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# Tense relations: the tradition of Hoshi and emergence of Borantia in Japan

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**TENSE RELATIONS:  
THE TRADITION OF *HŌSHI* AND EMERGENCE OF  
*BORANTIA* IN JAPAN**

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the  
requirements for the award of the degree

**Master of Social Change and Development (Honours)**

from

**THE UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG**

by

**Nichole Georgeou, (BCA, Dip.Ed)  
Centre for Asia Pacific Social Transformation Studies (CAPSTRANS)  
2006**

## THESIS CERTIFICATION

I, Nichole Georgeou, declare that this thesis, submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of Master of Social Change and Development (Hons), in the Centre for Asia Pacific Social Transformation Studies (CAPSTRANS), University of Wollongong, is wholly mine unless otherwise referenced or acknowledged. The document has not been submitted for qualifications at any other academic institution.

Nichole Georgeou  
3 February 2006

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Figure 1: Non-profit regimes according to the Social Origins Theory

## LIST OF FOREIGN WORDS

<i>Aikoku Fujin Kai</i>	The Patriotic Women's Association
<i>Amakudari</i>	Descent from heaven (Term describes the way many bureaucrats become politicians after retirement, or take high ranking positions in <i>kōeki hōjin</i> .)
<i>Amaterasu-O-mikami</i>	Sun Goddess, ancestress of all Japanese people
<i>Beibeiren (Betonamu ni heima o! shimin rengō)</i>	League of Peace for Vietnam
<i>Borantia</i>	Taken from the English "volunteer". First appearing in the early 1970s, it became a household word and symbol of civil society after the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake that hit Kobe in January 1995.
<i>Borantia ishki</i>	Volunteer consciousness
<i>Borantia seishin</i>	Volunteer spirit
<i>Bushidō</i>	The Way of the Warrior
<i>Chōnai kai</i>	Community organizations for mutual help
<i>Chūō Jizzen Kyōkai</i>	Central Charity Association
<i>Chuo Shakai Fukushi Kyogikai</i>	The Central Social Welfare Association
<i>Dai kōgi</i>	Great authority (Early Edo term)
<i>Dai san sekutaa</i>	Term refers to a hybrid sector of quasi public, quasi business organizations, and does not depict a distinct institutional sphere (As distinct from the English word "third sector")
<i>Daimyo</i>	Semi-independent feudal lords
<i>Enryo</i>	Hesitation or emotional restraint
<i>Fujin Minsbu Kurabu</i>	The Women's Democratic Club
<i>Fujin Yū Kensha Dōmei</i>	The League of Women's Voter's
<i>Fukoku Kyobei</i>	Meiji slogan: "Enrich the Country and Strengthen the Military"
<i>Gaijin</i>	Foreigner
<i>Gakkō hōjin</i>	Literally: School Legal Person/s (Is a special law within the Article 34 and 35 framework for the incorporation of schools)
<i>Gakkō Kyōikuhō</i>	School Education Law
<i>Giri</i>	Obligation
<i>Gōrudo Plan</i>	Gold Plan
<i>Gyōsei itaku soshiki</i>	Administrative consignment organization (the term refers to the act of state administration consigning specific functions to private organizations)
<i>Hahaoya Taikai</i>	Mother's Convention
<i>Hakujin</i>	White person
<i>Henna gaijin</i>	Strange foreigner
<i>Hiningoya</i>	Shelter, workhouse and job placement centre for able bodied poor. Established in Kanazawa

<i>Hōjin</i>	Incorporated associations
<i>Hōshi</i>	The Japanese word that was historically used to describe private philanthropy, charity and mutual self help.
<i>Hōtokusha</i>	Repaying virtue societies
<i>Ie</i>	Household
<i>Iryō hōjin</i>	Literally: Medical Legal Person/s (Is a special law within the Article 34 and 35 framework for the incorporation of organisations established for medical purposes)
<i>Iryōhō</i>	Medical Law
<i>Jikēiyū Kissoku</i>	Relief Regulations (Part of Meiji Government welfare strategy)
<i>Jiko sekinin</i>	Self responsibility
<i>Jiyutō</i>	Liberty Party – Japan’s first political association.
<i>Joho kokai</i>	Literally: information disclosure
<i>Jūmin undō</i>	Residents’ Movement
<i>Jusen</i>	Firms specializing in real estate loans
<i>Kaishinto</i>	Progressive Party (forerunner of Minseitō)
<i>Kami no michi</i>	Religion - The Way of the Gods
<i>Kan on Ko</i>	First example of organized social welfare and relief established 1829 by Nawa Saburoemon
<i>Kanshi seido</i>	Supervision system
<i>Katsuryoku aru Fukushi Shakai</i>	A Welfare Society with Vitality
<i>Kō</i>	Contemporary Japanese word for “public”. In early Japan used to mean righteous, devoid of selfish motives or impartiality.
<i>Kōbunsho</i>	Government documents
<i>Kōeki hōjin</i>	Literally: Legal Public Interest Persons/Groups (Charitable organizations or public benefit organizations defined by Article 34 of the Civil Code as “associations or foundations relating to worship, religion, charity, science, art or otherwise relating to public interest and not having for their object the acquisition of gain.”)
<i>Kōgi</i>	Authorities; common noun meaning government (term used to refer to the feudal lord during the Edo period -1603-1867)
<i>Kōkasesu chibō hito</i>	Literally: person from Caucasia
<i>Kōyōsha</i>	Government archives
<i>Kyōdō Bokin</i>	Community Chest
<i>Machi Kaisho</i>	New Town Office
<i>Meirokusha</i>	Sixth Year of Meiji Society
<i>Messhi bokō</i>	Literally: self annihilation for the sake of One’s Country (used in slogans calling for selfless loyalty to the state)
<i>Minken</i>	People’s rights
<i>Miseriorcordia</i>	Philanthropic organizations run by the Jesuit missionaries during the sixteenth century in Japan



<i>Mukoku no kyūmin</i>	Poor who have no-one to turn to
<i>Mura</i>	Village
<i>Nihongata fukushi shakai</i>	Japanese-model welfare society
<i>Nin-i dantai</i>	Unincorporated Non-Profit Organization
<i>Ninjō</i>	Human feeling
<i>On</i>	Indebtedness
<i>Onshi zaidan</i>	Endowments
<i>Onshi-zaidan Saiseikai</i>	Imperial Relief Association
<i>Osukui</i>	Lord's Relief
<i>Ōyake</i>	Mansion of the Lord
<i>Rissbida</i>	Literally: The Society to Establish One's Ambitions
<i>Ryōsai kenbo</i>	Good wife and wise mother
<i>Saiseikai</i>	Society to assist livelihood
<i>Samurai</i>	Military class
<i>Sangyō kumiai</i>	State regulated agricultural cooperatives
<i>Sanka-gata Fukushi Shakai</i>	Participation Orientated Welfare Society
<i>Seiyukai</i>	A Japanese political party founded in 1900. It was derived from the Jiyūtō. After WWII it reappeared as the Progressive Party and was later absorbed into the Liberal Democratic Party.
<i>Shadan hōjin</i>	Incorporated Associations
<i>Shakai fukushi gyōsei roku gensoku</i>	The basic structure of Japan's social service administration
<i>Shakai fukushi hōjin</i>	Literally: Social Welfare Legal Person/s (Is a special law within the Article 34 and 35 framework for the incorporation of social welfare organisations)
<i>Shakai Fukushi Jigyōhō</i>	Social Welfare Industry Law
<i>Shakai hōjin</i>	Public Benefit Organisation
<i>Shi</i>	Self or private
<i>Shigaku Shinko Zaidan Hō</i>	Private School Encouragement Foundation Law
<i>Shijuku</i>	Private tutorial schools
<i>Shiken kenkyū hōjin</i>	Special tax status for NPOs
<i>Shimin dantai</i>	Civic group/s
<i>Shimin undō</i>	Citizens' Movement
<i>Shin Nihon Fujin Dōmei</i>	New Women's League
<i>Shinmin</i>	Imperial subject
<i>Shinritsu Gakkō Shinko Josei Hō</i>	Private School Encouragement Assistance Law
<i>Shinru kenri</i>	The right to know
<i>Shogun</i>	The ruler
<i>Shūkyō hōjin</i>	Literally: Religious Legal Person/s (Is a special law within the Article 34 and 35 framework for the incorporation of religious organisations)
<i>Shūkyō Hōjinhō</i>	Religious Legal Persons Law
<i>Shumu kanchō</i>	Competent supervising ministry
<i>Tanin</i>	Persons unconnected with oneself; outsiders
<i>Teiseito</i>	Political party organized by the government (1880s)
<i>Tennōsei</i>	Emperor System

<i>Tokushu hōjin</i>	Special Status Corporations
<i>Tokutei Heiri Katsudō Sokushin Hō</i>	Law to Promote Specified Non-Profit Activities
<i>Tokutei hieri hōjin</i>	Specified Non-Profit Organizations
<i>Tokutei koeki-zōshin hōjin</i>	Special tax status for NPOs (under NPO Law)
<i>Tonari gumi</i>	Neighbours ties
<i>Yasukuni Shrine</i>	Shinto shrine founded in 1869 in Tokyo to commemorate and worship those who have died in war for their country and sacrificed their lives to help build the fundament for a peaceful Japan. Literally: “peaceful country” shrine
<i>Yūshisha</i>	Charitable Worthies
<i>Zaidan hōjin</i>	Incorporated Foundations
<i>Zenkoku Shakai Fukushi Kyōgikai</i>	The National Social Welfare Association

## LIST OF ACRONYMS

APEC	Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation
C's	Coalition for Legislation to Support Citizens' Organisations
CAP	Cycle Against Poverty
CSCAP	Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific
IMF	International Monetary Fund
LDP	Liberal Democratic Party
NGO	Non-government Organisation
NPO	Non-profit Organisation
NPO Law	Law to Promote Specified Non-profit Activities
SDF	Japan's Self Defence Forces
UNCED	United Nations Conference on Environment and Development
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VWU	Vietnam Women's Union
W no Kai	Women's Group ("W" for women and " <i>kai</i> " meaning group).
WTO	World Trade Organisation
YMCA	Young Men's Christian Association

## ABSTRACT

In this thesis I examine the transformations of volunteering in Japan from “*hōshi*” (mutual obligation) to “*borantia*” (borrowed from the English “volunteer”). I argue changes in the forms of volunteering overtime point to important shifts in state-citizen and state-civil society relations in Japan. *Hōshi* emerged during a period of Japan’s history when the state had an increasingly authoritarian approach to managing its subjects. It reflects this cultural context as it embodies a strong sense of obligation and is characterised by notions of service and sacrifice, particularly dedicated service to the greater good of the Emperor and state. In contrast the concept of *borantia* is associated with free will and social contribution. *Borantia* has had a tremendous impact on the way Japanese citizens view civil society. Its emergence marked a change in popular consciousness about the role of citizen’s vis-à-vis the state and departure from Japan’s traditional form of volunteering (*hōshi*) which has connotations of obligation to the state and Emperor. First appearing in the 1960s and 1970s, the word “*borantia*” was used to describe residents’ and citizens’ movements. After the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake of January 1995 the notion of *borantia* was propelled into popular public consciousness leading to the enactment of The Law to Promote Specified Non-Profit Activities (NPO Law). This represented a significant landmark in state-citizen/state civil society relations. However, the effectiveness of the Law to enable an autonomous civil society has been impeded by traditionally low corporate and individual giving, as well as a reliance on the state for funding. Tension remains in Japan because the old systems and practices that supported *hōshi* remain along side new systems and practices that led to the emergence and proliferation of *borantia*.

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