

A Research on Holy Place Tourism in Nagasaki

Doctoral Course in Regional Management

1411D03 Takuro Ikeda

1. Background of the research

Sightseeing and pilgrimage, which were considered separate phenomena after modernization, are connected. In certain situations, this connection should be described as "fusion of religion and sightseeing". This "fusion" is at the back ground of this research. That is, there is a trend toward making tourist attractions out of religious holy places and institutions. Holy places serve as spaces for people who have various purposes, for better or worse.

Sightseeing is formerly considered to be a pleasure trip, more precisely, a popular activity. Making a religious holy site applicable to sightseeing brought about "loss of the holiness as a holy site", or "a religious declension", and religious and traditional culture of the area could be broken and degraded. However, in recent years, the trend of tourism which is regarded as religion tourism is remarkable. The popularity of holy sites including spiritual place boom is increasing. Another factor which promotes the fusion of religion and sightseeing to have come to argue about the only best nature of the holy site from a viewpoint of world heritage registration different from faith. Registering with the world heritage showing global value, gives a universal value to a holy place, and the place is reported by various media. As a result, Churches and Christian sites in Nagasaki were publicized widely and holy sites came to be chosen as tourist destinations. When religion and sightseeing intersect, number of people who visit a religious holy site increases, and there is an increase in exchange population or creation of an economic ripple effect. However, the way that a holy site functions could be forced to change because many people visit. Namely, when a religious holy site which was originally "an invocatory place" is commercialized as a tourist attractions, there have no choice but to ask questions about sightseeing. It is asked how a holy site, which have obtained the character of a tourist site and gains an increase of tourism resources or world heritage classification, faces with sightseeing.

Originally, a religious holy site is not a place which has planned to become a cultural asset or tourist attraction. However, new value, such as artistic, aesthetic, economic, or cultural, is given to each religious holy site by being registered as a

cultural asset or world heritage site. Meanwhile, there is a situation that the asset value of cultural property is regarded as "valuation (rating)" of the sacred place and the religious belief itself. Therefore, the religious and cultural politics of how to use a religious holy site for sightseeing promotion and town planning is also asked. Furthermore, when many tourists come to visit a religious holy site, issues arise concerning problematic behavior or a lack of ethical consideration which should naturally be paid. Such situations place a serious burden on the livelihood of people who maintain the holy site itself.

2. Purpose of the research

In this paper, I verify the trend in tourism of making a religious holy sites the destination for holy place tourism, by choosing Nagasaki as an example. Additionally, I clarify the factors of which holy place tourism consists, the policy of holy place superintendence in local management, and related subject.

Based on the background of research, I set up Nagasaki Prefecture as the research region for verifying the trend of holy place tourism in this paper. There are 138 Catholic churches in Nagasaki prefecture, which forms a main stage of Japanese Christian history. Each church is positioned in the center of the life base of a community as "a living church" until now. Such a place does not exist elsewhere, so it is considered to be a unique place. Nagasaki Prefecture has a plan to become a travel destination. In this context, Churches and Christian sites in Nagasaki has been made a component of sightseeing. Not only the Oura Cathedral, which had been considered a staple of sightseeing in Nagasaki since ancient times, 138 churches interspersed individually became newly recognized as "churches". The present condition in which the 138 churches in Nagasaki are now used for sightseeing is not seen in other areas. Under such circumstances, the process of promoting the Catholic churches and related historic relics in Nagasaki as world heritage sites is becoming active. There exist 20 world heritage in Japan as of November 2016, and religious holy sites, such as " Buddhist Monuments in the Horyu-ji Area", " Sacred Sites and Pilgrimage Routes in the Kii Mountain Range, and the Cultural Landscapes that Surround them", also exist. However, there is no Christian-related world heritage among them, which proves uniqueness of Nagasaki's Churches. Furthermore, world heritage classification of Nagasaki's churches is simultaneously accompanied by movement toward promoting tourism resources, and trends in the measures in Nagasaki Prefecture have a major influence on the regional future in the area that has constituent assets of Nagasaki Churches. Furthermore,

Nagasaki's Churches temporarily withdrew their world heritage application on the recommendation of ICOMOS in February, 2016. The subject of "a prospective visitor superintendent" is discussed and considered to be a problem of local management, and leads to the research task in this research.

Nagasaki Teramachi's existence is also an important element which set up Nagasaki Prefecture as the research region. Nagasaki Teramachi was built with the intention of Christian prohibition during the Edo period, and it has characteristic scenic beauty with two shrines and fourteen temples which stand in a row in a horizontal line. Moreover, the rows of houses of Teramachi intermingled with the traditional temples of Japanese ancient times and the Obaku sect temple, which has a connection in China, may be called one of the most uniquely beautiful scenes in the country. In addition, Nagasaki Teramachi is also a religious holy site inseparable from the life of the people of Nagasaki. The traditional event of the "Shoronagashi (Spirit Boat Procession) " and "Nagasaki Kunchi" is a religious event concerned for waiting with the people of Nagasaki, and considered to be "the religion in a life" of people of Nagasaki. In order that Teramachi's temples and shrines play large relation and role in these events, they may hold parishioners; moreover, local characteristics are strongly rooted in the area. Thus, Nagasaki Teramachi's two shrines and no less than fourteen temples take hold on the community as "a living temple." This study presents an original examination and comparison of how Nagasaki's churches relate religion and life of the local community.

3. Method of research

In this paper, I use the argument of J. Urry's "Tourist Gaze". In this research, I do not consider guests as a single collectivity (body) but classify them into tourists, pilgrims, and participants in holy place tourism. From this, two boundaries of "holy" religious site and "-a way of the world" "tourist resort" dissolve. As a result, the elements associated with both pilgrimages and sightseeing influence each other. Following this, I show clearly that the phenomenon of holy place tourism is a special form which is not a conventional form of sightseeing. In addition, a chief aim of this research is to examine places which are considered such places based on their features.

Therefore, in this research, I hold interviews with tourists and explain people's motives and purposes for visiting holy sites. Furthermore, I consider how people of the communities which receive tourists view and accommodate them. Specifically

paying attention to "people's narration (narrative)", I held interviews with both hosts and guests. On the host side, the holy site used as the destination of sightseeing is the invocatory space of the people who live there. I consider that the comprehension about the state of holy sites is equal to the direction of the community in which it is rooted. On the other hand, on the guest side, the tourist has dared to choose the religious holy site from various tourist resorts. I show clearly what a tourist asks of a holy site and understand the place. By doing so, I consider how to respond to tourism while keeping the sanctity of the sacred place, while responding to the contemporary needs of tourists visiting sacred sites.

Therefore, in this research, I conducted interviews in urban area of Nagasaki and rural areas of the Sotome region, Hirado, and Goto islands which where the composition property of "Churches and Christian Sites in Nagasaki" exists. Furthermore, I do not limit a holy site to a Christian holy site, and also consider tourism resources of Buddhist temples. Thus, I take up example of how Nagasaki Teramachi materialized as a part of the countermeasure against Christianity in the Edo period. Based on the knowledge acquired from the field survey. I examine the Catholic church in Nagasaki, and Nagasaki Teramachi's example, to clarify the ethical problem of the commercialization involving a religious holy site. In these sacred places, I will examine the actual state of tourism resource conversion in the host community what tourists want in a sacred place and how the various gazes of people in sacred places will intersect. And I discuss the subject of holy place tourism, and the future view from a viewpoint of local management.

4. Result of the research

This research consists of four parts. In the first part, I conducted a theoretical investigation, reviewed the research related to this thesis and the basic concepts of tourism, to argue that the gaze towards sacred places is changing. The pilgrimage carried out by enthusiastic believers bears strong religious characteristics. This remarkable image is a basis of a phenomenon which should also be called "holy place tourism" now. I clarified ethical problems which may arise when elements of tourism intervene in a holy site. In addition, I examined the influence that heritage of the holy place has on the sacred ground. While considering the standards and worth of becoming a world heritage site, especially paying attention to the trend of world heritage classification, I also considered the power of World Heritage brand. Based on such a viewpoint, I considered a phenomenological meaning called holy place tourism. With regard to a trend in tourism which makes a religious holy sites

as a destination, the case of Nagasaki's churches is remarkable. Many people visit places due to having world heritage designation, which recognizes the universal value observed at a site's. However, as the number of people visiting has increased, sacredness as a religious sacred place is lost, and there are cases where the sacred place is forced to change. Therefore, I showed clearly the importance of having a system of holy-site superintendence.

With the second part, I clarified the present condition of holy place tourism by making into an example the Catholic holy site in Nagasaki Prefecture which is the research region. Therefore, I surveyed the history of Christianity in Nagasaki, and I explained what kind of position Christianity has occupied in Nagasaki up to now. Moreover, I surveyed the circumstances from which the world heritage movement of Nagasaki's churches has taken place. Also, while describing the basis of value and its narrative as a world heritage, I examined the position of Christianity in Nagasaki and administrative process of gaining world heritage classification. Furthermore, through the examples of Oura cathedral, Tabira church, Shitsu church, Kashiragashima church and the former Gorin church, I considered the current movement toward managing holy sites as world heritage and tourist attraction sites in a community from.

In the example of Oura cathedral, it has a sidedness of "the open place" as the public inheritance a "national treasure", though it is a place of faith. The unique characteristics of Oura cathedral is it is an important place which should become one standard, when considering preservation of a cultural heritage, and when considering the problems associated with the practical use of sightseeing destinations.

In the example of the Tabira church, I clarified the present condition of this church, which was one of the leading properties from the beginning of world heritage recommendation process. In response to the effect of world heritage status, the Tabira church is also in the situation where a holy site is exposed to the wave of mass tourism. Perspectives of the local residents and tourists differ. On the local community side, it is intolerable to receive an increasing number of tourists. Therefore, from the interview it became clear that the community has felt relieved after being excluded from world heritage candidacy. The opinions of the various people relating to Tabira church were mixed. Therefore, I pointed out the current situation that diverse actors are forced to work on sightseeing and sanctity management while giving way to each other.

The example of the Shitsu church demonstrates the meaning of Christian

culture gaining world heritage classification and tourism resources through a local resident's narrative. Furthermore, I considered the present condition that people's gaze to a holy place comes from differing perspectives. In the past, a "Romantic gaze" was directed to Shitsu church. However, with the movement toward world heritage status, a "Collective gaze" has been directed. Among the believers, although much support has been obtained for the preservation of the church by World Heritage registration, conflict arises in the local society regarding the tourism resources accompanying it. However, there is an increasing number of believers who are trying to engage in the office of "*Kyokaimori* (church protector)", established to respond to tourists among the community. This is an example of how believers are trying to address the effects of sightseeing. On the other hand, as for "*Kyokaimori*", the way that should be is reexamined from the origin. Believers came to be asked not only for a superintendence of the *Shitsu church* but for a superintendence of the whole colony now. There is also the reality of a decrease in population and aging of the area, and I showed clearly that believers are in the middle of this dilemma.

Furthermore, in the example of *Kashiragashima church* and *the old Gorin church*, I took up the problem of tourism resource advanced in parallel with the trend of world heritage classification of Nagasaki's churches. I clarified what it means for a church to serve as a tourism destination, and discussed the reaction of the community. On the Goto islands, taking advantage of sightseeing products "*the Goto pilgrimage*", Nagasaki Prefecture borrowed the form of the pilgrimage and the connected the various scattered churches. People also came to choose the churches regarded as a "Nagasaki's churches" as a destination of sightseeing. Furthermore, Nagasaki Prefecture emphasizes a marker indicating world heritage candidacy, and the new tourism product which added the element of "pleasure" to *the Goto pilgrimage* has now been launched. Even if the participants of the tour are non-believers, there are many people who feel relaxed and healed by putting themselves in the silent holy space of the church, those who are impressed by the figure of believers who gather in the evening at church and pray. I argued that they strengthened the yearning to visit holy places.

In the third part, *Nagasaki Teramachi* was taken up as a case, and the tourism resources of the Buddhist temple were examined. I discussed the process which the distinctive scene for which Nagasaki Teramachi's two shrines and fourteen temples were formed. Also, through the narratives of the religious people of the shrine and temples and the local residents, the relation between sacred places and holy place

tourism was clarified from the viewpoint different from that of Catholic holy places. *Nagasaki Teramachi* shows the posture plentiful in tourism resources of shrines and temples, and expresses the cooperative attitude to the event which made *Teramachi* as its stage. The only temples which are active in tourism are Obaku temples, such as *Kofukuji* and *Sōfukuji*, unlike Nagasaki's Catholic churches, there is hardly any cohesion as a "group" in *Teramachi*. However, it is impossible to realize tourism development using the shrine temples of *Teramachi* without the cooperation of the temple shrine, residents and administrations. I found that this is one similarity with the subject of holy place management of Nagasaki's churches in that respect.

In the fourth part, based on the theories and case studies, I have considered in this research, I examined the phenomenon called holy place tourism. Tourism products which make Nagasaki's churches and Nagasaki Teramachi the stage have not only the tourism-related aspects but also invocatory elements with them. Since these places contain both elements of tourism and pilgrimage, it is difficult to distinguish both sharply. Then, why do people aim to visit a holy site? Sacred places are a "place of prayer" as well as a "holy place of memories" for believers, but even non-believers accepted them as special places with a certain power. Therefore, one should not grasp a holy site only from the images presented by a guidebook or the media. It is important to understand a community at the same time as feeling the holiness of a holy site. In order to manage holy sites, much of what is needed not only for hosts but also for guests.