

DAY THREE (July 17, 2006)
Our Roles:
Toward Making a Difference in the World

Morning Session
The Role of Tenrikyo in the World

3-1-1 Tenrikyo and Its Response to Medical Technology

3-1-2 Tenrikyo and Its Contribution to World Peace

3-1-3 Tenrikyo and Its Promotion of Cultural Activities

3-1-4 Tenrikyo and Its Approach to the Environment

Regional Meetings

Asia

Africa/Europe/Oceania

USA Northern California/Northwest/Canada

USA East Coast/Midwest/South

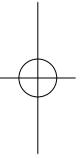
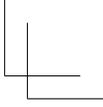
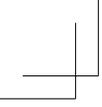
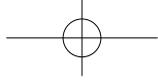
USA Southern California

Hawaii

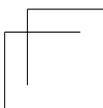
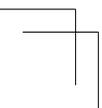
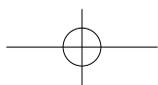
Latin America

Japan

3-1



3-1





- Day Three Photo Gallery -

3-1-1 Tenrikyo and Medical Technology by speakers Mr. Kinoshita, Mr. Shiozawa, & Mr. Obayashi



3-1-2 Tenrikyo and World Peace by speakers Rev. Nagao, Mr. Itakura, & Mr. Komatsuzaki



3-1-3 Tenrikyo and Cultural Activities by speakers Mr. Yuge & Mr. Seldin



3-1-4 Tenrikyo and the Environment by speakers Ms. Dali, Mr. Noto, Mr. Forbes, & moderator Mr. Federowicz

July 17th, Day Three Regional Meetings

Photo Gallery



Asia



Africa, Europe, Oceania



USA Northern California, Northwest, & Canada



USA East Coast, Midwest, & South



Southern California



Hawaii



Latin America



Japan



Tenrikyo's Influence on Global, Social, and Economical Improvements by former Ambassador Nakamura



Panel Discussion speakers (from left) Ms. Miyauchi, Rev. Takeuchi, and Rev. Yukimoto



Words of Encouragement by Rev. Iburi



Panel Discussion



Tenri Forum Chairman Rev. Terada



Participants of the Tenri Forum 2006 "New Frontiers in the Mission"

Tenrikyo and Organ Transplantation

Mikio Obayashi, M.D.

(Mr. Obayashi is a primary care physician and resides in Ogden, USA)

The concept of brain-based criteria for human death was first introduced in 1968 by Harvard Ad Hoc Committee. Due to the revolutionary nature of this concept, significant opposition to the adoption of brain death criteria was expected. However, it was rapidly accepted by society, both among the intelligentsia and the general public contrary to our expectation. This trend culminated with the President's Commission Report in 1981.

Peter Singer notes that this lack of opposition is particularly surprising since the acceptance of whole brain death marked a fundamental alteration of people's view on life and death. We could now take "warm pulsating human beings," declare them dead, and even cut out "their hearts and other organs" for the purpose of transplantation.

Despite initially gained widespread support, "brain death" is currently the subject of debate worldwide. This paper first focuses on this subject from medical, metaphysical, and moral viewpoints. Then, Tenrikyo theological perspective of brain death/organ transplantation is discussed. It is interesting to note that our doctrine allows dual interpretation in this subject. I will focus my discussion on 1) A Thing Lent, A Thing Borrowed, 2) Causality, 3) Passing Away for Rebirth, and 4) *Hinokishin*.

Because our doctrine allows dual interpretation, there is no way to come up with the consensus in this subject. In addition, it is extremely difficult to remove emotional component out of decision making process due to affective reaction. However, if we think about this subject from practical standpoint, we have to allow organ transplantation; otherwise we will need to deny all medical care. As a religious organization, we need to allow organ transplantation once, then let God the Parent decide the appropriateness of it.

Organ Transplantation

During the first half of 20th century, the failure of any organ essential to life was uniformly fatal. However, technology to sustain life despite transient organ failure was slowly developed; early dialysis for acute renal failure and

refining of ventilator for respiratory insufficiency are two examples. The experimental techniques of organ and tissue transfer were tried in man, mostly in the form of kidney transplantation and skin grafting at the initial stage. The early attempts for these types of organ transplantations failed because the understanding of immunology did not evolve as rapidly as did the idea of organ replacement. Currently, because of improved understanding of immunology and of organ and tissue preservation, end-stage failure of several organs essential to life no longer dooms the patient to an imminently fatal course.

There are two types of organ transplantation. One is to have transplant from living donor, and the other is to have one from cadaveric donor. Only kidney, segmental pancreas, and bone marrow grafts can be taken from living relatives; all other organs and tissues are procured from a cadaveric donor. The consent of organ donation is obtained through a signed donor card, a driver license, a consent statement, a will, or by permission of the next of kin or suitable legal guardian. The optimal situation regarding organ donation occurs when the family has previously discussed and agreed upon organ donation. Solid organs can only be transplanted if they have been perfused by an intact cardiovascular system until the time of retrieval. In other words, fresh organs are necessary in order to assure transplant to be successful. Any patient with normal cardiac function who has been pronounced “brain dead” is a potential donor.

Definition of Death

The definition of death is primarily a philosophical and theological issue. It depends on one’s philosophical anthropology, as well as one’s overall metaphysical world view. A philosophical Platonist or a traditional Aristotelian defines the death in terms of the separation of the soul from the body. Many theologically orthodox Christians would also accept this definition.

Rene Descartes represents the Cartesian view of death. It holds that human person consists of two things: a mind (also identified with “the soul” or “the spirit”) and a body. The mind is the thinking thing and the body is a kind of machine. The means of interaction of mind and body occurs via the brain, which collects sensory information and controls the rest of the body. If the brain is irreversibly destroyed, then the mind is cut loose from the body. The person, as a composite of soul and body, has died.

John Locke represents the Lockean view of death. The thing that concerns

a conscious person is the continuity of his or her personality such as memories, commitments, and attitudes. It is this psychological continuity which constitutes the person as a person. So, if the possibility of any psychological life is cut off by irreversible brain damage, then there is no person. A body might continue to live on, but it cannot be a person when body is no longer the bearer of any psychological attributes. Consequently, it cannot be the same person it was before; thus, the person must have died.

In Tenrikyo, we define death as “passing away for rebirth” and say that it is like taking off our old clothes to put on new ones. Our soul or spirit was born at the time of human creation. Our spirit enters the human body and lives through the life of that person. When we pass away, we return our body to God the Parent but the spirit will remain. It will stay in the bosom of God the Parent until it has an opportunity to enter into new body. Then, it will return to this world with new appearance. The death is merely a point in this whole life process. The timing of death is primarily influenced by our causality and how we used our mind.

Brain Death

Based on the traditional definition of death in the medical field, a person is declared dead when the circulatory, respiratory, and nervous systems were destroyed. Why do we need to redefine the traditional definition? As medical technology advanced, the early notion of death had become obsolete. The following example illustrates this point:

Someone was just involved in a motor vehicle accident and apparently sustained severe head injury. He had a pulse but was not breathing. Hence, he was intubated at the scene. He was subsequently taken to a local hospital. There, he was placed on the life support system. He has been on the ventilator and has gotten medications via IV line to keep his heart pumping. Because he has been on life support system, his color has been good. He has been warm to touch. He looks as though just sleeping but yet unconscious. He has maintained this status for several days but has shown no signs of recovery.

Based on the traditional definition, this person is clearly alive because he is breathing and his heart is still pumping. It is possible to keep this person, some people call “mechanically perfused cadaver,” alive for many months to years. The need for redefining the death had risen from this type of situation.

In 1968, the Harvard Medical School Ad Hoc Committee to Examine the Definition of Brain Death proposed whole brain death as the criterion for pronouncing a person dead. Due to the revolutionary nature of the change, one would think there would have been significant opposition to the adoption of brain death criteria, but surprisingly, there was not. Physicians, philosophers, theologians, and general public rapidly accepted this newly proposed criterion for death. This trend culminated with the 1981 report of the President's Commission for the Study of Ethical Problems in Biomedical and Behavioral Research, which held that death occurs when the entire brain, including the brain stem, permanently ceases to function, even when circulation of blood and respiration continue.

Are the donors dead when declared brain dead? This is the subject of debate among intelligentsia. The medical justifications include its certainty of irreversible loss of consciousness and near certain prognosis of death. Gillet notes that "the orienting, reflexive, and vegetative responses that remain do not constitute mattering because there is neither a way in which they matter nor a reason why they matter to the human being involved." The moral justifications apply to any patient who is deemed not to have any interest in being kept alive, or for whom one's interest is served by one's death. The metaphysical justifications apply to any patient who had irreversibly lost human consciousness or human rationality based on Cartesian-Lockean philosophy

Paul Byrne (Pediatrics), Sean O'Reilly (Neurology), Paul M. Quay (Philosophy), and Peter W. Salsich, Jr. (Law) in *Gonzaga Law Review* (1982/83) argue that the real force behind the new criteria for death was the desire to obtain fresh viable organs for transplantation. It was fueled by a brief, uncritically accepted by the medical establishment, that it is morally acceptable to use a corpse for utilitarian purposes. It leads physicians to treat the body as a corpse at the earliest possible moment and confuses the diagnosis of death with the prognosis that death will soon occur. They also argue against the notion that since the brain dead patient is "as good as dead," we might as well treat one as dead and harvest one's organs. They support the moral acceptability of allowing a brain dead individual to die; however, they categorically deny the moral acceptability of actively causing the death of an innocent human being.

Josef Seifert who is a philosopher directs the International Academy of Philosophy in Liechtenstein asserts that the permanent loss of consciousness

would not be equivalent to death even if it could be proven in brain death unlike Cartesian-Lockean view. He notes that the existence of the soul is distinct from consciousness. He identifies the death with the end of biological life, the death of “human organism as a whole.”

Brain Death: Tenrikyo View

In 1985, the issue associated with kidney transplantation was first discussed among Tenrikyo experts. Since that time, many discussions have been held in regards to organ transplantation. They were mainly coordinated through Tenri Yamato Culture Congress. Some prominent figures are in favor of organ transplantation while others are against it.

One of the main reasons why it is hard to reach the consensus is that our doctrine allows the dual interpretation in this subject. Dr. Akira Kaneko summarizes this point in the following four areas of the doctrine:

1) Thing Lent, A Thing Borrowed

In favor: Based on this teaching, we may assume the body is the possession of God the Parent and the mind is our own. When we are determined to be brain dead, our mind is essentially gone. What is left behind is the mere body itself which is the possession of God the Parent. Since we are all children of God the Parent, there is nothing wrong with sharing the organs. Why not make the best use of our body.

Opposition: God the Parent lends us a body that is appropriate for each individual. In the other words, God the Parent is the owner, and we are the borrower. No matter what happens to our body, the borrower has no right to determine what to do with the lender’s possession. In this case, it means the sharing of the organs.

2) Causality (*Innen*)

In favor: The causality is essentially determined by how we use our mind. When we are determined to be brain dead, our mind is gone. Hence, the causality should have nothing to do with organ transplantation.

Opposition: God the Parent lends us a suitable body based on our causality. Hence, organ transplantation is not just a matter of taking out a body part and transferring to it someone else. Sharing of one’s organ with someone else

might result in transferring one's causality to someone else.

3) Passing away for rebirth

In favor: We are here in this world to pursue Joyous Life. It is only possible if we continue to live. If successful, organ transplantation would help a person continue to live and, therefore, will bring joy to a recipient and one's family.

Opposition: God the Parent determines when one would pass away based on one's causality and how one used one's mind. Hence, prolonging this timing by organ transplantation is stepping overboard.

4) *Hinokishin*

In favor: Giving up one's own body to save others is the ultimate *binokishin*. God the Parent would be pleased with this act.

Opposition: From the donor's standpoint, the above statement may be true. However, from the recipient's standpoint, one is waiting for someone to be brain dead so that one can be saved. This type of mindset is considered greed. Therefore, God the Parent would not approve.

Tenri Advisory Counsel (Tenri Yamato Culture Congress) on Society and Culture 2004 noted that when a human maintains warm pulsating body, the counsel feels that God the Parent is still at work therein. Therefore, it is hard to recognize brain death as person's death.

Affective Reaction

As you read the arguments made by both parties, we can easily sense a lot of emotion being applied to their argument. We are dealing with the subject of life and death, and consequently, it is understandable that we become emotional. However, to make a purely theoretical argument, this emotion often interferes with your judgment. Martyn Evans and Michael Potts called it affective reaction. Let's bring up an example:

1) First Scenario:

You have a previously healthy small child. He suddenly became seriously ill. The only way to save your child is to have organ transplantation.

2) Second Scenario:

You have a sixteen-year-old son who was just involved in motorcycle

accident. He sustained severe head injury. He has been on life support system. He has a nice color and is warm to touch but in comatose state. His doctor came by and noted that his chance of recovery is close to 0 %. They were asked to see if he would be a candidate for organ donor. However, he just looks as though he has been sleeping and could wake up in any second. They have heard about some miraculous story from their friend at church. In addition, they have difficult time imagining taking out organs from warm pulsating human who is also their son.

Our intuitive reaction in the first scenario would be to allow organ transplantation. However, with the second scenario, the emotion would be against it. In these situations, our thought process is already being biased at affective level before we even think about our teaching to reflect upon these issues. This notion is pre-theoretical. In other words, you already know what you want to happen in these situations. Then, you look for the answers in our teaching to justify your action. Just as explained before, you can easily find an argument to support or against your position in our teaching because it allows dual interpretation.

My View of Organ Transplantation

I believe that we need to allow organ transplantation as a religious organization. As we discussed earlier, I believe there is no way to come up with the consensus in this issue because dual interpretation of our teaching is possible. When one comes up with an argument for organ transplantation, we can easily come up with counter argument against it. In addition, it is extremely difficult to purely theoretical and remove emotional component out of decision making process because of affective reaction. Since there is no precedence from Oyasama's time nor is Oyasama around to guide us, we will never find the clear answer. In this type of setting, sometimes, it would be helpful to think about practical aspect of it first and retrospectively analyze the whole situation.

Let's think about the argument against organ transplantation. You might say that this body is a thing lent from God the Parent. We are the borrower of this body. We are not an owner of this body. Hence, we have no right to share our body parts. Moreover, you need to recognize that you became critically ill because of the causality and misuse of your mind. It is more important to recognize your causality, correct your mind accordingly, and see if God the

Parent saves you. After all, passing away is just merely a point in this whole life process. If you are a true Tenrikyo follower, you should not be preoccupied about the death per se. Your spirit will soon come back in this world although you have a different appearance.

If we accept this argument, then we are essentially denying any form of medical treatment. Let's say you develop appendicitis. Your appendix is so badly diseased, and it needs to be removed; otherwise you can potentially die from the complication. If you try to be consistent with above argument, then, you would say that the appendix is not my possession. It is the possession of God the Parent. I cannot simply have a surgeon remove it and, moreover, have it be discarded. I develop appendicitis because I misuse my mind, and it must be in part due to the causality. I need to change my mindset and see if God the Parent would save me. I do not have any fear about dying from this condition because I will come back to this world again with new body. Therefore, I will deny the surgical treatment at this time.

I do not believe anyone would accept this type of argument. One thing we know from our teaching is that Oyasama never denied medical care. She clearly recognized that physicians and medications are the instrument of God the Parent. As a credible religious organization, we seek consistency in our policy. Once again, if we deny organ transplantation, we need to deny any type of medical care. I believe that is not what Oyasama taught us.

We are given the freedom to use our mind. If one feels that above argument should hold, then one might take that as your option. After all, whatever happens in this world is all governed by God the Parent. Whether you would want to be a donor or recipient of organ transplantation, it is not up to you to realize that. No matter how bad you wanted to be a donor or how much you needed an organ transplant, you have no control over this situation. God the Parent is the judge of this situation. If God the Parent figures that you need to give up your organ to help others in need, God the Parent would make you a donor. If God the Parent figures that you need to be a recipient of organ transplant, God the Parent would find it for you. If organ transplant happened to be successful and consequently you lived, then God the Parent must have determined that you are still a useful timber who can contribute to our society. If unsuccessful, God the Parent determined that you should not have been around any longer.

Conclusion

When precisely does the soul leave our body? This is a metaphysical question we will never have a clear answer for. Many views have been expressed in regards to this issue in and out of our religious circle. I believe that one of the most remarkable features of our teaching is the recognition of the true parent. God the Parent is the true parent who created this world and human beings. God the Parent governs everything that occurs in the world. God the Parent is the law of nature. This is obviously applicable in the situation with organ transplantation; whether you will be a donor or recipient, God the Parent decides on that. I believe as a credible religious organization, we need the consistency in our policy. If we deny organ transplantation, we need to deny other medical care. I believe that God the Parent is the one who gave us the knowledge and technology to develop successful organ transplantation program. We need to allow organ transplantation once, and then, let God the Parent be the judge for its appropriateness. This is the only fair way of dealing with this situation.

The Beginning of Life, the End of Life

Chiaki Shiozawa, Ph.D.

(Mr. Shiozawa is the head of Tenrikyo Alberta Fellowship and a former researcher at the University of Calgary's Department of Medicine)

Thank you very much, Chairman, for your kind introduction and for giving me this opportunity to share my thoughts with you all in such a great forum. In this presentation I would like to compare the current beliefs in medicine pertaining to the beginning and end of life, with the teachings of Tenrikyo.

1) Rapid developments in modern medicine

Rapid developments in modern medicine are contributing greatly to protecting our lives. On the other hand, these developments have also introduced a degree of risk into the lives of human beings. One of these risk factors involves using one life to replace, compensate for, or repair the deteriorations or defects that occur during the course of natural life. As I have mentioned in the summary, there have been many developments of methods such as organ transplants, usage of embryonic stem cells, genetic recombination, gene therapy, gene diagnosis and human cloning, that present the possibility of greatly affecting not only the future of mankind but the very foundation of human life as well. These methods have been developed on the basis of the passion of scientists who wish to protect the lives of humans to a greater degree, but it should not be forgotten that there is a significant profit to be reaped from this kind of research.

Moreover, with the clinical application of these methods, various ethical issues and problems arise. For instance, in order to increase cadaveric donors for transplantation, brain death has been newly defined to be considered as clinical death. Also, in reproductive technology, scientists plan to destroy divided fertilized cells prepared in excess in order to obtain highly active differentiated cells and to produce organ cells for use in transplantations to repair the various defects in another's life. These scientists conveniently define the ovum as "materials without life" in order to obtain what they need. These developments in medical research greatly blur the border between life and death.

As mentioned earlier, modern science is constantly and rapidly developing and gives us marvelous results to help maintain our health. However, it also creates potential dangers for our future. We, as Yoboku of Tenrikyo, should keep a careful eye on the direction of the developments of these potentially dangerous methods, and should strongly communicate our opinion in accordance with the Tenrikyo teachings. Because I do not have enough time to talk about everything in this field, I will cover two main topics: organ transplant and the use of embryonic stem cell research, and discuss both from the point of view of science and Tenrikyo.

2) What is the problem?

a) The end of life

I would like to first talk about brain death and organ transplant from a scientific perspective. As mentioned earlier, brain death has been proposed to be a criterion for stopping life-support. The invention of this life-support system has saved many lives by providing emergency and temporary maintenance of support for those who have lost the ability to breathe on their own. This is used until the patient's state is stabilized and when they are ready for perpetual treatment.

A patient without self-respiratory activity can survive by being placed on a life-support system. However, there is a problem. Great costs are required in order to operate this system. A hospital cannot financially afford to indefinitely support patients who have no hope for recovery. From the perspective of business, hospitals need to consider these medical expenses. Therefore, they are forced to establish a criterion or a protocol to know when to stop the system. The criterion of brain death has been applied for this very purpose. The machine invented to prolong a human life creates an economical burden on medical services, especially when dealing with those patients whose hope for survival is uncertain.

In Canada, the first time brain death was used clinically as a criterion was in the province of Saskatchewan. It was before organ transplant was established. A medical doctor stopped a patient's life-support when it was determined that he was brain dead. The patient's family took the doctor to court charging him for the murder of their loved one. However, the doctor won the suit because this practice was medically accepted. This was the first legal recognition of brain

death in Canada.

The defining of brain death within the scope of clinical death influences not only organ transplants but other treatments as well. If a patient is diagnosed as being brain dead, even though the heart is still beating, the treatment on the patient will be stopped at that point. There is a specific case in Canada of a young 25-year-old female patient named Sofia who was hospitalized in Toronto. She was ten weeks pregnant at the time. She slipped into a coma and was determined to be brain dead on the 27th day. The hospital decided to stop her life-support. However, the family requested that her life-support remain connected in order to sustain her body until the delivery of her baby. The hospital rejected this request because she was already diagnosed to be brain dead and was thus considered to be dead at that point. The hospital announced that the doctors of the hospital have no obligation to treat dead patients. Of course, there were many debates arguing both sides of this controversy. However, legally, at the point that the hospital determines that she is brain dead, despite the fact that her heart was still beating, the decision by the hospital was medically accepted. Now the definition of brain death is applied to organ transplantation for obtaining fresh and living organs.

Conversely, from the scientific point of view, brain death shows just a probability of death. Its application to organ transplantation is a sort of trick to give death to donors for obtaining convenient, living organs in operation.

b) The beginning of life

On the other hand, we should take 'the beginning of life' into consideration since the medical community has stated to use living material for treatment, such as the use of embryonic stem cells. We have not debated or considered the issue of beginning of life seriously until this problem arose. Now we are unsure of whether we should tolerate treating embryo simply as material. The purpose of stem cell research is to create necessary organ cells from the cell and restore damaged or sick organs instead of replacing the whole organ.

The target cell for this research is the fertilized human ovum, which just started its cell division. As you all know, a human life begins from an ovum fertilized by sperm. After a fertilized ovum starts cell division, this increases the cell number, which differentiates into several kinds of organs. All organs are then united forming a whole body. The start of a body is an ovum.

Therefore, the cells in the early stages of this cell division have the potential to differentiate into any kind of organ cell. From this, scientists got the idea of obtaining these useful organ specific cells in order to help repair damaged human organs.

This seems like an ingenious idea in order to save a human life. However, the problem lies with the source from which the cells are obtained. The excess, spare fertilized ovum prepared for infertility treatment is the source. One of the reproductive technologies used today involves fertilizing an ovum in vitro, and then returning it into the mother's body. But in the case that the implantation is unsuccessful, excess fertilized ova are prepared. However, when the treatment is successful and the parents are able to have a baby, these ova are left to be forgotten and are kept in a deep freezer indefinitely or destroyed within a certain period. Hence, the researchers attempt to use these fertilized ova to generate stem cells for medical purposes. Researchers argue that there is nothing wrong in using sleeping cells for saving others.

When the ovum is used for medical purposes it is destroyed at a certain period to prepare a single cell suspension cultured in vitro in order for differentiation of the cells to occur. After this, the possibility for an ovum to create a whole body is lost completely. The issue that needs to be considered is whether the ovum is a living organism or simply medical material. If it is material, as scientists define it, it does not matter if it is used for the purpose of saving other lives. However, if the ovum is a start of a life, nobody has a right to stop the future life of the ovum, which does not have the ability speak in its own defense. When dealing with the ovum, treatment should only be for the sake and betterment of the ovum, rather than destroying it for treatment of others. It should not be up to the scientists to decide the fate of the ovum.

3) From "The Story of Creation"

a) Putting seeds into the body of *Izanami-no-Mikoto*

So, what are the correct criteria for evaluating those problems? I believe it is the teachings of Tenrikyo. Fortunately, we have "the Story of Creation" which clearly defines what life is and how it was created and even how it functions. I enjoy this story as a purely scientific article. From this story, we can study and learn about the beginning and the end of life, which we can then use for the criteria to evaluate medical applications.

The story of creation told us how God the Parent created our bodies and nurtured us with great effort and time. There are many ways to understand this story, but my understanding of the story is based on a biological perspective.

At first, 'Uo' (fish) and 'Mi' (serpent) are chosen as the model of husband and wife. The next six instruments are summoned from six different directions and are settled there and given particular roles for creating human beings. This creation scene is presently reenacted in the Service of the Kanrodai.

Next, it states, "Thus, the models and instruments having been determined, the creation of human beings was begun." After several detailed explanations it states, "Then God the Parent, as *Tsuki-sama* (the Moon), entered the body of *Izanagi-no-Mikoto* and, as *Hi-sama* (the Sun), entered the body of *Izanami-no-Mikoto* and taught them the divine providence of creating human beings. Then nine hundred million, ninety-nine thousand, nine hundred and ninety-nine seeds were put into the body of *Izanami-no-Mikoto* in three days and three nights." These sentences describe the beginning of life. That is, putting seeds into the body of *Izanami-no-Mikoto*, namely fertilization is surely the beginning of human life.

Thus, when considered from the perspective of the story of creation, the argument in which scientists define the dividing ovum at the early stage of differentiation as materials is very questionable. In a fertilized ovum, whether fertilized in vitro or by any other method, a life has already been created. Nobody has the right to destroy it for any purpose except for the benefit of the embryo itself. When the embryo is destroyed, what should happen to the soul or heart and mind, which God the Parent had already lent a body to? There are several other ways in which we can replace this method. Therefore, this method that sacrifices young life should not be developed as medicine.

b) Passed away for rebirth

Next, I would like to discuss the concept of death from the story of creation. As some of you may have noticed, the word "death" is not used in the story. Instead "passing away for rebirth" is used and is a very important teaching in Tenrikyo. I will not talk about this concept because as Yoboku, you all know the meaning of it.

Following the early stage of creation, the story continues into the detail about the function or workings of each instrument. In *The Doctrine of Tenrikyo*,

the workings of the six instruments in the creation scene are described in Part four, “Tenri-O-no-Mikoto.” One of the instruments, *Taishokuten-no-Mikoto*, is described in the following: “the providence of cutting off the ties of the child to its mother at birth, and also in cutting off the breath of life when one passes away for rebirth; in the world, providence of cutting in general.” Thus, the citation clearly defines passed away for rebirth or so-called death in general as the cutting off of breath of life.

Therefore, based on the teachings of Tenrikyo, defining brain death as general death—applied to the cadaveric donor for obtaining fresh and living organs for organ transplant—is not acceptable. If the donor is still breathing and his or her heart is beating with the use of any method, the donor should still be considered to be alive and not as a dead body. Therefore, organs should not be taken from a live body. If brain death is totally accepted by the medical community as the criterion for death in this case, then technically this standard should be applied consistently to all patients found to be brain dead in the hospital, in which doctors stop their efforts of curing patients whose heart is still beating. Of course, this is not the case and we would never wish for a doctor to stop his or her efforts in curing a patient until he or she is really dead.

Organ transplantation is not the sole treatment available for malfunctioning organs. There are many methods available, such as the use of artificial organs, which are developed to be of high quality and some have also been found to be practical. Organ transplants place much burden and strain on mankind in many ways. I interpret that the teachings of Tenrikyo may not necessarily accept this type of method of treatment. I hope that the organ transplant method is simply a transitional, temporary method used only until a better method is found that does not burden human life.

4) Hope for the future

I am not able to discuss genetic recombination of humans and cloning of human beings in detail due to a limit in time; however, I would like to talk briefly about these topics right now. Those trials involving manipulation of human genes is a precarious practice, creating harmful possibilities for the future of mankind. It increases the risk of creating harmful malformations in the future.

Some companies and religious groups have tried to clone human beings. The success rate of cloning is very low, even for other animals. For example,

the success rate of cloning the sheep named Dolly was 1 out of 300. After Dolly's success, many groups tried cloning many types of animals with little success. Almost all of the unsuccessful cases turned into malformations and died shortly after. The life span of those that survived was shorter than normal.

When malformed animals are born, the only way to stop the transfer of genetic factors to offspring is by killing them. If a malformed gene is created in a human, will it be as acceptable to kill off these clones to cease the transfer of the genes? Some groups plan to make cloned human spare parts for organ transplants in the future. With this, two classes of humans can appear in this world.

Although it appears as though I am only negating modern medicine, my intent is to bring attention to this issue so that we, as Yoboku of Tenrikyo, have an understanding of the current world views of life and the direction of many aspects in the world of medicine. It is important that we have a clear view of this from the Tenrikyo perspective, and ensure that we communicate our opinion to control the direction of our future. Fortunately, wonderful and rich knowledge lies within the teachings of Tenrikyo. Especially in the story of creation, there are clear, detailed and excellent teachings about life which cannot be found in any other religion. My hope is for Tenrikyo Medicine to be established based on the teachings, and for this medicine to be spread throughout the world by Yoboku medical doctors like Dr. Obayashi and scientists.

Organ Transplantation and Tenrikyo's Challenge in the Future

Tamio Kinoshita

(Mr. Kinoshita is a professor of English education and communication studies in the Department of European and American Studies at Tenri University)

The recent advancement of medical technologies, represented by human cloning, reproductive technology, and organ transplants, has reached the stage at which unpredictable advantages and disadvantages to human beings coexist. In my presentation, I will discuss the following three points: (1) organ transplantation and Tenrikyo's stance; (2) my personal experiences of witnessing organ transplants in the United States; and (3) my proposal for the future directions of Tenrikyo followers when they face organ transplantation patients around them.

My first point is an introduction to the present stance of Tenrikyo on organ transplantation. Tenrikyo Church Headquarters has not officially announced whether Tenrikyo, as a religious organization, is for or against the concept of brain death or organ transplantation. Tenri Yamato Culture Congress, which plays a vital role of an "opinion leader of Tenrikyo," specifically argues that brain death is not considered the death of an individual, and therefore, organ transplantation is not acceptable in Tenrikyo from the viewpoint of its teachings. Although Tenrikyo has not officially announced its standpoint regarding the controversies of brain death and organ transplantation, it seems clear that Tenrikyo takes a stance on the opposition to it from the viewpoints of the teachings of "passing away for rebirth" and "a thing lent, a thing borrowed."

Tenrikyo's official hospital, Tenri Ikoi-no-Ie Hospital, for example, does not conduct any organ transplantation surgery as it is not officially recognized by the government as a hospital for organ transplantation despite the fact that the medical standard of the hospital far exceeds the high medical standard for organ transplantation. Instead, the hospital can only supply fresh organs for their transplants at other hospitals as it recognizes that the patients hospitalized or treated at Ikoi-no-Ie may be the holders of the organ donor cards.

My second point is concerned with my personal experiences at the Intensive

Care Unit of the University of Wisconsin-Madison Hospital where I witnessed two specific instances of liver transplantation in 1987 and 1989 as a volunteer interpreter upon request by the hospital for two Japanese couples whose five-year-old daughter and six-month-old son underwent a liver transplant. Since these experiences in Wisconsin marked my turning point, giving me a lot of insights into the feasibility of organ transplantation in Tenrikyo, I have to reconsider the interpretation of the teachings. Thus, although I was formerly against the idea of the organ transplantation, having been directly involved in the organ transplants changed my stance to accept organ transplantation on certain conditions.

From the viewpoints of the Tenrikyo teachings, doctors and medicine are weeding and fertilizing, and therefore, we human beings can rely on sophisticated medical treatment on the condition that we should be well aware of the fact that the root of illness lies in the usage of our mind. Accordingly, we should reflect upon the past use of our mind and adjust the wrong course in our life at the time when we are given a physical disorder by God the Parent.

However, in case of emergency such as heart attacks, cerebral infarctions, traffic accidents or organ transplants, a theological pondering or interpretation of Tenrikyo teachings does not necessarily accompany our decision-making process for coping with those serious, acute illnesses or accidents. In fact, all we can do is to administer the Sazuke or to pray for those suffering people.

This was what I did in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) at the hospital when I was serving as a volunteer interpreter for several days before, during, and after the liver transplantation for the parents of the Japanese boy. With the consent of the patient's parents and the doctors and the hospital staff, I administered the Sazuke six times a day to the six-month-old boy.

That six-month-old boy was afflicted with an acquired biliary atresia which doesn't allow bile to flow from the liver to the duodenum due to the biliary obstruction. This is a rare case in which only one out of 10,000 children have this kind of problem, and about 10 percent of those children who suffer from this disease are unable to survive more than several years unless a liver transplant is conducted at the early age.

As a temporary solution to this acquired biliary atresia, the Kasai procedure is usually operated for those children within 60 days after their birth. One of the three Japanese cases of liver transplants at the University of Wisconsin-

Madison Hospital involved a six-month-old boy named Hiroto and his young parents from Japan. By August 1989 when they arrived in Madison, Wisconsin, the boy had undergone a series of three major surgeries in Japan starting his age of 55 days. Despite the Kasai procedure in Japan, the boy's bile didn't flow effectively from his liver to the duodenum, resulting in a dangerous stage of jaundice and hepatic cirrhosis. The level of his bilirubin due to his jaundice was as high as more than 19, which was a very dangerous level.

As the boy's liver didn't function properly, other organs in his body were malfunctioning to the extent that he had only 48 hours before his brain would have an irreversible damage as of September 25, 1989. He was on the top priority list on the national organ donation network for transplantation in the U.S.

At this critical moment, I was administering the Sazuke to the boy six times a day in the ICU. Meanwhile, I searched a Tenrikyo church in the neighborhood of the town of the patient's parents in Japan. Since they were not Tenrikyo followers, I asked the head minister over an international phone call to persuade their relatives to get together at the church for a prayer service. I also asked my brothers in Japan to have a prayer service in the Main Sanctuary of Church Headquarters as well as at Heishin Grand Church to which I belong. In our apartment in Madison, Wisconsin, too, my family and ten other Japanese scholars and doctors got together for a prayer service.

Then, on the morning of September 26, the following day, when the boy had only 24 hours to go, remarkable news was reported to the boy's parents by Mr. and Mrs. MacFarland, whose three-year-old son had received a liver transplant three days before. Observing my frequent administration of the Sazuke for the Japanese boy in ICU and the boy's and his parents' unbearable and pitiful situation, Mr. and Mrs. MacFarland asked their First Baptist Church in Florida to have a prayer service attended by 1,000 Christian members. The boy's parents and I were overwhelmed, deeply impressed by the sincerity of those Christians.

Finally, on the evening of September 26, it was decided that a liver transplant for the Japanese boy would be conducted starting the early morning of September 27 if the liver of a six-year-old boy in Texas would fit the patient. The transplantation surgeon and a transplantation coordinator flew by chartered jet to Texas and brought back with them a liver. The eight-hour-long

liver transplant was successfully completed for the seven-month-old Japanese boy at 5:00 p.m. on September 27. I was overwhelmed at the series of events that were taking place around me.

Next, I would like to discuss what should or can be done by Tenrikyo followers around the world when they are confronted with those who are currently suffering from physical disorders in which an organ transplant is the only cure for their problem.

I have several questions to ask both of the speakers here and the audience members. I'm wondering how a devout Tenrikyo missionary, who is totally against organ transplantation, is going to face a patient who is awaiting an organ transplant? Is the missionary going to convey the teachings by telling the patient not to have an organ from another person because the human body is the possession of God the Parent, and therefore, he/she cannot have God's possession under the name of a medical treatment? Or is the Tenrikyo missionary going to persuade the patient not to have an organ transplant because the present life is not the only life when he/she can live, and furthermore, the soul of each individual is everlasting? Or does the missionary tell the patient that as long as an individual leads the present life joyfully with the mind of gratitude and true satisfaction, by passing away for rebirth, he/she can borrow another body to be reborn in this world again with a better soul. Then, the missionary goes on to emphasize that expecting to have an organ transplant from another person is simply the result of the usage of the self-centered, greedy minds, disregarding the divine intention.

Through my personal experiences pertaining to the organ transplants in Wisconsin, I can personally admit organ transplantation in the following situations:

(1) When I, my wife, or one of my children is brain dead in an accident, either one of us can offer any part of our bodies for the sake of others who need organ or tissue transplantation. When I am brain dead in an accident and I am confronted with an irreversible brain damage, I have to return my borrowed body to God the Parent anyway. When you return your borrowed body to God the Parent, as Oyasama teaches us, it is like old clothes which you don't need and can be discarded. Yet, if it is used by somebody else, it can be utilized again. Nonetheless, I and my family will never receive any kind of organ transplant. We will be donors. In addition to my family, if other Tenrikyo

followers have signed an organ donor card, they can do the same. Since they are not my family members, they can be either donors or recipients.

(2) When a partial liver transplant is carried out from a living donor, the donor can survive and the recipient will eventually regain his/her normal condition.

(3) When organ or tissue transplants are conducted from a deceased donor whose heartbeat has stopped, kidney transplants and cornea transplants (and hopefully a bone marrow transplant) are possible, capable of saving several people. Again, Oyasama teaches us that the deceased body is an unnecessary one and can be discarded in any way.

Nevertheless, it is always the case that organs are in short supply in every country where organ transplantation is carried out. What does this situation imply? First, the idea of the organ transplantation is perhaps valid not for eternity, but for a temporary period until some decisive solutions to the problem are found in the future because of the divine blessing. What then constitute decisive measures to cope with this organ transplantation controversy?

One of those measures may be the emergence of more sophisticated artificial organs. The artificial hearts invented and produced by some medical teams in Japan, for example, are in great demand in Europe and North America. With the advancement of medical technology, its quality is getting higher and higher, and it is expected that such artificial hearts will replace the current heart transplantation some day.

Second, we are waiting for the day when organs will be produced naturally and ethically, even without using embryonic stem cells. Although medical researchers believe that stem cell research has the potential to change the face of human disease by being used to repair specific tissues or to grow organs, it has ethical and moral problems.

Third, as a Tenrikyo Yoboku, I personally believe that now is a seasonable time when all Yoboku around the world should begin to engage in missionary work for those people who are suffering from medically incurable diseases—especially for those who are afflicted with AIDS or dysfunctional or non-functional organs. So far Tenrikyo hasn't tried this kind of consolidated Sazuke-administration drive in which all one million Yoboku and other followers around the world are united as one, engaging in an all-out salvation drive. We need participation by every Tenrikyo Yoboku, including all Honbu-

in, Honbu-junin, Seinen, and all Church Headquarters staff members, and all Yoboku and followers. We haven't successfully proven in society or around the world that the administration of the Sazuke and the prayer service accompanying that Sazuke drive will not only cure all kinds of physical disorders but eventually change a bad *innen* into a good one, and we can regain the original purity of our souls which were given to human beings at the time of human creation by God the Parent.

By replacing all Yoboku seminars or various seminars for all church head ministers and fellowship heads, we should launch this kind of miraculous salvation drive, which not only asks for the remarkable divine blessing but also persuade every single community to believe that our prayer and the Sazuke administration are indeed the decisive measures to cope most effectively with incurable diseases in collaboration with modern medicine and its technology. Of course, medicine is weeding and fertilizing and is also a precious gift from God the Parent. We can accomplish this kind of drive because every devout missionary of Tenrikyo has encountered specific instances of miraculous salvation in their missionary experiences. Even I have such miraculous salvation experiences in which two malignant cancer patients were completely cured because of my administration of the Sazuke while I was serving in the Overseas Department many years ago.

Now is a seasonable time for all Yoboku to make an important decision for the entire world!

Section Summary Report

Organizer: Katsumi Shimada

The section meeting, “Tenrikyo and Its Response to Medical Technology,” focused on the issues of brain death and organ transplantation from the perspectives of Tenrikyo teachings. The topic was chosen upon consultation with speakers of the section meeting. This section meeting was designed so that a wide spectrum of voices on this issue can be heard at this special occasion. The issue of brain death and organ transplantation particularly involves so many complex, technical, and even emotional elements in it that the organizer invited for speakers, not only specialists who were capable of providing us with the basic information and possible interpretations of the teachings of Tenrikyo, but also a non-specialist who actually has his own experience of “salvation” in an actual situation where someone needed an organ transplantation.

The arguments and the points of emphasis made by three speakers are widely different from each other. Summarizing the overview of the complex elements around the issue of brain death and organ transplantation, Dr. Mikio Obayashi argues with a Power Point presentation that in many cases there are dual interpretations possible on this issue and therefore it is difficult for Tenrikyo as a religious organization to prohibit organ transplantations entirely. Dr. Chiaki Shiozawa, on the other hand, explores the possible interpretations particularly from the perspectives on the Truth of Origin, and argues that as far as a person is still breathing and his or her heart is beating, that is exactly by the work of God the Parent, and therefore, the person should not be considered to be dead. Professor Tamio Kinoshita, the only “non-specialist” in this panel, shares with us the story of his encounters with this issue during his stay in the U.S., in which he witnessed two specific instances of liver transplantation. He particularly highlights the power of the Sazuke in his effort to save a six-month old boy, and expresses his personal reflections as a follower of Tenrikyo based on this experience.

It seems that the clarity of all three papers as well as a wide range of information provided by them were widely appreciated by the audience. After the presentations of the three papers, our session moved on to a discussion,

where eight people voiced their comments and questions. Several comments were made based on their own experiences of a person's death or their personal encounters with organ transplantations. One person, referring to his brother's death, said that he views such difficult situations as God's blessing that has enabled his family members and relatives to inquire into God's true intention. Another person, the head minister of a Tenrikyo church, expressed his agreement with Dr. Obayashi's point of view, saying that concrete instances of brain death and organ transplantations should be dealt with case by case.

One question from the floor was derived from a case that happened a few years ago in the U.S. in which a woman became brain dead and there was a big dilemma between her family that wanted the life support to keep her alive and her husband who wanted to take it off and let her go. The person who raised this case for example asked the panelists what they would do in that kind of situation. Dr. Obayashi responded that since there is no right or wrong answer in this particular situation, he, not only as a medical doctor but also as a Tenrikyo follower, would leave it up to the family members to make a decision.

The most drastic comment made by the audience was probably the one concerned with Tenrikyo's stance on ethics and morals. According to the person who made this comment, the point of Oyasama's teaching is that when our mind becomes absolutely clear, there is only the point of view left that comes from the Truth of Origin. Although all three papers' arguments have very clear reasoning, he continued, they all seem to be biased with "worldly common reasoning," which is equivalent to ethics or morals. Such a "quasi-Gnostic" perspective on Tenrikyo, I would say, probably is a little extreme, but it seems worth listening to when we reflect upon issues, like organ transplantations, that are inevitably colored by a particular moral-ethical view.

As the organizer, one of the lessons I learned from our session meeting is that when we discuss issues like this, one of the possible ways to deal with it is to separate the layers of discussions: for example, 1. Tenrikyo as a religious organization situated in a particular social-historical setting; 2. possible interpretations of scriptures in terms of social issues; 3. personal reflections as a follower of Tenrikyo. Although it is probably difficult to make coherency among these layers, it seems more realistic to cope with them in this way when it comes to issues that involve so many complex elements in them.

The Tenrikyo Teaching and War and Peace

Toshiaki Komatsuzaki

(Mr. Komatsuzaki is a research fellow of Japan Society for the Promotion of Science)

Peace is a word of so many meanings, and there is no consensus among academics or practitioners on the idea of peace. Actually, any effort to define the concept of peace per se always causes unpeaceful situation. Nonetheless, the concept of peace is normally divided into two sub-concepts: negative peace and positive peace. Negative peace simply denotes a condition where direct violence (like war) is absent, and positive peace means a condition that is more than that; that is, it requires the presence of social justice, a fair distribution of resources, impartial enforcement of law, and other things that promote social welfare. As you may notice, I used the word “peace” vis-à-vis war. So, in my presentation, I confine the meaning of peace to its negative sense.

Although everyone agrees that we need peace, the world is actually full of violence. During the twentieth century, we lost approximately 110 million lives because of war or other types of armed conflict. It is undoubtedly an unnecessary loss, and further all wars are unnecessary. War clearly shows the most inhumane and destructive characteristic of humanity. In the face of war and other types of violence, as a follower of Tenrikyo and a human being, I cannot but contemplate how I can get involved in putting an end to them and in restoring peaceful situation. In this presentation, I would like to present my tentative understanding of the relationship between war and the teachings as a small step towards future discussions on this topic. My presentation consists of three parts: the first part is on performing the Joyous Service, or *Tsutome*; the second part on “the root of rebellion;” and the final part on a question to what extent Tenrikyo followers can practically contribute to world peace.

The Joyous Service

First of all, we can get some clues as to the teaching on war and peace, or war and its settlement, in Part XIII of the Ofudesaki.¹ It says:

1 To be sure, the meaning of each verse of the Ofudesaki should be interpreted in context, but each verse by itself may be useful in stimulating further discussion about war and peace in general.

Tsukihi sincerely desires only to end the wars
among those on the high mountains.

Ofudesaki XIII:50

Oyasama started writing Part XIII early in 1877 (Meiji 10), by that time a famous conflict between Saigo Takamori and the Meiji government (the Satsuma rebellion) had already begun. This verse presumably refers to this rebellion. It articulates God the Parent's deep concern about the war and God's desire to put an end to it. The Ofudesaki continues:

By what means can they be ended?
If only you set forth on the Joyous Service . . .

Ofudesaki XIII:51

If you read these verses, one thing becomes immediately clear: issues on war and its settlement are referred to in connection with doing the Joyous Service. Therefore, one may well easily conclude, from this point, that the way to put an end to war is only to do the Joyous Service sincerely and correctly.²

“The root of rebellion”

However, the Ofudesaki does not say that the Joyous Service is all we can do. It is obvious that we, as Tenrikyo followers, must do the Joyous Service sincerely, praying for those who are suffering from unpeaceful situations and for the divine blessings from God the Parent on them. However, according to the Ofudesaki, the settlement of war and the realization of peace by the providence of God take more than doing the Joyous Service.

In Part XIII, Oyasama teaches us the reason why such a conflict arises. The most fundamental problem is people's attitudes towards and understanding of the teachings; that is, that the human mind and human thinking as opposed to the intent of God the Parent have prevailed.³ So, in order to realize peace or the world of the Joyous Life, people have to firmly replace their mind⁴ and truly

2 Osashizu of 30 July 1894 (Meiji 27), which probably refers to the Sino-Japanese war although its title says an inquiry concerning the war in Korea, also instructs people to do the Joyous Service and pray for those on the battlefield if they seek an end to the war.

3 Cf., Ofudesaki, XIII: 9, 34 and 94.

4 Cf., Ofudesaki, XIII: 10.

understand God's intention and the teaching on the origin of human beings: the truth that "the body is a thing lent, a thing borrowed."⁵ Prior to making reference to the war among those on the high mountains in verse 50, Oyasama got down to the heart of the issue in verses 43-49 by explaining the truth of human beings.

All of you throughout the world are brothers and sisters.
There should be no one called an outsider.

That there is no one who knows the origin of this
is the very cause the regret of Tsukihi.

Those living in the high mountains and those living in
the low valleys: their souls are all the same.

Furthermore, the instruments you use daily
are all things lent by Tsukihi.

Unaware of this, the thought in the minds of all human beings
is that there are the high and the low.

By all means, Tsukihi desires to make the truth of this matter
clearly understood by the whole world.

If only this is clearly understood,
the root of rebellion will be cut off.

Ofudesaki XIII:43-49

What is of great importance here is that people, not only Tenrikyo followers but also those who have not yet known the teachings of Oyasama, need to firmly understand the teaching of "a thing lent, a thing borrowed." A hand movement for "rebellion" appears in Song Two of Mikagura-uta⁶ represents drawing a sword and wounding others with it, which is obviously an act against this teaching. Therefore, spreading the teaching as well as doing the Joyous

⁵ Cf., Ofudesaki, XIII: 46 and 79.

⁶ Paragraph 6 of Song Two of Mikagura-uta.

Service sincerely and correctly are indisputably other endeavours we can make for world peace.

Practical contributions?

Despite such a clear, or rather simple conclusion, I cannot stop my argument here. I still feel that Tenrikyo at large do nothing but praying somewhere a long way from actual battlefields and talking to someone who is willing to listen to us. It may be rather easy for anyone to talk only about “peace” by remaining in the realm of peace, and steer clear of discussions on violence and many other things that lie outside our “peaceful” worlds. However, discussing and expressing admiration for peace within a congenial company of pacifists does not by and large have much influence on the mindset of warmongers. I acknowledge the intellectual and practical powers of pacifist attitudes and the conception of non-violence, but at the same time we have to challenge the logic of war and violence by struggling with its inconsistency with the logic of Oyasama’s teachings. We cannot acquiesce in the status quo.

It may be inappropriate to express my personal anguish here, but sometimes I cannot understand why God the Parent shows us so many wars and allow so many innocent people dying irrationally. I feel uncomfortable with it. To be honest, I do not know why, because life and death is a divine blessing of God the Parent and we cannot determine it. Nonetheless, when we try to influence the whole world, I think we are accountable to explain it based on the logic of Oyasama’s teachings. So, I would like to present my tentative explanation.

As we have seen above, according to Part XIII of the Ofudesaki, people did not truly understand God’s will⁷ and had doubted and erased the words of God,⁸ which was the deep regret of God.⁹ What is God’s will, then? It is to teach the origins of the world and human beings to people all over the world.¹⁰ God the Parent was not able to do it because the minds of people were full of dust and not purified. For a long time, God the Parent had only looked on and kept still,¹¹ but God saw “no hope of a settling”¹² there. Ofudesaki reads: “The

7 Cf., Ofudesaki, XIII: 15, 100 and 104.

8 Cf., Ofudesaki, XIII: 34, 62, 66 and 104.

9 Cf., Ofudesaki, XIII: 16 and 105.

10 Cf., Ofudesaki, XIII: 30-31.

11 Cf., Ofudesaki, XIII: 28 and 106.

12 Ofudesaki, XIII 80.

regret and anger of Tsukihi have piled up like a mountain,”¹³ and “the regret of Tsukihi . . . is not a small matter.”¹⁴ God the Parent now hastens universal salvation;¹⁵ besides, “the time is pressing.”¹⁶ Therefore, in order to make people purify their minds, “clear away all the regret and anger of God,”¹⁷ and bring true understanding to their minds, God the Parent decided to “admonish” human beings by “manifesting the regret of God.”¹⁸ This will of God is also described in other words such as “Tsukihi will go forth to work,”¹⁹ and “God is openly revealed,”²⁰ instead of giving people warnings and notices.²¹

In the previous part of *Ofudesaki* (Part XII), Oyasama tells us that if God the Parent set out, we might see something pitying.²² It may indicate that human beings would encounter very difficult situations. At the same time, Oyasama also teaches us that even such a difficulty is also the working and blessing of God and, when we see it, we need to “rejoice the world.”²³ Furthermore, Oyasama assures that once the regret and anger of God are cleared away, a marvellous path – the world of joyousness – would open up.²⁴

Given this perspective, war could be sort of a manifestation of the regret of God; and, if so, we have to take it seriously in order to understand the intent of God correctly. Having said that, it may be not enough, and it seems to be ineffectual in terms of helping people killed on the battlefields. Nevertheless, the first thing that we have to do is to “lean on God” and do the Joyous Service,²⁵ since Oyasama reveals that, if the sincerity of the performance is accepted by God, God the Parent will work accordingly,²⁶ and peace “will come step by step through God’s protection.”²⁷

At the heart of performing the Joyous Service lies harmony. The monthly

13 *Ofudesaki*, XIII: 105.

14 *Ofudesaki*, XIII: 32.

15 Cf., *Ofudesaki*, XIII: 106 and 112.

16 *Ofudesaki*, XIII: 107.

17 *Ofudesaki*, XIII: 35.

18 Cf. *Ofudesaki*, XIII: 16-20.

19 Cf., *Ofudesaki*, XIII: 5 and 81.

20 *Ofudesaki*, XIII: 92.

21 Cf., *Ofudesaki*, XIII: 2 and 8.

22 Cf., *Ofudesaki*, XII: 30 and 35.

23 *Ofudesaki*, XIII: 4.

24 Cf., *Ofudesaki*, XIII: 35-37.

25 Cf., *Ofudesaki*, XIII: 10 and 68.

26 Cf., *Ofudesaki*, XIII: 11, 23 and 69.

27 *Ofudesaki*, I: 20.

service performed in local churches requires at least sixteen performers: six dancers, nine music instrument players, and one singer. The most important thing for dancers is to remove their habits and temperaments away from their hand movements and perform in unison. On the other hand, what is important for musical instrument players is to listen to each other carefully in accordance with the singer so that a good quality of each instrument can be drawn forth. The head minister of my grand church once told us that that is the implementation of the teaching that “we are saved by saving others.”²⁸ I think this is one of the important messages we can deliver to the world with regard to the issue on war and peace.

Each of us has to keep conveying such teachings to people outside our community in their languages, searching for common ground. To be sure, such an effort may be nothing, but yet it could be a persuasive conceptual framework through which people structure their views of the world. A conceptual framework in accordance with Oyasama’s teachings can be a real challenge to the logic of violence. Theologian and antiwar activist A.J. Muste once wrote: “There is no way to peace. Peace is the way.”²⁹ If that is the case, we could demonstrate peace through our daily lives in accordance with the teachings. I think, that is our significant, if not fully efficient, contribution to world peace. Part XIII is closed with the following verse:

Whatever it may be, Tsukihi will never say that it cannot
be realized. It all depends on the mind of each of you.

Ofudesaki XIII: 120

28 I am grateful to Rev. Yoshihiko Shirokihara, head minister of Honshiba Grand Church, for giving me a manuscript of one of his past lectures.

29 Quoted in David P. Barash (ed.), *Approaches to Peace: A Reader in Peace Studies*, Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2000, p. 1.

Tenrikyo's International Network for Mutual Help

Tomoyuki Itakura

(Mr. Itakura has been working at Tenrikyo Church Headquarters since 1991)

Today I would like to share with you an account of the problems we have today in the world, and how we as Tenrikyo, can approach those problems. There are so many social problems that we face, but how many problems can we solve as Tenrikyo? I know it's not easy, but what can we do and what are we supposed to do? As a staff member of the "Tenrikyo International Network for Mutual Help," I would like to introduce its history and the role we play.

There is an organization called "Tenrikyo International Network for Mutual Help" within Tenrikyo Church Headquarters. What they do is they collect money contribution (monetary donations) from Tenrikyo followers, and they try to help people in areas where people are suffering from natural disasters. While money contributions are used in different ways, the methods of support may be limited, depending upon the country. In this session, we will talk about the situation of each country and especially of developing countries. Hopefully, we would like to support the variety of needs among the countries and meet the needs of those countries as much as possible.

While the official title of "Tenrikyo International Network for Mutual Help" came about only ten years ago, we have actually tackled activities to help people who were suffering from natural disasters since 1966. Our recent actions include responses to the big earthquake in Turkey and Taiwan in 1999 and the earthquake and tsunami disaster in East Asia in 2004.

Even though the official name was given only ten years ago, the history of disaster relief in Tenrikyo traces back to 1966. In 1966, along with the missionary work in Congo, Tenrikyo Church Headquarters set up a clinic which was called Iko-i-no-Ie within church grounds because there were not enough medical facilities in the country itself. These medical treatment activities were continued for almost ten years. Then the clinic was closed once, but the new clinic was built near the church, and the clinic and medical appliances that were used in the old clinic were all donated to the Republic of Congo. The clinic is now under control of the government of Congo and Tenrikyo still supports it by donating appliances and medicine.

In 1970 to 1976, the medical treatment activity was held in Laos. In Laos, a roving medical treatment party was organized, but this activity was forced to end for political reasons. In 1976 to 1995, we accepted refugees from Vietnam at the request of the Ministry of Justice. The Hino Grand Church was the main place for stay for the refugees from Vietnam.

Then since 1981, as many of you know, a Tenrikyo relief operation known as “Milk for children who are suffering from hunger” was developed in Kenya. This relief operation began from a letter written by children who lived in Tokyo. These children, who were seven and four-years-old sisters and a one-year-old brother, said in the letter, “To the people of Tenrikyo newspaper (publishing department), we are watching many people who are suffering from hunger. Please give those people our allowance money.” They sent 2,000 yen with the letter. Tenrikyo regarded this letter highly and printed this letter on the newspaper. Then they started to collect contribution from readers among Tenrikyo followers, and the operation called “Milk for children who are suffering from hunger” began and lasted almost ten years. This activity raised the awareness among Tenrikyo followers towards helping people who are suffering from natural disasters.

In the recent five years, activities of Tenrikyo International Network for Mutual Help are as follows: in 1999, earthquakes in Colombia, Turkey, Taiwan, and flood disaster in Mexico; in 2001, earthquake in India, and “September 11 terrorist attacks” in New York; in 2002, earthquake in western India; in 2003, flood disaster in Kenya; in 2004 and 2005, earthquake and tsunami disaster in South Asia; and this year, we sent money contribution to those affected by hurricane disaster in Mexico and earthquake in Indonesia.

The money is actually sent to Tenrikyo churches and mission centers in the area concerned. Then the churches and mission centers make contact with the government of that country or with relief organizations; then they seek the best way to use the contribution. In recent years, Tenrikyo does not send contribution to countries where a Tenrikyo church or mission center does not exist because there is no certainty in terms of how the money will be spent. In some countries, money may be appropriated by the government for other uses or consumed by unknown organizations, and the contribution does not reach people who are actually suffering. It is very difficult to find out which organization is reliable.

If a disaster happens in Japan, an organization called Disaster Relief Hinokishin Corps will be dispatched to the disaster area and they help suffering people. However, in foreign countries we need more people and more organization. That will be the first step we have to make from now.

Even though Tenrikyo is acting as the organization called “Tenrikyo International Network for Mutual Help,” we need to make a difference between missionary work and a rescue operation. If we have a lot of money, we may help people who are suffering from poverty, but it is not missionary work. In missionary work, we need to save people’s mind. Giving the contribution to the stricken area may help people in some way, and it may relieve their anxieties and help with their lives but it will not save their souls. The contribution to the stricken area is one of the opportunities that we have to approach them. It may be the beginning of the missionary work.

As you know, during these three years, a lot of natural disasters happened all over the world. What causes these disasters? It may be the cause of global warming, and we may say that we cannot do anything about the natural disasters. Is it really OK to say that?

Ofudesaki says:

In this world, landslides, thunder, earthquakes,
and great winds are all from the anger of Tsukihi.

Ofudesaki VI:91

Thunder, earthquakes, great winds, and floods:
these are from the regret and anger of Tsukihi.

Ofudesaki VIII:58

In this case, “anger” does not mean the same situation where human beings are mad at something. God the Parent is very disappointed because human beings do not listen to what God the Parent says and they are doing anything as they please. God the Parent is always with us and leads us to the Joyous Life.

Ofudesaki continues:

Because no one has ever understood this matter,
this time Tsukihi will tell you about them beforehand.

To Tsukihi, each of you, one and all, is a child of Mine.
I am filled with love for you.

But the innermost heart of everyone of you
is covered with piles of dust.

Unless this dust is cleanly swept away,
The deep concern of Tsukihi will be to naught.

Tsukihi is anxious about your dreadful and dangerous course.
Yet none of you is aware.

Ofudesaki VIII:59-63

God the Parent worries about our future because our minds are filled with dust. God the Parent warns us by making natural disasters, so that we would be able to clean our dust from our minds.

Does it mean that people who actually met the disasters were really bad, and were they the ones who really accumulated most dust in their minds? I believe nobody thinks that way. I do not know the definitive answer as to why things happen to innocent people, but I am sure that we must be the ones to reflect as to what is going on, and we are the first ones who should try to sweep away the dust from our minds because we already know and are familiar with the teachings of Tenrikyo.

In these days, we have to think about what we need to do for world salvation, and as Tenrikyo we need to think about what we should do from now.

We need more Yoboku, more people who actually act to save people. In some countries, we are not allowed to do missionary work because their governments of that country does not allow us to do it, but living in such countries we may meet many people through cultural activities, and we can convey the teachings of Tenrikyo, spread the fragrance of Tenrikyo through heart-to-heart interaction.

Each of us needs to spread the fragrance of Tenrikyo to people who live right next to us. To increase the number of Yoboku in each country is the fastest way to world salvation.

Tenrikyo and Interreligious Gatherings

Noriaki Nagao

(Rev. Nagao is the head of Tenrikyo Europe Centre located in a suburb of Paris, France)

Although oppositions between ideologies have nearly disappeared, world peace has yet to be realized. This is because clashes between civilizations, caused by differences in race and religion—which were hidden behind ideological disagreements—have now become apparent. The United States' conflicts with Afghanistan and Iraq are examples. Moreover, because of these differences, people try to become independent or to gain more territory. Examples include the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the Chechen War, the problems in Northern Ireland, and the conflicts in the Basque region. There are also conflicts that are caused by political confrontations, such as the internal struggles in Africa.

I have been asked to speak about Tenrikyo's contribution to world peace. However, at the present moment, I think there are very few ways in which Tenrikyo can contribute to global harmony. As the number of followers is small, Tenrikyo has very little influential power. Still, the charity bazaars and other events held by dioceses or churches, although they may be modest, have significant meaning in a material sense. The main reasons for the conflicts I mentioned earlier and poverty may not seem to be related. However, it is poverty that causes people's minds to become degenerate, and I believe that this indirectly causes conflicts. Therefore, if the profits made from charity events can reduce poverty, even if only slightly, it will indirectly contribute to preventing conflicts. At the Europe Centre, where I serve as the head, we have been holding an annual charity bazaar for more than twenty years. This event has received high appraisal from many people outside of our church. We plan to continue holding this event every year. In previous times, and possibly even now, there were people who thought that because activities such as charity bazaars and fundraising to aid refugees were not originally of a religious nature, we should not take part in them. Certainly, the primary activity of religious groups is to work for the salvation of the soul, and not to provide material relief. There is also the point of view that material aid should be carried out by

the United Nations, national governments, and other public institutions, or by private bodies such as Doctors without Borders. We must remember, however, that Oyasama began Her Divine Model by giving away Her possessions to those around Her. It was only with the spiritual maturity of the followers that She began to work for the salvation of the soul. Therefore, I think it is of utmost importance for us to take part in charity work.

On the other hand, as I mentioned earlier, because of our limited numbers, it is difficult for Tenrikyo to fulfill its fundamental role, which is to purify the minds of people and contribute to world peace. Since the beginning of our religion, its objective was to bring salvation to the entire world and not just to one race or one nation. Although our number may be small, we must strive to disseminate our faith to those outside of our religion. Yet, in reality, we are not spreading the teachings of Tenrikyo as much as we should be. I have been participating in events such as the interreligious assembly hosted by the Vatican for more than ten years. “I have never heard of Tenrikyo. Is it a part of Shinto?” “I’ve heard of *Rissho Kosei-kai* (a type of Japanese Religion), but what is Tenrikyo?” These are some of the questions that I was often asked when I first started attending these events. I was often told that “it is surprising that Tenrikyo is participating in these kinds of events.” If we do not actively participate in these events and speak out, there will be few opportunities for the world to learn of our religion. Even Japanese religious communities that are smaller than ours in size are proactively expounding their doctrine.

It is not only a problem of events. For example, if we look at publications, I believe that for a religious group, we have the most in the world. However, they are all “books of, by, and for the followers of Tenrikyo.” In other words, they are books that serve to deepen the faith of followers, and books on the teachings that are meant for the general public hardly exist. Therefore, they are rarely seen in local bookstores. Because of this, there is all the less chance that people will have an opportunity to learn of our teachings. In Japanese newspapers, advertisements for new publications appear daily and we see that many religious groups publish books and magazines for the general public. It is extremely regretful that we rarely see any Tenrikyo books advertised. This has made our religion almost like an exclusive club and I suspect that people who are not followers feel hesitant to join us. This can also be said about the atmosphere of the church. Once, when I went to Tokyo, I was to meet

someone, coincidentally, near a grand church. So, I decided to go and worship. I made it to the front of the church but found it difficult to enter. It is much easier to go into shrines and temples. I, a follower, found it difficult to set foot into a church, which will give you an idea of how a non-follower must feel.

Why is this so? I believe it is because of the introspectiveness and exclusivity of our religion. For example, let us suppose that there is a person who came to worship for the first time to a church on the day of its monthly service when a reverend from the Church Headquarters was also present. The head minister and many of the leading figures of the church will not be able to speak to that person because they are too busy entertaining their guest from the Church Headquarters. Let us liken this situation to a company. A first-time customer comes to a Toyota branch store in Nara. It so happens that an executive from the Headquarters has also come. What would happen if the manager of the branch and all of its employees were busy entertaining the executive and paid no attention to the customer? Chances are that the customer would get mad and go home. You cannot conduct a successful business in this way. The executive should work together with the employees of the branch and recommend their product to the customer. Although business and religion differ, there are many common aspects. It is a fact that I hear complaints about this exclusiveness from those outside of our church. As we have seen, the perspective of our religion as a whole is focused inward. As mentioned before, in Japan, Tenrikyo is probably the most active religious group in respect to providing material aid. In addition, we are able to carry out this aid very systematically. The performance of the Disaster Relief Hinokishin Corps is very impressive and the level of blood donation in Oyasato cannot be compared to other religious groups. However, the general public does not know about these activities because we do not inform them.

Let us focus our point of view outward. Let us actively attend the various meetings that people outside of our church organize and publish magazines targeted at the general public to spread even just a part of our wonderful teachings to the world. The International Meeting of Prayer for Peace, which I attend every year, is organized by the Community of Sant'Egidio. Once, a member of this community asked whether the Young Men's Association would be interested in working together to aid a developing country. In the end, this plan was not realized because Tenrikyo failed to give a decisive answer. Is it not

important for us to participate actively in these events?

I have confidence that there is nothing that can contribute to world peace as much as the doctrine of Tenrikyo. Oyasama teaches us, “At any shrine or temple of Buddha, pay your respects and then chant Tenri-O-no-Mikoto.” We can interpret these words as Oyasama telling us to respect other religions. Tenrikyo preaches that which other Western monotheistic religions have difficulty in overcoming. We have a teaching that will be able to bring peace to a world where conflicts, caused by differences in race and religion, never seem to end. We must participate in events outside of our church and convey to the leaders of the main religions of the world, namely Christianity, Islam, and Buddhism, how wonderful Oyasama’s teachings are.

At the same time, Tenrikyo could organize an interreligious assembly and invite other religious groups to Jiba. At a past International Meeting, a representative of a Buddhist denomination told me that, in Japan, it would be impossible to hold this kind of assembly anywhere except in Tenri. Tenrikyo has the human resources and facilities to take on these projects. I can still remember it clearly. Four years ago, the Tenrikyo-Christian Dialogue, in which I participated, was held in Jiba. On the night of the final meeting, the Shinbashira held a reception. Because I was to leave early the next morning for Paris, I went to worship at the Main Sanctuary after the gathering. It was very late at night and there were many Tenri High School Evening Course students in the Sanctuary. There were also three professors from the Gregorian University sitting and carefully watching those who were praying. There was a look of amazement on their faces. I think this was because there are no churches in Europe that are open at night where followers can come to pray as they please. Also, there are few teenagers who go to pray so late at night. Let us spread the teachings to religious and political leaders and have them see the attitude of followers and the atmosphere of Jiba. This will certainly serve to spread the teachings, and I firmly believe that this will lead to world peace.

Section Summary Report

Organizer: Ikuo Higashibaba

Toshiaki Komatsuzaki discussed in what way Tenrikyo is able to contribute to the implementation of world peace. He neatly presented his position by referring to the Ofudesaki, and singled out the performance of the Service and the spreading of the teaching as Tenrikyo approaches to world peace. He then significantly mentioned, “It may be not enough, and it seems to be ineffectual in terms of helping people killed on the battlefields. Nevertheless, the first thing that we have to do is to ‘lean on God’ and do the Joyous Service, *since Oyasama reveals that, if the sincerity of the performance is accepted by God, God the Parent will work accordingly, and peace ‘will come step by step through God’s protection’.*” Here lies his thesis. We know that the Service and teaching are important, but is it not the case that we cannot be wholly free from a kind of skepticism about its efficacy, its practicality? He reminded us of the importance of leaning on God with our full conviction of the divine protection, with the steadfast belief that the Service is truly the path leading to world peace. Such belief, as he also contended, should come from our trust in Oyasama.

Tomoyuki Itakura presented Tenrikyo’s contribution to world peace by focusing on the Tenrikyo International Network for Mutual Help in which he had been personally involved. Since it was founded 10 years ago, the organization has been engaged in relief activities outside Japan—countries and areas that suffered from severe natural disasters. Although its activities are still limited, it is the only Tenrikyo-based international relief network that provides tangible, that is, monetary and material, contribution to help those in need. While admitting the importance of relief activities, Rev. Itakura clearly distinguished the relief activities from missionary work, for, in his view, it is only the latter that can “save their souls from the bottom.” Then, he argues, “In these days, we have to think what we really need for world salvation, and as Tenrikyo we need to think what we should do from now. We need more Yoboku, more people who actually act for saving people.” We need to pay attention to his choice of Yoboku as Tenrikyo agent for peace, and to underline that he meant by Yoboku those who live in the countries concerned. By this he seems to indicate that, although Tenrikyo’s contribution to world peace

ought to be rooted in its teaching, it should be done within local context, taking various elements into consideration. Thus, their contribution to world peace must be something that surpasses but still includes relief activities.

Noriaki Nagao's presentation critically reflected upon the problem of introspectiveness of Tenrikyo organizations. He maintained that we should open our doors to outsiders, helping them to come in, and let general public and other religions know what we are doing. Interreligious gatherings, a number of which he has taken part in, is a good opportunity for that end. Behind such claim exists his confidence in the teachings of Tenrikyo, which certainly helps bring about peace in the world. He says, "I have confidence that nothing can contribute to world peace as much as the doctrine of Tenrikyo." His talk was stimulating in many aspects, but most of all in this clear-cut confidence in Tenrikyo. In view of the section meeting theme, he seems to be suggesting that Tenrikyo become a world religion it truly deserves to be. It is possible since we have enough resources; what has yet to be done is applying correct approaches to it, including our own attitudes to others.

Comments from the floor after the presentations ranged from a personal impression of the forum to a few highly political opinions. We live in the world where religions are never free from complicated international conflicts and wars. This being the case, it would have been imagined that discussion under this topic could not avoid such issue as world politics and Tenrikyo's response. Yet, this section meeting did not deal with it, leaving it to future debates.

About Spreading Japanese Culture

Ronnie Seldin

(Mr. Seldin is the head of Tenrikyo Hon New York Fellowship)

Recently, I have been thinking a lot about the subject of Japanese culture, and its spread into American society. In large part this has been due to the support of Michael Yuge, who has encouraged me to write this article, as well as agreeing to be the organizer of the program in which I am to be the moderator, during the upcoming Tenri Forum from July 15-July 17, 2006, at Jiba. The name of the program I am to moderate is “Tenrikyo and its Promotion of Cultural Activities.”

In addition, in this week’s weekly *New York Japanese Newspaper*, there is an article and photograph of me in my *Shakuhachi* studio. So, please bear with me while I do my usual rambling!

For those of you who do not know me—a brief introduction:

1. I first became involved in Tenrikyo in 1973 (33 years ago). I have considered Tenrikyo my exclusive spiritual path from every moment since then.

2. I also became quite dedicated to the study of the *Shakuhachi* at the same time. Within two weeks of my beginning to study, I felt (and told everyone) that this was what I was going to do the rest of my life.

3. Originally a home shrine, my fellowship—Hon New York (under Soryo Branch Church, and Tohon Grand Church)—became an official fellowship in 1980. At present we have over 50 *Yoboku*, and over 50 more *nakaseki* (those who have begun the *Besseki* Lectures but have not yet finished them).

4. In terms of my activities with the New York Center, as one of the handful of original members (and Board Members), I was fortunate enough to be involved in all of the decisions in the first 20 years of the Center. I also did *nissan* (daily worship) at the Center for 10 years without missing a day when I was in New York, headed the New York Center Young Men’s Association for 9 years and was a Vice-Chairman of the Young Men’s Association of America.

Well, to the point of this article. I have long been involved, as a professional *Shakuhachi* (a vertical bamboo flute) player, in all aspects of spreading Japanese culture to the United States. But, perhaps more than that, due to the way my spiritual parent Rev. Hideaki Kamijo, taught me (through action even more than

words) that the basis of Tenrikyo was to “give-and-give,” rather than “give-and-take” (which I was raised to believe). With this idea (basically *binokishin*—the way I define *binokishin*), one just tries to do things to make others joyful (the way Oyasama did), without any thought of receiving anything back in return.

When I was much younger, there was a very small interest in Japanese culture in this country. There were no sushi restaurants, the only authors translated were Mishima and Kawabata, no manga or anime, no interest in Japanese music, art, *ikebana* (flower arrangement), tea ceremony, etc. The Japanese language, while taught at a few universities, was not considered to be that important.

However, in the early 70s, a number of us felt differently. In a way we were pioneers, in that we went to Japan and proceeded to study the traditional arts. We could go for 6 months, even in a city like Kyoto (where I lived), and not even see another non-Japanese person. In this pursuit, though, I was similar to others. What was different for me was meeting Rev. Hideaki Kamiyo. His teachings made me switch the accent from what I could get for myself to what I could give to others.

With this understanding, I constantly wanted to try to push towards the foundation of the Tenri Cultural Institute. I am afraid that I truly did antagonize some members who did not see the importance in the same way that I did, but I would like to think that my original vision and persistence had to do with the creation of the Tenri Cultural Institute. Of course, there were so many others whose efforts were also indispensable.

I even felt so strongly that at one point I did what only a non-Japanese could do. I went “over the heads” of my direct superiors and even set up a meeting with Rev. Iburi in Jiba to plead my case for the necessity of the Cultural Institute. I also remember going out with Rev. Okui to plead with the Board of Directors at mission headquarters for the Cultural Institute’s formation.

You see, I feel strongly that this should be our prime mission here in the United States because, if Tenrikyo is a religion that seeks to do things for others, it cannot do this by just doing the Service. It is necessary to “reach out” and help others. Now there are other ways to do this such as helping homeless people, and helping people in hospitals, but as a musician who performs Japanese music, I have found this to be the best way for me.

On a practical level, I am fortunate because my shrine hangs over the table where I do my daily *Shakuhachi* teaching, and when I do my pilgrimage to Jiba once or twice a year (since 1980), I always take back students who take the Besseki Lectures. Many of them become Yoboku.

And thanks to God the Parent, I have been successful in my attempts to spread the wonderful music of the *Shakuhachi*. I personally hold two Grand Master Licenses (*Dai Shibhan*), the most recent one at the never-before-awarded level of Ninth level (*Kyu-dan*) from the Shakuhachi Living National Treasure (Ningen Kokuho - Aoki, Reibo). My school, KiSuiAn Dojo is the largest and most active in the world outside of Japan with about 80 active students, with four branches, and remote students in 26 states and 6 foreign countries. Perhaps one of my greatest accomplishments was the conception and production of the 4th International Shakuhachi Festival here in New York (at New York University), where we had the largest gathering of non-Japanese Shakuhachi players in history.

I would love to hear what all of your feelings and opinions are on this subject!

Section Summary Report

Organizer: Michael Yuge

After discussing the basic premise behind promoting Japanese culture as a way to spread the fragrance of the teachings, Ronnie Seldin and Michael Yuge (Administrative Director of Tenri Cultural Institute) spoke about the success of Tenri Cultural Institute (TCI). TCI was modeled after the cultural institute in Paris and was established in New York City in 1991. After establishing its programs with a Japanese school, an art gallery and a concert venue in Manhattan, TCI moved to a new location in 2001.

Since then, the programs have grown exponentially. The Japanese program has more students than ever before (150 students each semester) and the beginner's class fills up so quickly that people are put on waiting lists. The gallery has become so popular that it is booked for the next three years and reviews of the shows have been featured in magazines such as *Art in America* and *Newsweek*. The concert hall is more popular than ever and groups need to book six months ahead of time to set a date. Articles about concerts at TCI have been written in *The New York Times* and *Time Out New York* lists TCI as a prominent concert venue comparable to Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center! This has happened over the years and it is almost all by word of mouth since we do not advertise.

Many participants asked questions regarding the formation of TCI and how this program can be expanded to areas such as Fresno, California and Australia. Michael Yuge made the following comments:

The formation of TCI took many years to garner support in New York and at Church Headquarters. It was such an expensive project that soon after its formation, there was often talk of discontinuing the program. Thankfully this has not happened and TCI has persevered through the years and has established itself as a force in the New York community. Nevertheless, due to the controversy and financial expense of such an undertaking, I doubt that Church Headquarters could make another such program in the near future. In my opinion, it would be great to establish "grassroots" projects in places like Fresno and Australia. If a community can create a program with the members available in that district, it would go a long way in building a bigger project.

Starting a Japanese school would be a great start. I just don't think we can rely on Church Headquarters to build something for us first. One of the biggest issues with such projects is the staffing. Another issue is that often the next generations of Japanese Americans will not be able to speak Japanese nor teach about Japanese culture. These are big practical issues that need to be dealt with.

The Environment, Within the Body of God the Parent

Cedric Noto

(Mr. Noto is a construction inspector for public works projects)

Effects of Global Warming and Climate Change

I am sure you are aware of many effects of global warming or climate change that is going on. We have melting glaciers, rising sea levels and temperatures, threatened coastal communities, and dramatic changes in local climates. Also, many species are in danger of extinction. There is, moreover, the issue of strained resources in terms of deteriorating water quality and air quality—an issue compounded by dependence on fossil fuels. There are also new illnesses, such as the bird flu, SARS, and dengue fever, which, while not a direct effect of environmental degradation, are related because the unstable environment has driven evolutionary changes to organisms, particularly viruses.

So all these things are happening right now and have brought to light an increasingly urgent need to address the environmental crisis. What we would like to find out here is: What does Tenrikyo doctrine say about the environmental concerns?

What Tenrikyo Doctrine Says about the Environment

As far as I know, Oyasama did not explicitly explain how to address the environmental issues. During Her time, the people She primarily spoke to were farmers. Thus in Her teachings, a lot of references to the natural environment and farming are found.

Of the many metaphors used by Oyasama, two of the most commonly used elements are water and earth as included in the following Ofudesaki verse:

From now on, I shall speak in the metaphor of water.
Be enlightened by the words “clear” and “muddy.”

Ofudesaki III:7

Here Oyasama uses the terms “water” and “earth.” This passage teaches that God wishes us to have a mind like clear water and that using the mind in any other way invites dust.

The primary tie between humans and the environment comes from this passage in the Ofudesaki:

This universe is the body of God.

Ponder this in all matters.

Ofudesaki III:40;135

So the environment is in the body of God the Parent. While there are many meanings that could be spun out of this verse, the one thing I would like to take up for my presentation is the teaching of *kashimono-karimono* or “a thing lent, a thing borrowed.” We are taught that our bodies are lent to us by God the Parent, but the mind alone is ours. Since this universe is the body of God, then the human body is also within the body of God.

The relationship, then, is that the universe, the environment, and the human body are within the body of God. Alongside the human body is the human mind. The body is a thing lent, a thing borrowed. And our minds alone are ours. The physical things are part of the body of God, but the mind is not, although the mind is tied to the human body.

I will expand in further detail the relationship of the universe, environment, human body, and human mind.

The human mind is owned by each individual. God the Parent gave each of us a mind to use at our own will. We have free use of mind as a gift from God the Parent. The mind is a gift from God. However, since the purpose of the creation of humans is for us to lead a Joyous Life, we are to use our minds and our bodies for that purpose. That is what Oyasama taught. The mind is communicated to by God the Parent for the purpose of guiding us toward a joyous existence. The mind is cured by the guidance of God the Parent and self-reflection.

From the human body perspective, we are taught:

Everything in this universe is all by Tsukihi.

All human bodies are things lent by Tsukihi.

Ofudesaki VI:120

The human body is owned by God but controlled by the human mind.

The purpose of the human body is to serve as medium in which the mind can realize the Joyous Life. The human body controls the environment in the short term within one's lifetime but controls the environment indefinitely as a population. When you pass away, your control of your body and of your immediate environment ceases. The human body is cured by the blessings of God the Parent and the Sazuke as well as by doctors and medicine.

As for the environment, the environment is within the body of God the Parent. The environment is controlled by the laws of nature. The purpose is not clearly defined, yet, possibly it serves at least two purposes. Either the environment serves specifically as the medium in which humans can realize the Joyous Life or that humans are another dynamic within the many other dynamics of the environment and universe. The environment is cured by the laws of nature. There are no medicines for the environment. We cannot do the Sazuke on the environment. So to help the environment, we need to allow nature the time to heal itself. By doing so, we would be using our minds and the environment as God the Parent intended, thus saving the environment as well as saving ourselves.

So comparing and contrasting the human mind, the human body and the environment, we see that the environment is similar to the mind because the mind persists so long as the earth persists. The environment is also similar to the body in that humans have the ability to control the environment through the control of our bodies, although our control of the environment is not as great as our control of our bodies. The environment merges the existence of the mind and body. However, unlike the mind and the body, the environment will continue to change in the living physical world from one human generation to the next. Also, the environment exists as long as the earth exists, independent of human existence.

Concerning the healing of the environment and the law of nature, the Ofudesaki merges Oyasama's path and the law of nature.

“This path cannot be followed by human thinking. It is the path that is being formed by the law of nature.”

Anecdotes of Oyasama, no. 17

If Oyasama's path is based on the law of nature, then for us humans to

follow the path, we must also follow the law of nature.

The law of nature may be defined as a generalization that describes recurring facts or events in nature. These facts and events are essentially things you can observe and test over and over again, and they will continue to follow the same patterns.

What we observe is that nature is balanced. Nature being balanced is an exemplary model of the Joyous Life, because nature is operating in the exact same way as it was when first created by God. The same thing applies to plants and animals. They are actually examples of the Joyous Life because as far as we know they do not incur the dust of the mind. They don't have selfish reasoning.

In the human pursuit of the Joyous Life, we have the physical example of the natural world as well as Oyasama's teachings. The physical world appears as the easiest example of the Joyous Life to study since this is what God created so we can observe that mechanism. The balance of life can be found among plants and animals. In observing nature, we see that plants and animals live in harmony with each other, always moving toward a sense of balance. They depend on each other for food, shelter, and reproduction. There are also harmonious interactions between the elements that nurture these life forms and that include fire, wind, and water. Water rises as gas and falls as rain or snow. But water does not rise and fall without fire or heat, which comes either from the sun or from the core of the earth. The earth provides the substrate for all life and serves as a vessel to hold water, both above and below ground. The earth also provides a place to store heat energy. Finally, the wind is a manifestation of the exchange of energy between the earth, atmosphere, and the rise and fall of water.

Since our bodies are owned by God the Parent and the environment is the body of God, God communicates to us through the environment as well as through our bodies. How do we know that we are mistreating the environment? God is communicating to us humans that we have abused the environment through natural disasters. I believe it is God communicating to us humans that the state of the natural world is out of balance.

In this world, landslides, thunder, earthquakes,
and great winds are all from the anger of Tsukihi.

Ofudesaki VI:91

Thunder, earthquakes, great winds, and floods:
these are from the regret and anger of Tsukihi.

Ofudesaki VIII:58

These events are not just random acts of nature, but guidance from God. Science can explain a lot of phenomena. For instance, storms are the result of two large opposing atmospheric pressure fronts colliding. However, science has not yet discovered the actual source of the pressure fronts. The source of these events is due to the guidance of God.

If you are truly of a mind to save others,
there is no need for the persuasion of God.

Ofudesaki III:32

Warnings are coming from God that undesirable events are appearing from the result of misuse of the planet. These manifestations should not be regarded as punishment but as guidance. Through corrective action, things will, in essence, heal itself according to the “law of nature.” God’s blessing occurs to the earth as it does to our minds. Whether the consequences are good or bad from a human point of view, they are all God’s blessings. Like our minds that have collected dust, we have allowed the environment to become “dusty.”

The Relationship Between the Use of Mind and Guidance of God the Parent

We see that if your use of mind is in accord with God, you can enjoy the Joyous Life. If not, you must go back and change it. The same can be said of the environment as well. Because of our misuse of the environment caused by our misuse of the mind, God is showing us guidance through the environment.

So what needs to be done? The general approach to the environment is that it starts from you. There is a story in the *Anecdotes of Oyasama* #28, in which Chushichi Yamanaka commented to Oyasama that it would be better if the path were cleared in the high mountains, referring to the oppression of the Tenrikyo movement. Oyasama’s response was: “If the path is cleared from up above, can the people down below get near? If the path is cleared from down below both the people up above and the people down below can easily get

near, can they not?" From this perspective, we might say major changes should begin from each of us. Eventually as the voice of concern come from the individuals and communities, changes will eventually be made in the political arena since, theoretically, politicians are supposed to represent the voices of us individuals. As we become more and more vocal about the environmental issues, hopefully changes will occur.

Also, we need to balance technological motivation between economics and spirituality. We should continue to rely on technology to provide a smart and efficient living environment while keeping in mind our impact on the natural environment. I have no doubt that economics will continue to be the primary driver for projects. After all, without the funding, projects cannot be realized. However, we should also incorporate spirituality into future technological innovations. If we fail to do so, the continued degradation of the environment will result in the diminishment of humans. Incorporating spirituality will help to restore balance within nature, restore balance socially within the human population, and individually within each person.

What Can You Do?

What can Tenrikyo do as a religious organization? One of the things it might consider doing would perhaps be to start an environmental research department in Tenri University. Using the core of the teachings, the department could become a leading research institute as well as providing lawmakers and the government with the reasoning to pass environmentally healthy laws and regulations. For example, several professors from the University of California at Davis were invited by the state of California legislators to explain the phenomenon of flooding in that state. It was their input that helped lawmakers to provide better policies for future development in California.

Another area where the Tenrikyo organization can aid in terms of protecting the environment is to promote environmental awareness within the existing programs, e.g., in the context of the Boys and Girls Association. This is the easiest part, because making posters and promoting environmentally friendly living within the existing programs are things you can do immediately. One example is that at the Mission Headquarters in America there is a group called Biotope Circle, which was started in January 2003 and which has been promoting

environmentally friendly programs. The group's suggestions have resulted in replacing Styrofoam with Tupperware for monthly lunch boxes, which can be reused over and over again. The group provides educational programs for the young, such as Sunday school activities designed to teach children some basic things about nature. If you educate the young, you can have them promote ideas to their parents. Biotope Circle also started a garden and an environmental library. The group has organized a field trip to a nearby university research facility. Other activities of this group include writing articles on environmental concerns in the mission headquarters' monthly newsletter; creating educational posters; and promoting use of recycle bins and other environmentally friendly practices.

As individuals, we can become active by participating in Hinokishin Day, for instance, but perhaps, we can have such activities more frequently. We can also support and promote neighborhood cleanups and recycling programs. You can also educate yourself and others. The environmental problems are nothing new. There are a lot of groups that are participating in this global effort. There is a lot of information out there to gain, e.g., via the Internet. There are websites such as www.saveourevironment.org. You can incorporate environmentally friendly activities in your own respective church activities.

In more concrete terms, here are some things you can do or keep in mind to make your lifestyle environment friendly, e.g.:

- Recycle
- Accept a plastic bag when shopping only if you need it. Get in the habit of carrying your own plastic or cloth bag when going to the store. Consider if you need a bag. If not, refuse it. In Hong Kong, each time you use your own bag, you are given a little saving at the grocery store.
- Create a plan for even simple everyday things like washing in the morning. Use a drain plug. Change your habits of how you wash yourself. Make a plan for how you want to wash yourself in the morning. Do you open the faucet then look in the mirror checking your face while the water is running?
- It is estimated that the average per capita use of fresh water globally is approximately 700m³/year. In contrast, the per capita use of water for the United States is 1850m³/year or about 2.5 times the world average.
- Refrain from overwrapping gifts. Most wrapping papers get disposed

right away. Gift bags can be used over and over again and still look great.

- Pay attention to air pressure in tires. Maintaining air pressure allows tires to last longer and increases fuel efficiency. Every year, 240 to 260 millions of tires are disposed. At any given time, there are billions of wasted tires in the U.S.

- The important thing is to have a mind that prevents wasteful actions. This is really what Oyasama wanted to teach. With that in mind, you will find your own ways of decreasing waste without depreciating your quality of life.

Examples and Case Studies of Environmental Friendly Living

Fortunately, I have some background in environmental engineering practices, so allow me to share some information with you.

Water Meters: In the domestic use of water, the key factor is that of economics. Customers that were charged a flat monthly rate for unlimited water use were far more likely to have a high water demand than customers that were charged water use by volume. Does this mean that their standard of living decreased? Probably not. However, waste is typically encouraged by abundance. People have this concept of unlimited resources. We need to get them away from that.

Drought Study: During a drought study in a community called Rancho Murieta, we found that there was up to 25% reduction in water use voluntarily when people were told that there was a water shortage. This underscores the importance of promoting environmental awareness. Another thing that was done was the use of raw untreated water for landscape irrigation (though that required special infrastructure needs to be met). As a side note, the greatest demand for single family dwelling units in America is landscape irrigation. For arid locations, there is a need to promote less water-intensive landscape.

Tuolumne River Restoration for Salmon: Intensive in-stream gravel mining had nearly destroyed all natural salmon spawning habitat resulting in the near extinction of salmon reproduction on the Tuolumne River. Gravel mining resulted in a series of deep pools which changed the flow conditions and water temperature necessary for salmon reproduction. My company was contracted

to re-design the river, as close as possible, back to the natural pre-gravel mining conditions. The result was a success. In the winter of the first year of channel construction, salmon tails could be seen splashing about in the shallow water as salmon were spawning in the newly restored gravel beds.

Indeed, the natural environment is a blessing from God that should be cherished as much as the human body and studied to help us toward obtaining the Joyous Life. Given that our bodies and the natural environment are the body of God, there are parallel metaphors in regard to the teaching of “a thing lent, a thing borrowed.” As is written in the Tenrikyo Church Headquarters website on the Doctrine of Tenrikyo, “However, because of our immaturity, most of us must return our bodies prematurely to God. Returning our bodies is called ‘passing away for rebirth’ and is much like taking off our old clothes to put on new ones. The mind alone being taught as ours, we borrow new bodies and return to this world.”

The parallel metaphor is the rapid degradation of the environment. God intended the human body to last 115 years, but because of our mind use, we have to return our bodies before the lapse of that time. So there is very close inference to the environment. God has the intention for the environment to sustain human life. But if we continue to abuse the environment, we will have to return a lot of the gifts from the environment a lot earlier than originally intended.

Conclusion

All human bodies are things lent by God.
With what thought are you using them?

Ofudesaki III:41

As we spiritually mature and develop the mind to save others, our actions of saving others and living in an environmentally friendly way should parallel. My opinion is mirrored in this passage from Akio Inoue: “I believe it is a Tenrikyo follower’s responsibility to make bold attempts to interpret the Scriptures in a global and modern manner, understand the current situation of the world correctly, become awakened to the activity of the ecosystem taught as God’s body, and put it all into practice in the daily religious life.” Mr. Inoue’s message

is that environmental awareness should also be incorporated into our religious life as well. The human body is within the body of God the Parent. With what thought are you using yours?

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Questions and Answers held immediately after the presentation

Audience: I'd like to say that often we assume that the Joyous Life can only be attained by human beings. We don't realize that animals and plants, in my opinion, also have spirits as well. In order for us to truly attain the Joyous Life, there has to be a balance between the natural world and us. I can't imagine a perfect world without animals and plants. There has to be that balance. Just as we evolve, the same thing is happening to the earth. All these natural disasters are ways in which the earth is trying to balance itself. The earth is evolving, and

we are evolving, too. We are trying to find the balance between one another. Once we find that balance, that will lead to the Joyous Life.

Cedric Noto: Yes. And that is not apparent at all. It takes thought to really start to think about what is actually happening in the environment. But when you start to really think about what is happening in your own area, you start seeing a lot of changes occurring around you. There are so many things that are related.

Audience: Even before America was “discovered,” native Americans were there. People who “discovered” America came to conquer land or the world. Native Americans were more whole and harmonious with the world.

Cedric Noto: While that is true, we also have to look at the efficiency of living and the amount of people we are trying to feed. If we look at the way people live in Hong Kong versus Sacramento, for example, you have tall buildings and skyscrapers in Hong Kong whereas people are spread out in Sacramento, because it is all driven by economics. There are a lot more balances that are involved there. If the native Americans were dealing with concentrated populations, they could not sustain that type of living. Human beings evolve. So although we can learn a lot of lessons from the way native Americans lived, that is just how they used to live in what their environment provided in the past.

For the Joyous Life: Environment Conservation Activities of Love Green Nepal

Amira Dali

(Ms. Dali serves as the President of Love Green Nepal and resides in Katmandu, Nepal)

First of all, I think I should briefly mention how I came to know Tenrikyo. I finished my school at the age of twelve. After that, I took a Japanese language course at college, where Rev. Omukai was teaching. While I was learning Japanese, I came into contact with Tenrikyo. Rev. Omukai introduced me to Rev. Shigeru Matsumoto, who invited me to come to Japan. I entered the Japanese Language Course of Tenri University. After finishing that course, I stayed at Rev. Matsumoto's church, Keigo Branch Church, while working towards my Master's degree at Sophia University. After going back to Nepal, I started working for a Japanese company. It was in 1952. I was not satisfied with working for the company; I wanted to do something very different because, during the four years I had lived at the church, my body and mind had adopted the teachings of Tenrikyo. I used to do *hinokishin* every morning and evening, for example. I thought I should do something for the country and for the environment because Nepal had some environmental problems.

Perhaps I should give some background on Nepal. Even now, 90 percent of the population depend on fuel wood as the main energy source. About 80 percent live in villages, and 70 percent of the population don't have access to electricity. Nepal is located between India and Tibet; it is a land-locked country. Nepal does not produce oil, so it needs to import it all the way from India. The cost of doing so is very high.

So I thought that, since people are dependent on fuel wood and are cutting trees in the mountains, I would like to do something about that. Inspired by the teachings of Oyasama, I particularly wished to make the lives of women easier, because they have to walk a long way to collect fuel wood as well as to get a pot of water every day. It is really hard work for women. So especially considering the hardships of women, I established the NGO Love Green Nepal in 1991.

Love Green Nepal (LGN)—I came up with this name myself—is a non-

governmental development organization dedicated to contributing to the realization of Joyous Life through the sustainable economic development with the appropriate use of resources and conservation of nature, working unitedly, forgetting selfishness, and expressing the gratitude to God the Parent.

Those of us who are members of this group are all volunteers. This is a volunteer organization. Yet it is different from other volunteer groups because we are seeking to work in unity of mind, forgetting selfishness and expressing our gratitude to God the Parent

Our mission is to contribute to the development of sustainable livelihoods for economically disadvantaged people in grassroots communities in Nepal. Our goal, then, is to let people in the villages share one another's joys and pleasures, sharing the resources, conserving the nature and environment, working wholeheartedly for each other, and inducing many to follow and join in. We have conducted projects in rural communities of Katmandu, Bhaktapur, Lalitpur, Kavrepalanchok, Makawanpur, and several other districts of Nepal. Let me give you a brief overview of our activities below.

Scope of LGN's Activities

I. Environment Conservation: Tree Plantation and Construction of Biogas Plants

More than 900,000 forest, fodder, and fruit (3 Fs) seedlings have so far been planted by 4,500 farming households, 20 community forests, schools and other local institutions in the five villages of DCGD (Deforestation Control & Greenery Development) project sites.

We have introduced the "3 Fs" concept. The 3 Fs stand for "forest, fodder, and fruit." We distribute three kinds of tree seedlings to farmers. The three kinds of trees provide fuel wood for cooking, fodder for livestock, and fruit, which can be a source of income.

About the biogas plants, I will say more below.

II. Sustainable Agriculture Development: Organic Agriculture, Agro-forestry, High Quality Agro-products

We are introducing organic agriculture, focusing on women in particular. Some 200 women are already engaged in organic farming. Mainly we promote growing organic vegetables, which can be taken to Katmandu and sold.

Also, 150 farmers are engaged in a high-quality agro-product program.

It involves growing high-value agro-products, which earn good profits for farmers.

III. Educational Development: Public School Construction/Reconstruction and Scholarships for Girl Students

The current number of beneficiary schools is 22 (9 primary, 4 lower secondary, 8 secondary, 1 higher secondary).

140 classrooms constructed

Drinking water facility developed in 18 schools

Toilet facility developed in 16 schools

Furniture provided in 18 schools

1,234 trees planted in 13 schools

We have provided scholarships to 42 under-privileged girl students so far. After graduating, these students come back to their own schools and teach there. They do teaching voluntarily. That is the system we have introduced.

IV. Community Small Infrastructure Development: Construction of Multi-purpose Women's Building, Coop Building, Community Toilet

For instance, women can gather in a women's center to conduct various kinds of training and engage in other activities.

V. Community Health: Health Camps and Construction of Health Post Buildings

1. Number of health camps organized: 5

2. Number of patients examined: about 1,400

3. Types of camps: general health check up, epilepsy, and eye.

4. Number of health posts constructed: 2

(1 in Panchakhal and 1 in Nagkhel, Bhaktapur)

Funding Sources

Our funding sources are bilateral grants and subsidies from GOs, NGOs, INGOs and from various institutions, membership fees, income from the sale of seedlings from our own nursery, souvenirs, LGN publications, and so on. We established our own nursery, where we grow plantlets and sell them.

Collaborating organizations include:

1. Love Green Japan (LGJ)

2. Embassy of Japan in Nepal

3. Asia Women and Children's Educational Foundation (AWCEF), Japan

4. Sikikobo Kabushikigaisha, Japan
5. Daichi-Wo-Mamorukai, Japan
6. UNDP's Global Environment Fund, Small Grants Program
7. Tenri University Student Union, Japan
8. Nepal Agriculture Research and Development Fund (NARDF)

Tenri University helped us recently to construct a number of biogas plants.

The executive committee of Love Green Nepal comprises 9 members who are elected by the general assembly. These members are all volunteers. We have a team of 12 staff members, who, headed by Project Coordinator, are engaged in implementing projects and carrying out day-to-day administrative functions.

Community Biogas Promotion Program

What is biogas?

Biogas is a clean, odorless, and smokeless gas produced specially from cattle dung through a process called "digestion" in a biogas digester or plant. We construct a biogas plant for each household that is participating in the program. The production of biogas is a cheap process, for it requires only cattle dung and water (the plant is also designed in such a way that human waste can be fed into it). Biogas contains 50 to 60 % inflammable methane gas. The rest is carbon dioxide, other gases, and water vapor.

A biogas plant works as follows: Users put cow-dung and water into the inlet and mix those ingredients in the inlet. The gas that is produced inside the underground dome is fed to the stove in the kitchen, where cooking is done in a clean and smokeless environment. The amount of gas is sufficient for cooking three meals a day.

We hold pre-plant construction meetings with women users (women are the main users) in order to find out how much livestock they have, how many cattle they have, and so forth. This is to decide the capacity of the biogas plant that we are going to build for them.

Composition of biogas:

- | | |
|-------------------|--------|
| 1. Methane | 50-60% |
| 2. Carbon dioxide | 40-50% |
| 3. Hydrogen | 5-10% |

- | | |
|---------------------|-------|
| 4. Nitrogen | 1-2% |
| 5. Hydrogen sulfide | trace |
| 6. Water vapor | 0.3 % |

Why biogas?

1. It helps to reduce the rate of deforestation and environmental degradation by providing alternative source of energy.
2. It reduces cooking time, making extra hours available to village women.
3. It is smokeless. Health hazard caused by burning of fuel-wood is highly reduced.
4. It helps reduce carbon emissions in the atmosphere.
5. Its slurry is used for making good compost fertilizer, which is directly contributing to productivity.

Immediate objectives:

- Check deforestation and conserve greenery, bio-diversity and natural environment.
- Contribute to mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions.
- Contribute to health and well-being of women through prevention of respiratory disease as well as water borne disease.

Long-term objectives:

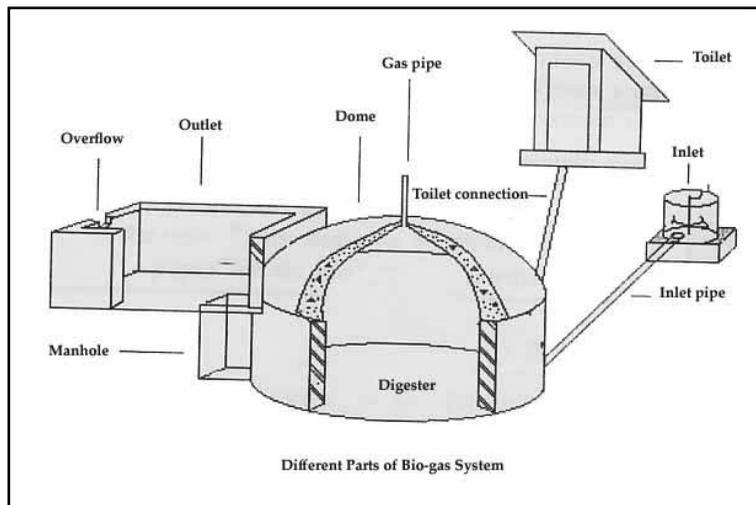
- Upliftment of livelihood and well-being of people in rural communities of Nepal and contribute to reduction of global greenhouse gas emissions (GHS).

Environmental benefit of biogas:

- Each biogas plant serving one household saves 2 tons of firewood per year.
- Each biogas plant saves 0.35 tons of agriculture residue per year.
- Each biogas plant saves 0.60 tons of livestock dung per year.
- Each biogas plant saves 25 liters of kerosene per year.
- Each biogas plant reduces 12.35 tons of carbon emissions in the atmosphere per year.
- Biogas slurry helps reduce use of chemical fertilizer and promotes organic compost/farming.

-Biogas helps keep a clean, hygienic environment in the community.

We have already constructed 506 plants, and that means we are saving 1,012 tons of firewood per year. Similarly, one biogas plant saves 25 liters of kerosene per year. This is extremely important since kerosene is imported. Also, one biogas plant reduces 12.35 tons of carbon emissions in the atmosphere annually.



Project sites:

Makwanpur District (Palung village)—

Tenri University Student Union through Tenrikyo Network of Mutual Help under the Overseas Department helped us build 19 biogas plants and distribute 15 eco stoves in Palung village, south of Katmandu. (The total amount received from TUSU was ¥400,000 = NRs.268,000.)

Kavre District—

Panchakhal village, Baluwa village, Anaikot village, Patlekhet village, Rabi Opi village.

The results of Love Green Nepal's projects include enhanced greenery—we have planted 900,000 trees—and happy people. In particular, women are very happy. I wanted people and women, in particular, to be happy. If women are not happy, the family cannot live the Joyous Life. Through LGN, I try first of all to ensure that women are happy.

Taking Cues from Oyasama's Divine Model in Creating an Environmentally Conscious Culture

Roy Forbes

(Mr. Forbes works in the Overseas Department, Translation Section)

Hello everyone. Although I fear that I am by no means an expert and lack a background in environmental activism which our two previous presenters have, I hope to use the best of my limited background in what I call "Tenrikyology" or Tenrikyo studies to approach the subject of this section meeting.

The terms "sustainability" and "sustainable consumption" have become buzzwords in environmental circles. In Tenrikyo, the *Hinagata*, or Oyasama's Divine Model, must be considered one of our most precious assets. In this presentation I will argue that in Her role as the Parent of the Divine Model (*Hinagata no Oya*), Oyasama shows a way of life that is environmentally conscious, a kind of "sustainable living" which we should emulate as closely as possible. I will then speak briefly on aspects of the exemplary life of the Honseki, Izo Iburi that, touches upon the issue of sustainability and if time allows, I will introduce five ministers who have taken cues from Oyasama's Divine Model and have made themselves exemplary models of "sustainable living."

Examples of "Sustainable Living" Found in Oyasama's Divine Model

We can find a number of stories in *Anecdotes of Oyasama, the Foundress of Tenrikyo* which can be considered environmentally conscious aspects of Oyasama's Divine Model. According to #45, "Wrinkles of the Mind," Oyasama did not even waste one sheet of paper. She regularly smoothed the wrinkles out from pieces of wastepaper and placed them under Her pillow to be used again. While the point of this anecdote is to encourage us in salvation work to smooth out the minds of others like we would smooth out paper, we should not ignore Oyasama's practical lesson teaching us the importance of conserving our material resources.

For when Rin Masui was about to go to Tanbaichi to purchase some paper so she could copy the Ofudesaki, Oyasama stopped her and took out several sheets of paper from under Her pillow. Selecting sheets that had no writing on

them, Oyasama bound them together and handed the booklet to Rin. Oyasama did not appear concerned that the sizes of the sheets were not the same. Rin wrote down the Ofudesaki verses as Oyasama read them aloud. This copy of Part IV of the Ofudesaki is presently preserved just as Oyasama had bound it, with the paper irregular in size.

Compared to today where it is relatively cheap and easy to buy paper in large quantities, paper was a commodity that was expensive and harder to come by in Oyasama's day and age. So it is possible to surmise that She conserved paper because of this. But when we consider that Oyasama had Rin Masui copy a part of the Ofudesaki—a treasure for all of humanity—on used paper that was irregular in size, Oyasama is showing us through Her Divine Model the importance of conserving our resources and utilizing them to their utmost potential. In anecdote #26, “The Story of Linen, Silk and Cotton,” it is described how Oyasama expressed a preference for cotton over other kinds of cloth, precisely because cotton was “useful until its original form no longer remains” (p. 21).

The *Anecdotes of Oyasama* also relates that during an imprisonment Oyasama once made paper strings out of a piece of writing paper and wove these strings into a net basket. Giving this to Gisaburo Nakata, She said to him,

“You must treasure things. You must make good use of everything.
Everything is a gift from God . . .”

Anecdotes of Oyasama, no. 138

Then we must also consider the episode related in *The Life of Oyasama, Foundress of Tenrikyo* when Oyasama blew out an oil lamp after sunrise during Her final imprisonment at Ichinomoto Branch Police Station. A policeman who was dozing nearby awoke with a jolt and demanded what She was doing. Oyasama responded with the following,

The sun is already up but your lamp was still lit. It is wasteful, so I put it out.

The Life of Oyasama, p. 208

When we consider that Oyasama showed such a concern for conserving

lamp oil despite She was in the middle of enduring an imprisonment during the coldest winter in Yamato in over thirty years, She once again shows through Her own example the importance of conserving our resources. According to anecdote #124 (“A Drawstring Made of Wood Shavings”), Oyasama showed Hisa Kajimoto how to braid a drawstring from wood shavings. This is the amount of care She put into recycling material one would normally throw away.

Oyasama also once said,

“Do not waste even a single vegetable leaf.”

“Leftovers will nourish you. It is not gluttony.”

Anecdotes of Oyasama, no. 112

Because Oyasama went so far to treasure and conserve things, the second of the “Three Promises” of the Boys and Girls Association is a promise to use things with care (*mono o taisetsu ni shimasu*). Those of us who are familiar with Oyasama’s Divine Model are aware how She lived a frugal physical existence. Anecdote #181 (“Oyasama’s Rice Bowl”), describes that She regularly used a rice bowl and a flat dish that were chipped and repaired. She also ate relatively simple meals. There was one occasion when Izo Ihuri was served a special meal, he shed tears as he said that Oyasama never ate such delicacies in Her physical lifetime (T pp. 98-99). I feel it is appropriate that I also bring up Izo Ihuri, the Honseki, because there are cases in the Osashizu, where the word *hinagata* also can refer to his exemplary life (S pp. 35-39).

The Exemplary Model of the Honseki Izo Ihuri

As the Honseki, Izo Ihuri uttered the words of God in Oyasama’s place in the twenty years following Her withdrawal from physical life. He was also responsible for bestowing the Sazuke to followers in Her place. As Oyasama’s most esteemed disciple, the Honseki himself demonstrated an attitude similar to Oyasama’s where he treasured and conserved material resources. This is not surprising since he was the only follower besides Shuji and Kokan who was in constant contact with Oyasama. Therefore, he had the most opportunity to receive Her direct instruction compared to other followers. He not only worshipped at the Residence daily for almost twenty years, but he was the first follower to do *sumi-komi*, or to move into and live at the Residence.

It has been said that for the most part, the Honseki ate simple meals like Oyasama did, for he saw firsthand how She, Shuji and Kokan sometimes had nothing but pickled vegetables and water to nourish themselves. The Honseki's meals largely consisted of pickled plums, rice gruel seasoned with salt and sesame, and occasionally pickled vegetables. The Honseki also preferred to wear cotton, a reusable material, over other types of cloth.

The Honseki was also known to have conserved charcoal. After using a lit charcoal just to heat his hands, he would cover it with ash so it could be used later. Once he told Keitaro Nakayama, the grandson of Masa Nakayama and great-grandson of Oyasama, the following,

Ultimately, charcoal is something that we receive from God. So we must learn how to use it well. If we let it burn until it emits flames, it will quickly turn into ash. However, if we cover the charcoal with ash, an amount that would normally last for one hour can be extended to three to four hours. If we use two hours' worth of charcoal in one hour, it is like throwing away an hour's worth of God's blessings. Everything in this universe belongs to Heaven, to God. So it is important to use things as preciously and as long as we can (T p. 88).

The Honseki's tendency to conserve material resources was also evident in how he practiced calligraphy. When he began practicing calligraphy at the age of sixty, he first practiced on a glass plate and cleaned the ink off each time since he thought it was wasteful to actually practice with paper. Even after his writing skills improved, he would practice on the back of wrapping paper and write on the same piece of paper several times.

The Honseki also often said:

It is important to have a mind that does not allow things to go to waste or to spoil. It is against the Reason of Heaven (*Ten-no-ri*) to use things carelessly (T pp. 44, 145).

Lastly, the Honseki always turned off the oil lamp in his room whenever he went out. Even when he knew he would immediately return to his room, he was nevertheless concerned with conserving even the slightest amount of lamp

oil. Such an attitude reminds us of how Oyasama blew out the policeman's lamp at the Ichinomoto Police Station when the sun came up.

The Exemplary Efforts of Five Ministers

Next, I will introduce five Tenrikyo ministers who, in their own personal ways, have implemented environmentally conscious aspects of the teachings and Oyasama's Divine Model in their lives. It is my hope that describing the efforts of these ministers will encourage followers to keep themselves informed of environmental issues and take part, however small, toward resolving these issues in their respective communities.

1. Rev. Hiroshi Matsuoka

First is Rev. Hiroshi Matsuoka, the former head minister of Bingo Ohiraki Branch Church (Chuka) in Okayama Prefecture. In his daily effort to become intimate with the teachings, he came to a point where he places an emphasis on using water sparingly. As we know, in the Mikagura-uta, it says, "God, the same as water, washes away the dirt from your minds" (Song V:3) and in the "Ten Aspects of the Complete Providence," *Kunitokotachi-no-Mikoto*, which provides the blessing of water, comes first before all the others. There is also the teaching that claims that "we cannot repay the blessings water provides" (*mizu no go-on o kaesenai*). Thus Rev. Matsuoka uses only three washbowls' (*senmenki*) worth of water to wash and rinse his body when taking a bath. He also waters his fields with collected rainwater, fertilizes his fields with compost made from raw garbage, and uses ocean sand as a weed killer. Rev. Matsuoka's daughter Akemi Hayamizu claims that her father's way of life came about naturally out of his practice of faith and was common among the faithful of previous generations.

2. Rev. Tadayuki Oyama

Rev. Tadayuki Oyama is the successor of Tamago Branch Church (Ushigome) and the chairperson of the Tenrikyo Young Men's Association in his district of Northern Musashino in Tokyo Prefecture. He is active running the monthly "Heart-Clean Campaign" in his area. Due to his participation in a monthly *hinokishin* activity cleaning public places, he was inspired in the 70th anniversary of All Tenrikyo Hinokishin Day to organize an aluminum can recycling drive. The revenue generated by the recycled cans were then donated

to a local center treating Hansens' disease. The district Young Men's Association have held *gagaku* concerts at this very center and used the occasion to talk about their recycling activity and thus provided an excellent opportunity for *nioigake*.

Because the Young Men's Association of his church and district is conscious of the importance of recycling and waste reduction, someone brought up the suggestion to stop using disposable utensils at the meal following his church's Young Men's convention. So it was decided that they replace disposable utensils with reusable plastic ones. Along with encouraging members to pick up trash they found along the road coming to the convention, they also distributed "an eco-bag" or a reusable shopping bag as a commemorative gift. Though Rev. Oyama imagined that washing, wiping, and putting away the plastic utensils would be a bother for the participants, he was instead surprised at how spirited the members were upon implementing their decision to help reduce the waste generated at the convention.

3. Rev. Yoshiichi Shiozawa

Rev. Yoshiichi Shiozawa, head minister of Harajuku Branch Church (Koga) is also the former president of the Shiozawa Corporation, a paper supply company. In 1989, Rev. Shiozawa was inspired by Oyasama's Divine Model where She smoothed out the wrinkles of used paper. So he embarked on a plan for his company to begin collecting paper for recycling. Many of his workers, his bank and customers were initially against the idea. His company was in the red for the first eight years of this project. But his persistence in wanting to implement Oyasama's Divine Model paid off and his company was in better shape because of it. As of the year 2000, his company was the only paper supply company in Japan that collected and recycled paper. Rev. Shiozawa demonstrates that an environmental ethics based on Oyasama's Divine Model can be applied to businesses and make a large impact toward conserving our natural resources.

4. Rev. Yoshiko Takayama

Rev. Yoshiko Takayama is the head minister of Shibakari Branch Church (Asakura) in Mii County, Fukuoka Prefecture. Rev. Takayama is especially sensitive to environmental issues since she became a victim of dioxin poisoning in the late 1960s soon after her graduation from college. She has been

active in a variety of social causes such as supplying shoes to prevent tetanus among children in Africa, chronicling images of mountain villages about to be submerged by the building of dams, and help to give voice to victims of dioxin poisoning and radiation poisoning. However, Rev. Takayama's most personal cause is her local nature-watch group in which she teaches children the importance of clean water in local river habitats. By showing how living organisms such as tadpole shrimp can only live in habitats with clear water, she helps raise interest and awareness to environmental issues on the local level.

5. Rev. Makoto Watanabe

Rev. Makoto Watanabe is the head minister of Ryuyo Branch Church (Uryu) in Sapporo, Hokkaido. He helped co-found a local citizen's group that is active in educating the public of environmental issues. He also has local children participate in a "Children's Earth Summit" (*Kodomo Chikyū Samitto*) and on one occasion a number of these primary school-age children wrote letters to the mayor of Sapporo to inform him of some of the environmental problems they learned and invited him to an upcoming seminar, which the mayor attended.

Rev. Watanabe is also helping to spread the "my chopstick movement" (*mai hashi undo*). To elaborate, Rev. Watanabe once appeared on a radio program and said that 25 billion pairs of wooden chopsticks are thrown away in Japan each year. He further explained that amount of wood is equivalent to the lumber used to make twenty thousand wooden houses. Rev. Watanabe encouraged the radio audience to carry their own pair of chopsticks ("*mai hashi*") instead of using a pair provided at restaurants. His goal is to spread the movement throughout Japan so that the wood equivalent to ten thousand houses can be conserved and alleviate the consumption of the other ten thousand homes' worth of wood through planting trees. Rev. Watanabe and the radio program's directors were amazed when the radio station was deluged by phone calls and faxes responding to his plea for everyone to carry their own pair of chopsticks.

Considering how many disposable chopsticks are used at the *naorai* (post-service meals) of all churches, if every Tenrikyo follower owned a pair of his or her own chopsticks, the amount of wood conserved each year would be significant indeed.³⁰ Rev. Watanabe shows us that for better or for worse,

³⁰ According to Rev. Hirokuni Funatomi, the issue is not the use of disposable wooden chopsticks (*wari-bashi*) per se, but the fact that ninety percent of *wari-bashi* used in Japan are imported from China, a majority of which are made from trees cut solely for the purpose

changes in our consumption patterns make an impact upon the environment. Rev. Watanabe has noted that Tenrikyo ministers and followers are not as informed on environmental issues as they should be. He himself considers resolving environmental issues as an indispensable part of his *otasuke* or salvation work.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I hope I have shown that, altogether, Oyasama's Divine Model, the exemplary life of the Honseki and the efforts of the five ministers I have just described demonstrate that a proactive Tenrikyo lifestyle already incorporates the "four R's" of sustainable consumption (reduce, reuse, recycle, and refuse).³¹ I believe that it is the mindset of *tsutsushimi* or moderation is the foundation of this proactive Tenrikyo lifestyle.

Regarding the "four R's," we should remember that Oyasama once taught Yoshie Iburi,

"Do not waste even a single vegetable leaf."

"Leftovers will nourish you. It is not gluttony."

Anecdotes of Oyasama, no. 112

The food we eat is nurtured by the blessings of God the Parent and is brought to us through the efforts of many nameless individuals to cultivate, transport, and prepare it. We must not allow ourselves to throw away God's blessings and the sincerity of others. Oyasama's above lesson to Yoshie encourages us to make efforts to reduce the amount of waste we produce and reduce the amount of daily resources we use. Our modern comforts—running water, electricity, gas, etc.—are possible because of the blessings of God the Parent. God the Parent trained human beings in wisdom for six thousand years (D p. 23), giving us the ability to harness these natural resources. We must cultivate the mind that treasures our daily resources, every drop of water and petroleum, every charge of electricity. We must keep in mind Oyasama's

of making chopsticks. Rev. Funatomi places *wari-bashi* as an important aspect of Japanese culture which originally came out of a desire to utilize the wood leftover from construction materials. Refer to Funatomi 2006 b, pp. 44-45, for more information.

³¹ There are several versions of the "four R's" on the internet. This particular list is from Rev. Funatomi who writes they are the "four R's" of the European Union (2004) but I have been unable to confirm as of writing.

Divine Model of blowing out the policeman's lamp at Ichinomoto Police Station. The Honseki was careful about the amount of charcoal used at the Residence and practiced calligraphy on a glass plate. We can similarly reduce the waste we produce by following the other R's by reusing and recycling our material resources.

Oyasama took wrapping paper and smoothed out the creases so it could be reused later. Even though we may easily and cheaply buy paper, we ought to give consideration to Oyasama's Divine Model and reuse the backs of envelopes as scratch paper. Oyasama also recycled writing paper into a net basket and wood shavings into drawstring. Both Oyasama and the Honseki preferred cotton over other types of cloth because it could be recycled into rags.

Lastly, I believe the last of the "four R's," "refuse," is most representative of the Tenrikyo ideal of *tsutsushimi* or moderation. We should avoid using disposable products such as styrofoam cups and plates that are harmful to the environment. We should be encouraged by Oyasama's example and refuse to take part in an extravagant lifestyle. Oyasama expresses the ideal of living frugally in the anecdotes as follows:

"Those who live in this Residence—if they want to eat good food, wear good clothes, and live in good houses, then they will not be able to stay in this Residence.

If only they do not think of eating good food, wearing good clothes, or living in good houses, will every daily need be met in this Residence. This is the *real* 'rich man's residence' in the world."

Anecdotes of Oyasama, no. 78

I believe we ought to take the time to reflect upon these words of Oyasama and ask whether our mission headquarters, mission centers and churches have more things than we need. Tenrikyo places of worship should indeed reflect, most of all, the virtue of "moderation." I wish to close my presentation by mentioning that there are recent signs of other religious organizations cooperating with environmental groups (Gardener). However, since both types of groups have shown signs of extremism, I believe that Tenrikyo's most significant and unique contribution to environmental activism is this virtue of

“moderation.” Rev. Hirokuni Funatomi of Izutaka Branch Church (Izumi) has written,

The conservation of our natural resources and the protection of the environment ought not to be enforced by laws or religious commandments. There is neither joy in clenching one’s teeth in a self-imposed life of discomfort nor is it possible to continue it for any long period of time. It is here that the virtue of moderation which Oyasama taught us then emerges for each of us to ponder and implement as we reflect upon our personal *innen* or causality.

Funatomi 2004, p. 13³²

It is my personal belief that the future success of the conservation movement depends upon the ability of Tenrikyo followers to spread Oyasama’s teaching of “moderation” that becomes the basis of an environmentally conscious, sustainable lifestyle.

Abbreviations

A: *Anecdotes of Oyasama, the Foundress of Tenrikyo*. Tenri: Tenrikyo Church Headquarters, 1978.

D: *The Doctrine of Tenrikyo*, second printing, revised edition. Tenri: Tenrikyo Church Headquarters, 1995.

L: *The Life of Oyasama, Foundress of Tenrikyo*, third edition. Tenri: Tenrikyo Church Headquarters, 1996.

S: *Selections from the Osashizu*, revised edition. Tenri: Tenrikyo Overseas Mission Department, 1990.

T: *Ten no jogi: Honseki Iburi Izo no shogai*. Tenri: Tenrikyo Doyusha, 1997.

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_____. 2006b. “Hikari to mizu to kaze to: kankyo tasuke 4—

32 Dr. Yoshitsugu Sawai has similarly written that “the lifestyle of *tsutsushimi* has useful hints for resolving environmental problems” (2003, pp. 45-46). Unlike Rev. Funatomi, however, he recognizes the benefit of regulations and restrictions on national and international levels to address environmental problems. Refer to Sawai 2001 for more information or Sawai 2003 for an English translation.

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*Interview with Akemi Hayamizu conducted on May 30, 2006.

Section Summary Report

Organizer: Steven C. Fedorowicz

We start out this session with the assumption that the environment is in a state of crisis. Reading the newspaper every day, this is an easy assumption to make. I live in Osaka, and seeing the air and water pollution is very alarming. Mr. Noto gave us several examples of contemporary and important environmental problems throughout the world.

The purpose of this session is to explore what we as members of Tenrikyo can do to solve the environmental crisis. What does our belief system tell us about the environment? These are difficult questions for sure. There have been some important attempts in the past to explore these questions, and it is our hope to build and expand on those ideas.

All three papers today provided interesting perspectives in our attempt to answer these difficult questions. And all three presentations had common themes, which I want to briefly outline.

First is the idea that environmental problems are no longer merely a local problem. And more importantly, solutions to such problems cannot be limited to local or even national solutions. We have heard the phrase so often that it has probably become a cliché: act locally, think globally. Our presentations today have really said: act and think locally, act and think globally.

Ms. Dali's presentation in particular gave us good examples of local actions that have both local and global benefits. Her presentation also discussed the use of networks in solving environmental problems. These networks include governmental agencies, non-governmental organizations, religious organizations, businesses, national groups, local groups, and individuals. Solutions to environmental problems must include collaboration between global, regional, and individual entities.

Mr. Forbes' presentation gave us several examples of individual efforts to help in creating sustainability. The actions of individuals can spread to groups in local, regional, and global settings. This is perhaps one important solution that we as Tenrikyo members can do to contribute to improving the environment. It is also our greatest challenge as we look for practical and meaningful ways in which to do this.

For the remainder of our session, we want to solicit questions and ideas from everybody assembled in this room. Feel free to ask questions to our presenters about their individual papers or other related matters. Please also feel free to offer your own thoughts and ideas on what Tenrikyo can do to help solve the current environmental crisis.

Questions & Answers Session

Question: I'm from America, and we are a consumer society. We are in a war that is mostly for financial purposes from my perspective. What can you do when certain agendas are so huge? What can you do as followers in terms of addressing the environmental problems?

Amira Dali: I can give you an example. In my country, we are running three-wheelers by solar batteries. These vehicles do not use gasoline. And they are plying along the roads and in cities. The solar batteries are rechargeable.

Question: How fast do they go?

Amira Dali: Well, the speed is OK for us Nepalese, but may not be good enough for California.

Cedric Noto: Strictly speaking, the original question has more to do with a political agenda. Theoretically, politics is from the people, but when you start to whittle it down, ultimately decisions are made by people referred to as decision-makers. But as far as it concerns local aspects, you can look at fuel efficiency, public transportation, car-pooling, etc. There are a lot of such ideas that are already out there. L.A. is not a commuter efficient town. The situation is different in cities like New York and Boston, which are hundreds of years older and which have concentrated living conditions. In Hong Kong, also, you can go out at any street corner anywhere and find a minibus with a capacity of 15 people going just about anywhere in Hong Kong. California, unfortunately, has largely been a car society. But cities are increasingly addressing this issue, because they are driven by economics. People are forced by rising gas prices to spend less on gas. Cities are now investing in public transportation where 20 years ago it was not economically viable to do so. Yet this is not the whole story. The last part of my presentation was that we should be able to—within reason—invest towards the bettering of humanity not for just economic success. Economics will drive projects, but that sort of vision has got to be

implemented to a greater degree, not just as a last resort.

Question: What is Tenrikyo Church Headquarters doing in terms of being environment friendly because it is building so many facilities? Does anyone have any ideas as to what the Headquarters is doing about environmentally sound construction?

Audience: I can't speak for the Headquarters, but when we at the Mission Headquarters in America made the multi-purpose hall, we tried to address the energy issue. One question was whether we want to be running our air-conditioner on the whole floor all the time, which would be wasteful. The idea we came up with was to section off a certain portion of the building, depending on our needs. So we are able to divide the whole floor into three sections. We have three zones of air-conditioning. Another is that we did a lot of investigating into the solar issue. We tried to let the sun come into the building. We designed the building in a way that allows us to use sunlight instead of having to generate light all the time. You'd be surprised how much that is not normally thought of. Solar panels, on the other hand, are very expensive, unfortunately. Also, the hall is not used all the time; when the monthly service is performed, lots of people use the building, but the rest of the time very few people use it. So the master plan has to be very sophisticated in order to accomplish efficiency.

Cedric Noto: Technologies are starting to catch up, driven by economics. But we can put a little more spirituality into our environmental thinking.

Question: We have heard about the need to make an effort to address environmental concerns. How do you approach, say, a minister who is doing some kind of re-construction where putting in an environmentally sound system is more expensive and who is not as well informed about environmental issues as you? How do you approach such a minister and suggest using this environmentally sound system in a respectful manner without being condescending, without seeming to be imposing the idea?

Audience: You can tell your minister, "I'll handle it." And your minister will probably thank you.

Cedric Noto: Ministers are there for the congregation, for the people. They will listen if you mention your idea. Of course, there is always a way of

presenting ideas tactfully. But if your intention is really sincere in wanting to do something about it, they will feel that. Also, you can get together with some other people and gather more and more information. In any case, if you are sincere about it, you can help your minister out. Also, the minister will feel a lot more proud about the outcome, knowing that there is sound reasoning behind the design.

Question: I really like your program in Nepal. What kind of trees or plants should we actually grow or plant?

Amira Dali: It depends. Farmers normally want the sort of tree that earns money quickly. But that is not the solution. I mentioned three Fs. We need to have a good balance of ecology. So we give them “fodder trees” especially for the livestock, “fruit trees” for income generation, and “fuel or forest trees”—fast growing trees that can be used as fuel. Of course, once they have a biogas plant, we don’t give them fuel trees. We don’t give them just whatever they want. We calculate how many family members they have, how many cattle they have, etc. We count them and, based on the data, we calculate people’s needs. As for fruit trees, we distribute banana trees, mangos, and citrus fruits—various tropical fruits because Nepal is in a tropical region.

Cedric Noto: You can also think about the different shades and sizes of leaves that trees have and also about different locations in which to plant trees depending on what kind of lifestyle you like. Do you like the morning light? Or evening light? You can put appropriate trees in certain locations to help conserve energy by shading your house or providing more light. So there are a lot of innovative ways of designing houses that are environmentally sound.

Amira Dali: Also, perhaps, you can give thought to planting indigenous trees.

Steven C. Fedorowicz: Many important points have been addressed today and I have the feeling that there are many more we could discuss. Unfortunately we only had an hour and a half for this session, so we hope we can continue this conversation in the days ahead.

Asia Regional Meeting

In summary, our main objective is a greater interaction amongst Asian countries and their Tenrikyo organizations. Asia whilst being the largest continent is currently best described as “diverse” and “lacking cohesion.” Our long term objective is to create greater “Regional Interaction”; a Pan-Asian sub-group which is characterized by greater cohesion, unity and interaction, with the underlying driver for this unity being our common faith. It is our objective that through greater interaction, we can all learn from each other. In the short term, what we would like to achieve is greater cross-interaction through Spiritual Friendship Circles; through greater interaction of church ministers across the region and also through technology. Asia is a region where collectively we can be greater than the sum of our parts.

1. The Current Situation

At present Asia is a geography where the spiritual maturity is diverse. Whilst most of Asia is still characterized as a region where Tenrikyo remains a distant minority within the religious community, with a limited number of fellowships, there are also two dominant countries where Tenrikyo has progressed, Taiwan and Korea. The diverse geographical boundaries of the continent and also its cultural diversity have meant that Asia has also operated in an independent manner with little interaction amongst countries. A common view amongst participants was that countries such as Hong Kong, India and Nepal, whilst vastly different, could all learn from the experiences of countries such as Korea and Taiwan, where the faith was spread much earlier and also where the spiritual maturity was far more developed. A means of such cross fertilization was through greater interaction amongst the Asian countries.

2. Our long term objective

Asia as noted above is different from the Americas and Brazil in that we do not have an integrated community with a common cultural background. That does not however preclude Tenrikyo organizations within Asian countries from learning from one another. Our long term objective is to achieve a greater interaction such that Asia can develop as a single community learning from one another. A pan-Asian Tenrikyo forum can provide opportunities where

interaction can be at various levels head ministers, Yoboku and children.

It is also with the expectation that through greater interaction there can also be greater support. An example cited was the Young Men's Association. Asia is typified as a region where there are high instances of natural disasters occurring. Earthquakes and typhoons are natural and are serious factors affecting the region. A fact impressed upon us was the speed and reaction within Tenrikyo to dispatch relief corps to areas affected. A key example was Tenrikyo's response to the Great Hanshin Earthquake. What we would like to achieve is greater interaction amongst the Young Men's Association who can in effect replicate what Tenrikyo did in Japan in Asia. To do this, we would first need to establish the platform within Asia where the Young Men's Association members could interact. Various countries in Asia are currently at different stages of spiritual development. It is through such interaction that countries can learn from more mature countries on how to manage and operate a Young Men's Association.

3. Our immediate objective

While our long term objective is to establish a close dialogue and regular interaction, in the short term, interaction can be achieved quickly albeit informally.

Cross Fertilization

A key factor reflecting most of Asia is a shortage of ministers. Many countries in Asia are typified by individual church fellowships and mission stations/mission centers. Tenrikyo believers are therefore limited in their exposure to missionaries. Asia collectively however can boast many church ministers, fellowship ministers, and ministers of the Overseas Department's mission posts and mission centers. We would like to encourage greater opportunities for Asian Tenrikyo followers to be exposed to such ministers by having the ability to invite such ministers to various Asian countries. At present such opportunities to listen to other Tenrikyo missionaries are largely limited to Joyous Life Lectures, which are typically presented by Overseas Department staff. Such events can be expanded to include reverends and fellowship heads from other Asian countries.

An example discussed was the Greater China region in particular. Hong

Kong at present has one church and two active mission stations/fellowships. In view of close cultural background it was felt that Hong Kong could benefit from visits by church ministers from Taiwan who present sermons in Mandarin, a language understood by most people. Likewise it was felt that the Taiwan fellowships would be interested to see how Tenrikyo was spread in Hong Kong, an area which they feel holds stronger resentment towards things Japanese than Taiwan does.

Spiritual Friendship Circles

Informal gatherings can take place whenever there is an opportunity to meet. This can occur such as during the Spring and Autumn Grand Service Festivities or during Oyasama's Birthday celebrations, when people from around the world return to Jiba. On these occasions, ideas and thoughts can be discussed and experiences shared. An opportunity to meet is an opportunity to learn.

Technology

An idea discussed was to make use of modern technology. Presently a common tool used is pod casting and the downloading of files. A suggestion was to make use of technology by uploading sermons from around Asia to a common site for followers to listen to or download. Also to make a common homepage for people to record their thoughts and to share their experience was another view.

Africa/Europe/Oceania Regional Meeting

A. Self-introduction & Brainstorming (20 minutes: 10:50~11:10)

-All participants made a brief self-introduction one by one.

-A small piece of paper was distributed and all participants were asked to write down “Three Ideas,” which, through attending the Forum, they had in their mind and would like to further or implement as “New Frontiers in the Mission.”

B. Present each participant’s own Top One idea (15 minutes: 11:05~11:20)

1. Counseling (Yasuyo): need to know a better way of dealing with people
2. How to convey the teachings clearly (Glen): reinforce education in Tenrikyo
3. *Nioigake* (Mira): how to convey the teachings in German
4. How to nurture post-Shonen-kai (Boys and Girls Association) young people (Masafumi Adachi)
5. Tell others about Tenrikyo (Roes)
6. *Hinokishin* (Raymond): In Uganda, “direct” *nioigake* (sprinkling the fragrance of the teachings) is very difficult for various reasons. *Hinokishin* is a very good way to have an opportunity to meet people.
7. Inter-religious meeting in Jiba (Noriaki Nagao): have a place to know each other
8. Various ideas (Yuzo): very impressed to see that many overseas followers gathered and had an active and serious discussion.
9. Formulate my stand points based on the teachings (Yuki Takeuchi)
10. Blog based on website (Masa Takeuchi): get more familiar with each other and exchange various opinions
11. Service in local languages (Komatsuzaki)
12. Romanized Mikagura-uta to help followers perform the service (Tomo Matsui)

*This has been already done in Brisbane, Australia. (commented by Glen)

C. Sum up the topics and select Three Major Categories by the Organizer Simon (15 minutes: 11:10~11:35)

Among the topics mentioned above, some seemed related to personal

learning or practices (e.g. Inter-religious meeting in Jiba, blog, Romanized Mikagura-uta, etc.), whereas others seemed too specific and a little difficult discussing now (e.g. Service in local language, *noigake* in certain region, etc.). Those topics could be put into action by those who presented them themselves or discussed on another occasion.

Then, three topics were decided to be discussed as follows: “Counseling,” “Conveying of teachings,” and “Nurturing of post-Shonenkai.”

D. Group discussion (15 minutes: 11:35~11:50)

1. Counseling: (5 people) Yasuyo, Mami, Masa Takeuchi, Tomo Matsui
2. Conveying of teachings: (4) Glen, Naru, Yuki, Roes, Toshi
3. Nurturing of post-Shonenkai : (6) Adachi, Raymond, Nagao, Shirokihara, Yuzo, Mira

E. Presentations from each group (20 minutes: 11:50~12:10)

1. Counseling (by Yasuyo)

We need to deal with people inside and outside of Tenrikyo and handle “real” world issues. We should know how to deal with people in emotional situations (grieving, moaning), but in doing so, training is necessary. We first have to know what “counseling” is.

There are many accessible resources outside. We can ask experts to come to church to teach us useful skills in dealing with people. Visiting Ikoi-no-Ie Hospital is another possible option.

We do not have to be an expert in counseling, but could become a “good listener.” For that, we need some background information regarding counseling. That is, a Yoboku is not a specialist, but needs to know a better way to deal with people.

(Yamato Culture Congress had a discussion on “grieving care/moaning care” in Japanese four years ago. Members visited a hospice. It should have been shared with many people including those from overseas but unfortunately there is no translation. Here we can find a communication gap and more translation is necessary.)

2. Conveying of teachings: Educating the general community and followers in the early stage of their faith (by Glen)

We need self-education. We cannot tell others what we don’t know, that is,

we cannot convey the teaching if we do not understand it.

We need more learning opportunities, such as one day/one week/one month seminars. It should not be specific but be a general/simple session. *Narimono* (musical instruments for the service) practice may be good to be held once a week.

We should set up various opportunities for people to gather together at churches or mission stations on a regular basis. And let people feel more comfortable and create a friendly atmosphere.

In the Netherlands, there is no place to worship, or no direct link to access nearby. Tenrikyo events such as Hinokishin Day should be more widely announced.

We should try to create links with the local community and become liaison with the community, keeping in touch with people in need.

To publicize the name of Tenrikyo wider is important. We should think more seriously of how to promote Tenrikyo, as not a Japanese religion, but as a world religion from a more international perspective. We should convey not “Japanese-ness,” but “Tenrikyo-ness”.

3. Nurturing of post-Shonenkai (by Adachi)

We shared each other's examples and experiences. Some churches and mission centers have organized various events. But it seems often the case that invitations were sent yet few showed up.

It is a good idea to let young people organize programs by themselves to take care of children.

In Europe events to nurture post-Shonenkai were held four times so far.

We should provide the young with opportunities to get more involved in the Tenrikyo community.

Honshiba Grand Church provides young people with a room at the church where they can use freely at anytime as a space to get together.

To use HARP (Heart Awakening Recreational Program) edited by Gakutan, Tenrikyo Students Advisory Committee, could also be used in overseas countries.

In Uganda, missionary activities are not allowed. So it is a good idea to hold an event for small kids to gather together, play games, and get familiar and deepen friendship.

F. Summary of each presentation (by Simon)

Counseling: practice of listening attentively, getting skills through training, creating network.

Education: get informed ourselves first, knowing more about Tenrikyo, establishing Tenrikyo-ness.

Nurturing: make a clue to have the young gather together, considering situation and age group and also making use of existing materials.

We were able to have a good discussion and exchange possible action plans to bring back to each country or region in this session. We shall try our best to implement what we have learned, discussed, and decided during the Forum as much as possible so as to promote missionary activities in our respective countries or regions.

USA Northern California/Northwest/Canada Regional Meeting

How can we implement what we have heard in the past three days through this forum?

Hinokishin

Extend our perspective beyond the church and look to websites for volunteer activities in the region.

Are there ways in which we can help elderly citizens?

There are also experts within the Tenrikyo community who can help and direct our efforts. Who are they and how can we make networks to take advantage of what they have to offer?

Study of Tenrikyo Teachings and Doctrines

Gather together to discuss Tenrikyo teachings in order to better our understanding of the teachings

Take photos to create a collage to enhance our understanding of the Truth of Origin

John Lewis Ofudesaki study group

Otefuri (service dance) practice session

Translation of Service into English

Service practice

Church Ties

Mother's Groups

Look to New York Cultural Institute as a model for regional activities

Record and archive videos of Tenrikyo events that would be available for people who were unable to attend

Summary of Meeting

As a whole, there were some hesitations on what each individual locality could do, since each area was limited in terms of personnel. Also, we could not have specific discussion for each locality since there were about four to five

different localities in the one room.

The younger people were excited about the Forum and were willing to commit themselves to Tenrikyo activities. There is a sense that there needs to be more direction to encourage and nurture their enthusiasm in the future.

USA East Coast/Midwest/South Regional Meeting

One of the biggest challenges in holding this regional meeting was determining how and what to discuss due to all the different regions represented. The states representing the East Coast included New York, New Jersey, Connecticut and Maine, while the Midwest was represented by followers from Illinois (Chicago) and the South was represented by followers from Georgia (Atlanta). With the geography of all these states, with the exception of the tri-states (NY, NJ, Connecticut), being quite spread out, the participants had to decide (1) which location will be the center of talks (2) how to include the followers from the different regions (3) which activities would be worthwhile for all participants.

After consideration, the participants agreed that the focus of talks and activities should center around the tri-state region, in particular, New York Center and Tenri Cultural Institute. The remainder of the session was spent brainstorming ideas and then coming up with a consensus of which ideas or activities should be pursued. Below is the list of ideas the participants suggested:

Task 1: Brainstorm: possible ideas to work on

- Daycare center
- Mini-Tenri Forum
- One-Day Seminar, Two-Day Seminar (similar to Joy Workshop at Mission Headquarters of America)
- Activity Day: Sports/Outdoor activity
- Family Day with other districts
- East Coast Shuyokai
- Mission Tours (like Boston)
- Tenrikyo Softball Team
- Soup Kitchen
- Animal Therapy
- Flower arrangement class
- US Rescue Corps/Hinokishin Corps
- Joining Volunteer groups
- Gathering with members of another church, outside NY Center

- “*Matsuri*” (festival) night
- Yuki Daiko* (traditional Japanese drums)
- Lessons of Japanese instruments (*koto*, *shamisen*)
- Gagaku workshop
- Kimono Demonstration
- Judo/Karate Class

Task 2: Decide on 3 or 4 ideas that we can suggest to make this a reality

1. Mini-Tenri Forum: due to the success of Tenri Forum, the participants unanimously agreed that a mini-regional version should try to be put into the works. Possible topics for the forum are as follows:

- Shorter lectures
- Current issues
- Other religions
- Human relationships
- Discussions
- Follow-up on today’s discussion
- Sexuality
- Teachings and politics
- Nioigake* (sprinkling the fragrance of the teachings)
- Interfaith/interreligious relationships

Possible guest speakers that were suggested include:

- John Lewis
- Jiro Morishita
- Keiichi Ogawa
- Noriaki Nagao
- Simon Patterson
- Aishwarya Sugandhi

2. Rescue Corps / Hinokishin Corps: similar to the Rescue Corps organized in Taiwan, it would include volunteers from all regions of the US ready to be dispatched to sites of natural disasters for relief efforts. The Hinokishin Corps would serve in helping followers with manpower for various projects (construction, moving, etc.) In order to actualize this project, the following

issues need to be addressed:

- Funding
 - Permission
 - Joining other volunteer corps
 - Training from *Seinenkai* (Young Men's Association) at Church Headquarters
- Seita Mihama, head of Taiwan Rescue Corps, was suggested as a guest in helping organize this project.

3. Soup Kitchen: volunteering at soup kitchen was an activity the young men's and young women's association conducted in the past. Revitalizing this activity was something the younger members felt was important for connecting with the community. Volunteering allows us to make ties with other volunteer groups, and serves important lessons, such as appreciation and reality-check on society, for the younger members.

4. 1-2 Day Seminar/Joy Workshop: designed as an introductory course for people new to the teachings. By having the seminar over a period of a day or possibly two, participants must commit themselves to wanting to further their understanding of the teachings. Also, by having it over a period of 2 days, it would be more of an incentive for those traveling from far. The key issues involved in such a program are as follows:

- Introduction to Tenrikyo
- Presentations, lectures, discussions, exercises
- Breakdown info
- Need participants
- Volunteers to step up to be lecturers
- Ofudesaki studies

Whether the activities serve in reaching out to the community, or strengthens one's connection with the church, or serves in enriching one's faith, finding a good balance among the activities was one important consideration the participants focused on when coming to this general consensus. With so many different activities serving different purposes, the participants felt that diversity would be important in bringing all members and followers together.

USA Southern California Regional Meeting

Goals for Meeting:

1. Review what's been discussed
2. Apply discussion to our region (brainstorm, prioritize, devise action plan)

I. Ideas from Tenri Forum Section Meetings

- A. Know and use resources (human and physical).
- B. Educate the young – advertise, make public (the organizational structure so they know where they can fit in, find ways for TYMANA and Joshiseinen to contribute to discussions and present their progress to create a pipeline for life after Shonenkai).
- C. Tenrikyo and the Environment – educate the members about the precious resources in nature (Environment = Joyous Life).
- D. Truth of Origin Study Sessions – use primary/historical documents such as those presented by Masa Matsuda so we can have first hand information to better understand the teaching.
- E. Communication – there are not enough publications for non-followers, improved P.R./media.
- F. Relationships/Communication – within and without Tenrikyo Community
- G. Gradual steps for teaching the faith – i.e. Joy Workshop, 3-Day Seminar (will be developed in the near future), then Spiritual Development Course.
- H. Direct Marketing – better use of technology to find out who is interested in Tenrikyo (i.e. upgrade the mission headquarters website to include interactive system that allows newcomers to see information first, then submit level of interest through website.
- I. Personal Responsibility – hold more members accountable for involvement. Training can include scope of organizational structure and all the ways we should be involved in supporting the American mission.
- J. Develop and Retain Human Resources – broadcast ways for members to get involved.
- K. Sazuke – training on how to do it actively and make it comfortable and

easier to perform.

L. Embracing the Localization of the Teaching – don't be hesitant to apply the teaching in the region just because Church Headquarters hasn't sanctioned it.

M. Attracting the Young – sports teams, boy/girl scouts, arts, etc. should be developed and promoted to make getting involved fun for new and continuing members.

N. Bridge the Cultural Gap – better inform and train congregation about the diversity of our communities. This is important in spreading the teaching.

O. Develop Identity Outside of the Church – people in the community should be able to recognize our faith and what we stand for.

P. Community Outreach – provide various ways the church can provide services to the community that are not necessarily faith specific.

Q. Promote Tenrikyo to Newcomers – “bring a friend to church day” to help Tenrikyo presentation to newcomers and make them feel welcome.

R. Nurturing the Current Members through the Teachings – programs that help current members develop a stronger understanding of the teaching.

II. Prioritizing for Action Plan

The group agreed to take the ideas above and consolidate many of them into four main themes/categories that drive the action plan for the So Cal region. The group also pushed for members to volunteer to serve on potential committees that can be developed through these categories.

A. Educate the Young

-Hajime, Marguerite, Kevin, Trasey, Minoru

B. Balance with Nature

-Keiji, Roxane, Colleen O., Brian Y.

C. Nurturing the Teaching

-Margarite, Thomas, Jon, Koji

D. Communication Plan

-Kelly, Marguerite, Thomas, Hiroko, Yuji H., Marlon, Traci I.

III. Other Items that Emerged from the Meeting

The members agreed that they would meet, based on further instructions

for ad-hoc committee that would oversee this effort, by September 1st to come up with action plans for each group.

Jon Nomachi volunteered to serve as the main contact for all the groups and the ad-hoc committee.

Jiro agreed to be the liaison between the groups and the bishop and board of directors.

It was agreed that it would be good to know the list of official subcommittees sanctioned by the bishop (the following is a partial list): PR, Rituals, Successors, Boys and Girls Association, Construction, Translation, Future Path, Women's Association, TYMANA, NY Center, TCI, Biotope (not a true committee), Educating/Nurturing.

IV. Next Steps

Coordinate with other North America groups to see where the overlaps are and which ones are regionally specific. For there, it will be important to coordinate with the bishop and various subcommittees that are related to the categories identified by the So Cal group.

This information needs to be submitted to the group members in this section ASAP.

E-mail addresses for every member present in this regional meeting must be collected by Tenri Forum steering committee members and submitted to Jon for dissemination.

It was also agreed by everyone that the North American mission desperately needs a 5 to 10 year plan to help guide its members in their effort to do salvation work. This must be coordinated by the leadership of the North American mission.

V. Summary and Words of Encouragement

The members of the So Cal region were active in their feedback of ideas they learned at the section meetings and for the forum in general. There was however, frustration expressed by the members in the way the church organization in North America has moved thus far. They would like to see a more transparent organizational structure and better guidance about where the North American mission is heading in the near future. The members are excited about getting involved but they are cautious about jumping into

something that may not have a purpose that is tied to the overarching goals of the North American mission.

Hawaii Regional Meeting

1. Concrete actions we can implement in Hawaii
2. What have we learned? – Action Steps

Ideas/Strategies

Interfaith meetings within communities (Hawaii Interfaith Council)

Scriptures study (Ofudesaki – study) – monthly – Doctrine, Otefuri Practice narimono. Established to accommodate flexible schedules. English study sessions for working people & students.

Have a larger presence in the community – community outreach – Raise community awareness.

Children's camp at branch churches, sleepovers at branch churches.

Health promotion activities: CPR classes, blood bank.

Tactical

Create a business plan, strategic plan.

Prioritize activities; expand/recruit manpower to support activities.

Succession plan – grooming leaders, recognize potential leaders.

Website – web cast, online access to sermons, Origins (need more committee members and obtain input).

Human Resources directory (tapping in/nurturing talents)

Improve communication to members; expand participation.

Be a member of the Tenrikyo Master Plan.

Assure continuity of committees and activities.

Increase/broaden participation in Tenrikyo established activities.

Environmental awareness incorporated into the churches – pamphlets to educate church ministers of environmental issues/using Tenrikyo teachings.

Educating ministers of community resources (health care services, social services).

Offer computer literacy skills to all members.

On line videos (12 dances) – accessible to all members.

Top four vote getters

22 - Weekly Sunday Schools

17 - Rebuilding Tenrikyo Cultural Center, library or renovate & expand the activities at Cultural Center – make it more accessible to the community at large.

17 - Preschool.

15 - One-day Seminar, Five-day Seminar (Brazil model), Shuyokai (1-month)

ESTABLISH ONE-DAY AND FIVE-DAY SEMINARS, AND ONE-MONTH

Participants: Colin Saito, Wayne Jyo, Owen Nakao, Daniel Higaki, Bert Kawasaki, James Higaki, Scot Mikuni, Junko Mikuni.

OBJECTIVE: Prerequisite to Shuyokai/Shuyoka

ACTION STEPS:

1. Need to standardize seminars in line with what is already in place.
 - a. Research Brazil's 1-day and 5-day seminars.
 - content
 - frequency
 - b. America Mission Headquarters Joyous Workshop (2 hours)
 - c. Three-day seminar will be more practical than the 5-day seminar due to it may be difficult to take off from work to attend the seminar.
2. Make suggested plan (curriculum).
3. Present to the Bishop and the Board of Directors

TENRI CULTURAL CENTER

GOAL: Create a master plan for the development of TCC.

OBJECTIVE: To promote the faith; to cultivate existing members; to reach out to the community, bring in new members.

ACTION PLAN

1. Retain an architect
2. Figure out cost
3. Personnel
 - a. Salary and benefits.

4. Agreement on the Concept (What the congregation wants). Master Plan Task Force
 - a. Master Plan Task Force input
 - b. Conduct survey among membership.
5. Form committee – Utilize YMA to organize and plan.
6. Need to discuss all activities and priorities.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

1. Conduct Sunday School on a weekly basis instead of just on the mission headquarters monthly service days.

Consider Saturday School due to monthly service at other churches on other Sundays.

2. Separate classes for different age groups.
3. Develop age appropriate curriculum based on the BGA Headquarters' guidelines.
4. Provide transportation for students.

Latin America Regional Meeting

Concerning the Tenri Forum

- The Tenri Forum was quite good; it was a stimulating experience for me.
- Unlike the “Latin America Gathering for Successors of the Path” that was held before on two occasions, I liked the fact that the Forum was different in that you could make friends from various countries in all areas of the world.
- I also want to see an event similar to the Forum held in Brazil.
- I would like to see a forum where we invite to Brazil people from around the world who are giving their best and have them give a talk on their experiences. For instance, a presentation from someone like Ms. Amira Dali from Nepal, who is active not just within the church but in the community at large, would be stimulating. It would be very impractical to have as many people from Brazil to return to Jiba for such an event. It would be far more feasible to have a few people from overseas come to an event held in Brazil. I think there is a necessity to spread activities held in Jiba to various dioceses and districts.

Concerning the translation of the Mikagura-uta

- Is it necessary to sing a translated version of the Songs for the Service? Although I was born in Brazil, I came to understand the meanings of the service by dancing it over and over in Japanese. So I don't think a translated version is necessary.
- Because it is important that we follow the teachings exactly as Oyasama taught us, we should perform the service in Japanese.
- But it is important to enable people who do not know any Japanese to understand the service in their native language. Once they familiarize themselves with the service, it becomes more viable for them to perform the service in Japanese.
- I think that to make such a translation available is just one step in a bigger process. Once we have many people understand the meaning of the Mikagura-uta in the local language where the meaning is conveyed fully and settled in their hearts, then we can have them perform the service in Japanese. So just because there is a translated version of the service does not necessarily mean that we will stop performing it in Japanese altogether.

- The followers in Argentina are performing the service in Japanese. This goes to show that it's possible to teach the service to non-Japanese as it is.
- It may perhaps be beneficial to try to think outside the box about publishing a singable, danceable version of the Mikagura-uta. There is the tendency to make everything Church Headquarters publishes the definitive version, so there may be some hesitancy to carry it through on their part.
- The service in South Korea is performed in Korean. Hasn't this been a contributing factor toward the growth of the path there?
- Church Headquarters did not initiate the creation of the Korean version of the service. It was made because the Korean followers were driven by necessity. This may just go to show that it is also important for local followers to take the lead and get things done.

Miscellaneous comment

- The situation in Mexico is a sad one in that those from the younger generation who show promise leave for the United States and Japan.

Japan Regional Meeting

Motivations behind and impressions of participating in the Tenri Forum

-I found out about the Forum from the *Tenri Jibo* newspaper. I am an educator and I once engaged in missionary work in Uganda. I participated because I wished to receive and answer questions in English. I am glad that I was given such an opportunity to learn in such a setting, and I hope it will be held again. I only wish that more students and more people teaching English in Japan had participated.

-I found out about the Forum from *Tenri Jibo*. My grand church once dispatched me as a missionary to Australia, but I had to return to Japan since I am the designated successor to the head minister of my church. At first I thought it was too difficult for me to follow, but the people in my room at Moya 38 were quite friendly to me. I got a lot out of it. I got the impression that Tenrikyo followers from overseas are very passionate about their faith. I hope that the topic “contribution” (*otsukushi*) will be covered next time.

-I found out about the Forum from *Tenri Jibo*. Although I am a translator, I had trouble with verbal communication. I thought the Forum was planned quite well.

-I felt that the discussions were livelier when the speakers took a step further in their presentations. I felt that it was great to provide an opportunity for opinions to be exchanged. Right now, Tenrikyo is in a state of stagnancy. In Japan, the churches have a gloomy atmosphere, whereas I could feel Tenrikyo followers from overseas had a positive and cheerful outlook. I cannot help but feel the cause of the stagnancy because we have lost touch with society at large.

-Everyone was overflowing with positive energy. You don't see many young people in churches in Japan anymore. Also, Boys and Girls Association activities are always limited to fife and drum corps. Everything is carried out in a top-down manner; there is almost no effort being made to hear what the younger generation thinks. We must ask ourselves: Isn't there more that we can do for the sake of the Tenrikyo youth?

-I was deeply inspired. There are many Tenrikyo activities in Japan, but I find there is a lack of enthusiasm. I see the need for more discussions such as these.

-I felt that I should be thankful for the fact that I grew up near Jiba. I had lost sight of the way to be thankful. I also wonder if it is possible for someone like me in Japan to give opinions unreservedly or ask questions of any substance. I wonder if there is any way to learn from the enthusiasm of young Brazilians.

-I participated with the hope it might help bring my husband, who is Norwegian, into Tenrikyo. By interacting with followers from overseas, I felt their enthusiasm rubbed off on me. Although it is difficult to bring an open mind to everything you encounter, I hope to adopt as many positive aspects from this Forum as possible. I feel the next Forum can benefit from having interpretation so that more people from all walks of life can participate.

-I feel that the Tenrikyo Students Association has much vitality. The section meeting "Educating the Young" was focused on the Boys and Girls Association. But I felt that there could have been a section meeting devoted to nurturing followers from the Students Association age group. I feel that TSA activities that are now coming to fruition in Japan can be adopted overseas.

-The participants came from many backgrounds, so it was difficult to consolidate the various perspectives. But there were instances when it was fruitful to have a discussion with input from different areas.

-There were followers in their 20s from overseas who were able to hold their own in the discussions. I think this could be attributed to the Oyasato Seminar and possibly their effort to overcome the difference in Japan and the United States.

-I felt that much preparation had gone into the Forum. Because it was in English, I mostly devoted myself to listening. I definitely want to take to my church this approach toward listening. I felt that there were several similarities and differences between the situations in Japan and the United States. The issue of "school refusal" (*futoko*) seems especially difficult for Americans to grasp. I discovered that this is an issue that we need to resolve on our own in Japan. On the other hand, issues involved in marital relations are universal. I also felt a gap in the quality of how discussions are conducted in Japan and abroad. At this Forum, one was able to say what one wanted. I see the need to practice in order to be able to express my thoughts in words.

Why do you think followers from overseas come across as cheerful and

enthusiastic?

-I think we in Japan are too hung up on the things we “must” and “should” do.

-The concept of “obligation” that is characteristic of Japan.

-Followers overseas have built a one-on-one relationship with God. In Japan there is a tendency to do things top-down in a single direction. We need to have opportunities where we can express our opinions.

-It is presumptuous to think that followers in the United States are not tied down. I think they have their own obstacles to overcome, but that they are cheerfully giving it their best despite those obstacles.