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The development of millennialistic thought in Japan's new religions: from Tenrikyō to Honmichi

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If a new religious movement is to have millennialistic ideas,¹ one or both of the following conditions must be met: (1) traditions of millennialistic ideas must already exist or be imported; and (2) a millennialistic worldview must be created. The first condition can be broken down into various levels. On the least systematized level, vague and amorphous images of catastrophes or ideal states of affairs exist, such as a big flood or an abundant harvest. They are found in folklore and are called *yonaori* (world renewal) in Japan.² At the opposite pole, there are highly refined and systematized traditions concerning the ultimate state of the world, based on articulated views of history and mankind. The millennialistic ideas of new religious movements are largely derived from these highly systematized millennialistic traditions. However, when these traditions do not exist or are weak, what is the source and salience of millennialism in new religious movements? They seem to inherit vague and amorphous millennialistic images from folklore, thus fulfilling the second condition for the formation of millennialism, that is, a millennialistic worldview. In large part, this worldview directly or indirectly reflects rapid social change.

Among Japan's new religions dating from the middle of the nineteenth century, we can find several groups which have a millennialistic inclination. Well-known examples are Tenrikyō, Maruyamakyō, Ōmoto, Soka Gakkai and Honmichi, a schism from Tenrikyō. The millennialistic ideas of these groups are heterogeneous and, generally speaking, unorganized.³ This is because there is no firm tradition of systematic millennialism in Japan. In the earlier movements such as Tenrikyō and Maruyamakyō, in particular, millennialism is vague and amorphous, largely reflecting their perception of changing situations. In these groups, moreover, there is no messianism, and the founder or foundress is worshipped merely as a living *kami* (god), not as a divine king or queen. But the circumstances of the later movements are

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different. Traditions of millennialistic ideas preceded them even though they had not been articulated in the forms previously developed by other new religions. The millennialism of the new movements was nevertheless based on these foundations. In some cases systematic millennialistic ideas were eventually formed, as happened in Honmichi. This is a rare case in which an indigenous messianism was also created. In this chapter I shall investigate how amorphous millennialism developed into systematic millennialism in conjunction with messianism in the course of the transformation of Tenrikyō into Honmichi.⁴

An important condition for the formation of millennialism is a millennialistic worldview which can be seen in part as a reaction to rapid social change. Before millennialism is established as a system of thought, millennialistic ideas depend largely on this type of worldview. In order to elucidate the contents of millennialistic ideas in Tenrikyō and early Honmichi, it is therefore necessary to analyse how these ideas reflected believers' worldviews at different historical junctures. I shall describe the believers' worldviews in the following three ways:

(a) Perception of the total society, that is, how they perceive the society with which they believe they share a common destiny (mankind, nation, tribe, etc.). This will be called 'perception of the societal situation'. For example, when the societal situation is perceived as dangerous, believers expect some supernatural power to overcome the crisis, and millennialism is likely to develop with this expectation.

(b) Perception of the movement itself, that is, how they perceive the situation of their own movement or group which is believed to embody the earthly manifestation of supernatural power. This will be called 'perception of the group's situation'. For example, when a movement spreads very fast, and various miracles are believed to be changing the destiny of many believers, it is likely that members will also expect transformations of the whole society.

(c) Perception of the relationship between a movement and the wider society (government, police, mass media, established religions, etc.). This will be called 'perception of the relational position'. For example, when a movement is persecuted, the persecution is recognized as a symptom of the confrontation between god and some evil power, and there is an expectation of an imminent catastrophe as a result.

In the following sections, the histories of Tenrikyō and Honmichi in their early phases are first sketched, and then the processes whereby the millennialistic ideas in each group were formed and transformed are analysed.⁵

The formation of Tenrikyō

Tenrikyō⁶ was founded by Nakayama Miki (1798–1887), the wife of a farmer in Yamato province. She was born in Sanmaiden village (now part of Tenri City), the daughter of a rich farmer. At the age of 13⁷ she was married to Nakayama Zenbei, the first son of a rich farmer in Shōyashiki village (now another part of Tenri City). Miki's religious career began when she was 40 years old. In the autumn of 1837 her only son Shūji, then 17, developed a severe pain in his leg when working in the fields and could not work any more. Miki, very anxious about her son's illness, asked a *yamabushi* (mountain ascetic) called Nakano Ichibei to offer prayers for Shūji. This seems to have been effective initially, and Miki eventually became a devout believer of Ichibei's cult. However, Shūji's pain recurred again and again, and it became evident that the disease could not be cured easily. A year after the onset of the illness, Ichibei was invited to the Nakayamas' house, and a shamanistic ritual was performed to cure Shūji's recurrent problem. In the ritual Miki insisted that she was possessed by the original and genuine God (*moto no kami, jitsu no kami*), later called Tenri-Ō-no-Mikoto, God the Parent, or Tsuki-Hi (Moon and Sun). After three days of violent and continuous possession, Miki believed that she had become the 'Shrine of God' with a great mission to save mankind.

According to Tenrikyō doctrine, the last day of her possession was the beginning of the new religion, Tenrikyō. Members believe that from that day on the Creator came to earth and revealed His will directly to mankind. In fact, however, Miki's belief was not recognized by anybody for more than ten years and was regarded as a kind of madness which would lead the family to ruin. It was not until 1862, when Miki was 65 years old, that believers began to form a group.

As the number of members increased, the group gradually became an organized body with its own identity. First, a system called *sazuke* was initiated. This was a system for giving devout believers the capacity to reveal God's will or perform magical prayers. Only a few people were ever qualified to reveal God's will, and after about 1870 only the latter qualification was bestowed. Eventually the term *sazuke* came to mean the magical prayers themselves.

Between 1866 and 1867 the first scripture in a 'counting song' style, Mikagura-uta, was composed. In a mild and pleasant tone reflecting the folk songs of those days, the believers were instructed in daily practices and attitudes. Then a ritual called *tsutome*, which consists of dances, gestures and the chanting of Mikagura-uta, was developed. Later, *tsutome* became the central practice of the religion. Moreover, some people called *toritsugi* began to take on the role of giving instruction to those who visited Miki for the first time. Their

teachings formed a set of doctrines which later became the practical part of Tenrikyō's doctrinal system.

The contents of these initial doctrines are as follows. Human beings are children of God the Parent for they were created by Him (or Her). The world is the body of God, and human bodies are lent to men by God. Only the mind belongs to each person, and when he (or she) uses it incorrectly, *hokori* (dust) piles up around it. This dust is the cause of disease and of other misfortunes. Dust, or misuse of the mind, is of eight kinds: miserliness, covetousness, hatred, self-love, enmity, anger, avarice and arrogance. Men can stop piling up dust by turning their minds to God and getting rid of the dust which has already collected by reflecting on themselves (*sange*), by practising *tsutome* and service work (*hinokishin*), and by proselytizing (*nioigake*). It was taught that diseases would then be cured and other misfortunes would vanish. Man does not experience life on earth only once, but is reborn again and again. Thus, dust piled up in one lifetime influences the next life. This connection is called *in'nen* (cause and effect). If diseases or misfortunes afflict a life lived in virtue, it is because of the *in'nen* from a previous life (or lives). One should, and can, get rid of this by more self-reflection and religious practice than is strictly necessary for removing the dust accumulated in one's present life.

Beginning in 1869, the second year of the Meiji Restoration, Miki started writing a new scripture named *Ofudesaki* and she continued writing it intermittently until 1882. It is written in *tanka* (a traditional Japanese poem of 31 syllables) style. Because Miki wrote these verses when possessed by God, the scripture is full of God's words expressed in the first person and is not a systematic statement of doctrine; rather, it reveals God's will concerning concrete problems of the present moment. It is often difficult to know what is meant, however, for the expression tends to be vague and allusive.

One type of situation which is covered in *Ofudesaki* is when the movement is oppressed and interfered with from the outside. Oppression and interference directed towards the community of believers surrounding Miki gradually increased as the group grew bigger and as the administrative system of the Meiji government became firmly established. In 1874 the Nara prefectural government and the Nara Middle Teaching Academy (the local office for propagating Tennoist and Shintoist ideology through all the religious bodies) interfered in Tenri's activities. The following year the police also began to interfere. Miki was arrested nine times before her death. Miki's God spoke with fierce indignation against this interference and oppression.

Meanwhile, Shūji and other leading believers sought approval for

their activities from the authorities by getting a licence for a public bath, registering as a suborganization of a traditional Buddhist temple, and so on. Miki, regarding these efforts as unfaithful compromises, issued strong warnings against them. Nor was this the only instance of such warnings, for she also warned throughout most of the *Ofudesaki* against the irreligious actions and attitudes of those around her. In her opinion, the followers were motivated too much by worldly concerns and too little by faith in God. She suggested that there was great hope for the future and implored them to mend their ways and deepen their faith.

Miki believed that the most fundamental doctrine of her religion was the story of the creation and the growth of mankind (it can be called the 'Heilsgeschichte' of Tenrikyō). Although part of it is also alluded to briefly in the *Ofudesaki*, she created another scripture called the *Kōki*, or the *Doroumi-kōki*, in order systematically to state the myth in full detail. She told the story to some educated believers and dictated it to them several times between 1881 and 1887, leaving several variations. The outline of the story is as follows. 'Originally, this world was an immense expanse of muddy waters. Tsuki-Hi, God the Parent, found this chaotic condition unbearably tasteless and thought of creating human beings so that He might share their joy by seeing their *yōkigurashi* (joyous life).' (Tenrikyō Church Headquarters, 1972a: 25) He therefore chose nine aquatic animals as materials for creating human beings. From these materials 999,999 (or 900,099,999) human foetuses were created and delivered to the place where the house of the Nakayama family stood. Eight of those nine aquatic animals were also gods, and so the original God was simultaneously conceived of in three ways: as one, God the Parent; as two, Tsuki-Hi (Moon and Sun); and as ten, two plus eight. The ten gods each protect various functions of the human body, representing the sun, the moon and the stars, and they are also the substance of popular gods, buddhas and bodhisattvas.

The foetuses were then born in various places which had not yet been formed as land in the Yamato area and throughout Japan. At first they grew to only three inches in height and then died. But as they were reborn several times they grew to five feet in height. Meanwhile, the whole world — heaven and earth, land and sea — was formed, and mankind began to dwell on land. Those who were originally born in Yamato lived in Japan, while others lived in other countries. By this time 990,000 (or 900,090,000) years had passed. During the further period of 9,999 years God indirectly gave mankind various cultures. Following this period of preparatory education, in accordance with the original promise, God descended to earth and started Tenrikyō. It was believed that the *kanrodai*

(nectar stand) would be built at the place of human creation, and that, by taking the nectar (*kanro*) which would fall on it, men could live their full span of life, that is, up to 115 years.

The *kanrodai* would be made of 13 hexagonal stones piled up about eight feet high. After the first model of the *kanrodai* was constructed in 1873, the location of the true *kanrodai* was determined in 1875. Miki walked around the garden of her house, and when her feet stopped as if attracted by the earth she believed she had found the place of human creation. In 1881 the bottom two pieces of the genuine *kanrodai* were made and erected, but the next year the local police removed and confiscated them. After that incident Miki did not order the making of the genuine *kanrodai*. After her death another wooden model was constructed, and now the third one stands at the centre of the shrine of the Tenrikyō Church Headquarters. Every month a mask dance symbolizing human creation (*kagura zutome*) is performed around this model *kanrodai*.

As the group grew larger, Miki came to be worshipped as the sole 'Living God', representing God's will on earth (see Shimazono, 1979, 1981). The members believed that all important problems should be resolved in accordance with her divine will. There were also occasions, however, when someone substituted for her in relating God's will to the believers. For a while Miki's fifth daughter Kokan played this role most frequently, but in Miki's last years Iburi Izō (1833–1907), one of the earliest followers, monopolized it. After Miki's death in 1887, this role became very important. Izō then became the spiritual leader of the whole group. As *tenkeisha* (the revealed one), he was the sole person to mediate God's will to mankind. He also monopolized the role of conferring *sazuke* on the believers and was called *honseki* (the true seat). On the other hand, the leader of the group's secular aspects was called *shimbashira* (the central pillar) or *kanchō* (superintendent). Makayama Shin'nosuke (1866–1944), a son of Miki's third daughter, who had been adopted into Miki's family, performed this role. Thus there were two complementary leaders in Tenrikyō at this time. During Izō's 20-year period as the *honseki* the group grew so rapidly that, according to one source, the number of believers reached about 1,242,000 by 1907 (Tenrikyō Dōyūsha, 1929).

Izō's revelations were collected by others and called the *Osashizu*. The *Osashizu* are of two kinds: '*sashizu* for questions', giving answers to concrete questions about troubles with the authorities, permission for opening branch churches and so on; and '*sashizu* of the fixed time', delivered at a special hour of the night, giving directions about what the faithful should believe and how they should act. Like the

Ofudesaki, the *Osashizu* does not give a systematic presentation of the doctrine and is for the most part vague and allusive, although some passages touch on fundamental problems of doctrine. One such important problem is how to explain the death of the Foundress. Miki died when she was 90 years old, although she herself had forecast that she would live to be 115. There had to be an explanation, therefore, for her premature death. Izō's answer in the *Osashizu* is in two parts: (1) she died early because she loved her 'children' (men), and (2) she would live in her 'house', that is, in the Headquarters' shrine, and continue to work in the world. This doctrine is called 'the doctrine of the Foundress's further life' (*zonmei no ri*). Though it did not answer the question completely, it did greatly mitigate the shock caused to the believers by her death.

One of the consequences of this answer was that the role of Izō himself was limited to a certain extent; for, according to this doctrine, it is still the Foundress who mediates God's power and will on earth, and Izō is only her proxy. Since the organizational management of the Church was basically in the hands of the superintendent and other leading believers, Izō's role was confined to correcting their decisions from the spiritual viewpoint. 'The doctrine of the Foundress's further life' and this limitation on Izō's power are closely related to each other.

Izō played his corrective role most effectively in connection with the problem of how to cope with public authorities. There had been, as we saw earlier, a lot of oppression and interference by public authorities during Miki's lifetime. In 1888, a year after her death, the group received official approval as Shintō Tenri Kyōkai, albeit in the unsatisfactory form of being assigned to Shintō Honkyoku, one of the Shintō sects (*kyōha shintō*) embracing miscellaneous religious groups. Oppression and interference did not stop, however, and as the organization spread rapidly throughout the whole country, the government in 1896 issued an order limiting Tenrikyō's activities (the so-called 'secret official order of the Ministry of Home Affairs'), which caused local Tenrikyō organizations considerable trouble. The leading believers took various measures to stop or mitigate the problem, and from 1899 onwards their efforts were concentrated on getting official approval as an *independent* Shintō sect. The way to gain approval often involved doctrinal changes and restrictions on activities. Izō handled such measures from the spiritual viewpoint, but when tension arose between secular logic and religious logic, Miki stuck to religious logic and did not permit compromises. Izō, on the other hand, suggesting religious logic, sometimes did permit compromises. The Ofudesaki was filled with the sense of tension between God's will and men's worldly thinking, but in the *Osashizu*,

even though the tension was still an important theme, its character was somewhat softened.

Izō died in 1907, and the status of *honseki* was handed over to Ueda Naraito (1863–1937). But she could not live up to her leadership role in the Church as 'the revealed one', and in 1918 even the role of conferring *sazuke* was transferred to Nakayama Shin'nosuke's wife Tamae. Since then, the position of the highest authority of the Church has been monopolized by the head of the Nakayama family. Meanwhile the government gave official approval to Tenrikyō as an independent sect in 1908, and the tension between the group and the wider society was greatly reduced (Tenrikyō Dōyūsha, 1929).⁸

The formation of Honmichi

Honmichi⁹ was founded by a Tenrikyō missionary, Ōnishi Aijirō (1881–1958). Aijirō was the third son of Kishioka, a farmer in Uda village in Nara Prefecture. The Kishioka family had been rich farmers of high standing in the Tokugawa period, but by the time Aijirō was born they had lost a lot of their land and had sunk to the status of middle-class farmers. Since the third son could not inherit the family's lands, and since Aijirō had a talent for learning, he became an elementary school teacher. In 1899, when he was 19 years old, he entered the Nara Prefecture Normal School in order to gain a higher qualification while living in Nara City as a boarding student.

About this time the Kishioka family fell victim to some unfortunate events. In 1897, after the second son's serious hypochondria, the first son, Sentarō, developed an eye disorder and soon lost his sight. In 1898 their mother, Kisa, began to suffer severe pain from a tumour in the womb, and from then on the pain was recurrent. Out of the agony of his disease Sentarō developed faith in Tenrikyō and exhorted Aijirō to have faith too. During the summer vacation of Aijirō's first year in the Normal School, Kisa's condition became grave. Aijirō began to have deep faith in Tenrikyō as a result of an experience in which his mother's pain was alleviated by his prayer; but Kisa died shortly afterwards. Aijirō thought that her death revealed that the Kishioka family had bad karma (*in'nen*) and that consequently he had to devote his life to Tenrikyō and eliminate bad karma.

After official approval for the Tenrikyō movement in 1888, proselytization has been conducted through its churches. Every follower belongs to a church and is required to increase the members of the church through proselytization. When a believer (or, rather, a missionary) converts a certain number of people and gains the qualification of a priest (*kyōshi*), he can then start a new church and become its head (*kyōkaichō*). Thus, a 'child' church is born from a 'parent' church. Because a child church is a suborganization under

the guidance of a parent church, the creation of a new church by a successful missionary does not jeopardize the parent church's prosperity. It is the ideal of a missionary to devote all of his (or her) life to the propagation of the church, donating all property and abandoning any profession; to establish a new church by his efforts; and to 'give birth' to as many child churches as possible. To attain this, a missionary often goes to a distant place by himself or with only his immediate family, and in extreme poverty looks for new converts.

Aijirō belonged to the Nara Shikyōkai (branch church) in Nara City, but he left the Normal School in December 1900 and began travelling for the purpose of proselytization without telling his father anything about it. He went to An'naka, a town in Gunma Prefecture, and made a few converts. In late 1903 he came back to Nara in order to be married to a member of Nara Shikyōkai, Ōnishi Toh, thereby becoming a member of the Ōnishi family. (Hereafter Aijirō will be called Ōnishi.) Then he was ordered by the head of Nara Shikyōkai to do more proselytization in and around Yamaguchi City. There were already some members in Yamaguchi City, and in 1895 Yamaguchi Fukyōjo (propagation office) was established. He was appointed the head of Yamaguchi Fukyōjo but later went to Hanaoka (now in Kudumatsu City) with his wife and mother-in-law to start 'solitary proselytization' again.

Ōnishi had to come back to Yamaguchi Fukyōjo in 1907 after about two years of proselytization because of Yamaguchi prefectural government's new policy of religious regulation. He then proselytized in Yamaguchi City for seven years while working for four years as an officer of the Tenrikyō Church Association in the Chūgoku District. This work took up a lot of time and money and did not help the task of proselytization. As a missionary Ōnishi was unlucky because, for reasons beyond his control, he had to move several times and could not devote his time to proselytization. Since he was not a successful missionary, and members of Yamaguchi Fukyōjo were far fewer than was expected by the Nara Shikyōkai, he must have felt alienated from Nara Shikyōkai.

It was against this background that in 1913, when he was 33 years old, Ōnishi believed that he received a revelation from God, which gave him an understanding of fundamental truth. This happened at a time when he had confined himself to his house for six months and had been reflecting on himself and on the seemingly incurable diseases of some members of his church. He came to believe that he himself was the 'revealed one' (*tenkeisha*) who should reign over the whole Tenrikyō organization. On 15 August, wearing nothing, Ōnishi and his wife began walking round and round in one room,

bearing their children on their backs. After several hours Ōnishi's feet came to a halt as if attracted by the floor. He believed that it was God's affirmation that he himself was the *kanrodai*. Present-day Honmichi members celebrate this event annually on 15 August as the foundation day of their religion.

As we saw earlier, the *kanrodai* in Tenrikyō is a stone stand which is meant to be set on the place of human creation. But Ōnishi believed that there must also be a human *kanrodai* (*nin no kanrodai*) along with the stone *kanrodai*, and that, since he himself was the human *kanrodai*, he should become the spiritual leader of Tenrikyō. Moreover, his revelation held that, because the Foundress was to have lived on earth only until she was 115 years old, or in other words until 1912, and not eternally, as Tenrikyō doctrine taught, there should be another revealed leader after 1912 and that it was he himself. Although these ideas were quite strange and heretical from the viewpoint of orthodox Tenrikyō doctrines, Ōnishi believed that many passages in the Ofudesaki and the Osashizu predicted the advent of a human *kanrodai*.

Following his revelation, it was not Ōnishi's intention to challenge the Tenrikyō Church. Until 1922, in fact, he merely sent *tankas* (named Kanrodai-kōki) expressing his new ideas to the leaders of the Church. However, the established Tenrikyō organization, naturally, could not tolerate keeping a missionary with such ideas. Ōnishi accepted Nara Shikyōkai's proposal in 1914 that he should resign as head of the Yamaguchi Senkyōjo (propagation office) and leave the Church. The Ōnishi family lost contact with members of the Church and fell into extreme poverty. With virtually no belongings, they went back to Nara Prefecture where their relatives and acquaintances lived, and eked out a living in a small hut at Tsuji in Makimuku village until 1917. After the birth of their fourth child, Ōnishi found a job in a hospital and then in a taxation office, and in 1920 he became an elementary school teacher in Iwaki village, Takenouchi, and was assured of a stable livelihood.

In June 1920, a Tenrikyō missionary who had read the *tankas* that Ōnishi had sent to the local churches came to join him. At last, here was a sympathizer from outside his family; and from that time on, more and more Tenrikyō missionaries and believers, hearing of his revelation, came to him. In 1923 four followers were sent to Tenri City (then Tanbaichi Town) to visit the headquarters of Tenrikyō and the homes of church staff in order to persuade them that Ōnishi should become the leader of the Church. In 1924 he resigned from the school to devote himself full-time to religious activities again after a lapse of 11 years.

By 1925, when the number of Ōnishi's followers exceeded several

hundred, a new religious organization was rapidly taking shape. The group was called 'Tenri Kenkyūkai' (Tenri Study Association), and was not intended to be an independent religious organization outside Tenrikyō's but, rather, to be a study group for Tenrikyō's scriptures, especially the Osashizu, and to spread their correct interpretation within the Tenrikyō organization. However, because Tenrikyō dismissed the priests and excluded from its churches those followers who joined in Tenri Kenkyūkai's activities, it in fact became an independent organization from Tenrikyō.

Meanwhile, Ōnishi began to believe that the great remaking of the whole world was imminent. The apparent reason for this idea was the development in 1925 of a serious mental disorder in his first son, Yoshinobu, who was then 18 years old. Ōnishi thought that this disease was God's message that the catastrophe hinted at in the Ofudesaki and the Osashizu was approaching. At the end of 1925 he therefore left Takenouchi for Ujiyamada (now Ise City) with his wife and a few upper-level staff on a mission connected with the anticipated catastrophe. For more than a year, he wrote *tankas* called Iwato-Kōki and sent them to Takenouchi, one after another. Most of these *tankas* were precepts for the believers' daily life, but in some there are words hinting at the imminence of some grave events.

From September to December 1927, Ōnishi worked on a pamphlet called *Kenkyū Shiryō* (*Study Data*) with Nakai Ginjirō and Nakagawa Kiroku, both of whom were retired naval officers and the most important leaders of the group at the time. Expecting a detailed investigation by the police in the immediate future, they intended the pamphlet to inform the public authorities of their ideas about the future. The pamphlet, details of which will be discussed below, criticized the Tennō regime and warned people about a massive transformation of Japan and the world which was believed to be imminent according to their interpretation of the Ofudesaki and the Osashizu.

In early 1928 Ōnishi moved with his wife and Nakai from Ujiyamada to a follower's house in Nagoya and concealed their whereabouts, perhaps so that his arrest would be postponed for as long as possible. Meanwhile, Yoshinobu's illness became more serious, and Ōnishi was more and more convinced that the catastrophe was about to occur. On 12 March Ōnishi sent the *Study Data* to Takenouchi, and as soon as Yoshinobu saw it he gave orders for it to be taken to the Nara prefectural government. On 22 March the staff in Takenouchi took a copy to the neighbouring Takada police station and then delivered copies to the Nara prefectural government; to police stations, prefectural governments and elected representatives in various places; and to all the ministries, embassies

and legations in Tokyo. This action was later called the *uchidashi* (campaign).

As the government was drawing up stringent regulations concerning anti-government movements (for example, the enactment of the 'Law for the Maintenance of Public Peace' in 1925), it naturally took strict measures against Ōnishi's whole organization. On the legal grounds that delivery of the pamphlet was a crime of *lèse majesté*, 467 believers were arrested, of whom 180 were prosecuted alongside Ōnishi and his wife. All the activities of Tenri Kenkyūkai were temporarily prohibited in what has come to be called the 'Tenri Kenkyūkai incident'. Tenri Kenkyūkai argued in court that they did not intend to overturn the state but simply to foretell and warn against future events. In the first and the second trials Ōnishi was found guilty and sentenced to four years of penal servitude, but the Supreme Court decided in 1930, on the evidence of a mental examination, that Ōnishi was not guilty by reason of diminished capacity for judgement. Devout followers took this decision as proof that their beliefs and actions were correct.

As a result of this incident, the Tenri Kenkyūkai organization at first suffered serious damage, not only because many followers were arrested, but also because activities in Takenouchi were brought to a halt, and newspapers attacked the group in sensational articles reporting the incident. But soon after the Supreme Court's acquittal, the organization recovered and became active again. The headquarters was shifted to Osaka and facilities were rapidly expanded there, as well as in other places.

In this process the group became more like an independent religious body, and by 1934 it claimed 10,000 followers. It was probably about this time that a short doctrinal book, *Kyōgi Ippan* (*An Outline of the Doctrine*), written by Ōnishi himself, began to be used as the text for the introductory lecture course. The first three and the last sections teach the basic doctrines of Tenrikyō such as creation and the protection of human beings by God; the eight dusts and *in'nen* karma; the fourth and fifth sections, entitled 'Three Steps of the Way' and 'Solely for *Kanrodai*', teach Ōnishi's original doctrines. In the 'Solely for *Kanrodai*' section it is asserted that there is not only the stone *kanrodai* but also a human *kanrodai*, and that this human *kanrodai* will accomplish the 'Way'. It is also hinted that the human *kanrodai* is Ōnishi himself. 'Three Steps of the Way' explains the process of the Way as initiated by Nakayama Miki and completed by Ōnishi in three stages. The first step, occurring from the Foundress's first possession until her death, was the 'Way of the Prototype', a state full of difficulties representing a model for the true Way. The second step, the 25-year period from the Foundress's death

to Ōnishi's revelation, is called the 'Way of Reason', a provisional stage of compromising with the world and preparing for the next step. The third step, beginning with Ōnishi's revelation, was the *honmichi* (True Way), namely, the genuine Way in which the goals of mankind will be attained. Based on this idea, the name of the group was changed from Tenri Kenkyūkai to Tenri Honmichi.

However, this period of attracting converts and giving instruction in doctrines did not last long. In 1936 Ōnishi's wife Toh developed a kidney disease, and in 1937, when her body became paralysed on one side, the group's activities again turned to the outside. A new propagation campaign was launched in June 1937, and in September three leading believers moved to Tenri City for about a year, visiting Tenrikyō Headquarters and trying to convert its leaders. In early 1938 Toh's disease took a serious turn which made Ōnishi all the more convinced that a catastrophe was imminent. Ōnishi and other leaders therefore planned a second public campaign, and from July to September seven pamphlets entitled *Shoshin* (*Letters*) were written by Iwata Gen'emon, Koura Yoshio and Ōnishi Aiko (Ōnishi's daughter). About 9 million copies were printed and were delivered to police stations, military police offices, politicians and prominent men of the time. In addition, when Toh's condition became dangerous on 3 August, Koura wrote a pamphlet entitled *Yūkoku no Shi ni Tsugu* (*An Announcement for the Patriots*) and sent copies to two leading newspaper companies in Osaka.

These pamphlets claim to explain the events of 1928 and to correct the public's misunderstandings. Although it is true that they refer to these events, the main contents are a repetition of the *Study Data*. 'The Fifth Letter' and 'The Sixth Letter' are, respectively, concerned with Ōnishi's detailed autobiography and *An Outline of the Doctrine*. The history of Tenrikyō and the relationship between Tenrikyō and Honmichi are described and explained in 'The Second Letter' and 'The Seventh Letter'. As a whole, however, the style of the pamphlets is more objective and the argument is clearer than in the *Study Data*.

The government, which had just crushed two big new religions, Ōmoto and Hitonomichi in 1936 and 1937, used the publication of these pamphlets as a pretext for taking strong repressive measures against Honmichi. On 21 November 1938, 346 leading believers and Ōnishi himself were arrested, and 237 were prosecuted for violating the 'Law for the Maintenance of Public Peace' and for committing the crime of *lèse majesté*. The Ministry of Home Affairs prohibited all activities of Tenri Honmichi and ordered its dissolution in September 1939 in what has come to be known as the 'Tenri Honmichi incident'. The result was that Honmichi was unable to conduct any religious

activities for about six years. In the first and second trials of Ōnishi and a few leading believers, all were found guilty and Ōnishi was sentenced to penal servitude for life. But while they were on trial in the Supreme Court, the second world war ended.

Along with many prisoners accused of political crimes and thought 'dangerous' to the state, Ōnishi was released in September 1945. He and other believers were finally acquitted in March 1946, and a few days before that, in accordance with the new Religious Corporation Ordinance, the group had received official recognition for the first time as a religious corporation. Following the Tenri Honmichi incident the government had ordered the disposal of the group's properties, and the Ōnishi family had moved to Hagoromo Town in the southern part of Osaka Prefecture, which became the location of the group's new headquarters. Membership increased steadily, reaching about 230,000 members in 1954 and about 300,000 members in 1980.

I shall not describe the history of Honmichi in the postwar period, but one point needs to be raised: namely, the problem of the succession of 'charisma', in the Weberian sense. As early as 1932, when his first son Yoshinobu died, Ōnishi told some of the leading believers about his death and about his successors: he said he would not live to be a 100 years old; he would be born again and again eternally in the Ōnishi family as the human *kanrodai*; and until the reborn *kanrodai* reached maturity, proxies (*tegawari*) designated by him should take his place. After release from gaol he designated his first daughter Aiko and his second son Masanori as, respectively, *kyoshu* (teaching head) and *kanshu* (superintendent) and as two proxies. Ōnishi himself retired from major activities soon after his release, and when he died in November 1958 Aiko and Masanori were already venerated by the followers. When Aiko and Masanori died in 1966 and 1971, they were succeeded by Masanori's first and second sons, Motooki and Masataka. Meanwhile, in 1962, in the Headquarters at Hagoromo, a group called Mirokukai developed in support of Ōnishi's second daughter, Tama, who claimed that she was the reborn Foundress and that she should be the successor of the human *kanrodai*. The governing body, rejecting her claim, expelled the group, which then formed a new religious body named Honbushin (True Construction). Soon after this 'Mirokukai incident' the leaders of Honmichi announced that the *kanrodai* had already been reborn as one of Masanori's sons, and they later revealed that this reborn *kanrodai* is Masanori's sixth son, Yasuhiko, who was born in 1960. At present, followers of Honmichi are looking forward to the day when the reborn *kanrodai* will receive his revelation from God.

Millennialism in Tenrikyō

Three periods can be discerned in the development of millennialism in Tenrikyō: (1) the period represented by the Mikagura-uta, the earliest stage in the formation of the group; (2) the period represented by the Ofudesaki and the Kōki, the stage when the group's identity was established; and (3) the period represented by the Osashizu, about twenty years after the Foundress's death. The periods after the Osashizu will not be discussed, for there was no literature with millennialistic ideas to guide the whole group, and no activity connected with millennialism was undertaken by most of the group.

Mikagura-uta

In the Mikagura-uta, millennialism is still very vague and amorphous. It is true that there are words predicting the coming of the ideal world by God's power.

Tong! Tong! Tong! The beginning of the dancing at New Year: How delightful it is!

Second, This marvellous construction once it is started: How lively it is!

Third, Nourishment will be put on you.

Fourth, The World will change to prosperity,

Fifth, If all come and follow Me,

Sixth, I will cut off the root of rebellion.

Seventh, If you help others who are suffering,

Eighth, I will cut off the root of illness.

Ninth, If you keep your mind determined,

Tenth, Peace shall reign everywhere.¹⁰

(Chapter II)

Though it does not indicate clearly when the ideal world will come, it seems that the shift to the ideal world is already under way and the goal near at hand. However, the coming of this ideal world is not conceived as accompanying a fundamental change in the present order of the world. The shift is smooth, and the ideal world is the extension of present village life. The 'joyous life' consists of such images as abundant harvests, sound health and the end of social disorders. It is not completely different from the present state.

This vagueness in the millennialism is inherited from the folkloric concept of *yonaoi* (world renewal), and the manner in which Mikagura-uta is sung to the accompaniment of various simple instruments with slow dances and gestures is reminiscent of rural folk festivals.

(a) How, then, did this vague and amorphous millennialism reflect the contemporary worldview? The societal situation is perceived

quite optimistically, but the political trends are not grasped or clearly represented. There is just a vague, optimistic expectation for the future of village life in the Yamato district:

- Third, Keep the mind of a three-year-old child!
- Fourth, Then, a rich harvest.
- Fifth, The providences shall come forth.
- Sixth, Unlimited abundance everywhere.
- Seventh, If you grow and reap whatever you wish,
- Eighth, Yamato will be blessed with a rich harvest
- Ninth, Now come hither and follow Me!
- Tenth, Then the full harvest will become fixed.

(Chapter I)

The Mikagura-uta was composed at a time when rapid social change was just beginning. The political change known as the Meiji Restoration was anticipated, but wars, social disorders and economic suppression had not yet deeply touched the farmers' lives. Most of the people were still living a quiet and orderly village life. They hoped for a better life, but not for a world greatly different from the contemporary one. In 1867 people's hope for change exploded in the form of mass pilgrimages to the Ise shrine from all over the country (*Eejanaika*). The Mikagura-uta reflects the kind of hopeful perception of the societal situation that was shared by a wide range of people.

(b) The movement itself had just started. People who had not been acquainted with each other formed a new community and voluntarily worked together to build a shrine (*tsutome-basho*). The community was expanding rapidly, and the members were experiencing miracles one after another. The future of the community was full of possibilities, and the Mikagura-uta expresses a bright perception of the group's situation:

- Second, This marvellous place for the Service,
Though I ask no one to build,
- Third, All gathering together from the world,
The construction has been accomplished.
How miraculous it is!
- Fourth, With much effort, you have followed Me thus far;
True salvation will begin from now.

(Chapter III)

(c) Following Nakayama Miki's possession by God in 1838, her faith was accepted at first only by a few people around her. But in the late 1860s, when she was invariably surrounded by her followers, including influential farmers from neighbouring villages, she did not feel so isolated. It is true that in certain passages a sense of tension with the external world is expressed:

- First, Whatever others may say;
God is watching, so be at ease!
- Third, All of you close to Me,
Watch whatever God acts and works!
- Fourth, Night and day, dong! chang! we perform the
service;
The neighbors may feel it noisy and annoying.
- Fifth, As I am always in haste to save you,
Quickly become joyful and come to Me!
- Sixth, Villagers I wish to save at once,
But they do not understand My heart.

(Chapter IV)

On the whole, however, there are not many passages with such a tone of tension. Moreover these passages are not closely connected with ideas concerning millennialism.

Thus, Mikagura-uta reflects a bright outlook on all three levels, and this is in a sense conducive to the formation of millennialism. But, at the same time, an important component of millennialism is lacking: namely, the sense of crisis. This is partly why millennialism in the Mikagura-uta is very vague and amorphous.

The Ofudesaki and the Kōki

The vague and amorphous expectations characteristic of the Mikagura-uta can still be found in the first part of the Ofudesaki, but the optimistic tone of the Ofudesaki gradually fades away. There are more and more phrases expressing a keen awareness of the distance between the ideal state of affairs and the actual one, which is filled with various evils. There are also many phrases forecasting a drastic turn from the present bad state of affairs to a good one. As we have already seen, the Ofudesaki was written in order to show God's will concerning the concrete problems of the moment; and the more critical the situation, the more drastic and the more total the impending change was thought to be. Thus, millennialism is better articulated in the Ofudesaki than in the Mikagura-uta.

For example, the verses referring to the construction of the *kanrodai* predict the coming of the ideal world, a world fundamentally different from the contemporary one:

- If only you have finished the sweeping of your mental dust, I will work remarkable salvation. 98¹¹
- You shall be saved according to the true sincerity of your mind. You shall not fall ill, die or become weakened. 99
- By this salvation I, God, intend single-heartedly to fill the natural term of human life at one hundred and fifteen years. 100

(Part III)

I set up the Kanrodai as the evidence that I created human beings at this place. 9

If only this Stand is completed, and every Prayer shall be heard. 10

Before that time the sweeping of the dust of human hearts must be accomplished throughout the whole world. 11

(Part XVIII)

These words correspond to the actual construction of the *kanrodai*. Some followers believed that they really watched nectar falling to earth, and Miki herself, at least for a period, believed that the *kanrodai* would be completed and that the ideal world would be ushered in during her lifetime.

Phrases predicting the great change and, in turn, demanding faithfulness are found not only in passages related to the *kanrodai* but almost everywhere in the Ofudesaki (see Shimazono, 1981). The composition of Kōki and the performance of the *tsutome* (service) are also referred to as preconditions for the coming of the ideal world. Words like 'until now' and 'henceforth' appear many times, showing that the present was considered an important point of change.

It may be asked, however, whether all the changes referred to in the Ofudesaki represent millennialistic ideas. Some predictions are concerned too narrowly with the future of the Nakayama family to be called millennialistic, and, on the whole, phrases expressing the nature of the change are vague and fragmentary. One typically vague expression is the metaphor of the 'way' (or road):

Do not despair of your present way, whatever kind of way it may be! Look forward with delight to the main road [true way] ahead of you! 37

(Part III)

Moreover, the timing of the ultimate change is not clearly and consistently stated. Sometimes the change is pictured as occurring in the remote future, an interpretation adopted by Tenrikyō today for most of the verses concerning change. However, we can say that all predictions of change found in the Ofudesaki arise from a more or less millennialistic mood. How then is this millennialistic mood related to the perception of the contemporary situation?

(a) Two pair-concepts, foreigners v. Japanese and the high mountain v. the bottom of the valleys, are used to express the perception of the societal situation. It was, according to the Ofudesaki, against God's will that the 'foreigners' and the 'high mountain' dominated the 'Japanese' and the 'bottom of the valleys':

Until now the foreigners have managed the Japanese¹² as they please. The sorrow of God was so severe that I could not find any way to clear it away. 86

Henceforth the Japanese will lead the foreigners. All of you, be aware and expect it! 87

They are the root and branches of the same tree. Branches may be broken, yet the root will grow prosperous. 88

Until now the foreigners have been said to be great; henceforth they shall only be broken. 89

(Part III)

Although until now those who are on the high mountains have done whatever they pleased, scolding noisily. 57

Henceforth, however high their position may be, those who are on the high mountains shall never be able to do as they please to those who are at the bottom of the valleys. 58

(Part XV)

'The high mountains' refer to political and religious rulers who are regarded as being heavily influenced by 'the foreigners'. Contemporary politics is considered bad because of the foreigners' influence. The right people are in powerless positions, and this bad state of affairs must change — these ideas represent the perception of the societal situation in the Ofudesaki. They imply criticism of the political reforms and economic instabilities around the time of the Meiji Restoration which made farmers' lives desperate. Rapid social change was beginning, and many farmers lost their land and had to leave their villages. Because the main cause of these undesirable changes was believed to be, and in a sense really was, the pressure of western countries, criticism of the societal situation takes the form of chauvinism.

The combination of millennialism and chauvinism is also very evident in Maruyamakyō and Ōmoto and is one of the common components of millennialism in Japan's new religions before the end of the second world war. In the case of Tenrikyō, the chauvinism was vague and general, for there is neither criticism of western customs nor references to specific policies.

(b) As the perception of the societal situation became more pessimistic, the perception of the group's own situation was hardly brimming with optimistic expectation. Even though the believers' community was still expanding rapidly, and God's presence was strongly felt, a trend contrary to God's will was observed in the obviously conciliatory attitudes of the leading believers towards oppression and interference. Miki thought that those around her did not have true faith and that this was both the cause and the result of the fact that God was not exercising his power fully.

Make haste in high spirits! Do you not know the expectation of Tsukihi? 49

I, Tsukihi, truly have a single-hearted desire to exhibit my omnipotence at once. 50

Although I, Tsukihi, care with so much true sincerity, the minds of you close to Me are yet as common as those of the world. 51

(Part VII)

Among those 'close to' Miki, she was most concerned for her son Shūji. Although, as the head of the Nakayama family, he naturally played an important role in the group's management, Miki doubted whether he had much faith in her God. One reason was that Shūji's leg pain, which had inspired Miki to create a new religion in the first place, had not been cured. For Miki, his misery was also a part of God's will, and human will, she thought, struggles against God's will. This situation had to change fundamentally:

I, Tsukihi, made you lame, though you had to that time no bodily defect at all. This has given you much trouble. 118

Therefore you are doubting whatever words I, Tsukihi, may say. But, it is natural. 120

This time I am preparing to clear up your innermost heart. This is the prime matter. 121

My regret which has piled up to the present is not slight, so it cannot be expressed by word of mouth. 126

Until now I have been passing through a mountainous regret. If only I can clear it all away this time, 127

Thereafter I will save you from any and every kind of disease or trouble, however serious it may be. 128

(Part XII)

The perception of the group's situation to the effect that God's benevolent power, through active life on earth, is not fully revealed leads to the formation of millennialism.

(c) The criticism of the upper stratum of society referred to above is related not only to the perception of the societal situation but also to that of the relationship between the religious movement and the rest of society. Typical expressions of the tension between the believers' community and society are 'regret', 'anger' and the 'return' of God. They appear again and again in verses written when the Nara Middle Teaching Academy ordered God's name to be changed and ritual properties were confiscated in 1874; and when the police removed two pieces of the stone *kanrodai* in 1882:

They rejected the name given by Tsukihi. What do you think of this deep regret of Mine? 70

Understand that the true anger and regret of Tsukihi is not slight! 71

Until now those who are on the high mountains have been rampant and managing everything as they please. 72

(Part VI)

But from now on, in their place I, Tsukihi, will reign as I intend. Copy whatever I, Tsukihi, will work. 41

(Part XVII)

Beginning with the perception that some external force is blocking the full realization of God's power, there is a swelling expectation of a great change which will get rid of the obstacle.

In the Ofudesaki, we can observe millennialistic ideas which are somewhat clearer than those in the Mikagura-uta. This means that there is a keen perception of the situation conducive to the formation of millennialism. These millennialistic ideas, however, were so heavily dependent on the perception of the situation that they could not be integrated into one system and so are expressed without a close, logical connection among them. Thus, this scripture does not form one organized millennialistic doctrine, but rather expresses in general nothing more than a millennialistic mood.

This will become clearer when comparing it with the Kōki¹³ which was written at the same time as the Ofudesaki. The Kōki refers, though only briefly, to the future of mankind when the *kanrodai* is set up and the ideal world arrives, allowing men to live to be 115 years old. But it does not say that the coming of the ideal world is imminent, or that it will follow a catastrophic event. Moreover, it is difficult to draw the conclusion from what is written about the past in the Kōki that there will be a massive change in the near future. This scripture, mainly telling stories about human creation and God's intentions for it, as well as about God's protection of men's bodily functions, aims at confirming the harmonious relationship and oneness between God and men. Consequently, it says nothing about the tension or antagonism between God and men. Thus, the millennialistic mood of the Ofudesaki and the Kōki's guiding ideas fall into two different categories. This is evidence that Miki's ideas of millennialism and her basic view of mankind and of mankind's history were not integrated into one system of thought.

The Osashizu

The Osashizu is so voluminous that it is very difficult to analyse it thoroughly. I shall give only a rough outline for future study. There are, no doubt, expressions which can be called millennialistic, but, like those in the Ofudesaki, they are not systematic. Here, too, various ideas reflect different perceptions of the situation. The Osashizu has the same structure as that of the Ofudesaki in that it expresses God's will concerning the specific problems of the situation. The Osashizu basically imitates the Ofudesaki's style.

Generally speaking, however, the tension between God and men is less severe, and patience rather than resolution is exhorted in the

Osashizu. In the perception of the societal situation and of relationships between the movement and society, the tendency is to regard the crises as manageable; for, while Japan's industrial revolution was in progress and the two wars with China and Russia were being fought, Izō and others did not think that they were very dangerous. The catastrophe and the coming of the ideal world are conceived of as occurring in the distant future, and the process of change is seen as slow. But the difference between the Ofudesaki and the Osashizu is most conspicuous in the perception of the group's own situation. According to 'the doctrine of the Foundress's further life', the Foundress, who is the incarnation of supernatural power, though still alive and on earth, has hidden herself. Here is a latent awareness that supernatural power has ceased to be very active. Although the rapid increase of members is taken as evidence that the process initiated by the Foundress is on the way to its completion, there is also another conception of time: namely, that the greatest period of history lay in the past. Since the ideal world will be brought about only by the highest supernatural power, the Osashizu does not consider that it will occur in the near future.

Thus, although the Osashizu inherited millennialism from the Ofudesaki, the perception of the situation on various levels was not conducive to its further development. Consequently, millennialism in the Osashizu is no more refined than in the Ofudesaki.

Millennialism in Honmichi

As in the case of Tenrikyō, we can discern three periods in the development of millennialism in Honmichi: (1) from 1913, when Ōnishi came to believe that he himself was the human *kanrodai*, to 1923, when Ōnishi's belief was first propagated in Tenri City; (2) from 1923 to 1945, the period of the two 'campaigns' and the suppressions which immediately followed; and (3) from 1945, when the suppressed group was reorganized, to the present.

1913-1923

Although we do not have enough information for this period and must to some extent depend on conjecture, we can safely say that millennialism was only latent. Ōnishi's main concern was that he himself was the human *kanrodai* and that he should be the leader of Tenrikyō. According to the Ofudesaki, the *kanrodai* will be established at the coming of the ideal world, so we may infer that the human *kanrodai* will be the leader of the coming ideal world. Here is messianism, although not clearly expressed, and it is true that in the Ofudesaki, too, we can find messianism in its embryonic form:

This time, purifying the water, I desire to take in quickly the Shimbashira (central pillar), who is to control the internal affairs. 56

The central pillar of those who are on the high mountains is a foreigner. This is the prime cause of the anger of God. 57

(Part III)

In these verses Miki expresses, even if only vaguely, her wish to establish a male leader for her group and also to make him the leader of Japan or perhaps the world. However, this idea appears only in fragments. The Shimbashira was conceived mostly as the leader of the group and not as a messianic leader of the whole world. On the other hand, Ōnishi's belief that he himself was the *kanrodai* was quite likely to develop into messianism, for the image of the *kanrodai* cannot be separated from the notion of the ideal world. Messianism is not common in Japan's new religions; for, although founders and foundresses are worshipped as living gods (see Shimazono, 1981), they are not regarded as kings or queens of a coming ideal world. As a sacred king there is already the Tennō, the Emperor of Japan, a figure who is not easy to compete with (see Miyata, 1980). This lack of messianism is closely connected with the fact that millennialism in Japan was vague and unsystematic, yet Ōnishi's belief that he himself was the *kanrodai* was capable of breaking through this limitation.

Ōnishi's outlook in this period, however, was so narrowly restricted to the framework of Tenrikyō that the human *kanrodai* was conceived only as the leader of the religion. Furthermore, the idea that the transformation of the world was imminent was not yet clearly developed. Of course, as an eager reader of the Ofudesaki and the Osashizu, he might have taken special notice of millennialistic passages in them, but he did not give expression to millennialistic ideas in his own words or actions at this time. This indicates that his own perception of the situation on any level was not likely to lead to the formation of millennialism.

(a) In this period, while rapid industrialization and imperialistic diplomacy were continuously causing both internal and international political tension, it seems that Ōnishi, at least in the first part of the period, paid little attention to the societal situation. Since he was almost entirely preoccupied with the doctrinal system of Tenrikyō, he was not very concerned with ideological problems concerning the future course of the state and society. In the latter part of the period, however, when he was working in a tax office and an elementary school and had contact with many believers from various districts, he might have paid closer attention to political affairs.

(b) As early as 1913, he held the idea that he himself was the highest embodiment of the supernatural on earth. But it was only an abstract idea. Until about 1920, in the absence of a believers'

community, he was most unlikely to have had a strong awareness of any substantial activity of supernatural power in the world at large. Only when a believers' community rapidly formed around him must he have perceived that a momentous change was imminent.

(c) After his revelation in 1913, he was extremely isolated in Tenrikyō. It might be the case that he regarded this isolation as a symptom of some grave crisis. However, there are no writings by him or stories about him which prove that this was how he saw the situation.

In sum, Ōnishi in this period took one step forward from the vague millennialism of the Ofudesaki towards a more systematic one in the sense that a messianic idea was constructed. However, because the millennialistic outlook was weak, a new millennialism, yet to find expression, remained merely latent.

1923-1945

This is the period when a fairly clear belief in millennialism was established, becoming the central component in the belief system of the whole group. The millennialism of this period was expressed mainly in three documents — *Study Data*, *Letters* and *An Announcement for the Patriots* — as well as in the group's actions during the two 'campaigns'. The millennialistic ideas which crystallized around 1928 and those from around 1938 are basically the same, although slight differences can be found. In *An Announcement for the Patriots*, the contents of the *Study Data* are skilfully summarized and itemized. I shall introduce the millennialistic ideas of Honmichi at this period by further summarizing them.¹⁴

(a) 'The central concern of this Way': this Way is not merely a religion, but the Way to the destiny of the whole world.

(b) 'The records of the Divine Age': the so-called Divine Age described in the *Kojiki* and *Nihon Shoki*, two ancient mythological texts, is not a story about the past, but prophecies. For example, Amaterasu-Ōmikami, the sun goddess who governs the world and who is considered the ancestor of the Tennō family, is in fact the Foundress Nakayama Miki; 'Iwato-gakure', a story in which Amaterasu hid from anger in a stone cave, is in fact the prophecy of the death of the Foundress; and the descent of the goddess's grandson, a story in which an ancestor of Tennō, Ninigi, descended to earth to reign over Japan or the world, is in fact a prophecy about the succession from Miki to Ōnishi, who will become the leader of the world. In the same way, the Paradise and the advent of Christ in Christianity, as well as the Land of Happiness and the advent of Maitreya in Buddhism, are all in fact prophecies about the impending divine world of the *kanrodai*.

(c) 'Our Tennō has no heavenly virtue': Tennō has no heavenly virtue to rule the country, the Emperor's insistence on divine origin is false, a mistake based on misinterpreting prophecies about the future as a story about his family in the past. People, realizing this, will not obey him in the future. Moreover, he must accept the return of God to earth and what it entails, for (the former) Tennō, opposing God's will, persecuted the Foundress.

(d) 'God's regret': the Foundress sacrificed herself in this world full of selfishness to save mankind, but she was persecuted and had to shorten her own life from 115 to 90 years. This is the cause of God's great regret, and rulers who are responsible for it must accept God's return to earth, that is, natural calamities and wars. In order to be saved, men should believe in, and rely on, God, who wishes to save people from these disasters.

(e) 'A great war will occur in the near future, and Japan will be placed in the ultimate predicament': when Japan is in the ultimate predicament, the human *kanrodai*, Ōnishi, will save her, for through him people can know God's will. Then, as the divine country (*shin-koku*), Japan will reign over the whole world.

(f) 'The Diet will not be able to govern the country': men's eternal peace can be attained only by divine rule.

(g) 'The construction of the *kanrodai*': this means the construction of paradise in this world under the rule of the human *kanrodai* with all the people in the world united as one. This is the purpose for which God made mankind.

The *Study Data* also predicts that the year 1928 is the 'year of Grace' when the great event will happen and all the people will then become equal.¹⁵ And *Letters* maintains that the group's claims in the *Study Data* were proved correct by the acquittal pronounced by the Supreme Court. However, there is no reference in *Letters* to whether the prophecy of the great event in 1928 turned out to be true or not and, if not, why.

The two 'campaigns' were conceived to inform and warn rulers of the coming catastrophe, and the proselytization directed towards Tenrikyō had the same purpose. These were the collective actions of the whole group motivated by millennialism. With these actions and the three documents discussed above, a tradition of millennialistic ideas dating from the Mikagura-uta became a clear doctrine for the first time. Messianism, which was latent in the period 1913-23, became clear with the belief that the human *kanrodai* is the divine king of the impending ideal world. This concept occupies a unique position in Japan's history of ideas in that it boldly challenges the divine authority of Tennō.

The maturation of millennialistic ideas in this period was brought

about by the keen critical perception of the situation shared by Ōnishi and others.

(a) The most important element was the perception of the societal situation, in which Japan was, internationally, in a very difficult position. Of course, this perception reflected the international situation and the political ideology dominant at that time. After the first world war Japan's international position was elevated, and the tension with the United States and other western countries became more and more serious. On the other hand, the aggressive policy against China was gradually escalated, turning into outright belligerency after 1931. In this position of international isolation, the government intensified internal control of the country. This policy was supported by the ideology that, in order to protect Japan from foreign countries, the people must become united under the reign of Tennō. Honmichi of this period modified this idea and incorporated it into its own set of teachings. In the process of modification and incorporation, a few leading believers played an important role as advisers to Ōnishi, for they had a great deal of knowledge about the political situation and about ideological problems as well as the ability to state their opinions about them in theoretical terms. Such ideas as the crisis of Japan and the illegitimacy of Tennō's reign were probably incorporated not by Ōnishi but by these believers. Without them, Honmichi might not have established a clear concept of millennialism.

The perception of the societal situation which was incorporated primarily by these believers and expressed in the three pamphlets, however, was not very wide in its scope. Although they asserted that the present ruler had no ability to rule, they said little about the consequences of this inability, that is, how people were suffering, how the society was changing for the worse and so forth. A short reference to the selfishness of ordinary people can be found, but only as an introduction to praising the great mercy of the Foundress. There is an indifference to social evils which is characteristic of Tenrikyō thinking after the Mikagura-uta. This is in sharp contrast to the perception of the societal situation in Ōmoto with its strong stance against social evils.

(b) The perception of the group's own situation, too, has much to do with the establishment of millennialism, although not as much as the perception of the societal situation. The rapid growth of the group after 1920 must have caused the believers to feel that a supernatural power was taking the world in hand. But it was the serious diseases of Ōnishi's son Yoshinobu, and his wife Toh, that sparked the launching of the two 'campaigns'. For Ōnishi and his followers, these diseases meant that some evil power or tendency had

obstructed God's benevolent power. It was believed that this evil, which must have been conceived, at least unconsciously, as the cause of the long adversities of the Ōnishi family before 1920, would lead to catastrophe and would then disappear. As in the Ofudesaki, the perception that a benevolent supernatural power was very active in the world but not effective in the very centre of the group enhanced the idea that massive change was imminent.

(c) The relationship between millennialism and oppression of the group is not directly expressed in the three pamphlets. There are no references to the government's blocking of God's will or to prophecies that God will remove obstacles hindering the group. But we can surmise that, in fact, there was such a strong sense of tension between the group and the wider society that it motivated the articulation of millennialistic ideas. The two 'campaigns' were planned with the expectation that sooner or later there would be oppression, which was explicitly thought to be a chance to inform the public authorities of the group's teachings rather than the operation of some evil power or tendency. Yet behind such a thought there was a strong awareness of the coming crisis that would be caused by this oppression. It was this awareness that forced Ōnishi to go into hiding in 1927. Moreover, it is clearly stated that the persecution of the Foundress was an important cause of God's regret and retaliation. This means that the believers had a firm idea that the persecutors or the authorities represented evil.

Thus, the perception of the situation in Honmichi at this time was such as to precipitate the formation and the articulation of millennialism. Through this perception the vague millennialistic ideas that had crystallized since the Ofudesaki turned into a fairly clear concept with links to messianism. But it did not become an independent systematic idea at that time; that is, its contents still depended largely on the current worldviews, especially on the perception of the societal situation. In other words, the realization that Japan was in a crisis and Honmichi's central doctrine that Ōnishi was the human *kanrodai* are only contingently related, not integrated into one all-encompassing theoretical system. There is no fundamental explanation of why the crisis was deepening or why the final event was imminent. As was discussed earlier, we cannot conclude from the 'Heilsgeschichte' in the Kōki that a catastrophic change is imminent, because it says nothing about why and how the tension between God and mankind began and grew. In this respect Honmichi of this period added very little: it had neither a view of human beings nor a view of history which could become a basis for the development of millennialism, and the current millennialistic ideas, though fairly clear, did not evolve into systematic thought.

1945-present

There have been no dramatic events or drastic changes in doctrine in Honmichi during this period; yet, of course, there have been developments in various aspects, including doctrines. Indeed, much progress has been made in the systematization of the doctrines based on the scriptures from Tenrikyō and of ideas arising in the early days of Honmichi. The result of this systematization is presented in *An Outline of Honmichi*, published in 1972, where Honmichi's millennialistic ideas are stated in a logically consistent way. The basic contents of the prophecies and the assertions, however, do not differ from those of their predecessors. In the near future, a world war will occur and mankind will suffer a grave crisis; but by prayer (*muhon-zutome*) performed around the human *kanrodai* at the place of human creation, the war will be ended, and those who follow the human *kanrodai* will be saved. As to the nature of future events, the main change is the disappearance of chauvinism and nationalism. A few new ideas which do not greatly affect the whole structure of millennialism are added concerning Honmichi's own history: that the two 'campaigns' were necessary in order to inform society of Honmichi and were preparatory actions for future events; that Japan's defeat in the second world war and the democratic reforms following surrender were fulfilments of prophecies in the scriptures; and so forth.

The most important characteristic of the millennialism in this period, however, is that it is firmly founded on the dualism of 'the unique Way of God' and 'the worldly and rational way', that is, on the antagonism between Honmichi itself and the wider society. The two main incidents of oppression are seen in the light of dualism. The 1928 incident, regarded as the result of the 'misunderstanding' of *Letters*, is now considered the inevitable consequence of profound antagonism between the two spheres. Just as the Foundress, according to Honmichi, was persecuted again and again, those who follow God are naturally persecuted by those rulers who oppose God. On the basis of this idea, harsh criticisms are directed against Tenrikyō which, they assume, has taken a compromising line with society since the Foundress's death. By withdrawing the Kōki and other scriptures, requesting governmental approval and providing various aid for the wars, Tenrikyō, they argue, has run counter to the 'Way of God' and degenerated into the 'way of man'.

Moreover, this dualism of 'the unique Way of God' and 'the worldly and rational way' is believed to have its basis in human nature. God gave human beings free will when creating them, and although He furnished the path for men's maturation, they abused this freedom of will and ran counter to the will of God. The

impending catastrophe, in which men will be placed in a situation of grave danger, is the result of this abuse. Until men developed maturity, God permitted them, His children, to run counter to Him. But now that mankind has reached maturity, God will no longer permit men to commit profane actions. Furthermore, despite the fact that ultimate truth was revealed through the Foundress and the human *kanrodai*, man responded to it by committing acts of persecution. This heightened God's 'regret'. All these abuses by mankind will result in the coming catastrophe. Here the whole history of mankind is viewed from the perspective of the tension between God and men, and it is this perspective which has enabled millennialism to become a logically coherent system for the first time in a tradition dating from the Mikagura-uta.

On the other hand, actions based on millennialistic ideas are not extraordinary and one-off things but, rather, are embodied in daily activities. The construction of big shrines (*shinshiden*) by service work (*hinokishin*), regarded as preparations for the coming catastrophe and the ideal world, have been the group's central activities in postwar Honmichi. The big shrines are, it is believed, places where people will be saved from the catastrophe and where believers will start to construct the ideal world. This routinization of millennialistic action, as well as the systematization of millennialistic thought, is closely connected with the institutionalization of the movement, whereby the group's situation and its relations with its social environment have become stabilized. Thus, both millennialistic ideas and actions tend to be independent of the current perception of the situation. In fact, although the perception of the societal situation has to some extent been conducive to the development of millennialism because of chronic international tension between the Western and Eastern blocs, the perception of the group's own situation in postwar Honmichi is not such as to elicit millennialism. This is because God's direct and immediate involvement in the world's affairs is felt to be weaker since Ōnishi's retirement and death. The tension between the movement and the external world has been lowered by the legal establishment of the freedom of religion. Yet, in spite of a situation unfavourable to millennialism, Honmichi has stuck firmly to it, chiefly because millennialistic ideas have become a systematized doctrine, and millennialistic actions have been routinized.

Conclusions

There is no influential tradition of systematic millennialism in Japan, but among new religions there are quite a few groups which display elements of millennialism, even if they are vague. The history of Tenrikyō and Honmichi shows how systematic millennialistic

doctrine can develop out of amorphous ideas. In Tenrikyō and Honmichi before the end of the second world war, as in most of the other new religions with elements of millennialism, millennialistic ideas were vague and largely dependent on the current worldview. Basically, their millennialism was simply the expression of a millennialistic perception of the situation and not a systematic doctrine.

We have not yet discussed why Nakayama Miki and Ōnishi Aijirō and those who followed them had a more acute perception of the situation than did others. Limitations of space prevent me from giving more than a single clue to the solution of this problem. Miki and Ōnishi tended to place great emphasis on the appearance both of God's power and of evil power or the tendency to obstruct God's power. This emphasis on the contrast between God's power and evil is due, at least partly, to their experience of long isolation at an early stage of their religious life. At the basis of all three aspects of their millennialistic worldviews, there is a keen sense of tension between their belief and the values of the wider society. But as long as this sense of tension could not be related to a firm view of mankind and history, millennialism remained vague.

In post-war Honmichi, however, millennialistic thought advanced beyond this limit, and a systematic millennialism was established. This unique process was accomplished, I assume, by the combination of the following three factors. (1) In the 1920s and the 1930s, when Honmichi grew rapidly and the basis of its doctrine was laid down, Japan's international relations were in a state of utmost tension. The dominant ideology at the time was itself millennialistic. Honmichi absorbed a great deal of the atmosphere of the age. (2) Honmichi was a schism from Tenrikyō, and most of its followers had been members of Tenrikyō. They were loyal to most of the Tenrikyō doctrines, opposing it only on one particular point. Thus, Honmichi could elaborate and refine Tenrikyō doctrines from one clear perspective, the problem of the divine leader. (3) For more than thirty years after Ōnishi had received his revelation, he and his religion were in continuous tension with society. Consequently, awareness of the severe tension with society became an essential part of Honmichi's thinking and helped the systematization of its millennialistic ideas.

Millennialism can be the expression of any traditional or imported view of mankind and history which puts an emphasis on the limitations and evils of human beings. But there are cases where such a view of mankind and history is formed only as a result of the work of millennialistic movements. Honmichi is an example of the latter. By further study of such cases, we shall be able to develop a deeper understanding of the structure and evolution of millennialistic thinking.

Notes

1. According to Yonina Talmon, millennialistic (millenarian) religious movements are those 'religious movements that expect imminent, total, ultimate, this-worldly, collective salvation' (Talmon, 1968).
2. Millennialistic traditions in Japan's folklore have been studied extensively by Noboru Miyata (1975a; 1975b; 1980).
3. This point is discussed in Yasumaru and Hirota (1966) and Miyata (1980).
4. Yasumaru and Hirota (1966) is the only existing study of the refinement of the folkloric millennialistic tradition into organized thought in new religions.
5. Few references are made in this chapter to the historical background of the movements. A handy introduction in English is Murakami (1980).
6. English-language works on Tenrikyō's history, doctrines and religious activities include van Straelen (1957); Tenrikyō Overseas Mission Department (1966); Tenrikyō Church Headquarters (1967; 1972a); and Ellwood (1982). Tenrikyō scriptures in English translation are Tenrikyō Church Headquarters (1971; 1972b). *Osashizu* and *Kōki* can be read only in Japanese, in Tenrikyō Kyōkai Honbu (1948-49) and Nakayama (1957).
7. Age is reckoned in this chapter in the traditional Japanese way of counting the years of one's age, that is, counting a fraction of a year as one full year.
8. In the same source, the number of believers in 1928 is given as more than 4 million. On the other hand, the statistics for 1980 show about 2,592,000 believers (Bunkachō, 1982). It is unlikely that believers decreased dramatically between 1928 and 1980; the statistics for 1928 seem to be highly exaggerated.
9. As far as I know, there have been no studies of Honmichi in English. Honmichi Kyōgibu (1972), Murakami (1974) and Umehara (1977) give descriptions in Japanese of Honmichi's history. Three important pamphlets from Honmichi in the early Shōwa period (*Study Data*, *Letters* and *An Announcement for the Patriots*) are reprinted in Tanigawa et al. (1971). I am greatly indebted to Murakami's work.
10. For the Mikagura-uta and the Ofudesaki I used the English translations published by the Tenrikyō Church Headquarters (1972b; 1971).
11. The number is that of each *tanka* in each Part.
12. In the original translation by the Tenrikyō Church Headquarters, 'foreigners' and 'Japanese' are 'the people of the region where My teachings spread later' and 'the people of the region where My teachings spread early'. Corresponding Japanese words are simply *kara* and *nihon*.
13. As to the relationship between Ofudesaki and Kōki, see Shimazono (1981; 1982).
14. In the summary of *An Announcement for the Patriots* there are eight items, the first of which — general remarks on God — is omitted here, for it has little to do with millennialism.
15. Mass pilgrimages to the Ise shrine occurred about every 60 years in the Tokugawa period, giving rise to a folk belief that God gives men abundant benefits at this interval. 1928 was the sixty-first year after 1867 when a big mass pilgrimage called 'Eejanaika' had occurred.

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