SOKA GAKKAI: A RESPONSE TO MODERNIZATION

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SCOPE AND CONTENTS:

        This thesis is concerned with the sociological analysis of
lower class religious organizations in Japan.   The analysis centres on
the Soka Gakkai (Value Creation Society).   An attempt is made to relate
this group to the process of modernization in Japan.   Within the context
of Japanese society, it will be contended that the Soka Gakkai is
basically a response to modernization -- a response which is not without
its equivalents in other modern societies.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Problem

This thesis is an attempt to analyze a lower class religious organization within the general institutional framework of Japanese society. Our primary object for empirical analysis will be the Soka Gakkai (Value Creation Society). The Soka Gakkai is one of the most successful religious groups in Japan today. Its membership, organizational structure, and political activities have been growing rapidly since the early 1950's. According to Soka Gakkai statistics, membership has increased from 5,728 households in 1951 to approximately 5.4 million households or 10 million members in 1965.[1] The current growth rate set by the national headquarters is close 100,000 members a month. Even more objective observers suggest a membership of at least seven million.[2]

The Soka Gakkai was originally organized in 1930 as a lay movement of the centuries-old Nichiren Shoshu sect. It was suppressed during World War II only to be reorganized during the Allied Occupation. This reorganization has produced a tight, efficient organizational structure which has been able to gain power and influence among the lower classes

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[1] Seikyo Times, Tokyo: The Seikyo Press, August 1965, p. 2, (Seikyo Times is a Soka Gakkai religious magazine.)

[2] L. Olson, The Value Creation Society, New York: American Universities Field Staff Report, Vol. XL, No. 6, 1964, p. 755.

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in Japanese society. By building up a "working class" membership, the
Soka Gakkai has done what practically no other traditional or contem-
porary religious group has been able to do in the postwar period.

In order to account for the phenomenal development of the Soka
Gakkai, it is necessary to examine the changes which took place during
the modernization of Japan. These changes have promoted a situation
which has allowed for a movement such as the Soka Gakkai and which has
seen the emergence of social types susceptible to such a movement. It
is an underlying hypothesis of this thesis that the legitimation and
growth of the Soka Gakkai within Japanese society is a function of the
structure of established institutions and the durability of traditional
forms of social relationships.

In addition, our analysis of the Soka Gakkai will attempt to
establish:

(1) that it is primarily a lower class movement.

(2) that its organizational structure is similar to those existing in
"established" social groupings (i.e. the firm, factory, political party,
and family).

(3) that, despite its "activist" claims its success has depended on its
ability to operate within the framework of Japanese society while at
the same time it concentrates on the practical problems of its member-
ship or potential membership (i.e. money, illness).

Dominant Values and Lower Class Religious Organization

In an age in which many view with alarm the fact "that man is
assimilated more and more completely to his social function",[3] religion

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[3] W. Barrett, Irrational Man, New York: Doubleday Anchor Books,
1962, p.5.

can be seen as an integrating, adaptive device rather than an innovating system of values providing "meaning" in a changing world.

Concerning "other-worldly" religious orientations Levy writes:

> ...one may say that the level of asceticism in terms of other-worldly religions is likely to be measured by the lack of concern with rationality. The general adherents of an other-worldly religion are not likely to be characterized by any considerable development of asceticism. Their other-worldly belief is itself their asceticism. High levels of other-worldly asceticism require virtuosi just as do high levels of accomplishment in other respects. It is, however, legitimate to infer that even for the average believer the emphasis implicit in other-worldly theologies is on adjustment rather than reform, on passive reaction rather than on active desire to change the environment as one finds it.[4]

Recent observations on religion in the United States suggests that even the "this-worldly" and "secular" aspects of the major faiths place a positive emphasis on the established social order. The so-called "revival" of religion takes place within a pre-existing social framework which is little affected by this flurry of activity. William Barrett writes:

> A few years ago there was even considerable talk about a "religious revival", and some popular and patriotic periodicals such as Life magazine gave a deal of space to it; but the talk has by now pretty much died down, the movement, if any, subsided, and the American public buys more automobiles and television sets than ever before. When life magazine promotes a revival of religion, one is only too painfully aware from the nature of this publication that religion is considered as being in the national interest.....[5]

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[4]M. J. Levy, Jr., Modernization And The Structure of Societies, Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, Vol.2, 1966, p. 614.

[5]W. Barrett, "The Decline Of Religion", in E. and M. Josephson (eds.), Man Alone, New York: Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 1962, p. 167.

In a somewhat less polemical vein a recent study by Herberg attempts to examine this problem in a more systematic manner.[6] For Herberg the relationship between American society and American religion is so close "as to make it virtually impossible to understand either without reference to the other."[7] Thus, in American society

> ..."religion" is the system familiarily known as the American Way of Life. It is the American Way of Life that supplies American society with an "overarching sense of unity" amid conflict.... It is the American Way of Life that provides the framework in terms of which the crucial values of American existence are couched. By every realistic criterion the American Way of Life is the operative faith of the American people.[8]

What are some of the values which constitute this religious system? If anything

> The American Way of Life is individualistic, dynamic, pragmatic. It affirms the supreme value and dignity of the individual; it stresses incessant activity on his part, for he is never to rest but is always to be striving to "get ahead"; it defines an ethic of self-reliance, merit, and character, and judges by achievement: "deeds not creeds" are what count.[9]

In other words,

> The American Way of Life is a middle-class way, just as the American people in their entire outlook and feeling are a middle-class people.[10]

A great deal of sociological analysis proceeds from this assertion that "middle-class values" and middle-class people dominate

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[6]W. Herberg, _Protestant---Catholic---Jew_, New York: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1955.

[7]W. Herberg, _op. cit._, p. 3.

[8]_Ibid._, p. 75.

[9]_Ibid._, p. 79.

[10]_Ibid._, p. 81.

American society. The "middle-class measuring rod", which upholds hard
work, self-discipline, and productive activity, has given the social
sciences an analytical tool which has been fruitful in studying such
diverse topics as deviance,[11] industrial relations,[12] and the family.[13]
In fact, "middle-class values" seem so pervasive that they have been
accepted, in many cases, as definitive of "normal" social behaviour.
G. P. Grant, in a recent paper analyzes "Personality and Psychotherapy"
by Dollard and Miller[14] and concludes that:

> Dollard and Miller, indeed, say some quite interesting
> things about the learning process. But they also claim
> to be writing of therapy, and here, of course, their
> method has greater limitations because therapy is a
> practical art concerned with realizing goals in human
> life. The result is that when they write about therapy,
> they write about its methods, implying that all sensible
> middle-class Americans know what the goals are.... The
> assuming rather than the rational examination of such
> goals obviously implies a reliance on the massive middle
> class consensus about such goals.[15]

In spite of the inadequacies of this type of social science writing,
generally, most sociologists would agree with Riesman that:

> America is a middle-class country, and the middle-class values
> and styles of perception reach into all levels except the
> fringes at the very top and the very bottom.[16]

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[11]A. K. Cohen, Delinquent Boys, Glencoe, Illinois: Free Press,1955.

[12]E. Chinoy, Automobile Workers and the American Dream, Garden
City, New York: Doubleday, 1955.

[13]J. Seeley, R. A. Sim, and E. W. Loosely, Crestwood Heights,
Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1956.

[14]J. Dollard and N. E. Miller, Personality and Psychotherapy,
New York: McGraw-Hill, 1950.

[15]G. P. Grant, "On Health" in H. Schoeck and J. W. Wiggins (ed.).
Psychiatry and Responsibility, Princeton: Van Nostrand, 1962, p. 123.

[16]D. Riesman, Individualism Reconsidered, Glencoe, Illinois:
Free Press, 1954, p. 499.

Riesman's conclusion that "middle-class values and styles"
dominate American life takes on an added relevance in the light of
research which suggests that even those at "the very bottom" are being
socialized in terms of these values. What is the "Great Society", the
"War on Poverty", and the "Civil Rights" movement? If anything, are
they not attempts to integrate lower-class marginal social strata into
the mainstream of American society?

Benton Johnson questions some of the longstanding assumptions
about the role of religion among underprivileged groups in the United
States.[17] For example, the accepted account of Holiness religion is that
it offers a setting for emotional and other-worldly escape from the
realities of life and does not attempt to offer "rational" solutions to
the social and economic problems which beset the lower-class membership.
Although Johnson agrees that this is one of the functions of Holiness
religion, he also suggests that there is sufficient evidence to demon-
strate that Holiness religion functions "as an agency of the socializ-
ation of the lower classes in the dominant values of American society".[18]
Holt, after describing Holiness groups as "reactionary" rather than
"constructive", states that

> (these groups)...are successful in inspiring hope and a type of
> behavior in individuals which may raise their individual
> or group status above that of their class.[19]

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[17]B. Johnson, "Do Holiness Sects Socialize in Dominant Values",
Social Forces, Vol. 39, 1961, pp. 309-16.

[18]*Ibid.*, p. 309

[19]J. B. Holt, "Holiness Religion: Cultural Shock and Social
Reorganization", *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 5, October, 1940,
p. 741.

In addition, Johnson writes:

> The greater attention that Holiness and other sects pay to the phenomenon of conversion is highly suggestive of the fact that these groups endeavour to reorient the individual's motivations and values in fundamental ways.[20]

The direction of this "reorientation" is usually not against any basic characteristic of American society. It is "worldliness" which is condemned (i.e. alcohol, gambling, dancing, idleness etc.) rather than secular activity _per se_. Pope has pointed out the economic assets which result from industry's supporting similar religious groups.[21] Generally, Holiness groups produce steady, efficient, reliable workers for industry.

> The evidence presented by Pope establishes the plausibility of the proposition that Holiness and other inner-worldly ascetic sects in the South actually do produce workers who consistently apply themselves to the tasks set for them in the industrial work situation.
> Consistent self-application to one's work is not only a vital condition for building and maintaining a highly productive economy, it is one of the oft-mentioned characteristics of the dominant American value system.[22]

Even groups whose ideology advocates radical and possibly violent changes in American society cannot escape "dominant middle-class values". An interesting example is the Black Muslims. Any examination of Muslim ideology would suggest that they are advocating and preparing for a

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[20] B. Johnson, _op. cit._, p. 311.

[21] L. Pope, _Millhands and Preachers_, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1942, pp. 29, 140.

[22] B. Johnson, _op. cit._, p. 315.

racial revolution. On this point Parenti writes:

> The Muslim's outspoken hatred of white oppression and the
> sheer intensity of their rhetoric have been seized upon
> as proof that they are preparing for violence. Yet the
> truth is that the movement prohibits and abhors the use
> of violence except in self-defense, and forbids members
> to use or carry weapons. All evidence indicates they
> practice what they preach.[23]

What the Black Muslims actually do, in spite of their activist

or revolutionary claims, is provide a social framework for re-integrating

marginal lower class elements of the negro population into the wider

community.

> Indeed, both sympathetic and unsympathetic observers have
> witnessed that the Muslims do, for addicts, alcoholics,
> criminals and despairing slum dwellers in general, that
> which psychologists, police and social workers have
> failed to do, namely, rehabilitate them.
> .....It is this very stratum which benefits least from
> integration and which is generally forgotten by middle-
> class civil rights organizations.[24]

To become a Muslim is not to retreat from the "responsibilities" of

middle-class life. The Muslim world is not "beat" or involved in a

search for "kicks".[25]

> For all their virulent denunciation of the white man, the
> Muslim are assiduously modeling themselves after certain
> white middle-class ideals. Besides the interdiction on
> alcohol, tobacco, and narcotics, the Muslim must refrain
> from gambling, fornicating, dancing, more than one daily
> meal, long vacations, idleness, excessive sleeping, lying,

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[23]M. Parenti, "The Black Muslims: From Revolution To Institution",
Social Research, Vol. 31, No.2, 1964, pp. 175-94.

[24]M. Parenti, op. cit., pp. 180-1.

[25]See H. Finestone, "Cats, Kicks, and Color", Social Problems,
Vol.V, No. 1, July 1957. This paper analyzes another possible response
to lower class status among urban Negroes.

stealing, discourtesy (especially toward women), intemper-
ate singing, shouting or loud laughter....In addition,
personal cleanliness, the festidious care of homes, thrift,
sobriety, diligent, honest work (even for a white employer),
and obedience to (white) civil authorities----except on
grounds of religious obligation----become moral duties,
while the middle-class dress of subdued suit, tie, and
white collar becomes the Muslim uniform....
      Nor should this appear as a paradox, for the very
attempt to rise above lower-class Negro subculture requires
some emulation of the standards of the dominant white
community....
      ....If anything, the results of their efforts is to
make them more, not less, at home in the white man's world.[26]

Like the Holiness sects the Black Muslims offer social and

political status, self-respect, and, by promoting certain attitudes,

criteria by which the individual can measure up to the demands of

"middle-class" America.

If the "dominant values" of American society influence the

religious values of the marginal lower classes, do the dominant values

of other modern societies produce religious organizations similar in

function to the Holiness sects or the Black Muslims? It is the object

of this thesis to examine the "dominant values" of a modern non-Western

society and relate these values to a lower class religious organization.

We intend to examine the traditional and contemporary aspects of the

dominant Japanese value system and social organization and relate this

analysis to the process of modernization and the religious responses

associated with this process in that country.

The following chapter will analyze some of the general aspects

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[26]M. Parenti, op. cit., pp. 184-5.

of modernization as they relate to the Japanese case. Our discussion
of the important problem of the relationship between traditional
values and social organization and the requirements of modernization
in Japan will provide a general framework for analysis and help to
place the Soka Gakkai into perspective.

CHAPTER 2

MODERNIZATION

The essential difference between premodern and modern or modernizing societies is their attitude toward change. A belief in progress, the desirability of change, and the possibility and necessity of controlling the physical, social, and political environments have become the dogmas of the modern world.

> In a sense, for perhaps the first time in the history of the modern world a universal goal is gradually evolving. Even in cultures traditionally based on an ideological system that emphasizes other-worldliness. The desire for change in this world is constantly increasing. Indeed, the desire for such change has itself become a <u>spiritual</u> force of great importance in those areas of the world.[1]

These new ideas and activities have not been easily accepted. Concerning the idea of social change Bellah writes:

> It is not my intention to imply that these ideas have been easy to institutionalize nor that they have in any society been more than incompletely institutionalized. Quite the contrary, I want to emphasize precisely how difficult it has been to put these ideas into operation, ideas which seem to contradict the basic presuppositions of all of the traditional cultures.[2]

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[1] W. E. Moore, "The Social Framework of Economic Development", in R. Braibanti and J. J. Spengler (eds.), <u>Tradition, Values, and Socio-Economic Development</u>, Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1961, p. 61.

[2] R. N. Bellah, <u>Meaning and Modernization</u>, (A paper read at the American Sociological Association Meeting, September 1, 1965.), p. 4.

There are several other basic characteristics which scholars
have attributed to modern societies; urbanization, universal education,
social mobility based on technical skills, specialized occupational
roles, large scale administrative bureaucracies, etc. However these
"core" characteristics are formulated, modernization basically

> ....involves the systematic, sustained, and purposeful
> application of human energies to the "rational" control
> of man's physical and social environment........[3]

This inherent "systematic control" of social and natural environ-
ments does not mean that modernization is achieved "once and for all".

> ...."success" in modernization is always relative and
> transient because modernization itself is so endlessly
> subversive of every fixed position, no matter how great
> an achievement it may originally have been.[4]

Modern and modernizing societies must be able to avoid "stagnation" and
"breakdown". Eisenstadt sees the problem of "sustained growth" in both
the economic and non-economic spheres as a major fact of life in these
types of societies.[5] He also agrees with most analysts that moderniz-
ation

> ....has always been a revolutionary process of under-
> mining and changing the existing institutional structure.
> But the possibility of successful institutionalization of
> an innovating or revolutionary process is never inherent

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[3]B. Schwartz, "Modernization and Its Ambiguities" (Hakone
Conference Paper, mimeo.) Quoted in M. B. Jansen, Changing Japanese
Attitudes Toward Modernization, Princeton: Princeton University Press,
1965, pp. 23-4.

[4]R. N. Bellah, op. cit., p. 10.

[5]S. N. Eisenstadt, "Modernization and Conditions of Sustained
Growth", World Politics, Vol. 16, 1964, pp. 576-594.

in the revolutionary act itself. It depends on other
conditions primarily the society's capacity for
internal transformation.[6]

According to Eisenstadt a society's "capacity for internal

transformation" involves the ability to deal with "new" problems which

are the result of or closely connected with modernization. For example,

> ...political modernization implies not only.....growing
> structural differentiation, but also the continuous
> development of new situations and problems.....At certain
> stages of modernization, the problem of sufferage and the
> definition of the new political community, the attainment
> of its independence, assumed central importance. In
> other societies or at other stages of modernization, pro-
> blems of religious toleration or of so-called "seculariza-
> tion of culture" predominated, while in still others
> economic and social problems as well as problems of
> organization were most pertinent....
> .....Hence, the central problem of modernization can be
> seen as the ability of any system to adapt itself to these
> changing demands, to absorb them in terms of policy-
> making, and to assume its own continuity in the face of
> continuous new demands and new forms of political organiza-
> tion. In other words, political modernization creates in
> its wake problems of sustained political growth which
> become its central concern.[7]

If this discussion is an accurate account of some of the processes

of modernization, we are involved with another set of problems. What

social structures are "crucial" in implementing the modernization

process? Which ones are "crucial" for maintaining it? On the most

general level the answer to both questions would be the following:

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[6]S. N. Eisenstadt, "Transformation of Social, Political, and
Cultural Orders in Modernization", American Sociological Review, Vol. 30,
No. 5, October, 1965, p. 659.

[7]S. N. Eisenstadt, "Modernization and Conditions of Sustained
Growth", op. cit., pp. 577-8.

Those structures which promote the processes of change, scientific control, and "sustained" growth. At best this response is tautological. Our difficulties are not easily overcome by empirical analysis.

For example, what are some of the "crucial" structures which enable a society to modernize (i.e., to accept social change, to develop stratification systems based on achievement, to establish large administrative bureaucracies, and so on)? Scholars agree that there are certain "crucial" or essential conditions which must exist in order that a society may be classified as modern.

> ...Thus, it is impossible to envisage a modern economy without the development of markets, suitable labor capital, and demand for the products of industry. Similarily, it is difficult to envisage a modern political system without some political and administrative centralization and a tendency toward the spread of potential power. Moreover there can be no doubt that extension of criteria of universalism and achievement into every strategic part of the social structure especially in the sphere of social stratification and in the legal system and a growing specialization (or specification of different societal functions) are very crucial aspects of any process of modernization.
> But, beyond such "base" characteristics, the evidence is not so clear.[8]

The structures which enabled the West to modernize have not usually facilitated modernization among those societies which might be called "late-comers to modernity". The "laissez-faire" entrepreneurship which characterizes much of the modernization of the West does not seem to favour similar developments elsewhere. Even in the West

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[8]Ibid., p. 581.

individualism and entrepreneurship had to overcome the "premodern"

aspects of social life. In England during the eighteenth century

> ...despite the growth of population the mobilization of
> labour was impeded by a customary way of life, in which
> work was subordinated to social rather than economic
> considerations....(there was a) widespread inability
> or unwillingness of adults to adapt themselves to the
> "new discipline" of the factory.[9]

More recently,

> It is too much rather than too little individualism and
> entrepreneurship and too little willingness to work
> with discipline in a hierarchical organization that
> plagues much of Southeast Asia and also other under-
> developed lands.[10]

Social structures have varying potentialities for modernization.

Similar sets of social relationships can promote or retard the process.

This depends on the social-historical context in which these relation-

ships exist. Some analysts have claimed that the extended family retards

economic development and the encouragement of individual initiative.[11]

The restrictive nature of this family system is not always apparent.

The relationships which exist among members may allow them to undertake

co-operative tasks without previously being familiar with such things as

accounting.[12] Resources may be pooled for investment purposes, business

[9]R. Bendix, Work and Authority in Industry, New York: Harper
Torchbooks, Harper and Row, Publishers, 1963, pp. 36-38.

[10]A. O. Hirschman, "Obstacles to Development: A Classification
and a Quasi-Vanishing Act", Economic Development and Cultural Change,
Vol. XIII, No.4, Part 1, July 1965, p. 387.

[11]See P. T. Bauer and B. S. Yamey, The Economics of Under-
developed Countries, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957, p. 66.

[12]See C. S. Belshaw, In Search of Wealth: A Study of the
Emergence of Commercial Operations in the Melanesian Society of South-
Eastern Papua, Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1955.

ventures, and the education of talented individuals.

A rigid social structure which inhibits the social mobility of talented individuals is usually regarded as an obstacle to modernization. In Japan, however, the rigidity of the social structure which barred merchants and their sons from becoming members of the ruling elite or from accumulating large land holdings has been cited as one of the sources of talent and individual initiative which facilitated the rapid modernization of that country. China's flexibility and openness in this respect was detrimental to its initial attempts at modernization.[13]

This is not to say that there is a random relationship between premodern social structures and their potentialities for modernization or that there can be no theoretical conceptualization of the general conditions which promote or maintain modernization. The most important point to be remembered is that the discussion of modernization in a specific area of the world requires the systematic relating of general concepts to specific sets of social and historical data relevant to the area in question.

Modernization and Traditional Values

Since modernization by definition involves change there is the further problem of its impact on "traditional" social relationships.

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[13]See M. J. Levy, Jr., "Contrasting Factors in the Modernization of China and Japan", Economic Development and Cultural Change, Vol. II, October 1953, pp. 161-97.

What aspects of the traditional social structures are to be changed,
retained, or encouraged? Again, in a specific area the answers depend
on previous social and historical settings in which these questions are
asked. Whatever the composition of the modernizing elite, it must
decide on the status of "tradition" in the "new" era:

> ...when traditional rulers remain in power, as in Japan,
> they are supported by new social groups and assume new
> social functions. They must now mobilize the masses to
> meet the challenge of the modern industrial West. Whether
> there has been a massive social revolution or a
> "circulation of elites", the cultural revolution is
> inevitable.[14]

Thus, from the point of view of a set of traditional social
relationships, the process of modernization is generally disruptive.

> As the process (of modernization) goes forward, there
> will be less and less combining of the "best of the old"
> with the "best of the new".[15]

The modernizing elite in Japan, for example, attempted to combine
"Western science" and the "Japanese Spirit" (Nihon Seishin) as the
foundation of the new Japan. Their success has been the object of much
scholarly research.

As far as most other Asian nations are concerned, the possibil-
ity that traditional social relationships will provide an adequate basis
for modernization is limited. Soedjatmoko of Indonesia, commenting on

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[14]M. Matossian, "Ideologies of Delayed Industrialization: Some
Tensions and Ambiguities", Economic Development and Cultural Change,
Vol. VI. No.3, April 1958, p. 227.

[15]M. J. Levy, Jr., "Some Aspects of "Individualism" and the
Problem of Modernization in China and Japan", Economic Development and
Cultural Change, Vol. X, No.3, April 1962, p. 229.

Asia in general, writes:

> ...it will be necessary for the modernizers to increase
> their manipulative capacity with regard to the tradition-
> al sectors of their society.[16]

> What is required.....is the activation of more basic and
> more specific motivations for the acceleration of economic
> development. And these motivations in our societies are
> undoubtedly embedded in the cultural religious matrix.[17]

Senator Manglapus of the Philippines, after an analysis of traditional

social relationships in his own country concludes that:

> ...the leadership in Asia.....must address itself to the
> difficult task of social change, of changing the minds
> and psychology, the attitudes and values of the people.[18]

These remarks are important for several reasons, and can be

directly related to our concern with Japanese modernization and religion.

In the first place, there is an explicit recognition of the fact that

religious motivation can be both positively or negatively related to

modernization. Second, traditional social relationships are seen as a

direct outgrowth of the "cultural-religious matrix". In Japan, the

close relationship between mundane activities and traditional religious

sanctions has long been noted.[19] Third, there seems to be an underlying

tension between the traditional and modern sectors in the developing

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[16]Soedjatmoko, "Cultural Motivations to Progress: The "Exterior"
and "Interior" Views," in R. N. Bellah (Ed.), Religion and Progress in
Modern Asia, New York: Free Press, 1965, p. 2.

[17]Soedjatmoko, ibid., p. 6

[18]R. S. Manglapus, "Philippine Culture and Modernization", in R.
N. Bellah, ibid., p. 41-2.

[19]For a definitive account of this relationship see R. N. Bellah,
Tokugawa Religion, Glencoe, Illinois: Free Press, 1957.

societies. Although Japan is considered a modern nation, the
"traditional sector of the economy" employs a substantial proportion of
the work force. In addition, many observers point to the "traditional
paternalism" which they claim exists even in the more complex
industrial bureaucracies.[20] Finally, there appears to be an agreement
that some of the religiously based traditional social relationships are
capable of being manipulated and adapted to the changes required by
modernization. Japan's success in modernization suggests that the
traditional institutions were adaptable in this sense.

An analysis of the role of traditional values in modern Japan is
essential for an understanding of the Soka Gakkai. Basically, the Soka
Gakkai can be seen as a recent example of a general societal adaptation
to the increasing complexity demanded by a progressively more efficient
technology. This adaptation has taken place without the denial of the
validity of traditional values and social relationships.

> To modernize Japan the leaders of the Meiji period--the Meiji
> oligarchs--sought within their society.......values meaningful
> to the Japanese that could serve both as mainsprings of
> motivation for the people to support modernization and as
> sanctions for necessary changes entailing sacrifices and
> painful adjustments. The traditional values mobilized were
> the concepts of the emperor system and the family system.[21]

Since the Soka Gakkai is not to be regarded as a "phenomenon in
isolation" but is related to general responses to the changes necessitated

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[20] See especially J. C. Abegglen, The Japanese Factory, Glencoe,
Illinois: Free Press, 1958.

[21] J. M. Saniel, "The Mobilization of Traditional Values in the
Modernization of Japan", in R. N. Bellah, Religion and Progress in Modern
Asia, op. cit., p. 125.

by modernization, it is necessary to examine the role of "traditional paternalism" in modern Japan and relate this analysis to the organizational structure of the Soka Gakkai. In order to do this we must establish what is meant by the "traditional values of Japan". After establishing what constitutes the "traditional values of Japan" a more extensive account of the role of traditionalism as it relates to modernization in Japan will be presented. In addition, since social mobility based on achieved status is usually characteristic of modern or modernizing societies, the relevance of this problem to Japanese modernization will also be briefly discussed. The concluding sections of this chapter will examine the problem of traditionalism in the modern Japanese economy so that the relevance of this general problem to the Soka Gakkai may be established.

MODERNIZATION AND THE TRADITIONAL VALUES OF JAPAN

Traditional Values

The following discussion attempts to briefly outline the traditional value system of Japan which many observers claim has survived the process of modernization with only minor changes.[22] Japanese modernization and the Soka Gakkai are more easily understood when this system of values is taken into account.

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[22]This discussion relies heavily on the following works:
R. N. Bellah, Tokugawa Religion, op. cit. R. N. Bellah, "Values and Social Change in Modern Japan", in Asian Cultural Studies, Vol. 3, October 1962, pp.13-56. R. N. Bellah, "Traditional Values and the Modernization of Japan", in Contemporary Religions in Japan, Vol. III, No.3, September 1962, pp. 207-19. R. Benedict, The Chrysanthemum and the Sword, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1946.

The basic pattern of traditional values in Japan was explicitly
developed and institutionalized during the Tokugawa Period (1603-1868).
Most of the essential patterns predate this period, but they become
closely tied to the political structure of the Tokugawa regime at this
time. Utilizing these patterns, the Tokugawa Shoguns (political and
military leaders of Japan), attempted to consolidate and stabilize
their power by intensifying a system of interpersonal relations derived
from Confucian concepts of feudalism and familialism. This system laid
heavy emphasis upon the strict codification of behaviour and the con-
cept of reciprocal obligations (the rights and duties required vis a vis
one's position in the hierarchical system). At the top of the Tokugawa
social structure were the Shogun, the Emperor (at this time a religious
symbol with little political power) and the daimyo (lords); next were
the samurai (warriors); next came the peasant farmers, who as the culti-
vators of rice were the chief sources of wealth; finally there were the
merchants, who in Confucian theory ranked lowest in terms of social
prestige. The relationships between these classes were hereditary,
hierarchical, and ascriptive. Stability depended upon the maintenance
of precedents and reciprocal obligations which gave legitimacy to the
system and required submission to its authority.

The basic ideas in this system are the following:

In the first place, social groups (the family, work groups)
rather than individuals are the basic units of social action. They are
the focal point for all legitimate social relationships. Leadership,
discipline, responsibility are a function of the entire group rather

than of any one person. Group consensus is deemed a necessary pre-

requisite for group activities. Even contemporary research substanti-

ates these points. Dator writes:

> Very seldom would a person prefer to have his own opinion
> prevail and thus lose the comfortable knowledge that his
> preferences and the group's are the same.[23]

Lifton concludes that:

> ...Japanese of all ages, in virtually any situation,
> have a powerful urge toward group formation: when they
> wish to do something startling (intellectual, artistic,
> social, or political), they are likely to go about it
> by forming, joining, or activating a group. The extra-
> ordinary array of student circles, of cultural, pro-
> fessional, political, and neighborhood groups—the
> "horizontal" groups so prominent at all levels of
> society—makes Japan one of the most group-conscious
> nations in the world.[24]

These co-operative, communal groups (kyōdotai) are regarded as "natural"

entities and not as artificial constructs formed only for expedient

purposes.

Secondly, groups such as the family, are endowed with a sacred

religious character as well as being secular. Unlike the Chinese

concept of "t'ien ming" (mandate of Heaven) which provided a superordinate

basis for judging the legitimacy of any particular set of social relation-

ships, there is a "submerged tradition of transcendence"[25] in the

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[23]J. A. Dator, "The Soka Gakkai: A Socio-political Interpretation",
in Contemporary Religions in Japan, Vol. VI, No. 3, September 1965, p.211.

[24]R. J. Lifton, "Youth and History Individual Change in Postwar
Japan", in Youth: Change and Challenge, New York: Basic Books, 1963,
p. 228.

[25]R. N. Bellah, "Values and Social Change in Modern Japan",
op. cit., p. 34.

Japanese value system. For example, the Emperor, as the chief religious symbol, is part of the sacred; he is part of the "divine-human continuity in which the symbolic heads of groups have an especially important place, being especially endowed with a sacred quality".[26] Relationships between superiors and subordinates are legitimatized in religious terms. What develops is a system in which superiors relate the group (in the case of Japan) to divine ancestors and protective deities. Individuals exist in a hierarchical system of groups "where they receive a constant flow of blessings from the protectors of those groups...from the ruler, from parents, from all kinds of superior figures".[27] Contractual elements are only a part of the relationships between the group and its head.

Thirdly, the individual is required to repay the blessings he has received from the social groups to which he belongs. Self-sacrifice for the prosperity of the groups is a good thing. The "good" man integrates himself into the group.

Finally, activities designed to fulfill group obligations (i.e. education, taking on a specific occupation, moral discipline) are not valued in themselves but only in terms of their contribution to the group.

These principles are the basic values on which social groups are

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[26]Ibid., p. 32

[27]R. N. Bellah, "Traditional Values and the Modernization of Japan", op. cit., pp. 211-12.

organized in Japan. In the Tokugawa Period, Confucian ethics combined with Shinto and Buddhism to produce a political loyalty which was best exemplified by the samurai and the "Bushido Spirit"; an ethical code which was eventually to become a national morality (kokutai). The following quote from the Hagakure, a classical treatise on Bushido compiled in the eighteenth century, gives a concrete example of the system of values outlined above:

> Never in my life have I placed mine own thoughts above those of my Lord and master. Nor will I do otherwise in all the days of my life. Even when I die I will return to life seven times to guard my Lord's house.
> We have sworn to do four things: namely--
> (1) We will be second to none in the performance of our duty.
> (2) We will make ourselves useful to our Lord.
> (3) We will be dutiful to our parents.
> (4) We will attain greatness in charity.[28]

The Bushido ethic lays great stress on obedience, diligence, the rigourous fulfilling of daily tasks and duties, and most important filial piety (ko) and loyalty (chu). There are several aspects of this ethic that are relevant to this discussion.

It must be remembered that filial piety was subordinated to loyalty to the heads of extra-familial groups. This is made explicit in the following quote from Nichiren, the spiritual forefather of the Nichiren Shoshu sect and the Soka Gakkai:

> ....when a father opposes the sovereign, dutiful children desert their parents and follow the sovereign. This is filial piety at its highest.[29]

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[28]Iwado, Tamotsu, "Hagakure Bushido: Book of the Warrior", in Cultural Nippon, Vol. 7. No. 3, 1939, p. 37.

[29]N. R. Ehara, The Awakening to the Truth or Kaimokusho by Nichiren, Tokyo: International Buddhist Society, 1941, p. 61.

Loyalty is directed not only to collectivity heads but also to a status rather than an individual. Personal likes or dislikes do not necessarily interfere with loyalty. While a high value is placed on "active" service, performance of duties, and the attainment of goals which enhance the power and prestige of the group, the group goals and the "active" service and performance required by them are not rigidly defined or closely related to a static social structure. Group goals and norms are specific and relevant to particular group contexts. Even in Tokugawa Japan, chu (loyalty) and ko (filial piety) had no universal meaning. This is not to say that loyalty is independent of the prevailing definitions of group responsibility, but it is also a fact that there can be a sudden shift in the content of these goals if changes are deemed necessary for group survival by legitimate collectivity heads.

> Appeals to loyalty to the head of the collectivity and to pre-eminent system goals could override concern for harmony and motivate the breaking through of old forms of prescribed behaviour. [30]

In addition to the loyalty aspects of this value system the idea of group responsibility requires further comment.

Failure to conform to the duties and obligations of membership in various groups is not merely a matter of individual responsibility. Conformity or nonconformity might involve the family group, the village, the city ward, or feudal lord and all such groups or group heads might be held responsible for acts committed by individuals. As a result,

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[30]R. N. Bellah, Tokugawa Religion, op. cit., p. 16.

discipline, hierarchical obligations, and the requirements of loyalty were part of the strict behavioural codes imposed in the Tokugawa family. This basic unit was a legal and political entity in which property rights and duties were vested. The family head was the external representative and had wide powers of control over family members. He was responsible for the family property--the proper veneration of ancestors required the maintenance of the family unit for coming generations. Family continuity necessitated the strict control of the behaviour of family members. Primogeniture required a male heir and adoption was utilized where necessary. Official Confucian ideology demanded strict obedience from the child to its parents, the wife was to be obedient to her husband and the older male members of the household, younger brothers were to be obedient to older brothers, sisters were to be obedient to brothers, and younger sisters were to be obedient to older sisters. A hierarchy of age, sex, and reciprocal rights and duties based on filial piety and reinforced by ritual observances of these relationships insured the stability of the family group. Under the system of primogeniture younger sons were usually expected to leave the family household and property and seek their fortunes elsewhere. Where family wealth was sufficient or if a family business was expanding a younger son might be given a piece of land or the management of a new branch of the business. The younger son was then given the privilege of establishing a bunke (branch house). In a business enterprise, for example, power and prestige tended to be directly related to family position. The loyalty and hierarchical relationships between

the bunke (branch house) and the honke (main house) were similar to those which existed internally in each family unit. If branch houses were to establish branch families of their own, another set of honke-bunke relationships would be created. If these sub-branches were recognized by the original main family honke - mago-bunke (grandchild-branch house) relationships would be created. Thus there emerges a system of mutual aid based on family loyalty and which to a great extent depends on the availability of certain facilities (i.e. younger sons, land, a successful business enterprise) to extend itself.

This type of social organization, emphasizing loyalty and group responsibility, was not limited to family relationships. As a means of political control the Tokugawa administration established the goningumi (five-family groups) in the peasant villages. Each family head was required to belong to one goningumi or another. The head of each five-family group was usually the head of the most wealthy and prestigeful family in the group. The group was formed by families occupying the same geographical area regardless of class differences. The goningumi was also the unit of group responsibility.

> A crime committed by a member was a crime of all others,
> and concealment of a crime committed by a fellow member
> was also a crime of all the others.[31]

The internal affairs of the village were also based on this principle. If village codes were violated the local sanction system

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[31]H. Befu, "Village Autonomy and Articulation with the State: The Case of Tokugawa Japan", in The Journal of Asian Studies, Vol. XXV, No. 1, November 1965, p. 22.

(mura hachibu) sought to isolate the culprit's family. Dissenting from a corporate village decision would, in certain instances, activate this sanction system. Group responsibility was an integral part of village life.

> For example, those living next door and in three houses across the street from the house where a crime was committed were held responsible for certain crimes, regardless of whether they belonged to the same five-family group. In another application of the same concept the whole village was held responsible, rather than its individual members or five-family groups.[32]

The goningumi were also duplicated in the cities. These groups were collectively responsible to the ward head who was chosen from the most powerful and prestigeful family in the ward. The ward had a definite geographical location and was shut up at night. Ward heads, ward associations, and goningumi leaders were responsible for the conduct and obedience of those whom they represented. A move from the village to the city was not an escape from authority. The village councils, ward associations, the goningumi, and the basic unit of responsibility, the family, acted to maintain the Tokugawa social structure.

Japanese Traditionalism and Modernization

Although status loyalty and group responsibility could allow for innovation, the need for extensive innovations was not immediately felt until the closing years of the Tokugawa period. China's humiliation by the Western powers and their attempts to bring Japan out of her isolation set the stage for basic changes in the Tokugawa social structure.

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[32]Ibid., p. 24.

Previously, threats to the prevailing system of social classes were
dealt with within traditional frameworks. Merchants, for example,
were told to curb their ostentatious displays of wealth and their
economic power was not allowed to be directly exchanged for political
control or social prestige. Confrontation with the industrialized
West presented a direct threat to the feudalistic class structure
and even the anti-Tokugawa conservative samurai who wanted to "restore
the emperor and expel the barbarians" and who were to lead Japan
during the Meiji period realized that the changes resulting from their
attempts to establish a "strong nation" would necessitate a compromise
between the "old" and the "new".

The modernization of Japan during the Meiji Period (1868-1911)
took place on two levels. Initially, it was necessary to break down the
traditional distinctions between the classes. Talent was to be the
criterion of continued power and prestige. Secondly, it was necessary
to instill "the samurai spirit" into the general population. A loyal
populace had to be ready for the social experimenting that was to come.
Loyalty and filial piety were intensified and focused on the sacred
personage of the Emperor and his representatives, who were now officials
of a centralized nation rather than the heads of feudal fiefs. Values
inculcated in the family were stressed.

> Because it was within the microcosmic replica of the larger
> entity that the process of internalizing traditional social
> norms that the reformers desired to preserve, the Japanese
> leaders sustained the family system in the civil code, one
> of the legal reforms of the Meiji period. Primogeniture,
> the basis for succession to the leadership of the house,
> and the rights of the house head over the members of the

house, both to represent them and to direct their
activities, were legalized.[33]

The code supported samurai patterns. Many who would have simply foll-
owed the customs of their groups came to regard the upper class patterns
as legitimate.

The new conscript army replaced the samurai, who previously had
the exclusive right to bear arms under the Tokugawa regime. "Bushido"
became the code of peasant conscripts. The commands of military
officers replaced those of the village head; they were the dictates of
the Emperor to be obeyed unquestioningly.

Innovations were officially regarded as "traditional". Goode
points out:

> that many family patterns now viewed as "traditionally
> Japanese" were in fact changes made in early Meiji period.[34]

This process went on in other areas and extended beyond the Meiji period
into another era of "crisis" in the 1930's. About that period Scalapino
writes:

> Increasingly, the great Confucian values were stressed:
> the superiority of an ethical system drawn from familial
> relations and the importance of stressing "proper conduct"
> over self-gain, morality over materialism......the
> conservatives forwarded the process of turning Japan into
> a mass society......Going back into the ancient roots of
> their society, they reconstructed "neighborhood associations",
> small group organizations that could serve as vehicles for
> the execution of national policy. In such movements as the

[33]J. H. Daniel, "The Mobilization of Traditional Values in the
Modernization of Japan", op. cit., p. 130.

[34] . J. Goode, World Revolution and Family Patterns, Glencoe,
Illinois: Free Press, 1963, p. 526.

Patriotic Labor movement for the workers and the Imperial
Rule Assistance Association, the common man of Japan found
himself more involved in politics and organization, more
part of a mass movement than at any time in his history.[35]

Reversion to "traditionalism" on both an ideological and
organizational level is a recurrent pattern in Japanese history. External
influences and their impact on indigenous systems of ideas and
social organization is one of the decisive facts about Japan. For
example, being geographically accessible to what the Japanese consider-
ed an "advanced civilization" in China led to many experiments with
Chinese ideas and institutions. What was "borrowed" was usually relevant
to a problem which was considered crucial by the ruling elite in any
particular historical period. The Tokugawa regime utilized certain
Confucian concepts to stabilize their political power. It is important
to note the "utilitarianism" connected with much of this interchange
of ideas and institutions. The structure of the family and the polity
in China were not duplicates of their counterparts in Japan, although
both were based on Confucianism.

> ...because of continued contact over a millennium character-
> ized by extensive social and cultural borrowing, China
> represented the known and the acceptable to the Japanese,
> especially in an age when the freebooting West had yet to
> validate its claim to alleged superiority over the social
> orders of East Asia. But the Tokugawa adoption of Chinese
> social and cultural _forms_ did not necessarily imply the
> adoption of the _functions_ associated with these forms in
> the Chinese system.... this adoption of forms but not of
> functions has been the pattern of Japanese borrowing from

[35]R. A. Scalapino, "Ideology and Modernization -- The Japanese
Case", in D. E. Apter, Ideology and Discontent, Glencoe, Illinois:
Free Press, 1965, p. 117.

China since the seventh century and is one of the cardinal, constant measures of difference between the two societies regardless of any apparent similarity in certain social and cultural forms.[36]

Innovations could be interpreted in terms of loyalty and legitimatized through the hierarch of group obligations. Social changes could be introduced because they rarely threatened the basis of the pre-modern Tokugawa social structure. On this point Levy writes:

> The introduction of new patterns from one relatively non-industrialized society to another can frequently be absorbed with relatively slight changes. They represent a transfer of nonrational, particularistic, functionally diffuse patterns from one purpose to another or at most from one type to another. The highly industrialized pattern breaks this mold.[37]

Social Mobility and Japanese Modernization

One of the basic indicies which shows that the pre-modern "mold" has been broken is the shift in the economy from unspecialized economic roles to highly differentiated roles based on varying degrees of skill. Initially, this might only mean that a peasant might be unable to repair the tools necessary for harvesting his crop and that he becomes more dependent on persons who specialize in this activity. Another crucial problem is the placing of talent where it is required. The problem of allocating talent is more acute where ascriptive values are an integral part of the social structure.

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[36]N. G. Jacobs, "The Patrimonial Thesis and Pre-Modern Japanese Herrschaft", The Sociological Quarterly, Vol. 5, No. 4, 1964, pp.392-3.

[37]M. J. Levy, "Some Sources of Vulnerability Of The Structures Of Relatively Non-Industrialized Societies To Those Of Highly Industrialized Societies", in E. F. Hoselitz, (Ed.), The Progress of Underdeveloped Areas, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1952, p. 124.

The Tokugawa regime placed a great stress on the maintenance
of social distinctions between the ruling elite and the non-elite
masses. Even wealthy, successful merchants could not be considered as
potential political rulers. A merchant's son could be adopted into a
samurai family as the legal heir but this involved changing his name
and his complete integration into the ruling class. Emphasis was
placed on knowing one's "proper station". The possibilities of
achieving "proper station" were slight. Mobility was largely within
classes rather than between them. The hierarchical aspects of the
Tokugawa regime did not always coincide with the functional importance
of certain groups in the social structure. The establishment of a
national peace and the existence of a centralized polity increased the
pace of economic development. In the process of this development many
merchants and artisans increased their wealth and importance, while
many of the samurai became impoverished. An elaborate system of pro-
hibitions attempted to control the conspicuous consumption of the
townsmen.

> ....there was resentment over the luxuries enjoyed by the
> upstart merchants, whose appearance in conspicuous clothes
> was a particularly irritating portent to their superiors
> of the erosion of their own privileged status....The
> government therefore prescribed that consumption should
> be correlated precisely with status. This need was the
> principal reason for the clothing and other sumptuary
> laws directed at the townsmen.[38]

This disruption of hierarchical ascription was not limited to

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[38]D. H. Shively, "Sumptuary Regulations and Status in Early
Tokugawa Japan", Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies, Vol. 25, 1964-65,
p. 126.

the townsmen and the developing economy. According to Dore,[39] the problem of relating hereditary status to ability was widespread in Tokugawa society. The increasing consolidation of the Tokugawa administration and system of formal education affected the internal status distinctions of the ruling elite itself. There were many precise status distinctions within the samurai class. In the samurai schools these distinctions were gradually undermined. Initially, the problem of maintaining ascription in the samurai schools was not serious. "Moral virtue" (loyalty) was stressed and a dull student from a high ranking family could compensate by excelling in this area. The aims of education were moral rather than vocational. Even in this situation inroads on ascription were necessitated. Emphasis on moral rather than intellectual accomplishments did not alter the fact that the scholars who taught in these schools held their positions because of their "superior" knowledge. They were specialists and not entirely indifferent to intellectual ability per se. They claimed special deference because of their knowledge of the Way of the Sages. The expansion and maintenance of this school system required a selection process based on ability rather than hereditary social rank. Students, who were to become scholars, were placed in special dormitories and received an intensive course in Chinese studies. Ability was difficult to conceal in these circumstances and criteria other than hereditary social rank were stressed in order not to question directly the

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[39]R. P. Dore, "The Thought of Men : The Thought of Society", in Asian Cultural Studies, Vol. 3, October 1962, pp. 73-86.

prevailing class structure. Sometimes age was used for this purpose.
The dormitory rules of the Okayama fief school stressed the following:

> When you are together in the lecture halls, even if there
> are only two or three of you, never break the principle
> of seating by seniority. If you do, the younger will
> either feel uncomfortable or arrogantly proud. At the
> daimyo's court rank is all-important and the inferior may
> not vie with the superior. But in learning seniority is
> important and the essential thing is to respect the
> proper relations of senior and junior.[40]

As Dore points out, respect for Confucian principles were maintained in
this compromise. Even if a high-ranking samurai had to defer to a low-
ranking senior, his "merit" was not being tested and he too would
achieve senior rank with the passing of time.

This type of compromise was also a part of the administrative
structure of each fief as well as the Tokugawa government. Within
ranks recruitment was on the basis of ability. The practice of adoption
allowed families without heirs or with incompetent sons to recruit
talented individuals from lower-ranking families. Administrative skill
was not necessarily a pre-requisite of high rank. Skilled administrative
work could be done by social inferiors without direct damage to prevail-
ing hereditary distinctions. There was greater emphasis on acquiring
skills among the lower-rank samurai and there was a certain amount of
promotion across rank barriers at this level of the hierarchy. This
emphasis on ability and the increasing need for practical skills were
gradually felt by the fief and government schools. The introduction of
"western learning" saw the incorporation of such studies as navigation,

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[40] Okayama-ken Kyoiku-kai, Okayama-ken Kyoikushi, 1937, p. 37.

metallurgy, and chemistry. More importantly, the "new skills" came
to dominate the Hagi school of the Choshu fief, which played a major
part in overthrowing the Tokugawa regime.

> The principle of ascription necessarily weakened, both in
> the schools and in the bureaucracies of the fiefs and of
> the Tokugawa government; the trend within the school being
> at once an effect and a stimulus of the trend in the
> bureaucracies. Gradually the barriers of status began to
> give way. By the end of the period a man's prestige and
> power, if still not his income, increasingly came to
> depend less on who he was than on what he could do.[41]

This undermining of ascriptive distinctions took place even before
the Meiji Restoration made it an explicit government policy. The
political and social reforms of the Meiji oligarchs broke down the
barriers to social mobility very rapidly. Silberman makes the
enormity of this change very vivid.

> ....after 1873 the criteria for success or advancement, and
> probably for recruitment as well, were predominately
> achievement-oriented and were applied to those within the
> traditional elite strata without regard to origins in
> specific strata. This is reflected in: (1) the fact that
> almost all of those who achieved success after 1873 were
> characterized by their acquisition of Western knowledge
> and/or non-traditional political experience; (2) the
> predominance of lower samurai among those who were
> successful; and (3) the resignation from the civil service
> by 1873 of all members of the imperial family, 85.0 percent
> of the court aristocracy and 67.0 percent of the daimyo,
> all of whom were characterized by their conformity to
> traditional education and political activity. By 1873,
> birth in the traditional upper elite strata was apparently
> no longer enough to insure retention in the upper civil
> service.[42]

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[41] R. P. Dore, op. cit., p. 85.

[42] B. S. Silberman, "Criteria for Recruitment and Success in the
Japanese Bureaucracy, 1868-1900 : "Traditional" and "Modern" Criteria
in Bureaucratic Development", Economic Development and Cultural Change,
Vol. XIV, No. 1, 1966, p. 170.

These types of changes extended themselves throughout the
structure of Japanese society and, as previously noted, the ruling
elite utilized concepts of loyalty and responsibility based on
traditional values to legitimize its actions. Again, the emerging
factory system produced a compromise between technical demands and
the traditional value system.

TRADITIONAL VALUES AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS IN MODERN JAPAN

Bellah suggests that the traditional value structure "provided
the basis of Japanese modernization". It provided a "disciplined
group structure" from which the process of modernization could be
controlled, and released the energy necessary for labour in a modern
industrial society. He also claims that

> ...the traditional Japanese value system....remains strong
> today not only among conservatives but in the labour
> unions, in the Socialist Party, in the universities, in
> fact everywhere in Japanese life....even though it has
> undergone many alterations in detail, so much so that it
> is hardly recognizable as the same thing that came from
> the Edo period.... (it) still maintains its basic
> continuity with the past.[43]

It is now necessary to examine what is meant by the "basic
continuity" of the traditional Japanese value system. Since the Soka
Gakkai exists in a society in which these values are inherent, it is
essential to examine what might be called the structural relevance of
this system of values for any group which is a part of such a society.

Bellah's contention that there is a "basic continuity" to the
Japanese value system requires further comment at this point. He

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[43]R. N. Bellah, "Traditional Values and the Modernization of
Japan", op. cit., p. 219.

admits that there have been many alterations in the details of this
system. In other words, the empirical structures which now incorpor-
ate these values are not replices of those which existed in the
Tokugawa period. He seems to suggest that the structures which
incorporate these values "function" in much the same way. For example,
the ward associations of the Tokugawa period functioned in a way very
similar to those which existed in the modern period before World War
II. They integrated individuals into the institutions of the wider
society. This may be true, but it is also a fact that, since the
Meiji period and especially since World War II, integration has taken
place within the framework of an industrial social order. While there
may be many structural similarities between the system of social re-
lationships in Tokugawa Japan and the period after World War II, on a
functional level these relationships operate under different sets of
priorities. At the present time, one of the essential priorities is
the maintenance of a large scale bureaucratic economy.

A more extensive analysis of the role of traditional Japanese
values in a modern industrial setting is now required. It is necessary
to question the extent to which an "enormous change in economic activ-
ity can be taken into an on-going culture", without changing the nature
of that culture or the role of that culture in modern industrial
society.

Bennett and Ishino[44] explain paternalism in the Japanese

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[44]J. W. Bennett and I. Ishino, _Paternalism in the Japanese
Economy_, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1963.

economy in terms of the oyabun (father status) -kobun (child status)
pattern. Social relationships based on the oyabun-kobun system
stress many of the traditional values we have previously mentioned.
The oyabun-kobun relationship is a system of ritual kinship where
people unrelated by "true" kinship assume obligations similar to those
ascribed to family members. The oyabun is a ritual father and his
kobun are his ritual sons. These kobun in turn are ritual brothers
to each other with seniority formally recognized by forms of address
which suggest older brother-younger brother distinctions. These ritual
families can be extended like "true" families and recognize several
generations of kinsmen. They are characteristic of certain traditional
professions and certain occupational groups (i.e., construction crews).
There are several differences between the ritual kinship system (oyabun-
kobun) and the "true" kinship system. Positions in the ritual kinship
system are always achieved and are not ascribed by birth. Positions
are earned by engaging in activities desired by the group and the
system provides a framework for integrating the activities of persons
who are not related by "true" kinship. "True" kin and ritual kin
roles sometimes overlap but each system has its own set of priorities.
Any conflict between the two would result in loyalty to the ritual kin
role. In most cases, a retiring oyabun is not allowed to pass on his
economic and social connections to his "true" son. These interests must
be passed on to his ritual son or kobun.

As Bennett, Dore, and Abegglen point out,[45] the basic principles of the traditional value system are simulated in the _oyabun-kobun_ system and are capable of existing under various conditions and of organizing many different activities. The labour boss, union leader, and plant manager become involved in _oyabun-kobun_ relationships with their subordinates. These relationships attempt to utilize traditional values as well as allowing for occupational recruitment and social mobility based on achievement.

Generally, the _oyabun-kobun_ relationship is characterized by a high degree of affectivity, hierarchical order, and an avoidance of conflict with superiors. This system, as we would expect, places a high value on group solidarity.

> ...the best example of this stress upon solidarity is found in the way workers are paid; the wages from the employer are not parceled out individually to each worker, but given to the _oyabun_ who in turn distributes the rewards of group production according to how he thinks this distribution will promote group solidarity and loyalty to him as the symbol of that solidarity.[46]

Although the _oyabun-kobun_ system is an organization which is based on achievement, the "socio-emotional" commitments inherent in this institution are not directly related to or capable of being derived from the "technical" requirements of any activity in which the group is involved. The _kobun_ can expect bonuses on special occasions, gifts,

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[45]J. W. Bennett and I. Ishino, _ibid._; R. P. Dore, _City Life in Japan_, California: University of California Press, 1958, Chapter 12, pp. 191-210. J. C. Abegglen, _op. cit._

[46]J. W. Bennett and I. Ishino, _op. cit._, p. 91.

care in times of illness, and housing and education subsidies. In
larger companies and in many small firms recreational and cultural
activities (i.e., flower arranging, judo) are encouraged and finan-
cially supported. Vacations are subsidized and many large firms
have resorts for the use of their employees. In return, subordinates
or kobun are expected to support their oyabun as a member of his
group within the firm, factory, or political party in its clash of
interests with other groups. In the labour boss system, for example,
the oyabun

> ...has jurisdiction over the "business" as well as certain
> "private" affairs of his workers, and over the techni-
> logical as well as the social activities of his staff.
> Thus, the oyabun presides over ceremonial activities of
> the group, he personally supervises his subordinates on
> the job, he determines their pay, he mediates in quarrels
> among workers and between workers and their wives, he
> helps to select wives for those who are single, he
> provides the workers with entertainment, and, if it is a
> dormitory group, he designates the housing and mess
> facilities of the labourers.[47]

Bennett and Ishino's account of the oyabun-kobun system

generally applies to the smaller industries rather than the larger ones.

They conclude that:

> In general, the great expansion of the industrial economy
> in Japan during the 1950's and 1960's has contributed to
> the decline of oyabun-kobun organizations, although the
> system can be expected to continue in areas of the
> economy where seasonal employment, low skills.....still
> prevail.[48]

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[47]Ibid., p. 93.

[48]Ibid., p. 106.

On the other hand, Abegglen claims that social relationships
similar to those of the oyabun-kobun system exists even in the large
factories.

> At repeated points in the study of the factory, parallels
> to an essentially feudal system of organization may be
> seen.....not, to be sure, a replication of the feudal
> loyalties, commitments, replication of the feudal loyalties,
> commitments, rewards and methods of leadership but a re-
> phrasing of them in the setting of a modern industry.[49]

One basic point of this discussion is not to deny the loyalty-
paternalistic aspects of Japanese industrial relations and social
structure but to put these variables and the Soka Gakkai into
perspective. In order to do this it will be necessary to critically
examine Abegglen's account of the Japanese factory.

According to Abegglen, the general features of the Japanese
factory organization are greatly influenced by traditional practices.
The most conspicuous example of this is the system of permanent and
irrevocable employment.

> More than any other single factor affecting productivity
> at present is the general rule, traditional and strong,
> that employees at all levels of the company have a permanent
> position with the company.[50]

As a result, mobility between occupations is a rare occurrence because:

> Workers at all levels of the factory customarily work in
> but one company. They spend their entire lives in that
> single firm which is entered immediately on completing
> their education. The firm will continue to provide the

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[49]J. C. Abegglen, op. cit., p. 131.

[50]Ibid., p. 113.

worker's income at whatever disadvantage to itself,
and the worker will continue in the company's employ
despite possible advantage in moving to another firm.[51]

In the factory we also find many non-contractual elements
entering into the employer-employee relationship. Recruitment into
a work group is as much the result of social connections as the possess-
ion of specific technical skills. In addition, cash is only a part of
the rewards for loyal service. Technical skill is not necessarily re-
lated to economic reward.

> The recompense of workers is made up of such items as
> housing, food, and personal services, with the actual
> cash pay of the worker only a part of the total. Pay is
> based primarily on age, education, length of service, and
> family size, with job rank or competence only a small
> part of the criteria for determining work reward.[52]

Again, like the oyabun in the labour boss system:

> Management is involved in such diverse and intimate matters
> as the worker's personal finances, the education of his
> children, religious activities, and the training of the
> worker's wife.[53]

Abegglen's analysis supports much of what has already been said
about traditional values and their empirical manifestations in the
family and the oyabun-kobun system. This somewhat idealistic picture
of "traditionalism" in a modern industrial organization has tended to
overlook what Koji Teira calls "rational economic factors".[54]

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[51]Ibid., p. 128.

[52]Ibid., p. 128.

[53]Ibid., p. 129.

[54]K. Teira, "The Characteristics of Japanese Labour Markets",
Economic Development and Cultural Change, Vol. X, No.2, January 1962,
p. 150.

Abegglen suggests that the "uniqueness" of Japanese modernization
results from the adaptation of traditional values to the "setting of
modern industry" — a process which has avoided many of the more
disruptive tendencies which have accompanied modernization elsewhere.
Abegglen's conclusions, while rightly emphasizing "feudal parallels",
wrongly attribute an idyllic stability to Japanese industrial relations
and social structure. If the stability and immobility of the permen-
ent employment system allow for the existence of "traditional paternal-
ism", it does not necessarily mean that "employees at all levels" enjoy
the benefits of such a system. Abegglen's analysis would not explain
the success of the Soka Gakkai, whose members and potential members
are assured both financial and spiritual benefits through belief in
the "True Buddhism". There is great concern shown towards personal
and money problems suggesting that "paternalism" is not producing its
desired effects "at all levels of Japanese society".

Abegglen's claim that "labour mobility is virtually non-existent
in the Japanese system"[55] seems to be the result of a selective analysis
of "critical differences".[56] Before 1920 labour shortages, partial
commitment to industrial labour, employer competition for labourers, and
the deplorable conditions in the factories led to a high rate of labour
mobility. Employers were faced with the problem of attracting more
"stable" workers.[57] Rational procedures for eliminating this problem

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[55] J. C. Abegglen, _on. cit._, p. 68.

[56] Ibid., pp. 11ff.

[57] K. Taira, _on. cit._, pp. 152-53.

were not unknown. In 1900 a report to the Ministry of Agriculture stated:

> There is nothing objectionable, if properly conducted, for factory owners to pay higher wages to attract workers, or for workers to leave low-wage factories for higher wages elsewhere.[58]

Labour markets were open and horizontal mobility by workers with similar skills between factories was widespread. In order to prevent a shortage of skilled workers after World War I, the large enterprises introduced training programmes for wage earners. (The staff and management personnel and the office workers were usually part of the "permanent system" even at this time.) Workers were encouraged to be more "stable" by pensions and insurance schemes subsidized by employers, improved dormitory facilities, reduction of work hours, and the introduction of educational and recreational facilities. These practices were legally reinforced during World War II (e.g., Labour Mobility Prevention Law) when there was another shortage of skilled labour. The need for "stable" workers seems to be related to an increasing tendency toward paternalism.

In this context, it must be remembered that labour mobility was higher in Japan than in the United States before World War II, but lower in the postwar period.[59] As Taira points out, the stability of employment in large enterprises after World War II cannot be explained

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[58]Shokko Jijo, (Conditions of Workers), Report to the Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce, Vol.I, 1903, p. 53.

[59]K. Taira, op. cit., p. 162.

only in terms of a cultural tradition which emphasizes loyalty to superiors. The labour mobility which characterizes much of the prewar period, when the influence of traditional values was stronger, is difficult to explain solely in terms of "traditional parallels".[60]

It is also erroneous to claim that labour mobility in Japan is rare regardless of the size of the enterprise. Labour mobility for small firms in 1959 was as high as that in the West.[61] More importantly, minor enterprises form a larger proportion of the total number of enterprises than in the West. In 1958, the proportion of minor enterprises (employing less than 100 workers) where labour mobility is very frequent was about 61% of the total number of industries in Japan. For the United States, Great Britain, and West Germany such account for only 25% of the enterprises in each country.[62]

Paternalistic concern can also be seen as a rational response to certain economic conditions. Many of these practices were introduced only in the 1920's and during World War II. Odaka writes that:

> To emphasize that this employment practice (permanent
> employment) is a parallel to an essentially feudal system
> is virtually the same as to consider the lengthened period
> and employment which resulted from the recent reinforce-
> ment of seniority rules, health and welfare plans, and
> negotiated pensions in the United States as a new
> industrial feudalism.[63]

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[60]Ibid., p. 162.

[61]See Report of the 1959 Labour Turnover Survey, Tokyo Division of Labour Statistics and Research, Ministry of Labour, 1960.

[62]See Nihon Seisansei Honbu (The Japan Productivity Centre), Nihon no Chusho Kigyo (Minor Enterprises in Japan), Tokyo: Nihon Seisansei Honbu, 1958.

[63]K. Odaka, "Traditionalism and Democracy in Japanese Industry", Transactions of the Fifth World Congress of Sociology, Vol.III, Belgium: International Sociological Association, 1962, p. 45.

Even in the large enterprises, the stronghold of "traditional paternalism", rational economic considerations affect the distribution of benefits. The Factory Act of 1916 attempted to alleviate adverse working conditions. Certain protective measures were established for "factory operatives" and employers were subject to legal penalty if working conditions fell below the required minimum. This law became a burden to some employers and they attempted to circumvent it by hiring new workers as "temporary" workers rather than "operatives" who were entitled to protection. This practice became widespread during the economic revival of 1931-36 when there was uncertainty about the prospects of labour conditions. The "temporary" workers had to sign short-term contracts in which they waived any claims to the privileges enjoyed by the permanent workers. Lower wages and substandard working conditions followed. Labour surpluses, in spite of widespread unionism, forced a similar compromise after World War II. The recession of 1949-50 did much to increase the concern of unions for the benefits of their members. They demanded the employment of union members regardless of economic conditions. The result was a kind of tenure system known as **teiinsei** in which both union and management mutually guaranteed permanent employment to a certain number of workers. (Management is then given a free hand in the hiring and firing of non-permanent, "temporary" employees in response to shifting economic conditions.)

Labour mobility was and is much higher among the "temporary" workers and decreases in the large firms which require a large,

permanent work force. High wages in the large firms act to curb
labour mobility while in the smaller firms low wages act to increase
it. While permanent status is offered in the smaller and family
operated firms, low wages and the threat of unemployment and under-
employment restrict the benefits which characterize this position in
the larger firms. It must also be remembered that although the
unions attempted to remove their members from the influence of the
"market" by tying their economic well-being to the enterprise within
which they organized, there was a more rapid growth of non-union
employment than union employment in the 1950's. In this context, Taira
writes:

> ...that the appropriateness of the "permanent" status is
> limited to the permanent, unionized employees of the
> high-wage, larger firms, who can be identified with the
> permanent regulars in the firms employing 500 or more
> regular workers, and who account for no more than a fifth
> of all wage-earners in Japanese manufacturing.[64]

Taira is correct in pointing out the fact that foreign observers
have tended to overemphasize the "traditional stability" of Japanese
industrial relations. No doubt economic factors have and still do
influence the amount of labour mobility and the stability of the econ-
omy. On the other hand, he tends to overemphasize "rational economic
factors". A man may stay with a job because of the financial reward
involved, but this does not explain the content of the work relationships
which Abegglen claims are operating here. Taira's "permanent employees",
whether they are emotionally committed or not, are involved in a system

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[64]K. Taira, "The Characteristics of Japanese Labour Markets",
op. cit., p. 167.

of relationships which do stress non-economic factors (i.e., promotion based on seniority). To say that this has not always been the case and that employment also depends on "market conditions" may be true, but this not really a refutation of Abegglen's "loyalty" thesis. It would appear that the modern firm has resorted to a more "traditional" way of doing things in order to maintain an adequate supply of labour. How long such "traditional relationships" can be maintained if the "market" demands a substantial cut or increase in personnel remains to be seen.[65]

Maintenance of Traditionalism in Modern Japan

The above discussion has pointed out that reverting to "traditional" forms of social organization is not without precedent in modern Japan. The Meiji period was in a sense the "traditionalizing" of every aspect of life for many who previously had not been subject to such "moral obligations". The social patterns of the samurai were held out as legitimate behaviour to be expected from all classes. In agreeing with Taira, we do not necessarily have to disregard the "loyalty" thesis. He says himself that it is plausible when applied to certain strata in the factory system (i.e., permanent workers). It is also a fact,

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[65]Since the early 1960's and especially since 1964 there has been a general shortage of labour. As a result, "the large firms, using their higher wages and larger fringe benefits began to "raid" the employees of other firms". This unconventional practice is expected to undermine the "system of pegging wages and salaries to length of service" and represents the latest attack on traditionalism in Japanese industrial relations. The depth of this assault has yet to be documented. For some exploratory observations see K. Yamamura, "Wage Structure and Economic Growth in Postwar Japan", Industrial and Labour Relations Review, Vol. 19, No. 1, October 1965, pp. 58-69.

however, that paternalism in the Japanese economy does not affect
everyone equally. "Non-permanent workers", for example, would be
more susceptible to the workings of a "rational economy". Whether or
not the worker or clerk actually has a feeling of loyalty to his firm
and even if this loyalty is calculated in terms of his pay, the fact
remains that the "traditional practices" do protect certain strata from
the instabilities to which others are subjected. This helps to explain
the persistence of these "practices" in the modern period and the
difficulties the Occupation Authorities encountered in attempting to
introduce "democratic reforms".

The oyabun-kobun system in the labour boss organization persist-
ed, in spite of Occupation reforms that would have eliminated its most
exploitive aspects. It was only after "functionally equivalent"
organizations were set up by the unions and factory management that
the labour boss organization was undermined. The oyabun-kobun relation-
ships in this organization also responded to "rational" demands. The
relationship between the kobun and oyabun was considered null and void
if the oyabun failed to provide employment and aid in times of financial
crisis and illness. Even if the oyabun provided employment and social
security, the relationship was not always one in which conflicts and
tensions were absent. In many cases

> ...it would have been simpler for the oyabun to raise the
> wages of the workers to a level which would be more
> commensurate with the total wages and benefices he gave.
> Unfortunately, such a wage policy would controvert one of
> the fundamental objectives of the labour boss system:
> namely the fostering of a state of economic dependence of
> the workers on the oyabun....By maintaining such dependence,

the oyabun was able to demand greater personal loyalty
from his workers and achieved greater discipline among
them.[66]

It must be remembered that despite any exploitation involved in these
relationships they did provide a measure of employment security, group
solidarity, and acted as a means of occupational mobility. Even after
the Occupation reforms (i.e., the establishing and encouraging of
unionization) destroyed the economic basis of the labour boss system,
its "functional equivalent" emerged in the teiinsei agreements between
the unions and the large firms. This has also meant that a large
number of non-union workers have had to find alternate means for
obtaining the benefits given to others by "traditional paternalism".

"Traditional paternalism" produces both a stable system of
benefits and its own inherent tensions. It has not blunted the
rationality of massive economic change, but it has provided a system
of social relationships which helps to integrate the Japanese into a
modern industrial society. At various levels of the social structure
these relationships "function" in much the same way. They provide a
"no longer essential but still useful----additional lever to success".[67]

In the large companies, for example, a "permanent" position in
management depends not only on an university degree but also on one's
clique or batsu. Whether or not they are a part of the formal structure
of the organization the batsu resemble the oyabun-kobun system. In

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[66]J. W. Bennett and I. Ishino, op. cit., p. 75.

[67]R. P. Dore, City Life in Japan, op. cit., p. 209.

each group there are senior men with a number of subordinates under them who are regarded as members of their groups. As each junior men advances to senior status he still maintains his subordinate status to his original superior. In the process of achieving senior status he has also established a batsu, but his superior is not necessarily responsible for the subordinates of his subordinate. Utilizing the oyabun-kobun system or the batsu it is possible for a large number of workers and management personnel to be organized for various technical and non-technical activities. The batsu personalizes what under other circumstances could be highly impersonal procedures.

Even the universities operate under conditions which allow for batsu relationships. Present economic conditions have allowed the absorption of almost all university graduates, but this has done little to lessen the competition for "permanent" jobs in the prestige companies or for desirable government positions. After rigorous university examinations and company and government screening examinations, all of which are objective and impersonal, personal connections become decisive. University training takes place within a batsu which like the batsu in the company, union or political group is based on personal loyalties. A particular university department or individual professor through batsu connections has influence in certain companies and government offices which generally exclude non-batsu applicants regardless of ability. A qualified student must depend upon these affiliations in order to obtain a secure job. Batsu connections do not guarantee employment. The requisite ability must also be present before the candidate is

allowed to compete for positions from which he would have previously been excluded.

> As institutions the "batsu" are new, but the ideas and dispositions on which they are based—cliquism, lord-vassal relations, "oyabun-kobun" relations—are certainly traditional. The system continues not only because it appeals to traditional feelings—although this is often important—but because it fulfills genuine needs in contemporary life and because it has become institutionalized through the rooting of vested interests.[68]

Failure in a modern Japan which strongly stresses the "achievement of proper station" can mean both the lack of educational requirements and isolation from the necessary batsu connections. Failure in both senses is concentrated in the lower and lower middle classes in Japanese society. If the present discussion does not reflect future trends in Japanese society, it does apply to the 1950's and early 1960's when the Soka Gakkai gained its foothold among this "dispossessed" strata. Even if present labour shortages raise standards of living, the relative deprivation inherent in this status will not disappear. Any recession or large increase in the labour force will immediately affect those who are unqualified educationally and technically and, perhaps more importantly, those who lack "permanent batsu connections". In addition, achievement motivation appears to be more pervasive in the lower classes in Japan than in the United States. In a recent study of deviance in Japan De Vos concludes that:

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[68]H. Passin, "Modernization and the Japanese Intellectual : Some Comparative Observations", in M. B. Jansen, Changing Japanese Attitudes Toward Modernization, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965, p. 486.

The working-class Japanese, both delinquent and non-delinquent show more achievement concerns than do their American counterparts.....the Japanese working-class sample resembles to a considerable extent American middle-class protocols.....Japanese are more likely than Americans to view achievement as being inspired by a beloved dead person or to see achievement in the context of bettering one's economic position in the face of poverty.[69]

Given a predisposition for achievement, a low degree of education, and a lack of proper connections on the part of the lower strata, we would expect some alternative social structures to develop which would reduce the social and economic "isolation" of those not integrated into the _batsu_ relationships of the wider society. The reduction of this "isolation" could be provided by a system of social relationships similar to those which exist in the management, union, and political _batsu_. Before World War II and before its decline in the postwar period the labour boss system provided such an alternative. Bennett and Ishino concluded that:

People in labour boss organizations by and large are those who are not able to find employment in the standard trades, businesses and other organizations because they lack the "proper" family background, or the opportunity to gain the requisite training or education; do not have sufficiently influential go-betweens or supporters; lack the capital to start business on their own; or otherwise fail to obtain the necessary entree.[70]

The Soka Gakkai can be seen as the most recent example of this type of alternative social structure. It has organized those elements of the population which have not benefitted from the compromise between

[69] G. A. De Vos, "Deviancy and Social Change: A Psychocultural Evaluation of Trends in Japanese Delinquency and Suicide", in R. J. Smith and R. K. Beardsley, (eds.) _Japanese Culture_, Chicago: Aldine Press, 1962, p. 159.

[70] J. W. Bennett and I. Ishino, _op. cit._, pp. 103-4

"traditional" modes of action and the technical requirements of a
modern economy. These lower class elements are achievement-oriented
and at the same time deprived of the facilities (i.e., education,
batsu connections) which could lead to financial and social success.
In this context, the Soka Gakkai is an outlet for the ambitions and
talents of those who have previously "internalized" the values of
diligence and hard work. It reinforces these values and makes them
religiously significant within the framework of True Buddhism. The
Soka Gakkai provides a system of social relationships which functions
in much the same way as the oyabun-kobun and batsu systems of the
wider society.

Before attempting to establish empirically that the Soka Gakkai
is such an alternative structure, the following chapter will examine
the historical and contemporary role of religion in Japanese society.
Japanese modernization is closely related to the development of
"religious nationalism" which has its roots in the traditional value
system. An analysis of the close relationship between political and
religious elites in Japan is relevant to any account of the Soka Gakkai,
since its emergence has coincided with the first official separation of
religion and state in Japanese history.

CHAPTER 3

THE ROLE OF RELIGION IN JAPANESE SOCIETY

Religion in Japan is the result of the interaction and integration of three religious traditions: Shinto, Confucianism, and Buddhism. In Japan there are not three religions but these "traditions" are three aspects of the religious life of the Japanese.

> A saying ascribed to Prince Shotoku, the founder of
> Japanese civilization, compares the three religious and
> moral systems found in Japan to the root, the stem and
> branches, and the flowers and fruits of a tree. Shinto
> is the root embedded in the soil of the people's
> character and national traditions; Confucianism is
> seen in the stem and branches of legal institutions,
> ethical codes, and educational systems; Buddhism
> made the flowers of religious sentiment bloom and gave
> the fruits of spiritual life...the Japanese even to-
> day are, consciously or unconsciously, followers of
> these various teachings at the same time, no one system
> being absolutely excluded. 1

If there have been no exclusions, there certainly have been periods when certain Shinto, Confucian, and Buddhist doctrines and institutions have dominated. It is also a fact that when a particular school or sect loses its power and influence it continues to exist and in many instances it has been capable of revivals. Many contemporary Shinto and Buddhist

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[1] M. Anesaki, History of Japanese Religion, Rutland, Vermont and Tokyo, Japan: Charles E. Tuttle Company, 1963, pp. 8-9.

groups have histories and traditions which are hundreds of years old.
The dominance of any religious group has depended on two things. First,
the ability of that group to religiously reform Japanese society and
its political institutions and secondly, the government's need for
legal and moral legitimacy. Emperor Kammu (781-806), for example, needed
Buddhist support for his reforms and at the same time Saicho (767-822)
was attempting to break away from the prevailing Buddhist orthodoxy.
As a result, each encouraged the other's innovations. Events such as
this have promoted the close integration of political and religious
institutions in Japan and this is perhaps one of the reasons why the
explicit Church-State distinction which characterized the relationship
between religion and politics in the West did not develop in Japan.

The following account will examine these aspects of religion in
Japanese society in order to provide a historical framework for
analyzing recent religious developments and especially the success of
the Soka Gakkai. This account will briefly trace the development of
Buddhism in relation to social and political changes and its relationship
to Shinto and Confucianism. The reasons for selecting Buddhism are
purely heuristic. A similar account would result if Shinto or Confucian-
ism were to be the focal point for analysis.

Any discussion of Japanese religion must deal with several
general problems. The following pages will analyze:
(1) The "Japanizing" of Foreign ethical and religious ideals. Even the
moral maxims and social organization of a contemporary group like the

Soka Gakkai must be seen within the general context of Japanese society.
(2) The relationship between Buddhism and political and social conditions
in the pre-war period. There are two basic trends in Japanese Buddhism.
The first is a "political Buddhism" which seeks to join itself with or
to depend upon the ruling regime. Unlike the mystical and ritualistic
aspects which characterize " political Buddhism", "evangelical Buddhism",
the second trend, is a gospel of universal salvation that addresses
itself to the dispossessed strata of the population.
(3) The separation of politics and religion after World War II. (This
process is directly related to the rise of "new religions", like the
Soka Gakkai, and will be dealt with in the concluding sections of this
chapter.)

Buddhism and Japanese Society

Before Buddhism entered Japan, the indigenous Shinto, a primitive
religion based on shamanism, had spread over the Japanese archipelago.
This religion included aspects of animism, fertility cults, ancestor
and nature worship. The deities and spirits of Shinto mythology are
called kami (superior or sacred). Kami dwelt in the heavens, the air,
rocks, fountains, animals, and human beings. Great leaders, heroes,
and princes were kami in human form.

> In short, Shinto as a religion was an unorganized worship
> of spirits. It was rooted in the instinctive being of
> human nature feeling itself in communion with the living
> forces of the world and showed its vitality in the
> communal cult. For the worship was often connected with
> local legends and communal customs, and the deities thus
> worshipped were mostly considered to be the ancestral or

tutelary spirits of the communes. Thus the communal
cult was the pivot upon which the traditions and life
of the people moved, wherein gods or spirits, animals
and trees, even rocks and streams, were believed to
be living in communion with men. [2]

There have been many attempts to organize Shinto practices into
a national religion. These attempts are closely related to the Imperial
family. This is the unique social and political fact about Shinto.
The myth concerning the Imperial family is associated with an elaborate
myth concerning the origin of the universe and the special place of
Japan in that universe.

According to this myth, Izanagi and Izanami were sent to the
earth by order of the celestial deities. Izanagi and Izanami united
and gave birth to Oyashima (the Great Eight Islands) or Japan. They also
gave birth to the mountains, fields, food, fire, water. Finally, they
gave birth to the rulers of the world. The myth establishes the Sun
Goddess (Ama-terasu-o-mikami) as the ancestress of the Imperial family
and through this family the protectress of the Japanese people. The Sun
Goddess gradually came to dominate the numerous local deities as a
result of the growing power of the clan with which she was associated.
Shinto morality emphasized the virtues of submission and military
valour. The supremacy of the Sun Goddess never completely subdued the
local cults and communal clans.

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[2] _Ibid._, p. 22.

In this early period

> ...we see a powerful ruling family established in the
> central part of the main island and many tribes attached
> to it, joined in the cult of the Sun Goddess. [3]

Before Shinto became the national faith it was brought under the influence of Buddhism and Confucianism; this restricted the manner in which these non-Japanese religions were accepted.

> Shinto welcomed Buddhism, Confucianism, and ancient
> Chinese philosophy in order to systematize its doct-
> rines. It is rather noteworthy, that even Buddhism,
> in playing an important role in the history of
> Japan was somewhat limited because of being Japan-
> ized by Shinto. [4]

Under the influence of Shinto, the more universal aspects of Buddhism and Confucian ethical theory were gradually overcome or related to Japanese problems. This helps to account for the lack of a religiously based opposition to the "religious nationalism" that was systematically developed during the modern period, especially during the 1930's and early 40's.

"Political" and "Evangelical" Buddhism in Japan

In Japan there is a distinction between "political Buddhism", which is usually associated with the ruling regime, and "evangelical

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[3] Ibid., p. 51.

[4] T. Tanigawa, "The National Character and Religion", Contemporary Religions in Japan, 1, 2 (June 1960), 4.

Buddhism", which is concerned with "universal salvation". This fact is of historical as well as contemporary relevance. Like the "new" teachings of the medieval period (approximately 1200-1300 A.D.), the Soka Gakkai is also an "evangelical" sect concerned with saving the oppressed in a period of moral decay.

These two trends in Japanese Buddhism may be seen as specific examples of two general distinctions found in Buddhism as a whole. The Buddhist account of the empirical world seems to dismiss the significance of attempts to stabilize or control terrestial events. The "Four Noble Truths" proclaim: (1) the inevitability of suffering and sorrow in life; (2) that this state of affairs is due to craving; (3) that only by eliminating the craving can we stop suffering and sorrow; and (4) that the only way to bring about this result is to follow the disciplined moral life of concentration and meditation of the Buddhist monk. Unless one sees the world as a place of suffering, as transitory and soulless, one cannot achieve salvation. No stable individuality "transmigrates" from body to body. Individuals as well as the other phenomena of this world are in a constant state of flux. This "stream" of existence with its concomitant suffering can only be stopped by achieving Nirvana. Only acceptance of the "Four Noble Truths", a rigid system of moral conduct, and intense concentration and meditation will bring salvation. Nirvana is the result of many lives of virtue and self sacrifice.

These beliefs of Theravada Buddhism were generally accepted by

all schools of Buddhism. In the second century A.D. in India Mahayana
Buddhism developed and gave little attention to these basic doctrines
of the Theravada school. Mahayana Buddhism, in contrast to the
aristocratic, mystic tendencies of Theravada Buddhism, claimed to offer
universal salvation. Associated with the Mahayana view were tendencies
to see the Buddha as a god and an increasing interest in the
bodhisattva (Being of Wisdom). Before his birth as Gautama, the Buddha
was supposed to have existed in many previous incarnations (bod-
hisattvas) and to have performed many deeds of self-sacrifice and
compassion as he sought virtue and wisdom. The idea of previous Buddhas
led to speculation about future Buddhas who would bring virtue and
wisdom into the world. If the road to Nirvana was so difficult, it was
reasoned that a bodhisattva after achieving "perfection" would not pass
directly into Nirvana but would choose to remain in the world to "save"
others so that eventually there would be universal salvation. Hinayana
Buddhism, which rejected the bodhisattva idea, was only capable of
saving those who were able to acquire the rigorous requisites for
perfection.

Although it was the Mahayana sects which eventually came to
Japan, even within this general framework there were distinctions between
those which stressed personal salvation, rigid discipline, and formal
ritual and those which stressed universal salvation and less elaborate
discipline and ritual. In any particular historical period these trends
were also influenced by the political rulers, the Confucianism which

accompanied Buddhism from China, and the native Shinto practices.

The regency of Prince Shotoku Taishi (573-621), for example, represents the first systematic attempt to introduce foreign religious and political institutions into Japan. Although many important clans, representing traditional Shinto ideas, opposed these changes, they were also caught up in the general desire to emulate the achievements of the contemporary dynasties of China and Korea. The Yamato court sought to enhance its power and prestige both at home and abroad by adopting many features of the "superior" Chinese civilization. For Shotoku this meant the introduction of Confucian ethics and the Buddhist religion. His first public act as regent was the proclamation of Buddhism as the state religion. In 604 his "Seventeen Article Constitution" put a Confucian stamp on Japanese administrative institutions. Special emphasis was placed on moral and spiritual harmony between the rulers and the ruled.

Shotoku attempted to bolster his political power by lecturing to his people on Buddhism. One of the texts he selected was Hokke-Kyo (Lotus of the Wonderful Law) a Mahayana scripture which came to be followed by many sects in Japan. The Lotus is essentially a gospel of universal salvation. More importantly, it is claimed to be the most complete of all Buddhist doctrines. The teachings in the Lotus are considered to be the final doctrines of the Buddha. While other teachings are not considered false, the Lotus is seen as the final synthesis and its emphasis on universal salvation is characteristic of Mahayana Buddhism. The idea of the bodhisattva inspired Shotoku and he considered

his life an emulation of the life of Buddha. He regarded himself as a
bodhisattva working for the salvation of Japan. This concept of the
self-sacrificing bodhisattva was to inspire many other subsequent
religious leaders in Japan, (i.e., Nichiren, spiritual forefather of
Soka Gakkai).

Confucian secular ethics and Buddhist spirituality were able
to coexist for the next thousand years without serious conflict.

> The union of religious ideals and national life thus
> proclaimed, expounded, and carried out by the prince,
> became once and for all the aim of the greatest
> Buddhists and the aspiration of the best statesmen in
> Japan. Through the broad vision and high idealism of
> his leadership, Buddhism was able to influence the
> Japanese extensively and profoundly....[5]

Shotoku's teachings and political activities are an example of
"political Buddhism". The seventh century saw a further extension of
the reforms introduced by Shotoku. The year 645 was the beginning of
the Taika Reform which was designed to restrict the power and privileges
of the clans and make all the people responsible to the throne. An
attempt was made to model the central government on the institutions of
the Tang dynasty (618-906) in China.

> Not only did the religious propaganda assist the poli-
> tical scheme, but Buddhism thereby became more closely
> interwoven with the interests of the central
> government. Thus, the consolidation of the nation
> under a strongly centralized government increased in
> association with the penetration of Buddhist influence,
> and Buddhism became a State organization...Buddhism
> rendered great services to the Government, in working

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[5] M. Anesaki, History of Japanese Religion, op. cit., p. 64.

to confirm the belief that the peace of the country
and the security of the Throne depended upon the
guardianship of Buddha and his saints.[6]

Additional reforms were attempted in the "Institutes of Taiho"
(701-2). Many Chinese institutions were taken over. The family was
set up as the unit of social organization in contrast to the clan in
earlier periods.

The eighth century, the Nara Period (710-94), was in fact an
attempt to make Japan a Buddha-land. Based on Confucian social institu-
tions, the union of Buddhism and the state was extended. In the two
hundred years from the regency of Prince Shotoku, Buddhist influence
manifested itself in every branch of social life. Buddhist temples and
monasteries helped to develop the resources of the country, and
established an elaborate system of communications as well as performing
religious functions. Social work, artistic forms, and Buddhist
spirituality contributed to the glorification of the ruling court
hierarchy. Buddhist doctrines emphasizing personal salvation gave way
to teachings which stressed the protection of the state. The close
connection with the court led to the establishment of a Buddhist aris-
tocracy. The Hosso school came to prominence during this period and
became associated with court life. It placed great emphasis on meditation
and mysticism. Hosso's "ten stages of mystic contemplation" produced
a hierarchical, restrictive ladder of perfection. Those who were not
capable of climbing the rungs of the ladder could not achieve salvation.

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[6] *Ibid.*, pp. 80-82.

This is one of the earliest Japanese examples of the universalism and
equality of Buddhist teachings being adapted to an existing political
structure. The result in this case was a formalistic, aristocratic
and mystic form of Buddhism. In the Nara Period the alliance between
the Buddhist prelates and court nobles led to the corruption of
Buddhist institutions and to the rise of a politically strong Buddhist
aristocracy. The strain resulting from the association led to reform
movements within particular schools and also resulted in the introduction
of "new" Buddhist teachings.

The Heian Period (794-1191) produced two prominant reformers,
Saicho (767-822) and Kukai (774-835). Both men attempted to centralize
Japanese Buddhism in one organized church. Although the teachings of
both men were imported from China, their success depended on a close
association with the court. Even though both teachings stressed egali-
tarianism (all men are capable of Buddhahood), actual practices reflected
the hierarchical, aristocratic nature of the court. It was not until
the Kamakura Period (1192-1336) that these populist potentialities
developed into mass movements.

Saicho established his ecclesiastical institution on Mount Hiei
near Kyoto. He studied Tendai Buddhism in China and brought its
teachings to Japan. Tendai Buddhism was based on the teachings of the
Lotus Sutra. This doctrine, as previously pointed out, emphasizes the
necessity of raising all men to the dignity of Buddhahood. Tendai
taught that all men were capable of attaining enlightenment. Every man

had a Buddha nature which was capable of being realized.

> The way that one may attain Buddhist perfection is to
> follow the way of Buddha by leading a life of moral
> purity and contemplation. Indeed, it was his
> emphasis on moral perfection rather than any more
> metaphysical aspect of the Tendai philosophy which
> most conspicuously appeared in Saicho's teachings.[7]

Kukai's Shingon Buddhism attempted to unify the pantheons of
various groups. Hindu, Persian, Chinese and Shinto deities, demons and
saints, were seen as manifestations of the Buddha. Although Buddhism
dominated this period, the worship of Shinto deities continued among
the majority of the population. Buddhism continued to coexist with
Shinto ideas and observances. This coexistance, begun in the eighth
century, became, through Kukai's writings, more systematic. His earli-
est writings were intended to demonstrate the basic unity of Shinto,
Buddhism, and Taoism. The result was an elaborate theory of _Ryobu
Shinto_ (Double Aspect Shinto) which attempted to integrate the mystic
teachings and the mundane moralities of Shingon Buddhism and Shinto.
The aristocrat mystic nature of Shingon found many adherents at court.
Kukai's "Ten Stages of Religious Consciousness" culminated in personal
extinction in Nirvana which was in contrast to the Mahayana belief that
those who had achieved perfection had a duty to remain in the world to
promote the salvation of all men. The most crucial event in the history
of Shingon, after the deaths of Saicho and Kukai, was its increasing

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[7] R. Tsunoda, Wm. T. DeBary, and D. Keene, _Sources of Japanese Tradition_, Volume 1, New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1958, p. 114.

dominance of Mount Hiei, the center of Tendai. The development of "esoteric" teachings in Tendai Buddhism resulted in a contest between Tendai and Shingon to decide which school was to be the center of "esoteric" teachings. The outcome was a victory for the Hiei monks.

After the ninth century, Buddhism became increasingly mystic and ritualistic. Confucian bureaucrats and the Buddhist hierarchy adapted themselves to court life. The Buddhist clergy shared the wealth and cultural life of the court nobles. Because it was open to the talented the Buddhist Church was a training ground for prelates and political administrators. Buddhism provided an outlet for the ambitions of talented individuals.

> ...the mystic Buddhism of Shingon was well suited to covetous demands, as it supplied worship and mysteries for the benefit of selfish interests and the court nobles were easily controlled by ecclesiastical nobles. In this respect the followers of Kukai vied with the prelates of Hiei in compromising themselves to the aristocrats and in making them tools of their own ambition. The doctrine of Tendai, the proper tenet of Hiei was obscured, by Shingon mysteries, and some of the Hiei prelates publicly proclaimed their own Scripture, the Lotus of Truth, to be equal in theory but inferior in practice to Shingon mysteries. The result was the indiscriminant worship of deities according to convenience...The great Buddhist centers increased their influence in proportion with the exercise of occult ceremonies and the power thus acquired became the weapon of ambitious prelates and villainous priests.[8]

In this respect, the Soka Gakkai is similar to the "Esoteric" Buddhism of this period. It also provides an outlet for talented individuals who lack opportunities in the wider society.

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[8] M. Anesaki, History of Japanese Religion, op. cit., p. 146.

Accompanying this increasing power and wealth of the Buddhist aristocracy was the rise of the monk-soldiers, who protected the vested interests of the Buddhist strongholds. This led to internal warfare among the Buddhists and to external pressure on the Fujiwara dominated court. The Buddhist factions became very powerful and troublesome during the reign of Emperor Shirakawa (1072-86). Whenever the monks of Mount Hiei had any demands to make, they marched in force on the capital, carrying the Shrine of the Shinto god Sanno. This served as protection against the soldiers, who feared they would be committing sacrilege if they attacked the priests. Beginning in 1095, and at least once a year for the next forty years, the capital was visited by the monk-soldiers of the Tendai and Hosso sects. Tendai monks of Mount Hiei burned the Miidera temple several times and in 1165 burned the Hosso stronghold in Kyoto.

> The power and outrages of the Monk-soldiers grew so alarming in the course of the eleventh century that the Fujiwara, who were the creators of this force, finding themselves impotent to control the monks, had to resort to the help of the military men from the provinces for suppressing their riots. This point had a significant bearing upon the political and social changes which were to take place in the latter half of the twelfth century, because when those military men who had their strongholds in the provinces were called to the capital to combat the monk-soldiers they began to realize their own power. From this time on their self-assertion grew, until they controlled the whole situation and supplanted the Fujiwara oligarchy. [9]

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[9] Ibid., p. 147.

The rise to power of the provincial soldiers, who held land
which could not be directly controlled by the central government,
indicated the cleavage between the court and the majority of influential
leaders in the provinces. Being away from the influences of the court,
they maintained the virtues of valour and personal fidelity. They
represented the rustic virtues of provincial life and the clan spirit
which had not been destroyed by the centralization of government. The
overthrow of the Fujiwara allowed for the rise of feudalism in the
following centuries. The country was dominated by the warriors and
their ethic Bushido (Way of the Warrior). With the rise to power of
the Minamoto clan and the establishment of Yorimoto as the first
shogun (1192), the military class moves into the center of Japanese
history until the middle of the nineteenth century. "Medieval Japan"
(1200-1600) was a period of disorder, instability and feudal warfare.
It can be vividly contrasted with the "peace and stability" of the
earlier Heian period and the Tokugawa regime which followed.

During the Kamakura Shogunate (1186-1336) many trends latent in
the preceding period became manifest. With the establishment of the
Bushido dominated military class, the Buddhist hierarchies lost not
only their prestige but mysticism and ritual fell into disrepute.
Although the clan-based Shinto practices were encouraged, there was
never a complete break with Confucianism and Buddhism. The Confucian
concepts of filial piety and loyalty and Buddhist concepts of self-
control complemented Bushido and were encouraged. A religious revival

took place based on simple piety and personal experience rather than
dogma or ritual. Strong minded men of humble origin brought Buddhism
back to the people.

> If the collapse of the old order brought new blood and
> more vigorous leaders on the scene, and if the eclipse
> of the aristocratic Kyoto court signified a greater
> participation by the provinces in the national life,
> so too in these circumstances the older forms of
> religion gave way to new ones, responding to the needs
> of the country as a whole. Thus, for example, the
> sense of despair, of inability to rise above the
> evils of the times, was met by a powerful movement
> offering salvation through faith alone, which brought
> the hope of new life and light to thousands of
> Japanese untouched by the older forms of Buddhism.
> The cult of Amida, who shared the bliss of his Pure
> Land with those who put their trust in him, is the
> most striking example of this tendency. In the
> teachings of Nichiren, also, there is great emphasis
> upon faith in the Lotus Sutra as the key to salvation,
> and it was a notable trait of both these movements
> that their leaders sought converts among the humblest
> folk in the farthest reaches of Japan....[10]

The "Way of the Lotus", which stressed the unity and universal
nature of Buddha's Teachings (i.e., everyone is a potential Buddha),
had been acknowledged by the Tendai and Shingon sects but was rarely
followed in the Heian Period. It was only during the "age of the warriors"
that these democratic tendencies produced mass movements in Japanese
Buddhism. This popularization was associated with Amida Buddha, whose
Pure Land or Western Paradise offered a haven for all souls in the
period of vice and evil (Latter Law or Mappo). Men were no longer capable

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[10] R. Tsunoda, Wm. T. DeBary, and D. Keene, Sources of Japanese
Tradition, Volume 1, op. cit., p. 182.

of saving themselves in this degenerate era and because of this Amida
had vowed that all who called his name and trusted in him would be
saved and brought to the Pure Land. Honen (1133-1212) was the first
to separate this doctrine from other forms of Buddhism. He declared
that the calling of Amida's name (Namu Amida Butsu) was superior to
all other religious practices. Since in the period of the Latter Law
severe monastic discipline could not save man, he must rely on the
power of Amida.

Shinran (1173-1262) became the founder of an independent branch
of Pure Land Buddhism called Shinshu (True Doctrine). The process of
demythologizing continued. Essentially, Shinran tried to eliminate the
distinction between the religious and the secular. He broke his
clerical vow of chastity, declaring that monastic training was not
essential to salvation. The home, not the monastery, was to be the
center of the religious life. It was no longer necessary for a man to
become a priest in order to achieve salvation.

> The more conservative of Honen's followers...held to the
> traditional monastic discipline of Buddhism, including
> the vows of celibacy and sobriety. But Shinran believed
> that if salvation truly depended on nothing but the
> grace of Amida, it was needless and perhaps dangerous to
> act as if one's conduct, or one's state in life, could
> have any bearing on ultimate redemption. Shinran's
> experience in exile convinced him that propagation of
> the faith among all classes of people required its
> apostles to identify themselves as closely as possible
> with the ordinary man.[11]

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[11] Ibid., p. 203.

For Nichiren (1222-1282) the Lotus Sutra of the Tendai sect was the key to salvation. Unlike the Pure Land teachings, he stressed the importance of one's efforts in obtaining salvation and because of this became convinced of his own exclusive mission on earth. Any teachings other than those of the Lotus were regarded as false. He maintained that there was a need for a religion that was related to the needs of man in the period of the Latter Law. More importantly, he claimed that all other religions were false and that the natural and spiritual disasters of the time were the result of the following of false religions. He urged the government to suppress these heretical religions and to establish his own teachings as the state religion. All other teachings had only prepared the way for the "truth of the Lotus Sutra".

> Nichiren with his political prophecy is an almost
> unique figure in East Asia and one of the very few
> who can be compared with the political prophets of
> the Old Testament.[12]

These transcendent teachings of Amida Buddhism and Nichiren provoked many attacks from the more orthodox sects, but the constant feudal wars prevented their complete suppression.

The Tokugawa period saw the "popular sects" incorporated into the ruling regime. Government political and financial support allowed the development of large ecclesiastical bureaucracies, but as a result

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[12] R. N. Bellah, "Values and Social Change in Modern Japan", _op. cit._, p. 35.

the "grass roots" aspects of these sects declined. Political patronage
rather than mass support was more important for organizational main-
tenance. Even Shinran's followers established the True Land School
as a hierarchical bureaucracy which resembled the Tokugawa fief
administration. It was only during the Meiji period and after World
War II that religion was again brought back to the people.

The unification of Japan under the Tokugawa Shogunate (1603-
1868) ended the civil wars and brought peace and stability. Mundane
problems of social order were the chief concern of the regime.

> ...there was an almost immediate response in the
> intellectual world to the need felt by the Tokugawa
> shoguns for a secular ideology that would buttress
> their own rule. What they sought was less peace of
> mind than the peace of the nation, and it was natural
> that they should turn to Confucianism for this, since it
> was par excellence the philosophy which devoted itself
> to the problem of achieving social peace and order.
> Consequently the new "this worldliness" of the Tokugawa
> era did not directly concern the material or physical
> world so much as the world of social ethics and it was
> in this domain that the Neo-Confucianism adopted from
> China had its greatest impact.[13]

Confucian historical study concerned itself with legitimate imperial
rule and eventually inspired a new interest in Shinto. Japanese feudal
traditions and Confucianism were both placed at the service of the
Tokugawa regime. Religion was utilized for political ends and "sub-
versive" movements like Christianity and certain Nichiren sects were

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[13] R. Tsunoda, Wm. T. DeBary, and D. Keene, _Sources of Japanese
Tradition_, **Vol. I**, _op. cit._, pp. 298-299.

suppressed.

> With the establishment of the feudal organization,
> however, Buddhists circles capitulated to secular power
> and willingly fulfilled the task of safeguarding the
> status quo and gave up all their noteworthy social
> functions...As the Buddhists sects were, on the one
> hand, subordinate to and protected by the feudal ruler,
> and on the other hand, justified their existence by
> holding the traditional ceremonies for the village
> communities, the feudal structure had to be perpetu-
> ated by all means for the maintenance of the sects
> themselves. It is only natural, then, that Buddhism
> in the Edo era willingly cooperated in the preservation
> of the feudal order. [14]

Thus the breakdown of the Tokugawa regime required another
political and religious reorganization. The Meiji Restoration saw the
revival of Shinto and its inculcation as a national ethic. As a result,

> ...the Buddhist ceremonies which had penetrated deeply
> into the religious service of Shinto shrines in the
> form of a syncretism of Shinto and Buddhism or had been
> adopted singly in the official function of the central
> government were severed from Shinto shrines by virtue of
> a policy of separation of Shinto from Buddhism
> (shinbutsu bunri), and were totally banned from the
> official sphere. This in itself was a great blow to
> Buddhism that had been living upon government authority,
> but the revivalist group (Revival Shinto) made a further
> attack called "abolishment and demolition of Buddhism"
> (haibatsu kishaku) ....It was through the Meiji restor-
> ation that Japanese Buddhism as a whole faced the
> experience of being consciously deserted by the state
> authority. [15]

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[14] S. Ienaga, "Japan's Modernization and Buddhism", Contemporary
Religions in Japan, Vol. 6, 1 (March 1965), pp. 4-5.

[15] Ibid., pp. 9-10.

Instead of attacking its enemies, Buddhism took the initiative
and attempted to integrate itself with the political authorities. When
the Meiji regime promoted a return to more "traditional" practices,
Buddhism complied by attacking the democratic rights movement,
Christianity, socialism, and the anti-war movements which developed as
Japan expanded her overseas empire.

Even before the modernization of Japan was begun in earnest under
the Meiji regime (1868-1911), there was always a close relationship
between the prevailing political and religious powers. At one time, it
was the political rulers who promoted religion (i.e., Prince Shotoku),
and at other times it was the religious leaders who sought the favour
of the ruling elite (i.e., Buddhism during the Tokugawa period). During
this "premodern period" there were several important attempts to
unify Japan politically and religiously (i.e., Taika Reform 645, Institu-
tes of Taiho 701-2). These attempts at unification were never complete-
ly successful and on the eve of Japan's rapid modernization the
"Japanese Nation" was more a dream than a reality. Although the Tokugawa
regime had done much to centralize government, communications, and the
economy, it never had unchallenged control over the entire country.
The tozama (outer lords) who had opposed Ieyasu, founder of the Tokugawa
Shogunate, were always a threat to unity. They were generally excluded
from any positions of power during the two hundred and fifty years of
Tokugawa rule. The sankin kotai system in which each daimyo (lord)
was required to live in Tokyo every other year and to leave behind his

family when he returned to his han (fief) was one of the principal
methods of keeping the tozama loyal. The encouragement of Confucian
concepts of "proper station" also helped to preserve Tokugawa order.
Loyalty to the shogun by the daimyo, by the samurai to their daimyo,
and by the people to their rulers was superceded during the Meiji period
by loyalty to the nation. The specific aspects of loyalty which existed
in the Tokugawa period were placed in a larger framework and centered
on the Emperor. Loyalty was more inclusive, since everyone was
involved in the Shinto myth of the Sun Goddess and the divine origins
of Japan and the Japanese. The national ethic brought Japanese
religion and politics closer together than ever before. The state did
not supplant "traditional religion" but utilized it to legitimate its
authority. Previously, the shogun and daimyo had done the same thing
in each of their domains, but now all Japan was to become the focus of
loyalty.

Religion in Modern Japan

The modern Japanese state was based on the integration of
Shinto nationalism and government administration. Shinto ideology
supported the idea that Japan was a divine land, and that the Japanese
were a divine race, and the state was a divinely established institution.
From 1890 to the end of World War II, the leaders of the "new" Japan
inculcated the samurai ethic as the national morality. The entire
educational system was systematically used for the purpose of political

indoctrination. This indoctrination was intensified when the militarists
came to power in the 1930's. The modern period in Japan has seen an
underlying struggle between the advocates of hokken (the rights of the
state) and the advocates of minken (the rights of the people). The need
for a committed, loyal, and hard working populace legitimitized the
curtailment of civil rights. The Russo-Japanese war, for example,
put great strains on the economy and victory was obtained at the
expense of the welfare of the common people. The "liberalism" of the
1920's was replaced by the ultra-nationalism of the 1930's. Beginning
with the war in China in 1931 and until 1945, Japanese writers and
intellectuals were forced to support the government or to cease opposition
to its policies. The demands of "national loyalty" are one of the chief
reasons for the lack of religiously based opposition to political
authorities. As early as 1891, when Uchimura Kanzo, a Christian school
teacher, refused on grounds of conscience to bow to the Imperial
Portrait, the conflict between loyalty and non-nationalistic individual-
ism produced a systematic orthodoxy to overcome any opposition to
government policies. The pervasiveness of this orthodoxy limited the
need for more violent action against possible sources of opposition.

The Christian church initially opposed the rise of religious
nationalism, found itself overcome by state policies designed to produce
a loyal populace.

> ...the membership of the church shifted to the newly
> developing white-collar class which had no reason to
> complain of the government's bureaucratic control over

individuals, as did the samurai at the beginning of
the era. This new class, which was destined to be
the bureaucratic core of Imperial Japan, having been
nurtured with school texts censored by the govern-
ment, consisted of people of a type far   different
from the independent samurai Christians of the earlier
period. [16]

Even Christian educational activities failed to offer an alternative to

the state demands for conformity.

The missionaires, however, believed that mission schools
had survived the storm because their schools surpassed
the government schools both in language instruction and
in moral education. What they failed to recognize, and
what the government saw, was that almost all the students
of this period were merely making use of the mission
schools as stepping stones to higher education in
government schools....The students were not interested in
the religious program as much as in the language
instruction which gave them some advantage in passing
the entrance examination for government schools. [17]

Before World War II control of religious groups was extended

and conformity was demanded. The "Law Governing Religious Organizations"

(1940) made the national ethic a necessary part of any religious

teaching. Not to include this theme was to invite arrest and legal

prosecution. The Soka Gakkai was one of many religious groups suppressed

during this period for "subversive" teachings.

Religion in Japan has had a long history of close association

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[16] F. Ikado, "Social Status of Protestantism in Japan 1859-
1918", Contemporary Religions in Japan, 2, 2 (June 1961), 49.

[17] Ibid., p. 56.

with political institutions. There have been trends toward elaborate ritual and mysticism (Shingon) and opposite trends toward "worldly asceticism" (Pure Land Buddhism). Whatever the dominant religion, there were always attempts on the part of both the clergy and the rulers to promote some kind of stable relationship between the secular and religious aspects of their society. Since the Tokugawa period and until the end of World War II, political leaders have utilized traditional religious practices for the maintenance of a stable social structure. Religions have been encouraged and suppressed in terms of their contribution to and disruption of the prevailing definitions of social order. It is also a fact that, in general, Japanese religions have been tolerant of each other. Confucianism, Buddhism, and Shinto coexisted for hundreds of years. Shingon Buddhism, for example, attempted to include the doctrines of all major sects. Christianity was proscribed by the Tokugawa regime more because of its connections with the West than for its "subversive" doctrine. Only various Nichirenite groups were the subject of prolonged and systematic persecutions. Their intolerance of other religions and their demand to be made the national religion made them politically suspect. The success of the Soka Gakkai, which is based on the teachings of Nichiren, is one indication of the great changes that have taken place in the Japanese religious world since 1945.

Religion in Postwar Japan

The Occupation authorities redefined and reformed much of Japanese social system and way of life. Although western influences

and ideas had been present in Japan before the war, they were, in
many cases, made the "letter of the law" after Japan's defeat. The
Emperor renounced his divinity and the freedom of religion was
guaranteed by the new Constitution adopted in 1946. These measures
were designed to eliminate the "Shinto Nationalism of the prewar
period. In conjunction with these new laws, steps were taken to curb
police authority. After 1927 police power and authority were
increasingly and more openly used to enforce political and religious
conformity. Many were arrested without being charged and questioned
under torture by even the ordinary policeman or in some cases by the
Special Police (Kempeitai). The allegation of "thought crimes"
(shisohan) saw people investigated, charged, and convicted on the
most trivial pretenses.[18]

The legal separation of religion and politics proceeded hand
in hand with the removal of "moral education" from the school
curriculum. The Imperial Rescript of 1890 with its reaffirmation of
the traditional values of filial piety, obedience to superiors, and
Loyalty to the state, saw the introduction of a compulsory course in
morals (shushin) based on Shinto ideology (emperor and ancestor
worship). The intensification of these nationalist doctrines after
1930, the bureaucratic centralization of education, and the formation
of such bodies as the "Bureau of Thought Supervision" ensured the

[18]I. I. Morris, "Policeman and Student in Japanese Politics",
Pacific Affairs, 33, 1 (March 1959), 7.

nationwide acceptance of imperial policy and the inculcation of patriotism in all students. After the war, an educational reformation, centering on democratization and demilitarization of the educational system, was introduced.

The subject of "moral education" has been the object of much controversy since the end of the war. It is claimed that increasing crime rates and delinquency, and even moral and social anarchy have resulted from educational reforms which have de-emphasized nationalism, patriotism, and social morality. Movements to re-introduce "ethical education" have been opposed by the Japanese intellectual community, especially the elementary school teachers, on the grounds that there is a real danger of possibly reviving the "religious nationalism" of the prewar period. "Moral" instruction was eventually introduced in 1958 and April 1964 the Ministry of Education prepared new "Moral Guidance Data" to be used as a guide in moral education in the schools all over Japan. A recent analysis of this book concludes that

> According to the textbooks of the world, the politician ranks first as ideal character, and the religionist 4th, but in the case of this data book for the elementary school, the politician ranks 5th, while there is no mention of religionists at all......Regarding the cultivation of religious sentiment, there lurks a great problem in Japan's moral education of today.[19]

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[19]T. Karasawa, "Morality from Now On: Concerning the Moral Guidance Data," Contemporary Religions in Japan, 6,1 (March 1965), 46-47.

The author of this paper also observes that even the practical advice given to the children is outdated (i.e., how to keep clear of an impatient horse) in an advanced technical society. The "nationalistic" education of the prewar period has been replaced by an emasculated morality which does not deal with the everyday problems which are faced in a modern society.

This secularization of education has not been compensated for by traditional religious institutions. Generally in most non-western societies, formal hierarchical organizations like that of the Catholic Church do not exist. This does not mean that religion has remained dormant due to the lack of more formalized dogmas and rituals. Rather, as noted above, religion in Japan has been mostly a political asset and accordingly has been integrated closely with the political structure. Political religion (i.e., Shinto) concerns itself mostly with national sentiments, but says little about everyday life except that one should live up to his social obligations. Such obligations tend to become "morally compelling" in themselves and the sanctions connected with them are not related to any specific religion. For example, this helps to explain the varying fortunes of Buddhism during the Tokugawa and Meiji periods. The close association between religion and politics tended to eliminate the need for a clergy intimately connected with the general population. Support from the political rulers was more important than mass support from the populace. After World War II, the separation of religion and

politics undermined the power and influence of orthodox religions

because they had generally failed to organize on a grass roots level.

> Confronting such a completely new age, each Shinto sect was
> very much at a loss as to what it should do....Hence,
> because of the sudden change in national thinking, all the
> prewar Shinto sects....came to a complete deadlock in their
> propagation. Because of secessions they also lost heavily
> in their human and financial resources.[20]

Buddhist temples found themselves in the same situation. In addition,

> The agricultural land reform of 1946 was also a great source
> of "trouble from without". In prewar days there were temples
> which were maintained solely by the profits from their vast
> farmland holdings but, as a result of the farmland reform,
> all but a very small area of rice fields, the product of
> which was "offered to the Buddha" (bukku-den), was lost.[21]

Religious freedom and the "moral bankruptcy" of traditional

religious institutions created a vacuum which was waiting to be filled.

> The rapid increase of sects was one of the remarkable social
> phenomena of the postwar period[22]...those who sought the new
> sects were mainly the "common people", and the greatest
> motive for conversion was suffering.[23]

This increase in the number of new sects occurred during a

period of rapid social change. For example,

> In 1950, 62.5% of the people were classified by the Welfare
> Ministry as rural; by 1960 this figure had dropped to 36.5%,
> and today it is around 30%.[24]

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[20] "Reminiscences of Religion in Postwar Japan", Contemporary
Religions in Japan, 6, 2 (June 1965), 156-158.

[21] Ibid., 165.

[22] Ibid., 170.

[23] Ibid., 193.

[24] L. Olson, "The Value Creation Society," op. cit., 12.

In this context, the Soka Gakkai can be seen as a possible solution to some of the "strains" associated with the developments outlined above. It has emerged during a period when, for the first time, religion has been legally separated from politics. Religion is no longer subsidized by the state and religious groups both in doctrine and finances are "on their own." Unlike previous orthodoxies, the "new" and "old" religions in Japan today must build up "popular" support if they are to survive. This "popularization" of religion requires a closer relationship between religious leaders and their followers than was necessary for the prewar, state-supported religious establishment. Soka Gakkai has established such a popular base among the urban masses. The following chapter will analyze the doctrine and organizational structure of the Soka Gakkai within the framework of the discussion presented in this chapter.

CHAPTER 4

NICHIREN BUDDHISM AND THE ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE
OF THE SOKA GAKKAI

Before analyzing the actual organizational structure of the
Soka Gakkai, there will be a brief discussion of the relationship
between Nichiren Buddhism and the Soka Gakkai. Although the Soka
Gakkai is a "new" sect, its spiritual basis, which centers on the
teachings of Nichiren, is 700 years old. This gives the Soka Gakkai
both traditional and modern significance. More importantly, it is the
reworking of this traditional religious faith within the organization-
al structure of the Soka Gakkai which makes it a strong force in con-
temporary Japan. The resulting spiritual and organizational "vehicle",
as the following analysis will demonstrate, functions to maintain the
relevance of many of the traditional values (i.e., diligence, hard work,
group loyalty) for the daily life of many in the urban lower classes.

Technically, the Soka Gakkai is a layman's group affiliated with
the Nichiren Shoshu sect. This sect is one of several derived from
Nichiren's teachings. As previously noted, Nichiren was one of the
several monks who attempted to take Buddhism out of the seminary to the
common people during the turbulent medieval period. Nichiren put his
complete faith in the Lotus Sutra and claimed that the sincere repeti-
tion of Namu Myoho Renge Kyo (Glory to the Lotus of the Wonderful Law)
was all that was necessary for salvation. He regarded this Sutra as

the final and perfect revelation of truth and predicted the downfall of any nation which rejected his "message". The impending Mongol invasion of Japan convinced Nichiren that the nation must accept his teachings and that he was the only one who could bring "true" religion to Japan. In the Lotus Sutra the bodhisattva Jogyo was charged with teaching Buddhism in the period of the Latter Law. Nichiren became convinced that he was a reincarnation of Jogyo and that it was his unique mission to save the world.

> There is no fault in me whatsoever; I am proclaiming the Truth, for the sole purpose of saving the people who dwell in the land from sinking into the deepest of Hells on account of degrading the Lotus.[1]

From these beliefs of Nichiren come the strong convictions of both the Nichiren Shoshu sect and the Soka Gakkai, who regard the Lotus Sutra and Nichiren's teachings as the sole source of salvation. Since other sects do not hold these beliefs, they are misleading the Japanese people and putting the nation in danger. Therefore, it is necessary to save those who have been misled by false religions. In order to secure peace and salvation the whole nation must be converted and then the rest of the world (Kosen-rufu). These beliefs help to account for the uncompromising attitude of Nichiren and his followers towards other religions and the political authorities which allowed such "heresies" to exist. The intolerance of the Shoshu sect and the Soka Gakkai has its roots in the basic teachings of Nichiren.

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[1]R. Tsunoda, W. T. De Eary, D. Keene, Sources of Japanese Tradition, Vol. I, op. cit., p. 220

According to the teachings of the Nichiren Shoshu sect and the
Soka Gakkai, there are two ways of propagating the "true faith". One
method is shoju and consists of argument and discussion and an attempt
to intellectually convince an unbeliever of the "truth". Shakubuku
(breaking and subduing), on the other hand, is a more forceful method
of conversion. Usually it means the constant harassment of a potential
member both publicly and privately. The Soka Gakkai considers these
annoyances acts of mercy.

> It is filled with unlimited kindness. In doing shakubuku one
> becomes the Buddha's agent, teaching men the right way of the
> Buddha and the law and saving them from suffering. The
> greatest good a man can do is to lead others to the true
> faith through shakubuku. The true faith is good for all men
> in all circumstances and for all time.[2]

Worship in the Shoshu sect and in the Soka Gakkai is very austere.
Soka Gakkai members are required to do shakubuku to get new members and
to worship the go-honzon, a mandala on which is written "Namu myoho renge
kyo--Nichiren". The inscription is claimed to have been written by
Nichiren and the mandala is located in the head temple Taisekiji near
Mount Fuji. Chanting the phrase written on this mandala, at Taisekiji,
or before a replica, which must be in the home of every member of the
Soka Gakkai, is a supreme act of religious faith.

> At Gakkai meetings members frequently testify as to how
> belief in the go-honzon has helped in healing sickness,
> in solving financial problems, and in other ways: in this
> way the proof of its validity is demonstrated in the
> actual life of the believer.[3]

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[2]R. L. Ramseyer, "The Soka Gakkai: Militant Religion on the
March", in R. K. Beardsley (ed.), Studies in Japanese Culture:1, Ann
Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1965, p. 152.

[3]Ibid., p. 153.

The writings of Makiguchi Tsunesaburo (1871-1944), the founder of the Soka Gakkai, are the only doctrines which can be attributed to the Soka Gakkai itself. His major work Theory of Value attempts to synthesize his theory of education and value with the teachings of the Nichiren Shoshu sect. According to Tsunesaburo,

> Creation involves the discovery of a relationship which nature has to man, evaluating it, and by human effort making that relationship closer or more important. Man alters nature to make it beneficial to him. By this definition creation is a term relevant only to value: it is not relevant to truth.
> Thus man creates values and in this lies man's greatness. Man finds Happiness--the goal of human life--in the pursuit of values.[4]

Concluding his analysis of the Soka Gakkai's theory of value, Brannen writes:

> Whatever may have been the original argument of the Theory of Value, as it stands today it reads very much like an exposition of utilitarian philosophy, interspersed with dogmatic statements from time to time on the indispensability of the Nichiren Sho faith for the realization of the goal of human life, happiness.[5]

The average member of the Soka Gakkai is not expected to acquire an extensive intellectual grasp of doctrine. The main reason for joining the Soka Gakkai is that it gives what it promises--happiness.

> The average follower is not so much taught to re-define the word "happiness" as he is led to believe that he has within his reach a tool to help him realize the happiness (defined by his own unaltered worldly standard) which had previously eluded him. The reward of first belief,

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[4]N. Brannen, "Soka Gakkai's Theory of Value", Contemporary Religions in Japan, Vol. 5, No.2, June 1964, p. 144.

[5]Ibid., p. 153.

the cumulative merit resulting from the forced conversion
of others, the efficacious merit of incanting for self
and others the invocation "Hail to the Wonderful Law of
the Lotus" (Namu Myoho- renge-kyo): all of these promises
are held out as means for escaping specific misfortunes
such as sickness, failure in business, and loneliness.
The cause of misfortune is false belief...[6]

Regarding religion instrumentally as a means for attaining
group goals is part of the traditional Japanese value system.[7] According-
ing to Dator,[8] the success of the Soka Gakkai can be attributed to (1)
the fact that it offers a simple account of world events and interprets
all aspects of life in terms of its doctrine; (2) that its explanation
of world events is a Japanese interpretation and not a foreign import;
(3) that it is both a new and an old sect; and (4) it deals with
practical problems while at the same time not requiring adherence to a
strict moral code.

The remainder of this chapter will analyze the integration of
this "fundamentalist" doctrine with the organizational structure of the
Soka Gakkai.

SOCIAL CLASS BACKGROUND OF SOKA GAKKAI MEMBERS

In fact, Soka Gakkai is the society where all classes of
people and many people of different nationalities advance
in firm solidarity towards the establishment of peaceful
society.[9]

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[6]N. Brannen, "The Teachings of Soka Gakkai", Contemporary
Religions in Japan, Vol. III, No. 3, September 1962, p. 251.

[7]See Chapter 2.

[8]J. A. Dator, "The Soka Gakkai: A Socio-Political Interpretation",
Contemporary Religions in Japan, Vol. VI, No. 3, September 1965, pp. 218-
224.

[9]Seikyo Times, Vol. 1, No. 8, August 1965, p. 8. (The Seikyo
Times is a religious magazine published by the Soka Gakkai in English.
It is printed by the Seikyo Press in Tokyo, Japan.)

The Soka Gakkai takes great pride in claiming that it represents the
general public. Although there are lawyers, doctors, university
professors, and business men who are members, "The Soka Gakkai seems
to have a higher percentage of members who are very poor than any other
major religious group".[10] In fact, the reasons for joining the Soka
Gakkai can be related to the social class background of the majority
of the membership. One of the main reasons the Soka Gakkai has been
successful is that it has based its appeal on the "personal problems"
which affect the lower and lower-middle classes in Japanese society.

In a 1960 survey of 261 Soka Gakkai members in the Kansai Area
respondents were asked to relate their experiences prior to joining
the Soka Gakkai. Troubles in the home were reported by 70; job and
business difficulties affected 70; unemployment and educational problems
affected 20; and illness was reported by 101. (Like many postwar
religions Soka Gakkai claims that it can cure disease.)[11] The nature
of these experiences accounts for the attractiveness of a group which
promises to solve "personal problems". There is always an attempt to
concentrate on the specific problems of various lower class groups.
For example,

> ...the Soka Gakkai has spread among the rank and file coal
> miners in Hokkaido and elsewhere by promising freedom from
> disease, safety from mine accidents, and automatic wage

[10] R. L. Ramseyer, "The Soka Gakkai: Militant Religion on the March", op. cit., p. 177

[11] K. Yanagida, H. Mori, K. Shimane and S. Tsurumi, Shakubuku:
The Idea and Behavior of Soka Gakkai, Tokyo: San Po, 1963, p. 186.

rises without resorting to strikes.[12]

A study of the monthly income of a sample of Soka Gakkai members and non-members in Tokyo provides further evidence of the sect's lower class basis.

Monthly Income (¥=Yen)	Non-members	Soka Gakkai Members
less than 10,000 ¥	0.5%	4.6%
10,000 - 20,000 ¥	6.0%	15.3%
20,000 - 30,000 ¥	28.5%	44.1%
30,000 - 40,000 ¥	46.5%	21.5%
over 40,000 ¥	18.5%	14.5%

[13]

Although there are some members of the Soka Gakkai who are well off financially, 64% of the members compared to 35% of the non-members have monthly incomes below thirty thousand yen. In the higher income categories—above thirty thousand yen a month—the percentage of Soka Gakkai members drops (36%) and that of non-members increases (65%).

Closely related to income is the type of occupation which characterizes the average member of the Soka Gakkai. An analysis of the Soka Gakkai Youth Section in Tokyo (1961) found that 40% of the males and 30% of the females members were workers in small scale

[12]H. Thomsen, The New Religions of Japan, Rutland, Vermont and Tokyo, Japan: Charles E. Tuttle Company, 1963, p. 23.

[13]This data was supplied by Dr. H. Nishio, Department of Sociology, University of Toronto and is based on a 1961 survey taken by F. Ikado of the Department of Religion, Ministry of Education, Tokyo, Japan.

business establishments; 17.5% of the males and 20% of the females worked as employees in various service industries; 25% of the males and 16.5% of the females were owners of small businesses and shops; and 17.5% of the males and 24.5% of the females were employed in large corporations or government offices.[14] The majority of the Soka Gakkai membership obtains its livelihood from the "marginal" sectors of the economy which are not able to offer the benefits of corporate "paternalism".

Another important fact about the Soka Gakkai membership is its age. Most of the membership is very young. In Japan seniority is rewarded rather than ability. A talented young man, regardless of ability, must "put in time" before receiving social or financial recognition. A "permanent employee" in a large firm will eventually receive his reward, but for those who work in small scale enterprises there is no guaranteed security.

AGES OF SOKA GAKKAI MEMBERS — WESTERN AREA

	No.	%
Teen-ager	58	11.6
20-29	188	37.6
30-39	117	23.4
40-49	51	10.2
50-59	32	6.6
60-69	27	5.4
over 70	7	1.4
no answer	19	3.8

[14]Ibid.

In this particular survey 72.6% of the membership was below forty years of age and 49.2% was below thirty.[15]

The majority of the Soka Gakkai membership has low paying jobs and in terms of their age they are trying to establish themselves in Japanese society. The membership is made up of workers, small business-men and merchants, and their employees who have not benefitted from the postwar prosperity. Some members of this strata have been successful and many of the leaders of the Soka Gakkai are successful merchants and businessmen. These men have brought their religion of "success" and "happiness" to the urban masses upon whose shoulders the difficulties of achieving success fall most heavily. For example, the increasing emphasis on education has placed an additional barrier between the college graduate and the non-graduate.

> Since a scholarship system is not well established in Japan, college students come, by and large, from well-to-do families. Now, Japanese society has a strong tendency to favour college students regardless of ability, and to discount non-college graduates however talented they might be. Thus, it is constantly producing a mass of able youngsters who are depressed and frustrated. The Gakkai recruits its leaders and members from these young people, because it knows how to inspire them.[16]

Converting to the Soka Gakkai gives these young people self confidence, an outlet for their abilities, and relief from the frustrations of daily life. In the Gakkai they are important. Their ideas

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[15]Ibid.

[16]Y. Endo, "Soka Gakkai, The Study of a Society for the Creation of Value", Anglican Theological Review, Vol. XLVI, No. 2, 1964, p. 132.

and talents are taken seriously. Their actions take place within
the framework of "True Buddhism". Each member is responsible for
saving unbelievers from their unhappy lives.

> However, Soka Gakkai is not simply a revival; it owes much
> of its rapid development to the social structure of present-
> day Japan and to its outstanding genius for organizing
> these victimized and pent-up groups in Japanese society.[17]

THE ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE SOKA GAKKAI

The Soka Gakkai attempts to provide a "total" environment for
its membership. Every type of activity from proselytizing to sports is
made "ideologically meaningful" and integrated into the organizational
structure. Although the Soka Gakkai adopted some of the administrative
procedures of "modern organizational analysis" when it reorganized
after the war, it also attempted to create an organization based upon
small group consensus and co-operation.

> By numbering members by family units and regarding the
> family as the lowest divisible unit of society, the Gakkai
> encouraged a sense of continuity with the familial heritage
> and relieved the feeling of nakedness experienced by most
> Japanese when they are treated as individuals.[18]

In fact, the Soka Gakkai attempted to organize, wherever
possible, within the framework of 'traditional" values and social
organization. The organizational structure of the Soka Gakkai can be
compared at many points with the oyabun-kobun and batsu practices

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[17]Ibid., p. 133.

[18]L. Olson, "The Value Creation Society", American Universities
Field Staff, East Asia Series, Vol. XI, No. 6, 1964, p. 11.

which exist in other institutions in Japanese society.

> ...because the Soka Gakkai developed in an environment
> which is consensual in its basic value preferences, and
> yet in which many of the traditional structures were
> demolished or discredited, with the resulting individual
> and social anomie, the individual Japanese is willing to
> invest more of himself into a group like the Soka Gakkai
> than he would be in a society whose order was already
> established.....and where the value of individual freedom
> and diversity was stressed.[19]

Basic Units of Organization[20]

The Soka Gakkai can be seen as a structure which permits mass

organization without eliminating small group consensus and co-operation.

The primary unit of organization is the _kumi_. It is made up of 10-15

members. The small size of each _kumi_ acts to maintain persistent and

intense person-to-person relationships among the members. When a _kumi_

increases in size through conversion, a new _kumi_ is established. In

this way, the problem of size is attacked at the "grass roots" level.

The vertical relationships in the _kumi_ are based on conversion ties and

each person is a member of the _kumi_ of the person who converted him.

Each _kumi_ leader is responsible for his converts. Each individual

member is responsible for the people he has converted. Everyone, as a

religious duty, must attempt to bring in more converts.

> He must practice _Shakubuku_ for the people who are opposed
> to the True Buddhism without the slightest recognition of

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[19]J. A. Dator, "The Soka Gakkai: A Socio-Political
Interpretation", op. cit., p. 212.

[20]The statistics presented in this section, unless otherwise
noted, are those provided by the Soka Gakkai. It is difficult to
obtain accurate statistics on Japanese religious groups because even
The Year Book of Religions, published by the Ministry of Education,
is made up of reports submitted to the ministry by the religious groups
themselves.

> it. When we look back on the day when we were
> converted, we will find that we also were opposed to the
> True Buddhism. But through Shakubuku, we could find our
> mistakes and were awakened to the highway to happiness.
> This fact well testifies the necessity of Shakubuku for
> anti-Soka Gakkai people.[21]

Conversion activities help to make the __kumi__ a tightly knit group.

> You may feel it difficult to explain the True Buddhism
> all by yourself. Then you can get help from your senior
> members. They will delightfully join you in the practice
> of Shakubuku.[22]

The relationship between senior and junior members not only helps to
integrate each individual __kumi__, but also establishes a direct communi-
cation link with other __kumi__. After a member advances in the faith
(i.e. after he makes conversions) he may become a __kumi__ leader himself.
This promotion does not negate any of the relationships between the new
__kumi__ leader and his original __kumi__. He is still a member of his original
__kumi__ and its leader is responsible for his actions as he is responsible
for the actions of his __kumi__ members. Thus, at the kumi level of
organization, sets of superior-subordinate relationships bind the
members of each __kumi__ to each other and relate each __kumi__ to other __kumi__.

The organization extends itself by pyramiding these superior-
subordinate relationships. Several __kumi__ make up a squad (__han__) with 30
to 100 members. The membership of the __han__ has been converted by the
same group of people. In other words, the leaders of the __kumi__ who make
up the __han__ are, at the same time, members of the __kumi__ of the person who
converted them (the __han__ leader). Next, several __han__ form a __chiku__ or

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[21]_Seikyo Times_, Vol. I, No. 14, November 11, 1965, p. 17.

[22]_Ibid._

or district of 500-1,000 members and then several chiku form a shibu
or chapter. (At the present time, there are 1,614 chapters or shibu
made up of 15,500 chiku or districts in Japan. There are 74 shibu
made up of 470 chiku in foreign countries.) The shibu for so-shibu or
general chapters (404 in Japan and 16 overseas). So-shibu form chihō
hombu or local headquarters (109 in Japan and 6 overseas). The chihō
hombu come under the hombu or central headquarters in Tokyo.[23]

At each level of organization there is an attempt to maintain
superior-subordinate relationships based on intimate person to person
contact. For example, the leader of a han is a member of a kumi made
up of other han leaders and they are all subordinates of their kumi
leader, who is also a chiku or district head. These sets of relation-
ships are duplicated in every aspect of Gakkai organization. Even
specialized groups such as the Youth Division and the Students Division,
which report directly to the President, are regarded as his hatamoto
(direct vassals).[24] The relationship between the President and the
Board of Directors can also be seen in terms of a kumi relationship.
Many leaders of the various specialized groups and members of the Board
of Directors, who appoint these leaders, are also bound by intermarriage
as well as religious and organizational ties. Similarities in age,
education, and organizational rank have helped to prevent factionalism

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[23]Seikyo Times, Vol. 1, No. 16, December 1, 1965, p. 12.

[24]The term hatamoto generally referred to the personal
retainers of the Tokugawa shogun.

at the top of the Soka Gakkai administrative structure. Moreover,
most of the top leadership entered the organization at the same time
and received their training together under Toda (1900-1958), the
second president.

In many cases kumi relationships are reinforced by occupational
ties. In 1957, eighty percent of the coal miners in the Yubari coal
mines were reported as members of the Soka Gakkai.[25]

Geographically based units have been introduced into the
organizational structure of the Soka Gakkai to supplement kumi relation-
ships. A series of such units, about the same size in numbers as the
organizational units, has been established to increase contact and co-
operation among Soka Gakkai members living in the same area.[26] This
"block" system (burokku) is based on the "minor block" consisting of
20 to 30 households and includes members from more than one kumi.
"Minor blocks" form "major blocks" which in turn are organized into
"major general blocks". "Major general blocks" are responsible to the
same local headquarters as the chapters and general chapters of the
kumi system. Leaders of the various block organizations are appointed
by the Tokyo headquarters. Many of these leaders have "religious rank"
in the hierarchy, but their actual duties are administrative rather
than religious. These leaders are responsible for distributing Soka

[25]N. K. Brennen, "The Teachings of Soka Gakkai", op. cit.,
p. 249.

[26]J. A. Dator, "The Soka Gakkai: A Socio-Political Interpret-
ation", op. cit., p. 214.

Gakkai literature and, more importantly, for organizing voting solid-
arity during election campaigns.[27] Such specialized administrators
relieve the kumi leaders in the vertical hierarchy based on conversion
from time consuming administrative tasks. This leaves the kumi leaders
free for religious activities and allows them to keep their kumi strong
in the faith.

> It is this dual organization pattern, consisting of horiz-
> ontal relations and vertical organizational relation, that
> accounts in no small measure for the strength of the
> Society.[28]

The central activity of the kumi which helps to keep Soka Gakkai
members strong in the faith is the weekly zadankai or discussion meeting.
It is usually led by the kumi leader or a member of the Education
Department. Meetings are often held in the houses of members and are
attended by 30 to 40 people. The discussion leader usually gives a
talk on some aspect of the faith or a Gakkai interpretation of current
events, especially those which indicate the "corruption and unhappiness"
of the wider society. A part of the meeting is given over to reports
from members who have received blessings because of their belief in
True Buddhism (i.e., illness cured, examinations passed, a new job etc.).
Face to face discussions of this nature encourage active participation
of the membership and provide a vehicle for the discussion of mutual
problems. Zadankai overcomes feelings of isolation and integrates the
individual into a social group in which he is officially as well as

[27]L. Olson, "The Value Creation Society", op. cit., p. 15.

[28]N. H. Branner, "The Teachings of Soka Gakkai", op. cit., p.249.

informally recognized as important. A Gakkai leader writes:

> Some members will take their friends to discussion
> meetings, while some will bring new members and new members
> their friends. In this way, discussion meetings of the
> Soka Gakkai have very close human relations, thereby creat-
> ing a friendly atmosphere.
> ....those present at zadankai can freely talk about
> topics which are closely related to their daily lives.
> By attending the discussion meetings, you can make
> friends with the other attendants. You will find that
> all men are equal and that they are aiming at the same
> target--to gain happiness. Also you will find some are
> in trouble as you have been.
> Man will feel unhappy if he is solitary. But you will
> no longer be alone at the discussion meetings.[29]

Although shakubuku is an integral part of all Gakkai activities,

it is an especially important part of zadankai. Members are encouraged

to bring relatives and friends to the meetings.

> This is especially effective with those who otherwise might
> be inclined to argue with a Gakkai member. Merely to come
> and listen seems safe enough, whereas to refuse would be
> both unscientific and unnecessarily rude. The zadankai is
> period of sharing so open and above board that often all
> doubts are overcome. Many a prospect is caught up in the
> enthusiastic atmosphere and becomes a fervent member.[30]

Zadankai helps to strengthen the organizational structure. Most

converts are already closely acquainted with the members of Soka Gakkai

who introduce them to True Buddhism. In a Kansai area survey of Soka

Gakkai members taken in 1961, 35% of the sample reported that they had

been introduced into the Soka Gakkai by their neighbours, 16.4% by

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[29] Seikyo Times, Vol. 1, No. 14, November 11, 1965, p. 19.

[30] R. L. Ramseyer, "Soka Gakkai: Militant Religion on the March",
op. cit., p. 169.

by their relatives, 16.2% by their co-worders, and the remainder
(32.4%) by less personal contacts.[31] In other words, the majority
of members (67.6%), previous to joining the Soka Gakkai, were related
by kinship, friendship or occupation to practicing members of the
faith. The relationships built on these ties not only help to integ-
rate new members into the organization but also prevent others from
becoming inactive. Members are urged to come to zadankai each week and
when they fail to attend their kumi members try to bring them back by
urging their participation in discussion.

Summary

The vertical and horizontal aspects of the basic units of the
organizational structure of the Soka Gakkai are similar in many ways to
"traditional" types of social organization.

At all levels the group is basis for social action. The kumi
and zadankai are concrete examples of group consensus and co-operation.
Leaders are representatives of group opinion and not competitors for
"executive positions". According to President Ikeda:

> The first and foremost responsibility of the leader is
> to bring happiness to the people....
> Secondly, the leader must always be on the side of the
> public.....
> Thirdly, the leader should never be misled by reputation,
> fame, and wealth, or should seek after distinction and
> honour....
> The leader in a new era is not the hero who manages
> everything by himself. The excellent leader is one who creates
> such an atmosphere that all the members can give full play to

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[31] K. Yanagida, L. Mori, K. Shime, and S. Tsurumi, Shakubuku:
The Idea and Behavior of Soka Gakkai, op. cit., p. 200.

their abilities and work happily, be it in the community, at the office, or in the state.[32]

The kumi, zadankai and all Gakkai activity groups have religious as well as organizational value. As Vice-General Director Izumi points out:

> At first, everyone will feel something awkward to devote themselves to both family life and Gakkai activities. But the two are not considered to be different. If you can practice shakubuku your home will be brightened with joy. You can talk happily at home about the joy of attending Gakkai meetings....you may feel it difficult to take part in Gakkai activities, but soon you will surely find great joy of life in doing so as a routine schedule of your daily life.[33]

If one is to find happiness, one must fulfill the obligations of group membership by practicing shakubuku and attending zadankai.

> What counts is your determination. You must have the resolution that you will spur yourself to greater efforts.[34]

Gakkai activities are not of value in themselves, but are only valuable to the group if they increase membership and bring "happiness" in the age of the Latter Law.

Perhaps the most important similarity between the Soka Gakkai organization and the "traditionalism" of the wider society is the emphasis placed on the superior-subordinate relationship. Like the labour bosses studied by Bennett and Ishino[35] Soka Gakkai leaders can

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[32]Seikyo Times, Vol. 1, No. 15., November 11, 1965, p.4.

[33]Ibid., p. 19.

[34]Seikyo Times, Vol. 1., No. 9, September 1965, p.11.

[35]J. W. Bennett and I. Ishino, op. cit., Chapter 3-5.

be seen as _oybun_ and their followers as _kobun_. In both cases, each

leader is responsible for the loyalty and actions of the junior

members of his _kumi_. It is his guidance which ensures the unity of the

organization. In his New Year's address before 2,500 General Chapter

leaders of the Soka Gakkai President Ikeda closed with the following

words:

> I want you all to become brilliant with common sense,
> courtesy, courage, justice, generosity, and dignity. Take
> good care of chapter members or corps members. You are
> then brilliant leaders, who have firm conviction to bring
> up the junior members to be devout believers of Daishonin's
> Buddhism. [36]

This important question of responsibility extends vertically to each

kumi leader and each member who brings in new converts. In a recent

panel discussion Vice-Director Kashiwabara responded as follows to

questions concerning who should be most responsible for the guidance of

new members:

> All should share the responsibilities. One thing is that
> the sponsor or mentor closest to him should guide him.
> For even if the group leader might make the utmost efforts
> to bring up the new convert, it is no use if the sponsor's
> faith is not strong. [37]

The hierarchical superior-subordinate relationships among the

membership of the Soka Gakkai are legitimatized on the basis of relig-

ious faith. Seniors must guide juniors. Juniors are encouraged to

bring in new recruits for whom they are responsible. Thus, the _oyabun_-

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[36]_Seikyo Times_, Vol. 2, No. 2, January 21, 1966, pp. 5-6.

[37]_Seikyo Times_, Vol. 1, No. 18, December 21, 1965, p. 22.

kobun practices found in the wider society are duplicated in the
organizational structure of the Soka Gakkai.

Specialized Units of Organization

Although the kumi, zadankai, and "block" units provide for
"primary" integration into the Soka Gakkai, there is also a system of
specialized groups based on age, sex, and specific interests and abil-
ities. As the Soka Gakkai has expanded these specialized groups have
developed rapidly. They provide a more extensive basis for integration
into the Soka Gakkai. Each special group can be seen as a unit for
promoting conversion or election activities, socializing novices and
training leaders, and encouraging cultural activities. It must be
remembered, however, that each group participates to some extent in all
these activities. A particular group only emphasizes one activity
rather than another. For example, it would be misleading to regard
Komeito (Clean Government Party) as merely a political organization.
It is also involved in shakubuku and is a training ground for Gakkai
leaders.

Youth Division

The Youth Division is, perhaps, the most important special de-
partment in the Soka Gakkai. It has organized and encouraged Gakkai
shakubuku activities and political campaigns. Members must be under
thirty years of age and they are regarded as the president's personal
vassals (hatamoto). Again, the kumi system organizes the members into
tight-knit groups. Members of this division are an elite corps and are
in the frontline of every Gakkai activity.

The main sub-divisions of this department are the Young Men's Division (1.7 million members) and the Young Women's Division (1.3 million members). Within this broad framework are units based on education. The Student Division was formed in 1957 and is made up of university students (75,000 members). The Senior-High Division, composed of senior high school boys and girls aged 16 to 18, was organized in October 1964 and by August 1965 it had organized 300,000 high school students. In September 1965, the Junior-High Division, consisting of boys and girls in the fifth grade of primary school (12 years old) to the third grade of junior high school (15 years old), was formed. At the same time, a Boys' and Girls' Division composed of children from the first to the fourth grades of primary school, was organized. The Junior-High and Boys and Girl's Divisions are made up of fifty children from each General Chapter and are instructed directly by Youth Division leaders from each Local Headquarters. It is among these young people that the Soka Gakkai hopes to produce qualified leaders for the future.

The Young Men's Division is especially active. Leading _shakubuku_ squads, they are responsible for much of the expansion of Soka Gakkai. They are the chief supporters and organizers of Gakkai political activities. The present President of Soka Gakkai recognizes the importance of this department.

> The spirit of the Y.M.D. is clearly shown in President
> Ikeda's guidance, "Youth Be World Leaders", in which is written:
> "The growth of the Youth Division brings the advance of the
> Soka Gakkai. The advance of the Soka Gakkai brings that of
> Japan. In the same way, world propagation of the True Buddhism

will realize world peace. Therefore the growth of the Youth Division will be an advance toward world peace.[38]

The Young Men's Division has been described as the "driving force" of Soka Gakkai.[39] The Young Women's Division is also an active force but President Ikeda's instructions for this department are usually more conservative. They are urged to live "harmoniously" within the "true faith".

> Attend as many times as possible discussion and guidance meetings to create a cheerful atmosphere.
> Take belief that Y.W.D. members are the foundation of the future Soka Gakkai, and realize a happy and rhythmical harmony between your daily work and home life.
> Gain good guidance from senior leaders concerning important problems.[40]

When these young women become members of the Women's Division, the "happy harmonious life" is again held out as legitimate:

> The activities of the Women's Division have recently been much invigorated through "Mother's and Children's Meetings". Various activities are planned throughout Japan for sensible women befitting the new age. To cite a few examples, they hold record concerts, cultural exchange lectures and make full use of local libraries.
> They willingly participate in PTA meetings or women's meetings at school.
> Although their activities are not eye-catching compared with those sponsored by other divisions, the Women's Division members are the supporters of the Soka Gakkai activities.[41]

Although the Gakkai stresses the equality of the sexes and provides an active role for women as propagators of the faith and _kumi_ leaders, important positions of leadership are generally dominated by men.

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[38]_Seikyo Times_, Vol. 1, No. 16, December 1, 1965, p. 13.

[39]_Ibid._

[40]_Ibid._

[41]_Ibid._, p. 14.

The weakest department in the Youth Division is the Student
Division. Its 75,000 members represent only about 2.5% of the total
membership of the Youth Division. The main source of strength is in
universities in the Tokyo area. Members of this department concentrate
on doctrinal matters and are expected to be teachers of the theory of
True Buddhism and play a major part in shakubuku. Each Chapter of the
Soka Gakkai has a unit made up of Student Division members who can be
called upon to lead or advise the kumi leaders or zadankai in matters
of doctrine.

Study Department

Aside from shakubuku and Komeito (Clean Government Party) the
Study Department (843,000 members) furnishes a major outlet for the
abilities and ambitions of the youthful membership. In order to become
members of the Study Department each candidate must pass an examination
in doctrine. Promotion in rank requires the passing of annual examin-
ations. Preparation consists of courses on the writings of Nichiren
and other related doctrines. These examinations are difficult and
require systematic study habits if the candidate is to be successful.

> The year 1965 began with examinations in Buddhism in
> the Soka Gakkai while other people were still under the
> influence of New Year-celebrating wine, Toso. Nearly
> 650,000 members sat for the examinations to be appointed
> assistant lecturers, the first grade of the Study Depart-
> ment. About half of them emerged successful.[42]

Ranks in the Study Department are parallel to those used in a

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[42] Seikyo Times, Vol. 1, No. 18, December 21, 1965, p. 10.

university. At the present time, there are 650,000 assistant
lecturers, 152,000 lecturers, 35,000 associate assistant lecturers,
5,133 assistant professors, 1,191 associate professors, and 244
professors.[43]

Study Department members are active in each _zadankai_ as leaders
and advisors. Because of their "theoretical" training they take a
leading part in the _shakubuku_ of the non-members who attend _zadankai_
and high ranking members give regular lectures in each District.
Many members of the Study Department are also members of the Youth
Division and these youthful members are noted for turning doctrinal
lectures into political speeches during election campaigns.

Anticipating the further expansion of educational activities
the top leadership of the Soka Gakkai has drawn up plans for establish-
ing a high school and Soka University. A Gakkai leader writes:

> At this time of crisis, the inauguration of Soka
> University together with a high school means a revolution
> in educational circles in the world as well as in Japan.
> Kosen-rufu means the establishment of the highest civil-
> ization based upon the wisdom of Buddhism and world-wide
> knowledges. It is much expected, therefore, that great
> leaders of society will be born from this university.[44]

Similar to other Gakkai activities, the Study Department is
involved in education, religion, and producing organizational and
political leaders. Every effort is made to give each member an opportunity
to develop his potentialities for study and leadership.

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[43]_Seikyo Times_, Vol. 1, No. 13, November 1, 1965, p. 18.

[44]_Seikyo Times_, Vol. 1, No. 16, December 1, 1965, p. 3.

Culture Bureau

The activities organized in this department have been referred to as the "outer circle" of the Soka Gakkai.[45] This department is to advance the "Third Civilization", which is the result of True Buddhism becoming an aspect of every social activity.

> Thus, the Sokagakkai can be considered a cultural organization as well as a religious organization.
> In other words, the Gakkai is a large-scale "organization of thoughts" which leads all the foregoing thoughts, philosophies, cultures, education, art, and science to higher levels, with the great life-philosophy of Nichiren Daishonin at the root.[46]

One of the largest groups in this department is Min-on (Democratic Music Association) which has about 700,000 members. Min-on is usually described as a beneficent organization concerned with the welfare of the public.

> The Association was formed in October, 1963.......Its purpose is to provide the public with the opportunity to appreciate good music at reasonable admission fees, in consideration of the fact that good music has not been properly presented to people and restricted to only a part of the nation.

The appreciation of music is inevitably based on True Buddhism. Culture is also functional for the Soka Gakkai. In the words of one corps leader:

> To bring a show to the public opened up a new medium for Shakubuku as the people could really see what we are doing. This, I feel will greatly accelerate our Shakubuku activities. It gives the members something to really look forward to as an uplift.[48]

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[45]Seikyo Times, Vol. 1, No. 18, December 21, 1965, p. 15.

[46]Seikyo Times, Vol. 1, No. 15, November 11, 1965, p. 8.

[47]Seikyo Times, Vol. 1, No. 18, December 21, 1965, p. 15.

[48]Seikyo Times, Vol. 1, No. 12, October 21, 1965, p.11.

Closely associated with Min-on is Min-en (Democratic Drama
Association) which presents various plays and provides an outlet for
members with acting ability.

True Buddhism is not at odds with modern science. The Science
Department allows for both science and religion.

> Just as various studies can go on in respect and in
> cooperation with each other, the true religion and studies
> can go without any contradiction or incompatibility. Both
> of them should contribute to men's welfare in each field.[49]

Although this department is supposed to be made up of scholars, univer-
sity professors, and Ph.D.'s their "academic activities" are within the
framework of True Buddhism. For example,

> ...the Science Department of the Sokagakkai aims at the
> salvation of all mankind as their basic attitude of study.
>   Sparing time from their tight schedules, they attend
> discussion meetings, talk about the true religion, listen
> to people's troubles and pay efforts in solving such
> difficulties. Research by scholars with True Buddhism as
> their basis leads up to the establishment of the Third
> Civilization.[50]

The Art Department is made up of about one hundred actors,
actresses, singers, dancers, and musicians, who are also receiving the
benefits of faith.

> For instance, Miss Miyuki Kawamura, a pianist gained out-
> standing prizes thrice. Her performances, the fruit of
> a delicate sense gained from pure religion, moved the
> listeners.[51]

The Institute of Asian Culture and Oriental Science studies the

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[49]Seikyo Times, Vol. 1, No. 16, December 1, 1965, p. 16.

[50]Ibid.

[51]Ibid.

cultures, philosophies, and histories of Asia.

The Public Opinion Department manufactures "sound public opinion" in a world filled with "deformed" ideas and thoughts. Soka Gakkai propaganda is necessary because

> If sound public opinions are not reflected in politics or various other functions of society, any country cannot be called democratic in the true meaning of the word. From this standpoint, the Public Opinion Department works toward constructing unbiased and fair public opinions.....
>
> However irresponsible and arrogant opinions the selfish critics might make, the justice of the Public Opinion Department will overcome them, if we are united and advance determinedly.[52]

The most important sub-division in the Culture Bureau is Komeito (Clean Government Party) which is a political organization supported by the Soka Gakkai. Gakkai politics was officially organized and separated from the other activities in 1964. The necessity of appealing to non-members for political support in future elections prompted this move because Soka Gakkai "...cannot continue indefinitely to grow merely by converting people to Nichiren Shoshu first and then turning them into Komeito supporters".[53] In July, 1965, Komeito won 20 seats in the 250 seat House of Councillors (Senate) of the Japanese Diet. Komeito is now solidily established as the third strongest party (after the Liberal-Democrats and the Socialists) in Japan.

The rationale for Soka Gakkai political activity is based on the teachings of Nichiren. Basically, a society can only have peace

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[52]Ibid.

[53]J.A. Dator, "The Soka Gakkai: A Socio-Political Interpretation", op. cit., p. 237.

and stability when it is founded on True Buddhism. Political law
and Buddha law (Obutsu Myogo) must be joined. The good society can
only be achieved when all peoples are believers in the teachings of
Nichiren. The winning of converts is not only a religious duty but
a political necessity.

The political strength of the Soka Gakkai is in the large urban
centers, like Tokyo.[54] In the rural Miyazaki Prefecture "The Soka
Gakkai is still only a minor factor"[55] in its political life. The
appeal of the Soka Gakkai is to the lower class marginal groups in
Japanese society.

> Its great strength is in urban areas of great mobility
> and social change....It has perhaps been more successful
> than any other group in exploiting the fringes of Japanese
> society, but it has yet to penetrate to the core of that
> society.[56]

Soka Gakkai's political strategy is responsible for much of its
success at the polls. Candidates are only run where they have a good
chance of winning. In any constituency candidates are first run on the
local level before they compete in national elections. Candidates are
only run in multi-member districts (the Diet, local assemblies) and
not in single member districts (Mayor or prefectual governor). Because
the Japanese electoral system is composed of multi-member districts,
the chances of minor parties are enhanced. In national elections, for

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[54]R. L. Ramseyer, "The Soka Gakkai and the Japanese Local
Elections of 1963", Contemporary Religions in Japan, Vol. IV, No. 4,
December 1963, p. 300.

[55]Ibid., p. 299.

[56]Ibid., p. 300.

example, in each electoral district sometimes fifty, but usually

three to five representatives are chosen. Thus, the three, four, etc.

candidates with the most votes in each district are declared elected,

unlike Britain and North America where each district has only one

elected representative. By concentrating voting power on one candidate

rather than splitting the vote by nominating two or three the Soka

Gakkai has a high degree of success in getting its candidates elected.[57]

During the 1963 campaigns,

> In the two waves of elections to local organs of government,
> the Soka Gakkai nominated a total of 992 candidates and
> elected 971, a record of 97.8% success. This again is a
> testimonial to the conservative election policy of the Soka
> Gakkai in preferring to elect few candidates by large margins
> then to enter more candidates and run the risk of having
> some failures.[58]

In national elections Soka Gakkai has concentrated its efforts on the

less political House of Councillors and only recently has there been

any plans to establish a more "political" base of power by putting up

candidates for the Lower House of the Diet.[59]

Soka Gakkai's " conservative election policy" gives the impress-

ion that it is very strong. Each victory and each speech by elected

Soka Gakkai members is widely reported by Gakkai publications. Both

members and non-members are urged to let their "needs" be known to

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[57]J. A. Dator, "The Soka Gakkai: A Socio-Political Interpret-
ation", op. cit. p. 231.

[58]R. L. Ramseyer, "The Soka Gakkai and the Japanese Local
Elections of 1963", op. cit., p. 298.

[59]Japan Times, November 18, 1965, pp1-2.

elected <u>Komeito</u> members, for it is their duty to reform "corrupt

politics". The individual is made to feel politically important.

> ....<u>Komeito</u> has a magnificent "grass roots" structure in
> the constituent parts of the Soka Gakkai, it is able to
> have a far better two-way flow of communication from
> constituents to representatives and back than can the
> ordinary members of other political parties.[60]

FUNCTION OF ROLES IN THE SOKA GAKKAI

One of the main functions of roles in the basic and specialized

organizational units of the Soka Gakkai is to provide an outlet for the

energies and talents of those who are isolated from the normal avenues

to success in the wider society (i.e., university). An opportunity to

compete in activities usually denied to persons in the lower strata of

Japanese society is offered. Non-college graduates can become profess-

ors or lecturers in the Study Department. For those with administrative

ability and religious fervour, there is the opportunity to become

<u>kumi</u> leaders by converting new members. Those with artistic and

intellectual ability can be accommodated by the Culture Bureau. In this

way, the idea of personal "success" based on individual effort rather

than seniority or prestige derived from non-Gakkai ties is openly encour-

aged. The fact that the Soka Gakkai can offer "status" to those who

have not been given the opportunity to compete for "success" in the

wider society is explicitly recognized and exploited by Soka Gakkai

officials. President Ikeda writes:

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[60]J. A. Dator, "The Soka Gakkai: A Socio-Political Interpretation",
<u>op. cit.</u>, p. 233.

To become Sokagakkai leaders itself is a great fortune,
I believe. Unless you join the Sokagakkai, you will
be made a fool even by your wife or children. But as
Sokagakkai leaders, you win respect from thousands of
people.[61]

If one is unable to compete personally for success within Soka

Gakkai, there is still hope for the future. As President Ikeda points

out,

Kosen-rufu is not limited only to Japan. The Daishonin's
Buddhism is of greater scale. Entrust your sons and
daughters to me and they will be the foremost leaders of
the future world.[62]

In this context, the proposed establishment of Soka University can

be seen as an attempt to deal with the "status anxieties" of Soka

Gakkai parents. A Gakkai official writes:

Soka University aims at realizing the ideal university
education for promising young students to bring about
unimaginable benefits to the future of Japan.
    Soka University will become the guiding light of
university education for the coming centuries.
    With the establishment of Soka University, the re-
formation of the current education system and the govern-
ment's education program should be deliberated.[63]

Soka University is especially important because overcrowding

in schools and the highly competitive "entrance examination hell" are

problems which face Japanese parents of all social classes.[64]

There is a similarity between social roles in the Soka Gakkai

and those found in other institutions in Japanese society. The Soka

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[61]Seikyo Times, Vol. 1, No. 9, September 1965, p. 11.

[62]Seikyo Times, Vol. 1, No. 11, October 11, 1965, p. 2.

[63]Seikyo Times, Vol. 1, No. 16, December 1, 1965, p. 7.

[64]See H. Passin, Society and Education in Japan, New York:
Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1961,
Chapters 5 and 6.

Gakkai kumi system is essentially a reworking of the oyabun-kobun relationships which, for example, make up the structure of social relationships in the economy. Dator writes:

> It seems important to stress that the Soka Gakkai is not especially different.....from other successful large organizations in Japan. For example, it is instructive to compare both the structure and "spirit" of the Soka Gakkai with that of the Honda motor company.[65]

Dator also refers to a basic difference in psychology between Japanese and American industrial relations.

> From a practical American businessman's point of view, the purpose of a motorcycle factory is to make motorcycles, and in order to get workers to do this, one pays them money. But within Japanese society, it seems that money is not enough to get people to work. It is far more important that psychological and esthetic personal needs be satisfied through a process of mutual activity, and that the transcendental value of producing motorcycles be correctly agreed upon.[66]

Although Dator's analogy agrees with the general points made in this discussion, it does not probe some of the essential differences between "paternalism" in economic activity and the "spiritual basis" of the Soka Gakkai. Dator concludes that it is a mistake to view Japanese society "as apathetic to spiritual values". It is more fruitful if one assumes "that Japan is in fact very much spiritually-oriented to the extent that all successful groups in Japan are based upon mutually-formulated transcendental values".[67] While this may be true, it seems

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[65]J. A. Dator, "The Soka Gakkai: A Socio-Political Interpretation", op. cit., pp.215-16.

[66]Ibid., pp.216-17.

[67]Ibid., p. 217.

that Dator's analysis, much like that of Abegglen,[68] overemphasizes the "paternalism" of the economy and de-emphasizes the economic rationality which is also characteristic of corporate life. As Bennett and Ishino point out, the chief reason for many non-rational economic practices in the labour boss system was to reinforce social and economic dependency on the oyabun, so that he could maintain a "loyal" work group.[69] Comparing the structure of the Soka Gakkai with economic institutions, which are similar in many ways, tends to obscure organizational differences, for it is a relative lack of direct economic dependency on the part of the Soka Gakkai membership which sets this organization apart from the Honda motor company. This is not to say that the Soka Gakkai is not concerned with the economic problems of its membership (i.e., members are encouraged to patronize the services and shops of fellow members), but only to point out that the oyabun-kobun and batsu aspects of the kumi system do not function solely to solve these problems.

The analysis of the organizational units of the Soka Gakkai presented above suggests that they are concerned more with providing outlets for ability and religious fervour than with problems of economics. This contention is further substantiated by an analysis of the financial aspects of the Soka Gakkai. Funds for running the Gakkai are provided by the Finance Department. Members of this department are required to

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[68] J. C. Abegglen, The Japanese Factory, op. cit.

[69] J. W. Bennett and I. Ishino, Paternalism in the Japanese Economy, op. cit.

make annual contributions (about 4,000 Yen or $12). They are given

special pins,

> but there is no evidence that members of the Gakkai are
> pressured into this contributor's group. The members of
> the Soka Gakkai pay no dues or membership fees and are
> not required to make contributions to the organization
> treasury.[70]

One of the great appeals of Soka Gakkai is that it does not impose any

financial burden on its membership like other "corrupt" religions.

> Only a part of the total membership is selected as the
> members of Financial Department to finance Sokagakkai
> activities.
> Religions become corrupted and degraded because they
> collect money from the poor. In Japan, the old established
> Nembutsu sect and the newly risen Rissho Koseikai are
> exploiting poor people.
> Sokagakkai hardly becomes rich but its members are
> making their lives better-off through earnest faith.[71]

Although the membership is in the millions, most of the officers

are unpaid and only a minority of the top leadership are solely depend-

ent on the Soka Gakkai for their livelihood.

> ...this huge body supports financially only the President
> (the third president is named Daisaku Ikeda) and about
> 200 persons who work in the publication department. The
> Great Leaders who number 3,000 and the 20 or 30 thousand
> Minor Leaders, the members of the Education Department
> who number about 130,000----all receive no salary from the
> Soka Gakkai. They have their own occupations and support
> themselves. The Great Leaders come mainly from the social
> stratum of shop keepers and minor businesses. Their lives
> are very secure because of their diligence and aggressive-
> ness....Ordinary members are required to take its newspapers,
> but they do not pay pledges. So, "the Gakkai is cheap" and

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[70]R. L. Ramseyer, "Soka Gakkai: Militant Religion on the March",
op. cit., p. 170.

[71]Seikyo Times, Vol. 1, No. 8, August 1965, p. 13.

this makes it a even greater attraction to them.[72]

Even though many large companies and financial houses advertise
in Gakkai publications contributions from non-believers are discouraged.

> Contributions for the construction of Sho-Hondo (Grand
> Main Temple) are limited to the believers in the True Buddhism,
> since non-believers' contribution will go against the spirit
> of True Buddhism. Non-believers should be refrained by all
> means.[73]

Unlike the employees of the Honda motor company, the bulk of the
membership of the Soka Gakkai are not dependent on the organization for
their livelihood. Economic dependency does not maintain or reinforce
social dependency. Gakkai activities are not basically financial or
economic. Shakubuku, for example, is based on a theology which empha-
sizes the necessity of saving the world in a period of moral decline.
Conversion becomes an integral part of all Gakkai activities.
It provides an outlet for individual abilities and success in converting
new members is a basis for upward mobility within the organization.
"Status" is not only given to those who utilize their abilities it is
also an indication that one is progressing in religious faith. Partici-
pating in the activities of the Soka Gakkai does not guarantee an in-
crease in wages or occupational mobility. The Soka Gakkai is not invol-
ved in economic production and evaluation in this sense is eliminated.
"Efficiency" in the Soka Gakkai is based on religious criteria (i.e.,
shakubuku). Successful participation in Gakkai activities is not ipso
facto a means for achieving financial or occupational success in the

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[72] I. Endo, "Soka Gakkai, The Study of a Society for the Creation
of Value", op. cit., pp.139-40.

[73] Seikyo Times, Vol. 1, No. 10, October 1, 1965, p.4.

wider society. This is not to say that the abilities, administrative
skills, and self confidence which result from participating in the
various activities of the organization cannot be exploited for material
and occupational success outside the Soka Gakkai. On the other hand,

> Young people often join not because of poor health or
> poverty, but because by joining they can make friends and
> engage in some purposeful activity, or because they simply
> are searching for something beyond money and the economism
> of the country's leaders. If they are young, here is an
> outlet for their energies and talents in an organization
> that allows even the poorly educated to study and rise in
> a substitute hierarchy outside the hierarchy of the larger
> society.[74]

In summary, the Soka Gakkai appeals to those who have been
excluded from the benefits which a "paternalistic" economy gives to
others. It does this by providing religious, political, and social
status in a "substitute hierarchy". More importantly, it is the non-
economic rather than any subsequent economic success which accounts for
the success and unity of the Soka Gakkai. If observers of the economy
have tended to overstress the non-economic nature of social relationships
in industry, observers of the Soka Gakkai should not make a functionally
equivalent mistake by overemphasizing any economic benefits of membership.

ORGANIZATIONAL UNITY

The picture of the Soka Gakkai presented up to this point is that
of a highly integrated organization which encompasses religious,
political, and cultural activities. Indeed, the efficiency of Gakkai
organizing is the envy of both the socialists and communists. The kumi,

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[74]L. Olson, "The Value Creation Society", op. cit., p. 19.

zadankai, block system, and various departments (i.e., Culture Bureau)
do allow for a high degree of communication between higher order and
lower order organizational units. In spite of this, the Soka Gakkai
has faced and is facing problems of organizational unity which
characterize other large organizations.

The Soka Gakkai has developed in a society where consensual
and co-operative small groups have both historical and traditional as
well as contemporary relevance in defining and limiting social behav-
iour. Large organizations based on this type of small group, while
maintaining a high degree of personal intimacy between members in each
organizational unit and facilitating communication between these units,
are prone to factionalism, especially, if the units take on specific
functions. The Soka Gakkai has resisted any major trend toward the
factionalism which characterizes many occupational, political, and
social groups in Japanese society. Membership in the various organiz-
ational departments tends to overlap or be hierarchical in nature.
An individual may be a member of the Study Department, Komeito, the
Youth Division, and an active participant in shakubuku without under-
mining organizational unity. The fact, for example, that efforts to
convert new members are a basic activity of each of these organization-
al units would promote unity and integration. Members of the more
"specialized" units are hierarchically related to higher order units.
The Senior High, Junior High, and Boys and Girls' Divisions are the
direct responsibility of sub-division chiefs in the Youth Division
who are responsible to their own superiors and the top leadership of

the Youth Division is directly responsible to the President. Even
with the added advantages of the _kumi_ system of organization, the
subject of unity is a point of serious concern for the Soka Gakkai.

The necessity of avoiding the "impersonal" aspects of bureau-
cracy are recognized by the top leadership. In a recent article,
General Director Hiroshi Hojo warns:

> We must avoid authoritarianism and bureaucracy. We are on
> the side of the people. President Ikeda teaches us this
> instruction through his behaviour. We always feel sorry
> to worry him about such details.[75]

For President Ikeda, the great problem is "To eliminate bureaucracy....
To use men of ability or bring up such men with sincerity is necessary."[76]

Maintaining unity is a religious duty for without it there are
"tragedies" and "errors".

> The unity of the Sokagakkai is the unity based on the
> strict law of the universe...
> For the cause of making the True Buddhism eternally
> prosperous, and in return for the gratitude of society,
> and also for subduing devils, let us strengthen our unity
> more and more.[77]

Officially, personal jealously has no place in the organization.

> We Sokagakkai members will avoid envying or slandering
> other members and share the joys and sorrows, thus stately
> advancing toward Kosen-rufu.[78]

The necessity of guarding against disunity and bureaucracy were
major part of the Soka Gakkai aims for 1965.

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[75]_Seikyo Times_, Vol. 2, No. 2, January 21, 1966, p. 11.

[76]_Seikyo Times_, Vol. 1, No. 8, August 1965, p. 3.

[77]Seikyo Times, Vol. 1, No. 14, November 11, 1965, p.5.

[78]_Ibid._

They were 1) for each group to convert at least one
family each month; 2) to promote discussion meetings; and
3) to consolidate each division and department.[79]

The special departments of the Soka Gakkai are a potential

source of disunity. Dator suggests that the most likely source of

factionalism is a break between the politically active Youth Division

and the politically apathetic Women's Division. There is also a

chance of generational friction as the present leadership grows older.

An important source of disunity may be the unintended consequen-

ces of the Gakkai activities themselves. The rewards and benefits ac-

cumulated by those who are "successful" within the various departments

of the Soka Gakkai are a constant theme in Gakkai publications. For

example,

> A young man who has never failed to read the teachings of
> Nichiren Daishonin in the Gosho whenever the President
> referred to them has now made himself an excellent leader
> of the Youth Division. Another leader has become a pro-
> fessor of the Study Department as he spared more time in
> the study of the True Buddhism than other members since
> he thought himself to be less intelligent.[80]

"Failures" can be produced internally within the Soka Gakkai itself.

If these "failures" (i.e., those who fail to bring in new converts or

pass Study Department examinations) are allowed "exposure" there is a

possibility of internal division based on education or organizational

rank. This possibility has been officially noticed by President Ikeda

and he has reminded the faithful of their responsibilities to each

other and for the maintenance of organizational unity.

[79]Seikyo Times, Vol. 1, No. 18, December 21, 1965, p. 10.

[80]Seikyo Times, Vol. 1, No. 17, December 11, 1965, p. 3.

> I hope you will become humane leaders who can talk
> with anyone without discrimination. Those who seek power
> alone will be intoxicated by, and be defeated by power.
> Those who rely on financial power may ruin their lives
> by the big changes of the times. And those who believe
> in "fame" may face a miserable life when their fame fades
> away with the times.
> The fundamental thing which promises you eternal
> prosperity is faith....[81]

In a recent speech before members of the Senior High Division, President

Ikeda offered the following advice:

> ...I hope you will respect each other without any discrim-
> ination by school records. Senior High Division members
> are all my disciples. You cannot judge a person by school
> marks alone.
> ...some of you cannot attend university but never become
> servile. Those who can go to university should never boast
> of it. All must have a strong unity with friendship.[82]

A major factional division has yet to be documented, but there

is some evidence that such a split may have taken place.

> After a high-level reorganization announced February
> 27 (1966), there were reports that the Soka Gakkai noted
> for its youthful vigor, had undergone a factional split.
> The supreme position of the president, Daisaku Ikeda,
> remained unchanged but Storu Izumi, 57, replaced the 43-
> year-old Hiroshi Hojo as director general....
> Soka Gakkai asserted that the changes were intended to
> meet changing conditions and groom new leaders, but observers
> felt part of the purpose might have been to get more dignity
> and age into the top councils.[83]

The most important problem which the Soka Gakkai has yet to

face is that of getting more converts. What happens when potential

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[81]Seikyo Times, Vol. 2, No. 2, January 21, 1965, p. 6.

[82]Ibid.

[83]The New York Times, April 3, 1966, p. 4.

converts run out? Dator suggests that "the Soka Gakkai can double
its present size before this limit is reached".[84] If the rapid growth
rate is maintained, this point may be reached in the near future.
This presents an additional problem for the Soka Gakkai because

> ...the Soka Gakkai has an exceedingly bad reputation among
> the public at large.....This very bad image which the Soka
> Gakkai has and the fact that a sizable number of Tokyo
> residents (at least) are opposed to a religious group
> (specifically the Soka Gakkai) participating in politics
> seems to indicate that there is an upper limit to the growth
> of Soka Gakkai, both as a religious and as a political
> group.[85]

THE INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF THE SOKA GAKKAI

If the Soka Gakkai is to expand, it must overcome its "bad
image" and appeal to the general public. There is much evidence to
suggest that the Soka Gakkai has already come a long way in trying to
come to terms with the rest of Japanese society. During its rapid
expansion there have been few large-scale attempts to oppose or discred-
it the Soka Gakkai. It has not antagonized any major opposition such
as big business. In fact, "Japanese big business aware that Soka
Gakkai has become something more than transient....is increasingly
courting the group".[86] This has happened in spite of the radical
and revolutionary nature of Gakkai propaganda. Too often reports of
the Soka Gakkai's religious intolerance, shakubuku abuses, election

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[84]J. A. Dator, "The Soka Gakkai: A Socio-Political Interpretation",
op. cit., p. 235.

[85]Ibid. pp. 233-35.

[86]The New York Times, April 3, 1966, p. 4.

violations, and "fascist" tendencies have interfered with objective analysis of the actual role of this religious group in Japanese society. In many ways, the dynamic and revolutionary aspects of the Soka Gakkai are more ideological than real.

Converting to Soka Gakkai is usually an attempt to deal with "personal" problems. It is not society which is changed but the individual. "Happiness" not revolution is promised. As a result of conversion, individuals who have previously experienced difficulties in the wider society become "functioning" members of that society. A new personality which can overcome the problems of daily living is produced. A woman married twenty-three years without a child gives birth to a baby boy after joining Soka Gakkai.[87] Examinations are passed and new jobs are obtained because of belief in the True Buddhism. A husband is cured of pluero-pneumonia after his wife converts him to Soka Gakkai.[88] It is initial changes in personality, health, and status which are proof that one is a true believer in Nichiren Buddhism rather than any success at societal reform.

The Soka Gakkai is not dedicated to radical economic reforms.

"Work First"---work is the revelation of faith. Men must become first in their jobs. It is against True Buddhism to think that neglecting your work, you can get along only if you are devoted to Gakkai activities.[89]
What the Sokagakkai teaches the members is to become most diligent and first-class workers in their occupations.[90]

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[87]R. L. Ramseyer, "Soka Gakkai: Militant Religion on the March", op. cit., p. 174.

[88]Seikyo Times, Vol. 1, No. 16, December 1, 1965, p. 29.

[89]Seikyo Times, Vol. 1, No. 11, October 11, 1965, p. 5.

[90]Seikyo Times, Vol. 1, No. 18, December 21, 1965, p. 7.

Loyalty to superiors and the endurance of any personal sacrifices

involved in this relationship is the duty of every devout believer.

> In order to receive twenty-thirty, and forty
> thousand yen of salary or benefit, you have to obey faith-
> fully the boss and work diligently for him, no matter how
> hot or cold or how sleepy you may be.[91]

The Soka Gakkai is also opposed to strikes.

Diligence and hard work within the institutions of Japanese

society are required of all members, especially, the young. In a

recent address to the Senior High Division,

> The President instructed them on how to have faith as
> Senior High Div. members, their resolution for faith,
> and stressed that they should gain good results in
> their study at school.[92]

In addition to the requirements of worship the Junior High members are:

"To study hard. To attend school punctually. Not to worry parents."[93]

Many of the activities which brought the Soka Gakkai to public

attention have also given it a bad reputation. Officially and unoffic-

ially successful attempts are being made to "tone down" some of the

"enthusiasm" of the membership.

Initially, shakubuku was connected with threats, intimidation,

and even violence.[94] Shakubuku bands invaded target areas and in each

shakubuku attempt several of the devout encircled one non-believer and

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[91]Seikyo Times, Vol. 1, No. 12, October 21, 1965, p.3.

[92]Seikyo Times, Vol. 2, No. 2, January 21, 1966, p.7.

[93]Seikyo Times, Vol. 1, No. 16, December 1, 1965, p. 15.

[94]R. L. Ramseyer, "Soka Gakkai: Militant Religion on the March", op. cit., p. 174.

and by using insults, flattery, lies, and threats they attempted
conversion. At one time, the constant harassment of potential members
in public, at their jobs, and in their homes was the order of the day.
This type of "conversion" is being restricted. The use of physical
violence has always been repudiated by the central headquarters, and
now the emphasis is on "democratic persuasion" rather than intimidation.
Shakubuku is an effort "To introduce non-believers to the True Buddhism
through free talks."[95] It is claimed that,

> ...there is no coercion in persuading other people to join
> this religion. If new comers join through coercion they
> will not continue their faith for a long time.[96]

There is also an attempt to avoid antagonizing any group which might
oppose Soka Gakkai. For example, members are warned that they "...should
not practice Shakubuku at...places of work, because they are the places
to work".[97]

The fanatic intolerance of the Soka Gakkai to other religious
groups is being officially presented in more cautious terms. President
Ikeda writes:

> We should never compromise in judging the right or wrong of
> any religion. But it is a great mistake to get angry and
> sever all acquaintances with those who oppose our religion.
> It is the spirit of Sokagakkai that we should live harmon-
> iously as members of the society wishing happiness for all
> people....[98]

The Soka Gakkai has become less ambitious about being able to

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[95]Seikyo Times, Vol. 1, No. 8, August 1965, p. 3.

[96]Ibid., p. 13.

[97]Seikyo Times, Vol. 1, No. 18, December 21, 1965, p. 7.

[98]Seikyo Times, Vol. 1, No. 7, July 1965, p. 2.

cure illness. They now urge people to "Go to your doctor, if he can cure you. Come to us when he cannot cure you."

One of the most direct ways to reform society is to obtain political power, but the entry of the Soka Gakkai into politics has not seen the emergence of a new form of political radicalism in Japan. At first the Soka Gakkai employed expedient methods to gain votes and were charged with many election law violations. In the words of one member:

> To win we had to carry out the most effective election campaign. We therefore simply had to disregard the election laws. But we cannot have committed anything wrong, for all we have done is only for the good of our Gakkai.[99]

After a special election in 1957 became a national scandal because of frequent election law violations on the part of the Soka Gakkai, this type of activity decreased rapidly. Being sensitive to public opinion the Gakkai published an election law guide for the 1963 local elections in order to curb any further election irregularities by its membership.

Although the __Komeito__ (Clean Government Party) appears "radical" (i.e., opposition to nuclear weapons, opposition to revision of the "no war" clause in the constitution, a demand for the reformation of corrupt politics), its main concern has been solvable practical problems (i.e., new schools, road repair, prices).[100] __Komeito__ members have concentrated on these issues rather than becoming involved in the

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[99]H. Thomsen, __The New Religions of Japan__, op. cit., p. 98.

[100]J. A. Dator, "The Soka Gakkai: A Socio-Political Interpretation", op. cit., p. 232.

"ideological" battles between the Left and the Right.

Along with attempts to work within the framework of societal institutions, there is evidence to suggest that the rapid expansion of the Soka Gakkai has indirectly contributed to its accommodation to the wider society. Specialized departments require trained personnel both to socialize new members and carry out programed activities. In other words, it is necessary to divert energies in order to maintain the organizational structure. A major problem in this respect is not the socialization of converts but of new members who have been born into the Soka Gakkai. The indoctrination and education of the children of Soka Gakkai members require the further allocation of personnel and material resources that could be used elsewhere. The young members of the Junior High and the Boys and Girls' Division

> ...are instructed directly by the sub-division chiefs of
> the Youth Division, who make all their efforts in raising
> the "Gakkai-children", treasures of the Sokagakkai.[101]

Because the success of the Soka Gakkai has been based on its offer of status in a "substitute hierarchy", there is an additional problem of providing and maintaining within the organizational structure outlets for the abilities of members and new members whether they are converts or recruited by birth. Official plans to establish Soka University and cultural groups such as <u>Min-on</u> (Democratic Music Association) can be seen as possible responses to this problem.

These "internal" problems of organizational maintenance suggest

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[101] <u>Seikyo Times</u>, Vol. 1, No. 16, December 1, 1965, p. 15.

that there is a strong possibility that less emphasis will be placed on shakubuku in the future. Although organizational unity and expansion are part of official doctrine and the raison d'être of most of the specialized departments, appeals have been made largely in terms of the personal problems faced by the lower strata in Japanese society. If expansion is to continue, Soka Gakkai must broaden its basis of support. If the Soka Gakkai antagonizes established groups (i.e., big business) or arouses public opinion against itself, the possibilities of stagnation and loss of membership increase. A broader appeal might promote a breakthrough into the "core" of Japanese society, but the evidence presented in this discussion indicates that this penetration would probably result in a further accommodation of the Soka Gakkai within existing institutions in Japanese society. On the other hand, the intolerant nature of True Buddhism may prevent such an attempt not only by provoking external opposition but also because of demands for "religious purity" from within.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

The Soka Gakkai is "part of a broader context in Japanese society, fed by ancient springs as well as benefitting from modern conditions."[1] Its organizational structure is a particular example of the general societal compromise between the "traditional" and the "modern" which has characterized the process of modernization in Japan. It is, in fact, the most recent example of a "religious response to modernization" in Japan.

"Religious responses to modernization", like modernization itself, are never "once and for all." They are not limited only to the transitional period when a premodern society modernizes. It is eventually necessary to "modernize" most aspects of the social structure. Just as the Black Muslims and Holiness sects in the United States indirectly develop a "motivated" and disciplined work force, the Soka Gakkai can be seen as an equivalent response to the "modern" problems which face the urban masses in Japan. In both countries these lower class religious organizations inculcate skills and values which are similar to those deemed moral and necessary by the economic and educational institutions of the wider society.

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[1] A. Bloom, "Observations In The Study of Contemporary Nichiren Buddhism", Contemporary Religions In Japan, 6, 1 (March 1965), 73.

Initially, many of the changes required by modernization in Japan
were legitimatized by "religious nationalism". Even the most mundane
activities were translated into a religious framework. If necessary,
loyalty to immediate superiors could be presented as a patriotic duty.
The breakdown of "religious nationalism", after World War II, has not
"secularized" mundane activities and removed them from the influence of
religion. The Shinto nationalism of the prewar period and the "new
religions", like the Soka Gakkai, in the 1950's and 60's are similar in
one important respect: both are concerned with providing "motivation"
for and "provoking" activity in the institutions of the wider society.
For members of the Soka Gakkai, correct behaviour in non-Gakkai institu-
tions is one of the requirements of belief.

Even in the secular social and economic institutions of the West,
the problem of motivation is far from being solved. Friedman in his book
"Anatomy of Work" analyzes the relationship between motivation, productivity,
and the structure of work groups. After discussing some of the disruptive
effects of intensive job specialization, he contrasts this type of organi-
zation with the productive advantages of "job enlargement" (i.e., making
several simple operations the responsibility of one worker rather than
several) and concludes that

> ... the increase of the unit by allowing the worker
> to vary his work within the enlarged jobs, keeps the
> advantages of work rotation and also gives the job a
> little interest and meaning, which it often completely
> lacked before.[2]

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[2] G. Friedman, The Anatomy of Work. New York: Free Press of
Glencoe, 1961, p. 60.

In other words, even in the most technical types of activity there is also a motivation problem and such activities are made more satisfying and productive by being made "meaningful".

On a more general level, this problem of making mundane activities "meaningful" is one faced by all modern and modernizing societies. One of the most obvious ways to make daily activities "meaningful" is to place them within a religious framework. The modernization of Japan was a process whereby specific loyalties to local social groupings were reinterpreted into a national ethic. This national ethic justified the hardships and frustrations which initial modernization necessitated. As large numbers of people moved from the rural communities to the cities and their factories, the previously inculcated loyalty ethic centered on new types of activities and the transition was relatively peaceful. Since World War II, there has been another more extensive shift in population from the rural villages to the industrialized cities. In fact, technological innovations in the rural areas have rendered many of the traditional village practices obsolete.[3] Again, for many, this transition has been eased by groups like the Soka Gakkai which attach religious meaning to what would otherwise be a routinized, frustrating existence. Japan is not the only country which has experienced religious "revivals" of this nature.

Japan's neighbour in Asia, China, has, within the last twenty years, embarked on a "radical" program of social change. Even "atheistic communism"

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[3] See O. Hasumi, "The Impact Of Science And Technology On Traditional Society in Japan", Journal of World History, 9, 2 (1965), 365-380.

has had to relate mundane activities to an ethical system which links

individual action to what can be described as "religious purpose". The

focal point of this system is the thought of Mao Tse-tung.

> To the Chinese masses who are so vigorously inflicted with
> it, Maoism is presented simply as "The Thought of Mao Tse-
> tung", and the Chinese press in recent months has been
> replete with wondrous accounts of how these thoughts can
> be beneficial in every field from Ping Pong to the
> levitation of chicken feathers. For example,

> The chief driver of a locomotive drives fast and
> steadily as a result of studying Chairman Mao's
> works and regarding them as supreme instructions.

> At a Peking hospital, the rate of recovery from burns
> has risen steadily to over 95 per cent ... This is the
> fruit of the application of Mao Tse-tung's thinking
> in medical practice.

> Cooks in a certain PLA (People's Liberation Army) unit
> raised high the Red Banner of Mao Tse-tung's thought...
> and reduced the time needed for cooking rice.[4]

The similarity between the "miracles" of Maoism in China and those of

True Buddhism in Japan is more than apparent.

In most of the non-communist countries of Asia social changes

are being legitimatized in terms of traditional religion. In Burma,

for example, the ethical teachings of Buddhism promote economic

development and social change.

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[4]_Newsweek_, August 8, 1966, pp. 37-38.

U Nu, for his part, justified so important a measure
as the nationalization of land on Buddhistic principles.
In his parliamentary address of September 10, 1948,
he declared that the value of property consists only
in its use-value, and this use-value, in a Buddhist
country which feels obligated to help its subjects
attain their spiritual goals, can be better guaranteed
by nationalization rather than by the land's being
left in private ownership. Moreover, the individual's
recognition of the inconsequentiality of property is
a decisive step on his road to Nirvana.[5]

If the leaders of the Asian countries are as successful as were

those of Meiji Japan, the religious problems connected with modernization

may also take a more peaceful course than they did in China or Russia.

Eventually, the prospect of working in an industrial social order may be

seen as a moral virtue by the majority of the population in these areas.

As the premodern elements are brought into contact with the modern, the

emergence or revival of religious groups which will be functionally similar

to the Soka Gakkai may be expected.

In conclusion, a general remark about "traditional" values and

their place in a modern industrial society is in order. The present dis-

cussion of Japanese modernization has shown that the batsu, for example,

rather than being "traditional survivals" from the premodern period could

be more fruitfully regarded as "traditional revivals". On a functional

level, they bear little resemblance to similar relationships which existed

in the premodern period. In fact, their existence is due more to "contemporary

needs" rather than to a direct result of loyalty to traditional modes of

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[5] E. Benz, Buddhism or Communism: Which Holds The Future of Asia?,
Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1965, p. 110.

behaviour. The tensions and strains associated with modernization were not eliminated _ipso facto_ by utilizing traditional ideology and social organization wherever possible. Although the course of Japanese modernization was not violent compared to other Asian and African countries, the changes which resulted were profound. Both Shinto nationalism and the Soka Gakkai can be seen as religious responses to the tensions and strains associated with the changes made necessary by modernization (i.e., social mobility based on occupational skills). To assume that a non-violent process of modernization is simply a "reworking of tradition" rather than a qualitative change in social structure is as misleading as the claim that all such changes are or have been the result of "class struggle".

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