

【論文】

Implementing Multiculturalism through Structural Reform:
The Case Study of Yamagoe Catholic Church

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構造的リフォームによる国際化：
山越カトリック教会の事例

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要旨：現在、日本に滞在する外国人のトップファイブは中国人（695,522人）、韓国人（457,772人）、フィリピン人（243,662人）、ベトナム人（199,990人）、ブラジル人（180,923人）である（MOJ 2017）。第2位から5位の国の人たちの中にはローマ・カトリック信者が多数いる。本論文は、東京カトリック大司教区にある「山越教会」における多文化対策を分析し、今後の日本国内多文化を考察する。20年前、毎週500人超のフィリピン人信者が山越教会に殺到してきたが、彼らは日本人信者と仲が悪かった。一方、現在の山越教会ではフィリピン人と日本人の交流が多くあり、年に数回合同イベントをしている。この変化の原因は、日本人とフィリピン人のコミュニティを引き付ける活動計画にある。復活祭、クリスマス、敬老の日などのパーティの導入により、教会全体が「構造的リフォーム」を導入し、多国籍信者の参加を活性化させた。本論文はアンケートと観察を通じて、山越教会内多文化の経緯を考察する。

Keywords : Free rider Filipino Roman Catholic Church in Japan

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1. All are Welcome—Except Free Riders

The Philippines is considered one of the most Christian countries in the world with nearly 80% of Filipinos identifying as Roman Catholic (Pew Research Center, 2011). Take this statistic along with the fact that 10% of Filipino nationals currently live overseas (Reyes, 2016), transforming the Philippines into a major missionary powerhouse. Yet we must be cautious before equating immigration with church action. While it is true the Filipino has become the lifeblood of many international communities overseas (San Buenaventura 2002; Gonzalez and Maison 2004; Ignacio 2005; Phan 2005; Gonzalez 2009; Bankston 2014: 55-58) and in Japan (Terada 2010, 2013), these Catholics may not always interact with non-Filipinos or have the best interests of the congregation at heart.

In their nation-wide study on Catholic Churches in the United States, Zech, Gautier, et al. (2017) reported how the workloads of most churches are carried by a small minority of parishioners. Those who do not carry their fair share of responsibility are “free riders” who “value what the parish has to offer but contribute little or nothing to support it” (79). The Filipino Catholic, with their tendency to be taught about Catholicism as an extension of their Philippine national identity, is particularly susceptible to a becoming free rider. They exemplify this in the way many are married at Catholic Churches or baptize their children there seldom returning after these ceremonial marks of life transition. This has created strong cultural connection between Filipino migrants and church while living abroad (Mateo 1995; Satake and Danany 2006). But as previously stated, an occasional visit to church is different from involved membership. The prevalence of Filipino free riders has necessitated Catholic churches spend more time attracting

migrant Catholics. The Yamagoe Catholic Church (pseudonym) has done just this. Located in the Tokyo suburbs, this church has played a major role in integrating Filipinos into the Roman Catholic Church of Japan (RCCJ hereafter) through offering an English Mass and numerous multicultural events that attract hundreds of Filipinos weekly.

Yamagoe Catholic Church (Yamagoe Church hereafter) was built in the late 1980s, and began to offer English Mass after changes to the country's immigration law in 1989 led to the precipitous growth of the Filipino community. Twenty-five years later, a crackdown on illegal immigration caused this numbers to drop abruptly (Parreñas 2008). The numbers of Filipino parishioners at Yamagoe Church have dropped by nearly 50% since 2004 coinciding with declining rates of Filipino immigration. To add to this problem has been a steady decline in Japanese parishioners as its oldest members pass away.

Since 2010, the Yamagoe Church took initiatives to embrace its multiracial congregation by remodeling its kitchen and implementing a series of multicultural events that have catered to Filipino and Japanese cohorts excited to interact with each other. However, success did not happen overnight taking years of effort from Filipinos and Japanese; "taking the lead" in implementing multicultural reform (Mullins 2011:183). What changes occurred over the past twenty years that have made Yamagoe Church more multicultural? What problems still need to be addressed? And to what extent, if any, can the lessons learned be applied to the RCCJ and Japanese society? These are the questions this paper sets out to answer by analyzing the history of Yamagoe Church.

2. Method and Research Site

Tokyo was chosen for this research because it is the international hub

of Japan, with foreigners comprising 3.0% of its population (Statistics Japan 2018). This ethnic diversity will likely continue to rise in the future (Shigeta 2018; Tobita 2018; Yoshida 2018). Within this metropolis, the RCCJ is arguably the largest and most diverse institution, with over half its membership being foreign-born (Muncada 2008; Tani 2008; Takahashi 2015). For this reason, research conducted at Yamagoe Catholic Church from 2010-2019 holds a wider significance for a case study of multiculturalism within Tokyo. Data was collected through observations at the Japanese and English Masses and surveys distributed in 2015 and 2016.

Over the course of this research, participants were aware of my position as a researcher and my intent for publications. This includes consent received from Fr. Tanaka, the resident priest of Yamagoe Church, the church board, and leaders from English and Japanese-Mass communities. Nevertheless, it was impossible to receive permission from everyone appearing in photos. For this reason, I have substantially edited figures to protect the privacy of individuals by smudging the pixels around individual's faces. In addition, all names used in this research from that of the church to the resident priest, are pseudonyms.

3. How Things Used to Be

Free rider Catholics who are not involved in parish activities reached its peak in the first half of the 2000s. Then, Filipinos entered Japan from all socio-economic classes to work in service and construction jobs throughout the country. During this period, nearly six hundred Filipinos attended the English Mass weekly. Attendees were so great, they flooded the second-floor chapel, poured down the stairwell, out the front

door, and into the adjacent public park (Figure 1 and 2). Filipino vendors would sell their ethnic foods on the side of the street, transforming the neighborhood into a little Manila. During this period, the English Mass existed as a parallel reality, separate from the lives of Japanese Catholics. It was as if the English-speaking priests at that time (invited in from other locations) and the attendees had little desire to interact with Japanese Catholics or call Yamagoe Church home.



Figure 1: Filipino vendors crowding adjacent park



Figure 2: Filipino participants blocking the public walkway



Figure 3: Multilingual signs in front of location where venders sell goods

3.1 A New Priest named Fr. Tanaka

In 2006, Fr. Tanaka took over for an elder Japanese priest who had outsourced the English Mass to the Jesuit order. Fr. Tanaka is a Japanese polyglot, trained in Europe and the United States in the Bible and psychological care. He entered Yamagoe Church with the intention of constructing an international community that would favor neither Japanese nor Filipino. He did this through categorically implementing changes, first to the Mass, and then the church bureaucracy.

The first step at multiculturalism was to improve the relationship between Yamagoe Church and its neighbors. Fr. Tanaka used to periodically receive calls from the police due to the illegal parking of Filipino parishioners' husbands on the one-way, narrow street in front of the church (Figure 3). Illegal vending of Filipino goods and blocking the walkway in front of the church were also constant issues of concern. Because these are common practices that occur in the Philippines, many Filipinos were unaware (or unconcerned) that these habits 'interfered' with the free use of public space and attracted police intervention giving, Yamagoe Church a bad reputation in the neighborhood. Fr. Tanaka publically confronted this problem through Mass announcements, and even created promotional videos on YouTube about appropriate Mass behavior.



Figure 4: El Shaddai Mass, 2004

3.2 El Shaddai and Multicultural Policy

The poor relationship that existed between Filipino Catholics and their neighbors affected relationships with Japanese Catholics within Yamagoe Church. This was most apparent with the strained relationship the church board held with the Filipino Catholic lay organization known as El Shaddai. El Shaddai (ES hereafter) is an evangelical Catholic group that arose in the Philippines in the 1980s (Wiegele 2007). ES has an office in Tokyo that corresponds with four churches throughout the Tokyo archdiocese. ES Tokyo offices transported their own PA system, band, and paid preacher (who was not a priest) to each church to perform its service. A Catholic priest was also conscripted to officiate the beginning of the service according to the Roman Catholic rite. After the Mass concluded, the service continues in ES fashion for several more hours. For the use of the parish, ES divided its collection between

the ES office in Manila and the host church. The Japanese at Yamagoe Church believed this monetary reimbursement satisfactory in the beginning. That was until internal problems began to arise.

The ES Mass was eventually discontinued in 2008. The problem with El Shaddai was that its three-hour, charismatic services drew complaints from residents surrounding the church due to noise. It did not help matters that this group would often not clean the church after its use and litter the streets on its way home. In the end, the primary reason Fr. Tanaka stopped sponsoring ES was due to its attendees having little to no contact with the parish. Even the money they contributed was not enough to offset the stress these Masses placed on the formation of a multicultural parish. Fr. Tanaka and a small group of committed leaders decided to transform the church into a multicultural community rather than continue outsourcing English support to groups with less interest in parish matters. This began with Fr. Tanaka's 'request' to officiate the English Mass, and his refusal of ES Masses or weekly outsourcing to foreign priests.

When I arrived in 2009, Fr. Tanaka and core members were aware that things at the English Mass had to change. This was evidenced by leaders having to shout announcements at the congregation or Fr. Tanaka pausing during Mass for silence. On several occasions this elicited the anger of the Filipino MC who would rebuke the congregation yelling "You are being rude!" This poor communication with the congregation led the young Fr. Tanaka to take decisive action to 'teach' them through selecting a small group of multicultural-minded leaders to carry out structural reform.

4. Yamagoe Catholic Church

Before moving forward, it is important we understand more about Yamagoe parishioners and how their ethnic composition has made embracing a multicultural platform a reality. The present Yamagoe Church is a multicultural parish concerned with increasing communication between its Filipino Japanese members. This section samples a cross-section of the current Yamagoe Church paying special attention to its ethnic makeup, employment and the proximity of residents' homes to the church.

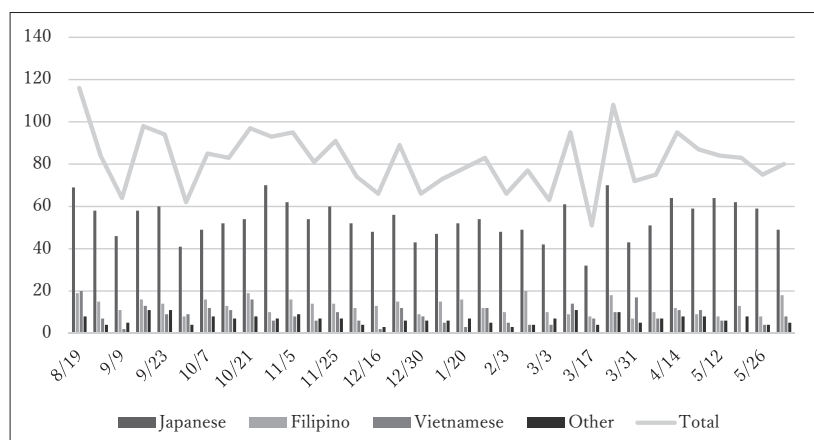


Figure 5: Ethnic breakdown at Japanese Mass (Aug 2018-May 2019)

4.1 Breakdown of the Mass at Yamagoe Church

A central feature of Yamagoe's multiculturalism is its Mass schedule. Yamagoe Church has two Masses every Sunday: a Japanese Mass in the morning and an English Mass in the afternoon. Fr. Tanaka leads both. Despite the English Mass attracting nearly four times that of the Japanese Mass, the Japanese is more international with participants

coming from Japan, the Philippines, Vietnam, Korea, and Taiwan. This ethnic diversity is captured in two figures of attendance (Figure 5) and ethnicity (Figure 6) taken over a period of 34 Masses.

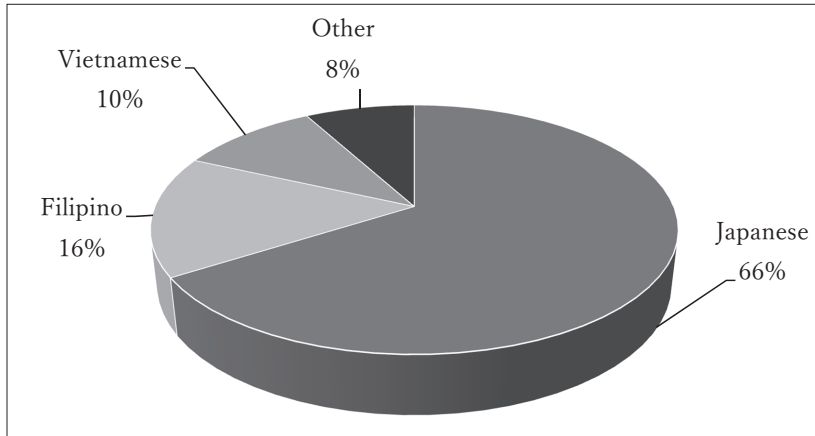


Figure 6: Ethnic Breakdown at Japanese Mass (Aug 2018-May 2019)

On average, the Japanese Mass attracts 81.9 people every week (Figure 5). Of these parishioners, the Japanese only account for 54.1 people, or 66% of total attendance. Filipinos number 12.9 people (16%), Vietnamese 8.4 people (10%), and other ethnic groups 6.6 (8%) (Figure 6).¹⁾ “Other” refers to attendees predominately from Korea, China, Taiwan, and elsewhere.

In comparison to the ethnic diversity at the Japanese Mass, the English Mass varies significantly from as few as 100 to more than 300 attendees. Thus far, the only data collected at the English Mass

1) Ethnic composition was determined by sight and prior knowledge of the historical background of individual attendees.

occurred on September 23rd, 2018. This Mass had a relatively low turnout with only 121 attendees (possibly due to rain). As seen in figure 7, nearly 88% of attendees at this Mass were from Filipino backgrounds, substantiating claims that Filipinos predominately attend the English Mass.

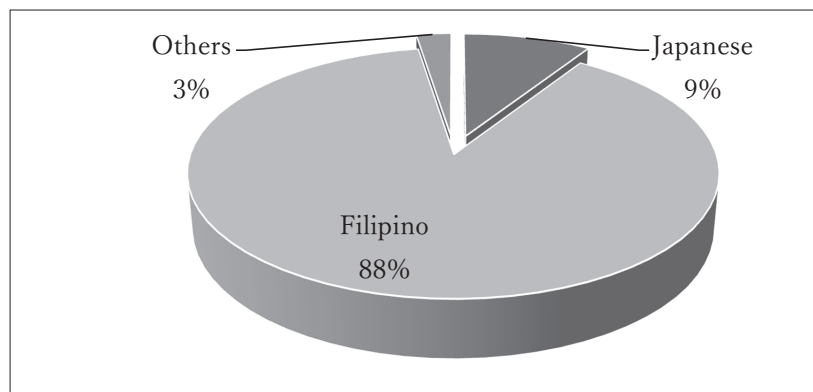


Figure 7: Ethnic Breakdown at the English Mass 9/23/2018

4.2 The Current State of Filipinos at Yamagoe Church

Yamagoe Church was chosen for this case study for the variety of its multicultural activities and its high rate of cross cultural participation. To better understand what kind of Filipino attends Yamagoe parish, a questionnaire was distributed in 2015 to 105 individuals (forty-eight Japanese and fifty-three Filipinos). Surveys were administered by church members for four consecutive weeks during the month of February. This questionnaire focused on the life patterns of Yamagoe parishioners including places of employment, education level, number of children and degree of church attendance.

Based on data collected, the average age of Filipino respondents

was forty-four years old, making them nearly eight years younger than their fifty-two-year old Japanese counterpart. Most Filipino respondents were women who had lived in Japan for two or more decades. This influenced their desire to settle down in Japan (80%) and raise their one or two children (average ages fifteen years old). Yamagoe Filipino parishioners moved to Tokyo from areas in or around Manila (69% of Filipinos interviewed). ²⁾ Filipinos travel longer distances to attend Mass than their Japanese counterpart with 51% traveling more than 30km across prefectural (and diocese) borders. By comparison, 81% of Japanese parishioners lived within 10km of the church.

Filipino membership at Yamagoe Church is highly educated with 61% of parishioners having obtained an undergraduate degree or higher. This is only slightly lower than the 64% average of Japanese parishioners. Despite their high education level, Filipinos tended to work in service jobs compared to their Japanese counterpart. For example, 55% of Japanese worked in service jobs including health care, cleaning, teaching and massage, compared to 67% of Filipinos who worked in health care, cleaning, cooking, retail, supermarket and teaching (Figures 8 and 9). Notable in this breakdown is the absence of the entertainment as a Filipino profession, which might have been seen the past.

2) Considering 33% of those Japanese interviewed were born outside Tokyo, a significant number of parishioners moved into the Tokyo archdiocese.

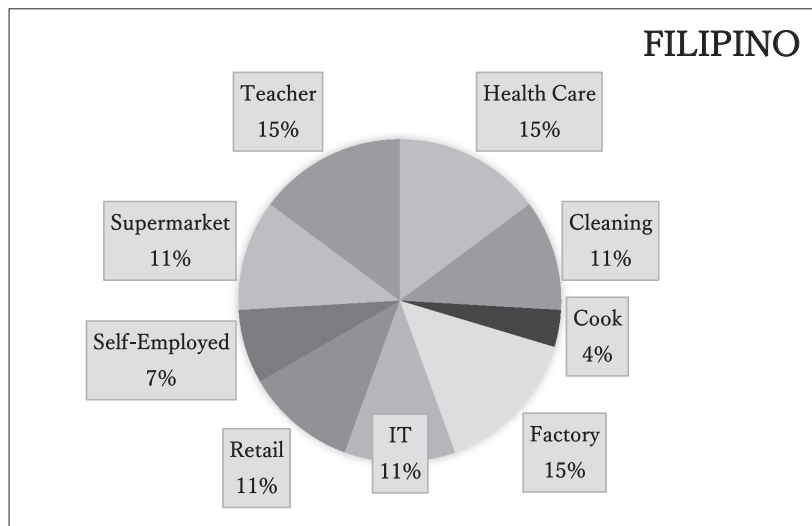


Figure 8: Filipino-member employment

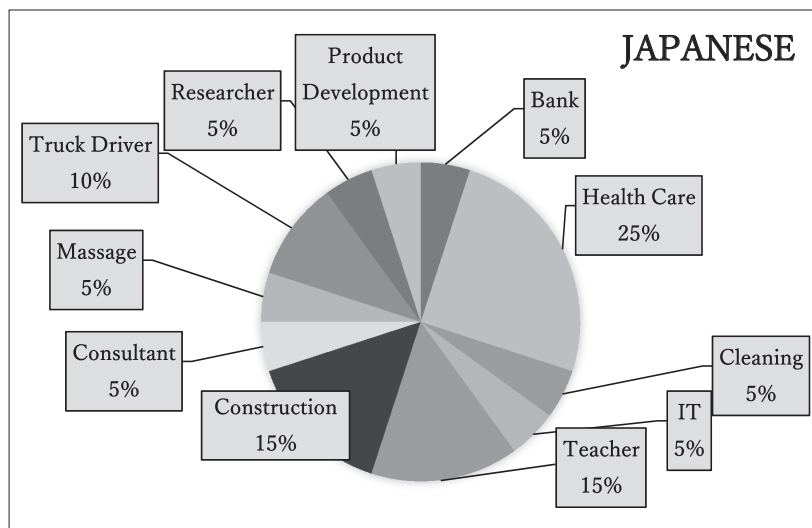


Figure 9: Japanese-member employment

Based on this survey, most Filipinos parishioners at Yamagoe Church are middle-age mothers of two children who work part-time, blue-collar jobs, live in the suburb, and spend Sunday afternoons at church. These women may have initially entered Japan as entertainers (Parreñas 2008), but now work part-time jobs while raising their family as marriage migrants (Takahata 2015). They are what Celero (2017) calls “assimilating mothers” who try hard to adapt their lives to their Japanese husbands and requirements by Japanese society in the raising of their children (187-188).

5. Church Activities, Identity Construction and Outreach

Roman Catholicism, with its global hierarchy, requires its churches a degree of compliance to authority. It achieves this by standardizing worship practices for which it constructs a collective identity. Foreign-born Catholics sometimes oppose multicultural initiatives by retreating to mono-racial church communities where they avoid contact with nationals by speaking their native language and practicing their native culture. LeMay (2013) illustrates how some Filipino groups in the Roman Catholic Church of Japan maintain parallel communities with Japanese, sharing church buildings but functioning as separate entities. A similar situation existed previously at Yamagoe Church between Filipino-dominant English and the Japanese Mass.

This has changed since Fr. Tanaka arrived at Yamagoe Church. His determined efforts at internationalizing its Mass included hand-picking a small group of Filipinos to initiate his liturgical reforms. This began with him standardizing the liturgy and replacing Filipino band members with a Japanese organist knowledgeable in the order of the Catholic liturgical seasons. Other reforms included replacing Filipino-

style worship with international equivalents. These reforms led many parishioners to leave the Mass for parishes elsewhere. Fr. Tanaka interpreted this as a good thing, however, claiming those who had left were free-rider parishioners unwilling to compromise to international demands.



Figure 10: New Year Eve Mass, 2019

5.1 Open and Closed Networks in a Multiracial Setting

Bankston (2014) uses the terms “closed” and “open” networks to classify church communities by the relationships their members hold with each other. A “closed network” is as small, parochial community with “strong ties” amongst its members. These communities share close, almost familial relationships, meeting outside church and being involved privately in the lives of other members. On the other hand, “open networks” are representative of outward-looking and ethnically diverse communities that yield impersonal relationships. The benefit of closed networks is in the wide variety of information they provide members, and their ability to attract people from outside the religious community. This can be observed at international churches in Tokyo

such as the Franciscan Center in Roppongi, the Kojimachi Catholic Church in Yotsuya or the St. Anslem Church in Meguro. These churches tend to yield weaker relationships with fellow parishioners, but make up for this with expert support such as advice on immigration policy, medical aid, legal support and employment opportunities (Mateo 1995; Bankston 2014: 12). In these ways, both kinds of relationships—open and closed networks—contribute to the migrant experience in different but significant ways.

Table 1: List of events planned between English (E) and Japanese (J) groups

Event Name	In Charge	Description
Palm Cutting	E	Cutting Palm Branches for Palm Sunday
Easter Egg Painting	E	Paint eggs to pass out after Easter Mass
Easter Party	J (E)	Joint party on Sunday in between Masses
Christmas Party	J	Party on 12/24 after nighttime Mass
New Year Party	E	Party on 12/31 after nighttime Mass
Elder Day	J (E)	Sunday party where E group will perform
Block Rosary	E	Carrying statue of Mary to houses
Birthday Parties	E	Monthly birthday party
Zumba	E	Latin-style aerobics after E Mass

Though Bankston's terms are helpful in classifying parishioners' networks, parishes usually possess dynamic relations that fall somewhere between these extremes. This is illustrated in the vast array of open and closed network events offered by Yamagoe Church. For example, the Block Rosary usually meets at the homes of parishioners, making it a favorite for Filipinos, but is seldom attended by Japanese due to Filipino tastes and culture. By comparison, Christmas celebrations are heavily attended by parishioners' families or friends from all ethnic backgrounds,

increasing the size of Yamagoe Church Mass by as much as 300%.

Combining open and closed networks has worked well with the ethnically diverse community at Yamagoe Church. But not all areas of this church are ethnically diverse, as the Filipino-dominated English Mass attests. The Yamagoe Church, with its English and Japanese speaking communities, is a combination of 1) mono-ethnic, 2) pan-ethnic, and 3) multi [ethnic] church communities (Kim 2010). Mono-ethnic churches are where over 80 percent of the members are from one national background, pan-ethnic churches are where 80 percent are of a specific ethnic background such as East-Asian or Southeast-Asian, and multi [ethnic] churches are where no more than 80 percent are of a singular ethnic background (Ibid., 103). Yamagoe church fluctuates between mono-ethnic and multi [ethnic] church activities depending on the social event or the language of the Mass. For example, thirteen Filipinos and eight Vietnamese consistently attend the Japanese mass, diversifying this traditionally mono-ethnic parish. On the other hand, the mono-ethnic English mass or other predominately Filipino activities exist for those desiring a touch of their native Catholicism.

5.2 ‘Concrete’ Multiculturalism through Church Renovation

Yamagoe Church’s multicultural activities have been recent developments since the stationing of Fr. Tanaka at Yamagoe Church. The first sign of change came a few years after his assignment when the hall and kitchen were remodeled to better reflect the community’s changing demographic. The original hall was constructed with Japanese parishioners in mind and proved woefully inadequate to accommodate the social activities of its ethnically diverse membership. For example, the second-floor chapel and its first-floor social space were too small to

accommodate Sunday attendees who were forced to stand during Mass along the walls or socialize outside during over-crowded social events. When Fr. Tanaka arrived, he quickly recognized the inefficiency of the narrow kitchen and weathered hall to meet the social needs of the Yamagoe community. This led to a renovation costing \$200,000 (USD) that transformed the first floor from a space used for personal events, to one that could house over 100 sitting and three times that standing. This ‘hot water room’ was expanded from 8.2 square meters (barely the size of a home kitchen) to a kitchen of 32.8 square meters. The new kitchen included two refrigerators, one for the Japanese and one for the English group, two double-basin sinks, a 3.5 x 1-meter countertop, and a meter-wide oven with seven burners. The industrial kitchen came with enough cutlery, pots and pans, silverware and plates to feed over 300 people. Since the remodeling of the hall and kitchen, food and hospitality has become a central part in Yamagoe Church’s community events, and a space that has fundamentally changed the interactions of Japanese with Filipinos.

6. Social Activities and the Bridging of Cultural Difference

Gonzalez III and Maison (2004), Faier (2009) and Gonzalez (2009) show in their study of Filipino social groups, how Catholic Churches frequently become “breeding grounds of volunteerism, philanthropy, and civic behavior” not to mention “spaces for the cultivation of civic engagement and sites for political recruitment, incorporation, co-optation, and empowerment” (Gonzalez, 340). Filipinos active in church decision-making lead to the “rene[wal], preserv[ation], and transmi[tion] [of their] cultural capital in the form of community concern[s], family values, and a work ethic” (Ibid., 341). This implementation of social capital is

achieved by practicing culture during group events like pot-luck meals, dance parties and other performative expressions of Filipino culture.

At Yamagoe Church, Filipinos use birthdays, baptisms, and weddings as excuses to socialize with other Filipinos and Japanese. After the church was remodeled, Filipinos have used the kitchen to invite friends to its extensive list of events. In this section, five events are delineated to qualify how Filipinos have taken a greater interest in associating with Japanese Catholics. Since Fr. Tanaka's assignment, each of the events listed below became more multicultural to such that Filipinos have begun inviting Japanese to attend events only they had previously attended (such as the New Year Eve party).

6.1 Christmas and Easter Parties Overviewed

At Yamagoe Church, Christmas and Easter Mass receive greater attendance than any other event. On these holidays, pews overflow and attendees align the walls (Figure 11). After Christmas and Easter Masses, parties held in the first-floor hall unite Japanese and English language groups. These celebrations each have a distinctive flavor.

The difference between Christmas and Easter center on when they are celebrated. Christmas is not a public holiday and often falls on a weekday. Fewer than 100 people can attend Christmas Day Mass, making the Christmas Eve Mass receive substantially more participation (500 people or more). The evening party afterwards includes eating, keynote speeches and some performances from church groups. This lasts from 9:00 to 11:00, leaving little sleep for those having to work the following morning.

By comparison, Easter always falls on Sunday and is divided into Japanese morning and English afternoon Masses. These Masses

receive close to double the average attendance. Easter parties are scheduled between the Japanese and the English Masses and last from about 11:30 to 13:30. Older members tend to participate in these daytime events more than on Christmas Eve Mass. Younger school children who have the day off also turn out in high numbers. These daytime parties are not the scale of the Christmas party, but still attract around 200 members.



Figure 11: Christmas Eve Mass 2015



Figure 12: Easter Party, 2016

6.2 Christmas Party Participants

To get a better grasp of Yamagoe's parties, I refer to the Christmas party of 2017. Preparation for this party began on December the 23rd and continued into the afternoon of the 24th. Though food was prepared for 400 people, plates were cleared in less than an hour after the event began. By 8:30pm there was a nativity reading by the Yamagoe Church School, proceeded by Santa gift-giving, and a raffle where participants could win a one-night stay at a hotel, or other prizes. According to Yamagoe tradition, the Japanese group planned the Christmas party, but outsourced activities to the Church School and the English group (New Year's Mass is the English group's responsibility). Cleaning was undertaken by everyone who attended, regardless of group affiliation.

The Christmas party offers a unique opportunity for emerging adults to attend with their parents, or for those without family to feel connected to a community. This includes foreigners who feel isolated from society, divorcees and single mothers, people with depression or other psychological illnesses. Fr. Tanaka mentioned this in his Christmas day homily saying...

What we are trying to do here at Yamagoe Church is to make the invisible visible, and this pertains to Japanese society. Last night's Christmas party was attended by several different kinds of people who were either not Christian, or seldom attend church events. For the past few years, our church has been frequented by local college students interested in observing a kind of multiculturalism here that is absent in the wider Japanese society. We also have several severely handicapped people who feel

themselves part of this community. And then there are those children of parishioners who only come to church a few times a year. Included in these are those with mental handicaps like depression, Down syndrome and loneliness. I can imagine coming to a lively party on Christmas Eve may give them a venue to communicate with others. In this way, God has made the invisible visible by blessing us with such diversity.³

Christmas Day Mass and its party afterwards have played an integral part in the local community attracting not only regular members, but also many free riders. In addition, recent years have brought numerous college students researching multiculturalism who attend for field work or the chance at interacting with non-Japanese. For these students, Yamagoe Church offers a window to experience ethnic diversity in Tokyo irrespective of religious background.



Figure 13: Palm cutting, 2017

3) Paraphrased and translated from 2017 Christmas Day homily.

6.3 Palm Cutting

Another example of a Yamagoe event that has brought the Japanese and Filipinos together is the palm cutting activity held before Palm Sunday. In the Christian tradition, a week before Easter is when Jesus is said to have entered Jerusalem making way for his public mission and crucifixion. Accordingly, upon entering Jerusalem the residents cut palm branches and laid them on the ground where Jesus walked as a symbol of his royalty. To reinterpret this event, Catholics cut palm branches and pass them out before Mass to be blessed. These are then taken and displayed at home for one year until they are burned 11 months later for Ash Wednesday. Preparation for Palm Sunday includes members from both Masses as they cut, trim and decorate palm branches. Each year, nearly 400 branches are cut at Yamagoe Church by a small group of parishioners. These are decorated with ribbons, sometimes colored with glitter or paint, and sold for a nominal cost on Palm Sunday. After Mass, participants have their palms blessed to bring home.

Palm cutting is unusual for several reasons; the first is its religious significance. Palm cutting is not an attractive party with delicious food, dance or other productions, but is a calm and methodical labor of love that participants engage in over casual conversation. The second reason I include this here is because it is the Filipino community—not the Japanese—who order the palms and supervise their completion. They facilitate interaction with Japanese, transforming this otherwise dull activity into a locale where each culture can experience their unique version of Catholicism.



Figure 14: Easter egg painting, 2014



Figure 15: Easter egg distribution, 2014

6.4 Elder Day Party

When one thinks of multicultural events, a party to honor the lives of

elder parishioners is probably far from the top of the list. For most part, events in Japan that honor the elderly involve gossip over green tea. Such is not the case at for Yamagoe Church's Elder Day party. Since 2010 Samponya, a professional Peruvian band has been contracted as its main attraction. This ten-piece band sends small factions of three to five entertainers each year to play traditional flutes, drums, and guitars from Latin America. In the first few years of its activity the band took center stage. With hits like "Coffee Rumba" and "La Bamba" they interjected a light-hearted, jubilant feel to this party. In 2010, Filipino core group members made their presence felt as they encouraged Japanese elders to dance. Within minutes, ten elders ages seventy and older were on their feet line-dancing. Even those in wheel chairs were not excluded as groups of dancers placed them at the center the dance floor, joining hands together in a circle, becoming the model for years to come.



Figure 16: Elder Day party, 2017

In 2017, a junior high school student teamed with a visiting college student to perform a hip-hop dance based on a live performance seen at Tokyo Disneyland. From then came two dances by Filipino members: A Hula Dance, and Zumba, both complete with hand-made uniforms. Samponya ended this Elder Day celebration with the Spanish hit “Bésame Mucho” to rapturous applause. This cooperative style between parishioner and performer, amateur and professional was a sign that Yamagoe Church had evolved into a community that encouraged the activities of all its members. With a hundred Filipino and Japanese dancing over an hour, the Elder’s Day party continues to be one of the best representations of multiculturalism at Yamagoe Church.

7. Conclusion: Multicultural Leaders and Free Riders

In 2017, the food at the Christmas and Easter parties was a little less gorgeous than usual. The reason for this change was the lack of help in preparation. Over the past few years, fewer people are helping prepare for Yamagoe Church’s extensive list of social events. This has not always meant, however, that fewer attend. As mentioned above, the number of non-Catholics and irregular attendees at Yamagoe Church has increased. This difference has meant extra added stress for a smaller number of active members.

Studies by Sherkat (2014: 93, 95), Smith, Longest, et al. (2014), and Zuckerman, Galen et al. (2016) show that weekly church attendance is on the decline worldwide. This phenomenon has led to the downsizing, merging and closing of churches to lack of support from the congregational body. A similar situation can be seen occurring in rural areas in Japan as parish sizes dwindle due to old age and lack of cohort

replacement. Comparatively, Yamagoe Church is unusual for its proximity to the urban center of Tokyo and many major universities, both factors resulting in younger membership and a steady intake of new attendees not seen elsewhere. Despite these unique characteristics, Yamagoe Church's active leadership has not grown substantially over the past decade. This has created a tension that has begun to threaten its multiculturalism as aging members struggle to respond to the demands of growing numbers of foreign-born Catholics.

The threat of free riders draining essential resources from the church community is also a concern for Yamagoe. This is reflected in church entrance and exit polls taken at the Yamagoe Church English Mass on October 9, 2016. Candy was distributed to church attendees as they entered the front door in hopes of not disturbing people's Mass attendance. Every fifteen minutes the color of candy was changed to get a sense of who entered and left church when. These were then tallied to speculate the percentage of people who stay after Mass. The first candy was distributed 30 minutes before Mass began. By this time twenty-six people had already entered the church. These were predominately members in the choir or those working to prepare for the Mass. At 13:30 and 13:45 two sets of thirty people had entered the parish for a total number of 86 participants. During the first 15 minutes of the Mass, another seventeen entered. These were followed by three people at 14:30. Finally, one person entered at 14:45 and one person at 15:15, barely 5 minutes before the end of the Mass (Figure 17). After the Mass, attendees left the church in a solid wave with few remaining minutes afterwards.

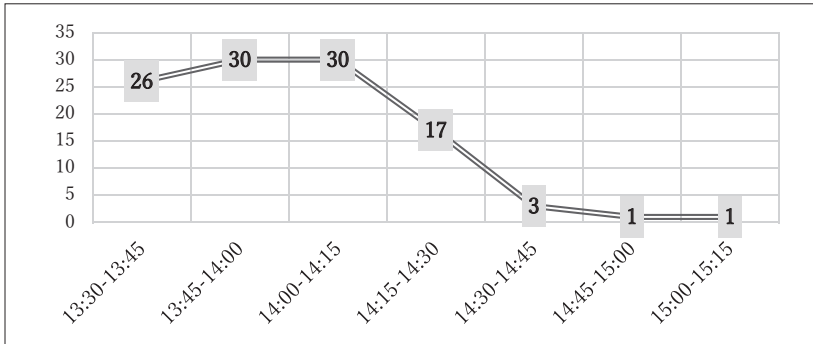


Figure 17: English Mass entrance times (n=108)

This survey reflects a reality that only those attendees involved in leadership positions took time to socialize after Mass. Overall, almost 75% of the congregation left directly after the Mass, mingling with no one. Yamagoe Church's ethnic diversity may be unique within the RCCJ, but the persistence of its high numbers of free rider parishioners has complicated its ability to meet the multicultural ideals it has set for itself. If Yamagoe Church is to remain accepting to all its members, it will need to motivate more of its attendees to take an active role in church matters.

This study has revealed how multicultural communities in Japan comprised of Catholics from Japan, the Philippines, and elsewhere engage in implementing multiculturalism in different ways. Despite all members 'believing' in ethnically diverse ideals, the degree these can be translated into tangible results depends on the ability of local communities to stimulate their members to take an active role in the group's goals. The longer this is not achieved, the greater the stress on individual leaders becomes, pushing them to give up on these ideals, into mono-cultural enclaves, dealing a heavy blow hopes that religious

communities such as these can contribute positively to Japan's changing future.

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