Globalizing Asian Religions

International Institute for Asian Studies

Publications

The International Institute for Asian Studies is a research and exchange platform based in Leiden, the Netherlands. Its objective is to encourage the interdisciplinary and comparative study of Asia and to promote (inter)national cooperation. IIAS focuses on the humanities and social sciences and on their interaction with other sciences. It stimulates scholarship on Asia and is instrumental in forging research networks among Asia Scholars. Its main research interests are reflected in the three book series published with Amsterdam University Press: Global Asia, Asian Heritages and Asian Cities.

IIAS acts as an international mediator, bringing together various parties in Asia and other parts of the world. The Institute works as a clearinghouse of knowledge and information. This entails activities such as providing information services, the construction and support of international networks and cooperative projects, and the organisation of seminars and conferences. In this way, IIAS functions as a window on Europe for non-European scholars and contributes to the cultural rapprochement between Europe and Asia.

IIAS Publications Officer: Paul van der Velde
IIAS Assistant Publications Officer: Mary Lynn van Dijk

Global Asia

Asia has a long history of transnational linkage with other parts of the world. Yet the contribution of Asian knowledge, values, and practices in the making of the modern world has largely been overlooked until recent years. The rise of Asia is often viewed as a challenge to the existing world order. Such a bifurcated view overlooks the fact that the global order has been shaped by Asian experiences as much as the global formation has shaped Asia. The Global Asia Series takes this understanding as the point of departure. It addresses contemporary issues related to transnational interactions within the Asian region, as well as Asia's projection into the world through the movement of goods, people, ideas, knowledge, ideologies, and so forth. The series aims to publish timely and well-researched books that will have the cumulative effect of developing new perspectives and theories about global Asia.

Series Editor
Tak-Wing Ngo, University of Macau, China

Editorial Board
Kevin Hewison, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, USA; Hagen Koo, University of Hawaii, USA; Loraine Kennedy, École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (EHESS), France; Guobin Yang, University of Pennsylvania, USA

Globalizing Asian Religions

Management and Marketing

Edited by
Wendy Smith, Hirochika Nakamaki, Louella Matsunaga,
and Tamasin Ramsay

IIAS International Institute for Asian Studies

Publications

GLOBAL ASIA 8

This volume is dedicated to
Professor Peter B. Clarke (1940-2011),
our colleague, mentor, and friend who sadly passed away
before the manuscript could be completed.

Table of Contents

Section 3   Empirical Investigations: Southeast and South Asian Religions

Section 4   Empirical Investigations: Japanese Religions in Europe and the Americas

Section 5 Future Perspectives: Globalizing New Religions in a Postmodern World

List of Figures and Tables

Preface

The idea for this book emerged from discussions between Nakamaki and Smith, both anthropologists who have done ethnographic studies of large corporations. Since 1988 Nakamaki has studied corporate rituals such as Japanese company funerals and company tombs (2002). Smith (1994) has studied a Japanese multinational operating in Malaysia. Equally, both have researched Asian new religious movements (NRMs) in depth: Nakamaki has studied the operations of Japanese NRMs in Latin America (2003) and Smith, the headquarters and local centres of a Japanese (2007) and an Indian NRM (Ramsay and Smith, 2008) in Australia and Southeast Asia. From these research experiences, they decided it would be worthwhile to examine the organizational aspects of Asian NRMs. They wished to explore the ways in which their systems of management allow Asian NRMs to meet the same operational challenges faced by multinational corporations (MNCs), while functioning in a global context across memberships with vast cultural diversity. Furthermore, they considered that it would be equally valuable to investigate how NRMs 'marketed' themselves, in the sense that they could attract followers in diverse cultural contexts.

Out of these discussions grew an international symposium on 'Management and Marketing of Globalizing Asian Religions' at the National Museum of Ethnology (Minpaku) in Osaka, Japan, in August 2009. Later, two more anthropologists were co-opted as editors: Louella Matsunaga, who studied the now bankrupt supermarket chain Yaohan, which had endeavoured to become a multinational Japanese company and which was closely and publicly linked with a Japanese NRM, Seichō-no-Ie (Matsunaga 2000, 2008); and Tamasin Ramsay, whose in-depth, longitudinal ethnography of the Brahma Kumaris (2009) and current historical and social inquiry into the organization, has included a posting as their NGO representative to the United Nations (New York).

The 'Management and Marketing of Globalizing Asian Religions' conference was jointly funded by the National Museum of Ethnography (Minpaku), in Osaka, Japan, and the Interntional Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS), in Leiden, the Netherlands, and organized by Nakamaki in 2009 at his home institution, Minpaku. Significantly, this institution, the National Museum of Ethnology, was inspired by a very early ethnological museum in Japan, the Tenri Sankōkan Museum, which was set up in 1930, in Tenri City, Nara Prefecture, by the earliest global Japanese NRM, Tenrikyō, (founded 1838) to aid missionary activity outside Japan. As its homepage states: 'The Museum

promotes understanding of the cultures of the world (not only from Asia, but from Europe, the Americas, and Africa) by focusing on artefacts that were in actual daily use (Tenri University 2010)'.

Tenrikyō had previously established a comprehensive library of religious texts, as well as a university (both in 1925) to teach foreign languages for that very same purpose: aiding missionary activity internationally by understanding the fundamentals of the cultures of the world. This shows an extraordinary global mindset in the early twentieth century, before our current globalization era, and, as we shall argue, attests to the fact that many NRMs are 'born global'.

Smith obtained the support of IIAS for this project, as she had previously edited a special issue of their newsletter (on New Religious Movements) in which she outlined its central idea. See Smith (2008: 3). The project also aligns strongly with two of the delineated research foci of IIAS, namely: *Global Asia*, that is, the central role of Asia as an agent of global transformation, and *Asian Heritages*, in this case, religious heritage, and its implications for social agency. For instance, a recent case where the influence of Asia extended well beyond the borders of Asia is the impact of the Japanese Management system (JMS), of which Confucianism is a central element. From the 1970s onwards, the JMS, with its disciplined workforce, quality control circles resulting in near zero-defect production, revolutionary production innovations, such as just-in-time, continuous improvement, and low levels of union conflict, captured the world's imagination and spread globally. Many of the core practices and values of the JMS were adopted into foreign management production systems, notably in the multinational automobile industry, and in cultural contexts as disparate as the U.S., U.K., Malaysia, and France. The JMS has been heavily researched in the management discipline, and is mentioned in all undergraduate management textbooks. In that the binding value system of the JMS is Confucianism, with its emphasis on learning, long-term relationships, harmony and diligence, this is a striking case of an Asian cultural heritage going global in an international management context.

Equally, Asian religions have had widespread influence around the world prior to the Japanese management boom and – apart from Zen Buddhism or Tibetan Buddhism – NRMs in particular gained a notable following in totally disparate cultural contexts.

This book is based on papers from the conference proceedings, at which the contributors were requested to recast their data on Asian religions in terms of the way the organizations are managed in an overseas or global context, by examining the structure, organizational culture, management style, and leadership principles of the religious organizations they have

hitherto studied from the perspective of the anthropology or sociology of religion or religious studies. A further important focus is how they market themselves in the midst of existing local religious traditions. The chapters focus on these issues to varying degrees. The difficulty of objectifying religious phenomena using an overtly etic analysis has proved to be difficult for some, as Arweck and Stringer (2002) point out. Uppermost in some scholars' minds is that, if the leaders and members of the religious organization that has been studied, read their scholarly and objectified analysis, they may find it distasteful – even critical – and scholars may hesitate to jeopardize the delicate collaborative relationships they have established with organizations. However, much of the detailed empirical data in the chapters implicitly reveal the management structures and marketing dynamics of the organizations studied.

The authors in this collection have revised their chapters to take into account changes since the date of the original conference in 2009. Indeed, since the International Society for the Sociology of Religion conference in Aix-en Provence in July 2011, a strong new direction in academic publishing has been established, which bridges the disciplines of religious studies, and management and marketing. See Gautier and Martikainen (2013) *Religion in Consumer Society*, which is based on a panel at that conference. Another noteworthy volume is Usunier and Stolz (2014) *Religions as Brands*. This new trend builds on a previous body of work; see for instance, the work of Finke and Iannaccone (1993) and monographs which examine religious organizations from an economic perspective in the era when Stark and Bainbridge (1987) applied the theory of rational choice in their theory of religious economy. At the time, this was a path-breaking paradigm in religious studies, much discussed and critiqued, including, among others, the entrepreneurial model of cult formation, which opened up the possibility of studying religious institutions and membership in novel ways. But the focus of these studies has been mainly on Christianity and Western societies, and has not generally been in the context of Asian religions, with the exception of Kitiarsa (ed.) (2008) *Religious Commodifications in Asia: marketing gods.* Nor, on the whole, has it been grounded in detailed anthropological studies. This is one of the first books to focus on globalizing religious movements of Asian origin from a management perspective, and one that has a predominant focus on new religious movements as opposed to established religions. For this reason, we are delighted that this will be published in the IIAS Global Asia series. This is also an important book in that it presents the work of a number of Japanese scholars in English including very eminent scholars in the Japanese religious studies world. The excellent work of Japanese scholars

of religion is difficult to access for non-Japanese speaking academics and this book will help to make their work accessible. Finally, and sadly, the book contains one of the last pieces to be written by the doyen of NRM studies in the West, Professor Peter B. Clarke, before his untimely passing in June 2011. This will be a reason for many people to access this book, and we dedicate it to him.

We wish to thank Minpaku and IIAS for supporting this project from the very beginning. Nakamaki especially wishes to thank Oyasato Institute of Tenri University who hosted a day during the conference. And we all thank Mieko Yoshimura for her help with the preparation of the manuscript.

We are also grateful to our families for their ongoing support of the time-consuming process of editing. Tamasin wishes to acknowledge fellow author, friend, and mother Barbara Bossert Ramsay whose warm intelligence and unflinching heart have been a profound support throughout this project. We also thank the countless members of the organizations in which many of the authors did participant observation or conducted in-depth interviews, for their time, sincerity, and willingness to share.

Works cited

Arweck, Elisabeth and Martin D. Stringer, eds. 2002. *Theorizing Faith: The Insider/Outsider Problem in the Study of Ritual.* Birmingham: University of Birmingham Press.

Finke, Roger and Laurence R. Iannaccone. 1993. "Supply-side explanations for religious change." *The Annals of the American Academy* AAPSS 527(1): 27-39.

Gauthier, François and Tuomas Martikainen, eds. 2013. *Religion in Consumer Society: Brands, Consumers and Markets*. Farnham: Ashgate Publishing.

Kitiarsa, Pattarna, ed. 2008. *Religious Commodifications in Asia: Marketing Gods* New York and London: Routledge.

Matsunaga, Louella. 2000. "Spiritual companies, corporate religions: Japanese companies and Japanese new religious movements at home and abroad." In Japanese New Religions in Global Perspective, edited by Peter B. Clarke. Richmond: Curzon Press.

—. 2008. 'Blurring the boundaries between corporation and religion' *IIAS Newsletter* (Special Theme on New Religious Movements), #47: 5-6.

Nakamaki, Hirochika. 2002. "The Company Funeral as 'Shaen' Culture'." *Senri Ethnological Studies* (Special Issue 'The Culture of Association and Associations in Contemporary Japanese Society'), #62.

—. 2003. *Japanese Religions at Home and Abroad: Anthropological Perspectives.* London: Routledge Curzon.

Ramsay, Tamasin and Wendy Smith. 2008. "The Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University" *IIAS Newsletter* (Special Theme on New Religious Movements), #47: 1,4,5.

—. 2009. *Custodians of Purity: An Ethnography of the Brahma Kumaris*, Doctor of Philosophy, Social Sciences and Health Research Unit, School of Psychology, Faculty of Medicine, Monash University, Melbourne. Accessed 29 March 2018. http://arrow.monash.edu.au/hdl/1959.1/151563.

Smith, Wendy. 1994. "A Japanese Factory in Malaysia: Ethnicity as a Management Ideology." In *Japan and Malaysian Development*, edited by Jomo Kwame Sundaram, 154-181. London: Routledge.

—. 2007. "Sūkyō Mahikari in Australia and Southeast Asia – a Globalized Japanese New Religious Movement outside the Japanese Diaspora." In *Japanese Religions in and Beyond Japanese Diaspora,* edited by Ronan A. Pereira and Hideaki Matsuoka, 45-78. Berkeley, CA: University of California Berkeley/Institute of East Asian Studies.

Stark, Rodney and William Sims Bainbridge. 1987. *A Theory of Religion.* Bern: Peter Lang.

Tenri University. 2010. "Tenri University." Accessed 9 April 2018. www.tenri-u.ac.jp/en/ariirho0000007pc.html.

Usunier, Jean-Claude and Jörg Stolz, eds. 2014. *Religions as Brands: New Perspectives on the Marketization of Religion and Spirituality.* Farnham: Ashgate Publishing.

1   Introduction

Wendy Smith, Hirochika Nakamaki, Louella Matsunaga, and Tamasin Ramsay

Abstract

This chapter delineates the context and aims of the volume as a whole. We begin by reviewing recent literature on religion and marketing, and the globalization of religion, and situate this within the broader context of theories of globalization. We then proceed to suggest the insights that may be drawn from re-examining religious organizations from the perspectives of the disciplines of management and marketing, and consider some of the ways in which the categories of 'religion' and 'business' may become blurred. In this volume, these issues are explored with reference to globalizing Asian religions, both new and established. This chapter also gives a summary outline of the structure of the volume, and the main points covered by the subsequent chapters.

Keywords: globalization, management, marketing, Asian religions, new religious movements

Religious organizations have long been at the forefront of the global movement of people and ideas (Rudolph and Piscatori 1997: 3). Missionary activity has preceded or accompanied trade and political domination across continents since well before the beginning of the Christian era, alongside less organized forms of dissemination of religious belief. Even today, religion is a key element in the development and intensification of globalization (Beyer 1994: 3).

The conceptualization of this process also has its own more recent intellectual history, which has become the object of academic scrutiny. The term 'world religion' only appeared in European writings towards the end of the nineteenth century, and initially in association with the universalizing claims of Christianity (Masuzawa 2005: 23). By the early twentieth century,

the term was taking on an expanded meaning to include a number of other religions that are now widely listed under this heading.[1]

The category of 'world religion' has oftentimes been conceptualized to mean large, established world religions with universal claims to relevance, in contrast to locally based religions. This assumed division has not gone unchallenged. Masuzawa (2005: 20-21) explains that this system of classification tends to operate within an Orientalist discourse, and elides specificities of locality and power relations among the so-called world religions. Another aspect of the dominant discourse of 'world religions' is that global relevance is seen as a marker of authenticity and status in the religious sphere.

There is now an extensive literature on the globalization of new religious movements (NRMs) founded since the 19th century (Beckford 1986; Hexham and Poewe 1997; Clarke 2006a) that are generally excluded from the world religions category (see Clarke 2006b: vi-xii). In the context of Asian religions, there has been particular attention to the globalization of Japanese religions, both new and established (Clarke and Somers 1994; Clarke 2000; Nakamaki 2003; Pereira and Matsuoka 2007; Dessi 2013, 2017; Amstutz and Dessi 2014; Matsue 2014) but none, with the exception of some papers in Nakamaki (2003) and papers by Matsunaga (2000) and Smith (2007) in these volumes, have taken a perspective of their overseas expansion from a management and marketing approach.

The striking thing about many of these NRMs is that they constitute themselves as global entities from the outset and they unify their followers globally, transcending their cultures of origin by replacing many of their day-to-day cultural practices with the ones practised within the movement. As is the case of long established religions such as Islam, in NRMs such as Brahma Kumaris and Sūkyō Mahikari, when followers meet each other at the pilgrimage place, a truly global culture is experienced, in which individual members' race, ethnicity and native language become less important than the common fact of membership in the organization. This 'born global' mindset is represented in their names: Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University, Church of World Messianity, Perfect Liberty Kyōdan (a Japanese NRM with English in its name) (Smith 2008).

---

1   Masuzawa (2005: 23-24) notes that the European discovery of Buddhism, and attempts to incorporate Buddhism in the conceptual framework of 'world religions' was an important influence on this process. Conversely, the attempts of followers of different strands of Buddhism in various parts of Asia to situate themselves within this framework in order to claim equal standing with Christianity itself had a very significant impact on the development of modern narratives of Buddhism (Ketelaar 1990, Snodgrass 2003). See also Michaud 2004.

This scholarship in turn can be situated within the broader frame of theorizing on globalization. Of relevance here, from an anthropological perspective, is Appadurai's now classic work (1990), in which globalization is conceptualized in terms of scapes and flows. Globalization has become further intensified in recent decades with technological transformations enabling much more rapid flows of both people and ideas across geographical boundaries with profound consequences both at organizational and individual levels.[2]

In this volume, while seeking to build on the existing scholarship on globalization more broadly, we have asked the contributors to reflect on the globalization of Asian religions from a fresh perspective: that of management and marketing. The links between religion, consumption, and marketing (including branding) have been explored recently by Einstein (2008, 2011), Gauthier and Martikainen (2013) and Usunier and Stolz (2014), however, these studies largely focus on Europe and the United States, with an emphasis on Christianity and new alternative spiritualties. Earlier scholarship in this field has also largely focused on Christianity and the new age (Finke and Iannaccone 1993; Moore 1994; Roof 1999; Stark and Bainbridge 1987; Huss 2007).

To date, there has been relatively little literature focusing on religion, marketing, and management in Asian religions. Exceptions are *Religion in Contemporary Japan* (Reader 1991: 194-233), *Marketing the Menacing Fetus in Japan* (Hardacre 1997), *Practically Religious: Worldly Benefits and the Common Religion of Japan* (Reader and Tanabe 1998), and *Religious Commodifications in Asia: Marketing Gods* (Kitiarsa 2008).

We seek to extend the insights of this research, taking as our focus Asian religions[3] broadly defined: that is, we have included religions originating in Asia but transplanted elsewhere (either in Asia or beyond) such as Jōdo Shinshū and the Brahma Kumaris, and also religions originating elsewhere that have established branches in Asia, like Pentecostalism. Our chapters focus both on established world religions such as Buddhism, Islam, and Christianity in revivalist forms akin to NRMs, and Asian NRMs themselves. The authors comprise scholars from a range of national and disciplinary backgrounds including anthropologists, sociologists, philosophers and

2   Harvey's (1989) 'time space compression' and Dessi's 'accelerated globalization' (Dessi 2017: 29) both address this phenomenon.
3   Turner (2015:3) notes that the terms 'Asian religions' or 'Religions of Asia' are both problematic given the diversity of religious practice within Asia, the migration of Asians worldwide, and the existence of large numbers of non-Asian adherents to 'Asian' religions. Here, we use the term in a loose and inclusive sense.

historians, from Japan, Malaysia, the USA, Australia, Brazil, and the UK. The inclusion of a high proportion of articles on Japanese religions outside Japan, and non-Japanese religions in Japan, distinguishes this volume from Kitiarsa (2008), which includes ethnographic examples from all over Asia, but does not include any studies of Japanese religions. This work is broader in scope than Reader and Tanabe's (1998) work on this topic, which focuses exclusively on Japanese religions. We also aim to bring the work of the distinguished Japanese scholars included here to a wider, non-Japanese speaking audience.

Why management and marketing?

Several of the authors whose work is included here have a long-standing inter-est in the parallels between companies and religions. Nakamaki (1979; 1991; 1995) and Matsunaga (2000, 2008) suggested parallels between multinational enterprises and 'multinational religions' at a time when the spotlight in the business world was on multinational enterprises. Since then, the emphasis has shifted to the global, with the perceived erosion of the significance of national boundaries in business terms. People, finance, and technology move across borders with increasing freedom (for the most part, although the resurgence of nationalism and attempts to restrict these flows have also recently become evident). At the same time, the growth of neo-liberalism has led to an increasingly pervasive discourse of the (global) market and the consumer, applied to a wide range of organizational fields, including for example, education and the medical field. In this context, it seems timely to critically examine at an etic level how notions of management and marketing might be relevant to the study of Asian religious organizations in the context of globalization. Multinational companies (MNCs) and NRMs as global organizations are comparable in size and global reach; both use a global geographic structure and frequently move key personnel across national boundaries. They are comparable also in terms of membership size, property holdings, and budget size. This is especially evident in several prominent Japanese NRMs. Operating cross-culturally in a global context, they have a need for a 'corporate culture' that binds them and unifies the purpose of the organization across disparate cultural contexts. In fact, corporate cultures of for-profit organizations have been studied in terms of the ele-ments they share with religions: myths about the founder, rituals, symbols, sacred texts, dress codes, lifestyle norms, values, and shared purpose. Some Japanese NRMs use the same organizational terms as Japanese MNCs for

their organizational structures and key roles in the hierarchy (Nakamaki 2003: 191; Smith 2007: 67).

There have also been important changes in the situation of religious organizations in much of the world over the past hundred years or so. In many (though not all) countries, religion has lost its overarching and compulsory character, leading to a situation in which established religions cannot take the loyalty and support of their membership for granted. Many new religions and alternative spiritualties have also emerged, resulting in what some have called a 'spiritual supermarket'.[4] In this diversified landscape, if religious organizations are to attract and retain members, they find themselves in competition not only with other religions but also with secular alternatives. Against this background, analysing religious organizations in terms of management and marketing would seem to potentially offer some useful insights. However, some caveats are also in order.

Firstly, as Gauthier et al. (2013: 8) note, there is a danger that such an approach could be subsumed into a discourse in which religious organizations are conceptualized in neo-classical economic terms, simply as organizations that compete in the open market to maximize market share in terms of the time, commitment, and money of their members. This approach (often associated with neo-liberalism) makes a number of unsustainable assumptions both about the actions of individuals and the ways in which markets operate. Economic anthropologists have critiqued this model for some decades now on the basis that individuals always act within a framework of social and cultural constraints, and markets also operate within a social and cultural context.[5] In other words, the neo-classical model of the freely operating individual seeking to maximize his or her self-interest can be seen as a modern myth, closely linked with the discursive formations of capitalism.

Marketing in general, including the marketing of religious organizations is a much more complex, culturally and socially embedded phenomenon. As Gauthier et al. (2013: 9) point out, recent literature on marketing and branding is at pains to affirm that, 'companies today are not simply selling goods or services. From chewing gum to automobiles and insurance, companies are instead knowingly providing identity markers, ideals, experiences, and authenticity'.

---

4   See e.g. Roof (1999) on the 'Spiritual Marketplace' in the context of American religion.
5   This debate goes back to the 1950s, with Paul Bohannan's classic (1955) work on exchange among the Tiv. For a more recent summary of anthropological approaches to the market see Dilley (1992) or Gudeman (2001).

Considering the complexity of marketing therefore, there are fruitful areas of overlap between religious organizations and corporations to explore. It is not just a case of religions taking on practices developed by secular organizations, but rather a case of boundaries between secular and religious becoming frequently blurred, so that secular organizations may also seek to enter areas that were previously the domain of the religious. For example, there is a growing recognition in the business world that it is indispensable to maintain good relations with stakeholders in order to ensure the enterprise's continued existence and growth. The importance of values that could equally well be associated with religions, such as goodwill, corporate social responsibility, and strong governance are key elements in corporate culture, and these themes feature prominently in many corporations' web pages.[6]

Much contemporary research on branding has explored parallels between religion and branding in terms of meaning making, the creation of community, and the transmission of values.[7] Danesi (2006: 25) argues that 'brands now offer the same kinds of promises and hopes to which religions once held exclusive rights – security against the hazards of old age, better positions in life, popularity and personal prestige, social advancement, better health, happiness, etc'. In this volume, therefore, we do not consider marketing in terms of the neo-classical model, or in terms of simply promoting a 'product', but rather in terms of influencing and engaging the target audience in a range of ways, both material and immaterial, within a particular social and cultural context.

Another potentially problematic area in examining religions through the lens of marketing and management is the frequent resistance (Usunier and Stolz 2014: 23) of both the general public and members of religious movements to the language of marketing when applied to religious organizations. Marketing may be seen as problematic for these and other reasons: what the religion offers is perceived as 'non-sellable' and marketing is associated with selling; marketing may be seen as manipulative; it may be seen as contradicting the central religious message of the group. Usunier and Stolz also note that marketing may be perceived negatively as associated with a consumer dominated capitalist society (2014: 23). This is indicative of the difficulty in integrating etic and emic levels of analysis in the study of

6   See BHP (2018) and GSK (2018).
7   See, for instance, Danesi 2006: 25; Sherry 2005: 42-44. For a summary of work on this topic, see Matsunaga 2015.

religion (see Arweck and Stringer 2002; Yong 2012: 27). Our motivation in this volume is largely to conduct an etic level of analysis, based on detailed ethnographic data gathered through field observation at the emic level.

Religious organizations widely view spiritual values as of a higher order than worldly concerns, and some may see worldly activities such as marketing as opposed to their values. Nevertheless, certain rituals, informal practices, and organizational structures may serve to attract new members and retain followers. Established religions often incorporate local deities and rituals in their global expansion into other cultures. For instance, Buddhist temples in Japan incorporate Shinto shrines and deities, and NRMs actively innovate to attract followers. Shōkō Asahara, the founder of Aum Shinrikyō, steadily added new elements of doctrine and rituals drawn from different religious and New Age contexts – Meditation, Yoga, Christianity, Early Buddhism, and Tibetan Buddhism – to stimulate members' interest and to obtain revenue from ritual offerings and purchases (Reader 2000: 131-132). Religious hybridity or the mixing of different religious concepts may be indicated here as one of the conspicuous features of globalizing religions, and indeed forms a key element in attracting new members, especially if they are told that they do not need to give up their former religious beliefs, as these are accommodated by the movement. For instance, Sūkyō Mahikari ('Sūkyō' means 'supra-religion') positions itself as higher than existing religions and able to enhance them, so that a Christian who becomes a Mahikari member becomes a better Christian (Smith 2007: 54). In this volume, Nakamaki discusses Seichō-no-Ie's compatibility with Roman Catholicism in Brazil (Chapter 16). Chapter 10 looks at the Brahma Kumaris, who subsume all the major religions within a doctrine of the Cycle of five ages. Syncretism is thus a powerful marketing device. In Chapter 2, Clarke argues that the appeal of Sekai Kyūsei Kyō (SKK) [Church of World Messianity] in Thailand is that the movement is not perceived as belonging to the Shinto-based family of new religions, but as a new form of Buddhism, a radical repositioning of the movement. *Jōrei*, the technique of transmitting healing energy through the upraised palm of the hand, practised by SKK members, is accepted in the Thai context as a practice of socially engaged Buddhism, and is interpreted as a route to encountering Maitreya Buddha.

At the emic level of analysis, believers' perception of what appeals to them in a religion, and why, is very dependent on cultural context. However, there are also religious organizations which have adopted explicit marketing and branding strategies with enthusiasm, and without this appearing to present a problem. In the UK, for example, the Church of England has actively encouraged churches to consider branding as a way of getting noticed (Church of

England 2017) and a number of Church of England cathedrals have either already rebranded themselves or have branding projects in hand.[8] There is also now an extensive literature on marketing in the context of American religion, in particular (although not exclusively) Christianity, a trend that seems entirely consistent with the generally positive attitudes towards consumerism and marketing in the United States.[9] And Clarke (1976) notes a similarly affirmative attitude to the market among the Ismaili Khojas.

Finally, a sticking point for many in the suggested application of a marketing perspective to the analysis of religion is the implication that marketing is all about generating profit. While religious organizations clearly need to generate cash flow in order to function and to provide service, the idea of creating profit as a guiding principle in religious activities is often seen as problematic. Usunier and Stolz's (2014: 6) suggestion that religious organizations may resemble non-profit organizations more closely than commercial organizations is useful here, as it enables a shift away from a focus on profit to other marketing goals. Another useful perspective is that of Peter Drucker, looking at the sphere of business, who asserts that the business objective of corporations is not the search for profits, but the creation of customers:

> Because the purpose of business is to create a customer, the business enterprise has two – and only two – basic functions: marketing and innovation. Marketing and innovation produce results; all the rest are 'costs'. Marketing is the distinguishing, unique function of the business. (Drucker 1954: 37).

Marketing and the creation of followers in religious organizations

If we apply this perspective to religious or spiritual movements, could we hypothesize that their objective, if seen in business terms, is the creation of followers through the development of innovative beliefs and practices and their successful marketing? The formalization of the notion of purgatory by the Roman Catholic church in the late twelfth century (Le Goff 1986) and the subsequent selling of indulgences to assuage people's load of sin, is one example of Drucker's principle in a religious organizational context. The

8   For one interesting example, see the brand guidelines for Norwich Cathedral, made available on-line in the tongue-in-cheek form of a digital 'brand bible' (Click Design (N.d.). Accessed August 2014. http://www.theclickdesign.com/project/norwich-cathedrals-brand-guidelines).
9   See Moore (1994), Twitchell (2007) Einstein (2008), Cimino and Lattin (1998).

guarantee of this-worldly benefits by both new and established religions in Japan is another. In all cases, the creation of followers is a key point.

Another aspect of marketing is the creation of demand. Although for companies advertising through the mass media is a central aspect of this, for religious organizations the situation is more complex. A number of religious organizations are indeed well known for the use they have made of the mass media – examples range from televangelists in the United States (Moore 1994) to the use of mass media advertising, television, and door to door leafleting by new religious movements in Japan (Reader 1991: 218-219). The Internet also plays an increasingly important role in this respect, as discussed in the context of Japan by Baffelli et al. (2011).[10]

Management of religious organizations

In addition to considering marketing in the religious context, we also asked the contributors to consider the management of religious organizations. From a business perspective, management concerns include conducting business activities, planning strategy, setting up effective leadership and an organizational structure which incorporates control mechanisms, managing information, finance, and resources (including human resources). These are matters of concern for any large organization, including religious organizations, and they become more difficult in cross-cultural contexts. There is now an extensive literature on the anthropology of organizations, which has been explored through detailed ethnography topics including bureaucracy, industrial relations, corporate training programmes, meetings, and the structuring and daily life of organizations including both non-profit organizations and commercial enterprises.[11] Anthropological research on this area makes clear that the management of organizations, whether secular or religious, is always embedded within specific socio-cultural contexts, and involves processes of meaning making that cannot be understood solely with reference to formal economic models.[12]

10   See especially pages 26-29, and Reader's discussion of the Shikoku pilgrimage in the same volume.

11   An early influential work on this topic was Wright 1994. More recent contributions include the edited volumes by Gellner and Hirsch (2001) and Jiménez (2007). In 2017 a special edition of the Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute was devoted to 'Meetings: Ethnographies of Organizational Process, Bureaucracy, and Assembly'.

12   There are also cases of company involvement with, or inspiration by, the religious sphere, in existing ethnographic studies of some Japanese enterprises. See e.g. Nakamaki (1995, 2002)

As Iwai notes in Chapter 5 in this volume, it is also important to point out that management is not necessarily concerned with the pursuit of profit. The association with profit implies that the language of marketing and management may be alienating, and seen as inappropriate, by many members of religious organizations, as discussed above. However, for most religious organizations, donations from members (whether compulsory or voluntary) and the sale of religious goods (whether material or immaterial) are critical sources of revenue to fund their operations in terms of staff remuneration, infrastructure costs, and service programmes. Hence, attracting and retaining a membership size which guarantees sustainability is critical. It is also true that the management of a religious organization differs in some important respects from that of a business. Nevertheless, both are social organizations which commonly bring together large numbers of people most of whom are unrelated by ties of kinship or residence, and which may command considerable resources, which in turn need to be organized and allocated. As such, it is our hope that a focus on management in the context of religion may enable a closer examination of the organizational aspects of religious groups, including an examination of leadership, hierarchies, power, organizational structure, and the control of resources and information. These are all important aspects of religious as well as secular organizations, and are explored by in the chapters below.

Structure and chapter outline of this volume

The volume is composed of five sections. The first section gives a theoretical overview, and presents some general characteristics and models of management and marketing, based on the concrete examples of Japanese new religious movements and the Unification Church. The second section deals with East Asian religious movements in Japan, Korea and China. The third section looks at South Asia and Southeast Asia, specifically new religious movements in Malaysia, Thailand, and India, as well as Pentecostalism in Malaysia and Indonesia. The fourth section is concerned with Japanese religious movements in Europe and America. As we turn from the present towards the future, the final section presents a survey of what might be described as post-modern religion, a concept that research suggests is one future possibility.

Clarke (Chapter 2) offers a broad theoretical frame for the entire volume by highlighting the increasing permeability of the boundaries of religions,

and Matsunaga (2000). For a reverse perspective, see Smith (2002).

both in the sense of boundaries between religion and other spheres of activity, as well as economically and geographically. Clarke argues for a multi-directional view of globalization, in which no single centre can be identified (Appadurai 1990). Anticipating Turner's more recent comments on the problems associated with the label 'Asian Religions' (Turner 2015: 13), Clarke also notes that assigning geographical labels to religions has become increasingly problematic. The chapter goes on to examine the concept of globalization, and the management and marketing of religion, with particular reference to the expansion outside Japan of Japanese new religious movements in the post-WWII era. Clarke outlines the diversity of means by which religions market themselves – including, but also going well beyond, familiar methods used by commercial businesses.

Sakurai (Chapter 3) focuses on management in religious organizations through the lens of the Unification Church. In organizational terms, the structure of the Unification Church resembles that of a multinational conglomerate enterprise, while the source of information for their corporate culture binding together the disparate elements of the conglomerate is their sacred book, 'The Divine Principle' which sets out the theological ideas of the 'Messiah', Sun Myung Moon. According to Sakurai, those in the Church view Korea as the centre of the world because the 'Messiah' was born there, and Korea is the headquarters in terms of management of the Church. Sakurai presents a model of the development of the Unification Church in which in the early period it resembled a new religious movement, then, during the period of growth it became a conglomerate, and now it is emerging as a global enterprise. Economically, the Church offers unconventional religious activities such as 'spiritual' sales. These sales along with the high fees charged for participation in mass wedding ceremonies keep the Church in the black. Sakurai also predicts that under the pressure of legal restrictions the movement will be unable to maintain itself as a global conglomerate and will ultimately have to revise its pattern of business expansion. Sakurai's analysis illustrates some of the fascinating insights offered by a management perspective on religious organizations.

Global concerns that are of interest in the secular sphere are also important to religious groups. Shimazono (Chapter 4) opens the second section on East Asian religions with a chapter on the role of religions in the world peace movement in Japan. By exploring the world peace movement and the ways it manifested in the local context of Japan, with reference to particular nationally grounded discourses, Shimazono reveals ways in which value strategies are transformed in a process of glocalization. This relates to the broader argument made by Dessi (2017), that an important aspect of

globalization is the way in which global debates, such as those concerning the world peace movement, may have a transformative effect on local religious configurations, while at the same time becoming transformed in turn. Dessi also points out the role of nationalist narratives in this process, where global debates may be re-configured within a nationalist frame. The example Dessi (2017: 10) gives relates to environmentalism and the religious dimension of 'eco-nationalism' in Japan. Shimazono's chapter is also an example of this process, in which the discourse of the peace movement in Japan was initially strongly influenced by Japan's positioning as the only country to have suffered the dropping of the atomic bomb.

In Chapter 5, Iwai analyses the operations of SKK, a Japanese NRM with a global presence. He does this by reconsidering the word 'management'. He understands it not as a term to do with a commercial enterprise but rather the administration and operation of a social system. From this perspective, Iwai looks at the 'management of secrets' and the ways in which secrets may maintain hierarchies of power in religion, and act as a form of capital. A key question for Iwai is the relationship between the management of secrets and the proliferation of offshoots of SKK, both in South Korea and more widely. See also Matsuoka's chapter (15) for a focus on SKK in Brazil. The practice of *jōrei*, which gives the possibility of exercising spiritual power to ordinary members, with its potential healing and beneficial outcomes to the recipient, may be one of the attractive features of SKK which has led to its wide global membership. Ironically, the strong point of the organization in attracting followers leads to changes in its organizational structure as Iwai demonstrates.

Penny (Chapter 6) examines the transformation of Falun Gong following its suppression in mainland China in 1999 into a diasporic organization headquartered in New York, and with a new global audience. Since then, Falun Gong has re-marketed itself and subsequently gained some political traction. One of its main means of promotion and communication is now the Internet to such an extent, Penny argues, that 'Falun Gong really now exists primarily as a cyber-community'. Furthermore, since 2004 Falun Gong has performed its message through song and dance in a Chinese New Year Gala, which has been broadcast on a privately-owned TV station, and has also toured internationally. They use this creative form of marketing to communicate Falun Gong messages, and also messages about the suppression of Falun Gong in mainland China. Penny demonstrates that these performances also position Falun Gong as a guardian of Chinese culture, while the Chinese government accuses Falun Gong of distorting it. This new battlefield is thus not just about Falun Gong as a religion, but

is also a debate about Chinese national and cultural identity, played out outside national borders. The use of globalized media means that, from a marketing perspective, Falun Gong's message of governmental oppression remains alive, and they are able to reach new diasporic audiences and local audiences abroad.

Shamsul (Chapter 7) begins the section on religion in South East and South Asia with a study of an apparent failure, that of Arqam – an Islamic revivalist religion in Malaysia. Despite being an efficiently managed bureaucratic entity, Arqam's identity as a social and political movement exposed it to retaliation from the Malaysian Government which banned it in its existing form in 1994. In spite of this, Arqam was able to re-invent itself through managing itself as a business enterprise with an international reach renamed Rufaqa', that sells *halal* products to Indonesia, Brunei, and the Philippines. Shamsul notes that most of the employees of Rufaqa' in Malaysia and Indonesia are sympathetic to Arqam, suggesting that in this case adopting the identity of a business organization was a highly adaptive strategy for Arqam as a religious and political movement.

Yano's chapter (8) is a case study of a different sort of 'failure', that of Wat Phra Dhammakaya, a new Theravada Buddhist movement originating in Thailand. In the Dhammakaya temple in Japan, most of the followers are Thais living in Japan and there is little impact on the Japanese population. However, another Theravada Buddhist group in Japan has thousands of Japanese members. Yano looks at the management strategies of each to explain the different outcomes of these two Theravada groups in relation to Japanese recruitment, drawing on theories of business administration. He also draws specifically on domain strategy, arguing that a strategy that was successful for Wat Phra Dhammakaya in the Thai context has not so far been successfully adapted for the Japanese context. In a sharply contrasting study, Andaya (Chapter 9) employs the concept of 'glocalization' to examine how Pentacostal Christianity has been successfully marketed in Indonesia and Malaysia in ways that maintain a global style of evangelism while stressing local roots. Social media and a technologically sophisticated worship style have also brought a unique and novel religious modernity, creating tensions as 'local' elements recede in favour of global influences that are becoming increasingly dominant.

One form of marketing used by religious organizations relates to gift-giving. Giving discounts, freebies, two for one offers, and samples are common ways for corporations to draw in customers. Religions may also offer gifts: material and non-material. Andaya notes that Pentecostal Christians offer people the gifts of healing and spiritual prophecy, while Smith and

Ramsay in Chapter 10 describe the gift of '*toli*' (hand-made sweets cooked in God's remembrance) that are given to guests, often accompanied by a 'blessing' – a small card with an often-prophetic positive slogan.

While Pentecostalist Christianity has religious roots in the Occident, Smith and Ramsay's chapter (10) on The Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University (BKWSU) examines a NRM founded in the Hinduistic context, in pre-Partition North West India. With a fundamental message of imminent global change, the call for absolute purity (including celibacy) and a radical reinterpretation of cyclic time, venturing into foreign countries required skillful marketing (Ramsay 2009). Smith and Ramsay look at BKWSU practices and principles that, examined through a management lens, demonstrate the organization's ability to appeal to and capture the interest of a mass global membership of spiritual inquirers, whose culture of upbringing may be very different from the ascetic practices of the organization (Smith 2015). From being a world-rejecting (Wallis 1984) movement that clearly went against social customs of the time, it has become a movement in the process of rapid change while still attempting to reaffirm important traditions, as the original members pass away.[13] The organization's recent overt management and structure change in Australia is designed to accommodate and appeal to an individualized, globalized and secular audience whilst attempting to hold on to its foundational roots. Ramsay, Smith and Manderson (2012) discuss some of these dilemmas.

A factor in the globalization of Asian religions is whether it occurs in the context of a diaspora, or whether it is due to a process of conversion by spiritual seekers despite the high degree of cultural distance between their culture of socialization and the culture and lifestyle of the Asian religion (Smith 2015). Section 4 on Japanese Religions in Europe and the Americas builds on research on the multi-nationalization religions brought by migrants to their new countries of settlement. However, one of the most significant features of contemporary globalizing religion is the phenomenon of religions moving beyond the framework of diaspora. The section begins with Matsunaga's chapter (11), focusing on Jōdo Shinshū (or Shin Buddhism), a form of Pure Land Buddhism in Europe. Jōdo Shinshū remains little known in Europe, despite the size and importance of this sect in Japan. The European situation is also very different from Jōdo Shinshū in the USA, where it became established from a base in the Japanese American community. In contrast, most of the very few members in Europe are locals. Matsunaga offers us

---

13   For more on this phenomenon see the scholarly website brahmakumarisresearch.org administered by Ramsay (2018).

a case study of 'glocalization', and the way in which a globalizing Asian religion such as Jōdo Shinshū has had to adapt to a very specific context. She explores the reasons why Jōdo Shinshū has a significantly different profile in different regional settings, the challenges it has faced in Europe, and its subsequent adaptations and relationship with other Buddhist organizations.

Moriya (Chapter 12) takes up the expansion of Jōdo Shinshū outside Japan, this time in the context of the USA and Hawaii. She demonstrates that the process of religious expansion is not always driven by the religious organizations concerned, but sometimes by a demand created by the followers. Jōdo Shinshū expanded to the USA and Hawaii from the late nineteenth century onwards largely in response to the expressed needs of Japanese migrants. When Japanese immigrants who worked on the sugar cane plantations in Hawaii went on strike repeatedly in the early twentieth century for improvements in their working conditions, Jōdo Shinshū responded to this situation by offering active support to these migrants. The first Jōdo Shinshū bishop in Hawaii commented that the plantation workers 'are the first to be saved by Amida Buddha'. For the Shinshū missionary priests, the migrant workers were a new market through which to expand into the United States. It is notable that this expansion was largely in response to the expressed needs of the followers themselves.[14] Moriya's work also shows how the role of lay Buddhists was vital in its development, including the Buddhist social ethics that grew out of engagement with labour movements in pre-war Hawaii.

In Chapter 13 Yamada explores Tenrikyō, one of the earliest of the Japanese new religions, founded in 1838 in a farming village, and noteworthy in terms of its subsequent global reach and historical importance. It adopted a world focus from its earliest days and set up a library of sacred texts of world religions, an ethnological museum to facilitate missionary work, a publications department in sixteen languages and a university to teach these languages. Yamada discusses Tenrikyō theology, which considers that all beings and nature are placed within the divine body of God. Tenrikyō management philosophy places everyone within the nurturing reciprocity of a parent-child relationship. It is common for NRMs in Japan to place an emphasis on building personal human relationships, and offering guidance within a parent-child type of interaction. Yamada discusses the propagation

14   To pursue the marketing analogy, there are parallels here with recent studies of branding, which suggest that some of the most effective marketing/branding is that which engages the consumer as co-creator of the brand (Schouten and McAlexander 1995; Muniz and O'Guinn 2001:427; Arvidsson 2005: 208).

of Tenrikyō in Brazil, where the movement emphasizes the parental love [*oya-gokoro*] between spiritual parent and spiritual child. Great significance is also attached to participation in cooperative activities such as the construction of group headquarters. Tenrikyō has established bases in most major continents, including the Americas. Yamada explores the aspects of Tenrikyō that have helped facilitate this expansion, and suggests ways in which this may be re-shaped in the future by increasing globalization.

Pereira's chapter (14) also focuses on Brazil, which, he notes, is the country with the largest expatriate Japanese community in the world. Pereira compares the experience of a number of different religions of Japanese origin in the Brazilian context. These religions show diversity not only in terms of doctrinal orientation but also their size and geographic spread of membership. Pereira examines extrinsic and intrinsic factors influencing the spread of religions outside their countries of origin, and argues that, since the extrinsic factors are the same in the case of Japanese religions in Brazil, we must look to intrinsic factors, 'the religious group's inherent characteristics and selected strategies' to understand the different outcomes experienced by the groups that he surveys. He examines Sōka Gakkai International (SGI) as a case study of leadership in a global context.

As Clarke points out in Chapter 2, marketing of religious movements extends beyond methods familiar from the world of business such as the use of mass media or leafleting. Other important means of engaging the public (and potential members) include educational and cultural programmes, sponsorship of the arts, volunteer programmes, and projects such as the construction of sacred sites. Sekai Kyūsei Kyō (established 1955) is a Japanese new religion which established its sacred site, 'Guarapiranga' in the outskirts of São Paulo in 1995. In Chapter 15, Matsuoka examines the significance of this gigantic and well-maintained sacred place in propagation and internalization of the doctrine by the followers, recognizing it also has an impact on the many non-devotional visitors. Matsuoka demonstrates that Guarapiranga is a cooperative enterprise which motivates followers through its planning, and increases their level of satisfaction with the movement. This sacred site is intended to be the realization in actual physical space of an earthly paradise or 'heaven on earth' which can be seen as fulfilling followers' (customers') needs. At the same time, the site is open to visitors who are not members of the movement, which also makes a significant contribution to the marketing of SKK.

In Chapter 16, Nakamaki looks at the more classical notions of marketing and management, and – through this lens – describes how religions such as Tōdaiji Temple and Tendai Mission in Hawaii and SGI in the USA, as well

as Perfect Liberty Kyōdan and Seichō-no-Ie in Brazil, have spread to the Americas. Using the analogies of habitat segregation and epidemicalization, Nakamaki looks at the concept of sharing and its notional value in the dissemination of religion and the ways in which religions may claim exclusivity within a field of competitive market share. Globalization does not necessarily emanate from the headquarters in Japan, as in the old multinational model. For instance, Japanese NRMs in Brazil move beyond the Japanese diaspora to indigenous communities largely due to their magical elements which resonate with the local culture, and then may springboard elsewhere through personal networks.

This illustrates Clarke's assertion (Chapter 2), that we must be aware of various routes to globalization: not only dissemination worldwide from a central hub, or from a particular starting point, but through proselytization or migration from one place to another. In the case of SKK, practices and beliefs which had spread among Japanese migrants to Brazil were subsequently transmitted to non-ethnic Japanese. Thus, not only did the movement acquire many followers among Brazilians who are not of Japanese descent, but now it has spread to former Portuguese colonies such as Angola and Mozambique, and members are even undertaking missionary work in South Africa. And, although the route of propagation is different, in Thailand the membership of SKK has grown to the incredible figure of 600,000.

On the other hand, in the final section on future perspectives, Inoue (Chapter 18), brings us back to broader issues of globalization such as the erosion of boundaries between religion and other social domains. He discusses the effects that globalization and new information technologies are having on religious activities in Japan. He argues that one consequence of this changing social context is the formation of 'hyper-religion', which shows little continuity with older domestic religious traditions, and draws our attention to the growing phenomenon of virtual religions – religious activity on the Internet. He argues that Internet-based religions incorporate religious concepts which are independent of the idea of a native country, or a native religious culture. One of their particular features is the active incorporation of practices from other cultures, and even non-religious elements, for example from psychology and science fiction.

Global religions, global concerns

Throughout this volume, the contributors engage with the ways in which globalization has transformed the religious landscape. Drawing on Appadurai

(1990), this volume explores the interaction of flows of people (ethnoscapes) and ideas (ideoscapes) – not only ideas in the sense of religious teachings, but also ideas from other domains. While our focus here is on the interaction between religious organizations and perspectives drawn from marketing and management, the engagement of religions with other globally circulating ideoscapes is also evident, from the environmental focus of SKK referred to by Clarke and the yogic farming of the Brahma Kumaris (Ramsay 2012) to the movement for world peace discussed by Shimazono. The influence of technoscapes, such as the Internet, is discussed by several contributors, including Penny and Inoue. We can also see an erosion of geographical and social boundaries – the comparison of contemporary religions to liquids flowing across borders is an appealing one here (Tweed 2006),[15] as is Bauman's (2000) notion of 'liquid modernity', a state characterized by mobility, change, and the erosion of certainty.

Part of what is at stake here is how religions seek to adapt and to establish their relevance in this changing environment. In this volume, we examine how religions, in order to gain members, 'market' themselves to a continually changing and shifting landscape of a hyper-mobile population and, having achieved a large, global membership how they structure and 'manage' themselves in order to remain relevant for a changing population of members in terms of size and cultural complexity. A particular consideration here is the cross-cultural implications for leadership and communication in a world where legal, financial, political and social structures are all asking new and different things of religion. Humans are reshaping the world at an astonishing rate (Deane-Drummond et al. 2017), This book encourages us to consider that an understanding of the marketing and management of globalizing Asian religions may help us to explore human beings' changing self-perception in relation to globalization and the imaginings of how we should now 'be' in our rapidly changing world.

Works cited

Appadurai, Arjun. 1990. "Disjuncture and difference in the global cultural economy." In *Global Culture,* edited by Mike Featherstone, 295-310. London: Sage.
Amstutz, Galen and Uggo Dessi. 2014. "Approaching Japanese religions under globalization." *Journal of Religion in Japan* 3: 83-95.

15   We also note, however, the unevenness of these flows, see Tsing (2000).

Arvidsson, Adam. 2005. "Brands: A critical perspective." *Journal of Consumer Culture* 5: 235-258.

Arweck, Elisabeth and Martin D. Stringer, eds. 2002. *Theorizing Faith: The Insider/Outsider Problem in the Study of Ritual.* Birmingham: University of Birmingham Press.

Baffelli, Erica, Ian Reader and Birgit Staemmler, eds. 2011. *Japanese Religions on the Internet: Innovation, Representation and Authority.* London and New York: Routledge.

Beckford, James A. 1986. *New Religious Movements and Rapid Social Change.* London: Sage/UNESCO.

Bauman, Zygmunt. 2000. *Liquid Modernity.* Oxford: Polity Press.

Beyer, Peter. 1994. *Religion and Globalization.* London: Sage Publications.

BHP 2018. "BHP (Broken Hill Propetary) Billiton." Accessed 29 March 2018. http://www.bhp.com/community.

Bohannan, Paul. 1955. "Some principles of exchange and investment among the Tiv." *American Anthropologist* (New Series) 57(1): 60-70.

Church of England. 2017. "Director of Communitications Appointed." Accessed 11 April 2018. https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/news/director-communications-appointed.

Cimino, Richard and Don Lattin. 1998. *Shopping for Faith: American Religion in the New Millennium.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Clarke, Peter B. 1976. "The Ismailis: A study of community." *British Journal of Sociology* 27(4): 484-494.

—. ed. 2000. *Japanese New Religions in Global Perspective.* Richmond: Curzon Press.

—. 2006a. *New Religions in Global Perspective.* New York, London: Routledge.

—. ed. 2006b. *Encyclopedia of New Religious Movements.* Oxford: Routledge.

Clarke, Peter B. and Jeffrey Somers, eds. 1994. *Japanese New Religions in the West.* Richmond: Curzon Press.

Click Design. N.d. "Norwich Cathedral" Accessed 29 March 2019. https://theclick-design.com/portfolio/norwich-cathedral/.

Danesi, Marcel. 2006 *Brands.* London: Routledge.

Deane-Drummond, Celia, Sigurd Bergmann and Markus Vogt, eds. 2017. *Religion in the Anthropocene.* Cascade Books: Eugene, Oregon.

Dessi, Ugo. 2013. *Japanese Religions and Globalization.* Routledge.

—. 2017. *The Global Repositioning of Japanese Religions: An Integrated Approach.* Oxford and N.Y.: Routledge.

Dilley, Roy. 1992. *Contesting Markets: Analyses of Ideology, Discourse and Practice.* Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Drucker, Peter F. 1954. *The Practice of Management.* New York: Harper and Row Publishers, Inc.

Einstein, Maria. 2008. *Brands of Faith: Marketing Religion in a Commercial Age*. London: Routledge.

—. 2011. "Evolution of religious branding." *Social Compass* 53(3): 331-338.

Finke, Roger and Laurence R. Iannaccone 1993. "Supply-side explanations for religious change." *The Annals of the American Academy* AAPSS 527(1): 27-39.

Gauthier, François, Linda Woodhead and Tuomas Martikainen. 2013. "Introduction: Consumerism as the ethos of consumer society." In *Religion in Consumer Society: Brands, Consumers and Markets,* edited by François Gauthier and Tuomas Martikainen. Farnham: Ashgate Publishing.

Gauthier, François and Tuomas Martikainen, eds. 2013. *Religion in Consumer Society: Brands, Consumers and Markets*. Farnham: Ashgate Publishing.

Gellner, David and Eric Hirsch, eds. 2001. *Inside Organizations: Anthropologists at Work.* Bloomsbury Academic.

GSK 2018 [2001]. "GlaxoSmithKline." Accessed 4 April 2018. https://www.gsk.com/en-gb/responsibility/.

Gudeman, Stephen. 2001. *The Anthropology of Economy: Community, Market and Culture.* Oxford: Blackwell.

Hardacre, Helen. 1997. *Marketing the Menacing Fetus in Japan* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Harvey, David. 1989. *The Condition of Postmodernity.* Oxford: Blackwell.

Hexham, Irving and Karla Poewe. 1997. *New Religions as Global Cultures: Making the Human Sacred.* Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press Jiménez.

Huss, Boaz. 2007. "The new age of Kabbalah." *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies* 6(2).

Jiménez, Alberto. 2007. *The Anthropology of Organisations*. London and New York: Routledge.

Ketelaar, James. 1993. *Of Heretics and Martyrs in Meiji Japan: Buddhism and its Persecution*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Kitiarsa, Pattarna, ed. 2008. *Religious Commodifications in Asia: Marketing Gods.* New York and London: Routledge.

LeGoff, Jacques. 1986. *The Birth of Purgatory* [Translated by Arthur Goldhammer]. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Masuzawa Tomoko. 2005. *The Invention of World Religions: Or, How European Universalism Was Preserved in the Language of Pluralism.* Illinois: University of Chicago Press.

Matsunaga, Louella. 2000. "Spiritual companies, corporate religions: Japanese companies and Japanese new religious movements at home and abroad." In *Japanese New Religions in Global Perspective,* edited by Peter B. Clarke. Richmond: Curzon Press.

—. 2008. "Blurring the boundaries between corporation and religion" *IIAS Newsletter* (Special Theme on New Religious Movements), #47: 5-6.

—. 2015. "The corporate brand: Toward an anthropology of branding." In *Enterprise as an Instrument of Civilization: An Anthropological Approach to Business Administration,* edited by Hirochika Nakamaki, Kōichirō Hioki, Izumi Mitsui and Yoshiyuki Takeuchi. Dordrecht: Springer.

Matsue, Regina Yoshie. 2014. "The glocalization process of Shin Buddhism in Brasilia." *Journal of Religion in Japan* (3): 226-246.

Michaud, Derek. 2004 [1994]. "World Parliament of Religions." *Boston Collaborative Encyclopedia of Western Theology.* Accessed 29 March 2018. http://people.bu.edu/wwildman/bce/worldparliamentofreligions1893.htm.

Moore, Robert Laurence. 1994. *Selling God: American Religion in the Marketplace of Culture.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Muniz, Albert M. and Thomas C. O'Guinn. 2001. "Brand community." *Journal of Consumer Research* 27: 412-432.

Nakamaki Hirochika. 1979. "Hawai no nikkei shūkyō ni okeru nihon shikō to amerika shikō. [The preference for Japan or America in Japanese Religions in Hawaii]." *Shūkyō Kenkyū* 51 (3).

—. 1991. "The Indigenization and multinationalization of Japanese religion: Perfect Liberty Kyōdan in Brazil." *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies*, 18(23): 213-242). Nagoya: Nanzan Institute for Religion and Culture.

—. 1995. "Memorial monuments and memorial services of Japanese companies: Focusing on Mt. Koya." In *Ceremony and Ritual in Japan: Religious Practices in an Industrialized Society*, edited by Jan van Bremen and Dolores. P. Martinez, 146-158. London: Routledge.

—. 2002. "The company funeral as 'Shaen' culture." *Senri Ethnological Studies* (Special Issue 'The Culture of Association and Associations in Contemporary Japanese Society'), #62.

—. 2003. *Japanese Religions at Home and Abroad: Anthropological Perspectives.* London: Routledge Curzon.

Pereira, Ronan A. and Hideaki Matsuoka, eds. 2007. *Japanese Religions in and Beyond Japanese Diaspora.* Berkeley, CA: University of California Berkeley/ Institute of East Asian Studies.

Ramsay, Tamasin. 2009. *Custodians of Purity: An Ethnography of the Brahma Kumaris.* Doctor of Philosophy, School of Psychology and Psychiatry, Monash University.

—. 2012. "Yogic Agriculture Reaping Rewards in India." *Rio+Business*. Brazil: CBD, UNCCD, UNFCCC & Entico Corp, 118-119.

—. 2018. "Brahma Kumaris History and Research." Accessed 20 March 2018. http://www.brahmakumarisresearch.org.

Ramsay, Tamasin, Wendy Smith and Lenore Manderson. 2012. "Brahma Kumaris, purity and the globalisation of faith." In *Flows of Faith: Religious Reach and*

Community in Asia and the Pacific. Edited by Lenore Manderson, Wendy Smith and Matt Tomlinson, 51-70. Dordrecht: Springer.

Reader, Ian. 1991. *Religion in Contemporary Japan.* Basingstoke, UK: Macmillan, and Honolulu: University of Hawaii.

Reader, Ian and George Tanabe Jr. 1998. *Practically Religious: Worldly Benefits and the Common Religion of Japan.* Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

Reader, Ian. 2000. *Religious Violence in Contemporary Japan: The Case of Aum Shinrikyo.* Richmond, Surrey: Curzon Press.

Roof, Wade C. 1999. *Spiritual Marketplace: Baby Boomers and the Remaking of American Religion.* Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Rudolph, Susanne H. and James Piscatori, eds. 1997. *Transnational Religion and Fading States.* Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press.

Schouten, John W. and James H. McAlexander. 1995. "Subcultures of consumption: An ethnography of the new bikers." *Journal of Consumer Research* 22(1): 43-61.

Sherry, John F. 2005. "Brand meaning." In *Kellogg on Branding,* edited by Alice M. Tybout and Tim Calkins, 40-69. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

Smith, Wendy. 2002. "The corporate culture of a globalized Japanese new religion." *Senri Ethnological Studies* (Special Issue 'The Culture of Association and Associations in Contemporary Japanese Society'), 62: 153-176.

—. 2007. "Sūkyō Mahikari in Australia and Southeast Asia: A Globalized Japanese new religious movement outside the Japanese diaspora." In *Japanese Religions in and Beyond Japanese Diaspora,* edited by Ronan A. Pereira and Hideaki Matsuoka, 5-78. Berkeley, CA: University of California Berkeley/Institute of East Asian Studies.

—. 2008. "Asian New Religious Movements as Global Organizations." *IIAS Newsletter* (Special Theme on New Religious Movement), #47: 3.

—. 2015. "New Religious Movements as Transnational Cultural Systems: Implications for Agency." In *Transnational Agency and Migration: Actors, Movements and Social Support,* edited by Stefan Köengeter and Wendy Smith, 48-173. London: Routledge.

Snodgrass, Judith. 2003. *Presenting Japanese Buddhism to the West: Orientalism, Occidentalism, and the Columbian Exposition.* Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press.

Stark, Rodney and William Sims Bainbridge. 1987. *A Theory of Religion.* Bern: Peter Lang.

Tsing, Anna L. 2000. "The global situation." *Cultural Anthropology* 15(3): 327-360.

Turner, Bryan. 2015. "Religion, religions and modernization." In *Routledge Handbook of Religions in Asia,* edited by Bryan Turner and Oscar Salemink. London and New York: Routledge.

Tweed, Thomas A. 2006. *Crossing and Dwelling: A Theory of Religion,* Cambridge and Boston: Harvard University Press.

Twitchell, James B. 2007. *Shopping for God: How Christianity Went from In Your Heart to In Your Face.* New York: Simon & Schuster.

Usunier, Jean-Claude and Jörg Stolz, eds. 2014. *Religions as Brands: New Perspectives on the Marketization of Religion and Spirituality.* Farnham: Ashgate Publishing.

Wallis, Roy. 1984. *The Elementary Forms of the New Religious Life.* London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Wright, Susan. 1994. *Anthropology of Organizations.* London and New York: Routledge.

Yong, Amos. 2012. "Observation-Participation-Subjunctivation: Methodological play and meaning-making in the study of religion and theology." *Religious Studies and Theology* 31(1): 17-40.

About the authors

Wendy Smith is an anthropologist in the fields of management, religion and Asian studies. She was formerly Senior Lecturer in management and Japanese studies at Monash University, Australia. Smith has conducted extensive research on Japanese management transfer to Malaysia, globalizing Asian new religious movements, and Islam and social protection in Turkish migrant communities. She is co-editor of *Flows of Faith: Religious Reach and Community in Asia and the Pacific* (2012) and *Transnational Agency and Migration – Actors, Movements and Social Support* (2015).

Hirochika Nakamaki, Director-General, Suita City Museum, Professor Emeritus, National Museum of Ethnology, Japan is an anthropologist (Ph.D.) of Japanese religions, Japanese management and calendar studies. He is the author of *Japanese Religions at Home and Abroad: Anthropological Perspectives* (2003). Recent co-edited publications include *Business and Anthropology: A Focus on Sacred Space* (2013) and *Enterprise as an Instrument of Civilization: An Anthropological Approach to Business Administration* (2016).

Louella Matsunaga is Senior Lecturer in the Anthropology of Japan at Oxford Brookes University. Her research interests include gender, personhood, and the body in contemporary Japan; Japanese religions outside Japan; the classification and investigation of 'unnatural' death in England and Japan; and the anthropology of branding. Her chapter "The Corporate Brand: towards an anthropology of branding" appears in Nakamaki et al. (eds.) 2016.

Tamasin Ramsay is an independent scholar and applied anthropologist with a specific expertise in the Brahma Kumaris. From 2010-2015 she was NGO Representative to the United Nations (New York) for the Brahma Kumaris and is a special advisor to the Brahma Kumaris Environment Initiative. Ramsay has undertaken significant historical and anthropological research within the Brahma Kumaris, which can be seen at brahmakumarisresearch.org. Her most recent publication is the entry on 'Brahma Kumaris' in the *Oxford Bibliographies in Hinduism. (2017)*

Section 1

Theoretical Approaches

2 Globalization and the Marketing Strategies of Japanese New Religions Abroad with Special Reference to Brazil, Africa and Thailand

Peter Clarke (1940-2011)[1]

Abstract

This chapter discusses the following themes: i) The complex motivating factors behind the globalization of Japanese new religious movements (JNRMs). Motivational factors changed over time; those of the pre-World War II era differing substantially from those of the postwar period to the present. ii) The aims/goals of globalization. These again changed over time. iii) Marketing strategies of the globalization era. In some cases a Japanese blueprint was/is followed, in others situational logic and reflexive modes of syncretism greatly influenced the making of these strategies. iv) The issue of sustainability, which arises for many reasons, including the principle of permitting multiple memberships which movements have adopted, some reluctantly like Sōka Gakkai. Furthermore, many JNRMs lack important instruments for the transmission of their teachings and values, such as rites of passage, and institutions such as schools, clinics, hospitals and leisure facilities on which socially integrated and dynamic communities are built. v) The influence of JNRMs on the course, form and content of the process of globalization.

Keywords: Japanese new religious movements, motivation, marketing strategies, syncretism, Sekai Kyūsei Kyō, *jōrei*, sustainability

---

1   Editor's note: Professor Peter B. Clarke, who passed away in June 2011, completed this manuscript on 4 October 2009.

The multi-directional face of modern globalization

Globalization is envisioned here as multi-directional. For some time now globalization in its various forms, including its economic, cultural and religious forms (Clarke 2000), has been moving in all directions perhaps most noticeably from East to West, rather than from the West to the rest of the world, as was once largely the case. Some have argued this is profoundly modifying the ethos and worldview of the latter (Campbell 1999) and, it may be added, the way we think of and define religion.

Moreover, in the contemporary world the boundaries of religions, notwithstanding the attempts made by their officials and spokespersons in the past decade to police them more efficiently, are noticeably much more porous than was the case only 50 years ago. This change is due as much as anything else to the developments in information technology and communications, large scale economic migration and the new forms of religious pluralism that have emerged as a result of these developments. Thus, although the labels Western/Occidental and Eastern/Oriental, or African or Middle Eastern are still sometimes applied to religions, these labels are becoming increasingly obsolete. The silent revolution occurring in Muslim communities in the West (Ramadan 2004: 4) can also be said to be happening in Buddhism, Hinduism and Jainism there. What we are also seeing, almost inevitably, across all the religions as a response to the erosion of the old boundaries and traditional points of reference, are passionate affirmations of identity, which include a return to traditional ways of thinking and acting. This natural reaction notwithstanding, the new global context and the forces that fashion it, are not only making it increasingly less meaningful to define religions as Eastern/Oriental or Occidental/Western, but are also leading to greater structural similarity and similarity of aims among religions as the issue of environmental conservation comes increasingly to preoccupy and challenge them all to focus on saving the planet.

The end of religious geography, so to speak, is accompanied by greater religious pluralism in a form unlike anything ever previously witnessed anywhere. Whereas pluralism from within the same religious tradition was once the norm, what is now being experienced almost everywhere is both intra and inter religious pluralism on an unprecedented scale. Simultaneously, there has been and continues to be a reversal in the outlook and response to the world of the religions. While religions traditionally associated with Asia and the East, once regarded as non-proselytizing, have adopted in recent times a more directly and unmistakably missionary character, mainstream Christianity in much of the West, once strongly missionary in

both a theological and geographical sense, has become much less committed to active, undisguised evangelization.

Such a change suggests that the new missionary zeal and universalism evident in Japanese religions and other religions of Asian origin, now expanding globally, are linked to economic and political interests, providing the 'soft' side to the more functional, pragmatic, profit making and profane aspects of economic and commercial expansion. The question arises as to whether these new 'religious' movements of Asian origin are not more than just religions. Would they not be better understood if they were seen not solely or strictly as religions, but as composite movements with religious, commercial, cultural and political aspirations?

I will return to this question later in the chapter, while making the point that Japanese new religious movements (JNRMs) and other Asian and religions of Muslim and African origin might be better understood if seen as world affirming, socially engaged religions, that eschew purely spiritual, other worldly notions of religion. Many of the new Asian religions – but not all if we include such movements as the Indian derived Brahma Kumaris movement – transcend the traditional divide between religion, economic and commercial organizations. Some, including several JNRMs, promote commercial activity and political engagement. This is also a feature of new Muslim movements some of which have not only been the mainstay of the local economy but have also played a key role in enlarging economies and in generating considerable wealth for their communities. As an example, one can cite the pivotal role played by the Senegalese Muslim movement, the Murid Brotherhood, in transport and the groundnut economy of Senegal. The founder of this movement, Shaykh Ahmadu Bamba (1851-1927), insisted that true prayer consisted of work and more work in the fields with the aim of producing an ever-larger groundnut crop. Dharma Master Cheng Yen (1937-) of the Taiwanese Buddhist Tzu Chi [Compassion and Truth] movement preaches a similar message, limiting as she does the practice of meditation to twice a day.

Other modern or new religions espouse one or other version of what is known as Prosperity Theology which in essence teaches that true conversion to Jesus or his equivalent brings with it financial and economic security. Some believe this teaching to be the antithesis of the teaching of the Christian Gospels and of all true religion, which, it is claimed, is uniquely concerned with spiritual matters. How religions understand the nature and purpose of religion does influence their missionary strategies and how they market themselves.

Through their activities in Brazil, Africa, Thailand, Europe and North America, over the past 50 years JNRMs have contributed greatly to changing

the course and the cultural, intellectual and religious content of globalization. Further, they have introduced new management and marketing styles and a new business ethos abroad. Historically the global ambitions of a number of JNRMs can be linked – albeit not straightforwardly and unambiguously – to the economic and political goals of the modernization process begun under the Meiji and continued on under their successors the Taishō (1912-1946) and Shōwa (1926-1989) emperors. For example, Ōmoto (Great Origin) in the pre-WWII era conceived of its universalizing aims in national terms, even whilst not uncritical of the Imperial House of Japan. This was illustrated in 1924 when Deguchi Onisaburō (1871-1948), believing himself to be the Saviour of Asia, led his 'spiritual army' into Mongolia.

As with other JNRMs, Ōmoto underwent a profound ideological shift after WWII. Since then this movement, like so many other JNRMs, has been an indefatigable opponent of war and a leading champion of peace. There are many illustrations of this profound change in the worldview of Ōmoto post-WWII. In 1960, for example, this movement spearheaded a campaign to ban atomic and hydrogen bombs, and in the process collected the signatures of over 7.5 million protesters. Moreover, like Tenrikyō [Heavenly Wisdom], Ōmoto has consistently engaged in and facilitated religious dialogue with Christianity, Islam and other World Religions.

Since WWII several JNRMs have made pacifism a core element of their global mission (Kisala 1999). However, not all have or have ever had a clearly defined global mission. Some movements have shown little desire to become global in the sense of adapting their teachings and practices to local non-Japanese cultures preferring instead to establish Japanese religion and culture abroad. Conversely, neo-syncretism and/or reflexive syncretism is a marked feature of other JNRMs in the Brazilian context as it is in those of Africa (Angola, Mozambique and South Africa) and Thailand (Clarke 2006a). I now discuss the expansion and marketing of JNRMs in each of these contexts in turn.

The expansion of JNRMs to Brazil, Africa and Thailand

Brazil: from ethnic to universal religions (c. 1908-1965)

The first Japanese immigrants to Brazil set out from Kobe in Japan on 28 April 1908 on the Kasato-maru and arrived at the port of Santos in the state of São Paulo on 18 June 1908 (Handa 1980). They numbered 782 individuals or 170 'family' units who had signed a three-year contract with

the Imperial Colonization Company (ICC) (Japanese: *Kōkoku Shokumin Gaisha*; Portuguese: *Companhia Imperial de Colonização*) to work on the coffee plantations of São Paulo. The president of the ICC at the time was a Mr. Ryō Mizuno who in 1906 had signed an agreement with the Secretary of Agriculture of São Paulo to provide him with three thousand Japanese agricultural labourers for the plantations. One of the first places to which Mizuno turned for recruits was the Seiyuji temple in Tokyo which belonged to the Honmon Butsuryū-shū, the first of the modern lay Japanese Nichiren Buddhist movements, and forerunner of the Nichiren Buddhist lay movements such as Reiyūkai, Risshō Kōseikai and Sōka Gakkai.

Among those whom Mizuno enlisted from this temple was Tomojirō Ibaragi (1886-1971) who at the time felt a strong desire to go to Brazil as a Buddhist missionary. However, this was not possible due to a clause in the contract between the ICC and the Brazilian authorities, which stated that no immigrant could travel either as a single person or as a priest (Nakamaki 2003). Ibaragi quickly constructed a family, firstly by requesting Shintarō his fourteen-year-old brother, of a different father from his own, and still at school, to accompany him to Brazil. Next, through the Seiyuji temple he was introduced to Chiyo Yasumira, seven years his senior, who agreed to be his wife. In this way Ibaragi complied with the conditions of the contract of employment in Brazil and later, after moving from one coffee plantation to another, he began to fulfil his original purpose for going to Brazil which was to spread the Honmon Butsuryū-shū version of Nichiren Buddhism (Nakamaki 2003). Tenrikyō and Ōmoto followed in the 1920s and while the former retained its Japanese identity, the latter gradually took on a pronounced spiritualist character to such a degree so that by the 1960s it was difficult to distinguish between Ōmoto and Spiritualism (Maeyama 1983)

Japanese religion in Brazil in the pre-WWII era and even later was informal and makeshift in character. What gave it a semblance of form and substance was the cult of the Emperor which was practised mainly through the school system. This 'civil religion' provided the social cement of what was, contrary to the popular stereotype of it, a heterogeneous Japanese immigrant community. As Maeyama (1983: 185) explained:

> The communities were unlike their Japanese equivalents in that the common feeling of and binding forces among the members were not derived from kin and residential ties of long standing, but from shared ethnicity. The only transcendent figure of worship was the Emperor. For the Japanese in Brazil the Emperor of Japan became the tutelary deity (*uji-gami*) in the broadest sense; in most local Japanese communities

'Emperor worship' compensated for the absence of *uji-gami* and ancestor
worship of the more ordinary sort, serving the same function of social
integration.

The mission of those JNRMs that arrived in Brazil prior to the 1960s was to
serve the spiritual and cultural needs of the Japanese communities; a mission
that was in part imposed upon them by the Brazilian situation which did
not allow them to proselytize among non-Japanese. It was in the mid to
late 1960s that JNRMs began to turn their attention to the wider Brazilian
society, a shift in focus that came about for several reasons, one of the most
important of which was that the Japanese communities were becoming
more multi-ethnic through increasing numbers of out-marriages, among
the third and fourth generations in particular. Another was the increase
in the numbers of those who were entering mainstream Brazilian life as
professionals. The vast majority, even of the older members of the Japanese
population in Brazil, had already decided by the 1960s that Brazil – not
Japan – was their homeland, the place their soul would remain after death.
Few now spoke as they used to before WWII of death in Brazil as 'death in
a foreign land' (Maeyama 1983):

> This revolution in the way the Japanese and their descendants in Brazil
> thought of their presence in that country was accompanied by a decline in
> interest towards Japanese culture including the Japanese language. Many
> of the young had only a technical grasp of Japanese and were unable to use
> it to express their thoughts or emotions (Field Notes, Brazil, August 1991).

Furthermore, Japanese immigration to Brazil had almost dried up by the
early 1960s, which meant that if JNRMs were to expand they were going to
have to engage with and appeal to non-Japanese Brazilians. This was the
route several of them adopted in the 1960s. By the mid-1970s the membership
of movements such as Seichō-no-Ie and Sekai Kyūsei Kyō (SKK), both of
which were established in 1950s Brazil, had grown and changed. In the early
1960s they grew from no more than a few thousand members, over 90 percent
of whom were of Japanese origin in the early 1960s, to a membership of
hundreds of thousand by the late 1980s, over 90 percent of whom were
Brazilian of non-Japanese origin.

Although most of the JNRMs in Brazil had re-invented themselves as
multi-ethnic, universal religions, by the late 1980s their social base was
and continues to be relatively narrow, the vast majority of their members
coming from the middle classes. This results in their being identified with

one particular class and may explain at least in part why almost all of the more than thirty JNRMs in Brazil are in decline.

Africa: the Japanese-Brazilian route to African-Brazilian roots

There are relatively few JNRMs in sub-Saharan Africa and among those present there are Tenrikyō, Sōka Gakkai and SKK. The focus here is on the development of SKK in Angola, Mozambique and South Africa (Clarke 2006). Most of the staff and/or missionaries who have been laying the foundations of SKK in all three countries are African-Brazilian and are under the direction of an African-Brazilian senior member of SKK, the Reverend Francisco Fernandes de Jesus. The latter, a well know former footballer with the famous Rio de Janeiro football team Fluminense, and also once a member of the Brazilian national football squad, launched SKK in Angola, Mozambique and South Africa. Part of the SKK mission strategy in its early years in Brazil and elsewhere was to attract well known personalities and in this way, to defend itself from attack, and from being dismissed by the host society as 'Japanese black magic', and to draw people to the movement through these social icons and celebrities.

Angola

SKK arrived in Angola at the request of an Angolan teacher who, while on a visit to Brazil, read the movement's 'bible' called 'Foundations of Paradise', a book that has attracted many to SKK. Reverend Francisco responded and within a few years of the request being made SKK began its African mission in the Macalusso district of Luanda, capital of Angola. This was in the early 1990s and by the time I undertook research on its development in that country in 2002 there were twelve *Jōrei* centres[2] and 40 *Jōrei* points dotted across the city of Luanda, while the membership was estimated at around eight thousand. By 2006 there were sixteen centres, four hundred points of *Jōrei*, and an estimated 20,000 members. By 2009 I was informed that the membership had reached around eighty thousand, and missionaries were being sent out from Angola to several other African countries including the

2   Editor's note: *Jōrei* Centre – a place to give and receive the transference of divine light [*jōrei*], a central feature of the SKK organization, a '[...] healing ritual which consists of the transmission of divine light. *Jōrei* is administered by a member who, wearing an amulet or *ohikari*, raises the palm of his/her hand over the recipient, who may or may not be a believer, and imparts to her/him the divine light of healing'. (Clarke 2006: 516)

Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mozambique, and South Africa. *Jōrei* is the principal tool of evangelization and closely associated with it are ceremonies held at prominent locations including the Cine de São Paulo, a large cinema/theatre close to the centre of Luanda, during which testimonies of healing are given in the presence of large crowds. A *solo sagrado* [sacred or holy ground] is in the process of being constructed and will provide the location for these and for all the major ceremonies.

When I carried out research in various *Jōrei* centres and and *Jōrei* points in Luanda in 2002, the majority of the membership was middle class – teachers, nurses, doctors. There were also a significant number of unemployed and poor. Most people were between the ages of 35 and 50 and, as always, the majority were women. Members came from a variety of religious backgrounds including Catholicism, Jehovah's Witnesses, the Church of the Blacks, Kimbanguism and the Christian Rationalist Church. In Angola, as in Brazil, Thailand and elsewhere SKK has made important contacts with people in high places including the military.

Most of those whom I interviewed turned to SKK in the hope that *jōrei* would provide a solution to their health problems that included impotency, diabetes, prostate cancer, fistula, stroke and epilepsy. Displays of cures through *jōrei* were given at the Cine de São Paulo on Sunday mornings and during my visit Reverend Francisco Fernandes emphasized during his address that the cures we were witnessing were not to be regarded as miracles but rather as the result of the operation of natural forces that could be scientifically observed. I understood him to mean that the effects of *jōrei* could be scientifically demonstrated. He also insisted that membership of SKK was the path to improvement, to education, study abroad and other benefits.

While these benefits and the hope of healing brought many to SKK, others were impressed by the movement's philosophy, some insisting in interviews that this was much more important than healing.

Missionaries in Angola are driven by spiritual and cultural motives. SKK's principal missionary in Angola, the African Brazilian Claudio Pinheiro, confided to me that he had no other ambition in life than to stay and work in Angola, or some other part of Africa for the rest of his life. It is by being a missionary with SKK, a Japanese movement, that he has discovered his African identity and heritage. SKK, he believes, has given him the opportunity not only to discover his own African ancestry but also to make reparation for his forebears who participated in the horrors of the slave trade that, he believes, was responsible for his 'exile' in Brazil. This sentiment is shared by other African Brazilian missionaries of SKK

including those whom I interviewed in Mozambique and South Africa, and is not totally unlike the rationalization given by some Black North American Christian missionaries for engaging in the Christianization of Liberia in the nineteenth century. The slave trade, they claimed, was permitted by God so that Africans could be Christianized in America and then return 'home' to save their fellow Africans.

Mozambique

As in the case of Angola, SKK came to Mozambique in the late 1990s at the request of a Mozambican, this time a student who had studied in Brazil. His request was supported by two friends in Mozambique, Krishna and Atish, both of Indian origin. In 2002 an African Brazilian missionary arrived in Maputo to establish SKK on a permanent basis and, as he explained to me, he immediately felt on arrival *en casa* [at home] (Field Notes, Maputo, August 2006). It was as if he had come back to his roots. He experienced no desire to return to Brazil. This was not a rejection of Brazil but an experience of self-discovery.

The total membership of SKK in Mozambique in 2006 (the time of my last research trip there) was estimated to be around 2000. There were people from the Muslim, Christian (Catholic and Protestant) and Hindu faiths. Today[3] there are approximately 6000 members; the majority of them well educated professional women between the ages of 25 and 40. Once again, as in Angola, most people have initially been attracted to *jōrei* for healing purposes, but eventually came to regard *jōrei* as more about developing a deeper, inner spiritual life than as a means of curing physical ailments. It is also seen as having an altruistic purpose, as a way of reaching out to others. Visiting the local hospitals on a Saturday afternoon and distributing flowers to the sick and administering *jōrei* to them is one way in which this altruism is expressed.

South Africa

The progress of SKK in South Africa has been much slower than in either Angola or Mozambique. After almost 20 years of missionary activity by SKK in South Africa there are no more than 250 members and many of these immigrants are from other African countries including Sao Tome and Principe, Angola, Mozambique and the Cameroons. One of the main

---

3   Editor's note: In 2009, when Clarke wrote this chapter.

obstacles to SKK's development in South Africa is its image. In the mind of the local people it lacks the principal characteristics associated with a church which, to be authentic, must have Jesus at its centre. By way of contrast, SKK preaches that its founder, Mokichi Okada (1885-1955), known as *Meishu Sama* [enlightened spiritual leader], is the saviour of the world, and symbolically gives him the central position on the wall at the back of the altar.

> People pass by the *Jōrei* centre situated on one of the main streets of Pretoria, are invited in, and when they find no evidence of what they consider to be a church, most move on quickly (Field Notes, Pretoria, August and September 2006).

SKK's chances of attracting more members in South Africa are also reduced by the fears people have about leaving their present church to join a 'foreign' one. Some ask, 'Who will attend my funeral?' This is a vitally important question in a society in which a proper funeral attended by one's kin is essential for a full and happy life as an ancestor. There is also the problem of language.

> A knowledge of the local language whether Xhosa, Zulu or Swazi, is seemingly vital to belonging in South African society. However, efforts are being made by SKK to adapt, and become more church-like, including making greater use of the New Testament, especially Chapter 16 of St Mark's gospel[4] to justify their presence there (Field Notes, Pretoria, August and September 2006).

These obstacles to progress notwithstanding, the African-Brazilian missionaries in South Africa, like their colleagues in Angola and Mozambique, are firmly convinced that they have been entrusted with the same mission as their colleagues, which is to accumulate the merit necessary to redeem those of their ancestors who participated in the slave trade and were in part responsible for their long exile outside of Africa. Their accumulation of merit is through the dissemination of *Jōrei* in Africa.

Thailand and SKK: from 'quick fix' to 'modern' Buddhism

SKK has been present in Thailand since the early 1960s. In the past ten years Thailand has become the largest SKK mission in the world outside Japan

---

4   Editor's note: St. Mark Ch. 16, vs. 12-20 makes reference to the casting out of devils, the speaking with new tongues and the laying on of hands, that the sick shall recover.

with a membership estimated at over 600,000. The movement's headquarters are situated close to the town of Saraburi 130 kilometres to the Northeast of Bangkok. The SKK Thai model of paradise on earth; its holy ground[5] with gardens replete with orchids, azaleas and other exotic flowers, hedges and plants, and a pond teeming with Japanese cod fish, is situated a little further northeast in the Khao Yai mountain range and forest reserve. A *Tsukinami Sai* [monthly ceremony] is held there on the first weekend of every month at which the President of SKK Thailand, the Reverend Mr. Kasahara, presides. The President has four deputies all of whom are Thai women. The last time I attended this ceremony was 7 and 8 October 2006 when an estimated 13,200 members had gathered, many from Chiang Mai and Bangkok. SKK has attracted many influential Thai, including army generals, senior level bankers and managers of large companies. There is effective and large-scale collaboration between SKK and the Thai army in the field of *shizen nōhō* [nature farming].

What follows regarding the marketing strategy of SKK in Thailand is based on a series of interviews I had with Mr. Kasahara and with members of SKK in Bangkok, Nakhon Ratchasima and Chiang Mai during my research in Thailand which has been ongoing since 2000. My last research visit was in June 2007.

> From its beginnings under the leadership of Mr. Wakigumi until the mid to late 1970s SKK enjoyed little success in Thailand. The present leader Mr. Kasahara joined Mr. Wakigumi in 1968 and began his mission activity in a Bangkok slum known as Sapan Kway, which is now part of the Pahon Yotin Road near the Victory monument. After two years of proselytizing he managed to attract only five people, and the main obstacle to growth, he believes, was his inability to speak Thai which resulted in his inability to explain the philosophy underlying the practice of *jōrei*. Thus, he explains, the Thai saw *jōrei* as no more than a quick fix. He recalls them saying 'yes please' when asked if they wanted to receive *jōrei* and then whether they were healed or remained sick they would say 'bye, bye' (Field Notes, Saraburi, October 2007).

Supernatural dreams and visions have played and continue to play a central role in the origins and success of JNRMs and indeed of many religions and

---

5   Editor's note: SKK creates beautiful gardens in association with their headquarters and major centres, based on the founder, Mokichi Okada's philosophy of raising one's spiritual level through cultivating appreciation of natural beauty.

this was the case of SKK in Thailand. In 1977 the first head of the SKK mission in Thailand, the previously mentioned Mr. Wakigumi, received a vision from the founder of the movement Mokichi Okada, formerly known as *Meishu Sama*. In this vision, he was told that SKK must build a solid foundation in Thailand and from there branch out throughout the rest of Asia. This vision renewed the determinism of Wakigumi and others to succeed and in a relatively short period of time the membership of the *Jōrei* centre in Bangkok reached three hundred.

Mr. Kasahara is convinced that the ability to instruct members about the teachings of SKK in Thai through the introduction of study groups and *hōshi* or voluntary work were vitally important in achieving and consolidating growth. Where the dissemination of SKK teaching is concerned, Mr. Kasahara's approach would seem to contradict the general principle that for success in a new environment a religion usually needs to display considerable cultural continuity with the host culture. To introduce teachings that are radically new to a culture, usually undermines success (Stark 1996) since they require the abandonment of fundamental features in terms of beliefs and the cultural and moral capital of the host culture.

SKK in the predominantly Buddhist Thailand would appear to be an exception to this general principle. For Mr. Kasahara, its president, insists in his teachings that the truths of Jesus are the truths of *Meishu Sama*. One of the most important sources of his teaching is the New Testament which he reads every day and his favourite passages therein are Matthew Chapter 4 (The Temptations of Jesus in the Desert), Matthew Chapter 5 (The Sermon on the Mount) and John Chapter 9 (The Man Born Blind).

Kasahara's rationale for taking the approach he does is that 70 per cent of the teachings of *Meishu Sama* came from Christ and that the purpose of SKK is to prove the teachings of Christ. This is hardly an example of cultural continuity and must seem to the Thai listener strange talk in a Buddhist land where out of some 60 million people there are at most one million Christians. In his address or sermon at the Monthly Ceremony on 6 October 2006 Mr. Kasahara made great use of the New Testament causing one Thai non-member attending the ceremony for the first time to wonder why he spoke so little about Buddhism, which she believed, would be easier for people to understand. This individual surmised: 'Maybe his strategy is to offer people something new, a new understanding of love, of giving, a more modern, Western outlook'.

The actual liturgical celebration was also far removed from Thai culture. Not only was the content of Mr. Kasahara's address Christian but the rest of the ceremony, and the setting, was Japanese down to the last detail even

though he spoke in Thai. As explained below, the content, purpose and practice of Nature Farming as explained by a Thai member of SKK provides an understanding of world salvation more in keeping with Mahayana and Theravada Buddhist understandings than that found in Mr. Kasahara's speeches and sermons.

Saraburi: Nature farming [*shizen nōhō*] as spiritual techniques for world salvation

Individual healing and the healing of the planet are interdependent according to SKK philosophy. A strongly millenarian movement, SKK's primary concern is the transformation of the world and that means the creation of a world not only without sickness but also without poverty and crime as well. All three of these conditions are interlinked and there is a particularly strong link between achieving these goals and the practice of *shizen nōhō*. As illustrated below, the SKK understanding of *shizen* shares something in common with that of the philosopher Nishitani Keiji (1900-1990) who described it as a moral force that takes humanity back to its original and authentic mental state. Furthermore, Nishitani Keiji's understanding of the concept seems to imply that its meaning also relates to the origin of human existence and has a dynamic aspect to it. He writes, for example, about a person *growing in shizen* (italics mine) (Saitō 2006).

Most of the training in *shizen nōhō* takes place at the sacred grounds at Saraburi. The movement has also initiated training projects in *shizen nōhō* across Thailand and indeed across all of Southeast Asia including Cambodia, Laos and Indonesia. Trainees come from diverse backgrounds including former soldiers of Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge army and hundreds of thousands of ordinary Thai farmers, teachers, police, doctors and local government officials. An estimated 60,000 trainees pass through the Nature Farming Institute at Saraburi each year. There are also interns from as far afield as Ecuador and Central America. In addition to the provision of in house training programmes (a three-day course costs 300 baht or USD10), these programmes are also organized in schools, universities, and hotels among other places where sustainable agriculture, wastewater management, and the recycling of kitchen waste are taught, as is the use of Effective Microorganisms (EMs) as opposed to chemical fertilizers.

One attraction of these courses, particularly for the poorer farmers of the Northeast of Thailand (Isan) and Laos, is the savings that can be made by changing to Nature Farming. The director of the Nature Farming at

Saraburi claims that costs can be reduced by up to 40 percent especially in rice farming. The savings come mainly from the use of EMs, from the higher yield and the improved health of the farmers (Field Notes, Saraburi, October 2006).

SKK is keen to give to all its activities spiritual legitimacy. It stresses, for example, that there is a profound difference between Nature Farming and Organic Farming. According to the Director of Nature Farming Institute at Saraburi, Mr. Kanit: 'It (Nature Farming) is a way of promoting a way of life and at the same time the philosophy of *Meishu Sama*' (Field Notes, Saraburi, October 2006.) This includes inculcating altruism and/or concern for others, social harmony, sustainability, concern for the eco-system and the environment. Kanit explains further: 'It is also the way to save the world since it is the way to respect the laws of Nature, which is the *Jōrei* concept that comes closest to the idea of God found in certain other religions'. (Field Notes, Saraburi, October 2006). Organic farming is different, then, from Nature Farming in that it has no spiritual dimension and consists essentially in the non-use of chemicals. Thus, the claim made by SKK for Nature Farming is that it not only cuts costs, preserves the structure of the soil, and benefits in specific ways and generally the environment, but also has the advantage over organic farming of offering a spiritual approach which is indispensable if the world is to be transformed. Mr. Kanit teaches his students that 'Nature farming is grounded in *jōrei* and aims at changing people's hearts and minds, and instilling in them an awareness of their duty to humanity'. Moreover, Kanit believes that 'To do Nature Farming one must give 'love' to the tree or vegetable etcetera, and one must establish a good spiritual relationship with the soil'. To practise Nature Farming effectively and correctly, then, one must acquire the mind of the ideal monk, which is clean, purified and spiritual (Field Notes, Saraburi, October 2006).

Bangkok: Jōrei as applied Buddhism

There are several *Kyōkai* or *Jōrei* centres in Bangkok and the social composition of these differs from that in other parts of Thailand and from that of Nakhon Ratchasima (see below) in particular.

The Bangkok membership includes business managers, professors, engineers, doctors, female flight attendants, and army generals most of whom are retired. The person with overall responsibility for Bangkok is a woman and she is also the vice-President of *Jōrei* Thailand. Of the

estimated 100,000 SKK members in Bangkok 70 to 80 per cent are women. 'Men', one male member suggested 'find it difficult to believe in miracles, and a husband will only come when he sees his wife change' (Field Notes, Bangkok, October 2006).

Most of the members interviewed initially joined to find a cure for a specific illness, or because they had met someone who was ill and had been cured through *jōrei*. A female flight attendant, Oie, for example, became a member in 2001 when, while on a flight from Copenhagen to Bangkok, she witnessed a *jōrei* healing of an elderly man with a stroke. A further benefit derived from *jōrei* was the removal of an obstacle to building a house on her father's land. But like others Oie did not understand miracles only in terms of physical healing or the removal of obstacles. She and other members were anxious to stress that miracles consisted of two types – remedying illness and changing minds from selfish to altruistic.

> Altruism takes many forms including the merit-making ceremony of *tam bun* for unborn children; a practice that many married couples who have lost children in the womb find brings happiness and harmony (Field Notes, Bangkok, October 2006).

SKK is a form of applied or engaged Buddhism, Adjan Chantana, a very senior member of SKK in Bangkok explained.

> The difference between being a monk and being a *jōrei* practitioner, she believed, was this: *jōrei* enables the practitioner to help others. In the view of Adjan Perua head of the Bangkok *Jōrei* centres and deputy president of *Jōrei* Thailand believes that *jōrei* makes possible the practice of *karuna* [compassion], *metta* [loving kindness], *mudita* [sympathetic or altruistic joy] and *upekkha* [equanimity, neutrality, poise]. *Jōrei* as applied/engaged Buddhism is also an important part of its appeal in Sri Lanka, where more than five hundred Buddhist temples employ *jōrei* explaining that it has nothing to do with Buddhist philosophy but is simply a technique or practice that has positive benefits for people (Field Notes, Bangkok, October 2006).

It is worth noting that few if any of the Thai members interviewed in the Bangkok *Jōrei* centres follow President Kasahara in making comparisons between Buddhism and Christianity. To hear it defined as applied/engaged Buddhism is much more common.

Nakhon Ratchasima: Jōrei as the path to the future Buddha (Maitreya)

Yet another Thai perspective on SKK is found in Nakhon Ratchsima, or Khorat as it more widely known among the local people. This city, situated 259 kilometres by road from Bangkok, is the second largest city in Thailand and is the capital of one of the poorest of the country's 72 provinces. The Northeast region as a whole – Thailand's major rice producing area which includes provinces such as Buriram, Si Saket, Ubon Ratchathani and Surin – is the poorest part of the country in every respect.

Members of the *Jōrei* centre at Nakhon Ratchasima defined SKK as *parsihan mettrai* [the path of the future Buddha]. While the leadership of the *Jōrei* movement in Nakhon Province is middle class, most of the ordinary members are from farming villages. In Nakhon Ratchasima province access to medical services is more difficult than elsewhere – there is only one doctor for more than 20,000 patients, while in Bangkok it is one doctor for just under one thousand patients. Many of those who frequent the Nakhon centre for *Jōrei* are in search of cures for specific illnesses or because they have a migraine or are '*mai sabai*' – not feeling well. But not all; Ning, for example, a 25-year-old lady with her left arm amputated from the elbow said that after visiting the centre six months prior (January 2006) she had begun to experience happiness and tranquillity, and that was the principal reason why she attended.

There were 30,000 members in Nakhon Ratchasima, and some 100,000 in the Northeast, in October 2006. On previous occasions, I also visited a number of centres in the Northeast including Ubon Ratchathani where I assisted at a Nature Farming training programme that was organized jointly by SKK and the Thai army. I assisted at another in the very old Thai village of Kawao in Buriram province, Thailand's poorest province. It is a rice-farming province and as in Nakhon Ratchasima province, the strongest attraction after *jōrei* itself for the people, most of whom are farmers, is *shizen nōhō* or organic farming, which is said to cut the cost of agriculture.

Chiang Mai: SKK as the 'new' Buddhism

Once again in Chiang Mai we see a new face of SKK, described to me by many members as the 'new' Buddhism. The Thai members of the Chiang Mai branch of SKK were for mostly professional people and many of them gave their time doing *lungkhaek* (voluntary work) [Jap: *hōshi*] in the community mainly in teaching and administration. It was the non-professionals who carried out the manual voluntary work. *Shizen nōhō* is implemented by

instructors going out from the headquarters in Chiang Mai to teach the farmers in the rural areas, and measure their progress.

Many reasons are given for being an SKK member in Thailand. Most members in Chiang Mai continue to identify as Buddhist and it is interesting to note that they regard SKK which is liturgically Shinto as Buddhist. Some members have clearly decided to reinterpret what it means to be Buddhist in ways that do not reflect traditional Theravada Buddhist views on this subject. What we see happening in Thailand is a shift towards Mahayana Buddhism with a particular emphasis on its millenarian dimension.

> When asked if he is still a Buddhist, Mr. Suwit, a senior member of the Chiang Mai branch and an instructor replied: 'Of course. *Meishu Sama*'s teachings are the same as the Buddha's'. He continued: 'He is the first man to be able to deal with God and make people happy through his intercession with God'. Then when asked: 'Who or what is God?' He replied: 'God is the next Buddha, *parsihan* [Maitreya]'. (Field Notes, Chiang Mai, October 2006).

In Chiang Mai *jōrei* is the main instrument of recruitment but in Thailand as elsewhere the search for physical and emotional healing changes its character becoming a more spiritual quest and one that eventually sees in altruism the path to individual and world salvation.

While belief in SKK as the path to *parsihan* [Maitreya] is strong among members of the Chiang Mai *Jōrei* centres and in this respect, there is a close resemblance in worldview between the SKK of Chiang Mai and that found in Nakhon Ratchasima, there is also in Chiang Mai much more emphasis on SKK as a new form of Buddhism, in the sense of a Buddhism that is concerned above all else with compassion and involvement in the life of society. The Chiang Mai understanding of SKK as a new form of Buddhism also resembles that found in Bangkok. It is worth speculating whether involvement in SKK and other JNRMs in Thailand might not be part of a more general trend away from Theravada Buddhism in Thailand towards the more active and altruistic tradition of Mahayana Buddhism. There are many other examples globally of this trend towards greater social engagement through the medium of religion.

Summary of marketing strategies employed in Brazil, Africa, and Thailand

Confining the discussion to JNRMs active in Brazil, Africa, and Thailand the main instruments of expansion have been already been mentioned. Some

of the most effective have been the traditional methods of evangelization and include the day-to-day task of door-to-door campaigning and the dissemination of literature. Action alone has not brought success. Beliefs and theologies have also been crucial, as have the capacity and willingness of a religion to adapt to local culture. Where there has been either too little or too much adaptation there has been little growth. Healing rituals, the use of other supernatural experiences such as dreams and visions, the development of techniques that involve self-empowerment, idealistic and inspirational planning for the future, and charisma have also played a crucial role in expansion, as has the effective use of information technology.

In the Brazilian, African and Thai contexts the highly inspirational belief advanced by JNRMs that world transformation is possible by human effort generates impressive levels of commitment and voluntary social engagement in projects such as the construction of holy grounds. It also motivates and gives cohesion and solidarity to movements, as do collective events such as the monthly gatherings at these holy grounds and the celebration of such festivals for the ancestors. Education including seminars on the teachings of the founder of a movement, workshops on ikebana or flower arranging, calligraphy, Nature Farming, scripture – which includes in the case of Seichō-no-Ie the Christian Gospels – on life issues, urban living, employment and family living – prominent instruments of PLK missionary activity (Nakamaki 2003: 172-182) – have all been important in the development of JNRMs in the countries discussed in this chapter.

JNRMs have inserted themselves with considerable tact and diplomacy into Brazilian, African and Thai society, seeking wherever possible to avoid competition and conflict with the existing, mainstream religions. At the same time, they strive to heighten their visibility and make an impact at the local and national level through engagement in high profile social activities which include litter management in public spaces such as the parks or public squares of Brazil's major cities. Visiting the sick in hospitals and distributing flowers to every home throughout the country for a better world have proved to be highly successful missionary methods.

Centre-periphery relations play a crucial role in marketing strategy which can be a complex and potentially divisive activity and provide reasons for dissent and even splintering. Often the principal leadership in Japan needs to display considerable ability at handling initiatives and developments in locations outside Japan, and considerable charisma. In some instances, the voice of Japan is sacrosanct and, depending on the movement in question, that voice unceremoniously and unequivocally overrides the view of the leadership on the spot creating alienation and disaffection. In other cases,

the voice from the centre is perceived as confused or contradictory, leaving the local membership disoriented. There is evidence of all of this, albeit to a greater or lesser degree, in several of the JNRMs operating in Brazil, Thailand and Africa.

As Inoue has pointed out (1991; 2000) one of the principal distinguishing feature of JNRMs is their strategy of neo-syncretism, or as it is sometimes referred to 'reflexive syncretism'. Neo-syncretism is a widely used method by JNRMs in Brazil (Clarke 2006), Africa, Thailand and elsewhere. As I have attempted to show, this strategy takes a variety of forms in these countries including the use of Christian scriptures as a means of engaging with potential members. This occurs not only where one might expect it to occur, for example in predominantly Christian cultures such as Brazil, Angola, South Africa and Mozambique, but also in a predominantly Buddhist country such as Thailand. What JNRMs mostly lack are well-established means of socialization and internalization of the beliefs, values and culture. These include rites of passage, institutions and organizations such as schools, clinics, hospitals and leisure facilities on which socially integrated and dynamic communities are built. The absence of these facilities and means makes it difficult to define what exactly it means spiritually and socially to be a member of a JNRM.

JNRMs religions or commercial and cultural enterprises?

Theology and/or spirituality are crucial to both the immediate and long-term success of any religion. As we have seen in the case of SKK in Thailand and elsewhere, every instrument of expansion is seen as essentially spiritual including such activities as Nature Farming. Even the idea of the 'Japanese miracle' which attracts many and which consists of the country's phoenix-like rise from the ashes of WWII has a spiritual aspect to it, and might be termed a religious idea. Many in Africa and the developing world believe that the experience Japan has gained by overcoming so successfully the devastation of WWII makes it the ideal instrument for world transformation.

This notwithstanding, other observers have suggested that JNRMs are essentially hedonistic (Wilson 1979) and world affirming (Wallis 1984), with the implication that they offer little by way of spirituality as traditionally understood. It seems to me, however, that Shimazono in his various publications (1995; 2004) has a more nuanced understanding of these movements. If I am not mistaken he can be said to characterize them in some respects as 'anti-hedonistic'. I would support this view and my own preference would be to describe most JNRMs as world-transforming

movements. They could also be described as modern forms of utopianism that believe in the possibility of transforming human life from a life of suffering and limitation to one of unlimited happiness and fulfillment. This is a central theme of Ōmoto, SKK, Agonshū, and Kōfuku no Kagaku,[6] among other Japanese NRMs, and has been an important factor in the recruitment of large numbers of people to SKK in Brazil, Thailand, Angola and Mozambique and South Africa.

The way JNRMs and Asian religions are described raises the more general question of how we should define religion in the new global context. As is well known, there is no unanimity among students of religion as to what constitutes religion. Most would argue that religion has no essence, and that religions resemble each other in the way members of a family resemble each other (Clarke and Byrne 1993). This makes it difficult to state with any degree of certainty what counts as 'authentic', 'true', or 'genuine religion'. Elsewhere (Clarke 2009) I have argued for a more organic concept of religion and one that is grounded in a more global context. I believe that it may well be too idealistic to think of religions in purely religious or spiritual terms, whatever their cultural origins or mission statement. In the modern world, secular means and icons can be entry points to the world of religion and spirituality. Moreover, many modern forms of religion in the contemporary world might meaningfully be described as secular forms of religion.

Leaving aside modern developments consequent upon increasing and new forms of globalization, JNRMs would not be the first religions to espouse a form of religion that privileges both the spiritual and material. The Ismaili Khojas, a sect of Shi'ite Islam, makes no apologies for its positive approach to commerce and the market generally, one of its prayers affirming that 'money is holy' (Clarke 1976). In this respect, other examples are the Murids, which transformed the transport and the groundnut economy of Senegal, and the Taiwanese Buddhist Tzu Chi (Compassion and Truth) movement. Other movements widely accepted as religious, espouse one or another version of what is known as Prosperity Theology. In essence, this teaches that true conversion to Jesus or his equivalent brings with it financial and economic security, a teaching that some mainstream Christians believe to be the antithesis of the teaching of the Gospels and of all true religion.

---

6   Editor's note: see Clarke, P.B. (ed.) 2006 *Encyclopedia of New Religious Movements* Oxford: Routledge for a description of these JNRMs.

Conclusion

The new global context demands that scholars develop a more organic understanding of religion which would allow them to treat 'unfamiliar' and 'untraditional' forms of religion as manifestations of religion and/ or spirituality that have emerged as part of the new directions taken by the ongoing and ever-changing nature of the process of globalization. Japanese and other Asian NRMs including those of Korean, Chinese, Indian, Indonesian, Cambodian origin have been an integral part of this process of globalization which I have referred to as multi-directional globalization, since the early years of the twentieth century, and which from the 1950s have widened their international outreach to include Latin America, Africa and elsewhere (Clarke 2006b). While the inspiration and motivation for such expansion on a global scale over time have been variable and complex, and are in some measure linked to and reflect the rapid the new political and economic order, there can be little doubt about the impact of this outreach on the way the world is now beginning to think about, 'do' and propagate religion.

Works cited

Clarke, Peter B. 1976. "The Ismailis: A study of community." *British Journal of Sociology.* 27(4): 484-494.

—. 2006a. *New Religions in Global Perspective.* London: Routledge.

—, ed. 2006b. *Encyclopedia of New Religious Movements.* Oxford: Routledge

—. 2009. "Towards a more organic understanding of religion within a global framework." In *The Oxford Handbook of the Sociology of Religion,* edited by Peter B Clarke, 1-31. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Clarke, Peter B. and Peter Byrne. 1993. *Religion Defined and Explained.* Basingstoke/ London: MacMillan.

Handa Tomoo. 1980. *Memórias De Um Immigrante Japonês No Brasil.* São Paulo: T.A. Queiros Editora.

Inoue Nobutaka. 1991. "Recent trends in the study of Japanese new movements." In *New Religions,* edited by Inoue Nobutaka. Tokyo: Kokugakuin University.

—. (2000) *Contemporary Japanese Religion.* Tokyo: Foreign Press Centre.

Kisala, Robert. 1999. *Prophets of Peace. Pacifism and Cultural Identity in Japan's New Religions.* Hawaii: University of Hawaii Press.

Maeyama Takashi. 1983. "Japanese religions in southern Brazil: Change and syncretism." *Latin American Studies.* 6: 181-238.

Nakamaki Hirochika. 2003. *Japanese Religions at Home and Abroad*. London: Routledge and Curzon.

Ramadan, Tariq. 2004. *Western Muslims and the Future of Islam*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Saitō Takako. 2006. "The Meaning of Heaven According to Nishi Amane." In *Frontiers of Japanese Philosophy*, edited by James Heising, 1-22. Nagoya: Nanzan Institute for Religion and Culture.

Shimazono Susumu. 1995. "New, new religions and this world: Religious movements in Japan after the 1970s and their beliefs about salvation." *Social Compass* 42 (2): 193-205.

—. 2004. *From Salvation to Spirituality. Popular Religious Movements in Modern Japan*. Melbourne: Trans Pacific Express.

Stark, Rodney and William Sims Brainbridge. 1986. *The Future of Religion: Secularization, Revival and Cult Formation.* Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press.

Wallis, Roy. 1984. *The Elementary Forms of the New Religious Life*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Wilson, Bryan R. 1979. "The new religions." *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 6: 193-206.

About the author

Peter B. Clarke (1940-2011) served as Professor Emeritus of the History and Sociology of Religion at King's College London and was a professorial member of the Faculty of Theology at the University of Oxford from 2003. Professor Clarke was the founding Director of the Centre for New Religions at King's College in 1982, founding editor of the *Journal of Contemporary Religion* in 1985, and the convenor of a series of annual conferences on new religious movements, synthesizing into what is now the INFORM (Information Network Focus on Religious Movements). He is also the author and editor of more than 20 books and 100 scholarly articles.

3 A Management Perspective on the Mission Strategies and Global Organizational Structure of the Unification Church

Yoshihide Sakurai

Abstract

Focusing on the Unification Church and its global mission strategies, this chapter examines the nature of management in religious organizations. By diversifying its businesses into political and economic domains, the Unification Church succeeded in forging connections with those governments that offered political support for religious activities. Furthermore, it developed country-specific mission strategies, performing as a star entrepreneur in Korea, a troublemaker in the United States, and exploiting Japan as a money tree. This pattern in the evolution and organizational development of the Unification Church suggests that the organization may be better understood when viewed as a 'conglomerate' religious movement, rather than through the theories of congregational development advocated by researchers such as David O. Moberg.

Keywords: Unification Church, mission strategy, conglomerate, Japan, Korea, cult controversy

The purpose of this research is to examine the nature of management in religious organizations from the perspective of their diversified strategies in response to globalization. For illustrative case material, I will focus on the Unification Church (UC) and its global mission strategies. By diversifying its businesses into the political and economic domains, the UC succeeded in forging connections with those governments that offer political support for religious activities. Furthermore, they developed country-specific mission

strategies, performing as a star entrepreneur in Korea, playing the role of troublemaker in the United States, and exploiting Japan as a money tree. As a result, the UC in Japan engaged in illegal missionary work and fund-raising activities for more than 30 years, which developed into a big social issue in Japan. This pattern in the evolution and organizational development of the UC suggests that the organization may be better understood when viewed as a conglomerate religious movement, rather than through the theories of congregational development advocated by researchers such as David O. Moberg and Kiyomi Morioka. The biggest contributing factors to the UC's growth are that it compensated for its lack of religious competitiveness with a strategy of business diversification in the political and economic arenas, and it established a global operational presence.

Introduction

There are two reasons to focus on the UC as a case study. The first reason is that the UC is considered to be an excellent subject of study to examine the globalization and management of religious organizations: it takes the façade of a religious organization expanding into multi-national corporate activities, or is a multi-national enterprise with a religious component. Regardless, little research has been done on its diversification strategies. Hence, elucidating the reality of their church activities could help us to grasp the real image of the UC. I will also provide insights on some of the common characteristics of recent globalized new religions such as the hybrid nature of their doctrines and rituals, their centralized entity to control mission strategies, and the flexibility of their global operational presence with a locality-sensitive approach. Since the conventional congregational development models that take a denomination as a basic unit are not applicable to these religious groups which have developed through world missions, a new type of model is required. In this sense, this chapter will greatly contribute to the studies of sect and denomination by presenting a new development model.

Another reason is that when examining the world missions of religious groups, the UC's case clearly shows the dimension in which management strategies such as globalization and diversification greatly helps the diffusion and indigenization of religious culture, in addition to political dynamics such as colonialism and support from the authorities. Among religions that originated in Korea and were introduced to Japan, the UC was the only new religion that was able to establish a power base in Japanese society. It is almost a miracle that the UC, with its out-of-the-mainstream doctrines

and rituals and being viewed as a cult by major Christian churches, was able to earn members in Japan.

Why did they succeed in Japan? This cannot be explained by merely insisting that the UC is a cult that uses mind control techniques to convert members illegally. Such psychological interpretation and legal criticism cannot fully account for their missionary activities in Japan. Rather, I would like to point out that their diversified strategies in securing human and financial resources greatly compensated for their weakness in propagating their religion. Developing this argument further, I reframe the concept of mission strategy from the perspective of corporate management and strategy.

Congregational development and strategy

A theory of congregational development adopted by Kiyomi Morioka, one of the most famous religious sociologists in Japan, was David O. Moberg's five stages of the organizational life cycle, outlined in Table 1 (Moberg 1962).[1]

Table 3.1   David O. Moberg's theory of congregational development

Stage of Development	Characteristics for each Stage
1 Incipient organization	Cult/sect-like enthusiasm
2 Formal institution	Institutionalization of leadership; Appearance of the sect
3 Maximum efficiency	Denomination; Adaptation to society; Organizational maintenance
4 Institutionalization	Establishment of bureaucracy; Attunement to the existing society; Moral relaxation
5 Disintegration	Increase of nominal members; Rise of internal reformation

Moberg referred to Christianity as a 'model', and Western religious scholars have taken it to be a 'universal religion' since the 19th century (Masuzawa 2005). His argument is based on the assumption that the religious organization in his model performs its functions as a Christian church, but retains the common structure of a social organization in general. On the other hand, Kiyomi Morioka, who studied religions in Japan where traditional and new religions coexist and compete with one another, developed a model (see Table 2, below) that pays more attention to the peculiarity of each religious

---

1   Adapted by the author from Moberg (1962).

culture, while using general organizational theories to examine the 30-year congregational development process of Risshō Kōseikai (Morioka 1989).[2]

Table 3.2   Kiyomi Morioka's congregational development model

Type	Characteristics of Relationship/ Organization	Example
'Clan' Model	Static Relationship through top to bottom	Traditional Denominational Temple
Parent-Child Model	Missionary/Teaching Relationship, Flexible Power Relations	Middle/Small-scale New Religions
Peer/Bureaucracy Combination Model	Central Administration of Branches/ Headquarters, Status-Role Relationship	Large-scale New Religion

Adapted by the author from Morioka (1989); *Shin Shukyo Undo no Tenkai Katei* (The Development Process of New Religious Movement)

Shigeru Nishiyama, a religious sociologist and heir to Morioka, advocated the perspective of 'denominational life course', which analyses the peculiarity of denominational development in relation to socio-historical events. Nishiyama (1990) refers to the following four factors which make a great impact on the development of religious movements. The degree of:

1   The routinization of charisma
2   The controlling ability of spiritualists (employing the magical dimension)
3   The centralization of organization
4   The adaptability to the oppressive political regime

He then discusses the ebb and flow of Japanese new religions by each factor. Yet further discussions of this type of categorization and patterns for denominational development have not progressed so far in Japan. Their discussions have been limited to domestic religious development so that most Japanese scholars sought the indigenous Japanese model.

For world missionaries, sending and receiving religious culture is sometimes described as intercultural communication, but it could also be metaphorically compared to the export/import of packaged cultural commodities. In that case, the following questions are pertinent, and would be very similar to those faced by multinational corporations in the development of marketing strategies. What kinds of religious needs exist in the relevant country? What channels are available to transmit religious culture? How

2   Adapted by the author from Morioka (1989).

is it possible to find a new religious niche without fighting a losing battle with the existing religious culture of the host country?

Of course, this paper does not seek to propose a religious market model as seen in American religious sociology (Stark and Bainbridge 1986). There are dissimilarities as well as similarities between corporation management and denominational management. Despite the behavioural features of each organization and the differences between markets, to a certain level, even religious organizations have engaged in organizational management in an economic sense and, when dealing with the global missionary work of a religious organization, the perspective of contemporary business administration can be useful (Asaba 2004; Ōtaki et.al 2006; Porter 1980; Barney 2010).

The subject of this chapter, the UC, has a business/organizational structure that is essentially conglomerate. Despite that, the UC is treated as a religious group by scholars of new religion due to the complexity and skillfulness of their global missionary strategies and their lobbying tactics. The UC portrays itself as a religious group in the West, a multinational corporation in Korea, and engages in underground soliciting and fund-raising activities in Japan. Looking at this group from the perspective of contemporary business administration, it is possible to observe the idiosyncratic aspects of a contemporary religion.

Mission strategies and denominational management of the Unification Church

The Unification Church's historical background and doctrine

The UC was founded in Korea in 1954 by Mun Son-myong (henceforth Sun-Myung Moon)[3]. In Japan, its missionary work was instituted in 1958 by Choe Sang-ik (Nishikawa Masaru in Japanese), who entered Japan illegally following the order of Sun-Myung Moon. Sun-Myung Moon was born in 1920 in Jeongju-gun, North Pyongyan Province (now North Korea). According to him, he had a vision of Jesus at the age of sixteen. Between 1941 and 1943, he

---

3   Mun Son-myong is the transliteration of the founder's name from Korean, and uses the family name/given name in the traditional Korean order. The original meaning of Mun is 'sentence' and/or 'art', not 'moon'. Likewise, Son means 'vivid' or 'new', not 'sun'. 'Sun-Myung Moon', more commonly found in English publications, is his artificial romanized name, contrasting the Sun and the Moon images in text form in order to symbolize his greatness. The misunderstanding behind the Moon and Sun romanization was intentionally promoted among his believers to encourage them to recognize him as the Messiah.

was enrolled in a technical school attached to Waseda University and worked for the Kashima Gumi (a large construction company) after graduation. After the war, he retired and became an assistant priest in the 'Israel Monastery', one of the new-born Christian churches, in Seoul. From 1946 to 1950 he was in Pyongyang on missionary work, before being arrested on spying charges and sent to the Hyungnam labour camp. He was released when UN troops advanced on the camp, and resumed missionary work in Pusan.

Sun-Myung Moon's doctrine was compiled in Wolli Haesul (Explanation of the Divine Principle), and later in 1966, his disciple Eu Hyo-won revised it and published Wooli Kangron (The Divine Principle) as the main theological textbook of the UC. Its content is close to the teaching of Kim Baek-mun, who was the head of the Israel Monastery, for which Sun-Myung Moon used to work. Kim Baek-mun's work, Kidokkyo Kun Bon Wolli (Christian Primordial Principle), describes the synopsis of Wooli Kangron: Principle of Creation, Principle of the Fall, and Principle of Restoration (Kim 1958).

According to Sun-Myung Moon, the Principle of Creation explains the primordial principle of the universe and God's purpose of creation, and the Principle of the Fall sheds light on the true nature of original sin as a cause of unhappiness. The notion of original sin is interpreted by Moon in this way: the fallen angel Lucifer, who was later named Satan, committed adultery with the first human being Eve, and in consequence there is an inherited bloodline of evil shared by all human kind via Adam resulting from this rebellion against God. Jesus could not accomplish the perfect salvation plan (the principle of restoration), so God sent a new messiah to finish the work. This messiah is Sun-Myung Moon, one of the self-proclaimed messiahs in Korea.

Through the 'Blessing' ceremony (mass marriages) held by Sun-Myung Moon and his wife Han Hak-ja, members of the UC believe that any children born after the Blessing are free from original sin and that they can create a family centred on God. Since 1960, more than 20 international mass wedding ceremonies have been held. In 1998, 300 million and 60,000 million couples (highly questionable statistics from the UC) received the blessings, and in 2001, the former Roman Catholic Archbishop Milingo's participation in the blessing ceremony received public attention.

For some background on this unique doctrine, which is quite distinct from other major Christian denominations, it helps to remember that several Christian new religions emerged in the early twentieth century. The doctrine of the UC is assumed to share its ideological and ritual origins with shamanistic Divine-possession cults such as Beku Nam Kidung at Ursan, the Kil Shu Church founded by Kim Song-kil, and Pe Chung-kjo founded

by Ho Pong-pin. To be more precise, it refers to the advent of the Messiah (characterized by the spiritual possession of the leader, the position of the Korean Peninsula as Israel, and the exchange of the spiritual *pigarum* [body], presupposing sexual intercourse between the self-proclaimed Messiah and his followers) (Ryu 1986; Yan 2009).

These teachings and rituals are general principles, and deductions can be made about the particular instances that formed them. Indeed, in the early phase of the UC, the possibility of blood exchanges (sexual intercourse between Sun-Myung Moon and his female followers) was suspected. As a result, five teachers and fourteen students of Ihwa Women's University in Korea were forced to resign their positions or leave the university in 1955. Sun-Myung Moon was arrested for the illegal confinement of a follower, but was found innocent of the crime. The UC has since gradually gained power, and eventually acquired the status of an incorporated foundation in Korea in 1963. The UC had been initially acknowledged as a heresy by the Korean government; however, Moon's anti-communist/anti-North Korea theology and movement were regarded as useful for Park Chung-hee's dictatorship in revitalization reform. Sun-Myung Moon started his world missionary tour in 1965 with the help of Park Bo-hee, a newly affiliated commissioned officer, and established residence in the United States in 1971 for the purposes of managing his world missionary programme (Editorial Committee of the Unification Church 2000; Yamaguchi 1993).

Missionary work in Japan

Kuboki Osami, the first head of the organization, secured legal approval for the branch church in Japan to operate as a religious corporation in 1964. In 1966, the World Collegiate Association for the Research of Principles (W-CARP) was established, and the college and youth mission expanded. In 1968, the International Federation for Victory over Communism was established, and anti-communism political movements began. In 1973, the Professors World Peace Academy (PWPA) was established, and the UC started exercising its influence in the world of academia. Around this time, UC members replaced their day-labouring jobs, such as the collection of recyclable materials and the sale of flowers, and set up more profitable trading companies selling Korean goods. Through these merchandise sales, they began to secure the necessary funding to conduct missionary activities.

At the beginning of the 1980s, agents sold goods like Korean ginseng tea and Koryo marble ware through direct selling in homes and business

premises, however the sales technique used, in combination with fortune telling by the name and family pedigree, was outlawed as fraudulent spiritual sales in the late 1980s. In 1988, the National Network of Lawyers against Spiritual Sales was created to sue for refunds and damages against the UC. According to research by this network, the total amount of accumulated damages adds up to 1 billion, 78 million dollars until 2016. This is the major reason why the activities of the UC in Japan were officially recognized as a social problem.

Table 3.3   Related organizations of the Unification Church (representative examples only)[4]

Sector	Representative Organizations
Religion	The Holy Spirit Association of World Christianity
	Family Federation for World Peace and Unification
Politics	International Federation for Victory Over Communism
	The Association for the Promotion of True Families
Student Organization	World Collegiate Association for the Research of the Principle
	Professors World Peace Academy
Media	The Sekai Nippo
	The Washington Times Foundation
Publishers	Kougen sha
	Seiwa shuppan sha
University	Sun Moon University
Art	Universal Ballet
	Little Angels
Volunteer (Charity)	Shinzen
	Nonohana kai
Corporations	Happy World Company Ltd.
	International Home Medical Group
	Yongpyong Resort
	Ilhwa Co. Ltd.

Source: Reikan Shoho no Jittai (The Reality of the Spiritual Sales) (National Network of Lawyers Against the Spiritual Sales) Internet (http://www1k.mesh.ne.jp/reikan/index.htm,viewed on December 14, 2015)

It is difficult to figure out how many UC members, churches, and affiliated groups there are currently. Unification movements are characterized by their diverse and wide range of activities, and when the number of participants in the blessings is also taken into consideration, calculating even rough figures

4   National Network of Lawyers Against Spiritual Sales 2018.

Figure 3.1   Resources of initial stage of denominational formation of the Unification Church

Informational Resources (Doctrine, Church)	Human Resources (Members only)
Funding Resources (None)	Material Resources (None)
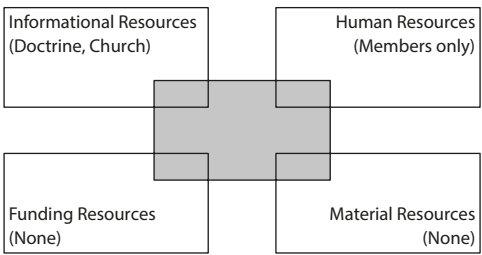
is difficult. Indeed, there are a few hundred organizations in which church members and staff are involved directly or indirectly. This refers not only to the associations and groups established by the UC, but also those existing schools, corporations, and newspaper companies that the UC bought out or invested in. Table 3 shows just case examples of the Unification Affiliated corporations.

Resource presence in the beginning stage

According to contemporary theories of management, four resources are needed to establish a corporate organization (Figure 3.1). They are human resources, material resources, funding resources, and informational resources (organizational culture) (Asaba 2004). A new religion like the UC neither receives support from the general public nor inherits assets that could be the foundation of their church. Furthermore, they only learned about teachings and rituals as well as some management procedures for generating enthusiastic congregations from other Christian new religions in Korea. In fact, the ritual sexual intercourse between the Messiah and believers (*pigarum*) and the church's theological doctrine represented a more significant informational resource than Sun-Myung Moon's personal charisma.

Although such informational resources encouraged primary followers to gather in primitive churches in Korea, the sexual ritual of *pigarum* was not transferred to Japan. It was far from the pure and clean image of Christian churchs and their pastors in Japan. Instead, Japanese primitive churches accepted the sanitized concept of a Christian church delivered by Choe Sang-ik, who used to be a church pastor, and adopted the sense of unity gained through communal life under vows of poverty, and the Utopian

worldviews characteristic of religious movements. Primary followers and current executives saw Sun-Myung Moon in the words and actions of Choe Sang-ik, and worked hard to establish a foundation to welcome the Messiah in Japan.

Uncompetitive religiosity in the religious market

It is said that there are five competitive factors (see Figure 3.2) that need to be dealt with properly for corporations to pursue market development, including input merchandise, maintaining a sales force, and generating profits (Porter, 1980). If one assumes a religious marketplace in Korean society, the competition among Christian denominations was intense in Korea. Christians played an outstanding role in leading the resistance movement against Japanese colonialism, and after Korea's liberation in 1945, followed by the Korean War of 1950, those who sought a place of rest and solace in the devastated land flocked to Christian churches. The growth of churches accelerated rapidly until approximately 29 per cent of Korean nationals in 2005 were Christian (Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism 2012). Although the UC also had the chance to grow during this period, due to their formidable competitiveness, their religious power did not expand to the same degree as their investments in finance and human resources. Even today they cannot move beyond their position as a heterodox religion.

On the other hand, in Japan, the UC did not have as many Christian competitors as in Korea, because Christians consist of only 1 per cent of Japan's population. Moreover, the heterodox doctrine provided by the UC would be uncompetitive compared with the orthodox doctrine of mainline churches in Japan. In addition, in the religious marketplace where a variety of new religions compete with one another, it is not so easy to attract Japanese people with a religion that only requires commitment and provides no guarantee of an advantage over the secular world. That is why it started with a mission strategy that disguised the UC as a social movement geared towards a world revolution for the young through its youth network, establishing J-CARP in 1964. The UC did not have to provide followers with immediate and mundane compensation as other Christian denominations did. Instead the UC members just believed in the realization of Utopia promised by the UC in the future, and this facilitated their endurance of the hardships of poverty associated with church life.

Figure 3.2   The five competitive factors in religious markets in Japan and Korea

| Threat of New Entries | Korea | Differentiation from Christianity |
| | Japan | Many other new religions and political movements |

| Negotiation Ability of Suppliers | Korea | Christian culture/Shamanism |
| | Japan | Direct importation only |

| Threat of Replacements | Korea | Christianity |
| | Japan | New religious movements |

| Negotiation Ability of Customers | Korea | Accustomed to missionary |
| | Japan | Not accustomed to missionary |

| Rivalry with Competitors | Korea | Major Christian denomination |
| | Japan | United Church of Christ in Japan etc. |

In spite of the criticism received from Christian churches like the United Church of Christ in Japan, which labeled the UC's Christianity as heresy and their mission and fund-raising activities as illegal, they gained the protection of right-wing figures such as Ryōichi Sasagawa, right-wing magnate, and Nobusuke Kishi, Prime Minister (1957-60), who proceeded to support anti-communism movements in East Asian countries. Under the conservative politicians' patronage, whilst avoiding criticism from the Socialist and Communist Parties, the UC established political organizations such as the International Federation for Victory over Communism in 1968 and steadily expanded their influence within Japanese politics.

Regardless, since the UC was not competitive as a religious organization either in Korea or in Japan, they had to supplement their religious appeal with social services in Korea, and with a peculiar mission strategy in Japan.

The operational structure in Japan

In order to investigate the operational reality, all we can do is to collect information from published court documents (National Network of Lawyers Against Spiritual Sales 2018), materials provided by lawyers (plaintiff's statement of facts, evidence and court materials, briefs, verdict statements), or from the former executives who defected from the UC (Soejima and Inoue 1984). Furthermore, to confirm information on the operational details and systems, hour-long interviews were conducted with more than 30 former members, with many who were once active as the founding executive members but were later sidelined.

In the UC, the missionary sector is given the role of church and responsibility to manage missionary work and indoctrination training for followers. The role of the commander is to manage the members who become followers of the UC after completing this training. The commander's duty is to give orders, and it has adopted a thoroughly centralized administrative framework. Figure 3.3 shows a district which bundles youth followers, married followers, and the various sections together. As shown from the system in Figure 3.4, accounting and spiritual patrollers sent from the headquarters check the district's fund-raising and missionary performance, and report back to the headquarters. In a way, the Church resembles the management system of Japanese central government and big corporations, in that it manages several operational sectors on a district-by-district basis, and auditors go around and check up on accounting and operational conditions.

What is the outcome of the UC's strategy of operational diversification and human resources centralization in the economic sector? The positive side of it is that the UC conglomeration is accepted as a model of paradise on earth by its followers. The followers are able to work at the UC affiliated companies and feel that God's Providence, as promised to them by Sun-Myung Moon, is close to realization. On the other hand, the church section, which is supposed to be the central focus of any Christian church, has shrunk, and the UC of Japan has wound up becoming an unbalanced religious organization in which the fund-raising sector has become bloated. Moreover, since the UC of Japan succeeded in their fund-raising efforts, Japanese believers were continuously directed to specialize in this operation by Korean headquarters, and were made to believe that God's Providence encouraged the fulfillment of this mission.

As a result, Japanese UC invented its way of deceiving and scaring the general public by acting like psychics to tout good-luck goods and purification rituals, while referring to the wrath or curse of ancestors and aborted fetuses in their fortune-telling. In the 1960s and 70s Japanese families dramatically reduced birth rates by artificial abortion so that, in the 1980s and 90s, many women were attracted to invented folk rituals to appease the spirits of their aborted babies by establishing *Jizō Bosatsu/ Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva* [saviour of children] images and offering special prayers (Morikuri 1995; LaFleur 1995). UC capitalized on this pervasive sorrow. Undoubtedly, the first priority of UC's strategy was fund-raising, not the happiness of members or customers (Asami 1987; Kawasaki, 1990; Arita 1992; Gouro 1993; Yamaguchi 1993; Sakurai and Nakanishi 2010).

Figure 3.3   District organizational chart showing the centralized administrative framework of the Unification Church
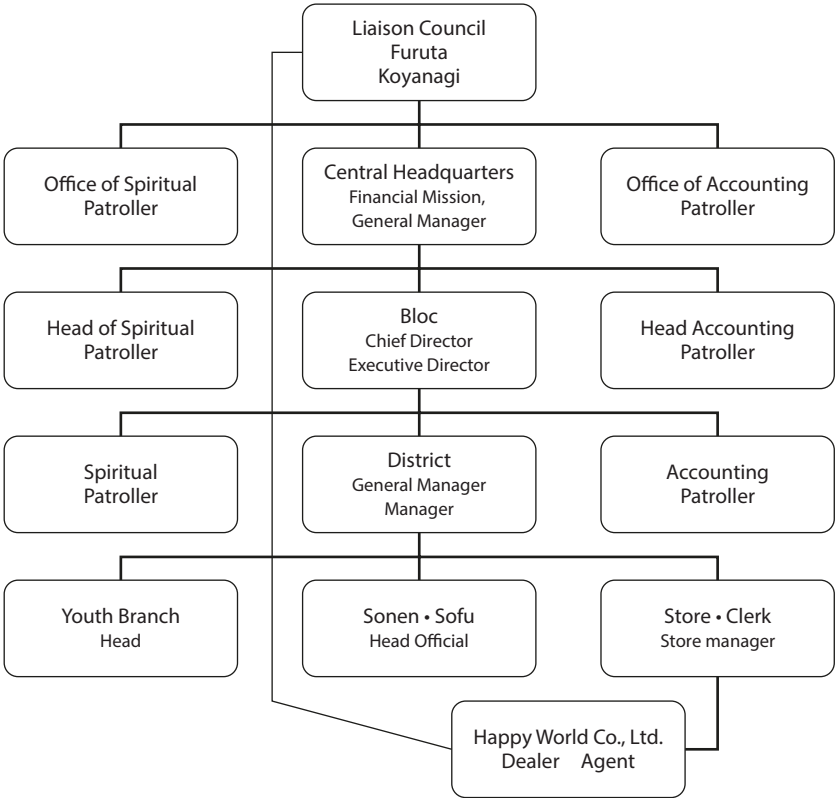
```
                    Commander • Local Mother
                            (Couple)
                  ┌────────────────┴─────────────────┐
        Church Leader • Team Mother              Agency
                (Couple)
         ┌── Economy                    ┌── Techi Seikyo Butler
         ├── Gathering                  ├── VIP Talker • Assistant
         ├── Church Director            ├── Person in charge of Blue
         │   Accountant • Administrative├── McCOL
         │   Manager                    ├── Sauna
         ├── SSVC (Youth Group)         └── Women VC
         ├── Youth Branch Office
         ├── Advanced Training
         └── Educational Department
```
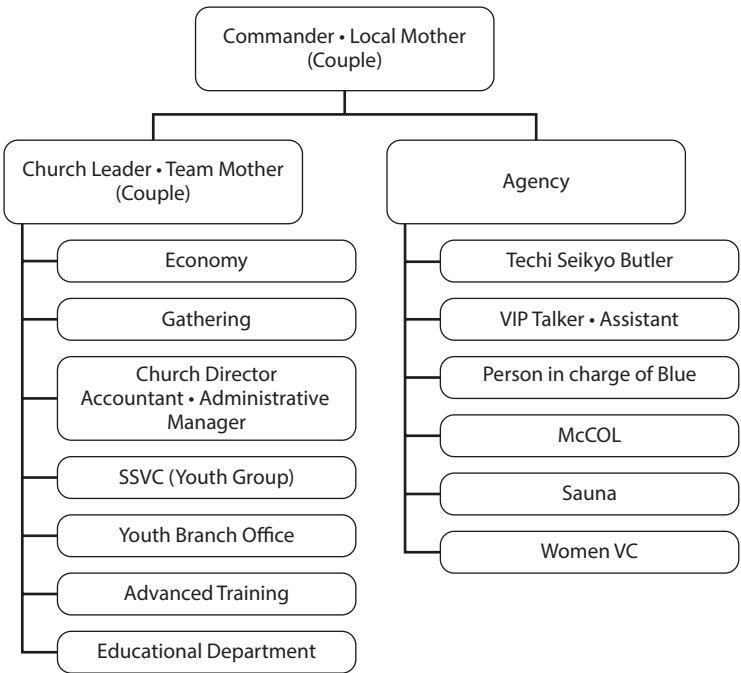
Source: Sued in 1991, 1999 Case No. 18400, Damage suit; settled in 1999 at the Supreme Court. Proof No. Ko-87, Shigetomi Terumi, Kagoshima district, circa July 1989. Note: Tenchi Seikyō is another religious organization, which was once a local Buddhist new religion and taken over by the UC, aiming to recruit believers of Buddhism. VIP is the section designed to care for prospective generous donors such as wealthy housewives and elderly members. 'Talker' refers to a member who plays a shamanistic role in name onomancy and pedigree analysis. 'Person in charge of Blue' refers to a sales clerk in charge of an exhibition and the spot sales of such items as jewelry, artwork, and Kimono. McCOL and sauna are merchandise goods in the door-to-door sales section.

Globalization strategies under the system of doctrine

Globalized corporations supply standardized merchandise for the global market and buy off related industries to create subsidiary corporations to achieve maximum economic efficiency in both scale and scope. However, the UC has given priority to religious reasons rather than economic ones and furthermore damaged mutually-beneficial trade between Korea and Japan. As a typical example, Koryo marble vases and two-story pagodas which each initially cost less than 50 dollars were exported by the UC affiliated Ishinsekizai Ltd. in Korea and they were illegally sold for more than 5000

Figure 3.4   Organizational chart of the business section of the Unification Church

```
                        ┌─────────────────────┐
                        │   Liaison Council   │
                        │      Furuta         │
                        │     Koyanagi        │
                        └─────────────────────┘
```

Figure 3.4 Organizational chart of the business section of the Unification Church

Liaison Council
Furuta
Koyanagi

| Office of Spiritual Patroller | Central Headquarters — Financial Mission, General Manager | Office of Accounting Patroller |

| Head of Spiritual Patroller | Bloc — Chief Director, Executive Director | Head Accounting Patroller |

| Spiritual Patroller | District — General Manager, Manager | Accounting Patroller |

| Youth Branch — Head | Sonen • Sofu — Head Official | Store • Clerk — Store manager |

Happy World Co., Ltd.
Dealer   Agent

Source: Zenkoku Shiawase Sakuru Renraku Kyōgikai (Liaison Council of National Happiness Circle); Sued in 1991: 1999 Case No. 18400, Damage Suit; Settled in 1999 at the Supreme Court. Proof. No. Otsu-108, made by Koyanagi Sadao, who testified in 1995 on organizations from the late 1980s to the early 1990s. Note: 'Sonen/Sofu' refers to married members of the Unification Church.
'Accounting Patroller' refers to a mid-level executive in charge of accounting and payment from the district and the headquarters. 'Spiritual Patroller' refers to a mid-level executive in charge of counseling for members and management of members' actions. Bloc is an upper category of District. We can find a correlation with gender roles, such that the General Manager and the Accounting Patroller are male and the Spiritual Patroller is female, which functions to allocate men more political and financial power in the organization than women.

dollars by the UC district organization (see Figure 3.3) via UC's wholesale company Happy World Company Ltd (Table 3). Thus, a huge gross margin of profit was brought to Korea by the UC Japan.

According to their doctrine, the Messiah's motherland, Korea, is the centre of the world, and the United States is situated as a global leading nation that has the role of heralding the coming of the Messiah. In contrast, Japan is

Figure 3.5 The relative positions of nations according to strategic importance and local competition
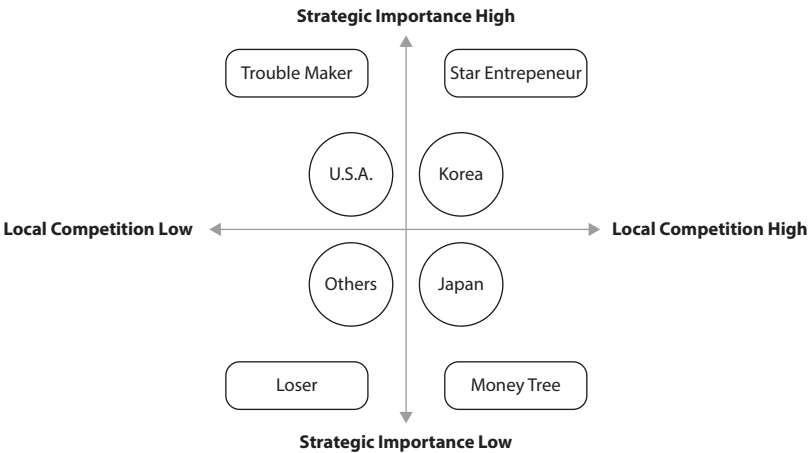
seen as a sinful nation that colonized Korea and is expected to atone for her sin toward the Koreans. That is why the funds collected illegally from Japan are made to flow into the business sectors in Korea and the lobbying sectors in the United States, and why Japanese female followers participating in the mass marriage ceremonies are used to make up for the shortage of brides in Korea (Sakurai 2010; Sakurai and Nakanishi 2010). Since the funds collected in Japan are never reinvested in the business sectors to finance expansion, the UC of Japan has been trying to cut down on labour costs while making profits from illegal economic activities. Furthermore, even though these activities generated a bad reputation for the UC in Japan and paralyzed its religious activities, those at headquarters appear to remain unconcerned about this.

Let us summarize the strategy of the UC through the theory of a global market portfolio. Figure 3.5 compares the local competitiveness of religious and other sectors with their strategic importance and plots the position of each country.

In addition to the fact that Japan is a treasury of human and funding resources for the Church, its operation there is relatively free from social regulations and the economic sector is rather profitable and competitive. However, Japan's value in the UC movement has not been acknowledged within the doctrine of the Church, and it ends up being exploited as a money tree. Although there might be members and executives who are not content with this, a majority of them attempt to save their own skin, and

small offshoots such as Group Wu (self-claimed Moon's illegitimate child), Group Nakayama (self-claimed heir of Moon), and other leaders broke away from the UC and recruited sympathetic believers.

In Korea, in order to display its religious power, the church has launched a variety of projects, contributing to the Korean economy (by creating employment opportunities in the business sector and engaging in resort development) and to local welfare (via marriage mediation services). Regardless of their low economic profitability, such projects will be continued by the organization so as not to lose its role as a star entrepreneur.

The United States was situated in a key position in their mission strategies, and Sun-Myung Moon and his family also resided there. The UC invested in various political lobbying activities, but in American society they are merely recognized as a cult. Nonetheless, they have influence in American political circles and academic associations of religious studies.

In other countries, there are missionary offices established to fulfill part of their goal of world missionary outreach, but their missionary activities have generally achieved little. Consequently, the projects based in these branch offices are most likely to be terminated if the headquarters stops sending money.

As shown above, there are different marketing strategies for each country, and the UC does not have any universal mission strategies or management policies that cover the entire globe. As this is the case, it is not appropriate to assume any similarity among the countries regarding the reaction of the host government or society towards the followers' conversion process or the Church's project development. Hence, this reveals that previous studies on the UC in the West have only shown the special 'cult' cases in which the Church was treated as a loser or a troublemaker (Barker, 1984). From that perspective, it would be difficult to look at the cases of Korea and Japan where the Church has achieved the status of star entrepreneur or money tree.

Conclusion

The essential elements in considering the congregational growth model of the UC are its diversified strategies and global operational presence. It is rare to find a denomination that has included such elements from its inception: even the Church of Scientology.

The following is a summary of stages regarding the congregational growth of the UC. The first stage of the UC is characteristic of a new religious movement, particularly the 'theory of congregational development' presented

Figure 3.6 Growth model of the Unification Church
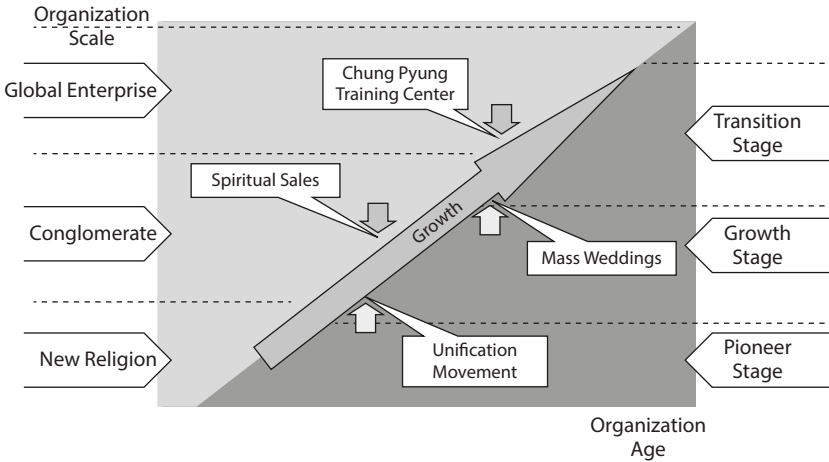
by Moberg (1962) and Morioka (1989). However, this stage only lasted for about the first ten years in Korea/Japan following its foundation, and the UC quickly moved on to the next stage.

In the growth stage, the Church ventured into the business world as a conglomerate. Although the profitability associated with the conglomerate structure of the organization was not fully anticipated, the fact that the UC in Japan created an economic sector that would make up for other loss-making sectors further promoted conglomeratization. However, this type of syndicate, Moon's aide-run business development harmed the intricate relationship between the host nation and the UC. In Japan, for example, the illegal sales of merchandise via so-called 'fraudulent sales techniques', coerced donations, and missionary work that failed to clearly identify the organization, were deemed illegal by the Japanese Supreme Court.

The UC subsequently became a family-run *chaebol* [a large family-owned business conglomerate] as other Korean *chaebols* did. The leader of this *chaebol*, Sun-Myung Moon, died at 92 years of age in 3 September 2012. Since then the succession race to become the next Messiah has started among his sons. His fourth son, Mun Kuk-jin was in charge of the economic sector, which stretches across the U.S. and Korea. The World Collegiate Association for the Research of Principles (W-CARP) was under the leadership of his third son, Mun Hyeon-jin, the head of the missionary sector. But Sun-Myung Moon designated his seventh son, Mun Hyeong-jin as his successor. Since Mun Hyeong-jin has not been engaged in the business projects of the conglomerate, he seems to be fully dedicated to

religious activities. However, Han Hak-ja, the wife of Sun-Myung Moon was disgusted by the sons' quarrelling that triggered a legal fight over the building plans for the Yoido estate in Seoul, and she recalled them from their privileged positions. In this way, she won power and started her self-deification on 1 July 2014, by proclaiming herself an 'independently born woman with no sin', which means that she now has the same status as her late husband.

In Japan, there was a series of incidents in 2009 in which several members of the UC were arrested for illegal commercial transactions and fraud. As a result, the UC issued a document entitled 'Guidance for church members on the soliciting of donations, proselytization, and educational activities through video screening' on 25 March 2009 under the name of President Tokuno Eiji. He mentioned three important points: first, donations must be made based on free will; second, when proselytizing, declare the name of the UC; third, abide by the law. However, it is impossible to achieve the same level of profit from the economic sector of the UC in Japan whilst conducting missionary work and fund-raising activities according to these guidelines. Hence, it seems, for the last ten years or so, the UC has been raising the bulk of its funds from Japanese church members by sending them to Chung Pyung Training Center, Korea. In this way, the Church gains training fees and special donations, collected supposedly in return for getting rid of ancestral curses. Collecting money from members in this way, rather than from the general public, could be seen as a return to the behaviour properly associated with a religious group, but this strategy is insufficient to maintain a global conglomerate. Furthermore, Japanese members were affected by Mun's internal familial conflict and divided into at least three groups: the mainline church controlled by Han Hak-ja, W-CARP members guided by Mun Hyeon-jin, and new sect named Sanctuary Church established by Mun Hyeong-jin in 2015. The UC is therefore currently faced with schism and financial crisis, which no longer sustains it as a *chaebol* business.

Works cited

Asaba Shigeru. 2004. *Keiei senryaku no keizaigaku* [*Economics of Management Strategy*]. Tokyo: Nihonhyoronsha [in Japanese].

Asami Sadao. 1987. *Tōitsu Kyōkai – genri undo: sono mikiwamekata to taisaku* [*Unification Church and Unification Movement: Diagnosis and Countermeasure*]. Tokyo: Publisher of the United Church of Christ in Japan [in Japanese].

Arita Yoshifu. 1992. *Tōitsu Kyōkai toha nanika: oikomareta gennri undō* [*What is the Unification Church?: Cornered Unification Movement*]. Tokyo: Kyoikushiryo [in Japanese].

Barker, Eileen. 1984. *The Making of a Moonie: Choice or Brainwashing?* Aldershot, Hampshire: Ashgate.

Barney, Jay B. 2010. *Gaining and Sustaining Competitive Advantage,* 2nd ed. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall.

Editorial Committee of the Unification Church. 2000. *Nihon tōitsu undo shi* [*History of the Japanese Unification Church*]. Tokyo: Kogensha [in Japanese].

Gouro Masaki. 1993. *Tōitsu Kyōkai maindo kontororu no subete: hito ha donoyounishite dorei ni narunoka* [*Unification Church and its Mind-Control: How Did Peoples Become the Slave of Sun-Myung Moon*]. Tokyo: Kyoikushiryo [in Japanese].

Kawasaki Kyoko. 1990. *Tōitsu Kyōkai no sugao: sono senno no jittaito taisaku* [*True Face of the Unification Church: Brainwashing and Countermeasure*]. Tokyo: Kyobunkan [in Japanese].

Kim Pek Mun. 1958. *Kidokkyo gunchek wonri* [*Principle of Christianity*]. Seoul: Ilnarido [in Korean].

LaFleur, William L. 1995. *Liquid Life: Abortion and Buddhism in Japan*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

Masuzawa Tomoko. 2005. *The Invention of World Religions: Or, how European Universalism was Preserved in the Language of Pluralism*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism. 2012. *Statistics of Religion in Korea 2011* [in Korean].

Moberg, David O. 1962. "The church as a social institution." *The Sociology of American Religion.* Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall.

Morikuri Shigekazu. 1995. *Fushigidani no kodomotachi* [*Children in Mystical Valley*]. Tokyo: Shinjinbutsuoraisha [in Japanese].

Morioka Kiyomi. 1989. *Shinshūkyōundō no tenkaikatei* [*Changes in New Religious Movements*]. Tokyo: Soubunsha [in Japanese].

National Network of Lawyers Against Spiritual Sales. 2018. "Reikan Shōho no Jittai [The Reality of Spiritual Sales]." Accessed 29 March 2018. https://stopreikan.com/index.htm [in Japanese].

Nishiyama Shigeru. 1990. 'Undō tenkai no patan (Pattern of growth of religious movements). *Encyclopedia of New Religion.* Tokyo: Kobundo, 56 [in Japanese].

Ōtaki Seiichi, Kazuyori Kanai, Hideo Yamada and Satoru Iwata. 2006. *Keiei senryaku: ronrisei, sozosei, shakaisei no tuikyu* [*Management Strategy: Pursuit of Logic, Creativity and Sociality*]. Tokyo: Yuhikaku [in Japanese].

Porter, Michael E. 1980. *Competitive Strategy*. New York: The Free Press.

Ryu Don Shiku. 1986. *Kankoku kirisutokyō shingaku shisoshi* [*Theological History of Christianity in Korea*]. Tokyo: Kyobunkan [in Japanese].

Sakurai Yoshihide (2010) "Geopolitical mission strategy: The case of the Unification Church." *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 37-2: 317-334.

Sakurai Yoshihide and Nakanishi Hiroko. (2010). *Tōitsu Kyōkai: nihon senkyo no senryaku to kannichi shukuhuku* [*Unification Church: Mission Strategy and Mass Marriage in Korea and Japan*]. Hokkaido: Hokkaido University Press [in Japanese].

Soejima Yoshikazu and Inoue Hiroaki. 1984. *Korega Tōitsu Kyōkai no subeteda* [*Secret of the Unification Church*]. Tokyo: Bungei Shunju 7 [in Japanese].

Stark, Rodney and William Sims Bainbridge. 1986. *The Future of Religion: Secularization, Revival and Cult Formation.* Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press.

Yamaguchi Hiroshi. 1993. *Kensho Tōitsu Kyōkai* [*Investigation of the Unification Church*]. Tokyo: Ryokuhu Publishers [in Japanese].

Yan Pyo Sung. 2009. "Nittei jidai no kirisutokyō shinshūkyōundō ni kansuru kousatsu" [A Study of Christian New Religious Movements in Japanese Colonial Era]. *Proceedings of higashi ajia kokusai kenkyūshūkaigi: Higashi ajia shinshūkyō kenkyū to jyōhō riterashi* [*East Asian International Conference on the study of new religions in East Asia and information literacy*], Kokugakuin University, 7 Febuary 2009 [in Japanese].

About the author

Yoshihide Sakurai is Professor of sociology at the Graduate School of Letters, Hokkaido University, Japan. His recent publications include *Regional Development in Northeast Thailand and the Formation of Civil Society* (2003). He has published many books about contemporary religion in Japan and East Asia.

Section 2

Empirical Investigations: East Asian Religions

4 Post-War Peace Movements

The Historical Background of National and International Religious Cooperation

Susumu Shimazono

Abstract

With the progress of globalization, value strategies once accepted in Japan are no longer accepted. This is a problem for religious groups, but it can also become an opportunity for them to develop new value strategies in the context of globalization. This chapter will examine some characteristics of peace movements associated with Japanese religious organizations in the post-war period, focusing on the World Conference on Religion and Peace (WCRP) as the main example. These peace movements, sponsored by religious organizations and backed by the tradition of national religious cooperation, have developed alongside a strong nationalism. The chapter traces the ways in which these movements have benefited from the influence of globalization and, through this, have developed into international movements.

Keywords: WCRP, peace movements, Nikkyō Niwano, Risshō Kōseikai, religious cooperation, Japan Religion Federation

Post-war peace movements and religious groups

Religious groups expand their management and power in relation to the value consciousness of the general public. In the era when the borders of the Japanese nation state were firmly established, the strategies pursued by religious groups developed in relation to national values: either by going along with values promoted by the nation while evading state control, or by pursuing an independent course, and proclaiming their own religious values distinct from national values. This is an issue of the value strategies of

religious groups. With the progress of globalization, however, value strategies once accepted in Japan are no longer accepted. This is a problem for religious groups, but it can also become an opportunity for them to develop new value strategies in the context of globalization. In the process of developing these value strategies, religious groups have addressed issues that are also now faced by secular organizations in the course of globalization. If we consider that many aspects of the management strategies of religious groups in Japan have developed ahead of similar developments in business enterprises, it is perhaps to be expected that the same can be observed with the value strategies of religious groups.

In this chapter, I will examine some characteristics of the peace movements associated with Japanese religious groups after WWII, focusing primarily on the World Conference on Religion and Peace (WCRP) as an example. These peace movements, sponsored by religious movements and backed by the tradition of national religious cooperation, have developed alongside a strong nationalism. I would like to trace how these peace movements have benefited from the influence of globalization and through this have developed into international movements.

'Peace' became a focal theme of the national consciousness in Japan from the 1950s to the 1960s. The goal of peace was accepted by many people as being a necessity and it came with a strong sense of urgency. This sense of urgency was brought about by several factors. First, the growing antinuclear consciousness was furthered by the Korean War (from 1950 to 1953) and the Bikini nuclear incident (the Daigo Fukuryū -maru Incident) in 1954. This growing antinuclear consciousness was heightened by the revision issue of the Japan-US Security Treaty and also by a real sense of crisis brought about by the possibilities of a nuclear war between the US and the Soviet Union in 1960. Later concerns about the Vietnam War from the 1960s to the 1970s gave new impetus and added the youth of the day to this growing peace movement.

Part of the background to this growing peace consciousness in Japan was that people were aware that even after the US occupation of Japan ended, US military interests still had great influence or control in Japan due to the San Francisco Peace Treaty and the Japan-US Security Treaty. Because of this, Japan could not fully exercise its sovereignty and yet still assumed great military risk and obligations. Peace movements developed because of this awareness, together with a general discontent with the control exerted by the United States in Japan.

The Constitution of Japan, which was established at a time when US interests were focused upon the cold war, was not developed to make

Japan into a strong country with its own strong military and thus upholds a pacifism which is in contradiction with the San Francisco System (Treaty). The very strong and popular movement of antinuclear consciousness was based on the tragic Japanese experience of the atom bomb, and was the foundation for many of the peace movements. These movements for 'Peace' were carried forward on the common understanding that all Japanese wanted to be free from US control along with its attendant hard-line policy towards Asia, which strengthened during the cold war period. Because the Japanese could also observe the connection between peace and freedom brought about by the pacifism of the Constitution of Japan they worked towards the elimination of nuclear weapons and the reduction of destructive armaments all over the world.

However, there were several serious weak points in the peace movements that arose from these premises. Every political party had a peace and antinuclear policy as part of its platform. Consequently, the subject of 'Peace' was apt to be treated only as a political slogan, which, becoming overused, lost some of its meaning and power, and so did not lead to any effective or substantial action. The Japanese populace distrusted arguments for making more sacrifices after being involved unwillingly with the American-Soviet antagonism during the cold war. In addition, their sense of being victims was reinforced by the fact that Japan had endured the truly devastating experience of being the only country that had been atom-bombed.

The peace movements at that time tended to link with nationalism and turn inwards. They did not turn their eyes outward and look at the oppressive colonial rule of the past and the suffering caused to the many people abroad who had been treated cruelly by the Japanese army. This one-sided historical perspective isolated them, and so the chance of joining others in international solidarity was lost. Another problem was that the peace movements were being used by political parties. The parties out of power used this movement as their anchor and came to be known as the Opposition. The labour unions, which developed after the war, also used their own form of pacifism to appeal to their members. The net result of this was that peace movements based on voluntary participation on an individual basis, separate from political parties or labour unions failed to develop to any significant extent.

Since the latter half of the 1970s, when Japan achieved economic self-sufficiency, and began to reduce economic protectionism under pressure from the US, peace movements have been sluggish. This is linked to the weak points of the previous peace movements. As Japan realized that it shared the interests pursued by the USA in the global economic order, the peace

movements lost direction, the arming of self-defence forces intensified, and the non-nuclear principle became ineffective. Added to this, the sending of Japanese troops overseas was on the agenda.

The 'Peace for Vietnam Committee' (*Beheiren*) established in the late 1960s, became the first peace movement started as a citizen's movement, which focused on the individual participants. It was only a first step and in 1974 the Beheiren was dissolved. Some of the members of peace movements and student movements at that time expressed the idea that they themselves were responsible for the aggression during the imperialist system of the past. However, these movements did not develop into larger movements. Although the idea of 'Peace' inspired many people in the 1950s and the 1960s, it appears to have subsequently receded from popular consciousness. Overshadowed by its use by political parties, it has become ineffective.

There are few religious connections or groups described in the papers on peace movements after WWII by Ishida (1989), Dower (1993) or other progressives from the viewpoints of the social sciences and history. It is generally considered that peace movements in Japan are chiefly supported by political parties, labour unions, scholars and intellectuals, along with some individual 'citizens'. The nucleus of the peace movements is divided into two groups: 'the conservatives' and 'the reformists'. The 'conservative' groups along with those too difficult to be classified into either of the two have little concern for the peace movement in itself. They have used the Peace Movement in the past and try to continue to use it in the present to further their own ends, a political situation that may have its origins in the cold war era. However, when we bring religious groups into the picture, it casts a new light on the history of peace movements. Many religious groups have been involved with peace movements in various ways from the immediate post-war period to the present.

Post-war peace movements by religious groups and their frustrations

In 1947, the Japan Religion Federation held the Japan Conference on Religion and Peace at the Tsukiji-Honganji Temple. Both mainstream Buddhist and Christian circles, as well as the new religious movements Jinruiaizen-kai (Ōmotokyō), Nihonzan-Myōhōji and others, started peace movements declaring themselves against the official separate peace treaty, and for the abolition of nuclear weapons and other armaments.[1] These peace move-

---

1   In viewing the peace movement of the Japanese religious people after WWII, the Japan Council on Religion and Peace and the World Conference on Religion and Peace (WCRP) Japan

ments associated with religious groups suddenly became active after the Bikini nuclear incident in 1954, in common with other peace movements at that time. Since the First World Rally against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs was held in 1955, the antinuclear movement has been at the heart of the peace movements led by religious groups. In 1958, the Association of Religious People against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs where various religious organizations joined together was started with Toyohiko Kagawa as its promoter. However, this Association broke up shortly afterwards because the movement against atomic and hydrogen bombs was divided, disorganized and split due to the revision issue of the Japan-US Security Treaty in 1960. The Japan Congress for Peace against Nuclear Weapons, which was influenced by the Liberal Democratic Party, was also organized at that time. However, in response to an appeal by the Association, the Japan Council on Religion and Peace (*Shū-hei-kyō*) was formed in 1962. The character of this movement (based on Isooka 1989) is examined below.

In July 1961 before the formation of Shū-hei-kyō, the First World Conference on Religion and Peace was held in Kyoto. Forty-seven people from sixteen overseas countries, as well as about two hundred and seventy people from Japan, attended. At this conference 'The Kyoto Declaration' (Religions for Peace 1970) was adopted, including the following paragraph. This may be regarded as the document that decided the future course of Shū-hei-kyō:

> We affirm that religious and mental attitudes have the purpose of connecting internal peace of the mind with the external peace of the world. Peace of mind cannot be attained without the happiness of every person. We unanimously agree that religious people should be aware of their responsibility to address problems relating to the welfare of humanity. The subject of war and peace is the most important issue that we are now confronted with. We have gathered here to express our own opinions and to listen to others. The essential attitude toward the attainment of this purpose in this Conference has been the spirit of tolerance (Isooka 1989: 293).

From this statement, it is clear that the participants of the conference made great efforts to form an idea of a peace movement appropriate to all religious standpoints and not from the position of any one particular religion. Their will to act positively in addition to appealing to 'peace of mind' comes to the

Committee must be mentioned. On this topic, I benefited from the following literature: (Ōishi 1981, Niwano 1987-1988, Isooka 1989, Homer A. Jack 1993, Akitomo Nukaga 2000).

fore. We might also note the idea of solidarity of all religious people acting together, which is premised on the early 1960s idea of diversity through international exchanges. The seventeen proposals agreed by the conference included not only idealistic statements but also realistic and feasible goals, such as establishing a nuclear-free zone, the reduction of military budgets, and opposition to imperialistic and colonial oppression. The first, and most idealistic, proposal was:

> We propose complete disarmament: To attain this goal, military alliances including the Japan-US Security Treaty must be denounced. All foreign military bases must be removed. A mutual non-aggression treaty must be concluded based on friendly international relations and mutual confidence (Isooka 1989: 294).

I cannot reconstruct here in detail how this ideal of peace in international society became so distanced from the religious circles of the day. Some of those religious circles considered this idea of the denunciation of military alliances to be an impracticable action, which was interfering in their domestic and overseas political developments during the 1960s. So, this movement may have been regarded as a movement promoted by those dealing with social problems who were seen as leftists in religious circles.

Shū-hei-kyō held the World Conference on Religion and Peace twice and the Japan Conference on Religion and Peace five times in the 1960s. Its activities were viewed positively and were accepted by many at that time. By the 1970s, however, their activities had converged with other activities and they were seen as just another leftist movement. Shū-hei-kyō suffered serious setbacks owing to discord caused by the influence of leftists within the movement[2] and the subsequent withdrawal of Ōmotokyō, a leading member. These events undermined the unity of the movement. We can see that this later peace movement of the 1960s, which was formed by religious cooperation, went into decline after it was caught up in this party-inspired political confrontation. The above result is similar to what happened to the peace movement after WWII.

The peace movements formed by religious cooperation did not completely end with the decline of Shū-hei-kyō. The World Federation movements of Ōmotokyō, Christianity, Buddhism, and Shinto joined to form the World

---

2   A communist-influenced section of the movement supported nuclear testing by socialist states, leading to the Japan Congress Against A- and H-Bombs separating from the Japan Council Against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs in 1965.

Federation of Religions Japan Committee in 1967. Since the first meeting of World Federation of Religions for Peace was held in 1969, a general meeting has been held annually. It has worked in cooperation with other non-religious world federation movements. For example, Ayabe-shi and Musashino-shi have declared themselves World Federation cities.

The influence of the World Conference on Religion and Peace (WCRP) is particularly noteworthy. The main activity of this peace movement is a meeting held in each area in the world every four or five years. The first meeting was held in 1970, and the Seventh Meeting was held in Amman, Jordan, in 1999 and was attended by twelve hundred people from seventy countries. The International Committee head office of the WCRP is located in New York and national committees are organized as branches of the main organization in 35 countries. The WCRP Japan Committee is the most influential[3] and is located at the site of Risshō Kōseikai, Tokyo. The Japan Committee was also active in the formation of the Asia Conference on Religion and Peace (ACRP) in 1977, which is a sister organization of the WCRP.

Formation of The World Conference on Religion and Peace

Before the WCRP was organized in 1972, the Japan-US Conference on Religion and Peace and the First World Conference on Religion and Peace were held in Kyoto in 1968 and 1970 respectively. The latter conference seized the opportunity of organizing itself permanently and became well known as 'The Kyoto Conference', which produced excellent results later. More than three hundred people from 39 countries attended this conference to discuss the three themes of 'Demilitarization', 'Development' and 'Human rights'.

Homer A. Jack (1993), a Unitarian, was one of those who devoted their energies to holding the Kyoto Conference and he became the first secretary-general. Seven members were specifically named as founders though the movement came about through the united efforts of a great number of people: Dana McLean Gleeley (Unitarians, USA), Maurice Eisendrath (Reform Judaism, USA), R.R. Dewakwer (Hinduism, India), Angelo Fernandes (Catholicism, India), Nikkyō Niwano (Risshō Kōseikai, Buddhism, Japan), Toshio Miyake (Konkō Kyō, Shinto, Japan) and Maria A. Lüker (Catholicism, Germany).

---

3   In Tetsuya Isooka (1989: 306) the following is stated: 'WCRP Japan Committee contributed 55,000 dollars to the International Committee in 1979, over a half of the budget for the year. Approximately a third of the money was the contribution from Risshō Kōseikai'. (Isooka 1989: 306).

In addition to the great efforts made by participants from Japan, the host nation of the conference, we should also note the contribution of Gleeley and others, who had been involved with non-sectarian and non-religious peace movements in the USA since the early part of the 1960s. They helped to form an international community which built a positive and cooperative network. The leading members of this community worked together to foster religious cooperation for unity among religions. Toward the end of the 1960s, this movement in the USA built up a connection with a similar religious movement in Japan to further international cooperation and broaden their base. This international exchange among religions in other regions of the world was expanded and enhanced by the movements in the USA and Japan.

After the Kyoto Conference, a permanent organization was established. The International Association for Religious Freedom (IARF), which aimed at sharing goals and fostering unity among different religions, was the glue that connected the movement in the USA with the movement in Japan. This movement, which aimed at harmonious cooperation among churches and religions, also had the goal to foster the peace movement through religious cooperation. This peace movement brought about by the cooperation of many different religions in many countries of the world became the crowning achievement of these efforts.

Campaigns by the WCRP in the 1970s included the campaign for the early end of the Vietnam War, the campaign for the relief of Indo-Chinese refugees and the campaign for starting a fund for peace and development. This fund for peace and development began with 'the movement for saving a meal'. After the Second World Conference on Religion and Peace was held in Leuven, Belgium in 1974, Yasuyoshi Sakata, Head Priest of Misogikyō, and Yasusaburō Tazawa, Head of Shōroku-Shinto-Yamatoyama, proposed to bring the phrase, 'from prayer to action', into people's daily lives and to make it a reality. Masakane Inoue, Founder of Misogikyō, preached during the time of the Tenpo Great Famine, 'Save a meal to relieve the starving'. From this origin, the movement for saving a meal started. A day of fasting coupled with doing ascetic practices is observed every month, and the money saved from these meals is deposited in a fund of the WCRP Japan Committee. Not only does this practice help others materially but feeling hungry personally gives meaning to the ascetic practices in which one feels and shares the pain of hunger as it is so often experienced in this world. Through these practices one can connect with one's true humanity and have the feeling of both supporting those who are in distress and being supported by those in distress.

The Asia Conference of Religions for Peace (ACRP) started from the Conference held in Singapore in 1976. Mother Theresa (India) and Thich Nhat Hanh

(Vietnam), who subsequently became well known for his engagement in the social Buddhist movement, both attended this Conference. The 'Singapore Declaration', adopted by the conference, included the following section:

> We meet at a time when memories of the Second World War are not yet buried and when the wounds of subsequent local wars are not yet healed in many Asian countries. We meet at a time when the whole of Asia is still in a state of crisis, when in many countries there are still economic imbalances and exploitation resulting in grinding poverty, or an authoritarianism which crushes freedom, or conflicts of ideologies and cultures or minority problems, all of which add their quota to the sum total of human suffering. Although we meet in the peace and comfort of Singapore the cries of the refugees, the protest and agony of the victimized and the oppressed, and the bitter suffering of the poor and the neglected, ring in our ears (ACRP 1976).

Religious influences on peace movements and the tradition of religious cooperation in Japan

As noted above, the formation and development of the WCRP movement was closely connected with the movement for religious cooperation in Japan. In 1872 the 'Great Teaching Campaign' drafted both Buddhist and Shinto priests as instructors. Other noteworthy events include the Parliament of the World's Religions, held Chicago in 1893 to which various Japanese religious groups sent delegates, and the Conference of the Three Religions (Shinto, Buddhism and Confucianism) held in 1912 with the support of Takejirō Tokonami of the Ministry of Home Affairs and the religious scholar Chōfu Anezaki with the aim of presenting these religions in a favorable light, while relieving the anxieties and fears of the emerging socialist and labour movements.

I will not go back too far into the past here. Instead, this chapter focuses on movements during and after the 1920s, beginning with the recollections of Shinichirō Imaoka (1881-1988) on the origin of the WRCP peace movement from the viewpoint of religious cooperation. Imaoka had an interest in the unity of religions in his youth and was involved in religious cooperation throughout his life. He was also involved in organizing the WCRP.[4] In an interview reflecting on the history of religious cooperation in Japan Imaoka

---

4   'Religious Cooperation History of Sixty Years – Interview with Mr. Shinichirō Imaoka (Interviewer: Akitomo Nukaga)' included in Prayer for World Peace and Practice (see Note 2).

referred to the importance of the Japan Association of Religious People in 1924, which was led by Shintoists and others to deal with the anti-Japanese movement in the USA which at that time was gaining momentum. In 1928, the Japan Religion Convention was held at the Japan Youth Hall in the *Meiji Jingū Gaien* (Outer Garden of the Meiji Shrine) in commemoration of the Emperor's Enthronement Ceremony. Three years later the Japan Conference on Religion and Peace was held, with Imaoka helping to organize it. At that time, a World Conference was also planned, but the voluntary religious cooperation movement had reached an impasse because of the outbreak of the Japan-China War in 1931. Part of the intention and purpose of this movement was taken over by the Religious Supporters' Association, which began functioning around 1940, a joint cooperation of Shinto, Buddhism and Christianity in accordance with the Religious Corporation Act and The Japan Wartime Patriotic Association of Religious People (1943) (WCRP 1981: 50-66).

According to Ōishi (1981), who was closely connected with the post-war religious administration, 'The Japan Wartime Patriotic Association of Religious People' changed its name to 'The Japan Religion Association' in February 1946, with the Minister of Education appointed as president and the Chief of Religious Affairs Section appointed as general manager. Soon after this, the Association was restarted as an independent body which was totally separate from the Japanese government and changed its name to 'The Japan Religion Federation' in June of that year (Ōishi 1981: 28-45). This Federation has functioned as an important base of the post-war movement for religious cooperation. Shuten Ōishi took an active leadership role in the movement for religious cooperation and also had a managerial role in the WCRP Japan Committee (Okazaki and Okano 1993; Kobayashi et al. 1995).[5] The Japan Religion Federation played an important part in other groups beginning with the Japan Conference on Religion and Peace in 1947 and continuing to the Japan Council on Religion and Peace (Shū-hei-kyō) in 1962.

There is a great difference, however, between the pre-war and post-war movements for religious cooperation. The post-war movement had a tendency to build up horizontal connections with various non-governmental movements as well as seeking international solidarity. Only if circumstances required and it was absolutely necessary did they have connections with the government. The chairman of the preparatory committee of the

5   The system where religious groups are united under administrative guidance to render services to the national society can be compared to a system of stabilized cooperation such as 'Japan Co., Ltd'. or 'Japan, Inc'., though they are different in scale.

World Religion Conference in 1955 was Yasaburō Shimonaka (1878-1961) of the publishing company Heibonsha, who was eager to join and help the world federation movement. Imaoka established the Japan Association for Religious Freedom and was also involved in International Association for Religious Freedom movement. But a more remarkable change was that many new religions, which in the pre-war period had been viewed as 'fake religions' and had been subject to severe controls by the Japanese government authorities, established a federation to actively participate in the peace movement.

Nikkyō Niwano (1906-99), founder of Risshō Kōseikai, and Toshio Miyake (1903-99) of Konkō Kyō were internationally known and were remarkably effective in Japan and abroad as Japanese promoters of the WCRP movement. Before the WCRP movement, Niwano contributed to the establishment and management of this federation of new religions. This federation was then named 'The Federation of New Religions in Japan (Shin-shū-ren)'.

When it was first formed there were 24 member religions in the Federation of New Religions in Japan. At first Sekai Kyūsei Kyō and Seichō-no-Ie were also members but later they pulled out of the Federation to cooperate and join with the conservative party of Japan. The Shin-shū-ren had 69 member religions as of 2002. These include Perfect Liberty Kyōdan, Risshō Kōseikai, Gedatsukai, Myōchikai, Zenrinkyō, Ennokyō and Shōroku-Shintō-Yamatoyama, Though the WCRP Japan Committee is quite different from the Shin-shū-ren, Nikkyō Niwano (1987-1988) along with other leading members were importantly connected with both of them and these religious federations influenced each other.

Meeting with others in Asia

When the influence and character of the peace movement in Japan after WWII is reviewed through the history of the WCRP, its relationship with the Shin-shū-ren is worth notice. I think that many religious people and religious groups in Japan learned much through their helping to start or involvement in the WCRP movement and through the interchange they had with other religious people overseas. Some religions in the Shin-shū-ren including Risshō Kōseikai, Myōchikai, Myōdōkai and Shōroku-Shintō-Yamatoyama played important parts in the WCRP movement. This may have significantly influenced the Shin-shū-ren in its way of attracting and including many different religious groups as well as in fostering cooperation among these groups and in deciding which social activities to focus on.

We can look at the progression and change in consciousness of the Shin-shū-ren toward the war dead and also in its young men's association of Zen-sei-ren, for instance, by examining the issue of asking pardon from, and praying for the repose of, their souls (Nakajima 1995: 227-263). The Shin-shū-ren was greatly interested in the repose of the souls of the war dead in the 1950s. In cooperation with the Government and the Japan Religion Federation they organized a delegation to gather the ashes of the war dead and to appease their spirits in a ceremony seven times.

Nikkyō Niwano expressed thanks and condolences to the families in 1955 saying (Ōishi 1981: 28-45), 'Thanks to your disinterested self-sacrifice, our glorious *National Polity* was defended desperately to the last. Our homeland Japan has revived splendidly as a democratic state at a heavy cost in blood'. Michio Nakajima called this attitude toward the war dead as shown above as, 'an outlook on the war dead of the "achiever" type'. However, the tone changed toward the end of 1960s when Shin-shū-ren raised an objection to the Yasukuni Shrine[6] Retention by a State Act with advocating 'Retention of People'.

Michio Nakajima named this attitude toward the war dead where the outlook on peace by the Japanese religious people belonging to the WCRP movement was at first reflected. After WWII, some bases in Japan were offered to the US military to use for the Korean War and the Vietnam War. Some in Japan enjoyed many economic benefits from the presence of the US military occupying these bases.

However, some inhabitants in Okinawa and other areas were distressed by the social environment brought about by having so many soldiers and other support staff living in their area. There were many social problems as well as spiritual concerns with having a large military presence there. The question was raised about what price the people would pay for the Japanese government allowing the US bases to wage war elsewhere. The self-understanding of Japan as a 'cultural nation' lacks the knowledge of such grey areas.

Many leaders and members of religious groups attended the World Conference on Religion and Peace. They were all yearning for and working towards the establishment of peace and were consequently shocked by

---

6   The origin of Yasukuni Shrine is the *Shōkonsha* [Shrine to Summon the Souls] established at Kudan in Tokyo in the second year of Meiji (1869). It has become controversial since WWII as it enshrines the war dead who are believed to have sacrificed themselves for the sacred Emperor. When the Prime Minister pays respect to the war dead in ritual visits to the shrine, it raises issues of the separation of church and state (Saaler 2014: 142-145).

this new development of Japan permitting US military bases on the soil of 'Peaceful Japan'. Many of the participants protested against what they saw as the facilitation of war. Yoshikazu Murohara (Myōdōkai), one of the attendants from the Shin-shū-ren, said, 'There were many religious people with various opinions at the Conference including a Buddhist who cried out against the use of napalm incendiary bombs in the Vietnam War, a pastor struggling against racial discrimination, and others exerting themselves for peace in the world. The essential purpose and functions of religions were discussed and defined'. In this new context, the Zen-sei-ren planned a 'Seminar on the Okinawa Issue' and dispatched its young leaders and its adherents to Okinawa from 1969 to 1973.

Through these experiences, the Zen-sei-ren has changed its character. One good example of this change is in the performance of the ceremony, 'Memorial Service for the War Dead and Prayer for Peace' known as the '8.14 Ceremony'. This ceremony, which has been held by the Zen-sei-ren at the Chidori-ga-fuchi (Cemetery for the War Dead) on 14 August every year since 1962, has changed its focus. At the '8.14 Ceremony' in 1972 Mitsuhiro Fukada, the second chairman of the Zen-sei-ren, said 'The Japanese idea of peace was formed based on the terrible experiences of the atomic and hydrogen bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the mass murder at Okinawa which included civilians, the destructive damage of Tokyo, and the death of two million and hundreds of thousands of soldiers in battles abroad'. They have expressed an increasing interest in the civilian victims as time has passed.

The Zen-sei-ren has dispatched a 'Delegation of Young People to Southeast Asia for Peace' (Penitential Tour to Southeast Asia) every other year since 1974. The group of young members in 1974 had many experiences during their tour. One was building a tower for the repose of the souls of the victims who died during the construction of the Taimen Railway and holding a memorial service for their souls. They also cleaned a Japanese cemetery that had deteriorated into a ruinous condition at Labuan, Borneo. They found a deserted grave, which is probably the grave of a *karayuki-san* (one of the 'Japanese women who travelled to a southern country for work'). Another experience was paying a silent tribute to the 'Monument to the victims during the days occupied by Japan'. This delegation of youth also participated in a Catholic mass for the local and Christian victims of Japan's occupation that was celebrated at Saint Peter's Church in the Philippines. One final touching experience was their visit to the monument of 'The Death March at Bataan'. These experiences went beyond words, touching the hearts and minds of these participants along with many of their families

and friends. Nakajima (1995: 256) explains that this 'outlook on the war dead of the victim type' was struck a final blow through these experiences. The Zen-sei-ren were opposed to the Yasukuni Shrine Act in 1974, which may have been caused by the accumulated knowledge and feelings brought about by such learning experiences.

In review, the WCRP started 'the movement for saving a meal', and prepared the foundation for Asia Conference on Religion and Peace (ACRP), while also commencing programmes to support the Indo-Chinese refugees at that time. The WCRP was very instrumental in 'The Singapore Declaration' at the Asia Conference on Religion and Peace held in Singapore in 1976, cited previously. *A Thirty-Year History of the World Conference on Religion and Peace* tells us that:

> As the Conference progressed, the Japanese religious participants could not be spared from getting a great shock. They directly came in touch with the sorrows and sufferings of the Asian people who had been dominated and exploited by European countries as well as by Japan. The realities of daily life in these Asian countries, where the damage due to war has not yet been removed were plainly and starkly reported. Many people in these countries continue to suffer from dire poverty and starvation due to the economic gap between these Asian countries and the advanced nations. There were many requests which came from this conference.

First, a guarantee of the right to live as human beings for all citizens around the world and of establishing a new international economic order where more balance was the norm helped by effective development assistance from the wealthier countries. Also, there was demand for increasing the yield of foods coupled with better distribution to those most in need. Emphasis was placed on the spread and availability of education along with the increase of medical services with much greater outreach. Another important topic was the freedom and independence of the practice of religion from governmental pressure.

The Japanese religious participants were deeply impressed again by the fact that many Asian people still have deeply rooted ill feelings toward Japan at the bottom of their hearts due to the cruel actions of the Japanese military during the War. Later resentment was caused when Japanese products so successfully invaded their markets and hurt local industries (Nukaga 2000: 163-164).

The historical meaning of peace movements in Japan

Takeshi Ishida (1989) has stated that the complacency of pacifism in Japan and its populace in and after the 1970s was due to the immature understanding of each citizen's personal responsibility towards peace at that time.[7]

In the peace movements that formed prior to the struggle against the Japan-US Security Treaty in 1960, non-political and conservative people came to the fore with the understanding that their 'peaceful home' was jeopardized by war and that 'a peaceful home' was the most important thing. They had no other mutual interests.

Ishida (1989) pointed out, however, that the movement by the Beheiren was new because they were conscious of the new tension in the relationship that developed between the individual and the nation, which came from the very different attitude of 'self-awareness as an aggressor'. This is in addition to the earlier outlook of peace maintaining and protecting their lives. When peace is considered from the viewpoint of one's personal responsibility and of the possibility of being an aggressor, then the peace movement tends to form as a group composed of voluntary participants independent of huge organizations. Subsequent peace movements in Japan have failed to maintain or improve on these views, which were integral to the Beheiren movement.

The above assessment may only apply partially to the WCRP. Some representatives of religious groups, who have had the experience of reviewing this history of the peace movement, have felt strongly about the limits of the outlook of 'a closed peace', which is current at international conferences and networks for religious cooperation. Indeed, only a few people in each religious group have personally attended such meetings. Most of the members of each religious group have come to their own understanding through listening to the reports they were given.

On the other hand, it is true that the perspective on peace incorporating 'self-awareness as an aggressor' has been shared to such an extent by the movements of the WCRP and others in the 1970s that it has become firmly accepted. Religious people, who earlier emphasized only the 'peace of mind' of the individual before using a politically conservative outlook on peace, took great steps forward by looking at history from the perception of others with a new consideration for the pain and suffering inflicted upon other people and other nations.

It is necessary for us to go deeper than Ishida (1989) did and to examine whether we can truly sympathize with the victim's position using 'the

---

7   See: *Japanese Politics and Words* in the last volume, Note 1, Section 6.

organization and the individual' viewpoint. This hypothesis holds that an individual can surpass the national identity. However, when we examine this hypothesis critically, we see that it overestimates the power of the individual.

We must all open our minds and feelings to other ways of looking at experiences and history. It is only through accepting others' views and their diversity while at the same time keeping our own traditional values that we will all benefit from our common historical experiences. Some religious people have come to understand the relationship between the aggressor and the victim (of wrongdoing and responsibility) through looking back into history using traditional and religious outlooks on peace. They have tried to reflect upon the past and, using their common religious consciousness, have accepted the burden and responsibility of trying to make amends to those who have suffered due to their nation's actions.

We have reviewed the process that Japanese religious groups experienced as they re-examined history and how they learned directly through the international exchanges with others. These experiences were attained through the framework of 'religious cooperation for the development of the state and national society', which was conceived in the 1920s and was accepted as a natural premise by many people during and after WWII. This was further developed later into an idea of worldwide religious cooperation for the advancement of peace and a better life for all beings.

The benefits from this process of opening up to others and a century of learning from these experiences cannot be reversed. I shall be happy to examine or discuss any other interesting cases or new developments of Japanese religions in keeping with globalization and the unity through diversity it brings.

Works cited

ACRP: Religions for Peace. 1976. *Asian Conference of Religions for Peace* (*Singapore Declaration*). Accessed 28 March 2017. http://rfpasia.org/statements/assembly-declarations/singapore-declaration/.

Dower, John W. 1993. "Peace and democracy in two systems: External policy and internal conflict." In *Postwar Japan as History*, edited by Andrew Gordon, 3-33. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Ishida Takeshi. 1989. *Japanese Politics and Words*, from the last volume, 'Peace and Nation' (the first volume 'Double Meaning of "Peace" – Semantic Change'). Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press.

Isooka Tetsuya. 1989. "Dawn and development of the peace movement by postwar religious cooperation: Japan Council on Religion and Peace and World

Conference on Religion and Peace (WCRP), a case of the Japan committee." In *Cooperation and Discord Among Religions.* Kosei-Shuppansha: Central Science Research Institute.

Jack, Homer A. 1993. WCRP: *A History of the World Conference on Religion and Peace.* World Conference on Religion and Peace.

Kobayashi Hideo, Tetsuji Okazaki, Sei-ichiro Yonekura and NHK reporters. 1995. *Showa History of 'Japan Co. Ltd'. – Structure of Bureaucracy.* Sogensha.

Nakajima Michio. 1995. "War and Japanese." In *Iwanami-koza, Complete History of Japan* 20(1), edited by Naohiro Asao, Yoshihiko Amino, Susumu Ishii, Masanao Kanō, Shōhachi Hayakawa and Yoshio Yasumura. Tokyo: Iwanami-shoten.

Niwano Nikkyō. 1987-1988. *Process of the WCRP, No. 1 to No. 8 Series of Sermons.* Vols. 7-9 and 12-16. Kosei-Shuppansha.

Nukaga Akitomo. 2000. *A Thirty-Year History of the World Conference on Religion and Peace.* WCRP Japan Committee.

Okazaki Tetsuji and Masahiro Okano. 1993. *The Origin of Modern Japan's Economic System*. Japan Economic Newspaper.

Ōishi Shuten. 1981. "Course of the formation of WCRP." *Prayer for World Peace and Practice*. The WCRP 10th Anniversary Executive Committee 1981.

Religions for Peace 1970. "The Kyoto Decleration of the First World Assembly (sic)." Accessed 29 March 2019. http://www.religionsforpeace.org/sites/default/files/pubications/First%20World%20Assembly.pdf.

Saaler, Sven. 2014. "Bad War or Good War?" In *Critical Issues in Contemporary Japan*, edited by Jeff Kingston, 142-145. London: Routledge.

WCRP. 1981. *Prayer for World Peace and Practice – The World Conference on Religion and Peace* (*WCRP*) *History of Ten Years.* The World Conference on Religion and Peace Japan Committee, 10th Anniversary Executive Committee.

About the author

Susumu Shimazono is Professor of the Graduate School of Applied Religious Studies at Sophia University in Japan. He was awarded his BA and MA in the Department of Religious Studies at the University of Tokyo, while also being honoured with a Fulbright Grant. He has a long and distinguished career of visiting professorships that include the University of California, Berkeley, the University of Chicago, University of Venice and Cairo University. He currently also holds a position as Director of the Institute of Grief Care at Sophia University.

5   The Development of Japanese New Religions in Korea

The Case of the Church of World Messianity

Hiroshi Iwai

Abstract

This chapter will focus on Sekai Kyūsei Kyō in South Korea, which is known as one of the religions having many offshoots, and will attempt to analyse the reasons for offshoots by applying a management perspective to religious organizations. After a discussion of 'management studies of religion', the chapter previews the current situation of Japanese religions in South Korea, and then outlines the development of Sekai Kyūsei Kyō there. The management system of the organization is explored, then the formation of offshoots from Sekai Kyūsei Kyō, with particular reference to the 'management of secrets'.

Keywords: Sekai Kyūsei Kyō, South Korea, Japanese new religions, management studies of religion, secrecy in organizations, capital, religious offshoots

Sekai Kyūsei Kyō [Church of World Messianity] (hereafter SKK) is well known as a Japanese new religion from which many offshoots have sprung. The religious organizations arising from SKK, and those religious organizations strongly affected by SKK, are often referred to as the 'Sekai Kyūsei Kyō lineage (*kei*)' organizations. The incidence of new groups branching off is common to both new and old religious organizations. To make an effective study of this process of schism it is very important to explore religions like SKK from which many offshoots have originated. This chapter will focus on SKK in South Korea, and will attempt to analyse the reasons for the formation of these offshoots from the perspective of management studies of religion.

Firstly, I will discuss 'management studies of religion', and give an over-view of the current situation of Japanese religions in South Korea, and the development of SKK there. Then, I will explore the management system of the organization and the formation of offshoots from Kyūsei Kyō with particular reference to the 'management of secrets'.

What is 'management studies of religion'?

Briefly 'management studies of religion' in the context of this chapter is the study of the administration and operations of a religious system. I have chosen not to refer to the existing studies of religion or the sociology of religion. Rather, by fundamentally re-grasping the word, 'management', we can combine findings from management studies and religious studies, including how they interact with each other.

In the study of religion there has been strong resistance to the use of the word 'management' to describe the administration of a religious organization. There are two factors at play here. Firstly, the word 'manage-ment' instantly brings to mind images of making or seeking profit. This is considered an inappropriate expression for religion, which is based on the principle of salvation for mankind. Secondly, the concept of managing a religious organization is inherently different to that of running a business entity. Studying business administration means focusing on running a business, and the concepts of running a business and the study of business administration are both products of modernization.

As Hioki (2000) has noted, if business administration is the study of managing a social system in a broad sense, the know-how for managing systems must have existed prior to the modern era. For example, when people built a pyramid or ran a manor, 'they may have developed and accumulated know-how for preparing meals and coordinating the lives of workers as well as dividing and managing tasks' (Hioki 2000: 93). Therefore, although the study of running a business can be seen as relatively new, the actual administration and operation of social systems is not.

Once 'management' is understood to be not the pursuit of 'commercial purposes' or 'profits', but the administration and operation of a social system, then administering a religious system can be considered 'management'. In this chapter, I will explore SKK developments in South Korea from the perspective of 'management', focusing in particular on the 'management of secrets'.

The current situation of Japanese religions in South Korea

A Gallup survey in 2014 found that half of the population of South Korea have a faith affiliation, with 22 per cent identifying themselves as Buddhist, 21 per cent as Protestant, and 7 per cent as Catholic. Adherents of new Japanese religions are included under the category of Buddhist, since most of these, including SGI (Sōka Gakkai International), are new Buddhist denominations. Furthermore, a large number of believers publicly identify themselves as Buddhist rather than as followers of a Japanese religion in order to avoid the prevailing anti-Japanese sentiment in Korean society. However, Japanese religious movements have prospered under the official 'Japanese popular culture open-door policy' which has been in place since 1998, and as a consequence, Japanese religious associations are thought to have gained many believers in South Korea (Lee 2008).

Lee (2008) studied 18 religious associations imported from Japan and estimated they have about 1,930,000 believers in total, equivalent to about 4 per cent of the total Korean population. Of these, South Korean SGI has 1,480,000 followers, and Tenrikyō 270,000 followers, accounting for 90 per cent of the total number of believers. The remainder are followers of other Japanese new religious movements, including Reiyūkai, Shinnyoen, Risshō Kōseikai, Seichō-no-Ie, Konkō Kyō and Sekai Kyūsei Kyō.

The establishment of SKK in South Korea

A short history of SKK

In 1935 Mokichi Okada (1882-1955) established a religious organization, Dai Nippon Kannon Kai (the Japan Kannon Society), the forerunner of the present-day SKK. After founding several associations of which the main practice was *jōrei*[1] (a spiritual healing technique enacted by holding up one's hand and channeling divine energy), in 1950, Okada called his association 'Sekai Messiah Kyō'. From the beginning, the organization included the word *sekai* [world]. This shows that Okada had a global mindset. After Mokichi's death in 1955, his wife, Yoshi, succeeded to his position and changed its name into 'Sekai Kyūsei Kyō' in 1957. Mokichi's eldest son, Yōichi is now the fourth president. The organization claims to have about 800,000 believers.

---

1   *Jō* – the Chinese character means 'purification, cleansing, exorcism' *Rei* means 'soul, spirit', hence *jōrei* – 'purification of the spirit' through which healing may take place.

In SKK, the core religious practice is *jōrei* through which the movement believes diseases may be healed. Another of their guiding principles is *Yakudoku*, meaning that medication is poison. This idea extends to carrying out pesticide-free Nature Farming. The ultimate goal of SKK is to create heaven on earth with a world free from poverty, disease and conflict.

The schism of SKK can be divided into three stages: around 1950, around 1955, and after 1970. In the first stage, relatively small offshoots appeared because of weak control over the organization. In the second stage, other offshoots were formed by believers who were upset over the founder Mokichi's death. In the third stage, many more offshoots appeared as a result of resistance to the centralization policy of SKK (known as the 'unification'). After that, SKK was split into *Shinseiha* (New Life Group), *Saiseiha* (Rebuilding Group) and *Gojiha* (Protection Group) for the purposes of administrating the religious organization. In 1997, these three branches were reconciled. In 2000, the Religious Juridical Person[2] SKK became a Comprehensive Religious Juridical Person, and these three branches became affiliated religious juridical persons under the umbrella of SKK as Sekai Kyūsei Kyō Izunome Kyōdan (Church of World Messianity Izunome[3] Religious Body, *Shinseiha*), Tōhōnohikari (Light of the East, *Saikenha*), and Sekai Kyūsei Kyō Sunohikari Kyōdan (Church of World Messianity Principle Light (God) Religious Body, *Gojiha*) respectively.

Sekai Kyūsei Kyō in South Korea

In 1953 SKK started evangelical work in Hawaii and California. Its missionary work expanded to Brazil in 1955, and to Taiwan, South Korea, Australia, Germany, Thailand and Argentina in about 1960. It is notable that in Brazil, owing to the successful expansion of the frontier of evangelism, most of the believers are non-Japanese.

In 1964, Jeong Bok-su (1909-1987), a Korean living in Japan, started the evangelism of SKK to South Korea in Yangsan of Gyeongsangnam-do. Before her mission, in 1943, some traces of SKK introduced in Gyeongsangnam-do

---

2   A Japanese system establishing the legal status of religious organizations, see Agency for Cultural Affairs, Government of Japan (N.d.). Approximately 183,000 religious organizations in Japan have been designated as religious juridical persons based on the Religious Juridical Persons Law which protects their autonomy and independence to manage their own affairs, while at the same time being publicly accountable (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology 2000).

3   A term derived from the name of a deity appearing in Japanese myths.

were found. However, they seem to have faded away because of World War Two (WWII).

Jeong married and emigrated to Japan after graduating from college in Seoul during Japan's colonial period. She returned to Korea in 1950 and worked as a public servant in Yangsan. She then returned to Japan and lived with her parents-in-law after her husband's death. Later she became ill and received *jōrei* treatment from Ichiro Nakamura, a follower of Mokichi Okada. It seems that she recovered, and subsequently learned *jōrei* from Nakamura. In 1964, as her mother was dying, she returned home temporarily and had the opportunity to practise *jōrei* in her home town. This can be viewed as the first example of SKK evangelism in South Korea. In 1967, Jeong returned home permanently, bringing with her a hanging scroll bearing the name of the deity *Daikōmyōnyorai* (Tathagata of the Great Light) written by Mokichi Okada himself, which became an object of worship for her. She then started evangelism in Busan, and SKK Busan Church was subsequently established with the support of SKK headquarters.

In 1970, Nakamura, Jeong's religious mentor, separated from SKK and established the Seikō Church (Phosphorescent Light Church) in Japan. In the following year, as if in response, SKK Busan Church was renamed the Sekai Messiah Kyō Busan Church, and at the same time gained independence from the headquarters in Japan to become Sekai Kyūsei Kyō Seikō ha (Church of World Messianity Youthful Light faction). As early as 1976 the organization saw an offshoot appear and become the MOA (Mokichi Okada Association) headquarters in South Korea. Busan Ilbo, a newspaper company in Busan, reported that the MOA headquarters in South Korea was a Japanese religion, and the number of believers decreased due to anti-Japanese feelings, a hang-over from Japanese colonialism. Jeong died in 1987, and in 1989, Sekai Messiah Kyō Busan Church split into three offshoots, one Busan/Yeongdo-based, another Busan/Suyeong-based, and the third Daegu-based. These three offshoots are now officially called Sekai Messiah Kyō, MOA Headquarters in South Korea (Tōhōnohikari), and *Jōrei* Centre in South Korea (Izunome) respectively, and each conducts its own activities. It is estimated that the total number of believers of the three offshoots is 5000 at present (Lee 2007).

The management of secrets

I will now introduce a viewpoint called the 'management of secrets' by which we can study Kyūsei Kyō's management of a religious organization and the

formation of the derivative groups. I would argue that the way religious organizations manage secrets is central to their success in operating both the organization and the creation of offshoots (Iwai 2003).

Secrets in religion

Ayabe (1988) has the following to say about studying secret societies:

> Whether civilized or uncivilized, in public or in private, people have always had secrets. It may be said that, unlike animal instincts for secrecy, such as concealing dens or a catch, the concept of secrets at an intellectual level was born with human beings, and has kept pace with human history. It should be considered that individually the 'secret' is born with the formation of the ego, while collectively, the secret society-type association has been built up with the emergence of the principles of cohesion other than those of territorial bonding or kin (Ayabe 1988: 8-9).

Every religion throughout the ages has had secrets. These 'secrets' may be hidden in the religious scriptures or the knowledge and techniques (spiritual powers and the like) of specific individuals that ordinary believers cannot access. In particular, there is a tendency to mystify the secrets of religious leaders.

Why does the secret play an important role in religion? Firstly, ensuring that special knowledge and techniques rest only with specific individuals justifies and protects the authority of the founder or priest. Secondly, revealing aspects of secret teachings gradually is an effective way of increasing the believers' motivation to engage in religious training.

There is an argument that withholding the secret of a technique during an apprenticeship serves to encourage the apprentice to practise religious training. This mirrors the second reason. The first reason is related to sociological findings which suggest that retaining specific knowledge is associated with hierarchies in society. As Schütz (1964) has noted, all knowledge is not available to all members of a society. It is easy to see examples around us. High-ranking government officials have information that ordinary people cannot access. Technical specialists have technical knowledge which is unnecessary to most other people. As these examples illustrate, knowledge is allocated unequally according to our areas of concern or our social status. The kind of knowledge we have tends to be linked to our social status and class.

Secrets as 'capital'

It is said that secrets can function as a kind of 'capital'. Obtaining more secrets, and therefore greater capital, is linked to gaining status in society. However, as Bourdieu (1971; 1979; 1987), who expanded the concept of capital and introduced it to sociology has noted, a '*champ* [field]' is required for capital to be recognized and to function as capital. What can become capital is decided by its relation to the field. For example, if France stops teaching Latin (or Japan stops teaching Chinese classics) at school, anyone with the ability to teach Latin (or Chinese classics) loses their market in which to sell his or her knowledge, and his or her 'capital' will revert into just a kind of 'possession'.

The founder and priest have two possible concrete strategies to protect their secrets and maintain their status. One is the 'involution strategy', the other is the 'hierarchy strategy'. The former is inspired by the 'involution' concept of Geertz (1963). That is, because the procedure and details of the rituals practised by the founder and priest are complicated, it is difficult to imitate them. The latter strategy insists that if people have not received their education from specific ministries or similar institutions established by the church, then they cannot obtain the necessary knowledge or techniques.

The history of religion around the world proves that these strategies have succeeded, to some extent, in preserving the status of founders and priests. When the secret is concealed to an extreme degree, however, authority can become too concentrated in the religious leader, which runs the risk of ordinary believers losing their trust and faith. Consequently, it is important to consider the transfer or decentralization of power, so that the secret is partially and gradually revealed to rank and file believers. A training system through which it is possible to acquire religious and spiritual power can be an important motivation for believers.

Inflation of religious power

If too many believers obtain access to a secret even though it is only gradually revealed, the organization will experience a phenomenon called 'inflation of religious power'. Reminiscent of demand and supply curves, knowledge or technique which is limited only to certain people can act as 'capital' in a religious 'market'. If 'inflation' occurs, each secret goes down in value.

To cope with this kind of phenomenon, the increase in religious person-nel, such as spirit mediums, for example, may be controlled by prescribing

the content and stages of the training, and by making the training more rigorous. A study of Shinnyoen by Kawabata (1995) provides evidence of this inflation and control of spiritual power. This association has four stages of faith or *Rei-i* [spiritual power ranking]. To obtain 'spiritual power', the highest *Rei-i*, the initiates have to train for more than a dozen years. Shinnyoen has seen an increase in the number of believers since the latter half of 1970, and expanded further in 1980. According to Kawabata's research (1995), the number of years required to reach 'spiritual power' after joining the movement has increased as the number of believers has expanded. This is because a merit system, which provides believers and prospective believers with opportunities such as training, was introduced. This merit system offers believers opportunities to train for spiritual advancement, although these opportunities are not offered unconditionally.

Secrets and the Internet

We have seen that carefully balancing the concealment and disclosure of secrets is important for the successful management of a religious association. The growth of the Internet has added a new phase to the 'management of secrets' in religious organizations, however. No longer can special and particular knowledge be reserved exclusively for people according to class, vocation, or membership. The growth of the Internet 'has led to the emergence of the individual who has more expertise than the researcher. It is no wonder that ordinary people have more information on religion than the religions themselves' (Inoue 1997: 147). Inoue calls this the 'inversion of specialist knowledge'. Religious secrets also leak onto the Internet. For example, in a case which was brought to court in the United States, a former member of Scientology leaked a secret previously unavailable even to long-standing members who had undergone extensive training. It is no longer possible to fully protect the exclusivity of doctrines, and there is a strong possibility that the contents of secret rituals and seminars will be disclosed due to the spread of the Internet.

Expansion and separation: the dilemma of *jōrei*

On the basis of these discussions, how can we analyse the management system of Kyūsei Kyō and the formation of its offshoots in South Korea?

The disclosure of *jōrei*

The reason Kyūsei Kyō gained a large number of non- Japanese believers abroad is because of the religious practice, *jōrei*, which is a simple practice that is believed to have immediate healing properties. This practice is central to SKK in South Korea.

A questionnaire distributed by Lee (2007) to the believers of SKK in South Korea revealed that 62.4 per cent of them answered 'yes' to the question about whether they had experienced physical changes since joining the movement, such as 'illnesses that were healed'. This result contrasts with the survey results for followers of other new religious movements in South Korea around the same time concerning the changes they experienced since joining. For SGI (Sōka Gakkai International) the top responses were 'doing well with family and at work' (57.9%); 'change in thinking about life and views of life' (57.5%), 'getting along well with others' (54.7%). In other words, they answered positively about their social position and changing views of life (Lee 2007: 269). Regarding their motivation for membership of a religious association a majority of SKK believers answered 'because of my and family's illnesses' (59.6%). In contrast, the top answer for Kōmyōkai (Light Association) was 'because of interest in the meaning of life and views of life' (21.5%). The number of adherents that answered 'because of my and my family's illnesses' was 20.8 per cent (Lee 2007: 267).

Thus, it can be said that healing illness by *jōrei* is at the core of religious practices of SKK and contributes to its expansion. However, on the basis of the 'management of secrets', the practice of *jōrei* creates a serious dilemma. *Jōrei* is a simple practice and its disclosure to rank and file believers accelerates the 'inflation of religious power' and therefore contributes to the formation of offshoots.

Originally, Mokichi Okada was the only person who could practise *jōrei*. A prototype of *jōrei* can be seen in *Miteshiro*[4] (transferring through the hand) of Ōmotokyō [the Religion of Great Fundamentals], the practice of holding up a rice paddle to channel divine energy to cure illness. Mokichi was once a believer of Ōmotokyō before founding SKK. Accordingly, there is a strong possibility that he imported *Miteshiro* from Ōmotokyō to SKK. Later, *jōrei* was opened up to ordinary believers, and any believer with a pendant or charm called *ohikari* (lit. light, radiance) is eligible to practise it. This can be regarded as the 'disclosure of the secret'.

---

4   For a detailed explanation of this practice in English, see Birgit Staemmler (2002: 261).

Theoretically therefore *jōrei*, which is very simple to practise and is open to a large number of adherents, has the ability to cause 'inflation of religious power'. However, there is no standard way to define clearly whether or not the inflation of religious power has occurred.

Jōrei and the formation of offshoots

As an example of the 'disclosure of secrets', the disclosure of *jōrei* has important implications for the formation of offshoots. Generally, the factors leading to the formation of offshoots from a new religious organization are as follows:
–   Religious oppression by political power.
–   The death of a founder.
–   Dispute over the property of a religious association.
–   Objections to the legitimacy of a successor.
–   Disagreements with the translation of doctrine.
–   Objections to changes in the organization.

Only the first one is an external factor, one that we have hardly seen since the period before the war. The others are usually considered in combination, rather than individually. These multiple factors usually accelerate the emergence of offshoots. For example, as Miller (1991) has noted, although the death of a founder is a great tribulation for a religious organization, it can be said that historically few have been dissolved because of their founder's death. But when the founder's death combines with other internal factors, the possibility of splits in the organization becomes stronger.

There are also other invisible factors situated in the doctrine and practice to consider, in addition to those previously mentioned. For example, as Yumiyama (2005) has noted in his study on the offshoots of Tenrikyō, if the founder's reincarnation and the notion of divine revelation are central to the doctrine, a person who claims to be a successor after the death of founder may form an offshoot. On the other hand, if training spiritual mediums and using spiritual power to propagate the movement are the targets for the organization, a spiritual medium who is perceived as having a certain power and expertise about missions may often form an offshoot. This is clearly one of the reasons why SKK has many offshoots too.

One reason that SKK in South Korea tends to have offshoots therefore is possibly because *jōrei* is a practice that is easy to imitate, allowing a member to become independent once they have learned the practice. This applies not only to SKK in South Korea, but also to SKK in Japan and other overseas branches, all of which place *jōrei* at the core of their religious practice.

Conclusion

In this paper focusing on SKK in South Korea, I set out to analyse their management system and the formation of offshoots from the perspective of the management studies of religion. I presented the view that the successful management of a religious organization depends on the well-considered 'disclosure and concealment of secrets'. Based on this premise, I suggested that SKK in South Korea faces a serious dilemma. That is, whilst healing illness by *jōrei* contributes to the expansion of its frontier of evangelism, as a simple practice its disclosure to rank and file believers accelerates the 'inflation of religious power' and the formation of offshoots.

Lastly, from the perspective of the management studies of religion, we might consider SKK in South Korea in relation to organizational theory. If the disclosure of *jōrei* accelerates the 'inflation of spiritual power', then the system needs to attract more believers to the core of the organization. However, if a centralization policy is enforced, then SKK will experience the same result that occurred when 'unification' was carried out in the 1970s. Perhaps a new religious practice could be created to complement *jōrei*? However, in that case, the practice would need to be legitimized by establishing its basis in doctrine. It would be necessary to trace back the ideas of Mokichi Okada to their origin and reorganize the doctrine. Another issue concerns the positioning of *jōrei*. If *jōrei* has been opened to rank and file believers, and it is impossible to stop its inflation, then a change in the meaning of *jōrei* would produce a new phase for the organization. However, in this case also the doctrine would need to be fundamentally reviewed, as suggested above.

Works cited

Agency for Cultural Affairs, Government of Japan. N.d. "Religious Juridical Persons and Administration of Religious Affairs." Accessed 29 March 2018. http://www.bunka.go.jp/english/policy/religious_institutions/.

Ayabe Tsuneo. 1988. *Himitsu no Jinruigaku* [*Anthropology of Secret Societies*]. Kyoto: Academia Shuppankai.

Bourdieu, Pierre. 1971. "Genèse et structure du champ religieux." *Revue Française de Sociologie* 12(2): 259-334.

—. 1979. *La Distinction: Critique Social du Jugement*. Paris: Editions de Minuit.

—. 1987. *Choses Dites*. Paris: Editions de Minuit.

Geertz, Clifford. 1963. *Agricultural Involution: The Processes of Ecological Change in Indonesia*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.

Hioki Kōichirō. 2000. *Keieigaku-Genri* [*The principle of business administration*]. Tokyo: Economist-sya.

Inoue Nobutaka. 1997. "Jōhō-ka jidai no shūkyō to global ka" [Religions in the information age and globalization]. In *Global ka to Minzoku Bunka* [*Globalization and Indigenous Culture*], edited by the Institute for Japanese Culture and Classics, Kokugakuin University. Tokyo: Shinsho kan.

Iwai Hiroshi. 2003. "Shūkyō no Enshinryoku to Kyūshinryoku ni kansuru Shiron" [Essays on religious centrifugal force and centripetal force]. *Shūkyō to Shakai* [*Religion and Society*] 9: 3-20.

Kawabata Akira. 1995. "Kyōdan no hatten to reinousha" [Development of religious organizations and spiritual mediums]. In *Shūkyō Network* [Religious Network], edited by Shūkyō Shakaigaku no Kai [Group of Sociology of Religion], Shiga: Kōro-sha.

Lee, W., ed. 2007. *Kankoku ni okeru nikkei Shūkyō undō no Rikai* [*Understanding of Japanese religious movements in South Korea*], Seoul: J&C. [in Korean].

Lee, W. 2008. "Kankokujin no shūkyōishiki: Kankoku Gallup sya Kankokujin no Shūkyō to Shūkyōishiki" [Religious consciousness of Koreans: Focusing on Korean Gallup Survey 'Religions and Religious Consciousness of Koreans']. In *Kankoku niokeru Shimin Undō no Dōtai II* [*Public Awareness Movement in South Korea II*], edited by M. Okonogi and J. Nishina. Tokyo: Keio University Press.

Miller, Timothy, ed. 1991 *When Prophets Die: The Postcharismatic Fate of New Religious Movements*. NY: State University of New York Press.

Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology. 2000. "Outline of the religious juridical persons system." In *Japanese Government Policies in Education, Science, Sports and Culture 2000*, Part 2, Chapter 8, Section 5.1. Accessed 29 March 2018. http://www.mext.go.jp/b_menu/hakusho/html/hpae200001/hpae200001_2_143.html

Schütz, Alfred. 1964. *Collected Papers II, Studies in Social Theory*. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff.

Staemmler, Birgit. 2002. *Chinkon Kishin: Mediated Spirit Possession in Japanese New Religions*. Muenster: Lit Verlag.

Yumiyama Tatsuya. 2005. *Tenkei no yukue: Shūkyō ga bunpa suru toki* [*Revelation: The Schism of the Religions*]. Tokyo: Japan Institute for Community Affairs.

About the author

Hiroshi Iwai is Professor of Sociology and Religious Studies at Tezukayama University. His recent research focuses on the transmission of management philosophy of the Samsung Group in South Korea. He is the author of a chapter in Nakamaki et al. (eds.) *Enterprise as an Instrument of Civilization: An*

Anthropological Approach to Business Administration (2016), and *Asia-kigyo no Keieirinen: Seisei Denpa Keisho no Dynamism* [Management Philosophy of Asian Companies: Dynamism of Creation, Diffusion and Succession] (in Japanese), (2013).

6   Falun Gong in Song and Dance

Benjamin Penny

Abstract

Since Falun Gong was suppressed in the People's Republic of China in 1999, its activities have centred on communities of practitioners located around the world who are mainly expatriate Chinese. Since 1999, followers of the founder, Li Hongzhi, have engaged in political activity, agitating for the rights of their Chinese co-religionists in detention and pressuring the Chinese government to ease restrictions on practitioners. In the last decade, Falun Gong has developed new means of publicizing its message. Along with surveying its suite of websites, broadcast and print media organs, this chapter will examine a new manifestation: its song and dance performances by three New York-based troupes that tour Europe, the Americas, Asia and the Pacific annually. Marketed as 'classical Chinese dance', they claim to preserve traditional Chinese culture. This alignment of Falun Gong with the glories of the Chinese past is a significant development in their propaganda war with the Chinese government

Keywords: Falun Gong, Shen Yun, performance, ritual, Chinese religions, new religions

More than a decade has now passed since Falun Gong was suppressed by the Chinese government in July 1999.[1] Until the suppression, Falun Gong's activities were largely confined to China itself. Any overseas presence that the movement had was, in a sense, accidental, the result of informal expansion amongst expatriate Chinese or, very rarely, amongst westerners who had come into contact with it through friends in China or overseas.

---

1   In this chapter I cite several texts from Falun Gong and Chinese government websites. In some cases, there are mistakes or infelicities in the English but I have left these in the original form and not noted them with [sic].

The homeland of the movement was China, the cultural universe of Falun Gong doctrine was Chinese, and the language of the scriptures was Chinese. After 1999, however, this situation changed. Now based in the New York area, Falun Gong became a diasporic organization, a collection of co-religionists scattered around the globe who were prevented from returning to their homeland. This literal de-centring of the movement changed the status of the previously relatively insignificant number of overseas practitioners of Falun Gong. They have now become an international network of communities of loyal activists engaged in a range of activities such as lobbying for the Falun Gong cause with their host governments, keeping the message of the brutality of the suppression alive and at the forefront of the minds of the foreign media, as well, of course, as maintaining their cultivation practice. Launched in north-eastern China in 1992, Falun Gong's period of its exile from the homeland now far exceeds the time it was active in China.

Examining how Falun Gong manages its global network of followers in the present therefore raises a very specific set of issues to do with its history. The first task that the movement confronts is maintaining its community of practitioners, scattered as they now are across the world. The second challenge is the attempt to transform itself into a movement that establishes genuine roots in the countries in which it is allowed to practise: a religion that belongs to those localities rather than one that has only been transplanted to them. In this chapter, I discuss the means by which Falun Gong has attempted to maintain its existence across the world since 1999 and spread its message to non-Chinese people as well as to its natural constituency of expatriate Chinese. The clearest means by which Falun Gong achieves these goals is through their extensive presence on the Internet and in other media. This is the topic to which I will first turn, before examining the phenomenon of Falun Gong song and dance performances.

Falun Gong websites and media

Falun Gong has always been aware of the possibilities of innovations in communication technologies, and today runs many tens of separate websites, which are linked to each other, with different functions. Most of them are maintained by local groups around the world, and include, for example, information on practice sites and protest activities in the cities concerned (Falun Dafa 2018a). However, the main Falun Gong site with international currency is falundafa.org, the entry point for most enquiries from non-practitioners (Falun Dafa 2018b). It has versions in more than 40 different

languages including Tibetan, Hebrew, and Arabic. The home page for the English version of the site includes a basic introduction to Falun Gong, and links to sites which provide free downloads of the core Falun Gong texts, video and audio guides to the performance of the five basic exercises, and information on local contacts around the globe. At the time of writing, the website listed contact points in seventy-six countries.

Among the audiovisual resources on falundafa.org are nine lectures given by Li Hongzhi, or Master Li as he is known to practitioners, the founder and leader of Falun Gong.[2] These lectures formed the basis of the text of *Zhuan Falun*, the primary scripture of the movement originally published in January 1995.[3] During these lectures, as well as introducing Falun Gong, Master Li also apparently cleansed the bodies of those attending and inserted a *falun*, or 'Wheel of the Law' into their abdomens (Penny 2012). This *falun* (which exists in another dimension) is at the core of Falun Gong cultivation as it is constantly in motion, spinning one way to absorb the energy of the universe and then the other to disperse it throughout the practitioner's body. The goal of Falun Gong cultivation is 'consummation', also expressed as 'returning to the origin', which Li compares to the Daoist ascension to heaven in broad daylight or the Buddhist nirvana. It should be noted, however, that he is explicit in declaring that Falun Gong is not Buddhism, and indeed denounces it (along with other established religions) in his writings and speeches (Penny 2005). Although Falun Gong cultivation is primarily an individual task consisting of the performance of the exercises, following the Falun Gong moral path, and reading and re-reading the Master's works, the cultivation process cannot be completed without the spiritual intervention of Li Hongzhi himself.

Falun Gong has, therefore, a well-developed and extensive set of teachings. How Falun Gong has chosen to represent itself on falundafa.org raises important issues about the contemporary form of the movement. In all 40 language versions, the format of the website, the links provided, and the photographs used in the rotating banner are identical. The first set of photographs shows galaxies, like those taken by the Hubble telescope. The second has an alabaster sculpture of a standing Buddha flanked by Chinese- and English-language versions of *Zhuan Falun*. The third set shows a mass group practice session in Guangzhou that was obviously taken before

2   '9-Session Lecture' (Falun Dafa 2018c).

3   The most convenient way to access *Zhuan Falun* and all Li Hongzhi's other texts is from gb.falundafa.org/falun-dafa-books.html for the original Chinese versions (Falun Dafa 2018d), and en.falundafa.org/falun-dafa-books.html for the English translations (Falun Dafa 2018e).

the suppression; there are two Western women practicing the fifth of the exercises, and a group of five also practicing, this time of three Western men and two Chinese women. That these images of Falun Gong practice depict Westerners, despite the fact that most Falun Gong practitioners around the world are ethnically Chinese, indicates that Falun Gong wants to give the impression that it is an international and multicultural movement (Ownby 2008). This uniformity in the websites shows the strong editorial control that is exercised by a central authority.

This was not always the case. The standardization of the websites only occurred in August 2012. Before this, it would appear that the editors of the site for each language had a degree of autonomy.[4] In the English-language site before the standardization, the iconography used – a lotus flower, an *apsara* or Buddhist female cloud spirit in the style of the Dunhuang cave paintings – was consistently Buddhist in inspiration, despite Falun Gong's insistence that it is not Buddhism. Could we conclude from this that the site's designer chose to make use of both the generally positive view of Buddhism in the west and a widespread lack of knowledge, in English-speaking countries, of what it actually is? The English-language home page stood in contrast to the equivalent Japanese-language site that had no lotus image, perhaps because most Japanese people would know enough about Buddhism to realize that Falun Gong has no relationship to that religion. These features of the site perfectly illustrate Wendy Smith's observation that '[Religious] organizations must [...] as corporations do, [pay] attention to the design of their products and services in cross-cultural contexts' (Smith 2008: 3). The fact that the Falun Gong sites are now standardized perhaps indicates that the desire for control by the Falun Gong's central authorities outweighs any advantage they might have seen in targeting specific audiences in specific ways.

The main site for Falun Gong practitioners is minghui.org, which has an English equivalent in clearwisdom.net, as well as being available in sixteen other languages. Unlike falundafa.org the design of these sites has always been identical in the different languages; their intended audiences are clearly already part of the movement so adjustments did not need to be made for each iteration. They are also much more detailed than falundafa.org and include, among other things, Li Hongzhi's latest statements, news of the suppression, stories of cultivation, information about the latest publicity drive or protest activity, and detailed histories of the movement.

4   See previous versions of www.falundafa.org/eng/home.html and www.falundafa.jp on the Internet Archive 'Wayback Machine' at archive.org.

Another of Falun Gong's main websites is faluninfo.net. Functioning as Falun Gong's public information channel with a clear focus on the persecution of practitioners, this site's full title is, 'Falun Dafa Information Centre: News and Analysis on Falun Gong and the Human Rights Crisis in China'. To these may be added pureinsight.org and its Chinese equivalent in zhengjian.org which is a forum for 'articles primarily written by practitioners covering a wide range of topics in science, society, the arts, the humanities and more', fofg.org or 'Friends of Falun Gong', as well as clearharmony.net or 'Falun Dafa in Europe' and falunau.org, the site for Falun Dafa Australia. There is also fgmtv.net, the site for Falun Gong's video library ('fgm' stands for *fang guangming*, or to 'send out enlightenment'). This suite of websites has been consciously constructed to provide services for different audiences: newcomers are directed to falundafa.org while minghui.org and clearwisdom.net are clearly designed to keep the dispersed community of believers unified and committed to the cause. Clearly, beyond its many local groups of ten or twenty practitioners, Falun Gong really now exists primarily as a cyber-community. In addition, many local Falun Gong groups, as well as the central organization, also have a presence on Facebook and Twitter. One indicator of the importance Falun Gong places on web access is that Freegate, the software used by many Chinese groups and individuals to circumvent the so-called Great Firewall, was developed by Falun Gong practitioners.

In addition to the websites, Falun Gong also runs, or appears to run, several other media ventures to spread their message. These include Sound of Hope, a web-based radio station started in 2003, New Tang Dynasty TV established in 2001 (NTDTV 2001), and the free newspaper the *Epoch Times* that began in 2000. The *Epoch Times* has been widely distributed internationally, and has been subject to some controversy over its links to Falun Gong, as has New Tang Dynasty TV, since neither of these ventures acknowledges Falun Gong control or ownership. In April 2004, then China correspondent for *The Wall Street Journal*, Susan V. Lawrence wrote, 'In the David-and-Goliath-style struggle between the Falun Gong spiritual movement and China's government, Falun Gong is fielding two new weapons: a small New York-based Chinese-language television production company – New Tang Dynasty Television – and the *Epoch Times*, a New Jersey-registered Chinese-language newspaper' (Lawrence 2004). She continued:

Both give prominent coverage to Falun Gong, which Beijing still suppresses because it sees it as a major challenge to its rule. Where the paper and TV company are controversial is in their unwillingness to identify themselves

as having any association with the group, despite ample evidence to the contrary. 'Right now we are labeled a Falun Gong TV station, even though we are not', says NTDTV's President Zhong Lee. NTDTV 'really has nothing to do with Falun Gong at all', he adds. Yet tax records show that a top spokesperson for Falun Gong in the US, Gail Rachlin, is one of three directors for NTDTV, officially registered as the Universal Communications Network. As for the *Epoch Times*, Editor in chief Annette Jun Guo says to call it a Falun Gong media organization would be 'completely wrong' and dangerously 'misleading' because Falun Gong, she says, has no political goals. Yet tax records show that the chairman of the paper's board is another top Falun Gong spokesman Kangang Xu.

On 6 May 2004, NTDTV's Zhong Lee responded saying that 'NTDTV neither teaches the doctrines of the Falun Gong movement nor attempts to represent a Falun Gong viewpoint', but he did concede that, 'It is true that many Falun Gong practitioners work for NTDTV' (Lee 2004). The same could be said of *The Epoch Times*. The links between NTDTV and the *Epoch Times* with Falun Gong are certainly strong: in June 2009 Li Hongzhi himself gave a 'Fa [Dharma, Law] Teaching at the NTDTV Meeting' (Li Hongzhi 2009), following this in October with a 'Fa Teaching Given at the *Epoch Times* Meeting' (Li Hongzhi 2009b). Needless to say, he has not honoured other media outlets with his presence. It is also worth pointing out that the US government accepts some linkage between these media organizations and Falun Gong: A Congressional Report Service paper from August 2006 refers to 'FLG followers' being 'affiliated with several mass media outlets', namely those mentioned above (Lum 2006). On this issue, David Ownby (2001: 222) observed that:

> Neither practitioners in general nor those who work for the *Epoch Times* like to call it a 'Falun Gong newspaper', even though it was founded by Falun Gong practitioners, most if not all of its publishers are Falun Gong practitioners, many of its journalists are Falun Gong practitioners, and at least part of its staff is made up of volunteer workers, many of whom are Falun Gong practitioners.

In interviews with Ownby, one publisher indicated that if they were identified as a Falun Gong newspaper they would experience difficulties reaching readers. While this may be partly true, it also points to a general unwillingness across many Falun Gong media ventures to be identified with the movement. Despite the complete or partial denials of links between Falun Gong and these media ventures, the homepage of Pure Insight lists

the *Epoch Times*, Sound of Hope, and NTDTV under 'Related Links' alongside Falundafa, Minghui, Clearharmony, Falun Dafa Australia, and the Falun Dafa Information Centre. Also on this list is Shen Yun Performing Arts, a group that performs song and dance shows around the world, and which will be the concern of the reminder of this chapter.

Falun Gong in song and dance

Falun Gong song and dance shows sponsored by New Tang Dynasty TV began in 2004 with a 'Chinese New Year Gala', followed each year by a new and more elaborate performance (NTDTV 2010). These were originally clearly modelled on the long running Spring Festival Gala broadcasts of Chinese Central TV that feature the best of Chinese performers and are reckoned to have an annual audience of 700 million people. The official CCTV Chinese New Year television shows began in 1983 and by 1994 were being simultaneously broadcast to Australia and North America. The 1997 show was broadcast for the first time by satellite, and in 2006 it was available streamed live on the Internet. A regular feature of the CCTV New Year performances is patriotic songs accompanied by images of the current leadership of the Communist Party. The Spring Festival Gala proclaims itself to be a symbol and enactment of national unity. One indication of this is that during the middle 1990s, as Zhao Bin notes, 'Regional and local television networks began to remove their own local gala broadcasts on New Year's Eve to make space for CCTV to stage the one and only national happy gathering'. (Zhao 1998: 46).

The original 2004 New Tang Dynasty TV show toured five cities in North America. In subsequent years, it changed its name several times – Chinese New Year Spectacular, Holiday Wonders, Divine Performing Arts, Shen Yun Performing Arts – and became more ambitious in both its scale and its touring programme. In the 2016 season, according to the Shen Yun website, there were four separate troupes of dancers and musicians touring different parts of the world simultaneously; they performed 406 times in 118 cities in nineteen countries (Shen Yun Performing Arts 2016). Simply by broadcasting a rival show to CCTV, NTDTV, and therefore Falun Gong, were making a political point. However, an examination of the content of the Shen Yun shows demonstrates a considerably more nuanced and complex politics behind them, as well as, I will argue, a kind of ritual of national renewal.

Since their inception, Falun Gong's song and dance performances have followed a similar pattern. Each item is introduced by two compères standing

in front of the curtain, a man and a woman, whose stilted and highly scripted banter is in both English and Chinese. They introduce approximately 20 items, all dances except for the occasional instrumental solo, and two songs, one in each half. The songs implicitly or explicitly purvey Falun Gong messages. In the first half of the 2015 show, for example, the performer of 'Divine Pledges Fulfilled' sang:

> The Gods made an oath:
> To deliver us to heaven at the end of days
> For countless ages, lives have awaited this day
> Yet now, when called, they turn away
> Dafa has been taught this whole time
> The blood of the holy believers is shed on others' behalf
> They spread truth to save us, even while oppressed
> The gods are fulfilling their oath
> Yet some people are only interested in profit
> And don't bother to find out the oppressor's lies
> They dare not imagine that the gods are fulfilling their oath
> (Shen Yun Performing Arts 2015: 12).

After intermission, it was 'A Song from the Ancestors':

> There is a song in my heart
> Passed down from ancestors to me, telling us:
> That at the Red Regime's [*hongchao*, literally 'red tide'] end divine beings shall come
> And the spiritual followers will suffer for humankind's sake
> The legend now comes true in our day
> The melody tells us to answer destiny's call
> This is every life's last hope
> This is the salvation we've all longed for
> (Shen Yun Performing Arts 2015, 15).[5]

While some of the dances also have Falun Gong content, most do not. Instead they either depict traditional Chinese stories from history, myth, or literature, or else have ethnic themes. In the 2015 programme, for example, those with historical and literary themes included 'Capturing Arrows with Boats of Straw', which tells a story based on the exploits of master strategist Zhuge

---

5   On Falun Gong's eschatology, see Penny (2012: 135-150).

Liang at the time of the fall of the Han dynasty. While based on historical incident the story itself comes from the famous Ming dynasty novel *Romance of the Three Kingdoms*. Another Ming novel, *Outlaws of the Marsh*, provides the narrative for 'Outlaw of Mount Liang', which concerns one of its heroes, Lin Chong. The ethnic dances in this programme are 'Chopstick Dances of the Mongolian Ladies', 'Snow-Capped Celebration' (set in Tibet), 'In a Village of the Hmong', and 'Spirit of the Yi'.

These kinds of dances are the staple of officially sponsored song and dance shows in China and their purpose and politics in Falun Gong's performances are similar. For the Chinese state, the ethnic dances make manifest the government policy of *minzu tuanjie*, [solidarity of the nationalities], where all 56 officially designated nationalities (including the majority Han Chinese) come together in a unified national whole. This national whole is, of course, ruled through the Chinese Communist Party to whom each nationality owes loyalty. Thus, Gardner Bovingdon writes, in relation to the Uyghur, that, 'The CCP has made *minzu tuanjie* [solidarity] the centrepiece of its yearly propaganda drives to combat separatism' (Bovingdon 2010: 16). The inclusion of this kind of dance in the Falun Gong performances is not, however, merely imitation or, more strongly, endorsement of the CCP's position. It is, rather, a performance of the ideal Chinese state envisaged by Falun Gong. I argue that this state has two fundamental characteristics: first, it is founded on the primacy of the Han and secondly, it is based on a new cosmic dispensation in which Li Hongzhi is implicitly (but clearly) the heavenly mandated ruler.

A Han-based ethno-centrism appears to be a strong feature in Falun Gong's ideology. In addition to the song and dance shows, Falun Gong also run 'Classical Chinese dance', and 'Han Couture', competitions through New Tang Dynasty TV. The instructions to these competitions make this ethno-centrism clear. The stated mission of the Han Couture competition is 'to spread the classical Chinese apparel culture around the world, and in the process, promote the values of integrity and beauty it embodies' (Wong 2016).[6] The designs submitted, it says, should be:

> Inspired by the depth and inner meaning of 5000 years of Chinese apparel [… and build] upon the ancient Chinese codes of conduct of benevolence, righteousness, courteousness, wisdom and loyalty, as well as the values of kindness and beauty, to reclaim the traditional Chinese apparel and etiquette culture' (NTDTV 2013).

---

6   The promotion of *hanfu* is not limited to Falun Gong. Stephen Wong dates the beginning of a *hanfu* movement to 2003.

Most explicitly, the instructions demand adherence to the styles of the Tang, Song and Ming dynasties, which were ruled by the Han Chinese. Notably excluded are 'designs based on other ethnic groups such as the popular Hu clothes of Tang Dynasty, the Mongolian clothes of Yuan Dynasty, and the Manchu clothes of Qing Dynasty' – in other words, the costumes of so-called 'conquest dynasties' where the ruling house was not ethnically Han.

Not only do these ethnic strictures distance Falun Gong's ideal Chinese state from that run by the Communist Party, whose ethnic policies are all-embracing, but Falun Gong also decry the Communist Party for destroying traditional Chinese culture. Thus, another feature of these rules is that 'the title and design of works submitted should carry no influence of the Chinese Communist Party culture'. The rules of the dance competition go further:

> Since the Communist Party is outlawed in the United States, all songs and music that eulogize the Communist Party will be prohibited during this competition. Contestants would be well advised to send their dance music to the Panel of Judges for assessment in order to avoid unnecessary problems (NTDTV 2016).[7]

In each version of Falun Gong's song and dance shows, there are also two dances – one in each half – that focus the attention of the audience on the situation of the group in China since the suppression. The programme for the 2015 show gives this précis of the narrative of 'The Power of Compassion' – the Falun Gong dance in the first half:

> In a town in contemporary China, people are practicing Falun Dafa. This is a spiritual meditation discipline, also known as Falun Gong, whose practitioners are persecuted in China today. But in the beginning of this story, these are still peaceful days, a time when the practice was a common sight in Chinese parks; even passersby were inspired by its principles of truth, compassion and forbearance.
> Persecution suddenly erupts, with Communist Party policeman attacking the meditators. While trying to arrest a young man, a police officer slips and hurts his knee. The young man stops trying to flee and helps the resistant officer. They eventually sit down together to read *Zhuan Falun*, Falun Dafa's main text. The police officer comes to regret his actions, as understanding and sincerity pave the way to an unexpected blessing (Shen Yun Performing Arts 2015, 11).

7   The Communist Party is not, in fact, outlawed in the United States.

The dance with Falun Gong content in the second half is also always the final item of the show. I argue that this item forms a pair with the opening item, so will analyse them together. In the 2015 show the first item is called 'Following the Creator to Renew all Things'. The synopsis reads:

> High up in the heavens, we find ourselves in a sacred, divine realm. Suddenly a golden chariot appears, signalling the arrival of the Creator. He announces to the deities his intention to descend to the mortal world and establish civilization on Earth. Many divine beings join his mission, reincarnating in the Middle Kingdom as members of China's splendid Zhou Dynasty (Shen Yun Performing Arts 2015: 10).

This dance, like the opening items in all versions of the show, base themselves on a specific view of what might be thought of as a divinized view of Chinese history, one where Chinese culture was passed on to people by gods in a direct way. According to this narrative, gods descended to earth in ancient times, and out of compassion for humanity (or, perhaps, specifically Chinese humanity) have chosen to return periodically, reborn as notable figures throughout history. This alternative history of China regards it as a Divine Land (or in Chinese, *shenzhou*), whose culture is not the construction of humans but was 'divinely imparted', was inspirited. Chinese history, they maintain, began 5000 years ago with the Yellow Emperor who, they say, was a divine being who descended to earth from heaven. The position that Chinese culture is divinely inspired, of course, opposes the teachings of the Chinese Communist Party in fundamental ways where culture is defined as fundamentally a human construction. Indeed, according to the classical Marxist model, culture changes through history as a result of class struggle. For Falun Gong, on the other hand, Chinese culture is understood as perennial: if not unchanging then at least shot through with an essential golden thread. The Shen Yun website describes this view of history under the heading '5000 Years of Civilization, Almost Lost':

> China was once known as Shen Zhou – The Divine Land. This profound name describes a land where deities and mortals coexisted, and a belief that the divine transmitted a rich culture to the people of the earth. For thousands of years, Buddhist, Taoist, and other disciplines were at the heart of society. Calligraphy, music, medicine, attire, and much more were said to have been passed down from the heavens.
> Unfortunately, over its past 60 years of rule, the communist regime has treated traditional Chinese values, centred on the idea of harmony

between heaven and earth, as a threat to its existence. And in its system-
atic campaigns like the Cultural Revolution, it has uprooted traditional
beliefs and destroyed ancient treasures – bringing traditional 5000 years
of civilization to the brink of extinction (Shen Yun Performing Arts n.d.).

Thus, these performances are imbued with spiritual power, a characteristic,
the writers claim, of Chinese culture. In addition, though, the opening item
consistently begins with the descent of gods to earth. In the context of a
performance, these items unavoidably recall the way traditional Chinese
religious rituals begin; that is, with an invocation to the gods, calling on
them to descend to the ritual arena. If we move now to the final item in
the performances, we can see a parallel closing motif. The 2015 version of
Shen Yun ends with 'The Divine Renaissance Begins':

> Returning to China today, the scene opens with a little girl who sees a
> group of people meditating. Moved by their serenity, she discovers they
> are practicing Falun Dafa, and befriends them, despite the disapproval of
> her police officer father. She joins them in holding a banner: 'Falun Dafa is
> Good'. A group of Communist Party policemen suddenly appear, and with
> them dark clouds, signaling the onset of nationwide persecution. Amidst
> the chaos, the girl's father arrives just in time to see a fellow officer land
> his daughter a lethal blow. Anguished, he renounces his loyalty to the
> Party. When all seems lost, and even the earth begins to erupt in fury,
> Lord Buddha appears, with divine beings trailing in his wake. And, with
> this heavenly scene, a new era begins (Shen Yun Performing Arts 2015: 15).

Here, as with all of the final items, the core narrative concerns state vio-
lence against peace-loving Falun Gong practitioners. However, unlike the
dances in the first half of the programme, which typically end with one
of the persecutors realizing the goodness of Falun Gong and joining the
practitioners, these final items conclude with heavenly intervention, the
murdered practitioner transforming into a deity and reappearing amongst
a retinue of 'Buddhas, Gods, and Daos', as Falun Gong texts describe them
(Penny 2012: 128-130).

In terms of ritual, the key phrase in the programme's synopsis is 'a new era
begins'. We have seen how the opening item in the performance of Shen Yun
calls the gods to the ritual arena. Here the gods reappear, before returning
to their heavens having inaugurated a 'new era'. This interpretation of Shen
Yun sees it as a ritual of renewal where the relationship between the sacred
realm and the mundane realm has been re-established. The goal of the ritual

is to set the cosmos to rights and to place the community for whom the ritual is performed in its correct position vis-à-vis heaven and earth. This is, of course, the paradigmatic form of Chinese ritual, most famously manifested in the Daoist *jiao* community ritual (Andersen 2008) and, at the grandest scale, the imperial *feng* and *shan* sacrifices (Lewis 1999) that took place on, and at the base of, Mount Tai from ancient times. I am not arguing here that Shen Yun parallels the forms of Chinese rituals of renewal in the same way as it parallels the Chinese government's New Year televisions spectaculars. This is not simply the adoption of a pre-existing format to appeal to a pattern of action that has cultural power. It is, I would argue, a ritual of real spiritual power, at least in the eyes of those that sponsor and perform it.

This is the case for two reasons. First, the cosmic historical pattern that is enacted in the opening and closing items corresponds closely to Falun Gong teachings on the cyclic nature of the universe. Master Li frequently refers to the times we are living in as 'the period of the decline of the Dharma', borrowing Buddhist terminology. In this eschatology, the teachings of Falun Gong are the only means by which people can save themselves during the cataclysms that will presage the birth of a new era. The most notable of the signs that these cataclysms have started is, according to Master Li, the suppression of Falun Gong itself and the cosmic battle that is currently being fought between good and evil across all dimensions, where the Communist Party of China represents the heart of evil on the earth. Thus, the final item of Shen Yun is an enactment in microcosm of the end times, a demonstration of the salvific power of Master Li's teachings.

The second, more mundane, reason that we know Shen Yun has real spiritual power comes from postings on Falun Gong websites. According to Shen Yun publicity material, audiences across the world are impressed, moved, and thrilled by their performances but the response of some viewers includes more than simply aesthetic appreciation. On 2 July 2009, a post on clearwisdom.net claimed that a stroke victim in her sixties 'recovered miraculously and could walk normally again' after watching a DVD of the 2009 performance, and a car accident victim had her broken ribs healed by watching the DVD and reciting the words 'Falun Gong is good. Truthfulness-Compassion-Forbearance is good'. In this latter case, the author is not shy in linking Shen Yun Performing Arts with Falun Gong and, indeed, sees the miraculous power of the performances (even in DVD form) as an efficient means of bringing newcomers to the faith (Clearwisdom 2009b). Most potently, a 'Retired Cadre from Shuangcheng' in Heilongjiang province, reported her experience of both the official New Year's Eve show on television and Falun Gong's song and dance show:

All my family members were busy doing their own things on New Year's Eve. I am such an old woman that I had nothing to do, so I retired to my own bedroom. I turned on the television and lay down on the bed to watch a programme while waiting for dinner to be served. The special New Year's programmes broadcast by CCTV all contained a lot of chaotic noise with wild dancing, and they annoyed me. I felt the pressure of unseen evil forces closing in around me, pushing me toward a bottomless abyss. I felt suffocated and had a feeling of wanting to vomit and having diarrhoea at the same time. I struggled out of bed and felt darkness closing in on my eyes, so I leaned against the door frame. A sudden severe pain in my stomach caused me to lose control and soil my pants [...] Suddenly I remembered that a friend had given me a copy of the 2008 Shen Yun Performing Arts Chinese Spectacular DVD, which I enjoy watching very much. I found it right away and started to watch. After a while, I felt my entire body relaxing; all of the illness symptoms disappeared and I felt immensely comfortable [...] You really have to see it in order to understand. This is my real experience (Clearwisdom 2009a).

These testimonies not only demonstrate that Shen Yun (or its predecessors) apparently has actual spiritual effects that manifest in real people but that it also has a cleansing effect. As the retired cadre illustrates, the official performance is itself powerful in the same supra-mundane realm but the power of Shen Yun purifies and decontaminates the evil of the Communist Party. In this testimony, the cosmic battle between good and evil is fought out in the person of the retired cadre and the victory of Shen Yun presages the final victory of the cosmic forces of good led by Master Li.

The interpretation of Shen Yun performances outlined here – as rituals of renewal that, incidentally, have healing power – is an attempt to understand their role in Falun Gong, and possibly to explain why so much time, effort, and expense is spent on their production and tours. It is one of the characteristics of the study of Falun Gong, though, that the accounts of incidents, activities, biographies, texts, etc., as provided by Falun Gong do not simply disagree with the accounts given by the Chinese authorities on the same topics, they do not even occupy the same explanatory territory. In the case of Shen Yun, however, this may not be so clear-cut. While the criticism of Shen Yun by the Chinese authorities does not address the possibility that these performances are ritual acts, the terms in which their criticisms are couched do in some ways reflect Falun Gong's ideas about the performances as representations of an ideal China.

Chinese criticisms and counter-representation

Criticisms of Shen Yun by the Chinese authorities are part of the propaganda war they have been waging against Falun Gong for the last decade. The Chinese embassy in Washington asserts that Falun Gong:

> [...] have been staging the so-called 'Shenyun' Performances in the US in recent years in the name of promoting Chinese culture and showcasing the oriental charm. But in fact, the performances were filled with cult messages and implied attacks against the Chinese Government. Li Hongzhi himself claimed openly that it was he who instructed the various 'Falun Gong' groups to organize the 'Shenyun' performances aimed at 'showcasing the practitioners, salvation and telling the truth' rather than entertainment for the ordinary people. Clearly, the so-called 'Shenyun' is not a cultural performance at all but a political tool of 'Falun Gong' to preach cult messages, spread anti-China propaganda, increase its own influence and raise fund. Such show denigrates and distorts the Chinese culture, and deceives, makes fool of and even brings harm to the audience. The Chinese culture, with its long history and rich variety, has long been popular and loved by the American public. When endorsing or appreciating events and performances in celebration of the Chinese New Year, the public need to stay away from the so-called 'Shenyun' performance of the 'Falun Gong' organization so as to avoid being deceived and used by the cult (Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the USA n.d).

None of this statement is particularly different from other Chinese government attacks on Falun Gong. What is interesting about it, though, is that the authorities have chosen to engage Falun Gong in their own version of the culture wars. Rather than simply damning these performances as purveying 'cult messages' and spreading 'anti-Chinese propaganda' their additional claim is that Falun Gong apparently 'denigrates and distorts the Chinese culture' which 'has long been popular and loved by the American public'. Thus, the correct representation of 'Chinese culture' – and who has the right to determine what that representation should be – has become one battleground on which the Chinese authorities have chosen to fight Falun Gong. For the Chinese authorities, these Falun Gong performances represent much more than an evening of singing and dancing: they are a counter-representation of the history and culture of China that underpins the legitimacy of the present regime. It is perhaps for this reason that they have fought so assiduously to have Shen Yun performances stopped

across the world. In most places, the attempts have been unsuccessful but in May 2016, four shows at the KBS Hall in Seoul were in fact cancelled, a decision upheld in court after Shen Yun challenged the theatre's decision (Yuhas 2016).

We should note, however, that any perceived political power Falun Gong's critique has derives precisely from the movement's similarity to its target. Falun Gong and the Chinese Communist Party share the same banal nationalism and the same urge to teleology. Nakamaki Hirochika proposed some years ago that the spread of Japanese new religions outside their homeland paralleled in important ways Japanese multinational corporations, especially as far as their structures are concerned. Falun Gong, I suggest, takes a model closer to home: The Communist Party itself. Before 1999 administrative and doctrinal leadership in Falun Gong came from the apex of the pyramid and flowed downwards through provincial level 'main stations', to county or district level 'guidance stations', and finally to tens of thousands of local practice sites, perhaps the equivalent of neighbourhood committees, reflecting Communist Party organization. In this volume Iwai Hiroshi, using insights from Management Studies, proposes (in the case of Sekai Kyūsei Kyō), that secrets in religions can function as a kind of 'capital'. Again, Falun Gong provides a fascinating contrast to this observation. Unlike many other new religions, the authorized versions of all Falun Gong's teachings – in the form of the speeches and writings of the founder – are open for anyone with access to the Internet to read. Nothing is withheld, even from the general public. Unlike the way companies work, this commitment to publicity, again, resembles the Communist Party who are assiduous in promulgating the writings of the founders of their doctrine as well as its contemporary representatives. But also like the Communist Party, the question of where exactly power resides in Falun Gong, who makes what decision, and what role the nominal supreme leader has, is shrouded in mystery. Perhaps the piquancy of the threat the Chinese authorities feel from Falun Gong derives from the strangely recognizable features they see in their indefatigable opponent.

Works cited

Andersen, Poul. 2008. *"Jiao"*. In *The Encyclopedia of Taoism*, edited by Fabrizio Pregadio, 539-544. Abingdon: Routledge.

Bovingdon, Gardner. 2010. *The Uyghurs: Strangers in Their Own Land*. New York: Columbia University Press, 16.

Clearwisdom. 2009a. "Retired cadre in China: Shen Yun Performing Arts brings good fortune to humankind." Accessed 28 March 2018. http://en.minghui.org/html/articles/2009/3/24/105859.html.

—. 2009b. "Colleague watches Shen Yun performance and miraculously recovers." Accessed 28 March 2018. http://en.minghui.org/html/articles/2009/7/2/108771p.html.

Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the United States of America. N.d. "Facts about the so called 'Shen Yun' Performance by the 'Falun Gong'." Accessed 28 March 2018. http://www.china-embassy.org/eng/sgxw/sghds/t1005243.htm

Falun Dafa. 2018a. Accessed 29 March 2018. http://en.falundafa.org/falun-dafa-global-contacts.html.

—. 2018b. Official web page. Accessed 29 March 2018. http://www.falundafa.org.

—. 2018c. 9-Session-Lecture. Accessed 29 March 2018. http://en.falundafa.org/falun-dafa-video-audio-9session.html

—. 2018d. Accessed 29 March 2018. gb.falundafa.org/falun-dafa-books.html.

—. 2018e. Accessed 29 March 2018. en.falundafa.org/falun-dafa-books.html.

Lawrence, Susan V. 2004. "Falun Gong Fields Media Weapons." *The Wall Street Journal,* 14 April.

Lee, Zhong. 2004. "Letters." *The Wall Street Journal,* 6 May.

Lewis, Mark Edward. 1999. "The *feng* and *shan* sacrifices of Emperor Wu of the Han." In *State and Court Ritual in China*, edited by Joseph P. McDermott, 50-80. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Li Hongzhi. 2009. "Fa teaching given at the NTDTV meeting." Accessed 28 March 2018. http://en.minghui.org/html/articles/2009/8/20/110204.html.

—. 2009b. "Fa teaching given at the Epoch Times meeting." Accessed 28 March 2018. http://en.minghui.org/html/articles/2009/11/15/112402.html.

Lum, Thomas. 2006. "China and Falun Gong." *CRS Report for Congress, Congressional Research Service*. Washington: The Library of Congress.

NTDTV. 2001. Accessed 29 March 2018. "New Tang Dynasty TV." http://www.ntd.tv.

—. 2010. Accessed 28 March 2018. "NTD's International Chinese Classical Dance Competition." New Tang Dynasty TV. Accessed 28 March 2018. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6lbXWNRrrQ8.

—. 2013. "2013 NTD 4th Global Han Couture Design Competition rules and regulations." New Tang Dynasty TV. Accessed 29 March 2018. http://hancouture.ntdtv.com/en/regulation.

—. 2016. "NTD Television International Classical Chinese Dance Competition rules and regulations." New Tang Dynasty TV. Accessed 28 March 2018. http://www.competitions.ntdtv.com/dance/dance-rules-regulation.

Ownby, David. 2008. *Falun Gong and the Future of China.* New York: Oxford University Press, 134-138.

Penny, Benjamin. 2005. "Falun Gong, Buddhism and Buddhist Qigong." *Asian Studies Review* 29(1): 35-46.

—. 2012. *The Religion of Falun Gong.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Shen Yun Performing Arts. N.d. "Our Story." Accessed 28 March 2018. http://www.shenyunperformingarts.org/about.

—. 2016. 'Shen Yun 2016 World Tour." Accessed 28 March 2018. http://web.archive.org/web/20151210060647/www.shenyunperformingarts.org/tickets.

Smith, Wendy. 2008 "Asian new religious movements as global organizations." *IIAS Newsletter* (Special Issue on New Religious Movements), #47: 3.

Yuhas, Alan. 2016. "New York Dance Troupe says China Banned Shows Over Falun Gong Links." *The Guardian*, 7 May. Accessed 28 March 2018. https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/may/06/shen-yun-dance-troupe-falun-gong-china-cancelled-performances.

Wong, Stephen. 2016. "Han Follow Suit in Cultural Renaissance" *Asia Times Online*, 26 August. Accessed 28 March 2018. http://www.atimes.com/atimes/China/HH26Ad01.html

Zhao Bin. 1998. "Popular family television and party ideology: The spring festival eve happy gathering." *Media, Culture and Society* 20, 1: 43-58.

About the author

Benjamin Penny is former Director of the Australian Centre on China in the World at the Australian National University and now Senior Research Fellow there. He studies the religions of China in medieval times, in the nineteenth century and in contemporary times. He is the author of The *Religion of Falun Gong* (2012) and, most recently, co-editor of *Religion in Taiwan and China: Locality and Transmission* (2017) with Chang Hsun. He is also the editor of *East Asian History*.

Section 3

Empirical Investigations: Southeast and South Asian Religions

7   Asian NRMs Are Not All Success Stories

The Demise of the Global Dream of Malaysia's Arqam

Shamsul A.B.

Abstract

This chapter examines the experience of Arqam, an Islamic NRM which emerged in Malaysia in the 1960s, then became so successful at the national and international levels, (with members recruited from various countries in Europe, Africa and Asia), that it was eventually banned and dismantled in the late 1990s at the pinnacle of its success, when it was accused of aiming to take over the government. By focusing on shared mechanisms of contention rather than, say, the uniqueness of the movement, such an approach opens up a broader array of theories, and comparative empirics, for studying successful and failed movements and gives equal weight to the dominant and the dominated, which is needed to explain them

Keywords: Arqam, *dakwah*, failed NRMs, business strategy, Malaysian politics, social movements

This chapter focuses on the rise and fall of a Malaysian Islamic movement, Arqam, and in doing so, contributes three unusual perspectives: Islamic movements in Asia, (in this case, one of revitalization of a traditional religion), a global religious movement originating from a developing economy, Malaysia, and finally a case of failure.

A cursory browsing of digital and paper-based material on Asian globalized religious movements reveals the fact that the successful examples, especially new religious movements (NRMs), are overwhelmingly from Japan. Their success is often explained with reference to their style of organization which is highly corporate in nature and is measured, along with membership size, by their global reach made possible by good management, leadership, and a compact internal bureaucracy. Some

well-known Japan specialists – local and foreign – have noted the parallels between Japanese multinational corporations (MNCs) and the Japanese NRMs (Matsunaga 2000; Nakamaki 1991, 2003; Smith 2008), which began to expand their international push around the same time, in the 1970s. Hence an epistemological focus on organization theory is now emerging more strongly in studies of NRMs to explain their success, as indeed was revealed in the case of Japanese NRMs. However, the task of accumulating sufficient and relevant ethnographic detail on organizational structures of each of the NRMs is not an easy one, especially if questions are asked about accounting and finance systems. Anthropologists studying Japanese MNCs have confronted similar intense challenges. Larger and tougher still for those studying NRMs has been the task of creating comparative empirics to build a corpus of knowledge for a new subfield in anthropology/ Japanese studies called 'NRM organization studies' successfully pioneered by Professor Hirochika Nakamaki of the National Museum of Ethnology in Japan (MINPAKU).

My studies of Islam and politics have included the study of social movements within the Islamic world since 1975, in particular its NRMs in the Southeast Asian region, popularly known as *dakwah* [renewal or revival] movements. Not dissimilar in approach to some Japanese NRMs, the leaders of the *dakwah* movements have consciously adopted 'a world focus from the outset' (Smith 2008: 3) hence they usually perceive their movement as a transnational one within the context of established worldwide Islamic networks. Memberships are drawn from both within the Muslim community as well as involving new converts within a global environment.

Perhaps the absence of successful Muslim MNCs which could provide a conceptual mould for analysing the variety of *dakwah* groups (among which a few have been successful and many have failed), requires this exercise to begin at a more basic sociological level. It was not originally the notion of 'organization' that guided my research and analysis of *dakwah* movements in Southeast Asia (Shamsul 1983). Rather I used the social science theories of 'collective action', emphasizing not 'organization' but movement commonalities rooted in 'process':

– The way the movement's central ideas are organized and propagated.
– How contention is organized.
– How grievances and the proposed trajectory of solutions, fundamental to the founding of the movement are collectivized.
– How tactics and strategies are homogenised in response to exogenous shifts in opportunities and constraints.

By focusing on shared mechanisms of contention rather than, say, the cultural distinctiveness of the movement (in the same way that the supposed 'uniqueness' of the Japanese management system has sometimes been emphasized), such an approach would open up the possibilities of adopting a broader array of theories, concepts, and comparative empirics of successful and failed movements. This approach gives equal weight to the dominant and the dominated, each representing a different viewpoint, and each articulating dis-similar interests, hence opening the way for uncertainties, ruptures, and tensions which we need to explain in both various successful and failed social movements. This approach also opens up the opportunity to investigate not only successful movements but also those which failed, hence acknowledging that the vast amount of human energy that has been invested in lost causes also warrants attention as part of the overall human experience.

Concern for the successful and unsuccessful has become an integral analytical approach in the study of Islamic NRMs, some of which have originated in Asia, and hence strike a different note from the predominant view of successful Asian NRMs. My motivation in presenting this study is not impelled by the need to find a balance between stories of success and failure. Rather, it reflects the sociological argument best expressed by James Scott in his important book *Weapons of the Weak* (1986). Scott suggests that even 'the weak many' in their state of weakness have their own weapon which, through a war of attrition, could create not necessarily victory but havoc and disarray amongst 'the strong few', and subsequently could lead to the downfall of the latter. My aim therefore is to highlight the 'process' and 'the struggle' within, in this case, an Islamic NRM finally viewed anew as an organization.

Theories of collective action: 'the process' at the centre

In order to make sense of the ethnography which follows I will outline the theory of 'process' mentioned above, which is rooted in theories of collective action. There are three recognizable sets of processes that create, operate, and sustain a social movement; namely resource mobilization, decision-making, and framing.[1] I shall now discuss each in turn.

---

1   In this analytical pursuit, I am guided by the excellent work of Wiktorowicz (2004a, 2004b) and his peers on relocating global Islamic activism within mainstream social movement theory, rather than viewing it as Islamic activism *sui generis*.

Resource mobilization

The roots of collective action emerge from a generalized situation of dissatisfaction, including the awareness of being economically exploited, a feeling of cultural neglect, unhappiness over social discrimination, deep religious disagreement with religious authorities and personnel, and lack of political freedom. Sociologically speaking, possessing such a state of mind based on dissatisfactions and grievances is not sufficient to activate a social movement. No doubt it is a necessary pre-condition, albeit an incomplete one. However, to transform this pre-condition into actualized mobilization requires a set of at least two intervening intermediary variables, as follows.

First, the movement needs resources. Second, the movement needs mobilizing structures to collectivize the individualized dissatisfactions. Funds, networks, communication channels and technology, an official or clandestine meeting place, and other resources are extremely necessary 'to organize, direct, and mobilize contention'. (Wicktorowicz, 2004a: 34) Without the capacity to organize a collective entity, the dissatisfied individuals – even though they may all share the same dissatisfactions – remain isolated from one another and unable to orchestrate a collective project.

If we observe the different types of social movements that have existed over the last five centuries we will notice that differences in mobilization patterns may be attributed to the degree of resource availability, the types of resources and mobilizing structures that have been available to the prime movers of the movement, be they peasants, students, middle class bureaucrats, religious fanatics, environmentalists, and so on (see Guini et al. 1999; Moore Jnr 1967: Skocpol ,1979: Tilly and Tilly 1981; Tilly and Wood 2009). We could argue that resource mobilization, as a process, operates beyond particular ideologies. In other words, our focus is not yet on the ultimate goal of the movement (economic, religious, class, etc.) rather it is on how movements are able to be mobilized, a few successfully, but many resulting in failure.

Decision-making

There are two schools of thought on this matter. First, it is common to assume that social activists adhere rigidly to ideology or dogma of all sorts. In this context, we often generously label such activists or their movements as extremist or fundamentalist, be they religious activists, environmental activists, and so on. The ultimate ideological objective of the movement

and its degree of strict observance becomes our guide in analysing them. In other words, we endorse such an approach because we know the nature of the outcome and that is what is chosen as a convenient label. These labels in turn, are taken as fundamental truths by the media which needs to capture – in capsules of 60-second news bites – the content that eventually appears globally on international TV or the Internet. I suggest that there is a strong flavour of orientalism in this approach, which Edward Said (1978; 1997) revealed in his path-breaking study on orientalism and its impact on the media.

The second school of thought suggests that social activists are a rational lot, and in the process of organizing the movement, and making the movement work as a process, they are guided by a 'rational choice' political approach rather than a rigid, dogmatic ideological framework. In other words, they are driven by tactical and strategic assessments of costs and risks.[2] Therefore, it could be argued that activists are involved in a continuous conscious evaluation for every strategy they adopt in order to maximise benefits, in the context of opportunities and constraints that they have to come to terms with, strongly driven no doubt by the desire to achieve the ultimate goals of the movement. Admittedly, the rational choice political approach adopted by activists is not necessarily utilizing ideas and nomenclatures from classical 'rational theory'. Nonetheless, the emphasis on strategic decision-making remains a central principle in any social movement and the way they conduct their activities.[3] Perhaps the situation is best described by Wiktorowisz, 'the universe of potential choices is circumscribed by the imaginable options within particular worldviews' (2004a: 35).

Framing

When I de-emphasize the role of ideology in motivating a social movement, and focus instead on 'the process', I am not suggesting that ideas are unimportant. Instead, I am focusing on 'the process' of how these ideas are socially created, arranged, and disseminated for the benefit of the movement, in the short- and long-term.

Therefore, the emphasis is on the process of constructing discourse and the resulting ideational packages. In short, movements must 'frame' their ideas and arguments to persuade the targeted audiences to give support and participation (Wiktorowisz 2004a: 35).

2   See Dowling et al. (2009).
3   For an up-to-date discourse on 'rational choice theory' see Green (2000).

Arqam: Its rise and fall (1968-1994)

A comment on sources

There exists a substantial literature on Arqam both in English and Malay.[4]
But the latter is much larger and often provides more detailed and sustained
analyses, based on research done by academics, including those who are
ex-Arqam members (doctors, lawyers, sociologists, and political scientists).
Indeed, there is a huge collection on Arqam written by the leader, Ustaz
Ashaari Muhammad, and its members, as part of its public promotion
programme as well as a channel to expound its ideas.[5]

There is a distinct difference between the English and Malay published
material on Arqam. It could be said that the English sources are short pieces,
relatively superficial in coverage and depth, often repeating, quoting or
indulging in the 'respectful regurgitation' of what previous scholars have
said about Arqam. To the best of my knowledge, no foreign researcher has
conducted extensive, in-depth research on Arqam, of the kind leading to a
monograph on the subject.[6] Usually those foreign scholars who have written
about Arqam mention it together with other Islamic revival groups (such as
ABIM[7] or *Jemaah Islamiah*), in articles or book chapters. The Malay language
publications are still the richest sources, and I will be mainly drawing from
them in this analysis.[8]

I also have the advantage of having many relatives and close personal
friends – academics and others – who were members of Arqam, and who
were my 'key informants' for the duration of Arqam's existence (1968-1994).
Through them I have heard about, discussed and debated Arqam's initially
successful community-based activities, their elitist leadership, and the way

---

4   Originally, the movement was called Darul Arqam, the name adopted by the group in
memory of the companion of the Prophet Muhammad, Arqam bin Abi Arqam. He donated
waqf [his house] in Mecca as the first ever meeting place and centre for the teaching of Islam
as a religion. After Arqam had grown and prospered it came to be called Al-Arqam or simply
Arqam. In this essay, I shall use Arqam.

5   Professor Mansor Mohd Noor, PhD (Sociology) Bristol, UK was once – for about a decade – one
of the central advisors to Ustaz Ashaari Muhammad, the leader of Arqam. He describes and
analyses the growth of Arqam and its methods of recruiting members (Noor 2004).

6   There is one monograph in English by the Malaysian scholar Muhammad Syukri Salleh
(1992)

7   ABIM (Angkatan Belia Islam Malaysia or Muslim Youth Movement of Malaysia) was
founded on 6 August 1971 with a public advocacy role as well as the spreading of Islam through
dakwah.

8   See representative studies such as Lawee (2004), Ann (2005a; 2005b; 2007)

they recruited and maintained such a large membership which expanded all over Malaysia as well as to many locations overseas, in Europe, North America, Africa, Oceania, and the rest of Asia.

History (1968-1994)

The original Darul Arqam, a self-proclaimed Sufi group, had a humble beginning. It was originally a small religious 'study group' of less than ten people, established in 1968, headed by government-employed religious teacher Ustaz Ashaari Muhammad, later famously known as Abuya. The main aim of Abuya in establishing the group was modest: to provide interested Muslims with an opportunity to revise and improve their basic knowledge about Islam, thus to rediscover their faith and to double or treble their religious commitment, both in spiritual terms as well as in terms of generously serving the *ummah* (the community of believers) in everyday practical ways. He was propagating the integration or simultaneous pursuit of inward individual purification (*hablum-minallah*), and the collective development of outward socio-economic, cultural, and political organization (*hablum-minannas*) in the everyday life and behaviour of Muslims. The end result could be considered an act of worship (*ibadah*) directed to the service of Allah (Salleh 1992: 89-92).

It was this deceptively simple and yet powerful theological-cum-pragmatic orientation that made Abuya's teachings and his community project accessible, easily understood, and not impossible to carry out for his disciples. It had clear practical outcomes as well as personal spiritual satisfaction for each of his disciples and followers, initially and in an enduring sense.

It was from this humble beginning, but with its clear and accessible doctrinal combination of theology and daily life practice, that Arqam grew so large and so quickly, in a brief period of two decades. It provided a model of a self-developed and self-sufficient rural Malay-Muslim village located in permanent premises, on five-hectares at Sungai Pencala, Selangor, about 20 kilometres north of the capital city, Kuala Lumpur. This village community managed to succeed without any form of support from the government in an era when rural agricultural community support was the norm under Malaysia's New Economic Policy (1971-1990). Then, Arqam 'exploded' when it was transformed into a massive religious-business empire, with bases spread all over the Malay-speaking archipelago, serving a market of 250 million Muslims in maritime Southeast Asia, as well as in other parts of Asia, Europe, Africa, North America, and Oceania.

Arqam had three important departments to produce and market its products in the Asia-Pacific region. They were: Department of Economics Affairs (*halal* food and beverages, retail outlets, and distribution centres); Department of Science and Technology (which provided maintenance services to major oil and gas companies such as Esso, Shell, and Petronas); and Department of Agriculture (which purchased at least 500 hectares of land in different parts of Malaysia, Indonesia, and Thailand using them as agriculture training centres, and for plantations, paddy fields, dairy production, as well as processing agricultural products). At the time of its demise, Arqam had 80 businesses – mostly established in Malaysia – such as mini markets, herbal products, travel, and tourism agencies (haj and umrah to Mecca), advertising, furniture, canteens and cafeterias, general clinics, electronic and multimedia outlets, childcare centres, music production, and publishing.

Arqam fell from this high pinnacle of fame and success in 1994. It happened in a more sudden and dramatic manner than its well-charted rise. The leaders and close family members were detained without trial for several months under Malaysia's infamous Internal Security Act (ISA)[9], during which they were interrogated and made to renounce Arqam. Upon release, all the leaders were put under house arrest. Arqam's sudden demise had to do with the perceived political threat it posed to the Malay-Muslim ruling political party UMNO (United Malays National Organization) due to its expanded membership and sympathizers, as both survived on the support of Malay-Muslims. At the time, Arqam was reputed to have about 500,000 Malay-Muslim members, and associate members and sympathizers, mainly from Peninsular Malaysia. In the first half of the 1990s, Arqam began to make its public 'political' presence through the various speeches and books of Ustaz Ashaari Muhammad, articulating Arqam's interest in forming an Islamic State and governance (Abdullah 2003: 174-175). With its excellent economic, technological, and agricultural achievements, demonstrating its organizational ability to mobilize Malay-Muslim in the process, Arqam made the government felt threatened that one day it could enter the political arena and takeover from the dominant Malay-Muslim UMNO (Abdullah 2003: 168-170).

9   Internal Security Act 1948 (ISA) is perceived as a draconian law because anyone can be detained without trial for 60 days and subsequently be sent to detention camp for at least two years. During the Cold War of the colonial period (1948-1957) ISA was used to arrest pro-communist supporters. ISA has frequently been used against opposition leaders during the post-Independent era of 1957.

However, in the redefined Malaysian and global economic and political scenario of the mid-1990s, when Malaysia was experiencing an annual growth in GDP of 8 percent, Arqam re-invented itself without the religious-political component that had given Arqam the name and identity. It reincarnated in the form of a business conglomerate called Rufaqa' Corporation Private Limited (*rufaqa* means a loyal friend in Arabic) with the motto 'Calm & Confident', running a multi-million-dollar business from noodles to napkins, herbal remedies to real estate, and many more products and services. Perhaps through Rufaqa', Arqam has not really disappeared in spirit, though it has disappeared in form. Though banned in Malaysia, Arqam is reputed to have made deep in-roads into Indonesian society with a few million followers, many of them now employees in Rufaqa's various production lines across Indonesia.

To understand the rise and fall of this Islamic 'new (renewal) religious movement' it is useful to explain Arqam's evolution as a social movement, which could be divided into three phases to be examined in turn. Phase 1: building individual members' internal spiritual strength; Phase 2: building a *jemaah* (community) through community service; Phase 3: global expansion, the 'New Islamic World' and the *Daulah Islamiah* [Islamic Nation] as the Nation-of-Intent[10].

Phase 1: Building individual members' internal spiritual strength (1968-72)

As mentioned above, in its first five years (1968-72), Arqam was a 'study group', consisting of the teacher, Ustaz[11] Ashaari Muhammad, a small network of around 50 people and their extended family members and friends, which was to expand rapidly. The activities were initially conducted in the family home of the teacher's friend in the village of Sungai Pencala near Kuala Lumpur. It later moved to another family home of a member of the study group. This was the core group whose location was to become the base of Arqam's subsequent expansion.

It was quite clear at this stage that there was no sign at all of the ambitious expansionist plan that emerged in the Arqam organization of later days.

---

10   For a discussion on the concept 'nations-of-intent' see Shamsul A.B. 1996 and its application in Cribb 2004 and Li Narangoa and Cribb 2010.

11   *Ustaz* is a formal title given to qualified religious teachers in private and public schools. The label *ustaz* is also used popularly for anyone who is teaching religious rituals, reading Quran, and the like.

At that time, the teacher was simply interested in building the members' individual internal spiritual strength through a serious effort of revising and improving their basic knowledge about Islam, its rituals and other practices so as to facilitate their rediscovery of faith. This exercise is often referred to as *dakwah* [inviting to the faith of Islam]. Through such a process Ustaz Ashaari Muhammad hoped the disciples would be able to deepen their religious commitment (*aqidah* [the beliefs of Islam] and *iman* [faith]), both in spiritual terms and in terms of generously serving the *ummah* [the community of believers] in everyday practical terms. The whole process could be said to be – simultaneously – a learning, an unlearning, and a re-learning process for the disciples. It was also about building teamwork, loyalty, and comradery, all personally conducted as part of their *ibadah*, or service and submission to Allah.

As a result of such a strong, sustained, and successful team building effort Ustaz Ashaari Muhammad was able to get all the members to agree to give up and pool their savings. Hence, in 1973, the group bought a five-acre tract of land in Sungai Pencala, on the outskirts of capital city Kuala Lumpur, where they built Arqam's permanent base and headquarters. While the physical construction of the new HQ was underway, Ustaz Ashaari Muhammad began to expand his *tarbiyyah* [guidance] activities to create a network of potential disciples by giving lectures from house to house, increasingly in bigger venues including *surau* [prayer houses], mosques, schools, offices, and even university campuses. Transforming an audience into a community, thus expanding the Arqam group, was at the centre of his tireless efforts. The First Islamic Consciousness Course was launched in 1974, and was attended by only 20 people. But it began to be noticed and many took interest in what happened during the course. People who attended his discourse became convinced that he was the true leader who had clear programmes, not only for spiritual needs but also material existence, especially his commercial and agricultural projects.

It must be mentioned that during this expansion campaign, Ustaz Ashaari Muhammad received some negative remarks from *ulamak* [scholars], social commentators, and the local Malay-Muslim press. They commented mainly on two aspects: form and content. The physical visual presentation of Arqam was highlighted, namely the wearing of a green turban and robe for men and *jilbab* (the face covering worn by women) and a loose wrist to ankle robe for women in white and green (supposedly the choice of the Prophet Muhammad). In the 1970s and 1980s in the middle of a hot and humid modern tropical Kuala Lumpur, before the tourists came from the Middle East, Arqam members looked overdressed and some even thought they

looked like 'aliens'. However, this distinctive dress was an inspired case of organizational branding (Usunier and Stolz 2014) using the 'Islamic' colour, green. In terms of content, Arqam and its teachings were labelled as blasphemous, deviationist, fundamentalist, radical, extremist, or tribalistic Islam.

Whatever labels they were given, Ustaz Ashaari Muhammad and his disciples were unperturbed. On the contrary, all the negative reporting gave them free publicity. This increased people's curiosity about Arqam and encouraged more people to want to know about it, increasing the numbers who came to listen to Ustaz Ashaari Muhammad and his viewpoints; first about Islam and its practices among the Malay-Muslims, and second about his plan to turn the economically backward Malay-Muslims in Malaysia to a more entrepreneurial, business-minded group of people, whom he intended to lead by example.

Coincidentally, the early formation of Arqam began in a troubled social milieu in Malaysia, around the period of the ethnic riots of May 1969 in Kuala Lumpur. The official reason offered as to why the riots broke out was that they were an articulation of unhappiness by the predominantly rural Malay-Muslim population over their state of economic backwardness in the aftermath of British colonial economic policies. It was not surprising, therefore, that some Malay-Muslims saw Arqam as a possible alternative 'development model' to the government response to these riots, the New Economic Policy of 1971.

Overall, the political and socio-economic situation was advantageous to Arqam. They began in earnest building the *ummah*'s internal spiritual strength, steadily involving larger groups of people and increasing the tempo of the organization's community service.

Phase 2: Building the *ummah* and community services (1973-83)

The first thing Arqam built for its immediate disciples, while at the same time opening its door to the community outside, was a religious school, where both Arqam members and outsiders in the vicinity of Sungei Pencala came together. The school became the base for the expanding *ummah* and for social services offered to the wider community. More importantly, the five-acre land plot soon became the HQ and nerve centre for all Arqam's activities for the next two decades. Overnight the place was buzzing with activities combining disciples, ardent supporters, curious visitors, and interested audiences of Ustaz Ashaari Muhammad's lectures.

Arqam's membership by then, in 1976, was only about 70. But by 1979, it was reported that Arqam membership had exploded and expanded to 10,000 if sympathizers were included. Because Arqam, designated as a study group, had not been required to register itself officially under the Registrar of Societies Act, the exact number of members cannot be confirmed. However, by 1975 Arqam was actively recruiting members for its religious activities as well as its practical commercial ones. In other words, Arqam needed not only *mubaligh* [proselytizers] but also, quite literally, manual labour. Who was qualified to join Arqam? The following is a brief guide.

–   Spiritual preconditions: There were no written prerequisites to become a member of Arqam. The person need not fill out any forms. Anyone could automatically become a member if he/she seriously upheld the rules of Islam, that is, recognized and practised the five rules: (i) observe strictly that which is *wajib* [obligatory], (ii) accept that which is *sunat* [complementary to *wajib* but a matter of choice], (iii) be conscious of and avoid that which is *haram* [prohibited], (iv) abstain from that which is *makruh* [detestable] and (v) decide judiciously on the *harus* [optional].

–   Active pre-conditions: Demonstrate a willingness to participate actively in Arqam's programmes as follows: *usrah* [Islamic discussion circle], *tahlil* [special prayers for the dead], and others. Moreover, be willing to struggle with Arqam through *dakwah* including doing petty jobs, selling Arqam's soy-sauce, newspapers and publications, working in Arqam factories, and so on.

–   Acceptance: Anyone who was able to participate in all Arqam's programmes and put a serious effort into improving his/her Islamic self and the struggle to uphold Islam was accepted as a 'strong' member of Arqam. If one was not able to participate fully in all Arqam programmes, he/she was considered to be a sympathizer.

Therefore, it could be said that Arqam membership was organized in concentric circles; at the centre a member-core, surrounded by a circle of sympathizers, and perhaps further on by a circle of observers.

Who were the members and what was their background? The original members of Arqam were primarily male working-class employees and housewives. It is significant that the new members were mainly drawn from middle class professionals including, doctors, lawyers, academicians, engineers, army and navy personnel, civil servants, police officers and members of the rank-and-file, corporate managers, graduate teachers, and university students. This is quite a broad sample from the middle class spectrum. Many of them actually resigned from their jobs to become full

time members of Arqam. Those who did not resign donated some percentage of their monthly salaries to Arqam and others gave donations. Quite a number of individuals contributed 'in kind' by donating books, building materials, food stuff, and the like.

With this set of talented and experienced human resources and generous monetary and in kind contributions, Arqam was able to start its community social welfare projects; a free medical clinic, publishing activities for promotional purposes, music and performance arts for entertainment, the all-important *halal*[12] industries (*halal* food manufacturing), agricultural and animal husbandry projects that included horse, goat and cattle rearing, and health and well-being projects such as the production of *halal* herbal cosmetics, herbal medicines, etc.

What was the basis of Arqam's appeal for ordinary members? Especially in the era of rural-urban migration and social mobility engendered by the New Economic Policy of 1971-1990 which saw a rapid growth in the urban working class and new middle class. Arqam, like many new religions provided a haven for individual families in this era of rapid social change. It provided a complete community experience where all their daily needs were provided for and a not unfamiliar spirituality became their anchor.

To describe a typical Arqam member's daily and family lifestyle: pious Muslim rituals were observed. Males typically demonstrated their piety by each taking four wives who – being members of the pervasive religious culture – got on very well with each other. The wives cooperated in child-rearing and educating each other's children, and brought in income for the family through co-operative child care arrangements. Excellent medical care was provided at the Arqam medical centre, which offered herbal and other alternative remedies, so much so that it was patronized by non-members. Arqam schools provided good education for children, drawing on the combined expertise of members. Supermarkets and fresh produce markets (wet markets) supplied certified Arqam *halal* products. Even entertainment in a new genre of Islamic music became associated with the movement. In short, the lifestyle provided an urban community with all the *geshunschaft* factors for first generation urban migrants from rural kampong backgrounds, an *umma* [spiritual community] in the original sense, but in an urban middle class context. The original headquarters, Sungei Pencala on the outskirts of Kuala Lumpur, made it possible for the new

12   *Halal*, in Arabic, means 'lawful'. *Halal* food indicates food items and drinks prepared under strict Muslim dietary laws. Included in the contemporary *halal* label are non-alcoholic perfume and drinks, and pharmaceutical products.

middle class and new working-class families to live daily lives in a nurturing spiritual community, while coping with the pressures of urbanization and life in unfamiliar modern bureaucratic workplaces. In other words, Arqam provided a practical spiritual approach to the dislocating effects of modernity.

By 1983 (in one decade), Arqam had become a well-established organization, indeed a successful corporate business group that had spread its tentacles globally. The presence of middle class professionals as members became the most important catalyst for its activities, giving Arqam a strong footing and organizational direction. Arqam indeed established a centralized bureaucracy, with branches at the state/province levels all over the country, with Ustaz Ashaari Muhammad in the uncontested top position. The centralized bureaucracy allowed Arqam to coordinate activities with well organized logistics, pre-prepared production schedules and advanced promotion of products. In other words, the centralized bureaucracy managed all Arqam's *dakwah*/religious activities, community services, and commercial enterprise. Profits from the commercial activities helped to expand physical infrastructures at the HQ and also developed new 'Arqam villages' (clones of the HQ and its activities) across the country. So, by the early 1980s Arqam was ready and confident to make the global push from its Malaysian base.

Phase 3: The global push, the 'New Islamic World' and the Daulah Islamiah as the Nation-of-Intent (1983-94)

With its stable religious programme, impressive community service and handsome profits from its commercial arm, Arqam was ready for the international expansion. In 1980, it sent its first *dakwah* team abroad, under the instruction of its leader, Ustaz Ashaari Muhammad, who thought Arqam was ready to enter the international arena, based on the fact that Islam is a world religion. They first targeted societies within the ASEAN countries including Thailand and Indonesia. They targeted only existing Islamic communities in these countries. This was an exploratory visit in an attempt to find out how people from these neighbouring countries would react to Arqam. Later, they sponsored students from Arqam's school to study in Pakistan, Egypt, USA, France, New Zealand and Australia.

The boldest international move by Arqam was when it sent its so-called 'diplomatic missions', involving delegations of from 41 people to over eleven countries in 1993. The countries they visited are as follows; Uzbekistan (7 delegates), Turkey (3), Jordon (5), Egypt (5) China/Yunnan (3), Indonesia

(6), Thailand (4), The Philippines (4) and Pakistan (4).[13] These missions aimed to obtain international recognition from Islamic organizations in the respective countries (official state organizations, CBOs (Community Based Organizations), NGOs (Non-Governmental Organizations) that Arqam was an international organization with global reach. It was also intended to foster a 'New Islamic World' based in the Far East (Southeast Asia and East Asia) through a combination of support from Chinese Muslims in China and Indonesian and Malay Muslims in the Malay Archipelago.

Arqam's doctrine included the belief that Islam would rise again in the East and that the 'New Islamic World' could be physically expanded if Arqam could help to find the site of the 'Lost Kingdom' of Khorasam[14] (in Persian this means 'the land where the sun rises'). Khorasam, which covers the land mass today that stretches between Iran, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Afghanistan to north-western Pakistan, was founded as a political entity by the Sassanids of the Persian Empire in the 3rd century *Hijrah*.[15] If this lost kingdom could be found, and combined with Muslim China and the Muslim Malay world, the 'New Islamic World' would be bigger than the Middle East and more powerful, the Arqam leaders suggested.[16]

It was also suggested that the 'New Islamic World' could only be actualized when Imam Mahadi (The Messiah) returns, with Arqam providing the main support under the leadership of one *Pemuda Bani Tamin*,[17] the future title for Ustaz Ashaari Muhammad, as Imam Mahadi's able lieutenant. This huge physical area called the 'New Islamic World' would be the location of Arqam's 'Nation-of-Intent', that is, *Daulah Islamiah* [Islamic nation], which would have its own system of government and governance. Thus, Ustaz Ashaari Muhammad determined that the creation of *Daulah Islamiah* would begin in Malaysia, followed by the maritime Malay world around archipelago Southeast Asia (Nusantara[18]) then Muslim China and would finally be joined by the regions of the former Khorasam.

---

13   See Darul Arqam 25 Tahun (1993: 184).

14   For further information on 'Khorasam' mentioned by Arqam see an article entitled 'Reconquest of Khurasan' (Alim 2018).

15   *Hijrah* means the 'flight' or 'emigration' of Muhammad from Mecca to Medina (c. 622 AD) to escape persecution. The date became the beginning of the Islamic era or calendar.

16   Arqam was so serious in its plans to find the lost kingdom of Khorasam that the effort was integrated into 'diplomatic missions', in order to survey the possibility of creating the 'New Islamic World' by combining the physical areas of Malaysia, the Malay world and Khorasam. See Arqam (1993) and Pahrol Mohammad Juoi (1992).

17   Youth leader of the tribe Bani Tamim, whose origin can be traced to be descendants of Ismail, son of Abraham.

18   See Osman (1997) especially Chapter 2.

To lay the groundwork to support this initial political move, Arqam began to be involved in local Malaysian electoral politics, especially in the Malaysian General Elections of 1990.[19] Many Arqam leaders and members were dispatched to the various states to campaign for candidates identified as sympathizers of Arqam's cause, in both Federal Parliamentary (MP) and State Legislative Assembly (ADUN) constituencies. Ustaz Ashaari Muhammad, for the first time since he left the arena of party politics in 1968 (when he left Parti Islam, also known as PAS),[20] made an open political statement urging Arqam members to vote judiciously and choose the right candidates for the Malaysian GE-1990. Apparently, none of the candidates he supported won seats. He also made a public statement on Parti Islam, saying that he considered it not fit to rule the country because the kind of Islam the party espoused was not 'authentic'. Some viewed his comment as purposely provocative of conflict with Parti Islam.

The politicization of Arqam as an organization was further consolidated by a dramatic change in its administrative structure just after the 1990 General Elections, one which received nationwide attention: almost overnight it re-organized its central and local bureaucracy, restructuring according to parliamentary constituencies, and thus declaring that Arqam was ready for the next election in 1995. Arqam evolved into a political organization with an Islamic ideology.

However, Arqam never made it to the 1995 General Elections. Arqam was banned in August 1994. In September 1994, the whole team of its national leadership was brought back from Thailand[21] by bus and once they crossed the Malaysian border they were detained under the ISA. In 1996, more Arqam leaders, wives, and adult family members were also detained. On average, each of those arrested was detained without trial for at least twelve months. The leaders were punished by the Malaysian government and sent to a two-year detention without being tried in a court of law. They were released in 1996.

The Malaysian HQ ceased to exist. There was an attempt to shift the HQ to Singapore but this did not succeed. In spite of that, Arqam was able

19   Malaysia's political system is a federation, and nine of the *negeri* [provinces] have Sultans or royal leaders. It has had democratic elections every five years since 1955 and, thus far, been won by the National Front (NF), a coalition of multi-ethnic parties. The United Malays National Organization (UMNO) is the dominant Malay-Muslim ruling party in the National Front. Parti Islam (formerly part of the NF) is seen as the other influential Malay-Muslim party. For historical details see Andaya and Andaya (2017).

20   He had been a member of a PAS committee in Selangor state until 1971, but was never an MP.

21   Arqam was already declared illegal and banned in Malaysia in August 1994 and considered to be a risk to national security. They were brought back by the Malaysian security forces with the cooperation of their Thai counterparts in September 1994.

to re-invent itself into a business enterprise with international reach. It has branches in Indonesia and countries in Europe, North America and Oceania where ex-members of Arqam had decided to migrate. But it lost its religious element when Ustaz Asaahari Muhammad, its charismatic leader, passed away in 2010.

Rufaqa': Arqam reincarnated?

When the top leaders of Arqam were under detention without trial, those not detained began to take immediate action to salvage whatever they had left, especially Arqam's rather extensive business empire, stretching from Malaysia to Indonesia and other parts of the world.[22] Arqam as a 'study group' was never registered with the Registrar of Societies[23]. But the business wing in 1994 was registered under the name Rufaqa' Corporation Sdn. Bhd., with the Registrar of Companies. The registration was accepted without any problem. The signal from the ruling government was clear: Arqam could continue to conduct its business in *halal* industries[24] and others, but not operate in a form similar to that of a political party. Rufaqa' persisted until 2006 and became a household name for *halal* products, not only in Malaysia, but also in the Malay-Muslim world in Southeast Asia. Some products were exported to Europe, the USA and Oceania. Rufaqa' had factories in Malaysia and Indonesia, and it flourished in neighbouring countries, such as Brunei and the Philippines. It was reported to have more than two million members in Indonesia alone and employed a large number of workers who were mostly former Arqam members or sympathizers.

As a political group, Arqam's business offshoots were not able to survive the Malaysian political milieu. Though political, they have never been associated with terrorism. What remains now are the mini-markets, car repair and welding workshops, and retail sundry shops run by former Arqam members, found all over Malaysia.

In retrospect, Arqam was viewed more as an 'economic organization' with a good business track record. Some even consider Arqam to be the

22   Arqam successfully set up branches with largely Malay-Muslim members who were mainly students and family members located in Singapore, Indonesia, Thailand, the Philippines, Brunei, Britain, France, Germany, USA, Australia, New Zealand, Pakistan, Jordan, Egypt, Uzbekistan and China.

23   It was never required to be registered at the Registrar of Societies but had to be registered with the Department of Religious Affairs of Selangor, where its HQ was located at Sungai Pencala. It was subsequently banned by this Deptartment.

24   *Halal* foodstuff, religious music tapes and Islamic publications.

most successful Malay-Muslim enterprise that emerged during the New Economic Policy (NEP) era of 1971-90, although they did so without needing any government support, thus the NEP is rather irrelevant to Arqam.

Conclusion

This chapter has re-examined the history of Arqam in Malaysia utilizing the new perspective advocated in this book; 'the complex organization approach' in which the focus has been specifically on the management or bureaucratic style of religious movements, with all the complexity this implies if they expand internationally. One definite feature of any study of such movements would be an analysis of the background to the struggle they go through to achieve success and to maintain that achievement in the long term. For every success story, there may be a dozen untold failures. This chapter details the story of a failed Islamic revivalist movement, why it failed and how it coped with failure. Analysing 'failed projects' is a special kind of counter-factuality which motivates us to seek the relevant tools for investigating the vast amounts of human energy that have been invested in lost causes. This is what I have attempted in this brief study. In this chapter, I have examined the resource mobilization, decision-making, and framing that Arqam underwent during its development as a global organization, and the kind of social dynamics that made it successful at that time in Malaysia's development history. Nevertheless, despite being an efficiently managed bureaucratic entity, Arqam's identity as a social movement which gained critical mass within the national political system opened it to retaliation from State mechanisms of power which effectively shut it down as a social movement based on Islamic religious ideals.

The most critical element in Arqam as a social-religous movement was its framing, namely, the particular Islamic sectarian ideology that it chose as a theological base and choosing the name Arqam, in memory of a companion to Prophet Muhammad, whose house was used by early Muslim followers for proselytization activities.

Ustaz Ashaari Muhammad, the founder of Arqam, also claimed that in his dreams he had met friends of Prophet Muhammad from whom he received his messages to spread Islam and its teachings for the better of human material existence. This sectarian[25] approach and his personality became anchors for Arqam's framing.

25   'Sectarian' refers to the sub-division, such as Arqam, established within the different Sunni 'schools of thought', or *Mazhab Shafie*. There are three other Mazhabs in Sunni Islam: *Hambali,*

Resource mobilization was critical to Arqam in ensuring it to practise its 'Arqamnomics' based on the three Islamic philosophies: i) do not seek excessive profit or accumulation of wealth; ii) base economic activity on the full utilization of human energy, thinking and innovation; and iii) create an economy free from *riba* [interest] or not based on *haram* [forbidden] sources.

The initial capitalization of Arqam as a corporation was achieved through compulsory monthly collection of ten to twenty percent of wages of every salaried member who had joined the group. Using this capital accumulated from members, Arqam was able to generate income through various activities in business and non-business spheres.

The decision-making process was organized through strict discipline based on Islamic ethics and etiquette by Ashaari Muhammad who was at the top of the hierarchy, with his advisers and a set of professional leaders to run all the commercial activities. This enabled Arqam to grow as a Malaysian-based conglomerate corporation with a global business network.

However, after it grew so huge and so quickly it added to its socio-religious orientation, sectarian nature, and personality cult. It focused around a charismatic leader, Ustaz Ashaari Muhammad, a set of political motives, ambitions and activities that were never part of its initial goals.

This re-framing of Arqam turned it into such a threat that UMNO, the Malay-Muslim ruling party, began to take the organization seriously and began to try to dismantle Arqam politically and administratively, unsuccessfully at first. This forced UMNO to take legal measures to declare Arqam as a deviationist sect, which was promoting anti-Islamic teachings.

Arqam leader Ustaz Ashari Muhammad was imprisoned for a number of years in Malaysia for 'deviant Islamic teachings'. After his release in 1997, using capital from Arqam, he established the private corporation called 'Rufaqa' in Malaysia. In Indonesia, it was called Hawariyun. In the year 2000, the two companies joined together and named Zumala Group International.

In 2002, it became Rufaqa International Corporation Sdn Bhd. It was registered in Malaysia. However, most of the business operation was conducted in Indonesia and also in other branches in Europe, North America and Oceania, with Malaysian-Muslim students the main representatives and clients. In 2006, the Malaysian authorities raided a bakery in Kuala Lumpur belonging to Rufaqa and arrested more than 100 people who were accused of trying to revive Arqam. In December 2006 Rufaqa was banned.

Maliki and *Hanifi*. Each has its internal sub-divisions, often popularly referred to as sectarian sub-divisions.

Ustaz Ashaari Muhammad passed away in May 2010. The plan to create a New Islamic World was buried with him.

Many NRMs seek political power through State institutions; the case of Sōka Gakkai (a revivalist movement based on Nichiren Buddhism) in Japan and the Kōmeitō party it set up is one such case. Other NRMs seek to influence society through political institutions by courting existing MPs and educating them to their ideals. Established religions such as Christianity and Islam have served as rallying ideologies for political movements and parties throughout history. The circumstances of Malaysia's development history made the seeking of wider social influence through the existing political system perilous for Arqam. However, it has had indirect influence on Malaysia's public institutions: the mainstreaming of Islamic economic, finance, and banking systems in Malaysia during the Arqam period and the ways in which Arqam helped to promote these is one notable example, worthy of future research. Despite being banned, the return to Islamic principles of banking at the state level enhanced Arqam's image as an Islamic 'economic organization', not a political one, which helped during its post-banning transition. Arqam's argument with Parti Islam (one of the few opposition parties at the time) regarding the difference between their model of an 'Islamic state' and that of the latter is also critical. At the level of popular culture, the influential role of Arqam in shaping the 'Islamic popular music' genre that exploded into the Malaysian pop scene at the end of the 1990s is another of its important legacies. This music genre is called 'nasyid', originally from Arqam in Malaysian before spreading to Indonesia until Arqam was banned.[26]

I hope this chapter has provided an example of a revivalist religious movement originating in a developing country which had ramifications in the wider world using the vehicle of Islam, an established global religion.

Works cited

Abdullah, Kamarulnizam. 2003. *The Politics of Islam in Contemporary Malaysia*. Bangi: Penerbit UKM.

Alim 2018. "Khalifa Uthman bin Affan – Re-conquest of Khurasan." Accessed 29 March 2019. Alim: Islamic Software for Quran and Hadith. http://www.alim. org/library/biography/khalifa/content/KUT/31/3.

---

26   The first group was called Nadamurni Al-Arqam (Pure Sound of Al-Arqam) was established in early 1980s at Sungai Pencala (Barendregt 2011; 2012).

Andaya, Barbara and Leonard Andaya (3rd Ed.). 2017. *Malaysia: A History*. London: Palgrave.

Ann Wann Seng. 2005a. *Al Arqam di Sebalik Tabir*. Kuala Lumpur, Universiti Malaya Pres.

—. 2005b. *Rahsia Arqam,* Shah Alam: PTS Millennia.

—. 2007. *Al-Arqam & Ajaran Aurad Muhammadiah: Satu Penilaian Skudai*: Penerbit UTM.

Arqam. 1993. *Jadual Allah untuk Umat Islam* [*Allah's Schedule for Muslims*], information pamphlet: no publisher.

Barendregt, Bart. 2011. "Pop, politics and piety: Nasyid boy band music in Muslim Southeast Asia." In *Islam and popular culture in Indonesia and Malaysia*, edited by Andrew N. Weintraub, 235-256. London: Routledge.

—. 2012. "Sonic discourses on Muslim Malay Modernity: the Arqam sound." *Contemporary Islam*, Vol. 6, 315-340.

Cribb, Robert. 2004. "Nations-of-Intent in Colonial Indonesia." A paper presented at the 18th IAHA Conference, Taipeh, 6-10 December.

Dowling, Keith, Torun Dewan and Kenneth A. Shepsle, eds. 2009. *Rational Choice Politics*. Thousand Oaks, Ca. & London: Sage.

Green, Steven L. 2000. *Rational Choice Theory: An Overview.* Baylor University, USA Seminar on 'Rational Choice Theory'. Accessed 28 March 2018. https://business.baylor.edu/steve_green/green1.doc.

Guini, Marco, Doug McAdam and Charles Tilly, eds. 1999. *How Social Movements Matter.* Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press.

Lawee, Mohd Lazim. 2004. *Penyelewengan Jemaah Al-Arqam dan Usaha Pemurniannya.* Bangi: Penerbit UKM.

Li Narangoa and Robert Cribb. 2010. "Nations-of-Intent: From counterfactual history to counterfactual geography." *Journal of Historical Geography.* 36: 276-285.

Matsunaga, Louella. 2000. "Spiritual companies, corporate religions: Japanese companies and Japanese new religious movements at home and abroad." In *Japanese New Religions in Global Perspective,* edited by Peter B. Clarke. Richmond: Curzon Press.

Noor, Mansor Mohd. 2004. 'Perspektif sosiologi dalam memahami extremisme agama." [Sociological perspectives for understanding religious extremism] *Jurnal Rekayasa* 1(1): 12-19.

Moore Jnr, Barrington. 1967. *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy: Lord and Peasant in the Making of Modern Democracy.* New York: Beacon Press.

Nakamaki Hirochika. 1991. "The internationalization and multinationalization of Japanese religion: Perfect Liberty Kyōdan in Brazil." *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 18(2-3): 213-242.

—. 2003. *Japanese Religions at Home and Abroad: Anthropological Perspectives*. Routledge Curzon.

Osman, Taib. 1997. *Islamic Civilization and the Malay World*. Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa & Pustaka.

Pahrol Mohammad Juoi. 1992. *Khurasan dalam Jadual Allah* [*Khurasan in Allah's Schedule*], Kuala Lumpur: Penerbit Hikmah, 4-7.

Said, Edward. 1978. *Orientalism*. New York: Vantage.

—. 1997. *Covering Islam: How the Media and the Experts Determine How We See the Rest of the World,* Revised Ed. New York: Vintage.

Salleh, Muhammad Syukri. 1992. *Approach to Rural Development: The Arqam Way.* London: ASOIB International Limited.

Shamsul, A.B. 1983. "A revival in the study of Islam in Malaysia." *MAN: The Journal of Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and* Ireland. 18(3): 399-404.

—. 1996. "Nations-of-Intent in Malaysia." In *Asian Forms of the Nation*, edited by Stein Tonnesson and Hans Antlov, 323-347. London: Curzon and Nordic Institute of Asian Studies.

Skocpol, Theda. 1979. *States and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia and China.* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Smith, Wendy. 2008 "Asian new religious movements as global organizations." *IIAS Newsletter* (Special Theme on New Religious Movements), #47: 3.

Tilly, Charles and Lesley Wood. 2009. *Social Movements, 1968-2008*, 2nd Ed. Coulder, Colorado: Paradigm Publishers.

Tilly, Louise and Charles Tilly. 1981. *Class Conflict and Collective Action.* New York: Sage.

Usunier, Jean-Claude and Jörg Stolz. 2014. *Religions as Brands: New Perspectives on the Marketization of Religion and Spirituality*. Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate

Wicktorowicz, Quantan. 2004a. "Conceptualizing Islamic Activism." *ISIM Newsletter* 14: 34-35.

—. ed. 2004b. *Islamic Activism: A Social Movement Theory Approach*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

About the author

Shamsul A.B. is a social anthropologist and is one of only five Distinguished Professors in Malaysia to date. He is the founding Director of the Institute of Ethnic Studies at the National University of Malaysia. Currently, he is Deputy Chair, National Council of Professors, Malaysia, and in July 2018 has been inducted as Fellow, Academy of Science, Malaysia. He also sits on the International Advisory Panel, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS),

Singapore. Shamsul is the leading architect of Malaysia's National Unity Blueprint 2015. Since 1973, he has researched, lectured and published extensively on 'economic development, culture and politics', with an empirical focus on maritime Southeast Asia and Malaysia.

8 The Propogation of Thai Theravada Buddhism Overseas

The Case of the Dhammakaya Temple

Hidetake Yano

Abstract

This chapter examines the organization, management and propagation into foreign countries of the Wat Phra Dhammakaya (Dhammakaya Temple) movement, which is a newly arisen Theravada Buddhist group in Thailand. At the branch temple in Japan, most of the followers are Thais living in Japan; so far the recruitment of Japanese has not been very successful. However, there is another group of Theravada Buddhists in Japan, the Japan Theravada Buddhist Association, which has more than 2000 Japanese members. What has caused this gap in the successful propagation of Theravada Buddhism to the Japanese? This chapter will discuss this question by focusing on the management strategies of the two organizations.

Keywords: Wat Phra Dhammakaya, management strategy, resource strategy, competitive strategy, domain strategy, layers of Theravada Buddhism

Propagation to the Japanese and analysis of the management strategy used

Due to the progress of globalization, the propagation of religion has accelerated in many directions. In recent years, the expansion of traditional religions and new religious movements from foreign countries into Japan has been striking. This chapter examines a case that is an example of this trend: Wat Phra Dhammakaya (Dhammakaya Temple), a branch of Thai Theravada Buddhism, and its propagation in Japan.

In June 2009, I requested permission to conduct research on the Tokyo branch of Wat Phra Dhammakaya. I requested information about their missionary work among the local Japanese population, and was interested in the difficulties of propagating their work in a different culture. The chief monk of the branch temple in Tokyo declined my request, saying that the activities of Dhammakaya Temple in Japan were directed to Thai people living in Japan and that they had no plans to conduct missionary work among the Japanese either at that time or in the future. It therefore seemed slightly strange to me that a few days after receiving this reply, a short ordination course to enter the priesthood was advertised in the official temple blog, as well as in a newspaper of religious affairs in Japan (Chūgai Nippo 2009). The course was targeted at foreigners, including Japanese, and was to be held in Thailand.

Regardless, the above reply of the chief monk could have been the truth. An explanation for this apparent inconsistency could be that the temple plans were to disseminate information about their activities to Japanese society, and to present their activities as cultural exchange rather than as propagation of their religion. In fact, the course for entering the priesthood in Thailand was described as 'cultural exchange' in the newspaper.

From this, we can surmise their difficulties in taking the first step on the road to active dissemination toward the Japanese. Why is promoting to the Japanese difficult? In this chapter, I place this question in the spotlight and attempt to analyse this propagation by employing the theory of management (or business) strategy within business administration theory. The theory of management strategy will be explained later. In this section, I provide a rationale for using business administration theory.

Perspectives drawn from the sociology and anthropology of religion have undoubtedly been effective in research on the development of contemporary religious organizations. However, the theories of business administration offer a different perspective that may also prove useful by situating the study of religious organizations within the broader frame of modernity and modern forms of social organization. Viewed as one form of modern social institution, contemporary religious organizations have much in common with other modern social institutions, including businesses. An examination of religious organizations from the perspective of business administration may therefore prove fruitful.

There are differences, however, between business enterprises and religious organizations in their aims and in their formation. Therefore, we must not indiscriminately apply modes of analysis and concepts drawn from business administration to research on religion. In this attempt to shed light on

the differences between business administration and the administration of religious organizations, the application of the business administration model offers useful insights. For example, measuring the viability of different strategies of propagation of religion in different cultures by employing the concepts and methods of business administration enables us to analyse whether propagation toward a specific target is successful or not and what the primary factors in this are.

The remainder of this chapter describes the history of Wat Phra Dhammakaya (Dhammakaya Temple) in Thailand and its management strategy and examines problems faced by the branch temple in Japan relating to propagation among the Japanese.

Wat Phra Dhammakaya (Dhammakaya Temple)

The monks and lay followers of Wat Phra Dhammakaya practise a unique form of meditation, known as Dhammakaya style meditation. This style of meditation was devised by Phra Mongkhon Thepmuni (1884-1959), a previous chief monk of Wat Paknam in Bangkok in around 1947. According to some followers, the meditation was rediscovered. In this Dhammakaya meditation, one meditates on a light ball or crystal as the object for mental concentration and then cultivates the inner self in various stages. Eventually the practitioner will be led to Dhammakaya, the Dharma body, achieving a state of unity in the mind. The movement teaches that the supreme aim of life is to achieve this state of 'Nirvana'[1] or 'true self' through this experience of unity. The monks and followers not only practise meditation, but also observe Buddhist precepts and offerings. They aim to accumulate merit while training to achieve the state of 'Nirvana'. They also believe in a special guardian power and charms, along with their practice of meditation (Yano 2006a; 2006b).[2]

Dhammakaya meditation has been taught to several lineages, of which Wat Phra Dhammakaya is the largest organization. Its origins are traced to two male university students, Thammachayo and Thattachiwo, who became the pupils of a nun named Ubasika Can, a disciple of Phra Mongkhon

---

[1]   The meaning of 'Nirvana' based on the idea of Dhammakaya meditation is different from the orthodox interpretation of the term.

[2]   Hereinafter, the information on the outline of the Dhammakaya Temple before the year of 2006 is based on the authority of my book. Further information is based on the homepages of the Dhammakaya temple and its related groups. Studies done by Apinya Fu'angfusakun (1998) and Jackson (1989) also provide helpful knowledge about this temple.

Thepmuni. Subsequently these two students entered the priesthood, took the names Phra Thammachayo and Phra Thattachiwo and built a training centre for young people. The training centre was developed into a temple in 1977, which later became Wat Phra Dhammakaya. During the initial stage, university students played a key role in the temple, entering the priesthood shortly after their graduation and laying the foundation of this organization. Students were selected by the movement as the most important people to propagate their teachings. The roots of this emphasis on the role of students can be found in the Thai custom whereby people believe it is preferable for men to enter the priesthood for a short period of time while they are young. Wat Phra Dhammakaya adapted this custom anew and made good use of it to acquire new followers.

The main temple of Wat Phra Dhammakaya functions as the head of the many branch temples, which are dispersed in many different locations. This temple sits on extensive premises of around 4,370,000 square metres. Within these grounds there is a giant stupa and an enormous ceremonial hall, which can accommodate 100,000 people. On the first Sunday of every month, a large number of followers gather from all over the country, and a grand ceremony takes place. This ritual is large in scale, but has a quiet and orderly atmosphere. Visual scenes and images of the ritual and the participants appear in magazines and pamphlets, and are also broadcast through the Internet.

Wat Phra Dhammakaya's position in society in Thailand

As explained above, the temple has a unique view of the practice of meditation and also of the doctrine of Nirvana. Famous learned priests and others in Thailand have pointed out that this view is not an orthodox interpretation. However, the Thai Sangha has not officially rejected Wat Phra Dhammakaya as heresy. Rather the temple continues its activities while keeping a delicate balance with the Sangha. In summary, it can be said that Wat Phra Dhammakaya officially belongs to the Thai Sangha but at the same time, their doctrines and activities are different from other existing temples. It is a kind of 'religious community within the Sangha'. Why, then, do they not break away from the rest of the Thai Sangha and establish a new sect? Or alternatively pursue their activities as a new religion, separate from the doctrine and practice of Theravada Buddhism?

The reason for this can be found in the benefits that the movement derives from their positioning as part of Theravada Buddhism, an institution in

Thailand. Thailand has an official approval system of religions, in which the national government recognizes some groups, including Buddhism, Islam, Christianity, Brahmanism, Hinduism and Sikhism, as state religions and controls them, as well as providing some support. Government approval is needed to become a monk and also for temples of Theravada Buddhism in order to gain recognition. When any group acts without obtaining this approval, they are then not allowed to refer to themselves as monks nor as a temple of Theravada Buddhism. For example, there is a Buddhist organization known as Santi Asok, which broke away from the Sangha in Thailand. They are regarded as a private organization not as a government approved 'religious group', and so are not allowed to act as an organization of Theravada Buddhism.

Development of the activities of Wat Phra Dhammakaya outside of Thailand

Wat Phra Dhammakaya developed within Thailand, but today has a number of branch temples outside the country. The first branch was established in the USA in January 1992. As of August 2008, the temple has branches in 24 countries and regions worldwide. Among those, the USA has eleven branches, Japan has six, and Australia and Germany follow with five branches each.

In Japan, the first branch was set up in Tokyo in 1996. In 1998, other branches were established in Osaka, Nagano, Tochigi, Ibaraki, and Kanagawa. Most of the followers are Thai people living in Japan, and women members are the most numerous. Hizuru Miki, a religious sociologist, conducted a survey in the Osaka branch in 2008,[3] Miki estimated the highest number of followers is 500, while typically there are around 80 participants in the main Sunday services. Thai women comprise about 80 per cent of the followers, and the majority of these are in their 40s and 50s.

Seen another way, the publicity and the propagation to the Japanese population seems to have failed to yield results. Why does the practice of Wat Phra Dhammakaya not spread among the Japanese? It could be pointed out here that Mahayana Buddhism is the dominant form of Buddhism in Japan, and the Japanese seem to be cautious about alien Buddhist practices, tending

---

3   The material presented here on Wat Phra Dhammakaya in Osaka is based on my interview with Miki in 2008. He conducted his research on 26 August 2008 at the Osaka branch of the Dhammakaya temple.

to hold practices such as Hinayana (Theravada Buddhism) in low esteem. However, this has not prevented other forms of Theravada Buddhism from attracting followers in Japan. For example, an institution known as Japan Theravada Buddhist Association, established in 1994 under a Sri Lankan monk, Venerable Alubomulle Sumanasara, has more than 2000 Japanese members (Yano 2009). Some further explanation therefore seems to be needed. With this in mind, and against the background outlined above, the rest of this chapter examines the drawbacks of the publicity and propagation methods of Wat Phra Dhammakaya to the Japanese, from the perspective of management (or business) strategy.

Management strategy of Wat Phra Dhammakaya

I would like to offer an outline of why one uses a management (or business) strategy model and the reason why I focus on this strategy. Management strategy is concerned with the goals of decision-making in business administration and its results. It evaluates the 'fit' of an enterprise in a variety of external environments. To achieve its corporate objectives, an enterprise examines and defines its domain of activity (domain strategy) and decides the allocation of resources, including human resources, goods, funds, and information (resource strategy). Through this strategy and its associated choices, the enterprise tries to improve its competitive advantage over other corporate entities (competitive strategy).

  While religious groups may not intentionally devise their strategies in this way, they nevertheless develop strategies that, whether intentionally or not, serve the needs and wishes of their congregations, and may therefore be analysed using a management strategy model. In the next section I give an outline of the strategies that Wat Phra Dhammakaya established in Thailand, from the viewpoint of resource strategy, including decision-making on the acquisition, accumulation and allocation of human resources, goods, funds and information. Following this is an outline of its competitive strategy, including its decision-making relative to other related businesses, as well as its domain strategy, including the setting up and management of all activities of the organization.[4]

4   As for resource strategy and competitive strategy, they are supposed to be minutely studied as divisional strategy, but this chapter only examines these strategies in a very general way. Also, the domain strategy almost overlaps the concept of corporate strategy in points of deciding the directional movement of the entire corporation.

Resource strategy

As previously noted, the members who belong to a relatively young age group outnumber other followers of Wat Phra Dhammakaya in Thailand. When I conducted a survey in 1998, the average age of official adult monks was 28.8 years old, that of the male office staff of the Dhammakaya Foundation was 26.8 years old, and that of the female office staff was 30.6 years old. The average age of lay followers was 36.8 years old for men and 37.0 for women. An important factor of this great appeal to the young is thought to be the short ordination course for students, because of which a large number of applicants are accepted.

When adding the staff of the Foundation to the monks who have been in this religion for a long time, the membership is close to 900. The majority of them graduated from junior colleges or higher levels of university. Therefore, there are about 900 people who are highly motivated and highly educated in the foundation and the temple. In addition to this, around the central core of followers there are ordinary believers who belong to the new urban middle class who, along with their families, have more spending power than the average. Donations from these people play an important role in the financing of this temple and its foundation.

Competitive strategy

The Wat Phra Dhammakaya has chosen a competitive strategy which enables them to differentiate their temple from the other existing temples. Their image is that of a very modern temple with a responsive and relevant religious group. They have combined their practice of meditation and the observance of the Buddhist precepts and disciplined behaviour with an approach appropriate for a modern urban context.

For example, the main hall of the head temple is built in a simple style, using white as a basic colour, which enables them to easily repair or rebuild it. There are no detailed decorations at all, as can be seen extensively at all of the traditional temples in Thailand. On the days of big events which are held once a month, and on festive days related to Buddhism, tens of thousands of followers gather at the head temple. They also disseminate their message and attract people to the head Temple by making the most of mass media and information technology. Pictures and commentary of major events and festive days are distributed inside and outside of the country using magazines, newspapers, satellite broadcasting and the Internet. The

images disseminated express the aesthetic sense and values of the modern urban middle class.

Furthermore, the projected images themselves create an atmosphere of an important event. The gravitational field of the head temple as a centre has an effect similar to a scene in which people standing in line attract many more people. In this way, the head temple symbolizes a holy place for people who wish to acquire the efficiency of modernistic tranquility along with the beauty gained through meditation. At the centre of this holy place, the founder, Phra Mongkhon Thepmuni, and the first chief priest of the temple who belongs to the lineage of his pupils, are revered as charismatic leaders.

Domain strategy

Domain strategy is used to support resource strategy and competitive strategy. The following remarks of the current chief priest provide us with an insight into this: 'Buddhism is full of fundamental principles and eternal truth. If it is compared to merchandise, our product is of the top quality. But in the present circumstances, the marketing is not good enough'. (Apinya Fu'angfusakun 1998: 49).

In fact, Wat Phra Dhammakaya has attempted to set up a domain of activities of a new type of Buddhism using theories of marketing and new technology. However, we have to read the intention hidden between the lines of the above statement. Although he uses the term 'Buddhism', there is a strategy of striving not to show the uniqueness of the Dhammakaya meditation and how different it is from conventional Theravada Buddhism in Thailand.

From this, it can be said that Wat Phra Dhammakaya envisions a domain integrating conventional Theravada Buddhism and the unique meditation and ideas of Dhammakaya, which also makes use of marketing technology. The way in which this strategy has been devised takes account of the delicate position of Wat Phra Dhammakaya within Thailand. Their aim has been to improve the presentation of Theravada Buddhism, and at the same time embed their form of meditation into this presentation. As a result, it has become difficult to criticize them for the uniqueness of Dhammakaya.

Although they have some problems within Thailand, their strategy has enabled the temple to fit into the society of Thailand and this has contributed to the increase in their number of followers. However, the above management strategy, which was devised for Thailand, is ineffective in increasing the

number of foreign believers, in particular Japanese people. This point will be examined further by referring to the cases of some branches in Japan.

Incompatibility of the management strategy in propagation to the Japanese

It remains obscure what sort of strategy of internationalization the temple has for the operation of the foreign branches of Dhammakaya Temple. Though my information is limited, based on my knowledge of the Tokyo branch and the materials regarding the Osaka branch collected by Miki Hizuru (Japanese researcher of Sociology of Religion), it seems that Dhamma-kaya Temple has brought the same management strategy used in Thailand, into Japan. It appears that this policy has been successful to a certain extent in obtaining Thai followers living in Japan. However, they have not been successful in gaining Japanese followers. How can this be explained with reference to their management strategy?

Shortage of management resources

Let me begin with their resource strategy. In Wat Phra Dhammakaya in Thailand, the followers of the new urban middle class have become a key part of their membership and management. These highly skilled and motivated members work as a dynamic management resource of workers and also provide goods, funds, and information. However, it seems that these circumstances are not applicable in Japan.

For instance, the greater part of the monks and staff, who are dispatched from the head temple in Thailand to the Tokyo branch, are well-educated and are capable of performing a variety of clerical work. They are also responsible for preparations for the temple events every weekend, to which the Thai followers living in Japan come. However, when they come to Japan, most of them are foreign students with a student visa.[5] Therefore, they have to devote much of their time to the study of Japanese and the research for which their visa permits them to stay, and have limited time for other activities. Turning to the ordinary believers, most of these are Thai women living in

---

5   Visa applications for overseas education (Japanese universities and language schools) are easier to obtain for admission into Japan, compared to a visa for pursuing religious activities such as missionary work.

Japan. Although a few are university graduates, it appears to be difficult to appoint these women as secondary staff who require a high level of skill in information technology.

This does not mean that the Japanese branch of this temple does not practise publicity and propagation toward the Japanese. Recently, as previously noted, they have begun to offer a short ordination course to Japanese nationals.[6] They have also been practicing a variety of activities, including Thai classes for the Japanese and Thai children living in Japan, as well as giving lectures on Thai culture and Thai Buddhism.

According to the survey by Miki the branch at Osaka also provides the children of Thai women living in Japan with a course for entering the monkhood for one week as half ordained novices. It is not thought that the Thai classes and the lectures will directly lead to the acquisition of new believers. But for those who enter the monkhood as half ordained novices, who are children speaking Japanese, this could open a new way of development in the future.[7]

Imperfect competitive strategy and differentiation

Their competitive strategy seems to have been effective to some extent in differentiating the movement from conventional temples of Theravada Buddhism of Thailand. However, it has not seemed to work well in the Japanese context. From a Japanese perspective, even for an individual interested in meditation, other factors are needed to make the movement more attractive compared with Zen meditation and meditation practised in other Buddhist sects – for example, an attractive doctrine, a charismatic leader, a miraculous experience such as curing a serious illness or a moving mystical experience. One or more of these factors must be present.

Although Dhammakaya meditation and doctrine are unique, they are not represented in an attractive form (for example in the form of a book summarizing the movement's teachings). There does not appear to be a charismatic leader in the Tokyo branch at present, and miraculous recovery from an illness is not emphasized. Although mystical experience gained through meditation is one of the strengths of the temple, it is usually experienced after training oneself through meditation for a long period of time. However, ordinary Japanese people, unlike Thai, seldom practise

---

6   The branch states that they offer the Japanese financial assistance of 50,000 yen for travel expenses, though there is a limit on the number who can apply.

7   In August 2008, seventeen children aged between nine and fifteen participated in the course at Osaka Branch.

meditation for a lengthy period of even one week, without a special reason and preparation, within a religious group to which s/he is not committed. Furthermore, as religious groups which employ information technology and make the most of their publicity through media are common in Japan, these activities do not make the same impact on local Japanese people as they do in Thailand. This does not mean that Theravada Buddhism is incompatible within the Japanese context, but the differentiation strategy of Wat Phra Dhammakaya, and their domain strategy, discussed below, are not very effective in Japan, especially given the competition among religious groups in Japan, and the generally critical public view of religious groups.

In contrast, the Japan Theravada Buddhist Association has succeeded in obtaining a number of the Japanese followers. Their foundation has pursued a different strategy from that of the Dhammakaya Temple, clearly displaying the image of Early Buddhism during the period of Buddha and of Pali Theravada Buddhism, and distributing methods of meditation and study through a paperback pocket edition which was distributed in Japan and over the Internet. Their leading monk (a Sri Lankan) is well versed in guiding their meditation, and teaching doctrine, and is an effective preacher. These factors appear to have gained some advantage for the Japan Theravada Buddhist Association in terms of their competitive strategy.

Dissolution of the domain

The domain strategy of Wat Phra Dhammakaya in Thailand is the integration of the Dhammakaya meditation and the temple's ideology with the conventional Theravada Buddhism of Thailand by employing a new and previously unused marketing technology. Their successes indicate that some Thai Theravada Buddhists have converted to become followers of Dhammakaya. However, this success has occurred in the context of Thai society (or more specifically Thai Theravada Buddhism). The following three 'layers' of Buddhism are integrated as one religion in Thailand: Early Buddhism during the period of Buddha, historical Pali Theravada Buddhism based on Pali Tripitaka, which spread in Sri Lanka, Burma (Myanmar), Thailand, Laos, Cambodia and its environs, and the ethnic Thai Theravada Buddhism, which is embedded in the tradition of Thai society where Thai is spoken.[8] In the case of Wat Phra Dhammakaya, they have chosen a strategy

---

8   An infinite number of various local practices of Buddhism are commonly thought to be connected to the unity of Early Buddhism, Pali Theravada Buddhism and Ethnic Theravada Buddhism.

Figure 8.1   Layers of Theravada Buddhism
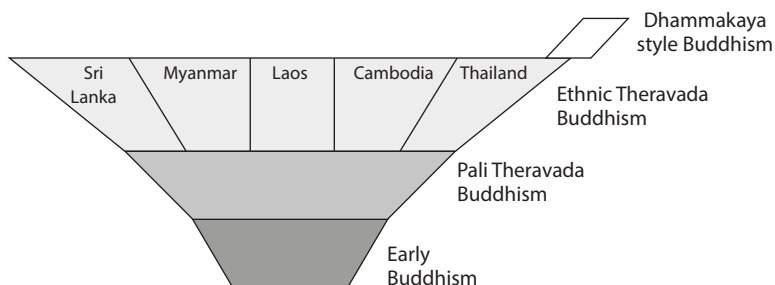
in which Dhammakaya Buddhism is newly connected within the sphere which integrates Early Buddhism, Pali Theravada Buddhism and Ethnic Theravada Buddhism [See Figure 8.1].

This integration is specific to Thailand and does not apply to Japan. So, what sort of understanding of Theravada Buddhism is common among Japanese people at present? Although I cannot produce empirical data on this, it appears that there is no single well-integrated image of Theravada Buddhism in Japan. Rather, it can be seen as consisting in a number of layers: Theravada as a form of Buddhism derived from Early Buddhism during the lifetime of the Buddha; Theravada Buddhism as based on Pali scripture which is still practised in Sri Lanka and some South East Asian countries; and the ethnic Theravada Buddhism of each region (Figure 8.1) Some may also have an image of Theravada Buddhism as 'Hīnayāna Buddhism, implying a view of Theravada as inferior to Mahayana Buddhism.

Unexpectedly, there are interests and needs unmet in the sphere of Early Buddhism. That is because of the influence of the achievements of Dr. Nakamura Hajime (1911-1999), a famous researcher of Early Buddhism. There is both an academic and a religious demand for more information in this sphere. As far as the religious demand is concerned, historically there have been no temples or monks which use the doctrine of the Early Buddhism as their foundation in Japan. Therefore, it can be said that this situation, in which the interest and demand in this area has not been met, has continued up to the present.

The Japan Theravada Buddhist Association, which has Venerable Alubomulle Sumanasara as its leader, have been in a position to impact and benefit from the above situation through its domain strategies. The association skilfully avoids emphasis on the elements of ethnic Theravada Buddhism, including the mixture of the Sri Lankan monks and Burmese monks, by attaching an importance to Pali. In fact, their domain strategy

uses the desire for historical Early Buddhism as a base, and adds to this Pali Buddhism which has an actual Sangha.

There is some interest in Japan, in ethnic Theravada Buddhism (Thai Buddhism and Burmese Buddhism), but this is within the framework of an interest in a different culture. The Japanese who look at this from the point of view of valuing the experience of a multicultural society confine their attention to the ethnic features of 'Thai Buddhism'. Wat Phra Dhammakaya continues to put forward and push its strategy of trying to build a very special holy place of Buddhism in its main temple. Therefore, it is impossible for them to remove the ethnic features from their competitive strategy and domain strategy. So, the Japanese branches present courses for learning the language of Thai and of Thai culture along with a programme of cultural exchange between Thailand and Japan, as a window that they hope will appeal to the Japanese. However, there has been little interest in the Thai language and Thai culture in Japan. At present this interest remains within the framework of understanding a different culture and so seldom leads to religious need or interest.

Conclusions

In this chapter, the head temple of Wat Phra Dhammakaya in Thailand and the branch temples in Japan have been compared to each other from the viewpoint of management strategy. The branches of the Dhammakaya temple in Japan serve the needs of Thai people living in Japan by providing them with religious services in a similar way as found in Thailand. However, strategies that work well in Thailand have not been successful in attracting followers from the local Japanese population. This failure is thought to be caused by several factors. Firstly, the resources of branches in Japan are limited. Secondly, their differentiation has not been clearly focused on, and in particular their domain strategy, which lies behind their teachings, has been incompatible with the Japanese population. The 'domain' mentioned here means the scope of activities and its existence. In other words, the domain of the existence of an institution is the image given by its identity, and this comes about through the relationship with its environment. I suggest that the reason why the domain strategy that was successful in Thailand was not successful in Japan lies in the differences of the religious environments between Thailand and Japan and their populations as well as the level of modernization in each country.

However, there are other examples of unexpected successes of domain strategy. For example, Inoue (1985) states that the ratio of non-Japanese

followers, in particular Caucasian followers, increased at NSA (Nichiren Shōshū Sōka Gakkai of America, a Japanese New Religious Movement) in USA, from the latter half of 1960s. He points out that the main cause lies in the fact that the counter-culture became popular, leading to an interest in 'oriental religion'. NSA benefited from this, leading to an increase in non-Japanese followers. As previously noted, in the case of the Japan Theravada Buddhist Association, they did not define ethnic Theravada Buddhism of Sri Lankan as the domain, and instead situated themselves in the domain of early Buddhism and Pali Theravada Buddhism. Furthermore, they chose the medium of the paperback book to transmit their teachings. This differentiated competitive strategy was successful in leading to the increase of Japanese followers. In this way, when religious culture and religious groups are moved into the scope of a culture, then their management strategy, and the hidden assumptions of their domain strategy (which were successful in the home country) are highlighted.

Finally, it is important to address the following question: when a religious group undertakes a restructuring of its management strategies in response to a different cultural context, to what extent is it possible to change itself and continue to be true to its core beliefs? Further study of the globalization and the management strategies of religious groups using the perspectives presented here may cast further light on this issue.

Works cited

Apinya Fu'angfusakun. 1998. "Sasanathat khong Chumchon Mu'ang Samaimai Suksa Korani Wat Phra Thammakai." *Phutthasat Suksa*, Culalongkon Mahawithayalai, Pi thi 5, Chabap thi 1 Mokarakhom – Mesayonk, 4-88. [in Thai]

Chugai Nippo. 2009. *Tanki Shukke Kosu Tanjo Nihonngo-de Sanshukan 8gatsu 8nichi~30 nichi Thai Dhammakaya jiin de* [*Opening of a course of entering the priesthood in a short time – Three Weeks in Japanese, 8 to 30 August at Wat Phra Dhammakaya in Thailand*], 16 June, 5 [in Japanese].

Inoue Nobutaka. 1985. *Umi o Watatta Nihon Shūkyō Imin Shakai no Uchi to Sōtō* [*Japanese Religion Across the Sea – Inside and Outside of the Immigrant Community*], Tokyo: Kōbundō [in Japanese].

Jackson, Peter A. 1989. *Buddhism, Legitimation, and Conflict: The Political Functions of Urban Thai Buddhism*. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies.

Yano Hidetake. 2006a. *Gendai Tai ni okeru Bukkyō Undō – Dhammakaya meiso to Taishakai no Henyo* [*Buddhist Movements in Present-day Thailand – Dhammakaya Meditation and Transfiguration of Thai Society*], Tokyo: Tōshindō [in Japanese].

—. 2006b. *"The Paradox of Sacred Consumption in the case of Wat Phra Dhammakaya* [in Japanese]."* Institute of Asian Studies Chulalongkorn University, *Asian Review* 19: 51-70.

—. 2009. "Nihon ni Hiromaru Terawada Bukkyo [Theravada Buddhism Spreading in Japan]." In *Shūkyō to Gendai ga Wakaruhon* [*Find Out What the Religion and Modern Times Are*], edited by Naoki Watanabe, 212-215. Tokyo: Heibonsha [in Japanese].

About the author

Hidetake Yano is Professor of Religious Studies at Komazawa University in Tokyo. He is the author of Buddhist Movements in Contemporary Thailand: Thammakai (Dhammakaya) Meditation and Thai Society in Transition (2006, in Japanese), and State and Theravada Buddhism in Thailand (2017, in Japanese). He researches within the sociology of religion and his research interests include new Buddhist movements in urban Thai society, religious education in Thailand and the history of religious studies in Thailand.

9   Contextualizing the Global

Marketing Pentecostal/Charismatic Christianity in
Malaysia and Indonesia

Barbara Watson Andaya

Abstract

Despite Christianity's position as a minority faith in most Asian countries,
the remarkable expansion of Pentecostalism-Charismatic (P/C) Christian-
ity in recent years has encouraged observers to regard it as a 'new' religious
movement. Using the Sidang Injil Borneo, Malaysia, and the Bethel Church
of Indonesia as examples, this chapter employs the concept of 'glocaliza-
tion' to examine how P/C Christianity has been marketed to Indonesian
and Malaysian clientele in ways that maintain a global style of evangelism
while stressing local roots. The emphasis on charismatic preaching and
healing has exercised a strong cultural appeal and provided a basis for the
subsequent growth of P/C congregations. An increased presence in urban
centres also owes much to communication through social media and to
a technologically sophisticated worship style perceived as emblematic of
a new religious modernity. At the same time, these case studies suggest
that the presentation of Christianity as simultaneously national and
cosmopolitan contains inherent tensions, and that 'local' elements are
receding as global influences become increasingly dominant.

Keywords: Pentecostalism, Charismatic Christianity, marketing, glocalisa-
tion, Sidang Injil Borneo, Gereja Bethel Indonesia

In the non-Western world, the contemporary revitalization and expansion
of Pentecostalism, a movement within Christianity that stresses a believer's
personal encounter with God through the Holy Spirit, is an unprecedented
phenomenon. This development is of particular interest because Pentecostal-
ism itself is not a 'new' religion. While its formal origins are generally traced

to revival meetings held in Azusa Street in Los Angeles in 1906, antecedents can be found in Christian renewal movements in the late nineteenth century. The name is derived from the Greek *Pentekostas* [50], which in Jewish tradition refers to the ritual held seven weeks after Passover. The Pentecostal movement takes its inspiration from the biblical description of events on the Day of Pentecost that followed the death and resurrection of Christ as described in Acts 2. A group of disciples were gathered together for prayer when the sound of a mighty wind engulfed the entire house. 'And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance'. The conviction that the Holy Spirit can once more descend in all its power is thus central to Pentecostal theology.

Despite commonalities with evangelical Christianity – the insistence on personal conversion and salvation by faith, the obligation to evangelise and the acceptance of the Bible as the sole authority in matters of faith – Pentecostalism is distinguished by its 'fourfold teaching'; the emphasis on being 'born again', on divine healing, on a Second Coming, and on baptism of the Holy Spirit, often evidenced by speaking in tongues or glossolalia (Dayton 1987: 15-28). In the 1960s similar renewal movements began to develop within mainstream churches. They are subsumed under the rubric of 'Charismatic Christianity' because they stress the gifts (charisms) bestowed by the Holy Spirit, such as the ability to heal and to see revelations revealed in scripture. By the 1970s some groups had formed independent congregations or had merged with existing Pentecostal churches (Eskridge 2012). Since they have so much in common and since there is so much interaction, it is impossible to draw boundaries between these movements, now generally called Pentecostal/Charismatic (P/C), although others have favoured terms such as 'spirit-empowered' (Yong 2015).

In the history of Pentecostalism global-local connections are a key element because from the outset this mission-oriented movement was 'made to travel' (Dempster et al. 1999). In this sense, it can be compared with modern business firms that are 'born global' and that 'from their beginnings, have a global focus and commit their resources to international ventures' (AMD 2016). In the early twentieth century, new congregations soon developed in Europe, but it was the non-Western world that was the greatest magnet for Pentecostal evangelism. The first of many Pentecostal missionaries arrived in China in 1907, but others rapidly moved into India, Africa, the Middle East and Latin America (Anderson 2007). Since the 1970s, however, this momentum has accelerated beyond all expectations. According to current projections, Pentecostal-Charismatic numbers worldwide will reach 800 million by 2025 and if the trend continues should exceed one billion by 2050

(Jenkins 2011: 10, 80). A major reason for this dramatic surge is expansion in the 'Third World', notably Latin America, Africa, but also Asia. In 2005, the Pew Forum estimated that there were 351 million Asian Christians, about a third of whom could be considered Pentecostal/Charismatic. Unlike Africa and Latin America, P/C followers in Asia are largely drawn from the middle class, and as Asia becomes increasingly more urban they are predicted to become the dominant expression of Asian Christianity. Because the phenomenon of Asian P/C Christianity is relatively recent, this chapter argues that it can be approached here as a 'new' religion (Pew Forum 2006; Robbins 2004; Yung 2005: 53; Speciale 2013; Anderson and Tang 2005).

Studies of Asian Pentecostalism have accorded most attention to developments in Korea, and in Southeast Asia the growth of large urban-based P/C 'megachurches' has often been attributed to a non-indigenous 'prosperity theology' that appeals primarily to the commercially-oriented Chinese community, with Singapore a striking example (Tan-Chow 2007; Koning 2009; Koning & Dahles, 2009; T. Chong 2018b; Goh 2018). However, although Chinese still dominate Christian churches in Peninsular Malaysia and Singapore, it is now accepted that P/C congregations are drawn from a far wider pool. In Southeast Asia, a more pronounced focus on the P/C appeal to non-Chinese is coupled with the effort to understand why their churches are increasingly preferred over established denominations (Beech 2010; Speciale 2013; T. Chong 2018a).

In analysing the strategies by which Pentecostalism has been transnationally appealing, the similarities to globalized business have provided a new vocabulary to explain why this 'brand' of Christianity has been so successfully marketed, especially among urban dwellers. The term 'glocalization' was coined by Japanese economists during the late 1980s as *dochakuka* [global localization] to describe a product or service developed and distributed internationally but concurrently fashioned to appeal to consumers in local markets (Robertson 1995: Lyon 1998; Vásquez and Marquardt, 2003: 56; Einstein 2008). While frequently invoked in discussions of new religious movements, the word has been particularly associated with Pentecostalism, the very identity of which, it is said, 'can be found in its glocalization' (Anderson et al. 2010: 26). This has enabled Pentecostal churches in Asia to create their own 'corporate identity'. Indeed, the extent and variety of local P/C congregations have led some authorities to argue that we should now speak of 'Pentecostalisms' (Yip and Hoon 2016; Yong 2015; Anderson 2014: 2,5,11).

Against this background, the current chapter takes the Malaysian Sidang Injil Borneo (SIB, formed as an outgrowth of the Borneo Evangelical Mission,

BEM) and the Bethel Church of Indonesia (GBI, Gereja Bethel Indonesia) as examples of the glocalization by which P/C Christianity has been marketed to an Asian clientele in ways that recognize local particularities while maintaining international links and a global style of evangelism. Yet these examples also suggest that glocalization itself is under pressure in the face of persuasive and persistent influences that promote the adoption of a 'global' management and worship style. At the same time, international connections are themselves infused with ambiguity, for Christianity carries with it the baggage of European colonialism and the insidious stamp of Westernization. In the majority-Muslim countries of Indonesia and Malaysia the perception of Pentecostalism as a 'foreign' import is reinforced because of its links to evangelist churches overseas, especially in the United States, and because individuals of Chinese descent are so prominent in P/C congregations.

In both Indonesia and Malaysia, the leaders of Pentecostal/Charismatic churches, well aware of these issues, are carefully negotiating the often-conflicted relationship between a localised identity and membership in a worldwide Christian community. Both countries have a Muslim majority, and in Islam conversion to another faith is not only regarded as a great sin but in practice is virtually impossible. In business terms, therefore, neither country is a 'free marketplace' for Christian expansion, and P/C congregations are drawn from existing churches or in some cases from previously Animist groups. Because of the differences in cultural context and historical background, the Sidang Injil Borneo and the Gereja Bethel Indonesia provide useful case studies for comparative discussion.

Indonesia, comprising around 17,000 islands, is the world's fourth-most populous nation (around 266.7 million in 2018, with hundreds of different ethnic groups). Although Islam is not the state religion, 87 per cent of Indonesians are Muslim. In the 2010 census Christians were probably under-counted at ten per cent, and in recent years P/C congregations have increased considerably. Current estimates range from 7.3 to 10 million, with a corresponding rise in P/C churches, some of which are extremely large. Their congregations include a significant number of Indonesian Chinese, who are estimated at five to six per cent of Indonesia's total population, although they control about a third of the economy (Yung 1997: 38; Robinson 2005: 340; Anderson 2013: 144; T. Chong 2018a; Hoon 2018). However, a recent survey of 3748 P/C members in Indonesia revealed that 57.1 per cent described themselves as *pribumi*, or indigenous Indonesians, and only 34 per cent self-identified as being of Chinese descent (Abdilah 2014: 62).

In contrast to Indonesia, Malaysia (population 31.7 million in 2018), though not an Islamic state, has constitutionally affirmed Islam as its

official religion. The status of Islam has specific implications for Christian missionizing, since Malays (around 60 per cent) are overwhelmingly Muslim, proselytizing among Muslims is forbidden, and apostasy by Muslims has been persistently blocked by religious courts. Under British colonialism large numbers of Chinese and South Asians were introduced as labourers, and in 2016 Malaysians of Chinese descent were estimated at 23.4 per cent of the total population and those of South Asian origins at 7.3 per cent. In West (or Peninsula) Malaysia Christians come primarily from these minority communities, and their numbers therefore remain relatively small, accounting for only 3.1 per cent in the 2010 census. The figure is far higher in the East Malaysian states of Borneo, where Christians comprise 26.6 per cent of Sabah's population and 46.2 per cent of Sarawak's. In both places Chinese are prominent in urban congregations, but the majority of Christians (including P/C followers) are indigenous non-Malay peoples who, like Malays, have the status of *bumiputera* [sons/daughters of the soil].

The Pentecostal background in Indonesia and West Malaysia

In Indonesia, the history of Pentecostalism is usually linked to the arrival of American Pentecostals and their Dutch counterparts in Java in the 1920s (Aritonang and Steenbrink 2008: 870-883). However, charismatic Christianity had already established an Asian presence, since ripples from revivals in India and China were reaching Southeast Asia through the long-standing migrant network (Yung 1997: 123-124). The appeal to overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia has its own history, for thousands flocked to the Pentecostal-style revival meetings led by the Fujian evangelist John Sung in the economically difficult years following the 1929 Depression (Lyall 1964; Tan 2005: 286; Koch 1972: 54-64; Anon 2001: 142; Robinson 2005: 331; Andaya 2015). After the war, the establishment of Chinese-speaking Assemblies of God in West Malaysia created a hospitable environment for the 1963 Pentecostal crusade conducted by the Hong Kong movie actress Kong Duen Yee. Her stress on speaking with tongues and the gifts of the Holy Spirit attracted a considerable following, in part because of her prediction that the Second Coming was imminent (Tan 2005: 287-288). In Indonesia, a surge in Chinese membership of established Pentecostal churches followed the events of 1965, when the Suharto regime declared that all Indonesians must align themselves with one of the five approved religions, at that time Islam, Christianity (meaning Protestantism), Catholicism, Buddhism, and Hinduism (Wiyono 2005: 333-336).

Figure 9.1   Map of Indonesia

Nonetheless, it is important to note that involvement in Pentecostal-style movements was by no means confined to the Chinese community. The best-known Indonesian example is the so-called Timor revival in 1964, which began in the mountain town of Soe where most residents were members of the Protestant Gereja Masehi Injili Timor (Christian Evangelical Church in Timor). Coinciding with late rains and the sudden appearance of a comet, the apparent descent of the Holy Spirit in a church gathering was widely interpreted as portending the Second Coming (Tari 1991: 27; Wiyono 2004). Throughout the revival individuals were reported to have received revelations through visions and dreams, and there were accounts of biblical parallels such as water turning into wine, miracle healing and raising of the dead. This 'thoroughly indigenous' revival, marked by long sessions of prayer and preaching, confessions of sin, and destruction of traditionally sacred objects, swept over all western Timor and nearby islands and from thence to other Christianised areas, including Borneo (Wiyono 2005: 269-293; Orr 1976: 206; Koch 1972: 121-164). It established a strong base for the later expansion of Pentecostalism which, while actively rejecting Animist beliefs, places great emphasis on the ecstatic experience. Specific 'signs' are believed to show the presence of the Holy Spirit, and the concept of 'gifts of the spirits' such as invulnerability, prophecy and miraculous healing are particularly appealing in societies for whom supernatural involvement in everyday living is accepted as part of the human experience (Yung 1997: 7, 71-76).

Two case studies

The Sidang Injil Borneo

The Sidang Injil Borneo of Malaysia originally developed from missionary initiatives that stressed the necessity of local leadership (Tan 2011: 98). In 1928 the Borneo Evangelical Mission (BEM) was inaugurated in Melbourne, and the following year three evangelists arrived in Sarawak (East Malaysia). Aware that in urban centres they would face competition from other denominations, they focused their conversion efforts on Sarawak's interior groups, notably the Murut (alternatively called Lun Bawang), who are also found in contemporary Sabah, Brunei and in Indonesian Borneo. By 1941 BEM mission work had extended into British North Borneo, and to the Kelabit highlands along the border with Indonesia (Amster 2003: 38; Tan 2011: 94-95). In accordance with the missionary vision, the training of native evangelists was well under way.

It was the internment of Europeans during the Second World War, however, that effectively opened the door to indigenous leadership of the BEM. When missionaries returned in 1947 they found that the Lun Bawang church was thriving and that Christianity was well established among highland Kelabit communities. The opening of a Bible school expanded the training of local men and women as teachers and deacons, with special attention given to translations of religious material into Borneo languages. In 1959 the 'Sidang Injil Borneo' (SIB, Borneo Evangelical Assembly) was established as an entity separate from the BEM, and the intermingling of highland groups who had migrated to the oil-fields of Miri and elsewhere in search of employment and education helped promote the SIB as a 'Borneo' religion (Lees 1964; Amster 1998: 39-40; Basri 1999: 76; Mat Zin 2004). Local leadership played an important role in recruiting converts, and in urban areas tribal peoples who had relocated for work continued to dominate SIB congregations, despite a substantial Chinese element.

SIB leaders who had been trained in BEM Bible schools had absorbed the views of their missionary mentors and were generally wary of Pentecostalism, which was considered doctrinally unsound. During the 1970s, however, the influence of the global P/C movement was transmitted to Sarawak not just through tape recordings and television but through visits by the charismatic and well-travelled Indonesian preacher, Dr. Petrus Octavanius (1928-2014). SIB membership increased markedly as people flocked to prayer meetings, attracted by reports of healing, exorcism, and other practices associated with Pentecostalism, such as the public confession of sins and

Figure 9.2   Map of Sarawak, Malaysia showing Limbang and Baram Districts

Used with permission from Tan Jin Huat (2011, 130).

the manifestation of charisms, the gifts of the Spirit. In October 1973 a group of secondary school students in the town of Bario in the Kelabit highlands, inspired by reading about the Timor experience nine years earlier, reportedly experienced the descent of the Holy Spirit. In the wake of this widely-publicised event, prophecy, speaking in tongues, miracle healing, spiritual writing, and deliverance from demonic powers became common

occurrences. Despite initial concern about 'excesses', such as emotional prayers and the belief that trances, dreams, and visions signalled divine guidance, the SIB leadership eventually accepted these events as a genuinely spiritual experience. Prayer meetings and revivalist gatherings stimulated the dispatch of mission teams of schoolteachers, young people, and church elders, as well as district and village chiefs, to other parts of Sarawak. In 1976 SIB Sabah became a separate organization with the establishment of its first church in Kota Kinabalu (Bulan and Bulan-Dorai 2004: 185-196; Orr 1976: 184-185, 190-191; Lees 1979: 180-196; Tan 2005: 299-300; Tan 2011: 233-241; Basri 1999: 76, 105).

The perception of the SIB as an expression of indigenous Christianity was solidified during the 1980s, following three further renewal movements that swept through Sarawak. The impact was most pronounced in the Murut/Lun Bawang area of Ba'Kelalan, not far from the Indonesian border, which in 1984-85 became the centre of a renewed Pentecostal-style movement. A principle figure was the charismatic Agung Bangau (d. 1992), who had been 'baptised in the spirit' in 1974 following the earlier revival in Bario. Many SIB members accepted the claim that the Holy Spirit had favoured him with special gifts, such as the ability to turn water into oil and rice grains into flour. His centre of worship was the nearby Mount Murud, the tallest mountain in Sarawak and long believed to be the domain of powerful indigenous spirits. In a landscape resacralized as Christian, the corpus of stories about divine intervention and miraculous events that continued to multiply were now expressed in the idiom of Christianity (Amster 2009). Mount Murud has since become a pilgrimage site for Borneo Christians, and the month of July is specifically dedicated to an International Revival Meeting that attracts a considerable number of overseas visitors (Tan 2005: 300; Amster 2003: 131-160; Chew 2009; Sim 2014; C. Hong 2015).

Meanwhile, SIB churches in urban areas, notably Kuching, Sibu and Miri, also saw a significant rise in congregations. Because so many indigenous leaders were based in the interior and had little knowledge of the city life, evangelism was supported by young Christians from overseas who had arrived as volunteers with international aid organizations (Tan 2011: 249). Generating new global connections, this enhanced religious environment stimulated further growth, with bible teaching, prayer meetings, and radio and television broadcasts leading to the formation of new urban churches or 'church-planting', a term especially associated with Pentecostal evangelism (Ma and Ma 2010: 117). Reckoned at around a thousand in 1962, SIB membership rose to 75,000 in 1993. Methodists, Anglicans, and Roman Catholics

maintained a strong presence, but eventually the SIB emerged as Malaysia's largest Protestant church (Basri 1999: 83; Amster 1998: 306; D. Chong 2010).

By 1993 increased migration from Sabah and Sarawak to West Malaysia encouraged SIB to establish a base in Kuala Lumpur. Under the sponsorship of SIB Sabah, SIB Semenanjung (Sidang Injil Borneo on the Peninsula) was inaugurated in November of that year, growing from fifteen people to around 130 in 1998. By 2005 SIB Semenanjung had inaugurated 23 churches, and then separated from SIB Sabah to become an autonomous branch. The following year three floors were rented in a downtown building in Kuala Lumpur, and currently several services are held each Sunday to serve around 3500 worshippers, many of whom are from Sabah and Sarawak. In 2013 70 SIB congregations were operating in West Malaysia, a notable development being their outreach among non-Muslim Orang Asli, the indigenous but marginalized inhabitants of Peninsula Malaysia (Koay 2013). In the Pentecostal tradition of global missionizing, members of SIB churches are working in Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia, Papua New Guinea and the southern Philippines, where SIB experience with tribal peoples is regarded as particularly useful.

Notwithstanding the extension of what Amster (2009) has called 'portable potency', the SIB heart continues to be in Sabah and Sarawak, with a combined membership that some estimate to be as high as 500,000 (SIBKL 2015). Although the majority still come from indigenous communities, the composition of congregations has tended to change with movement into urban centres. Members of newer churches like Kota Kinabalu's SIB Skyline (2015), established in 2001 and Kuching's SIB Grace (2015), commissioned in 2003, are more obviously Chinese, and their services are in English and Chinese rather than the Malay or local languages used in rural churches (SIB Likas 2016). A similar trend is apparent in West Malaysia, where the East Malaysian Christians who began meeting in 1993 were largely of Chinese descent and where the symbolic capital of being *bumiputera* [indigenous] is less easily deployed than in Sabah and Sarawak.

Gereja Bethel Indonesia

The history of Gereja Bethel Indonesia, like that of the SIB, dates from the 1950s. The founder, H.L. Senduk (originally Ho Liong Seng, 1917-2008), was born in Ternate (eastern Indonesia) of middle class Indonesian-Chinese parents (Senduk 1993: 22; Hosea 1998: 21-25). Educated in a Dutch school, the youthful Senduk became a member of the Pentecostal Church and was baptised in 1935. While studying at the Netherlands Bible Institute in

Surabaya he lived with his teacher, the Dutch evangelist Gerald van Gessel, who had been prominent in the Pentecostal movement of the 1920s. After the war Senduk became an active member of the Gereja Pantekosta di Indonesia, Indonesia's first, and still largest, Pentecostal church (Kakiay 2001: 15-19).

In 1952, following divisions within the Pentecostal leadership, Senduk allied with Van Gessel and formed a new church, the Gereja Bethel Injil Sepenuh (GBIS, Bethel Full Gospel Church). Sometime in the 1960s he responded to the undercurrent of anti-Chinese feeling by changing his name to Ho Lukas Senduk (Bimo 1998: 86). In 1958, following an international Pentecostal conference in Toronto, Senduk and his wife joined the Church of God in Cleveland, Tennessee, one of the world's largest Pentecostal denominations. For several years Senduk and representatives of GBIS and the Church of God worked together to formalize mutual collaboration. However, the proposal for financial amalgamation and for more American missionaries met considerable opposition among GBIS ranks. In 1970 Senduk and his supporters broke away and established another church in Sukabumi, West Java, which they called Gereja Bethel Indonesia (Senduk 1993: 66). By 2000 GBI had grown to an estimated 700,000 members, and the numbers have continued to expand (Anderson 2004: 131). Until his death in 2008, Senduk (in keeping with Pentecostalism's deep commitment to missionizing), maintained that his goal was the establishment of ten thousand GBI churches. These would minister not just to Indonesians within the country, but to those living overseas as well. Indeed, in the 21st century the Indonesian diaspora has transformed the GBI into a global church, with branches in Australia, Canada, the United States, the Netherlands, Germany, Taiwan and recently, Dubai (Hess 2001: ix; Smith 2009: 10).

The GBI provides an informative case study of the challenges facing a Pentecostal church that aims to maintain global connections while proclaiming its 'national' character in a Muslim-majority country. It has not been easy to cast off the image of Pentecostal Christianity as a prosperity church of primary relevance to Chinese-Indonesians, since many Pentecostal pastors are of Chinese descent and have strong followings among Chinese-Indonesian [*Peranakan*] business leaders (Koning and Dahles 2009: 31). Nonetheless, although it has been difficult to detach 'internationalization' from 'Westernization', promotion of the GBI as both global and 'national' has gained considerably from the leadership of Jacob Nahuway, pastor of GBI Mawar Saron (Rose of Sharon) in Jakarta.

The rise of Pastor Jacob (b. 1947) to prominence owes much to his ability to identify with ordinary Indonesians, for he is not *Peranakan* Chinese and he came of a poor family. He was raised in a Protestant community on the

island of Nusa Laut in central Maluku (eastern Indonesia), where his parents made their living by fishing and subsistence farming (Tuwanakotta, 1993: 17-23). At the age of fourteen he was able to attend school in Jakarta; here he was drawn to a Pentecostal church and was subsequently baptised. As a seminary student, he attracted the attention of H.L. Senduk, who arranged for him to attend a seminary in Seoul. In Korea Dr. David Yonggi Cho, who had founded the Yoido Full Gospel Church in 1958, took Jacob under his wing, and 20 years later Senduk appointed him pastor at Jakarta's small Mawar Saron church.

Under Pastor Jacob's leadership Mawar Saron has grown from a small congregation of only 40 people to its current membership, now accommodated in a massive new cathedral that can seat around ten thousand (Cossey 2009: 13). This new cathedral sets GBI Mawar Saron aside from many other Pentecostal churches (including GBI congregations) that hold their services in hotel ballrooms, shopping malls and similar venues. As Hoon (2018) reminds us, obtaining the capital necessary for completing this structure and the fact that it received official permission testifies to the connections that Pastor Jacob has established both with government authorities and with wealthy entrepreneurs.

While connections with evangelical churches in the West are still strong, the GBI's strongest overseas links are to Korea, and to David Yonggi Cho, even after the latter's suspended conviction for embezzlement in 2014 (set aside in June 2016). Pastor Jacob has continued to benefit from this his association, since Dr. Cho can still be regarded as 'the most well-known Pentecostal minister in the world today', and certainly the most influential in Asia. With his support, Pastor Jacob became chairman of the Asian Mission Association (AMA), while the Mawar Saron church hosted the tenth AMA convention in 2010, with the telling theme, 'Asian Churches in Global Mission'. Closer to home, Pastor Jacob is a familiar figure in Sarawak and Sabah, since links between Pentecostals in Malaysian Borneo and Indonesia have always been close.

Although international connections are a hallmark of the modern Pentecostal evangelist, Pastor Jacob is also regarded as a 'national' figure, his reputation well established throughout Indonesia because of his many revival meetings. As chairman of the synod of Gereja Bethel Indonesia, he has been working with colleagues to unify all Indonesian Pentecostal churches. His personal connections with a congregation that includes a large number of Chinese have been strengthened by his marriage to a Chinese Indonesian (Tuwanakotta 1993: 74). Perhaps the greatest evidence of his interaction with other Indonesians is through Facebook, Twitter and

Instagram. Social media provides Pastor Jacob's following of well over 17,000 access to daily messages, pictures of rallies, international visits, news of forthcoming events, and links to other sites, including the Mawar Saron church. This is above all a domain dominated by the young, allowing 'friends' to sign up and send messages such as 'Syalom Uncle Jacob, you are scattering the love and goodness of Lord Jesus through all Indonesia, from Sabang to Merauke, from Timor to Sanggir'. Occasionally Pastor Jacob himself will post a reply (Nahuway 2015). Today the Gereja Bethel Indonesia, with an estimated membership of 2.6 million and over five thousand churches, is one of the largest of Indonesia's Pentecostal denominations, maintaining branches in all Indonesia's provinces.

Marketing Pentecostalism: Some comparative comments

The history of the Sidang Injil Borneo and the Gereja Bethel Indonesia provides an opportunity to compare the glocalization of Pentecostal Christianity in two different contexts. In the first place, most observers agree that Asian cultures offer a cultural environment that is conducive to the P/C style of evangelism. Despite a vehement rejection of spirit worship, the belief in divine healing and other 'signs and wonders' as well as the reality of Satan and the significance of 'power encounters' is quite compatible with many underlying local beliefs. The raising of hands, the group dancing and singing, and the cacophony of voices in personal prayer all contribute to a heightened state of emotion that bears similarities to many indigenous rituals and recalls the revival meetings in pre-war China (Xi 2010). In Southeast Asia charismatic preachers also stand out as modern-day 'people of prowess' because they are perceived as recipients of divine favour (Wolters 1999: 112, 169). This is evident in their ability to communicate with supernatural powers, to foresee the future and to heal in miraculous ways, and by the blessings they have received, such as material wealth and good health.

In the second place, the glocalization process is facilitated because the absence of a liturgical template enables churches to 'package' their product in different ways and thus offer specific 'brands' from which religious consumers can choose (Einstein 2008: 13). Pentecostalism has always been 'congregation based', and each church is responsible for management of its own activities as long as these are in keeping with the movement's larger vision. In Indonesia, for instance, all GBI churches are autonomous, and organizational structures are decentralized, allowing pastors and congregations not only to raise money and regulate their own

finances, but also to develop their own style of worship and identity (Yip and Hoon 2016: 287; Wiyono 2005: 318-9). To a considerable extent the same comment could be made about the SIB in Borneo. Although SIB churches are not as autonomous as GBI congregations in Indonesia, church leaders have acknowledged the reality of religious preference. In 1989, they even issued an official statement affirming a policy of inclusiveness that would accept different modes of worship. Such differences also reflect contrasts between urban and rural congregations. In rural villages, communal prayer for the sick plays a central role, since there is limited access to medical care and hospitals are far away. People spend more time attending prayer gatherings than in the cities, and church services, often lasting several hours, are held early in the morning or in the late evening to allow villagers to work in their rice fields. In this environment, one is more likely to find echoes of pre-Christian practices. For example, honey could be mixed with red colouring as a substitute for communion wine and among some congregations the intoning of prayer between men and women recalls the alternating pattern of exchanges in pre-Christian ritual recitation (Amster 1998: 303-304; Basri 1999: 85, 109).

In urban areas where church-going is normally a Sunday affair, P/C churches bustle with weekly activities, advertising short prayer meetings to accommodate busy professionals, group meetings, encounter sessions, youth fellowships and special outings. The character of services has also changed over time. In the 1990s recruits from mainstream churches were accustomed to a more conventional manner of worship and it was sometimes difficult to distinguish these somewhat sedate Pentecostal services from those of fundamental evangelical churches (Aritonang and Steenbrink 2008: 892). Some pastors even encouraged their congregations to follow a less exuberant mode of worship. According to one member of an English-language SIB church in Miri, 'We don't believe in charismatic preaching at our church. We don't believe in speaking in tongues, raising up hands or faith healing' (Amster 1998: 307-8). Another observer noted that the Kota Kinabalu congregation of the largest English-language SIB church was also relatively subdued. Largely professional and educated, they displayed few 'charismatic' signs and even the raising of hands was muted (Basri 1999: 80). Almost 20 years later, however, more youthful congregations are 'on fire for God', high-spirited musical performances may include strobe lights, and church seminars to train people in miracle healing are commonly advertised. Such influences have also been felt in mainstream churches, but some leaders have argued that young people are only temporarily attracted to movements like Charismatic Catholic Renewal (Pembaharuan Karismatik

Katolik) PKK) because it is a 'fashionable' form of entertainment, and that their spiritual commitment is not deep (Subangun 2003: 37-43).

A third element in the success of both the GBI and the SIB is the attention given to organization and administration. For GBI the mentoring of David Cho was particularly important in providing a management model that addressed issues related to funding, tithing, and the development of a lay leadership. The Korean examples showed how large congregations could become more coherent through a network of 'cells', small groups of families or of individuals alike in age and interests that usually meet in homes but are linked to the main church (Yung, 1997: 206-208; Anderson 2004: 137-138, 221-222, 232-233, 265-266; Hong and Myung 2003). From 1999 the SIB in Kuala Lumpur also developed itself as a 'cell church', with groups formed specifically for teenagers, students, young adults and older members. Under the leadership of a junior pastor, such meetings provide the intimacy that encourages the sharing of religious experiences and has been a major attraction of P/C churches. 'When you join a cell, you will receive care and encouragement from your cell members through prayers, word and fellowship. You will also be equipped to pray, work together as a team and learn how to share the gospel' (SIBKL 2015). Urban churches have also adopted an administrative structure that incorporates many of the principles of corporate leadership, with skills, aptitude and experience often favoured above religious training. As a result, individual pastors (who may also be the church founder) are frequently from a secular and professional background, selected because they are regarded as recipients of spiritual gifts. They wield considerable authority and it is their vision that shapes the church's mission and determines the allocation of resources. It is not uncommon for family members, including wives, to take on leadership positions; Lee Lee Dusing, wife of Jerry Dusing (head of SIB Sabah), is senior pastor at SIB Likas, while at GBI Mawar Saron Pastor Jacob's deputy is his son, Yohannes.

In the fourth place, there is little doubt that the entertaining and participatory worship style of P/C churches is a major factor in attracting young people who make up the bulk of the congregation. Sermons are intended to retain audience interest by dealing with the pragmatics of daily living, such as family relationships, and to endorse the message that devotion to God will lead to happiness and success. Services are enhanced by sophisticated multimedia presentations, orchestrated praise-dancing, and performances by professional bands, well-known soloists and robed choirs. Characteristic of all Pentecostal churches, the dynamics of faith-oriented music and lyrics have become a 'tremendously powerful' means of conveying a spiritual message (Wiyono 2005: 327n.53; Cruz 2009: 120-121). The SIB Kuala Lumpur

congregation has even produced a musical version of 'Drunk Before Dawn' by Shirley Lees, the story of the SIB beginnings in Borneo. Individual decisions about which church to attend can be influenced by many factors, but for young 'consumers', entertainment and peer group companionship at a 'happening' place is as important as the theological message.

The mention of entertainment relates to a fifth component in the P/C success story – the rapid incorporation of technology as a marketing tool (Cruz 2009). Even in the 1970s, Bible students in Sarawak were listening to cassettes of sermons by well-known preachers, but in recent years visual and aural reach has been vastly increased through televangelism, but more particularly via the Internet – websites, YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, streamed video, e-marketing, blogs, chat rooms, and other interactive media. Through their online presence the various GBI and SIB churches provide access to popular preachers, prayer services and other events that is not limited to set times but that can be viewed or heard all day and any day. An increasing variety of media devices also enables churches to revisit past events, publicise future occasions, and attract new participants through advertising leadership programmes, health advice, family counselling, children's camps, and international tours. Websites and apps that provide links to download sermons, prayers, and e-Bibles, and to on-line sales of gifts, religious books, videos, music etc. have become indispensable in the marketing of Pentecostalism (Yip and Hoon 2016). Young Indonesians and Malaysians are among the highest users of Facebook, and the social networks created through various media spaces have been a major factor in Pentecostalism's ability to attract urban youth, who see church attendance as an opportunity to construct a modern religious identity and lifestyle, of which the e-Bibles downloaded on their cell phones or tablets are just one symbol (Tong 2008: 201; Morrison 2010). The Internet has become a highly influential medium for disseminating accounts of miraculous events, while blogs and chat rooms provide testimonies of God's involvement with ordinary people, whether this concerns success in a business deal or assistance in finding a stolen car.

The professionalised technology of P/C megachurches, especially in Indonesia, has been a major factor in disseminating 'global' practices that can be easily emulated by urban churches. Often marketed as Biblical or 'God-ordained', the widespread success of the megachurch encourages imitation (Cruz 2009; Ellingson 2013). Although this 'universal' model may be adjusted to fit specific contexts, the very strength of customer preference for innovation in the religious marketplace often overwhelms the local elements said to characterise 'glocalization'. Yet outside large town centres

there are many smaller congregations without technical support and here 'global' influences are less evident. Websites may be initially set up with enthusiasm, but maintenance is another matter, and it is not uncommon to return to a previously accessed site only to find that it has become unavailable. Nonetheless, even a simple Facebook page or Twitter account provides opportunities to create networks of 'friends', to post comments, photographs, music and videos, and to alert followers to coming events (for example, SIB Sogoh 2016). It is also useful to remember that for most Christian communities, electronic communication is still not 'the primary form of faith practice' but is used to supplement off-line religious experiences and strengthen the social interaction that has made P/C churches so appealing (Einstein 2008: 34). Personal connections are especially important in rural areas, where Internet access is unpredictable or unavailable and a simple task like charging a cell phone may be problematic. Even in towns the Internet cannot displace the face-to-face interaction that comes with attendance at church gatherings and prayer services, and which contributes to the 'warm fellowship' that characterises P/C services (Speciale 2013). By the same token, modern technology can reinforce, but cannot replicate, the heightened atmosphere generated by the emotional outpouring from cries such as *Roh kudus hadir di tempat ini* [the Holy Spirit is present in this place] and the anticipation of some miraculous event (Santoso 2014).

This comment returns us to the heart of the Pentecostal experience – evidence of the descent of the Holy Spirit. Church leaders are naturally anxious to avoid any claims of charlatanism and in the 1980s the SIB leadership, mostly products of Bible school training, was 'not entirely comfortable' with endorsing Agung Bangau's apparently supernatural feats, one of which involved the spontaneous combustion of a clump of damp moss (Amster 2003: 142). Yet the witnessing of 'signs and wonders' remains a legitimating force for P/C followers, and a belief in a personalised God whose direct engagement with human experience is universally shared. Miraculous recovery from illness or disability is often the most publicised sign of the Holy Spirit's presence, and a reputation for curative powers often accounts for the large following many preachers acquire. For those attending the Mawar Saron church in Jakarta a great attraction is therefore the daily healing service. The New Testament's verse Book of James, which promises that anointing with oil and the 'prayer of faith' will save the sick exercises a powerful hold over Pentecostal congregations, especially since oil is also used in Javanese rituals. Such prayer sessions are said to result in miracles, which in some cases reportedly occur after simply listening to Pastor Jacob's radio sermons (Cossey 2009: 13; Tuwanakotta 1993: 120).

The future of glocalization

To date, the glocalization of GBI and SIB evangelism has been successful because churches have been able to position themselves as 'national' in countries where Islam is the majority religion (and has itself been localized in ways that allow for the retention of older beliefs). (Yip and Hoon 2016: 488). Through its roots in Kelabit-Lun Bawang society in the Sarawak highlands, the Sidang Injil Borneo can claim to be 'indigenous', fully entitled to include the word 'bumiputera' in its publicity material. Although Chinese SIB members are closely networked with Singapore, there is no mention of financial support from foreign sources, and assistance to students and pastors in Borneo often comes from SIB congregations in the Peninsula (SIBKL 2015). Participants in official SIB meetings in Sabah and Sarawak typically wear their distinctive ethnic dress, stressing their Borneo origins. The presidents of all three SIB groupings (Sarawak, Sabah, and the Peninsula) are all from indigenous Borneo ethnic communities. At the same time, it is also possible for preachers to place the Bario and Ba'Kelalan revivals in a global framework, locating them along an international continuum of spiritually charged events that leads back to Azusa Street and beyond (Khoo 2011) The early links to Australia and the BEM are also proudly displayed as part of the SIB story. Equally, however, SIB congregations can position themselves nationally by insisting, for instance, on their use of Malay (SIB Bukit Kanada 2016; SIB Likas 2016). In affirming its place on the national stage, the 2009 SIB Sabah website was forthright:

> The Sidang Injil Borneo or SIB is a Malaysian church. It was founded and developed in Sarawak and Sabah. In the late nineties, the ministry was expanded to the Peninsula. It does not have its origin in other countries, and is not dependent on financial aid from overseas. It has no formal organizational links outside Malaysia, but fosters links of prayer and fellowship with other churches both within Malaysia and overseas. Its common language is Bahasa Malaysia, which is widely used in conferences, Bible schools and correspondences (SIB Sabah: 2009).

Though founded under Chinese-Indonesian leadership, the Gereja Bethel Indonesia has also promoted itself as 'indigenous', and Senduk's words echo sentiments similar to those of the SIB: 'The GBI is not a local church, and it is not a regional or ethnic church. It is a national church. Its members and officials come from all the peoples of Indonesia, from Sabang to Merauke, from Rote to Miangas. This is a Church of 'Unity in Diversity'. It is not a branch

of a foreign church, but is the church of Indonesia citizens [...] free from foreign influence' (Senduk 1993: 79). Despite *peranakan* Chinese prominence in Indonesian Pentecostalism, the involvement of ethnic groups known for their education and cosmopolitan leanings, such as the Rotinese, and leadership of a Malukan like Jacob Nahuway, have strengthened the GBI's national claim. In addition, Indonesia includes several provinces (notably north Sumatra, Ambon, and Manado) that are home to large Christian ethnic groups where the GBI is also putting down strong roots. Indeed, its National Synod in 2008 was said to be attended by representatives of six hundred ethnic groups (Culpepper 2009). As its official website has proclaimed, the GBI is simultaneously international and national (GBI Indonesia: 2009).

Nonetheless, simmering religions tensions in both Malaysia and Indonesia are a reminder that the local-global interaction said to lie at Pentecostalism's heart is hardly unchallenged. Access to technology and the use of English (even if poorly understood) may be valued as a sign of global citizenship, but international connections contain an inherent challenge. Despite a steady flow of well-known Asian evangelists, P/C churches are often associated with Western (specifically American) missionizing, and many Indonesian Muslims are concerned about the proliferation of worship sites, especially megachurches, and their perceived foreign support. Large congregations contribute to the widespread belief that P/C pastors, encouraged from overseas, must be illegally proselytizing among Muslims (Gudorf 2014: 6). Protests from international Christian organizations when churches are attacked by radical Muslims or closed by district officials are regarded as evidence of foreign involvement. Such assumptions were only reinforced when the anti-government and Christian-dominated Papuan liberation movement adopted 'Onward Christian Soldiers' as its rallying cry (Farhadian 2005: 166).

In Malaysia SIB leaders have generally maintained a low political profile, fully aware of the tensions that can be generated if Christians are perceived as stepping beyond accepted boundaries in a country where Islam is the official religion and Malay is considered synonymous with Muslims. However, from 2007 the Malaysian government's confiscation of bibles, CDs and other Christian material using the word 'Allah' led to legal protests by SIB leaders in Sabah and Sarawak. SIB churches in both states rely heavily on material imported from Indonesia, where the use of Allah for 'God' is accepted, though forbidden in Malaysia since 1986. International criticism and censure by Christian organizations were viewed by some Muslims as politically motivated and supportive of anti-government groups. Yet because support from the Borneo states is important in maintaining the present

regime in power, SIB leaders have successfully pressed their case for the acceptance of 'Allah' in Christian material in Sabah and Sarawak (although in West Malaysia restrictions still apply). In June 2016 the three leaders of SIB Semenanjung, Sabah and Sarawak formally accepted a new Malay translation of the Bible, *Alkitab Versi Borneo* (The Borneo Bible), so that they will no longer be dependent on Indonesian editions. The first verse reads: '*Pada mulanya Allah menciptakan langit dan bumi*' [In the beginning God created Heaven and Earth] – a significant victory for a church that promotes a world religion while simultaneously affirming its local identity within the national space.

Conclusion

The Pentecostal conviction that individuals can directly engage the Holy Spirit and prepare for an imminent Second Coming has been especially compelling in Africa, Latin America and Asia. Once associated with less educated and largely rural believers, the core of P/C strength is increasingly in cities and towns, with white-collar professionals in leadership positions. In this regard Malaysia and Indonesia are no exception, despite connections with earlier renewal movements in remote areas like Timor and the Borneo highlands. Despite the localization that has undoubtedly taken place, the more cosmopolitan urban environment and congregations that include a substantial middle class and large numbers of Chinese have influenced the ways in which Pentecostal teachings are presented. Well-travelled church leaders have imported management models, mission strategies, and novel performance styles that have become important elements in P/C growth. The ever-expanding reach of electronic media, particularly affordable and ubiquitous cellular phones, has contributed to the explosion of social networks that have been highly effective in attracting a youth membership who are themselves oriented towards a global culture (Yip and Hoon 2016).

The combination of social change and persuasive international forces weighs heavily on the glocalization that has been so important in Pentecostalism's Asian success. Certainly, powerful influences from outside are always tempered by the fact that personal interaction and local missionizing remain the primary medium for maintaining a congregation and attracting new members. However, although the experience of international marketing reminds us that religious 'goods' are not necessarily consumed in the ways producers of the brand intended, the styles of worship and church management that Pentecostalism introduces are regarded as universally applicable (Cruz 2009: 135). It seems almost inevitable that standardised

theological training, the example of overseas preachers, the adoption of imported models of church organization, the urban concentration of church leadership and the growth of megachurches will stress the global aspects of Pentecostalism at the expense of local dynamics. In other words, the power relationships embedded in the concept of 'glocalization' are ultimately unequal. In Indonesia and Malaysia, both majority Muslim countries, the marketing of Pentecostalism is complicated by the perceived need to promote an indigenous and 'national' church while maintaining engagement with an international and modern Christian community. In both countries, the extent to which these sometimes-conflicting aims can be reconciled will be critical in the future development of P/C churches and in the legitimation of claims that this movement has put down truly 'Asian' roots.

Works cited

Abdilah, Syarif Ubed. 2014. "Class, status and the theology of success among Indonesian Pentecostals and Charismatics." In *Aspirations for Modernity and Prosperity. Symbols and Sources behind Pentecostal/Charismatic Growth in Indonesia*, edited by Christine E. Gudorf, Zainal Abidin Bagir and Marthen Tahun, 53-84. Adelaide, Australia: ATF Theology Press.

AMD Law Group. 2016. "What is the definition of a 'Born Global' firm?" Accessed 28 March 2018. http://www.amdlawgroup.com/what-is-the-definition-of-a-born-global-firm-international-business-law-case-study-2/.

Amster, Matthew H. 1998. *Community, Ethnicity and Modes of Association among the Kelabit of Sarawak, East Malaysia*. Ph.D. Thesis, Brandeis University.

—. 2003. "New Sacred Lands: The Making of a Christian Prayer Mountain in Highland Borneo." In *Sacred Places and Modern Landscapes: Sacred Geography and Social-Religious Transformations in South and Southeast Asia*, edited by Ronald A. Lukens-Bull, 131-160. Southeast Asian Studies Monograph Series, Arizona State University.

—. 2009. "Portable potency: Christianity, mobility and spiritual landscapes among the Kelabit." *Anthropological Forum* 19 (3): 307-322.

Andaya, Barbara Watson. 2015. *Come home, come home! – Chineseness, John Sung and theatrical evangelism in 1930s Southeast Asia*. Freiburg: University of Freiburg Occasional Papers, 23.

Anderson, Allan. 2004. *An Introduction to Pentecostalism*: *Global Charismatic Christianity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

—. 2007. *Spreading Fires: The Missionary Nature of Early Pentecostalism*. Maryknoll: Orbis Books.

—. 2013. *To the Ends of the Earth: Pentecostalism and the Transformation of World Christianity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

—. 2014. *An Introduction to Pentecostalism,* 2nd ed. Global Charismatic Christianity. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Anderson, Allan and Edmond Tang, eds. 2005. *Asian and Pentecostal: The Charismatic Face of Christianity in Asia*. Oxford: Regnum Studies in Mission.

Anon. 2001. "A history of the Pentecostal Movement in Indonesia." *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* 4 (1): 131-148.

Aritonang, Jan Sihar and Karel Steenbrink, eds. 2008. *A History of Christianity in Indonesia*. Leiden: Brill.

Basri, Ghazali. 1999. *Gerakan Kristian*. Bangi: Universit Kebangsaan Malaysia.

Beech, Hannah. 2010. "Christianity's Surge in Indonesia." Accessed 28 March 2018. http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1982223-3,00.html.

Bimo, Thomas. 1998. "Tahap Pengembangan Ketiga: Pendewasaan Pelayanan." In *Hanya oleh Anugerah: Aku Jadi Seperti Aku Sekarang*, edited by Ferry H.A. Lembong. Jakarta: Gereja Bethel Indonesia.

Bulan, Solomon and Lillian Bulan-Dorai. 2004. *The Bario Revival*. Kuala Lumpur: Home Matters Network.

Chew, Ariel. 2009. "The History of Mount Murud as Prayer Mountain." Accessed 28 March 2018. http://gunungmurud.blogspot.com/2009/06/history-of-mount-murud-as-prayer.html.

Chong, Deborah (2010) "SIB Result Reflects Growing Christian Vote." *Malaysian Insider* (28 May). Accessed 28 March 2018. http://www.themalaysianinsider.com/malaysia/article/sib-grows-the-fastest.

Chong, Terence, ed. 2018a. *Pentecostal Megachurches in Southeast Asia: Negotiating Class, Consumption and the Nation*. Singapore: ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute.

—. 2018b. "Speaking the heart of Zion in the language of Canaan: City Harvest and the cultural mandate in Singapore." In *Pentecostal Megachurches in Southeast Asia: Negotiating Class, Consumption and the Nation*, edited by Terence Chong, 207-234. Singapore: ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute.

Cossey, James E. 2009. "Jacob Nahuway: Overseer/Pastor of Gereja Bethel Indonesia." *Evangel*, June: 13. Accessed 28 March 2018. http://content.yudu.com/A18aeb/JUNE09/resources/13.htm.

Cruz, Joseph Nathan. 2009. "A Spectacle of Worship: Technology, Modernity and the Rise of the Christian Megachurch." In *Mediating Piety: Technology and Religion in Contemporary Asia,* edited by Francis Khek Gee Lim, 115-138. Leiden: Brill.

Culpepper, James. 2009. "Forward Together in Changing Times." *Evangel* (June), 6-7. Accessed 28 March 2018. http://content.yudu.com/A18aeb/JUNE09/resources/13.htm.

Dayton, Donald W. 1987. *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.

Dempster, Murray W., Byron D. Klaus and Douglas Peterson, eds. 1999. *The Globalization of Pentecostalism: A Religion Made to Travel.* Irvine, CA: Regnum Books.

Einstein, Maria. 2008. *Brands of Faith: Marketing Religion in a Commercial Age.* New York/London: Routledge.

Ellingson, Stephen. 2013. "Packaging religious experience, selling modular religion: Explaining the emergence and expansion of Megachurches." In *Religion in Consumer Society: Brands, Consumers, and Markets*, edited by François Gauthier and Toumas Martikainen, 65-76. Farnem, UK: Ashgate.

Eskridge, Larry. 2012. "Pentecostalism and the Charismatic Movement'. Accessed 27 July 2016. http://www.wheaton.edu/ISAE/DefiningEvangelicalism/Pentecostalism.

Farhadian, Charles E. 2005. *Christianity, Islam and Nationalism in Indonesia.* New York/London: Routledge.

GBI Indonesia. 2009. Accessed 28 March 2018. http://www.gbi-bethel.org/.

Goh, Daniel P.S. 2018 "Grace, megachurches, and the Christian Prince in Singapore." In *Pentecostal Megachurches in Southeast Asia: Negotiating Class, Consumption and the Nation*, edited by Terence Chong, 181-206. Singapore: ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute.

Gudorf, Christine E. 2014. "Introduction: Pentecostalism amid the late modern shifts in Indonesian society." In *Aspirations for Modernity and Prosperity. Symbols and Sources behind Pentecostal/Charismatic Growth in Indonesia*, edited by Christine E. Gudorf, Zainal Abidin Bagir and Marthen Tahun, 1-14. Adelaide, Australia: ATF Theology Press.

Hess, Larry G. 2001. "H.L. Senduk – The Spiritual Father of Gereja Bethel Indonesia." In *H.L. Senduk Bapa Rohani GBI. Sejarah, Kepimpinan, Teologi, Visi dan Misi*, edited by M. Ferry Haurissa Kakiay, ix. Jakarta: Gereja Bethel Indonesia.

Hong Young-Gi and Sung-Hoon Myung, eds. 2003. *Charis and Charisma: David Yonggi Cho and the Growth of Yoido Full Gospel Church.* Oxford: Regnum Studies in Mission.

Hong, Carolyn. 2015. "Seeking God in Peak Pilgrimage." *Straits Times*, 26 Jan. Accessed 28 March 2018. http://www.straitstimes.com/asia/se-asia/seeking-god-in-peak-pilgrimage.

Hoon Chang-Yau. 2018. "Pentecostal Megachurches in Jakarta: Class, Local and Global Dynamics." In *Pentecostal Megachurches in Southeast Asia: Negotiating Class, Consumption and the Nation,* edited by Terence Chong, 21-46. Singapore: ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute.

Hosea, Amos. 1998. "Seluk Beluk Dasar Pengembangan Kepemimpinan Om Ho." In *Hanya oleh Anugerah: Aku Jadi Seperti Aku Sekarang,* edited by Ferry H.A. Lembong, 21-25. Jakarta: Gereja Bethel Indonesia.

Jenkins, Philip. 2011. *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Kakiay, M. Ferry H. 2001. *H.L. Senduk, Bapa Rohani GBI: Sejarah, Kepemimpinan, Teologi, Visi dan Misi.* Jakarta: Gereja Bethel Indonesia.

Khoo Soo Ghee. 2011. "Prayer and Revival Seminar." *Clarion* 27, 4 July/Aug/Sept). Accessed 28 March 2018. http://www.trinitypj.com/wp-content/uploads/clarion/2011-070809.pdf.

Koch, Kurt. 1972. *The Revival in Indonesia.* Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications.

Koning, Juliette and Heidi Dahles. 2009. "Spiritual Power; Ethnic Chinese Managers and the Rise of Charismatic Christianity in Southeast Asia." *Copenhagen Journal of Asian Studies*, 27 (1): 5-37.

Koning, Juliette. 2009. "Singing yourself into existence: Chinese Indonesian entrepreneurs, Pentecostal-charismatic Christianity, and the Indonesian nation state." In *Christianity and the State in Asia. Complicity and Conflict,* edited by J. Bautista and F. Lim Khek Gee, 115-130. London: Routledge.

Lees, Shirley P. 1964. *Jungle Fire.* London: Oliphants.

—. 1979. *Drunk before Dawn.* Southampton: Overseas Missionary Fellowship.

Lyall, Leslie T. 1964. *John Sung: Flame for God in the Far East.* Chicago: Moody Press.

Lyon, David. 1998. "Wheels within wheels: Glocalization and contemporary religion." In *A Global Faith: Essays on Evangelicalism and Globalization,* edited by Mark Hutchinson and Ogbu Kalu, 47-68. Sydney: Centre for the Study of Australian Christianity.

Ma, Julie C. and Wonsuk Ma. 2010. *Mission in the Spirit. Toward a Pentecostal/Charismatic Missiology.* Eugene, OR: WIPF & Stock.

Mat Zin bin Mat Kib. 2004. "Christianization in Sabah and the development of indigenous communities: A historical study." *Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 77, 1 (June): 53-65.

Morrison, Chris. 2010. "Inside the Numbers: Facebook's Third-Largest Country, Indonesia, Uses English Heavily." Inside Facebook. Accessed 28 March 2018. http://www.insidefacebook.com/2010/06/24/indonesia-facebook-english/.

Nahuway, Jacob. 2015. Public figure facebook profile. Accessed 28 March 2018. http://www.facebook.com/pages/Jacob-Nahuway/56329319551.

Orr, J. Edwin. 1976. *Evangelical Awakenings in the South Seas.* Minneapolis: Bethany Fellowship.

Pew Forum. 2006. "Overview: Pentecostalism in Asia." 5 October. Accessed 5 April 2018. http://www.pewforum.org/Christian/Evangelical-Protestant-Churches/Overview-Pentecostalism-in-Asia.aspx.

Robbins, Joel. 2004. "The globalization of Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity" *Annual Review of Anthropology* 33: 117-143.

Robertson, Roland. 1995. "Glocalization: Time-Space and Homogeneity-Hetero-geneity." In *Global Modernities*, edited by Mike Featherstone, Scott Lash and Roland Robertson, 25-44. London: Sage.

Robinson, Mark. 2005. "The growth of Pentecostalism." In*Asian and Pentecostal: The Charismatic Face of Christianity in Asia*, edited by Allen Anderson and Edmond Tang, 329-344. Oxford: Regnum Studies in Mission.

Santoso, Y Agus Heru. 2014. "The spiritual experience of Pentecostal and Charis-matic church members." In *Aspirations for Modernity and Prosperity. Symbols and Sources behind Pentecostal/Charismatic Growth in Indonesia,* edited by Christine E. Gudorf, Zainal Abidin Bagir and Mathen Tahun. Adelaide, Australia: ATF Theology Press.

Senduk, Ho Lukas. 1993. *Sejarah G.B.I.: Suatu Gereja Nasional Yang Termuda.* Jakarta: Gereja Bethel Indonesia.

SIB Bukit Kanada. 2016. Accessed 29 March 2018. http://www.bembkbm.org/.

SIB Grace. 2015. Accessed 29 March 2018. http://bemgrace.org/.

SIB Likas. 2016. Accessed 29 March 2018. http://www.siblikas.com/.

SIB Sabah. 2009. Accessed 16 June 2009. http://www.sibsabah.org.my/eng/.

SIB Skyline. 2015. Accessed 29 March 2018. http://www.skylinesib.com/.

SIBKL. 2015. Sidang Injil Borneo Kuala Lumpur. Accessed 31 March 2018. http://www.sibkl.org.my/.

Smith, Jr., Andrew Tommy. 2009. "Centre of the Wind." *Evangel* (June): 8-10. Accessed 29 March 2018. http://content.yudu.com/A18aeb/JUNE09/resources/13.htm.

Speciale, Alessandro. 2013. "In Asia, the Pentecostals are on the March." UCA News. Accessed 29 March 2018. http://www.ucanews.com/news/in-asia-the-pentecostals-are-on-the-march-/68010.

Subangun, Emmanuel. 2003. *Dekolonisasi Gereja di Indonesia: Suatu Proses Setengah Hati.* Jakarta: Kansius.

Tan Jin Huat. 2005. "Pentecostals and Charismatics in Malaysia and Singapore." In *Asian and Pentecostal: The Charismatic Face of Christianity in Asi.* Edited by Allen Anderson and Edmond Tang, 222-247. Oxford: Regnum Studies in Mission.

—. 2011. *Planting an Indigenous Church: The Case of the Borneo Evangelical Mission.* Eugene, Oregon: WIPF & Stock.

Tan-Chow, Mayling. 2007. *Pentecostal Theology for the Twenty-First Century: Engag-ing with Multi-faith Singapore*. Aldershot, UK. Ashgate.

Tari, Mel. 1991. *Like a Mighty Wind*. Green Forest, AR: New Leaf Publishing Group.

Tuwanakotta, Piet. 1993. *Anak Desa Jadi Pendeta*. Jakarta: Surya Grafika.

Vásquez, Manuel A. and Marie F. Marquardt. 2003. *Globalizing the Sacred: Religion across the Americas*. New York: Rutgers University Press.

Wiyono, Gani. 2004. "Timor Revival: A Historical Study of the Great Twentieth Century Revival in Indonesia." *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* 4 (2): 269-293.

—. 2005. "The growth of Indonesian Pentecostalism." In *Asian and Pentecostal: The Charismatic Face of Christianity in Asia*, edited by Allen Anderson and Edmond Tang, 327-38. Oxford: Regnum Studies in Mission.

Wolters, O.W. 1999. *History, Culture and Region in Southeast Asian Perspectives,* rev. ed. Ithaca, New York: Southeast Asia Program, Cornell University; Singapore: ISEAS.

Xi Lian. 2010. *Redeemed by Fire: The Rise of Popular Christianity in Modern China*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Yip, Jeaney and Chang-Yau Hoon. 2016. "To build a generation of stars: Megachurch identity, religion and modernity in Indonesia." *South East Asia Research* 24 (4): 477-491.

Yong, Amos. 2015. "The many tongues of Asia and Pacific pentecostalisms: An introduction and some theological prognostications." In *Global Renewal Christianity: Asia and Oceania Spirit-Empowered Movement: Past, Present, and Future*, edited by Amos Yong and Vinson Synan , xxvii-xxxix. Lake Mary, Florida: Charisma House.

Yung, Hwa. 1997. *Mangoes or Bananas? The Quest for an Authentic Asian Christian Theology*. Oxford, England; Irving, California: Regnum International.

—. 2005. "Pentecostalism and the Asian Church." In *Asian and Pentecostal: The Charismatic Face of Christianity in Asia*, edited by Allen Anderson and Edmond Tang, 37-58. Oxford: Regnum Studies in Mission.

About the author

Barbara Watson Andaya (Ph.D. Cornell) is Professor of Asian Studies at the University of Hawaii. In 2005-06 she was President of the American Association of Asian Studies and in 2010 she received the University of Hawaii Regents Medal for Excellence in Research. Her specific area of expertise is the western Malay-Indonesia archipelago, but she maintains an active teaching and research interest across all Southeast Asia. Her publications include *The Flaming Womb: Repositioning Women in Early Modern Southeast Asia* (2006) and (with Leonard Y. Andaya) *A History of Early Modern Southeast Asia* (2015) and *A History of Malaysia* (2016). Her present project is a history of gender and religious interaction in Southeast Asia, 1511-1900.

10   Spreading Soul Consciousness

Managing and Extending the Global Reach of the Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University

Wendy Smith and Tamasin Ramsay

Abstract

The BKWSU is an Indian globalized NRM that originated in Hyderabad in 1936 when the founder, Dada Lekhraj, a pious jewellery merchant, received dramatic visions from God relating to the peaceful soul world and imminent world destruction. He subsequently created a closed meditative community, largely female, and handed management over to them, thus initiating a revolutionary spiritual path for Hindu women. Members of the community call themselves 'Brahmins', practice celibacy, and maintain a lacto-vegetarian diet, mirroring Hindu Brahmin practice, but embodying a revolutionary social identity within Indian society. In the early 1970s, the movement spread internationally and now has approximately 8,500 centres in 121 countries. Our chapter will discuss the changes in administrative structure and management since its global expansion, examine which aspects of its organizational culture attract and retain members, including recent changes in strategic marketing to increase the movement's appeal to an individualized and secular global audience.

Keywords: Brahma Kumaris, Global Functioning, Hindu, spiritual technology, purity, soul consciousness

Introduction

This chapter will discuss aspects of management and marketing within the Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University (BKWSU), an Indian globalized new religious movement (NRM) established in 1936 in pre-Partition Hyderabad (now in the Sindh province of Pakistan). The founder, Lekhraj

Kripalani, a middle-aged, pious and wealthy jewellery merchant received dramatic yet contrasting visions of the supreme beauty of paradise and the destruction of the present world. He subsequently sold his half of the lucrative business and created a meditative community, initially called Om Mandli. He handed over his wealth and management of the community to a small group of young women followers, thus initiating a revolutionary spiritual path for women in the context of Hindu society (Ramsay 2017).

Students of the community call themselves BKs (Brahma Kumaris[1]) and, as part of their lifestyle of *brahmacharya* [seeking God realization through a virtuous life], practise celibacy and consume a '*sattvic*' ['pure'] lacto-vegetarian diet. These disciplines mirror Hindu Brahmin tradition, embodying a revolution in social identity within the dominant Hindu culture, as members are termed 'Brahmins' regardless of their caste origins. Despite its close adherence to the most ascetic forms of Indian religious practice, in the early 1970s the movement spread to Europe and Asia. The BKWSU is now represented on all continents, with approximately 8500 centres in 121 countries (BKWSU 2018a). Our chapter will discuss the administrative structure, management, and leadership principles of this global movement, and examine which aspects of its organizational culture have attracted and retained members, despite the need for core members to follow an extremely ascetic and often-disparate lifestyle compared to their cultures of socialization (Ramsay et al. 2012; Smith 2015). We also observe the way in which patterns of marketing and membership are shifting, by considering the contemporary changes in management structure within the Australian arm of BKWSU.

The name 'Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University' reflects the global focus of this NRM from its earliest days, reinforced by the fact that its doctrine accommodates and subsumes all major world religions. The core features of BK doctrine begin with the question, 'Who am I?' It is explained that 'I' (the self) am a sentient and self-luminous point of light, located in the centre of the forehead. This awareness is known as 'soul consciousness'. In this state, and with the support of a pure lifestyle and meditation, one can establish and maintain a connection with the Supreme Soul [Shiv Baba]. *Drishti* [divine gazing] (Babb 1981) is the practice of looking at others with 'soul conscious vision' and is a key spiritual technology[2] unique to the BKs.

1   'Brahma' is the first god in the Hindu Trimurti of Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva/Shankar. 'Kumari' is daughter or virgin.
2   BK spiritual technologies require the discipline of 'purity' (celibacy), which, when followed, promotes soul consciousness and a stronger link with the Supreme Soul.

In this state of soul consciousness, one perceives that the body is merely housing the soul. The soul will ultimately leave the present body (death) and take another body (re-birth).

Souls come into bodily incarnation through the Cycle [*Kalpa*] of five Ages: Golden Age (where, as deities, souls are 'sixteen celestial degrees' completely pure) and Silver Age (fourteen celestial degrees) constitute Heaven; Copper Age and Iron Age are described as Hell. Copper Age is the period of human history in which the prophets and founders of the major religions descend from the soul world to help mankind and slow their entropic descent. Iron Age is the age of decadence, poverty and structured violence when human relationships degenerate, and wars, materialism, and disasters increase. The current auspicious 'Confluence Age' is a brief age of enhanced consciousness that sits between Hell and Heaven, whereupon the spiritual endeavour of BKs stimulates global change. After an apocalyptic destruction, there is a return to paradise, destined to be populated by the BKs or 'Raja Yogis' of the previous Confluence Age. All other souls are liberated and return to the soul world awaiting rebirth from Copper Age onwards in subsequent pre-destined and identically repeated Cycles. The poster of the *Kalpa* Tree (Figure 10.1 and cover) summarizes the emergence of the major religions within this BK cosmology, hence subsuming other religions within the BK doctrine.

NRMs typically arise and flourish during times of political and economic upheaval. In contrast to established religions where membership is usually based on ties of kinship and community, NRM membership is generally a matter of individual conversion. The issue of conversion is pivotal to understanding NRMs. They engage the individual convert in a quest for spiritual self-renewal, and they may offer innovative ritual practices for doing so, such as exchanging divine purifying energy, as in the case of Ōmoto, Sekai Kyūsei Kyō, and Mahikari (see Clarke 2006) or establishing a powerful union with God, in this case through meditation and *drishti*. We style these distinctive practices within NRMs 'spiritual technologies' due to their purifying effects and – often – a subsequent recovery from illness or misfortune. These outcomes are frequently seen as miracles (Smith 2008).

Globalized religious organizations, even with the selfless motive of serving mankind, must structure themselves strategically (as profit-making corporations do), attentively designing their products and services, managing their human resources effectively through appropriate training, and upholding staffing policies in cross-cultural contexts.

Our aim is to compare the BKWSU with a multinational corporation (MNC) in terms of its global presence: the geographic scale of its operations, large membership numbers, rapid international expansion, international

Figure 10.1   The *Kalpa* Tree incorporating all other religions

human resource management (IHRM) practices, and the impact of its 'corporate culture' (Smith 2002) on recruiting and retaining members.

BKWSU history

In the early 1930s, Dada Lekhraj, after his spectacular visions, started having gatherings whereupon he would narrate extracts from the Bhagawad Gita. Women and children from the Bhaibund caste of merchants and traders would attend, while husbands and fathers were often away on extended business travel. After the readings, those gathered would collectively chant 'Om', frequently experiencing transcendental states of consciousness.

In 1950 (after Partition) the community moved from Hyderabad, Pakistan to Rajasthan, India and set up a self-sufficient community of around 400 on Mount Abu (Chander 1983) and called it 'Madhuban' [forest of honey]. This is where they established their customs and systems, devoted their time to spiritual study, and practised silent meditation and self-transformation. Madhuban remains the home ashram and spiritual headquarters of the BKWSU and is a focus of pilgrimage for its global membership.

In 1952 sisters began traveling through India to teach. By then known as the Brahma Kumaris, they set up 'museums' containing vivid posters and lifelike models illustrating *gyan* [knowledge] for predominantly illiterate villagers, in an attractive and entertaining way. This is one of their oldest, most popular, and most persistent forms of marketing (Meditation Museum 2018). The first museum established on Mount Abu in the 1960s still remains. Modernized versions of museums are found in retreat centres outside India, with video presentations, artistic posters, creative writing installations, and more westernized representations explaining core issues of doctrine. Large posters of the Tree (Figure 10.1) still function as a key marketing element.

In 1954 the first group of Dadis[3] went overseas for the first time, traveling to Japan for service. In the early 1960s the knowledge was consolidated and compiled into a series of seven lessons that could be easily taught and marketed to the spiritual consumer. In 1971 senior[4] members travelled to London, after which the first group of non-Indian students committed themselves to the Raja Yogi lifestyle. Vertovec (2000: 93) notes the presence of local British members along with South Asian members in neo-Hindu movements in Britain such as the Brahma Kumaris.

---

3   Dadi is a respectful term in India meaning elder sister.
4   'Seniors' are BKs who have longevity within the organization coupled with a high position.

Dadi Janki was the first original member to leave India and begin long-term service abroad. Before she left India in 1974 to establish the first permanent overseas centre in London, Baba – through the trance medium of Dadi Gulzar – directed her to 'make a model of Madhuban' wherever she went. Dadi Janki has often reiterated this teaching to junior administrators as a point of 'franchising' through organizational cohesion, cultural belonging, and spiritual inspiration when they go overseas to open new centres.

In 1981 the BKWSU received NGO status with the United Nations (UN). By then the student membership had grown to 40,000 and, in 1984, the BKWSU was in 30 countries. In 1986 the BKWSU conducted its first international event, the Million Minutes of Peace Appeal. International membership continued to increase, with 100,000 in 1988 and 800,000 in 2007. Subsequently, the organization built two new campuses; Gyansarovar (1995) and Shantivan (1998), at the top and the foot of Mt Abu respectively. In 2018 there are an estimated 1,000,000 members. Overseas centres in Europe were established with largely local members and included very few ethnic Indians. Ironically though, in the US and Asia, most of the recent expansion has involved new members from the Indian diaspora. Numbers of European, American, and Australian members have remained largely static. In Australia, there are now fewer Australian-born BKs and a far greater proportion from the Indian diaspora. Patterns of attendance have shifted greatly in recent years (Walsh 2005).

Spiritual identity and practice

The main spiritual practice for BKs is open-eyed Raja Yoga meditation, designed to establish oneself in 'soul consciousness', creating and sustaining a connection and relationship with the Supreme Soul through a heart-mind link, while remaining present in the world. The ultimate goal of the Raja Yoga practice is self-mastery and thus a regal birth in the forthcoming Golden Age.

Soul consciousness is the seed of Raja Yoga practice whereupon one is cognizant of the self as a soul: an infinitesimal spark of eternal and aware light, seated in the centre of the forehead. BKs introduce God as the Supreme Soul who is beyond birth and death. The name for God is Shiva Baba or, affectionately, just 'Baba'. BKs believe Baba to be the one true god of all religions. BKs typically meditate on an image of Brahma Baba or a point of light poster and members exchange *drishti* with the senior BK conducting the meditation. The calm, pure environment of these meditation spaces and retreat centres makes a profound impression on members of the public for whom specific meditation events are organized. Although newcomers may

not understand what is happening, the experience of meditating on the point of light, sometimes with a guiding voice or spiritual music, and receiving *drishti*, can constitute a powerful and calming experience, which may lead one towards embracing membership. The experiential element of conversion, as opposed to an intellectual evaluation of doctrine, is noteworthy in many NRMs. Some NRMs make what would seem to be preposterous claims to the public, based on contemporary science.[5] Yet, grounded in these powerful experiences, many join and put their reservations about aspects of the doctrine to the back of their minds, or understand them as metaphors.

Regarding categories of membership, there is no clear distinction between priestesses/priests and laity. However, those who have followed the lifestyle consistently and attained a high level of spiritual stature are acknowledged and lead ritually and administratively. BKs refer to each other as 'BKs', 'Brahmins', or 'sisters' and 'brothers'. Non-Indian BKs are referred to as 'double foreigners' (DFs), which incorporates cosmology and geography. Cosmologically all souls are from the soul world or 'Nirvana', meaning that all souls are foreign to this physical world. Geographically, DFs are souls who have taken birth outside the 'pure land' of India, the home of the future Golden Aged deities.

Disciplines and lifestyle

BK disciplines are enacted in support of the core spiritual practices of soul consciousness and God's remembrance. We describe these in some detail as they are uniformly practised around the globe and serve as a 'corporate culture', a shared set of values and practices, which unify members of the organization and make it possible to visit any centre in the world, know how to behave correctly, and feel at home. The lifestyle components are termed '*maryadas*' [codes of conduct] and include the following key observances and restraints:

– Meditating at 4.00 am daily for *amrit vela* [hour of nectar] (also a Sikh practice).
– Attending meditation and morning class at the local centre from 6 am daily.
– Abstaining from alcohol, tobacco, meat, fish, eggs, and drugs.
– Practising modesty, celibacy, and restraint in interaction between genders.

5   For instance, that time moves through a repeating cycle of five Ages, lasting 5000 years (BKWSU 2017).

–   Keeping good company, creating a peaceful atmosphere, and guarding
    speech.
–   Having the necessary permissions from seniors when visiting other
    centres and Madhuban.

Clothing

BKs typically wear white, modest clothing. Until the mid-1990s even DFs
(particularly centre residents) wore white Indian clothing (saris and kurta
pyjamas). However, today most sisters and brothers wear pale secular
clothing; 'lights' in contrast to 'whites'.

Whereas the white clothing had been a key element of the organization's
identity, members are now often discouraged from 'wearing whites' at public
events as it has cultic associations. In this way, the strategic fashioning of the
public image shows a concern for marketing. On the other hand, at exclusive
BK events, wearing 'whites' reinforces the feeling of cohesion and purity,
which is a primary theme in BK life (Ramsay 2009). Wearing white Indian
garments can also be a sign of full immersion, which is reinforced on one's
first pilgrimage to Madhuban where thousands from around the world are
wearing the same spiritual uniform (Figure 10.2). Clothing is a powerful
means of generating a shared corporate culture and could be analysed as
a form of corporate branding (Usunier and Stolz 2014). The purchasing and
wearing of such clothing fosters a sense of belonging for new members.

Food

The BK diet is modelled on the lacto-vegetarian Hindu diet and is prepared
without garlic or onions. Ideally, one should only consume food cooked by
oneself or other BKs. The delineation of diet through food taboos, and food
sharing boundaries, is found in many religious contexts and enhances feel-
ings of shared identity and membership. The BKs' ritual practices relating to
food are very strong. Communal eating of *Brahma Bhojan* ['pure' food cooked
in remembrance of Baba] is a ritual of cultural inclusion. Eating food cooked
by members often has an intangible yet powerful effect on newcomers.[6] The
delicious chai served at centres after *murli* [morning spiritual class, literally
'flute'] and *toli* [sweets] (Figure 10.3) typically offered at public meditation

---

6   For a case of the scientific examination of such intangible phenomena, see Emoto (2001)
which contains photographs showing how the shapes of water crystals are influenced by positive
or negative circumstances.

Figure 10.2   A 'Double Foreigner' wearing traditional BK Hindu clothing

Figure 10.3   A typical *toli* gift box with slogan and symbol of Shiv Baba
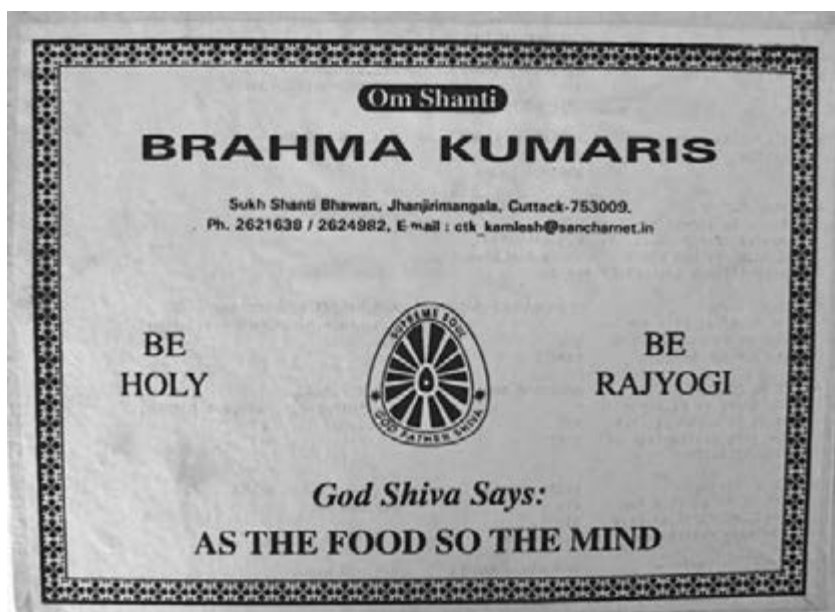
programmes are elements in a set of significant experiences which serve as marketing mechanisms.

Residential centres

BK doctrine is taught through 'centres', that are usually suburban houses or shop fronts. Centre Coordinators are typically female, although there are centres that are run by brothers. Centre residents [*centrewassis*] support the operation of centres and retreat centres physically and financially and were held in high esteem from the 1970s through to the early 1990s. Many BKs wished to be asked to move into a centre as an affirmation of their spiritual progress. Today many centres have closed and retreat centres[7] are now more popular as places of service for the public.

Routines

Daily

The standardization of daily routines globally is a powerful device for integrating the organization. A typical day for a dedicated BK begins by rising at 3:30 am to sit for *amrit vela,* open-eyed meditative communion with Shiv Baba from 4-4:45 am. Students attend their local centre for meditation (6 am) and morning *murli* class (6:30 am). The weekday *murlis*[8] are transcripts of teachings given by Shiv Baba through Brahma Baba between 1965-1969. Sunday *murlis* are teachings given by 'BapDada' (the combined spiritual form of Shiv Baba and Brahma Baba) given through the trance medium of Dadi Gulzar during 'Baba's Meeting' since 1969 in Madhuban. *Murlis* are translated from the original Hindi into English at International Headquarters in London, and subsequently into approximately sixteen other foreign languages and nine Indian dialects. The same *murli* is disseminated digitally so that all centres read the same *murli* on the same day. Class is conducted by a senior teacher or centre resident, with attendance restricted to dedicated BKs. With the benefit of the Internet, the daily *murli* is available around

---

7   Retreat centres are residential places outside of the city where guests can stay and participate in a weekend long meditation retreat focussed on a variety of topics. They are very different from the typical suburban homes that characterize centres. The first of three Australian retreat centres was opened in 1996.

8   For a more comprehensive discussion of the *murli*, read Ramsay (2009: 6-7).

the world on demand. Daily evening meditation from 7-7:30 pm is for both BKs and the public and is sometimes followed by a class.

Weekly

Thursday morning is *Satguruwah,* the day that BKs honour God in the role of the *Sat Guru* [True Guide]. Special food [*bhog*] is cooked and offered to Baba by the entire class, accompanied by ceremonial music dating back to before international expansion, giving a special feeling of connection to the revered 'old days'. *Drishti* meditation is conducted by a senior *centrewassi*, and the ceremony is reportedly transcendent and powerful. On Sundays, BKs attend *murli* which is followed by a communal breakfast, creating strong feelings of belonging.

Monthly

On the third Sunday of every month, World Meditation Hour is widely promoted to the public and held across the globe at centres or in public venues, which is a popular way to engage outsiders. Being for the world, it reinforces the global consciousness of the organization.

Annually

Between October and March, BKs from India and overseas travel to Madhuban to attend one of a series of Meetings with Baba. This pilgrimage is a priority for BKs and is a spiritual 'stamp' of belonging. BKs must follow all principles for one year to be able to attend Baba's Meeting. During Baba's Meeting, Dadi Gulzar goes into trance meditation, after which her body is used as a vehicle for BapDada to speak. In the past, Baba's Meeting continued for many hours, long beyond the normal physical endurance span of such an elderly person. Presently, Baba's Meetings are much shorter in duration and the nature of the Meetings is changing due to Dadi Gulzar's age.[9] Non-Hindi speakers tune into the translations with radio receivers to hear a simultaneous translation in over 25 languages, including European, Asian and Indian languages and dialects.

---

9   Recently, Dadi Gulzar has not been well and so has been absent during the dates for Baba's Meetings. Videos of previous meetings are being played to avoid disappointing the pilgrims.

BKWSU NRM as a non-profit multinational corporation

We are inspired to compare the BKWSU NRM with a multinational company, based on the ground-breaking work of scholars of Japanese NRMs and building on the pioneering idea of Nakamaki (2003). Ardent field researchers of Japanese NRMs, Hardacre (1997), Reader (1991), and Matsunaga (2000; 2008) have noted the organizational parallels between NRMs and Japanese MNCs, which began their international advance in the 1960s and recruited local members who were neither ethnic Japanese who had been posted overseas, nor from an existing diaspora. As an Asian NRM, the BKWSU has similarly found a solid home in societies and cultures different from its cultural base.

Global reach

BKWSU has a significant presence at the United Nations (BKWSU 2018c). BKWSU is an international non-governmental organization (NGO) of the United Nations accredited with General Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). It also has Associate Status with the Department of Public Information (DPI); Consultative Status with United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF); and Observer Status to the United Nations Environment Assembly of UNEP. It is an Observer Organization to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and a Flagship Member of Education for Rural People (ERP), Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO). The BKWSU is a truly global organization (Inner Space Ebene 2018) situated on every continent, in 121 countries, territories and islands including Africa and the Middle East. A number of centres are located in places of social and political unrest.

Forces of expansion

ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE. The annual pilgrimage to Madhuban brings members together in a shared culture, which transcends national cultures. Despite linguistic, racial, and ethnic differences, everyone wears white, eats communally, and enacts the daily routine and rituals. There are classes from senior BKs twice a day and attending Baba's Meeting is the high point of the visit. This is a striking example of how the corporate culture of the organization (Smith 2002, 2007) is globally pervasive, transcending individual ethnic and cultural identities, and giving members a sense of being part of a global community.

FOOD. Food is cooked by solar energy in kitchens that feed thousands at a sitting during pilgrimage season. Although the menu is Indian, the organization tries to accommodate to the dietary preferences of DFs by offering toast and carrot jam, hot chips, steamed vegetables and even bean sprouts. Australian's are known to bring supplies of Vegemite on their pilgrimage.

INTERNET. Decades ago, Baba's Meetings were small, intimate, and private. Then in the early 21st century there was voice-only transmission over the Internet. Now Baba's Meetings embrace up to 25,000 people at a time in Diamond Hall, Shantivan while they are simultaneously video broadcast on the Internet in real time. This is a powerful means for unifying the organization and giving members a strong sense of belonging to a global 'family'. BKs in Australia come to their local centre at midnight for the start of the live transmission and stay through the night despite often working the next day. Digital access to the *murli* also gives the organization a global feel while also affecting attendance, as many students now read the *murli* of the day at home on their devices.

FINANCE. Since its inception, the organization has been funded by voluntary donations. While there have been large voluntary donations, global expansion has occurred primarily with many small donations from many BKs. All services are offered free of charge and, in the past, there has been a firm discipline of not asking for money. Considering the above, it is a sign of the rapidly globalizing nature of the BKWSU that they recently publically invited donations.[10]

HUMAN RESOURCE FACTORS. Starting in the early 1970s, through the medium of Gulzar, Baba directed trusted sisters, who were also first country nationals[11] from India, to start service overseas. They were sent to strategic locations in Australia, Europe, Africa, Russia, the Middle East, and the United States. These posts later came to be known as Regional Coordinators (RCs) and those same sisters remain in those posts. As an internationalization strategy, other senior BKs have been posted abroad by the Dadis, and established centres globally, supported spiritually and administratively by Madhuban HQ. Moveover, since its early days of service, centres have been established upon the invitation of someone from the local community

10   Brahma Kumaris Australia temporarily had PayPal on their homepage between 2014 and 2017, demonstrating the opposing forces of spiritual ideals and organizational demands.
11   In international management theory, 'first country' nationals are expatriate managers posted from the country where the HQ are located. Third country nationals in an MNC subsidiary have a nationality different from both HQ and local managers.

(Nagel 1999). This happens when there is a capable and trusted member willing to take the initiative. In this way, the organization has been able to expand easily.

Marketing

Doctrine

The BKWSU's drive to internationalize from the 1970s has been aided by doctrinal elements, the most powerful one being that they are supra-religious (illustrated in Figure 10.1) and non-denominational, hence subsuming the prior religious affiliations of potential new converts and neutralizing them as impediments to joining the BKs. The apocalyptic doctrine typical of many NRMs can also be seen as a marketing factor here, as there is much contemporary evidence for the imminent destruction of the world: the nature of international conflicts and the degradation of the environment, the popularization of global threats such as the notion of terrorism, and the overthrow of grand narratives such as gender and marriage, typical of emerging post-modern society. These may convince some that we are truly in the Confluence Age and the world, as we know it, is near its end. Adherence to the BK lifestyle thus promises a Golden Aged future through its spiritual product of purity.

Historically, converts cut former social ties and distanced themselves from worldly pursuits. When the end of the world did not happen as presumed, many senior BKs re-examined their affiliation with the organization (Walsh 2005; Wallis 2003; Walliss 2002). Since the mid-1990s BKs have been re-establishing careers, re-connecting with family and friends, and in some cases starting families of their own. In the foundation years, the community embodied a social revolution, challenging the systems and customs of Indian culture. In the 1970s and 1980s the BKWSU presented more of a total worldview than a practice of meditation and new BKs were offered the key to paradise through purity, service, soul consciousness, and God's remembrance. This was coupled with a very real sense of spiritual urgency. In the 1990s and in the early Millennium the BKWSU came to be marketed as a meditative organization (Howell 1997) with soul consciousness and God consciousness as its basis. Today, the organization keeps its esoteric philosophy more in the background, marketing its products to suit the needs and interests of the public (Brahma Kumaris 2018a).

Free courses

Today, spiritual consumers are attracted by free classes and courses that teach methods to manage life's ups and downs. As well as the course in Raja Yoga meditation, 'positive thinking', 'overcoming anger', 'self-esteem', 'stress-free living', and gender specific courses such as 'the four faces of women'. and 'spirituality for men' are offered. Today it is more like a chocolate box of spiritual options, rather than a clear path to *jeevan mukti* [liberation in life].

The spiritual supermarket

For an ever-changing population of individualized spiritual consumers, in a huge global organization, the new international website (BKWSU 2018a) offers an almost secular new-age kind of meditation to a fluid marketplace, ensuring the BKWSU has an appealing product and can stay relevant among an increasingly diverse audience of consumers. For example, 'The Mindful Kitchen'[12] utilises the contemporary interest in a secular version of Buddhist mindfulness. These marketing modifications all help the BKWSU to attract followers who do not wish to renounce their current religious identification or secular lifestyle. Once inside the organization however, the comprehensive 'corporate culture' (Lukenbill 1998; Smith 2002) of daily rituals, regular study, codified[13] modes of speech and behaviour, and expectations of adherence to certain Indian cultural norms, exerts a strong influence.

Student recruitment

THE FORMAL PROCESS. Due to the rule of celibacy, the BK community depends on outside recruitment for its sustainability. Often, recruitment has been through public events involving one of the charismatic and inspiring senior Dadis. Those attending experience *drishti* and meditation and may receive an inspirational blessing card handed to participants as they leave with a piece of delicious *toli* (Figure 10.3). Others may attend a free programme at a local centre on positive thinking or come into the shop with its spiritual literature, CDs with uplifting music and guided meditations, and accessories such as bags and t-shirts available for purchase.

12   See Brahma Kumaris 2018d.
13   See Hexham and Poewe (1997: 144) for a discussion of the significance of distinct patterns of language and vocabulary created within religious organizations.

Retreat centres host residential weekends based on themes such as 'Values in Health Care or 'For Spanish Speakers'. These are conducted by a BK from that theme group, allowing newcomers to experience meditation, discuss spiritual issues relating to their work or situation, and meet long-term BKs who impress with their quality of peacefulness.

Once an individual has expressed interest in the movement they may participate in a free no obligation seven-day meditation course. Over seven hourly sessions, people are introduced to the fundamental tenets of Raja Yoga meditation (introductory lessons) and are given the option to proceed to the study of key doctrinal elements of BK cosmology (advanced lessons). There is an appeal in the experience of meditation and the logic of the cosmology. The interpretation of world events, religions, and global history is given a new and innovative treatment within the Brahma Kumaris movement. Once students learn the spiritual technology of open-eyed Raja Yoga meditation, they are taught about karma, the three worlds, the Tree of all religions, the Cycle of Time, and the eight spiritual powers. At the end of the course, the student is introduced to the *maryadas*. After this, understandably, it is only a small percentage who become fully-fledged BKs.

Spiritual technologies. Spiritual technologies within the BKWSU attract new people, while also helping the practitioner achieve self-mastery. Along with the internal practice of meditation, two powerful external technologies are giving *drishti* and distributing the spiritually empowered *toli*. When experiencing *drishti* people sometimes experience the room filling with a radiant light during the exchange. This is an enigmatic and experiential way of attracting members who are spiritual seekers.

Giving *toli* is the second distinctive marketing procedure. *Toli* are customarily distributed as meaningful gifts or spiritual blessings after public programmes as well as being distributed after BK events. Being handmade and cooked in Baba's remembrance *toli* are reportedly filled with love and power. BKs in India offer gifts of pink and white boxes containing *toli* (Figure 10.3) to outsiders. After public programmes, particularly in foreign countries, *toli* are given with *drishti* and are often accompanied by a 'blessing card' which is a small, decorated card inscribed with an inspirational saying. These are given randomly, but often resonate remarkably with one's life situation. Making blessing cards and *toli* are dedicated service activities of BKs. To newcomers, receiving a gift that incorporates the generosity and hospitality of the organization, with the wisdom of spiritual insight, leaves a strong impression.

Student retention: An indicator of the strength of corporate culture

When new members become committed BKs, they embrace a lifestyle that has its origins in Hindu Brahmin practice and, for DFs, is alien to their culture of origin (Walsh 2005; Smith 2015). Even for many Indian BKs, the practices are different from their caste lifestyles. The new member invests great social capital into leaving her or his former lifestyle and relationships, giving a strong impetus to live a dedicated life. Entering a new social world often leads to over-zealousness in religious observances and a feeling of heightened spirituality. Sometimes when subsequent experiences do not live up to the initial zeal of the 'honeymoon period', converts may leave the movement disappointed and disillusioned. The adaptations to the BK lifestyle (Walsh 2005) require long-term members to adjust their mental approach and ritual observances, usually after a period of years, sometimes leading to a softening of the observances, or creative interpretations of them, that do not challenge the status quo.

Management

Spirituality in leadership

Following the death of the founder in 1969, three Dadis from the original group of young women in the 1930s were designated as spiritual leaders of the organization. The current leaders are elderly; Dadi Janki (103) is the Chief Administrative Head, and Dadi Gulzar (Co-Administrative Head) and Dadi Rattan Mohini (Joint Administrative Head) are in their 90s (BKWSU 2017b).

   Despite these titles, the Dadis do not resemble administrators. They are more like traditional elders who give spiritual guidance to BKs at all levels and guide the direction of the BKWSU in its service activities. There is no distinctive dress for seniors: all dedicated BKs wear simple white clothing. The doctrinal emphasis on soul consciousness means that very little is needed for material life.

Historical administrative structure and staffing

Pre-1969, those in management roles had direct access to Brahma Baba. As the organization expanded overseas, it evolved initially into a simple global geographic structure (Figure 10.4), focusing around regions. Throughout

expansion, the hierarchy has been well maintained. We describe it here, beginning with the topmost level.

In line with the global geographic organization structure (Figure 10.4) there are Regional Coordinating Offices (RCOs) in London (coordinating Western Europe, South Africa, the Middle East), Africa (Nairobi office), the United States of America (New York office, coordinating North, South and Central America and Caribbean Islands), Russia (Moscow office, coordinating Russia and Eastern Europe) and Australia (Sydney office, coordinating Australia and Asia). Global Co-operation House in London, is the umbrella coordinator of international operations. Regions of India are administered by Zones-in-Charge, which are similar to the international Regional Coordinators in terms of position.

Prior to 2007 (see Figure 10.4), the next administrative layer was National Coordinators (NCs). Every country where BKWSU has registered centres has a National Coordinating Office (NCO). NCs were either local members or third country nationals, that is, from a country other than India. For instance, the NCs of Australia, Greece, Chile and Brazil were from Australia, and in Italy, from England. There is no systematic form of rotation for these postings as there is in other NRMs and the incumbents tended to stay there indefinitely. Positions are not democratically determined by stakeholder vote,[14] but rather they are assigned by senior position holders, in keeping with the corporate culture emphasizing spiritual stature in determining leadership.

Administrative postings within the BKWSU are generally permanent and non-negotiable. RCs maintain control by regular visits to the centres within their charge, as well as visiting other regions. This cross-visiting around subsidiaries is typical of MNCs and strengthens organizational cohesion. Currently there are annual meetings for RCs, NCs and CCs (Centre Coordinators). These typically take place at Madhuban HQ during the pilgrimage season.

The autonomous leadership of NCs is now giving way to National Coordinating Teams (NCTs). These may be comprised of sisters and brothers, local members or third country nationals. In this sense, the BKWSU closely resembles some Japanese multinational corporations (JMNCs) in having first country nationals posted to key management roles overseas,

---

14   In 2016 France became the first country to adopt a democratic voting system for its administrators and managers. This has – to date – not been picked up by any other country within the BKWSU.

as a control mechanism, with a degree of localization at the host country level. Widespread use of third country nationals mirrors the next stage of multi-nationality in economic organizations, as they become more truly global in their organizational operations. That this phenomenon exists in the BKWSU and other NRMs such as Sūkyō Mahikari (Smith 2007: 66-67), attests to the strength of religious organizational cultures in cross-cultural contexts, facilitated by the shared values and rituals among their members.

After the national level of management there is the centre level administered by Centre Coordinators, formerly known as Centre-in-Charges. This change in nomenclature helps to soften the appearance of hierarchy while still maintaining it. CCs are recruited locally and internationally. In contrast, Centre Residents (CRs) are locally appointed by NCTs in consultation with their CCs. CRs are local BKs who have been dedicated students for at least a year or two. NCTs and CCs meet annually in Madhuban for a retreat that incorporates spiritual inquiry, study and meditation, and financial, structural and organizational concerns.

Centre Coordinators and Centre Residents are expected to assume the role of spiritual teachers as well as performing other voluntary duties like cooking and cleaning, administrating, leading morning meditation, and reading and conducting *murli* class. They also cook *bhog* on Thursdays and prepare food for the Sunday family breakfast, conduct public programmes and meditation in the evenings. They are responsible for looking after the daily needs and welfare of senior visitors from overseas and organizing their programmes. As well, they often counsel regular members of their centres. Centres are spotlessly clean despite having many meditators passing through and that too is the responsibility of the residents although members may help out. Starting at 3.30 am every day, often working in regular jobs, returning to serve at the centre until late in the evening, theirs is a life of service. The cost of running centres is decentralized to centre residents and regular students who donate part of their wages into 'Baba's Box', aligning with the principle that BKWSU offer all programmes free as a community service.

Management based on spiritual principles

With Baba as the reference point, there is an impetus to conduct the management of the organization according to the highest code of spiritual conduct, with the 'CEO' as the Supreme Soul. This is reinforced by the fact that the teachings in the Meetings or in messages brought by *sandeshis* [trance messenger sisters who communicate with Baba in trance meditation] will

Figure 10.4   Brahma Kumaris organizational structure (pre-2007)
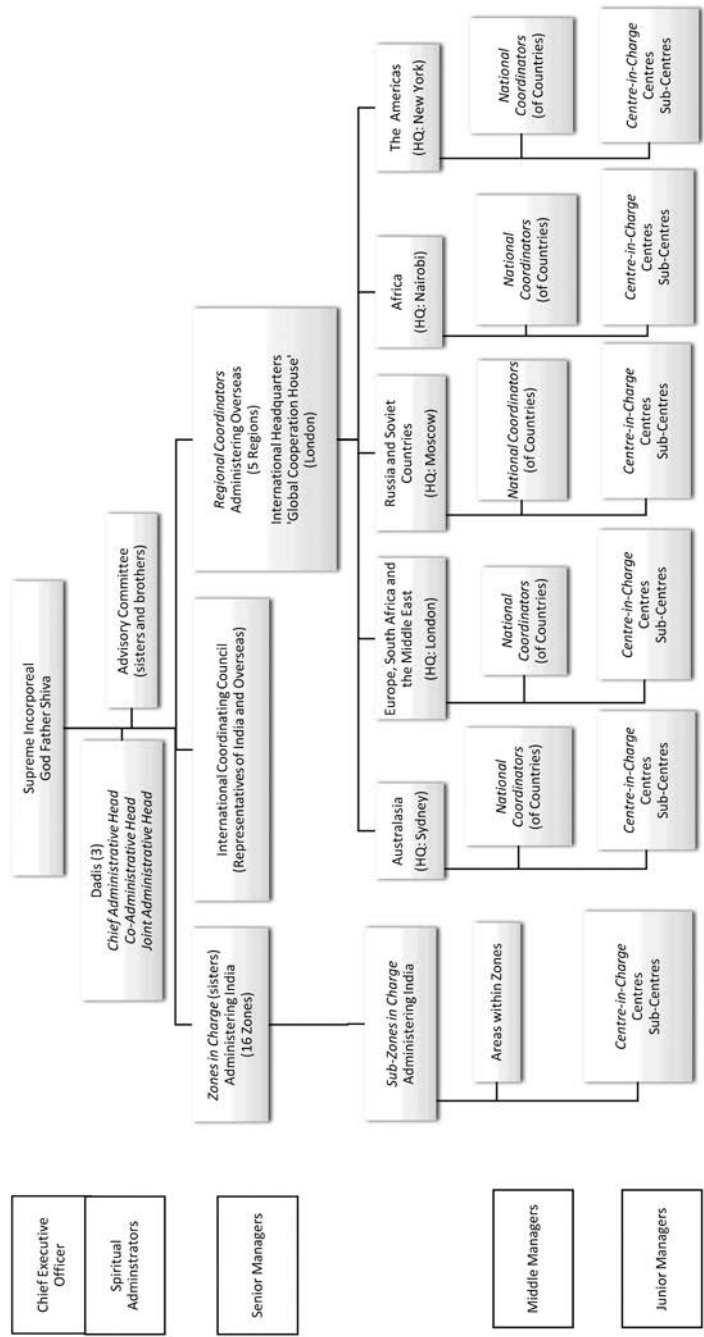
often contain pertinent messages about some pressing issue within the organization, so there is a sense of continual and direct communication with Baba, the spiritual head of the organization.

Among BKs, there is a concept of 'numberwise' (Ramsay 2009: 43) so that every member is placed in a hierarchy of spiritual stature in terms of the purity of their practice. This is an unusual way of organizing the hierarchy of authority in a very large organization, but it works as a controlling mechanism that everyone recognizes, being a spiritual universal. This method of ordering is augmented by the concept of the rosary, which gives everyone a place of belonging in a vast metaphoric sacred necklace. Because the 'rosary' is a spiritual phenomenon, there is no sense of rivalry or envy, and one's position is not 'fixed'. There is always the opportunity to 'make more effort'. If BKs feel a sense of rivalry or competition, they would tend to examine these states of mind as part of their reflective practice.

Staff recruitment

There is no formal training as such. However, one could 'go for training' by spending extended periods of time with one of the Dadis. Prior to the development of autonomous national administration (see below)[15] within the BKWSU, all forms of management were enacted by those who have been 'chosen by Baba'. Therefore, any direction was seen as guidance from Baba himself. Guidance also comes through the spiritual technology of *amrit vela* meditation when BKs often report receiving inspirational 'touchings' from the Supreme Soul. They are still cautioned against *manmat* [the directions of one's own mind], and are encouraged to get clarification from seniors before making any decisions. However, this habit is rapidly diminishing among DF BKs.

Recent developments in management structure

As the organization has become larger and has spread geographically, its structure has necessarily changed. In order to cope with organizational expansion, growing criticism on the Internet, and reduced face-to-face consultation with the leaders, there has been an attempt to integrate the

---

15   Because of tax law changes in India, within the last decade, national-level BK organizations have become legally and financially autonomous and so now the link with Madhuban is more tenuous.

Figure 10.5   Demonstrating the integration of the spiritual and the administrative in the global management of the Brahma Kumaris
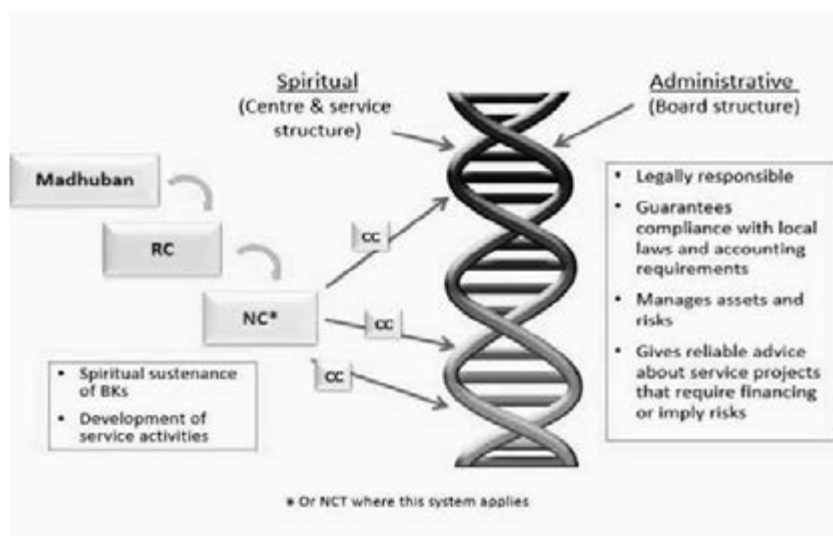
lokik [worldly] with the *alokik* [spiritual] (employing the metaphor of the double helix DNA, see Figure 10.5) through organizational reflection.

One such endeavour is Global Functioning which was created in 2008 by three BKs from the Americas and designed as a series of conversations among the family. Out of this came seven areas of organizational importance: (1) Upholding Our Spiritual Principles, (2) Care and Wellbeing, (3) Managing Human, Financial and Other Resources, (4) Providing Mechanisms for Reconciliation, (5) Newness in Learning, (6) Communication and Decision-Making, (7) BK Information (previously BK History and Information). Global Functioning inspired countries to act more autonomously, bringing in different groups of people with varied expertise, beneficial to the organization. All are dedicated BKs using their *lokik* skills in service. Nevertheless, some BKs question the benefit of Global Functioning and wonder whether it has just added another layer of bureaucracy to an already increasingly corporatized religion.

In light of these tensions, and in the spirit of introducing a more democratic element into the organization and sharing responsibilities, a group of 'RC Trustees' was established in 2011. This is a small group of trusted DF BKs and BKs from the Indian diaspora who play a role supportive to the RCs. The RC meetings that take place twice annually include all of them, totalling around fifteen members: the six RCs proper, and their closest colleagues, the RC Trustees.

Figure 10.6   Brahma Kumaris Australia indicative management structure 2017
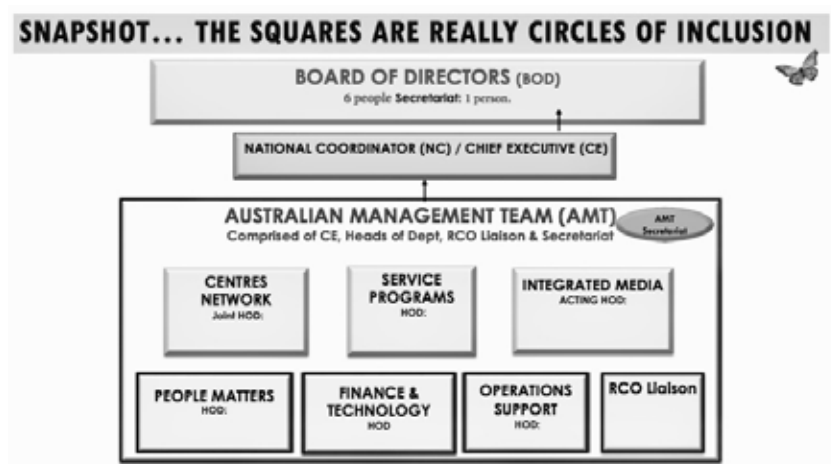
These structural changes, including the aforementioned evolution of NCTs, aim to make centres more collaborative, democratic and cooperative, while also removing the pressure on one person. Overall, however, the organization has indeed become more bureaucratic and has had to create positions to deal with organizational facets previously shunned as *lokik*, such as risk, finance, child protection, technology, buildings, legal issues, Occupational Health and Safety standards, and other forms of *lokik* administration. As the world requires more from the BKWSU as an organization, spiritual control mechanisms are no longer possible to the same degree as in the past.

As an example of the organizational response to forces of globalization, we show the new management structure within Brahma Kumaris Australia (BKA)[16] (Figure 10.6) which aims to respond to increasing worldly demands, changing patterns of BK membership and attendance, while also endeavouring to serve a broadening base of spiritual consumers. There is a core group, and then a series of what one might call ad-hoc consultants who have expertise in particular areas (law, finance etc.) that are required by all organizations in the contemporary world. Note that each of the departments indicated contain further sub-departments.

---

16   It is notable that Brahma Kumaris Australia has dropped 'World Spiritual University' from its name, reducing the stigma of 'University', which is an imperfect English translation from the original Hindi *Ishwariya Vishwa Vidyalaya* [Godly learning institution for the universe] while also increasing the organization's glocal appeal.

Authority and permission

In countries like Australia there has been an increasing tendency to step outside the system of hierarchy that was part of pre-2007 BKWSU culture. Since the passing of the much loved Dadi Prakashmani (Chief Administration Head of BKWSU 1969-2007) who administered on the basis of love and discipline, it seems the organizational structure has less relevance to BKs, although most BKs would remain dedicated to the founder's vision. The lives of many BKs – while still within the BKWSU spiritual purview and supported by the BKWSU spiritual technologies – are lived independent of instruction and seeking advice from those holding managerial posts. Perhaps BKWSU spiritual technologies truly are creating a generation of self-sovereigns and self-mastery, the aim of Raja Yoga meditation.

Succession planning

Due to its belief in an imminent apocalypse, the organization has not implemented succession planning. Many of the group of senior Dadis, who were the original leaders appointed by Brahma Baba, have passed away. Dadi Prakashmani's passing in 2007 was the first major change in continuous leadership since the founder 'left the body' and created some challenges for the organization. Dadi Prakashmani was distinctive in her management style, as she administered through being the example of the spiritual teachings, establishing relationships of love, and listening to others. Despite her passing, there is still a fluid relationship of communication between all levels of management, and this extends beyond managers to the broader family, even if not to the same degree as in the past.

The management structure is typically much looser in foreign countries than in India and is affected by the cultural attitudes of each place. For instance, in Australia, despite the shared commitment to purity, the structure is more sustained by relationships of friendship. In India (indicated on the left of Figure 10.4), and in countries most heavily influenced by Indian culture, the hierarchical management structure is more apparent. There is a clear system of permission/obedience within the management structure of India, whereas there is much more autonomy and independence in countries like Germany and Australia. The passing of the original generation of members has seen increasing bureaucratization within the management structure, in a way that is decreasingly relevant to many older BKs, who knew the organization when it was smaller and more face-to-face.

The International Coordinating Council (ICC) had existed for many years as an advisory group to the Chief Administration Head of the Brahma Kumaris, Dadi Prakashmani. Since her death, the ICC (that includes senior BK brothers and sisters from the 1950s) has taken a more active role, aiming to ensure a seamless continuation of management, while BKs deal with the loss of their esteemed leader. The most senior position holders are elderly and physically frail but are sustained by their spiritual practice. Perhaps there is no generally known succession plan because BKWSU doctrine fosters the view that we are now in the Confluence Age, and after an apocalyptic event, the world will transform into Golden Age, to be populated by the core BKs who have led a pure lifestyle. Therefore, the passing of the organization into the next generation has not been considered.

Several times in the past, BKs believed this changeover from the Iron Age to the Golden Age was imminent (Brahma Kumaris Research 2018), to such a degree that members did not purchase homes, have children, financially plan for retirement, or make long-term plans for their old age. When the apocalypse did not eventuate (Walliss 2002:112), as happens in many NRMs that are millenarian in nature, the structural limitations of such a large global organization became apparent.

Conclusion: The future

The BKWSU are now involving themselves in present day social concerns, more than ever before, as they seek legitimacy and relevance to an increasingly diverse membership base. Some examples are the ways in which members engage in politically relevant discussions such as climate change (BKWSU 2012), women (UNESCO 2015), and education (BKWSU 2007). Presently, the BKWSU keep their cosmology in the background, which is a change from their earliest days when they actively promoted a philosophy, theology, and set of practices that challenged cultural norms, both in India (caste specific roles and lifestyles) and internationally (celibacy and lacto-vegetarianism). Nevertheless, the spiritual technologies remain the same and enable many BKs to live ascetic, highly disciplined lives akin to cloistered monks or nuns, while remaining present in the world and sustaining work, family, and home lives.

Howell and Nelson's study of BKs in Australia (1997) cites the way in which members have adjusted their spiritual practice in western settings as a key to the NRM's success. This is echoed by Walsh (2005), although the work of Smith (2015) shows that when compared with other NRMs, the degree

of change and adaptation to local cultures has been minimal due to the *maryadas,* which constitute disciplines for establishing the relationship with the Supreme Soul.

The BKWSU is distinguished by its practice of spiritual principles in management leading to very low levels of conflict in an institution of this size and cross-cultural complexity. The problems of leadership succession and control in such a large organization, where face-to-face interaction with leaders is becoming increasingly difficult, are the major unsolved challenges.

However, the achievements of the BKWSU are considerable. The distinctive and, in most societies, quite unfamiliar cultural base of the BK movement demonstrates the remarkable pull of Asian NRMs. Foreign students are surprisingly willing to embrace an alien cultural system. They substantially moderate relationships with family, friends, and society, to fulfil the distinct lifestyle requirements of studentship. For the inner circle there can be no modification of core principles. However, in the way the organization relates to the wider society, there have been significant adaptations. The BKWSU was a revolution during a time of great social unrest and was rejected by the Sindh Hindu community. After Partition, BKWSU gained legitimacy among the Hindu population of North West India by adopting cultural norms of the area. When the BKs were new to the West, there was an emphasis on traditional teachings, practising meditation, and living the disciplines of the path. Their relationship with the United Nations has been a great support to overseas expansion. Since the mid-1990s, the movement has reconfigured its identity to interact more with the wider community and to be of service in response to social and global change. BKs level of service has been considerable in response to disaster (Ramsay and Manderson 2011), environmental issues (Ramsay 2012, BKWSU 2014), health care and energy innovations in India; and on an individual level, providing a meditation experience for millions, just as mindfulness is becoming a buzzword in corporate wellbeing programmes. During the early days of Om Mandli, they were world-rejecting. Now BKWSU embraces a late modern and liquid approach (Bauman 2000) to the marketing of spirituality through being world-corresponding. Whatever is fashionable in the world's New Age spiritual marketplace facilitated by the Internet, dictates the shape of BKWSU offerings as they adapt themselves to a new market base through rebranding their core message with the goal of supporting people through global upheavals (Ramsay et al. 2010), before ushering in a new Golden Age.

Works cited

Babb, Laurence A. 1981. "Glancing: Visual interaction in Hinduism" *Journal of Anthropological Research,* 37 (4): 387-401.

Bauman, Zagut. 2000. *Liquid Modernity.* Oxford: Polity Press.

BKWSU. 2007. "Values-Based Education for Rural People" Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University Statement for the *United Nations Food and Agriculture Association* (*FAO*) FAO Headquarters, Rome, Italy, 6 June.

—. 2012. "Aligning Awareness and Action for the Future We Want" Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University and the Call-of-the-Time Dialogue Network statement for the Rio+20 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 20-22 June.

—. 2014. "Brahma Kumaris Environment Initiative." Accessed 29 March 2018. http://www.environment.brahmakumaris.org.

—. 2017. "The Cycle of Time." Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University (Indian website). Accessed 29 March 2018. http://www.brahmakumaris.com/articles/cycle-of-time/.

—. 2017b. "The Brahma Kumaris Story: Current Leaders." Accessed 29 March 2018. http://www.brahmakumaris.org/about-us/the-brahma-kumaris-story/current-leaders.

—. 2018a. Brahma Kumaris (International website). Accessed 29 March 2018. http://www.brahmakumaris.org/.

—. 2018b. "BKs at the UN." Accessed 29 March 2018. http://www.brahmakumaris.org/about-us/united-nations.

—. 2018c. "Brahma Kumaris at the United Nations: From Awareness to Action." Accessed 29 March 2018. http://un.brahmakumaris.org.

—. 2018d. "Mindful Kitchen." Brahma Kumaris (International Website). Accessed 16 April 2018. http://www.brahmakumaris.org/discovery/the-mindful-kitchen.

Brahma Kumaris Research 2018. *Brahma Kumaris History and Research.* Accessed 6 April 2018. http://brahmakumarisresearch.org.

Chander, Jagdish. 1983. *Adi Dev: The First Man*, 2nd English ed. Mount Abu: Brahma Kumaris.

Clarke, Peter B., ed. 2006. *Encyclopaedia of New Religious Movements.* London and New York: Routledge.

Emoto Masaru. 2001. *The Hidden Messages in Water.* New York: Atria Books.

Hardacre, Helen. 1997. *Marketing the Menacing Fetus in Japan.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Hexham, Irving and Karla Poewe. 1997. *New Religions as Global Cultures: Making the Human Sacred.* Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press Jiménez.

Howell, Julia D. 1997. "ASC induction techniques, spiritual experiences, and commitment to new religious movements." *Sociology of Religion* 58 (2): 141-164.

Howell, Julia D. and Nelson, Peter L. 1997. "Structural adaptation and 'success' in the transplantation of an Asian new religious movement: The Brahma Kumaris in the Western world, part 1". *Research in the Social Scientific Study of Religion,* 8.

Inner Space Ebene. 2018. "Brahma Kumaris Worldwide Centres". Accessed 29 March 2018. http://ebene.innerspace.mu/about-brahma-kumaris.

Lukenbill, B. 1998. "Observations on the Corporate Culture of a Gay and Lesbian Congregation." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 37(3): 440-452.

Matsunaga, Louella. 2000. "Spiritual companies, corporate religions: Japanese companies and Japanese new religious movements at home and abroad." In *Japanese New Religions in Global Perspective*, edited by Peter B. Clarke. Richmond: Curzon Press.

—. 2008. "Blurring the boundaries between corporation and religion." *IIAS Newsletter* (Special Theme on New Religious Movements), #47: 5-6.

Meditation Museum. 2018. "Brahma Kumaris Meditation Museum: Peace is inside." Accessed 29 March 2018. http://www.meditationmuseum.org.

Nakamaki Hirochika. 2003. *Japanese Religions at Home and Abroad: Anthropological Perspectives*, RoutledgeCurzon.

Nagel, Stephan. 1999. *Brahmas geheime Schöpfung. Die indische Reformbewegung der Brahma Kumaris* [*Brahma's Secret Creation: The Indian reform movement of the Brahma Kumaris*]. Doctor of Theology, Comparative Religion and Religious Philosophy, Philipps Univerität, University of Marburg, Marburg.

Ramsay, Tamasin. 2009. *Custodians of Purity: An Ethnography of the Brahma Kumaris*, Doctor of Philosophy, Social Sciences and Health Research Unit, School of Psychology, Faculty of Medicine, Monash University, Melbourne. Accessed 29 March 2018. http://arrow.monash.edu.au/hdl/1959.1/151563

—. 2012. "Systems approach to agriculture." *LEISA India,* 14 (4): 29-30.

—. 2017. "Brahma Kumaris." In *Oxford Bibliographies in Hinduism.* Accessed 29 March 2018. DOI: 10.1093/OBO/9780195399318-0191, http://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780195399318/obo-9780195399318-0191.xml. Oxford University Press.

Ramsay, Tamasin, Lenore Manderson and Wendy Smith. 2010. "Changing a mountain into a mustard seed: Spiritual practices and responses to disaster among New York Brahma Kumaris." *Journal of Contemporary Religion* 25 (1): 89-105.

Ramsay, Tamasin and Lenore Manderson. 2011. "Resilience, spirituality and post-traumatic growth: Reshaping the effects of disaster." In *Climate Change and Human Wellbeing: Global Challenges and Opportunities*, edited by Inka Weissbecker, 165-184. International and Cultural Psychology Book Series. Dordrecht and New York: Springer Publishing Company.

Ramsay, Tamasin, Wendy Smith and Lenore Manderson. 2012. "Brahma Kumaris: Purity and the globalization of faith." In *Flows of Faith: Religious Reach and Community in Asia and the Pacific,* edited by Lenore Manderson, Wendy Smith and Matt Tomlinson, 51-70. Dordrecht: Springer.

Reader, Ian R. 1991. *Religion in Contemporary Japan.* Basingstoke, UK: Macmillans, and Honolulu: University of Hawaii.

Smith, Wendy. 2002. "The corporate culture of a globalized Japanese new religion." *Senri Ethnological Studies* (Special Issue 'The Culture of Association and Associations in Contemporary Japanese Society'), #62: 153-176.

—. 2007. "Asian new religious movements as global cultural systems." *IIAS Newsletter* #45 (Autumn): 16-17.

—. 2008. "A global NRM based on miracles: Sūkyō Mahikari." *IIAS Newsletter* (Special Theme on New Religious Movements), #47: 12-13.

—. 2015. "New religious movements as transnational cultural systems: Implications for agency." In *Transnational Agency and Migration: Actors, Movements and Social Support*, edited by Stefan Koengeter and Wendy Smith, 148-173. London: Routledge.

UNESCO (2015) Commission on the Status of Women 59th session, Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University statement for the follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the special session of the General Assembly, *Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century.* United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. 9-20 March. Accessed 29 March 2018. http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=E/CN.6/2015/NGO/212&referer=http://www.unwomen.org/en/csw/csw59-2015/official-documents&Lang=E.

Usunier, Jean-Claude and Jörg Stolz, eds. 2014. *Religions as Brands: New Perspectives on the Marketization of Religion and Spirituality.* Farnham: Ashgate Publishing.

Vertovec, Steven. 2000. *The Hindu Diaspora: Comparative Patterns.* London: Routledge.

Wallis, Roy. 2003 "Three types of new religious movement." In *Cults and New Religious Movements: A Reader*, edited by Lorne L. Dawson. Maiden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.

Walliss, John. 2002. *The Brahma Kumaris as a 'Reflexive Tradition': Responding to Late Modernity.* Ashgate New Critical Thinking in Religion, Theology and Biblical Studies. London: Ashgate Publishing.

Walsh, Trevor. 2005. *How Much Can a Yogi Bear? A Yogi's Tale. Yoga Traditions, the Brahma Kumaris and the Pressures of Lifestyle: Adaptations Required to Adjust to an Australian Socio-Cultural Environment.* Honours Thesis, Sociology/Anthropology Latrobe University.

About the authors

Wendy Smith is an anthropologist in the fields of management, religion and Asian studies. She was formerly Senior Lecturer in management and Japanese studies at Monash University, Australia. Smith has conducted extensive research on Japanese management transfer to Malaysia, globalizing Asian new religious movements, and Islam and social protection in Turkish migrant communities. She is co-editor of *Flows of Faith: Religious Reach and Community in Asia and the Pacific* (2012) and *Transnational Agency and Migration – Actors, Movements and Social Support* (2015).

Tamasin Ramsay is an independent scholar and applied anthropologist with a specific expertise in the Brahma Kumaris. From 2010-2015 she was NGO Representative to the United Nations (New York) for the Brahma Kumaris and is a special advisor to the Brahma Kumaris Environment Initiative. Ramsay has undertaken significant historical and anthropological research within the Brahma Kumaris, which can be seen at brahmakumarisresearch. org. Her most recent publication is the entry on 'Brahma Kumaris' in the *Oxford Bibliographies in Hinduism.* (2017)

Section 4

Empirical Investigations: Japanese Religions in Europe and the Americas

11   Shin Buddhism (Jōdo Shinshū) in Europe

Organizational Issues

Louella Matsunaga

Abstract

Jōdo Shinshū [Shin Buddhism] remains little known in Europe, despite the size and importance of this Buddhist sect in Japan. The European situation also presents a marked contrast with its significant presence in the United States, largely based in the Japanese American community. Jōdo Shinshū can thus be seen as a global religious organization that has a significantly different profile in different regional settings. This chapter focuses on the reasons behind this, and considers the history of Jōdo Shinshū in Europe, and the organizational challenges it has faced there: how has Jōdo Shinshū sought to adapt to the European setting, and in particular how has it situated itself in relation to other Buddhist organizations within Europe and Jōdo Shinshū elsewhere?

Keywords: Jōdo Shinshū, Buddhism in Europe, regional adaptation, religious organization, ordination, ritual language

Introduction

This chapter presents a case study of the emergence in Europe of a network of local branches of one of Japan's major Buddhist sects, Jōdo Shinshū (also known as Shin Buddhism).[1] Jōdo Shinshū is one of the largest Buddhist sects

---

1   The word *jōdo* (often written as *jodo*) literally means 'pure land', while *shin* means 'true'. So, Jōdo Shinshū means 'true pure land school'. It is a branch of Pure Land Buddhism. Shinran, the founder of Jōdo Shinshū, was a follower of Honen, who founded Pure Land Buddhism (Jōdo shū) in Japan.

---

in Japan, dating back to the 13th century. There are nearly 20,000 temples in Japan affiliated to one of the two major branches of the sect: Hongwanji-ha and Ōtani-ha (also known as Nishi Hongwanji or Honpa Hongwanji, and Higashi Honganji),[2] both of which have their head temples in Kyoto, and are headed by descendants of Shinran, the founder of Jōdo Shinshū. There is no difference between the teachings of Nishi and Higashi Honganji – the split between the two derives from a succession dispute in the late 16th century. Hongwanji-ha is the larger of the two, and the branch with which this chapter is primarily concerned.

A form of Pure Land Buddhism, Jōdo Shinshū can be more broadly situated within Mahayana Buddhism. Its central teaching is reliance on Amida Buddha. The movement teaches that we are all embraced by Amida's primal vow, which assures rebirth in Amida's Pure Land. Rather than advocating a particular practice therefore, Jōdo Shinshū teaches that we can simply rely on, or entrust ourselves to, Amida Buddha. The aim of Jōdo Shinshū could be summarized as awakening to the power of Amida's vow, and reaching a state of entrusting oneself to Amida, commonly referred to in Japanese as *shinjin*.[3]

Jōdo Shinshū has a large overseas membership in the USA (where the Shin Buddhist organization linked to Nishi Hongwanji is referred to as the Buddhist Churches of America) and also in Hawaii and parts of South America (especially Brazil). In 2009, the membership of the Hongwanji-ha branch in the USA was estimated by Hongwanji at around 145,000. The establishment of the American branches of Jōdo Shinshū dates back to the late 19th century, and is closely linked to the history of Japanese migration to the Americas, as explored by Moriya in Chapter 12. Today, Jōdo Shinshū in the Americas has a membership extending beyond the ethnic Japanese community, but with strong roots in the Japanese diaspora. In the USA and Hawaii in particular, Jōdo Shinshū has a very well-established organization, including a network of temples and linked organizations (such as women's groups and youth groups), and a ministry training programme. These local organizations are in turn closely linked to their parent organizations in

2   The preferred forms of romanization for Japanese words differ between the two branches of Jōdo Shinshū, and are not applied consistently. Here, I use the romanization generally used by the English-speaking followers of each branch.
3   *Shinjin* is written with two Chinese characters: the first meaning 'entrust', and the second as 'heart' or 'mind'. The translation of *shinjin* has been hotly debated among Jōdo Shinshū followers for decades – early translations as 'faith' have been seen as problematic because of their Christian connotations. The preferred current translation in English texts produced by the movement is 'entrusting heart'.

Japan, and are for the most part affiliated to one of the two main branches of Shin Buddhism in Japan.

Jōdo Shinshū also exists in Europe, where its history dates back to the 1950s. In the period since then, while other forms of Buddhism have gained popularity and a sizeable following, Shin Buddhism has remained comparatively unknown, and at the time of writing, probably has no more than a couple of hundred members throughout Europe. European Jōdo Shinshū thus presents an interesting contrast both with other Buddhist groups in Europe, and with Jōdo Shinshū elsewhere. Based on research with European Shin Buddhist groups over a period of two decades beginning in the 1990s, this chapter presents first a brief history of this little-known branch of Jōdo Shinshū; followed by an analysis of the characteristics of European Shin Buddhist groups and the challenges they have faced in the European context; and the ways in which they have sought to adapt.

Historical background

In Europe, the first Jōdo Shinshū group was established in 1956, by Harry Pieper, a German Buddhist living in Berlin, who had converted to Buddhism in the 1930s. Pieper met Kōshō Ōtani, then head abbot of Nishi Hongwanji, when Ōtani visited Berlin in 1954. Pieper received a form of ordination as a priest from Ōtani, despite not having completed the usual training for new priests in Japan. Pieper's active involvement in the Berlin group was short-lived, owing to the decline in his health from the 1960s onwards, but he had a larger impact elsewhere, as other Europeans interested in Shin Buddhism contacted him for information. Notable among these were Friedrich Fenzl, who established an Austrian branch of Jōdo Shinshū in the 1960s, and Jean Eracle, a former Roman Catholic priest from Switzerland, who set up the Buddhist Society of Jōdo Shinshū in Switzerland in 1970. Neither of them was ordained in Japan, but Fenzl studied at one of the Shin Buddhist universities in Japan, while Eracle received a form of ordination via Pieper, with Kōshō Ōtani's authorization. Other early converts to Jōdo Shinshū included Jack Austin in Britain, who met Pieper in the 1950s and received ordination in Japan in 1977, Adrian Peel, a friend of Jack Austin's who was ordained in Japan in 1979, and a follower of Jean Eracle, Jerōme Ducor, who was also ordained in Japan at the same time as Jack Austin.

Ordination in Europe became a controversial topic for a period. The general practice in Jōdo Shinshū is for a two-stage ordination: firstly *tokudō* [tonsure] followed by certification as *kyōshi* [teacher]. Both stages involve a

period of training, followed by an ordination ceremony. Currently, training is offered in Kyoto in Japan, and recently has also become available for Hongwanji Honpa followers in the USA, at the Institute of Buddhist Studies. For both *tokudō* and *kyōshi* certification, the training is followed by an ordination ceremony in Kyoto. In the case of ministers serving in the USA, a further qualification may also be obtained, that of *kaikyōshi* [overseas minister]. Ordination training in Japan is generally conducted in Japanese, but from 1989 periodic ordination training in English has also been offered in Japan. The ordination training in the USA is also in English.

The current *tokudō* ceremony was standardized in 1886, during a period of organizational re-structuring and centralization of Hongwanji in Japan. At the same time, it was made a requirement that the ceremony should be conducted by the head abbot [*monshu*] of the temple. Current explanations of this practice emphasize that the *monshu* of both main branches of Jōdo Shinshū must be a direct descendant of Shinran, the founder, since the headship has been hereditary since the time of Shinran (celibacy is not practised by Shin Buddhist priests). Compulsory ordination by the *monshu* was a departure from previous practice. In pre-modern times in Japan it had been possible for ordinands who lived far from the head temple, or who could not afford to be ordained at the head temple, to receive ordination at their own temples – a system called *jitokudō*, or self-ordination (Nasu 1998: 209). This practice was cited as a precedent in a short-lived attempt to establish a European ordination programme in Switzerland.

The structure of ordination training presents a problem for non-English speaking followers of Jōdo Shinshū, as there is no training available in languages other than English and Japanese. Further, the fact that training is not available at all in Europe presents a problem for those who – for various reasons – are not able to travel to Japan. These considerations underpinned the somewhat unusual route to 'a form of ordination' for both Pieper and Eracle. However, these ordinations were recognized by the head temple as they had been authorized (and in Pieper's case performed) by the head abbot. It was in part owing to a recognition of these problems, and in part in an attempt to root Jōdo Shinshū more firmly in Europe that Eracle introduced a programme to train and ordain local priests himself in Switzerland in the 1990s. He aimed to open up ordination to members who spoke neither Japanese nor English. Although in this case the ordination ceremony was not performed by the head abbot, Eracle argued that there was a precedent in the pre-1886 system of self ordination. However, this programme was not recognized by the head temple in Japan, and those ordained by Eracle only achieved limited local recognition in Switzerland. Despite attempts

to revive a European based ordination following Eracle's death by one of his followers, it has now lapsed. Jōdo Shinshū in Switzerland is now headed by Jerome Ducor, a Swiss national who was ordained in Japan, and is fully recognized by Hongwanji. The general consensus among European members at present seems to be that Jōdo Shinshū is not well enough established in Europe to support a locally run ordination programme.

It is also worth noting that organization of the priesthood is somewhat different, and the significance of the first stage of ordination [*tokudō*] is interpreted distinctly in Japan, Europe, and the USA. In Japan, the position of temple priest is generally hereditary and members of temple families often receive *tokudō* while quite young, and it is not seen as sufficient in itself to become a temple priest – *kyōshi* certification is also required. In the USA, although some priests are sent from Japan, and may come from temple families, there are also a number of American-born priests, not all of whom are ethnic Japanese, and who do not necessarily come from temple families. Also, in the USA, while recipients of *tokudō* may perform certain roles in the temple, they cannot become the main priest of the temple until they receive at least the *kyōshi* certification, and preferably the *kaikyōshi* certification.

In Europe, on the other hand, only one of the non-Japanese priests has the *kyōshi* certification, Jerōme Ducor, who succeeded Eracle after his death. All the other non-Japanese priests have received *tokudō*, but not *kyōshi*. In the European context *tokudō* is considered sufficient in order to become a temple priest, and the vast majority of European Jōdo Shinshū temples are led by locally born priests who have only *tokudō*. This perhaps reflects the greater difficulty faced by Europeans, especially non-English speakers, in fulfilling the requirements to obtain both qualifications – even obtaining the first stage, the *tokudō*, involves a substantial commitment. Europeans now invariably take the training in Japan. Members must be recommended to take the training (generally, though not always, by their local priest) and must then wait for an English language *tokudō* training course to be scheduled in Japan (these are not held every year – rarely, special arrangements may be made for non-Japanese to receive *tokudō* in the interim). They must then attend a demanding ten-day residential training course, during which they study Jōdo Shinshū teachings and master the performance of key elements of ritual and liturgy, including chanting in Japanese and Sino-Japanese. It is perhaps not surprising then that undertaking *tokudō* is seen as a major life event in the European context, and tends to confer a measure of authority. It is also experienced by those Europeans who have completed it as both very challenging and personally transformative.

To return to the historical narrative: by the beginning of the 1980s, Shin Buddhism had established a number of centres in Europe, all affiliated with Nishi Hongwanji in Japan (a further centre was established in Poland during the 1980s), and also had several ordained priests (at *tokudō* level), although few lay members. In Germany, Switzerland, and Belgium, almost all those involved were Europeans, while in the UK, (where the group was run jointly by Jack Austin and a Japanese priest Hisao Inagaki, then lecturer at the School of Oriental Studies (SOAS) at the University of London) there was a more mixed membership, including some Japanese.

In the 1980s the European Shin Buddhist groups suffered some setbacks. In Britain, Jack Austin became ill, and Hisao Inagaki had to return to Japan, following the death of his father, and gave up his post at SOAS. A network of Pure Land Buddhists, the Pure Land Buddhist Fellowship, continued to exist in Britain, but it was to be some decades before another British-born priest was ordained in the Hongwanji tradition. Both in Britain and in Germany Shin Buddhists also experienced some difficulties in gaining acceptance by other Buddhists, who expressed doubts as to whether Jōdo Shinshū could be considered as 'real' Buddhism, for reasons that are considered in greater detail below.[4] In Britain, the Pure Land Buddhist Fellowship only gained permission to meet at the premises of the Buddhist Society in London in 1995, with Pure Land Buddhism placed on the Society's syllabus for the first time the following year. Similarly, in Germany, after a brief period of membership in the German Buddhist Union in the early 1980s (which then lapsed) local Jōdo Shinshū groups experienced difficulties re-joining. Many in the German Buddhist Union opposed Jōdo Shinshū's application to re-join again on the grounds that they were not real Buddhists. The Zen groups in particular argued that 'Amidism' was more based on Christianity than Buddhism (as discussed further below). These objections were eventually overcome in 1992. The German branch of Jōdo Shinshū, then under the leadership of another native German priest, Thomas Moser, was then allowed to re-join.

Overall, the 1990s were a period when Shin Buddhism in Europe gained greater acceptance from other European Buddhists and also expanded. Two new temples are particularly notable here. Ekō-ji, also known as Eko Haus, an impressive Japanese style Jōdo Shinshū temple, was built in 1992

---

4   One widely cited comment is that of Christmas Humphreys, founder of the Buddhist Society in London, who wrote of Shin: 'Here [...] is a form of Buddhism which on the face of it discards three-quarters of Buddhism. Compared with the teaching of the Pali Canon it is but Buddhism and water [...] This is easy, simple religion, for all the work is done for one [...] and it may be better than no religion at all. But is it Buddhism?' (1990: 164-165).

in Düsseldorf, a city that has a large number of Japanese expatriate residents. This was paralleled by the establishment in 1994 of the Three Wheels temple in west London, in an area with a high concentration of expatriate Japanese thanks to the nearby Japanese school. Both of these temples differ in important respects from the other Jōdo Shinshū European centres. Firstly, both have Japanese priests, and secondly both are organizationally and financially independent from Nishi Hongwanji. Eko Haus is formally affiliated to the Bukkyō Dendō Kyōkai (the Society for the Promotion of Buddhism, a Japan based organization linked to the Numata Foundation) and funded by the Mitsutoyō Foundation,[5] although their priests are drawn from Nishi Hongwanji. The Three Wheels Temple in London is a branch of Shōgyōji in Japan, a temple linked to Higashi Hongwanji. The head priest of Three Wheels, Kemmyō Taira Sato is a former University professor and also a former pupil of D.T. Suzuki, and is very active in organizing classes on aspects of Shin Buddhist teachings, and in translating key Shin Buddhist texts. Although not directly linked to Nishi Hongwanji, it maintains close ties with other Shin Buddhist groups in Europe, and organizes a range of activities, not necessarily aimed solely at Shin Buddhists. These include study classes, retreats, meditation classes, monthly meetings with dharma talks, and an annual reconciliation service for survivors of WWII.

Eko Haus plays a dual role as a centre for religion and culture, running courses introducing various aspects of Japanese culture such as calligraphy or flower arranging, which may be considered as Buddhist arts with a meditative component. It also houses a library, a guest house for visiting scholars, and a kindergarten open to Japanese and non-Japanese local residents, regardless of religious affiliation. Eko Haus also offers facilities for a range of Buddhist communities, and to that end has a special meeting room in the basement of the temple complex where the object of veneration is a changeable scroll that can be altered to show the images of founders of different traditions as the occasion demands. However, the main worship hall is constructed along Jōdo Shinshū lines, and the services follow the Nishi Hongwanji pattern. Eko Haus has become an important centre for periodic meetings and conferences for the whole Nishi Hongwanji European *sangha* [Buddhist community].

Other developments in the last two decades include a new Jōdo Shinshū group in Romania, headed by Adrian Cîrlea, who first encountered Jōdo Shinshū on the Internet. Cîrlea was ordained in Kyoto in 2003, and has

---

5   Mitsutoyo Corporation was founded by Yehan Numata (1897-1994), who also established the Bukkyō Dendō Kyōkai.

Figure 11.1   Ekō-ji [Eko-Haus], Düsseldorf, Germany

since become very active in European Shin Buddhism, although his group remains small. Cîrlea contributes regularly to Internet-based debates on Shin Buddhism. In Germany, further ordinations of native German priests have taken place, and there are now Jōdo Shinshū centres in Berlin and Mönchengladbach (near Düsseldorf) as well as the temple in Düsseldorf. In the UK, after an interval of some decades with no British-born Hongwanji-ha priest, a British priest, Gary Robinson was ordained in Kyoto in 2012, and now leads a small Jōdo Shinshū group in Southampton. There has also been a generational shift in leadership, with the death of several members of the founding generation. Eracle in Switzerland has been replaced by Jerome Ducor, and Peel in Belgium by Fons Martens. And in all the European centres there has been a shift in modes of communication, with Internet-based communication taking on an ever more important role. The implications of this are considered further below.

Jōdo Shinshū in Europe: Organizational characteristics

What are the key organizational characteristics of Jōdo Shinshū in Europe, and how does European Jōdo Shinshū differ from Jōdo Shinshū in Japan and the USA? The most apparent difference concerns the membership. There are now branches of Jōdo Shinshū (Hongwanji-ha) in seven European countries: Germany, Austria, Belgium, the UK, Switzerland, Poland, and Romania, as well as a small number of members in other European countries where

there is no formal Jōdo Shinshū centre. With the exceptions of Eko Haus in Düsseldorf, and the Three Wheels temple in London, the temples are run and attended by Europeans, all of whom are first generation converts. However, the total number of members remains very small, and there is little involvement of local expatriate Japanese in the European-run temples, even where many of these expatriates may be formally attached to a Jōdo Shinshū temple in Japan.

One can explain the lack of involvement of Japanese expatriates in Europe with local Buddhist organizations by considering the role that Buddhist temples take in most people's lives in Japan. Temples primarily offer funeral services and services for the ancestors, in a context where membership of a particular Buddhist sect is largely a matter of belonging at the level of a household, and is therefore conferred by birth or by marrying into a household, rather than by individual choice. The trend to 'funerary Buddhism' in Japan has been widely noted (see e.g. Reader 1991: 87-89), and there are efforts to combat this, and to carve out new roles for temples in Japan. Still, this remains the dominant perception of Buddhism for most people in Japan. When Japanese migrated to the Americas and to Hawaii, Jōdo Shinshū temples there catered for these same needs, while also providing an important source of cultural, social, and political support in the context of exploitation and discrimination, as noted by Moriya (Chapter 12). Hence, in the Americas, Jōdo Shinshū has a strong ethnic Japanese base, although it has also expanded beyond this in recent years.

In contrast, in contemporary Europe, Japanese expatriates are generally short-term migrants, who rarely need funeral services, and who rely on their home temples in Japan for the care of the ancestors. Discrimination, while sometimes present, is not on a scale comparable to that experienced by ethnic Japanese in the Americas before and during WWII, and social support for Japanese expatriates is provided by a range of other, mainly secular, Japanese-run organizations. From this perspective, a local European run Jōdo Shinshū temple has little appeal for most expatriate Japanese in Europe. Although the two Japanese-run European temples attract somewhat greater numbers of local expatriate Japanese, the numbers are still relatively small, and many of them attend only on special occasions – regular attendance at the temple is not a feature of Japanese Buddhism, and is not expected in Japan.

Secondly, the various European Shin Buddhist groups have developed largely independently from one another, although often linked by personal connections established through a wider European Buddhist network. The initiative for establishing most of these groups has come from local people,

not from missionaries sent from Japan. Communications among the various groups are necessarily limited by the range of languages spoken. English is most often used as the common language, despite the small number of native English-speaking members. However, there is no universally shared language, and there is a tendency for the groups to divide along linguistic lines. One result of all this has been that the individual groups have strong local identities, and may differ quite markedly from each other in various respects, including the form of services, use of local languages, and incorporation of practices such as meditation, as discussed further below.

Shin Buddhist groups in Europe have also enjoyed a great deal of autonomy in relation to the head temple in Japan. In formal organizational terms, Europe is listed as an overseas regional district in Hongwanji's organizational chart, alongside Australia, Mexico, Taiwan, and Nepal. Larger overseas branches are given the designation of district – a category that includes the Buddhist Churches of America, Canada, Hawaii, and South America. Links with Japan are mediated by the international office of Hongwanji, the International Association of Buddhist Culture (IABC), but in practice there are insufficient resources available to closely oversee the European groups, especially given their small size and the range of languages. The IABC does provide a degree of financial support for European Jōdo Shinshū though and is closely involved with the biennial Europe wide conferences which provide the main pan-European meeting point for European Shin Buddhists. Conferences may also be attended by members of Jōdo Shinshū from other countries, and the conference in 2014 included representatives from mainland USA, Hawaii, and Nepal.

These conferences are also the main occasion when representatives of Hongwanji in Japan visit Europe, and have been led on most occasions by either the retired Head Abbot [*zenmon-sama*], who is the head of the Hongwanji organization worldwide, or the designated successor to the head-ship [*shinmon-sama*]. As noted above, these positions are always occupied by direct descendants of the founder, Shinran, and partly for this reason, those occupying these positions are regarded with considerable reverence by the European followers, and their attendance is an important symbol of the recognition of the European branches by the head temple. However, this recognition does not extend to any systematic supervision or control of the local groups on an everyday basis. The running of local groups is generally left to the local priest, where there is one (not always the case). The control that the head temple exercises over the ordination process thus constitutes the main (indirect) form of control of the European network of branches by the centre in Japan.

Although the symbolic links between the European temples and Japan are seen as very important, and are emphasized on occasions such as the Europe-wide conferences, to date there has been no formal organizational structure to draw the various temples within Europe together – rather, they are all linked to the head temple in Japan, but only rather loosely to each other. Although there have been a number of attempts by the parent organization in Japan to introduce an overarching European structure, including the 2014 appointment of the Belgian priest, Fons Martens as the main liaison point between Europe and Japan, these have met with a cool response from many European members. The argument is often made, in discussions among members, that it is not realistic to try to create a single Europe-wide organization, given the cultural and linguistic differences between the various European countries.

One point that the various groups in Europe do have in common, though, is the issue of positioning themselves within the wider context of European Buddhism. As noted above, there have been repeated challenges to Jōdo Shinshū's authenticity as a form of Buddhism from other European Buddhists, generally on the grounds that with its emphasis on reliance on Amida Buddha (which in older English language publications is often phrased in terms of 'faith') it looks suspiciously like Christianity in disguise.[6] This suspicion is exacerbated by the absence of an easily identifiable form of practice, such as meditation, in Jōdo Shinshū. In the Japanese context, this is readily explicable in terms of the well-known opposition between self-power [*jiriki*] Buddhism, which relies on practices such as chanting or meditation, and other-power [*tariki*] Buddhism, or Pure Land Buddhism, which relies on the power of Amida Buddha's vow. However, in the European context, other-power Buddhism is an unfamiliar concept to many.

While in other Buddhist sects, practices such as chanting or seated meditation have a central role and are seen as transformative for the individual practitioner, in Jōdo Shinshū the central tenet is that of reliance on Amida Buddha, rather than on one's own efforts. This casts practices such as chanting and meditation in a very different light. While chanting is a part of Jōdo Shinshū services, and in particular the repetition of the *nenbutsu – Namu Amida Butsu* – is a well-known feature of Shin Buddhism, the chanting in services is a part of the liturgy rather than a practice of self-transformation, and saying the *nenbutsu* is understood as an expression of gratitude to

6   See Amstutz (1997: 55-65) for a detailed discussion of comparisons drawn by Western observers between Christianity and Shin Buddhism in the early modern period.

Amida Buddha[7]. This contrasts sharply with, for example, Sōka Gakkai, in which members and interested non-members alike are exhorted to chant *Namu Myōhō Renge Kyō* [devotion to the Lotus sutra] and invited to then observe the transformative effects this practice may create in their lives[8].

Seated meditation, often viewed by Europeans and Americans as synonymous with Buddhism, may also be viewed as problematic in terms of the *jiriki-tariki* [self power/ other power] opposition. Insofar as meditation is practised by some schools of Buddhism as a means to enlightenment, it is viewed as a *jiriki* practice. The idea that meditation could be a means to enlightenment is firmly rejected by Jōdo Shinshū. For this reason, meditation is not generally part of Jōdo Shinshū services or meetings, nor is it systematically practised by either priests or other members (although some may practise on an individual basis). One Jōdo Shinshū European priest explained:

> People in Europe expect that Buddhism equals meditation and vegetarianism. People may come to *dōjō* [the Jōdo Shinshū centre] once, ask about meditation, and when you say you don't meditate they say, 'Can you offer meditation classes?' Then I say, 'I could, but what's the point?' Then often they don't come back!

Although this priest decided not to offer meditation classes, other Jōdo Shinshū temples both in Europe and in the USA, do offer such classes partly in response to the widespread perception outside Asia that this is an integral part of Buddhism. However, these classes are not a core part of a Shin Buddhist temple's activities, and are presented more as an optional activity that may have some relaxation and general health benefits rather than a practice undertaken with spiritual benefits in mind.

Potential European converts may thus be deterred by the absence of an easily graspable practice, or of other features commonly associated with European perceptions of Buddhism. Shin Buddhists are not vegetarians, they are not celibate, and they are not barred from drinking alcohol. The questions, 'What do you do if you are a Shin Buddhist?' or 'What is your

---

7   The *nenbutsu* is not usually translated, but the meaning could be roughly summarized as an expression of reliance on and entrusting oneself to Amida Buddha (Jōdo Shinshū Hongwanji-ha 2002: 74-75)

8   This is a reference to the title of the Lotus Sutra, which is central to the Nichiren school of Japanese Buddhism, to which Sōka Gakkai belongs. It can be translated literally as "devotion to the Lotus sutra", but for a full discussion of its meaning from the movement's perspective see Sōka Gakkai 2015.

practice?' are hard to answer. Europeans may see the act of entrusting oneself to Amida Buddha and his vow as too similar to Christianity (with which they are familiar) to be appealing.

Against this background, and in the context of their very small membership, it has been important for Jōdo Shinshū groups in Europe to position themselves clearly as part of the broader network of European Buddhist organizations. And they also need to comply with local legal requirements concerning the formation and organization of religious groups. Baumann (2002: 97) has pointed out that in some European countries, notably Germany and Austria, in order to obtain state recognition and hence legal rights, e.g. access to the media, financial support, legal standing and recognition equivalent to those of Christian churches, or the right to teach in schools, certain requirements have to be met. This usually involves setting up umbrella Buddhist organizations, and delineating and mutually agreeing upon specific Buddhist doctrines. To be recognised, it is essential to belong to an overarching Buddhist organization, and to conform with that organization's requirements, which in turn are influenced by the requirements laid down by the state. This has caused problems for Jōdo Shinshū. For example, in Germany the German Buddhist Union established a Buddhist creed, but some local Jōdo Shinshū members did not feel they could accept all the elements, as the core of Jōdo Shinshū teachings is reliance on Amida, rather than accepting a body of specified rules or precepts. This resulted in some members leaving Jōdo Shinshū when it re-joined the German Buddhist Union in 1994, although currently Jōdo Shinshū groups in Germany enjoy good relations with the German Buddhist Union, as do other Jōdo Shinshū groups with the Buddhist networks in their respective countries.

Another aspect of this positioning of European Jōdo Shinshū groups within the wider frame of European Buddhism concerns the terminology and forms of service used in Europe. Strikingly, the ritual forms adopted in Europe are much more likely to resemble the forms generally used in Japan (such as music and chanting) than the forms used in the USA. While Jōdo Shinshū in pre-war USA adopted a service format that resembled Christian services in many ways, including hymns,[9] Jōdo Shinshū groups in Europe tend to be resistant to any format that appears Christian, preferring forms that align closely with European expectations of Buddhism. This includes chanting to Japanese style music, often in Sino-Japanese, and sometimes

9   Some of these apparently Western-style hymns were actually written in Japan. The late nineteenth century saw Western style musical settings widely adopted in Japan, including in some Buddhist contexts (Asuka 2008).

in Pali (e.g. when taking the three Buddhist refuges; in the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha) and also sometimes in local European languages. An exception to this was Jōdo Shinshū in Switzerland during Eracle's lifetime. As noted above, Eracle was a former Roman Catholic priest, and also a passionate advocate of the localization of Jōdo Shinshū. As part of his attempts to localize Shin Buddhism, he set some Jōdo Shinshū services to a Benedictine chant, but this innovation appears to have lapsed with Eracle's death. The remaining Jōdo Shinshū members in Switzerland seem to prefer the Japanese style musical settings.

In any case, the hymnals used in American branches of Jōdo Shinshū are never used in Europe, and European groups have also avoided terms widely used in American Jōdo Shinshū such as 'church' or 'bishop' which are associated with Christianity. There is a clear contrast with strategies adopted by Jōdo Shinshū in the USA in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century, which developed in a context in which discrimination against Japanese migrants was rife. There were therefore some benefits in adopting forms that echoed forms used in the local religion, Christianity. In Europe, on the other hand, the forms of service and language have developed in a context in which Jōdo Shinshū groups are trying to establish an identity that is clearly aligned with Buddhism, and correspondingly distanced from Christianity. While proselytization is not a major feature of Jōdo Shinshū, in conversations with European members of Jōdo Shinshū, many have suggested that European converts to Buddhism appear to be looking for something different from Christianity. Emphasizing the differences, rather than the similarities, between Jōdo Shinshū and Christianity may therefore be important in enhancing Jōdo Shinshū's appeal to potential local converts in the European context, particularly as there is no core of ethnic Japanese members to rely on.

Against this background of limited local knowledge of Jōdo Shinshū, and the widespread misunderstandings concerning this form of Buddhism in Europe, one of the priorities for European Jōdo Shinshū has been the dissemination of accurate information about Jōdo Shinshū, and the translation, or re-translation of key texts into local languages. This links with a somewhat academic bent that is noticeable across the various European Jōdo Shinshū groups, and which also finds expression in the modes of communication between the groups, and in the organization of Europe-wide events. Many of the early generation of European members were involved in academia or education, several as teachers at universities.

Publishing journals and organizing conferences to bring together the European members was an early feature which has continued to the present. In 1979 a new journal of European Shin Buddhism, *The Pure Land,* was

launched, while in 1980 the first European conference of Shin Buddhism was held, thenceforth to be a biennial event. In 1982 the International Association of Shin Buddhist Studies (IASBS) was launched at Ryūkoku University in Japan to promote the study of Shin Buddhism, following closely behind the establishment of another international body based in Japan, the International Association of Buddhist Culture (IABC). Founded in 1980, IABC aims 'to promote Buddhism throughout the world, especially the other-power teaching of Shinran Shōnin (1173-1262), popularly known as Shin Buddhism' (IABC N.d.).

In many respects, these conferences follow the standard format of academic conferences, and indeed the IASBS is an academic association. Name cards and welcome packs with copies of presentation papers are distributed on registration at the opening of the conference. Academic papers may be presented in the IASBS section of the conference by a range of speakers, including guest speakers from Japan. A further section offers a forum for members to give papers based on more personal experiences. In practice however, the distinction between the two sections in terms of the types of papers presented may become somewhat blurred. The most obvious difference between these events and other academic conferences is that short morning and evening services are held before and after the main session of the day. Furthermore, a highlight of these conferences is the ceremony for the confirmation of new Jōdo Shinshū members [*kikyōshiki*] conducted by either the retired abbot (currently) or, previously, the designated successor (who has now taken up the position of head abbot).

During the services, the atmosphere of the conference is transformed: ordained conference attendees don their robes, and members who have previously been confirmed put on a special Buddhist vestment [*shikishō*]*,* and take out their prayer beads [*nenju*]. The services are usually very short, and consist largely of chanting, but the change in feel from academic to religious gathering is marked. On these occasions, the varying religious statuses of the conference participants is also made visible: from ordained priests in full robes, through to lay members with the *shikishō* with the Hongwanji crest (a mark of organizational membership) worn over their ordinary clothes, and observers or interested participants from other Buddhist organizations, or in some cases with no visible religious affiliation at all. The *kikyōshiki*, in particular, is a ritual moment of strong and visible emotion for some participants, in particular the new members who are receiving it, but also for others for whom it brings back memories of their own *kikyōshiki*.

These moments aside, some participants find the conference format, and the focus on giving formal papers, alienating. At conferences that I have attended some have commented that the content was too complex and

hard to follow, a problem which was exacerbated by language difficulties
– conferences take place in English, which is a foreign language for most of
the participants, as there are very few native English-speaking members in
Europe. However, there is no alternative by which all European members
and the visiting Japanese participants may communicate. It seems likely that
this difficulty, together with the financial costs of attending conferences
abroad without sponsorship, may prevent many European members from
attending, and may exacerbate the tendency for the conferences to be
dominated by the more academically inclined among the membership, and
by those who are competent in English.

Despite these difficulties, there are also important organizational benefits
from these conferences, which mirror to a great extent the experience of
academic conferences. The conference dinner(s), coffee breaks, lunches, and
informal conversations between organized sessions, offer opportunities to
establish networks, and renew and reinforce interpersonal bonds between
members who may otherwise have few opportunities to meet. Initiatives
taken at conferences may also have long-term organizational implications.
For example, at the 2014 conference an Internet-based group was formed
for women members, who felt that there was a need for an international
grouping to give a forum specifically for women and their experiences of
Jōdo Shinshū. The conference format is also used in other Shin Buddhist
organizations in Europe. The European Association of Shin Buddhism was
created in 2000 in Baden-Baden, on an initiative by Ekō-ji, the Japanese
run temple in Düsseldorf. Members meet twice a year in years when there
is no IABC/ IASBS Shin Conference. At one meeting academic papers are
presented, and at the other meeting European members give presentations.

Another increasingly important form of communication is the Internet,
with various Internet forums existing in different languages, including
French, German, and English, as well as less widely spoken languages such
as Dutch and Romanian. Facebook groups, blogs, and websites are all used,
and some groups also enable long distance participation via the Internet.
Local temple events are often publicized via their websites, which also
frequently offer newsletters and dharma talks. With the advent of a younger
generation of priests in Europe, who are more at ease with the Internet, the
potential for a de-territorialised European Internet-based Jōdo Shinshū
community has grown, and affiliation with a particular group is no longer
necessarily based on geography.[10] The Internet is now widely used in building

10   An extreme example of de-territorialization is that of the White Lotus Center in Alaska
(closed when the priests of this temple left Alaska). This was a Shin temple which, for its twelve

Shin Buddhist networks across Europe, organizing meetings, and engaging in discussion and debate, Skype also provides a means for members to participate in services remotely. The Internet is an increasingly important means for groups to make their presence known. The Belgian temple Jikō-ji, for example, finds that most of the new contacts made with their group come from people who have discovered them via the Internet.

Conclusion

What are the implications of the above discussion for the development of a 'European Jōdo Shinshū'? There are some distinctive aspects of Jōdo Shinshū in Europe which are shared across the region, notably, the predominance of locally born, non-ethnic Japanese members and the influence of more general European perceptions of Buddhism. Nevertheless, the individual European centres are divided by other factors such as language and geography. This has contributed to the development of a situation where the different centres are largely autonomous, and in many cases, have closer links with the Japanese centre (Hongwanji), from which they derive training and some financial support, than they do with each other.

   Hongwanji retains clear overall authority in Europe, and other overseas branches, by virtue of the hereditary headship, which traces its descent back to the founder. In the European context, this is unchallengable, nor do local European members wish to challenge it (although in Japan there have been a number of succession disputes among Shinran's descendants over the centuries). Another important aspect of Hongwanji's authority is its control over the ordination process. This was recognized by Eracle, and some of his followers, but their attempt to set up an independent European based ordination system in order to, as they saw it, allow a distinctively European Jōdo Shinshū to develop ended in failure. Although all the European branches recognize the authority of Hongwanji to train and ordain priests, Eracle's ordinations did not gain recognition. Eracle's authority to

years, was affiliated with the European Shin Buddhist community as a 'daughter temple' of Jikō-ji, rather than with the Buddhist Churches of America. The reasons for this were institutional and personal. Institutionally the centre priests had only received the first level of ordination, which is recognised as a qualification as temple priest in Europe, but not by the Buddhist Churches of America. Personally, one of the priests of this Alaskan temple had been an assistant priest in Jiko-ji in Belgium, and wanted to maintain this connection after moving. This possibility of affiliation with other temples (depending on personal connections and preferences) outside a member's country of residence, has been taken up by a number of members.

conduct ordinations was challenged in the light of the current practice which stipulates that valid ordinations can only be conducted by the head abbot, the direct descendent of Shinran.

European Jōdo Shinshū also operates within a sharply different context to that of Jōdo Shinshū in the USA, owing to the variation of language, legislative frameworks governing religious bodies, and cultural and religious background that exists within Europe. While in the USA it has been relatively straightforward to establish a nationwide organization (the Buddhist Churches of America), drawing together all the Jōdo Shinshū temples in mainland USA, the view of most followers in Europe is that they prefer to retain their independence from each other in order to adapt appropriately to particular local contexts. There is little appetite for a pan-European layer of organization, especially if it might be seen as giving one national branch pre-eminence over others.

In terms of the relationships among the various European Jōdo Shinshū branches, perhaps the closest organizational analogy is to an academic network comprising a number of distinct, but linked, organizations. Common activities are based around academic discussion, conferences, and the publication of journals[11] alongside the broader goal of disseminating information about Shin Buddhism in Europe, and various ongoing translation projects. This orientation is consistent with the perceived needs of the organization (in so far as Shin Buddhism remains little known within Europe), and the other-power orientation of Shin, in which practices such as meditation and chanting are de-emphasized, and reliance on Amida is stressed. An observable aspect of this throughout Jōdo Shinshū centres globally is an emphasis on hearing the dharma, and hearing Amida's call. Study, dharma-talks, and reading Shin Buddhist texts are all encouraged within this framework, and there is a continuity between these and the study-group/academic conference format for transnational communication that Jōdo Shinshū in Europe has tended to favour.

Another reason for the academic bias in European Jōdo Shinshū may be the presence of professional academics within European Shin, both past and present. Academic employment has some advantages for priests: it provides a source of income and greater flexibility than many other types of work (European Jōdo Shinshū priests derive little if any personal income

---

11   Significant Buddhist publications that I have drawn on are: *The Pure Land,* produced by the International Association of Shin Buddhist Studies; *Shin Buddhist,* produced by the International Association of Buddhist Culture; and *Pure Land Notes*, the journal of the Pure Land Buddhist Fellowship in the UK.

from the central organization). In Japan too, many Jōdo Shinshū priests are academics, as academic employment allows sufficient flexibility to officiate at temple services morning and evening. Also, academics may be particularly well placed to continue contributing to the dissemination of knowledge about Shin Buddhism through the translation of key texts and by writing books and articles. In any case, there is a very noticeable bias within Jōdo Shinshū in Europe towards disseminating information rather than actively pursuing conversion. Many, though not all, argue that an active programme of proselytization would be contrary to the principles of 'other power', and 'leaving it to Amida'.

However, the shape of European Jōdo Shinshū may now be changing. A significant development for Jōdo Shinshū in Europe in recent years has been the increasing use of the Internet, which has the potential to overcome geographical barriers, and also to re-configure existing groupings. While language barriers remain an issue, having distinct Internet forums in English, German, and French (the most commonly-used languages) as well as other local languages such as Dutch or Romanian, the widespread use of English as an international language has permitted the establishment of Internet groupings that span different European countries, and include participants from Japan, the USA, and elsewhere. This shift has several implications. Notably, it gives a more prominent voice to those who are adept at using the Internet, which may presage a shift away from the predominance of academics in the more formal conferences and journal publications. It also permits groupings based on factors other than geographical location – for example, gender (the recently formed women's forum), or positions regarding doctrine and the interpretation of texts. For instance, a particularly lively recent debate involving contributors from Europe, the USA, and Japan has centred around symbolic versus literal interpretations of key tenets of Shin Buddhist teachings.

Despite the potential of the Internet to transcend the local, some locally specific factors continue to be important. Particularly noteworthy is the relationship between Jōdo Shinshū in Europe and other European Buddhist organizations, and the difficulty the movement has experienced in convincing others that it is an authentic form of Buddhism. Many of these battles were fought, and apparently won (at least on an institutional level) in the 1990s, and for the most part the relationships between Jōdo Shinshū and other European Buddhist groups now appear to be good. However, the issue of how Jōdo Shinshū is perceived (although it is still one of the least known forms of Buddhism in Europe) as an inauthentic form of Buddhism has not disappeared. This may be one of the factors behind many Europeans

members prioritizing the importance of translation and teaching, and also on their autonomy in developing their own locally appropriate forms. In the shaping of Jōdo Shinshū in Europe, the positioning of European Shin Buddhism in relation to wider Buddhist networks, as well as in relation to the parent organization in Japan and broader international Shin Buddhist networks (including those facilitated by the Internet) have all played important roles.

Acknowledgements

Works cited

Amstutz, Galen. 1997. *Interpreting Amida: History and Orientalism in the Study of Pure Land Buddhism*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Asuka Kanritsu. 2008. *Bukkyō ongaku e no shōtai* (*An invitation to Buddhist Music*). Kyoto: Hongwanji Shuppan.

Baumann, Martin. 2002. "Buddhism in Europe: Past, present, prospects." In *Westward dharma: Buddhism beyond Asia,* edited by Charles S. Prebish and Martin Baumann. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Humphreys, Christmas. [1951] 1990. *Buddhism: an introduction and guide*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

IABC. N.d. *International Association of Buddhist Culture*. Accessed 29 March 2018. http://www.ne.jp/asahi/iabc/homepage/Intro.htm.

Jōdo Shinshū Hongwanji-ha. 2002. *Jōdo Shinshū: A Guide*. Kyoto: Hongwanji International Centre.

Nasu Eishō. 1998. "Ordination Ceremony of the Honganji Priests in Premodern Japanese Society." In *Engaged Pure Land Buddhism: Challenges facing Jōdo Shinshū in the contemporary world*, edited by Kenneth K. Tanaka and Eisho Nasu, 201-220. Berkeley: Wisdom Ocean Publications.

Reader, Ian. 1991. *Religion in Contemporary Japan*. Basingstoke: Macmillan.

Sōka Gakkai. 2015. "The meaning of nam-myōhō-renge-kyō." *Sōka Gakkai International: Buddhism in Action for Peace.* Accessed 4 April 2018. http://www.sgi.org/about-us/buddhism-in-daily-life/the-meaning-of-nam-myoho-renge-kyo.html.

About the author

Louella Matsunaga is Senior Lecturer in the Anthropology of Japan at Oxford Brookes University. Her research interests include gender, personhood, and the body in contemporary Japan; Japanese religions outside Japan; the classification and investigation of 'unnatural' death in England and Japan; and the anthropology of branding. Her chapter "The Corporate Brand: towards an anthropology of branding" appears in Nakamaki et al. (eds.) 2016.

12   The Eastward Transmission of Buddhism across the Pacific

The Development of Japanese Buddhist Missions in Hawaii and Mainland United States

Tomoe Moriya

Abstract

Japanese Buddhist denominations launched foreign propagation in the late nineteenth century, and priests were dispatched to Hawaii and mainland United States to minister to the Japanese diaspora. This chapter critically examines two methodological problems in the analysis of pre-war Japanese/Japanese American Buddhism. Firstly, previous studies mostly deal with Jōdo Shinshū, which results in the neglect of the activities of other denominations. This chapter, therefore, uncovers the diverse history of Japanese Buddhist missions. Secondly, preceding studies tends to use the accounts of priests, as they rely on archival sources from the missions. However, this study claims the role of lay Buddhists was vital. With these new findings, the chapter concludes by describing how Buddhist social ethics grew out of engagement with labour movements in pre-war Hawaii.

Keywords: Japanese Buddhism, foreign propagation, Jōdo Shinshū, Americanization, Japanese language schools, the role of lay Buddhists

Japanese Buddhist denominations launched their foreign propagation [*kaikyō*] programmes [opening the (Buddhist) teachings] in the late nineteenth century, and Japanese priests subsequently crossed the Pacific to Hawaii[1] and mainland United States to conduct *kaikyō.* The word *kaikyō* was coined

---

1   Regarding spelling: 'Hawaii' is used as both noun and adjective, i.e. for residents, places, and in names of organizations or titles of literature. 'Hawaiian' refers to people of Hawaiian descent.

in the Meiji period (1868-1912) to describe the spreading of the teachings of Buddhism to non-Buddhist local residents in a foreign country. Early on, one critical view actually held that the word should be *tsuikyō* [teachings following (immigrants)] because the priests were following the Japanese immigrants (Kojima and Kiba 1992). The latter term denotes the clear contrast between this propagation of Buddhism by Japanese Buddhist denominations and the enthusiastic proselytization by Christians missionaries which had converted a significant number of non-Christians in Asia and Africa. One *kaikyōshi* [missionary priest] who had served in pre-war North America for eighteen years admitted that he had conducted mainly traditional propagation to Buddhist immigrants from Japan, while maintaining his desire to disseminate something more than just the 'extension of Japanese Buddhism' or 'religion affiliated with immigrants' (Uchida 1930: 20). This statement reflects the situation at that time, in which the Buddhist missionaries actually preached mostly among the Japanese immigrants, although a proportion of priests held out the ideal of spreading Buddhism to the local people in the New World in the manner of the Christian missionaries.

This paper will add a new viewpoint on the pre-war history of Buddhist propagation across the Pacific, to complement those available on the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii (hereafter HHMH) and the Buddhist Mission of North America (hereafter BMNA, the Buddhist Churches of America after 1944), both of which are affiliated with the Japanese Pure Land school, Jōdo Shinshū Hongwanji-ha headquartered in Kyoto, Japan. I will argue that much more attention should be paid to the contributions of lay members who co-founded their temples with priests. The narratives of preceding studies have tended to deal with the history of Jōdo Shinshū in the United States from the clergy's perspective, largely due to the methodological fact that they have relied on archival sources from the missions. Hence, scholars have paid little attention to the role of committed members, some of whom even appealed to the mother temple to commence Buddhist services for them. In the following sections, I will examine some cases in Hawaii and California to illustrate how Jōdo Shinshū Hongwanji-ha interacted with the lives of the lay immigrants.

The religious characteristics of the Hiroshima-born immigrants in Hawaii

Hiroshima prefecture is regarded as having sent the greatest number of immigrants to Hawaii. Previous studies reveal that the vast majority of first generation [*issei*] immigrants in Hawaii, who mainly worked on the

sugar plantations, were raised in rural villages in Southwest Japan. Arimoto (1995: 377) analyses statistics from the period of government-sponsored immigrants (*kan'yaku imin*) from 1885 to1894, which show that four prefectures, Hiroshima, Yamaguchi, Kumamoto, and Fukuoka, outnumbered the others, accounting for 96.2 per cent of the total numbers of immigrants to Hawaii. These four prefectures are Jōdo Shinshū (or Shinshū)[2] strongholds in Southwest Japan, and were also the top prefectures for migration in the period between 1889 and 1923, accounting for 49.5 per cent of all the immigrants to Hawaii during this later period (Arimoto 1995: 378). Part of this pattern can be attributed to a serious decline in the farming around Hiroshima Bay, which forced a significant number of Japanese to search for jobs elsewhere. But the question remains: what was their motivation for travelling such a great distance and crossing the Pacific? Here I should like to examine this question from a religious viewpoint.

The predominance of Shinshū households in the above regions is evident from Tamamuro's (2006) detailed analysis of local surveys showing the numbers of parishioners of different denominations. The question is, what was so unique in Shinshū's religious ethos that it led to this type of migration and economic activity? The migration of Shinshū followers has been well documented by Gorai (1950) who studied the migration from the Hokuriku region to North Kantō region (northern vicinity of present-day Tokyo) between the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and Naitō (1941) whose pioneering study uncovered the religious influence of the Ōmi merchants' work ethic. Arimoto (1995: 381) argues that 'in areas where Shinshū followers predominate a migrant-type economy tends to emerge', and that the following three religious factors seems to encourage such active migration: (1) strong opposition to taking life through abortion and infanticide, which resulted in population growth, (2) the work ethics of diligence, patience and thrift, and (3) less emphasis on living in the home villages with a conviction that Amida [skt. *Amitābha*] Buddha's compassion would illuminate wherever the followers might have to move.

Points (1) and (3) are particularly convincing as a religious ethos that would trigger migration. Several studies on folklore, sociology, and Buddhist history have pointed out that Shinshū followers discouraged abortion and also that they rarely held annual festivals of the kind that were important for surrounding villagers of other denominations (Takeda 1963; Bellah 1957; Kodama 1976). According to Kodama (2007: 3), the lay-oriented confraternity,

2   For the names of the Pure Land School, 'Jōdo Shinshū', 'Shinshū', and the equivalent English term, 'Shin Buddhism', are used interchangeably.

kō, especially village-based *koyori-kō* of Shinshū followers, played an important role in the formation of a unique lay-Buddhist tradition, which is still evident today. The *koyori-kō* developed as a kind of association of households offering one another mutual assistance in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. They tended to place a greater emphasis on equality and a sense of local community in contrast to other types of village organization, such as the *miyaza*, or Shinto shrine festival associations prevalent in southwest Japan, which were dominated by the founding families of the villages, that is, the families who first settled in these villages and who hence had higher status than other village families (Kodama 2005: 190-194). *Koyori-kō* members would gather to hold Buddhist services with sermons which encouraged entrusting single-mindedly in Amida Buddha's Vow, while discouraging praying to other buddhas or deities. The religious meetings would start and end by reciting the *nembutsu* [ch. *nianfo*, 'the verbal practice of taking refuge in (Amida) Buddha'].

At the same time that these developments in lay village associations were taking place, from the late 1890s to the 1900s there was a rapid increase in young men going to Hawaii and North America to seek work. Lay followers continued to play an active role in Shinshū in the New World, as explored further below. Indeed, given the limited number of temples and priests, foreign propagation would not have been possible without the active support of the lay followers. Another important factor was that in Hawaii, plantations were segregated with only limited contact allowed between ethnic groups, a situation which allowed the Japanese community to preserve its characteristic features. Lay Shinshū followers in Hawaii built their own temples, together with priests, and actively participated in the newly established Young Men's Buddhist Association, which took the place of the *koyori-kō*.

To return to the situation in Japan, other areas in Hiroshima had fewer Shinshū followers, a point which has often been overlooked in previous studies. The eastern mountainous area of Bingo district in Hiroshima was 'predominantly Sōtōshū' (Arimoto 1995: 381) and people from this region formed a confraternity of Kannon (ch. Guanyin) Bodhisattva in Hawaii (Hawaii Soto Mission Bishop's Office 2002: 25-27). During the early period of government sponsored migration (1885-1894), the Shinshū stronghold of the Hiroshima Bay coastal area sent immigrants first, while the 1900s saw soaring numbers migrating from the Kōnu and Jinseki counties of the Bingo district. Two main reasons for this were: (1) tobacco, a staple crop in the area, became a government monopoly with no monetary compensation in 1898, and (2) there was a devastating crop failure the following year. Consequently, the number of immigrants to Hawaii grew rapidly,

following the route already established by earlier immigrants from the Shinshū dominated areas (Arimoto 1995: 383), and continuing the cycle of migration from Hiroshima to Hawaii.

Lay founding-members of Buddhist temples

Buddhist temples were built in 80 of the 222 sugar plantation camps in Hawaii on which the majority of Japanese immigrants worked (Palumbo-Minatoishi and Reiko 1998: 283). Similarly, the Japanese communities on the West Coast of mainland United States built temples near where they lived (Kashima 1977). Narratives of the history of overseas propagation tend to stress either the priests' or mother temple's initiatives in the making of these temples, neglecting the role of lay members. In the case of the HHMH, the first Buddhist priest of whom we have a record was Sōryū Kagahi, a Shinshū priest from Ōita prefecture, who visited the Big Island of Hawaii in 1889. He decided to go to Hawaii in order to give spiritual comfort to the migrant workers after learning of their miserable working conditions from his local parishioners who had already migrated there. Kagahi departed alone to commence propagation, and his activities were supported by local Japanese immigrants, including Saiji Kimura, who was a supervisor at a sugar plantation (Tabrah 1989: 1-8).

After spending a few months there, Kagahi returned to Japan and approached the leaders of his denomination, urging them to respond to the request from Buddhist immigrants there, but failed in his efforts.[3] As he did not go back to Hawaii, the petition was not taken up for a few more years until Ejun Miyamoto was sent to Honolulu on an official visit in 1897. The following year saw Hōni Satomi appointed as director of the mission, while Miyamoto headed for mainland United States this time. The formal launch of Jōdo Shinshū missions started around the same period in both Hawaii and North America, and it is noteworthy that some Japanese Buddhists in San Francisco had already formed a congregation before any priests were sent from the head temple. One of the immigrants, Nisaburō Hirano, travelled to Kyoto to request the dispatch of priests, and it was this which finally changed the head temple's policy concerning foreign missions, and persuaded them to send Miyamoto (Buddhist Churches of America 1974: 44-47). In other words, missions did not simply follow the migrants but were launched at the request of the migrants.

3   Interview with Reverend Enryū Toyo, an abbot of Saikōji Temple on 24 August 1996, Ōita Prefecture, Japan

The formation of missions of Japanese Buddhist denominations

Japanese Buddhist denominations in Hawaii commenced their missions after the 1890s, reflecting the rapid increase of immigrants to Hawaii, as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 12.1   Launching of missionary activities in Hawaii

Year	Denomination
1889	Sōryū Kagahi visits the Big Island
1894	Jōdoshū
1898	HHMH
1899	Shinshū Ōtani-ha
1900	Nichirenshū
1903	Sōtōshū
1914	Shingonshū

Observing the six denominations above, four patterns in forming these missions can be identified: (1) chain migration through local and denominational networks, (2) lay-oriented confraternities [*kō*], (3) propagation by voluntary priests, and (4) competition with other denominations. These categories are illustrated in Table 2, although it should be noted that there is some overlap between them, depending on the denomination.

Table 12.2   The pattern of mission formation

Chain migration through local and denominational networks	Lay-oriented confraternity (*kō*)	Voluntary propagation of priests	Competition with other denominations
HHMH: Priests and laity from Southwest Japan	Sōtōshū: *Kannon-kō*, at nine temples (out of eleven)	HHMH: An individual visit from an Ōita priest	Shinshū Ōtani-ha: Propagation on an island with no HHMH churches
Jōdoshū: Priests and laity from Yamaguchi	Shingonshū: Initially *Daishi-kō* of the laity from Yamaguchi	Jōdoshū: Donations from the Hawai Senkyōkai, a non-sectarian group formed in Japan	
Sōtōshū: Priests and laity from Hiroshima		Nichirenshū: A priest from Nara preached amongst laity from Kumamoto	

Local and denominational networks were an important feature for all the denominations, not only those shown on this table. Priests moving to Hawaii were often from the same villages as previous lay migrants, or neighbouring villages, exemplifying the pattern of chain migration through the use of pre-existing networks. But competition with other denominations also sometimes played a part: the Ōtani branch of Shinshū targeted their propagation efforts at Shinshū lay followers living on the island of Kauai which did not as yet have priests from the Honpa Honganji branch (Ama 2011). In another apparent counter-example to the pattern of making use of networks based on locality or denomination, Gyōun Takagi, a Nichirenshū priest from Nara, a prefecture which was not one of those contributing to the Japanese migration to Hawaii, went to Hawaii despite having no direct local connections on any of the islands. However, he was able to appeal to immigrants from Kumamoto prefecture in part because of their admiration for Lord Kiyomasa Katō (1562-1611), a famous local daimyo and well known historical figure who was also a Nichirenshū follower and succeeded in increasing the Nichirenshū membership in Hawaii (Annaka 2005).

Turning to Hiroshima and Yamaguchi prefectures, both areas from which many migrants orginated, the Ōshima district contributed the largest number of immigrants. According to Hoshino (1983), the religious distribution in Ōshima county was 50 per cent Jōdoshū, 40 per cent Shinshū, and ten per cent others. However, this district also had many temples which had been Shingonshū previously, and many sites associated with Shingonshū's very popular founder Kūkai, (also known as Kōbō Daishi), still exist there. Concerning *kō* in which the laity played the major role, the *Kannon-kō* of Sōtōshū and the *Daishi-kō* of Shingonshū are prime examples. Although the former has no relationship with the teaching of the founder Dōgen, who encouraged seated meditation, the Sōtōshū clergy adopted Bodhisattvas Jizō and Kannon as symbols of devotion (Williams 2005). The adoption of the latter, rather than Jizō who consoles the departed, was owing to the labourers' religious aspiration for this-worldly benefits as a counter to the hardships they experienced in their daily lives (Hawaii Soto Mission Bishop's Office 2002).

While the Sōtōshū mission used propagation both through sermons and funerals by priests and through the lay-based *Kannon-kō*, Shingonshū first started with the *Daishi-kō*, followed by official dispatch of Shingon priests about a decade later. The popularized characteristics of the *Daishi-kō* grew out of different cultural sources from the esoteric Buddhist philosophy of Kūkai. However, the popularity of Daishi worship exemplifies how deeply the adherents wished for spiritual support under the harsh living conditions in the plantation camps (Hoshino 1981). These two types of lay-oriented confraternities

demonstrate a unique transnational movement of Buddhist-oriented Japanese folk religion, a topic neglected by previous studies which tend to deal with only the so-called world religions like Buddhism, Christianity, or Islam.

The home of Buddhism: the role of the Japanese language in marketing

Buddhist temples in both Hawaii and mainland United States established Japanese language schools, which provided educational, religious and cultural facilities for the young members. Many priests also served as teachers, which is the reason why they are still called *sensei* [teacher, but also a title for Buddhist priests] today. The language schools were established at the request of the *Issei* parents, who wished to give a Japanese language education to their second-generation (*nisei*) children with American citizenship (Okita 1997; Yoshida 2005; Asato 2005; Williams and Moriya 2010). In terms of temple management, Japanese language education offered financial benefits in securing members and proved a source of income, but the Japanese language was also important for religious purposes in missionary work.

With relatively high concentrations of Japanese immigrants, California attracted many Buddhist missions. The BMNA first commenced missionary work in San Francisco and its vicinity, following the southward advancement of the Japanese community from the mid-1910s. However, compared to Hawaii where the Japanese comprised 40 per cent of the total population of the whole islands around the turn of the century, in the same period Japanese migrants made up only a few per cent of the population of California. Partly due to this difference, the development of Buddhist missions was slower in California than in Hawaii. Table 3 shows the chronological order of the establishment of Buddhist denominations in mainland United States.

Table 12.3   The establishment of the first Buddhist missions in mainland USA

Year	Denomination	City of foundation
1899	BMNA	San Francisco
1912	Shingonshū	Los Angeles
1914	Nichirenshū	Los Angeles
1921	Shinshū Ōtani-ha	Los Angeles
1922	Sōtōshū	Los Angeles
1928	Jōdoshū	Los Angeles

According to Ishikawa who conducted a survey of Japanese language schools from the 1910s to the early 1920s in California, Buddhist schools were prevalent during the pioneer period between 1903 and 1912, indeed he regarded language schools as a '*kaikyōshi*'s side job' (1923: 12). In the mid-1910s, Japanese Christian churches in California began to establish Japanese language schools, which was an interesting contrast with their counterparts in Hawaii where Japanese Christian ministers had been the first to start such schools.

Table 12.4   The number of Japanese language schools in California

	Northern California	Southern California
1900s	5 (4)	2
1910s	34 (5)	20 (1)
1920s	61*(7)	60*(9)
1930s	114 (2)	82 (5)
1940s	98*	127*

An asterisk indicates figures based upon the foundation year of the school. The figures in parentheses are Buddhist schools. Central California is included in Northern California.

Table 4 shows that there were more schools established in Northern California than in Southern California in the early period, but that these schools subsequently followed the southward development of the Japanese community and Buddhist missions. Of the 33 Buddhist-run Japanese language schools, 30 were affiliated with the BMNA. Aside from a school in San Jose (independent from the BMNA) and two Sōtōshū-affiliated schools, Sōkei Gakuen and Hokubei Sōgō Gakuen, the overwhelming majority were run by the BMNA. The BMNA benefited from a larger membership base than other denominations in securing pupils, enabling faster fund-raising for construction, which facilitated the establishment of affiliated Japanese language schools. Research on school management reveals that five Buddhist-affiliated schools had 543 pupils with annual expenses of $15,077, five Christian-affiliated schools had 101 pupils with annual expenses of $2100, and 23 schools run by the local Japanese Association (*Nihonjinkai*) had 1144 pupils (the exact figure is uncertain) with annual expenses of $38,976 (Ishikawa 1923: 30-32). From these figures, it is obvious that the annual expenses and the number of students per school differed greatly.

Because the top priority for each temple was to either purchase or lease a building for religious services on a limited budget, many of them first established Sunday schools offering religious education. Japanese language

schools were given a lower priority. In areas where the local Japanese Association or other denominations had already run such schools, it was not necessary for the small-scaled missions to found new ones separately. In such cases, the *kaikyōshi* would teach at the nearby language school which already existed in the town.

Aside from these affiliated language schools, Buddhist denominations engaged in language education in the following ways: (1) the establishment of an affiliated school, (2) the *kaikyōshi* serving as a Japanese language teacher at a neighbouring school if the temple owned no language school, and (3) reorganizing a Japanese language school as a Buddhist temple. This demonstrates how closely the Buddhist missions were related to Japanese language schools.

Table 12.5   The Buddhist missions and Japanese language schools in California

Affiliated language school established	No affiliated language school established	Language school re-organised as a Buddhist temple
BMNA: 30 schools	Shingonshū: A principal of Sierra Madre Japanese language school and a teacher at Hollywood Japanese language school	BMNA: Formerly Senshin Gakuen, reorganised as Senshin Buddhist Church
Sōtōshū: Sōkei Gakuen and Hokubei Sōgō Gakuen	Shinshū Ōtani-ha: A group of BMNA members in Berkeley opposed to the foundation of a new Buddhist Japanese language school in town, changed their affiliation to Ōtani-ha, another Pure Land school, and founded a new temple.	Sōtōshū: Formerly Sōkei Gakuen, reorganized as Kōtaiji
Independent: San Jose Buddhist church (independent from the BMNA)	Jōdoshū: A principal of Pasadena Japanese Saturday School and a teacher at Bandini Japanese language school	

Beginning in the 1910s, these schools were founded in many parts of California in which *kaikyōshi* taught, coinciding with the growth in the Japanese population as a consequence of the settlement of the first generation of Japanese migrants [*issei*] in the United States, as well as the rapid increase of the American-born second generation, or *nisei*. These *nisei* children, with American citizenship, were primarily educated under the American public-school system, while learning Japanese after school. Because they could spend a longer time with *kaikyōshi* at language schools during the week than at Sunday schools, held only on the weekends, Japanese language education by priests played a vital role in connecting the *nisei* children with Buddhism.

In the 1920s, the BMNA started to provide religious education for English-speaking *nisei*, and to consider the need for an English version of the sūtras and English language propagation, as well as training *nisei* priests. In 1929, the BMNA's adjunct foundation for propagation, Hokubei Kaikyō Zaidan, was inaugurated to create a fund for training American-born priests. Its purpose was to send either the *nisei* or Euro-American candidates to Japan so that they would be ordained as *kaikyōshi* who were 'proficient in Japanese and English' (Terakawa 1936: 568). In this way, the BMNA executives envisioned that these young, bilingual American priests would take the initiative in propagation in the United States. Here, it is apparent that the Japanese language was still considered essential to fully understand Buddhism, as well as to be ordained as *kaikyōshi* in America. Even non-Japanese, as long as they wished to be Buddhist priests, were required to master the Japanese language. While there was a common perception among the *issei* priests and members that the Japanese language was vital for understanding Buddhism, they were also aware of the need for bilingual propagation. Every priest would be required to communicate with the *issei* Buddhists as well as the executives of the head temple in Japan who had little command of English. Even today, it is usual practice that applicants for priesthood must take examinations in Japanese in Japan for full ordination, and they have to understand the writings of the founder written in Japanese as well. Citing the words of one *kaikyōshi* who served in Palo Alto, this was probably the result of the perception of 'Japan as the home of Buddhism' (Terakawa 1930).

The 'eastward transmission of Buddhism' (*Bukkyō tōzen*) was an ideal concept of foreign propagation shared by *kaikyōshi* of all denominations. It originally meant the transnational spread of Buddhism from India to Japan via China and Korea, but was now extended to include the spread across the Pacific to Hawaii and North America, underlining the significance of the missions to these countries. Curiously enough, this eastward transmission designated Japan as the 'home of Buddhism' because this version of Buddhism was brought from Japan, hence the Japanese language became indispensable in its marketing. This exemplifies the religious motivations for the growing number of Buddhist Japanese language schools throughout the Japanese communities. Owing to the perception that language acquisition and studying Buddhism were inseparable, Japanese Buddhism has retained its ethnic features despite its transplantation to the United States for more than a century. It also reveals the strong Japanese language orientation in the Buddhist temples in America, which may make an interesting comparison with the European counterparts as explored in Louella Matsunaga's chapter in this volume.

Japanese Buddhism and the labour movement

This section will highlight the social role of *nikkei*[4] [of Japanese descent] Buddhism, focusing on the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii.[5] In the early days of the mission, the migrant labourers in the sugar plantations lived in terrible conditions. They also tended to lead dissolute lives and to have a strong distrust of priests. In this context, Yemyo Imamura, who had been a director (later appointed as bishop) of the HHMH for more than three decades, stressed to these labourers the importance of the idea of equality in Shinshū doctrine:

> Shinshū is particularly meant for the ordinary people, because it emerged after aristocracy-oriented Tendai and Shingon schools, and is also different from samurai-oriented Jōdo and Zen schools. [...] Although we do not necessarily disregard capitalists, we are most concerned about labourers. Although we do not necessarily disrespect foreigners [Americans], we pay the most generous attention to labourers. Although labourers have been despised as rustic and backward by immigration companies and the Japanese consulate, they are the first ones to be saved by Amida Buddha. (Imamura 1918: 25-26).

As observed by Kodama (2007: 3-5), such ethical characteristics as 'equality, diligence, solidarity, honesty, and patience' were cultivated among the lay Shin Buddhists in their rural communal lives. In Hawaii, priests gradually gained the trust of desperate labourers through sermons that disseminated the egalitarian tenets of Shin Buddhism. However, the priests were also favourably regarded by the managers of the plantations: Bishop Imamura intervened in a strike in 1904, persuading the Japanese labourers to return to work, and overall plantation owners seem to have viewed Buddhism as a stabilizing influence, and even donated land for Buddhist temples (Takaki 1983: 108-109).

Despite the success of Bishop Imamura's 1904 intervention, strikes occurred frequently, and the Buddhist clergy, who depended on donations from labourers (i.e. lay members), found themselves torn between facilitating reconciliation between planters and labourers and the egalitarian doctrine of Shinshū. In an interview with the *Nippu jiji* newspaper on 8 December 1908, Imamura described the lifestyles of labourers as having changed

---

4   *Nikkei* has come to mean 'Japanese American'.
5   For the reluctance of the denomination to commence the Hawaii mission, see Moriya (2008).

from those of sojourners to those of settlers, and commented that their living standards had been distinctly improved. The next year, however, saw Japanese plantation workers organize a labour union which included all plantations on O'ahu Island, which developed into a well-known large-scale strike. One issue raised in a campaign pamphlet of the Higher Wage Consummation Association was that whereas Christians did not bear the expenses for managing their churches, Buddhists had to 'bear all expenses themselves' and manage their temples solely through their donations, and one of their demands was for the right to exercise a greater number of free religious activities (Moriya 2008). In spite of this, Imamura accepted the role of mediator, and many of the strikers returned to work for a while. However, his intervention eventually failed and the labourers went back on strike. As Imamura himself stated, demand for higher wages was inevitable once the Japanese immigrants decided to settle down in Hawaii. His failure in the 1909 strike prompted the HHMH to reconsider its attitudes toward the labour movement (Moriya 2008).

The year 1919 witnessed union moves, supported by the Young Men's Buddhist Association, to demand higher wages. In the 1920 strike, Imamura clearly expressed support for the strike. Together with other Buddhist and Shinto priests in Hawaii, the Japanese religious leaders released a joint public statement on 23 January 1920 to the Hawaiian Sugar Planters Association (HSPA), which advised them to meet the demands of the labourers. Subsequently Imamura, at the annual ministerial meeting of the HHMH, emphasized that priests should direct their attention to social problems and not interfere with union activities (Moriya 2001).

The change to the pro-union attitude of the HHMH was the consequence of the egalitarian tenets that Imamura had preached. However, this attitude was unusual for a Japan-based organization in the context of the time, particularly after the High Treason Incident in Japan in 1910-1911, in which 26 socialists and anarchists including four Buddhists had been arrested and immediately sentenced to death in a closed trial.[6] As Buddhists were involved in this incident (although it was a secretly conducted government-fabricated crackdown), Buddhist denominations in Japan subsequently became extremely sensitive to, and cautious of, labour movements (Ama 2005; Moriya 2005; Moriya 2008). In sharp contrast, the political and geographical distance of the Hawaii mission enabled the clergy there to support labour movements. This case also demonstrates how lay Buddhists

---

6   Some were commuted to life imprisonment.

tried to realize the egalitarian teachings of Shinshū, resulting in a change in attitude among the priests.[7]

Conclusion

In the pioneer period of the missions in Hawaii and mainland United States, Buddhist denominations expanded through the religious affiliation of the immigrants and their local networks. Missionary priests, or *kaikyōshi,* conducted religious services and rituals in the Japanese style with support from lay Buddhist immigrants, and in response to their religious aspirations. Religious activities which highlighted Japaneseness were criticized as 'Un-American' during the '100 per cent Americanization' campaign starting around the time of WWI. The Japanese immigrants did not entirely Americanize themselves, but they did organize strikes to pursue better living conditions for themselves in the United States, and in contrast to the situation in Japan at that time, they drew support in this from local religious organizations.

In a country with a very different culture from that of Japan, in a context framed by racial discrimination and harsh living conditions, Japanese immigrants looked to Buddhism for a guide that would form a basis for how to live, and be a support in their daily lives. This religious yearning led to the construction of numerous Buddhist temples in the areas where Japanese immigrants lived, and also the expectation among immigrants that Buddhism would play a role in the education of their American-born children. With the YMBA in Hawaii supporting the labour movement, *kaikyōshi* also had to change their stance to support union activists. The consequences of not doing so was highlighted by a case in which lay members moved to have a strike-breaking priest removed from his office. This shift could be said to be a natural outcome of the doctrine of egalitarianism, but it is also indicative of the power of the lay members to influence the policy of the mission in relation to the labour movement. The impact of the lay members on the development of the social role of Japanese Buddhism in Hawaii should not be underestimated, and is indicative of the strength of their religious and social engagement.

---

7   The Japanese Buddhist endeavour for an egalitarian society may be regarded as an earlier example of the 'socially engaged Buddhism', a concept that was first introduced by Thich Nhat Hanh during the Vietnam War.

Acknowledgements

Works cited

Ama, Michihiro. 2011. *Immigrants to the Pure Land: The Modernization, Acculturation, and Globalization of Shin Buddhism, 1898-1941.* Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

Ama Toshimaro. 2005. *Shūkyō wa kokka o koerareru ka.* Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō.

Annaka Naofumi. 2005. 'Hawai ni okeru nichirenshū no kaikyō katsudō ni tsuite', *Indogaku bukkyōgaku kenkyū* 52 (2): 78-83.

Arimoto Masao. 1995. *Shinshū no shūkyō shakaishi.* Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan.

Asato, Noriko. 2005. *Teaching Mikadoism: The Attack on Japanese Language Schools in Hawaii, California, and Washington, 1919-1927.* Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

Bellah, Robert Neelly. 1957. *Tokugawa Religion: The Values of Pre-Industrial Japan.* Glencoe: Free Press.

Buddhist Churches of America, ed. 1974. *Buddhist Churches of America (vol.1) 75 Year History, 1899-1974.* Chicago: Nobart.

Gorai Shigeru. 1950. "Hokuriku monto no kantō imin." *Shirin* 33: 597-612.

Hawaii Soto Mission Bishop's Office, ed. 2002. *History of the Soto Sect in Hawaii.* Honolulu: Hawaii Soto Mission Bishop's Office.

Hoshino Eiki. 1981. "Hawai ni okeru daishi shinkō no tenkai to shingonshū jiin no katsudō." In *Hawai nikkeijin shakai to nihon shūkyō: Hawai nikkeijin shūkyō chōsa hōkokusho*, edited by Keichi Yanagawa and Kiyomi Morioka, 137-153. Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku Shūkyōgaku Kenkyūshitsu.

—. 1983. "Hawai nikkeijin to daishi shinkō." *Shūkyō kenkyū* 246: 65-67.

Imamura Yemyō. 1918. *Hawai kaikyōshi.* Honolulu: Honpa Hongwanji Hawai Kaikyō Kyōmushō Bunshobu.

Ishikawa Ken. 1923. *Beikoku kashū nihongo gakuen ni kansuru kenkyū.* Private publication.

Kashima, Tetsuden. 1977. *Buddhism in America: The Social Organization of an Ethnic Religious Institution.* Westport: Greenwood Press.

Kodama Shiki. 1976. "Suō Ōshima no 'kanmanshū" (shinshū) to sono keifu." In *Setonaikai chiiki no shūkyō to bunka*, edited by Masaharu Kawai, 141-169. Tokyo: Yūzankaku Shuppan.

—. 2005. *Kinsei Shinshū to chiiki shakai*. Kyoto: Hōzōkan.

—. 2007. "Kinsei Shinshū no shakaiteki jissen: Sōei (Sekisen) gakuha o chūshin ni." *Shinshū kyōgaku kenkyū* 28: 1-27.

Kojima Masaru and Akeshi Kiba, eds. 1992. *Ajia no kaikyō to kyōiku*. Kyoto: Hōzōkan.

Moriya Tomoe. 2001. *Amerika bukkyō no tanjō: 20 seiki shotō ni okeru nikkei shūkyō no bunka hen'yō.* Tokyo: Gendai Shiryō Shuppan.

—. 2005. "Social ethics of 'New Buddhists' at the turn of the Twentieth Century: A comparative study of Suzuki Daisetsu and Inoue Shūten." *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 32(2): 283-304.

—. 2008. "Buddhism at the crossroads of the Pacific: Imamura Yemyō and Buddhist social ethics." In *Hawaii at the Crossroads of the US and Japan before the Pacific War*, edited by Jon Thares Davidann, 192-216. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

Naitō Kanji. 1941. "Shūkyō to keizai rinri: jōdo shinshū to ōmi shōnin." In *Shakaigaku 8,* edited by Nihon Shakai Gakkai, 243-286. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten.

Okita Yukuji. 1997. *Hawai nikkei imin no kyōikushi: nichibei bunka, sono deai to sōkoku*. Kyoto: Minerva Shobō.

Palumbo-Minatoishi, Lorraine Reiko. 1998. "Hawai ni okeru 'purantēshon jūkyo gata' jiin kenchiku no kenkyū: Hawai no nikkeijin shakai ni okeru jiin kenchiku no hen'yō katei ni kansuru kenkyū (1)." *Nihon kenchiku gakkai keikakukei ronbunshū* 513: 275-284.

Tabrah, Ruth. 1989. "A grateful past, a promising future." In *A Grateful Past, A Promising Future: Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii 100 Year History, 1889-1989,* edited by the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii, 1-120. Honolulu: Centennial Publication Committee, Honpa Hongwanji Mission.

Takaki, Ronald. 1983. *Pau Hana: Plantation Life and Labor in Hawaii, 1835-1920.* Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

Takeda Chōshū. 1963. "Minkan shinkō to shinshū." In *Shinshūshi gaisetsu,* edited by Toshihide Akamatsu and Kazuo Kasahara, 383-389. Kyoto: Heirakuji Shoten.

Tamamuro Fumio. 2006. "Meiji shonen jiin meisaichō no sūryōteki bunseki." *Kindai bukkyō* 12: 1-19.

Terakawa Hōkō. 1936. *Hokubei kaikyō enkakushi.* San Francisco: Hongwanji Hokubei Kaikyō Honbu.

Terakawa Tansai. 1930. "Zenshin subeku mazu jisei yori hajimeyo: Sono ichi." *Hawai Hōchi,* 23 July.

Williams, Duncan Ryūken. 2005. *The Other Side of Zen: A Social History of Sōtō Zen Buddhism in Tokugawa Japan.* Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Williams, Duncan Ryūken and Tomoe Moriya, eds. 2010. *Issei Buddhism in the Americas.* Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press.

Yoshida Ryō, ed. 2005. *Amerika nihonjin imin no ekkyō kyōikushi.* Tokyo: Nihon Tosho Sentā.

About the author

Tomoe Moriya is Professor at Hannan University in Osaka, Japan. She specializes in Japanese/Japanese American Buddhism and Japanese intellectual history and has written extensively on transnational aspects of Japanese/Japanese American Buddhism in Japanese and English. Some of her English works include *Selected Works of D.T. Suzuki*, Volume 3: Comparative Religion (2016), *Issei Buddhism in the Americas* (2010), and "Buddhism at the Crossroads of the Pacific: Imamura Yemyō and Buddhist Social Ethics," in *Hawaii at the Crossroads of the US and Japan before the Pacific War* (2008).

13   The Management and Marketing of Tenrikyō in its Strategy of Global Expansion

The Case of Brazil

Masanobu Yamada

Abstract

Tenrikyō was founded in 1838 in a farming village in contemporary Nara Prefecture and expanded its religious activities even after the Foundress 'withdrew from physical life' in 1887. After government recognition in 1908, it institutionalized into a religious organization with numerous branch churches. Tenrikyō is regarded as a representative Japanese NRM in terms of its scale and historical importance. Tenrikyō's global expansion has led to the establishment of overseas bases in Asia, Europe, Africa, Oceania, and the Americas. In the Americas, Tenrikyō took root in the countries and regions where Japanese farming immigrants resided. The Japanese ethnic communities on Brazil are known for their large size, and the number of Tenrikyō adherents and churches are comparatively larger there than in other regions.

Keywords: Tenrikyō, Foundress, management philosophy, centripetal principle, lineage, spiritual parents

Introduction

Tenrikyō was founded in 1838 in a farming village in Yamato Province (currently Nara Prefecture) and expanded its religious activities even after Miki Nakayama, the Foundress of Tenrikyō, withdrew from physical life in 1887. After about 50 years, the number of its adherents reached three million.

Tenrikyō attained government recognition of its sectarian independence from the Shinto Honkyoku in 1908 after it had institutionalized into a religious organization with numerous branch churches. In ten years, the number of branch churches increased rapidly and reached approximately 1300 in Japan. In Japan and abroad, Tenrikyō altogether has approximately 16,000 branch churches at present and is viewed as a representative Japanese new religion in terms of its scale and historical importance.

Tenrikyō's global expansion has led to the establishment of overseas bases in Asia, Europe, Africa, Oceania, and the Americas. Its first overseas post, the Kankoku Fukyō Kanrisho (Tenrikyō Mission Administration Office in Korea) was established in the year it attained sectarian independence, and was renamed the Chōsen Fukyō Kanrisho the year after Japan's annexation of Korea in 1910. It is possible to interpret that Tenrikyō's overseas expansion occurred as a result of the historical context of the Japanese government's colonial occupation of Asian countries, for Tenrikyō's next overseas missions were established in Taiwan and the South Pacific. However, it is insufficient to simply suggest that the overseas mission was a direct result of the historical conditions of colonial occupation by the then Japanese government. This is because there was a revelation which foretold that the divine name of Tenri-O-no-Mikoto would circulate to all corners of the world after the Tenrikyō teachings spread all over Japan in the 75 years following its founding. Tenrikyō's overseas mission gained prominence when it was increasingly promoted in the years leading up to the 40th Anniversary of the Foundress in 1926.

In the Americas, Tenrikyō took root in the countries and regions where Japanese farming immigrants resided. Although congregations differ in scale, Tenrikyō is presently based on the USA mainland, Hawaii, Mexico, Peru, Brazil, Paraguay, and Argentina. The Japanese ethnic communities on the USA mainland, Hawaii, and Brazil are known for their large size and the number of Tenrikyō adherents and churches there are comparatively larger than those of other regions. For instance, Brazil has a mission headquarters and 85 churches, which are mainly centred in the states of São Paulo and Paraná where there are sizable populations of Japanese Brazilians. There are approximately 30,000 Tenrikyō adherents in Brazil, with roughly 20 per cent of them who are not ethnically Japanese.

In this chapter, I examine Tenrikyō's management philosophy and its expansion in Brazil. Following a discussion of Tenrikyō theology and management philosophy I shall describe how this is tied into the religion's expansion into Brazil by tracing the history of the establishment and development of Tenrikyō Mission Headquarters in Brazil and several branch churches. In the Americas, it is said that the scale of Tenrikyō activity in

Brazil surpasses that of Tenrikyō congregations on the USA mainland and in Hawaii. In this paper, I will address the reason why this is so as well as explore what aspects of Tenrikyō in Brazil brought this about, and how these aspects are being affected in an age of increasing globalization.

Tenrikyō theology and management philosophy

In Tenrikyō God [*Kami*] is called 'God the Parent [*Oyagami*], Tenri-O-no-Mikoto'. According to Tenrikyō theology, this universe is the body of God and the human body is 'borrowed' from God. Consequently, the whole of creation (including human beings) are integrated into God's body and given life by God's providence. In this sense, *Oyagami* is the 'Parent' and creator divinity that gave life to the whole of creation. The Main Sanctuary of Tenrikyō Church Headquarters is built surrounding the *Jiba*, which is considered to be the place of original human creation. The *Kanrodai* (stand for the heavenly dew) is set up to mark this spot. On a festival day, the '*Kagura-zutome*' [masked service] and '*Teodori*' [dance with hand movements] – Tenrikyō's most important soteriological rites – are performed with the *Kanrodai* at the centre. In this context, the *Jiba* is simultaneously the source of the salvation of humanity and the focus of prayer. A pilgrimage to *Jiba*, which is called an *Ojiba-gaeri* [return to *Jiba*] is a return to mankind's original home and is thus a religious act that allows one to meet Miki Nakayama, the Foundress, who remains 'everliving' and continues to work for the salvation of humanity. In Tenrikyō, the Foundress is understood as the origin of God's direct revelation and as God on earth. The core beliefs of Tenrikyō therefore have a centripetal disposition that is aligned toward the religious centre called *Jiba*.

   This principle of centripetal religious disposition (hereinafter referred to as the centripetal principle) in Tenrikyō has become its core management philosophy and helps organize the religion in two ways. One is called 'lineage' [*keitō*]. The management philosophy recreates the nurturing reciprocity of a parent-child relationship. There are approximately 240 churches in Japan directly supervised by Tenrikyō Church Headquarters (hereinafter also referred to as 'lineage churches') that are all connected to their direct 'parent', Church Headquarters, located at *Jiba*. Each lineage church often has many branch churches that comprise a relationship similar to the parent-child-grandchild structure of a family. Such relationships can be referred to as the *ri-en* [spiritual relationship]. In the *ri-en*, parents who provide guidance and children who receive it are respectively referred to as 'spiritual parents' [*ri no*

oya] and 'spiritual children' [*ri no ko*]. While each church is independent and
self-sufficient financially, the spiritual parent-child relationships between
them are nevertheless valued. Churches directly supervised by Tenrikyō
Church Headquarters are also called 'highest parent churches' [*sai-jōkyū
kyōkai*] and their branch churches that have the position equivalent to
children are connected and related to one another like cousins. In addition,
although there are clusters of churches with grandchild relationships, as with
family relationships in Japan, the cousin and grandchild relationships are
usually not as valued as the 'spiritual parent-child relationship'. It can be said
that Tenrikyō has expanded on the basis of this 'lineage' form of organization.

The other form of organization is a regional one. Each prefecture in
Japan is set as a diocese [*kyōku*] where a diocese office [*kyōmu shichō*],
a local branch of Tenrikyō Church Headquarters, is located. Depending
on the size of selected overseas congregations, they likewise have a local
branch with an equivalent status that is referred to either as a mission
headquarters [*dendōchō*], mission centre [*shuchōsho*], or contact office
[*renrakusho*]. Like diocese offices in Japan, these overseas administrative
offices supervise local churches and mission stations [*fukyōsho*] in their
respective regions. The management philosophy of these administrative
offices is to increase the awareness among adherents that they are *michi no
dōshi* [like-minded persons on the path] by maintaining close contact with
each church within the region. Tenrikyō churches are connected through
two forms of relationships, the spiritual relationship and the regional
relationship. Both relationships are important to facilitate the smooth
transmission of the 'voice of the Parent' from the *Jiba* (other policies and
other instructions from Tenrikyō Church Headquarters). Tenrikyō values
the spiritual relationship, as it will be noted later. However, it ought to
be acknowledged that the regional connection tended to be more in the
foreground than the spiritual in Brazil during WWII.

As mentioned above, Tenrikyō's structure is based on spiritual and
regional relationships. Each vector converges and centres on *Jiba*, and is
managed on the basis of the centripetal principle. On the other hand, the
centrifugal principle is also important in religious action. I would like to
consider this from the standpoint of religious concepts such as *oya-gokoro*
[parental love] and *go-on hōji* [expressing indebtedness] as described in
Tenrikyō theology. God the Parent and spiritual parents both help nurture
Tenrikyō adherents. In other words, adherents are 'guided and nurtured' and
feel the parental love of God the Parent and their spiritual parents. This idea
of 'parental love' generates a faith that is centred on the divine Parent and
human spiritual parents, which is connected to the centripetal principle

and establishes a vertical relationship within the religion. Tenrikyō's vertical structure is thus created on the basis of this relationship.

Go-on hōji refers to the religious practice of expressing the *go-on* [favor/ indebtedness] of the parental love one has received. This can be seen as the basis for the horizontal relationship and the source of the centrifugal principle. This centrifugal principle is regarded as a fraternal relationship, while the centripetal principle is evident in the parent-child relationship. Showing consideration for people in the neighbourhood who are looking for happiness and salvation is generally considered fraternal love. However, Tenrikyō attaches a deep significance to such feelings not only as a horizontal act of fraternal love, but also as a vertical act in which an adherent expresses one's indebtedness for God's parental love. Tenrikyō also has a religious action known as *hinokishin* [devotion activities]. It is taught that the body of a human being is borrowed from God, and is kept alive by the providence of God. When a human being expresses appreciation for God's parental love, it is called *hinokishin*. It is taught that one should not only give thanks to God directly, but should also serve one's neighbours faithfully as a concrete act of appreciation to God. For example, the Foundress once taught: 'Save others [....] Earnestly tell others how you were saved' (Tenrikyō Church Headquarters 1976: 84). Therefore, the vector of expressing indebtedness is ideally focused on people. Such acts of consideration for other people are commonly seen as volunteer activities, but Tenrikyō theology regards them as expressing indebtedness to God. This idea of 'expressing indebtedness' sustains a horizontal relationship in the religion's activities, in other words, the centrifugal principle which urges adherents to approach others.

As shown above, Tenrikyō's organizational and missionary principles are described as having two religious aspects based on Tenrikyō theology; 'parental love' and 'expressing indebtedness'. These two aspects stipulated the manner in which Tenrikyō expanded in Japan and abroad, as its marketing philosophy. What follows is a diachronic examination of Tenrikyō's expansion in Brazil as an actual case study on how the religious concepts of 'parental love' informs a centripetal-vertical relationship and 'expressing indebtedness' informs a centrifugal-horizontal relationship.

Germination of the Tenrikyō mission in Brazil: The formative period of self-supporting churches (circa 1908-1938)

Tenrikyō is mainly promulgated through door-to-door visits, which is an activity called solitary missionary work [*tandoku fukyō*] and done by an

individual under his or her free will. This style of propagation was not only employed in Japan, but was similarly done in Brazil as well. Emigration to Brazil from Japan began in 1908. Records show that Tenrikyō adherents settled in Brazil starting in 1914 (TBD) 1958: 19). About 20 Tenrikyō adherents had settled in Brazil by the end of 1928. There were more than a few who had the experience of having done solitary missionary work in Japan. Approximately ten of them were later appointed as church head ministers [*kyōkai-chō*]. They engaged in missionary work whilst farming on the settlements in severe conditions (TBD 1958: 22). Zennosuke Negoro, after having done solitary missionary work in Osaka prior to settling in Brazil 1927, established the first Tenrikyō church in Brazil in 1935.

When a new Tenrikyō church is established or when a Tenrikyō adherent succeeds to the position of church head minister, both the new head minister and that of his highest parent church must obtain approval [*yurushi*] directly from the everliving Foundress at *Jiba*. Herein is the arrangement where the new head minister receives the parental love of his or her highest parent church head minister and the Foundress. Needless to say, this arrangement rests on the centripetal principle.

In the years leading to the 40th Anniversary of the Foundress in 1926, Church Headquarters attached great importance to the overseas mission. In response, Nankai Grand Church sent ten families to Brazil in 1929 with the aim of having them engage in missionary work. This was realized by the South America Emigration Program of the Wakayama Prefecture Emigration Association. Chūjirō Ōtake, a member of the Nankai Grand Church, had the experience of propagating in Korea and his grand church had placed great expectations on him. Ōtake, who was still single, had an arranged marriage to Chiyo Nishi before adopting Shichirō Minami as his son. This was due to the fact that one of the preconditions for emigration was that it was limited to families of three or more. Although his main purpose for emigrating was to propagate the faith, he had no other actual means of earning his living other than farming. In the beginning, he cut down giant trees and cleared the land while battling dysentery and malaria with his fellow immigrants. Chiyo also participated in the farming work. In 1931, Ōtake gained the understanding and support of his fellow adherent families from Nankai Grand Church and began a solitary missionary effort in the neighbouring town of Bauru. At that time, Japanese immigrants settled in the inland areas in the states of São Paulo and Paraná, where coffee plantations were prevalent. Bauru was an important location for the railways which connected the main cities and towns in the area. Ōtake opened a mission in Bauru and was able to have his family join him a year and a half later.

In addition to gaining new adherents, Ōtake found Tenrikyō adherents who were so overwhelmed by their farming work that they could not sufficiently practise their faith. He subsequently helped instruct them. Then, in 1935, Takahito Iwai, a representative of Mitsui & Co., Ltd., visited Brazil with a group of economic delegates. Iwai was staying in São Paulo and gave Ōtake a message entitled 'To Tenrikyō adherents in South America' from the second *Shinbashira* [spiritual and administrative leader] of Tenrikyō, Shozen Nakayama, when he visited. Iwai's visit demonstrates that members of the Tenrikyō organization in Japan were aware of Ōtake's enthusiastic missionary efforts. Having received a message from the *Shinbashira*, Ōtake planned a pilgrimage group to *Jiba* for the 50th Anniversary of the Foundress the following year. It is imagined that 'the voice of the Parent' Ōtake received from *Jiba* inspired him to organize a pilgrimage to *Jiba* among the adherents who gathered around him. A total of 150 people, including 23 Tenrikyō adherents, took part in the pilgrimage group. Apart from those who belonged to Nankai Grand Church, approximately 30 Tenrikyō adherents immigrated to Brazil between 1929 and 1935 (TBD 1958: 44).

In the year of the 50th Anniversary of the Foundress, five churches were established under the Nankai (two churches), Chūwa (two churches), and Muya (one church) lineages. To the churches established under the Nankai lineage, Ōtake became the head minister of Bauru and his wife Chiyo was appointed as the head minister of Paulista. Chiyo had a significant role in establishing the structure of the Mission Headquarters in Brazil in addition to her husband. Although it is said that she was not so tough physically, she farmed with Shichirō and supported her livelihood while her husband engaged in solitary missionary work in Bauru. Once the family rejoined in Bauru, she also engaged in propagation efforts.

Back in *Jiba*, the *Shinbashira* asked Ōtake, the leader of the pilgrimage group, 'Will you return next year?' Thus, Ōtake formed another pilgrimage group for the Centennial Anniversary of the Founding of Tenrikyō in 1937. There were 86 participants this time, about half of whom were Tenrikyō adherents. In 1937 and 1938, three new churches were established: Nampaku (Nankai lineage), Brasil (Kōriyama lineage), and Nippaku (Meijō lineage). However, no new churches were established until 1952, after post-war disturbances had ended.

As shown above, nine churches were established in the three years from the 50th Anniversary of the Foundress. An important fact in the spiritual history of Japanese emigration to Brazil is that according to Takashi Maeyama, all religions, with the exception of Catholicism, were subject to strict travel restrictions to Brazil by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs between 1918 and

the end of the WWII (Maeyama 1999: 42-43). He notes that emigrants did not desire religious activities at the settlements in the least. Maeyama's assertion that the majority of emigrants did not demonstrate interest in long term residency or religious activities until the end of the war may be on the mark. Nevertheless, as acknowledged above, the fact that there were Tenrikyō adherents who engaged in propagation activities and established churches regardless of these conditions must not be overlooked.

Unlike the structure the Mission Headquarters in Brazil would later have, the churches established at the time did not develop to the point of having active and organic horizontal relationships. Takashi Maeyama further notes that emigrants were increasingly giving up on the idea of going home replete with honors from about this time and instead worked on strategies that allowed them to earn an income on a long-term basis. Some became independent farmers while others were at the stage where they agonized over their lack of success (Maeyama 1999: 177). They were simultaneously confronted with the difficult proposition of choosing between residing permanently or going home and trying to preserve a Japanese identity in the midst of increased nationalism both in Japan and Brazil.

When Tenrikyō adherents in Brazil had such thoughts about Japan, they would have naturally turned to their birth families and parents or their 'spiritual parents'. One imagines that this would have heightened their desire for parental love and made them conscious of the centripetal principle that valued lineage. This would explain why there was no organizational effort based on regional bonds that transcended church lineages among adherents in Brazil despite that they may have been fully aware that they were 'like-minded persons on the path'. In this sense, the churches established in Brazil in those days can be viewed as independent self-supporting churches that greatly valued their connections to their parent churches in Japan. Nonetheless, the two pilgrimages to *Jiba* that Ōtake helped launch, led to the establishment of nine churches. This can be seen as the germination of Tenrikyō Mission Headquarter's structure in Brazil, which would centre on Ōtake. At that time, Ōtake made efforts that transcended lineages so like-minded persons on the path scattered among several settlement areas would each become self-sufficient. This must have been one of the ways he happened to express his indebtedness. It can therefore be said that Ōtake added a horizontal relationship to the vertical relationship in the Tenrikyō organization.

The horizontal relationship in Brazil has been brought to the foreground since then. This can be seen from the fact that the Brazil branch [*bunkai*] of the Tenrikyō Instructors Society [*kyōshi-kai*] was formed in 1939 with Ōtake

as head and began enhancing regional activities. Irrespective that Tenrikyō Church Headquarters gave the instruction for the Instructors Society to be formed, there was still a necessity on the part of like-minded people in Brazil to cooperate with one another as they overcame the difficulties of their particular age and circumstances. Further, the Brazil division of the Women's Association was formed the same year. With Chiyo at its helm, the Brazil division helped direct Tenrikyō activities for women adherents. It is a general trend in new religions for women adherents to take a central role in implementing substantive, everyday activities. In Tenrikyō, women are called the 'foundation of the path' that helps support all Tenrikyō activities and have been appointed the significant role of 'joining' by promoting cooperation among people. It can be said that as men adherents, led by Ōtake, increasingly expanded their regional activities, women adherents, led by Chiyo, helped enhance them.

Structural development of Tenrikyō Mission Headquarters in Brazil

The formative period of branch churches under Mission Headquarters (circa 1939-1965)

The international situation grew increasingly tense and WWII was imminent. Travel and correspondence between Brazil and Japan came to a halt. Nationalism reared its head both in Japan and Brazil. In 1937, when the Second Sino-Japanese War broke out, the Brazilian government strengthened its nationalist policies under President Vargas, including the prohibition of foreign language education to children. Even under such conditions, Ōtake's enthusiastic propagation efforts led to the construction of Bauru Church's 12x20 metre brick sanctuary in 1941 and the establishment of a total of six local mission stations in the same, and following, year. These mission stations were the foundations for future branch churches of the Mission Headquarters in Brazil. According to the current Constitution of Tenrikyō, churches and mission stations are established, and respectively approved by Church Headquarters and the local diocese office. However, due to the tense international situation at the time, the Brazil branch of the Tenrikyō Instructors Society exercised jurisdiction over the establishment of churches and mission stations from 1940 onwards. Brazil was therefore independent from the Tenrikyō constitution, although the Mission Headquarters in Brazil established later was positioned within the direct circuit of the centripetal

principle toward the *Jiba* from the viewpoint of Tenrikyō theology. Therefore, it was natural that the mission stations established at that time would be regarded as directly supervised entities of Mission Headquarters.

Publication of Japanese language newspapers were prohibited in July 1941, and the Japanese community could not obtain detailed information about the international situation. People from Japan, Germany, and Italy were prohibited from gathering and using their native language. In December that same year, the Japanese Navy attacked Hawaii and the Pacific War broke out. In January 1942, Brazil declared the severance of diplomatic relations with Japan, Germany, and Italy. Consequently, people from the Axis powers were regarded as people from hostile countries. Bank deposits were frozen, meetings and trips were prohibited, and freedom was restricted. In February, the security police started to arrest and search the domiciles of people from the Axis powers. Leading Japanese were targeted.

Chūjirō Ōtake was arrested and imprisoned by the Bauru Police in March that year. Police officers came after morning service to arrest six leading Tenrikyō adherents, including Ōtake (TBD 1958: 137-138). Those other than Ōtake were imprisoned for approximately one month, whilst Ōtake was imprisoned for a year and three months. Tenrikyō adherents in Brazil then began to experience its 'dark age' (TBD 1958: 135). However, these experiences can be understood as the cornerstones that established the horizontal relationships, which transcended church lineages. Strict surveillance by police authorities had slowed the Tenrikyō mission to a standstill. Although Ōtake's Bauru Church was forcibly closed, many adherents eluded the guards and entered the church to worship in the middle of night. This mirrored the experiences of Miki Nakayama, the Foundress, who was sent to prison more than a dozen times since her teachings deviated from State Shinto orthodoxy. Her experiences are referred to as the Foundress's 'Hardships'.

The Foundress explained that such adverse circumstances provided opportunities for propagation and she perceived them in a positive manner, saying that 'buds sprout from knots'. Reportedly, the number of Tenrikyō adherents increased each time the Foundress was released from prison. This may be because adherents were assiduous in pursuing missionary work as a means to 'express their indebtedness' in order to make up for the 'Hardships' she endured.

While her husband was incarcerated, Chiyo endured several searches of her home by police authorities with Michie, who would later become her daughter-in-law. It is suspected that they understood their own hardships as expressions of indebtedness that recalled the Foundress's Hardships. It

is also said that when she visited her incarcerated husband in São Paulo, she not only encouraged him but others as well by saying uplifting words and bringing fruits or vegetables (TBD 1984: 659).

Ōtake was released from prison in May 1943 and placed under confinement within the municipality of São Paulo. Although gatherings with three foreigners or more were prohibited, he secretly offered doctrinal courses in sessions that lasted six-months at the São Paulo Mission Station. After his release from confinement in 1945, the base of operations was moved to Avaí, a town near Bauru, Ōtake provided religious instruction to 150 people over eight terms under the guise of agricultural training classes. The class produced many Tenrikyō adherents who went on to support the Tenrikyō mission in Brazil. The agricultural training class was closed in 1948, when Ōtake was 43 years old. Considering that five of the seven head ministers of the churches (that were later established as direct branches of Tenrikyō Mission Headquarters in Brazil) were older than Ōtake, demonstrates how much of a leader he was in the Tenrikyō community in Brazil. It is easy to imagine that the unity of the Tenrikyō adherents in Brazil strengthened under the pressure of state control and repression. Under such circumstances, Ōtake and other adherents discovered a common awareness they were *michi no dōshi* [like-minded persons on the path] through their experiences in the settlements. Horizontal relationships may therefore have helped them to overcome their wartime difficulties.

The establishment of horizontal relationships by the Tenrikyō organization in Brazil progressed in part due to the collaborative efforts among adherents. This can be seen in how Japanese immigrant communities became free to engage in social activities after the war, leading to the beginning of social welfare services. One example is the Bauru Culture Association. This association was established in 1946 for the purpose of promoting spiritual cultivation and Brazilian culture, and it gained official approval from the authorities the following year. The association's central operation was the management of dormitories open to schoolchildren of both Tenrikyō and non-Tenrikyō families. According to remaining records, a total of 234 children all rose from bed at the same time and commuted to school between 1947 and 1954 from a dormitory named the Bauru Culture Scholarship House (TBD 1958: 218). Further, in 1946, Bauru Church opened the Bauru Culture and Sewing Institute in the cause of women's education after which the management of the institute was transferred to the Tenrikyō Women's Association in 1949. In addition to Chiyo Ōtake, other women adherents played major roles as they became involved in life education at these two facilities. While the scale of these activities was not necessarily

significant in itself, we can understand how women's efforts contributed to the establishment of regional, horizontal relationships.

After the war, Ōtake returned to Japan with his wife Chiyo in 1949 to cheer up the spirits of those at Tenrikyō Church Headquarters. At that time, the decision to set up the Tenrikyō Mission Administration Office in Brazil was made and Ōtake was appointed as its administrative officer. This led to the establishment of Mission Headquarters in Brazil with Ōtake as the first bishop. In 1951, the *Shinbashira* was in attendance for the service for the establishment of Mission Headquarters in Brazil. Following the establishment of the Mission Administration Office [*fukyō kanrisho*] in Brazil, a ten-day doctrinal course [*kōshūkai*] based on 'The Doctrine of Tenrikyō' was offered to nurture adherents. By 1963, 1292 people had taken the course (TBD 1984: 207). Further, a month-long Spiritual Development Course [*shūyōkai*] began to be offered from 1964 at Mission Headquarters in Brazil. This course is equivalent to the three-month *shūyōkai* held at the Church Headquarters and is ranked higher than the doctrinal course in Brazil's adherent nurturing system. In addition to the establishing branch churches of Tenrikyō Mission Headquarters in Brazil, the establishment of this adherent nurturing system enhanced the structure of the Mission Headquarters in Brazil.

In 1963, Sorocabana and Marialva were established as branch churches of Três Barras Church. Twelve churches were established between 1951 (the year the Mission Headquarters was established) and 1963. Five of these were formerly mission stations that had been directly supervised by the mission headquarters, and promoted to church status. Although each of the five head ministers of these churches belonged to a particular lineage church, their mission stations came under the direct supervision of the Mission Headquarters in Brazil since they were established during the war. Consequently, the 'spiritual parent-child' relationship was reconstructed in Brazil yet this also had laid an important foundation for establishing the regional, horizontal relationship. Further, two churches that were established in 1963 amount to being grandchild churches of the Mission Headquarters in Brazil, which demonstrates that the mission headquarters was organized as a lineage church born in Brazil.

Emigrants from the Tenrikyō Emigration Program settling in Brazil (1966-present)

1966 was a landmark year for Tenrikyō in Brazil. Eight churches were established, and the head ministers of three of them were members of the

Tenrikyō Emigration Program. This Program started in 1957 with the aim of invigorating Mission Headquarters in Brazil. The mission headquarters continued to accommodate emigrants through the Program (which peaked in 1961) until 1966. A total of 184 people, including 152 people from 33 families, 29 single men, and three brides-to-be, settled in Brazil (TBD 1984: 57). Along with being a successful policy for Church Headquarters since it gave birth to new head ministers, the Tenrikyō Emigration Program also allowed the Mission Headquarters in Brazil to establish an independent structure. Most emigrants from the Tenrikyō Emigration Program stayed at Mission Headquarters immediately after their arrival in Brazil and either learned about the life and culture of Brazil before moving on to their respective areas of settlement or dedicated themselves to the construction [*hinokishin*] for a new mission headquarters sanctuary that began in 1960. The mission headquarters not only represented the place they started their life in Brazil, but it also became their 'home' where they felt closest to *Jiba*.

Adherents Mr. and Mrs. Ōtake (Ōtake '*chōchō-san*' [bishop] and his wife Chiyo *okāsan* [mother] were regarded as 'spiritual parents' at the branch churches that were supervised by Mission Headquarters, and as virtual and emotional 'spiritual parents' at other lineage churches. Chiyo Ōtake, the pioneering 'foundation of the path' who emigrated to Brazil for the purpose of propagating the faith, supported her family as they cleared the rainforests, and watched over the church while visiting her incarcerated husband during the hard times of the war passed away in 1976 at the age of 70. It is reported that many people who were older than her cried out, '*okāsan!*' at that very moment (Ōkubo 1979: 113). Ōtake's life came to a close in 1992, at age 87. Together with his wife Chiyo and other adherents, he nurtured the structure of Mission Headquarters by making it the surrogate institution from which the 'parental love' that originated at *Jiba,* as well as lineage churches, was transmitted.

The aforementioned previous period when branch churches were formed under the Mission Headquarters was also a time when horizontal relationships between Tenrikyō adherents in Brazil, and the foundation that would accommodate post-war settlers, were built. On the other hand, during the period in which emigrants from the Tenrikyō Emigration Program were settling down in Brazil, Tenrikyō Mission Headquarters in Brazil was receiving the first emigrants through Church Headquarters and lineage churches in Japan. This process initiated the strengthening of the vertical relationship whilst also establishing and maintaining the new horizontal relationship. Tenrikyō's original centripetal principle started to come into the foreground as the structure of Mission Headquarters was established.

The structure of Mission Headquarters was further strengthened as comings and goings of people increased between Japan and Brazil thanks to the post-war growth of economic ties.

In the same period, the number of second-generation and third-generation adherents born in Brazil increased. Consequently, it became necessary to convey the Tenrikyō doctrine in Portuguese. In addition to classes in Japanese, classes in Portuguese were started with the 43rd doctrinal course in 1970 and the 26th Spiritual Development Course in 1976. The major factors that have allowed Japanese new religions to make inroads among non-Japanese Brazilians include shifting the language from Japanese to Portuguese, the cultivation of leaders of non-Japanese descent, the enthusiastic embrace of Brazilian ideas and ways of life, the support system of the headquarters in Japan, and the respect for Japan and the Japanese by Brazilians (Nakamaki 1990: 628-629). In this sense, the embrace of the Portuguese language was a new development utilized by Tenrikyō to adapt to the Brazilian community.

How does this compare with the development of Sekai Kyūsei Kyō (Church of World Messianity), which has the largest number of adherents of all Japanese new religions in Brazil? Sekai Kyūsei Kyō began its mission in 1955, and adapted to the local context, issuing a bulletin in Portuguese in 1965. The movement established missionary bases in six cities between 1964 and 1973 where only a small number of Japanese-Brazilians lived (Watanabe 2001: 287-289). As of 1974, over 30 per cent of adherents who held certified qualifications such as religious instructor, were of non-Japanese descent (Watanabe 2001: 295). Tenrikyō started to issue monthly periodicals both in Portuguese and Japanese in 1970. Tenrikyō and Sekai Kyūsei Kyō attempted to conduct missionary work in Portuguese on an institutional basis at almost the same time. However, there is a large difference between Tenrikyō and Sekai Kyūsei Kyō regarding the percentage of leaders of non-Japanese descent and total number of adherents. There are other factors that should be involved for an organized religion to be accepted in a different culture in addition to the ones offered above, for I think that continuity with the local religious culture is particularly relevant. Here, by focusing on Tenrikyō's management philosophy and drawing attention to the centripetal principle that lies at its core, I examine the process in which successors are nurtured. The centripetal principle in Tenrikyō is prominently expressed in the process through which successors are nurtured and is seen to be the driving force behind the ways in which this religious organization has expanded and established itself.

There is a marked tendency in Tenrikyō for children of church head ministers and adherents to be nurtured in *Jiba*. Such an idea is expressed

as 'to have one nurtured at the side of the Foundress' and its central aim is to deeply instill the perception of 'parental love' in a person. Accordingly, many children of Brazilian adherents have studied at educational facilities near the *Jiba*, which include the Special Japanese Course at Tenri University (a two-year course, discontinued after the last new students were admitted in 1993), the Tenrikyō Language Institute (TLI) Japanese Course (established as a one-year course in 1995), and a two-year Seminary Course [*senshūka*]. There is an additional one-year TLI Oyasato Fusekomi Course for those who want to learn Tenrikyō more deeply through practice after graduating from the TLI Japanese Course. The practice of studying at these facilities began in 1956 with three students sent to the two-year Seminary Course and has continued until today. Here, I will pay particular attention to the 10-year period between 1984 and 1993.

This time period is especially notable because the average number of students from Brazil that had been five per year since 1956 had increased to over ten. In 1985, 17 students were sent to learn, and in 1990 the number was 18. Accounting for these numbers was the fact that many children of members of the Tenrikyō Emigration Program had reached an age where they could study at these facilities. Further, the 'Oyasato Seminar', a programme lasting approximately one month, was inaugurated in 1992 for high school students. At the time of writing, 20 to 30 students take part in the seminar every year.

The Mission Headquarters in Brazil also holds a Japanese Language Training Seminar [*renseikai*] for the children of church head ministers and mission station heads. I took part in the first seminar held in 1984 as an instructor. It is a one-week religious-oriented programme that includes Japanese language instruction and recreational activities. The seminar is still being offered. Although it is said that the students' acquirement of Japanese has fallen lately, there is no sign of decreasing interest, as the seminar fluctuates between 50 and 80 students. It is easy to present the seminar as proof that the Tenrikyō community in Brazil is conscious of Japan. As one of those who planned and ran the seminar, I can say that they are not conscious of Japan itself, but are conscious of the Japan where *Jiba* is situated. The Japanese language is simply a tool to awaken the centripetal disposition toward the *Jiba*.

Conclusion

There is no denying the fact that Tenrikyō in Brazil has an image of transplanted Japanese culture. The sanctuary of Mission Headquarters

in Brazil was built in the Japanese style, its garden is a famous tourist spot in Bauru, where people may come to be in touch with Japanese culture, and the garments worn and the musical instruments played at religious observances (which include the singing and dancing of the Twelve Songs) are all Japanese in style. Nevertheless, these elements have been adopted based on Tenrikyō's original centripetal principle. While it is true that these elements allow them to connect with their ethnic identity with ease, the fact that adherents in Brazil do not automatically search for the symbol of 'Japan' is clear in how they send their children to receive instruction in the Japanese Language Training Seminar.

In this paper, I compared Tenrikyō with Sekai Kyūsei Kyō to a limited degree. There is a large difference in the number of adherents for several reasons. One of the possible reasons Tenrikyō does not have as many adherents as Sekai Kyūsei Kyō may be because the centripetal principle has resulted in being tied with ethnic identity. Tenrikyō in Brazil has existed in the Japanese community for a long time. At present, it seems that the religious faith that either seeks out the *Jiba* or 'parental love' is closely tied to a symbolic 'Japan' and stimulates the succession of Japanese language and culture in Brazil.

The centennial of Japanese emigration to Brazil was celebrated in 2008. The Japanese-Brazilian ethnic community is considered to be at the onset of significant change. Since the '*dekasegi*' (going to Japan to work) trend started in the mid-1980s, people, material goods, and money have traveled briskly between Japan and Brazil. Internet services have spread, and satellite broadcasts by ethnic media can be viewed both in Brazil and Japan. While these changes have strengthened ethnic identity, they have also resulted in broadening the ethnic base, which is somewhat contradictory. Examples of stronger ethnic identity in the Tenrikyō context include the Japanese Language Training Seminar held at Mission Headquarters and the experience of students from Brazil studying abroad in Japan. It is assumed that these activities will continue in the future. These activities develop the sentiment of 'parental love' and strengthen the organization's vertical structure. An example of broadening the ethnic base includes the phenomenon of Brazilians of Japanese descent marrying those of non-Japanese descent. It is my understanding from experience that the proportion of non-Japanese is gradually increasing, transforming the ethnic composition of Tenrikyō adherents in Brazil. This must be a sign that Tenrikyō's theology of 'expressing indebtedness' will increasingly be understood as a religious sentiment that is to transcend and expand beyond ethnic boundaries.

The centripetal religious principle that lies at the heart of the marketing of Tenrikyō functioned as a key principle in binding 'like-minded persons

on the path' during WWII in Brazil and in establishing the foundation of the structure of the Mission Headquarters in Brazil. Although the first bishop Chūjirō Ōtake and his wife Chiyo were intensely committed to their cause, the story of Tenrikyō's enthusiastic propagation efforts among the Japanese ethnic community has been largely overlooked in the spiritual history of Japanese emigrants in Brazil. It is imagined that Tenrikyō in Brazil will change gradually in conjunction with future changes within the Japanese-Brazilian ethnic community. However, it is also assumed that Tenrikyō adherents will continue their way of faith that inspires them to deepen their deep physical and spiritual connection with the *Jiba* in their search for 'parental love' and convey the joy and emotion that they gained there through 'expressing their indebtedness'. The subject of Tenrikyō's expansion into the U.S. mainland and Hawaii is one that remains to be covered in the future.

Acknowledgements

Works cited

Maeyama Takashi. 1999. *Ihō ni'Nihon' o matsuru: Brazil nikkei-jin no shūkyō to ethnicity* [*Enshrining 'Japan' in foreign lands: Religion and ethnicity of people of Japanese descent in Brazil*]. Ochanomizu-shobō.

Nakamaki Hirochika. 1990. "Brazil." In *Shin-Shūkyō Jiten* [*Encyclopedia of New Religions*], edited by Nobutaka Inoue, Mitsugi Kōmoto, Michihito Tsushima, Hirochika Nakamaki, and Shigeru Nishiyama. 626-629. Tokyo: Kōbundō.

Ōkubo Akinori. 1979. "Brazil no okāsan: Ōtake Chiyo." In *Mukku Tenri* no. 3, 112-113. Tenrikyō Dōyūsha.

Tenrikyō Church Headquarters, ed. 1976. *Anecdotes of Oyasama, the Foundress of Tenrikyō, Manuscript Edition*. Tenrikyō Church Headquarters.

TBD. 1958. *Tenrikyō Brazil dendōshi* [*History of the Tenrikyō mission in Brazil*], Vol.1. Tenrikyō Brazil Dendōchō.

—. 1984. *Tenrikyō Brazil dendōshi* [*History of the Tenrikyō mission in Brazil*], Vol.2. Tenrikyō Brazil Dendōchō.

Watanabe Masako. 2001. *Brazil nikkei Shinshūkyō no tenkai* [*Development of Japanese New Religions in Brazil*]. Tokyo: Tōshindō.

Yamada Masanobu. 2007. "Global-ka to shūkyō-teki kachi no tenkai: Brazil no
    Tenrikyō no ba-ai." [Globalization and development of religious value: Tenrikyō
    in Brazil]. In *Global-ka no naka no shūkyō: bunkateki eikyō, network, Naralogy*
    [*Religion in globalization: cultural influence, network, Naralogy*], edited by Noriya
    Sumihara, 180-204. Kyoto: Sekai Shisōsha.

About the author

Masanobu Yamada received master's degrees in Area Studies (1996) and
in Religious Studies (1998) from the University of Tsukuba, Japan. He was a
visiting researcher at the Nucleus of Studies of Popular Religions (NERP) at
the Federal University of Pernambuco, Brazil (1999-2000). He is currently
a Professor at the Faculty of International Studies at Tenri University. His
areas of research are religious studies and migration studies. He is recently
engaging in research on religion affiliations among Brazilians in Japan and
Spain, especially focusing on Pentecostalism.

14 Transnationalization of Japanese Religions in a Globalized World

Perspectives from Case Studies in Brazil

Ronan Pereira

Abstract

Globally, the largest Japanese expatriate community is found in Brazil. As a consequence, Brazil may be host to the largest number of Japanese religions which show a diversity, not only in terms of doctrinal orientation, but also their size and geographic spread of membership. For instance, some have been re-exported transnationally from a Japanese Brazilian base. Research on the transplantation of these religions to alien, that is non-Japanese, communities and societies has indicated various elements that affect their chances for survival and growth, such as the demand for new spiritual alternatives and the degree of legal and social openness in the host societies, or the prior existence of a body of teachings that favours proselytization. Based on some case studies of Japanese religions in Brazil, this chapter argues that there can be no single explanation for the success of a religion in an alien society. We need a 'multifactor' explanation, in which extrinsic and intrinsic factors are interdependent and complementary. Especially in a globalized world the role of charismatic and strategically smart leadership is a crucial element in the growing phenomenon of religious transnationalization.

Keywords: Japanese religions, globalization, religious transnationalization, leadership, Brazil

From the second half of the nineteenth century to the end of WWII, the expansion of Japanese religions abroad depended firstly on the Japanese politics of expanding the frontiers of its empire throughout Asia and the

Pacific Islands and secondly, on the emigration of labourers to places such as Hawaii, California, Brazil, Peru and others.

Analysing the diffusion of Japanese new religions in Brazil, Korea, Thailand and the United States, Shimazono (1991) focuses on two general variables: (1) the conditions of receiving societies (for example social and legal tolerance toward foreign religions, or the demand for new creeds as a result of socioeconomic change); and (2) specific features and appeal of expanding religions (for example straightforward magical practices, practical life ethics, systematic/logical statements, positive approach to religious pluralism).

In the following sections I expand Shimazono's approach to explain the missionary success of some Japanese religions abroad. I divide my argument into two large blocs based on data from the Brazilian context. The first bloc consists of what I call 'extrinsic factors' (global and national variables of the destination), the second, 'intrinsic factors' (inherent features and general orientations of the expanding religious group). Normally – and even more so in the rapidly globalizing circumstances of the world – it is the combination of these two blocs which determines the successful or unsuccessful transnationalization of a religion. As I will stress, there are cases of religious movements that, despite having a universalist doctrine, were not capable of expanding beyond the boundaries of a small ethnic/social minority or a limited area. In this way, religious transnationalization is seen here as a process dependent not only on the religion's members' will to go global, but also on external factors over which religious groups have no control.

A key factor for a religious movement to become a global cultural system, I argue, is the part played by its leadership. To be successful, a leader needs more than prolific discourse and good intentions. A leader must also be a good strategist and have charismatic flair that invigorates his or her followers, gives them a sense of purpose, and enlists them to dedicate themselves to the 'noble cause of spreading the good news'. To illustrate my point, I will discuss the case of Daisaku Ikeda, the president of Sōka Gakkai International (SGI).

Extrinsic factors affecting outcomes for a transnationalizing religion

The 'extrinsic factors' consist of those external to and beyond the control of religious organizations, in other words, general variables such as global

processes and the circumstances of the host countries. There are many concrete examples within the general context of globalization: worldwide cultural exchange; advances in communication, transportation, and information exchange; human migration; basic democratic liberty that allows for the existence of a 'religious market' in which different religious traditions compete for new members; the deregulation of religion (Finke 1990) and the demand for new religious alternatives in host societies; massive urbanization; and the subsequent change of cultural paradigms.

The extrinsic factors alone may not be sufficient to explain the recent transnationalization of religious communities once the main world religions managed to penetrate different continents in the pre-colonial and colonial eras in a context of enormous technological and communication restrictions. But certainly, technological advances and the expansion of capitalism allowed a speedy flow of ideas, people, religion, information, commodities, technology, and capital. It is important to stress that this flow is not just from the centre to the periphery, 'from the West to the rest' of the world. It can actually have multiple combinations and possibilities in an unpredictable way (Clarke 2000; Appadurai 1996).

The processes of industrialization and massive urbanization have been linked to the advancement of a secularized mindset along with the loss of a frame of reference for individual identities, a very crucial issue for the urban masses. As a result of these processes new creeds have emerged and contributed to the resocialization of newcomers to the cities, offering them an instant support group and new identity. In many countries, the simultaneous appearance of and demand for new religions has led to an increasingly plural religious market, whose boundaries have not been limited by the nation-state. These changes have created a favorable environment for the establishment of an alternative culture, a trend also connected to the liberating demonstrations of students in Europe and the Counter-culture movement in California in the 1960s. For instance, the romantic Orientalism of the end of the nineteenth century may have paved the way to future acceptance of Buddhism and other Eastern religions outside Asia, but the Counter-culture movement of the 1960s was undoubtedly a turning point in this matter. This social effervescence of the 1960s produced a new mentality, new practices, new aspirations that, to say the least, undermined the hegemony of traditional religions in the West and certainly in Brazil too. This change in the cultural paradigm created a propitious climate for the propagation of new creeds, particularly those of Eastern origin.

Japan and Japanese religions are cases in point. Also, the sweeping changes brought about by the ascension of the Meiji emperor deeply affected

the religious arena. To begin with, the very word *shūkyō* was a neologism constructed in the late 19ᵗʰ century to translate into the Japanese language the Western concept of religion. Although the Japanese had been in contact with foreign religions since the introduction of Buddhism in the sixth century, the Meiji period (1868-1912) was a particular moment of internationalization of the Japanese religious environment. With the great influx of Western thought and Christian denominations followed by the opening of Christian schools, many Japanese religions established a dialogue with Western science and Christianity, while others opened their own schools and turned to the provision of welfare services.

Moreover, it was under the impact of multiple and radical changes in society that Japanese religions started their 'centrifugal diffusion' (Reid 1996). At first, these religions depended mostly on the structures mounted by the Japanese colonial empire and the massive emigration of Japanese individuals to the colonies and other countries. It is well-known that Buddhist monks were dispatched as chaplains with the Japanese army to newly conquered territories. They also pioneered missionary activities in Hawaii, the United States mainland, Korea, Peru, and Brazil. After WWII, while this emigration continued briefly, Japanese religions in general depended more and more on Japan's economic prosperity.

The first World's Parliament of Religions was held in 1893 in Chicago, and was especially important as an international experience for Japanese Buddhism (Ketelaar 1993). Although the Japanese delegation did not have much impact on Western Buddhologists and the public in general, this was the starting point for the spread of Zen in the United States and other countries. The [*Rinzai*] Zen representative at the Parliament, Soen Shaku (1858-1919), established an enduring relationship with a group of people in California that permitted his disciples to open the first Zen centres in the West. Later on, the famous books of one of his disciples, Daisetsu Teitarō Suzuki (1870-1966), became a reference for many people with an interest in Zen all over the world as they were published in English.

In Brazil, Japanese religions arrived with immigrants in 1908. The general conditions of the host country were in some respects favorable, but hostile in other ones. At first, there was no legal impediment to missionary propagation, although the Catholic Church still had a hegemonic influence over society. Over 90 per cent of Brazilians identified themselves as Catholics. In spite of this monopolistic and at times oppressive religious context, there was something in the religious practices and beliefs of Brazilians that could be exploited by Japanese missionaries. First of all, similarly to Japan, there is, in Brazil, a culture favoring

syncretism[1] and a pervasive folk religiosity (*minkan shinkō*) involving reliance on all sort of amulets, practices of spiritual healing, pilgrimage centres, strong belief in miracles, and a wide range of supernatural beings (from ghosts to Catholic saints) (Pereira 2000). Adding to this malleable culture, Brazilians have had a long history of being nominally Catholic but allowing themselves to engage in other religious traditions according to their needs and circumstances. Furthermore, in the beginning of the twentieth century, groups such as Kardecist-Spiritism and the Esoteric Association for the Communion of Thought [*Círculo Esotérico da Comunhão do Pensamento*] introduced in the country certain notions of Eastern religions that could facilitate the dialogue or interaction between immigrants and local Brazilians.

If Japanese immigrants and religions did not face legal impediments to the introduction of foreign religions in Brazil, they did not meet a radical opposition from society either. Actually, the Catholic environment constrained the immigrants from openly practising their original religions and led many to baptize their children as a way to avoid hostility from and friction in their social environment (Maeyama 1983). In fact, public opinion and political debate were divided. On the one hand, the concept of 'yellow peril' was fomented by the idea of the non-assimilative behaviour of the Japanese and the fact that by the 1930s the Japanese represented about half of the immigrants entering the country. On the other hand, some people admired Japanese culture and the hard-working character of these immigrants. This conflict of opinion was also expressed in the literary realm. If renowned modernist writers such as Mário de Andrade (1893-1945) and Oswald de Andrade (1890-1954) treated the Japanese with suspicion and somehow hostility in their romances (Nakasato 2007), poets such as Guilherme de Almeida (1890-1969) became intimately involved with haiku writing and its propagation in the country. Again, in the 1950s and 1960s, some poets became interested in haiku under the influence of Ernest Fenolosa and Ezra Pound. The following generation felt in love with Matsuo Basho's haiku, linking this poetry form to Zen Buddhism (Rocha 2006: 71).

---

1   Religious syncretism in Brazil is an unequal process framed by colonialism, in which Catholicism dominated and was imposed over other traditions, even though Catholicism itself has also been influenced by these dominated traditions, mainly Indigenous and African. In Japan too, the centuries old history of syncretism, chiefly involving Shinto and Buddhist traditions is widely known. This is where a foreign religion was not imposed on people but was introduced as part and parcel of an intense process of importation of Chinese culture by the elite. It took a few centuries for Buddhism to become a popular Japanese religion.

Up to WWII, few missionaries or militant believers could count on their religion's Japanese headquarters for support. This period was character-ized by improvised religious activities and adaptation to the host country (Maeyama 1983;1989). In the 1950s and 1960s, when some Japanese religions decided to seriously dedicate themselves to missionary activities in Brazil, the country was under a rapid process of urbanization and industrialization. This was a period of transition and speedy changes within the country. With the slogan 'fifty years in five', President Juscelino Kubitschek (1902-1976) promised to use his five-year term to improve the country to such a degree that it would take others 50 years to equal him. Accordingly, he built a new capital – Brasília – that became a symbol for the new face of a modernizing Brazil. He also made roads connecting every region to Brasilia and attracted automobile makers to produce cars that would transport people and products throughout these newly-constructed roads. Then, in 1964, in the context of the Cold War, the military was supported by conservative sectors of society (including part of the Catholic Church's top echelon) to carry out a coup and establish a dictatorship that lasted until 1985. Part of the youth took arms against the military government, while some opted to create an alternative culture that advocated 'peace and love' under the influence of the Counter-culture movement. Interestingly, the military government favored marginal non-Christian religious groups to counterbalance the 'leftization' of the progressive sector of the Catholic Church that joined the armed resisters to the regime.[2]

Some scholars argue that Japanese religions, like others with different origins, have benefited from this period of modernization of the Brazilian social structure and the favorable atmosphere created by factors such as the Counter-culture movement, the so-called 'crisis of modernity', and the diffusion of certain ideas and practices associated with the New Age Movement (see Gonçalves 1998).

In the pre-war period, regular immigrants used to take up the role of religious specialists once it emerged that non-Christian religions had dif-ficulties in sending missionaries to Brazil. After the war, some Japanese religious groups counted heavily on a large and successful *nikkei* community

2   We still do not have enough information on how the Japanese religions responded to the military government in Brazil. While Seichō-no-Ie was very supportive of it (Albuquerque 2003), Sōka Gakkai raised suspicion among the military, mainly because of its political ties in Japan and its practice of proselytization (Pereira 2007: 208-210). However, this movement was not repressed to the point of preventing it from converting the majority of its members precisely during this period.

to convert non-Japanese believers.[3] *Nikkei* bilingualism and biculturalism were instrumental in the proselytizing activity as well as in translating the doctrinal books and a variety of propagation material. Normally, top positions in the religious and/or administrative hierarchy have been filled by Japanese or their descendants. Not surprisingly, the majority of these religions' headquarters were built in São Paulo, a state that congregates around 70 per cent of the Japanese Brazilians.

These extrinsic factors set the stage for the Japanese religions in Brazil. However, they alone could not decide the fate of an expanding religion. A combination of intrinsic factors would also function in deciding which groups would be successful and which ones would not.

Intrinsic factors for the fate of a transnationalizing religion

The 'intrinsic factors' that will decide the fate of an expanding religion are made up of its peculiar characteristics, appeal, and orientation. Shimazono (1991) identifies six inherent features of new religions from Japan that permitted them to be successful abroad: straightforward magical practices; ethical teachings and guidance in daily life; a systematic, logical discourse; this-worldly orientation; a positive approach to religious pluralism; and a deliberate attempt to adapt themselves to alien cultures. I would subdivide the intrinsic factors around three different areas: doctrine and practice, strategies for proselytizing, and the type of organizational structure and leadership.

Doctrine and practice

Although doctrine and practice carry different meanings, they complement each other and might be different ways to express the same worldview or understanding of human existence. That is why I group them together. The doctrine is undoubtedly a fundamental aspect of a religion in its process of propagation. Naturally a universal and undiscriminating teaching would work better for mass conversion in different countries than a teaching restricted to an ethnic or minority group. Sometimes this universal approach comes with a view of religion and divinity as having the same origin as is the case of Kardecist-Spiritism and Baha'ism. Many Japanese religions

---

3   The great majority of these religions belonged to the category of *shinshūkyō* [new religions] such as Seichō-no-Ie, PL Kyōdan, Sōka Gakkai, Sekai Kyūsei Kyō, and Mahikari.

also include a similar concept known as *bankyō dōkon* [all religions spring from the same root]. In Ōmoto, for instance, *bankyō dōkon* has been the core of its inter-faith activity in the past century. Accordingly, Ōmoto leaders sponsor world religion summits, publications in the Esperanto idiom, art workshops, ecumenical joint ceremonies, and suchlike. Ōmoto's co-founder, Onisaburō Deguchi (1871-1948), expressed this idea in the following poem (Keer 1997)

> There are many countries in the world,
> But the God they trust in is one.
> His name differs from country to country,
> But the Lord who descended to save us
> — call Him Kami or Buddha —
> Originally all are names for Love and
> Compassion.
> We live under the sun
> Which shines on us all,
> But our worldly hearts keep us apart.
> Religions have differed
> By time, place, or situation,
> I speak of the religion of the ages.

Another example of how its doctrine may put a religion in an advantageous position is the 'multiform conceptions of salvation' of Nichiren Buddhism as taught by Sōka Gakkai. Bryan Wilson pointed out that the devotional practice of *daimoku* [chanting] in this movement 'may be for general goodwill, for altruistic ends, for personal benefit whether material or spiritual, and not solely for a blissful afterlife' (Wilson 1998: 6-7). This plural notion of salvation would fulfill the aspirations of people with different hopes and standpoints. For instance, those interested in afterlife salvation may have comfort and a secure path toward that end; people more driven to social or community activism would feel at home within the Gakkai movement; yet, those focusing on personal desires and goals would be attracted by the movement's publications and feel inspired specially by the Gakkai's second president's words of encouragement.

Often, religious doctrines also link proselytizm and salvation. This way, members would feel more prone and motivated to proselytize. The spreading of one's religion would be simultaneously a religious act, a manifestation of one's benevolence and altruism vis-à-vis the non-believer, and a secure way to safeguard one's own salvation. Tenrikyō's proselytizing activity *nioikake*,

Sōka Gakkai's *shakubuku*, Reiyūkai's *michibiki,* and others are conceived in a similar vein.

As Nakamaki (1990) has shown in his study of Perfect Liberty Kyōdan (PL) in Brazil, whilst straightforward magical practices may be attractive in the first period of contact of a person with a new religion, it is no guarantee that these practices will secure a large number of new members. Herein lies the importance of teachings, especially if they can be translated into detailed and inspiring guidance for daily life, transmitted in an updated manner, and attuned with the lives of contemporary people.

In the Brazilian context of Christian hegemony, another attractive feature of Japanese new religions has been the positive view of the world which does not include notions such as original sin (Paiva 1990: 184, 185). The syncretistic doctrinal constitution of most new religions may also be favorable. For instance, Leila Marrach (1978: 2-3) noted that Seichō-no-Ie's syncretistic origin brings flexibility to the movement, interpreting its doctrine and adapting it according to the audience. The natural and more frequently used path is the dialogue with the Christian worldview through mention of passages of the Gospel. Some groups also use Christian words (church, reverend, mass, etc.) and/or introduce Christian prayers in their rituals as in the Sekai Kyūsei Kyō's case.

Strategies for proselytizing

Each religion has its own method to convey its message in order to survive and reproduce itself. A religious body may close its doors to the general public and count only on the indoctrination of descendants of their members. Others may look for public visibility through preaching in public spaces or door-to-door propagation; and the use of up-to-date tools such as the Internet, commercials in the media, or TV programmes.

The usual expressed scope of most religions is to save souls, but normally they also compete with each other to expand their membership in their original country and sometimes abroad. Competition among religions can play the role of a stimulus in fomenting new proselytizing strategies. Shimazono (1991: 113) notes that:

> In a capitalistic competitive society, one's legitimacy is graphically brought home on the basis of success in expanding numbers. What is more, when the following of one's teaching by people of other cultures is felt to be proof of your religion's universal adequacy, missionary activity to people of other cultures overseas can stir up stronger impulses than propagation among one's compatriots.

After being introduced into a foreign country, a religious organization has to face the decision of whether to adapt or nor to the host culture. Normally a more flexible attitude and a degree of social accommodation helps the group to survive longer and in better conditions.

Again, I offer some illustrative data from Japan. 'For example, Sōka Gakkai's spirit of aggressive, argumentative proselytization of complete strangers is easily surmised to be effective in circumstances where isolation in urban society has increased and diverse cultures coexist and clash with one another' (Shimazono 1991: 119).

However, in Brazil, Gakkai leaders left behind the movement's exclusivist and militant tradition in order to implement a successful policy of controlled flexibility according to the precept of 'adapting to local customs' [*zuihō bini*]. To begin with, the organization became more tolerant of dual or multiple religious affiliations. It has also been marketing its image through meeting with politicians, participating in government campaigns and ritualized public events, large use of public spaces, obtaining rewards for the organization and its leaders, and establishing agreements between the Sōka University and Brazilian universities, etc.[4] Due to its hybrid formation, that is, being originally a study group within a traditional religion (Nichiren Buddhism) and, at the same time, a new Buddhist movement with worldwide activities as a NGO, Sōka Gakkai displays a dual discourse and image, which is used separately according to the audience (Pereira 2007: 210-218).

This flexible and adaptive drive is not limited to Sōka Gakkai. Other religious movements have also 'Brazilianized' their rituals, their translated publications, and their rhetoric. Facing the reality of hegemony by the Catholic Church, some groups assume a complementary role leaving to the discretion of believers to keep or not their ties to Catholicism especially in what concerns rites of passage. Accommodation to the host culture has been particularly evident in the work of translation (Shimazono 1991: 124):

> PL, for example, takes a variety of steps to make their translations of documents readily understandable to the local people. It has also been reported that they have also introduced elements that differ significantly from the way ceremonies and assemblies are conducted in Japan [...]. Seichō-no-Ie is said to have omitted from its translation of *Seimei no jissō* and other documents passages that might encounter resistance from

---

4   Similar strategies have been used by Sekai Kyūsei Kyō as shown in Peter Clarkes's chapter in this book.

> Brazilians. The NSA[5] has also made repeated efforts to Americanize; one example is its 'pioneer spirit' catch phrase in connection with its active involvement in the Bicentenary of American Independence [...].

From its onset, Seichō-no-Ie has always depended on the campaign method of propagation campaign based on the written word (Alburguerque 2003). In the past decade or so, following the steps of many Pentecostal denominations and the Catholic Church, Seichō-no-Ie launched its own proselytizing TV and radio programmes in Brazil. The importance of mass-communication media in the spread of religion has also been noted by Rocha (2006: 130) regarding the construction of the image of Zen in Brazil:

While all 'scapes'[6] contribute to the process of constructing an imaginary of Zen Buddhism in Brazil, the media-scape, which produces and conveys images, information, and ideas throughout the world, has an especially prominent role. The increasing visibility of Buddhism among the intellectual, middle class, and upper middle class sectors of Brazilian society in the 1990s is very much due to the frequency and the way Buddhism is represented in the media, whether foreign or local.

Considering that Brazilians are internauts who spend much time surfing the Internet,[7] many Japanese religions have already opened their website and virtual discussion lists. It is curious to read the messages left by visitors in some religious sites. A decade ago, in a site created by a Sōka Gakkai member one could read testimonies of how a visitor found the site by chance while surfing the web. Some ask for information about 'rules to become a Buddhist' and a contact address in their cities. One visitor from Rio de Janeiro, in particular, wrote that he became interested in Buddhism after he watched the animation 'Saint Seiya Knights' (Port., *Os Cavaleiros do Zodíaco*; Jap., *Seitoshi Seiya*), in which appeared a story told by Buddha to his disciples. This suggests that the growing interest in Japanese pop culture throughout the world may lead to an increase of interest in Japanese religion as well.

---

5   NSA stands for Nichiren Shōshū of America. After the break between Nichiren Shōshū and Sōka Gakkai, most members joined the latter or SGI-USA.

6   Appadurai (1996) refers to the five 'scapes' or dimensions of the global cultural economy: ethnoscapes, mediascapes, technoscapes, financescapes, and ideoscapes.

7   According to recent polls, Brazil ranked tenth among the nations with the largest number of computers. The 64 million Brazilian internauts spend an average of 23 hours and 48 minutes per month surfing the net (as of April 2009). In the last two years, the use of the Internet in the country grew by 78 per cent (Brasil conseguirá ser líder mundial de acesso à Internet? 2009).

Finally, Japanese religions have also capitalized on the positive image of the *nikkei* community in the Brazilian society. Despite the initial hardship and antagonism here and there, this community managed to construct a solid image of themselves as a group that went to Brazil to help out, and to contribute to its development, especially in the field of agriculture. Some religious groups have used a similar discourse. That is, besides the salvation of souls, they would be present in the country to ameliorate it, contribute to its progress and support a better life for Brazilians. For instance, PL Kyōdan has offered medical equipment to hospitals and built an agricultural research centre in a city near São Paulo. Sōka Gakkai offered books and scholarships to a few Brazilian universities, opened a primary school and an ecological research centre in the country, and conducts a strong literacy programme. Risshō Kōseikai has started a public campaign to cure bronchitis, at first from a purely medical standpoint, then associating the treatment with the need for self-knowledge and offering prayers to one's ancestors. Sekai Kyūsei Kyō has opened schools, taught Japanese art (ikebana, pottery) and language courses, and advanced organic farming.

Type of organizational structure and leadership

In the pre-war period in Brazil, Japanese religions survived in most cases as informal missions until they were granted formal recognition. In some groups, after a while, their organization took the shape of 'religious clans' inasmuch as members began to establish their identities and sense of belonging through their link to certain churches, families, leaders, and/or their convertors. Here one might recall the case of Tenrikyō. In any circumstances, most transnationalizing Japanese religions reproduced traditional models of organization based on *ujikō* [parish] or *danka* [family] systems, focusing on Japanese immigrants and their descendants. Usually, believers have been organized by sex and age in a clear continuation of the Japanese tradition.

Nowadays Japanese religions in Brazil are so diverse that certain locally specialized organizations can not move to the next level of having a globalized bureaucratic structure similar to multinational companies, typical of some of the larger religions. This is because they have emerged within the local Japanese diaspora as a response to particular local conditions, and are necessarily small-scale, unlike larger groups such as Tenrikyō which came to Brazil with the diaspora and had vigorous missionary activites originating in Japan. Some groups would be better called religious associations or fraternities [*kōsha*]. This is the case of Ishizuchi Jinja of Brazil, a

group founded in the mid-1950s as a religious response to a severe drought in the vicinity of Mogi das Cruzes city, state of São Paulo. After the passing of the founder, his son who lived near the capital city of Brasilia became a kind of 'accidental leader'. In this Ishizuchi Jinja of Brazil there is no propagation, or regular contact with the Japanese headquarters, and there are no explanatory pamphlets or training and educational programme for believers. What there is, is an intense and deliberate syncretistic practice manifested in a monthly *missa* (mass) and a once-a-year pilgrimage to the Mogi das Cruzes shrine.

It seems, however, that among the larger groups the organizational structure which predominates is a combination of bureaucratic organization, paternalistic and centralized leadership, and the adoption of advanced mass media technology. Tenrikyō built its international organization upon a fictive kinship relationship of the parent-child [*oyako-kankei*]. Sōka Gakkai, on the other hand, still has its numerous horizontal and vertical divisions and groups. Many movements take advantage of neighbourhood get-togethers that allow members to pray, share experiences, study together, deepen their faith and above all introduce new or potential members.

The issue of choosing, raising, and training leaders is vital in any organization. Japanese religions tend to limit top positions to Japanese nationals or their *nikkei* descendants while nurturing non-*nikkei* leadership to work in the frontline of propagation. There is no known case of a third country national leading a Japanese religion in Brazil, although some groups are sending Brazilians to propagate and lead their branches in other countries. Sometimes leaders have lifetime rights, but more often they rotate regionally, nationally or even internationally. In Tenrikyō, for instance, church leaders tend to be posted for life. PL *mestres* [masters] rotate nationally and, in a few cases, internationally. Some groups provide regular seminars specifically for training and indoctrinating their leadership.

As a matter of fact, today there is a tendency among globalized religions to adopt the format of a modern bureaucratic organization as bureaucracy became a dominant institution in the past century. In some extreme cases of world transforming movements there is even the establishment of a corporate conglomerate in order to implement their doctrinal agenda. The Unification Church is a good example since it has created numerous profit-making organizations in different parts of the world (Bromley 1985). Generally speaking Japanese religions have taken a different path. Even the investment of Sekai Kyūsei Kyō in education, arts, and natural food production do not match the Unification Church's investments in mining, publishing, manufacturing, pharmaceuticals, etc.

Almost two decades ago Hirochika Nakamaki suggested that some of these groups could be labeled 'multinational' because of similarities they bear to multinational enterprises:

> [...] PL can be called a multinational religion. Its main headquarters are in Osaka (the Daihonchō), and it has a network of affiliates in the United States, Canada, Brazil, Peru, Paraguay, Uruguay, Argentina, Chile, and Europe. Directives from Daihonchō are transmitted by phone, telex, publications, and letters to distant members via local head offices, churches, and branches. Also, the wishes of these members travel back down the same channels to reach Daihonchō. Personnel exchanges and distribution of funds also work the same way. This complex system of organization, similar to that of a multinational enterprise, has made PL's many religious activities possible (Nakamaki 1991: 235-236).

The point to make here is that, in such a globalized world of religions, bureaucracy and mass media technology can make a difference for the reproduction and expansion of a religious movement. However, I would highlight here the importance of leadership. In the following section, I will discuss the charismatic leadership of Daisaku Ikeda as an exemplary case.

The role of the leader: The case of Daisaku Ikeda

Expanding the leadership role after excommunication

In the period following the excommunication of members of the Sōka Gakkai International by the Nichiren Shōshū priesthood in 1991, Daisaku Ikeda (born 1928) added the positions of teacher and spiritual master to his status of SGI president. In order to guarantee internal cohesion under the leadership of Ikeda, some ideological principles and slogans were reinforced, such as *shitei-funi* [unit of master and disciple] and *itai-dōshin* [different bodies united in mind or faith]. In his writings and speeches, Ikeda frequently affirms that SGI members need to carry on the master-disciple relationship as happened with Nichiren and his disciples, Makiguchi and Toda, Toda and Ikeda. Ikeda nurtures this relationship in many ways. For instance, there is no SGI event, inauguration, anniversary of a group, or New Year's publication without a note from Master Ikeda written for the special event. Thus, contrasting to the opinion of skeptical Japanese media and critical opponent religious leaders, a member or a sympathizer sees Ikeda as a great

leader and mentor who is tireless in spreading the teachings of Nichiren and advancing the cause of world peace.

There is no doubt that Ikeda constitutes a classic case of a charismatic leader who invigorates his followers and inspires them to enthusiastically dedicate themselves to the common cause. In doing so he plays a similar role to business leaders in managing their corporate cultures. Among other qualities, a good business leader is expected to be a good team-builder to get the best from his/her human capital and a good motivator to create a positive working environment. In these matters, Ikeda is an expert.

Organizer and strategist

In order to sustain his leadership as a visionary with a higher purpose, in 1958 Ikeda launched the project 'Seven Bells' as a working plan for Sōka Gakkai for the following 21 years, divided into three periods of seven years each. Seven Bells was followed by two similar projects, that were divided into similar cycles, and aimed at developing and propagating the movement. These cycles have included specific goals such as achieving a certain number of conversions and the inauguration of branches and culture centres. They serve as motivational drivers that keep the movement focused, and enlisted the militancy of members.

Another high-profile initiative was the formation of the political party Kōmeitō, which has become one of the main political forces in Japan. While maintaining his performance as a great strategist and organizer, Ikeda also created a full-scale education system that spans from kindergarten to university, includes art museums, and a host of cultural, educational, and environmental institutions. In 1975, Ikeda organized the Sōka Gakkai International (SGI) to oversee its affiliated chapters all over the world. In the following decade, SGI attained a non-governmental organization (NGO) member status to the United Nations.

Ikeda has also been a prolific writer with more than one hundred works, ranging from Buddhist philosophy to dialogue with outstanding personalities, poetry, children's stories, and photographic collections. His works have been translated and published in more than 30 languages. Furthermore, Ikeda has been awarded over 200 academic honors and received the honorary citizenship title from more than 500 cities and counties around the world.

Since 1960 Ikeda has traveled to every continent to propagate his movement, and established national and international institutions thus creating great visibility for the movement and a context for exerting influence over local societies and matters of global concern. He has met with internationally

acclaimed writers, artists, politicians, scholars, and scientists. Such intense activity in Japan as well as in the global scene can be interpreted as a method of changing his former image of a fundamentalist militant and ambitious political-religious leader into that of a Buddhist thinker, spiritual master for humanity, peace builder, and educator.

For good or for bad, Ikeda became the face of SGI and the mastermind behind the transformation of his organization from a parochial lay Buddhist organization into a major international religious movement that doubles as a non-governmental organization.

From human revolution to world peace

Following on from the above inquiry, similarly to some Nichirenite groups, SGI claims to be the sole heir of its original patron, Nichiren, from whom it acquired its self-assertiveness, fighting spirit, determination, and active militancy. Its leadership depicts the organization as 'a lay movement among ordinary people' destined to transform the world. The key to reach this goal is the catch-phrase and philosophy of self-reform propagated by Josei Toda called 'human revolution' [*ningen kakumei*], which stands for the psychological and cultural reform of a person's life or way of life that bears the potential to transform communities and institutional structures, and eventually change the entire world for the better. In another nuance, 'human revolution' would be the equivalent to the traditional Buddhist concept of enlightenment [*satori*] as SGI members are encouraged to make an effort to improve their own lives and reveal their human potential through the chanting of the mantra *nam-myōhō-rengekyō* [Devotion to the Mystic Law of the Lotus Sutra]. Thus, the human revolution of SGI members is expected to decide the future of the movement and, at the end, of Nichiren Buddhism. From their perspective, world peace and even the future of humankind depends on the global expansion of the SGI movement and its social activism, or at least the concerted effort of SGI and like-minded people and institutions. Then the ideal future planetary society would be conducted by the United Nations but guided by the principles of SGI's version of Nichiren Buddhism. This is SGI's recipe to reach the utopia of the 'Third Civilization' through 'human revolution'.

The SGI case not only illustrates the role of leadership in transforming a NRM into a global cultural system, but also reveals some changes in religion in the contemporary world. For instance, it illuminates the struggle of religion to survive in the era of globalization in which mushrooming new rival movements as much as traditional roles of religion have been

appropriated by governmental agencies, NGOs, and liberal professionals, particularly therapists. In this particular, SGI has been successful as it carries the structures and practices of a religious institution while displaying the dynamic of a NGO.

The case of Daisaku Ikeda serves to show that charismatic appeal, strategic vision, and managerial ability are just some of the skills needed in the baggage of a leader aspiring to a global reach. In half a century, this leader organized his neo-Buddhist movement in some 190 countries and territories, reaching a membership of more than 12 million members.

Final thoughts

Despite all the progress of scholarship on the transnationalization of Japanese religions, we still need to deepen and broaden our comparative perspective in order to have a more balanced and informed view on this subject. Among all the researchers of Japanese religions, Hirochika Nakamaki might be the one who has covered the largest area with intensive fieldwork in Japan, Hawaii, California, Brazil, and elsewhere. Throughout his prolific career, he has suggested a wide range of causative factors that have contributed to the expansion of Japanese religions abroad. Combining extrinsic and intrinsic elements he has spoken of the suitability of Japanese new religions for industrialized or modernizing societies such as Brazil; of a deliberate effort by some religious groups to adapt to host societies; of the perpetuation of *nikkei* leadership in top positions while nurturing non-*nikkei* leadership to work in 'frontline' propagation; of the combination of magical ritual practices with detailed ethical orientations to daily life; and of the similar dynamics of these religions to Japanese multinational enterprises (Nakamaki 1986a; 1986b; 1989; 1990; 1991).

In Brazil, a country with the largest Japanese expatriate community, there are still deficient and inadequate areas of research on Japanese religion. For instance, a nationwide survey of Japanese religions is still to be done. When we estimate the existence of more than 60 different religious groups of Japanese or *nikkei* origin in Brazil, the number suggests an amazing success of Japanese religions there. However, the great majority of these movements have a very limited range of activity and influence over society as their focus still is the *nikkei* community. As a matter of fact, their membership is generally in decline.

Among the approximately 25 *shinshūkyō* or new religions introduced in Brazil, only six managed to succeed in proselytizing among non-*nikkei* on

a national scale. This is if we include Reiyūkai in the group of Seichō-no-Ie, Sekai Kyūsei Kyō, Sōka Gakkai, Mahikari, and Perfect Liberty Kyōdan. Most Japanese religions were introduced or formally organized in the country in the 1950s and 1960s, which means they had to face roughly the same international and national context (extrinsic factors). In the face of this evidence, I suggest that intrinsic factors, that is, the religious group's inherent characteristics and selected strategies prevail over extrinsic factors.

There are cases of universalist Japanese religions such as Tenrikyō and Risshō Kōseikai that did not succeed abroad. Sometimes accidental circumstances play against the fate of an expanding movement such as the Ōmoto in Brazil. A promising universalist movement, Ōmoto suffered from the two Japanese government repressions in 1921 and 1935, lack of communication between its Brazilian branch and the Japanese headquarters during the war, and a discontinuity in its missionary work.

The study of Japanese religions from the perspective of globalization and, in comparison to multinational companies, can illuminate diverse aspects not only of the religions themselves, but also of contemporary societies. These modern and bureaucratic religious organizations, similarly to major companies, have the power to 'export' values into the lives of families and individuals. Moreover, considering the existence of an international circuit of religious consumption, certain religions can be adopted as a way of reproducing social and class distinctions. This can be seen, for example, in the involvement of some of the Brazilian elite with Zen Buddhism. Cristina Rocha (2006: 73) elucidates:

> I would further argue that much as Brazilian artists, poets, and intellectuals emulated European Orientalist trends in the past, from the late 1950s onward, elite intellectuals saw their knowledge of Zen not as a form of cultural resistance, but rather as a tool enabling them to demonstrate both their role in Brazilian society as translators and interpreters of overseas avant-garde movements *and* their prestigious position as cosmopolitans. These claims gave them the cultural capital necessary to reinforce and maintain their own class status in the country.

Another aspect to consider is the wide acceptance of Japanese pop culture in a global scale. If Japanese technology and gadgets fascinated consumers all over the world from the 1960s to the 1980s, in the following decades, Japanese pop culture, particularly manga and anime, seem to be additional important exports from Japan. An entirely new generation across countries and continents has been raised under the influence of this pop culture. A

testimony of one of my students made me wonder if we are not facing a new powerful trend here. This student told me he had been a manga fan since he was a child. This made him come to admire Japanese samurai values and behaviour. Somehow, he associated *bushidō*, the samurai code of behaviour, with Buddhism and eventually converted to Jōdo Shinshū and became its youth leader in Brasilia! This is despite the fact that Japanese religions have not yet used Japanese pop culture as their main propagation tool, yet one cannot deny that globalization may be playing a favorable role for Japanese religions. The impact of pop culture on the global expansion of Japanese religion is a phenomenon whose development deserves our close attention and further research efforts.

Works cited

Alburguerque, Leila Marrach B. 2003. "Dominós da ditadura: Seichō-no-Ie do Brasil [Dominoes of the Dictatorship: Seichō-no-Ie of Brazil]." In *Religião no Brasil: enfoques, dinâmicas e abordagens,* edited by Paulo D. Sierperski and M. Gil Benedito, 119-124. São Paulo: Paulinas.

Appadurai, Arjun. 1996. *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

"Brasil conseguirá ser líder mundial de acesso à Internet? [Will Brazil Manage to Become a Worldwide Leader in Access to the Internet?]". Opinião e Notícia. 14 April 14 2009. Accessed 17 July 2009. http://opiniaoenoticia.com.br/brasil/ nacional/brasil-conseguira-ser-lider-mundial-de-acesso-a-internet/.

Bromley, David G. 1985. "Financing the Millennium: The economic structure of the Unificationist Movement." *Journal of the Scientific Study of Religion* 24 (3): 253-274.

Clarke, Peter B. 2000. "Introduction. Japanese New Religions Abroad: A Case of 'Reverse' Globalization." In *Japanese New Religions in Global Perspective*, edited by Peter B. Clarke, 1-9. Richmond (UK): Curzon.

Gonçalves, Hiranclair Rosa. 1998. *Perfect Liberty: o fascínio de uma religião japonesa no Brasil [Perfect Liberty: the fascination of a Japanese religion in Brazil]*. Masters Thesis in Social Sciences, Pontifical Catholic University, São Paulo, Brazil.

Keer, Alex, ed. 1997. *Bankyo Dokon: Seventy Years of Inter-Religious Activity at Oomoto.* Kameoka, Oomoto Foundation. Accessed 29 March 2018. http://www. oomoto.jp/enDokon/.

Ketelaar, James E. 1993. *Of Heretics and Martyrs in Meiji Japan. Buddhism and Its Persecution.* Princeton, Princeton University Press.

Maeyama Takashi 1983. "Religion, Kinship, and the Middle Classes of the Japanese in Urban Brazil." *Latin American Studies.* University of Tsukuba, 5: 57-81.

Marrach, Leila. 1978. *Seichō-no-Ie: um estudo de sua penetração entre os brasileiros* [*Seichō-no-Ie: a study of its diffusion among Brazilians*]. M.A. thesis, Pontifical Catholic University, São Paulo, Brazil.

Nakamaki Hirochika. 1986a. *Shin-sekai no Nihon shūkyō: Nihon no kamigami to ibunmei* [*Japanese Religions in the New World: Gods from Japan and Foreign Civilizations*]. Tokyo: Heibon-sha.

—. 1986 b. "Religiões japonesas no Brasil: estratégias multinacionais. [Japanese Religions in Brazil: Multinational Strategies]". *Comunicações do ISER*, Ano 5, nº 18, Março: 16-23.

—. 1989. *Nihon Shūkyō to nikkei Shūkyō no Kenkyū: Nihon, Amerika, Burajiru* [*Studies on Japanese and nikkei Religions: Japan, United States and Brazil*]. Tokyo: Tōsui Shobō.

—. 1990. "Shin-shūkyō no Kaigai Fūkyō: Burajiru. [Proselytizing of New Religions Abroad: Brazil]", 626-629. In *Shin-Shūkyō Jiten* [*Encyclopedia of New Religions*], edited by Nobutaka Inoue, Mitsugi Kōmoto, Michihito Tsushima, Hirochika Nakamakī, and Shigeru Nishiyama. Tokyo: Kōbundō.

—. 1990. "Seichō-no-Ie", 638-640; "Tenrikyō", 644-645; "Perfect Liberty", 647-648; "Honmon Butsuryū-shū", 648-649. In *Shin-Shūkyō Jiten* [*Encyclopedia of New Religions*], edited by Nobutaka Inoue, Mitsugi Kōmoto, Michihito Tsushima, Hirochika Nakamaki, and Shigeru Nishiyama. Tokyo: Kōbundō.

—. 1990. "Shin-shūkyō no Kokusai-ka" [Internationalization of (Japanese) New Religions]. In *Shin-Shūkyō Jiten* [*Encyclopedia of New Religions*], edited by Nobutaka Inoue, Mitsugi Kōmoto, Michihito Tsushima, Hirochika Nakamaki, and Shigeru Nishiyama, 608-611. Tokyo: Kōbundō.

—. 1991. "The indigenization and multinationalization of Japanese religion: Perfect Liberty Kyōdan in Brazil." *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 18: 2-3, Sept/ June: 213-242.

Nakasoto, Oscar Fussato. 2007. "Imagens do nipo-brasileiro na ficção" [Images of the Nippo-Brazilian in Fiction]. In: *Anais do XI Encontro Regional da Associação Brasileira de Literatura Comparada*, São Paulo: Abralic. Accessed 29 March 2018. http://www.abralic.org.br/eventos/.

Paiva, Geraldo José de. 1990. "Seichō-no-Ie." In *Sinais dos Tempos – Diversidade Religiosa no Brasil,* edited by Leilah Landim, 181-186. Rio de Janeiro, Instituto de Estudos da Religião (ISER), Cadernos do Iser nº23.

Pereira, Ronan A. 2000. "Religiosidades japonesa e brasileira: aproximações possíveis" [Japanese and Brazilian religiosities: Possible comparisons]. In *Anais do XI Encontro Nacional de Professores Universitarios de Lingua, Literatura e Cultura Japonesa.* I Encontro de Estudos Japoneses. Brasilia, Universidade de Brasilia/ Departamento de Linguas Estrangeiras e Tradução, 209-221.

—. 2007. "A paradise of happiness will unfold for you in Brazil: Sōka Gakkai success in and beyond the Japanese expatriate community." In *Japanese Religions in and*

beyond Japanese Diaspora, edited by Ronan A. Pereira and Hideaki Matsuoka, 201-230. Berkeley: University of California/ Institute of East Asian Studies.

Reid, David. 1996. "Internationalization in Japanese religion." In *Religion in Japanese Culture: Where Living Traditions Meet a Changing World,* edited by Noriyoshi Tamaru and David Reid, 184-198. Tokyo/ New York/ London: Kodansha.

Rocha, Cristina. 2006. "Zen in Brazil." *The Quest for Cosmopolitan Modernity.* Honolulu, University of Hawaii Press.

Shimazono Susumu. 2007. "The expansion of Japan's new religions into foreign cultures." *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies*, 18 (2-3) June-September: 105-132. New version republished in *Japanese Religions in and beyond Japanese Diaspora,* edited by Ronan A. Pereira and Hideaki Matsuoka, 17-29. Berkeley: University of California/ Institute of East Asian Studies.

Wilson, Bryan R. 1998. "Sōka Gakkai in the Modern West." *The Journal of Oriental Studies* 8: 3-14. Tokyo, The Institute of Oriental Philosophy.

About the author

Ronan Alves Pereira was formerly Professor and Chair of the Centre for Asian Studies of the University of Brasília. He has done extensive research on Japanese religions (in Japan and abroad) and is author of *Spirit Possession and Cultural Innovation: The Religious Experience of Miki Nakayama and Nao Deguchi* (1992, in Portuguese) and co-editor of *Japanese Religions in and beyond the Japanese Diaspora* (2007) as well as many articles on Japanese religions, Japanese anthropology and Japanese Studies in Brazil.

15 The Significance of Sacred Places in the Proselytization of NRMs

Guarapiranga, a Sacred Place of the Church of World Messianity of Brazil

Hideaki Matsuoka

Abstract

Some Japanese NRMs, such as Perfect Liberty Kyōdan, World Messianity, Sūkyō Mahikari, are well-known for their gigantic sacred places. A common element among these sacred places is the pursuit of beauty. Scattering traditional or novel (sometimes bizarre) buildings and structures, these sacred places appropriate Japanese aesthetics. The Church of World Messianity is a Japanese new religion that started proselytization in 1955. The religion established its sacred place, Guarapiranga, in the suburb of Sao Paulo in 1995. Since then numerous people, not only its followers but also non-Messianity followers, have visited Guarapiranga. This paper examines the significance of this gigantic and well-maintained sacred place or the propagation and internalization of the doctrine by followers.

Keywords: Church of World Messianity, sacred places, Guarapiranga, proselytization, Japanese aesthetics, Japanese NRMs

Introduction

Some of the new religious groups in Japan, including Perfect Liberty Kyōdan, Church of World Messianity [Sekai Kyūsei Kyō] and Sūkyō Mahikari, are well-known for their huge sacred places. A common element among these sacred places is beauty. The sacred places, which combine traditional or novel (or sometimes even bizarre) buildings with natural scenery, cleverly apply a Japanese aesthetic of beauty. The Church of World Messianity (hereinafter

Figure 15.1   Brazilian Messianity members administering *jōrei*

called Messianity) is a Japanese new religion known for its practice of *jōrei*, meaning 'purification of the spirit' in Japanese, the foundation of all its activity.

Messianity has actively been proselytizing in Brazil since 1955.[1] According to a census in 2000 (IBGE N.d.), the number of its followers is 109,310. There are 410,000 according to Messianity's website in Japan (Izunome 2008).

In 1995, Messianity founded its extensive and well-maintained sacred place, Guarapiranga, in the suburbs of São Paulo. Many Brazilians, both adherents and non- Messianity followers, have visited the site since then. Messianity calls the 320,000 m² site beside Lake Guarapiranga 'heaven on earth' [*paraíso terestre*], and 'sacred place' [*solo sagrado*]. It is a space that incorporates natural features such as the lake and forest. A woman in her 30s who visited there told me it is 'Beautiful, just beautiful! I have no words to explain'. Many followers responded in the same way when asked about their impressions on visiting Guarapiranga for the first time.

'The sacred' is a category of interpretation and value peculiar to the sphere of religious research and has various definitions: something that contains a quite specific and simple element; an inexpressible moment, something irrational, and so on. In other words, a sacred place can be a space beyond words, or an irrational space.

1   For more details on Messianity in Brazil see Matsuoka 2007.

Murphy states that modernity is characterized by a process of rationalization, which includes the rationalization of nature (Murphy 1994).[2] With scientific and technological progress, Murphy argues, modernity has imposed an order upon nature by eliminating its mysterious and magical elements. However, he concludes that this Weberian rationalization process will ultimately be avenged by nature. What I want to discuss here is not whether his conclusion is correct, but the validity of his premises.[3] If modernity tries to eliminate the mysterious and magical elements from nature, how should we consider the act of constructing a sacred place which positively incorporates nature? Japanese new religions have built their sacred places to be the source of religious authenticity, and consequently to be spaces which not only improve but reinforce the belief of followers who visit there. Besides these aims there lies another reason that should not be overlooked; the identity of new religious groups. Guarapiranga the sacred place of Messianity in Brazil, is no exception.

I will therefore now discuss how Guarapiranga was constructed, and then analyse the landscape of the sacred place.

Birth of the sacred place

The story dates back to 1974, when Messianity in Brazil purchased 320,000 m² of land besides Lake Guarapiranga on the fringe of São Paulo. However, at the time of purchase, Messianity had no firm plans for its use. It was in the 1980s that Messianity decided to construct their sacred place on the site. *Kyōshu* [the leader of teachings] Okada Itsuki, the founder Okada Mokichi's granddaughter and then representative of Messianity, visited Brazil in September 1985. The year 1985 had special meaning for Messianity in Japan and Brazil. It was the 50th anniversary of the establishment of Dainippon Kannon Kai (Kannon Association of Great Japan), the precursor of Messianity, by Okada Mokichi in 1935. 1985 was also the 30th anniversary of the commencement of Messianity's proselytization in Brazil, which started in 1955. To commemorate this significant year, Messianity constructed a white shrine in Guarapiranga for the leader's visit to Brazil. On 15 September,

2   According to Giddens, modernity is 'a style of life and structure which has been influential across the world since it appeared after about the 17th century in Europe' (Giddens 1991: 1). Murphy's definition of modernity seems not to differ greatly from that of Giddens.
3   The sense that modernity is making essence and origin collapse is not new at all (Clifford 1988: 4).

Messianity held a special ceremony in the presence of the Kyōshu to announce the construction of the sacred place in Guarapiranga. She addressed the followers gathered for the ceremony as follows: 'With your faith and sincerity, this land of Guarapiranga is shining. From here, you are advancing on the road to constructing a Heaven on Earth' (Journal Messiânico 1988: 7).[4]

There is no doubt that this ceremony was one of the most important events in the history of Messianity in Brazil, because the construction of a sacred place in Brazil was announced by the Kyōshu, who was visiting Brazil for the first time. For this reason, Messianity urged their followers to come to Guarapiranga and take part in the ceremony. The ceremony was a great success. Although the ceremony was held in a space with a newly built shrine in a vast wilderness, Messianity reports that 52,000 followers assembled for the special occasion. To put this in perspective, we can compare it with Messianity's most significant annual ritual, the festival of Heaven on Earth, which is held on 15 June. According to Messianity, the number of followers in Brazil was 211,704 in 1992, and the participants in the festival at the São Paulo headquarters in that year numbered around 40,000. Messianity records that the number of followers at the end of 1985 was only 125,963. However, tens of thousands of followers are said to have gathered at the ceremony in Guarapinga, and even if the numbers are exaggerated, it clearly shows that great importance was ascribed to this ceremony.

In 1986 Messianity asked Silvio Sawaya, an architect and Professor of Architecture at São Paulo University, to organize graduate student groups in order to participate in a design competition for the sacred place. As a result, seventeen groups were formed. An exhibition was held at the headquarters from 26 November to 6 December 1987 to display each group's plans. Messianity selected five plans, and modified them to create a final plan for the sacred place. It was originally intended that construction would begin as early as possible in 1988, and be completed by the end of 1991. However, Messianity could not start construction due to financial problems. During this hiatus, there arose another event that clearly demonstrates the charisma of Watanabe Tetsuo, the President of Messianity of Brazil.

When Watanabe was staying in Japan during the winter of 1990, he claimed to have been visited by the same dream every night for two weeks, with an image of the sacred place to be constructed in Brazil. He drew a sketch of it and ordered a priest who was visiting Japan at the time to take it to Brazil and ask the priests there to cancel the ongoing plan, and to make

---

4   A Japanese version of *Journal Messiânico* was launched in 1987, but was discontinued two years later.

a completely new plan in accordance with his dream. All the priests were very surprised to hear his order, because Messianity had already chosen the construction companies and entered into negotiations with them. However, as they were well aware of Watanabe's religious power, they finally agreed to accept this sudden change at the conference of church representatives in April 1990. Construction of the sacred place immediately restarted.

Messianity has three sacred places in Japan. For the construction of those three sacred places, the followers not only made donations, but also contributed labour.[5] Following this tradition, Brazilian Messianity appealed to the followers not only to donate money but also to come to Guarapiranga and take part in the construction. It goes without saying that dedicated volunteer service as well as donations help Messianity a great deal, but there is another significant religious reason for this request. It is important for Messianity as a religion to be proud of the fact that the followers themselves take part in the construction of its sacred places, not only by donating money but by offering their labour. The followers, for their part, were pleased to dedicate service in Guarapiranga and to be engaged in what they consider to be 'divine labour'.[6] Watanabe Tetsuo appealed to the followers as follows:

> By taking part in the construction of Guarapiranga, the Heaven on Earth in Brazil, each follower tries to build his own belief. And on the day of the ceremony of completion, we will celebrate and shed tears of joy together (Journal Messiânico 1988: 10).

Messianity constructed the sacred place in order to create a source of religious authority to establish its identity, an identity which declares that Messianity in Brazil is a branch of the Japanese group, and at the same time is a religion with its own local policy and history. In one sense this construction of Brazilian Messianity's own identity seems to contradict the strategy that maintains Messianity's identity as a Japanese religion. However, I think that identity is a multi-dimensional construct that may accommodate contrary elements.

There remains another point which we should not ignore. If we consider a sacred place of a certain religion an asset, how is its value guaranteed?

---

5   The three sacred places are; Shinsenkyō in Hakone, Zuiunkyō in Atami, and Heiankyō in Kyoto.
6   'Divine labour' is a special term used by Messianity, meaning that human beings should work according to God's will.

Needless to say, the land where a sacred place is located has value as real estate. What we have to examine is religious value. Several Japanese new religions have constructed sacred places on lands significant for those religions, such as the place where the founder was born, where the religion started the first proselytization, and so forth. For example, the sacred place of Tenrikyō is constructed centring on the house of Nakayama Miki (1798~1887), the founder. On the other hand, Guarapiranga is a sacred place built on land which did not have religious significance for Messianity. Reverend Watanabe did not mention why the religion chose the land of Guarapiranga to construct its sacred place. Thus, Guarapiranga became a religious commodity because of the buildings and other constructions on the site.

Guarapiranga: Landscape as religious commodity

Guarapiranga was finally completed in November 1995, and a magnificent inauguration ceremony was held. This vast sacred place resembles a theme park. Alighting in the huge parking area that can accommodate 400 cars and 700 buses, pilgrims walk to the shrine, passing through a space that has several structures and parks, a space that can be called a 'forest of symbols'. As architect Maki Fumihiko and sociologist Tada Michitarō individually point out, Japanese traditional religious facilities have a spatial structure which offers the feeling of moving towards the innermost part of the space (Maki 1980; Tada 1983). The space from the entrance gate to the spot where people get off a bus, or from Messianity's headquarters to the sacred place, can be regarded as a journey to this innermost space.

A bird's eye view of Guarapiranga after completion reveals that the sacred place, which covers 320,000 m², resembles a small village with many facilities. There is lodging for pilgrims, a refectory and a cafeteria, a farm, shrines, houses for ministers and staff working at the sacred place, and lawns and gardens scattered around. Medical doctors and nurses stand by in consultation rooms when a large-scale ceremony is held for tens of thousands of followers.

Three important elements of the landscape at Guarapiranga are plants, water, and light, because these are directly linked to Messianity's worldview. To begin with plants; in Guarapiranga there are several gardens such as the 'garden of harmony', the 'garden of happiness', the 'garden of friend-ship', the 'garden of love', and the 'garden of hope', which all feature plants prominently. There is also an abundance of well-maintained grass fields. As spaces where visitors can talk and relax, the gardens and lawns have

Figure 15.2   Guarapiranga, the sacred place of Messianity in Brazil, 1995

an important function. According to Messianity, about half of the plants in Guarapiranga were carefully chosen to harmonize with their surrounding environment. This policy reflects Messianity's worldview that places significance on Ikebana (Japanese style flower arranging) and art in general.

Water also plays a remarkable role in the Guarapiranga's landscape, not least because the site borders Lake Guarapiranga. The appearance of the surface of the lake changes continually throughout the day from dawn to sunset, creating a relaxing and tranquil atmosphere for visitors. On a fine day, one can see the skyscrapers of São Paulo, the largest city in South America, in the distance. Guarapiranga utilizes the natural settings of the lake.

There are also a number of artificial structures that use water, including several large and small ponds. Among these, the largest is located down the slope adjoining the dining hall. With coloured carp in the water, this pond is a popular place to relax among followers, especially after lunch or dinner. The most interesting among the man-made structures is the road to paradise [*caminho do paraíso*]. It is 36 metres long, with flagstones at the centre and gravel on both sides. A book of photography entitled *Sacred Place, Guarapiranga*, published by the Okada Mokichi Foundation in Brazil to commemorate the completion of the sacred place, offers captions in both Japanese and Portuguese for each photo. This structure is called the road

Figure 15.3   The Road to Paradise

to paradise in Portuguese, and *taki no sandō* [approach to a shrine with waterfalls] in Japanese (Fundação MokichI Okada 1996: 18-19).[7]

Indeed, this is a *sandō* with waterfalls. It resembles a traditional *sandō* in that it is made of flagstones and gravel, but is distinctive in its inclusion of waterfalls. On both sides of the path, there are two elevated ponds from which water endlessly flows down the walls: The path runs between the two waterfalls. In the book of photography mentioned above, the photo of the road to paradise has a caption which evokes the famous scene from the movie, 'The Ten Commandments' (The caption is translated from Portuguese).

The road to paradise is a symbolic device which represents two important issues in Messianity's doctrine: (1) purification and (2) the relationship between transcendental beings and human beings. Purification is a key concept for religions in general, and flowing water symbolises purification in many religions. Messianity is no exception. Purification in Messianity can be divided into two categories. One is physical, and therefore visible, purification. Specifically, this is concerned with release from suffering in this world, for example disease, financial problems, and interpersonal conflicts. The other is metaphysical purification, that is, purification of the

7   This book refers not to the movement's doctrine but to film, an indication of the emphasis placed on the visual elements of Guarapinga.

spirit. When I was walking along this path with other followers, one of them told me, 'I feel that my spirit is now being purified'. Others I encountered expressed similar sentiments regarding the sense of purification they experienced on the path.

Another important feature of the path is its slope. The walls bordering the path are two metres high at the beginning, but only 60 centimetres high at the end. This means pilgrims are climbing a slope with a height of 1.4 metres as they walk along the path. Berque points out, 'There is a slope toward sacredness from plain to mountain' in traditional Japanese religious spaces, both Shinto and Buddhist (Berque 1995: 95-96). We may infer that the rising slope of the road to paradise was taken from this idea.

Finally, the last significant element at Guarapiranga is light. As is commonly known, light plays a significant role as a metaphor for transcendental existence in many religions. One example is the light that flows into a Christian church through stained glass windows. Messianity's God is *Miroku Ōmikami* [The God of Bright Light]. In the book of photography *Sacred Place, Guaraprinaga* mentioned above, we can find the following passage by Okada Mokichi (Fundação Mokichi Okada 1996: 2).

> God is light.
> Where there is Light,
> Peace, happiness and delight shall prevail.
> In the darkness, there shall thrive conflict, want and disease.
> Those who seek for the Light and prosperity,
> Come to me.

Ordinary Messianity churches do not have any features that effectively utilize light such as stained glass. However, Guarapiranga can be compared to a brilliant open-air theater. It is full of light: sunlight in the sky, reflected light from the surface of Lake Guarapiranga, and sunbeams streaming through the leaves of the trees. Most impressive, and most important for the followers, is the light that falls through the Tower of Light in the shrine.

At the end of the road to paradise, there appears a lofty tower and a building structure reminiscent of Stonehenge, which looks like a giant ring supported by numerous pillars. The sixteen pillars are eighteen metres high, and evenly spaced to create a circle that is 60 metres in diameter.[8]

---

8   The number sixteen is the number of the petals of the Chrysanthemum Throne of the Emperor of Japan.

Figure 15.4   The Shrine and the 71-metre Tower of Light at Guarapiranga

This structure reminds us of Stonehenge in England. Behind the circle there is the 71-metre Tower of Light, a gold-coloured structure which brilliantly reflects sunlight, with three shrines at its base.

   The shrine at the centre is part of the tower and is for the God of Messianity; on the right is a shrine for the founder, Okada Mokichi; and on the left a shrine for devotion to ancestors. These shrines are important objects

Figure 15.5   The Three Shrines at Guarapiranga, important objects of worship

of worship, and visiting followers pray by clapping three times and then chanting in front of them.

The tower has a special feature that makes a vivid impression on pilgrims. It demonstrates the relationship between the founder Okada Mokichi and light by using sunlight in a dramatic celebration of Okada's birthday. As the Tower of Light is just below the Tropic of Capricorn, sunlight comes directly down onto it on 23 December, the day of the summer solstice in the southern hemisphere, and the birthday of Okada Mokichi, and illuminates the scroll calligraphy of '*Miroku Ōmikami* [The God of Bright Light]' written by Okada Mokichi, which is also worshipped in Messianity. Recalling the scene that she saw on 23 December, a follower relayed to me with some excitement: 'It was really fascinating to see with my own eyes the light *Meishu Sama* [Okada Mokichi, the founder] gave us. I felt that light was shining here in Brazil'. Utilizing the annual drama with sunlight, the tower eloquently expresses the continuity between the God, the founder, and the followers.

Sacred place as heaven on earth or utopia

De Certeau's theory about the nature of the city offers a way to grasp the characteristics of Guarapiranga. De Certeau states that the 'city', in utopian

and urbanistic discourse, is defined by the possibility of a threefold operation, described below (De Certeau 2002: 94-95):

1   The city is a rational organization, in that it represses physical, mental, and political pollutants that would compromise it.
2   The city eliminates what is called "tradition" and creates a synchronic system.
3   The city shapes itself as a universal and anonymous subject.

According to De Certeau, however, this state will never be realized completely, because 'the city is left prey to contradictory movements that counter-balance and combine themselves outside the reach of the panoptic power' (De Certeau 2002: 95). The architect Alexander ([1966] 1972) points out in an article entitled 'A city is not a tree' that a city is not structured in the manner of a branch diagram, but rather more closely resembles a rhizome with roots entwined with each other (Delueze and Guattari 1976). In fact, a city includes spaces that deviate from a rational planning mode. For example, spaces infested with crime and immoral conduct. In other words, a real city cannot be a utopia. For instance, in Shinjuku, Tokyo, there are nests of crime like amusement quarters where the sex industry and bars flourish, and drop-ins for homeless people, within a mile of the Tokyo Metropolitan Government Office.

We can use the threefold operation of the city as utopia by De Certeau as a way of analysing Guarapiranga.[9] There are sacred places of Messianity not only in Japan and Brazil, but also in Thailand. Each of them has its own name, but is similarly regarded as 'Heaven on Earth'. This means the sacred places of Messianity are constructed as models of Heaven and utopia on earth.

As described above, the design of Guarapiranga was based on the ideas of Watanabe Tetsuo. Designing a sacred place means not only planning the structures, selecting the location, and planning the layout of gardens and other buildings, but also creating a scheme according to which the followers who visit the sacred place can perceive, feel, and experience its sacred quality through their five senses. This applies to the sacred places of all new religions. The aims of a sacred place also include improving and reinforcing the quality of the believers' faith. A sacred place is a tool which is used in order to instill a religion's worldview in its followers through the non-verbal communication of the 'landscape'. Guarapiranga depicts an ideal, a model of Heaven. At the same time, elements that are in conflict with Messianity's worldview are excluded.

9   'Utopia' here indicates a space that functions according to De Certeau's threefold operation.

In contrast with real cities, crime and immoral acts are excluded from Guarapiranga. Although an ideal city may try to exclude such acts, real cities cannot exclude them. There is theft at Messianity churches, and I myself had items stolen twice during my fieldwork over the course of about one year. When I stayed in a dormitory attached to a Messianity church in a big city, I had my wallet stolen when I left my room for three minutes without locking it. At another church, I left my watch in a room for a few minutes and returned to find it had gone. However, in Guarapiranga it seems that no thefts have been reported, something which would seem inconceivable outside Guarapiranga, and which suggests that its sacred quality is regarded as something absolute.

Turning to the second part of de Certeau's model, Guarapiranga differs from the model in that it does not exclude what is called 'tradition'. Rather, it emphasizes this factor with various building structures. This emphasis allows the followers to perceive and learn about Messianity's history, and conveys the message that Messianity is watched over and protected by the transcendental being, *Miroku Ōmikami.*

In Japanese religions in general and in religions around the world, the tomb is a significant symbol. Some Japanese new religions put the tomb of the founders in their sacred places so that the followers can pay their respects to these eminent figures.[10] In Guarapiranga, there are no replica tombs of Okada Mokichi and his wife. However, on the birthday of the Okada Mokichi (23 December), the Tower of Light placed above the main shrine demonstrates that the founder (who died in 1955, the year that propagation in Brazil started) is connected to Brazil by the light.

If we consider the gardens, in Guarapiranga these are classified into three categories in terms of their style: Japanese, Western, and a mixture of the two styles. Of these, the Japanese style gardens reconfirm to followers that Messianity emerged in Japan. 'This garden is marvelous, the most beautiful I've ever seen', said a middle-aged man who was looking at a small Japanese garden. He continued, 'I really would like to visit sacred places in Japan someday. I heard that the gardens are beautiful there'. In this way, Messianity affirms its authenticity as a religion that emerged in Japan by melding Brazilian Messianity and Japanese tradition.

Following De Certeau's third rule of the city, is Guarapiranga an anonymous entity? For pilgrims, Guaraparinga is a special place. We might consider here Stewart's comments on the 'gigantic': 'the gigantic represents infinity, exteriority, the public, and the overly natural' (Stewart 1993: 70). This is

---

10   Needless to say, visiting a grave is a form of ancestor-worship.

exactly what Guarapiranga represents. Aside from the sacred site of the movement Perfect Liberty Kyōdan (another NRM of Japanese origin), there is no other sacred place in Brazil that can be compared with Guarapiranga in terms of size and beauty. Guarapinga contains symbols and spaces that cannot be seen or experienced elsewhere: effectively non-replaceable spaces. We can refer to Stewart again here: '"Authentic" experience becomes both allusive and elusive as it is placed beyond the horizon of present lived experience, the beyond in which the antique, the pastoral, the exotic, and other fictive domains are articulated' (Stewart 1993: 133). Guarapiranga is not anonymous. On the contrary, it is a place which eloquently emphasizes its sacredness.

This analysis of Guarapiranga in terms of De Certeau's model of the threefold operation of the city as an ideal reveals the following three characteristics of Guarapiranga.

1   Guarapiranga excludes whatever is against Messianity's ideals.
2   Guarapiranga emphasizes the traditions of Messianity.
3   Guarapiranga eloquently emphasizes its sacredness.

These characteristics both demonstrate the distinctiveness of Messianity and make Guarapiranga attractive as a religious commodity. It is also noteworthy that the importance attached to nature in Messianity's philosophy is appealing in the context of the current popular interest in ecology.

Conclusion

Guarapiranga is a place where pilgrims internalize Messianity's worldview through volunteering their labour as a form of service, and also by placing themselves physically within the landscape of Guarapiranga. Guarapiranga is a utopia which gives physical form to Messianity's philosophy. At the same time, however, for some followers, it may also be a refuge; a space where they can temporarily forget the 'real' secular world. While in Guarapiranga, they can enjoy the beauty of the place in a safe and regulated environment. A woman in her thirties told me about her impression of Guarapiranga as follows:

> It is really marvelous. Beautiful, just beautiful! I'm fascinated. Here, I forget my life. I have many things to solve at home, but I've forgotten about them. I believe that I will have solved them all when I return home.

Guarapiranga was created as a model for heaven on earth. However, there is possibility that Messianity followers may understand Guarapiranga not as a model but as itself heaven on earth.

This has significant implications for propagation. As examined above, Guarapiranga presents Messianity's worldview, and also declares its authenticity. Through making a pilgrimage to Guarapiranga some followers may find reconfirmation of Messianity's teachings of constructing heaven on earth, and will practise giving *jōrei* more positively as a result. For others, their visit is an escape from everyday life.

Guarapiranga is not a space that is important only for adherents. It is open to the public, and non-Messianity followers can also visit there. At least in São Paulo, it has gradually become known among non-followers. The article, "Ten places to escape from São Paulo without going far away" chooses Guarapiranga as one of them (Vivabem 2018). It states:

> Established by Messianity, this place is a good destination for those who want to meditate and contemplate nature. With its vast lawn, ornamented by trees and flowers, this location is also sought after as a scenario for picnics.

From the website run by São Paulo city, we can download the Guide of Ecotourism in São Paulo brochure (São Paulo Turismo 2017). It introduces Guarapiranga as follows:

> With this publicity, many tourists and residents of the region visit the sacred place, which does not necessarily increase the number of followers. Nevertheless, Guarapiranga could be considered to be a marketing phenomenon, in the sense that it reveals to non-followers that there is a religion called Messianity and that it has a huge sacred place. By constructing this sacred place, like a gigantic theme park which positively incorporates nature, Messianity has created a fascinating religious commodity. Non-followers therefore visit the sacred place, which does not directly increase the number of followers, but does alert non-followers to the fact that there is a religion called Messianity and that it has a huge nature-oriented sacred place. By constructing a gigantic theme park-like sacred place which positively incorporates nature, Messianity has created a fascinating religious commodity.

Works cited

Alexander, Christopher. 1972 [1966]. "A city is not a tree." In *Human Identity in the Urban Environment*, edited by Gwen Bell and Jaqueline Tyrwhitt, 401-428. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Berque, Augustin. 1995. *Nihon no Fūdosei* [*Japanese Climate*]. Tokyo: Nihon Hōsō Shuppan Kyōkai.

De Certeau, Michel. 2002. *The Practice of Everyday Life*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Deleuze, Gilles and Felix Guattari. 1976. *Rhizome*. Paris: Minuit.

Fundação Mokiti Okada. 1996. *Guarapiranga*. São Paulo: Fudação Mokiti Okada.

Maki Fumihiko. 1980. "Oku no Shisō" [The thought to the interior]. In *Miegakuresuru Toshi* [Cities In and Out of Sight], edited by Fumihiko Maki and Architekt Japan, 197-230. Tokyo: Kashima Shuppankai.

Giddens, Anthony. 1991. *The Consequences of Modernity*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

IBGE. N.d. Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia a Estatistica. Accessed 29 March 2018. https://www.ibge.gov.br/estatisticas-novoportal/sociais/populacao.html.

Izunome. 2008. "Sekai Kyūsei Kyō" Accessed 29 March 2018. http://www.izunome.jp/.

Journal Messiânico. 1988. No. 5, Jan. (*paraíso terestre*) in Brazil (*Journal Messiânico*, Japanese version 5: 7 Jan.

Matsuoka Hideaki. 2007. *Japanese Prayer under the Equator:* Lanham: Lexington.

Murphy, Raymond. 1994. *Rationality and Nature*. Boulder: Westview.

São Paulo Turismo 2017. *Polo de Ecoturismo de São Paulo* [*Ecotourism Zone of Sao Paulo*]. Accessed 3 April 2018. http://cidadedesaopaulo.com/v2/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Roteiro-Polo-ING-2a-edicao-site.pdf

Stewart, Susan. 1993. *On Longing*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Tada Michitarō. 1983. "Oku no Kankaku" [The Feeling of Inner Part]. In *Kūkan no Genkei: Sumai ni okeru Sei no Hikaku Bunka* [*Archetype of Space: Comparative Culture of Sacredness in Residence*], edited by Atsushi Ueda, Michitarō Tada and Gisuke Nakaoka, 423-434. Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō.

Vivabem 2018. Accessed 3 April 2018. http://vivabem.uol.com.br/album/2016/08/23/10-refugios-para-se-desconectar-de-sao-paulo-sem-precisar-ir-muito-longe.htm?mode=list&foto=3.

About the author

Hideaki Matsuoka is former Invited Professor of the Communication Design Center at Osaka University and Lecturer in anthropology and Latin American studies at the University of Tokyo. Along with his book *Japanese Prayer below the Equator: How Brazilians Believe in the Church of World Messianity* (2007), Matsuoka is co-editor of *Japanese Religions in and beyond the Japanese Diaspora* (2007). He has published in Japanese and English about Japanese religion, anthropological methodology, and the consumption of music.

16   Habitat Segregation and Epidemicalization of Japanese Religions in the Americas

Hirochika Nakamaki

Abstract

This chapter describes how Japanese religions disseminated to the Americas from the viewpoint of 'management' and 'marketing'. Discussion is also based on the concept of the religious marketplace with reference to 'sharing'. 'Marketing' and 'sharing' among Japanese religions in the Americas are analysed under the model of habitat segregation. Cases used to illustrate the discussion are the Tōdaiji Temple sect and the Tendai Mission in Hawaii and SGI (Sōka Gakkai International) in the U.S.A., as well as Perfect Liberty Kyōdan and Seichō-no-Ie in Brazil. Among endemic religions management adopts a logic of habitat segregation, and sharing goes up in value. On the other hand, among epidemic religions, marketing is necessary for the expansion of their religious market.

Keywords: habitat segregation, epidemicalization, sharing, marketing, Japanese religion, Americas

The model of habitat segregation

Hawaii is the first place where Japanese religions started their overseas missions. At first, priests from the home prefecture of emigrants carried out their missionary work sponsored by the immigrants. Then, Japanese religious organizations themselves supported missionaries who they sent from Japan to strategically expand their overseas activities. In those days, Japanese emigrants in Hawaii faced many hardships in working on the

sugar-cane plantations. Each plantation community built its own Buddhist temple (which came to resemble a Buddhist 'church') or else a Christian church (see below). Compared to Buddhist temples, there were fewer Shinto shrines built. Shamans and mediums from a Japanese cultural base also started their activities. New religions such as Tenrikyō and Konkō Kyō also commenced their diffusion to Hawaii. In the Japanese diaspora communities, however, it was Jōdo Shinshū and Protestantism which struggled for supremacy. There was severe competition between the leader of Honpa Hongwanji, Emyo Imamura, and that of the Makiki Holy Castle Church, now called Makiki Christian Church, particularly through the establishment of Japanese language schools. A strike involving employees of sugar-cane plantations brought them into conflict, though the two leaders addressed the workers together to persuade the Japanese to return to work (Hunter 1971: 66, 87, 92).

The main basis of this conflict was the differing orientation of Japanese community members; towards America or towards their homeland (Nakamaki 1978: 20-22). In other words, it was a difference of outlook; some were willing to be assimilated into American society and others treasured their ties among the Japanese immigrant society. The former preferred religions which were established in *haole* (white American) society, and which encapsulated American (Hawaiian) values, while the latter engaged in activities for the Japanese community specifically, retaining their traditional way of thinking towards religion. The difference of these two mindsets greatly affected the organization of the community, although it was not always easy to divide them clearly into two groups.

Since these two groups competed in Hawaiian Japanese society, we can consider that the religions competed for a share in the limited market. As time passed, this struggle resulted in a relatively stable phase. Japanese Buddhism introduced Sunday services and Sunday schools, and created Buddhist hymns based on Christian ones. Buddhist marriage ceremonies modeling those of Christianity were established. Buddhism was tremendously Americanized, adopting a Protestant style. On the other hand, Christian churches made efforts to appeal to the people who cherished Japanese values. For instance, the Makiki Holy Castle Church constructed a church in the form of a castle tower that was worthy of its name.

After WWII, the struggle for 'market share' was settled, and some remarkable movements were seen in Hawaii. Two examples are mentioned here: Tōdaiji and Tendaishū.

Tōdaiji Hawaii Bekkaku Honzan

Tōdaiji Hawaii Bekkaku Honzan (an affiliation in Hawaii of the Tōdaiji Temple in Nara, Japan) was founded by a *nisei* (second generation Japanese) woman, Tasshō Hirai (Nakamaki 1980: 337-348). After going through a period of asceticism at Tōdaiji Temple in Nara, she commenced proselytization in Honolulu in 1941. Although she was interned in Hawaii during the war, she restarted proselytization after the war and obtained many followers through incantations and prayers, and memorial services for ancestors and spirits. These were deep concerns within Japanese culture, not addressed in mainstream Christianity. Exorcism of evil spirits was also performed occasionally. As for the management of the organization, she covered all expenses with monetary offerings, unlike other Japanese religions which collected a membership fee. While Tōdaiji Hawaii Bekkaku Honzan kept a good relationship with Tōdaiji in Japan, it never possessed a connection with other religions in the Hawaiian Japanese community. It never belonged to the Hawaii Buddhist Council but practised its religious activities independantly. Salvation by Hirai's spiritual power attracted many followers, and under this charismatic leader with her absolute authority, the temple secured a niche in the Hawaiian religious market. The number of followers was officially reported as 30,000 in the 1970s, but this was the total number of visitors who came for prayers or consultation. No more than 300 people participated in annual events. The majority of followers who supported Hirai's religious activities had united in the 1950s to establish the temple. She told a journalist, 'This temple exists for worship not for sightseeing'. Regarding the temple as a place for discipline, she refused to allow visitors to enter the gate unless they sought daily meditative training under the waterfall or recited incantations and prayers.

In the case of Tōdaiji, marketing scarcely existed. Hirai refrained from going out without any particular business and she devoted herself to disciplines for the salvation of others all day long. The people who were allowed to enter the gate of Tōdaiji were limited to those who had heard from their acquaintances of the high reputation of Hirai as a medium. Curious visitors excited by the mass media were turned away at the gate. On the other hand, sharing (the use of internal resources through resorting to the contributions and participation of existing members) was remarkable. It took eight years and three months to build the temple complex and it largely depended on voluntary holiday work by followers. On the point of sharing, followers shared their time and energy, believing they

were religiously saved thanks to her, such was their gratitude for their salvation. Hirai invited followers and treated them with meals prepared at the temple on the occasions of annual events and important memorial services. Thus, a reciprocal relationship continued for a long time. What should be noted was that speaking English was, in principle, prohibited at Tōdaiji. Sitting places were also fixed; men should be seated on the right, and women should be on the left facing the inner temple. Women were obliged to wear long skirts and on New Year's Day, 'Kimigayo' (the Japanese national anthem) was sung at a slow tempo in the same manner as before the war. In short, Hirai and her followers all espoused pre-war Japanese values and lifestyle.

What could be derived here is a hypothesis that sharing can be assumed as the opposite of marketing; closed and reciprocal sharing is in opposition to open marketing. When people want to firmly maintain the experience, values, or lifestyle of a certain period, the logic of sharing is remarkably practical. On the contrary, attracting new members through successful marketing, to increase resources, might dilute core values.

Tendai Mission of Hawaii Betsuin

The Tendai Mission of Hawaii Betsuin (branch temple) was built just a stone's throw away from Tōdaiji in 1973 (Nakamaki 1979: 30-33). The Overseas Missionary Society of Tendai purchased land and buildings and Ryōkan Ara was dispatched from Japan as head priest. *Danka* [supporters] of the Tendai sect were not many even in Japan, and there were almost no members who could be called so in Hawaii's Japanese community. Although Tendai was a project carried out at the initiative of the main temple, it literally started from zero. According to the research report of 1977, there were only around ten people who sought a funeral ceremony in the Tendai style, and about 50 people attended Yakushikō (religious association of *BhaiSajya-guru* [the healing Buddha] which was the biggest monthly event. Members of its support group, *Ichigūkai* (One Corner Association) were around three hundred. Most of them were *issei* [first generation Japanese] women and, as Ara said, 'followers were no more than people who attended classes for the hand-copying of sutra'.

Ryōkan Ara appeared as an innovator in the Japanese religious market in Hawaii. He presented himself in the mass media, performed Buddhist sermons on television and radio programmes for *nikkei* [people of Japanese descent] to promote Buddhist culture. In 1977, he appeared for one

minute in a Japanese programme on KIKU TV every night and explained significant Japanese words such as Buddhist terms. Ara had a regular radio programme from 9:15 am, and was appointed one of the regular advisors of a programme from 2:00 pm on the KOHO Japanese radio broadcast. He challenged the mass-communication market and helped to diffuse the concept of Buddhism and to deepen people's understanding of Japanese culture. What he did was not just disseminate the Tendaishū doctrine, a particular sect of esoteric Mahayana Buddhism, but he endeavoured to cultivate people's better understanding of Buddhism, taking a 'Pan-Buddhist' approach.

At the same time, many culture classes were offered at the temple. Besides a class for the hand-copying of sutra, various classes such as Japanese painting, oil painting, calligraphy, tea ceremony, flower arrangement, ceramic art, piano, a reading circle, Buddhist seminars in English and conversational Japanese classes were held there. The temple also supported academic activities, led by staff of the Department of Religion, University of Hawaii.

It is appropriate to regard these promotional activities and culture activities based on the Tendaishū brand as marketing. Ryōkan Ara appeared in his vestments not only on TV but whenever he went out, clearly showing that he was a priest. He tried to attain a niche by cultivating new markets, leveraging Buddhist cultural activities, in other words, 'Pan-Buddhism' which was the opposite of 'Funeral Buddhism'. I asked him how he harmonized sympathy towards religious ideology and the maintenance of groups with shared values, and he replied, 'As I am not charismatic, I try to sustain them as a matter of management or business'. It was obvious that he thought of temple management and marketing within the Japanese religious market in terms of a business model.

By contrast, Tōdaiji (with its charismatic leader), unconsciously placed the idea of sharing as the foundation of its management, while the recently-arrived head priest of Tendaishū (who did not have much charisma), intentionally took a market-cultivation strategy, making use of marketing devices. However, these devices, the culture classes and lectures on Buddhist doctrine, nevertheless socialized new members into a system of common values.

The Japanese religious market in São Paulo

In Brazil, where Japanese immigration started in 1908, Japanese religions have developed under different conditions from those in Hawaii. There,

the religious sphere is largely dominated by Catholicism, which may be referred to as 'the state religion'. For this reason, before WWII, the major religious organizations of Japan presented a 'reserved attitude' towards Catholicism, restraining moves to evangelize in Brazil. Even so, grass-roots religious activities had already occurred at that time under the leadership of lay people who knew the fundamental precepts about the religion they represented. Moreover, since the 1930s, new religions such as Tenrikyō, Ōmoto, and Seichō-no-Ie were already promoting their organizations leading to overseas diffusion. On the other hand, the number of *nisei* who were baptized in Brazilian Catholic churches was not small. After WWII, when the confrontation between winner and loser was still continuing, various Buddhist headquarters from Japan led by Nishi Honganji and Higashi Honganji, two temples in Kyoto which are the headquarters of the two factions of the Jōdo Shinshū (True Pure Land Sect), one of the largest Buddhist sects in Japan, intensified their fight for a larger share of the market. This was because *issei* [first generation] migrants were becoming more convinced that they would stay in Brazil forever (Maeyama 1968: 131). Also in the 1950s, new religions such as Sekai Kyūsei Kyō (The Church of World Messianity) and the Church of Perfect Liberty (P.L. Kyōdan) advanced their influence there. Thus, the share in the market turned out to be divided into three major parts: Catholicism, Buddhism, and new religions of Japanese origin (including mediums). (Nakamaki 1989: 399, 2003: 106)

This process can be compared to the phenomena of succession observed in ecology (Nakamaki 1991: 124, 2003: 105). In an ecological system, the combination of actions and reactions between the environment and plants result in a climax after a series of successions.[1] The same thing happens in religious markets: a certain stability is obtained after some successions as a result of actions and reactions that have occurred between religious organizations and followers. In the Japanese *nikkei* (people of Japanese descent) religious market in Brazil, there were three phases: the grass-roots phase; the phase under the direction of Japanese headquarters; and the phase of habitat segregation[2] which has three divisions. The last phase can be compared to a kind of climax.

---

1   Ecological climax is the achievement of a steady state in an ecosystem which has been established through the process of ecological succession in the development of vegetation over time.

2   Habitat segregation is an ecological concept proposed by Kinji Imanishi, which can be rephrased as territoriality between different species. A similar concept is niche segregation.

Figure 16.1   A religious model of the *nikkei* [Japanese] community in São Paulo, Brazil

official ceremonies of Japanese community

rites of passage, annual ceremonies

Buddhism   Catholicism

new religions
(mediums)

resolution of problems
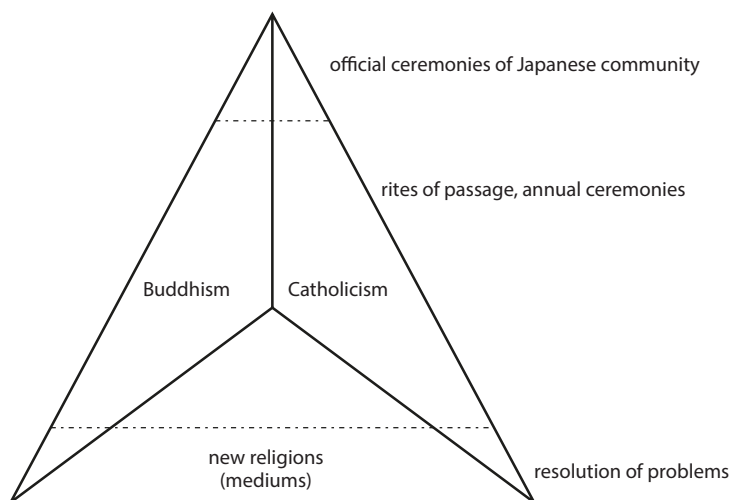
From Figure 16.1 we can see that the sharing of religious functions in social life is divided, to a large extent, into three basic functions: official events of the *nikkei* community [*colônia japonesa*]; rites of passage and annual events; and resolution of problems. This shows that, in relation to the official events of the *nikkei* community, only Buddhism and Catholicism are involved. Concerning rites of passage and annual events, Buddhism and Catholicism share the majority of duties. The main market for new religions is in their function of solving problems. New religions use the feature of rituals to investigate the spiritual world, or to mediate between the spirit world and the here and now through the use of mediums.

In the same way, in Brazil, a climax has been reached in a relatively short period of time. Basically, a similar model can be applied to Hawaii. It is clear that Catholicism must be replaced by Protestantism and Shinto plays a more important role in Hawaii than in Brazil, and we need to pay attention to official events of the *nikkei* community. This model was also applied in the study by Ōhashi (1998: 598-599) of religion in Okinawa and the Okinawan community in Brazil.

Religious division of labour

It is well known that Adam Smith set up the concept of an economic division of labour, and Durkheim systematized the notion of a social division of labour. However, researchers in Japan attempted to logically systemize the concept of a religious division of labour. Tadao Umesao was the first to do this and he advocated the idea of a 'divine division of labour'. He also applied the categories of 'enterprise', 'consumer', and 'dealer' to religion. According to Umesao, the majority of religious theories have been based on the 'logic of enterprise'. Using the analogy of enterprise, it is said that these theories had a similar approach towards a 'history of the enterprise' and the central theme would then be production. On the contrary, religious theories based on the 'logic of the consumer', pick up themes of consumption, which lead to the 'study of house management for religions'. If we compare the degree of fidelity/loyalty to the 'brand' (religion) in Japan and Europe, the Japanese degree of fidelity/loyalty is very low; Japanese have ties with several religions at the same time. By contrast, in the European case, this degree of fidelity is quite high; this context has a structure where the 'logic of enterprise' is close to the 'logic of the consumer' (Umesao 1990: 436-446). What had a great influence on Umesao's theory of the religious division of labour was the theory of habitat segregation by Kinji Imanishi, an ecologist. Imanishi is known as a person who rejected Darwin's theory of evolution and studied the process of habitat segregation of organisms (Imanishi 2002, in Japanese, 2002, in English).[3]

The model of epidemicalization

Of course, religion is not a disease, but comparative analysis is possible using this analogy, as explored below.

A unique point of view, which analysed religions of the world from an eco-logical standpoint, was suggested by Umesao (1967: 228-256). He compared religions to endemic and epidemic diseases. Furthermore, introducing the

3   Imanishi discovered niche segregation when he collected four species of mayfly larvae in the upper streams of Kamo River in Kyoto, which co-existed harmoniously in their own territories above sections of the river flowing at different speeds. Imanishi was not satisfied with the Darwinian explanation of the mechanism of evolution, that is, natural selection. At that time, natural selection was thought to be driven by environmental change. Imanishi, with his discovery of segregation, strongly believed that environmental selection was not the answer (Matsuzawa and McGrew 2008: 587-591).

concept of immunity to his theory, he established a hypothesis that once a person was immune, he would not contract the same or a similar disease. For example, Buddhism and Christianity have commonality: both of them left their birthplace, moved to other places, and flourished. Buddhism extended to the East, and Christianity spread solely to the West; the former reached the Japanese islands, and the latter finally arrived in Western Europe (if we limit the range to the Old World). Although their religious contents were considerably different, their way of spreading to other geographical areas was very similar so, according to Umesao, they could be explained as parallel phenomenon. Based on this perspective, another hypothesis may be possible; places that were swept by Buddhism will not easily be infected by Christianity and vice versa.

Is the immunity hypothesis of epidemic religion appropriate to explain the fact that Japanese Christians are less than one percent of the population, in spite of earnest mission activities? How does the immunity theory explain the rapid increase of Christians in Korea? These are interesting topics, however they are beyond the scope of this chapter. Let us return to the discussion of Japanese *nikkei* religions in the Americas.

In the Americas, particular Japanese religions expanded, crossing the border of the *nikkei* community. In particular, various new religious organizations cultivated non-*nikkei* for their new market. They evolved to become multinational organizations and their activities could truly be called 'multinational religions' (Nakamaki 1986: 151-153, 2003: 190)

It is also possible to compare the diffusion of Japanese religions to epidemic disease to some degree (Nakamaki 1991: 126-128, 2003: 106-107). Let us compare the Zen boom and spread of SGI (Sōka Gakkai International) in Europe and America to infection and immunity. The 'virus' of each was created by Dōgen or Nichiren respectively. Their infectious capacity was strong and they occupied a certain share in Japan. They then spread all over the world along with the overseas emigration of Japanese or overseas proselytization of Japanese religions. Abroad, infected individuals were those who belonged to particular strata of society, or those who had a specific taste, with weak immunity or resistance. For instance, Jewish and highly educated people occupied a large proportion in membership of Zen centres in America (Hoshino 1983: 45). Although there are many virus carriers, they do not always 'succumb'. Once they do 'succumb', they obtain immunity and will never be infected again. In the United States, most followers of the 'hippie generation' who entered SGI by street *shakubuku* [a term used by Nichiren groups to denote proselytization] have already left the organization (Kawabata 2009: 55).

Seichō-no-Ie in Brazil

Seichō-no-Ie surpasses all other Japanese new religions in terms of penetration among non-*nikkei* in Brazil. I will attempt to analyse it from the viewpoint of the symbiosis of endemic and epidemic religion (Nakamaki 2003: 131-154). Their monthly magazine '*Acendedor*', published in Portuguese, had a circulation of more than 500,000 in 1988. We can cite some factors for the success of Seichō-no-Ie: (1) its doctrines allow for syncretism and match the taste of Brazilians; (2) the organization has skillfully achieved parallel double structures (one using the Portuguese language and the other, the Japanese language) (Maeyama 1983: 211-212); (3) it holds an extremely accommodative attitude towards Catholicism; (4) it is said to be a philosophy of life rather than a religion *per se*. Meanwhile, if we look into the reasons for affiliation among new members, we find that the cure of disease, abortion remorse and spiritual solutions to concrete problems of daily life carry considerable weight. In this sense, it may be said that its popularity derives from its character as an ethical religion, accompanied by its record of providing a way to cure illness.

Next, I would like to examine what kind of impact the Portuguese language division has had, while noting that the Japanese language division's appeal is closely related to ethnicity. During the orientation for beginners, it is emphasized that Seichō-no-Ie is not only a religion but also a philosophy as well as a view of life. Newcomers do not have to abandon their former religion; rather Seichō-no-Ie is presented as a complementary doctrine. Therefore, it can be accepted as a personal religion or just as a view of life.

Masaharu Taniguchi, the founder of Seichō-no-Ie, advocated in his book *Seimei no Jissō* [Truth of Life] that there is just one truth although there are many different ways of explaining it, from the viewpoint of *bankyō kiitsu* [the truth that all religions emanate from one universal God] (Taniguchi 1962). That is, he declared the possibility of its co-existence with other religions (Nakamaki 1993). This idea was actually applied in Brazil, a different cultural environment. Let us pick up some typical examples. Firstly, followers are allowed to maintain Catholicism as their family religion. This avoids friction with the Catholic Church and freedom to choose their individual religion is secured for new members. Secondly, some followers say that they found their personal religion (Catholicism) within Seichō-no-Ie. This accompanies the satisfaction that thanks to the teachings of Seichō-no-Ie, they could see Catholicism in a new light. As Takashi Maeyama points out, they cherish their Catholic identity even though they are not particularly pious, and

they put value on being good Catholic lay followers (Maeyama 1992: 146). Seichō-no-Ie allows them to preserve this status.

There were, however, some Brazilian executive leaders who were deeply involved in religious practices, which at a glance, appeared far from Seichō-no-Ie or Catholicism. Two examples are given below. One was the case of a yoga teacher and manager of a yoga school (combined with a nursery) which was the only one in Porto Velho, Rondônia, a state in Western Brazil bordering Bolivia. Being interested in yoga, she began to read a book 'Yoga for Christians'. After moving to Porto Velho, she attended a yoga *dōjō* [training hall] in Rio de Janeiro and practised yoga during her holidays. When she first encountered the teachings of Seichō-no-Ie at one of its meetings, she found the notion of micro cosmos and the teaching of nature conservation to be similar in both yoga and Seichō-no-Ie. For her, *Shinsōkan* [Seichō-no-Ie meditation] played an important role in connecting yoga and Seichō-no-Ie. In particular, the two have lots in common in terms of breathing methods and both of them aim at internal perfection. There is no contradiction between yoga and Seichō-no-Ie for her, and she can deal with them on the same basis. She learned yoga as a science, a philosophy, and an art; therefore, it was the same as Seichō-no-Ie which also encompasses a view of life, philosophy, medical science, psychology, and art.

Another case is that of a woman who managed a private primary school in Ariquemes, a city in Rondônia state who was a member of União do Vegetal (UDV) (Nakamaki 1992: 20-23). UDV is a religious organization where followers consume a hallucinogenic drink called 'Vegetal' and regard illusions caused by the drink as God's revelation. They believe in a cycle of reincarnation and aim at spiritual improvement. This hallucinogenic drink is similar to a South-American Indian's drink called *ayahuasca* or *yajé*, and it was known to Brazilians who came to the border between Brazil and Peru during the rubber boom. Subsequently, various religious groups emerged. UDV was formed by José Gabriel da Costa in 1961 and received stronger influence from spiritism than from Catholicism. The headquarters were originally located in Porto Velho and moved to Brasília in 1981. She remained affiliated with UDV for nine years and with Seichō-no-Ie for eight years, and mostly at the same time. In fact, 'a number of UDV members go to Seichō-no-Ie' she said. Comparing UDV and Seichō-no-Ie, she said that UDV membership mainly consists of individual experiences while Seichō-no-Ie is easier to convey in terms of its teachings. She often quoted the words of Masaharu Taniguchi in her correspondence with the parents of her students but she never received objections from them. If we take the view that although God is only one, there are various means of explanation, UDV whose core activity is personal

experience through hallucination, and Seichō-no-Ie whose core activities are publication or lecturing, can coexist without contradiction.

These two women happened to be intelligent university graduates. They were both involved in education and nursing, but the practices of yoga and UDV and Seichō-no-Ie coexisted in their consciousness without any contradiction. However, for Seichō-no-Ie as a religious organization, such issues among members could be accompanied by increasing entropy. Sometimes a brake to control entropic decline is needed. But for Brazilians mixing is not negative, but rather, is often considered to be very positive. Generally speaking, Brazilians tend to consider their culture as mixed and the yoga teacher believed that a pure culture did not exist in Brazil and that they must be mixed in harmony. By this, she even concluded that 'Brazil is the centre of world and Brazil itself is the world', and referred to the words of Masaharu Taniguchi during his visit to Brazil that he would prefer to be born in Brazil next time.

It is alleged that at a rally for all Brazilian Seichō-no-Ie executive leaders, Masaharu Taniguchi said that Brazil would be a suitable place for a centre of his Humanity Enlightenment Movement, which aims at realizing world peace through faith in the Absolute God (Seichō-no-Ie 2008) since many races and ethnic groups from around the world gathered and lived in harmony there. This invoked 'mixed feelings of courage and confusion' (Maeyama 1992: 152) in *nikkei* people and the notion that 'It is a Japanese mission to clean up Brazilian society' spread among the Japanese language division. On the other hand, the words of its founder 'I would prefer to be born in Brazil next time' gained the sympathy of the Portuguese language division which was Brazil-centric, and greatly encouraged Brazilian membership.

From the above, we can create the following explanation. At first, when Seichō-no-Ie decided to expand their proselytization to non-*nikkei* people in Brazil, it was their strategy to create two groups based on the aspect of language. Two groups meant the Japanese language division and the Portuguese language division; thus Habitat segregation was implemented. The Portuguese language division had its base in the city of Porto Velho, the capital of the state of Rondônia, while the Japanese language division had its base in Treze de Setembro, a Japanese community [*colônia*] in the suburbs of Porto Velho, Rondônia. They were relatively independent in carrying out their activities, but the joint event of a *Ōharai* [purification ritual] was organized once a year. There were a few *nisei* who could speak Portuguese in the Portuguese language division, and some gave lectures from the position of 'Assistant lecturer'. What is more, in yet another location, a youth group of the Japanese language division used Portuguese at their

meeting. In this way, the Japanese language division and the Portuguese language division were relative not absolute entities, being not necessarily clearly divided by language or ethnicity. A state of harmonious symbiosis was implemented as seen in their joint events. At the same time, Seichō-no-Ie members admitted belonging to plural religions in Brazil as well as in Japan, so it could be diffused with Catholicism, yoga, or new religions originating in Brazil without any conflict. Moreover, it could be said that the founder modified his words and explanation to inspire *nikkei* and non-*nikkei* Brazilians respectively.

Now, I focus on their marketing. Each group, the Japanese language division and the Portuguese language division, did marketing, and they competed with each other for numbers. The Japanese language division of Treze de Septembro was formed in 1983. It was directly created by the Seichō-no-Ie Latin America missionary headquarters in São Paulo (the general affiliate in Brazil) and executive leaders were dispatched from there for its establishment. After the Japanese language division was formed, a meeting was held almost every Sunday. In 1987, a *Sōhaku* executive meeting (joint meeting of the *Sōai-kai* [Loving-each-other Committee], consisting of men, and the *Shirohato-kai* [White Dove Committee], of women, was held on first Sunday of each month. *Sōai-kai* and *Shirohato-kai* respectively held study meetings on second Sundays, and joint board meetings of Japanese and Portuguese language divisions on third Sundays. Then, *Sōai-kai* and *Shirohato-kai* held respective study meetings on fourth Sundays. In the case of a fifth Sunday in a month, the activity of first Sunday was brought forward, so Sunday activities were, in principle, rotated on a four-week cycle except for special events. In other words, for executive leaders, every Sunday was taken up with the activities of Seichō-no-Ie. In 1989, the Japanese language division of Treze de Setembro included twelve members of the *Sōai-kai*, and sixteen members of the *Shirohato-kai*. Considering there were only around a dozen families in the *colônia*, its penetration was outstanding. When I revisited the area in 1992, an executive leader told me 'The whole *colônia* became Seichō-no-Ie'. It didn't mean that everybody in the *colônia* had become its follower but when one person in a family subscribes to publications of Seichō-no-Ie, the whole family was regarded as Seichō-no-Ie. Therefore, in this sense, Seichō-no-Ie spread among all Japanese families in the *colônia*. During this time, the Rondonia Joint Association of *Sōai-kai* won an award as the most subscriber-winning group in Brazil. The Rondonia Joint Association of *Shirohato-kai* also received first prize in Brazil after increasing the number of '*Seishimei Kaiin*', or the 'members of the Body

for the Holy Mission'. Thus, the Japanese members of the Colônia of Treze de Setembro greatly contributed to this.

At that time, the Rondonia area was at the forefront of western pioneering of Seichō-no-Ie in Brazil. Numerous *nikkei* settled in the area from southeastern Brazil and new *nikkei* communities were being formed. Seichō-no-Ie went on the offensive towards this new market led by its missionary headquarters in Brazil, effective marketing through study groups or boards was conducted, and they succeeded in accounting for a reasonable share of the market. Thus, in Treze de Setembro, it almost became a monopoly.

A Japanese [*nikkei*] succeeded to the position of chief director at Seichō-no-Ie in Brazil in spite of the fact that the overwhelming majority of members were non-*nikkei*. In addition, at the end of the 1980s, when this research was carried out, all of the executive leadership roles and important positions of headquarters were occupied by Japanese who were *nikkei*. This style of top management was the same as that of Japanese enterprises overseas.

SGI (Sōka Gakkai International) USA

In the case of SGI USA, the position of chief director had been passed from Japanese to Japanese since 1960. According to a recent report by Akira Kawabata, they experienced a stagnation called Phase II in the 1970s, and thereafter they started to appoint Americans as leaders (Kawabata 2008: 51-61). In the mid-1970s, there were about 60,000 active members, but by 1979 the number had dropped to around 30,000. Assertive street recruiting activities [*shakubuku*] disappeared, and an annual convention, which had been held without interruption since 1963, was discontintinued in 1979. The convention, characterized by its mass games, was a means to involve and unify all members and functioned to demonstrate the presence of the religious organization to the public. In those days, a number of hippie-generation Americans had left the organization, thus the relative proportion of Japanese members had increased. The Americans who continued to stay had a superior academic background and high positions in their professions. Instead of the convention, an SGI General Meeting was held in 1980, in the presence of the President, Daisaku Ikeda. In the middle of 1980s the convention re-emerged, and general meetings of the Youth Division and the Young Men's Division were also held. The 1980s was a period when '*Kōsen-rufu*' was freely translated as 'World Peace'. In 1990, President Ikeda stayed in Los Angeles for seventeen days, and promulgated

its precepts among executive leaders and members. In the 1990s no convention took place: instead efforts were devoted to the English translation of *Gosho* [The writing of Nichiren Daishōnin] and the editing of *The Sōka Gakkai Dictionary of Buddhism*. Analysing this from the perspective of transitions in SGI leadership, all executive leaders were ethnic Japanese until the mid-1970s, whereas from 1977 to 1982 heads of the Young Men's Division and the Young Women's Division were non-Japanese Americans. However, in 1982 heads of both divisions were occupied by Japanese once more. In 1989, a non-Japanese American became the head of the Young Men's Division once more. In the 1990s, non-Japanese Americans occupied most heads positions in the Men's Division, Women's Division, Youth Division, Young Men's Division and Young Women's Division. Considering that most of these executive leaders were staff of the headquarters, bureaucratization is possibly accelerating. At present, the official number of members is 100,000. This scale of membership shows that SGI USA is only one of several Asian religious groups which has a small share of the religious market there. It does not have a political party, like New Kōmeito in Japan. It is possible to consider that this religious group has now weakened its epidemic nature, i.e. its spreading potential, compared to the period of street *shakubuku*.

In 2009, at the Japanese Association for the Study of Religion and Society, Kawabata reported that one of the reasons for retreat during Phase II was the insufficient use of English at meetings. According to him, there are four levels of English use: (1) Meeting and discussion level, (2) Bulletin level, (3) Daisaku Ikeda's publication level and (4) Doctrine level. A shift from Japanized English to natural English had started in the 1980s and, at last, Americans had come to fully understand the philosophy. This can be regarded as an innovation. Judging from the fact that Ikeda, Honorary President of SGI, stayed at Los Angeles in 1990, we can guess that he played the important role of innovator. What is more, we can assume that concerns about the level of linguistic understanding were behind the appointment of non-Japanese Americans to national leadership roles. In order to overcome the retreat of Phase II, management came to emphasize the process of deepening the individual religious understanding of American members, over improving their consciousness of 'belonging by experiencing oneness', such as occurred at the former conventions. In other words, a style of management dependent on events shifted to a style of management focusing on the translation of doctrine. Nevertheless, the decision on these matters was made in Japan, and the organizational structure of SGI management still shows a hierarchy, with the Japanese headquarters at the top.

Sōka Gakkai USA has a fifty-year history, and it is assumed that bureaucratization is progressing, and that the religion itself is becoming an established one. Under such circumstances, although innovations in terms of language or organizational culture have been remarkable, whether this has resulted in any philosophical innovation for the 21st century or not remains in question.

Sharing, marketing and the management approach of each

As a matter of course, management strategy naturally differs when facing a limited market or an unlimited market. When distinguishing the differences between endemic religions and epidemic religions from the viewpoint of the market, it makes a great difference whether the market is limited or unlimited.

Religions based on ancestral cults, local cults and ethnic cults such as manifested in the *Bon-odori* [Bon festival dance to honour the spirits of the ancestors in Japan] and *Eisā* [drum dance for Obon in Okinawa] never cross the boundary of race, region, and ethnicity. Therefore, these religions have no choice but to function as endemic religions in a limited market. In such a market, there are many conflicts and struggles between endemic religions for a share of it. After arriving at a relatively stable phase, the logic of sharing functions becomes active. Habitat segregation is one of the forms in this phase, and mutual non-intervention guarantees this stable phase. As seen from the analysis of official events in São Paulo, coexistence is another logical approach which helps to maintain this phase. The basis of management in the case of endemic religions does not allow individual prominence, but rather tries to promote equality. Innovation and market-opening are not welcomed and at times resisted.

On the other hand, religious communities are organized to share their suffering with no limits across blood, local, or ethnic relationships. Keiichi Yanagawa elucidated the concept of *dōku kyōdōtai* [a community of suffering] (Yanagawa 1982: 52), which was based on Victor Turner's concept of the same name (Turner 1969: 14). It is new religions that organize such a community of shared pain. In the Americas, at the beginning, Japanese new religions were involved in a contest for a share of *nikkei* community members, and then gradually extended their hands to non-*nikkei* community members in their new market. Seichō-no-Ie, Perfect Liberty Kyōdan, Sekai Kyūsei Kyō, Sōka Gakkai, and Sūkyō Mahikari adopted this strategy, achieving the character of epidemic religions. At first, these religions aimed

at a niche market limited to the *nikkei* community. But not being satisfied with this situation, they fought their way toward the unlimited non-*nikkei* market. Expansion and prominence are valued highly, and are positively recommended. Here, the 'logic of marketing' replaces the 'logic of sharing'. For this, innovation is the cornerstone of marketing. Innovation appears at various stages, such as formulating a mission strategy and promoting the understanding of precepts. It seems that innovators operate powerfully in Japanese new religions in the Americas. Innovations are controlled by the concrete intentions of innovators who dominate the head office in Japan, and in an overseas office this is reinforced by the tendency for Japanese *nikkei* to occupy the top management roles. The degree of multi-nationalization and localization can be judged by the extent to which top management is shared between both *nikkei* and non-*nikkei.* The degree to which these factors are present will also affect market share problems in the global religious market.

There are differences between the sharing management and marketing management strategies. In order to continue and maintain a religious group in a religious market, if management adopts the logic of 'habitat segregation', then sharing goes up in value. As a result, endemic infection is achieved at a certain stable phase. On the other hand, marketing their mission strategy and an understanding of precepts is necessary for epidemic religions which yearn for the expansion of their religious market share. In such cases, each religion aspires to have a religious monopoly of the market, and the principle of competition is introduced. Some of them give up the aim of expanding in the domestic religious market and *nikkei* religious market, and go into the non-*nikkei* market abroad. In doing so, they need to establish a structure with an overseas missionary division to manage their mission abroad. In addition, as religions show a rising tendency towards epidemicalization, they are obliged to assume that their management does not fully function in the new context, and introduce innovations. However, if they try to slow down their epidemicalization, a decline in membership may result, which was observed in the case of SGI-USA. In such a phase, a marketing management strategy would need to be re-adjusted to the situation.

This chapter has shown that marketing and sharing approaches exist as opposites. It has suggested that they are connected with epidemic religions and endemic religions respectively, and that original management strategies such as habitat segregation were developed when Japanese religions expanded globally to the Americas.

Works cited

Hoshino Eiki. 1983. "Americateki sanga no tenkai – Zen Centre no genjō to bunseki [American development of sangha: Current state and analysis of Zen Centre]." *Taishō Daigaku Kenkyū Kiyou* [*Taishō University Research Bulletin*], 68.

Hunter, H. Louise. 1971. *Buddhism in Hawaii: Its Impact on a Yankee Community*, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

Imanishi Kinji. 2002 [1941]. *Seibutsu no Sekai Hoka* [*World of Organisms, and Other Things*], Tokyo: Chuō Kōronsha (Original publication *Seibutsu no Sekai*, Kōbundō)

—. 2002. *A Japanese View of Nature: The World of Living Things* (translated by Pamela Asquith, Heita Kawakatsu, Shusuke Yagi and Hiroyuki Takasaki). London: RoutledgeCurzon.

Kawabata Akira. 2008. "Americajin ni Shintō suru Bukkyō – America SGI eno Nyūshin to sono Miryoku [Buddhism that permeates into Americans – Entering SGI America and its appeal]." *Globalization Jōkyō ni okeru Nihongata Shin Shūkyō no Kanousei ni tsuiteno Hikaku Shakaigaku Kentō* [*Comparative Social Study on the Possibility of Japanese-style New Religions at the Time of Globalization*], edited by Yutaka Akiba. Report of a Research Project under Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research. Osaka: Osaka Prefecture University, School of Humanities and Social Sciences.

Maeyama Takashi. 1968. "Burajiru Nikkei Minority Shakai ni okeru Shūkyō Kōdō no Ichi Kōsatsu [A Study on Religious Behavior among Japanese Minority Communities in Brazil]." *Kenkyū Report* III, São Paulo: Jinbun Kagaku Kenkyūjo.

—. 1983. "Japanese Religions in Southern Brazil: Change and Syncretism." *Latin American Studies* 6: 181-238.

—. 1992. "Brazil Seichō-no-Ie Kyōkai no Tagen Kozo [Pluralistic Structure of Seichō-no-Ie Church in Brazil]." In *Tōsuisuru Bunka – Chūnanbei no Shūkyō to Shakai* [*Intoxication Culture – Religions and Societies of Central and South America*], edited by Hirochika Nakamaki. Tokyo: Heibonsha.

Matsuzawa Tetsuro and William C. McGrew. 2008. "Kinji Imanishi and 60 years of Japanese primatology." *Current Biology* 18 (14) July: 587-591.

Nakamaki Hirochika. 1978. "Hawaii no *nikkei* Shūkyō ni okeru Nihon Shikō to America Shikō [Orientation towards Japan, and towards America of *nikkei* Religions in Hawaii]" *Shūkyō Kenkyū* [*Religious Studies*] 51 (3).

—. 1979. "Tendaishū." In *Hawai nikkei Shūkyō no Tenkai to Genkyō – Hawaii nikkeijin Chōsa Chūkan Hōkoku* [*Development and Current State of nikkei Religions in Hawaii – Mid-term Research Report on Hawaiian nikkei*], edited by Keiichi Yanagawa and Kiyomi Morioka. Tokyo: University of Tokyo, Department of Religion.

—. 1980. "Nikkei mediums and folk beliefs in Hawaii." *Bulletin of the National Museum of Ethnology* 5(2).

—. 1991. "Nihon Shūkyō no Gendaiteki Tenkai – America to Brazil no Bukkyō wo Chūshin ni" [Modern Development of Japanese Religions – focusing on Buddhism in America and Brazil]. In *Gendai to Bukkyō – Gendai Nihonjin no Seishin Kōzō to Bukkyō* [*Modern era and Buddhism – Mentality of Modern Japanese and Buddhism*], edited by Kōkan Sasaki. Tokyo: Shunjūsha.

—. 1992. "Hajime ni Ekitai Ariki – Brazil ni okeru Genkaku Shūkyō no Sōseiki" [Liquid Existed First – Birth of Hallucinogenic Religions in Brazil]. In *Tōsuisuru Bunka – Chūnanbei no Shūkyō to Shakai* [*Intoxication Culture – Religions and Societies of Central and South America*], edited by Hirochika Nakamaki. Tokyo: Heibonsha.

—. 1993. "Endemikku shūkyō to epidemikku shūkyō no kyōsei – Brazil Seichō-no-Ie no jirei kara" [Coexistence of endemic and epidemic religions: Taking an example of Seichō-no-Ie in Brazil]. *Shūkyō Kenkyū* [*Journal of Religious Studies*] 296.

—. 2003. *Japanese Religions at Home and Abroad: Anthropological Perspectives*, Oxford: RoutledgeCurzon.

Ōhashi Hideshi. 1998. *Okinawa Shamanism no Shakai Shinrigakuteki Kenkyū* [*Social and Psychological Studies on Shamanism in Okinawa*], Tokyo: Kōbundō.

Seichō-no-Ie. 2008. "History of Seichō-no-Ie." Accessed 29 March 2018. http://www.seicho-no-ie.org/eng/whats_sni/history.html.

Taniguchi Masaharu. 1962. *Seimei no Jissō* [*Truth of Life*]. Tokyo: Kyōbunsha.

Turner, Victor. 1969. *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*. Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company.

Umesao Tadao. 1989 [1967]. *Bunmei no Seitaishikan* [*An Ecological View of History – Japanese Civilization in the World*], Vol. 5. Tokyo: Chūō Kōron Sha.

—. 1990. *Umesao Tadao Chosakushū* [*Collected Works of Tadao Umesao*], Vol. 7. Tokyo: Chūō Kōron Sha.

Yanagawa Keiichi. 1982. *Shūkyō Riron to Shūkyō Shi* [*Theory and History of Religions*]. Tokyo: Ōbunsha.

About the author

Hirochika Nakamaki, Director-General, Suita City Museum, Professor Emeritus, National Museum of Ethnology, Japan is an anthropologist (Ph.D.) of Japanese religions, Japanese management and calendar studies. He is the author of *Japanese Religions at Home and Abroad: Anthropological Perspectives* (2003). Recent co-edited publications include *Business and Anthropology: A Focus on Sacred Space* (2013) and *Enterprise as an Instrument of Civilization: An Anthropological Approach to Business Administration* (2016).

Section 5

Future Perspectives: Globalizing New Religions in a Postmodern World

17   Modern New Religions' Responses to Globalization in a Post-Modern World

Nobutaka Inoue

Abstract

This chapter discusses the effects of globalization and new information technologies on religious activities in Japan, with reference to both modern new religions that developed in the course of Japan's modernization, and to more recently formed 'new new' religions that have arisen in the era of globalization, and have been influenced by globalization and new information technologies from their inception. The chapter argues that one consequence of this changing social context is the formation of new forms of religion that might be termed 'hyper-religions', which show little continuity with older domestic religious traditions, and do not hesitate to incorporate aspects of religious traditions from other cultures, psychology, or even science fiction.

Keywords: globalization, Japanese religion, new information technologies, modern new religions, 'new new' religions, hyper-religions

Concept of 'modern new religion'

In this chapter I discuss the ways in which globalization and information processes have affected religious activities in Japan from two perspectives. Firstly, the response of modern new religions to globalization and information processes, and secondly the appearance of new types of religious groups that have formed on the basis of globalization and the information age.

I explain the concept of 'modern new religion' and the reason why I use this term instead of 'new religion', which is the term most commonly used to indicate new movements in modern Japan. I apply the term 'modern new religion' to new movements that have the following two

characteristics:[1] a deep connection with Japanese traditional religions in terms of ritual and teachings which were widely accepted in society before the modernization of Japan, and a new method of organization to correspond to social changes caused by the modernization process. Tenrikyō, Reiyūkai, Sōka Gakkai, Risshō Kōseikai, Sekai Kyūsei Kyō are typical examples of modern new religions. In fact, most groups usually referred to as 'new religions' are included in the category 'modern new religion'.

One of the reasons I am advancing this idea is that some scholars of new religions have the view that a new type of new religion has appeared since the 1970s, and since the 1980s these have been called 'new new religions', 'neo new religions', and other similar terms (Inoue 1997). Using the term 'new new religion' implies a discussion about the beginning and end points of new religions, an issue that has already been extensively discussed. One problem with this, is that if we use the concept 'new religion' exclusively to indicate newly established groups, it must include 'new religions' that have existed in ancient times through the middle ages and well into the modern age. However, if we distinguish 'new religions' from 'religious groups', this is likely to foster debates about the time frame to which these concepts should be applied.

The concept of 'modern new religion' rests on the hypothesis that many new religious groups in modern Japan appeared and were promoted by the modernization of Japanese society as a whole. This overarching hypothesis is associated with two more hypotheses: that this phenomenon is not unique to Japan, and that the formation of a novel kind of religious group, distinct to modern new religions, has been promoted in an age of new social changes. By 'new social changes', I mean the rapid progress of globalization and information technology since the 1970s. These changes have had a gradual but broad influence on religious activities, teachings, and rituals, and may favour the appearance of new types of religious groups.

In this chapter, on the basis of these hypotheses, I discuss the changes observed among modern new religions within the development of globalization and information technology, and the characteristics of novel religious groups formed in the context of these developments.

---

1   'New religion' as a category for certain movements and groups remains an amorphous one among Japanese scholars, mainly because the study of the category as a whole is still undeveloped. New religions are defined loosely in the forward of the *Dictionary of New Religion* (Inoue et al. 1990). Although a number of arguments have been proposed regarding the stages of development of new religions thereafter, the definition of new religion itself remains ambiguous.

Responses of modern new religions to recent social changes

The formation of modern new religions has been realized easily, as they were established on the basis of the former Japanese religious system which had a stable social foundation. In this context, the 'religious system'[2] in pre-modern Japan contains three primary streams. The first and largest stream is that of Buddhist sects through which *danka seido* [the unique Japanese patronage system of Buddhist temples] was established. The second is Shinto, including shrine Shinto and folk Shinto on the basis of *jingi seido* [the kami worship system from ancient times]. The third is Shugendō, which is a religion based on traditional mountain worship, and established as a result of the harmonization between Shinto and Buddhism.

While they differ from one group to another as to how they have been influenced by these three religious streams, modern new religions established new organizations, incorporating rituals and teachings, under the influence of these three streams. Therefore, when assessing the characteristics of the teachings and rituals of modern new religions, we can find many points of continuity within the broad history of Japanese religion.

On the other hand, through the process of modernization, modern new religions came to develop different methods of organization than that of older religions. Social changes in the modern era include urbanization, industrialization, changes in local communities, and changes of the family system (ie. from the extended family to the nuclear family). Other significant changes include the appearance of mass media, the development of transportation methods, and the development of universal compulsory education. The organizational characteristics of modern new religions and the rapid increase of members in a relatively short time are closely associated with these modern social conditions.

The number of modern new religions have gradually increased and some of them have grown into large organizations with more than a million members. The increasing number of members of modern new religions drew social and political attention from the first half of the 20th century through to the 1970s. However, the progress of globalization and information

2   In the context of this discussion, 'religious system' refers to my approach for analysing the social and cultural development of religions by applying the three analytical categories of 'subject', 'network', and 'information' to religious phenomenon. 'Subject' includes the leaders and followers in a religious group, 'network' the organizational aspects of such groups, and 'information' their teachings and rituals. See Inoue 1991.

thereafter influenced the activities of modern new religions in a variety of ways.

Globalization is the process where exchanges among human beings, as well as organizations, expand and intensify. It therefore has the potential to override many kinds of borders relating to the maintenance of modern society, including national borders. Modern new religions were established in sympathy with Japanese traditional religious culture, and their main focus of activity was people's daily lives. During an age of high economic growth, the main reasons for becoming members of modern new religions were to solve problems caused by poverty, disease, and conflicts in the family and the workplace. With few exceptions, modern new religions have approached finding solutions to these kinds of problems in a similar way to that of positive thinking, within the framework of Japanese society.

One major effect of globalization is that of moving from a domestic viewpoint to a global one. Although modern new religions have responded to this new situation in many different ways, some modern new religions have started developing new activities, initiating global activities such as international peace movements, and increasing volunteer activities. These kinds of activities have become prominent since the 1980s. For example, from 1984 onwards Risshō Kōseikai started sending hundreds of thousands of blankets to Africa every year (Campaign for Sharing Blankets with People in Africa N.d.). Byakko Shinkōkai began developing a world peace movement, taking advantage of the International Year of Peace in 1986, and transferring the promotional centre of the movement from Ichikawa city in Chiba prefecture to New York, and changing the name of the movement to The World Peace Prayer Society (2017). Myōchikai established the Arigatō ('Thank you') Foundation in 1990 (Arigatō International 2017), offering emergency support in cases of conflicts and natural disasters in every area of the world under the cooperation with agencies of United Nations such as UNICEF and UNHCR. They especially stressed the improvement of the environment for children. The Arigatō Foundation held the first forum of Global Network of Religions for Children in 2000 to extend their activities internationally.[3]

The advances of the information society have also influenced the activities of modern new religions. As they began a more systematic promotion of proselytizing and indoctrination activities in comparison to traditional shrine Shinto and Buddhist sects, modern new religions were influenced by the progress of information technology. The rapid growth in the prevalence

3   Regarding the international activities of the Arigatō Foundation, please see Lee Hwajin (2008)

of the Internet since the 1990s also forced them to reconsider the way they conducted their religious activities. Generally, in modern new religions, members gather at the headquarters or at the local office to engage in face-to-face proselytizing and teaching activities. The discussion meetings of Sōka Gakkai, and Hōza meeting of Reiyūkai-derived groups are typical examples of this type of meeting in modern new religions. Members gather in local branches periodically, exchange opinions, offer advice to members, and give instructions about the purpose of the group's activities. This is an effective method of exchanging important information which should be shared among members.

However, the appearance of the Internet has made it possible to teach their followers and to recruit new members in novel ways, enabling bilateral communication and rapid exchanges of information beyond national boundaries without the need for face-to-face interaction. The problem for them is how they can utilize this new system effectively.[4]

Internet use increased rapidly among Japanese religious groups from the latter half of the 1990s through to the first half of the 2000s following the release of Windows 95 in 1995. Some modern new religions also began actively disseminating their information outside the group, through the Internet. While most groups only have websites in Japanese, some groups have publicized their websites, or part of their websites, in English. Some groups use several foreign languages on their websites, in most cases reflecting the geographic distribution of overseas members. For example, Perfect Liberty Kyōdan has a website in English, Spanish, and Portuguese because of their membership in the USA, Brazil, and other Latin American countries. Reiyūkai (N.d.) uses English, Spanish, and Portuguese because they have members in Latin America as well as some Asian countries.

Sōka Gakkai, (2015) which has members in more than a hundred countries, uses only English. If they were to take into account all these different cultures and languages, they would use multiple languages. Regardless, they have chosen to use only English. However, Sōka Gakkai established an international organization entitled Sōka Gakkai International (SGI) in 1975. The president of SGI is Daisaku Ikeda and in July 2009 their website provided links to related organizations in 37 foreign countries and areas including Japan. Each site in these countries publicizes its contents in the most widely spoken languages of that country. Risshō Kōseikai uses only English although they have more than one million members, the second

---

4   On the uses of the Internet by new religions in Japan and Korea from the late 1990s to the early 2000s, see Inoue 2007.

largest number of members after the Sōka Gakkai among modern new religions. Tenrikyō uses only English on their homepage, even though they started overseas activities during the pre-war period. Explanations of the headquarters facilities called *oyasato* are written in Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Italian, Korean, Nepali, and Portuguese as well as English.

An exceptional case in the use of languages is Ōmoto. They use English, Esperanto, Spanish, Magyar, and Russian. This is not because they have members in areas where these languages are spoken, but because they have claimed to be international even from the pre-war period. Deguchi Onisaburō (one of the key figures in the establishment of Ōmoto in the Meiji period) recommended that members use Esperanto to communicate with people in every region of the world. Therefore, it can be said that the languages used on the Ōmoto Internet site express their doctrinal position, and their use of multiple languages on the site is for symbolic purposes, not for the practical purpose of communication.

However, even in modern new religions, the use of the Internet for global activities is not so common. The information age has changed the ways in which we communicate. Among the younger generation, we see the phenomenon of 'detachment from organizational religion'. Younger people tend to avoid face-to-face communication. This means that activities for modern new religions are facing radical changes in social conditions, as it challenges their practice of exchanging information face-to-face among members and the use of this method as the basic policy of their daily religious activities.

After modern new religion: the emergence of new types of religious groups

Globalization and information technology progressed rapidly in the last quarter of the 20th century. These social changes promoted the formation of different types of religious groups, in contrast to modern new religions. One such group, which I have termed 'hyper-religion'[5] (discussed further below) started appearing in the 1970s. Furthermore, as the Internet gained popularity, 'virtual religions' and 'cyber religions' began to appear. From a global perspective, the Church of Fools (2018), established in 2004, is a good example of a cyber religion. The Ship of Fools website was established

5   'Hyper-religion' is a term I introduced in Inoue (1999) as a means of distinguishing such groups from 'hyper-traditional religions'.

on April Fools' Day 1998. Significantly, it is the first 3D online church, and features digital bilateral flow of communication between the church and parishioners.

Turning to virtual religion, another example is Second Life. Second Life was established in 2003 by Linden Lab in California. By becoming a member of Second Life, one can engage in all aspects of life, including religious activities in the virtual world. Certain activities, termed the 'big six' are prohibited on Second Life: 'Intolerance, 'Harassment', 'Assault', 'Disclosure', 'Adult Regions, Groups, and Listings', and 'Disturbing the Peace'. However, as religious activities are not prohibited, new Christian sects and other religions engage in virtual proselytizing activities.[6] Although a Japanese version of Second Life was released in 2007, the number of users was fewer than expected. Overall, it seems that activities such as virtual religion and cyber religion are not fully developed in Japan at the time of writing.

I now focus on and offer some background on the term 'hyper-religion'. New religious groups began to appear in Japan from the 1970s onwards that had little relationship with traditional Japanese religion in terms of teachings and rituals. I realized that a corresponding phenomenon was occurring in the United States, Europe, and other countries during a similar time period. A characteristic of these groups is that they freely adopt teachings and rituals that are not common in their mother country, and that have little connection with their traditional religions. They also often adopt non-religious elements, including scientific concepts. I have used the word 'hyper' here in reference to computer terminology such as hyper-card and hyper-text. Hyper-religions demonstrate little continuity with domestic religious tradition but on the other hand show no hesitation in adopting religious traditions from other cultures, psychology, or even concepts used in science fiction.

The appearance of hyper-religion presupposes changes of people's consciousness concerning religious matters. It indicates that objects of concern related to religious thought, rituals, and religious practices have become borderless. It has become easy to access various kinds of religious information in daily life as a result of the progress of information technology. Contacts with foreign religious cultures have also increased greatly as a result of globalization. In contrast, the influence of traditional religious cultures in people's countries of origin is decreasing. When people accept certain ideas,

---

6   As observers of Second Life (N.d.) know, the 'Linden dollar' used in the virtual world can be converted to the US dollar. This means that virtual proselytizing activities lead to actual, real-world donations.

teachings, and rituals, they become less concerned by whether or not religious groups are associated with traditional religion or not. This is also the case of folk religion and seems to be more apparent among the younger generation.[7]

An example of this increasing indifference can be seen in recent changes in the styles of wedding ceremonies in Japan. While the Shinto style of wedding ceremony was the most popular in the first half of the 1990s, the Christian style became the most popular in the latter half of the 1990s. At the time of writing, about two thirds of wedding ceremonies are Christian. Christianity has been accepted in Japan to a certain degree since the Meiji era and, despite the low numbers of professed Christians in Japan, Christianity has had an extensive influence in fields such as social thought, education, and literature. Christmas has also been accepted as a social custom. Bearing this in mind, it is not surprising that the Christian style of wedding ceremony has become popular among the younger generation.

Nevertheless, Japanese people have shown relatively conservative attitudes to rituals such as the coming of age ceremony, funeral services, and ancestral worship. Most modern new religions have developed their activities by coexisting with traditional Buddhist customs concerning funeral and memorial services. In consideration of this, the rapid increase of the Christian style of wedding ceremony is evidence that people have become more flexible regarding religious matters.

Conventional religious culture has had a strong influence on the historical formation of morality and other important values. However, as a result of the weakening of traditional value systems and the free acceptance of various religious cultures, people may adopt religious rituals, teachings, and practices from religions formerly unfamiliar to them. If this tendency can be termed a hyper-state of religious consciousness, then the appearance of hyper-religions is possible on the basis of this hyper-state of religious consciousness. Such groups form their teachings from various religious sources. For example, the teachings of the Bible and Buddhist Sutras, or ideas from Hinduism, Islam, or Shinto may influence the teachings of new religious groups. These types of new groups may have been accepted by people to a certain degree because there is little resistance to the juxtaposition of plural religious ideas and rituals within a single religion.[8]

---

7   Ishi (1994) has shown that new types of annual events, including ones originating in foreign countries, are growing more prevalent especially in urban areas while traditional folk customs are on the decline.

8   Hirafuji (2007) has used the term 'hyper mythology' to refer to the new mythologies created for computer games by mixing and matching myths originally from Greek, Indian, North European, and Japanese mythology.

GLA (God Light Association) and Kōfuku no Kagaku also contain factors of hyper-religion. GLA was established in 1976 by Takahashi Shinji. After Takahashi died in 1976, his eldest daughter Takahashi Keiko became his successor. She made it the main goal of their activities to bring the existence of human beings to a new dimension through the combination of the spiritual world and the material world. For this purpose, she published several books including three volumes of Shin Sōseiki (True Genesis: the volume of Hell, the volume of Heaven, and the volume of the Apocalypse). She also advocated the 'Total Life of Human Science' as the 'Study of the Soul'. Since Takahashi Keiko succeeded to the leadership of GLA, it has become increasingly similar to self-development groups that are based on psychological theory rather than religious ideas.

Kōfuku no Kagaku was established by Ōkawa Ryūhō. Ōkawa decided to live as a religious person in 1980 after he had resigned from Tomen, a big trading company. He proclaimed that his true nature is 'El Cantare', and that Buddha and Hermes were manifestation of El Cantare in this world. He published many books including a number of best sellers. Kōfuku no Kagaku also made the anime films 'Hermes', 'The Laws of the Sun', and 'The Golden Laws' as a means of proselytization, which contain little to no reflection of Japanese religious culture. Further, the movement established a political party, Kōfuku Jitsugen Tō (Happiness Realization Party) in 2009.[9]

Aum Shinrikyō can also be seen as having some characteristics of a hyper-religion. Although Asahara Shōkō, the founder of the group, was once a member of Agonshū, one of the modern new religions, he established his teachings and rituals without any connection to Japanese traditional Buddhist sects. Conversely, he preferred to use ideas such as Karma (from Indian religion), *Phowa* (from Tibetan Buddhism), and Armageddon from Christianity. He also introduced yoga practices to his followers.

These groups have almost no relationship with Shinto and Buddhist sects regarding teachings and rituals. Outside Japan too, some groups categorized as cults or NRMs in Western countries can be included in the category of hyper-religion, and their number is increasing. Scientology and the Raelian Movement might be considered typical examples of hyper-religion outside Japan.[10]

9   Kōfuku no Kagaku established the party in 2009 in order to run official candidates in the elections for the Tokyo Metropolitan Assembly and the House of Representatives (i.e., the general election) that year. They did not win a seat in either election. Their political activities have little bearing on the nature of hyper-religion.

10   See Partridge (2006). Some of the groups described in this work appear to fall under the category of hyper-religion.

Conclusion

Globalization and information technology have had the inevitable effect of changing religious culture. Through globalization, which has been characterized as the creation of 'borderless worlds', unfamiliar religious cultures different from traditional religious cultures have been introduced into Japan through various routes. While on one hand we observe a tendency to return to Japanese traditional religions, sometimes tending to a kind of fundamentalism, the general trend is apparently towards the diversification of religious culture, and even the creation of stateless religions.

Information technology also facilitates radical changes regarding conventional religious ideas, even those formerly regarded as key elements of Japanese religious culture. Accordingly, ideas of ancestral worship and combinatory ideas of Shinto deities and the Buddha might no longer be taken for granted as the common ground of religious culture among Japanese people in the future. As another example, the largest group of Buddhist sects in Japan are those affiliated with Pure Land Buddhism.[11] For them the concept of the Pure Land is essential, and belief in the Pure Land is important more broadly when considering religious culture in Japan. However, for the younger generation of Japanese, it is not clear which commands most credence: the idea of the Pure Land or that of Pleiades as a sacred place which is famous among New Agers and spiritual seekers.

Despite the alienation of hyper-religion from traditional religious cultures, hyper-religions have had some success in attracting members, indicating the loosening sway of traditional ideas concerning religion. There are also increasing opportunities for the comparison of scientific and religious concepts. In Japan, there has so far been little real debate about the differences between religion and science, the boundary between the two, and their mutual influences. However, this can now be explored more widely, as the growth of information technology facilitates the discussion of this relationship between science and religion from various perspectives on the Internet. For example, we can find many threads criticizing religion from a scientific perspective on the site of '2 channeru', a famous Internet site in Japan.[12] Although debates on the Internet are often undervalued, scholars

11   'Jōdo Shinshū' (True Pure Land sect), Jōdoshū (Pure Land sect), Yuzu Nenbutsushū or Yuzu Nenbutsu sect and other Pure Land Buddhist sects are included in Pure Land Buddhism

12   Richard Dawkins (2016) offers the clearest distillation of criticism of religion by the scientifically minded. Views supportive of Dawkins's stance can easily be found on the Internet. Many websites discuss religion in essentially critical terms on the basis of neurological science. Views similar to these could also be heard in Japan in the pre-war years, primarily by psychiatrists who

of religious studies should consider more carefully the consciousness that forms the basis of these debates.

Works cited

Arigatō International (foundation of Myōchikai Kyōdan). 2017. *Arigatō Foundation Homepage.* Accessed 29 March 2018. https://arigatōinternational.org/en and https://arigatōinternational.org/jp.

Campaign for Sharing Blankets with People in Africa. N.d. *Japan Blankets for Africa Campaign.* Accessed 29 March 2018. http://www.mofu.org/.

Church of Fools. 2018. *Church of Fools.* Accessed 29 March 2018. http://churchoffools. com/.

Dawkins, Richard. 2016. *Official Page of Richard Dawkins.* Accessed 29 March 2018. http://richarddawkins.net.

Hirafuji Kikuko. 2007. "Global-ka Shakai to Hyper-Shinwa: Computer RPG ni yoru Shinwa no Kaitai to Saisei" [Globalising Society and Hyper-Mythology: Demolition and Rebirth of Myth by Computer RPG]. In *Shinwa to Gendai* [*Myth and Modernity*], edited by Matsumura Kazuo and Yamanaka Hiroshi. Tokyo: Riton-sha.

Inoue Nobutaka, ed. 1997. *Globalization and Indigenous Culture.* Institute for Japanese Culture and Classics, Kokugakuin University.

Inoue Nobutaka. Kōmoto Mitsugi, Tsushima Michihito, Nakamaki Hirochika, and Nishiyama Shigeru, eds. 1990. *Shin-Shūkyō Jiten* [*Encyclopedia of New Religions*]. Tokyo: Kōbundo.

Inoue Nobutaka. 1991. "Recent trends in the study of Japanese New Religions." *New Religions: Contemporary Papers in Japanese Religion* 2: 4-24.

—. 1999. *Wakamono to Gendai Shūkyō* [*Youth and Modern Religion*]. Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō.

—. 2003. *Japanese College Students' Attitudes Towards Religion: An Analysis of Questionnaire Surveys from 1992 to 2001.* Tokyo: Kokugakuin University.

—. 2007. "Globalization and religion: The cases of Japan and Korea." In *Religion, Globalization, and Culture*, edited by Peter Beyer and Lori Beaman, 453-472. Leiden, the Netherlands: Brill.

Ishii Kenji. 1994. *Toshi no Nenchū Gyōji: Henyō Suru Nihonjin no Shinsei* [*Annual Events in the Urban Area: Changing Mind of Japanese People*]. Tokyo: Shunjūsha.

postulated that religious phenomena – especially those associated with new religions – were pathological in nature. The information age has made it easy for people to voice critical opinions toward religion.

Lee Hwajin. 2008. "Arrival of globalization age and development of new religion: A case study of Myōchikai Kyōdan", *Journal of Religious Studies* 28, Komazawa Daigaku Shūkyōgaku Kenkyūkai.

Partridge, Christopher H, ed. 2006. *Encyclopedia of New Religions: New Religious Movements, Sects and Alternative Spiritualities.* Place: Lion Books.

Perfect Liberty Kyōdan. 2001. *Perfect Liberty Kyōdan Homepage.* Accessed 29 March 2018. http://www.perfect-liberty.or.jp/.

Reiyukai. N.d. Accessed 29 March 2018. *Reiyukai Homepage.* http://www.reiyukai.or.jp/.

Second Life. N.d. Accessed 29 March 2018. *Official Homepage of Second Life.* http://secondlife.com/.

Sōka Gakkai. 2015. Accessed 29 March 2018. *Sōka Gakkai Homepage in English.* http://www.sgi.org/.

Tenrikyō. 2017. Accessed 29 March 2018. *Tenrikyō Homepage.* http://www.Tenrikyō.or.jp/ja/top.html/.

World Peace Prayer Society. 2017. Accessed 29 March 2018. *World Peace Prayer Society Homepage.* http://www.worldpeace.org/.

About the author

Nobutaka Inoue is Professor Emeritus at Kokugakuin University, Faculty of Shinto Studies and also Visiting Professor at the Institute for Japanese Culture and Classics of Kokugakuin University. His main area of scholarship is religious studies, and within that his interests focus on the Sociology of Religion, Comparative Study of Modern Religious Movements, Modern Shinto Study and Religious culture education. Professor Inoue was a former President of the Japanese Association for Religious Studies (2011-2013). His many publications include *New Religions in the Age of Mass Media*, (2017), and *Globalization and Indigenous Culture*, (1997).

Index

Page numbers in italics refer to maps, images, and tables.

Matthias Maass (ed.): *Foreign Policies and Diplomacies in Asia. Changes in Practice, Concepts, and Thinking in a Rising Region*
2014, ISBN 978 90 8964 540 1

Volker Gottowik (ed.): *Dynamics of Religion in Southeast Asia. Magic and Modernity*
2014, ISBN 978 90 8964 424 4

Frédéric Bourdier, Maxime Boutry, Jacques Ivanoff and Olivier Ferrari:
From Padi States to Commercial States. Reflections on Identity and the Social Construction of Space in the Borderlands of Cambodia, Vietnam, Thailand and Myanmar
2015, ISBN 978 90 8964 659 0

Michiel Baas (ed.): *Transnational Migration and Asia. The Question of Return*
2015, ISBN 978 90 8964 658 3

Kees van Dijk: *Pacific Strife. The Great Powers and Their Political and Economic Rivalries in Asia and the Western Pacific 1870-1914*
2015, ISBN 978 90 8964 420 6

Juliet Pietsch and Marshall Clark (eds): *Migration and Integration in Europe, Southeast Asia, and Australia. A Comparative Perspective*
2015, ISBN 978 90 8964 538 8

Arndt Graf and Azirah Hashim (eds): *African-Asian Encounters. New Cooperations and New Dependencies*
2017, ISBN 978 94 6298 428 8