

## Reply

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The main point of Dr. Swyngedouw's rejoinder seems to be that in attacking European ethnocentrism we went to the opposite extreme and may have become guilty of Japanese ethnocentrism.

It was not our intention, however, to overemphasize Japanese "uniqueness" or in any way to deny scientific theory. Despite our perhaps immoderate statement that "Japanese religion cannot be explained in terms of western theory" (p. 8), we simply wished to point out that it is extremely difficult to analyze contemporary Japanese religion by means of the church/ sect model — except, of course, for the "new religions." We wanted to say that it is impossible to gain a comprehensive understanding of Japanese religion within the framework of the church/ sect model.

In replying to Dr. Swyngedouw we would like to clarify three points. These points have to do with ancestor worship, *ie* and *ie* structure, and integration.

*Ancestor worship.* As mentioned in our original paper, secularization in Japan cannot be understood as a crisis in organized religion. It is true, of course, that secularization is causing a number of problems in certain organized religious bodies such as the Shinshū Ōtaniha (Higashi Honganji-ha) and the Nihon Kirisuto Kyōdan (United Church of Christ in Japan), but these are internal problems and do not, we must emphasize, represent a crisis of religion as a whole in Japan. In fact, owing to the development of the "new religions," it may even be said that a religious revival of sorts is taking place.

In raising the question of ancestor worship, our intention was to point out that a significant change is occurring—invisibly,

as it were—outside the sphere of institutional religion. With regrets for any unclarity that may have attended our statement, we wish to call attention to the works of such scholars as Hozumi (mid-Meiji period), Watsuji (early Shōwa period), Yanagita (in the immediate postwar period), and several contemporary students of religion on the sense of crisis over the decline or change in ancestor worship.

In his work on the new religious consciousness Bellah points up the growth of utilitarian individualism as over against the decline of biblical religion, the result being a “massive erosion of the legitimacy of American institutions” (1976, p. 333)—a value crisis in American society. Watsuji, however, made much the same point nearly fifty years ago when he called attention to the crisis in Japanese values occasioned by changes in Japanese ancestor worship. In our paper, accordingly, ancestor worship was viewed as a symbolic expression of changing values. Our purpose was not to define ancestor worship. We merely wished to point out that the question of ancestor worship is of concern to scholars who treat it as a problem in the secularization of Japanese religion.

*Ie and ie structure.* What Dr. Swyngedouw observed as regards the *ie* and *ie* structure appears to be essentially a semantic problem. Dr. Swyngedouw, who is extremely well-versed in research on Japan done by Japanese scholars, simply read too much into the text. He took the metaphoric use of the *ie* model to signify Japanese corporations or the nation as a whole. As we used it, however, the *ie* model had a more limited range of application. What we had in mind was the more traditional definition of the *ie* not as a family (as may have seemed to be the case) but as the institution that unites the living and the dead.

An important change is taking place, in fact, in Japanese rituals for the dead; they are becoming mere memorials. We remember an incident in which Japanese officials were deeply shocked to observe an American Konkōkyō “memorial service.”

In ancestor worship the dead (regarded not as dead but as living in another world) are not simply longed for or fondly recollected. The *ie* serves as a point of interconnection between the two worlds. The change to "memorial services" implies a fundamental change in the role of the *ie*, and it is for this reason that the *ie* was taken up for consideration.

*Integration.* The problem of integration is tremendously important and is one to which we will have to give further consideration. Dr. Swyngedouw asserts that since Japan is a homogeneous country, the problem of integration should not arise. This is not necessarily true. Perhaps we may take the liberty of introducing to him a fifteen hundred-year-old maxim: *wa o motte, totoishi to nasu* ("harmony should be your guiding principle above all else"). This idea is still applied today. True though it is that Japan is homogeneous, it is equally true that the integration of "cliques" (*habatsu*) into organizational wholes is a constant problem in Japanese society.

*General theory.* Last to be dealt with is the question of the contribution of our paper to general scientific theory. This matter probably requires no further explication, but by way of clarifying our intention, let us take a hypothetical situation. Let it be supposed that Christianity in the west is viewed not as one church among other institutional religions but as the "family religion" of its adherents. On this view the Sunday service becomes not a gathering of faithful individuals but a gathering of families. A decline in church membership or in the number of worship services would indicate not that secularization has taken over but that the "family" system of religion has disappeared.

The point of this illustration is to show that our references to religion in the west and to the religious dimension in the family were intended not to support some notion of Japanese "uniqueness" but to suggest the hope that the ideas at work in our study

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may not be without relevance to the understanding of religion  
in the west as well as in Japan.