Commodification of Folk Religion and it's Re-Embedding in Everyday Life: 
An Experimental Ethnography on Pilgrimage Tourism in Contemporary 
Japan

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This paper is to describe the formation and the expansion of the pilgrimage tourism in modern Japan by using concepts such as "becoming cultural resource" or "commodification of religion." Besides, it is to clarify how to make a theoretical contribution to the contemporary folklore studies by describing "the religious," which is generated within the contexts of market economy or consuming society.

I will gradually focus the scope for this description from macro level to micro level. First, the process of "disembedding" pilgrimage from the life-world will be described. The pilgrimage as a conventional folklore has been transformed to Pilgrimage tourism, which is an user-selectable "commodity" by cultural industries. Second sketch is about the commodification of the religious convention at more local social space. I will take an example from the activities of the local pilgrimage industry and the participation to the industry of pilgrimage experiencers in Sado area of Niigata prefecture. Here we can observe that some factors which had been detached from original contexts by becoming a cultural resource (= disembedded) is now "re-embedded" to the alltag context again.

The pilgrimage of Sado is very popular at first glance. However, what allows local people to have religious experience is not the local tradition, but this kind of market economical structure supported by pilgrimage industries described in this paper. Accordingly, describing internal events of small area (= a village) delimited by a spatial border and eliminating outside of that border from their description is not at all enough for contemporary folklore studies as an everyday life study. "The process of becoming cultural resource" is an idea, which demand us to consider the mutual reflection of micro and macro factors. Ultimately, that is a question to ask how the observation objects are constellated in the "total."

Key words: Cultural industry, contemporary folklore studies, alltag, Sado, disembedding