

Coming to Terms with “Reverence at Shrines”

The 1932 Sophia University–Yasukuni Shrine Incident

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On 5 May 1932 the military training officer attached to Sophia University led a group of students to Yasukuni Shrine 靖国神社, just a few blocks away. The spirits of the Japanese soldiers who had died in China following the eruption of the Manchurian Incident the previous September had recently been enshrined, and groups of students from various schools in Tokyo were making pilgrimages to the shrine to pay them homage. The Sophia students were to do the same. As it happened, however, three students who were Catholic did not take part in the act of homage. The next day, when the officer confronted the university president, Hermann Hoffmann (1864–1937), over this matter, Hoffmann confirmed that the Church indeed forbade believers to engage in acts of reverence (*sanpai* 参拜) at Shinto shrines, including Yasukuni, Ise 伊勢, and Meiji 明治. Thus began an incident that was to shake the young Jesuit university (founded in 1913) to its roots. The 1932 Sophia University–Yasukuni Shrine incident was not the first clash between Catholic believers and government representatives over shrine reverence (*jinja sanpai* 神社参拜); in many ways it reprised issues

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that had been debated repeatedly in the preceding decades. Those issues had been contested as well by Protestant Christian and Buddhist (particularly Shin school) groups. But the scale of the Sophia incident was unprecedented, and it was to have major repercussions for the Church's policy on shrines. It would leave a stamp, too, on the government's official stance regarding the meaning of shrine reverence. As such the incident occupies a place of some importance in the fraught history of the relationship between religion and shrines, state and Shinto, in prewar Japan.

THE STATE'S POSITION ON SHRINES

The status of shrines was a matter of considerable controversy throughout the Meiji, Taishō, and early Shōwa periods. The years immediately following the Restoration saw a brief attempt to create a theocratic polity. In 1868 the emperor declared "reverence for deities and emphasis on rites" to be "the great principle of the imperial nation." Two years later, at the beginning of 1870, "to foster widely the great divine way" and disseminate the teachings fundamental to orderly rule, he announced the appointment of "promulgators of teaching" (*senkyōshi* 宣教使). It was assumed that shrine priests would play a major role in the "promulgation of the great teaching." To substantiate shrine priests' semiofficial function, in 1871 shrines were defined as not the "private holdings" of individual priestly houses, but as public entities, the site of the "rites of state" (*kokka no sōshi* 国家ノ宗祀).¹ Soon, however, partly in response to initiatives taken by Buddhist groups, partly in reaction to infighting among Shinto partisans, government leaders began to take a more restrained stance regarding the place of shrines and shrine priests in the new order. Reversing its previous position, in 1882 the government ordered that priests of shrines above the prefectural level were not to engage in activities such as propagating doctrine or conducting funerals. In principle such practices—in other words, what might be understood as "religious" undertakings—were to be reserved for confraternities, which

1. For these measures see Yasumaru and Miyachi 1988, pp. 429, 431–32, 437. For an overview of the history of government policy concerning shrines and Shinto, see Hardacre 1989, Nitta 2000, and Sakamoto 2000. See also Holtom 1922, 1938, and 1947.

were to be kept distinct from shrines as such, and conducted in confraternity churches (*kyōkai* 教会, *kōsha* 講社).² Ultimately the most substantial of these confraternities evolved into the so-called religious Shinto sects (*shūha shintō* 宗派神道, *kyōha shintō* 教派神道).

Parallel to taking a more distanced position on shrines, the government moved to establish the basic parameters of a formally secular state, a process that culminated in 1889 in the promulgation of the Meiji Constitution. Itō Hirobumi 伊藤博文 (1841–1909), the government leader primarily responsible for overseeing the compilation of the constitution, resisted the suggestion of foreign advisers such as Rudolf von Gneist (1816–1895) that Japan should adopt a state religion (which Gneist assumed would be Buddhism), and, as confirmation of the state’s impartiality on religious matters, Article 28 of the Meiji Constitution provided that “Japanese subjects shall, within limits not prejudicial to peace and order, and not antagonistic to their duties as subjects, enjoy freedom of religious belief.”³

What this constitutional provision meant for shrines remained uncertain. Although the issue was broached on more than one occasion during the deliberations leading up to the constitution’s promulgation, government leaders preferred to leave unspecified how freedom of religious belief might bear on the status of shrines. The scholar Nishi Amane 西周 (1829–1897), for example, prepared a draft constitution in 1882 at the request of the government leader Yamagata Aritomo 山県有朋 (1838–1922). In his draft Nishi included, in addition to an article concerning freedom of religious belief, one stating that “the rites conducted at indigenous shrines are intended to recompense benefits received and to manifest virtue; they are not an instrument of belief. Each individual is free to offer [such rites] or not.”⁴ Commenting on this draft, however, the government adviser Inoue Kowashi 井上毅 (1844–1895), who played a central part in the overall compilation process

2. Yasumaru and Miyachi 1988, p. 480.

3. See Pittau 1967, pp. 45, 144, 182–84; Abe 1969.

4. Nishi 1962, p. 206; Inada 1960–1962, vol. 2, pp. 557–58. In quoting the shrine article, Inada reads as “*kokuyū jinja*” 国有神社 (“nationally held shrines”) the term rendered in Nishi 1962 as “*koyū jinja*” 固有神社 (“indigenous shrines”). See also Abe 1969, pp. 68–69.

(and who personally took a quite secular, Confucian perspective on Shinto and shrines), observed that such an article was unnecessary.⁵

The shrine issue came up again in a somewhat more indirect form in the 1888 Privy Council deliberations on the final draft of the constitution. Whereas the deliberative committee approved most of the articles without debate, two members posed a hypothetical question in regard to Article 28 about what would happen should a government official refuse for reasons of personal religious faith to take part in court rites conducted in the presence of the emperor. While acknowledging that such a situation was not relevant to the populace as a whole and did not fall under the categories of “prejudicial to peace and order” or “antagonistic to their duties as subjects,” the questioners pointed out that under the provisions of Article 28, nothing could be done about this serious potential problem. Itō Hirobumi, chairing the deliberative committee, put an end to the debate that threatened to break out over the issue by stating that as a hypothetical rather than immediate problem, it should be left up to the wisdom of future government leaders.⁶

In the 1880s figures such as Itō Hirobumi and Inoue Kowashi perhaps did not envision there to be a substantive possibility that people might refuse on religious grounds to participate in shrine rites. Equally it seems clear that they did not assume a situation in which such participation would be required as one’s “duty as a subject.” By deferring definition of the relationship between shrines and freedom of belief to future developments and perspectives, however, they also left pending an issue that in the following decades would become increasingly divisive and difficult to resolve.

5. Nishi 1962, p. 200; Inada 1960–1962, vol. 2, p. 564. On Inoue’s perspective, see Gluck 1985, pp. 77, 120–23; and Saitō 2006. Inoue believed that to avoid arousing sectarian strife, the government should not involve itself in religious matters. One of the chief architects of the 1890 Rescript on Education as well as the constitution, he insisted that the former should not include any reference to “respect for Heaven, reverence for deities” (*keiten sonshin* 敬天尊神) and interpreted the phrase “imperial ancestors” (*kōso kōsō* 皇祖皇宗), often held to refer to Amaterasu and the later emperors, to indicate instead simply the line of emperors beginning with Jinmu 神武. Saitō 2006, pp. 230–31, 315–16.

6. Shimizu 1973, vol. 3, pp. 243–46; *Sūmitsuin kaigi gijiroku*, vol. 1, pp. 229–31. The deliberative committee approved most of the other articles in this section unanimously, but when Itō called for the vote on this article, four of the twenty-two committee members present did not stand in approval. See also Nitta 2000, p. 253; Nitta 1997, pp. 67–68.

What above all brought this issue to the fore was the growing tendency from early in the twentieth century for various government figures and agencies to encourage *jinja sanpai* as a normative practice. Concerned about rural revitalization and about social unrest in the wake of the Great Treason Incident of 1910, and responding as well to demands on the part of Diet members and shrine priests, government officials began to actively promote “respect for deities and reverence for ancestors” (*keishin sūso* 敬神崇祖) as a core principle of national morality (*kokumin dōtoku* 国民道德).⁷ The periodic addresses (*kunji* 訓示) to the assembly of prefectural officials given by the home minister from 1890 on serve as a good illustration. In these talks the home minister typically took up topics of significance to local administration, such as public works, policing, and sanitation, but beginning in 1911, along with improving local morals, the need to encourage reverence and support for shrines became a regular theme as well.⁸ At the 1911 meeting, the minister of education, Komatsubara Eitarō 小松原英太郎 (1852–1919), joined the home minister in emphasizing the importance of reverence for shrines.⁹ The same year, providing concrete guidance for how to inculcate such reverence, the Ministry of Education issued a directive to prefectural officials that called on them to urge school principals and teachers to conduct their charges to local shrines to perform *sanpai*.¹⁰

A series of events of national import provided natural occasions for implementing this directive: In 1912, as Emperor Meiji lay dying, school prin-

7. See Gluck 1985, pp. 138–42; Kōmoto 1978, pp. 315–35. On the evolution of government shrine policy from the late nineteenth to the early twentieth century, see Sakamoto 1994, pp. 295–317.

8. Volume 4 of *Naimushō shi*, pp. 322–545, contains all the addresses that are extant; a number of the early ones exist only in summary form. For the 1911 talk, by Hirata Tōsuke 平田東助 (1849–1925), see p. 366.

9. For Komatsubara’s participation in the meeting with prefectural officials, see *Koe* 427 (June 1911), pp. 29–30; 428 (June 1911), pp. 36–37. The latter reproduces an editorial that had appeared in the *Yomiuri shinbun* on 28 May 1911. For *Koe*, a Catholic periodical intended for general believers, see below, p. 119.

10. For Komatsubara’s directive, see Holtom 1922, pp. 41–42; and Holtom 1938, p. 73. For a few years in early Meiji some areas such as Nagasaki seem to have included *jinja sanpai* as part of the round of school activities. In the case of Nagasaki this custom was then discontinued for several decades. *Sanpai* by schoolchildren as a general practice dates from the 1910s. See Yamamoto and Konno 1987, pp. 60–61; Yamamoto and Konno 1986, vol. 1, p. 284.

cipals and teachers throughout the country took their pupils to shrines to pray for his recovery; three years later, in November 1915, schools organized rites at shrines to coincide with the enthronement ceremony (*daijōsai* 大嘗祭) of Emperor Taishō. Japan's participation in the First World War likewise spurred the collective offering of prayers for victory at local shrines. Another circumstance focusing attention on shrines was the decision to build a major shrine in Tokyo dedicated to Emperor Meiji. Contributions to various aspects of the project were solicited from the general populace, and once the shrine was completed and the spirit of the deceased emperor enshrined in 1920, it became a common practice for local groups to offer "reverence from afar" (*yōhai* 遙拜) on the shrine's festival day. The custom of offering reverence from afar on Yasukuni Shrine's festival days and taking students to local shrines for the war dead (*shōkonsha* 招魂社) also became widely established in these years (to perform *yōhai*, the assembled participants would bow in unison in the direction of the shrine in question). Taishō's illness and death in 1926 and the enthronement ceremonies for Emperor Shōwa in 1928 served as yet other nationwide occasions for cultivating "respect for deities and reverence for ancestors," as did the completion in the fall of 1929 of the twenty-year cycle for the rebuilding of Ise Shrine. In the last case, the Ministry of Education distributed orders to prefectural officials at the end of August about the manner for performing "reverence from afar" on the occasion of the deities' transfer from the old shrines to the new, and the prefectures in turn called on the schools under their jurisdiction to implement appropriate ceremonies on that day.¹¹

The move by the Home Ministry, Ministry of Education, and prefectural and local officials to encourage *jinja sanpai* and *yōhai* as regular school activities brought into the open the fault line in the relationship between shrines and freedom of belief that figures such as Itō Hirobumi and Inoue Kowashi had preferred to leave latent. Pointing to what they held to be evidence of the fundamentally religious nature of shrines—the offering of prayers, distribution of amulets, and so forth—Christian and Shin Buddhist groups and a number of scholars and intellectuals raised objections to

11. On the spread of the practice of *sanpai* and *yōhai*, see Yamamoto and Konno 1986, vol. 1, esp. pp. 163–204, 214–17, 274–339; see also Akazawa 1985, pp. 53–56. For the building of Meiji Shrine and the campaign for general contributions, see Yamaguchi 1993 and 2005. Regarding the *yōhai* ceremonies at the time of the 1929 Ise Shrine rebuilding, see below, pp. 125–27. See also Takagi 1985, vol. 1, pp. 252–58.

requiring schoolchildren to participate in *jinja sanpai* and *yōhai*. As these critics put it, requiring *sanpai* compelled the adherents of other faiths to participate, contrary to their convictions, in the rites of what was in effect another religion. It thus contravened the principle of freedom of belief established by Article 28 of the Meiji Constitution. To resolve this conflict, either the religious elements should be removed from shrines, so that the believers of other faiths could show their patriotic commitment through *sanpai* without going against their conscience, or the government and schools should cease requiring *sanpai*.¹²

Government spokesmen responded to these objections with a number of counterarguments. Perhaps the most basic was the oft-repeated assertion that from a legal, jurisdictional perspective shrines were not religious because the government dealt with them differently than it did with religious groups—namely Buddhist schools, Christian denominations, and the Shinto sects. The first step in this direction had been the 1882 demarcation of the activities of shrine priests from those who engaged in proselytizing and the conduct of funerals. A second step had come in 1900 when the government had separated into two the bureau within the Home Ministry that hitherto had been responsible for supervising both shrines and religious groups. Henceforth there were two offices: the Shrine Bureau (*Jinja Kyoku* 神社局), with jurisdiction over shrines, and the Religions Bureau (*Shūkyō Kyoku* 宗教局), with jurisdiction over Christian, Buddhist, and Sect Shinto organizations. Drawing the line yet more firmly, in 1913, the government transferred the Religions Bureau from the Home Ministry to the Ministry of Education. Now it was not just two bureaus within one ministry that were respectively responsible for matters pertaining to shrines and to religion, but two separate ministries.

To counter objections to requiring *sanpai*, government figures also asserted that *sanpai* to shrines should be distinguished from the attitudes associated with religious belief. In a 1911 article in the journal of the Shrine Association (*Jinja Kyōkai* 神社協会), for instance, the Home Ministry official (and later head of the Shrine Bureau) Tsukamoto Seiji 塚本清治 (1872–1945) bewailed the fact that, despite the clear jurisdictional demarcation between

12. On the development of this debate, see Akazawa 1985, Kōmoto 1978, and Tomura 1976. A related issue, raised especially by Shin Buddhist groups, was the pressure for households to receive *taima* 大麻 votive tablets from the Ise Shrine.

shrines and religion, people continued to confuse the two. This happened, he argued, because they confused “Shinto” (in other words, Sect Shinto) with shrines. Alluding to the 1882 directive, he pointed out that Shinto churches (*shintō kyōkai*, i.e., the sites of Sect Shinto) were not to encourage the ordinary populace (as opposed to their specific followers) to engage in *sanpai* at such churches. Further, adherents (*kiesha* 帰依者) of Shinto, like those of other religions, were called “believers” (*shinto* 信徒). For shrines, however, the appropriate term was “those who offer homage” (*sūkeisha* 崇敬者).¹³ Put slightly differently, “belief” (*shinkyō* 信教), fundamental to “religion,” was to be distinguished from “homage” (*sūkei*). If people wished to “believe” in shrines, that was their personal matter; unlike “homage,” “belief” was not something intrinsic to shrines. In the face of *jinja sanpai* opponents’ reluctance to accept such arguments and these critics’ counterclaims, government spokesmen also resorted to trying to differentiate between “philosophical” or “academic” views of shrines (where, they admitted, opinions about shrines’ religious or nonreligious character might diverge) and the actuality of shrines’ institutional existence, which by virtue of state jurisdictional arrangements was clearly nonreligious.¹⁴

It proved impossible, however, to put the claim as to the nonreligious character of shrines beyond debate. Indeed it was awkward for government bureaucrats to try to define in detail what it was about shrines or the activities conducted there that made them nonreligious because opponents of *jinja sanpai* were not the only ones to assert that shrines and shrine rites should be recognized as religious. Those who advanced “philosophical” or “academic” views of shrines as religious included a number of prominent shrine advocates, such as the legal scholar Kakehi Katsuhiko 笥克彦 (1872–1961), the authority on philosophy and national morality Inoue Tetsujirō 井上哲次郎 (1856–1944), and the scholar of religion Katō Genchi 加藤玄智 (1873–1965). These figures agreed that shrines were fundamentally religious in character, although they did not see that circumstance as posing an obstacle to upholding Article 28, which they regarded rather as guaranteeing the parallel pur-

13. The article was quoted in *Koe* 429 (August 1911), p. 30. For a statement Tsukamoto made some years later in 1918, when he was head of the Shrine Bureau, summing up his views of the matter, see the extended translation in Holtom 1922, pp. 43–46.

14. On such government arguments, see Sakamoto 2007, pp. 368–76.

suit of private religious faith.¹⁵ Significant figures in the shrine world likewise protested any potential attempt to reduce shrines’ religious aura. In 1930, a shrine priest organization issued a statement, for instance, declaring, “To rob shrines of the source of their miraculous efficacy, [...] ignore the existence of the divine spirits (*shinrei* 神霊) to whom should be shown awesome reverence, and turn what are vital and alive shrines into dead memorials would be an extremely shortsighted act destructive of shrines’ true meaning.”¹⁶ From the mid-1920s to the early 1930s the controversy escalated as the hearings of two successive government advisory committees provided semiofficial forums for airing differences of opinion on the matter.

The first of these committees was the Committee for the Study of Religious Administration (*Shūkyō Seido Chōsakai* 宗教制度調査会), set up in 1926 to review the draft of a proposed Religions Bill. Consisting of thirteen government representatives (including five scholars, such as Anesaki Masaharu 姉崎正治, 1873–1949, from Tokyo Imperial University), thirteen Diet members, and thirteen figures from the religious world (Sect Shinto, Buddhist, and Christian), the committee was supposed to consider the bill’s various provisions, which dealt exclusively with those groups defined by the government as religious (and thus did not touch on matters concerning shrines). Although shrines were in principle outside the committee’s designated purview, from the first general meeting, members raised the issue of shrines and *sanpai*, and that topic continued to dominate the discussion throughout the initial six general sessions. The debate continued in the House of Peers hearing on the bill and on a revised version of it, the Religious Organizations Bill, submitted in 1928 after the original bill failed to clear the Diet hearings.¹⁷ The second committee, the Committee for the Study of Shrine Administration (*Jinja Seido Chōsakai* 神社制度調査会), was set up at the end of 1929 explicitly to address matters concerning shrines and had as one of its charges

15. For an extensive survey of views on the religious versus nonreligious character of shrines, see Holtom 1922. For a summary of the arguments of Kakehi and Inoue, see *Koe* 486 (1916), pp. 39–42. See also Tomura 1976, pp. 5–23.

16. From the statement submitted by the Tokyo Shrine Priest Organization (*Tōkyō-fu Shinshoku Sōdai* 東京府神職総代) to the *Jinja Seido Chōsakai* 神社制度調査会 (see below) in 1930. Quoted in Tagawa 1938, pp. 94–96. See also Sakamoto 2007, pp. 376–78.

17. See Akazawa 1985, pp. 108–50. On the Religions Bill and Religious Organizations Bill, also see Abe 1970, pp. 61–79.

to consider the relationship of shrines to religion. Various interested parties, including the Shin Buddhist school, the Tokyo Shrine Priest Organization, and the Protestant National Christian Council submitted statements of their views on the matter to the committee.¹⁸ The result was a protracted, at times heated, debate by the committee members that between 1930 and 1933 swirled inconclusively around the shrine-religion issue and exposed a variety of shades of opinion and differences of view among those linked to shrine policy as well as among the broader advisory group.¹⁹ The Sophia–Yasukuni Shrine Incident took place against the backdrop of this situation.

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH'S POSITION

The Catholic Church's position on shrines in the modern period took shape in tandem with the developments sketched above.²⁰ Church representatives initially saw shrines not as a separate issue but as a component in the mixture of traditional Japanese religious practices forbidden to Catholic believers as superstitious. Early versions of the catechism produced by the different dioceses included as sins prohibited by the First Commandment "believing in false gods and buddhas, worshipping their images, and using amulets (*fuda* 札, *mamori* 守), receiving purifications (*harai* 禊), and casting lots (*uranai* 卜)." Making contributions for the building of temples and shrines was also prohibited. The uniform version of the catechism adopted in 1896 for use throughout Japan included the same elements under the category of "blind belief" (*mōshin* 妄信), adding to them setting up a *kamidana* 神棚.²¹

18. See Tagawa 1938, pp. 88–96. For the position of the National Christian Council (Nihon Kirisutokyō Renmei 日本基督教連盟), also see Tomura 1976, pp. 18–22; and *Japan Christian Quarterly* 5:3 (July 1930), pp. 249–58.

19. See Sakamoto 1994, pp. 317–24; Akazawa 1985, pp. 162–63.

20. For an informed overview of the evolution of the Church's position on shrine rites, see Minamiki 1985. In this book George Minamiki devotes one chapter to the Yasukuni incident and quotes extensively from a wide range of primary sources, both published and unpublished. His pioneering research and elucidation of the doctrinal issues involved have been an invaluable guide. See also Swyngedouw 1967 and Krämer 2002.

21. *Kōkyō yōri* 1889, p. 36; *Tenshu kōkyō yōri* 1896, p. 142. For a brief history of the different versions of the Japanese catechism, see Martin 1956a and 1956b.

Within the mixture of religious practices, Church representatives in the latter decades of the nineteenth century seem to have regarded customs associated with Buddhism—particularly the expectation that one should take part in the funerary rites of family members and associates—as presenting more of a problem than shrines. Church officials in Japan also expressed a cautious readiness to accommodate native rites that were no longer explicitly religious. At a regional synod of the ordinaries of Japan and Korea held at Nagasaki in 1890, the participants concluded that:

Any rite, which—although it may have had a superstitious origin—is now performed without a superstitious intention according to the common understanding of the people, is not to be prohibited as superstitious. It is permissible to tolerate a rite which may be of some superstitious origin and which up to now may have been practiced by pagans with a superstitious intention provided that some meaning agreeable to reason has been attributed to the act and provided that into its practice some change has been introduced by which in the common understanding of the people or in the judgement of the state it is no longer looked upon as pagan.²²

This statement did not refer specifically to shrines (it seems to have been directed primarily at matters such as putting out the flag on national holidays), but as the Church grappled with the issue of *jinja sanpai* in later years, various figures would return to the principles it set out and find in them a potential solution to the *sanpai* problem. In the interim, however, as the government’s position on *jinja sanpai* hardened in the 1910s and 20s, the Church also adopted a more rigid approach.

The evolution of the Church’s perspective on *jinja sanpai* can be traced in the pages of *Koe* 声, a monthly journal put out for the guidance and edification of believers, first published in 1891.²³ The content of the articles carried in the following decade and a half or so again suggests that Church officials at this time saw shrines as less problematic or dangerous than other aspects of the contemporary cultural environment. In these years, *Koe* included articles on aspects of Buddhism and the dangers of various trends in Western

22. Quoted in Minamiki 1985, p. 126. See also Metzler 1980, p. 255.

23. *Koe* was initially published twice monthly; it changed to a monthly schedule in 1907.

thought, such as materialism, atheism, and the ideas of Nietzsche, but it hardly touched upon matters concerning shrines or Shinto. Starting around 1905, however, the journal began to show a greater interest in these latter subjects. The first articles (actually advice to readers in the form of questions and answers) expressed a quite tolerant approach, more in line with the principles adduced by the 1890 synod than the catechism. If an official had been designated to make an offering at a shrine in the name of the emperor, it was acceptable to do so, the author of one such advice column wrote in early 1905, because the official sought solely to carry out his duties, not to perform a personal religious act. A follow-up question and answer in the next issue, presumably by the same author, dealt with the issue of soldiers and students attending *shōkonsai* 招魂祭 (rites for the war dead), where the shrine priest recited *norito* 祝詞 liturgies and performed what seemed to be “a pure act of worship (*reihai* 礼拝).” Referring to the 1890 synod, the writer answered that again the key issue was intent. If the believer engaged in the act of worship, it would be going against the First Commandment, but if the intent were simply to express respect (*sonkei* 尊敬), it was allowable.²⁴ The following year, *Koe* published a series of articles in which the author drew from a wide range of early, medieval, and early modern texts to explicate Shinto notions of *kami*, the creation, and sin. The articles concluded by pointing out the limitations of these concepts from a religious perspective, but the overall tone was academic and informational.

From 1911 on, however, responding to the Home Ministry and Ministry of Education’s increased emphasis on showing reverence at shrines, *Koe* published a stream of articles on the various problems and dangers posed by *jinja sanpai*.²⁵ These articles were quite different in character from the earlier series on Shinto. Countering arguments that shrines were nonreligious, the articles from 1911 on stressed the religious nature of the acts performed there—the recitation of liturgies (*norito*), the offering of prayers and supplications (*kitō* 祈祷), the worship of fetishes, the reception of amulets. Some, such as a series in 1916 and 1917 by Yamaguchi Shikazō 山口鹿三 (1870–1953), a specialist on philosophy (writing under the pseudonym Yamaga Sei

24. *Koe* 326 (10 January 1905), p. 32; 327 (25 January 1905), pp. 31–32.

25. Evidence of the journal’s concern about the development of government policy in 1911 can be seen in the articles cited above in notes 9 and 13. As in these cases, *Koe* frequently included transcriptions of articles that had appeared in other media.

山鹿生), showed a detailed knowledge of the subject. Over the years Yamaguchi was to write many such articles on the problematic religious character of the activities and practices found at shrines. And, moving away from the quite tolerant attitude taken by the author of the 1905 questions and answers about involvement with shrines, similar advice columns took a much sterner stance. A 1922 column raised the question whether it was permissible to offer veneration (*raihai*) at Meiji Shrine or Yasukuni, assuming there was no act of prayer but simply an expression of respect (*kei* 敬意). No, was the response; because of the religious elements involved, including the belief that the dead became kami and the nature of the rites performed to summon and make offering to their spirits, even formalistic participation could not be allowed.²⁶ Two years later a policeman asked how to deal with the situation at kendō practice, where at the command of the teacher, the assembled group was supposed to face and venerate (*hairei* 拝礼) the *kamidana* in the practice hall. He should explain the situation to the teacher and the police chief and ask to be exempted, the column writer answered. If he humbly and respectfully set out his reasons in detail, the teacher and chief would surely understand. If by some chance they did not yield, the questioner would have no choice but to resign from his position in the police force.²⁷

The articles criticizing *jinja sanpai* fervently reiterate Catholics' steadfast loyalty to the emperor and grateful respect for ancestors and the “meritorious” (*kōrōsha* 功勞者), a code word for figures such as the heroic loyalist to the Southern Court Kusunoki Masashige 楠木正成 (1294–1336), who had been exalted and enshrined early in the Meiji period, as well as for the war dead enshrined at Yasukuni and local *shōkonsha*. From this perspective they express concern about the implications for Catholics of the links presumed between reverence for the imperial house and *jinja sanpai* and *yōhai*. In 1914 a *Koe* article decried the decision to build a shrine to commemorate Emperor Meiji because it would be impossible for believers, despite their unwavering wish to show their respect for the deceased emperor, to take part in ceremonies there. Special ceremonies at shrines planned in conjunction with the enthronement of Taishō were likely to cause similar problems. Although

26. *Koe* 561 (August 1922), pp. 49–50. Different *Koe* articles sometimes gloss the term 礼拝 as *reihai* and sometimes as *raihai*. Here I follow the *furigana* in the article in question.

27. *Koe* 579 (April 1924), p. 52.

believers were second to none in their devotion to the imperial house and the nation, they might well be slandered as disrespectful or not proper Japanese (*hikokumin* 非国民). To forestall this danger and overcome the contradictions in the government's attempt to set shrines apart from religion, the only solution was to remove from shrines the religious elements such as *norito* and ritual procedures (*saishiki* 祭式).²⁸

In the years after 1911, *Koe* also reported incidents in various parts of the country where students and schoolchildren had experienced pressure to take part in acts of reverence at shrines. In one such incident in 1914 that the magazine described in some detail, three Catholic students enrolled at Kokugakuin 国学院 University had been forced to withdraw after failing to participate in a group *sanpai* to Yasukuni on the occasion of its spring festival. The school had canceled classes in honor of the festival, and the three had stayed home instead of joining their fellows in offering reverence at the shrine.²⁹ An article the next year advised parents to instruct their children that if a school principal tried to force them to attend shrine rites to pray for victory in the war (i.e., the First World War) or for the recovery of a member of the imperial family, they should tell the principal that they would do so instead at home or at church in accordance with the forms of their own faith.³⁰ *Koe* in 1917 related an incident that had occurred in Hakodate and had been extensively reported in the local press. Bishop Alexandre Berlioz (1852–1929) of Sendai, whose diocese included Hakodate, had distributed a printed sheet declaring that Catholics could in no manner worship anything other than the sole true Lord of Heaven and that they had no duty to join rituals held at *shōkonsha*. He had also told believers that on the day of such rituals, the schoolchildren who were expected to participate should hand the sheet to the school. When one middle school student did so, the school had asked him to withdraw voluntarily, but he had refused, creating a furor.³¹ In a similar case in 1924, the principal of Nase 名瀬 Middle School (on Ōshima 大島, in Kagoshima prefecture, where there was a substantial Catholic population) took students to do *sanpai* at the local Takachiho 高千穂 Shrine and

28. *Koe* 460 (1914), pp. 40–42.

29. *Koe* 463 (1914), pp. 2–7.

30. *Koe* 470 (1915), pp. 46–47.

31. *Koe* 501 (August 1917), pp. 45–48.

expelled the two Catholic students who would not participate in the act of reverence.³²

As can be seen from the background to the 1917 Hakodate incident, the Church responded to the pressure to participate in shrine rites by taking a firmer line in its formal pronouncements, too. In 1916 Bishop Jean-Claude Combaz (1856–1926) of Nagasaki issued a pastoral letter about shrines and their rites in the form of a pamphlet in French titled *Les “Jinja”*. As an overwhelming majority of Japanese Catholic believers lived in Bishop Combaz’s diocese,³³ the pamphlet in effect served as an official statement by the Church in Japan. *Les “Jinja”* declared that despite the efforts of various spokesmen for the government to argue otherwise, shrines and the rites performed at them were clearly religious in nature. The pamphlet brushed aside as irrelevant the separation of the Religions Bureau from the Shrine Bureau. Some might hold that the prayers offered at shrines were for the protection of the state and not individual benefit, but the general populace did not make such distinctions. The superstitious acts revolving around shrines, such as the acquisition of amulets, confirmed their fundamentally religious character. Should the day come when the ceremonies performed at shrines were made “purely civil,” Catholics would be happy to take part, but until then it was essential for them to refrain from acts of *sanpai*.³⁴

32. Koe 578 (March 1924), pp. 9–10, 50–51. On such incidents, see also Takagi 1985, vol. 1, pp. 245–51.

33. In 1912, the Catholic population of Japan came to about 67,000, approximately 12,000 less than the number of Protestants (out of a total population of close to 53,000,000). Of the Catholic believers, 40,000 were to be found in Nagasaki. See Gonoï 1990, p. 292.

34. Nagasaki Diocese 1916. The actual author of the pamphlet was Léon Gracy (1875–1945), head of the Nagasaki seminary. Perhaps indicating how little meaning the Church attributed to the institutional separation of the two bureaus emphasized by the government, Gracy in fact confused their location, writing that “the Shrine Bureau has been detached from the Home Ministry and transferred to the Ministry of Education” (p. 7). Combaz also issued a shorter public manifesto in Japanese that made the same basic points: *Jinja sanpai ni tsuite* 神社参拝に就いて. The copy of this statement held by the Kirishitan Bunko at Sophia University does not include its date, but almost certainly the manifesto is the one that Holtom, who quotes briefly from it, describes Combaz as issuing in 1918. See Holtom 1922, pp. 55–56. A full English translation appeared in *The Japan Evangelist* 25 (May 1918), pp. 180–83.

The same strong stance is evident in an expanded explanation of the catechism written by the Belgian missionary Émile Raguét (1854–1929) and published in 1917. The explanation devoted a special note to the problems inherent in *jinja sanpai*:

Some people insist that *jinja sanpai* is not something religious, but from the word “sanpai” alone one should be able to see that it is a religious act. Shrines are a religious institution of Shinto in the same way as temples are an institution of Buddhism, and churches an institution of Christianity. As for the ceremonies performed at shrines, even if those conducting them are government officials, the shrine officiants (*shinshoku* 神職), adhering to Shinto ceremonial (*reigi* 礼義), primarily perform purifications, recite *norito*, open the [inner sanctuary] doors, make offerings, and so forth. This is very far from the ordinary etiquette of social intercourse and without doubt has a religious character. [...] If rites in honor of the war dead (*shōkonsai*) were simply an expression of homage (*sūkei*) to people who had devoted themselves to the country, there should be no objection to participating in them as an expression of patriotism. But in the form they are presently conducted, they are a type of religion. Thus participation in them and engaging in *jinja sanpai* are sins of superstition (*meishin no tsumi* 迷信の罪).³⁵

The clashes over *jinja sanpai* between local authorities and Catholic believers upholding the teachings of the Church that Koe reported in the years after 1911 involved almost entirely Catholics acting within a non-Catholic environment. They concerned public officials and schoolchildren and students who encountered pressures to participate in shrine-related rites in the course of their duties or school life. Such clashes posed a serious dilemma for the Church as it tried to situate itself as an authentic part of Japanese society. But what raised the conflict to a higher level, making it a critical issue, were controversies involving Catholic schools, particularly male institutions of higher learning. There were three such institutions in the 1920s and early 30s: two middle schools operated by the Marianists, Kaisei 海星 in Nagasaki (founded in 1891) and Gyōsei 暁星 in Tokyo (founded in 1888), and one uni-

35. Raguét 1916–1920, vol. 2, pp. 18–19. This work appeared in three volumes over the space of several years. Volume 2 was published in 1917.

versity, the Jesuit-run Sophia (Jōchi 上智), which achieved formal recognition as a university under the provisions of the University Law in 1928.³⁶ (The Marianists also operated a commercial school, Meisei Shōgyō Gakkō 明星商業学校, founded in 1898 in Osaka.) These conflicts culminated in the 1932 Yasukuni incident originating from Sophia, but an earlier clash in 1929 centered on Kaisei and Gyōsei prefigured the issues at stake.

THE 1929 ISE SHRINE “REVERENCE FROM AFAR” INCIDENT

As noted above, 1929 marked the completion of the twenty-year cycle for the rebuilding of Ise Shrine, and at the end of August, the Ministry of Education distributed orders to prefectural officials about the manner for performing “reverence from afar” on the occasion of the transfer of the deities to the new sanctuary at the beginning of October.³⁷ The following month in Nagasaki, where Kaisei was located, the governor instructed schools in the prefecture to perform *yōhai* and twice met specially with middle-school principals to emphasize the transfer ceremonies’ importance as an opportunity for cultivating “respect for deities and reverence for ancestors.” Parallel to these instructions sent out by governmental offices, however, the apostolic delegate in Tokyo issued orders to Catholics, and Catholic schools in particular, not to engage in such acts of superstition. Seconding these orders, the Marianist head in Japan, Alphonse Heinrich (1860–1939), directed the principals of the Marianist schools not to hold *yōhai* ceremonies. The minister of education might have emphasized the importance of the day commemorating the transfer, Heinrich wrote, but he did not enforce upon schools the uniform performance of *yōhai*. Heinrich, in effect, was interpreting optimistically the manner in which the Ministry of Education had issued its instructions. As was usual in such matters, the only “official” orders about the *yōhai* ceremony put out by the ministry concerned things like the song to be sung at it;

36. In this period both Kaisei and Gyōsei were substantially larger than Sophia, having about double the enrollment of Sophia at its maximum.

37. The sources for the following discussion of the 1929 *yōhai* incident are primarily the documents concerning it preserved in the Ministry of Education archives under the file “Gakkō kyōren” 学校教練, 1925–1931, in the section “Dai ni: Kyōikumon ne (zatsubu)” 第二: 教育門ね (雑部). See also Takagi 1985, vol. 1, pp. 252–58; and Mariakai 1968, pp. 261–62.

the necessity to hold the ceremony was conveyed through an internal directive to be implemented individually by the prefectural offices who received it.

Obeying Heinrich's instructions, on 2 October, the day of the transfer of the deity, Kaisei did not hold regular classes but also did not perform any *yōhai* ceremonies. The failure soon spurred a reaction, led by the school's military training officer and the head of the local branch of the Military Reserve Association (Zaigō Gunjinkai 在郷軍人会). The latter in particular complained to the prefectural Educational Bureau and demanded that it take action against Kaisei. Over the next month, parents, students, and graduates also protested the failure to hold the *yōhai* ceremony, and the press picked up the story. A student manifesto declared that the transfer ritual was not religious, and unrest among the students, made worse when the school suspended some of the leaders, threatened to escalate into a strike.

Seemingly as much concerned about the potential consequences of a student strike as the school's failure to perform the *yōhai* ceremony, and with a watchful eye on the doings of the Military Reserve Association head, the prefecture, in consultation with the Ministry of Education, worked out a somewhat uneasy compromise. The governor reprimanded the Kaisei principal for "confusing shrines and religion" and for following the orders of the Marianist head rather than the government offices with direct jurisdiction over the school. The principal for his part stated that before receiving the orders from Heinrich, the school had made preparations to perform the ceremony, apologized for failing to carry it out, and promised to do so in the future. Having confirmed that the initiative for not performing *yōhai* had come from the Marianist head rather than the school, and noting that the school had a good record in promoting national morality, the governor chose to take Kaisei's apology and promise regarding the future at face value. It would be sufficient, he proposed, to let the school off with a warning and an admonishment to be careful in the future.

The Ministry of Education agreed to the governor's proposal, but in the meantime, the Kaisei furor led the ministry also to make inquiries about the situation at Gyōsei and Meisei Shōgyō Gakkō. Gyōsei administrators responded that they regarded the transfer ceremony as an important national rite that all Japanese should honor with solemn respect and had instructed the students to this effect. But, as they believed *yōhai* to be a form of worship (*raihai*), rather than perform the ritual of expressing reverence from afar,

on the day of the ceremony the school did not hold classes and everyone “showed sincere homage” (*sūkei no makoto o itaseri* 崇敬の誠を致せり).³⁸

In contrast to this diplomatically equivocal answer, the principal of Meisei Shōgyō was considerably more direct. The school was second to none in its sincere respect (*sonsū* 尊崇) for the imperial ancestor (*kōso* 皇祖, i.e., Amaterasu), he wrote. Nevertheless, “education not based on religion is like a tower built on sand.” As it was improper to do anything contrary to one’s faith, and since the school held the transfer ceremony to be “a religious rite based on Shinto,” it could not perform *yōhai*. On the report on Meisei the Osaka governor submitted to the Ministry of Education, someone, presumably at the ministry, wrote: “Shinto may be one branch of religion, but shrine rites within the institutional system of our country are not religious.”³⁹ Although Kaisei expressed repentance and Gyōsei and Meisei did not, the action taken towards the latter two schools was only marginally more severe than that meted out to Kaisei. The Ministry of Education instructed the governors of Osaka and Tokyo to reprimand both schools strictly. In their summation of the situation, however, Ministry of Education officials also took note of the fact that the Kaisei principal had himself realized his error and apologized, and ultimately this was to prove a point in the Nagasaki school’s favor.

Many of the elements that shaped the *yōhai* incident of 1929 were to figure again in the Yasukuni incident two and a half years later—pressure from a military training officer and outside groups, attention from the press, student unrest. Yet there were also important differences in 1932 that complicated the situation and raised the stakes. Most notable of these was direct involvement by the Army and the more central role it had secured in government and society in the intervening years. The outbreak of fighting on the continent and political assassinations (including that of Prime Minister Inukai Tsuyoshi 犬養毅, 1855–1932, just ten days after the Sophia students failed to do *sanpai* at Yasukuni), strengthened the hand of the military relative to the civilian arm of government. The deaths of Japanese soldiers in battle also

38. Report from governor of Tokyo to the Ministry of Education on the situation at Gyōsei, 1929.11.21.

39. Report from the governor of Osaka to the Ministry of Education on the situation at Meisei, 1929.12.2, appending the statement by the Meisei principal of 1929.11.26.

drew attention to ritual sites directly connected to the Army, namely Yasukuni and the *shōkonsha*, which would be the focal point of the 1932 incident.

NEGOTIATING *JINJA SANPAI*

When the Sophia military training officer confronted President Hoffmann in May 1932 over the failure of the three Sophia students to offer reverence at Yasukuni, Hoffmann's response was more or less in line with the position stated by the Meisei principal in 1929. As reported by the officer to his superiors in the Army, Hoffmann told him flatly,

Shrines are all religious in nature, and there is only one true religion, Catholicism. Since there can be only one form of truth, other religions, regardless of what they are, are based on error. Therefore, Catholic believers cannot do *sanpai* to shrines, which are an erroneous form of religion. This of course applies to Ise Shrine and Meiji Shrine as well.⁴⁰

In comparison to what happened in 1929, however, the consequences this time of expressing such a view were to be far graver. Apart from the officer's and his superiors' displeasure over the students' behavior and Hoffmann's attitude, Army leaders likely recognized the situation, consciously or not, as something that could be turned to advantage to enlarge their own say within and without the government. Their next step was to seek removal of the military training officer, a measure that under the provisions of the military training system required the agreement of the Ministry of Education.

40. *Jōchi Daigakushi shiryōshū*, supp. vol, pp. 107–108. Documents concerning the Yasukuni incident are included in volume 3 and the supplementary volume of this collection. Volume 3 has documents from the university archives that were known to the compilers at the time the initial five volumes were put out. The supplementary volume contains additional documents kept in the file “Gakkō kyōren,” 1932–1940, in the Ministry of Education archives. Where the Ministry of Education archives materials are reproduced in the published university *shiryōshū*, I will cite the latter; otherwise citations are to the original documents in the “Gakkō kyōren” file. Army records concerning the incident seem to be no longer extant.

The military training system had been set up in 1925 as a joint arrangement of the Army and the Ministry of Education. The aim, in the period of military retrenchment following the First World War, was to nurture a future potential pool of officers. Under the arrangement, the Army assigned military officers to middle schools and higher institutions of learning; these officers, known as *haizoku shōkō* 配属将校 (“officers assigned” [to outside institutions]), conducted classes in basic military training. Should the students who received such training be conscripted in the future, they would be commissioned as officers and exempted from some months of actual service.⁴¹ In the Army’s eyes, participation in such training was thus a privilege. This was the general perspective presented in the media and shared by society at large as well. For the schools concerned the presence of a training officer was an essential social credential. In this period few students in secondary and higher institutions of learning in fact faced the likelihood of actual conscription. Nevertheless, not to have certification of having completed military training while at school was seen as a disadvantage in finding employment after graduation. For a school to lose its military officer would unquestionably be a black mark on its reputation. The Army’s threat to remove the officer thus signaled its authority and importance within the national order.

The Army, however, could not withdraw the officer on its own. While the Army decided what officer was to be assigned to what school and their rotation in and out of other military divisions, the Ministry of Education had to approve measures bearing on the overall operation of the system, including an extraordinary step such as removal of an officer because of the shortcomings of the hosting institution. In accordance with this arrangement, after hearing from the officer about what had happened at Yasukuni and Hoffmann’s response, in early June 1932 the vice-minister of the Army Ministry sent a formal message to his counterpart in the Ministry of Education announcing the Army’s desire to consult with the Ministry of Education about terminating the assignment of an officer to Sophia. The university’s basic orientation, the Army declared, was contrary to the *kokutai* 国体—the nation’s moral and political foundation—and to the purpose of the military training system.⁴²

41. On the military training system, see Hirahara 1993.

42. *Jōchi Daigakushi shiryōshū*, supp. vol., p. 107.

The demand that the officer be removed because Sophia's orientation was contrary to the *kokutai* conveyed a threat not just to the university but also to the Ministry of Education, which had accredited the university under the University Law and was responsible for supervising it. The ministry unquestionably still held to the view of shrines, *sanpai*, and religion it had expressed at the time of the 1929 *yōhai* incident, and it cannot have been pleased by the students' failure to pay reverence or by Hoffmann's justification of their action. But, headed by the party politician Hatoyama Ichirō 鳩山一郎 (1883–1959), who remained in office for the duration of the incident, even after the inauguration of the nonparty Saitō Makoto 齋藤実 cabinet following Inukai's assassination, the ministry also could surmise the Army's ambitions, and it determinedly sought to protect its own jurisdiction from any Army attempts at encroachment. To this end, over the next several months the ministry in effect worked behind the scenes, first with the university and then the Church, to find a solution that would head off the Army's demand for removal of the officer.

The initial efforts at resolving the problem were mixed. After the ministry informed the university on 14 June (by telephone) of the Army's demand, the university prepared a guarded brief "explanation of the situation" (*shimatsusho* 始末書) in Hoffmann's name. In this explanation, dated 5 July, the president confirmed that following the incident the Ministry of Education had "informally told him" (*naishi kore ari* 内旨有之) that *sanpai* by students to "state shrines" (*kokkateki jinja* 国家の神社) was an official policy intended to strengthen the national spirit and was not contrary to the constitutional guarantee of religious freedom. He stated that he had informed the students of this, but went no further.⁴³

Together with this explanation, the university dean, Hashimoto Jūjirō 橋本重治郎 (1882–1964), a non-Catholic who had previously taught at Tokyo Higher Normal School and presumably was experienced in dealing with the educational bureaucracy, wrote a fuller report about various measures the university had taken to demonstrate and further consolidate its patriotic credentials. These included hiring the noted former Tokyo Imperial University philosophy professor Inoue Tetsujirō, known among other things as the author of the official commentary on the Rescript on Education, to offer lectures on Chinese philosophy and the history of East Asian ethics; Sophia also

43. *Jōchi Daigakushi shiryōshū*, supp. vol., p. 108.

had engaged Tokyo Imperial University professor Tsuchida Seiichi 土田誠一 (1887–1945), an authority on Shinto, to offer lectures on national morality. In his report Hashimoto struggled to distinguish the university as such from the Catholic believers, including Hoffmann, so closely associated with it. The university as an institution, he emphasized, had no intention to deny “state shrines” or to impede *sanpai* to them. He had to admit, though, that as individuals, the Catholic believers continued to adhere to the position set out in *Les “Jinja”* and thus held that they should “pray for the repose of the souls of those who had died for the country, the founding ancestor (*kokuso* 国祖, i.e., Amaterasu), and the Meiji emperor” according to the rituals of their own religion.

The draft copy of this statement in the Ministry of Education archives contains various notes written in a different hand. These notes suggest that ministry officials may have proposed ways to counter the statement’s ambiguities and amplify its impact. One such note at the end states that the problem had arisen because “the president’s concept of shrines lacked clarity, and the terms he used [e.g., in his exchange with the officer] were not appropriate. His concept of shrines has now become clear, and he has declared that he will change his attitude regarding believers.”⁴⁴ Ministry of Education officials formally responded on 22 July to the Army’s demand for removal of the officer, attaching Hoffmann’s explanation to their efforts to deflect the demand. It is unclear whether or not they forwarded Hashimoto’s statement as well, but in the response the vice-minister echoed the note written on it, explaining that the problem had arisen because Hoffmann’s “concept of shrines lacked clarity, and also because he has not fully mastered Japanese usage.” The ministry, the response continued, had thus provided the university with additional information about shrines; Hoffmann now had an accurate understanding and had conveyed this to the students. There was no need to take drastic action such as removing the officer.⁴⁵

For the next two months there was a lull, but in mid-September, the Army vice-minister sent his counterpart in the Ministry of Education a curt reply: The Army saw no significant improvement in the situation at Sophia; further, it had learned that the same situation obtained at the two Catholic middle schools, Gyōsei in Tokyo and Kaisei in Nagasaki. The officers there-

44. *Jōchi Daigakushi shiryōshū*, supp. vol., pp. 108–13.

45. *Jōchi Daigakushi shiryōshū*, supp. vol., p. 114.

fore should be withdrawn from all three.⁴⁶ The Army apparently had been doing its own investigation of the Catholic position on *jinja sanpai*. One of its sources was the May 1932 issue of *Koe*, which carried another extended discussion of *jinja* by Yamaguchi Shikazō. Rehearsing arguments and evidence he had reiterated over the years, Yamaguchi countered from various angles the government's claim that the institutional separation of *jinja* and religion meant that *jinja* were not religious. The *norito* recited and offerings made at ranked shrines on national festival days according to specifications issued by the Home Ministry were clearly religious in nature, he asserted, and it was obvious that such shrines, including Ise, distributed amulets promising supernatural protection.⁴⁷ That the Army took this as incriminating evidence can be seen from an interview that the Allied Occupation forces conducted after the Second World War with Nagae Kunishiro 長江邦四郎 (1881–1960), who had long served as vice-principal at Gyōsei. According to the interview, Nagae recalled that on 17 August 1932, Major-General Asada of the Imperial Guard Division in Tokyo suddenly appeared at Gyōsei and asked his view of the *Koe* article and whether it reflected the school's attitude towards *sanpai*. When Nagae replied affirmatively, Asada rejoined that this must mean that he "considered a Church command more important than a state order."⁴⁸

The Army's dismissal of the measures taken by the university and the threatened escalation of the matter made clear that stronger ameliorating action was required. Having reached the conclusion that the conflict over reverence at shrines was jeopardizing the Church's existence in Japan, vari-

46. *Jōchi Daigakushi shiryōshū*, supp. vol., pp. 114–15.

47. *Koe* (May 1932), pp. 396–405. In these years *Koe* did not list issue numbers.

48. Trainor Collection, Reel 12, pp. 26–28. I am indebted to Hans Martin Krämer for alerting me to the existence of this record and providing me with a copy of it. The Major-General Asada mentioned is almost certainly Asada Ryōitsu 浅田良逸 (1879–1958); he in fact was at that point a lieutenant general and had been assigned to the reserves the previous year. The so-called "Küenberg Report," a report in German written in 1933, presumably by Max von Küenberg, at the time the rector of the Jesuit community at Sophia, a copy of which is in the Sophia University archives, states that when Hoffmann talked with the military training officer after the incident he gave him some material to read on the Catholic view of *sanpai*. *Koe*'s publication date of the 15th of each month makes it unlikely that Hoffmann gave the officer this issue. Nevertheless, the Ministry of Education file on the incident includes a copy of the article together with the correspondence with the schools and the Army and other newspaper and journal clippings.

ous figures closely connected with the Catholic leadership moved to develop a new approach to *jinja sanpai*. Efforts to this end came from several directions. One was advanced by Bishop Johannes Ross (1875–1969), the vicar apostolic responsible for overseeing the Hiroshima-Okayama region. Ross, a Jesuit, happened to be in Tokyo in June when the Ministry of Education first informed the university of the Army’s demand to withdraw the officer. Having been concerned for some time about the problems the *sanpai* issue caused for believers and the Church, Ross argued that a solution could be found in the section of canon law that covered formal participation in non-Catholic ceremonies when necessitated by social or other exigencies. Referring to Canon 1258, Ross proposed applying to *jinja sanpai* the principle of “passive participation”—that is, the principle that an otherwise forbidden sacrilegious or superstitious act might be permitted if there were grave reasons for performing it, so long as the engagement of the believer remained purely passive.⁴⁹

Another approach called for building on the more conciliatory approach to native customs articulated at the 1890 synod and the premise that once-superstitious customs could, with changed circumstances, lose their superstitious character. A key figure behind this approach was Yamamoto Shinjirō 山本信次郎 (1877–1942), a well-connected rear-admiral in the Navy who had attended Gyōsei and converted to Catholicism. Yamamoto had been posted as a military attaché to the Japanese embassy in Italy for three years from 1914 and had joined the Japanese delegation to the 1919 Paris Peace Conference. The following year he accompanied Crown Prince Hirohito on the latter’s trip to Europe and arranged for his audience with Pope Benedict XV (1854–1922). After returning to Japan, Yamamoto was active in Church activities as head of the Catholic Youth Association. At the time of the 1932 incident he was in the reserves and serving in the Imperial Household Ministry.⁵⁰

As a naval officer, Yamamoto had firsthand knowledge of the difficulties the prohibition of *jinja sanpai* presented to Catholic government officials such as himself, who might be expected to take part in shrine rites in conjunction with their duties. During his years in Europe Yamamoto consulted with Vatican officials about a possible way to surmount the problem, and

49. See Minamiki 1985, pp. 141–42, 146–49.

50. Regarding Yamamoto’s role, see Minamiki 1985, pp. 130–31, 143–45.

found in the example of the late Roman Empire a potential model. In the post-Constantine era, he noted, the cult of the emperor had undergone a transformation wherein pre-Christian religious elements had persisted but had come to be tolerated as part of the protocol of reverence associated with the emperor. Something similar might be said to have happened with *jinja sanpai*. Educated Japanese, Yamamoto argued, did not believe in the literal divinity of the emperor, and they regarded the shrine ceremonies required by the government as “patriotic and not religious.” The core element of such ceremonies was to bow before the shrine, “which contained no statue,” and to receive a drink of sake referred to as “sacred wine.”⁵¹

One of Yamamoto’s contacts at the Vatican arranged for him to meet in Paris with Pierre Batiffol (1861–1929), an authority on early Christianity, who, because of his historicist approach to the development of doctrine over time, is sometimes linked to the Modernist movement within the Church. Yamamoto’s contacts also prevailed upon Batiffol to write a review of the evolution of the Roman emperor cult, with special reference to potential parallels with the situation concerning shrines rites. The French prelate’s conclusion, published in 1920, was that in the Roman case, the “remains of the pagan imperial cult, emptied of the superstition which formerly rendered them unacceptable, thereafter took on a purely civil and political meaning.” A similar line of development might be possible in Japan, but to sustain the parallel, “it would be necessary that official Shinto be declared a purely civil and political matter by the imperial authority on which it depends.”⁵² Previously various spokesmen for the Church in Japan, such as the author of *Les “Jinja”*, had argued that for shrine rites to become tolerable to Catholics, their form had to change. Yamamoto and Batiffol’s approach assumed this was unlikely to occur. The crucial point was rather how to verify evidence of an official change in the interpretation of the form’s meaning.

Battifol’s assertion that the key would be a government declaration as to the “purely civil and political” nature of shrine rites suggested an approach to pursue, but it also posed a dilemma: for all the paper and ink that had been expended in the preceding decades on the “shrines as nonreligious”

51. Bréhier and Batiffol 1920, pp. 5–6.

52. Bréhier and Batiffol 1920, pp. 29, 33; the translation follows Minamiki 1985, pp. 132–33; Minamiki provides a succinct summary of the key points of Batiffol’s argument regarding the process whereby the forms of the imperial Roman cult were retained while losing their once religious content.

question, the government had not, for the reasons discussed above, issued a formal declaration to this effect. This was true even of statements made by government ministers in official and semiofficial settings, such as that by Minister of Education Okada Ryōhei 岡田良平 (1864–1934) to the opening meeting of the Committee for the Study of Religious Administration in June 1926. Okada encountered sharp questioning on the shrine matter from the committee members, including Hayasaka Kyūnosuke 早坂久之助 (1883–1959), a Catholic priest who the following year would be appointed bishop of the Nagasaki Diocese and who was one of two Christian committee members.⁵³ To queries about the grounds on which the government based its view of shrines as being nonreligious, Okada rejoined that “since it has been decided by state laws that [shrines] are not religious, for those acting under the provisions of these state laws” not to show reverence at shrines was “in effect to disregard state law.”⁵⁴ But the “state laws” (*kokuhō* 国法) to which he referred were indirect measures such as the 1882 ordinance that shrines above the prefectural level were not to engage in propagating doctrine or conducting funerals and later administrative laws defining the status of the upper levels of shrine priests as government appointees or reaffirming that shrines were “sites of the rites of state.” It was not possible to adduce any formal governmental ordinance or declaration that identified shrines in so many words as being “nonreligious.” Okada’s statement thus basically expressed his personal understanding (albeit an understanding widely shared by his fellow government officials); it could not be termed a definitive pronouncement.⁵⁵

Reflecting this situation, as noted above, the debate in the Committee for the Study of Religious Administration hearings between Okada and other government representatives, on the one hand, and Hayasaka and those who were critical of the government position, on the other, continued along parallel trajectories, without reaching resolution. Nevertheless, that same debate provided a lead that would prove relevant in the early autumn of 1932 as

53. Hayasaka, who succeeded Combaz as bishop of Nagasaki, was the first Japanese national to be appointed bishop.

54. *Shūkyō Seido Chōsakai gijiroku*, first general session, 1926.6.1, pp. 26–27.

55. The same was true of the debates over this issue that came up in the course of the Diet deliberations in 1927 and 1929 on the Religions Bill and Religious Organizations Bill. For relevant excerpts from the debates, see Tomura 1976, pp. 3–5, 92–95, 98, 116–17.

Church representatives sought a means to solve the *jinja sanpai* problem. In the third general session of the 1926 hearings, Hayasaka raised the specific issue of schoolchildren being forced to participate in *jinja sanpai*. Okada, Hayasaka pointed out, had argued that *jinja sanpai* was essential as a means to “unify the spirit of the populace” (whereas imposing a state religion would likely, to the contrary, sow division). Why, then, Hayasaka asked rhetorically, was *sanpai* compulsory only for primary and middle school pupils? Should it not also be compulsory for higher school and university students, not to speak of the general public? To this Okada responded with a somewhat convoluted counterargument. *Sanpai*, as such, he stated, was not specifically required as a matter of law: “At present there is no law anywhere that says that primary and middle school students must do *sanpai* at shrines.” Rather, the crucial point was to enable students to understand the meaning of the textbooks that taught that they “must show homage to shrines.” Taking students to do *sanpai* at shrines was “one means of education” (*kyōiku no ichi shudan* 教育ノ一手段), a “training” (*kunren* 訓練) appropriate to the elementary and middle school level that would serve to inculcate the proper attitude of homage to shrines.⁵⁶ In the early autumn of 1932, the Catholic hierarchy in Tokyo and the Ministry of Education essentially pursued the idea of *sanpai* as “a means of education” to work out a compromise that, by establishing officially that what took place at shrines was “a purely civil and political matter,” would allow the Church to make some accommodation of *jinja sanpai*.

The first verifiable step in the negotiations toward this compromise took place on 22 September, when the archbishop of Tokyo, Alexis Chambon (1875–1948), with the agreement of the apostolic delegate, sent a carefully worded letter to Minister of Education Hatoyama. The Church wanted to foster “wholehearted allegiance to constituted authority,” Chambon wrote Hatoyama, but Catholics had encountered difficulties in “taking part in rites which seem to be identical with those of a religion other than their own.” Chambon went on to set out the definition of *jinja sanpai* he hoped to obtain: He understood that the reasons for requiring attendance at “school exercises in connection with national *Jinja* and *Shokonsha* [...] have to do with patriotism and not with religion.” The difficulties encountered would thus be reduced “if it is made clear that the bow in which the assembled group is

56. *Shūkyō Seido Chōsakai gijiroku*, third general session, 1926.6.4, pp. 6–13.

invited to join on such occasions has a significance which is exclusively patriotic and in no sense religious.”⁵⁷

In phrasing the proposed compromise in these terms, Chambon essentially ignored the proverbial elephant in the room—the *norito*, prayers, and amulets that had been the focus of the Church’s prohibition of *jinja sanpai* throughout the preceding decades. Instead, raising only the question of the bow, he limited the issue at stake to the element that might most readily be interpreted as having a civil rather than religious meaning. As considered from a doctrinal perspective, he implicitly adopted the argument Yamamoto had made in explaining the problem of *jinja sanpai* to Vatican officials and to Batiffol and that Batiffol had then cautiously validated: it was possible for an act that in other contexts had religious meaning to acquire, in different circumstances, primarily secular connotations.⁵⁸ The Ministry of Education undoubtedly likewise found it convenient to keep matters narrowly focused on the bow. A few days later, on 30 September, having consulted the Home Ministry, it responded with an equally carefully phrased brief official statement addressed to Chambon: *Sanpai* by students was based on educational reasons, and the bow they were asked to perform in unison was “none other than to express patriotic commitment and sincere loyalty.”⁵⁹ Although Chambon had asked the ministry to clarify that the significance of the bow was “in no sense religious,” in its statement the ministry judiciously avoided any explicit reference to “religion.” Otherwise, it basically adhered to the parameters of the issue of *jinja sanpai* as set out by Chambon.

Having obtained an official declaration concerning the nature of the bow, Chambon proceeded at the beginning of October to transmit it to the priests of his diocese. *Sanpai*, he wrote, was a “mixed matter” (*une chose*

57. *Jōchi Daigakushi shiryōshū*, supp. vol., pp. 115, 279–80. The letter was submitted in both English and Japanese. The English version is quoted here with the original Romanization.

58. This clearly represented a shift in the stance of the Japanese Church. In 1924 a provincial synod held in Tokyo had already acknowledged the possibility of “purely passive participation in the Shinto cult,” but had demurred that “to make signs of reverence, like the inclination of the head, [...] would not seem to be allowed.” Minamiki 1985, p. 136; Metzler 1980, pp. 283–84.

59. *Jōchi Daigakushi shiryōshū*, vol. 3, p. 74. The terms used and summarized here as “students”—*gakusei*, *seito*, *jidō* 学生生徒児童—make clear that they encompass all educational levels from university to elementary school.

mixte, i.e., something involving both problematic and allowable aspects), but “passive participation and the bow, when it is for grave reasons, may be tolerated.” The priests therefore should instruct students and the latter’s parents “to abstain from [non-Catholic] religious ceremonies, but to make the bow when the students are taken in groups to shrines.”⁶⁰ On 18 October Chambon further sent the Ministry of Education a formal reassurance that Catholic students henceforth would participate in *jinja sanpai*.

The stance Chambon and the apostolic delegate adopted in September–October 1932 marked a key turning point in the Church’s position on shrine rites. Eventually, in 1936, Rome, speaking through the Propaganda Fide, the Vatican office responsible for overseeing missionary activities, would endorse it and officially recognize shrine ceremonies to have “only a purely civil value.”⁶¹ Significant as it was for the Church, however, the change did not solve the immediate problem that had spurred it: the threat of withdrawal of the military training officers.

INTO THE PUBLIC EYE

Up to this point only those directly involved had been aware of the negotiations taking place over both the withdrawal of the officers and the meaning of *jinja sanpai*. The Ministry of Education’s 30 September statement to Chambon regarding *jinja sanpai* changed that situation. A reporter for the *Hōchi shinbun* 報知新聞 newspaper gained word of the pronouncement, and the following day, 1 October, the paper carried an article about it. As *Hōchi shinbun* reported the story, students at “a certain Catholic university in Kōjimachi 麹町 (the name of the school is to remain confidential) [...] and a certain religion-related school in Kudan 九段 belonging to the same sect” had failed to perform *sanpai* at Yasukuni. As a means of “shifting responsibility,” the schools concerned had asked the Ministry of Education to issue a general directive (*kunrei o ippanteki ni* 訓令を一般的に) stating definitively “whether shrines are religious or not.” The Ministry of Education had refused the request to issue a general directive as it would be likely to cause controversy, but it had formulated a statement that *jinja sanpai* by students and school-

60. *Jōchi Daigakushi shiryōshū*, vol. 3, pp. 273–74.

61. See Minamiki 1985, pp. 149–58; Swyngedouw 1967, pp. 582–84.

children “is based on educational reasons and all must follow this policy without exception.” Despite the “very tepid” nature of this pronouncement, it was sure, the article concluded, “to cause a stir in the Japanese religious world and regarding the shrine system.”⁶² The sentence about the imperative to participate in *jinja sanpai* went beyond the wording of the actual Ministry of Education statement (although it was undoubtedly in line with its underlying premise), but true to the article’s forecast, the compromise between the Ministry of Education and the Church did indeed cause a stir. Instead of leading to the hoped-for resolution of the military training officer problem, it seems to have stiffened the Army’s determination to secure the officers’ removal from schools whose educational principles it held to run counter to the *kokutai*.

As a new strategy for bringing pressure on the Ministry of Education and the schools, the Army evidently decided to make its own use of the media by leaking the story of its complaints against the Catholic schools and its demand for withdrawal of the officers from them. Beginning with the 13 October evening edition of *Yomiuri shinbun* 読売新聞, the press reported the story widely over the next couple of weeks. At the beginning of December a fresh run of articles announced the Army’s renewed intent to carry out its threat. In the end, frustrated by the Ministry of Education’s unwillingness to agree to removal of the officers, the Army resorted to an irregular maneuver. Without obtaining the Ministry of Education’s agreement, it “transferred” the Sophia and Gyōsei officers as part of a scheduled general rotation and listed their replacements as “pending.” For some reason, Kaisei, perhaps because of its earlier more accommodating stance and its local connections, escaped this treatment. The Ministry of Education protested the Army’s acting without its agreement and sought reassurances that replacements would be made soon, only to be told that difficulty in finding “suitable” successors made it uncertain when a new officer could be appointed.⁶³

With this fait accompli, the balance in the power struggle between the Army and the Ministry of Education over withdrawal of the officer shifted. Thereafter, instead of resisting the Army’s demands, the Ministry of Education, Sophia, and Gyōsei found themselves in the position of having to plead

62. *Hōchi shinbun*, 1 October 1932; text given in *Jōchi Daigakushi shiryōshū*, vol. 3, pp. 75–76.

63. See *Jōchi Daigakushi shiryōshū*, supp. vol., pp. 118–22.

with the Army to supply a new officer. In the following months, the media reported that with the absence of a military training officer, Sophia graduates faced difficulty in finding employment. Many students left; others organized protests calling on the university to take more positive action in solving the problem (which led the university to take, in turn, disciplinary measures against the organizers of the protest); enrollments of new students dropped substantially. Rightist groups distributed inflammatory flyers and engaged in other forms of intimidation.

As the situation dragged on unresolved, Sophia and Gyōsei, evidently in consultation with the Ministry of Education, pursued several strategies to demonstrate their overall patriotic credentials. According to reports the ministry sent the Army in early April 1933 and again in early July, in an effort to convince it to relent and dispatch new officers, both schools replaced the Catholic instructor who had previously taught moral training (*shūshin* 修身) with a non-Catholic. In Sophia's case, instead of Hoffmann, Inoue Tetsujirō assumed responsibility for this symbolic course. Both schools, the ministry emphasized, took strong measures to insure that they harbored no "red" students or tendencies. Regarding this last point, a statement Sophia sent the ministry at the end of June noted that four of its foreign professors had received government "funding for scientific spiritual research" (*seishin kagaku kenkyūhi* 精神科学研究費) to undertake critical research on Marxism. The university, the statement promised, would continue to strive "to deal leftist thought a decisive scholarly blow." Sophia also stressed the efforts of its faculty to establish a "correct understanding" abroad of Japanese culture and Japan's international aims. Several faculty members had published articles in German on "Japan's distinctive culture." Following the Manchurian Incident, moreover, Professor Johannes Kraus (1892–1946) had gone to Manchuria to observe the situation and on more than one occasion had sought through radio broadcasts and newspaper articles to convey "the necessity of Japanese protection to secure the welfare of the Manchurian people" and "the valid reasons for the actions of the Japanese Army in Manchuria."⁶⁴

Together with this evidence of the schools' upholding the *kokutai* and worthiness of having the military training officers restored, the Ministry of Education relayed to the Army new indications of their fuller understanding of and commitment to *jinja sanpai*. A key to the feasibility of the brief, care-

64. *Jōchi Daigakushi shiryōshū*, supp. vol., p. 126.

fully worded understanding on *jinja sanpai* reached by the Ministry of Education and the Church in September 1932 had been that the two parties could interpret it in somewhat different terms. The Ministry of Education had described the bow performed in unison as “none other than to express patriotic commitment and sincere loyalty” (*aikokushin to chūsei to o arawasu mono ni hoka narazu* 愛国心ト忠誠トヲ現ハスモノニ外ナラス). For the ministry, *hoka narazu* meant basically “it is exactly,” and thus, as the *Hōchi shinbun* article reporting the statement concluded, carried the connotation that the expression of reverence, being of imperative importance, should take precedence over matters of “private” religious faith. The Church, on the other hand, could read *hoka narazu* to imply “no other purpose” beyond educational reasons; in other words, the bow, serving simply to “express patriotic commitment and sincere loyalty,” did not infringe on the religious sphere, which was, for the Church, the realm of ultimate significance.⁶⁵ It was on those terms that the bow was acceptable.

By February 1933, however, with student unrest at Sophia surging (and reported in the press along with comments that the Army showed no signs of yielding), Gyōsei and Sophia moved beyond the tacit attempt to contain “patriotic commitment and sincere loyalty” within certain limits. With the approval of Archbishop Chambon, they submitted to the Ministry of Education a joint statement acknowledging a substantially enlarged role for *jinja sanpai* in the life of Japanese Catholics. Subsequent to the “truly regrettable misunderstanding” between Hoffmann and the military training officer, the statement noted, the school authorities had engaged in further study and had exchanged views repeatedly with “knowledgeable” Japanese.⁶⁶ As a result, they had gained a new understanding:

The Imperial Way (*kōdō* 皇道) is the authentic national ethos intrinsic to Japan, and to offer reverence at the places where rites are

65. Minamiki essentially follows this interpretation. He thus translates the phrase as “no other purpose” and interprets it to mean that “the act of homage required of the students had no other significance than that of showing patriotism and loyalty to the country.” Minamiki 1985, p. 145.

66. *Nihonjīngawa no shōsokutsū* 日本人側の消息通. The somewhat odd expression would seem to allude to the principle that in deciding how to deal with morally ambiguous situations, greater weight should be given to knowledgeable and educated views than to those based on a more limited perspective.

held for the imperial ancestor and imperial founders (*kōso kōsō*), for the deceased emperors of generations past, and for loyal and filial, benevolent and upright warriors, is the expression of the Imperial Way within the sphere of the public life of the people of the nation. It is situated on a level totally distinct from that occupied by religious faith in the private life of the people of the nation.

Thus, not only was there no problem in offering reverence at such shrines, “*sanpai* undertaken for the purpose of expressing and fostering this spirit of loyalty and patriotism is something to be positively encouraged by the Catholic Church.”⁶⁷

The Ministry of Education transmitted this statement to the Army, noting in its cover letter that the schools had “corrected their previous understanding of *jinja sanpai* and have promised that henceforth they will act without error”; from an educational perspective, it was highly undesirable for them to remain without the officer.⁶⁸ In subsequent months, as the Army continued to hold out, the ministry supplied specific examples of mass *sanpai* to Yasukuni and Meiji shrines as evidence of the schools’ change in attitude.

The exact circumstances under which the Army was eventually persuaded that Sophia and Gyōsei’s educational policy was in accord with the *kokutai* remain uncertain, but in mid-November 1933, it finally yielded and reassigned military training officers to the two schools.⁶⁹ A year and a half

67. *Jōchi Daigakushi shiryōshū*, vol. 3, p. 91. A Latin draft of this document that has been preserved in the S.J. House archives at Sophia shows those who prepared it wrestling with the wording’s nuances. For instance, as mentioned in note 5, the term *kōso kōsō*, although usually taken to refer to Amaterasu and the early emperors, was subject to different interpretations. The formulators of this document chose to view it (like Inoue Kowashi) as meaning only the first emperors (*imperatores primores*). Similarly, to the passage quoted above, someone added a qualifying interpretive note: “NB. These things, when considered historically, can be affirmed if we say ‘we understand’ and not ‘we approve.’” I would like to express gratitude to Father Klaus Luhmer for providing a copy of this document and to Bettina Gramlich-Oka and Tullio Lobetti for assistance in translating it.

68. *Jōchi Daigakushi shiryōshū*, supp. vol., p. 122.

69. According to the brief memoir of the incident written by Niwa Kōzō 丹羽孝三 (1900–1975) for a pamphlet put out in 1973 to commemorate the sixtieth anniversary of Sophia’s founding, the key to the Army’s yielding was intervention by an imperial

after the failed *sanpai* had set it off, the Sophia-Yasukuni incident at last was over.

REVERBERATIONS

The incident’s impact can be seen in various areas. One was obviously the shift in the Church’s position on shrine rites. For the Catholic faithful, information about that shift perhaps was received piecemeal. Following Yamaguchi Shikazō’s long article on the problems with shrines and *sanpai* in the May 1932 issue of *Koe*, another article in December of the same year, two months after the exchange between Chambon and the Ministry of Education, rehearsed many of the same points. The latter article concluded, however, on a quite different note. Just as the author finished writing it, he stated, word had come that Chambon had distributed copies of the Ministry of Education statement on *sanpai* to the priests of the diocese and had granted permission for Catholic students to do *sanpai* at shrines like Yasukuni and Meiji and to make the bow that expressed their patriotic commitment and sincere loyalty.⁷⁰ Thereafter, with no further comment, the matter of showing reverence at shrines disappeared from the pages of *Koe*.

prince who assumed command of the Imperial Guard in 1933 and who had studied German under Hoffmann when the latter taught it at the Army War College (*Jōchi Daigakushi shiryōshū*, vol. 3, p. 112). Niwa, a Sophia graduate, was the university provost at the time of the incident. His memoir, which has been widely quoted, is full of tantalizing leads but also contains many errors and inaccuracies and needs to be used with caution. It has not been possible to verify his assertion about the prince’s intervention. In fact, one requisite step for resolving the incident proved to be allocating responsibility for the “improper” behavior and attitude that had led the Army to take action. In the case of Sophia, from early on the figure targeted was Niwa, whose confrontational manner aroused the ire of both the Army and the students. Eventually, in June 1933, the university let him go. At Gyōsei, the foreign principal reprimanded Nagae Kunishirō for not having provided him with proper guidance and docked his salary. The Ministry of Education reported both developments to the Army, but even so, it was six months after these signs of repentance before the latter relented.

70. *Koe* (December 1932), pp. 914–17. The author of this article, writing in Japanese under a pseudonym, was in fact a French priest, Clement Joseph Lemoine (1869–1941).

The following month, January 1933, Taguchi Yoshigorō 田口芳五郎 (1902–1978), active in various information-disseminating efforts by the Church (and eventually, in 1973, appointed the second Japanese cardinal), published a tract called *Katorikku-teki kokkakan* カトリック的国家観 (The Catholic View of the State) in which he provided a rationale of sorts for the shift in position. Most of the tract was devoted to demonstrating, with extensive quotes from the Bible, the Church's commitment to nurturing loyalty to legitimate authority and patriotism and its backing of just war. To this discussion Taguchi appended a brief chapter on *jinja sanpai*. In the chapter, he first criticized the government for not addressing the issue of shrines' "content" (*naiyō* 内容) and instead relying excessively on the formalistic separation of institutional jurisdiction to justify the claim that they were not religious. He went on to propose that although shrines combined in an intricate fashion both civil patriotic and religious elements, it should be possible to "preserve each as an independent element." As guidance for how to do so, he quoted Canon 1258, Chambon's letter to Hatoyama, and the Ministry of Education's reply.⁷¹

Despite such indications to general believers of the change in Church policy, for several years after 1932 the catechism retained the stricture against *jinja sanpai*. In 1937, however, subsequent to the Propaganda Fide's 1936 endorsement of shrine ceremonies as having "only purely civil value," the prohibition disappeared. A revised catechism continued to list as examples of "superstition" casting lots, imputing some sacred character to objects, and nature worship, but it dropped all specific reference to shrines and amulets.⁷²

What impact did the incident have on non-Catholics concerned with shrines? As might be expected from the ongoing vigorous debate over the character of shrines, news of the incident attracted wide attention in Protestant circles. The Protestant media quickly picked up and recycled mainstream newspaper reports. On 1932.10.14, for instance, the weekly *Nihon Methodist shinbun* 日本メソヂスト新聞 recapitulated the story that had appeared in *Hōchi shinbun* two weeks before, noting that the Ministry of Education had refused the request to put out a general directive and further paraphrasing *Hōchi*'s summation of the statement issued to Chambon. The *Nihon Method-*

71. Taguchi 1933, pp. 141–50.

72. Koe ran a detailed series of explanations of the new catechism; see Koe 734 (March 1937), pp. 41–42.

ist article added that Chambon would soon inform the priests of his diocese that it was appropriate to engage in *sanpai* and that the decision to adhere to government policy on this matter had been reached after extensive consultation and research from a theological perspective. The article concluded that the incident was likely to influence other Christian denominations and to “cause a great sensation” in both the scholarly and church world.⁷³

The shrine world also took note of the incident, with *Kōkoku jihō* 皇国時報, the journal of the National Shrine Priests Association (Zenkoku Shin-shokukai 全国神職会), which appeared three times a month, carrying several articles on it. The first, on 21 October, seems to have been based on other media reports and was largely informational in tone. First-page articles in November and December were more strident. The December article asserted that the incident was evidence of the dangers of Christian education: the Catholic Church, fearful that the Army’s uncompromising attitude would lead to further clashes, had promised to uphold *jinja sanpai*, but this was “no more than formalistic temporizing”; the Church’s true colors were evident from Yamaguchi’s May *Koe* article.⁷⁴ The Committee for the Study of Shrine Administration also discussed the incident, inviting the vice-minister of education on two occasions (1933.4.10 and 1933.5.1) to talk with the committee about it. Unfortunately, on both occasions the stenographic recording of the proceedings was halted for the duration of the vice-minister’s comments on the incident, so that although we know the committee took up the matter, what was said about it remained off-the-record.⁷⁵

This circumspection was in line with the Ministry of Education’s reported reluctance to issue a “general directive” on *jinja sanpai*.⁷⁶ In the absence of such a directive, the statement about the meaning of the bow provided in response to Chambon’s request remained the fullest official explication of the character of the activities performed at shrines.⁷⁷ Okada Kaneyoshi 岡

73. *Nihon Methodist shinbun* 2127 (14 October 1932), p. 1.

74. *Kōkoku jihō* 475 (1 December 1932), p. 1.

75. *Jinja Seido Chōsakai gijiroku*, vol. 1, pp. 678, 693, 701.

76. See above, pp. 138, 144. Whether the Church had, in fact, initially sought a general directive cannot be verified from the extant documents in the Ministry of Education archives.

77. Comparing the 1932 statement to Minister of Education Okada Ryōhei’s remarks to the 1926 Committee for the Study of Religious Administration (see above, pp. 135–36), Akazawa Shirō sees the 1932 statement’s significance as lying in the

田包義 (1900–2000), a Home Ministry bureaucrat who had served in the Shrine Bureau since 1932, cited it, for instance, in a survey of shrine institutions published in 1936. The statement, he argued, should have resolved the objections of those who continued to hold that the policy of requiring “the entire populace alike to show sincere homage at shrines” conflicted with the constitutional provision for freedom of belief because shrines were religious. That people still quibbled over the matter was because they failed to grasp that “shrines have a public dimension and a private dimension.” While “belief in and homage to shrines” in the private dimension was a matter of free choice, it was natural for state authority to require these as regards the public dimension. Indeed, “if among existing religions, there are those that as a doctrinal principle do not recognize homage to shrines,” this was tantamount to acting in a manner “antagonistic to their duties as subjects” and they should be dealt with as such.⁷⁸

In the postwar period researchers have frequently cited the Ministry of Education’s 1932 statement as evidence of the government’s efforts to make *jinja sanpai* compulsory.⁷⁹ Certainly government bureaucrats played a major role in shaping the environment in which failure to pay reverence at shrines became problematic, and, as Okada Kaneyoshi’s statement cited above suggests, the outcome of the Sophia–Yasukuni Shrine incident encouraged an increasing conviction on their part that *jinja sanpai* came under the category of “duties as subjects.”⁸⁰ Yet, to understand how the 1932 formulation of the content and meaning of reverence at shrines contributed to this development, we should keep in mind that it was not simply imposed unilaterally from above. To a substantial extent it was a joint product of the Ministry of Education and the Tokyo Catholic hierarchy. Cooperation between the two parties may not have been enthusiastic on either side, but in effect, the com-

extension of the requirement to engage in *sanpai* to higher school and university students (Akazawa 1985, pp. 133, 202). His point is well taken, but another important difference is the formal character of the 1932 statement.

78. Okada 1936, pp. 25–28.

79. See, for instance, Murakami 1970, pp. 200–201; Ōe 1984, pp. 41–43; *Meiji ikō shūkyō seido hyakunenshi*, pp. 134–35.

80. On this point Sakamoto Koremaru quotes a number of statements by Shrine Bureau officials in the 1930s and 40s, including that by Okada Kaneyoshi. See Sakamoto 2007, pp. 379–82.

mon need to defend their own interests against Army aggression drew the ministry and the Church together in a shared endeavor.

Finally, what was the incident’s impact on Sophia? For the university, the Yasukuni incident came close to being a death blow. Student enrollments, around 315 in May 1932, were 264 a year later, and had dropped to around 220 by the end of 1933.⁸¹ Nevertheless, Sophia survived, and in the following years, little by little, it consolidated its place in Japanese society. In his address on the occasion of the celebration of the university’s twenty-fifth anniversary, held on 1 November 1938, President Hermann Heuvers (1890–1977), who had succeeded Hoffmann upon the latter’s death in June 1937, noted as a particular honor that in December 1937, in a ceremony attended by the entire school—faculty, staff, and students—the university had received an imperial portrait. One of the features of the 1938 celebration was a congratulatory message from the minister of education, Araki Sadao 荒木貞夫 (1877–1966), who in 1932, as Army minister, had loomed as one of the university’s most serious adversaries. Nineteen thirty-eight saw two other notable events in the university’s history. Three years earlier, at the initiative of Father Kraus, Pope Pius XI (1857–1939) had entrusted to the university a project to bring out a Japanese translation of the German Catholic encyclopedia originally published by Herder. At the end of 1938 the completed manuscript for the first of four volumes was sent to the printer.⁸² And in 1938 the indefatigable Kraus saw another project through to fruition: the university embarked on publication of the journal *Monumenta Nipponica*. As President Heuvers put it in his anniversary address, “many universities have come close to overlooking research on Japan’s traditional characteristics and its distinctive culture. Caught up in foreign culture, they have been inclined to forget the value of traditional culture. The present journal seeks to be a center for the investigation of Japanese culture, past and present.”⁸³

Among the features of the early issues of *Monumenta Nipponica* is the large number of articles on Shinto and the related topic of *kokugaku*, many by Heinrich Dumoulin (1905–1995), whom the Jesuit head directed in 1936

81. *Jōchi Daigakushi shiryōshū*, vol. 3, p. 96.

82. In one of the many ironies of this period of Japanese history, for several years the *Catholic Encyclopedia* translation project provided employment for a number of leftist Japanese intellectuals, including Miki Kiyoshi 三木清 (1897–1945) and Tosaka Jun 戸坂潤 (1900–1945).

83. *Jōchi Daigakushi shiryōshū*, vol. 3, pp. 115–24.

to undertake the study of Japanese religions. These articles, dealt with in this volume more fully by Bernhard Scheid, were in a sense a fulfillment of the university's 1933 promise, in the midst of the Yasukuni incident, to continue to transmit a "correct understanding" of Japanese culture to an international audience, a promise reconfirmed by Heuvers in 1938. They were also, one assumes, an attempt to come to terms academically with some of the historical roots of the troublesome and complex phenomena—intellectual, religious, and cultural—that the university and the Japanese Church had so recently encountered.

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