

Editor's Notes

INTERNATIONALIZATION has long been a much debated topic within Japan. Its meaning and significance for the country and its people have been the substance of countless journal and newspaper articles, television talk shows, political posturing and economic planning. Behind such theoretical speculation, however, the demographic changes Japan has experienced in the past decade give shape and color to the reality of an internationalizing society. In this issue of the *Japan Christian Review* we explore the multidimensional issue of internationalization in relation to the Christian community in Japan, both in terms of the challenges raised and the outreach demanded.

We begin our exploration with an article by Michael T. Seigel which examines the relationship between the two missional themes of inculturation and internationalization. For Seigel, both inculturation and internationalization are complex and ambiguous processes, and both lie at the heart of what it means to be Christian in Japan today. With their own internationality, Christian denominations have a particular contribution to make to the ongoing debate, but the value judgments involved are neither simple nor straightforward. Seigel challenges readers to look at the two dynamics in broader terms than usually understood.

One very obvious impact of the internationalization of Japanese society is the presence of relatively large numbers of foreign workers. Labor shortages coupled with Japan's heavy economic expansion overseas have drawn many to Japan in search of work. John Clammer's keen sociological

analysis of this phenomenon highlights the challenges it presents to ethnic identity, human rights, and Japan's role in the world.

The church's pastoral response to the stranger in its midst is the subject of Martin Dubuc's telling reflections on the Christian communities belonging to the Catholic parish of Fujisawa. The changes in Japanese society necessarily effect changes in the church and Fujisawa Parish is no exception. Cross-cultural conflict is unavoidable in a multicultural parish community, but Dubuc places the spotlight on one parish's attempt to resolve those conflicts and, in so doing, arrive at a deeper dimension of what it means to be Christian.

Jan Swyngedouw offers a personal reflection on the challenges of internationalization. He writes from the perspective of a missionary to Japan who spends six months of every year teaching in Cameroon and the Philippines. From that stand point, he questions the traditional stereotypes of Japan and Christianity and offers a new image of complementarity as the basis from which true internationalization emerges.

A clear sign of the internationalization of Japanese Christianity itself is the increasing numbers of Japanese Christians serving abroad as missionaries. Namikawa Miyako provides us with some data on this significant trend within a Roman Catholic context and then reflects on her personal experiences in serving a small, rural church community in Mexico.

Tomiyama Taeko follows with an article describing the deepening internationalization of her own faith. She traces her journey as a

of her own faith. She traces her journey as a painter and artist and relates her encounters with the Third World, especially her encounter with Korea and minjung theology. The encounters changed not only her art and but also her faith perspective.

Miyachi Yaeko's account of the collaboration needed for successful translations of the New Testament into Japanese in the nineteenth century provides an early example of internationalization. She focuses on the individual Japanese who were active in this effort and provides several valuable reference tables for students and scholars of biblical translation projects.

The "Perspectives" Department offers an insightful article on Japanese theology which compares the models of Christ found

in the theology of Yagi Seiichi and Kuribayashi Teruo. Dean looks at the question of who is Jesus for Japan and the answers given to that and other questions by Yagi and Kuribayashi. Each argues for a different model of Christ, but both draw on the experience and traditions of Japan. They both call for a distinctively Japanese approach to Christology.

Our "Features" Department again has a review of Christian periodical literature in Japan; it was written for this issue by Mizuno Kayano. Brendan Kelleher charts the Christian Year in Review and presents the current denominational statistics for our readers.

Cheryl Allam