7

Is the LDS Church a Japanese New Religion?

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The concept of Japanese "new religions," or *shinshūkyō* (新宗教), formalized after World War II and eventually became a common and self-referential religious category. New religious movements based on a syncretism of several religious influences began to emerge at the end of the Tokugawa period (early nineteenth century). Today, academic studies, legal recognitions, public perceptions, and some religious organizations themselves have created the category and traditions of new religions.[1] In the twenty-first century, the Mormon image in the Japanese mind[2] is a new religion (*shinshūkyō*) image. A survey of contemporary literature in both English and Japanese provides ample evidence for the predominance of this new religion image for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. An analysis of Japanese history, characteristics, and worldview can explain

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why the LDS Church, in both its historical and its current traits, is perceived and categorized as a new religion. Sydney Ahlstrom has written about Mormonism generally, "One cannot even be sure if the object of our consideration is a sect, a mystery cult, a new religion, a church, a people, a nation, or an American subculture."[3]

Categorization as a new religion could have significant organizational and evangelical detriments. Often, new religions are not seen positively, and this view has increased since the terrorist violence of Aum Shinrikyō, a Japanese new religious movement once led by Asahara Shōkō, in 1995.[4] For many Japanese, the term "new religion" has become synonymous with "cult."[5] However, we shall see that averting religious categorization, as Ahlstrom suggests about the LDS Church, can also have serious implications. Nevertheless, LDS leaders, missionaries, and members in Japan should be aware of new religions and the serious consequences that links to new religions can have for their church.

The LDS Church in Literature on Japanese New Religions

Commonly, the term "new religion" is applied to religious organizations founded or formed after a determined date or period of time. Religious organizations formalized within the last two hundred years are often categorized as new religions, though the time frame can vary. However, definitions of new religions by characteristics rather than chronology can be challenging and even problematic. Often the "new" in new religions is determined by context rather than the chronological age of the religion itself. As traditional religions internationalize, they are often interpreted as "new" within the countries in which they expand; this is often the case for Asian religions that migrate to Europe or America. Often alternatives to traditional religious institutions are labeled as "new" even though these alternatives

were founded several hundred years ago. These alternatives are constantly changing in order to stay vital and relevant to contemporary peoples and situations. All these factors lead to not one definition, but several diverse definitions for new religion.[6] In Japan, the definition of new religion (*shinshūkyō*) is more exact and consistent, representing a category of religion with political recognition and widespread public identification. Japanese new religion or *shinshūkyō* is more than an academic term or general description; it is a religious category that is used precisely to reference specific groups by the media, in government statistical reports, within laws and regulations, and by established religions, as well as the general public. *Shinshūkyō* has also become a self-referential term for many religious groups.[7] A broad and yet admittedly unscientific sampling of how the LDS Church is described in both Japanese and English sources provides strong evidence for the perception that the LDS Church is a Japanese new religious movement.

The initial arrival of LDS missionaries to Japan in 1901 brought a variety of opinions and even criticisms by the Japanese media and populace. Some Japanese who were trying to eliminate Japan's concubine laws and traditions saw polygamy-practicing Mormons as an affront to that effort. Some newspapers even called for banning Mormonism from Japan. As part of ongoing debates on Mormonism between several newspaper editors, an editorial in the Osaka *Mainichi* on August 21, 1901 (just weeks after the arrival of Elder Heber J. Grant) included the following: "As long as it is not prejudicial to public peace, any religion is permissible, be it Buddhism or Christianity. Among the ignorant public, even Tenrikyo or Renmonkyo is allowed to exist. Then, what in the world should prevent the coming of Mormonism?"[8] The connection between the LDS Church and Tenrikyō or Renmonkyō, both prominent new religions at the time, is certainly not intended to be complimentary, but does make the argument that certain characteristics of the LDS Church align it more

Perfect Liberty Church, Osaka, Japan.

Salt Lake Temple, Utah, USA. (Photo by David Iliff.)

with Japan's new religions than with Protestant Christianity, especially due to public controversies and media scrutiny.[9]

This study focuses attention on contemporary general reference and academic books in both Japanese and English on Japanese new religions. Japan's new religions are a consistently popular topic for researchers and publishers. Dozens of reference books and academic monographs have focused on Japan's new religions, and a sampling of such works reveals a few interesting things.

There are two types of books that include a discussion of new religions: books that focus on religion in modern Japan, and books that focus on the new religions specifically. The LDS Church is often mentioned in academic works on modern Japanese religions written in English. Mark Mullins discusses Mormonism in his article "Christianity as a New Religion" in *Religion and Society in Modern Japan*.[10] Shimazono Susumu includes Mormonism in his study of modern Japan's religions in *From Salvation to Spirituality,*[11] both as an example of a new religion generally[12] and as a new religious movement within Japan.[13] Interestingly, Shimazono never references Mormonism independently, but always as an example of imported Christian new religions, along with Jehovah's Witnesses and the Unification Church.[14] Ian Reader, in *Religion in Contemporary Japan*, also mentions Mormonism. The first mention discusses whether a Mormon convert can still participate in explicitly Buddhist or Shinto traditions like *obon* or New Year's observances while being true to their Mormon conversion and convictions. When Reader analyzes the new religions, he reports, "It is common for Japanese academics to treat non-mainstream Christianity (for example the Jehovah's Witnesses, the Mormons and the Unification Church (the Moonies), all of which proselytize in Japan) as new religions."[15] However, many books in English on religion in modern Japan do not mention Mormonism at all, much less categorize them with the new religions.[16]

Within works on Japan's new religions specifically, mentions of Mormonism are common. This is surprising because many monographs focus on a case study of a single organization.[17] In Japanese, there are several works that are marketed toward a much larger audience than most academic monographs, and the LDS Church is often mentioned within these trade or reference publications. While not all books of this type include Mormonism, some of these works do include the LDS Church as a Japanese new religion.

A guidebook of new religions published in 2000[18] includes a short description of the LDS Church. Estimates of membership both in Japan (about 110,000) and worldwide (10,300,000) are provided. Joseph Smith is listed as the founder of the Church, but Gordon B. Hinckley (Church President in 2000) is not listed as the current leader; that distinction is given to Kitamura Masataka. In 2000, Kitamura "Eugene" Masataka was director of temporal affairs for the LDS Church's Asia North Area with headquarters in Tokyo. Kitamura has also served as the president of an LDS stake and as the president of one of several LDS missions in Japan.[19] Kitamura is recorded as the Church's legal representative on government documents establishing the Church as a legal corporation, or *shūkyō hōjin* (宗教法人). The choice of Kitamura as the current leader is a good indication that this guidebook defines the LDS Church more as a Japanese new religious movement than a global religious organization. The LDS Church is given the moniker "the Christian Church that emphasizes family."[20] A very brief description of the Church's founding, the Book of Mormon, and Heber J. Grant's founding of missionary work in Japan is provided, along with the entire first article of faith and some of the thirteenth article of faith. The entry finishes by noting that the members of the Church do not drink alcohol and then provides the address and phone number for the Presiding Bishop's office or area headquarters in Tokyo.

The Illustrated New Religions Guide[21] from 2006 also included the LDS Church. This guide divides the new religions into four types: Buddhist, Shinto, Christian, and Another (*shokyōkei*/諸教系).[22] The Christian new religions are listed in the final section, and the LDS Church is the last of four organizations included. Along with the LDS Church, the Unification Church, Jehovah's Witnesses, and The Spirit of Jesus Church[23] also have profiles. Similar to the guidebook published in 2000, the profile on the LDS Church includes membership estimates (123,000 in Japan and 10,300,000 worldwide) and also uses the moniker "the Christian Church that emphasizes family." Joseph Smith is listed as the founder, and Doniel Gordon Rich[24] is listed as the current Church leader and representative. By 2006 Eugene Kitamura had been replaced by Don Rich as director of temporal affairs in Tokyo. The guide includes certain aspects of Church history, including its founding in New York by Joseph Smith as one of six founding members, the move to Utah for religious freedom, the end of polygamy in 1890, and the 1901 start of missionary work in Japan by Heber J. Grant. A special section also gives important dates in Joseph Smith's life, including his birth in Vermont (1805), the first angelic visit of Moroni (1823), his receiving the gold plates (1827), the publication of the Book of Mormon, and the establishment of the Church (1830). The number of Church buildings in Japan (308) and the number of teachers or *kyōshi*/教師 (814, with 584 of those foreign born) are also included in the profile. For most new religions, teachers or *kyōshi* would refer to full-time or professional clergy, but in the LDS case, this refers to full-time missionaries. The profile also includes unique features of the LDS Church, including the prohibition of alcohol, tobacco, and coffee; the paying of tithing; and the missionary service of members between the ages of nineteen and twenty-five (two years for men and eighteen months for women).

The LDS Church is very briefly mentioned in another recent book on Japan's new religious movements called *Japan's New Religions*.[25] No information about the LDS Church is provided besides its name and a membership figure of 123,321.[26] The other Christian organizations listed in the book include the Unification Church (560,000), Jehovah's Witnesses (217,400), The Spirit of Jesus (28,990), and Seventh-Day Adventist (15,317).

These examples of books on Japanese new religions show that while the LDS Church is considered a Japanese new religion, it is not a very significant one where significance is measured by membership statistics. In books where profiles of about 100 new religions are provided, the over 100,000 members of the LDS Church in Japan warrant inclusion.[27] In works where fewer groups are profiled or analyzed, the LDS Church is not included or specifically analyzed. In *Japan's New Religions*, profiles of twenty new religions are provided. While the Unification Church and Jehovah's Witnesses have membership numbers to warrant profiles, the LDS Church does not. It can be safely concluded that in Japan, the LDS Church would be categorized as a new religion before it would be included in the category of Christianity, like most other Protestant or Catholic organizations.

Chronology of New Religions

In order to further analyze the inclusion of the LDS Church as a Japanese new religion, the first issue that needs to be addressed is how old a religion can be before it is no longer considered "new." Academic studies have provided a periodization of Japanese new religion development starting in the early nineteenth century and continuing through several stages of growth and stasis up until the closing of the twentieth century.[28] The 1830 founding of the LDS Church would make it one of the oldest of Japan's new religions, but well within the earliest period

of development. Inoue Masakane (1790–1849) and Nakayama Miki (1798–1887), the founders of Misogikyō and Tenrikyō, respectively, are older than both Joseph Smith and Brigham Young, and their movements are still labeled as "new" in Japan. Other new religions from the earliest stage of development include Kurozumikyō (founded in 1814) and Nyoraikyō (founded in 1802).[29] This places the LDS Church within the same period of development as some of the best-known new religious movements in Japan. Specifically as a Japanese movement, the LDS Church started at the beginning of the twentieth century (1901). Both Sōka Gakkai and Ōmoto, two of the largest Japanese new religions, have similar histories of development. Sōka Gakkai was founded in 1930, survived years of persecution during World War II, and then began impressive postwar growth and development.[30] Ōmoto was founded in 1899, had a good prewar following that resulted in persecution and state suppression, and then continued to grow and develop postwar.[31] As either a global organization starting in 1830 or a Japanese religious movement beginning in 1901, the LDS Church would certainly share time periods of development with several firmly established Japanese new religions.

Characteristics of New Religions

The most common way of classifying Japan's new religions is through identifying similar traits or characteristics. Two of the first monographs in English to specifically study the new religions both analyzed these movements through identifying key characteristics.[32] These studies by H. Neill McFarland and Harry Thomsen have influenced subsequent research on Japan's new religions, which have also analyzed these groups through identifying and comparing similar characteristics.[33] There are many commonalities among the characteristics identified by McFarland and Thomsen; a combined list from their studies would include:

1. charismatic leadership (established through theophany and divine communication);
2. concrete goals (especially in evangelism and growth);
3. community identification;
4. highly centralized organizations;
5. massive construction projects resulting in large gathering places and architectural icons;
6. mass activities and conferences;
7. establishment of a religious center (like Mecca);
8. Millennialism with doctrines and designs to build a kingdom of God on earth;
9. syncretism, mysticism, and novelty in teachings and doctrines;
10. structures and principles that are easy to understand, enter, and follow; and
11. a critical optimism where the movement provides necessary hope to a deteriorating world society.

Both McFarland and Thomsen would argue that it is not so much each individual characteristic but the influence that these characteristics have together that shapes and identifies new religions. The LDS Church includes every characteristic identified by McFarland and Thomsen in one way or another.

Analyzing the LDS Church in comparison to this list of characteristics presents some interesting parallels. The biography of Joseph Smith is certainly a story of charismatic religious leadership through theophanies. LDS Church headquarters in Salt Lake City, often called Temple Square, provides ample evidence for the characteristics of massive construction projects as gathering places or architectural icons, mass activities or conferences, and the establishment of religious center or Mecca. Studies on Mormon history have often focused on their unique blend of millenarian beliefs and teachings of

critical optimism.[34] While some arguments could be made as to how well the LDS Church does represent or illustrate each trait, surely Mormonism would not be disqualified from the Japan new religion category based on an analysis of characteristics.

Worldviews of the New Religions

In her monograph on Kurozumikyō, Helen Hardacre includes a theory of understanding new religions which goes beyond simply a list of common traits to a more holistic approach based on worldview.[35] Hardacre argues that an analysis of worldview, rather than doctrine or practice, can reveal commonalities among the new religions. While related to cosmology, Hardacre defines *worldview* as a "set of relations believed to link the self, the body, the social order, and the universe as a whole."[36] Within this argument, she attempts to move beyond simply explaining the new religions as reactions to a series of crises (resulting in the label "crisis cults") and reducing the new religions to a select number of common elements (shamanism, faith healing, ancestor worship, and so forth). Hardacre explains, "The collection of elements that has been called constitutive of the new religions is in fact derived from a more basic source: worldview."[37] It is not discrete trait elements that define new religions as a category or the inclusion of any specific organization within the category, but rather how these traits work together to create a worldview. Discrete characteristics become both elements and expressions of worldview. This is an important qualification of research on new religions through analysis of characteristics or traits. Both humans and horses have several similar characteristics, but that does not necessarily mean the categories which include both humans and horses are academically useful, or that such categories make a compelling argument that humans and horses are fundamentally similar.[38]

The worldview of the new religions is one of harmony and interconnection. Individual actions incrementally affect the body, society,

nature, and the universe. While all levels of this worldview are important, the self is paramount because it is most inclined to cultivation and the development of virtue. As one who subscribes to the worldview of the new religions improves, expected benefits and results can be reflected in all other elements of his or her worldview: with the body through physical health and aesthetics, with society through positive and constructive relationships, with the state through peace and prosperity, and with the cosmos through a satisfying understanding of premortal, mortal, and postmortal existence for oneself and others. This worldview turns both other people and situations that the self encounters into mirrors that reflect and even magnify religious cultivation and individual virtues. The worldview of the new religions provides the self with much more control and requires the individual to internalize religious conceptions and specific contexts. The promises of the new religions' worldview are great, but so are the responsibilities.[39]

The question then becomes whether this new religion worldview adequately describes a prevalent worldview in the LDS Church. Without falling into the trap of dividing or reducing this worldview into discrete characteristics or traits, several general questions should be asked. Does the LDS Church teach an interconnection between the self, the body, society, nature, and the cosmos? Does it teach an interconnection between cultivation of the self or the development of virtue and the realization of health, beauty, love, prosperity, immortality, and eternal life? Hardacre argues, "If the self is awakened and resolutely so, sincerely striving for virtue and the conquest of egotism, then nothing is impossible."[40] It could be argued that this is similar to several verses found in the scriptures of the LDS canon. The thirteenth article of faith lists the virtues sought by the LDS faithful as a process of individual moral cultivation, societal renewal, and a pathway to divine promises. In Moses 7:18–21, the qualities of Enoch's ideal society are described. The establishment of the kingdom of God on earth (Zion) is a goal of the LDS Church, and this millennial

Tokyo Japan Temple. (Photo by Greg Wilkinson.)

society should emulate the spirituality and harmony experienced by the city of Enoch as both an individual and communal promise.

The Traditions and Cultures of New Religions

Even if the LDS Church appears to be a Japanese new religion through an analysis of chronology, characteristics, and even worldview, the question must be asked whether a foreign or Christian religion could be accepted and defined as a Japanese new religion. Most Japanese new religion research focuses solely on religions that are founded in Japan within a specific Japanese cultural and social context. While many Japanese new religions have successfully internationalized and expanded their organizations beyond Japan through evangelical efforts,[41] their headquarters, top organizational leadership, and bureaucracy, as well as a vast majority of members, remain in Japan. This certainly could not be said of the LDS Church. Looking for other organizations that are either foreign-based or Christian, or even both, and yet are still deemed Japanese new religions will help in determining whether the LDS Church is too foreign or too Christian to be included in the category.

Several foreign-based religions are commonly called new religions in Japan within academic or journalistic publications and other

sources of media.[42] Most notable among these foreign new religions are the Jehovah's Witnesses (United States), The Unification Church (Korea), and Falun Gong (China). These are certainly not the only foreign religious organizations in Japan that would comply with general characteristics or definitions of new religions, but these groups have been numerically successful and are aggressively evangelical, making academic and media coverage more common.

As for Christian movements (foreign or indigenous) being deemed new religions, much has been published, most notably by Mark Mullins.[43] Mullins claims that while not all Christian churches in Japan should be labeled new religions, many that are explicitly sectarian and make unique claims of authority and legitimacy that separate them from traditional Christian denominations could and should be included with other new religions in Japan that are based on Buddhism, Shinto, or a syncretism of several elements.[44] Shimazono Susumu concurs and has stated that the new religions in modern Japan include "Christian imports."[45]

Advantages and Disadvantages of New Religion Categorization

If the above analysis is correct and the LDS Church is a Japanese new religion and is perceived as such by Japanese who come in contact with the Church, is there anything the LDS Church could do to change perceptions and thus categorization?[46] If Shimazono Susumu is correct, changing perceptions or categorizations would probably require lessening evangelic fervor and even abandoning certain proselyting tactics.[47] If Mark Mullins is correct and new religious categorization derives from a sectarian rather than denominational stance in regard to other Christian organizations, then changing categories would require doctrinal concessions to a pluralistic definition of legitimacy.[48] However, before prescriptions to change the Church's image

are considered, the question must be asked whether the LDS Church should try to distance itself from its new religion categorization or characteristics. While perhaps not readily apparent, there may be some persuasive advantages to the LDS Church accepting and even embracing a new religion categorization and the ties with other new religions that could result. While most Latter-day Saints might prefer ecumenical cooperation with groups other than Jehovah's Witnesses or the Unification Church, issued-oriented collaboration with other new religions could result in significant benefits.

Japan's new religions face many challenges, including changes in the law or the enforcement of laws, an increasingly skeptical media and public, and the occasional unethical or illegal acts by individuals or organizations within the new religion category. Responding to these challenges may be more effective through issue-based ecumenical cooperation among the new religions. The oil shocks of the late 1970s and the terrorist acts of Aum Shinrikyō in 1995 have resulted in paradigm shifts in Japan.[49] Previously, religions were seen to be constitutionally protected from intrusion, or even supervision, because religion could provide necessary societal benefits. Now, constitutional protection, rights of incorporation, and tax benefits are increasingly seen as privileges religions must earn rather than rights they inherently enjoy.[50] New laws such as the Personal Information Protection Law[51] and door-to-door sales laws[52] have the potential to seriously alter the organizational and evangelical activities of the LDS Church along with most new religions. However, some of the larger new religions in Japan, most notably Sōka Gakkai, hold strategic political influence and have successfully lobbied for religious exclusions from such laws.[53] Cooperation with large new religions, like Sōka Gakkai, to prevent consumer protection or personal information laws from becoming an undue burden on religious activities is probably a worthwhile goal. However, because the LDS Church is so small in Japan in comparison to groups like Sōka Gakkai, Kōfuku no Kagaku,

or Risshō Kōsei-kai, it does run the risk of being primarily known by many Japanese for their cooperation with these organizations. Issue-based ecumenism can quickly become far-reaching entanglement.

Another opportunity for ecumenical cooperation comes from times of crisis or natural disaster like the Kobe earthquake in 1995 or the Tohoku tsunami in 2011. Certainly the resources and logistical support of large new religions would improve the LDS Church's ability to meet certain objectives, and perhaps cooperation could work towards the common good. However, navigating opportunities, even the most promising, must be approached carefully and prudently. LDS leaders and members should understand how their Church is associated with Japanese new religions and common perceptions, and even the stereotypes the categorization may engender. Often, the LDS Church does not easily fit into common religious categories. As Janine Sawada has argued, this can result in serious consequences in times of turmoil or religious persecution because religions without categorization do not enjoy ecumenical support and are often singled out and more severely persecuted.[54] The LDS Church and its members should carefully consider the significant advantages and disadvantages of being perceived as new religion and if embracing that categorization may be preferable to the lack of categorization altogether.

Notes

1. See Trevor Astley, "New Religions," in *Nanzan Guide to Japanese Religions*, ed. Paul Swanson and Clark Chilson (Honolulu: University of Hawaii, 2006), 91–114.
2. This terminology is borrowed from J. B. Haws. See J. B. Haws, *The Mormon Image in the American Mind: Fifty Years of Public Perception* (New York City: Oxford University Press, 2013).
3. Sydney Ahlstrom, *A Religious History of the American People* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1972), 508.

4. See Ian Reader, *Religious Violence in Contemporary Japan: The Case of Aum Shinrikyō* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2000).
5. See Asami Sadao, *Naze Karuto Shūkyō wa Umareru no ka* (なぜカルト宗教は生まれるのか) (Tokyo: Nihon Kirisuto Kyōdan Shuppankyoku, 1997), 15–28.
6. See J. Gordon Melton, foreword to *New Religions: A Guide*, ed. Christopher Partridge (New York City: Oxford University Press, 2004), 10–13.
7. For example, several new religions have formed the *Shinshūren* (新宗連), or the Federation of New Religious Organizations, and publish the New Religions Newspaper (*Shinshūkyō Shinbun* or 新宗教新聞). See Shin-Nihon Shūkyō Dantai Rengōkai, "Shinshūren," http://www.shinshuren.or.jp/.
8. Quoted in Shinji Takagi, "Mormons in the Press: Reactions to the 1901 Opening of the Japan Mission," *BYU Studies* 40, no. 1 (2001): 160. The translation of the Osaka editorial was taken directly from Takagi's article.
9. See Janine Tasca Sawada, *Practical Pursuits: Religion, Politics, and Personal Cultivation in Nineteenth-Century Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2004), 236–61, for analysis of the controversies and criticism surrounding Tenrikyō and Renmonkyō in the late nineteenth century as precursor to the opinions expressed by groups in the Osaka Mainichi editorial. Sawada argues that criticism and persecution of Renmonkyō resulted from its status and characteristics that were extraneous to traditional religious categories and even ecumenical associations among the new religions, which left Renmonkyō vulnerable to political or societal definitions of religious orthodoxy. A similar argument could be made about the LDS Church in Japan because its characteristics could place it extraneous to categorization as a Protestant Christian denomination or new religious movement/*shinshūkyō*.
10. See Mark R. Mullins, "Christianity as a New Religion," in *Religion and Society in Modern Japan,* ed. Mark R. Mullins, Shimazono Susumu, and Paul L. Swanson (Berkeley, CA: Asian Humanities Press, 1993), 259.
11. Susumu Shimazono, *From Salvation to Spirituality: Popular Religious Movements in Modern Japan* (Melbourne: Trans Pacific Press, 2004).
12. Shimazono, *From Salvation to Spirituality*, 3.
13. Shimazono, *From Salvation to Spirituality*, 18, 28.

14. Shimazono, *From Salvation to Spirituality*, 18, 28, 230, 259.
15. Ian Reader, *Religion in Contemporary Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1991), 13, 198, 200, 249. Reader cites Numata Kenya, *Gendai Nihon no Shinshūkyō* (Osaka: Sōgensha, 1988), as evidence for Mormonism's inclusion within the new religion category by Japanese academics.
16. See, for example, Winston Davis, *Japanese Religion and Society: Paradigms of Structure and Change* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1992), or Shigeyoshi Murakami, *Japanese Religion in the Modern Century* (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1980).
17. Examples of case studies include Winston Davis, *Dojo: Magic and Exorcism in Modern Japan* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1980); Brian McVeigh, *Spirits, Selves, and Subjectivity in a Japanese New Religion: The Cultural Psychology of Belief in Sūkyō Mahikari* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 1997); H. Byron Earhart, *Gedatsukai and Religion in Contemporary Japan* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1989); and Ian Reader, *Religious Violence in Contemporary Japan*.
18. Shinshūkyō Kenkyū-kai, ed., *21-seiki no Nihon o rīdo suru shin shūkyō 100* (21世紀の日本をリードする新宗教) (Tokyo: KK Besuto Bukku, 2000), 212. The cover page of this book states that it is the perfect introduction for anyone interested in the new religions or seeking to join a new religion.
19. An oral history of Kitamura was recorded by Richard Turley in 2001 and is cataloged in the LDS Church History Library as OH 2900, but is unfortunately closed to research. At the time of publication, the director for temporal affairs and the Church representative in Japan was Wada Takashi.
20. In Japanese this description is *Katei o taisetsu ni shite iru Kirisuto-kyō* / 家庭を大切にしているキリスト教.
21. Shinshūkyō Kenkyū-kai, ed., *Zukai Shinshūkyō Gaido* (図解新宗教ガイド) (Tokyo: Kyūtensha, 2006), 255.
22. While awkward, "another" is the translation given for *shokyōkei* in the original Japanese text.
23. The Spirit of Jesus Church or *Iesu no Mitama Kyōkai Kyōdan*/イエス之御霊教会教団 was founded by Murai Jun in 1941. *The Illustrated New Religions Guide* records current membership as just over 40,000, but reports of membership

over ten times that number have been claimed by the group. Similar to the LDS Church, Spirit of Jesus performs baptisms for the dead as a form of ancestor veneration, and some have speculated that this could explain the group's claims of over 400,000 members, which is nearly half of the total number of Christians in Japan. See Mullins, "Christianity as a New Religion," 269.

24. Don Rich is listed as ダニエル ゴードン リッチ.
25. Hiromi Shimada, *Yoku Wakaru! Nihon no Shinshūkyō* (よくわかる！日本の新宗教)(Tokyo: Kasakura Shuppansha, 2009).
26. This membership number is taken from Bunkachō, ed., *Shūkyō Nenkan* (Japan's yearbook of religion) (Tokyo: Kyosei, 2009), 84–85.
27. *21-seiki no Nihon o rīdo suru shin shūkyō 100* and *Zukai Shinshūkyō Gaido* include profiles of 100 and 90 groups, respectively.
28. See H. Neill McFarland, *The Rush Hour of the Gods* (New York City: Harper Colophon Books, 1967), 54–67; Susumu Shimazono, *Gendai Kyūsai Shūkyō-ron* (Tokyo: Seikyūsha, 1997); and Helen Hardacre, *Kurozumikyō and the New Religions of Japan* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986).
29. For a chronological list of new religions by date of founding, see Susumu Shimazono, "Introduction to Part 4: New Religious Movements," in *Religion and Society in Modern Japan*, 221–30.
30. See Karel Dobbelaere, *Sōka Gakkai: From Lay Movement to Religion* (Salt Lake City: CESNUR, 2001), for an analysis of Soka Gakkai's early development and split with Nichiren Shōshū.
31. See Sheldon Garon, *Molding Japanese Minds* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997), 60–87, for an example of Ōmoto's early history, especially instances of state persecution from 1930 to 1945.
32. See McFarland, *The Rush Hour of the Gods*, 71–96; and Harry Thomsen, *The New Religions of Japan* (Rutland, VT: Charles E. Tuttle, 1963), 20–31.
33. See Davis, *Dojo*; Earhart, *Gedatsukai and Religion in Contemporary Japan*; and Hardacre, *Kurozumikyō and the New Religions of Japan*.
34. See Grant Underwood, *The Millenarian World of Early Mormonism* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1993).
35. Hardacre, *Kurozumikyō and the New Religions of Japan*.

36. Hardacre, *Kurozumikyō and the New Religions of Japan*, 6.
37. Hardacre, *Kurozumikyō and the New Religions of Japan*, 7.
38. Gordon B. Hinckley made this same analogy to argue that despite similar characteristics, The Book of Mormon and Solomon Spaulding's or Ethan Smith's works are fundamentally dissimilar. See Gordon B. Hinckley, "My Testimony," *Ensign*, November 1993, 51–52.
39. Hardacre, *Kurozumikyō and the New Religions of Japan*, 8–21.
40. Hardacre, *Kurozumikyō and the New Religions of Japan*, 12.
41. See Peter B. Clarke, ed., *Japanese New Religions in Global Perspective* (Richmond, Surrey: Curzon, 2000).
42. See Kenya Numata, *Gendai Nihon no Shinshūkyō*, 1988.
43. See Mullins, "Christianity as a New Religion," 257–72.
44. See Mullins, "Christianity as a New Religion," 258–59.
45. Shimazono, *From Salvation to Spirituality*, 18, 28.
46. Tomoko Aizawa, "The LDS Church as a New Religious Movement in Japan" (master's thesis, Brigham Young University, 1995). Aizawa argues that new religion categorization has severely limited LDS Church growth and development. A new religion label does not need to be an obstacle to growth; several new religions have experienced significant growth. However, I do not contend with Aizawa's conclusions. In 1995, shortly after the subway terrorist attacks of Aum Shinrikyō, new religion categorization had several disadvantages, which severely limited evangelical activity and organizational development.
47. Shimazono, *From Salvation to Spirituality*, 28.
48. Mark Mullins, "Christianity as a New Religion," 269. LDS sociologist John Hoffmann concurs with Mullins and states that "Christianity in Japan—whether of a Western or Japanese form—continues to suffer from chronic denominationalism. . . . Syncretism is more consistent with Japanese history and tradition." See John P. Hoffmann, *Japanese Saints: Mormons in the Land of the Rising Sun* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2007), 43–44.
49. See Ian Reader, "Consensus Shattered: Japanese Paradigm Shifts and Moral Panic in the Post-Aum Era," *Nova Religio: The Journal of Alternative and Emergent Religions* 4, no. 2 (April 2001): 225–34.

50. See Richard Kisala and Mark R. Mullins, *Religion and Social Crisis in Japan: Understanding Japanese Society through the Aum Affair* (New York City: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001).
51. The Personal Information Protection Act (*Kojin Jōhō Hogo Hō*/個人情報保護法) was passed in 2003. Religious issues with the law included the dissemination of membership information (even internally), the kind of membership information religions could permanently maintain, and the rights individual members had about the information religions could keep, especially when members want to sever ties with their religion.
52. Door-to-door sales regulations have been included in several laws on commercial transactions and consumer protection. Many of these regulations could have severely limited door-to-door canvassing which is common by many of Japan's new religions (Soka Gakkai, Mahikari, Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons, and so forth). However, members of the Diet from the Kōmeitō or New Kōmeitō Party (NKP) have consistently been able to add exceptions for religious organizations into laws that regulate door-to-door sales.
53. In 1954 Sōka Gakkai organized the Kōmeitō political party. Kōmeitō has elected members to several local, prefectural, and national offices. At the time of writing, Kōmeitō was a part of the majority coalition with the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) in the National Diet with twenty party members in the House of Councillors or upper house (*Sangi-in*/参議院) and thirty-five members in the House of Representatives or lower house (*Shūgiin*/衆議院). See Kōmeitō, https://www.komei.or.jp/en/.
54. Sawada, *Practical Pursuits*, 236–61.