

Acknowledgments

Over a decade in the making, this book is based on a research project that was conceived back in 2008 while I was spending a portion of my sabbatical year away from Sophia University in residence at Duke University. I'm grateful to Richard Jaffe and the Asian-Pacific Studies Institute & Department of Religion for hosting me during that time. I submitted a book proposal that year to Pat Crosby, then editor at the University of Hawai'i Press, and was delighted to have a contract in hand for a volume on "Neonationalism and Religion in Contemporary Japanese Society." Although I had hoped to complete the research and writing within two to three years, the gestation period to produce this volume turned out to be far longer. This has been due in part to the continued flourishing of Shinto-related nationalism, which I felt needed to be documented. The delay was also due to some professional changes. After returning to Sophia University from sabbatical leave, I served a term as editor of *Monumenta Nipponica*, and then moved to New Zealand in 2013 for a professorship in Japanese studies at the University of Auckland.

This study represents a new area of research for me, which emerged and evolved in connection with two seemingly unrelated projects. First, it was the Aum Shinrikyō sarin incident on the Tokyo subway on 20 March 1995 that initially shifted my attention from the comparative sociology of religious minorities—Buddhists in Canada, Christians in Japan, and New Religions—to the study of religion-state issues and the relationship between religion, nationalism, and politics in contemporary Japan. Matsudo Yukio's chapter, "Back to Invented Tradition: A Nativist Response to National Crisis," in *Religion and Social Crisis in Japan* (Kisala and Mullins, 2001), alerted me to the rise of neonationalism as one important response to the destabilizing subway attack that followed the Hanshin-Awaji (Kobe) earthquake of 17 January, which began this year of disaster.

His observations prompted me to follow more closely this “nativist response,” and I began to document the growing evidence for a religio-political restorationist movement in post-disaster Japan. This movement continued to develop in the wake of the 2011 “triple disaster”—earthquake, tsunami, and nuclear accident at the Fukushima Daiichi plant—which necessarily extended this project.

This serendipitously merged with a second project. Shortly after moving to Sophia University in 2002, I became aware of a popular story circulating widely, which claimed that Yasukuni Shrine was saved from destruction in the early months of the Occupation by the actions of Fr. Bruno Bitter, an important member of the Jesuit community at Sophia University, who intervened with General Douglas MacArthur. This story found its way to the homepage of Yasukuni Shrine in an article entitled “The Priest Who Defended Yasukuni Shrine” (*Yasukuni jinja o mamotta shinpu*), which recounts the Catholic priest’s role and expresses deep appreciation and respect for Fr. Bitter. Many contemporary Yasukuni supporters—politicians, academics, and even the manga artist, Kobayashi Yoshinori—have found this story about a foreign priest to be useful ammunition in their responses to international criticism directed at politicians who supported the shrine by their “official” visits.

This story puzzled me and I began a period of extensive archive research in search of documentary evidence that would validate this claim, including records of the Supreme Commander of Allied Powers’s (SCAP) Religions Division, Yasukuni Shrine archives, and a number of Shinto accounts of the Occupation and the early postwar period. As I read these sources it became clear to me that the Shinto experience of marginalization due to SCAP’s policies is what motivated key leaders to launch a “restoration movement” once the foreign Occupation came to an end. It was in the process of tracing the genealogy of this movement that I literally backed my way into the world of Shinto scholarship. As a late-comer and interloper of sorts, I’ve depended upon the work of established scholars in the field of Shinto studies, which I will acknowledge extensively in what follows.

While I was already aware of the critical engagement of some Christians and New Religions with the neonationalistic trends documented in this study, I’m grateful to Ugo Dessi for introducing me to Sugahara

Ryūken and Hishiki Masaharu, two Jōdo Shinshū priests, who have been key leaders in the Buddhist legal battle with Yasukuni Shrine over postwar enshrinements. They were kind to meet with me on several occasions and generously shared legal documents, court records, and publications related to their ongoing struggle with both Yasukuni Shrine and the Japanese government.

As someone who only began serious archival research rather late in an academic career, I'm especially indebted to Ben Dorman for his helpful advice about accessing the National Archive materials related to the Occupation period and for kindly sharing his index of the religion-related files. This was an incredible time-saver as I searched for relevant materials. It turns out that other critical documents for making sense of religion during the Occupation period are scattered far and wide in a number of collections. I'd like to acknowledge the institutions and archivists who made this study possible by arranging for my visits to their collections and for kindly responding to many requests for copies of their materials: Bruce Tabb and Linda Long, Special Collections, University of Oregon Libraries; Michael P. Walsh, M.M., Maryknoll Mission Archives, New York; James Zobel, MacArthur Memorial Library & Archives, Norfolk, Virginia; and Carrie March, Special Collections, Honnold/Mudd Library, Claremont University Consortium; Tomoko Bialock and Toshiko Scot, Richard C. Rudolph East Asian Library, UCLA. I've also relied on archive materials and Shinto journals provided by Yasukuni Shrine and Kokugakuin University Library. I owe a special thanks to John Breen for his introduction to Noda Yasuhira, a Yasukuni Shrine priest and archivist at the Yūshūkan Bunko, who kindly spent many hours responding to my queries and generously provided copies of materials I requested during my visits in 2014. In addition to those mentioned above, I'd also like to thank Rich Gardner for introducing me to the family of Lt. William K. Bunce, the chief of SCAP's Religions Division during much of the Occupation. Peter Bunce generously shared some Occupation period photos from his father's personal collection, a number of which have been included in this volume.

Over the past decade, I've had many opportunities to present some of my initial research findings at international conferences, workshops, and symposia hosted by the National University of Singapore, University

of Southern California, Sophia University, the City University of Hong Kong, Cornell University, Leipzig University, the University of Auckland, the University of Vienna, De Paul University, Duke University, and Otago University. Early chapter drafts were also presented at the annual meetings of a number of academic associations, including the Association for Asian Studies (2011; 2014; 2016), the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion (2016), the European Association for Japanese Studies (2011; 2017), the Australian Association for the Study of Religions (2017), the New Zealand Association for the Study of Religions (2018), and the East Asian Society for the Scientific Study of Religion (2019). I gratefully acknowledge the many expressions of collegial support and helpful feedback received along the way from many scholars, co-panelists, editors, and anonymous peer reviewers of earlier articles and book chapters, which were adapted, expanded, and updated for various sections of this larger monograph (for details of which, see the concluding Permissions). In particular, I would like to express my appreciation to Shimazono Susumu, Helen Hardacre, Ian Reader, Erica Baffelli, Nakano Kōichi, John Breen, John Nelson, Paul Swanson, Mark Teeuwen, Elisabetta Porcu, Nakano Tsuyoshi, Jeff Kingston, Sven Saaler, Okuyama Michiaki, Tsukada Hotaka, Kate Nakai, Bettina Gramlich-Oka, Esther Sanders, Chiara Formichi, David Slater, Larry Repeta, Levi McLaughlin, Emily Anderson, and Jolyon Thomas.

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Over the past five years, I also received additional support for this project from the Humanities Centre for Advanced Studies at Leipzig University. I would like to thank Professors Christoph Kleine and Monika Wohlrab-Sahr for inviting me to join their “Multiple Secularities” Project as a Senior Research Fellow in 2015. This affiliation provided many opportunities for conversations with scholars working on similar issues in other contexts. In addition to attending several conferences in Leipzig, I was fortunate to be in residence for three months in late 2019, which is when I finally completed this manuscript. The chapter on Promoting Constitutional Revision actually began as a paper prepared for their 2018 Workshop on “Secularities in Japan.” I’m very grateful to Christoph and Monika, as well as the other Centre staff and visiting scholars, for creating such a stimulating and supportive environment for my work.

As I wrapped up this project in 2019, I began conversations with UH editor Stephanie Chun and colleagues at Nanzan University about the possibility of including this monograph in the Nanzan Library of Asian Religion and Culture Series. I’m grateful to the Nanzan Advisory Board for agreeing to include it and to the editorial team at the Nanzan Institute, Matt McMullen, Tim Graf, Jim Heisig, and Paul Swanson, for shepherding this manuscript through the production process. I’m honored to have a second volume in the Nanzan series and would like to thank Stephanie for facilitating this arrangement with UH Press.

Since moving to New Zealand in 2013, I’ve returned to Japan each year for follow-up research. I’m especially grateful to good friends Yukiko and Joe Dunkle for their warm hospitality during my many sojourns back in Tokyo. And last, but certainly not least, I wish to thank Cindy, my partner of over four decades and professional in-house editor. She has not only listened to me go on about this project for far too long, but has read and offered her editorial advice on numerous chapter drafts that eventually became this book. Thanks to her editorial eye and critical feedback, the

manuscript has been markedly improved. One could not ask for a better companion with whom to celebrate life's milestones.

This book is dedicated to the memory of David Reid (1927–2017), a sociologist of religion and long-time editor of the *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies*, who was a mentor to me when I returned to Japan as a young academic in the mid-1980s. He took a personal interest in my work, helped me find my bearings in the field, and kindly introduced me to his rich network of Japanese scholars. His reputation as a first-rate editor and translator was well-earned and many of us working in the field of Japanese religion and society today are indebted to him for his long career and generous investment in the work of others. May he rest in peace.

A note about macrons and Japanese names: Japanese names throughout the text are rendered in Japanese order with the surname first and the personal name second. Also, macrons are not used for Japanese place names and terms that appear in English-language dictionaries.