

10

Self-Help Groups of Japanese Alcoholics: Their Movements and Cultural Influences.

OKA, Tomofumi. Sophia University, Tokyo, Japan.

Our paper has four parts. The first is on the outline of the history of Japanese alcoholics' self-help movements. The second is on the methods which Japanese alcoholics developed in their self-help groups. The third is on Japanese Alcoholics Anonymous. In the final part, we give some considerations about the future of Japanese alcoholic self-help movements.

1. The History of Japanese Alcoholic Self-Help Movements.

1.1. Introduction of Alcoholics Anonymous.

The first Japanese temperance group was formed in Tokyo, 1890. It extended itself to establish the national temperance alliance (Nihon Kinshu Renmei) in 1989. A leader of the organization noticed the existence of Alcoholics Anonymous, and he introduced the self-help group to Japanese people through their newsletter in 1950. Since then, the leaders of the temperance alliance visited United States to learn about Alcoholics Anonymous. In 1953, these leaders encouraged Japanese alcoholics to organize a self-help group of alcoholics. They operated their groups like Alcoholics Anonymous for the first six months(*1). However, they found that some principles of Alcoholics Anonymous were not suited to Japanese culture. They transformed methods of Alcoholics Anonymous and tried to adjust them to Japanese culture. The name of the group was Danshu-Tomo-no-Kai (Sobriety Friends Society.)(1:p. 2, 3:p. 30)

A leader of Danshu-Tomo-no-Kai was considered "dominant" (3:p.30), and he conflicted against the temperance alliance. As a result, the temperance alliance made a new self-help group, Danshu-Gojo-Kai (Sobriety Mutual-Help Society). In 1958(*2), several alcoholics from these two conflicting groups made the third self-help group. This group is Tokyo-Danshu-Shinsei-Kai (Tokyo Sobriety New Life Society). It was under the auspices of the temperance alliance. It was in 1962 that it got the complete independence from the temperance alliance (3:p.30). Tokyo-Danshu-Shinsei-Kai has developed greatly because of their strong public relations. Danshu-Tomo-no-Kai came to have over 2000 members in 1953(7:p.330), but it is not so active now.

Note:

(*1)In 1957, Alcoholics Anonymous was again started in a hospital. This group continued for ten years and disappeared (10:pp.6-7).

(*2)According to the reference book no.1, this group was started in 1957.

1.2. Development of All Nippon Sobriety Association (ANSA).

In 1958, a leader of the temperance alliance went and gave a speech in Kochi Prefecture. The speaker reported about Alcoholics Anonymous and Tokyo-Danshu-Shinsei-Kai in details. After hearing the speech, an alcoholic, Matsumura, proposed the audience to make a self-help group like Alcoholics Anonymous. Sixteen days after that, a self-help group of alcoholics, Kochiken-Danshu-Shinsei-Kai, was started. This group then included only two alcoholics; Matsumura and another man. They were supported by a psychiatry.

In 1963, Matsumura sent a letter to Tokyo-Danshu-Shinsei-Kai to come to Kochi Prefecture. He proposed to make the national self-help organization by the chance of the fifth anniversary of Kochiken-Danshu-Shinsei-Kai. As a result, some of the Tokyo group participated the fifth anniversary ceremony of Kochiken-Danshu-Shinsei-Kai, and the All Nippon Sobriety Association (ANSA)(*1) was established by only two local groups. Matsumura, the leader of Kochiken-Danshu-Shinsei-Kai, was nominated as the chairman of ANSA (3:pp.30-33).

After the birth of ANSA, Matsumura began a social education journey all over Japan. He tried to let numerous ANSA groups start all over Japan. As a result of his devotion, by 1965, ANSA group had the meetings in seventeen prefectures and cities (2:p.4). However, he fell down because of the brain disease in 1966. After his recovery, he resumed the journey and continued it until 1969 when he fell down again (3:pp.34-38). This disease eventually killed him in 1970.

In 1993, ANSA has 607 groups and about 50,000 members. It received grants from local governments and the amount of it reaches to ¥30,000,000 (\$300,000). (1:p.9)

Note:

(*1)Nippon means "Japan" in Japanese language. All Nippon Sobriety Association (ANSA) is the formal English name of Zenkoku Danshu Renmei.

1.3. The Rebirth of Japanese Alcoholics Anonymous.

As stated above, the activities of Alcoholics Anonymous were

introduced to Japanese people in the 1950s, and they tried to have meetings in the same way as Alcoholics Anonymous. After the attempt for half a year, however, Japanese alcoholics and their supporters came to think that this way was unsuited to Japanese culture. In particular, Japanese culture then saw a married couple as a unit of life. This, probably, included not only the cultural obedience of wives to husbands but also the lack of individualism in Japanese family.

However, this couple-centered approach is not applicable to single or divorced alcoholics. Japanese Alcoholics Anonymous was started by two catholic fathers in 1975(4,5:p.303-339). One was American, and another was Japanese. Alcoholics Anonymous has attracted numerous Japanese alcoholics, especially single or divorced men and women, who feel uncomfortable to ANSA's couple-centered approach. They spread in big cities such as Tokyo and Osaka, and 280 groups all over Japan. It is said that from 4000 to 5000 alcoholics participate the meetings(4).

2. The Unique Methods of Japanese Alcoholics Groups.

While Alcoholics Anonymous in Japan uses the exactly same concepts and ideas as those in the world, indigenous Japanese alcoholic self-help groups have developed their own methods and concepts. Some of them are transformed from Alcoholics Anonymous methods, and others are, probably, their original ones.

We take the methods of two groups. They are Danshu-Tomo-no-Kai and ANSA group. (Danshu-Tomo-no-Kai often call themselves "Dan-Yu" shortly. Dan-Yu means Sobriety Friends. We, therefore, use this short name in this paper.) As they were separated from the same group, their methods and concepts have many common points. However, the leaders of the two groups seemed to have different characters. Matsumura, the leader of ANSA group, went around Japan, and left no books. After his death, ANSA members and supportive professionals made a book(3) for his memory. Though the book is, sometimes, treated as the Bible for ANSA, it doesn't seem to be used among ANSA members as much as the Big Book among Alcoholics Anonymous members. Therefore, ANSA group seemed to have no sophisticated conceptual frameworks. Just recently, they started to make their theories clearer in a small booklet(6). They are so young that we are unable to know whether these concepts are well fitted to ANSA members. On the other hand, Kamihorinouchi, the leader of Dan-Yu, was interested in making books. He and his colleagues seemed to be ardent for making theories. We should notice that Dan-Yu names itself "Alcoholics

Anonymous" in English(7) though they didn't take the twelve steps. Dan-Yu considered itself nearer to their model, Alcoholics Anonymous than ANSA group. For example, Dan-Yu criticized ANSA against its adhesion to hospitals and mental health administrators.

2.1. Dan-Yu Method.

Dan-Yu group developed several original methods for their sobriety. They call them "Dan-Yu Method." We show some of their unique ways.

2.1.1. The Nine Traditions and The Five Conventions.

Dan-Yu group had the nine traditions and the five conventions. Neither of the two sets looked so sophisticated. They disappear in their new booklet(8). However, they express the nature of Dan-Yu group so well that we introduce them first.

The (Nine) Traditions.

(1) Dan-Yu group has the anonymity-spirit. We make our names clear. However, we are free from formalism and humble. We are egalitarian.

They don't have the anonymity principle that Alcoholics Anonymous keeps as their tradition. However, they insist that they share the "anonymity-spirit" with Alcoholics Anonymous. Anonymity-Spirit means, according to their theory, being free from formalism, humble, and egalitarian. However, Kamihorinouchi often appeared with his real name in mass communications such as radio, television, newspaper, and so on (7:pp.315-330).

(2) We are independent and depend on nobody. Our membership fees and contributions make our finance.

This tradition differentiates Dan-Yu group from ANSA group. ANSA group receives grants from local administrative organizations. Additionally, ANSA group is often supported by mental hospitals. Dan-Yu group criticizes this attitude of ANSA group as their adhesion to hospitals. Instead, Dan-Yu group refers to "The Third Therapy System" as their original method to cooperate with hospitals. "The Third" means a new developmental stage. Dan-Yu group tried to differentiate the role of Dan-Yu group and the role of hospitals concerning the support for alcoholics (7:pp.308-309).

(3) We have completely no relation with similar alcoholic self-help

groups. Their methods and ways of thinking are different from ours. We keep our purity as an organization for the rebirth of alcoholics.

This tradition implies their hostility against ANSA group. The Dan-Yu is older than The ANSA. However, ANSA group has much more members.

(4) Our groups should be family-like and cooperative. The harmony of people is important.

(5) We think that a married couple should be one body.

Dan-Yu group thinks that a member's wife has a strong power for his sobriety. Their writings often take a Japanese proverb, "A married couple is one body." Wives are encouraged to join at their meetings. On Mother's Day, Dan-Yu group has a "Meeting To Admire Our Wives." On the other hand, they have a "Meeting To Admire Our Husbands" on Father's Day. This policy clearly pays no attention to the fact that some alcoholics are single and/or female.

(6) We endeavor to change our personalities. We should become active, honest, humble, unselfish, generous, and grateful.

Alcoholics Anonymous and ANSA group consider alcoholism a disease. On the contrary, Dan-Yu group denies the idea that alcoholism is a disease. Instead, they consider it a result of defective personalities (7:p.306-307, p.325). See the ninth tradition.

(7) We should be philanthropic.

(8) We should be sober.

(9) We call not "alcoholic intoxication" but "alcoholic misfortune" or "liquor damage." We don't consider alcoholism a usual physical disease.

The (Five) Conventions.

(1) Our baseline is the sobriety oaths.

We introduce their sobriety oaths in 2.1.2.

(2) Our methods are the Eight Right Ways. They are Unity, Rebirth, Service, and Self-Awareness, Training, Support, Confession, Character-

Building.

The Eight Right Ways are divided into two groups. One is the group purposes. The three purposes are almost the same as what we read on the Alcoholics Anonymous' triangle symbol. They are Unity, Recovery, and Service. Dan-Yu group clearly learned them from Alcoholics Anonymous. The other is the ways that members take to seek the group purposes. These ways are called the Five Right Ways (7:pp.186-87).

(3) A day, a life. We are sober day by day. We are struggling with "Sobriety Markings."

Sobriety Markings is one of the ways that Dan-Yu group feels most proud of(7:p.332). "Sobriety Markings" is the English name that they created to introduce their ways to foreign alcoholics. "Markings" is an imitation of "score sheet" of Sumo wrestling. When a Sumo wrestler fight, he wins or loses. A day has a fight. This is like alcoholics who seek sobriety day by day. When he wakes up, he draws a white circle in the frame of "today." If he is sober until he goes to bed, he wins. A white circle is a symbol of win. If he drinks, he paints out a white circle to make a black circle. A black circle is a symbol of defeat. If a Sumo wrestler wins continuously and gets a long series of white circles, he will become a Yokozuna Champion. Dan-Yu group prepared a series of prizes whose names are the same as Sumo rankings, such as Yokozuna, Ozeki, Sekiwake, and so on.

(4) We attend "Gonin Gumi" meetings, Sister Society meetings, and the Central Meetings in the Three Stages Psychotherapy.

They call their therapeutic system the Three Stages Psychotherapy. "The Three" means 'Gonin Gumi' meeting, 'Shimai Gumi,' and the Central Meeting. We take this in detail at 2.1.3.

(5) We make service to the others. Our motivation is not sympathy. Our service makes active the life of alcoholics.

2.1.2. The Sobriety Oath.

Dan-Yu group has no twelve steps. Instead, they have the sobriety oath. Because Dan-Yu group thinks that they are the Japanese version of Alcoholics Anonymous, their oath reminds us of Alcoholics Anonymous' twelve steps. To make comparison with the twelve steps, we put side by side each piece of the oath and the counterpart of

Alcoholics Anonymous twelve steps. Dan-Yu's oath has five parts and a postscript.

(1) We admit we were captured by the demonic power of alcohol, and that we cannot manage ourselves by ourselves.

A.A.: We admitted we were powerless over alcohol - that our lives had become unmanageable. (The first step.)

(2) We believe that the power of Dan-Yu group can restore us and attend the regular meetings with effort.

A.A.: Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity. (The second step.)

(3) We depend on gods and Buddha, and ask them to remove our shortcomings.

A.A.: Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood him (The third step). Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character (The sixth step). Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings (The seventh step).

(4) We vow to examine our past faults all the time and to make as much amends as possible to those whom we have so far harmed.

A.A.: Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves (The fourth step). Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all (The eighth step). Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others (The ninth step).

(5) We vow to help and support each other, and to build a new life.

A.A.: (There is no step like this.)

(Postscript) We vow to practice those words, support Dan-Yu group, rescue ourselves and our families, and devote ourselves to those who have the same grief.

A.A.: Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs (The twelfth step).

We notice that Dan-Yu group took some of the twelve steps into their oaths and ignored the others. In the fourth chapter, we pay more attention to the differences from the cultural point of view.

2.1.3. "Gonin Gumi" and the Three Stages Group Psychotherapy.

'Gonin Gumi' is originally a mutual watch system of the Japanese feudal age. 'Gonin' means five persons, and 'Gumi' means groups. Until the middle of the previous century, Japanese rulers forced their people to have a group of five persons, and to observe each other to prevent crimes. They gave the people the joint responsibility for their behaviors. If a member of a group did bad things, all the members were punished. The name of 'Gonin Gumi' remains after the end of the feudal age, and it is sometimes used as a name of neighborhood mutual help groups.

Dan-Yu group also named their small groups 'Gonin Gumi.' Five members in vicinity make a 'Gonin Gumi.' They support each other. Dan-Yu group recommends that members and their wives participate 'Gonin Gumi' together. As a result, A meeting of 'Gonin Gumi' usually has about ten persons. (They don't seem to think of single men and female alcoholics.)(7:pp.52-62).

Additionally, Dan-Yu group has a system that they call Sandankai-Shudan-Seishin-Ryoho (Three Stages Group Psychotherapy). In this system, members participate a small group ('Gonin Gumi' meeting), a middle group ('Shimai Gumi' meeting), and a large group (the Central meeting). The small meeting of 'Gonin Gumi' is closed to outsiders. It is held at members' private houses by turn. Each 'Gonin Gumi' has sister groups. All the 'Gonin Gumi' members in the sister-group affiliation participate 'Shimai Gumi' meetings. 'Shimai' means sisters. 'Shimai Gumi' meetings are open to outsiders. The central meeting is a place where any Dan-Yu members and outsiders can participate. The central meetings often have guest speakers who are medical doctors and social workers.(7:pp.295-299, 8:pp.3-4).

2.1.4. Ceremonies.

Dan-Yu group has simple ceremonies. For example, the central meetings are held every three weeks. Their meetings start by chorusing the Sobriety Oath, and end by "Linking Hands ('Rensa Akushu')." All the participants link their hands to make one circle. They swing their hands greatly and shout three times, "Let's hold out! Let's hold out! Let's hold out!"(7:p.65). Linking Hands remains in ANSA group. In ANSA group, members chorus, "Wiser! stronger! more serious! let's go! let's go!"(10:p.188).

2.2. ANSA Method (Matsumura Method).

ANSA group has the similar nature to Dan-Yu group. Their methods

are male-oriented and request the members' wives to cooperate for their husbands' sobriety. A book, which is very important to ANSA group, call their ways Matsumura Method, because they think that their great leader, Matsumura, developed their methods. However, on the contrary to Kamihorinouchi, the leader of Dan-Yu group, Matsumura seemed to be interested in practice rather than theories. Matsumura did not write any book. He went around Japan, and he met numerous alcoholics. He gave different words to different alcoholics. He was not dogmatic. He put more importance on practice rather than theory or words. ANSA also has some sets of Oaths. However, they are created by a medical doctor, not an alcoholic. We understand this fact not as a proof that ANSA group is led by medical doctors, but as a proof that they are not interested in words. As a result, ANSA had fewer systematic theories than Dan-Yu group had. However, just recently, they started to build some theories. They are "Guidelines and Standards." We introduce here their Oaths, "Guidelines and Standards." Additionally, we point out some differences between the principles of ANSA group and Dan-Yu group.

2.2.1. Procedures.

ANSA meetings have a procedure(9:pp.206-207)(*1).

- (1) an opening greeting by the facilitator.
- (2) a silent prayer.
- (3) a chorus of the Sobriety Oath.
- (4) introducing newcomers.
- (5) Members talk their experiences.
- (6) free talkings.
- (7) a chorus of the Sobriety Song.
- (8) linking hands.
- (9) a closing greeting.

In the time of a silent prayer, the member and their families respectively read "Spiritual Oath" and "Family's Oath." We translate these oaths as follows.

Note:

(*1) In some meetings, this procedure is simplified (10:pp.188-189).

2.2.2. "Spiritual Oath, "Family's Oath," and "Sobriety Oath."

Spiritual Oath is read by alcoholics. They say, "I joined ANSA group and stopped drinking. Whatever happens since now, I won't dispel my gloom by drinking. I won't be mean. I won't drink any

liquor since now. Because numerous comrades stopped drinking, it is impossible that I cannot stop drinking. I can stop drinking completely. From the bottom of my heart, I vow to stop drinking."

On the other hand, Family's Oath is read by alcoholics' family members. It is written on the assumption that a wife prays for her alcoholic husband's sobriety. They say, "My husband joined ANSA group. I suppose that he really has a hard time because he stopped drinking that he loves so much. I think that he is great because he decided not to drink. His habit of drinking is a disease. It must be cured because it is a disease. It can be cured. His affliction is my affliction. To stop his drinking, I help him as much as possible, share the affliction with him, and cooperate with him to cure it. I vow to cooperate with ANSA members to help him stop drinking.(*1)"

The Sobriety Oath has five parts.

- (1) We admit that we were captured by the demonic power of alcohol, and that we could not manage ourselves by ourselves.
- (2) We realize our past wrongdoings, and make as much amends as possible to those whom we harmed.
- (3) We help each other, conquer our drinking habit, and build a new brave life.
- (4) We become advisers for those who are suffering from their drinking habit and encourage them to stop drinking.
- (5) We unite each other as ANSA comrades regardless of our different religious or political thoughts.

These three oaths were created by a psychiatry that let ANSA group start with Matsumura.

The Sobriety Song has three parts.

- (1) We have cut off our past when we are suffering from our drinking habit. We live to be sober. This is our life. With a new spirit and hope, let's walk the way of sobriety. ANSA group is bravely developing.
- (2) Each of us has a strong spiritual tie with sobriety comrades. We encourage each other, and have a blazing hope. Let's go forward the way of sobriety. ANSA group is bravely developing.
- (3) With an inflexible determination, we go up the steep road. We are bravely and proudly linking hands. We look for the future and have hopeful tomorrow. Let's build the way of sobriety. ANSA group is bravely developing.

Note:

(*1)A psychiatry criticizes this oath (10:p.191-192). According to him, this is an expression of an old Japanese proverb, "Husband is

the ruler of the house.”

2.2.3. The Guidelines and Standards.

ANSA group had not been interested in creating new concepts and theories. However, in 1993, they made public their "Guidelines and Standards." Clearly they created them to have such principles as the twelve steps and the twelve traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous.

2.2.3.1. The Guidelines for Sobriety.

These guidelines are the counterpart to the twelve steps of Alcoholics Anonymous.

- (1) We admit we are powerless over alcohol and that we couldn't manage ourselves by ourselves.
- (2) We participate the regular meetings and frankly talk about ourselves.
- (3) We dig up our experience of harmful drinking and honestly admit it. We humbly listen to the other members' stories and deepen our insight on ourselves.
- (4) We admit the interaction of our personalities and the bonds of our hearts make our sobriety possible and deepen the mutual trust among the members.
- (5) We endeavor to improve ourselves and create a new life.
- (6) We make amends to our families and the persons we harmed.
- (7) We carry our joy of sobriety to the persons troubled by harmful drinking.

2.2.3.2. The Standards of the ANSA group.

These standards correspond to the Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous. We put the corresponding Tradition under each of the Standards if there is. If the corresponding Tradition is against the Standard, we put (*) in front of the Tradition.

- (1) The ANSA group is a self-help group made by alcoholics for alcoholics.
- (2) Anybody who wants to stop drinking can join the ANSA group.
A.A.: The only requirement for AA membership is a desire to stop drinking.
- (3) The members of the ANSA group, in principle, make their names clear.

(*)A.A.: Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

(4) The activities of the ANSA group are, in principle, free of charge.

(5) In the regular meetings of the ANSA group, all the members are equal, and there is no king.

A.A.: For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority - a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern (the second Tradition.)

(6) From the beginning to the end of the regular meetings, we talk about our own experiences.

(7) In the regular meetings, the participation of our families is important.

(8) The ANSA group makes social contribution through the counseling service and social education on harmful drinking.

A.A.: Each group has but one primary purpose - to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers (the fifth Tradition).

(9) The ANSA group is managed on membership fees. It can receive subsidies and donations of good will.

(*)A.A.: Every AA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions (the seventh Tradition).

(10) The ANSA group is not exploited by political, religious, and commercial activities.

2.2.4. The Differences between ANSA and Dan-Yu group.

ANSA and Dan-Yu group have many common points. However, there are several differences.

First, ANSA group has much closer relations with hospitals and local administrative organizations than Dan-Yu group. While Dan-Yu group doesn't receive any money from outsiders, ANSA group gets a great amount of grant from local administration. The fact that a psychiatry created the ANSA's sets of oaths may tell us that ANSA group is proud of professional support.

Second, while Dan-Yu group has completely closed meetings like 'Gonin Gumi,' all the ANSA meetings are open to outsiders. Medical professionals and social workers participate their meetings.

Third, Dan-Yu group developed many concepts and theories. They sometimes looked confusing. On the other hand, ANSA group had few theories until the Guidelines and Standards were published.

3. Japanese Culture and Alcoholics Anonymous.

3.1. Demographic Change of Japanese Alcoholics.

The greatest difference between Alcoholics Anonymous and Dan-Yu and ANSA group is that the method of Dan-Yu and ANSA group is male-oriented and couple-centered. In the 1950s when Dan-Yu and ANSA group started, few women drank. However, most women today work and many traditions oppressing Japanese women disappeared. Many Japanese women also begin to become alcoholic. On the other hand, Japanese traditional values on marriage also changed. The divorce rate is going up, and the stigma of the divorced is decreasing. After all, it becomes hard to say, "A Man and his wife are one body." As the society becomes rich, additionally, young people drink more and they are likely to become alcoholics. However, these new kinds of alcoholics such as women, divorced men, and unmarried young people cannot find a comfortable place in Dan-Yu or ANSA group. This is one reason why Alcoholics Anonymous is developing recently in Japanese big cities (4,11:pp.293-294).

3.2. Socioeconomic Status and Alcoholics Anonymous.

Japanese professionals tend to refer single and poor alcoholics to Alcoholics Anonymous and married and rich ones to ANSA group. Those who lost their family and job because of their alcoholism hesitate to participate ANSA group. On the contrary, people hesitate to attend AA meetings in the business suits (4).

3.3. The Different Meanings of the Meetings.

ANSA group meetings usually have many members(*1). Their air is more formal and ceremonial. The participants wear formally. They have informal conversation before and after the meetings. On the other hand, AA meetings are more informal and relaxed. The participants wear Jeans or casual clothes. They talk freely in the meetings. After the meetings, however, they disperse. Thus, Japanese AA members tend to have their relations with each other only in meetings. On the contrary, ANSA members tend to have relations out of meetings as well. Additionally, AA meetings recognize the participants' right of

silence. On the other hand, in ANSA meetings, the facilitator encouraged any participant to talk about their experience (11:p.293).

Note:

(*1)A report says that an ANSA meeting has about fifty participants (12:p.1512).

3.4. Al-Anon and Alcoholics Anonymous.

In Japan, Al-Anon group is also active. Al-Anon members think that they themselves need to recover. Consequently, alcoholics and their spouses participate separate meetings. This way of thinking is completely contrary to ANSA group's idea that the spouses should help their alcoholics to stop drinking.

3.5. The Problems of Words.

A problem that Alcoholics Anonymous has in Japan is that members don't read their books well. Because they are not so interested in their books and booklets, some of them don't understand Alcoholics Anonymous (13). We point out two reasons for that.

First, Alcoholics Anonymous clearly has its cultural and spiritual roots in Judeo-Christian traditions. Therefore, some of words and concepts are not easy for Japanese to access. For example, as stated above, ANSA group's oaths include no prayers for God or Power. Even AA members hesitate to talk about God. Instead of God, they talk about Higher Power. However, Higher Power is not included Japanese vocabulary. This kind of translated strange words makes it hard for Japanese alcoholics to read AA books.

Second, Japanese culture traditionally put more importance on sensitivity rather than on logic. For example, think of Zen. Zen's truth is beyond words. Shintoism, the indigenous Japanese religion, has completely no Bibles. Japanese Buddhists have had almost no interest in translating Buddhist books into Japanese. If Japanese culture were logic-oriented, they would make the Twelve Steps and the Twelve Traditions more complicated and larger. However, the reverse was the case. Both of Dan-Yu group and ANSA group simplified and shortened the Twelve Steps and Traditions. The Westerners have the Bible. They have a custom of reading a book repeatedly and together with the others. Japanese people don't. They have no custom of keeping the Bible.

4. The Future of Alcoholic Self-Help Movements in Japan.

4.1. The Increase of Young, Unmarried, or Female Alcoholics.

The amount of consumed liquor is rapidly increasing in Japan. Consequently, we suppose that the number of alcoholics is increasing as well. First, more and more Japanese women are free from the traditional values and participate the business world. In Japanese business world, it is important to drink with business partners. They often have to be used to drinking. This is a reason that the female alcoholics are increasing in number. Second, as the society becomes rich, young people have enough money to drink much. Third, as the traditional values on family weaken, the divorce rate is higher and the marriage rate is lower. The number of single alcoholics is clearly increasing. Consequently, we suppose that Alcoholics Anonymous attracts more and more Japanese people. On the other hand, ANSA group, which is male-oriented and couple-centered, may attract the limited population of alcoholics (*1).

Note:

(*1)ANSA group partly tries to have female members and single members by making special meetings for women or single men (12:p.1512-1513).

4.2. Japanese Social Policy and Self-Help Movements.

Japanese administrative organizations have tried to absorb many self-help organizations and some of their trials got the ends. For example, the administrative organizations commissioned self-help groups of physically handicapped persons to nominate public advisers. Consequently, their leaders became public advisers. By the fact that their leaders do public work, their self-help organizations got the legitimacy and easily received grants from local administrative organizations. In place of that, however, their organizations lost any critical attitude against the local administrative organizations. They lost voluntarism and new leaders didn't appear. Their leaders sometimes work as if they were local government employees.

Recently, Japanese welfare and health administrative organizations pay more attention to self-help groups. In many places, already, the leaders of ANSA group become public advisers and work in public health centers (11:p.293). We are afraid that this trend might weaken the voluntarism of ANSA group.

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