### Social Science & Humanities Research Association

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| Name of the Conference | SOCIAL SCIENCE AND HUMANITIES RESEARCH ASSOCIATION (SSHRA) Singapore – International Conference on Social Science & Humanities, 16-17 March 2023 |
| Conference Dates | From: (16/March/2023)To: (17/March/2023) |
| Participant’s Name | Katsuhiro Sasuga |
| Department/ Institute | Department of International Studies |
| University/ Organization | Tokai University |
| City, Country | Kanagawa, Japan |
| Email ID 1 | katsusasuga@gmail.com |
| Email ID 2 | Sk062220@tsc.u-tokai.ac.jp |
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**Religious Nationalism in Contemporary Japan**

**Katsuhiro SASUGA**

*Department of International Studies, Tokai University,*

*4-1-1 Kitakaname, Hirastuka-shi, Kanagawa-ken, Japan 2591292*

*katsusasuga@gmail.com*

**Abstract**

*The study of religious nationalism in Japanese politics has been a relatively understudied sub-field of research. Although secularization has been apparent in Japan, there has been a substantial revival of religion in politics of Japan. The assassination of former Japan’s Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in July 2022, shed light on the relationship between the controversial religious organization, known as the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification, and Japanese politics. The mother of the man suspected of killing Abe was bankrupted as the result of huge donations to the Church. Through strong ties with Abe family, the Church has exerted its influence on Japanese politics especially among conservative LDP (Liberal Democratic Party) members for several decades. Its ties with politics went back to the period of the Nobusuke Kishi’s administration, known as Abe's grandfather.*

*Religious nationalism is not a new phenomenon in Japan, however hitherto Buddhist nationalists and state-Shinto have been paid attention as the center of religious nationalism especially during the Japanese imperialist war in 20th century. While religion is not a necessary component of nationalistic ideologies, religious considerations have been part of political decisions. The religious groups as the social organization have continued to gain more political power and to impose their religious visions on all of society. The election supports by religious groups for increasing vote-gathering power cannot be ignored by the candidates to win the national or municipal elections.*

*This paper seeks to reveal the relations between religious nationalism and politics little discussed in the mainstream of Japan’s political studies and to examine how political decision have been affected by religious nationalism.*

**Key Words:** religion, politics, Japan, nationalism, electoral incentives

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