THE STIGMATISATION OF RELIGION IN JAPAN AND THE RESPONSE TO IT

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Abstract: The concept of stigma is used to analyse religion and social identity in Japan. After the Pacific War, religion in Japan and the social identity it provided can be said to have been stigmatised. Today, religion is still highly visible and still used as a mark of social identity and, thus, the effects of stigmatisation might still seem to be problematic. It is shown that in order to overcome this stigma a discourse has emerged. The discourse is associated with a typical reaction to the kind of threat to social identity and esteem that stigma can bring. This is made sense of through a conceptualisation of stigma incorporating the work of Link and Phelan, Nelson Goodman, and Tajfel and Turner. The stigmatisation and destigmatisation of religion and analytic tools to investigate it are particularly relevant today given the demonization of Islam.

Keywords: *Japan, religion, stigma, exempification, social identity theory.*

Introduction

In the past century, the world was riven by two world wars. The latter ended in two atomic bombs falling on two unprepared Japanese cities with consequences that are as unimaginable as they are horrendous. This event hastened the end of the Pacific War. The Japanese surrendered. The Americans came ashore, put an end to the 'State Shinto' system, had the emperor renounce his divinity, and rewrote the constitution. This very process of restructuring Japan ultimately acted to stigmatise religion in Japan to some significant degree. Yet, it seems, today religion is still deeply embedded in the culture and still provides a social identity. A discourse has thus emerged that aims to destigmatise religion in Japan and the social identity it provides. This, it is argued, is done following patterns similar to those identified by social psychologists like Tajfel and Turner.

In order to make sense of this, I'll proceed in the following manner. First, I will define what I mean by stigmatisation. I'll use Nelson Goodman's theory of exemplification to make sense of this in an original but intuitive manner. Second, I'll outline some strategies that

are associated with reacting to negative group identity following social identity theory. Third, I'll introduce, briefly, the historic and religious background to our discussions and document the ways in which Japanese religion came to be stigmatised. I'll then show the way that the stigmatisation is overcome in Japan using the theoretical tools previously developed.

 A quick word about my motivation here, which is twofold: First, living in Japan is to live in a space which is saturated by religious behaviour, paraphernalia, and intention. Yet, most people I meet, as borne out by survey evidence, are resolutely committed to denying religious identity. Second, in many places around the world and in cyberspace the demonization of religions like Islam is hard to escape. Indeed, I think, it is correct to say that Islam today—embodied in items of clothing, behaviours, and its relations (real or otherwise) to certain groups and nations—is heavily stigmatised. It thus seems relevant to present a case of a stigmatised religion that has undergone the process of destigmatise and chart how this was done

The Conceptualistion of Stigma

Link and Phelan

 The study of stigma was introduced by Goffman (1963). It was taken up by sociologists and psychologists. It was often used to analyse the relations between various social groupings, particularly what might be called disadvantaged groups and the stigma they bore and its effects on them. It has been noted that the concept of "stigma" is various and often varies from study to study (Stafford & Scott 1986). To overcome this, Link and Phelan propose the following conceptualisation of the concept:

> In our conceptualisation, stigma exists when the following interrelated components converge. In the first component, people distinguish and label human differences. In the second, dominant cultural beliefs link labelled persons to undesirable characteristics—to negative stereotypes. In the third, labelled persons are placed in distinct categories so as to accomplish some degree of separation of "us" from "them." In the fourth, labelled persons experience status loss and discrimination that lead to unequal outcomes. Finally, stigmatisation is entirely contingent on access to social, economic, and political power that allows the identification of differentness, the construction of stereotypes, the separation of labelled persons into distinct categories, and the full execution of disapproval, rejection, exclusion, and discrimination. Thus, we apply the term stigma when elements of labelling,

stereotyping, separation, status loss, and discrimination co-occur in a power situation that allows the components of stigma to unfold. (Link and Phelan 2001, 367)

We'll take a brief look at each feature in turn as it will help make sense of the way I conceptualise stigma.

Labels

Link and Phelan say that human differences are labelled and those labels are used to categorise people. I assume that a difference is associated with a human individual as a whole and the individual is, thereby, labelled. These differences are differences that matter, that is, of some salient kind. What makes the difference one of a salient kind seems to be down to the social context. Relatedly, they think the benefits of using the term 'label' are twofold: (a) it emphasises that a difference that makes a difference is socially processed, and (b) the term 'label' does not suggest that the label applies validly (Link and Phelan 2001, 368).

There are a few problems with this: First, talk of labelling differences implies there are differences in persons to label. Second, talk of validity, also, suggests that there are validity conditions. Presumably, such validity conditions are satisfied based on the differences in the persons labelled. Both undermine the stated aim of the use of the term 'label'. A third issue is that sometimes a shaved head, a branding, an amputated limp, etc. are used, instead of labels, to designate stigma. Actual cases attest to this—for example, from the Vichy women to AKB48 a shaved head has been a way of stigmatising females by male dominated societies who deem them to have offended their patriarchal sensibilities in some way (See Stiles 1996, BBC News 2013).

This kind of embodied symbol points us in the right direction—for we can build upon it and keep what is good from what Lean and Phelan value about their use of the term 'label'. Basically, we can see a stigma in a symbolic fashion. To make this out consider the kinds of stigma that Goffman calls our attention to

> First there are abominations of the body - the various physical deformities. Next there are blemishes of individual character perceived as weak will, domineering or unnatural passions, treacherous and rigid beliefs, and dishonesty, these being inferred from a known record of, for example, mental disorder, imprisonment, addiction, alcoholism, homosexuality, unemployment, suicidal attempts, and radical political behaviour. Finally there are the tribal stigma of race, nation, and religion, these being stigma that can be transmitted through lineages and equally contaminate all members of a family (Goffman 1963, 3).

Each of the three kinds may be said to involve symbols. Abominations of the body involve symbols that are embodied in the bodies of individuals. A limp, for example. Blemishes of character also involve symbols that are embodied in the bodies of individuals, most obviously, in their behaviours—frequent heavy drinking and constant carousing, for example. And tribal stigmas involve symbols that are embodied in the relations that the individual in question has. For example, those to a sibling who has murdered (May 2000).

Embodied symbols are, then, either embodied in the body of an individual or embodied in the relations he or she has to other individuals and things (including events, times and spaces). The differences that Lean and Phelan talk about, too, are embodied in these ways—e.g. small foreheads and large faces, cross-eyes, ADHD (Link and Phelan 2001, 368). These are more like the embodied 'attributes' and 'marks' that they reject (Link and Phelan 2001, 368). However, they are *symbols* and as symbols only have meaning within a system of broader meanings and are meaningless otherwise. This means the differences in question, though embodied, should be understood to be salient in and only in a social context and given meaning through social processes, which meets the concerns of Link and Phelan.

Stereotypes

Another element in Link and Phelan's conceptualisation of stigma is stereotype. From the passage above, Link and Phelan think of a stereotype as a set of undesirable characteristics (Link & Phelan 2001, 369). A label links a person to a stereotype. Link and Phelan provide some cognitive evidence for the existence of this process and the research is somewhat thick on the ground (see Hilton & Hippel 1996).

We have chosen to replace talk of labels with symbols. If we accept what Link and Phelan say about stereotypes, we can think that an embodied symbol (embodied in actual bodies, behaviours, or relations) links a person to a stereotype. We should also say that it is not just that the symbol links a person to a stereotype, but that that stereotype, by the nature of the *link,* classifies that person by the stereotype. This is developed through Nelson Goodman's notion of 'exemplification' below.

Separations

Labelled individuals are categorised in ways that separate 'them' from 'us'. The former is an out-group relative to the latter which is the in-group, according to Link and

Phelan. A classification of a stigmatised individual into a group that is distinct from the extension of non-stigmatised individuals is involved. This seems true enough. But it might do to note that terms like us/them, in-group/out-group, normal /different, etc. are slippery. For example, the generically non-different individual may be a target of the 'extra-ordinary' for being too much like everyone else (cf. Lange 2014) and being part of a 'them' group may be a badge of pride, as it is for bikers and juveniles.

In the terms we are using, an embodied symbol (in body, behaviour, or relation) exemplifies a stereotype that classifies the individual into a group. If we follow Link and Phelan, this is an extension that separates that group from others in some kind of evaluative fashion.

Status Loss and Discrimination

Link and Phelan note that status loss and discrimination is often left out of the definition of stigma. They feel, however, that it is a necessary condition: "Most definitions of stigma do not include this component, but...the term stigma cannot hold the meaning we commonly assign to it when this aspect is left out" (Link and Phelan 2001, 370). It seems to be the case that, if individuals are labelled, stereotyped, and separated, *and* all that leads to status loss and discrimination (against the backdrop of power relations), then they are a stigmatised group (Link and Phelan 2001, 371).

What do they mean by 'status loss'? This seems to be related to hierarchy. It seems that labelled individuals of one type, generally, drop down to lower status positions than (better) labelled individuals of another type. I assume that the first set of individuals are stereotyped negatively in the way stated above and the latter type not. Thus stigma seems to entail low status positions in a hierarchical structure.

What is meant by 'discrimination'? Examples of discrimination from Link and Phelan are rejecting a job application, refusing to rent an apartment, relying on the recommendations of a dominant group for job references, construction of buildings that hamper the disabled, etc. (Link and Phelan 372-73). It occurs along various dimensions: individual and structural and sociological and psychological. These interact and affect each other.

One might accept that to be labelled, stereotyped and negatively categorised *can* lead to a subjective or objective sense of devaluation. However, it neither seems to *entail* a status loss nor discrimination, and neither does status loss *entail* the latter. I do think

the process does, however, entail *the likelihood* of a loss of status and discrimination. Three points may make this clear: First, Link and Phelan write that labelling, stereotyping, and classifying constructs a rationale for devaluing and discriminating against individuals (Link and Phelan 2001, 371). But a rationale for doing something does not entail the motivation for doing it let alone the action—although it probably makes it somewhat likely. Second, as noted by Link and Phelan, themselves, even if there are no outward signs of status low or discrimination, there may be psychological affects and outcomes (Link and Phelan 373-374). But such affects and outcomes may not be negative. For example, experiencing stereotyping may not entail loss of status or face discrimination but just an awareness that one might obtain a lower status or discrimination. That might prime the actor for behaviours that result in purely positive psychological outcomes. Third, labelling, stereotyping, classifying, and devaluing does not entail a *loss* of status and low status does not entail discrimination in many actual cases. For example, the underage and unqualified may be labelled, stereotyped, classified, and even devalued without suffering a status loss. And if they can be considered to have a relatively low status in the relevant hierarchy and are excluded and rejected on that basis in the associated contexts, this may not amount to discriminatory behaviour. An example is the relationship between a Kōhai (後輩) and Senpai (先輩)—that is, the relationship between, for example, a 'junior' and a 'senior' member of a club, office, or school, etc. in Japan.

What status loss and the kinds of discrimination Lean and Phelan mention have in common is harm. And, though, I think, such harm is highly likely, it is not entailed. Thus, in our terms, an embodied symbol (in body, behaviour, or relation) exemplifies a stereotype that is used to classify an individual in a way that has the potential and scope for harm of a social, psychological, economic, etc. kind. Though, these are not entailed, one and probably many more harmful outcomes are likely.

Turning to the notion of 'stereotype threat', which is relevant below, it seems also the possibility and likelihood of harm is cognitively significant. Stereotype threat occurs in situations in which a negative stereotype associated with the performance of individuals of a certain group is made relevant to an individual of that group in a certain context, thereby, causing the individual to feel threatened and, ultimately, perform differently from an individual of the same group to whom the stereotype was not made relevant or from an individual of a group to whom the stereotype is not relevant. Since the stereotype links the relevant individuals to poor performances, the individual in whom the stereotype threat is

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induced, ends up acting in a way that does not meet the evaluative standards that are met by the individuals to whom the threat is not made relevant or is not relevant. This can be done simply by implying the relevance of the stereotype to the context. This has been shown to be a phenomenon that can be induced in any number of stereotyped groups of individuals with respect to academic stereotypes, athletic stereotypes, etc. (Steele, Spencer & Aronson 2002). It can even be induced in groups, who though negatively stereotyped in some ways, enjoy hegemonic privilege in most social spheres. (Steele, Spencer & Aronson 2002, 386). Thus, via negative stereotyping, the possibility and likelihood of harm, and the acknowledgement of this as a cognitively significant threat is produced.

Power

It seems to me Link and Phelan are entirely right to say that stigma emerges against a background of power relations. It, also, seems correct to say that stigmatisation may occur in the struggle for and maintenance of power. And it might even be right to say, power entails stigmatisation. I don't assume the latter is correct, just that it could be so. So the processes above plays out against a background of power relations maintaining or instating them and in this sense they are arbitrary.

Nelson Goodman

There was a lot to be drawn from the work of Lean and Phelan. I would like, now, to take what we have learnt from them in a new direction. I would like to introduce some ideas from the philosopher Nelson Goodman.

Goodman (1976) gave us a theory of symbols.[1] Symbols denote and exemplify. It is exemplification that is important here. A symbol that exemplifies does so by denoting a predicate and having that predicate classify it. For example. Käthe Kollwitz's painting *Woman with Dead Child* denotes the predicate 'is sad' and that predicate, thereby, classifies the art work as a sad painting. And it becomes an example of a sad painting through this process. This kind of process, for Goodman, is entirely conventional and, therefore, social and contingent. We have taken embodied symbols as fundamental to our ideas about stigma—those embodied in bodies, those embodied in behaviours, and those

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[1] Also see Elgin (1996).

embodied in relations. These symbols may be understood as symbols that *exemplifies* in Goodman's terms.

Following Goodman's general outline, we can think of something like a shaved head as exemplifying. For example, conventionally and in the relevant context, it denotes 'is someone who has fraternised with the enemy'. Denoting that predicate classifies the exemplifying individual as *someone who has fraternised with the enemy*. In effect, the individual constitutes an example by possessing a certain embodied attribute that also acts as a symbol just as a painting constitutes an example by possessing a certain concrete quality that acts as a symbol. Likewise with behaviour. The behaviours of an individual will, given the relevant conventions and contexts, denote a predicate that will classify him or her and render the individual actor an example of such and such a type. Thus, if a male's behaviours denote the predicate 'is effeminate', it classifies the actor in question as an individual that is an effeminate male. The individual in question becomes an example of the kind of individual in question through this process. The same can be said of a relation— a relation is an embodied symbol that exemplifies a predicate that classifies the individual who bears the relation. So consider an ex-convict. The relation in question denotes the predicate 'acted criminally', thereby, classifying the individual as someone that is related to crime. The individual is an example of an individual who bears such a relation. Stigma, in this sense, is embodied in bodies, behaviours, and relations which are symbolic and exemplifying. What is exemplified is conventional and contextual and, in this sense, contingent and, assuming dependence on a political base, most often arbitrary.

Following Goodman and like-minded philosophers, we can note that predicates are not isolated, that is, they do not float free in the air and do not fall from the sky fully formed. Rather, predicates form families of alternatives like hot/cold, wide/long/high/deep, etc. These families are called schema. And these schema are dependent on historical and contextual factors: "What the admitted alternatives are is of course less often determined by declaration than by custom and context" (Goodman 1976, 72). Further, in relation to a realm of objects, these schema constitute what are called systems. Relating a schema to a realm of objects is to systematically associate predicates with objects.

In terms of our discussion, embodied symbols are associated with predicates. These predicates are schematic. As they apply to individuals, classifying and sorting them, they constitute a system. Such a system is historically determined and context dependent and played out against a background of power-relations and struggles, arbitrary.

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Another thing to emphasise is that, in line with what exemplification is, embodied symbols *make examples* of individuals. To be made an example of a negative predicate can be, of course, highly distressing, and where the outcomes associated with the predicate are negative and arbitrary, highly threatening and acknowledged to be so. This seems likely to be a component of stereotype threat. A related point is that the kinds of examples made may relate to past, present, possible or generic typicality. For example, a relation that connects an individual to a historic theft may denote the predicate 'is a thief'. That predicate classifies the individual and presents him or her as an example of a thief. But, dependent on convention and context, the predicate may classify him or her as a past, present, possible or generic thief. The possibility that relations to past events colour the present or future or classify one as generically typical in a conventional and arbitrary manner is also threatening and more often than not acknowledged to be so. In a sense then it is exemplification that leads to stereotype threat.

But what of stereotypes? A stereotype may be thought of as an entrenched predicate. Such a predicate, of course, can be complex. For example, a symbol of the type in question may denote several predicates which can be thought of as a single conjunction and, thus, a single predicate. An understanding of stereotypes may, then, be explained through exemplification. A stereotype is constituted by an entrenched predicate, singular or complex, that classifies an individual through the process of exemplification. These are threatening to the individual when that is done in a way that has the potential and scope for the kind of outcomes, social, psychological, economic, etc. that are harmful to the individual. That is threatened given the nature of the predicate, its entrenchment and systematic application through the exemplification process, which serves to make an example of the individual categorised. That is, the induced threat a stigmatised individual may feel from a stereotype when that stereotype is made relevant, even in some very minimal way, to his or her situation, interactions, and outcomes produces threat. As such an individual's behaviour may be effected negatively. With all this in mind, I want to now consider how groups may react to stigmatisation.

Tajfel and Turner

To start with, as mentioned, there is already stereotype threat to acknowledge. In terms of a stigmatised individual the individual bears an attribute that exemplifies an entrenched and systematically applied predicate of the kind in question impacting on

behaviour negatively. For example, the individual may embody a particular skin-colour and in the relevant context, that may denote a predicate like 'has low mathematical ability'. When placed in a context which evaluates such ability on being reminded of the predicate the individual's body, in the present case, exemplifies, the individual is threatened and runs a higher risk of actually falling into the extension of the predicate for no other reason than the existence of the threat (i.e. Aronson et al. 1998)

Nevertheless, stereotyping, though it can work to the detriment of the individuals involved, provides categorisations that may also work to the benefit—particularly with respect to 'self-esteem'. That is, even if a stereotype becomes a threat to performances in situations where they are induced, it may not affect esteem negatively and can, in fact, help to raise self-esteem. For example, Crocker and Major have shown that, if the context is right, an individual who is associated with a group that is associated with a negative stereotype can protect self-esteem by (a) blaming negative outcomes on prejudice; (b) making in-group comparisons; (c) placing lesser value on those things that individuals of the group are stereotyped to do badly with. At base, identifying with a stigmatised group allows one to protect self-esteem through these strategies (Crocker & Major 1989, 620). This, then, points to the possibility of working with a negative stereotype to a positive end.

In the terms we have been discussing, symbols are embodied in individuals and they denote well-entrenched predicates that may harm and that are acknowledged to be of this type. They classify the individual that embodies the symbol making that individual an example of the set of individuals that embody the symbol in question. In this way, the individual may, too, identify himself or herself with the set of individuals systematically classified by the predicate in question, and even if this set of individuals is a stigmatised set of individuals. Individuals that do not embody the symbol in question may not be identified with and by exemplifying an alternative predicate, according to the schema in question, may systematically be identified as unstigmatised. Relations between the two sets of individuals may be used to maintain self-esteem, for example, even where the broad environment is such that the predicate exemplified by a member of the stigmatised set is likely to do harm and is acknowledged to be of this type by the stigmatised individual. That is, following Crocker and Major, by (a) identifying negative outcomes associated with the stigmatised group with causal processes that stem from the non-stigmatised grouping; (b) valuing sets of attributes associated with the latter and devaluing those associated with those of the former; (c) making in-group comparisons.

This kind of thinking has its origins in Tajfel and Turner. An introduction to the most important concepts and themes from their work for the conceptualisation of stigma and its resolution is briefly provided next and integrated into the present conceptualisation.

Group Membership

For Tajfel and Turner (1986) group membership is defined in the following manner: "[T]he essential criteria for group membership, as they apply to large-scale social categories, are that the individuals concerned define themselves and are defined by others as members of a group" (Tajfel & Turner 1986, 40). I assume the individuals concerned and the others are of a significant number and both parties define the individual in question as of the same group.

Collections of individuals of this kind constitute the members of the group. They can, according to Tajfel and Turner, be thought of as thinking of themselves as group members, sharing emotional involvement in the definition of themselves as group members, and achieving some kind of consensus about the evaluation of the group and their membership of it (Tajfel & Turner 1986, 40). The first obviously follows from the definition. Given that group membership is likely in the social setting to provide social merit or demerit, which affects identity and esteem, the latter two consequences are also likely to obtain.

Social Identity

Social groups provide their members with a means of identity. This is termed "social identity" (Tajfel & Turner 1986, 40). Social identity is defined as: "[T]hose aspects of an individual's self-image that derive from the social categories to which he [or she] perceives himself [or herself] as belonging" (Tajfel & Turner 1986, 40). To make explicit the relation of social identity to group membership we can add an additional clause: social identity is defined as those aspects of an individual's self-image that derive from the social categories to which that individual perceives himself or herself belonging and is perceived as belonging to by a significant number of others, similar and different.

Social groups also provide individuals with a means to manage their identity. It is assumed that: First, individuals strive for a positive self-image in order to protect self-esteem; Second, social groups and categories are associated with positive or negative connotations; Third, positive comparisons between groups produce high prestige, negative ones low prestige. From these assumptions, Tajfel and Turner think the following three

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outcomes follow: First, individuals aim to preserve a positive social identity; Second, thus, one's group is positively differentiated from an other's group; Third, when social identity is wanting, individuals will either leave their group or look for ways to make favourable comparisons with other groups—which leads to the need to differentiate from other groups (Tajfel & Turner 1986, 40-41). In order to do so, individuals must have internalised the group membership as part of their self-concept; circumstances must befit comparison; and a relevant group must be found to compare to (Tajfel & Turner 1986, 41). The aim is to provide a beneficial comparison.

Responding to Negative Social Identity

In relation to negative or threatened social identity. Two responses are highlighted. First, "social mobility", that is, the movement of an individual from a group with a negative social identity to a group with a positive social identity. Second, where that is not possible, "social creativity". That is, where: "The group members…seek positive distinctiveness for the in-group by redefining or altering the elements of the comparative situation" (Tajfel & Turner 1986, 43). It becomes the most important strategy when, "the barriers (objective, moral and ideological prohibitions) to leaving one's group are strong." Under such circumstances, "unsatisfactory social identity may stimulate social creativity that tends to reduce the salience of the subordinate/dominant group conflict of interest" (Tajfel & Turner 1986, 44). Competition with subordinate groups is most likely, but a group may compete with a dominant group when that group is a viable source of comparison (Tajfel & Turner 1986. 45). When the situation is seen as both unstable and unjust, but there is no room for social mobility, social creativity emerges (Tajfel & Turner 1986, 45).[2]

This theory of social identity can now be incorporated into the picture of stigma I am presenting here: As stated, symbols are embodied in individuals, in bodies, behaviours and relations. These symbols denote predicates. In the present context, these symbols denote well-entrenched predicates i.e. stereotypes. These well-entrenched predicates, in turn, classify the individual that embodies the symbol. In this way, the individual becomes an example of like individuals. An individual of this set of individuals, following Tajfel and Turner, can be said to have class membership of the relevant grouping just in case that individual sees himself or herself as a member of the group in question and a significant

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[2] One might think of social mobility as a 'flight' strategy and social creativity as a 'fight' strategy. The choice is then between fight or flight. Sometime, though, flight is impossible.

number of others see that individual as a member of that group. Given the conventional nature of the symbol embodied by the individual in question and a systematic use, this is likely to be satisfied. The individual in question so far as he or she has class membership may associate his or her identity with that class and thus obtain a social identity. Social esteem is associated with a positive or negative social identity based on class membership. High self-esteem is consistent with positive social identity; low self-esteem with negative social identity. Esteem is a function of the social identity that one receives from one's class membership. I think, we must add that conventionally, the kind of symbol in question may denote several predicates, provide several class memberships, and a conjunctive identity (or some equivalent of that). Given the nature of stigma, embodied symbols denote, at least, some heavily entrenched negative predicates that classify individuals into negatively categorised groups as examples of individuals to whom the predicate applies making it likely that negative outcomes obtain for them. Thus, it is, at first blush, highly likely that the kind of class membership in question leads to a negative social identity and, thereof, low self-esteem. Assuming, then, that individuals try to preserve self-esteem through a positive self-identity, and a positive self-identity is associated with a social identity reliant on one's class membership and the way it is evaluated, positively or negatively, and assuming that individuals want to skirt the threat and likelihood of low status and discriminatory behaviour against them, which is likely to emerge from this or that negative class membership, two options present themselves: to become socially mobile or socially creative.

I find these two options too vague for our purposes and would like to develop two related kinds of mobility that I will call "symbolic mobility" and "systematic creativity". Symbolic mobility is defined as a change in social identity that involves erasing the symbol that leads to an unwanted social identity or outcomes. Systematic creativity is defined as a change in social identity that involves the reassignment of the denotative relation between symbol and predicate. An example of the first may be the stigma that accrues from hair colour. Hair colour can be a symbol of, for example, age and conclude in detriment to the individual who embodies the symbol. A change in hair colour erases the symbol and the social identity it implies and related outcomes. An example of the second, systematic creativity, may be where stigma accrues from skin colour. In such a case, symbolic mobility is not practically possible since skin colour is difficult to erase. However, a change in what skin colour as an embodied symbol *denotes* may be of some advantage to the individuals

who embody the symbol in question. For example, black skin may denote 'is black-skinned' and classify that individual as a black-skinned individual. That association will stand. But others may be reassigned. For example, a narrative or discourse may be constructed that eliminates negative associations with black skin and beauty. In the discourse, black skin may now come to denote 'is beautiful,' thus classifying the black-skinned individual as beautiful, and a typical example of beauty. The outcome is a conjunctive social identity provided by membership of two classes. An individual embodies a symbol, black skin, which denotes both 'is black-skinned' and 'is beautiful' and classifies the relevant set of individuals as black and beautiful and allows for the correspondent social identity to emerge and be taken up. It must, also, be noted that no comparisons seem to be necessary to the emergence of this identity, just the reassignment of the symbol-predicate relation. Perhaps, though, it is practically unavoidable since non-black skin may not be understood as related to beauty especially where prior negative associations stem from groups who do not embody black skin. An admixture of symbolic mobility and systematic creativity may emerge through a discourse that is 'colour blind'. That is, where embodied symbols like skin colour systematically take no reference.[3]

Stigmatisation does not just take the form of conjunctive social identities which are reformed through systematic creativity, but conditional, disjunctive, etc. identities, which may be revalued. Logically this must be true, since conjunctions are equivalent to conditionals and disjunctions with negation. It may do to analyse stigma and reactions to it in terms of these other relations. For example, an individual may have lost or not been born with the use of his or her legs. This may be understood as an embodied symbol. It may, conventionally and systematically, denote the predicate 'is disabled'. That predicate may classify the individual as a disabled individual and that may work to make the individual an example of a disabled individual. At the same time, the conventional systematisation of the predicate 'disabled' may be associated with the predicate 'unproductive' in the following conditional relation: 'if an individual is disabled, then the individual is also unproductive'. In this way, the embodied symbol classifies an individual as disabled and by implication unproductive. Thus, an individual who embodies the kind of symbol in question is rendered an example of an unproductive individual. Two classes (a set and a subset) can be associated with the individuals here and a conditional identity.

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[3] All his will be developed in a further paper on stigma.

The likelihood of negative outcomes (psychological, sociological, etc.) is extreme and further implications may be systematised and, thus, such class membership and the conditional identity that emerges is likely to be rejected. It is difficult to see, in most contexts, how the symbolic mobility strategy might be adopted, given, that is, how entrenched the relation between the symbol and predicate is (cf. Atkinson 2015). Thus, systematic creativity is much more likely to be adopted. It is, again, easy to see how this might work. Conditionals are negated by accepting the antecedent but negating the consequent. A discourse that systematically associates the symbol in question with disability and productivity, reassigns the symbol in a way that classifies the individual as disabled and productive, and makes of him or her an example of both disability and productivity and successfully negates the inference. That undercuts the likelihood of harm associated with the unwanted conditional identity noted above.

Stigmatised individuals, then, who embody the symbols that denote predicates that classify them in their bodies, behaviours, and relations that are very difficult to erase may find symbolic mobility particularly difficult. For example, individuals with a particular skin tone, individuals that follow and value certain religious practices and behaviours, and individuals that exist in a particular space and are related, thereby, to a race or nationality. For these individuals, systematic creativity is urgent in order to facilitate positive group connotations, social identity, and maintain self-esteem. Tajfel and Turner say that that requires differentiation, which requires a space in which negative/positive comparisons can be made and an alien group with which these comparisons can be made. Following Tajfel and Turner groups can either compare to other stigmatised groups or re-imagine intergroup relations i.e. "by redefining or altering the elements of the comparative situation" (Tajfel & Turner 1986, 43). However, as we pointed out, the comparative element is not necessary to a reassignment and systematic mobility, but it seems likely. It is this kind of strategy that will be important below. This can, as we have seen, be thought of as achieved simply through the reassignment of symbol-predicate values, for example, through a new narrative or discourse which retains some values and reassigns others.

It is through stigma interpreted as above through embodied symbolisation, exemplification, class membership, social identity and the protection of self-esteem through systematic creativity that one can understand both the stigmatised nature of religion in Japan and the response to it. I turn my attention to this next.

The Stigmatisation and Destigmatisation of Religion in Japan

Religion in Japan

Shintō is sometimes thought to be the indigenous religion of Japan. However, it has continental forebears (De Bary 2001, 17). Moreover, it was not homogenous in Japan at the time it was first defined (De Bary 2001, 17). This heterogeneous set was defined as Shintō in opposition to the incoming of Buddhism in the sixth century (Kuroda 1981). It has been reimagined from time to time, for example, in the late 19th to early 20th century period (Chamberlain 2012). Japanese religious history, of course, is not even a story about two religions. Indeed, Confucianism from Japan's early period was, perhaps, even more influential than Buddhism, which itself was more influential than the Shintō tradition. Prince Shōtoku (573-621) in emulating the Chinese model centralised the state and produced a written constitution following Confucian principles. (De Bary 2001, 41). Even during the State Shintō period, which will be of interest to us, from the beginning of Meiji to the end of the Second World War, when State Shintoism came to dominate the relationship between divinity and national identity, Confucian ideas had a role to play. For example, on the Imperial Rescript on Education, a prominent government publication that helped define the period in question (Duke 2009, 366).

There have been, then, a number of religious influences on Japanese thought and this has consistently be related to identity. Many authors have commented on this close relation: "Questions of social and political identity in Japan have almost always been accompanied by perceptions and decisions about religion" (Pye 1996). And, again, in the following passages we find similar sentiments:

From the beginning of documented history throughout the centuries, we find, among scholars and priests of Shintō, Buddhism and Confucianism alike, a definite religious debate in Japan about the question of what it means to be 'Japanese' as distinguished from the outside world (Antoni 2001, 10).

[Since] the early 1880s...the bureaucracy in charge of religious affairs promoted Shintō as a public expression of Japanese ethnic identity and loyalty to the throne that all imperial subjects would observe (Hardacre forthcoming, 2-3).

In the last passage Helen Hardacre speaks of a period of history that will be important to us below. Ian Reader identifies similar links between religion and identity in contemporary Japan (Reader 2001, 14). Thus, religion in Japan, up to today seems to be various and entwined with definitions and understandings of identity, sometimes singularly sometimes interrelatedly.

As said, the period of time most important to us is that stretching from the beginning of the Meiji Period in 1868 to the end of the Second World War. At this time religion was linked to national identity in a very particular fashion and it was this particularism manner that caused the relationship between religion in Japan and national identity to be so heavily stigmatised in the years to come. That is, of course, important to our discussion below and we'll take a brief look at the relationship between religion and national identity at this time.

To define a nation, as with a group, certain predicates are associated with it. These associations it seems safe to assume are assigned discursively and systematically, in the sense given above, through application of a schema to a domain of reference, the people. Thus, the very particular link between religion and national identity in question can be understood to have been a function of a very particular discourse that was systematically organised through social processes. The discourse in question seems to have been a discourse sponsored by the Meiji and proceeding governments and certain elites. This discourse associated certain religious qualities with Japan, its emperor, and his subjects: Japan was said to have a divine origin and divine teleology; the emperor's family line was said to be directly related to divinity and the emperor a living deity; and the people of Japan were said to be subjects of the emperor and obliged to serve him unconditionally. These discursive associations, then, functioned to link certain religious features with a very particular and distinct national identity.

A number of documents exhibit the elements mentioned and their relation to the nation. The Meiji Constitution, for example, was a dedication to the ancient form of governance given to Japan by its ancestral origins and it called on those sacred spirits to both witness and help maintain the laws of the constitution. Lineal succession was talked of as eternal and the emperor declared sacred and inviolable and the people of Japan were considered to be subjects of the emperor with certain duties. In further documents to come the link between religion and national identity was only secured. Consider the government document the Fundamental Principles of the National Polity, which links the emperor, the people, and the nation in the following manner ("Amaterasu Ōmikami" refers to the deity

that created Japan in the creation myth most closely associated with the Kojiki, a scared Shintō text):

> Our country is established with the emperor, who is a descendent of Amaterasu Ōmikami, as her centre, and our ancestors as well as we ourselves have constantly beheld in the emperor the fountain head of her life and activities (Fundamental Principles of the National Polity, from Ives 2009, 46).

The Imperial Rescript on Education, a short document, but one obliged to be taught in schools and kept together with the emperor's portrait in complete safety, relates religion to nation in the following manner: "I, the Emperor, think that my ancestors and their religion founded my nation a very long time ago" (Japan 1890). In fact, this document took on a sacred qualities. It was famously distributed to schools (with a portrait of the emperor) and was expected to be looked after even at the cost of one's life (Woodard 1972, 166).

Indeed, that such documents were to be considered sacred came to be viewed as a norm. This is from the Imperial Rule Assistance Association (大政翼賛会 Taisei Yokusankai), a political organisation, in a time when all political parties had been dissolved, dedicated to the furtherance of imperial rule: "We shall hold as sacred the rescripts issued by generations of emperors" (Lu 1996, 441).

Again, the link between religion and nation passing through the emperor and his blood line is provided in a document called the Way of the Subject: "The Imperial Family is the fountain source of the Japanese nation, and national and private lives issue from this" (Japan August 1941, section V). This document also called for subjects to disregard the private self in service of the emperor and the public good of the Emperor Institution, as it is sometimes referred to, and identified this with the significance of national life:

> The way of the subjects is to be loyal to the Emperor in disregard of self, thereby supporting the Imperial Throne coextensive with the Heavens and with the Earth...Our lives will become sincere and true when they are offered to the Emperor and the state. Our own private life is fulfilment of the way of the subjects; in other words, it is not private, but public, insofar as it is held by the subjects supporting the Throne...All must be unified under the Emperor. Herein lies the significance of national life in Japan (Japan August 1941, section V).

This document is also clear about the world mission Japan has, which is manifest through the expansionist Hakkō Ichiu (八紘一宇) principle: "the benevolent rule of the emperor may be extended so as to encompass the whole world" (Japan August 1941, section IV).

So it seems that religion has had a role to play in Japan and religion and nation were related prior to the end of the war in a very particular manner. A discourse emerged that associated a divine origin, a divine teleology, a divine emperor, and a divine obligation to serve him with the Japanese nation and its people. The discourse can, thus, be thought of as a systematic function from a certain set of religious qualities associated with Japan, its creation, teleology, the emperor and his subjects to a national or social identity. However, this discourse and thus the relationship between religion and identity it provided were to become heavily stigmatised.

The Stigmatization of Religion in Japan

The Way of the Subject, noted above, sought to provide a legitimisation of imperial expansionism. And in 1941 Japan attacked Pearl Harbour and precipitated war with the United States. Japan lost this war. The position that Japan found itself in after the loss was dire. There were the atomic bombings; millions dead; over 70% of inhabitants had abandoned Tokyo and 65% of its inhabitable places had been destroyed and more in other cities; homelessness ran into the millions, made up of demobbed soldiers, widows and orphans; there was a lack of food and communicable disease spread easily; crime, corruption, and state sanctioned prostitution contributed to shortages of supplies and disease; and under such conditions anxiety and trauma were not hard to find (Dower 2000). It was religion that was officially blamed for this outcome. The 'Shintō Directive', one of the first documents to be published by the occupying forces, explicitly established a link between religion, ideology, and suffering. It was stated that religion had helped form "an ideology [that] contributed to [the people's] war guilt, defeat, suffering, privation, and [Japan's] deplorable condition" at that time (GHQ December 1945).

It is also important to note that religion of the kind in question was also associated with militarism and ultranationalism by the Shintō Directive. It thus states that part of its mission is "to prevent a recurrence of the perversion of Shinto theory and beliefs into militaristic and ultra-nationalistic propaganda designed to delude the Japanese people and lead them into wars of aggression" (GHQ December 1945). That kind of militarism was linked to the teachings, beliefs and theories associated with what was designated 'State

Shintoism' to pick out the particularism world view and associated identity highlighted in the previous section.

This document's stated mission was not only to allocate blame but to negate the equivalence relation between state and religion. Thus, on the one hand, its mission was put like this: "The purpose of this directive is to separate religion from the state to prevent misuse of religion for political ends…" (GHQ December 1945). To further cement this separation a block on the power of religion to influence public life and education was instated. On the other hand, the directive sought to pluralise religious space and to remove official interferences that might retard this process. Thus, freedom of religion was an important part of the stated aim of this document. The sentence above continues like this: "…and to put all religions, faiths, and creeds upon exactly the same legal basis, entitled to precisely the same opportunities and protection" (GHQ December 1945). Indeed, Woodard, part of the mission to Japan and later a scholarly contributor to our understanding of Japan at that time, writes that SCAP (Supreme Commander of Allied Powers) wanted "to develop a desire for freedom of religion" in Japan (Woodard 1972, 179). The message was echoed in various other documents that followed. The constitution being one prominent example; others being the Fundamental Law of Education of 1947, the Religious Corporations Ordinance of 1945, and later the Religious Juridical Persons Law of 1951, and so on.

To further the break of equivalence, several steps were taken. A space was created in which the equivalence of religion and state was concretely dismantled in the minds of the Japanese people. For example, concrete actions, including voluntary and involuntary dissolutions and encouragements to leaders to step down and a few purges, were taken against religious groups who seemed to exhibit the qualities associated with the religion of the past and who sought to influence public life in similar ways. An early English language record of this is found in the *Reminisces of Post-War Japan* series (1965). On the other hand, SCAP set up sections like Civil Information and Education (CI&E) in order to manage the reeducation of the Japanese people which included a syncretic, pluralistic, tolerant reorientation toward religion: "Many of the CI&E educational films showed an imagined America, a harmonious, prosperous society free from racial, class, gender, or religious conflicts" (Tsuchiya 2002, 204). In addition, the obligatory tribute to local shrines collected by community associations became a matter of choice although its implementation remained problematic for a time (Woodard 1972).

Thus religion was associated causally with war, suffering and death; particularism; militarism and ultranationalism; the equivalence between religion and state legally prohibited; and steps taken to avoid the conflation of religion and state and religion and politics through dissolutions of problematic religious groups, a tolerance of all other religious entities, and processes of reeducation and reorientation.

Today, the contemporary understanding of pre-occupation religion in Japan is consistent with the discourse that was disseminated by the occupying forces. For example, in a paper reviewing theories of 'civil religion' in Japan, Okuyama (2012) cites several authors who manifest the paradigmatic view. For example, Christi and Dawson (2007) identify three kinds of civil religion: a totalitarian one; a sacred form of nationalism; and a historical form that serves elites. They associate pre-occupation religion with the first and second types (Okuyama 2012, 65). Robertson (2009) is another prominent example. He divides civil religions and political religions (theocracies). Giving examples of the latter kind, Robertson writes: "[S]ocieties with political religions (or theocracies) have included Nazi Germany, contemporary North Korea, and the period of State Shinto in Japan (approximately 1890 until 1945)" (Robertson 2009, 453). A third example is drawn from Takayama (1993): "With Japan's unconditional surrender in 1945," he says, "the Allied powers demanded the abolition of the Japanese civil religion moulded during the nationalistic and ultranationalistic periods" (In Okuyama 2012, 69). That this discourse is paradigmatic is also attested to by those who bemoan the ostracising of Shintoism in particular (e.g. Nishi 1982). Parenthetically, it should be noted that other religions in Japan contributed to the ultranationalist paradigm at that time. Nichiren Buddhism is one case in point; Christianity, however, another (Chamberlain 2012).

Thus, we have some sense of the stigmatisation of religion that occurred in Japan after the war. I want now, then, to set the process of stigmatisation and destigmatisation out in terms of the theory developed above.

The Process of Destigmatisation

In the present context, we have seen that a discourse associated religion with national identity through divine origins, teleology, and the emperor's divinity. This discourse, however, was supplanted by a discourse that associated religion with a negative set of predicates. This discourse classified religion and religious actors in Japan as particularism and antagonist to contrarian voices; causally related to war, death, and suffering;

militaristic and ultranationalist; and the force behind a dangerous equivalence of religion and state (a relation that came to be legally proscribed). This list of associations may be thought of as a predicate and, in the relevant sense, a stereotype, call it 'is S' or just S for short. S may also be thought of as synonymous with acting theocratically, following Robertson (2009) (and others) quoted above. Because the occupation discourse has dominated and is concurrently paradigmatic in conventional scholarly discussion, the predicate is entrenched and can, therefore, be thought of as a stereotype. We can, thereof, say that the discourse associates religion in Japan prior to occupation with the stereotype S and, by implication, theocratic behaviour.

On our conceptualisation, stigmatised groups posses bodily, behavioural or relational symbols that exemplify predicates which classify them and make them examples of the kinds of individuals that fall into the extension of the entrenched predicates. Such classifications lead to the likelihood of negative outcomes. In the present case, then, something like the following might be said to take place: an individual comes to embody a symbol that denotes (or implies) S and S classifies and presents that individual as an example of someone that engages in theocratic behaviour. This suggests class membership and class membership suggests identity and such an identity is liable to engender negative outcomes, not least of psychological import (low self-esteem, guilt, etc.). It is very unlikely that such class membership will be accepted and that such a social identity is adopted or maintained. As stated above, strategies above are available that can be adopted in reaction to this set of possibilities: symbolic mobility or systematic creativity. To understand the appropriate type we need to understand just what symbol threatens the kind of classification in question.

There are two main symbols: First, behaviours and practices. Second, historical relations. In Japan, it appears as if people engage in various religious behaviours and wilfully participate in certain events, celebrations, ceremonies, rites, etc. For example, the majority of people visit graves (Hakamairi 墓参) in line with the Buddhist calendar, pray at shrines for the upcoming New Year (Hatsumōde 初詣), commemorate the dead with Buddhist ceremonies (Hōji 法事), etc. People also seem to exist in a space saturated with religious paraphernalia. There are shrines easily found standing on public streets and private shrines (Kamidana 神棚) and religious altars (Butsudan 仏壇) in many houses. Moreover, there is a sense of sacred things and such things are treated with respect and

reverence e.g. one's ancestors. There is a sense, also, of cultural value to the things mentioned and the practices done. They are, in fact, deeply embedded in the culture of the nation. On the other hand, the historical relations in question are paradigmatic, as already shown. Therefore, we have behaviours which act as symbols and historical relations that act as symbols. Each may denote S or each may denote religious behaviours that imply S (or, at the very least, the respective possibilities—past, present, future, or generic). If so, it doesn't seem that in either case symbolic mobility is possible. Culturally embedded religious behaviours are hard to do away with, global historical truths even harder. Rather, it is systematic creativity that is called for. Following the examples provided, that should be achieved by another discourse. Certain discursive strategies might be undertaken to this end: the reassignment of the symbol-predicate relation or the negation of the implication from religious behaviour or history to S. In fact, all of these strategies can be found. Here are a number of such strategies observable in Japan.

Syncretism, Pluralism, Tolerance

Today the syncretic, pluralistic and tolerant nature of religion *in Japan* is stressed. For example, consider the following passage:

> お正月に神社にに参り、結婚式はキリスト教の教会で挙げ、お葬式には仏教に則る。こういった、生活のなかにいくつもの宗教が混在する日本人の宗教観を、ユダヤ・キリスト教の一神教を基調とする欧米人は理解し難いと感じているようだ (Atsusaka 2015).

> We visit Shinto shrines at New Years, get married in churches, and follow Buddhist funeral rites. It is difficult for Americans and Europeans, who follow religions like Judaism and Christianity, whose key note is monotheism, to get to grips with this way of life.

Syncretism and pluralism are emphasised to go hand in hand with tolerance:

> どんな宗教が輸入されても，寛容な気持ちで日本の神様の仲間として取り入れ...”
> (Wajikan 2015).

> Whatever religion has come to Japan, with a tolerant spirit, it enters as the friend of the Japanese gods.

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This strategy, then, may be seen as an attempt to negate the inferential relationship between religion and S. Behaviour may, indeed, denote religious behaviour, but religious behaviour does not imply S. In fact, religious behaviour and the negation of elements of S are consistent with the Japanese context, it is said. Therefore, these behaviours and the negation of S as a whole, assuming S is conjunctive, is also consistent with the context. And that is equivalent to the negation of the implication, from religious behaviour to theocratic behaviour, in question. Passages like the above also tend to obfuscate the historical relation to S. As can be seen from the second quoted passage, it seems religion in Japan has never be consistent with S as a whole, but rather with its negation. That undermines the narrative provided by the occupation forces.

Naturalism

It is fairly often emphasised that religion in Japan involves a plural number of deities. It is usually Shintoism that is used to express this point:

神道はその歴史的な起源から特定の教義や聖典、唯一神を持たない信仰の自由度の高い多神教の宗教であり、山や川、森、岩、野生動物、気象、（自然災害）など自然の万物に宿る「八百万の神々（やおよろずのかみがみ）」を崇拝するのです (Es Discovery 2011).

Shinto, from its very beginnings, a religion that had a vast number of gods and that is free of the belief in a single god, scripture, and special doctrine, is the worship of an innumerable number of gods that inhabit every part of nature, for example, natural disasters, weather, wild animals, rocks, forests and mountains.

The real emphasis of the plurality connects religion in Japan to a deep veneration for nature. This reverence is explicit in responses to surveys carried out on religious attitudes in Japan. In a 2008 Yomiuri Shinbun survey of religious attitudes, for instance, participants were asked about a recent change to the education law. The law would allow the teaching of general religion in the classroom. Respondents were asked what they thought should be taught. Approximately 70% said a respect for life and nature (Yomiuri Shinbun 2008).

This can be seen, again, as the willingness to accept that behaviours denote religious behaviours, but as an attempt to break the back of the implication from these behaviours to S. In this case, since religion and a reverence for life and nature are consistently associated, religious behaviour does not imply death and politics. This, assuming S is a conjunction, negates the general implication from religion, especially Shintoism, to theocratic behaviour. So far as this is related to the beginnings of religion in Japan, again, as far as Shintoism is concerned, the historical origins of this negation are secured. That, again, puts strain on the occupation interpretation of Japanese religion before the war, especially associated with Shintoism.

Naturalism and Irreducibility

The naturalism above is apparently related to animism and ancestor worship. Ama (1996) argues that this is why religion in Japan is thought to be distinct from other religions by ordinary people and, ultimately, not really religion at all. In essence, people are using the relation between nature and animism and ancestor worship to make the behaviours and practices in question irreducible to religious behaviour and practice. In this case, the symbolic relation between behaviours and their appearance is tackled. Behaviours that *appear* religious, actually, according to most Japanese people, according to Ama, denote behaviours that are not really religious at all. This rests on the conflation of religion with American/European religion. Again, so far as the historical relation between religion and S is concerned, it is obfuscated since nativist behaviours are not really religious at all in Japan.

Irreducibility to Dogma, Scripture and Founders

Religion in Japan is also understood by many to be irreducible to doctrines, scriptures, or a founding teacher. Of course, this can only begin to make sense if religion in Japan is associated with Shintoism, as in the following quote:

神道には教義や教典、教組がないので教えが一切ない信仰だと誤解している人が大勢おります。仏教やキリストのように煩雑な教えこそありませんが、人としての生き方を教えてくれる言葉が「古事記」や「日本書紀」「万葉集」はじめ、多くの古典に記されている (Izumu-ooyashiro Murasakino Kyokai).

Although Shinto has no doctrine, scripture, or founder, it is a big mistake to think that Shinto has nothing to teach. Although there isn't the same kind of troublesome

teaching found in Buddhism and Christianity, words of wisdom on how to live life are contained in many classics like the Shojiki, Nihonshoki, and Manyoshu.

In this case, the discourse suggests that the presence of religion is accepted. However, it also implies that such religion hasn't the same kind of troublesome or confusing features as other religions found from other areas of the religious universe but is, nevertheless, related to wisdom found in the classic texts of Shintō mythology. Thus, again, symbols of behaviour if denoting religious behaviour do not denote S, since S involves dogma, scriptures, and a reductive origin to a founding family line. If S is a conjunction of its elements, the inferential relation between religion, again, associated with Shintoism, and theocratic behaviour is falsified. And, again, so far as Shintoism, through its texts, stretches back to primordial Japan, historical relations are obfuscated.

Irreducibility to Religion

Religion in Japan is said to be practiced without real religious identity. The reluctance of Japanese people to identify themselves or their behaviours with religion can be pronounced. It is summed up by the vast majority of Japanese folk identifying with the 無宗教 (Mushūkyō) category in surveys of their religious attitudes and behaviours (NHK and ISSP 2009). The Japanese literally translates as "no-religion." Global statistics also confirm this kind of self-categorisation (Noack 2015). Again, such an argument can be seen as a narrative strategy that tries to reassign the value given to behaviours. Such behaviours no longer denote the behaviours of a religious actor and, thus, such acts are not related to S if ever such behaviours were. Moreover, interestingly, for Japanese people not only behaviours that appear to be religious but behaviours that may *even* denote Shintoist behaviours or *Japanese* Buddhist behaviours, all fail to denote the behaviours of a *religious* actor. This leads to apparently paradoxical classifications: Shintoists, Buddhist and adherents of no religion lack mutual exclusivity, they are merely cultural and thus unified. That is, one might identify with the first 2 categories as well as the third. Again, it also helps to obfuscate the historical relations, since there is not really any religion in Japan.

A strange quasi-academic counterpart to the emphasis in question is found in the idea that because the term 'Shūkyō' purportedly did not exist in Japan prior to its use to translate the term 'religion,' religion did and does not exist in Japan. It's a strange view since, first, it overgenerates as many terms actually did not exist in Japan until they were

engineered to translate imported terms and concepts and, second, in general, the conclusion does not follow from the premises. This argument, again, seems to seek to reassign the value associated with the behaviours in question, what look like religious behaviours, thereby, do not denote religious behaviour but behaviours that are indigenous to Japan and merely look religious to western outsiders. Again, the historical paradigm is undermined.[4]

The Whole Narative

Thus, we have a discourse today that associates religion in Japan with syncretism, pluralism, tolerance, life and naturalism, irreducibility to dogma, scriptures, founding or primary teachers and, in fact, disassociates it with actual religion and religious classification. Given the viability of this discourse, religious behaviours in Japan now come to exemplify predicates that break the back of the inference that associates religion in Japan with attributes contained in S or undermines the assignment of behaviours to religion altogether and obfuscates history. The discourse goes some way to destigmatising a set of practices and behaviours that are deeply ingrained in the lives of ordinary people and their culture, such as the 法事 (Hōji) remembrance ceremony or the visiting of the infamous 伊勢神宮 (Ise Jingū) shrine, a Shintō shrine with deep connections to the ideological past but which retains a special place in the hearts of many Japanese people—about 7 million people a year visit it (Ise Shrine 2011). If the historical relations are true at all, it no longer, according to the discourse in hand, has anything to do with the true nature of religion in Japan, which in its indigenous forms isn't actually religion at all or if it is, has a negative relation to theocratic behaviour. In our terms this is systematic creativity at its best.

Conclusion

To sum up. The stigmatisation process involves embodied symbols like the behaviours and historical relations relevant to this case. These symbols denote. According to the discourse associated with the occupying forces in the present context, such symbols can denote theocratic behaviours or religious behaviours from which theocratic behaviour can be deduced. The behaviours in question look like religious behaviours and the

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[4] See Fitzgerald (2003) for a version of this argument in a slightly rambling discussion paper.

historical reading is paradigmatic. There is, then, some entrenchment here. Individuals who embody such behaviours in the Japanese context and are in some way related to the historical relation may be classified as theocratic actors and they become examples of theocratic actors. It is likely that such classifications will harm the individuals in question, not least psychologically. Therefore, it is unlikely that class membership and the resultant social identity will be accepted. It seems it isn't.

Likely ways to react against the classification are symbolic mobility or systematic creativity. The behaviours and historical relations are unlikely to be erased. The behaviours are highly valued and the historical relations are paradigmatic. Thus, systematic creativity is most likely to be taken up. Indeed, that is, as argued above, what happens. A discourse is produced. So far as the behaviours in question denote religious behaviour, religious behaviour is constant with non-theocratic elements, which falsify the inference from religious behaviour to theocratic behaviour. Or/and the behaviours in question actually do not denote religious behaviour at all, which means the inference from religious behaviour to theocratic behaviour is inapplicable to the Japanese context. Last, since a negative inference relation to theocratic behaviour or a lack of denotative relation to religious behaviour exists, the occupation discourse that tied religious behaviour to theocratic behaviour is obfuscated.

Thus, in terms of the present discourse, individuals embody symbols like behaviours and primordial historical relations to the religions (or sometimes 'nonreligions') of Japan. These classify the individuals concerned and the individuals concerned become examples of non-theocratic actors if at all religious. In a modern world, that kind of class membership is likely to be viewed positively and class membership and the resultant social identity is likely to be highly prized. High self-esteem and prestige can be conjectured, which is evident from the quoted passages above. Tajfel and Turner suggest the kind of response adopted as antagonistic. But we argued it doesn't have to be, but is often likely to be. Is it in this case? Unfortunately, it seems so. The historical aspect of the occupying discourse is obfuscated, though paradigmatic and, therefore, likely to lead to outright conflict. Nishi (1982) mentioned above is a scholarly example of this. Moreover, the destigmatising discourse makes its case for non-theocratic identity by contrast to religions perceived to be non-Japanese, and particularly with reference to the US or Europe (and often does so using a set of false comparisons). Thus, it is implied that non-Japanese religions of that kind *are*

theocratic or tend to a more theocratic notion of religion. Thus, as Tajfel and Turner think, antagonism is an implication of what I called systematic creativity in this context.

In general, then, religion in Japan provides an excellent example of a once stigmatised and latterly destigmatised religion. This should be of some relevance today given the continuing stigmatisation of religions like Islam.

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