

Morioka Kiyomi :
From a Structural to a Life-Cycle Theory
of Religious Organization

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My first sociology of religion course in graduate school was taught by Morioka Kiyomi. His scholarly style left such an indelible imprint on my own thought processes that I am to a considerable extent a “Moriokan.” I doubt, therefore, that I am suited to undertake a critical review of his work. The challenge to try was accepted, however, because if the attempt is not made now, I may never be able to objectify thoroughly the “Morioka within myself.” Of course, the task far exceeds my limited, immature capabilities; but having accepted, I intend to examine matters as dispassionately as possible in order to appraise the import of Morioka’s work in the sociology of religion not only for myself but also for all engaged in this field in Japan. I hope, further, to identify whatever problems may remain in his treatment of major themes and to offer, for what they may be worth, my own responses to them.

Early influences. Before taking up his theories, I had better touch briefly on his background and development. On 28 October 1923, Morioka was born the eldest son of a rather well-to-do farm family living in the Shimo Awa hamlet attached to the village of Ōyamada in Mie Prefecture. Because his family, like others in the community, was a supporting

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household of a temple belonging to the Buddhist True Pure Land sect (Jōdo Shinshū Honpa Honganji-ha), he grew accustomed from an early age to the chanting of the “Shōshinge.”¹ This family background was perhaps not wholly unrelated to his later decision to do research on the True Pure Land organization.

After graduating from his own prefecture’s Mie Normal School, he enrolled in Tokyo Higher Normal School in 1943. In 1945 he entered the Philosophy Department of the Tokyo University of Literature and Science. There he studied sociology under Okada Yuzuru and for his senior thesis wrote “Nōson shakai no ichi ruikei” [One type of rural society].

Graduate study. Following graduation in March 1948, he remained at the university, on Okada’s recommendation, as a special research student until March 1950. This brief period was extremely important for Morioka in several ways. During this time, he penned his first article, “Dōzoku ketsugō ni kansuru ichi shikō” [A preliminary view of the extended household body] (1948).² This marked his debut as a scholar. More important, the basic ideas and scholarly perspectives that were to distinguish his later work, whether in religious or family studies, all began to appear in this period.

In January 1949 he began what was to become a series of studies on Shinto with his article “Miyaza to sonraku shakai no kōzō” [Rural social structure and shrine parish organization], later expanded and revised as “Sonraku no kaikyū kōzō

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1. The “Shōshinge” is the name given the last 120 verses of volume 6 of the *Kyōgyōshinshō* [Teaching, practice, faith, and attainment], the main doctrinal work produced by Shinran, traditionally regarded as the founder of the True Pure Land sect. —Transl.
 2. The terms *dōzoku*, *dōzoku ketsugō*, and *dōzoku dan* all refer to the extended household group, that is, a body comprised of a main house and its branch houses and considered as a social unit. For more on the *dōzoku dan*, see p. 149, note 1. —Ed.

to *miyaza*” [Class structure and the *miyaza* system in a village] (1954a).³ A year later, in January 1950, he began studies of a rural Christian church in the Gunma Prefecture village of Shimamura—again launching what would become a continued program of research on Christian churches. Soon after, in March of the same year, he made a systematic analysis of the organizational structure of the Takada sect of True Pure Land Buddhism; this too was the beginning of a series of inquiries into True Pure Land bodies.

Mentors. In all these efforts Morioka was in various ways building on the labors of Aruga Kizaemon and his colleagues whose research on the household (*ie*) and the extended household (*dōzoku*) was then at its zenith in the world of sociology. This influence was particularly evident in Morioka’s application of household and extended household theories to his study of True Pure Land organization.

In that connection it may be noted that Aruga and Nakano Takashi, both of whom had from prewar days engaged in household/extended household research, became a professor and full-time lecturer, respectively, in the Sociology Department of Tokyo University of Education when it was founded in 1949 soon after the end of the war. Their presence presumably exerted some influence on Morioka’s research methods in those days.

In addition, since urged by Okada in 1947 to do his senior thesis on the family life-cycle, Morioka had been reading widely on theories of the family life-cycle in the literature of American rural sociology (1973e, p. iii).

Publications and positions. It was not until the 1952-54

3. *Miyaza*: a Shinto parish organization comprised of specific households (in some cases, of men or women in certain age groups) that perform certain rituals in honor of the parish kami (*ujigami*). —Transl.

period, however, that the results of Morioka's years as a special research student were published. Articles appearing in this period include his "Chūsei makki honganji kyōdan ni okeru ikkashū" [The Honganji organization of the late medieval period as an assemblage of households] (1952, 1953a), "Nihon nōson ni okeru kirisutokyō no juyō" [Acceptance of Christianity in a Japanese rural community] (1953b), the previously mentioned "Sonraku no kaikyū kōzō to miyaza" [Class structure and the *miyaza* system in a village] (1954a), and, on the sociology of the household, "Kazoku kenkyū no ichi shikaku: Kazoku shūki no riron to hōhō" [One perspective on family studies: Theory and method in the study of family life-cycles] (1953c).

In April 1950 Morioka became an assistant at Tokyo University of Literature and Science and continued teaching first there, then at its successor institution, Tokyo University of Education, for the next twenty-eight years. He was the last dean of the latter institution's humanities division until Tokyo University of Education closed in 1978. Currently, he is a professor in the liberal arts division of Seijō University (Tokyo).

Character. Morioka is industrious and methodical; his work is done promptly and accurately. An exceptionally productive scholar, his works during the twenty-eight-year period from 1948 to 1976 consist of 14 edited or authored books and 191 articles (see appended list of his main writings). His output thus averages 1 edited or authored book every two years and some 7 articles per year. These figures do not include such things as articles of less than five pages, book reviews, public lectures, panel discussions, critiques, bibliographies, newspaper articles, pieces used by publishers in promotional material, lecture summaries for monthly reviews, or high-school text materials.

Moreover, Morioka maintained his level of productivity even

during the 1968–70 period of campus turmoil when he served as university trustee and during his 1974–78 deanship. Such constancy witnesses to his exceptional powers of self-discipline and time-management.

While still a special research student, Morioka received Christian baptism in 1948 from missionary Theodor Jaekel of the German Evangelical Church. Many people have therefore regarded his Christian faith as the formative force behind his character and qualities, and some even speak of “the puritan Morioka.” But this is not necessarily the case. According to his own recollections, he was endowed with the character and attributes that inform his work long before his contact with Christianity; indeed, they prompted him to approach the rationally oriented Protestantism with which he felt some affinity. Even so, according to the preface of his *Gendai shakai no minshū to shūkyō* [Religion and people in contemporary Japanese society], his Christian faith was in any case “the main factor in the development of my perspective on religion” (1975c, p. iv).

CHIEF CONCERNS

As already noted, Morioka’s research activity began about 1947, and by 1950 the basic ideas and perspectives characteristic of his work had already emerged.

Shinto. In looking back over his career, Morioka points out that about 1947 he was stimulated by the household-organization research then in its ascendancy to study his own native rural community from that perspective, and in fact he spent some time observing his native community. He abandoned this notion, however, because he felt the household-organization approach more appropriate to communities in the northern part of Japan’s main island and less to the region of his birth. Instead, he attempted an analysis of class structures of the neighboring rural community of Mibuno as

reflected in its shrine parish organization (*miyaza*). The results of that early research effort were published in his 1949 article "Miyaza to sonraku shakai no kōzō" [Rural social structure and shrine parish organization].

Buddhism. Having abandoned research on the household as such, Morioka embarked on serious, practical inquiries into other aspects of household and extended household theory. His subsequent series of studies of True Pure Land Buddhist organization were in fact an extension of this original shift in focus. This series began with "Bukkyō kyōdan no kōzō" [Buddhist organizational structure], written while he was still a special research student, and continued with his work on the Honganji organization of the late medieval period as patterned on household/extended household relationships (1952, 1953a). From 1952 he conducted surveys on True Pure Land temples of the Ōtani sect located on the Noto peninsula (on the Japan sea coast north of Osaka) and, from 1956, on True Pure Land temples of the Takada sect in Fukui Prefecture. These studies were brought to fruition in a graduate thesis in 1962 and published under the title *Shinshū kyōdan to "ie" seido* [The Shin Buddhist orders and the *ie* system] (1962d).⁴

Morioka subsequently produced many articles on True Pure Land organization, later compiled in a volume entitled *Shinshū kyōdan ni okeru ie no kōzō* [*Ie* structures in True Pure Land organization] (1978f).

In terms of research perspective, the later "*ie* structures" volume is not fundamentally different from the earlier "*ie* system" work. But the thoroughly empirical research in the sociology of religion, based on the household and extended household theories presented in the "*ie* system" volume, was a genuine innovation in Japanese religious sociology; indeed,

4. *Ie*: family and/or stem family; household and/or extended household. —Transl.

it is no exaggeration to say that this work was the first truly *sociological* sociology of religion produced in Japan.

Christianity. Morioka's studies of Japanese Christianity began in January 1950 with his investigation of the Methodist church in Shimamura. In time they came to embrace such questions as the reception, penetration, and establishment of Protestantism and the patterns of change it experienced in Japanese rural society.

In 1953 he wrote an article on the Shimamura church entitled "Nihon nōson ni okeru kirisutokyō no juyō" [Acceptance of Christianity in a Japanese rural community], and later another, "Chihō shōtoshi ni okeru kirisuto kyōkai no keisei" [The establishment of a Christian church in a small local city] (1959a), a study of a Congregational church in the Gunma Prefecture town of Annaka. These were followed by a monograph on a Methodist church in the Yamanashi Prefecture village of Kusakabe, "Nihon nōson ni okeru kirisutokyō no dochakuka" [Indigenization of Christianity in Japanese rural society] (1965b).

Despite the affinities among these objects of research on Christian churches, however, there were some discrepancies in the way methods and concepts were applied, so the articles as a whole lack the theoretical consistency seen in Morioka's studies of True Pure Land Buddhism. In the "acceptance" article on Shimamura, for example, he utilized M.J. Herskovits' theory of acculturation and thus focused on "alterations in local customs involved in the interaction of Christianity with established folk religion" (1959e, p. 195). The church-sect typology of Liston Pope and Walter Muelder was employed in the "establishment" study of Annaka to depict Christianity's "change to a religion of the household." A critical application of David O. Moberg's theory of life cycles in religious organizations was made in the "indigenization" article (on Kusakabe) to treat "the process by which the

church comes to occupy an established position within the institutional structures of society” (1965b, p.5).

The degree of internal correlation and overall integration of concepts and methods achieved in these articles was less than adequate, as Morioka himself recognized. It was not until much later, in 1972, that he achieved conceptual clarity and consistency regarding the phenomena of reception, penetration, establishment, and change in the case of an imported religion. In that year he wrote “Gairai shūkyō no dochakuka’ o meguru gainenteki seiri” [A conceptual examination of the indigenization of foreign-born religions] (1972e).⁵ In this article various issues pertaining to a religion of foreign origin were organized within a coaxial framework. One axis dealt with the degree of change: was change limited to nonessential aspects, or did it penetrate to matters of substance? The other axis involved relations to other systems in the recipient society: did the newly introduced religion take a negative-rejecting or an affirmative-accepting stance toward its values and behavioral patterns? Within this broad concept of indigenization, Morioka distinguished four possible types: isolation, indigenization, clandestinization, and submergence. Unfortunately, he has not subsequently carried out empirical studies using this framework, so its usefulness has not been clearly confirmed.

Religion and state. Following his 1962 “*ie system*” study, Morioka began introducing new perspectives into his studies of Shinto shrines and Christian churches. One was a new emphasis on the importance to shrine studies of relations to state power. Another was his realization of the need to deal with the effects on shrines and churches of the intense population mobility that stemmed from the remarkable rate of urbanization spurred by Japan’s rapid economic growth in the

5. A contribution to a discussion initiated by Sakurai and Ozawa (1971). –Transl.

1960s.

Notable among studies taking state power into account was his “Meiji makki ni okeru shūraku jinja no seiri” [Local shrine mergers in the closing years of Meiji] (1966b, 1969b). Here Morioka sought “to trace the process through which such major events as the abolition and amalgamation of shrines took place, not because of changes in community structure but because of the intrusion of state power, in order to assess how the community adapted structurally to this imposed change” (1966b, p. 2). This led him to analyze the shrine merger process first in Mie Prefecture and, second, on the national scene. In a 1975 article, “Jinja o meguru jūmin kanjō to kanryōteki gōrishugi” [Bureaucratic rationalism and local residents’ sentiments regarding shrines] (1975d), Morioka discussed the refusal of governmental authorities to approve local residents’ desires to construct new shrines. The sense of problem evident in this work is essentially the same as in his “local shrine mergers” articles (1966b, 1969b).

Studies of shrines and churches affected by urbanization and population mobility include “Kinkōka ni yoru chiiki kōzō no henka” [Change in neighborhood structure due to suburbanization] (1964), “Chiiki shakai no jinkō idō to kirisuto kyōkai no kyōsei” [Population mobility in local communities and Christian church strength] (1966c), and “Kinkōka ni yoru jinja shinkō no henbō” [Transformation in shrine worship due to suburbanization] (1968e). Each of these studies was based on extensive questionnaire surveys, and in this respect differed from Morioka’s previous work. Of these three, the 1966 and 1968 studies sought to ascertain “what alterations in the shrines stemmed from suburbanization-caused changes in community social structures” (1968e, p.75). This was done by focusing on local shrines in the suburban areas of Tokyo where population growth rates at the time were highest. In the 1966 study, churches related to the United Church of Christ in Japan and located in various in-

dustrial, inner city, residential, suburban, and hinterland areas were selected and their membership increase/decrease compared on the basis of the supposition that “there is a close correlation between population movement and church membership fluctuation, the latter being basically controlled by the former” (1975c, p.161).

Theoretical synthesis. During the 1960s when campus turmoil was widespread, Morioka’s work expanded to cover a variety of topics; at the same time he began to move from treating Shinto, Buddhism, and Christianity as separate objects of research to taking a larger view in which more general and comprehensive principles of religious phenomena could be articulated. This shift is evident in his “Toshika genshō to shūkyō” [Urbanization and religion] (1968f). Here he clearly elaborates, from a general perspective, how Shinto, Buddhism, and Christianity each has its “social basis” in local community, household, and individual respectively, and then explains how this “base” undergoes change or even collapses under the impact of urbanization.

As for expansion of research interests, Morioka during these same years published various articles on theory, survey methods, research trends, religion in general, and folk religion. Space limitations prevent listing specific titles, but the range of his interests may be seen in the accompanying table (table 1).

Since his 1972 survey of Myōchikai, Morioka has engaged in studies of various new religious organizations such as Tenrikyō, Konkōkyō, Ōmoto, and Risshō Kōseikai.⁶

6. The Myōchikai study, set up as one part of a project sponsored by the Japan Committee of the Institute for Religion and Social Change under the chairmanship of the late Hori Ichirō (then a professor at Seijō University), was guided by Morioka, who in turn coopted Nishiyama Shigeru and Moroto (née Inoue) Aiko as assistants. It was carried out for a one-week period beginning 12 September 1972, a team of students from Tokyo University of Education providing most of the labor. The results appear in Morioka (1976b), Morioka and Nishiyama (1978i), Nishiyama (1976), Nishiyama (1978), etc.

TABLE 1

Morioka Articles Distributed by Topic,
1948-76

Year of Publi- cation	Sociology of Religion						Other Sociology				Total		
	Theory, methods, research trends	General	Shinto	Buddhism	Christianity	New religions	Folk religion	Theory, methods, research trends	Family	Extended house- hold, community	Other	Articles	Books (edited and authored)
1948										1		1	
1949												0	
1950										1		1	
1951										1		1	
1952				1				1				2	
1953				1	1			1				3	
1954			1	2	1			1		2		7	
1955				1				1		1		3	
1956		1			1			1		1		5	
1957				1				1		3	1	6	
1958				2						2		4	
1959				3	1					1		5	
1960	1			3				1				6	
1961				1								1	
1962	1			1	1				2			5	1
1963		1		4					4			9	
1964			1						5			6	
1965				1	1		1		4			7	
1966			1	1	2				4			8	
1967	1	1		3	2				11			18	1
1968	2		2	3				2	7			16	2
1969		1	1	1			2		6			11	
1970		2		1					5			8	1
1971		1							4			5	
1972	1	3		1	1		1		5			12	2
1973	2			1	1				3			7	1
1974							1		9			10	2
1975		1	1					1	4		1	8	3
1976				1	2	2	2		9			16	1
Total	8	11	7	33	14	2	7	5	89	13	2	191	14

Source: Morioka 1977f.

Note: The sociology of religion articles number 82 (42.9%), the others 109 (57.1%).

For types of material excluded from consideration, see above, p. 170.

Having turned to the new religions rather late in his career, Morioka has so far produced few articles on them, but what he has produced contains hints of conceptual and methodological innovations that make one look forward eagerly to the results of his further work on these religious groups.

Thus far, articles on the new religions include “Myōchikai kai’in no shūkyō ishiki” [Religious consciousness among Myōchikai members](1976b), “Minshū shūkyō no kyōso ni okeru karisumasei” [Charisma in founders of popular religions] (1978b), “Shinshūkyō no chihō denpa to teichaku no katei” [A new religion’s diffusion and establishment in a local community](1978i), and “Shinshūkyō no seidoka katei” [The institutionalization of a new religious movement](1978j). All three 1978 articles are concerned with the institutionalization process in the new religions, but they embody two distinctive approaches.

The article on founders and their charisma (1978b) is a study undertaken from the theoretical standpoint that sees religious organizations as tracing a life-cycle. Beginning with the emergence of charisma, a breakthrough occurs, tradition is transcended, and something out of the ordinary comes into being. This starts “from the appearance of the founder and his or her circle of disciples, continues through the formation of a religious organization, its systematization, bureaucratization, and institutionalization, and goes on to its fossilization” (1978b, p. 242). This is a study, then, of the institutionalization process as it pertains to religious organization seen in the context of society as a whole.

By contrast, the “a new religion” article (1978i) analyzes the faith and organization of one new religion, Myōchikai, with respect to the conditions and processes of its spread to, penetration of, and establishment in one particular local community (the Yunohama district of Tsuruoka city in the prefecture of Yamagata). The analysis depends on the combining of three variables: the character of this new religion,

the structural peculiarities of this local community, and the personal qualities of those in leader and follower roles.

Thus the “charisma” article (1978b) and the “institutionalization” article (1978j) take up the institutionalization of religious organizations within society as a whole, whereas the “a new religion” article (1978i) deals with the institutionalization of a new faith in a particular community. All three, however, may be regarded as the working out of Morioka’s intention to “consider indigenization as an expression of faith” (1965b, p. 3) while drawing on Moberg’s concept of “life-cycles in religious organizations.” The dynamic grasp of religion evident in Morioka’s studies of new religions contrasts sharply with the static structural analyses in his series of studies on True Pure Land Buddhism, but it goes back to and is informed by his sequence of studies on the acceptance of Christianity (1953b et seq.).

Topical analysis. In the 1970s Morioka compiled much of his past research in book form. First came *Nihon no kindai shakai to kirisutokyō* [The development of the Christian church in the modern society of Japan] (1970b), followed by *Religion in changing Japanese society* (1975a), and *Gendai shakai no minshū to shūkyō* [Religion and people in contemporary Japanese society] (1975c). The first of these three was based on his series of Christian studies. The last brought together a number of discursive essays previously published in scattered sources, essays embodying his perspectives on religion in present-day Japan. The remaining volume drew from his occasional articles on Japanese religion earlier published in English.

At this point let us look at the distribution of Morioka’s works according to topic, referring to table 1. Of a total of 191 articles, 82 (42.9%) fall within the sociology of religion category. Of 14 full-length books (whether edited or authored), 6 (42.9%) are on sociology of religion topics. The

reason that less than half of his books and articles pertain to sociology of religion is that from the 1960s he has devoted an increasing number of articles to sociological studies of the family. Of the 109 articles on sociological topics other than religion, 89 (81.7%) are family studies. This strong interest of his goes back, of course, to the senior thesis theme suggested by Okada and to the article he published as early as 1953, namely, his "One perspective on family studies" (1953c). Morioka began devoting his major energy to this field, however, only after publishing his "*ie* system" volume (1962d). This work constitutes a watershed between his completion of the True Pure Land studies taken up under Okada's direction and his response to the escalation of social concern for family problems provoked by Japan's rapid economic growth. His concentration on family studies ran from 1953 to the 1973 publication of *Kazoku shūkiron* [A study of the family life-cycle] (1973e).

Among his 82 sociology of religion articles, the largest group of 33 (40.2%) deals with Buddhism (mostly True Pure Land Buddhism). Next is Christianity with 14 (17%), followed by general religious studies, 11 (13.4%); theory and methodology, 8 (9.8%); Shinto, 7 (8.5%); folk religion, 7 (8.5%); and new religions, 2 (2.4%). Quantitatively considered, these works show that Morioka's attention has obviously been directed toward True Pure Land Buddhism and Christianity. Substantively, however, his compelling interest has been not so much in the specific religions themselves as in investigating them so as to derive more general sociological patterns. This interest likewise appears to have led him to focus primarily on aspects of religion (such as religious organization) amenable to the derivation of such regularities.

ACADEMIC APPROACH AND RESEARCH METHODS

The logic of social facts. From his mentor Okada, Morioka inherited an academic approach that is essentially Durkheim-

ian. In this approach the objects of sociological research are cognized in terms of their "external" and "limiting" attributes and treated as "social facts" which, in distinction from personal phenomena, are to be observed as things. This is, in a word, the approach known as sociologism. Behind this Durkheimian sociological method lies a conservative view of society aptly caught in Miyajima's description of this approach as "an awareness that social facts are independent of the will and behavior of the individual person, that they possess a firm reality which resists the influence of individuals. This method seeks to follow out the logic of social facts less in terms of society as constituted by the intentional behavior of autonomous human subjects than in terms of the givenness of what is allotted to individuals" (in Durkheim 1978, p. 290).

According to Durkheim, social facts, "far from being a product of the will... determine it from without; they are like molds in which our actions are inevitably shaped" (1938, p. 29). These "molds," in the language of Berger and Luckmann, constitute "society as objective reality," which is to say, "institutions." These scholars see Durkheim as undertaking his inquiries from the perspective of "society as subjective reality," that is, the individual, but as lacking a grasp of "the [dialectical] relationship between man...and the social world" (Berger and Luckmann 1966, p. 78; cf. Takasaka 1976) that would enable him to retrace the moments in which meaning is, on the one hand, externalized and objectivated in the *institution* and, on the other, legitimated and internalized in the *individual*. For this reason the Durkheimian method, though somewhat ineffective for analyzing social phenomena in respect of genesis and change, is appropriate and useful for analyzing them in respect of their established, structural features. Since Morioka's studies of True Pure Land Buddhist organization were directed precisely toward such features, the Durkheimian approach and method was eminently suitable.

Morioka's affinity to Durkheimian thought comes out

clearly in the preface to his “*ie* system” book: “My intention is to treat Buddhist organization as one branch of extended household studies” (1962d, p. i) and, approaching the study of True Pure Land organization from that perspective, to draw on the household system as “the mold for its organizational structure” (1962d, p. ii). What led him to adopt this viewpoint he explains as follows:

After Ôtani Kôzui had resigned his post as chief abbot of Honganji temple and gone to Shanghai,⁷ he wrote a scathing characterization of the True Pure Land organization: “They claim to have the power to reverse the course of the whole world, but in fact lack the power even to reverse the headlong rush with which the organization is heading for deterioration.... This cannot be attributed merely to my own incompetence; even if the ablest takes my place, the result will be the same.” This indictment he mailed to readers in his home country.

The pessimistic outlook expressed in this denunciation is not one I share. I suspect, moreover, that most members of the True Pure Land organization would agree.

What did capture my attention is the indication that the head of the organization is powerless to reverse its course, that beneath the rapid flow of events there is an awesome force—operating like an inexorable law—which no one can resist.

This research is directed toward just that point: the proposition that the larger the religious organization, the more likely that there will be a law-like movement transcending individual wills. The task here contemplated is to grasp the nature of that power within the history and reality of the religious organization (1962d, p. i).

7. Ôtani Kôzui (1876–1948) was the 22nd head of the Nishi Honganji temple of True Pure Land Buddhism. He resigned in 1914 due to financial scandal and went to Shanghai where he conducted business in China and the South Seas. He advocated a nationalistic ideology and supported Japan’s wars in China and the Pacific. –Transl.

“An awesome force...no one can resist,” “a law-like movement transcending individual wills”—these express “social facts” in typical Morioka style; they are the kinds of things he expects sociology to discover and confirm. He seems to have an uncommon trust in the existence of such law-like qualities hidden behind phenomena.

From regularities to middle-range theories. Morioka’s determination to uncover the general, universal, regulatory principles underlying phenomena probably stemmed in large part from the rationalism rooted in his character and attitude toward life. All this accorded with the Christian world view that sees “God’s order” permeating the phenomenal world. It seems safe to say that his work has indeed been sustained by the firm belief that all existence has a rational order and that if appropriate procedures are followed, rational understanding of all things is possible.

Such a rationalism is reflected in Morioka’s personal preferences. As a student he enjoyed, and was good at, geometry and grammar. Geometry possesses a rationality articulated with straightforward clarity and coherence; Morioka later regarded this discipline as the model for all scholarship. As for sociological research method, the ideal type devised by this logic-emphasizing scholar comes out in his article “Riron kōsei e no sekkin” [An approach to theory construction], (1968i), written under the influence of Zetterberg’s *On theory and verification in sociology* (1962).

But rationality and logicity are not the only distinguishing features of Morioka’s scholarly work. Logic, unfettered, at times soars to spacious but specious speculation and to the spinning of “grand theories.” Morioka, however, does not indulge in such excesses; he dislikes the poverty of grand theories, the emptiness of speculation. He prefers the sober and more honest pathway of empirical verification that begins with “confining one’s perspective to dimensions where phenom-

ena exist” (1968i, p. 219) and then “generalizes from the lowest level, rising, via empirical verification, to ‘theories of the middle range’ ” (1962d, p. 5).

Relationship between sociology of religion and sociology. Morioka’s sociology of religion, then, is both logical and empirical; it is also thoroughly sociological. This is only natural for Morioka, as he is a student of religion because he is first a sociologist. Here lies both his strength and his weakness. The present situation in which sociology of religion constitutes a specific and limited subdiscipline within the general discipline of sociology will, Morioka thinks, “continue for some time; but in the long run sociology of religion will probably be parceled out into theories of movements, groups, organizations, systems and the like, and eventually disappear” (1978k, p. 5). He contends that religious phenomena should be viewed in terms of these more comprehensive perspectives. The ideal is that religious organizations should be compared, for example, with industrial, governmental, and educational organizations to yield a highly abstract “theory of organization” and, conversely, that religious organizational theories should constantly be checked against and understood in terms of more general organizational theory. Morioka’s point is that the sociological study of religion is *sociology* of religion, and hence that the scholar’s fidelity must be to sociology as the research method more than to religion as the research field.

For a more concrete definition of what sociology of religion is and does, the following excerpt from his “*ie system*” volume is pertinent:

In my opinion the sociology of Buddhism is not concerned with investigating Buddhist social phenomena in general. It selects, rather, Buddhist groups as phenomena for investigation. Politics, law, morals, economics, art—all these phenomena are more than merely Buddhist; but they must be regulative in and of Buddhist groups, they must be borne by Buddhist

groups in order to qualify as proper objects of research for a sociology of Buddhism (1962d, p. 6).

If "Buddhism" in the above quotation is replaced by "religion," we have a good statement of Morioka's understanding of sociology of religion as of that time. In the preface to the same volume he writes, "What I have tried to do in this book comes under the heading not of the study of religion but of the study of *religious organization*" (1962d, p. iii, emphasis in original).

Today, as he applies himself to developing a sociology of charisma, Morioka would doubtless wish to enlarge the scope of this prescriptive definition. But he continues to attach great importance to the human association as "form" in Simmel's sense of the term, so it is hardly to be expected that any new definition will depart radically from the position that religious phenomena are to be viewed externally.

Response to critics. Since Morioka's stress is on the *sociology* of religion, it is only natural that he is roundly criticized by scholars who advocate sociology of *religion*. He has taken their criticisms seriously, and in his "indigenization" article reflects, "My studies of religion heretofore have been mainly studies of religious organization; they have tended to be studies of groups devoid of their religion" (1965b, p. 3). Again, "the empty externality of my approach has been exposed," and it is clear that a new approach is required, one that will lay hold of religious phenomena with "more attention to the internal side" and consider them "in terms of faith" (1965b, pp. 3, 4). With Morioka's turn from studies of the organizational structure of True Pure Land Buddhism to studies of Christian indigenization processes and, more recently, to the life cycle of "new religion" organizations and the charisma of their founders, occasions for sensing the need for such a new approach have perhaps increased.

EVALUATION AND ISSUES OUTSTANDING

A lasting contribution. Morioka's major contribution to the sociology of religion in Japan consists in his having joined reliance on a clearly defined theoretical frame to empirical verification, thus producing the first genuine *sociology of religion* in this country. His scholarly work is not merely the investigation of vaguely conceived relationships between "religion and society"; it is above all the sociological study of religious phenomena (or sociology that takes religion as its object of study). He has no part in that mode of scholarship that is content to offer an abstract, if not speculative, introduction and then mechanically apply the theories of some well-known foreign scholar. Morioka's sociology of religion always begins with a discipline-oriented frame that is tested and confirmed as he accumulates empirical data directly related to concrete realities, and then draws out general propositions.

This characteristic is clearly evident in his studies of True Pure Land Buddhism, especially his "ie system" and "ie structures" volumes (1962d, 1978f), the former of which, in particular, will long be remembered as a monumental work in the field of empirical sociology of religion in Japan. It is difficult to overevaluate this work as regards its clear conception of the problem to be investigated, its logical consistency, and the thoroughness of its empirical analyses. Morioka's successors in the field will find it most difficult to surpass the standards set by this work.

Our purpose here, however, is not to extol him by elaborating on these difficulties. In the remaining paragraphs we will note, rather, what we personally regard as problematic points in Morioka's sociology of religion as well as issues awaiting future attention.

Making room for the religious factor in the object. First of all let us consider the most characteristic feature of his work: the

central place given to sociology in his approach. It has already been pointed out that Morioka understands his task as one of studying religious organizations, not religion as such, but that in recent years he stresses the need for a new approach that will overcome the tendency toward "empty externality" and toward studies of religious organizations as "somehow devoid of religion" by taking more seriously the "internal side" of religion.

That this new emphasis emerged in connection with his studies of Christianity is hardly accidental. The Christian churches in Japan, especially the Protestant churches, have not yet acquired the kind of firmly fixed structures found in True Pure Land Buddhism; hence, the structural analysis he had applied to this Buddhist body is not well suited to the study of Christian organization. If the object of inquiry is still in an amorphous condition, that is, lacking full-fledged structures, the Durkheimian approach that perceives social phenomena as things and abstracts institutional molds loses its force. This problem became increasingly serious as Morioka took up the study of new religious organizations. New wine must be put into new wineskins. Morioka's new wineskins consist of the conceptual frame adopted to consider the indigenization of an imported religion, the diffusion and establishment of a new religion in a local community, and the more recently employed life-cycle theory of religious organizations.

The crucial shift in analytical focus was from static structures to the dynamic processes of change that occur with the passage of time. Of particular importance was the bold conception that sought to make a dynamic analysis of the religious organizational process in its entirety, beginning "from the appearance of the founder and his or her circle of disciples, continuing through the formation of a religious organization, its systematization, bureaucratization, and institutionalization, and going on to its fossilization—a life-cycle theory of religious organizations aimed at acquiring

universal regularities" (1978b, p. 242). This cyclical concept, however, is an idea yet to be tested. Apart from one recent article (1978j), there is, unfortunately, insufficient indication of how the cyclical process is to be dealt with in concrete terms.

The shift from static structures to dynamic processes has doubtless extended the effective range of Morioka's sociological methodology, but the question remains whether it enables him to overcome the problem of "empty externalities" and religious study "devoid of religion" and thereby to treat the "internal" aspect of religion in a way more appropriate to the nature of religious faith. The answer to this question is more than likely half negative and half affirmative. On the affirmative side is the fact that in dealing with religious founders and their charisma, Morioka has recently plunged directly into the teachings and world views of the founders themselves—an approach not seen in earlier studies. On the negative side is the fact that in his questionnaire-employing demographic studies of Shinto shrines and Christian churches, studies conducted since 1960, there is a kind of "empty externality" and "religionless quality" different from that seen in his "ie system" work. This may be, after all, an inescapable handicap in an approach that studies human associations as "forms" rather than as religious organizations. So long as one adheres to a strictly sociological approach, the perception of religion will necessarily remain external; conversely, any attempt to deal with the internal aspects of religion will necessarily overstep the bounds of sociology's theoretical frame. This is the dilemma of the *sociology* of religion—a stubborn problem that is not Morioka's alone but is confronted by all, including the present writer, who propose to carry forward the sociological study of religion. It is also worth mentioning, however, that sociologists, who have a clearly defined methodology, are fortunate that they can occupy themselves with this kind of problem.

Making room for the value factor in the subject. Another problem in Morioka's sociology of religion is that of subjectivity and objectivity. Max Weber gave classical expression to this problem in his proposal for "value-free" sociology. On this matter Morioka holds that "it is especially important in sociology, where the object of study itself provides so little help in preserving objectivity, to exclude value judgements from logical operations. But the choice of perspective from which to treat the research object is controlled by some subjective value-premise" (1978k, p. 7). Morioka thus acknowledges that the standpoint from which one approaches an object of study inescapably involves some prior value-judgment. What, then, is Morioka's own value-premise?

In order to answer this question, one needs to consider the intellectual climate in which Morioka began his work. The principal factor in the immediate postwar years, one he shared with many scholars, was the practical issue of the "democratization" of Japanese society. The dominant focus in sociological circles was on "household studies," and many were concerned with the "legacy of feudalism" and "pre-modern elements." These latter problems were to be overcome, of course, by "democratization," which, therefore, was a widely popular value-premise. Even the pioneer in household studies, Aruga Kizaemon, though willing to see in the household/extended household phenomenon "distinctively Japanese characteristics," opposed the idea of designating these characteristics as "feudal" or "premodern." The most representative advocate of democratization, Fukutake Tadashi, relied heavily on Aruga's work in formulating his typology of rural communities.

Morioka was not a democratization extremist. But he began his research on True Pure Land Buddhism in the climate described above, and his treatment of the *ie* or household system as the prototype of this body's organizational structure definitely manifests a negative attitude.

His ideal image of a religious organization is one in which individuals with a personal faith are bound together in brotherly and sisterly solidarity to form a community of believers. The greatest hindrance to the realization of such a community are the *ie* system upon which religious organizations are modeled and the commonly found local community principle of unity derived from that of the household and extended household. This negatively understood “prototype” is clearly evident in his “*ie* system” book (1962d). In another work he writes, “Though a researcher should deal solely with objective realities and refrain from expressing his own subjective views ...in this volume I have at times stepped outside this role” (1975c, p. iii). In the “*ie* system” volume as well, here and there passages occur in which he steps over this boundary. To cite a couple instances:

It is not enough for us to condemn the thoroughgoing institutionalization of vertical relations among the temple priests as a betrayal of religious principles. We must also reflect on the irony that this betrayal, built into the structures of the organization, is done in the name of repaying the kindness of Shinran. This exemplifies the proverb, “Even thieves are not utterly lacking in principle” (1962d, p. 619).

The lust for fame at work here has nothing to do with faith in the power of the Other (*tarikiki*). This clever contribution system brings together the human weaknesses of self-denial and selfishness. Who can guarantee that this system is not destroying, at its very foundations, faithful support for the head temple? (1962d, p. 169)

With the exception of *Gendai shakai no minshū to shūkyō* [Religion and people in contemporary Japanese society], a collection of articles “written for cultured and religious persons and the general public” (1975c, p. iii), value-statements disappear from Morioka’s works produced after the 1962 “*ie* system” book. From that time on he worked hard,

under Zetterberg's influence, to improve the precision of his research methods and thus was most probably inclined to suppress or altogether forego any "overstepping the bounds" in order to make explicit value-statements. Moreover, after his "*ie system*" book (1962d), he concentrated more on family than religious studies, and even in his religious research made increasingly extensive use of questionnaire methods. These shifts in focus and method probably served as a constraint on "overstepping." In his 1978 "*ie structures*" work (1978f), for example, there appear virtually no instances of "overstepping," though the research theme and standpoint are the same as in the 1962 "*ie system*" work.

The pros and cons of value-statements rest, in the last analysis, on the judgment of each individual scholar. But if radical "overstepping" is suppressed or completely avoided, if articles are made impossibly dull and senseless because a boundary that should have been overstepped was not and a value-standard or sense of problem thus diluted or lost, this is certainly as problematic as radical "overstepping."

Morioka's works as a whole are by no means lackluster or pointless, but a few, produced since he adopted questionnaire methods in the 1960s, are not entirely free of this danger. Is there, after all, no way to avoid the tendency for scholarly works to become less "interesting" as they are made more "scientific"?

The two problematic points and consequent challenges we have noted in Morioka's works are, of course, no less problems and challenges for all who work and write in the field of sociology of religion. I am sensitive to these issues partly because, like Morioka, I too am engaged in religious studies as a *sociologist*, but even more because of the profound impression his approach to knowledge made on me when I was in graduate school. He and the other professors in the sociology department of the now defunct Tokyo University of Educa-

tion subjected us to rigorous and disciplined training. It is thanks to this training that I find myself able to continue in the sociological enterprise. For the same reason, this attempt to objectify the “Morioka within myself” has been far from easy.

Brief Biographical Sketch of Morioka Kiyomi

Birth

28 October 1923 as the eldest son of a farm household in the Shimo Awa hamlet of Ōyamada Village, Ayama-gun, Mie Prefecture

Education

1943–45 Tokyo Higher Normal School
1945–48 Tokyo University of Literature and Science (TULS),
Philosophy Department
1948–50 TULS, special research student

Employment

April 1950 Appointed professorial assistant, TULS
March 1952 Promoted to full-time lecturer, TULS
January 1953 Reassigned as full-time lecturer of Tokyo University
of Education (TUE, successor institution to TULS),
Humanities Division
October 1954 Promoted to assistant professor
April 1956 Appointed director of graduate research
May 1974 Promoted to full professor
October 1974 Named to TUE Board of Trustees, later reelected
April 1977 Appointed dean of Humanities Division
March 1978 Retired from TUE in connection with its closing
April 1978 Appointed full professor, Liberal Arts Division,
Seijō University (Tokyo)

Degrees

June 1961 Litt.D. (Dissertation: *Shinshū kyōdan to “ie” seido*, 1962d)

Academic Awards

March 1954 TULS Memorial Award for “Nihon nōson ni okeru

MORIOKA Kiyomi: From Structural to Life-Cycle Theory

- October 1963 kirisutokyō no juyō" (1953b)
Japanese Association for Religious Studies Anesaki
Memorial Award for *Shinshū kyōdan to "ie" seido*
(1962d)
- November 1974 Third Odaka Memorial Award in Sociology for
Kazoku shūkiron (1973e)

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