Title	The structure of Japanese religiosity : Data analysis of a national survey on values and religiosity
Sub Title	
Author	真鍋, 一史(Manabe, Kazufumi)
Publisher	慶應義塾大学法学部
Publication year	2008
Jtitle	慶應の政治学 政治・社会 : 慶應義塾創立一五〇年記念法学部論文集 (2008.) ,p.283(44)- 322(1)
JaLC DOI	
Abstract	
Notes	
Genre	Book
URL	https://koara.lib.keio.ac.jp/xoonips/modules/xoonips/detail.php?koara_id=BA88454491-00000007-0283

The Structure of Japanese Religiosity:

Data Analysis of a National Survey on Values and Religiosity

Kazufumi Manabe

I Introduction

In recent years, the theme of "values" has resurfaced as a topic of actual examination in the field of the social sciences based on new dimensions, for example, the emergence of post-modern values. Since the 1980s, several large-scale multi-national comparative surveys have been conducted that focus on people's beliefs and values, including the European Values Studies, the World Values Survey, and the International Social Survey Programme (Manabe, 2003). The questionnaires used in many of these surveys focus on "religiosity." The results have shown that "while religiosity is strongly related to people's values, beliefs, and attitudes in Western countries, this tendency is not evident in Japan." The generalized use of the phrase "non-religious Japan" is also derived from this context (Manabe and Jagodzinski 2000, Manabe, Jagodzinski and Onodera 2000, Manabe, Jagodzinski and Onodera 2002, Manabe and Jagodzinski 2002, Manabe and Jagodzinski 2002, Jagodzinski and Manabe 2003, and Manabe 2003). This perspective, however, is based on Western religious views, and an examination informed by Japan's distinctive religious beliefs, attitudes and behaviors would undoubtedly shed some light on other aspects that might not otherwise be evident. That is the main purpose of this empirical study (national survey).

Some background and contextual information on this national survey will be useful. This survey was conducted as part of a collaborative study entitled "A Cross-National Comparative Study of the Values and Religiosity in Contemporary Society: Focusing on the Asian Perspective" with funding from a Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research for 2005-2007 (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, Japan Society for the Promotion of Science) (Kiban-Kenkyu (A) Number 17203036). This collaborative study team was comprised of the Field Survey and Qualitative Research Group (managed by Eisho Omura) and the Questionnaire Survey and Quantitative Research Group (managed by Kazufumi Manabe). We have already conducted the following studies.

(1) We reviewed of the results of both theoretical and empirical studies previously conducted in Japan and abroad on values and religiosity, and collected, sorted, and compiled the survey data and related materials that produced those results.

(2) We presented the methodological problems in this field of research, particularly the identification of the problem of "equivalence" with regard to how religiosity is observed and measured in multi-national comparative surveys, and proposed methods of solving those problems.

(3) We conducted field surveys (on-site observations and interviews) in Hawaii and the west coast of the US, South Korea, Taiwan, Okinawa, and Northern Europe, particularly Sweden, focused on one of the contemporary and strategic problems in this field of research, that is, the phenomena known as "secularization" in the context of conventional religious doctrine. These were done by examining religious feelings and behaviors, and exploring the ways people think about, feel about, and handle the human ashes created by the increased use of cremation, animal funerals, embalming, and pet loss.

The questionnaire survey studied here was planned and designed based on these previous studies.

Ⅱ Survey Outline

The sample was obtained using a two-stage stratified random sampling of men and women aged 20 and older from the Basic Resident Registry as of March 31, 2006. The country was divided into 12 regions. These were divided by size into 16 large cities, other cities, and towns and villages, and surveys were conducted in 25 locations in the 16 large cities, 63 locations in the other cities, and 12 locations in the towns and villages, for a total of 100 locations. Eighteen people were surveyed from each of these 100 locations, yielding a total of 1,800 respondents.

The sampling and survey were conducted in March 2007. A survey company (Central Research Services, Inc.) was entrusted to conduct the survey using the leave-and-pick-up method. Valid responses were collected from 882 respondents, resulting in a response rate of 49.2%.

Ⅲ　Survey Content: Classification of Question Items

The survey question items can be divided into the following three categories: (1) items related to the social attributes and demographic factors of the respondents, (2) items aimed at measuring the unique religiosity of the Japanese, and (3) items aimed at measuring the respondent's attitudes, feelings, and behavioral responses to everyday life, society, and politics.

The question items of the survey are classified based on the content and format of each question. The classifications above are content-based. The three types of question items were prepared based on the following approach. First, the social attributes and demographic factors of the respondents (1) are significant in two ways: they make it possible (a) to check the representativeness of the sample population examined in the questionnaire survey, and (b) to analyze (through what is called a conditional analysis) the relationships between attributes like sex, age, education, occupation, and income with the way people look at, think about, feel about and behave in response to various phenomena (these are referred to in social scientific terms as "values, beliefs, attitudes, opinions, and behaviors"). Next are the (2) items aimed at measuring the unique religiosity of the Japanese, which is a central theme of this survey. Finally, the (3) items aimed at measuring the respondent's attitudes, feelings and behavioral responses (and their underlying values) to everyday life, society, and politics are intended to examine whether "religiosity is related to people's values, beliefs, and attitudes" in Japan as it is elsewhere.

This data analysis will examine the items classified in category (2). Before analyzing the inter-relationships between the items in categories (2) and (3), it is necessary to conduct an exploratory examination of the overall picture (or in my own terms,

the "forest") of what would generally be referred to as "Japanese religiosity" (or religious beliefs, feelings, attitudes and behaviors). Such an analysis is of an exploratory or heuristic nature.

Next, the Facet Approach is a method of classifying question items by the format of the question as well as the response scales. It is a unique intellectual construct developed by L. Guttman. S. Shye (1978) divides the Facet Approach into three processes:

(1) Facet Design: (a) the preparation of conceptual devices and a conceptual framework for conducting observations (questionnaire surveys), (b) the selection of question types and response categories, and (c) the creation of mapping sentences and structuples, which are unique methods of expressing the theoretical and hypothetical diagrams of a survey in text format.

(2) Facet Analysis: Methods of analyzing data for testing hypotheses, such as Scalogram Analysis, Partial Order Scalogram Analysis, Smallest Space Analysis (SSA) and Median Regression Analysis. This final technique is used by Guttman as a simple method of depicting the relationship between two variables, but it has not been explained in his papers. I named this technique and have worked with other experts to create a computer program for it.

(3) Facet Theory: Formularization of collective laws of human behavior —— including the first law, the second law, and the laws of polytone regression —— and their theoretical rationale, based on questionnaire surveys.

There is not enough room to provide a detailed explanation of the Facet Approach here. For more information, see my previous works (Manabe 1993, Manabe 2001, and Manabe 2002).

From the perspective of Facet Design, the question items used in the survey are divided into open-ended questions and closed-ended questions. Guttman divides the

latter into range questions and cafeteria questions. From the perspective of formulating laws of human behavior based on questionnaire surveys, the use of range questions —— a format that presents unidimensional response categories ranging from one end of a spectrum to another, such as "agree to disagree," "like to dislike," and "satisfied to dissatisfied" —— is more effective. Cafeteria questions are presented in a format that offers a range of multidimensional response categories. For example, the answers to the question "How do you spend your free time?" might include "I heal myself from the tiring effects of work," "I strive toward self-realization," and "I do things I enjoy," "I spend time with my family."

Range questions can be further classified into several different types, depending on the format of their response scales. This is a method of categorizing question items based on the format of the question as well as the response scales. Because this paper, as already mentioned, will analyze the "question items aimed at measuring the unique religiosity of the Japanese," it will show how question items are classified based on the range, using these items as model cases. This will be done by classifying the question items into the four types below.

(1) Question items related to whether the respondent is involved in religious behaviors (four response categories: "Often," "Sometimes," "Occasionally," "Never").

(2) Question items related to whether the respondent believes in the existence of deities, souls, reincarnation, and other such phenomena (four response categories: "Exists," "May exist," "May not exist," "Does not exist").

(3) Question items related to the respondent's religious beliefs, feelings and attitudes (five response categories: "I agree," " I somewhat agree," "Can't say either way," "I somewhat disagree," "I disagree").

(4) Question items related to the workings, functions and characteristics of religion (five response categories: "I agree," " I somewhat agree," "Can't say either way," "I

somewhat disagree," "I disagree").

Type (1) is different from types (2), (3), and (4) in terms of the format of the response categories. That is, while the response categories in type (1) are presented such that 0 points are assigned to the response "Never" at the far end of the spectrum, the 0-point responses for types (3) and (4) are assigned to the middle response "Can't say either way." This response is surrounded by positive responses ("I agree" and "I somewhat agree") on one side and negative responses ("I disagree" and "I somewhat disagree") on the other. Type (2) is a variation of types (3) and (4), where the 0-point response category is omitted.

The question items used in this survey were classified into three groups based on their content, and the "question items aimed at measuring the unique religiosity of the Japanese" listed as group (2) were then classified into four groups based on their format. Before analyzing the data, let us consider the reasons for classifying the question items this way. The cumulative findings of Guttman and his research group regarding Facet Theory show that "the size of the relationship between question items is affected not only by the content of the questions, but also by the 'format' of the questions." For example, the relationship between questions about attitudes, where the 0-point response is in the middle of the response scale, and questions about involvement, where the 0-point response is on one end of the response scale, has sometimes a polytone shape rather than a monotone (linear) shape, regardless of the question content. Guttman calls this the law of "polytone regression." All too often, even today, data analyses in the social sciences are designed to examine the relationship between questions based on the content of the question items, with little consideration given to their format. Thus, taking adequate measures to prepare for the data analysis before the data analysis is performed, that is, the process of Facet Design, is unique to Facet Analysis, and this is a significant difference between Facet Analysis and Factor Analysis, which tries to assign meaning to the results after the data analysis is performed.

Something must be said regarding the content of this survey other than what has already been stated about the classification of the question items. That is, how were

the "question items aimed at measuring the unique religiosity of the Japanese" prepared? In other words, an effort can be made to conceptualize and operationalize the sense of religiosity believed to be unique to the Japanese. Many things have been said in the existing literature about Japan's unique religious beliefs, attitudes and behaviors. However, much of that information has been written based on the authors' own insightfulness, observational capabilities or imagination, and it is important to point out that while this can be a useful starting point for research in the field of sociology, it can also be the end point. Very few efforts have been made to conduct empirical analyses based on large-scale sample surveys using the questionnaire method. The following are among them.

NHK Public Opinion Research Institute (1984). *Nihonjin no shuukyou ishiki* [*Religious Attitudes of the Japanese*]. Tokyo, Japan Broadcast Publishing.

Kaneko, Satoru (1997). *Nihonjin no shuukyousei: okage to tatari no shakai shinrigaku* [*The Religiosity of the Japanese: The Social Psychology of Gratitude and Punishment*] Tokyo: Shinyosha.

Ishii, Kenji (2007). *De-tabukku gendai nihonjin no shuukyou* [zouho kaiteiban] [*Databook: The Religions of Contemporary Japanese*] [Supplemented and Revised Edition]. Tokyo: Shinyosha.

Inoue, Nobutaka (2003). *Wakamono ni okeru kawaru shuukyou ishiki to kawaranu shuukyou ishiki* [*Changing and Unchanging Religious Attitudes among Young People*]. Tokyo: Kokugakuin University.

Nishiwaki, Ryo (2004). *Nihonjin no shuukyouteki shizenkan* [*The Religious View of Nature of the Japanese*]. Kyoto: Minerva Shobo.

Hayashi, Fumi (2007). *Mijikana seikatsu ni okeru dentou bunka ishiki ni kansuru chousa: 2006 nen yokohamashi 4 ku yuusou chousa houkokusho* [*Survey of Traditional Cultural Attitudes in Everyday Life: Report on a Survey Sent to the Residents of Four Wards in Yokohama in 2006*], Tokyo: Toyo Eiwa University.

Kisala, Robert, Mikiko Nagai, and Mamoru Yamada (2007). *Shinrai shakai no yukue: kachikan chousa ni miru nihonjin no jigazou* [*Becoming of a Trustworthy Soci-*

ety: The Self-Perceptions of the Japanese as Seen in a Values Survey]. Tokyo: Harvest-sha.

Naturally, this paper cannot exhaustively address all of the empirical studies that have endeavored to measure Japanese religiosity. Instead, it hopes only to be able to make a dent in the conceptualization and operationalization of the religiosity of the Japanese to examine the question of whether "religiosity is related to people's values, beliefs and attitudes" in Japan as it is elsewhere, as this is the central issue of concern here. To do this, I have cited materials prepared by members of the joint research group. The questionnaire was designed based on these materials.

Ⅳ Data Analysis

1 Response Distribution Patterns

The first step of the questionnaire survey data analysis is to determine whether the response distribution shown in the simple-tabulation tables (marginal frequency distributions) for each question item is (1) single-modal or (2) multi-modal. If it is (1) single-modal, it will have to be identified as either (a) linear decreasing, that is, where the percentage of respondents is the highest for the first response category and declines in a linear manner in the order of the response categories, (b) bell-shaped, where the percentage of respondents is highest in the middle of the response categories, and decreases in both directions moving away from the middle, or a (c) linear increasing, where the percentage of respondents increases in a linear manner in the order of the response categories. If it is (2) multi-modal, it will have to be identified as either (a) U-shaped, where the percentages are high at both ends of the response category spectrum, and lowest in the middle, or (b) N-shaped, a variation of the U-shaped pattern that occurs when there are four response categories, and the percentages are high at the second and fourth response categories, and low at the first and third.

The question items addressed in this data analysis are the 57 question items

Table 1　Frequency of the Response Distribution Patterns

Distribution pattern	Number of cases	%
(1)-a Linear decreasing	8	14.0
(1)-b Bell-shaped	40	70.1
(1)-c Linear increasing	7	12.3
(2)-a U-shaped	1	1.8
(2)-b N-shaped	1	1.8
Total	57	100.0

aimed at measuring the unique religiosity of the Japanese. These 57 items can be classified by the shape of their response distribution pattern, as follows **(Table 1)**.

These results show that most of the question items addressed in this analysis are (1) single-modal, and bell-shaped distributions. This does not present problems for proceeding with the analysis below.

2　Correlation Matrix: Analysis of the Relationships between Question Items

The basic approach to data analysis used here, figuratively speaking, is to begin by looking at the forest rather than the trees. The data analysis of questionnaire surveys generally begins with the identification of the overall structure and correlations of data in a broad sense, and this is followed by efforts to intensify the analysis by focusing on specific aspects of the data. I think of the former structural aspects as "looking at the forest" and the latter more specific aspects as "looking at the trees." What kinds of methods, then, can be used to "look at the forest"? The process begins with a correlation matrix, a tool that shows all the simple correlation coefficients between n number of items in the form of a matrix that is n (rows) × n (columns) in size. Because 57 question items are being addressed in this data analysis, the correlation matrix thus created is very large, about 1 m tall by 2 m wide. For this reason, the correlation matrix cannot be included here in its raw form. I will therefore use bullet points to highlight the information that can be gleaned from a reading of the matrix and along with my relevant observations.

(1)　As stated above, the 57 question items addressed here consist of (a) question items related to whether the respondent is involved in religious behaviors, (b) ques-

tion items related to whether the respondent believes in the existence of deities, souls, reincarnation, and other such phenomena, (c) question items related to the respondent's religious beliefs, feelings and attitudes, and (d) question items related to the workings, functions and characteristics of religion. However, the question items in category (d) are expressed in the form of statements or propositions, leaving the respondent to answer "I agree" or "I disagree." Thus, it is important to identify whether the content of these statements or propositions are positive or negative. If the question items in category (d) are divided into two groups, positive statements/propositions and negative statements/propositions, I end up with five total types of question items. The examination of the correlation matrix is based on these question item types.

Correlation matrix examinations generally focus on two aspects of the coefficients: (i) their sign and (ii) their size (value). An examination of this correlation matrix reveals that there tend to be (i) relatively more positive signs and (ii) relatively large coefficient values among the correlation coefficients "within" the question item groups than "between" them. This suggests that the data analysis below could benefit from an advanced analysis of each of the question items groups.

(2) Shifting away from the classification of the question items described above, it is also important to ask: In which part of the correlation matrix are the values of the correlation coefficients small? There is no absolute standard for judging the size of a correlation coefficient. Here, correlation coefficients of less than 0.1 will be referred to as "low values." According to this standard, most of the correlation coefficients with a negative sign have low values. This is the case between four question items —— Q12b (I draw a stick with a number on it to learn my fortune), Q19f (Do you believe that UFOs exist?), Q21f (Shinto gods and Buddhist deities are all the same thing), and Q21g (Happiness in this life is more important than salvation in the next life) —— and the other question items. The advanced analysis conducted below seems to suggest that eliminating these four items would make the analysis proceed more smoothly.

(3) In this questionnaire survey, the religiosity of the Japanese is based on two key variables. One is Q7 "Do you have any religious beliefs?" and the other is Q24 "Do

you think that a religious mind is important?" Of course, these two question items were prepared based on the results of a study on The Japanese National Character conducted by the Institute of Statistical Mathematics. When Japanese respondents were asked "Do you have any religious beliefs?", 60% said "No," but when that same 60-70% were asked "Is a 'religious mind important?", they indicated that it is (Ishii, 2007). It is on this point where the uniqueness of Japanese religiosity becomes evident. Certainly this is the phenomenon referred to by Keiichi Yanagawa as "faithless religion" (Yanagawa 1989). From this perspective, if a comparison is made of the correlation coefficients between these two question items, Q7 and Q24, and the other question items, the results show that the value of the correlation coefficients with the latter (Q24) tend to be larger. This certainly suggests that the feeling that "a religious mind is important" is central to the religiosity of the Japanese.

3 Smallest Space Analysis

The previous section attempted to read the trends by comparing the sign and value of the correlation coefficients in the correlation matrix. However, there are several inherent problems in this kind of analysis. As long as the individual correlation coefficients shown in the correlation matrix are a measurement of the relationship between a pair of variables, any reading of the trends is only going to illuminate individual, independent phenomena. That is, this approach makes it impossible, in my terms, to gain a view of the forest. Methods of data analysis that can extract "fundamental aspects" that are believed to connect these individual independent trends, are needed. One of the methods available to meet this need is Louis Guttman's Smallest Space Analysis (SSA).

As a type of multidimensional scaling, SSA is a method of expressing the relationship between n number of question items shown in a correlation matrix by the size of the distance between n points in an m-dimensional ($m<n$) space. The higher the correlation between items, the smaller the distance between them, and the lower the correlation, the greater the distance. Usually a 2-dimensional (plane) or 3-dimensional (cube) space is used to visually depict the relationship between question items.

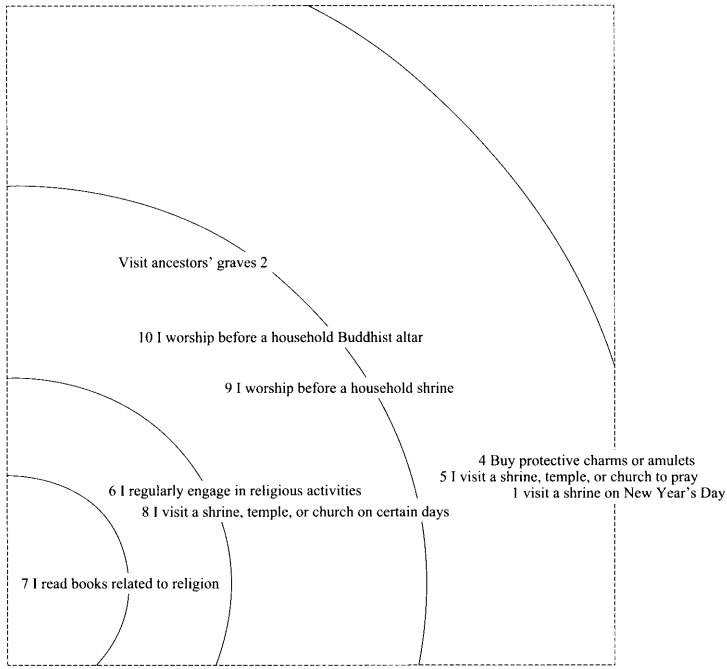
Unlike factor analysis, the output axis has no particular meaning in SSA (Manabe 1993, Manabe 2001, and Manabe 2002).

This suggests that SSA is the most appropriate method of visually depicting the overall structure and correlations of the data. I would therefore like to look more closely at the significance of using this technique in the analysis of the "unique religiosity of the Japanese." I have emphasized the importance of "process instructive papers" (Michio Umino's term) in empirical social science research, and consequently, have also explained the basic approach to and specific processes involved in the design of the questionnaire used in the Survey on Values and Religiosity. Thus, before this survey was conducted, the existing literature on Japanese religiosity was carefully reviewed and the questionnaire was designed based on the results of that review. In other words, an attempt was made to conceptualize and operationalize the religiosity of the Japanese. However, while such activities shine a "searchlight" (Talcott Parsons' term) on various aspects of so-called Japanese religiosity and its characteristics, they do not in and of themselves lead to a complete picture of how those aspects are connected, or an overall image of Japanese religiosity. In the research conducted up to this point, no efforts have been made to empirically extract such a comprehensive picture.

The purpose of this data analysis is to try to reconstruct the larger picture of "the aspects of Japanese religiosity," which have been deconstructed in the form of various question items. This is done by focusing on the structure of the inter-relationships between question items. SSA is one of the methods of data analysis that can address these kinds of "exploratory" or "heuristic" issues.

The sections below discuss the 56 question items designed to measure the unique religiosity of the Japanese, as follows. First the 56 question items were classified into four clusters based on the format of each question and its response categories, and SSA was performed on these four clusters. Next, the results of the simple tabulations of each item in the SSA maps were examined.

Figure 1　Smallest Space Analysis of Religious Behaviors



1　Q10　Do you visit a shrine on New Year's Day?
2　Q12a　Visit ancestors' graves during the obon and higan seasons.
3　Q12b　Draw a stick with a number on it to learn my fortune.
4　Q12c　Buy protecitive charms or amulets (for traffic safety, passing entrance exams,etc.)
5　Q12d　I visit a shrine, temple, or church to pray for such things as business prosperity and success in passing the entrance exams.
6　Q12e　I am regularly involved in relgious activities, such as worship and devotions.
7　Q12f　I read books related to religion, such as the Bible or sacred scriptures.
8　Q12g　I visit a shrine, temple, or church on certain days.
9　Q12h　I worship before a household shrine.
10　Q12i　I worship before a household Buddhist altar.

(1) Smallest Space Analysis of the Question Items Related to Religious Behavior

The portion of the correlation matrix showing the relationships between these 10 question items (Q10 and Q12a-i) was extracted and analyzed using the Hebrew University Data Analysis Package (HUDAP), computer software package. This produced the following 2-dimensional SSA map **(Figure 1)**. The computer output consisted of numbers that expressed the location of each variable (question item) in the 2-dimen-

sional space. The four concentric circles shown on the SSA map are the results of my effort to assign meaning to (interpret) the spatial partition (constellation) of these 10 items based on the empirical law of Guttman's Facet Theory. My interpretation is based on the following. The spatial partition of these 10 items is centered around item 7(Q12f) "I read books related to religion, such as the Bible or sacred scriptures," with the other items distributed through the space based on their relationship (correlation) to that question item. Items with a higher correlation coefficient are located closer to the center, while items with a smaller correlation coefficient are located further from the center. Of course, the spatial partition is depicted as a circle rather than an ellipse because all the points on a circle are equidistant from its center.

The first concentric circle, which includes "Bible, scripture reading," is the starting point of the examination of the spatial partition of the items other than the center item.

The second concentric circle contains item 6(Q12e) "I regularly engage in religious activities" and item 8(Q12g) "I visit a shrine, temple, or church on certain days." Their correlation coefficients with "Bible, scripture reading" are 0.54 for the former and 0.41 for the latter, both of which are statistically significant at the 1% level. These figures indicate that these items are "very highly correlated."

The third concentric circle contains three items: 10(Q12i) "I worship before a household Buddhist altar" (0.21) and 9(Q12h) "I worship before a household shrine" (0.19), both of which are statistically significant at the 1% level, and 2(Q12a) "Visit ancestors' graves" (0.08), which is statistically significant at the 5% level. These figures indicate that these items are "moderately correlated."

Finally, the outermost fourth concentric circle contains the items that have a "very low correlation" with the "Bible, scripture reading": 5(Q12d) "I visit a shrine, temple, or church to pray for success" (0.03), 4(Q12c) "I buy protective charms or amulets" (0.02), 1(Q10) "I visit a shrine on New Year's Day" (-0.01), 3(Q12b) "I draw a stick with a number on it to learn my fortune" (-0.05). None of these correlation coefficients are statistically significant.

This reading of the SSA map suggests the following two points.

1. The 10 items on religious behavior addressed here are separated into three groups within the concentric circles into which the space has been divided. These are (i) worship, devotions, Bible and sacred scripture reading, shrine/temple/church visits, (ii) grave visits, household shrine worship, household altar worship, and (iii) New Year's Day shrine visits, fortune-telling sticks, protective charms and amulets, and prayer.

This classification of the items is based on Guttman's contiguity hypothesis. The questionnaire survey originally served as a method of empirically measuring the meaning of the words used on the questionnaire form, and thus, the data analysis would explore the "spaces of meaning" of both the surveyor and the respondent. According to Guttman's approach, if the question items used in the survey are close in meaning, they will be positioned close to one another (spatial distance) on the SSA map. In fact, however, Facet Theory has been constructed based on the conceptual devices and empirical evidence regarding "spaces of meaning" and "relationships of meaning." Thus, is it possible to say what the "meaning" of each of the question item clusters that has been partitioned as shown above is? Here, I want to focus on the common characteristics of the items, and will refer to them as (i) faith-manifestation behaviors, (ii) traditional behaviors, and (iii) event-specific behaviors.

This finding has important implications for the observation (through a questionnaire survey in this case) and analysis of Japanese religiosity, because international comparative studies of religiosity have not adequately divided so-called "religious behaviors" into different types of behaviors, as has been done here. That is, there has been a lack of "dimension specification."

For example, the study that has attracted the most attention in this field is the Survey of Japanese Values, a national survey conducted in Japan as a counterpart to the European Values Study (Kisala, Nagai, and Yamada 2007). However, this survey does not distinguish between types of religious behavior. Nonetheless, it does show that "In Japan, although the percentage of people who hold religious beliefs is low, there is a high rate of participation in religious activities," suggesting that "Religious activities have been conventionalized in Japan." Another example is provided by the International Social Survey Programme (Religion Module), which concluded that

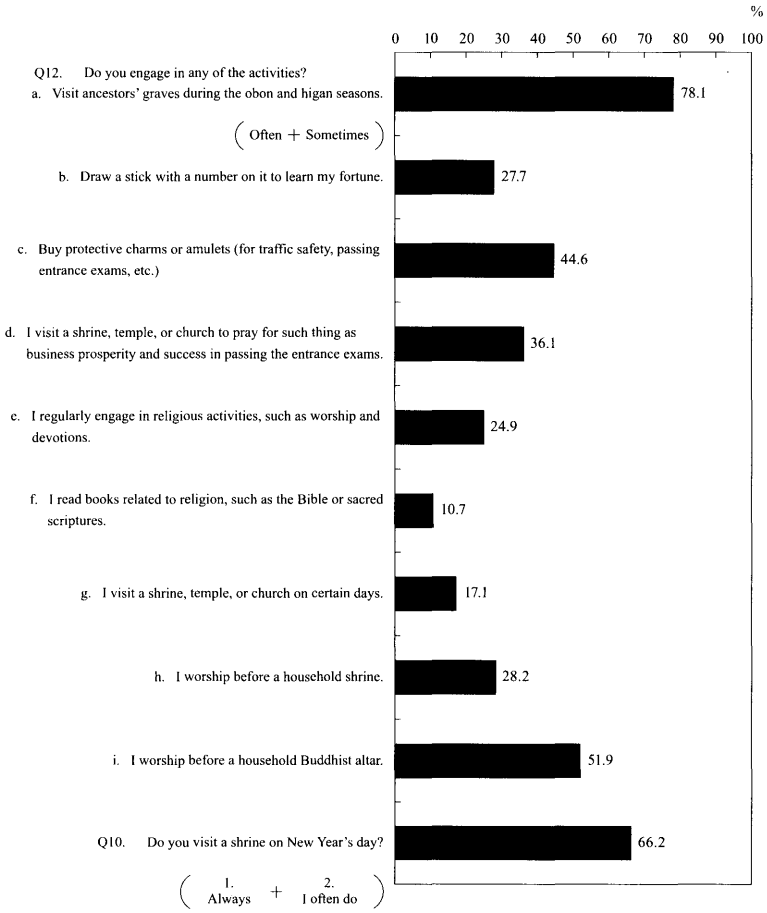
"The religious activities of the Japanese have become entrenched as social customs" (Onodera 1999). This statement is subject to the problem referred to by Robert Merton as "ex post interpretation" (Merton 1957, 1961), but aside from that, the former problem of the failure to distinguish between different types of religious behaviors remains.

The problem with the analysis of the religiosity of the Japanese conducted using the questionnaire survey discussed here is that the religious behaviors of the Japanese are treated in a blanket all-inclusive kind of way. At the risk of repeating myself, the religious behaviors that have been divided into three types —— (i) faith-manifestation behaviors: worship, devotions, Bible and sacred scripture reading, shrine/temple/church visits, (ii) traditional behaviors: grave visits, household shrine worship, household altar worship, and (iii) event-specific behaviors: New Year's Day shrine visits, fortune-telling sticks, protective charms and amulets, and prayer —— have very different characteristics, and as a result, their correlations tend to be rather small.

2. Guttman refers to the shape of the SSA map above, that is, the figure drawn with several concentric circles around a common center point, as a "simplex." When the relationships between items addressed in this kind of data analysis have the characteristics of a simplex, performing a scale analysis (Guttman scale) on those items will result in the formation of a unidimensional scale.

That being the case, the question items on religious behavior discussed here can be viewed as forming a unidimensional scale ranging from "Bible, scripture reading" to "protective charms, fortune-telling sticks, and New Year's Day shrine visits." Of course, this kind of unidimensional scale shows a single characteristic in the form of a linear relationship. What is the "dimensional" characteristic in the question items on religious behavior? Generally speaking, it is the "depth" or "strength" of religiosity. However, based on my own "insightfulness, observational capabilities, and imagination," I like to think of it as the "self-awareness of religiosity." That is, the sense of self-awareness is high for the "Bible, scripture reading", but low for the "protective charms, fortune-telling sticks, and New Year's Day shrine visits." In spite of the fact that people do not perceive (or recognize) "protective charms, fortune-telling sticks,

Figure 2　Percentage Distributions of Responses to Questions on Religious Behaviors



and New Year's Day shrine visits" to be "religious behavior," I hypothesize that somewhere deep in their hearts they hold an unconscious sense of religiosity. (Actually, this hypothesis is to be tested by examining the size of the correlations between these items and the question items discussed below: items related to the existence of deities, souls, reincarnation, and other such phenomena, items related to religious beliefs, feelings and attitudes, and items related to the workings, functions and characteristics

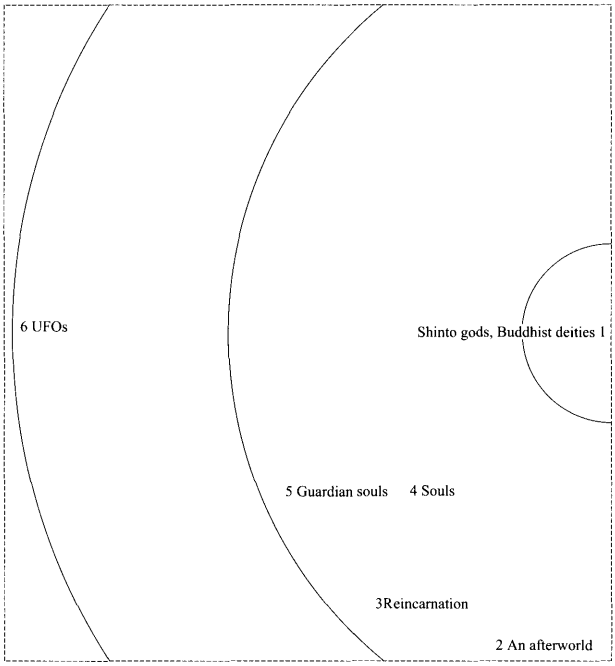
of religion.)

A review of the results of the simple tabulation of the items related to religious behavior **(Figure 2)** based on the results of the SSA analysis reveals that with regard to the three types of behaviors, (i) faith-manifestation behaviors, (ii) traditional behaviors, and (iii) event-specific behaviors, the ratio of responses indicating the demonstration (either "often" or "sometimes") of the group (i) behaviors is relatively low. The behaviors cited by large numbers of respondents are "visit ancestors' graves" (78%), "New Year's Day shrine visits" (66%), followed by "household altar worship" (52%) and "purchase of protective charms" (45%), but only 1/3 or fewer of the respondents report involving in the other behaviors. Looking only at these results, which show a low percentage of engagement in "faith-manifestation behaviors," might lead one to characterize Japanese religiosity as being "faithless religion." Doubt remains, however, over whether this phenomenon is unique to Japan. Further investigation is needed.

(2) Smallest Space Analysis of the Question Items Related to the Existence of Deities, Souls, Reincarnation, and Other Such Phenomena

The same analysis was performed on these items as was performed on the "items related to religious behavior." However, the results **(Figure 3)** show that except in the case of UFOs (about 0.3), the size of the correlation coefficients were overall "very large (0.5 or higher)" as compared with the previous question items (all had statistical significance at the 1% level). Of the six items, only the one regarding UFOs seems to have been somewhat different from the others ("deities" and "an after world, souls, reincarnation, and guardian souls" likely occupy distinct "spaces of meaning" in people's minds from "UFOs"), but the other five may not need to be further classified by drawing concentric circles. However, an examination of the size of the correlation coefficients between these items and the items that will be addressed in the next section, "items related to religious beliefs, feelings and attitudes" reveal some differences among the five items with regard to "deities" and "an after world, souls, reincarnation and guardian souls." That is, the values of these correlation coefficients are often

Figure 3　Smallest Space Analysis of Beliefs in the Existence of Deities, Souls, Reincarnation, and Other such Phenomena

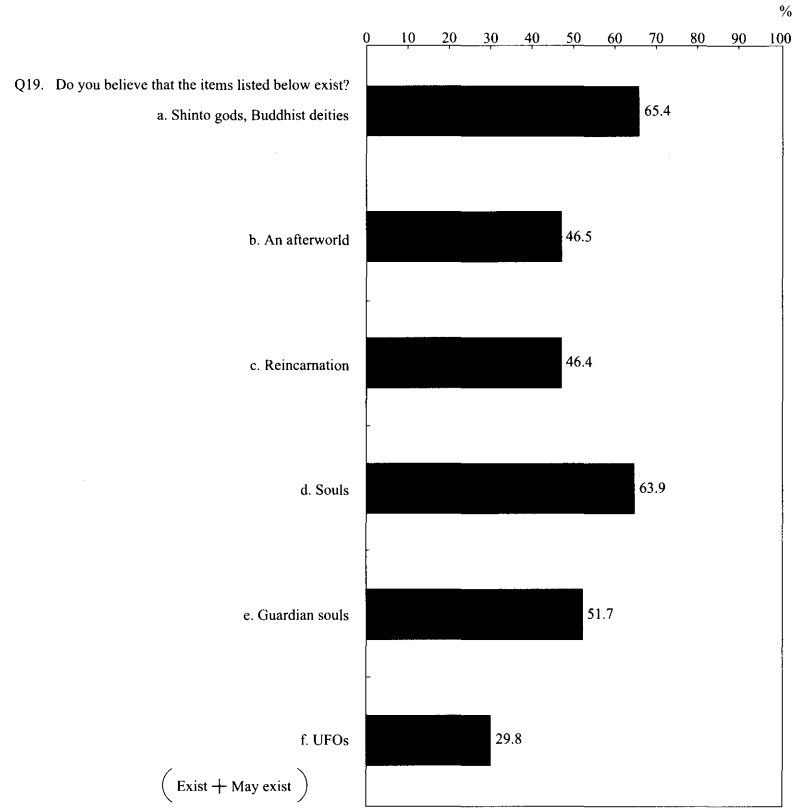


1　Q19a　Shinto gods, Buddhist deities
2　Q19b　An afterworld
3　Q19c　Reincarnation
4　Q19d　Souls
5　Q19e　Guardian souls
6　Q19f　UFOs

larger with the former than with the latter. This suggests that there is some significance to dividing up the space as shown in Figure 3.

The results of the subsequent simple tabulation **(Figure 4)** show that, again excluding the UFO question item, the percentage of respondents that gave positive responses ("exist" + "may exist") was 46% or higher on all the items, particularly on the questions regarding "deities" and "souls," which was as high as 65%. Interestingly, this is about the same percentage of those who reported that "a religious mind is important," and as much as double the 32% of respondents who indicated that they hold

Figure 4　Percentage Distributions of Response to Questions on the Other World

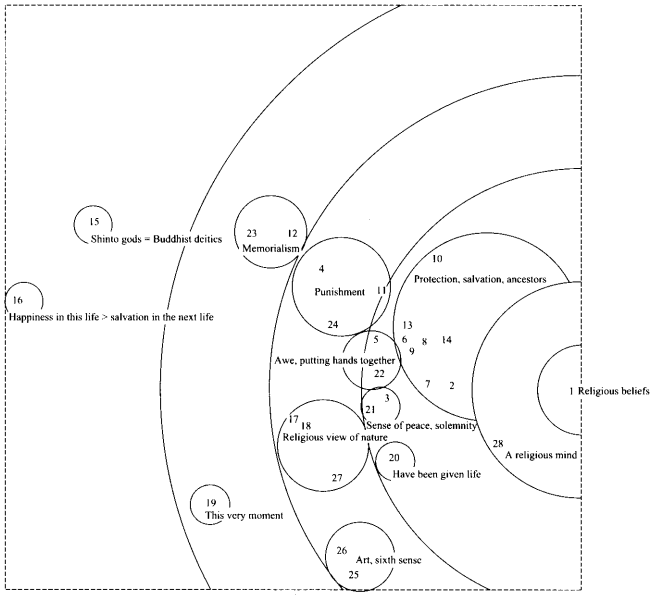


religious beliefs.

(3) Smallest Space Analysis of the Question Items Related to Religious Beliefs, Feelings and Attitudes

This SSA map **(Figure 5)** seems to be more complex than those examined above due to the fact that such a large number of items (28 items) are analyzed at a time. However, this map is not really all that complex, as its overall structure is the same as those examined above. With the center positioned on the item "holds religious beliefs," the other 27 question items are distributed within a space that is divided into

Figure 5　Smallest Space Analysis of Religious Beliefs, Feelings and Attitudes



1	Q7	Do you hold any religious beliefs?
2	Q20a	I feel a strong connection to my ancestors.
3	Q20b	I feel a sence of peace when I visit a shrine, temple, or church.
4	Q20c	I cannot litter near, or contaminate a shrine, temple, or church.
5	Q20d	When I visit a shrine, temple, or church, I instinctively want to put my hands together.
6	Q20e	When I'm having problems, I call out in my heart to a god or deity.
7	Q20f	I'm grateful to the gods for my safe and peaceful daily life.
8	Q20g	When I pray to a Shinto or Buddhist deity,I feel like they somehow amswer my prayer.
9	Q20h	The souls of our ancestors are living on somewhere and are always watching out for us.
10	Q21a	Failure to hold a memorial service for one's ancestors is evidence of a lack of belief.
11	Q21b	If you are irreverent to gods or deities you will be punished.
12	Q21c	The memories of family members who have died are precious.
13	Q21d	Being saved by a god or deity means that things will go well for you in this life.
14	Q21e	Good behavior in this life will be rewarded in the next life.
15	Q21f	Shinto gods and Buddhist deities are all the same thing.
16	Q21g	Happiness in this life is more important than salvation in the next life.
17	Q21h	When looking at a large, old tree, a kind of feeling of divinity comes over me.
18	Q21i	At sunrise or sunset, or in the light of the moon, I experience a sense of solemnity.
19	Q21j	I think that this very moment here and now is an important time.
20	Q21k	I feel that I have been given life by a great power that I cannot see.
21	Q21l	When I hear a worship song or gospel music, or the singing of sutras or sacred songs, I feel a sense of peace and solemnity.
22	Q21m	Gods and deities inspire awe.
23	Q21n	When I worship at a Buddhist altar or visit family graves, I think more about my deceased parents and grandparents than about my ancestors.
24	Q21o	If you do something wrong, even if no one else sees it, you will be punished.
25	Q21p	Sometimes I feel as though I have a sixth sense in which I am informed of what is going to happen in the future.
26	Q21q	An excellent piece of artwork can convey a sense of something religious.
27	Q21r	I think that souls inhabit everything, such as mountains, rivers, grass, and trees.
28	Q24	Regardless of your religious perceptions up this point, do you rhink that "a religious mind" is important or unimportant?

five concentric circles based on the size of their correlations (coefficients) with that central item. The items located close to one another are similar in meaning, as suggested by the contiguity hypothesis discussed above. Let us now look at the content of the question items distributed within each space, starting with the innermost of the five concentric circles.

Starting from the first concentric circle which includes item 1(Q7) "hold religious beliefs," the second concentric circle includes 28(Q24) "a religious mind is important," which has a correlation coefficient of greater than 0.30 (statistically significant at the 1% level). This correlation is characterized as "considerably high." However, "considerably high" is not as high a characterization as "very high." Aspects of the attitude "hold religious beliefs" and the attitude "a religious mind is important" might best be differentiated along different dimensions. In other words, the size of the correlation coefficient provides no definitive way of determining when two items occupy the same dimension and when they occupy different dimensions. More than a problem of "technical judgment," this is really a problem of "theoretical goals." Because of the conceptual distinction being made between aspects of the item "hold religious beliefs" that make it a "faith-manifestation attitude" and aspects of the item "a religious mind is important" that make it a "simple religious feeling" (Fumi Hayashi's term), I established the "theoretical goal" of developing an explanation of the aspects of the unique version of Japanese religiosity. However, this data analysis has provided some clues about the operational methods that can be used to examine these kinds of ideas.

The third concentric circle contains 13 question items, the largest number in this part of the analysis. The correlation coefficients between these items and "hold religious beliefs" are all 0.20 or higher (statistically significant at the 1% level), reflecting a "moderately high" correlation. These items can be further divided into four groups based on their proximity to one another:

i) "Protection, salvation, ancestors"

6(Q20e) I call out in my heart to a god or deity

7(Q20f)　I'm grateful to the gods

8(Q20g)　They answer my prayer

13(Q21d)　Being saved by a god or deity

14(Q21e)　Be rewarded in the next life

2(Q20a)　Connection to my ancestors

9(Q20h)　The souls of our ancestors are always watching out for us

10(Q21a)　A memorial service

ii) "Awe, putting hands together"

5(Q20d)　When I visit a shrine, temple, or church, I instinctively want to put my hands together.

22(Q21m)　Gods and deities inspire awe

iii) "Sense of peace, solemnity"

3(Q20b)　I feel a sense of peace when I visit a shrine, temple, or church

21(Q21l)　When I hear a worship song or gospel music, or the singing of sutras or sacred songs, I feel a sense of peace and solemnity

iv) "Have been given life"

20(Q21k)　I feel that I have been given life by a great power that I cannot see

On this SSA map, these groups are shown using separate circles from the four concentric circles that surround the center (origin) item "hold religious beliefs." As mentioned above, the four concentric circles are based on the empirical law of Guttman's Facet Theory, and are the result of trying to assign some meaning to (interpret) the spatial partition of the 28 question items examined here. However, the practice of drawing the small circles to highlight the four groups listed above is my own device. Guttman's approach suggests that it would be better to depict these groups using spatial partitions created by lines radiating from the common origin rather than small circles. However, I feel that the method used must be determined by the purpose for which the groupings are to be used. While Guttman's Facet Analysis is fundamentally about "testing a hypothesis," my approach is more of an "exploratory effort." The

method of drawing radial lines is well suited to Guttman's purpose of examining the Circumplex Theory regarding the structure of the relationship between multiple variables. Here, my original intent was not to test a specific hypothesis related to the religiosity of the Japanese, but rather to focus on an earlier stage, that is, to draw a complete picture of the various aspects of Japanese religiosity. Given this purpose, the use of small circles to encompass the items that are located relatively close to one another within the space, as suggested by the contiguity hypothesis, is sufficiently meaningful. The use of this grouping method clearly confirms that "deities" and "ancestors" are not altogether separate things in the religious sensibilities of "beliefs, protection, and salvation," but rather are closely intertwined. This point is particularly noteworthy given that it comes as the result of an empirical study using a large-scale questionnaire survey on a proposition that can be found in many works on Japanese religiosity, that is, that "the Japanese believe that their deceased ancestors become Buddhas."

The fourth concentric circle contains eight question items, all of which have a correlation coefficient with "hold religious beliefs" of 0.10 or higher (all are statistically significant at the 1% level except item 25(Q21p) "A sixth sense"), reflecting a "low correlation." These eight items can be divided into three groups using the same approach as was described for the items in the third concentric circle.

i) "Punishment"

4(Q20c)	I cannot litter near, or contaminate a shrine, temple, or church
11(Q21b)	If you are irreverent to gods or deities you will be punished
24(Q21o)	If you do something wrong, you will be punished

ii) "Religious view of nature"

17(Q21h)	When looking at a large, old tree, a kind of feeling of divinity comes over me
18(Q21i)	At sunrise or sunset, or in the light of the moon, I experience a sense of solemnity
27(Q21r)	Souls inhabit everything, such as mountains, rivers, grass, and trees

iii) "Art, sixth sense"

26(Q21q)　An excellent piece of artwork can convey a sense of the something religious

25(Q21p)　I have a sixth sense

The following two points are worth noting here.

1. From the perspective of the magnitude of the "relationship of meaning" expressed by the spatial distance between these items and "hold religious beliefs," "(the expression of) religiosity" is more strongly linked to "protection, salvation, reward" than to "punishment" or "a religious view of nature."

First, with regard to "punishment," it will be helpful to look at *The Religiosity of the Japanese* by Satoru Kaneko (Shinyosha, 1997). In this book, Kaneko proposed two key concepts for better understanding the religiosity of the Japanese: okage (gratitude) and tatari (divine punishment). Broadly interpreted, "okage" corresponds to the "protection, salvation, reward" group while "tatari" corresponds to "punishment." That being the case, it is quite interesting that this data analysis has led to the finding that the beliefs of contemporary people are more strongly linked to "gratitude" than "punishment." This suggests that the attitudes of contemporary people trend more toward reward than punishment.

Next, *The Religious View of Nature of the Japanese* by Ryo Nishiwaki (Minerva Shobo 2004) will prove helpful for looking at the "religious view of nature." The very concept of a religious view of nature, as well as the question items designed as tools to operationalize it, are based on this work by Nishiwaki. There is a fair amount of distance between "(the expression of) religiosity" and "a religious view of nature" in the minds of contemporary people. However, this is because the analysis was based on a model centered around the holding of "religious beliefs." If the analysis were conducted with items related to "a religious view of nature" (where the word "belief" would not generally even be used) at the center, a very different SSA map would surely result. The knowledge gained here points to the need to change the perspective from which we try to identify the religiosity of the Japanese.

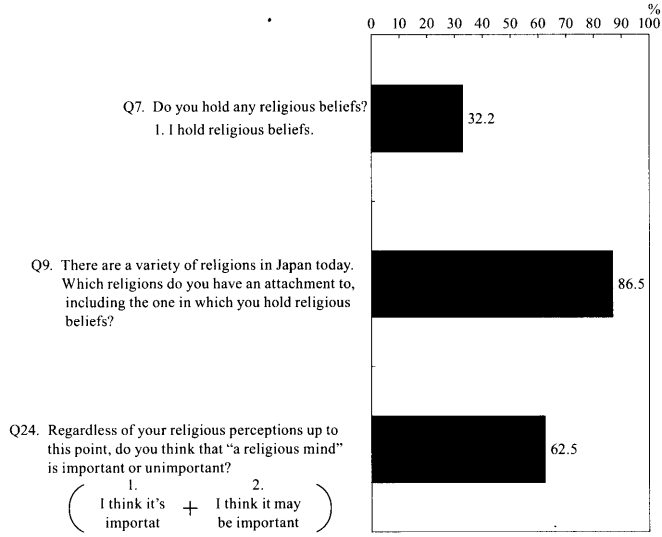
2. Likewise, "(the expression of) religiosity" is more strongly tied to "natural, intrinsic, ex-ante" aspects, such as naturally putting hands together or having a sense of awe, than to "functional, normative, ex-post" aspects, like punishment. This is reminiscent of the Sanction Theory in sociology, as presented by Talcott Parsons (1954). This suggests that contemporary attitudes would likely reflect a preference for the latter aspects over the former aspects. These contemporary attitudes are also closely connected to what Ronald Inglehart refers to as "post-modernization values" (Inglehart 1997). These two points are exploratory discoveries, and must be analyzed more thoroughly in the future.

The fifth concentric circle contains three question items, all of which have a correlation coefficient with "hold religious beliefs" of less than 0.10, thus reflecting a "very low correlation." The correlation coefficient of item 19(Q21j) "I think that this very moment here and now is an important time" was 0.09, which is statistically significant at the 5% level, but the correlation coefficient of item 12(Q21c) "The memories of family members who have died are precious" was 0.04, and of item 23(Q21n) "When I worship at a Buddhist altar or visit family graves, I think more about my deceased parents and grandparents than about my ancestors" was 0.05, neither of which is statistically significant. Previous studies on the religiosity of the Japanese argue that "conventional Japanese attitudes of ancestor worship and admiration are being transformed into attitudes that view ancestors merely as subjects of memory and reminiscence." Such attitudes have been labeled "memorialism," but the results of this data analysis show that there is a certain distance in the "space of meaning" between traditional "religious views of ancestors" and the concept of "memorialism." This suggests that "memorialism" constructs a different "world of meaning" from "religious belief" in contemporary attitudes.

Finally, there are only two items outside the fifth concentric circle, 15(Q21f) Shinto gods = Buddhist deities, and 16(Q21g) happiness in this life > salvation in the next life. These also have only a very low correlation with "hold religious beliefs", and are not statistically significant.

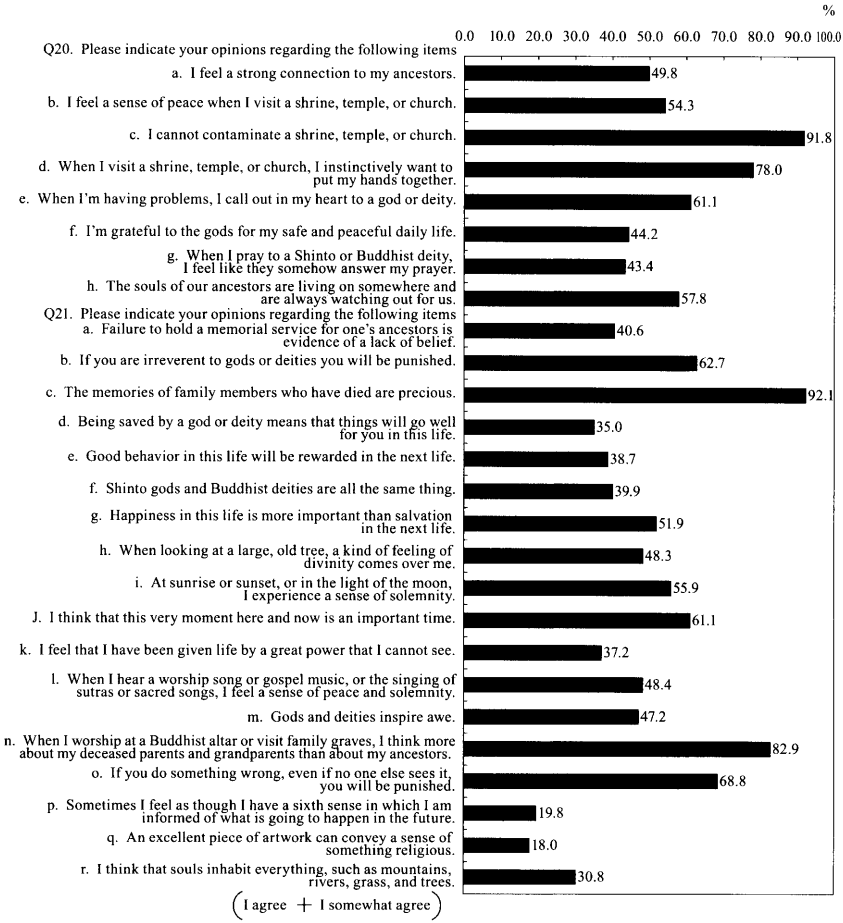
All of this contributes to the examination of the SSA results for the items related

Figure 6-1　Percentage Distributions of Response to Questions on Religious Beliefs, Feelings and Attitudes



to religious beliefs, feelings and attitudes. This SSA map is important insofar as it brilliantly shows the various aspects of Japanese religiosity. As was mentioned above, a great deal has already been written about the unique religiosity of the Japanese people, but there have been no efforts to create an overall picture of what this looks like based on empirical survey data. Having confirmed the positions of these items, that is, the relative "relationships of meaning" between the various items, it is time to turn to the results of each simple tabulation **(Figures 6-1, 6-2)**. No more than 30% of respondents report that they "hold religious beliefs," but twice as many, about 60%, say that "a religious mind is important", and as many as 80-90% indicate that they "agree" with "memorialism," and with the notions that "I have an attachment to religions", "I cannot contaminate a shrine, temple or church" and "I instinctively want to put my hands together." On many other question items regarding religiosity as well, more than 40% of respondents give positive responses. Those phenomena that have defined Japan's unique version of religiosity continue to live on in people's hearts even today, a result I am quite surprising.

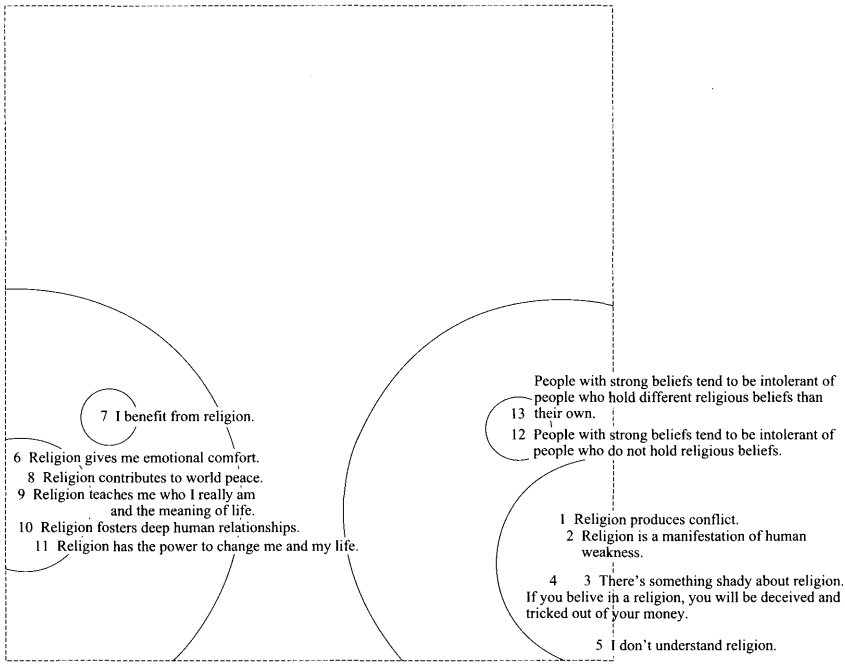
Figure 6-2 Percentage Distributions of Response to Questions on Religious Beliefs, Feelings and Attitudes



(4) Smallest Space Analysis of the Questions Related to the Workings, Functions, and Characteristics of Religion

Previous studies of Japanese religiosity have many things to say about the workings, functions, and characteristics of religion. These notions were operationalized into propositions or statements, and then several of those were developed into 13

Figure 7　Smallest Space Analysis of Opinions on Workings, Functions and Characteristics of Religion

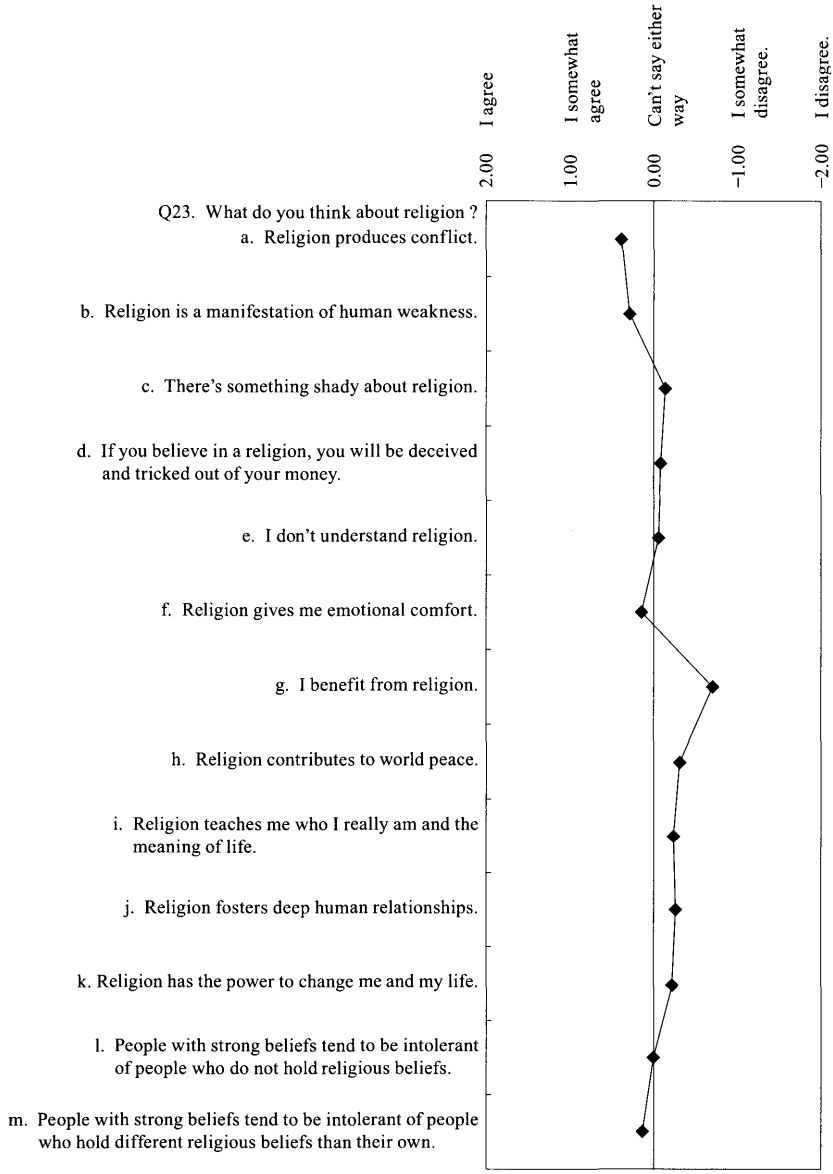


1	Q23a	Religion produces conflict.
2	Q23b	Religion is a manifestation of human weakness.
3	Q23c	There's something shady about religion.
4	Q23d	If you believe in a religion, you will be deceived and tricked out of your money.
5	Q23e	I don't understand religion.
6	Q23f	Religion gives me emotional comfort.
7	Q23g	I benefit from religion.
8	Q23h	Religion contributes to world peace.
9	Q23i	Religion teaches me who I really am and tha meaning of life.
10	Q23j	Religion fosters deep human relationships.
11	Q23k	Religion has the power to change me and my life.
12	Q23l	People with strong beliefs tend to be intolerant of people who do not hold religious beliefs.
13	Q23m	People with strong beliefs tend to be intolerant of people who hold different religious beliefs than own.

question items.

This SSA map **(Figure 7)** shows that these 13 items (propositions) are divided into two groups: those with a positive orientation toward the workings, functions and characteristics of religion, and those with a negative orientation. Within these two

Figure 8 Average Points of Responses to Questions on Workings, Functions and Characteristics of Religion



groups, certain question items are further grouped into several smaller clusters. Among the positive statements, "I benefit from religion" is located a fair distance away from "Religion gives emotional comfort," "Religion contributes to peace," "Religion teaches the meaning of life," "Religion fosters deep human relationships," and "Religion has the power to change me and my life." Likewise among the negative statements, the items about "religious intolerance" are located a fair distance away from the other items, like "Religion produces conflict," "Religion is a manifestation of human weakness," "If you believe in a religion, you will be deceived and tricked out of your money," "There's something shady about religion," and "I don't understand religion." These points are sufficiently convincing given the examination of the content of the question items.

Next, the results of the simple tabulation of the 13 items on the workings, functions and characteristics of religion are shown in the form of mean values **(Figure 8)**. The process is as follows. These questions present 13 statements, and the respondent is asked to select one of five response categories to each statement. Each response category is assigned points: "I agree" = +2 points, "I somewhat agree" = +1 points, "Can't say either way" = 0 points, "I somewhat disagree" = –1 points and "I disagree" = –2 points. These points were added up for all the respondents to determine the average value, and the results were then plotted on the graph.

The findings show that respondents tended to choose the response "I disagree" regarding the benefits of religion, its role in world peace and deep human relationships, and its ability to change people's lives, while they tended to choose "I agree" regarding the role of religion in conflict and as a manifestation of human weakness. The respondents thus tended to report fairly negative attitudes about "the workings of religion." However, this may be because they are answering the questions about "the workings of religion" based on their awareness of existing religious organizations, rather than from the perspective of the unique Japanese sense of religiosity that, as mentioned above, continues to live on in people's hearts. If that is the case, then the discrepancy between the images that are conjured up by the word "religion" and the unique religiosity of the Japanese is a highly distinguishing religious phenomenon in

contemporary Japan.

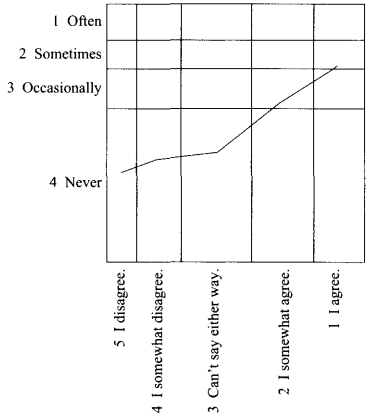
4 Median Regression Analysis

I already mentioned the method of Facet Analysis that I named "Median Regression Analysis." This method has been developed as a simple method of visually depicting the relationship between two variables, an effort to which Guttman's fundamental idea is important. Facet Approach, with its three components of Facet Analysis, Facet Theory, and Facet Design, is the starting point. Guttman divided questionnaire items into the categories of attitude, involvement and intelligence based on the type of response scales —— range type —— and referred to these as the principal components of human behavior observed using a questionnaire method. Then, using a variety of questionnaire surveys, he found that the relationship between these components were polytone regressions (including U-shaped, N-shaped and M-shaped), regardless of the specific content of the questions. Median Regression Analysis was intended to serve as a method of depicting the patterns of regressions.

The question items used on the questionnaire in the National Survey on Values and Religiosity can be divided into four clusters: question items related to (1) religious behaviors, (2) the existence of deities, souls, reincarnation, and other such phenomena, (3) religious beliefs, feelings and attitudes, and (4) the workings, functions and characteristics of religion. Cluster (1) items are about involvement, while items in clusters (2), (3), and (4) are about attitude. The final issue remaining is to analyze the relationship between these components. I was led to this idea by the general theory known as Facet Theory, but this is not specifically where my theoretical interest lies. Actually, my interest lies in substantive theories regarding the religious beliefs, attitudes and behaviors of the Japanese from a comparative perspective. By way of example, one analysis of the Values Survey, which was conducted in Japan for the purpose of comparison with the European Values Study, a pioneering work in terms of a large-scale international comparative study based on a questionnaire survey, suggests that "religious behavior has been conventionalized in Japan" (Kisala, Nagai, and Yamada 2007). However, these kinds of "Japanese religious behaviors," should not be

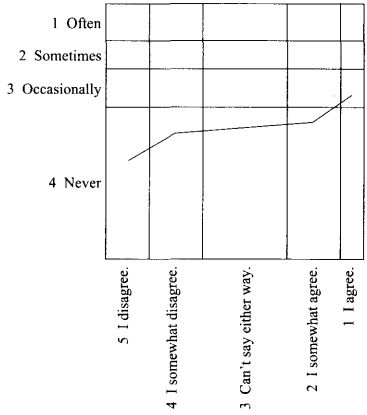
Figure 9　Median Regression Analysis of the relationship betwen Religious Behavior and Religious Feeling

Q12. Are you involved in any of the activities listed in items "a" to "i" below?
e. I am regularly involved in religious activities, such as worship and devotions



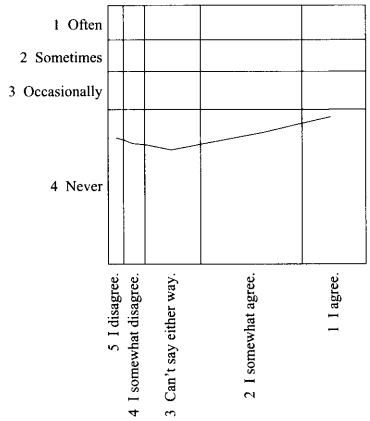
Q20. Please indicate your opinions regarding the following items "a" to "h".
f. I'm grateful to the gods for my safe and peaceful daily life.

Q12. Are you involved in any of the activities listed in items "a" to "i" below?
e. I am regularly involved in religious activities, such as worship and devotions



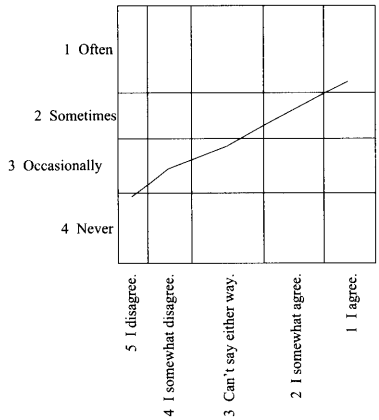
Q21. Please indicate your opinions regarding the following items "a" to "r".
r. I think that souls inhabit everything, such as mountains, rivers, grass,and trees.

Q12. Are you involved in any of the activities listed in items "a" to "i" below?
e. I am regularly involved in religious activities, such as worship and devotions.



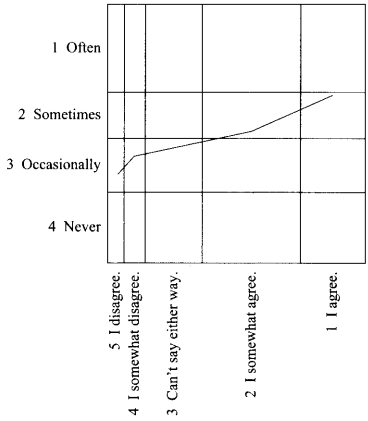
Q21. Please indicate your opinions regarding the following items "a" to "r".
b. If you are irreverent to gods or deities you will be punished.

Q12. Are you involved in any of the activities listed in items "a" to "i" below?
i. I worship before a household Buddhist altar.

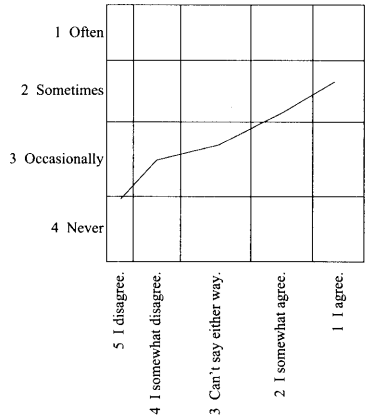


Q20. Please indicate your opinions regarding the following items "a" to "h".
f. I'm grateful to the gods for my safe and peaceful daily life.

Q12. Are you involved in any of the activities listed in items “a” to “i” below?
i. I worship before a household Buddhist altar.

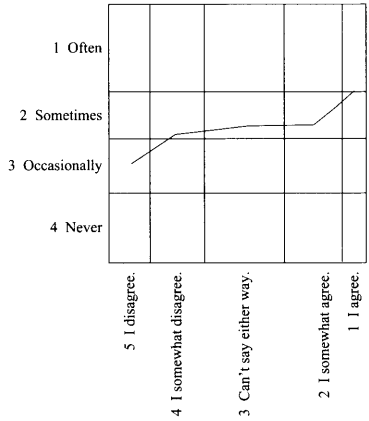


Q12. Are you involved in any of the activities listed in items “a” to “i” below?
c. Buy protective charms or amulets (for traffic safety, passing entrance exams, etc.)



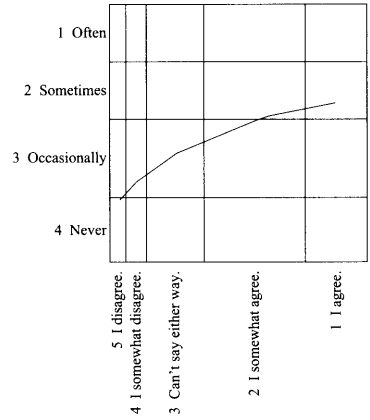
Q20. Please indicate your opinions regarding the following items “a” to “h”.
f. I'm grateful to the gods for my safe and peaceful daily life.

Q12. Are you involved in any of the activities listed in items “a” to “i” below?
i. I worship before a household Buddhist altar.



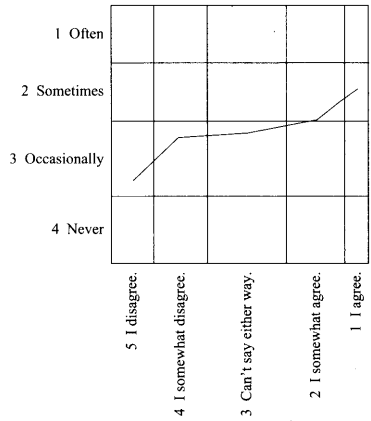
Q21. Please indicate your opinions regarding the following items “a” to “r”.
r. I think that souls inhabit everything, such as mountains, rivers, grass, and trees.

Q12. Are you involved in any of the activities listed in items “a” to “i” below?
c. Buy protective charms or amulets (for traffic safety, passing entrance exams, etc.)



Q21. Please indicate your opinions regarding the following items “a” to “r”.
b. If you are irreverent to gods or deities you will be punished.

Q12. Are you involved in any of the activities listed in items "a" to "i" below?
c. Buy protective charms or amulets (for traffic safety, passing entrance exams, etc.)



Q21. Please indicate your opinions regarding the following items "a" to "r".
r. I think that souls inhabit everything, such as mountains, rivers, grass, and trees.

viewed as being entirely unrelated to "the unique religiosity of the Japanese that continues to live on in people's hearts," as mentioned above. While the behaviors might be being conventionalized, in a broader sense, the religiosity of the Japanese continues to underlie these behaviors. Some may claim that shrine visits on New Year's Day are nothing more than festive occasions, but I contend that these festivities offer a glimpse into the simple religious sentiments that people hold.

Because of my interest in such topics, I have tried here to analyze the relationships between items related to religious behaviors and items related to religious beliefs, feelings and attitudes. To do this, I explored the relationship between "question items on religious behavior" —— (1) "worship and devotions" as a "faith-manifestation behavior," (2) "worshipping at a household altar" as a "traditional behavior," and (3) "carrying protective charms and amulets" as an "event-specific behavior" —— and "question items on the unique religiosity of the Japanese," —— (1) the importance of expressing "gratitude to deities," (2) belief in the notion that "bad behavior will be punished," and (3) belief in "sansen somoku" ("the mountains, rivers, grass,

and trees, one and all become Buddhas") ——. The results are shown in **Figure 9**.

These results suggest that each relationship in all of the cases takes a monotone shape that rises upward to the right. That is, "religious behaviors" and "the unique religiosity of the Japanese" are not distinct and separate things, but are closely linked. These findings provide empirical support for my hypothesis.

V Conclusion

The above analysis was able at least to address the first part of my original topic of interest. I tried to empirically extract a complete picture of the religious behaviors, beliefs, feelings and attitudes, and opinions of the Japanese, and the results obtained in that process are presented below.

(1) Religious behaviors are clearly divided based on their position within the spatial partition into faith-manifestation behaviors, traditional behaviors, and event-specific behaviors. The percentage of those indicating that they are involved in faith-manifestation behaviors was low relative to the other behaviors. If the concept of secularization is understood to reflect a shift away from "(expressions of) belief," then the religious behaviors of the Japanese described above clearly reflect secularization. However, the percentages of respondents who "visit ancestors' graves" (78%) and "worship at a home altar" (52%) show that even in an environment of secularization, religious traditions are being maintained in some form.

(2) With regard to the existence of deities, souls, reincarnation, and other such phenomena, "deities" and "an after world, souls, reincarnation, guardian souls" occupy a different "space of meaning" from "UFOs." Incidentally, more than 60% of respondents gave positive responses regarding the existence of both "deities" and "souls."

(3) When the item "hold religious beliefs" is placed at the center of the spatial partition of the "relationships of meaning" of the question items related to religious beliefs, feelings and attitudes, the closest items to it are "a religious mind is important," "protection and salvation" "gratitude and emotional connection with ancestors," as well as "a sense of peace or awe." The next closest items include "bad behavior will

be punished" and "a religious view of nature." However, "exhibiting memorialism" and "having a sixth sense" are located a fair distance away from "holds religious beliefs." What does the response distribution say about Japan's unique version of religiosity? Although only 30% of respondents report that they "hold religious beliefs" or "are affiliated with a particular religion" (denomination or religious group), this does not mean that everyone else rejects all things religious. Rather, it indicates that Japan's unique sense of religiosity continues to live on in people's hearts just as it has in the past.

(4) The 13 statements regarding the workings, functions and characteristics of religion can be divided into positive statements and negative statements about religion. Most of the respondents indicated that they "disagree" with the positive statements, showing that people tend to have fairly negative attitudes about "the workings of religion."

The following issues are important to the interpretation of the findings of the above data analysis. There are two important concepts (propositions, theories) that have attracted attention in the field of the sociology of religion, and I want to suggest how the current findings might be viewed in light of those perspectives. These concepts are secularization and religious pluralism.

(1) Secularization

Although many people use the word "secularization," it is not always being used to refer to the same phenomenon. It can refer, on the one hand, to "a decrease in the number of church members" or "a decrease in participation in church activities," but on the other refer to a shift in people's hearts away from the transcendental toward the internal (Lawrence 1998). Secularization must be analyzed at three different levels: social, institutional (religious organization), and individual. At the individual level, there is a trend toward "religious bricolage" or "religion a la carte" in which people are selecting the components of different religions that best suit them (Dobbelaere 1981, 1995, 2002).

(2) Religious Pluralism

In post-modern society, "invisible religion" has come to replace traditional churches and religious systems (Luckmann 1967). That is, traditional religious formats seem to be waning, but people's religious sentiments are not. In today's highly decentralized and diverse society, people are demanding their own forms of religion. This way of thinking has opened the doors for religious study. For example, it has been found that "in developed societies, increasing numbers of people are thinking deeply about the meaning and purpose of life, but those are the same people who are turning their backs on traditional beliefs and existing religious organizations (Inglehart 1997, Norris and Inglehart, 2004).

Finally, I must reaffirm the importance of examining and discussing the latter part of my original topic of interest raised at the beginning of this paper in the future. That is, a data analysis and discussion need to be performed on how the "religious behaviors, briefs, feelings and attitudes, and opinions of the Japanese" are connected to "people's social values, beliefs, and attitudes," and what the nature of the structure of that relationship is. This paper presents some initial conclusions to consider as we wait for studies that address these issues.

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