

## **Abstract**

This bachelor thesis is devoted to the new religious movement *Aum Shinrikyo* with respect to the selected basic social links and aspects of the value orientation within Japanese society.

The thesis defines the new religious movements in the world, focusing on their development in Japan and deals with the possibilities of their existence and activity in relation to the extent of religious freedom during the Meiji Constitution and subsequently under the Pacifist post-war Constitution.

The significant elements, co-determining the formation, activity and character of the new religious movements in Japan, are also the various concepts of the value orientation in Japanese society, e.g. *Amae*, *Tate shakai*, *Oyabun-kobun*, *Shuudan ishiki*, including the issue of social integration of the individuals into the society which is, contrary to the western societies focused on individual, predominantly collectivistic.

To facilitate understanding of the context, the thesis also explores the development and specificities of *Aum Shinrikyo* and Asahara Shoukou, focusing on his power position within this new religious movement where he was able to influence a considerable number of his followers and persuade them to commit the terrorist acts, unprecedented in Japan until then. Consequently, the thesis in this regard deals with the reaction of Japanese society, media and public authorities or parliament, as the case may be.

The objective of this bachelor thesis is, on the basis of the analysis of the selected characteristic aspects of Japanese society, to answer the question whether the violent activities of *Aum Shinrikyo*, completed by the sarin gas attack in the Tokyo subway in 1995, are merely an excess or anomaly in Japan, or whether there is a certain link between the long-term unresolved problems in Japanese society which subsequently logically resulted in these violent acts.