

The International IOWC Is Getting to Know Japan

Annemarie Manke
March 1975



Photo date and location unknown

In order to truly understand the work of the IOWC with the Japanese people it is important to know their historical position in God's Providence and also the basis of their spiritual understanding.

We learned that Japan's position between America and Korea is comparable to that of Egypt in relation to Israel and Rome 2000 years ago. Japan, like Egypt, stands on the foundation of idol worship of many gods and has no religion that teaches the existence of a personal God. Therefore their own family relationships are primary to their concern for the teachings of Buddha or Confucius. For instance it's quite usual to be born without a religion, to be married in a Shinto Shrine, and to die having Buddhist burial rites.

At the World Professors Academy, Professor Masushita Mastoshi said the thinking of most Japanese is very similar to the Hellenistic outlook on life -- very horizontal and humanistic. For this reason there is a great danger of the communist ideology being accepted in Japan.

The Unification Church in Japan has been able to reach many people to show them through the International Federation for Victory over Communism (IFVC) the inconsistency and fallacy of the communist theory and to offer them the alternative of Unification Thought. They have, however, hesitated to teach Divine Principle directly. Our IOWC has had to pioneer a new approach on a more spiritual level to reveal the internal character of our movement. Japan has never been introduced to Rev. Moon and the people do not see the connection between our many activities. Therefore it is difficult for them to see in us the salvation of the world. They know about Unification Church but for many this is merely an equivalent for flower selling and children who have suddenly gone crazy for God to the dismay of their parents. The time has come for Japan to identify the man who has in a short 20 years mobilized young people from over 25 nations, who is the only man to bring us an ideology superior to communism, who has succeeded in bringing a clear understanding as to the purpose of man in relation to God, and most important of all, who has explained how to realize the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth in our time!

Japanese people are actually best prepared for unification. Their culture is not based on individualism; in fact they were not introduced to democracy until after World War II. Until then they had lived under feudalism. The Japanese people have a very strong tendency to search for center. Even to this day the Emperor stands as internal subject to the people and even though he has no political power his people love him and are loyal to him. At one time the Communist Party introduced a bill to abolish the position of Emperor. This brought forth a great wave of opposition and anger among the people.

Best Prepared

The relationship between the Emperor and the people is in essence nationalistic and has not the character or content to bring world unity. Therefore our purpose is to elevate Japan from the national to the international level by helping her to recognize God as the Heavenly center of all nations.

Japanese people are very grateful for knowledge. They are very quick to adapt to new ways and to expand the original idea and even improve it. Once a Japanese person comes to a true understanding of God's existence and of how God has prepared for his eternal life and salvation, his gratitude is immense. For us it's only natural to be Christians, to believe in God and eternal life. But for the Oriental person death and nothingness is the inevitable end to all things.

They have a rather fatalistic outlook on life. The only eternity in their conception would be to have their family name perpetuated in their children. To themselves, they are but foam emerging from the sea to ride for a short time the crest of a wave only to disappear again.

Koreans in Japan

Before going on to a city by city description of the campaign it is important to bring out one more point that greatly affects both Japan and Korea. Some 600,000 Korean residents live in Japan. Many of them were brought to Japan during the time of the Japanese Occupation in Korea. They were put into factories to work in an almost slave-like capacity and afterwards killed so that their knowledge of the production in the factories would die with them. A deep resentment built up between the Korean and the Japanese people that still exists today.

After the War, the Koreans in Japan divided into two groups; one was Chosoren, North Korean supporters, and the other was Mindan, supporters of South Korea and strong anti-communists. The Mindan supporters are largely business people who are striving to gain civil rights and equality with the Japanese. Many even changed their names and nationality to avoid discrimination. The number of Chosoren and Mindan members is almost equal, yet Chosoren is much more powerful. Chosoren is directly supported by the North Korean Government with money and also a strong ideology, whereas Mindan receives no financial or ideological aid from South Korea.

Mindan is realizing that our movement is their only hope. Without IFVC they would be weaponless against communism. They could never educate the people enough to save them from the confusion of ideological warfare.

Here in Japan, Chosoren runs a large private university which is completely off-limits even to Japanese officials. No one knows what goes on behind the closed doors. We do know, however, that almost all communist activity in Japan is instigated from this point. It is coming to the point where South Korea faces greater danger from plain-clothed Koreans from Japan than it does from armed soldiers from the north!

Each City Different

This has been just a short synopsis of what we have recognized as characteristic of the Japanese situation. Yet each city's spiritual and physical life is so different and formed by its own historical and material background that it is impossible to be rigid in one's understanding. Without an open mind and the ability to be flexible the IOWC would never have survived so far.

Sendai was our first stop after the Tokyo campaign. Rev. Moon called Sendai the "heavenly flower" because of its special Christian spirit. We were told that exactly 350 years before the first festival, Feb. 18th, many Christians had been killed here for their faith.

It was not an easy city for the team. We were still in the formation stage 'of our unity and understanding between east and west plus we were working under severe conditions of extreme cold and limited accommodations. We had not much time, only three days, before the first festival. On the first night of the speech about 80 communists gathered and demonstrated in front of the hall shouting at us for at least ten minutes. Even though we did not have the booming success we would have liked to have had, the number of guests increased each evening and we heard in the latest report that many people are still coming to workshops and lectures and keeping the local family busy.

Rev. Vincenz knew how hard each person had to work and pour his heart out every day. He spoke to us after the campaign and we all realized how urgent it was to work more quickly and to pray more in order to reach the people. In the future, he said, "people would not have time to hear God's Word under such entertaining and comfortable circumstances!"

"Big Slope"

After Sendai we came to Osaka, which means "big slope." Symbolically understood it means that great effort and indemnity would be needed in this city before reaching the goal. From the beginning, however, our relationship to the people in this city was much better. As far as our own family was concerned, they were so warm and wonderful it was difficult to part from them. Each night we could fill the 1700-man hall to its capacity. Always after the speech of Col. Pak, hundreds of young people would pile into our buses and come with us to our churches. Sometimes we would sing and talk together for another two or three hours. Many would immediately decide for three-day or seven-day workshops!

In Osaka, Mindan supporters outnumber and are more powerful than Chosoren supporters. We were able to establish a very good relationship to them through Mr. and Mrs. Chung who had been given this special mission to work with Mindan by Rev. Moon. They were all very impressed that Rev. Moon, a Korean, should attain such honor and acknowledgment throughout the world. What moved them most was that we as young people should care so much for other nations and particularly that we seemed to understand so deeply the plight of South Korea. Most South Korean people think the world is blind to their situation and that no one understands the truth about communism.

The president, chairman and secretary-general of Mindan plus the president of the Women's Association of Mindan all came to the three nights of the Festival. Col. Pak invited them all, plus the PR team, to a special Korean dinner. Everyone was deeply moved by the address of the Mindan president. He knows Divine Principle and Rev. Moon very well. His words were simple but very strong and from the depth of his heart. We could feel the long years of struggle behind him but we also saw his determination to keep fighting, even alone. That we were there to help seemed like a miracle to him and tears stood in his eyes at his concluding words.

PR Successes

The PR team met the most famous political family of Japan in Osaka-the Nakayama family. Mr. Nakayama just had his picture added to the top -- most statesmen of which there are only 90 to date on the walls of Congress. Mrs. Nakayama was the first lady in Congress and their two sons are following in their footsteps as active congressmen. They have known our family for many years and upon occasion Mr. Nakayama would even speak to our members. While we were there we visited them in their home to show them the Eight-City Tour film.

On Feb. 25th we could arrange for Rev. Vincenz to address 14 Senators and in conclusion we received their formal recognition of Rev. Moon and our IOWC in a proclamation. We were able to arrange a similar meeting the next day with more than ten City Councilmen. PR by this time was finding more and more methods to contact and convey to the people the purpose of IOWC and Unification Church. It was not just a matter of collecting proclamations and pictures; the actual purpose was much deeper and more lasting.

They had to really inspire these people with new hope and trust that here at last was something true and strong enough to change the world. It was important to leave them with the feeling that this was something that they too could stand up for even in time of trouble.

Nagoya was our next city. Mr. Kamiyama, now in the USA, was formerly leading the Nagoya Church. It is considered the most successful church in Japan and has the reputation of bringing forth the best leaders. Nagoya is a very modern city with an almost European atmosphere. It is also the third largest city in Japan. In the early history of this Church Jesus appeared many times to the first pioneers. At this time whole families joined at one time and therefore we could have a deep mature relationship to the community from the beginning.

We had the best workshop results in this city. After our first three-day workshop, 80 percent decided to stay for the seven-day seminar. However our success was not handed to us without some obstacles. Persecution is not new to our church and we have no intention of ever succumbing to its power. We have found the best policy is to keep on course and let God and time take care of the rest. For instance, early in Nagoya Church history the local churches threatened to excommunicate their members if they even so much as listened to us. But now those very same ministers are studying the Divine Principle and admitting to find greater depth of understanding. Some university professors are going so far as to proclaim the Divine Principle as the only hope of the future.

Kyoto was our fifth city. It is Japan's most traditional city as well as being its religious center. Its many temples and shrines are an attraction to people the world over. Kyoto is said to have the spirit of a mourning woman. We all felt something like that-a deep melancholy permeated the atmosphere of the team for the first day or so. There was no substantial reason for this and finally we put it behind us by uniting and just throwing ourselves full force into the mission.

Since Osaka we had divided the team into three parts in order to have longer preparation time in each city. Also, it was possible once again to establish more family-like relationships in the teams on this scale. After the initial breakthrough we became very successful in witnessing. We even managed to have a weekend workshop before the festival. It seems however that we got a little bit carried away witnessing and lessened our concentration on ticket giving so that the people were a little slow in coming the fast few days. But still we never failed to fill the hall.

Meeting VIP's

The work of the public relations team was most fruitful and interesting in Kyoto. It was possible to bring many VIP's to the Festival. We met some of the leaders of the most famous shrines in Japan. For instance, one group went to visit the famous Zen Buddhist Master, Rev. Murnan Yamada. On the-academic level we met the world famous mathematician Prof. Oka, Honorable Citizen of Nara, oldest city in Japan. As a final pinnacle to our work we even met Kyoto's communist governor who has held office for 25 years now. We spoke to him for nearly 20 minutes despite the obvious disapproval of his associates. When we left his office we felt as if we had won an internal victory over Satan. We had gone straight to the heart of the city and staked a claim for God!

We made one outstanding Mindan contact in Kyoto. He is a businessman and owner of several restaurants in Japan and Korea. This man was so moved by Col. Pak's speech that he even came to attend the Festival again in Fukuoka. He is very close to really understanding and already he has proposed to help us by employing family members in his restaurants!

To reach the next city our team took a ferry from Kobe to Fukuoka. What a wonderful treat it was for everyone! Just imagine, there was not a table or chair to be found anywhere on board, so everything took place in communal fashion on the floor! By this time the other two-thirds of the team were already in Hiroshima.

Hiroshima is one of the cities upon which the atom bomb was dropped. It was an extremely heavy experience working there. Hiroshima and Nagasaki (the other city hit by the atom bomb) were like Cain and Abel cities.

Hiroshima was comparable to ancient Sodom and Gomorrah. Historically we know that it was also the center of military equipment production. During the time of the Japanese occupation many Koreans were brought to Hiroshima to work in the military factory and of those not many remained alive to tell about it.

Nagasaki, on the other hand, is said to have been a most pure and Christian city. Interpreted from the understanding of the history of restoration, Hiroshima is said to have paid indemnity for the mistakes of the past whereas Nagasaki was chosen to pay indemnity for the mistakes of the future.

Fukuoka was our last city in Japan. The unusual thing about Fukuoka is that our members have not until just recently begun to teach Divine Principle. Almost all their contact with the community has been on the basis of IFVC. They cannot even use a cultural approach because Little Angels never performed in Fukuoka.

We were told by the local church leaders that our family had laid a 40-day prayer condition to prepare the city to receive Divine Principle and also to understand the international scope of our work as the Unification Church. For this same reason, the PR team worked to prepare a briefing for all IFVC contacts and community leaders.

About 60 VIP's came. They were shown the Eight-City film, the New Hope Singers entertained, and Rev. Vincenz gave the main address. Rev. Vincenz spoke directly about God's plan and the work which must be done and gave strong testimony. Many who had initially planned to stay for only a short time were so taken by the depth and force of the meeting that they could not leave. Afterward about 20 of the foremost patriots joined Rev. and Mrs. Vincenz for dinner. Great significance lay in this meal because by the end of it we had drawn each person to our hearts. They could never fail to recognize Rev. Moon or the Unification Church again.

Quality Results

In Fukuoka we were faced with the second largest hall after the Budokan in Tokyo. We had to bring 5000 people. It was not so easy and usually there were still free seats in the balcony. But the team did its best and even if the results did not come in quantity they did have quality. Each night after the Festival up to 200 or more young people drove back with us to the college where we lodged. Everyone jammed into one big hall. Francesco Santelli's "Chunjoo" group sang, played and did skits until they had everyone rolling on the floor with laughter. Incredible high spirit was built up every night, many promised to go to workshops, and many wanted to join us even before going!

On the first night after the Festival Col. Pak spoke to some of the nationalists and Mindan leaders, many of whom had attended both the briefing and the dinner. Each one in turn stood and gave deep testimony to Col. Pak. One man in particular said that he had had dreams of Col. Pak and of Rev. Moon before ever having seen them. Each of them recognized a purity and force behind our words and works that could only be God inspired. As the last city, Fukuoka was the place where each person's individual account had to be settled.

For some this meant a time of harvest-reaping the fruits of their hard work and prayer. For others it meant paying off debts or overcoming long-avoided issues. So as well as having to accomplish externally each member as well as the team as a whole had to prepare spiritually to start with a fresh slate in Korea.

One of the primary questions asked at this time was "Did we truly accomplish our purpose in Japan?" What was our purpose? Was it only to walk the streets and fill the hall? Of course not! Yes, we were there to serve but also we had come to unite with the Japanese heart. Japan is the Eve nation -- warm and delicate like a mother to Korea which is the hard and rugged Adam nation.

Japan was our first experience of the Oriental heart. We could not believe the depth and sensitivity involved and many times we felt very shallow and we suffered not being able to respond with equal feeling. Then we found a very simple answer-we had just to become like children.

By finding the Heart of Mother in Japan we could come to Father's Heart and by uniting the two we could come to have the heart of parents ourselves. Therefore our mission in Japan was to prepare for Korea and in Korea we shall have to prepare for the world. we must go forth with the unconditional love of parents to restore all people into the original kinship with God. Or, as Col. Pak put it "We must all become like little Messiahs to the world." Then victory will be close at hand.