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PREFACE

This book offers from the viewpoint of cultural anthropology a description and interpretation of religious and related social circumstances in modern Japan. During the past century, Japan has undergone drastic economic and social changes that have been accompanied by changes equally great, although less well recorded and studied, in the realm of religion. The specific aim of this book is to present an interpretation of the state of religion in modern Japan in its relationship to social and other cultural conditions that influence its forms and functions. A fundamental assumption underlying the interpretation offered here is that religion owes its form and content to the molding effect of other aspects of culture that are vital to human existence: the way in which livelihood is gained, the associated manner in which human beings are ordered into groups, and the rationales—only part of which may be called religious—that support and give meaning to the total way of life. To reach the goal we have set, it is necessary to consider a field much wider than religion alone; we shall therefore also review major trends of social and economic change that have occurred in Japan during the past century and discuss certain ideals or values that have been important in Japanese life during this time.

In 1868, after two and one-half centuries of self-imposed isolation from other nations and cultures, Japan officially opened itself to contact with the West and the world at large. The following century represents, at its beginning, a breaking away from native tradition, and in its course, a complex process of selection and integration of foreign cultural elements that has been accompanied by extensive internal changes in society and culture, changes that have been largely “natural” in the sense that they have not been wittingly planned. Attention will be given to these changes outside the realm of religion in an attempt to understand changes in religion. In other words, we aim to present an account of Japanese religion in its cultural context, an account that selects for emphasis changes and continuities in religion and seeks to interpret them on the basis of their relationship to certain other changes and continuities in society and culture.

The information upon which this book is based is drawn from a combination of field research and relevant published writings in Japanese and in English. Personal field research in Japan was carried out in 1950-51, 1958-59, 1964-65, and during the summer of 1966. During the first two periods of residence in Japan, investigations centered on general conditions of life in small rural communities of the nation, in which traditional culture was better preserved than in the cities, and upon the effects of modernization on the traditional culture of these communities. Later field
research was conducted principally in the major cities of Japan, especially Tokyo and Osaka and its neighboring cities, and attempted to gain knowledge of present-day religious and socioeconomic circumstances. This research consisted of interviews with officials and ordinary members of major religious sects, participant observation in religious events, extensive reference to Japanese publications (including newspapers and popular magazines), and consultations with Japanese colleagues in a wide variety of scholarly fields.

Romanized words of the Japanese language in the chapters that follow need a few words of explanation. The diacritical mark appearing over certain vowels (for example, ơ) indicates a long vowel phonemically distinct from a short vowel. This distinction between long and short vowels may also be indicated by doubling the vowel (oa). Except in writing the names of the cities Tokyo and Osaka (properly Tōkyō and Ōsaka), the symbol “…” has consistently been used when appropriate in words Romanized by the author. Practices of Romanizing the Japanese language are highly ununiform, however, and many seeming instances of inconsistency appear in this book. These are the result of the faithful citation of personal names, titles of books published with Romanized titles, and English writings containing Japanese words when the authors or transliterators failed to use any diacritical marks or otherwise Romanized in a way different from that followed by this author. For example, the name Sōka Gakkai (the author’s version) appears also as Soka Gakkai and Sokagakkai (the versions of other people).

I am thankful to many persons for aid in the preparation of this book and in conducting the field and library research upon which it is based. I am especially indebted to Kiyomi Morioka, who generously shared his wide knowledge of Japanese society and religions and was in other ways most helpful, and to Norihisa Suzukī, who patiently gave assistance of many useful kinds. I wish to express thanks for helpful services also to Tetsutarō Ariga, Kiyoto Furuno, Marilou Gamst, Mary Ellen Goodman, Naofusa Hirai, Fujio Ikado, Douglas L. Johnson, Aiko Kodama, Washio Kurata, Susumu Kurosawa, Ryōzō Kuwahara, Marianna Madrigal, Fumio Masutani, Alden Mathews of the Interboard Missionary Field Committee, Sugi Mibai, Hiroshi Mannari, Shūten Ōishi, Tokutarō Sakurai, Deni Seinfeld, the late Jōji Tanase, Aki Tanino, Lee White, Leslie A. White, William P. Woodard, Keiichi Yanagawa, and my wife.

I am grateful to the many official representatives of religious sects of Japan for the kind hospitality they extended to me and for their patience in answering my questions. It is my hope that none of the information and
opinions contained in this book about their religious sects will be in any
way offensive to them. I have sometimes recorded in the pages of this
book second-hand and even third-hand reports and rumors about various
religious sects. These are all identified as rumors or as the reports of other
observers. They are included in the book because they provide what I
thought to be useful information on what the Japanese think about the
religious organizations of their nation. If I have sometimes perpetuated
unflattering rumor that is false, I am truly sorry.

Parts of chapters VI and VII were previously printed in somewhat dif-
ferent form in the Japanese language under the title “Reigi oyobi Dōtoku
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Edward Norbeck
CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Foreign observers of modern Japan have sometimes received apparently conflicting impressions of the state of religion within the nation. Some observers have thought that the Japanese are extremely religious; others have gained the impression that the prevailing attitude of the Japanese toward religion is indifference. Both of these impressions are founded upon seemingly sound evidence. The prevailing modern attitude toward religion does indeed appear to be indifference, but old ideas and customs have not been erased. They exist side-by-side with the new and, because they are so readily apparent, may easily convey to the casual observer the false impression that they represent national norms.

The traveler in Japan is seldom long out of sight of a Shinto shrine or a Buddhist temple. Even the tiniest and poorest wayside shrines in mountainous areas remote from the centers of population show by the presence of flowers or other small offerings that they are not entirely neglected. Festivals featuring pageantry, dancing, and other colorful activities are plentiful. Many of these festivals are famous and draw audiences of thousands, even hundred of thousands, from all over the nation. Although religion and government are legally separated, important events in the lives of members of the imperial household are marked by traditional Shinto ceremonies. Ancient religious ceremonies that relate to the welfare of the nation are also still conducted by the imperial family. Among these are harvest rites and a planting ceremony in which the emperor gives supernatural aid by acts that include the physical transplanting of rice seedlings by his own hands. Newly elected prime ministers customarily visit Ise Grand Shrine, and newly appointed cabinet members undergo a ceremony of imperial attestation. Shrines and temples are often thronged with people and the sale of numerous kinds of charms, amulets, and written prayers believed to have supernatural potency apparently thrives. Shinto ceremonies are customarily conducted when dwellings and commercial buildings are erected, at ship launchings, and at opening ceremonies of any large enterprise. Whether newly erected or old, department stores and other large business concerns engaged in selling goods customarily have on their
roofs a shrine dedicated to the Inari, the Shinto tutelary god of merchants. Many people are united in marriage by Shinto ceremonies. Buddhist funeral rites are conducted for most people who die, and commemorative ceremonies at fixed periods are commonly conducted for them for a number of years afterwards.

Beliefs and practices of supernaturalism of a kind that fall outside the organized religions of the nation are also abundant among both conventionally religious people and people who are not members of any religious sect and regard themselves as irreligious. As elsewhere in the world, the most common of these practices are forms of divination and ideas and customs concerning good and bad luck. Ancient beliefs concerning lucky and unlucky days and years for business transactions, marriage, and other events continue to hold importance. In 1966, the Year of the Horse according to the Chinese-derived calendar which Japan had used until about a century ago, the birth rate of the nation during the first six months was 26% lower than during the same period of 1965, a reduction attributed to belief in the ancient idea that girls born during this year will grow to be violent women and for this reason will have trouble finding men willing to marry them. Similarly ancient beliefs and customs concerning yaku-doshi, certain years of the human life span that are regarded as inherently critical or dangerous periods, provide another example of this kind of supernaturalism that may be found among Japanese citizens of all levels of education. Many fortune tellers ply their trade at night in the streets of the entertainment districts of Japan’s cities, and divination in many other forms continues to be attractive. But to most of the people of the nation, practices and beliefs of this kind are not part of religion. They are instead superstitions and are so regarded by many of those who observe them. The name given to these beliefs is meishin, a term derived centuries ago from the Chinese language that in literal translation means “misguided beliefs.” The catalog of meishin retaining varying degrees of life in modern Japan, as revealed by extensive national surveys, is enormous, and the retention of these beliefs has been the subject of mild concern to modern-minded citizens who regard the continued existence of the beliefs as symptomatic of a general set of attitudes appropriate for former times but obsolete today.

Perhaps the most conspicuous evidence in modern Japan of religious activity in organized form comes from the large group of recently chartered religious sects. Many dozens of legally recognized religious bodies of various theological backgrounds, commonly called “new religious sects,” have sprung into existence since the end of World War II. These claim as adherents over twenty million people, about one-fifth of the total population.

Statistics on religious affiliation published by the Religious Affairs Section
of the Ministry of Education of Japan seem to indicate that the Japanese population is super-religious, since reported sect and church membership greatly exceeds the national population. In 1965, there were in Japan 404 religious orders classified under the following categories: Shinto, 163; Buddhist, 174; Christian, 46; and Others (mostly new sects), 32. Membership claimed by these sects totaled 159,541,396 persons in 1965, at a time when the national population was about 98,000,000. For a number of years, the reported annual increase in adherents to the religions of the nation has greatly exceeded the annual increases in population.

As the foregoing data suggest, governmental statistics on the religious affiliations of the nation’s people are highly inaccurate, and they are so regarded by the personnel of the Ministry of Education that compile and publish them. These data are furnished by the religious bodies themselves, some of which find it useful to report inflated figures. Many sects furnish only estimates, made by methods that are no longer realistic, and reported memberships of individual sects sometimes fluctuate inexplicably from year to year. Temples and shrines often report as parishioners the estimated number of households within arbitrary geographical areas regarded by them as their parishes, multiplying this figure by 2.5 to arrive at the number of individual followers. National shrines may report the number of amulets and charms sold as constituting the number of parishioners. Parishes of Shinto shrines and Buddhist temples overlap, and parishioners are counted twice, thus swelling the total of the putatively faithful.

Governmental statistics on the numbers of religious personnel and religious installations of the various sects are somewhat more reliable, but information on the number of legally chartered religious bodies is incomplete. Most religious bodies are chartered through the Religious Affairs Section of the national Ministry of Education, and the number and identity of these groups is accurately reported in ministry publications. Religious bodies may, however, be chartered through local prefectural agencies and a small number have done so. Information on such groups is either lacking or incomplete in statistics of the Ministry of Education. The best that may be said for the official statistics on sect membership is that they are of some use in judging relative size of religious bodies and, over a period of time, in suggesting trends of change.

The size of the religious population of Japan is in short unknown, but it is surely a small fraction of the figures reported to the Ministry of Education. A noted Japanese scholar of religion, writing in 1961 when the new religious sects were estimated to have six million adherents, states that the members of the new faiths “constitute perhaps one-half of the entire Japanese religious population.” Public opinion surveys also present a picture of Japanese religious circumstances very different from that sug-
gested by the statistics of the Ministry of Education and give no evidence of national intensity of faith. A much-cited survey conducted in 1958 by a governmental agency which sampled the entire nation reported that 65% of the population did not belong to any sect.⁶ A resurvey conducted in 1963 reported that the figure had risen to 69%.⁷ Many other scholarly investigations of religious attitudes and sect affiliations report the same general conclusion, that membership in organized religious sects is limited to about one-third of the population.⁸

Much else suggests that religion finds no important place in the lives of many modern Japanese. The “established religions” (kisei shūkyō), organized religions that antedate the new religions (shinkō shūkyō), are commonly regarded as obsolete in their teachings and methods, stagnant, inadequate, and even moribund, and the new religious sects are looked upon by many people with suspicion as havens for the poor and superstitious. Buddhism is often referred to contemptuously as the “graveyard” or “funeral” religion because it enters the lives of most people only in ceremonies connected with death and the spirits of ancestors, traditional ceremonies that may have little significance to their participants under modern conditions of life. Shinto has fared no better under the changed conditions, and Christianity has failed to become established as an important religion. Most of the nation’s population conducts its daily life without regard or recourse to organized religion of any kind. Professional men of religion in Japan expectably deplore the lack of faith and, borrowing a cliché from the Western world, sometimes speak of the “spiritual vacuum” of the nation. Whether or not the presently non-religious part of the Japanese population might be attracted to a religion with dogma and practices suited to modern times is an unanswerable question. Attitude surveys report that the majority of the population, including many of those who themselves are not members of any sect, regard religion as “important,”¹⁹ but this majority does not appear to be actively seeking a faith.

If indifference to religion is the prevailing attitude, one might well ask why there is so much apparent activity at shrines and temples and in conducting Buddhist and Shinto festivals. Festivals undoubtedly involve religious sentiments for some of their participants, but they are also in considerable part commercial enterprises, sponsored by municipal governments as well as by shrines and temples to earn income. Some festivals may be frankly labeled as commercial forms of entertainment that feature folk dancing and curious, obsolete customs. Most cities of the nation promote one or more such festivals annually as profit-making enterprises. In these events, the religious element becomes more and more obscure as time passes and, like Christmas festivities in the United States, their commercial aspects grow greater. The many grand festivals of the city of
Kyoto, for example, contribute very importantly to the income of the city's population and much effort is devoted toward making them into spectacular tourist attractions. Advertising placards on floats and in the hands of festival dancers are common at large festivals anywhere. But the commercialization of religion in Japan does not end with Buddhism and Shinto. Department stores and other merchandisers have long attempted to boost their sales by elaborate displays and other publicity at Christmas, which has religious significance to few Japanese but provides an opportunity for richly colorful advertising that precedes or accompanies the programs of sales promotion for New Year's, a traditional time of gift giving in Japan.

Noted shrines and temples, with which the city of Kyoto is particularly well endowed, are "cultural properties" of the nation, treasured works of architecture and landscape gardening of Japan's past. The most ancient and remarkable of these constructions are officially designated as national treasures, and special legislation applies to their use and maintenance. To perhaps the majority of visitors to these famous shrines and temples, the structures are museum specimens with no personal religious significance. The hordes of ostensible pilgrims who throng the paths to the summits of Fuji, Ontake, Ōmine, and other traditionally sacred mountains similarly include a large proportion of sightseers and pleasure-seekers, often laden with cameras and transistor radios. Modern times have brought to the ordinary Japanese citizen increased wealth and leisure, and modern values see nothing reprehensible in the pursuit of pleasure during one's free time. Entertainment, pleasurable diversion of any kind, is eagerly sought and all resources that the nation offers are thoroughly exploited.

Despite the heavy use which some temples and shrines see, most of the religious organizations of modern Japan are suffering a decline. It is the great and famous edifices that are visited and the grand festivals that attract onlookers. Although falling within the scope of either Buddhist or Shinto belief and practice, many festivals are undertakings of individual communities and bear no direct relationship to any organized sect. The once-abundant festivals of the small communities that centered on local Shinto shrines are today seldom conducted or have become token events observed by individual families. Buddhism and Shrine Shinto are sorely pressed for lack of funds, and the same may be said of various of the older sects of Sect Shinto and of many Christian churches. Despite a full century of active proselytizing, Christianity has won only a meager number of converts, a figure well below one million. The majority of Shinto, Buddhist, and Christian priests and ministers have extremely low incomes from their religious calling, and must take auxiliary employment to survive. The social status of ordinary ministers and priests is today low, reflecting their economic status and the position which religion holds. The number of reli-
gious professionals has decreased in relation to the size of the population and the established religions are concerned over the diminishing quality as well as the quantity of their professional personnel.

There is, of course, no necessary conflict between the statements that Japan is irreligious and that it is a land of abundant religions. The old religions remain, essentially unchanged in their teachings, and their plentiful number has been greatly increased by new religious bodies. Many of these offer little that is wholly new in theology but all offer much that differs from practices of their seniors in methods of propagation and in activities of their adherents. Although the majority of the Japanese population seems indeed to have little personal interest in religion, there is nevertheless considerable religious activity in the nation, and striking religious innovations have appeared since the end of World War II.

In the first half of the nineteenth century the Japanese population identified itself thoroughly with both Buddhism and Shinto. A trend toward indifference to all organized religions then became evident as Japan moved toward industrialization and modernization after 1868. Although masked by the imposition of State Shinto in the years before and during World War II, the trend toward waning religious faith has since continued and the cumulative change during the last century is remarkable. The recent mushroom growth of new religious bodies is also remarkable, but only seemingly opposes the general trend.

The circumstances we have so briefly outlined suggest many questions that require answers if an understanding of modern Japanese religious life is to be gained. Why the religious apathy? Why the intense religious activity among part of the population? Does the growth of the new religions represent the beginning of a national upsurge of interest in religion, a religious "revival," or does it have other significance? What has happened to make the traditional religious teachings and practices uninteresting to the modern population? What do the new religions offer that is different? Why has Christianity apparently failed to take root in a nation that eagerly accepted much else from the West?

These and many other similar questions may be subsumed under one. What are the roles of religion in Japanese life, past and present, and what are the circumstances that have given it these roles? The question is one that twentieth-century scholars of religion have asked about various nations and have attempted to answer from various viewpoints. Many obstacles have stood in the path of the scientific study of religion, however, and it remains only poorly developed. Western scholars of the religions of Japan have been few, and their interests have often been confined to theological matters that have no direct bearing on the role of religion or the factors that give the religions of Japan their forms. Even purely descriptive ac-
counts of the contemporary religious circumstances of Japan written in English or other European languages are scanty and they generally concern only small aspects of the whole. The abundant writings on religion by Japanese scholars contain an increasing number of interpretive, analytic studies, but these unfortunately are nearly all locked away in the Japanese language. During the past decade, Western scholars have shown an increased interest in Japanese religions and have produced informative publications. The past decade has also seen the publication in English by both Japanese and Western writers of a number of theological books on Zen Buddhism, which has piqued the interest of educated people in the United States and Europe. Interpretive accounts of Japanese religions in Western languages by scholars trained in the social sciences remain scarce, however. At the time of this writing, the Western world probably knows less about the current state of Japanese religions than it did before and during World War II.

The chapters which follow present a view of modern Japanese religions as an integral part of the whole of Japanese culture. They proceed with the assumption that religion is a part of the whole way of life from which it is derived, a part of the whole of man's learned behavior that changes in congruence with other changes. According to this view, religion may be called a reflection of social experience, deriving its form from man's social experiences and playing variously important roles in those experiences.

To reach the stated goals of this book it is important to take notice of cultural changes of many kinds, and we shall attempt to do so, limiting our attention primarily to seemingly relevant developments of the past century in the social, economic, and religious spheres. Such purely descriptive material on these subjects as seems necessary is included. References provided here will guide the reader interested in learning further details.

Our concern with Japanese religions gives some consideration to dogma but places emphasis on other aspects of the religions. Published materials on the theology of Japanese religions, with the exception of the recently established faiths, are relatively abundant. These are writings which, for the most part, represent the views of theologians. As elsewhere in the world, a great breach exists in Japan between official dogma and the religion of the ordinary man, who is often poorly informed and little interested in theology. For the average man, religion concerns matters of practical importance in human life. Rather than being an abstract philosophy, it consists of ideas and physical acts that relate to his experiences. From the standpoint of the social sciences, consideration of religion as a system of action is necessary to its interpretation. The identity of participants, what they do in religious acts, and such matters as the relationship of participants to each other are vital statistics that offer keys to understanding.
It is impossible, for example, to answer the kinds of questions we have asked regarding the religions of Japan—for example, why new religious sects have risen with vigor and anciently established faiths have waned—wholly on the basis of a consideration of their dogmas even when the dogmas are placed in cultural context. It is also impossible to answer our questions without consideration of social and economic life outside the realm of religion. None of the foregoing statements means to deny importance to dogma, which we shall also consider if briefly, or to deny importance to religion.

We shall here first describe Japanese religions and Japanese social and economic life, giving particular attention to trends of change, before offering an interpretation of the roles of religion in contemporary life. Our account of Japanese religions will give emphasis to newly formed religious sects. This course of action is taken for two reasons. One is that writings in English on the older religions are more plentiful, especially writings that describe and discuss dogmas, rites, and histories. A second reason for emphasis on the new religious sects is that they today constitute the most vigorous religious elements of the national population and, as we have noted, appear to oppose a national trend away from organized religion.

A few preliminary remarks are useful concerning the organization of the descriptive part of our account. The classification of Japanese religions we have used follows established convention, which divides the religions of Japan into the three major categories of Buddhism, Shinto, and Christianity. Boundaries between the religions are not always so sharp as this classification suggests, however. Buddhism and Shinto often overlap and what is called one or the other may indicate only that Buddhist or Shinto elements appear to predominate. The influence of Christianity is also evident in various religions labeled as non-Christian. Religions that have emerged or risen to prominence in the twentieth century are particularly difficult to classify in a threefold scheme of Shinto, Buddhism, and Christianity. Therefore we again follow convention and add a fourth category, “New Religious Sects,” even though the official dogmas of some of these sects may be Buddhist, Shinto, Christian, or eclectic. Confucianism and Taoism are omitted from separate consideration as religions on the grounds that in Japan they have never held the status of religions with bodies of worshippers and ecclesiastical organizations. Although various of its practices and ideas have entered into both folk beliefs and the dogma of organized religions of Japan, Taoism has never had a separate existence as a Japanese religion. Confucianism similarly has never existed in Japan as an organized religion. Certain Confucian teachings have had great importance in secular and religious life in Japan, however, and we shall have occasion to discuss them. Probably every other religion of importance
in the world has token representation in Japan, but the number of Japanese nationals of these faiths is inconsequential and such religions have been omitted from consideration.
CHAPTER II

THE NEW RELIGIOUS SECTS

The term "new" as applied to the religious sects of Japan is the subject of mild argument among Japanese scholars and religious professionals. Some include in this category the various sects, such as Tenrikyō, Kurozumikyō, and Konkōkyō, that arose in the nineteenth century; others limit the phrase to twentieth-century developments. Some use the phrase "new religious sects" (shinshūkyō) for the nineteenth-century sects and another term, "newly risen religions" (shinkō shūkyō), for the more recent ones. Some religious leaders of the newer sects regard the name "newly risen religious sects" as somewhat offensive, analogous with other Japanese phrases (shinkō narikin and shinkō kaikyū, "newly risen new-rich" and "newly risen [social] classes") that are deprecatory. Many scholars hold that calling these developments "new religions" is inappropriate because their doctrines and rituals fall discernibly within the traditions of Buddhism, Shinto, and Christianity, or else they represent amalgams of elements of these and other long-established religions and philosophies. If the name "new sects" rather than "new religions" is used, much of the argument disappears. As independent religious bodies there is no doubt of their newness and, as such, they constitute a striking social phenomenon. By far the greatest number of sects defined by whatever criteria as new came into legal existence in the twentieth century and principally after World War II. Our discussion here will be limited to these sects.

It should not be assumed that a single, grand religious explosion occurred after World War II. Some of the sects chartered since the war represent a backlog. During World War II and for some years earlier, the national government exercised powerful control over religious bodies and all other kinds of corporate groups. It was then difficult or impossible for new religious sects or any other form of common-interest association to become legally established. Many sects that had once been separate bodies were forced by the government in 1941 and 1942 to amalgamate with other sects. Official approval was given at this time to only 43 groups, 28 of which were Buddhist, 13 Shinto, and two Christian, and only this number had official existence until after the close of the war. In addition to the sects
that lost their official identities through enforced amalgamation, an unknown but probably large number of groups existed before and during the war either as nascent splinter groups of officially chartered sects or as essentially new groups that became nominally affiliated with established sects in order to meet legal requirements for existence. As soon as postwar legislation governing religious bodies allowed them to do so, many groups seceded and became independent bodies. In 1959, 129 Shinto sects (and 15 Shinto associations based on shrine worship) were chartered through the national government. Of these, 59 were secessions from the original thirteen, and only two of the 59 seceding groups are said to have been true splinter sects of the original thirteen. In 1965, the number of nationally chartered Shinto bodies was still 129, although a few small regional sects had been chartered through prefectural governments since 1959.

Similar circumstances existed among Buddhist sects, although these seem to have been much closer to each other in doctrinal features and a larger proportion of the postwar sects might accurately be called splinter sects. Postwar regulations that allowed individual temples to become legal persons and to have legal ownership of local temple property also encouraged splitting into religious bodies that are officially and administratively if not doctrinally separate. In 1945, the number of sects of the Jōdo, Nichiren, Rinzai, and Shingon schools of Buddhism was 36. In 1959 it had increased to 118. Which of these added Buddhist sects might properly be called “new” is open to question. It seems probable that some may have operated semi-independently for years before they were chartered as autonomous sects.

Added to the “fissionary” sects of these kinds is a large handful of splinter sects that have seceded from other “new” sects within very recent years. Many existing sects may be described as wholly postwar in the sense that they seem to have had no previous existence as organized groups. Many of these new sects have been ephemeral, collapsing a short time after their appearance. Their greatest number was reached in 1951, just before a tightening of rules governing the chartering of religious persons brought a drastic reduction in their numbers. In 1951 the number was 720; in 1964 it was 404. Yet official statistics on the religious affiliations of the Japanese population during this interval of thirteen years show a large absolute growth rather than a decline. As we have noted in some detail elsewhere, statistics on sect membership are highly questionable, but it is certain that no drastic reduction occurred during these years in the total number of adherents to religious sects in the Japanese population. Sects which disappeared were small groups, some of which were not religious sects but instead shady enterprises that had sought tax benefits and other advantages offered by incorporation as religious persons.
By the mid 1950's the number of sects had become fairly stable. Few new sects have been legally formed since that time and few have dissolved. The total number of sects, new and old, has remained approximately 400. Although the number and identity of sects have changed little since the mid-1950's, some very noteworthy changes have occurred in sect affiliations. The new religious sects have gained many new members, often drawing them from the old, established Buddhist sects, and a small number of the new sects have become large and nationally important groups. By 1964 or 1965, nevertheless, the fast growth of most of the new sects had slowed to the point that Japanese scholars of religion began to speak of current membership as forming a plateau. The prevailing opinion among Japanese scholars was that by this time most of the potential converts to the new religions had been reached and future growth of individual new sects would come principally from winning converts who were members of other new sects.

The precise number of new sects is unknown or uncertain, in part because of lack of agreement on the definition of "new" versus "old." Informed estimates often put the figure at approximately 150 chartered bodies. A religious map prepared in 1959 by a Christian mission research institute in Japan listed 168 new religions. Until the mid-1960's, printed statistical data were generally limited to information on religious bodies chartered through the national government under statutes that required the existence of active religious facilities in at least two prefectures.

A considerable number of religious bodies has, for this or other reasons, obtained charters through prefectural channels. The religious annual published by the Ministry of Education has in recent years included brief information on sects chartered at prefectural levels, but these data are incomplete. Sōka Gakkai, the largest of the new sects, has not appeared in Ministry of Education statistics, presumably because it was chartered through the Tokyo Metropolitan Government; however, statistics are given in this publication on the Nichiren Shōshū sect of Buddhism, with which Sōka Gakkai is affiliated as a lay organization. These statistics, which we shall later discuss in greater detail, have often failed to agree even approximately with the number of adherents claimed by Sōka Gakkai. Another reason for uncertainty about the number of new sects is that an unknown number of unchartered groups that includes newly formed associations appears to exist throughout the nation. These are without question small groups, since legal status as a religious body is generally desirable and, once a sufficiently large membership has developed, seems to be customary. If such small, unchartered groups and sects incorporated on local governmental levels are considered, the number of new religious sects in Japan is likely much larger than 150.
The great majority of the small new sects may be regarded as local manifestations of traditions that are widely distributed throughout the nation. Fission among religious sects has a long history in Japan, and the proliferation of the new sects is consistent with the Japanese tendency toward close identity with a small group, a tendency also evident in the labor unions of Japan. This marked tendency toward splintering into small groups was undoubtedly one of the factors that induced the military rulers of Japan before World War II to limit religious bodies to a small number so that they might more easily be supervised and controlled. It is significant that only a few of the new sects have grown large and have members widely distributed throughout the nation, a subject that will later be given detailed discussion.

Information on the number of adherents to the new sects is particularly unreliable. Most religious sects in Japan either deliberately overstate their membership or estimate it by measures that are unrealistic. The large new sects appear to maintain unusually careful records of membership for their own use but report for public dissemination figures that are often inconsistent but always generously enlarged. Some notion of the disparity between claim and fact can be gained from information on Reiyūkai Kyōdan, which in 1948 was the largest of the new sects but has since greatly declined. In 1948, Reiyūkai Kyōdan claimed a membership of about 2,000,000. Subsequent splintering reduced the number heavily, but membership as reported by Reiyūkai Kyōdan to the Ministry of Education as of December 31, 1964 and published in its religious annual of 1965 was 4,719,988. A personal interview with an official representative of the sect in 1964 yielded the statement that members totaled “about 3,000,000.” Reiyūkai Kyōdan also speaks of 28 regional branches; in 1964 it seemed in fact to have only 15. The figure of 28 was described to me as an “ideal number,” relating to the number of doctrinal tenets of the sect. Informed estimates of the membership of the sect in 1966 placed the figure between 200,000 and 300,000 members.

Disparity between fact and claim seems to be less for other sects, but exaggeration is still the rule. Sōka Gakkai in 1964 claimed 13,000,000 members, and in 1966, 15,000,000, but estimates by informed outsiders reduced the 1966 figure by about two-thirds. If membership in the various sects were to be stated in terms of truly active members, those who participate regularly in sect affairs and regularly make contributions, the figures would constitute only a small fraction of the claims. For Sōka Gakkai, such “core members” might number four or five hundred thousand. The attitude of the new sects with respect to statements of membership might be summed up as resembling the strategy of wartime propaganda. During World War II, the leaders of Japan regularly broadcast to the nation such outrageous lies about military successes that, after a time, the public came to recognize
them as false. The new sects seem similarly to be waging their own kind of offensive against a largely hostile population, but it is doubtful that the leaders of any of the sects today truly expect that their statements on membership will be believed.

Despite the lack of sound statistical information, it is certain that the great majority of the new sects have only a few thousand or several thousand members. Those with memberships ranging between 10,000 and 100,000 appear to be very few. Japanese scholars estimated the total number of followers of the new sects in 1964 as between ten and twelve millions, the great majority of whom were members of only a handful of exceptionally large sects. One informed estimate in 1964 credited ten sects with memberships of over 500,000 each. This estimate appears to include three sects, Tenrikyō, Konkōkyō, and Kurozumikyō, which became well established in the second half of the nineteenth century (and which are omitted from the present discussion of new sects). In 1965, twenty-one new sects claimed memberships of over 100,000 (see Table I). This number could probably be safely reduced to fifteen, but no means of getting

### Table I

NEW RELIGIOUS SECTS CLAIMING OVER 100,000 MEMBERS IN 1965

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sect Name</th>
<th>Ministry of Education Classification</th>
<th>Headquarters</th>
<th>Claimed Membership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Sōka Gakkai)</td>
<td>Buddhist</td>
<td>(Tokyo and Mt. Fuji)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Sōka Gakkai was not chartered through the Ministry of Education and is not included in its statistics. Nichiren Shōshū, the Buddhist sect with which Sōka Gakkai is affiliated as a lay organization, appears in the statistics as having a membership on December 31, 1964 of 15,234,136.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risshō Kōsei-kai</td>
<td>Buddhist</td>
<td>Tokyo</td>
<td>2,042,590</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seichō-no-Ie</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Tokyo</td>
<td>1,458,232</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P L Kyōdan</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Osaka</td>
<td>1,218,927</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Busshogonen-kai</td>
<td>Buddhist</td>
<td>Tokyo</td>
<td>699,024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyōdan</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sekai Kyūseikyō</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Atami</td>
<td>629,173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Myōchikai Kyōdan</td>
<td>Buddhist</td>
<td>Tokyo</td>
<td>489,765</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sumerakyō</td>
<td>Shinto</td>
<td>Shizuoka-ken</td>
<td>447,621</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honinsha</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sect</td>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>Prefecture</td>
<td>Membership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sumerakyō</td>
<td>Shinto</td>
<td>Atami</td>
<td>383,102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zenrinkai</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Fukuoka</td>
<td>379,433</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reiyūkai Kyōdan</td>
<td>Buddhist</td>
<td>Tokyo</td>
<td>4,719,988</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenshō Kōtai</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Yamaguchi</td>
<td>243,040</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jingūkyō</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ananaikyō</td>
<td>Shinto</td>
<td>Shizuoka</td>
<td>215,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ennōkyō</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Hyōgō</td>
<td>170,885</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gedatsukō</td>
<td>Buddhist</td>
<td>Kyoto</td>
<td>169,974</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Myōdōkai Kyōdan</td>
<td>Buddhist</td>
<td>Osaka</td>
<td>154,978</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hōshikai Kyōdan</td>
<td>Buddhist</td>
<td>Iwate</td>
<td>138,621</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ömoto</td>
<td>Shinto</td>
<td>Kyoto City</td>
<td>Membership not reported in 1965a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shinreikai Kyōdan</td>
<td>Shinto</td>
<td>Tokyo</td>
<td>134,521</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dainihondaidōkyō</td>
<td>Shinto</td>
<td>Kyoto</td>
<td>111,689</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shinboku Kyōdan</td>
<td>Shinto</td>
<td>Tokyo</td>
<td>111,580</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Statistics on membership derived from publication of Ministry of Education (Shūkyō Nenkan, 1965). Reporting date for statistics is December 31, 1964; information is supplied by the sects.

NOTES:

1. Unit of membership is sometimes doubtful. The term used is shinto, “believer,” but some sects appear still to follow the old custom of counting membership by households rather than by individuals and multiplying by 2.5 or some other figure when reporting statistics by individuals. It is clear that even the Ministry of Education does not always know whether the intent was to report households or individuals (see Mombushō Chōsakyoku Shūmuka, Shūkyō Dantai Rutōki Chōsa no Kaisetsu, 1962, pp. 33-37). For the sects above, the unit appears almost certainly to be the individual member, but how the statistics were compiled is unknown.

2. Membership here is vastly exaggerated. See remarks in text.

3. Membership in 1964 reported as 134,445 and in 1963 as 141,301.
accurate information on sect membership are available. Figures on membership as given to me by representatives of various of these sects have always failed to agree with those reported to the Ministry of Education, being sometimes smaller but often far greater. The circumstances are made more complex by confusion over the unit of membership. Following ancient Japanese custom, some religious sects customarily use the household as a unit of membership. This custom explains some instances of exaggeration of membership, since a sect may count as a household any family of which one person is a member, and may then in computations of individual membership include this “household” as two and one-half or three and one-half persons.

Several of the twenty-one largest sects are historically or theologically related. Five (Risshō Kōseikai, Busshogonenkai Kyōdan, Myōchikai Kyōdan, Myōdōkai Kyōdan, and Hōshikai Kyōdan) are splinter sects of Relyūkai Kyōdan, for example. Sekai Kyūseikyō, Ananaikyō, and, to a lesser extent, Seichō-no-Ie are theological relatives of Ōmoto, a Shinto sect which traces its history to 1892. Ōmoto reached a membership of about 2,000,000 believers in the 1930’s and subsequently declined greatly (see Table I). Its importance today is chiefly as the theological parent of other sects. Most of the twenty-one sects claiming memberships of over 100,000 in 1965 are nationally obscure. Their names are unknown to the public and, as individual sects, they exert no discernible influence on national affairs. Only four sects—Sōka Gakkai, Risshō Kōseikai, P L Kyōdan and Seichō-no-Ie—may be described as nationally important. Rises and falls of the new sects have sometimes been mercurial. At present, Sōka Gakkai and Risshō Kōseikai show the greatest growth and strength, and it seems probable that they are drawing their new members in part from other new sects.

Classification of the new sects is difficult since their doctrines are often composite and poorly formulated. The Ministry of Education met this problem by classifying as many as possible under the headings of Buddhism, Shinto, and Christian on the basis of dominant features of doctrine, and in about 1965 added the subheading “New” under these categories. Some sects could not, however, reasonably be placed in any of these three major classifications or held themselves to be unique. To accommodate these, the Ministry of Education adopted a fourth category called “Other Religions.” According to the Ministry’s records, this category consisted in 1966 of 29 sects chartered through the Ministry, a number which had been unchanged for several years, and two tiny sects chartered through other channels.

Scholars of Japanese religion have generally followed a somewhat similar scheme of classification, tracing historical and theological relationships. Thus, seven of the twenty-one sects of Table I may be classified as Nichiren
Buddhist (Sōka Gakkai, Reiyūkai Kyōdan and its splinter sects). Four sects (Ōmoto, Sekai Kyūseikyō, Ananaikyō, and Seichō-no-Ie) are commonly classified by scholars as syncretistic of Ōmoto persuasion. (The Ministry of Education lists Ōmoto as Shinto, and the remaining three of this group as “Other Religions.”) Four sects (PL Kyōdan, Zenrinkai, Tenshō Kōtai Jingūkyō, and Ennōkyō) are generally labeled as syncretistic with no close relatives. Gedatsukō, although classified as Buddhist by the Ministry of Education, describes itself as a composite of Shinto, Buddhism, Confucianism, and Taoism. Of the remaining five sects, two (Sumerakyō Honinha and Sumerakyō) are related and the histories of the other three are obscure. All five are in the Shinto tradition and none is well-known nationally.

Although giving some idea of historic connection, these classifications are troublesome. Sōka Gakkai represents a branch of Nichiren Buddhism different from that of the other Nichiren sects. In other respects that we shall leave for later discussion, it also differs from the Nichiren sects stemming from Reiyūkai Kyōdan and from all other sects. Seichō-no-Ie differs in various ways from its putative relatives. Two sects, Seichō-no-Ie and PL Kyōdan, sometimes refer to themselves as “thought movements” and appear to have taken on the official status of religions more or less fortuitously. There is general agreement that no satisfactory basis for classification has been devised. Since the new religions as a group are often fluid in doctrines as well as in other matters, it seems unlikely that any durable scheme of classifying them on the basis of theology will be devised for some years to come.

It is useful to repeat that certain fairly old sects officially classified as Shinto and included among the thirteen Shinto sects recognized by the government in 1882 are sometimes classified as new religious sects. Tenrikyō (now officially separated from the league of sects of Sect Shinto but still classified as Shinto by the Ministry of Education), Konkōkyō, and Kurozumikyō are sometimes treated in this way, and with considerable justification. All three are fairly recent among the Japanese religions, and, as we have earlier noted, share many traits with the most successful of the post-war sects. Ōmoto, which began about seventy years ago, is usually included among the new sects.

Regardless of classification according to doctrine, the new sects resemble each other in many general ways and often in highly specific traits. It is well to bear in mind that virtually no data beyond unreliable statistics on numbers of adherents, religious personnel, and the like are available on the very small sects, and even this information is lacking for some. The remarks that follow here on common characteristics of the sects must be understood to concern principally the larger sects.
One of the traits that the new sects share as a group is the low regard of most Japanese citizens who are not members. They are frequently regarded as the religions of the unschooled and superstitious masses. For a number of reasons the new sects, as a class, are looked upon by the majority of the nation with suspicion, doubt, and sometimes fear. As a group, and often as named individual sects, the new sects have received extensive coverage in newspapers and other mass media of communication, and this publicity has often been highly unfavorable. Despite this wide coverage in the news media, the names of only a handful of the sects, generally the largest ones, are known to the general public. The average person, although well aware that new religious sects are abundant, is not interested in knowing their names or any other non-sensational information about them. The names are often high-sounding words of Chinese etymology or archaic Japanese terms that are difficult to remember as well as uninteresting. No ordinary Japanese citizen could fail, however, to know of Sōka Gakkai. Seichō-no-Ie is generally also a familiar name in at least the largest cities. Risshō Kōseikai, which has risen to imposing size in only very recent years and bears a name that is hard to remember, is as yet unfamiliar to many citizens although it has in the past been the target of much attention by the press. Although generally well-known in Osaka Prefecture, the site of its headquarters, P L Kyōdan has not become a familiar name throughout the nation. The names of certain of the smaller sects lacking national importance have become known because of sensational features in their teachings or rites that have been publicized in news media. Tenshō Kōtai Jingūkyō, which in 1965 claimed a membership of 243,040 persons but undoubtedly was much smaller, is an outstanding example. Bearing an official, and formidable, name in the Shinto tradition but commonly known as “The Dancing Religion” (Odoru Shōkyō), this sect attracted national attention at one time because of the colorful personality of its leader, the late Mrs. Sayō Kitamura, and the “dance of ecstasy” which its ritual features.

Like most of the general population, Japanese scholars of religion for some years tended to regard the new sects as beneath serious notice. Japanese scholars of religion are numerous, but they are most commonly theologians personally committed to one of the established religions. Only a relatively small number have made the new religions a subject of study. These scholars have, however, been uncommonly active, and, as the growing power of the new sects forced itself upon the attention of the whole nation, scholarly interest in the sects has grown. At the time of this writing, scholarly studies of the new sects had become fairly plentiful.

Part of the national opposition to the new sects stems from unscrupulous activities of certain of these sects themselves, particularly during the early years after World War II. Their postwar history, as recorded in the Japa-
nese press, has lurid and sensational entries that include numerous encounters with the police. When legislation governing religious bodies was changed after World War II, the hundreds of organizations that sought charters as religious bodies included a number that were extremely bizarre in their teachings and others that were not religious bodies at all but organizations seeking tax and other benefits as religious sects. The bizarre sects provided colorful newsprint for a time, but most of them appear to have been short-lived. An extreme example that is often cited is Denshinkyo, whose founder operated a shop selling electrical appliances. This sect is said to have worshipped electricity and to have included Thomas Alva Edison among its saints. Others in this category appear to have featured unusual sex practices, and one organization was reported to consist of a chain of brothels named “Inns for Co-Existence and Co-Prosperity,” in which men and women “could experience the joys of life.” One very small sect, Jiukyō, founded by a woman claiming divinity as the incarnation of the Sun Goddess was reported by the press as naming its own cabinet for the nation, and included among its members a famous sumo wrestler whose activities in connection with the sect were zestfully reported in the newspapers. This sect continued to have an official although apparently powerless existence in 1964.5

Changes in legislation governing the chartering and activities of religious bodies, police investigation of illegal activities, and, very probably, ineffectiveness of teachings and practices drastically reduced the number of post-war sects by 1951 at the expense of the sects most eccentric in their teachings and of the non-religious organizations seeking camouflage. But encounters with agencies of law enforcement are also part of the history of the most powerful surviving sects. Various of these sects that existed as small groups before World War II were suppressed by the government and their leaders were imprisoned during the war. Postwar histories of the sects include many instances of alleged illegality. Reiyūkai Kyōdan was involved in various kinds of scandal in 1949 and the early 1950’s that seem to have been important factors in its schism and decline. These scandals include charges of tax evasion and misappropriation of community-chest funds and the finding by police of opium and illegal gold bullion at the sect headquarters. Sōka Gakkai was for many years a frequent feature of newspaper articles that include accounts of legal issues of several kinds discussed in the appendix devoted to Sōka Gakkai. Risshō Kōseikai in the early 1950’s was the target of newspaper accusations of misguided faith healing leading to death. P L Kyōdan was charged in 1964 with illegal transactions in acquiring land for developing its facilities. Instances of this kind involving or bordering upon illegality have helped confirm for many Japanese the undesirable nature of the religious sects. The power of the new sects has, however, gained
acknowledgement in government circles. Prime Minister Ikeda in 1964 attended ceremonies inaugurating a new Sōka Gakkai building—and was subsequently criticized by newspaper editorials for doing so. In 1966, established political parties actively sought the support of Sōka Gakkai and its political affiliate, and by this time the newspapers generally had little to say that was unfavorable about Sōka Gakkai.

The sheer vulgarity alone of the important sects has been enough to discredit them in the eyes of many Japanese citizens. Charges of illegal acts made against various sects have left room for doubt since guilt has seldom been conclusively proven in incidents of recent years: But in the opinion of most of the nation, there is no doubt that the sects are vulgar in doctrines, modes of operation, facilities, and membership.

The commercial nature of the large, new sects has often been deplored in print. The scholar and severe critic of the new sects, Saki Akio, has charged them with the sale of “tickets to paradise,” and this criticism does not seem badly overstated. Trade has long been a respected calling in Japan and its religions have in one way or another always had their commercial aspects. In the eyes of their critics, however, the fault of the new religions is their emphasis on sales. They push too hard; sometimes approach the wrong prospective customers; do not hesitate to advertise the virtues of their wares in ways that are neither subtle nor sophisticated; and they are careful to see that accounts are settled. They may belong to federations, but like department stores, supermarkets, theaters, and hotels that also belong to federations, they watch every move of their competitors and strive to corner the market by offering more for the same price. Writing of Sōka Gakkai, a Japanese commentator complains that the sect has none of several attributes which an intellectual demands of any religion; it lacks “purity, poverty, and beauty.”

Despite stormy legal histories and positions of low esteem on other grounds, membership in the new religious sects continued to grow rapidly until recent years. As their power increased, the new sects became sources of great concern to the established religions from whom they have presumably drawn their members, winning from the older religious bodies grudging recognition and in some degree forcing the older sects to examine their own teachings and methods of propaganda. One measure of the success of the new sects, and especially of Sōka Gakkai, is the development of opposition from some of the established Buddhist sects. This opposition has come principally from the vigorous and large Jōdo Shinshū sects of Buddhism, and includes various publications that attack Sōka Gakkai as being faulty theologically. In recent years, the Japanese press and other mass media of communication have generally treated the new religious sects, especially the large groups, with growing respect. This trend has sometimes
been explained as the result of fear of loss of subscribers who are members of the sects. The large sects themselves have also become thoroughly aware of the value of a good national reputation and have made variably great and variably successful efforts to cultivate good public relations and to create favorable impressions of themselves. In this respect, the relatively small span of years since the new sects rose to prominence has seen great changes. Like the members of Japanese society as a whole, movement upward in social status seems to be eagerly sought by the successful new religious sects. Sect teachings and sect leaders have changed their garb in ways that make them appear more and more respectable, if still ostentatious, and less and less ignorant, uncouth, and superstitious. Authority has been cloaked with good purpose, of which world peace and the brotherhood of man are the most frequently stated goals.

The obvious question that arises is why have the new religions had such striking success? A partial answer to this question giving specific details is to be found in the four appendices dealing separately with the largest of the sects. Discussion here is confined to specific traits that all of the sects hold in common, some of which bear on the question of the reasons for the success of certain sects. These traits may be considered under the headings of doctrine, organization and activities, facilities, and membership.

**Doctrine**

The doctrines of all of the large new sects may be said to offer a simple interpretation of the whole universe, an explanation that does not sharply distinguish the realms of the secular and the sacred but rather offers correct, inspired principles for the conduct of life in general. The modes of expression of this fundamental doctrine and the historical backgrounds leading to these modes are expectably different and some conscious attempt is made by the sects to emphasize differences. In the descriptions that follow, it is useful to bear in mind that the basic similarities tend to become hidden when individual histories and individual details of creed are discussed.

The two largest of the new sects, Sōka Gakkai and Risshō Kōseikai, are of Nichiren Buddhist tradition. No large sect that has attained prominence since World War II is Shinto or predominantly Shinto. Only a few of the new sects, all small, identify themselves as Christian or are identifiable as predominantly Christian. These are sects featuring ecstatic states in their rituals. (Such new Christian sects as have been established since World War II as the result of missions from abroad are customarily excluded from the "new religions.")

In general, the new religious sects may be called syncretistic in dogma, combining primarily Buddhism, Shinto, and some elements of Christianity.
As we have earlier noted, the long contemporaneous life of Buddhism and Shinto in Japan has resulted in each taking on some of the specific aspects of the other. Moreover, all three religions in unmixed forms are similar in some respects. For these reasons, assignment of specific elements of modern dogma to one or the other of these religions cannot always be done with assurance. Added to these theological backgrounds of the new sects are various forms of magic, especially exorcism and shamanistic faith healing, that have ancient histories in Japan. Although often enough a running partner of Buddhism and Shinto, Japanese shamanism may stem in part from folk customs accompanying Taoism or from more ancient Siberian shamanism introduced into Japan by early migrants from the Asiatic mainland. Oguchi describes the new sects as being, in many cases, doctrinal reorganizations of “primitive forms.” This description seems most appropriate for the small and little-known sects, many of which appear to emphasize magical practices of various kinds and essentially to lack dogma.

As a group, the new sects cannot be described as truly revivalistic or nativistic despite their retention of much that is traditional in Japanese religious thought and behavior. A few small sects, for example Ennōkyō and Gedatsu-kō, do exalt old religious customs and teach that people must perform shrine and temple worship in the traditional ways, and Seichō-no-Ie may be described as culturally conservative. But conscious seeking to revive or perpetuate indigenous culture, secular or religious, is exceptional. Sōka Gakkai and Risshō Kōsei-kai have in a sense “revived” Nichiren Buddhism, but it has been given an interpretation that makes the term revival seem inappropriate. Whatever the provenience of individual elements of doctrine of the new sects, the final products may be described as distinctively Japanese blends that are “new” principally in the ways in which they combine old elements.

Doctrines are simple. They have generally been revealed to the founders in the twentieth century or, as with Nichiren Buddhism, in antiquity, and are held to be inviolate. Their appeal is primarily to emotions, but they are expressed in ways that are at the same time intellectually acceptable to those who are attracted. Some Japanese observers have described the new sects from this standpoint as being reactions against modern rationality. This interpretation seems to be an example of sophisticated scholarly projection; it is doubtful that most of the sect members are well enough acquainted with modern rationality to protest against it.

Sect founders and leaders appear to think it important that their teachings be rendered distinctive from those of other religions, although they themselves and the Japanese population as a whole generally regard all religions as being essentially alike. Certain matters of dogma or practice are seized upon for emphasis, but their bearing upon a sect’s success or
failure in gaining and holding members seems to be inconsequential. Sōka Gakkai and Risshō Kōseikai, for example, lay great official stress upon the parts of the Lotus Sutra and upon chanting as an act of devotion; Risshō Kōseikai also emphasizes reverence for ancestors; Seichō-no-IE stresses the unity of all religions; and P L Kyōdan has made “life is art” into a motto.

Although they may be given considerable official attention, formal matters of theology seem in fact to be one of the least important aspects of the new religions. Other facets of their teachings, especially the rewards they promise, hold much greater importance. The religions concern themselves first and foremost with daily life, providing wholly practical formulas for achieving success and well-being. Happiness is stressed as a desirable goal of life, and one need only follow simple prescriptions to achieve both happiness and the solution to human problems. Doctrines show little concern with transcendentalism. When, as in the teachings of Risshō Kōseikai, attention is given to other worlds of existence, temporal life is nevertheless the focus of doctrine. Paradise is on earth, not in other realms. The relationship between dogma and morality in the new religions—to be discussed in some detail later—is characteristically Japanese and cannot be described as forcefully intimate in the manner of Christian moral precepts. One should, of course, be virtuous, but virtue places no extraordinary demands on anyone and consists preeminently of observing the sects teachings, which may include but do not generally emphasize moral precepts. Man is by nature good, and immorality stems from departure from the path of proper religious thought and behavior. Moral precepts for their own sake thus need no emphasis. Morality, in any case, does not imply a rigid code of behavior that might prohibit such things as sexual relations, alcohol, or gambling. These may all be enjoyed, in socially harmless moderation.

It is important to note that an emphasis on worldly benefits is not new in Japanese religions. Although Buddhist theology may be described as emphasizing transcendentalism, actual religious behavior of the Japanese population has given it little attention and has instead usually concerned wholly practical matters. The incomes of temples and shrines for centuries have come principally from the performance of rites promising benefits or the avoidance of misfortunes in matters of mortal life. The abundant rites of Buddhism in honor of ancestors were not merely elaborations of transcendentalism. Under the social and cultural conditions of the past, they may be seen as utilitarian practices of social significance, in keeping with traditional customs of descent and inheritance. The old religions, however, have never made practical benefit an explicit focus of their official doctrines. The new religions often advertise it as a desirable feature of their faiths.

Most of the new religious sects are not exclusive. They hold that their
own teachings are superior, but state that they see value in others or, commonly, in all religions. Sōka Gakkai is the outstanding exception among the large sects in being fiercely intolerant, and in seeing the evils of the world as the result of false faiths. Characteristically, humanitarianism and the achievement of world peace are publicly stated goals. Some Japanese scholars refer to these goals as being part of a general change in Japanese religions since World War II from nationalism to universalism, an observation that seems accurate.

Let us also take special note that worldly benefits, the rewards of faith, are not regarded as selfish, individual goals. Clearly or dimly stated, there is always the proviso that happiness comes from socially helpful activities and never from selfish striving. The goals of faith are then noble, transcending the individual, although they also provide individual benefits.

**Organization**

The successful new religions characteristically have founders of great energy and personal force, some of whom are women. These founders have come from impoverished family backgrounds and, in their roles as religious leaders, generally communicate most effectively with people of similarly humble social status. Takagi's summary of the traits of the leaders, who are sometimes also the founders, of the ten largest sects describes all but two as having only the formal education required by law (either six or nine years, dependent upon their ages), all but one as having early histories of poverty and suffering, and most as being "victims of the feudalistic system," wives oppressed by parents-in-law or adopted husbands.

The founders—but not always the present leaders—generally fall within a pattern of personal characteristics common among religious leaders in all parts of the world, including primitive societies. Personal suffering as the result of misfortune and periods of psychological disturbance seem to be characteristic. The leaders of the Japanese sects have often been called shamans by Japanese scholars of religion and their personal histories do much to support this charge. The classic shaman of anthropological literature is highly suggestible and psychologically unstable. His "call" to the religious profession commonly comes in the form of revelatory trance or ecstasy that follows a long period of psychological disturbance. His revelation has marked therapeutic effect; once it is received and the new calling of shaman is taken up, he becomes assured and stable, able to control his unusual psychic states and make use of them in connection with his religious calling. Accounts of the lives of various of the founders of the new religions of Japan (and various older religions) do not depart radically from this description. Some founders claim divinity themselves and others are accorded it by their followers.
Sayō Kitamura, founder and head of the “Dancing Religion” (Tenshō Kōtaï Jingūkyō) who died in late 1967, is one example of the inspired, charismatic leader. The uneducated wife of a farmer who, according to her own account of her life, suffered for many years harsh treatment from an oppressive mother-in-law, Mrs. Kitamura began her career as a religious leader after receiving a revelation. Crediting herself with divinity, Mrs. Kitamura called herself Ogamisama, “The Goddess.” Her sermons, delivered in untutored Japanese, carried such fervor and conviction that the force of her personality was conveyed even to English-speaking listeners. The personal histories of numerous other founders of the new sects appear to differ very little in major outline from that of Mrs. Kitamura.

Founders and leaders of the new sects have sometimes been branded as charlatans and accused of leading luxurious lives. Especially among the early postwar sects that have since disappeared, certain founders undoubtedly merit the title of charlatan or even outright swindler. But among the leaders of the surviving sects, there is substantial support for the charge that some have been opportunistic and unscrupulous in financial and other practical matters. These circumstances, however, have no necessary bearing on the question of the sincerity of the leaders. The love for luxury does not necessarily conflict with intense feelings of religiosity, and, in any case, there is little reason to think that the leaders of most of the sects lead lives of luxury. The religious sincerity of the founders of the great new sects seems genuine, if it is granted that other and perhaps some unconscious motives may also be involved in spurring their activities.

Founders of the new Japanese sects appear generally to evoke from their followers charismatic responses of reverence and feelings of personal attachment. Since the sects have been recently formed, most of their present leaders are also their founders. Three of the four largest sects, Sūka Gakkai, Risshō Kōsei-kai, and P L Kyōdan, have had more than one founder, simultaneously or in succession, but the fourth, Seichō-no-Ie, continues to be led by its lone founder. These founders clearly were or are charismatic leaders. The role of charismatic leadership in the new sects as a group is, however, complex and variable. It seems generally to have been extremely important in the establishment of the sects and important also until membership became very large. As the accounts of individual sects given in the appendices will show, however, the personal charisma of present leaders appears to be least strong in the two largest sects.

As the preceding remarks imply, powerful founders are not the only or the most important organizational factor that gives strength to the great new sects. Three of the four largest sects appear to give less emphasis than formerly to the personal charisma of their leaders, and the large sects generally have tended in recent years to avoid any emphasis on shaman-
istic traits among their leaders. The founders of only two sects, Seichō-no-
Ie and Risshō Kōseikai, were alive at the time of this writing, and the
surviving founder (of two) of Risshō Kōseikai seems to fit the stereotype
of the charismatic leader less well than others. The original founders of
PL Kyōdan and Sōka Gakkai are dead. Their successors may be described
as very forceful men, but in Sōka Gakkai high authority seems, in fact, to
be vested in more than one person. The head of PL Kyōdan, who is also
an important if not the lone or original founder of the sect, is unquestion-
able a charismatic leader, but we may note that he has recently given high
if not highest authority to several persons.

Given a founder with sufficient personal force and ability to lay a solid
organizational foundation, the sects have considerable momentum. Once a
group has reached the size of a million or more members the personal force
of its leader must inevitably reach the rank and file in greatly diluted form
in which personal contact plays no great role. Once a substantial following
has gathered about a founder, an essential step for continued growth is
effective mechanical organization of all members in ways that do not de-
pend upon personal bonds with the leader. It is significant that Sōka
Gakkai, the largest of the new sects, appears to place the least reliance upon
a single leader and that this sect has taken forceful steps to avoid highly
personalized relations among its members that might lead to fission. Seichō-
no-Ie, ranking last in size of membership among the four largest, is most
nearly a group controlled by a single charismatic leader. Sōka Gakkai has
not made reverence for either its founder or its first president, both de-
ceased, into cults, and the largest new sects have in recent years generally
made efforts to avoid highly personalized relationships among members of
any rank.

Founders of the powerful new sects have generally become unapproach-
able to the ordinary sect member or to any outsider except those of great
social eminence. This practice is, of course, largely a matter of efficiency.
As the sects have grown to large size, their leaders have risen correspond-
ingly in social eminence and their burdens of responsibility have increased.
Sakii observes a trend of development whereby leaders of sects are first
founders, then are transformed into divine leaders (kami), and finally be-
come presidents or heads of enterprises (kaichō)—but these circumstances
do not apply unvaryingly. For the most part, succession to headship has
been “inherited” by sons or other relatives, although it is noteworthy that
Sōka Gakkai has avoided this practice.

One of the most outstanding characteristics of the largest sects is an
organizational scheme that is extremely strong structurally and effective
functionally. Organization, if not doctrine, is highly rational. These are not
amorphous groups clustering about a charismatic leader because of his
personal charisma. They are instead as tightly organized as an efficient modern army. Perhaps chiefly for lack of other suitable terms for their many divisions, the sects make some use of military terms (such as butai, tai, han) for organizational units of members. The activities of the sects are multiple, and lines of organization are correspondingly complex. Sōka Gakkai, for example, has three major lines of organization—membership; administrative and operational; and cultural activities—that converge under the control of executive committees, executive directors and advisors, and the head.

Members are organized according to geographical distribution into units and subunits that describe a pyramid.\(^{17}\) Divisions by sex and age cut across these geographic units. In some sects, a convert belongs to the same small group as his converter as well as to a geographically-based group. Adult men and women are in the same organizational divisions for most purposes, but in the large sects they are also members of separate men’s and women’s groups for activities that are regarded as distinctively male or female. Young people are characteristically placed in separate youths’ divisions for many activities. Any member thus usually has multiple ties to the sect through the different subgroups to which he belongs, ties through conversion, place of residence, sex, age, and special interests.

Youthful members are the center of much attention. There is full awareness of the importance of the young to the continued success of the sects, and many activities aim to identify children and young adults securely with their sects. The large sects have well organized programs and facilities for sports, music, and other forms of recreation and aesthetics that appeal to the youthful, and similar but less well developed programs for older members. Youths’ divisions are not limited to children and adolescents. In Japan, the term “young people” (seinen) has long referred to people of a wide range of age and perhaps most commonly means those of age 16 and older who have not yet married. The age limits of membership in youths’ divisions of the new sects are not uniform. The groups may include young married men and women and some persons up to or somewhat over 30 years of age; they commonly include many young men over age 25, and thus embrace in their membership a substantial number of young adults.

Japanese scholars of religion often speak of the organizational structures of the new religions as describing vertical and horizontal lines (tate-sen and yoko-sen), as do administrative officials of the sects themselves. The outlines of the vertical and horizontal structures are, however, by no means always sharply defined in all sects. There is some tendency among Japanese scholars to see the channels for authoritative dissemination of doctrine as vertical. It is true that designated teachers of doctrine, whether professional or lay, hold doctrinal authority over those whom they teach and these
teachers are arranged in a hierarchical structure, but their positions as teachers of doctrine do not imply strong authority. Persons holding administrative authority relating to specific non-doctrinal activities or to both doctrinal and other activities also form a hierarchical structure and may hold positions of great authority.

Administrative authority—essentially secular—and doctrinal authority may be vested in the same persons or the two lines may be deliberately held apart. Leaders of the sects have thus far held ultimate authority in doctrine as well as in all other matters. It is the structures below them that vary—and thereby reflect problems of maintaining solidarity. To ensure solidarity without the danger of fission, the two largest sects attempt to keep doctrinal lines separate from secular administrative lines and from recruiting lines. These are matters that are explored in some detail in the appendices devoted to Sōka Gakkai and Risshō Kōsei-kai. For the time being, we may observe that tight organization and devices to check the development of lines of unauthorized, charismatic authority have been vital to the growth of the sects. One or more chains of command branch downward from the head of the sect, who is variously called founder, divine founder, and association head or president. There are also tightly organized “horizontal” units such as the men’s, women’s, and youths’ divisions and other common-interest groups concerned primarily with aesthetics, sports, and other secular activities, wherein a spirit of egalitarianism prevails among the members. Regardless of their sex and age, new members are recruited by a vertical line; that is, the proselytizer stands in a position of superiority. Members are then organized into groups by sex, age, and region of residence. For various activities of the sect, these groups come under the authority of persons in the administrative vertical chain, but—an important matter in gaining wholehearted participation—most of the activities of the sects are carried out by groups in which all members are on terms of equality. Neither vertical nor horizontal lines can be said to hold preeminence, and certainly one of the most important and unifying features of the new sects is their strong development of the horizontal groups, a subject to which we shall return.

As the sects have grown in numbers of adherents, they have faced serious problems of balancing horizontal and vertical structures. One great danger they have faced is factionalism on the part of members who at first glance might appear to be in relations of intimate equality. These are the proselytizers and their converts, between whom there tend to be strong bonds. Following Japanese tradition, the proselytizer tends to hold a status as “father” to his convert “child,” and the father expectably holds authority over the child. An active proselytizer may have many converts, and his potential authority may extend to a large number of people who are converts of his
converts, so that he is to them “grandfather,” or “great grandfather,” and so on. A powerful father who takes a notion to set up an independent sect thus has a group of followers already formed. The threat to overall organizational aims imposed by these circumstances may be seen as a conflict between traditional and more modern social relations, of familism versus non-familism. Familistic organization can be used effectively only so long as the sect is small. As is pointed out in the appendices devoted to those two sects, Sōka Gakkai and Risshō Kōsei-kai appear to have met problems of this kind with considerable sociological sophistication.

One of the horizontal groupings of the new sects holds special importance. This is the informal discussion group characteristic of the large new sects. Called zadankai, a term suggesting informality that is also used secularly for any discussion group, or hōza, a Buddhist term, these groups have ancient predecessors in Japanese Buddhism but are at best poorly used by the established sects of Buddhism today. They have found their greatest and, from the standpoint of achieving organizational ties, most effective development among the great new sects. Much of the success of the new sects has been attributed to these groups. The groups characteristically range in size from ten to thirty participants and are conducted in an atmosphere of intimate informality. Meetings are held frequently, in facilities provided by the sects or in the homes of members, at times arranged to suit the convenience of members. Night meetings are commonly held for those unable to participate during daylight hours. These meetings, conducted by lay leaders, provide opportunities to fill human needs of more than one kind. Since the discussion groups are composed largely of people of similar social and educational backgrounds who have many common interests, they provide an opportunity for social identification that may not otherwise be readily available to urban industrial workers or to recent migrants from rural Japan. Members are committed to the psychological support of each other, thus providing a warm atmosphere in which to express freely personal troubles and anxieties. Leaders are counselors, whose advice promises solution to members’ problems. The meetings also provide an opportunity, free from the danger of bringing upon oneself painful social sanctions, for open confession of personal misdeeds that trouble the conscience. Much use of the meetings is made for this purpose.

Excerpts from an account in Japanese by Saki, who elsewhere states that he has attended many small-group meetings of Sōka Gakkai, give an idea of some of the features of the discussion group that are attractive. Saki describes this unit as the “cellular tissue” of the new religions, and states: Socially about equal, the members have much in common. They are united in the aim of finding salvation by faith and show little rivalry. Therefore it is easy
to make the atmosphere friendly and frank.

Some women are ashamed to tell doctors about their illnesses and they feel relieved when they can tell friends. After being taken to the leader they confess that their sickness is caused by guilty secrets. There are many kinds of worrisome secrets to confess, hidden savings of money, hatred of the father-in-law, betrayal and deception, blackmarketing, and sexual dissatisfactions. By telling all their secrets to each other, members realize that all people, without exception, suffer. Suffering in common from loneliness, feelings of inferiority, and personal misdeeds, people realize that they are all human and begin human intercourse. The group acts toward a common goal and is thereby bound in spirit.

The leader instructs the people to “polish each other” and interprets and explains individual cases. At times, extremely forceful shakubuku [techniques of conversion] and “the whip of mercy” are used, and the people fall prostrate in tears in front of the audience.

Another important function of the hōza is recreational. Housewives who have little free time feel satisfied when they can leave their work and come to the meetings, where they may talk freely. It is like organized well-side gossip. The tabooed problems of sex are confessed openly and are exciting to the listeners. Indecent talk about sex is, of course, important in well-side gossip, but at the hōza it is not treated as a laughing matter.

Another very important feature of the new sects is their strong reliance upon lay members rather than paid professionals to accomplish most of the tasks required to reach sect goals. As membership has grown to great size, professional administrators and professional instructors in doctrine have expectably grown in number, but the bulk of the activities remains in the hands of lay members. Given tight overall organization, this allocation of activities to ordinary members is not only highly effective from the standpoint of gaining solidarity but also efficient and inexpensive, thus paving the way for continued growth. Members are, moreover, given rich opportunity to gain personal proficiency in doctrine, or providing a large variety of other services.

In this respect, the new religious sects are remarkable in Japanese society, where circumstances of background, education, and wealth have strong influence on upward movement in society. A Japanese commentator observes that the degree of modernization of the sects may be measured by the extent to which positions of status and leadership are open to members. If the word “success” (as measured in number of adherents) is substituted for “modernization” this statement seems accurate. The ambitious and capable members of the large new sects may cut a swift path upward by their own efforts. As the sects have grown in size they have necessarily needed many men for positions of prestige and authority. These circumstances have undoubtedly been important to Sōka Gakkai, which in recent years has come to include a large number of young university-trained men among its administrators. Status in such positions is clearly labeled by the
use of impressive titles. Commonly, people in high ranking administrative positions are called *riji*, a title derived from the commercial world that is customarily translated as “executive director.” Sōka Gakkai and Risshō Kōseikai each have a good many *riji*. Instructors in dogma of the largest new sects are commonly given the titles in use among university professors—assistant professor, associate professor, and full professor.

Communication between sub-units of the sects makes lavish use of all modern means of communication, including numerous publications. Some sects own large fleets of passenger buses that help ensure faithful attendance at sect convocations. The tight organization and frequent joint acts of members serve to integrate the individual member thoroughly into the whole and provide constant reinforcement of the ties.

Communication is also generally maintained with other new sects. A large number of the new sects belong to a league of new religions (*Nihon Shinshūkyō Dantai Rengōkai* or, in abbreviated form, *Shinshuren*) that was formed to give mutual aid in solving common problems. During one of my visits to the headquarters of P L Kyōdan in 1964, a guided bus tour of its facilities was being conducted for about fifty representatives of other new religious sects. Some sects, perhaps especially P L Kyōdan, have concerned themselves actively with national religious affairs, participating in national religions federations. Cooperation leaves ample room for rivalry, however, and also provides fine opportunities for observing the progress of rivals. No sect likes to be outdone, and all regard visible markers of success in the form of impressive buildings and other facilities as essential. For the most part, rivalry seems good-natured, with one outstanding exception. Sōka Gakkai is not a member of the cooperative league, and its activities are looked upon with alarm and distaste. Discussing these circumstances, a representative of one of the sects stated, “When the others do something—for instance, the new hall that Risshō Kōseikai built—we honestly want to offer congratulations. But not to Sōka Gakkai.”

Various additional organizational aspects of the new sects relate closely to sect activities and are discussed in the pages that follow.

**Facilities and Activities**

Most of the sects conduct services at least once daily at fixed times in which all members are expected to participate. These may be conducted individually in one’s home or, in convocation, at designated places. In addition, meetings of the discussion groups and many other kinds of meetings bring members together frequently. In order to become full-fledged adherents, new members are generally expected or required to make trips to the sect headquarters, where they are lodged and fed for a few days while receiving indoctrination. Groups of Sōka Gakkai members bound for the religious headquarters of the sect at the foot of Mt. Fuji, bearing identifying
pennants and aligned in orderly groups that strongly suggest military formations, are a familiar scene at the railroad stations of all cities of Japan. Throughout, the activities of members of the sects heavily emphasize group rather than individual acts. Although identified with groups, every member is given a highly active role, constantly repeated.

In keeping with their teaching that "religion is life," activities of the new sects reach into many aspects of daily life. This circumstance is by no means confined to the religious organizations of Japan. Industrial concerns and agricultural cooperative associations similarly extend themselves over a wide range of human activities to include recreation and other matters that bear no direct relation to farming or industrial occupations. Many activities of the new religious sects duplicate or overlap those of business concerns and farm cooperatives; a signal difference is that ordinarily only the religious sects concern themselves with religious matters.

Sports, aesthetics, music, education, and programs of medicine and social welfare are variably emphasized. Sōka Gakkai regards politics as being within the realm of religious activities. P L Kyōdan and Risshō Kōsei-kai operate general hospitals for their members and boarding schools for children of members, a policy that is doubtless effective in assuring that the children mature to hold firm faith.

Despite their large size, intensive organization, and emphasis on group participation, none of the religions neglects the individual. He is given ample opportunity through the small-group discussions to express and confess his personal problems. P L Kyōdan officially stresses self-expression as vital to the happy and religious life. Although the new sects often refer to meetings of the discussion groups as periods of instruction in doctrine, they may be more accurately described as sessions of personal counseling and some sects so describe them. Issues discussed are chiefly personal problems of individual members. Responses of the lay leaders are what the questioners desire, assurances that problems will be resolved and simple prescriptions for their solution that consist primarily of maintaining faith in the simple tenets of the sect.

One of the most common personal problems of members is worry or suffering over poor health, and faith healing has been one of the most important attractions offered by the new sects. Claims of miraculous recovery from serious ailments of every kind are made. A feature of small-group meetings is the individual recitation of histories of such cures. The effectiveness of faith healing as a form of psychotherapy is beyond question. A published study of faith healing among the new sects reports the expected: 25 "The majority of the sicknesses for which healing is claimed seem to be psychologically caused or abetted." Some of the largest of the sects appear to have grown a little uneasy in recent years, however, over their practices
of faith healing. During the past decade, as they have grown to positions of prominence, these sects have shown a tendency toward increased reliance upon conventional scientific medicine. We have noted that two of the largest sects provide conventional medical treatment in their own hospitals, which are staffed by physicians who are not sect members. Sōka Gakkai maintains no hospitals, but it appears to encourage its members to make use of scientific medicine much more than it did in the past. Faith healing nevertheless enters importantly into therapy in conjunction with standard medical treatment, especially for cases that resist treatment or seem incurable. The present attitude of the sects toward medicine is that faith is essential to good health or recovery from illness, and scientific medicine is only a useful adjunct.

A question arises as to why faith healing should be so attractive in modern Japan, a nation where modern medicine is thoroughly established and where socialized medicine has for some years reached most of the population. Conditions of health in Japan may be described as good. Life expectancy at birth is equal to that of advanced Western nations. Although protracted and serious illness may entail heavy expenses, medical treatment is ordinarily available at moderate cost. The appeal of faith healing for ailments that scientific medicine cannot cure is obvious, but many other factors contribute to make it attractive for any kind of illness. As a group, the members of the new sects represent the least-educated part of the Japanese population, and, what is probably the most important factor in this connection, those who are least scientifically-minded and least inclined to regard faith healing as a delusion.

Faith healing is given further encouragement by deficiencies of scientific medical practices that have become pronounced in recent years. Modern Japanese medicine gives little attention to psychological aspects of therapy and, by force of circumstance, tends to be highly impersonal. Psychiatry is poorly developed, and the practicing urban physician ordinarily cannot and does not enter into even professionally personalized relations with most of his patients. By lowering costs for treatment, socialized medicine has enormously increased the number of people seeking medical services and has forced physicians, who are poorly paid, to treat vast numbers of patients. The average citizen cannot ordinarily make an appointment for medical care, but must wait his turn in a crowded waiting room to be treated as briefly as possible in assembly-line fashion by an overworked physician. Religious therapy offered by the new religious sects helps fill the gap in affective needs and may be described, for sect members, as the functional counterpart of psychiatry and psychological counseling in the United States.

We have noted that Japanese scholars lay some stress on the importance
of shamanistic elements in the new religions in connection with securing adherents and in therapeutic practices. Oguchi describes the practices as “modern, modified shamanism.” Some care must, however, be used in making these statements. The term shaman stems from anthropological literature and is derived from the native name for religious specialists among Siberian tribes. Shamanistic curing involves direct communication with the supernatural on the part of the shaman-curer during rites of healing. The shaman enters into trance to communicate with the supernatural world. Although various of the founders of the new sects may well be called shamans, the definition of this word is surely stretched beyond its limits when the name shamanism is given to the present practices of faith healing employed by the large, new sects. The practitioners whom members customarily see are not shamans. They are ordinary men who serve as dispensers of formulae, originally of divine inspiration, to be sure, but coming to them strained through many other individuals. Ecstasy on the part of these men is unthinkable, and would doubtless be regarded as a symptom of dangerous mental aberration. Personal contact with charismatic leaders of the large sects is rare, and counsel comes principally from men and women who make no claims of personal inspiration but merely relay sect teachings. As a whole, the new sects and all other religious groups of Japan give little place to ecstatic states or other extremes of emotional expression.

One additional feature of the new religions merits special attention as an effective mechanism for achieving and maintaining group solidarity and providing the individual with a feeling of close personal identification with the group. This is the use of symbolism, which is everywhere extravagant and is doubtlessly important in expediting the teaching of doctrine. Abstract religious philosophies have little appeal for the ordinary man, who responds far better to the concrete, to forms of objectification that may be physically appreciated by the eyes, ears, and other sense organs. Although such great religions of the world as Buddhism and Christianity have risen as philosophic or moral creeds, their passage through generations of adherents has resulted in intensive objectification. With the exception of certain lines of Zen, Japanese religions have abounded with symbolic representation. The new sects are no exception, and they seem remarkably skillful in the use of symbols that serve to bind members to the group. To what extent leaders of the religious sects are conscious of the value of symbols is, however, open to question.

Modes of symbolism used by the new sects are not wholly uniform, but few forms of objectification that might appeal to the senses have been overlooked. Music, song, and symbols with visual appeal are lavishly employed. Leaders and religious professionals may have special costumes. Buildings are not merely practical necessities; they are symbols of unity,
and the grand buildings at headquarters of the large sects are symbols of social prestige. Headquarters of the sects are commonly identified as earthly paradises, which the faithful may—and generally must—visit. Grand halls of the great sects are fabulously expensive and sometimes fantastically elaborate. Although these edifices are often looked upon by outsiders as amusing monuments of the new rich, among members they evoke admiration and personal pride. Members of Risshō Kōseikai, for example, feel happiness and pride over the sumptuous marble and jasper palace completed by their sect in Tokyo in 1964. It is a magnificent symbol of success. There can be no doubt that ceremonies conducted in such surroundings are impressive and even awesome. These edifices, garments, and other symbols, such as the 21-pointed star of P L Kyōdan that represents its 21 articles of faith and the crane used by Sōka Gakkai as a symbol of the sect, are also important in bringing about and reinforcing psychological identification with one's sect.

Grand festivals held by the sects at fixed times through the year are spectacles that attract enormous audiences. P L Kyōdan, which especially stresses visual and aural appeal, features in its special ceremonies spectacular displays of fireworks and includes among its facilities a powerful loudspeaker system for broadcasting to the great crowds gathered for festivals on its hundreds of acres of grounds.

Ordinary services and many special ceremonies feature chanting in unison or the singing of special sect songs. Whether consciously planned for this purpose or not, the chants and songs serve effectively to make members into active participants. Songs and chanted prayers are sometimes accompanied by symbolic movements of the hands. A large group of people chanting in unison in a great hall is a memorable experience. It is tempting to think that the chanted invocation of members of Sōka Gakkai and other sects of Nichiren Buddhism owes its appeal largely to its phonetic features, to the resonance of its vowels. One person alone may intone “Namu myōhō renge kyō” with impressive resonance; a large group intoning in unison is awesome.

The songs of Sōka Gakkai seem particularly stirring. Guided forcefully by energetic leaders who direct the tempo by voice and forceful movements of the arms and body, the songs seem to embody the spirit of aggressiveness that generally characterizes the activities of this sect. Some measure of this feeling of force and determination may come from the fact that certain songs of Sōka Gakkai are military tunes for which new lyrics have been written.

Certain forms of sensual appeal are generally lacking or are given little emphasis, and this seems entirely in keeping with the Japanese character. Attempts are certainly made to arouse emotions, but the display of emo-
tions in violent forms is ordinarily outside customary practices and perhaps beyond ordinary imagination. The "religious thrill" is encouraged but it is a tempered, controlled state of being, and none of the large sects makes use of violent states of ecstasy. At least on a conscious level, sexual symbolism and appeals to sexual sensuality are absent, although individual problems of sexual relations are often enough a subject of small-group discussions. Dancing is also ordinarily excluded from religious activities. Although traditional in Japan as a part of the Bon ceremony of Buddhism, dancing tends to be regarded today as a secular activity quite removed from the realm of religion. Its inclusion in rites strikes most people as strange and unserious. A few of the small sects constitute exceptions to the foregoing statements. Among these are Pentecostal sects of Christianity, which encourage ecstatic states among members. Some of the small and early postwar sects, none of which seems to have survived, featured unusual sexual practices. Tenshō Kōtai Jingūkyō is exceptional in featuring a dance of ecstasy (muga no mai—literally, "dance of selflessness"). Despite the flavor of sensationalism in the name given to this dance, it is a highly controlled performance that includes no apparent excess of emotion or motor behavior.

Any description of the activities of the largest sects is subject to change as the activities expand. All maintain elaborate programs of publication, printing newspapers and other news organs, doctrinal works, pictorial magazines for general distribution, and specialized magazines for youths' and women's divisions. These publications are well-printed and illustrated, and the books are often handsomely bound. Some are published to gain prestige; others are printed in large quantities for sale to members and are important as a source of revenue as well as a medium of communication. A few publications are offered for sale to the general public. Sōka Gakkai has special publications in connection with its political activities, and P L Kyōdan, in accordance with its emphasis on art, for some years published an essentially secular art magazine featuring articles and fine color photography by professionals who were seldom sect members. Seichō-no-Ie is perhaps as much a publishing house as it is a religious sect.

Most publications of the sects are expectably in the Japanese language, but recent years have seen a growing number of publications in English and other foreign languages. Publication in English confers prestige; publication in other foreign languages is much less common and seems to be almost wholly for the practical purposes of missionizing. In publications, as well as in other matters, the large sects compete with and emulate each other.

Financial support comes from two main sources that overlap, contributions from members and sales of publications. Places of worship of the
large sects lack offertories. Membership fees are small, and these are sometimes disguised as fees for subscriptions to periodicals. Members generally make additional contributions in amounts of their own choice, but it seems certain that considerable pressure is often put upon them to make contributions. When funds are needed for special projects, an appeal is sent out to all subdivisions. Sōka Gakkai makes its drives through well-organized "financial committees" and other sects appear to be following its lead. Sōka Gakkai announced with pride that its appeal for several million dollars for the erection of a building completed in 1964 was met within a few days, and that a campaign in 1966 for a much larger amount was equally successful.

A fairly recent and growing trend of activity, initiated by Sōka Gakkai and soon afterwards adopted by other sects, is to emphasize doctrinal learning. This is done through organized programs of lectures and individual study, separate from the more personal small-group discussion meetings. All members are strongly urged to take this training and those who demonstrate more than ordinary interest and competence are rewarded on the basis of written examinations by ranked positions as instructors of dogma.

This trend of development offers several organizational advantages. It fosters solidarity by bringing members together with greater frequency; provides a growing number of non-salaried teachers who are increasingly bound to the organization; yields additional income through the sale of doctrinal publications; and, what may be most important, through the system of ranked grades of competence in dogma provides for all members an escalated series of goals of achievement. Recognition comes with each step but another goal lies forever ahead.

Membership

Some understanding of the reasons for the success of the new sects comes from examination of the social backgrounds and personal characteristics of their members. These are drawn chiefly from the lower and lower middle social strata of Japanese society, the social classes with the least formal education and those who, while not impoverished, generally lack high incomes. Japanese scholars often refer to the followers of the new sects as the "unorganized masses." A survey conducted by the Ministry of Education of occupational affiliations of adherents to Japanese religions shows a high frequency among members of the new sects of people employed in manufacturing and commerce, that is, a high incidence of members of the urban laboring classes. A Japanese scholar describes the membership of the new sects as consisting chiefly of small business and shop owners, unorganized labor, poor and unfortunate farmers and fishermen, impoverished middle aged people with poor prospects, and women. A survey conducted by one of the large national newspapers of the characteristics of members of Sōka Gakkai describes them essentially as above except that it reports
no imbalance by sex. This report identifies them occupationally as being engaged chiefly in physical labor in industries of small and medium size.

An analysis of the "personal experiences" of Sōka Gakkai members (that is, an analysis of statements bearing witness to the benefits of Sōka Gakkai membership) compiled from the Sōka Gakkai newspaper during 1960 reports that nearly all of 261 cases had gained solutions for personal problems, which presumably moved them to join Sōka Gakkai. The most common problems, in descending order of importance, were illness, domestic troubles, and problems connected with occupations or livelihood. Various surveys conducted by Japanese scholars leave little doubt that the great majority of the followers of the new sects were converted because of the promise of cure of sickness or recovery from other misfortune that the faiths promised.

Many exceptions to the foregoing generalizations concerning the backgrounds of members may be found and some sects reach well into the middle class. Public school teachers, for example, are said by representatives of these sects to be fairly well represented in Seichō-no-Ie, P L Kyōdan, and Sōka Gakkai. The social status of public school teachers in Japan is not high, however, and they may be labeled as lower middle class. A trend seems evident of gradual change toward higher social status of new converts as the sects have grown in wealth and prominence. There is no doubt that each of the largest sects includes among its members some wealthy and influential people and at least a few who are nationally distinguished persons in arts, letters, drama, governmental service, and business and finance.

A sliding scale of social class affiliation of members of the four largest new sects would likely place Seichō-no-Ie at the top, followed by P L Kyōdan. Representatives of these two sects described their membership to me as predominantly middle class and lower middle class, respectively. Informed opinion gives them a somewhat lower rating, but identifies them as the sects reaching highest into the Japanese class hierarchy. Common opinion, not readily verifiable, holds that the membership of Seichō-no-Ie includes a number of intellectuals. Comparative rating of the affiliations by social class of Risshō Kōseiikai and Sōka Gakkai is more difficult. Prevalent opinion, which may reflect prejudice, identifies the members of Sōka Gakkai as drawn from the lowest social strata of all.

Discussion of the affiliations by social class of members of the new sects is complicated by the fact that assignment of the Japanese population to social classes is difficult. All of the new sects, for example, appear to include a considerable number of people who fall solidly in the middle range in incomes but are otherwise difficult to place. These are self-employed shopkeepers and entrepreneurs in small business who characteristically have had little formal education. A few members of similar backgrounds are
wealthy. It is safe to state that whatever social placement according to income might be, the members of the new sects generally represent the least educated segment of the Japanese population. They are described by Japanese scholars as conservative, pre-modern, and as being drawn from the people who have been active in traditional festivals and shrine worship.

A survey conducted in 1960 by Risshō Kōseikai of the previous religious affiliation of its members reports that 69% of the sample came from sixteen sects of established Buddhism. Since Risshō Kōseikai attaches importance to ancestors in its doctrine and rites, this figure does not seem high. The report also states, however, that 23.8% of the sample were not previously affiliated with any religion. A similar survey of 500 of its own members conducted by Sōka Gakkai in 1960 reports a comparable ratio drawn from established Buddhist sects, gives no information on converts with no previous religious affiliation, but reports 44 as “miscellaneous” and 55 as failing to answer.

Japanese commentators on the new sects have often attributed part of their success to the movement of the Japanese population from country to city. The increasing urbanization of Japan has undoubtedly favored the growth of the new sects by weakening the functional effectiveness of the established religions in several ways that have their beginnings long before the emergence of the new sects. There may well be some merit in the idea that sect membership is attractive to recent migrants to the cities who face problems of adjustment, but membership appears to consist mostly of thoroughly urbanized people. It must be borne in mind that Japan’s population is predominantly urban and that about three-fourths of the population was urban by 1964. Any sect seeking to attract members would sensibly concentrate its efforts on the cities first. Perhaps one of the reasons why the Odoru Shūkyō has not expanded after an initial spurt of growth is that it has concentrated its activities chiefly in the rural area of Yamaguchi Prefecture where it originated.

A trend of change appears evident in the age and, in lesser degree, in the division by sex of members of the new sects. Members are often described as predominantly middle aged and female, but the issues of the sex and age of members are not wholly clear. It seems certain that aged members are relatively few but youth is well represented. Sōka Gakkai members include a large number of young men and women. A sample survey of the ages of its members reported by Sōka Gakkai in 1960 reports that 37.6% were between ages 20 and 30 and only about 17% were age 50 or over. The average age of members of the new sects appears to be younger than that of adherents to the established faiths.

Common opinion in Japan holds that members of the new sects are principally female, and this impression seems correct if it is modified to
say that more women than men are members. Official representatives of the new sects, who are often well informed about scholarly as well as non-scholarly writings concerning their organizations, appear to be sensitive on the matter of the sex of their adherents. Characteristically, they state that membership is about equally divided between men and women, but they do not make public their statistics on the sex of members. Sōka Gakkai appears to have proportionately more male members than any other large sect, and Seichō-no-Ie probably has the largest proportion of female members. Opinion concerning the sex of members is apparently based principally upon observation of the participants in sect activities, and these are more frequently women than men. Representatives of the sects state that men are often unable to attend daytime services because these are held during working hours. Thus women are "representatives" for their families. In any event, there is nothing remarkable in a preponderance of women at religious events in Japan, and there seems to be some tendency to regard many religious acts as properly "feminine." Women outnumber men in the established Buddhist and Shinto sects. General trends in membership in the large sects in recent years appear to be a movement somewhat upward in social class and toward membership that is more nearly representative of the general population than in earlier years in distribution by sex and age, with a general upward limit of middle age.

The large new sects all include among their members some persons who are not Japanese nationals. These are mostly people of Japanese descent and principally citizens of the United States and Brazil. The sects appear to take great pride in their foreign memberships, and Sōka Gakkai has given considerable publicity to its Caucasian members. These are few and they seem almost invariably to be husbands of Japanese women, usually American men in military service who have been stationed in Japan, or persons who have intimate contacts of other kinds with Japanese citizens or people of Japanese descent. It is difficult to imagine that the teachings of these sects might find receptive audiences in the Western world. Specific features of their beliefs and religious practices, such as the ancestor worship of Risshō Kōseikai, are unsuitable for Westerners, and the overall cast of their philosophies is distinctively Japanese in a way that permits no easy meeting ground between Japanese and Western modes of thinking. In this respect Seichō-no-Ie is the least alien of the sects, and it alone appears to have consciously adopted and adapted elements of religious philosophy from the Western world.

The foregoing discussion of similarities and differences in doctrine, organization, and other matters may well have obscured the fundamental features to which the sects owe much of their success. Each provides an
acceptable rationale for existence, making the individual problems of ordinary human life endurable and providing a transcendental goal for the whole path of life. Solutions to everyday problems, statements of goals, and procedures for achieving the goals are expressed in ways that are intellectually and emotionally attractive to a part of the Japanese population—ways that are at the same time easily within the range of capability. The preceding statements are doubtless platitudes that apply to many religions, but they merit repetition. It is against the background of the social and economic order of Japan, the peculiar human interrelationships characterizing the nation in the past and today and the deficiencies of these social relationships, that these platitudes take on meaning, explaining the success of the new sects.
CHAPTER III

THE OLD RELIGIONS

Since the emergence of the new religious sects after World War II, Japanese conceptions of the nation's religions have tended increasingly toward a twofold classification of old (kisei, "established") and new (shinkō, "newly risen"). There is some tendency to classify as old the several sects arising during the nineteenth century, thus distinguishing them from the very new, or to give these nineteenth-century developments a name indicating intermediate age. We shall here regard as "old religions" all religious organizations, including Christian sects, except those that consensus regards as new. "Old religions" will then include the sects more or less of Shinto tradition, such as Tenri-kyō, that were well established before the beginning of the twentieth century and will also include various Christian denominations established after the end of World War II. On the grounds of dogma, organization, and activities there is ample reason for considering Tenri-kyō and other early sects of Sect Shinto together with the very new sects. Our concern here, however, is not so much classification as it is an attempt to understand the recent religious developments in Japan. The formerly "new" sects such as Tenri-kyō do not represent any great change over the recent past and they are not the centers of the most intense religious activity. It is only to the newest sects that this description applies.

A word of caution is useful here. Japanese opinion and classification of religions do not ordinarily include among the new religions the splinter sects of Buddhism recently given independent legal status, sects that adhere closely in dogma to the Buddhist streams of thought of their parental sects and that include orders of trained priests and other religious personnel. Such sects are usually regarded as being in the "established" group. The great "new religions" of Buddhism are lay orders. Christian denominations introduced since the war as representatives of American and European denominations are similarly "established."

The full history of Japanese religions is a vast subject, quite beyond the scope and capability of the researches forming the basis of this study. The lengthy histories of the kisei shūkyō, the established religions of Japan, moreover, are already recorded in detail in a number of available books.
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written in the English language by Japanese and foreign scholars specializing in this subject.¹ Most of these histories were written before World War II, however, and no comparably detailed accounts exist that describe their modern conditions. An accurate, detailed account of modern conditions would be difficult or impossible to compile for lack of information, but perhaps this is only to say that histories are most frequently written after the passage of some years. Professional men of religion in Japan, whether identified with new or old religions, are committed defensively and occasionally offensively to guard their vested interests, and they are seldom ideal informants about the religious affairs of their own or any other religious sect. As an example of lack of reliable information, we may refer once again to the deceptive and inaccurate statistics available on sect affiliations of the Japanese population.

Despite the difficulties that stand in the way of gaining accurate, detailed information on current conditions, it is clear that as a group the established religious sects of Japan have been deeply troubled since the end of World War II. A general idea of their present condition may be inferred from a wide variety of sources of information, including some outspoken representatives of the sects themselves. In part as background to a discussion of the present state of the established religions, and in part because this information is useful in connection with the aims of this book, we shall here first sketch briefly the outlines of the history of the religions of Japan until the close of World War II, calling attention to certain events and characteristics of the religions that appear to have special significance with relation to modern conditions.

Until the beginning of modern times, the Japanese language lacked any generic term meaning “religion.” The modern word for religion, shūkyō, is an invention of the nineteenth century, derived etymologically from the words for sect (shū) and teachings (kyō). Japan’s religious history begins with a complex of once-nameless supernaturalistic beliefs and practices. In modern times these have ordinarily been called native because they are ancient, antedating the beginnings of the recorded history of Japan and, although of unknown or uncertain provenience, because they were thoroughly integrated in native custom by the time of the earliest historical records. The name Shintō,² a term meaning “way of the gods” and composed of words derived from the Chinese language, was given to these beliefs and practices after the introduction of Buddhism, the second of the two major strains of religion in Japan.

The earliest clearly identifiable foreign additions to Shinto came between the third and the sixth centuries, when ideas and customs of Confucianism and Taoism reached Japan through contact with Korea and China. Confucian ideals of politics had early importance in Japan, and Confucian ethics
later assumed great significance in Japanese culture. Although Confucian ethics became incorporated in some degree in Buddhist and Shinto teachings and thoroughly incorporated as part of the quasi-religious or secular values of the nation, they have nevertheless remained distinguishable to modern times as Confucianism. Taoism similarly penetrated Japanese culture, becoming incorporated and, unlike Confucianism, generally losing its identity. Many folk beliefs and practices of supernaturalism, including forms of divination, Chinese dualism as expressed in the ideas of *ying* and *yang* (in Japanese, *in'yōdō*), and other ideas of cosmology accompanied Taoism and Buddhism and became parts of Japanese culture. Acceptance of these ideas and practices was easy and natural, since they arrived from the Asiatic mainland informally and often resembled beliefs and practices already existing in Japan. As time passed, what came to be regarded as Shinto by the ordinary man included numerous beliefs and practices of supernaturalism derived from Ch'na and often ultimately from other parts of mainland Asia that were not easily recognizable as Buddhist.

Japan’s first effective exposure to Buddhism occurred in the middle of the sixth century, when Chinese Buddhism reached the Japanese court by way of Korea. Aided by the manifest superiority of the contemporary Chinese culture that accompanied it, Buddhism won the support of the imperial court and, despite some opposition from Shinto priests, quickly became established as the religion of the aristocracy.

At the beginning of the eighth century, most of the theological and cosmological roots of the religions developing in Japan in the next eight centuries were already established—Shinto, Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, the Chinese idea of dualism, and a rich and varied group of beliefs and practices of shamanism, divination, and other forms of magic that accompanied but did not always fall within the provinces of the foreign religions and stemmed ultimately from areas at least as far away as Siberia and India. These elements, augmented by later additions of other aspects of Confucianism, different forms of Chinese Buddhism introduced in later centuries, and, last of all, various strains of Christianity constitute the historical ingredients of the contemporary religions of Japan. The coming together of these various forms of religion seems most remarkable for the mutual adaptations rather than the conflicts that resulted.

This process of religious adaptation was well along its course by the end of the ninth century. Buddhism remained a religion of the sophisticated elite until the beginning of that century, when native formulators adapted it into forms suitable for the common man and established the Shingon and Tendai sects or schools of Buddhism. A feature of this adaptation was the elimination of conflict with the native religion. According to the Shinto teachings of Shingon, called Ryōbu (Two aspects) Shinto, and similar
teachings of Tendai, called Ichijitsu (One reality) Shinto, deities of the Shinto pantheon were Japanese manifestations of Buddha appearing in the cycle of reincarnations. No conflict need exist, therefore, between the worship of Buddhist deities and the deities of Shinto. Aided by this interpretation, Buddhism spread to the common people throughout the nation, and by the end of the ninth century all strata of Japanese society were generally both Buddhists and Shintoists. The popular forms of Buddhism, Shingon and Tendai, departed in various ways from the Chinese Buddhism that had prevailed among the aristocrats. The new Buddhism as formulated by Japanese founders included simple concepts suited for uneducated people, magical formulae to bring desired earthly ends, and the promise of salvation for all who held the faith. Shinto deities were enshrined within the compounds of Buddhist temples, and Shinto rites came in many ways to resemble Buddhist counterparts. The two strains of religion had begun a course of coexistence in which two trends have been outstanding.

Despite some later periods of hostility and attempts to separate the two religions into “pure” lines, a trend of mutual influence continued so that each took on the color of the other. Full amalgamation into a single religion never occurred. Instead a second trend began toward a division of religious labor that, as time passed, left certain concerns and activities primarily or exclusively to one religion or the other. Merging that might be regarded as an exception to this general trend is limited to individual sects or groups of sects. Certain sects or schools of Buddhism, such as Shugendō, which developed from early Shingon and Tendai Buddhism and reached its greatest height in the thirteenth century, contained a larger portion of Shinto elements than other forms of Buddhism, but these developments were not amalgamations in which the identity of Buddhism became lost. The closest approaches to amalgamation that exist are all late developments, sects arising in the late nineteenth century, and, especially, certain of the modern “new religions.” The dogmas of these religions, it must be added, are not merely composites of Buddhism and Shinto but include elements of religious and quasi-religious thought from a much wider range of sources.

The division of religious tasks between Shinto and Buddhism never resulted in two completely separated realms, but where overlap occurred, procedures were much alike. For the most part, the roles of Shinto related to the events of daily mortal life. Death, the hereafter, and the veneration of ancestors were the concerns of Buddhism. When supernatural aid was desired by any member of society at times of sickness or other crisis, recourse might be taken to both religions. Buddhism was often the apparently dominant faith, especially because of the political influence which priests sometimes exerted and the position of privilege sometimes
given to Buddhism by the ruling authorities, but Shinto remained firmly embedded in the culture of the common people.

Strong religious ferment again arose during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, during a time of great political disturbance, and culminated in the establishment of new schools and sects of Buddhism that were better suited to the changed times than their predecessors. It is at this time that three of the greatest schools of Japanese Buddhism were established or first rose to importance: Amida Buddhism, which began in the ninth century and is characterized by simple doctrines and practices; Zen Buddhism, with its philosophic rather than supernaturalistic orientation and its teachings of mental disciplines, which was introduced to Japan much earlier and rose to great importance at this time; and Nichiren Buddhism, a new development formulated by the reformer Nichiren that violently opposed all other faiths. Japanese Buddhism had by this time become indigenous.

The history of Japanese Buddhism from the thirteenth to the seventeenth centuries reflects the disunity and strife of the nation during this period and is a chronicle of the ascent and decline of certain schools, political involvement in attempts by various sects to gain political power, bitter rivalry between sects, and at times violence that could properly be called war arising among sects and between political authorities and various sects. Fission of Buddhist sects into independent units was common, but no important new school of Buddhism arose and Buddhism never wholly submerged Shinto. Also a part of the history of Buddhism in Japan at this time, and one of its most outstanding features, is the significant role it played in the promotion of fine arts and other forms of aesthetics and in the promotion of science and learning in general. During much of Japan's history, its savants, innovators, and teachers in secular culture have been Buddhist priests and monks.

After centuries of national disunity while factions under local rulers fought with each other for power, Japan was unified by force of arms at the beginning of the seventeenth century under circumstances which greatly favored the position of Buddhism. During the internal strife of the sixteenth century, the nations of Europe first touched Japan in their efforts to explore the world and establish trade with Asia. Portuguese traders reached Japan in 1542, and shortly afterwards, in 1549, Christianity was introduced by Francis Xavier. Jesuit and Franciscan missionaries were active for nearly a century. Given the support of Japanese political authorities who saw in the foreign religion a useful rival to Buddhist priests seeking to gain political power, Christianity made considerable headway in gaining converts, especially in southern Japan. As time passed, the ruling authorities grew fearful of disastrous involvement with foreign nations and increasingly distrustful of the political value of Christianity. A decision was made to isolate Japan from contact with foreign countries and to abolish Christianity.
After several half-hearted and ineffective attempts at suppression beginning in 1587, earnest persecution started about the beginning of the Tokugawa era (1615-1868), and by 1640 all foreign missionaries had been driven out of the country or killed and native converts either killed or forced to apostatize. A few Christians continued to follow their faith in deep secret until modern times, but Christianity had otherwise been exterminated.

The two and one-half centuries of rule by the Tokugawa family were a time of tight unification and generally of internal peace brought about by a strict political control that included close surveillance over religion. As a measure to ensure the suppression of Christianity, the Tokugawa rulers gave special recognition to Buddhism. All citizens were required to become parishioners of Buddhist temples and to be so registered in temple records. As time passed, the temples became agencies of the government, since they were given the tasks of maintaining records of births, marriages, adoptions, deaths, changes of residence and occupation, and other similar vital statistics. The temples also assumed another role as forerunners of later public schools by operating temple schools where the children of commoners could receive instruction in reading and writing together with Confucian ethical teachings.

The nature of the roles officially given to Buddhist temples during the Tokugawa era, especially their police function connected with maintaining records of membership and vital statistics on all citizens, ensured that everyone was officially a Buddhist. Records of the time give no indication, however, of increased interest on the part of the people in the doctrines of Buddhism. Firmly secure as civil servants, Buddhist priests often became bureaucrats rather than dedicated men of religion, and the doctrines of Buddhism underwent little change. Perhaps the most noteworthy religious development of the time was the activity of Zen priests in promoting Confucian ethics of interpersonal relations, following the teachings of Shushi, a Confucian scholar of twelfth-century China. In the seventeenth century, these teachings formed the foundation of Bushidō, the code of honor of the samurai, which later permeated the entire nation as an important set of values.

The history of Shinto in the centuries following the introduction of Buddhism until near the end of the Tokugawa period is much less colorful than that of Buddhism, and is therefore comparatively poorly recorded. No formal dogma ever emerged, and no great national or sectarian ecclesiastical organization was formed. Shinto priests were not generally leaders in the development of aesthetics or other branches of learning. Despite the continued identification of the emperor with Shinto as a divine ruler, he had long before this time become a politically powerless figurehead, and
Shinto priests held no powerful roles in guiding affairs of the government. Yet Shinto beliefs and rites, now strongly flavored by Buddhism and augmented by many other foreign elements, continued to have a vigorous life among the common people who composed most of the population.

The contemporaneous existence of Shinto and Buddhism was not always one of complete amity. After the initial resistance to Buddhism on the part of Shinto priests at the time of the introduction of the foreign religion, there were also later Shinto movements of reaction against Buddhist domination and Buddhist efforts to oppose Shinto. A Shinto reaction against Buddhist domination in the fourteenth century resulted in no significant changes. Shin (Amida) Buddhism, which rose to great prominence in the seventeenth century, actively opposed Shinto belief and practice; but Shin represented only one of several strong Buddhist strains of the time. A more persistent and important trend that grew in intensity during the Tokugawa era was opposition on the part of influential Confucian and Shinto scholars to all forms of Buddhism, and this was accompanied by the growth of a strong national sentiment in favor of Shinto.

Revived interest in Shinto at this time was not merely or solely a corollary to anti-Buddhist sentiment. A general revival of interest in Japanese history, religion, and all other things natively Japanese occurred. The last decades of the Tokugawa era were a time of social and political unrest. No serious disturbances occurred until the uprisings that brought an end to the rule by the Tokugawa family in 1868, but the several preceding decades had been a time of mounting dissatisfaction with the Tokugawa rule marked by minor rebellions against the rulers, peasant uprisings against oppressive conditions of life, and a general atmosphere of repressed seething. Dissatisfaction also extended to Buddhism which, in its secure position as a state religion, was not serving the needs of the people. Among the events of this time that give evidence of the social ferment were religious movements, the first occurring in Japan's recorded history, that resulted in the lasting establishment of religious sects other than Buddhist. As we may recall, the native Shinto religion had never been sectarian but was instead an unformalized national faith lacking organized dogma and a national ecclesiastical organization.

The new developments, arising among the common people near the end of the Tokugawa reign, were organized movements headed by prophetic leaders. These led to the establishment of the religious sects of Kurozumi-kyō, Tenri-kyō, and Konkō-kyō, all of which have considerable vitality today and may be regarded as forerunners of the new sects of the twentieth century. Although officially classified as Shinto sects, these organizations in various ways doctrinally resemble many sects organized after World War
II that have strong Shinto orientation but include non-Shinto elements of doctrine.

The emergence and growth of these early sects of Sect Shinto and of other similar sects that followed in the late nineteenth century are one aspect of the dissatisfaction with Buddhism and associated antagonism toward it that characterized the late Tokugawa period and the early years of the Meiji era (1868-1915). Another development of this time was the widespread growth of small, local religious lay groups called kō with activities centering on the worship of Shinto deities and mountains traditionally regarded as sacred. Modeled in some part after Buddhist predecessors that were units of organized sects, these were informal, egalitarian groups of like-minded peers that may be seen as providing fertile ground for the development of organized sects when and if charismatic leaders assumed control of them. Some small, local religious groups of this kind continue to exist in rural Japan today.

Antagonism toward Buddhism on the part of the new Meiji government, which was now headed for the first time in many centuries by the emperor, became active persecution that reached its greatest height in the early 1870s. In a movement given the name Haibutsu Kishaku, “The Extermination of Buddhism,” Buddhist priests were driven from their employment, many temples closed, and some Buddhist religious edifices and paraphernalia destroyed. Hand in hand with the persecution of Buddhism was a governmental attempt to establish a revived Shinto as the state religion. But active persecution of Buddhism was an act of the political authorities, not of the people, and persecution ended when strong reactions among the people made clear that the nation opposed the drastic measures being taken and that national unity was thereby endangered.

Contact with European nations and the United States also exerted important influence on the government’s treatment of Buddhism and its policies toward religion in general. Foreign criticism of religious intolerance led to the adoption of an official, but only nominal, policy of extending religious freedom to all citizens and of separating the church and state.

These domestic and foreign pressures led the Meiji government to make several rapid changes in its policies toward religion. The movement to revive Shinto became a governmental campaign in early Meiji that included a program of “purifying” Shinto of its Buddhist elements and making Shinto into a state religion. Purification was aimed particularly at Ryōbu Shinto, the amalgamated form of Buddhism and Shinto, which had then existed for over ten centuries. Buddhist statuary and other religious paraphernalia in Shinto shrines were destroyed, and Buddhist priests officiating at these shrines were forced from their posts.

Abandoning the idea of Shinto as an officially recognized state religion
in 1872, the government created a Religions Ministry with jurisdiction over both Shinto and Buddhism. The personnel of both religions were to promote nationalism as "Teachers of Religion and Morals" with teachings centered on loyalty to the emperor and the state. This effort, in turn, was quickly seen to be unsuccessful and was abandoned.

Although the active persecution of Buddhism had now ended, a severe blow had already been dealt from which Buddhism has never entirely recovered. The edict banning Christianity was lifted in 1873, and the Religions Ministry was disbanded in 1877. None of these actions of seeming leniency toward non-Shinto religions implied the end of governmental control of religious affairs; an administrative office of religious affairs continued to maintain supervision.

As a result of these nineteenth-century developments, the religious circumstances of the nation by the 1880's were far more complex than in the past. Aided indirectly by the governmental attempts to revive the native religion, the popular sects of Shinto that first appeared early in the nineteenth century had grown in number and some had attracted large bodies of adherents. Buddhism had recovered some of its lost strength, and a growing number of Christian sects had established missions. The Doctrines of none of these three groups of religions accorded with the governmental aim to establish a state religion of Shinto, but suppression of any of them was clearly impossible. In 1882 the government recognized the now nationally-organized sects of Shinto as a separate category of religious bodies and officially divided Shinto into Sectarian Shinto, composed of financially self-supporting sects, and Shrine Shinto, which lacked sect organization and received financial support from the government or local communities on the grounds that it perpetuated traditional beliefs and practices of the Japanese nation and was believed to promote the welfare and prosperity of the people.

Separation of church and state was nominally accomplished in 1884 with the dissolution of the administrative office supervising religious affairs and the adoption of the official position that state-supported Shrine Shinto was not religion but was instead a national cult. The recognition of Sect Shinto as a separate category of religions had been one of the measures taken in the attempt to remove from Shrine Shinto the characteristics of religion. Sect Shinto and Shrine Shinto were also separated administratively by the creation of separate bureaus to administer their affairs. Another act directed toward the goal of eliminating from Shrine Shinto the characteristics of religion was a rule forbidding shrine priests to conduct funerals, which had for a brief time during the persecution of Buddhism legally become a Shinto prerogative. A new constitution adopted in 1889 nominally extended religious freedom to the population and prohibited religious education in public
schools, but it also allowed a large place for the putatively non-religious activities of Shrine Shinto as expressed in the Imperial Rescript on Education promulgated in 1890, which may be described as an eloquently brief command to make patriotism into a cult of nationalism. Reverence for the emperor and other Shinto deities that had now become national deities then became a part of the programs of instruction of the public schools of the nation and a patriotic duty of citizens of all ages.

In the years that followed until the close of World War II, governmental efforts to control religion continued and were powerful, but opposing forces were always at work and the government at no time had even full legal control over all religious affairs. Organs of the government supervising religious matters changed from time to time. In 1913 the governmental organ concerned with religion became part of the Ministry of Education, but Shrine Shinto remained under the control of the Ministry of Domestic Affairs. The most powerful deterrent to complete religious control by the government had always been the religious sects themselves, and these were only partly mollified by the labeling of state-supported Shrine Shinto as a form of patriotism rather than a religion. The greatest degree of governmental control of religion was reached after the promulgation in 1939 of the Religious Bodies Law, which gave to the Ministry of Education strong authority over all religious sects of the nation in matters of both organization and doctrine. Approval of all individual sect leaders by the Ministry was required, and these leaders were held responsible for the activities of their sects. To help ensure control over the large number of sects, amalgamation of various sects of Buddhism and Christianity was enforced in 1941 and 1942, and all aspects of sect activities were carefully scrutinized. Under this strict control, the religious sects of the nation were tolerated by the ruling authorities as long as their adherents, Buddhist, Sect Shintoist, or Christian, participated in shrine worship. Under this strong pressure, few sects failed to approve shrine worship for their members. Religious leaders who showed opposition were intimidated or punished, sometimes by imprisonment, and a few sects that refused to accept shrine worship were suppressed. During the period from 1941 until the end of World War II, the religious sects of Japan were as a whole compliant tools of the state, often passive but sometimes espousing governmental ideas of Shinto nationalism, and only rarely offering active opposition.

Japan's surrender in 1945 was followed by the abolition of Shrine Shinto as a national cult and the renunciation by the emperor of his divinity. Religious freedom was established under a new constitution which limited governmental supervision of religion principally to control over the legal existence of religious sects as juridical persons. All religious sects of the nation were required to be legally approved anew as religious persons under
laws designed to protect and encourage religion. Granting of the status of a religious juridical person was made the responsibility of a small department, the Religious Affairs Section (Shūmu ka) of the Ministry of Education, which is empowered to approve sects on a national level, that is, sects with installations in more than one prefecture. Other duties and responsibilities of the Religious Affairs Sections are to maintain statistics and other records of religious affairs of the nation and to provide legal advice to religious groups. Much of the present activity of the Religious Affairs Section consists of making scholarly surveys and studies of religious conditions in the nation, and the staff of the department includes well-qualified scholars of religion. Official approval of religious bodies on a local level may also be gained through prefectural offices. Other contact today between religious sects and national and regional governments may come through the Japan Religious League, a federation composed of representatives of Buddhist, Shinto, and Christian Sects, and Shrine Shinto, and through other less comprehensive federations formed by shrines and sects. None of these federations is in any sense an agency of the government.

Many changes occurred after 1945 in the social and economic life of Japan, some planned as measures of the American occupation, and, after the end of the occupation, others by the Japanese government. Still other changes were unplanned and sometimes unexpected. All have strongly affected subsequent trends of religious development. A major trend, which we have already noted, is toward secularization of life. As we have also noted, this trend has been accompanied by intense religious activity by a part of the population and the growth of many new sects which appear to have drawn their members principally from the older sects. The present circumstances of the “established” sects of Buddhism, Shinto, and Christianity will be discussed separately in the pages that follow. Before doing so, it is useful to call special attention to certain trends and characteristics of the religious life of Japan that are not always clearly evident in our brief historical review.

Two trends of the religious history of Japan that our sketch records but does not emphasize may appear to be antithetical. One trend is toward increasing similarity in all religions of the nation. As we have noted, discord has arisen at times between the two major currents of religion and among sects within a single current. The religious history of Japan seems notable, however, for the tolerance rather than the intolerance which adherents of one religion have shown for other faiths. In view of this attitude of tolerance and the associated partial similarity of Buddhism and Shinto as the products of centuries of coexistence with varying degrees of planned rapport, it is not surprising that modern Japanese commonly regard all religions as being alike. The ordinary citizen has for centuries been oblivious
of many historical distinctions of belief and acts of devotion that stem from quite different sources. To any villager, for example, there was often no distinction, and no need for such distinction, in prayers offered before wayside statues and shrines of Inari-sama, a Shinto deity; Yakushi-nyorai, a Buddhist deity whose name was often rendered by ordinary folk in personalized fashion as Yakushi-sama; and Daikoku-sama, one of the seven gods of luck coming from Chinese folk belief but ultimately derived from India.

The seemingly opposing trend has been toward a proliferation of sects, and the present number of religious sects in Japan far exceeds the number in the United States. Until the nineteenth century, sectarianism was limited to the Buddhist religion and consisted of several schools composed of many doctrinally similar or identical sects and subsects. Characteristically, these divisions clustered about a founder-leader. As the followers of a leader grew in number and came to be spread geographically, an organization of head and subsidiary temples emerged that often consisted of several degrees of subsidiary status. This complex constitutes a sect and, when branches are doctrinally different in a fairly marked degree, forms a school. The death of a powerful founder has often been followed by fission of the organization. New leaders arise who offer somewhat different doctrinal interpretations or there are disputes over succession to headship. The leader and his followers become administratively independent, thus constituting a sect. If doctrinal changes are marked, the new sect may, after repetition of the process of fission, become a school. The process of division has often been repeated in Japan, resulting in a great complex of dependent and independent subdivisions of a single doctrinal school.

After Sect Shinto appeared in the nineteenth century, the same trend toward division and independence became evident among the sects classified under this heading. This process of religious branching was brought to a standstill by the Japanese government in the decade before and during World War II, but it was certainly not brought to an end. The trend toward proliferation of sects has seen its strongest development since the war and, as previously suggested in our discussion of the post-war sects, offers a partial explanation of the seemingly explosive growth of new sects. It is useful to emphasize that whereas the great number of sects in Japan is a reflection of much internal strife among leaders, it does not imply a general state of religious exclusiveness or intolerance of other faiths among the sects. The large number of sects in Japan seems rather to be part of a trend toward forming small social groups and a reflection of the importance given to ties to individual leaders, traits that characterize the nation in secular as well as in religious life. The tendency toward fission seems ever present as the groups grow in adherents unless countering measures of organization and
reorganization, such as those followed by Sōka Gakkai, are taken to ensure continued solidarity.

The relationship between religion and the state in Japan is also worthy of special note. Despite the attribution of divinity to the emperor, a number of attempts to establish a state religion, and the power in political affairs held at various times by certain Buddhist schools and sects, religion has by and large been the servant rather than the master of politics. At least in historic times, the role of the divine emperor has always been as a validator of political policy. The State Shinto of the twentieth century was equally a validation, and never a controller, of political and martial policies and acts.

**Shinto**

The early religion of Japan before the introduction of Buddhism is usually described as simple nature worship, animism, or a combination of nature worship and animism. No scriptures existed and none has ever since been formulated that may be said to represent Shinto in its entirety. The principal accounts of early Shinto are two historical-mythological documents of the eighth century, the *Kojiki* (Chronicle of Ancient Events) and the *Nihongi* or *Nihonshoki* (Chronicles of Japan). These describe many practices that vanished long ago but nevertheless present a picture in which dominant themes characterizing modern Shinto are clearly evident despite many additions from foreign sources, and the deletions, modifications, and adaptations of later centuries. No major idea or associated practice of past or present Shinto is truly unique to that religion, and various of the central ideas of early Shinto resemble those of the aboriginal religions of Polynesia and some societies of Southeast Asia and Indonesia. The total complex of Shinto beliefs is nevertheless distinctive and unique.

Early Shinto had as its core a multi-faceted idea of supernatural power, called *kami*, which resembled the concepts of *mana* of Polynesia and various societies of Melanesia. Power existed in many places, in natural phenomena such as winds and storms, in mountains, waterfalls, and any unusual, inanimate objects of nature; in plants and animals; and in an enormous host of supernatural beings ranging from spirits of inanimate objects, plants, lower animals, and human beings on to a great roster of named deities. *Kami*, a word that has grown to have many meanings and remains in common use today in both religious and secular contexts, has a central meaning of superior status of one sort or another. In early Shinto, the word seems to have meant only supernatural power, both highly personified power possessed by deities concerned with the world and with human activities, and impersonal power that was object-like, communicable, and, on a supernatural level, had qualities analogous with the properties of things that have marked effects upon man, such as acids, bases, and electricity.
Kami worked for both good and bad, but it is safe to assume that its humanly beneficial qualities were the more important. Acts of supernaturalism were aimed to ensure well-being through propitiation of gods and other supernatural beings with man-like capabilities of thought and action, and through various mechanical acts that served automatically, without the direct intervention of supernatural beings, to bring desired ends. Other acts were performed to give protection from the harm that could result from improper use of power or exposure to it. Like the divine rulers of various societies of aboriginal Polynesia, the emperors of Japan possessed much power that was dangerous to common mortals. A custom observed until very late times required that dishes from which the emperor took food must be destroyed after every meal to prevent the death of other persons. Those who might otherwise use the dishes would die from the power transmitted to the tableware by the emperor.

Closely associated in early Shinto with ideas of harmful power were various rituals of purification and exorcism of evil. Purification by ablation or other means was necessary before one could approach supernatural beings. Death, disease, sexual intercourse, and the flowing of blood from wounds, during menstruation, and during childbirth imparted harmful power, and many ritual acts sought to protect people from the danger of such pollution or to purify them when pollution was thought to have occurred. These ideas and associated practices have had a very long life in Japan. Ancient customs of purification after menstruation and childbirth and after the death of a relative remained common in the early twentieth century. Although these folk customs are now nearing extinction, purification from evil remains a central idea of modern Shinto, forming the basis for many priestly rites.

Early Shinto was closely integrated with the events of daily life, and accordingly gave strong emphasis to beliefs and acts relating to agriculture. Critical periods of the annual cycle of agriculture, such as planting and harvest, were times of intense religious activity that included phallicism and other rites to promote fertility, and many of the important deities were gods of agriculture or otherwise related to the source of livelihood. To the large body of beliefs and practices centered on the production of food were added others concerning the crises in the life cycle of individuals—birth, maturity, reproduction, death, and sickness and injury. None of these critical events served as the basis for separate cults of ancestor worship, fertility, or the like, and most of the rites connected with death soon became the prerogative of Buddhism. Shinto provided courses of action to meet problems of daily life, giving greatest attention to matters, such as agriculture, that were of the most critical importance to the continuation of life. Although accounts of early Shinto are incomplete, it is clear that at least
certain moral issues were integrated into its beliefs and practices. Supernatural sanctions applied especially to socially harmful acts related to agriculture.

Important among the supernatural beings of early Shinto were clan gods, who were regarded as divine progenitors and protectors of clans; tutelary spirits, who were guardians of locales or of communities of people; and other guardian spirits exerting influence over people in specific occupations. The prominence of the Sun Goddess in Japanese mythology is usually held to be the result of the rise of one clan to dominance over others and the consequent elevation of the clan's cosmogonic legend to the status of a national myth of creation, which accords divine descent from Amaterasu, the Sun Goddess, to the imperial line. Some of the great gods of Shinto cosmogony became figures remote from human beings and receded long ago to positions of obscurity, but others have continued to hold importance. The most viable, and perhaps most important large category of Shinto deities are not great gods but tutelary gods of local communities and guardian spirits associated with occupations. These have retained great vitality until modern times.

Early worship of supernatural beings seems to have been extremely simple, involving little religious paraphernalia. By the beginning of recorded history, the important sites of worship had commonly become wooden shrines of simple construction dedicated to supernatural beings. Beliefs were further objectified by symbols of deities such as mirrors and stones, and, as the years passed, an increasing but never profuse number of additional objects. Water was always available at shrines for purification before worship. As we have noted, the passage of centuries saw the addition to Shinto beliefs of many supernatural beings from abroad and additional symbolism, but rites and sacred objects generally remained simple as compared with the developments of some Buddhist sects.

The Shinto pantheon of supernatural beings was capable of infinite expansion. After the introduction of Chinese culture and, especially, the introduction of Buddhism, foreign gods were included and, for the average person, came to be looked upon as indigenous. Historic persons who were national heroes were sometimes also enshrined and deified. Local enshrinement was even extended in late times to an Englishman named Will Adams, a seaman shipwrecked on the shores of Japan in 1600 who gave instruction in techniques of shipbuilding. Other additions to Shinto that we have earlier noted included many practices of divination and magic, and elements of Taoism and Confucianism. Buddhist influence was so great that certain Shinto shrines became architecturally indistinguishable from Buddhist temples.

At the beginning of the Meiji era in 1868, Shinto was an undifferentiated
mass of native and foreign beliefs and rites that retained greater importance for the general population than most historical records of the time appear to suggest. Certain great shrines had long held national importance and were the objectives of pilgrimages by citizens of every social level, but shrines were independent and were not organized in a great hierarchical system. Much of the strength of Shinto lay in its observances in the home by the family, and, in rites centering on the local tutelary gods, by members of the small community acting in unison.

The official division of Shinto in early Meiji times into Sectarian Shinto and State Shinto reflected real differences. State Shinto was a national cult in which participation was compulsory but it never entailed sect-like organization. Various sects of Sect Shinto were then and are today sects with founders, written dogma, and ecclesiastical organization. This division of Shinto left unclassified a large part of the total complex, the informal beliefs and practices of the home. The importance of this part of the Shinto religion was recognized by the national government which, in the years before and during World War II, strongly encouraged Shinto rites of the home. No further steps were taken by the government, however, to recognize officially or to regiment these unorganized beliefs and acts. As the result of enforced merging, the number of officially registered shrines had shrunk by 1910 from approximately 200,000 to 110,000, and these were nationalized. Vast numbers of small shrines, many of them unlisted in government records, were left as before to the disposition of local people. Important among these were the shrines to tutelary gods of the small communities. Uncounted numbers of tiny wayside shrines consisting of statues or other representations of supernatural beings were similarly left as before, and continued to be important in folk custom. Many folk beliefs and rites also survived, including rituals associated with agriculture, fishing, and other occupations, crises in the lives of individuals, directions of the compass as related to the position of dwellings, and a host of beliefs, prescriptions, and proscriptions concerning good and bad fortune, demonic possession, witchcraft, and black and white magic.

This essentially priestless conglomerate, known to scholars by the name of Popular Shinto but quite nameless to the ordinary citizen, has through the centuries constituted a main strength of Shinto, a strength that has met its greatest challenge only in very recent years.

State Shinto collapsed after the defeat of Japan in war in 1945. Following a directive of the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers, an end was then put to governmental support of shrines and to Shinto rites observed in the schools. The response of professional Shintoists was not demoralization but action that averted collapse of shrine activities and managed to salvage much of the old structure under policies that allowed con-
continuation of normal activities except those of national cultism. Occupation authorities as well as Shintoists seemed puzzled at first as to a suitable course of action with respect to the shrines. Throughout, the policy of authorities of the Occupation toward religion seems to have been one of sympathetic caution that sought to leave the solution of most problems of religion to the Japanese. The question of whether or not Shrine Shinto was religion or a secular activity was essentially settled by the shrines themselves. In February 1946 Shrine Shinto was officially recognized as a religion when most of the shrines sought and were given the status of religious juridical persons under a new law governing this matter. The shrines thus gained legal statuses of independence which were in keeping with a tradition that had never been wholly lost even under nationalization. Most of the shrines, nearly 80,000, became members of a new federation, the Association of Shinto Shrines, formed as a cooperative for joint action and contact with the government. The lone state “university” for the study and propagation of Shinto, Kōgakukan at the great Ise shrine, was closed, and state support of Shinto in any form or connection was limited to more or less indirect support, through the budget of the imperial household, of Shinto rites of the imperial household and of three small shrines on the grounds of the imperial palace.

Early 1946 found three forms of Shinto in the nation, the newly revamped Shrine Shinto, Sect Shinto, and the unformalized body of folk customs of Popular Shinto. Damaging blows were suffered by all forms as an aftermath of the war and as a result of later economic and social developments affecting the whole nation. Certain blows were felt by all forms of Shinto and others were unique to particular branches. All expectably suffered financially from loss of income in the years of national poverty following defeat in war. In addition to the loss of governmental funds in cash, Shrine Shinto suffered some financial damage as the result of the loss of the privilege of use without fee of state-owned lands that formed the shrine precincts and sometimes included profitable agricultural and forest land. According to postwar legislation, lands were sold or given to shrines and temples. Each case was handled individually and some shrines and temples suffered heavy financial losses thereby. The loss to Shrine Shinto of governmental financial aid was not a lethal blow, however, since most of their revenues came from voluntary contributions and, for the group as a whole, less than ten percent had come directly from local and national governmental sources.

The end of Shinto nationalism was probably a severe blow to Shinto in general, but its force is hard to measure, especially since non-nationalistic Buddhism—in short, religion in general—suffered also from loss of interest on the part of the population. The renunciation by the emperor of his di-
vinity, an act planned by the Japanese apparently quite independently of instruction by Occupation authorities, whose role in the event consisted only of giving approval, was probably in itself no great blow to Shinto. To the Japanese population, the war and associated nationalism that included reverence for the emperor were undoubtedly highly emotional experiences closely resembling religious experiences. In the sentiments of the people the emperor held a very special place, highly charged with emotion, but it is most doubtful that literal credence was given to the idea of his divinity, at least as Western conceptions define the word. In view of the intensity of nationalistic sentiments linked with Shinto, it is not surprising that defeat in the war led to a reaction among the people of turning away from Shinto.

The blow suffered by Shinto in general from abolition of state support was probably much softer than other weakening circumstances. The cult of State Shinto may be seen as an anachronism, out of keeping with views of the world held by much of the population, a cult forcibly imposed by a totalitarian government. The great blows to Shinto in the twentieth century have never been planned or deliberate. They have been the inadvertent results of functional incompatibility between an essentially unchanged set of beliefs and practices and drastic changes in the ways of life of the society which had formulated those beliefs and customs. Declining interest in Shinto was masked by State Shinto, and the removal of the mask made conditions of change, of weakening, seem sudden.

Changed economic conditions and altered social arrangements of the society as a whole are the sources of the main problems which Shinto has faced and is now facing. Changed conditions of life have left modern Popular Shinto and Shrine Shinto woefully lacking in effective techniques of propagation and in means of achieving the social solidarity required for the perpetuation of any social group, religious or secular. These forms of Shinto also lack a systematic, written body of doctrine, and their inferential doctrine is ancient and incompatible with modern world views and modes of social organization. Demographic changes alone have contributed greatly to the collapse of the “inner mission system,” the traditional mode of propagation by informal transmission from generation to generation. Lack of personnel in the shrine communities as the result of migration of young people to urban centers has made such continuity impossible.

Popular Shinto has probably suffered the greatest loss of strength. In a space of fifteen years from 1950 to 1965, personal acquaintance with a rural community of Okayama Prefecture allowed me to see changes in Popular Shinto that were very great and probably shared by rural communities in general. During that period, the local shrine community had essentially ceased to exist as a functioning corporate group; beliefs and
customs concerned with agriculture and fishing had greatly weakened or disappeared; customs relating to ideas of pollution had essentially vanished; community rites centering on the local tutelary god had become at best token events; home worship of Shinto deities had become limited principally to aged people; and many popular beliefs and customs had become amusing superstitions. The importance in the nation today of home or Popular Shinto is impossible to estimate, but it is clear that these ideas and customs are regarded more and more as outmoded superstitions.

Sect Shinto appears to have suffered little during World War II and the direct weakening effects it felt because of postwar legislation are difficult to appraise. Some sects were forced to delete nationalistic elements that had been added to their doctrines, but no great changes otherwise occurred in doctrine or in organization and activities after the war. The prewar sects of Sect Shinto, however, are not centers of intense religious activity today, and, as a group, they show clear signs of declining strength. The postwar years saw the addition of many new Shinto sects that form a part of the new religions, making a total of nearly 200 Shinto sects. The additions are, however, mostly very small groups. No single new sect of Shinto may be described as nationally important. Of the thirteen sects established before the war, most appear to be on a path of decline. These sects are heterogeneous and their classification as Shinto was originally in large part a matter of convenience to the Meiji government. Despite diversity, they may be divided on the basis of doctrines or other common characteristics into a number of groups. One common classification divides them into Pure Shinto Sects lacking founders, Mountain Sects, Confucian Sects, Purification Sects, and Peasant Sects. It is the last category, Peasant Sects, which has retained the greatest strength, and it is significant that these sects (Tenrikyō, Konkōkyō, and Kurozumi-kyō) bear the greatest similarity in tenets and organization to the most successful of the postwar sects.

A publication of the League of New Religions (Shinshūren) that includes writings of distinguished scholars and is not a partisan tract describes the circumstances of Sect Shinto as follows: “Except for Tenrikyō, Konkōkyō, and Kurozumi-kyō, which have unique doctrines of their own, the sects of Sect Shinto have come to a dead end. Because of the change in nationalistic ideas, they can no longer propagate effectively. Because of fission, they have lost economic resources and many of their personnel.” Other informed opinion adds to the list of groups retaining strength the sect Izumo Ōyashirokyō (commonly called Izumo Taishakyo or, in abbreviated form, Taishakyo—"taisha" and "ōyashiro" are alternate readings of the Chinese characters used to write the name), which lacks a historic founder and may be described as a rather loosely organized group with beliefs and rites much like those of Shrine Shinto. But even the largest and strongest of these
sects, among which Tenrikyō stands foremost, give no indication of significant growth. Although still large and powerful, Tenrikyō appears to have lost the fervor which once characterized it and to have greatly tempered the zeal with which it once solicited funds from its members. In prewar years, the pressure exerted by Tenrikyō for contributions led to some public criticism. This criticism was expressed satirically by slight alteration of the words of one of its mottoes, changing the meaning from “Do away with evil and help us” to “Sell the house and offer the money.” As forerunners of the new sects of postwar years, the fortunes of Tenrikyō and other so-called peasant sects are likely to be held in common with those of the very new sects, and their success or failure will depend upon their ability to change to meet changing times. Thus far, the sects have shown little sign of flexibility.

The modern conditions of Shrine Shinto have struck attention forcibly, and it is impressions of these conditions that are usually expressed in opinions decrying the deplorable, commercial state of Shinto today. Shrines are indeed commercial, deriving much of their income from tourists, wedding ceremonies, ceremonies purifying land upon which buildings are to be constructed, and the sale of talismans that now prominently include written prayers for success in passing high school and college entrance exams. Certain shrines are blatantly commercial in advertising facilities for weddings and wedding receptions, which are costly affairs that can produce high revenues. Shrines may in the course of one day conduct a steady series of closely timed marriage ceremonies and receptions. Great annual festivals of shrines, as we have earlier noted, are also important economically.

We shall note in passing that the importance of wedding ceremonies today as a source of Shinto income is an unexpected concomitant of the urbanization of Japan. In times gone by, wedding rites and wedding feasts were conducted principally in homes. The tiny living quarters of most urban Japanese families today are unsuitable for these ceremonies, and it has become customary to use Shinto shrines as well as secular facilities available in hotels and commercial wedding halls.

Despite its various commercial activities, Shrine Shinto is pressed for financial support. The number of shrines does not increase, and their distribution in the nation becomes more and more inefficient as continued urbanization moves the nation’s population to the cities. An associated problem is a shortage of qualified priests in growing urban centers. According to statistics published by the Ministry of Education, the number of Shinto priests has increased slightly in recent years, but their distribution as related to the changing distribution of the population is poor. Some 22,000 priests are reported as serving the approximately 79,000 shrines, but this ratio does not imply a mass resignation from Shinto priesthood leaving three-
fourths of the shrines without a priest; many priests serve more than one shrine. A large number of the shrines, about 30,000, are small edifices at which rites were never conducted by priests, and many others were traditionally the sites of only a few annual rites at which priests presided. Shrine Shinto nevertheless has serious problems of attracting and training well-qualified priests. The average level of education of the modern Shinto priest is much below that of Buddhist priests and Christian clergymen. Although high school education is said now generally to be expected of candidates for the priesthood of Shrine Shinto, many incumbents have had formal education of eight years or less and only a small proportion hold college degrees. Incomes from the religious work of Shinto priests, who are seldom on salaries and depend upon contributions, are the lowest of any clergy in Japan. Most shrine priests must also work as farmers, schoolteachers, or hold other secular employment to gain an adequate livelihood.  

Few citizens of modern Japan are drawn to priesthood as a profession, and Shrine Shinto, composed as it is of independent shrines, notably lacks great centers for the training of priests. Kokugakuin University in Tokyo is the largest Shinto university in the nation, and is probably the only institution with Shinto connections that might be regarded as a university in the conventional sense of the term. Established in 1882 and once partly financed by the government, this institution has since the end of World War II been privately supported by a society called Shintōkai (Shinto Circle) and by students' fees. Most of its students are enrolled in conventional curricula of study outside the field of religion. During the academic year ending in March, 1965, a total of 142 persons finished courses of training for the priesthood at this university. Other institutions for training Shinto priests, commonly called "universities," are connected with great shrines or Shinto sects and are much smaller. Among these, Jingūkōgakkan University, associated with Ise Grand Shrine, is probably the best known. Abolished by Occupation directive after World War II, this training center reopened in 1962 as a private institution. In 1965 it held second ranking in the nation as a training center, turning out 27 priests. Ōyashiro Kokugakkan, a "university" operated by the large Shinto sect Izumo Ōyashirokyō which produced six priests in 1965, is perhaps representative of the several small training centers. Annual enrollment of candidates for the priesthood in this institution is reported to be ten to twenty persons in courses of training lasting one year for high school graduates and two years for middle school (nine years of schooling) graduates. Candidates are said occasionally to include a college graduate.

Despite the infirm ground beneath modern Shrine Shinto, it is from the Shinto leaders associated with it that the greatest efforts are exerted to meet the general problems of Shinto. It is interesting to note that one of these prob-
lems continues to revolve about the issue of whether Shrine Shinto is or is not religion. Continued attempts are being made, for example, to secure governmental aid in support of Ise Shrine as a national monument on the grounds that it has always been closely associated with the imperial family and is the place of enshrinement of the mirror, one of the three ancient symbols of the divine status of the emperor. These efforts may well be successful since Ise Shrine tends to be regarded by even non-religious citizens as a national monument that should be maintained. The cost of maintenance is immense since the wooden shrine buildings have for centuries traditionally been built anew at intervals of twenty years. Similar pressure is being exerted to gain governmental funds for Yasukuni Shrine, a memorial to those who have died in war, and for some additional shrines for which a case of national significance may be argued.

Shinto scholars and leaders at Kokugakuin University and elsewhere in the nation continue actively to concern themselves with other problems of Shinto. Two “international” conferences on modern Shinto, attended principally by Japanese and American scholars, have been held in recent years. The first of these, conducted in Claremont, California in 1965 under the auspices of The Blaisdell Institute, was given special sanction by the presence of the brother of the emperor, Prince Mikasa, and his wife and daughter.

Although the ordinary Shinto priest seems to be content with an unquestioning course of mechanically performing traditional rites for which contributions are received, these conferences on the problems of Shinto and other similar activities make clear that a few Shintoists are aware of the nature of the problems that the past century, and especially the years since 1945, have brought to Shinto. To date, these persons have indeed been few, their ideas have not represented a consensus of even the few, and their efforts appear to have been largely ineffectual.

What appears remarkable is not the weakness of modern Shinto but its strength. There is much in the opinion, expressed often by both foreign and native observers of Japan, that Shinto goes beyond religion to express what is essentially Japanese, that Shinto expresses Japan in a way which no other religion or other distinguishable part of Japanese culture can do or has done. It is safe to say that in this way Shinto and its visible appurtenances remain dear to even the least religiously minded citizens of modern Japan.

Buddhism

A mere glance at statistical information on the established Buddhist sects of Japan is enough to intimidate any person, foreign or Japanese, who wishes to understand the nature of Japanese Buddhism. The approximately
175 sects are a gigantic and diverse growth that represents the additions, deletions, and modifications of a span of 2500 years and the major molding influences of three cultures, Indian, Chinese, and Japanese, each of which underwent many changes during the centuries in which it influenced the Buddhism of modern Japan. The great number of sects constitutes in fact only a relatively small number of schools or strains of Buddhism, but in details of doctrine and practices these, in turn, are probably the most varied and complex branching of a single religion known to any nation of the world.

Buddhist doctrines have often been described as a philosophy rather than a theology, principally because "pure" Buddhism lacks a concept of god. Whether philosophy or theology, the Japanese forms are both varied and unique to Japan. Certain traditional ideas are held in common by most schools and sects. Among these are belief in, but not always worship of, Gautama Buddha as the historic founder of Buddhism, and belief in his teachings, variously interpreted, as the road to salvation, a road with multiple prescribed lanes of moral behavior (seldom clearly defined and consisting principally of self-correction), meditation, intuition, and acts of piety that lead to the enlightenment or Buddhahood which constitute salvation. Within the scope of these common ideas, creeds and practices vary greatly, ranging from the ritually simple asceticism of some varieties of Zen, which involves no prayers but teaches principally techniques for attaining enlightenment, to the emphasis of Amida Buddhism upon simple vocal invocation of the mythical Buddha Amida as the way to salvation, and on to the elaborations of Shingon Buddhism with its huge pantheon of Buddhas, near-Buddhas, and other deities, good and evil, and equally elaborate esoteric rites and magical formulae.

The ordinary citizen of modern Japan has met the problem imposed by doctrinal diversity by lack of knowledge of the differences. He cannot give a clear or organized account of Buddhist doctrine of even the sect to which he belongs, and generally has no interest in doing so. The American authors of an extremely detailed study of life in a rural community of Japan conducted in the early 1950's observe: "For most of the present-day Japanese Buddhists, a denominational difference means hardly more than the difference in rituals which characterize each specific denomination." Lack of knowledge of Buddhism on the part of the average urban Japanese citizen today is probably greater than this observation might suggest. Few persons know the names of more than a very small fraction of the sects and, among young adults, even the name of the Buddhist sect of one's own family is often unknown. This circumstance should not, however, be regarded as evidence that Japanese Buddhism is in the throes of death. Names of Buddhist sects in Japan have generally been elegant words of Chinese
etymology, names that are difficult and unnecessary to remember in large numbers.

The numerous sects of Japanese Buddhism are customarily classified into six groups, five of which—Amida, Zen, Shingon, Nichiren, and Tendai—are groupings based upon doctrinal similarity and are commonly called schools. Within each school are many sects and subsects that became established following the pattern of sectarianism previously described; that is, they are, or once were, fissionary groups formed about leaders who sought independence on doctrinal or other grounds. The sixth category, the Nara sects, is not a doctrinal school but a catchall of small, ancient sects that hold no religious importance today. Fairly diverse in doctrines, these sects survive today principally because their temples are ancient architectural treasures protected by the government under laws designed to preserve the nation’s finest art and architecture.

In judgments based upon numbers of adherents, of which a total of about 70,000,000 are claimed and less than one-third of this number regard themselves as members, the five major groups are customarily ranked in descending order of importance as follows: Amida (principal subgroups, Jōdo-shū, Jōdo Shinshū Honganji-ha, and Shinshū Ōtani-ha, the latter two of which are commonly known as Shin sects and by the names Nishi Honganji and Higashi Honganji, respectively); Shingon; Zen (principal subgroups, Sōtō-shū and Rinzai-shū); and, falling considerably below the preceding three, Nichiren and Tendai. The most powerful and vigorous sects today are the three sects of Amida Buddhism listed and the Sōtō Sect of Zen. If the dramatic increase reported in recent years in membership of the Nichiren Shō Sect in connection with membership in its official lay organization Sōka Gakkai is accepted at face value, however, Nichiren Buddhism rises to a position rivalling Zen and Shingon but still well below Amida in importance.

Although diverse in doctrines and practices, the various schools and sects hold much in common in matters of organization, activities, and facilities. They have scriptures, highly organized priesthoods, organized networks of temples and other religious edifices; they conduct funerals and subsequent commemorative rites for parishioners and a few fixed annual rites; and they characteristically engage in many activities of social welfare. The number of their professional religious personnel is large, and the roles in ritual and administration they give to lay members is much smaller than is characteristic among the new religious sects. Yet forerunners of many of the organizational units of the new sects, including youths’ and women’s groups, are also characteristic, although these are less active, less egalitarian, less tightly organized and cover a smaller range of activities than their counterparts in the large, new sects.
The established Buddhist sects are traditionally organized in a pyramid with one large and famous temple and its senior priests at the peak and, at lower levels, several grades of lesser temples related to regional headquarters in an intricate, hierarchical scheme of priest and temple rank. Affairs of individual temples are ordinarily governed, within the scope of regulations set at higher levels of administration, by the priest in charge and a council of three or more lay members who are usually well-to-do, influential persons. The number of hierarchical classes of priests in the various ranks and subranks may reach as high as 49. (Jōdo Shinshū Honganji-ha has seven major groups, each with seven ranked subgrades.) Promotion in rank depends primarily upon achievements of various sorts, which include study, scholarship, leadership in sect administration, length of priestly service, and the amount of money remitted to the head temple. Length of service is a consideration for most ranks. Two kinds of rankings of priests may apply, a personal ranking based upon amounts of contributions transmitted to headquarters and an ecclesiastical rank based upon other considerations. Priests are generally not salaried but receive a part of the income of their temples and are provided with living quarters at the temples.

The head priest is customarily the final authority in both religious and administrative affairs, in which he is aided and advised by boards of advisors and larger advisory-governing bodies with some authority that constitute sect diets. Special bureaus headed by high priests concern themselves with finance, temple affairs, propagation of teaching, doctrinal matters, and social welfare. Priesthood, including the position of head priest, tends strongly to be hereditary, and when sons are lacking another close relative often serves instead or an heir is adopted.

An important organizational difference between Buddhist temples and most Shinto shrines relates to parishioners. Although a few great Shinto shrines have national significance, most shrines have fixed territories; that is, the parishioners of a shrine traditionally include all persons within the prescribed area, who are under the protection of the tutelary god to which the shrine is dedicated. Certain Buddhist temples, called in English "prayer temples," resemble shrines in their roles. These are temples at which anyone may pray, and they do not have fixed groups of parishioners. Most temples have a relatively stable, organized body of parishioners. Affiliation with temples is not, however, bound by locality, and residents of a single community or shrine community may be affiliated with different temples or even different sects. Assignment to a Shinto shrine community is thus ascribed by residence, whereas Buddhist temple affiliation theoretically allows a choice but in fact depends principally upon ties of kinship. Most persons expectably become affiliated with the same temples as their parents, and in view of the traditional Buddhist role in funerals, burial, and the
veneration of ancestors, there is forceful additional reason for so doing. The difference between Shinto shrine communities and Buddhist temple parishes is a matter of much importance in relation to national shifts of population, which have often left shrines with few parishioners and, despite a theoretical freedom of Buddhist temples from ties of locality, have brought similar problems to the temples because of their association with the spirits of deceased forebears.

Postwar changes in legislation governing religious bodies and in conditions of national life have profoundly affected the established Buddhist sects in matters of finance, internal organization, and virtually every other aspect of sect activities except the doctrinal. The agricultural reform after World War II greatly reduced sect income through loss of revenue from arable lands which had formerly been cultivated by share-cropping tenants. Great financial blows were also suffered through the wartime loss by bombing and fire of rental houses owned by temples and of temples themselves. Income of temples had come principally from voluntary contributions, including funds derived from the sale of talismans and contributions in connection with funerals and commemorative services, farm rental revenues, rental fees on houses, revenue from forest lands, and contributions of rice. These sources of revenue generally declined relatively or absolutely, and revenue from farm lands ended. As a result of shifts in population density, a few temples have since enjoyed increased income from contributions but these are exceptional.

The greatest source of income today continues to be contributions, especially contributions in connection with funerals, but the Buddhist sects have developed some other income-producing activities. Far more than in the past, famous temples are museums visited by sightseers who pay fees. Other fund-raising activities in the form of commercial or semi-commercial enterprises have been added, such as the operation of teahouses and restaurants in connection with temples and the offering of courses of instruction by wives of priests in flower arranging, the traditional tea ceremony, and knitting. Some of the added profitable activities fall within programs of education and social welfare, which, with a few exceptions, had their first substantial development among Buddhist sects after World War II. Temple kindergartens and day nurseries are such sources of income, but the financial gain they present does not appear to be great and many other added activities of social welfare represent principally expenditure rather than gain.

A report by the powerful Sōtō Sect of Zen Buddhism on its own sources of income in 1959 shows only 12% derived as income from property and 3% from side activities; this report also states that only about 500 Buddhist temples in the nation (of a total of about 75,000) remain powerful.
Average incomes of local temples of the Sōtō Sect in 1959 were reported to be far below the amounts required for the livelihood of priests and their families. In order to earn a livelihood, 33% of 12,731 Sōtō priests held other positions, principally as schoolteachers, social workers, and in public offices. A survey of citizens' opinions of the social rank of various occupations is also revealing. Buddhist priests were ranked, in descending order, between elementary school teachers and policemen, a position which does not denote high prestige and is much lower than the status held by the priests in former times. In view of these problems of earning a living, it is not surprising that the Buddhist priesthood includes relatively few young priests and faces difficult problems of attracting new members.

Another serious problem of Buddhism today is the threat to sect solidarity imposed by postwar legislation allowing each temple legal existence as a juridical person. Fission is thereby encouraged, since any temple may legally declare itself independent of its sect. A relatively small number of temples, called betsuin and most common in the Shingon and Jōdo Shin sects, hold a special status as branches of head temples (rather than as inferior temples, matsujii), and these do not have the right to seek legal independence. Most temples of the nation became juridical persons, however, and thus head temples hold no legal control over them. Disputes over succession to temple or sect headships, amounts of funds to be transmitted to superior temples, and other similar matters have led to a number of secessions. Such disputes and secessions have sometimes been reported by the press, thereby contributing further to the unfavorable impressions many citizens hold of Buddhist sect organization. Fission was especially common shortly after the promulgation of the laws in question, and it continues today at a slower pace. The latest notable incident of this kind was the announcement in 1965 by Kiyomizu temple, a famous temple in Kyoto established in 812 and one of the outstanding museum pieces of religious architecture of the nation, that it was seceding from the ancient and presently obscure Hossō Sect because leadership was monopolized by two temples in Nara.

By far the most serious modern problem of Buddhism is essentially the same as that of Shinto, the relative lack of change in doctrines, organization, and activities in the face of great social and cultural changes of the entire nation. Criticism of established Buddhist sects along these lines has very often been expressed in print, not infrequently by Buddhist priests and scholars. Major criticisms may be summed up in the statements that Buddhist doctrines remain unchanged and otherworldly, far removed from the problems of daily life; traditional rituals convey little meaning to modern citizens; the organization of sects is poor, especially in the manner of organizing adherents and in the development of social ties that might hold
adherents together; overall unity of Buddhism does not exist and solidarity within sects is constantly threatened by struggles for status of individual priests and temples; and Buddhist priesthood is often simply an occupation aimed at gaining a livelihood rather than a vocation denoting deep religious conviction and a commitment to promote the welfare of mankind.

Most of this catalog of criticisms may be further summarized in the statement that the greatest enemy of Buddhism is conservatism—expressed by some critics with the word "inertia." There is little doubt of the conservatism of the Buddhist priesthood, a conservatism that is understandable in view of the great age of Buddhism in the nation and the fact that most priests today are men well along in their spans of life. A study of the social functions of urban temples conducted in 1958 and 1959 in the cities of Tokyo, Osaka, and Nagoya showed that about one-third of the priests were 60 years of age or older and only 17% were under 40 years. Of priests with university educations, who generally compose the priestly ranks of greatest prestige and authority, 78% were over 40 years of age. This noteworthy study also included use of a questionnaire regarding political attitudes, the results of which attest to the conservatism of priests.22

An additional illustration of conservatism is afforded by the reaction of Buddhist leaders to the study of temples discussed above, a study conducted by scholars trained in sociology as a cooperative enterprise of thirteen Buddhist universities, with the objective of aiding Buddhism by analysis of its weaknesses. Priests of the temples covered by the research were reported to show little interest in the study, and publication of the results was reported to have been dismissed as "a pessimistic report by young professors."23 One of the major conclusions of this study of urban temples was that distribution of temples of various Buddhist sects was not uniform (whereas religious edifices of the large new sects were relatively evenly distributed in relation to the density of population). The problem implied by poor spacing of temples relates to a larger problem to which we have already referred that has been imposed by demographic changes. Increasing urbanization has not only resulted in poor distribution of religious facilities of some sects, it has also brought serious problems of temple affiliation for new migrants to the cities. Ties to Buddhism are principally through deceased ancestors whose remains are in graveyards of rural temples. It is customary for migrants to retain the temple affiliation of their parents, an affiliation that geographical distance, the passage of time, and changing conceptions of familial solidarity serve to make more and more tenuous as time passes. Thus, rural temples suffer from lack of truly active parishioners, and urban temples of the same sect do not often gain the migrants, in part because they too are bound by tradition and do not warmly
welcome as parishioners persons with no previously established familial connections with the temples.

For both Buddhism and Shinto, the long period of governmental control before 1945 appears to have led to dependence and lack of initiative that are important components of their conservatism. It seems significant that retention after 1945 of an organ of the national government concerned with religion came about in response to the expressed desire of sect leaders. A poll on the issue of abolition versus retention of the Religious Affairs Section in 1948 resulted in about 80% favoring retention.24

Although many of the modern problems and weaknesses of Buddhism are also the problems of Shinto, the weight of Shinto tradition and conservatism in inhibiting change seems greater and Shinto’s own attempts at self help seem smaller. The prospects for Buddhism are favored by several factors which are not shared or are poorly shared by some forms of Shinto. Pan-Buddhist unity does not exist and both inter- and intrasect rivalry are great, but a few of the very largest Buddhist sects are well organized and under progressive leadership. Buddhism has a traditional association with the refinements of secular culture and with education, a heritage of prestige that does not depend solely upon its religious activities. Its professional personnel are well educated as compared with the general public and Shinto priests, and various Japanese scholars of Buddhism hold international fame. The loss of several thousand temples during the war has been balanced by new construction, some of it of strikingly modern architecture, and the conversion of some former Buddhist meeting halls into temples. Despite a postwar loss of believers, the position of Buddhism in relation to the other religions of Japan appears good. Buddhism remains intertwined in national life and, despite the national growth of secularism, most citizens of the nation expect to be buried with Buddhist rites. Most temples continue to have importance as community centers. The fundamental problem does not seem to be a weakening of the position of Buddhism but rather of the position of religion.

Although conservatism is general among the established Buddhist sects, substantial signs of vigor and flexibility come from certain sects and Buddhist leaders, and some marked trends of change have been evident since 1945. The modernization of Buddhism has been the topic of many meetings and various published works, and one of the major recommendations has repeatedly been what is essentially a restatement of the topic of discussion — action to bring Buddhism “back to the people.” One general trend toward this goal has been to increase lay participation in religious events and in sect administrative affairs. Sectarian diets or parliaments now generally include substantial lay representation, and both lay and professional members are today chosen principally by election. Here and there sects
experiment in presenting regularly scheduled sermons to lay audiences in order to bring parishioners closer to the priest and temples, and, for the same reason, some efforts are made to create auxiliary groups of parishioners, to encourage sect members to make pilgrimages to the head temples, and to plan other ways of achieving solidarity. Some sects have experimented with the adaptation of Western music to create Buddhist hymns, and some new temples resemble Christian churches in their facilities for parishioners. Use is made of radio and other mass media in attempts at proselytizing, but these efforts to date do not seem strong. Awareness of the danger imposed by intersect rivalries has led to the beginnings of a Buddhist ecumenical movement that includes annual conferences, which, it must be said, have so far done little to solve problems. Japanese Buddhism has also made contact with Buddhism elsewhere in the world, participating in recent years in World Buddhist Conferences. Like the national conferences, these meetings have brought no discernable change or improvement, but they may be regarded as evidence of an awareness of problems and of willingness to attempt to find solutions.

One of the greatest postwar changes in Japanese Buddhism is its development of institutions providing secular education and of programs of social welfare, a trend which appears to be modeled after the activities of Christianity in Japan. In 1960, schools ranging from primary schools through junior colleges operated by Buddhist sects totalled well over 200, and the number has since grown substantially. In addition, hundreds of kindergartens are operated by Buddhist sects, and sixteen universities are associated with Buddhist sects and identified as Buddhist universities. Institutions of social welfare include thousands of day nurseries (which seem generally to be a source of revenue rather than an expense) and a range of institutions including orphanages, hospitals, homes for delinquent children, and homes for the handicapped and aged that total nearly 500.

Special mention should be made of the activities of the two great Shin (True Pure Land) sects of Amida Buddhism, Jōdo Shinshū Honganji-ha and Shinshū Ōtani-ha, and the Sōtō Sect of Zen. These powerful sects appear to be well united and are the most progressive in the nation. Reference has already been made to the critical self-analysis published by the Sōtō Sect. Jōdo Shinshū Honganji-ha appears to be the most active proselytizer and innovator. Some of the strength of this sect, and of Shin Buddhism in general, may relate to a tendency toward exclusiveness among Shin members. A detailed sociological study of a community of Shin parishioners (of the Ōtani sect, which is very similar and closely related historically to Jōdo Shinshū Honganji-ha) reports a strong trend toward ingroup marriage, especially among women, and the existence of values and opportunities for social contact among Shin parishioners that foster such endogamy. Some
of the strength of Shin Buddhism also undoubtedly comes from the well-spaced distribution of its temples in the largest cities.\(^{27}\)

Jōdo Shinshū Honganji-ha has included in its activities both opposition to Sōka Gakkai and some apparent emulation of it. This sect has studied Sōka Gakkai and criticized it in print,\(^{28}\) principally on theological grounds. Perhaps in emulation of this rival, the sect has attempted to establish among its members an organization of small, informal discussion groups resembling those of Sōka Gakkai and other new sects that will break away from the traditions of hierarchical relations among members and of emphasis on the family. The aim of this sect is reported to be reorganization “from a religion of the family to a religion of individual family members.”\(^{29}\) Further aggressive action against Sōka Gakkai, which is at the same time emulation, came in 1967 with the announcement that Jōdo Shinshū (the sect is commonly called by this name rather than its longer official designation) had formed a political body to counter the political advances made by Sōka Gakkai’s political party, and planned to present candidates in general and local elections.\(^{30}\)

If the various attempts to revamp Buddhism are appraised, it may fairly be said that the goal of modernization has not been reached. Results of the efforts are nevertheless impressive. Conservatism continues to reign but it has given way substantially here and there to innovation. The history of Buddhism in Japan shows that it has had great flexibility, adapting itself repeatedly to changes in national culture. One of the modern innovations may be especially significant, although few Buddhists of the established sects appear to regard it as a Buddhist development. This is the growth of lay Buddhism in more than one form since the end of World War II. One line of development is small lay movements that are entirely non-sectarian. The most noteworthy of these is the Zaike Bukkyō Undō (Lay Buddhist Movement), which became established in 1953 as an organized movement, the Zaike Bukkyōkai, under the leadership of the distinguished Buddhist scholar Fumio Masutani. A small organization with about 7,000 members\(^{31}\) which attracts intellectuals, it cannot be described presently as a Buddhist force. Very great force is represented, however, by the lay Buddhist movements Sōka Gakkai, Risshō Kōseikai, and other similar but smaller organizations among the new religious sects, which are generally forgotten in appraisals of the strength of Buddhism. If these developments are considered, the position of Buddhism is seen to be stronger. But to leaders of the circle of established Buddhism, acceptance of these new religious sects as a part of Buddhism is anathema.

**Christianity**

Measured in numbers of followers, the position of Christianity in modern
Japan is unimportant. Published statistics on the number of Christians in the nation are unreliable but are generally thought to be much less exaggerated than statements of membership in non-Christian sects. The yearbook of the Religious Affairs Section of the Ministry of Education for 1965 lists a total of 670,281 adherents, of whom 334,236 are divided among 36 Protestant and quasi-Protestant groups (representing about 95 denominations); 327,040 are Roman Catholic, and 9,005 are Eastern Orthodox. According to *The Japan Christian Year Book* 1966, which remarks upon the difficulty in obtaining accurate statistical information and does not state when its statistics were compiled, the total number of adherents was 1,039,584, a figure that appears to include children attending Sunday schools. Of this number approximately 74% are identified as Protestant or quasi-Protestant. Other recent publications give still different statistics. Prevailing opinion among knowledgeable persons is that Christians number between 600,000 and 700,000 persons, of whom somewhat over 60% are Protestants or non-Catholic.

The numerous Christian bodies in combination thus have fewer members than various single Buddhist sects and fewer than at least two of the new religious sects, Sōka Gakkai and Risshō Kōseikai. Our earlier discussions have given only bare mention to certain non-Christian sects—for example, the lay group of Nichiren Buddhism, Bussho Gonenkai—which report memberships equal to or exceeding those of all Christian groups combined. Reasons for giving special consideration to Christianity and slighting such sects as Bussho Gonenkai are probably obvious. Christianity holds a position of importance in the Japanese world of religion far out of proportion to its size as measured in followers—and Bussho Gonenkai is one of various representatives of its kind, a close but less successful relative of Risshō Kōseikai. An added reason for giving some special attention to Christianity concerns its very lack of importance, as judged by the number of adherents. In view of the ready acceptance by the Japanese of many other elements of foreign cultures, the failure to embrace Christianity evokes curiosity.

We have earlier noted that at the time of its first introduction to Japan in the sixteenth century Christianity was favored by the patronage of men in positions of authority, which aided its spread. The figure most frequently cited by modern scholars as the probable maximum number of converts before the banning of Christianity is 300,000, or one and one-half percent of the total population of about 20,000,000. This proportion has not been reached under modern conditions of religious freedom.

Circumstances adverse to the growth of Christianity during the past century have been numerous and certain of them continue to have great force today. The opposition to Christianity that led to its banning in early
Tokugawa times still existed more than two centuries later when Japan ended its isolation, but this opposition had obviously weakened. Christian mission activities were resumed some years before the edict banning Christianity was lifted in 1873. The first Christian missionary of modern times reached Japan in 1859, and others soon followed. Although preaching and proselytizing were still forbidden at this time and some persecution of Christians took place after 1859, the propagation of Christianity was done more or less surreptitiously in various parts of the nation before 1873. The first Catholic church was established in 1862 and the first Protestant church ten years later. After the downfall of the Tokugawa rulers and the beginning of the Meiji era in 1868, Japan extended an eager welcome to Western culture for about two decades. Christian missionaries were also welcomed, and for a time during the 1880’s it seemed probable that the entire nation would become Christian. The actual number of converts to Christianity at this time was not very great, however, and followers of Christianity consisted partly of groups of “hidden Christians” who now revealed themselves as descendants of ancestors who had maintained the Christian faith secretly throughout the Tokugawa reign.

The eager and uncritical welcome given to Western culture in the 1870’s and 1880’s was followed in the 1890’s by a period of reaction against foreign culture accompanied by the growth of nationalism. The earlier enthusiastic interest in Christianity waned; a large number of converts abandoned their faith; and in its subsequent history Christianity has never been the subject of truly conspicuous interest on the part of the general population. Growth in the twentieth century has generally been slow and has been marked by periods of lull or decreased size.

Until the turn of the century, Christianity in Japan had been principally under the direction of foreigners. At about this time, a trend became evident toward the appointment of native clergymen and the turning away from foreign financial support. Until about 1940, nonetheless, Christianity in Japan retained a strongly foreign cast in its administrative and religious personnel and still depended heavily upon financial support from foreign sources. During the 1930’s and World War II, Christian activities were strongly curtailed by nationalistic policies of the government and the associated elevation of Shrine Shinto to the position of a state cult. Foreign financial support of Christianity decreased during the 1930’s and essentially ceased after 1940. Governmental pressure was exerted at this time to remove Christianity from foreign control. In 1940, foreign priests of the Catholic Church were replaced by native clergymen in “all dioceses, vicariates, and prefectures apostolic.” Nearly all foreign Christian missionaries remaining in the country were first interned and then repatriated. For the
duration of the war, Christianity was under native leadership, seriously hampered by many unfavorable conditions.

Wartime legislation governing religious activities included the enforced amalgamation in 1941 and 1942 of all non-Catholic sects and denominations into a single organization, the Church of Christ in Japan, which together with the Catholic Church were the only Christian religious organizations given legal recognition. Treatment during the war accorded to the various Christian groups depended largely upon their cooperation with the government, especially as cooperation was expressed through their leaders, who were held personally responsible for activities of their groups. A few uncompliant groups suffered severe oppression or dissolution, but most groups yielded to governmental demands including the order to add to their rites acts of reverence for the emperor.

At the end of the war independent legal status was sought and gained by most of the amalgamated denominations, and the number of Christian juridical persons mushroomed. Only three of the major denominations, Presbyterian, Methodist, and Congregationalist, remained in the united Church of Christ. Christianity had lost some followers during the war, and the total number of Christians in the nation at war's end was probably about 200,000. In the following years, many additional denominations not previously represented in Japan were established, principally as the result of mission activities of churches of the United States and European countries. A few additional Christian bodies developed under Japanese leaders as new religious sects, and these relatively small sects are to date the only examples of what might be called native Christianity. Two such sects, Genshi Fukuin Undō (Original Gospel Movement) and Iyesu no Mitama Kyōkai (Spirit of Jesus Church, a Pentecostalist group) are noteworthy in having attracted more members than various of the older Protestant denominations, but their combined membership probably does not exceed 40,000 persons.

The principal developments of Christianity in Japan during the twenty-plus years since the end of the war may be summarized briefly. The number of Christian denominations has approximately tripled to a present total of about 95, but the additions are nearly all bodies with very few adherents; the number of Christians in the nation has approximately tripled, and the increased membership is chiefly in the Catholic Church and the various Protestant denominations that were established before World War II; the number of mission bodies has grown greatly, to a figure in 1966 of 108, and secular activities of Christian groups in promoting social welfare and education have also grown greatly.

A question that inevitably springs to mind is why has Christianity not established itself more firmly during this period of religious freedom when
new non-Christian sects have grown to such great size. Part of the answer to the question lies in the problems which Christianity has shared with Buddhism and Shinto—problems of finance; securing cooperation among the numerous competing organizations of the same religion; attracting well qualified persons for positions in the clergy, positions that now hold little prestige and seldom provide an adequate livelihood; of making and retaining contact with members of a geographically mobile population; and of formulating dogma that is appropriate and attractive in a Japanese setting which tends more and more toward scientific views of the world and secularization of the activities of life. Christianity has unquestionably suffered from opposition and competition offered by other religions, and from repressive action taken by the national government as well as from associated informal social pressures exerted by the general population against conversion or membership. So also at various times have Shinto and Buddhism suffered. It is difficult to judge which religion of the three might have suffered the most from these common problems over a long range of time because each has also had unique problems that have also inhibited expansion.

A major problem faced in modern times only by Christianity, a problem under which many related problems may be subsumed, is its failure to become naturalized in Japanese culture. The lack of naturalization applies to dogma, rites, personnel, and organization, all of which continue to give it a strongly foreign flavor. Traditional Christian views of the nature of God, morality, stewardship, and many other Christian concepts have been difficult to transplant in Japanese soil. The Christian neglect of attention to ancestors has been most unattractive to a society in which lines of descent have held great importance. Echoes of the Protestant past remaining in values and attitudes concerning sexual relations and in specific “moral” precepts of certain sects and denominations that prohibit the use of alcohol, tea, coffee, and tobacco are poorly suited to a society which has valued continence but at the same time has traditionally provided a guiltless place for pleasurable activities provided these are not seen to be socially disruptive and provided one has first fulfilled serious obligations of service to others. Weekly or more frequent regular attendance of church members at ceremonies in which they play an essentially passive role strikes many Japanese as a burdensome task.\textsuperscript{38} The exclusiveness of Christianity is also often cited as a deterrent to its acceptance by a nation in which religious exclusiveness has been uncommon.

These and many other similar objections to doctrines and modes of their propagation are voiced by Japanese. Even the edifices of Christianity are the objects of unfavorable criticism. Beauty and ugliness differ notably, and neither relates inherently to religious asceticism. In a land where ascet-
icism is valued, the native religious organizations of Japan have nevertheless erected structures for worship which are architecturally tasteful, sometimes resplendent, and most imposing in comparison with the humble and ugly buildings that ordinarily serve as Christian churches.

The Christian clergy in Japan is today principally—but not wholly—Japanese, and most of the larger Christian denominations attempt to operate with as little direct financial support as possible from foreign sources. Attempts are also made to place control of institutions of education and social welfare in Japanese hands once the institutions are well established, and for at least educational institutions these have often been successful. Many Christian schools ceased long ago to have any intimate or effective relationship with the missions or denominations that established them. These schools from the time of their establishment have generally been essentially secular institutions attended principally by non-Christians and staffed by an increasingly large proportion of non-Christian instructors. As agencies for evangelizing, the schools have been failures.

Despite a predominance of native clergymen, the presence of foreign clerics and missionaries in secular assignments is nevertheless very evident, and foreign financial aid is still substantial by force of necessity. Japanese leaders of Christianity seem generally to value and desire financial independence, but, like Buddhism and Shinto, Christianity is also pressed financially. The salaries of pastors and priests are low, and many must take side employment to survive. Like Buddhist temples, many Christian churches operate kindergartens and day nurseries that help support their pastors and their families. Most Protestant ministers are today Japanese, but in 1966 Protestant missionaries in Japan totaled nearly 2,000 persons, many of whom were laymen. The Catholic Church has been under Japanese leadership since 1940, but perhaps one-third of its priests are foreigners. During 1966, at least 20% of pastors’ salaries and over half the budgets of Protestant denominational headquarters were reported as coming from overseas, and 65% of the funds used for establishment of schools and institutions of social welfare came from mission societies. An extensive evangelical campaign conducted in various parts of the nation during the 1950’s was principally guided and inspired by foreign missionaries.

These and other similar instances of active foreign participation in Christian activities continue to call attention to Christianity as a foreign religion and at the same time hinder its naturalization. Techniques of propagating Christianity and, often, the human agents involved are also poorly naturalized and therefore ill-qualified for their tasks. Only the Catholic Church presents a united front. Despite the existence of various cooperative boards and leagues, Protestantism is less well unified than in prewar times and is characterized more by sectarian consciousness and vying than by
cooperation. Christian churches have never been centers of community activity in the traditional manner of Shinto shrines and Buddhist temples. Like Buddhist and Shinto priests, Christian missionaries and priests, both native and foreign, are generally regarded as inferior to their prewar predecessors in qualifications for their positions. Many foreign missionaries, clerics and laymen, have little knowledge of Japanese culture and little desire to gain such knowledge. In varying degree, many Western missionaries hold—and communicate to the Japanese—attitudes of superiority which have not been endearing and which their own personal qualities have sometimes belied.

Perhaps the most nearly successful examples of naturalized Christianity are provided by individual Japanese Christians, who have created varying kinds of syntheses of Christianity and native elements of religion. It is certain that Japanese Christians are never wholly Christian in the manner of Westerners, and they may be regarded as personal naturalizers of Christianity who have by no means entirely abandoned indigenous beliefs and practices of supernaturalism.41

Despite the many difficulties Christianity faces, some of its characteristics and circumstances appear advantageous for its future in Japan. The hate and fear of Christianity existing in Tokugawa times have disappeared, and have been replaced by feelings of respect. The prestige of the nations of the Western world from which Christianity came have given it reflective prestige that has been conditioned by the state of political relations between Japan and the West and presently is at perhaps its greatest height. This prestige has been augmented by Japanese appreciation of the philanthropic efforts of Christian groups in Japan in establishing schools and institutions of social welfare. The several hundred schools are an important part of the Japanese educational system from the level of elementary schools to colleges and graduate schools, and mission schools are recognized as important pioneers in providing higher education to women and girls.42 Institutions of social welfare include orphanages, homes for the aged and handicapped, leprosariums, and noted hospitals and medical clinics. The prestige of Christianity and of these philanthropic institutions is reflected in the fact that Buddhist sects have used these Christian works as models for their own activities since World War II.

Japanese adherents to Christianity may also be said to bring to their religion a considerable measure of prestige because of their own social and personal attributes. Japanese Christians and supporters of Christianity of the past century have included no counterparts of the feudal lords of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; that is, no persons holding authority have similarly promoted the spread of Christianity. Yet the modern Christians are a distinctive and distinguished group, well above the average
in educational attainments and income, and they include men and women of very considerable eminence. Both Protestants and Catholics recruit most successfully among educated urban professionals of the upper middle class. A sociological study of the backgrounds and attributes of approximately one thousand men regarded as the most eminent in the Japanese world of business and commerce in 1960 reports that 5.9% of the subjects declared themselves as Christians, a figure far above the proportion of Christians in the total population. Recruitment in the nineteenth century appears similarly to have been among people of favored social and economic positions, including many members of the former samurai class. These converts were in some measure social deviants but the positions of social prestige they held mitigated the deviance of their conversion to Christianity.

A potential advantage of Christianity that seems worthy of special note concerns a seeming congruence between the social milieu of Japanese Christians and the nature of Christianity. The social circumstances of representative Japanese Christians appear to favor their acceptance of Christianity over Buddhism or Shinto; that is, Japanese Christians are less likely than rural residents and urban people of lower social levels to be immersed deeply in ties of ramified kinship and of intimate membership in neighborhood associations or other small communities of non-kin. Most Christian efforts in proselytizing of the past century have been conducted in urban communities, and Christianity has no doctrinal or organizational features like those of Shinto and Buddhism that strongly relate to and reinforce bonds of family and community. It is significant that Christian attempts at conversion in rural communities have met little success.

Much of the foregoing is to say that many if not all of the forms of Christianity now represented in Japan appear better suited than Shinto or Buddhism to modern conditions of life in their emphasis upon the individual as opposed to the family and the united small community. One development relating to these remarks that merits at least mention in passing is the growth in Japan of a movement of “Churchless Christianity” which has roots reaching into the nineteenth century. Churchless Christianity took recognizable form as a movement in the early twentieth century but has never had firm formal organization. Opposing a church organization and stressing individualistic interpretation of the Bible and personal religious experience, Churchless Christianity continues to have life today among intellectuals. The number of its followers is estimated variously as 15,000 to 70,000 persons.

A word must be said about the influence upon Japan of Christianity as disseminated for a century by a large force of agents who have been little conscious of their roles as missionaries. These are the numerous foreign residents of Japan who have had no formal connection with Christian
churches and have doubtless included agnostics and atheists but who have carried with them and transmitted values deeply ingrained in Western culture and identified also as Christian values. The influence upon Japanese culture exerted by this and other indirect avenues of contact with Christianity may well have been great, but it has had little apparent effect in spurring formal conversion to Christianity. As Christianity now stands in Japan, it is a religion that is respected, even admired, but seldom personally sought. Its hope for the future depends upon complete naturalization and, as with Shinto and Buddhism, upon modernization to suit the changing surroundings.
CHAPTER IV

JAPANESE SOCIETY

TRADITIONAL MODES AND NEW DEPARTURES

Observers of the changing social scene in Japan during the past century have repeatedly called attention to the existence of both continuities and discontinuities from the past, often stating that in modern Japan the old and the new coexist. The old and the new may indeed be found in virtually all aspects of social life, but the truly old that remains preserved in precisely its form of a century or even three decades ago is rare or non-existent. Forces leading to social change have profoundly affected the entire nation, but their impact has not reached all sectors of the society uniformly. Notable differences in degrees of modernity exist among the various social classes and occupational groups and, among individuals, according to years of life and educational attainments.

Similar circumstances apply, of course, in other large industrial nations of the world, all of which have in modern times undergone great social changes. Japan is nevertheless socially remarkable among the great nations of the world for reasons that bear directly or indirectly upon the concerns of this book. The changes occurring in Japan during the past century are among the most drastic ever experienced in recorded history by any large society of the world, and they are unquestionably the most drastic experienced by any nation under conditions of internal peace. During this time Japan has had no revolutions or civil wars. After the relatively bloodless upheaval leading to the overthrow of the Tokugawa government, it has seen no rebellions involving more than small groups pursuing special interests. The manner in which changes came about, the nature of the cultural continuities and discontinuities, has special significance in this connection. What has become successfully established as the new thus bears the imprint of the old, and the new has very often made effective use of the old in order to establish itself. The result has often been an insensible transformation into new form.

If we think in broad terms of the development or evolution of human societies in general, the lack of truly serious social disturbances in Japan during the preceding century does not seem remarkable. Peaceful social change in any society probably always entails adaptation, more or less
gradual alteration of the old social forms to fit changed circumstances in other aspects of life. It seems safe to assume that a great many societies have undergone great changes peacefully, at least without internal warfare. Since the invention ten or more millennia ago of plant and animal husbandry and its subsequent diffusion to primitive hunting and gathering peoples, it is probable that many hundreds of societies have so changed peacefully through gradual adaptation. The "Neolithic Revolution" or "Food Producing Revolution" of which prehistorians speak may be regarded as a revolution only if one compares conditions at the beginning and end of a span of time that covers at least some centuries, and, for certain societies, one or more millennia. Despite the indisputable evidence in modern Japan of continuities from the past, the changes occurring there from 1868 to 1968 may, in the same sense as the changes of the Neolithic Revolution, be regarded as revolutionary when comparison is made of conditions at the two extremes in time.

A thesis we have previously expressed several times in discussing the religions of Japan is that religious changes have lagged behind changes in social life and other aspects of Japanese culture. To gain an understanding of the past and present religious conditions, it is necessary to know also the social conditions. With this goal in mind we shall here briefly describe major social and allied economic changes occurring in the hundred years since the beginning of the modernization of Japan, giving emphasis to social forms and supporting ideologies that appear to have special relevance to religious beliefs and practices. Various detailed accounts of the industrialization of Japan are available and our concern with industrialization will be limited principally to certain associated aspects of social change. A large number of publications chronicle the transition of the general population of Japan from peasant farming to life as sophisticated citizens of an industrial society. We shall outline this transition in a manner that does not wholly follow conventional accounts.

**Traditional Modes**

The modernization of Japan is conventionally described as beginning with the Meiji era in 1868, when the Tokugawa rulers were deposed, a relatively democratic rule established, and the self-imposed isolation of the nation from the rest of the world came to an end. Two and one-half centuries of isolation had left Japan scientifically and technologically backward as compared with the nations of Europe, a country composed of peasant farmers united with a small ruling class in a hierarchical order that had become obsolete in the West. Observers of the Japan of this time were strongly impressed by the rigidly hierarchical organization of the society and the many ways in which hierarchy was preserved. Later writings on
Japan by Westerners continued to convey a picture of the Meiji era that emphasized social hierarchy, and this impression of Japan is perpetuated in many writings describing the early twentieth century, or even current times. During the Tokugawa era, Japan was unquestionably one of the most firmly stratified societies known to human history, a society of vertical layers given forceful support by law and in many other ways. It is not surprising that foreign observers saw only the hierarchy; it was this aspect of life of which the Japanese themselves were most acutely aware as the result of repeated, explicit instruction reinforced by powerful sanctions. But in Japan as elsewhere in human society, a complementary principle of social organization along horizontal or egalitarian lines also existed in Meiji and Tokugawa times and far into antiquity. Such social groups, important for expressive as well as instrumental goals—for affective or emotional as well as practical economic reasons—doubtless exist, formally or informally, in all large societies, but they have not always been outstanding and have therefore escaped the attention of observers. The relative importance in Japan of the two sets of structures, the vertical and the horizontal, is hard to judge, especially since they serve as complements to each other and both seem vital. At our beginning point in time, however, hierarchy is clearly the more conspicuous and the more firmly implanted in the consciousness of the citizenry.

The Vertical Order

At the end of the Tokugawa era, Japanese society numbered about 33,000,000 persons, divided into hereditary classes that were theoretically immutable, and were largely so in fact. At the top were the noble families, composed of about 450 families, totaling less than 3,000 persons. Below them but sharing superior status were their retainers, the samurai, who with their families numbered nearly two million persons. Far below these two classes of the elite stood the masses, approximately thirty-one million commoners, most of whom were farmers or served in other rural occupations as foresters and fishermen. Far below the commoners was another class of a few hundred thousand persons, then generally known by the name Eta, who lived in segregated communities and formed an outcast group legally denied many of the privileges of commoners.

Under the Tokugawa rulers, these social classes were firmly preserved by close surveillance and strong legal and moral sanctions. As during several preceding centuries, the emperor held only symbolic importance and had no voice in ruling the nation. The gap between commoners and the elite was great, and no movement upward was normally possible. The social barrier between outcasts and commoners was at least equally great in preventing upward movement. The outcasts were, however, a small minority
group that has had little discernible impact upon national trends of cultural, social, and religious change and they are for this reason of only peripheral interest to us. Commoner subclasses of farmer, artisan, and merchant were also hereditary and hierarchical, but it is clear that some social movement occurred among these classes despite rules and laws designed to prevent movement. Some penetration into the samurai class also occurred when merchant families, some of whom had gained wealth in late Tokugawa times, arranged marriages of sons and daughters to members of impoverished samurai families. Hereditary social assignment strongly prevailed, however, and few opportunities existed for social elevation.

The nation was divided into nearly 300 feudal domains governed by lords who served as vassals of the Tokugawa ruler. The population lived in some 70,000 communities, most of which were rural, very small, and largely self-sufficient economically. Farmers were forbidden to sell lands or change places of residence. Since taxes were paid in rice, farmers were given little freedom even in choice of crops to raise.

As in other peasant agricultural societies, much of social life was organized on the basis of kinship, and it was through the ties of kinship and membership in one's small community that life was made possible. Hierarchy prevailed in the realm of kinship also. Males stood far above females, and the male head of the family ideally held unquestioned authority over all others. Inheritance by primogeniture was customary, and the male heir stood above his younger brothers. Seniority of age, conditioned by the sex of the family members concerned, also conferred prestige and authority.

The composition and size of family groups varied locally but was characteristically large as compared with the family of modern times. Customarily, when the head of the family grew old and felt that his powers failed him, he relinquished the headship to his eldest son, who by this time had ordinarily long been married and was the father of young children. The new head then assumed responsibility for his aged parents and such of his siblings as were still immature as well as for his wife and offspring. The family thus passed through a series of cyclical stages of composition so that the number of members normally rose and fell with the passage of years. At one time the group might be composed of an aging but still able-bodied family head and his wife, their eldest son of mature years who had not yet succeeded to headship, his wife, and the young children of this couple (the grandchildren of the household head). Two decades later, the same family might normally consist of a male head (the erstwhile eldest son) and his wife, a recently married eldest son, his wife and their infant children, one or more immature and unmarried siblings of the eldest son, and one or both of the aged parents of the household head. At other times in the cycle,
Daughters customarily left the family upon marriage and soon became identified with the kin groups of their husbands. Younger sons, who later became an important element in the industrialization of Japan, were often a social problem. Sometimes they were given in adoption during infancy or childhood to families lacking male offspring; another part of the population of younger sons was regularly absorbed by an institutionalized form of adoptive marriage according to which a young man was legally adopted at the time of marriage as the heir of the family of his bride, assuming her family name.

When finances allowed, younger sons might be given lands and property and established as branch families, subordinate to the establishing family and united with it in a familial group maintained through patrilineal lines in later generations. Familial branching of this kind sometimes became extremely elaborate as time passed, creating large complexes of trunk (honke) and branch (bunke) families, called dōzoku and a variety of other local names. In these organizations of trunk and branch families, the normative family served as a model; that is, the entire trunk family held a superior parental role and branch families were analogous with children, or, as sometimes occurred when branch families established their own branches, analogous with grandchildren. As the generations succeeded each other, heads of households became distant cousins but familism was preserved in their relations.

Terms of address and reference used among members of the dōzoku also reflected familism and hierarchy. Regardless of his age, the head of the trunk family was referred to and addressed by members of the subordinate family by terms indicating paternal status. The breach in status between other members of the trunk family and members of branch families was similarly reflected in their terms of address for each other. The young heir to headship of a trunk family, might, for example, be called “elder brother” by heads of branch families who were many years his senior. Much regional variation existed in the incidence and nature of the dōzoku. In some areas, it was a tightly bound corporate group that was economically important to its members and held together by customs and ingrained values of compelling force. In other areas, the dōzoku was a looser and economically unimportant structure in which differences in status of component families were not marked. In still other regions, where holdings of property did not permit branching, where livelihood did not depend upon ownership of substantial property, or where differences in wealth were not great, the dōzoku was uncommon or absent.

Familism permeated the society in still other ways. Livelihood and well-being depended upon ties of kinship, and when kin were lacking for
whatever reason an institutionalized custom was followed of creating fictive bonds of kinship with unrelated persons after the model of familial relations. Forms of fictive kinship were various. Sometimes an entire family bound itself to another family as quasi-kin. Where large areas of land were held by a few families and many other families were landless and impoverished, land-owning families sometimes incorporated unrelated families into the dōzoku which they headed, according them statuses, privileges, and obligations resembling but less advantageous than those applying to true kin in branch families.

Individuals also sometimes formed pacts of fictive kinship with one another, but these appear to have been most common in towns and cities and among people who were not farmers. The most common and important form of fictive kinship among individuals was the oyabun-kobun ("parent-child") relationship, applying principally to males, in which one person stood in the position of parent and another person was his "child." The oyabun-kobun was fundamentally an economic relationship between a senior entrepreneur and a labor force of juniors, but it had many of the qualities of normal kinship, involving emotional bonds and obligations of loyalty and mutual support. One oyabun might have several or many children, who became in some measure as brothers or siblings to one another. Fictive kinship among people close to each other in age and modeled after the relationships of brothers and sisters was otherwise not very common and rested principally upon emotional rather than economic ties.

The importance of kinship was evident in still other ways. Unrelated members of one's community were customarily addressed as if they were kin unless the social breach between the families of the speakers was great, and identification with one's family or larger kin group was so close that in many important contexts the individual had no existence apart from his identity as a family member. Populations were tallied by households; taxation and representation in community affairs operated on the same basis; property and earnings of the members of a family were held in common; and joys and sorrows, failings and strengths of any one member of the family were matters of united concern. The lack of individualism is clearly expressed in characteristic linguistic forms, many of which continue to be used today. Reference to members and possessions of one's family made no use of words meaning "my," but instead characteristically referred to the family. One's paternal grandfather, for example, was "the grandfather of our family."

The small world of the ordinary citizen of Japan a century ago revolved about kinship and membership in his small rural community, which ordinarily included many relatives. Contacts with outside communities were
ordinarily few, and direct contact with members of the nobility rarely occurred. *Samurai* intendants were charged with collecting taxes, and appointed officials were responsible for maintaining law and order. For the most part, life in the small community proceeded on its own course, and normal problems of social discord were settled in the family and community without recourse to outside authority.

The long period of Japan’s isolation from the outside world and the powerful political control exercised by the Tokugawa rulers encouraged the firm development of sets of values to support the hierarchical social scheme. Class antagonism did not exist. It was only near the end of the Tokugawa era that serious unrest became evident, and this was rebellion against the rulers rather than social revolution. To maintain the social order of Tokugawa times, procedures of social intercourse were sharply defined for every conceivable occasion and for every recognized class and category of human beings. Rules governing relations between classes and individuals of unequal social status were the most sharply defined and carried the strongest legal and informal sanctions. Symbols of status in clothing, hairdress, ornaments, and various other personal possessions were also clearly defined and supported by sumptuary laws. The normal course of life was thus set at the time of birth and much of one’s education consisted of learning the prescribed rules.

Internalization of rules of propriety was probably one of the most effective factors in the maintenance of the Tokugawa social order. For *samurai* and commoner alike, thrift, industry, and loyalty—the faithful discharge of one’s obligations to other members of society and especially to one’s superiors—were supreme values taught and reinforced in many ways. The social and political disturbances of late Tokugawa and early Meiji times did not entail any revolutionary changes in these ideals of human conduct. Instead, the modernization of Japan that followed made use of the established rationales, and these have been gradually transmuted in the following century.

*Horizontal Lines*

The foregoing sketch of late Tokugawa society, long familiar to readers of scholarly books on Japan, must be amplified with much less familiar information on non-hierarchical social groupings of importance to daily life, a subject on which fewer data are available. It is probably safe to assume that in Japanese society of the time, as in any other society, informal relations of equality that were affectively important existed among equals, but little else may be said on this subject. We can discuss here only formally organized social groups of this kind, which existed in varying degrees of development everywhere in the nation among at least the commoners and
were often vital to the continuation of life. These were democratic associations based upon common interests, and their history in Japan is ancient.⁵

Communal associations concerned with irrigation are probably one of their most ancient forms. The intense cultivation of paddy rice, which began in Japan over two millennia ago, requires the cooperation of many persons to build and operate systems of irrigation, and such irrigation associations continue to exist today. Formal and informal associations concerned with planting rice, harvesting crops, and other agricultural tasks are also ancient in Japan and were widespread during Tokugawa times. The cooperation necessary for these agricultural tasks sometimes came from groups of kin and fictive kin. Common residence rather than kinship seems, however, to have been the decisive factor, and when many people were needed communal participation appears to have been the standard practice.

Another of the early forms was a variety of local associations based upon age, often further divided by sex.⁶ Such age-graded associations appear to have been most common and most elaborately developed in southerly and coastal regions. The number of age-graded associations varied from community to community; that is, divisions by age and sex might be several or few. The most common and functionally important in community affairs were groups of able-bodied married males, and of young, unmarried males past adolescence. These associations had primarily instrumental goals connected with community affairs but they were also important for the friendly human contacts they provided and customarily included in their activities some that were purely recreational.

Egalitarian associations connected with religion were common in late Tokugawa times.⁷ Parishioners of Buddhist temples and members of Shinto shrine communities of local tutelary gods were in some sense common-interest associations. Membership in a Shinto shrine community, however, ordinarily coincided with membership in a general community association which functionally embraced activities in connection with the shrine so that the shrine community had no truly separate existence. Parishioners of Buddhist temples might be well united or—as seems to have been most common in late Tokugawa times—poorly united. Since parish groups were presided over by Buddhist priests and often included people of more than one community and varying social status, they tended more toward hierarchical social relations than other associations previously described.

Markedly egalitarian associations connected with religion also existed, however, in the small community. These were of two kinds, both commonly called by the Buddhist-derived name, kō. Each community customarily had one or more funeral kō, mutual aid societies composed of neighbors who helped bereaved families with their normal household tasks and served various roles in connection with funerals and later memorial services. Folk cus-
toms prohibiting relatives from performing certain roles in funerals doubtless encouraged the development of these associations. Other \( kō \), in which membership was wholly voluntary, were small local groups with activities centering on the worship of sacred mountains and of supernatural beings of Shinto, Buddhist and popular Chinese belief. As we have earlier noted, the emergence during late Tokugawa times of organized Shinto sects, such as Tenri-kyō, are developments which may possibly be linked with the existence of these \( kō \).

The incidence and type of common-interest associations varied from region to region even when occupations were the same. In much of northeastern Japan, where families with large holdings of land held positions of authority as heads of \( dōzoku \) or as landlords dominating tenants, necessary communal and cooperative work was done by kin, fictive kin, and tenant farmers. Common-interest associations were unnecessary, and from the standpoint of those in positions of authority, undesirable. In such communities, common-interest associations were limited to those which imposed no threat to the authority. In communities where distinctions of wealth were not marked, as in much agricultural land of the southwest and in various coastal communities of fishermen, cooperative associations were common. In general, southwestern Japan tended less to hierarchy and had greater development of egalitarian associations than the northeastern region of the nation, where the average person was poorer and more dependent upon relatives or the beneficence of fictive parents and landlords. A well-known interpretation of premodern Japanese society by a Japanese sociologist divides rural communities into two polar types, the "Clan-type" (\( Dōzoku \)) and the "Community-type" (\( Kōgumi \)), which represent extremes of hierarchy and egalitarianism and are said to have characterized the northeast and the southwest, respectively.

One common-interest association was general among the small rural settlements of the nation unless the communities were composed wholly of kin. This was a community association composed of one representative of each household, ordinarily the household head, whether households were large or small. Hierarchy was, of course, evident in these community associations. The most powerful families and individuals doubtless wielded the greatest influence. Mere operation of any social group, of course, supposes the existence of leaders. But the organizations were consciously democratic, seeking to look after the interests of all and theoretically giving each family an equal voice. These associations concerned themselves with communal interests and obligations of many kinds, such as the maintenance of communal roads and buildings, including the community shrine, and protection from fire. As with other associations, they also had expressive goals in connection with the joint conduct of enjoyable religious festivals.
The two modes of ordering society we have described, the vertical and the horizontal, should not be regarded as being wholly opposed and antagonistic. It is unlikely that the average citizen imagined them to be in conflict. From the point of view of the social sciences also, conflict is not an appropriate term to use in describing the relationship. They existed as complements to each other and were vital to life of the times. A perceptive Japanese scholar has stated that the dōzoku system and age-graded groups represented the two most important organizing principles of the society with complementary distribution.\textsuperscript{9} We may note also that although relations within any given common-interest association may be democratic, common-interest associations as a group lend themselves to authoritarian control as units of a hierarchical structure. During much of the post-Tokugawa history of Japan, the largest and most important of the associations, secular and religious, were so manipulated by the national government. Yet egalitarian common-interest associations in which membership is voluntary have been one of the common worldwide responses to cultural conditions that disfavor strong ties of kinship. The transition had already started on its way in Japan by late Tokugawa times, especially in southwestern Japan.\textsuperscript{10}

Other principles and dominant themes of Tokugawa social life beyond hierarchy and equality are evident in our brief account and are important to an understanding of later developments. We shall again call attention to the intense emphasis placed upon kinship, including some development of fictive kinship, and upon seniority in age as conferring status. Identification with small social groups—the family and the local face-to-face community—and intense loyalty to those social groups are also matters of great importance. None of these principles, themes, or values has disappeared, but all have changed by growth, decline, or transmutation. Many may be regarded as vehicles or roads to the later development of Japanese society and culture in its modern form.

**NEW DEPARTURES**

As with our account of Tokugawa times, we shall here present only a brief outline of the major cultural and social changes occurring after 1868, calling attention to those most relevant to our concerns. A notable defect in published writings on Japan is a lack of truly current information. Certain trends of social change have accelerated so greatly in recent years that descriptions and, especially, statistical information are outdated by the time they are put into print. We shall here give emphasis to the most recent developments, with the uncomfortable knowledge that they also will soon be outdated.

Outside observers have marveled at the phenomenal speed with which
after 1868 Japan successfully became industrialized and assumed a position as an international power. Among the important advantages for rapid industrialization and modernization were centralized authority and a tractable labor force that placed a high value on thrift, industry, and conformity. Some softening of the old class hierarchy came in early Meiji with the abolition of the samurai class and the end of laws binding citizens to hereditary occupations. Agriculture provided the capital for the development of industry and also the labor force, the sons and daughters of farmers. The lot of farmers had, in general, worsened rather than improved. After a change in the early Meiji era requiring payment of taxes in money rather than in rice, many farmers lost their lands and were forced to become tenant farmers paying rental fees to landlords of approximately half the annual yields. Movement to urban industrial employment was the primary means of gaining a livelihood of the excess farm population of younger sons and unmarried daughters. Industry was for many decades strongly familial, consisting principally of small enterprises operated by families or by family-like groups united by ties of fictive kinship.

By the beginning of the twentieth century, Japan had already become an international power. The subsequent history of the nation has been one of continued modernization and industrialization, accompanied by accommodative social changes, most of which have at best been only partly planned and foreseen. The path of development shows plateaus and lags, the most notable of which centered on World War II, but the general trend had been toward continual change and the tempo of change has been increasingly accelerated since the early 1950’s.

Paradoxically, defeat in World War II may be seen as stimulating rather than inhibiting change and development. Constitutional and other changes imposed upon Japan by the allied military occupation from 1945 to 1952 loosened the bonds of tradition. It is significant that since the end of the occupation no important reversion to earlier social conditions has yet occurred. If anything, social changes since 1952 that depart from traditional customs have probably gone farther than policy makers of the occupation had hoped for or imagined. Social changes brought about by the occupation seem, in fact, generally to represent an acceleration of trends already well established but obscured by oppressive military control before and during World War II.

Among the important innovations of the occupation were a revised constitution giving greatly increased freedom to the individual, including freedom of religion. Other provisions of the constitution were the establishment of legal equality of males and females and the abolition of primogeniture. An extensive land reform, which freed tenant farmers from oppressive control by landlords, and improved techniques of agronomy quickly im-
proved the efficiency of agriculture. Very few of the innovations were inappropriate. Land reforms were not new in Japan; but the reform imposed by the occupation was doubtless more drastic than any single-step, indigenous program might have been. Circumstances relating to other changes are similar. The status of women, who by 1941 had already become an important part of the nation's labor force, had in fact already risen although they were told in many ways of their lowly status and lacked legal equality. Primogeniture has never been legally reestablished since the end of occupation in 1952 despite the obvious desirability of limiting to one person the inheritance of farm lands so small they could never adequately support more than one family. The customary procedure in rural Japan has simply been for siblings to reach agreement that one only—usually the eldest son—should inherit farm property upon the death of their parents.

Japan's economic recovery after World War II came as the result of increased and increasingly efficient industrialization aided substantially at first by increased agricultural efficiency. Year by year agriculture has since shrunk in importance and industry and international trade have grown. This shift in economic base and the accompanying expansion of scientific and technological education have brought about far greater social changes than any planned or envisaged by either authorities of the occupation or native leaders of the nation.

Acknowledging that the most rapid changes have occurred in recent years, let us now review the major changes bearing upon religion that have occurred in the full century since 1868. These may be summarized for our purposes briefly as a transition from a status as an impoverished and culturally backward nation dependent economically upon peasant agriculture to a status as one of the great industrial nations of the world. With a population of 100,000,000, Japan is the world's sixth largest nation. In the realm of science and technology, Japan is now an innovator, a contributor to international scientific knowledge and technological advancement rather than an uneducated student emulating its foreign teachers. Its citizens enjoy the highest standards of living in the Orient, standards which continue to rise and are presently comparable with those of various nations of Europe. Major accompanying changes in Japanese society may be summarized as a shift in organizing principles and forms away from immobile hierarchy and reliance upon kinship to a fluid state in which familial patterns of authority have become relatively democratic, considerable movement occurs among social classes, many of the former roles of the family and other kin groups are performed by unrelated persons and impersonal institutions, and increasing importance is attached to the individual. A shift has also taken place in the relative development of vertical and horizontal social units that gives a much larger and more obvious place to "horizontal" com-
mon-interest associations. None of these changes represents a complete displacement or conversion of important traditional principles. As compared with the United States, Japan is still a land of social hierarchy, strong kin ties, authoritarianism, and lack of individuality, but the changes it has seen in these matters are nevertheless extremely great.

The system of social classes of Tokugawa times has long been shattered although lingering vestiges of the old order remain. The very fluidity of modern times makes it difficult to describe precisely the modern conditions of social stratification and mobility. Foreign and native social scientists who concern themselves with this topic clearly agree that social classes exist today, but they are troubled in defining, and reaching agreement upon, suitable criteria of class and deciding what segments and proportions of the population meet the criteria. Conventional criteria such as incomes, occupations, and levels of education may conflict, especially when these are related to subjective self-appraisals and non-subjective appraisals of social placement. The old markers of class—dress, demeanor, and expressed attitudes and values—have become blurred and are unreliable as guides. These conditions hindering the formulation of a sharply defined scheme of social classes are, of course, themselves indicators of social flux.

The social classes of Japan today may, however, be described in terms that take cognizance of movement. At the top is a small class of the highly elite, a very small part of which is hereditary. This class is composed of members of the imperial family, members and descendants of the former peerage abolished after World War II who have retained wealth, and families of commoner background which have long held wealth and power. In all segments of this class, ascribed status is expectably important, but recent marriages of commoners to members of the imperial family attest that rigid adherence to ascriptive membership is qualified even in the hereditary imperial line. The great bulk of the population falls into a large and rapidly growing middle class and a somewhat smaller lower class. Both of these classes have definable substrata and the borderline between the two classes is unclear. The middle class is composed principally of urban people in administrative and clerical positions and professional occupations. The lower class consists of an increasing number of skilled and unskilled workers in industry and a decreasing but still large number of farmers. At the bottom far below the lower class are the outcasts, who are today most commonly known by the name Tokushu Burakumin (“people of the special hamlets”) or its abbreviation, Burakumin, and number perhaps 2,000,000 persons. Although granted legal equality in 1871, the Burakumin are still subjects of discrimination. With the exception of the small imperial family, they are the only essentially hereditary social class in modern Japan. Factors which have preserved this caste-like class are complex and we shall omit them
from further consideration on the grounds previously stated that the Burakumin are peripheral to our main interests. We shall add in passing that most Burakumin are and have long been Shin Buddhists and, perhaps simply because they are outcasts, appear never to have been subjected to active proselyting by either Christian sects or any of the new sects.

According to the estimates of the Japanese sociologist, Kunio Odaka, who presents a somewhat more detailed scheme of classes than the foregoing, the proportions of the population in the various classes in 1965 were as follows: Uppermost stratum, 3%; Upper-middle class, 18%; Lower-middle class, 19%; Intermediate stratum, 32%; and Lower class 28%.

Studies of occupational and social mobility in modern Japan show that considerable movement in occupations exists beyond that from farming to positions as workers in industry. The rate of intergenerational movement in occupations is comparable with rates obtaining in industrialized Western nations. Thus, inferentially, social mobility also exists. Many social gradations tied in with modern occupations are evident today in the middle and lower classes. Occupations conferring the highest prestige are held principally by descendants of the old social elite and people of middle-class backgrounds, but it is clear that individual talent has become the primary qualification for important positions and that high status has been reached by people of humble backgrounds. As a nation depending for survival upon successful international competition in industry and trade, Japan must depend upon and recognize the individual talents of its citizens. A study of 1500 of the nation’s foremost business leaders in the early 1960’s reports that two-thirds came from “relatively unknown families.” Industrialization has, in short, resulted in an essentially new scheme of social classes that are still in a process of formation and show no signs of solidifying into a stable hierarchy. In various ways that we shall later discuss, traditional social assignments continue to exert influence on occupational and associated social movements, but it is safe to say that the old order is gone.

In order to show the relevance to religion of the modern social mobility discussed above, certain of its aspects and concomitants need expansion. One of these is the demographic change involved in the transformation of Japan from an agricultural to an industrial nation. In 1868, Japan depended economically upon agriculture; a century later, less than 10% of national income was so derived. In 1868, over 80% of the nation was composed of farming families. A century later this proportion had shrunk to an official figure of slightly under 20% which, in the interests of accuracy, should be restated as a considerably smaller figure. The farm population of Japan changed little in absolute figures until recent years, although its relative size decreased as the population grew. Totaling 48% of the total labor force in 1920, and swelling somewhat immediately after World War II
when many people who could not gain a livelihood in the devastated cities returned temporarily to ancestral farms, the agricultural population began a rapid and accelerating decline in the 1950's. In 1965, the proportion was 23.2%, but this figure does not accurately represent the number of full-time farmers. In that year, 60% of the farm labor force consisted of women, principally wives and aged mothers of family heads, and 29% of males over the age of 60, many of whom were "retired" fathers of family heads. Over three-fourths of farm families also engaged in occupations other than farming. Many family heads are employed by urban industries and either commute daily from farm to work or take up temporary residence near their places of employment. In a book published in 1967, one of Japan’s scholars best informed on rural life in the nation states, “It is estimated that only 40 per cent of today’s Japanese agricultural households deserve to be called real farming families, 20 per cent receive equivalent incomes from agriculture and additional sources, and 30 per cent should be regarded as non-agricultural households. The remaining 10 per cent of the families are in financial difficulties because they lack male adult members.”

The demographic changes initiated by the shift from agriculture to industry have resulted in reduced populations in rural areas and an increasingly dense population in industrial regions. A small ribbon of land given the name “Tōkaidō Megalopolis” that stretches about 300 miles from Tokyo southwest through Nagoya and on to Osaka and Kobe was reported to contain in 1966 about 50,000,000 persons, one-half of the nation’s population. The three cities of Tokyo, Osaka, and Nagoya held about one-fourth of the total population. Continued rapid growth of the megalopolis was forecast to embrace three-fourths of the population by 1975.

Demographic change has not been limited to a shift from farm to city. An accompanying trend that has important relevance to religion is a great increase in the number of families, which reflects the movement of farm workers to urban areas, improved economic conditions making small familial units financially possible among urban residents, and perhaps also acute problems in finding housing suitable for large extended families. During the five years ending in 1965, the number of households increased by 3,450,000 at a time when the national population increased by 4,860,000 persons. Totaling 24,080,000 in 1965, the number of households in 1975 was forecast as 30,780,000 and in 1985 as 38,100,000. As these statistics imply, the average size of the family has also decreased, shrinking from 4.97 persons in 1955 to 3.94 persons in 1966.

The rapid movement to the cities of Japan, especially to the Tōkaidō Megalopolis, and the increase in the number of families have brought serious problems of housing. Land suitable for dwelling in or near cities
has risen to prices far beyond the finances of ordinary citizens, and costs of construction have also risen greatly. The result has been tiny living quarters for most people which, for reasons of thrift, tend more and more to be apartments. Extensive national programs of public housing have already resulted in the construction of many *danchi*, complexes of dwellings composed principally of apartment houses, some of which shelter tens of thousands of people in a single complex. Much larger *danchi*, called “new towns,” that have been recently completed or are now under construction will accommodate as many as 200,000 people in a single development. The demographic changes we have discussed have left many rural communities with few young, unmarried males and females, as young women also frequently take urban employment. By choice, most of these young people remain in the cities and establish independent families when they marry. Many rural communities are also troubled by the alienation of adult heads of farm families, who in their roles as industrial employees are away from home much of the time and have lost close identity with community life.

A national administrative policy going back to Meiji times of consolidating villages, towns and cities into larger political units has also weakened the solidarity of the small community. Since the beginning of the Meiji era, the number of politically independent communities has been reduced from about 70,000 to 3,400. Although many of the formerly independent communities are still spatially separated from other parts of the towns or cities with which they have amalgamated, contacts outside the small community are necessarily more frequent than formerly. Economic self-sufficiency of the small community ended as industrialization transformed farming into a narrow occupational specialty among other occupational specialties. The elaborate development of television, radio, newspapers and other mass media of communication has also been effective in ending the isolation of rural communities. Together with economic changes that discourage dependence upon kin and neighbors, these changes in rural life have made solidarity difficult or even undesirable to maintain in the small face-to-face community.

Changes occurring during the past century in the realm of kinship—some of which have been touched upon already—are striking. Reliance upon a large body of kin is no longer possible for most people and, perhaps in large part as a rationale reflecting the new order of life, such reliance in at least economic affairs is looked upon more and more as undesirable or improper. Large organizations of relatives have become uncommon. The *dōzoku* has essentially disappeared, meeting its demise in its last large stronghold, the large and formerly badly impoverished rural prefectures of northeastern Japan, as the result of the postwar land reform. Extended families that include more than one generation are today principally rural,
and, as previous discussion of demographic changes implies, the nuclear family composed of a pair of spouses and their children predominates.

The size of families is not, however, a wholly accurate reflector of their type. The average size of the family living under one roof decreased during the half-century following 1868 and then remained nearly constant for over thirty years until 1955. The proportion of nuclear families had increased greatly between 1868 and 1920 but no precise comparative figures are available. Between 1920 and 1955, the average size of the family increased somewhat, but this growth represented an increase in the number of children and not the addition of aged, dependent parents of family heads or of non-linear relatives. In 1920, somewhat over one-half of the nation's families were already nuclear and the family averaged 4.89 persons. In 1955, when the trend of rapid change began, both family size and the proportion of nuclear families had increased slightly. In 1965, about 70% of the families were nuclear and the average size had dropped sharply to 4.08 persons. In 1966, when the average size of the family had dropped to 3.94 persons, a governmental bureau forecast a decrease to 3.53 persons in 1975 and 3.11 persons a decade later. Although no estimate was made of the proportion of nuclear and extended families in this report, a great increase in nuclear families is implied by a forecast that the number of households would increase by 50.6% between 1965 and 1985 (at a time when the national population would expectably increase by about 20%).

Fictive kinship has followed a similar course of decline. The oyabun-kobun relationship of "father" and "children" was well suited to the conditions of the earlier decades of industrialization, and then blossomed rather than declined. The small size of the industries of the time and the lack of programs of social welfare, labor unions, employment agencies or other means by which excess farm populations could find employment and psychological security among strangers in the cities made the personalized oyabun-kobun a useful mechanism both for recruiting labor and for allowing the recruited labor to adjust to new conditions of life. Although most industrial concerns of Japan are still small, the growing trend has been toward ever-larger firms and this trend has been accompanied in recent years by an increasing number of bankruptcies of small firms. Fictive kinship remains important today probably only in the underworld of criminals, the sector of the population least affected by the many modern institutions connected with labor and finance and the modern programs of social welfare.

Patterns of authority in the family and in the society at large have expectably been altered by the same set of factors that has shattered the traditional forms of the family and social classes. In the family the authority of the father has weakened, and the breach in status between males and
females has shrunk. Women today represent about 40% or more of the nation's labor force and are thus very important economically to the family as well as to the nation. Much evidence—including divorce actions and other litigations initiated by women and the activities of organizations of women in politics and toward civic improvements and social reforms—shows that women are no longer the meek creatures, subservient to male will, held in former times as the ideal. Eldest sons, especially sons of farming families, may be disfavored economically and otherwise over their younger brothers. Younger sons may receive at familial expense higher education, unnecessary for stay-at-home eldest sons, that will better equip them for life as urban residents. With or without higher education, their opportunities for economic improvement are generally greater than those of eldest sons of farm families. Urban life is, in fact, the desired goal of most of the rural young of both sexes. Since the late 1950's, young farmers have had difficulty in finding young women willing to marry them and follow dreary farm lives made still more trying by the necessity to live with the groom's parents. The "bride famine" rose to such serious proportions by the mid-1960's that incentives—goods and services ranging from prefabricated houses to "more human kindness" on the part of husbands—were reported as being offered by agricultural cooperative associations to girls willing to become farm brides.

Many additional lines of evidence point up the great changes that have taken place in familial composition and patterns of relations, changes that are supported by law as well as in other ways. A Japanese scholar of jurisprudence states: "As far as the law is concerned, the (traditional) family system of Japan has been abolished." One of the important directions of change evident in familial relations is part of a national trend applying outside the realm of kinship. This is the growth of individualism, which is often regarded as being linked with a trend toward impersonalization of life.

Let us note again that none of the preceding paragraphs intends to imply the end of familism and personalized relationships. By contrast with conditions in the United States, life in Japan continues to be familistic and personalized. Changes have, moreover, been uneven; where the old order can survive it has done so. Industry and all other means of gaining a livelihood today depend much less than formerly on ties of kinship and friendship, but they are nevertheless strongly if unevenly paternalistic and involve ties of personal loyalty and intimacy that cannot be described as impersonal relations. The family, reduced in size and changed in patterns of authority, remains of vital importance. Identification with the family and other groups continues to be important and to be sought. Much more than residents of the United States, the Japanese depend affectively upon close association with other people, a subject to which we shall later return.
Here and there in the preceding pages mention has been made of modern substitutes for kinship, that is, institutions, agencies, and customs that have taken over roles vital to life which kinship can no longer effectively perform. One of the important social changes that serves in part as a substitute for, or displacement of, kinship is the great growth of common-interest associations. As earlier noted, associations of this kind are old in Japan. The Meiji era and the first three decades of the twentieth century saw the growth of additional associations, but the trend of development was then brought nearly to a standstill by governmental control. During the 1930's and World War II, all associations were closely scrutinized by the national government and the formation of new organizations strongly discouraged. Certain well-established groups such as agricultural and fishing cooperatives, village associations of women, young people's associations, and urban neighborhood associations, were nationally organized, placed under strict governmental control, and used to further war efforts. Labor unions, which had developed modestly before the war, were discouraged to the point where they essentially disappeared.

At war's end, common-interest associations resumed the path of development that had been blocked by oppressive governmental control. Today they are abundant in both country and city. Many have instrumental goals, aiming at economic, civic, and social improvement or other practical objectives; many others are expressive, groups of like-minded people united for sports, aesthetics, and other pleasurable activities. Regardless of their explicit, stated objectives, all in some measure doubtless combine instrumental and expressive goals. Some religious associations, such as the small discussion groups of the new religious sects, are outstanding examples of such combination.

The number of common-interest associations to which adolescent and adult residents of modern rural communities belong ranges between about fifteen and twenty-five. These include economic associations, women's societies, young people's societies, and religious groups exclusive of legally established sects. Many are continuations, in modernized form, of old associations. Some limit membership to the small community and others are united with similar groups in other communities, sometimes being a part of national organizations. Some associations are for specific sex and age groups. The average resident is thus identified with several organized groups in addition to his community association and his family. Outstanding among the associations is the agricultural cooperative, which in its modern form has assumed various of the roles once performed by kin, personal friends, or other agencies. Although still nationally organized and in various ways supported by the government, the agricultural cooperatives have a good deal of local autonomy. Their economic functions concern credit, market-
ing, purchasing, improvement of agronomy, mutual relief, medical services, and farm management and finance. In addition, the postwar agricultural cooperatives also commonly provide facilities for recreation, promote aesthetic activities, and, in rich agricultural areas where the associations are correspondingly rich and strong, may reach into most aspects of life except the religious. The declining position of agriculture in Japan in recent years has somewhat reduced the importance of these cooperatives. At the time of their greatest development in the 1950's, they curiously resembled large Japanese business concerns and certain of the new religious sects in their tendency to expand activities to embrace many aspects of human life, sometimes absorbing once separate women's and youths' associations as auxiliaries.

Information on the full range of urban common-interest associations is relatively scanty, but it is clear that they are plentiful and extremely varied organizations with economic and political goals and a wide range of expressive objectives. Some of the urban associations of national importance, such as political parties, religious sects, and labor unions are expectably well known. Least known are the local groups pursuing expressive goals. One of the most important associations throughout urban Japan is the Neighborhood Association (Chōnaikai) composed of representatives of households within a defined area. This association, which has deep historic roots as a local group, was nationally organized before World War II as a means of mobilizing citizens for patriotic efforts and membership in it was essentially compulsory. Today, as a voluntary association, the Neighborhood Association concerns itself with civic improvements and other practical matters of interest to the geographical area concerned. As in prewar times, in this respect it generally resembles the community association of rural Japan. Groups within the Neighborhood Association organized for the enjoyment of sports and forms of art are also common. Movement of the population and the growing impersonality of urban life have weakened the Neighborhood Association and today membership is not sought by all families.

Other postwar associations that merit special comment are the Shujuren (Women's League) and the labor unions. A national organization with over a half-million members, the Shujuren has successfully pursued various civic improvements and is indicative of the rising status of women in the nation. Labor unions had a phenomenal growth after World War II, in 1964 embracing 8,784,000 members, 36% of the national labor force. Here also the imprint of the past is visible. Although national federations of unions are growing, enterprise unionism is characteristic. The number of unions in 1964, exclusive of federations, was 48,000. The unions are thus characteristically small and we may assume that relations among
members are relatively personal. In the early postwar years, presidents or owners of companies sometimes became heads of their enterprise unions.

An additional category of common-interest associations important in Japan is customarily omitted in discussions of this subject. These are the organized subgroups—essentially auxiliaries—of religious sects, business concerns, schools, and other large commercial or non-commercial enterprises. The many expressive and instrumental auxiliaries of the new religious sects have already been discussed. Counterparts of these groups, principally expressive associations centered on pleasurable activities, are abundant also in business firms and other secular organizations.

Scholarly studies of the nature of common-interest associations in various societies of the world have expressed in common two principal ideas. One is that the associations tend to serve as functional equivalents of kinship and personalized ties under conditions that make social or economic relations based on these latter considerations inefficient, difficult, or impossible. The second idea outlines the conditions: a rich growth of common-interest associations is said to be a phenomenon commonly associated with urbanization under democratic political control. The first of these ideas seems appropriate in describing modern Japan. If we accept the view expressed earlier here that modern Japanese agriculture is one of the specializations of an urbanized, industrial nation, so also does the second. Common-interest associations may be seen to have a plasticity suiting them to the modern scene. As long as membership in them is voluntary, they may be formed, altered, and disbanded without disruption to the family or other kin groups, the community, or political units. Movement of individuals in and out of the associations is similarly non-disruptive to other kinds of established groupings of the society.

And now let us review briefly this discussion of social shifts, realignments, innovations, and displacements. The modern resident of Japan lives in an urban society, for even rural Japan has become urbanized and industrialized. His life is one that grows increasingly secular and impersonal, a life in which traditional social bonds have necessarily changed in varying degree. No change has taken place in the fundamental nature of the human beings concerned. The needs and wants innate to them as human beings and essential for their survival are being met in ways that may, from one viewpoint, be described as only somewhat different from those of the past. In the past, religion served important roles in aiding survival and fostering well-being. Some of these roles have become obsolete and no secular replacement has been necessary. Others, those that relate to fundamental human requirements, have found secular equivalents, and it is for this reason that I have described the new ways as only somewhat different.
From another viewpoint—from a view of the present state of the religions and religious organizations of Japan—the changes seem great indeed. But religion, even in its traditional forms, has not become entirely functionless or obsolete. It is very likely that the unevenness of cultural change among the various social and occupational classes is responsible in considerable part for the conservatism, the failure to adapt to “modern” conditions, that is generally characteristic of Japanese religions today. Despite the evident secularization of life, it is certain that much of the population finds useful and therefore desirable some part, from small to large, of the traditional religious beliefs and customs—a subject that will be given further consideration in the chapters that follow.
CHAPTER V
THE ROLES OF RELIGION

As the opening pages of this book have stated, anthropological consider-
eration of religion is at the same time a consideration of culture, the man-
made part of the universe, of which religion is an important component.
Culture is man’s mode of adaptation to the universe, his way of competing
with other living forms and ensuring the perpetuation of his species. As a
part of culture, religion is accordingly, in the biological sense, also an adap-
tive device that has had value for survival. Accordingly also the question
of the truth or falseness of specific religious dogmas is largely irrelevant to
the study of the roles which religion plays in human life. Ideas need not,
of course, represent practical or scientific reality to be significant and even
vital to human beings. Religious conceptions of supernatural beings, super-
natural power, and of supernaturalistic ways in which the universe operates
are regarded as unconscious projections of man himself and of his ex-
periences—his wishes, needs, hopes, doubts, fears, his capabilities and traits
of personality, and his relationships with the inanimate world about him.
These projected images of man and the world of his experience provide
an interpretation of the universe and thereby also suggest ways of dealing
with the problems of human existence.

Briefly restated, this view holds that religion is a creation of man, arising
from the experiences of daily life, which serves him in various ways. Gods,
demons, souls, myths, taboos, rites, and other religious conceptions and
acts represent a casting into comprehensible form of the problems that be-
set man’s existence. Once problems are so conceived, man may deal with
them in ways analogous with those of ordinary experience—ways that
have now become religious acts.

Religious beliefs and practices are thus seen as functional responses to
the conditions of life. The important “conditions of life” of human beings
that distinguish one society from another and make religions differ are
primarily cultural, the conscious and unconscious creations of man himself.
As these words imply, religion is not viewed as the fundament of cultural
or social life despite its frequent claims to this status. Its specific form and
content are seen as derivations of more fundamental elements of the cul-
tural system in which it is formulated, especially the manner of gaining a livelihood and the associated ways in which society is ordered, and it serves principally adjustive and supportive roles for the individual, the society, and the entire cultural system.

Anthropological attempts to explain religious similarities and differences among societies of the world have proceeded on the basis of an assumption that a fair degree of congruence or functional compatibility must exist among all important elements of cultural systems in order for those systems to remain viable. Serious functional incompatibility leads to adjustive change or to breakdown. These basic ideas of functional interrelationships are, of course, not unique to cultural anthropology. They are current in any physical or social science that makes use of the concept of systems and they need no additional elaboration.

Let us note that none of the foregoing statements intends to imply that cultural anthropology looks upon religion as being a wholly passive part of a cultural system, acted upon rather than acting, or as lacking importance. The emotional intensity of religious values makes them forceful and tenacious. History has repeatedly shown that, once established, religious beliefs and practices may exert great influence directly and indirectly upon technology, economics, social organization, and other parts of culture, spurring or inhibiting development and change. To understand social organization or economics, one must then also look to religion and its effects upon them. The role of religion in stimulating economic development has been the subject of considerable scholarly attention, and we shall later return to this topic, comparing the seeming circumstances in Japan with those applying in various Western nations.

In form, content, and function, the religions of Japan differ fundamentally in no way from religions elsewhere. If stated in general terms without reference to their comparative importance, the seeming functions of religion in Japan that relate to the individual and society are duplications of those applying in other societies of comparable size and cultural complexity. In Japan the individual has sought through religion—and doubtless often gained—hope, comfort, reassurance, and solace, thereby also fortifying the social groups and the entire society of which he is a part. Rituals performed at times of crisis—the normal crises in the human life cycle of birth, maturity, reproduction and death, and extraordinary misfortunes such as sickness and bodily injury—have also been functionally significant. Providing clearcut courses of action and promises or assurances of aid at the critical times, the rites have helped to ease human beings through these periods of stress and change and at the same time have alleviated the disruption in group relations that might be caused by the addition and loss of members and by changes in the statuses and behavior of members. Joint acts of re-
ligion, through the common ties of belief and social interaction they provide, have served to unite those who perform them. Moral values that are expressed in creed and rite are thereby taught, supported, or reinforced, and supernatural sanctions for moral rules have doubtless served similarly to help prevent social disorder and to promote social conformity. Religion in Japan has also been a primary source of recreation and entertainment and a major vehicle for the development of music, drama, art, and other forms of aesthetics.

Despite sharing these various roles with religions elsewhere, the Japanese religions are in certain ways markedly distinctive functionally. Distinctiveness lies in differences in the strength and importance of the individual roles, and these differences, in turn, relate importantly to social and cultural differences. If, for example, Japanese religions and Christianity are compared from the standpoint of their seeming moral import—a subject that will later be discussed in some detail—they are seen to differ remarkably.

As in other societies, human awareness in Japan of the functions of religion is limited principally to the stated goals of belief and act. To the ordinary citizen, the annual Shinto festivals at planting and harvest are events that honor supernatural beings, seek their continued benevolence, and offer assurance that agricultural enterprises will proceed successfully. The ordinary man may also see certain implicit or unintended effects of the festivals, such as their value as pleasurable entertainment. Other unintended consequences, such as the functional roles of the festivals in uniting the community and setting it apart from other communities, are not so obvious to him. But these have been the religious circumstances everywhere in the world. Only scholars of religion ordinarily impute to it functions or effects that go beyond its stated purposes or goals.

The shrinking scope of religion in Japan otherwise also mirrors circumstances elsewhere in the world. A century ago, religion was far more pervasive, one of the important techniques for assuring success and well-being in gaining a livelihood and in meeting crises of illness and other misfortunes. As elsewhere among modern nations of the world, the growth of scientific knowledge in Japan has greatly reduced reliance upon traditional acts of religion. Dependence upon religious beliefs and acts to solve problems of living remains strong only in those sectors of human experience where secular means of alleviation and control are undeveloped or are felt to be inadequate. As elsewhere in the world, the former role of Japanese religions in providing recreation and entertainment—an important role that is overlooked or slighted in most historical accounts of Japanese religions—has been largely taken over by secular agencies.

Part of the loss of vitality in Japan's religions is then due to circumstances of cultural change that are unexceptional elsewhere. Other specific
weakening circumstances are unique to Japan, reflecting the social order peculiar to the nation and the changes in that order brought about by modernization and industrialization.

Much of the strength of Buddhism and Shinto in the agrarian nation a century ago lay in their association with important features of Japanese social life of the time. The functional compartmentalization that placed the affairs of daily life in the realm of Shinto and made death and the hereafter the primary concerns of Buddhism had related the two religions most intimately to different social features.

Traditional Shrine Shinto was closely identified with the united small community. Common beliefs and joint rites centered about the tutelary spirit enshrined in the local shrine were functionally appropriate to communities in which unity was essential for survival, and these beliefs and acts were also congruent with the conditions of knowledge a century ago. The small communities have not since truly disappeared. Many, perhaps most, remain distinguishable today despite their incorporation into larger towns and cities, and they retain some degree of their old solidarity and exclusiveness. But community solidarity today is expressed more and more through identification with secular common-interest associations rather than through joint membership in the shrine community. The solidarity of the small community achieved by these secular groups is, moreover, increasingly threatened as industrialization progresses and its concomitants, such as specialization in labor and changes in the size, form, and functions of the family, reach into rural regions.

Much of the old solidarity came from joint activities, secular and religious, in connection with agriculture, and many of the most important rites of Shinto concerned agriculture. During the past century agriculture has shrunk enormously in economic importance, requiring for its successful pursuit an absolutely as well as relatively smaller part of the population. As a result of the expansion of scientific knowledge, the elements of chance in agriculture have been greatly reduced, and for this reason alone many of the traditional rites of Shinto have lost their old importance for rural people and become meaningless to urban residents. Solidarity of the small community came also from dependence for economic survival upon one's kin and neighbors, a dependence which industrialization and accompanying functional substitutes for kinship and personalized relations with non-kin have made less strong or unnecessary. In many communities of Japan today sheer scarcity of numbers of certain important categories of personnel that are normal components of any human society makes solidarity impossible to achieve or maintain. Young adults are particularly poorly represented in rural communities today. Most young males and females move to the cities. The employment in industry of male heads of families, who are the
key members of the community, also weakens community solidarity by re-
ducing the intensity of their participation in affairs of the small community.

In urban Japan, the conditions that favored Shrine Shinto a century
ago are even less effective than in rural Japan for reasons that go beyond
Shinto's traditional connection with agriculture. The services that shrines
and shrine ritual can perform have less significance for the urban resident,
who has readily available to him a larger number of modern secular dis-
placements of religion. No channels or procedures have been worked out for
embracing newcomers in urban shrine communities. The number of urban
shrines—in Tokyo, a total of about 700—is quite inadequate. Despite the
interval of State Shinto, when many of the nation's shrines were placed
under common control, and despite the existence of a modern federation
of shrines, no solidarity such as is implied by sectarianism ever existed
among the shrines. As autonomous bodies lacking close unity and central
authority, the nation's shrines cannot solve the problems of poor distribu-
tion of facilities brought on by urbanization.

For many years urban shrines have not in fact been shrine communities
with clearcut geographical boundaries. Although they may have some faith-
ful local parishioners, they are not community centers of religious or secular
activities. Shrines have customarily been erected and maintained by the
joint efforts of citizens or, in former times, were erected by lords or other
persons with wealth and power for the benefit of themselves and the people
under their authority. Lords vanished a century ago and, for the various
reasons we have discussed, people who feel moved to establish and main-
tain shrines no longer exist in the cities of Japan. The roles that are left to
the urban shrines are chiefly to serve as places of regular worship for the
faithful few, who are generally aged; places for casual and highly irregular
worship by other citizens; the occasional scene of festivals to mark events
of importance in the past, festivals that may attract many casual onlookers
but are essentially secular events. The shrine compound may also serve as
the home of a priest, who is absent much of the time performing traditional
rites to consecrate new buildings or other new construction. If the shrine is
large and favorably placed, it may operate a marriage hall, in competition
with hotels, department stores, and secular marriage halls.

The roles of the urban shrines today are thus only lingering remnants
of the past. For a small and dwindling number of people, the shrine is still
important. For most, it is a relic with no functional significance except as a
symbol of identity as Japanese. Its importance in this respect is hard to
gauge; few people appear to value shrines highly enough to give them
substantial financial support. The socially unifying roles the shrines once
performed have otherwise ended, and this has come about from the dis-
solution of the non-religious bonds that formed the secular community—which was at the same time a religious community.

Folk Shinto has undergone a similar course of change toward functional obsolescence in its traditional rites connected with the human life span. In all human societies, attention is given to the normal biological crises of life that are socially important. During most of man's recorded history, these crises of birth, the attainment of physical maturity, reproduction, and death, have been attended by religious rituals. Because they celebrate and dramatize changes in social status of the human beings involved, these rituals have aptly been called rites of passage.\(^2\) Birth or reproduction and death always have some social importance since they constitute changes in the composition of the social group as well as changes in status of the bereaved and of parents and other relatives of the newborn. The importance attached to the attainment of maturity varies greatly from society to society, and conceptions of adulthood in modern times often bear no close relationship to physical maturation.

The presence or absence and the degree of elaboration of the rites of passage may be seen as approximate reflections of the relative social importance of the events they celebrate. In societies where the transition to adulthood is a gradual or obscure process, for example, rites tend to be simple or absent. Where lasting marriages are not of crucial importance to the rearing of children and the preservation of social groups, as in some primitive societies that are socially and economically organized through ties of matrilineal kinship, wedding ceremonies tend to be token affairs. No strong sanction need be placed upon marriage, for even if unions should fall asunder, the organization of the society into matrilineal kin groups continues without disruption to provide social identification and economic support for the children and the mother, and adult male relatives of the mother continue to serve roles that in other societies are given to the biological father.

In traditional Japan, all of the biological crises of life were given attention, and all may be seen as having been socially important. Long before the end of the Tokugawa era, however, attention to birth, maturation, reproduction, and death had become curiously divided among the existing forms of religion or were secular events. Prayers might be made at Buddhist temples in connection with birth or other crises, but only death was a prime concern of Buddhism. Death was also an important concern of Shinto, a matter which most accounts of Japanese religions either slight or fail to consider. Buddhist rites concerned with death related to ancestral lineages and the hereafter, and were also rites of passage.\(^3\) Shinto death rites were preeminently rites of passage in the classic sense as described by the early twentieth-century scholar Arnold van Gennep,\(^4\) rites in which the stages of social separation,
transition, and reincorporation of the human beings directly concerned are sharply evident. As rites of passage, their psychological value in assuaging grief and directing the restoration of normal social relations may well have been greater than that of Buddhist funerals.

Shinto death observances were rites of the home in which the entire small community participated less intensely, proscriptions and prescriptions of behavior with manifest goals of preventing harm from the pollution inherent in death.3 In the lengthy course of these observances—thirty-three days appears to have been a common ritual period—the bereaved were isolated from other members of society, enjoined to refrain from various acts of normal behavior, and to perform certain acts in an uncommon way, such as ladling water with a motion of the hands that was the reverse of the normal. Many normal activities, such as agricultural work and fishing, were simply suspended for a time. By prescribed gradual steps, the bereaved resumed normal activities and partial contact with other persons. At the end of the period, isolation came to a complete end. By ritual acts that included final steps of purification, the bereaved were then returned to society as normally functioning members.

Similar home rites of Shinto were observed for the same manifest goals at childbirth; and infants were later formally introduced to the tutelary god, and to the society, by a formal visit to the community shrine. Coming of age was an important and festive event for young men and women, surrounded by Shinto ritualism in which the entire community participated. Observed at a fixed age, commonly 16 years, when young people were regarded as prepared for the responsibilities and privileges of adulthood, these rites officially announced and sanctioned the new status. The change in status at this time was also visibly marked by adoption of new adult names, new hairstyles, and other symbols of young adulthood.

Ceremonies attending marriage were, quite curiously, essentially secular events although characteristically elaborate. Extremely strong sanctions to ensure stable unions were social necessities in Japanese society of the time, and the secular sanctions provided were powerful. These customarily included months of negotiations involving intermediaries as well as the families of the bride and groom, the exchange of gifts, a bridal dowry of household furniture and equipment, a very elaborate wedding ceremony that included feasting and participation by the entire community, and, for wives, the powerful sanction of complete economic dependence upon her husband and his family. Perhaps simply because these secular sanctions were so strong, religious support was unnecessary.

Modern times have brought great changes in the circumstances surrounding the crises of life and in their ritual observances. The modern intellectual climate has made ideas of pollution obsolete, thereby discouraging
Shinto death rites and similar rites once observed at childbirth. Greater discouragement of Shinto death rites, which had been briefly but strongly encouraged by the government in early Meiji times, came with the governmentally sanctioned revival of Buddhist funerals about 1875. Shinto rites at coming of age have disappeared except in such vestigial form as simple ceremonies of induction into modern young people's associations of rural communities. Life in an industrial nation with demands of formal education and lengthy training to fit its citizens for modern occupations has generally made the age of social adulthood greater than in former times but also uncertain and variable according to occupation and social class. In modern Japan, as in Europe and the United States, the time that one becomes an adult is unclear.

Stable unions of marriage are probably no less important in modern Japan than in former times from the standpoint of the welfare of the offspring of the unions. Adults may remarry with less stigma than before, however, and modern economic and legal conditions have made it possible for wives to divorce their husbands. Conditions inimical to lasting unions of marriage seem, in fact, much greater than in former times, and Japan in this respect faces a social problem common to industrial nations. Legal and other secular sanctions for marriage retain power but, as we have earlier suggested, modern religious sanctions in the form of Shinto wedding ceremonies appear to be principally a fortuitous addition. The trend toward Shinto wedding rites is an innovation of the past century, common only in the past few decades, and fostered especially by the lack of adequate space and facilities in the home to conduct ceremonies regarded as appropriate. A Shinto wedding ceremony implies no future commitment to Shinto beliefs and practices. During recent decades, some Buddhist sects have also begun conducting wedding rites, but this development remains small.

Of the old rites of passage what remains today in the realm of religion is only a small and shrinking part of a formerly rich and socially significant complex of beliefs and acts. All of the crises of life except maturation, which is no longer clearly identifiable, continue to receive social attention but this attention is primarily secular. Death is still customarily attended by Buddhist rites, but it is clear that the diminished importance of ancestors is reflected in modern ceremonies. It is uncertain what, if any, secular substitutes exist for the old Shinto rites of passage.

Buddhism has been similarly but less strongly affected by changes in the small community. Since Buddhist temples are less bound by locality than Shinto shrines, their parishioners were not always members of a single, small residential community and they were correspondingly less closely united. Some more or less unified parish groups existed, but these appear never to have had the solidarity possessed by Shinto shrine com-
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Communities in their dual roles as secular and religious communities. Like Shinto shrines, Buddhist temples have failed to establish channels for absorbing rural residents migrating to the cities. This default is not simply or solely lack of foresight on the part of Buddhist sects. No noticeable pressure is exerted by citizens to establish such channels. Such efforts along these lines as are made by the established sects of Buddhism come chiefly from priests mindful of vested interests. The growing alienation from Buddhism on the part of the general population may be traced in important part to another social change, the transformation of the form and the function of the family, the sector of Japanese social life with which Buddhism was most intimately associated.

The traditional manner of ordering society with its emphases upon family unity, descent through patrilineal lines, and customs of primogeniture may be described as successful under the economic and political conditions of Tokugawa and early Meiji times. Success depended considerably upon the rationales used to support and reinforce the social order. Among these were the idealization of filial piety, loyalty to superiors, and other Confucian values connected with interpersonal relations, including the Japanese adaptation of these values in Bushidō, the code of honor of the samurai. Buddhist roles in connection with death and ancestors gave important complementary support that was accorded special force by its atmosphere of supernaturalism. The immobile social classes and rules of descent and inheritance of the time made lines of descent of the utmost importance, thereby incorporating deceased ancestors into the living social organization. Funerals, later commemorative rites, and fixed annual rites of Buddhism that honor ancestors were preeminently familial rites serving to promote familial solidarity which, in turn, was vital to the maintenance of the individual as well as important in reinforcing the social status quo.

Under modern conditions of social life in which ancestors have lost much of their former importance, the contemptuous references one hears to Buddhism as being a “funeral religion” become comprehensible.

Among the many adverse social circumstances that Buddhism and Shinto in their traditional forms have faced, the most threatening are the transformation of the family and the small community. These changes, augmented by the secularization of life accompanying the growth of scientific knowledge, have made the traditional beliefs and practices largely irrelevant to the modern scene. Added to the major difficulties is a host of grave but less fundamental problems, some of which may be seen as corollaries of the main issues. Among these are the demographic changes that have made established religious facilities mechanically inadequate and a complex of problems that make it difficult to attract suitable professional personnel. Given wealth, solution might be possible of problems brought by social
change such as the inadequate number and poor spatial distribution of religious edifices in the rapidly urbanizing nation and the inadequacy of professional personnel. No action, however heroic, on the part of the religious leaders and followers can return the family and the community to their old forms or erase modern secular interpretations of the universe that have displaced supernaturalistic counterparts.

No prospect is in sight of a diminution of the factors that have weakened Buddhism and Shinto, and it seems obvious that the survival of these religions depends upon their ability to change. Although priests of both religions commonly claim eternal relevancy for their dogmas, it is clear that changes have already come about. How much change may have occurred in the dogmas of the established sects of Buddhism in the past century is uncertain. Buddhist religious leaders characteristically hold that they remain theologically unchanged, but it is probably safe to assume that subtle changes, seen clearly only in retrospect, have already taken place in the dogmas of even the most conservative sects. Nationalism has, of course, disappeared from Shinto and Buddhism and a less intense tendency toward internationalism has been added. Both appear to be appendages, never fully incorporated in the religions or truly integral to them. Very substantial evidence of change is afforded, however, by the large number of Shinto and Buddhist sects formed during the past century which, although similar to the old in dogma, differ markedly from the established sects in their social organization.

The trend of most of the nation during the past century has been toward increasing alienation from any form of religion. For the sectors of the population from which adherents of the new sects are drawn, membership in these organizations is socially as well as ideologically appropriate. For the large majority of the population, the roles once performed by religion have been taken over by other agencies which are ideologically and practically better suited to modern conditions. Intellectually, both the new and the old religions are unacceptable to most of the nation today. New secular interpretations are available and have been accepted. Although strong dependence upon other human beings continues to be characteristic of all social strata of Japan, the old roles of religion in this connection have ceased to be appropriate for the majority. Emotional needs for warm human relationships are met for most of the nation by secular means which involve no intellectual compromise such as might be demanded of most citizens by membership in one of the new sects and commitment to its teachings. The family, in its reduced and perhaps thereby increasingly intimate form, continues to be the pivot of emotional life. Numerous opportunities are available to most of the nation to gain satisfying identification with common-interest associations and with informal groups of equals.
For the great middle classes of Japan, whose livelihood is gained in the professions and by salaried employment in industry and commerce, affective needs appear to be relatively well met. The "salary man" is firmly identified with the concern which employs him. As we have earlier mentioned in passing, in this respect industrial concerns of Japan show a curious resemblance to religious sects. Lifetime employment is characteristic and this alone may be seen as fostering close identification with one's employer. Recent investigations among salaried employees of business firms reveal other customs and practices that appear to be secular equivalents of practices of indoctrination and conversion followed by religious sects, particularly the large, new sects. The new graduate of college or technical school, characteristically as yet unmarried, is required to live for a time in a company dormitory in association with other single employees, most of whom are his peers. He undergoes a course of training for the work he is to perform which at the same time embeds him psychologically in the group. He is taught that loyalty to the firm is a primary requirement and that such loyalty prohibits selfish competition for personal advancement. This teaching may be fortified by a rationale holding that the goals of the firm are humanitarian rather than merely to turn a profit. Social binders are abundantly provided. The new employee is taught that his role even in a position of authority must always be cooperative; he is given ample guidance by persons with whom he becomes affectively tied; and he is further incorporated by periodic joint meetings at work and by membership in auxiliary associations, formal and informal, for sports and other forms of recreation. Symbols of identification may extend to company mottoes and company songs. Although practices such as we have described are not uniform among the Japanese firms investigated, ample opportunities are characteristically provided for thorough incorporation into the group in an atmosphere that has strong tones of paternalism and also promotes the idea of solidarity in association with equals as well as superiors. It is not surprising that some employees subjectively describe the processes of becoming identified with their companies in terms that resemble religious conversion. Like the large, new religious sects, these successful commercial firms skillfully balance the interests of the individual and of the total organization, and much of their success in doing so rests upon a suitable balancing and enmeshing of vertical and horizontal lines of organization. It does not overstate the circumstances to say that the normal economic and emotional wants and needs of many Japanese men of middle class are satisfied through their families and the organizations which employ them. Accordingly, it is no overstatement to hold that many modern business firms of the nation serve in some part as functional substitutes for traditional groupings of kin and also for religion.
It is the middle and upper ranks of employment in industrial firms that are the principal subjects of programs of training and indoctrination. The industrial proletariat of the cities of Japan are affectively less well provided for by their employment, less secure financially, less well educated, and are accordingly in various ways more traditional in their outlook. It is to this group and to this group only that affiliation with most of the traditional religions, in the form of the established or the new religious sects, is appropriate and appealing. For those hardest beset by problems of finding suitable group identification and of satisfying other emotional needs, the large, new sects are the most appropriate. If the established religious sects of Japan are looked upon as the mainstems of religion in the nation—and this is surely the prevailing view among the citizenry—religion in modern Japan may then be said to serve only partly and poorly its roles of the past.
CHAPTER VI
MANNERS, MORALS, AND SOCIAL SANCTIONS

Western conceptions of religion commonly see morality as its most important element, and accordingly often define religion as a moral code. The loss of religion then implies the disruption or even collapse of society through loss of morality. However appropriate a definition of religion in terms of morality might be as applied to the related religions of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, it applies only poorly to many others. If the circumstances in all historically known societies of the world, primitive and civilized, are examined, it becomes clear that no inherent link exists between morality and religion. Some relationship and interdependence is characteristic, but in many societies religion touches upon morality only very lightly and cannot be described as a moral force.

Moral codes exist in every society, as they must in order for the societies to survive. Although the rules of behavior may be regarded by the members of a society as divinely bestowed, from the viewpoint of the social sciences they are derived from the circumstances of social life and for this reason differ from society to society. In all societies the rules are fundamentally alike, defining privileges and obligations and prescribing courses of social action for individuals in their relations to other individuals and to society as a whole, for the various classes or recognized segments of the society in their relations to the other segments and the whole, and the society as a whole in its relationship to other societies. Formulated at best only semiconsciously, the rules are often multihued, being not only rules of conduct but also cherished ideals that are looked upon as "natural" and immutable. As ideals, the rules tend to become ends in themselves, so that mere conformity with them becomes the goal of behavior. Sanctions that uphold these rules are also fundamentally alike in all human societies—ridicule, avoidance, ostracism, physical punishment, loss and gain of prestige, legal sanctions, praise and material rewards, and supernatural rewards and punishments. These sanctions are internalized in varying degree as values so that they need not be imposed by other members of society or supernatural beings but may function as part of the conscience. As with the more fundamental rules of behavior that they support,
in every society the sanctions form a complex that is distinctive because of differences in the emphasis given to the various individual sanctions involved. Any given kind of sanction—for example, the supernatural—may be strongly or weakly emphasized or even lacking for a particular violation of rules. Characteristically, however, multiple sanctions if not always the whole range are imposed for the violation of rules of behavior truly important to the maintenance of the social order. No sanction for behavior known to the Western world is wholly absent from Japanese culture, for example, but the weightings given to the two sets of sanctions do indeed differ, and differ as well in each country according to sub-culture or social class. The results are then sets of norms in Japan that, in the composite whole, may strike us as being remarkably different.

In the Western world we have given the name morals or ethics to certain rules and codes of behavior and we have called others manners or etiquette. As the anthropologist Leslie A. White has observed, the subject of etiquette has received almost no attention from the social sciences. In Japanese culture, where the border between etiquette and morality appears to be unclear, this subject seems eminently worth investigating. White makes a sharp distinction between etiquette and morality, stating:1

Among the parts of which every social system consists are... classes. A class, as we have defined the term, is one of an indefinite number of parts of a social whole, each of which differs from the others in composition and functions. Men, women, adults, children, married, widowed, divorced, etc., are thus classes. As we have just noted above, each class must maintain its own integrity, and each one must be articulated with the others if the social system as a whole is to function harmoniously and effectively. The means of accomplishing this is a code of rules that we call etiquette. A code of etiquette defines each class in terms of behavior and obliges each individual to conform to the code proper to his class. In this way the identity of each class is established and its integrity maintained. Furthermore, the behavior of an individual member of a class, as prescribed by the code of etiquette, serves not only to identify him with his own class but to prescribe the proper form of social intercourse with individuals in other classes. Thus a code of etiquette not only operates to preserve the identity and integrity of each class, but serves to relate classes to one another in an efficient manner. But if social classes are to be defined and made distinct and kept intact by obliging each individual to identify himself with his class, then some external signs are necessary. It is the business of systems of etiquette to provide these signs. All orderly social life, and indeed order in any kind of system, depends... upon regularity in the occurrence of events. Regularity and repetition mean continuity and the possibility of making realistic anticipations and predictions without which orderly social intercourse is impossible.

White states that a breach of etiquette must be observed by others in order to be effectively a breach, but a moral failing may bring severe penalty while remaining unknown to anyone except the person who has broken the rules.2 The penalties implied here are guilt and fear of the
imposition of supernatural sanctions. Characteristically, the Westerner looks upon violations of rules of etiquette as much less grave than moral offenses, a view that is congruent with traditional Christianity and its intimate association with morality. Etiquette has not been a concern of Christian dogma. It would be a mistake, however, to think that the sanctions for breaches of etiquette are necessarily less severe than for breaches of moral rules.

It is also an error to think that rules of etiquette, as defined by White, may not become internalized. We shall step aside from the civilizations of the world to take an example from primitive society. Hawaii and other aboriginal societies of Polynesia had elaborate rules of etiquette that were supernaturally sanctioned by taboos. Rather than bringing down the wrath of supernatural beings, violations of the rules brought automatic and impersonal supernatural punishment. The violator died or became ill because of the dangerous power inherent in acts that were improper or taboo. Important among the taboos were numerous rules concerning privileges and the consumption of goods that followed lines of social class and may properly be called sumptuary laws. In Hawaii, for example, a certain species of fish was reserved exclusively for members of royalty; only males could eat bananas; and men and women were forbidden to eat together. The most stringent taboos applied to the behavior of commoners with respect to rulers, and these may be called rules of etiquette. The kings of Hawaii and Tonga were thought to be highly charged with supernatural power dangerous to people of lower social position. Any violation on the part of commoners of the rules of social intercourse with the rulers was held to bring to them serious illness or death through communication of the dangerous power that emanated from those of royal birth. Once aware of his misdeed, the commoner who unwittingly walked where the ruler's feet had trod or where his shadow fell was stricken through a kind of internalization that has been called magical fright. Similar ideas, as we have noted, once existed in Japan, although they had lost their forcefulness long before the time of our concern. It is not difficult, however, to see that Japanese ideas of recent times concerning loyalty and filial piety—rules of behavior that White would call etiquette—might easily become internalized in a way that closely resembles the Western idea of conscience.

According to White's ideas, rules of etiquette come into existence as social classes of various kinds, hierarchical and non-hierarchical, come into existence and the rules define the behavior appropriate for one individual with reference to another individual from the standpoint of their affiliations with these social categories. Following this reasoning, we should expect to find very little development of codes of etiquette among the simple primitive societies of the world, societies that lack stratified social
classes, have only the simplest division of labor according to considerations of sex and age, and are essentially democratic. We should expect to find elaborate development of rules of etiquette among large, culturally advanced societies with many occupational categories and associated social classes. These seem in fact to be the circumstances, but the distinction between etiquette and morality is sometimes far from clear.

Among small, primitive societies, explicit rules of behavior appear to merge indistinguishably and sanction in identical fashion behavior that the modern European or American would separate into the two categories of morals and etiquette. All human societies have recognized if informal social categories based upon considerations of sex and age. Moreover, all societies of mankind have family organization of one kind or another, and primitive societies characteristically have still other groupings of kin. But in primitive society, socially discrete categories of people are nevertheless few, so few that they do not encourage or stimulate the formation of concepts of etiquette and morality as distinct from one another. There seem instead to be generalized conceptions of “proper” and “improper” that include specific applications for social intercourse among such classes of one’s fellows as are seen to exist. Such rules as are explicitly taught appear to be limited to those striking the consciousness as requiring emphasis. Rather than being merely a statement of the obvious, the preceding sentence refers to various rules of social behavior in any society that are often far from obvious.

But let us illustrate. We are told of the Luiseño Indians of California in aboriginal times:

On the purely ethical side, one trait stands out which is also a general American (Indian) rather than tribal characteristic. There is no provision against theft, assault, rape, witchcraft, or murder, nor any mention of them. Such violent extremes are too obvious for condemnation, as incest was to the ancient Aryans.... The Indian, beyond taboos and cult observances, centers his attention on the trivial but unremitting factors of personal intercourse: affability, liberality, restraint of anger and jealousy, politeness. He... sets up an open, even, unruffled, slow, and pleasant existence as his ideal. He preaches a code of manners rather than morals. He thinks of character, of its expression in the innumerable but little relations of daily life, not as right or wrong in our sense. It is significant that these words do not exist in his language.

It seems reasonable to think that the traits of affability, liberality, restraint of anger and jealousy, and politeness are important to any society. These traits are especially valuable in small societies, where people live in constant face-to-face contact, are intimately united in diverse ways through recognized ties of kinship, and must for survival depend strongly upon the good will and cooperation of their fellows. Rules prohibiting theft, assault, rape, witchcraft, and murder are also of paramount importance for social
well-being and continuity in these societies, and they exist in fact but seem to need no explicit teaching.

Similar rules of behavior, hidden from view because they are too obvious for condemnation or involve behavior that is too base to imagine, exist in all societies and we are now and then given a glimpse of them. We are told that at the height of the Mau Mau activities among the Kikuyu tribesmen of Kenya in the early 1950’s members were required as a part of their oaths of membership to perform acts so horrible and degrading that they were not taken into account in drawing up Kikuyu law. Those who performed the acts were thus rendered irredeemably polluted pariahs who could no longer be members of normal society. The acts of terrorism demanded of them later as members were by contrast mild.4 Among the great industrialized nations of the world, there are said to be no laws specifically prohibiting cannibalism, and the mere thought of enacting legislation of this kind seems absurd.

Much of the foregoing is to say that along with norms of behavior that are the focus of explicit, sustained teaching are other standards important to the well-being of the total society that do not require this kind of teaching. The values in question are, of course, transmitted. They are passed on from the elders to the young in numerous ways, often indirect, subtle, and unspoken, and become quickly and thoroughly ingrained so that there is no need to give them explicit statement or reinforcement. These values—they are hardly rules since they seldom rise to the level of consciousness—may concern matters of the most vital social importance, as with theft, assault, rape, and murder among the Luiseño Indians. For our purposes here, let us call such norms implicit rules of propriety. We may think of all rules of propriety as constituting a polar continuum with the wholly implicit rules forming one pole and the highly explicit, consciously taught, and reiterated rules forming the other. Many but not all important matters of morality tend to be implicit; rules of etiquette, as procedural rules of behavior in social interaction, must be explicitly taught. The relative importance of rules of etiquette and morality, of implicit and explicit rules, varies from society to society. Given changes in culture, the rules change their positions with respect to the polar extremes, lose or gain importance, become displaced by new rules, or disappear. Circumstances that foster explicit, pointed attention to rules of behavior are a high incidence of infractions of rules or the seeming danger of infraction. Although the rules regarded as the most important tend to receive the greatest attention, the importance accorded to rules is not a matter of objective judgment. Human beings hardly weigh such matters in an objective manner. What assumes importance is that which has both apparent important bearing on social relations and is in apparent danger of infraction.
If these ideas are applied to Japanese culture, it is not possible to say a great deal about implicit rules of propriety. It is possible, however, to discuss rules that are explicit and consciously taught, since many of these are a matter of record. It is possible also to point to trends of change in emphasis, and to relate the trends to changes in the social and economic spheres.

Since the end of the nineteenth century, Western observers of Japanese society have found its moral standards puzzling, and they have sometimes stated that the Japanese lack morals. With greater perception, they have occasionally described traditional Japanese society as being governed by rules of etiquette rather than morality. The Japanese language contains many words, however, that are customarily translated as “morals” or “ethics,” and other words translated as “etiquette” or “manners.” Examples of the first group are dōtoku, dōgi, tokkō, shūshin, and rinri; of the second, reishiki, reihō, reigi sahō, and the English-derived echiketto. What the modern Japanese regard as etiquette or manners are matters of form, procedural rules for social interaction, that equate fairly well with Western conceptions of etiquette. The compass of Japanese words translated as “morality” or “ethics” is, however, much harder to discern, and the boundary between etiquette and morality has in the past not always been distinct.

Japanese concepts of ethical behavior have sometimes shocked Westerners. Americans characteristically regarded the surprise attack upon Pearl Harbor by the Japanese in 1941 as a heinous violation of ethics; for the Japanese, the attack was a matter of military strategy that concerned people outside the boundaries of their own society and therefore had no ethical import. The Western businessman engaging in commercial relations with Japanese firms has often expressed horror and dismay at the “unethical” practices of their Japanese associates. Japanese firms dealing with one another have also often been similarly “unethical.” The Westerner who has long heard of the exquisite refinements of courtesy in Japan is surprised at the lack of consideration of others he sees on display in city streets, in restaurants, subways, and trains, where people jostle and push ahead of one another, and generally conduct themselves on the principle of every man for himself.

The Westerner may also be puzzled by the terms “public morality,” “social morality,” and “transportation morality,” that often appear in the various English-language newspapers in Japan. These are literal translations of the Japanese terms kōshū dōtoku, shakai dōtoku, and kōtsū dōtoku, which appear with at least equal frequency in the vernacular newspapers. The Westerner examining the teachings of the traditional religions of Japan may be impressed by the lack of sharply defined, embracive
moral codes. He cannot fail to be impressed by the modern clamor in newspapers, magazines, and the whole of the mass media of communication for moral improvement of the citizenry in general. Specific issues that receive much public attention are programs of instruction in morality for the young in the nation's public schools and the allegedly low standards of public, social, and transportation morality.

This current of opinion holding that the moral standards of the nation have seriously deteriorated undoubtedly has historical roots of some depth, but it seems to have assumed the position of a major national problem thoroughly familiar to all only after World War II. Today even Buddhist and Shinto theologians and church leaders are willing to state that their religions are deficient in moral teachings, a matter which seems not to have struck their consciousness before World War II. It is obvious that Japanese views of the proper and improper not only differ from those of the West, but also that these views are changing. The questions at issue for us are the nature of the major differences, the cultural circumstances that have fostered the Japanese codes of behavior, the sanctions supporting the codes, the place that religion holds as a sanctioning force, and trends of change in these matters.

The long span and relative cultural and social stability of the Tokugawa era provided ideal social circumstances and ample time for the luxuriant growth of rules of behavior governing relations among social classes. The Tokugawa rulers were unremittingly vigilant in maintaining social boundaries. Rules of behavior given the greatest emphasis were those we have defined as etiquette, and these were also important as insignia of social class. Formalized rules of behavior existed for every social situation that was ordinarily foreseeable. Perhaps no other language of the world provides such an abundance of words and grammatical features that indicate social distinctions and have important social significance. The Japanese language of a century ago is said to have included fifteen pronouns denoting the first person, from which selection was made according to the social contexts of the speaker and the person addressed. Since pronouns in the Japanese language are bound forms that are not modified in accordance with position or function in utterances and the language lacks case, this number seems phenomenally high. Describing circumstances at the end of the nineteenth century, Lafcadio Hearn states: "...there are eight different forms of the second person singular used only in addressing children, pupils, or servants. Honorific or humble forms of nouns indicating relationship were similarly multiplied and graded. There are still in use nine terms signifying 'father,' eleven terms for 'wife,' eleven terms for 'son,' nine terms for 'daughter,' and seven terms for 'husband.' The rules of the verb, above all, are complicated by the exigencies of etiquette to
The Tokugawa era also provided excellent circumstances for the explicit formulation of concepts to serve as rationales for the rules of social intercourse. What was of paramount importance for maintaining peace and order and ensuring continuity of the society in its stratified form were not only the rules defining privilege and obligation but devices for making the social order seem proper and desirable, values that would be regarded as goals in themselves rather than social means. Loyalty and unquestioning obedience to superiors were vitally important as was faithful meeting of obligations to inferiors. Among the samurai retainers of the feudal lords, ideal behavior was conceptualized and formalized in the code of Bushidō. Among commoners, similar Confucian concepts of ethics held force. The codes of ideal interpersonal relations were verbalized and given names which carry elaborate and distinctive trains of connotations and find no precise counterparts in Western thought. Among these are on, giri, and gimu, all of which embody different shades of meaning of the ideas of indebtedness or obligation.

Ruth Benedict’s discussion of these concepts in The Chrysanthemum and the Sword remains today as the most substantial and perceptive writing on the subject. Her work evoked intense interest among Japanese scholars and became the target of much criticism. The nature of the major trends of criticism is interesting and revealing. They seem on the whole to convey no serious charge of a lack of perception but instead complain that her account is outmoded, describing upper-class ideals of behavior of a time gone by.

Benedict’s writing inspired empirical investigations, conducted soon after World War II, of attitudes held by the general citizenry toward the values implied by terms such as on and giri. These studies indicated that Benedict’s account was far from accurate, that the feelings of gratitude for favors received, and compulsions toward loyalty, obedience, and reciprocity were considerably less intense than her interpretation indicated. Attitude surveys have since become a seemingly permanent addition to Japanese life, and these have repeatedly shown a continued weakening of the values in question, which are commonly labeled today as “feudal” values.

Benedict’s book was published in 1946 but the data used in its preparation were collected in the United States during the war from a small number of Japanese informants. It is not surprising, therefore, that her interpretations might reflect Japanese ideals of former times, the opinions and attitudes of Japanese who consciously or unconsciously wished to describe Japanese culture as favorably as possible. Her informants spoke of ideal standards of behavior, as they understood the ideals. But these were people who had been removed from the current of Japanese culture some years earlier, and who certainly did not represent postwar Japan. The tendency among colonists or emigrants from any nation to preserve their native customs as they existed at
the time of their departure has often been noted. I recall the distress expressed by a Japanese woman who in the mid-1950's accompanied her husband, a professor at Tokyo University, to Lima, Peru, where they lived for some months among the Japanese of Lima. She described life as trying because her associates “lived in the Taishō era” (1912-25).

The admirable person of late Tokugawa and Meiji times, and well into the twentieth century, did not depart far from the ideals depicted by Benedict. To be sure, there must have been variation according to social class, but this is a subject about which little can be said. As in other societies the innovators of primary importance in Japan have been the socially elect, and until recent times what became a matter of record was primarily the culture of the elect, who were themselves the recorders. The proper man of the nineteenth century knew his own place in society, knew the places of others, and carefully protected social borders by knowing thoroughly and following punctiliously the numerous rules governing behavior among the classes.

An examination of the curricula of the nation’s schools from Tokugawa to modern times is informative regarding explicit teaching of rules of propriety. At the end of the Tokugawa era a substantial part of the commoners, perhaps as many as one-half, had received three or four years of instruction during childhood at temple schools and a smaller number of private schools. Samurai were all customarily educated in separate fief schools. Commoners were taught reading, writing, arithmetic, and at least some smattering of Confucian ethics. The curricula of the fief schools for samurai are better known, and these emphasized Confucian ethics.

In discussing the question of how the idea of promoting men according to their individual talents might have grown in Tokugawa times, Ronald P. Dore observes that this system of formal education, which developed during the Tokugawa period, presented delicate problems of maintaining the sharp divisions of status within the samurai class. He states, “Systems of formal education have the drawback that they are apt to draw attention to the fact that human beings differ widely in their possession of intelligence, judgment, memory and other abilities which are valued in society. Conflict can easily arise when it is realized that the distribution of these abilities does not necessarily correspond with the distribution of rewards—of income, power and prestige.”

Differences of ability were reconciled with the differences in social status in various indirect and subtle ways. Although selection on the basis of ability was not entirely absent, it was accomplished by devices that preserved hierarchical distinctions among the classes of samurai. Routines of work had become thoroughly established, however, and demanded little initiative. Thus authority, to which the individual was born and bred, was more important than skill or intelligence for the maintenance of the society of the time.
The principal emphasis of education in the fief schools was upon what Dore calls ethics:12

The purely intellectual accomplishment of learning to read Chinese was merely a means to an ethical end. A dull pupil who had difficulty with his books but who nevertheless was virtuous in his conduct, respectful to his superiors, loyal to his lord, and filial to his parents had acquired the essentials. And these were the qualities that were held up to praise. Mere cleverness was disapproved. Regularity of attendance was the clearest objective mark of right moral attitudes... some schools went out of their way to emphasize that rank was all-important and this was the easier in that rei—one of the cardinal virtues to be inculcated—was interpreted to mean the meticulous observance of status distinctions. There was no question of education being a selective process designed first to discover intellectual ability and then train it. It was, rather a means of imparting the degree of moral and intellectual training necessary to all samurai by virtue of their general duty to protect and govern society.

Dore's study also points to trends of change during the Tokugawa era toward increasing recognition of ability after Western knowledge began to seep into the country and direct contact with the Western world seemed imminent.

The century that has passed since the end of the Tokugawa era is not a very long span of time. Most of the modern leaders of industry and finance in Japan are temporally not far removed from Tokugawa culture and many undoubtedly were directly exposed to it through their grandparents, who were young adults during the last two decades of the reign of the Tokugawa rulers. The values of which Dore and Benedict write are thus not complete strangers to modern Japan, especially among the aged. Governmentally sponsored attempts before and during World War II to control and mold the thinking of the nation were attempts to revive or maintain some of the old rules and values relating to the social hierarchy. Talent was of course essential, but control of the nation was sought through teachings and legal statutes that emphasized loyalty and obedience to superiors, and especially to the emperor, the symbol of national unity. Perhaps the military defeat of Japan lies in part in just this circumstance, the forced imposition by a minority of military leaders of social forms that were in some measure obsolete within Japan and certainly obsolete for use in Japan's relations with the modern world outside it. The value system imposed upon the Japanese population by its military rulers during this time could not possibly have been applied to the Western world.

Let us look again at teachings of the schools, this time the public school system of Japan of the Meiji era and the years that Japan prepared for and conducted the campaign of territorial expansion that culminated in World War II. Meiji statesmen and educators seem at first to have been quite as perplexed as modern Japanese leaders by the problem of how best to conduct moral teachings under the changing cultural conditions, and what to teach.
For a time translations of French morality readers were used, but the Japanese textbooks afterwards became distinctive in combining Japanized versions of Confucian doctrine with selected Western writings. According to a modern Japanese scholar, morality (shūshin) and law were at first sometimes regarded as synonymous and, until 1900, no established policies existed on methods of teaching morality or on contents of textbooks. Confucian doctrines dominated, however, and these emerge clearly in the Imperial Rescript on Education, proclaimed by Emperor Meiji in 1890, which contains a description of the virtuous citizen:

Ye, our subjects, be filial to your parents, affectionate to your brothers and sisters; as husbands and wives be harmonious, as friends true; bear yourselves in modesty and moderation; extend your benevolence to all; pursue learning and cultivate arts and thereby develop intellectual faculties and perfect moral powers; furthermore, advance public good and promote common interests; always respect the constitution and observe the laws; should emergency arise, offer yourselves courageously to the State; and thus guard and maintain the prosperity of Our Imperial Throne co-eval with heaven and earth. So shall ye not only be our good and faithful subjects, but render illustrious the best traditions of your forefathers. The Way here set forth is indeed the teaching bequeathed by Our Imperial Ancestors, to be observed alike by their Descendants and their subjects, infallible for all ages and true in all places. It is our wish to lay it to heart in all reverence, in common with you, our subjects, that we may all attain to the same virtue.

Public school teachings of proper behavior that were conducted during the twentieth century until the end of World War II seem little different in many important respects from those described by Dore for the samurai of Tokugawa times. The name given to the elementary school teachings, shūshin, customarily translated as “morals” or “ethics,” is also a continuation from Meiji times. Filial piety, loyalty, industry, and perseverance were stressed. As the militarists came into control of the nation in the 1930’s, these teachings were molded into intense nationalism with blind loyalty to superiors and, especially, veneration of the emperor receiving heaviest emphasis. If the idea is sound that what must be insistently taught in deportment is that which is important and in danger of infraction, these values were then constantly threatened. Direct reference to distinctions of social class is absent from these teachings, but superiority of status, whether hereditary or not, was to be given utmost respect.

At the end of World War II, under the American military occupation, shūshin was removed from public school curricula because of its strong emphasis on nationalism, and for a period of over ten years no formally organized courses in morality were conducted in the public schools. Postwar problems of rising crime rates, juvenile delinquency and, as judged by prewar standards, laxity of sexual behavior soon led to a public cry for moral education. Educators, politicians, religious leaders, and prominent
citizens in many walks of life spearheaded this trend in the public press and other mass media of communication. As early as 1946, the president of Tokyo University stated in a graduation address that a crying need of the nation was improved morality.

Response to this pressure followed historical precedent by offering training in morality as secular rather than religious instruction. The Ministry of Education approved for the public school system various series of textbooks and readers designed for use in courses of moral education. Use of these books for the nine grades of compulsory schooling began in 1958 on a voluntary basis; that is, schools were not obliged to give the courses or to use the books. In some parts of the nation the schoolteachers’ union opposed use of the books on the grounds that they smacked of nationalism, but most of the public schools presently offer the training. The contents of the books currently in use do not give a systematic picture of ideal moral standards, but they are informative in other ways. One of these is that their contents reveal by their lack of any systematic scheme the confusion of the compilers as to what might constitute appropriate moral precepts. The books may be described as a disorganized collection of moralistic essays and tales, sometimes highly sentimental.

One of the sets of readers commonly used in the first six grades of public school bears the title “Bright Heart and Life” (Akar-ui Kokoro to Seikatsu). Books of this series for junior high school (seventh to ninth grades) are entitled “Middle School Morality” (Chūgakkō Dōjoku). (The term shūshin finds no modern use in textbooks or courses on morality because of its connotations of nationalism.) A review of the contents of these two sets of morality readers for the first nine grades of school shows both continuity and change. The books contain no overt nationalism, although many writings seem to aim in part at giving a feeling of national identity. The Japanese are sometimes depicted as inferior to people of other nations in such matters as littering public places and in consideration for others. Writings that point up hierarchical differences of social class and define obligations and privileges according to class affiliation are quite absent. The student is still enjoined to meet expectations—as seems reasonable in writings intended to instill rules of moral behavior—but these expectations give little hint of hierarchical social distinctions.

A summary of the contents of the seventh-grade reader will serve as an example. Students are enjoined to be on time, orderly, study diligently, achieve, persevere through difficulties, value money and not squander it, obey the rules of sportsmanship, avoid over-indulgence in pleasures such as television viewing, use “good” (kirei) speech, and, repeatedly, to be considerate of and maintain good relations with others—family members, fellow students, friends, and all other members of society.
A chapter written in the first person and entitled “New Friends” describes the characters of schoolboys. One of these is Yamada, whose father is dead and whose mother works to earn a living for her family. Yamada is always cheerful although he must arise early in the morning to deliver newspapers. He is never forward, but he expresses his opinions well at student meetings. Matsui, another paragon, is never angry and always smiles. He goes to school early to clean the mathematics room, and he is very considerate of his schoolmates. Whenever others are ill, he worries about them and does things for them. Nakai, a third boy, is the best student in the class and knows everything the teachers have ever taught even though he studies only two hours daily. He helps other students constantly, is an excellent teacher, and other students in the class are beginning to emulate him. Nishimura, the fourth example of schoolboy virtue, takes the blame for a fellow student, Higashino, who has broken a flower vase in the classroom. Higashino then admits that he is responsible; and Nishimura is praised by the teacher. Nishimura’s motive in taking the blame is described as a wish to help Higashino, who has a “weak spirit.” With such an example before him, the textbook observes, Higashino’s character will likely improve. The remaining tale in this chapter describes two unfriendly boys who are selected by their teachers as teammates in a three-legged race. Because they are on poor terms with one another, they lose the race. Realizing this, they become friends and win the next race.

A chapter entitled “The Well-ordered Society” gives rules of “public morality”: treat all others with courtesy, and do not litter public places, occupy more than one seat in trains or buses, throw hats onto theater seats from a distance to claim them, or push others out of the way to get seats.

“The Fine Person” (Rippa na Hito), as described in another chapter, is one who constantly tries to improve himself. He does so for the benefit of others, and thus he benefits himself. He does his work faithfully and without bringing offense to others. He is always considerate of others but not so fearful of offending that he forgets his own rights and privileges. He need not comply with unreasonable demands or follow mistaken opinions of others, but he must strive not to have mistaken opinions himself. He should strive to let others lead proper lives, and to cause them no unpleasantness. These should be natural rather than consciously planned acts, for kindness and thoughtfulness should flow from one naturally.

An essay entitled “My Family” (Watashi no Knzoku), written in the first person as a “student composition,” describes a student’s father and mother. Father was formerly thin, but he stopped smoking and took on the shape of a sweet potato. Father is devoted to his children, and now that most of them have grown up and left home, he feels lonesome. He would
like to treat the writer, who is the youngest and in the seventh grade, as a child but of course he cannot. Father loves to go out with his children but always denies that this is a pleasure. When his grown-up, eldest son came from his home in Tokyo for a visit, father walked about the town with him, and then said his son is still a child who loves to go out with his father. Protesting that he dislikes doing so, father accompanies his daughter every morning to the office where she works. He dotes on his infant grandchild, the child of his second daughter, who lives with her husband in Hokkaido. He telephones his daughter directly without thinking of the embarrassment this brings to her husband, and sometimes tries to talk with the infant, who cannot yet talk. When he carries the child in his arms for a walk, one cannot help thinking that it will soon be appropriate to call him grandfather.

As depicted in this composition, the student's mother is comparably replete with virtues and foibles. Mother looks very serious when she is out in public or away from home, as if she would never tell a joke, but in the house she is rather amusing and banterers with father. Sometimes she suggests to him that they play games, and father always pretends to lose. Mother seldom leaves the house because she says it might be robbed while she is gone. The house has never been robbed, but mother's presence at home is probably not the reason. Mother is very fond of doing laundry, and worries about damage to the articles of laundry caused by people bumping into them while they are on the line drying. The family now has a washing machine, but when this is called to her attention she says that clothes can't simply be thrown into it, that successful laundering requires skill. She seems to be confident of her skill, but she starches clothes until they are as stiff as plywood.

The essay discussed above can hardly be described as instruction in filial piety, and its purpose is not readily evident. Examination of the appended list of subjects for class discussion and of a separately published guidebook for teachers conducting classes in morality, however, suggests that the tone of fond criticism of the essay is intended to evoke in the students tolerance of parents and an appreciation of their roles.

If the contents of this entire series of morality readers are summarized, several themes stand out prominently, some old and others new. The many injunctions to be thrifty, industrious, to achieve, to improve oneself, to persevere through hardship, are ancient virtues and their continued existence is hardly surprising. Throughout, the writings convey a feeling of mission, a tone of heartfelt dedication to the proper path, whatever it may be, and this motif is surely not new to Japan. The ideals of fulfilling obligations and maintaining smooth relations with others are also prominent and old, but they appear to have undergone reinterpretation. The
student is no longer ordered to remember his debt of gratitude to parents and superiors. On the one hand, his obligations to parents, employers, and others seem less onerous than before. On the other hand, the obligations have been extended in less specific form to a wider if more generalized “others” so as to embrace the whole society, including the “public.” A smooth, even tenor of life devoid of conflict with others remains an ideal, but peace at any price is not favored; the rights of the individual should not be wholly submerged in the goals of the group. The individual should speak out, in school and elsewhere, but only unselfishly and with proper justification, and he should understand the viewpoints of others.

What impresses me as quite new in these teachings is an emphasis upon happiness; the writings strongly suggest that the goal of moral behavior is to achieve happiness or that morality and happiness are synonymous. The pursuit of happiness is an idea widely current elsewhere in modern Japanese life. The words *akarui seikatsu* (translatable as either “bright life” or “happy life”) which form part of the title of the series of morality readers find frequent statement in newspapers and in radio and television broadcasts, where they are common themes of advertisements for household appliances, travel, and entertainment. We have seen that happiness as a goal of life also stands out prominently in the teachings of some of the new religions. Ruth Benedict’s description of bygone days forms a sharp contrast: “The idea that the pursuit of happiness is a serious goal of life is to them an amazing and immoral doctrine.”

The writings expectably make no mention of heinous offenses, such as theft, assault, murder, and the like, which presumably represent rules of behavior learned elsewhere and requiring no reinforcement by the schools. As a whole, these public school teachings in “morality” seem much closer kin to concepts of morality of the Western world than did their counterparts before World War II. A general trend of change that seems evident is toward “universal” rather than “particularistic” rules; that is, toward identifying as moral those which if broken injure the whole society rather than segments of the society. What is currently taught in the schools—and, we may infer, regarded in Japan as virtuous behavior—includes much less etiquette (following the Western conception of the term) than in former times. We may recall that one of the greatest virtues of the Tokugawa *samurai* was observance of *rei*, a term that implies etiquette in the sense that we have used the word but also carries the meaning of salutation (particularly bowing), gratitude, thanks, and remuneration or gifts of thanks.

It is noteworthy that schoolbooks approved by the Ministry of Education and now in use include a single textbook for seventh to ninth grade students that bears the title “*Chūgakusei no Reigi*” (*Etiquette for Middle
This book has no fundamental overlap with the texts on morality; instead it contains detailed instructions in table manners and such matters as how to walk, talk, dress, write letters, make introductions, send gifts, use calling cards, and how to conduct oneself on vehicles of public transportation and in contacts with strangers. This book concerns first and foremost procedural rules for different kinds of social contacts and situations. Values to which the rules of etiquette might relate must be inferred whereas the books on morality are directed toward moral principles or values. In many respects the book resembles American books of etiquette and differs from them chiefly in providing lengthy instruction on deportment while in public places, at work, and in contacts with foreigners, subjects which find little or no space in modern American books of etiquette.

Sexual morality is not included among the moral issues taught in the public school, but, as we have noted, it is a matter of much concern to the adult population. The national cry for moral education probably stems in important part from concern over changing sexual mores. Public leaders, especially female members of the National Diet, voice deep concern over the sexual morality of the nation and especially of its youth. For a number of years women members of the Diet have led periodic investigations of Turkish baths (a postwar innovation), coffee houses, bars, and places of entertainment in an effort to stem what they view as a growing tide of immorality. These investigations have led to a number of changes in statutes governing hours of operation and illumination. (Characteristically, Japanese places of entertainment are dimly lighted.)

It is worth noting that those who deplore the conditions of sexual morality are persons of mature years, and what they label as immorality may in some part represent different standards of sexual behavior among their juniors. Extra-marital sexual relations, and sexual relations in general, have long been looked upon in Japan as natural and normal as long as they were kept “in their place.” The definition of proper place might expectably change for part of the population when differences in status between males and females diminish, class boundaries become elastic, and urban centers harbor great numbers of single young people of both sexes who were raised in the country. In their new environment, these young men and women have shed the sanctioning force of their relatives and acquaintances of the small community and at the same time lost the emotional satisfactions that their relatives and the small community provided. Regulation of sex as a mechanism for maintaining hereditary social boundaries by discouraging “improper” marriages is also a matter of less concern than in former times, at least to the urban population. The country girl must still, as in former times, be a paragon of sexual propriety.
in order to gain a desirable husband and approval of the rural community. The widespread dissemination of techniques of contraception as well as the availability of legal abortions have certainly done nothing to discourage extra-marital sexual relations. Any city of Japan provides much additional encouragement to illicit sexual behavior by the abundant presence of small hotels and inns that derive their income chiefly from renting rooms to couples for “short rests” or overnight.

For lack of clear information about modern ideals of sexual morality in Japan and of differences between ideals and actual practices of sexual morality and morality in general, it is not possible to make judgments about changes in moral standards. The increasing incidence in Japan since World War II of juvenile delinquency and crimes of violence has been commonly labeled as moral failings arising from changed social conditions. One may argue convincingly that old sanctions of familial and class life have greatly weakened under modern social conditions, thus encouraging immorality of many kinds, including sexual immorality, and that the old sanctions have not yet been replaced by others equally effective. At the same time, it is certain that concepts of sexual morality have changed to allow considerably more freedom to females without serious damage to their reputations. It is certain also that modern Japan is not a nation of moral chaos or anarchy.

In describing changing conceptions of morality and etiquette held by the nation as a whole, the following suggestions seem pertinent. Terms of the order of dōtoku, translated as “morality,” appear always to have implied universalistic rules, issues of importance resembling Western concepts of morality, that in former times were taught through diffuse channels including Japanese religions but received no emphasis in organized teachings until modern times. These are ideals of honesty, selflessness, humanitarianism, sexual morality, and the like that were ordinarily regarded as “natural” to mankind. Serious departure from these ideals reflected not so much upon one’s social status as upon one’s status as a human being.

Terms that include the word or word-element rei referred to highly specific, particularistic rules which were vital to the maintenance of the Japanese social organization of former times and were therefore exalted to the positions of supreme virtues. Knowledge of these rules and assurance that they be observed required and received constant teaching and the strongest of supporting sanctions.

In Tokugawa and Meiji times, these two distinguishable concepts of propriety were intimately intertwined, affecting and sometimes conflicting with each other. Following our earlier discussion, we may think of morality (exemplified by dōtoku) and etiquette (exemplified by rei) as forming a polar continuum, with universal ideals of propriety (dōtoku) at one end
and procedural rules (*rei*) for particular occasions at the other. In Tokugawa and Meiji times, however, much of what was called *rei* certainly held the status of high virtue and for this reason took on strongly the emotional tone more commonly associated with moral values. Under the changed cultural conditions of modern times, the aura of morality in *rei* is disappearing and perhaps has quite disappeared for children and young adults. Morality continues to mean universal rules, but the universe has in a sense been widened. The concepts of "public morality" and "transportation morality" are innovations arising first in Meiji times and assuming importance later. The obvious emphasis that continued to be placed upon etiquette during Meiji times served for foreign observers and also for the Japanese themselves to obscure the universal rules of morality. To some of the modern population, the old flavor of virtue still clings to the term *rei*, and it is perhaps for this reason that the English-derived term *echiketto* finds frequent use today. Its meaning in Japan is unequivocally particularistic rules that may be important but in no way connote virtue.

Modern conditions have made the old particularistic virtues increasingly inappropriate and often even practically and physically difficult to uphold. In the socially mobile society of today the old rules of etiquette have lost much of their significance and have accordingly been modified or abandoned. Social identification of fellow members of society on the basis of clothing, hairdress, speech and other insignia of social status is much less simple a matter than formerly and grows increasingly unreliable. The many social distinctions implied in the traditional vocabulary of polite speech have become less sharp and many of the old terms of deference are obsolete today. It is no longer good form by way of politeness to show extreme verbal deference to superiors, to use traditional "rude" forms of speech in conversation with social inferiors, or to depreciate oneself or one's family excessively. The polite language of former times is often considered amusing in modern context and sometimes forms a comic theme in theatrical entertainments. Customs of bowing have changed similarly. According to a tongue-in-cheek survey made in 1964, the bow has decreased in incidence, depth, and duration, although women still follow the custom more frequently and with greater formality than men. The formal exchange of bows is, in fact, often physically impractical under conditions of modern life. The aged who attempt to follow the etiquette of bowing learned during their youth impede traffic, irritate others, and endanger themselves in the crowded streets, hotels, and other public places.

But let us once again repeat a word of caution. Continuity from the past is clearly evident in observable patterns of social behavior as well as in ideals of propriety. The social changes we have discussed are a shift and not a revolution, and the changes have not applied uniformly to the
entire population. Japan is still in considerable measure an aristocratic society. Ideals of behavior that are explicitly taught similarly describe a shifting from particularism to universalism, an emphasis away from etiquette toward morality. The old ideals remain and the new have reached only part of the population.

Gaining a clear conception of modern Japanese social sanctions is still more difficult than understanding modern ideas and ideals of propriety. Ideals have often been branded, given name tags, so that they can be conceptually manipulated and passed on, but social sanctions tend to be more diffuse. The systematic, scientific study of social sanctions is a mountainous task and it has never been conducted in a thoroughgoing way for any large and socially complex society of the world. For Japan, a number of impressionistic interpretations has been offered and a variety of empirical studies has been conducted that concern sanctions relating to the formation of personality, for example, field studies of sanctions used in child rearing. For lack of other information, reliance must be placed upon these scanty data, interpretations, and impressions, and upon personal experience in Japan that must also be called impressionistic.

What emerges most repeatedly and prominently from these data is an emphasis in Japanese culture upon sanctions imposed by fellow members of society rather than sanctions generated by the individual himself. This has been expressed in popular terminology by the words “loss of face.” Some scholars have described the circumstances by saying that shame is an important sanction whereas guilt is not. Following the terminology used by David Riesman and associates in describing changing American values, we may say that the Japanese are predominantly “other-directed” rather than “inner-directed.” These are all familiar ideas to anyone even modestly acquainted with writings on Japanese culture, and they undoubtedly present an oversimplified picture.

It is impossible to think that important and strongly supported values of whatever kind do not become internalized. Guilt and shame are not mutually exclusive. The psychological studies of modern familial relations by DeVos seem reasonable in their contention that guilt operates to ensure social conformance, especially through the technique used by the Japanese woman of assuming blame herself for the failings of her children or husband, thus inducing in them feelings of dissatisfaction with themselves. Ideals of loyalty, obligation, and filial piety expressed by the concepts chu, on, giri, and kō could hardly fail to become internalized.

We may note also that the Japanese language has an abundance of words customarily translated as conscience that appear to express ideas similar to the English term. The modern Seichō-no-Ie lays considerable stress in its teachings upon the importance of eradicating consciousness
of guilt (tsumi no ishiki) on the premise that man is naturally good and that the burden of guilt is harmful. A modern teachers’ handbook on techniques of teaching morality in schools\textsuperscript{35} discusses the importance of internalization (naimenka) of moral values, but this, it must be added, appears to be a new pedagogical idea stemming from modern psychology.

Despite our references to these modern examples, internalization is by no means new in explicit teachings of ideals of behavior. The essence of Shingaku, a quasi-religious movement of the mid-eighteenth century popular among members of the Tokugawa merchant class, was the cultivation of conscience. Anesaki interprets the meaning of the term Shingaku as “the culture of conscience,” and states:\textsuperscript{20} “Shingaku was a doctrine of eclecticism, aiming at uniting the moral teachings of all the religious and ethical systems prevailing in Japan, tempering them with the general principles of humanitarian ethics and mental culture. . . . As a mirror, when perfectly smooth and clean, reflects every object faithfully and clearly, so our soul gives unerring guidance to our life, when it thinks and wills in accordance with the voice of the innermost conscience. The training in listening to this voice is true Mental Culture. . . .” Similar ideas are found elsewhere in religious and ethical writings, and the idea of “self-cultivation” that appears so widely in both secular and non-secular contexts in Japan strongly suggests the cultivation of conscience.

It is worthy of note that “self-cultivation” appears to refer principally to universal ideals of propriety, as exemplified by the term dōtoku. This, in turn, further suggests that internalization of rules of propriety has been important in Japan although not easily evident because of the obvious prominence of sanctions imposed by the social world outside the individual. The question of the relative importance of external and internalized sanctions resembles that of the relative importance of universalistic and particularistic rules of ideal behavior. Both kinds of sanctions and both sets of norms have undoubtedly been important but they have not been equally obvious. External sanctions continue to be readily evident. As in the past, one should today present a good image to his family, his friends, and the whole society, and the human beings concerned are forceful sanctioning media. The nation itself should present a good face to the rest of the world, which became a sanctioning force for Japanese behavior a century ago.

The 1964 Olympics, held in Tokyo, are exemplitative of the intense desire of Japan to show itself in a favorable light before the world.\textsuperscript{27} Much of the feverish activity in Japan in preparation for this event was directed consciously toward presenting a commendable front before an international assemblage of guests. Preparations guided and financed by the national government included such obvious necessities as the construction of additional hotel accommodations, suitable stadiums, improved trans-
portation facilities, and the like. They also included other activities that follow a national trend, evident since Japan came into contact with the West at the beginning of the Meiji era, of presenting a good face to the rest of the world. Rail service was not only increased and improved, but a tremendous effort was made to complete in time for the Olympics the fastest and most modern express trains in the world for service between Tokyo and the other large cities. Panders and prostitutes were cleared by the police from areas in Tokyo customarily frequented by foreigners and extensive programs of arresting members of criminal gangs were conducted in all major cities. New statutes imposed early closing hours on bars, coffee houses, and various places of entertainment. Several months before the Olympics, the number of detectives on the Tokyo police force specializing in apprehending pickpockets was tripled. Hotels catering to foreigners made attempts to exercise with increased stringency the standards of sexual morality which they had long imposed upon foreign guests—standards far stricter than they demand of themselves in Japanese inns—by keeping a close watch over unregistered guests and prohibiting visitors in rooms after ten in the evening. A national association of owners of retail stores conducted a campaign to ensure that customers in the nation’s shops received courteous and honest service so that the visitors would receive a favorable impression of Japan.

Signs in public places in Tokyo and leaflets urged its citizens, in preparation for the Olympics, to cease urinating in the streets, spitting, littering, and appearing in public while drunk; to observe “traffic morality” in driving cars; and to cease pushing and breaking into queues at subway and railroad stations. The Health and Welfare Ministry undertook a campaign to protect national parks from vandalism and careless visitors, and voluntary associations of students and adults cleaned famous sightseeing resorts of litter. Mt. Fuji was cleaned of litter by the New Livelihood Society of 17,300 members “to introduce a tidy Mt. Fuji to foreign visitors coming to Japan.”

Residents of an area of Tokyo near the Olympic Stadium were ordered by the Tokyo Metropolitan Government in the Spring of 1964 to install flush toilets in their houses because “it would be unseemly to have ‘vacuum cars’ (vehicles carrying large vacuum pumps to drain night soil from toilets) in the streets when foreign tourists are around.” The Tokyo Metropolitan Government and voluntary associations of citizens intensified their activities of beautification as the Olympics approached, bombarding Tokyo residents with leaflets, posters, radio and television announcements urging citizens to cooperate. Major train and subway stations removed “distasteful advertisements for the duration of the Olympics.” “Prepare-for-the Olympics” activities reached down to the ordinary Japanese citizen.
in many additional ways that included the preparation of booklets by the Tokyo Metropolitan Government and Nagano Prefecture instructing women how to behave toward foreigners so that they would not be mistaken for prostitutes; a mushroom growth of courses of instruction in the English language; and courses in Western table etiquette offered by Japanese restaurants, some of which were in cities far removed from Tokyo.

Despite evidence of continuity in social sanctions such as that given above, there is also evidence of change that is congruent with changed conditions of social life. Legal sanctions hold a larger place in Japanese society today than formerly, and their modern importance reflects the impersonality of urban life as well as the diminished importance of kinship and group affiliation as organizing principles and socializing agencies. It was formerly unseemly to take recourse to legal procedures to handle conflicts and social offenses, as these were "properly" matters for familial and personal arbitration which, moreover, did not bring public exposure. In rural areas, redress for minor offenses customarily avoided contact with the police or other formal agencies of law enforcement and this procedure perhaps still prevails. Takeyoshi Kawashima, a distinguished Japanese professor of law, observes that:

...litigation, which proceeds on the basis of fixed universalistic standards, is quite incompatible with the traditional social organization of Japan. Although there was hierarchy, the traditional role of the superior is patriarchal rather than despotic... in other words, he is supposed... therefore partially to consent to the requests of his servant or employee. Consequently, even though their social roles are defined in one way or other, the role definition is precarious and each man's role is contingent on that of the other. Obviously this characteristic is incompatible with judicial decisions based on fixed universalistic standards.

Similarly, among those who were equals in social status, relationships were particularistic, a circumstance that does not lend itself to the settlement of disputes by universalistic standards of law. Kawashima states further:

When people are socially organized in small groups and when subordination of individual desires in favor of group agreement is idealized, the group's stability and the security of individual members are threatened by attempts to regulate conduct by universalistic standards. The impact is greater when such an effort is reinforced by an organized political power. Furthermore, the litigious process, in which both parties seek to justify their position by objective standards, and the emergence of a judicial decision based thereon tend to convert situation interests into firmly consolidated and independent ones. Because of the resulting disorganization of traditional social groups, resort to litigation has been condemned as morally wrong, subversive, and rebellious.

As with almost any other custom or attitude of prewar times that might
be selected for discussion as an example of change, the premodern attitude toward litigation remains in Japan, in weakened form. A trend of change toward judicial settlement rather than legal arbitration or informal settlement was apparent in the later years of World War I, but came to a standstill under the totalitarian control of the decades that followed until the end of World War II. The trend away from personal or "particularistic" handling of disputes took on momentum after World War II. The number of new civil cases of law submitted to Japanese courts, including both judicial and mediation cases, nearly doubled in the interval between 1952 and 1962. It is noteworthy that one of the most outstanding postwar changes is in family disputes, an increasingly large number of which find no informal resolution and are brought to Family Courts, where disputants often insist upon legal rights rather than reconciliation.

The question of the importance of the modern family as a sanctioning agency for moral behavior can be answered only speculatively. Popular opinion in Japan holds that the solidarity and therefore the sanctioning power of the family have been greatly weakened. We have seen that many of the old functions of kinship have been assumed by economic, legal, and other social institutions. But this is not to deny importance to the family as a sanctioning force for behavior. It is possible to argue that because of its small size the nuclear family may be more tightly united until children mature and may involve more intimate emotional bonds than the larger kin groupings of former times in which large size made emotional ties more diffuse. If this argument is acceptable, it seems reasonable also to think that the nuclear family—to the point in the individual's life span when he frees himself from the nuclear family of his birth to form part of another nuclear family in which he plays a different role—is a tremendously important channel for the transmission of culture and sanctioning force. After adulthood has been reached, the importance as a sanctioning force of the family of one's birth would expectably be less than in former times.

Affiliations with groups other than kin and changes in the nature of these affiliations are also expectably reflected in prevailing modes of behavior. Despite a growth of individualism, group membership remains a matter of prime importance to the average Japanese, and for many persons such affiliations have in part become functional substitutes for the kin groups of former times. As we have noted in other contexts, groups continue to attempt to submerge the individual. Apparent violations of rules of ethics among rival business concerns become comprehensible when consideration is given to the importance of group membership and the bonds of loyalty which membership implies. We may safely assume that non-kin groups with which one is identified are extremely important as sanctioning agencies as well as in other ways.
Standards of behavior as members of non-kin groups, like familial relations, are matters of particularistic morality. The development of Japan during the past century into a large, united nation proceeded on a particularistic basis, which was entirely congruent with a course of industrialization and modernization making use of kinship and small-group organization. Nationalism was also fostered as a matter of private morality involving personal allegiance to superiors and to the emperor. Against the background of these trends of Japanese social history, the curious distinction that is drawn today between public and private morality becomes understandable. The compartmented world of former times was furnished with explicit rules of behavior toward members of identified groups—one’s family, community members, schoolmates, fellow employees—and to socially identified individuals of whatever category with whom one had contact. All were important agencies in enforcing the rules of behavior. Despite an ethic of humanitarianism, direct relation of the individual to society at large, to unknown and unidentified persons, was not a common or prevailing idea. One’s obligations to society at large were channeled through the social groups to which he belonged and, in a personalized way, through the hierarchy with the emperor at its apex.

Public places, such as railroad and subway trains, streets, and parks are by and large innovations of modern times. They came to be regarded as the responsibility of unidentified members of society, outside the scope of one’s personal responsibility as an individual, and the average citizen treated them accordingly. He could without qualm litter and otherwise misuse public facilities. The parks and scenic areas of Japan are perhaps as memorable to foreign visitors for their deposits of rubbish as for their natural beauty. Similarly, in the cities of Japan, many of the rules of interpersonal behavior did not apply to the unidentified on the streets and in vehicles of public transportation.

The idea of “public morality” may be seen as an attempt to formulate conventions suitable to the enlarged social world of modern times. The concept of “public morality” as expressed in the terms kōshū dōtoku, shakai dōtoku, and kōtsū dōtoku are not innovations beginning after World War II but may be traced to the Meiji era.\(^{35}\) The great clamor about the deficiency of public morality is, however, a recent development. It may be seen to indicate both a growth of the value it implies as well as social differences among the population which make the value meaningful to part of the population and meaningless to other persons.

The foregoing discussion has scarcely mentioned supernatural sanctions for moral behavior. Benedict’s account of Japanese values and social sanctions similarly gives them very little attention, and this course of action seems justified. If we look to Japanese religions for evidence of forceful
support of whole moral codes, the goal is elusive. It is not difficult, however, to cite many examples of supernatural sanctions for rules of behavior, and some of these apply to rules of etiquette as well as morality, as we have defined these terms. The ancient Shinto concept of impersonal power, for example, may readily be seen as a sanction for various kinds of inter-class relationships. In former but not very distant times, social contact with the emperor was hedged with taboos, which, by bringing calamity upon violators, operated like an electrified fence to mark and maintain social boundaries. A similar Shinto-derived idea of harmful pollution was extended to contact with the Eta, the pariah class of Japan. Direct contact with these outcasts resulted in harmful pollution for which rites of purification were necessary. As we have seen, women also were under various taboos during childbirth and menses that restricted their behavior and perhaps served indirectly to support their social position of inferiority to males. Ancient Shinto rites of purification named as sins many acts connected with agriculture, daily life, and sexual relations, but most of these had lost their relevance long before the period of our concern.

As we have noted, many folk beliefs of supernaturalism, long called superstitions by the Japanese themselves, prohibit certain acts as offensive to supernatural beings and prescribe others as requirements for winning divine favor. Prescriptions and proscriptions supported by supernatural sanctions were standard inclusions in rites of passage. These beliefs remained alive among a substantial part of the population until very recent years. The expressions "bachi ga ataru" and "tembatsu ga ataru" (divine punishment will strike) seem formerly to have been common in connection with folk beliefs of this kind although they have little currency today. Divine punishment was most commonly the result of sins of ritual omission, failure in one way or another to pay proper homage to the Shinto gods, and only uncommonly the result of violating moral rules that directly concerned relations with one’s fellow men. Even today the backwoods charcoal maker, the rural fisherman, and the urban carpenter who fail to perform traditional ceremonies before or during the course of their work or fail to observe associated taboos may interpret any subsequent misfortune as divine punishment. Many taboos and various ideas concerning auspicious and inauspicious omens and periods of time were supernaturalistic interpretations of causality that involved no intervention or sanction by supernatural beings. These taboos, now becoming extinct, bear no direct relationship to behavior with respect to other human beings and it is difficult to look upon them as involving moral issues.

Modern Shrine Shinto has no formalized theology and can hardly be said to teach or preach morality. To the extent that the former State Shinto might be called religion rather than nationalism it may be said that
virtuous behavior was religiously sanctioned in the name of the divine emperor. There seems no doubt that citizens held special feelings of attachment to the emperor that do not depart far from the words of the Meiji constitution describing the emperor as “sacred and inviolable.” The “emperor institution” did not, however, exercise sanctions in an active sense; the emperor was a personalized rallying cry, the highest referent for faithful execution of obligations, for adherence to virtues that existed before State Shinto was created and which were strongly enforced by secular sanctions, also long established. Sanctions imposed by State Shinto were powerful, but much of this power stemmed from political authority.

Various of the sects of modern Sect Shinto which began in the nineteenth century and of the postwar religions do indeed provide explicit moral teachings. Tenri-kyō and Kurozumi-kyō explicitly catalog sins that prominently include matters of moral import. Tenri-kyō interprets sickness or other misfortune as divine “warnings” against repeated sin, whereas Kurozumi regards virtue as a requisite for receiving divine grace. Newer sects that we have discussed have similar teachings. High standards of morality that include unselfishness and humanitarianism as ideals are important in the formal teachings of many of these new sects as means of attaining well-being or salvation.

Personal conversations with leaders of the largest of these new sects always elicited statements that morality is an important element of their teachings but also always conveyed the impression that moral precepts were not strongly emphasized. Responses to the question of what, in the speakers’ opinions, constituted the most outstanding and significant element or feature of their religions included no references to morality.

Buddhist morality is a subject to which Japanese scholars of religion often refer, but the relationship between Buddhism and practical, worldly morality is remote. Theological Buddhism has held itself aloof from worldly morality. One may, to be sure, find many references in Buddhist writings to the desirability of living a moral life, of emulating the Buddha in one’s conduct, but the teachings are directed toward reaching peace of mind through an intuitive feeling of oneness with the universe. They do not stress moral behavior as a divine command with attendant rewards and punishments or regard virtue as a goal in itself. One may indeed find specific Buddhist moral injunctions against vices such as greed, selfishness, arrogance, and hatred and, as the moral counterparts of these vices, the extolling of such virtues as mutual helpfulness and self-renunciation. Faith and morality go hand in hand. Moral strivings are vain unless accompanied by faith in Buddha. Faith is perfected by moral life, and moral life is made possible by faith. This latter idea—common enough today in the teachings of the new sects—may be crassly described as a recipe for salvation or well-
being rather than a strong force compelling one to moral rectitude.

It is important to remember that Buddhist theology and Buddhism of the layman differ greatly, and that many of the ideas of Buddhism became altered in Japan. Emulating Buddha in one's conduct has not been a requirement in Japan for attaining Buddhahood; generally any Japanese is thought to attain it upon death. Ideas of karma, reincarnation, and much else of formal theology seem never to have fully penetrated to the common man, or to have been rejected by him. Even ideas of self-renunciation and mutual helpfulness appear to have been interpreted to accord with referents in the Japanese social order; those for whom one renounced the self and whom one aided were socially identified. Inevitably, specific Buddhist teachings came to incorporate ideals of Japanese ethics, especially the Japanese versions of Confucian interpersonal ethics, but morality of daily life has never been a forceful part of Japanese Buddhism. In certain Japanese teachings of Buddhism, immorality seems almost to be condoned. The teachings of Shinran, founder of the Shin branch, saw the conduct of individuals as having no bearing whatever upon salvation, which depended entirely upon the grace of Buddha and human faith in Buddha.

Anesaki's statement concerning the lack of antagonism between Confucianism (which, we may recall, in Japan was essentially secular) and Buddhism seems appropriate: "The comparative absence of antagonism may partly be due to the tendency to keep apart the transcendental aspects of religious ideal and the practical morality of daily life, as if there were a division between the two phases of life." 37

Ancestor worship in Japanese Buddhism needs a special word since this is the aspect of Buddhism which has remained most viable in modern Japan. Ancestor worship—which might better be called ancestor care since the Japanese of historic times have not truly worshipped ancestors but instead have given them respectful care and felt close to them—may be seen as an indirect sanction for virtuous behavior. In addition to its role in binding the kin group and reinforcing ideals of filial piety, ancestor worship conceivably sanctions ethical behavior because any departure from ethical rules reflects unfavorably upon the ancestors. This is an idea that is familiar enough in the Christian world, where no "ancestor worship" exists, but perhaps it is not unreasonable to think that it constitutes a greater force toward conformity among the Japanese, who have made ancestors a focus of attention. Old Buddhist beliefs that misfortune will result if rituals honoring ancestors are neglected reinforce ideas of proper conduct by reminding the living of their forebears and thereby also of their obligations to the entire group of kin, living and dead.

The prevailing view of morality in Japanese Buddhism has already been stated several times in other contexts and is characteristic also of the new
Japanese sects whether Buddhist, Shinto, or eclectic. Sin is an illusion, or a sign that one has strayed from the path of moral behavior that is natural to man. If one follows the proper faith, he will naturally be morally upright. Where, as in Shin Buddhism, the nature of man is seen as base and prone to sin, absolution comes from faith in Buddha rather than from individual virtuous performance. It is not ordinarily the province of supernatural beings to keep man on the path of rectitude by threatening or exercising punishments. Buddhist teachings of some sects include ideas of heaven and hell, but children are not ordinarily raised with the idea of an inexorable God watching their behavior and giving rewards and punishments. When misfortune is seen as the result of misbehavior, it is not a punishment but a divine sign that one has mistakenly wandered from the proper path.

When the direct and indirect sanctions evident in Buddhist dogma and practice are examined, the conclusion is forced that the religion does not closely ally itself with worldly morality, an opinion that, as we have seen, renowned Japanese scholars of Buddhism have expressed. The importance of Buddhism in supporting moral values could hardly be great today in Japanese society where contact with the religion for most people comes only occasionally in rites connected with death.

In the foregoing chapters, the role of Confucianism with respect to ethics has entered discussion many times in various contexts, and this role was unquestionably great. Confucian principles of the nature of human relations, as we have noted, were ideally suited to the Japanese social scene and they were heavily used. The social circumstances to which they applied did not, however, arise from Confucianism; they came into existence by their own routes and found in Confucianism a suitable rationale that was already well worked out. Even then, the Japanese did not accept Confucianism intact. They selected and modified the Confucian principles of interpersonal relationships, the five human relationships of lord and retainer, parent and child, senior and junior brothers and sisters, husband and wife, and friend and friend. Filial piety and loyalty were stressed, and loyalty was raised to preeminence. The great Confucian virtues of benevolence, justice, wisdom, politeness and faithfulness received less emphasis, and certain Confucian ideas were rejected. The Confucian view that a monarch deficient in benevolence, justice, and wisdom forfeits his mandate to rule and should be deposed, for example, was quite unacceptable in Meiji Japan. Confucian teachings had prestige and authority, but—what is particularly relevant to the discussion here—their nature in Japan was essentially secular. Although denoting cherished Japanese values that have been incorporated in some measure into Japanese religious teachings, Confucian precepts have not been an essential part of Buddhism or Shinto.

It seems clear that morality in Japan has long depended chiefly upon
secular rather than religious sanctions. Despite some tendency among the new religions to give increased attention to moral codes as matters of religious import, the realm of morals is surely more and more a secular one. Changing concepts of propriety that we have discussed may be seen as concomitants of changed and changing social relationships. Since the process of change continues at a rapid pace and has thus far affected the nation unevenly, the picture one may draw of ideals of behavior and sanctions upholding those ideals is expectably cloudy.
CHAPTER VII
RELIGION AND ACHIEVEMENT

The role of religion in stimulating economic development has been discussed and debated for many years since the publication of Max Weber's *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*.¹ Weber's thesis may be described as an argument against earlier interpretations of economic development that emphasized rational motives of human beings in economic activities and ignored expressive motives. Weber saw certain emotionally-charged values as an important element in the development of capitalistic enterprise among the Protestant bourgeoisie of nations of western Europe. As described by Weber, the Protestant ethic was an ascetic devotion to work fortified by the doctrine of vocations which interpreted secular employment in the same light as the call to the pulpit. Unflagging industry, thrift, and frugality were virtues; laziness, extravagance, and self-indulgence immoral. The Protestant reliance upon the self—as opposed to the Catholic reliance upon the church—was held to be an important factor in the genesis of this ethic which, in turn, was important in the economic development of Protestant nations.

Argument has since waged about the validity of Weber's interpretation, but modern scholars are in agreement in regarding the will to work, accompanied by restraints such as those embodied in the Protestant ethic, as one of the necessary conditions for economic development. Weber's study has had great heuristic value, stimulating investigations of the implicit roles of religion and the general subject of motivation toward achievement. These investigations have made clear that marked differences exist in attitudes toward work and achievement among societies and sub-societies of the world, some valuing work for its own sake and others placing no special premium upon industriousness. Among individual members of some societies and subsocieties, achievement is exalted to the point that the name "achievement syndrome"² seems apt because of its psychopathological implications. For these people, means have become ends, and the reward for their efforts may be principally or solely the feeling of a task well done.

Modern studies of motivation toward achievement have sometimes been essentially descriptive, telling us who has and who lacks strong motivation
and pointing to various behavioral correlates without explaining their functional significance. While not denying the relevance of religion, many of these studies have essentially ignored it and have centered on other factors of seeming significance. The relative strength and weakness of motivation toward achievement has been linked with traits such as scholarly achievement, self-esteem, risk-taking, conforming behavior, aesthetic and perceptual sensitivity, and affiliation with social classes. These studies comprise a diffuse group of research projects of small scale that present no unified interpretation of factors and processes involved in the formation and maintenance of strong or weak motivation to achieve.

A related but distinguishable body of studies has centered on the relationship between "achievement need," as measured by tests, and modes of socialization, particularly the nature of familial relationships and modes of training children for roles as adults. From these studies has emerged an interpretation of presumed universal validity that delineates the psychosocial characteristics of the achieving nation. As formulated by David C. McClelland, the foremost scholar engaged in these studies and the author of the major work on the subject to date, the achieving society is one in which parents are not authoritarian, where there is early and strong inculcation of achievement as an ideal, and early training in independence and competition. The primary source of information leading to this interpretation has been the United States, a nation that is an obvious achiever. The ideas so derived have been applied in attempts to understand other nations of the Western world that are obviously much less well developed scientifically, technologically, and economically. The low scores of Brazilian boys on tests designed to measure motivation toward achievement, for example, have been seen as significantly linked with social conditions different from those of the United States: the Brazilian mother is less likely than the American mother to train her sons in self-reliance, autonomy, and achievement, and the Brazilian family is dominated by an authoritarian father. Low scores in tests of achievement motivation among Turkish men are similarly related to a strong authoritarianism and dominance by Turkish fathers.

When an attempt is made to use these various illuminating ideas from Weber and later scholars in gaining an understanding of Japan, the results range from qualified success to outright failure. Japan is unquestionably an outstanding example of the achieving nation. Its history of the past century and, especially, the record of its economic recovery and growth after World War II provide remarkable evidence of national achievement. One might question, however, whether or not this stellar record of achievement implies the existence among the Japanese population, in the past and today, of an affect-laden ideal of achievement. Here, too, the response is an unequiv-
local yes, supported by a variety of lines of evidence. Diligence, thrift, asceticism, and achievement are Japanese ideals that have long been noted and have often been likened to the Protestant ethic of the Western world.

A recent attitude survey conducted by an American scholar seeking to determine whether or not these values exist in fact today offers a conclusion which few knowledgeable persons would dispute: "The answer would plainly seem to be 'yes.'" (We shall note in passing that 82% of the sample of 980 Tokyo residents surveyed in this study claimed no religious affiliation and one-third were unable to identify the traditional religions of their families.) The modern schoolbooks in morality which we have discussed give ample evidence that thrift, industry, self-improvement in human skills and capabilities, and persistent struggles toward success are regarded as modern virtues. As we have noted, these themes have considerable historical depth in the curricula of Japan's schools. They recur in many other contexts and any observer of Japan encounters frequent reminders of the importance of these values. The last will of wartime Prime Minister Hideki Tojo, apparently written just before he attempted suicide in September, 1945 and made public by the press in 1966, adjures the youth of the nation to be diligent in defeat. To accuse a Japanese of being a namakemono, a term customarily translated as "lazy person," constitutes a whole moral judgment, implying that he is morally inferior in general rather than merely lazy. The report of a survey conducted by the Labor Ministry in 1964 of recreational activities of the citizenry illustrates this attitude: "...in the past recreation was regarded as laziness and the people were afraid of talking about their interest in extra-curricular [sic] activities lest they might be labeled as lazy or soft."

Careful planning for distant goals of achievement is also clearly a characteristic of much of the Japanese population, as is evident in the swelling enrollment of colleges and universities as well as in many other ways. Education is looked upon as the golden key to success, a means and not an end in itself. A popular song of the 1930's told of the parental ideal of giving one's daughter in marriage to a university graduate. The growth since World War II of institutions of higher education has been phenomenal, and the season when admissions to colleges and universities are announced has become a time of national crisis, described in detail by all news media. The intensive efforts of parents to secure for their children the best education possible are also phenomenal, entailing thrift, self-sacrifice, and long-range planning that may involve changes of residence from one part of a city to another in attempts to place children in schools from kindergarten upward that have reputations of excellence and serve as springboards for admission to successively higher schools of quality.

Much of the success of Japanese migrants to the United States and of
their descendants, as measured by the lack of serious problems of adjustment, low incidence of crime and juvenile delinquency, and economic well-being, seems to stem from the values in question, which accord well with those prevailing in the United States. The experience of sugar and pineapple corporations of Hawaii with imported contract laborers provides a rather wide-scale comparison of cultural values with respect to work. Beginning in the late nineteenth century, these Hawaiian industries imported laborers from various countries, including China, Korea, Portugal, the Philippines, Puerto-Rico, and Japan. There is no dispute in rating their performances; the Japanese were unquestionably regarded as the most satisfactory. Causing the least social disturbance, they were also hard workers who, unlike the workmen of various of the other ethnic affiliations, could be relied upon to appear for work.

It is clear, in short, that a set of values resembling the Protestant ethic obtains in Japan and that these ideals are not recent developments. In Japan these values tend perhaps less often to become goals in themselves. Education, for example, seems only seldom to be viewed as a goal for its own sake. The similarity to the Protestant ethic is nevertheless close in both specific norms of behavior and moral import. It is safe to assume that these values are importantly linked with the economic and general cultural development of Japan during the past century. A case may also be built for the significance of religion in relation to the Japanese ethic, a subject to which we shall return. But similarities end at this point. The interpretation of social correlates of the achievement ethic that has been offered in explanation of achievement in the United States cannot be applied with success to Japan. Paths of development and modes of transmission and support of the values in question are obviously different in the two countries.

The genesis of the Japanese ethic is far from clear, but it is certain that various social factors of putative significance in the West are either lacking or else exist in precisely the forms held to be inimical to achievement according to the prevailing current of thought among social theorists in the United States. A critique of these theories based upon circumstances in Japan has been offered by George A. DeVos, who summarizes relevant postwar research conducted in Japan by himself and various colleagues in the social sciences. DeVos concerns himself in particular with the question of dependence versus independence, arguing convincingly that dependence rather than independence is stressed in Japan. But, before continuing to discuss this subject, let us review with reference to Japan the whole roster of major social factors discussed earlier that are held to be significant in fostering an ethic of achievement. These are early training in achievement, that is, early implantation of achievement as an ideal; early training in independence and competition; the lack of strong parental authority. Of
these, only the first seems to apply in Japan. There is, however, no doubt that achievement and its correlates of industry, thrift, and self-denial are transmitted and reinforced in various ways from childhood throughout the span of life.

Studies of child training have brought out sharply a strong tendency in Japanese practices of rearing children to create dependence upon others, especially the mother, upon whom reliance for emotional support and reassurance is fostered by many customs including long and intimate physical association. Especially by her technique of assuming blame for shortcomings and misdeeds of her children, the mother is seen to be a powerful agency of socialization. Certain customs of Japanese child rearing point up this dependence strikingly. A study of middle-class families of Tokyo informs, for example, that boys virtually never threaten to run away from home and that a form of punishment for misbehavior regarded as fairly severe is “to lock the child out of the house and require him to apologize before he can come in.” The tendency to submerge the individual in the group and the affective importance of group affiliation in Japan, subjects that we have already discussed in other contexts, may also be seen as indicative of a high degree of emotional dependence. These characteristics may further be seen as mediating the intensity of competition between individuals, behavior which has never been deemed desirable. Competition obviously exists, of course, but it is muted, rationalized, and its stressful aspects played down by an ideal of cooperation that is congruent with strong dependency. Even where the most obvious competition exists, as in college entrance exams, the spirit of individualistic vying is softened by an atmosphere of cooperation rather than competition in the years of college life that follow for those successful in passing the exams.

So also with parental authoritarianism. According to tradition, the Japanese father is the familial voice of undisputed authority. In actuality, the Japanese mother has doubtless always exercised much indirect authority in ways such as DeVos has suggested, and her role in this respect was likely forceful even in bygone days when the father’s position of dominance was supported by law. What seems striking and more significant than the existence of parental authority is the strong and prolonged emotional dependence of children upon their parents, a dependence that continues into adulthood.

The functional counterparts in Japan of the independence, individualism, competition, and low degree of parental authority associated with achievement in the United States appear then to be dependence, a stressing of cooperation over competition, and parental authority generally so surrounded and masked by emotional dependence that compliance is more desirable than revolt. From the standpoint of the results they may achieve,
these two quite different sets of conditions are not logical antitheses. If we re-examine the manner in which the industrialization and modernization of Japan came about, the kinds of social groupings involved and the relationships of the human beings in these groups, we may see congruence. The psychosocial dynamism of the Protestant ethic of the West may also be seen as incongruent with conditions in Japan.

This picture of psychosocial factors relating to Japanese achievement that we have briefly sketched is as yet admittedly shadowy, a formulation that will doubtless become revised as well as expanded as the result of future investigations. Trends of change toward individualism and independence and changes in familial relations that are already evident will also doubtless alter the interpretation. Conspicuously absent from this interpretation is consideration of the role of religion, even though one might reasonably expect to find any important and long established value of a society reflected in some way in its religion.

Weber's theory of the Protestant ethic served to stimulate various scholarly attempts to find a functional analogue in Japanese religion, and these studies have had some measure of success. Most outstanding is a study of the religion of the Tokugawa era by Robert Bellah, who concludes that such a functional counterpart does exist, particularly in Confucianism. Ideals of filial piety and loyalty have undoubtedly been associated importantly in Japan with the will to work, and these virtues explicitly included thrift, diligence, and self-denial. As we have earlier noted, Confucian ethics were incorporated in some teachings of Buddhism, in nationalized Shrine Shinto, and in some measure in Sect Shinto. But, we shall repeat, Confucianism in Japan was primarily secular, so that Bellah's argument depends heavily upon the definition of religion. We may note also that Confucian ideals of filial piety and loyalty serve preeminently to reinforce particularistic rules of social behavior, and the general trend since Tokugawa times has been away from particularism toward universalism, a trend which Bellah discusses in a later writing. No corresponding trend is evident in Japan of the diminution of the achievement syndrome.

As Bellah points out, exhortations to thrift, asceticism, and diligence appear in the teaching of religious leaders of Tokugawa times. These values seem to have permeated all strata of society, and their inclusion in religious teachings is entirely expectable. One of the most explicit expressions of the ideal of achievement during Tokugawa times was the quasi-religious Shingaku, which we have already discussed. Shingaku was popular among the merchant class, however, and reached only a very small part of the Japanese population.

Similar ideas were expounded by Ninomiya Sontoku (1787-1856), "The Peasant Saint," who in his lifetime had a wide audience among farmers
and whose teachings continued to have influence well into the twentieth century. Ninomiya's philanthropic teachings made him into a national culture hero and a model of virtue for the youth of the nation. Many rural schoolyards are still graced by statues of him. Although perhaps somewhat less religious in overall tone than Shingaku, Ninomiya's teachings were strongly moralistic. He taught practical methods of agronomy and agricultural finance together with moral ideals of scrupulous faithfulness to Confucian principles of ethics, diligence, and frugality: "Work much, earn much, spend little." These ideals of behavior seem to have become established values among the rural population before the time of Ninomiya and, although strongly cherished, to have been essentially secular. In writing of modern changes in the value systems of Japanese farmers, the sociologist Fukutake states, "The philosophy of respecting hard labor and enduring low income was fortified with another philosophy in which consumption was regarded as a sin and thrift as a virtue." Ninomiya's role was as an outstanding spokesman of an ethic already established, and his most distinctive contribution was espousing the added virtue of practical self-help. In this regard, his teachings resemble fairly closely the Protestant ethic of western Europe: although he emphasized the indebtedness of man to nature, he held also that man must himself exert effort to control nature.

Buddhist and Shinto ideas and practices of asceticism have also been seen as giving support to the Japanese ethic of achievement. As many observers have stated, Zen Buddhism stands out most prominently in this respect. Zen, in turn, was the suitable complement for the Bushidō code of the samurai, which may at best be called quasi-religious. For women of samurai status, a corresponding secular ethic, as set forth in the work Onna Daigaku by the Confucianist scholar Kaibara Ekiken (1630-1714), exalted thrift and diligence as well as loyalty. As the ethical precepts of Bushidō reached the common people, however, their overtones of religion and connection with Zen Buddhism became attenuated.

The most recent substantial publication on the relationship between religion and economic development in Japan is in essential agreement with Bellah's study. Regarding Confucianism as religion, its author concludes that the Japanese ethic of achievement has been given support and encouragement by all three major religious systems of Japan—Shinto, Buddhism, and Confucianism. Identifying samurai values as the epitome of national values, its author states, "What the Protestant Ethic was to the West, the Samurai Ethic was to Japan."

Close examination of Japanese religions would undoubtedly reveal other ideas and ideals that might be seen to complement or support ideals of thrift, diligence, and achievement. The association between religion and
these values is far from extinct in modern religions. The essence of the teachings of P. L. Kyōdan may in fact be described as an expression of the virtue of achievement, and the dogma of Sōka Gakkai in its emphasis on practical value bears a resemblance to the teachings of Ninomiya. But the path of interpretation is not limited to a single course. Various ideas of Japanese religions may be interpreted as inhibiting economic development. The Buddhist ideal of self-denial, of eschewing worldly pleasures, bears a resemblance to Protestant ideas concerning self-indulgence, but let us note that Buddhist non-worldliness has not explicitly meant diligence coupled with self-denial. The idea of selflessness is also present in other religions of Japan and is notable in the teachings of various of the new sects, but the ideal of selflessness lends itself to an interpretation of providing consolation for one's lowly status rather than serving as a stimulus to achievement. An examination of the dogma of Buddhism reveals much else—for example, ideas of asceticism, of feeling gratitude for whatever one receives, and ideas of an ordered, immutable universe—that may be interpreted as inhibiting rather than spurring economic progress. Accompanying the ideals of thrift, diligence, and self-denial among the farmers of the past and the rest of the nation was an attitude of acceptance of the established social order that might well be regarded as rationalized by Buddhist ideas of fatalism. Moreover, the ideals in question were not the teachings of most Buddhist and Shinto priests of the Tokugawa era and of later times. These clung to traditional dogma and performed religious duties that had no direct bearing on the values at issue. Priests had, in fact, generally ceased to preach long before the beginning of the Tokugawa era.

As the foregoing remarks suggest, the issue of the relationship in Japan between religion and achievement remains cloudy, and it seems improbable that a definitive solution will ever be reached. It is worth noting that the scholars who have concerned themselves with the subject of the functional significance of Japanese religions in this respect have followed the essentially universal predilection of scholars of religion. Apparently proceeding with an implicit assumption that the socially positive functions of religion outweigh in importance the negative, they have searched for connections that appear to reinforce social values and at the same time encourage economic development. No study of this kind has ever been directed toward negative effects of religion.

Despite the doubts expressed above, ample evidence attests that religion has been positively associated with achievement in Japan. The association seems best described as resembling the relationship between religion and morality in general—a reflection by religion of values otherwise derived, an imperfect and incomplete mirroring of social values of great importance. The most intimate connections affecting the population in general have
been through Confucian ethics and nationalized Shrine Shinto. The issue
of whether or not Confucianism and Shrine Shinto in its form before 1945
should be regarded as religion has already been discussed. Tokugawa
religions and those of later times, in short, have supported unevenly the
ideal of achievement. Rather than being the wellspring for this ethic, the
religions have served principally in subsidiary roles of reinforcement that
have varied in importance and seem presently to be weak. At no time were
the values in question central themes in the mainstreams of Buddhist and
Shinto theology and they do not hold this status today. The modern teach-
ing of morality in the public schools as a secular activity is not a radical
departure from the past. The removal of the mantel of religion placed
on this teaching by nationalized Shinto has doubtless weakened the sanc-
tioning force, but there is continuity in the secular sanctions.

If one seeks the roots of the Japanese values in question, it seems ap-
propriate to look for them in the circumstances of life outside the realm
of religion which might later incorporate and reinforce the values and
even seemingly become their source. In a land such as Japan that is
exceptionally poorly endowed with natural resources of nearly every kind,
hard work and frugality are at least congruent social values. The birth
of the Japanese ethic very likely lies in the economic and social conditions
of everyday life of the population during Tokugawa times or earlier. Thrift
and unremitting industry were necessary during the Tokugawa era for
maintenance of the social order and simply for survival. As is common
everywhere, the Japanese population made virtues of the modes of life
open to it and these virtues characterized aristocrat as well as commoner.
Mere poverty is, of course, an insufficient basis for the establishment of
the traits of thrift, industry, and self-denial as cherished values. One may
easily find examples of societies whose populations gain a bare subsis-
tence, societies in which the value of thrift and industry seem obvious
but in which they have not become virtues. For Japan, a much broader
complex of values appears to have arisen from the conditions of social
life and to have functioned as a mutually reinforcing system.

A key to understanding lies in the Japanese social structure of former
times. Given the obvious survival value of thrift and industry, it is not
difficult to see their interplay with values of filial piety and loyalty in
the social context of the time. These latter values were of utmost im-
portance in maintaining the social hierarchy. A society such as that of
Tokugawa Japan—a "feudal" society, hierarchical, with strong value
placed on personal or particularistic relationships—provides fertile ground
for the emergence of thrift and industry as ideals. The hierarchical family
structure—reinforced by ideas of ancestor worship grafted onto Buddhism
and the propagation of Confucian ethics—seems part and parcel of the
system for which these values are congruent. Merely to have patrilineal family lines continue in the impoverished land required diligence and thrift. The establishment of subsidiary lines of kin, as in the dōzoku, often required sustained effort and bitter frugality. Thrift and ideals of achievement were made a part of filial piety and loyalty to superiors, and they may owe their genesis as important values in part to these other ideals.

The Tokugawa farmer earned a bare subsistence and the samurai was hardly better favored. Most members of the samurai class received from their lords fixed stipends about equal to the incomes of farmers. Small wonder that the samurai made frugality a virtue or, since he was wholly dependent on his lord, that he stressed loyalty as a virtue, and that rulers also held these traits as ideals. Some members of the merchant class of Tokugawa times had become well-to-do or wealthy, although evidence among them of luxurious living sometimes brought expropriation and ruin at the hands of the rulers. Merchants also regarded thrift as a virtue, one that brought material rewards even though these often had to be concealed for fear of losing them. One of the important rewards was a de facto if not a de jure rise in social status through the power of merchant wealth, which brought about liaisons between merchant and samurai families by means of financial transactions and by marriage of the children of merchants to the offspring of impoverished samurai. Wholly visible rewards of these kinds were doubtless important motives for industry. The fact that the rulers still followed tradition by thinking of wealth and power as consisting of land and farm produce was likely also important in getting the modernization of Japan under way, since the rulers watched the farmers closely but, unaware of their growing importance, allowed the new merchant class relative freedom for the amassing of wealth and power.

After the end of the Tokugawa era, when sumptuary laws were abolished and some elasticity appeared in the social structure with the beginning of industrialization, thrift and industry could for the first time produce for the ordinary man tangible results in the form of accumulated wealth. Wealth, in turn, brought enhanced social status, an additional incentive toward the practice of thrift. Conspicuous consumption in such forms as elaborate weddings, funerals, and exchanges of gifts often accompanied thrift and industry, and continues to do so today. Farm families of Meiji and later times frequently carried both thrift and consumption to what seems absurd extremes, practicing the utmost thrift for years only to exhaust all resources in a grand wedding ceremony. These practices were carried over to Hawaii by Japanese plantation laborers where it was common in the years just preceding World War II for a family to spend the equivalent of one to two year's income for a wedding ceremony.

The quantity of luxury goods available and sold in Japan today at
prices seemingly far beyond the reach of ordinary pocketbooks is remark-able, and has long been a matter of governmental concern. Luxury and conspicuous consumption had also been matters of governmental concern even in Tokugawa times, when the emerging merchant class, although numerically small, raised itself economically to the point where luxuries were within reach. Governmentally sponsored programs of social improvement of recent years have urged citizens to simplify and shorten weddings and traditional holiday activities. Legislation has also attempted by the imposition of enormous import taxes to place curbs on expenditures for luxurious foreign goods, which hold high prestige. Editorials in newspapers frequently inveigh against sybaritic living but, as economic conditions of the nation continue to improve, conspicuous consumption in every conceivable form increases. Symbols of status have sometimes been absurd, such as large foreign cars, too wide for most of the streets of Japan, that are now prohibited by statute as obstructions to traffic. It seems reasonable to think that the Japanese emphasis on hierarchy, with its accompaniment of visible markers of social status, has important bearing upon past and present inclinations toward prestigious consumption. Conspicuous consumption itself has, of course, often been regarded as a stimulus to economic growth.

For most of the nation, however, prestigious consumption has not truly been the antithesis of thrift. It has been possible only through diligence and thrift, and these traits have generally gone hand in hand. Thrift, diligence, and asceticism, moreover, remain firmly embedded as national virtues. Whatever lack of virtue the occasional fling of conspicuous consumption might imply appears small as compared with the social satisfactions derived thereby. As we have already remarked, social prestige and the visible markers of prestigious status continue to be highly cherished and the whole set of values may be seen to complement and reinforce each other. The behavior of the Japanese errand boy who practices the utmost thrift for months in order to purchase a foreign watch or cigarette lighter at an exorbitant price is from this viewpoint quite comprehensible. As a result of changed cultural conditions since Tokugawa times, industry and thrift are not merely virtues that bring their own reward and make a minimal livelihood possible, they are the keys to richer and highly tangible rewards.

A significant change has been that the rewards are increasingly individual rather than for the group, a circumstance that might well enhance the positions of thrift and industry as cultural ideals. Another trend of change is the attitude toward work itself. Before World War II, work implied toil, sweat, and tears in fulfilling obligations of one kind or another. Today there is a growing tendency to see it as something providing pleasure,
at least personal satisfaction. Individual choice of kind of work and "job satisfaction" are ideas that have growing currency—and surely leave ample room for spurring the older value of achievement. It seems probable that the future will see no decline and very likely continued growth in the strength of the value placed upon achievement.

Here, as elsewhere in the realm of Japanese values that might be called morality, the role of religion today as a reinforcement is diffuse and, if it is indeed significant, difficult to see. The growing secularity of the nation and the lack of frequent or direct contact with religious teachings for most of the nation strongly suggest that the role of religion in this regard is much less forceful than in the past.
CHAPTER VIII
PROSPECTS

Scholars of religion have customarily given the name of religion to a certain part of the ideology and acts of every society, whether primitive or civilized. Scholarly attempts to define religion, however, are remarkable perhaps chiefly because of the disagreement they show, a disagreement that is surely in part ethnocentric, reflecting the changed roles of religion in modern times in the societies of which the scholars are themselves members. A modern trend among social scientists in the United States has been to define religion as the values which the members of a society cherish most highly, the things they feel most keenly about. This definition makes no mention of supernaturalism, and thus presumably makes all human beings religious. Examination of the actual phenomena, the ideas and acts, which scholars in the social sciences have selected to describe and discuss as religion, however, makes it clear that its distinguishing trait of primary importance is supernaturalism.

With uncommon exception limited chiefly to scholars, the word religion continues for most of the world to imply a central idea of supernaturalism, a transcending of the ordinary world of experience and of ordinary human capabilities. This is the former and the present meaning of religion in Japan and, accordingly, it has been the guiding definition used in the descriptions and discussion of the preceding chapters of this book. It is unlikely that Japanese citizens might define religion without giving its transcendental aspects an important place, but there has nevertheless also been a change in Japanese conceptions of religion. For many people much of what was once religion, and perhaps for all people some of what was formerly religion, have come to bear the name of superstition. This shifting represents a major change but one that most observers of Japanese religions have omitted from the roster of religious changes, perhaps because they have unconsciously adopted the view that what is now called superstition should never properly at any time have borne the name of religion.

The preceding chapters have conveyed a picture of many and great changes of other kinds in the religions of Japan during the past century and of great changes in the whole of the Japanese way of life. These
chapters have stated that a combination of closely related changes in secular spheres of life—in ways of gaining a livelihood, of ordering people into familial and other groups, and of associated views of the world, rationales for existence, ideals of behavior, and modes of enforcing conformance with ideals—have greatly reduced the former strength and importance of Japan’s religions.

This book has thus presented the view that the present weakened state of Japan’s religions is a result of functional incompatibility or incongruence between religion and the other spheres of human cultural life that mold the form of religion and provide roles for it. From the standpoint of human well-being, the problems of incongruence have been met with no apparent great distress or social disorder, at least without disturbance that can assuredly be regarded as a consequence of the waning importance of religion. Science has as yet devised no techniques that permit confident statements supported by quantified evidence about the importance to man of the ideological aspects, secular or religious, of his culture. We assume, for what seem to be substantial if impressionistic reasons, that the importance is great, so great that the ideological elements of human life are regarded as vital to man’s welfare and to the survival of mankind as a species. Observers of human society and culture have often called attention to changes that have occurred in modern times in the prevailing ideologies of various societies and subsocieties. Their judgments about the importance of such changes have also been impressionistic; at least they have not been expressed by any standardized units of measurement. Evidence of changes in the religions of Japan is similarly impressionistic, but only partly so. A large body of information is in quantified form; for example, statistics on the number of adherents to the various religions, the financial state of the organized religious bodies, the number of religious personnel and religious facilities, and the attitudes toward religion expressed by the population as recorded in sociological surveys. This quantification, although obviously imperfect, leaves no doubt about general trends of change, and the composite of impressionistic and statistical evidence makes it very clear that the changes have been extensive.

As elsewhere among human societies undergoing cultural change, the alterations in the state of religion in Japan have come about with little planning or far-sighted conscious endeavor on the part of the people. There has been no plot, no long-range plan to undermine religion by assigning its tasks elsewhere. Similarly, the many alterations in the social sphere, in the form and functions of the family and in other social groups, are not the result of plans of far-seeing social reformers. No amount of planning and effort in 1868 could quickly have transformed the Japanese family to its present state, a state which was then not only socially un-
desirable but also quite inconceivable. Human planning of a wholly cognitive kind detached from emotional considerations that has been involved in many of the most important changes in Japanese life may be described as being at best shortsighted, representing ad hoc and perhaps post hoc planning suggested by other aspects of culture and by changes in those other aspects of culture. The range of possibilities for change is always limited—and human societies facing similar problems of adjustment to change have again and again hit upon similar solutions.

The economic changes that Japan has undergone during the past century have spurred, suggested, and even forced changes in the social order that may, with some caution, be described as a transformation. The social order itself, in its characteristic forms of one hundred years ago and in the forms it has later held at any given point in time, has unquestionably also affected the direction and rate of economic development. If one seeks to compare Japan with other societies of the world in the matters of economic development and associated social forms, it is possible to argue cogently that the social order of Japan—its groupings of human beings and the conventionalized patterns of relations existing among the people who make up the groups—has provided powerful encouragement for economic development. The relationship between the social and economic realms is then one of mutual influence that has resulted in great changes in both realms.

But the process of change has not been simple and it involves another necessary component, the large realm of values, ideals, views of the world, and rationales for behavior that I have, as a matter of convenience, called ideology. Although derived from and giving support to social and economic life, these ideological tools of man also influence other parts of culture. Like various of the “maintaining” factors of biological evolution, such as territoriality and interspecific sterility, that foster the continuation of individual biological species without necessarily preventing further evolutionary development, a primary function of the ideological elements of culture is to preserve the cultural status quo. Since the ideological elements are derived from other conditions of human life, however, they are also subject to change—and in their new forms they continue to play their supportive role, now supporting the altered elements of culture which led them to assume new forms.

The present religious state in Japan may be regarded as an unremarkable example of events that are a normal and expectable part of processes of cultural change applying to all societies. For the most part, the religions of modern Japan attempt to support and reinforce institutions and ideals that are either obsolete or headed toward obsolescence. Many factors, including the lengthy existence of Japan as a stable society and the great
age of the religions, have encouraged this conservatism. Many conditions and events of very recent times have also worked strongly to inhibit adjustive religious change. Among these are the speed and extent of economic, social, and demographic changes of the past two decades, which have encouraged the firm adoption of secular substitutes for religion, substitutes that in the intellectual and social environment of modern times could not be displaced by traditional religion even if the personnel and facilities needed to bring about such displacement were available. Various circumstances that have damaged Japanese religions and retarded change in them are not inherent qualities of religion and their inhibiting effects may be only temporary. Among these is the political use of religion in an obsolete form before and during World War II in a nation that was generally too sophisticated to accept intellectually the prescribed beliefs and acts.

Many other factors which have served to inhibit religious change in Japan, such as the conservatism that inheres in religion and other ideology, and economic and social changes that bear upon religion from the outside, have been discussed in some detail in earlier chapters of this book and will not be reviewed here. The results of these interactions and reactions in Japan have been various. Among societies of the world that allow religious freedom to their members, modern Japan may be described as one of the least religious—if religiosity is measured by membership in religious organizations and performance of religious acts. At the same time, Japan is a society of which most members regard religion as desirable (but presumably in a form which does not as yet exist in the nation), a society which continues to give a large if shrinking place to many informal beliefs and practices of supernaturalism—today's "superstitions"—that involve no commitment to a coherent, systematic body of dogma or of affiliation with an organized body of believers; and a society that is seeing on the part of a substantial minority, the adherents to the new religions, some of the most intense religious activity existing in the modern world.

It is evident, then, that Japan is experiencing both religious conservatism and adaptive change. The adaptive change which might be called truly religious—that is, change in theology—is as yet small. In this sense, the emergence of the new religious sects is much less a phenomenon of adaptive religious change than it is an example of theological conservatism provided with a new social organization; that is, the new sects represent the blossoming of traditional ways under modern political and social conditions that for the first time in the history of Japan have fostered such rich blossoming. The new religious sects draw their members from the most conservatively minded segment of the national population. So also do the established sects. Memberships of both old and new sects include many persons in middle
and old age, whose personal cultural sets make the traditionalism of these religions appropriate for them. This circumstance offers nothing to account for the intensity of the religious activity of members of the new sects, but consideration of the few large new sects, in which religious activity is at its greatest height, suggests an explanation. The great new sects do indeed constitute innovative adaptation. Let us note again, however, that their important innovative aspects are not matters of theology but of social organization. Even these social “innovations” are principally traditional forms falling well within the range of experience familiar to the membership. Their innovative aspects are a new alignment, a shifting of emphasis, of old social forms to a new urban or urbanized scene and a particularly skillful use of familiar social devices that bind human beings to one another by providing emotional rewards of several kinds. The sectors of the population from which members of these sects are drawn are those to which secular substitutes for religion, for various reasons, have had the least growth.

Two questions spring to mind. Has the modern society of the Japanese population, those who show little interest in religion and do not regard themselves as members of any religious group, suffered from the loss or lack of religion? What are the prospects for religion in Japan in the future?

A partial answer to the first question has already been given. No great social, moral, or personal disturbances have occurred, and such social, moral, and personal problems as are evident cannot reasonably be attributed to religious defection. The state of well-being of the Japanese population in general seems, in fact, to be at the highest point in recorded history. According to the results of numerous attitude surveys, a large majority of the population expresses itself as being well satisfied with modern conditions of life. Such dissatisfaction as is commonly expressed concerns what is regarded as a temporary bodily discomfort, the inadequate living quarters that urbanization and shifting habitats have brought. For most people, the needs of life are apparently satisfied in secular ways and, although religion is generally said by them to be desirable for their society, little likelihood of a religious renascence seems to exist.

If renascence occurs, it will surely require a recasting of traditional dogma as well as a reforming of the social structure of Japan’s religious bodies far greater than has yet occurred among even the most progressive of the established religious sects. Whether such remodeling will occur is uncertain, but we may remember that Japanese religions, and Japanese culture in general, have been outstandingly successful in adjusting to change without serious or violent disruption. Traditional Shinto is surely doomed to eventual extinction as an increasingly ill-fitting anomaly. Some aspects of Buddhism and of Christianity are similarly so headed eventually. If the record of Japan’s religious past is a suitable basis for forecasting its reli-
gious future, it seems nevertheless reasonable to think that organized religions in altered form, perhaps lacking supernaturalism and stressing matters of moral import, may have an enduring future. The remaining life of the existing religions in their supernaturalistic forms will also be long if not vigorous. For many years to come, these religions will be appropriate for a part of the population. If, as some social commentators predict, the expanding industrialization of Japan brings into existence an urban, industrial proletariat that is alienated in various ways from the rest of the population, such religions as Sōka Gakkai might have very lengthy lives in forms little different from those of today.

Other possibilities also exist. The recent history of Europe has shown that political movements which do not represent modes of thought of the whole society may take temporary control once power and authority have been gained. It is for this reason that Sōka Gakkai, however philanthropic its stated aims might be, has been the source of feelings of disquiet in Japan. Growing political strength, continued expansion into the secular activities of human life, and growing wealth derived from a growing membership have given much power to Sōka Gakkai. If recent talk by officials of Sōka Gakkai about the possibility of forming its own labor union ever becomes reality, the power of the sect will undoubtedly grow in all of its activities.

The preceding statements are, of course, speculative. What seems certain about Japan's religious future illustrates a fundamental assumption of cultural anthropology concerning the nature of culture. In order to survive in more than lingering, vestigial form, the religions of Japan must attain congruence with other aspects of human life. Religious developments since World War II have shown some trends of change toward such congruence, but the fit is as yet far from perfect.
APPENDICES
Many superlatives may be used in describing Sōka Gakkai. It is the largest, most powerful, and fastest growing of the new sects. It is the most aggressive in its techniques of conversion, the most intolerant of other religions, and the only powerful sect that broadcasts converting the entire world as a goal. Its history is the stormiest, and during the period since its rise to power in the 1950’s it has been accused of more misdeeds than any other sect.

The charges against Sōka Gakkai are varied. It has been called a group of fanatics, an extreme rightist movement, and a fascist organization that seeks to gain control of the nation and the world. Stands taken by Sōka Gakkai on various timely issues, such as the statement “We are the Castro of Japan” that appeared in its newspaper at the time of the crisis in Cuba, have added weight to these charges. The sect has also been unofficially accused of such illegalities as forced conversion, illegal voting practices, and illegal political activities. Since it regards politics as a part of religion and engages actively in national politics, it has been informally accused of violating the postwar Japanese constitution, Article 20 of which states: “Freedom of religion is guaranteed to all. No religious organization shall receive any privileges from the State nor exercise any political authority. No person shall be compelled to take part in any religious acts, celebration, rite, or practice. The State and its organs shall refrain from religious education or any other religious activity.” To avoid charges of improper political activity, the political party of Sōka Gakkai was made legally independent in 1964. No official charges of illegal political activity have ever been made, and the accusation of illegality may reflect only reactions by outsiders to the extremely aggressive political activities of the sect.

Truth and fiction about Sōka Gakkai are sometimes difficult to distinguish, and it is probable that some of the information reported in this book is fiction. An official representative of Sōka Gakkai who kindly read this chapter has informed me that various of its statements are untrue or need modification. As a result of this critical review, a few changes were made in the original manuscript. Most of the suggestions for change were not heeded, however, because they consisted of denials of some activities of Sōka Gakkai as observed by myself or as reported by the Japanese press and by scholars, or else the suggested changes seemed to be expressions of opinion. For example, the reviewer denied that Sōka Gakkai was secretive, had aims to convert the world, drew most of its college-trained members from graduates of the less prestigious Japanese universities, and that its members were ever expected to meet quotas of converts. He also felt that various of my statements regarding the dogma of Sōka Gakkai were misrepresentations. I am thankful for the suggestions, and I wish to make clear that my account of Sōka Gakkai represents in part my own observations and opinions, which may not always be sound, and in part the reports and opinions of other observers, which are so identified. My account might then be described as consisting largely of the views of Sōka Gakkai that are held by non-members. As such, it very likely contains errors and distortions and most expectably differs from Sōka Gakkai’s view of itself.

Sōka Gakkai receives more attention from the popular press than any other religion and for many years was the subject of the most highly unfavorable criticism by the press. After the sect gained national political power in 1959, however, newspapers ceased to report many of its activities and since then have not often published
articles that condemn the sect or reflect adversely on its activities. Some observers have called this a "silent press," but Sōka Gakkai nevertheless continues to receive much newspaper and magazine coverage on its political activities. Newspaper articles written after the official separation of Kömeitō, the Sōka Gakkai political party, have often failed to mention the name of Sōka Gakkai. The political party and the sect are publicly treated with increasing respect, mingled with fear and mistrust, by politicians as well as by the press. Financiers and large commercial enterprises of various kinds are said to court the favor of Sōka Gakkai, and this does not seem surprising in view of its size and wealth. Periodicals published by Sōka Gakkai have for some time carried advertisements for products and services of various of the largest national manufacturers, great banks, and other kinds of business concerns.

An unverified report about the power and influence of Sōka Gakkai that circulated in Tokyo in 1966 held that Sōka Gakkai was able to suppress a pamphlet prepared for public distribution which charged the organization with much wrongdoing. The pamphlet, entitled in English translation "Criminal White Paper on Sōka Gakkai," was said to have been prepared by the newspaper of the League of New Religions, of which Sōka Gakkai is not a member, in a run of 700,000 copies, of which only 50,000 were distributed. This pamphlet was said to have listed murders and other crimes committed throughout the nation by members of Sōka Gakkai. Whether true or false, this report gives an idea of the attitudes toward Sōka Gakkai held in some Japanese quarters.

Many additional superlatives may be used in describing Sōka Gakkai. Among the new sects, it appears to be the most tightly organized, with direction in the hands of the youngest and most highly educated group of administrators. Its activities are the most diverse of any religious group in the nation, and they continue to expand with what much of the nation views as frightening speed. In a country where most of the citizenry looks upon the new religious sects as harbors for the ignorant and lowly, and where the cultured citizen sees the successful new religious sects as vulgar new-rich, Sōka Gakkai in all its aspects has been the outstanding example of these characteristics. But Sōka Gakkai is seen as more than merely uncouth and low class. It is actively feared and hated in some circles, and it is probably the only religious group in the nation that commonly evokes these emotions.

Perhaps in part because of the antipathy it has encountered, Sōka Gakkai is secretive about various of its activities. Consistent and reliable information on its membership and various of its activities cannot be obtained from either representatives of the sect or its publications. Japanese social scientists engaging in research on Sōka Gakkai who needed copies of the principal newspaper of the sect for 1960 reported that they were unable to get copies of even this publication from official sources and were forced to collect them by indirect means.

Administrative activities of Sōka Gakkai are conducted at a group of large and new headquarters buildings in Tokyo. These include a separate building for the extensive publications division, which in 1968 was publishing about twenty newspapers and other periodicals as well as various books in the Japanese language, and a lesser number of periodicals and books in English and other foreign languages. Included among the publications is one monthly magazine, Ushio, prepared for general sale throughout the nation and distributed through normal magazine channels. In 1966, its circulation was said to be 160,000 copies, and in 1968 to have grown to 350,000 copies. The principal newspaper had a reported circulation of about 3,000,000 copies in 1966. Forthcoming publications include an autobiography of Daisaku Ikeda, the incumbent president of the sect. During 1966, Sōka Gakkai sought to find the
Elsewhere in Tokyo and throughout the whole Japanese nation are many hundreds of buildings and facilities owned by Sōka Gakkai that are used as regional headquarters and for recreational activities. For purposes of propagating its teachings, Sōka Gakkai also frequently rents community halls and auditoriums throughout the nation and rents stadiums for giant sports events and other forms of entertainment for its members. The political party associated with the sect, Kōmeitō, has its own headquarters building in Tokyo near the headquarters of Sōka Gakkai.

Religious activities center on Taisekiji, a temple complex near Mr. Fuji of the Nichiren Shōshū sect of Buddhism, several hours by train and bus from Tokyo. Lesser Nichiren Shōshū temples, many of them new, are distributed throughout the nation. A report in 1966 by Sōka Gakkai informs that about 200 new temples—identified as Nichiren Shōshū temples and not edifices of Sōka Gakkai—were constructed in the past ten years. The “spiritual” headquarters, Taisekiji, is a combination of many small and old Nichiren Shōshū buildings, some going back to the thirteenth century, and several large new buildings erected since the formation of Sōka Gakkai. Included are several old temples and a pagoda, a new lecture hall and a new reception hall, various old and new domiciles and places of training for Nichiren Shōshū priests, and many lodging houses for visiting Sōka Gakkai members. In 1966, the total number of buildings, old and new, was about thirty, and additional buildings were under construction. Plans for the future included the construction of a Grand Main Temple at Taisekiji, scheduled for completion in 1970. The sum of 100 million dollars reportedly collected from members for this purpose in 1966 should provide a temple very grand indeed for Nichiren Shōshū, which, until its association with Sōka Gakkai, had been a small and impoverished sect and presently has no large and impressive temples.

Despite the lack of any grand temple, the collection of buildings at Taisekiji is very impressive. One enters the Taisekiji complex of grounds and buildings through an elaborate temple gate and travels a long street flanked by twelve lodging houses for visitors before coming to the center of activities, where old and new buildings are densely packed. New buildings erected since 1958 dominate the scene and dwarf the older temples. These are large ferro-concrete structures that, like most recently constructed religious edifices in Japan, seek to combine ancient and modern architectural features. The two largest and most striking of these make a forceful impression on the visitor and were surely designed with this objective in mind. These are the Grand Lecture Hall, which includes a hall accommodating 5,000 persons, and a hostelry called the Grand Transient Castle, which houses 4,000 guests. Despite their grandeur, the new buildings are highly utilitarian in floor plans and building materials, as is appropriate to withstand the heavy use they receive.

According to a Sōka Gakkai representative, visitors at Taisekiji in the summer of 1964 averaged 8,000 persons daily. A sect publication in 1966 announced that visiting members had reached a daily figure of about 12,000 for the days when visitors are allowed (variously reported as 20 and 24 days each month) with a monthly total of 270,000. Unlike most other religious installations in Japan, the Taisekiji compound is open only to members. Special permission is required before outsiders are admitted, and they must ordinarily be accompanied by a sect member who serves as their guide. Entrance to many buildings is prohibited to nonmembers, and use even by members follows closely planned schedules.

Sōka Gakkai is officially described by its leaders as a lay organization of Bud-
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Dhists associated with Nichiren Shōshū (Orthodox Sect of Nichiren). To its members, to the rest of the nation, and, at least sometimes to Sōka Gakkai leaders, it is a religious movement. Its history is brief and its emergence as a powerful group dates only from the early 1950's. Its original founder, Tunesaburo Makiguchi, was a public school principal in Tokyo who had received secondary formal education in a normal school. In 1930 Makiguchi organized a voluntary association, Sōka Kyōiku Gakkai (Value Creating Education Society), to propagate a theory of education that he had formulated. The basis of Makiguchi's teaching was an essay of his own composition on "the theory of value," to which teachings of Nichiren Shōshū Buddhism were added. This informal association consisted of only a few members until after 1937, when it was formally organized. In 1941, Makiguchi's followers numbered about 3,000 persons. The society was outlawed in 1942, and Makiguchi and various other members were imprisoned in 1943 for illegal activities that included opposition to State Shinto. Makiguchi died the following year at age 74. According to most accounts, he died of malnutrition while still imprisoned. One report in 1966 of a personal interview with president Ikeda, however, informs that Makiguchi did not die in prison but was released because of his advanced age and poor health and died soon thereafter.

The activities of the society were revived by Jōsei Toda, one of the imprisoned associates of Makiguchi, after his release from prison at the end of World War II. Once also a schoolteacher and described in various Japanese accounts as the self-educated son of a fisherman, Toda revived the society under its present abbreviated name and became its president. After several years of slow growth, the society began to expand rapidly in 1951, when techniques of conversion were perfected and a great drive of conversion began. A sustained battle with Tanro, the powerful coal miners' union of Japan, over conversion of its members was one of the many indications that Sōka Gakkai had acquired much power by the mid 1950's. At the time of Toda's death in 1958, membership had grown to perhaps 750,000 persons. A new president, Daisaku Ikeda, then only 32 years of age, assumed office in 1960. During the two-year interval when no one officially served as its head, the society showed no signs of faltering. Techniques for gaining and holding members had by that time been thoroughly developed and the society had become skillfully articulated. Growth after 1960 continued at a fast pace until about 1965 when the rate of increase appeared to decline somewhat.

The history of Sōka Gakkai is curiously like that of Nichiren (1222-1282), the founder of Nichiren Shōshū, and his followers of the thirteenth century. They appear to have been equally aggressive, authoritative, intolerant, and critical of other faiths, and to have been equally hated, feared, and opposed. Like the modern Sōka Gakkai, Nichiren and his followers were often called fanatics. Precedents for certain activities of Sōka Gakkai are said also to be found in the fourteenth century in the Shin sect of Pure Land Buddhism (Jōdo Shinshū). Under the priest Rennyō, propagation was conducted by techniques like the practices of conversion (shakubuku) of Sōka Gakkai, and village groups of lay members (kō) resembling the modern small discussion groups (zadankai) of Sōka Gakkai were organized with village heads rather than priests as the leaders.

Sōka Gakkai has been loudly critical of the doctrines and activities of established sects of Buddhism other than Nichiren Shōshū and has been criticized in return, especially by Jōdo Shinshū. Sōka Gakkai does not, however, like to be called intolerant of other religions and attempts to explain its attitude toward them in a different way. The following excerpt from one of the sect's English publications,
written in characteristically faulty English, is representative. “A person who finds his friends taking poison will stop them by all means. There are times when people who are ignorant of religions follow unreasonable and illogical faith of some kinds. Those who warn such unfortunate people should not be considered intolerant.”

The relationship between Sōka Gakkai and Nichiren Shōshū is not clear, but it is certain that Nichiren Shōshū has held a status of relative obscurity as the running partner of Sōka Gakkai. Developments in 1966 suggested that Sōka Gakkai plans in the future to give the Nichiren Shōshū sect a position of greater prominence. Addresses given during the year by President Ikeda before large audiences of sect members were very deferential to Nichiren Shōshū and its head priest, and this deference is evident in other ways. Two books published in English by Sōka Gakkai in 1966 give much attention to Nichiren Shōshū. Both identify Sōka Gakkai in their titles as an affiliate of Nichiren Shōshū (that is, as Nichiren Shōshū Sokagakkai). The first of the many illustrations in one book is a large photograph of the head priest of Nichiren Shōshū; this is followed by a photograph of Ikeda, president of Sōka Gakkai. In Japanese society, a change of this kind conveys much meaning.

Other events also suggest that the status of Nichiren Shōshū is being elevated. The preface of one of the two books, a third and enlarged edition which had not included Nichiren Shōshū in its title in previous editions, explains the change in the book’s title as a move to put an end to misunderstanding regarding Sōka Gakkai’s relationship to Nichiren Shōshū and to make it clear that Sōka Gakkai is not a political party. In another publication, the altered title of this book is referred to as an “outstanding change.” This identification with Nichiren Shōshū in a seemingly subsidiary position did not occur for the first time in 1966, however; at least as early as 1964 one English publication of Sōka Gakkai was entitled Nichiren Shōshū Sokagakkai. The planned construction of a magnificent temple at Taisekiji also suggests deference to Nichiren Shōshū, since this temple, like all others, will be officially identified as an edifice of Nichiren Shōshū and not of its lay organization, Sōka Gakkai.

These developments suggest there is some substance to rumors circulating for years of strained relations between Sōka Gakkai and Nichiren Shōshū that are said to have arisen because Nichiren Shōshū felt Sōka Gakkai gave too much attention to itself, slighting Nichiren Shōshū. It is possible also that these events are part of a program of Sōka Gakkai to gain a position of respectability in the eyes of the Japanese population. Clear identification of the organization with a Buddhist sect established six centuries earlier might remove some of the stigma of newness and vulgarity.

Many rumors circulate about the wealth of Sōka Gakkai, which is obviously very substantial, and the sources of its wealth. According to Sōka Gakkai, its funds are derived from fixed contributions by members of 1,000 yen ($2.78) four times annually, from sales of publications, and from special drives among members for funds when expensive new buildings or other extraordinary facilities are needed. Special drives are apparently backed by strong sanctions. Sōka Gakkai announced that its call to members for several million dollars for erection of its Grand Reception Hall at Taisekiji, inaugurated in April, 1964, was met in only four days. A drive concluded in 1966 for a new main temple at Taisekiji was also swift. The goal of this drive is said to have been $7,000,000, but the astounding sum of $100,000,000 is said to have been collected. Additional income is derived from voluntary contributions from members, some of which are said to be large sums, and from the sale of advertising space in the sect’s numerous periodicals.
Teachings

Teachings of Sōka Gakkai are based upon part of the Lotus Sutra (in Japanese, commonly called Hokekyō) as interpreted by Nichiren in the thirteenth century and upon a writing by Makiguchi, founder of Sōka Gakkai, entitled Kachirōn (Essay on Value), which serves as a modern interpretation of part of Nichiren's teachings. This essay by Makiguchi appears to have been considerably revised by his successor, Jōsei Toda. Sect members are given instruction in some of the teachings of the Lotus Sutra, and must memorize a small part of it. Other works that are read and studied include the Shakubuki Kyōten (loosely translatable as “Manual of Conversion”), which was prepared by the Education Division of Sōka Gakkai under the direction of Toda.

Much emphasis is laid on the supremely sacred object of Nichiren Shōshū, a mandala or graphic representation of the universe, which is called honzon or gohonzon, “Principal Object of Worship.” Sōka Gakkai maintains secrecy about its sacred objects as well as other things and these are not available for inspection by non-members. The mandala in question is said to represent the universe in chart-like form by depicting in Chinese ideographs the relationship of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. Nichiren Shōshū and Sōka Gakkai hold that the mandala is the work of Nichiren's own hand; other Nichiren sects and informed outsiders say that it is not. Converts to Sōka Gakkai receive a miniature copy of the mandala, mounted in a scroll for hanging in their homes, before which they recite the sect's invocation. For the ordinary member, the meaning of the mandala seems to be quite clear; it is an object or a representation of something with supernatural potency that confers benefit upon human beings who have faith in it and follow the teachings. Sōka Gakkai publications frequently describe individual members as “enjoying the favor of gohonzon,” in gaining health or financial success. Sect publications also contain many accounts of disease and other misfortunes that strike the believers in false faiths (that is, any faith other than Nichiren Shōshū). An analysis of the Sōka Gakkai newspaper for 1960 tallies 103 such entries.14

Sacredness and importance are also attached to the simple invocation, called Dainmoku, “Great Title,” honoring the Lotus Sutra. Members are required to make the invocation twice daily. The greater the number of repetitions of the brief invocation (Namu myōdō renge kyō, “Honor the lotus sutra”), the greater the benefits received. President Ikeda has suggested as a “moderate” goal for each member 3,000 daily iterations of the invocation or about 1,000,000 in the course of a year.15

Nichiren himself as the incarnation of Buddha, various of his relics, and the Nichiren Shōshū temple, Taisekiji, are also held as sacred. The Buddhism of Sōka Gakkai is said to be limited to the teachings of Nichiren, thus ignoring various elements of Buddhism elsewhere important. Taisekiji and its honzon are the well-spring of supernatural power, and the faithful must visit Taisekiji and must make invocations before their honzon.

According to the statements of a Sōka Gakkai member who is also a priest of the Nichiren Shōshū sect, “A person who wishes to become a believer must go to a Nichiren Shō temple for a ceremony much as a Christian must accept baptism. He is then a member and receives a copy of the object of worship, the honzon, which he enshrines in the family altar. Morning and evening he chants the sacred formula before this altar and offers prayers for whatever he wishes for his daily life.... The object of worship is not a statue or image. It is made of paper, but what is written on it is not for publication.”16

It is worthy of special note that the leaders of Sōka Gakkai are not regarded as divine. The founder, whose teachings appear to be increasingly altered, has shrunk.
into relative obscurity. A monument at Taisekiji in honor of Jōsei Toda, the second president of Sōka Gakkai, is modest as compared with the grand structures honoring religious personages elsewhere in Japan. In the teachings of Sōka Gakkai, Nichiren is the only mortal who has been elevated to a position of true divinity. The modern leaders appear to be regarded as inspired, mortal interpreters of the holy sage Nichiren, who are revered but are not divine.

The teachings of Nichiren in the thirteenth century were extremely simple and for the ordinary member consisted primarily of a call for unswerving faith in the power of Buddha and the Lotus Sutra, faith in Nichiren himself, and constant repetition of the simple invocation. This seems to be essentially what is expected of the modern member of Sōka Gakkai, plus dedicated efforts in behalf of the sect. Faith and commitment to the idea that only Nichiren Shōshū teachings are valid is demanded first. Members must sever any connections they might have with other religions and destroy religious objects of other faiths that are in their possession, a requirement that Sōka Gakkai fails to mention in its English publications and which probably does not appear in Japanese publications for general distribution. After conversion, fuller understanding of Nichiren doctrine is to come from subsequent instruction. In the meantime, one who has faith and performs the few ritual tasks required is a member in good standing. Nichiren Shōshū priests continue to perform ancient ceremonies of their sect, but most of these are acts in which Sōka Gakkai members do not customarily participate.

Two grand ceremonies of Nichiren Shōshū are held annually in which Sōka Gakkai members may participate. One ceremony, conducted in the spring, is called Omushihbarai (“Airing the scrolls,” literally, “Driving out the insects”), and centers on an examination of the sect’s mandalā and other ancient religious documents said to have been written by Nichiren. The second great ceremony, conducted in the fall, commemorates the death of Nichiren. Priests of Nichiren Shōshū nightly conduct an ancient ceremony at midnight, a prayer for peace.

The dogma of Nichiren Shōshū alone is quite inadequate as an explanation of the doctrinal appeal of Sōka Gakkai. The Nichiren contribution is an important declaration of faith, of commitment to the orders of leader-interpreters, objectified in simple acts that any human being is capable of performing with little instruction. The Buddhist ideal of attaining harmony with the universe is expressed in simple and much altered form. The goal of faith and of the required acts of religion is practical benefit, a goal that Sōka Gakkai teachings strongly emphasize. Although present in Nichiren dogma, this idea receives much greater elaboration in Makiguchi’s Essay on Value, an essay that may itself be described as an advanced case of value judgment. According to this writing, the goal of human life is happiness, and man finds happiness if he has the proper concept of Value. Truth is not in itself a value or ideal to be sought in human life. Truth is unchanging and may be harmful rather than beneficial. It is valuable only to the extent that it serves man practically. As a guide for life it must be replaced by benefit, which is a relative and changing concept. Value consists of three related ingredients or sub-values: goodness, beauty, and benefit or gain. Man’s world of experience is to be judged and its contents found worthy on the basis of whether or not objects, ideas, and emotions hold these three sub-values (which compose Value). Beauty is an emotional, sensory value; goodness means moral behavior, acts that contribute to the common good. Most important of all is benefit. What lacks benefit, wholly human benefit or gain, is undesirable as a basis for any kind of human conduct. Beauty and goodness are then lesser “ingredients” of Value since they must also convey benefit or gain.
In some passages of the essay Value seems described wholly as material gain to which beauty and goodness are poorly-connected and unimportant appendages:

In order to reach the goal of life, that is ideal happiness, man seeks after that which has Value. In doing so it is inconceivable that he would disregard Value, which is inherent in advantage, benefit, profit, convenience, in other words, gain or economic value. It is not surprising that this phase of happiness, especially gain or economic value, cannot be ignored. Yet, strange as it may seem, philosophers generally have seldom, if ever, regarded it as an integral part of happiness and included it in the criteria for happiness. Consequently, their principles are academic and remote from the actualities of life.

The Principle of Value makes the basic ingredient of happiness: gain, goodness and beauty. This alone is a trustworthy standard for determining the ideal life. In this connection beauty or aesthetic value describes the momentary value which has an emotional quality derived from our five senses. Essentially it is what one likes or dislikes. Likewise, gain or economic value, that is, profit, refers to the quality of being able to support and prolong the life of an individual in a way that beauty cannot. Goodness or moral value is the term that is applied to the volitional actions of an individual that contribute in any way to the development of the community of which he is a constituent member. This corresponds to what is called public welfare. The opposites of these three are respectively ugliness, loss, and evil.

A volitional action is regarded by the individual as either gain or loss, depending upon whether or not the community of which he is a member considers it to be good or evil, right or wrong. Consequently, an action that is destructive from the community point of view is never regarded by the individual as profitable. Moreover, that which is regarded highly in one's own community may be considered evil in another. This is as true in regard to nations, societies, classes and groups as it is for the individual, in which case, the criterion of value is gain or loss, not good or evil.¹⁸

These teachings may be described as the apogee of an idea widely current in modern Japan, that happiness is a proper goal of life. Sōka Gakkai exalts happiness and well-being, and provides the simplest of formulas for attaining them. Its deceased president Toda is reported to have described the sect as "a happiness-making machine."¹⁹ Lack of the proper faith (that is, any faith other than Nichiren Shōshū) is the cause of all evils and misfortunes of the individual, the nation, and the world; proper faith not only corrects what is wrong but assures a successful future.

The appeal of Sōka Gakkai teachings then is not to reason, but to emotions, wishes, and wants. The adherent commits himself to the direction of others, performs his simple acts of faith, and in exchange is promised wholly practical benefits. The publications of Sōka Gakkai repeatedly show that the meaning of faith includes faith in the wisdom of the leaders of the organization and unswerving obedience to them. Any acts of Sōka Gakkai—in practical terms, any acts of its leaders—are apparently condoned by the Essay on Value on the grounds that they have value for Sōka Gakkai if not for other human beings.

A perceptive Japanese scholar observes a trend of change in the teachings of Sōka Gakkai: "Until five years ago it taught that membership would make the poor rich and cure all kinds of disease; the source of every ill... lay in the existence of other religions. Nowadays it tends to eschew such direct promises of material benefits and to stress instead the human happiness that membership will bring."²⁰ Sōka Gakkai publications continue, nevertheless, to contain many statements and claims concerning benefits of health, wealth and happiness that membership in the sect and faith in its teachings will bring. Testimonials of benefits received continue to be an important part of various of the sect's publications.

There is some danger that the preceding description conveys the false idea of a creed directed wholly toward satisfying worldly wants of the individual. Such a creed would find no favor among members of Sōka Gakkai. The teachings of Sōka Gakkai
do indeed promise individual, practical gain but this is to be reached only through group goals—the improvement not only of Japanese society but of a united society of all mankind—and only through group (Sōka Gakkai) activities. One's original motives for conversion are undoubtedly individual and thus selfish considerations, but conversion and subsequent activity in behalf of the group are conceived as directed by noble, inspiring, philanthropic purpose. Rather than being an organization of coldly calculating strivers for selfish gain, Sōka Gakkai is a closely united and cooperative group impelled by exalted values that transcend the individual.

Organization

A description of the internal structure of Sōka Gakkai published in 1964 lists 74 named types of units, of which the office of president (kōchō) forms one.21 Another more detailed account published in the same year lists approximately 100 different kinds of units, of which some are special-interest groups that members enter voluntarily and certain others are administrative organs.22 A description by Sōka Gakkai itself of its organization in 1966 shows over 70 named kinds of units, but this description appears to be incomplete.23 The sect is organized into three main lines, administrative, membership, and cultural activities, and is presided over by a president, councillors, directors, and a number of advisory committees that includes a committee on Rewards and Punishments (not listed in Sōka Gakkai's own description, referred to above, of its organization). There are thus multiple lines of authority rather than a single line. If special-interest groups and various administrative committees and bureaus are omitted from consideration, the organization may be described as pyramidal, proceeding from the smallest regional unit of 10 families (kumi) on to larger regional units (han, chiku, shibu, sōshibu, hombu). As of September, 1963, members in Japan were reportedly organized into 455 shibu, 85 sōshibu, and 25 regional hombu. The shibu then embraced about 10,000 “families” each. In 1961 the number of shibu had been 250; of sōshibu, 36. The regional hombu did not then exist and the term hombu meant sect headquarters.24 According to a Sōka Gakkai publication, the number of major divisions in Japan in May, 1966 corresponding with the shibu, sōshibu, and regional hombu of 1963 were 460, 113, and 28, respectively, and local chapters totalled 1,793.25

Lay members who become instructors in dogma are formally organized into grades that bear titles usually restricted to the academic world. Sōka Gakkai runs the greatest range of grades and titles, a total of six, ranging downward from professor to assistant lecturer. Ordinary members, who are not teachers or who have not yet joined the ranks of teachers, make a seventh category of membership. Members are strongly encouraged to undertake the training necessary for appointment to the various grades of instructorship. These lay teachers rather than the relatively small number of Nichiren Shōshū priests are the important force in proselytizing and in teaching dogma. In 1964, Sōka Gakkai reported that approximately 500,000 people were enrolled in its Education Department, and in 1966 gave the number as 1,500,000. The Education Department, formed in the early 1960’s, is concerned chiefly with this lay teaching of sect doctrine and techniques of shakubuku, “forced” conversion.

Shakubuku has frequently been described in the Japanese press as consisting of sustained pressure—sometimes called “brainwashing” in the English-language newspapers—imposed upon one person by a large group of proselytizers. Conversion has also been described as depending strongly upon inducing the subject to state the problems that he faces in life. If he goes this far, conversion is said usually to fol-
Every member of Sōka Gakkai is expected to proselytize and to meet assigned quotas of converts.

Appointment to positions as lay instructors is based upon the successful completion of recently formulated examinations in matters of doctrine. As the result of examinations given nationally in March, 1964, over 500,000 persons were given one or another of these titles. The vast majority held the lowest rank and only 141 were given the title of "professor." In 1966, the number holding the lowest rank was said to be 800,000 and those holding the highest rank, 519.

The special appeal of this training program appears to be in the immediate rewards of rank and status and the fact that the rewards are based entirely upon personal achievement as measured by written examinations. It is said not to be entirely unusual for a university graduate to fail in an exam while another person with only the minimal compulsory education of nine years is successful.

Members of Sōka Gakkai are widely distributed throughout the nation but tend expectably to cluster most heavily in the urban centers of population. The hierarchical, cell-like units into which members are organized are often described by Japanese scholars as resembling a military organization, in part because of their structure and in part because they employ some military nomenclature. Conduct of group affairs that involve any substantial number of persons is highly disciplined. Outside observers often speak of its members as being subject to "military discipline" because they act upon orders given in military fashion by the leaders, and it is impossible to avoid this impression when one witnesses activities of Sōka Gakkai members that involve any substantial number of people.

Enmeshed with the vertical structure described above is an elaborate organization of sub-units that are "horizontal," that is, groupings which necessarily involve some degree of hierarchy but in which an atmosphere of equality prevails and is strongly encouraged. An American observer states: "A new member is registered with the group to which the person who won him to the faith belongs, and that person is responsible to see that he remains in the faith. It is this dual organization pattern, consisting of horizontal relations and vertical organizational relations, that accounts in no small measure for the strength of the Society." Important ties go far beyond the proselytizer-convert relation, however. As with all of the other large, new sects, Sōka Gakkai has discussion groups, which it recognizes as being one of its most important elements of organization. Regional groups, and groups based upon age, sex, and special recreational or other interests also provide powerful bonds of unity.

Separate men's and women's divisions are well developed. The Youths' Division is kept separate from the regional headquarters for direction of many of its activities, has its own leaders, and is the focus of much attention. In 1966, Sōka Gakkai claimed that membership in its Youths' Division numbered over three million persons, of whom about 62% were said to be male. As the Youths' Division increased in membership, its subdivisions were correspondingly increased. In 1966 these totalled six, based upon age and educational status, and covered a range of members varying in age from about six to thirty years but consisting mostly of adolescents and young adults. A membership of 100,000 was claimed in its subdivision for college students in 1966. College students who are members appear to be drawn chiefly from the less prestigious colleges and universities. Tokyo University, the most prestigious university in the nation, is poorly represented among members, and Nihon Daigaku, a large institution with an undistinguished reputation, appears to be best represented.

The Youths' Division has extremely well developed programs of sports and many other pleasurable activities. Although the sect's claims of membership in this division...
are undoubtedly exaggerated, the Youths' Division is unquestionably both large and vigorous. The nation's largest stadiums are rented for its major sports events and pageants, which are unusually well organized and colorful spectacles that include motorcycle parades, organized dancing, gymnastics, performances by a symphony orchestra, fife and drum bands, baton twirlers, and much else. Sub-units of Sōka Gakkai concerned with sports and other forms of recreation are particularly well developed for members of all ages. A wide array of forms of recreation including aesthetics is available to any member and, year by year, the range of these activities expands.

The relationship between the Sōka Gakkai convert and the person who induced him to enter the faith needs special mention. A strong bond evidently exists, but Sōka Gakkai is well aware of the latent danger of factionalism stemming therefrom and has taken strong measures to counteract them. When Sōka Gakkai made its first great spurt of growth in 1951, steps appear to have been taken to prevent the growth of cliques among active proselytizers and their converts. Toda, the president of the time, is reported to have warned members that Sōka Gakkai would not tolerate personal ties that endangered organizational unity. He inveighed sharply against use of the term kyōka-oya (“converting parent”), which had been in use for some years, saying that the relationship it implied was improper. Strict rules were laid down at this time to prevent the emergence of cliques consisting of kyōka-oya and their converts. On August 31, 1951, Toda is said first to have warned members about the relationship between converter and convert, saying that it was bad and wrong for the convert to look upon his converter as a parent, teacher, and superior; that the proper lines of authority were through the heads of formally organized divisions and subdivisions; and that kyōka-oya and division heads should not be mixed (that is, powerful converters should not be division heads with vested authority). Toda is reported to have said, “We will punish those who use the word kyōka-oya and control their converts to serve their own interests.” In December, 1953 strict rules were instituted that prohibited “selfish interests.” Members were forbidden to borrow money from or lend money to other members, to sell insurance and the like to other members, to engage with members in cooperative business enterprises, and to use membership in any way to promote personal political aims. These policies have been maintained under the administration of Ikeda, who has also inveighed against selfish use of membership, feigned belief in Nichiren Buddhism for personal gain, and autocratic behavior on the part of leaders. Ikeda has cautioned members that their relations with one another should be democratic, for all are equally representatives of Nichiren Buddhism. Like Toda, Ikeda has also threatened malefactors with punishment, making it clear that the punishment would be divinely levied and frightful. Members are nevertheless encouraged to do business with other members of Sōka Gakkai so long as this is not done in a “selfish” way, that is, in a way that does not endanger solidarity.

The organization of Sōka Gakkai has been aptly described as a dynamic and skillful blend that promotes both interests of the individual and of the total organism. One of the features of the organization and operation of Sōka Gakkai that has been important to its success is the special opportunity it provides for the individual to gain social prestige. Membership gives a modest place in the sun to every member, and it also provides opportunities for rising in status. For over a decade Sōka Gakkai has opposed fictive "parent-child" (oyabun-kobun) relations in its organization, and it cannot be described as paternalistic. Instead, an untraditional kind of democracy prevails with regard to gaining positions of importance. Positions as lay instructors in
dogma and positions with managerial responsibility rest first and foremost upon individual ability. We have noted that past leaders of Sōka Gakkai have not been deified. Positions of control are not passed on from leader to disciple or from father to son. The member who has qualities of leadership has opportunities for rising in status that are probably unparalleled elsewhere in Japan. Ikeda, the president of Sōka Gakkai, seems to have been chosen for this office by high-ranking peers and associates on the basis of personal merit. His appointment to the presidency is said to have resulted from his fine service in earlier years as a leader in the Youths' Division. Himself a high-school graduate, he has since surrounded himself with junior executives who include many college graduates.

A brief biography of Ikeda written by a journalist informs that he is one of eight children of an impoverished family and suffered poor health during his childhood. Ikeda became a member of Sōka Gakkai at the age of 19 at a time when he was suffering from tuberculosis. He lives an austere life of devoted effort for Sōka Gakkai that leaves little time for any other kind of activity.

Such information as is available on other high-ranking officials of Sōka Gakkai also describes austerity, devoted striving for the group, and, for several men, histories of tuberculosis or other misfortune at the time they were converted. Officials of Sōka Gakkai are paid salaries that are very modest as compared with those of men in comparable positions in the commercial world. In 1966, only 91 of the sect’s officials were said to derive their livelihood from salaries paid by the sect. (This may be compared with another non-profit organization of national membership, the General Council of Labor Unions [Sōhyō], which is reported as having a membership in 1966 of 3,850,000 persons and a staff of 362 salaried officials.) All other positions in the Sōka Gakkai hierarchy, including many important posts, were held by laymen who gained their livelihood in other ways. The beginning salary of a new college graduate added to the administrative staff was reported as equal to that of a low-paid, young clerk (24,000 yen or about $67 monthly), and the working hours were said to be very long.

There is no doubt that officers of Sōka Gakkai are dedicated to the organization. The small size of the salaried staff is made possible in part because of the immense load of work that each officer assumes. One high-ranking official, Einosuke Akiya, in 1966 held the multiple positions of vice-chairman of the board of directors, director of the public relations bureau, councillor for the youths’ division, general editor of the principal sect newspaper, director of a separate publishing firm (Hōshoin) owned by Sōka Gakkai, and managing director of the sect’s large concert association. A journalistic account interprets this practice of assigning topmost officers to many important and time-consuming positions as a planned device to keep them from becoming bureaucrats. According to this account, high officials of Sōka Gakkai are left only four hours daily for sleep.

Any organization as large and powerful as Sōka Gakkai offers many positions of prestige and authority in addition to those of highest officialdom. Although there is considerable justification for labeling Sōka Gakkai as the “radical right,” its mode of recruiting personnel for positions of authority seems radically in opposition to Japanese tradition. The controls it has placed on the development of kin-like relations between converts and proselytizers also oppose tradition. When the organization was smaller, this relationship seems to have been encouraged and to have been very useful in recruiting and cementing members.

Much else in the organization of Sōka Gakkai falls well within the boundaries of Japanese tradition, familiar to all members. Young people’s associations, women’s
associations, and other common-interest groups concerned with sports and recreation are all old and familiar forms. If regarded as a common-interest association centered on religion, Sōka Gakkai itself is a traditional form with ancient predecessors in Japanese history. Sōka Gakkai's departures from tradition—in such matters as the mode of recruiting key personnel and the prohibition it has placed on fictive kin relationships—have come about only when they were obviously desirable or necessary to ensure continued existence and growth. Various of the circumstances of the growth of the sect and of the nature of its membership have doubtless fostered the emergence of a social group that places a great premium on individual ability and discourages personal ties. Among these are large size, a membership drawn from urban residents with no ramified ties of kinship, an immediate need for many talented leaders, and a short period of existence that has not yet allowed any great development of chains of personal bonds that might influence the recruitment of key personnel.

One wonders, however, how well and how long Sōka Gakkai may resist the temptation to base its organization of executive and other key personnel on the familial and personal ties so well established elsewhere in Japanese society. One account of the relationships of Sōka Gakkai leaders (described to me as false in a personal communication from a sect representative) informs that there are already ties of kinship among a number of the executives brought about through marriage to each other's sisters.41

A reputable Japanese magazine42 in 1966 carried an article on a national chain of bars, numbering nearly one hundred and said to be increasing rapidly, that are described as using the "phenomenal merchandising techniques of Sōka Gakkai." Ninety-five percent of the 12,500 personnel of the bars was reported to be members of Sōka Gakkai. The bars all bear a common name, Yōrō no Taki (Care-of-the-Aged Waterfall), derived from an ancient legend of filial piety. The features of operation likened to those of Sōka Gakkai are profit sharing among employees, the ordering of personnel into ranks, replete with badges, resembling those of a military organization, promotion in rank dependent entirely upon personal ability regardless of age, sex, education, and seniority, an inspirational meeting of the staff of each bar for thirty minutes at the beginning of the day (which includes marching while beating time with the hands), and another similar meeting of thirty minutes when the bars close.

Any description of the organization of Sōka Gakkai tends quickly to become out-dated. As membership has grown, subdivisions have correspondingly grown. New activities are continually being added and these are accompanied by the establishment of new organs or subdivisions. The structure of Sōka Gakkai is unusually fluid, and the leaders have shown remarkable skill in meeting problems of growth in size and expansion of activities. The bonds of personal affect are continually maintained despite the mushroom growth, and these, coupled with clearly defined channels for exercising authority, foster a tightly knit organization that is probably capable of continued growth provided that the reservoir of citizens amenable to conversion is not exhausted.

One of the recently established and important features of the organization of Sōka Gakkai is the use of what a Japanese observer calls a "depressed pyramidal type" of organization in connection with the teaching of dogma.43 Excerpts translated from the Japanese account follow:44
The learning of dogma is done at fixed meetings at various organizational levels. There are meetings of ordinary members, squad leaders, of regional heads, and so on, and these are usually informal discussions (zadankai). Each of these meetings is attended by a kanbu (a type of executive), of which there are reportedly over 10,000 throughout the nation. This type of system of communication may be called the “depressed pyramidal type” because the top members (kanbu) periodically or very often come into direct contact with the lowest echelon, and this mode of communication is unique to the organization of Sōka Gakkai. The meetings take place between 6:30 and 8:30 p.m., when the heads of families would otherwise be at home drinking beer and watching television. The theory of Sōka Gakkai is that if every kanbu attends a meeting with an average of 100 persons in attendance, the total number of participants in meetings led by the kanbu will be one million in one night. Thus, ten million people may be taught in one month if meetings are held at intervals of three days or ten times monthly. These meetings also provide direct two-way communication, so that a kanbu can detect in the bud any anti-Sōka Gakkai movement that there might be. The function of a kanbu is like that of the position of Coordinator established by Tokyo Electric Power Company. This system also inhibits the growth of bureaucracy. It is said that officials of the U.S.S.R. have shown an interest in the structure and operation of Sōka Gakkai.

Activities
The stated aim of Sōka Gakkai is to make the Buddhism of Nichiren Shōshū the religion of the entire world. All activities of its members are held to be religious activities. Control of every aspect of human life is sought. These ideas and goals are presented with an authenticating aura of conventional religiosity derived from a long-established religion within a familiar Japanese tradition. Acts expected or demanded of Sōka Gakkai members that are religious in a conventional sense are extremely important devices for promoting social solidarity and deep-dyed identification with the group. The invocations, singing, and many other joint endeavors of groups of people, all conducted in impressive surroundings and with an air of absolute authority, do much to secure solidarity. Addresses by leaders, writings in sect publications, and the lyrics of sect songs are inspirational, as is appropriate for a missionizing sect, and give members a sense of purpose. The following translation of one of the songs, composed in 1961, serves as an illustration:

SONG OF A NEW AGE
(SHINSEIKI NO UTA)

1. Noble and bold are young eagles in flight.
   Through heaven’s arch unfurled.
   Firm is our trust in our leader’s might—
   Pillar of the world!
   For our brothers in misery,
   Let us strive anew.
   Save them all through our faith,
   Merciful true!

2. Where plays the dolphin wild and free,
   Resounds our leader’s command.
   Over the face of the seven seas,
   Forth to every land.
   Know our firm and steadfast faith
   Makes the whole world one.
   March along—now’s the time!
   We have but begun.
3. When e'er the lion raises his voice,
   Even the earth trembles too.
   So shall it be as we answer the call:
   Kosen-rufu! [World conversion]
   With the sword of truth and power,
   Banish evil's sway.
   Built on faith, it is our
   Newly dawning day.

Small discussion groups (zadankai) held in the intimate atmosphere of homes of members of local subdivisions give the individual member warm companionship, a feeling of importance, and assurance that his problems will be solved, whether they are illness, domestic or financial difficulties, or whatever. Personal testimonies to the miraculous recovery of health and the solving of financial and other problems as a result of faith are a feature of these and other informal meetings. Although the existence of these practices was denied by a representative of the sect, it appears that at one time and perhaps today Sōka Gakkai made some use of magical medical formulae for critically ill members and a small copy of its sacred mandala was sometimes worn about the neck as a protective amulet.46

To provide visual reinforcement of their faith, members have the impressive symbolism built up through the centuries by the Nichiren Shōshū sect and its forebears. To this are added numerous modern symbols—including flags, uniforms of various kinds, identifying lapel badges, and impressive buildings. The member is expected—in effect, required—to visit the religious headquarters, Taisekiji, at the foot of Mt. Fuji, Japan's most spectacular and sacred mountain. Special trains are run from Tokyo to a station near Taisekiji. It was necessary in the early 1960's for the Japan National Railways to lay new tracks for part of the distance to accommodate the large number of pilgrims bound for the spiritual headquarters.

The pilgrim proceeds to Taisekiji by organized prearrangement with other members of a group, which is identified by pennants during all parts of the journey. At his destination he encounters a large and impressive group of buildings, is housed and fed, and is given intensive indoctrination that is designed to secure wholehearted commitment. A stated goal of Sōka Gakkai during 1964 was “to successfully perform the three million members' visit to the Taisekiji, head temple of Nichiren Shōshū faith, to commemorate the completion of the Dai-Kyakuden, Grand Reception Hall,”17 as well as give intensive instruction in the practice of daily prayer and training members in “faith.” This goal was said to have been reached in 1965.

Certain Nichiren Shōshū symbols that seem inappropriate in modern context appear to have been deemphasized in recent years, and this trend may represent a part of Sōka Gakkai's efforts to present a good image to the Japanese nation and to the world. The sacred Onikuge, said to be a tooth of Nichiren himself preserved still living from the thirteenth century, is an example. According to tradition, a small piece of tissue clung to the tooth when Nichiren removed it, and this tissue continues to grow. When the age of enlightenment, of total world conversion to Nichiren Shōshū Buddhism occurs, the tooth will be completely surrounded by living tissue. The tooth was displayed at a ceremony conducted in 1952 to commemorate the seven-hundredth anniversary of Nichiren Shōshū and again in 1958 when the great lecture hall at Taisekiji was inaugurated. The tooth has not, however, figured prominently in more recent proselytizing activities and it seems never to be mentioned in English publications of the sect. It is possible, however, that
even this esoteric relic may find ready acceptance, given total commitment to the teachings of Nichiren Shōshū. The Sōka Gakkai official who guided me about Taisekiji in 1964—a man under thirty years of age who identified himself as a graduate of Tokyo Gaikokugo University—talked of the Onikuge in a way that gave clear evidence of his faith in its authenticity.

Since Sōka Gakkai regards all activities of life as being within the realm of religion, there is no direction in which its guiding principles would inhibit its movement. An extract from one of President Daisaku Ikeda’s essays in 1964 reads: 48

The purpose of the Sōka Gakkai lies in the attainment of Kosen-rufu, propagation of True Buddhism throughout the country, and further to the entire world. From a cultural viewpoint, Kosen-rufu means the construction of a highly civilized nation. Religion should be the base of all cultural activities. In this sense, the Sōka Gakkai aims at unprecedentedly flowery culture, the Third Civilization.

Nowadays, the cultural activities of the Sōka Gakkai cover a wide variety of fields such as politics, economics, culture, education, public opinion, publication, sports, arts, and academic researches. These activities were started after the formation of the Cultural Bureau in 1961, one year after the inauguration of the third president Daisaku Ikeda. The year 1964 is very significant in that the development of the Society has entered the vital stage of attaining Kosen-rufu. Now the Buddhist philosophy will be applied to every field of society as the basic idea (to) establish public welfare and perfect democracy.

Although Sōka Gakkai presently endeavors to enter almost every realm of life, in secular activities it first gave emphasis to things having wide appeal for its members—athletics, art, music, and the theater. No important part of the membership is slighted in this respect, and pleasurable events have included festivals honoring aged people and children. In addition to the activities in sports and aesthetics in which they themselves participate as performers, members may attend musical concerts, ballet and opera performances, and other theatrical performances by famous professional entertainers engaged by various sub-organizations of Sōka Gakkai.

As the years have passed, the non-religious activities of Sōka Gakkai have not only broadened but have also become much grander in scale in each particular. In very recent years, professional entertainments sponsored by the Concert Association of Sōka Gakkai have included performances by famous European and American entertainers. Among those reported in 1966 as engaged for performances in the future were the La Scala opera troupe, the Novosibirsk State Theater of Opera, and the New York City Ballet. The pleasurable events have also been given a more elegant name. Since about 1964, large meetings of the sect featuring mostly pageantry, music, and athletics have been called “Cultural Festivals.”

In the late 1950’s another trend became evident in what we may call the secular activities of Sōka Gakkai. At this time it entered politics in Japan, and since that time it has begun various additional activities that are not recreational. An organ called the Culture Bureau was formed in 1961. In 1966, this bureau was composed of five sub-departments, Education, Public Opinion, Fine Arts, Economics, and Science. The Education Department is concerned with improving public education, and announced plans to establish a high school in 1968 and a university in 1971. The Public Opinion Department (Genronbu, a name formerly translated into English in Sōka Gakkai publications with greater accuracy as “Public Speech Division”) aims to create public opinion rather than to determine its trends. Goals of the Departments of Economics and Fine Arts are to improve conditions in those realms of human activity. The poorly developed Science Department is composed of a small number of college and university professors in the physical and social sciences and aims “to return learning to the common man.” Plans for the near future include the
constructing of a large building to be called the Soka Culture Center which will be the headquarters of the Culture Bureau. Some consideration has also been given to forming a national labor union under the direction of Soka Gakkai. Soka Gakkai refers to its Concert Association as one of its "cultural bodies," of which two others exist, the Institute of Oriental Science, which appears as yet to be in a formative stage, and the Asian People's Association, formed in the early 1960's for the purpose of "promoting cultural exchange among Asian nations."19

In 1966, another of the budding developments was the addition of a program of counseling to solve individual, personal problems of members. For this purpose, attempts were being made to recruit a staff of counselors from the college students and college graduates in the youths' division.

Activities directly connected with organizational goals of Soka Gakkai are expectably abundant on the local level, and these activities of local chapters are integrated with overall objectives through periodic regional and national meetings of various divisions. Extensive use is made of town halls and other public facilities throughout the nation for large convocations.

The political activities of Soka Gakkai need special mention, as these more than anything else have raised it to national and international attention. Soka Gakkai first entered Japanese politics in 1956 and by 1959 had attracted wide national attention because of its successes as well as by various irregular practices of securing votes. In 1962, Soka Gakkai formed its own political party, Komei Seiji Remmei (known in abbreviated form as Koseiren), to conduct its political campaigns. In the general elections of 1963, offices were won by nearly all of its candidates, who were, of course, members of Soka Gakkai. As of March, 1964, its members held 1,171 elective posts in local, prefectural, and national governmental assemblies. Of this number, 15 were members of the upper house of the National Diet, the House of Councillors, who were officially given the name Komeikai (Clean Government Society) by Soka Gakkai. In May, 1964, Soka Gakkai announced that in addition to candidates for other offices, 30 members would run for office in the lower house of the Diet, the House of Representatives, in the next election. At the same time, its president announced that its political department was being "dissolved" (presumably as a protection against legal action for violating the constitutional provision prohibiting religion in government):20 "From now on, we want Koseiren to fight completely unhampered—with no holds barred. Soka Gakkai as a purely religious organization without a Political Department will continue to strive in its religious activities and in conversion work—as a supporting organization for Koseiren." Officially dedicated from its beginning toward removing corruption from government, Soka Gakkai announced that its efforts along this line would continue. The goal was changed, however, to the achievement of buppō minshū shugi ("Buddhist democracy") instead of the earlier ōbutsu myōgō, which literally means that government and Buddhism are one.21 In November, 1964 inaugural ceremonies were held for the "new" party, officially separated from Soka Gakkai and bearing the new name Kōmeitō (Clean Government Party), and a headquarters building for the party was erected soon thereafter in an area of Tokyo near the general headquarters of Soka Gakkai. Since the formation of Kōmeitō, Soka Gakkai has often denied that it is a political party and has stated that it only "supports" a political party.

By 1966, the rapid growth of Kōmeitō members in elective office seemed to have slowed somewhat but the number elected still represented a substantial growth over 1964. In 1966 the number of Soka Gakkai members in the lower house of the Diet had grown from 15 to 20, and the total number of members elected to posts in
local, prefectural and national governmental assemblies had grown from 1,171 to 1,296. In July, 1966, Kōmeitō announced the names of 32 candidates for the next general election of members of the House of Representatives of the national Diet. Of these, 25 won offices in the elections held in January, 1967 and votes cast for Kōmeitō candidates totaled 2,472,371, representing 5.4% of the nation's voters.52 In May, 1967 the number of Kōmeitō members holding local, regional, and national elective posts had risen to 1,434, and in January, 1968 the number was reported again to have risen sharply to 1,999.53

In various elections, Kōmeitō members have won the votes of citizens who are not members of Sōka Gakkai, but it is uncertain just how large this number of votes might be. In the election of members of the House of Councillors (lower house) of the Diet in July, 1965, Kōmeitō candidates were given 5,097,173 votes, 13.5% of the total cast, of which an unknown but fairly considerable part represented citizens who were not members of Sōka Gakkai. The reputation of politics and politicians in Japan is said to be helpful to Kōmeitō candidates. The average citizen of Japan looks upon politics and politicians with distrust, and assumes that most politicians are dishonest and self-seeking. Successful candidates from Kōmeitō seem generally to have won for themselves reputations while in office of honesty and unselfish service, a circumstance that may materially aid the party in the future.

The platform of Kōmeitō includes various items of strong appeal to the Japanese citizenry, especially local issues. On an international level these include striving for peace, and, on a domestic level, the freeing of government from corruption and a middle-of-the-road policy in most matters. Some highly specific domestic issues are particularly appealing and undoubtedly win more votes than any international issue. In 1966 these were: a house for each family; reducing the cost of foodstuffs; reducing educational expenses; checking the rising cost of public utilities; establishing a ministry for aiding enterprises of medium and small size which are hard pressed by competition from large industrial and commercial concerns; and stabilizing farming to prepare farmers for sudden drops in the prices of crops.54 In view of the Kōmeitō record of success, it is not surprising that in 1966 both of the dominant political parties, the Liberal Democrats and the Socialists, were strongly seeking its support in backing their candidates for the gubernatorial election of Tokyo in April, 1967. Kōmeitō supported neither but ran its own candidate. Although the Kōmeitō candidate ran far behind those of the two major parties (601,527 votes of a total of 4,948,998),55 once again Sōka Gakkai demonstrated that it has great strength.

Various observers have pointed out that Sōka Gakkai has followed a political strategy calculated to create an impression of great strength.50 The seeking of political office began modestly on a local level in regions where success was assured by the presence of many members and the sect has subsequently put up candidates for office, high or low, only when the odds seemed much in their favor. The number of successful candidates has been very high, and this has created in Japan an impression of great strength. In the election of members of the House of Representatives held in January, 1967, for example, the Communist Party polled nearly as many votes as Kōmeitō but ran candidates in all prefectures, even those in which it was very poorly represented by members, and was successful in winning only five seats (as compared with Kōmeitō's twenty-five).57

Initial steps toward world expansion have been taken by Sōka Gakkai. Since 1960, the president and other officials have made many trips abroad to many parts of the
world, and a number of "chapters" exist in various countries, mostly in the United States.

**Membership**

Total membership in Sōka Gakkai is a matter of much speculation. The sect advertises statistics on membership, but these are often inconsistent and they are generally discredited by outsiders. In 1966, claims of membership varied between 10 and 15 million people. Membership is, however, customarily stated on the basis of the family as a unit, and over five million families were said to be members in 1966. It is certain that "family" membership in Sōka Gakkai often consists of only one person and that totals for both families and individuals are overstated. The claimed circulation in 1964 of the sect's principal newspaper, *Seikyō Shimbun*, published thrice weekly, was 2,500,000, at a time when a membership of ten or more millions was claimed. Informed opinion of outsiders generally placed the membership in 1966 as five to six million individuals, of which a much smaller number were truly active "core" members. These figures may represent some minimizing because of wishful thinking on the part of "informed opinion," which usually comes from people who look upon Sōka Gakkai with disfavor.

Recourse to statistics on Nichiren Shōshū members does not give an answer to the question of the actual membership of Sōka Gakkai, and it does not explain the relationship between the two organizations. It does, however, show a startling growth in Nichiren Shōshū membership. One of the smallest Buddhist sects of Japan before World War II, Nichiren Shōshū remained small until about 1960. In 1920, its membership was reported as 66,000. In 1946, 16 years after the formation of Sōka Gakkai, the number was 128,500. By 1959, it had increased to 483,000 and by 1960, to 1,024,712. In 1962, the figure was reported as 2,094,307, and, inexplicably, in 1965 it had risen to 15,234,136. Although membership in Nichiren Shōshū is sometimes described by Sōka Gakkai representatives as optional, it seems evident that membership in the two associations generally coincides. The enormous increase over previous years reported for 1965 probably represents some formula of multiplying "family" units to arrive at membership counted by individuals. A high-ranking official of Sōka Gakkai describes the sect as being like a kō of Nichiren Shōshū, an association of lay believers following the teachings of Nichiren, and that Nichiren Shōshū has given the president of Sōka Gakkai the official title of Daikōtō, a term that may be translated as "Highest Leader of the Kō." He states, "When we convert someone, we introduce him at a local temple of Nichiren Shōshū. On that day, a rite of conversion is conducted at the temple, and the new member receives from Nichiren Shōshū a honzon (copy of the sect's mandala)."

The occupational, educational backgrounds and personal characteristics of Sōka Gakkai members are not certainly known to outsiders. As we have noted, various published accounts refer to its members as coming from the lowest sectors of Japanese urban society. A Japanese scholar characterizes members as primarily urban residents, many of them newcomers to the cities, of low social class, not impoverished but tending because of their youth to have average incomes lower than those of members of the other large new sects. Most members are said to be persons who have suffered critical illness or other dire misfortune, and there seems to be little doubt of the accuracy of this statement. Many have been attracted by the promise of cure of illness, and here Sōka Gakkai also combines old with new. A growing tendency is evident of urging members to seek scientific medical care for certain kinds of illnesses as well as cultivating religious faith.
Many writings on Sōka Gakkai refer to the abundance of bar and cabaret hostesses among its members. A few noted professional entertainers, mostly female, are members, and these are given much publicity. Sōka Gakkai is strong among coal miners and generally growing among the ranks of organized industrial labor. It seems certain that its members include a substantial number of public school teachers. Since Sōka Gakkai began among teachers as a kind of educational movement, perhaps this is not surprising. Although it is safe to assume that the bulk of the members are indeed from the lower levels of Japanese society, some trend toward recruitment from higher levels of Japanese society seems to be occurring. As the movement has grown in power and wealth, it has gained some measure of prestige and attractiveness, and seems to be attracting growing numbers of young people. Statistics for 1960, published by Sōka Gakkai and unverified by outside investigators, show that over 70% of a sample of 499 members were under 30 years of age and that very few aged persons were included in the sample. We have noted that in 1966, Sōka Gakkai claimed to have over 3,000,000 members in its Youths' Division. Although the social status of converts has risen in recent years, there is probably considerable truth in the idea current among observers for some years that membership still leans heavily to those persons who in one way or another feel slighted by society. The recent increment of university students, for example, seems to be principally young men and women from the “wrong” schools.

According to statistics published by Sōka Gakkai in 1960, the most common relationship between converter and convert was that of neighbors. Other fairly common relationships, as reported by outside investigators, were those of relatives, fellow employees, and associates in business. According to Sōka Gakkai, the most important reason for conversion given by members is that they were “impelled by the intensity of the proselytizers.”

As with other Japanese religions that are represented abroad, foreign members are almost exclusively of Japanese ancestry. Sōka Gakkai has given considerable publicity to its sprinkling of Caucasian members who are citizens of the United States; until the late 1960's these seem almost always to have been American men in military service who had married Japanese women or men who were otherwise in intimate relationship with Japanese women. In 1966, 29 chapters existed in the United States and were said to have 15,000 members and a growing but still small number of Caucasians had become members. A few small chapters existed in South America, Europe, and Southeast Asia, and Australia, Nigeria, and the Dominican Republic each had one small chapter. One temple had been built abroad, in Los Angeles, and others were planned for Brazil, Paraguay, France, and in Bangkok. In addition, a membership of several thousand was claimed in Okinawa.

In part in connection with missionary activities and probably in part because of the prestige it conveys, publications of Sōka Gakkai include an increasing number of works in English. Plans were announced in 1964 for the publication of explanatory pamphlets in seven foreign languages, English, German, French, Portuguese, Thai, Indonesian, and Chinese. In 1966 one periodical, The Seikyo Times, was being published in seven languages.

Factors contributing to the success of Sōka Gakkai may be summarized as a rich and increasingly skillful use of appeals to the emotions, physical senses, and the ordinary human wants of unsophisticated people. Forceful and perhaps attractively unsubtle means of winning members are followed by a sustained barrage of devices designed to produce intense solidarity. Entering Sōka Gakkai is easy; leaving
it is hard. Any member is under the constant surveillance of his fellows. As newspaper accounts attest, force has been used—at least in the past—not only for conversion but also to prevent members from severing their connections with the sect. Sōka Gakkai promises its members much that is attractive, and many have regarded the price of admission as low or non-existent. Financially, the cost seems indeed low. For most of the nation, however, the price is otherwise high and the product repelling. For them, the elements of traditional religious dogma which Sōka Gakkai espouses are at least obsolete and often anathema: membership involves total commitment to an unworthy cause and to questionable leadership which may not be questioned; membership, moreover, brings intimate contact with social inferiors whose modes of life differ in important ways.

In modern Japan, any vocal and aggressive minority group may exert influence out of proportion to its numerical size. Sōka Gakkai is indeed a minority group, but one of wealth and power. The current trend under its college-educated and youthful administration appears to be toward expansion of activities and modification of teachings and policies in such ways as to attract members higher in the national social scale and younger than the majority of its present membership. How much it will continue to grow is unclear, but there is no shadow of doubt that it is looked upon as a national problem of gravity. In 1966, the prevailing opinion in Japan was that Sōka Gakkai was approaching the limit of its growth, but it is possible that this opinion represents wishful thinking. Sōka Gakkai’s announced plans for the future continue to be grand. Among future developments announced by Sōka Gakkai that may foster continued growth are the use of “more sophisticated” techniques of conversion and an expansion of educational programs to include the teaching of technical and general educational subjects unrelated to dogma, and an expansion of instruction in arts and aesthetics. Given a well-developed educational program that includes secular university training, a more powerful political branch, continued expansion into other secular activities, and continued polishing to remove the marks of uncouthness, Sōka Gakkai might well have a long period of added growth.
Risshō Kōseikai bears a name that is cumbersome in Japanese and difficult to translate into English. Members usually abbreviate it to Kōseikai. Translations of the name have been various, including “The Society for the Establishment of Righteousness and Friendly Intercourse” and “The Association of Truth and Fellowship.” The organization itself, “to give the intention of the co-founders,” paraphrases its name in English as “Society of Laymen who Seek the Perfection of their Character and the Attainment of Buddhahood by Following the Religious Teaching of the Lord Buddha.”

Risshō Kōseikai has also had periods, now several years in the past, of extremely unfavorable publicity. These experiences appear to have helped make the organization acutely aware of the importance of good public relations.

The history of Risshō Kōseikai as a separate organization and its path of growth resemble those of Sōka Gakkai. Originating in 1938 with a male and a female co-founder and 30 followers, the sect is one of the many that have split off from the once-powerful Reiyūkai Kyōdō. Separation is officially declared to be the result of dissension over matters of dogma.

Both of the founders of Risshō Kōseikai sprang from the humblest of social and educational backgrounds, and have histories of personal misfortunes that led finally to membership in Reiyūkai Kyōdō. The female co-founder, Mrs. Myōkō Naganuma, was converted to Reiyūkai Kyōdō membership through the proselytizing of the male founder, Nikkyō Niwano, who was then employed in Tokyo as a milkman. At that time Niwano bore another given name which he later changed to Nikkyō, an elegant name following Buddhist tradition. After a period of zealous membership in Reiyūkai Kyōdō during which the two founders worked as a team in winning converts, they formed their own group in 1938. Mrs. Naganuma came to hold a position of seeming preeminence and near divinity as a living Buddha. Since her death in 1957 the sect has honored her in various ways but has not made her memory into a cult.

Niwano, who was born in 1906, became president (kaichō) of the sect at Mrs. Naganuma’s death. Niwano is not regarded as divine, and, at least today, he can hardly be described as a charismatic leader. Like the president of Sōka Gakkai, as the years pass he appears more and more to take on the personal attributes of a business executive. In fact, there is much in the organization and operation of Risshō Kōseikai that suggests it has in recent years consciously attempted to minimize charismatic leadership and the magical elements of its dogma, especially in its publications. Niwano is reported once to have been a student of name divination and a form of geomancy called hōigaku that is concerned with topography and directions of the compass. These occult forms of supernaturalism remain in sect practices but are given little publicity today. Likewise, the traits of shamanism that appear to have characterized Niwano in his early adulthood are no longer readily evident. Instead,
Niwano cultivates another role with respect to the sect's teachings. In addition to being a business executive, he is also a scholar of religion, versed in Buddhist theology far removed from shamanism. This role as a Buddhist savant has had considerable emphasis since the early 1960's; elaborate and handsomely printed books bearing Niwano's name as the author began appearing in 1963.

Risshō Kōseikai continued to exist during World War II as a small but growing organization. According to information published by the sect itself, membership at the end of the war was over 3,000 persons. Another account reports membership at this time as "1300 families." Officially chartered in 1948 under the new laws enacted after the war, the sect first went through a period of relatively moderate growth. Its membership in 1957, at the time of Mrs. Naganuma's death, was perhaps 300,000. Growth since that time was rapid for several years, and it was accompanied by a series of changes in organization. In 1966, the sect claimed a membership of about two million members. This figure is undoubtedly exaggerated, but there is no question that Risshō Kōseikai is large and powerful. It appears to regard Sōka Gakkai as an arch rival and has been accused, with some apparent justification, of emulating various of the activities and organizational features of its competitor. The Kōsei Gureifu (Kosei Graphic), a pictorial magazine published monthly by Risshō Kōseikai, for example, seems to be modeled after Sōka Gakkai's older weekly magazine Seikyo Gureifu. Various organizational changes made by Risshō Kōseikai follow lines that were developed earlier by Sōka Gakkai, but these may represent a response to growth in size rather than outright imitation. Rivalry between the two sects is said to have extended to competition in 1964 over conversion of a star baseball player and a group of geisha. Sōka Gakkai has at times apparently taken pleasure in announcing that former Risshō Kōseikai members had joined Sōka Gakkai. Rivalry between the two sects is doubtless much heightened because both stem theologically from Nichiren Buddhism, and each regards itself as the only proper interpreter of Nichiren.

In 1964 Risshō Kōseikai in one respect surpassed its primary rival, at least temporarily. The Great Sacred Hall of Risshō Kōseikai, completed in that year after eight years of construction, is the largest and most luxurious modern religious edifice in Japan. It is also remarkable in other ways. An architectural curiosity, the structure is a unique combination of forms and colors. The building incorporates several tower-like circular appendages in its seven stories, and is capped by spiral domes inspired by the architecture of India. The exterior is faced principally by pink tile and vermilion jasper. As a religious edifice, the interior seems fantastic, and resembles more than anything else a grand opera house. A high domed ceiling and four great, circular mezzanines focus on a central stage where ceremonies are conducted. The impression of grandeur is enhanced by rich wall and ceiling decorations and the use of very little furniture. A few tiers of theater-like seats on the ground floor accommodate special guests, but the great majority of the 30,000 persons the Great Sacred Hall will accommodate must stand or sit on floors carpeted in rich colors. Lavish use of imported marble, native but rare vermilion jasper, gilt, metal in golden tones, and brilliant lighting make the hall a spectacle that is rendered more colorful by a giant circular rug of intricate pattern and rich colors laid on the ground floor. The theatrical air of the building is heightened by the presence of a closed-circuit television system with over 100 viewers for the benefit of those who cannot easily see the performers on stage. Equipped also with air-conditioning, elevators, and containing elaborate dining rooms and a battery of administrative offices, the building is startling. In the eyes of many Japanese citizens who are not members of Risshō
Kōseikai, this building is a particularly flagrant example of the behavior of the new rich. In the eyes of the faithful, who are given free access to the Great Sacred Hall, it is an object of splendor and a source of pride, and it undoubtedly plays a part in winning converts.

Teachings

Risshō Kōseikai is unique among the large new sects in openly admitting that its dogma is not yet well formulated, attributing this circumstance to its youth. Its publications speak of stages of growth and clarification of doctrine, but the sect seems to be following two somewhat opposing courses of action in this respect. It appears to feel that impressive and elaborate holy writings are essential as a proper attribute of a large and powerful religious body; but, to gain and hold converts, its teachings must be easily comprehensible. Under the guidance of Mrs. Naganuma, doctrine was revelatory and little appeared in published form; however, the evidence seems clear that after becoming large and affluent the sect sought the aid of professional scholars in formulating dogma for publication. Six books on sect dogma published in 1963 and 1964 are attributed to the authorship of Niwano but are surely the work of professional writers and scholars of Buddhism. They give little help to the ordinary follower by way of clarifying doctrine. Other works bearing Niwano's name have followed. Since 1964 professors of religion at universities in Tokyo have been consulted on the question of formulating and clarifying dogma, partly in connection with a Japanese ecumenical movement seeking to formulate a "Fundamental Buddhism," in which Risshō Kōseikai is participating.9 For the ordinary member, however, teachings continue to be given in simple fashion and principally verbally, by means of the informal meetings common to all of the large new sects.

Like Sōka Gakkai, Risshō Kōseikai identifies itself as a lay organization of Nichiren Buddhists. Unlike Sōka Gakkai, it has no official connection with any preexisting Nichiren sect, although unsuccessful attempts to seek such an alliance are said once to have been made.10 Like other new sects, Risshō Kōseikai concerns itself first with the problems of daily life, promising happiness in this world as well as in future and past worlds. In the words of its president, it is not a religion for the sake of religion but is for the sake of mankind.11 The aims of Risshō Kōseikai, as stated in a brochure entitled [in English translation] "For the Happiness of All," are to restore the teachings and spirit of Buddhism to family and society.12 Added also is the objective customary to the new sects of attaining national and international peace. Like the other large new sects, Risshō Kōseikai gives growing emphasis to this goal in its official or public announcements.

The main features of the doctrines of Risshō Kōseikai are familiar: proper faith (that is, acceptance of the teachings of Risshō Kōseikai) and proper living bring happiness, enlightenment, and relief from illness and other misfortunes. Specifically, teachings center on the Lotus Sutra. The Eternal Buddha (Buddha Sakyamuni) was officially declared in 1959 as the sect's object of worship, and Nichiren is regarded as his true interpreter. According to a publication of Risshō Kōseikai which is declared to represent a clarification of its predecessors, special emphasis has been placed on the "Three Actions" to perfect character and attain enlightenment. These are briefly summarized in the publication as follows:13

1. VERBAL ACTION: Chanting the Sacred Title (there is no magical quality inherent in this), reciting the scriptures, and using proper language in daily life.
2. MENTAL ACTION: Repentance and purification from the sins of the six senses: eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body (touch), mind (sensation).
3. BODILY ACTION: Practice of the Bodhisattva Way of the Buddha-to-be, which means helpfulness to others.

This publication continues:

Among other uniquely Buddhist teachings which are emphasized by Kōsei Kai are the Four Noble Truths, The Eightfold Way of Enlightenment (right belief, aspiration, speech, conduct, means of livelihood, endeavor, mindfulness, and meditation) and the Twelve Chains of Causation.14

The foregoing passages and other writings make it clear that mere faith and mere utterance of the Sacred Title or invocation (Namu myōhō renge kyō, “Honor the lotus sutra”) are regarded as inadequate. The significance of the invocation is the issue that is said to have caused the co-founders of Risshō Kōseikai to leave Reiyūkai Kyōdan to set up their own organization. The brochure cited above elaborates on this point: “Most people believe that there is special merit in the continual or frequent repetition of this Sacred Title, and many of them spend much time in observing this practice. The co-founders of Kōsei Kai, however, believed that mere repetition of the Sacred Title had no merit apart from a life lived in accordance with the teachings of the Lord Buddha, and this was one of the primary reasons they organized their movement.” Many members of the sect nevertheless appear to think that supernatural value inheres in utterance of the invocation.

According to sect doctrine, faith must be accompanied by adherence to moral rules, which include giving service to others and reverence for ancestors, but are otherwise not very clearly defined or emphasized. Man is fundamentally proper and good, but this innate disposition, Buddha-like and Buddha-given, becomes clouded and needs polishing. Sickness and misfortune are the results of cloudiness or human error, which imply both improper mental attitude and improper conduct. Men commonly err and suffer misfortunes because of wilfully improper attitudes and acts, but they also commonly err through ignorance, that is, through lack of knowledge or failure to appreciate and follow the proper religious teachings. One of the common “ignorances” which cause misfortune and distress is neglect of ancestors, to whom the living are mystically bound in an endless cycle of transmigration. Those who do not venerate ancestral spirits “betray a defect of character which can only result in misfortune for themselves and their families, and indescribable unhappiness for those who have left this world.” Penance and rectitude are the way to break the chain of causality and find enlightenment of Buddhahood.

In simple terms, as these ideas come to the ordinary member, the requirements of the faithful are belief in the sect doctrines, recitation of the invocation, moral behavior that emphasizes selfless service to fellow men, and reverence for ancestors. Buddha does not punish. Instead, man brings on his own misfortunes through human failings in act or attitude, and the misfortunes represent an inexorable causality. It is not proper, however, to resign oneself to suffering so long as one’s motives in taking active steps toward recovery are not selfish. The cause of sickness or other ill fortune must be diagnosed and the improper conditions corrected. Recovery will then follow. Individual meditation is also encouraged to find enlightenment and to correct mental attitudes. One should examine himself to find his faults and then correct them.

According to the teachings of Nichiren, one of the causes of illness is a misdeed in a former incarnation. This idea is also used in the teachings of Sōka Gakkai, but it has a position of greater importance in the doctrine of Risshō Kōseikai in connection with reverence for ancestors (which does not appear in the doctrines of Sōka Gakkai). One of the sect’s procedures in attempting to determine the causes of misfortune consists of divination related to ancestors, and thus also related obscurely to
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former existences. Risshō Kōseikai maintains a large genealogical bureau and attaches special importance to the significance of names of ancestors. The new member records the names of his ancestors as far back as they may be remembered or traced, and study of these names is useful in diagnosing the causes of illness or other misfortunes.

As the foregoing brief account suggests, various aspects of sect teachings and practice seem from the Western viewpoint hazy and even contradictory. Neglect of ancestors or other improper behavior brings misfortunes, but proper behavior is not sharply defined and the misfortunes are declared not to be punishments. Improper behavior may be quite mysterious, the acts of a person, blameless in present life, while in a previous incarnation. Risshō Kōseikai officially denies the use of magic, but it attaches divinatory importance to the names of ancestors and has often been accused of magical healing practices. As we have noted, its members seem commonly to believe that chanting the invocation has supernatural powers of its own, which sect leaders deny. Some of the faithful believe that visits to the headquarters will bring recovery from illness or misfortune, and this idea is probably common among members of all new as well as old non-Christian religious sects of Japan.

As with other non-Shinto religions of Japan, traces of Shinto are evident in the custom of making pilgrimages to headquarters and in other beliefs and practices of the sect. Although the Eternal Buddha has become the official object of worship, members pray facing a mandala, prepared by President Niwano, that is said to represent Nichiren's interpretation of the universe. Saint Nichiren did not deny the existence of the deities of the Shinto pantheon, and Niwano's interpretation also gives them a place. The copy of his mandala in the Great Sacred Hall of Risshō Kōseikai in Tokyo is flanked on one side by two scrolls bearing the names of two important Shinto deities, Tenshō Kōtaijin and Tōyūkedaijin. A sacred object (shugoin, "protective god") placed below this mandala closely resembles, in miniature, a Shinto shrine. Ceremonies that are Shinto-derived were conducted at various stages in the erection of the Great Sacred Hall, a custom which is general throughout the nation and is said also to be followed when temples are erected by the established sects of Buddhism.

Risshō Kōseikai is generally tolerant of other religions. It actively cooperates with other sects in the Federation of New Religions, and Niwano, its president, became chairman of the Federation of New Religions in 1965. We have noted that the sect actively promotes a Buddhist ecumenical movement. In this matter, however, the stand taken by the sect is sometimes contradictory. One spokesman for the sect shows both tolerance and intolerance of other religions in a single sentence. He states, "Risshō Kōseikai does not say that other religions are not genuine, so for the people and welfare of mankind we wish to join hands with other religions that are just and good. These are not to be found in Islam nor in the established Buddhist sects of Japan but in Christianity alone."18

Organization and Activities

During the years of its most rapid growth in the late 1950's and early 1960's, Risshō Kōseikai was in a constant state of reorganization to encompass its increased membership and activities. Fairly extensive structural reorganization of Risshō Kōseikai was carried out in 1962 and 1963. According to opinions of various Japanese scholars, the structure of Sōka Gakkai was used as a model. A representative of Risshō Kōseikai described the reorganization to me as a course of action made necessary by the great growth and geographical spread of sect membership throughout the nation. This statement is undoubtedly true but motives for the re-
organization seem also very likely to have included the desire to provide checks against factionalism. As one of eight sects splitting off from Reiyūkai Kyōdan, Risshō Kōseikai might be unusually aware of the danger and sources of fission.

Especially because of its rapid growth, Risshō Kōseikai has faced continuing problems in striving simultaneously to meet organizational aims and to satisfy individual interests. The two sets of interests intertwine and reinforce each other in multiple ways, but they also present conflicts. As sect membership grows, conflicts or potential conflicts arose that threatened the whole structure. Risshō Kōseikai leaders refer in their publications to the importance of reinforcing group consciousness and of increasing solidarity. The organization of the sect is planned to promote solidarity and at the same time to provide a good place for the individual member.

After its partial reorganization in 1962 and 1963, Risshō Kōseikai described an organizational form of named units and sub-units much like that of other major new sects. There were the usual geographical divisions and subdivisions and cross-cutting divisions by sex and age as well as administrative and "cultural" organs. Each member was enrolled in a han, which averaged seven families (each family represented by at least one individual), and in the progressively larger units of kumi (averaging about 50 families), hōza (averaging 300 families), shibit (averaging 2,000 families), and kyōkai (of variable size). (It is useful to note that Risshō Kōseikai uses the term hōza to mean a relatively large unit of formal organization and also the small, informal discussion groups.) In addition to these subdivisions, which are essentially geographic, there are crosscutting divisions for adult men, adult women, and young people. Membership in the men's (Sōnenbu) and the women's (Fujinbu) divisions is voluntary for those who have free time and an interest in the activities of these associations; these divisions concern themselves chiefly with the propagation of sect teachings, education of children, and social welfare. Young people are expected to belong to the young people's association, which is divided by sex in customary fashion. Members of the young people's division range in age from 15 to 30 years and include some married couples. The young people's division is further subdivided into numerous special interest groups connected with sports, music, and hobbies, a subdivision composed of college students, and the usual geographical subunits.

Before the reorganization described above, Risshō Kōseikai had followed another structural scheme modeled after the pattern of Japanese familial relations that was used for general administration as well as for recruiting and teaching dogma. This was an elaborate system of fictive parent-child relationships characterized by strong personal bonds, a form of organization that was regarded as a line of vertical authority. According to representatives of Risshō Kōseikai, this form of organization was highly effective in recruiting members and achieving solidarity among those involved in the relationships. A graphic representation of this line of organization follows:

```
President
  ↓
Division
  ↓
Head
  ↓
Lineage Parent  (Keitō no Oya)
  ↓
Connecting Parent (Kankei no Oya)
  ↓
Converting Parent (Michibiki Oya)
  ↓
Member
```
A special relationship of intimacy existed between a member and his Michibiki Oya, "Converting Parent." A member felt close to his "parent" and obligated to him. Relations between fellow converts of a common parent were often close and rather like those of brothers and sisters, but they involved no special feelings of strong mutual obligation and they were incidental to the important relationship of "parent" and "child." When a member had made ten or more converts, he was raised to the status of Connecting Parent, provided he seemed otherwise acceptable from the standpoints of faith and character. Continued service to the organization and success in gaining new members resulted in elevation to the status of Lineage Parent. Lineage Parents and Connecting Parents formed an official non-professional group (kambu) charged with administrative functions.

Parental titles indicated statuses of authority and honor. Connecting Parents received visible symbols of their status in the form of a small copy of the sect's mandala. Lineage Parents received a talisman called shugojin that resembles a Shinto shrine; this was placed below the copy of the mandala in their homes and was thus faced during home worship. These awards were conferred by the president himself at impressive ceremonies conducted at the national headquarters. Monthly meetings called gemeinichy ("honorable decree day") were held of Connecting Parents and their "offspring" (a meeting which commonly included two generations since the children of Connecting Parents frequently became Converting Parents of added new members). Similar monthly meetings were conducted of Lineage Parents and Connecting Parents in which three "generations" of converts participated. Division (shibu) heads, who are full-time professionals, were ordinarily chosen from among the Lineage Parents. A similar monthly meeting was also held of the head of the shibu and his various lines of converts. These meetings, which are described as being much like the small-group discussion meetings (hōza) except for the special bonds of relationship of their participants, were doubtless effective social binders.

The parent-child relationship had weaknesses that, as the sect grew, came to outweigh its strengths. One of these is that efficient geographical division of the sect is not possible when the parent-child relationship is the primary mode of organization. Recruitment is done by neighbors, friends, and relatives, and frequently by fellow employees in business firms and industries. Recruiter and convert sometimes live in widely separated places, and even when both reside in Tokyo, they often live in areas so distant from each other that assignment to a common unit presents serious problems of communication. The reorganization into geographical units—a step taken some years earlier by Sōka Gakkai—is said by Risshō Kōsei-kai representatives to stem from this circumstance.

The old parent-child relationship contained another serious weakness. The authority of fictive parent over fictive offspring, the close personal ties between them, the debt of gratitude due to parents from offspring, and the administrative authority formerly given to Connecting Parents, Lineage Parents, and shibu heads (who had ordinarily risen through the parental ranks to professional status) presented a threat to overall unity. A shibu head or Lineage Parent who wished to strike off on his own had a ready-made following of substantial size. To what extent Risshō Kōsei-kai might have faced actual threats of this kind is unknown. Talk among informed outsiders holds that when such a threat arose, it was sometimes possible to quiet the rebel by enlisting the aid of his "father" to remind him of his obligations to the organization. After the reorganization to which we have referred, administrative and
doctrinal lines were separated—that is, fictive parents were stripped of administrative authority and given roles that concern only proselytizing and doctrine. This change may be seen as reducing the danger of factionalism by reducing the authority of the parental lines and putting authority in the hands of heads of geographic units, which do not ordinarily include large chains of offspring of any single parent. Divisional (shibu) heads are ordinarily still fictive parents with many offspring, but they are also presumably men in whom confidence may be placed. As another check against factionalism, shibu are not allowed to become extremely large; in 1964 they were said to average about 2,000 households (of one or more members). The present emphasis on geographic division is described by a Risshō Kōseikai representative as less efficient than the old system in gaining converts but more efficient in maintaining overall contact. Representatives of the sect do not care to discuss problems of factionalism.

The precise date at which the changes described above took place is uncertain. Statements of sect representatives on this subject do not agree, perhaps because the changes consisted of a number of steps. In September, 1964, a sect representative stated that the full structure of fictive parent-child groups was still in use, for recruiting only. In August, 1966, the same representative stated that the fictive parent-child scheme of organization had been abandoned entirely, in 1963, except for the relationship between converter (michibiki-oya) and convert, and that only the name michibiki-oya continued to be in use. Monthly meetings (gomeimichi) of converter and converts were still said to be held in 1966, but these were limited to the michibiki-oya and his converts. Because of problems of transportation when converter and convert live far apart, the fictive parent-child relationship often loses importance under the present scheme of organization. The michibiki-oya and his converts meet regularly when this is practical. When impractical, the new convert is incorporated after a period of some months into the regional division that covers his place of residence. His converter is charged with the responsibility for seeing that he is first indoctrinated and with introducing him to the persons in charge of his regional division.

Another organizational change that may also be an instance of emulating Sōka Gakkai was made in 1962. According to Risshō Kōseikai representatives, this was done to expedite the teaching of doctrine, but it may also be seen as a device promoting organizational solidarity. Instruction in dogma was more or less formalized at this time and an order of lay instructors was established. Three grades of instructors were set up, and appointment to these positions was made to depend upon successful completion of courses of training and written exams, prepared by the Education Division. One year of study is normally required to pass each of the exams. Overlap in personnel between instructors in dogma and proselytizers is said to be limited mostly to the bottom rank of instructors. According to a sect representative, michibiki-oya are generally members who are very interested in making converts but little interested in acquiring great proficiency in doctrine. The higher ranks of instructors are filled by persons whose primary interest is in doctrinal matters and who are said to be more capable teachers than most of the active proselytizers.

Risshō Kōseikai thus has two major lines of organization of members with special and important roles, administrative and doctrinal. To this is added the remnant of a structure that once gave considerable emphasis to the role of recruiting. As among other new sects, high ranking administrators are full-time professionals; all others are laymen. The bulk of the teaching and other activities is thus in the hands of lay
members, but most positions of authority are held by professionals. These, in turn, are recruited from among the lay members who demonstrate ability and loyalty. In 1966 a sect representative stated that the salaried staff concerned with administration and doctrine numbered about 300 persons, and that salaried employees of the sect's publishing division, hospital, schools, and other establishments totalled about 1700.

Risshō Kōsei-kai gives very strong emphasis to its informal discussion groups (hōza), which give members opportunities to find companionship, seek aid for sickness and other troubles, confess failures, and find absolution. A brochure published by Risshō Kōsei-kai in English aptly describes these meetings as providing "group therapy." The Great Sacred Hall is daily the scene of many dozens of meetings of these small groups. Mezzanines are subdivided into marked areas for members from the various wards of Tokyo and from regions outside the city. Members of the discussion groups seat themselves on the floor in circles in the areas designated for them. Participants are principally middle-aged women, often accompanied by their small children or grandchildren. An air of informality and warm fellowship prevails, to which the presence of the children contributes.

Many other features of the sect are sources of satisfaction for the individual. Among these are the fictive parent-child relationship, and a multitude of opportunities to gain status by service to the sect. At the same time that the program of formal training for instructors began, a system was instituted of grading ordinary members into five different classes dependent upon their proficiency in dogma as determined by annual voluntary examinations. Activities of the men's, women's, and young people's divisions provide opportunities for the expression of individual secular interests as well as for gaining status and finding companionship. As is customary among other large new sects, special attention is given to the young people's division. Its activities have expanded greatly in the past decade and continue to expand.

Daily devotions and the regular hōza or small group discussion meetings help to hold members within the fold. Members in Tokyo are also encouraged to attend brief devotional meetings that are held daily at noon and at 3:00 p.m. in the Great Sacred Hall, when invocations are chanted in unison for a few minutes. Three grand annual festivals call for mass participation. A full-page advertisement inviting foreigners to view the spectacular parade which forms part of the activities of the fall festival in Tokyo appeared in one of the English language newspapers at the time of the Olympics in 1964.

In recent years strong efforts have been made to bring together once annually all members of the men's, women's, and young people's divisions, and to have all members make a pilgrimage to the Tokyo headquarters, where they are lodged and indoctrinated. Chartered buses are used to transport members from outlying areas of Tokyo and from other parts of the nation. In 1966, a sect representative estimated that about 50% of the membership had by that time made the pilgrimage to the Tokyo headquarters.

Activities

In most respects, the activities of Risshō Kōsei-kai are like those of Sōka Gakkai except somewhat narrower in scope. The specialty of Risshō Kōsei-kai, which follows the tradition of its parental sect, Reiyūkai Kyōdan, is social welfare. Some of its activities in this field, especially the cleaning of public places by members of the young people's divisions, represent service for the nation at large. Most of its program of social welfare, however, is for the benefit of sect members. It operates for members a day nursery, two kindergartens, a home for the aged, a large (338 bed)
and modern hospital, a library, and a burial ground. Erection of the hospital seems to have been a response to public criticism by one of the national newspapers of sect practices of faith healing. Staff physicians are not members of the sect, and present-day curing is thus in part modern scientific medicine, which expectably excludes psychiatry. A large and prominent place is thus left for faith healing. Risshō Kōseikai also operates in Tokyo four schools for children of members, a junior high school and a senior high school for each of the sexes. Other facilities at the headquarters include buildings for training teachers and for lodging and indoctrinating members, a wedding hall, and a practice driving course for golf.

The numerous activities of the sect are conducted from a scattered group of buildings in Tokyo centering on the Great Sacred Hall and also from regional installations. The oldest of the Tokyo structures is a small house of traditional Japanese architecture, formerly the residence of founder Myōkō Naganuma. Other buildings are mostly round in form and pink in color. A number of buildings and facilities were under construction in late 1966 or planned for the near future. A large lecture hall was planned for erection beside the Great Sacred Hall. In the suburbs of Tokyo a building and other facilities for the young people's division was under construction, and land had been purchased for a large burial ground to replace the present graveyard, which had become too small. Plans were also made for the construction at divisional headquarters throughout the nation of about 30 halls for instruction in dogma.

In 1965, Risshō Kōseikai added politics to its interests and activities, but the extent to which the sect intends to engage actively in politics in the future is uncertain. In 1964, rumor in Tokyo held that the sect intended to put up three candidates at the next national election of members of the House of Councillors, but representatives of the sect denied this intent. In the election in 1965, two members of the sect ran successfully for office with Risshō Kōseikai sponsorship, and a third successful candidate, officially sponsored by the Federation of New Religions, was also supported by Risshō Kōseikai. In 1966, a sect representative stated that no plans for forming a political party were being seriously entertained, but he also claimed that the sect was already very well represented in the Diet by sect members identified with the established political parties. According to this claim—which might, with great understatement, be called wild exaggeration—the two houses of the Diet included about 100 members of Risshō Kōseikai.

An addition to sect activities that began in about 1964 was the establishment of an advanced educational program, admission to which is limited to college graduates. In 1966, five students were reported as enrolled under this program for a series of special lectures in religious philosophy, Buddhism, politics, and economics given by professors at Tokyo universities.

Funds for sect activities are derived from monthly dues (raised from 10 yen to 100 yen per family when the sect was reorganized), voluntary additional offerings collected in offertories, special drives for contributions to erect buildings or other facilities, the sale of sect magazines, texts, and other books, and the sale of candles, incense, and religious paraphernalia.

Membership

As with other sects, information on the membership of Risshō Kōseikai is very cloudy. In 1964, representatives of the sect informed me in personal conversation that membership totalled 2,300,000 families. In 1965, its membership as reported to the Ministry of Education was 2,042,950 individuals. In August, 1966, a sect representative stated that individual membership was about 2,000,000 and family
membership about 500,000. Increases in 1964 and 1965 were said, however, to have been substantial in Japan although small in overseas divisions. As of September, 1964, Risshō Kōseikai had 21 major divisions (kyōkai), and 176 regional shibu, of which 25 were in Tokyo and three were abroad, one each in Okinawa, Los Angeles, and Kealakekua, Hawaii. According to a sect representative, in August, 1966, kyōkai numbered 20 and shibu numbered 30, of which 24 were in Tokyo, three were in other areas of Japan, and three were abroad. In 1964, the Tokyo membership was said to be 100,000 families, and in 1966, 130,000 families. As may easily be seen, these reports on membership are internally as well as otherwise inconsistent. Given an average as claimed of 2,000 families or even individual members per shibu, for example, the total membership is much smaller than the figure stated. It is nevertheless certain that Risshō Kōseikai has a substantial active membership, and it seems probable that membership is increasing somewhat at the time of this writing.

Membership appears to lean toward people of middle age, and especially to women. Representatives deny that there is any disproportion by sex in membership, but it seems clear that men are considerably outnumbered by women among teachers. Even in the young people's divisions, females outnumber males; figures given to me in September, 1964 by a sect representative were 30,000 males and 40,000 females, and in 1966, 40,000 and 60,000, respectively. Statistics on membership of the men's and women's divisions were said not to be significant in this respect since these are voluntary organizations. The women's division is said to be much larger than the men's because women have more free time for such activities.

Membership appears to be drawn principally from lower and lower middle social and economic strata but includes a substantial number of owners of shops and other small business enterprises. In keeping with the practice of venerating ancestors, familial membership is emphasized. Opinion among outside observers rates the average income of members as somewhat higher than that of Sōka Gakkai members, a circumstance that seems in part to reflect the differences in average age between members of the two sects. As Risshō Kōseikai has gained power and prestige, it appears, like Sōka Gakkai, to be attracting new members of somewhat higher social and economic status than in earlier times.

An account in 1966 in a well-known weekly magazine bearing the title (in translation) "Unexpected Notables in Risshō Kōseikai" carried brief descriptions of a number of distinguished members of the sect. These included the national Minister of Finance, the Minister of Education, three members of the Diet (two of whom were sponsored by Risshō Kōseikai when elected, and a third described as being also a member of Seichō-no-Ie and as being fond of chanting invocations), various actors and actresses (one of whom is married to an actor who is a member of Sōka Gakkai), and a few writers and critics.

A survey, published in 1960 and now perhaps somewhat outdated, of reasons for conversion of 84 members of the sect reports that 82% entered to seek relief from sickness or other misfortune. Most members appear formerly to have been members of established Buddhist sects. Educational attainments of members appear to be low. A representative of Risshō Kōseikai stated that in 1964 the young people's division (70,000 members of ages 15 to 30, single or married) included about 1,000 college students. In 1966, an extravagant claim was made that college students in the membership totalled 20,000.

Risshō Kōseikai has thus far made no public statements about aims or desire to convert the world. This seems to be one of many matters under consideration for the future. Present membership in foreign divisions is small—in 1966 said to be
about 800 families—and limited almost entirely to persons of Japanese ancestry. A personal interview with a reporter for the Risshō Kōseikai news organs revolved principally about the subject of world conversion; I was asked what might be the most effective means of propagating sect teachings in the Western world.

Risshō Kōseikai seems to be particularly fluid in matters of both dogma and activities, and sensitive to changes that will enhance its appeal. Its brief history has already seen it change considerably, and one of the present trends appears to be toward minimizing features of doctrine that might endanger its growth or make it appear to be a religion of low order. The interest that the sect officially expresses in formulating a universal Buddhism may be seen as a move toward doctrinal and social elevation and toward gaining adherents abroad. Risshō Kōseikai's apparent acceptance of modern medicine and its playing down of magical elements of doctrine may also be reasonably interpreted as movements toward modernity and higher social status. Steps appear to be taken in several directions at once, as if the organization were feeling its way. Policies of the past several years have been highly successful, but prospects for the future seem less certain. To the probable advantage of Risshō Kōseikai, as compared with Sōka Gakkai, are its policies of seeking to win and hold converts by gentle means without force or threat and its practice of maintaining good relations with the outside world of non-members. Unlike Sōka Gakkai, it has not incurred the general animosity of non-members.
RELIGION AND SOCIETY IN MODERN JAPAN

APPENDIX C

P L KYÔDAN

P L Kyôdan bears an unusual name that gives it a tone of modernity. The initials in its name, which are used without punctuation marks, are abbreviations of the English words "perfect liberty," and the sect translates its name into English as Perfect Liberty Order. Much else about P L Kyôdan is at first glance similarly novel in ways that strike many Japanese as strange and somewhat comical. Mention of its name often evokes amused smiles that derive from the sect motto "Life is art" and from various of the sect's activities. These include a self-conscious cultivation of the fine arts, a strong development of golf—it is sometimes called "the golf religion"—mammoth displays of fireworks, and, at one time, sponsorship of a radio program entitled "Let's Sing" that featured popular music. P L Kyôdan seems more modernistic than modern, and it is this impression of the sect that has spread among many non-members. Although various activities of the sect seem to many Japanese inappropriate and even absurd for a religious group, the teachings, organization, and activities of P L Kyôdan are nevertheless fundamentally like those of the other successful new sects, distinguished chiefly by extremely colorful and modish outer garments. Like the other sects, P L Kyôdan also makes use of various elements of creed and organization that follow familiar, traditional lines.

P L Kyôdan was incorporated as a religious body in 1964, but its roots are over two decades older. Accounts published by the sect credit two men, Tokuharu Miki and Tokumitsu Kanada, as being important in its founding, but only Miki, the father of the present head of the sect, appears to hold the status of founder. Tokuharu Miki had a lifelong history of close association with a variety of Japanese religions. Once a priest of the Obaku sect of Zen Buddhism, Tokuharu Miki later entered a new sect of Sect Shinto headed by Kanada. In 1924, on the basis of a revelation, he formed a religious organization that later became known as Hito no Michi (The Way of Man). Hito no Michi met a fair degree of success but was prohibited by the Japanese government in 1937. Tokuharu Miki, his son Tokuchika, and various followers were at that time arrested and imprisoned. Tokuharu Miki died the following year, but the organization is said to have maintained an underground life throughout the war. After Tokuchika Miki was released from prison at the end of the war, the organization was officially revived under his leadership and with the new name of P L Kyôdan. The first headquarters of the sect was in Tosa, Kyushu. Several years later the headquarters was moved north to Shizuoka Prefecture, closer to the greatest national centers of population, and in 1955 to Tondabayashi, Osaka Prefecture, a short distance from the city of Osaka and in an area second to Tokyo in density of population in the nation.

The extensive buildings and other installations of the sect are placed on 2,200 acres of once steeply rolling land that was cleared of pine trees and in many places leveled by what local people call an army of tractors. Following a pattern familiar among Japanese religious sects, the headquarters quickly became a holy land for the faithful. Facilities and features of the headquarters installation in 1966 included many buildings, an artificial lake, a 27-hole golf course with a clubhouse called by the English term the “country club,” a 36-hole golf practice range, and facilities for many other sports. Many buildings are widely separated so that administrators often move by car from one to another. No consistent architectural theme is evident except that all buildings and other structures might be called “modern.” Here and
there on the grounds are massive pieces of abstract sculpture, and the interiors of some buildings are similarly adorned with smaller pieces and with other decorative features.

The principal religious building, the Goseiden (Sacred Hall), is eclectic in style and suggests a combination of the architecture of the temples of ancient Greece and ancient Maya. Low, flat-roofed, and faced with round columns, the chalk-white stone building is starkly simple and beautiful but seems strangely out of place against its distant background of hills covered with Japanese pines. Flanked by two low, box-like wings of complementary style, the Sacred Hall is faced by a great plaza dominated by a fountain with 580 fonts that is illuminated brilliantly for ceremonies conducted at night.

The adjacent founder's mausoleum, enshrining the remains of the original founder, Tokuharu Miki, is also architecturally curious. This consists of a large plaza arranged like a formal Western garden leading to a small semisphere covered by turf that is surmounted by a small tree. This plant, the sakaki (Cleyera ochracea), has traditional significance in Shinto ritual and has special significance to P L Kyōdan. Its founder is said to have worshipped for five years before a sakaki tree he had planted in accordance with the instruction of his master Kanada before he received the revelation that led to the founding of Hito no Michi. Immediately behind the small hemisphere lies a much larger one that constitutes the mausoleum proper. Once covered with turf that was found difficult to maintain in pleasing condition, the mausoleum was refaced with stone and concrete to form a checkerboard of green and gray.

A third outstanding building, the Renseikan (Training Hall), combines modern and traditional architecture and somewhat resembles the grand buildings of Sōka Gakkai, which similarly attempt to combine the old and the new. Multistoreyed and of ferroconcrete construction, the Training Hall accommodates 800 overnight guests and has various rooms for lectures and training in aesthetics.

Other features and facilities of the headquarters at Tondabayashi include a baseball stadium, a large gymnasium for various sports that bears the English letters P L Y to signify the youths' division, a swimming pool, various schools, and a hospital. Since the headquarters is in a formerly rural area of Osaka Prefecture and its immediate environs are not yet densely settled, P L Kyōdan has also erected a number of apartment houses for its officials and other employees and operates dining halls and restaurants for them and for visitors. The large plazas and other open areas at headquarters serve functionally as an open-air auditorium or stadium for great festivals, which attract huge numbers of people. According to sect representatives, as many as 200,000 persons attend the great annual festivals. On these occasions, use is made of an elaborate and powerful broadcasting system, permanently installed, which is said to be a source of irritation to the townspeople of Tondabayashi who live near the sect's headquarters.

Teachings

The teachings of P L Kyōdan contain many elements held in common by other religions of Japan but the whole cannot be closely identified with any single predecessor. Some elements are distinctive and a few unique. The sect has as yet no substantial body of religious writings. Members receive a small book for chanting prayers. Other principal writings are a few very small books on doctrine written by the head of the sect and one of the high priests. Some doctrinal matters also appear in the sect newspaper and in its several colorful magazines. Two of the three books that composed the principal doctrinal writings as of 1964 were first published during
the preceding year. As with other new sects, most instruction in dogma is verbal.

Despite some distinctive features, major outlines of the doctrines of P L Kyödan are quite familiar: proper views of society and the world and proper behavior are the keys to a state of temporal well-being, a conception of the good life that gives greatest emphasis to personal well-being but includes familial, national, and international harmony. Various specific teachings and practices disguise these fundamental similarities to the doctrines of other sects and create a superficial impression of high distinctiveness and even of secularity. P L Kyödan has sometimes been described as "the least religious" of the new sects. Representatives of the sect state that its post-war founder Tokuchika Miki was undecided at first whether to call the teachings a religion or a "thought movement," but that he decided in favor of religion because it expresses belief in a god. (There are, of course, very practical reasons of finance that favor incorporation as a religious body.) The God of P L Kyödan bears a name, Miyoaökami ("Great Parent God"), that follows Shinto tradition but is unique to the sect. In other respects, Miyoaökami does not seem exceptionnal. He is a universal God, fatherly, helpful, and omniscient, who instructs or warns rather than punishes human beings who err. Although he is said to be intangible like the law of gravitation and to have "no characteristics like human beings," he clearly has many traits of personality like those of human beings and is interested in their welfare. He also communicates with human beings directly through divine warnings and through certain designated representatives of P L Kyödan.

The sect's object of worship (shinrei) symbolizes God and also the founders. According to a sect representative, ancestors are understood to be "added" to the meaning of the object of worship for those who, because of their faithfulness, have been awarded the higher of two statuses of membership. Sect members pray before the object of worship, which has come to have various forms that include a scroll placed in a case and a wooden object resembling a Shinto shrine. In late 1964 the most common form of the shinrei used by members, a recent addition, was a scroll contained in a silk-covered plastic tube that is set on end when services are conducted.

Most important among the representatives of the sect who can interpret God is Tokuchika Miki, who has special supernatural powers. His major ritual role is as intercessor between man and God, who cannot communicate with each other unaided. One of the high priests of P L Kyödan explains the difficulty in communication as due to "the language barrier." This role of interpreter of God and intercessor between man and God is similar to that of the priests of the much older Konkôkyô sect of Sect Shinto and is called by the same name, otorisugi.

Special intercession and interpretation are necessary for individual cases of illness or other misfortune, but ordinarily human life will proceed happily and with good fortune if one follows the revealed precepts of the sect. Once eighteen in number, and later increased to twenty-one, these compose a mixed bag of declarative statements and admonitions, some of which appear contradictory:

1. Human life is art.
2. Man's life is an expression of the self.
3. The self is an expression of God.
4. Man suffers if he does not express himself.
5. Man loses himself if he is carried away by his emotions.
6. The self lies in selflessness.
7. All things are mutually related.
8. Live radiantly like the sun.
9. All men are equal.
10. Call blessings upon the self and others.
11. Depend upon God for all things.
12. There are different ways for different people.
13. For men, the way is that of men; for women, that of women.
14. All things exist for world peace.
15. All things are a mirror.
16. All things progress and develop.
17. Grasp firmly the heart of things.
18. Man stands forever on the border between good and evil.
19. When inspiration comes, act at once.
20. Live to the full perfection of both mind and matter.
21. Live in perfect liberty.

Added to the ideas expressed in these precepts are various loosely fitting elements. Reverence for ancestors, for example, is tacked on lightly as if it were an afterthought for the benefit of members showing concern for their deceased ancestors. The object of worship is officially defined to include ancestral spirits, but no ceremony centers upon or directly concerns them. Sect teachings do not prohibit belief in or worship of the supernatural entities of other religious faiths, but the possibility of dual or multiple faiths does not seem to be an issue of importance. Sect representatives stated that they believed few members were also members of any other religious sect.

The entire complex of doctrine and ritual practices of P L Kyōdan seems to tend more toward traditional Shinto than to any other established faith. This impression stems in part from the religious terminology used by the sect, which, although sometimes unique, is generally in the native Japanese or Shinto tradition. Unusual readings with an esoteric tone are given to various ideographs used for religious concepts in doctrinal writings, a practice that is far from new in Japan’s religious history. To ensure that members of the sect may know the proper readings of the ideographs, these are given in furigana, a phonetic script printed beside the characters. To educated Japanese who are not members of the sect, these two practices suggest affectation on the part of the authors of the dogma and semiliteracy on the part of sect members.

If various ill-fitting elements and seeming contradictions are set aside, it is possible to reduce the principal teachings of P L Kyōdan to simple fundamentals that cohere. An all-knowing God exists. He is interested in the welfare of man and can instruct man in various ways how to live the rewarding life on earth. Man is fundamentally good, but he errs often without knowing how or why he has done so, and thereby brings upon himself sickness and other misfortunes. These are signs from God of mistaken thinking and related misdeeds. The revealed precepts of P L Kyōdan tell man how to live. Few human beings can think objectively about themselves even with this guidance, however, and many must have special personal diagnostic and remedial attention in line with the precepts. This is available through the head of the sect and certain other priests qualified to serve as intercessors.

The basic ideas set forth in the foregoing paragraph are given a highly distinctive packaging and presentation. Most of the teachings are comprehended under the precept that life is art, and this phrase has become an important symbol of the sect. As conceived by P L Kyōdan, art certainly includes the fine arts, and organized attempts are made to cultivate them. But art has a much broader meaning. It means artful living. The artful life means one in which the interests of the individual are expressed and all activities of living are developed to the greatest heights of perfection. The artful life also entails subordination of the self to the interests of others. One
“must” express himself, but this injunction is not a blanket endorsement of private and selfish desires. There is always the proviso that self-expression of the individual must be as a member of society, mindful of the interests of others.

Doctrinal publications are largely accounts of proper attitudes and behavior, written in the homeliest style. Such traits as bragging, selfishness, and affectation are branded as bad, for example, and proper relations between familial members and between men and women are prescribed. One account describes pretentious and “useless” people as being like flat beer. Within the limits of what amounts to a quite conventional conception of moral behavior, the individual is urged to look for happiness in self-expression. Every man is an artist, but not all men realize their potentials. Art is then excellence in all activities of life that are not disruptive socially.

Although doctrinal writings of the sect give a seeming emphasis to instruction in morality, other aspects of its dogma appear to be more important. P L Kyo\d{a}dan not only urges the cultivation of excellence in all human traits and capabilities, it also offers opportunities for the pursuit of excellence in some endeavors. The sect offers much encouragement in the form of instruction in and facilities for the pursuit of excellence in various sports and fine arts. Practical instruction in achieving artful perfection in such endeavors as repairing automobiles or research in science cannot conveniently be offered. As we have noted, however, sect teachings urge perfection in every activity of life, and doctrinal tracts explicitly mention the importance of achieving excellence in personal attire, in daily tasks such as cooking and housework, and in science. Performance that reaches the level of art depends then partly upon the development of skill and partly upon proper attitudes and behavior. P L Kyo\d{a}dan thus endorses both happiness and achievement, and extends to its members an endorsement of these goals of life by advocating a restricted kind of individualism.

Much of the appeal of P L Kyo\d{a}dan comes through another facet of its equation of art and life. Unartful life leads to misfortune, especially in the form of sickness. Misfortunes are divine tidings (mishirase) of selfish and thus improper thought and act. (The term gash\do, “expression of egotism,” is also used to mean these divine signs, but representatives of the sect state that it has generally been replaced in recent years by the word mishirase.) When misfortune strikes, its cause must be determined. This is done most commonly by means of a standardized printed form in which the afflicted gives all pertinent details in writing. The form is then forwarded to the sect headquarters for diagnosis and a remedial prescription (kokoroe) that follows sect teachings. Diagnosis is presumably done by the sect leader, Tokuchika Miki, or by one of various other persons recently designated by him as having the special powers required. Receiving a prescription is said ordinarily to take about one week. In late 1964 plans were made to speed up the process, in part by providing kokoroe which, unlike the prescriptions of the past that needed interpretation by professional teachers of dogma at regional headquarters, inform the applicant in highly specific terms what course of action to follow. As the years have passed, prescriptions are said to have become more specific and also more common, thus providing increased income to the sect. In former times, one generalized kokoroe was designed to last the individual member for his lifetime, but the present trend is to request a new and specific prescription for each crisis. When critical illness or other serious misfortunes require speedy action, prescriptions may be obtained by telephone or teletype. In mid-1966, the handling of kokoroe was speeded by the use of computers, which were also to be used in various other ways to increase speed and efficiency in administrative tasks and the keeping of records.
To this familiar kind of faith healing are added various elements of magic and there is also a recognition of modern medicine in the form of a hospital for members. The sect has two protective amulets, both known by English names. One of these, called amuretto, is a scroll placed in a container that is worn suspended from the neck against the skin. The second, called ringu amuretto, is a plain gold ring that may be worn on any finger and is sometimes used also as a wedding ring. Members must make written application for the amulets, and a contribution is expected in return. Some members of P L Kyōdan appear to attribute supernatural power to the performance of ritual, visits to the headquarters, and to the object of worship. An issue of one of the sect magazines in 1964 carried an article on a member in the theatrical profession who, while performing, carried not only the amulet but brought with him a “portable” object of worship.³

A unique rite of P L Kyōdan relating to faith healing appears to have been a response to the pressure from increased requests for kokoroe that accompanied the sect’s growth in membership. This is the oyashikiri, “parent’s vow,” which the sect translates into English as “the highest vow of sincerity of the Patriarch.” Any member may perform the rite of oyashikiri, which consists of a vow that he will conduct himself according to the tenets of the sect. Its distinctive feature is that the head of the sect assumes vicarious responsibility (migawari) for correcting the improper views and acts of the member. Once the vow has been taken, misfortunes are at least ameliorated if not altogether ended until the sufferer can receive a kokoroe that tells him the specific nature of his failure so that he may take corrective action. Although the vow itself is said to have no significance unless its maker lives up to the tenets of the sect, it appears certain that some members regard the vow and uttering the word oyashikiri as conferring supernatural benefit.

Ritual observances include daily morning services, a monthly ceremony of thanksgiving, and two annual festivals. Until 1965, four such festivals, spaced throughout the year, were conducted at the national headquarters. In 1966, only two were conducted, and plans at that time called for only two annually in the future. The great festival, honoring the founder, is conducted in August. This rite consists of a gigantic and lengthy display of fireworks, in accordance with the expressed wish of the deceased founder, followed by a brief ceremony conducted on the steps of the Sacred Hall by the leader of the sect and a group of priests and priestesses. The display of fireworks is a long-established form of entertainment in Japan that is looked upon in some degree as a form of art. (It is said that in former times, Japanese connoisseurs of fireworks displays were able to recognize by their patterns and colors the fireworks of certain master craftsmen and informally judged the relative skill of the masters at each display.) The spectacular display provided by P L Kyōdan attracts many non-members, who are charged admission fees and are seated separately from members. In 1966, the exhibition began during the daylight with fireworks producing smoke of various colors and designs and whistling devices, and continued after darkness fell with a great display of brilliant fireworks. The staggering cost of the exhibition—large fireworks are said to cost $200 each and the display lasts for hours—is met by special contributions from members.

An important additional ceremony is the familiar small-group discussion, zadankai, which the sect customarily translates as “round-table conference.” A thanksgiving ceremony, conducted simultaneously on the twenty-first day of each month at headquarters and all major branches, is regarded by the sect as the most important of the “established” ceremonies other than the great annual festivals.⁴ Begun in 1958, this ceremony includes elements that appear to be a response to demands
for mass production. During the ceremony, the patriarch returns to God the responsibilities he has assumed during the past month for the behavior of vowing members and assumes responsibility for their behavior for the coming month. A change made in ritual requirements in late 1964 seems also to be in part a response to growth as well as an attempt to gain popularity. Attendance at early morning services at sect installations then ceased to be an obligation of members, who henceforth might optionally conduct services in their own homes.

Ritual includes the singing of hymns accompanied by organ music that resemble the hymns of Christian sects. Symbols in use are vivid and lavish. A twenty-one-pointed sunburst or star symbolizes the sect precepts; special positions and movements of the hands have symbolic significance, and, as the preceding pages have shown, the sect has many other objects and practices with symbolic meaning that are used in the great festivals. Floodlights, the cascading fountain, fireworks, and the rich and colorful costumes worn by the patriarch and high priests at these times make the important rituals of the sect truly spectacular.

Organization and Activities

P L Kyōdan differs sharply from Sōka Gakkai and less sharply from Risshō Kōsei-kai in the relationships that hold between the leader of the sect and the members. Tokuchika Miki is in good measure a prophet with divine powers, a patriarch governing and guiding a flock. His official designation, Oshiroya (literally, "Divine-Teaching Parent" but translated by P L Kyōdan as "Holy Father" or "Patriarch"), is in keeping with his attributes. He is the undisputed authority in sect affairs. Other organizational features of the sect give it the flavor of a family enterprise, in top management if not among the rank and file of membership. The patriarch's father is sanctified and his memory kept alive by ritual and the impressive mausoleum at sect headquarters. Positions of high prominence are held by the patriarch's wife and daughter, both of whom are qualified to diagnose the causes of misfortune and to prescribe remedies. The nephew of the patriarch, who has no son, holds the position of second highest dignitary of the sect and has been named, on the basis of revelation, as the patriarch's successor.

The patriarch is not merely a doctrinal leader and prophet. He plays a second, secular role as chief administrator. Except when the demands of ritual call for a religious mien and the rich and colorful robes of religious office, he dresses and conducts himself in ways that are in keeping with his role as a successful business executive. Expensively dressed and carefully groomed, he makes use of other symbols of business success in Japan that include membership (honorary) in the prestigious Rotary Club and Lions Club.

The patriarch is in legal fact a business executive, the head of a commercial concern bearing his name, Miki Enterprises. Much of the property commonly regarded as the possession of P L Kyōdan is said to be legally owned by Miki Enterprises and is operated for profit. Moneymaking establishments and facilities consist principally of golf courses, of which a half-dozen were distributed throughout the nation in 1966. Other establishments are said to include a few restaurants, bars, and souvenir shops. A new golf course, in Chiba Prefecture, about 90 minutes from Tokyo by public transportation, was being added in 1966.

Although still extremely vigorous and actively controlling affairs of the sect, the patriarch, born in 1900, is advancing in age. Problems incurred by growth of the sect added to concern over its future after the death of the aging patriarch have led in recent years to organizational changes that give important office to a number of people. Until about 1961, only the patriarch was qualified to dispense divine in-
struction as an intercessor between God and man. By 1964, six additional persons had been named as official intercessors, the patriarch's nephew, his wife, his daughter, and two men and one woman who are not relatives of the leader. By mid-1966 the number of such assistant intercessors (taike-oya, "assistant patriarchs") had grown to 19, of which only the three mentioned above were female. This increase was accompanied by an announcement describing the founder's revelation as including the information that a total of 204 intercessors would ultimately be required for conversion of the whole world. This trend of change is similar to those evident in Sōka Gakkai and Risshō Kōseikai, a movement away from a strong prophet-flock relationship toward one more characteristic of large commercial enterprises. P L Kyōdan has as yet not gone so far in this respect as the other two sects.

In other organizational features, P L Kyōdan also resembles Sōka Gakkai and Risshō Kōseikai but, again, has not gone so far in elaborating and distinguishing its organizational parts and their functions. There are the familiar regional divisions proceeding from a han of five to ten families through progressively larger divisions called dan, hōmen, chiku, and shibu. In 1964 the largest division on the regional level that remained fully functional was the shibu, which had several thousand members. Shibu were formerly organized into larger divisions called "blocks." In 1964 these were said to exist mostly as a "concept" rather than an administrative unit. In 1965, some of the units were renamed. Shibu became kyōkai (church or parish); chiku became shibu, and so on. These changes reflect growth in size of membership but no significant change in structure. In 1966, an attempt was begun to make a seemingly important change in organization. This was a movement to do away with the large churches or meeting halls throughout the nation and to conduct small-group meetings at members' homes. One church building and its grounds in Osaka were offered for sale.

Men's, women's, and youths' associations are well established. A children's association enrolls school children in the first six grades of school. On entering junior high school (at about twelve years of age), a child joins the young men's or young women's association, which includes members up to thirty-five years of age. P L Kyōdan is unusual in dividing its association of mature, married men into three groups by age. These subdivisions bear names reflecting a kind of sentimentality characteristic of the sect: Mature Years Society (ages 30 to 50), Rounded Hearts Society (ages 50 to 70), and Aged Spring Society (ages 70 and over).

A considerable number of instructors in doctrine, about 500 in late 1964 and about 800 in 1966, are full-time professionals (kyōshi). Several times this number are lay instructors, who are placed in two grades. Instructors in doctrine are trained according to an organized system. Professionals normally receive a total of two years of formal training in doctrine and serve one or more years as novices. Women are less well represented than men among the ranks of instructors; about 60 of the 500 in 1964 were women. Although in Japan as elsewhere in the world, more men than women become professionals in religion, P L Kyōdan appears to have in the past deliberately discouraged women from holding positions of authority. This issue is not entirely clear, but the patriarch's writings do make clear that he regards it proper for men to lead and women to follow. Women who hold positions as professional instructors in doctrine are said to be principally widows of former instructors, who received their appointments after the death of their husbands without going through the periods of formal training now required of new male instructors. An order of women professionals of low rank called the "Divine Sisters" (D S Kyōshi) has existed for a number of years. Divine Sisters receive only brief training
in doctrine and most commonly serve as assistants to the wives of male professional instructors, helping them with domestic work, record keeping, and other tasks. Divine Sisters are also given training in flower arranging and other forms of art suitable for women. In late 1964, representatives of the sect stated that the principal reason women did not participate in the formal training program for professional instructors was that living quarters in the training halls were available only for men but that facilities would be provided in the future for giving the same training to women. It is difficult to avoid thinking that this planned change as well as the appointment of women to positions of high status is a deliberate move to bring policies of the sect into better congruence with current Japanese ideas about male and female equality.

Separation of the lines of organization of P L Kyōdan according to administrative, doctrinal, or other specialized roles is so far not well developed at any level. In Japanese phraseology, the vertical lines are not clearly distinguished from the horizontal lines. The most important administrative posts are in the hands of men and women who are also professional instructors in doctrine. Heads of the major district divisions are professional instructors; heads of the next two largest divisions are ordinarily lay instructors, and the smaller divisions are headed by ordinary members. The whole is controlled by the patriarch and a complex of administrative and advisory bodies concerning themselves with problems of finance, organization, doctrine, and the like. Personnel who hold positions of authority in these committees and boards are all instructors in dogma, and much overlap exists in membership of the various bodies. Advisors from outside the sect give counsel on matters of finance, construction, publishing, and the like.

Some reordering of role assignments occurred in 1965 that appeared to be in keeping with other developments aimed at avoiding heavy dependence upon one leader or a very small group of leaders. At that time the major regional divisions (renamed kyōkai but formerly called shibu) were given some degree of autonomy and positions as heads of the next smaller geographical divisions (now called shibu) were opened for the first time to lay instructors. This latter change was probably also influenced by a shortage of trained instructors in dogma.

P L Kyōdan is well aware of problems of organization, and one of its advisory boards (Soshikihō) is charged with handling them. It is significant that headships of regional divisions are temporary posts of about two years' duration, a practice that is followed to discourage factionalism. The sect seems never to have had occasion to face threats to group solidarity from relations between recruiter and recruitee. A recruiter looks after the welfare of his converts to the point of seeing that they become firmly established as members of the regular organizational units. In 1965 or 1966, an attempt was made to tighten solidarity by requiring that converters assume responsibility for seeing that their converts become solidly embedded in the organization. No formal use is made by P L Kyōdan, however, of fictive parent-child relationships among the rank and file of members, perhaps because the patriarch looks upon himself as the father and allows no opportunity for others to play this role.

In addition to organizing its members into groups that are brought into regular and close contact with each other, P L Kyōdan follows other practices, none of which is unique, that help to hold the flock together. Like other new sects, it provides opportunities for the individual to raise his status through service to the organization. Successful recruiters are given official recognition by having their names written on notices placed on walls of meeting places and gain prestige thereby.
Members are urged to meet the ideal goal of one new convert per person each month. Professional instructors do not ordinarily recruit. Members are placed in two grades dependent upon the apparent intensity of their faith, and even the most ordinary member can thus distinguish himself by faithful performance. Those who rise to the higher grade of membership receive a special votary object. A member may also distinguish himself in sports and aesthetics.

Each new member pledges himself to visit the headquarters for three days of training, a requirement for first-class members (kyōto). In 1964, about one-third of the members held first-class rank. The pilgrims come to sect headquarters in organized groups, generally traveling in chartered buses. The sect is said formerly to have owned its own buses—a total of 1800 in 1964, according to sect representatives—but subsequently to have sold them and turned to chartered vehicles. Trainees wear special hospital-like robes of white cotton and pursue a thoroughly organized course of lectures, prayers, songs, and other joint activities. Volunteer labor for the benefit of the organization, especially in cleaning buildings, is a part of membership. Small-group discussions (zadankai) are held frequently at times that suit the convenience of members, and one may attend few or many of these meetings.

For the benefit of members, boarding schools are available for children from kindergarten through high school. A new dormitory for schoolchildren, equipped with Western beds and special study rooms, was nearing completion in mid-1966. Plans for the indefinite future call for the construction of a junior college. A new 98-bed hospital for sect members, completed in 1966, replaced a smaller one that had been in use for several years. Some activities of public welfare are conducted, but these follow no established, long-range program. During 1964, the sect gave aid to the people of Niigata who suffered a disastrous earthquake and conducted a nation-wide campaign of cleaning litter from parks and other public facilities in preparation for the Olympics.

A large part of the appeal of P L Kyōdan undoubtedly lies in its emphasis on "self-expression" through sports and various forms of art, both Japanese and Western. Young people are provided fine facilities for almost any kind of organized sport. For the more mature there is golf, which holds high social status in Japan. Regional establishments of the sect often have practice driving courses. P L Kyōdan is unusual in allowing non-members to make use of its facilities for golf and other sports upon payment of nominal fees. Girls who have finished high school may take a year of study in an institution at headquarters called the Hanayomeryō (literally, "Brides' Residence Hall," but translated by P L Kyōdan as "Finishing School"), where they receive training in flower arranging, Japanese dancing, and other feminine arts and accomplishments as well as in doctrine. Girls who become Divine Sisters are products of this training who receive some additional instruction in doctrine. As a part of their training, male professional teachers also study various forms of art, some of which are optional and others compulsory, that include poetry, calligraphy, music appreciation, Japanese dancing, and the tea ceremony. A completely equipped theater in one of the wings of the Sacred Hall is used for choral singing and theatrical exhibitions by sect members and professional entertainers. The several periodicals published by P L Kyōdan included for some years a secular art magazine. Elaborately illustrated, it contained little direct reference to the religious teachings of the sect and was written almost entirely by outsiders from the world of arts and entertainment. In general, sect magazines for young people and women give less emphasis to doctrine than those of other new sects and contain far more articles of general interest.
The sources of the income of P L Kyōdan are not wholly clear. Members are expected or required to pay monthly fees of 100 yen (28 cents) each, and additional sums are derived from fees paid for the services of intercession, subscriptions to various periodicals, and the sale of amulets and tracts. P L Kyōdan is said to be careful to see that fees are paid promptly and to encourage members strongly to make additional voluntary contributions for such events as the displays of fireworks. Additional funds for special projects are raised by the sale to members of what a sect representative describes as "the equivalent of" small-scale issues of interest-bearing bonds. An undisclosed portion of the sect's income is derived from the profits of Miki Enterprises. All members of the patriarch's family are expensively dressed and are said to live well. This, it must be added, is entirely in keeping with the tenets of the sect.

In 1965 and 1966, the organization of P L Kyōdan seemed to be in a particularly fluid state that suggested retrenchment. Rumors held that the sect was financially troubled as the result of overspending and that its membership was not increasing according to expectations. Various actions taken by the sect during these years, some of which have already been mentioned, seem to support the rumors. These include the reduction of the grand, and expensive, festivals from four to two; the postponing or abandoning of plans for construction of some buildings and other facilities that in 1964 seemed definitely planned for the near future. Other possible suggestions of a shortage of funds are the increase noted in the number of intercessors, from whose services a substantial part of the sect's funds are drawn; the sale of its autobuses; reported attempts to sell certain church buildings and their grounds; the stopping of publication of the sect's expensive art magazine; and a reduction in the number of salaried employees. Personnel at the Tondabayashi headquarters and students in residence there were said by sect representatives to number about 3,000 persons at midyear in 1964. Two years later this number was much smaller. During 1966, plans were made for reducing greatly the number of salaried priests or instructors in dogma and using in their place unsalaried lay members. These various changes might, of course, represent attempts to achieve greater efficiency at lower cost rather than moves of necessity brought on by lack of money.

Membership

Representatives of P L Kyōdan describe its members as coming principally from the lower middle class and running strongly to civil servants, white collar workers, shopkeepers and other self-employed persons with moderate incomes, and including a moderate number of schoolteachers. Males and females are said to be "about the same" in number. Only a few hundred of the sect's members are college graduates or college students. Members are expectably concentrated most heavily in the Osaka-Kyoto-Kobe area where the headquarters lie. The region of second largest concentration is Tokyo.

Information on sect membership is inconsistent. In personal conversations, sect representatives claimed a membership in July, 1964 of 1,225,000 families, and in December, 1964 of 2,200,000 individuals, excluding children under twelve years of age. According to statistics published by the Ministry of Education, membership at the beginning of 1965 was 1,218,917 individuals. A circulation of 560,000 copies was claimed for the sect's newspaper in July, 1964, but this figure seems to be greatly overstated. In 1966, information from a source well informed in the affairs of P L Kyōdan held that actual membership of named individuals (rather than families) on the sect's records was limited to 140,000 of which about 100,000 were regularly paying the monthly fees. Which, if any, of these reports is accurate is
very uncertain. Although the figures given by sect representatives are probably greatly exaggerated, it is hard to believe that the extensive facilities of the sect could be maintained by an active membership of only 100,000 persons unless the various commercial enterprises associated with the sect are highly profitable.

P L Kyôdan has overseas branches in Okinawa, Hawaii, Los Angeles, Sao Paolo, Brazil (where it claimed 10,000 members in 1964), and Lima, Peru. Plans in 1964 called for the establishment of missions in Switzerland and France in the person of representatives trained in the languages and customs of those countries. In late 1964 three such representatives were active in Jakarta, Java. P L Kyôdan does not proclaim the goal of world conversion, but it evidently entertains the idea. According to its patriarch, the words "perfect liberty" were chosen for its title because they are "suitable for world propagandizing."

Like its colleagues, P L Kyôdan is astir with plans for expansion and change, some of which we have mentioned. These plans have changed frequently and, as previously stated, suggest either declining strength or fear about the future. Plans held in 1964 for the establishment in the near future of a headquarters in Tokyo had, by 1966, materialized in the form of the purchase of land in Chiba Prefecture, some distance from the city of Tokyo, on which a golf course was being built. The construction at Tondabayashi of a giant bathhouse and restaurant planned in 1964 for completion in the very near future had not yet begun in 1966. The erection of a giant piece of abstract sculpture "at least 50 meters high" by a famous Japanese sculptor that was discussed in 1964 was later dropped for the stated reason that it seemed impractical. Plans for other construction and expansion seemed in 1966 to be behind the expectations of 1964. Representatives of the sect admitted to indecision as to courses for the future saying that their periods of expansion have inevitably been "rather cyclic": "We think it is important to have nice facilities at the headquarters and so we concentrate on them for a while. But it is also important to give attention to our regional divisions and to other things connected with growth, and so we emphasize those for a while. And so on."

Despite an apparent slowing of pace in the mid-1960's, P L Kyôdan at this time did add certain facilities that we have mentioned and claimed a considerable increase in membership in South America. An innovation in the summer of 1966 was the establishment in Osaka of courses of training in the English language. Staffed by three male instructors from the United States, two of whom were Caucasians and one a young man of Japanese ancestry, the courses began with a total enrollment of 600 fee-paying students. These courses of instruction are said to represent a service to the nation rather than to constitute an agency for proselytizing. The fees are nevertheless substantial by Japanese standards. Two of the instructors but only a handful of the students are members of P L Kyôdan.

The patriarch of P L Kyôdan has been a guiding spirit in the formation of Japanese religious federations, and in 1964 was president of the Japan Federation of Religions and chairman of the Union of New Religions of Japan. P L Kyôdan thus keeps well informed of religious affairs of both old and new sects of the nation, and appears to be on the best of terms with other influential new sects of the Union. Nikkyô Niwano, the head of Rîshô Kôseikai, is reported to visit the headquarters at Tondabayashi from time to time to play golf. P L Kyôdan has not entered politics, but in the election of members of the National House of Councillors in 1965, it gave strong support to a candidate, officially backed by the Union of New Religions, who was successful in winning office. P L Kyôdan appears to be intently considering matters of organization and doctrine and modes of propagation.
that will ensure its success. One of the changes that promises to contribute toward this end is the trend toward avoiding total dependence upon a single charismatic leader. At the time of this writing, a great growth in the future seems doubtful. Much will depend upon the skill with which the present reorganization is carried out.
In literal translation, Seichō-no-Ie means "House of Growth." Seichō-no-Ie prefers to render its name into English, "in loose translation," as "The Home of Infinite Life, Wisdom & Abundance." These are names that seem at once Japanese and suggestive of various religious movements in the United States and England. Other terms used in self-reference by Seichō-no-Ie—for example, "tower of light" and "lighthouse of the new age"—have a familiar ring in Western ears. This similarity is not wholly the result of coincidence.

Seichō-no-Ie is unique among Japan's new sects in maintaining contact and rapport with movements in the United States and Europe that have similar aims and teachings. Among these are Unity, Religious Science, Divine Science, Mental Science, and New Thought. Although Seichō-no-Ie has no organizational links with these movements, it maintains friendly, cooperative relations with them, sponsoring addresses in Japan by their leaders and representatives and translating publications of Unity into Japanese for distribution among Seichō-no-Ie members. In return, leaders of these organizations extravagantly endorse the various English-language publications of Seichō-no-Ie, and in 1962 sponsored lectures on their home grounds by Masaharu Taniguchi, founder and leader of Seichō-no-Ie. Taniguchi has stated that he regards the beliefs and ideals of Religious Science to be exactly the same as those of Seichō-no-Ie.1 Seichō-no-Ie also compares itself with the Unity movement in the United States. Calling itself a "nondenominational truth movement teaching that all religions emanate from one God," it states that it attempts to do in the Orient what Unity attempts in the United States. Because of its doctrinal eclecticism, a Japanese scholar has labeled Seichō-no-Ie as "the religious department store."2

Seichō-no-Ie is distinctive among Japanese religions in still other respects. It may be described as a movement offering its members the good life, especially a life free from illness, through teachings with religious, metaphysical, and mystic tones that stress more than anything else the cultivation of optimistic thoughts. This brief description points to a fundamental similarity to the other new Japanese sects which unquestionably exists. But Seichō-no-Ie has unusual features. Although often matters of emphasis rather than radical departures, they set Seichō-no-Ie apart from the other new sects and give it an overall flavor so distinctive as to mask the similarities. This quality of distinctiveness might be summed up in the statement that Seichō-no-Ie, despite its illogic and metaphysics, seems curiously sophisticated. Its tone of seeming sophistication springs from varied sources that include the personal qualities of its leader and certain of its teachings and modes of operation.

Seichō-no-Ie traces its history to 1930, when its founder and leader, Masaharu Taniguchi, began to expound through writings the doctrines that came to him by revelation. Beginning as a publishing house, Seichō-no-Ie retains some of the atmosphere of a commercial book publisher. It continues to distribute advertising circulars for its publications and depends heavily for its income upon their sale. As claimed by Seichō-no-Ie in 1964, the sale of its founder's masterwork, Seimei no Issō ("The Truth of Life," published in a regular 20-volume edition and in other forms including a short English version and a "portable" Japanese edition of 40 volumes) had reached 9,600,000 volumes. If stacked, it is claimed, these would reach a height eight times that of Mt. Fuji.3 In addition to books, six magazines are regularly published, and a regular program of radio broadcasting is conducted.
Development of Seichō-no-Ie into a religion seems to have depended in part upon the exigencies of incorporation and finance under the laws of Japan. Examination of the writings and stated aims of Seichō-no-Ie also shows considerable shifting with the tides of national and even international sentiment. Once supernationalistic, Seichō-no-Ie today reflects prevailing currents of thought and accordingly espouses religious universalism, world peace, and the brotherhood of man. Representatives of Seichō-no-Ie state that its founder had not intended at first to found a religion, and many of its modern elements that are "religious" in a conventional sense are additions to the original doctrines and appurtenances. The origin of its present object of worship is described by representatives of the sect as fortuitous. According to postwar legislation defining requirements for chartering as a religious body, an object of worship is necessary. Seichō-no-Ie lacked any visible symbol of the kind and its leader then decided upon a scroll bearing the word jissō, written in Chinese characters in cursive style. This term, ordinarily translated as "reality," "truth," or "enlightenment," is sometimes rendered into English by Seichō-no-Ie representatives as "indwelling God," "soul," and "true nature." Since that time, sect worship has been conducted before copies of this scroll.

Seichō-no-Ie saw moderate success before and during World War II. Doctrines of the time gave a prominent place to nationalism centered on emperor worship, and the sect seems to have suffered no suppression from the Japanese government. After the war, Taniguchi was purged for several years by authorities of the Occupation because of his nationalistic writings and during this time the fortunes of Seichō-no-Ie suffered. Once its leader was allowed to resume activities, however, the sect saw recovery and increased growth in changed doctrinal garb that omitted nationalism but otherwise retained the ideas and ideals of prewar Japan. In 1964 Seichō-no-Ie claimed a membership of about two million persons, basing its estimate on sales of publications. It is worthy of note that the unit here is the individual and not the household. Seichō-no-Ie has not stressed family ties.

Seichō-no-Ie is best known in Japan through its abundant publications and the numerous public addresses and radio broadcasts of its leader. It is not, however, merely a loose organization of the like-minded but is a well-organized corporate group that, in this respect also, resembles other new sects. The center of activities of the sect is Tokyo. In keeping with the nature of its doctrines, the headquarters building is eclectic in architecture and symbolic features. The most striking feature of the building, which incorporates a lecture hall seating over 2,000 people, is a tower ending in a spire. In front of the tower stands a statue of "the eternal Christ" as beheld in a vision by founder Taniguchi. Atop the spire is the principal identifying symbol of Seichō-no-Ie, a circular design incorporating a Buddhist-derived swastika and an eight-pointed cross or star signifying a single truth. Symbolizing Buddhism, Shinto, and Christianity, the design was devised to signify the unity of all religions. This symbol is described by Seichō-no-Ie as having been "clairvoyantly seen" by one of the leaders of the sect. Symbolic significance of another kind is attributed to one of the writings of Taniguchi, Kanro no Hon, which some members regard as a protective amulet.

Once imposing, the headquarters building seems modest in comparison with the grand buildings erected by other new sects in more recent years. But Seichō-no-Ie has less need than other sects for a grand headquarters. Sect policies have not so far included pilgrimages of the faithful to any sectarian paradise or holy land, and dazzling halls and hostleries are not necessary. Many of its lectures are public—admission fees are charged—and these are sometimes conducted in public audi-
A part of the appeal of Seichō-no-Ie undoubtedly comes from these public lectures, which have the air of scholarly addresses. The sect leader travels to visit the faithful and maintains other important contact with them by radio addresses and a rich stream of written words. In addition, Seichō-no-Ie makes use of various features of organization and methods of operation common to the other new sects.

Teachings

Seichō-no-Ie describes itself, in English, as follows:

Seichō-no-Ie is an internationally renowned humanity enlightenment movement or truth movement founded in Japan by Dr. Masaharu Taniguchi in 1930 through divine revelation, based on a sublime ideal of bringing genuine happiness to all mankind—an ideal world of happiness, gratitude, and peace—not a mere visionary Utopia but to manifest here on this earth a home of infinite unfoldment brimming with abundant life and creation.

The flood of writings produced by Taniguchi, who is said to have written a total of over 300 works, does not provide any simple and wholly consistent exposition of the doctrines of Seichō-no-Ie and this is perhaps partly intentional. Any wholly lucid exposition would presumably put an end to continued publication of new works, thereby reducing income. As we have noted, the teachings have undergone considerable change with the passage of the years, and the modern composite represents many additions as well as some deletions. The additions seem to be a loosely fitting cloak for certain fundamental ideas that are important to the sect believers. In its present garb, Seichō-no-Ie states that it syncretizes all religions, and one may easily find in its teachings elements drawn from other religions. Taniguchi was once a member and professional employee of the Ōmoto sect, charged with writing doctrine, and Seichō-no-Ie is often described as one of the offspring of Ōmoto. Elements of Seichō-no-Ie doctrine derived from Buddhism and Christianity are also plentiful. Its writings contain many references to Buddha and still more to Christ. Seichō-no-Ie speaks of the gods of all religions as being a single God, and declares that all religions have some value. In speaking of this matter, representatives of Seichō-no-Ie explained its viewpoint by an analogy with gold mining. There are many kinds of gold ore just as there are many different religions. Once the ore has been smelted and its impurities removed, the end product of all ores is identical, pure gold. Seichō-no-Ie is then the master smelter.

The years after World War II have seen the addition to Seichō-no-Ie doctrines of such grand objectives as attaining world peace and the brotherhood of man. The central core of its teachings as they reach its members cannot, however, be described as concerning these goals or religious universalism. The most important doctrine of Seichō-no-Ie is that well-being can be achieved only by possessing the proper conception of the universe as this is taught by Seichō-no-Ie. The fundamental nature of man and the entire universe is perfection and complete harmony. Man’s conception of the universe, however, comes to him as a distorted reflection of its true and perfect nature. Sickness, discord, and suffering of all kinds are illusions, the result of warped thinking that may be set right by the teachings of Seichō-no-Ie.

Clustered about the central theme are many lesser and often poorly integrated ideas and ideals—conceptions of God, transmigration, ideas of metaphysics, simple supernaturalsim, and much else. The teachings abound with internal inconsistencies and do not stand up under logical scrutiny. Much more than the teachings of other sects, they lean toward psychology, especially psychotherapy.

Seichō-no-Ie teaches techniques for attaining intuitive perception of the true nature of reality. In doing so, it relies in part upon faith abetted by millions of printed words of counsel, but it also prescribes various physical acts. Some of these
are standard practice among the other new sects of Japan. Regular services of worship are conducted that include sermons with a lecture-like quality and joint recital of the scriptures. Seichō-no-Ie has its own "sutras," written by Taniguchi, that include a sutra for divine healing. A highly important part of sect activities are the informal discussions (zaodankai) that follow joint worship, sermons, and the bearing of testimony. As with the other new sects, members may here bring up questions, confess errors, and seek advice for personal problems. Also important is meditation (shinsōkan), which, as we may recall, finds a place in the teachings of Rishō Kōseikai. Seichō-no-Ie teachings give considerable emphasis to meditation. Although reminiscent of venerable Zen Buddhism, this practice as followed by Seichō-no-Ie has a modern as well as a traditional dress. Seichō-no-Ie provides instruction for both Occidental and Oriental bodily postures during meditation; that is, it prescribes a position for meditation while sitting in a chair and another while sitting on the floor. During meditation one must think that sickness and suffering do not exist, that he is healthy, successful, and—since man is innately perfect and has unlimited potentialities in any human endeavor—that he is capable of doing anything he wishes.

Seichō-no-Ie doctrines give little attention to morality in a systematic way. Here and there are explicit references to moral issues, but morality cannot be described as an important component of the teachings. The idea that a moral life is desirable seems to be taken for granted, so that it does not need statement or emphasis. Seichō-no-Ie does explicitly favor generosity and helpfulness to others, and it opposes hate and all other "low" emotions. There are no divine punishments. God is a loving God, and suffering is either itself illusion or the result of illusion. Once the true image of reality is gained, moral behavior will follow naturally, since man is by true nature perfectly moral. Guilt (sumi no ishiki, literally, "consciousness of wrongdoing") is illusory and most undesirable. Considerable stress is laid upon the need for eradicating repressed emotions, one of the worst of which is the secret feeling of guilt for moral or other failings. The view of Seichō-no-Ie with regard to morality seemed to be summed up in its statement that evil is manifested only for so long as it is recognized.

As might reasonably be inferred from the foregoing discussion, faith healing to cure sickness and to gain relief from distress of any other kind lies close to the heart of Seichō-no-Ie teachings. Some of the most important publications of the sect are works on "spiritual healing," and all teachings relate to this subject. Here, too, Seichō-no-Ie has seemingly modern accessories. Its advertising circulars speak of "metaphysical healing" and the Seichō-no-Ie "method of psychoanalysis," and use other similar terms.

Seichō-no-Ie has no hesitation in claiming efficacy in faith healing, and publishes lists of its "cures." These include a relatively small number of successes relating to such moral issues as alcoholism, depravity, improper love affairs, and bad relations with other people. Many claims are made of economic and social successes in numerous kinds of endeavors; these include success in marriage, divorce, business enterprises, lawsuits, passing college entrance exams, recovering runaway children, and obtaining living quarters and employment. Painless childbirth is also claimed for believers. By far the most common claims are of curing diseases, including cancer and other afflictions for which scientific medicine can give little or no aid.

Seichō-no-Ie seems hesitant in expressing in print its attitude toward conventional scientific medicine. Its publications make it clear, however, that medical theories concerning germs, nutrition, and the like are unimportant and that one's mental
attitude is the vital matter. Seichō-no-Ie's conception of the relationship between mind and matter extends into the realm of human fertility. One of its magazines states:

The lack of sperms in the husband is due to a lack of the masculine ideal within the mind of the husband. Thus, if the wife will call forth the masculine ideal in her husband, sperms as symbols of manhood will increase and pregnancy will become possible. The masculine ideal tends to be suppressed when the wife is the boss, so to speak, of the family, and for this reason the wife will have to do everything she can to encourage the adequate development of her husband's aggressive and positive nature. In Shinsokan [meditation] the wife will have to learn to arouse an attitude of adoration towards her husband whom she should envisage as a perfect man. In daily life she will have to learn to become as meek and as obedient as possible and to learn to obey her husband quietly so that his positive and aggressive nature as a man may be given full and adequate play in the affairs of the family's life.

All therapy of Seichō-no-Ie is "mental." Faith even enables one to cast aside all ideas of nutrition for the "... correct faith will nourish you so well that you will be able to take in most abundant nourishment from whatever food you eat." Another characteristic of Seichō-no-Ie is distinctive, and, to members of the sect, probably appealing. The writings of Taniguchi are remarkably flamboyant throughout, hothouses of luxuriant prose full of verbal roses entwined by orchids, all in riotous blossom. The writings are also heavily adorned with terms drawn from psychology, psychiatry, physics, and other modern sciences. Although often ludicrous, these usages succeed in creating a curious tone of eccentric, untutored modernity. The human body, for example, is likened to an electric cell with positive and negative poles. Placing the fingertips of the two hands together in prayerful meditation completes an electric circuit. Human beings are also like radio or television sets, replete with antennas. At other times, they are transmitters. Dependent upon the state of mind of the individual, he may transmit or receive waves that are harmful or beneficial. During meditation, one should "spread the eyebrows" for when one frowns, gloomy waves are transmitted that may cause the meditator to receive the spiritual wave of a spirit inferior to God.

Organization and Activities

More than any other of the large new sects, Seichō-no-Ie is a one-man show. Its leader and founder is a man of apparently boundless energy who, despite his age, maintains a grueling program of conducting fifteen regular monthly lectures at the largest installations throughout the nation, who turns out a vast volume of prose, edits many other publications, and, according to Seichō-no-Ie representatives, "superintends everything." Born in 1893 as the son of a farmer, Taniguchi retains nothing bucolic in his appearance or behavior. Leaders of the other new sects that we have discussed look and dress like successful businessmen except when they may be in ritual garb. In personal appearance only Taniguchi resembles the stereotype of the ascetic man of religion or letters, but his costume is nevertheless a conventional business suit. Alone among these leaders, Taniguchi cultivates a position of litterateur, public speaker, and public showman traveling under the guise of scholarliness. He is referred to in sect publications and personally addressed as sensei, a title denoting the learned person which is used throughout Japan for schoolteachers, university professors, and other teachers. Taniguchi's formal education consists of attendance at, but not graduation from, Waseda University. In a manner suggestive of similar men in the religious history of the United States, he labels himself as "Dr. Taniguchi," and is said to hold one or more honorary doctoral degrees in theology of obscure and dubious American provenience. It is difficult to
think of Taniguchi as the strongly charismatic leader who compels men to follow by the sheer strength of his personality, but there is no shadow of doubt that his oratory is colorful and that he is a powerful leader exercising great authority. Much of the success of Seicho-no-Ie depends upon his peculiar skill as a formulator and perennial amplifier of doctrine, especially in published form.

Seicho-no-Ie does not neglect other mechanisms that bind. Like the other large new sects, it places operation principally in the hands of its lay members except for higher supervision and management. In 1965 only about 100 religious instructors were professionals, and all of these had been personally chosen by Taniguchi. Leaders of small groups are ardent lay members who receive recognition but no stipends for their efforts. Everyone is given an active part, and there is much joint activity.

Seicho-no-Ie is organized nationally and internationally along familiar lines. Centering on the headquarters in Tokyo are large regional divisions (sōaki rengōkai), one for each prefecture, composed of variable numbers of smaller divisions. In 1964, about 1800 of the smallest unit (sōakai) were distributed throughout the nation. Meeting places of these units are most commonly private homes. In addition, there are the usual cross-cutting divisions for adult men, adult women, and young people, organized on local prefectural and national levels. The young people’s association is further subdivided into groupings for high school students and university students, and there is an association of Seicho-no-Ie teachers. These organizations are in some measure auxiliaries with objectives unique to each. The women’s division (Shirohato-kai, “White Dove Society”), for example, has as its main objective “the education of women,” and it engages in some activities of social reform such as opposition to abortion (but not to contraception). The teachers’ group (Shinkyōikusha Renmei, “New Educators League”) is composed of lay teachers of Seicho-no-Ie, most of whom are professional schoolteachers. Although described by Seicho-no-Ie representatives as being “more or less independent” and having its own conventions and publications, the teachers’ association seems to concern itself principally with the dissemination of Seicho-no-Ie teachings to parents of the students of the professional schoolteachers. Ample opportunity is provided for the individual member to achieve status by service to the organization.

Important administrative posts are in the hands of persons who are also professional teachers of sect doctrine, all of whom, as we have noted, are personally selected by the head of the sect and are presumably people dedicated to furthering the aims of the organization. No organizational use is made of the relations between recruiter and his recruits. Recruiting is done by members, but Seicho-no-Ie wins a considerable part of its membership by means of its publications. Thus, like P L Kyōdan, Seicho-no-Ie combines administrative and doctrinal lines in its higher echelons of organization and has no structurally important recruiting line.

Five “training schools” (Rensei Dōjō) are scattered about the nation, from Fukuoka, in Kyushu, to Tokyo. Rather than being exclusively organs for the dissemination of doctrines, these institutions seem to function principally as therapeutic centers. The customary period of training is ten days, during which trainees are put through an exhaustive routine designed to correct their “mental attitudes.” According to accounts given by Seicho-no-Ie representatives, correction appears to consist principally of techniques aimed to create a cheerful, hopeful state of mind and the impression that one is capable of attaining any goal. Trainees are praised and encouraged, urged to feel grateful to their parents and all other persons, and told that they can succeed in anything they attempt. Part of the training is provided by loudspeaker broadcasts that
instruct trainees bedded down for the night to be grateful, that they are all children of God, and that all will be well. Trainees are awakened by similar broadcasts announcing that it will be a wonderful day and otherwise assuring trainees of success and well-being. Many cures of illness are claimed to result from these courses of training.

Seichō-no-Ie does not neglect other familiar devices that serve to promote social solidarity. The small-group discussion (zadan kai) is important among these. Meetings begin and end with songs chosen from a range of about sixty composed principally by members. Home worship and meditation are conducted before one of the sect symbols (the Jissō scroll previously described). Members wear as badges of affiliation lapel buttons bearing the Seichō-no-Ie symbol. These are of several different kinds to distinguish the different grades of membership and the professional ministers. Depending upon the size of the annual fees they pay, members are also divided into three main classes that are given names like those used in classifying members of scholarly and philanthropic societies. In 1964, the annual fees ranged from about $1.35 to $28.00 for regular, contributing, and sustaining members. Membership includes subscription to various of the sect’s publications. Additional income is derived from separate sale of publications, sale of tickets to lectures, and from direct contributions collected through the efforts of a fund raising organization. Headquarters is said to fix only the amount of the minimum contribution for each major regional division.

Membership

The membership claimed by Seichō-no-Ie is said to be an estimate based upon sales of publications, which include five monthly magazines. The claims are exaggerations, but there is no question that the teachings of Seichō-no-Ie have reached with varying effectiveness a large number of Japanese citizens. Those who find Seichō-no-Ie attractive are clearly not drawn from the same social and educational backgrounds as the membership of Sōka Gakkai and Risshō Kōseikai. Seichō-no-Ie members come predominantly from the middle classes and appear to include a substantial number of college graduates. Japanese scholars of the new sects have often stated that Seichō-no-Ie members include people of upper social class and some intellectuals.

As with other new sects, questions concerning the sex and age of Seichō-no-Ie members cannot be answered with assurance. Popular opinion charges Seichō-no-Ie with a membership running especially heavily to middle-aged women. Seichō-no-Ie representatives hold that members are evenly divided by sex and scattered through all age groups. The young people’s division is said to have had over 200,000 members in 1964.

Like other large new Japanese sects, Seichō-no-Ie undoubtedly has aspirations to reach beyond Japan and beyond people of Japanese descent. The sect is unusual in including among its members a sprinkling of Caucasians who are not the spouses or close relatives of members of Japanese descent. Seichō-no-Ie has foreign branches in Hawaii, the continental United States, Canada, Mexico, and Brazil. Representatives of the sect stated that Brazilian members totaled 60,000 in 1964, and that members in all other foreign countries then totaled about 6,000. (A publication of Seichō-no-Ie of the same year stated foreign membership was 20,000.)

Seichō-no-Ie seems content at present with a role as “Unity of the Orient.” It has, however, sponsored various lecture programs with high-sounding titles that have an international flavor. Among these was a long series of addresses sponsored in 1964 entitled “Symposium on the Knowledge of Human Beings” (Ningengaku Kōza) and three addresses given in the same year that bore the general title “Grand Lecture Meeting on Mutual American-Japanese Bright Ideals” (Nichi-Bei Gōdō Kōmei Shiso
One of these latter addresses was delivered by a Caucasian minister of one of the American sects with which Seichō-no-Ie maintains friendly relations. Recent years have also shown a trend in Seichō-no-Ie activities toward increased contact with similar organizations of the Western world. A "round-the-world" lecture tour made by Taniguchi in 1962 took him to Hawaii, the continental United States, Canada, Peru, Argentina, Brazil, and several countries of western Europe, where he delivered a number of addresses under the sponsorship of Religious Science, Unity, and other similar organizations.

What future Seichō-no-Ie might have after the death of its aging founder is uncertain. Taniguchi has named his son-in-law—thus far kept in relative obscurity—as his successor. In keeping with Japanese custom often followed when a family lacks a son, the son-in-law was adopted at the time of his marriage to Taniguchi’s daughter, assuming Taniguchi’s surname and legally becoming his son. Seichō-no-Ie seems fairly well united in ways that might allow its continuation if not added growth without its present leader.
NOTES TO CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

3. See Meishin Chōsa Kyōgikai, Meishin no Jittai, Nippon no Zokushin, No. 1 (Tokyo, Gihōdō, 1949), and Meishin Chōsa Kyōgikai, Seikatsu Kansei no Meishin, Nippon no Zokushin, No. 3 (Tokyo, Gihōdō, 1955).
9. See, for example, the two publications cited in notes 6 and 7 above.
10. Among the developments of interest is the establishment in Tokyo of the International Institute for the Study of Religion, which conducts and encourages research on Japanese religions and publishes a journal and separate books in the English language. Scholars connected with the Institute include citizens of the United States and several European countries as well as Japanese scholars.

NOTES TO CHAPTER II: THE NEW RELIGIOUS SECTS

12. See, for example, Kunio Yanagita, sonota, op. cit., p. 103.
13. See Akio Saki, sonota, Kyōdo (Tokyo, Aoki Shoten, 1955); Iichi Oguchi, sonota, henshū, Shūkyō to Shinkō no Shinrigaku, Shinrigaku Kōza 4 (Tokyo, Kawade Shobō, 1956); Hīroo Takagi, op. cit.


15. See, for example, Akio Saki, sonota, op. cit.


19. See, for example, Akio Saki, op. cit. (1960), pp. 197-199.

20. This term is used by Risshō Kōseikai for certain meetings of large groups as well as for the much more frequent meetings of small groups.


29. See, for example, Hīro Takagi, op. cit. (1962); Akio Saki, op. cit. (1960), p. 111.


34. Seikyō Shim bun, Oct. 21, 1960, as reported in Kunio Yanagita, sonota, op. cit., p. 198.

35. Ibid., p. 197.


37. Ibid., pp. 43-45.


NOTES TO CHAPTER III: THE OLD RELIGIONS


2. Elsewhere in this book the diacritical mark over the “o” in Shinto is omitted for the reason that this term has long been Romanized for Western readers without using the phonetic mark, which indicates a long rather than a short “o.”

3. See, for example, Tōkei Sūri Kenkyusho Kokuminsei Chōsa Inkai, *Nihonjin no Kokuminsei* (Tokyo, Shiseidō, 1961), p. 479. A poll showed that 66% of the sample regarded all religions as the same.


6. For a recent account of Shinto, see Floyd H. Ross, *Shinto, the Way of Japan* (Boston, Beacon Press, 1965).


11. According to the statements of Tatsuhiko Senge, retired head of this sect, given in a personal interview in 1964, its official name is Izumo Ōyashirokyō. The Ministry of Education gives the name, in English, as Izumo Taishakyo.

12. Personal interview in 1964 with Naofusa Hirai, noted Shinto scholar and one of the prime movers in attempts to modernize Shinto. According to Hirai, a high school education is required for admission to training. According to Tatsuhiko Senge (see note 11 above), candidates for priesthood with only nine years of schooling (middle school) were accepted for training by Izumo Ōyashirokyō in 1964. Hirai estimated the number of college graduates among priests of Shrine Shinto as 30% to 40%, a figure which seems too high, and stated that about 60% of the priests held secular side jobs, working only part time as priests. According to a survey conducted by Jinjahonchō (undated but some time between 1950 and 1955), only 15% of Shrine Shinto priests had college educations and 50% had eight years or less of formal education.

13. Information on the number of Shinto priests completing training in 1965 was supplied by Professor Kiyomi Morioka (personal communication). Information on Ōyashirokyō Kokugakkan is derived from a personal interview in 1964 with Tatsuhiko Senge (see note 11 above).

14. See *Proceedings of the Conference on Shinto since 1945*.


16. For a detailed account of the organization of one of the most important sects, see Masami Haseyama, *Jōdo Shinshū Honganji-ha Shūmon Hōki Gaishetsu* (Kyoto, Hyakkaen, 1954).

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18. Ibid., pp. 184 and 187.


28. See, for example, Jōdo Shinshū Honganji-ha, Fukuō Kenkyūsho, hen, Sōka Gakkai no Kentō (Kyoto, Hyakukai, 1961). Shin Buddhism in general has offered greater opposition to Sōka Gakkai than any other religious school or group in Japan. See, for example, the Jōdōshū publication, Shinjō Takenaka, sonota, Henbō suru Sōka Gakkai (Kyoto, Jōdōshū Shūmushō, 1965).


31. Information derived from personal conversation with Fumio Masutani.


34. See, for example, discussions of this subject in C. R. Boxer, The Christian Century in Japan (Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1951), and Johannes Laures, S.J., The Catholic Church in Japan (Tokyo, Charles E. Tuttle, Co., 1954).


36. See Charles W. Iglehart, A Century of Protestant Christianity in Japan (Tokyo, Charles E. Tuttle Co., 1960), and Joseph J. Spae, CICM, Catholicism in Japan (Tokyo, ISR Press, 1963). Iglehart (p. 335) states that Protestants dropped from about 120,000 in 1941 to probably fewer than 100,000 during the year. Spae (p. 12) states that members of the Catholic Church numbered 119,224 in 1940 and 108,324 in 1946.

38. See Brendan R. Branley, M.M., Christianity and the Japanese (Maryknoll, N.Y., Maryknoll Publications, 1966), Ch. VI for a discussion of the Japanese image of the church with respect to church attendance and moral rules.


40. Ibid., p. 96.


42. Information on the number of Christian educational institutions is uncertain. One current account reporting for the year 1966 (Gordon K. Chapman, op. cit., p. 159) states that there are 240 Christian schools ranging from elementary schools to four-year “universities” (25) and graduate schools (10). Another account of schools of the Catholic Church in 1962 and 1963 (Joseph J. Spae, op. cit., pp. 47, 49, and 82) reports 274 schools of the same range of levels of education in 1962 and 290 such institutions in 1963. The number of kindergartens and nurseries operated by the Catholic Church and Protestant groups is much greater and highly variable.


44. See Kiyomi Morioka, op. cit.

NOTES TO CHAPTER IV: JAPANESE SOCIETY


7. See Tokutarō Sakurai, Kōshūdan Seirisutsu Katei no Kenkyū (Tokyo, Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1962).

8. Tadashi Fukutake (English version appears in his work cited note 2 above, pp. 170-198). For a critique of this interpretation, see Tokutarō Sakurai, op. cit.


11. See, for example, the series of articles on social classes by Kunio Odaka in Contemporary Japan, XXVIII, 1 and 2 (1964).

12. For a detailed account of the Burakumin, see George DeVos and Hiroshi


21. Preceding statistics in this paragraph are drawn from Takashi Koyama et al, loc. cit.


23. Ibid.

24. In 1954, when Japan had fairly well recovered economically from the effects of World War II, only 6.9% of its industrial firms had 50 or more employees; in 1960 this figure had risen to 10% (M. Sumiya, *Social Impact of Industrialization in Japan* [Tokyo, Japanese National Commission for Unesco, 1963], p. 239).

25. The Japanese Ministry of Labor announced on Sept. 1, 1967 that women accounted for 32% of the total number of employees in Japan, an increase of 6.4% over the preceding year. This figure does not include women in farm families or in families operating stores. (See Consulate General of Japan, *Japan Report*, XIII, 18 [New York, Consulate General of Japan, Sept. 30, 1967], 10.)


30. The Bureau of Statistics, Office of the Prime Minister, *Statistical Handbook*


32. S. B. Levine, op. cit.

**NOTES TO CHAPTER V: THE ROLES OF RELIGION**


6. Drawn from conversations and correspondence with Hiroshi Mannari, Professor of Sociology, Kwansei Gakuin Daigaku, Nishinomiya, Japan. See also his "Bijinesu wa ika ni Ningen wo Tsukuru ka," *Chūō Köron Keiei Mondai* (Spring, 1966).

**NOTES TO CHAPTER VI: MANNERS, MORALS, AND SOCIAL SANCTIONS**


2. Ibid., p. 229.


8. Ibid.; see also Takeyoshi Kawashima, "Giri," *Shisō*, No. 327 (September, 1951), pp. 759-766.


12. Ibid., p. 76.


16. Eijirō Inatomi, *kanshū, Akarui Kokoro to Seikatsu, 1-nen, kaiteihan, 2-nen, kaiteihan, 3-nen, kaiteihan, 4-nen, kaiteihan, 5-nen, kaiteihan, 6-nen, kaiteihan* (Tokyo, Osaka, Shūgakusha, n.d. [in use in 1965]).


27. The remarks that follow are based upon personal observation and numerous articles in the popular press during 1964.


32. Ibid., pp. 44-45.


34. Takeyoshi Kawashima, op. cit.

35. How old the conception of public morality might be is uncertain. A book published in late Meiji (Yomiuri Shimbunsha, hensan, *Kōtoku Yōsei no Jisarei* [Tokyo, Bungakudo, 1903]) discusses public morality of the nation at length and makes a clear distinction between public and private morality (pp. 111-113).
NOTES TO CHAPTER VII: RELIGION AND ACHIEVEMENT


8. Ibid., pp. 29 and 35.


10. As reported in The Japan Times, April 18, 1965.


22. Ibid., p. 174.


**NOTES TO APPENDIX A: SŌKA GAKKAI**


5. Ibid.


9. Sōka Gakkai, *The Nichiren Shoshu Sokagakkai*, 3rd ed.; Sōka Gakkai, *Nichiren Shoshu Sokagakkai Photographic 1966*, Vol. 6 (Tokyo, The Seikyo Press, 1966). A representative of Soka Gakkai who has read this chapter declares that the relationship with Nichiren Shoshu has been firmly established, as described in an English publication of Soka Gakkai entitled *The Soka Gakkai* (personal communication). This may well be true, but to non-members, including myself, the relationship remains unclear.

10. Diacritical marks over Romanized letters are normally omitted in English publications of Soka Gakkai.


29. See, for example, the description in Hirō Takase, Daisan Bummei no Shūkyō (1962; rpt. Tokyo, Köbundō, 1963), pp. 7 ff.
32. Kazuo Kasahara, op. cit., pp. 339-342. A representative of Sōka Gakkai has denied that the term kyōka-oya was ever used by the sect but states that the word shōkai-sha ("introducer") has been used (personal communications).
33. Ibid.
34. Ibid., p. 342.
35. See Fujio Ikado, op. cit. (1962).
37. Ibid.
38. Ibid.
39. Ibid.
40. Ibid.
42. Anonymous, "'Yōrō no Taki,' Kyōi no Soka Gakkai Shōhō," Shūkan Gendai (April 28, 1966), pp. 16-20. A representative of Sōka Gakkai states that the sect looks with disfavor upon "such a copying move by an outsider" (personal communication).
43. Taizō Kusayanagi, op. cit.
44. Ibid., pp. 232-234.
45. The Seikyo Times, XVIII, 2 (July 1, 1966), 32.
48. Ibid., p. 68.
49. Ibid., p. 75.
55. Asahi Shimbun, April 1, 1967.
56. See, for example, James Allen Dator, "The Sokka Gakkai: A Socio-Political Interpretation," Contemporary Religions in Japan, XI, 3 (September, 1965).
58. See Mombusho, Shikyo Nenkan, for the years in question.
60. Ibid., pp. 109-110.
63. See James Allen Dator, op. cit.
64. Kunio Yanagita, sonota, op. cit.
65. Ibid., p. 200.
66. Ibid., p. 199.

NOTES TO APPENDIX B: RISSHÔ KÔSEIKAI

4. For the sect's own account of its history see Rissih Kôseikai Kyoten Honyaku Jinkai, hen, Rishih Kôseikai (Tokyo, Rishih Kôseikai, 1965).
5. Ibid., p. 5.
7. C. B. Offner and Henry van Straelen, op. cit., p. 98.
8. See, for example, Seikyo Shimbun, July 1, 1960.
9. See Rishih Kôseikai, Fundamental Buddhism Based on the Teachings of Risho-Koseikai (Tokyo, Rishih Kôseikai, n.d. [ca. 1963]).
14. Ibid.
15. Ibid., p. 4.
16. Ibid., p. 11.

**NOTES TO APPENDIX C: P L KYODAN**

2. Ibid., p. 24.

**NOTES TO APPENDIX D: SEICHŌ-NO-IE**