

The Emergence of Japanese Hutterites

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Summary

In the early 1970s, a group of Japanese Christians established a Hutterite settlement north of Tokyo, the culmination of a fifteen-year search for a religious model that would allow them to live communally as described in the Bible in Acts 2:44. The ideal model was found in the Hutterites, an Anabaptist group formed in the early sixteenth century in Moravia. Throughout their history, Hutterites have been persecuted for their religious beliefs and customs, including the practice of a fundamentalist religion, adult baptism, and pacifism. Their response has been migration. In 1874 they left Europe and moved to the United States, and in 1918 they migrated to Canada where the majority continue to live today in communal agricultural settlements called colonies. The process through which the Japanese Hutterite colony (Ōwa colony) evolved and the role Canadian Hutterites played in this process are examined, as is the character of the Canadian Hutterite model.

Key words

JAPANESE CHRISTIANS, HUTTERITES, ANABAPTIST, ŌWA COLONY, CULTURAL DIFFUSION, ADOPTION AND INTEGRATION

INTRODUCTION

What has come to be considered the distinctive Japanese culture has evolved partly through the continuous borrowing and assimilation of ideas and practices from the outside. In the realm of religion, the adoption of Buddhism and Christianity and their subsequent integration into, and impact upon, Japanese

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culture exemplify this propensity. On a much smaller scale, one concrete contemporary example of such cultural adoption is the emergence of a Hutterite colony in Japan.

In the summer of 1975, I visited several Hutterite settlements, called colonies, in southern Alberta, Canada, and, surprisingly, met five Japanese "Hutterites." They had been visiting the Wilson and West Raley colonies for several months. Since then, I have been corresponding with the Japanese group and, in 1976, 1980, 1994, and 1998, I visited their colony in Japan. The emergence of the Japanese Hutterite colony, which has strong ties with Canadian Hutterites, is a curious phenomenon. This paper recounts the birth and the present status of the Japanese Hutterite colony based on personal observation, conversation, and examination of written correspondence between Canadian and Japanese Hutterites and offers a comparative appraisal of the emerging Japanese religious settlement with its chosen role model.

HUTTERITES

Hutterites are a Christian sectarian group which, like Mennonites and Amish, practice adult baptism. They are, however, the only group among these three to insist rigorously on communal living. Hutterite history began in the 1520s with the establishment of a communal society by some 200 Anabaptists in Moravia who were seeking refuge from religious persecution.

The central Christian doctrine as understood by Hutterites is remarkably well summarized in a sketch drawn by an imprisoned Anabaptist, Leonard Schiemer, in the year 1527 (Fig. 1). Schiemer made a sincere attempt to explain his faith to others, including his interrogators. According to this diagram, human beings were created by "the Will of God," and were placed in the Garden of Eden. They disobeyed God and fell away from His will and, by acquiring the disobedient nature of "Adam," became helplessly "carnal." In order to be restored to God, a person must have an intermediary, Christ the Savior. The explanation thus far is common to the major Christian faiths. The difference for Hutterites is that a person is not saved by his professed faith or right beliefs alone but by living in a proper social relationship in a Christian community. Communal living, in their view, is essential to the process of salvation.¹

Under Jacob Hutter, their first leader, the basic tenets of Hutterian belief were laid down. These include a strict separation of church and state, commu-

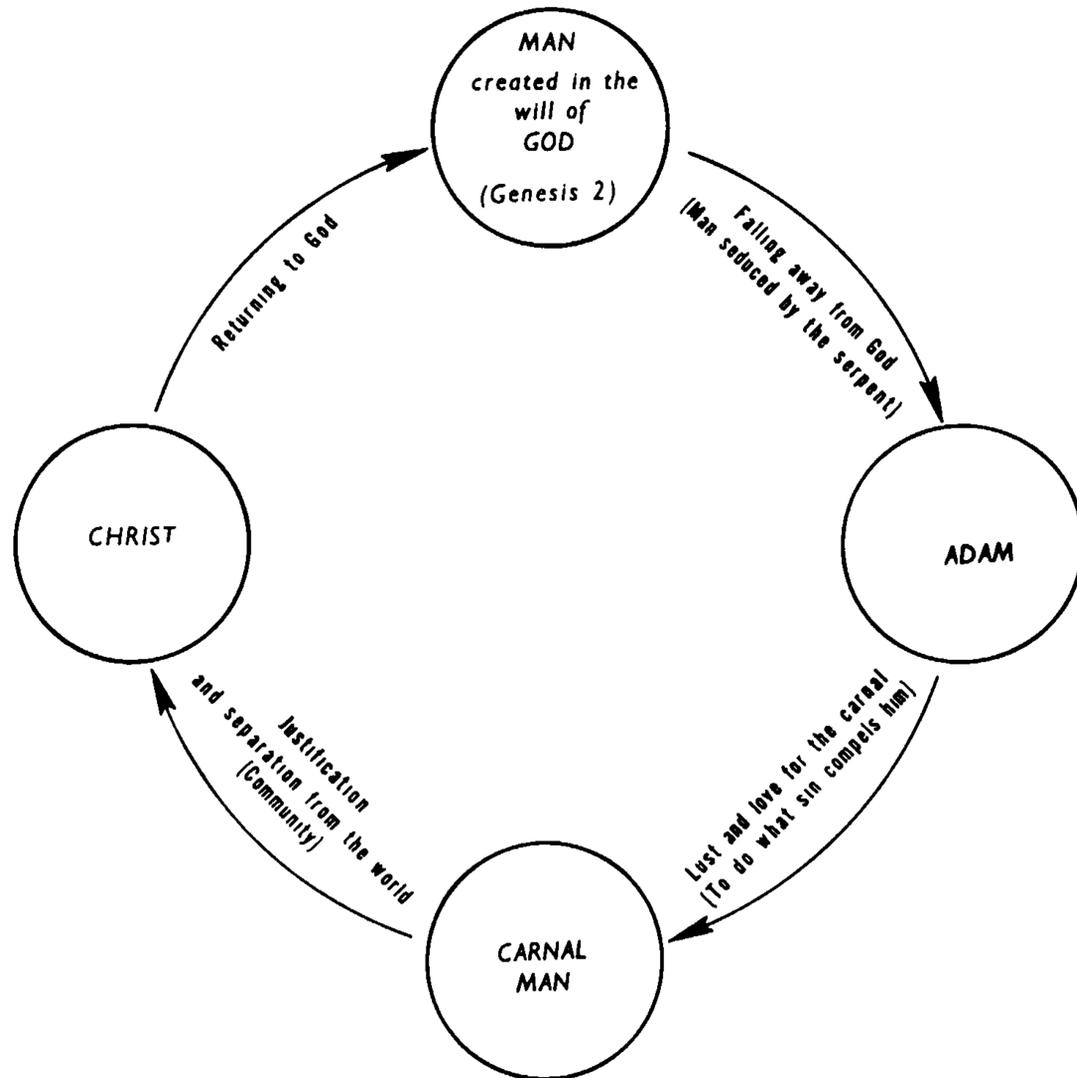


Fig. 1. Epitome of Anabaptist doctrine (Leonard Schiemer, 1527, in prison at Rattenburg-on-the-Inn, Tyrol, a manuscript of 1566)



Fig. 2. Sixteenth-century woodcut showing Hutterite dwelling and dress (Photograph from title page of Erhard, 1589)

nal ownership of property, nonviolence and opposition to war, and adult baptism. These beliefs, along with their language, customs, dress, and austere lifestyle remain largely unchanged to this day (Fig. 2). While they are fluent in English and standard German, they have retained and use on a daily basis a distinctive German dialect similar to that spoken in the Austrian province of Carinthia.² The Hutterite belief in the communal way of life is rooted in Acts 2: 43-47.

⁴³Many miracles and wonders were being done through the apostles, and everyone was filled with awe. ⁴⁴All the believers continued together in close fellowship and shared their belongings with one another. ⁴⁵They would sell their property and possessions, and distribute the money among all, according to what each one needed. ⁴⁶Day after day they met as a group in the Temple, and they had their meals together in their homes, eating with glad and humble hearts, ⁴⁷praising God and enjoying the good will of all the people. And every day the Lord added to their group those who were being saved.³



Fig. 3. In the sixteenth century various methods of interrogation of Anabaptists included the iron horse, the rack, and stretching with weights (Flint, 1975 *The Hutterites: A Study in Prejudice*, Oxford University Press, 1975)

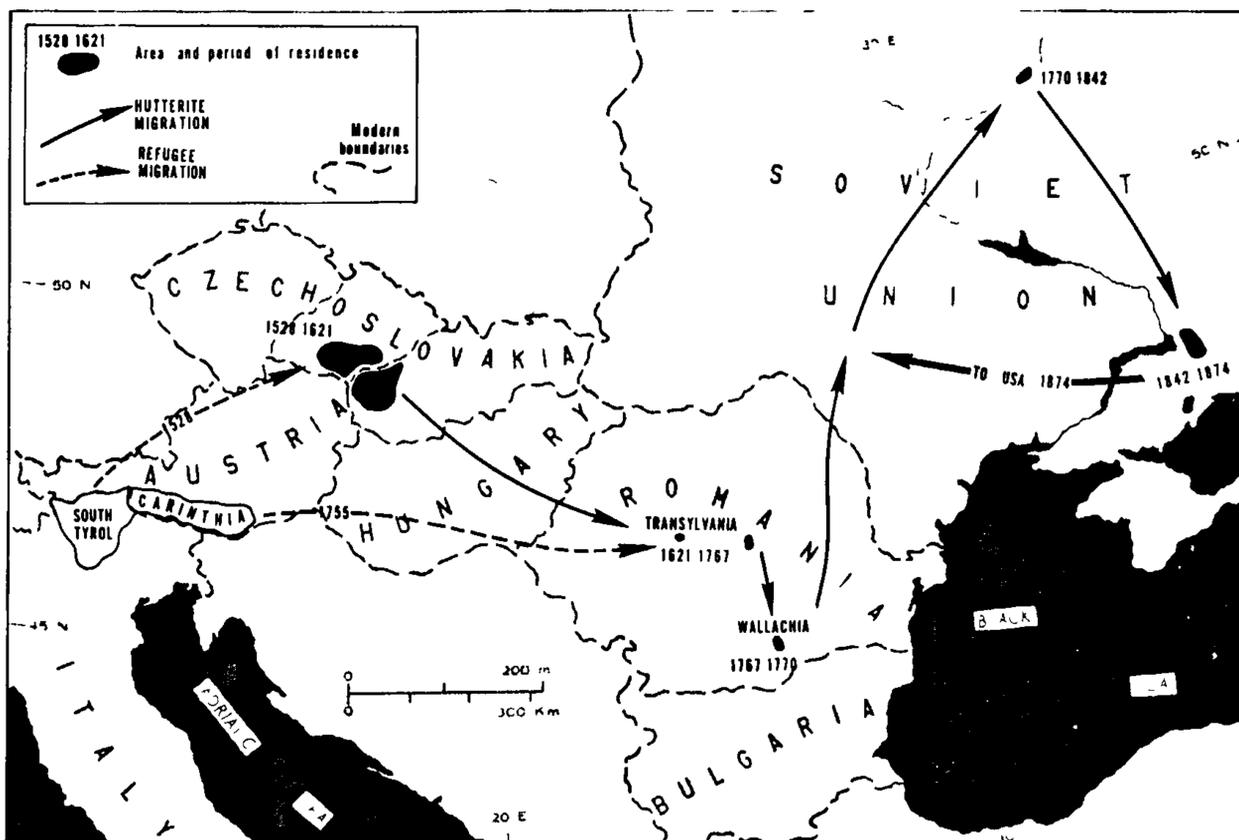


Fig. 4. Hutterite Migrations and Areas of Residence, 1528-1874 (Hostetler, 1974)

Over the centuries, Hutterites periodically have been subjected to persecution for their beliefs (Fig. 3). Their response has been migration. They moved first from Czechoslovakia to Hungary then to Romania, tsarist Russia, the United States, and finally to Canada (Fig. 4). The migration to Canada from the United States of all but one colony in 1918 was the outcome of harassment in response to the Hutterites' refusal to participate in military service of any form. They settled on the prairies, initially in the provinces of Alberta and Manitoba, and later in Saskatchewan.⁴ Over time there has been a gradual re-establishment of colonies in the United States. Hutterite population currently is in excess of 30,000. Nearly 70 percent of North American Hutterites live in Canada.⁵

Hutterites are an agrarian people who live in nearly self-sufficient colonies of approximately thirteen families (85 people) each. When the population of a colony expands to between 125 and 150 people, the settlement subdivides and a new colony is formed. Hutterites make no attempt to convert outsiders to their religious beliefs. Their growth is exclusively through reproduction. Hutterites continue to be divided into the three original clans that migrated from Europe: Dariusleut, Schmiedleut, and Lehrerleut. Hutterites in Manitoba Canada and the Dakotas in the United States are the Schmiedleut, while those in Alberta, Saskatchewan, and the United States outside the Dakotas belong to the other two clans. The emergence of Hutterites in Japan, the subject of this paper, however, is not the extension of the international migration of the Hutterites originating in Europe. It is, rather, the outcome of

the search for an ideal way of life initiated by a group of Japanese, the ideological roots of which are found in the Bible.

BACKGROUND FOR THE ADOPTION OF THE HUTTERIAN WAY OF LIFE IN JAPAN

Founder

Cultural adoption requires a suitable precondition. The emergence of the Hutterite movement in Japan is no exception. It had its beginnings in the mid-1950s. The man responsible for the birth of Japanese Hutterites was the late Izeki Isomi (Fig. 5).

Izeki was born in Aizu in Fukushima Prefecture in 1898. The Aizu district, a rich agricultural region, has had a long exposure to Christianity beginning with the conversion of the daimyo, Gamo Ujisato, to Christianity around 1585, soon after Christianity had been introduced to Japan. Christianity was generally tolerated until the beginning of the seventeenth century, at which time the Tokugawa Shogunate proscribed the religion and persecuted adherents. It was about this time that Japan's doors were closed to the outside world. When interaction with western nations resumed in the latter part of the mid-nineteenth century, the Meiji government secured religious freedom, and Christianity was reintroduced into the country. Catholic and Protestant missionaries came to the Aizu district.

Izeki was born into a poor farm family. His father was an alcoholic who died at a young age, leaving the family with a heavy debt. Izeki graduated from primary school at the top of his class but had to forgo further education in order to help out on the family farm. At the age of seventeen, Izeki was exposed to Christian doctrine through the sidewalk preaching of a Protestant missionary, and he converted to Christianity.



Fig 5. Reverend Izeki Isomi, founder and spiritual leader of Ōwa Colony, with his wife (Shimazaki, 1976)

Eventually, determined to become a Christian minister, he enrolled in Christian Studies at Tōhoku Gakuin Theological School. After graduating from the school, he held various ministerial positions in churches throughout the Tōhoku district and was ordained in 1938.

His interests were many, but two in particular stand out in relation to his later establishment of a Hutterite colony. When he was serving at Motomiya Church in the late-1930s, he instigated a project to secure brides for Japanese soldier/settlers in Manchuria. Izeki's project was related to the involvement of the Young Men's Christian Association with the Japanese colonials in Manchuria. At the close of World War II, when these individuals were recalled to Japan, he negotiated with the prefecture and obtained land at the base of Adatara Mountain where he established Heiwa-mura, or Peace Village, as a place for them to settle.

Another of his communal interests was the establishment of a school, Bunka Gakuin (Cultural Institute), for female factory workers to prepare them for motherhood. This project was later abandoned as he could not obtain land where the school could be built.

Early Seeds

In 1941, Izeki became a minister in the newly established Nihon Kirisuto Kyōdan (United Church of Christ), a union of several Protestant denominations and other groups including the Salvation Army, Baptists, Methodists, and the YMCA and YWCA. His church was in Koriyama city, located 150 kilometers north of Tokyo. Izeki was fervently involved with the propagation of the Christian faith. Although there were converts to Christianity in postwar Japan, strong ties with Japanese society at large resulted in the departure of many from the church. Izeki was searching for some way to stem the outward flow. The words of Acts 2: 44, "And all who believed were together and had all things in common,"⁶ seemed to point to a solution. He and some ten other people sought to pattern their lives on the teachings of Acts 2: 44. Although they worked outside the church, they lived communally within the building. The code that governed their activities for some 15 years before they learned of the Hutterite way of life incorporated three rules:

- (1) Do not let your life be controlled by the desire for wealth.
- (2) Approach your work with a spirit of service to your fellow man, and do not demand a reward.
- (3) Under all circumstances, Sunday is a day of prayer and rest.

The group searched for a communal model that would encompass their ideological principles. Thinking that the Israeli kibbutz might provide the model

they sought, Izeki visited Israel. He was, however, disappointed. In a letter to the Canadian Hutterites he says: "About that time (1965), the nature of the kibbutz in Israel was spread abroad to Japan in newspapers and books. I went to Israel to observe. But what I found was a national and cultural community, not the community in the Bible."⁷

The existence of Hutterites in North America was made known to Izeki and his group in 1970 through two books on Anabaptism written in Japanese by Sakakibara Gan.⁸ Recognizing the possibility that the model they were seeking existed within Hutterite society, Izeki sent a letter to the Wilson Hutterite colony, then the head colony of the Dariusleut, located near Lethbridge, Alberta. Encouraged by the response from Canada, Tamura Katsumi, Izeki's much younger assistant, visited two Alberta colonies for several months in 1971 and returned the following year with his wife and Watanabe Masako, a young unmarried woman of the group.

The Japanese group was now sure that Hutterite life was the model to follow. Thus the interval between the time when the idea of the Hutterite way of life was introduced to the group and the time it was accepted as a model was only two years. However, this relatively rapid acceptance was founded on 15 years of conscious searching, evaluation, trial, and rejection.

LAYING THE FOUNDATION FOR THE ADOPTION OF THE HUTTERITE WAY OF LIFE

Several changes in lifestyle were made in the process of adopting the Hutterite way of life in Japan. The first externally obvious adoption was the Hutterite costume. North American Hutterite clothing, based on European dress of the sixteenth century, reflects Hutterite origins and their steadfast determination to resist worldly influences. Today, the long skirts and kerchiefs of the women and the black hats and round-necked suits of the men make the Hutterites readily identifiable in the community. The first samples of Hutterite clothing for the Japanese were made by the Canadian Hutterites and sent to Japan. Tamura wrote:

Emiko [Tamura's four-year-old daughter] likes the Hutterian dress very much. She is very proud of it. She never wears the worldly clothes. Sumiko [his wife] has been wearing Hutterian clothes which were made by Katie, Susie, Rachel, and Maria. Yutaka [his 11-year-old son] wears your clothes only on Sunday.⁹

Initially, the women of the group wore Hutterite clothing all the time while

the men were less exact. The Hutterite clothing provides less contrast in rural Japan than it does in the Canadian landscape. Subdued colors, head covering, and long baggy pants are the traditional style in the countryside for female laborers, while black, round-necked uniforms are worn by some four million schoolboys throughout Japan.

The Japanese Hutterite women initially found the Hutterites' long skirts, jackets, and kerchiefs functional, comfortable, and protective for work in the fields. While the intention was to be simple, practical, and without regard for current style, many Kōriyama townspeople admired the Hutterite dress and some even considered it high fashion. To wear a uniform is popular among many social, economic, and political groups in Japan. The adoption of a common style of dress may have given the Japanese Hutterites a sense of group identity and social security (Fig. 6).

To further the development of the Hutterite way of life, it became apparent that a definite geographic site within which ideological and economic security could be achieved was needed. At this time the group entertained the idea of moving to Canada and wrote to the Canadian Hutterites to ask for advice. Izeki wrote:



Fig 6 The Japanese Hutterites have adopted the austere dress of their Alberta brethren. The ratio of males to females is more balanced than the photo suggests — at the time it was taken, most of the men were at work in the fields. (Shimazaki, 1976)

I asked your advice about an important problem for us. It was: should we move to Canada to establish a complete community or stay in the city where we live now? And in reply you advised me that we should get out of the city and move into the country. We talked over the matter several times and realized that we could not stay in the city. While the population in rural Japan is declining, there is very little flat land for sale and that which is available is expensive and in great demand.¹⁰

Hutterite colonies in North America are located in rural settings and agriculture is the main livelihood activity. Each colony contains a village-like settlement where families live separately, but work, eat, and worship together. Colonies range in size from about 1600 ha in Manitoba to 3200 ha in Alberta and Saskatchewan where conditions are drier. The recommendation that the Japanese Hutterites should move to the countryside was no surprise. It was from the Wilson colony which, like other colonies, is deeply entrenched in the rural setting.

A search for suitable land was made in the vicinity of Kōriyama city from which most of the members were drawn. Nothing was available, and the search spread farther afield. Eventually, the group found suitable acreage 70 kilometers south of Kōriyama on which they felt they could establish a colony.

Izeki described the land to the Canadian Hutterites as follows:

The area of the land is about 12 acres. The soil is fertile and most suitable for farming.¹¹ It is away from town and human habitation. It is a world in itself. The land costs 20 million yen [about Can \$60,000 in 1972] and is the minimum price. Japan is limited in area and densely populated as you know. Although Japan is smaller than Alberta, its population is 70 times larger. Here the land is very high in price. The other day we made a field investigation and do not believe anything is better than this. We are now led to the land which the Lord chose by the will of God and meeting and associating with Hutterites personally.¹²

To raise the money to purchase the land, members of the group sold their properties and possessions. The remaining funds required came as a gift from the Dariusleut Hutterites in Canada. The land they purchased is classified as "forested mountain." The colony is separated from the nearest village, which has a population of 300, by a low mountain. Thus the geographic foundation of the present colony was established.

ŌWA COLONY

By this time membership in the colony had settled at nineteen, including four men, eleven women, and four children. Among the adults were several farmers, a truck driver, an electrician, a typist, and a teacher. The group adopted the name Kitokusha Zaisan Kyōdōtai Shin-Hateraito Ōwa Seikatsu-dan (Christian Communal Settlement New Hutterian Brethren Ōwa Colony). The name Ōwawa was taken from the name of the nearest village in the same manner as the Canadian colonies are named.

The colony operates on these principles:

- (1) We believe in the teachings of the Bible. We practice a communal lifestyle in brotherhood with our Lord Jesus Christ.
- (2) In a frontier land we live and pray following Romans 12: 1: Present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.
- (3) Through encounters with the Hutterites who are living in Canada, we share our brotherhood and proceed in cooperation with them.
- (4) Concerning our everyday work, each individual does that for which he is best suited. Farming is our primary activity. We have one income and eat from one pot.
- (5) To join our community, it is first necessary to believe in the teachings of the Bible. Apart from that, young or old, man or woman, rich or poor, strong or weak, wise or ignorant, all may belong.¹³

Ōwa colony members constructed ten structures: a church, three houses, a kitchen and dining hall, a workshop, a storage building, a laundry, a chicken barn, and a goat shelter. In Canadian colonies there are many buildings, and their spatial arrangement is similar from one colony to the next (Fig. 7). Forming the colony's core are residential structures, the communal dining hall and kitchen, the school, and the church (though often the school or dining hall doubles as the church), while farm buildings are located on the periphery. At the Ōwa colony, the arrangement of the buildings is determined by the available terrain.

Electricity was put into the Ōwa colony in 1974. The water supply came from a natural spring, which the group called Jacob's Well after Jacob Hutter. The mechanical equipment they initially acquired included a jeep, a pickup truck, a motorcycle, two bicycles, a threshing machine, a washing machine, and a refrigerator.

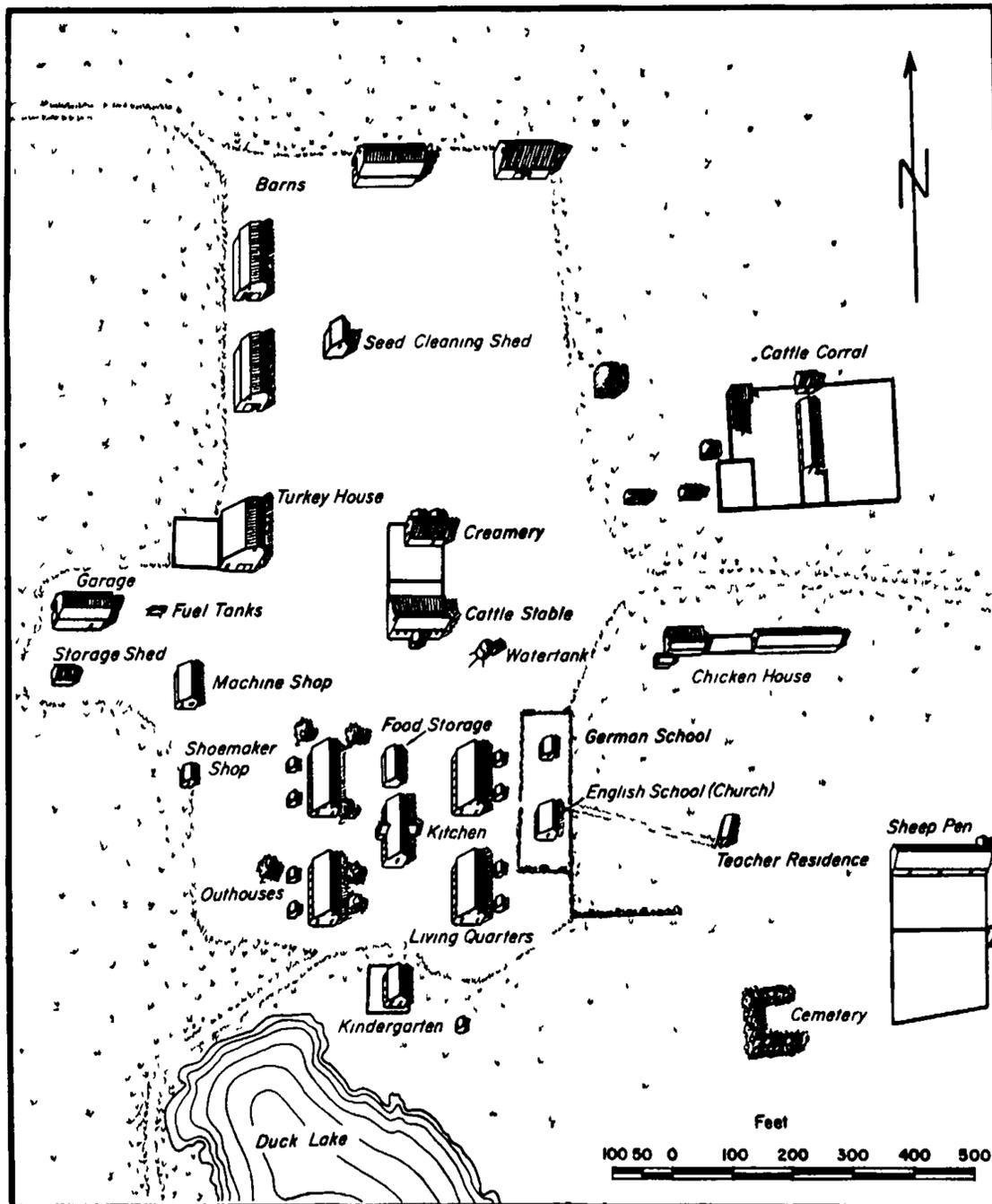


Fig. 7. Layout of Rock Lake colony in Alberta, Canada (Hostetler, 1974)

Canadian Hutterite colonies cooperate among themselves but function as independent economic units. They are quick to adopt the most recent agricultural advances into their farming techniques. Relative to the acreage occupied, the output of their well-managed, large-scale, mixed-farming operations is disproportionately large within the prairie economy.

In order to ensure the continuation of their distinctive way of life, Hutterites have succeeded in maintaining a school in each colony where their children are educated. In colony schools in Alberta, the provincially approved curriculum is studied in English by all the children until the eighth grade, under the tutelage of provincial-government-appointed teachers. Grades nine and ten are taken through correspondence courses by about half of the students. A few go on to take diploma courses outside the colonies, such as in animal nutrition, veterinary science, and teacher training. In addition to English school, the chil-

dren attend daily German school for religious education and study of the German language. The Japanese colony does not have its own colony school and sends its children to the local school. The completion of high school is encouraged, as is university or technical education. Daily religious study is provided at the colony. The language of study is Japanese.

INTERNAL CONFLICT

From the early stages, conflict has existed in the colony. Two controversial issues are of particular importance. One of the earliest conflicts arose over the question of adult baptism. The idea of adult baptism is fundamental to the Hutterian faith, but when Reverend Izeki was still under the auspices of the United Church of Christ in Japan he refused to talk about adult baptism, fearing that this concept was against the teaching of his church. In writing to the Canadian Hutterites in the spring of 1972, Tamura says: "Take heed of Reverend Izeki like Ulrich Zwingli."¹⁴

He quotes a passage from *Confession of Faith* by Peter Rideman (Tamura's underlining throughout this passage):

In Switzerland, in the year 1525, several scholars met to talk over matters of faith. Among them were Conrad Grebel, a nobleman, Felix Manz, Ulrich Zwingli, and a clergyman called George von Haus Jakob (afterwards called Blaurock). They found that child baptism has no scriptural foundation. On the contrary, from the teaching of Romans X, one must first have "a living faith, receive the Christian Baptism with a good conscience, and continue to serve God in the godliness of a Christian life, standing steadfast to the end through all suffering."

Ulrich Zwingli shrank back from the obvious consequences of such a radical faith, and later became one of the persecutors of this new movement. The movement grew and the followers of it became known as Anabaptists. As the movement spread over large parts of central Europe, it was most cruelly persecuted, both by the Roman Catholics and by the new state churches of Luther and Zwingli. Manz and Blaurock each died a martyr's death, Grebel was condemned to death, but died of the plague at Maienfeld in 1526. The Anabaptists suffered fierce persecution in the Tirolese Alps, and many families sought a new home around Nikolasburg in Moravia.¹⁵

Tamura goes on to say:



Fig. 8. Watanabe Masako of Ōwa colony and Reverend John Würz, head minister of the Wilson colony, in downtown Lethbridge in the summer of 1975, when Watanabe was in Alberta to study with the Canadian Hutterites. (Courtesy of Lethbridge Herald)

Reverend Izeki never teaches my colony members and church members about baptism. Not only my colony members but also church members do not know what baptism is. He is afraid of the Church and never declares that child baptism is wrong. He is timid. He is my pain and burden.¹⁶

In 1975, however, Izeki, his wife, and Watanabe visited Canada and were formally baptized into the Hutterite faith (Fig. 8). Tamura, on the other hand, did not feel ready to be baptized. Reverend Würz of the Wilson colony of Alberta conducted the baptismal service in Japanese as it had been taught to him by Watanabe.

The second conflict was over the conservative versus modernistic operation and management of the colony. Izeki always moved slowly and carefully in adopting and executing new ideas. Tamura, on the other hand, seemed to

want to realize goals and objectives more quickly.

Tamura and his family were still very active in the colony when I visited it in 1976. However, soon after, he and his family withdrew from the colony, feeling that the colony had no future. Tamura's youngest son was the first child to be born in the colony. The departure of this family was a serious blow; however, new members have since joined the colony and many more children have been born into it. At the same time, others have left the colony, either by choice or through death, but colony life continues.

The ties and communication between the Japanese and Canadian colonies were initially very strong. Letters were exchanged twice a month. Messages from Canadian Hutterite ministers were translated and published in the bimonthly journal *Budō-en* (Vineyard), published by Ōwa colony.

Izeki returned to Alberta in May 1977 and was ordained as a Hutterite minister. By the winter of 1979 he had baptized the nine remaining members of the Ōwa colony. In 1977, the possibility of Watanabe marrying a Canadian Hutterite who would eventually become the head of the Ōwa colony was discussed, but the idea was eventually dropped. In 1978, Watanabe once again came to Alberta for six months for further study with the Hutterites, particularly to improve her German. Although Izeki's ordination gave the Ōwa colony independence, the spiritual and material ties with the Alberta colonies were maintained.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

In 1983, the decision was made to rebuild the Ōwa colony church. Shortly after the foundation had been laid, Izeki suffered a brain hemorrhage. As he lay close to death on the floor of his residence, he could see the new foundation and gave thanks to those who had helped him realize his dream. In Canada, each Hutterite colony has its own cemetery for the burial of the bodies of its deceased members. In Japan, burial is the exception; cremation is the norm. Izeki was cremated, but it was only in 1997 that the colony was able to acquire a communal plot in the Ōwa town cemetery for the interment of its members' ashes. It is here that Izeki's ashes, along with those of the other deceased colony members, now rest.

While both Canadian and Japanese Hutterites are quick to adopt modern technological tools for their agricultural and domestic practices, both groups prohibited the use of television and radio. Recently, however, the Japanese Hutterites have brought a television to the colony, and members gather around it after lunch to enjoy a drama that is watched by millions throughout the country.

Changes have also been made in the choice of dress. Hutterite costume is now worn on Sundays only. The women found the skirts impractical for farm labor. Traditional Japanese baggy pants allow greater freedom of movement as they work in the fields. The men wear commercially available black trousers rather than the handmade tight-fitting Hutterite pants.

When the original colony well, Jacob's Well, showed signs of drying up, water had to be brought in by truck. In 1997, the group found a new water source in their leased paddy field, a gift from God, they feel. Since then the new well has been supplying all the colony's water needs.

Compared with their Canadian counterparts, the scale of the farming operation of the Ōwa colony is minute. Initially machinery was borrowed from neighboring farmers in return for physical labor. Today the colony owns the necessary equipment and the farm has been expanded to include a rice paddy, allowing near self-sufficiency with regard to food. At present, the colony practices organic farming, cultivating wheat, rice, sweet potatoes, potatoes, onions, soy beans, persimmons, apples, chestnuts, citrus fruit, grapes, and strawberries for their own use. The group keeps six goats and about 500 chickens. The organic eggs are a primary source of colony income. The colony continuously experiments with crop production. In the beginning, they attempted to grow Canadian wheat, but soon realized that Japanese wheat was better suited to the climate and terrain (Fig. 9).

For many years, Canadian Hutterites were blocked from visiting the Japanese colony by their refusal to pose for passport photographs. The late John Würz, head minister of the Wilson colony, had a great interest in seeing the Ōwa colony, but, as the head of the Dariusleut clan, felt that he could not bend the rule. With the advent of a requirement for photographs on Alberta



Fig. 9. Ōwa colony, 1998. Leased rice paddy in the left foreground with the residential structures through the trees behind. Chicken barns are to the right of the residences. (Shimazaki)

drivers' licenses, Hutterite restrictions on photographs have eased somewhat, and several Canadian Hutterites have visited the Ōwa colony and enjoyed their experience of Japanese culture. Samuel Waldner, the late head minister of the West Raily colony in Alberta, said, before he visited the Ōwa colony in 1979, that when he came to Alberta early this century the natives were sleeping on the ground. He understood that the Japanese slept on the floor, and he was hoping that they too would learn that beds were better. He was astounded to find how clean and how comfortable Japanese tatami mats are and abandoned any idea of changing the sleeping habits of the Ōwa colony members.

In the early nineties, the Ōwa colony changed its name from Kitokusha Zaisan Kyōdōtai Shin-Hateraito Ōwa Seikatsu-dan (Christian Communal Settlement New Hutterian Brethren Ōwa Colony) to Shin Hateraito Ōwa Kyōkai (New Hutterite Ōwa Church). The original name was thought to be too long and to carry "communist" overtones. The new name reflects the fact that the colony church serves as a Christian church for the community. While colony members worship daily, on Sundays they are often joined by as many as a dozen people from nearby villages.

The colony's membership fluctuates as children are born and older members leave or die. The likelihood of young adults returning to live in the colony full-time after completing their education is slim. But to date, membership averages approximately twenty people, and under the leadership of Izeki's successor, Kikuta Fumio, the colony life continues.

EPILOGUE

In North America, preservation of the Hutterite way of life has been possible largely because of the ability of Hutterites to remain true to their fundamental beliefs while at the same time adopting those elements of the outside world that are necessary for their economic and social well-being. Strict adherence to their religious beliefs and customs, perpetuation of their ancestral language, the education of their children within the colony environment, and a well-managed agrarian economy all play a role in Hutterite survival. Members are free to leave the colony and some do, but most return and are welcomed back into the fold, so assimilation is not a threat. In contrast to this North American situation, the future of the Japanese Hutterites depends upon the capabilities of the members in "managing" opportunities and risks that they will encounter in their quest to develop a cultural and economic independence that will provide the foundation to support the practice of their religious beliefs.

Over the years many religious and quasi-religious communities have

emerged in Japan.¹⁷ With respect to the Hutterite movement, the Ōwa colony is the initial core and may become the nucleus for further dispersion. A recent trip by Kikuta to Taiwan, at the request of the Takasago tribe who are seeking to adopt the Hutterian way of life, suggests that Ōwa colony may become an agent of further diffusion of the Hutterite way of life in Asia. In the mid-1980s, hearing of the generosity of the Canadian Hutterites in assisting in the purchase of land for Ōwa colony, a group of Christian Filipinos from Luzon Island requested and received initial colony establishment funds from Wilson colony. The Filipino group failed to maintain contact with the Canadian Hutterites, so the outcome of this venture is unknown.¹⁸

As Ōwa colony is very much in its initial developmental stages, not yet one generation old, it is hard to predict the future. Will the Japanese Hutterites increase in number? What aspects of the Canadian Hutterite practices they have adopted will be maintained, modified, or rejected, and why? Will Ōwa colony eventually become a full-fledged Hutterite community with a distinctively Japanese flavor? Answers to these questions related to the process of innovation and diffusion in the search for the ideal way of living remain to be seen.

Notes

1. Hostetler (1974. 140).
2. Ryan (1987 495)
- 3 *Good News Bible* (1976)
- 4 For a description of Canadian Hutterite life written in Japanese, see Shimazaki (1982).
- 5 Ryan (1988)
6. *The Holy Bible Revised Standard Version* (1971).
- 7 Letter from Reverend Izeki Isomi to Reverend John Wurz, Wilson colony, March 1970.
8. Sakakibara (1967a, 1967b)
9. Letter from Tamura Katsumi to Reverend Samuel Waldner, West Raley colony, December 1 1997.
10. Letter from Izeki to Wurz and Waldner, November 11, 1971.
11. Soil maps show that the Ōwa area is covered by loam with a thickness of 5-6 meters. According to data (1975) provided by the Utsunomiya branch of the Japan Meteorological Association for this area, the average minimum monthly temperature is 1.0°C (January) and the average maximum monthly temperature is 25.6°C (August), while the mean annual temperature is 13.0°C. Annual precipitation is 1,322 millimeters.
- 12 Letter from Izeki to Wurz and Waldner, November 11, 1971.
- 13 Warera no Seikatsu Annai (1975).
14. Letter from Tamura to Waldner, May 20, 1972.
- 15 Rideman (1970 268-269).

16. Letter from Tamura to Waldner, May 20, 1972 .
17. For example, Ittoen with its spiritual foundation in Buddhism, and also Shinkyō Buraku, with its spiritual foundation in Tenrikyō made their appearance about this time
- 18 Personal communication with John Wurz, Wilson colony.

Sources

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要 旨

日本フッタライトの誕生

島 崎 博

1972年、日本人キリスト教徒の一団が栃木県黒羽町大輪に設立したフッタライト（ハテライト）生活協同体は、日本における外来文化の伝播と受容、また「神と人間と土地」というテーマを考える教材となりうる。フッタライトとは、宗教改革の時代に幼児洗礼を否定し成人洗礼を信じ実行したために「アナバプティスト（再洗礼主義者）」とよばれた宗教改革左派に属する人々の傍系で、聖書の「使徒行伝」にある愛の共同体にならい、財産の共有を主張し、簡易質素な共同生活を実践してきたキリスト教徒である。16世紀以来、迫害と殉教の歴史を背負うフッタライトは、定住の地を求めてヨーロッパ各地（チューリッヒ、モラヴィア、ウクライナ）を移動したあと、アメリカ合衆国、そしてカナダへと新天地を求めた。現在は、カナダ平原3州を中心に散在する300余の「コロニー」とよばれる集落で、固有の生活様式を維持している。日本のフッタライトは、聖書に精神的よりどころを得、カナダで具現されていた基督者協同体モデルを模して誕生した。本稿は、カナダのフッタライト協同体モデルはどのような性格をもち、日本のフッタライトはそれをこれまでどう受容してきたかの過程を探求する。