

FFWPU Europe and the Middle East: Japanese Lawyers Exploiting Fear Of The Unknown

Knut Holdhus
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The crucifixion of the 26 Catholic martyrs of Nagasaki, Japan 5th Feb. 1597

Hostile lawyers inflating figures and exploiting people's fear of the unknown

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No need for asset preservation provisions - Questionable request for dissolution of the Family Federation



Sekai Nippo

Part 3 of interview with international lawyer Tatsuki Nakayama (中山達樹)

Unsubstantiated claims by National Network of Lawyers Against Spiritual Sales (NNLASS)

by the Sekai Nippo editorial department (Interviewer: Takahide Ishii (石井孝秀) and Yoshiyuki Iwaki (岩城喜之))

- Asset preservation has been a topic of discussion in the parliament, primarily among the opposition parties. How do you perceive this?

When constructing laws, the concepts of "necessity" and "acceptability" are considered. Necessity refers to the literal requirement that a law addresses specific social circumstances. On the other

hand, acceptability involves balancing considerations such as human rights protection and compatibility with other existing legal provisions.

There is a lot of debate about whether the asset preservation bill is "acceptable" from the perspective of religious freedom, but I would rather put the spotlight on the issue of "necessity". The fundamental question is whether there is a need for this bill in the first place. Organizations such as National Network of Lawyers Against Spiritual Sales (全国霊感商法対策弁護士連絡会 - Zenkoku Benren) emphasize that it is necessary because there is a large amount of "damage", but most of the "damage" is "damage" without evidence. Recently, a 94-year-old former female believer in Yokkaichi City, Mie prefecture, withdrew a lawsuit where she demanded more than 100 million yen.

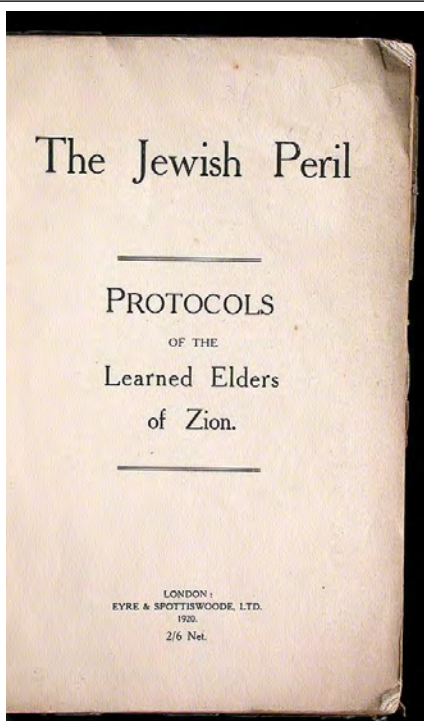


Attorney Tatsuki Nakayama exposing how hostile lawyers exploit people's fear of the unknown

Over the past year, the [religious organization](#) announced that it voluntarily refunded a total of approximately 4 billion yen. On the other hand, despite the gathering of numerous lawyers from National Network of Lawyers Against Spiritual Sales, they have not been able to compile any evidence. In the end, the lawsuit filed in Mie prefecture was also withdrawn. In the eyes of a lawyer, it is tantamount to saying there were no damages or victims to speak of. Therefore, it becomes evident just how inflated the damages of 100 billion yen claimed by the National Network of Lawyers Against Spiritual Sales truly are.

In other words, one might question whether there was any "necessity" to create the law of asset preservation in the

first place. Both the ruling and opposition parties were working hard to draft a bill to preserve assets, but in the end, this coincided with the aims of the National Network of Lawyers Against Spiritual Sales to attack the [religious organization](#) in an activist manner, and the politicians' desire to create a track record that would be popular with the public. This appears to be a "battle of appeal" between the two sides to appeal to the public.



The Japanese network of lawyers painting a black picture of the [Family Federation](#), uses similar rhetoric to what the Nazis used against the Jews. Here the title page of the 1920 British publication of the anonymous edition of the Protocols of the Elders of Zion, an Anti-Semitic fraudulent publication describing an alleged Jewish conspiracy to take over the world

In 2018, the Consumer Contract Act was amended, and a so-called "spiritual sales law" was also incorporated into it. The network of lawyers played a significant role in this amendment as well. However, even with these changes, we don't hear stories of newly discovered "victims" being compensated. The same seems to apply to the victim relief law from last year.

From the perspective of the National Network of Lawyers Against Spiritual Sales, their goal seems to be to strongly implant the impression in society that the [religious organization](#) is "evil", all while ensuring that this impression persists until the dissolution of the [organization](#).

- The religious organization is undergoing reforms, but what will be needed in the future?

When considering reforms, two patterns must be taken into account. The first is reform during the period when the dissolution request is being examined in court. The second is reform after the request has been rejected, and the [religious organization](#) is not dissolved.

If the dissolution request is granted, that's the end of it. Therefore, let's first consider reforms during the period until the court's verdict is delivered. As in the symposium of the Second Generation Association, it is important to appeal to the public the reality of not being mind-controlled. If the judges knew the real picture, they would realize that this is not an organization that deserves to be disbanded.

If the organization manages to overcome the dissolution, the next crucial step would be to facilitate dialogue. Possibilities include intergenerational conversations between first-generation and second-generation members, as well as dialogue between

believers and individuals outside the [organization](#). It's essential to balance the extreme image that the public holds of the [organization](#) with the real-life perspective of a believer as an ordinary citizen.

In the past, Scientology was labeled as a "cult" and encountered significant opposition in the United States, yet it managed to survive. The key to its survival lay in employing a strategic approach: utilizing the media to portray the authentic nature of the religious organization and filling in the gaps in the general public's perception, where they were often viewed as mysterious or a poorly understood group.

The fear of the unknown is great. The work of filling the gaps in the public perception of the [Family Federation](#) was monopolized by the National Network of Lawyers Against Spiritual Sales and others. The public perceived the [Family Federation](#) as a "frightening religious organization that we don't know much about."

Abduction and confinement for the purpose of forced renunciation of faith is another such gap. Filling it - depending on how it is done - could lead to exposing the hypocrisy of the side against the [Unification Church](#).

Tatsuki Nakayama (中山達樹) was born in Kanagawa Prefecture (神奈川県) in 1974. He graduated from the University of Tokyo's Faculty of Law. In 2005, he became a registered lawyer and graduated from the National University of Singapore Law School in 2010. After working as an international lawyer at a law firm in Singapore, he established Nakayama International Law Office in 2015. In 2016, he became a certified fraud examiner and graduated from the master course of Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy. His notable works include "Global Governance Compliance" and others.

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November 5, 2023 • Knut Holdhus



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The role of the lawyers

After that, the lawyers Kito and Yamaguchi appeared on the scene. They were brought to Niigata by



Masaki Kito, activist leftwing lawyer. Photo: Screenshot / Bitter Winter



Hiroshi Yamaguchi, activist leftwing lawyer. Photo: Screenshot / Bitter Winter

deprogrammer Takashi Miyamura, and they were remarkable. Lawyer Hirata [Hiroshi Hirata] visited the place of confinement, but lawyers Kito [Masaki Kito] and Yamaguchi [Hiroshi Yamaguchi] were very smart. They did not show up the place of confinement at all. [They tried not to be connected to the crime. Yamaguchi was from the former Socialist Party and founded National Network of Lawyers Against Spiritual Sales (Zenkoku Benren) in 1987 in order to destroy the Unification Church. Kito joined the network after a while.]



Professional deprogrammer Takashi Miyamura (宮村峻). Photo: FFWPU

My father, Miyamura, and I went to a joint law firm in Niigata. And we were introduced to them there. After that, Takashi Miyamura, my father, and I drove back and forth to Tokyo with one bodyguard. Then they told me, "Suing the hospital where you used to work is taking responsibility. You have to take responsibility. Take responsibility."

Then I wondered,

"They thought that I had gone crazy. Therefore, I have been locked up, haven't I? Suddenly they talk about responsibility. Something is strange here. These people locked me up because they think I am crazy."

They said to me,

"If you don't believe in the church, you have the responsibility to sue them. You have no other responsibility but suing that church-related organization."

And it was not only of me they demanded this. They did not talk just to me. In 1993 there were lawsuits the lawyers called "Give me back my youth" in Niigata City. There were also monthly meetings about it there [to prepare new ex-members for such cases]. I and five or six other persons were always locked up in the Niigata area, in [what was then] Niitsu City. If someone said, "I've left the Church, I've left," they would be made to say that at a meeting. It was "rehabilitation". And the kidnappers thought that it was "rehabilitation" to have ex-believers sue the Church.



Hirohisa Koide telling his story 10th Sep. 2023 in Tokyo. Photo: Screenshot from YouTube video by Japanese Victims' Association against Religious Kidnapping and Forced Conversion.

At that time, about 50 people had already participated in the [meetings preparing new ex-members for] "Give me back my youth" court cases. But only about five of them actually showed up in court. The actual plaintiffs [who appeared in

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showed up in court. The actual plaintiffs [who appeared in court] were not so enthusiastic, not very passionate. The pastors and deprogrammers told them that it was their responsibility now to sue the Church. Once they agreed to do that, they no longer had the freedom to refuse to sue.

Christian pastors

And above all, something was really frightening about study groups in some Christian churches. If someone's son or daughter said that he or she was doing something unusual, such as joining an unfamiliar religion, the parents would become concerned and look for someone to consult with.

When you say, "Christian church", doesn't that sound a little reassuring? Ordinary people think that Christians don't do anything bad. It is of course a bit of an exaggeration to say that they are yakuza [gangsters, someone involved in a Mafia-like criminal organization]. And if there is such a beautiful Christian church, everyone will trust it a bit. And what do they do there? They show you videos, and some ex-believers talk to you, and they say, "Oh, if you were in such a **Unification Church**, your life would be miserable. You would go crazy." And they keep going on and on about it and convince people / parents that the only way to get you to quit your faith is to lock you up.

If parents to some degree think they have to lock up their son or daughter, then that's it. There is a 2-day seminar [for them]. When I went to a 2-day seminar, there was practical training included. I played one role – the enthusiastic believer.

When asked what kind of attitude the parents should have when their son or daughter is locked up, the parents would say, "My son, you have to stop!" A former believer would then say, "You can't tell him to stop like that, father. I would not hurt the feelings of a believer in that kind of way." They would continue to do this mock training all the way through until they decided on X-Day [day to take action and do the abduction]. They even had the parents and relatives make a schedule where the X-day was determined.

How they treat believers

I could go with that pastor to prepare a place of confinement. It was done by the pastor. The windows were locked with a special gadget to make sure they could not be opened. I



Device making it impossible to open window. Photo: [Japanese Victims' Association against Religious Kidnapping and Forced Conversion](#).

could hardly believe that a pastor would do such a thing. He would also be the guard at the place where a believer would be confined by his or her relatives. This was really painful for me to watch. Just in this one case [I watched], just one night, he would let in about 10 or 15 relatives, really that scrum around the believer. He or she would be brought in while the crowd would be screaming and shouting all around him or her.

It's really kidnapping people, just like the title of my book says ["Escape from Kidnapping"]. I was there, and so I told the pastor, "It's a successful lock-up." He said, "It's almost a success." But it's definitely confinement, no matter how you look at it.

I was also present at a place of deprogramming. I am a believer who was confined in that way.

There was actually a board next to the pastor's room with a list of five or six names on it. So, everyone talked about it and asked, "Who's going today?" And if it was for rehabilitation, they would make me go. But once I was there, I was having nightmares every night. Even now, when I decided to come to this symposium, I had nightmares again. That's how painful it is for those who were locked up. They were really in pain. Even

one day was painful. It was a really painful experience for me too. My true desire now is for people who have gone through such experiences, to get better, even if just a little.

Conclusion



Pastor Yasutomo Matsunaga (松永康智) of the Niitsu Evangelical Christian Church. Photo: FFWPU

However, both Pastor Matsunaga and Attorney Kito believe that they have done the best thing possible.

Kito appears on TV and looks very dignified. He is convinced that he is doing something great. I think he believes that he is a hero who does things that no one else does.

It is actually really difficult to use brute force to destroy someone's belief. There is a saying, "In times of trouble ask for God's help!" I couldn't even do that. If you belong to a faith, you are told that also praying is a superstition.

It was so hard and so difficult that I think it would have been easier to have my head cut off. I was denied even the world of prayer, and told that I'm delusional. It's really painful to have all of my religious experiences reduced to delusions, and to have my loved ones force me to go through this deprogramming. I believe that the 4,300 persons [the number of members of the [Family Federation](#) abducted and subjected to deprogramming] are still suffering and being hurt. Those people who were mentioned earlier may not be able to regain their sense of security, safety and self-confidence.

I am currently doing medical service at Angkor Wat [in Cambodia]. There, you can see such a Buddha statue that has been decapitated. (Showing a photo.)

It is written about it in Masaki Kito's book. A deprogrammer (exit counselor) says that the moment a Buddha statue is broken, and the moment a person renounces the faith, is the most satisfying moment of his life. The deprogrammer says that the moment when believers abandon what they believe in is the greatest joy for him.

That was all. Thank you very much. See [part 1](#), [part 2](#)

Featured image above: From the front cover of the 1996 version of Hirohisa Koide's book "Escape from Kidnapping". Published by Kogensha. New edition in 2023.

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