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Asia Pacific: Perspectives is a peer-reviewed journal published on average once a year in April/May. It welcomes submissions from all fields of the social sciences and the humanities with relevance to the Asia Pacific region.* In keeping with the Jesuit traditions of the University of San Francisco, *Asia Pacific: Perspectives* commits itself to the highest standards of learning and scholarship.

Our task is to inform public opinion by a broad hospitality to divergent views and ideas that promote cross-cultural understanding, tolerance, and the dissemination of knowledge unreservedly. Papers adopting a comparative, interdisciplinary approach will be especially welcome. **Graduate students are strongly encouraged to submit their work for consideration.**

* 'Asia Pacific region' as used here includes East Asia, Southeast Asia, South Asia, Oceania, and the Russian Far East.

The Future of U.S. Relations with Japan and China: Will Bilateral Relations Survive the New American Unilateralism?

by Rita Kernacs, M.A.

Abstract

The following paper examines how America's bilateral relations with Japan and China may be affected by Washington's recent move towards an increasingly unilateral foreign policy. Immediately after the tragic attack on the United States on September 11th, it appeared that relations with Japan and China, as with many countries around the world, would grow stronger. Finding a common enemy in "militant Islam" did much to improve U.S.-China relations. But, despite the temporary warmth, issues related to Taiwan, a lack of trust regarding each nation's intentions for dominance of the region, the quest for oil, the increased likelihood of a regional arms race, and differences over how to guarantee human rights still served to cool the relationship.

In the case of Japan, relations between President Bush and Prime Minister Koizumi have been very strong. But with public opinion in Japan becoming increasingly anti-American, a situation exacerbated by the Iraq war, there are increased calls from the left and the right for Japan to distance itself from the U.S. Japan's growing right wing has advocated that Japan should re-militarize and become a "normal nation," play a more independent role in international affairs, and strengthen its multilateral relations in the region. With increasing trade and investment between Japan and China, some strategists have anticipated a new regionalism that would interlock the two nations economically and serve as a balancing force in the world.

After the attacks of September 11th, it was widely predicted that a new age of multilateralism would emerge. Washington seemed to want a coalition of friends throughout the world, especially in Asia, leading many to believe that Washington was genuinely committed to working with the international community to end terrorism. But just as quickly as the world banded together in the wake of the crisis, the coalition of sympathetic countries seemed to disintegrate. As the memories of 9/11 began to fade, many world leaders became less enthusiastic about banding together with the United States solely because of Washington's views on terrorism.¹ And as the Bush Administration began to expand its "war on terror" beyond Afghanistan to Iraq, many leaders around the world were caught trying to balance their anti-terrorist collaboration with the U.S. with rising anti-American sentiment, economic instability, and other domestic issues that threatened their nation's security.

America's war on Iraq signaled a major shift in U.S. foreign policy. Unlike other recent wars where it had the support of a coalition of countries, as in the case of Afghanistan, the first Gulf War and Bosnia, the U.S. now had almost no support in the world community save for Britain. Washington had to decide whether following a narrow unilateral

policy was worth the risk of alienating many of its allies around the world. Despite concerns that ignoring the world community would negatively affect U.S. foreign relations, the White House decided to bypass the U.N. Security Council and carry out a "pre-emptive" strike against Iraq based on the premise that Iraq had hidden weapons of mass destruction and might, in the future, pose a direct threat to the United States. Though opposition was fierce worldwide, public protests dissipated once the bombs began to rain down on Baghdad. But should one conclude that America's relations with nations around the globe would be unaffected? Long-term relations with many countries in the Middle East, Europe, and Asia will reflect this change in global politics. The following paper will examine how U.S.-Japan and U.S.-China relations will be impacted by President Bush's post September 11th foreign policy.

U.S. - China Relations Overview

The United States has always recognized the possible threat posed by China were it to grow economically and military to a point where it could eventually undermine America's position as the sole superpower. After President Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger visited China in the early 1970's, Washington's China policy shifted from containment to engagement and relations were eventually normalized. The motivation for improved relations was the belief that the U.S. could help China develop economically and militarily and, in return, garner the favor of an emerging superpower. Bill Clinton wanted Beijing to help advance fundamental American interests and values. But, in order for this type of engagement to achieve its intended purpose, it is necessary to have a certain level of trust between the two nations. So is there a genuine trust and friendship between the U.S. and China? And if there is, will it survive the new U.S. move towards unilateralism?

"Realists" would generally deny that any true friendship could develop between the United States and China because of their belief that the two nations are destined for conflict due to their place in the world order, where the U.S. is a status-quo and China a revisionist power.² The realists would argue that the revisionist state is naturally dissatisfied with its position, which is determined by the status quo-state, and therefore, it will eventually challenge the status-quo power, resulting in conflict. The way to avoid such conflict would be to bring the revisionist state into the status quo-community. The goal of the United States, therefore, has not been to challenge China but to draw it closer to the international community. As was stated by President Bill Clinton's National Security Adviser, Samuel Berger, America's engagement of China was designed to pull China "in the direction of the international community." Former Secretary of State, Madeline Albright, put it this way: "We seek a China that embraces universally recognized human rights and global norms of conduct and one that works with us to build a secure international order" (Johnston).

As the status-quo power, America has focused on engaging China in an effort to bring it into the status-quo community. However, it is unlikely that a revisionist state

will relinquish its desire to undermine the position of the status-quo state through engagement alone. Engagement must be accompanied by a policy aimed at building mutual trust and respect. Clear evidence must be present to convince the revisionist state that the status-quo power is genuinely committed to allowing the challenger state a proper place in the status-quo community. One way to build such trust is through policies that engage the revisionist state in a consistent and transparent culture of diplomacy. However, in recent years, U.S. policy towards China has been less than consistent, and often even contradictory.

In the early part of his administration, President George W. Bush, for the first time, referred to China as a "strategic competitor" ostensibly reversing America's China policy from that of the previous administration, which preferred to view China as a strategic partner. Five months before September 11th, Bush declared his vision for the security of the Asia Pacific Region, which was based on America's "commitment to the people of Taiwan" and required that the U.S. continues to challenge China's rule in the name of the "universal values that gave our nation birth" (Schmitt). In addition, Bush increased U.S. support for Taiwan, approved one of the biggest arms deals to the island in years and, in April 2001, announced that the United States would do "whatever it takes" to defend Taiwan's democracy (Kaplan). But shortly after September 11th, President Bush reversed U.S. China policy and turned to China for help with the new "War on Terror." In the administration's National Security Strategy, released a year later, "terrorism" replaced a "rising China" as the United States' primary strategic threat (Abramowitz and Bosworth 119). Just weeks after September 11th, the U.S. and China were sharing intelligence and making plans for how to fight their new enemy. Secretary of State Colin Powell announced that the United States and China had both been victims of terrorist violence and faced a common threat from international terrorism (U.S. Interests in East Asia).

Islam: The Common Enemy?

September 11th helped solidify the U.S. and China relationship in that it helped define a common enemy: Militant Islam. The Uighurs, a Turkic people in Xinjiang province, are Muslim and have been trying, much like the Tibetans, to liberate themselves from Chinese control. In recent years, however, the movement in Tibet has been largely peaceful, while in Xinjiang province, it has become increasingly violent. In trying to suppress the separatist movement known as the East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM) China has been widely criticized by the international community and specifically the United States for its abuse of human rights.

But as part of the renewed friendship between Beijing and Washington, post 9/11, the U.S. State Department designated the "ETIM" a terrorist organization. Supporters of the designation maintain that there may be a link between the Uighurs and al-Qaeda while skeptics have pointed out that the Bush Administration's clampdown on the ETIM came as the U.S. sought to prevent a veto in a U.N. Security Council debate over Iraq. In any event, the designation has made it

easier for China to rule Xinjiang province with an iron fist and without interference from the outside world. In an effort to ethnically cleanse the region, according to Amnesty International, huge numbers of Han Chinese have been resettled in Xinjiang province, local language Islamic schools have been closed, illegal birth control measures have been instituted against Uighurs, and Uighur women have been pressured to marry Han Chinese (Pocha).

U.S.-China Collaboration on Solving the North Korean Crisis

One of the biggest accomplishments of the new friendship between the U.S. and China has been China's willingness to cooperate with the United States over the North Korean crisis. Despite China and Korea's historical friendship and military alliance, China has been careful not to appear partial to either North Korea or the United States. Helping to bring both sides to the negotiating table through high-level talks, such as the six-party talks in February 2004, was one way China worked to ease tension between the two sides.

China's ultimate goal for North Korea, however, differs from the U.S. plan. While the U.S. would prefer a total collapse of Kim Jong Il's regime, China would prefer a peaceful Northeast Asian security environment that includes a communist North Korea. Such an arrangement is essential for China to maintain its foreign investment inflows, which are necessary for China to meet its goal of \$3,000 GDP per capita by 2020. Other Chinese considerations include the fear that millions of refugees will flow into Manchuria upon collapse of the North Korean regime, eliminating the "buffer state" between China and South Korea where 37,000 U.S. soldiers are stationed, as well as the loss of South Korean investment in Northern China. In an effort to keep North Korea engaged, China has had to balance its condemnation of its long-time ally by blocking U.S. attempts to use the U.N. Security Council to censure North Korea for withdrawing from the nonproliferation treaty and opposing sanctions against Kim Jong Il.

Despite the mutual desire to end the crisis on the peninsula, it is not likely that the U.S. and China can forge a long lasting relationship unless several philosophical and geopolitical differences can be overcome. Some of the most crucial issues that stand to cool the recent warmth in the relationship are the unresolved issue over Taiwan, a lack of trust regarding each nation's intentions for dominance of the region, the quest for oil, the increased likelihood of a regional arms race, and differences over how to guarantee human rights.

Taiwan

One of the most divisive issues pushing the two nations back to the politics of the Cold War has been the status of Taiwan. During a 2002 ASEAN regional forum, Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan warned Secretary of State Colin Powell that China was "seriously concerned" about U.S. relations with Taiwan and called on the U.S. to stop military contacts and arms sales to the island (KMT Seeks U.S. Mediation). KMT Legislator John H. Chang also warned the U.S. about a

possible arms race between the U.S. and China and cautioned the U.S. against employing a Cold War mentality towards China.

Since relations were normalized in 1979, the U.S. position regarding Taiwan has been a type of "strategic ambiguity," whereby Washington has verbally supported Beijing's "one China" policy while continuing to provide weapons to Taiwan. This policy of strategic ambiguity has been labeled a success because it has avoided a military confrontation. But it may also have created an environment of mistrust that may adversely affect U.S.-China relations in the long run. One example of how a lack of clarity in U.S. policy concerning Taiwan caused deep-seeded distrust, and may thereby have increased the likelihood of armed conflict, was the 1995-96 Taiwan Strait confrontation.³

After the conflict, China continued to grow increasingly suspicious of the United States. Many in Beijing began to question whether the U.S. was moving towards a policy of "peaceful evolution," whereby Washington would eventually evolve its ambiguous policy into clear-cut support for Taiwan's independence. In an effort to assuage Chinese fear, President Bill Clinton announced on a visit to Shanghai in 1998 that there were no two China's, no independence for Taiwan, and no support for Taiwan's membership in the U.N. or other international organizations of sovereign states. Relations between China and the U.S. again improved and it seemed that the Taiwan issue could finally take a back seat to other important issues like human rights and weapons proliferation, which were of grave concern to the U.S. Though the Clinton administration was successful in maintaining the ambiguous status quo and winning back China's trust to a certain extent, it wouldn't be long before the next administration would swing the pendulum in the opposite direction. Chinese leaders were left wondering if perhaps the United States was improving relations and strengthening economic ties with the sole purpose of keeping its enemy under a watchful eye.

While the current Bush Administration has worked to restructure and strengthen Taiwan's military, it appears the plan may have created fear and suspicion not just in Beijing. Washington's plan may have actually backfired, negatively impacting the U.S.-Taiwan relationship and helping to escalate the Taiwanese movement towards independence. More than two years after the Bush Administration approved a \$20 billion to \$30 billion arms package for Taiwan, only a few weapons have been ordered and none have been delivered, due to Taiwan's shrinking defense budget. Many Taiwanese legislators are also asserting that U.S. policies concerning weapons sales are actually driven by business interests, resulting in "inflated prices or efforts to dump obsolete weapons on Taiwan" (Pomfret and Philip). Not being able to keep pace with China's military build-up by purchasing defensive weapons, some Taiwanese military officials are now advocating the acquisition of offensive rather than defensive weapons in an effort to intimidate China. In response to Taiwan's recent talk of holding a referendum on a new constitution in 2006, Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao called on Washington to stop sending mixed signals to Taiwan and

be very clear in opposing the use of a referendum or writing a constitution or all other tactics used by the Taiwan authorities to pursue a "separatist agenda."

A Lack of Trust

According to a recent congressional report published by the U.S.-China Security Review Commission, the U.S. and China "have sharply contrasting worldviews, competing geo-strategic interests, and opposing political systems." It goes on to say that increasing economic ties have not changed China's strategic perception that the U.S. is its principal obstacle to growing regional and global military influence (Donnelly). But it's not only the United States that is apprehensive about the relationship; it appears the feelings are mutual.

China has been growing increasingly leery of what it sees as growing American imperialism and a possible encirclement of China. In response to America's invasion of Afghanistan, Deng Hao, a Chinese strategist, proclaimed in a government-sponsored journal on international studies that America's presence in Central Asia will "remold the strategic configuration of the area, presenting a challenge to China's security and strategic interests" (Kaplan). Shortly after September 11th, China's longtime ally, Pakistan, with a host of other countries, joined the bandwagon to fight terrorism. And when it became clear that U.S. troops would be stationed indefinitely in Afghanistan, some saw this as America's "security noose" tightening around "Beijing's neck" (Schmitt). But China is concerned not just about a physical encirclement by the U.S. More importantly, there is a deep disapproval of American imperialism in the political, ideological as well as the geographical sense. For example, China vehemently opposes the violation of another country's sovereignty in most cases. While the U.S. has recently moved further from the notion of inviolable sovereignty, (interventions in Panama, Haiti, Kosovo, Afghanistan and Iraq are examples) China has tended to stick to a more conservative concept of sovereignty referred to as "hyper-sovereignty" (Feigenbaum).

The Quest for Oil

Behind the U.S. and Japan, China is the world's largest oil consumer. And as one of the fastest growing economies in the world, with GDP growing at a rate of 7% per year, China is becoming increasingly dependent on oil to sustain its economic development. According to the Institute for the Analysis of Global Security, China's oil consumption is growing at 7.5% per year, seven times faster than the U.S. By the year 2010 China is expected to have 90 times more cars than in 1990. According to a report by the International Energy Agency, by 2030 Chinese oil imports will equal imports by the U.S. today.

And while China has sought to diversify its oil sources between the former Soviet Union, South America and North Africa, it is becoming increasingly dependent on Middle East Oil. Today, 58% of China's oil imports come from the Middle East; it is expected to grow to 70% by the year 2015. If Islamic fundamentalism spreads to oil producing countries, it would drastically increase world oil prices and threaten to undermine China's economic development. Hence China's seem

ingly cooperative approach to George W. Bush's "War on Terror" and a fairly restrained criticism of U.S. policy in Iraq. However, according to the Institute for the Analysis of Global Security, the feeling among many Chinese leaders is that America seeks to dominate the Persian Gulf in order to control its energy resources, thereby containing China's aspirations in the region. This alone makes the U.S. a critical threat to China's long-term energy security.

One way that China has guaranteed its access to Persian Gulf oil has been through cultivating relations with Saudi Arabia. Though the Saudis have been careful not to jeopardize their relationship with the U.S. by limiting their military purchases from China, according to the Institute for the Analysis of Global Security, "continuous deterioration in Saudi-American relations could drive the Saudis to end their reliance on the U.S. as the sole guarantor of their regime's security and offer China an expanded role" (Luft).

China has also worked to strengthen its relations with other nations in the region, including a visit by a Chinese envoy to Syria last October followed by stops in Egypt, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Palestine and Israel (Liwen). In Damascus, Syrian Prime Minister Muhammad Naji al-Ittri and Chinese envoy on Middle East affairs, Wang Shijie discussed the strengthening of Syrian-Sino relations in the areas of economic affairs, culture and non-governmental affairs as well as bilateral relations. More recently, in January 2004, President Hu Jintao, on a state visit to Egypt, held talks with Egyptian President Mubarak where they discussed the strengthening of Sino-Arab relations, setting up a Sino-Arab cooperation forum, as well as encouraging peace and stability in the region through establishing a nuclear-free zone in the Middle East. According to Hu, in the past decade, the Sino-Arab trade has increased tenfold, totaling 25.4 billion dollars, an increase of 43 percent over the previous year (Liwen). China has also used military sales to forge closer links with the region. Today, many states attempting to offset Israel's military consider China the best alternative source for weaponry.

The Beginning of an Arms Race?

The War on Terror affected the U.S. China relationship by both strengthening and undermining the relationship. Finding a common enemy provided a needed boost to the relationship, but the lack of trust that American unilateralism inspired may be the spark that will ignite an arms race, which could seriously destabilize the relationship in the long run. It has been suggested that since the Bush administration's recent withdrawal from the 1982 Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty, the increase in America's development of its missile-defense system and President George W. Bush's adoption of the pre-emptive strike doctrine, China has become determined to improve its defense capabilities. Realists, who believe that all nations are potentially a threat to one another, would argue that given China's growing economic strength an eventual arms race is inevitable. But even those who feel the realist argument warrants military preparedness, one must realize that increased U.S. hegemony will only intensify the scope and nature of the arms race. With both sides being

equally resentful of what they see as a potential threat to their security, we may be moving closer to conflict.

According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), China imported arms worth a total of \$10.78 billion in 1990 dollars in the decade up to 2001, making it the world's largest weapons importer in 2000. And in March, 2002, Beijing announced that it was boosting military outlays by 17.6% to about \$20 billion for that year. But according to a Pentagon report released July 12, 2002, actual annual spending had reached \$65 billion. This would make China the second-biggest defense budget in the world besides the US, currently at \$399 billion. And while the Cold War is officially over, it seems that America's old Cold War adversary, in an effort to revive its own military power, may be reviving its strategic partnership with China. According to Russia's former Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov, Russia's military-industrial complex can be preserved only by supplying military equipment and arms to China (Lague and Lawrence).

Peter Leitner, a senior strategic-trade advisor to the Department of Defense, writes that the Chinese military is pushing to produce a long-range cruise missile. As part of their power projection, they are trying to replicate the capabilities the U.S. has with the Tomahawk cruise missile (Korb). Most experts don't feel that the recent military build-up in China threatens the U.S. monopoly of military power, but they are becoming increasingly concerned about China's nuclear capabilities. According to intelligence reports, the Russians are helping China build a nuclear-fueled ballistic-missile submarine that could be in service as early as 2010 (Korb). China currently has 24 liquid-fueled intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBM's) but it is unclear if any are capable of hitting the U.S.

The Human Rights Debate

Another stumbling block haunting U.S.-China relations is the issue of human rights. The United States has almost every year introduced a resolution denouncing China at the U.N. Human Rights Commission and has pressured Beijing about releasing countless political prisoners. The U.S. State Department's annual human rights report regularly blasts China for its alleged human rights abuses, focusing on the lack of freedom of speech, freedom of press and freedom of religion.

But starting in 2000, the Information Office of the State Council of the PRC released its own human rights report on the United States. In the 2001 report, the Chinese document called the U.S. the only country where carrying a private weapon is a constitutional right; ranked the U.S. "first in the world" for its incarceration of more than 2 million of its people and declared life, freedom and personal safety in American society under "serious threat" due to the high rate of violence and crime. Every year, according to the document, the United States assumes the role of "world judge of human rights" and "distorts human rights conditions" in other parts of the world, including China, while ignoring its own human rights violations. The report concluded by urging the United States to "change its ways, give up its hegemonic

practice of creating confrontation and interfering in the internal affairs of others by exploiting the human rights issue." China's 2003 Human Rights Report criticized the U.S. for its "reckless use" of depleted uranium (DU) shells, cluster bombs and "Mark-77" napalm in the U.S. led war on Iraq.

Recently the Bush administration decided to introduce a resolution against China before the U.N. Human Rights Commission meeting in April 2004 for what it calls China's failure to meet its human rights commitments made at the 2002 U.S.-China Human Rights Dialogue and "backsliding on key human rights issues." It is clear that the two countries have deeply divergent views about what constitutes a human right violation, and as long as neither can define human rights abuse nor admit that each may be guilty of violations, U.S.-China relations will continue to be strained.

Japan

In many ways Japan is the antithesis of China when one considers its relationship with the United States. Since the end of World War II, the U.S. and Japan have generally had a solid relationship based on mutual trust and strong political, ideological, and military cooperation. But it would be a mistake to assume that this relationship will remain unchanged in the wake of September 11th. As Washington adopts an increasingly aggressive and unilateral foreign policy, there have been increased calls from Japan's growing right wing to re-militarize and become a "normal nation," play a more independent role in international affairs, and strengthen its multilateral relations in the region. Much of this is in response to growing anti-American sentiment. One might argue that most of these scenarios are unlikely in the near future, due to the history of U.S.-Japan relations, the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty, and Japan's dependence on American military protection. But it is possible that, in the long run, Japan will gradually drift away from the U.S. in exchange for strengthening its ties with China, strengthening its multilateral relations through ASEAN and other regional forums, and ensuring its supply of natural resources through improved relations with the Middle East. The following are examples of areas that may, in combination with other factors, work to weaken the U.S.-Japan alliance.

Is Japan Reasserting Itself?

In the postwar years, Japan accepted the fact that it would not become a major military power, so it focused instead on becoming an economic leader. By the 1980's, Japan had surpassed anyone's expectations for economic success and was leading nearly all of East Asia towards what would come to be known as the Asian Economic Miracle. And although a decade of miraculous growth was followed by more than a decade of recession and economic downturn, Japan is still the second largest economy in the world with one of the best-equipped self defense forces. Its defense budget ranges from second to fifth largest in the world and is predicted to increase steadily over the next several years.

Yet this seemingly powerful nation is dependent on the United States for much of its military protection. Some have described Japan as a semi-sovereign country in the area of

security because of the restrictions that were imposed on its military by the United States after World War II. For example, Japan's Self Defense Forces (SDF) are supposed to act only with the US Armed Forces and strictly in case of self-defense. It is because of this discrepancy in economic and military power that some realists believe that "the uneasy asymmetry between Japan's economic and military power will be broken sooner or later since historically no major economic power has remained such without transforming itself into a major military power" (Inoguchi).

Japan's Pacifist Core

What has kept Japan from pursuing the realist course from economic to military might has been its post-war constitution and a deep-seeded pacifist tradition that is engrained in the political landscape and public consciousness. Japan's military capability is restricted by Article 9 of the Constitution, which states: "the Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat of use of force as means of settling international disputes." But in recent years, there has been a renewed sense in Japanese political and popular culture that perhaps their Constitution is outdated. Many right-wing Japanese politicians from Japan's leading political party, the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), have objected to Japan's post-war constitution. They believe it was imposed upon the Japanese people by the Occupation Authorities and does not reflect the needs of modern day Japan. These right-wing politicians would like a more independent role for Japan in its self-defense and view the dependence of Japan's military on the United States with skepticism. Left-wing politicians and the majority of the Japanese public are also becoming more opposed to increased military cooperation with the U.S. because they see it as an abandonment of Japanese pacifist policies, especially since the U.S. appears to them to become increasingly aggressive as was illustrated in the recent invasion and occupation of Iraq.

The Case Against Pacifism

Although they authored Japan's constitution, some Americans have encouraged Japan to abandon its pacifist politics and offer military support to U.S. operations in the region. Critics have called Japan a "free-rider" pointing out that it is the U.S.'s guaranteed military protection that enables Japan to maintain its pacifist policies and spend more of its resources on its civilian sector. It also allows Japan to further its pacifist image while cultivating different partners-many of whom the U.S. sees as security threats. Those in the U.S. government who subscribe to this view have been a major force in pushing Japan to do more to support the U.S. in international conflict resolution. The Bush administration has implied that it wants a substantial military partnership from Japan that would parallel relations with its European allies.

During the Gulf War, Japan was harshly criticized by the U.S. for not contributing to the first U.S. led war against Iraq. In response, Japan signed a Joint Security Declaration with the U.S. in 1996, outlining how the two countries would work together on defense policies in response to changes in the international security environment. In 1999, after nine

months of deliberations, Japan's Diet passed the "1999 Law on Situations in Areas Surrounding Japan," which greatly loosened the restrictions on the conditions for dispatching the SDF. And just after the September 11th, terrorist bombing, Japan pledged its support for the U.S. and passed several similar laws, such as the "Antiterrorism Special Measures Law" aimed at allowing Japan's Self Defense Forces to provide more support to the U.S. and other armed forces. And while it expanded the criteria under which the use of military force was permissible, it did not permit Japan to send troops to fight alongside the U.S. military.

In March 2004, Japan sent 1100 non-combat troops to Iraq (the largest overseas dispatch since World War II) for the purpose of offering humanitarian assistance and helping to rebuild schools and other infrastructure. Despite massive public protests and accusations that the dispatch violated the constitution, Prime Minister Koizumi has pledged that the troops will remain in Iraq until needed.

LDP's Support of U.S. Policies

While Japan is currently unable to assist the United States in combat missions, the Koizumi administration has been increasingly supportive of the Bush administration's military endeavors in Afghanistan and Iraq. Just after September 11th, Koizumi expressed his support for the U.S. and pledged to provide military assistance for the invasion of Afghanistan. While this was immediately seen as a major shift in its foreign policy, Japan apparently backtracked on Koizumi's plan and ended up contributing very little militarily to the Afghan war.

The reason for the lack of actual military contributions could be attributed to internal politics, specifically, Koizumi's own party the LDP, which vetoed the early dispatch of Maritime Self-Defense Forces. Party leaders claimed that the policy of connecting the SDF to American war aims was not in Japan's best interest and worried that the LDP would suffer in the next election if the Self Defense Forces were dispatched. In the November 2003 elections, Koizumi's party was indeed weakened, likely as a result of dispatching the SDF to Iraq. While the ruling coalition managed to keep control of 275 of the 480 seats in the Lower House of Parliament, (a loss of 12 seats) Koizumi's LDP won just 237 seats, below the simple majority of 247 it had by itself before the election. The opposition won 205 seats, a total gain of 17. Despite the apparent divisions in the Japanese government as well as within the LDP, Koizumi has become even more supportive of the Bush administration and managed to do in Iraq what he couldn't do in Afghanistan.

Growing Anti-American Sentiment

While Prime Minister Koizumi's administration has been strongly pro American, there are growing signs that the Japanese public is growing increasingly skeptical of this relationship. While anti-American sentiment has been present in Okinawa, it seemed these sentiments grew more in the 1990's. In 1996, in the first-ever prefectural plebiscite, 53% of the Okinawan electorate voted for both consolidation and reduction of the U.S. military presence and a reform of the U.S.-Japan Status of Forces Agreement. In September 2002,

the *Asahi Shimbun* newspaper reported that 77% of Japanese polled in a telephone survey opposed a military attack against Iraq and only 14% favored it. According to the April 2004 polls conducted by Asahi, 70% of the Japanese public still believes that America's policy in Iraq is misguided. According to Professor Takeshi Inoguchi, an international-relations expert at the University of Tokyo, the country's hesitance to give all-out support for U.S. plans concerning Iraq reflects a change in Japanese perceptions of its place in international relations and its ties with the United States (Kakuchi).

Multilateralism

Japan has in recent years become more internationally minded and has therefore moved to expand its multilateral role in the region. Tokyo has secured Japan's position as leader of the Asia Pacific region by consistently giving money to its neighbors, even throughout the financial crisis of 1997-1998. Since 1991, Japan has been the world's top contributor of total ODA funds (Office of Development Assistance). Despite Japan's economic troubles, it has maintained its commitment to supporting peace and offering assistance to war-torn countries. Japan's contributions to Middle East Peace have won high praise from Israel and Arab nations. Japan's pledge of assistance for rebuilding Afghanistan (\$500 million over two years) was larger than that of the U.S. or E.U. As of 1999, Japan was paying 67% more in foreign aid than the U.S. and accounted for nearly 20% of the U.N.'s budget in 2001.

Japan takes part in several regional forums such as ASEAN (Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), APEC (Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation) and ARF (ASEAN Regional Forum). These forums deal with regional political, territorial and trade disputes. Japan is also currently involved with efforts to create an Asia-Pacific multilateral security dialogue framework, possibly an extension of ARF, as well as building a Northeast Asian Forum that includes Russia. Japan is also involved in plans for creating an Asian Monetary Fund. At this point it is called the Network of Bilateral Swap Agreements. Whether or not the institution will come to fruition is uncertain due to opposition by the United States.

As Asians become apprehensive about American unilateralism, many are realizing that multilateral disputes involving nations of East Asia are best resolved by East Asian nations. There exists "no need for the U.S. to be policeman for the region, self-appointed or elected by default" (E. Olsen in Arase). Current bilateral and multilateral tensions include the conflict between North and South Korea and China and Taiwan; disputes over territorial claims by Taiwan, China and Japan over the Senkaku islands; between South Korea and Japan over the Takeshima Islands; between Japan and Russia over the Northern Territories; and between China and Vietnam over the Paracel Islands. All of these disputes have been or can be dealt with through multi-lateral dialogues in regional meetings such as the Asean Regional Forum, the Four Part Talks on Korea, the Tri-lateral Forum on the North Pacific, the North-east Asia Cooperation Dialogue, or the South Pacific Forum.

Japan-China Relations

For many years, U.S. presence in East Asia was welcomed by many nations (including Japan) because of a fear of China and the belief that U.S. power balanced Chinese power. During the 1990's China experienced continued rapid economic growth just as Japan's economy stopped expanding. Many Japanese became fearful that China's economic growth could eventually undermine Japan's leading role in the region. This, together with rising Japanese nationalism and unresolved issues over territorial and historical disputes, has strained Japan-China relations.

Beijing has also grown increasingly concerned about Japan's military capabilities, specifically the broadening of Japan's strategic role as a result of U.S.-Japanese agreements since September 11th. Chinese leaders are furious about what they see as Japan's disregard for the humiliation and victimization of China during WWII, as well as Japanese support of Taiwan and a decline in Japanese aid to China. Prime Minister Koizumi's numerous visits to the controversial Yasukuni Shrine add further insult to injury from a Chinese perspective. Despite this rivalry, however, it appears that Japan's economic ties and political relations with China are strengthening rather than weakening.

Some Japanese and Chinese strategists have anticipated a new regionalism that would lock the two in a financial partnership that could serve as a balancing force in the world. Though that may not come about for some time, it does appear that things are moving in the right direction. In 1998, China and Japan issued a "Japan-China Joint Declaration on Building a Partnership of Friendship and Cooperation for Peace and Development." Since then, Japan has ranked as China's largest trade partner while China grew to rank as Japan's 2nd largest trade partner after the U.S. There are as many as 20,000 Japanese businesses operating in China, providing job opportunities to more than 1 million people. Also, Japan has not introduced any trade barrier to China's exports, as it had for the U.S. Tokyo has even permitted its leading companies to transfer important technologies to China, something that Japan rarely does for other countries, including the U.S. Some have even attributed Japan's recent economic rebound to a surge in exports to China, up 42% in September and 28% in October 2003.

This is not to say that all is smooth sailing in Japan-China relations, but it does show that there is increasing trust in the relationship and a level of economic interdependence that will serve as a balancing factor if the two nations do have political or territorial confrontations. In a 2002 interview, Prime Minister Koizumi stated firmly that he does not subscribe to the view that China is a threat. What's more important is that Japan and China are focused less on hegemony and more on the development of their countries, which requires a prolonged, peaceful, and cooperative relationship with their Asian neighbors and especially one another.

Conclusion

America's demonstrated ability to wage war with minimal international support and the reconsideration of its worldwide basing requirements has raised questions about

America's commitment to its long standing alliances in Asia and elsewhere. The Bush Administration was quick to marginalize two of America's oldest allies in Europe - France and Germany - by deciding to invade Iraq. This does not bode well for its allies in Asia. The two relationships that America should care for and cultivate with extreme care are those of China and Japan. The relationship with China is clearly the more difficult of the two to maintain due to the historically unfriendly relations and opposing world views of the U.S. and China. The tragedy of September 11th may have driven President Bush and Chinese President Jiang Zemin into each others arms, but a relationship that's based on a common enemy and without any genuine trust is one that can quickly fade.

As the Bush administration wages war in Iraq and Afghanistan, it is becoming increasingly apparent that the issues that divide China and the U.S. will not be easily resolved. While Washington was encouraged by the PRC's vote in support of both UN Security Council resolutions authorizing the international use of force against Afghanistan following the September 11th attacks, it is unlikely that China would again vote in favor of such a resolution. This was the case with the Iraq war. Despite President Bush's declaration in 2002 that China stands "side by side with the American people," many Chinese still see the U.S. as their principal adversary.

The main sources of contention that continue to fuel the flames of distrust are China's worries about American imperialism throughout Asia and the Middle East, weapon sales to Taiwan, and human rights. And though the Bush administration has put much effort during the past two years into salvaging this fragile relationship through numerous high level talks and political deal making, this has not established any long-term trust between the two. For now, China sits quietly wondering if after Iraq, the U.S. will need to find new enemies, making China next on the list. In reverse, the U.S. wonders if China will challenge it for control of the Middle East or if China is selling weapons to states unfriendly to the U.S. Washington's worst fear is the possibility that Beijing is gearing up for a confrontation in the Taiwan Straits.

On the other hand, there is a much simpler relationship that needs tending to. Stanley Roth, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, believes that the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty remains the foundation of U.S. engagement in Asia. And because of the importance of Japan in helping the U.S. maintain its influence in the region, it is important to nurture the relationship with Japan and recognize that the future of the relationship is not as solid as it once was. Despite Prime Minister Koizumi's staunch support of the United States, it is inevitable that as Japan's public opinion becomes increasingly anti-American, these feelings will undoubtedly permeate the government in time. At this point, Japan might try to reassert itself as both a political and an economic leader in Asia. And as Japan improves its multilateral relations, perhaps it will turn out that America's unilateral approach is no longer welcomed in the region.

ENDNOTES

- One of the main reasons that the Bush administration is having difficulty maintaining support for its "War on Terror" is because "terrorism" is an elusive concept that has not been clearly defined by the U.S. or the United Nations. Without defining what constitutes terror, many in the international community fear that such an open ended war can be directed at any number of countries for political rather than security reasons. For a more detailed discussion, see: "The Tricky Art of Defining Terrorism" by Pat M. Holt, *Christian Science Monitor*, March 7, 2002: <http://www.csmonitor.com/2002/0307/p11s01-coop.html>
Also, see "Terrorism: Theirs and Ours" by Eqbal Ahmad, Professor Emeritus of International Relations and Middle Eastern Studies, Hampshire College, Amherst, Massachusetts for a look at the politics behind who is or isn't labeled a "terrorist." <http://www.sangam.org/ANALYSIS/Ahmad.htm#Eqbal%20Ahmad>
- Realism is a political philosophy based on the notion that power is the primary end of political action. Political realism assumes that national interests are to be maintained through the exercise of power. It also assumes that nations will advance their own interests at the expense of other nations; making for an inherently unstable international environment where every nation is for itself. Definition taken from the *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, <http://www.iep.utm.edu/p/polreal.htm>
When using the terms "status quo" and "revisionist power," I am referring to the terms identified by A.F.K. Oganski and Jacek Kugler as quoted by Alastair Iain Johnston in "Challenges to Asian Security: Myths and Reality" *International Security*, Spring 2003. According to Johnston, Oganski and Kugler define the status quo states as the ones who design the 'rules of the game' and which stand to benefit from these gains. The "challenger" or "revisionist" states want a "new place for themselves in international society" and "express a general dissatisfaction" with their "position in the system."
- In 1992, the Bush administration, in violation of its pledge in 1982 to reduce the quantity of arms sales to Taiwan, sold Taiwan 150 F-16 warplanes. Wanting to send a strong message to the U.S. and Taiwan about what might happen if Taiwan moved towards independence, China began a series of missile tests and naval air exercises using high-tech submarines, destroyers and missile launchings near Taiwan between 1995 and 1996. In response, the U.S. sent two battle carrier groups to the waters east of Taiwan to show that it was ready to come to Taiwan's defense if it was attacked. The situation became extremely tense and many feared an all out war in the Straits, but China eventually ended the tests and the crisis subsided.

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The Maintenance of Imperial Shintô in Postwar Japan as Seen at Yasukuni Shrine and Its Yûshûkan Museum

by Richard Lambert, M.A.

Abstract

What is commonly known as "State Shintô" was put into place in the late 1860's by Japan's elites. The invention of a "modern" Imperial Shintô tradition resulted through a series of conscious political acts in the name of the Emperor. Hoping to unite the people to handle the challenges of modernization, Shintô was used as a political tool, drawing upon the old legends of Japan's origin together with a tradition predating the Meiji era (1868-1910) that I will call "Folk Shintô." The local power represented by thousands of small independent shrines throughout Japan carrying the authority of numerous divinities (*kami*), was cohered into national unity under State Shintô, with the Emperor proclaimed as religious and political head, resulting in what I call "Imperial Shintô." By examining the conditions that allowed a highly politicized Shintô to develop, we can more easily see how ingrained it had become by the time of Japan's defeat in 1945, and how difficult it was for the Occupation to extinguish. We can also see how some of these conditions continued into the current day thanks to institutions like Yasukuni Shrine and its attached Yûshûkan Museum. Both continue to exert undue political influence in a secular democratic society.

Background

Faced with the threat of being colonized from the West and following the defeat of the Tokugawa regime, a modernization program was put in effect in the name of the restored Emperor Meiji, sixteen years old in 1868. Until the end of the 19th century, a series of political acts instituted by Meiji elites laid the foundation for the "tradition" of an imperial mythology culminating in the establishment of State Shintô. The first step was promoting the doctrine of *saisei itchi*, decreed in 1868 by the Emperor, declaring that "the Way of the unity of religion and government shall be revived" (Holtom 1943:5). Next, the year 1869 saw the start of a series of government departments set up to control the religious future of Japan by taking over jurisdiction of Buddhism and Shintô (Bunce 1955:27). Third, the 1870 Great Teaching Campaign (*taikyô senpu undô*) attempted to propagate state ideology based on respect of the gods, love of country, and obedience to the Emperor. The campaign was afforded religious significance, and was influential in creating an awareness of Shintô as independent of Buddhism (Hardacre 1989:42).

The fourth significant political act was designed to reconfigure the way people regarded Buddhism, which had close ties to the ousted Tokugawa government. The Meiji period witnessed attempts by the newly unified Japanese state to weaken and redefine the authority that belonged to the heretofore Buddhist/Shintô amalgam (*shinbutsu shûgô*).

In March of 1868 the government issued the order of *shinbutsu bunri*, calling for the separation of Shintô and Buddhism. Shintô gods were no longer to be called *bosatsu* (bodhisattva), Buddhist priests were no longer to participate in Shintô services, and Shintô shrines were to eliminate Buddhist paraphernalia (IJCC 2004:8).

In May of 1875 a law was issued stating, "To the superintendent priests of all sects of Shintô and of Buddhism: As stated in the subjoined notice, the establishment of religious unions (*kyôin*) between the sects of Shintô and Buddhism is now prohibited" (Holtom 1922:16). The new laws (and periodic persecutions) never resulted in the elimination of Buddhism. But the results redefined, as explained by James Ketelaar in his book *Of Heretics and Martyrs in Meiji Japan – Buddhism and its Persecution*, what religiosity had been to the people over their history, and what it was to become in the new nation (Ketelaar 1990:76).

The State attempted to reduce further the status of Buddhist priests by interfering in areas that had heretofore been privileged. Ministry of State Order #133, April 1872, read, "Priests may do as they wish regarding the eating of meat, marriage, and the cutting of hair," breaking mutual obligations that had been maintained between the State and Buddhism (Ketelaar: 6). While the State was attempting to weaken Buddhism and strengthen state identity, the Conscription Law of 1873 was introduced that mandated four years of military service into the life of the common man.

Yasukuni Shintô Shrine was established in 1879 through the renaming of the Tokyo Shokonsha, a shrine built in 1869 to honor those who had died for the Emperor during the Meiji Restoration. With Japan being politically unified under Meiji, Yasukuni would continue this tradition. Yasukuni would gain spiritual as well as political importance as the designated state repository for the souls of those who would die for Japan during the ensuing expansion of the Empire.

In 1882, *Kokka* (State) Shintô was established by the state as officially non-religious, as differentiated from *Shûha* (religious) Shintô. *Kokka* Shintô received status, authority, and financial support from the state, but *Shûha* Shintô and the Buddhist faith was left to support themselves (Bunce: 30). State Shintô shrines free of Buddhist influence were built, while many local, religious Shintô shrines were purged of their Buddhist influence. State Shrines and Folk Shintô Shrines were merged in many regions, concentrating the power and influence of State Shintô (Hardacre: 85).

In 1882 Emperor Meiji delivered the Imperial Rescript to Soldiers (*Gunjin Chokuyû*), introducing a Meiji-era rendition of *bushidô* to conscripted soldiers. As pointed out by Emiko Ohnuki-Tierney, its most famous (infamous) passage stated that a soldiers' obligation of loyalty to the Emperor was heavier than the mountains, but with death being lighter than a feather (Ohnuki-Tierney 2002: 80).

The Imperial Rescript of 1881 promised a constitution, and the 1889 Constitution became an imperial gift to the nation. State Shintô would become the long term beneficiary, for as Carol Gluck declares in her 1985 work *Japan's Modern Myths*, "The Constitution would make imperial powers legally explicit for the first time in Japanese history" (Gluck 1985: 76).

One power benefiting State Shintô was education. The Education Code of 1872 set up the framework of an extremely efficient educational system. Emperor Meiji's promulgation in 1890 of the "Imperial Rescript on Education" (*kyôiku chokugo*) turned education into a tool of the Emperor, extending the state's ability to instill internal values into subsequent generations through Imperial Education. The Rescript affected the religious freedom nominally granted under the Meiji Constitution. By becoming "the pillar of prewar Japan's ethics and morality" and providing "an identifiable focus of unity for the populace as a whole and for the Shintô priesthood in particular," it turned the virtues of loyalty and filial piety into "absolute, universal values that could not be questioned or subordinated to anything else" (Hardacre: 122).

State Shintô would expand its official doctrine in future generations through Publication Law Article XIX, #15 of 14 April 1893, authorizing the Minister of Home Affairs "to prohibit the sale, and confiscate the draft of books and other publication, the contents of which are deemed injurious to peace and order or prejudicial to public morals" (Hall 1949C: 468). "Public morals" would come to be those as defined by State Shintô.

The 1899 Ministry of Education's Order Number 12 prohibited religious instruction in school, leaving State Shintô as the basis of moral education, while it eliminated competing spiritual values (Gluck:129). This was followed by the 1900 Public Peace and Order Police Law that prohibited membership in political parties by religious clergy, serving to depoliticize Buddhist, Christian, and religious (*kyôha*) Shintô. This set the stage for politics to be dominated by a growing "non-religious" State Shintô (Murakami 1980:65), paving the way for a unification of faith and politics, of religion and State.

By the turn of the century the road to the "Imperial Way" (*kôdô*) was well defined. Professor Helen Hardacre states in her study *Shintô and the State, 1868 – 1988*, that prior to the Meiji Restoration, Shintô as a religion independent of Buddhism scarcely existed. Its new sense of meaning and purpose was a modern, post-Meiji invention (Hardacre 1989: 19). In her presentation at the University of London for the "Shintô and Japanese Culture" symposium held in November 1994, Professor Carmen Blacker said this about Meiji-era State Shintô:

State Shintô was a recent aberration of the beliefs that had peaceably existed in Japan for centuries....Its story rams home to us the salutary lesson of the terrifying way in which the powerful symbols of myth and religion can be manipulated... not only to weld together a new nation state, but also to create one in which a totalitarian fanaticism utterly alien to the real tradition of the culture can drive that nation to disaster (Blacker 1994).

Fueled by the patriotic fervor of military victory over both China and Russia, and accompanied by a growing economy unmatched by any Asian country, subsequent generations were taught cultural superiority and a form of Japanese Manifest Destiny. As Japanese political scientist Maruyama Masao stated, whereas Western states had evolved from the dissolution of the "divine right of kings" into a

separation of church and state, "Japanese nationalism strove consistently to base its control on internal values of the people rather than on the authority deriving from external laws" (Maruyama 1969:3-4). The post-Meiji invention of State Shintô and an Imperial Emperor gave the State the authority to instill these values.

The Ministry of Education mandated morality (*shushin*) classes that illustrated the righteousness of Japanese values. The theme of Divine Origin and Divine Leadership were wrapped up in superior characteristics defined by a quasi-religious National Shintô, spelling out the Divine Mission of spreading Japanese morality to the world.

Superiority of material achievements was witnessed in Japan's rapid drive into modernization, resulting in a country able to compete with the Europeans and the United States. "Kokutai" (national essence/structure) supplied the ideology of a cultural superiority and human spirit that was used to explain the miraculous economic achievements of Japan's modernization. "Superiority" was evidenced by a new sociocultural order that had been able to adapt Western technology without succumbing to colonization as had its Asian neighbors. Dr. Morris-Suzuki feels that Japan's concept of its right to rule Asia was not because of racial superiority, but due to concepts expressed in terms of spirituality, morality, emotions and loyalty, with Japan holding itself as a more advanced form of modern civilization (Morris-Suzuki 1998: 87).

D.C. Holtom, in his 1943 study on Shintô, cites an article published by the Japanese Minister of War illustrating that righteous morality was used to justify acts of terror in neighboring countries. "Since the foundation of the Japanese Empire it has been the yearning of all Japanese to unite all the races of the world into a happy society. We regard this as the great mission of the Japanese people. We strive also to clear away from the earth injustice and inequality and to bring everlasting happiness to mankind" (Holtom 1943:22).

Maruyama wrote in his 1946 essay "Theory and Psychology of Ultra-Nationalism" that prewar Japanese nationalism involved both spiritual and political power, with the state determining the ultimate moral code, acting for this collective morality, and channeling the spiritual power of the people into the state defined effort (Maruyama 1969: 8-9). The Emperor became the figurehead for this collective effort and whose presence justified the endeavor.

Righteous morality ennobled the acts taken in the name of the Emperor, with his agents gaining authority by acting in his name. From the *Asahi Shimbun*, February 6, 1943, Prime Minister General Tôjô commented on the question of dictatorship while addressing the 81st Diet Session.

People often refer to this as a dictatorial government, but I should like to make the matter clear...I am just the same as you. ...It is only when I am exposed to the light of His Majesty that I shine. Were it not for this light, I should be no better than a pebble by the roadside. ...This puts me in a completely different category from those European rulers who are known as dictators (Maruyama 1969:17).

Tôjô separated himself from his contemporary European despots by his affiliation to the Emperor, the repository and personification of Japanese *kokutai*, which allowed the general

his political authority. What the Meiji oligarchs had introduced as State Shintō for unification purposes had through ensuing generations been transformed into Imperial Shintō, with the nation operating under an Imperial Mission given it by the “superiority” of an “infallible” Emperor.

This came to a forced end in the 1945 defeat and post-war Occupation. Necessity saw the Occupation put much of the previous imperial bureaucracy back in control in order to rebuild the economy. Prewar bureaucrats had exercised the Emperor’s policy, with postwar bureaucrats working under the grace of the Allied Occupation. The pace of economic success and cold-war political tensions took precedent over democratic evolution. From the ratification of the constitution of 1947 to the present day, Japan has been dominated by one political party, continuing many of the policies introduced by the Occupation.

Yasukuni ’s Museum: A New Light on Japanese History?

The remodeled Yūshūkan, the museum dedicated to war memorabilia on the grounds of Yasukuni Shrine, reopened for visitors in July 2002; I visited in December 2002. Illustrations from the English text that explain the galleries will indicate the strengthened attempts by supporters of Yasukuni Shintō to build a contemporary patriotism from the defeated Imperial Cause. Contrary to calls for war apologies from Japan’s neighbors, the Yūshūkan portrays a view of history that attempts to justify prewar Japan as a liberator of Asia from the European colonialists. Though Imperial Japan was defeated, the museum depicts a just cause, ennobling the sacrifice of the nearly 2,500,000 souls enshrined at Yasukuni.

While nations reserve the right to mourn and revere their war dead, the constitutional conflict in matters concerning religious faith and politics is often pointed out when prominent politicians visit Yasukuni. Being a former imperial shrine and center of Imperial Shintō, it continues its political and religious association. That a museum of military memorabilia and artifacts is attached to Yasukuni while it continues its status as a Shintō shrine also seems inappropriate in a democratic secular society.

At the entrance to the Yūshūkan a Japanese language brochure entitled “*Yasukuni ni Daihyakka*” (Encyclopedia of Yasukuni) is available, which tells the visitor “in order to understand the truth about modern Japanese history, in July 2002, the Yūshūkan has been reborn” (my translation). Originally built in 1882, it was designed in a European style by an Italian architect in the spirit of the times. It was redesigned in 1932 in a Japanese style to reflect the change in attitude. On my last visit in 2000, I was impressed with the solemn display of war equipment, serving as a place to reflect on those who had died in battle. Its current renovation is lavish and modern. As stated in the English pamphlet “Yūshūkan,” it was rebuilt in order to present from its collection items “that shed a new light on modern Japanese history.”

Upon entry into the “Spirit of the Samurai” gallery, one is greeted by English translations of poems that stir feelings of nationalism from Japan’s past. A Nara era (710-794) poem is

displayed. Used in prewar times to instill patriotic fervor, many of those surviving elders educated in the prewar period can still recite it by heart: “We shall die in the sea, we shall die in the mountains, in whatever way, we shall be beside the Emperor, never turning back.” This set the tone for further galleries that quickly traced the history of European and American colonization efforts in Asia.

The 1890 Imperial Rescript on Education that provided the authority of the Emperor over education, is described simply: “School curriculum tended to overemphasize the cultivation of the intellect, a result of western influence. Japanese culture was virtually ignored. Inconsistencies in or the absence of moral education at the imperial universities and secondary schools worried Emperor Meiji,” resulting in the draft that became the Rescript on October 30, 1890. “Consequently the Japanese moral code was revived and became firmly implanted.”

The next exhibit displays a huge mural depicting the victory over Russia in the Russo-Japanese war of 1905. It is accompanied by loud music featuring cannon sounds and men charging. Next is a gallery that describes how Japan was rebuffed by the League of Nations on its request for a provision abolishing racial discrimination even though siding with the allied powers in WWI. The rejection of racism, it is explained, was due to reluctance of the United Kingdom and the United States to support Japan’s position and growing power, “setting the stage for a new, US-dominated order in Asia.”

Prior to exiting this gallery, it is explained that China, motivated by the Russian Revolution, turned to nationalism and “focused their animosity on Japan. An anti-Japanese movement in Manchuria and discord within the Kwantung Movement resulted in the Manchurian Incident and the establishment of Manchukuo.” The League of Nations, at the Lytton Commission (October 1, 1932) “recognized Japan’s interest in Manchuria, but not its right to act in self defense. It also proposed affording Manchuria autonomous status in China.” The rendition goes on to state that since the League had chosen to disregard “the events that had resulted in the incident, Japan could no longer avoid a confrontation with the League,” with Japan withdrawing from the League of Nations on March 27, 1933 when the League demanded that Japan remove their troops from China.

The next gallery was entitled “The China Incident,” referring to what is called in the dominant view outside Japan “The Nanking Massacre” or “The Rape of Nanking.” I quote from the English description available in the gallery that explains the events leading up to this incident.

After the Japanese surrounded Nanking in December 1937, General Matsui Iwane distributed maps to his men, with foreign settlements and the safety zone marked in red ink. Matsui told them that they were to observe military rules to the letter and that anyone committing unlawful acts would be severely punished. He also warned Chinese troops to surrender, but commander in chief Tang Shengzhi ignored the warning. Instead, he ordered his men to defend Nanking to the death, and then abandoned them. The Chinese were severely defeated, suffering heavy casualties. Inside the city, residents were once again able to live their lives in peace.

Most renditions of post-war history agree that some level of massacre occurred in Nanking. That the “Nanking Incident” is downplayed at the museum indicates the museum’s effort, as stated in its English pamphlet, to “shed a new light on modern Japanese history”. Creating a history in which the Japanese observed “military rules to the letter,” while at the same time defeating the Chinese and leaving the residents “able to live their lives in peace” can be seen as an attempt to maintain the integrity of the Empire and the Emperor on whose behalf imperial troops were dispatched.

The next gallery tells of Roosevelt’s strategy for war with his “Plan Victory.” Embargoes were used to force war with Japan, because, as is stated, “The US economy made a complete recovery (from the depression) once the Americans entered the war.” When the Hull Proposals faltered, peace negotiations were deemed a failure, and on November 19, 1941 it was decided that “Japan has no choice but to go to war against the U.S.,” and by November 25, “the US plan to force Japan into war is then set in motion.”

The Pacific War Years Gallery shows the portraits and highlights the sacrifice of many young and earnest Japanese who loved their country, dying in the Great East Asian War (*Dai Tōa Sensō*). Japan is shown attempting to negotiate surrender through the Russians to no avail. “But since the U.S. had no interest in bringing the war to an early end, no opportunities for negotiation arose.”

A separate display explains that the end of the war came about by Imperial Intervention at a War Council, presided over by the Showa Emperor (Hirohito). A poem credited to the Emperor is prominently displayed, supposedly to reveal his feelings in his decision to end the war: “Saddened by the loss of the precious lives of so many of my people, I ended the war. It mattered not what became of me.”

Historically it appears that surrender was delayed by last ditch efforts to protect the Emperor’s position in a post-war Japan. This delay extended the war several days, resulting in the loss of more civilian and military lives, and caused the Americans to drop another atomic bomb at Nagasaki. Secretary of State James Byrnes (1945–1947) wrote in 1947 that one day after the August 6 atomic bombing of Hiroshima, the Japanese delivered a message through the Swiss government that they would indeed accept the Potsdam Declaration, but with the proviso that “the understanding that the said declaration does not compromise any demand which prejudices the prerogatives of his majesty as a sovereign ruler” (Byrnes 1947: 209).

This insistence on the preservation of Imperial prerogative caused the Americans to reply that only full compliance with Potsdam was acceptable (unconditional surrender), with a second bomb falling on Nagasaki on August 9. On August 15, Hirohito made his radio broadcast, which the Americans granted as full acceptance and surrender, halting the horrific possibility of a third atomic bomb. In his prize-winning work on Hirohito’s war responsibility, Herbert Bix speaks of this hesitation to surrender and of Hirohito’s character. “In his single-minded dedication to preserving his position, no matter what the cost to others, he was one of the most disingenuous persons ever to occupy the modern throne” (Bix 2001: iv).

Post war galleries display Japan’s war efforts as focused on liberating Asia. One room prominently displays Indian Justice Radhabinod Pal of the Occupation War Tribunal, who declared that Britain and other white Europeans were the first colonizers of Asia. The gallery described the liberation of Asia as a vindication of Japanese policy:

Not until Japan began to accomplish victory after stunning victory in the Great East Asian War did the idea of independence enter the realm of reality. ... When the war ended, the people of Asia returned to their homes—to colonies that they considered their own territory. ... War for independence broke out in Malaya, French Indochina and the Dutch East Indies.

The colonizers who had been defeated by Japan early in WWII could not suppress the ideas that Japan had advanced after WWI and were subsequently rejected—racial equality and self-determination for the peoples of Asia—with military force. One after another, the nations of Southeast Asia won their independence, and their success inspired Africa and other areas as well.

Prior to exiting the museum, a display room exhibits pictures and pictures of faces of those who died in service during World War II. Exhibits of war instruments, including “special forces” (*kamikaze/tokkōtai*) are presented. The exit is through the prayer room, where those who desire are able to write memorials to Yasukuni or loved ones. Portraits of a young Caucasian running through beautiful falling cherry blossoms opens onto a bookstore, with one exiting past a fully intact zero fighting plane.

A tour of the Yūshūkan does not give the impression that the type of Shintō seen at Yasukuni was a political creation almost purged in the defeat of war. Nor is the fact revealed that Shintō had to wait for Occupation acknowledgment to be recognized as a religion. Yasukuni Shrine strives to keep its own torch lit, afraid of the day that its flames might die out.

Spiritual Displacement in the Modernization of Japan

In the formation years soon after the Meiji Restoration, prior to the myth of Imperial Shintō becoming completely established, Fukuzawa Yukichii (1835–1902) wrote in his 1874 *An Outline of a Theory of Civilization* of the necessity for national unity in order to maintain sovereignty. He also pointed out that for the past 700 years since the start of the Kamakura era (1192), the people had not paid much attention to the Emperor because military power had been maintained by the Shogun and Tokugawa forces. “But if today, as some imperial scholars would have it, the people were to be set under a ruler who united in himself both political and religious functions, the future of Japan would be very different” (Fukuzawa (1874) 1973: 22).

One might assume that he expected the worst outcome when he wrote of the National Learning (*kokugaku*) scholars whom he complained had no compunction about assigning the ruler a fictitious status, preferring sham to truth (Fukuzawa:174). He warned of the possibility that, “Power will be claimed by linkage to the gods of heaven, expressed as a theocracy prevailing at the expense of true governmental authority, by creating a fabrication that leads to blind attachments to false authority of which a government has no right

to avail itself" (Fukuzawa: 30). Fukuzawa was concerned about the possibility of false authority and Imperial Power exploiting the virtue of loyalty in dangerous ways.

Of the status of Shintô in his day, in 1874 he wrote, "it has been nothing but an insignificant movement, one which barely managed at the Meiji Restoration to avail itself of the lingering glory of the Imperial House; it is ephemeral and incidental" (Fukuzawa: 146). In just a few short years, the glory of the Imperial House would be restored, bringing with it a national Shintô that would prevail "at the expense of true government authority."

Just thirty eight years after Fukuzawa's comments, Basil Chamberlain (1850–1935), the translator of the 8th century Shintô text *Kojiki* in 1882, wrote an eleven page essay in 1912 entitled, "Invention of a New Religion." His essay spoke of a "Mikado-worship" in the process of being consciously or semi-consciously put together by the official class from "Shintô, a primitive nature cult, which had fallen into discredit." He wrote of the development of a pseudo history of Shintô that exploited and recast the Japanese myths, resulting in a situation that dumbfounded him. He noted political and religious change occurring at an unnatural pace. "Not even officials can be so stupid as to believe in things which they themselves invented. ... said one of them to us recently—'we believe in it, although we know that it is not true'" (Chamberlain (1912) 1933:5).

In his 1922 study on Shintô, D.C. Holtom recognized the efforts of the Japanese State to create a neo-Shintô myth using archaic mythology as a base. He stated that the government was attempting "to give support to the affirmation that the present organization of the Japanese State is the manifestation of a fundamental and unchanging historical principle" (Holtom 1922:236).

In other words, the official position may be taken to mean that historical investigation of the Japanese state cannot be carried back beyond a time when this fundamental principle was not in operation. ... The Japanese government is very plainly seeking to surround a doctrine of political absolutism with the final sanctions of religious belief" (Holtom 1922: 236).

Shintô as a religious entity was recognized by the Occupation in its passion to preserve religious expression. As a legitimized religion, Joseph Kitagawa said in 1966 that, "various attempts have been made by Shintô thinkers to formulate systematic treatises of Shintô theology. Thus far, however, no definitive work has appeared on the subject" (Kitagawa 1966: 287). The type of Shintô being expressed at Yasukuni is a construction based on the perversion of a Folk Shintô that had existed long before Yasukuni. Having gained authority through a political / religious relationship with the Emperor in the period prior to defeat, the vested interests represented by Yasukuni continue to take advantage of this special status.

Kuroda Toshio's 1981 article entitled "Shintô in the History of Japanese History," tells of the distortions that had occurred to Japanese religious philosophy by the doctrine of political absolutism that accompanied State Shintô.

The Meiji separation of Shintô and Buddhism (*shinbutsu bunri*; 1868) and its concomitant suppression of Buddhism (*haibutsu kishaku*) were coercive and destructive "correctives" pressed

forward by the hands of government. With them Shintô achieved for the first time the status of an independent religion, distorted though it was. During this period the "historical consciousness" of an indigenous religion called Shintô, existing in Japan since ancient times, clearly took shape for the first time. ... Separating Shintô from Buddhism cut Shintô off from the highest level of religious philosophy achieved by the Japanese up to that time and inevitably, moreover artificially, gave it the features of a primitive religion. Hence, while acquiring independence, Shintô declined to the state of a religion that disavowed being a religion (Kuroda 1981: 26).

Separated from the religious constraints of the Buddhist/Shintô syncretism, State Shintô became an instrument of ultra nationalism justified through Imperial infallibility, allowing the concept of the Emperor's armed forces (*kôgun*). A Japan Times article of August 11, 2001, just days before Prime Minister Koizumi's first visit to Yasukuni, reviewed *Hei-tachi no Senso* (Soldier's War), historian Tadatoshi Fujii's book about the conscripted soldier of the Imperial army. The article told of Imperial Japan developing "ideological tricks" and "elaborate social devices" to validate the war for the common soldier. By linking him with the Emperor through the armed forces, holy war (*seisen*) would justify a soldier's aggressive spirit (*kogeki seishin*) in his efforts to accomplish his mission. To those killed in action came the honor of receiving the Order of the Golden Kite (*Kinshi Kunsho*), with enshrinement at Yasukuni (Kawabata 2001).

The Imperial Bureaucracy Finds New Meaning

Upon defeat in 1945, the American-led Occupation headed by General MacArthur had a brief opportunity to disable Japan's military capability and to deliver democracy to the people. They would try to undo generations of indoctrination in the seven years spanning 1945 – 1952. In retrospect we see that time, and policy decisions on the part of the Americans, cut this mission short.

From the start of the Occupation, it is apparent a policy was established whereby much of the preexisting imperial apparatus was used as a necessary tool to accomplish the rehabilitation of Japan. Robert Ward, in a 1987 article on the Allied Occupation of Japan, mentions documents written in 1943 taken from files of Harley Notter, a State Department official involved in the Occupation planning. Ward assumes that the existence of these documents indicate early on that maintenance of the Emperor was a consideration of the State Department, with these ideas manifested in MacArthur's Occupation Policy (Ward 1987: 4). An excerpt from the May 25, 1943 State Department memo was entitled "Status of the Japanese Emperor."

The survival of the emperorship would be a potential asset of great utility, as an instrument not only for promoting domestic stability, but also for bringing about changes desired by the United Nations in Japanese policy. The very fact that the power to initiate amendments to the Japanese constitution is reserved to the emperor makes orderly constitutional change more readily feasible if the approach is through the emperor. A non-militaristic governing group would be in a better position to make reforms effective if it could speak in the name and with the authority of the emperor (Ward: 4).

The “Japanese Developmental State” of mega-bureaucracies running massive state agencies influencing the economic development of post-war Asia had its authoritarian genesis approved by the American occupiers. While the Occupation indicted first tier officials and bureaucrats under the Emperor for war responsibility and punishment, the Emperor was kept above the fray to be used as a tool in Japan’s reconstruction. Along with his authority much of the heretofore imperial bureaucracy was retained and empowered by the Occupation forces and used to implement reforms for future democratic and economic development. Being allowed to retrench under the auspices of the Occupation returned to the bureaucrats prestige lost in the defeat, allowing them to maintain their authority.

John Dower, in his work *Embracing Defeat*, states that contrary to the direct military control which accompanied the German defeat, the Occupation of Japan operated through the existing infrastructure, entailing working through the bureaucracy and the imperial system (Dower 1999: 212). Dower goes on to say that perhaps because of this policy, the potential for democratization from below may not have been allowed to flourish, being seen as generosity from above (Dower: 221).

By the time the constitutional revision was complete in November 1946, the initial priority of the Occupation goals had started to shift. The American needed to confront growing nationalism in Asia, the rising power of Mao in China, and problems surfacing in Korea. This resulted in a “reverse course” of American policy (Pempel 1987: 168), shifting priorities from demilitarization and democratic reforms to a more expedient economic policy based on capitalism. Often the pace of economic development was accelerated through reliance on the experience of the pre-war industrial groups (*zaibatsu*) which the US chose to bring back. In the next decade these industrial groupings would be labeled a more benign “*keiretsu*.”

The 1947 Constitution gave the defeated political bureaucracy the framework from which to accomplish democratic reform. This reform was left up to the politicians answering to SCAP, but operating through a bureaucracy that had continued from before and during the war. In an article on postwar Japanese bureaucratic reformation, T.J. Pempel cites a memo dated January 25, 1946 to MacArthur’s aide Courtney Whitney that recognized Imperial influence. “The imperial bureaucracy has been one of the mainstays of totalitarian Japan. Now that the military clique is broken and the financial clique is tottering, the bureaucracy alone remains unimpaired, its power relatively greater than ever before. In the turmoil of politics, it had successfully outlasted its erstwhile allies, military and economic...” (Pempel: 165).

The Occupation favored economic progress over democratic reforms when they chose to leave intact much of the pre-war bureaucracy. Robert Hall, an Educational Reorganization Office during the Occupation, earned a Ph.D. in Education at Columbia after the war. Regarding the return of prewar bureaucrats in charge of education he wrote: “The Allied Powers, and the Japanese people, dare not preserve so dangerous a tool for the manipulation of the schools and the thought of the nation” (Hall 1949a: 292). About the Occupa-

tion treatment of the bureaucracy he noted that:

One of the most serious mistakes which Occupation officials at the time made was that of allowing their own position as political rulers to betray them into an underestimation of the sagacity of the docile and apparently naïve Japanese with whom they worked. The Japanese were experienced bureaucrats and were quite appreciative of the mistakes the Occupation bureaucracy made... (Hall 1949a: 478).

Former Prime Minister Nakasone, himself a wartime government official, confirmed the pre- to post-war bureaucratic continuity in a 1998 article. “In the aftermath of World War II, Japan’s bureaucrats, who had previously answered directly to the Emperor, became civil servants and were expected to look to elected government figures for direction” (Nakasone 1998: 41).

Maruyama Masao’s 1950’s comments written during the war’s aftermath seemed to question how much power was actually in the hands of the newly elected government figures.

...a revolution ‘from without’ and ‘from above’ has a fundamental limitation. It is popularly regarded as an open secret nowadays that the present leaders in politics and business have practically the same ideologies and basis of power as the pre-war politicians and businessmen... (and) are getting instructions and advice from them behind the scenes.” (Maruyama 1950: 24).

Victory in Defeat: Shintô Finds Religion

In his 1947 memoirs, Truman’s Secretary of State, James Byrnes, wrote of the difficulty of reforming a Japan that had suffered under years of ultra-nationalism and Imperial Shintô. “The spiritual disarmament of a people is a much more difficult task than their physical disarmament. To instill the democratic content of the individual in the Japanese requires a social revolution ... accomplished permanently only if we make certain that a whole new generation of Japanese is educated in accordance with this democratic ideal” (Byrnes: 225).

In the years leading to war, Imperial Shintô had achieved the functional equivalent of religion for many Japanese. As such, the Occupation felt its exercise was a decision best left up to the individual. But this concept was one rooted in the American premise (evidenced in the U.S. constitution) that there exists a separation of religion and State. The modernization of Japan had been accomplished under the concept and socialization of *saisei itchi* (unity of government and religion) where the norm was a respect for the Imperial Way (*Kôdô*) and The Way of the Subject (*shinmin no michi*). Democratic individualism was the foreign element that had been introduced. Simply declaring a separation of religion and State did not make it so.

Since Meiji, differences between the orientations of Folk Shintô and Imperial Shintô had become blurred. Folk Shintô had been exploited to harness its power of national acceptance and local presence for purposes of national unification as eventually expressed in State Shintô. But with the Emperor serving as the political head of state, as well as head of the Shintô myth, politics merged with religion, culminating in a theocracy. Imperial Shintô became the “unofficial” State

Religion embodying political extremism with the fervor of religion.

To ban Shintô entirely would have been unfair to those who found value in the traditions of Folk Shintô; the *matsuri* (a festival celebrating life) at local Shintô shrines and *harae* rituals (rites of purification) were established customs in Japan. But if indeed the Emperor was the embodiment of Shintô, his presence as head of State merged religion and State. Thus SCAP erred when it applied a “Western” concept of religious freedom together with “separation of church and state” as it applied to State Shintô.

The involvement of the Emperor brought politics into any form of Shintô. The Occupation avoided individual infringement of religious freedom and attempted to separate “church and state” by instructing the Japanese government to stop any support, participation, or sponsorship of Shintô. This ban also extended to the educational system that was ordered to stop the dissemination of Shintô ideology through the schools in 1945.

Writing in 1949, Robert Hall mentions that in the early summer of 1945 in SWNCC (State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee) directives, together with introduction of democratic principles, religious freedom was stressed. The “Initial Post-Surrender Policy” August 29, 1945 document did not specifically mention Shintô, and a further SCAP Directive AG350 (October 22, 1945) deleted all reference to Shintô on the grounds that the Potsdam Declaration had specifically guaranteed the establishment of freedom of religion. (Hall 1949a: 72).

In Kyoko Inoues’ book *MacArthur’s Japanese Constitution*, transcripts reveal that during the parliamentary debate on the MacArthur Constitution occurring between June – September 1946, members of Parliament were concerned about what would become of the status of Shintô under the new constitution. In response to a question regarding the status of shrines, Minister of Education Tanaka Kotaro said that until recently the government’s official position had treated the shrines as non-religious institutions. This followed from prewar government policy that classified State Shintô as “non-religious,” thereby upholding the Meiji Constitution’s guarantee of religious freedom.

Tanaka went on to say, “following the spirit of the Potsdam Proclamation, and as required by the GHQ directive, shrines and the state have been separated. Therefore shrines are now being treated as religious corporation” (Inoue 1991: 138). It appears that Tanaka’s position was that the Occupation edict of religious freedom would apply to both “non-religious” State Shintô, as well as Folk Shintô. This would mean that the Emperor’s Shintô would receive the same protection as Folk Shintô.

Hall’s comments on State Shintô as religion, taken from his 1949 study of the Japanese Ministry of Education’s 1937 publication *Kokutai no Hongi*, may have mirrored Occupation concerns about religious status.

But if it were a religion, however repugnant, it had to be granted the same protection accorded other religions. (p. 41).
... How could the masses of the Japanese people be delivered from the ideological bondage and financial burden of state

Shintô without violating the personal religious liberties of the millions who apparently held this philosophy as a religious faith? Could an attack be made on a pernicious ideology without religious persecution?” (Hall 1949c: 45).

The Shintô prevalent at the time of the Occupation was the conclusion of a phenomenon that had developed for political reasons under imperial Japan, becoming the state religion for political control. As Holton concluded in his 1922 study, “the official cult of the Shintô Shrines is the state religion of modern Japan. Shintô must be classified as genuine religion. ... it is also a religion to which the government, actuated by political motives, accords special protection and support” (Holton 1922: 299). Being a political manifestation with State support, it conflicted with the Occupation’s goals in matters of separation of religion and State. The Occupation’s reluctance to ban State Shintô gave it continued legitimacy into the postwar era, a position that a tool of the Imperial Kokutai System should not have received.

The Occupation avoided what may have been construed as religious persecution to those followers of Shintô, either State or Folk. The October 8, 1945 military newspaper “Stars and Stripes” proclaimed in bold letters “Shintôism Will be Eliminated as Jap State Religion.” The article went on to clarify that any policy “will not affect Shintôism in so far as it is a religion of individual Japanese” (*Stars & Stripes* 1945a).

MacArthur’s directive of December 15, 1945 (SCAP Directive entitled “Abolition of Governmental Sponsorship, Support, Perpetuation, Control, and Dissemination of State Shintô”) attempted to separate state and religion. The December 17 issue of *Stars and Stripes* summarized this policy in an article called “SCAP Hits Core of State Shintôism,” detailing how free worship was to be cultivated, with a SCAP directive putting a stop to state financial support of, or participation in Shintô, and stopping its dissemination in the educational system, thus allowing Japanese “for the first time in 75 years ... to doubt publicly the deity of the Emperor.” The article explained that “State Shintô had corrupted a religious form that had been observed for many centuries,” and “Though the Emperor remains the spiritual head of the Shintô sect, he will no longer be able to visit shrines as part of a state function...but he will be allowed to visit the shrine as a private citizen” (*Stars & Stripes* 1945b).

As long as the emperor was the spiritual head of Imperial Shintô, he embodied the unification of religion and State, a concept contrary to the goals of the Americans. Hirohito was able to de-politicize himself to the satisfaction of MacArthur and his Occupation. Through his “Imperial Rescript Denying his Divinity,” of January 1, 1946, he obtained the status of an “individual private citizen”, broke the bonds of church and State, and deflected the possibility of further persecution against Shintô. Drafted by GHQ with translations and revisions by the cabinet and court (Bix 2001: 561), the proclamation allowed MacArthur to protect Hirohito from individual wartime responsibility and persecution, in return receiving the Emperor’s support in the reformation and democratization of Japan. Courtney Whitney, one of MacArthur’s top aides, wrote in 1956 of this occasion:

In a directive issued November 1945, MacArthur ordered state subsidization of Shintôism to cease. And on New Year's Day 1946 he received an unexpected assist from the Emperor, who voluntarily and publicly renounced the concept of his own divinity. ... MacArthur was doubly gratified because of the completely voluntary nature of the Emperor's action. ... Thereafter, in accordance with his principle of religious freedom, MacArthur permitted Shintô priests to continue their teachings, so long as church and state were separated (Whitney 1956:275).

Whitney writes that through this action MacArthur became one of the Emperor's chief supporters, even though the British and Russian allies wanted to include him in the lot to be tried as war criminals. "MacArthur stoutly resisted such efforts," advising Washington "he would need at least one million reinforcements should such action be taken," and "even more, the Emperor from the start became MacArthur's chief ally in the spiritual regeneration of Japan" (Whitney: 284).

By renouncing his divinity, Hirohito "officially" removed himself as theocratic agent of Shintô, satisfying the religious and political element of Occupation policy, with more aggressive persecution of State Shintô being cut short. In spite of the "official Rescript" of denial, to millions of Japanese indoctrinated in the post-Meiji imperial era, the Emperor was still a living kami central to their belief. To these the Emperor was a savior who had stopped the militarists and terminated the war. To MacArthur he was a tool to help in postwar rehabilitation. With Hirohito's survival the preservation of the chain from Imperial Japan to Democratic Japan was allowed to proceed unbroken. "Thus, at the very beginning of the Occupation the Japanese defensive strategy for protecting the kokutai and MacArthur's Occupation strategy coincided (Bix 2001: 545).

As pointed out in Kyoko Inoue's *MacArthur's Japanese Constitution*, instead of terminating the roots of Japanese ultra-nationalism (State Shintô), Hirohito's denunciation allowed these roots authority and eventual protection under the new constitution. The difference and separation between ordinary Shintô, spiritual in origin (*kyôha Shintô*) and shrine Shintô, political in function (*Jinja Shintô*) was blurred and confused (Inoue 1991: 126).

Expressing realization of the religious aberration that had been wrought upon Japan, the Kyoto philosopher Tanabe Hajime wrote in a letter dated August 27, 1945: "May there not possibly come a time when religion will be sought for the sake of people's spiritual peace and enlightenment? If so, it would signal that the period of repentance for the entire Japanese people had begun" (Tanabe 1986: xxxviii).

Yamato Spirit or Shintô Myth

From Meiji into the modern era, from feudalism to economic powerhouse, Japan has been unique as an Asian country able to compete head on with the Western powers. In the early days of modernization the ancient myths of *Yamato Damashii*, Japanese Soul or Spirit, uniquely Japanese, were used in the political modernization process to explain the unexplainable pace of material success, giving a sacred

context for the legitimacy for the new Meiji regime and setting the stage for Imperial Shintô.

The defeat of 1945 offered the opportunity to expunge both the legitimacy and myth of State Shintô. Instead the Allies and the Japanese civilian government endeavored to posit a lack of responsibility in the Emperor, blaming the war bureaucracy and gangster militarists (Dower 1999: 278) while not indicting the man in whose name the war was fought (Dower: 28). A new constitution established the Emperor as the symbol of the State, affording him the status and protection of the first eight Articles. The people received fundamental rights such as freedom of thought (Article 19), freedom of religion and prohibition on the State granting privileges or political authority to any organization (Article 20), freedom of speech (Article 21), and prohibition on the State expending public monies for the benefit of any religious institution (Article 89).

For some this freedom gave rise to a new form of deep contemplation that expressed apprehension about what had been misplaced and forgotten during the years State Shintô reigned. Japan's 1994 Nobel Prize winner Kenzaburô Ôe offers his opinion of the "Yamato Spirit" in his 1995 book *Japan, the Ambiguous, and Myself*. He compares the war tainted "*Yamato Damashii*" with the same term referred to by Murasaki Shikibu in the world famous 11th century novel *Tale of Genji*. Oe states that whereas Murasaki referred "to nothing more than a particular sensibility inherent in her fellow countrymen," not unlike "what Aristotle calls '*sensus communis*,' that is, a shared sensibility," the "Yamato spirit" after the Meiji Restoration of 1868 was used to unify the "people's cultural consciousness in the interests of creating a modern state...by stressing the absolute nature of the Japanese culture, with the Emperor as its central feature." The Yamato spirit assumed a role as a slogan for imperialist Japan (Ôe 1995: 18-19).

Ôe blames imperial absolutism, "which showed none of the tolerance and sensitivity that characterized the spirit to which Genji was referring." He writes, "I know firsthand about such fanaticism, since it was instilled in me as a child. Like everyone else at that time, I was made to believe this mad conviction so alien to the 'Yamato spirit' of Murasaki Shikibu" (Ôe: 20).

Acknowledging a wide range of opinions among Japanese today regarding the emperor system, Ôe expressed, "it is alarming to see it regaining any popular support, for it has the kind of power that tends to override differing views" (Ôe: 37). He raises an alarm regarding popular support for the old Meiji constitution, "which posited an absolute power transcending the principle of democracy" (Ôe: 37). If the support became more than mere nostalgia it could overcome "the determination we made in the post-war ruins of our collapsed effort at modernization—that determination of ours to establish the concept of universal humanity" (Ôe: 120). The universal humanity that Ôe speaks of is the spirit of tolerance and sensitivity that existed in the past, prior to imperial absolutism. Jesuit brother Kakishi Kadokawa refers to this original spirit in his 1993 essay, and hopes that modern Shintô is able to return to it.

In order to rid themselves of that narrow racism and to gain a world vision, Shintōists must go back to the original Kami-experience and deepen the experience of "infinite life," broaden it and discover that the radical formative power they come to know there continues to form not only Japan but all the world and all its races. ...they will surely come to see that men who are formed by that selfsame fundamental power are all brothers and that the peoples of the earth form one global community (Kadowaki 1993: 89).

It is in this spirit that a contemporary Japanese patriotism should be built, based on the tolerance that exists in the accommodation of Buddhism and the adaptability of Folk Shintō, predicated on an understanding of the role Imperial Shintō played in Japan's modernization. This would indeed be a virtue from which the world could learn.

Conclusion

A glimmer of hope for democratic government existed at the start of Meiji. The rise of State Shintō and the invention of the Imperial Myth in Japan's modernization exploited the rights of the people to participate in their government and diminished this hope. Even in defeat a privileged and political status was given to the Emperor, validated by continued inclusion in the postwar constitution. As seen in the galleries of Yasukuni's museum, special interests still enamored by the privileged position afforded the Emperor continue to exert effort to vindicate the wartime actions of the Empire.

With the Emperor's continued inclusion in the first eight articles of the Japanese Constitution, his political prerogative is extended into future generations, blurring the separation of religion and State. As evidenced by Yasukuni, this has allowed political incursions into religious expression, mocking the intent of the constitution.

At the beginning of 21st century, almost sixty years after the institution of the "MacArthur" Constitution, Japan's political parties have focused on the need to re-examine the postwar constitution. Article 9, which renounced war and the right to use force to settle disputes, receives the bulk of attention in the United States. Inherent in any discussion of Japan's reasserting itself militarily is the question of Japan's past imperial aggression and the potential for renewed political extremism.

With the political status afforded the Emperor under the current constitution this concern remains valid. A revision removing mention of the Emperor from the constitution would for the first time in Japan's modern period provide constitutional detachment between Emperor and State, fulfilling the mandated separation of religion and state. Then, any modification of Article 9 in the future should be seen in the light of Japan's right as a sovereign nation to defend itself, detached from any imperial legacy. While the Emperor would continue to hold historical and cultural importance, being excised from the constitution would allow Japan to exercise positive political authority for the region commensurate to its economic power. It is hoped that its Asian neighbors would be mature enough to accept Japan as a democratic nation in the 21st century.

While Article 9 is foremost in thoughts among Western observers, expansion of democratic expression appears to be a more important consideration among Japanese citizens. John Nathan, in his recent book *Japan Unbound*, mentions a survey on constitutional amendment conducted by the *Yomiuri*, *Nikkei*, and *Mainichi* newspapers in the months August - September 2000. While the majority favored amendment, "the two thousand surveys indicated that amending Article 9 was not the most pressing concern. The majority of respondents wanted 'an amendment to allow citizens to vote directly for prime minister in a national election'" (Nathan 2004: 166).

If this survey represents a potential groundswell among Japanese electorate, for the first time in Japanese history the people are starting to demand the political privilege guaranteed them in the constitution. Direct elections on a national level would put a representative of the people at a level where action could be initiated, with the people being empowered by their democratic strength. It is time for Japan to express a new patriotism, proud of accomplishments but aware of past mistakes, ignoring the relics of Imperial Shintō as exhibited at Yasukuni and its Yūshūkan Museum.

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The Sôka Gakkai in Australia and Quebec: An Example of the Globalization of a New Japanese Religion

by Daniel A. Metraux, Ph.D.

Abstract

A key characteristic of new Japanese religions, one that distinguishes them from more traditional religions in Japan, is their universalistic orientation and international missionary zeal. The goal of this paper is to portray the globalization of one new religion through an analysis of the growth of the Sôka Gakkai International (SGIA) in Australia. SGIA's appeal is both social and religious. The fast pace of life, constant movement of people, and a sizeable growth of immigrants have created a sense of rootlessness among many Australians. Thus, a primary factor for SGIA's growth in Australia has been its emphasis on the concept of community. SGIA's tradition of forming small chapters whose members often meet in each other's homes or in local community centers creates a tightly bonded group. SGIA members find their movement's style of Buddhism appealing because they say it gives them a greater sense of confidence and self-empowerment to manage their own lives in a more creative manner.

Introduction

The concept of "globalization" has become a hot topic throughout academia over the past few years and many of my colleagues and I have spent hours debating about its inherent nature, extent, and even its existence. The phenomenon of certain ideas, fashions or material goods transcending national boundaries is as old as recorded history, but what is new is the extent to which this phenomenon is being conceived and organized on such a global scale. Many commentators today describe globalization as a primarily Western phenomenon, the expansion of American or Western culture(s) to the rest of the world. While there is much truth to this speculation, one must also realize the contributions of other cultures to this emerging global culture. Japanese culture and technology continue to have considerable impact on the world, especially in East and Southeast Asia. Today people on every continent feel the impact of Japan in the cars they drive, the music they listen to and, in some cases, the religions they practice.

The goal of this paper is to study the phenomenon of the globalization of Japanese religion through an analysis of the growth of the Sôka Gakkai in two very different cultures, Australia and Quebec. One may call the Sôka Gakkai a global Buddhist movement because of the fact that it has built chapters in over two hundred countries and has, according to Sôka Gakkai International (SGI)¹ estimates, slightly more than two million foreign members. I have visited SGI chapters in over a dozen countries and have rarely seen a Japanese face present at many meetings. At the same time, however, members worldwide are practicing the same religion and are

following the same ritual practices as the estimated eight million Sôka Gakkai followers in Japan.

Sanda Ionescu, who has studied the SGI in Germany, raises some interesting questions about the globalization of ideologies and cultures:

To what extent can a religion, which has arisen under specific historical and cultural circumstances, become relevant to people in entirely different social, cultural and temporal contexts? What is the exact proportion of universality to cultural specificity that a religion should have in order to gain a following beyond its national borders? And how much does a religion entering a foreign culture with proselytizing intentions have to take into account the characteristics of the host culture?²

One of the most interesting characteristics of the new Japanese religions that distinguish them from more traditional religions in Japan is their "universalistic orientation and international missionary zeal."³ Japanese immigrants a century or more ago took their more traditional religions with them to the United States and elsewhere, but these religions attracted very little interest outside the Japanese communities and faded when later generations of ethnic Japanese assimilated into the local culture. Japanese new religions like Sôka Gakkai, however, are often introduced abroad by a Japanese member, but quite often later develop a largely non-Japanese following.

To succeed outside of its host culture, a religion should have certain universalistic orientations and be flexible enough to adapt certain culture specific aspects of its ideology to the host culture. The Sôka Gakkai's success⁴ stems partly from the fact that its ideology is based on "this-worldly or vitalistic, and therefore universally relevant conceptions of salvation in terms of health, harmony, happiness, wealth, etc., and have made the means of salvation accessible to all."⁵ Sôka Gakkai members I have interviewed in foreign chapters virtually all agree that the essential ideology of the Sôka Gakkai revealed in its interpretation of the teachings of the Lotus Sutra and in its patron Nichiren⁶ are of lasting value and are as relevant to their lives as they are to followers in Japan.

Japan's Sôka Gakkai has created a rapidly growing global community of like-minded members and independent chapters with Japan as its center. Sôka Gakkai members outside Japan have altered certain uniquely Japanese practices and customs⁷ while agreeing on the universal value and applicability of the major teachings of Sôka Gakkai Buddhism. The result is a rapidly growing international Sôka Gakkai community with many local variations. The Sôka Gakkai is thus a religious movement which matured under specific historical, geographical and social conditions, but which today is relevant to more than two million people worldwide who do not share the same language, history or cultural assumptions.⁸ The Sôka Gakkai in Melbourne may have cultural differences with the chapter in Manila or Montreal, but they are both instantly recognizable as Soka Gakkai.⁹

The goal of this research is to demonstrate how the Australian branch of the Sôka Gakkai (Sôka Gakkai International Australia or SGIA) and the SGI chapter in Quebec¹⁰ represent an aspect of the center-periphery process of Japan's globalization. The spread of SGI to Australia and Quebec from

Japan has led to the “deterritorializing and relativizing”¹¹ of the movement from an inherently Japanese faith practiced mainly by Japanese to a much more universal movement whose followers abroad are rarely Japanese and who in many cases have no particular affinity for Japan or Japanese culture.

Research Goals and Methodology

This research is part of a broader project of this writer to examine SGI in a variety of countries. I conducted research on SGI chapters in Canada and Quebec in 1995-97 and again in 2002 and in Singapore, Malaysia, Hong Kong and the Philippines in 1998-99 and, very briefly, in New Zealand 2003. The research in Quebec was part of a more extensive survey of SGI in Canada. I visited the Montreal headquarters of SGI on eight occasions to interview leaders and members and visited the Quebec City SGI community center on one occasion. I also traveled to the small town of Baie St. Paul north of Quebec City to interview an SGI leader and distributed a survey which generated close to fifty responses from members in Quebec.

I did research on SGI in Australia briefly in 2000 and 2003 and for a longer period in 2002 with an Australian scholar, Ben Dorman.¹² We conducted a nationwide survey of SGIA members and conducted a number of in-depth interviews.¹³

Some of the questions addressed are why the Sôka Gakkai with its strong Japanese roots has succeeded in establishing a solid foundation in Australia, but also why after roughly forty years it has not expanded more rapidly. We wanted to learn who joined SGIA and why. When we discovered that a very high percentage of the ethnic Asian members were not Japanese in origin, we wanted to learn why SGIA would appeal to such a broad mixture of Asians, many of whom expressed very little interest in Japanese culture and had very little contact with Japan or its people. In other words, we were searching for evidence that the SGI had become a global movement with applicability beyond its Japanese roots and cultural ties.

The Sôka Gakkai Legacy

Makiguchi Tsunesaburo (1871-1944), a Japanese educator and a devout lay practitioner of the Nichiren Shôshû (“True Sect of Nichiren”) sect, founded the Sôka Gakkai in the early 1930s as a support group for his educational ideas. However, by the late 1930s he and his younger disciple Toda Josei (1900-1958) had transformed the organization into a lay support group for the Nichiren Shôshû sect of Japanese Buddhism. Makiguchi and Toda were imprisoned in 1943 because of their refusal to accede to the government’s request that they incorporate various nationalistic Shinto practices into their group’s religious observances. Makiguchi died in prison in 1944, but Toda, released in 1945, rebuilt the Sôka Gakkai into a major religious movement in the 1950s. Toda’s successor Ikeda Daisaku (1928—)¹⁴ expanded the Sôka Gakkai in Japan and played a key role in SGI’s expansion abroad. The realization that the Sôka Gakkai became a highly successful lay Buddhist movement with its own strong leadership which had its social and political programs

independently of the sect did not sit well with Nichiren Shôshû, a conservative and very traditional Buddhist sect. The fact that the Nichiren Shôshû priesthood and the Sôka Gakkai were going in different directions caused a growing schism by the late 1970s that led to the formal separation of the two organizations in the early 1990s. Today the Sôka Gakkai is an independent lay religious movement dedicated to the propagation of its version of Nichiren Buddhism. The Sôka Gakkai grew rapidly in the immediate postwar era because its leaders focused on Buddhist teachings that stressed the happiness of self and others in one’s immediate environment. Happiness was understood in very concrete terms for millions of dispirited and hungry Japanese: food, health, finding a mate, and securing employment. Later in the 1960s and 1970s when Japan became more affluent, happiness was redefined in more philosophical terms to include “empowerment, character formation, and socially beneficial work...”¹⁵ The fact that the Sôka Gakkai is a distinctly lay religious movement has broadened its appeal in an increasingly secular age.

The Sôka Gakkai grew as a highly exclusivist movement which in its early days attracted considerable criticism for its strong method of proselytization (*shakubuku*), its attacks on and harsh criticism of other sects and religions, and for its vigorous political activities and its highly partisan political party, the Komeito. Today this once highly-negative image has mellowed somewhat because the Sôka Gakkai has softened its methods of conversion, has quieted its criticism of others while opening dialogues with some other sects, and because the Komeito has become a highly visible political partner of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party.¹⁶ Today’s more moderate and mellow Sôka Gakkai, while still subject to attacks by some elements of the Japanese media, is gradually becoming part of the Japanese media.

The Growth of Sôka Gakkai International

When tens of thousands of Japanese immigrated to North and South America a century ago, they built their own temples and invited Buddhist priests from Japan to tend to the needs of these entirely Japanese congregations. These older largely Buddhist congregations have declined in recent decades as later generations became assimilated into the native population. Japan’s contemporary NRMs, however, have become genuinely global or universal movements because their teachings have attracted non-ethnic Japanese faithful abroad and today survive as autonomous units. Today a number of Japanese NRMs such as SGIA, Mahikari, Zen and Tenrikyo are growing in Australia because they have successfully adapted rituals, languages, customs and leadership to non-Japanese contexts.¹⁷

SGI in particular has succeeded in developing a strong following in many countries¹⁸ because, as Peter Clarke notes, “though a very Japanese form of Buddhism, it appears capable of universal application: no one is obliged to abandon their native culture or nationality in order to fully participate in the spiritual and cultural life of the movement.”¹⁹ Sôka Gakkai leaders, while maintaining the essential elements of their faith, have released their form of Buddhism from its

inherently Japanese faith by skillfully adapting their religious practices to each culture that they seek to penetrate. They recruit local leaders who direct the foreign chapter free of any direct control from Tokyo, conduct all religious exercises and publish all documents in the native languages, and emphasize those traits that are important to the host culture. Clarke, for example, notes that SGI practices in the United States that appeal to many American members are “the absence of moralizing, the stress on individual choice and the need to take responsibility for one’s own actions.”²⁰

My research on SGI members in Canada, the United States and throughout Southeast Asia indicates that the Sôka Gakkai attracts followers because of what they perceive to be its strong message of peace, happiness, success and self-empowerment. Many adherents interviewed or surveyed by this writer believe that the Buddhism espoused by the Sôka Gakkai gives them some degree of empowerment over their personal environments, that through their hard work and devout practice they can overcome their suffering and find happiness here and now. They also find great satisfaction and sense of community joining with other people who follow the same faith. The practice of having small groups of members meet together regularly to pray, discuss personal and mutual concerns, and socialize as close friends is an important social reason for the success of the Sôka Gakkai not only in Japan, but abroad as well.²¹

Many of the younger SGI members in these countries are also very well educated. I was especially impressed by the large number of well-educated upwardly mobile ethnic Chinese members I met in Malaysia, Singapore, New Zealand and Australia. There seems to exist a strong affinity between a religious dogma that emphasizes “mental work” (attitudes and individual focus) and the well-educated who have to work very hard to attain their educational credentials. This phenomenon may well explain why this form of Buddhism is attractive to this particular social stratum and also helps address why the Japanese origin of the Sôka Gakkai does not seem to matter very much to these non-Japanese converts.²²

The Sôka Gakkai in Australia

The Sôka Gakkai organization in Australia is one of several Buddhist organizations in Australia that follows one distinct school of Buddhism and has a multi-ethnic membership.²³ SGIA traces its origins to 13 May 1964 when a visit to Australia by Ikeda Daisaku encouraged a handful of Japanese resident members and white Australians to form a Melbourne chapter. The first leader, Dr. Tom Teitei, worked vigorously to organize the first chapters and to mold a national organization. By May 2003 there were between 2500-3000 members from an estimated 50 different ethnic groups spread over the major urban areas of the country.²⁴ The movement grew slowly in the mid-1960s and through the late 1970s its largely white and ethnic Japanese membership remained small, but it grew more rapidly in the 1980s and 1990s and early 2000s when many younger ethnic Chinese immigrants and smaller numbers of Indians and Koreans joined the movement. SGIA has won and lost many members over the years, but overall membership continues to grow.

SGIA, like most other SGI chapters outside of Japan, is fairly autonomous in the management of its own day-to-day affairs, but it maintains strong links with the Sôka Gakkai in Japan and is fairly responsive to requests from the Tokyo office for changes in changing ritual practices and the like. SGIA is fully responsible for selecting its own leaders and raising its own funds for day-to-day operations. While there were two paid employees who managed the head SGIA office in Sydney, all other leaders worked on a voluntary basis while pursuing their own careers outside of the movement. A major financial gift from Tokyo facilitated the construction of the Sydney Community Center a few years ago, but SGIA administers its activities and facilities and publishes its own journals on the roughly \$US 180-190,000 it raises each year from member contributions.²⁵

There is considerable communication between SGIA and the SGI Tokyo office. SGI sends study materials for foreign chapters to include in their various local publications, and once in a while an SGI leader from Japan will make a brief courtesy visit. SGIA General Director Hans van der Bent and Vice Director Yong Foo often attend meetings and SGI festivals and workshops in Japan and elsewhere in Tokyo, but they are responsible for providing organizational leadership and guidance for SGIA members.

Today more than two-thirds of SGIA members and well over eighty percent of younger faithful are ethnic Asians originating from Chinese communities in Southeast Asia and Hong Kong as well as native immigrants from Japan, Korea and India.²⁶ Our research indicates that SGIA has developed strong roots in a number of communities nationwide and the prognosis for its gradual expansion and long-term survival seems good.

Through our research we determined that the appeal of SGIA and its particular demographic makeup appear to result from its combination of an individualistic ethic and its emphasis on a family-like community. Other factors helping SGIA grow include its ability to offer its growing Asian membership an opportunity to be together with other Asians and the chance for members through conversion to Buddhism to reestablish a viable connection with their Asian heritage.

The results of our surveys and interviews often paralleled findings from other recent research done on SGI in Great Britain, the United States, and Canada.²⁷ The major difference between SGI in Australia and New Zealand was the fact that the membership there has become largely Asian while chapters in the United States, Britain, and Canada have a much broader ethnic mix that include many Blacks and people from Central and South America and the Caribbean as well as Asian and Caucasian members.

SGIA as a Representative Buddhist Group in Australia

Australia offers a rich diversity of Buddhist sects and temples. There are now more than ninety Buddhist temples and organizations in New South Wales, sixty-five of them in Sydney. There are numerous Zen, Tibetan, Vietnamese and other Buddhist denominations throughout Australia. A rapidly growing Taiwanese-based sect, Fokuangshan, has

temples in Brisbane, Melbourne, and Perth as well as a huge temple-complex near Wollongong.²⁸

While SGIA represents only a small segment of Australia's overall Buddhist population, the composition of the Sōka Gakkai closely resembled that of the overall Buddhist profile in Australia, especially in terms of age (relative youth) and European-Asian membership distribution.

There were very few Buddhists in the 1960s and early 1970s and the proportion of active white Australian Buddhists to the whole Buddhist population reflects the small size of SGI and its general membership profile of the same period. SGIA's growth in the late 1970s and during the 1980s paralleled the modest increase in the number of Buddhists in Australia overall. The numbers of Buddhists and SGIA members accelerated in the early and mid-1990s and moved up even faster in the late 1990s and early 2000s.²⁹

Buddhism has developed a very favorable and respected position in many Western societies including Australian recent decades. Thus, when Australia opened itself to Asian immigration in the early 1970s, it is not surprising that many immigrants would bring their Buddhism with them and that they would attract some attention from white Australians. Particularly interesting is the number of second generation Asians who were born in Australia or who immigrated there as young children who have adopted Buddhism. Their interest in Buddhism may be part of their efforts to learn about and identify with their native cultures.³⁰ We found a parallel phenomenon in SGIA where many younger members came from a family background that was largely Buddhist, but where the members themselves had expressed very little interest in organized religion before joining SGIA.

Recent censuses in Australia indicate that more than 70% of Australian Buddhists were born outside Asia, the majority in Vietnam. Less than twenty percent of Australian Buddhists were born in Australia, and even here a quarter belongs to the second generation of Asian immigrants. Many of the early waves of Asian Australians came from Vietnam, but there were also considerable numbers of ethnic Chinese from Hong Kong, Malaysia, Taiwan and Singapore as well as immigrants from mainland China, the Philippines, India, South Korea and Cambodia.³¹ The largest single ethnic group was Vietnamese, who comprise nearly one-third of Buddhists in Australia. Ethnic Chinese Buddhists came to Australia from many places including Malaysia, Hong Kong, Taiwan, mainland China, and Singapore. There was a smaller group of Buddhists from Theravada countries like Sri Lanka, Burma and Thailand. A handful of Tibetan Buddhist immigrants attracted a number of Anglo-Australians who found appeal in the mystique of the Vajrayana tradition.³² Throughout the 1990s approximately 17 percent of Asian immigrants to Australia thought of themselves as being Buddhist.³³ Since most immigrants arrived in Australia between the ages of 20 and 40, a huge majority of Australia's Buddhists were in their 20s, 30s and early 40s. (Adam and Hughes, 49) Well over 80 percent of Buddhists residing in Australia in 1991 were born elsewhere in Asia and had immigrated to Australia from their native lands. Only four percent of Australia's Buddhists were Australian born and had both parents who were Australian

born, a further indication that most of Australia's Buddhists were ethnic Asians.

There are about 170 different Buddhist groups in Australia representing all the major schools of Buddhism. Most of these groups are considered ethnic as their members are drawn from one of the major Asian communities. There are other generally quite small groups whose members are Anglo-Australian and are more interested in a general form of Buddhism rather than in any specific sect.³⁴

One can thus reasonably conclude that much of the startling growth in the number of people practicing Buddhism since the 1970s can be attributed to the huge influx of Asians from Southeast Asia and, as Judith Snodgrass has discovered, a strong revival in interest in Buddhism by second-generation Asians or in a few cases young Asians who, having arrived in Australia with no strong religious ties, became interested in Buddhism as a way of identifying with their Asian heritage.³⁵ The percentage of European Australians who claimed Buddhist ties before Asian immigration began in earnest in the 1970s was quite high, but their percentage dropped to well below ten percent by 1991 because of the major influx of ethnic Asian Buddhists.³⁶

SGIA in some respects fits the pattern of at least some of the other Buddhist groups in Australia. Its increasingly Asian membership parallels the profile of other Australian Buddhists as does the general age range. Most Sōka Gakkai members are in their twenties, thirties and forties and an increasing number were born in other Asian countries and immigrated to Australia either as temporary residents—in many cases as students—or to establish long-term or permanent residency. Very few of SGIA's younger followers were born in Australia and have two parents who are also Australian born. Some younger SGIA faithful were already members in their native lands—often Malaysia, Singapore or Hong Kong—while others came with no particular faith and adopted SGI Buddhism after their arrival.

There are, however, some factors that make SGIA rather distinct. SGIA is a very broad multi-ethnic movement. There is an important though proportionally declining white Australian membership and a growing ethnic Chinese component from Malaysia and elsewhere in Southeast Asia, but other ethnic groups also have healthy representations including a fair number of ethnic Japanese (about 20 percent), Koreans (about five percent), and Indian members (about five percent).

Demographics of SGIA Membership

Our surveys and interviews of SGIA leaders and members in 2000, 2002 and 2003 indicated a stable and tightly knit organization which appeared more interested in the welfare of its members and the building of a healthy Buddhist community than in indiscriminately signing up members whose interest or faith was only superficial. A person is considered for membership after he or she regularly attends several meetings over a period of several months, shows genuine interest in the movement, and has studied the basic teachings and philosophy of Nichiren Buddhism. The emphasis on conversion through dialogue has meant that many new members were converted by

family members and, to a lesser extent, by close friends. This development in turn has meant slow steady growth, but also less turnover of membership.

Our surveys indicated that SGIA is a largely family-oriented movement. Two-thirds of all members and three-quarters of young members had other close family members in the movement. While just over half of older members were the first members of their family to join SGIA, close to three-quarters of younger members had other members of their family in the organization when they joined. Just over half of older members were introduced to SGIA by other family members compared to about three-quarters of younger members. Other members were introduced by close friends. Only a tiny handful was introduced by work colleagues, fellow students, or strangers.

Overall, there are three female members to every two males in SGI. The female-male ratio is slightly higher among older members (those in their thirties and above) than among younger faithful (20s and very early 30s). Surveyed SGIA members were also overwhelmingly urban. More than half of those surveyed lived in suburbs of large cities while another quarter lived within big cities. Slightly more than ten percent lived in or near medium sized cities while another ten percent resided in small towns or rural areas.

Although SGIA members who joined in the 1960s and 1970s recounted that during the early years of the SGIA, members tended to be older with a roughly even ratio between European and Asian (largely Japanese) members, today the demographic picture has changed markedly. While ethnic Japanese dominated the Asian membership in the early days of SGIA, today they constitute less than one-quarter of the Asian group. Slightly less than two-thirds of Asians are ethnic Chinese with much smaller groupings of Korean, Indian and other Southeast Asian members. This trend toward larger proportions of Asian members is in contrast to patterns in the Sôka Gakkai chapters in the United States, Canada and Great Britain where Asian members are decreasing as a proportion of the membership, and younger members tend more to resemble the population as a whole in terms of ethnic diversity.³⁷

Another important factor is that SGIA members tended to be very well educated. Older members in their 30s and 40s were evenly divided between high school and university graduates, but younger members in their twenties or very early thirties were in general better educated. Well over half of the younger group said that they were university graduates, and another quarter said that they were pursuing a university degree. About ten percent of the younger members said that they had or intended to receive some form of graduate degree.

SGIA members are employed in a very diverse range of jobs and professions. A vast majority of older members were employed or self-employed, but there were also a few who had gone back to school or who were retired on a pension. There were large groups of nurses and other health care professionals, public servants, people involved in business and the financial sector, teachers at all levels, artists and musicians, secretaries, pharmacists as well as self-employed

business owners, computer specialists, and journalists. A number of the older members were back in school to complete either their undergraduate or graduate degree. Younger members included about a third still attending a university. Younger members no longer in school worked in a wide variety of jobs, but a higher percentage were involved in white collar professions or the arts than older members. About ten percent of older members were full-time homemakers, but there were virtually none among younger members.

Roughly two-thirds of the older members were married or living with a full-time partner while a quarter were single. Only a tiny handful had been divorced, widowed or separated. On the other hand, about two-thirds of younger members in their 20s and early 30s were still single with the rest either married or living with a partner. Less than ten percent were divorced or separated.

Only a minority of current SGIA members (40%) had any formal religious affiliation before they became members (60% Christian, 25% Buddhist, 7% Taoist and 7% Hindu), and only about 15% were highly committed to another religion. A third of those surveyed—including roughly a quarter of Caucasian members—had actively practiced another form of Buddhism or another East Asian faith at some point of their lives prior to joining SGI.

Another interesting find is the affiliation with and concerns about Japan by most members. Only about a third of members surveyed said that they had been persuaded to join or sponsored by an ethnic Japanese member—and most of these were themselves Japanese. The rest had been converted or sponsored by a non-ethnic Japanese member. When asked if they had any particular interest in any aspect of Japanese culture, only about half replied in the affirmative. Clearly, most SGIA members were not practicing this religion because of its particular affiliation with Japan.

Explanations for Patterns of Membership

While SGIA originated from a Japan-based movement, most members were attracted by the fact that it was a Buddhist movement whose members appeared to be very happy and successful in their lives and whose organization exuded a sense of warmth, harmony, and a welcoming spirit to new members. A young Caucasian member noted, "SGIA is indeed a Buddhist movement from Japan, but its message and appeal is universal. I have become a Buddhist, not a follower of Japanese Buddhism."

Another probable source of SGIA's appeal, especially to the movement's increasingly Asian younger membership, is the fact that SGIA offered a place to socialize with other Asians, even if from different countries. They could join in activities with other young people from their country or culture and develop a social base in a nation with a very different culture. SGIA membership also provided the opportunity to become acquainted with people from other cultures including some Caucasian Australians. SGIA has demonstrated a general pattern of outsiders—immigrants, minorities, gays and lesbians—finding welcome, acceptance and community.

Conversations with several ethnic Chinese SGI members from Malaysia and Singapore members in May 2003 revealed that while Sôka Gakkai Buddhism was an important reason for joining, the social factor was critically important as well. Coming to Australia for school or a job offered a real opportunity for them to advance in life, but they had to sacrifice ties back home with friends and family. If they had Malaysian or Singaporean friends or heard of a place where they could meet fellow countrymen, they would certainly take advantage of these opportunities.

Since a number of now middle-aged ethnic Chinese SGI members from these and other Southeast Asian countries had joined SGIA, thus forming a solid group of members in SGIA, it is not surprising that other immigrants from these countries would become familiar not only with these SGIA members, but also with the organization itself. Southeast Asian ethnic Chinese membership thus began to mushroom at a rapidly accelerating rate.

Conversion to Buddhism, for some, appeared to be a means of reconnecting with an Asian heritage. This hypothesis is supported by the fact that less than half of current membership had any formal religious affiliation before they became members and only a third of those surveyed had actively practiced another form of Buddhism or another East Asian faith prior to joining SGI. I found a very similar phenomenon in New Zealand and in Canada/Quebec, which are also countries with rapidly growing Asian immigrant populations.³⁸

Based on our interviews we discovered that SGIA meetings had what could be described as a therapeutic effect to some members.³⁹ Many surveyed members insisted that SGIA provided for both their religious and social needs, functioning as a support group in times of need and as the basis for a social outing. It offered a ready-made community center for the newcomer and magnet for somebody seeking greater happiness in life. Members told us that there was something missing in their lives or that they were sad, lonely or depressed. A friend or family member suggested that they attend an SGIA meeting at a cultural center or at a member's home. The newcomer was soon attracted by the warm sense of "family" or "community" plus other members' recollections of how miserable their lives were before joining and testimonies of how they had found true happiness in life as Buddhists after chanting regularly and becoming a devout member. One member noted:

What appeals to me most about SGIA is the idea of Buddhism in action - a spiritual family chanting, studying and working for others at a local level—being there for family, friends, strangers, different cultural groups and the environment—and globally when we deal with the wider issues that grow from our work at home such as world peace, education, and eliminating poverty.

This sense of community was very important for Australian members. The fact that many members found SGIA to be an open, tolerant, and caring community was especially important for immigrants new to Australian life. SGIA provided a ready-made community containing a diverse group of white Australians and Asian-Australians from virtually every region or country who could extend a wel-

coming hand to a newcomer from Malaysia, Korea, Hong Kong or Japan who may not have had any roots in the community. Newcomers are very welcome and very often find SGIA to be their port of entry and social base while entering Australian society. I met a number of Asian exchange students whose initial contact with SGIA was active members from their city or country. It is also interesting to note that SGIA today attracts a small but growing number of openly gay members because they feel that they are accepted and treated well by fellow members.⁴⁰

Our surveys and interviews indicated that at least some of these members were attracted to SGIA because of the movement's doctrine that members need to take responsibility for their own lives and circumstances. They felt that the movement gave them control over their own destinies so that they can create their own happiness in life. They felt motivated by SGI leaders and study materials that tell them that they can readily advance in life through their own hard work, strong faith and discipline. I found this factor to be an important part of SGIA's appeal to white-collar professionals not only in Australia, but also in other areas where I have researched SGI chapters.

A key ingredient of SGIA success has been its ability to maximize lay participation and its ability to work as a lay religious movement. The decline in the credibility of organized religions and increased debate over the very existence of an anthropomorphic deity have opened the way for religious organizations such as SGIA that insist that each member has a strong responsibility not only for his destiny, but also that of his fellow members.

Members were virtually unanimous in expressing that the quality of their lives had greatly improved after joining SGIA. Most said that they had become calmer, more self-confident and happier in their work and in relationships with family, friends and colleagues. Significant numbers related that they had become more optimistic and were better able to make clear and informed decisions about their lives. Virtually everybody surveyed said that they had they had chanted to realize a particular goal or set of goals and that they had achieved many of their desired results.⁴¹

It is also important to note that joining SGIA, while a major commitment of Buddhist faith, does not preclude the average member from leading a very ordinary Australian life. Membership does require some degree of commitment and service to the organization, but in most cases not enough to significantly affect one's social and professional life outside the movement. Indeed, the general proportion of a member's life devoted to SGIA does not seem that much different from that of members of my own church in Virginia. According to our survey, the average SGIA member attends about one meeting a week and a significant number attend two, though more active members might attend more. And, as Hammond and Machacek noted about SGI-USA members, those who join the movement "had to give up very little of their former way of life. Conversion, apart from learning to chant, entailed only minor behavioral change; whatever tension converts experienced because of their decision to join Soka Gakkai was therefore minimized."⁴² Based on our own observations, much about SGIA resembled SGI-USA in this sense at least.

SGIA membership was also not very disruptive in terms of members' everyday activities. Most maintained some close friendships with non-members and had jobs and careers not at all related to SGIA.

Another factor that enhanced a stable membership is that most SGIA members simply did not have to endure the social criticism from family, friends and colleagues that their counterparts in Japan often experience. The Sôka Gakkai in Japan is a high profile multi-million member movement that is deeply involved in politics and a variety of other social programs. By contrast, many Japanese have regarded the Sôka Gakkai as an extreme movement and many members have told me that they have suffered from the criticism of family or peers. Since SGIA is quite small and not well-known in Australian society, very few members have experienced any criticism at all.

The Sôka Gakkai in Quebec ⁴³

In May 2002 I took a dozen of my Mary Baldwin College students on an in-depth study tour of Quebec with detailed stops in Montreal, Quebec City, and Ottawa. The course had two educational objectives, to study the current state of the separatist movement in this very francophone province and to analyze Quebec and Canada's role in a global environment. Since I had devoted a lot of attention in the mid-1990s to research on the growth of chapters of Japan's Sôka Gakkai in Quebec and Ontario, I secured focus-group meetings with resident Canadian Sôka Gakkai members who provided stimulating views not only on the Quebec political scene, but also about their uniquely Japanese form of Buddhism that has secured a small but firm foothold in French Canada.. The visits to the Sôka Gakkai (Sôka Gakkai International—Canada; SGI-Canada) culture centers provided a clear view of the globalization of Japanese religions that paralleled what we discovered in Australia—only minutes away from the famed Plains of Abraham one could have a very intense encounter with a form of Japanese Buddhism practiced by an entirely white francophone group.

The Sôka Gakkai's growth in Quebec is strikingly similar to its experiences in Australia and other countries where SGI has developed strong ties. The Sôka Gakkai established its first roots in Canada in the early 1960s with local chapters in Toronto, Montreal and British Columbia. Today there are between 5,000-6000 members nationwide with perhaps a thousand or more in Quebec and neighboring areas such as Ottawa. Membership growth is very slow, but steady and every effort is made to keep SGI out of the public eye.⁴³

The traditional image of Quebec is one of a proud yet backward agricultural society under the firm grip of the Roman Catholic Church, but since the early 1960s, Quebec society had become engulfed in the swift changes brought about by the Quiet Revolution. The Church lost its dominant place, education and other institutions were soon in secular hands, and Quebec society became increasingly industrial and urbanized. Today Quebec is a highly modern, wealthy, secular, cosmopolitan and sophisticated society.

Quebec experienced a metamorphosis into a modern urban and post-industrial society that was now in close

contact with the rest of the world. The subsequent growth of the nationalist movement, election of a Parti Québécois government in 1976, and language legislation mandating the use of French in schools, offices and other aspects of public life drove tens of thousands of anglophone Quebeckers and businesses to Ontario and elsewhere.. They were replaced by large numbers of immigrants from all over the world, including Asia, Latin America, and the West Indies, who have made Montreal a very cosmopolitan city.

The arrival of many immigrants and the rapid secularization of Quebec society opened the way to a wide variety of religions and religious beliefs. Quebec has had an old Jewish community since the 1700s, but today Quebec is home to a variety of non-Christian/Jewish religions⁴⁵ that are growing rapidly due in part to the increasingly multi-culturalization of Quebec society, especially in Montreal. It must be noted that while less than a quarter of Quebeckers go to church on a regular basis, four of five Quebeckers today still affirm their belief in God and two-thirds believe in the death and resurrection of Jesus. Four-fifths call themselves Christians while most of the rest profess no interest in religion at all. Less than two percent in Canada and only about one percent in Quebec identify actively with non-Christian religions.⁴⁶

SGI in Montreal grew from the inspired efforts of a Japanese businessman and other members in the 1960s and 1970s while much of the success in the Quebec City region results from the pioneering efforts of the late Francoise Labbe in the tiny village of Baie St. Paul. Labbe was an aspiring artist who left her poor village to study art in Paris on a scholarship in the 1960s. She joined SGI in Paris and returned to Baie St. Paul as a dedicated Buddhist. Despite rampant scorn from many other villagers, she converted a number of younger residents while building a museum dedicated to Quebec folk art. Today due mainly to her efforts, Baie St. Paul is a major art and tourist center and her large museum is flourishing. Her first convert, Daniel Dery, is a college teacher in Quebec City and SGI chapter coordinator there.

According to a survey conducted by this writer in the mid-1990s, females outnumber males. Older members tend to be female, but younger members are almost all equally divided in terms of sex. Although SGI membership in Quebec is quite diverse in terms of ethnic origin, the vast majority outside of Montreal are francophone Quebeckers while Montreal members included almost equal numbers of francophones, ethnic Asians and immigrants from other countries and anglophones.

Older members in Quebec generally became members in their 20s and 30s and have remained in the movement for many years. The median age for joining the movement was about 23-25 years and the median age of current members was about 35-36 years. Although SGI members in Quebec encompass people of very different educational backgrounds, members as a whole are very well educated. Most members have a college or university degree and a significant minority had graduate degrees as well.

Typical francophone members grew up in Catholic families and were practicing Catholics as children and young

adolescents, but they almost all quit the Church during their high school years and found no other religious “home” before adopting Nichiren Buddhism. They indicate that they found little satisfaction or benefit from Catholicism and had been searching for a new source of spiritualism in their lives. When asked why they joined, why they remained in the movement, and what benefits they got from membership, one typical response was:

I joined because I was in my 20s and unsure of my direction in life. I was looking for a religion that took me as I was and offered a source of wisdom to couple with all of my desires in life in Quebec. The members who introduced me and looked after me soon became good friends. I stay a member because I found benefit from practice. The biggest benefit from membership on a personal level is being able to grow, develop wisdom, good fortune and the confidence to overcome obstacles, without leaving society, without becoming someone else. My daily activities are *gongyo* and *daimoku* twice a week for 45-60 minutes. There are on average 3-4 meetings a week including planning and district meetings.

My students and I were surprised at the very cosmopolitan nature of the over 200 members who attended the worship program at the Montreal Culture Center that Sunday in early May. Perhaps half the people were white and there seemed to be roughly an equal number of anglophones and francophones—but it is hard to tell for sure since virtually every member seemed well-educated and equally at home in both French and English. But we also met a number of ethnic Chinese, a couple of Africans, and an impressive array of people from a variety of other cultures. There were people from all age groups, but more young than old. Most were either advanced students or professionals with an impressive number of artists, musicians and teachers and virtually everybody seemed to be middle class.

As was the case in Australia, roughly half of the Asian members interviewed stated that they had been members of SGI before moving to Montreal; the rest had converted when encountering SGI in Quebec. Many Asian members said that the initial appeal of SGI was the fact that they found companionship with other compatriots who are SGI members, a phenomenon we found to be true with other non-Asian immigrant faithful.

We received an equally warm welcome when we attended an SGI discussion meeting in Quebec City three days later. The meeting was held in two large rooms in an office complex that was once the main bus station for Quebec. The membership is tiny when compared with Montreal and is generally white and francophone, thus corresponding with the local population. But the demographics otherwise corresponded with the Montreal counterpart.⁴⁷

Members interviewed in Montreal and Quebec joined for many of the same reasons that their counterparts in SE Asia and Australia did. Many native Quebec members spoke angrily of their traditional Catholic upbringings criticizing the autocratic nature of nuns and priest and their failure to find any satisfaction in the directed teachings of a Church that provided them with very little independence of thought. They state that they were willing to try SGI because of its ability to demystify Buddhism and to demonstrate that it has

universalistic doctrines that can apply equally well to people in Tokyo as in Montreal. They appreciate the fact that they are provided with a clear spiritual package that is easy to understand but deep enough to require continued study. They feel liberated and fulfilled, happier and more self-confident in life. One member, a middle-aged college teacher from Trinidad who came to Montreal to do graduate work and who joined SGI in Montreal in 1975 told this writer in 1995 that:

In 1975 when I started to practice true Buddhism, I was full of anxiety. I had recently become a single parent with a young child and was working on my master's thesis... Almost all of my *daimoku* [chanting] during those first years was directed toward my parenting situation, overcoming the blinding insecurity and anger at being on my own, and raising a small child. Steadily, my relationship with my former husband began to improve. Given my tendency not to forgive or forget, I have had clear proof of the power of the *Gohonzon* to transfer suffering and delusion into self-control and an increasing awareness of the law of cause and effect. I have used my Buddhist practice to overcome a lack of confidence and....to find true happiness in life.

Proselytization is done almost entirely through word of mouth. Most members we met in Montreal and Quebec joined after accepting a personal invitation to attend SGI events from a friend, colleague or family member. A typical sequence was a Quebec woman who joined while single but who converted her husband after their marriage. Their children became members as did her sister, her husband and his brother. Friends and colleagues also often become members in much the same way a colleague suggested that I attend his church when I first moved to Virginia.

Evangelical Nichiren Buddhism in the guise of the Soka Gakkai has found a welcome niche in Quebec because it has adapted itself to Quebec culture without losing the core of its inherently Japanese Buddhist teachings. The worship service we attended in Montreal was no different in both style and substance than ones I have attended in Japan or in SE Asia. But the leadership is very local, local cultural customs are encouraged, and every attempt is made to reach out to both anglophone and francophone communities in their own languages. Members and guests at a general session in the Montreal culture center could use earphones to hear simultaneous translations in both French and English.

Richard Hughes Seager, who has studied SGI in the United States, stresses that that SGI's emphasis on multiculturalism is essential to its broad appeal. “Given the increasingly complex nature of American society, the multicultural mix in Sôka Gakkai—in terms of ethnicity, race, gender, sexual orientation, and social class—is one of its outstanding achievements... The break with Nichiren Shoshu contributed to an egalitarian accent on issues of race and gender.”⁴⁸ One finds a very close parallel with SGI chapters in Quebec. Members eagerly embraced an inherently Japanese religion without themselves having in many cases any particular interest or attachment to Japan. We found a tiny handful of ethnic Japanese members in Montreal, but none in Quebec City.

Another reason for SGI's modest success in Quebec is its emphasis on the concept of community. The quick pace of life

in a rapidly changing society, constant movement of people from one location and job to another, and the many foreign-born immigrants lack roots and meaningful ties to the community. The Sôka Gakkai's tradition of forming small chapters whose members often meet in each other's homes or community center creates a tightly bonded group of neighbors who work and socialize together on a frequent basis. The new-comer to a neighborhood or town finds a ready-made group of friends who form the core of SGI. SGI provides its membership with companionship with like-minded people, a direction to channel their spirituality, and a new sense of confidence and direction in life. The fact that SGI is adamantly a lay movement makes it all the more welcome in an increasingly secular society.

Perhaps what is most striking about SGI Quebec is just how ordinary it is. Unlike my small Episcopalian church in Staunton Virginia, SGI is an entirely lay organization. But like my church, local SGI chapters in Quebec choose their own leaders, finance their own operations, and conceptualize and run their own programs and publications. Their religious unit is not really any different from any other church parish in Quebec, a small active religious community whose members meet several times a month but who otherwise carry on very ordinary lives in the outside world.

SGI is a new participant in the realm of Quebec religious life, but has already built itself a small but solid base that will grow slowly in time.

Conclusion

Sôka Gakkai is able to overcome its Japanese-based cultural baggage because its members in Australia and Quebec believe that its core teachings are highly relevant to the world they live in today. They find that this religion helps them fulfill their spiritual needs and that they can "maximize their potential" through this practice. Many SGIA members state emphatically that this practice helps them increase their "creative energy" and allows them to contribute to the realization of such ideals as world peace.

Their greatest achievement, however, is their discovery of what they feel is their Buddha nature inside themselves. They feel that this find is a common element they share with all citizens of the world and that is what makes SGI a truly global movement without any particular ties to any culture. Many SGIA and Quebec members relate how their religion helps them to remove the "shackles" which they believe restricted their world view in the past. They feel that they have moved away from a very parochial way of life to a perception that they are global citizens on a quest to realize world peace. They see their Buddhism as the key to the creation of a cleaner, greener, safer and more peaceful planet.

SGIA and Quebec members also find solace in the fact that their religion gives them the opportunity to partake in activities in a highly conducive community of like-minded people. Younger Asian members in both countries, mainly in their 20s and 30s, find comfort in the company of other compatriots and in the practice of a religion (Buddhism) that was important to their parents and grandparents, but which many of them were not active in prior to joining SGIA or SGI Canada.

Sôka Gakkai Buddhism has succeeded in shedding enough of its purely Japanese elements and has enhanced enough universalistic qualities to develop at least a small following in countries like Australia and Canada and tens of thousands of members in places like South Korea and the United States. Members appreciate the universalistic message of the Sôka Gakkai and have accepted those aspects which they consider to be essential to Sôka Gakkai Buddhism including basic teachings, language of prayer, and its organizational structure. SGI has made enough adaptations to local cultures, such as the creation of separate French and English-language meeting groups in Quebec, to reduce complaints that the movement is "too Japanese" or "too Asian" in its orientation. This flexibility will probably allow SGI to continue its growth on a global scale in years to come.

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ENDNOTES

1. Sôka Gakkai International administers the worldwide Sôka Gakkai movement from the organization's headquarters in Tokyo.
2. Ionescu, "Adapt or Perish," p. 183.
3. Cornille, "New Japanese Religions in the West: Between Nationalism and Universalism," p. 10.
4. The term "success" is, of course, a highly debatable topic. One can say that the Sôka Gakkai is "successful" because it has spread very rapidly abroad since the late 1960s, but the fact that it has only a few thousand members in such countries as Canada or Australia does not as yet make it a major force abroad.
5. Cornille, p. 28.
6. The Sôka Gakkai bases its teachings on its interpretation of the teachings of Nichiren (1222-1282), the founder of Japan's only native school of Buddhism. Sôka Gakkai members, like other followers of Nichiren Buddhism, base their practice on chanting the *daimoku*, the phrase "*Namu-myôhō-renge-kyô*." This translates roughly as "I commit myself to the wonderful dharma" referring to the highest teachings of the Buddha found in the sacred Lotus Sutra. Nichiren (1222-82), a Japanese Buddhist monk who founded the only truly Japanese school of Buddhism and who is the spiritual patron of the Sôka Gakkai, said that chanting the *daimoku* will release the powers of Buddhism within each believer and that this chanting will bring positive benefits to the faithful. The chanting of the *daimoku*, Members daily perform the *gongyo*, chanting short segments of the Lotus before a copy of Nichiren's *Gohonzon* (mandala) on which is drawn the title of the Lotus Sutra. The *Gohonzon* is said to embody the teaching of the true Buddha and contains the power to bring happiness to those who worship before it.
Sôka Gakkai in Japan is also a major socio-political movement. It created a political party, the Komeito, in the 1960s. The Komeito, which on average has held about ten percent of the seats in both houses of Japan's Diet, was briefly absorbed into a coalition of opposition parties in the mid-1990s. When the coalition collapsed in the late 1990s, former-Komeito Diet members established the New Komeito (NK). At present NK is a coalition partner of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party. Sôka Gakkai and NK are technically independent organizations, but virtually all NK members and leaders are Sôka Gakkai members as well.
Sôka Gakkai chapters outside of Japan do not engage in any political activities.
7. Sandra Ionescu notes, for example, in her study of SGI in Germany that while German members were in full agreement with the aims and meaning of Japanese Buddhism, they adapted their own views on such peripheral matters as language, clothes worn at meetings, and the sex division of labor. See Sandra Ionescu, p. 98.
8. Ionescu, 104.
9. All Sôka Gakkai members worldwide chant the same passages from the Lotus Sutra every day and perform identical rituals at home or in community centers. One finds fairly uniform organizational structures in most every chapter as well as small group meetings in members' homes. Members worldwide also share an apparent deep reverence for Sôka Gakkai leader Ikeda Daisaku.
10. The Sôka Gakkai movement is a subchapter of the national chapter, SGI Canada, but because of the very distinct cultural differences between Quebec and the rest of Canada, the Quebec chapter has a great deal of autonomy and certain characteristics including separate francophone and anglophone units that differentiate it from the national organization.
11. Befu, "The Global Context", 19-20.
12. Ben Dorman, who received a doctorate from the Faculty of Asian Studies at The Australian National University in May 2003, has conducted extensive research on the New Religions of Japan. He has been a member of SGIA since 1982. This writer, while not a member, has conducted extensive research on Sôka Gakkai since the late 1960s and was a Visiting Fellow at Sôka University in Tokyo in 1992.
13. Metraux and Dorman prepared a very detailed 59 question survey in April 2002 for SGIA members. The first section contained 18 questions about the member's personal experience with SGI and SGIA—how and when one had first heard of the movement, who introduced the member to the movement, that person's religious background, etc. Section II asked questions concerning the follower's attitudes towards the practice of Nichiren's Buddhism, focusing on such issues as benefits one may have incurred from this practice and whether that person had ever chanted for a particular set of goals. Sections III and IV posed queries about the member's feelings about the SGIA organization as a whole and its peace movement in particular. The fifth section requested a significant amount of demographic information from the member.
The research was carried out with the full cooperation of the SGIA leadership. The surveys were voluntary and the respondents had the option of revealing their identity or not. There were three main methods of distribution initially (1) The survey was sent to the SGIA headquarters in Sydney. SGIA Headquarters then sent it by fax to the main areas in which SGIA branches are located and also to members in outlying areas. The branches then distributed them through local channels. These branches collected the completed surveys and either sent them to SGIA headquarters, or sent them directly to the researchers. Of the surveys that were sent to SGIA headquarters, some were sent directly back to the researchers by SGIA and others were picked up in Sydney by us; (2) the survey was sent by the researchers via email to members who requested it, and around 30 responses came back via email; and (3) Dorman sent three hard copies of the survey directly to members who had not otherwise received copies or did not have email access.
This initial campaign brought about 160 responses, mainly from middle-aged members in their thirties, forties and early fifties. Since it is clear that SGIA has a large and rapidly growing youth membership, we attended a week-end SGIA Nationwide Youth Conference in Sydney in late July, 2002 where we successfully encouraged nearly a hundred younger members, most of whom were in their twenties, from all over Australia to fill out the survey. By August we had about 265 completed surveys representing perhaps 12 percent of the membership. SGIA leaders assured us that demographic patterns developed from our survey closely fit their perceived national patterns for age and ethnic distribution.
Metraux and Dorman also conducted about 20 in-depth interviews with individual or small groups of members in Canberra and the Sydney and Melbourne regions as well as shorter conversations with about thirty other members. We also interviewed a few members from across Australia at various SGIA meetings and festivals. We deliberately chose a few older members because of their ability to give us some historical perspectives about the movement, but other interviews came from people who expressed an interest in our interviewing them in survey responses.
As expected, we received a highly favorable image of SGIA from the active members interviewed; however, we also solicited and received a high number of very frank criticisms of the movement, especially on such topics as leadership and communication between leaders and ordinary members.
It is important to note, however, that while our survey did provide very detailed information concerning just over ten percent of SGI members, the sampling procedure itself was far from random and the results consequently are not necessarily fully representative of the whole membership. Rather, our findings probably reflect the thinking of the most committed members. A more random sample might have yielded more statistically valid results, but limits on time and resources placed certain constraints on our research.
14. Ikeda was president of the Sôka Gakkai from 1960 to 1979 when he left the day-to-day administration of the movement to other Sôka Gakkai leaders. Today he is the spiritual leader and mentor for members worldwide.

15. Seager, "Sōka Gakkai—The Next Ten Years," p. 94.
16. Most SGI chapters abroad have avoided a similar negative image because they have avoided any political involvement, have kept a very low profile, and have on occasion cooperated with local and even national bodies on a variety of projects. The mayor of Rotorua, New Zealand, Grahame Hall in an April 2003 interview told me that he highly respects SGI because of its many meaningful contributions to his community including a small peace garden.
17. Bouma et al., 74-76.
18. According to figures provided by the SGI office in Tokyo in 2002, there are over two million members in over 200 foreign chapters including 700,000 to one million in Korea and many thousands in many SE Asian countries including Malaysia and Hong Kong (40,000+ in each), Thailand, the Philippines, and Singapore. There are perhaps 150-200,000 members in both the United States and Brazil and 5,000+ in Canada.
It is difficult to determine the accuracy of these SGI-generated estimates. Various surveys of SGI USA by independent scholars suggest an American-based membership of 50-100,000 members and when I questioned an SGI leader in Quebec about membership figures for Canada, he said that national membership was closer to 3,000 than 5,000.
19. Clarke, 281.
20. Clarke, 285.
21. This interpretation is bolstered by the work of Hammond and Machacek in the United States, Wilson and Dobbelaere in Great Britain. Their studies related the growth of SGI in these countries to value shifts associated with growing economic well-being. In short, the idea, drawn from other cross-national studies of value change in advanced industrial societies, is that as economic security rises, so does the population's desire for intangible rewards such as happiness, self-fulfillment, and aesthetic pleasure.
22. This writer wishes to thank Mary Baldwin College Professor BrianLowe, who has studied practitioners of Zen Buddhism in Canada, for help in developing this hypothesis.
23. The SGIA head office states that there are at least 50 ethnic groups among its members.
24. Growth has always been glacial. Membership levels did not reach 1,000 until the late 1980s, but accelerated somewhat to hit 2000 in 1999 and to exceed 2500 in 2002. Figures provided upon request by the SGIA head office in Sydney.
25. Interview with General Director Hans van der Bent in Sydney, 26 July 2002.
26. Interview with Yong Foo, SGIA leader, in Sydney, 2 May 2003.
27. See Bryan Wilson and Karel Dobbelaere, *A Time to Chant: The Sōka Gakkai Buddhists in Britain* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994); Phillip Hammond and David Machacek, *Sōka Gakkai in America: Accommodation and Conversion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994); David Machacek and Bryan Wilson, Eds, *Global Citizens: The Sōka Gakkai Buddhist Movement in the World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); Daniel Mettraux, *The Lotus and the Maple Leaf: The Sōka Gakkai Buddhist Movement in Canada* (New York: University Press of America, 1996) and *The Sōka Gakkai Buddhist Movement in Quebec* (New York and London: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1997) and *The International Expansion of a Modern Buddhist Movement: The Sōka Gakkai in Southeast Asia and Australia* (New York: University Press of America, 2001).
28. Also Darren Nelson, "Why is Buddhism the fastest growing religion in Australia?" <http://www.buddhanet.net/whybudoz.htm>.
29. While Buddhists currently constitute only about two percent of the total Australian population today, their numbers are growing rapidly. From the eighties until the present, immigration from south-east Asia has been a key factor in the growth of Buddhism in Australia. By 2001, Buddhists had reached 360 000 or 1.91 per cent of the population. This represents an increase in numbers of 158 000 in the 5 years since the 1996 Census and an increase as a proportion of the population by 0.78 per cent. Thus, despite fluctuation in the early years,

Buddhism is now the fastest growing religion in Australia. Many people of an Anglo-Celtic origin have shown interest in Buddhism. A survey in 1998 found that 11.5 percent of the Australian adult population had practiced a form of Eastern meditation in the last twelve months. However, comparatively few convert to Buddhism, adopting it as their religion and identifying themselves as Buddhist in the Census. In the 2001 Census, just under 28 000 of the total 358 000 Buddhists were Australians born of Australian parents. Source: Christian Research Association of Australia, "Buddhism: Change Over Time" (2003). <http://www.cra.org.au/pages/00000227.cgi>.

Note: According to the 2001 census, 25% of Australians declared themselves to be Roman Catholic while 20% said they were Anglican. 15% said they were agnostic or atheists, a decline from 16% in 1996. Source=Burke article.

30. Source: Interview with Dr. Judith Snodgrass, a noted scholar on Buddhism in Australia, 1 August, 2002 in Sydney.
31. Coughland and McNamara, 53. Also Darren Nelson, "Why is Buddhism the fastest growing religion in Australia?" <http://www.buddhanet.net/whybudoz.htm>.
32. Adams and Hughes, 11
33. Coughlan and McNamara, p. 308.
34. Bucknell, 468.
35. Snodgrass interview, op. cit.
36. Adams and Hughes, 40-50.
37. Another indication of the heavy Asian-origin of most SGIA members is that only a third of surveyed members had heard of the Soka Gakkai first in Australia and only about 45% first joined SGIA while living in Australia. The vast majority of the faithful joining outside Australia received their formal membership in Malaysia (40%) or Japan (37%).
38. SGI in New Zealand, like Australia, started with a small white and ethnic Japanese membership, but today has a rapidly growing youthful ethnic Asian (mainly Chinese) membership. While SGI has a rapidly growing ethnic Asian membership, its overall membership is far more diverse and less Asian than its counterparts in Australia and New Zealand.
39. A large proportion of members we contacted stated that a strong sense of camaraderie and community initially attracted them to the Soka Gakkai and its form of Buddhism. SGIA became an important base for friendship, community caring and mutual help for many members, a critical reason for their joining the movement as well as for SGIA's long term growth.
40. Concerning gay members, an SGIA leader noted: "The Sōka Gakkai in Australia has high tolerance for gays—we are very open to gays because of high respect for human values. There is a strong homophobic tendency in South East Asian culture and homophobia was once very evident in SGIA, but we are becoming more open and tolerant in eyes of more members. People of all stripes find release and peace through chanting and as Buddhists we honestly see all people as being equal."
While this statement represents an ideal, several gay members told us that they feel at home in SGIA because of its increasingly tolerant and open atmosphere. A middle-aged ethnic Chinese Malaysian member noted in 2003:
"I left Malaysia nearly 20 years ago because there is a lack of tolerance for gays. Since I was already an SGI member, I joined SGIA and have stayed with the movement because I am accepted for who and what I am. I also enjoy the fact that I can practice my religion with my compatriots."
41. A vast majority of members also reported that they had also at least once wanted for a goal that had not been realized. Their explanations for these failures included the notions that the goals were unrealistic (like winning the lottery or saving a clearly doomed relationship), the timing was poor, or that they had not chanted with enough enthusiasm or sincerity.

42. Hammond and Machacek, 176-78.
43. For more extensive detail and bibliographic references to the SGI movement in Canada and Quebec, see Daniel A. Metraux, *The Lotus and the Maple Leaf and The Sôka Gakkai Buddhist Movement in Quebec*.
44. SGI leaders in Quebec and Canada are fully aware of the many recent controversies surrounding SGI in the United States including complaints by environmentalists in California who complained that SGI was using too much open forest land when it built a branch of Soka University near Los Angeles in the 1990s. Canadian SGI leaders want their organization to grow quietly without the long stream of controversies that have plagued the American wing of SGI.
45. Quebec government surveys show rapid growth in the number of Buddhists in the province. Most adherents are in the growing Vietnamese and ethnic Chinese communities in Montreal and elsewhere. Various surveys conducted in the 1990s in Quebec indicate that there were over forty thousand Buddhists, 50,000 Moslems and over 15,000 Hindus in the province See Metraux, *Quebec*, chapters 1-2.
46. Based on reports on surveys in *Macleans* magazine, various issues, in 1995. See Metraux, *Quebec*, chapters 1-2.
47. One difference was the conflicting opinions of members on Quebec sovereignty. Montreal members strongly wanted Quebec to remain an integral part of Canada. However, most of the members in Quebec City supported the concept of an independent Quebec and an end to the "colonial" status of the franco-phones.
48. Seager, p. 95.

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Memory and the Vietnam War: A Daughter's Choice in Yung Krall's *A Thousand Tears Falling*

by Nathalie Huynh Chau Nguyen

Abstract

This article examines the representation of memory and loss in Yung Krall's *A Thousand Tears Falling: The True Story of a Vietnamese Family Torn Apart by War, Communism, and the CIA* (1995). The Vietnam War split this particular family along geographical and political lines. Krall's account narrates her observations, as a female child, of the hardships suffered by her mother and siblings in South Vietnam after the departure of her father and older brother for North Vietnam in 1954. Her story articulates and reconstructs a past framed by the war and the trauma and family division it engendered. Although she never stopped loving her father, Krall gave her allegiance to South Vietnam, working for the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN), marrying a US Navy pilot and eventually becoming a spy for the CIA. Her narrative is an extraordinary account of the opposing choices that she and her father (a highly-placed official in the North Vietnamese hierarchy) made with regard to the war and to Vietnam.

He didn't know that my problem had never been a lack of memories, but too many memories; my mind was like an endless movie, now a documentary, now a tragic drama in which my family's scattered members were the unwilling and unfortunate actors.

Yung Krall¹

These words by Yung Krall, in her autobiographical narrative *A Thousand Tears Falling: The True Story of a Vietnamese Family Torn Apart by War, Communism, and the CIA* (1995), refer to the workings of her memory and the recurrent and haunting images of the past that it conveys. Her story is a means of articulating and reconstructing this past, a past framed by the Vietnam War and the trauma it engendered. While traumatic memories are fragmented and "encoded in the form of vivid sensations and images" (Herman 1992: 38), Krall imposes a coherent shape and structure on hers. Her narrative is orderly and linear. It unfolds like a roll of film, with vivid and detailed images stretching from Vietnam in the late forties to France, England and the United States in the seventies. Krall's family, like many others, was split along geographical and political lines by the war. Her account narrates her observations, as a female child, of the hardships suffered by her mother and siblings after the departure of her father and older brother north of the 17th parallel in 1954. The partition of Vietnam into North and South following the Geneva Agreement led to the sundering of Krall's family into two separate units, the father and eldest son in communist North Vietnam and the mother and six younger children in non-communist South Vietnam. This separation was not only

geographical but political. Although she never stopped loving her father, Krall gave her allegiance to South Vietnam, working for the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN), marrying a US Navy pilot and eventually becoming a spy for the CIA. Her narrative is an extraordinary account of the opposing choices that she and her father (a highly-placed official in the North Vietnamese hierarchy) made with regard to the war and to Vietnam.

A Thousand Tears Falling forms part of a growing body of diasporic narratives by Vietnamese women.² Krall's account is distinctive for the following reasons: firstly, her perspective is that of a woman, a Southerner, and a civilian; and secondly, her personal journey is a rare and unusual one that led her not only to oppose her father and support the cause he fought against, but to become a successful operative for a foreign agency. Her story provides another dimension to a war whose representation has been dominated by the experiences of male combatants.³ Her narrative is a valuable contribution to the collective process of remembering and recording the war. It expresses loss and mourning – for parent and sibling, for country – but also reveals the fashioning of a new life and purpose in a new country.

Krall's greatest loss was that of all the men in her immediate family: her father and two brothers. Her father's departure for the North signalled his official disappearance from his family's life. He was a Vietminh senator and, like many others, changed his name after going north for "re-grouping" in 1954, becoming known thereafter as Dang Quang Minh. He achieved a prominent position as the National Liberation Front (NLF) ambassador to the Soviet Union in 1965, arriving in Moscow in April of that year to head the largest NLF mission overseas.⁴ "The NLF delegation presented its "credentials" to the chairman of the Soviet Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Committee on April 30, 1965. An interview with Dang Quang Minh appeared in the Soviet publication *New Times*, in the edition dated May 26, 1965."⁵ Krall narrates that before leaving, her father destroyed the family photographs so that the authorities would have no documents to link him with his wife and children. For Krall, who was eight at the time, the damage was potent because with the photographs, all material traces of her link with her father were gone. Photographs of herself as a child had included him and were all destroyed, eliminating not only records of her own childhood but of that childhood in conjunction with her father. If modern memory, in Pierre Nora's words, "relies entirely on the materiality of the trace, the immediacy of the word, the visibility of the image" (1989: 13), then Krall's only means of conveying these early memories is through the written word. There are no photographic records of herself as a child to accompany her narrative.

The significance of the father's departure for a political cause is underscored in the following episode. Among the destroyed pictures was one of Krall and her younger brother Hai Van with the revolutionary leader Le Duc Tho.⁶ Krall recalls: "My mother took the photo and a pair of scissors and carefully cut me away from him; she then trimmed Hai Van away from the other side. She handed what was left, just the skinny body of Le Duc Tho, to my father and said, "Here, you

can have your comrade”(6). The mother’s gesture is heavily symbolic, since it underlines to her husband the fact that he chose the communist party over his own children and that by leaving them, he was cutting himself away from them. It also signified the severance of the children from the aims and ideals of the party. Other photographs survive: pictures of Krall’s siblings and mother, and of her father on his own, but Krall’s early years in the Mekong delta live on only in the memories of surviving family members and in Krall’s narrative. It is perhaps for this reason that her descriptions are so detailed. Her writing not only evokes the past: it is an affirmation of her identity. The act of writing, in this context, serves a therapeutic function by shaping traumatic memories into words and giving form to vivid and iconic images of the past (Henke 1998: xviii).

Krall’s narrative reveals that her father remained faithful to the party and that, to the end of his life, he put politics before his family. In that sense, he was always “lost” to his children. Krall made a number of fruitless attempts to reintegrate him into the family after the end of the war. She did not see her father again until 1975, the year that saw the fall of South Vietnam and Krall’s induction into the CIA. Father and daughter were briefly reunited in Tokyo, after a separation of more than twenty years. Dang Quang Minh was there as part of a delegation to attend the Ban-the-Bomb rally in August of that year. Krall flew to Tokyo with her son to see him, and informed the CIA that this visit was an entirely private family affair. Krall’s narrative illustrates the fact that the attachment between her father and herself remained steadfast despite the gap of years, experience and political beliefs. She gives a moving account of her first telephone conversation with him:

“Allo?” a voice said in sort-of-English, sort-of-French.

I don’t know how I knew immediately who it was, but I did. I wanted to call out “Father!” so badly I thought I would burst, but I also wanted to be cautious.

“Are you Ambassador Minh?” I asked formally. “Yes, I am. May I ask who is calling?” His voice was soft and clear, and somehow I could tell he was smiling.

“You were once Mr. Dang Van Quang, the senator from Can Tho before 1954, is that correct?” I asked.

I heard a little cascade of laughter, and in a friendly voice he replied, “That is correct. Now can you tell me how you know me that well?”

“I used to live in Bien Hoa, near Aunt Khue,” I told him, using the term “aunt” in the polite way Vietnamese refer to older persons, not in the sense of an actual relative.

“She is my sister! You must be one of the overseas students who came to meet the delegation at the airport when I arrived.”

I couldn’t hold it in any longer. With a sharp intake of breath I blurted out, “Papa, it is me, your daughter My Yung!”

There was a terrible, long silence on the other end of the line. “Papa, are you there? Are you all right?” I waited, and then

heard the “thunk” of the phone being dropped on a hard surface, perhaps a table. A few seconds passed, and there was a fumbling with the receiver as he picked it up again.

“My God! It is my daughter,” and then he couldn’t talk for a moment. I could hear him weeping (237).

The years of separation and of silence resulted in her delaying the moment of identification and seeking objective confirmation that it was indeed her father that she was speaking to. Instead of identifying herself immediately, she waited for him to confirm the name he was born with and his pre-1954 political appointment. She made sure of his identity before admitting her own. The mention of his answering the telephone in “sort-of-English, sort-of-French” provides an international dimension not only to their encounter, but to the lives of father and daughter—he as an official representative of the communist regime, she as the wife of an American and now a CIA operative. They were total strangers to each other’s lives and had not met for over two decades. Yet the sense of familiarity and intimacy is conveyed from Krall’s point of view: “I don’t know how I knew immediately who it was, but I did.” Of course, she knew it was him, while he had no idea that his daughter, whom he’d last seen as an eight-year-old child in South Vietnam, was in Japan.

From their subsequent encounter in his Tokyo hotel and the arguments that erupted between father and daughter, Krall’s narrative makes clear that although the love between them was undiminished, they were poles apart ideologically. Krall arranged for her parents to meet in Paris in 1975, and again in London in 1977, but her father refused to join his wife, children and grandchildren overseas, deeming it a betrayal of the party. Krall recounts his reasons for doing so: “I want the same thing you want,” he insisted. “My needs are not different from yours or your mother’s. You have my love, your mother has my loyalty, my faithfulness from a husband to a wife. But what you ask me I can’t deliver, for I’ll not walk away from my party” (383). Krall’s revelation of this divide between her father and herself underscores an already painful process of remembering. “Writing about a parent is never easy,” as Ursula Owen points out, “our parents lie at the heart of our innermost feelings, and are part of our innermost debates. For daughters writing about fathers, this difficulty seems to be acute” (1983: 10). A difficulty that was reinforced, in Krall’s case, by political division and lifelong separation.

The war also set Krall’s brothers on opposite sides. Her older brother Khoi was an officer in the North Vietnamese army (PAVN)⁷ and went to the Soviet Union for training in 1966, while her younger brother Hai Van joined the South Vietnamese air force and went to the United States for training in 1970. Krall’s book juxtaposes photographs of her brothers (in uniform) on the same page, a feature that brings into relief both their close family relationship and the political gulf that set them apart. Krall did not see her older brother Khoi during the war, but she grew up with Hai Van and was devastated when he died in January 1971 in a training accident in Georgia. He was twenty-one. Krall records her shock at this unexpected loss: “*It can’t be, I screamed in my*

head. Not him, not a twenty-one-year-old young man who hadn't even had a chance to fight for his country yet!" (203). Over twenty years later, her anguish is still patent: "How can one be "strong" and "take it well" when a little brother dies? I am still bitter about his death, still angry, and I miss him immensely" (204). Her brother's death is inextricably linked to the war, the division of her family and the loss of her country, and remains one of the most traumatic memories of the Vietnam War for Krall. In an article in the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, Elizabeth Kurylo writes: "His death still haunts Krall, whose stoicism crumbles as she talks about him. [...] 'When people say "I know your pain," they really don't. But the pain I carry from losing my brother taught me about other people's grief and the loss of their sons and their husbands and their fathers. That was the hardest thing in my life" (1998: D10). Krall's representation of wartime Vietnam is defined by her father's absence and the damaging effect of politics and war on family cohesion. Her brother's death crystallized this divide and made his loss even harder to bear as a result.

Krall's life story presents the construction and reconstruction of her identity through years of war and displacement. Her father's departure not only signified a personal loss, but led to the falsification of her identity. He instructed his wife to have false birth certificates registered for their children, with the father listed as "missing," which in legal terms meant that he was "unknown," so that they could not be linked with him. It is clear that these measures traumatized Krall and that she felt that she had lost an essential part of herself in the process. As she writes:

My mother stood before a judge and swore to the "truth" regarding her "missing husband," and the children of Dang Van Quang became children without a father. To complete the illusion, Hai Van and I got new names. I became Tran Ngoc Yung [...] For days after that brief appearance in court, though, I felt as if I had lost something very precious, very personal, and very powerful – my identity [...] That miserable paper that said I was a bastard child was important – important to the Diem regime, to the society we lived in, and worst of all to me, because it tore me to pieces and I couldn't tell anyone or complain to anyone about the lie I was forced to live (81).

The falsification of Krall's details and the obliteration of her father's presence were compounded by her name change, which signified a denial of her own identity. The "lie" that Krall was forced to live as a child was an official reality since these were the papers under which she, her mother, and her siblings, were recognized by the state. She was the daughter of a prominent communist, but this was a hidden reality, submerged under the daily exigencies of life in wartime South Vietnam. Against this context of war, Krall's problematic bond with her absent father allowed for no middle ground: she was either for or against what he represented. Her political convictions were shaped by her years in the South, by the anger and trauma that resulted from seeing civilian victims of insurgent terror and having classmates die in combat. Her narrative records her struggle to separate herself from her father's politics and to separate her father in turn from his politics. She tried to explain her feelings to others: "I tried to make her understand that I love my father

more than anyone else on this earth but I could not share his cause" (174). This dichotomy between loving her father, and hardening her opposition to the ideals and actions of the communist regime runs throughout her book. Ten years after her father departed for the North, her opposition to his cause took concrete form: at the age of eighteen, Krall applied to work for G-5, a propaganda and communications section under the command of Fourth Corps of the South Vietnamese army (ARVN). Krall's job was that of a news writer for the radio program run by G-5, which broadcast news to the troops and any others listening in. It was a venue that allowed her to speak out against the National Liberation Front while remaining undetected by her communist relatives: "no writers' names were mentioned on the 'Voice of the ARVN' radio program" (128). It was the closest thing she could manage short of enlisting in the army. She told the chief of G-5, Captain Nguyen Dat Thinh, the truth about her family background. His response underlines the internecine nature of the Vietnam War, which pitted father against son and brother against brother.

He puffed on his cigar and looked at me for a moment. Then, calmly and quietly, he said, "We have one thing in common from the start. I have two younger brothers who are officers in the North Vietnamese army." Thinh was one of 800,000 North Vietnamese who went south in 1954. His two brothers remained in the North (133).⁶

Krall forged a new identity for herself as a loyal citizen of South Vietnam, and this allowed her at last to break with her father's politics and follow her own convictions.

Krall refashioned herself anew when her circumstances changed again. She met and fell in love with a US Navy pilot in 1967 and moved with him to the States in 1968. She married and her son was born there, but the experience of leaving her country proved traumatic and resulted in marked feelings of displacement and disorientation. She has little recollection of either her marriage or her first months in the United States,⁹ and this is reflected in the sparseness of details regarding this period of her life. She writes, "I wasn't doing very well at all. I had dreams and nightmares of home almost every night: I dreamed of Viet Nam, of Sai Gon, I heard Vietnamese music, I dreamed of Viet Cong trying to break up my marriage" (202). Krall's revisiting of Vietnam, familiar people and places in dreams parallels that of many Vietnamese refugees and migrants.¹⁰ Such vivid dreams and nightmares are a means of reconnecting with a lost homeland and are common to displaced people (Thomas 1999: 177).

Krall's most dramatic reinvention was that of a spy for the CIA. Her successful work in espionage was in response to a series of factors allied to her displacement from Vietnam. One was clearly a determination to act for both her new and old countries—Vietnamese communist agents not only represented a regime she was opposed to, but were also harming her new country. Secondly, she acted in payment for her family's freedom and safe passage to America—she had given her word to the US Navy that she would do so. Finally, her actions were in memory of her brother Hai Van. Krall stressed to the CIA that she would never spy on her father. However, if her father's comrades assumed that, as his beloved daughter, her political beliefs coincided with his,

then she did not disabuse them and used her connection to him to successfully carry out her work as a CIA agent in those circles. It was her anger and grief at the desecration of the South Vietnamese flag at the Provisional Revolutionary Government (PRG) mission in Paris in 1975 that signaled her decision to succeed in her career as a spy and her determination “to be like a chameleon” (268). She found the flag being used as a bathroom rag. She writes: “In my mind I remembered the same flag covering my brother’s casket before he was buried, the same flag covering the bodies of my classmates who had been killed in combat” (267). Krall became not only a successful CIA agent but also carried out counter-espionage work for the FBI. She did undercover work at PRG missions in Paris and New York, and at the Socialist Republic of Vietnam Embassy in France. She also infiltrated Vietnamese communist networks in the United States and France and acted as a courier between the two countries. Her work led to the convictions of David Truong and Ronald Humphrey of espionage on July 8, 1978.¹¹

Krall’s narrative charts a remarkable journey, from daughter of a Vietminh senator to “bastard” child with father “unknown,” from child sympathizer to the revolutionary cause to opponent to the communist regime, from displaced war bride to American spy. Her shifts in identity encode not only a reaction to the historical pressures of the time, but also the formation of her own system of beliefs and values. This she could only do by distancing herself, politically, from her absent father. She gradually came to accept this separation between her father and herself, a separation that was all the more marked in that it was no longer a matter of physical and geographical distance between them, but an ideological gulf. Krall recalls: “As we embarked on our new life alone, I had no way of knowing when I would see my father again. And I would never have dreamed that when I did see him, it would be as a spy for the nation that was to become more of an enemy to him than the French had ever been” (38). At an interview in 2000, Krall explains the reasons for her actions:

When I was seventeen, I wanted to join the army to fight the Viet Cong, and in our society, especially in small towns, we needed soldiers, but there were many families who did not have a favourable view of soldiers and for a girl to join the Army was a no-no. This is something that I felt it was my obligation to do. I reminded myself, you’re doing this for the Southerners, you’re not against your father, you’re against his party.¹²

This was her means of overcoming the trauma and losses of the Vietnam War and of continuing her service to her country. Her behaviour counters the tradition of the “Three Obediences” (in which a woman owes obedience to her father when unmarried, her husband when married, and her son when widowed), and the perception of Vietnamese women as passive victims of the war. It reveals that women are active agents in their own lives and that there existed a plurality of views among civilians in the South. Krall’s mother joined her to settle in the United States, and her surviving elder brother did likewise in 1986, after numerous failed attempts to leave Vietnam.¹³ Krall is her father’s daughter in that, like him, she remained true to her beliefs. She acknowledges her similarities to him:

I recognized that I had many of the qualities of my father, even to my high cheekbones, my deepset eyes, and my overbite. Our personalities were similar, too. He was a fighter, having fought the French, capitalism, and the “American imperialists” [...] I was a fighter in my own way, not a noble one, perhaps, but a fair one like my grandfather had taught me to be. I also realized that our family was not unique (84).

Krall’s physical resemblance to her father underlines another parallel: a willingness to act for her political ideals. While it was perhaps not so unusual for a committed communist like her father to give priority to his political goals at the expense of his family, it was more so for Krall, as a daughter, to take such action against everything that her father believed in most deeply and to do so at considerable risk to herself.¹⁴ Krall’s decision to testify at the trial of Truong and Humphrey was a courageous one, since it followed the ransacking of her house and threats to her family. She had a seven-year-old child and had to send him away for safety as the time for the trial came close. Much of her work is still classified so is not revealed in the book, but her determination to operate as a spy and to go ahead with her actions reveals the same gritty decisiveness that characterized her father’s decision to leave his family for the “cause.” Krall states that it was he who taught her to love her country. It is ironic that the same sense of patriotism that motivated the father’s actions motivated likewise his daughter’s and younger son’s, but for the opposite side. The father could not control the way in which his children grew up and did not predict that the same loyalty and allegiance that he paid to the North and to the interests of the communist party, they would in turn owe to the South and its greater potential for freedom and political democracy. Krall and her brother Hai Van’s desire to protect the South was as determined as their father’s for the South to submit to the North. As Krall said to her father in Tokyo: “I do not accept the presence of the Ha Noi government in the South” (242). This family drama recaptures in microcosm the wider tragedy of the Vietnam conflict.

A Thousand Tears Falling was nominated for the Georgia Writers’ Non Fiction Author of the Year award in 1996.¹⁵ The book generated emotional responses from readers, especially Vietnam veterans.¹⁶ By presenting the war from a South Vietnamese civilian perspective and giving it a human dimension, Krall’s narrative provides a space for individual and collective grieving and healing. Krall states at interview that she wrote the book for “people who have questions about Vietnam.”¹⁷ She achieved that objective, her work and her public talks impacting on the lives of several veterans by healing wounds that had festered for twenty or thirty years. *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution* reports the case of John Givhan, who lost a leg in Vietnam in 1964 and nursed a bitter grievance towards both the Vietnamese people and the United States government for thirty-two years,

until a diminutive Vietnamese-American woman [...] liberated him with a few simple words. “She looked at me and said thank you,” said Givhan, 57, now a retired lawyer [...] “For the first time, a Vietnamese person looked at me and said, ‘Lieutenant Givhan, if it had not been for you and your comrades, I would not be free today.’ It was overwhelming. It lights such a fire in my bosom that I cannot explain it” (Kurylo 1998: D10).¹⁸

Krall relates that she received the most reader responses from Vietnam veterans and their families, followed by middle-aged Vietnamese men (former soldiers, officers, and re-education camp inmates) and Vietnamese women, who recognized her family's struggles and pain as reflective of their own experiences.¹⁹ Her narrative reveals that close family ties persisted despite political division and dissension within families. She dedicated the book jointly to her parents and grandparents.

Krall's account exposes the contrast between the silencing of the South Vietnamese experience from most histories and narratives of the Vietnam War,²⁰ and her insistence on reminding the reader that the war was primarily a Vietnamese experience. Her writing raises pertinent questions about the way in which the past is signified and remembered, especially in relation to a controversial and highly politicized conflict. It takes its place in a wider project of "remembering" the Vietnam War—"who its heroes were, who must be forgotten, who may mourn."²¹ Her passionate belief in Vietnam and the ideals of the South is allied with a wish for people not to forget the struggles and suffering of the South Vietnamese. Her narrative re-inscribes the South Vietnamese experience into the historical and literary discourses of the war. It is a testament to those who died in it and those who, like her, lost loved ones. For Krall, telling her story is not only an act of memory but also a means of bearing witness to the trauma of the past. Her voice, ultimately, is that of a woman of courage and conviction, and contributes another thread to the tapestry of experiences that makes up the recorded memory of the Vietnam War. It is her memory of the people, places and events of the past that infuses her narrative with such immediacy. As Nicola King writes, "All narrative accounts of life stories, whether they be ongoing stories which we tell ourselves and each other as part of the construction of identity, or the more shaped and literary narratives of autobiography or first-person fictions, are made possible by memory" (2000: 2).²² The interpretation of Krall's memory makes for insightful reading: her exposure to both sides of the political divide gives an added depth to her motivations and actions, and encapsulates the many contradictions and complexities of the Vietnam conflict.

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ENDNOTES

1. Yung Krall, *A Thousand Tears Falling: The True Story of a Vietnamese Family Torn Apart by War, Communism and the CIA* (Atlanta: Longstreet Press, 1995), 229. Further page references, referred to in parentheses in the text, will be to this edition.
2. In addition to inclusions in collections of oral histories, there are over fifteen narratives by Vietnamese women published in the United States, Australia, Canada and France, but most have been published by small presses with limited distribution. The best-known are: in the United States, Le Ly Hayslip's *When Heaven and Earth Changed Places* (New York: Doubleday, 1989) (with Jay Wurts), and *Child of War, Woman of Peace* (New York: Doubleday, 1993) (with James Hayslip), which were made into the film *Heaven and Earth* by Oliver Stone in 1994; and in France, Kim Lefèvre's *Métisse blanche* (White Métisse) (Paris: Bernard Barrault, 1989) and *Retour à la saison des pluies* (Return to the Rainy Season) (Paris: Bernard Barrault, 1990), which were sold out in paperback editions and have recently been reprinted by Editions de l'aube. Recent narratives include Jackie Bong-Wright's *Autumn Cloud: From Vietnamese War Widow to American Activist* (Sterling, VA: Capital Books, 2001), and Anh Vu Sawyer's *Song of Saigon: One Woman's Journey to Freedom* (New York: Warner, 2003).
3. "In Vietnam, as hundreds of thousands of wounded men returned to their families and communities, as male veterans and reporters began to write about the war, public pity has focused on the male veteran. [Phan Thanh] Hao told me that 'everyone felt sorry for the men. There were so many veterans and they had so clearly suffered so much. Everyone could see it. No one thought about the women then.' The few writings from Vietnam available in English portray the "people's" war as one fought by men alone." Karen Gottschang Turner, *Even the Women Must Fight: Memories of War from North*

Vietnam (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1998), 8.

There exists a substantial body of memoirs and collective memoirs by Vietnam veterans in the United States. See, for example, Joe P. Dunn, "Texts and Auxiliary Resources," in *The Vietnam War: Teaching Approaches and Resources*, Ed. Marc Jason Gilbert (New York: Greenwood Press, 1991), 201-225, 216-217.

Renny Christopher refers to an emerging canon of Vietnam War literature and writes, "the American cultural mythology that emphasizes individualism and the primacy of personal experience has caused the U.S. mythologizing of the war to focus narrowly on soldiers' private experiences, thereby depoliticizing representations of the war and excluding Vietnamese 'experience' of the war, because, for most American soldiers, any Vietnamese experience was by definition outside of their experience." Renny Christopher, *The Viet Nam War/The American War: Images and Representations in Euro-American and Vietnamese Exile Narratives* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1995), 2.

Marc Jason Gilbert refers to collected writings by major Vietnamese leaders and to collections of oral histories of Vietnamese refugees in "Broadening the Horizons of a Course on the American War in Vietnam," in *The Vietnam War: Teaching Approaches and Resources*, Ed. Marc Jason Gilbert (New York: Greenwood Press, 1991), 79-113, 91 and 93.

John Schafer points to the Indochina Monographs published by the US Army Center of Military History in Washington D.C., which include accounts by South Vietnamese military leaders. See John C. Schafer, *Vietnamese Perspectives on the War in Vietnam: Annotated Bibliography of Works in English* (New Haven: Yale University Council on Southeast Asian Studies, 1996). URL: <http://www.yale.edu/seas/bibliography/chapters/chap3.html>.

4. Douglas Pike, *Viet Cong: The Organization and Techniques of the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam* (Cambridge: The M.I.T. Press, 1966), 342-343.
5. Pike, *Viet Cong*, 342-343.
Dang Quang Minh features as the "NLF diplomatic representative to [the] Soviet Union" in Robert K. Brigham's *Guerrilla Diplomacy: The NLF's Foreign Relations and the Viet Nam War*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999. xv. Brigham writes that in 1972, "In Moscow, Dang Quang Minh, the Front's diplomat, met with several high-ranking Soviet officials to clarify the NLF's objections to the October 11 [Henry] Kissinger-[Le Duc] Tho peace proposal." Brigham, *Guerrilla Diplomacy*, 106.
Krall's book contains photographs of her father in the Soviet Union in the sixties, including with the NLF delegation at the Kremlin in 1966.
6. Le Duc Tho was the chief negotiator for the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV) at the Paris Peace Talks in 1973. Brigham, *Guerrilla Diplomacy*, 113.
7. People's Army of Vietnam (PAVN).
8. Approximately a million refugees fled from North Vietnam to South Vietnam. See Bernard B. Fall, *Viet-Nam Witness 1953-66* (London: Pall Mall Press, 1966), 76, Joseph Buttinger, *Vietnam: A Political History* (London: Andre Deutsch, 1969), 420, Dennis J. Duncanson, *Government and Revolution in Vietnam* (London: Oxford University Press, 1968), 207, Neil L. Jamieson, *Understanding Vietnam* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 232-233, and Stanley Karnow, *Vietnam: A History* (New York: Viking, 1983), 238.

9. Krall said at interview: "I was in shock for a long time, probably for six months. I was in California, but my heart, my mind, my dreams were always in Vietnam." Interview with Yung Krall in Atlanta, 27 November 2000.
10. See Mandy Thomas, *Dreams in the Shadows: Vietnamese Australian Lives in Transition* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1999), 177.
11. The men were found guilty of transferring US national security documents to the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. Quinlan Shea represented Yung Krall in her effort to "get the CIA to declassify her manuscript." He writes that, "After a lengthy trial, in the course of which Mrs. Krall was the principal government witness and was subjected to extensive, gruelling cross-examination, the jury convicted Ronald Humphrey and David Truong of espionage on July 8, 1978. Each was sentenced to fifteen years' imprisonment." Quinlan J. Shea, Jr., "Afterword" to Yung Krall, *A Thousand Tears Falling*, 410-412.
12. Interview with Yung Krall in Atlanta, 27 November 2000.
13. Interview with Yung Krall in Atlanta, 27 November 2000.
14. "Shea writes: "We do know that it was exceedingly dangerous work. Bill Fleshman [FBI] told me that he was always torn as to how far to let Mrs. Krall go operationally, because of the great personal danger she regularly faced." Shea, "Afterword," 411.
15. Letter to Yung Krall from Betty Anderson and Virginia Davis, Co-Chairmen, 1995 Georgia Author of the Year Awards Committee, dated February 14, 1996.
16. See Kurylo, "Honored Patriot," D10. Unpublished letters to Yung Krall from John B. Givhan dated 13 July 1996 and from Bob Crissman dated 21 July 1996.
17. Interview with Yung Krall in Atlanta, 27 November 2000.
18. Kurylo, "Honored patriot," D10.
19. Interview with Yung Krall in Atlanta, 27 November 2000.
20. "According to historian George C. Herring, the South Vietnamese have been conspicuously absent from most histories of the war. Indeed, in our collective rush to find explanations for the US failure in Vietnam, we may have accepted negative stereotypes of the ARVN that do no fully explain the conduct and outcome of the war." Robert K. Brigham, "Dreaming Different Dreams: The United States and the Army of the Republic of Vietnam" in *A Companion to the Vietnam War*. Eds. Marilyn B. Young and Robert Buzzanco (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2002), 146-161.
Anthony James Joes writes of "the much-neglected South Vietnamese military and militia" in *The War for South Vietnam 1954-1975: Revised Edition* (Westport: Praeger, 2001), xiv.
21. Suzette Min refers to the Vietnamese American artist Khanh Vo's work *April 25, 1975 (resonance)* as "part of a national project that Lisa Lowe describes as the "re-membering" of the Vietnam War – who its heroes were, who must be forgotten, and who may mourn." Suzette Min, "Remains to Be Seen: Reading the Works of Dean Sameshima and Khanh Vo" in David Eng and David Kazanjian, 2000. Eds. *Loss: The Politics of Mourning*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 231-250.
22. Nicola King, *Memory, Narrative, Identity: Remembering the Self* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2000), 2.

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