

Post-Mortem Identity and Burial Obligation: On Blood Relations, Place Relations, and Associational Relations in the Japanese Community of Singapore

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Using gravestone inscriptions in the Japanese cemetery in Singapore, this paper addresses two issues pertaining to the Japanese in Singapore. Its findings, however, will have implications for understanding Japanese social organization in general. The first issue is the “post-mortem identity” of the Japanese, that is, the profiles of the dead constituted by the personal data found on gravestones. The second issue is “burial obligation,” namely, who buries whom for what reasons. My aim is to find out the kinds of facts crucial for the formation of the “personality” of a deceased person, and the kinds of social relations that existed between the deceased and the parties who performed the burial on his/her behalf. I will demonstrate that post-mortem identity is constituted mainly by “blood relations” (*ketsuen* or kinship) and “place relations” (*chien* or place-of-origin). Meanwhile, “associational relations” (*shaen*) played an important role in determining burial obligations in the Singaporean context, although they did not replace other kinds of relations. I will also discuss how gravestone inscriptions provide us with a glimpse of social division and even political tension within Japanese society before 1945.

Death, as anthropologists have shown, is a social event [HUNTINGTON and METCALF 1979: 1-22]. When a person dies members of the immediate family, friends and neighbours, and indeed society at large is called into action. In modern Japan various individuals, groups, and institutions that may or may not have any close relationship with the deceased are called upon to act as well. When the moment of death approaches, a doctor is summoned, and, depending on the circumstances, the police may also be alerted. An ambulance takes the dying person to the hospital where death will be officially pronounced. In due course the morgue, the funeral home, the cemetery, and the priest will be contacted for their services.¹⁾ Moreover, the death must be reported to the local government office once a death certificate is obtained. As the survivors go into mourning, relatives and neighbours will help with the funeral and burial, while friends, colleagues, and business associates will make financial contributions to help with expenses. In short, managing the death of one person necessitates the involvement of multiple individuals, social groups, and institutions, setting into motion social processes of

varying intensity and duration. Death is thus useful for understanding society. As records of personal history and social processes, the Japanese cemetery in Singapore represents a valuable source of information on an overseas Japanese community whose history stretches back to the late nineteenth century.

Singapore's Japanese cemetery is one of the oldest and by far the largest and best preserved in Southeast Asia.²⁾ Today it has more than 900 graves, most of which are marked by gravestones with inscriptions of varying lengths. As these inscriptions contain concrete and personal facts that have been left out of the historical "big picture," they open a special window onto the social history of the Japanese not just in Singapore but also in Southeast Asia (Nanyō) at large.³⁾ Admittedly, gravestone inscriptions usually follow a standardized style and are cryptic in meaning. They are difficult to interpret. But, while any single grave may yield little useful information, the aggregate of over 900 graves constitutes a database large enough for trends and patterns to emerge. In Section One I will give a brief history of the cemetery to put the gravestone inscriptions in context.

Information on gravestones falls into two broad categories. The first consists of personal data necessary for the identification of the deceased, of which the name has central importance. With the exception of the anonymous dead, the name always appears at the center-front of the gravestone. This name can be either the "religious name" (*kaimyō/hōmyō*) or the "secular name" (*zokumyō*)—that is, the name used in one's lifetime. In many cases both names are given. Depending on their literal meaning and the way they are recorded, these names provide clues to sectarian affiliation, gender, age (infant or adult), and socio-economic status. In addition, names are combined with such information as death date, place-of-origin, next-of-kin, profession, and status to form varying profiles of the dead. By examining the salient features of these post-mortem identities, it is possible to make some general observations about Japanese social organization. I will take up this issue in Section Two.

The second category of information pertains to the individuals and groups that were involved in burying the dead. Managing death is a basic problem facing many immigrant communities, and the Japanese in Singapore were no exception.⁴⁾ Whereas back home the family of the deceased normally takes care of funeral and burial matters, in a young immigrant community such as the one in Singapore, which had a large proportion of single immigrants, non-kin had to assume the mortuary responsibility of the family if people were to be properly buried at all. Gravestone inscriptions furnish evidence that friends, co-workers, and employers were among the parties involved in burials. But there were also destitute loners who had to rely on the goodwill of strangers for a proper burial. It was under these circumstances that the Mutual Help Association (*Kyōsaikai*) was formed at the end of the nineteenth century to provide burial service to members and, occasionally, abject non-members. In spite of the importance of the Mutual Help Association, it would be wrong to assume that the Japanese cemetery was a burial ground for the single and poor only. The graves of such notable members of the Japanese

community as company presidents and medical doctors are also found there. When these people died it was not the Mutual Help Association but the more prestigious Japanese Association (Nihonjinkai) that was responsible for organizing a suitably dignified funeral complete with long banners, huge wreaths, and a meandering motorcade (see pictures in YASUKAWA (ed.) 1993: 220, 221, 226). But unlike the Mutual Help Association, the Japanese Association was seldom involved in the construction of graves for individuals. The issue of who constructed graves for whom will be discussed in detail in Section Three.

As noted earlier, gravestone inscriptions have clear limitations as historical sources, providing but fragmentary information about the dead and the social circles to which they belonged. Since these texts make little sense standing alone, it is essential to interpret them with reference to contemporary sources (e.g., TSUKUDA 1916, NANYŌ 1929, 1937) and the work of post-war researchers (e.g., HARA 1986, SHIMIZU and HIRAKAWA 1998, YANO 1975). Nonetheless, as few archival materials on the pre-war Japanese community exist in Singapore, and the Japanese brothels and curios shops of old have long since disappeared due to war destruction and post-war redevelopment, the graves are the only tangible link between present-day Singapore and the early Japanese presence there.⁵⁾ By piecing together snippets of information gleaned from these graves, I hope to add a few details to the broad picture of Japan's "southward advancement" (*nanshin*), a vista so far dominated by intellectuals, politicians, military figures, and big businesses.⁶⁾

THE COMMUNITY AND THE CEMETERY

According to Yano Tōru, three modes can be discerned in the socio-economic advancement of the Japanese in Singapore (and Southeast Asia) before 1945 [1975: 79-116]. While primarily defined in economic terms, they also correspond roughly to the chronological periods of late Meiji (1880-1911), Taishō (1912-25), and early Shōwa (1926-1945). It must be emphasized, however, that the predominance of one mode at a particular time did not exclude the others.

In the late nineteenth century the Japanese in Singapore were mainly prostitutes with a handful of men working as pimps, hawkers, and menial laborers [SHIMIZU 1997: 94-118]. Their number was small and, because of their profession, they were looked down upon not only by the Westerners but by other Asian peoples as well [NANYŌ 1937: 523]. It was these Japanese of humble social status who made up the bulk of the Mutual Help Association's membership. The second mode had its beginning in the early twentieth century when the Japanese community saw a gradual transformation in its socio-economic character. This shift was symbolized by the crackdowns on Japanese prostitution in the 1910s, which brought about a retreat (but not an eradication) of Japanese prostitutes and pimps. Meanwhile, the number and influence of "respectable" Japanese grew as more import-exporters, shipping agents, bankers, plantation owners, and professionals came to reside in the city-port. Consequently, the Japanese community became not

just more affluent but also socially more acceptable to the colonial authorities. The formation of the Japanese Association, basically a social club, and the concomitant decline in the grave-building activity of the Mutual Help Association reflect this change. The third mode is typified by the ascendancy of Japanese industrial capital. Japanese companies poured money into the massive exploitation of such tropical products as rubber, palm oil, and base metals. Such investments in turn boosted Japanese interests in trade, finance, and shipping. The prime example of this development is Ishihara Sangyō, a mining concern operating in Singapore and Malaya. It was financed by semi-governmental money from, for example, the Bank of Taiwan, and its business strategies conformed to the Japanese national development agenda [YANO 1975: 107-115]. In fact, it was this kind of competition between the macroeconomic interests of Japan and those of the Western colonial powers that formed the backdrop to the Pacific War.

The Japanese cemetery was officially created in 1891 when Futaki (or Niki) Takajirō, Shibuya Ginji, and Nakagawa Kikuzō obtained government approval to convert twelve acres of land in the Serangoon area outside the city into a burial ground for Japanese [YASUKAWA (ed.) 1993: 8-11].⁷⁾ At that time, fields and rubber plantations surrounded the site, although it is now located in the middle of a low-density residential area off Chuan Hoe Avenue. In fact, the Japanese had begun using this site for burial before it was officially recognized as a graveyard. The 1911 *Nanyō no hatten* (cited in YASUKAWA (ed.) 1993: 216-217) notes that in 1888 Shibuya and Futaki relocated the remains of 27 Japanese from a mass grave to the Japanese cemetery. More recently, Higuchi Naoki, who did a survey of the cemetery in 1981, discovered three gravestones dating from 1889 [YASUKAWA (ed.) 1993: 8]. After its official opening the cemetery was managed by the Mutual Help Association under the leadership of Futaki. When the Japanese Association was formed in 1914, it joined the Mutual Help Association in running the cemetery. This arrangement lasted just three years. From 1917 onward the Japanese Association took over as sole caretaker until the outbreak of the Pacific War. During the Japanese occupation of Singapore, from 15 February 1942 to 15 August 1945, the occupation administration entrusted the cemetery to the care of the Shōnan Patriotic Service Association (Shōnan Hōkō Kai), which was created under the administration's auspices.

After the war all Japanese military and civilian personnel were repatriated by 1947. As a result the cemetery fell into disuse. In 1953 the Singapore government transferred the custody of the cemetery to the Embassy of Japan. When Japanese civilians started to return to Singapore, the Japanese Club (Nihonjin Kurabu) was formed in 1957 with the express purpose of restoring and maintaining the cemetery. Club members repaired damaged graves and persuaded squatters to move off the premises. In 1969, after repeated petitions, the Singapore government agreed to transfer custody of the cemetery to the Japanese Association. Nevertheless, four years later, in accordance with new urban re-development plans, the government decreed that no more burials were to be performed on the site. Thus, a century after

opening, the cemetery has ceased to function as a burial ground, although it continues to serve as a symbol of Japanese presence not just in Singapore but also in the region. In 1987 to commemorate its thirtieth anniversary (post-war), the Japanese Association beautified the cemetery with donations from members and assistance from Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It was made into a public park and given a new name: the Japanese Cemetery-Park (Nihonjin Bochi Kōen).

When surveyed in 1981 the cemetery had 910 graves. This number represents a reduction of 360 from the 1270 identified in 1947. Graves disappeared due to a number of reasons. Encroachment and vandalism soon after the war caused some destruction while the tropical climate hastened the decay of grave-markers, especially those made of wood. In terms of the era of grave construction, 309 graves date from the Meiji period, 122 from Taishō, and 88 from Shōwa. Nonetheless, as many as 494 graves have no date. Many of the undated ones appear to belong to poor prostitutes from the Meiji era. Typically, they consist of nothing more than a small, nondescript headstone bearing the name of the deceased.

Saiyūji, a Sōtō sect temple, once stood on the cemetery grounds. The founding monk, Shakushu Baisen of Hyōgo, came to Singapore in 1892 [YASUKAWA (ed.) 1993: 10-11, 219; NANYŌ 1937: 511-512]. Living in a hut in the cemetery since arrival, he managed to collect enough donations to construct a proper temple in 1912, a year before his own death. In the same year that the temple was constructed he planted a thousand rubber trees to commemorate the philanthropic act of Futaki and Shibuya as well as to provide a future source of supplementary income for the temple.⁸⁾ Not much is known about the temple after Baisen's death. In 1916 it shared an office with the Mutual Help Association on Short Street, a sign that the two were working closely with each other [TSUKUDA 1916: 242-243]. For an unspecified period it also played host to a devotional group (*kō*) focused on the temple's principal deity Kannon [NANYŌ 1937:511]. Between Baisen's death and 1926, a succession of four monks served at the temple. Practically no information exists about the temple between 1926 and 1945. For more than 10 years after the war it was left unattended. By 1960 the temple was so devastated by white ants that it had to be pulled down. The new building, which was put up through the effort of the Japanese Association and the Embassy, also housed the altars from two disused Japanese temples in the city, which belonged to the Nichiren sect and the Nishi-Honganji sect. This building was again demolished in 1986 to make way for a ferro-concrete Worship Hall (*midō*). The new name is meant to reflect the building's non-sectarian identity.⁹⁾ For a period of time before the war the cemetery also had an Inari Shrine and a crematorium on its grounds. Neither exists anymore.

POST-MORTEM IDENTITY

Most information on gravestones consists of personal data about the dead. Among the personal data the name of the deceased is essential, almost always occupying the most prominent spot on the gravestone.¹⁰⁾ When the secular name is

the only name given, it appears at the center on the front surface. When the religious name is also present, it tends to take the center and relegate the secular name to one side (or to a side surface). Most religious names contain what is known as *igo* (“rank”), and some have an additional component called *ingo* (“title”). Besides the name, information about the place-of-origin, death date, age, birth order, next-of-kin, military rank, status and profession of the deceased may also be found. This section discusses the post-mortem identities of men, women, infants and children, and Tenrikyō followers and colonial subjects. Graves are numbered according to Yasukawa’s [1993] system.

Men

Most men’s graves bear religious names. A good example is A11. On the front of the headstone is the religious name Jissōin Nisshin Koji wherein the first component is the *ingō*, the second is the religious name proper, and the third is the *igō* (in this case the *kojigō*). On a side surface is the death date, place-of-origin, secular name, and age of the deceased. On the back is the name of the donor (*seshu*) of the grave (Yamaura Sano) and her place-of-origin (Fukuoka). Since the religious name proper and the *ingō* are unique to the deceased person, it is impossible to enumerate them all. There is much less variety, however, in the case of *igo*. By far the most common *igō* for men is *shinji* (or *shinshi*, a male devotee) (e.g., D63), although there are a few examples of *koji* (a more prestigious title for a male lay devotee, e.g., A2).¹¹ There is one example of the single characters *shi* (E137). It does not appear to be a standard *igō*, although it could be an abbreviation for *shinji*. There is also an example of *ō* (or *okina*), which literally means an elderly person (F150).

As mentioned earlier, not every deceased man has a religious name. For example, the gravestone of Abe Manjirō who died in 1889 shows only his secular name (E335). Since religious names are generally regarded as a sign of prestige, not having one may have slightly compromised Abe’s post-mortem dignity. But he was still fortunate compared with some of his fellow countrymen. A woman called Yamamoto Sei paid for his grave and saw to it that his place-of-origin and death date were recorded on the gravestone. In other words, his female benefactor has given him a relatively clear post-mortem identity. By comparison, those who have died impoverished and without benefactors had to be content with a small and crude gravestone bearing nothing more than a hastily chiselled-in secular name (e.g., E265-269). Even though the post-mortem identities of such individuals have been stripped to the bare minimum, at least they still have their names. There are graves marked by stones engraved with the words *shōryō bodai* (the soul of the deceased, e.g., E146). People buried in these graves have lost all personal traits, including their gender. (In fact, many of these graves seem to belong to women [prostitutes] rather than men.) The absence of a religious name from a gravestone, however, does not necessarily reflect economic deprivation of the deceased or his family. For

example, the gravestone of Nagano Saneyoshi shows no religious name, although he was the founder of the trading company Yamato Shōkai and a prominent figure in the Japanese community (B2). His grave is reasonably large and has a stele with a eulogy composed by Vice Admiral Nomaguchi Kaneo (B1).

In addition to the name(s), a variety of personal data go into the making of a man's post-mortem identity as well. The above-cited A11 shows that the deceased was from Hyōgo and that he died on 16th September 1920 (Taishō 9)¹² at 76. While less essential than the name, other information such as place-of-origin, death date, birth order, and next-of-kin appear on a great number of gravestones. For instance, the inscription on Shinatarō's grave notes that he died on 4th November 1891 and that he was the first son of Yamanaka Gen'ichi of Nagasaki, the owner of a curios shop (*zakkashō*) (E14). The format of this inscription is typical: the deceased is referred to by his first name and as the son of his father, whose full name (and sometimes his profession) is given. Only one man in the whole cemetery, Matsuzaki Torahachi of Kumamoto, who died in 1903 at 49, is identified on his gravestone as the *father* of his son Tokutarō (E190). The general tendency to identify the father of a deceased son but not the reverse shows that, whether alive or dead, the father's identity is a crucial element in the post-mortem profile of a son. Following the father, the older brother is the second most-frequently-named next-of-kin. For example, Fukuda Bunkichi, who died in 1904 at 22, is identified as the younger brother of Ta'ichi, who paid for his grave (D116). There is only one case in the entire cemetery where the uncle of the deceased is named as next-of-kin. The inscription on the grave of Yamazaki Hisao, who died at 24 in 1911, identifies him as the nephew (*itoko*) of Iku Rō,¹³ a low ranking aristocrat (*shizoku*) from Fukushima (C123). Presumably, the uncle is named to lend a degree of prestige to the deceased.

The majority of military men do not have religious names (see F7 for an exception). Instead, on their gravestones, the secular name is usually preceded by military rank, identifying the deceased as, for example, a captain in the Navy or a major in the Army (e.g., C18, E3, F7, F8, F55). Moreover, while the unit to which the deceased belonged is often identified, next-of-kin is never mentioned. Besides ranks, orders of merit (*kun'i*) are noted too. For example, the inscription on the grave of Army major Takebayashi Chisato¹⁴ notes that he has been conferred the order of *jūrokui kungotō* (E329). Similarly, deceased civilians attached to the military are identified by their military affiliation, whether they were *gunzoku* (civilians attached to the military, F101) or *rinji shokutaku* (temporary affiliates, F24). Apparently, a man's association with the military not only endures after his death but also eclipses his other social attributes when it comes to the making of his post-mortem identity.

By contrast, few civilians retain their professional identities after death. Usually, those who do are sailors: a certain Shimada (his first name was not given) was the fireman (*kafu*) on the Ariake-maru (E72), an anonymous "Korean" (*senjin*) was a sailor (*sen'in*) on the Atsuta-maru (C103), and Oki Sahei was the helmsman

of the Sōyō-maru (E277). Besides sailors, other examples are: Watanabe Kiyokichi, who was an electrician (*denki gishi*) (C13); Hasegawa Yoshio, who was a secretary (*gaimu shoki*) with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (B9); and Fukuyama Shōjirō, who was a merchant from Osaka (D127). Like soldiers, religious professionals have their religious ranks and titles as the core of their post-mortem identities. For example, Shōtō Reisen of Nagasaki retains the rank *oshō* and the title of former abbot of Ryūsenji (E239), and Baisen retains the rank *daioshō* (A13). Only one layman, Harada Taneyoshi of Yamanashi, has the name of his religion, Tenrikyō, specified on his gravestone (F58). There are no identifiable Christian graves in the cemetery.

Just a handful of gravestones bear inscriptions identifying the deceased either as an aristocrat (*shizoku*) or a commoner (*heimin*). The above-mentioned Hasegawa Yoshio, who died of a disease on returning from the Second World Peace Conference in the Hague in 1907, is identified as a *shizoku* with the order of *shōhachi'i kunhachitō*. Not all aristocrats who died in Singapore held such a prestigious job as a diplomat. The above-mentioned Watanabe Kiyokichi of Yamaguchi, who died in 1902, was an electrician who had to rely on an anonymous friend (*yūjin*) for a proper burial. Haraguchi Rokurō, who died in 1908, had to rely on a woman named Sonoda Moka, perhaps his lover, to pay for his grave (B8). The gravestone inscription makes no mention of his profession but identifies him as the younger brother of the *shizoku* Matsujirō.

Three men are identified as commoners on their gravestones: Kobayashi Takekichi of Osaka, who died at 28 in 1896 (B62); Nakamura Tomekichi from Tokyo, who died in 1894 (E43); and Tanaka Yoshizō of Kanagawa, who died in 1895 (E8). Since most of the people buried in this cemetery were presumably commoners, it is unclear why these three alone had to be so identified. While the wish to claim *shizoku* status may be explained by vanity (either of the deceased or his benefactor), it is hard to fathom the motive of anybody coveting the label *heimin*. One possible explanation is that these three were so identified precisely because they (or their ancestors) had *not* been commoners but had belonged to one of the discriminated groups in Tokugawa times. In other words, they were the “new commoners” (*shin heimin*) under Meiji law.¹⁵⁾

Women

Gravestone inscriptions for women follow the same general format as men's. A typical case is C75. The gravestone shows the religious name Myōkai Shinnyo on the front, the secular name Arita Nei and the place-of-origin on one side, the death date and age on the other side, and the name Mutual Help Association on the back. While the religious name usually appears at the center, there are variations. For example, B24 has the secular name Mise Hatsu at the center, the religious name on the right, and the name of her husband on the left. On a side surface is the place-of-origin for herself and her husband, her death date, and her age. Religious

names for women vary from person to person just as in the case of men. The most common *igo* is *shinnyo* (devout woman, e.g., E121-125), the female equivalent of the male *shinji*. There are several examples where the more prestigious *daishi* (literally “older sister”) is used (B10, B11). More rare is the title *ni* or *nun* (e.g., B22). Some women also have *ingō*: for instance, the above-mentioned Mise Hatsu has the *ingō* Hochūin. While religious names are common, they are by no means universal. Quite a few women do not have them. For example, Yamamoto Kamekichi’s gravestone merely shows her secular name and place-of-origin (E58). There are those whose places-of-origin go unrecorded. For example, D50 merely shows the name Yoshinaga Asano. Other women have lost their family names, retaining only their first names and places-of-origin. For example, the family name of Yatsu of Kumamoto, who died in 1897, is not recorded on her gravestone (E53). Similarly, another woman who died in 1896 is simply known as Tama from Fukuoka (E238). But these are still not the most skeletal post-mortem identities. There are only three characters on the headstone of E161: “the deceased Shizu” (*ko* Shizu). This is just one step away from the generic term *shōryō bodai*, which is devoid of any personal information as well as gender neutral.

The father is the most often named next-of-kin on women’s graves just as he is on men’s. Nevertheless, in the case of women his identity tends to dominate their post-mortem identities to an even greater extent. A case in point is a woman who died in 1896: she is simply identified as the daughter of Matsuura Katsujirō of Kumamoto (E61). Since her first name is not recorded, her identity is entirely subsumed under her father’s. She is not *herself* but her father’s daughter. Some women have a more independent identity of their own: as daughters, they also have their personal names on their gravestones. A woman who died in 1897 is typical: she is identified as “Hatsu, the daughter of Kanegai Isaburō of Nagasaki” (E51). Birth order is often given for women as well. For instance, Nakaoka Tome is identified as the fourth daughter of Yasōhachi of Nagasaki (D88). Iwamoto Kinu who died in 1906 at 16 is identified as the foster daughter of Shintarō of Nagasaki (E205).

Other categories of relatives named as next-of-kin are usually men as well. For example, Natsu who died in 1897 is described as the older sister of Miya-? Gohei¹⁶ of Kumamoto (E52; also E155, E157, E178). Since Gohei is a man’s name, the next-of-kin is the younger brother of the deceased. Similarly, Miyazaki Tomi, who died in 1903, is identified as the younger sister of Seitarō of Tokushima (E150; also E143). Again, since Seitarō is a man’s name, the next-of-kin is the older brother of the deceased. As expected, husbands are named as next-of-kin for married women. For instance, Matsu who died in 1893 at 38 is identified as the wife of Sakai Miyakichi of Osaka, owner of a curios shop (D124). Some married women are not remembered by their own names but merely as wives. For example, a woman who died in 1902 is simply identified as the wife of Sasano Eizō of Mie (D105). Although she has a religious name, her first name is not recorded. Just like the daughter whose identity is subsumed under her father’s, this woman’s

identity is almost entirely absorbed into her husband's.

As the Japanese military was exclusively male, military ranks do not appear on women's graves. In fact, information about profession in general is almost non-existent. Presumably, this is because most Japanese women in Singapore at that time either did not have a profession or were in a trade such as prostitution, which (presumably) would not be appropriate to record on gravestones. There are two exceptions. One is the founder of the Tenrikyō mission in Singapore Itakura Taka. She carries the rank of *daikōgi* on her gravestone (C170). The other is a nurse with the army (*jūgun kangofu*), Ishida Sei (D43). She died of a disease during the war and was buried by her fellow nurses. In her case it is difficult to decide whether she is remembered more for her profession as a nurse or for her affiliation with the army.

Finally, information on status appears on two women's graves. The first one is a joint mother-and-daughter grave (C145). Coming from an aristocratic family in Tokyo, Kojima Tsuru and her oldest daughter Kojima Teu were "interred together" (*gōdōbune*), which seems to mean that their cremated remains share one container.¹⁷⁾ The second one belongs to Taki Chiyo who died in 1907. She is identified as the daughter of Miura Kanekichi of Osaka, a commoner (E348).

Infants and Children

Like adults, infants and children may possess both religious and secular names. For example, the one-year-old girl who died in 1922 has the religious name Kū Reihō Gainyo and the secular name Kasa Kaneo (C4). In this case, which is typical, the religious name appears on the front of the gravestone while the secular name, age, death date, benefactor, and place-of-origin are given on the side surfaces. Of course, there are variations. For example, the secular name of Nanbu Chōko, a 12-year-old girl who died in 1923, appears on the front of the gravestone while the religious name, Sōsei Kayō Dōnyo, is on a side surface (D52). Compared to adults, there is a wider range of *igo* for infants and children. For boys *gaiji* (D110) is most common, although there exists a few variations: *dōji* (D107), *dōnan* (F85), *shinji* (E126), *shindō* (E64), *eiji* (B56), and *gaishi* (sic) (C95). *Gainyo* (59) is most common for girls with variations like *dōnyo* (D52), *yōjo* (F60), and *einyo* (B58). There are also such terms as *sanji* (E67), *seiji* (E126), *eishi* (sic) (D64), and *yōshi* (F85) that make no distinction between the sexes. Sometimes the deceased is referred to as *mizuko* (aborted fetus, E65, E353) or *shizANJI* (a stillborn, F56). Some infants possess not only *igō* but *ingō* as well. For instance, each of the four infants buried at F85 has an *ingō*. Finally, there is an infant girl who has nothing but her nickname *Yoshi-chan* on the gravestone (D13).

As can be seen in the case of *Yoshi-chan*, infants and children tend to have extremely brief inscriptions on their graves, which means their post-mortem identities are correspondingly vague. For example, D64 shows nothing except the religious name Shōtō Eiji. B44 shows the infant girl's religious name Gyokushō

Einyo and her nickname (*tsūshō*) Dora but provides no family name. But at least these infants have names; a few others have no name to themselves at all. For example, an infant who died in 1894 is simply recorded as the “child” (*ko*) of Yamada Yasu (E37). Another grave holds the remains of the “infant girl” (*yōjo*) of Hirabara (F60). Yet another inscription notes that the deceased was the “stillborn” (*shizanji*) of Minami (F56). Without their own names, these infants have no separate identity from that of their mothers’ (presumably), whose own identity may also be incomplete, as seen in such partial names as Minami and Hirabara (also F13).

Unlike adults, infants and children may have either parent named as next-of-kin. For example, C174 notes that the infant boy with the religious name Tenshin Gaiji is the “stillborn” (*shizanji*) of his father Nakatsuka Yasujirō (C174). Similarly, the infant boy Shaku Ryōnen is the “newborn son” (*seiji*) of Takushima Gonsichirō, the father (E126). It is equally common for the mother to be named. For example, the baby girl Shise is identified as the first daughter of her mother Matsuo Naka (B59). Nevertheless, father and mother never appear together as next-of-kin. The only exception to this rule is the grave of a Korean boy (C171).

Lastly, the birth order and age of infants and children are sometimes recorded, even though the time they spent in this world was extremely short. For example, the baby boy Fukuda Shin’ichi is identified as the one-year-old first son of Fukuda Ta’ichi of Hyōgo (D117). Similarly the two-year-old Aiko is identified as the second daughter of Katō Shōtarō (D90). The newborn Harue, who died a mere one hundred days after birth, is remembered as the first daughter of Hirano Enzō of Chiba (D65). By assigning birth orders to these ill-fated little ones, their parents reserved for them a place within the family’s collective memory despite the brevity of their lives.

Tenrikyō Followers and Colonial Subjects

The generic categories of men, women, and infants that I have used so far may give the wrong impression that Japanese society is homogeneous. In this section I discuss two groups of graves to highlight the fact that “Japan” is not monolithic either socially or politically. Specifically, I want to show that the avoidance of religious names and/or era names (*nengō*) on two groups of graves is linked to sectarian affiliation and/or ethnic identity. Religious names are absent from all Tenrikyō graves (C170, F58, F139, F146, F150) as well as some of the Taiwanese and Korean ones. To be more precise, of the ten Taiwanese and Korean graves¹⁸⁾ dated before 1940 (Taiwanese: C17, C176, F153, Korean: F34, F38, F66, F68, C19, C171, C172), only one has a religious name (C19). None of the four Tenrikyō followers has a posthumous name. Meanwhile, the tendency to avoid Japanese era names marks out Taiwanese and Korean graves from the rest, including Tenrikyō graves. For example, the death dates on the Taiwanese grave of F153 and the Korean grave of C171 follow the Gregorian calendar whereas another Korean grave

follows the Chinese lunar calendar (F38). Admittedly, this avoidance is not universal: for example, the Taiwanese grave of C17 shows the era name Meiji while the Korean grave of C19 shows the era name Shōwa. Universal adoption of the Japanese era name Shōwa by Korean graves came only after the outbreak of the Pacific War. There are no identifiable Taiwanese graves from this period.

By contrast, almost all Japanese graves built before 1945 use Japanese era names. This rule is sometimes contravened when the inscription is in English; for example, B35, D45 and D87 follow the Gregorian calendar. But even in English, Japanese era names may still be preferred (B38). Alternatively, Japanese and Gregorian dates may be given alongside each other (C12). It is only in the post-war period when there appears a grave that has a Japanese inscription using the Gregorian calendar (A23). The vast majority of graves and memorials constructed after the war adheres to the era name Shōwa (e.g., F6, A21).

BURIAL OBLIGATION

In addition to displaying personal data of the deceased, gravestone inscriptions sometimes also shed light on (1) the party (parties) who has contributed to grave building and (2) the relationship between the deceased and the donor(s) of his/her grave. In this section I discuss grave construction by family members, employers, co-workers, comrades-in-arms, people with the same place-of-origin, co-religionists, and other social groups. My aim is to demonstrate that in addition to blood relations and place relations, associational relations also underlie the decision of a person (or a group) to contribute to the burial of another individual.

Survivors

Although in Japan it is the norm for the family of the deceased to construct the grave, such graves are the minority in the Japanese cemetery in Singapore. Here are some examples. First, husbands built graves for wives and vice versa. For instance, Mise Hatsu of Nagasaki was buried by her husband Mise Toyosaburō of Iyo (Shikoku) in 1900 (B24). An opposite case is Morita Tsunekichi. He was buried by his wife (*dōjin tsuma*) Taka in 1909 (B10). Similarly, Kotō Shūzō, the president of Nanyō Nichinichi Sha, a Singapore-based Japanese-language publisher, was buried by his wife rather than by his company (D4).

Second, parents and children constructed graves for each other. For example, Sakai Kinu, together with the Mutual Help Association, paid for the grave of her son Sutejirō who died in 1914 at 13 (D63). That Kinu could not afford the grave alone suggests that she might have been a poor prostitute. Naturally, fathers built graves for their children too. Katō Shōtarō, owner of a rubber plantation, was the sole contributor to the grave of his two-year-old daughter Aiko who died in 1899 (D90). However, the only grave where both parents are identified as contributors belongs to the above-mentioned Korean child who died in 1928 at 3 (C171).

Conversely, children built graves for parents. For example, Murakami Asajirō of Aichi, who died in 1926 at 54, was buried by Takajirō, his “male heir” (*shishi*) (D47). Similarly, it was the “male heir” (C: *jinan*) who constructed the grave of Guo Rongjiao, a Taiwanese who died in 1927 (F153).

Third, siblings built graves for each other. For example, it was the older brother Ta’ichi who paid for the grave of Fukuda Bunkichi, the younger brother (D116). By the same token, Kawaguchi Sada, the older sister (*ane*) of Kawaguchi Natsu, paid for the grave of her younger sister who died in 1898 at 29 (E79).

Finally, there are several family graves in the cemetery. One of them belongs to the Nagano family (*Nagano-ke senzo daidai no haka*). Nagano Issei, presumably the male heir, constructed it in 1966 for Nagano Matsuno, who had died in 1937, and Nagano Hirakichi, who had died in 1945 (A23).

Employers

Employers on occasion constructed graves for employees.¹⁹⁾ For example, the trading company Mitsui Bussan, which was first set up in Singapore in 1891, paid for the grave of a certain Tajima from Bizen-no-kuni (Nagasaki), who was a fireman (*kafu*) on the company’s ship Ariake-maru (E72).²⁰⁾ In those days many deaths occurred on rubber plantations due to harsh and unhygienic work conditions. Consequently, some plantation companies constructed graves for deceased employees. For example, Chitose Rubber Plantation in Singapore paid for the grave of its employee Sasaya Tsunesaburō from Hyōgo who died in 1911 (C125). In 1926 the Furukawa Company constructed a collective grave for the remains of 14 employees relocated (*kaisō*) from its plantations in Johore and Bataam (C14). It is not clear what prompted the relocation in this case. The reason is clear in the next example. Fujita-gumi of Osaka built a collective grave for 20 Japanese workers from the Shin-Nankō Rubber Plantation in Johore (D5). The inscription explains that the Japanese-owned property was sold to a British company in 1928, and that the change of ownership necessitated the removal of the remains to Singapore.

Ishihara Sangyō, the aforementioned mining concern, was responsible for an individual grave and a collective memorial. In 1937 it paid for the grave of Morinouchi Naosachi of Kumamoto who died at 32 (C18). In 1980, its president, Ishihara Kenzō, erected a memorial dedicated to “all the people” who had sacrificed their lives “developing” Southeast Asia (D2). Eight years later, he added a new inscription to the monument with a similar message. The meaning of both inscriptions is ambiguous. Neither makes it clear if the memorial was meant only for the company’s deceased employees or for all Japanese who had perished in Southeast Asia. The ambiguity, I suspect, may be intentional.

The publisher Nanyō Nichinichi Sha constructed three individual graves: Somoto Shigetaka (place-of-origin unknown) who died in 1915 at 41 (E355); Inagaki Masaichi of Tokyo who died in the same year at 26 (E318); and Satō

Chūjirō of Iwate who died in 1914 at 36 (E354). Likewise, Nagafuku Tora, owner of the fishing company Taishō Kōshi, paid for the grave of Matsuo Kanae of Nagasaki who died in 1918 (D48). Then, there is Ikeda Morikuni of Hyōgo. He was buried by the Singapore branch of Nomura Higashi-Indo Shokusan Kabushiki Kaisha, even though he was a civilian attached to the Army when he was killed in action in 1942 (D28). (The grave itself was constructed in March 1945). The last example shows that not just employees could benefit from company-paid graves. Yamato Shōkai, the trading company founded by Nagano Saneyoshi, paid for the grave of Tomeko, the founder's widow. She died in 1916, a year after her husband's death (B3).

Sailors

When employers did not pay for the burial of deceased employees, co-workers sometimes did. This practice was most prominent among sailors. For example, the crew (*norikumi'in ichidō*) of the Tanba-maru contributed to the grave of Takeda Teizō, the ship's engineer who died on the Indian Ocean in 1903 at 25 (B38). There was a similar arrangement for the sailor Sakai Kosaburō who died in 1898 at 38: the crew of the Kamakura-maru paid for his grave (E80). The crew of the Sōyō-maru was responsible for the burial of the helmsman Oki Sahei who died in 1912 at 23 (E277). In the case of Tomita Matsuyoshi of the Bonbai-maru, the shipping company (Nihon Yūsen), the crew (*sen'in*), and some unnamed "benefactor(s)" (*yūshi*) bore the cost of his grave (D53).

Comrades-in-Arms

Soldiers stand out among all social groups for their commitment to each other when it comes to burial. For example, when Imamura Hajime, a paymaster in the Army's Hayato 987 unit, died in 1942, the entire accounting department (*keirishitsu ichidō*) together with Ōtsuka Momono (a lover?) and a certain trading company (the name is illegible) made donations for his grave (B20). Such solidarity among fellow soldiers endured after the war. For instance, Ōshima Takeo was buried in 1946 by his unit, the Onuki company (*Onuki chūtai ichidō*) (F5). Immediately after the war, the Allies organized surrendered Japanese soldiers into "work groups" (*sagyōtai*), which became new social units responsible for burials. For example, the Keppel Work Group built the grave of Tsuji Kikuzō who died in 1947 (F8). This obligation could persist for decades after the war. In 1982, for instance, former members of the Army's eleventh regiment (*daijūichi rentai yūshi*) returned to Singapore to construct a grave for their commander, colonel Sasaki Itsumi, who had died of a disease in 1945 (F7). In addition to the graves of individuals, comrades-in-arms also put up collective memorials. For example, in 1947 survivors of the fifth regiment of the Imperial Guards (*Konoe hohei daigo rentai*) constructed a memorial for 396 fallen members (A14). In the same year all work groups in

Singapore banded together to dedicate a memorial for all military personnel (*gunjin gunzoku*) killed in Southeast Asia (A17). Clearly, membership in the military not only dominated a person's post-mortem identity but also determined by whom he would be buried.

People from the Same Place

Place relations lie behind the construction of two graves. The first one belongs to Kakishita Kametarō of Miwasaki-chō in Wakayama who died at 32 in 1907 (C28). A group of men from the same town (*chō*), calling itself the “Miwasaki gang (*renjū*) at Broome,” paid for the grave. Three years later, another group of men built the grave of Fukushima Iwaichi of Taiji-mura, also in Wakayama (C108). This group called itself the “Taiji gang from Broome in western Borneo (sic).” As Shimizu and Hirakawa point out, in the early 1900s divers from Wakayama were contracted by Australian companies through middlemen in Singapore to collect shellfish at Broome, Northwest Australia [1998: 121].²¹⁾ The Miwasaki and Taiji gangs thus appear to consist of professional divers from the same village (*mura*) or town. If this was indeed the case, then members of these gangs were doubly bonded to each other: by place-of-origin and by profession. Unfortunately, the circumstances that led to Kakishita's and Fukushima's burial in Singapore rather than in Australia cannot be known from the inscriptions.²²⁾

Co-Religionists

Membership in a new religion is another principle by which support can be mobilized for grave construction. The Tenrikyō group in Singapore was responsible for building the graves of four members. Nagatani Tsuruki of Nagasaki who died in 1923 at 47 was buried in a grave contributed by the “Singapore Tenrikyō Church” (F139). The same is true for Matsuba Kikumatsu of Mie (F146), Kondō Manroku of Nagasaki, and Kondō Miya, also of Nagasaki (the last two, apparently husband and wife, share the grave F150). Nevertheless, in the case of the above-mentioned Harada Taneyoshi of Yamanashi who died in 1941 at 75, even though the headstone shows Tenrikyō as his religion, it was not the church but three individuals who paid for the grave (F58).

Friends and Donors

This section deals with *yūjin*, *seshu*, and *yūshi*, three related categories of contributors to grave building. The term *yūjin* means friends. Several graves were clearly constructed by friends. A few others may be reasonably attributed to friends or acquaintances. Let us look first at the clear-cut cases. An anonymous person(s) identified only as a “friend(s)” (*yūjin*) built the grave of Takahashi Chiyo of Fukuoka who died in 1909 at 55 (B4). Similarly, “a friend(s) in Shōnan”

(Singapore) (*zai Shōnan yūjin*) paid for the grave of Araki Torao of Tokyo who died in 1944 at 66 (F101). Yuki, one of the two donors of the double grave belonging to Myōshō Shinnyō and Nakamura Matsue, is also identified as “a friend” (D96). For some reason, the relationship between the second donor (who appears to be a Korean man) and the deceased is not specified. Shimizu Toyogorō who died in 1922 at 41 is an ambiguous case (F154). Names of 57 donors appear on his grave, which was constructed in 1926. Although eight are identified as “promoters” (*hokkinin*), none is identified as a friend. Nevertheless, it seems reasonable to assume that at least some among the 57 had to be friends or acquaintances of the deceased.

The term *seshu* has a wider range of meaning than *yūjin*, covering people who may or may not have known the deceased. At one extreme, it refers to next-of-kin. For example, Sakai Kinu (mentioned above) is listed together with the Mutual Help Association as the *seshu* of the grave of her 13-year-old son Sakai Sutejirō (D63). Similarly, in the case of one-year-old Kasa Kaneo, the sole *seshu* who paid for her grave, Kasa Naosaburō, appears to be her father (C4). There are many examples of *seshu* who appear to be friends or least acquaintances of the deceased. Just to name one: the grave of Okamoto Tama who died in 1913 at 26 was constructed by the female *seshu* Yoshida Sue together with the Mutual Help Association (C149). Judging by their names, Tama and Sue do not seem to have been relatives. Since the Mutual Help Association was involved, they may have been fellow prostitutes. At the other extreme, however, a *seshu* does not need to be an acquaintance of the deceased. As previous examples show, the term can apply to an organization like the Mutual Help Association.

Like *seshu*, *yūshi* and *shishu* may include acquaintances as well as people who do not know the deceased. First, *seshu* and *yūshi* may be used interchangeably. The inscription on the grave of Ozaki Ito of Kumamoto who died in 1910 describes the benefactor(s) (*seshu*) as a “donor(s)” (*yūshi*) without giving his/her name(s) (D72). Of course, *yūshi* does not have to be anonymous. For example, a total of 16 *yūshi*, most of whom were probably friends of the deceased, are named on the grave of Iwanaga Kamematsu who died in 1911 at 37 (D61). The term is also found in the phrase “donors in Singapore” (*Shingapōru yūshisha*). This group was responsible for the graves of naval personnel Isotani Gaisaku and Takeuchi Denjū, both of whom died in 1908 at the Japanese hospital Tōa Byōin when their frigates visited Singapore (D78, D79). Since it was unlikely that the donors were friends of the deceased, *yūshi* may be better understood as philanthropists in this case.

Mutual Help Association and Other Organizations

The name “Mutual Help Association” is found on a large number of gravestones as either the sole contributor or the joint-donor of the graves. This organization was created at the time when the Japanese cemetery came into existence and was initially known as the Charitable Association (Jizenkai)

[YASUKAWA 1993: 216-217]. In exchange for the payment of a monthly due, members could expect a proper burial by the Association in the event of their death. As the sole donor, the Association was responsible for building the graves of many Japanese prostitutes, who died without survivors around. For example, the Association was the sole sponsor of the graves of Arita Nei who died at 24 and Tamamura Toshi who died at 23, both of whom were most likely prostitutes (C75, C81). The Association was also responsible for burying the anonymous dead. Many of the gravestones bearing the inscription *shōryō bodai* have the name of the Association inscribed on them (e.g., E331-340). In 1901 it established a memorial dedicated to “all deceased members and non-members”—an expression of Buddhist universal compassion (E342). The Association was similarly active as a co-contributor of graves. For example, together with Koyama Yoshi, it paid for the grave of 24-year old Makoshi Fuku (C48). Although there is no explicit information on the relationship between Makoshi and Koyama, it may be assumed that they were fellow prostitutes, given the large number of such young women in Singapore in those days.

Besides the Mutual Help Association, there were several other organizations that constructed graves and memorials even though they had not been formed with the intention to provide such a service. For example, in 1928 the Japanese Association moved the grave of Kusunoki Tomekichi, a sailor on the warship *Tsukuba-maru* who had died in 1879, from a cemetery for Westerners in Bukit Timah to the Japanese cemetery (D80). Besides this case, the Association’s name was not linked to any other individual graves. Also involved in the relocation was the Southern Hollyhock Association (Ki’nankai) made up of people from Wakayama, the same prefecture as the deceased sailor. This group placed an obelisk by the side of Kusunoki’s grave to explain the circumstances of the relocation (D81). It, too, was not involved in the construction of any other graves. Yet another organization, the South Seas Association (Nanyōkai), was responsible for several memorials constructed during the Pacific War. Some two months after Japan conquered Singapore, this organization erected a wooden obelisk in commemoration of six members who had been killed in action and two members who had died of disease (D1). It also paid for a row of stone tablets dedicated to 21 officers (presumably its members) who had died of injuries sustained in the assault on Singapore (A5).

On the 25th anniversary of the war’s end in 1970, the Equator Society (Sekidōkai) dedicated a Hinomoto Jizō in memory of 41 civilians who had perished during detention in Jurong from October 1945 to May 1946 (A9) (Imai 1978). The Society consisted of all civilian detainees at Jurong and was formed on the basis of their common experience of defeat and hardship in the aftermath of the war. The inscription on the pedestal names the Society as the “owner of merits” (*kudokushu*). In 1980 the Japanese Association constructed a collective grave for 78 soldiers who could not be identified due to the decay of the wooden markers on their graves (D20). This is the only case in the post-war era where the Japanese Association’s

name appears on a grave.

CONCLUSION

I will sum up this paper by making three observations. The first observation is that the post-mortem identities of Japanese in Singapore duplicate to a large extent their *pre*-mortem identities. Basically, the same personal information used to identify a living person—name, sex, place-of-origin, age, father’s name, birth order, etc—also appears on gravestones. Put differently, the contents of gravestone inscriptions closely parallel that of the household registry (*koseki*).²³⁾ Admittedly, minor differences exist—e.g., the use of the death date instead of the date of birth and of religious name instead of secular name for the deceased—but the two sets of information are basically identical. Both death and birth dates serve to anchor a person’s life in history, and names, religious or secular, have the same function of tagging a person. Since post-mortem identity is based on the same type of information that is found in the household registry, the former also shares the latter’s patriarchal character. As we have seen, in the case of adults it is the father that appears most often on gravestones as next-of-kin. The mother is almost never named as next-of-kin except, occasionally, for infants and children.²⁴⁾ By the same token, older brothers (*ani* may refer to either the oldest brother or just an older brother) are the second most-frequently-named next-of-kin. Older sisters and younger brothers are rarely so identified, and younger sisters never appear in this capacity. Similarly, married women are routinely identified on gravestones as “the wife of so-and-so,” but the same formula is never used for identifying married men. In sum, there is a strong tendency to use men—especially fathers, older brothers, and husbands—as points of reference when the post-mortem identities of men and women are constructed.

The second observation is that associational relations are as important as blood relations and place relations in determining burial obligation among the Japanese in Singapore. In an overseas community where relatives are not always nearby, the primary social group to which an individual belongs often assumes the obligation to bury him/her in the event of death. Such groups fall into four broad categories. The first category is the military. Perhaps because of the constant threat of death and its tight organization, the military stands out for its strong sense of responsibility toward its deceased members. In fact, this commitment endured beyond the end of World War II, as evident in the graves constructed by work groups soon after the surrender and veterans decades later. The second category includes various economic/professional groups: companies constructed graves for employees and buddies at work such as sailors and divers made donations toward the burial of fellow co-workers. The third category consists of the religious group Tenrikyō that buried its own members. The fourth category consists of groups formed according to ethnicity. For example, the Mutual Help Association was a charitable organization at one level, but since its membership was open only to

Japanese it was also an ethnically based burial association. Similar examples include the Japanese Association, which was involved in the relocation of a Japanese grave and the construction of a collective grave, and the Equator Association, which constructed a Jizō statue in memory of all Japanese civilians who had died in detention after the war. In sum, for the Japanese in Singapore, comrades-in-arms, employers and co-workers, co-religionists, and compatriots seem to be the four types of associational ties instrumental in determining burial obligation.

The third observation is that the absence of religious names and the way dates are entered on some gravestones are telltale signs of divisions and tensions not just within Japanese society but also within the Japanese Empire. Tenrikyō followers do not have religious names on their graves. The absence of such names reflects religious diversity among Japanese or, to use the expression of the time, the “inner population” (*naichijin*). Similarly, peoples from Japan’s colonies or “outer territories” (*gaichi*) like Taiwan and Korea usually do not have religious names. The absence of religious names from Taiwanese and Korean graves may merely indicate a difference in burial customs between the colonies and the home country. But the absence of such Japanese era names as Meiji, Taishō, and Shōwa from the same graves cannot be attributed to simple cultural differences. Since era names are by definition political markers, their use or disuse inevitably has political implications. That Taiwanese and Koreans failed to adhere closely to Japanese era names before 1940 must, therefore, be understood as some kind of gesture of political protest. However, all Korean graves built in or after 1940 bear the era name Shōwa. This shift suggests that wartime mobilization and thought control demanded such a high degree of uniformity across the different peoples in the Japanese Empire that even burial customs could not escape standardization according to the Japanese way, depriving the colonial subjects of the faintest gesture of dissent. In contrast to the Gregorian and Chinese ways of dating adopted by Taiwanese and Koreans, Japanese overwhelmingly adhered to their country’s era names before, during, and after the Pacific War.

Acknowledgments

I wish to thank Nakamaki Hirochika for encouraging me to write this paper. At different stages of writing, Miki Mari, Scot Hislop, Mitchell Sedgwick, Ōkita Yōko, Machida Sōhō, Yu Wei-hsin, Lim Beng Choo, Guo Junhai, and Yamamuro Shin’ichi have generously offered comments and suggestions. I am most grateful to them.

Notes

- 1) A handbook [SHUFU 1983: 215] on funerary matters stipulates as many as 12 steps (discussed in 33 pages) to be taken when death occurs. This list does not include funeral and burial arrangements, which require another 117 pages of explanation.

- 2) Across the causeway from Singapore are two Japanese cemeteries. The closer one is in Johore Bahru and the one farther away is in Kuala Lumpur [YASUKAWA (ed.) 1993; ICHIKAWA et al. (ed.) 1991]. There are other Japanese cemeteries in Southeast Asia. Perhaps the most famous of them is the one in Sandakan mentioned in Yamazaki Tomoko's *Sandakan Brothel No.8* (pp.84-85). Abe Yoshiharu [2000] recently reported on the dilapidated condition of the graves of Japanese pearl divers in Dobo, Indonesia.
- 3) Suzuki [1997] makes a similar argument for studying graves in Japan for insights into history and social change.
- 4) For Japanese in the Americas see Nakamaki [1986] and Maeyama [1993], for Chinese in Tokugawa Japan see Tsu [1996], for Koreans in Japan see I [1999].
- 5) This is particularly the case with regard to war-related sites and monuments. The more prominent ones like the Shōnan Jinja (Shōnan Shrine) and the Chūreitō (memorial for the war dead) did not survive the war and its aftermath. Extensive redevelopment in subsequent years eliminated other minor landmarks. The Japanese cemetery is arguably the only place in Singapore where Japanese monuments directly linked to the war (and pre-war years) still stand.
- 6) Hara's [1986] study of Japanese agricultural immigrants to Malaya before 1945 is an excellent attempt to look beyond the publicists of "southward advancement" to the individuals who undertook the challenge to colonize the tropical forests. He shows that there was an enormous gap between the optimism of the publicists and the hardship experienced by the immigrants. The latter's efforts usually ended in failure, if not tragedy.
- 7) According to Higuchi Naoki, government records show that only eight acres were approved for burial [YASUKAWA (ed.) 1993: 8].
- 8) See the commemorative text composed by Baisen: *Nihonjin kyōdō bochi ki'nenhi* [YASUKAWA (ed.) 1993, A1].
- 9) The architecture and interior of this "non-sectarian" worship hall evince a strong Buddhist mood. Moreover, the wooden plaque over the entrance announces to every visitor/worshiper that the building is located (metaphorically) on a "Mountain of Buddhist Teaching" (Shakukyōsan).
- 10) Exceptions belong to one of two kinds. They are either graves of anonymous individuals marked by gravestones inscribed with the characters *shōryō bodai* or collective graves of the war dead (e.g., A-18).
- 11) See Hōgi kenkyūshitsu [1976: 142-143] for a discussion of religious names according to the Myōshinji Branch of Rinzai Zen. I am grateful to Machida Sohō for this source.
- 12) Unless otherwise specified, all dates pertaining to graves have been converted from the Japanese system of era names to the Gregorian calendar. For more on this issue, see the discussion below about the graves of colonial subjects.
- 13) This name is probably corrupt.
- 14) I thank Yamamuro Shin'ichi for suggesting the reading for this rather unusual name.
- 15) I owe this explanation to Yamamuro Shin'ichi.
- 16) The second character in this name is not legible.
- 17) The circumstances under which the mother and daughter were buried are not clear. Since the gravestone shows only one death date, 1st June 1913, it is possible that the two died on the same day—which may also explain why they were interred together.
- 18) It is possible that not all graves of Taiwanese and Koreans can be identified by the names that appear on them. This is because during the Pacific War Taiwanese and Koreans serving in the Japanese armed forces sometimes adopted Japanese names [YASUKAWA 1993: 32, 222]. Then there is C179. It belongs to the Chinese keeper of the cemetery and follows the

- Gregorian calendar.
- 19) See Nakamaki [1990: 11-44] for more information on this topic.
 - 20) This grave is undated. That the graves around it were constructed in the Meiji era suggests that it too may belong to the same period.
 - 21) Also see Nanyō kyōkai Taiwan shibu [1929], vol.1.
 - 22) Since prospective divers had to undergo medical examination and have their travel papers prepared in Singapore, their stays there could last up to several months [NANYŌ KYŌKAI TAIWAN SHIBU 1929: 1-283]. It could be that Kakishita and Fukushima died in Singapore while waiting for their job applications to be processed.
 - 23) See Ido [1971] for examples of early Meiji household registries.
 - 24) Two reasons for this practice are conceivable. The first is that babies born out of wedlock have their mothers' names on the graves as next-of-kin. Given the large number of Japanese prostitutes in Singapore at the turn of the century, it is not difficult to imagine that there were at least a few such cases. When it is not possible to identify the father, putting the mother's name on the grave of a baby seems to be the natural alternative. Another possible reason is the common perception that an infant is closer to the mother than the father. This belief might have made it acceptable for the mother's name to appear on her baby's grave as next-of-kin. However, both explanations are mere conjectures.

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