Kolleg-Forschergruppe
multiple secularities

Christoph Kleine

The Secular Ground Bass of Pre-modern Japan Reconsidered

Reflections upon the Buddhist Trajectories towards Secularity

Working Paper #5

Working Paper Series of the HCAS "Multiple Secularities – Beyond the West, Beyond Modernities"

#5: Christoph Kleine. "The Secular Ground Bass of Pre-modern Japan Reconsidered. Reflections upon the Buddhist Trajectories towards Secularity"
Leipzig, July 2018

This working paper has been published online.

Please cite as:
Christoph Kleine. "The Secular Ground Bass of Pre-modern Japan Reconsidered. Reflections upon the Buddhist Trajectories towards Secularity." Working Paper Series of the HCAS "Multiple Secularities – Beyond the West, Beyond Modernities" 5, Leipzig, July 2018.

The HCAS is part of Leipzig University and funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG).

UNIVERSITÄT LEIPZIG

DFG Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft

Christoph Kleine

The Secular Ground Bass of Pre-modern Japan Reconsidered

Reflections upon the Buddhist Trajectories towards Secularity

Contents

The Secular Ground Bass of Pre-modern Japan Reconsidered

Reflections upon the Buddhist Trajectories towards Secularity[1]

1 Introduction

As can be easily recognised, the title of this paper alludes to a famous statement by Robert N. Bellah. In his article "Values and Social Change in Modern Japan," originally published in 1970, Bellah identified "worldly affirmativeness, the opposite of denial" as "the ground bass […] of the Japanese tradition." His argument runs as follows:

> So we have this great outpouring of the recognition of transcendence in Kamakura times together with new forms of society and new cultural forms that in many ways laid down the lines of Japanese development through the Tokugawa period. However the note of transcendence was soon lost. It was drowned out by the ground bass, so to speak, of the Japanese tradition of this-worldly affirmativeness, the opposite of denial.[2]

This may, at first sight, seem to be consistent with my rather provocative notion of the 'secular ground bass of pre-modern Japan.' Is "worldly affirmativeness" not actually a key feature of 'secularity,' and of 'modernity' for that matter? However, Bellah's argument runs in the very opposite direction. Contrary to what one might expect, worldly affirmativeness,

1 This paper is partly based on a presentation given at the 42nd *Annual Meeting of the Social Scence History Association* (SSHA) on 2 November 2017 in Montreal, and partly on an article published in German in 2013: Christoph Kleine, "Religion als begriffliches Konzept und soziales System im vormodernen Japan: Polythetische Klassen, semantische und funktionale Äquivalente und strukturelle Analogien," in *Religion in Asien? Studien zur Anwendbarkeit des Religionsbegriffs,* ed. Peter Schalk et al. (Uppsala: Uppsala Universitet, 2013).

2 Robert N. Bellah, "Japan: Values and Social Change in Modern Japan," in *Beyond belief: Essays on religion in a post-traditional world,* ed. Robert N. Bellah (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991 [1970]), 119.

in Bellah's view, did not pave the way for secularity but, rather, prevented it. The reason is, says Bellah, that the alleged ground bass of worldly affirmativeness was responsible for the 'failure' of the early modern Japanese to actualise the moment of transcendence that had been recognised and strongly emphasised by medieval Buddhist thinkers already – most prominently by Shinran 親鸞 (1173–1263) in the 13th century. And this failure, in Bellah's view, accounts for the inability of the Japanese to establish a truly "axial civilization," become modern and thus secular. They had missed, so to speak, the chance to develop a Protestant ethic and a spirit of capitalism out of their own cultural resources.

I do not comment upon Bellah's ideas here, which are somewhat tainted by classical evolutionist and teleological theories of modernisation and secularisation popular at that time. I adopt a completely different approach instead. In accordance with the basic assumptions of our research project *Multiple Secularities – Beyond the West, Beyond Modernities,* I aim to demonstrate that the medieval Japanese had already developed a set of epistemes with a *longue durée*, which turned out to be favourable for appropriating modern Western concepts of secularity in the 19th century, because they clearly distinguished between two social domains, which we – from a modern perspective – would label roughly as 'religion' on the one hand and 'politics' on the other. In other words, we find social structures and related systems of classification that come quite close to the ideal type of secularity as originally[3] defined by Monika Wohlrab-Sahr and Marian Burchardt, namely: "*institutionally as well as symbolically embedded forms and arrangements for distinguishing between religion and other societal areas, practices and interpretations*."[4]

To be sure, it is not my intention to claim that medieval Japan was a secular society in our modern understanding. I only argue that the notion of secularity as it was propagated by Western powers in the 19th and 20th centuries fell on fertile ground in Meiji Japan.

Broadly speaking, it is the primary goal of our interdisciplinary project to find explanations for the evident multiplicity of secularities, i.e. for the multiplicity of forms and arrangements for distinguishing between

3 Marian Burchardt and Monika Wohlrab-Sahr, "'Multiple Secularities: Religion and Modernity in the Global Age' – Introduction," *International Sociology* 28, no. 6 (2013).

4 Christoph Kleine and Monika Wohlrab-Sahr. "Research Programme of the HCAS "Multiple Secularities – Beyond the West, Beyond Modernities'" Working Paper Series of the HCAS "Multiple Secularities – Beyond the West, Beyond Modernities" 1, Leipzig, 2016. http://ul.qucosa.de/api/qucosa%3A16727/attachment/ATT-0/.

religion and other 'nexuses of activities.'[5] We reject the oversimplified post-colonial narrative of secularity being a concept completely alien to non-Western cultures upon which the 'religious-secular divide' was forcefully imposed in colonial times. I do not deny the fact that either secularity or secularism were concepts established in the so-called West,[6] and that the separation of religious from secular domains played a crucial role in the establishment of modern nation states throughout the world. On the other hand, it is a matter of fact that different cultures have appropriated the Western notion of secularity in very different ways. And this multiplicity of secularities is in need of explanation.

We assume that the differences in appropriating or rejecting secularity can be accounted for, at least partly, by historical path-dependencies. We argue that in a situation of colonial encounter, relevant individual and institutional actors in non-Western societies resorted to indigenous cultural resources in order to come to terms with the newly introduced Western knowledge regimes. Rather than being just passive recipients, they were driven by their own particular interests, and appropriated Western notions of secularity on the basis of culture-specific epistemes in active, creative, and purposeful ways. Also, not to forget, this happened in response to specific reference problems partly caused by the encounter with the hegemonic 'West' developing guiding ideas, which at least alluded to indigenous semantics. Accordingly, we seek to identify the respective epistemes and cultural predispositions, those emic systems of classification and knowledge that will enable us to account for the multiplicity of secularities.

5 Stanley Stowers, "The ontology of religion," in *Introducing religion: Essays in honor of Jonathan Z. Smith,* ed. Willi Braun and Russell T. McCutcheon (London, Oakville: Equinox Publishing, 2008), 442.

6 Heiner Roetz has conclusively shown, however, that "the development of Enlightenment secular thought [...] was the outcome of a trans-cultural joint venture," because it was to a considerable degree inspired by the supposedly "enlightened monarchy" of Qing China. Heiner Roetz, "The Influence of Foreign Knowledge on Eighteenth Century European Secularism," in *Religion and Secularity: Transformations and Transfers of Religious Discourses in Europe and Asia*, ed. Marion Eggert and Lucian Hölscher, 9–34 (Leiden: Brill, 2013).

2 The case of Japan[7]

According to the famous chart included in the article "Modernization, Cultural Change, and the Persistence of Traditional Values" by Inglehart and Baker,[8] Japan stands out as a nation with an extreme secular-rational orientation, surpassed only by the former "communist East Germany." Notwithstanding the problems involved with such charts, especially when based on the notorious *World Values Surveys*, it is evident that the notion of secularity was accepted by the Japanese in the late 19th century without notable resistance – in contrast with, for instance, many Islamicate countries.

As a historian of Japanese religions, I see it as my task within our project to identify the epistemes, and historical à prioris that prepared the Japanese for the acceptance of Western concepts of secularity and shaped the specific way in which they appropriated these concepts. In other words, I want to trace the assumed 'secular ground bass' of Japanese culture. One of the major challenges is how to operationalise secularity. My quest focuses on the two dimensions of *drawing boundaries* and *making distinctions*, which indicate respectively a socio-structural as well as an epistemological predisposition towards secularity.

My first approach is to look for emic taxonomies and systems of classification in medieval Japan. The related question is: did the Japanese group those socio-cultural formations that we count as 'religions' together as institutional representatives of a specific social domain, which we would call 'religion'?

The second approach is more specific and requires prior explanation. For the purposes of our project, we have constructed the concept of 'secularity' as an ideal type in a Weberian sense. This is to say, we conceptualise 'secularity' as a form with two sides – one side being 'religion,' the other being a singularised 'secular rest'. Such a binary model of secularity has come under suspicion in post-colonial discourse as being a specifically

7 For a discussion of Japan as a case example from a strictly sociological standpoint, which also takes into account the multiple secularities approach, see Thomas Schwinn, "Zur Neubestimmung des Verhältnisses von Religion und Moderne: Säkularisierung, Differenzierung und multiple Modernitäten," in *Religion und Gesellschaft,* ed. Christof Wolf and Matthias Koenig (Wiesbaden: Springer VS, 2013). As the author is evidently not very familiar with Japanese history, for which he mainly depends on Shmuel Eisenstadt's works, the analysis is only restrictedly usable. Much more detailed and historically reliable studies on "formations of the secular in Japan" have been collected and published in Aike P. Rots and Mark Teeuwen, eds., "Formations of the Secular in Japan,"Special issue, *Japan Review* 30 (2017).

8 Ronald Inglehart and Wayne E. Baker, "Modernization, Cultural Change, and the Persistence of Traditional Values," *American Sociological Review* 65, no. 1 (2000).

Western, Cartesian obsession that was a characterising element of modern state-building processes. I would not deny that in principle, but as a historian of religion, I cannot but stress the fact that the binary distinction between 'religion' and 'the secular' is first and foremost a religious strategy of conceptually organising the world, and at the same time claiming institutional autonomy.[9] It is religion that defines its social environment as 'secular' and thus creates a binary structure in which everything that does not belong to the realm of religion is 'singularised,' lumped together under one label, namely 'secular.' (Just think of the Gelasian Doctrine of the Two Swords or Luther's Doctrine of the Two Kingdoms.) Now, the decisive question for me is whether similar binary schemas have been developed by, for instance, Japanese Buddhists. Only such a binary schema, a 'form with two sides,'[10] which does not simply acknowledge societal differentiation in general as a multiplicity of social domains or functional systems, but boils down to a mode of an 'either-or ascription,' comes close to our ideal type of secularity. Moreover, I presume that such a binary schema would have substantially facilitated the appropriation of modern Western binary concepts of secularity.

So let us start with the problem of emic classifications and taxonomies in ancient, medieval, and early modern Japan.

2.1 Classifications and Taxonomies

In the following pages I will briefly present a few case examples that do not leave much room for doubt that the pre-modern Japanese placed those traditions or socio-cultural formations, which are usually regarded as 'religions' today, under one single category. This suggests that these traditions or socio-cultural formations were not just arbitrarily grouped together. In other words, it is safe to conclude that the process of categorisation, which led to the formation of the modern concept of religion, is perhaps not as historically contingent as some scholars from the 'postmodern camp' may claim.

9 Niklas Luhmann and André Kieserling, *Die Religion der Gesellschaft* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2002), 282.

10 Ibid., 187.

2.1.1 The Sun, the Moon, and the Stars: Kūkai 空海 (774–835) on the Similarities and Differences between Confucianism, Daoism and Buddhism

In the text "Essentials of the Three Teachings" (*Sangō shiiki* 三教指歸)[11] allegedly published in 797 – traditionally attributed to the Buddhist monk Kūkai, founder of the tantric-esoteric Shingonshū 真言宗 in Japan – fictional representatives of the three traditions, Confucianism, Daoism and Buddhism, each praise the merits of their respective traditions; with the expected result that Buddhism turns out to be superior. In the text, a certain Tokaku 兎角 receives three guests – the Confucian Kimō 亀毛, the Daoist master Kyobō 虛亡 (in Hakeda: Kyobu) and a nameless mendicant (boy Kameiji 仮名兒; i.e. the 'boy [probably in the sense of 'novice'] 'So-and-So'), which represents Buddhism. Tokaku talks to the three of them in turn about his spoiled nephew Shitsuga 蛭牙, hoping they will give him some advice on how to lead the young man back to the right path of virtue.

In the preface, Kūkai emphasises that there are "three different systems of teaching (*kyōkō* 教 綱)" that "inspire wise people." These are the (teachings) of Śākya 釋 (Buddha), Li 李 (Laozi) and Kong 孔 (Confucius). Although they differ in their profundity, they are all expressions of wisdom or holiness (*seisetsu* 聖 説).[12]

Confucianism

The Confucian Kimō recommends that the shrewd Shitsuga practise fidelity and loyalty, study zealously, and learn the classical arts. By doing so, he will raise his reputation and will be respected by all. He will achieve a high civil service rank and make a name in politics. After his death, his memory will be preserved, his name will be honoured into the future, and his family will prosper. In short, the Confucian's recommendations are to follow the social norms and to cultivate oneself through study in order to achieve a worldly career, prosperity and fame for oneself and one's descendants:

11 The text is contained in Kūkai 空海, *Sangō shiiki* 三教指歸; *Seirei shū* 性靈集. Ed. Watanabe Shōkō 渡邊照宏 and Miyasaka Yūshō 宮坂宥勝 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1988), and in Kūkai 空海, *Sangō shiiki* 三教指帰. Ed. Katō Junryū 加藤純隆 and Katō Seiichi 加藤精一 (Tokyo: Kadokawa Bunko, 2007). For an English translation see Yoshito Hakeda, ed., *Kūkai: Major works* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1972).

12 Kūkai, *Sangō shiiki; Seirei shū*, 85; Kūkai, *Sangō shiiki*, 107; Hakeda, *Kūkai*, 102.

> Shitsuga! Swiftly abandon your foolish inclinations and follow my instructions. If you do so, you will achieve the highest degree of faithfulness (*kō* 孝) to your parents, the perfection of loyalty (*chū* 忠) to the prince. The glory of being surrounded by friends and the joy of thriving offspring will be perfect. This is the basis for a career (*risshin* 立身) and the essential for gaining fame (*yōmei* 揚名).[13]

This prospect seems to convince Shitsuga, because he vows to follow the instructions of Kimō: "That's it! Respectfully, I want to follow your instructions. From now on, I will wholeheartedly give myself to study."[14]

Daoism

Then the Daoist Kyobō enters the scene. He ridicules the recommendations of the previous speaker. It would be better not to heal at all, than to do so by such means.[15] Kyobō emphasises that the Daoist teachings he represents are mysterious and inaccessible to the ignorant. His instructions require ritual preparation. First, an altar must be erected, an animal sacrificed, its blood drunk and an oath spoken. Kyobō then begins his speech. As expected, he is concerned with achieving a long life through various "methods of nourishing nature" (*yōsei no hō* 養性之方) and "techniques of prolonging one's lifespan" (*kyūson no jutsu* 久存之術).[16] These include a turning away from worldly affairs, the avoidance of certain foods, the use of amulets and spells, self-control and preservation of vital fluids, the ingestion of herbal and mineral substances, breathing exercises and more. In conclusion, he emphasises that all aspiration for a worldly career is pointless given the uncertainties and shortness of life.

Tokaku, Shitsuga and Kimō are overwhelmed by Kyobō's speech and make the following vow: "From now on, we will wholeheartedly refine our minds (*renshin* 練 神) and eternally enjoy these words."[17]

Kyobō's goal, that is the goal of the Daoists, is the transformation of the individual into an "immortal genius" (*sen* 仙).

Buddhism

Now an ugly and run-down "nameless mendicant monk" (*kamei kotusji* 仮 名 乞 児) enters the stage – a representative of Buddhism. He is described in detail and, not least, his freedom from any family bond is em-

13 Kūkai, *Sangō shiiki; Seirei shū*, 101; Kūkai, *Sangō shiiki*, 117; Hakeda, *Kūkai,* 113.
14 Kūkai, *Sangō shiiki; Seirei shū*, 101; Kūkai, *Sangō shiiki*, 118; Hakeda, *Kūkai,* 114.
15 Kūkai, *Sangō shiiki; Seirei shū*, 105; Kūkai, *Sangō shiiki*, 119; Hakeda, *Kūkai,* 115.
16 Kūkai, *Sangō shiiki*, 121; Hakeda, *Kūkai,* 116.
17 Kūkai, *Sangō shiiki*, 125; Kūkai, *Sangō shiiki; Seirei shū*, 113; Hakeda, *Kūkai,* 120.

phasised. Meanwhile, he keeps himself safe from a Confucian's insinuation that the mendicant neglects his duties to his parents (i.e. neglects the cardinal virtue of "filial piety") a standard charge of the Confucians against the Buddhists. He incessantly transmits "occult blessings" (*meifuku* 冥福) to the state[18] and directs "hidden merits" (*inkō* 陰功) to his parents. It cannot be said, therefore, that he lacks loyalty (*chū* 忠) and filial piety (*kyō* 孝).[19] On the contrary, repaying the blessings received from the parents only in this world and in a material way is inadequate and dependent on many contingent factors (ability to work, talent, wealth, health, etc.). The spiritual concern for the otherworldly fate of the parents is much more valuable.

Driven by hunger to leave his cave in a pine grove, the ascetic goes into the city for almsgiving. As he arrives at the gate to Tokaku's house, he hears the arguments of the Confucian Kimo and the Daoist Kyobō. When he has heard enough, he speaks up and sharply criticises the previous speakers. Their utilitarian considerations were solely based on inner-worldly arguments (*kanchū ben* 寰中辯).[20]

In essence, he accuses the two of being caught in the secular sphere and striving only for mundane things. They overlooked the fact that all existence is fleeting and limited. To strive for worldly glory or the prolongation of this existence would be nonsensical, because in the end one would find oneself in a hell again or be reborn as a hungry ghost or as an animal. The only meaningful goal was to overcome the world, that is, to escape the cycle of rebirths. Neither the Duke of Zhou, nor Confucius nor Laozi had taught the cause of suffering in *saṃsāra* and the joy of overcoming the passions and defilements.[21] Remarkably, however, the ascetic does not deny his responsibility to the state and parents. The Confucian virtues of loyalty and faithfulness to ministry may be less noticeably practised by him, but they are practised all the more effectively, since his way of virtuous practice is not confined to mundane affairs, as is the case with the Confucians, but is aimed at transcendence and thus entails a soteriological moment.

As expected, Kimyō and Kyobō are overwhelmed by the persuasive power of the mendicant monk who characterises the two other teaching systems in juxtaposition to Buddhism as follows:

18 Kūkai, *Sangō shiiki; Seirei shū*, 123.
19 Ibid., 124–25.
20 Ibid., 125; Hakeda, *Kūkai*, 127.
21 Kūkai, *Sangō shiiki; Seirei shū*, 134.

> Although this is truly only a tiny fraction of the spiritual legacy of my teacher [Śākyamuni]; how could one compare or even mention the lesser art of the immortals (*shinsen no shōjutsu* 神仙之小術; i.e., the teachings of the Daoists) and the lukewarm breeze of worldly affairs (*shokujin no bifū* 俗塵之微風, i.e. the teachings of the Confucians) in the same breath.[22]

Of course, Kimyō and Kyobō see how superficial the doctrines propagated by them are and can hardly believe their luck to have heard "the superior instructions for overcoming the world" (*shusse no saikun* 出世之最訓) from the mouth of the mendicant.

Finally, the mendicant monk composes a poem for the two converts, in which he once more conciliatorily explains the differences between the 'Three Teachings' of Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism, as well as their similarities. As the sun and moon break through the darkness, the 'Three Teachings' dispel the ignorance of men. Men naturally have very different needs, which is why there have to be different healing methods for their ailments.

In conclusion, Kūkai accepts Confucianism and Daoism as ways of self-cultivation, of providing meaning and orientation, and considers them comparable to Buddhism in that sense. However, they lack the capability to achieve true transcendence and enable men to be liberated from the cycle of birth and death. The conclusion that is decisive for our topic, in my opinion, is that extra-worldliness or transcendence (lokottara) is emphasised as a specific distinguishing feature and a proprium of Buddhism, but that this lack of quality in Confucianism and Daoism does not exclude these two traditions from the (admittedly rather broad) polythetic class named 'kyō.' The family resemblances – authoritative writings and authoritative personalities, virtuosi, a closed system of interpretation and orientation, codified rules and moral norms, practices of cultivation, etc. – justify the categorisation of the three traditions as members of one polythetic class, the prototype and centre of which – in Kūkai's view – should be Buddhism.

It is equally interesting that Kūkai names the similarities more or less explicitly. All three class members address the problem of contingency, in particular the contingency of personal happiness, which is defined as fame and recognition, prosperity and success, health and longevity, etc. However, Confucianism ultimately offers only mundane, Daoism relatively transcendent and temporary solutions at best. To re-

22 Kūkai, *Sangō shiiki; Seirei shū*, 145; Hakeda, *Kūkai,* 138.

main in the medical imagery of Kūkai, Confucianism and Daoism are concerned only with the symptoms, not the cause of the illness. Within the world, which is defined in Buddhism as a realm of suffering, the problem of contingency and thus of suffering cannot be overcome.

2.1.2 Nichiren 日 蓮 (1222–1282) and the Superiority of Buddhism over Confucianism and Brahmanism

Like Kūkai in the 8th century, the monk Nichiren 日 蓮 (1222–1282) compares different schools of thought and teaching traditions from the inside perspective of the faithful Buddhist in the 13th century. Nichiren, too, subsumes three doctrinal traditions under one category, but replaces Daoism mostly by the non-Buddhist traditions of India. In some places, however, Daoism is also mentioned as a competing tradition. Nichiren's attitude towards the competing systems is exclusive in a synchronous perspective, but inclusivist and hierarchical in a diachronic one. In his famous *Kaimoku shō* 開目抄 ("Treatise on the Opening of the Eyes") he states that "there are three things to learn and study, namely, Confucianism, the external [ways of India; *gedō* 外道], and the inner [teachings of Buddhism]."[23]

Nichiren's arguments for the superiority of Buddhism seem, at first glance, to be one-sided from the Buddhist internal perspective. The aims of Buddhism, as in Kūkai, are the standard of judgment of other traditions, and Nichiren concludes that they have no methods of achieving those aims. In terms of moral teachings, the four traditions – Indian religions, Confucianism, Buddhism, and (to a certain extent) Daoism – are very similar from Nichiren's point of view. A central moral category is the repayment of received blessings, especially those received from the parents. Honouring the obligations of kinship is considered the basic virtue of Confucianism, but Nichiren claims, like Kūkai, that the worldliness of Confucianism prevents a higher service to the parents. Only Buddhism has the power to positively influence the other-worldly fate of the deceased parents. Morality and soteriology are thus closely linked, whereby clear primacy is granted to soteriology.[24] In essence, Nichiren argues much like Kūkai.

23 又習學スヘキ物三アリ。所謂儒外内コレナリ。 (T 84, no. 2689, p. 208b20–21).

24 For the complex relationship between religion and moral see Luhmann and Kieserling (2002), *Die Religion*, 96; 173–74.

Brahmanism, Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism share a large number of family resemblances, especially in the field of morality, and can therefore be compared with each other and be classified under one generic category. Every tradition has its benefit, but only Buddhism can really influence the other-worldly destinies of one's deceased parents positively and finally help to overcome the world of suffering altogether.

> The four sages [*shishō* 四聖][25] and three ascetics [*sansen* 三仙] of the Confucian and Brahmanical scriptures and teachings [*geten gedō* 外典外道] are referred to as sages, but in fact they are no more than ordinary people who have not yet been able to eradicate the three categories of illusion. They are referred to as wise men, but in fact they are no more than infants who cannot understand the principles of cause and effect. With their teachings for a ship, could one ever cross over the sea of the sufferings of birth and death? With their teachings for a bridge, could one ever escape from the maze of the six paths? But the Buddha, our great teacher, has advanced beyond even transmigration with change and advance, let alone transmigration with differences and limitations. He has wiped out even the very root of fundamental darkness, let alone the illusions of thought and desire that are as minor as branches and leaves.[26]

At least from the Buddhist point of view, the orientation towards transcendence is evidently more than just one feature among many. It is this other-worldliness that puts Buddhism at the centre of the polythetic class; the other traditions on the periphery. The respective class – whether we call it religion or not – is a 'graded category.'[27] The transcendent nature of Buddhism may be comparable to the ability of a bird to fly. A 'strong' representative of the class 'bird' would not least have to be characterised by his flying ability; if the feature is missing, a candidate is a 'weak' representative of the class – the 'penguin among religions,' so to speak. Supra-mundaneness would therefore be, like the ability to fly, a 'typical-

25 This refers to the disciples of Confucius, i.e. Yanhui 顔回 or Yanyuan 顔淵; Cengcan 曾參; Zisi 子思; Mengzi 孟子.

26 外典外道ノ四聖三仙ハ。其ノ名ハ聖ナリトイエトモ。實ニハ三惑未斷ノ凡夫。其名ハ賢ナリトイ 画像 ヘトモ。實ニ因果ヲ辨ヘサル事嬰兒ノコ トシ。彼ヲ船トシテ生死ノ大海ヲワタルヘシヤ。彼ヲ橋トシテ六道ノ巷コエカタシ。我カ大師ハ變易スラ猶ヲワタリ給ヘ　リ。況ヤ分段生死ヲヤ。元品無明ノ根本猶ヲカタフケ給ヘリ。況ヤ見思枝葉ノ麁惑ヲヤ。(T84, no. 2689, p. 209b29–c08). English translation quoted from Gosho Translation Committee, ed., *The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin* (Tokyo: Soka Gakkai, 2003), 223.

27 Cf. Benson Saler, ed., *Understanding religion: Selected essays* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2009), 168.

ity feature,' but not a necessary feature whose presence or absence would clearly determine class membership. In our historical example, the prototype gradient went from Buddhism (dealing with absolute transcendence) through Daoism/Brahmanism (dealing with relative transcendence) to Confucianism (dealing with immanence).

2.1.3 The Christian Challenge: A new Competitor in the Same Social Field

When Francis Xavier (1506–1552) and his successors began to spread the Christian gospel in Japan, the Japanese, for the first time in history, were forced to systematically compare two well institutionalised missionary traditions with a universal claim of validity – Buddhism and Christianity.[28] What is noteworthy in this context is that both sides – the Christians and the Buddhists – did not foster the slightest doubt that Buddhism and Christianity belonged to the same class of social institution. As the first Christian missionaries arrived from Goa in India, many Japanese even believed that the Jesuits had come in order to spread a new form of the Buddha Dharma. Once they realised that Christianity was a different, yet functionally equivalent, tradition, a fierce competition started. Both groups were quite aware that they were striving for dominance in the same field of activity – that is, in Bourdieu's wording, "the religious field."[29] The letters of the Jesuits and other missionaries, as well as anti-Christian treatises written by Japanese Buddhists, provide extremely interesting information on how a discrete polythetic class[30] of social institution was conceptualised and thus served as a *tertium comparationis*.

28 For more information on the Christian mission in Japan and Christian Buddhist Encounters see Neil S. Fujita, *Japan's encounter with Christianity: The Catholic mission in pre-modern Japan* (New York: Paulist Press, 1991); Kiri Paramore, *Ideology and Christianity in Japan* (London, New York: Routledge, 2009); Joseph Jennes, *A history of the Catholic Church in Japan: From its beginnings to the early Meiji era (1549–1873): A short handbook* (Tokyo: Oriens – lnstitute for Religious Research, 1973); Hans Haas, *Geschichte des Christentums in Japan; 1: Erste Einführung des Christentums in Japan durch Franz Xavier* (Tokyo: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Natur- und Völkerkunde Ostasiens, 1902); Charles Ralph Boxer, *The Christian Century in Japan, 1549–1650* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1951); George Elison, *Deus Destroyed: The Image of Christianity in Early Modern Japan* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1973).

29 Pierre Bourdieu, "Genesis and Structure of the Religious Field," *Comparative Social Research* 13 (1991).

30 For the concept of polythetic classes see Kleine, "Religion als begriffliches Konzept;" Brian C. Wilson, "From Lexical to the Polythetic: A Brief History of the Definition of Religion," in *What is Religion? Origins, Definitions, and Explanations*, ed. Thomas A. Id-

Besides, it is important to keep in mind that the encounter of Christians with other cultures, especially in Asia, was crucial for the development of the European concept of 'religion' as a universal phenomenon and as a generic term.[31] In Japan, the somewhat traumatising encounter with the Christian missionaries resulted in a policy of isolation (*sakoku* 鎖國) and in the production of anti-Christian pamphlets, such as the *Ha daiusu* 破提宇子 ("Deus Destroyed," publ. 1620) by the convert and later apostate Fukansai Habian[32] 不干斎ハビアン (1565–1621) or the *Ha kirishitan* 破吉利支丹[33] ("Christianity Destroyed," publ. 1642) of the Zen monk Suzuki Shōsan 鈴木正三 (1579–1655).[34] However 'devilish' and 'perverted'

inopulos and Brian C. Wilson (Leiden: Brill, 1998); Rodney Needham, "Polythetic Classification: Convergence and Consequences," *Man* 10, no. 3 (1975); Martin Southwold, "Buddhism and the Definition of Religion," *Man* 13, no. 3 (1978).

31 Evidently, it was in the 17th century when European authors attempted to describe the more or less newly 'discovered' cultures of the world on the basis of the letters of the missionaries, reports of sailors, traders, and adventurers and thereby popularised the concept of religion as a generic category and universal phenomenon. Cf. Samuel Purchas, *Purchas his pilgrimage. Or Relations of the vvorld and the religions obserued in all ages and places discouered, from the Creation vnto this present: In foure partes. This first containeth a theologicall and geographicall historie of Asia, Africa, and America, with the ilands adiacent. Declaring the ancient religions before the Floud … With briefe descriptions of the countries, nations, states, discoueries, priuate and publike customes, and the most remarkable rarities of nature, or humane industrie, in the same. By Samuel Purchas, minister at Estwood in Essex* (London: Henrie Fetherstone, 1613); Edward Brerewood, *Enquiries touching the diversity of languages, and religions through the chiefe parts of the world: Written by Edw. Brerewood lately professor of astronomy in Gresham Colledge in London* (London: John Bill, 1614); Alexander Ross, ΠΑΝΣΕΒΕΙΑ: Or, A view of all the religions in the world: with the severall church-governments, from the creation, to these times; together with a discovery of al known heresies (London: James Young for John Saywell, 1653); Bernhard Varen, "Kurtzer Bericht von mancherley Religionen der Völcker: Aus dem Lateinischen verteutschet durch E. F.," in *Unterschiedliche Gottesdienste in in der gantzen Welt: Beschreibung aller bewusten Religionen, Sekten und Ketzereyen*, ed. Alexander Ross and Bernhard Varenius (Heidelberg: Endter, 1668).

32 Cf. Monika Schrimpf, "The Pro- and Anti-Christian Writings of Fukan Fabian (1565–1621)," *Japanese Religions* 33, no. 1–2 (2008).

33 Suzuki Shōsan 鈴木正三, "Ha Kirishitan 破吉利支丹," in *Kirishitan shiryō* 吉利支丹史料, ed. Tōhō Sho'in東方書院 (Tokyo: Tōhō Sho'in, 1935).

34 For more information on Suzuki Shōsan see Arthur Braverman, ed., *Warrior of Zen: The Diamond-hard Wisdom of Suzuki Shōsan* (New York, Tokyo, London: Kodansha, 1994); Shōsan Suzuki, *Selected writings of Suzuki Shōsan.* Translated by Royall Tyler (Ithaca NY: China-Japan Program, Cornell University, 1977); Hajime Nakamura and William Johnston, "Suzuki Shosan, 1579–1655 and the spirit of capitalism in Japanese Buddhism," *Monumenta Nipponica* 22, no. 1–2 (1967); Suzuki (1935), "Ha Kirishitan"; Royall Tyler, "The Tokugawa Peace and Popular Religion: Suzuki Shōsan, Kakugyō, Tōbutsu, and Jikigyō Miroku," in *Confuciansim and Tokugawa Culture*. Ed. Peter Nosco (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984).

Christianity may be according to the respective texts, it belongs to the same class of socio-cultural formation as Buddhism. For instance: Suzuki Shōsan calls the Christian Deus a "Great Buddha" (*daibutsu* 大佛); likewise, according to the *Kirishitan monogatari* 吉利支丹物語[35] ("Story of the Christians"), the Christian God is "a Buddha called Deusu … でうす…とも申す" characterised as "the Buddha who opened up heaven and earth" [でうすと申は天地かいびゃくの佛也]. He is the "principle Buddha" (こんぽんお佛) of this sect (しうてい, i.e. probably 宗底), their monasteries are called "*tera* 寺" (a term usually denoting Buddhist temples and monasteries), their main "objects of worship" are called *honzon* 本尊 as those of the Buddhists, their scriptures are called kyō 經 (usually denoting Buddhist sutras), their services are called *gongyō* 勤行 as are the Buddhist ones, the Christian concept of salvation is termed "becoming a Buddha" (*jōbutsu* 成佛), their teachings pretend to be "the true dharma" (*shōbō* 正ぼう), whereas the teachings that the "Southern Barbarians" spread (supposedly for the purpose of conquering Japan, the "land of the gods" [*shinkoku* 神國] and the "land of the Buddhas" [*bukkoku* 佛國]) are actually only a (perverted) variant of the "Buddha dharma" (*buppō* 佛法), and for their institution the terms "*shū* 宗," "*shūtei* しうてい" (i.e. 宗底), or "*shūshi* 宗旨" are used in the same way as they are in reference to traditional Buddhist institutions. Christianity is further called a "law/*dharma* of a devilish heresy" [あくまげどうのほう]),[36] whereas "heresy" (*gedō* 外道, literally "external way") is a term derived from the Sanskrit *tīrthika* ("ford maker") which from early on was used by Buddhists to refer to adherents of competing traditions aiming, just like them, to find a ford which enables them to cross the river and reach the other shore of salvation (*mokṣa*; jap. *gedatsu* 解脱).

2.1.4 Tominaga Nakamoto 富永仲基 (1715–1746) or why none of the 'Three Teachings' is the 'Way of Ways'

Once Christianity was eradicated from Japanese soil, the debate on the best methods of self-cultivation and moral instruction focused on three traditions again, with Daoism or Brahmanism sometimes being replaced

35 Anonymous, "Kirishitan monogatari 吉利支丹物語," in *Kirishitan shiryō*, ed. Tōhō Sho'in 東方書院 (Tokyo: Tōhō Sho'in, 1935).

36 Cf. Tōhō Sho'in, *Kirishitan shiryō*; Elison, *Deus Destroyed*.

by Shintō 神道, which had begun to be regarded as a system of practices and beliefs independent of Buddhism since roughly the 16th century.[37]

In contrast to Kūkai and Nichiren, the remarkable Japanese free-thinker Tominaga Nakamoto, in the 18th century, considered the 'Three Doctrines' from a decidedly external perspective: "I am not a follower of Confucianism, a follower of Daoism, or a follower of Buddhism,"[38] he clarifies in his famous work, *Shutsujōkōgo* 出定後語 ("Words after Emerging from Meditation"; publ. 1745). In the 24th chapter of the text, Tominaga deals with the classical 'Three Teachings' (*sankyō* 三教): Confucianism, Daoism and Buddhism. Tominaga focuses in his writings not on the similarities of the 'Three Teachings' that allow their classification under the same category, but on the differences. He emphasises the relativity of their claims of validity and doubts the usefulness of a doctrine beyond its context of origin. Buddhism was good for the Indians, in China it was 'rubbish' because of its magical orientation; Confucianism is appropriate for the Chinese; in Japan, its exaggerated appreciation of rhetoric and literature makes it 'rubbish' again.

Tominaga also discusses earlier attempts to formulate a common denominator of the 'Three Teachings,' such as that of the scholar Li Shiqian 李士謙 of the Sui period, who in 589 had chosen an astronomical allegory and thought that Buddhism was the sun, Daoism the moon, Confucianism the stars.[39] As we have seen above, Kūkai referred to the celestial bodies in the same way.

---

37 For more information on the history and formation of Shintō see John Breen and Mark Teeuwen, eds., *Shinto in History: Ways of the Kami* (Richmond: Curzon, 2000); Bernhard Scheid, *Der eine und einzige Weg der Götter: Yoshida Kanetomo und die Erfindung des Shinto* (Wien: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2001); Mark Teeuwen, "From Jindō to Shinto: A Concept Takes Shape," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 29, no. 3–4 (2002); John Breen and Mark Teeuwen, *A new history of Shinto* (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010).

38 吾非儒之子、非道之子、亦非仏之子、傍観乎其云為、且私論之然. Mizuta Toshihisa 水田紀久 and Arisaka Takamichi有坂隆道, eds., *Tominaga Nakamoto, Yamagata Bantō* 富永仲基, 山片蟠桃 *(*Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1973), 134a. Cf. Tominaga Nakamoto, *Emerging from Meditation* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1990), 168.

39 See, for instance, *Fozu tongji* 佛祖統紀 (T49, no. 2035, p. 360, a12–14). This can be seen as an early form of the *sanjiao* theory. Li Shiqian is also mentioned in a text titled *Sanjiao pingxin lun* 三教平心論. According to him, the functional equivalence of the three teachings lies in their purpose to make people do good (T52, no. 2117, p. 781, b26–27).

He further quotes the Chan monk, Qiesong 契嵩 (1007–1072),[40] who said, "I believe that the Three Teachings enrich and improve the world."[41] Qiesong's position is paraphrased in a petition to the Emperor to print and canonise the Chan historiography "True Genealogy of Dharma Transmission" (*Chanfa zhengzong ji* 傳法正宗), emphasising that the two [sic! Confucianism and Buddhism?] Teachings are ways of the saints and alike have improved the world and benefitted man.[42] Among other things, Qiesong emphasised the conformity of the five cardinal virtues of Confucianism (*wuchang* 五常) with the five main commandments of Buddhism (*pañca-śīla; wujie* 五戒).

The saints of antiquity who spoke for Buddhism, Daoism, and Confucianism were of one mind, and their respective teachings differed only in outward form.[43] Their identity was that they each wanted to improve people.[44] All three lessons are needed.

Now, Tominaga's reply to Qiesong's position is remarkable. He argues that it was completely nonsensical to seek the unity of the 'Three Teachings' in that they are all ways to good. If this is the common feature of Buddhism, Confucianism, and Daoism, why restrict the class to these three teachings? After all, there are dozens of heterodoxies (*gedō* 外道) and heresies (*itan* 異端), which strive for the good as well. This argument shows that Tominaga accepts the improvement of human beings as a function or defining feature of the class traditionally formed by the 'Three Teachings,' but criticises, among other things, the limitation to these three doctrines. However, by adding "heterodoxies" and "heresies" as further candidates of the class "*kyō* 教,"[45] he implicitly assigns the func-

40 From *Fujiao bian* 輔教編; cf. digitalised facsimile of the Harvard-Yenching Library: http://pds.lib.harvard.edu/pds/view/11097463?n=1&imagesize= 1200&jp2Res=. 25.

41 吾謂、三教者、乃相資而善世也. Mizuta and Arisaka, *Tominaga Nakamoto,* 133b. Cf. Rebekka Radke, *Worte nach der Meditation: Die historische Buddhismus-Kritik von Tominaga Nakamoto (1715–46)* (Frankfurt a. M. et al.: Peter Lang, 2003), 136.

42 *Chuanfa zhengzong ji* 傳法正宗記 (T51, no. 2078, p. 715, c7–8). Cf. *Tanjin wenji* 鐔津文集 (T52, no. 2115, p. 691, c22–24).

43 其心則一、其迹則異. Mizuta and Arisaka, *Tominaga Nakamoto,* 133b; Radke, *Worte nach der Meditation,* 136.

44 夫一焉者、其皆欲人為善者也. Mizuta and Arisaka, *Tominaga Nakamoto,* 133b; Radke, *Worte nach der Meditation,* 136.

45 Note, Campany argues that in China "教" has become a category comparable with "道" or "法" only in modern times. Robert Ford Campany, "On the Very Idea of Religions (In the Modern West and in Early Medieval China)," *History of Religions* 42, no. 4 (2003): 287–319; 306–07. My materials suggest that, at least in Japan, this happened much earlier. Furthermore, I think that the pre-modern Chinese concept of the "three teachings" (*sanjiao* 三教) that classifies Confucianism, Buddhism, and Daoism under one category

tion of improving people to a common, segmentarily differentiated social field or system (including outlawed traditions) defined by a specific social function.[46] It is noteworthy that, in this functional context, he does not refer to other, 'secular' social systems such as 'law' or 'education.'

Nevertheless, Tominaga sees the common denominator of Buddhism, Confucianism, Daoism and Shintō – the fourth member of the class – in morality. This becomes clear when he criticises the Buddhists in his *Okina no fumi* 翁の文 ("Writings of an Old Man"; publ. 1746) for co-opting the customs of the Indians, the Confucians for imitating the customs of the Chinese and the Shintō followers for dressing and behaving like the people of the distant past. Therefore, Tominaga writes, none of the "ways of the Three Teachings" (*sankyō no michi* 三教の道) is the "way of ways" (*michi no michi* 道の道) as it should be practised in contemporary Japan.

According to Tominaga, the "way of ways" consists of fulfilling one's daily duties according to the conditions of present-day Japan, of maintaining a sincere heart and correct conduct, being reserved in language and attitudes, and serving and honouring one's parents.[47]

Tominaga continues the listing of moral commandments elsewhere, being aware that all of these commandments are part of the codified norms of the 'Three Teachings.' In short: He adopts the moral postulates of the 'Three Teachings,' but rejects the adaptation of "cultural specific accessories"[48] and renounces any reference to transcendence.

---

suggests the same for China.

46 Cf. ibid., 315: "In Western discourses, 'religions' are, relatively speaking, 'like-us,' whereas 'unlike-us' are the 'other' categories of 'magic,' 'superstition,' 'witchcraft' and 'heresy,' always implied to be different kinds of things from 'religions' ('Popular religion' is always a borderline category – it is religious but is the kind of religion least like 'ours'.) This sort of contrast, too, is largely absent in Chinese discourse, which speaks of 'deviant daos,' 'the dao of the left,' 'licentious sacrifices,' and so on, without implying that such daos or such sacrifices are another kind of thing than daos or sacrifices proper'". I am not quite convinced, however, that Campany's assessment of "Western discourses" is quite correct. Pre-modern authors such as Samuel Purchas also distinguish between true and false religions, which means the 'idolaters' have religion too, albeit a false one.

47 "As to the way of truth (*makoto no michi* 誠の道), the way should be practised in present-day Japan, it is simply to perform our evident duty in everything, to give priority to the tasks of the day, to maintain an upright heart and correct conduct, to be restrained in speech and bearing, and if we have parents, to serve and honour them well." Tominaga, *Emerging from Meditation,* 57. Ienaga Saburō 家永三郎, *Kinsei shisōka bunshū* 近世思想家文集 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1988), 551.

48 "To write with today's script, use today's language, eat today's food, wear today's clothes, use today's utensils, live in today's buildings, follow today's customs, observe today's regulations, mingle with today's people, to avoid all the bad things and do the good things,

The true 'way of ways' is thus pure, contemporary morality, without uncontemporary or exotic posturing and exaggerated inclinations such as the inclination to magic in Buddhism, the obsession with polished language in Confucianism and the tendency towards mystification and secrecy in Shinto.[49] Even the members of the 'Three Teachings' can be considered as followers of the true path, as long as they understand their own teaching as pure, enlightened morality.

Nevertheless, in contrast to Nichiren, Tominaga defines as the common feature of all 'Three Teachings' a morality that apparently does not require any supra-mundane legitimation and purpose. The common function of the three doctrines is thereby wholly bound up with the realisation of inner-worldly goals by inner-worldly means. By contrast, Kūkai and Nichiren had implicitly accused all other traditions of actually pursuing the goals of Buddhism – complete overcoming of the contingent world – but denying them the means to achieve it.

As Tominaga identifies with none of the traditions, he basically postulates the transformation of Confucianism, Daoism, Buddhism and Shinto into wholly mundane moral teachings (*kyō*) that provide a suitable way (*michi*) of inner-worldly self-cultivation. In doing so, like Kūkai and Nichiren, he does not do justice to the self-understanding of the individual traditions, but formulates a lowest common denominator, which possibly justified the supportability of traditional socio-cultural formations or traditions over time and independently of the particular inclinations of individual rulers. In fact, it seems reasonable to suppose that, from the point of view of rulers in East Asia, the function of religion was primarily the moral cultivation of human beings; in other words, their domestication.[50]

– this may be called the way of truth, and it is the way which should be practised in present-day Japan." Tominaga, *Emerging from Meditation,* 59; Ienaga (1988), *Kinsei shisōka bunshū,* 552–53.

49 "Thus those who learn the three teachings may also be regarded as followers of the way of truth, but only if they understand them in this way and live in this world with other people without behaving in a wrong, weird and extravagant manner". Tominaga, *Emerging from Meditation,* 61; Ienaga (1988), *Kinsei shisōka bunshū,* 554.

50 Note, however, that writers in 17th century Europe who popularised the comparative concept religion, had a similar functional understanding of religion. Alexander Ross, for instance, writes: "Religion is the Sacred Anchor, by which the Great Ship of the State is held fast, that she may not be split upon the Quick-Sands of popular tumults, or on the Rocks of Sedition. Religion is the pillar on which the great Fabrick of the *Microcosm* standeth. All humane Societies, and civil Associations are without Religion, but ropes of Sand, and Stones without Morter, or Ships without Pitch: For this cause, all Societies of men in all Ages, and in all parts of the Universe, have united and strengthened themselves

2.2 Intermediate

It is obvious that the Japanese classified certain socio-cultural formations roughly in the same way as did their European contemporaries and – rooted in that tradition – modern scholars. Against the backdrop of radical constructionists who claim, that 'religion' is a genuinely and exclusively Western concept coined for specific political reasons in early modern Europe,[51] this finding is by no means trivial. Buddhists in ancient and medieval Japan subsumed Buddhism, Brahmanism, Daoism, and Confucianism as functional equivalents. The respective category was sometimes designated as *hō* 法 (law, order, nomos), sometimes as *dō* 道 (way, path), sometimes as *kyō* 教 (teaching), and the respective Chinese characters were suffixed to form binoms such as *buppō* 佛法 (law/teaching of the Buddha, i.e. the *Buddha dharma*), *butsudō* 佛道 (path of the Buddha), or *bukkyō* 佛教 (teaching of the Buddha). In early modern times, terms such as *shū* 宗, *shūshi* 宗旨 and *shūtei* 宗低 were additionally used to denote particular socio-cultural formations regarded as religions from a modern perspective. None of these terms can serve as exact semantic equivalents to the modern term 'religion' or *shūkyō* 宗教 in Japanese.[52] However, em-

with the Cement of Religion; finding both by experience, and the light of nature, that no humane Society could be durable, without the knowledge and fear of a Deity, which all Nations do reverence and worship, though they agree not in the manner of their worship." Alexander Ross, *ΠΑΝΣΕΒΕΙΑ: or, a View of all Religions in the World: With the Several Church Governments from the Creation, to these times. Together with a Discovery of all Known Heresies, in all Ages and places, throughout Asia, Africa, America, and Europe* (London: John Saywell, 1653), The Epistle Dedicatory.

51 See, for instance, the „modern classic" of Talal Asad, *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003); see also: Timothy Fitzgerald, ed., *Discourse on civility and barbarity: A critical history of religion and related categories* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007); Timothy Fitzgerald, ed., *Religion and the Secular: Historical and Colonial Formations* (London: Equinox, 2010); Gedaliahu A. Guy Stroumsa, *A New Science: The Discovery of Religion in the Age of Reason* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010).

52 For the introduction of the term '*shūkyō*' as a translation of the Western term 'religion,' see Shimazono Susumu 島薗進 and Tsuruoka Yoshio 鶴岡賀雄, eds., '*Shūkyō*' *saikō* 「宗教」再考 (Tokyo: Perikansha, 2004); Jun'ichi Isomae, "The Conceptual Formation of the Category 'Religion' in Modern Japan: Religion, State, Shintō," *Journal of Religion in Japan* 1, no. 3 (2012); Isomae Jun'ichi 磯前順一, *Kindai Nihon no shūkyō gensetsu to sono keifu: Shūkyō, kokka, shintō* 近代日本の宗教言説とその系譜–宗教・国家・神道 (Tokyo: Iwanami, 2000); Isomae Jun'ichi 磯前順一, *Shūkyō gainen aruiwa shūkyōgaku no shi* 宗教概念あるいは宗教学の死 (Tokyo: Tōkyō Daigaku Shuppankai, 2012); Hans Martin Krämer, *Zwischen westlichem Wissen und eigener Tradition: Zur Aneignung und Übersetzung von Religion in Japan, 16. bis 20. Jahrhundert* (Habilitationsschrift, Bochum: Fakultät für Ostasienwissenschaften, Ruhr-Universität Bochum, 2012); Hans Martin Krämer, "An der Schwelle zum modernen Religionsbegriff: Der Beitrag japanischer Bud-

phasising historical developments and cultural variations, the 'multiple secularities approach' does not aim at identifying semantic equivalents, taxonomies or classifications, which are *entirely congruent* with the modern category 'religion.' Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that ancient and medieval Buddhists in Japan also subsumed the very systems of practice and belief that we classify as 'religions' under one category, and did so presumably on the basis of family resemblances and functional equivalence.

2.3 Classification by Social Function?

As a rule, pre-modern discourses do not provide clear-cut definitions of abstract concepts. The historian has to reconstruct the meaning of the terms by analysing their usage and implicit statements with regard to central features ascribed to representatives of a generic category. As a tentative result of my reading of a number of ancient and medieval texts, I assume that sets of practices and beliefs are assigned to the category *hō, dō,* or *kyō,* etc. primarily on the basis of functional considerations.

Broadly speaking, from the perspective of the *individual* the primary function of *dō, kyō,* etc. can be defined as 'ways' or 'teachings' conducive to 'coping with contingency'. From the apologetic standpoint of Buddhist authors, Buddhism is the perfect representative of the category because only Buddhism provides the means to completely and permanently overcome all kinds of contingencies, which are unavoidable within the 'mundane' realm, the cycle of birth and death. In contrast to Buddhism, Confucianism, Daoism, etc. are only capable of coping with specific contingencies – wealth or poverty, fame or shame, success or failure, health or illness, etc.[53]

---

dhisten, 1850–1880," in *Religion in Asien?,* ed. Peter Schalk et al. (Uppsala: Uppsala Universitet, 2013); Hans Martin Krämer, *Shimaji Mokurai and the reconception of religion and the secular in modern Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2015); Jason Ānanda Josephson, *The Invention of Religion in Japan* (Chicago, London: The University of Chicago Press, 2012).

53 For further information see Kleine, "Religion als begriffliches Konzept." The same holds true for Shintō 神道 which was, however, not regarded as an autonomous tradition in medieval Japan, but rather as the mundane dimension of Buddhism. According to the dominant paradigm of "original grounds and their traces" (*honji suijaku* 本地垂迹) the indigenous kami or gods venerated in Shintō were regarded as immanent manifestations or 'traces' (*suijaku* 垂迹) of the transcendent Buddhas and Bodhisattvas who were their 'original grounds' (*honji* 本地). It must be noted, however, that the *honji suijaku* paradigm, originally designed to assimilate the indigenous cults into Buddhism, declaring that kami need to be tamed and saved by Buddhist rituals, eventually resulted in a

From the perspective of the *political elite* (but also of 'secular' thinkers such as Tominaga), the primary *social* function of *dō, kyō,* etc. lies in their ability to civilise the populace by providing "norms 法," "ways 道" and "teachings 教" or "moral instructions" which contribute to the cultivation of the individual and thus to public order and political stability. Remember Max Weber's dictum that "the domestication of the masses" is a main function of religion!

This is clearly indicated as early as in the so-called "Seventeen Article Constitution" (*jūshichijō kenpō* 十七条憲法) ascribed to crown prince Shōtoku 聖徳太子 (574–622):

> Sincerely reverence the three treasures. The three treasures, viz. Buddha, the law and the priesthood, are the final refuge of the four generated beings, and are the supreme objects of faith in all countries. What man in what age can fail to reverence this law? Few men are utterly bad. They may be taught to follow it. But if they do not betake them to the three treasures, how shall their crookedness be made straight?[54]

2.4 The Quest for Binary Schemas

Now, let us address the second question whether the pre-modern Japanese developed binary schemas that resemble our ideal type of secularity as a form with two sides. The most likely candidate is the Buddhist theory of dual rule, the doctrine of the interdependence of the ruler's nomosphere and the Buddha's nomosphere.

---

valorisation of the kami who, as manifestations of transcendent Buddhist saviour figures, became soteriologically relevant and subject to an increasingly independent discourse. As a rule, however, in medieval Japan the *kami* were primarily responsible for "inner-worldly benefits" (*genze riyaku* 現世利益), whereas the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas held a monopoly on complete final liberation (*gedatsu* 解脱) from all sorts of contingencies. For more information see Mark Teeuwen and Fabio Rambelli, eds., *Buddhas and Kami in Japan: Honji Suijaku as a Combinatory Paradigm* (London, New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003); Alicia Matsunaga, *The Buddhist Philosophy of Assimilation: The Historical Development of the Honji-suijaku Theory* (Tokyo: Sophia University, 1969).

54 二曰。篤敬。三寶。三寶者。[佛法僧也]則四生之終歸。萬國之極宗。何世何人。非貴是法。人鮮尤悪。能教從之。其不歸三寶。何以直枉. English translation by William George Aston, *Nihongi*: *Chronicles of Japan from the earliest times to A. D. 697* (Rutland, VT, Tokyo: Tuttle, 1998), vol. 2, 129; Chinese text: *Japanese Historical Text Initiative, University of California at Berkeley.* 16 January 2018, last accessed. http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/jhti/cgi-bin/jhti/kensaku.cgi

In pre-modern Japan – especially in the Heian period 平安時代 (794–1185) and the Kamakura period 鎌倉時代 (1185–1333) – chiefly but not exclusively Buddhist texts distinguished two orders upon which the nation was founded: (1) the "ruler's nomosphere" (*ōbō* 王法; Skt. *rāja-dharma*) and (2) the "Buddha's nomosphere" (*buppō* 佛法; Skt. *buddha-dharma*). Only the interplay of these two nomospheres could, according to the Buddhist view, maintain the balance of the social, moral, political and cosmic order. This view was apparently shared by large parts of the political power elite.

Special emphasis was put on the unconditional interdependence of both orders. The demise of the ruler's nomosphere and the Buddha's nomosphere are interdependent.[55] It is prayed that the Buddha's nomosphere and the ruler's nomosphere will flourish simultaneously,[56] so that great peace can reign in the world and the people can live in safety and prosperity.[57] The Buddha's nomosphere and the ruler's nomosphere protect each other and support each other.[58] One has deep respect for the Buddha's nomosphere and does not turn away from the ruler's nomosphere.[59] It is said that "in times of crisis, the Buddha's nomosphere and the order of men [sic!] help each other."[60] If the Buddha's nomosphere shows signs of decline, then the ruler's order will lose its power to protect.[61] What supports the Buddha's nomosphere is the ruler's nomosphere; and what protects the ruler's nomosphere is the Buddha's nomosphere.[62] Basically, the Buddha's nomosphere protects the ruler's nomosphere, and the ruler's nomosphere venerates the Buddha's nomosphere.[63] When the Buddha's nomosphere disappears, the ruler's nomosphere also disappears.[64] The Buddha's nomosphere is that which is worshipped by the ruler's nomosphere; the ruler's nomosphere is that which is protected by the Buddha's

55 王法佛法滅亡在于茲 (*Keiran shūyō shū* 溪嵐拾葉集; T 76, no. 2410, p. 510, b29–c1).
56 欲祈佛法王法同時盛興 (*Musō Kokushi goroku* 夢窓國師語録; T 80, no. 2555, p. 466, c29).
57 一切大小神祇。別般若十六善神。所冀佛法王法共繁昌。天下太平萬民安泰 (*Enzan Battai Oshō goroku* 鹽山拔隊和尚語録; T 80, no. 2558, p. 564, c6–7.).
58 仏法王法互守互助" (*Enryakuji daishu ge* 延暦寺大衆解; KI no. 3234).
59 是以深敬仏法、不背王法" (*Enryakuji daishu ge* 延暦寺大衆解; KI no. 3234).
60 仏法人法難救難興云云" (*Enryakuji daishu ge* 延暦寺大衆解; KI no. 3234).
61 仏法已得衰末之相、王法又失鎮護之力" (*Tōji sangō ge'an* 東寺三綱解案; KI no. 4017).
62 夫補仏法者王法也 … 護王法者仏法也" (*Kansenji* 官宣旨; KI no. 16075).
63 抑仏法者守王法、王法者崇仏法" (*Gyōnen shinjō* 行然申状; KI no. 21296).
64 所謂、仏法是護王法、若仏法滅者王法滅云 (*Ōmi Onjōji gakutō shukurōtō shinjō* 近江園城寺学頭宿老等申状; KI no. 27012).

nomosphere.[65] The sublime power of the Buddha's nomosphere and the deterrent power of the ruler's nomosphere are the essence of the state.[66]

Usually, the ideology of the "interdependence of the ruler's nomosphere and the Buddha's nomosphere" (*ōbō buppō sō'i* 王法佛法相依) is negotiated with reference to the relationship of state and [institutionalised] religion. However, a clear distinction between state and religion, with appropriate division of labour, does not mean that culture is divided into secular and religious spheres. It does, though, fall short of the mark to simply identify the 'ruler's nomosphere' with the state and the 'Buddha's nomosphere' with the Buddhist 'church.' Rather, both orders represent, in fact, two distinguishable spheres of a complex world, for each of which a normative system is responsible. Unfortunately, in the sources known to me, explicit definitions of the areas of responsibility or the nomospheres themselves are missing. Nevertheless, it can be deduced from the texts which affairs and issues were assigned to the respective nomospheres.

The ruler's nomosphere is associated with *saṃsāra*; the Buddha's nomosphere, in contrast, with *nirvāṇa*.[67] Within the ruler's nomosphere, a secular life within a family setting is the norm, while according to the Buddha's nomosphere, living in homelessness is to be favoured.[68] The order of the Lord forbids the killing of men; the nomosphere of the Buddha in addition prohibits the killing of birds, mammals, worms and insects.[69] Notably, in the area of morality, the 'five cardinal virtues' of Confucianism – compassion, sincerity, etiquette, wisdom, and trustworthiness – are attributed to the ruler's nomosphere[70] and classified as *laukika*.[71] They

65 仏法者王法之所崇、王法者仏法之所護" (*Fujiwara Mitsunori jiryō kishinjō* 藤原光範寺領寄進状; KI no. 51456).

66 仏法の御力と申、王法の威力と申、彼は国主也" (*Nichiren shojō* 日蓮書状; KI no. 11837).

67 一團秋光者歟。縦有生死有涅槃有佛法有王法 (*Kai'an kokugo* 槐安國語; T 81, no. 2574, p. 566, b29–30).

68 然灌頂有二。一者在家灌頂。二者出家灌頂。在家灌頂者。王法祕藏也 。出家灌頂者。佛法奥藏也 (*Tessenchaku hongan nenbutsu shū* 徹選擇本願念佛集; T 83, no. 2609, p. 29, a12–14).

69 又別シテ人ヲ殺スハ。殺中ノ重大也。是ハ王法ノ禁令ナレバ犯スモノ有ルベカラズ。禽獣鱗虫ハ佛法獨リ戒トス。(*Renmon gakusoku* 蓮門學則; T 83, no. 2619, p. 325, c16–18).

70 マタホカニハ。仁義禮智信ヲマモリテ。王法ヲモテサキトシ。内心ニハフカク本願他力ノ信心ヲ本トスヘキヨシヲ (Rennyo *Shōnin* ofumi; T 83, no. 2668, p. 793, a19–21).

71 仏法有五戒、世間有五常 (*Enryakuji daishu ge* 延暦寺大衆解; KI no. 3234, p. 272). Note, however, that the usage of terms is not always consistent. In some contexts, the term *seken* is just used as a synonym of *zoku* and thus refers to the laity in juxtaposition to

are juxtaposed to either belief in Amida Buddha's original vows[72] or the five lay precepts, which as a rule are attributed to the nomosphere of the Buddha.[73] Even a Buddhist must submit to the ruler's nomosphere and observe the cardinal virtues, but in his or her heart, he or she should trust in the 'Other Power' of Amida Buddha's vow.[74] Here another aspect is already visible: an obvious interior-exterior symbolism underscored by an anatomical imagery. The ruler's nomosphere is associated with the exterior, the forehead and the body, the Buddha's nomosphere, however, with the interior, the heart and the spirit.[75] And finally – and this is decisive for us – the ruler's nomosphere is characterised as "mundane" (*se [ken]*), the Buddha's nomosphere as "supra-mundane" (*shusseken*).[76]

It is obvious that this is more fundamental than the distinction and the interplay of state and church authority. Often, the 'nomosphere of the Buddha' is juxtaposed with the 'nomosphere of men' (*ninpō* 人法; Skt. *dharma-pudgala, puruṣa-dharma*). The latter term is evidently used in cases in which the authors want to refer to the people rather than to the government. Otherwise, *ōbō* and *ninpō* are used as synonyms. Therefore, one could tentatively speak of a division into a secular and a religious sphere, or rather as a binary schema adaptive to, and compatible with, the modern religious-secular divide.

Obviously, at least from the Buddhist point of view, the one-sidedly mundane character of the ruler's nomosphere or the order of the people, is a 'mundane' or 'secular' order (*sehō* 世法; also *seken no hō* 世間の法; Skt. *loka-dharma*). A particularly telling essay on the subject can be found

monastics. In such cases, the 'five precepts' – being primarily lay precepts – are attributed to the mundane realm, or *seken*.

72 Rennyo *Shōnin* ofumi (T83, no. 2668, p. 793, a20).

73 *Enryakuji daishu ge* 延暦寺大衆解 (KI no. 3234, p. 272).

74 Rennyo *Shōnin* ofumi (T 83, no. 2668, p. 793, a19–21). Cf.: ワレハ佛法ヲアカメ。信心　ヲエタル身ナリトイヒテ。疏略ノ儀ユメユメアルヘカラス。イヨイヨ公事ヲモハラニスヘキモノナリ。カクノコトクココロエタル人ヲサシテ。信心發得シテ後生　ヲネカフ。念佛行者ノフルマヒノ本トソイフヘシ。コレスナハチ。佛法王法ヲムネトマモレル人　ト。ナツクヘキモノナリ。アナカシコアナカシコ(ibid. 83c13–21).

75 王法ハ額ニアテヨ。佛法ハ 内心ニ深 ク蓄ヨトノ仰ニ候。(*Rennyo Shōnin goichidai kikigaki* 蓮如上人御一代記聞書; T83, no. 2669, p. 819b05–06); 仏法王法猶如身心 (*Kōfukuji sōjō'an* 興福寺奏状案; KI 3, no. 1586, p. 261).

76 The attribution is often made implicitly and by way of analogy but is nevertheless clearly visible. Cf. "自爾以降人法仏法之再興、世間出世之紹隆　難得" (*Ninkū okibumi* 仁空置文; *Dainihon shiryō* 大日本史料　6編47冊402); "善悪に付て、国は必王に隨ものなるへし、世間如此、仏法も又然也" (*Nichiren shojō* 日蓮書状; KI 15, no. 11173, p. 53); "我今應當求索無上佛法、出世間法，令諸眾生讀誦翫習，遠離生死，得至涅槃。" (*Daihōben butsu hō'on kyō;* 大方便佛報恩經, T 3, no. 156, p. 133, b10–12).

in the "Dream Dialogues" (*Muchū mondō* 夢中問答) of the famous Zen monk Musō Soseki 夢窓疎石 (1275–1351) with the general and founder of the Muromachi shogunate Ashikaga Tadayoshi 足利直義 (1306–1352). Musō, who also uses the term "way of governing" (*seidō* 政道) in contrast to the 'Buddha's nomosphere,' responds to the question whether cultivating the roots of goodness by practising Buddhism does not actually hinder the 'way of governing' and impedes people's ability to rule. Musō points out in his answer that all good – e.g. to obey the five lay commandments and the ten good deeds – which is performed in a state of delusion can only be regarded as an "impure good" (*uro no zen* 有漏の善) which leads to rebirth in the sphere of men or gods. Nevertheless, one must do this impure good for peace and prosperity in the world. If all men were doing good, the world could be turned into a pure land. Then he writes the following sentences, which make it clear that the 'secular' or 'mundane order' is equated with the 'ruler's nomosphere':

> Since ancient times many kings and ministers both in Japan and abroad have been devout believers in the Buddha's nomosphere. Among them have been some who espoused the Buddha's nomosphere for the sake of the secular nomosphere [*sehō* 世法], while others have used the secular nomosphere in order to promote Buddhism. Although leaders who put their trust in the Buddha's nomosphere in order to improve the quality of the secular nomosphere are superior to evil kings and ministers who lack all faith in Buddha's nomosphere, their true concern is with prosperity and benevolent governance. […] In contrast, leaders who promote the secular nomosphere for the sake of the Buddha's nomosphere are truly lay bodhisattvas, skillful in guiding the populace to the Buddha's nomosphere. In Japan, Prince Shōtoku constructed temples and pagodas, enshrined Buddhist images, lectured on the sutras and treatises, and commented on the holy texts, even as he handled all of the various affairs of state. This is what it means to promote the secular nomosphere wisely for the sake of the Buddha's nomosphere.[77]

77 Musō Soseki 夢窓疎石 and Thomas Yūhō Kirchner, *Dialogues in a dream* (Kyoto: Tenryu-ji Institute for Philosophy and Religion, 2010), 81–82. I have slightly amended the translation for the sake of terminological consistency. The Japanese text can be found in Musō Soseki 夢窓疎石 and Satō Taishun 佐藤泰舜, *Muchū mondō* 夢中問答 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1991), 63–64.

3 Conclusion

In conclusion, we may say that the pre-modern Japanese classified socio-cultural formations in roughly the same way as their European contemporaries and thus had a notion of 'religion' as a distinct social field. Furthermore, they pressed their social world into a binary schema of 'mundane' and 'supra-mundane,' which resembles the modern Western 'religious-secular divide,' or at least the early modern doctrine of the 'Two Kingdoms.' Note, however, that the distinction between the two nomospheres of the ruler and the Buddha is not made along the same lines as the classification of systems of practice and belief as 'laws,' 'ways' or 'teachings.' The ruler's nomosphere also includes responsibility for non-empirical, i.e. 'relatively transcendent' forces, as well as non-negotiable ethical norms such as the cardinal virtues of Confucianism – which were, however, classified as 'mundane' by the Buddhists. The ruler's competence ended at the point where things, beings, norms, activities, institutions, etc. were deemed 'absolutely transcendent', or at least conducive to obtaining a state of absolute transcendence such as *nirvāṇa*. Likewise, the graded categories *hō, dō, kyō,* etc., under which Buddhism, Confucianism, Daoism, etc. were subsumed, also included activities assigned to the 'mundane' ruler's nomosphere. These categories refer to discrete systems of belief and practice as represented by competing or complementary socio-cultural formations and their activities within the world. From the hegemonic Buddhist perspective, among all the laws, ways, and teachings, only Buddhism had access to an absolutely transcendent realm. The classification of a variety of socio-cultural formations, categorised as 'religions' today, and the binary schema of the mundane ruler's nomosphere and the (ultimately) supra-mundane nomosphere of the Buddha constitute two special-purpose taxonomies and are therefore not entirely congruent.

In any case, it is safe to conclude that the historical preconditions in Japan were quite favourable for the appropriation of secularity in modern times. There was – so to speak – a continuous secular ground bass that accompanied the social history of Japan since medieval times.

Factors Conducive to Secularity?

As a historian of religion, however, I am not quite content with merely observing a particular development trajectory. I want to understand, on a more general level, which factors are conducive to the development of social structures and epistemological imprints favourable for the appro-

priation of secularity. Based on my historical research, I would tentatively divide such factors into three interrelated clusters, namely: cognitive, organisational, and ideological.

By cognitive factors, I mean a universal inclination of human beings to distinguish between empirical and supra-empirical forces. The latter are often conceived of as incorporeal and slightly 'counterintuitive agents,' with whom people cannot interact in quite the same way as with empirical, corporeal beings. To communicate with these forces requires specific preparations, skills, and knowledge; sometimes a specific charism is needed, and those endowed with this charisma often function as intermediaries between ordinary men and the supra-empirical forces. The counterintuitive agents, their dwellings, etc. are typically regarded as *sacré* in a Durkheimian sense. Accordingly, there is a tendency in all cultures to distinguish ordinary activities related to profane empirical things and agents on the one hand, and somewhat extraordinary activities related to sacred supra-empirical things and agents on the other. The more the latter activities are monopolised by certain groups, the more these groups tend to emphasise the extraordinariness – and significance – of what they do.

This brings me to the second set of more culture-specific factors conducive to secularity, namely organisational factors. As can be seen in Japan, strong organisations, which claim the monopoly on engaging with supra-empirical forces, are eager to emphasise their specific charismatic competence. They sharpen their profile by stressing the difference between empirical and non-empirical realms, sacred and profane, mundane and supra-mundane. In some cases, as in Buddhism for instance, this amounts to a fundamental distinction between immanence and transcendence. Powerful organisations who claim the monopoly on accessing transcendence, such as the Buddhist *saṅgha* in medieval Japan, also tend to devaluate immanence for the benefit of transcendence, which becomes equated with salvation. Such a combination of organisational and ideological factors clearly favours the development of a binary social structure as well as a concomitant binary epistemology conducive to the adoption of secularity as a form with two sides.

4 References

Anonymous, "Kirishitan monogatari 吉利支丹物語." In *Kirishitan shiryō* 吉利支丹史料. Edited by Tōhō Sho'in 東方書院, 1–20. Tokyo: Tōhō Sho'in, 1935.

Asad, Talal. *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003.

Aston, William George. *Nihongi*: *Chronicles of Japan from the earliest times to A. D. 697. Two Volumes in One.* Rutland, VT, Tokyo: Tuttle, 1998.

Bellah, Robert N. "Japan: Values and Social Change in Modern Japan." In *Beyond belief: Essays on religion in a post-traditional world*. Edited by Robert N. Bellah, 114–45. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991 (1970).

Bourdieu, Pierre. "Genesis and Structure of the Religious Field." *Comparative Social Research* 13 (1991): 1–44.

Boxer, Charles Ralph. *The Christian Century in Japan, 1549–1650*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1951.

Braverman, Arthur, ed. *Warrior of Zen: The Diamond-hard Wisdom of Suzuki Shōsan*. New York, Tokyo, London: Kodansha, 1994.

Breen, John, and Mark Teeuwen, eds. *Shinto in History: Ways of the Kami*. Richmond: Curzon, 2000.

Breen, John, and Mark Teeuwen. *A new history of Shinto*. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010.

Brerewood, Edward. *Enquiries touching the diversity of languages, and religions through the chiefe parts of the world: Written by Edw. Brerewood lately professor of astronomy in Gresham Colledge in London*. London: John Bill, 1614.

Burchardt, Marian, and Monika Wohlrab-Sahr. "'Multiple Secularities: Religion and Modernity in the Global Age' Introduction." *International Sociology* 28, no. 6 (2013): 605–11.

Campany, Robert Ford. "On the Very Idea of Religions (In the Modern West and in Early Medieval China)." *History of Religions* 42, no. 4 (2003): 287–319.

Elison, George. *Deus Destroyed: The Image of Christianity in Early Modern Japan*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1973.

Fitzgerald, Timothy, ed. *Discourse on civility and barbarity: A critical history of religion and related categories*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2007.

Fitzgerald, Timothy, ed. *Religion and the Secular: Historical and Colonial Formations*. London: Equinox, 2010.

Fujita, Neil S. *Japan's encounter with Christianity: The Catholic mission in pre-modern Japan*. New York: Paulist Press, 1991.

Gosho Translation Committee, ed. *The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*. Tokyo: Soka Gakkai, 2003.

Haas, Hans. *Geschichte des Christentums in Japan; 1: Erste Einführung des Christentums in Japan durch Franz Xavier*. Tokyo: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Natur- und Völkerkunde Ostasiens, 1902.

Hakeda, Yoshito, ed. *Kūkai: Major works*. Vol. 1. New York: Columbia University Press, 1972.

Ienaga, Saburō 家永三郎. *Kinsei shisōka bunshū* 近世思想家文集. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1988.

Inglehart, Ronald and Wayne E. Baker. "Modernization, Cultural Change, and the Persistence of Traditional Values." *American Sociological Review* 65, no. 1 (2000): 19–51.

Isomae, Jun'ichi 磯前順一. *Kindai Nihon no shūkyō gensetsu to sono keifu: Shūkyō, kokka, shintō* 近代日本の宗教言説とその系譜—宗教・国家・神道. Tokyo: Iwanami, 2003.

Isomae, Jun'ichi. "The Conceptual Formation of the Category 'Religion' in Modern Japan: Religion, State, Shintō." *Journal of Religion in Japan* 1, no. 3 (2012): 226–45.

Isomae, Jun'ichi 磯前順一. *Shūkyō gainen aruiwa shūkyōgaku no shi* 宗教概念あるいは宗教学の死. Tokyo:

Tōkyō Daigaku Shuppankai, 2012.
Jennes, Joseph. *A history of the Catholic Church in Japan: From its beginnings to the early Meiji era (1549–1873): A short handbook*. Tokyo: Oriens – Institute for Religious Research, 1973.
Josephson, Jason Ānanda. *The Invention of Religion in Japan*. Chicago, London: The University of Chicago Press, 2012.
Kleine, Christoph. "Religion als begriffliches Konzept und soziales System im vormodernen Japan: Polythetische Klassen, semantische und funktionale Äquivalente und strukturelle Analogien." In *Religion in Asien? Studien zur Anwendbarkeit des Religionsbegriffs*. Edited by Peter Schalk et al., 225–92. Uppsala: Uppsala Universitet, 2013.
Kleine, Christoph, and Monika Wohlrab-Sahr. "Research Programme of the HCAS "Multiple Secularities – Beyond the West, Beyond Modernities'" Working Paper Series of the HCAS "Multiple Secularities – Beyond the West, Beyond Modernities" 1, Leipzig, 2016. http://ul.qucosa.de/api/qucosa%3A16727/attachment/ATT-0/.
Krämer, Hans Martin. *Zwischen westlichem Wissen und eigener Tradition: Zur Aneignung und Übersetzung von Religion in Japan, 16. bis 20. Jahrhundert*. Habilitationsschrift, Bochum: Fakultät für Ostasienwissenschaften, Ruhr-Universität Bochum, 2012.
Krämer, Hans Martin. "An der Schwelle zum modernen Religionsbegriff: Der Beitrag japanischer Buddhisten, 1850–1880." In *Religion in Asien? Studien zur Anwendbarkeit des Religionsbegriffs*. Edited by Peter Schalk et al., 320–49. Uppsala: Uppsala Universitet, 2013.
Krämer, Hans Martin. *Shimaji Mokurai and the reconception of religion and the secular in modern Japan*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2015.
Kūkai 空海. *Sangō shiiki* 三教指歸; *Seirei shū* 性靈集. Edited by Shōkō Watanabe 渡邊照宏 and Yūshō Miyasaka 宮坂宥勝. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1988.
Kūkai 空海. *Sangō shiiki* 三教指帰. Edited by Junryū Katō 加藤純隆 and Seiichi Katō 加藤精一. Tokyo: Kadokawa Bunko, 2007.
Luhmann, Niklas, and André Kieserling. *Die Religion der Gesellschaft*. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2002.
Matsunaga, Alicia. *The Buddhist Philosophy of Assimilation: The Historical Development of the Honji-suijaku Theory*. Tokyo: Sophia University, 1969.
Mizuta, Toshihisa 水田紀久, and Takamichi Arisaka 有坂隆道, eds. *Tominaga Nakamoto, Yamagata Bantō* 富永仲基, 山片蟠桃. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1973.
Musō, Soseki 夢窓疎石, and Thomas Yūhō Kirchner. *Dialogues in a dream*. Kyoto: Tenryu-ji Institute for Philosophy and Religion, 2010.
Musō, Soseki 夢窓疎石, and Satō Taishun 佐藤泰舜. *Muchū mondō* 夢中問答. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1991.
Nakamoto, Tominaga. *Emerging from Meditation*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1990.
Nakamura, Hajime, and William Johnston. "Suzuki Shosan, 1579-1655 and the spirit of capitalism in Japanese Buddhism." *Monumenta Nipponica* 22, no. 1–2 (1967): 1–14.
Needham, Rodney. "Polythetic Classification: Convergence and Consequences." *Man* 10, no. 3 (1975): 349–69.
Paramore, Kiri. *Ideology and Christianity in Japan*. London, New York: Routledge, 2009.
Purchas, Samuel. *Purchas his pilgrimage. Or Relations of the vvorld and the religions obserued in all ages and places discouered, from the Creation vnto thispresent: In foure partes. This first containeth a theologicall and geographicall historie of Asia, Africa, and*

America, with the ilands adiacent. Declaring the ancient religions before the Floud … With briefe descriptions of the countries, nations, states, discoueries, priuate and publike customes, and the most remarkable rarities of nature, or humane industrie, in the same. By Samuel Purchas, minister at Estwood in Essex. London: Henrie Fetherstone, 1613.

Radke, Rebekka. *Worte nach der Meditation: Die historische Buddhismus-Kritik von Tominaga Nakamoto (1715-46)*. Frankfurt a. M. et al.: Peter Lang, 2003.

Ross, Alexander. *ΠΑΝΣΕΒΕΙΑ: or, a View of all Religions in the World: With the Several Church Governments from the Creation, to these times. Together with a Discovery of all Known Heresies, in all Ages and places, throughout Asia, Africa, America, and Europe.* London: John Saywell, 1653.

Roetz, Heiner. "The Influence of Foreign Knowledge on Eighteenth Century European Secularism." In *Religion and Secularity: Transformations and Transfers of Religious Discourses in Europe and Asia.* Edited by Marion Eggert and Lucian Hölscher, 9–34. Dynamics in the history of religions. Leiden: Brill, 2013.

Rots, Aike P., and Mark Teeuwen, eds. "Formations of the Secular in Japan." Special issue, *Japan Review* 30 (2017).

Saler, Benson, ed. *Understanding religion: Selected essays.* Berlin: de Gruyter, 2009.

Schalk, Peter et al., eds. *Religion in Asien? Studien zur Anwendbarkeit des Religionsbegriffs.* Uppsala: Uppsala Universitet, 2013.

Scheid, Bernhard. *Der eine und einzige Weg der Götter: Yoshida Kanetomo und die Erfindung des Shinto.* Wien: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2001.

Schrimpf, Monika. "The Pro- and Anti-Christian Writings of Fukan Fabian (1565-1621)." *Japanese Releigions* 33, no. 1–2 (2008): 35–54.

Schwinn, Thomas. "Zur Neubestimmung des Verhältnisses von Religion und Moderne: Säkularisierung, Differenzierung und multiple Modernitäten." In *Religion und Gesellschaft*. Edited by Christof Wolf and Matthias Koenig, 73–97. Wiesbaden: Springer VS, 2013.

Shimazono, Susumu 島薗進 and Tsuruoka Yoshio 鶴岡賀雄, eds. "*Shūkyō*" *saikō* 〈宗教〉再考 Tokyo: Perikansha, 2004.

Southwold, Martin. "Buddhism and the Definition of Religion." *Man* 13, no. 3 (1978): 362–79.

Stowers, Stanley. "The ontology of religion." In *Introducing religion: Essays in honor of Jonathan Z. Smith*. Edited by Willi Braun and Russell T. McCutcheon, 434–49. London, Oakville: Equinox Publishing, 2008.

Stroumsa, Gedaliahu A. *A New Science: The Discovery of Religion in the Age of Reason*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010.

Suzuki, Shōsan 鈴木正三. "Ha Kirishitan 破吉利支丹. " In *Kirishitan shiryō* 吉利支丹史料. Edited by Tōhō Sho'in 東方書院, 1–9. Tokyo: Tōhō Sho'in, 1935.

Suzuki, Shōsan. *Selected writings of Suzuki Shōsan*. Translated by Royall Tyler. Ithaca NY: China-Japan Program, Cornell University, 1977.

Teeuwen, Mark. "From Jindō to Shinto: A Concept Takes Shape." *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 29, no. 3–4 (2002): 233–63.

Teeuwen, Mark, and Fabio Rambelli, eds. *Buddhas and Kami in Japan: Honji Suijaku as a Combinatory Paradigm*. London, New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003.

Tōhō Sho'in 東方書院, ed. *Kirishitan shiryō* 吉利支丹史料. Tokyo: Tōhō Sho'in, 1935.

Tyler, Royall. "The Tokugawa Peace and Popular Religion: Suzuki Shōsan, Kakugyō, Tōbutsu, and Jikigyō

Miroku." In *Confuciansim and Tokugawa Culture*. Edited by Peter Nosco, 92–119. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984.
Varen, Bernhard. "Kurtzer Bericht von mancherley Religionen der Völcker: Aus dem Lateinischen verteutschet durch E. F." In *Unterschiedliche Gottesdienste in der gantzen Welt: Beschreibung aller bewusten Religionen, Sekten und Ketzereyen*. Edited by Alexander Ross and Bernhard Varenius, 941–1040. Heidelberg: Endter, 1668.
Wilson, Brian C. "From Lexical to the Polythetic: A Brief History of the Definition of Religion." In *What is Religion? Origins, Definitions, and Explanations*. Edited by Thomas A. Idinopulos and Brian C. Wilson, 141–62. Leiden: Brill, 1998. *Tominaga Nakamoto (1715–46)*. Frankfurt a. M. et al.: Peter Lang, 2003.