

デンマーク・オーフス(Aarhus)大学の Jørn Borup 先生が、日本の仏教系新宗教の経済戦略をテーマにご講演下さいました。オーフス大学はデンマークでも宗教学がもっとも盛んな大学です。

このテーマについては、かつての日本の宗教社会学では、教団の教義や実践の中に、「プロテスタントイズムの倫理」に対応する経済倫理を探したり、教団の経営の実態に注目したりといった研究が主でした。これに対して、Borup 先生は、このところ話題のペンテコステ派の「繁栄の福音 prosperity gospel」現象と、創価学会や幸福の科学の経済観を比較するという新しい切り口から研究されました。日本での調査の成果をお話し下さいました。

PROSPEROUS BUDDHISM, PROSPERITY BUDDHISM AND RELIGIOUS CAPITAL

In the West, Buddhism as a “world rejecting” religion based on ascetic renunciation and non-economic spirituality is often invoked as a default narrative, and in many Buddhist cultures, immateriality is indeed promoted as a symbolic ideal of authenticity. Economy and materiality, however, are inherently part of Buddhism. This is notably the case in Japan, where monasteries, temples and associations throughout history have been wealthy organizations. Contemporary temple Buddhism, however, faces economic threats from secularization, non-Buddhist ritual business, and new religious movements (NRMs). This presentation analyzes the economy in and of contemporary Japanese Buddhism and systems of value transactions. The concept of “prosperity Buddhism” and religious capital is explored by comparing temple Buddhism with two new religious movements: Soka Gakkai and Happy Science. It is argued that the transaction models of these two groups are different from those of temple Buddhism by being differently adjusted to the market through teachings, practices and organizational structures legitimating more openly this-worldliness and materiality. It is also argued that especially Soka Gakkai has transformed its value exchange model by converting ideals of economic transactions into other kinds of non-material forms of capital. Finally, it is suggested that a capital perspective on (Japanese) Buddhism reveals both structural differences within kinds of Buddhism, and that “Prosperity Buddhism” can be a useful analytical concept with which to illustrate one such type.

