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Editor's Foreword

WE ARE proud to present the fifth volume of *Religious Studies in Japan (RSJ)*. *RSJ* was established in 2012 as the English-language journal of the Japanese Association for Religious Studies (JARS). We have finally reached our fifth outing with this issue, and over time there have been slight changes in the character of the periodical. Accordingly, I want to take this occasion to explain a little bit about what that character is at present as well as our basic orientation.

First, the journal was founded to serve as a medium through which the members of JARS could present the fruits of their research in English. For that reason, from the very start it has accepted article submissions from the membership. The articles that appear in the journal have been peer reviewed and deemed to be of sufficient value to be published. Unfortunately, not many articles that go through this process reach publication, but in any case, I still wish to reemphasize that this journal is positioned to serve as a venue through which JARS members can put their research findings before the public eye. We expect to receive more submissions than ever from the membership.

Next, since volume 3, we have been conducting an ongoing trial to select articles from recent issues of JARS' Japanese-language journal *Shūkyō kenkyū* (Journal of Religious Studies) and translate them into English for publication in this journal. Today, these translated articles occupy an important place in *RSJ*.

There are various reasons why certain articles are selected for translation, but one reason I would like you to keep in mind is our desire to help junior

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scholars present their findings. For that reason, many of the articles that have been selected for this process have been written by comparatively junior scholars who up to now have not presented much of their work in English.

Another of our fundamental aims is to give our readers a sense of the current state of religious studies in Japan. In light of this, most of the articles that we present take up the study of religion in Japan. However, this is not to say that we are focused exclusively on religion only in Japan; recognizing the importance of this opportunity to present research in English translation, we also make a point of including articles that take up religion in other countries and regions.

For those scholars whose research focuses on Japanese religion, reading the articles in the original Japanese rather than the translations we present here would likely not be an issue. However, we believe that publishing these articles in English translation may make it possible for them to be used in undergraduate and graduate programs where students are not necessarily expected to have Japanese skills. We also hope that these articles may be read by religious studies scholars who, while not necessarily specializing in Japanese religion, will nonetheless find the arguments and a sense of the issues at hand congruent with their own interests, and thus facilitate a broader discussion.

We will maintain these basic orientations for *RSJ* in the future, and at the same time we encourage our readers to contact us if they have opinions or requests they wish to share on the direction we are taking. Working in partnership with our readers, we will continue to make every effort to create an even better journal in the years to come.

Hoshino Seiji
Editor in chief, *Religious Studies in Japan*
Tokyo, April 2020

BESSHO Yūsuke 別所裕介

Those Who Sell the Sacred Sites

The Economic Development of
Contemporary Tibet and Popular Religious Spaces

This article considers the popular spaces of religious practice that have formed at the sacred sites of Buddhism in contemporary Tibet during the rapid modernization that has taken place under Communist Party rule and will pay special attention to the commercialization of those religious sites. Traditionally, research on sacred sites, undertaken mostly by Western scholars, has been based in an understanding of cosmology as rooted in the Buddhist scriptures and has been most concerned with the kind of ritual correspondence built between the natural environment at sacred sites and pilgrims. The diversification of the religious environment of the sacred site is rarely taken into account. I argue that the religiosity of sacred sites established through the replacement of “natural space” with “pure land space” has been influenced by the diversification of monastic economies and the penetration of outside commercial actors. I will demonstrate that this religiosity is, in fact, the target for those seeking to acquire economic profits on the level of individual sacred sites, which are the actual locations of religious practice. As a result, within the sacred sites of contemporary Tibet, which are exposed to the intense pressures of development, a commercial space based on the relationship of economic supply and demand operates in parallel to a value system based on pure land cosmology. I conclude that it is time to revise the traditional understanding of the preceding literature.

KEYWORDS: contemporary Tibet, commercialization, pilgrims, sacred site business, supply and demand

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THIS article will consider the popular spaces of religious practice that have formed at the sacred sites of Buddhism in contemporary Tibet during the rapid modernization that has taken place under Communist Party rule and will pay special attention to the commercialization of those religious sites.

In contemporary Chinese-controlled Tibet, beginning with the closing years of Jiang Zemin's regime (1989–2002) and continuing for over fifteen years (beginning in the year 2000 and currently in the second phase), the Chinese government has undertaken an economic development initiative for the marginal regions called “The Great Western Development Strategy.” In China, the “frontier” refers to an area of 9,600,000 square kilometers that accounts for roughly three fourths of the country's land—a place where Mongols, Tibetans, Uighurs, and other minority groups live along the 22,000 kilometers of China's most extensive inland borders. Under the Great Western Development Strategy, in addition to efforts made to mine the natural resources that exist in abundance in the scarcely populated areas where these minorities reside, and to send those resources along a massive shipping lane to the coastal areas, there have been attempts to transform the frontier regions such that labor surplus can be put toward the construction of infrastructure. This is an effort to accommodate the colossal demands of the Chinese market, which have formed with the coastal metropolises at its center, by reinforcing domestic demand for construction materials. Accordingly, one can witness the establishment of basic infrastructure such as an electrical grid powered by various dams and hydroelectric stations on the high plateaus of Tibet, roads, airports, and a pipeline to facilitate the smooth transfer of resources to the eastern areas of the country. In 2006, the Qinghai-Tibet Railway system (from Xining to Lhasa) with a total length of 1,956 kilometers was completed. Moreover, in recent years, along with the construction of infrastructure, the state of information and social media technology has improved rapidly and a communication network powered by 3G broadband now provides coverage to a broad number of Tibetan communities.

This modern network that spread along with state-led development initiatives has totally enveloped the sacred sites of traditional Tibetan Buddhism that had heretofore existed apart from society amid the hostility of nature, and

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introduced seismic changes to the very core of the religious character of these locations. In terms of their general state of development, sacred places have evolved through a complex interaction between the religiosity that formed within the unique natural environment of the highlands and the wave of economic development that has arrived from the outside. If one sets aside certain topics such as tourism and damage to the environment, which stand out and have received attention in recent years, this general state of affairs has not received sufficient attention. As I will mention later, until now research on sacred places—conducted predominantly by scholars from Europe and the United States—has typically revolved around an understanding of cosmology as can be devised from Buddhist texts. This research has expressed its greatest interest in the manner in which natural spaces and pilgrims preserved this ritualistic correspondence. This same research has consistently neglected the issue of the transformation of the religious space of the sacred sites themselves. The fact of the matter is that the religiosity of sacred spaces that formed as a result of “natural spaces” being rendered as “pure land spaces” has been influenced by the diversification of the economies of monasteries and the introduction of outside commercial actors. In this article, by revealing the complicated character of the actual spaces of religious practice, which also serve as sites for the acquisition of economic profit, I reveal the problems inherent in the current approach used in research into sacred spaces. In particular, I will demonstrate the limitations of the position held in this body of research that takes the one-dimensional formation of a “pure land cosmology” at sacred locations as self-evident.

Before beginning my own investigation, below I will briefly discuss the findings of the preceding research into the religiosity of Tibetan sacred sites and modernity while highlighting the trends in this research, which has been conducted predominately by Western scholars.

The Theory and Practice of Sacred Sites

SACRED SPACES AS “PLACES OF PURITY”—THE DEBATE OVER CENTRALITY AND PERIPHERY

The territory of Tibet is a comparatively new research field as conducting onsite studies was prohibited for an extended period following the forced annexation of Tibet by China in 1951. Upon entering the mid-1980s, when the reform and opening policies (Ch. *gaige kaifang* 改革開放) began to have a more concerted influence on the regions of Tibet, approval was gradually granted for surveys to be carried out in Tibet by foreign researchers—albeit with limitations on theme. Given this, Western scholars of Tibet who had traditionally conducted fieldwork in Nepal and other neighboring regions began to conduct onsite surveys in

Tibet on certain topics that were approved by the Chinese government such as “nature worship” and “folk religion,” and publishing their research findings on folk-level religious revival.¹

Through these research findings, the revival of “pilgrimage to sacred sites” as multiregional, popular religious practice attracted attention for the opportunity it afforded to observe at once a worldview articulated in certain Buddhist scriptures and familiar to scholars working with texts, and the concrete manifestation of that world represented in actual society. As a philosophical system introduced from India, it is essential to explain how Buddhism first transcended the boundaries of the monastic institutions of the professional groups who specialize in its handling and spread among the general population. In other words, it is essential to discuss the process by which the world as it appears in the Buddhist scriptures was transposed onto the actual objects that make up the real world. As is well known, within the context of the Buddhism of Asia, as Buddhism became localized in a particular society, the act of placing the structures of the natural environment of those regions into a Buddhist cosmology and reinterpreting them was an important medium for this transition. For example, as Suzuki Masataka as demonstrated, within the context of Japan’s mountain cults, the view that mountains were otherworldly locations that had existed since ancient times served as a foundation for the transposition of esoteric Buddhist cosmology of the Matrix and Diamond Mandalas wherein certain mountains came to be viewed as central axis of the world, such as “Mt. Sumeru.” Climbing these mountains (“entering the peaks”) fulfilled a certain set of norms that became steps in the spiritual development of the climbers (that is, entering a state of non-self) and this connection came to organize the places and practices of Japan’s unique mountain faith.²

In this way, the imported religion was localized through the systematic reinterpretation of the native view of the natural setting of the target society through the lens of imported religion. This process of the localization of imported religion generally traces the same path in the context of Tibet’s direct reception of esoteric Buddhism from India. Beginning in the eleventh century, during the height of later esoteric Buddhism, the mountain ranges that bordered the Indian world—with the Himalayas playing a leading role—began to be discussed in numerous religious scriptures as places where tantric Buddhist worldviews characterized by the geometric structure of the mandala had been transposed into this world (HUBER 1990).

1. For more on this topic see BLONDEAU and STEINKELLNER (1996), MACDONALD (1997), GOLDSTEIN and KAPSTEIN (1998), and BLONDEAU (1998).

2. Suzuki Masataka has an extensive body of work relating to mountain cults but for his most recent work see SUZUKI (2015).

Existing among the various mountain ranges of Tibet were originally local territorial gods called *yul lha* (*yul* means territory in Tibetan) who were worshipped by tribal groups who ruled each of these various locales. It was believed that these local divinities promised continued fortune in war for men and the prosperity of the tribe in exchange for offerings and rites from the tribe. However, as the era of later esoteric Buddhism progressed, these designated mountains, which had until that point served as the sites for worship of these local divinities, went on to serve as sites where through a projection of pure land cosmology the symbolic systems supported by esoteric Buddhist rites were written on top of preexisting indigenous mountain cults. The first important opportunity to undertake such a process can be found in the rewriting of legends that concern the nature of local divinities. The French scholar of Tibet, Alexander MACDONALD (1990), points out that in Tibet one can see broadly the motif whereby connections between “pure land cosmology” and “actual natural space” served as an opportunity for the conquest of the divinities of other religions by the divinities of later esoteric Buddhism. MacDonald, as one instance of such a motif, introduces the legend known as the “myth of Rudra.” Rudra is a non-Buddhist divinity and considered to be the equivalent of the god Shiva. However, in the scriptures of later esoteric Buddhism, there is a shared creation myth that states that after Samvara (*bde mchog*) descends from the heavens and subjugates Rudra, who had been installed on a mountain by non-Buddhist devotees, Samvara himself goes to reside at the mountaintop and transforms the surrounding area into a mandala. Samvara here is the main deity of the *Cakrasamvara Tantra*, a representative scripture of later esoteric Buddhism. By eliminating the non-Buddhist forces from the local environment, this esoteric deity changed the mountaintop from the residence of a local god. In that process, the natural environment from the mountaintop all the way to the foot of the mountain was given new symbolic meaning as it was paired to the structure of the sanctified sacred space of the “mandala.” Kailash (Gangs Rinpoche), a famous sacred mountain site in the western Himalayas, is one well-known example of a location where this kind of “mandalization” process was applied to an actual physical space. This mountain possesses an ancient history and was worshipped by practitioners of Bon as the residence of the highest god. However, from the middle ages onward, along with the spread of the itinerant pilgrimage practice called *pitha*, a practice engaged in heavily by Tibetan tantrists, one can confirm from records in the surviving literature the view that Kailash’s entire form resembled the mandala of *Cakrasamvara* had increasingly gained the upper hand. The mountain’s meaning within the context of the Bon religion began to fade. In this process the indigenous, local territorial god who was originally in the position of the highest divinity of Kailash was swapped out for an esoteric Buddhist deity, and the practitioners of the Bon religion were ultimately defeated by charismatic

tantric practitioners such as Milarepa (1040–1123) and Gotsangpa (1189–1258) who excelled in the incantations of esoteric Buddhism. As a result of dramatic transformation, today's Kailash is itself considered to be a natural mandala that encapsulates that stratified symbolic system, and it is home to three hierarchal pilgrimage courses with the main peak serving as Samvara, four temples, and four other places of worship. Pilgrims traverse this circuit within the mountain region and, by climbing along the higher-level, interior pilgrimage route approaching Samvara, it is believed that one achieves the same spiritual merit as if one had visualized and meditated upon the actual mandala (BUFFETRILLE 1997).

The French scholar Katia Buffetrille first established the theoretical framework for the “Buddhicization” of mountain cults by utilizing “mandalization” as an index for the series of changes such as the one described above. Buffetrille argues that where the mandalization of a region's interior takes place can be expressed quantifiably as a process where the secular nature of the indigenous culture supported by ties of blood and local relations associated with the land serving as the source of subsistence food production decreases in value (BUFFETRILLE 1998).

Here, that which is specifically assumed to be “Buddhicization” is the phenomenon where the penetration of a religious outlook turns a specific natural space into a “pure land” where the layperson's behavior such as drinking, smoking, and animal sacrifice is declined within its borders. Along with a transformation in behavior that is in accordance with Buddhist virtue, self-serving and exclusive tendencies rooted in tribal cohesion diminish.

Buffetrille sees this process by which the belief system of a particular mountain gradually shifts from the indigenous content that enshrines the tribal guardian deity, or *yul lha*, to a Buddhist one that takes the entire mountain as a naturally existing mandala and Buddhicization as one and the same. As change visible to the eye and in response to the intensity of Buddhicization, the main divinity at the mountain's peak, which began as an indigenous territorial god (a tribal level guardian deity), will be replaced by an esoteric deity. Accordingly, the rites of the mountain god wherein animal sacrifice was performed face-to-face gave way to an Indian-style practice of clockwise circumambulation (Sk. *parikrama*) and, in the end, those who visited the mountain were bound by the same behavioral norms that would be followed while visiting a temple (BUFFETRILLE 1998, 21–29).

In addition, given that as Buddhicization progressed there would be regional differences based on societal conditions such as sectarian distribution and tribal influence, there would be cases of hybridity where the name of the indigenous territorial god might remain associated with the mandalized mountain (semi-mandalization) or there would be individual mountains where both the

indigenous and the esoteric systems overlapped. However, the ultimate goal of Buddhization remained the expatriation of the indigenous system of faith from the mountain region under question and, therefore, it would be possible to point out the causal relationship being the intensification of Buddhization and the proximity with which the structure of the sacred place approached a mandalized pure land space.

The above is a theoretical explanation of how the natural environment of the Tibetan Plateau became a stage for the historical development of sacred Buddhist mountains (*gnas ri*). In this process, the pure land cosmology derived from literature acquired a concrete form as specific mountains and the surrounding regions of the natural environment were given over to this cosmology that gave shape to a centralized sacred area with a new main tantric divine forming the axis of that region. On the other hand, the general believers who paid visits to this kind of instantiated sacred space would reference the information revealed in the sacred literature and understand the religious significance of the rocks, trees, and mountain ranges that would appear before their eyes. To these the visitors would make offerings and through physical contact with location they would receive its sacred power. This entire series of activities—from creating these sorts of representations of the natural space to coming into physical contact with natural space—is the religious practice of “sacred site pilgrimage.” The popular religious activity observed today is taken to be a movement to reconstruct such historical undertakings as they have continued since premodern times amid the modern social environment of a territory under Chinese rule.

Development and Sacred Places: Erosion at the Hands of Modernity

As described above, the initial research on sacred space that opened up the regions of Tibet to the outside was concerned with the issue of the centrality or peripheral character of sacred places as expressed in terms of the “loss of the secular character of a space.” Studies have developed in various locations to examine the ritual conduct of pilgrims in order understand the extent to which the cosmology expressed in Buddhist scriptures remains compatible with the actual natural environment.³

On the other hand, as mentioned earlier, after the reform and opening of the 1980s, in the year 2000, the Chinese government began the Great Western Development. The effects of economic growth of the coastal areas quickly began to expand into frontier areas giving rise to a frontier-style market economy driven by state-led infrastructure development. This was to have an intense

3. Representative works in this area of research include HUBER (1999); HUBER ed. (1999); MCKAY (1998).

direct or indirect impact on the religious meaning that had accumulated in Tibet's land and natural environment.

Amid this intensifying impact, and within the framework of tourism research as the “garnish” of cultural industry, a series of discussions have emerged. These consider the redefinition or recreation of the sacred spaces of traditional Tibetan Buddhism within the context of “ethnic tourism” where these sites of pure land cosmology take on a new form as tourist locations.⁴

One scholar representative of this trend is Jiangbian Jiacao of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences who explored how the oral tradition of the epic poem entitled “The Epic of Gesar of Ling” (*gling gesar gyi sgrung*) was nurtured in a delicate ecosystem centered on the region at the headwaters of the Yellow River. This epic integrates the animistic traditions of Tibetan pastoralists who are made to symbolize in spiritual form the vitality of nature. This assertion makes the spiritual heritage of the location congruent with the water resource conservation objectives urged by the central government. Moreover, by connecting the existing mountains and lakes depicted in the epic as “places where spirits reside” to the “tourism content of environmental education” and promoting eco-tourism that targets ethnic Han Chinese from the inner regions, it reinforces the belief that it is possible to build a mutually beneficial relationship between center and frontier (JIANGBIAN 2003, 317–28).

The viewpoint that invigoration of the frontier economy is due to the development of a tourism that makes the folk culture of Tibetans into a product for consumption is also shared by Western scholars who began researching the transformation of Tibetan tourism in the late 1990s. However, while Chinese scholars tend to speak affirmatively about the recreation and redefinition of the indigenous culture of Tibet, these Western scholars tend to pay more attention to the processes replete with competitive contradictions inherent in the focused attention from the outside and increased tourism. For example, Åshild KOLÅS (2007) illustrates the ulterior motives of government attempts to integrally reorganize the main portion of Tibetan settlements in Yunnan under Western utopian concepts such as “Shangri-La,” and shines a light on the symbolic politics of interventions into this region. In addition, foreign organizations such as China Dialogue and Tibet Watch that are interested in the negative impact of tourism development on local communities publish articles that trace the escalation of the confrontation between tourist capitalism and residents over the development of Yamdrok, the sacred lake west of Lhasa (LIU 2012). These organizations also publish reports that comprehensively cover the cultural friction caused by ethnic Han Chinese pouring into traditional Tibetan communities in

4. For more on this issue see JIANGBIAN (2002), XIE (2005), and WANG (2012).

vast numbers (TIBET WATCH 2014). These reports depict the unbalanced power relationship that exists between those outside of the communities, and Tibetan monastic communities and sacred pilgrimage sites, which are made out to be “sacred, hidden seclusions” through mass tourism. These same reports also show that if the balance between the “culture” and “consumption” of “culture of consumption” cannot be reached, unilateral efforts to make locations into tourist destinations will not necessarily lead to the steady economic development hoped for by local governments. Rather than unifying these regions, such an unbalance could become a factor in the unexpected fragmentation of and conflicts with the communities of these regions.

Direction of this Paper

The various issues discussed above have emerged from the debate over the relationship between sacred sites and economic development, and they serve to disrupt the framework of preceding research that asserts that the infiltration of a pure land cosmology into specific natural environments led to the autonomous formation of centralized sacred spaces based on Buddhist values. In the literature on traditional sacred space as depicted by Buffetrille, the religious understanding of sacred spaces was something that was firmly grounded in the society of a specific region and the physical space of sacred sites existed in a natural environment that was not easily accessible. However, within the context of the whirlwind of massive economic development that has remade people of the frontier and the structure of nature in accordance with the demands of the coastal regions, and with the development of the tourism sector and the media industry, the religiosity that has accumulated in sacred spaces is broadcast outward as a cultural resource and diffuses in a fluid manner. Moreover, at the same time, there are a wide range of situations in which the opening of the physical land that accompanies the development of infrastructure has greatly affected the way sacred sites continue to exist. These movements might be considered a process and aspect of “de-Buddhicization,” wherein the centrality of the sacred site—seemingly the product of an era of religious revival—is engulfed by the dynamism of a modernization that came from outside the region and that has eroded the centrality of the site as it becomes the target of “consumption” by third parties without faith-related objectives. With this situation in mind, from the late 1990s to the present, case studies related to sacred sites and tourism, with Chinese and Western researchers at the helm, have differed in terms of approach or level of interest. However, as I have mentioned, these case studies have mainly discussed the creation of an ethnic tourism with the ability to attract tourists from the coastal areas and the accompanying conflicts and contradictions that take place among the people of the regional communities.

On the other hand, research from the latter half of the 1990s onward deals mainly with highly visible, sensational examples of large-scale tourism and ethnic tension, and considers it a necessity to pay a certain amount of attention to the fact that the spotlight has been given exclusively to the active movement of people. In the inland regions of the Tibetan Plateau where GDP is consistently the lowest domestically, the number of places with the potential for market growth to reach the level where industrial capital will begin to take notice is limited to regions that meet the requirements for becoming tourist hotspots, such as Lhasa after the opening of the Tibetan Railway (YEH 2013), the aforementioned Shangri-La (Yunnan), and the World Heritage Site Jiuzhaigou and its neighboring area (Sichuan) (PENG 1998; SCHREMPF and HAYES 2009), and Lurol (Qinghai), which is home to a traditional festival that is recognized as an official intangible cultural property (EPSTEIN and PENG 1998). The three-way clash between the tourism industry, local government, and local residents at these large-scale and well-known tourist locations is being researched extensively. Moreover, from this seemingly economic process one must also take into account the role of the state's political intentions, which at the highest level of state policy make a distinction between those aspects of ethnic culture that facilitate the speedy integration of the population and those that do not (MURAKAMI 2011).⁵

It is possible to look at modern sacred sites as caught in a grand national integration project that is a tug of war with “Buddhicization” at one end and “de-Buddhicization” at the other. However, given poor accessibility, outside of the local Tibetan population little is known about what is happening at local sacred places where tourism is still in its infancy. More minor Buddhist sacred spaces, such as will be explored in this paper, that exist in remote locations have finally been affected by the wave of economic development. These minor sacred spaces have been passed over by mainstream Tibetan tourism because of their small capital and market value, and they are unlikely to receive attention in the literature on tourism.

However, it is too early to conclude that there is absolutely no commercial activity popping up at these small-scale, more minor sacred sites. At these kinds of local sacred places, given their size and anonymity, one can see the development of unique commercial activities that utilize the religiosity of the sacred

5. MURAKAMI Daisuke (2011) considers the mass tourism of Lhasa in the early part of the first decade of the twentieth century and argues that the tourist industry under the auspices of state leadership is not limited simply to stimulating the consumption of ethnic symbols through tourism, but is none other than an attempt to force the acceptance of state-promoted values such as “progress” and “harmony” on the Tibetans and encourage the internalization of such values through political power.

place itself to target local pilgrims. In addition, in contrast to the preceding research—which treats the relationship between the infiltration of a pure land cosmology into sacred space and changes in the normative behavior of believers as a self-evidently causal relationship—by focusing on economic behavior that targets the “faith” that forms autonomously at these sacred places, there is an opportunity to propose an analytical framework that takes into account the new dynamism of diversification of the actual popular religious space. In this sense, this paper will examine the existing business model of local sacred places through an extreme close-up that will have the potential to serve as a guideline in exploring the relationship between modernity and the religiosity found at a great number of general sacred spaces in the Tibetan interior.

In the following, after presenting an overview of the sacred places that will serve as my case studies, I will explore the official symbolism—derived as it is from Buddhist scriptures—of sacred sites, the process of ritual performance undertaken by pilgrims, and commercial activities that stem from locals who develop a means for going out to make money in tandem with religious practices. On that basis, from an examination of how these commercial actors at sites of religious practice appropriate the religiosity of sacred places to improve their profits, I will demonstrate the merit of analyzing the relationship between the religiosity of local sacred places and the indigenous economic fundamentals that naturally arise in those locations.

The Object of Examination: The Drakar Dredzong Pilgrimage

A GEOGRAPHICAL AND HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

The location that I will address in this paper is a sacred site centered on an independent rock peak called Drakar Dredzong (Monkey Fortress) (see FIGURE 1). As an administrative division it belongs to Xinghai 興海 County in Hainan 海南 of the Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in Qinghai Province and is located in a mountainous region about thirty kilometers southwest of the county’s administrative municipality. The Dredzong pilgrimage route, which consists of climbing a single rock peak, stretches for a length of nine kilometers, and the circuit can be completed in roughly five hours on foot. Given that the indigenous god that serves as the main deity of this sacred site has the face of a monkey, it is believed that pilgrimages undertaken in the year of the monkey bring about twice as much merit as is typical. In 2016 (the third year of the monkey after the opening and reform following 1992 and 2004), at New Years (8 February), a huge number of pilgrims are quick to visit this location and, with summer as the peak (July through August), the waves of people are continuous until after October.

The earliest record concerning this sacred site is a guidebook (*gnas yig*) written in the early seventeenth century by esoteric practitioner Drigung Chokyi

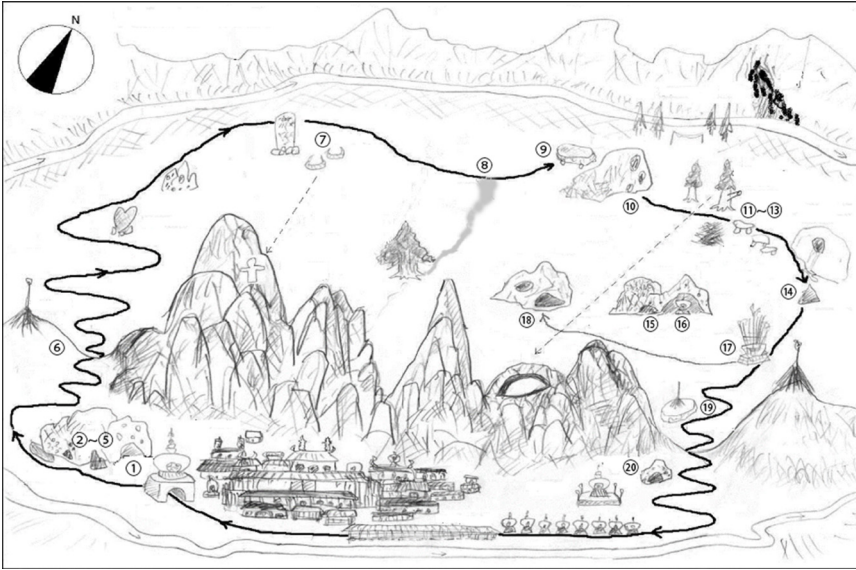


FIGURE 1. Drakar Dredzong pilgrimage route and major religious sites. Created by author.

Trakpa (1595–1656) entitled, “Pilgrimage Guide to Drakar Dredzong” (*Brag dkar sprel rdzong gi dkar chag*). In this text the events concerning the tantric practitioner Padmasambhava,⁶ who had visited from India and had entered a meditative state inside of a cave, are recorded. After expatiating the local spirit that had attempted to bury him alive, Padmasambhava sanctified the land through various esoteric rituals such as burying the *gter bum* (an enchanted urn filled with grains and wish-granting jewels used to sanctify the land) in the earth and prayed for the flourishing of the Buddhist Dharma. Among the records in this text, there are some that point to the beginnings of the Buddhist sacred place Dredzong which correspond to the abovementioned “creation myth” motif involved in “Buddhization” which remains the central theme of pilgrimage activities today.

There is no definitive record for when exactly this sacred site came to be visited by pilgrims but, in a biography for the itinerant monk Shabkar (1781–1851), who resided in this area around 1810, there is a record that states, “*bod sog kun ’ong phyag skor byed*” ([To Dredzong,] people from Tibet and other regions visit to do prostrations and complete the pilgrimage circuit) (SKAL BZANG LHA MO 2002, 383) and, at the very least, one can see that by the early nineteenth century Dred-

6. Padmasambhava was a historical figure who was invited to the court of the Tibetan empire in order to establish Buddhism in Tibet and succeeded in subjugating various indigenous gods one after another through powerful esoteric incantations. Commonly known as Guru Rinpoche.

zong was widely known as a famous sacred place. In 1923, the first full-fledged monastery, Drelzong Temple, was constructed at the foot of the mountain. This temple was constructed by Arol Rinpoche (*A rol blo bzang lung rtogs bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan*, 1888–1959), who was a reincarnation of a high-ranking lama of the famous Rongwo Monastery (in Tongren 同仁 County in Huangnan 黄南 of the Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture), in response to the dying wishes of his previous incarnation. The monastery completely ceased activity from 1958 until the end of the Cultural Revolution, but in 1981 the government allowed activities to resume, and reconstruction of the monastery continues to this day. Currently, the temple has a head abbot, Arol Rinpoche (1977–), who is the first of thirteen incarnate lamas, and five hundred and thirty registered monks who reside at the temple.

*Written Tradition and the Actual Location of
Connection: The Representative Behaviors of Pilgrims*

TABLE 1 summarizes the twenty major sacred sites one can observe while undertaking a pilgrimage to Drelzong. The spatial location of each sacred place is given on FIGURE 1 where they are numbered from ① to ⑳. In general, in addition to those locations that serve as objects of ritual activity related to the events of the Padmasambhava myth mentioned above (⑭, ⑯ through ⑱), there are certain trees, waterfalls, and two mountain passes with monuments for ritual use. Also, to the northeast of the site, there is a concentration of sacred sites related to the auxiliary theme traversing hell (⑪ through ⑬). The natural landscape and composition of natural objects in this area are marked by a series of representations that hint at the world after death. Pilgrims in the process of walking clockwise along the pilgrimage circuit make physical contact with the miraculous traces that appear at these locations, they perform prostrations and, by presenting offerings, attempt to draw spiritual power (*byin brlabs*) of these locations into their bodies. In addition, they collect rocks, soil, pieces of wood, or spring water from these sacred places and attempt to take them back to the space of their daily lives. Given the restrictions here, in the following I will limit myself to an outline of the ritual activity of pilgrims as it is performed at the sacred sites associated with the “creation myth” discussed above.

⑭ DEMON'S GRAVE

This is the place where the remains of the demon lie, who was himself killed during his attempt to trap Padmasambhava inside a cave. Pilgrims face a mound of earth made to be the “gravestone” that is on the left-hand side of the pilgrimage route, spit at it quickly three times, and throw a handful of dirt taken from

TABLE 1. List of the main religious sites of Drakar Dredzong pilgrimage.

	NAME OF RELIGIOUS SITE	OBJECT OF WORSHIP	FORM OF THE RITUAL ACTIVITY OF THE PILGRIM
1	Cave of Gratitude for Parents	The crack in a boulder	Enter the interior and touch one's head to the boulder and make a wish
2	Hidden Door of the God of Wealth	A rock wall running along a river	Throw a Terma bag into the river
3	Yama's Pliers	A narrow pass in a triangular rock formation	Pass through the gap in the rock
4	Hidden Door to the Treasury	A white rock wall along a river	Offer a Terma bag in front of the hidden door
5	Holes of the Sound of the Recitation of the India Sutras	Two holes in the rock face	Place one's head into the hole and listen to the recitation of sutras
6	Tori-La	The western mountain pass (3,860m)	Conduct offerings at Labtse Shrine
7	Prostration Place of the Old Man from Arik	The figure of the Avalokitesvara that manifested naturally at the rock peak	Conduct prostrations while facing the figure of the Avalokitesvara in intimation of the old man who received the prophecy from Avalokitesvara after devoted practice.
8	The Waterfall of Annihilation and Completion	A waterfall pouring over the cliff wall	Bathe and collect water from the waterfall
9	Gravestone believed to have come flying from India	A rock with a flat, board-shaped surface	Lay down facing upward, bending to see the emanation of symbols of a monkey on the back.
10	Yama Tharkhong	A rock formation where wind comes out of three tunnels	Climb to the top of the rock formation and descend to the bottom by passing through a wind tunnel
11	Yama's Great Pot	A river pool below at the base of a cliff	Throw a big rock into the pool to break the bottom of the pot
12	Yama's Bellows	A thin embankment between mountains	Build a small stove using rocks and supply with firewood
13	Yama's Scale and Mirror	An old pine tree facing a huge rock mountain	Hang from the branch of the tree to measure the weight of one's sins and look at the rock mountain upside down
14	Demon's Grave	A pile of fallen rubble	Face the grave and spit on it
15	Crystal Palace	Long, narrow limestone cave	Enter the cave and touch the sacred relic
16	Yangdzong Cave	Rock dome	Touch the sacred relic that manifested on the surface of the rock
17	Labtse of the Monkey God	Labtse Shrine	Make offerings to the monkey god
18	Vajra Meditation Cave	Meditation hall inside a limestone cave	Make prostrations to each of the sacred relics of Padmasambhava
19	Tashi-La	The eastern mountain pass (3,820m)	Conduct offerings at Labtse Shrine
20	Cave of the Wish-Granting Cow	Dome-shaped rock cave	Enter the cave and collect some earth

the ground before passing on. It is said that this is to dispel the evil presence of the demon.

⑩ YANGDZONG CAVE

There is a large rock dome with a Buddhist stupa built on the inside at this site. In various places on the rock surface are the footprints of Padmasambhava and characters in the Tibetan language that are thought to have manifested on their own. While circumambulating the stupa, pilgrims touch their head to these sacred relics and, in imitation of the acts of purification undertaken by Padmasambhava to purify the sacred space, the pilgrims themselves also deposit *gter bum* inside the cave.

⑪ LABTSE OF THE MONKEY GOD

The sheer triangular rocky mountain soaring across from the Yangdzong Cave is considered to be the palace of Nyendrel Dawachenpo-dawa chenpo (literally, “Monkey God of the Moon”) who pledged himself to Padmasambhava and serves as his protector. Pilgrims perform rites at the *labtse* at the base of this mountain. *Labtse* is a shrine of bundled wooden poles shaped like a bow and arrow and is believed to house the deity. Here the pilgrims tie strips of cloth with various verses from sutras printed upon them called “darchok” to the *labtse*, place scented wood or wheat flour into the censer placed before the *labtse*, and pour sacred alcohol as an offering. Subsequently, pilgrims scatter scraps of paper with pictures of horses printed on them called “lunta” while circumambulating the *labtse* and intoning sutras.

⑫ VAJRA MEDITATION CAVE

This location is commensurate with the interior pilgrimage route of the sacred site. Here the pilgrims momentarily leave the main route of the pilgrimage and, taking the mountain pass toward the interior pilgrimage route, arrive at the cave where Padmasambhava entered meditation. Inside the cave there are rock formations that are presented as Padmasambhava’s seat and a beggar’s bowl. There is an opening in the ceiling that is said to have been made by a vajra after the demon had locked Padmasambhava in the cave. Pilgrims pray, make prostrations touching their head to the ground, and gather pieces of stalactites or underground water at these sites. In addition, they offer *gter bum* inside the cave.

The above description of the sacred places and ritual activities of pilgrims is based exclusively on the portrayal of the pure land landscape of the sacred site as recorded in the Drigung Chokyi Trakpa guidebook for the location. This same

guidebook explains how these sacred spaces came into being through Padma-sambhava's sanctifying acts, the origins of its relations to the hells, and how the sacred site possesses the same virtue as *Tsa ri*, the sacred mountain of central Tibet, also known as the "Crystal Palace"—which is one of the famed sacred sites of the Cakra Samvara Mandala.⁷ In this sense, this pilgrimage centered around the rocky peak of (15) standing in for the "Crystal Palace," on the one hand, is said to be identical in essence to the sacred sites of the Cakra Samvara Mandala. Given that this pilgrimage is also composed of the coexistence of an indigenous system with the local territorial god Nyendrel Dawachenpo from the Padma-sambhava origin tales, one could examine the pilgrimage within the context of "Buddhization" described earlier. Within this framework, the site could be understood as the "semi-mandalization of a sacred Buddhist site" wherein the two systems of the indigenous gods and esoteric gods overlap at a single mountain. Pilgrims who visit this sacred site experience the same motifs of multiple legends, such as "sacred creation," that are firmly rooted in the place. Simultaneously, these pilgrims offer prayers and offerings in accordance with the context of each sacred site and through their bodies receive spiritual power. Through the repeated performance of such acts, the sacred site continues to exist as a bounded space that is in possession of a specific religious theme. As seen earlier in the conventional research on sacred places, creating a connection between the "written information" that discusses the religious value of this sacred site and the actual natural space is taken to be something that happens automatically at the site mainly through the judgment of the pilgrims who perform the rituals. However, with the penetration of widespread economic development into the frontier areas of today, it is unrealistic to assume that pilgrims can act in such a way as to provide the main interpretation of the natural space at the actual site of religious faith. To put it simply, in the years of the pilgrimage, when a massive number of people—between several thousand and ten thousand each day—enter the mountain for the purpose of faith, a small market forms within the sacred site to handle the demands of religious supplies such as offerings, food, drink, and lodging. These years are also a period of economic revitalization for migrant commercial actors who enter from the outside at this time. By bringing incense, sanctified alcohol, *gter bum*, and *darchok* that were purchased at wholesale stores in urban areas in order to sell them and setting up stores onsite that supply butter lamps, mani stones, and so on, these commercial actors enter into religious activity at the various sacred locations along the pilgrimage route in order to profit economically. In the following, I will examine the changes in the religious environment that accompany the intervention of such commercial

7. For more details on this document see BESSHO (2007).

actors from a perspective that takes into account the local economic principles involved in the religiosity of the sacred site.

*From People of Faith to People of Income:
Migrant Commercial Actors and Monastic Institutions*

In February, May, and September of 2016, the author made three trips to the sacred site under question and joined in pilgrimage activities in order to conduct research.⁸ In February, the influx of commercial actors had just begun and they were still at the stage of setting up their stores. However, when I revisited in May, all of the main religious sites were filled with the tents and temporary shacks of these commercial actors and I witnessed the same situation in September as well. In considering the formation of a local market such as this one, one must first account for the problem of land management at the sacred site as a whole. The jurisdiction over the land surrounding Drakar Drel dzong belongs to the Drel dzong Monastery. All of the commercial actors who do business inside the territory of the sacred site are required to get approval from and pay a fee for land use to the “Monastery Administration Committee” (MAC) (a congressional administrative body consisting of monks from the same monastery and headed by Arol Rinpoche IV) who oversees administration of the temple affairs. The site rental fee is typically paid in one lump sum for the year, calculated according to the “faith value” and “convenience” of the location in question, and ranges greatly in price from 5,000 yuan at the lowest to a maximum of 380,000 yuan (1 yuan = 17 yen).

I will explain these locations by tracing the path in FIGURE 1. Sections ① to ⑤ consist of 25 square meter blocks costing 40,000 yuan. Up until the pass in section ⑥ tents cost 5,000 yuan each, 15,000 yuan at the top of the pass in ⑥, and beginning in the descent in ⑥ and continuing from ⑦ through ⑬ tents are 5,000 yuan each. Sections ⑭ through ⑰, which are located on both sides of the pilgrimage route, are 250,000 yuan, and ⑱ and ⑲ are together 350,000 yuan. The monastery has prohibited the use of area ⑱, but the pass top at ⑲ is 380,000 yuan, and the descent from ⑲ through ⑳ in front of the monastery is 120,000 yuan per tent. At a single glance one can see that places that relate to the creation of the sacred place have a higher price tag but, in order “to maintain a tranquil environment,” commercial activities have been prohibited at the highly religious site at ⑱. Also, even within the same mountain, the reason that a different price is given for ⑥ and ⑬ is that when compared to “Tori-La” (High Mountain Pass),

8. The author was onsite for one week during each visit and, along with performing the actual pilgrimage on foot multiple times (one of those times was conducted in the manner of prostrations), collected research resources through participant observation and interviews.

“Tashi-La” (Auspicious Pass) relates to the good luck of “the completion of all things” and is, therefore, religiously superior. In addition, given that poor access to water and transportation results in higher costs, prices on the northern side of the sacred site are set to be more reasonable than those on the southern side. Here on the northern side, fees are “retail” and the cost of renting the space is carried out on a one-tenth basis with fees paid to the MAC. On the other hand, as in sections ⑭ through ⑰, a single investor pays the annual fee for using the space in one lump sum and, after securing the right to use this space, acts as a “broker” who makes a profit by leasing lots to tenants. This section, also called “Gate to the Holy Land,” is an area of fierce competition that borders the most important religious sites, and there are more than thirty tents on each side of the pilgrimage route expending energy jockeying with one another for customers. Moreover, according to interviews with the members of the MAC, the income received by the temple in terms of leases on land plots amounted to 1,730,000 yuan as of September. However, after making deductions for the various expenses associated with the public monastery, the remaining funds were all distributed equally to each monk as an allowance regardless of class or age.⁹

Next, I would like to highlight some of the representative narratives expressed by commercial actors from my September survey field notes.

1. Section ⑥ Tori-La Pass (small retailer, Han woman from Gangtsa County, forty years old), moved to the mountaintop with her family to open a shop immediately following the start of the new year and began to conduct sales. She was selling *darchok* for 10 yuan, one bag of incense for 15 yuan, one jar of sanctified alcohol for 10 yuan, a large butter lamp for 10 yuan, and a small butter lamp for 5 yuan. There were costs involved with hiring someone to carry goods to the base of the mountain so an investment of one million yuan was made to build a simple ropeway for that purpose. The goods are purchased directly from a wholesaler located in town (the administrative municipality of Xinghai County) and carried to the foot of the mountain in the family truck. She also took orders for hauling goods for other vendors and received 2 yuan per kilometer. Starting two years ago, this vendor began conducting business at other pilgrimage sites, thereby acquiring experience and, because she knew that location was the most important thing, she selected this location even though the cost of leasing was much higher than other locations. The profits are decent. At the best times, she makes 10,000 to 12,000 yuan in sales in a single day. The frigid temperatures at

9. The right to receive these funds is given to any currently registered member of the clergy who participates in the extended dharma assembly of the summer retreat. During the year of this survey, about four hundred such monks participated and were given roughly 2,500 yuan each.

the ridge and the difficulty involved in disposing of garbage are the biggest challenges.

2. Middle of the northern side of Tori-La (managing a dining hall and lodging, pastoralist man from Golok, thirty-three years old), run by a couple. Tukpa (Tibet-style meat and noodle dish) for 15 yuan, meat buns for 20 yuan, and cup noodles for 5 yuan. One night at the lodging is 20 yuan per bed. Daily earnings during the busy period amount to between 5,000 and 6,000 yuan with a net income of about half that amount. Lucky to sell one hundred Tukpa meals a day. From September onward pilgrims begin to decline in number and their earnings decrease by half. Based on an agreement with the MAC, aside from the cost of lodging, all prices for commercial goods and foods are set at the same price for all shops. The same is true for both the northern and southern sides of the sacred site. The main expenditures are the cost of fuel for boiling water and the cost of gasoline for the motorcycle used to fetch water. It was decided that tea would be given to pilgrims without charge, but as the water comes from a distant mountain stream, is acquired by hand, and requires the use of a motorcycle for transportation, when costs are calculated, the water for one cup of tea results in a loss of more than one yuan.

3. Section (16), Yangdzong Cave (lamp shop, pastoralist woman from Xinghai County, thirty years old), in addition to butter lamps and *gter bum*, sells incense and sanctified wine as a family of four. Received a hint from the MAC and believing that, if their location was good, they would definitely make a profit, they therefore decided to raise the funds to rent this space. Having an excellent location before the Buddhist stupa, and free from competitors, they got a return on their investment. Each day they made a net profit of between 5,000 and 6,000 yuan, over half of which came from butter lamps. They experienced difficulty in acquiring a building permit for their structure from the MAC and, although they originally built a small brick shop for dedicating lamps, they were told that they could not erect a permanent building at that location and were ordered to tear it down. They rebuilt using a prefab structure but, in addition to the fees for leasing the space, their costs were upwards of 250,000 yuan. Because sales went smoothly, despite these losses they were still able to make a profit.

4. Section (17), nearby the *labtse* of the Monkey God (managing a dining hall, a pastoralist woman from Xinghai County, twenty-seven years old) operating the shop with her two daughters. This woman typically runs a small restaurant in the county's administrative municipality. With the hope of success, she set up a tent in the valley but, at the moment, there are twenty such tents in close proximity and competition is intense. The cost of one tent in this area is 10,000 yuan. The neighboring merchants have come up with strategies to attract customers and to increase the sales of offerings by newly assembling incense platforms and surrogate *labtse*. During the period of peak activity, they were left with 2,000

yuan in profit for the month. At the moment, when sales are good, profits are about 500 to 600 yuan. Because butter lamps make more money, they would like to try selling them but the location where they are set up is not close to the religious sites, making it difficult to increase profits from those kinds of sales.

To summarize, the various trades of the interviewees can be roughly divided into four categories: (1) dining halls, (2) simple lodging, (3) retail shops (carrying Buddhist implements, offerings, and daily use items), and (4) retail shops that sell butter lamps. Most commercial actors engage in several of these trades simultaneously. Within the market that forms alongside the religious activities that take place within the sacred site, the primary factor in acquiring regular profits is the “religiosity” of the location, that is, the value of the location in terms of faith, and this is also linked to the establishment of the market price of the fees for renting plots. When one considers that the average monthly income of a local civil servant is around 5,000 yuan, one can clearly see that those commercial actors who monopolized speculatively good locations before their competitors made extremely high profits. Conversely, one can also see that those who ran shops in locations where competition was stiff or the location unfavorable were in a situation where they were lucky to break even. In the next section, I would like to explore the formation of economic activities around the religiosity of sacred locations such as this one from the perspective of “supply” and “demand.” In so doing, I will present the characteristic features one can see in the relationship between the religious and the commercial at the sacred sites of contemporary Tibet.

Considerations: The Relationship Between Supply and Demand at “Sacred Places”

In order to efficiently turn a profit in the business of sacred sites, it is important to quickly physically monopolize the religious sites that directly connect to the religious value of the sacred site as a whole and, based on the religious context that the site possesses, continuously supply the products that meet the needs of pilgrims. The entrepreneurs in cases 1 and 3 understood the defining features of supply and demand at their locations—supplying *labtse* offerings at 1, and offerings related to the creation myth at 3—and aimed to maximize profits by restricting the capital used to procure specific products. In particular, commercial actor 1 prioritized the speedy procurement of products by installing a simple ropeway, and was able to make earnings that justified such an investment. On the other hand, commercial actors, such as 2 and 4, who were in areas of intense competition, or who were selling on the relatively inaccessible northern side of the sacred site, were required to devise creative techniques for getting a leg up on the competition and to raise profits. One such example comes from the installation of a new religious monument discussed in case study 4. In actuality, when I began the study of this sacred site in February, merchants had yet to arrive in

this section of the mountain and there was only one vendor for the *labtse* and one vendor for incense. However, when I was there again in May there was an army of tents to be seen in a situation that had totally changed. I witnessed on the roadside iron rods that would serve as the axis for pillars and cement being carried to assemble an incense platform. In September, when I visited for the third time, the commercial actors had finished constructing the new shrine and incense platform, which was functioning and receiving a large number of offerings. In this way, commercial actors promoted sales by adding new monuments that were consistent with the context of the space and increasing demand from pilgrims. For these reasons, the response of this commercial activity to the religiosity of the sacred site is not limited simply to following the religious meaning of the site but involves using that image and, in building new locations, creating a related context that connects to the generation of personal profit.

The autonomously progressing commercialization at sacred sites like those described above are uniformly influenced by policies such as the establishment of high-priced plot leases by the MAC of Dreltzong Temple and the uniform pricing established to control the cost of items at the sacred site. Establishing a uniform price reduces over-competition and, by relieving issues of supply and demand, benefits pilgrims. However, as remarks made by merchants who set up stores in locations with unfavorable conditions suggest, the pressure of operating costs and competition produces “market losers” who are basically unable to increase their profits. On the other hand, the MAC did not include area ⑩, which lies at the heart of the sacred site’s creation myth, among those for rent. Furthermore, in May, there was a notice released in the name of the MAC outlining a policy forbidding the construction of new permanent edifices in order to maintain the tranquility of the religious environment. The “dismantling and removal” that resulted in case study 3 in the previous section is the result of a crackdown on new structures as a part of this policy. These decisions can be seen to be part of a larger policy designed to avoid a situation where in the most religious location at the site one would also find the most commercial site—a dilemma unique to the business of sacred sites. In this way, the monastic institution sets the relative prices for plot leases inviting commercialism into the areas of the sacred site, but does not allow commercialism to surpass this pricing and overtake the site. This demonstrates a two-fronted set of standards for managing the sacred site.¹⁰

10. These policies issued by the MAC also reflect the administrative leadership of government-related departments such as the Xinghai County Religious Affairs Bureau, which is the top political unit supplying oversight jurisdiction of the monastery. One cannot ignore the intervention of such political entities in the management and control of this sacred site, but I will discuss this issue at another time.

In Conclusion: Toward a Future of Sacred Site Research

In this article, I have considered the natural process by which religiosity develops at sacred sites and, in contrast to the theories of Buddhicization, I have demonstrated that the commercialism that self-propagates at sacred sites is actually intervening in the onsite religious practice. At the sacred sites of contemporary Tibet, which are exposed to the high-pressure development that accompanies rapid modernization, natural space and pure land cosmology are linked to one another without mediation. However, it is impossible to conduct a proper analysis if one ignores the mediating role of the commercial space that is generated by the economic relationship of supply and demand that runs parallel to that value system. Based on the preceding results, it will be necessary to revise the analytical framework of preceding research on sacred spaces so as to account for the economic reality of the actual site.

On the other hand, the problem of how to situate the parallel development of the local religiosity we find at a site such as this one discussed here and commerciality in reference to the movements of “Buddhicization/de-Buddhicization” in mass tourism remains. As we saw earlier, tourism is a process where representations that are the result of views from the outside are consumed. The government of Xinghai County, which is in the position of having jurisdiction over Drelzong Monastery, has begun to promote this sacred place as the centerpiece of local tourism. However, that effort has only just begun and, in terms of preparing the entire site for tourists, the government is not yet at a phase where they are prepared to start sending out information systematically to the other areas.¹¹ Similarly, at the majority of sacred places which reside within the inland area of the Tibetan Plateau, there has not yet been a systematized movement to turn representations of these locations into a resource. As described earlier in this article, major sacred sites experience a kind of tourism that is only possible once public, private, and religious organizations come together. However, at minor sacred sites that reside in the shadows of these major sites is a different kind of minor economic phenomenon that has begun to spread, where what one might call self-consumption is carried out by local residents at the sacred sites. The situation described in this article where religiosity is utilized for commercial activity gives broad support to the implication that the general occurrence of such things takes place at a great many minor sacred sites. In future research on sacred sites, I believe it will be necessary to include both sacred sites that have

11. The Tourism Bureau of Xinghai's local government is making special attempts to modernize the environment by constructing promenades and billboards, but at present, these investments have not been made in a direct effort to attract tourists.

become tourist destinations and those sacred sites where those developments are still in their infancy.

(Translated by Jesse LeFebvre)

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Kumazawa Banzan's Ideas Regarding the "Great Way" and "Shinto"

Researchers have focused on Kumazawa Banzan's practical theory of moral cultivation and rationalistic statecraft, but have not deeply discussed his theory of religion, which proposed the restoration of Shinto. This is due to the fact that researchers see Kumazawa's thought as a far-fetched syncretism of Shinto and Confucianism. Hence, their assessments are poles apart: "Kumazawa's Shinto is nothing but Confucianism in the end" or "his Confucianism is not the original but Japanized."

Essentialist framings like "is Kumazawa's thought Confucianism or Shinto?" should be avoided. In this paper, noting that Kumazawa often expresses Shinto as *daidō*, I assert that he offers a universalistic argument which is based on the Confucian classics and relativizes Confucianism itself, as well as that it is a sort of theory of religion which can be compared with Western theories about natural religion. I hold that Kumazawa argues for the restoration of Shinto as a result of his exploration as to how to put a universalistic theory of the religious into practice in the form of a specific religious system tailored to the situations of the concrete epoch and region in early modern Japan.

KEYWORDS: Confucian Shinto—Kumazawa Banzan—natural religion—the Way (*dō*)—three-teachings theory

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THIS PAPER deciphers, using his concept of the “Great Way” (*daidō* 大道), the writings of so-called “Yangming Confucianist” Kumazawa Banzan 熊沢蕃山 (1619–1691) regarding Shintō 神道 (“The Way of the Gods”). I discuss how an intellectual from Japan’s early modern period, at a time when the concept of “religion” had not yet been imported from the West, articulated East Asian religious traditions, or religion-like things in human society.

According to Miyazaki Michio 宮崎道生, Nakae Tōju 中江藤樹 (1600–1648) and Kumazawa Banzan share a “concept of a universal Shinto common to the entire world” and both hold that there is a “‘Shinto of Japan’ that is particular in contrast to [this] universal” (MIYAZAKI 1990, 211). Rather than just describing the historical facts of Shinto being taught in accordance with Japan’s climate, Confucianism in accordance with that of China (Tōdo 唐土), and Buddhism in accordance with that of India (Tenjiku 天竺), Kumazawa asserted, despite being a Confucianist, that the “forms” (*hō* 法) which should be sought in contemporary Japan were not Confucian but Shinto. Miyazaki identifies this as a distinctive characteristic of Kumazawa’s Shinto thought. However, he offers the following final assessment: “Kumazawa is unable to completely escape the constraints of the word *shendao* 神道 [Jp. *shintō*] found in Confucius’s theory of ancestral spirits [*The Analects*] and the *Book of Changes*’ passages on the *guan* 觀 hexagram, and in the end does not go out of the realm of Confucianist Shinto” (MIYAZAKI 1990, 237).

There are more than a few similar views that assume the existence of some sort of pure “Confucianism” or “Shinto” and offer assessments based on Kumazawa’s distance from them. Bitō Masahide 尾藤正英 also argues that Banzan’s “Shinto” is in essence “the universal ‘Way’ [*dō* 道]/Great Way, and concretely it is nothing more than something identical to the ‘Way of the saints’ [*seidō* 聖道], in other words, the Way of Confucianism” (BITŌ 1961, 221). Itō Tasaburō 伊東多三郎, approvingly noting that “the Japanism [*nihonshugi* 日本主義] tendency in his thought” was ahead of its era, states that while “generally Confucianists’ theories of the unity of Shinto and Confucianism are essentially thought structures in which Confucianism occupies a central position . . . Banzan’s theory of Confucianism and Shinto left this kind of intellectual current behind and jumped to a view that placed Shinto at the center” (ITŌ 1976, 40). However, in all of these cases we find an assessment that takes a dubious essentialism as a premise: that the countable single entities of Shinto and Confucianism have existed through

time in a fixed way. This makes it impossible to discuss Banzan's significance in religious history.

It was in this context that Minamoto Ryōen 源了圓 asserted that Banzan was discussing a “universal ‘Shinto of heaven and earth’ [*tenchi no shintō* 天地の神道] that runs through Confucianism and Shinto” and that it had a “statecraft orientation” (*keiseiteki seikaku* 経世の性格). Minamoto also argues that in Banzan's case, engaging in benevolent governance in accordance with time, place, position, people's moods, and changes in the times itself is “Shinto,” and that he “did not hold that Confucian teachings were absolute but that the monarch's practice of benevolent governance had the highest meaning” (MINAMOTO 1980, 494). This is an important point that avoids an unproductive “Shinto or Confucianism” discussion and delves into the kind of horizon upon which Banzan himself discussed these.

Why did Banzan have to venture to call “benevolent governance” “Shinto”? In short, it was because he discussed the essence of religious traditions from a statecraft theory perspective, and arrived at a kind of religious theory, originating in Confucian rituals and music (*reigaku* 礼楽) theory, that discussed the kind of religious institutions that should be established. Below I will concretely examine how Banzan discussed the three teachings of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Shinto, as well as the “Shinto” that should be realized in the future.

Banzan's Idea of Shinto in Daigaku Wakumon

In Kumazawa Banzan's *Daigaku wakumon* 大学或問 (A Discussion of Public Questions in the Light of the Great Learning), he discusses the measures necessary to make “benevolent governance” a reality, including what we could call “religious policy.” In Item 17, entitled “On the Revival of Shinto,” he rejects what is called Shinto in society today. He says it is nothing more than embellishments of the laws of hereditary Shinto priest families and rules regarding the mindsets of Shinto professionals made into scriptures. Banzan also states that even the *Nihongi* 日本紀, which normal “Shinto” holds to be the foremost scripture, only discusses the surface of the principle (*ri* 理), namely, yin and yang and the supreme polarity (*taikyoku* 大極), and that only the “three sacred treasures [*jingi* 神器]” can be said to be Japan's scripture. Like the *Book of Changes'* hexagrams (symbols like “☰” that combine yin and yang solid and broken lines), the three sacred treasures express with three forms the heart-mind's wisdom, benevolence, and courage, in other words, they are symbols that were used to communicate in the distant past, when writing did not exist, the “Way,” which here refers to the *Doctrine of the Mean's* (Ch. *Zhongyong* 中庸; Jp. *Chūyō*) three virtues (*san tattoku* 三達徳) (*Daigaku wakumon*, 475). Banzan continues as follows:

In order to interpret the three sacred treasures, it is most appropriate to rely on the *Doctrine of the Mean*. China's saints [*seijin* 聖人] and Japan's divine people [*shinjin* 神人] are the same in terms of virtue. Their Way is not two. Therefore, the three sacred treasures and that which is preached by Confucian scripture match like tallies. Those who rule the whole country with the mandate of heaven are divine masters. No matter the era, the virtuous acts of those who are masters of the world—making clear the virtues of wisdom, benevolence, and bravery, as well as ruling the world in accordance with the time, place, position [*ji* 時, *sho* 処, *i* 位], as well as people's nature and changes in the times—are Shinto, and texts that record the traces of this are surely Shinto scriptures. The reign of Amaterasu (*tenshōkō* 天照皇) was virtuous rule. Describing now this virtuous rule and making Japan a virtuous country is the revival of Shinto. That which is called Shinto in society is only part of Shinto, not all of it. The Way is the natural Shinto of heaven and earth. The Way of the saints of China and the Way of this country's divine people are both the Shinto of heaven and earth. (*Daigaku wakumon*, 475)

Amaterasu, a “master of the world” and “divine person” who ruled ancient Japan is said to be as excellent a ruler as the saints of China. Insofar as the *Doctrine of the Mean* and the three sacred treasures are “texts” and “symbols” with which these individuals explained universal “virtue” and the “Way,” their meanings, of course, are in accordance with each other and commentaries on them would all be the same if done by people who know the Way. In this way, Banzan's “Shinto” is different from the Confucianism, Buddhism, and Shinto that exist concretely in history and it is made abstract to a universal degree: the “Shinto of heaven and earth.” This basically means nothing more than benevolent governance and virtuous rule, and is not something that can be presented in advance with tenets like “act this way” or “be this way.” Its nature is such that measures or institutions can only be recognized as having been Shinto after they have turned Japan into a “civilized country” via “virtuous rule.” Holding that this was realized in ancient Japan, Banzan seeks the “revival” of it from the rulers of the time.

The premise of Banzan's assertion is a confidence that in all people of the world the ethics articulated by Confucianism are found as inherent principle (*ri*). Due to the universality of this “principle,” “saints” or “divine people” can perceive and preach the Way anywhere. While it goes without saying that generally in Neo-Confucianism the ethical worldview of heaven and human beings sharing the same principle (*tenjin ichiri* 天人一理) serves as a major premise, Banzan does not stop at just saying that the teachings of the single religious tradition of Confucianism are universally valid. The universal essence found in nature and humans just happened to be articulated in China, which had fortunate climatic conditions and became civilized at an early stage. While undeni-

ably basing his ideas on an ethics that comes from Confucianism, in the end he relativizes the Confucianism that actually exists in China and Japan. We must investigate how Banzan himself articulated Shinto, Confucianism, and Buddhism, which people now normally understand as separate “religions.”

The Great Way and the Small Ways

In *Shūgi washo* 集義和書, *Shūgi gaisho* 集義外書, and his other major works, Banzan uses the concepts of “Way” and “forms” to distinguish between the essential nature and concrete historical forms of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Shinto.

Forms are not even the same among the saints of China. They change with the ages. Even if one tries to apply such forms to Japan, it would be difficult to implement many things. The Way is the “three bonds and five constants” [*sankō gojō* 三綱五常]. The “three bonds” correspond to heaven, earth, and people, and the “five constants” to the “five elements” [*gogyō* 五行]. Even when there was no word for virtue and no teachings of the saints, this Way was already being carried out. Even when humans did not live, it was carried out by heaven and earth, and even when heaven and earth were not separate, it was carried out by the Great Void [*taikyo* 太虛]. Even if [in the future] humans cease to exist and heaven and earth returns to nothingness, the Way will not extinguish. How could it—even just a little—simply because it is a later time?

(*Shūgi gaisho*, 227)

Here, the Way of the “three bonds and five constants” runs throughout heaven, earth, and people and is held to be the principle that exists without beginning or end. On the other hand, forms are relative institutions and products of civilization that are both bound by the concrete conditions of time, place, and position and have been created by outstanding figures of the past (such as saints and divine people). He explains these as follows.

The saints create forms in accordance with time, place, and position so that things will go well. Therefore, forms exist alongside the Way in their era. While these are called forms of the saints, if the time passes and people’s situations change, they can be difficult to use. When carrying out forms that do not match the era in a forced fashion, the Way is impeded. Much of that which is held to be and carried out as the Way by scholars of today are forms. If it is not what is best for time, place, and position, it is not the Way. (*Shūgi gaisho*, 227)

The concrete forms generally known as Confucianism are just the forms of ancient China. Banzan states that existing forms were established amid a time, place, and position that were entirely different, and discusses how to reestablish in his time positive forms that can be seen as the Way.

Banzan calling these forms “Shinto” and not Confucianism is related to him often calling the Way the “Great Way.” While normally Confucianists discuss the “Way” within the scope of Confucianism, Banzan sometimes argues even that he is not a Confucianist. He does so while pointing to his own academic background, actual experience in political matters, and his critique of the current state of Confucianists in Japanese society.

He first describes the Great Way in the context of a critique of Confucianists’ factionalism. From Banzan’s perspective, the “vulgar hearts” of scholars who, claiming that they are true Confucianists, compete over who can do extraordinary things and try to make a name for themselves by criticizing other scholars are impediments to the Way being carried out in the world. The problem with these people who strictly observe forms (*kakuhōsha* 格法者) was not simply that they were mistaken about how to practice the Way. He states, “scholars of today attached to forms do not know benevolence and justice [*jingi* 仁義], have robust emotions as vulgar people competing with others and pursuing interests, and, engaging in Confucian-like acts, using forms, and discussing scripture commentaries and interpretations just because this is in accordance with their inclinations, think that they are people of the Way.” In this way, Banzan holds that they are egotistical people who go against the Way, carrying out their studies based on their inborn abilities and tastes and in fact only following the vulgar emotions of the self (*Shūgi gaisho*, 228). Never mind those who just uncritically believe in the words of Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130–1200) and Wang Yangming 王陽明 (1472–1529) and practice formulaically—he says this is only theater that imitates form. Forms are entirely human-made, and even if their creator is a saint or wise man of the ancient past, the moment that they fail to be in accordance with time, place, and position, this no longer conforms to the Way and is no different from the likes of Buddhist transmigration thought, which Banzan held to be fictitious expedient means.

Banzan thought that people should engage in academic study only for the purposes of cultivating the self and keeping order in one’s family in the private realm and of creating an ideal society together by ruling the country and bringing peace to the world in the public realm. Therefore, since the Way of the saints is the ethics of the five relationships [*gorin* 五倫], it is the Way that should be learned by people of all social statuses (rulers, nobles, state ministers and state officials, warriors, and commoners), and it would be better if the likes of “Confucianists,” who make academic instruction their living, did not exist (*Shūgi washo*, 23). Also, “If it is learning it should be called learning, and if it is the Way it should be called the Way. It is harmful to give them names such as ‘the Confucian Way’ [*judō* 儒道] and ‘Heart-Mind Learning’ [*shingaku* 心学]” (*Shūgi washo*, 213). Elsewhere he states, “The Confucian way is the name of [the Way] in a time of declined virtue. The Great Way does not originally have a name.”

In this way, Banzan held that adopting the name “Confucianism” and becoming attached to distinctive etiquette (Ch. *li* 礼; Jp. *rei*) and doctrines is a cause of falling into a “small way” or “sectarian learning” (*ichiryū no gaku* 一流の学) that competes with Buddhism and the like. If people just follow their preferences and form factions, then even if they study Confucianism and call themselves Confucianists, they are no different than Buddhism’s various groups. If one wants to be universal, then it is appropriate to call it simply the Great Way.

Furthermore, Banzan also critiqued the various schools within Confucianism if they were factionalist. Regarding Zhu Xi Neo-Confucianism, he states the following.

Those who study Zhu Xi Confucianism now are satisfied with anything, regardless of content, if they are said to be the words of Zhu Xi, just like the tendency in the Nichiren sect and elsewhere to believe Nichiren. Therefore, the sacred classics are hidden due to commentaries, and the method of cultivating the heart-mind [*shinpō* 心法] becomes distant due to exegesis of the classics. [Such mistaken errors of] Zhu Xi Confucianists actually made Zhu Zi a criminal who obstructs the teachings of the saints. (*Shūgi gaisho*, 267)

When one forgets the practice of “making use of what one has learned” (*juyō kufu* 受用工夫) and is attached to form, no matter how faithful one is to Zhu Xi’s words, one is no longer a student of the teachings of the saints. Uncritically believing in something is always the same, even if the object of belief is Nichiren. Banzan criticizes Yangming Confucianists, stating that they are “mistaken about humanity, excessively simplify teachings, and are similar to other heretical teachings of enlightenment. Those who study this increase this harm” (*Shūgi gaisho*, 267). The “other heretical teachings of enlightenment” probably refers to Zen Buddhism.

Here we find types of religious traditions that Banzan articulated as different from the Great Way. One was uncritical, obstinate belief, like that of Nichiren sect believers, and another was the pursuit of one’s own mental peace in an asocial fashion, like Zen priests. Banzan asserts that they do not lead to the construction of an ideal society and are therefore not the Great Way. On the one hand, as a result of his unrelenting investigation of the essential nature of Confucianism by comparing with other traditions not its doctrinal content but its societal function, he criticizes the studies and learning of Confucianists in society as not being true, original Confucianism; on the other hand, he declares that his own study and learning is not the Confucianism spoken of by people in society.

Also, Banzan, describing his own academic background in detail, states that in the end he arrived at a method of not relying on Zhu Xi or Wang Yangming and directly approaching classical texts. This immediacy vis-a-vis the Way itself

and classical texts is something that distinguishes Banzan's academic approach. Relying on his own heart-mind that is originally one with "heaven," along with Confucius, Zhu Xi, and Wang Yangming, he seeks the Great Way that was sought by the emperors Yao 堯 and Shun 舜.

Banzan, boldly relativizing the words of Zhu Xi and Wang Yangming, of course appeared arrogant and heretical to his contemporary Confucianists. To criticisms from such scholars who say "your study of the Way is close to the Way of Laozi 老子 and Zhuangzi 莊子; claiming that forms are different from the Way itself, it is not based on the etiquette and teachings of Confucianism" (*Shūgi gaisho*, 328). Banzan responds with the criticism that present-day Zhu Xi Confucianism and Yangming Confucianism do not aim to "rule the country and bring peace to the world," and fall into sectarian study.

The likes of Yangming Confucianism and Zhu Xi Confucianism's people who strictly observe forms are just sectarian schools. Even if they end up having more followers in the future than at present, this is only because they have gathered people fit for their school. This is like how the Zen sect and Precept [sect] priests exist in society, and these are not teachings that rule the country and bring peace to the world. (*Shūgi gaisho*, 328)

His "Like how the Zen sect and Precept sect priests exist in society" refers to stopping at forming groups based on the times, with acceptance depending on the latest trends and individual tastes. This way of being means that Yangming Confucianism and Zhu Xi Confucianism do not conform to time, place, and position, and that they do not have the viability to move the country or the world. I want to highlight that Banzan, going beyond a Confucianism/Buddhism framework, articulates teachings based on whether they function as "teachings that rule the country and bring peace to the world."

Here, Banzan's "Great Way" discourse is connected to Daoism by a critic. There is no doubt that this discourse was based on the Daoists' "When the Great Way declined, benevolence and righteousness came to be preached," a criticism of Confucianists that points to a "Great Way" / "Great Togetherness" (*daidō* 大同) utopia that existed before various academic factions emerged and fought with each other.

A long time ago Zhuang Zhou 莊周 [c. 369 BC–c. 286 BC] criticized Confucius. This is because he was trying to protect the Great Way. Those in the world who said that they believe in Confucius were [actually] not on the path of Confucius. While advocating Confucianism, they were immersed just in criticizing each other. Zhuang Zhou thus rejected Confucius along with them, wanting to make the Great Way clear. (*Shūgi gaisho*, 193)

This is an assessment in which Banzan overlays himself with Zhuang Zhou. He was proud that he was going beyond the framework of normal Confucianism and discussing a “great” way that encompassed Daoism.¹

From the above, Banzan’s concept of the “Great Way” that exists in distinction to “sectarian study” and “small ways” has surely become clear. With a half century having passed since the establishment of the shogunate and society having stabilized, Banzan thought it was a good opportunity to make the “Way” a reality. It was for this very reason that he thought that becoming a *kakuhōsha* and alienating oneself from ordinary people after having gone through the effort to learn Confucianism was to lose sight of why one did so in the first place. If one truly wants to realize the Great Way, then rulers must establish forms that, conforming to time, place, and position, can be accepted by all people and include the various “small ways.” Banzan, who took pride in having acquired the essence of the “Way of the saints” through his unique academic stance of “understanding the general idea based on an extreme view [*kyōken* 狂見]” (*Shūgi washo*, 78), had to leave behind the label of “Confucian” in protest against the Confucianists in general.

The “Great Way” of the “Great Togetherness”

There were also people who, pointing out that people who follow Confucian etiquette naturally had begun to appear in Japan, sincerely wondered if this was an opportunity to spread proper etiquette. While agreeing (“this is truly what I wish for”), he replied that the conditions of the times did not yet allow for this on the grounds that such people “only interact with a few people and thus do not know the feelings of the numberless people in the mundane world.” Thinking that such people did not understand the true meaning of Confucian etiquette as forms, Banzan went back to the legendary sacred emperors to explain the process by which etiquette was created.

According to Banzan, in the era of Fuxi 伏羲, “study/learning” (*gaku* 学) arose, and then in the time of Shennong 神農, techniques to nourish the people

1. Banzan understands Laozi’s *wuwei* 無為 as not a lack of etiquette but as having the same meaning as Confucianism’s “self-restraint and conforming to etiquette” (*kokki fukurei* 克己復礼) (*Shūgi washo*, 180). Taki Yasuhide 瀧康秀 says Banzan, who equates the “golden mean” (Jp. *chū* 中) and *wuwei* and frequently uses the expression “helping the Creator’s work” (*zōka no kō o tasukeru* 造化の功を助ける) was influenced by *Yanzhai kouyi* 鷹齋口義 (Jp. *Kensai kōgi*; by the Southern Song’s Lin Xiyi 林希逸; 1193–1271). Taki notes that one of the characteristics of the “heart-mind studies” of the latter is seeing “the Creator” (*zōka* 造化) as ultimate *wuwei*, as well as holding that if humans give up their selfishness the “heart-mind can embody the functioning of the ‘natural principle’ and ‘the Creator,’ which actively generates and nurtures all phenomena” (TAKI 1998, 78).

(“agriculture and medical arts”) were invented. However, “etiquette and laws” (*reigi* 礼儀, *hatto* 法度) did not yet exist. While during the time of the Yellow Emperor (Huangdi 黄帝), rites, music implements, and writing appeared, there were still no detailed rules such as the dates and periods for coming of age, marriage, funerals, and ancestral rites. During the time of the five emperors (*gotei* 五帝), a general framework for etiquette and laws came into place, but they were still “simple and easy to carry out.” Etiquette at the time “encouraged people to do good through moral influence while not going against their feelings, and rules were created because people [who had thereby been made ethical] wanted them” (*Shūgi washo*, 93). They were not coercions or prohibitions pushed down from above. However, after going through the Xia 夏 and the Shang 商 and reaching the Zhou, civilization spread, and goods, food, and drink were no longer lacking. The world became peaceful and people had more leeway in their daily lives. It was at this point that for the first time many “etiquette-based temperances” and dates and periods for rites were established in detail out of concern that “people’s moods” would flood over and flow into luxurious splendor.

This development of etiquette in stages was all carried out in accordance with “time, place, and position,” and it is not the case that the lack of “etiquette and laws” meant that the knowledge of Fuxi and Shennong was inferior to that of the Duke of Zhou (Zhougong 周公) and Confucius. If they had been born in each other’s eras, then they would have handled etiquette as each other did. Because etiquette is established by the saints of each era in accordance with their times, each of their formulations of etiquette were correct in their respective limited situations. Therefore, for Banzan, Confucian etiquette is not something that should just be practiced by following exactly what is written in the classics, or by simplistically putting it into forms that can be practiced. The etiquette written in the Confucian classics is nothing more than the traces of the saints who sought etiquette that was in accordance with their time, and it is necessary to determine what etiquette from history is applicable to the time, place, and position of contemporary Japan.

Banzan described (*Shūgi washo*, 93) the Japan in which he lived as follows: while “the plethora of goods and people living luxuriously exceeds that of the richness at the height of the Zhou,” the “people’s heart-minds not becoming ethical through etiquette is similar to that of the era of Fuxi.” While the people during this time did not need etiquette, being “simple, honest and kind with little desire and no spirit of pursuing interests,” people today have “much desire and a deeply rooted spirit of pursuing interests, and these habits are not just ones accumulated over the course of ten or one hundred years but are firmly rooted and deeply impregnated.” Therefore, if something is done all of a sudden that goes against their desire to benefit themselves then “the Way will not be real-

ized.” Therefore, Banzan said that people should do things in stages and wait for the general public to desire etiquette, like “guiding a young child.”

The vulgar people of the past five or six hundred years are like five- or six-year-old children. First, with the policy of creating schools, open up the knowledge that distinguishes between good and evil and promote the appropriateness of knowing shame so that people will act appropriately. One should wait for an outstanding ruler to appear after this has accumulated for dozens or even hundreds of years, and then have etiquette be created. (*Shūgi washo*, 94)

Even if at present there are people who desire Confucian etiquette, there are only one or two people of outstanding talent among one hundred or so young children. If teachers educate at the level of these talented individuals, then they will take pride in being better than others, and while they will extend their abilities and knowledge, they will lose sincerity (*sei* 誠). Also, the majority of young children who cannot keep up will undoubtedly develop a dislike for learning itself.

Banzan encourages enthusiastic scholars who try to shoulder the Way to reflect if they want to practice unsuitable etiquette due to their vulgar emotions (*Shūgi washo*, 95). If one is going to become conceited by engaging in academic study and go astray from the human way, then it is better to not study and live in accordance with one's inborn wisdom (*ryōchi* 良知). If one implements forms that are estranged from the people, then society will see Confucianists as “only a school of Chinese-style scholars,” and, just as Precept sect priests maintain the precepts and Zen priests engage in *zazen* 坐禪, this becomes “an isolated path of learning separate from the general public” (*Shūgi washo*, 95). As a result, the Way will not be carried out in the world. One should not tailor things to scholars but to the masses.

The saints enjoy themselves with mundane people. The people of Lu 魯 engaged in competitive hunting, and Confucius did so as well. To do things with the masses is the Great Way. When one should do good, one does good with the masses. When the time has not come, one behaves foolishly with the masses. Therefore, scholars do not leave behind the mundane. The Way is not separate from the masses. When it is time to carry out the Way after moral influence has fully spread, then one does so along with the world as a whole. During such times the masses do good as is recommended and no one goes against it. (*Shūgi washo*, 96)

In other words, Banzan saw the alienation of scholars from the masses (“the people of the mundane world”) as the biggest problem for the realization of the Way. He did not think that people would follow Confucianism when they are persuaded to reject Buddhism on logical grounds. Using this method it would probably be difficult to edify people even on an individual level, never

mind bring about change in society as a whole (including the masses/mundane world)—this would require a completely different process than scholars studying the classics and acquiring an understanding of the “human way.”

Here, Banzan emphasizes that his “Great Way” includes the nuance of the “Great Togetherness.” Asked why—despite the “Way” being, of course, originally “Great”—he calls it the “Great Way,” Banzan answers as follows.

The Way ordinarily spoken of is a small way. Therefore, the name the “Great Way” is necessary. The “Great Way” is the “Great Togetherness.” One should proceed with mundane people and not go out by oneself. One should act with the masses and not be different by oneself. If other people do something evil, just do not do it oneself. One should not censure or criticize others’ acts. If there is good to be done, then one should do it oneself, and not make others do so. It is similar to how an army general moves with his troops and is not too far ahead of them just because of his strength and braveness. Sometimes, when one sees signs that the masses can follow, one takes the lead. Even if one has the ability to do something on one’s own, one does not do things that are hard for the majority of people to follow. It surely goes without saying that the Way ordinarily studied in society is a small way. *(Shūgi washo, 88)*

Banzan says that etiquette is a device for improving the manners and customs of the general public, and should be carefully established from this kind of perspective as planned over dozens or a hundred years, and that Japanese people of his time should learn from the etiquette of emperors Yao and Shun, two saints that existed in history.

The rule of Yao and Shun should eternally be taken as a teacher and taken as a norm by other countries [in addition to China]. While etiquette was not yet found therein, it did exist in an undefined form. Rulers were very sincere and prudent and the world was therefore naturally at peace. The good of being simple was comparable to consummate virtue, and by realizing the mean and harmony, heaven and earth operated properly and all things developed healthily. . . . Even if it is the etiquette of the Three Dynasties [*sandai* 三代], that which does not match the moods of the people of the world, the times, and abilities should not be used. Even tens of thousands of years later, and even in the other country of Japan, the rule of Yao and Shun should be carried on and taken as a teacher. *(Shūgi washo, 280)*

While normally in Confucianism the etiquette of the Zhou is considered ideal, Banzan holds that since it is not appropriate for Japan’s climate, there is a need to follow the simple etiquette of emperors Yao and Shun. Also, in response to an interlocuter who says that it is probably impossible to return things to the simplicity of their time unless almost all of civilization is done away with, Banzan answers as follows.

In *wuwei* 無為 [Jp. *mui*], there is true *wuwei* and *wuwei* only in form. Ruling based on the time and not disliking the familiar is *wuwei*. Even if one wants to bring back the simplicity of ancient times immediately, this cannot be done. If people with power force this, then there will be much harm. While great wars in the world arise due to ostentatious winning and straightforwardness being lost, trying to make things thrifty and simple again is worse than just leaving ostentation and falsity as is and will actually make disturbances worse. Regardless of whether things are complicated or simple on the surface, if sincerity of the heart-mind is established and the world comes to respect sincerity, the essence of ancient *wuwei* and simplicity can be obtained. There is no harm in taking time to restore customs bit by bit. (*Shūgi washo*, 281)

“True” *wuwei* is to establish sincerity of the heart-mind while not removing the empty words and insincerity of familiar customs in a forced way. Instead of simple etiquette that is the traces of the rule of emperors Yao and Shun, one should imitate their presentation of the “essence of etiquette” in a “simple” form.

The importance of this simplicity is the result of natural human feeling and therefore is not limited to Confucianism. Regarding the flourishing and decline of Buddhism's various sects, Banzan states the following:

People tend to rely on things that are simple. Since there are no teachings as simple as the Ikkō sect, many people take refuge in it [the Ikkō sect]. The Pure Land and Nichiren sects also imitated the simplicity of the Ikkō and spread very widely. As things have become more civilized in recent years, fewer and fewer people believe in teachings regarding hell, the land of bliss, and so on. This will become more and more the case. The Zen sect teaches simply without difficult things, emphasizes enlightenment, and does not focus that much on hell after death. This fits the era of civilization. However, Zen today, wanting foolish men and women to come to it, preaches teachings that have been made to seem mystical. This is for its own benefit, and goes against what was transmitted by the patriarchs. If it stops doing so then it will flourish more and more and other sects will lose. (*Shūgi washo*, 330)

Based on his insight into the human society in front of him, Banzan asserted that it is important for the Way of the saints to be “simple” so that it can be accepted by the masses and carried out as the Great Togetherness. We could say that Banzan also is trying to imitate the simplicity of the Ikkō sect.

From the “Great Way” to “Shinto”

While Banzan had in the past aimed to engage in the three-year practice of mourning found in Confucian etiquette, upon reflection he says that this was based on his own vulgar desire of seeking fame. Emphasizing that to make the Great Way flourish one must not leave behind the “masses” or the “mundane,”

he uses the expression, originally from Laozi, of “dimming the light and mingling with the dust” (Ch. *heguang tongjen* 和光同塵; Jp. *wakō dōjin*):

Even if those who aim to realize the Great Way know that they should engage in mourning [for three years]; if this is something that the people of their time cannot do, then they should dim their light and mingle with the dust, and, looking at things as if tens of thousands of years is a single day [that is, from a long term perspective], do things naturally without contrivance, start a business and present something that successors will take over, and proceed along with the masses. One should not seek fame for oneself. Those who do things that the masses cannot are not teachers of the world. This is just getting caught up in forms and becoming a single school. If one leaves behind the mundane world, one will never be able to give rise to the Way. (*Shūgi washō*, 83)

Banzan probably developed this view while being involved in the center of Okayama domain politics and experiencing friction with retainers critical of Confucianism.² Also, in *Shūgi gaishō* (332–36), he recognizes the importance of the existence of Buddhist funerals because they are simple (“While Buddhists are uncivilized heretics, they are in some ways suited for Japan’s climate and times”; *Shūgi gaishō*, 332). He even approves of cremation, which normal Confucianists abhorred on the grounds that it was lacking in benevolence and filial piety. It is now a “custom of the general public,” and it would be impossible in this society to have commoners practice the mourning rites found in *Zhuzi jiali* 朱子家礼 (Jp. *Shushi karei*; The Family Rituals of Zhu Xi) due to their high cost. Therefore, “if they have momentum that matches the present time and place and it would be difficult for us to go against the world’s current, it is fine to carry out Buddhist funerals” (*Shūgi gaishō*, 336).

Today, even if genius or wise rulers appear, it would be impossible to have everyone all the way down to commoners carry out the Confucian rituals of *Zhuzi jiali*. Commoners do not have enough food, clothing, and shelter to live, and cannot keep wind and rain out of their houses. The situation is one in which farmers only have enough assets for farming and merchants only enough for business, and barely enough at that—how could they have the leeway to do funeral etiquette? (*Shūgi gaishō*, 337)

He even says, “When the Way declines and there are many foolish people, thankfully there are forms of Buddhism. Funerary and other rites can be carried out in a simple and brief way. This is also the will of heaven” (*Shūgi gaishō*, 338).

2. Confucianism had not yet spread in seventeenth century warrior society, and it tended to be met with repulsion and mockery (WATANABE 2016). Retainers criticized the Confucianism-inclined Okayama Domain Lord Ikeda Mitsumasa 池田光政 (1609–1682) and people plotted to drive out Banzan, who had been given an important post as a Confucianist.

However, Banzan is only rejecting Confucianism and approving of Buddhism for its simplicity with regard to funeral rites at the time. The etiquette for the ideal society that should be aimed for as a one-hundred-year plan is not Confucianism or Buddhism but “Shinto.”

To “friends in learning” (*gakuyū* 学友) who say that if people gradually become wiser and stop believing in Buddhism “one hundred years from now Confucianism will rise and the world will be at great peace” (*Shūgi gaisho*, 330), Banzan partially affirms this idea, stating that while in theory this is true and in the past he thought so as well, “Looking at the mountains, ponds, grass, trees, people’s moods, and the conditions of the times in light of Japan’s recent climate, rituals and teachings do not spread or last long if they do not have the good of simplicity. Therefore Buddhism, which is simple and fits Japan’s climate, will probably continue into the future” (*Shūgi gaisho*, 330). Banzan is also asked, “If Buddhists are getting along despite not being benevolent just because of their simplicity, if the saints’ way of benevolent governance was simple, how victorious would it be? If so, if the Way of the saints is finally realized, then undoubtedly the forms of the Western lands’ barbarians [that is, Buddhism] would perish.” However, he is pessimistic, stating, “Scholars that do simple good and are fit for the climate will probably not appear” (*Shūgi gaisho*, 330). Confucianists in general are far “from simple good,” and he laments that when he advocates the Great Way, it is censured as being “Daoism and heretical” (*Shūgi gaisho*, 330). Even so, out of his sense of responsibility (“if my words do not remain when disorder arrives after Confucian forms have been carried out by the book, the Way will be almost lost”), he concludes as follows: “In Japan today, if it is not very simple in comparison to the etiquette forms of the Zhou to the extent that it is mistakenly seen as Daoism, then it cannot not be widely used in the world and carried out by future generations” (*Shūgi gaisho*, 330). In other words, he thought that there was a need for new forms that consisted of both the ethical nature of Confucianism and the simplicity of Buddhism and Daoism. Banzan called this “Shinto.”

My wish is as follows: that people bring back the Shinto of ancient times, establish sincerity, do not lean towards Chinese forms, do not follow Buddhism’s forms, and, using simple good, carry out the Great Way that is easy to know and easy to follow. However, scholars today do not know that they themselves are holding the Confucian way down while saying that they will make it flourish, as well as helping Buddhism while saying that they will beat it back. Buddhists’ lack of benevolence and Confucianists being stuck in principles are the same in that they ignore Shinto. (*Shūgi gaisho*, 331)

By advocating the rebirth of Japan’s “ancient Shinto” that was simple to the same degree as the rule of emperors Yao and Shun, one can work to realize the original Way without being dragged down by Buddhists, who do not aspire for

an ethical society, and Confucianists, who are preoccupied with the arguments and have lost sincerity. After stating, “There is the Great Way that reveals the noble virtue of the ages of the gods that has remained in subsequent generations, investigates the laws of the Dynastic period, considers in detail people’s present moods and the situation of the times, and helps the universe nurture all phenomena” (*Shūgi gaisho*, 331), he explains how “etiquette and laws” should be:

It is said that the Way is like a large road. It should be something that the masses also [in addition to scholars] can rely on. The five teachings and ten kinds of correctness [*goten jūgi* 五典十義] of the five relationships are this. The ethical essence of an illiterate person is sometimes superior to scholars because their nature is received from heaven. Etiquette is that which ornaments and assists this. It should be carried out with the masses while considering time, place, and position. (*Shūgi gaisho*, 331)

Banzan’s idea was the creation of simple etiquette like the one that existed in ancient times which enabled people to extend their inborn ethical natures without academic study and could be carried out even by poor commoners. This yet-to-be-realized “coming etiquette,” which combines the ethics of Confucianism with the simplicity of Buddhism, is the etiquette of “Shinto.” While at first glance it appears that Banzan is speaking of a rebirth of Shinto as it existed in the ancient past, in fact, driven by a utopian passion, he is discussing a Shinto that is to come in the future. This is neither the Shinto commonly spoken of by the general public, Confucianism, nor Buddhism. He renders Confucianism abstract to the extent that we could call it a social theory. Banzan, isolated among Confucianists for this reason, used the word “Shinto” to express the future forms that he conceived of based on this theory.

Banzan chose the name “Shinto” after calculating that it would have certain effects. Responding affirmatively to the words of a Buddhist priest who rejects even attachment to joining the Buddhist order on the grounds that it is attachment, Banzan states the following:

While I study the Way of the saints, I am not attached to Confucianism and also know the dubiousness of learning geared towards the masses. I also know the wastefulness of Zhu Xi Confucianism, Yangming Confucianism, and so on. There are no learnings that should be adopted in their entirety. The Shinto of heaven and earth [that is inherent in the natural world] is the Great Way. In our country, there is Shinto, which is based on Japan’s climate. While it is said that the Great Way has no name, since it is the way of our country, if one is forced to choose a name, one should choose Shinto. (*Shūgi gaisho*, 271)

When naming the nameless way, Banzan is able to rhetorically connect a universal “Way of the saints” and Japan’s particular “Shinto of the future” that is restricted by Japan’s climate. He does so by using the match between the com-

pound *shintō* (Ch. *shendao*; “mysterious way”) found in *The Book of Changes* and the compound used to refer to Japan’s native teachings and practice system related to the gods. Banzan’s argument is quite convenient in that it is easy to accept for those who are repelled by the foreign Confucianism (it takes into account favoritism for one’s country with the phrase “since it is the way of our country”), as well as for conservative people who dislike the new. Furthermore, the term *shintō* also has the merit of being something that can connect with commoners who do not have anything to do with book-based learning. As shown by the poem “If just the heart-mind is in accordance with the way of sincerity, then the gods will protect without prayer” (*kokoro dani makoto no michi ni kananaba, inorazu totemo kami ya mamoran* 心だにまことの道にかないなば、祈らずとても神や守らん), a discourse had spread on a general level that made prayer to the gods and buddhas rational and ethical by placing the gods within the heart-mind. For this reason, he is able to include everyone from those who simply seek worldly benefits through ritual practice related to shrines to those who have the capability to learn about higher-level moral doctrines. It appears that Banzan thought that the intellectuals incorporated into part of the Shinto that covered the entirety of society are not estranged and isolated from the “mundane world” or “masses,” as was the case with Confucianists who emphasized formal forms.

Also, writing a Confucian interpretation onto the so-called “three deities’ oracles” (*sanja takusen* 三社託宣) and holding that the three divine implements, which were already connected with the three virtues in Shinto teachings from the middle ages, are Japan’s only divine scripture, Banzan actively tried to incorporate the simple resources possessed by the Shinto tradition. He lays out this posture in *Shintō taigi* 神道大義 (The Gist of Shinto). Therein, the important points of the “Way of humans” and the “Way of the rulers” are explained plainly and concisely. For example, Shinto takes “honesty as the body, kindness and respect as the heart-mind, and just doing what should be done [*buji* 無事] as practice.” This “kindness and respect” is “without giving mind to it, naturally present regardless of whether one studies or not” (*Shintō taigi*, 11). Or, since Japan and China “have the same human nature and the common Way,” “those versed in Shinto have clearly acquired the method of cultivating the heart-mind and are equipped with political teachings [*seikyō* 政教], even if they do not use Confucianism. How could there be a need for the heretical Buddhism? [Shinto is] simple, self-evident, and fully-equipped and thus complete” (*Shintō taigi*, 14). In this way, he emphasizes that anyone can put into practice the Way without studying Confucian classics.

“Simplicity” and “Nature”

As previously described, in the end, Banzan’s “rebirth of Shinto” means the creation of “simple forms” fit for the Japan of his time. While simplifying the rituals found in *Zhuzi jiali* to be implementable was something that everyone aiming to put Confucian etiquette into practice did to some extent, Banzan was advocating creating something new. Asked if simplicity (*ikan* 易簡) and abbreviated standards (*ryakugi* 略儀) for rituals and etiquette are similar, he responds as follows.

They are quite different. The teachings of the saints have a simple good and do not present abbreviated standards [*ryakugi*] [for rituals and etiquette]. When abbreviated standards are taught to people, etiquette dies. When etiquette dies, extravagance arises. In times of extravagance, things used are ornamented and deeds become complicated. When things are complicated, falsity arises. When things are excessively ornamented, abbreviated standards are carried out more and more.

(*Shūgi washo*, 305)

For example, if the colors and design of a lower-class samurai’s ceremonial clothes (*eboshi* 烏帽子, *hitatare* 直垂, and so on) are established, one can carry out rituals with one set of them, and a situation will not emerge in which people will acquire multiple ones and compete over looks. However, at some point the *hitatare* coat and *hakama* 袴 skirt were abbreviated into the combined jacket and skirt called a *kamishimo* 袴, and since this is nothing more than the abbreviation of standards bit by bit, a limitless number of types emerge and costs mount. It is a situation in which “due to abbreviated standards people become lavish and their etiquette disappears, and things become glitzy and complicated” (*Shūgi washo*, 306). Since this is troublesome and costs are considerable, even honest people must commit falsehoods when trying to be in accordance with the ways of the lavish world. In order to avoid a chain reaction of people amplifying each other’s desire to consume while seeking to be different in their possessions and behavior, from the beginning, a simple and moderate model should be established after calculating its effects.

When doing so, since the ethics for the five relationships is inherent even in those who are illiterate and “etiquette decorates and assists this,” when creating etiquette one aims for people to stay close to the natural foundation that is called the “essence of etiquette” (*rei no moto* 礼の本) (*Shūgi washo*, 312). Banzan thought that “simplicity” was inevitable in both the natural world and human nature, as well as basis and effectiveness.

When etiquette is simple and in accordance with time, place, and position, there is harmony and it is easy to carry out. Heaven governs based on it being known easily (*i* 易). Earth nurtures phenomena based on it being brief (*kan* 簡). Heaven and earth’s hierarchical positioning is nature’s etiquette. The good

of simplicity is harmony. When [the etiquette of humans] is easy, it is easy for the people to know, and when it is brief it is easy to follow. When it is easy to know the people have an affinity for it. When it is easy to follow it is effective. Just as the moon and sun alternately shine and the seasons never cease to change, this is the nature of the eternal, unending heavenly way. This is the essence of etiquette and music. (Shūgi washo, 245)

In other words, when Banzan speaks of “simplicity,” he is referring not only to having a limited number of things so that the masses can easily put them into practice, and refraining from forcing through policies that go against people’s customs. He is also referring to being in accordance with the natural principle of heaven and earth by being moderate and appropriate so that the original effects of etiquette can be acquired.

Emperors Yao and Shun were the first to discover the method of cultivating the heart-mind found in *The Book of Changes*, and named it the “mean” [chū 中]. In other words, even with regard to keeping peace, ruling a country, and running a family, there is no method of cultivating the heart-mind or way besides the mean. The heavenly principle [tenri 天理] being un-arisen in oneself is called the mean, and the heavenly principle having arisen in oneself is called harmony [wa 和]. Cultivating oneself, keeping order in one’s family, ruling the country, and bringing peace to the world is already-arisen harmony. This is the same as the mean. Things acquiring the highest good of the heavenly principle and being the simplest and briefest is the mean, in other words, harmony.

(Shūgi washo, 34)

The mean is in accordance with the natural principle of heaven and earth. However, the mean is not a concrete norm. It is proof that one’s actions to obtain the “result” of cultivating oneself, keeping order in one’s family, ruling the country, and keeping peace under heaven—in other words, the acquisition of “harmony”—were in accordance with the heavenly principle. The mean state is originally balanced simplicity. The etiquette of the Zhou was complicated because it was made in accordance with the needs of the times. In other words, its complicatedness was a necessary evil. Banzan enthusiastically praises and takes as an ideal the “ancient time of supreme rule based on supreme virtue,” when, without anything like doctrinal study or the way of politics, things were governed by a naturally-arising “essence of etiquette,” a “Shinto” in which “heaven and earth were a book, phenomena were characters, and spring, summer, winter, and fall pass and the moon and sun alternatively shine” (Shūgi gaisho, 429).

The mind of benevolence arising based on spring naturally arriving is the same natural phenomenon as people of the same mind coming together, the same sounds resonating together, water flowing to damp places, and fire moving

to dry places. Why would there be a need to use words? Since later people became foolish and could not make heaven and earth their teacher, symbol-based teachings were created. The symbols created in Japan are the three divine sacred treasures. The symbols created in China are the eight trigrams. In latter times it is harder and harder to instruct even with the symbolic. Therefore, books were created. (*Shūgi gaisho*, 429)

In the past, “people, in accordance with the operation of nature that is based on the heavenly principle, worked or rested without volition intervening. This was *wuwei*.” In this way, there was natural harmony with heaven and earth. However, after this natural harmony is lost, harmony has to be restored with *wuwei* (“simple,” “mean”) governance in accordance with time, position, and place (“It is said that things were at peace, despite the ruler’s natural governance—not forced in accordance with time and place—and the world and country being pure all having been *wuwei*”; *Shūgi washo*, 177). For this reason, symbols and books have been created in accordance with the various eras.

Under a worldview that holds harmony with the generating and nurturing heaven and earth to be human happiness as well as the responsibility of humans, Banzan, relying on his reason and experience, discusses a universal essence of nature and humans, and, based on this, searches for institutions and forms of etiquette that are rational and without excess or lack. This was Banzan’s Shinto of the future. While ancient saints were extraordinary and excellent figures, the teachings and etiquette established by them do not have absolute orthodoxy. The natural principles of heaven/earth should be used as norms.

Banzan’s theory relativizes the writings in scripture as nothing more than the footprints of saints, departs from existing religious organizations and a traditional scriptural interpretive framework, and rationalistically seeks out the essence and realization of the Way. It differs from a “unity of the three teachings” (*sankyō itchi* 三教一致) discourse like the one that had gone along approvingly with the coexistence of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Shinto since the middle ages. It was a landmark theory comparable to the appearance of the theory of natural religion in the West. However, because at first glance it appears similar to the familiar modern discourse that understands these three entities as “religions,” its importance in Japanese religious history has been overlooked. Of course, one of the causes of this is that Banzan not only articulates the ethics which he presents as natural principles using Confucian terms (such as the five constant virtues), but he also calls these ethics “Shinto,” adorning them in continuity with tradition.

The theory of natural religion in the West was formed by freethinkers who maintained a distance from the Church. While opposing traditional doctrines, they often inherited Christian premises. Even so, in the sense that they removed or looked down on irrational elements like miracles and revelation, and discussed via reason-based verification a universal essence shared by ancient reli-

gions and non-Christian contemporary religions as well as the form of an ideal religion that should be brought back (or realized in the future), they were at a new stage that was different than the theology that had existed before them. In the same way, while it is certainly true that Banzan's ideas regarding the "Great Way" came out of Confucianism, he worked to reinterpret the three teachings based on reason and conscience (which were linked to the natural order) and lay a foundation for ethics in this mortal life using the essence shared by the three teachings. We can see it as a religious theory that arose out of the context of negotiations between the three (four) teachings in East Asia.

Conclusion

Above we have considered Banzan's Shinto theory while focusing on his idea of the "Great Way." It is notable as a religious theory for its focus on rulers, who edify the masses, creating "forms" that the masses put into practice. This was premised on a kind of natural religion theory that saw all of the historical three (four) teachings as sharing a common essence, namely, an ethics for this world with a cosmological significance. Banzan held that all forms are created by rulers trying to realize an ethical society via the rebuilding of societal institutions. He also explains the origins of the teachings and rituals of Shinto and Buddhism while patterning them after the origins of the teachings and rituals of Confucianism. He holds that outstanding figures of the past each established institutions in accordance with their time and climate based on their insight into heaven and earth as well as human nature.

In other words, for Banzan, religious traditions were devices for edification that work on the human subconscious in a non-linguistic fashion in order to realize universal ethics in society, and were something that should be discussed from the perspective of the institutions of rituals and music.³ While based on the moods and customs of the masses, it does not let them be as is, but aims for gradual change in accordance with the spread of virtue ("Politics should be carried out in accordance with the moods and customs of small people [that is, people of inferior character]. If one tries to carry out sudden changes, goes against people's moods, and makes them suffer, the Great Way will be unable to be realized"; *Shūgi washo*, 199). He explains this method as "like loving a young child and playing along with them" (*Shūgi giron kikigaki*, 68). An ancient person with the virtues of sharpness, sagacity, and bravery became the creator of forms and the outstanding ability to create the new (*shin* 神) in the heart-minds of the saints, anticipating the future, created things that would satisfy their various

3. I discuss Banzan's theory of religion that is based on Confucian "etiquette and music" theory in ISEKI (2015a).

demands. The intellect in their heart-minds cultivated ancient morality and created rules of etiquette, music, and models of conduct that fit the present, and taught the six classical arts, poetry, and history, thereby bringing [the people] to goodness (*Shūgi giron kikigaki*, 68).

While the creator epistemologically stands outside of the forms that they create, they act as if they are inside it with the people. This dual consciousness could be criticized as political trickery to win the people's hearts. However, adopting a view of the masses based on *The Analects* ("People cannot be made to know the Way but become good citizens in accordance with the Way by the moral influence of the ruler"), he states that

it is actually harmful to try to make all commoners know the Way with the likes of preaching like Buddhist priests. The moral influence of virtue-based rule is not like that. Influencing only a few is not very effective. It is not purposefully hiding [the Way] and refraining from informing them about it. While if everyone in the world knows the Way, ruling and edification is easy, but they cannot be made to know it. (*Rongo shōkai*, 112)

We could see this as a methodology that arose from directly facing the difficulty of preaching and convincing a group of each individual reason for things. If one does not face this difficulty and tries to apply the communication methods of fortunate intellectuals with wealth and time to society as a whole, the poor and busy masses will be made to think that it is impossible to practice the Way and they will be estranged from it. The end result will be the self-satisfaction of a handful of intellectuals acquiring fame. From Banzan's perspective, this is not a problem of the masses being unable to learn but with intellectuals who teach improperly.

This religious theory of Banzan is, of course, not discussing that which is called "religion" today from a neutral perspective. While keenly insightful into one part of what is called "religion" today, it has a pronounced bias, taking the unity of politics and religion as a premise. However, we could also say that it offers much to contribute to the present-day task of reconsidering the Western concept of religion. Rather than using the concept of religion from Western modernity as a standard from which to assess this, we need to carefully go through how he articulated this in a different historical context.

However, Banzan cannot, therefore, be immediately called a representative theorist of religion in early modern Japan. He offered a comparative theory of religion or theory of the essence of religion out of his interest in constructing an ethical society. For the time being I want to call it a statecraft theory of religion. Insofar as I am aware, a similar theoretical premise was shared by not only Confucianists but also Shintoists and Buddhists as one of the common fields for

intellectuals from the early modern times onwards to discuss religion.⁴ While Banzan called Shinto the concrete form that should be adopted when realizing a universal Way in Japan, the statecraft theory of religion should be considered an important background to the “Shinto” that would be reconstructed through the early modern and modern periods: Shinto’s approach in differentiating itself from other religions by calling itself the Great Way found in the Meiji period and later is surely related to this kind of theory of the universal and the particular.⁵ There are many related topics that should be researched. For example, this should include how this view of religion—or, rather, view of “teachings” (*kyō* 教) or the “ways”—that focuses on making people ethical, and societal unity led to, through negotiations with the understanding of religion imported during the Meiji period, the view that Shinto is not a religion, as well as the Japanese-style separation of religion and politics.⁶

(Translated by Dylan Luers Toda)

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4. Regarding ideas about Shinto that were influenced by Banzan, see ISEKI (2011; 2015b).

5. For example, Endō Jun 遠藤潤 shares the following assertion of a Shinto priest recorded in Tokoyo Nagatane’s 常世長胤 (1832–1886) *Shinkyō soshiki monogatari* 神教組織物語 (Shinto Organization Tales): “Shinto is the Great Way that rules the whole nation, and is not religion.” We could say that this was the reaction of someone, who saw Shinto as the “Great Way,” against “Shinto” being held to exist in a way comparable to the various Buddhist schools (*shūmon* 宗門). Banzan referred to these as “small ways.” See ENDŌ (2004, 176).

6. When Meiji period intellectuals discussed the relationship between politics and religion using the concept of “religion” (*shūkyō* 宗教) imported from the West, the Confucian view of religion, which up until then had been discussed using the term “teaching” (*kyō*), exerted a strong influence on a basic level, and led to the formation of the Meiji Emperor-system state. Regarding this, see WATANABE (2016).

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MITSUMATSU Makoto

The Successors of Hirata Theology

This paper will survey the current state of research on the influence of Hirata Atsutane's nativism (Hirata Kokugaku) on the Meiji Restoration. The three main points are summarized below:

1. Postwar researchers favored viewing Hirata Atsutane as a spiritualist and avoided examining the nationalistic side of the Hirata school. However, it is difficult to negate his influence on nationalistic movements during the Restoration.
2. Hirata's writings and other related artifacts in the National Museum of Japanese History have provided us with rich information on him, his family, and his disciples, greatly raising the standard of research. Consequently, research without the aid of these materials has lost much of its validity.
3. We should remain cautious against the popular understanding of the failure of Hirata's nativism in the first year of the Meiji era. Nativist scholars from the Tsuwano and Satsuma groups were also influenced by Atsutane, so the downfall of Hirata's direct disciples alone does not signify the decline of his influence on the Meiji administration.

KEYWORDS: Kokugaku (nativism)—Hirata school—Tsuwano school—Satsuma school—Meiji Restoration

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MANY discussions in the past have placed the nativism of Hirata Atsutane 平田篤胤 (1776–1843) as the intellectual origin of the Meiji Restoration. The following passages are rather extreme examples from during and after the war:

The doctrines of Atsutane—who advocated his views for about thirty years from Bunka 文化 to Bunsei 文政 to Tenpō 天保—were succeeded by Kanetane and Nobutane, and became the driving force to fulfill the great visions of the Meiji Restoration. This is now an established historical understanding. Even Atsutane himself probably did not expect his teachings—which were mistreated and repressed so much during his lifetime—would be revived after only twenty to thirty years and make such a great impact. Although the Meiji Restoration was an inevitable outcome of history, it still had its seeds (that is, causes). Unplanted seeds do not grow, but the seeds planted by Atsutane certainly grew and bore fruit. (WATANABE 1943)

Although Hirata was a very hard worker—and thereby also a very well-read person with a retentive memory—he had a contemptible personality and was called a “swindler” during his lifetime. It was truly a huge disaster for the Japanese people that Meiji leaders were influenced by the bogus teachings of this giant swindler. I believe that the root cause of the collapse of the Meiji government lies here. (TAKIKAWA 1950)

Both examples above are discourses directly linking Hirata’s nativism to the Meiji Restoration, but they also reveal the reversal in the evaluation of Hirata’s legacy after the war. In the context of wartime mobilization, Hirata’s focus on imperial rule was praised and an Atsutane boom occurred during the centennial of his death in 1943 (TANAKA 2009; MITSUMATSU 2016a). The former argument (by Watanabe) is a product of that time period, and the latter (by Takikawa) a reaction against it. At that time, talking about Hirata Atsutane also meant talking about the Meiji Restoration.

One hundred and fifty years after the Meiji Restoration, and more than seventy years since Japan’s defeat in the Second World War, the war can now be regarded as almost a halfway point in Japanese history from the Meiji Restoration to the present. I want to reflect on whether one should emphasize the influence of Hirata’s nativism in talking about the Meiji Restoration. I will first review the trends in postwar scholarship up to the present. On that basis, I will confirm

the influence of Hirata theology (*Hirata shingaku* 平田神学) on the Meiji administration for each of the groups in positions of power.

1. *Postwar Research on Hirata's Nativism*

1. THE TURN TOWARDS THE SPIRITUAL

Perhaps because the wartime Atsutane boom remained on people's minds as a loathsome memory, there was a considerable period of time after the war during which research on Atsutane was largely avoided. Even after the reexamination of Hirata's nativism began, there was a tendency not to recognize its significant influence on political movements at the end of the Edo period.¹ Instead, much more attention was paid to Atsutane's theological thinking about Amaterasu governing the Visible World (*kenkai* 顕界) and Ōkuninushi governing the post-death, Invisible World (*yūkai* 幽界)—where people would go after dying, and receive judgment—depending on the result—to become a *kami*. And the perennial image of Atsutane as the “pioneer of Japanese folklore studies” or the “seeker of Japanese spirituality”—with Orikuchi Shinobu's arguments as the starting point of such a portrayal—could also be evaluated as a product of the efforts to discuss Atsutane while avoiding negative wartime memories (see ORIKUCHI 1976; ASUKAI 2002; ASOYA 1989; KAMATA 1987; 2002; INOUE 1977; KOYASU 2001; SAGARA 1972; NUMATA 1984; HOSHIYAMA 2001; MIYAGI 2004; YOSHIDA 2016; YOSHIDA 2009). Atsutane's *Senkyō ibun* 仙境異聞 (“Strange Tales of the Land of Immortals”), which gained widespread attention thanks to Orikuchi, is a record of interviews with the boy Torakichi, who claimed to have a connection to the Invisible World. But this work by Atsutane was originally not even published as a *hanpon* 版本 (books printed from wooden blocks), and simply existed in handwritten form. Despite this fact, *Senkyō ibun* garnered much attention from those interested in the occult boom² and *yōkai* 妖怪,³ and it was taken up by Iwanami Bunko at the end of the twentieth century and republished again in 2018. The cover reads, “The testimony of a child who was kidnapped by

1. MATSUMOTO (1972) positions *bakumatsu* Kokugaku as an ideology that denies political practice and ensures the obedience of the governed, and TAHARA (1963) also sees the construction of theory for the stability of the lifestyle of the governed as an issue of Hirata's nativism. Both regard Hirata's nativism as something that stabilizes immediate order, and does not recognize it as an opportunity for reform. There may have been more nuance to Haga Noboru's arguments, but due to stylistic problems, it should be regarded as having had no significant impact.

2. In publications by Hachiman Shoten, besides *Senkyō ibun*, there are many by those from the Hirata school and Restoration Shintoists.

3. From around the end of the twentieth century, Atsutane and Torakichi were re-presented to the reading public by Mizuki Shigeru and Aramata Hiroshi. See ARAMATA and MAITA (2000), MIZUKI (2005), ARAMATA (2007).

a *tengu!*” The tendency to isolate the political movements of the *bakumatsu* era from Hirata’s nativism leads to the dissemination of the image of Atsutane in this type of nonpolitical context.⁴ Some even went as far as to claim that Hirata’s thought and the influence his nativism had on the Meiji Restoration should be treated altogether separately.⁵

Also among historians of religion of the Meiji period—as more and more empirical research was produced—the tendency to caution against the overestimation of the influence of Hirata has spread. Until the 1970s, there was still a general consensus that Hirata Atsutane played an important role in leading the Meiji Restoration ideologically.⁶ But gradually, more emphasis was placed on the unworldly qualities of Hirata theology (and its students) and the secular nature of Meiji state leaders. This led to the now common perception that views the Tsuwano school in leadership positions and the Hirata school on the margins of power (at least speaking exclusively about the first year of Meiji).⁷ Yasumaru Yoshio once regarded Atsutane’s doctrine as one that “is thought to have gained the status as the official ideology of the Meiji Restoration through the mediation of Ōkuni Takamasa and Hasegawa Akimichi,” and as the “mortal enemy in front of us—the arrogant and insensitive connection between nation-

4. The fact that Torakichi’s arguments could not have been unrelated to the *bakumatsu sonnō* movement has been made clear in MITSUMATSU (2009).

5. HOSHIYAMA Kyōko (2007, 38) thought that there should be “a strict distinction between the intrinsic understanding of thought and the social function that it came to fulfill as a result of that in later Japanese society.”

6. For example, according to Murakami Shigeyoshi,

Hirata Atsutane developed a new religious aspect of Kokugaku and created a systematic doctrine of Restoration Shinto. . . . Atsutane created his own Shinto funeral rituals and prayers, but Restoration Shinto essentially remained a doctrine of Shinto, and its substance as a religion was still immature, when it entered a period of intensifying political disputes during the *bakumatsu*-Restoration period. . . . In terms of the history of Shinto, where it had accomplished self-expansion through syncretization with developed foreign religions such as Buddhism, Confucianism, and Onmyōdo, Restoration Shinto was an unusual school of Shinto. The absolutization and exclusive nature of the fanatic Restoration was clearly different from the Shinto tradition. The reason why this kind of Shinto hereticism could become a political leadership ideology in the process of the political disputes of the *bakufu* overthrow was because that religious reactionism and *sonnō*-ism had ideologically based political effectiveness on the political purpose of the restoration of the monarchy, the central reunification of Japan through the restoration of the emperor’s ancient religious authority.

(MURAKAMI 1970, 66–67)

7. See, for example, INOUE and SAKAMOTO (1987); SAITO (2006); SAKAMOTO (1993; 1994); SHIMAZONO (2001); TAKEDA (1996); NITTA (1997); YASUMARU (2007a); YAMAGUCHI (1999). Regarding this period, HAGA (1994), and TAKAGI (1984) are also important, but they have been criticized for the context of the Hirata school vs. Tsuwano school.

alism and cultural assimilation—a fraudulent system of Japanese ‘modernization’ theory—that had cursed the Japanese people” (YASUMARU 2007b, 32, 47). But later Yasumaru changed the focus of his analysis of Atsutane, commenting that, “beginning in 1871 (Meiji 4), Hirata scholars and Shintoists were excluded from positions of responsibility in religious policy; some of them became the chief priests of large shrines and, as Shintoists, demonstrated a strong tendency to go along with the Meiji government’s policies. Caught in the tide of *bunmei kaika* 文明開化 (‘civilization and enlightenment’), Hirata’s religious philosophy—based on the belief in a spiritual reality—has largely retreated, and many Shintoists also adapted themselves to such circumstances. If anything, they mostly swam with the tide” (YASUMARU 2007c, 302). The above example shows how the image of Hirata’s nativism had changed from the public ideology of the Meiji Restoration—which had pioneered modernization theory—to a spiritualistic thought that became outdated and relegated to the background.

One of the arguments that emphasized the point that Hirata theology—which took seriously the existence of the Invisible World and theories about judgment after death—was ultimately not acceptable for the imperial state can be found in HARA (2001). Hara’s work first shows that Izumo/Ōkuninushi—which are contrasted with Ise/Amaterasu—hold great significance for Hirata theology as the main *kami* of the Invisible World. In the fourth year of Meiji, according to Hara, the Hirata group—who emphasized Izumo—was defeated by the Tsuwano group—who emphasized Ise. The movement to enshrine Ōkuninushi at the Shinto secretariat temple, led by Senge Takatomi, who succeeded Hirata theology—was also defeated before the Ise group. Hara argues that belief in the Invisible World and the religiosity of Shinto itself was denied by the government. Hara recognizes in Hirata theology—which emphasized the importance of Ōkuninushi—a potential that is distinct from the Amaterasu/emperor-centric state that actually came to be, and observes that Hirata’s legacy would eventually influence individuals like Deguchi Onisaburō and Oriuchi Shinobu.

Thus, in recent years, the widely circulated view is that Hirata’s nativism—which privileged spiritual matters—was not able to play an active role in the development of the Meiji nation, and that the discourse praising the Hirata group’s contribution to the nativist movement during the Meiji period was merely a product of subsequent generations.⁸

8. KATSURAJIMA Nobuhiro (2008, 127) states that the modern image of Kokugaku in academia seems to suggest a succession of Motoori-Hirata nativism, but that actually, this image was only created after the fall of nativism and its cosmology, and so the failed Hirata faction alone cannot accurately represent all of Kokugaku back then. See also FUJITA (2007).

2. *Rediscovery of Ibukinoya Materials*

Recent research and organization of the historical materials related to the Hirata school (Ibukinoya 気吹舎)—led by Yoshida Asako and Miyachi Masato—greatly changed the standard for research on Atsutane. They directed our attention to a number of important topics, including the impact of the Russian crisis in the early nineteenth century on the development of Atsutane’s thought, his interactions with other scholars of the same time period, the circumstances surrounding their publishing activities and discipleships, and the elucidation of Atsutane’s thought based on the comparative analysis of manuscripts (YOSHIDA 2016; MIYACHI 2015; YOSHIDA 2012; NAKAGAWA 2012; KOBAYASHI 2017). The standard for political history, social history, and bibliographic analysis has been raised dramatically, and it is now difficult to advance serious research through discussions that rely solely on the Hirata Atsutane *zenshū*.

Concerning the relationship between Hirata’s nativism and politics, the best argument is provided by Miyachi Masato—who had, from early on, been focused on the Hirata group at the end of the Edo period as a political information network (MIYACHI 1999; 2015). According to Miyachi, Atsutane’s thought—developed during the early nineteenth century as Russia approached Japan—was primarily concerned with the formation of national subjects that could confront the external crisis. This was a groundbreaking argument in that it once again foregrounded the image of Atsutane as a nationalist, and not necessarily in a negative way.

As for the *bakumatsu*-Restoration period, Miyachi examines how individuals in the commoner class became political actors towards the end of the Edo period, focusing on the South Shinano/East Mino regions—featured in *Before the Dawn* (*Yoakemae* 夜明け前), a well-known historical novel by Shimazaki Tōson—as the main stage. In other words, Hirata’s nativism expanded as a result of the imperial-shogunal division over trade treaties and the collapse of samurai authority; the regional middle class became politically active in this context, and the idea of a nation that directly connected the emperor and the people was conceived. While this generally led towards a centralized government based on *hanbatsu* 藩閥 (*han* favoritism), it also provided the impetus towards the Movement for Civic Rights and Freedom in the 1880s. This is the gist of Miyachi’s argument. It is a huge debate exploring the formation of a nation-state from the bottom up, using Hirata’s nativism as a starting point.

Following Miyachi’s work, research was advanced on Ibukinoya—which operated as the center of a political information network—and its activities during the end of the Edo period. The fact that Hirata Nobutane (the third head of the Hirata school) was active as a member of the *sonnō jōi* 尊王攘夷 group of Akita domain was revealed in detail by Amano Masashi 天野真志. Further-

more, my own research describes how the Hirata family—which had originally affirmed the emperor’s delegation of the administration of the country to the shogunate—came to disseminate *sonnō jōi* commentary after the conclusion of the trade treaty and ultimately argued in favor of *ōsei fukko* 王政復古 (“restoration of imperial rule”); see MIYACHI (2004; 2015); AMANO (2009; 2012; 2015; 2016), MITSUMATSU (2010; 2012a).

There was also some progress in research on the activities of the Hirata school in the new government. Concrete aspects of the conflict over the official teachings within educational facilities established in affiliation with a government agency or in connection with the Jingikan 神祇官 (Council of Divinities, 1868–1871)—among the Tsuwano school and surrounding nativist scholars—were examined in detail. Among other observations, it was revealed that Hirata Nobutane was somewhat embroiled in a conflict between Hirata’s direct disciples—such as Yano Harumichi and Maruyama Sakura who emphasized adherence to Atsutane’s theology (by opening, for instance, an inquisition over the location of the World of Darkness [*yomi* 黄泉])—and others like Fukuba Yoshishizu (Tsuwano school)—who was close to the Chōshū faction and sought to create his own concepts about ritual. It has also been shown how Hirata’s direct disciples—unable to promote their opinions about the closure of Kyoto Daigakkō 京都大学校 (the University at Kyoto) and Nobutane’s dismissal from the *senkyōshi* 宣教使 (the Office of Indoctrination) role—all lost their positions in a national criminal case in which they sought advice from a spirit medium called Maebashi Shinnyo 前橋神女 (1858–?) (ENDŌ 2012; KUMAZAWA 2007; MITSUMATSU 2013; 2016b).

In summary, it was confirmed by detailed examination that, in the process leading to the Meiji Restoration, Hirata’s nativism stimulated the formation of political subjects and that the Hirata group’s activities inside and outside the new government were frustrated by beliefs about spiritual matters and *sonnō jōi*. When we think about the significance of the Meiji Restoration broadly, the impact of Hirata’s nativism cannot be ignored. But, on the other hand, when we interpret the significance of the Meiji Restoration more narrowly in terms of the political and administrative history before and after the establishment of the new government, it is difficult to negate the existing analyses that de-emphasize Hirata’s influence.

What needs to be noted, however, is the range of the Hirata school under consideration. The groupings of the so-called direct disciples of Hirata and the Tsuwano school are undoubtedly effective categories for distinguishing nativist scholars in terms of their thought and affiliation during this time period. But the reason why the old debates managed not to compartmentalize these groups was because they both appeared to be Hirata Atsutane’s ideological successors. While it is true that Hirata’s students began a theological debate against

other groups in order to be faithful to Atsutane's theory—regarding questions such as the location of the World of Darkness, the main *kami* of the Invisible World, and the possibility of interacting with the Invisible World—the groups they were arguing against were not necessarily uninfluenced by Atsutane's theology. Given Hirata's contribution in terms of assembling a grand (albeit rough) cosmology that presented views about the world after death and the significance of the emperor that differed from Confucian and Buddhist understandings—by freely expanding upon and making use of materials such as the deities that appear in the *Kojiki* 古事記 and *Nihon Shoki* 日本書紀 after the three *kami* of creation (*zōka sanjin* 造化三神) or *ame* 天 (heaven), *tsuchi* 地 (earth), *yomi* 泉 (spring)—it is hard to deny that for the subsequent Restoration (*fukko* 復古) Shintoists, Hirata Atsutane was an important predecessor to learn about or learn from, and for research-minded Shintoists who idealized Motoori Norinaga-style philology, Hirata was their starting point of inquiry.⁹ Doesn't the fact that people like Suzuki Shigetane and Ōkuni Takamasa who were criticized by the Hirata school indicate how they were regarded as splinter groups that advocated heretical views? (MATSUURA 2001; MITSUMATSU 2010; YOSHIDA 2012). In considering the relationship between Hirata's nativism and the Meiji Restoration, we need to be more sensitive to the fact that the lower-class groups and Hirata's direct disciples—who happened to be excluded from leadership positions—were not the only successors of Hirata theology.

However, there is a strong tendency in Miyachi Masato's argument—similar to that of Hara Takeshi—to emphasize the gap between the Hirata school and those close to the center of power in government—perhaps in an effort to derive from Hirata's disciples a different possibility than the Meiji state that actually formed. Arguments by Sakamoto Koremaru and others that differentiated Hirata's disciples into groups like the Tsuwano and Satsuma groups, while improving the empirical validity of the discussion, may have also resulted in promoting the above image.

So in the following, I will not limit the influence of Hirata theology on the Meiji Restoration exclusively to the students of Ibukinoya or to a particular subset of pro-*sonnō jōi* nativists. I will instead reaffirm the influence of Hirata's nativism and the activities of the Restoration Shintoists for each major group inside the new government, which is often regarded as among the leading players of the Meiji Restoration.

9. The case regarding Iida Toshihira, who was responsible for the development of the ritual system at the Office of Ceremonies (Shikiburyō 式部寮), was introduced in MITSUMATSU (2012b).

2. *The Ishin Government and Restoration Shinto*

1. THE FOOTHOLD/BASE OF THE SONNŌ JŌI GROUPS

Sawa Nobuyoshi, who was responsible for the requisition of Nagasaki by the new government, was a pro-*sonnō jōi* court noble that returned to the political stage after the Shichi kyō ochi 七卿落ち (“the exile of seven nobles”) and the Ikuno no hen 生野の変 Incidents. Making use of his experience in Nagasaki, Sawa served as the Minister of Foreign Affairs from the summer of Meiji 2. Sawa assigned Maruyama Sakura, another *sonnō jōi* activist he encountered in Nagasaki, to the position of the Officer of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (*gaimu taijō* 外務大丞) and moved him up north to manage the situation in Sakhalin.

Sakura was a loyalist from the Shimabara domain, who studied nativism at the Hirata school and served in the Council of Divinities (Jingikan 神祇官), the University (Daigakkō 大学校), and the House of Peers (Kōgisho 公議所; Shūgiin 集議院). Rumored to take up the post of Councilor (*sangi* 参議),¹⁰ Sakura could be regarded as the most powerful student of Hirata. Among the bureaucrats in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs—serving under Nobuyoshi and Sakura—were the disciples of Sakura and Yano Harumichi, as well as many others who were not under the influence of Satsuma and Chōshū. Besides the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Council of Divinities, the House of Peers, the university, and the Board of Censors (Danjōdai 弾正台) also exhibited strong *sonnō jōi* tendencies, and were comprised of many individuals who were not under the control of the Meiji bureaucracy, including the commoner class. But these departments, which represented the main foothold for the *sonnō jōi* factions, were ultimately rendered dysfunctional after conflicts with the mainstream government. Even within the *senkyōshi* system, established as an anti-Christianity organization, the result of forcefully championing Hirata theology (although this succeeded to a certain degree) and denouncing alternative views was the defeat of Nobutane and other affiliates. In the end, Sakura’s hard-line anti-Russia measures were not accepted, and as a result of trying to make a breakthrough in the situation through an invasion plan of the Korean Peninsula, around the third month of Meiji 4, the conservative court nobles, as well as the *sonnō jōi* groups from places like Kurume and Akita—together with powerful men of the Hirata school—were arrested, and the tide of history moved towards *haihan chiken* 廃藩置県 (the abolition of feudal domains and the establishment of

10. Nobutane’s letter addressed to Kanetane dated the 23rd day of the 5th month, Meiji 3, states, “Maruyama was offered the position of Councilor in confidence, but he rejected it because he thought it would only hinder his activities. Now he is very busy organizing meetings with comrades and doing other things” (*Kokuritsu rekishi minzoku hakubutsukan kenkyū hōkoku*, vol. 128).

prefectures) (see TANAKA 1983–1993; MIYACHI 1999; ENDŌ 2012; MITSUMATSU 2016b; KOBAYASHI 2017).

2. TSUWANO, CHŌSHŪ

During the first year of Meiji, the Tsuwano school—which had linked to the Chōshū group led by Kido and others—was the rival for Hirata’s disciples (INOUE and SAKAMOTO 1987; SAKAMOTO 1993 and 2005; TAKEDA 1996; MITSUMATSU 2013). Restoration Shintoists who were influenced by Hirata Atsutane but advocated their own versions of nativist theory—such as Oka Kumaomi and Ōkuni Takamasa—came from the Tsuwano domain. Fukuba Yoshishizu, who is thought to have led the religious policies of the first year of the Meiji administration, also learned from Takamasa,¹¹ representing another Tsuwano-type nativist scholar influenced by the Hirata school. Towards the end of the Edo period, Yoshishizu entered into Kyoto politics—under the direction of his feudal lord Kamei Koremi—and created a connection with the Chōshū domain, eventually serving in the Council of Divinities in the first year of Meiji. Today he is also known as the person who designed the ritual for the Charter Oath (*Gokajō no goseimon* 五箇条の御誓文), the enthronement ceremony for the Meiji emperor, and the *Daijōsai* 大嘗祭 that was held in Tokyo. He could be regarded as a nativist scholar who created Shinto rituals that differed from the precedents valued by the court nobles (for example, by including the participation of various samurai officials in such rituals), and who not only attempted to restore old customs but also promoted measures that were suitable for the reform posture of the new government (denying, for instance, the importance of holding the *Daijōsai* in Kyoto, as advocated by Hirata’s disciples).

Regarding the shrines, while Hirata’s disciples—on the premise of the coexistence of the Council of Divinities alongside the Council of State (*Jingikan dajōkan ni kansei* 神祇官太政官二官制)—called for policies such as the direct control of the national shrines by the Council of Divinities and the expansion of the shrines’ land ownership, Tsuwano-school individuals such as Fukuba Yoshishizu, Kadowaki Shigeaya, and Kabe Izuo—who actually controlled the Council of Divinities and the *Jingishō* 神祇省 (Ministry of Divinities)—in cooperation with nativist scholars from the Tottori group, denied giving more control to an independent Council of Divinities, and they helped bring about policies such as the confiscation of land owned by Shinto shrines (the first month of Meiji 4) and the abolition of the hereditary status for Shinto priesthood. Implementations towards *saisei icchi* (祭政一致; unity of ritual and political rule) were

11. However, there were non-negligible differences between Takamasa and his disciples, such as whether he was a proponent of the *bakufu* government (see MATSUURA 2001).

advanced—through the annexation of the Council of Divinities by the Council of State (Dajōkan) (Jingikan no Dajōkan naibu kikanka 神祇官の太政官内部機関化) and the absorption of Shinto roles into those of public servants (Zokuri no yakushoku ken'nin 俗吏の役職兼任)—and the establishment of a shrine system centered on the rituals for Amaterasu and the imperial ancestors by the emperor was envisioned.

Regarding the policies for Shinto proselytization of the masses, after Hirata's disciples were ousted in Meiji 4, a series of discussions were developed in line with the theories of Ōkuni Takamasa, which took on an Amaterasu-centric monotheistic character and abandoned the interest in interacting with the Invisible World as originally emphasized by the Hirata school. Under the Shinto policies advanced by Yoshishizu and others, Amaterasu not only represented the imperial deity and the ruler of Takamagahara but also absorbed the role of the three *kami* of creation (*zōka sanjin* 造化三神)—as depicted in Hirata theology—as well as the role of Ōkuninushi as the ruler of the Invisible World. Fukuba and others, in collaboration with Kido Takayoshi, who was close to Nishi Honganji 西本願寺, envisioned the creation of a national edification (*kokumin kyōka* 国民教化) program—involving both Shinto and Buddhism—as an anti-Christianity measure, proceeding to establish the Ministry of Doctrine (Kyōbushō 教部省) (third month of Meiji 5) and to introduce the *kyōdōshoku sei* 教導職制 (the system of national instructors). But with factors such as Kido's (and other's) trip to the West, Fukuba's influence on the national edification policy was lost within this year, and the nativists from the Satsuma school entered into the Ministry of Doctrine.

In this way, regarding the ideological policies during the inception of the Meiji nation, we could say that the generally accepted understanding in recent years is to emphasize the role played by the Tsuwano school, namely Fukuba and his allies—in collaboration with Kido—over the role played by Hirata's disciples. One could also observe the tendency among the members of the Tottori group—which collaborated with the Tsuwano school—to highly respect Norinaga more than Atsutane.¹²

However, as mentioned above, Fukuba was also originally a student of the Hirata school and worked in cooperation with Nobutane. It also cannot be denied that Ōkuni Takamasa was another individual who succeeded Atsutane in his academic style of preaching about the superiority of the imperial country over all countries, creating a grand (albeit rough) myth/history through repeated references to Chinese and Western studies.

Furthermore, the influence of Hirata's nativism on the thought formation of the Chōshū loyalists cannot be ignored. First, it has already been pointed out

12. MITSUMATSU (2012b); TAKEDA (2017). In addition, for Chōshū Kokugaku scholars, Kondō Yoshiki also derives from the study of Motoori.

that Yoshida Shōin, in his later years, was inspired to study nativism while in prison (KIRIHARA 2009). And Shiraishi Shōichirō, who was positioned at the nodal point of various activists, was a student of Suzuki Shigetane, who entered Ibukinoya after the death of Atsutane but was reprimanded by Kanetane, and developed a confrontational relationship with Hirata's disciples and was eventually purged as an “evil monster” (*yōmi* 妖魅). Takasugi Shinsaku was also a devoutly religious figure, and is presumed to have been influenced by Atsutane. Scenes of Takasugi praying and absorbed in the reading of Atsutane's *Tama no mihashira* 靈能真柱 (The True Pillar of Spirit) are recorded in his diary (*setsugyo nisshi* 替御日誌). Recent studies have focused on the influence of Hirata's nativism on the thought formation of the pro-*sonnō jōi* faction of the Chōshū domain, which gave birth to the *shōkon jō* 招魂場 (sites of memorial for the dead who fell fighting for their country) (TSUDA 2009a; 2009b; 2011; 2013; NAKAHARA 2014; AOTA 2015). The fact that Hirata's disciples were in conflict with the Restoration Shintoists, who allied with the Chōshū faction during the first year of Meiji, does not mean that Hirata theology did not leave any influence on the loyalists of the Chōshū domain.

3. SATSUMA

Next we will consider Satsuma.¹³ Satsuma was originally a place where nativism thrived. Shimazu Shigehide, who was well known for his love of learning, also interacted with Hirata Atsutane, and he appointed the nativist scholar Shirao Kunihashira to the compilation of the encyclopedic books *Seikeizusetsu* 成形図説. Shirao left many topographic descriptions inflected with a sense of Japan as *shinkoku* 神国 (“divine land”), and many of his other works also connect the myths—developed by Satsuma-domain nativist scholars embracing the notion of *tenson kōrin* 天孫降臨 (“descent of the grandson of the sun goddess”)—to the local land. The poets of the Keien school who worked at the Kyoto *hantei* 藩邸 (official residence) such as Yamada Kiyoyasu and Hatta Tomonori were also such nativist scholars. But these individuals were punished by their feudal lord Shimazu Narioki due to the Kaei hōtō jiken 嘉永朋党事件 (a family feud over Shimazu Narioki's heir in the Kaei 嘉永 era [1848–1855]), and Yamada committed *seppuku*. Okobira Takamune—who was named alongside Shirao Kunihashira—died during his punishment, and Katsuragi Hikoichi—who became a student of the Hirata school after being impressed by *Tama no mihashira*—also went into a life of exile. When Shimazu Nariakira regained power, however,

13. On Satsuma Kokugaku or the abolition of Buddhism in Satsuma, see KUBOTA (1941); WATANABE (1986); MATSUMOTO (2005); MIYAMOTO (2010); NAGOSHI (2011); MIYACHI (2012); MITSUMATSU (2016c); KOZURU (2017).

nativist education became promoted at the domain school Zōshikan 造士館 with Godaiin Mihashira—son of Okobira—and Hatta at the center.¹⁴

Hatta later worked at the Kyoto Daigakkō and the Imperial Poetry Bureau. Research has recently been advanced on the fact that poets connected to the Satsuma network—such as Takasaki Masakaze (who lost his father in the Kaei hōtō incident) and Saisho Atsuko, who were students of Hatta—had occupied the positions in the Imperial Poetry Bureau.¹⁵ It appears that Hatta also shared Hirata theology's interest in the Invisible World, and Atsutane was very pleased to obtain Hatta's *Kirishimayama yūkyō shingo* 霧島山幽境神語 (Divine Tales of Mystic Realms in Mt. Kirishima), and considered adding it to the appendix of his *Senkyō ibun*. Not only was Hatta's work accepted by the Hirata family, but the influence of Hirata Nobutane's *Gyojūron* 馭戎論 (On Taming Barbarians) can also be detected in Hatta's works—such as in his *Dairon ryaku* 大理論略 (An Outline of the Great Law), which argued that the greatness of the imperial country ought to be publicized in negotiations with foreign countries, negating the need for Japan's isolationism/exclusionism. But according to this book and *Tōkō kakun* 桃岡家訓 (Tōkō Family Mottoes), Hatta did not share the characteristics of the Hirata school that valued Ōkuninushi as the ruler of the Invisible World, and identified the creator *kami* (which would later be designated as Amenominakanushi) as the entity that commands over the Invisible World = the world of the *kami*.

Godaiin Mihashira was a nativist scholar who entered Ibukinoya while Atsutane was alive. He conducted research on temples and shrines in anticipation of *shinbutsu bunri* 神仏分離 (the separation of Buddhism and Shinto), and—together with Mishima Michitsune—surveyed the imperial mausoleums. The Kokugaku Bureau (Kokugaku kyoku 国学局)—where his disciples gathered—played a major role in the post-Restoration policies of *haibutsu kishaku* 廃仏毀釈 (“abolish Buddhism and destroy Shākyamuni”) and the establishment of Shinto as the state religion (although we also cannot ignore the significance of the general devaluation of Buddhism among

14. “Godaiin is a famous scholar of National Learning and was offered the position of Lecturer at Zōshikan, given the proposition to change school traditions. According to the order, *Kojiki*, *Nihongi* 日本紀, and *Ryōnogie* 令義解 and so on were to be lectured because there apparently were students without adequate knowledge of Kokugaku in the school. On a certain day in the third month, he was summoned before the lord and ordered to lecture on the *Kojiki*. After the lecture, as I heard, he talked about the national canon as well. In addition, Hatta Kizaemon was ordered to lecture on *Man'yōshū*, read Waka poems, and so on. Also, in an effort to further National Learning, Godaiin, Hatta, and others were asked about the ability of Suzuki Shigetane; it is said that a determination was made to hire [Shigetane] after this.” Ansei 安政 5, *Kagoshima-ken shiryō Nariakirakō shiryō*, vol. 3, 102.

15. See MIYAMOTO (2010), MATSUZAWA (2014), and studies by CHŌFUKU (2015).

feudal retainers). As Kubota Osamu points out, their publications—such as *Keishin setsu ryaku* 敬神説略 (A Summary of Faith) and *Kannarai gusa* 神習草 (A Kami-follower’s Note)—were composed with direct references to Hirata theology. Even if their policies were not exactly carried out as intended—due to the abolition of the *han* system and the people involved leaving for the capital—the scars left by this measure were quite large.

The impact of Hirata’s nativism on the *sonnō jōi* faction of the Satsuma domain is not limited to these nativist scholars in the narrow sense. During the Ansei 安政 period (1854–1860), Saigō Takamori frequently visited Ibukinoya himself and guided his companions to the school (MIYACHI 2012, vol. 1, 274–75). After Nariakira’s death, Ōkubo Toshimichi, in approaching Shimazu Hisamitsu—who was to lead the administration of the domain as the father of the feudal lord—is said to have slipped a petition along with Atsutane’s *Koshiden* 古史伝 (An Annotated Ancient History) (Hisamitsu was interested in Atsutane’s *Koshiden*, which was obtained by Saisho Atsushi—Hirata’s student and member of the Seichū gumi 精忠組 [“league of loyalty,” a *sonnō jōi* group in Satsuma]—and was being circulated among his friends) (SASAKI 2001).

These members of the Satsuma school entered the Ministry of Doctrine in cooperation with members of the Dajōkan sain 太政官左院 (the House of the Left). The national edification (*kokumin kyōka*) policy—led by the Ministry of Doctrine—which initially left room for collaboration with Buddhists, transformed into a program that foregrounded a type of theology from the Satsuma school that prioritized the *kami* over the Buddha and respected not only Amaterasu but also Amenominakanushi. In the fifth year of Meiji, Kuroda Kiyotsuna was appointed as the deputy minister (Kyōbu taifu 教部大輔) of the Ministry of Doctrine and Mishima Michitsune as the senior secretary (Kyōbu taijō 教部大丞). Even at the Daikyōin 大教院 (the Great Teaching Institute), established in June of Meiji 6 to serve as the base for the national edification program (involving both Shinto and Buddhism), Amaterasu and the *zōka sanjin*, including Amenominakanushi, were enshrined, and eleven precepts based on Restoration Shinto were added to the teachings (the rehabilitation of Hirata’s direct disciples, such as Yano Harumichi, can also be detected). Monks—who could not preach outside of the *kyōdōshoku sei* (the system of national instructors)—also got involved in this arrangement.

But opposition to such policies arose from Jōdo Shinshū. After Meiji 7, Shimaji Mokurai—who had connections with those from the Chōshū faction, including Kido Takayoshi—criticized the policies of the Ministry of Doctrine that promoted “religious” Shinto. The Satsuma clique—which had traditionally suppressed Jōdo Shinshū—sometimes differed in attitude with the Chōshū clique, and after much confusion—following Kido and others’ return to Japan, and Saigō Takamori and others leaving the government—the Daikyōin was dis-

solved in Meiji 8, Kuroda and Mishima were transferred, and the Ministry of Doctrine was also abolished in Meiji 10. The Ministry of Home Affairs' Bureau of Shrines and Temples (Naimushō shajikyoku 内務省社寺局) would later promote the separation of the government and “religion” (MIYACHI 1981; INOUE and SAKAMOTO 1987; SAKAMOTO 1994; HAGA 1994; NITTA 1997; OGAWARA 2004; MIYAMOTO 2010).

The Office of Shinto Affairs (Shintō jimukyoku 神道事務局)—established after the dissolution of the Daikyōin as the hub for the Shinto *kyōdōshoku* system—became the root organization along with the Ise Shrines. From the beginning, Jingū kyōin 神宮教院 (Ise Jingū Teaching Institute) had tried to expand their affiliated religious associations (*kōsha* 講社) with a doctrine that prioritized the *zōka sanjin* and Amaterasu. In Urata Nagatami's *Daidō hongī* 大道本義 (The True Meaning of the Great Way)—in contrast with Hirata's theory—it was taught that Amaterasu was the ruler of Heaven and Earth as well as the governing entity over the Invisible World and the salvation of souls. In Meiji 7, Tanaka Yoritsune of the Satsuma school—who worked at the Kokugaku Department of Zōshikan, a school of the Satsuma domain, and also became a shrine magistrate—was appointed as the high priest of the Ise Shrines. While *Sanjō engi* 三条演義 (A Commentary on the Three Standards of Instruction), issued in his name, indicated the understanding that placed Amaterasu as the main *kami* of the universe, the emperor as the ruler of the Visible World, and Ōkuninushi as the ruler of the Invisible World, Tanaka's *Shintokuron* 神徳論 (Theory of Divine Virtues) emphasized the importance of the divine virtues of the *zōka sanjin*, including Amenominakanushi, who created heaven and earth, and the divine virtues of the “greatest, deeply revered” Amaterasu.

The Izumo Taisha 出雲大社 (Izumo Grand Shrine)—which was also trying to expand their management of religious associations—criticized the Ise Shrines and the Office of Shinto Affairs' maintenance of the edification program emphasizing Amaterasu and the Ise Shrines. Senge Takatomi sought to have Ōkuninushi enshrined by name at the altar of the Office of Shinto Affairs, where the *zōka sanjin* and Amaterasu were enshrined. This led to the Pantheon Dispute (*saijin ronsō* 祭神論争) that divided the Shinto world into Ise and Izumo factions. The Izumo group, which, like Hirata theology, privileged Ōkuninushi as the ruler of the Invisible World, criticized the expansion of Amaterasu's role in the *Daidō hongī*, especially the absorption of the role of the ruler of the Invisible World as having no basis in the classics. On the other hand, during April of Meiji 13 in the middle of the Pantheon Dispute, Tanaka Yoritsune—in opposition to Senge—maintained his position that the enshrinement of Ōkuninushi was unnecessary, not denying that Ōkuninushi was the ruler of the Invisible World but nevertheless emphasizing the divine virtues of the *zōka sanjin* and Amaterasu. After much debate, the conclusion made by the imperial decision of

Meiji 14 determined that one should worship from afar the *kyūchū sanden* 宮中三殿 (Three Shrines in the Imperial Court) (*kashikodokoro* 賢所 = Amaterasu, the spirits of the past emperors, and the *kami* of heaven and earth). Far from the enshrinement of Ōkuninushi, the Office of Shinto Affairs having its own central altar itself was denied. In Meiji 15, Shinto priests and *kyōdōshoku* were separated and the Research Institute for the Japanese Classics (Kōten kōkyūsho 皇典講究所) was established. The separation of “non-religious” Shrine Shinto and sect Shinto was also advanced, and in Meiji 17, the Office of Shinto Affairs as well as the *kyōdōshoku* system were abolished. In this manner, Restoration Shinto—with its religious characteristics—was cut off from the government.¹⁶

4. SAGA

Politicians who ran the new government were not necessarily limited to those from the Satsuma and Chōshū domains, who were the ringleaders of the coup for the restoration of imperial rule (*ōsei fukko*). The Hizen Saga domain—which contributed significantly to the victory of the Boshin War with its military power—along with its former leader Naomasa, quickly gained some influence by having the pro-*sonnō jōi* patriots they had retained enter the new government. Saga clansmen such as Ōkuma Shigenobu and Soejima Taneomi—who gained experience in international negotiations in Nagasaki—became prominent figures due to their abilities in a new government with little diplomatic experience (SHIBAHARA 1965; MŌRI 2008; NOMURA 2008; SAWAI 2016a; 2016b; 2017; KIHARA 2009).

Edayoshi Shin'yō (see ŌZONO 2014) was the mentor of these pro-*sonnō jōi* patriots from Saga. Like his father, Shin'yō served as a teacher at the domain school Kōdōkan 弘道館. He was known for advocating the *Nihon ikkun* 日本一君 (“only one lord in Japan”) theory and starting the national literature study group at the Shōheikō 昌平黌 in Edo. He was also a close friend of Yano Harumichi. At Kōdōkan, Shin'yō not only taught the Chinese classics but also Japanese literature, formed a political association named Gisai dōmei 義祭同盟 (“league of honoring justice”) that enshrined Kusunoki Masashige, criticized the shogunate

16. On the Pantheon Dispute, see NAKAJIMA (1972), FUJII (1977), INOUE (1991), and FUJITA (2007). Regarding Tanaka Yoritsune in particular, refer to TONAMI (2013) and TAKEDA (2018). Hara Takeshi sees the imperial decision on the Pantheon Dispute as the “official rejection of the claim of the Izumo faction,” “Ise’s Izumo-expunction,” or the “official denial of *ken'yūron* 顯幽論 (‘debates on the seen and the unseen’)” (HARA 2001, 181). But the imperial decision itself did not touch on *ken'yūron*, and the Ise faction had also developed an original *ken'yūron* and spiritual theory for the purpose of committing to the *kyōdōshoku* system in opposition to Christianity (TAKEDA 2018). Not only Izumo’s theory had been denied; Satsuma’s theology of the three *kami* of creation also lost its privileged position at the time.

administration, and trained many pro-*sonnō jōi* patriots; he eventually died of cholera. His younger brother Soejima Taneomi, as well as Ōkuma Shigenobu, Etō Shinpei, Ōki Takatō, and many others received Shin'yō's instructions.

Shin'yō was also teaching at the Shingakuryō 神学寮 (Department of Theology) which was established in the seventh year of Kaei for the training of Shinto priests. Nishikawa Mikawa, caretaker of the Shingakuryō, wrote in his diary dated the eighth month of the second year of Ansei:

The second day [of the eighth month], I was present at an examination at Shingakuryō for all shrine priests in the domain. All officials including the magistrate attended. Over sixty priests received instructions, and over forty participated in the recitation of texts. Whoever remains should be examined on the twenty-seventh of the eighth month, so by then every single priest will have been examined.
(*Ushizu otomiyasha nikki*)

It is well known that in the Saga domain, Kōdōkan—under the leadership of Nabeshima Naomasa, who was instructed by Koga Kokudō 古賀穀堂, a scholar of *shushigaku* 朱子学 (a form of neo-Confucianism, based on the teachings of Zhu Xi and his followers)—adopted the policy of educating all their clansmen and boasted the highest education standard in the country, introducing a system for medical licensing based on the education of Western medicine (*Saga-ken kyōikushi*, vols. 1 and 4; MAEDA 2012; IKUMA 2011; 2015; AOKI 2015). But we should note that Shinto priests were also obligated to be trained in theology.

Another individual well-known for being a teacher at the Shingakuryō is Nanri Arichika, who—influenced by Hirata Atsutane—created a kind of Shinto theology that adapted ideas from the Chinese translations of Christian writings.¹⁷ Others involved with the Shingakuryō included Shinto priests such as Mori Wakasa, Fujiwara Sadaaki, Nishikawa Sugao, Oka Yoshitane, and Itoyama Sadamoto. It is important to note that they all looked up to Mutobe Yoshika—renowned as the priest of the Mukō Shrine in Yamashiro Province and as a direct disciple of Atsutane—as their teacher. Individuals such as Sugao, Yoshitane, and Sadamoto came to be in charge of policies regarding Christianity during the *senkyōshi* period and the control of shrines during the Ministry of Doctrine period. Sugao is also known for being a lecturer during the early days of the Daikyōin, for his involvement in the Shintoization of Fujidō as well as the establishment of the sect Shinto group Jikkōkyō 実行教 with his teacher Shibata Hanamori, and the implementation of *haibutsu kishaku* in Dewa Sanzan. Yoshitane became the senior priest of the Ise Shrines, but after the establishment of Jingūkyō 神宮教, he left and became the superintendent priest of Kōsokyō 皇祖教. In addition to leaving behind theological writings about their own version of

17. For the history of research after MURAOKA (1940), see MITSUMATSU (2015).

Restoration Shinto that revised Atsutane's theory,¹⁸ they were also regular contributors to the publication *Shinkyō sōgo* 神教叢語 (Tales of Divinities), which was supported by Kubo Sueshige—Hirata Kanetane's son-in-law—during the time of the Office of Shinto Affairs (KOBAYASHI 2017). In the case of Saga, one of the results of the feudal lord's promotion of scholarship was the spread of Hirata theology.

Soejima Taneomi was also one of these Restoration Shintoists. He is known as a teacher at Kōdōkan or as a scholar of Chinese and Western learning who studied with Guido Verbeck in Nagasaki, but in fact he also studied *kōgaku* 皇学 in Kyoto (said to be the only retainer from his domain to do so) and interacted with figures such as Mutobe Yoshika, Yano Harumichi, and Tanimori Yoshiomi. In the first year of Meiji, with regard to the management of the Daigakkō, Hirata's disciples expected a lot from Taneomi—and also from the Satsuma faction during the era of the Ministry of Doctrine—but it is difficult to conclude that he performed up to their expectations. Ōkuma Shigenobu, who also received instructions from Shin'yō and studied *eigaku* 英学 together with Taneomi, gave up on Shinto early on, citing as his reasons the incompetence of nativist scholars and the imperfection of Shinto as a religion, and marking as a turning point Restoration Shinto's failure to evangelize Christians in Nagasaki (ENJŌJI 1895, 301–2). On the other hand, unlike Shigenobu, Taneomi—even after retreating from the frontline of politics—continued to be a staunch Hirata-school Shintoist. During the Seinan War (1878), Taneomi had gone to China, but there is a rumor that he did so in order to avoid a catastrophe as foretold by a revelation of the *kami* from Honda Chikaatsu, a Satsuma nativist who had developed a unique practice called the *chinkon kishin* method 鎮魂帰神法. Many things are not known about the theologies of Taneomi and Chikaatsu that emphasized spiritual possessions and divine revelations, but according to the remaining records, there is a considerable amount of similarities between their theologies that valued theories about *jindai moji* 神代文字 (ancient Japanese characters) and Amenominakanushi.¹⁹ It appears that Taneomi's manner of spiritual possession was thought to be questionable even by Sano Tsunehiko, who founded the sect Shinto group Shinrikyō 神理教.²⁰

18. For details, see MITSUMATSU (2017). On Sugao and his teacher, Shibata Hanamori, see MITSUMATSU ed. (2016). On Yoshitane, see NAKANISHI (1998) and OKA (2014). On Sadamoto, see KONDŌ (2013).

19. *Soejima Taneomi zenshū* and *Honda Chikaatsu zenshū*; see SUZUKI (2000); SATŌ (1978); KUSAMORI (2000–2003). Soejima and Honda also seemed to see Atsutane's theology as insufficient.

20. INOUE (1991) briefly touches on the encounter between the two, but I quote below the most extreme assessment from the diary of Tsunehiko:

Tsunehiko: "There is a rumor that you are a fox-taming mystic."

Conclusion

There are many more examples I would like to introduce, but—based on the discussion so far—allow me to summarize my provisional views on the question at the beginning of the paper about the relationship between Hirata’s nativism and the Meiji Restoration.

Since the conclusion of the trade treaties, the number of students of Hirata has increased dramatically. During the era of *sonnō jōi*, from commoners to the feudal lords, we find many cases of individuals accepting Hirata’s nativism in the process of their formation as political subjects. The Hirata family became a node of a political information network, and in addition to disseminating ideas about the political situation of the time, they worked as members of the *sonnō jōi* faction in the Akita domain. We also cannot ignore the influence of Hirata’s nativism on activists who were not his direct disciples. Although not every member of the Hirata school was active in political activities, it is difficult to separate the political movements of this time period from Hirata’s nativism by simply referring to Hirata theology’s emphasis on spiritual theories and the exploration of the Invisible World.

Within the new government, especially in the ritual and academic departments, it is true that Hirata’s direct disciples, who were faithful to Hirata theology, lost their positions before exerting as much influence as might have been expected. However, the scope of the influence of Atsutane is not limited to his direct disciples. Many Restoration Shintoists—such as those in the Ōkuni Takamasa and Suzuki Shigetane schools, or the Satsuma school—were influenced by Hirata theology in constructing their arguments, and these effects cannot be neglected. The range of Hirata’s influence also extends to sect Shinto and the subsequent new religions. Some discussions place Deguchi Onisaburō as the successor of Hirata theology, but should we not more carefully interpret the processes of succession, transformation, and diffusion of Hirata theology by setting a broader field of vision, and without abridging or oversimplifying this history?

Taneomi: “It’s understandable. You also see me with a suspicious eye because of ignorance about *kami*’s dwelling in our body. Knowing the truth, divine revelations come at any time. But even I can’t get revelations when the mind is impure.”

Tsunehiko: “I know the presence of *kami* in our body well. I am not one of those quackish shamans.”

Taneomi: “Well, I will tell you. Pray to the deity on my head, ‘bless me, tell me,’ and then the deity will come and tell you omens.”

Tsunehiko: “I thought that he was a neurotic, which women often become. I saw neurotics many times when I was a doctor. I saw many tombstones engraved ‘A daughter of Soejima Taneomi’ in Aoyama cemetery before. Heaven still had punished him.”

(*Shinrikyō Kyōso Gonisshi*, vol. 1, 72).

The hope is to better understand the complex relationship between Hirata's nativism and the Meiji Ishin/Fukko from a variety of perspectives, by bringing together specific case studies in line with the available historical evidence.

(Translated by Miura Naohito)

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REVIEW



Takahashi Norihito 高橋典史, Shirahase Tatsuya 白波瀬達也, and Hoshino Sō 星野壮, eds., *Gendai Nihon no shūkyō to tabunka kyōsei: Imin to chiiki shakai no kankeisei o saguru* 『現代日本の宗教と多文化共生—移民と地域社会の関係性を探る』 [Religions and Multicultural Coexistence in Contemporary Japan: Exploring Immigrants' Relationships with Local Communities]

Tokyo: Akashi Shoten, 2018. 234 pages. Hardcover, ¥2,500. ISBN 978-4-7503-4668-7.

CONCERNING the relationship between migrants and religions, students of Japanese religions have long focused on religious groups and traditions that have expanded *from* Japan into various overseas countries as a result of immigration or religious organizations' propagation into new frontiers. The last decade or so has in turn seen the rise of scholarship on religions that have expanded *to* Japan from other countries as a result of the changing landscape of migrants in contemporary Japanese society. Some important research has been published in edited volumes, including, among others, MIKI and SAKURAI (2012), which was reviewed in the 2014 issue of this journal; MIKI (2017); and most recently SHŪKYŌ JŌHŌ RISĀCHI SENTĀ (2019). These works have brought to light such themes as the historical background of immigrants to Japan, religious traditions that migrants have brought to Japan and how they interact with these traditions in the new cultural environment, and the roles that these religions play in the process of migrants' adaptation to the host society as well as of the maintenance and construction of their ethnicities.

Seen in this light, the volume being reviewed here can simply be seen as one of the many other contributions in this field. As the title of the volume suggests, however, it can be distinguished from other volumes in its focus on the nexus between immigrants, religious traditions/organizations, and local communities in contemporary Japan. As one of the editors, Takahashi Norihito, rightly points out in the introduction, the main focus of the earlier works was in one way or another to showcase a variety of religious traditions that have been brought to Japan by migrants, especially so-called newcomers whose numbers rapidly increased from around the 1980s (16–17). In this sense, studying the relationships between migrants and religions from the viewpoint of multicultural coexistence (*tabunka kyōsei*) can be seen as a new approach in this particular field of research.

The notion of multicultural coexistence serves as a key concept throughout this edited volume. Takahashi notes that, compared to terms that are more commonly used in Western contexts such as multiculturalism or social integration, the notion of multicultural coexistence is uniquely employed in the Japanese context (15–17). As briefly discussed in the introduction and further elaborated in chapter 9, this concept is both a social and analytical category that is pregnant with variable meanings. As a social category, it is a term that originally began to be used from around the 1990s in the context of social movements aiming to address social and political issues surrounding minorities, including foreign workers. However, it later came to be de-politicized when it was adopted as a keyword in the context of formulating the Japanese government’s public policies under the banner of the internationalization of local communities (*chiiki kokusaika*) (208–15). While being aware of the politically loaded connotations of the term, Takahashi uses the notion of multicultural coexistence as an analytical category by introducing two ideal types that were developed in his earlier work: “‘multicultural coexistence’ pertaining to within religious organizations” (*shūkyō soshiki nai “tabunka kyōsei”*) and “‘multicultural coexistence’ pertaining to outside religious organizations” (*shūkyō soshiki gai “tabunka kyōsei”*) (17). The former refers to “multicultural coexistence that is developed in an organization in which people with different cultural backgrounds share the same faith” (17). The latter concerns “initiatives of multicultural coexistence that are promoted in the public sphere of a given society by using religious organizations and their members as resources” (17). As ideal types, these two modes of multicultural coexistence cannot be always clearly demarcated in the actual religious organizations, nor do these two modes necessarily develop concurrently (17). These two ideal types will be used in most of the subsequent chapters to analyze the state of multicultural coexistence in each specific case being studied.

It is against this theoretical and historical background that subsequent chapters in the volume discuss a wide range of case studies. Aside from chapter 9, each chapter is organized in a way that focuses on social groups of particular national origin such as Brazil, Vietnam, or the Philippines, or a specific group or organization related to a particular faith tradition such as Catholicism or Islam. Readers will notice that case studies introduced in this volume are disproportionately Catholic-related, a fact that, as Takahashi notes, attests to the prominence of the activities organized by this religious tradition (21).

The contributors of chapters 1 to 8 each shed light on variable themes relating to multicultural coexistence based on their research. In chapter 1, Shirahase Tatsuya discusses Catholic churches’ multilayered initiatives to support immigrants in Japan as primarily informed by the Church’s official policy toward migrants. He reports that Catholic churches in Japan are increasingly becoming multiethnic as a result of responding to the needs of migrants who follow the same faith, an initiative that has been made possible in part by the presence of priests from other countries. In this sense, the level of multicultural coexistence within religious organizations are

increasing within the circle of Catholic churches, but as Shirahase points out in the conclusion, there are several issues that need to be addressed if the churches are to advance multicultural coexistence with regards to local communities outside the churches.

In chapter 2, Hoshino Sō also discusses Catholic churches but with a specific focus on immigrants from Brazil, who had increased from around the 1990s largely due to the change in Japanese law concerning migrants of Japanese descent. Like Takahashi, Hoshino also touches upon the increasing ethnic diversity within Catholic churches. Through an analysis of a church event primarily intended for the Brazilian community, however, Hoshino sheds light on how the increasing proportion of one ethnic community within a church may at times lead to conflicts rather than integration. As far as the relationships with local communities are concerned, Hoshino reports that Catholic churches reached out to people from Brazil in the wake of the 2008 recession, which can show, albeit as a somewhat isolated example, how intra-organizational multicultural coexistence can extend to the wider local community in certain circumstances.

Chapter 3 features Takahashi's study on the roles religious organizations played in response to the refugees from mainland Southeast Asia in the aftermath of the Vietnam War. Religious organizations including Catholic churches and Rissho Koseikai provided shelters to fill in the vacuum of the lack of government-run facilities for the refugees. Moreover, some Catholic churches and Catholic-related organizations provided support for the refugees in the process of their settlement, including social support and mental care. Takahashi notes that the initiatives intended for the refugees who were not church members can be said to have been informed by the practice of intra-organizational multicultural coexistence, echoing Hoshino's analysis in the previous chapter. While positively appraising these initiatives, Takahashi is very careful not to overemphasize the role of religions by drawing attention to some of the limitations that religious organizations face in organizing support programs for refugees.

Chapter 4, authored by Nogami Emi, focuses on a microcosm of one Catholic church known as Takatori Kyōkai by focusing on one priest's role in promoting multicultural coexistence both within the religious organization and in relation to the local community. The former concerns the relationship between members from Japan and Vietnam, who comprise nearly half of the entire membership. The latter relates to an NPO based in the church, which served as a hub of volunteers in the wake of the 1995 Great Hanshin earthquake and has become a center for multicultural coexistence in the local area. Nogami emphasizes that much of these developments are owed to the priest's vision and actions in understanding the relationship with the local communities as being inseparable from his religious mission.

Chapter 5 changes the focus from newcomers to old-time immigrants by focusing on the actions taken by a Korean Christian church in Osaka and its social welfare activities for the aging population in the local area. Ogi Shōichi, the author of

this chapter, describes in detail how the social welfare organization known as Rōjin Daigaku (Institute for the Elderly) has served as a support center for aging foreign residents living in the local area, especially older ethnic Koreans, by providing various opportunities for these people with support from the local municipality. Ogi also notes that in this particular case, newcomers support the older residents as many of these younger residents had become devout Christians in their country of origin, that is, South Korea.

In chapter 6, Yamamoto Takanori discusses the process of what he calls *chiikika* (localization) and *naibuka* (internalization) of religious actors in a local community by focusing on a Catholic-based, faith-inspired social welfare organization known as Kibō no Ie (House of Hope). Operating in a Kyoto district that is historically known for its population of socially marginalized people including outcast groups (*burakumin*) and ethnic Koreans, this organization has become part of the local community by taking the initiative to address issues facing the community at different junctures of the organization's development since around the 1960s. One of the elements that has helped Christians to become part of the community are sharing the management of the organization with the community while refraining from bringing the religious mission to the fore.

Chapter 7 also focuses on the same organization, Kibō no Ie, but sheds light on different aspects concerning multicultural coexistence by focusing on the initiatives taken by Filipino communities based in Catholic churches. In this chapter, Nagata Atsumasa discusses how the Filipino communities' involvement in the initiatives for multicultural exchange taking place at the multicultural exchange network salon based in Kibō no Ie has facilitated their interaction with people of other ethnic backgrounds as well as the wider local society. Nagata's research is indicative of how Filipino communities' connection with Catholic churches has served as a catalyst to translate the multicultural coexistence within the religious community into the local community.

Chapter 8, by Okai Hirofumi, makes a distinctive contribution in this volume by focusing on Muslims, whose presence is increasingly becoming visible in Japan in recent years. In discussing their interaction with the wider Japanese society, Okai indicates the limitations of the overarching category of Muslim, which can at times overshadow the diversity within Muslim communities vis-à-vis their ethnicity, social status, level of commitment to faith practices, and their own self-identification. He then points to the need to pay attention to sub-groups and loosely connected networks among this social group. Based on this understanding, Okai discusses various ways in which Muslims in Japan interact with the local communities, with some Muslims based in a mosque conducting more organized social outreach programs and others engaging in more informal activities on an individual basis. In terms of addressing issues surrounding structural inequalities and negative public perceptions of Muslims, Okai suggests the possibility of cooperating with other minority groups by, for instance, forming associations aiming to remedy these social issues.

As briefly noted earlier, chapter 9 does not discuss a specific religious or ethnic group but instead draws a broad picture of unique roles that religious organizations can potentially play in supporting the initiatives of multicultural coexistence. Tokuda Tsuyoshi points out how the Japanese government's austerity and ensuing deregulation of the management of public facilities in the last two decades caused financial difficulty in running facilities and programs intended to advance multicultural coexistence. Tokuda argues that in these circumstances, the religious sector has some advantages compared to the public sector, whose budget is shrinking due to austerity, or the civil sector, whose organizational autonomy is limited because of its reliance on subsidies. Despite some setbacks experienced by religious organizations due to the separation of church and state as well as the negative public perception of religions in general, Tokuda notes that some of the organizations in the religious sector can effectively commit to these initiatives by employing their own resources without worrying about government restrictions.

The arguments and examples presented in this volume paint a picture of multi-dimensional realities facing immigrants, religious organizations, and the roles religious organizations play in the field of multicultural coexistence in contemporary Japan. As has been mentioned earlier, this area of research was not the main focus in earlier works. Despite the fact that the majority of the chapters focus on Catholic-related initiatives, this book sheds light on a wide range of issues that can be in one way or another made applicable in analyzing other groups, such as how the practice of multicultural coexistence within a religious organization by one particular ethnic group can translate into interaction with the wider local society through the mediation of a faith tradition that migrants had already been familiar with. In addition to this focus on the intersections of immigrants, religious actors, and local communities, this volume provides a detailed account of the very notion of multicultural coexistence as it relates to religious organizations. This discussion can be particularly useful as it provides a point of reference for comparing the official policies and social discourses surrounding the place of migrants, social minorities, and religious organizations with their counterparts in other social, cultural, and legal contexts. One example would be how the public policies and social discourses surrounding multicultural coexistence in Japan could compare with those of multiculturalism as adopted in Britain in the 1970s in terms of its impact on ethnic minorities and religious organizations. Another example can be a comparison of the extent to which religious organizations can be directly involved in social welfare activities by using their own resources and facilities, which, for example, can be very restricted in a country like France, where religious organizations can only be involved in religious activities as stipulated in the organization's statutes. These comparative analyses will in turn help elaborate the discussion presented in the introduction of this edited volume. In fact, this area of research may be addressed in the ongoing project known as "Religion and Minority: Lived Religion, Migration and Marginalities in Secular Societies," which is being jointly conducted by researchers based in Japan

and the U.K., including two of the editors of this volume. The research group's focus on how the notions of "marginality" and "minority" are constructed in the wider society and how marginalized groups use religions to negotiate their place in society and within the religious traditions in different sociocultural contexts can certainly provide useful comparative analyses.

Seen in this light, the insights delineated in *Gendai Nihon no shūkyō to tabunka kyōsei* usefully lay the groundwork for potential cross-cultural comparative studies, which adds value to this already important contribution. Researchers of religions in contemporary Japan and of migration and religions in general alike can certainly benefit from this excellent collection.

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REVIEW



Nagaoka Takashi 永岡崇, *Shinshūkyō to sōryoku sen: Kyōso igo o ikiru* 新宗教と総力戦—教祖以後を生きる

Nagoya: Nagoya Daigaku Shuppankai, 2015. 368 pages.
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NAGAOKA TAKASHI's monograph *Shinshūkyō to sōryoku sen: Kyōso igo o ikiru* breaks new ground in the study of modern Japanese religions by providing for the first time a detailed study of a Japanese new religion during the war. The work examines largely unexplored archival resources in order to describe the history of the Tenrikyō religion (f. 1838) in the generations after the passing of the founder Nakayama Miki (1798–1887). The purpose of the book is to reconsider how both scholarly works about the community and Tenrikyō's own official account of church history elide some of the complex dynamics between religion and state that characterized the development of the movement during the imperial period. In the tradition of the sociology of religion, Nagaoka aims to balance his analysis between macro-political forces and the biographies of individuals who make their lives in circumstances not of their choosing. Meticulously researched and sensitive to the difficulties faced by the generation who lived through the war, Nagaoka's study will be of interest to scholars of religion, sociology, and history, and anyone curious about how the war was experienced by religious communities.

Briefly, the twentieth century history of Tenrikyō covered in this monograph can be divided into two periods named for emic categories: *kakushin* or “reforms” and *fukugen* or “return to the scriptures.” The *kakushin* period formally refers to state-mandated reforms to the Tenrikyō institution and its doctrine that began in 1938 (chapter 3). Some parts of the canon were banned, as was the case with the oral story of the cosmogony, the *Ofudesaki*, and the *Osashizu*. The *Mikagura Uta* songs for the service were censored. In general, the nature of the reforms was to excise anything in Miki's teaching that could be seen to question the authority of the state or call for changes to the social structure. The roots of these reforms can be traced to edited versions of the Tenrikyō scriptures that the community was obliged to

submit to the government as part of a long campaign for accreditation as an independent Shinto sect that finally succeeded in 1908.

The subsequent *fukugen* period can be indexed to the postwar “return to the scriptures” which began in earnest in 1945, and which represents the beginning of the postwar orthodoxy (chapter 6). The two periods of Tenrikyō history correspond to the lifetime of the second *shinbashira* (leader), Nakayama Shōzen (1905–1967, subject of chapter 2). Shōzen was a graduate of Japan’s flagship religion department at the University of Tokyo and a student of the famed scholar Anesaki Masaharu (1873–1949). Shōzen developed Tenrikyō’s postwar orthodoxy based on the conviction that the *kakushin* reforms were an unfortunate but unavoidable detour—a compromise that the church had to make to avoid being crushed by the state (as was the dire fate of Ōmoto). In general, this account of events is taken as authoritative within the Tenrikyō community, and scholarship on Tenrikyō by outsiders also bears the influence of this perspective.

Against the grain of this received narrative, Nagaoka argues that however sincere the Tenrikyō leadership’s postwar renunciation of wartime theology may have been, archival resources suggest that, for the Tenrikyō community who lived during the war, there does not appear to have been a general sense that they were somehow on an aberrant trajectory. Rather, it seems that they understood their contributions to the nation state as part of their religion’s capacity to work for the public good, and they appear to have envisioned the best interests of their religion in line with state ideology and the goals of imperial expansion promoted by the government. This argument is presented over the course of six chapters framed by an introduction and conclusion. The structure is as follows: “Introduction: New Religions and Total War”; chapter 1, “Crisis and Reform in the Faith Community”; chapter 2, “Nakayama Shōzen’s Prewar Activities”; chapter 3, “The *Kakushin* Period”; chapter 4, “The Asia Pacific War as Religious Experience”; chapter 5, “Religion in the Holy War (*Seisen*), and the Holy War in Religion”; chapter 6, “The *Fukugen* Period”; and “Conclusions: The Path to Wartime Mobilization.”

The introduction interprets the state of the field of studies of new religions with particular attention to historical research on Tenrikyō. Nagaoka maintains that prior research is heavily influenced by two primary directions that gravitate respectively around problems of politics (public issues) and matters related to individual subjectivity (the private dimension of personal faith). In Nagaoka’s reading, MURAKAMI Shigeyoshi (1972) represents the first approach, and his classic interpretation of Tenrikyō (and many other new religions) is based on the premise that the group’s teaching, rooted in the culture of ordinary folk, implies a kind of egalitarianism. According to Murakami, Miki was gifted with the vision to understand human equality as an ideal, the insight to recognize poverty as the result of structural injustice, and the capacity to communicate these ideas in a prophetic language that ultimately appealed to millions of people. Nagaoka allows that Murakami’s is an insightful reading of Miki’s thought, but he notes that it authorizes an interpreta-

tion of Tenrikyō history framed as a binary between resistance/collaboration with the state—that is, a mythological narrative of heroes and villains. Nagaoka's study suggests that maybe most people did not really experience things this way. Nagaoka attributes the emphasis on subjective experience to SHIMAZONO Susumu's (1998) intervention in Tenrikyō studies. Shimazono's focus on the subjective development of faith in the context of Miki's biography prioritizes deep engagement with the lived experience of social contradictions and personal dilemmas that played a role in the formation of Miki's personality and thought. Nagaoka suggests that there is a divide between politically focused studies and personally focused studies in the secondary literature on new religions, and he relates this to SHIMAZONO's (2010) more recent and influential argument that the State Shinto system dominated public life while relegating religions to the realm of private life and the home. This argument proposes a so-called dual-structure that inherently limited the capacity of religions to resist the state. Nagaoka acknowledges that all of these perspectives have contributed to the understanding of Japanese new religions, but he aims to deconstruct the dual-structure narrative (and, implicitly, to transcend the personal-political binary) by focusing on how the political and the personal intersected in the lives of the Tenrikyō community in multifarious ways.

Chapter 1 functions as a preface to the rest of the work by detailing how a division of powers within Tenrikyō developed after Miki's passing. This arrangement saw theological authority primarily invested in a charismatic medium known as the *honseki* ("main seat") Iburi Izō (1833–1907) while bureaucratic functions were delegated to Miki's grandson Nakayama Shinnosuke (1866–1914), the first *shinbashira*. It was under these leaders that official recognition as a legal religion was acquired to mitigate against suppression. After Iburi's passing, ecclesiastical and bureaucratic authority came to be centralized in the Nakayama line. Chapter 2 follows the biography of Nakayama Shōzen during his youth, and Nagaoka emphasizes how the young *shinbashira*'s intellectual interests in scriptural study (returning to Miki's *Ofudesaki* writing), ethnography (the study of foreign cultures for missionary ends), and missiology (the Jesuit missions to Japan as a model) set the mold for the institutional development of Tenrikyō under his leadership from 1929 until his death. Nagaoka argues that these interests situate Shōzen squarely as a man of his times during the expansionist Japanese empire. Like Christian missionaries seeking to spread European culture globally, Shōzen imagined Tenrikyō missionaries as capable of spreading both Tenrikyō and Japanese culture as part of a civilizing mission throughout the empire and the world.

Chapter 3 discusses the trajectory that led to the *kakushin* period, arguing that although Tenrikyō's postwar orthodoxy presents the years between 1908 and 1945 as a narrative of victimhood, the reality was more complicated. The heart of the argument is that Tenrikyō's ability to achieve legal status as the last recognized sect of Shinto in 1908 was tied to the religion's increasing acceptance of responsibilities to contribute to society along lines defined by the state authorities. In particular, this

arrangement entailed Tenrikyō participation in moral suasion campaigns (*kyōka katsudō*) from the 1910s, the expansion of social welfare work including the opening of the Yōtoku'in orphanage, and the creation of a Tenri village (Tenri mura) in colonial Manchuria. Chapters 4 and 5 detail the development of *hinokishin* during wartime. The term refers to collective labor for the public good understood as a form of religious activity. The work of *hinokishin* today is known to refer to voluntary activities like the cleaning of public parks and disaster relief efforts. However, Nagaoka explains that in the first half of the twentieth century *hinokishin* included such diverse activities as participation in state-backed moral suasion campaigns and coal mining to support the war effort. Such works were undertaken in response to demands from the state, and Tenrikyō developed a theological rationale to sanctify these efforts by endowing them with a religious significance.

Finally, chapter 6 details the postwar *fukugen* or “return to the scriptures.” Postwar Tenrikyō theological scholars led by Nakayama Shōzen engaged in a massive research project into their own history in order to establish authoritative versions of the Tenrikyō scriptures, Miki’s biography, and church history. The oral tradition of the cosmogony was restored, the *Ofudesaki* and the *Osazhizu* were put back into circulation, and the *Mikagura Uta* was once again published without state-mandated redactions. These theological developments were celebrated as signs of the restoration of religious freedom, and the postwar mainstream of Tenrikyō theology became rooted in the textualist tradition of scholarship that leaders like Shōzen learned through elite university educations in religious studies and adjacent fields. Nonetheless, Nagaoka invites readers to ask, in the process of establishing the new direction for Tenrikyō in the postwar period, what aspects of wartime history and the experience of the war generation have been swept under the rug?

It is important to recognize that Nagaoka’s investigation of the wartime activities of Tenrikyō serves to place Japanese new religions (or at least those operating legally under the umbrella of sect Shinto) in the same boat as all other legally recognized religious organizations operating during the war, whether Buddhist, Shinto, or Christian. This work raises as many good questions as it answers about the role of new religions during the war, but it is now the standard account of Tenrikyō’s wartime history. Nagaoka sets a high bar for future scholarship on new religions and the war, and I hope that this study will inspire further research in this nascent field.

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