

Japanese New Religions in Postcolonial South Korea and Taiwan: The Case of Tenrikyo¹

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Introduction: How can we dialogue on memories and discourses of colonization?: the approach across national lines

According to mass media and social movements of anti-Chinese or Korean in Japanese society, historical issue on Japanese colonization in East Asia, has yet to be resolved even now, and at times, this issue is stronger than in previous years. Of course, after the end of colonization or WWII, historical issues had been researched by specialists of history studies and dialogues conducted over states (colonized state and be colonized state) for a long time, but we question why that issue still exists, and becomes even stronger with nationalistic discourse.

In order to solve historical issue, at first we have to make the issues clear, then we can discuss how to deal with it. The difficulty of reconciliation's process is due to dialogue being completed between states of Japan and South Korea or Taiwan states under authoritarian rule (Kuomintang in Taiwan, and dictators in South Korea) in postwar period. After democratization, for their own nation and colonized nation (Japan), people naturally request to face their real voices and experiences individually, and claim their issues not been solved yet. And the governments of both sides, South Korea or Taiwan and Japan, face this complex responsibility and have to consider how to deal with multi-voices of the memories and discourses.

Two approaches are used to analyze these historical issues in this paper. One is across national lines. The other one is across disciplines. Conflicts about historical issues between states of those who colonized and being colonized are quite usual, and many Asian and African nations still have similar problems. However, for individual or people's historical issue to solve completely tend to be much difficult because of the unstable situation in raising tension or crisis of balance of power in international relations. In addition, dominant discourse and feelings of individual and ordinary people are easy to be influenced by mass media and political and social situation. We know that solving historical issue involves not just historian studies, other scholarly disciplines also are needed, especially for confused process of decolonization. Cultural anthropology would analyze contexts of historical issues and their functions for person and society. In addition, by depth interview for individual narratives and

viewpoints, cultural anthropology could study variability and creativity.

One advantage of these approaches is that it would be easy to find homogeneity and heterogeneity between the two nations, and to figure out social/cultural causes of the differences in postcolonial situations. Another is that we can find ways to solve or deal with historical conflicts from a range of viewpoints. However, there are also disadvantages. The big problem is manner of evaluating rationality and objectivity. When we analyze reasons of the different situations of the two nations, it will be difficult to explicate social/cultural causes.

Comparative studies which cross nation line will help us understand differences of two nations and can show each postcolonial situation clearly and this approach might support anthropological qualitative studies, but disadvantage of this approach is influence of bias, and difficulty of keeping rationality and objectivity in combination of more than two nations, therefore it's very difficult to analyze social/cultural causes of the differences across nations. However, accumulating of multiple examples over disciplines can possibly refine it.

Historical issues on colonization occur during postcolonial period usually, and that is what we call "decolonization". Both Taiwan and South Korea were Japanese colony, however after the end of colonization, the social and political situations of Korea and Taiwan were very different. And influenced by the different postcolonial situations, their Japanese image and evaluation of Japanese colonization were diverse.

Historical issues occur not only between governments of colonizing and colonized state but also with religious world in the two nations. In this paper, one of the Japanese new religions, Tenrikyo was analyzed because it was set as one sect of the State Shinto during Meiji Period to the end of WWII, and we can compare postcolonial situations in Korea and Taiwan through this case study. Japanese Buddhist and Christian organizations are usually separated as they are based on different nation after WWII, as each organization represents its nation to which it belongs, historical issue does not confuse their task. Some scholars criticize their missionary works under colonization, but basically, they could solve colonial issues automatically by changes of belonging nation in postcolonial period. Tenrikyo is the only Japanese new religion which continues their missionary works from Japanese colonial period to present in two nations, therefore is a good example to compare postcolonial situations in South Korea and Taiwan (cf. Shimazono 1991).

1. Brief history of Tenrikyo missionary work in Taiwan

In 1896, one female, name Matsu Furuya started Tenrikyo missionary work individually under Japan's colonization in Taipei, Taiwan. Another group assembled by Yamana Grand Church also started their missionary works in Taichung, and established the first Tenrikyo church there in 1897. They continued the missionary work and established churches in Taipei (1900) and Tainan (1904) (Takano 1975, 104-118). Due to propagation of Tenrikyo believers, headquarters

of Tenrikyo set their Taiwan Headquarters in 1934 after 38 years since missionary work first started in Taiwan. Taiwan missionary office finally started their missionary school but opened for only 3 years because of Imperial Japan's collapse. There were 39 Tenrikyo churches and about 20,000 local believers in Taiwan in the end of Japanese rule (Oyasyo Research Institute 1989, 966-967).

After WWII, the Chinese government (Republic of China) of Kuomintang (KMT) started their rule in Taiwan, and performed their policy of decolonization by anti-Japan including Japanese language and culture. In spite of their efforts, the anti-Japan policy could not succeed because it was difficult to distinguish between Japanese elements and the other. Therefore that is decolonization conducted by outsider (which means those came to the place after war). Under the KMT rule, the 8th bishop of Taiwan Headquarters center was accepted to enter as a missionary by KMT government in 1967, and accepted the registration as legal religious organization in 1972. One of main reason of this is rupturing diplomat relations with Japan in 1972. This is the first time for Japanese religion to get official acceptance by Taiwan government. Again Japanese Tenrikyo missionaries started missionary work in Taiwan, because most of them are not fluent at Mandarin and missionary works are conducted in Japanese language, therefore a number of people who were to speak Japanese or remain with good old time (of Japan's colonization) were attracted because of feeling nostalgic. Under the martial law (1948-1987), comings and goings was very limited, and legalized religious exchange provided rare chance of contact with Japan and Japanese for local people in Taiwan. Therefore Tenrikyo missionaries had advantage of playing the role of representation Japan and Japanese (cf. Fujii 2007). In fact many people visited Japan for participation in Shuyoka (Tenrikyo's missionary training school) in Tenri, Nara. A great part of them stress that they feel an affinity with Japan rather than with China represented by KMT.

2. Brief history of missionary work in Korea

In 1893, first Tenrikyo's missionary started works individually in Pusan, Korea. Many grand churches and its branches dispatched missionaries to Korea after that. The first church was built in Pusan in 1904. In order to keep Japanese image of enlightenment, Japanese colonial government would control missionary works of Japanese religion in that time. And the government requested headquarters of Tenrikyo to establish Tenrikyo missionary office in Pusan in 1908. This office was moved to Seoul after 3 years.

All missionaries were Japanese at that times, therefore they had to establish training school of local missionaries, which was completed in 1916. Since most students of this school were Japanese in the early years, the school ban entrance of Japanese student after 13 years since its establishment, and then started essentially training local missionaries (Oyasyo Research Institute 1989, 960-961).

After WWII, all Japanese people had to return their homeland, and then headquarters could have no contact with Korean local churches and believers. Korean people celebrated the end of Japanese colonization and national liberation. In the process of decolonization, they define the vestiges of Japanese colonization and made efforts to get rid of it.

Korean believers manage missionary school by themselves. Tenrikyo's original songs of service are translated into Korean absolutory in the school. The main reason is difficulty of using Japanese after the colonization. It was a very sensitive problem especially under authoritarian rule.

In 1970, international exhibition was held in Osaka, Japan, and 39 believers took this chance coming back to Tenri. In 1973, Korea central office of Tenrikyo was associated. Then Tenrikyo mission center changes its name as Korean headquarters of Tenrikyo 5 years later, and started training program for local leaders which has invited Japanese lecturer from headquarters of Tenrikyo since 1976. Korea government relaxed restrictions of traveling abroad in 1982, and as a result, human exchange increases day by day.

3. Compare postcolonial situation between South Korea and Taiwan

A main difference of Tenrikyo between South Korea and Taiwan is separation. In South Korea, there are 300,000 local Tenrikyo believers, but are separated in two headquarters. In Taiwan, there are 20,000 local believers and no separation happened like in South Korea. In South Korea, headquarters belong to central headquarters in Japan, but the other one stresses that the relation of the central headquarters with the Korean headquarters should be equal, therefore independent from central headquarters. When they progress their independent movement, religious legitimacy is often referred to. There are about 100 Tenrikyo churches in South Korea, and heads of churches are all local people, contrastively half of church's heads are Japanese in Taiwan. Korean believer are not willing to accept Japanese missionary and head of church. The cause of separation can be said as not due to amount of believers in two nations, but discourses on decolonization, includes relation with Japan, and religious legitimacy of Tenrikyo (cf. Lee 2011).

In the process of Tenrikyo's separation in South Korea, one group requests central headquarters of Tenrikyo to set relationship equal, to respect local history and culture, and to accept their practice. For example, they regard the object of pray, yashiro (shrine of god) as not Tenrikyo's original style, because Japanese government forced to change it and Tenrikyo could not reject it then, therefore it is leftover of violence of Japanese government in wartime. They request central headquarters to accept this interpretation and to agree change of the object of pray. In addition, they said that the circle mirror, the thing which represents god, is also assimilating Shinto's style, therefore other thing has to be created to replace it.

Korean mission center of Tenrikyo were separated by these arguments, and some of them

call for independence or decolonization, to be separated from the original headquarters, and to establish new association of Korean Tenrikyo.

The point is when Korean Tenrikyo elites questioned the colonial elements in Tenrikyo, central Tenrikyo headquarters had already finished restoration by Shinbashira who is leader of Tenrikyo after WWII, but Korean believers did not have any chance to request and point to the issue at that time. Because this restoration lacked viewpoints of believers abroad, the decolonization cannot be regarded as adequate.

Contrastly, most of Tenrikyo believers welcomed Japanese missionaries and Japanese style in Taiwan, because it provided identification with Japanese religions, and believers share the special feeling of belonging Japanese religions other than folk religions. Believing Japanese religion is, for some believer, resisting KMT authoritarians because Japan was the government before KMT, and conversion of Japanese religions represents protection of KMT government.

This is a unique discourse Korean believers do not have, so we can say that this is a original discourse from Taiwan. Researcher on postcolonial study of Taiwan, Chih-huei Huang, refers similar discourse on Taiwanese member of Japanese literary activity as Haiku and Senryu. She analyzes their works and describes changing of attitude toward Japanese and its culture, especially after WWII under KMT government, they restarted learning Japanese hard for resistance outsider's authoritarian rule again (Huang 2003).

As analyzed above, the meaning of Japanese colonization is very different between South Korea and Taiwan. And in South Korean, based on confrontation with one another, the evaluation of Japanese elements of Tenrikyo was significant junction to appeal religious authenticity and legitimacy.

What is important is that memories and discourse can be created in adapting situation. To analyze humanity in postcolonial discourse, what we have to learn is how human beings create narratives and meaning of that narrative for the person and (others) society. Of course, their narratives are easy to be influenced by changing situation surrounded. In addition, postcolonial discourses in the social movement were also influenced by the change of international relation (balance of power).

Sometimes colonized state also insists that they are victim, especially for new religions after Meiji period, it is very easy to stress that they are victim of Japanese religious policy during war time. This is part of the fact, but if taking views of people being colonized, the religion saved believers but is also part of colonization so their narrative tend to be more complex and with contradiction.

Conclusion: Politics of memories and discourse on postcolonial East Asia

Japanese missionaries are much welcome by Taiwanese in postcolonial period and special meaning is created for believing Japanese religion. By contrast this phenomenon, there are

enough local Korean missionaries in postcolonial period, and they made efforts to get rid of Japanese missionaries and Japanese elements of Tenrikyo in Korea in order to avoid criticism against 'Japanese religion'. In this process, they were confident of Tenrikyo believers because of political and social oppresses.

In South Korea, conflicts on evaluation of leftover of colonization were actualized in the process of separation between believers. Religious legitimacy is referred to in arguing about influences of colonization in Tenrikyo. Thus, reconciliation is a kind of continuing dialogue between central headquarters in Japan and local people and society in Korea and Taiwan, therefore it had not been reached.

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Notes

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