

FFWPU Europe and Middle East: A Lie Told 100 Times Becomes Truth in Media

Knut Holdhus

December 17, 2024



Fumihiko Kato (加藤文宏) delivering his lecture 14th December 2024 in Ichikawa City, Chiba Prefecture



Japanese author carrying out extensive media study concludes that lies told 100 times by the media about religious minority becomes truth for the general public

Tokyo, 16th December 2024 - Published as an article in the Japanese newspaper [Sekai Nippo](#). Republished with permission. Translated from Japanese. [Original article](#).

Media That Produces Negative Sentiments

Lecture by Author Fumihiko Kato (加藤文宏) at the Senichi Club (世日クラブ)

by the editorial department of [Sekai Nippo](#)

The regular lecture meeting of the Senichi Club (世日クラブ), formed by readers of the [Sekai Nippo](#) (The World Daily), was held online 15th December 2024. Author Fumihiko Kato delivered a lecture titled "The Era of Agitation and Media Pollution: Morikake (モリカケ), Slush Funds (Under-the-Table Money), and Reporting on the Former [Unification Church](#)." [Editor's note: Morikake refers to a scandal where it was claimed that government officials had given preferential treatment to school

operators with ties to the prime minister.]

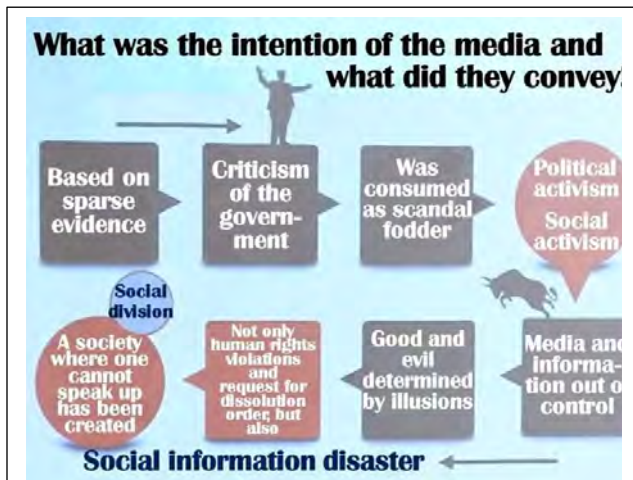
Kato pointed out that the mass media, driven by ideologies or profit motives, often stimulate public sentiments with biased or fabricated information. He noted,

"This frequently gives rise to negative sentiments, which, in turn, create waves of public opinion."

Kato referred to the media's act of selecting and determining topics from daily events as "agenda-setting". He expressed concern about the media's agenda-setting, where the importance of an issue to society is determined by the amount and nature of its coverage. Fumihiko Kato said that there is just "a fine line between such agenda-setting and the idea that 'a lie told a hundred times becomes truth'."

Regarding media coverage of political funding issues within the Liberal Democratic Party factions and the [Family Federation for World Peace and Unification](#) (formerly the [Unification Church](#)), Kato criticized the tendency to rely on testimony from certain biased parties. He also pointed out how terms like "slush funds" (under-the-table money) and "deeply involved" (cozy relationships) are used to divert the focus of discussions. He analyzed that

"actual public opinion is often born by conforming to the false image of public opinion created by the media."



English reconstruction of a slide he used in [another lecture](#) 20th Jan. 2024. In it, he claimed that the reporting on the [Unification Church](#) was a phenomenon where opinion leaders and mass media influenced the commotion by asserting, with little evidence, that "the [church](#) is controlling Japanese politics."

Kato also criticized public opinion polls, stating that they

"introduce preconceived ideas and biases to the respondents, making the polls a tool for creating media-driven public opinion. Perhaps it would be more appropriate to call them 'media influence surveys'."

As a countermeasure to media pollution, Kato proposed abolishing the "political neutrality" requirement in Japan's Broadcasting Act to ensure that media outlets are not treated as authoritative or untouchable entities. He also recommended developing legal frameworks, creating archives of broadcasts, and establishing an independent verification body.

[Editor's note: Fumihiko Kato (加藤文宏) has contributed to various media outlets, including opinion magazines. Under the pen name Fumi

Kato (かとう ふみ), he has published works such as "Chushi Ruro" (厨師流浪 - Wandering Chef), "Kakai Fuki" (花開富貴 - Blossoming, Prosperous and Noble), and "Denko no Otoko" (電光の男 - Lightning Man). In 2023, he contributed with an article titled "[Can News and Talk Shows Determine Good and Evil?](#)" in the February issue of Monthly Seiron (月刊正論), challenging the approach to reporting on the [Unification Church](#).]

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Author: Japan's "Apartheid-Style Social Exclusion"

• February 27, 2024 • Knut Holdhus



Japanese author puts spotlight on social exclusion of members of religious minority reduced to second-class citizens








What was the reporting intended to convey? Report with data on the hounding of the Unification Church

a presentation by Fumihiro Kato (加藤文宏), writer, author, and photographer, at a symposium on the theme "Why Did Reporting Go Astray? Thorough Examination by Journalists on Reporting on the Former Unification Church", (organized by UPF-Japan) held 20th January 2024 in Tokyo to investigate the media's continued coverage persecuting the [Family Federation for World Peace and Unification](#) (formerly known as the [Unification Church](#)).

Part 1, see [part 2](#), [part 3](#), [part 4](#), [part 5](#).

I intend to

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What was the reporting intended to convey?

Report on the hounding of the Unification Church
with data

English reconstruction of one of the slides Fumihiko Kato
used 20th Jan. 2024. Illustration: FFWPU

hounding the **Unification Church** by looking at the data and asking, "What was the intention of the reporting, and what was being conveyed?" I hope that it can become evidence for both of you.

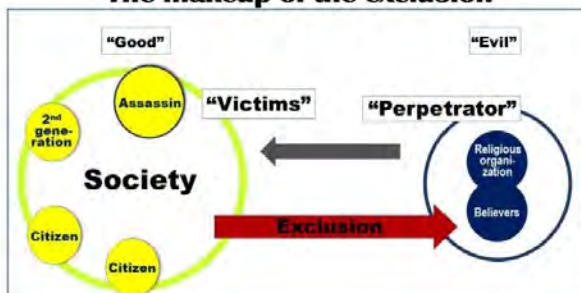
First, let me provide some background. Since the summer of 2022, I have been interviewing members of the **Family Federation for World Peace and Unification** (the former **Unification Church**). These believers have expressed concerns, stating,

- "The mass media only adopts one-sided testimonies."
- "The reports criticize the government while using the **Unification Church** and its followers, saying that the **church** is evil."
- "As a result of being used in this way, our faith has been exposed and made public, and we have been excluded from places of civic life."
- "There are even movements to limit our right to political participation, and violations of privacy and human rights occur."

They believe that these issues are a result of the media running wild.

The human rights violations against the followers were carried out under the premise that "a good society is

The makeup of the exclusion



English reconstruction of one of the slides Fumihiko Kato
used 20th Jan. 2024. Illustration: FFWPU

the victim" and "let's exclude the evil **church** and its followers because they are the perpetrators." It was stated that "the assassin is the victim," and "ordinary citizens are also victims." The situation where "**followers are excluded from society** because they are dangerous and abhorrent" **reminds us of apartheid**, which separated whites and non-whites.

U.S. State Department Report on International Religious Freedom: Parts related to Japan
2022



English reconstruction of one of the slides Fumihiko Kato
used 20th Jan. 2024. Illustration: FFWPU

It's not just the followers who point out that they have been excluded from society. In the "Report on

International Religious Freedom" by the U.S. State Department, which is responsible for managing the country's foreign policy, the history of the hounding of the **Unification Church** after the assassination of Shinzo Abe is thoroughly covered, along with issues of persecution of the Uighurs and Rohingyas. Furthermore, an organization with *Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations* quoted a statement asserting that "the followers have become victims of **intolerance, discrimination and persecution**." The statement was quoted as **alarming** as it has become a Japanese social problem.

By the way, in Japan, if you speak or write about the same content as this State Department report, you tend to be called "tsubo" (ツボ) – pot, word used to mock followers) or "zubuzubu" ('corrupt relationships not easy to cut' or 'deeply involved') and your opportunities for speech are likely to be taken away. Entertainer Hikari Ota (太田光) has also been called a spokesperson for the **religious organization**. Until now, we have worked to solve human rights issues, such as discrimination and hate, as social problems. Regardless of the background, the side that discriminates, the side that is discriminated, the side that watches, all are members of society, so it is a social problem.

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If, as a result of reporting out of control,

What is happening to society as a whole



English reconstruction of one of the slides Fumihiro Kato used 20th Jan. 2024. Illustration: FFWPU

discrimination and exclusion against believers have occurred due to information running wild, then this can be said to be a **press disaster** and an **information disaster**. An information disaster is a concept that attracted attention through studies of the rumors and damage that occurred in the aftermath of the 2011 nuclear accident, and questioning the causal relationship between **rumors causing harm** and the **resulting damage**. Natural disasters are caused by nature itself. Information disasters are caused by information. And it is the **media that widely disseminates information to the public**.

Continued in [part 2](#), see [part 3](#), [part 4](#), [part 5](#).

Fumihiro Kato (加藤文宏) has contributed to various media outlets, including opinion magazines. Under the pen name Fumi Kato (かとうふみ), he has published works such as "Chushi Ruro" (厨師流浪 – Wandering Chef), "Kakai Fuki" (花開富貴 – Blossoming, Prosperous and Noble), and "Denko no Otoko" (電光の男 – Lightning Man). Last year, he contributed with an article titled "Can News and Talk Shows Determine Good and Evil?" in the February issue of Monthly Seiron (月刊正論), challenging the approach to reporting on the Unification Church.

Featured image above: Fumihiro Kato 20th January 2024 in Tokyo. Photo: Screenshot from video recording by UPF-Japan.

"Author: Japan's 'Apartheid-Style Social Exclusion'" – text: Fumihiro Kato

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