

## The Indigenization and Multinationalization of Japanese Religion — Perfect Liberty Kyōdan in Brazil —

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Why did Brazilians of non-Japanese descent accept a Japanese religion? Through what processes did that acceptance pass, and against what social background? The first objective of this article is to provide the data needed to answer such questions related to the indigenization of a religion from Japan. A second objective is to consider the religion's extension of a multinational network, from Brazil as its base, to South and North America and even farther afield to Europe.

The two questions of indigenization and multinationalization will be pursued through a case study of Perfect Liberty Kyōdan (PL).<sup>1</sup> After a period in which the arrival of Japanese instructors in 1957 was followed by propagation mainly of Japanese and Brazilians of Japanese descent, Brazil's PL has been active in propagation to Brazilians of non-Japanese descent and vigorous in its pursuit of indigenization. Multinationalization is also progressing, as symbolized by the South America Holy Land in Arujá City on the outskirts of São Paulo. PL thus provides a suitable object for studying the indigenization and multinationalization of a multinational religion.

\* This article is a revised and condensed translation of a chapter from NAKAMAKI 1989.

<sup>1</sup> The Perfect Liberty Kyōdan is called *Instituição Religiosa Perfect Liberty* in Brazil, and The Church of Perfect Liberty in the United States. It was established on 29 September 1946 as PL Kyōdan, but its name was changed in 1974 to its present form. At one time it had been the Hito no Michi Kyōdan, founded in 1931 by Miki Tokuharu, but in 1936 it was suppressed by the government, with Miki Tokuharu being arrested along with his eldest son, Tokuchika, and in April 1937 the religious group was dissolved. Tokuharu died during the war; after the war Tokuchika reorganized the religious group as PL Kyōdan. The headquarters is in the "Holy Land" in Tondabayashi City in Osaka. According to the 1989 issue of the *Shūkyō nenkan* [Religion yearbook], it has approximately 2,200,000 believers and 30,000 instructors, with over 140 legally registered religious bodies throughout the country. Its influence seems to be on the wane, however, and the number of active believers is estimated to be much lower.

*Outline of Brazil's Perfect Liberty Kyōdan*

PL's formal overseas propagation began with Brazil. Azuma Ryōzō, the first instructor sent to Brazil, arrived in São Paulo in February 1957. At the time an assistant instructor, he worked as a chef in the Tokyo Inn located in the Liberdade section of the city and began propagation in his spare time.<sup>2</sup> His curing of an old man who could not stop shaking, by practicing *oyashikiri* 祖遂断 (the taking of an oath to God) for ten days, triggered an increase in membership (MORI 1979, p. 85). In response to an appeal for an instructor to cope with the increase, the first instructor, Tomio Masuichi, arrived on 2 October 1957. In November they leased a fifth-floor apartment on Liberdade Avenue and opened the Brazil Headquarters. On 16 February 1958 they moved headquarters from there to a one-story house in Jabaquara and enshrined there the Head Office Spirit. This day is fixed in Brazil as the anniversary of the group's beginning. Over a thousand people are said to have crowded in for worship at the Jabaquara headquarters on the occasion of the Patriarch Miki Tokuchika's first overseas visit in 1960.

In 1964 the group purchased a building at Rua Pirapitingui 204 in the Liberdade section, and they moved the South America Headquarters there from Jabaquara. There was a church in the same building; in 1972 it became independent under the name Central Church, and is now known as the Liberdade Church. The old headquarters building was later demolished, and an eight-story New Brazil Head Office was completed in 1981.

The following year, 1965, 1,560 hectares of land in Arujá was purchased as the site for the South America Holy Land. In each of the following two years eight young PL men were sent from Japan to work on the Holy Land. As a result, 1968 saw the golf club begin operations, and 1971 saw the completion of the outdoor liturgical stage. Then in 1972 the botanical research institute was opened, with researchers tackling the problems of the tissue culture of virus-free potatoes and the growing-point cultivation of orchids. Also in 1972 the recreation park was completed. Later, in 1976, a training hall and a cemetery were opened, to be followed in 1983 by the Corina Santa Church (where the Administrative Office was located) and in 1984 by the Youth Hall (gymnasium).

From as early as 1967 the PL Festival and other events were held in the South America Holy Land. At the Founder's Festival, begun in 1973, fireworks attracted huge crowds. According to the group's newspaper,

<sup>2</sup> An assistant instructor is described as "a member of the faithful who is especially chosen to handle the same teaching responsibilities as an instructor and to engage in guidance in the faith" (YUASA 1977, p. 107).

*Jornal PERFEITA LIBERDADE* (hereafter, *Jornal PL*), and other sources, attendance is said to have been 30,000 in 1973, increasing to 50,000 in 1974, 80,000 in 1976, 100,000 in 1978, and more than 100,000 in 1979. Actual numbers attending, however, were always far below these figures; the largest crowd is estimated to have been around 30,000. In 1980 the Founder's Festival was canceled at the last minute because of traffic problems and the problem of maintaining public order. Now big events like the Founder's Festival have been downplayed, but the Holy Land is effectively used as the scene of various other events such as the sports day, the religious festivals in spring and autumn, an athletic tournament, and for training and other educational activities.

The South America Holy Land carries on the concept of the Holy Land in Japan. Not only Brazilian members but also members from Argentina, Paraguay, Peru, and other Spanish-speaking countries gather there, making it an important religious center. Still, an organizational base from which to exercise control over all of South America has yet to be established here.

As the various facilities in the South America Holy Land would indicate, PL's activities are not limited to religious ones. Besides the obvious activities of propagation and education, others deserving mention are cultural, sporting, and public-service activities. Cultural activities include flower arrangement and choirs; sporting activities include indoor soccer, volleyball, baton twirling, and a sports day. Public-service activities include MOVINEC (Movimento Nacional de Embelezamento das Cidades)—a beautify-the-cities movement—and contributions of food and clothing to charitable organizations. MOVINEC is a nationwide movement that began in 1982, led by the youth section. On the level of the religious body as a whole, special mention is to be made of a donation to the Brazilian government of a primary-pure-breed of a germ-free potato and the presentation to medical facilities of medical equipment such as stomach cameras.

The important activities of propagation and education are also varied and wide-ranging. They can be divided broadly into two periods, one of emphasis on propagation, one of a shift in emphasis to education. The Brazilian PL itself thinks in terms of the two periods of "*oyashikiri* propagation" and "teaching-emphasis." This change was due to the efforts of Chiba Nobuhiro, head of the Brazil diocese, who assumed the position in 1976.

*Oyashikiri* began from the time the second spiritual head, Miki Tokuchika, received it in a vision on 27 May 1958. Added to the *ofurikae* お振替 (transferral) of Hito no Michi times and the *migawari no shinji* 身代りの神事 (religious act of vicarious suffering) of contemporary times, it has come to occupy an important place in propagation activity. The *oyashikiri no shinji* is explained as "a religious act for the purpose of having

the troubles in some person's present life taken away, or for the purpose of having that person's fervent prayers answered, through an oath to God taken by the spiritual head (*oshieoya*) in which the latter offers himself as a sacrifice" (YUASA 1977, p. 27). In the churches the instructor listens to the problems and petitions of members and gives each one his *kaisetsu* (explanation of what the solution to the problems are), after which he performs the *oyashikiri no shinji* as mediator for the members before God. It is also one way of praying for God's power to act. Sometimes the words of the *oyashikiri* are recited over and over, the same as the *daimoku* or the *nenbutsu*, and this is reputed to be effective in easing people's troubles. *Oyashikiri* has been given a special meaning by PL, but, like the *jōrei* of Sekai Kyūseikyō or the *daimoku* of Sōka Gakkai, it has the power to appeal to beginners. The reason is that beginners can more frequently find a way out of their problems through simple actions than through difficult doctrines. And, as a matter of fact, the widespread use of *oyashikiri* enabled PL to achieve success in its propagation to Brazilians.

The number of Brazilian believers of non-Japanese descent increased rapidly during the time Hashimoto Seita was head of the diocese (he took office in 1970). This also corresponded with the period in which *casa de oyashikiri*, grassroots organizations of the church, increased. Private residences turned over to use as meeting or prayer places played a significant role in effecting contacts with nonbelievers, even without signs advertizing their functions. Many places where groundbreaking propagation took place also owed a great deal to the *oyashikiri*.

With Chiba becoming head of the Brazil diocese (1976), the emphasis shifted to educational activities. First of all, Chiba himself showed an ardent desire to learn Portuguese; then, in 1977, he established a school to train instructors and worked hard for the training of Brazilian instructors (including second-generation Japanese). Along with the completion of a training hall in the Holy Land, he built up a system of intensive training on all levels and of all types. He embarked on an aggressive program of translations into Portuguese, especially the writings of the second spiritual head, Miki Tokuchika. But in June of 1984 Chiba returned to Japan, his post was left vacant, and the Brazil diocese was placed under the jurisdiction of Uehara Keiko, who was supervising all of North and South America.

As of July 1984, there were 62 churches (34 in the São Paulo district, 18 in the Rio de Janeiro district, 3 in Minas Gerais district, 7 elsewhere), and branches and mission stations numbered 116. The wave of propagation had spread from São Paulo State to Rio State, then on to Minas Gerais State. There were 84 instructors and over 2,000 assistant instructors. Fluctuations among the general membership are extreme, so it is difficult to determine precise numbers, but active believers are estimated

to have peaked at about 30,000, of whom over 90% were Brazilians of non-Japanese descent.

*Indigenization of an Ethical Religion*

Of all the Japanese new religions, PL places particular emphasis on ethics. How was such a religion able to spread in a society where the traditions of a spirit-possession religion and Catholicism were so strong? Although a religion of ethics, PL began its propagation with a stress on miracles. Perhaps the reason is that miracles are a familiar concept to Catholics, so that missionaries were able to attract the interest of Brazilians by emphasizing them. But after the use of miracles as a point of contact, the next step was to teach people ethics for daily life. The shift of emphasis from miracle-faith to life-ethics shaped the history of PL in Brazil.

With regard to life-ethics, PL, like Seichō no Ie, has exerted a considerable influence, particularly in urban society. In that sense we might say it was accepted as an urban-type religion. The way in which it was accepted as a family ethic for nuclear families, or as an ethic for the occupations and workplaces of management and labor, or again as a citizens ethic, was similar to the way European Protestantism was accepted.

The path to indigenization was a tortuous one, but the following major streams can be singled out. First of all there was the switch from Japanese to non-Japanese Brazilians, and from the Japanese language to Portuguese. Along with this there was the shift from a Japanese life pattern to a Brazilian life pattern. These efforts at indigenization were a part of the multinational strategy.

FROM MIRACLE-FAITH TO LIFE-ETHICS

PL preaches a religion so closely linked with everyday life that it is described as the "Life Guidance Religion" (MORI 1979, pp. 112–13). It would be no exaggeration to say that the writings of Miki Tokuchika are, from beginning to end, expositions of how to solve the troubles that crop up in daily life. PL does not exhibit many external signs of a religion. The word *God* appears in its Twenty-one Precepts for Conduct of Life only in the third article ("The individual is a manifestation of God") and eleventh article ("Have true faith in God"). Even in its rules for religious living, God puts in an appearance only in articles 11 ("think of a child as a child of God") and 21 (in the phrase "blessing of God"). Just as Jissen Rinri Kōseikai, which broke off from Hito no Michi, has taken the path of a personal-cultivation group, so PL, in comparison with other New Religions, lacks a religious aura.

When one reads the weekly *Journal PL*, however, one finds many

stories of this-worldly benefits, such as how someone's long-standing illness was cured by *oyashikiri*, or how someone got rid of a serious problem by reciting *oyashikiri*. There were, in fact, many reports of cures of sickness or neuroses in the personal testimonials at meetings or in personal interviews with believers.

Among ordinary Brazilian people there is even today a strong religious belief typified by *promessa* (vows) and *milagre* (miracles). One can say that official Catholicism rests upon this foundation of popular Catholicism's miracle-faith (ARAI 1982, pp. 196-97). Japan's New Religions also grew in membership by emphasizing miracles in the beginning. The *osazuke* of Tenrikyō and the *jōrei* of Sekai Kyūseikyō would be classic examples. Long ago in the early days of Tenrikyō evangelization, so it is said, Brazilians of non-Japanese descent poured in to join. Likewise, PL paved the way for growth by means of *oyashikiri*. This is a matter that can be treated on the same level as the miracle-faith of popular Catholicism.

Azuma Ryōzō, who took the first steps in PL propagation, has said:

You ask about the method of propagation? In the very beginning you need something convincing. You have to show them with miracles. I would look for some sick person the doctors had given up on, and I would cure the person in front of others. Once you do that, it never fails, they all come to be sympathetic. That's how we succeeded in Brazil. (MORI 1979, p. 85)

Fujikura Yūmi, a missionary who set about pioneer propagation work in Minas Gerais State, went from Rio de Janeiro at the end of 1972 to Belo Horizonte City, with miracles his top credentials. He was visited by a woman who was afflicted by an endemic skin disease affecting the whole body. Calling on the founder to take on her sufferings vicariously, Fujikura performed *oyashikiri*; then he turned around and announced to her, "You are cured." Of course, this did not mean she was cured right then and there, but Fujikura promised he would return for another visit a month later, and he went back to Rio. When he returned to Belo Horizonte, the woman was so improved one would not recognize her for the same person. This brought on an increase in PL membership. And one time a man with a bad back came in (he had come from the town of Teófilo Otoni, a three-days' journey away), and after receiving *oyashikiri* he improved amazingly. In response to his request, Fujikura visited his town several months later, where he stayed for two days. In that time sixty people became members. This is how the present Teófilo Otoni branch started.

But miracles are not enough to continue living a religious faith for long. Large numbers of people left the churches. According to one PL executive, the dropout rate is about 30 percent. Again, if one relies solely

on miracle-faith, one's propagation activity itself will enjoy a temporary boom but end right there. This is why it becomes necessary to link miracle-faith with life-ethics. This is where the strength of Japanese New Religions lies. Their character as ethical religions that have been tempered in the process of Japan's modernization is very effective.

Setting up a system centered on teaching rather than on *oyashikiri* propagation was a priority during Chiba's leadership, as mentioned earlier. The Japanese edition of *Jornal PL* assesses Chiba as follows:

In the area of propagation, he preached PL teachings in depth and set great value on the importance of carrying them out in everyday living; his propagation policies were added to *oyashikiri* propagation on a large scale, and both internally and externally the church entered a period of fulfilling propagation. (*Jornal PL* 1 August 1979)

In 1977 a training hall was completed in the Holy Land, and from 1978 training became a very important activity. With a view to thoroughness of teaching, believers were urged to undergo a program from discussions of propagation to attendance at churches to training. "By undergoing training you will learn the teachings faster, and you will be saved that much faster," they were told. "One could go so far as to say that one training session at the Holy Land is equivalent to a whole year of morning worships," it was stressed (*Jornal PL* 1 June 1978). In a sense training is an intensive period of religious exercises aimed at changing a person's character.

Training goes on throughout the year. Worthy of particular mention is the training to improve one's fortune, carried out from January to February. This is a two-day training session charged with the founder's earnest plea for good fortune in the new year, in which the believer receives a "fortune paper that guarantees happiness the whole year if it is observed." In 1980 eleven groups underwent these two-day training sessions.

In the Brazilian PL petitions for *oyashikiri* (*solicitação de oyashikiri*) are received during the last few days of the year. The 1985 form contained three items: a) thanksgiving for the things that happened to one in 1984; b) listing of those things one was unable to achieve by the end of 1984; c) writing down of one's objectives and resolutions for 1985. The point aimed at in guidance is to stay within the range of what can be achieved. In making people write down concrete resolutions for the new year and arousing a desire to achieve them, this practice has a slightly different quality from the *hatsumōde* in Japan. That is, one's good fortune in the new year, while being helped by the founder's vow, is something that one has to work on, oneself, as well. Here we find a clear manifestation of PL's special characteristic as a practical ethical religion that goes

beyond miracle-faith. In other words, what is sought is a shift from "other-power belief" to "self-power belief."

#### DEVELOPMENT AS AN URBAN-TYPE ETHICAL RELIGION

##### The City and Religion

As in Japan, PL has remained fundamentally an urban-type religion. In 1958 two waves of farmer-members migrated to Brazil; they spread out within São Paulo State, and most later gave up farming. Even in churches found in inner São Paulo State, where there are many Japanese, farmers do not make up the substantial part of believers. The church did not take hold as a farming-town religion. Regional growth tells the same story: from São Paulo and environs, to Rio de Janeiro, and to Belo Horizonte—the tendency to concentrate in large cities is conspicuous. In the northeast section of the country as well, the bases are located in such state urban centers as Salvador, Fortaleza, and Belém. It is clear that the membership base is located in the large cities or the regional cities. In other words, PL has increased its numbers by responding to the troubles of city dwellers.

The urban concentration of Brazil's population is worth noting. A comparison of the urban and rural populations shows a rapid growth in urban population from about 30% of total population in 1940 to 70% in 1980. While total population increased about threefold between 1940 and 1980, the urban population increased about sixfold. There is little difference between the growth in Japan's total population in the one hundred years since the Meiji Restoration and the increase in Brazil's in the last forty years. One can surmise from this rapid concentration of the population in the cities what serious problems must have arisen for Brazilian city dwellers as a result of urbanization.

The population growth for São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, and Belo Horizonte illustrates this trend. While Rio's population growth rate between 1940 and 1980 roughly matches that of the country as a whole, São Paulo's is about equal to the urban population growth rate for the country as a whole, and Belo Horizonte's has swollen to over eight times what it was in 1940, graphically reflecting the rapid urbanization that has taken place. Most of the population concentration in the cities has been due to the influx of rural population, with the immigration of foreigners a negligible factor. This is closely connected with the fact that Brazil has carried out amazing industrial development.

##### Family Ethics

The problems most frequently brought up in consultations with PL instructors and assistant instructors are marital problems. Add to them problems between parents and children, and you have the two types of



problems that account for from 60 to 70 percent of the problems they hear about, according to what some instructors told me. The next most frequent problems are those connected with the workplace and economic problems, whereas health problems are rarely brought up. Why is it that, whereas for Okada Mokichi, founder of Sekai Kyūseikyō, the three main problems were “poverty, sickness, and strife,” with strife in last place, in Brazil strife within the family is brought up most often in consultations? I would like to discuss this question of family problems first.

Middle-class Brazilian city dwellers overwhelmingly belong to nuclear families. The trend toward nuclear families increased rapidly between 1965 and 1980. The process from the traditional large families toward modern nuclear families is, according to one urban anthropologist (VELHO 1981, p. 75), mechanical and rectilinear. What this means is that the large family, the rural-family pattern that was common till recently, was, except for the upper class and a portion of the lower class, replaced in the cities by the nuclear-family pattern. The situation described by anthropologist Gilberto FREYRE (1933, pp. 18–19) as a feature of Brazilian society, the large families in farming villages, is already a thing of the past; the situation is quite different at present. Freyre also stated that Brazil’s religion was not the religion of the city cathedrals but that of the *família* (p. 22). And whereas it was Catholicism that was the religious form that supported the large family, now the religion of the nuclear family is not limited to the Catholic Church but is more diverse.

While PL holds that “all men are equal” (the ninth precept), it also teaches that “there is one way for men, and there is another for women” (the thirteenth precept). In concrete terms, it explains that “men’s love is loving, women’s love is being loved,” or, likening it to social dancing, “men do the leading, women follow.” Again, just as they vow in the tenth rule for religious living that “husband and wife will live in heartfelt good harmony,” marital harmony is stressed. These practical ethics are extremely nuclear-family-oriented, or a married person’s ethic, and clearly in contrast with a patriarchal ethic based on the idea of male superiority. For this reason it is more acceptable to nuclear families. To look at the matter from a different perspective, a nuclear family does not usually have to deal with the problems that arise between a wife and her mother-in-law, but instead the problems a wife has in relationship with her husband. A couple of cases should help illustrate what I mean.

Case Study 1. (M., white married woman, born in 1950, resident of Belo Horizonte)

Married for ten years to a man twelve years her senior, she has not been happy. Her husband is a lawyer, graduate of university law faculty; she, in contrast, only completed junior high school. Her husband is a native

of Belo Horizonte, but she is a country girl, daughter of a plantation owner. These extreme differences in age, education, and background were the sources of marital discord. Yet after she became a member of PL in 1977 and participated in a course on "The Way of Wives," she overcame these problems. She was kind to her husband and tried to think of him rather than of herself. She put her husband first, herself second, and the children third. Her husband had a superiority complex towards her, but she followed through on what she learned in "The Way of Wives," obeyed her husband, was as kind to him as she could be, and never said "No." After two months her husband also entered the PL Kyōdan. He put into practice "The Way of Husbands" and started conferring with her before he did things. She is always together with him, and she says he is like a lover. She also feels that the reason their three children do not have any serious illnesses is that she and her husband get along so well.

Case Study 2. (H., white male, approx. 60, resident of Belo Horizonte)

He has seven children, the oldest a son of 35. He did not get on well with his wife, and the family had a variety of problems, among them instances of children running away from home. In 1977 he and his wife entered PL. His wife soon left, however, and entered Sekai Kyūseikyō, but she did not remain in it for long, either. He also strayed from the PL. Two years earlier he and his wife were divorced, but a year ago he returned to PL and has been trying to effect a reconciliation with his wife. The wife used to grill him with questions when he came home late at night, pestering him about money in particular. Also, she used to give him what was left over after the children ate. These problems led to their divorce, but not long ago they took part in a training session at the Holy Land together and received blessings. The wife was overjoyed and has gradually been changing her ways.

In the first case, divorce was averted; in the second, it actually took place. Without going into other case studies, I might mention that the most common direct cause of divorces is adultery on the part of the husband. Special individual circumstances are behind such cases, but it would not be amiss to point out the following by way of social background. First, there is the practice of *poliginia* that grew up within a patriarchal tradition. With Catholicism so strong in the country, polygamy was not allowed. What sprung up instead was the custom of polygyny, that is, one man having several women (PRADO 1983, p. 85). Secondly, there is machismo. The machismo tradition, Latin America's version of male supremacy, demands submission from women. Attention to women that borders on the abnormal may be considered the other side of the machismo coin. Polygyny and machismo are both deeply rooted

in the consciousness of the city males, and they are the remote causes for marital infidelity. Again, divorce was not allowed in Brazil (until 15 June 1977) because of a Catholic ethical policy. Instead of divorce, separation is a widespread practice, and as a result there are many men cohabiting with “lady friends.”

When viewed in the light of this background, the special features of PL's marital ethics are readily apparent. In opposition to male supremacy it preaches equal rights for men and women and equality of the sexes, and to counteract polygyny it strongly asserts the ethics of monogamy. The reason the teaching is accepted in cities is that people can relate to it. In the first case study, male supremacy was overcome from the wife's side, while in the second case there was discord because, from the husband's point of view, the wife was stronger. PL teaching stresses harmony between husband and wife, but when couples face the crisis of divorce, it is more common (overwhelmingly so) for the wife to speak of distress. To these women PL says that, if they understand their husbands and are kind to them, they will not fail to return to the wives. It turns the perspective the other way around and urges self-reflection, saying that the husband is a mirror of the wife, and hence the root cause of the husband's infidelity is in the wife. It states that, if she changes her ways, the husband will also change, and tries to get the wife to take concrete steps toward effecting a change. Thus, for example, if she had been letting a maid pour the husband's coffee, she would be urged to pour the coffee herself and present the cup to her husband.

Many marital problems have their source in the children. As can be seen in Case Study 2, where the husband was given the children's leftovers, sometimes splits occur between husband and wife where the children are put at the center of the family. In these crises PL preaches that the husband takes precedence and, by adjusting the order of precedence to that of husband, then wife, then children (as in Case Study 1), the crises are overcome. When children run away from home or are delinquent, the causes are sought in the parents, in accordance with the PL's teaching that “children are mirrors of the parents.” In the case of the family involved in the second case study, when one of the daughters married and then divorced in a year and a half, her behavior was looked upon as a reflection of that of her parents. The first work by the Founder translated into Portuguese was *Ikuji geijutsu* [The art of raising children]; this shows how much interest there was within nuclear families in the subject of raising children.

For the most part it is the wife who defends the family, and who has much more frequent contact with the children. As a result, the heavy responsibilities of the family fall mostly on the wife, and her worries are accordingly much more numerous. In Lins Church in the inner regions of São Paulo State, 95% of consultation cases are women, and in Belém

90% of the members are women. Though there may be an element of exaggeration in these figures, there is no denying that PLs teachings and *kaisetsu* have aspects that appeal to women. In the whole of Brazil, if we take figures based on registers provided by assistant instructors, approximately 73% of the membership of 2,118 are women.

### Ethics of Employment and the Workplace

Employment and the workplace are very important for men, especially breadwinning husbands and fathers. The relationship between a man and his workplace parallels that between a woman and the home. The second most common problem brought up at consultations with PL instructors is related to work or to the economic situation.

Summarizing what the cultural anthropologist Eunice DURHAN says in her work on migrants from farming villages to cities (1978, pp. 145–81), I would like to describe the general conditions existing in urban employment and workplaces.

People who flow into the cities do so in hope of high wages and a better life. Most of them, however, are inexperienced laborers without the skills needed in an industrialized society. Lacking necessary qualifications, they are subject to instability in their lives, and they are unable to escape working at jobs demanding physical labor, such as construction work. They have almost no scope for choosing what work they will do. Unlike the cooperative work common in a farming village, work in the big city is fundamentally individualized. For them the spiritual bonds of the workplace are extremely weak. Nevertheless, they prefer a workplace where they can get on well with the boss. They tend to stay in a workplace where personal relations are good, even if the pay is lower. Their goal is to become a contract worker, but they do not easily achieve this goal. They are often satisfied with less than the minimum wage. In comparison, if they were to engage in household work their pay would be less but at least they would receive all kinds of safeguards. Itinerant trade, on the other hand, offers some of the few openings available to those who wish to move up the social ladder, because traveling salesmen can survive even if they do not have a great deal of capital. Still, it often happens that a man cannot support the family and so he abandons his wife. In families of abandoned wives and children, the woman either has to leave the children at a child-care center or go back to the country.

For more recent immigrants the situation is not much different from that of the immigrants from farming villages. It may even be more harsh, as a result of greater language problems. Here is one example.

Case Study 3 (S., male, 31, of Syrian descent, resident of Bauru)

His father had migrated to Brazil thirty years earlier, and he migrated from Syria in 1977. He attended school, but the family was in econom-

ically straitened circumstances, and he was experiencing a variety of problems. On 11 January 1982, at the urging of someone from the same student residence, he joined PL. The teaching that responsibility is one's own affair, not someone else's, was attractive to him, and four days later he took part in a training session in Arujá. After becoming a PL member, his headaches were cured, he was able to graduate from university, and he found a job. At present he is a traveling salesman of ready-made suits. Before he leaves for sales negotiations and the like he makes donations to the church, thus setting out for work full of confidence.

In his case, though he did computer-related studies in the university, he is quite happy being a traveling salesman (possibly because of a shortage of job openings for computer specialists). He puts sincerity into his work and does his very best to work for the betterment of society. He is not fussy about the type of employment he is engaged in.

Durhan points out that itinerant sales is one of the few openings for upward social mobility; among PL members there are, in fact, quite a few people with experience as traveling salesmen or door-to-door salesmen. Furthermore, because the teachings of PL (*misasage* 献身, or self-sacrifice, for example) produce industrious workers with disciplined self-interest, they are an important force for good in the world of trade.

Case Study 4 (Y., male of unknown age, second-generation Japanese Brazilian, resident of Tupã)

The supermarket he owned in partnership with his brother ran into financial difficulties in 1971. To gain peace of mind he entered PL. He made daily visits to the church for twenty-one days, received a *kaisetsu* on the right attitude towards running a business, and closed down the supermarket to become an itinerant salesman. He started to practice family devotions every morning and evening, went to church almost every day, and received another *kaisetsu*. Before long his income from sales increased and he was able to repay his loans. After five years, his honesty and industry received recognition, and he was made manager of an agency of a Japanese-owned enterprise. "That someone like me with no assets, no standing, just debts, could gain a position like the one I have now and become so fortunate, can only be described as the reward for devoting myself completely to my religion," he explains (*Perfeita Liberdade* 1 June 1978).

One might be forgiven if one thought the PL teaching was geared to itinerant trade and door-to-door sales, for PL propagation took place by way of door-to-door visits, and there are examples of their becoming the driving force behind the development of a church. Santo André Church on the outskirts of São Paulo is an example in which salesmen put their ability to speak Portuguese to good use and worked as diligently at propagation as at sales.

In none of the articles in the "Precepts for Conduct in Life" is there any direct reference to work or employment. But in the "Instructions in PL Belief" is found a passage that says: "One is not to show a lazy attitude. While one is working one is not to feel discontent by paying attention to those who feel discontent." Instructions dealing with employment, however, dominate the "PL General Instructions." There are, for example, instructions for merchants, farmers, salesmen, insurance salesmen, nurses, people taking examinations, drivers, etc.

Besides the above instructions dealing mostly with employment, human relations within the workplace are also touched on in the teaching that, while superiors are to be superiors and subordinates are to be subordinates, people are to make the best possible use of their abilities. According to "Instructions in PL Belief," it is important that one "not feel discontent." "A person who believes in God and works without complaining will make good products, attract the attention of superiors, and gain a rise in salary, and will in addition experience a sense of satisfaction in the job and win the respect of fellow workers" (*Perfeita Liberdade* October 1975). What is being suggested here is that a goal of harmony transcends differences of position. In effect, the subordinate comes to accept the will of the superior gladly, and this leads to promotions and higher salaries. One second-generation Japanese who had started working for a well-known department store only seven months earlier was made an assistant supervisor. He attributed this to his membership in PL. When the jealousy of the other workers became a worry to him, he came to the church for a *kaisetsu*.

As a result of meeting with several full-time assistant instructors and asking their opinions of attitudes towards work, I learned that, for the great majority of Brazilians, work is nothing but drudgery. Apparently this view of work is colored by the Catholic religion, according to which human beings were compelled to work as a punishment for original sin. Another factor to be considered is the content of work. Physical labor for low wages is, no doubt, drudgery, especially in cases where effort is not linked with better wages and improvement in one's position. People then naturally tend to try to get the most pay for the least work, and to consider work as only a means to making money. In the opinion of the assistant instructors, the view of work widespread among the general mass of Brazilians is one of "weekday work is for weekend recreation." The PL view of work is in strong contrast to the above view, however. It takes work as an expression of the self, it looks for godliness in work, it sees work as something done for society, for others, for one's neighbor, and considers the spirit more valuable than the making of money. Its emphasis on these points is a special feature of the PL. Still, as we have seen, the connection with promotions and better wages is part of the at-

traction of its message and regarded as proof of the correctness of its teachings.

This attitude towards work is in some respects similar to that of Protestantism, but there are significant differences. While in Calvinism "work is regarded as a calling from God, performed for the glory of God," in PL it is held to be "an expression of the self" and "for the benefit of society or the benefit of others." In addition, PL's message is premised on harmony in the workplace. Thus it differs qualitatively from schemata based on relations between exploiters and the exploited, or on class struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. Its teachings, are, rather, an ethic appropriate for the workplace in industrialized society; they do not aim at structural reform of the workplace or of society.

#### FROM JAPANESE TO NON-JAPANESE

PL, as a religion of urban-style ethics, spread into Brazil's urban centers as it shifted its emphasis from miracle belief to ethics in daily life. In the process it devised a variety of strategies and made skillful use of a variety of tactics. The biggest change in strategy came with a switch from targeting mainly Japanese for propagation to targeting Brazilians of non-Japanese descent. Along with this, new tactics more suited to the Brazilian way of life were adopted, foremost among them being the use of Portuguese rather than Japanese. This resolute change in strategy was something that could happen in a religious group to which affiliation was by personal choice rather than a matter of family tradition. In overseas propagation modelled on *ujiko* or *danka* (family temple affiliation) organization, identity as a Japanese or a person of Japanese descent is sought over generations, and a strategic shift to non-Japanese subjects is close to impossible.

In Brazil, rightly called the "melting pot of races," racial composition is complex. Compared with some other countries, where white and black mixed-blood people are sometimes objects of strict aversion, Brazil is a place where the mingling of races has advanced to a degree deserving of the "melting pot" designation. Mixed marriages among whites, blacks, and the native Indians actually was an everyday occurrence from the time of the first Portuguese settlers. From the nineteenth century on, however, Italians, Germans, Japanese, and other immigrants settled in São Paulo State and other states to the south; from first-generation immigrants speaking their own languages to Portuguese-speaking Brazilians—a new nation was in the making. As far as social institutions go, superficially at least, racial discrimination is almost non-existent, and opposition to intermarriages between people of different races is rare. Still, at the same time there exists among immigrants a deeply-rooted at-

tachment to ethnic or traditional idiosyncrasies stemming from differences in language, culture, or lifestyle. Religion has been closely connected with such ethnic and traditional identity. The links between Italians and Catholicism, Germans and Lutheranism, Arabs and Islam, Jews and Judaism, and Japanese with Buddhism include elements that cannot easily be severed. There is no need to elaborate here on the extent to which religious affiliation is an important bastion of ethnic identity.

In PL, however, all races and backgrounds, with the one possible exception of native Indians, are gathered together: Japanese, Brazilians of Japanese, European, African, Asian, or Arabian descent, and mixed-blood Brazilians. In other words, racial and ethnic idiosyncrasies are, in principle and in reality, ignored here. Like Jōdo Shinshū and other Buddhist sects, PL's propagation was first directed toward Japanese, but at a comparatively early stage it also turned to propagation of people of non-Japanese background, and when that proved successful, it began presenting a more attractive external appearance. Thus in a sense it is fair to say that, while the established Buddhist groups aimed at indigenization through becoming firmly established in the Japanese community, PL achieved indigenization by spreading its roots within the non-Japanese community. Let us look more closely at when this "de-Japanization" began, and how it was possible.

PL's first propagation activities began in Liberdade in São Paulo City, later the base for activities was moved to Jabaquara, whence propagation spread to Pinheiros. All of these are areas with a dense Japanese (including second- and third-generation Japanese) population. The religious instructors were also newly arrived from Japan, with little knowledge of Portuguese, and nearly 100% of the believers were Japanese. This situation was not limited to São Paulo City: propagation within the interior of the state, also, expanded to Japanese settlements and to places where there were large numbers of people of Japanese descent.

Meanwhile, in São Paulo City the headquarters was moved from Jabaquara to Liberdade in 1964, and from this time propagation would finally begin among non-Japanese. The Master Teacher for South America at that time was Ono Hisahiko; against opposition from Japanese executive board members, he promoted propagation among non-Japanese. Most support for his initiative came from second-generation Japanese assistant instructors and second-generation Divine Sisters (young women who assisted in educational activities). The second-generation assistant instructor José Nishida and Sterbio Romano Serioni (also an assistant instructor) attended the Patriarch's Birthday Festival in the Daihonchō in 1964, and afterwards toured Japan, giving talks. About this time, young Divine Sisters also visited Japan for training at the Daihonchō (*Perfeita Liberdade* 15 August 1978). Also, Takahashi Terushige, who had gone to Brazil in 1956 as a migrant sponsored by



the Cotia Agricultural Cooperative Union set up by Japanese immigrants, entered PL in 1963, went back to Japan in 1965 and became an audit student in the teacher's academy, then taught for a while as an instructor in PL in Japan, and finally, in 1967, returned to Brazil as a religious instructor. In this way, progress was made in introducing local instructors and Divine Sisters, and instructors sent from Japan did not take part in propagation for one year but instead studied the Portuguese language.

Propagation in the Portuguese language was not limited to instructors. One case in point is that of Santo André City,<sup>3</sup> which is an industrial area bordering on the south of São Paulo popularly known as ABC (for Santo André, São Bernardo do Campo, and São Caetano do Sul). Many automobile manufacturing plants are concentrated here, with Chrysler, Ford, GM, Benz, Volkswagen, and Pirelli among them. Over 500,000 people live in the area. Propagation began in 1961 with the Japanese instructor Tomio Masuichi targeting Japanese, but propagation among non-Japanese began with the activities of Japanese members who were salespeople for daily household goods. One husband-and-wife team in particular had a lot of steady Brazilian customers, and they used their abilities in Portuguese to pass on the PL message on the side. In 1965 they made their house available for use as a *casa de oyashikiri*; some months as many as one hundred people entered the church through their efforts. When the regular instructor returned to São Paulo in 1965, the husband took over for him and maintained the Santo André propagation base. Besides this husband-and-wife combination, the efforts of other Japanese members who were salespeople also contributed to the church's expansion. The explanation for their success lies in the fact that they enjoyed the advantage of being able to distribute PL literature and books, or bring the subject up in conversation, when they made the rounds collecting monthly payments. As of 1985, there were in the ABC area fourteen churches or branch churches, and approximately three thousand enthusiastic members, of whom 99% were of non-Japanese descent.

Propagation of Brazilians of non-Japanese descent was at first promoted by second-generation (in exceptional cases, by first-generation) Japanese who were able to speak Portuguese, but gradually non-Japanese assistant instructors and instructors became the main force. The year 1970 saw the birth of seven second-generation and non-Japanese instructors, and the taking up of duties by two young instructors from Japan who had learned Portuguese. On 21 March the next year, in the

<sup>3</sup> For my data here I relied mainly on interview surveys with instructors and Japanese executive board members and articles in *Jornal PL* (1978).

Ibirapuera Gymnasium in São Paulo, 14,000 people gathered for a Pan-Brazil Joint Thanksgiving Festival and Members' Conference; organizers arranged it so that most of the 132 officiants were of non-Japanese descent (*Perfeita Liberdade* 1 February 1979). About this time a "thirty-housecall *artina*" and an "indiscriminate *artina* campaign" were carried out, and new membership among non-Japanese increased.<sup>4</sup> As a result of these *artina*, in 1972 a record of 36,000 new members in one month was set (*Perfeita Liberdade* 15 March 1979). This sort of trend was the motive force behind the large mobilizations of people at the Founder's Festivals described earlier in this article.

In addition to breaking through the ethnic barrier, PL also expanded geographically beyond the confines of the São Paulo State. Membership increased rapidly in Rio de Janeiro State in the first half of the 1970s, then showed remarkable development in Minas Gerais, particularly in Belo Horizonte City. The table of new memberships in Minas (Table 1) shows that, through 1975, annual new membership never reached 1,000, but from 1976 through 1980 about two to three thousand people joined per year, with a peak of 3,469 in 1978. In both Rio and Minas almost all the new members were Brazilians. Symbolizing this growth, eighty-five new mission stations were established in 1978, and churches, branches, and mission stations had spread to twenty-one states (Acre and Mato Grosso were the exceptions), two government territories, and 183 cities (*Jornal PL* 1 January 1979).

Accompanying the expansion of the group and the increase in the number of its churches was a growth in the demand for instructors, full-time assistant instructors, and Divine Sisters. As a temporary measure to satisfy this demand, PL in 1977 conducted an intensive five-day training program for twenty-five full-time assistant instructors and for some Divine Sisters. To carry this development further, it embarked on the establishment of an academy for instructors that would be an institution for local training of personnel who would devote their full time to religious work, and who would be sought from among people in Brazil, not in Japan. A special training course was begun at the end of 1977 and produced nine new instructors. All were males, two of Japanese descent and seven of non-Japanese descent. Then, in March 1978, nine others enrolled as the first class in an academy for instructors. The period of study and training lasted approximately half a year, two months being devoted to a teaching course and four months to practical training, after which they were sent to the "front line" of missionary activity. By 1984 eight classes had graduated, totaling 73 people, of whom six were women, and fifteen of Japanese descent. Of the total number of instruc-

<sup>4</sup> *Artina* stands for *art(e de) i(ngressar) n(ovos) a(deptos)* [art of winning new converts].

tors, 92% were male; under 20% were of Japanese descent. Of the 73 who were trained as instructors, forty-four, or 60%, actually were actively engaged in front-line propagation as of early 1985 (the remaining 29 were no longer active as instructors). The establishment of an academy for instructors did much to advance the system by which Brazilians propagated and educated Brazilians. In fact, there have been no instructors sent from Japan for the purpose of propagation since December 1978.<sup>5</sup>

TABLE 1. New Members in Minas Gerais

month year	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	total
1973	—	—	—	—	—	—	27	47	47	105	57	50	333
1974	42	43	24	40	32	54	39	47	61	56	46	42	526
1975	51	59	70	69	66	53	41	44	92	135	132	104	916
1976	137	202	200	178	152	226	192	142	135	128	114	88	1,894
1977	158	216	217	186	199	187	98	179	177	208	278	238	2,338
1978	300	239	252	325	374	320	280	212	210	330	348	275	3,469
1979	244	303	285	371	280	236	156	168	185	167	121	129	2,645
1980	98	130	574	257	132	115	114	89	88	148	144	95	1,984
1981	98	75	79	88	61	87	57	70	80	45	42	29	811
1982	42	39	78	57	64	58	39	94	86	46	73	59	735
1983	72	79	61	54	106	60	54	65	69	49	64	29	762
1984	55	51	52	58	54	46	53	38	48	—	—	—	455

As of January 1985 there were 84 instructors, of whom 42 (50%) were Japanese, 13 were of Japanese descent, and 29 were non-Japanese. From the fact that 27 of the instructors of non-Japanese descent are in charge of churches, while only two work at the Head Office or the Holy Land, it is apparent that they are working at the front line of propagation. Japanese instructors, on the contrary, are evenly distributed between churches and Head Office/the Holy Land. Thus half of their number are principally engaged in administration, education, publications, and research. This division of labor seems to be a major factor in PLs indigenization. The average members, meanwhile, are estimated to

<sup>5</sup> One Japanese with instructor qualifications was sent from Japan in 1981 to work in the plant research laboratory, and he has not been active in the front line of propagation.

be over 90% non-Japanese. It is certainly true that the overwhelming majority of people participating in the large events are not of Japanese descent. Membership statistics, however, do not exist even at PL's Head Office, and I dare say there are no statistics kept for members in terms of ethnic background. However, we can pin down the figures for assistant instructors with considerable accuracy. Assistant instructors help instructors and substitute for them in listening to people seeking advice; they are the real pillars of the churches, the core members.

TABLE 2. Number of assistant instructors (as of 1983)

Area	Japanese	non-Japanese	male	female	total
IAIC*	8 (7.0)	107 (93.0)	31 (27.0)	84 (73.0)	115
Brasília Goiás	1 (1.7)	59 (98.3)	10 (16.7)	50 (83.3)	60
Minas Gerais	0 (0)	123 (100.0)	26 (21.1)	97 (78.9)	123
Rio de Janeiro	3 (0.5)	563 (99.5)	157 (27.7)	(2) (0.2) 407 (71.9)	566
São Paulo – metro	282 (29.2)	684 (70.8)	264 (27.3)	(2) (0.2) 700 (72.5)	966
São Paulo – interior	85 (41.7)	119 (58.3)	55 (27.0)	149 (73.0)	204
South Paraná	16 (30.2)	37 (69.8)	10 (18.9)	43 (81.1)	53
Holy Land	25 (80.6)	6 (19.4)	14 (45.2)	17 (54.8)	31
Total	420 (19.8)	1,698 (80.2)	56 (26.8)	(4) (0.2) 1,547 (73.0)	2,118

\* churches administrated by central church

I have therefore attempted to gather some statistics based on lists of assistant instructors that appeared in *Jornal PL* (see Table 2). There were 2,118 people listed as assistant instructors in November 1983. Of these, 420, or 19.8%, were Japanese or of Japanese descent, while the remaining 1,698 were non-Japanese. On the assistant instructor level, then, the ratio was one to four. When I investigated numbers of new members, however, even in Liberdade Church, which has a large number of Japanese members, the number of new members in 1984 was 145, of whom only 17, or slightly over 10%, were of Japanese descent. If one looks at PL as a whole, then, one is certain to find that non-Japanese new mem-

bership exceeds 90%. In other words, about 20% of the lay leaders are of Japanese descent, whereas among the ordinary members they do not amount to even 10%. Furthermore, most of these people of Japanese descent do not use the Japanese language.

When you look at the geographical spread, the ratio of Japanese members and members of Japanese descent to non-Japanese is highest in the Holy Land. Aside from this, which can be treated as exceptional, they come to approximately 40% in the interior of São Paulo State, and approximately 30% in the metropolitan areas of São Paulo and Paraná states. In Rio and Minas states, it could be said that the PL organization has been completely indigenized. In Minas, the only Japanese, a block leader, was replaced in November 1984 by an instructor of non-Japanese descent.

#### JAPANESE TO PORTUGUESE

The greatest obstacle in the way to acceptance of PL by the Brazilians was language. When there is no communication, propagation is impossible. As mentioned earlier, in the switch from Japanese to Portuguese, though efforts were made by Japanese instructors, it was second-generation instructors who played an important part. The same thing could be said about Seichō no Ie and the Sōka Gakkai. In this they were only following the strategy employed by Japanese enterprises and trading companies that had entered Brazil, of putting second-generation Japanese in management positions. However, there were other religious groups, such as Sekai Kyūseikyō, that sent Brazilians to Japan and had them pursue the study of the Japanese language.

PL policy was to have Japanese instructors pursue the study of Portuguese. Instructors sent over in their youth were in a particularly advantageous position in this regard. Heads of the diocese generally had difficulties with Portuguese; one head, Mr Chiba, tackled the language with enthusiasm and a little over a year after his arrival in the diocese he was able to deliver lectures without the aid of an interpreter. It was efforts like this that made the Portuguese-centered propagation and education system possible. On the other hand, the policy also had the result of narrowing down the number of places where instructors who were not fluent in Portuguese could work and of making it inevitable that they return to Japan.

Another effect was that Japanese gradually disappeared from rituals and events, the only Japanese to remain being terminology peculiar to PL. Also, assemblies in the Japanese language gradually disappeared. Even in Liberdade Church, Japanese is used only once a month for the meeting of the Women's Association. In the ABC parish, assemblies in Japanese ceased over ten years ago, and about the only time Japanese is

used is in prayers in the home. These circumstances posed difficulties for a portion of the Japanese membership, and led to some straying from the church. This can be seen as one of the “sacrifices” paid by indigenization.

In publication activities both Portuguese and Japanese have been used, with more stress put on the former. Two newspapers are published: the Portuguese *Jornal PERFEITA LIBERDADE* two times a month in an eight-page tabloid format, and the Japanese *Perfeita Liberdade* ペルフェイタ・リベルダーデ once a month in four-page format. A magazine in Portuguese, *PL: REVISTA PARA A PAZ MUNDIAL*, is published every two months with about fifty pages per issue. Finally, translations into Portuguese of works by Miki Tokuchika have appeared at the rate of almost one per year since 1977, beginning with Miki's *Instruções para a vida religiosa PL* [Instructions for living a PL religious life]. It is worthy of note that in these translations efforts have been increasingly made to omit altogether what is specifically Japanese or to replace such references with Brazilian examples.

#### FROM JAPANESE MODE TO BRAZILIAN MODE

Brazilianization did not stop with language but extended even to ritual. A good example of this may be seen in the offerings to God. Prior to Chiba's time as head of the Brazilian diocese, the offerings were *omiki* (sacred rice wine) accompanied by kelp and dried cuttlefish. At one time they used to make an offering called *seika* 聖菓 (sacred confectionery), but this practice did not take hold. Chiba felt that *omiki* not only was not to Brazilians' tastes but it also was an obstacle to acceptance of PL teachings, so he had *omiki* replaced by wine. He chose wine rather than whiskey, beer, or *pinga* (distilled spirits made from sugar cane) because he judged it to be the most suitable drink to be treated as something sacred. This does not mean he was imitating the Catholic Church, though there is no denying there may have been some indirect influence, since wine is probably at the top of the list of alcoholic drinks Brazilians would consider having a sacred quality. The kelp and dried cuttlefish were replaced by cakes. The reasoning here was that cakes are found at every party, and they go well with wine. On the “Day of Appreciation” on the 21st of every month, wine and cakes are offered up in every church, and after the ceremony these are served to all those in attendance.

Liberdade Church has fixed the last Sunday of every month as a *feijoada* day, as part of its fund-raising activities. Instead of sushi, tempura, and other Japanese food, they sell *feijoada*, typical Brazilian food. This can be considered another aspect of indigenization. In the same church, too, the entire membership—young and old, men and women—join together to celebrate the Festa Junina. At this time the children

dress as peasants and sing and dance, and the adults can enjoy playing bingo and billiards. On New Year's Eve, members dance the samba, or go by bus to the Holy Land to await the dawn.

Because these conditions prevail even in churches where there is a preponderance of members of Japanese descent, one can readily judge how things are in churches where Brazilians are the majority. This does not mean, however, that Japanese elements have disappeared completely. Even though the fireworks displays have ceased, the sports days (*undōkai*) are still popular as pleasant occasions when various churches can get together and compete against one another.

### *Problems in Multinationalization*

#### FROM BRAZIL TO OTHER COUNTRIES

A multinational religion is one that conducts its propagation activities across multiple national boundaries, on the analogy of multinational enterprises. A wide latitude can be found among multinational enterprises, from companies whose principal business is conducted in at least two countries, and hence are multinational in a wide sense, to parent companies that control giant business conglomerates registered in a variety of countries, and hence are multinational in a strict sense of the term. The same is true of multinational religions: they can be multinational in a wide or a narrow sense. I propose to use the term here in a wide sense for two reasons. Firstly, when one is doing research on religious groups that do not have a long history of foreign propagation, as is true of Japanese religions, the least restrictive definition is more appropriate. If one excludes religious groups with a multinational system on a small scale, then one might be ignoring data that is important for making cultural comparisons. Secondly, if one were to use the concept of multinational religion in the narrow sense, there would be a tendency to restrict the term "world religions" to religions like Christianity. The use of the concept "world religion" in contrast with "ethnic religion" involves many problems. Even if we can assume a universal religion in the world on a conceptual level, in reality such a thing does not exist, and therefore it would be more proper to refer to it as a universalistic religion. INOUE Nobutaka has pointed out that this distinction easily invites the value judgment that a world religion is superior, and if every religious group that reaches out across races or borders has to be called a world religion (how easy is it to judge whether or not race boundaries have been crossed?), this could lead to unnecessary confusion (1985, p. 187).

Taken in the wide sense, then, 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.

The indigenization of PL in Brazil has truly come about as part of its multinationalization. The shift from Japanese to non-Japanese, from the Japanese language to the Portuguese language, made multinational strategies possible in the widest sense. With non-Japanese acting as mediums, PL's teachings spread out directly to Canada and Europe—in the beginning in the form of individual propagation, then gradually backed by PL, eventually establishing a firm multinational structure.

The history of the Ottawa Church in the capital of Canada helpfully illustrates this point. The story of its beginnings cannot be told without mentioning Brazil. Silvana Ferreira, who became a member in 1971 in São Caetano do Sul in the ABC region, obtained the qualification of an assistant instructor; ten months later, in 1972, she migrated to Ottawa in search of employment. Not long after migrating there she made contact with the PL church in Los Angeles by letter and obtained advice from them. For nearly seven years she regularly received newspapers and other publications from Brazil as well. After a church was established in New York in 1978, the instructor started making occasional visits to Ottawa. Membership in the Ottawa area grew fivefold in one year. As a result, Ms Ferreira appealed to Brazil to send someone who could speak both Portuguese and Italian, so as to propagate among the Portuguese and Italians living in Ottawa. In answer to this appeal Ono Hisahiko was sent in June 1979. Described as "a teacher ever enflamed with a pioneer spirit," this Ono had conducted propagation in fifteen states in Brazil during his seventeen years there, and his work in Rio and Recife in particular involved him in frontline activities (*Perfeita Liberdade* 1 August 1979). The Ottawa Church continued to grow, and from it the sparks of PL faith spread to Portugal and Australia.

PL also spread from Brazil to other South American countries through the efforts of Japanese, beginning with Azuma Ryōzō. After he engaged in pioneering propagation in Paraguay and Argentina, Azuma went to Europe. He was a person whose role in multinationalization was something like that of an advance guard. In the process of the spread of PL's teachings from Brazil to other South American countries, Canada, and Europe, the role of individual "advance guards" was prominent, but PL also provided a support system. This point deserves additional consideration.



## STRUCTURAL DIFFERENTIATION AND INTEGRATION

The structure in Brazil at first functioned as a harmonious whole with the structure of all of South America. But in 1972 the two structures were clearly divided and functional differentiation occurred. Originally the Spirit of Brazil and the Spirit of South America were enshrined in the Headquarters, but on 5 June 1972 the Spirit of Brazil was enshrined in the central church of Rua Rocha Pombo (now Liberdade Church), thus divided from the others of South America. This symbolically represented the progress of multinationalization.

The Holy Land in Arujá is, in this sense, nothing more nor less than a center symbolizing multinationalization. The building that symbolizes this is the outdoor altar, where the spirits of the dead are enshrined. About one hundred members from Argentina and Paraguay attended a ceremony at the outdoor altar on 21 May 1972. Groups of members from Japan, headed by 28 service committee members, took part as well. At the Founder's Festivals that began in 1973, the numbers of participants from Spanish-speaking countries increased each year, and by 1979 the event was rich in international color, with about 300 participants from Japan, the United States, Canada, Argentina, Paraguay, Peru, Portugal, and Italy.

The large crowd mobilized for that year's Founder's Festival has not been matched since, but this does not mean that participation in events by members from other countries has ceased. Every year, for example, busloads of pilgrims from Argentina and Paraguay come for the New Year training sessions at the Holy Land. When a meeting of representatives of missionaries from North and South America was held in the Holy Land on 3 June 1984, about 400 heads of churches and heads of assistant instructor associations from the United States, Canada, Argentina, Paraguay, Peru, and Chile took part. Thus, instead of mammoth events, at present it is meetings and training sessions that are being held under the multinational network.

Although the Holy Land is a major base for multinationalization in South America, there is no structure in place there for jurisdiction over South America; instead, it is the Brazil Head Office that has substantially taken over what should be the Holy Land's task. The Brazil Head Office was constructed with contributions raised within Brazil, and it is a self-supporting organization. In other words, it is a fully indigenized "local religious body." The Holy Land, on the other hand, was built by funds from Japan and the investment of Japanese personnel.

If you take the Daihonchō in Osaka as the center, then you might say the entire overseas propagation system, not only that in Brazil, has been run in a multinationalist way. The Second Patriarch put an especially large amount of effort into Brazil; he visited Brazil a total of ten times

between 1960 and 1978, and earlier, while acting as proxy for his predecessor, he visited Brazil frequently. The Third Patriarch also visited Brazil, making his first visit as Patriarch in 1984. In addition, there have been countless exchanges of personnel, with instructors and advisers sent from Japan, pilgrim groups visiting Japan, and group visits to Brazil of members from Japan. Groups of pilgrims began going to Japan as early as 1963, and groups have made pilgrimages to Daihonchō every year for the Founder's Festival.

En route from one of these pilgrimages in 1978, a group of about 60 members went to France and experimented with a week-long *artima* in Paris. While the results were not spectacular, as an experiment in multinational strategy it is worth noting here.

#### OPPOSITION AND COEXISTENCE

The Second Patriarch, Miki Tokuchika, had an audience with Pope Paul VI in the Vatican on 29 November 1973. In return, the Pope's special envoy visited Daihonchō on the Founder's Festivals in 1974 and 1975. In autumn of 1974, the Patriarch had a second audience with the Pope. A photograph of the meeting between the Pope and the Patriarch is hung in all PL churches in Brazil. In predominantly Catholic Brazil, the significance of this photograph is by no means negligible, for it symbolizes a harmonious relationship of coexistence between the Catholic Church and PL within the multinational strategy.

In Brazil, as well, meetings have taken place between the Second Patriarch and the Cardinal of São Paulo, and friendly relations are sought with the Catholic Church. Friction with Catholics does occur at the fringes, however. In a certain town in Minas Gerais, for example, the local priest is reported to have continued criticism of PL over the radio for a long time. In another town in Minas, a priest has said he will deny the sacraments to seriously ill PL members, and this has given rise to hostile comments. Overall, nevertheless, relations of peaceful coexistence between the Catholic Church and PL have been maintained.

#### DIVERSITY AND COMMUNITY IN RELIGIONS FROM JAPAN

From what has been seen of multinationalization in Japanese religions such as Buddhism and PL, it is difficult to develop a generalized theory. Groups such as Tenrikyō, Seichō no Ie, and Nichiren Shōshū have each adopted their own strategies and techniques with a view to multinationalization. I would like, therefore, to single out a few points of difference and commonality and then consider the cultural-historical background that these groups share.

As far as the objective of overseas propagation goes, Tenrikyō aims at

salvation in the form of “the world in a single rank” (*sekai ichiretsu*), Seichō no Ie advocates the “brightening” (*kōmyōka* 光明化) of humanity and the world, Nichiren Shōshū fiercely pursues world propagation under the banner of “widely declare and spread Buddhism” (*kōsen rufu* 広宣流布), while Jōdo Shinshū and PL do not have any clear slogans. The presence or absence of a slogan does not necessarily define the range of propagation; that is clear from the fact that in Brazil Tenrikyō concentrates on people of Japanese descent, while PL concentrates on non-Japanese.

There is also no uniform pattern regarding relations between headquarters in Japan and local organizations. Compared with the absorptive force wielded by Tenrikyō’s headquarters, Seichō no Ie and Nichiren Shōshū allow their local organizations a great deal of independence. In Tenrikyō, on the other hand, there has been no replacement of the head of the missionary office since its establishment; this is in stark contrast to PL’s frequent changes in the headship of the Brazilian diocese. Tenrikyō’s Ōtake Chūjirō, Seichō no Ie’s Matsuda brothers, Daijirō and Miyoshi, and Nichiren Shōshū’s Robert Saitō (all charismatic “mini founders”)<sup>6</sup> have been at the top of their local organizations for many long years, whereas in PL there have been numerous changes of the head in accord with the Patriarch’s wishes.

There is similar diversity in the area of rituals. Tenrikyō tries to maintain the Japanese way of performing rites, including the use of the Japanese language. PL has embarked on Brazilianization, from the use of Portuguese to adaptations in the type of things presented as sacred offerings. In Seichō no Ie there is a Japanese section and a Portuguese section; in the Portuguese section, the prayer chants are recited in Japanese, but almost everything is conducted in Portuguese, so this approach puts them somewhere between Tenrikyō and PL.

As multinational organizations, Japanese New Religions share a number of common features. One is that all the top executives of these groups are either Japanese or of Japanese descent. Even in Seichō no Ie, there are no non-Japanese on the board of directors that governs both the Japanese and the Portuguese sections. This is a feature that conforms exactly with that of multinational enterprises, where top management is usually carried out by executives sent from the head office. It must be admitted that the practice of restricting “mini founders” and executives to individuals of Japanese descent has taken deep root in Brazilian society.

Another common feature is that the acceptance of these Japanese re-

<sup>6</sup> The concept of “mini founders” was suggested by Inoue Nobutaka; it refers to those involved in propagation in religious groups who are endowed with a charismatic character (INOUE 1985, p. 113 and 1988, p. 317).

ligions by non-Japanese began from the second half of the 1960s. In the United States the "counter culture" acted as one favorable condition, while in Brazil the rapid industrialization and urbanization paved the way for the acceptance of Japanese religions. Other favorable factors that can be thought of are Japan's high economic growth rate, making it a future-model for Brazilians, and the high level of trustworthiness of Japanese immigrants.

It was not accidental that Japanese religions came to attract the interest of Brazilians after Japanese enterprises poured into the country. It seems that the Japanese religions likewise groped for multinational adaptations in an age of enterprise multinationalization. Japanese religious groups have always had strong entrepreneurial qualities, and over many years they have accumulated the latent ability rapidly to adopt a multinational style of management. Already in the Edo period the main temple/shrine and subordinate temple/shrine relationships and the *kō* (fraternity) networks had crossed multi-national (i.e., multi-domain) boundaries, and they had erected a hierarchical organization with the main temple or main shrine at the top. They took on the nature of a private enterprise, with the operations of the main temple (read: head office) supported by the activities of subordinate temples (branch offices) and parishioners (shareholders). On the other hand, the system of State Shinto also formed a structure that could be compared to that of a public enterprise or public corporation. The organizational model adopted by the New Religions was one of private enterprise based on a membership principle of individual choice. The New Religions, however, went on to develop their private-enterprise character further, rather than the family-bound-type organization of established religions. Furthermore, their international strategy of multinationalization only became possible on the basis of their longstanding history as a private-enterprise type of organization.

While PL propagation activity in Brazil was started by "advance guards," the PL organization soon took a hand in its management and set up, albeit on a small scale, an enterprise-type system, with the Brazil Head Office at its pinnacle. The other New Religions from Japan are also approaching Brazilian society with similar entrepreneurial propagation systems. These entrepreneurial features of PL stand out in sharpest contrast when compared with the Afro-Brazilian cults that are representative of new religions born in Brazil. Such cults as Candomblé and Umbanda keep heading off in the direction of proliferation through endless schisms formed around cult leaders, making it nearly impossible to achieve the organizational unity expressed by many of the Japanese New Religions in Brazil.

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