GRATITUDE, OBEDIENCE, AND HUMILITY OF HEART:
THE MORALITY OF DEPENDENCY IN A NEW RELIGION

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In his book *Dojo*, Davis attempts to explain why a group such as Sûkyô Mahikari exists in a modern, industrialized, and in the Weberian sense, a rationalized society. He poses the question, "is it possible that magic, like religion, *reinforces* the institutions and values of industrial society?" (1980: 11). In order to answer this, Davis relies on Mannheim's distinction between a rationality that insightfully aims at an ultimate goal (substantial rationality) and a rationality that co-ordinates activities in pursuit of limited goals (functional rationality). The difference can be seen in an army. Common soldiers, unaware of the intentions of the commander, nevertheless execute their tasks which in the end realize the goal of the commander.

This argument, while certainly correct in a very general sense, fails to offer a satisfactory answer, because it can easily be contended that *all* groups and movements in any society support the system's elites in some way. This is the failure of any structural–functionalist explanation. Davis' contention is not wrong in itself. But it simply fails to answer anything. His argument also labors under the premise of modernization theory; as a society rationalizes, magic, superstition, religion, and other "irrational" thought patterns should, like a gloomy mist, evaporate in the sunlight of rationality.

I believe in order to answer why a certain group supports a sociocultural system, it is more productive to first focus on a particular group or social setting, and then search the cultural landscape for values and norms that are shared between the group and the society at large. There will undoubtedly be differences that cannot be ignored,

but there will also be important affinities. I believe that Mahikari supports a set of normative ideas which are conspicuously congruent with mainstream Japanese society. These values, rather idealized, even amplified, are explicitly discussed, thought about, and advocated in its *dôjô* (centers for religious practice and training).

This is not to say that all groups in a given society share exactly the same ideas, or that their aspirations and goals are identical. Rather, it is a recognition that to a large degree members of the same society often define, explain, and interpret the world using similar values. At the same time, members of the same society employ values instrumentally in attempts to accomplish different ends.

I view values and norms as facts, more specifically, social facts. Difficult to put into empirical terms, they nevertheless exert a powerful influence on social life that any serious account of human nature cannot ignore. I define values as emotionally-charged beliefs about how people should act toward one another. I am interested in two aspects of values: 1) as cultural desirables, as ways of behaving that people find desirable for themselves and others; 2) as tools, as the means by which social actors obtain certain things. This is the pragmatic, strategic side of values, and consequently relates to political concerns. Related to the strategic use of values is their use as categories of thought, as ways of classifying, ordering, and thereby evaluating the behavior of others and oneself.

I   Mahikari

Commonly referred to as Mahikari, the movement in question was founded in 1959 by Okada Yoshikazu who claimed to have "received an important directive from God which revealed how radiating the Divine Light of the Creator can produce health, harmony, happiness, and freedom from emotional pain and financial hardship." Eventually Okada would become known as Sukuinushisama, the 'Lord Savior.' Members wear a divine pendant (*omitama*) and participate in *okiyome* sessions in which people receive and radiate the Divine (or True) Light in order to purify their bodies and souls. Concentrated in the major urban areas of

Japan with numerous overseas centers, its membership has been estimated at between 350,000 to 400,000.[2]

Ⅱ Discourse as Ideology: The Cultural Construction of a Theory of Human Nature

There are different ways to discuss the cultural constituents of human nature. In this article I wish to outline the normative constructs of human nature rather than focus on the more cosmological concepts as espoused by Mahikari. This is not to deny the importance of the latter discourse, but for the sake of convenience I will focus on the former. In any case, it must not be forgotten that Mahikari's discourse about human nature, besides discussed in an explicit form in terms of values, is deeply embedded in its cosmology, beliefs about the workings of the universe, talk of attaching spirits, ceremonies, and ritual activities. My theoretical premise is that values and concepts that are frequently discussed and advocated in a group indicate political concerns and sociopolitical relations. Taken together, these values as advocated by Mahikari constitute a theory of human nature which centers around *the idea of dependency on others in hierarchical relationships*. As we shall see there is a limited number of terms and ideas persistently discussed in Mahikari settings.

Ⅲ The Morality of Dependency

What follows is an outline of the terms and concepts which appear in the literature (notably the monthly *Mahikari*, the official magazine of the organization), discussions, study sessions, and ritual activities of Mahikari with unusual frequency. An understanding of this normative view offers us clues to understanding Japanese society at large, and those familiar with Japanese culture will notice that, with the exception of a few terms, these words are very common everyday expressions borrowed from ordinary Japanese. Therefore, it can be said that Mahikari's morality of dependency is a local version of a more diffused and general view of human nature found in Japan. However, I must emphasize that this outline is not an abstraction or a reduction of a set

of underlying rules motivating all Japanese behavior. Instead, I am offering a specific world view which has borrowed ideas from a wider repertoire of norms commonly found in Japan. Mahikari, like other similar movements, "single out, simplify, elaborate, or exaggerate a segment of the total cultural fund" (Lebra 1986: 354).

As a convenient way of presenting this outline, I have listed frequently used terms which are meaningfully related to each other under *cluster* headings. Terms and concepts that form a cluster state basically the same thing in different ways. They are semantically very much related. Taken together the five clusters form a sociopolitical theory of human nature, of how individuals should behave. Whether or not they actually and always behave this way is not my primary concern. The clusters mutually reinforce one another, constituting a logically structured, interrelated system of thought. Thus, this is not a trait list. It is a dynamic, integrated system of meaningful relations which states that people should belong to groups and depend on others in hierarchical relationships.

Certain terms are sometimes strung together in the Mahikari literature, forming phrases that capture key values in a single sentence. These terms, and similar ones, are important linguistic staples in the New Religions (cf. Hardacre 1988: 21–28). It is worth noting that these terms have widespread use in Japanese society. For members, they are natural ways of behaving rooted in the cosmos itself.

(1) Gratitude Cluster. To be grateful is an extremely basic value in Japan, and the words *kansha* ('grateful') and *arigatai* ('thankful') are the most significant words in Mahikari. Since members receive divine favors and benefits from Su God, *on* ('favors') must be gratefully repaid (*hô-on*). There is very little that people should not be thankful for, since everything comes from the divine source, Su God. Even unfortunate events and disasters should be regarded as gifts from Su God, since unpleasant and painful experiences are his way of cleansing us for past misdeeds.

Lebra has pointed out that gratitude and guilt have traditionally been linked in Japanese spirituality (1976: 92), and this is clearly seen in the

use of *owabi* ('apology') in situations which do not appear to demand forgiveness. But for members they are related and therefore I have included "apology" in the gratitude cluster. To apologize also carries connotations of making a vow of indebtedness, of placing oneself under the authority of another.

In Japan, *itadaku* and *chôdai suru* (both meaning to 'humbly receive') are commonly used expressions of politeness, the former customarily said before eating a meal or as a way of giving thanks after receiving something. A common usage of *itadaku* is to put it after a gerund of a passive verb, as in *tsukawasete itadakemasu ka* ('may I humbly be permitted to use it?'). Or it can be used after a gerund of an active verb, as in *renraku shite itadakemasu ka* ('may I humbly receive your contacting me?'). My glosses are admittedly literal and consequently clumsy, but I have translated these expressions this way in order to bring out embedded cultural themes. Speaking of another religious group, Lebra writes that "Passivity is exaggerated in causative-passive-polite-grateful forms, as such expressions inundate the members' speech and writings" (1986: 358).

Davis writes in a footnote that members use passive linguistic forms even when they take an active, controlling role in the production of miracles. This in itself is true, but when he justifies his translation of *kiseki o itadaku* as 'to receive,' 'to experience,' or even 'to perform miracles' because deference and humility are *de rigueur* in Japan (1980: 201), he rides roughshod over key concepts which are conspicuously emphasized in Mahikari. The fact that articles in the *Mahikari* more often than not use the passive verb form plus *itadaku* for every one or two sentences must mean something. Such frequent use of this term is not ordinary Japanese, as non-members have pointed out. Furthermore, this verb is often used in ordinary expressions where it is not clear why an individual is being humbly allowed to do anything. The implication seems to be that even the most simple, common things are given to us. Members seem to be very aware of their special use of *itadaku*.

Other words in this cluster which stress the receiver-end of receiving/giving relations are *yurusu* ('permit, 'allow,' 'approve,' and in

certain contexts, 'forgive'), and the classical-sounding *tamawaru* ('to be bestowed with'). It is very common to link these words together in a single sentence in articles in the *Mahikari* and formalized prayers, creating a sense of extreme passivity and polite indirectness. These are linguistic strategies for indicating an individual's dependency on superiors and ultimately Su God.

(2) Obedience Cluster. To be *sunao* is another important cultural desirable in Japan, used toward both children and adults. Usually translated as 'obedient,' it actually carries a heavier semantic load. Other glosses include 'submissive,' 'gentle,' 'meek,' 'receptive,' 'tractable,' 'compliant,' and 'co-operative.' In a pedagogical context, White writes that this is used to describe the "good child" and has many nuances; open-mindedness, nonresistancy, truthfulness, naivete, naturalness, simplicity, mildness, straightforwardness, and strongly implies active co-operation and engagement in the activities of a group (1987: 28). It also strongly implies positive acceptance of what one is told. Related to being *sunao* is *shoshin*, which is usually translated as 'inexperienced,' is often used to denote a childlike attitude we should return to in order to learn important teachings with an open, accepting mind.

Another extremely popular word in the obedience cluster, though unique to Mahikari, is *kokoro no geza*, "humility of heart.' In the *Mahikari* (the monthly magazine of this group) it is common to see the three most commonly heard words, *kansha, sunao,* and *kokoro no geza,* appear together in the titles of articles' testimonials.

Part of the rhetorical instructions members' are exposed to are the warnings against thinking "logically" or "thinking with one's head." We are encouraged to "think with our hearts," and "experience" the teachings. Good things come to those who obediently accept whatever comes their way, and people with too many questions, such as inquisitive anthropologists, are exhorted to just accept things the way they are.

The set of terms and concepts in the obedience cluster point to and reinforce the notion of hierarchy, of "occupying one's proper place"

(Lebra 1976: 67-68). Vertical relations are stressed, such as *kôhai/ sempai* ('junior/ senior'), *seito/ sensei* ('student/ master') in Japanese society, and the in *dôjô* of Mahikari the authoritative vertical lines that run from Su God through the Lord Savior, Oshienushisama, the local *dôjô* presidents, the squad leaders, down to each individual member, are made very clear. When members meet each other for the first time, they inevitably ask each other when they joined Mahikari, since seniority is assigned to the one who joined first. It is common to talk about *omichibiki-oya* and *omichibiki-ko* (or sometimes *kôhai* and *sempai*) (roughly, the 'parent who guided' and the 'child that was guided') when discussing relationships between those who brought another into Mahikari and those who were brought in.

(3) Belongingness Cluster. Members distinguish themselves from non-members by referring to themselves as *kamikumite* ('hand-in-hand with God'), Sunshine Children, and the Seed People of the spiritual civilization to come. The wearing of Omitama, lapel badges, and an emphasis on group-entry rituals instill within members a strong sense of belonging. A sense of belonging increases among members who take the Intermediate and Advanced Training, since they become the recipients of knowledge which brings them closer to Su God.

From the viewpoint of many *kamikumite*, recruitment activity acts as a clear group-marker. As Miyanaga writes, this is because "The people a believer tries to recruit will likely represent outsider's critical opinion against religion. He is on constant trial. Therefore, recruitment creates confrontation" (1983: 28). Besides attempting to introduce the doctrine of Mahikari to family and friends, *kamikumite* sometimes target a neighborhood and go door to door, introducing themselves as Sunshine Children and asking if they can radiate True Light. Other members slip flyers into mailboxes.

Kamikumite are taught not just to consider themselves members of Mahikari. They are also reminded of their responsibilities to their local *dôjô*, and even to their own squad. This is done in subtle— and sometimes not so subtle ways— occasionally fostering fragmented groupism.

The focus on the group is a noted characteristic of Japanese society. "Group- oriented," "groupism," and "collectivism" are characteristics that proponents of "Japan's uniqueness" tend to point to when searching for the "unique" traits of the Japanese people. Regardless of the fact that the role of the collectivity is often over- emphasized, groups do play a significant role in Japanese society. Rohlen states that "we find entry points to new groups and institutions highly elaborated as markers of the expectation that attachment will develop and that fixed routines will be complied with " (1989: 27). "Families, companies, and religious, educational, and fraternal organizations apparently create their own distinct social worlds in which order is learned and maintained" (1989: 11).

By establishing a set of rules, at times rather explicit, that all members are expected to follow, the group itself takes on an identity and acts as a source of authority for the individual. Learning the ways of the group is more than just a matter of acquiring practical information, since the acceptance of a certain way of doing things, often different from the way the same thing is done in another group, symbolizes one's affiliation to the group and acceptance of its legitimacy. The stress on proper *aisatsu* ('greetings') acts to reinforce in-group /out-group awareness since it clarifies group boundaries. In Mahikari these acts of common civility are constantly and consciously given serious attention. Testimonials occasionally discuss the benefits of proper *aisatsu* when dealing with others. The social atmosphere of homes, shools, work place, and *dôjô* change for the better when individuals greet each other correctly.

Besides acting as a mechanism for marking group boundaries, proper greetings strengthen group solidarity. Its decibel level is proportional to how strongly a member feels he should acknowledge loyalty to the group. The concern with *aisatsu* is not limited to Mahikari. Hardacre notes how Reiyûkai members were admonished for not shouting "Yes!" with enough spirit (1984: 72), and notes that "The concern with correct greetings is a seemingly minor point but one asserted pervasively in the new religions" (1988: 94).

(4) Diligence and Devotion Cluster. This cluster is really a continuation of the previous one. To belong to a group requires a certain level of commitment, attachment, loyalty, and devotion, whether it is one's squad, *dōjō*, special activity group, or the Mahikari organization itself. The most obvious sign of devotion to the group is participation, but in additon to signifying attachment, it also represents a form of discipline and acts, in the words of Rohlen, as a thermometer of "morale and the measure of cohesiveness" (1989: 20–29).

When discussing the group or group activities, members often use the common Japanese term *ittaika* ('be united,' 'as one'). At times *ittaikan* ('feeling of oneness') is talked about, another common expression in Japan (Lebra 1976). Being "united" is more than just a feeling or social state of affairs. It is a very desirable goal that takes on a reality all its own.

In *The Structure of Tenacity [gambari]: The Principle of Japanese Behavior*, Amanuma analyzes the social uses and discourse of the word *gambaru* ('hold out,' 'stand firm,' 'persist,' 'do one's best'), without a doubt one of the most frequently heard words in Japan. It is a term heard in various social contexts, from work, studying, sports, and even leisure (1987). It is not difficult to come across examples of the *gambaru*–mentality in everyday Japan. Like *gaman suru* ('endure,' 'put up with'), *gambaru* serves as a basic linguistic staple in Mahikari, ensuring that everyone is wholeheartedly participating in the tasks at hand.

Kamikumite are encouraged and exhorted to dedicate themselves to recruitment activities, special events, regular tasks for *dōjō* maintenance, and preparation for ceremonies. Observable, visible participation on the part of members is indicative of sincere interest in the group and "physical action can be perceived as isomorphic with spiritual change" (Kondo 1982: 54).

A related theme in the diligence and devotion cluster is suffering for the sake of the group, and by extension, for one's own spiritual salvation. This is a theme that occurs in other New Religions (Hardacre 1988: 28), and in Mahikari, pain becomes associated with the erasure of

sin, often symbolized by the discharge of physical impurities from one's body. *Kamikumite* are encouraged to *gaman* and *gambaru* through discomfort and be grateful for the cleansing experience. This way of thinking is part of a pedagogical principle that one is originally rough and unpolished, but through hardship and suffering, and becomes a mature social being.

In order to make a group operate smoothly and efficiently, whether it is a squad, *dôjô*, or the entire organization, a positive attitude on the part of the rank and file is essential. This is why terms such as *yôki* ('positive,' 'cheerful,' 'light-hearted,' 'lively'), *akarui* ('bright,' 'cheerful,' 'happy,' 'sunny'), *egao* ('smiling face'), and *niko niko suru* ('smiling') are often encountered. Again, these are all ordinary, common Japanese words, frequently used in discourses focusing on educational, pedagogical concerns. According to one *kamikumite*, the Lord Savior himself used to practice smiling before he went to bed each night. The theory being that if one wore a cheerful expression, one's attitude would naturally change to being more positive.

A positive attitude, strongly encouraged by those in authority, becomes contagious during group activities and ceremonies, some people 'burning (passionately)' *(moeru)* with enthusiasm for the group's goals. The words *kandô suru* ('be moved,' 'inspired') and *kangeki suru* ('deeply moved,' 'deeply impressed') are important linguistic staples, often chained together for full effect, as in *kansha-kangeki-kandô no omoi de ippai deshita!* ('I was filled with thoughts of gratitude, deep feeling, and emotion'). Set phrases, such as *kangeki no namida ga tomedonaku detekimashita* ('I started to cry tears of deep emotion that wouldn't stop') are used in the *Mahikari*. *Fushigi* ('mysterious,' 'marvelous') is another common word used to emotionalize and mystify events and activities.

All these words, most of which are borrowed from ordinary Japanese, are strategically employed to construct within the minds of members a sense of interpersonal warmth and self-fulfillment. At the same time, a strong sense of loyalty to the organization is acquired. Participating in activities becomes enjoyable. Thus, the Mahikari term

for proselytizing is *kaikô* ('widening' [of the Divine Teachings])' which is the same as 'everyone's happiness' (*kaikô*). The encouragement of those in authority of a positive attitude toward the movement is common to the New Religions.[3]

It is pertinent here to bring up the special Mahikari term *sônen*, 'one's innermost thoughts and attitudes,' since this is used to make evaluative statements about the proper (or improper) attitude of members. *Sônen* has a spiritual status, and by talking about one's attitude as if it were something spiritual one's devotion to the organization and its precepts become grounded in world beyond this one, thereby adding legitimacy and authorization to one's beliefs.

Related to the positive attitude theme fostered by such terminology is a sense of self-confirmation and confidence. This was made clear to me by not only the general feeling of confidence displayed by *kamikumite* in the face of personal crisis and hardship, but also by minor but symbolically-charged actions. For example, *kamikumite* are told to pronounce prayers clearly. Even in front of Su-God's altar (the supreme divinity), we are told to affirm ourselves.

(5) Empathy Cluster. Lebra writes that in Japan, empathy (*omoiyari*) "ranks high among the virtues considered indispensable for one to be really human, morally mature, and deserving of respect. I am even tempted to call Japanese culture an *"omoiyari"* culture (1976: 38). Though I rarely heard the word *omoiyari* itself used by Mahikari members, a semantically related word, *rita-ai* is often used. Though usually glossed as 'altruistic love,' Miyanaga suggests 'compassion' is more accurate because altruism conveys a sense of self-sacrifice lacking in *rita-ai* (1983: 214). It is a concept that means to be concerned about what others are feeling and experiencing, to the point of anticipating their wishes (Lebra 1976: 38-49). *Ai* ('love') — which also means *ai* ('divine will')—is used in similar contexts. A good sense of what *rita-ai* means can be gleaned from its undesirable opposites which are warned against; *wagamama* ('selfish'), *rikoshugi* ('egoism'), and *jikochûshin* ('self-centered').

Concrete expressions of empathy and compassion are not hard to find

among members. At local *dôjô*, they selflessly administer Light to those in need; in their homes, among friends, and with strangers on the street, they are always on the lookout for opportunities to help someone on his path to salvation. Empathy relates to the concern superiors should feel toward juniors, and vice versa. But as Miyanaga has very insightfully made clear, it also acts as an equalizing element between individuals. Miyanaga points out the social logic behind the prime value of empathy:

1) Ignorance or lack of compassion in a past life causes misery for someone, so that the victimized party comes to resent the attacker.

2) After death, the victim possesses the attacker (or a relative of the attacker), resulting in role reversal of victim and attacker. "The assailant has to experience the misery of the victim by himself being victimized by his original victim" (1989: 222–223).

3) Through purification, spirit investigation, and the Divine Teachings, both parties develop understanding and compassion, leading to reconciliation.

4) The possessing spirit departs and the person recovers, or social discord, economic difficulties, or other problems disappear.

Ignorance and not knowing how the needs of others are the opposite of empathetic concern. It is only logical that a keen awareness becomes vital to how one's actions, *both intentional and unintentional*, affect others. As Miyanaga states, spirit possession rituals act as social equalizing mechanisms, since both victim and assailant come to understand one another by temporarily exchanging roles (1983: 215–223).

Though highly symbolic and seemingly far removed from everyday affairs and the secular sphere, spirit possession is the ritual confirmation of how human relations should be. If successfully resolved, these rituals teach the participants how to construct socially desirable relations; relations based on empathy. Thus, spirit possession is an intensified, highly focused instance of the value called empathy, a cultural theme that runs throughout Japanese society.

Besides the five clusters outlined above, there are several other

concepts that show up in the discourse of Mahikari.

Hansei suru: Commonly heard in everyday life, this term means to 'reconsider,' 'carefully think over.' This word is used for all ages. What is thought over is sometimes left unsaid, though in the context of Mahikari it is apparent that one's disobedience, lack of devotion, lack of gratitude, or an unsympathetic attitude are cause for *hansei*. This concept is related to *omoiyari* in that one should constantly be thinking about how one's behavior effects others. Ignorance of the needs of those around oneself is a very undesirable trait.

Self-cultivation: Very much a part of the *hansei* idea is the positive change of self. This comes about through seeing one's own faults in others, a very pervasive way of thinking in New Religious movements (Hardacre 1988: 22). Self-cultivation is obtained through very concrete means, such as carrying out *gohōshi* ('divine service,' various jobs and tasks assigned at the *dōjō*), fulfilling one's mission in a *miyaku* ('divine role;' any administrative position or office), saving others, and giving *okiyome* as much as possible. But *kamikumite* also have more abstract ways of talking about improvement of self, such as *sōnen tenkan* ('change of one's *sōnen*).

Personalistic Relationships: The emphasis on close, personalistic, emotionally–charged relations is important in Mahikari. Spiritual salvation is obtained through a very particularized relationship to the Lord Savior and Oshienushisama. By logical extension, the relationship one has with one's local *dōjō* president becomes important since this authority figure is positioned relatively closer to the Oshienushisama in the cosmological hierarchy.

Very few members know the Lord Savior and it is extremely rare for *kamikumite* to meet Oshienushisama. Very few ever get close to her, and keeping her separated from the rank and file, literally and symbolically, seems to be a policy on the part of the movement's leaders. This separation elevates her status and increases her authority. At the same time, her role as the savior of all mankind is emphasized, and members are encouraged to express devotion to her.

For *kamikumite*, gratitude, obedience, and humility all work to

construct a view that particular personal relationships—in and outside of the *dôjô*—are the primary constituents of society and are highly significant, if not indispensable, for one's existence. Impersonal, generalized, and what may be called rationalized relations, though an inevitable part of social intercourse, imply the undesirable opposite of a 'caring' (*omoiyari*) social life.

Practice: All term and concepts listed above should not be thought of as abstract, vague platitudes. The word 'practice' (*jissen*) is frequently discussed along with them, and very concrete examples of how one has lived out these norms are given in testimonials. Indeed, terms such as *kansha no gyô* ('spiritual practice of gratitude') and *kokoro no geza no gyô* ('spiritual practice of humility') are employed, *gyô* denoting religious austerities as in *shûgyô* ('ascetic training,' 'discipline').

IV Values as Categories of Cognition

In this section I want to point out why, as nebulous and shadowy as social environment values are for some social scientists, they are essential components of human society. This is because they wield a power over our perceptions of the social environment that cannot be ignored. Values should be thought of as categories of thinking, as the conceptual tools we employ in order to classify the behavior of others. In the same way that color terms divide the visual world up for us, or as geometric figures present us with determined forms that give shape to the observable world, values codify the actions of social actors. Through the cataloguing of desired and undesired behavior, we are able to analyze and organize the shifting social scenery. Since classifying provides us with a certain order, we acquire a sense of control and predictability.

The major cultural themes that are at work in Mahikari are incessantly pressed into service to rate the behavior of others and one's own in the most important places for socializing individuals; family, school, and work place. Many of the testimonials and articles in the *Mahikari* deal with the resolution of family discord, school problems,

and work place tensions. Resolution involves the realization of one's lack of gratitude, lack of humility, or a failure to occupy one's proper place. This type of thinking can only reinforce traditional norms of family life, education, and employment. Thus members do not just consider home, the classroom, and work to be important in themselves; they recognize and use these socializing agents as supports for the sociopolitical agenda embedded in their religious beliefs. It is in these places and in these social situations that members are encouraged to employ the norms they are taught.

V   Values: The Marginal as Mainstream

In his book about Mahikari, Davis asks how such a group can advocate a world view that "in so many respects, runs against the grain of contemporary Japanese culture?" (1980: vii). He writes that his intention is to reach an understanding of how "cognitive deviance" functions in modern society (1980: 9).

Regardless of the fact that certain beliefs and practices of Mahikari are considered strange, even repulsive, by many Japanese, it is my contention that a careful examination of this movement reveals a firm espousal of values that the majority of Japanese finds quite under-standable and acceptable. To state that Mahikari runs against the grain of contemporary Japanese culture is to simply ignore a complex of values that this group constantly and explicitly expounds upon. The use of the term "cognitive deviance" may point to certain unusual beliefs and practices, but its use obscures the significant and common evaluations that members of Mahikari and ordinary Japanese make about their social world. Thus, concerning another New Religion, Lebra states that its members "hyperbolize what the average Japanese would believe and practice" (1986: 354). This is no less true in the case of Mahikari, and it is not an exaggeration to state that the spiritual centers of Mahikari are, in at least certain respects, microcosms of Japanese society at large. In spite of their beliefs, ancestor spirits, members are by no means nonconformists. On the contrary, they work hard at integrating themselves into Japanese society. And when

confronted with the difficulties of life, it is not surprising that they press into service the norms their culture has to offer, conforming even more to the dictates of social values in the process of being helped. There is nothing terribly strange about a desire for normative certainty, and Mahikari offers a moral vision claiming that after all the suffering, confusion, and complexity of life, the universe is ultimately a fair place.

Notes

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2) For detailed treatments of this movement, see Davis (1980), Miyanaga (1983) (who researched Sekai Mahikari Bunmei Kyôdan, a group which Mahikari broke off from). Also, see Anderson (1988).

3) Speaking of Tenrikyô, Van Straelen writes that "the objective onlooker cannot escape the impression that he stands vis a vis some kind of enforced happiness, he faces a show of bright living; he does not doubt the sincerity of the people, yet he witnesses an *etalage*, a splash, a glitter, a strut, some kind of pomposity, a *tour de force*, and he wonders how long he can stand this strain" (1957: 139).

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感謝，素直，心の下座：
新宗教における「依存の道義」

〈要　約〉

ブライアン・マックベイ

　『道場』という著書の中でデービスは，何故新宗教が現代産業社会に存在するかという問題に解答しようとしている。彼は宗教や魔術などは消滅したのではなく，かえって人がその困難を解決する為，これを使い，結局，宗教などは現代社会の不安を軽減し，合理化と近代化という過程を強化していると述べている。然し，宗教を含め，総ての社会集団は社会の働きと機関を支持すると言えるので，デービスの見方は社会学的な説明としては弱く，なぜ新宗教が現代社会に存在するのかを解決していない。彼の説明の仕方は新宗教の信者の意識の重大な部分を無視するものであると思われる。信者の価値観を入念に考えるなら，日本における新宗教の役割は明白になり，日本文化と新宗教との価値観の接点が明らかに見えて来ると考える。ここでは「崇教真光」という教団を例にとり，しかしその教団の宇宙論の信仰を論ぜず，文献，勉強会，講義などに繰り返して出ている言葉と概念をとり上げ，分析してみたい。これらはすべて崇教真光の価値観を構成していると考える。この価値観は人間関係についての理論を「依存の道義」と名付けている。信者はこの道義に基づき，教団によって人間関係の在り方を教えられる。基本的な道徳的信念を挙げると，①感謝，②素直，③所属観，④献身・勤勉，⑤思いやり，がある。一般的な日本人は，崇教真光の信者はこれらを誇張し，大切にし過ぎると見ているようだが，挙げた事項は日本文化に存在し，日本文化の産物であるので，日本社会と

重大な接点を共有する。信者にとっては，この原理は抽象的でも曖昧な考えでもなく，彼らは寧ろ，日常生活における人間関係についての実用的知識を思想体系化する為，「依存の道義」を使用している。従って，日本における新宗教の意義を理解する為，その価値観を調査することが絶対に必要だと考える。