

ABSTRACTS

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1) JAPANESE RELIGIONS IN A GLOBALIZED WORLD – some considerations based on case studies in Brazil

Brazil has the largest Japanese expatriate community and as such might be the country with the largest number of Japanese religions as well. These religions compose a diverse field not only in terms of doctrinaire orientation but also in scale and scope. Research on the transplantation of these religions to alien societies has indicated various elements that affect their chances for survival and growth, such as the demand for new spiritual alternatives and the degree of legal and social openness in the host societies, or a body of teachings that favors proselytism. Based on some study cases of Japanese religions in Brazil, this paper argues that in a globalized world the role of charismatic and strategically smart leadership is crucial for the growing phenomenon of religious transnationalization.

2) RELIGION AND EDUCATION: challenges to the old Catholic monopoly in Brazil

For three centuries the Roman Catholic Church guaranteed its monopoly in the religious as well as in the educational arena due to its alliance with the Portuguese Crown. Even after Brazil's independence, in 1822, until the establishment of a republican regime in 1889, Catholicism kept its position of state religion even though it had to face a minor secular and public competition in the educational field. However, the 20th century witnessed both a decline in the number of Catholics, the booming of new creeds, and the establishment of numerous non-Catholic private schools. As a reaction against the increasing hegemony of the scientific discourse and also as a mean to interfere in this discourse while carving a legitimate space in society, many religions have established their own educational system,

publishing houses and other means of communication. Taking this into consideration, this paper will show the current situation of teaching religious cultures within public and private universities in Brazil.