

In Search of Lost Essence

Nationalist Projections in German Shinto Studies

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A “classic” depiction of Shinto in German Shinto studies can be traced back to Karl Florenz (1865–1939) who was, together with William George Aston (1841–1911), Ernest Satow (1843–1929) and Basil Hall Chamberlain (1850–1935), one of the pioneers of modern Japanese studies. Like his British colleagues, he devoted most of his research to translation of the earliest Japanese chronicles and was particularly interested in the origins of Japanese culture.¹ His best known writing, *Die historischen Quellen der Shintō-Religion* (The Historical Sources of the Shinto Religion, Florenz 1919)—which is actually a translated and annotated collection of texts about the “age of the gods” in *Kojiki*, *Nihon shoki*, and *Kogo shūi*—contains a brief introduction where Florenz explains the development of Shinto as consisting of three phases: firstly, “pure, old Shinto” from primordial times until around 800; secondly, “vulgar Shinto” intermingled with Buddhism, which lasted until 1868; and thirdly “revived pure Shinto”, the form of Shinto propagated after the Meiji Restoration.² Florenz attributes the “vulgarization” of Shinto in his second stage to the Buddhist founding figures Saichō and Kūkai. He

1. Florenz spent about twenty-five years in Japan and was in close contact especially with Aston. Since their translations appeared in tandem, both authors frequently referenced and influenced each other. On Florenz’s life and scholarship, see Wachutka 2001. For Florenz’s French counterpart, Michel Revon (1867–1943), see Jean-Pierre Berthon’s chapter in this volume, pp. 185–91.

2. Florenz 1919, pp. v–vi. For the second term Florenz renders the Japanese equivalent “Zoku-Shintō,” a term probably derived from *Zoku shintō taii* 俗神道大意 (Outline of Vulgar Shinto) by Hirata Atsutane (1776–1843), published in 1860.

also uses the somewhat anachronistic term *ryōbu shintō* 両部神道 (“Shinto of two parts”) for the entire period of Shinto between 800 and 1868.³

Florenz’s terms are clearly derived from the nativist school (*kokugaku* 国学), but similar outlines of Shinto can be found among other contemporary Western observers of Japanese culture as well. Aston, for instance, provides a much more detailed and complex depiction of Shinto than Florenz but equally maintains that the introduction of Buddhism meant at the same time the “neglect and decay” of Shinto.⁴ While both Aston and Florenz were particularly interested in early Shinto, they regarded Shinto’s decline as an inevitable evolutionary process. As Michael Wachutka has pointed out, this Western approach can be probably traced back to Edward Tylor (1832–1917), the founding father of British anthropology, who, in a famous lecture on Japanese mythology of 1876, speaks of the necessity to eliminate Chinese and Buddhist elements from Japanese myth in order to arrive at primitive mythology in its natural form.⁵ In retrospect, it may seem that this claim was already influenced by similar statements by *kokugaku* scholars in Japan, but actually Tylor just expressed the main objective of prehistorical and anthropological research in the nineteenth century: the search for the simple, pure, original state of mankind. This search coincided with the search for the simple, pure, original state of Japan among Japanese *kokugaku* intellectuals. But while Western scholars looked for a blueprint of “primitive culture” on a global scale—however influenced by “Orientalist” preconceptions it might have been—the Japanese scholars were interested primarily in their own cultural heritage that would explain the uniqueness of their own culture. What both perspectives had in common, however, was the focus on ancient

3. Aston equally regards Ryōbu Shinto as a sect founded by Kūkai (Aston 1905, pp. 361ff.). Both authors certainly echoed contemporary Japanese conceptions here. For a discussion of the historical development of the term *ryōbu shintō*, see Scheid 2003.

4. Aston 1905, p. 395.

5. Tylor 1877, pp. 57–58, quoted from Wachutka 2001, pp. 91–92. Interestingly, Tylor’s lecture was mentioned also by the French anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss (1908–2009) in his keynote speech at the opening of the International Research Center for Japanese Studies (Nichibunken) in Kyoto 1988. According to Lévi-Strauss, Tylor’s evaluation was the starting point of a general academic interest in Japanese mythology that raised the subsequent translations into English and German above the level of merely regional studies (Lévi-Strauss 2012, p. 22).

mythology or “Shintoism,” as Western observers tended to call it. The focus on antiquity and the simple sketch of ancient, vulgar, and restored Shinto by Florenz and others set the scene for ignoring the historical dynamism in the relationship between *kami* and buddhas, an ignorance that would remain characteristic for Western scholarship on Shinto during most of the twentieth century.⁶

Carl von Weegmann (1879–1960) wrote in an obituary that Florenz found in “Shinto the very kernel of ‘Japaneseness’.”⁷ Weegmann is probably correct in identifying Florenz’s research in ancient Japanese mythology with his interest in ancient Shinto. However, Florenz’s intended readership were, among others, “scholars of religion who are no japanologists.”⁸ Similar to Tylor’s proposition, his research was ultimately directed at providing an example of early mythology for the comparative study of universal myths. Thus, “Japaneseness” as such was not the focus of his interests. Being an empiricist rather than a theoretician, he put most of his efforts in the meticulous annotations to his translations and never explained systematically whether Shinto was the kernel of Japaneseness or what Japaneseness actually consisted of. Wilhelm Gundert (1880–1971), who took over Florenz’s chair in Hamburg in 1936, broadened the historical picture but hardly changed the layout of Shinto history left in the above-cited sketch by Florenz.⁹ The question of Japaneseness and Shinto as addressed in the obituary of 1939, however, was introduced mainly by a new generation of scholars that were raised already under the influence of rising nationalism in Germany and Japan. These authors are the subject of the present chapter.

6. Florenz wrote more extensively on Shinto in a couple of later works, but tended more and more to believe in contemporary claims that modern Shinto succeeded in the revival of “ancient, pure Shinto.” For an analysis of his interpretations, see Naumann 1985.

7. “... Shintō, in dem er mit Recht den Kern des ‘Japanischen’ erkannte,” Weegmann 1939, p. 351.

8. Florenz 1919, p. viii.

9. Gundert published his dissertation as a series of studies on “Shintoist noh drama” in 1925. In his main oeuvre, *Japanische Religionsgeschichte* (1935), however, he dealt mainly with Buddhism.

MONUMENTA NIPPONICA

The core of this chapter examines discourse on Shinto in prewar and war-time volumes of *Monumenta Nipponica*, 1–6 (1938–1943, hereafter MN). MN was edited by the Catholic Sophia University (Jōchi Daigaku 上智大学) founded by the Jesuit order in 1913. Most members of the founding staff, as for instance, the first president Hermann Hoffmann (1864–1937), were German Jesuits.¹⁰ The publication of MN—which was only realized after energetic networking in Europe as well as in Japan by chief-editor Father Johannes Kraus (1892–1946)—marked the university’s recovery from a deep crisis in 1932, the so-called Sophia University–Yasukuni Shrine Incident. As explained in detail by Kate Wildman Nakai in this volume, the Catholic Church’s position on “State Shinto” or more precisely on the obligation to do reverence at shrines (*jinja sanpai* 神社参拝) stood in the background of this confrontation. In order to overcome the imminent repressions by the government, the Japanese Catholic Church and Sophia University in particular had to renounce their former critique of *jinja sanpai* and thus to demonstrate loyalty towards the ultranationalistic regime. In this context, Shinto had become a sensitive issue in the relations between government and Church authorities of that time.

The early volumes of MN are therefore especially interesting as regards their depiction of Shinto. At the same time, they represent an excellent sample of German scholarship on Japan. *Monumenta*, which was initially a multilingual journal, served at that time simultaneously as an international and as a most important German scientific forum within the Western Japa-

10. One reason for the active role played by German Jesuits in Sophia’s founding was probably the desire to develop a new field of activity for them at a time when the Jesuit order in Germany was under severe restrictions owing to the so-called *Kulturkampf* (cultural clash) involving the confrontation of the newly founded German nation state with conservative Catholics adhering to the pope rather than to the secular authorities. The ensuing “Jesuit laws” which prohibited Jesuit activity in Germany were in effect from 1872–1917. Many German Jesuits went abroad during this period. In 1908, Jesuits were sent to Japan with the explicit order to build up the reputation of Catholicism in the field of higher education in Japan. The result was the foundation of Sophia University in 1913. In 1921, subsequent to the restoration of Jesuit activity in Germany, Japan was assigned to the “Lower German Province” in the administrative districts of the Jesuit order (Fuess 2005).

nese Studies community.¹¹ In other words, German articles formed something like a subsystem within the thematic scope of early MN volumes. In a letter from 1941, Horst Hammitzsch (1909–1991), then one of the rising stars in German Japanese studies, expressed this situation in the form of his apprehension “that people abroad might be led to the impression that German japanology is entirely in the hands of the Jesuits.”¹² Hammitzsch, whose Nazi background will be discussed in more detail below, would have certainly preferred a scientific journal in the hands of a German university.

Another reason for putting the emphasis on the case of *Monumenta* lies in the fact that the journal operated in an environment where several layers of interests (Catholic, German, Japanese, etc.) both intersected and stalemated each other. Thus, if there was a scientific forum where German scholars in the 1930–40s could express their opinions more or less free from political repression, it was *Monumenta Nipponica*. MN, therefore, should provide a more balanced picture of German scholarship than any contemporary journal in Germany proper, since in the latter case political (self-) censorship can be taken for granted. Nevertheless, already a cursory glimpse at the table of contents of MN volumes 1–6 reveals certain biases among German scholars. In particular we can notice their focus on Shinto-related topics and/or on the emergence of a “national spirit” in Japan.

Monumenta was from the beginning dedicated to Japanese history and literature. In their initial statement of the journal’s “Aims and Objectives,” the editorial board professed a particular emphasis on translations of texts that convey “essential and typical features of Japanese tradition.”¹³ While this did not exclude studies on contemporary Japan, articles on premodern history and literature clearly dominate the thematic spectrum. In due consequence, volumes 1–6 contain a comparatively large share of translations and articles dedicated to classical literature and poetry with a particular empha-

11. Alternatively, there existed the two traditional publication series *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan* (TASJ, since 1874) and *Mitteilungen der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Natur- und Völkerkunde Ostasiens* (MOAG, since 1873) which appeared as collections of essays once a year or, occasionally, in the format of larger monographic publications, but not in the format of a regular journal. Other German periodicals on East Asia like *Asia Major* (1923–1935) had become victims of the Nazis (Worm 1994, p. 181).

12. Worm 1994, p. 182.

13. MN 1:1 (1938), p. 1.

sis on noh. Of even more quantitative importance, however, are articles on Shinto in a broad sense, including not only mythology or ritual, but also the intellectual history of *kokugaku*, the Mito School, etc.: excluding short notes and reviews, there are twenty-eight contributions to this topic.¹⁴ By contrast, articles on Japanese Buddhism amount to only nine contributions. The third major topic in the early volumes, which is also specifically mentioned among the first editors' "Aims and Objectives," is the "history of the so-called Christian century (1550–1650)" in Japan. Besides a large number of "brief notes," there are eighteen main articles and translations on that subject. Other thematic categories like social and juridical history, linguistics, ethnology, philosophy, etc., are of course also covered in MN but received comparatively less attention.

Fig. 1: Overview of articles in MN 1–6

volume	articles*	languages			Shinto**		Christ.	Buddh.
		Eng.	Ger.	Rom.	Eng.	Ger.		
1 (1938)	24	9	9	6	2	2	7	4
2 (1939)	25	6	14	5	1	6	7	0
3 (1940)	27	10	12	5	2	7	1	0
4 (1941)	20	9	9	2	1	5	0	0
5 (1942)	15	4	9	2	0	1	1	1
6 (1943)	16	3	11	2	0	1	2	4
	127	41	64	22	6	22	18	9

* excluding reviews, short notes, etc.; including translations

** including national icons

If we take a look at the ratio of European languages in the early numbers of *Monumenta* we find a significant bias towards German articles, which amount to sixty-four, one-half of all main contributions. English articles comprise about one-third of the journal, while articles in Romance languages (mostly French, but also Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese) appeared

14. Among these twenty-eight articles I count also a series on six heroic figures of early and medieval Japanese history such as Wake no Kiyomaro, Kusunoki Masashige, and others who served as models of loyalty to the tennō and were therefore important figures in the contemporary nationalist ideology.

in significantly less numbers. The predominance of German articles is not so much of a surprise given the above-mentioned fact that most of the foreign staff at Sophia, including the chief editor of *Monumenta*, at that time were Germans. Nevertheless, in the first volume there seems to be a conscious intent to balance German and English. The dominance of German can be felt significantly only in the volumes of 1939, 1942, and 1943. When we look at the topic of Shinto, however, English articles are by far outweighed by German ones from the beginning: Apart from Japanese authors such as Katō Genchi 加藤玄智 (1873–1965) and Kōno Seizō 河野省三¹⁵ (1882–1963), who were translated into English, the only native English-speaking Shinto scholars were Daniel Clarence Holtom (1884–1962), who published a highly interesting study, “The Meaning of Kami,” in a series of articles from 1940 to 1941 in MN, and Daniel Buchanan (1892–1982) who published a short piece on the *mikuri* of the Fushimi Inari Shrine. On the other hand, the most prolific German contributors were at the same time those who published mostly on Shinto-related topics.

These most active “Shinto authors” of early MN include Hermann Böhner (1884–1963) with seven long and four short contributions plus reviews;¹⁶ Heinrich Dumoulin (1905–1995) with eight long, one short, and several review articles; and Horst Hammitzsch (1909–1991) with three long articles. (Most other German authors published only one main article each in the years from 1938 to 1943.)

Hermann Böhner, who figures prominently in Michael Wachutka’s contribution to this volume, was one generation older than Dumoulin and Hammitzsch, came from a Protestant missionary family, and studied theology. Early interests in Chinese led him to Tsingtao, at that time a German colony in China, where he was taken prisoner by the Japanese soon after the beginning of World War I. During his imprisonment he learned the language and became so well acquainted with Japanese culture that he remained as a

15. Reading according to *Shintō jinmei jiten*, p. 435. In MN he is referred to as Kōno Shōzō.

16. The long contributions contain the above-mentioned six biographies of national heroes and one translation of “Notes to the Crown Prince” by Emperor Hanazono (1297–1348), which Böhner takes as an occasion to develop his own idiosyncratic view of Japanese history culminating in the Meiji Restoration: “Ur-Japan, Ur-Volkstum Japans schien wiedergekehrt zu sein und verkörperte sich in einer der grössten Gestalten der Geschichte des Ostens, in Meiji-Tennō” (Böhner 1938, p. 327).

teacher of German in Osaka and eventually spent the rest of his life in Japan. In MN he appears most prominently as the author of a series on national heroes that was apparently started on his own initiative.

Heinrich Dumoulin was a member of the Society of Jesus and had come to Japan only a few years earlier after having finished his studies of theology in Germany. In 1938, he was still enrolled in the doctoral course in comparative religion at Tokyo Imperial University¹⁷ (being the only foreigner there), which he finished in 1943 with a dissertation on Kamo no Mabuchi 賀茂真淵.¹⁸ He remained in Japan for the rest of his life, concentrating on missionary work after the war, but entered the scientific community again in the 1950s to become one of the leading Western experts on the history of Zen.

Horst Hammitzsch was the youngest in our group of authors. After finishing Japanese studies in Leipzig he came to Japan in the late 1930s to work as an instructor of German in Nagoya. In contrast to the vast majority of japanologists at that time, he had no religious training or theological background of some sort. Rather, he represented a new type of German scholar who was raised in a national rather than a clerical environment. In addition to his membership in the NSDAP he was a distant relative by marriage to Adolf Hitler.¹⁹ The fact that he was appointed to a professorship in Leipzig already in 1941 further testifies to the fact that he was favored by the Nazis. Nevertheless, he did not encounter any disadvantages after the war, when he became one of the most influential figures in German postwar Japanese studies, holding a chair of Japanese studies first in Munich and later in Bochum. He is best known as the editor of a handbook on Japan (*Japan-Handbuch*) published in 1981, but became also interested in the history of tea.

17. On this newly introduced field of academic study, see the chapter by Hayashi Makoto in this volume, pp. 53–55 and 58–60.

18. At Tokyo Imperial University, Dumoulin was taken care of by Ishibashi Tomonobu 石橋智信 (1886–1947), an Old Testament scholar who was fluent in German and coauthored the translation of the *Yuiitsu shintō myōbō yōshū* 唯一神道名法要集 (Ishibashi and Dumoulin 1940) with Dumoulin. It was Ishibashi who directed Dumoulin's interests to *kokugaku*, and in particular to Mabuchi. Already in this period, Dumoulin also did some research on Zen and published translations of Zen classics, for instance in *Monumenta Serica* (Heisig 1985, p. 111).

19. A relative of Hammitzsch was married to Hitler's half-sister Angela. For details, see Worm 1994, pp. 174–78.

BLUT-UND-BODEN RHETORIC

The overview of early MN topics certainly leads to the impression that even without direct political intervention, it was mostly German authors who touched on the ideological hotspots of the day, i.e., issues that we now call tennōism, State Shinto, and Japanese national identity. The nationalist or Nazi background of these authors could be further enlightened by detailed biographical research but the aim of this chapter is not primarily to unveil political affiliations and machinations.²⁰ Thus, I mostly ignore those Nazi authors who left no lasting trace in the history of Shinto studies due to the small quantity or the inferior quality of their academic output. Rather I want to point out the explicit or implicit political connotations in the academic work of German scholars who shaped the understanding of Japan, and in particular of Shinto, also in the second half of the twentieth century. I will therefore start with a closer look at the use of *Blut-und-Boden* rhetoric in *Monumenta Nipponica*.

By *Blut-und-Boden* rhetoric I refer to certain keywords of (German) nationalist ideology, such as “Blut-und-Boden” (blood and soil, or, in more academic language, genetic and geographic conditions), “Volk” (people in the sense of an ethnic unit) and particularly its adjective “völkisch” (of the people), “entartet” (degenerate), or “artfremd” (alien) in juxtaposition to “rassisch” (determined by race). These are all words that in the diction of Nazi ideology point to the concept of race (*Rasse*) in the sense of hereditary, genetic characteristics that determine a given culture (or rather “Volk”) and the hierarchy among cultures like a natural law. The German terms of the prewar period are certainly not all neologisms coined by the Nazis, but especially in combination their racist implications are immediately clear in a German context. They are rare in scientific discourse before the Nazi era. After World War II, a critical examination of these terms set in only slowly, and therefore Nazi jargon can be found to some extent also in postwar academic literature. Today, however, these terms are treated as politically incorrect and are therefore on a kind of tacit index in all German-speaking countries.

The above mentioned Nazi terms can be indeed found in large numbers in German articles of MN before the end of World War II, and in particular

20. For information on these aspects of German scholarship on Japan in the prewar period, see in particular Worm 1994 and Hack 1995.

in articles by German “Shinto authors.” Dumoulin, for example, started his eulogy of the Meiji martyr Yoshida Shōin 吉田松陰 (1830–1859) in the first volume of *Monumenta* with the bold claim: “History is deeply rooted in the blood and the soil of a people.”²¹ Hammitzsch wrote about the *kokugaku* intellectuals: “To large circles [of society] these scholars demonstrated for the first time possibilities to develop in accordance with blood and soil [...].”²² Böhner tried even harder using the phrases “determined by blood” and “conditioned by soil” (“blutmäßig bedingt” and “bodenmäßig gegeben”) as analytical categories which interact, according to Böhner, in a dialectical relationship.²³ Yet, racist terminology was also used by authors who did not deal with Shinto or nationalist subjects, as for instance Florenz’s “last pupil,” Herbert Zachert (1908–1979), who published at that time mostly on *noh*.²⁴ Particularly telling is Zachert’s review of a book on “the hero concept in ancient Japanese literature,”²⁵ by Walter Donat (1898–1970), an early member of the NSDAP and one of the politically most active German japanologists.²⁶ Donat’s attempt to draw a parallel between German and Japanese heroism

21. Dumoulin 1938a (MN 1), p. 350. The article deals with loyalism to the tennō rather than with Shinto, but Dumoulin seems to equate Japanese patriotism, bushidō, and Shinto when he writes that in Shōin’s family, “true *bushi* spirit and the ancient Shinto tradition existed side by side” (p. 351).

22. “Die Gelehrten zeigten weiten Kreisen zum ersten Mal wieder blut- und bodengebundene Entfaltungsmöglichkeiten [...]” Hammitzsch 1939 (MN 2), p. 22.

23. Böhner 1938 (MN 1), p. 316.

24. Zachert is best known for his translation of imperial edicts in *Shoku Nihongi*, published first in 1932 and in a second version in 1950. After the war he became professor of Japanese studies in Berlin and Bonn. Outside MN, Zachert published also an article on “the nature and national spirit of the Japanese” (Zachert 1940).

25. Zachert 1939 (MN 2).

26. Donat was originally trained in German literature. *The Japanese Concept of the Hero* was his habilitation written in haste to raise his status before he became the head of the German-Japanese Culture Institute in Tokyo in 1938. Hack and Worm leave no doubts that Donat’s habilitation was only approved due to strong support by the NSDAP (Worm 1994, pp. 178–80; Hack 1995, *passim*). In 1941 Donat was substituted by Zachert in Tokyo (Hack 1995, p. 83) and took over an SS-funded chair in Berlin. At that time, he was one of the most influential intermediaries between Germany and Japan, in terms of both diplomacy and nationalist propaganda. After 1945, Donat was one of the few Nazi japanologists who lost his post. From 1950, however, he was allowed to resume teaching at the universities of Erlangen and Würzburg.

based on Fascist concepts of race is commented on approvingly by Zachert, who mentions the “racially conditioned heroic mind” (*die rassistisch bedingte heldische Gesinnung*) of the Japanese several times in this three-page review. In line with contemporary Japanese nationalistic sentiments, Zachert regards Emperor Go-Daigo’s loyal retainer Kusunoki Masashige (1294–1336) as the embodiment of the “highest *völkisch* idea of Japanesedom.”²⁷

Finally, Nazi terms were—arguably quite aptly—used in translations of Japanese articles into German. In an article by Hiraizumi Kiyoshi 平泉澄 (1895–1984), a professor of Japanese history at Tokyo Imperial University and one of the leading Shinto ideologues of the day, the decline of Heian culture is explained by the “spirit of degeneration” (*Geist der Entartung*) which led to a loss of “manly spirit.”²⁸ An article on “Kannagara no Michi” by another prominent ideological figure, Kōno Seizō, was published in English. Here the word “race” is used to indicate what would be rather called “culture” or “nation” today: “... the spirit of *kannagara* thus developed a racial faith...”²⁹

The discussion of racist and nationalist terms will reappear in several citations below, but at this point I would like to conclude with two general observations: Firstly, the use of ideological rhetoric reached its peak in the issues of 1939 and 1940, after which it declined in spite of the fact that the ratio of German contributions increased. Perhaps, those German scholars who remained scientifically active in Japan became more and more reluctant to echo German propaganda as the war proceeded. Secondly, the use of racist rhetoric indicates a certain generational gap in the scientific community. Racist terms appear more often in the language of younger German scholars who were born in the early years of the twentieth century and therefore were still comparatively young at the establishment of Nazi rule in 1933. This is not to say that members of the older generation did not sympathize with the Nazis. The above-mentioned Wilhelm Gundert (born in 1880), for example, joined the National Socialist Party quite early and left no doubt of his loyalty towards the *Reich* in order to advance in his academic career. Yet, as pointed out by Herbert Worm, Nazi rhetoric occurs primarily in Gundert’s

27. “... die höchste völkische Idee des Japanertums,” Zachert 1939, p. 312.

28. Hiraizumi 1938 (MN 1), p. 60. In his Hanazono article, Hermann Bohner takes over this notion (Bohner 1938, p. 319).

29. Kōno 1940 (MN 3), p. 379.

speeches and propaganda writings, not so much in his academic writings.³⁰ The afore-mentioned Hermann Bohner, on the other hand, is an exception among the older generation due to his constant and systematic usage of *Blut-und-Boden* terminology.

All in all, the use of Nazi jargon is particularly striking among the younger Shinto authors, but there are noteworthy exceptions to this trend. The art historian Dietrich Seckel (1910–2007), for example, dealt with Shinto architecture during this period. While his topics border on the nationalist agenda of Shrine Shinto, his articles show no particular sympathy with either German or Japanese nationalism.³¹ Most of the other younger German authors who refrained from nationalist discourse, however, avoided Shinto-related topics as well.³²

MONUMENTA'S STANCE TOWARDS NATIONALIST TOPICS

The correlation of Shinto topics and German nationalism raises the question whether this trend was intentionally fostered by the core members of MN, or put more generally, what was MN's general stance towards nationalist topics. In this respect, the most influential figure is certainly Johannes Kraus, the founder and first editor of *Monumenta Nipponica*. Kraus was trained as

30. Worm 1994, pp. 169–72. More recently, Gerhard Krebs traced Gundert's numerous publications in non-academic Nazi journals, where Gundert glorified Japanese heroism, nationalism, and Shinto (Krebs 2013).

31. In MN 6, Seckel published a detailed article on Taigen-kyū, the most important shrine of Yoshida Shinto (Seckel 1943). Some expressions in this otherwise very informative article may appear odd to us today, as for instance “the hot national center [...] of the divine-national force” (p. 59), but it remains unclear whether this has to be taken as an approval of contemporary nationalism. Similar things can be said about Otto Karow (1913–1992), an expert of historical linguistics who also covered ethno-folkloristic topics. In his excellent MN study of mating rites in the *fudoki* 風土記, he used expressions like “das Volk in seiner blutmäßigen Gemeinschaft” (Karow 1942, p. 288) or “völkische Lebensgestaltung” (p. 325). Nevertheless, these terms do not play a central part in his analysis. Elsewhere, Seckel and Karow published a study on the origin of *torii* 鳥居 (*Der Ursprung des Torii*, Karow and Seckel 1942), equally without affirmative slogans of Japanese or German nationalism.

32. See, for instance, Oskar Benl (1914–1986), who wrote two articles on Heian literature in the early volumes of MN.

a Jesuit priest in Germany and spent many years in various European countries. He had cherished a long ambition to do missionary work in Japan but came there when he was already thirty-nine years old. The foundation of MN can be seen as his most important achievement. Nevertheless, he was no specialist in Japanese studies and probably even could not understand Japanese very well. Therefore, his contributions to the journal are confined exclusively to reviews and one-page introductory remarks to certain volumes.

Judging from these short contributions, Kraus certainly did not hesitate to use Nazi rhetoric. In his review of Bohner's translation of the *Jinnō shōtōki* 神皇正統記 (Bohner 1935), for instance, Kraus called this classic of Japanese divine country discourse (*shinkoku shisō* 神国思想) a "Bibelbuch der völkisch-nationalen Weltanschauung Japans" and praises Bohner for both the choice and the scientific scrutiny of his translation. Yet, the review ends with the somewhat ambiguous acclamation: "Whoever harbors a sense for heroic greatness will not be able to defy the fascination of this intellectual world [of the *Jinnō shōtōki*] that has been brought to us with prophetic fervor (*prophetische Glut*),"³³ indicating an ironical distance to Bohner's mysticism and pathos. In another review of a book on the "state theory of contemporary Japan," which was obviously perfectly in line with Nazi ideology, Kraus severely criticizes the author's concept of "artfremd" and bluntly points to his lack of specialist knowledge. Nevertheless, in the concluding sentence, Kraus feels obliged to pay lip service to the author's "successful attempt to explain the unique form of the Japanese empire [...] to the German reader."³⁴ The same opportunistic stance can be seen also in the choice of articles in MN, exemplified in volume 3:2 of 1940.

In this year, 1940, Japan celebrated the mythical foundation of the state by Jinmu Tennō, allegedly 2,600 years before. Naturally, this event could not be ignored by MN. In his brief introductory note to this special issue (MN 3:2), Kraus simply repeated some of the most common nationalist self-stereotypes of Japan: the unbroken line of emperors; the union of emperor and people in one great family; and the sanctification of this union by Shinto. Again, he applied also some *Blut-und-Boden* rhetoric: "Emperor and people are united in the religico-mystic veneration of their blood-related family

33. Kraus 1938 (MN 1), p. 286.

34. Kraus 1940a (MN 3), p. 330.

bond,” which is seen as the “Urgeheimnis,” the ultimate secret, of the Japanese people.³⁵

Kraus’s introduction is followed by two articles that bear a direct relation to the 2,600-year anniversary, one on “emperor and people in Japanese short poems,” in German, one on Shinto, in English. The article on the emperors’ poems is a very short anthology, with almost no commentary, of imperial poems from antiquity to the present selected by Sophia University’s president Hermann Heuvers (1890–1977) and Uda Gorō.³⁶ The most important contribution to the 2,600-year anniversary, however, was the above-mentioned article by Kōno Seizō on *Kannagara no michi*. Kōno, then the director of Kokugakuin University, was a nationalist intellectual to the extent that after the war he was purged and lost his post as a university professor. He remained active, however, in the newly founded National Association of Shinto Shrines (Jinja Honchō 神社本庁, founded in 1946).³⁷ In his *Monumenta* article he maintains that *kannagara* 随神 (lit. “kami-like” or “being like a *kami*”) had embodied the fundamental national faith since times immemorial and the “fundamental principle and guiding power of rising Japan” since the Meiji Restoration.³⁸ A particular point is his contention that *kannagara* does not imply the whole range of possible *kami* but refers specifically to Amaterasu, the imperial ancestor deity. Although *kannagara no michi* can be found as an alternative reading for the characters usually read as *shintō* 神道, the two expressions are, in Kōno’s view, not exactly the same, *kannagara* being the “quintessence” of Shinto. In other words, worship of Amaterasu as the imperial ancestor deity is the essence of Shinto. To substantiate this contention Kōno uses sometimes plausible, sometimes dubious, philological and etymological arguments that can be traced in one

35. “Herrscher und Volk wissen sich so eins in religiös-mystischer Verklärung blutsverwandter Familiengemeinschaft.[...] Dai-Nippons Kultur [...] kann nur verstehen, wer zu diesem Urgeheimnis japanischen Volkstums vordringt” (Kraus 1940b, pp. 361–62).

36. Heuvers and Uda 1940. The chosen poems underline both the virility and the mildness of Japanese emperors, including Meiji. Hermann Heuvers had translated also a selection of poems by Emperor Meiji, in MN 2:2 (1939), pp. 333–48.

37. *Shintō jinmei jiten*, p. 435.

38. Kōno 1940 (MN 3), p. 369. The term *kannagara* is originally taken from the *Nihon shoki* where it is explained as a synonym of *shintō*.

way or another back to *kokugaku* scholars like Motoori Norinaga 本居宣長 (1730–1801).³⁹

In our context, the most interesting detail regarding Kōno's article in *Monumenta* is the fact that Kraus appended to it a kind of epilogue written by D. C. Holtom. Based on *Shintō daijiten* 神道大辞典 published shortly before (1937–1940) and other contemporary Japanese secondary literature, Holtom points to several flaws in Kōno's arguments and finds "good reasons for taking *kannagara* in a much wider sense than that favored by Dr. Kōno."⁴⁰ Thus, Holtom clearly puts Kōno's simplistic reductions of Shinto into perspective. The fact that Holtom's critical notes were explicitly written "at the Editor's request" sheds an interesting light on Kraus in this connection: Obviously, Kraus followed a twofold strategy on the occasion of the 2,600-year celebration. On the one hand, he asked one of the most prominent representatives of the National Spirit (*kokumin seishin* 国民精神) movement for a contribution to his journal; on the other, he appended to this contribution a critical evaluation as far from Kōno's intentions as it could possibly be. Quite obviously the reputation of his journal in the Anglo-Saxon academic world was still a big issue and was almost as important to him as staying in the good grace of the Japanese government.

These examples may suffice to indicate an ambivalent, or perhaps rather opportunist stance of the chief-editor of MN regarding both German and Japanese nationalism.⁴¹

A NEW FOCUS ON *KOKUGAKU*

In addition to the frequent use of Nazi terms, early MN articles on Shinto also exhibit another new feature of German scholarship on Shinto at that time, a particular interest in *kokugaku*. With the exception of Ernest Satow,⁴² Western scholars hitherto had referred to *kokugaku* works only as secondary sources in the interpretation of ancient Shinto. The new generation of German Shinto scholars, however, turned away from ancient mythology and

39. Norinaga had a similar view on *kannagara* as expressed, for instance, in his *Naobi no mitama* 直毘靈.

40. Holtom 1940 (MN 3), p. 389.

41. For a similar evaluation of Kraus, see Fuess 2005, p. 98.

42. *The Revival of Pure Shintau* (Satow 1883).

addressed the emergence of a new national consciousness in Japan that they rightfully traced back to early modern authors like Kamo no Mabuchi, Motoori Norinaga, Hirata Atsutane 平田篤胤, and others. The focus on *kokugaku* is most striking in MN 2:1 of 1939, which could be called the “*kokugaku* issue” of *Monumenta*. As mentioned above, 1939 is at the same time the first year dominated significantly by contributions in German.

MN 2:1 contains first of all a series of “smaller texts by the three great *kokugaku* scholars” that are nevertheless “characteristic for their authors’ interpretation of Shinto”⁴³: Heinrich Dumoulin translated Mabuchi’s *Kokuikō* 国意考 (Thoughts on the Meaning of the Country), Hans Stolte (1913–2007) translated *Naobi no mitama* (The Spirit of the Naobi [Deities], here translated as “The spirit of renovation”) by Motoori Norinaga, and Wilhelm Schiffer (1914–1972) translated Hirata Atsutane’s *Taidō wakumon* 大道或問 (Questions about the Great Way). Needless to say, all translations were into German. They are introduced by an article on the historical development of *kokugaku* by Heinrich Dumoulin, to which the other translators seem to have contributed some passages on their translated works.⁴⁴ All translators were members of the Jesuit order, Schiffer being at that time the assistant of MN chief-editor Kraus.⁴⁵ Thus, the whole project was probably planned and coordinated either by Kraus or by other authorities among the Jesuit Sophia University.

In addition to these four major contributions, an article by Horst Hammitzsch occupies the prominent first place of MN 2:1. Titled “Kangaku und Kokugaku” it deals with Confucian and nativist movements in Tokugawa intellectual history. Hammitzsch starts with an overview of Tokugawa Confucianism and Shinto-Confucian syncretism that more or less represents the state of Western academic knowledge at his time. When it comes to the topic of *kokugaku*, however, Hammitzsch ventures new forms of interpretation: he maintains that Confucian circles were ultimately less successful than the *kokugaku* movement because foreign ideas still prevailed within

43. Dumoulin 1939, p. 156.

44. As indicated in the table of contents (MN 2:1), the article was written by “Dr. Heinrich Dumoulin S.J., in union (in Gemeinschaft) with Hans Stolte S.J. and Wilhelm Schiffer S.J.” Stolte came to Japan in 1934, where he spent the rest of his life. After the war he worked as a teacher at Eikō Gakuin, a middle and high school in Kamakura, founded by the Jesuits in 1947.

45. Dumoulin 1972, p. 1.

them. Therefore, the Confucian thinkers could not reach the common people (*das Volk*). The “*völkisch* school,” as Hammitzsch calls the *kokugaku* movement, however, corresponded to the people’s demand for natural freedom and simple cheerfulness, “characteristics that pertain to the people by racial condition.”⁴⁶ According to Hammitzsch’s interpretation, the quest for the racial conditions of the Japanese people (*das dem Volke Arteigentümliche*) is the main motivation driving *kokugaku*. This was at the same time the endeavor to clean Shinto from the “sediments of foreign thought” (*die Schlacken fremden Gedankengutes*) or from “alien intruding matter” (*art-fremdes, eingedrungenes Gut*).⁴⁷ Together with a reorientation towards the past, *kokugaku* “showed the people the right way that would lead to spiritual health, a way determined by race and soil (*rassegemäß und bodengebunden*), that is nothing else but Shinto, which implies worship of the tennō and patriotism” (p. 17). *Kokugaku*’s stress on sincerity and simplicity is echoed in Hammitzsch’s interpretation in a form of anti-intellectualism again rooted in obscure racial determinations: “This is Makoto no michi, ‘the Way of Truth,’ not in the sense of gibberish teachings (*verklausulierte Lehren*) but in a much greater sense deeply rooted in the people” (p. 21). “It is certainly possible to criticize *kokugaku* for its scientific flaws, but what does that mean in comparison with its great aim, which is nothing less than the maintenance of the people’s spirit (*Erhaltung des Volksgeistes*)” (p. 22).

This explicit approval of irrationalism in the interest of nationalistic aims can be already found in an earlier article by Hammitzsch (1936) on Hirata Atsutane where Hammitzsch explains truly important thoughts as expressions of an instinctive vital force rooted in race and blood.⁴⁸ In a subse-

46. “... Wunsch nach einer natürlichen Ungebundenheit, nach einer einfachen Heiterkeit [...] Eigenschaften[, die] dem Volke rassisch gebunden anhaften” (Hammitzsch 1939, p. 11).

47. Hammitzsch 1939, p. 14.

48. “Gerade heute, wo das gegenwärtige Japan, genau so wie wir in Deutschland, ein Verstandenwerden seines Geistes unter den Völkern sucht und durch Kulturpropaganda seinen Geist den Mitvölkern darlegen will, ist es meines Erachtens wichtig, einmal einen Blick auf eine solche Kämpfergestalt von der Art Atsutanes zu werfen, — rein aus dem einen Grunde: zu erkennen, daß Gedanken von wahrhafter Größe und Ausmaß nicht Gedanken einer künstlichen Konstruktion, sondern einer tief in Rasse und Blut sitzenden Urlebenskraft sind, und so immer wieder auftreten” (Hammitzsch 1936, p. 26).

quent article on Aizawa Seishisai's *Shinron* 新論 (New Theses), Hammitzsch finds similar words also for the political philosophy of the late Mito school: "[Seishisai] shows the people the way that corresponds to nothing else but its racial conditions and traditions."⁴⁹

Arguably, such interpretations of *kokugaku* or *Mito-gaku* as nationalist Japanese movements are in some sense justifiable and are still to be found among experts of Tokugawa intellectual history. The point with Hammitzsch's interpretation is that by his rhetoric, he not only assimilates to this kind of nationalism but equates it simultaneously with the Fascist ideology of Nazi Germany. Thus, *kokugaku* appears as one monolithic block dedicated to the single goal of maintaining the *Volksgeist* of Japan. The sources on which Hammitzsch bases these interpretations are rather limited. Apart from a few sentences taken from different writings by Atsutane, Norinaga, and Mabuchi, Hammitzsch's *kokugaku* article seems to draw mainly from *Kokugaku no kenkyū* 国学の研究 (1932) by the above-mentioned Kōno Seizō.

If we compare Hammitzsch's essay with the *kokugaku* article by Dumoulin in the same volume (1939), we notice a much more balanced methodological approach by the latter. Dumoulin strives to substantiate his outline of *kokugaku* by extensive citations from primary sources. As a theologian, he is further interested in ethical questions and devotes a relatively long passage to the differences between the ethical concepts of the individual *kokugaku* authors. Thus, *kokugaku* is not depicted as one monolithic idea, but lines of differentiation become visible. In this respect, we may also remember Dumoulin's thorough review article on recent Japanese scholarship on Shinto in MN's initial volume⁵⁰ or his pioneering study and translation of the *Yui-itsu shintō myōbō yōshū* by Yoshida Kanetomo 吉田兼俱 (1435–1511) in MN 3 (1940).⁵¹ Thus, in comparison to Hammitzsch, Dumoulin's writings show much greater commitment to scientific scrutiny and contain much more information still valuable for us today.

Dumoulin's general interpretations of *kokugaku*, however, are quite similar to Hammitzsch's: Like the latter, Dumoulin argues against the dangers of cultural intermixture in that he regards all kinds of "syncretism" before *kokugaku* as "disgusting superstitions" (*widerlicher Aberglaube*) and

49. Hammitzsch 1940 (MN 3), p. 70.

50. Dumoulin 1938b.

51. Ishibashi and Dumoulin 1940.

comments approvingly on *kokugaku*'s xenophobia.⁵² Like Hammitzsch, he mentions in passing Fujiwara Seika, Hayashi Razan, and Yamazaki Ansai as pioneers in the process of cleansing Shinto leading up to the advent of *kokugaku*. Still prone to Shinto-Confucian syncretism, these authors represented nevertheless an important stage in the evolution of pure Shinto. In the course of this argument, Dumoulin praises Yamazaki Ansai "as a strongly national-minded personality (*national gesinnte Persönlichkeit*)" and therefore as "one of the greatest Japanese of the Tokugawa period" (p. 147), while other Confucian scholars such as Ogyū Sorai, Dazai Shundai, or Yamagata Shūnan are severely criticized for their lack of respect towards their national heritage: "The idolatry of China and the defilement of their fatherland by these Confucians must have led to true indignation by any good-hearted patriotic Japanese" (p. 145). The contemporary state of tennōism and State Shinto is seen as the outcome of a long intellectual evolution in which the *kokugaku* movement played a key role. Taking Kiyohara Sadao's 清原貞雄 *History of Shinto* (*Shintō-shi* 神道史, 1932) as his main secondary resource, Dumoulin regards this evolution generally as positive. Thus, both Hammitzsch and Dumoulin echo contemporary Japanese evaluations of *kokugaku* in line with Japanese nationalism.⁵³

52. Dumoulin 1939 (MN 2), p. 145. The same position is repeated in his 1943 thesis on Kamo no Mabuchi, which deals with the "overcoming of syncretism" of the medieval period rather than with Mabuchi himself, as the subtitle of this publication indicates.

53. Admittedly, Dumoulin uses *Blut und Boden* rhetoric much more sparingly than Hammitzsch. Their relation can be also deduced from Dumoulin's review of Hammitzsch's booklet on the Mito school (Hammitzsch 1939), reviewed by Dumoulin (1940, pp. 327–29). Dumoulin repeats Hammitzsch's nationalist pathos when he writes about the founders of the Mito school: "The intense concern with the history of their fatherland certainly trained and fostered the *völkisch* mind of these men" (p. 328). At the end of his review, however, a certain demand for a more sincere investigation of the source material can well be read between the lines. Considering Hammitzsch's prominent place in the world of German-Japanese political and social connections, we may assume that Dumoulin's politeness is to be explained by diplomatic ruminations.

BOHNER'S SEARCH FOR THE JAPANESE ESSENCE

Hermann Bohner, whose biographies of Japanese national heroes have been mentioned in passing, seems to have prepared the path followed by Hammitzsch and Dumoulin. As Michael Wachutka points out in this volume, Bohner was obviously deeply influenced by a text that shaped the Nazi concept of the Third Reich.⁵⁴ As regards Shinto, however, Bohner differs from his younger colleagues in that he does not draw a clear line between “foreign Buddhism” and “national Shinto.” Rather he regards the encounter of ancient Shinto and Buddhism as “fortunate for both.”⁵⁵ In due consequence, Bohner’s series of national heroes includes an article on Kōbō Daishi Kūkai published in 1943. Elsewhere he published a huge hagiographical study on the mentor of early Japanese Buddhism, Shōtoku Taishi.⁵⁶ Thus, Bohner acknowledged the important heritage of Buddhist culture in Japan and did not try to cleanse Shinto from “alien intruding matter” as Hammitzsch put it. Rather than on Shinto, Bohner put the focus of his historical research on what he called the “Japanese essence” (*japanisches Wesen*) or the “personality of the Japanese people” (*japanische Volkspersönlichkeit*).⁵⁷ According to Bohner, this essence manifests itself in historical figures that enter the stage of history at decisive junctions. This is most vividly described in Bohner’s portrait of the Nara-period courtier Wake no Kiyomaro, who prevented the Buddhist monk Dōkyō from the usurpation of imperial sovereignty:

54. In his study of the *Jinnō shōtōki*, Bohner compared the nationalist ideals in this medieval text (or rather its Japanese interpretations in the twentieth century) to Moeller van den Bruck’s *Das Dritte Reich* (1923). In spite of his sympathies for German and Japanese nationalism, Bohner was probably never a member of the NSDAP. In 1938, he was second on a shortlist for the chair for Japanese studies in Leipzig and negotiated with German authorities, but eventually Hammitzsch took over this post (Worm 1994, pp. 174–78).

55. “Japanese religiosity (today mostly designated by the term Shinto) and Buddhism meet each other. This is no hostile, offensive, despotic encounter. Both parties are fortunate” (Bohner 1940 [MN 3], p. 253). To some extent, Dumoulin seems to take over this position, citing Bohner several times in his Mabuchi thesis (1943).

56. Bohner 1940, published in MOAG. Moreover, Bohner’s first substantial scholarly publication was a translation of the *Nihon ryōiki* (Bohner 1934), a collection of Buddhist tales.

57. Bohner 1940a (MN 3), p. 240.

Kiyomaro saves something that—as far as there is something like a Japanese essence—cannot be touched; he preserves it from being touched; danger seems to approach this historical point, this crisis from a far distance; Kiyomaro prevents the disaster; from here the history of the Japanese essence can further grow for centuries; this danger will not return.⁵⁸

It seems that Bohner had the nationalist catch phrase *kokutai* 国体 (national body, national essence) in mind when he wrote about the Japanese essence. In any event, this essence has much to do with the unbroken line of emperors, since this is what Kiyomaro preserved, according to legend. It is telling—and quite close to the contemporary Japanese understanding and usage of *kokutai*—that Bohner does not plainly address the danger of a dynastic change that Kiyomaro prevented. Rather he mystifies his account implying some transhistorical force behind Japanese tennōism that “cannot be touched.” Nevertheless, Bohner—in contrast to Hammitzsch and Dumoulin—rarely mentions *kokutai*. His conception of the Japanese essence is probably more dynamic than *kokutai*, since it develops, as mentioned above, in dialectical relation to “blood and soil.” In accordance with German idealism, Bohner envisioned the transformation of the Japanese *Wesen* into some higher form of human existence, a theme that I have not yet noticed among Japanese *kokutai* discourses.

CONCLUSION

As we have seen, in the 1930–1940s German authors took over a leading role in research on subjects such as Shinto, *kokugaku*, and *kokutai* ideology. Nationalities obviously played a significant role in determining not only the choice of these delicate issues but also, and more importantly, the question whether Japanese nationalism was seen from a critical point of view or whether it was regarded with favor.

The German Shinto authors discussed here identified with both German and Japanese nationalism and regarded themselves as intermediaries between the befriended political powers. Compared to Karl Florenz’s Shinto

58. Ibid.

studies, we notice not only a significant change in the choice of their subjects but also a different methodological or rather mental approach to Japanese myth. Hammitzsch, for instance, expressed this change in the following evaluation of *kokugaku*:

In a time, which has overcome the merely rational circle of thinking, it is probably easier to understand why these fighters for a new national-intellectual order [i.e., *kokugaku*, B.S.] relied on myth [...] since myth is seen today as a revelation of action determined by race and ethnicity (*Volkstum*).⁵⁹

The new *Blut-und-Boden* rhetoric that becomes apparent here coincided particularly with an interest in Shinto. This was not only a change of vocabulary. The diffuse concept of “blood and soil” pointed to a quest for something inherently Japanese to be found in myth, or else in Shinto. Thus, in the eyes of the new German Shinto authors, Shinto became a reservoir of the pure, pre-Buddhist essence of Japanese culture comparable to the pre-Christian pagan traditions that romantic nationalists in Germany regarded as the unconscious substratum of their own culture (rooted in “blood and soil”).

The new focus on *kokugaku* is intimately related to this essentialist turn in German Shinto studies, since the *kokugaku* thinkers Kamo no Mabuchi, Motoori Norinaga, and Hirata Atsutane became the primary point of reference to justify the essentialist interpretation of Shinto. As Dumoulin put it, “the tendency to purge Shinto from all alien ingredients slowly gains ground; thus, the history of Shinto in the Tokugawa period probably can be best understood under the aspect of this cleansing process.”⁶⁰

This interpretation is not entirely different from Aston and Florenz who, as we have seen, also regarded the time from early Heian to late Edo as a period of “vulgarization” of Shinto. In fact, the German Shinto authors in early

59. “Daß diese Kämpfer einer national-gedanklichen Neugestaltung auf [...] den Mythos, als Ausgangspunkt ihrer Betrachtungen zurückgriffen, kann man vielleicht gerade jetzt in einer Zeit, in welcher der rein rationalistische Gedankenkreis überwunden, besser verstehen als ihre Zeitgenossen und Nachfolger es verstanden, denn der Mythos erfährt ja heute die Wertung, die ihm zusteht, die Wertung als Offenbarungsakt des durch Rasse und Volkstum gebundenen Handelns” (Hammitzsch 1936, p. 25).

60. Dumoulin 1939 (MN 2), pp. 141–42.

MN reaffirmed the three-step-model by Florenz and the ensuing negative image of Shinto-Buddhist syncretism, in spite of some reservations in this respect by Bohner.

As regards the revival of “ancient, pure Shinto” in modern Japan, however, the elder scholars were highly skeptical. The new German Shinto authors, on the other hand, drew a direct line from *kokugaku* nativism (or from the medieval *Jinnō shōtōki*) to the contemporary state of Japanese society and regarded this development as a most impressive achievement. Thus, it appears as if Shinto had indeed been purged from alien thought and thereby paved the way for a true expression of “*japanischer Geist*” or “*japanisches Wesen*.” Such interpretations were certainly sustained by *kokugaku* and Mito thinkers who used concepts like *yamato damashii* 大和魂 (Japanese spirit), *magokoro* 真心 (true mind), and *kokutai* (national essence) in combination with Shinto. In the early Shōwa period, however, Shinto was hardly en vogue as an ideological catch phrase any longer. As discussed in more detail by other authors of this volume, “Shinto” tended rather to mean those New Religious movements that were subsumed under the umbrella term Sect Shinto (*shūha shintō* 宗派神道), while Shrine Shinto (*jinja shintō* 神社神道) was defined as a nonreligious phenomenon. This marginalized the term Shinto and the traditional *kokugaku* position in the ideological discourse of the early Shōwa period. Instead of Shinto, *kokutai* or *kōdō* 皇道 (imperial way) were the most powerful catch phrases, but these were related rather to the *tennō* than to the Japanese *kami*. Equally, the purification of Shinto was probably no longer a major concern among nationalist Japanese intellectuals. Bohner, in his portrait of Wake no Kiyomaro seems to have taken notice of this shift, when he speaks of “Japanese religiosity (today mostly designated by the term Shinto)”⁶¹ rather than using the term Shinto himself. Other scholars, like the leading expert of Shinto history of that time, Miyaji Naokazu 宮地直一 (1886–1949), used *jingidō* 神祇道 (lit. way of heavenly and earthly deities) or *jingishi* 神祇史 (history of heavenly and earthly deities) instead of Shinto or Shinto history.⁶² Hammitzsch and Dumoulin, however, used Shinto consistently in the same sense as the premodern *kokugaku* authors. Thus, their glorification of *kokugaku* nationalism completely overshadowed the subtle changes to the “disadvantage” of Shinto from the Meiji period onward.

61. Bohner 1940 (MN 3), p. 240.

62. See Endō Jun’s chapter in this volume.

Therefore, the problematic points in early *Monumenta's* German discourse on Shinto—and especially in the depictions of Shinto by Hammitzsch and Dumoulin—include not only the affirmative reception of Japanese nationalism and the denial of a positive role of Buddhism in the history of Shinto, but also the ignoring of the ambiguous status of *kokugaku* and post-*kokugaku* ideologies in prewar and wartime Japanese nationalism. While the German authors were probably skeptical regarding the Japanese myth of the unbroken line of the tennō, their essentialist belief in the purification of Shinto created the myth of an unbroken development of Shinto in the modern period. It is my impression that this myth still dominates the Western imagination of State Shinto, even if State Shinto is now mostly addressed from a critical position.

The problems of German Shinto studies continued also after the war since the prewar discourse on Shinto was never critically examined. In the postwar years, the very persons who had dominated the field earlier resumed their studies and hardly changed their prewar positions. Even Nazi terms were still in use albeit somehow more cautiously.⁶³ Eventually, however, those who had dealt with Shinto turned to other topics. Especially, the study of *kokugaku* disappeared almost completely. With the exception of a few smaller publications in the immediate postwar period, the entire field of German japanology seems to have felt an obligation to compensate their dominance of research on Shinto and nationalism before 1945 by utterly ignoring these matters thereafter. The search for the Japanese essence in the depths of Japanese history, however, continued by replacing Shinto with the culture of Zen and bushidō: Böhner kept looking for it in *noh*, Dumoulin in Zen Buddhism, and Hammitzsch in the Way of Tea.

63. Hammitzsch kept the term “völkische Schule” as a translation of *kokugaku* even in the introductory article to “Japanese religion” in his handbook of 1981, where he also defined Shinto as based “auf dem ‘Urjapanischen’, das dem Volke innewohnt” (Hammitzsch 1981, pp. 1530–31).

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