

東洋大学長 殿

To the President of Toyo University

東洋大学海外からの研究員 研究報告書

## Research Report for the Toyo University Research Fellow Program

氏名 Name	Veronique Altglas
所属機関名 Affiliation	Queen's University Belfast
部局名 Section	School of Social Sciences, Education and Social Work
職名 Position	Senior Lecturer
研究テーマ Research topic	(日本語 Japanese) 日本のメシアニック・ユダイズム関連運動についての研究および日本の研究者・研究機関との学術交流 (English) Research on Messianic-Judaism-related movements in Japan and academic exchange with Japanese researchers and research institutions
研究期間 Research period	年 月 日～ 年 月 日 From 2024/11/05 to 2024/11/30
受入担当教員氏名 (東洋大学の所属) Name of Host professor (affiliation at Toyo Univ.)	Norihito Takahashi (Professor, Faculty of Sociology)
研究成果発表 (予定も含む) Publication/Presentation of research results (including future ones)	I delivered two lectures during my time in Japan: - Toyo University Lecture (21 November 2024): Focused on the topic of new religious movements and spirituality in Euro-American societies, tailored for undergraduate students specializing in the sociology of religion. - Tokyo University Lecture (28 November 2024): Invited by Professor Satoko Fujiwara, I presented a seminar on the same theme to postgraduate students and scholars at Tokyo University.  The insights gained during my visit open doors for a more comprehensive research project on messianic movements in Japan. I now intend to draw on this preliminary research to write a research proposal in order to access funding for a more extensive project on messianic and pro-Israel groups in Japan. This funded project could support a postdoctoral researcher to conduct a comparative analysis of messianic congregations and Christian Zionism in Japan, focusing on their sociological impact and growth in Asia.
研究成果の概要 Summary of research results	This research explored the expansion of messianic religious movements in Japan, a continuation of work on a manuscript concerning messianic congregations in Northern Ireland. These movements, characterized by their blending of Jewish traditions with Evangelical Christian beliefs and ideological support for Israel, present fascinating sociological challenges. While extensively studied in regions such as North

	<p>America, Brazil, and Africa, they remain underexplored in Asia. This preliminary exploration revealed a growing interest among Japanese Christians in the Hebraic roots of their faith, mirroring trends in Europe and North America, yet with distinctive Japanese trends and groups.</p>
<p>研究成果(600字以上) Research results (more than 600words)</p>	<p>A substantial portion of my research during my visit focused on the expansion of messianic religious movements in Japan, which aligns with my ongoing work on a manuscript centered on messianic congregations in Northern Ireland. The global proliferation of these movements presents unique sociological questions, particularly their fusion of Jewish traditions with Evangelical Christian beliefs and their ideological support for Israel. While the messianic movement has mainly been studied in North America, and now in Brazil and Africa, there is no known study on cases in Asia. Yet the messianic movement and Christian Zionism both have expanded also to Japan. Besides, from discussions I had in Japan with representatives of different religious movements (see below), it seems that there is a growing interest from Japanese Christians for the Hebraic roots of their faith, which was observed in Europe and North America.</p> <p>I identified several religious movements that could be the focus of a future in-depth empirical research:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Chosen People Ministries</i> (Japan): This outreach group, rooted in American evangelicalism, emphasizes the conversion of Jews and has established a presence in Japan.</li> <li>- <i>Tree of Life Messianic Japan</i>: A typically messianic congregation that observes Jewish laws while following Jesus, bridging Jewish and non-Jewish beliefs; probably the only messianic congregation in Japan.</li> <li>- <i>A Bridge between Zion and Japan</i> (BZJ): The Japanese branch of Bridges for Peace, a global Christian Zionist organization. Based in Kobe, this organization connects Israeli Messianic Jews with Japanese believers, aiming to foster cross-cultural religious dialogue and support for Israel. It is an independent ministry from the leader who is pastor of a church. He is also on the board of <i>Chosen People Ministry</i>. This group shows that an opposition between Japanese and Western group would make little sense and that the reality on the ground is more complex. Indeed, its leader traces the origin of their activities to a Japanese Pastor of early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, calling to pray for Jews and Israel.</li> <li>- <i>Jerusalem Japan House of Prayer</i> (JJHOP): This community, involving Israelis, Japanese, Jews, and Christians, conducts tours and Bible studies, emphasizing biblical and Zionist themes.</li> <li>- <i>Eternal Love Israel</i>: Describes itself as Japan's first project dedicated to Jewish evangelism.</li> <li>- By contrast, Makuya an older religious movement, is typically Japanese, primarily attracts Japanese adherents and seems to emphasize conservative religious and political orientations. Makuya might not be recognized by evangelical organisations above; nor do they seem to cooperate with each other. While very distinct from these transnational organizations whose membership could be predominantly, or in part, western, Makuya however share similarities: the movement supports Israel, and seeks a return to the Hebraic roots</li> </ul>

of Christianity. Yet, contrary to the above groups, they do not consider messianic congregations as valid paths to follow Jesus.

- Similarly, another Japanese movement remains separated from the worldwide network of ministries described above. The Holy Ecclesia of Jesus, an independent Japanese Christian denomination founded by Ōtsuki Takeji, aimed at recovering apostolic Christianity and entrusted with a special mission regarding the nation of Israel in the “last days”, of which salvation is believed to have implication for Japan’s fate.

As noted elsewhere in my work on messianic organizations, these organizations seem to be diverse and vivid, yet they might be volatile too: for instance. Japan Messianic Fellowship (JMF) and Tikkun Global Japan are cited in the recent academic literature but seem inactive nowadays.

During my stay, I have mapped out these organization and the ways I which they relate (or not) with each other. I also started preliminary biographical research to sketch the outlooks of the existing knowledge on these groups as well as knowledge gaps. I engaged with some of the leaders and participants of these religious movements. I spoke with the leader of *A Bridge between Zion and Japan* and the chairman of *Chosen People Ministries Japan*, who co-leads *Tree of Life Japan Messianic Congregation*. I was also invited to attend their Shabbat service, which provided firsthand insight into their practices and beliefs.

The insights gained during my visit open doors for a more comprehensive research project on messianic movements in Japan, potentially supported by a UK-based grant. This project could fund a postdoctoral researcher to conduct a comparative analysis of messianic congregations and Christian Zionism in Japan, focusing on their sociological impact and growth in Asia.

Preliminary discussions on this potential project are held with Professor Takahashi and, in December, with Erica Baffelli from the University of Manchester, with whom I have a collaborative history, including through the UKRI-funded project, “Minority religion/minorities in religion” (2018-2019).

Overall, my tenure as a guest researcher at Toyo University provided a valuable opportunity for academic collaboration, lecturing, and pioneering research into understudied religious movements. These activities have laid the groundwork for future partnerships and expanded the scope of my research to include significant developments in Japanese religious practices.