

Asian Values Study

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ALTHOUGH POLITICS, economics, and the social sciences appeal to Asian values on a regular basis, no attempt has been made to conduct a truly broad, comparative study to identify what these values might be. To fill this gap, the Nanzan Institute for Religion and Culture has undertaken a project, in cooperation with a group of scholars in Japan, to explore the possibilities of adapting the European Values Study for use in Japan and other Asian countries, with the aim of producing a cross-culturally comparative survey on values in contemporary society.

The European Values Study is a comprehensive survey covering over 400 items, designed to test for values in the domains of religion, work, family, and politics. It was initially conducted in the countries of Western Europe in 1981, then expanded to include the countries of Eastern Europe and repeated in 1990; a further survey is being conducted in 1999. The comprehensive nature of the survey, the number of countries included, and the fact that it is repeated at fixed intervals have made it the standard in the field of values research. Indeed, the survey questions have been used in other studies, most notably the World Values Study, and an attempt was made early on to use the survey in Japan—an attempt that yielded questionable results arising from the lack of care taken in adapting the instrument to the non-European cultural environment.

In planning its study, the Nanzan Institute sought to build on these experiences in order to develop a survey instrument applicable to the Asian situation and yet one that could be compared with the European survey. An international group of scholars working in Japan was recruited to study the European survey as well as other less comprehensive studies in Japan and abroad. In close consultation with the European Values System Study Group, a decision was made to adapt about two-thirds of the questions used in the European survey, concentrating on the questions considered core to that study, and add other questions specifically designed to test for what are commonly considered Asian values. A test survey was conducted in Japan in April 1998, and we have begun an analysis of the results.

For the test survey a random sample, weighted for age and sex, of three hundred subjects from the Tokyo and Osaka metropolitan areas was chosen from resident registration roles, and interviews were conducted with the subjects. The

survey included 237 items, and generally the interviews ran for about one hour. Core questions from the European Values Study comprised about two-thirds of the survey, and items to test for Asian values, such as harmony, group-orientation, diligence, and obedience, were added. The Chūō Chōsasha, a highly reputable survey agency, was retained to conduct the survey for us.

The members of our research group held a panel on the results of this survey at the annual meeting of the Association for Asian Studies in Boston in March 1999. In this report I include a discussion of contemporary Japanese values that was presented at that panel, followed by a more extensive consideration of religious values and morals. Throughout this report comparisons will be made, where possible, with previous European results and other pertinent surveys.

Japanese Values Today

As in the European survey, the first question in our survey regarded the relative importance placed on various domains of life.¹ Our survey results, compared with those from the European survey in 1990, can be found in Table 1. Recent years have seen a retreat from public life in advanced industrial countries throughout the world, and here as well movement towards the privatization of life is apparent. Increasing importance placed on friendship and leisure is especially apparent among the young in our survey. In comparison with the 1990 data from Europe, it is worth noting that the order of importance given to leisure and work, as well as politics and religion, is reversed, and a relatively lower level of importance is given to family, friends, work, and leisure overall in Japan. Although Japanese work habits are often highlighted, it is interesting to point out that the level of importance placed on work in Europe is fully ten points higher than in the Japanese survey.

Our survey also explored the importance placed on twelve general values that are often identified with Asia. These results can be found in Table 2, where the items are listed in order of importance given. What is particularly remarkable about these results is that traditional values form two clusters, one above and one below the two modern values of diligence and success found in the middle of the above scale. The cluster above these two values—honesty, cooperation, manners, and lawfulness—could be described as a personal morality governing general human relationships. On the other hand, the lower cluster—groupism, obedience, patriotism, and following authority—have to do with the preservation of vertical relationships within the group. Both the upper and lower cluster can be called traditional values, in that they are all Confucian in origin, but, although those that

¹ This section is a summary of a report coauthored by Yamada Mamoru and myself, presented by Yamada at the AAS convention mentioned above.

TABLE 1. Importance of life domains

	Japan (1998)	Europe (1990)
Work	76	86
Family	92	96
Friends	87	90
Leisure	79	83
Politics	49	35
Religion	18	48

regulate horizontal relationships continue to enjoy considerable support, those regulating vertical relationships are not highly prized. Despite the image of Japan as a group-oriented, vertical society, at least in terms of the twelve items tested in this question the values underlying that image attract only a relatively low level of support. In addition, with the exception of diligence and success, the interest in all of these items is lower as the age of the respondents decreases. This indicates that we might see a further erosion in the support given traditional values as time progresses.

The two clusters of traditional values are also seen in the results obtained from another question in our survey, where the respondents were asked to choose two items from a list of four values, two of which were traditional and two modern. The four items were filial piety, gratitude (repaying of debts), respect for individ-

TABLE 2. Asian values

	%	Average	~39	40~59	60~
Honesty	95	1.54	1.66	1.46	1.48
Cooperation	95	1.68	1.71	1.71	1.58
Manners	94	1.63	1.69	1.66	1.45
Obedying the law	92	1.66	1.85	1.60	1.43
Seriousness	88	1.74	2.03	1.64	1.43
Helping others	86	1.74	1.96	1.83	1.78
Diligence	83	1.91	2.15	1.72	1.84
Success	66	2.16	2.16	2.08	2.31
Groupism	64	2.20	2.35	2.10	2.11
Obedience	60	2.27	2.41	2.26	2.05
Patriotism	59	2.24	2.60	2.17	1.73
Authority	24	2.87	2.89	2.89	2.80

Percentage is a total of those responding "very important" and "somewhat important." The average is calculated by assigning 1 to "very important" and 4 to "not at all important."

ual rights, and freedom. Once again, the modern values of rights (49%) and freedom (44%) are placed in the middle of the scale, with filial piety attracting the most support (63%), and the debt of gratitude the least support (33%). Even allowing for the fact that respondents could make only two choices, the low level of value placed on gratitude is worth special mention. Furthermore, no difference according to age was reflected in the responses to this question.

We can see from these results that although traditional values in general are not receding, those concerning vertical relationships attract only a low level of support. It would appear that traditional values that restrict the freedom of the individual are no longer highly respected.

Traditional values that are not necessarily authoritarian, especially those oriented towards a sense of duty or charity (*J. giri ninjō*), continue to be highly evaluated. In the survey respondents were asked their opinion regarding the importance of four relational and two individual values. In level of importance these values were ranked as follows: concern for those in trouble (81%), efforts for one to whom you are indebted (70%), avoidance of differences of opinion (61%), following the orders of superiors (55%), maintaining one's own opinion (43%), and individualism/egoism (24%). In this order of importance the top three can be described as general relational, the fourth as authoritarian, and the bottom two as individualistic. As with the previous question on general Asian values, we can see a decrease in interest in the top four values (general relational and authoritarian) among lower age groups.

The orientation towards relational harmony over individualism can also be seen in the response to another question in the survey that dealt with the image of the desired human being. The achievement-oriented image (accomplishes tasks well but is unconcerned for others) was chosen by only 13% of the respondents, whereas more than 75% chose the harmonious image (gets along well with others but is not very good at work). The contrast in responses to yet another question concerning a desirable boss is even starker. A boss who makes unreasonable demands but takes care of his or her workers (81%) is overwhelmingly more popular than a boss who makes no such demands at work but also does not take care of his/her employees (14%). In response to a similar question included in a 1978 survey, although 87% of Japanese favored a charitable boss only 50% of Americans did so. Furthermore, we see no difference by age in regard to these two questions; all age groups in Japan show a strong orientation towards tight human relations.

The inclination to give importance to relationships in Japanese society is not necessarily a premodern holdover, and therefore it does not exclude the development of modern values. In fact, the importance placed on modern values can be seen in the results of the present survey. For example, one question asked the respondents to choose two reasons for poverty, and the results in order of impor-

tance were the following: laziness and lack of willpower, societal injustice, an inevitable part of progress, lack of luck, parental poverty, and karma. In these responses individual effort is given as the most important reason for the existence of poverty.

The modern emphasis on merit is the topic of two additional questions that test the criteria for hiring a new employee. Respondents are asked who they would hire if a relative did second best on an employment exam, and 62% of the respondents said that they would choose the person who scored highest over their relative, with only 29% choosing the relative. It would appear that merit is given preference over blood ties, at least in the formal work situation. There is considerably less emphasis on merit in the response to the other question, which asked what the respondents would do if the son of an important benefactor had scored second highest on the exam. Here only 51% would choose the top scorer, while 39% say they would choose their benefactor's son. In a 1978 survey, 46% of Japanese and 25% of Americans said they would choose a benefactor's son over the top scorer. It is interesting to point out that although filial piety scored higher than debts of gratitude in a previous question, here we find the opposite result. Be that as it may, we should also note that in both of these cases it is the orientation towards merit that supersedes that of individual relationships.

The importance placed on modern values can also be seen in a further question, where attitudes towards competition and diligence are tested. Regarding competition, on a ten-point scale (5.5 average) an average of 4.3 was attained, leaning towards the importance of competition over its harmful effects. Diligence achieved an average of 4.08, its importance being recognized over luck and connections. Although we saw that cooperation in human relations was prized in the response to a previous question, here it would seem that individual achievement wins out, however slightly. We must conclude, therefore, that although the relational orientation remains strong in Japanese society, modern values emphasizing merit also enjoy a considerable level of penetration.

The positive interaction of personal trust based on the sharing of traditional values and impersonal trust based on common modern values can contribute much towards the formation of a solid social structure. In fact, many would argue that herein lies the strength of Japanese society. The question needs to be asked, however, as to just how personal and impersonal trust are expressed in contemporary Japan. It is to this question that we turn next.

Japan is generally seen as a society that enjoys a great deal of trust, in terms both of informal human relationships and formal structures and institutions. The present survey, however, presents a different picture. Let us first consider the question where the respondents were asked to identify groups of people who they would not want as neighbors. The top five on this scale were drug addicts, right wing extrem-

ists, left-wing extremists, people with a criminal record, and emotionally unstable people. In all cases the percentage objecting to these groups as neighbors was much higher than that obtained in the 1990 European survey (Table 3). Can this level of distrust towards “outsiders” be the opposite side of the trust shown towards one’s own group in local society, or is it rather a sign of a more general distrust towards other human beings?

In answer to this question, another item in the survey explored whether, in general, people can be trusted. Only 30% responded positively to this question, while 64% said that in general one must be careful in dealing with people. While more than half of the respondents in the European survey shared the view that one must be cautious in dealing with others, these results belie the image of Japan as a trusting society. Furthermore, in a 1978 Japanese-American survey, although only 44% of Americans voiced caution towards others, fully 68% of Japanese said that one must be cautious. All of these results serve to indicate that Japanese society is not as characterized by unconditional mutual trust as is commonly assumed.

A similar result is attained from another question that asked whether, generally speaking, most people try to be helpful to others. Only 31% of the respondents held an altruistic view of their fellow human beings, while 63% responded that most people are only concerned about themselves. In this case as well Japanese were overwhelmingly more negative concerning human nature than American respondents in the 1978 survey. Given the image of Japan as a trusting society, the fact that

TABLE 3. Not desirable as neighbors

	Japan (1998)	Europe (1990)
Drug addicts	83	58
Right-wing extremists	57	37
Left-wing extremists	56	33
People with criminal record	49	35
Emotionally unstable people	42	27
Heavy drinkers	32	51
Homosexuals	29	31
People with AIDS	27	28
People with a strong faith	27	
Immigrants/foreign workers	13	13
People of a different race	8	10
People of a different faith	8	
People without any faith	3	
People with large families	2	9

two people out of three in Japan have a negative view of others is a rather surprising result.

How do social structures and institutions fare in terms of trust, then? An item that queried the level of trust in various social institutions was included in the survey (Table 4). Compared to the European results, Japanese society has a higher level of trust in only the legal system and the press, while the military and police enjoy about the same level of trust. The remaining seven institutions have exceedingly low levels of trust as compared to Europe. Some have argued that the organizing principle of Japanese society and Japanese structures is not personal emotional relationships but rather latent impersonal, rational rules.² However, in the present survey it appears that impersonal trust is extremely low throughout the institutions of government, the economy, and culture. It would appear that confidence and trust can no longer be used as keywords for Japanese society.

In summary, traditional values that place importance on personal human relations have not necessarily lost their vigor in contemporary Japanese society. However, these values have lost almost all their connection with premodern authoritarianism and groupism. Therefore, contemporary Japanese value an informal relationalism, combined with an orientation toward achievement based on modern individualism. However, it is difficult to say that people trust either the personal other or impersonal social institutions. The importance placed on values of harmony, as seen in the tendency to choose someone who gets along with others over an achievement-oriented worker, perhaps does not indicate the presence of vital emotional relationships as much as a reaction against the hollowing out of

TABLE 4. Trust in institutions

	Japan (1998)	Europe (1990)
Religion	13	48
Military (Self-Defense Force)	52	52
Education system	39	57
Legal system	63	52
Press	45	34
Trade unions	29	34
Police	69	69
Parliament	20	44
Civil Service	25	39
Major companies	25	50
Social security	44	52

² See, for example, R. D. Whitley, "The Social Construction of Business Systems in East Asia," *Organization Studies* 12 (1991).

those relationships. The preservation of traditional values gives a graphic account of just how strongly Japanese desire warm, trusting relationships in the face of the present anomie and loss of mutual trust. We turn next to a consideration of how religious and moral values have fared in contemporary Japan.

Religious Values

It is a common observation that although a minority of Japanese are formally affiliated with a religious group or profess belief in God, a high percentage participate in religious rites to commemorate the dead or make annual visits to a shrine or temple at the new year. This is in contrast to the situation in many Western countries, where a high percentage of the population may maintain nominal affiliation with one of the churches but a relatively small number of people participate in religious services. Interestingly enough, there seems to be an inverse correspondence in the numbers attached to these indicators in the two regions. According to a report issued by the European Values Study Group, four out of five Europeans identify themselves as belonging to a Christian religious denomination, while on average only 33% attend church at least once a month.³ Surveys in Japan generally indicate that about one-third of the population have some religious affiliation, while 80% participate in annual visits to shrines or temples at the new year.⁴

Our survey reflected a rate of religious affiliation in Japan similar to that found in previous studies, with 29% of the respondents identifying themselves with a particular religious group. Of this total, 2.3% identified themselves as Christian, a rate approximately twice as high as indicated by previous studies, perhaps due to the urban bias of the sample. Significantly, only 1% identified themselves as Shinto, with the remainder divided among the Buddhist sects (19.8%) and the New Religions (5.7%). While there was no significant difference in religious affiliation according to sex, our survey also reflected previous studies in that it shows a markedly decreased rate of affiliation among younger cohorts.

Specific indicators of religious participation in Japan, such as new-year shrine or temple visits, were not included in our survey. We instead opted for the general measure of religious participation found in the European survey. However, in consideration of the differing religious situation in Japan, where weekly church services are not the norm, the results must be read differently than in the European context. Only 21% of the Japanese respondents visit a shrine or temple at least once

³ David Barker, et al., *The European Values Study 1981-1990* (London: Gordon Cook Foundation, 1992).

⁴ Jan Swyngedouw, Religion in Contemporary Japanese Society. In: M. Mullins, S. Shimazono, P. Swanson (eds.), *Religion & Society in Modern Japan*. (Berkeley: Asian Humanities Press, 1993).

a month, a figure considerably lower than the European average of 33%. However, an additional 36% in Japan make semiannual visits, which would reflect the cultural pattern of a visit on the feast of the dead in August and at the new year, and 18% make an annual visit, presumably on one or the other of those occasions. Nearly three-fourths of the respondents to our survey, therefore, participate fairly consistently in traditional religious rites, a figure comparable to that obtained by previous studies in Japan. A similar number of respondents felt it was important to hold religious services at death, while only 29% felt it was important at birth and 41% at marriage. This also reflects religious customs in Japan, where for centuries the Buddhist sects have been primarily engaged in the performance of funerals and memorial rites, making this the primary religious rite of passage.

The above considerations testify to the fact that religious affiliation and religious participation, as indicators of secularization, bear contrary meaning in European and Japanese cultures. If this is in fact so, and if we thus can transpose the indicators, it would seem that the religious situations in the two cultures are remarkably alike in indicating a high level of adherence to cultural custom (religious affiliation in Europe and religious participation in Japan) and a relatively low-level personal allegiance to religion (religious participation in Europe and religious affiliation in Japan).

Indicators to measure a range of religiosity broader than religious participation or affiliation were also included from the European study. Responses to some of these indicators indicate a level of religiosity that corresponds to the level of personal allegiance to religion found above, one significantly lower than that found in Europe. For example, only 26% of the respondents to our survey identified themselves as a religious person. On the other hand, almost 19% described themselves as atheists. Thirty percent answered affirmatively when asked if they find strength or comfort in religion, and a similar number (32%) said that they pray or meditate. The sex of the respondents had little effect on these answers, although marginally more women than men professed to draw strength or comfort from religion (34% vs 26%). The age of the respondents, however, consistently played a role in the responses, with the level of religiosity rising as we move up through the cohorts.

In contrast to the low level of religiosity reflected in the above indicators, the two questions regarding belief in God or Buddha yield somewhat different results. In the European survey, belief in a personal God was taken as one indicator of a religious disposition or religiosity. In Japan, where nonpersonal images of the divine predominate, we would expect a low level of belief in a personal God, as reflected in the 10% rate that resulted from our survey. Given the religious situation in the country, however, it would seem that images of the divine as a spirit or life force would also indicate a level of religiosity. Nearly two-thirds of the respondents professed such a belief, with only 22% denying any belief in the divine.

Combining the rate of belief in personal and nonpersonal images of the divine, therefore, reveals that fully 76% of the sample profess some belief, a level of religiosity significantly higher than that indicated by the previous group of questions. Furthermore, the level of importance attached to the divine issued in a mean of 5.06 out of 10, a result that also calls into question the low level of religiosity reflected in the questions above.

The key to understanding these results is, I think, the associations attached to the word “religion” in Japanese society. Religion, as an institution, is poorly regarded, as we saw in the previous discussion on the level of trust accorded social institutions. This generally low regard of religious institutions could discourage people from identifying themselves as religious or induce them to deny that they draw strength or comfort from religion. Belief in the divine, however, is not necessarily identified with these institutions, leading to higher levels of religiosity on these measures. Indeed, one-fourth of those who describe themselves as “atheist” also profess some belief in God, a result that indicates that atheist, or *mushinronsha*, is perhaps associated in Japan more with distrust of religion than a lack of belief.

The European survey included a question regarding belief in various religious doctrines as a scale to measure religious orthodoxy. Given the plurality of religious traditions in Japan, orthodoxy is a less certain category than in Christian Europe. Nonetheless, the question was included in our survey, with one addition, in order to provide some measure of common religious beliefs.

Nine items were included in the question: belief in God, life after death, a spirit or soul, hell, heaven, sin, curses, resurrection, and reincarnation. As the summary of results indicates (Table 5), belief in the existence of God and the human soul or spirit is relatively high. Somewhat over one-third of the sample believe in some kind of existence after death. The rate of belief in resurrection is perhaps deceptively high, since fully 11% of the respondents professed belief in both reincarnation and resurrection, indicating some confusion regarding the meaning of the item. One-fourth of the respondents believe in the existence of hell, a level of belief comparable to that in Europe. Less than one-third believe in heaven, a rate somewhat lower than that seen in the European survey. Sin, however, attracts a significantly lower level of belief, perhaps because it is not a concept firmly established in the Japanese religious tradition. Indeed, we had some trouble translating the term, since the word commonly used in Japanese also refers to legal crimes. It might be more profitable in future surveys to consider other concepts that could be equivalent to sin in the West.

An item was added to this question to measure belief in curses, or *tatari*. The belief that spirits of the dead, if not properly memorialized, could produce harmful effects on the living is a traditional part of Japanese religiosity. In the modern

period, this belief has been popularized by some of the New Religions and other independent spiritualists. As the above results indicate, more than one-third of the respondents believe in the existence of *tatari*. The level of belief is somewhat higher among women (40%) and those affiliated with a religious group (43%).

Three other items were added to the questionnaire to test what were hypothesized to be popular religious beliefs. A pair of questions queried the possession of charms, usually purchased at Shinto shrines or Buddhist temples, and the level of belief in the power of those charms to ward off evil or bring good luck. The third question regarded belief in divination. A majority of the respondents (55%) possess a charm, and 42% believe that the charms are either somewhat or very effective, indicating that for almost half of the respondents the practice of buying and displaying these charms is more than merely a matter of custom. Belief in divination is considerably less popular, with only 3% of the respondents expressing unequivocal faith in the practice and an additional 20% saying they believe somewhat. Significantly, however, 35% of people under thirty years old believe either completely or somewhat in divination, attesting to the popularity of this practice among the young.

The questions added to the survey, measuring belief in *tatari*, charms, and divination, attest to the continued popularity of items connected with popular religion. While the level of belief in divination is relatively low, the other two items score higher than our indicator of personal allegiance to religious faith, that is religious affiliation, attesting to their importance as items of Japanese religiosity.

Mention has already been made (see Table 4) of the low level of trust accorded religion as an institution. Fully 86% of the respondents voiced not much confidence or no confidence at all (40%) in religion, by far the lowest level recorded for any of the seventeen social institutions included in the survey. Only 13% expressed some level of confidence in religion, compared to an average of 48%

TABLE 5. Levels of belief

	Japan	Europe (1990)
God	50	69
Life after death	34	43
Human spirit or soul	59	60
Hell	26	22
Heaven	31	40
Sin	23	55
Curses (<i>tatari</i>)	36	
Resurrection	13	
Reincarnation	39	

TABLE 6. Adequacy of religion's response

	Japan	Europe (1990)
Moral	32.7%	35%
Family	24.3%	31%
Spiritual	48.3%	53%
Social	9.3%	26%

in the 1990 European survey. Distrust of religion is especially high among younger cohorts, but nonetheless strong for all groups under seventy years old.

Queried on the adequacy of answers offered by religion to individual moral problems, problems of family life, spiritual needs, and social problems, the level of positive response, while lower than the European results, was generally comparable with those results, with the exception of religion's response to social problems (Table 6). Religion's social involvement, however, should not extend to direct political action. A question was included in the survey asking whether religious leaders should try to exert political influence. More than three-fourths of the respondents disagreed with this proposition, an opinion that was significantly stronger among men, younger cohorts, and those with at least some university education.

Two questions were added to the questionnaire to test what are assumed to be popular ideas in Japan regarding the future of religion. It has become commonplace, perhaps especially among the Japanese New Religions, to speak of the essential unity of all religious faith. In order to measure the appeal of this opinion, respondents were asked if they agree with the proposition that, in the end, all religions share the same end or goal. Just over half of the respondents answered affirmatively and less than one-fourth disagreed, with the remainder offering no opinion. Women, older respondents, and those who had not gone beyond the years of compulsory education were more likely to agree with the proposition.

The other item questioned the survival of religion. The question proposed that with the advancement of morals religion would no longer be needed. Contrary to our expectations, just 28% of the respondents felt that this would be the case. Only with respondents under the age of thirty did agreement with this proposition approach a majority, indicating that despite its present poor image many people see a continuing role for religion in society.

Responses to a question regarding the degree of attention paid to the meaning and purpose of life offers the opportunity for further speculation on the image of religion in Japan and the future of this institution. We have seen that religious affiliation drops dramatically among younger cohorts. An even more dramatic falloff is seen with regard to a religious upbringing, a development that does not

bode well for the future of religion in Japan. However, it is the cohorts younger than seventy years old, who increasingly do not belong to a religion and have not been exposed to religious belief at home, who are more inclined to think about the meaning and purpose of life. We might speculate that this high level of interest in questions of meaning and purpose, combined with a low level of interest in religion, leads to the conclusion that religion is not seen as providing answers to those questions by many contemporary Japanese.

Morals

Our survey used many of the same items as previous surveys by the European Values Study Group to measure public and private morality. Private morality is defined here as matters having to do with sexual and conjugal morality (married people having affairs, sex under the age of consent, homosexuality, prostitution, divorce), the taking of drugs, and death (euthanasia, abortion, suicide). The percent of respondents saying these behaviors are never justified can be seen in Table 7, compared to the results from the 1990 European survey, where available. In general, the Japanese appear to be more permissive on matters of sexual and conjugal morality as well as issues pertaining to death. Japanese permissiveness is especially pronounced regarding views on euthanasia. The Japanese appear to be less accepting of drug use than the Europeans.

Although age, sex, and education appear to play a role in determining attitudes on some of these issues, the rejection of drug use is across the board. Respondents over 70 years old are significantly less tolerant of marital affairs (81%), underage sex (91%), prostitution (91%), suicide (71%), and abortion (43%). Women are generally less permissive on some of the issues of sexual and conjugal morality: prostitution (64%), marital affairs (46%), and underage sex (46%). People with com-

TABLE 7. Private morality (never justified)

	Japan	Europe (1990)
Marital affairs	41	47
Underage sex	46	53
Homosexuality	30	37
Prostitution	54	44
Divorce	11	
Taking drugs	87	80
Euthanasia	10	28
Abortion	16	
Suicide	42	46

pulsory education (junior high school) or lower are less permissive on all of these issues except drug use.

While Japanese appear to be generally more permissive on issues of private morality, measures of public morality yield a mixed result. The issues involved in this measure are listed in Table 8, along with the percentage of those who feel these activities are never justified, from the Japanese survey and the 1990 European survey, where available. While more permissive on the issues of cheating on state benefits and fares for public transportation, the Japanese are less tolerant of tax cheats. On the one issue of private property, that of joyriding in a stolen car, the Japanese are considerably more permissive, perhaps reflecting the lower crime rate in their country. While the Japanese are less tolerant of lying, the survey shows a much higher tolerance of bribery. On issues of public behavior, driving under the influence of alcohol is generally not tolerated in Japan, while littering and smoking in a no-smoking area receive the same level of censure as lying.

Age seems to play a factor in all of these issues of public morality, with younger cohorts generally more permissive. The sex of the respondent introduces a difference only on the issues of public behavior, with women being less tolerant of driving under the influence of alcohol (65%), littering (52%), and smoking in a no-smoking area (55%). Respondents who have attended university are more permissive on two of the issues of public behavior, littering (43%) and driving under the influence (53%), as well as the issue of bribery (46%). Permissiveness on this latter issue might be explained by the fact that it is precisely this group that would most likely find themselves in the position of being bribed.

As we might expect, affiliation with a religious group does play a role in these issues, with members of a religious group less permissive on almost all the measures of public and private morality. There are two significant exceptions worth mentioning here. Affiliation with a religious group appears to make no difference

TABLE 8. Public morality (never justified)

	Japan	Europe (1990)
Cheating on state benefits	49%	59%
Cheating on fares	54%	58%
Cheating on taxes	68%	49%
Joyriding in stolen car	71%	84%
Lying	46%	37%
Taking a bribe	55%	70%
Drunk driving	61%	
Littering	47%	
Smoking	47%	

in attitudes towards drug use, testifying again to the broad censure of this activity in Japanese society. The other exception is homosexuality, indicating that this is perhaps not a religious issue in Japan.

Looking towards the Future

Although only a preliminary analysis is possible at this time, the results presented here indicate that our survey offers a wealth of possibilities regarding its twin aims of measuring Asian values and offering a cross-cultural comparison with the situation in other areas. In the near future we will need to work towards the development of analyses of the other areas covered in the survey—work, family, and political values—and publication of the comprehensive results.

As our next step in the development of the survey we hope that through a further analysis of the results of this pilot survey we will be able to identify questions that still need to be refined, such as the item on sin. We also plan to bring scholars from other Asian countries into the project, modifying or adding questions in order to make it a truly Asian survey. Only then will we be ready to conduct a final survey, using a larger, nationwide sampling, coordinating with groups in other Asian countries for a simultaneous testing comparable to that done in Europe.

We had originally planned to conduct the full survey in Japan this year, in conjunction with the latest round of the European survey. However, decisions made by the European Values Study Group regarding cooperation with the World Values Survey in the conduct of their 1999 survey have changed the level of collaboration that we had anticipated when we began our planning. As a result, it is no longer necessary for us to coordinate our project so closely with the European survey, both in terms of timing and content. The greater freedom in our own planning that we enjoy as a consequence of this development offers the opportunity for an expanded level of collaboration with scholars in other Asian countries at an earlier stage of the project. If further funding can be found for the project, it is our hope that this collaboration can begin even in the current year, leading to the realization of a comprehensive Asian Values Study by spring 2001.