

East Asian Regional Preliminary Workshop for SISR 2017

# Globalizations and Religious Cultures in East Asia

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East Asian Regional Preliminary Workshop for SISR 2017

# Globalizations and Religious Cultures in East Asia

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## Globalizations and Religious Cultures in East Asia

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## Foreword

SAKURAI Yoshihide  
[Hokkaido University]

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This workshop held October 15, 2016, at the Kokugakuin University Academic Media Center was convened as a preliminary gathering to the International Society for the Sociology of Religion (ISSR) (Société Internationale de Sociologie des Religions, SISR) conference originally slated to be held in Melbourne in 2017.

The workshop had two objectives. First, it was meant to serve as an impetus that would encourage younger scholars from Japan and elsewhere around East Asia to attend the larger conference held in the Asia-Pacific region. Second, given that making a presentation in English for the first time at one's first international conference can be a high hurdle to jump for some, it was thought that holding an international workshop in Japan would provide an opportunity to gain some practice. Moreover, it would also provide the chance to get accustomed to discussion in a foreign language with half the attendees being from other countries.

The preliminary workshop managed to achieve its objectives. The 34th ISSR Conference eventually held July 3-7, 2017, in Lausanne, Switzerland, included 13 participants who came from Japan, 3 from Taiwan, and 6 from Korea. The venue for the conference was abruptly changed due to unavoidable reasons at the original sponsoring institution. More than a few younger scholars abandoned plans to attend owing to the resulting increase in transportation and lodging costs. Still, we were delighted to see that some of the individuals who attended the preliminary workshop here at Kokugakuin did manage to attend the actual conference.

The workshop was split up into three sessions: session 1 on socially engaged religion and public religion in East Asia, session 2 on religious culture education in East Asia, and session 3 on the relationship between religious movements and relations between governments and religion in East Asia. The Lausanne Conference likewise saw a number of relevant joint sessions, including ones on “Neo-Nationalism, Politics, and Religion in the Public Sphere in Japan and East Asia” (convened by Professor Sakurai together with Professor Mark Mullins from the University of Auckland), “Media and Religion in East Asia” (Professor Sakurai with Dr. Wei-hsian Chi of Academia Sinica, Taiwan), and “Religious Research in Contemporary Asia-Pacific Regions (Professor Sakurai with Professor Kikuko Hirafuji of Kokugakuin University).

Incidentally, the advance notices for this workshop also overlapped with an International Conference Preliminary Workshop professors Hirafuji and Sakurai held as part of the Japanese Association for the Study of Religion and Society's Annual Congress that took place June 15, 2016, at the Joetsu University of Education. It should be noted that the professors explained about the

ISSR and issue a call for participants for this workshop while also delivering a lecture about how to make academic presentations in English.

It is our hope that younger scholars will make their presence felt globally not just in the field of religious studies, but also more broadly in the humanities and social sciences. Specifically, we look forward to seeing them participate in international conferences along with international workshops held in Japan, submit manuscripts to international journals published in foreign languages, and engage with global research networks. The first step toward achieving these lofty goals is participation in international scholarly conferences. How does one put together a 20-minute long presentation in English? How do you deal with a 10-minute question and answer period? The more actual experiences you have the more confidence you have in yourself, and the better you can engage in friendly research exchanges with your peers overseas. Seeing large numbers of younger researchers accumulate experiences of this sort from early in their careers would be most desirable.

Research that will win international recognition is not something that is done only by certain specific researchers at certain specific institutions. The breadth of the population of researchers itself is necessary for internationalizing the research standards of academic society. The policies of Japan's Ministry of Education will create strategic hubs, but as the academic world we want to aim for the training of human resources itself.

The articles collected in this report are a milestone for the younger scholars who authored them, but that first step is a crucial one. It is a first step that anyone can take.

Finally, a word on the structure of this report. This volume comprises two sections, one of papers and the other of abstracts. The people who presented at the workshop were sounded out about submitting their papers. We received five of them in the end; these comprise the papers section. Abstracts for those papers the full versions of which we have been unable to present for various reasons including publication in other venues are collected in the section of that name.

Both the preliminary workshop and the publication of this present volume were made possible with funds from the Institute for Japanese Culture and Classics, Organization for the Advancement of Research and Development, Kokugakuin University, and a Japan Society for Promotion of Science Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research (B) project title: "A Regional Comparative Study on Government-Religion Relations and the Formation of a New Theory of Public Religion in Asia" (subject number 16H05712) (project representative: Sakurai Yoshihide). The workshop also received support from the Japanese Association for the Study of Religion and Society.

## Program

\* The below is the original program of the workshop held at Kokugakuin on 2016.10.15.  
Please note that some titles are modified in this booklet.

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## East Asian Regional Preliminary Workshop for SISR 2017: Globalizations and Religious Cultures in East Asia

Room 06, AMC Building 5F, Kokugakuin University, Tokyo, Japan  
2016.10.15 (Sat.) 10:00–18:00

10:00–10:15 Opening Remarks

10:15–12:15 Session 1: Religious Engagement and Religious Actions in Public Sphere

Chair: Yoshihide Sakurai [Hokkaido University, Japan]

- 1) Aki Uchida [University of Tsukuba, Japan] “A Case Study of a Japanese Rural Temple Actively Involved in Social Activities” (\*abstract: p. 69)
- 2) Koki Shimizu [Hokkaido University, Japan] “Influence of Secularization On Subjective Well-being in Japan : Secondary Analysis of “Japanese Consciousness Survey” Conducted by NHK” (\*paper: p. 29)
- 3) Siyoon Lee [Sogang University, South Korea] “Buddhist, Environmental Movement, Religious Movement and South Korea” (\*abstract: p. 61)
- 4) Francis Lim [Nanyang Technological University, , Singapore] “Beyond Civil Society: Spiritual Empowerment, Work, and Social Engagement in China” (\*abstract: p. 63)

12:15–13:30 Lunch Break

13:30–15:30 Session 2: Religious Culture and Education of Religious Studies

Chair: Kikuko Hirafuji [Kokugakuin University, Japan]

- 1) Aki Murakami [Shirayuri University, Japan] “How Can an Oracle Become a Public Affair? : The Case of Study of Oshira-sama Shrine in the Tsugaru Area” (\*paper: p. 11)
- 2) Shiho Toishiba [University of Tsukuba, Japan] “Bosogaku: Praying for Prosperity in Modernizing Japan” (\*paper: p. 41)
- 3) Chae Young Kim [Sogang University, South Korea] “Religious Education and Related Problematic Issues in Current Korean Elementary-Secondary Schools and Beyond” (\*abstract: p. 59)
- 4) Yoshihide Sakurai [Hokkaido University, Japan] “University Education of Religious Diversity and Problematic Issues” (\*abstract: p. 65)

16:00–18:00 Session 3: New Religious Movement and Politico-Religious Relations

Chair: Nobutaka Inoue [Kokugakuin University, Japan]

- 1) NG, Ka Shing [Hokkaido University, Japan] “Localism and Christianity after Umbrella Movement: Growth of 'Localist' Churches in Hong Kong” (\*paper: p. 17)
- 2) Tadaatsu Tajima [Tenshi College, Japan] “Seeking for the 'Safe Living Land' for the Dead among the Urban Migrants in Japan: from the Research Study of the Nishiamuro Village Graveyard in 2016” (\*abstract: p. 67)
- 3) Yohei Fujino [Hokkaido University, Japan] “The Taiwanese Church and the Taiwan Independence Movement: Recent Tendency and the Context of After WW2 in Taiwan” (\*abstract: p. 57)
- 4) Yu Shuang Yao [Fo Guang University, Taiwan] “Christianity as Model and Analogue in the Formation of "Humanistic" Buddhism” (\*paper: p. 47)

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& JSPS KAKENHI Grant Number 16H05712 (Leader: Yoshihide Sakurai)

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# Papers



# How Can an Oracle Become a Public Affair?: The Case of Study of Oshira-sama Shrine in the Tsugaru Area

MURAKAMI Aki  
[Shirayuri University, Japan]

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## Abstract

In the Tsugaru region, many local communities hold a collective ritual in spring, and a spiritual medium called “*kami-sama*” is invited at the occasion. The purpose of these rituals is to receive oracles from *kami-sama*. These oracles consist on advices for everyday life. The participants care about what the *kami-sama* say, but it is rare that the oracles received lead them to any real action. The most common “action” those people undertakes is just to say “I will keep it in mind”. As a rule, the oracle deal remains limited to this simple exchange between the *kami-sama* and the listener, but in this presentation I will deal with an exceptional case where an oracle became a matter of public interest in the community. This happened in a village in Tsugaru, where we can find a shrine dedicated to *oshira-sama*. This shrine was built in 2001 in response to an oracle in a collective ritual. By examining the construction process of this shrine, it is our purpose to understand the reasons for this result. This shall help us to shed light on matters of a wider sphere, such as the nature of those *kami-sama*’s oracles and their relation with the community.

The Tsugaru area is in Aomori prefecture, on the northern extremity of the Japanese main island. There, we can observe active practices by local spiritual mediums called *kami-sama*. It is a popular practice among people in the Tsugaru area to consult *kami-sama* when they are in trouble. *Kami-samas*' spiritual séances are often held behind closed doors. People visit *kami-sama* privately to seek advice on personal matters such as illnesses, job issues, or family problems. This is why *kami-sama* often are called “local” or “folk” spiritual mediums (*Minkan Fusha* 民間巫者). The word *Minkan* 民間 delineates non-official or private characteristics of *kami-sama* practices.

However, when we think about the relationship between community (not individual) and *kami-sama*, we cannot ignore the degree of communal, or “public,” aspects in their practices. In this paper, I will deal with a case in which an oracle became a matter of public interest in the community. This will help in understanding the nature of *kami-sama* oracles and their relationship with the community.

## 1. *Kami-sama* and a Spring Prayer

*Kami-sama* is a general name for a spiritual medium in Aomori prefecture. Many of them are women, and some tell of their experiences during hard ascetic training to cultivate their abilities to communicate with supernatural beings. Others, however, say they have an inborn ability. The process to become a *kami-sama* varies, but their methods are similar. Clients go to a *kami-sama*'s home and talk about their misfortunes, and the *kami-sama* provides advice from deities or makes a special prayer to protect clients from further misfortunes.



Figure 1: A *kami-sama* praying

However, a *kami-sama*'s role is not limited to personal counseling. They are invited to lead collective prayers in villages. It is an annual event for housewives held in the spring, often called a spring prayer. An *itako*, a different type of local spiritual medium<sup>1</sup>, used to be in charge of the spring prayer, but because of a serious shortage of *itako* successors, *kami-sama* now lead this ritual.

The purpose of the ritual is to receive oracles from *kami-sama*, which means oracles from tutelary deities of the district, including *oshira-sama*. The *oshira-sama* is a well-known twin ritual figure made of wood and widely distributed in Tohoku region (northeastern Japan). The *oshira-sama* is a tutelary of home. Normally, *oshira-sama* are privately owned, but some villages have

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<sup>1</sup> For the purposes of this paper, it is not necessary to discuss the differences between *kami-sama* and *itako*, or their rituals. For more details, see 村上晶 Murakami Aki 「津軽地方の春祈禱にみる巫俗の現状」 “Tsugaru chihou no harukitou ni miru fuzoku no genjyo”, 『哲学思想論集』 33号 *Tetsugaku shisou ronsyu*, vol.33. 2015.





Figure 2: An *oshira-sama* in Tsugaru

public *oshira-sama* displayed as a tutelary of a village. Many people tell stories about how they were saved by an *oshira-sama*, whether from a natural disaster, fire, car accident, or illness, among cited perils. Thus, people who own *oshira-sama* take good care of them.

The oracles in spring prayers consist of advice for everyday life, such as warnings about driving cars and other aspects of life. The participants of the ritual are always eager to listen to these oracles, and some even take notes to ensure they do not forget the advice.

Thus, they care deeply about what the *kami-sama* say. However, it is very rare that they actually act on these oracles. The most common “action” people may undertake after receiving an oracle is to say, “I will keep it in mind.”

I did questionnaire research in three Tsugaru districts in 2014 on what people do after receiving an oracle. The most common answer was, “I kept it in my mind,” which suggests no particular actions were taken. Only one respondent took action based on an oracle: “I went to consult a *kami-sama* for further advice.” That was rather exceptional. In general, the oracle remains limited in the private sphere or limited to simple exchanges between the *kami-sama* and the listener in most cases.

## 2. An *Oshira-sama* Shrine in Suwado: a Case Study

However, an exceptional case in which an oracle became a matter of public interest in the community occurred in Suwado district in the Inakadate village in Tsugaru area, where roughly 350 people live. There, we can find a shrine dedicated to *oshira-sama*. This shrine was built in 2001 in response to an oracle uttered by a certain *kami-sama* during a spring prayer. As an oracle, the *oshira-sama* in the district manifested its wishes to be enshrined there.

Why and how was the construction of an *oshira-sama* shrine made possible? More importantly, how could the oracle of *kami-sama* become a public affair? Since oracles usually are received as private matters, it is surely worthy to consider why this could really happen. By closely examining the construction process for this shrine, it is our purpose to understand the reasons for its construction. This shall, in turn, help us shed light on wider concerns, including the nature of *kami-sama* oracles and their relationship with the community.

## 3. The Construction Process

Like many other districts in the Tsugaru region, a spring prayer is an annual observance hosted by an association of elderly women (*Rofujinkai* 老婦人会) in Suwado district. The association is a voluntary gathering of local women who are all at least 60 years old. The ritual is held at the

community hall, and roughly 25-30 members of the association participate every year.

There is a description of the 1997 Suwado spring prayer in the *History of the Village*<sup>2</sup>. It said the *kami-sama* summoned tutelary deities of the district, including *Iwaki-sama*, *Akakura-sama*, *Takayamainari-sama*, etc. Then *oshira-sama* said, “I want to be enshrined at the shrine because this community hall is filled with an incense smell.” Incense sticks are used as offerings for the dead. The words “filled with an incense smell” meant that the *oshira-sama* sensed the dead in the hall, which makes sense because the community hall sometimes is used for funerals. It is said that *oshira-sama* like to inhabit pure places, and dead bodies or bones are considered to be impure in Japan’s folk or Shinto context. Thus, the community hall is not an appropriate place for *oshira-sama*. This is why the *oshira-sama* insisted on being moved from that place.

At that time, a pair of *oshira-sama* were kept in the community hall’s storage room. Before that, this *oshira-sama* had been kept in the shoya’s (village headman’s 庄屋) house. But the shoya’s family moved away from the district. The *oshira-sama* lost its home and was moved to the community hall. Accordingly, villagers decided to treat this *oshira-sama* as a tutelary of the village.

#### 4. The Turning Point

So, what did the villagers do after receiving this oracle? Actually, they did nothing. They “kept it in their mind.” As stated above, this is common behavior after receiving an oracle. However, the *oshira-sama* did not give up. It repeated this wish annually in the spring prayer, but there was no action taken to implement *oshira-sama*’s wish that a shrine be built.

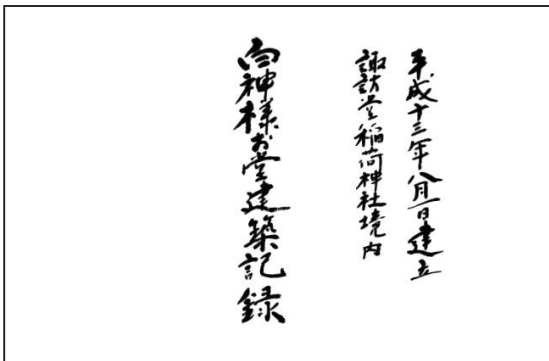


Figure 3: *The Record on the Shrine Building Process*

However, the situation suddenly changed in 2001, according to *The Record on the Shrine Building Process*, written by a villager. In the spring prayer that year, the *kami-sama* (talking as *oshira-sama*) said, “How’s Tanaka-sama (a pseudonym) doing?” This utterance is quite remarkable. The participant answered, “He is not good.” *Oshira-sama* continued: “I know he is always good to the district. Then please build a shrine for me; otherwise, he will

have a great trouble in August or September.”

Tanaka-sama was a politician born in Suwado district. He served as the head of the farm ministry, Defense Agency, and National Land Agency. He is a legendary person in the village. When he left politics, he returned to the district to spend the rest of his life. This oracle was received in February 2001, during which time, Tanaka-sama was suffering from cancer. Since he was quite

<sup>2</sup> 田舎館村 Inakadate-mura, 『田舎館村誌』下巻 *Inakadate sonshi*. Vol.3. 2000.

famous in the village, everyone knew about his illness.

Here, we can understand the meaning of the conversation. The utterance “How’s Tanaka-sama doing?” was a direct message about Tanaka-sama concerning his condition. Since he was quite popular among local people, this utterance was a big deal. Then the chairperson of the old women’s association, Ms. Miyata (a pseudonym), wrote a letter to inform Mr. Tanaka’s wife about this oracle.

Ms. Miyata was an excellent organizer. After she wrote a letter to Mr. Tanaka’s wife, she quickly asked other associations in the district for help, including the residents association and veneration association. These were male associations and had the right to make decisions on such matters in the district. Ms. Miyata and the president of the residents association started working together to build a shrine for *oshira-sama*. Then they organized the Commission for the *Oshira-sama* Shrine Building in June. The commission received a 600,000 yen donation from Mr. Tanaka and his wife, with roughly 800,000 yen needed to build the shrine.

The associations in the district worked hard on the construction. The veneration association obtained permission for the construction project from the chief priest of the village shrine. Members of the residents association and the old women’s association visited every household to seek contributions. Each household contributed between 1,000 and 10,000 yen, with 954,000 yen collected altogether, including the donation from Tanaka-sama. At the same time, members of the residents association cut down trees at the planned site and prepared the site for construction.

A local builder handled the construction project, and when it was built, an inauguration ceremony was held, on August 1, 2001. At the inauguration ceremony, a *kami-sama* was invited to channel and interpret the *oshira-sama*’s words. The *kami-sama* said, “I can hear a ring of a bell. It is the bell of *oshira-sama*. *Oshira-sama* rings the bell with joy.” Finally, the *oshira-sama*’s wish came true.

## 5. How Did the Construction Become Possible?

I want to spotlight the fact that the oracle did not spur action for at least four years. When we think about the reasons why the *oshira-sama*’s wish was not realized for years, we cannot ignore the issue of money, which was the biggest obstacle. The large donation by Tanaka-sama made the construction possible. Secondly, the associations in play were a factor. The old women’s association was a female association and had no right to make decisions on district matters. Only when the residents association and veneration association became involved could the project get off the ground. This suggests that oracles in the spring prayer were shared only in the old women’s association and not made public until later.

Oracles from spring prayers are normally only shared among participants in the ritual and not aired in the public sphere. However, in this example, the 2001 oracle mentioned Tanaka-sama, a very famous politician: a public figure. Thus, the male associations teamed up to build an *oshira-sama* shrine. As a result, we can say that the oracle was realized in the public sphere in the Suwado

district.

However, we must remember that the oracle was ignored for a long time: until Tanaka-sama became a factor.

I would like to end this paper by concluding that oracles are not acted upon automatically when practical matters are involved, especially money. People have the courage to ignore some oracles when they seem impractical or impossible, due to money, time, or power issues.

Many religious rituals held in districts are disappearing in Tsugaru, but when it comes to the spring prayer, many districts still continue to hold them as an annual observance. In such districts, we can find a very balanced relationship between oracles and realistic conditions, i.e. people will not yield to unreasonable demands, even if they come from deities. On the other hand, people accept an oracle as long as it seems reasonable and useful. This practical approach to oracles is a key to understanding why the spring prayer is surviving and is still popular among people.

Finally, oracles by spiritual mediums and related local religious practices in Tsugaru do not often appear in the public sphere, but it would be reckless to conclude that they are relegated only to the private sphere. As we have seen in this paper, oracles have the potential to elicit public action under the right collective circumstances.

# Localism and Christianity After Umbrella Movement: Growth of ‘Localist’ Churches in Hong Kong

NG Ka Shing  
[Hokkaido University, Japan/  
Nagasaki University, Japan]

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## Abstract

Almost two decades after the handover of Hong Kong to China in 1997, there has been a growing level of mistrust of the government and worry about the interference from the Chinese government. Movements advocating for higher autonomy and a ‘local Hong Kong identity’ have been developing rapidly. The Umbrella Movement (a series of sit-in street protests that occurred in Hong Kong 2014) and the flourishing of localist groups are some good examples of rising local consciousness. Localism has also spread in Christianity, with increasing number of the so-called ‘localist churches’ formed in recent years, such as Slow Church and the Ekklesia Hong Kong. These churches are composed of members who are politically active and concerned about the benefits of the local. They are highly spectacular in protests and on media, advocating their vision for a more autonomic and a ‘China-free’ Hong Kong society. This paper explores the rise of localism in Hong Kong and the role of Christianity in the recent localism movement using Slow Church as an example. I argue Slow Church intends to distinguish themselves from traditional churches by building a politically active and pro-local image. It also represents a form of localism movement growing within Hong Kong’s Christian community that aims to challenge the conservative and politically-apathetic mainstream churches.

## Introduction

Twenty years have passed since the handover of Hong Kong from Britain to China in 1997. Under the principle of ‘one country, two systems’, Hong Kong continues to have its own political, legal, economic systems. However, a number of incidents that happened after 1997 seem to have undermined the high degree of autonomy of Hong Kong and the benefits of the local people. For instance, the latest Chinese government’s interpretation of the Basic Law of Hong Kong over two ‘localist’ lawmakers’ swearing-in oath in 2016 is seen as an intervention into Hong Kong’s legal system (SCMP 2016). Another frequently used example is the social impacts brought by the Individual Visit Scheme, which allowed travelers from Mainland China to visit Hong Kong on an individual basis (SCMP 2014). The Umbrella Movement or the Occupy Central in 2014 also represents public resistance against PRC’s tightening control over the political reform and democratization in Hong Kong.

Many local people, especially the younger generation, are concerned over China’s growing influence and the future of Hong Kong after 2047, which is the year that marks the end of the promise that ‘the way of life shall remain unchanged for 50’ stated in the Basic Law. Amid growing concerns over the social and political development of Hong Kong, there has been an acute rise in localism, advocating local benefits and local identity to resist the “Mainlandization” of Hong Kong.

Against this backdrop, this preliminary study attempts to explore the recent rise of localism in Hong Kong from the perspective of religion. Through a case study of a “localist” church called Slow Church, I study how Christian communities, which have long played an important role in the social development of Hong Kong society, have reacted to the rising localism in Hong Kong. In particular, I argue that Slow Church intends to distinguish themselves from traditional churches by building a politically active and pro-local image. It also represents a localism movement growing within Hong Kong’s Christian community that poses challenges to the conservative and politically-apathetic mainstream churches. Given that this is only a preliminary study, the analysis is conducted based on materials gathered from the internet, such as homepage and Facebook of Slow Church, articles written by members of Slow Church, and other resources such as news articles.

## Rising Localism in Hong Kong

Localism is not a new phenomenon in Hong Kong’s history. According to Law (2014), localism in Hong Kong can be divided into three waves. The first wave refers to 1960s to 70s when Hong Kong experienced rapid social and economic development. Baby boomers at that time play a major part in the formation of local identity (Lui 2007). Different from their parents, they were born and raised in Hong Kong and have a strong sense of belonging. Local movements were mainly in the form of student movements consisting of some liberal, Chinese nationalist, and anti-colonialist elements. The Chinese Language Movement (that made Chinese to become the official language of Hong Kong along with English), the anti-corruption movement, and defense of the Diaoyu Islands (Senkaku Island) movement are representative examples of this first wave of

localism emerged in Hong Kong.

The second wave of localism occurred in the late 1980s to 90s when sparked by the 1989 Tiananmen Square Massacre (known as the June Fourth Incident in China). When the student-led demonstration was suppressed by the Communist government, causing hundreds to thousands of civilian deaths, 1.5 million Hong Kong citizens took to the street to show their support to students and condemn the Communist government. China's "uncivilized" crackdown of democracy protest made Hong Kong people realize the huge difference between Mainland China and Hong Kong. To contrast between the two systems and to highlight the distinctive features of Hong Kong have become the accent of the second wave of Hong Kong's localism. Local cultures strongly emphasized the cosmopolitanism of Hong Kong as an international city, a diverse civil society, civic education, press and academic freedoms, which are elements that were not available in Communist China.

The third wave of localism has gained its momentum since the mid-2000s when growing Chinese influence on the political, economic, and social life of Hong Kong has forced the local to reconsider their own identity. For instance, the protests organized by local communities against the demolition of the Edinburgh Place Ferry Pier in 2006 and Queens' Pier in 2008 were regarded as important civil movements to protect Hong Kong's history and identity against government's decolonization process. The civil discontent occurred in 2009 and 2010 against the construction of the Guangzhou–Hong Kong high-speed rail (a high-speed railway that would link Hong Kong with mainland China's growing high-speed rail network) also highlighted similar notions. Worries over the blurring of the Hong Kong–Mainland border as a result of connecting Hong Kong to the Mainland rail system, along with other concerns, such as cost, noise pollution, customs and border control complications, and environmental damage to local communities are the main reasons for opposition.

In addition to the demolition of colonial legacy and construction projects fusing Hong Kong and Mainland China, Hong Kong's immigration policy is also an important aspect linked to rising localism in Hong Kong. Since the start of the Individual Visit Scheme in 2003, travelers from Mainland China have been allowed to visit Hong Kong on an individual basis. While it has brought about economic benefits to Hong Kong, the increase of tourists has also caused a great disturbance (e.g. bad manners, 'explosive shopping'<sup>1</sup>) to the daily life of local residents. Anti-Chinese sentiment among local Hong Kong people has intensified. Furthermore, under the Hong Kong's Immigration Department's "Quality Migrant Admission Scheme" (QMAS), "Capital Investment Entrant Scheme" (CIES), an "Entry for Employment as Professionals" scheme (EEPS) and an "Employment of Non-Local Students" scheme (ENLS), there is a gradual increase of high-skilled

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<sup>1</sup> Known as bakugai in Japanese. Used by the Japanese media to describe the shopping spree carried out by Chinese tourists traveling to Japan. For more details, see <http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2016/08/22/business/chinese-tourism-surge-continues-but-explosive-shopping-shifting-to-cosmetics-supplements/>

Mainland migrants in Hong Kong's labor market. The link between Mainland migrants and growing social inequality in Hong Kong has helped fuel growing localism, intra-ethnic distinction, and discrimination (Nagy 2015).

In 2014, the Umbrella Movement (or sometimes called Occupy Central), a series of sit-in protests fighting for the universal suffrage of the Chief Executive (CE) without pre-screening by the Chinese government, broke out and last for 79 days. Chinese government inaction to respond to the local demand for democracy and tightening control over Hong Kong political and legal system (disqualify lawmakers who were elected democratically) further exacerbated the growth of anti-Chinese localism already taking root in Hong Kong society.

In fact, according to the Public Opinion Program (1997-2016) run by the University of Hong Kong, there has been a rise of anti-Chinese sentiment in Hong Kong since its handover in 1997. In the question 'are you pound of formally becoming a national citizen of China after the 1997 Handover?', people who answered 'no' has increased from 45.7% in 1997 to 64.8% in 2016. In recent years, there is a flourishing of localist groups in Hong Kong advocating higher autonomy and local benefits. Some groups show banners and distribute leaflets in the busy areas of Hong Kong and university campus, and hold gatherings and protests in the key shopping districts where Chinese tourist usually visit, advocating their vision of 'Hong Kong's independence'. Some groups even took part in the elections for Legislative Council, trying to bring the localist voices into Hong Kong's parliament. The rise of localism is, therefore, an important topic to understand the political and social development of Hong Kong and the changing Mainland-Hong Kong relationships.

### **Localism and Hong Kong's Christian Community**

Christianity appears to have a long history of political participations in Hong Kong. Christian-affiliated social groups and leaders have been active and vocal in movements advocating democracy, equality, and social justices (e.g. Butenhoff 1999, Pavey 2011). Christian members also had a strong presence in the 'July 1st Protest' in 2003 and 'Umbrella Movement' in 2014, the two largest political movements seen in Hong Kong since the 1997 handover. In particular, 'Christianity has been a visible element of the demonstrations' in the Umbrella Movement 'with prayer groups, crosses, and protesters reading Bibles in the street' (Levin 2014).

Despite the fact that Christian groups in Hong Kong have been engaged in political and social development in the past decades, most of them have adopted a conservative or even a critical approach to the rising localism, for the narratives in the recent movement that highlights "anti-China" and "Hong Kong first" seem to be in big contradiction with the teachings of an all-loving god. For instance, in his Archbishop's Christmas Message 2013 for the Hong Kong Anglican Church, Paul Kwong criticized the localism movement that causes "discrimination, xenophobia and a "Hongkonger first" attitude" (Kwong 2013). He says:

Some politicians, with an eye on votes only, incite a kind of vernacularism by calling for



restricting and reducing the quota of immigrants from the Mainland. Such views, which stand in opposition to family-reunion, are not in line with basic human rights and justice. The claim of the mother of a missing baby that the baby was kidnapped by a woman with a “mainland accent” was hyped up by some mass media to give people the wrong impression that all criminals were from the Mainland. The purpose of such labeling is to create conflict between Hong Kong people and brothers and sisters from the Mainland resulting in alienation and division (Kwong 2013).

Nevertheless, there is still a sign of rising localism within Hong Kong’s Christian community. This can be seen from the recent formation of Slow Church, a small group of Christians committed to promoting localism. In his study of the Protestant community and Umbrella Movement, Chan S. H. (2015) argues the significance of the development of Slow Church:

After the occupation in Mong Kok, some Protestants became members of the Slow Church, while others connected with the church through Facebook. These Protestants endeavored to continue their faith and action together. As such, they represent a rising new generation of young progressive Protestants in Hong Kong who have committed themselves to democratization and social change in the years to come (Chan S. H. 2015: 392).

For this reason, the rise of localism movement and local church (e.g. Slow Church) is an important key to understanding Hong Kong’s Christian community and political and social changes. In the following, I introduce how Slow Church has developed in the context of rising localism in Hong Kong society. I then discuss the “localist characteristics” of the Slow Church, and suggest the significance of understanding the recent development of Christianity and Hong Kong society through this group of “Christian minority”.

## **Slow Church**

The development of Slow Church can be traced back to 2012. It began as a small Bible study group in 2012 and evolved into a church group after the Umbrella Movement in 2014. The Church introduces themselves on Facebook in this way:

In 2012, a group of people who knew each other on the internet started to organize a Bible study group. Until 2014, we came up an idea: “why don’t we really open a church by ourselves?” And then we started our first worship on 7 Sept 2014. On 28 Sept 2014, the Umbrella Revolution broke out. We ask ourselves “how could we just sit inside a church and do nothing?” Then we decided to take to the street. During the revolution, we organized worship and prayer in a small church temporarily built in the occupied area in

Mong Kok. After the revolution, we rent an office in a commercial building in Mong Kok for gathering until today. (Slow Church's Facebook, translated by the author)

The preacher of Slow Church is Wong King Yip (in his 30s), who is also known as Chan Do among other members. Wong has been active in social movements and vocal on political issues through writing on media platforms, such as VJ Media (輔仁媒體), Passion Times (熱血時報) and his personal Facebook. He is also a member of the political party Civic Passion (熱血公民), which is widely regarded as a radical and localist group in Hong Kong by the conservative parties. The Church currently rents a space in Mong Kok and expenses (rent, utility, inviting guest speakers etc.) are covered by donations from members. The church has nowadays around 20 active members and aims at recruiting at most 100 people in the future.

In terms of belief, Slow Church is similar to mainstream Protestantism, believing in the Holy Bible and three creeds (Apostles' Creed, The Nicene Creed, The Athanasian Creed). They call themselves Slow Church to uphold the idea of 'slowness' and to criticize the business-like nature of mainstream churches in Hong Kong:

Churches in Hong Kong are too "McDonaldized", emphasizing too much on developments and too business-like. We advocate slowness. Slowness is to lower our speed, everyone should grow according to his/her own pace, no matter quick or slow. There is no intensive three-year disciple training course, no one will urge you to baptize, and no one will ask why you do not go to church. (Slow Church's Facebook, translated by the author)

As a church committed to promoting local identity and benefits, Slow Church can be characterized in five ways: (1) Critical of Hong Kong's government, (2) anti-Mainland Chinese, (3) radical (compared to Mainstream church), (4) recruitment strategy that emphasizes their difference from mainstream churches, and (5) responsive to local issues. The following discusses these features in more details.

### *1. Critical of government*

Slow Church is highly critical of the Hong Kong government. Leaders frequently comment on policies and social issues and criticize the Hong Kong government and officials for betraying the benefits of Hong Kong people by submitting themselves to the Mainland Chinese government. For instance, Pastor Chan has been an active writer for the media platform VJ Media and Passion Times, which are famous for their strong positions for an equal and democratic society and against capitalist and bureaucrats. In an article called "A theory of cursing", he criticizes that government misbehaviors have already aroused "the great indignation of both men and gods", and urges God to "give divine punishment because there is no justice on earth" (Chan 2016b).

In addition to social critique, in most of Slow Church's promotional materials, the church usually portrays the authority as an enemy to Christ. For instance, in one of their posters for Bible studies class, the title "Gospel of Luke: declaration of war to the authority" is used, with an image showing two men seemingly to be Christ on the right and a demon on the left arm-wrestling with each other, and a caption below: "you want war then we'll give you a fucking war!" (see Slow Church's Facebook). Undoubtedly, "declaring war" on the authority is merely metaphoric, but demonizing the government that has to be fought with expresses the church's strong criticism against the government. The underlying message of such propaganda is clear: all Christians should come together with Christ to stand against the government (the demon).

## *2. Anti-Mainland Chinese*

Slow Church has a strong color of anti-Mainland Chinese. A series of four posters on their Facebook provides the best references. With a loving image of God on the first page comes with a rather contradictive phrase "God loves everyone but also hates a sinful Mainland China". It is then followed by many examples of "sins" committed by Mainland Chinese on the second page, such as "corrupt officials", "uncivilized behavior", "suppression of freedom of speech", "destruction of Cross" and the like. The third page shows a picture of the 2015 Tianjin explosions that killed 173 people and injured hundreds of others with a caption "Look! The judgment day has come! No one can escape!" It then states the importance of "repent, confess, and act justly". The last page urges Mainland Chinese people (1) not to come to Hong Kong, (2) not to believe in Communist Party but in God, (3) to confess one's sins and repent, (4) to urge others not to come to Hong Kong, and (5) read the Bible and pray. A reminder is also added at the bottom: "If you do not repent, you too will experience a horrible end just like the Chinese Communist Party."

The contents of the posters may look offensive and are in many ways against the teachings of a loving God. However, Pastor Chan explains how such an anti-Chinese sentiment can be compatible with the Bible in his article titled "Spreading the gospel to locust in the world" (this title is also considered offensive as it equates Mainland Chinese to locust). Chan argues:

Popular gospel nowadays is always about "Jesus loves you and blesses you." However, what Jesus says in the very beginning is "repent of your sins and turn to God, for the Kingdom of Heaven is near"...I made some posters, talking about how God loves people but also hates the sinful China, like corruption, destroying the environment, suppressing freedom, and the like...China is really the 'hell' in reality...all people should be responsible for these sins when the final judgment comes...If Mainland Chinese want salvation, they should repent and confess, and cultivate their faith. This is the gospel in a true sense...I warn them of God's judgment and suggest what they should do...This is the responsibility of being a Christian. (Chan D. 2015, translated by the author)

From the above, we can understand the anti-Mainland Chinese position of Slow Church seem to have formed as a result of some kind of theological reflections. Their “understanding” of Mainland China and the actions of Chinese people, which are sinful in their eyes, is the origin of such sentiment. They believe that such “sins” have to be condemned by taking an anti-Mainland Chinese position, in order to “help” these “sinful men” realize their own wrongdoings and confess, and be saved eventually.

### *3. More radical compared to mainstream churches*

Slow Church criticizes mainstream churches in Hong Kong for being trapped in the “PRNN” ideology, which stands for peace, rational, non-violence, and non-profanity. The Christian community has a history of engaging in social and political movements in Hong Kong, but most of them are in the form of peaceful gathering, non-violent protest, or civil disobedience. It is because the majority of Hong Kong Christians considered PRNN as the guiding principles for civic movements according to biblical teaching. In contrast, Slow Church argues the use of force is acceptable in some circumstances. For example, the church organizes martial arts classes for its members for a number of purposes:

Whether it is for promoting physical health, or for fighting against the corrupt police force or for Hong Kong independence, it would be advantageous to learn *Kung-fu* (martial arts). Come on, our church is probably the only church in Hong Kong that provides “training for activists”. We have “mass training” every Wednesday (730-830) in Kun Tong, focusing on developing both stamina and technique. We have a master as the instructor, and students will be able to practice together. (Slow Church’s Facebook, translated by the author)

The church offers martial arts training for their members so that they can protect themselves and be more effective when confronting police during protests. Moreover, the promotional poster for the martial arts class displays a crucified, muscular Jesus breaking the cross, and a caption “train hard every day”. Such an image of Jesus Christ is quite different from the more common, companionate and victimized one. The “macho Jesus” is used in the poster instead of the more common one to indicate the importance of physical strength for fighting against injustice.

In short, Slow Church does not actively promote the use of force, but a certain degree of it seems to be acceptable when dealing with injustice as a last resort, as Chan writes in another article:

Protecting homeland, bringing order out of chaos is justice in itself. I urge members of the God’s family to become strong and unite with all Hong Kong people and fight together (Chan 2016a, translated by the author).

#### 4. Recruitment strategy emphasizing uniqueness

Slow Church recruits members by highlighting their differences from mainline churches. This is achieved by (1) criticizing the weakness of other churches and by (2) emphasizing the special role members are given after joining Slow Church.

Slow Church has been critical of other churches since the first day of its establishment. The church is formed by Christians who were not happy with their previous churches and quitted. Due to such background, the membership of Slow Church is highly critical of the mainstream Christian community, and a recruitment strategy that purposely highlights their differences from mainline churches has also been developed. For example, the promotional materials of Slow Church often criticize the teachings of other churches. One of the posters for their discipleship training course writes:

This course is not for members of Slow Church, but for people outside of Slow Church. To unlearn the *stupid things* you learned in the past, and to start from zero, strength your foundation and return to the *right track*. (Slow Church's Facebook, translated by the author; author's italic)

Slow Church criticizes mainstream churches for teaching their members only stupid things. The course also has a very symbolic title called "Sword of exorcising devil", which implies the knowledge that members learned from other churches are evil that need to be exorcised. They also claim that members can learn the "orthodox" of Christian teachings by taking the course (i.e. return to the right track) and such knowledge is an important weapon to stand against injustice.

Apart from being critical of other churches, Slow Church has also promoted itself by emphasizing the special meaning of joining their church: to become "a special force of Christianity". The following is a passage from their Facebook:

If churches are the army of Christianity, then I would say mainstream churches are the regular forces, and Slow Church is a special force.... We are recruiting 100 people...Try to imagine, we are like 100 *Avengers*, not 100 Stormtroopers!...If you are still a believer of god, looking for a community of faith...we welcome you to join us. But please be prepared, Slow Church is walking at the *margins*. We are very different from the mainstream churches. (Slow Church's Facebook, author's italic; translated by the author)

Slow Church believes their members are different from the majority of Christian because they play a special role (i.e. Avengers) for Christianity. While mainstream churches do not "take local issues seriously", Slow Church's members are committed to building a church for local people, responding to local issues, and not submitting themselves to government authority and standing by the weak (Slow Church's Facebook). This "special" mission makes them feel marginalized in

Hong Kong Christian communities, but they believe only themselves, as “a special force for Christianity”, are capable of achieving such goal. This sense of being endowed with a special mission (i.e. to serve the local people) is attractive to those who want to contribute to Hong Kong society and are seeking a sense of purpose.

#### *(5) Responding to local issues*

Slow Church is committed to serving the local people regardless of their relatively small membership. Charitable activities organized by Slow Church include distributing used clothes collected from the public to the needy, such as the homeless and poor, visiting homeless shelter, especially on cold winter days. As some members are also supporters of local political groups, they participate in their activities on an individual basis. As the church is expanding its membership, they might be able to organize more social programs for the local in the future.

Slow Church is still at an early developmental stage. In the context of rising localism, it has a high potential to grow by attracting Christians who are tired of the socio-moral conservatism of mainline churches. In fact, many of the promotional strategies used by Slow Church show that they intend to target this group of potential recruits. However, although they appear to be critical of mainline churches and government, and have a strong anti-Chinese sentiment in terms of ideologies, they are far from being radical in terms of the actions they have taken so far. It is interesting to see how they will apply such pro-local and anti-Chinese ideologies to social actions in the near future.

## **Conclusion**

Localism movement prioritizes the local history, culture, and identity, which usually arises as a result of globalization and growing external influence, which have a negative influence on the livelihood of the local. Hong Kong has experienced at least three waves of localism in the past and a new one is emerging when the Chinese government is tightening its control over Hong Kong’s issues. The rise of “localist church”, such as Slow Church, can be seen as a form of localism movement growing within Hong Kong’s Christian communities, whose narratives specifically focus on anti-Chinese influence, pro-local benefits, and is critical of the mainstream churches that chose to remain “political apathetic” and “obsessed with spiritual faith” even in a rapidly “Mainlandizing” Hong Kong society. When the PRNN (i.e. peaceful, rational, non-violent, and non-profane) approach adopted by church groups in civil movements has failed to help promote democratization in Hong Kong and protect the local against rising Chinese influences, localist Christian groups (e.g. Slow Church) that advocate localism and are more tolerant of a non-PRNN approach towards civic movement began to gain popularity among those dissatisfied Christians.

The development of Localist churches is significant in at least two ways. First, they can become an alternative choice for Christians, especially for those who are not happy with their churches in terms of political stances. Mainstream churches may, therefore, need to respond to these

new competitors if they want to maintain their membership. Whether they choose to resist the spread of localism ideologies to their members, or to embrace localism, making such decision requires careful organizational and theological reflections, and may have long-term effects on church development. Second, the ideas advocated by localist churches may be absorbed, digested by members of mainline churches in the long term. The spread of localism may cause internal and/or substantial changes in the culture of mainstream churches, promoting the political participation and localism movement of Hong Kong Christian on the whole.

This study shows the development of Slow Church as a form of localism movement growing within Hong Kong's Christian community, but many important questions remain unanswered given the preliminary nature of this study. For example, can such localism movement sustain? What is the influence of such movement on Hong Kong society and on mainstream churches? What are the reactions of mainstream churches to such movement so far? For further studies, interview with members of Slow Church and other localist churches, and mainstream churches should be conducted. The development of localism movement in Hong Kong should also be examined from a wider range of perspectives, such as national identity, value orientation, and political participation. This approach will provide a new perspective for understanding Christianity and political and social changes in Hong Kong as well as in Mainland China.

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# Exploring the Influence of Secularization on Subjective Well-Being in Japan: Secondary Analysis of “Survey on Japanese Value Orientations” Conducted by NHK

SHIMIZU Koki  
[Hokkaido University, Japan]

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## Abstract

The aim of this paper is to examine the relationship between religiosity and subjective well-being among Japanese people through exploratory analysis of Survey on Japanese Value Orientations which has been carried out by NHK since 1973 to 2008. In this paper, several analyses are conducted with following interests. (1) If religiosity among Japanese people can be divided into several different types of religiosity, what types of religiosity can be extracted or identified? (2) How did religiosity have changed along with generational shifts? (3) Can a positive relationship between religiosity and subjective well-being be found among Japanese people? (4) If so, which types of religiosity have the relationship? (5) Is relationship between those types of religiosity and subjective well-being universal across generations, or does it differ by cohort groups? However, these analyses are conducted not to confirm each proposition, but to provide statistical overviews. The results of the analyses imply that there can be found a positive relationship between traditional religious beliefs and subjective well-being, however, this relationship can be seen only in older cohorts and it seems to be disappearing along with generational shifts.

## Introduction

In Western societies, it is often reported that there is a positive correlation between individual religiosity and subjective well-being (ex. Ellison 1991). A growing number of research papers examines the association of individual religiosity and life-satisfaction or happiness. In World Database of Happiness, organized by Ruut Veenhoven to collect researches concerning happiness, there can be found 242 pieces of literature also concerning religion<sup>1</sup>. However, few studies addressed the relation between religiosity and subjective well-being among East Asian countries. The majority of studies in this field were carried out on Judeo-Christian samples, and researches using East Asian samples are scarce. Therefore, there is a need to use samples derived from East Asian countries to run cross-cultural comparison and to test the generalizability of the relation between religiosity and subjective well-being.

Table 1. 14 items of religiosity in Survey on Japanese Value Orientations<sup>2</sup>

<b>Q27 Religious Behavior (multiple answer)</b>	
Do you participate any activities which might be related to religions or faith?	
If yes, please indicate your activities from the following list.	
Q27-1. I usually participate religious activities, such as attending religious services, other religious practices, or missionary works.	(Service/Missionary)
Q27-2. I pray at times.	(Prayer)
Q27-3. I visit my family graves at least once or twice a year.	(Visiting graves)
Q27-4. I read religious texts at times, such as the Bible or scriptures.	(Bible/Scripture)
Q27-5. I have visited religious spaces in order to pray for personal security, success in business, passing entrance exam and so on, in past one or two years.	(Prayer for wishes)
Q27-6. I have talismans or lucky charms around me, such as <i>Omamori</i> or <i>Ofuda</i> .	(Charms)
Q27-7. I have drawn a fortune slip, or tried fortune-telling in past one or two years.	(Fortune-telling)
<b>Q28 Religious Belief (multiple answer)</b>	
Do you believe anything which might be related to religions or faith?	
If yes, please indicate things you believe from the following list.	
Q28-1. God(s)	(God(s))
Q28-2 Buddha	(Buddha)
Q28-3 Teachings from the Bible or Scripture	(Bible/Scripture teachings)
Q28-4 Life after death /the next life	(Life after death)
Q28-5 Miracles	(Miracles)
Q28-6 Power of charms such as <i>Omamori</i> and <i>Ofuda</i>	(Power of charms)
Q28-7 Fortune slip / Fortune-telling.	(Power of Fortune-telling)

The aim of this study is to explore the relationship between religiosity and subjective well-being in Japan through exploratory data analysis. However, it is broadly known that the way of having religious beliefs and practice among Japanese people differs from Judeo-Christian people.

<sup>1</sup> Veenhoven, R., Bibliography of Happiness, World Database of Happiness, Erasmus University Rotterdam, The Netherlands, assessed on 2017/03/31 at: [http://worlddatabaseofhappiness.eur.nl/hap\\_bib/bib\\_fp.php](http://worlddatabaseofhappiness.eur.nl/hap_bib/bib_fp.php)

<sup>2</sup> The questionnaire shown in Table 1 is translated by author. Original questionnaire written in Japanese is available at 高橋幸市 & 荒牧央 (2014). There is another English translation of this questionnaire which is translated by members of NHK Broadcasting Culture Research Institute (Takahashi & Aramaki 2016).

Table 2. Summary of cohort analysis (source: 清水 2017)

	Types of Aging and Cohort Effect	
	Aging Eff.	Cohort Eff.
<u>Q27 Religious Behavior</u>		
1. Service/Missionary	<b>Upward</b>	<b>Downward</b>
2. Prayer	<b>Upward</b>	<b>Downward</b>
3. Visiting graves	Upward	Not identifiable
4. Bible/Scripture	<b>Not identifiable</b>	<b>Downward</b>
5. Prayer for wishes	polytonal	Not identifiable
6. Charms	Not identifiable	Not identifiable
7. Fortune-telling	<b>Downward</b>	<b>Upward</b>
<u>Q28 Religious Beliefs</u>		
1. God(s)	<b>Upward</b>	<b>Downward</b>
2. Buddha	<b>Upward</b>	<b>Downward</b>
3. Bible/Scripture teachings	Not identifiable	Not identifiable
4. Life after death	Not identifiable	polytonal
5. Miracles	<b>Downward</b>	<b>Upward</b>
6. Power of charms	Not identifiable	polytonal
7. Power of fortune-telling	Downward	Not identifiable

As Romer reported, Christian people are only 1-2 percent of the population in Japan. And people who claim personal religious affiliation with any organized religion are about 10 percent (Romer 2010). However, it doesn't mean most Japanese people believe in nothing religious or participate no religious practice. In fact, about 40 percent of the population report they believe in God(s) or Buddha (*kami* or *hotoke*), and more than 60 percent visit their ancestors grave constantly (NHK 放送文化研究所 eds. 2015). Moreover, Shimizu indicated there is secularization process at individual level taking place in modern Japanese society, and new types of religiosity appearing among young generations (清水 2017). He conducted cohort analysis on 14 different variables concerning religious beliefs and behaviors, with the time-series data of Survey on Japanese Value Orientations (*Nihonjin no ishiki chosa*) which has been conducted by NHK (*Nihon hoso kyokai*: Japan Broad Casting Corporation) since 1973 to 2008. As result of analysis, he reported (1) in younger generations, less people participate religious service or missionary works, pray at times, read bible or holy scriptures, and believe in God(s) and Buddha, (2) at the same time, younger generations are more likely to enjoy fortune-telling and believe in miracles (see table 1 and 2). This fact implies younger generations have different types of religiosity from older generations. In other words, religiosity observed with 14 variables included in Survey on Japanese Value Orientations can be divided into several types. Therefore, examining the relationship between only a single indicator of religiosity and subjective well-being is not sufficient. Through using quantitative techniques, this study also aims at identifying different types of religiosity observed in Japan, and at examining how the relationship differs depending on which type of religiosity individuals have.

## Method

### *Dataset*

For the secondary analysis, this study uses the pooled dataset of Survey on Japanese Value Orientations. This survey was first carried out in 1973 by NHK. Since then, NHK has kept carrying out the same surveys in every 5 years. In each survey wave, there are between 3,000 and 4,000 samples randomly chosen from Japanese men and women aged 16 or above. The raw data is available on the Social Science Japan Data Archive (SSJDA<sup>3</sup>) for the use of scientific research. The latest survey was conducted in 2013, however, the data from 2013 is not open to the public yet. Therefore, data from 1973 to 2008 (from wave 1 to 8) is available so far<sup>4</sup>.

### *Variables*

The Survey on Japanese Value Orientations contains 14 items which concern individual religious behaviors and beliefs. This study classifies individuals' religiosity into different types of religiosity according to the answers for these 14 variables. The actual questions are shown in Table 1. In the first part of the question, samples are asked if they do any religious activities, such as participating religious services or missionary works, giving prayers, visiting graves, reading the Bible or other holy scriptures, giving prayers for specific wishes, having talismans or lucky charms, drawing fortune-slips or enjoying fortune-telling. In the latter part of the question, samples are also asked if they believe in God(s), Buddha, teachings from the Bible or other holy scriptures, life after death, miracles, power of talismans or lucky charms. The answer for each item is coded as 0 or 1.

When examining the relationship between religiosity and subjective well-being, we also need a measure of subjective well-being. This study uses 4 point life-satisfaction scale as an indicator of individual subjective well-being. In this item, samples are asked "How satisfied are you with your life as a whole these days? Please tell the closest answer to your mind." And they are asked to choose their answer from (1) unsatisfied, (2) rather unsatisfied, (3) rather satisfied, and (4) satisfied.

### *Analysis*

In order to classify individuals' religiosity into different types of religiosity according to the answers for 14 variables concerning religious behaviors and beliefs, this study uses latent class analysis. Latent class analysis is a data reduction technique which is similar to factor analysis. As broadly known, factor analysis is a method used to describe observed variables in terms of unobserved variables which are called factors. However, while both observed and unobserved variables are supposed to be continuous variables in factor analysis, latent class analysis supposes both variables to be categorical variables (藤原, 伊藤 & 谷岡 2012). In this case, because all the

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<sup>3</sup> Social Science Japan Data Archive (URL: <http://csrda.iss.u-tokyo.ac.jp/en/>)

<sup>4</sup> For more details about Survey on Japanese Value Orientations, see 高橋幸市 & 荒牧央 (2014)

14 religiosity variables are dichotomous variables which are coded as 0 or 1, it is more reasonable to use latent class analysis than factor analysis.

Moreover, when factor analysis extracts factors from observed variables, it focuses on the relationship between variables, and it is assumed that the structure of factors is same among samples. However, latent class analysis extracts latent classes from observed variables focusing on patterns of individuals' reactions to multiple categorical variables. Therefore, factor analysis is sometimes called variable-centered approach, while latent class analysis is called person-centered approach (Pearce, Foster & Hardie 2013; Muthén and Muthén 2000). Because the aims of this study are not only to examine the relationship between religiosity and subjective well-being among Japanese people, but also to examine how the relationship differs depending on which type of religiosity individuals have, it seems more reasonable to take the person-centered approach.

To conduct latent class analysis, I used R ver. 3.2.4 with poLCA package. Since this study uses 14 dichotomous variables, there are 16384 unique response patterns possible. I prepared 5 models from the model which identifies only one latent class (model 1) to the model which identifies 5 latent classes (model5) to see which model fits the data best in terms of several model fit values, such as Bayesian Information Criterion (BIC) and Akaike Bayesian Information Criterion (ABIC). However, I didn't include models with 6 or more latent classes in the examination in terms of parsimony and interpretability of result.

## Result of Latent Class Analysis

Table 3 shows the several model-fit values of results of latent class analysis for each model. Comparing the models with one another, you can easily tell the model with one class (model 1) fits the data most poorly. And as the numbers of latent classes increases, all model-fit values decrease. It is clear that the model with 5 latent classes (model 5) has the lowest BIC and ABIC and fits the data best.

**Table 3. Model-fit values for Model 1 to Model 5**

model	log-likelihood	df	BIC	ABIC	CAIC	likelihood-ratio
model 1	-198403.4	16369.0	396951.2	380593.1	396965.2	47735.1
model 2	-190193.0	16354.0	380685.3	380593.1	380714.3	31314.4
model 3	-186058.5	16339.0	372570.9	372431.1	372614.9	23045.3
model 4	-183866.7	16324.0	368342.1	368154.6	368401.1	18661.7
<b>model 5</b>	<b>-182186.8</b>	<b>16309.0</b>	<b>365137.1</b>	<b>364901.9</b>	<b>365211.1</b>	<b>15302.0</b>

Table 5 shows the result of latent class analysis for model 5. The first row of table 5 reveals the estimated percent of individuals who belong to each class. Class 1 is the largest class with 29.5% of samples. Class 2 (28.2%) and Class 3 (23.7%) have also relatively a large size of samples. However, there are only 9.9% of samples who belong to Class 4 and 8.8% belong to Class 5. Under the size of each class, class-conditional response probabilities for each item are also reported.

**Table 4. Class-conditional response probabilities of each items**

Model for 5 latent classes					
	Class 1	Class 2	Class 3	Class 4	Class 5
Size of classes	29.5%	28.2%	23.7%	9.9%	8.8%
Class-conditional response probabilities					
<u>Q27 Religious Behavior</u>					
1. Service/Missionary	2%	16%	2%	31%	<b>67%</b>
2. Prayer	6%	26%	9%	24%	8%
3. Visiting graves	<b>51%</b>	<b>82%</b>	<b>66%</b>	<b>84%</b>	<b>50%</b>
4. Bible/Scripture	1%	3%	2%	24%	52%
5. Prayer for wishes	8%	27%	<b>50%</b>	<b>66%</b>	11%
6. Charms	7%	36%	<b>53%</b>	<b>84%</b>	8%
7. Fortune-telling	7%	12%	<b>47%</b>	<b>53%</b>	4%
<u>Q28 Religious belief</u>					
1. God(s)	6%	<b>58%</b>	18%	<b>86%</b>	<b>42%</b>
2. Buddha	7%	<b>88%</b>	6%	<b>88%</b>	<b>61%</b>
3. Bible/Scripture teachings	2%	1%	5%	27%	<b>36%</b>
4. Life after death	2%	4%	13%	<b>41%</b>	23%
5. Miracles	6%	4%	25%	<b>44%</b>	15%
6. Power of charms	3%	12%	20%	<b>62%</b>	2%
7. Power of fortune-telling	2%	2%	14%	26%	2%

Based on these probabilities, I labeled these 5 classes as “Custom of visiting graves,” “Traditional beliefs,” “Merit-making,” “Spirituality (individualized religiosity),” and “Institutional religiosity.”

### *Class 1: Custom of visiting graves*

Most individuals who belong to Class 1, don’t believe in anything which is concerning religion at least as far as this survey covers, nor they enjoy no religious activities except visiting their family graves once a year. It seems even when they’re visiting their family graves, they are doing so just because it is a very common Japanese custom. Besides, about a half of members in this latent class do not even visit graves.

### *Class 2: Traditional beliefs*

Similar to individuals in Class 1, individuals in Class 2 don't much participate religious activities. However, more than 80% of members in this latent class answered they visit graves at least once a year, with some beliefs in God(s) and Buddha. It is not really clear what they mean by answering they believe in God(s) and Buddha, because Gods (*kami*) and Buddha (*hotoke*) in Japanese linguistic contexts have various meanings. For example, there is an expression “a person becomes *hotoke* when he/she dies (成仏).” In this sense, believing in Buddha could mean rather believing in the existence of the spirit of ancestors. However, it seems to be that they are aware of some kinds of supernatural existence and this awareness is connected to their high probability of visiting graves.

### Class 3: Merit-making

The characteristic of Class 3 is that they have relatively high probability of doing “prayer for wishes,” “lucky charms” and “fortune-telling,” but not on other religious activities. Individuals in this latent class can be understood as people who utilize religion only for their own good/profit. However, the majority of members in this class don’t believe in supernatural powers. Perhaps, for individuals in this class, those religious activities might be more like an insurance or lottery.

### Class 4: Spirituality (Individualized religiosity)

Members of class 4 have possibilities to take wide range of religious activities and beliefs. However, it doesn’t immediately mean that this latent class is especially religious among other classes. Since probabilities on “service,” “prayer,” and “Bible teachings” which are common religious practice in institutional religion are relatively low compared with probabilities on other items, it can be interpreted that members of Class 4 are people who enjoy various kinds of spiritual experience, but without any denomination, or institutional religiosity. I labeled this class as spirituality, or individualized religiosity.

### Class 5: Institutional Religiosity

Members of Class 5 participate “service,” “prayer,” “reading holy scriptures,” with beliefs in God(s) and Buddha. This kind of religiosity can be understood as typical religiosity of individuals who belong to institutional religion, such as traditional Buddhism, Christianity, and other new religions.

## Generational Difference in Religiosity

Before examining the relationship between different types of religiosity and subjective well-

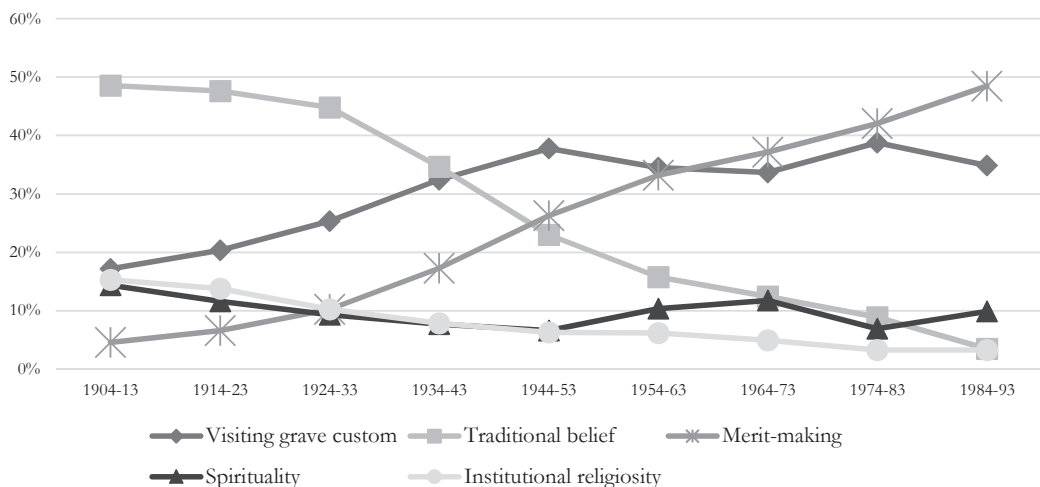


Figure 1. Proportion of each latent class in different cohort groups

being, it should be checked whether if the result of latent class analysis is consistent with previous studies. Figure 1 shows the proportion of people who belong each latent class in different cohort groups. In the oldest cohort group born in 1904-13, 48.5% of people belong to the latent class which I labeled “Traditional beliefs,” however, as generation shifts, less people belong to this class. In the youngest cohort group born in 1984-93, there are 3.5% of people belong to “Traditional beliefs.” The proportion of “Institutional religiosity” also decreases along with the generation shift (15.3% in the oldest cohort, and 3.3% in the youngest cohort). Instead, “Custom of visiting graves” and “Merit-making” increases their proportion as generation shifts. The percentage of people who belong to “Custom of visiting graves” in the youngest cohort (34.9%) is almost twice as the percentage of the oldest cohort (17.2%). And the percentage of the “Merit-making” in the youngest cohort (48.5%) is more than ten times as the percentage in the oldest cohort (4.6 %). In short, the majority of people in the oldest cohort born in 1904-13 belong to “Traditional beliefs,” while most people in the youngest cohort born in 1984-93 belong to “Custom of visiting graves” or “Merit-making.”

These generational differences in each type of religiosity are consistent with findings reported in previous studies. As already shown in Table 2, Shimizu indicated that the numbers of people who participate religious service, who give prayers, who read Bible, who believe in God(s) and Buddha decrease their numbers as generation shifts (清水 2007). According to the result of latent class analysis in this study, those people are likely to belong “Traditional beliefs” or “Institutional religiosity” which also decrease their share in the population along with generational shifts.

### **Correlations between Religiosity and Subjective Well-Being**

At the last part of the analysis, I examine the relationships between each type religiosity identified by latent class analysis and subjective well-being. To examine the relationships, I computed Pearson’s correlation coefficients between membership probabilities for each latent class and life-satisfaction scale.

In this analysis, samples are divided into 3 groups by their cohort groups, in order to see whether the relationships are universal across different generations.

Table 4 shows the Pearson’s correlation coefficients between membership probability for each latent class and life-satisfaction scale. Among the older cohort groups born in 1904-33, “Traditional beliefs,” “Spirituality” and “Institutional religiosity” have significant and positive correlations with Life-Satisfaction Scale. This result indicates individuals with these types of religiosity are more likely to be satisfied with their life. However, these correlation coefficients become smaller in the middle group. Among the younger cohort group, no significant correlations can be found. On the other hand, “Custom of visiting graves” and “Merit-making” have negative correlations with Life-Satisfaction Scale among the older cohort group. However, similarly to the former variables, these negative coefficients also shrink as cohort group gets younger. Membership probabilities of “Custom of visiting graves” is the only variable with a significant correlation with life-satisfaction



Table 5: Correlation between life-satisfaction scale and posterior class membership probabilities of each class

Cohort group		1904-33	1934-63	1964-93
<b>Correlation with Life-Satisfaction Scale</b>				
<b>Life-Satisfaction Scale</b>	Pearson's R	1	1	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)			
	N	6905	16737	4796
<b>Visiting grave custom</b>	Pearson's R	<b>-.109**</b>	<b>-.074**</b>	<b>-.047**</b>
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.001
	N	6905	16737	4796
<b>Traditional beliefs</b>	Pearson's R	<b>.078**</b>	<b>.074**</b>	<b>.018</b>
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.225
	N	6905	16737	4796
<b>Merit-making</b>	Pearson's R	<b>-.063**</b>	<b>-.028**</b>	<b>.016</b>
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.270
	N	6905	16737	4796
<b>Spirituality</b>	Pearson's R	<b>.050**</b>	<b>.041**</b>	<b>.021</b>
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.142
	N	6905	16737	4796
<b>Institutional religiosity</b>	Pearson's R	<b>.024*</b>	<b>.009</b>	<b>.009</b>
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.049	.262	.554
	N	6905	16737	4796

scale among the younger cohort group. However, it seems higher membership probability for this class in the younger cohort groups is associated with subjective well-being negatively. In short, regardless to which type of religiosity it is, the relationship between religiosity and Subjective well-being seems to be disappearing in younger cohort.

### Possible Explanations

For the result of correlation analysis, there are several possible explanations. Here I close my discussion with sharing three different explanations for the results above.

#### (1) Norris and Inglehart's (2004) secularization theory

The first explanation focuses on Norris and Inglehart's secularization theory. According to them, religion has a role in providing sense of security. Therefore, where level of human security is low, religiosity takes an important role to maintain individuals' subjective well-being. On the other hand, if societies get modernized and safer, importance of religion decreases. In Japan, we experienced rapid modernization process since the end of 19th century. This caused the sense of security and safety (in other words, religious coping) which is provided by religion to be less important for mainlining individuals' subjective well-being.

#### (2) Socialization theory

Individuals develop their religiosity when they are socialized. In Japan, religion is fused and

connected with many norms and customs in people's daily life, for example, saying "Itadakimasu (say grace)" with clapping hands before meals. If a person is raised in a rich and traditional Japanese family, or in traditional community with strong solidity where these norms and customs are likely to be strict, it can be assumed that he/she would more likely to have a certain kind of religious beliefs. In this sense, whether individuals have religious beliefs or not used to work as an indicator of their social attributes. However, as society get more modernized, people start having more individualized values. This process brings greater freedom to individuals from norms and customs which used to be set by their family or community. Because of the decline of those norms and customs, there are less opportunities for them to internalize religiosity through their socialization process today. Therefore, religiosity in Japan lost its use as an indicator of people's social attributes. And this caused the correlations between religiosity and subjective well-being to be decreased.

### *(3) Rise of new types of religiosity*

This Survey on Japanese Value Orientations was conducted first in 1973. And questionnaire was designed to measure traditional religiosity of Japanese people of the time. It is possible the religiosity we can measure with these 14 items has already become too old for the religious situation today. If so, it is also a possible interpretation that there are new types of religiosity appearing, like enjoying yoga, hand-healing, or reading books of spiritual self-development. And these new types of religiosity might have a positive correlation with subjective well-being instead of other traditional types of religiosity.

For deeper understanding, further study will be needed.

### **Acknowledgements**

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# Bosogaku: Praying for Prosperity in Modern Japan

TOISHIBA Shiho  
[University of Tsukuba, Japan]

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## Abstract

After the Meiji Restoration, some new religious movements related to graves have been launched frequently in Japan. As one example of it, this paper focuses on “Bosogaku.” It is so-called “grave chiromony”, which instructs the “right” style and shape of the grave for making descendants good luck. Drawing from archival and hearing research, this presentation examines for what kind of background Bosogaku was born and spread.

Since the early modern times in Japan, there has been the folk belief that people can gain merits by holding a service for Muen-haka (graves of someone with no relatives to mourn their death) as good deeds; particularly in Kansai Region. Yet, at the time of earlier period of Showa era in Japan, rapid industrialization and urbanization had been causing social unrest, and then most people came to believe that if they built their graves in conformity with the right model, their family would surely prosper. Interestingly, in Tokyo, Bosogaku transformed to the lighter form than before, and unfolded by the publication of books and magazines, the holding of the lecture for customers, and the cooperation with stone dealers. It is possible to say that Bosogaku was attributed to the factors characterizing modern Japan.

## Introduction

In simple terms, Bosogaku 墓相学 is a religious study on how to build a grave. In this short essay, I would like to provide a basic explanation of the phenomenon of Japanese Bosogaku. Recently, the younger Japanese generation have little notion about Bosogaku, not to mention foreigners who have apparently never heard of the word. This rather peculiar study of grave building originated during the Showa era. I have been researching the topic by carefully studying Bosogaku's history from the perspective of the sociology of religion. In this paper I would like to offer answers to two questions, namely, "what is Bosogaku?" and "why did Japanese need Bosogaku?" As per my understanding, Bosogaku was connected to not only superstition and fortune-telling but also was considered an element of praying for prosperity.

### 1. What is Bosogaku?

Bosogaku is a religious study about the way of building graves. It can be written in Kanji (characters) as 墓 (Bo) 相 (So) 学 (Gaku), which mean "grave," "phase," and "knowledge." Regarding the kanji, Boso means shape, style, color, and the location of graves. Bosogaku explains that Boso might very well influence a grave owner's family fortune. Big or small, new or old, broken or well-kept, such features of the grave could determine a family's fortune. Meanwhile, the "collect" grave, Kissobaka 吉相墓, was thought to bring good fortune to a family. Those who study Bosogaku recognize that it is based on statistics, history, and archeology.

According to English dictionaries, Bosogaku is the "physiognomy of a grave." The term physiognomy, in this case, refers to a kind of divination lore similar to distinguishing facial features to ascertain whether luck can be expected, or reading a line on a palm that answers a question, such as whether a person will have a long or short life. Bosogaku is similar in that it represents this kind of reading but to that of graves. In Japan, when houses or graves are constructed, people are concerned about their locations or in this case a "phase". Because Japanese culture was influenced by Chinese, so Bosogaku was partially influenced by Chinese geomancy (feng shui 風水) for such readings, but was developed very uniquely in Showa Era Japan.

In Bosogaku, if people do not follow its rules then various misfortunes may befall them. They might either fall sick or, even worse, lose their lives. There are many books which describe the connection between the shape and location of a grave and a family's misfortune. According to one of the Bosogaku books, "if the grave is filled with water, it may cause an eye disease; a black grave may cause cancer; a grave located at too high an altitude may ruin a family's foundation," and so on. Another book mentions that "the graves must have a three-tiered platform. If you build a four-tiered grave, your husband will surely become unfaithful." Bosogaku have many prohibitions regarding the construction of graves. Unfortunately, I cannot introduce all rules because there are far too many details.

Regardless, the doctrine of Bosogaku can be summarized as follows (some rules can be different depending on Bosoka but the general outline remains mutual): "a grave is the root of 'ie'

家。” “Ie” is a family in the Japanese family system (ieseiido 家制度), which was established by the Meiji Government in 1898. Under the system, it is supposed that “ie” will last for generations. Within a family, inheritance is passed through the paternal line; and “Ie” members must hold memorial services at their ancestors’ graves correctly. Failure to do so may lead to misfortune and ruin “ie.” Such an idea brought outbreak of Bosogaku rules. Indeed, Bosogaku embodies a family’s fortune rather than personal fortune.

Bosogaku originated in 1929 and gained popularity in the 1930s. Despite receiving severe criticisms for being superstitious and fraudulent, Bosogaku reached the height of its popularity during the period of fast economic growth, the so-called “bubble economy” of the 1970s and 80s. Now this phenomenon is disappearing gradually; however, it still has some supporters.

Bosogaku is preached by Bosoka 墓相家, an expert in Bosogaku. Bosoka do not require either a certification or qualification. Their activities usually revolve around publishing books in order to become popular among the public and work with private clients. At the same time, they also work not only as preachers but also as gravestone dealers and they advise in the designing of gravestones for clients. It seems that Bosogaku has both the features of Client Cults and Audience Cults.

Fig.1 is a Bosogaku cemetery. Some of the influential Bosoka have established a new cemetery in collaboration with several gravestone dealers and temples. A religious Bosogaku organization called Tokufukai sells spaces in a graveyard as well as gravestones.



Fig. 1. A cemetery based on Bosogaku in Kyoto

## 2. People Who Needed Bosogaku

Why did Japanese people need Bosogaku? Someone may give simplistic explanations. For example, it is because the Japanese are superstitious. They like mysterious power, charms, and fortune-telling. They also feel that they are haunted by the fury of their ancestors’ victims. They tend to hastily connect their misfortune with a lack of memorial services for the souls of the departed. However, according to my research (reading literature on the subject and by interviewing a Bosoka’s son), these reasons are not complete enough, especially during the prewar period.

I would like to introduce the content of a book, authored by Kosho Imai 今井鴻象, who was one of the most popular Bosokas in the 1930s. In this book entitled “*Illustrated Guide to Building a Grave: Shinto and Buddhist styles* 神道佛式墓相図解 お墓の建て方”<sup>i</sup>, there was a question and

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<sup>i</sup> Imai, Kosho 今井鴻象. 1937. *Shinto Busshiki Boso Zukai Ohaka no Tatekata* 神道佛式墓相図解 お墓の建て方. Tokyo: Togakusha.

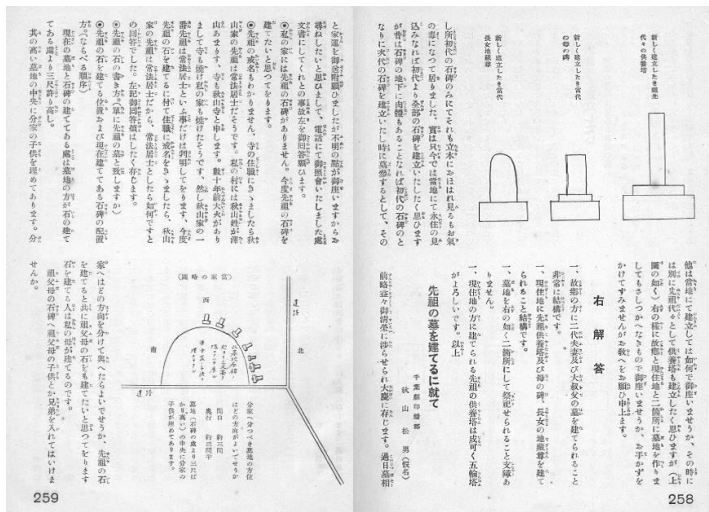


Fig.2. A Bosogaku book by Koshō Imai, 1937

answer column for readers. It contained 57 letters from readers who wrote of their troubles, worries, and concerns about their families. Readers sent long letters to the author Imai from all over Japan. This column can tell us what the readers of those days were worried about.

As an example, I would like to analyze a letter from a man who lived in Tokyo. According to his letter, his ancestor was a samurai from the Saga prefecture, also the location of his ancestors' graves. He decided to restore the graves of his ancestors. Looking for information about how to rebuild them, he bought Imai's book. Reading it, he came to understand that his ie's graves were actually the reason for his misfortune. Until the Taisho period of the 1930s his "ie" had been successful, but after this period and during the Showa period, his father lost his business. In an attempt to reverse his fortune, he ask for Imai regarding the ways to build a perfect grave. Fig.2 is the man's illustration of his ie's grave. Imai answered the man's query by explaining, "This grave is bad, and this may cause bad fortune to your family. You have to move the graves from Saga to Tokyo and build a new grave as per the Bosogaku in a new park cemetery in Tokyo!"

The others with questions in the book also had a variety of reasons for writing. Some were settlers in Hokkaido, Taiwan, and Manshu. Others were employees who were being transferred but worried about what they should do with their family's grave plot in their hometown. Some wanted to know how to build a grave in a new park cemetery in Tokyo. Some changed their faith to new religion or Shintoism and wanted to rebuild their graves in accordance with the rules of their new religion. And there were some who succeeded in business and therefore wanted to build large graves. They all asked for advice about grave construction.

### 3. Why Did Bosogaku Gain Popularity?

Why did the clients need Bosogaku? To answer this question, we should also consider the social conditions of the time. In the period after WWI, which saw the rapid growth of the Japanese



economy, industrialization and especially the “heavy and chemical industries” caused people to move to urban areas, which also increased in productivity and the Westernization of culture. Because of such social and economic structural changes, the gap between rich and poor continued to increase. In fact, it unexpectedly ruined many “ie”. The prospects of their “ie” were uncertain so family members worried about their luck. At the same time, while I have to omit specific details in this essay, I would also like to mention an important factor; new forms of cemeteries were constantly appearing in urban areas. These new park cemeteries gained popularity in urban areas by the end of Taisho Period of the 1930s. For people who decided to move to cities, they were faced with a difficult question as to whether they should build a new grave in the city, especially because they could not keep the old graves in their hometowns. To learn how to do this in the “right” way of praying for prosperity under such social situation, they bought books about Bosogaku, and were visiting Bosoka.

With a change in the social structure and traditions, people still wanted to have “knowledge” about how to protect themselves from bad luck and what could bring about the general well-being to their “ie” and family members. Methods of doing so were wide spread in the mass media. I think that Bosogaku mark one of the case of a religious belief made in the modernizing age.



# Japanese Influence on Taiwanese Buddhism

Yu Shuang YAO  
[Fo Guang University, Taiwan]

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## Abstract

So far as can be discovered, before 1919 there were no Buddhist nuns in Taiwan. Now, however, Taiwan is famous for its nuns, who far outnumber monks. How did this come about? Between the two World Wars, several Japanese Buddhist sects proselytized in Taiwan. The Rinzai Zen was particularly active; they ordained some men but more women, and took some of those women to Japan for education. In particular, this was done by a monk called Gisei Tokai (東海宜誠), who also established a (now defunct) Buddhist charity in Taiwan called Tzu Chi, like the current movement. Another link between this and today's Tzu Chi is a nun called Xiu Dao, now in her nineties; in 1961-2 she was the companion of the young lady who was later to found Tzu Chi and become known as the Master Cheng Yen. Perhaps because of this influence from Japan, Tzu Chi has adopted some features of the Japanese religion Risshō Kōsei-Kai.

## The Japanese Creation of Taiwanese Nuns

My research suggests that it is the Japanese who were originally responsible for the preponderance of nuns in Taiwan. The Rinzai Zen sect instituted a campaign of ordaining Taiwanese. In 1917 in Kai Yuan temple in Tainan in southern Taiwan there was held the first ordination ceremony for monks in Taiwan; Tai Xu officiated.<sup>1</sup> In 1919 the same temple held the first ordination ceremony in Taiwan ever to include women. We have the following figures for ordinations in Taiwan, which were performed under Japanese auspices:<sup>2</sup>

1919	84 monks	79 nuns
1923	83	58
1924	8	50
1934	31	83
1940	16	41

These figures show that while initially the sexes were fairly evenly matched, the number of male candidates then declined severely, but female candidates were not in short supply. The Japanese said, according to my source, that Taiwanese women had very hard lives and should realize that they would be better off as nuns.<sup>3</sup>

In the 1930s there were 120 Rinzai Zen temples in Taiwan funded by Japanese.<sup>4</sup> Most of these seem to have housed nuns.<sup>5</sup> There was also a Japanese Rinzai hospital in southern Taiwan. In 1937, the Japanese counted 170,000 lay followers of Japanese Buddhism in Taiwan, and 56 Japanese Buddhist temples.<sup>6</sup> Twelve Japanese sects were preaching in Taiwan, the Zen sects Rinzai and Sōtō prominent among them.

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<sup>1</sup> De Vido, p.14.

<sup>2</sup> Fai-yan Shih, "The study on Social Status Development of Taiwanese Buddhist Nuns," *Hsien Chang Bulletin of Buddhist Studies*, vol.8, January 2007, p.60. This article reports that according to a Japanese government report dated 1919, **there were at that time no Buddhist nuns in Taiwan.**

<sup>3</sup> Once the Japanese had set the ball rolling, others too made successful efforts to recruit and educate nuns. In particular, Jue Li, a monk from the Chinese mainland, but ordained into the Japanese Sōtō sect, played a major part (see Jones, *op.cit.*, pp.51-2). It is noteworthy that Jue Li was a Taiwanese delegate at the Tokyo conference organized by Tai Xu in 1925.

<sup>4</sup> Li-man Lin, "Interview of Genyou Nun (Miss Yuzhuo Huang): Nuns' Education in the Rinzai Sect Myoshin-ji School in Taiwan during the Japanese Colonial Period."

<sup>5</sup> Unfortunately Li-man Lin does not make clear how many temples housed nuns or how many nuns there were, even approximately. But evidently there were hundreds.

<sup>6</sup> Wang Jian Chuang, "Attempt to study the Japanese monk Gisei Higashiumi and his preaching career in Taiwan," *Bulletin of Yuan Kuang Buddhist Institute*, vol.3, March 1990, pp.357-382. Most of the information in the next five paragraphs is from Wang; the rest is from Lin. However, the name Gisei Higashiumi is a mistake by Wang, due to the problem of translation between Japanese and Chinese. The correct name for this monk is Gisei Tokai.

One Japanese Rinzai monk was particularly notable in this period. Gisei Tokai learnt Hokkien. He supervised more than one hundred preaching centres, which paid annual fees to the Rinzai headquarters in Japan, and he received an award from the headquarters for his activities. He also was advisor to the Taiwanese Buddhist vegetarian association. He founded a college in Taipei, called Zhen Nan Xiu Xin, for Buddhists (both clergy and lay), and was its warden and professor; the syllabus included Mandarin and other languages, mathematics, history and geography. In 1918 the college was taken over by the Sōtō sect. In 1934 it recruited 120 students, and 30 more joined in the second semester, so that the college decided to employ three more teachers.

Tokai founded a hospital in southern Taiwan and was chairman of its board; the hospital included a department for teaching Mahayana Buddhism and correcting wrong beliefs. He also founded a Buddhist charity called Tzu Chi, like the modern movement. It raised funds through members called “commissioners” (*mu kuan wei yuan*), who went round with begging bowls to collect donations; that today’s Tzu Chi uses the same name for fundraisers, who operate in the same way, can hardly be a coincidence.

It is also of particular relevance to my theme that he recruited nuns whom he sent to Japan to be given their monastic education by the Rinzai sect, who gave them scholarships. In 1933, of the 29 graduates from the college in Taipei half went on to study in Japan, where they were ordained; though the college was in Sōtō hands, one gathers that it was the Rinzai sect which taught and ordained them in Japan.

After 1945, when the Japanese were for the most part replaced by mainland Chinese, many of the nuns who had been educated in Japan were re-ordained into traditional Chinese sects by BAROC, the organization which then had sole control of Taiwanese Buddhist institutions. They continued however to be in charge of nunneries, though they are unlikely to have discarded all that they had learnt in Japan.

Ironically, Japan has very few Buddhist nuns, and they are still struggling to gain any kind of parity with monks.<sup>7</sup> However, in the vast arena of Japanese “new religions,” which covers roughly the past two centuries and millions of adherents, female leadership is a conspicuous feature. For instance, the religion Tenrikyō was founded in 1838 and led by a peasant woman.<sup>8</sup> Helen Hardacre writes that in the world view of Japanese new religions, the concept of pollution, including the pollution of women, is in general downplayed, and this gives women more scope to be religiously active.<sup>9</sup>

Thus it fits well into my general picture that some of the leading nuns of Fo Guang Shan have received their university education, or higher degrees, at Japanese Buddhist universities.<sup>10</sup> Since the

<sup>7</sup> Paula Kane Robinson Arai, *Women Living Zen: Sōtō Buddhist Nuns*, Oxford 1999.

<sup>8</sup> Helen Hardacre, *Kurozumikyō and the New Religions of Japan*, 1986, p. 21.

<sup>9</sup> *Op.cit.*, p.14.

<sup>10</sup> It is relevant to remark at this point that Fo Guang Shan is reticent about the personal details of its members, so that to come by precise information is by no means easy.

Master Hsing Yun is now very old, we shall no doubt find out before very long whether any of these nuns, who are probably abler than his leading monks, will succeed to the leadership.

Sheng Yen, founder of Dharma Drum Mountain and the Chung-hwa Institute of Buddhist Studies, had some difficult years after arriving in Taiwan. Then in 1968, “at the age of 38, he began doctoral studies in Buddhist literature at Risshō University in Japan and received his LLD in 1975. He has more formal education than any other major Buddhist leader in Taiwan.”<sup>11</sup> He studied Chan/Zen under both Chinese and Japanese masters, and has a clear Zen identity, but has about 300,000 regular followers, spanning Taiwan and New York, where for many years he spent about half his time.<sup>12</sup> His Saṅgha I believe to be quite small, and again to contain more nuns than monks. I do not know how his movement has been affected by his death, but I have heard that the movement has recently built a new temple in Taipei which is utterly Japanese in style.

### Japanese Influence on the Current Tzu Chi Movement

On Tzu Chi I have far more significant data. It is almost entirely a lay movement, founded and headed by a woman, and at least its first generation of membership was preponderantly female – though the balance is now shifting. I have published a rather long book<sup>13</sup> on this remarkable organization; here I must confine myself to matters of Japanese influence.

The personnel and structure of Tzu Chi recall Japanese new religions. We may also detect Japanese influence in the fact that Tzu Chi is both tightly organized and extremely regimented, down to matters of personal appearance. There have been lay Buddhist movements in China, but surely none of them was ever so smartly turned out. In 1960, the father of Jin-yun (who later became Master Cheng Yen) died, which gave the first impetus for her to leave the household life. She took to visiting a nearby temple called Ciyun Si. There she became friendly with a resident nun called Xiu Dao (修道). “Xiu Dao had been trained in Japan by Japanese Buddhists and she disagreed with some of the practices in Taiwanese Buddhist temples, which relied for their upkeep on revenue from services rendered. ... [She] also claimed that there was a lack of discipline within temple communities.” She thought that the Chinese Chan principle that a day without work is a day without food should be restored, and decided to follow it herself.<sup>14</sup>

In 1961 Jin-yun and Xiu Dao secretly left together and tried to lead an austere life by themselves in a remote area. In the end, Xiu Dao’s health started to give way and she returned to her old temple. Now in her 90s, she is still living as a nun in that temple, with three followers.

Before meeting Jin-yun, Xiu Dao had studied in a Rinzai nunnery in Aichi Prefecture in Japan, near Nagoya, for six to seven years. She has told me that she was one of the recruits of Gisei Tokai,

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<sup>11</sup> Richard Madsen, *Democracy’s Dharma*, Berkeley & LA, 2010, p.92.

<sup>12</sup> Madsen p.85.

<sup>13</sup> Yu-Shuang Yao, *Taiwan’s Tzu Chi as Engaged Buddhism*, Leiden and Boston, 2012.

<sup>14</sup> Yao, *op.cit.*, pp.62-3.

who took nuns to Japan for education in the 1930s (see p.18 above). I deduce that she had a considerable influence on Cheng Yen – though Cheng Yen has never visited Japan.<sup>15</sup> For example, she taught Cheng Yen that monks and nuns should live on alms collected daily; this original Buddhist tradition had been lost in China.

Though it is nowadays rarely if ever mentioned, I believe that Cheng Yen has been influenced by the Japanese lay Buddhist movement Risshō Kōsei-Kai, one of the “new religions” which gives central importance to the *Lotus Sutra*.<sup>16</sup> Attaching such importance to the *Lotus Sutra* is more typical of Japanese than of Chinese Buddhism. It is probably significant that in Tzu Chi the name of the *Lotus Sutra* is *Miao-fa Lien-hua Ching*, as is normal in Japan. *Miao-fa* means “Mystic law” and the Chinese never use this expression as part of the text’s name. For Cheng Yen the *Lotus Sutra* is so important that every morning from 4 to 6 she gives a class on it; the movement is planning to publish the teaching given in those classes in a multi-volume work.

Another point at which we may discern Japanese influence is this. We have mentioned that some Japanese new religions are headed by women and that Tenrikyō was founded by a woman. That lady was believed to be permanently possessed by a divinity and so was herself considered a goddess. In Chinese Buddhism no woman can ever be a goddess in any sense. However, there is ambiguity in Tzu Chi about the ontological status of Cheng Yen, and in some ways she is treated as a kind of goddess, an incarnation of Guan Yin.

In Risshō Kōsei-Kai, “an applicant for entry ... needs to be introduced by a ‘god-parent’, and the new member is called ‘godchild’. As parent and child have ties of blood, those who join the society, as a group of fellow believers in the Buddha, are bound by the *dharma*-relationship. Therefore, the godparent not only introduces a newcomer, but “just as a parent brings up his child, continues to be the guardian and adviser of the godchild, a guide in the faith, and labors for his sound growth, the new member is introduced to the fellow members by his godparent, and gets new brothers, sisters and friends in the faith.”<sup>17</sup>

An analogous system to this exists in Tzu Chi. Cheng Yen has introduced a new concept, *fa yuan*, meaning “*dharma* relationship,” which is a bond between members of Tzu Chi. It is more important than *su yuan*, “worldly relationship.” The latter ends at death but the former is eternal. The same applies to the pair of concepts *fa-qin* and *su-qin*: *qin* means “blood affection,” and that created by kinship in *dharma* is more valuable than that arising in the normal secular way.<sup>18</sup>

Though it is normal in Buddhist monastic communities for monks and nuns to regard each other as brothers and sisters, and senior teachers etc. may be considered to stand *in loco parentis*,

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<sup>15</sup> She has never been abroad because she has a weak heart and doctors tell her not to fly.

<sup>16</sup> In Tzu Chi’s yearbook for 1992-6 a photo of the chairman of Risshō Kōsei-kai and the Master Cheng Yen was taken while the Japanese chairman visited the movement’s headquarters, and a very senior member of Tzu Chi has told me that the Master took a correspondence course with Risshō Kōsei-kai in her early days.

<sup>17</sup> *Risshō Kōsei-Kai* [official handbook], Tokyo 1966, p.107.

<sup>18</sup> Yao p.88.

this idea of *dharma* relationships among lay followers seems to go further than anything found elsewhere in contemporary Chinese or Taiwanese Buddhism.

There are similarities between how Tzu Chi and Risshō Kōsei-Kai carry out the recruitment and socialisation of new members. I have described how new converts to Tzu Chi are “invited to the local informal group gathering called *chahui* (tea party) held every fortnight at the converter’s home or a neighbouring household ... The meeting is normally led by the testimony of the senior members [to] the positive effects experienced after their conversion: the resolving of personal problems and weaknesses. Within this confessional atmosphere, the isolated new convert would be encouraged to disarm their self-protection and guardedness.”<sup>19</sup> Risshō Kōsei-Kai has a similar practice.

There are further similarities between Risshō Kōsei-Kai and Tzu Chi. For example, the former has its own hospital, established in 1952, whereas Cheng Yen decided in 1966 to create a hospital in Hualien in eastern Taiwan, thus launching Tzu Chi as a medical charity.<sup>20</sup> Similarly both movements have their own school system. Another feature that Tzu Chi may have borrowed from Risshō Kōsei-Kai is that in its early days one of its chief methods of publicity was to distribute cheap printed leaflets. These features are more widely shared among modern Buddhist movements; but they do add up to a pattern of greater similarity than can be due to coincidence.

A striking similarity between Tzu Chi and some of the largest Japanese new religions is that there is no role for any clergy in the rituals and events surrounding death. Everything is done by laymen. Moreover, death is not regarded primarily as an occasion for mourning, but is given a comparatively optimistic interpretation. This too I have described in detail in my book.<sup>21</sup>

### The “Silent Mentor” Programme

However, in my book I make no mention<sup>22</sup> of the remarkable way in which Tzu Chi encourages people to donate their bodies for dissection by medical students, and how all this is carried out. The cadavers are known as “Silent Mentors.” The whole “Silent Mentor” programme is described in a fine article by Rey-Sheng Her.<sup>23</sup> Rey shows that although it has taken the whole matter much further, Tzu Chi has built on something started in Japan by what was called the White Chrysanthemum Society. This article seems so far to have attracted little attention, so I take the liberty of quoting Rey at some length.

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<sup>19</sup> Yao pp.168-9.

<sup>20</sup> Yao p.66.

<sup>21</sup> Yao pp.94-8.

<sup>22</sup> It had hardly begun when I was writing my book.

<sup>23</sup> Rey-Sheng Her, “The Silent Mentors of Tzu Chi”, *Journal of the Oxford Centre for Buddhist Studies*, vol. 4, May 2013, pp.47-74.



“In 1870, under the Meiji Restoration, Japan’s medical world decided to adopt Germany’s medical science, including its study of anatomy. From the late 1930s to the 1950s, Japan used “dead travellers”, people who fell sick and died by the roadside, for dissection. Many medical schools were reluctant to rely on such material for the practice of anatomy, as the wishes of the deceased could not be ascertained.

Then in this century, just when the medical world in the West began to consider the issue, Japan too started to adopt “respect for dead bodies” as the core value in anatomy education. The White Chrysanthemum Society (*Shiragikukai*) was established in Japan in 1971, with over 20,000 registered donors/members, who are recruited by appeal through various channels. Professor Tatsuo Sato, a leader of that society, commented on current practice: “They might wish not to be dissected, or on the contrary, they might be willing to. I assume most of them don’t wish so. Though they are just lifeless bodies, they should still be shown respect. Such use would create a bad impression on the students, so this practice is not welcome. It would be hard to teach students ethics with those bodies. The bodies now used have all been willingly donated with the implicit message that ‘this is to help you to become a good doctor, please use my body’. Such a message has a very good influence on the students.”<sup>24</sup>

This is how the White Chrysanthemum Society operates. Whenever a member passes away, the family notifies the Anatomy Teaching Department. The professor on duty will then put on a funeral black robe, which is kept on the premises, and rush to the funeral. A token contribution of 20,000 Yen towards the funeral costs will be handed over along with a body donation agreement. After that is signed, the body will be delivered to the medical school for study.

Respect for the donors is emphasised. Before the start of each class, the students must observe a moment of silence as a tribute to the donors’ contribution. In the classes, the teachers and students must hold the donors in high esteem. On the first day of anatomy practice, some of the society’s members are invited to attend and explain why they wish to donate. The students bring a bunch of white chrysanthemums to the first class. White symbolizes mourning, the chrysanthemum denotes nobility. Led by the teaching staff, the students place the flowers at the monument to body donors on the campus. At the beginning and the end of each class, all present must stand in silent tribute. At the completion of the course, each student team places the body they have dissected in a coffin covered with flowers. At some medical schools, the students also help to collect the bones after the cremation. At the end of the course, the students summarise their experience in a book which they send out to the donors’ families and society’s members; they write of their feelings during dissection, whether their attitudes have been changed, etc....

In its early days, Japan’s medical community was influenced by the Western way of thinking. Natural science was embraced with the belief that matter was the centre of the universe and that science education was to advocate rationalism. They deeply believed that rationalism in exploring

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<sup>24</sup> 3rd April, 2007; Her’s interview with Professor Tatsuo Sato of Tokyo Medical and Dental University.

the physical world was the ultimate value in the quest for truth as well as the highest human quality. But by the end of the 20th century, the White Chrysanthemum Society began soul-searching. They proceeded to merge the rational thinking of science with Japan's traditional etiquette. Gradually, body donation is being accepted as a virtue by Japanese society. But the White Chrysanthemum deliberately removes all religious connotations and bases its belief on science. Its aim is not to help deal with death, nor to provide guidance in overcoming the fear of death. It also does not seem to emphasise the sublimation of grief through the donation process. Instead, its aim to maximise the effective use of bodies is based purely on practicality: in the spirit of Jeremy Bentham, the British founder of utilitarianism, they hold that the aim of all social and political institutions should be the greatest happiness of the greatest number. Not only do the students show respect; through donation the bodies have become objects useful to society.”

In his impressive article, Her shows how, without detracting from the rational, scientific spirit here described, Tzu Chi has added to the proceedings, often at the Master's personal suggestion, features which indeed help those involved to “deal with death and provide guidance in overcoming the fear of death”. This noble cultural edifice is built on Japanese foundations.

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# Abstracts



# The Taiwanese Church and the Taiwan Independence Movement: Recent Tendency and the Context of After WW2 in Taiwan

[\*abstract]

FUJINO Yohei  
[Hokkaido University, Japan]

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## Abstract

In Taiwan, there is an ethnic conflict between the Mainland Chinese people (外省人) and The Hoklo (福佬). The Mainland Chinese people came from Mainland China with the KMT (国民党) after WW2. They speak Mandarin, have a Chinese identity, and support the KMT. The Hoklo (福佬) people lived in Taiwan before Japanese rule, speaking Taiwanese, demonstrating a Taiwanese identity, and supporting the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP 民进党).

In Taiwanese Christianity, there are 2 groups of Churches. The one group is Taiwanese Church, the other is Chinese Church. The church communicating in Taiwanese is referred to as the Taiwanese church, and the one in Mandarin Chinese is known as the Chinese church. Most mainland Chinese Christians gather at Chinese church, and most Holo Christians at Taiwanese Church. There is a good relationship between the Taiwanese Presbyterian Church (TPC) and the DPP. Both emphasize the Taiwanese language and identity.

The TPC actively participated in the Sunflower Movement and elections in 2016 to support DPP. So in this presentation, I report the activities of the Taiwanese church during the Sunflower Movement in 2014 and Taiwan's presidential elections in 2016. I also want to consider the relationship between the Taiwanese Independent Movement and the Taiwanese church.



# Religious Education and Related Problematic Issues in Current Korean Elementary-Secondary Schools and Beyond

[\*abstract]

Chae Young KIM  
[Sogang University, South Korea]

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## Abstract

Currently, most Korean religious education can be categorized as fitting into either of these two situations. The more that religious education is turned into an issue in public schools, the more that most of the religiously founded schools try to defend the merits of their own “religious” framework, seeking to strengthen it while, on the other hand, the public schools try to avoid dealing with considerations which would want to regard religious education as something which should be taught if students are to be prepared to assume the responsibilities that come with a form of global citizenship. Today, this unwillingness is to be regarded as the chief obstacle which works against the development of religious education in schools. If there is to be a breakthrough in this context in a way which does not ignore of the Korean government’s educational policy on religious education, the only viable alternative (apparently) is a choice which seeks to walk in the footsteps of a policy that is influenced by the general direction of religious education as this has arisen and as it has developed on the basis of a critical understanding of religious studies with respect to religion in general as a global phenomenon, exhibiting many diversities worldwide.





# Buddhist, Environmental Movement, Religious Movement and South Korea

[\*abstract]

Siyoon LEE  
[Sogang University, South Korea]

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## Abstract

In this study, I have tried to reveal the dual aspects of social movement of religious organizations through the case of South Korean Buddhist societies. Environmental movement is the most important area of religious organization's social participation in Korea since late 90s. In these movements, religious societies have been contributed to make the whole society to *reflect the compressed modernization process* and to search for the alternative way of life. A lot of movements were quite successful because of their rich resource mobilization potential including both material and social hegemonic one. However, in these movement process, most central element to successful mobilization was the construction of *narratives* that is sufficiently strong that they could interpret environmental issues as their own religious task: that is, *the secular* should be translated into *the sacred*. When this construction failed, mainly because of political-economic repression, environmental issues remained mere inner doctrinal controversy in religious societies. I will show different consequences of strength of narratives through the comparison between two representative environmental movements of Korean Buddhists: anti-movement against national development of *Mt. Chunsungsan* tunnel and *Mt. Bukhansan* tunnel.



# Beyond Civil Society: Spiritual Empowerment, Work, and Social Engagement in China

[\*abstract]

Francis LIM  
[Nanyang Technological University, Singapore]

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## Abstract

This paper investigates how the spiritual empowerment in the workplace enables Chinese Christian professionals to exert positive impacts on the wider society. Much of the broader literature on spirituality, religion and the workplace shows how religious values can contribute to enhancing the effectiveness of business leaders, the creation favourable workplace environment, the improvement in the workers' and organizational performance, etc. Many such studies tend also to advocate that business leaders, managers and entrepreneurs pay much more attention to the cultivation of a conducive environment for workers to integrate spirituality and religiosity into their working life. Insights from such studies, while useful in certain cultural and political contexts (such as those in Euro-American societies where most of these studies are conducted), might not be applicable in an authoritarian political regime like China due to the high level of political sensitivity surrounding religious matters. Based on in-depth interviews and participant observation, and utilizing concepts of spiritual and religious capital, this paper shows that, firstly, Christian professionals eschew a clear separation between religious faith and work. Importantly, they seek to exert positive impacts in the workplace as a way to transform the wider society deemed mired in serious moral crisis. Many respondents discursively construct a boundary separating Christians and non-Christians in the workplace, regarding themselves as more 'moral' and imbued with positive qualities that are lacking in the workplace and contemporary society. This happens in a socio-political context where Christians constitute a religious minority and where religion, especially Christianity, is still deemed a highly sensitive cultural and political issue in China. Secondly, this paper argues for an alternative to the usual 'civil society' approaches to understand religious social engagement in authoritarian political regimes.



# University Education of Religious Diversity and Problematic Issues

[\*abstract]

SAKURAI Yoshihide  
[Hokkaido University, Japan]

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## Abstract

Religious education in Japanese universities has two aspects of academic discipline: 1) dogmatic education of Christianity, Buddhism, and other religions just in missionary founded colleges and 2) science of religion and religious history in all universities. The latter should maintain value-neutrality and provide an objective point of view to religious phenomena and religious institutions, and at the same time academism should carefully deal with religious diversity and individual religions' claims which demonstrates religious freedom and religious tolerance. I will show such multiculturalism and religious pluralism oriented claims might have conflict with academic freedom and human security on cult controversy in university education and academic research.

In this presentation I will introduce my education practice at Hokkaido University. The first example is an undergraduate and international course called 'Religion and Society in Contemporary Japan: From a Sociological Perspective.' This course focuses on religious movements in contemporary Japan and discusses how Japanese mind-sets such as philosophy of life, social consciousness, and spirituality are related to social changes since the end of World War II. Students will also learn about some sociological theories to analyze religious phenomena.

The second example is a seminar for all freshmen enrolling in Hokkaido University that provides information about particular controversial religions such as the Aum (recently changed name to Aleph and Circle of Rainbow Light), the Unification Church (recently changed name to Family Federation for World Peace and Unification), JMS (Christian Gospel Mission), and other Buddhist new religions. This seminar aims to prevent their solicitation in and out of campuses. As a general manager of student counseling, I adopt student support that places emphasis on students' security and their religious freedom.

Finally I will add one controversial case in which religious research on academic basis was undermined by unexpected claiming. JMS filed an allegation to Hokkaido University claiming that my papers on JMS in 2006 and 2007 were fabricated. Surprisingly, Hokkaido University formally received this allegation so that I was inquired on preparatory investigation committee until I cleared all my suspicions. Unfortunately, in following month I was inquired once again by anonymous allegation. Hokkaido University stubbornly believed in outsiders' good-will accusation in order to conduct quality control of research, which as a result has favored harassment on me and spoiled our efforts on student counseling about cult prevention.

# Seeking for a Peaceful Eternal Resting Ground for the Dead Among the Urban Migrants in Japan: from a Research Study of the Nishiamuro Village Graveyard in 2016

[\*abstract]

TAJIMA Tadaatsu  
[Tenshi College, Sapporo, Japan]

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## Abstract

This study demonstrates how Haka-jimai (dismantling a family tomb) in the home village may lead to the disorganisation of the ‘Extended Village Community (hereafter abbreviated as EVC)’. EVC is the term which explains the relation between urban migrants and their mother village. This concept of EVC conveys a social system organised by the villagers, both those in and outside of the home village, enabling a circulation of their products, money, and culture to be extended beyond the boundaries of the village itself to urban settings.

In order to demonstrate this hypothesis, Nishiamuro Village in the Amami Islands was chosen as a case study place through field research conducted from September 5-8, 2016. This small village was relatively self-sufficient and geographically isolated. According to 2014 data, Nishiamuro Village contained only 63 households with a population of 102.

There is a graveyard for the villagers in Nishiamuro, where urban migrants from the village are buried. In 2016, 193 gravestones were located in graveyard. Typically one grave contains the remains of one family and its ancestors. Our research discovered that 2 graves had no names on the gravestones, however we could not ascertain if any human remains had been interred within those graves. And another 8 graves had been exhumed and abandoned or “Haka-jimai.” These 8 graves were carefully examined and 7 of them had belonged to former members of the migrants’ association (EVC). It was by way of discovering the Haka-jimai in the local graveyard that was a key indicator concerning the dissolution of the EVC.

There are two Nishiamuro migrants associations in Hanshin area comprised of 163 households and 592 members. In the Tokyo area another migrant association with 105 households and 229 members exists. And, in other areas of Japan, there is an additional

migrant association of 63 households with 135 members, according to a listing of members from 2005. All together then, the Nishiamuro EVC, consists of the home villagers, the members of the Hanshin and Tokyo migrants' associations, and migrants living in other areas of Japan.



# A Case Study of a Japanese Rural Temple Actively Involved in Social Activities

[\*abstract]

UCHIDA Aki  
[University of Tsukuba, Japan]

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## Abstract

Generally speaking, Japanese Buddhism is said to be less interested in social activities. Even though a chief priest of a temple wants to get involved in such activities, many parishioners do not support his policy. This is because what interests them most is to conduct funeral or memorial services for their relatives and ancestors. In addition to that, especially in rural area, the temples often have financial difficulties due to lack of enough parishioners and cannot afford to involve in social activities. However, recently there are some temples which attempt to get involved in social activities by finding alternative financial resources different from traditional parishioners' money.

The aim of this paper is to pay special attention to one rural temple named Tentoku-Ji which actively getting involved in social activities like relief of children living in developing countries, and to examine how the temple have solved above mentioned dilemma many traditional temples have. The key of this solution is a new style graveyard. Running the new graveyard, in this case tree-burial sites, the temple can get financial support and human resources from outside.





