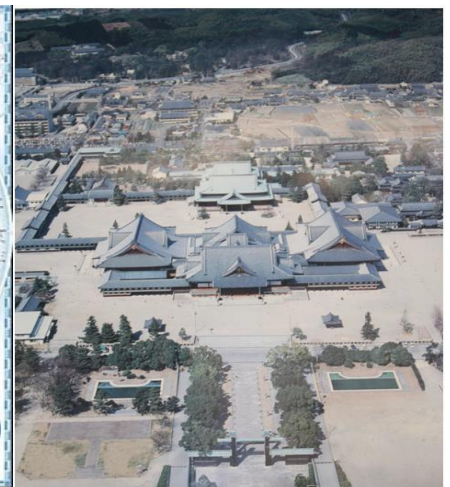


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The Methods of Propagation of A Japanese New Religion in the UK -- Tenrikyo



1

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The Aerial View of Tenrikyo's Main Sanctuary, the Founder's Sanctuary and the Main Entrance



The Mikagura Uta (the Songs for the Service)



***Sazuke* (Healing)**

- *sazuke* is accessible to ordinary people and the healing is so appealing in Japan (or in Taiwan) that devotees are sometimes willing to come to the Tenrikyo Church



Ojibagaeri (Return)

- The first words of greeting received by the pilgrims are ‘welcome home’.



Map 1 : The Diffusion of Tenrikyo – the Various Routes to the World



Note:

In East Asia, the Korean route began in 1893; the Taiwan route, in 1897; the China route, in 1914.
In Southeast Asia, the Philippine route began in 1904; the Indonesia route, in 1924; the Laos route, in 1968; the Vietnam route, in 1970.
In South Asia, the Singapore route began in 1912; in the South Pacific Islands, the Palau route began in 1928; the India and Sri Lanka route, in 1932; the Thailand route, in 1935; the Nepal route, in 1966;
in Oceania, the Australia route began in 1969; the New Zealand route, in 1987.

In Europe, **the England route began in 1910**; the German route, in 1968; the France route, 1970.
In North America, the United States route began in 1896; the Mexico route, in 1922.
In South America, the Brazil route began in 1914; the Peru route, in 1931; the Paraguay route, in 1957;
the Ecuador route, in 1961; the Colombia route in 1960; the Argentina route, in 1966;
the Chile route, in 1968; the Venezuela route, in 1995.

In Africa, the Congo route began in 1960; the Kenya route, in 1981; the Uganda route, in 2004.

Source: Morii (2008).

It is Japanese new religions' growth and development in the world that calls for a more comprehensive study of these movements, particularly when applied to one single religious organization such as Tenrikyo. Other scholars have turned their attention to Tenrikyo's propagation to other foreign countries such as Brazil, Singapore, and Taiwan, with a view to understanding whether Tenrikyo's overseas expansion follows the same pattern as Japan.

Previous Works on Japanese New Religions outside Japan

- Mullins and Young (1991)
 - suggest that when considering the transplantation of religions to other countries, caution must be taken in assessing how religions overcome ethnic and language boundaries and take foot in foreign soil.
- Shimazono (1991)
 - took into account the extension of Japan's economic power in the world economy and other major factors: the socio-political conditions of those foreign countries (urbanisation, industrialisation, tolerance and freedom of religion), the degree of effort to promote Tenrikyo in local settings and the appeal of certain Japanese beliefs and practices to local residents.

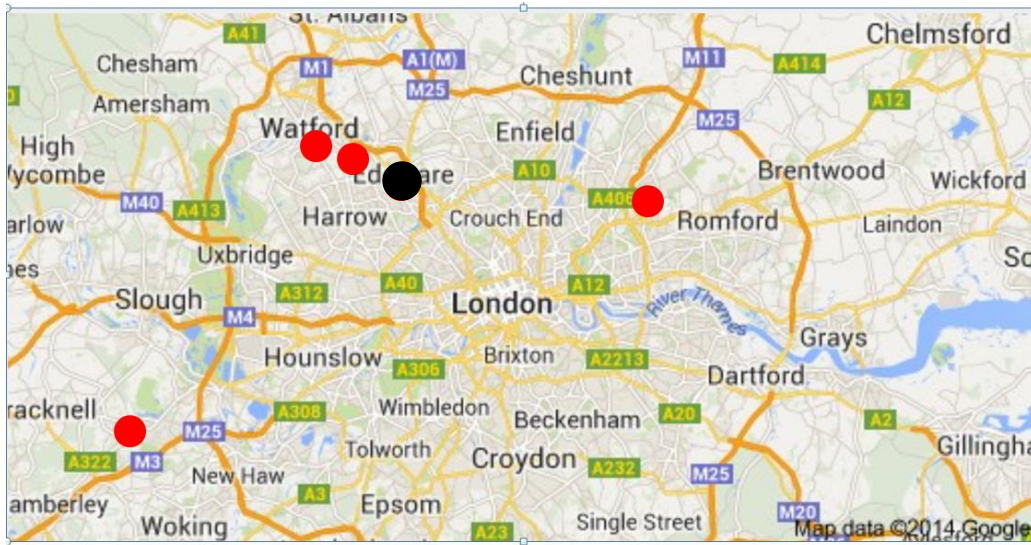
Previous Works on Japanese New Religions outside Japan

- Inoue (2007)
 - suggested that we attribute the phenomenon of the expansion of Japanese religions to four underlying and interrelated causes: missionaries, the geographic relationship between neighboring continents, colonial circumstances, and immigration.
- Takahashi (2008)
 - adopts an organizational perspective ...

Previous Works on Japanese New Religions outside Japan

- Clarke (2007)
 - considers the role of globalization of importance to the spread of Japanese new religions. (as a 'reverse influence')
- Andrew Barshay (2007)
 - the main reasons behind the successful expansion of Japanese new religions overseas are as follows: the new religions' dynamic feature, associated with their ability to communicate with modern people and gain the militant strength of people from all walks of life; their syncretistic practices, blending modernity and tradition; religious and nonreligious elements; their focus on the here and now, on simple ritualistic, on the individual and so forth

The Tenrikyo Religion in the UK



**4 mission stations in or near London
and 1 in Leeds**

**The Tenrikyo UK Centre,
Photographed on 06/06/10**



11

Note: the black spot represents the Tenrikyo UK Centre in London

Methodology

- Ethnographic observation
- Interviews
- Literature analysis and field notes
- from September 2011 to September 2012.

focus on the propagation strategy employed by the Tenrikyo organization to establish itself in the contemporary UK

Ethnographical account

- **The Religious Condition of Britain in the Twentieth Century**
 - Tenrikyo's missionary activities in the UK are inextricably linked to a significant change in the religious landscape of Christianity in Britain in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries is crucial to the birth and development of Tenrikyo in the contemporary UK.

Brown (1991)

Davie (1994)

Stiles (1995)

Ethnographical account

- **The Religious Condition of Japan in the Twentieth Century**
 - The history of Tenrikyo in the UK can be traced to several waves of earlier missionary activities during the twentieth century, particularly the overseas expansion by Senba Grand Church in Japan .

(Sotani 1991)

**Wumetani Shiroheie, the First Head
of Senba Grand Church**



The Tenrikyo Religion in the UK



4 mission stations in or near London and 1 in Leeds

**The Tenrikyo UK Centre,
Photographed on 03/01/10**



Ethnographical account

- **Tenrikyo Activities and Propagation Strategies in the UK**
 - (a) Japanese and English are the main means of communication, with the former associated more with mysterious, ritual, and solemn occasions and the latter more with informal, natural, and secular affairs.**
 - (b) The Tenrikyo UK Centre is regularly funded by Tenrikyo Church Headquarters in Japan because of its status as an overseas missionary outpost.**
 - (c) Another important strategy that Tenrikyo employs to facilitate its propagation in the UK is the tactic of adding Japanese cultural activities to its annual schedule and of running regular advertisements and newsletters.**
 - (d) Mass media and electronic communication also play vital roles.**

Ethnographical account



**The 19th Annual Tenrikyo Public Lecture
Photographed on 25/09/10**



**Seminar in Kyokushi Mission Station
Photographed on 27/05/12**

Conclusion

- **Tenrikyo has engaged in geographical expansion to the UK through different historical stages, including the earlier tense political circumstances in Japan that motivated this new religion to set foot on European soil en route to the United Kingdom.**
- **The Tenrikyo world view that hastens the realization of universal salvation.**
- **The crucial part played by the Tenrikyo UK Centre.**
- **Still, there are several factors crucial to Tenrikyo's development in the UK, not to mention the fact that it has had to compete against other new religious movements in attracting non-Japanese followers.**

The challenges and prospective ahead

- **The Japanese Expatriate-based Congregation**

(Cornille 1991; Pereira and Matsuoka 2007; Shimazono 1991; Smith 2007; Watanabe 2008),

(Sakashita 1998; Somers 1994; Wilson and Dobbelaere 1994).



*Hinokishin Day in Hyde Park
Photographed on 24/04/11*



- **The Cultural and Language Barriers**

Relevant Studies

- Catherine Cornille (1991)
 - saw the unsuccessful inculturation of Mahikari (one Japanese new religion) in the UK as the major reason behind that group's stagnation.

- Fujii (2006)
 - found that Tenrikyo's inculturation policy was an effective strategy in sustaining this Japanese new religion's position...

Similar findings

Firstly, there is a conflict between Tenrikyo's notion of authority and its centralized organizational structure, and the European idea of democracy in matters of organization, missionary strategies and teaching.

Secondly, the Christian idea of salvation, a more ambivalent attitude toward magical healing, and the question of the rationality behind *sazuke* are unable to square with Tenrikyo's vitalistic and this-worldly orientation.

Thirdly, the religious idioms and practices of Tenrikyo such as *Mikagura Uta*, *sazuke* are grounded in Japanese tradition, which European peoples find themselves unfamiliar with.

Fourthly, for the European, ancestor worship is not a traditional practice.

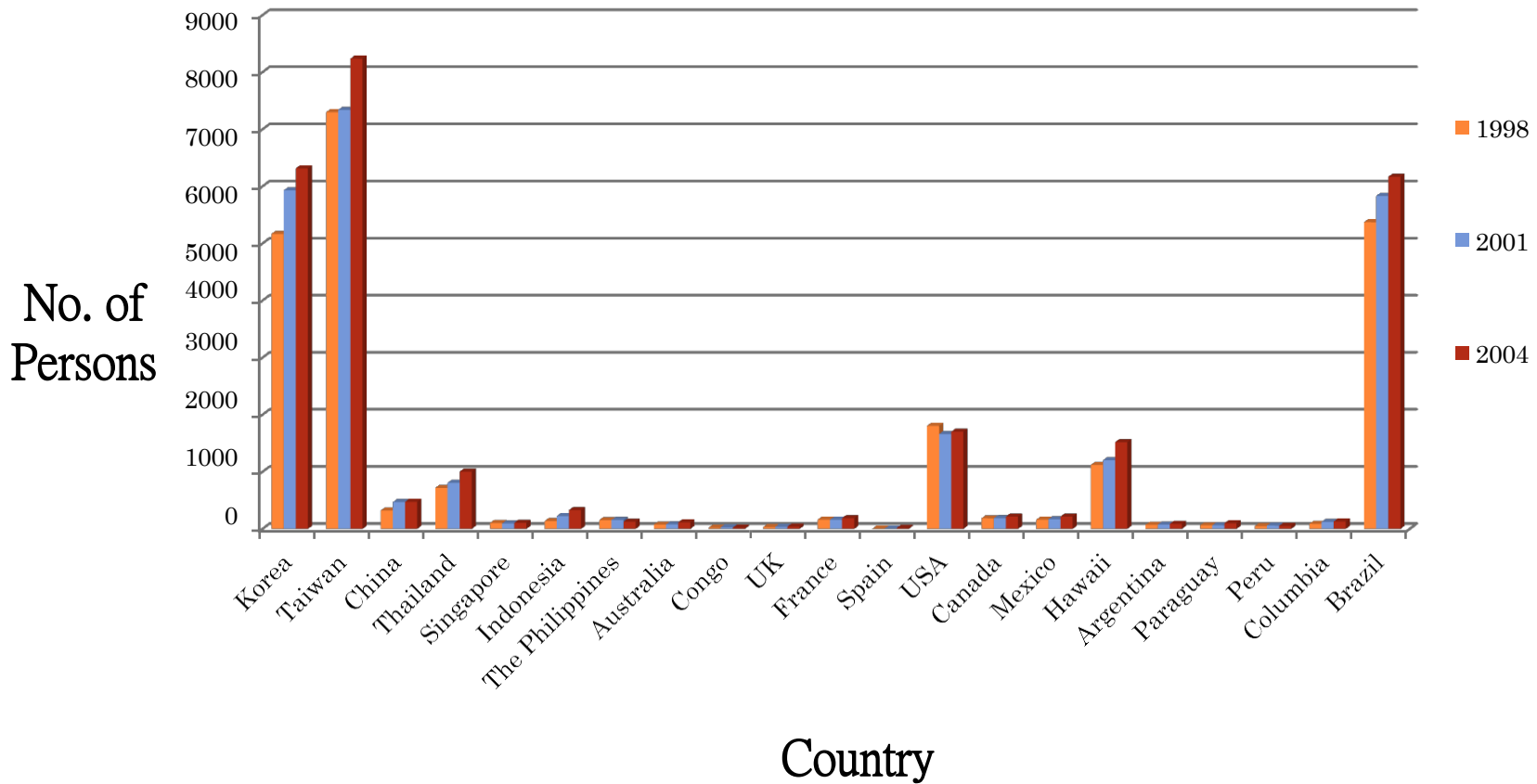
Fifth, while the idea of living *kami* is attractive and prevalent in Japan, it appears to be incompatible with the uniqueness of Christ within a predominantly Christian context.

Lastly, European peoples are reluctant to conform to the hierarchical rules that apply to Japanese people and to accept the notion of Japan as the center of the world or as the original place of human beings. (For instance, Jiba in Tenrikyo)

Interesting findings

The nature of Tenrikyo's monthly congregation and the condition of its propagation in the UK are similar to patterns in Brazil (Clarke 1999; Nakamaki 1991; Pereira 2007: 201) but different from those in Taiwan, Korea, and Singapore (Hamrin 2000; Shimazono 1991). In Brazil, Tenrikyo concentrates on people of Japanese descent (Nakamaki 2003), whilst in Taiwan, Korea, and Singapore it concentrates on non-Japanese people such as the Taiwanese, Korean, and Singaporean Chinese communities (Huang 2016a).

The Number of Tenrikyo Overseas Followers around the World from 1998 to 2004



Despite the weak expansion of Japanese new religions to the UK, it is still worth pondering the question as to the reasons behind the development of these Japanese religions in Western Europe.

Wilson and Dobbelaere (1994) draw attention to the factors crucial to the development of Soka Gakkai in the UK. They point out that the ethics of this new religion – its endorsement of the search for personal happiness, its emphasis on personal fulfilment, and its request for adherents to discover their own form of ‘taking responsibility’ – are in tune with the secular ethos of the UK, where those engaged in the mass media, entertainment industries and artistic pursuit for personal freedom and self-expression are most likely to be members of this movement.

The world view in Tenrikyo’s doctrine may encourage followers to carry their teachings to the world.

Yoki is in essence positive. With *yoki*, humans hold the real source of power and they are in control, whether in good or bad circumstances. By cultivating *yoki* and exercising that power, mostly through self-cultivation, one may change external persons and events. Without *yoki*, living things become inanimate and die. If humans cultivate their *yoki*, they can thus lead a bright and joyful life called *yokigurashi*, which is a state that Tenrikyo upholds as its central tenet.

Thank You for Your Listening

25

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