

FFWPU Europe and Middle East: Japan's Courts: Faith-Breaking is a Malicious Criminal Act

Knut Holdhus
April 20, 2025



The apartment block where Yukie Kanamori was [confined](#) (2014)



[Sekai Nippo](#)

From captivity to courtroom: Japanese woman wins lawsuit over malicious coercive faith-breaking by Christian pastors

Tokyo, 25th March 2025 - Published as an article in the Japanese newspaper [Sekai Nippo](#). Republished with permission. Translated from Japanese. [Original article](#).

[Intro from article 1: In July 2014, an incident occurred in Hiroshima where a couple in their 40s, members of the [Family Federation for World Peace and Unification](#) (formerly the [Unification Church](#)), were [forcibly detained](#) by their relatives and confined in an apartment in Osaka. In 2020, the Hiroshima High Court ordered the Christian-affiliated individuals and relatives responsible for the confinement to pay approximately 1.7 million yen [Editor's note: ca. 11,360 US Dollars] in damages. Yukie Kanamori (pseudonym, in her 50s) spoke to [The Sekai Nippo](#) about what happened at the time.]

"They Can't Think for Themselves," Said Relatives

[Special Report] Abduction and Confinement of a Married Couple Who Were Family Federation Believers (Part 2)

See [part 1](#)

by the Religious Freedom Investigative Team of the editorial department of [Sekai Nippo](#)



Committed suicide after being sued: Pastor and faith-breaker Mamoru Takazawa of the Christian Truth Church of Kobe

"So far, I have persuaded hundreds of [Unification Church](#) members to leave the [church](#), and only about 30 have managed to escape (from confinement)."

In July 2014, Pastor Mamoru Takazawa (高澤守) of the Christian Truth Church of Kobe (a Protestant church) made this remark in front of Yukie Kanamori (alias) - then in her 40s - who was confined in an apartment in Osaka Prefecture.

Pastor Takazawa maintained a one-sided attitude throughout his interactions with Kanamori and her husband [Editor's note: while both were held in [forcible detention](#), orchestrated by him. See part 1 of the story]. He would sometimes criticize the [Family Federation for World Peace and Unification](#) (formerly the [Unification Church](#)) from 3 PM to 10 PM nonstop.

Kanamori not only endured the mental distress of being subjected to this "persuasion" endlessly but also had to withstand the physical pain of bruises - requiring two weeks to heal - inflicted when her relatives restrained her. When she could no longer bear the pain and lay down on a futon, Pastor Takazawa furiously exclaimed, "That's no way to listen to someone talking!"

However, right after Kanamori and her husband were freed by the police, who arrived at the confinement

site, Pastor Takazawa gathered her relatives and made them kneel, begging Kanamori not to take legal action. Without giving a response, she returned to her home in Hiroshima and initiated settlement negotiations with her relatives.



The settlement terms included acknowledging the facts surrounding the [confinement](#) incident and pledging never to repeat such acts of [coercive faith-breaking](#). Kanamori explained,

"I told them that if they adhered to these conditions, I wouldn't file a lawsuit. The terms were actually quite favorable for them." However, her relatives refused the settlement and instead criticized her for even seeking one. Kanamori speculated, "The pastors must have been manipulating my relatives behind the scenes to suit the pastors' own agenda."

In November 2014, about four months after the confinement, Kanamori and her husband filed a criminal complaint against Pastor Takazawa and others who played a central role in the [coercive faith-breaking](#). However, in 2015, Takazawa died by suicide. The prosecution ultimately decided not to indict anyone, citing prosecutorial discretion.

Unsatisfied with this decision and still unable to shake off fears of being [abducted and confined](#) again, Kanamori and her husband filed a civil lawsuit in May 2016 at the Hiroshima District Court, seeking approximately 7 million yen [Editor's note: ca. 46,500 US Dollars] in damages from the relatives involved in the [confinement](#) and Atsuyoshi Oshima (尾島淳義), a deacon at the Aotani Evangelical Lutheran Church in western Japan.



In February 2019, the district court ruled entirely in favor of Kanamori, ordering her relatives and the Christian officials to pay about 2.8 million yen [Editor's note: ca. 18,600 US Dollars] in damages.

During the trial, the defendants, including Kanamori's relatives and the Christian representatives, emphasized the "malicious nature" of the [religious organization](#) and the "love and concern" of the family. They argued that Kanamori and her husband had lost the ability to "think for themselves" due to the [influence](#) of the [organization](#), making it necessary to [physically restrain and persuade](#) them. However, the court rejected this claim,

stating that the act of [confining and restraining](#) Kanamori and her husband posed a potential threat to their lives and constituted a "malicious criminal act".



In 2020, the Hiroshima High Court upheld the lower court's ruling, though it reduced the compensation amount to approximately 1.7 million yen [Editor's note: 11,300 US Dollars]. Since the defendants chose not to appeal further, the ruling was finalized.

Attempts at Reconciliation

With the trial behind her, Kanamori has attempted to reconnect with her and her husband's parents. While some contact has resumed, her mother still tells her,

"The fact that you joined the [Family Federation](#) is more abnormal than being [abducted and confined](#)."

Despite the [Family Federation](#) being a religious organization that conducts Sunday services - including hymns, sermons, and prayers - her family refuses to acknowledge it as a legitimate faith, leaving a deep

divide between them.

Although the courts ruled that [abduction and confinement](#) were criminal acts, Kanamori continues to struggle with how to repair relationships with her parents, who still believe the propaganda about "brainwashing" and "[mind control](#)" spread by pastors. Kanamori expressed frustration, saying, "The parents who were deceived into believing that [confinement](#) would surely lead to [de-conversion](#) were also victims [manipulated](#) by the pastors."

Since last year, she has begun sharing her experiences on social media, hoping to challenge the negative perceptions surrounding her [religious organization](#). She has also come to realize the power of words from someone who has personally experienced [abduction and confinement](#). She says,

"I sometimes regret not speaking out more about our faith and beliefs. Moving forward, I might have more opportunities to share my story."

See [part 1](#)

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Couple Abducted By Family! Held Captive 5 Days

- March 24, 2025
- Knut Holdhus



*"I thought I'd never see my kids again":
A mother's harrowing ordeal – Couple
abducted and held captive for days*



Logo of the
Sekai Nippo

Family Federation for

Tokyo, 24th March 2025 – Published as an article in the Japanese newspaper *Sekai Nippo*. Republished with permission. Translated from Japanese. *Original article.*

In July 2014, an incident occurred in Hiroshima where a couple in their 40s, members of the



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World Peace and Unification (formerly the **Unification Church**), were **forcibly detained** by their relatives and confined in an apartment in Osaka. In 2020, the *Hiroshima High Court* ordered the Christian-affiliated individuals and relatives responsible for the confinement to pay approximately 1.7 million yen [Editor's note: ca. 11,360 US Dollars] in damages. Yukie Kanamori (pseudonym, in her 50s) spoke to *The Sekai Nippo* about what happened at the time.

Location of Hiroshima and Osaka, on the main island of Honshu. Image: Maximilian Dörrbecker (Chumhwa) / Wikimedia Commons. License: CC ASA 3.0 Unp

Pastors Appeared to Persuade Them to Leave the Faith

Separated from Their Young Children for Five Days

by Takahide Ishii (石井 孝秀)

Kanamori recalls the experience of being **abducted and confined** while visiting her family home,

"At first, I didn't understand what was happening."

There have been numerous cases where **Family Federation** members have been abducted and confined by their relatives, who were influenced by "faith-breakers" (professional deprogrammers) and certain Christian pastors, to force the believers to renounce their faith and leave the **religious organization**.

Kanamori had returned to her family home in Hiroshima on the afternoon of 26th July 2014. She had other plans that day, but her mother strongly urged her to come home, so she complied, bringing along her 8-year-old daughter and 3-year-old son. Other family members, including her parents, her younger sister and her husband, as well as her mother's brother and his wife, were also present.

By 8 pm, Kanamori began noticing unusual behavior among her relatives. Her mother and younger sister took her daughter out shopping, which she found odd given the late hour. In hindsight, she realized this was a ploy to separate her from her children.



Her parents being abducted and confined by relatives took its toll on daughter. Illustration: Microsoft Designer Image Creator, 23rd October 2024.

At that time, Kanamori was beside her son, who had already fallen asleep, when her father invited her to talk in another room. There, she was surrounded by her father, uncle and aunt, and her brother-in-law. As they talked, her brother-in-law suddenly pinned her down from behind.

Her mouth was covered with a towel, and her hands and feet were about to be tied. At that moment, she realized she was being abducted and confined to force her to abandon her faith, and she resisted desperately. Suddenly, her brother-in-law's parents also entered the room.

She screamed in fear, thinking, *"I may never see my children again."* However, her sister had already prepared for this – she played music from a CD player to drown out the noise, ensuring that neighbors would not hear the struggle.

After a fierce struggle, Kanamori was not only bound but also forced into a sleeping bag and transported in a van. Around 1:30 am on 27th July 2014, she arrived at an apartment in Osaka. She found that her husband had also been brought there.

Her husband had been tricked into going to visit a critically ill uncle at a hospital earlier that day. However, this was a ruse set up by his relatives, who then took him directly to the apartment.

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Pastor and faith-breaker: Mamoru Takazawa (高澤守) of the Christian Truth Church of Kobe (キリスト教神戸真教会). Photo: Kazuhiro Yonemoto

During their confinement, two Christian pastors visited the couple: Pastor Mamoru Takazawa (高澤守) from *Christian Truth Church of Kobe* (a Protestant church) – after the incident he committed suicide – and Atsuyoshi Oshima (尾島淳義), a deacon from the *Aotani Evangelical Lutheran Church* in western Japan. They criticized the [Family Federation](#) and pressured the couple to leave it. However, the couple resisted by going on a hunger strike, refusing to comply with the pastors' demands.

Throughout their confinement, they carefully exchanged information and observed their surroundings in an

attempt to determine their location. Kanamori noticed a gas valve labeled "Osaka Gas", confirming they had been moved from Hiroshima to Osaka. Additionally, from overheard conversations among the relatives, she learned that they were being held in "Room 501" of the apartment building.

Since their belongings, including their cell phones, had been confiscated, Kanamori took a risk. At 2 am on 31st July, while their captors were asleep, she used one of their mobile phones to send a text message to a fellow [Family Federation](#) member. She provided all the information she had gathered and requested that the police be contacted.

The police arrived and freed the couple. They had been held captive since the night of 26th July and were finally able to return to Hiroshima in the early hours of 31st July.

During this time, their children had been cared for by Kanamori's mother and younger sister. She recalled,

"The night we returned to Hiroshima, my sister and her husband brought the children back home. The moment they saw me at the door, they burst into tears."

The children had been told that their parents were "away on work", but the forced separation had taken its toll – especially on her daughter. She had become overly cautious, insisting on locking the chain lock on the door every night, something she had never done before. She also started experiencing severe night terrors, crying uncontrollably at night.

Kanamori expressed her deep sorrow and frustration,

"What I find hardest to forgive is how this has hurt my children's hearts."

Featured image above: Yukie Kanamori (alias) shares her experience of being [abducted and confined](#). Photographed in Hiroshima by Takahide Ishii (石井 孝秀)

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