

Bernhard Scheid (ed.)
with Kate Wildman Nakai

Kami Ways in Nationalist Territory

Shinto Studies in Prewar Japan and the West



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OAW

BERNHARD SCHEID (EDITOR)

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ÖSTERREICHISCHE AKADEMIE DER WISSENSCHAFTEN
PHILOSOPHISCH-HISTORISCHE KLASSE
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Vienna, January 2013

Bernhard Scheid

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Abbreviations

BArch	Bundesarchiv [German Federal Archive]
JJRS	<i>Japanese Journal of Religious Studies</i>
MN	<i>Monumenta Nipponica</i>
MOAG	<i>Mitteilungen der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Natur- und Völkerkunde Ostasiens</i>
NKBT	<i>Nihon koten bungaku taikei</i> 日本古典文学大系
NOAG	<i>Nachrichten der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Natur- und Völkerkunde Ostasiens</i>
NSDAP	Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei (National Socialist Party)
OAG	<i>Deutsche Gesellschaft für Natur- und Völkerkunde Ostasiens</i>
TASJ	<i>Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan</i>

Introduction

Shinto Studies and the Nonreligious-Shrine Doctrine

BERNHARD SCHEID

When I planned the symposium “Shinto Studies and Nationalism” that led to the present volume, it was my initial motivation to identify the roots of several stereotype depictions of Shinto that still pervade some specialist and many nonspecialist introductions to Japanese religion. These stereotypes include the notion of Shinto as a transhistorical entity that has existed since times immemorial but was suppressed for more than thousand years by the introduction of Buddhism, unfolding again in the modern period and thus preserving elements of prehistorical origins, in ritualistic as well as in mental respects. In this perspective, Shinto is seen as the underlying current of Japanese culture, in spite—or sometimes precisely because—of the difficulty of pinning down its religious contents. This conventional depiction has raised a number of doubts that have been voiced by earlier studies, as for instance Kuroda Toshio’s famous article “Shinto in the History of Japanese Religion” (1981), as well as my own research on medieval and early modern Shinto. Not being a specialist of modern Shinto myself, I was only aware of the impact of late Edo-period *kokugaku*, the “nationalist school,” on the establishment of this received image of Shinto. Therefore, my preconception was that the ubiquity of this essentialist, ahistorical picture of Shinto was due to the nationalist ideologies in the modern era that built up the concept of State Shinto on the basis of *kokugaku* ideas.

With regard to Shinto in the German-speaking world, I still adhere to this preconception, as I will try to explain below and in my own chapter in this volume. Several of the other contributions have convinced me, however, that my initial premise was probably too essentialist in itself, since it presumed the existence of “State Shinto” as a clearly identifiable ideology that was enforced on the Japanese people more or less without interruption

during the entire period from 1868 to 1945.¹ In fact, this volume presents a much more complex picture. We discover the existence of several competing ideologies that may all be called “nationalistic” but do not necessarily center on Shinto. Conversely, it becomes quite clear that the currency of “Shinto” as an ideological concept shifted dramatically, corresponding to the ambiguous and contradictory path of religious policies during the modernization of Japan. These policies are actually well documented even in Western studies of State Shinto, starting from D. C. Holtom’s *Political Philosophy of Modern Shintō* (1922) to Helen Hardacre’s *Shintō and the State* (1989), to cite only two of the best known examples.² Shinto policies are moreover discussed in the chapter by Kate Wildman Nakai in this volume. I will nevertheless sum up the most important institutional and judicial changes in the religious policies of modern Japan for two reasons: firstly, in many chapters these issues are referred to in passing, so it may be convenient to provide an overview of them here; and secondly, the changes in the administration of religion provide, in my present opinion, a paradigmatic image of the changes in the dominant discourse on Shinto itself. Starting from the Meiji Restoration, these administrative steps were:

- 1868: Establishment of the Jingikan 神祇官, the Department of Shrine Deities, as the highest ranking administrative body of the new government.
- 1871: The Jingikan is reorganized as Jingishō 神祇省, Ministry of Shrine Deities; definition of shrine priests as state officials; prohibition of hereditary shrine priesthood; installation of a new shrine ranking system.

1. According to Azegami Naoki, this was indeed the prevailing concept of State Shinto after the publication of Murakami Shigeyoshi’s important study *Kokka shintō* in 1970 (Azegami 2012, pp. 65–67). Many Western works, as for instance Klaus Antoni’s study of Shinto and “national essence” (Antoni 1998), use a similar broad definition of State Shinto. The Japanese authors represented in this volume and other recent studies, however, tend to hold a more fragmented view, assuming a multitude of conflicting ideological agents, not just one nationalist ideology. On the different forms of Japanese nationalism in the modern period, see Doak 2006.

2. With regard to recent Japanese studies on State Shinto, numerous authors including Shimazono Susumu 島藺進, Sakamoto Koremaru 阪本是丸, or Isomae Jun’ichi have published widely on this subject.

1872: The Jingishō is replaced by the Kyōbushō 教部省, Ministry of Religions, responsible for Shinto, Buddhism, and Confucianism.

Shinto and Buddhist clergy as well as other religious figures are requested to act as *kyōdōshoku* 教導職, “national evangelists,” in the Great Teaching Campaign (*taikyō senpu* 大教宣布), a state-coordinated movement to teach morals to the general populace.

Shrines are allowed to conduct funerals.

1873: Removal of public proscription of Christianity.

1877: The Ministry of Religions is reorganized as the Bureau of Shrines and Temples, Shaji Kyoku 社寺局, supervised by the Home Ministry.

1880: The “pantheon dispute” (*saijin ronsō* 祭神論争) between different factions of the Shinto clergy casts serious doubts on the effectiveness of Shinto as a state religion.

1882: Shrine priests may no longer engage in *kyōdōshoku* activities or conduct funerals (shrines below prefectural level are exempted from this prohibition).

Official separation of “shrines” (*jinja* 神社) and “Shinto churches” (*shintō kyōkai* 神道教会) leads to the notions of Shrine Shinto (*jinja shintō*) and Sect Shinto (*shūha* 宗派 or *kyōha shintō* 教派神道).

State-sponsored shrines are no longer seen as “religious” institutions.

1889: Promulgation of the Imperial Constitution, including “freedom of religion” (Article 28).

1890: Publication of the Imperial Rescript on Education.

1900: Reorganization of the Bureau of Shrines and Temples into a Bureau of Shrines (Jinja Kyoku 神社局) and a Bureau of Religions (Shūkyō Kyoku 宗教局) within the Home Ministry.

1913: Transfer of the Bureau of Religions to the Ministry of Education (the Bureau of Shrines remaining with the Home Ministry).

The Bureau of Shrines issues new “service regulations” (*hōmu kisoku* 奉務規則) specifying that the performance of state rituals is the task of priests of all shrines, including local shrines.

1920: Inauguration of Meiji Jingū, the shrine commemorating Meiji Tennō (1852–1912).

- 1937: Publication of *Kokutai no hongî* 国体の本義 (Fundamentals of the National Essence), for the use of school teachers, by the Ministry of Education.
- 1940: Redefinition and enlargement of the Bureau of Shrines as the Chamber of Shrine Deities, Jinguin 神祇院, a tribute to the 2,600th anniversary of the nation's founding.
- 1946: Promulgation of the Shinto Directive by the Allied Occupation forces; abolishment of "State Shinto."

The reasons for these somewhat erratic changes in the religious policies of the state are manifold and involve a range of players, including Western powers but also, as recent studies have pointed out, Buddhist denominations, above all Shin Buddhism. Moreover, the legal consequences of these changes are not always entirely clear and are still a matter of debate and research. The overall picture, however, can be interpreted as the rapid decline of the initial ideal of the Meiji Restoration to unite state and religion, or rather "ritual and government" (*saisei itchi* 祭政一致), under the "state religion" of Shinto, reaching its point zero in about 1882, and the subsequent emergence of a new official ideology that defined shrines as nonreligious institutions of national reverence to the state and to the emperor, in contradistinction to organized "religions" in the form of Buddhism, Christianity, and Shinto-centered new religions (Sect Shinto).

This "nonreligious-shrine doctrine" is actually the starting point of most essays in this volume. They deal with the ensuing definitions of religion and of Shinto, with related concepts such as "national essence" (*kokutai* 国体), and with this doctrine's impact on religious life. Naturally, the nonreligious nature of shrines is primarily addressed in the chapters dealing with Japan, but indirectly the topic is also reflected in the depictions of Western discourse on Shinto.

NEW CONCEPTS OF RELIGION

Isomae Jun'ichi discusses the nonreligious-shrine doctrine in relation to the issue of the separation of religion and state, which is, as Isomae shows, still an object of heated debate in Japan. Isomae's main focus, however, is the

question where the boundaries between the “secular” and the “religious” can be drawn under the impact of the nonreligious-shrine doctrine or, in other words, what “religion” in contradistinction to the “secular” actually meant in prewar Japan. As indicated above, the official explanation was that shrine worship was a nonreligious act that had nothing to do with personal religious beliefs. Religion, on the other hand, was seen as a “private” matter where the state had no right to interfere. The world of shrine priests by and large accepted such a definition, since they knew that the official sponsorship of shrines was dependent on this legal construction. Scholars of religion, on the other hand, tended toward other conceptions, even if most of them supported the political status quo.

In spite of several critical voices against the official doctrine, the nonreligious-shrine doctrine certainly also had an impact on the general discourse on Shinto, in that the emphasis on “shrines” at the cost of “Shinto” disqualified the latter as an ideological key concept. Consequently, Isomae argues that the common basis of Japanese nationalism in the prewar period was not the idea of Shinto. Rather the “tennō system,” centering on the imaginary figure of the tennō, was at the core of prewar national ideology. The logical consequence would be, therefore, to regard the tennō system as Japan’s state religion or as “State Shinto.”³ While this seems viable in retrospect, according to Isomae, before the war such an idea did not even occur to critics of the political situation. The position of the tennō was in effect beyond reasoning. As Isomae puts it: “Even before the war, doubts had been raised time and again whether enforced reverence of shrines was in accord with the constitutional freedom of religion, but arguments that the tennō system itself might violate the constitution were virtually unheard of.” In the prewar period, the legitimacy of the tennō was therefore something like a blind spot. It cannot be aptly described by either the term “ideology” or “state religion.” Rather, the tennō system was tacitly accepted without explaining or questioning all of its legal consequences. This implied that related concepts remained ambiguous, such as religion and secularity, including the relationship between religion and state, or, more concretely, the difference between patriotic obligations and private moral values, or the actual extent of religious freedom.

3. Isomae cites Shimazono Susumu (2006), who indeed holds to this definition of State Shinto. See below, p. 26. Shimazono has recently further elaborated his views in Shimazono 2010.

Regarding the field of discourse in which explicit and implicit theories of religion and the state took shape, Isomae as well as Hayashi Makoto, who focuses on the development of “humanistic studies” in the early twentieth century, point out the decisive influence of religious studies, a new academic subject pioneered by Inoue Tetsujirō 井上哲次郎 (1855–1944) and established by his student Anesaki Masaharu 姉崎正治 (1873–1949) around the turn of the century. Influenced by his studies in Europe (especially in Germany under Paul Deussen), Anesaki introduced a concept of religion that looked for essential beliefs common to all religions—the “Protestant model” according to Isomae—at the expense of ritualistic idiosyncrasies that were regarded as marginal or “superstitious.” Even leading Shinto scholars like Anesaki’s fellow student Katō Genchi 加藤玄智 (1873–1965) tried to interpret Shinto from such a perspective. This resulted in a controversial position regarding the nonreligious-shrine doctrine, since these scholars emphatically interpreted “Shrine Shinto” as a religion. Yet as Isomae shows, the inherent conflict between the “Protestant model of religion” and the nonreligious-shrine doctrine did not lead to a critical distancing from nationalism. (We may remember that Inoue Tetsujirō, the teacher of Anesaki and Katō, was a famous advocate of Japanese nationalism.⁴) Rather, scholars of religious studies tended to look for other ways to reconcile their views with the prevailing ideologies of the state. Katō, for instance, clearly tried to establish Shinto as a state religion when, in his English study on Shinto published in 1926, he wrote:

Shintō—the State Shintō as well as the Sectarian Shintō—is in very truth a religion, i.e., the original religion of the Japanese people, or, otherwise stated the religion of the Japanese people from the very beginning down to the present time.⁵

While Isomae regards State Shinto as a postwar conception, this citation is one of the rare examples indicating that the term “State Shinto” was not entirely unheard of in the prewar period, even among Japanese authors.⁶ Nevertheless, Katō’s terms were certainly not in line with the common ter-

4. See, for instance, Antoni 1998, pp. 218–31.

5. Katō 1926, p. 1.

6. In Japanese, Katō actually used the phrase *kokkateki shintō* 国家の神道, which may be translated as “Stately Shinto” or “Statist Shinto” (see below, p. 36).

minology that would rather speak of “Shrine Shinto” in juxtaposition to “Sect Shinto.” Insisting on Shinto’s religious nature Katō went on to define religion briefly as “one’s consciousness of being in a special relationship with the Divine,”⁷ which is indeed very close to Anesaki’s belief-centered concepts as discussed by Isomae. Due to this “Protestant” understanding of religion, Katō’s view of Shinto exerted considerable influence on Western authors, even on critics of Japanese nationalism like the Protestant missionary D.C. Holtom, who established the term “State Shinto” in Western literature and referred to Katō already in 1922.⁸

While Isomae puts his emphasis on concepts of religion that were negotiated within religious studies and neighboring fields, Hayashi points to the practical political needs served by this new academic subject: religious studies became a kind of forum where policies pertaining to various competing religious denominations (Buddhism, Sect Shinto, and Christianity) could be discussed. Such a function was particularly welcomed in the 1920s, when the government, in reaction to the new “threats” of Socialism and Communism, decided to support religion in general, disregarding denomination, as long as religion served as a pillar of public morals. A consensus on anti-Socialist values was indeed reached among representatives of Buddhism, Christianity, and Sect Shinto at the Japanese Conference on Religions (Nihon Shūkyō Taikai 日本宗教大会), which was organized in 1928 by scholars of religion. Thus, even if scholars of religious studies generally tended toward a more liberal stance in regard to politics than other academic disciplines and were critical of the nonreligious-shrine doctrine, they served the practical political needs of the government and were by no means aloof from the nationalistic discourse of the time.

With regard to the definition of Shinto proper, we might expect the two Shinto universities Kokugakuin Daigaku in Tokyo and Jingū Kōgakkai in Ise, which have their roots in the late nineteenth century, to have taken a leading role. As Hayashi and Endō Jun discuss in their chapters, however, these institutions devoted most of their Shinto-specific energies to the ritual training of shrine priests. In doing so, they seem to have followed the official

Similarly, Inoue Tetsujirō interpreted Shinto as a “statist” religion, *kokkateki shūkyō* (Inoue Tetsujirō, *Kokumin dōtoku gairon* 1912, cited from Antoni 1998, p. 228).

7. Katō 1926, p. 2.

8. See, for instance, Holtom 1922, p. 115.

guideline of 1882 that forbade the engagement of (high-ranking) priests in the propagation of religious doctrines and other “religious” activities.⁹ On the other hand, *Kojiki*, *Nihon shoki*, and other classics, which are often seen as the “canonical texts of Shinto,” became the object of mythology studies, a new academic discipline that was more influenced by Western comparative mythology than by scholars in the *kokugaku* tradition, as Hirafuji Kikuko shows.

Of course, we should not overlook that Kokugakuin University ultimately did produce shrine priests that were at the same time ideologues of State Shinto, as for instance Kōno Seizō 河野省三 (1882–1963). Kōno graduated from Kokugakuin, acted as its president from 1935 to 1942, and became a member of the Ministry of Education’s National Spirit Culture Institute (Kokumin Seishin Bunka Kenkyūjo) founded in 1932. As briefly mentioned in my own chapter, Kōno stood in the tradition of political *kokugaku*, as can be seen from his particular interpretation of *kannagara no michi* (a synonym of Shinto) that is indebted to Motoori Norinaga. In addition to Kōno, advocates of State Shinto, as for instance Tanaka Yoshitō 田中義能 (1872–1946) and Katō Genchi, ended up at Kokugakuin after first teaching at Tokyo Imperial University. While this volume unfortunately does not contain a chapter dealing specifically with the heritage of *kokugaku* ideals of Shinto in modern Japan, these issues are mentioned in Michael Wachutka’s chapter and in my own article.¹⁰

THE COLONIAL IMPACT

The chapters dealing with Japanese intellectual history of the first half of the twentieth century (Isomae, Hayashi, Hirafuji, and Endō) all indicate, be it directly or indirectly, that scholars who specialized in Shinto studies or else adhered to *kokugaku* ideals, constituted only a minority faction in the academic environment of their time. All in all, the topic of Shinto seems to have been deemphasized in the academic discourse of this period.

9. See, for instance, the chapter by Kate Nakai, p. 110.

10. See also Wachutka 2012, for a recent study on modern *kokugaku*. On Tanaka Yoshitō, see Isomae 2000.

This is certainly due to a reluctance of the government to support the development of a consistent theology of “State Shinto.” This reluctance has often been explained as due to outside pressure and the government’s awareness of the potential conflict between a state religion and the constitutional freedom of religion. The chapters of Hayashi and Hirafuji, however, lead to the impression that the comparatively modest role of theological interpretations and/or ideologies of Shinto can also be seen in relation with Japan’s rise to colonial power. The xenophobic ideology of the *kokugaku* of the nineteenth century was no longer befitting to a country that began to see itself as a global superpower. Rather, Japan had to find a justification for the “Great East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere,” as Japan euphemistically referred to the occupation of its neighboring countries, and scholars in the humanities were well aware of this need.

In this respect, Hayashi draws attention to the impact of Japan’s colonial enterprises during the first half of the twentieth century. Within the humanities, not only was there no criticism of colonialism and warfare, but the different academic disciplines competed in proving their effectiveness either as ideological supporters or as practical advisers in the colonization of Asia. There were actually two different approaches, which can be clearly separated along the dividing lines of academic disciplines. Scholars of religion, who had begun to develop a strong interest in the new field of cultural anthropology from the 1930s onwards, regarded themselves as a kind of mediator between local, “primitive” cultures in Asia and the colonizing power of Japan. The main point within this “ethnologicist nationalism”—to use Hayashi’s terms—was the notion of a common cultural heritage between the Japanese people on the one hand and the indigenous (non-Chinese) cultures in the newly occupied territories on the other. “On the basis of this brotherliness, Japan of today has shouldered the mission to become the leader of these peoples,” as the scholar of religion and pioneer of Japanese ethnology Uno Enkū 宇野円空 (1885–1949) put it.

Matsumoto Nobuhiro 松本信広 (1897–1981) and Oka Masao 岡正雄 (1898–1982), who both studied for a number of years in Europe and are best known for their ethnological interpretations of Japanese myths, can be seen as further typical examples of the colonialist impact on the humanities, this time in the field of mythology studies. As Hirafuji Kikuko shows in her paper, Matsumoto took a quite similar position to that of Uno when he concluded on the basis of mythological and linguistic similarities that the Japanese and the

ethnic groups of Southeast Asia shared the same blood and that the former were therefore better suited to rule the latter than any Western power. Oka Masao, on the other hand, discarded his original interest in ancient Japanese mythology altogether when he was given the chance to establish the Ethnic Research Institute under the direct administration of the Ministry of Education in the 1940s. When this happened, he opted for practical, empiricist field studies in the colonies that would support governmental tasks. After the war, however, he returned to his studies of mythology and turned back to historical questions.

The study of Japanese mythology is of particular importance in the context of State Shinto, since the classical mythological sources—the *Kojiki* (712), the *Nihon shoki* (720), and others—have been regarded as canonical texts of *kami* worship since the ancient period and as such gained new relevance in the shrine world of the prewar period. Hirafuji's essay demonstrates that scholars took up this theme as well, but under the sway of Western comparative mythology, they distanced themselves from the world of shrine priests. This did not mean, however, that they were critical of nationalist ideologies. Rather, they ended up in the same camp as Hayashi's "ethnologicist nationalists."

More traditional disciplines that dealt with the philology of "high cultures," such as Buddhist, Indian, or Chinese studies (*tōyōgaku* 東洋学, lit. Oriental studies), on the other hand, searched for justification for the colonizing of places that had formerly been models for Japanese civilization, such as China and India, developing thereby what Hayashi calls an "Orientalistic nationalism." While these disciplines still adhered to the values embedded in the classical literature of former model cultures, they exhibited a much more aggressive ideological approach than the ethnologicist faction with regard to the contemporary Asian societies. They argued that the only place where traditional Asian (non-Western) values were still held in high esteem was Japan. China and India were socially weak and morally corrupt and therefore not capable of building on their own cultural roots. Thus, it was Japan's task to lead Asia back to its own traditions, even if this meant waging war against the other peoples of Asia. Despite their anti-Western rhetoric regarding the right to rule Asia, Japanese sinologists and buddhologists were proud of being the only scholars in the Asian world whose methods were on par with those of the West. This kind of chauvinism implied a contradictory approach to Western rationality, however. When questions of methodology were at

stake, Oriental scholars sided with Western ideas and turned against traditional knowledge, but at the same time they attacked Western rationality when moral values were being questioned. This “Japanese Orientalism”¹¹ can be seen in the writings of eminent scholars like Takakusu Junjirō 高楠順次郎 (1866–1945), the “father of modern Buddhist studies,” or the famous sinologist Shiratori Kurakichi 白鳥庫吉 (1865–1942), discussed by Hayashi, as well as in the writings of the specialist on Korean mythology Mishina Shōei 三品彰英 (1902–1971), portrayed by Hirafuji Kikuko.

SHRINES, NOT SHINTO

While the “religious” aspects of Shinto were indeed marginalized in the pre-war period, this must not lead to the impression that “State Shinto” had no impact on the lives of the Japanese at that time. With regard to “shrines” or more specifically “reverence at shrines” (*jinja sanpai* 神社参拝), i.e., formalized ritual devotion, we can observe a direct relationship between external warfare and internal social and economic tensions on the one hand, and the pressure to demonstrate patriotic loyalty at shrines on the other. This pressure becomes particularly apparent in the historical process by which the Catholic Church “came to terms” with reverence at shrines, as analyzed by Kate Wildman Nakai.

Like most Christians, Catholics were quick to criticize what they considered “pagan superstitions” in the context of patriotism, although they usually regarded themselves as good Japanese patriots. Therefore they put special emphasis on the constitutional freedom of religion, which would exempt them from reverence at shrines, inasmuch as shrines were religious institutions. Christians thus rejected the nonreligious-shrine doctrine more energetically than others and emphasized the religious nature of Shrine Shinto.

Nevertheless, the obligation to do reverence at shrines was not seen as a major problem among leading Catholics until the second decade of the twentieth century. Their lenient attitude to *jinja sanpai* changed, however,

11. The political ideologies related to Japan’s colonial rise to power, which took on a new dimension after the Russo-Japanese War (1904–1905), are often discussed under the label of “Asianism” or “pan-Asianism,” as, for instance, by Sven Saaler and Victor Koschman (Saaler and Koschmann 2006). Hayashi’s “Japanese Orientalism” bears close connections to the concept of Asianism.

when central government agencies began to emphasize “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) in the form of organized shrine visits by school classes. Also “reverence from afar” (*yōhai* 遙拜) to the Yasukuni Shrine, or (from 1920) to the Meiji Shrine in Tokyo became a common practice at schools. For about two decades, between 1910 and 1932, the Catholic Church reacted to the growing nationalist indoctrination of schoolchildren with an equally rigid repudiation of *jinja sanpai*, as Nakai shows in her analysis of the Japanese Catholic periodical *Koe* and other Christian documents. Eventually, the controversy culminated in the 1932 Sophia University–Yasukuni Shrine incident, a public scandal aroused by a seemingly trivial event: the refusal to do reverence at the nearby Yasukuni Shrine by three students of the Catholic Sophia University. This was actually only one of several similar incidents induced by Christian opposition against *jinja sanpai* that put the patriotism of Christians into question. Dogmatic statements by Sophia’s president against such insinuations led to a clash between the Catholic Church and government officials (above all the military) that was made public by the nationalistic press. The ensuing scandal ultimately threatened the very existence of the Catholic school system in Japan. At this point, the Church changed its official position to *jinja sanpai* radically, which finally in 1936 led to an official statement by the Vatican that Japanese shrine ceremonies had “only a purely civil value,” thus permitting *jinja sanpai* by Japanese Catholics.

Nakai’s detailed reconstruction displays these controversies, above all, as a mirror image of an emerging stress on *jinja sanpai*, especially at schools and universities. Moreover, Nakai reveals different layers of interest within the governmental administration itself when demonstrating how the frictions between Catholic schools on the one hand and the military on the other could only be settled after the Ministry of Education, an internal rival of the military, sided with the Catholics. Her case study also sheds light on the undecided legal situation surrounding the nonreligious-shrine doctrine, which was often unclear, even to the governmental representatives themselves. A further interesting side aspect can be found in the indirect means by which government agencies enforced allegiance on the *sanpai* issue: the only immediate threat for the university was the removal of the military training program that had become a customary part of academic education. Without such a program, graduates were not entitled to hold higher ranks when do-

ing their military service. This potential disadvantage was serious enough to bring about a tremendous reduction in student enrollment, which almost led to the university's collapse.

Finally, the Catholic Church's coming to terms with Shrine Shinto after the Yasukuni incident also explains the subsequent emphasis on topics related to Japanese nationalism and Shinto in *Monumenta Nipponica*, Sophia's most prestigious academic journal, founded in 1938. The specific ways in which the new journal tried to dispel the lingering mistrust in Sophia's patriotism are discussed in my own contribution to this volume.

Endō Jun's chapter provides insights into the "ideological apparatus" of State Shinto from an angle completely different than that of the Christian opposition. Endō offers a detailed analysis of the life and work of Miyaji Naokazu 宮地直一 (1886–1949), whose writings are still respected among historians of Shinto and who was probably the most knowledgeable expert on shrine history of his time. Here, however, Miyaji is portrayed not only as a scholar, but primarily as a "scholar-bureaucrat" working as an administrator of Shinto shrines. Miyaji started his career in the Bureau of Shrines of the Home Ministry and soon became a member of the commission that planned the most important memorial for Emperor Meiji, the well-known Meiji Shrine in Tokyo. Miyaji's chief task, however, was to survey historical shrine documents (*jinja kōshō* 神社考証), which were used to determine a shrine's rank in the modern ranking system of shrines. This rank had a direct impact on the prestige and the financial support by the government of the respective shrine. As the chief "scholar-bureaucrat" of the Shrine Bureau, Miyaji was the main official for deciding the ranking of shrines based on his evaluation of the historical documents presented by the respective shrines. Despite this important bureaucratic function (or perhaps because of it), Miyaji did not take part in any ideological debates, nor did he muse on the nature of Shinto in general. Rather, in his administrative duties, as well as in his function as a trainer of shrine priests and finally as a professor at various academic institutions devoted to Shinto studies, he confined himself almost exclusively to the "history of shrine deities" (*jingishi* 神祇史). Only in the 1930s, when the focus of his activities finally shifted from bureaucratic to academic work, did he begin to examine "Shinto."

Miyaji's case illustrates a tendency also mentioned in Isomae's chapter, namely that the bureaucratization of shrines that went hand in hand with

the official nonreligious-shrine doctrine did not foster devotion to shrines by the general populace, who continued to approach shrines for (this-wordly) religious benefits. Miyaji and other shrine bureaucrats therefore engaged in reconstructing so-called exceptional shrine rituals (*tokushu shinji* 特殊神事), a euphemism for local shrine customs that did not fit into the standardized patterns of reverence at shrines centering on the tennō and the nation.

SHINTO, NOT SHRINES

As we have seen above, scholars of religious studies were generally critical of the nonreligious-shrine doctrine, and thus were probably those who were the most active in advancing alternative conceptions of (Shrine/State) Shinto which did not focus on rituals as acts of patriotism. As Hayashi and Isomae emphasize, this approach to Shinto is closely related to the fact that religious studies scholars were familiar with Western concepts of religion and interpreted Shinto from such a point of view. On the other side, most Western scholars interested in Shinto tended primarily to pay attention to Japanese scholars of religion, as for instance Katō Genchi, and thus tended to ignore the nonreligious-shrine doctrine. Thus, in Western depictions of Japanese religion, the existence of Shinto at the same level of Buddhism is either presented as a *fait accompli*, or the Japanese culture is criticized for not paying adequate attention to Shinto as its original religion. In both cases, Shinto is interpreted as representing a certain step in the general evolution of religion with Christianity and Buddhism at its peak.

This tendency is well illustrated in Jean-Pierre Berthon's chapter, which presents a typology of the pioneers of Japanese studies in France in the nineteenth and early twentieth century. Berthon singles out the "travel-ethnographer," the "scholar," and the "missionary," and analyzes their discourse on Shinto. This discourse is certainly representative for many other Western observers of Meiji- and Taishō-period Japan as well.

Berthon chooses George Bousquet (1846–1937), whose travelogue of 1877 became one of the most popular reports on Japan in the francophone world, as a model for the "travel-ethnographer." Bousquet's often subjective narration of his personal experiences provides a much more immediate insight into Japan of his day than do later, more organized depictions, even though his observations are interrupted by general value statements that

are bound to his time. With regard to Shinto, his most notable observations concern the “primitive” state of Shinto that will “[n]ever take the place of the ‘great religion’ [Buddhism].” Thus, in Bousquet’s depictions of the early Meiji period, there is hardly any sign of “State Shinto” being part of the life of ordinary people.

Some twenty years later, Michel Revon (1867–1943), the “scholar,” began to study ancient Japanese mythology on the basis of original texts. He was familiar with Japanese scholarship on Shinto and exchanged his views with contemporary pioneers of Japanese studies, as for instance Ernest Satow (1843–1929), William George Aston (1841–1911), and Karl Florenz (1865–1939). The latter was his colleague at the Imperial University in Tokyo, where Revon was engaged as a professor of law. Like Aston and Florenz, Revon’s initial work in Japan studies was an attempt to recover Shinto’s original character as a “natural religion.” They shared a similar conception of the evolution of religions, according to which Shinto had to sooner or later give way to more “advanced religions” like Buddhism or Christianity: “As soon as Buddhism appears, Shinto is lost,” as Revon put it. Similar conceptions can already be found with “travelers” such as Bousquet—or even Engelbert Kaempfer (1651–1716),¹² for that matter—but “scholars” like Revon developed an active interest in Shinto as a window into the Japanese past and, still further, into the history of mankind. At the same time they planned to reconstruct ancient Shinto by separating it from the historical “forgeries” and “sophistications” of Buddhism and Confucianism, even if Revon’s methods were slightly different from the merely philological approach of his British and German colleagues. Like the latter, Revon did not question the historical steps of ancient (pure), syncretic (vulgar), and restored Shinto. As I point out in my discussion of German Shinto studies, in this respect there seems to be a direct influence by *kokugaku* scholars on Western Shinto studies. Regarding the prospects of restoring Shinto as a living religion, Revon criticized the Meiji government for its pragmatic disregard of Shinto as he saw it and speaks with sympathy and a kind of heroic pathos about the “spirit of the [Shinto] religion,” even if this went against his evolutionist preconceptions. The same can be said about Florenz, whereas Aston’s attitude seems more detached; Aston talks about Shinto as if it were an objective specimen of

12. See, for instance, Antoni 1997.

primitive religion, keeping it at a certain distance.¹³ However, none of these “scholar” types among the pioneers of Japanese studies around the turn of the century concerned themselves with reverence at shrines, not to mention the nonreligious-shrine doctrine.

The disregard of shrines changes radically with Berthon’s third figure, the “missionary,” embodied by Jean-Marie Martin (1886–1975), who spent most of his adult life as a Catholic missionary in Japan and wrote a two-volume study of Shinto published in 1924 and 1927, respectively. According to Berthon, a key motivation for Martin’s investigation into Shinto was to repudiate the nonreligious-shrine doctrine. “Since pagan Japanese are not qualified to decide whether Shinto is a religion or not,” Martin took the task upon himself of demonstrating Shinto’s religious nature by reconstructing Shinto history up to the Meiji period. In spite of Martin’s Catholic point of view, Berthon does not describe his work as inherently different from that of Revon. In particular, we find the same salient anti-Buddhist attitude when Martin speaks of “the invasion of Buddhism” in the course of Japanese history, or the “liberation of Shinto” when it comes to the Meiji Restoration. Thus, despite his original desire to criticize State Shinto, Martin reaffirms certain *kokugaku*-like preconceptions of Shinto history, as did Revon and others, and follows a similar, quasi-evolutionist pattern in order to categorize Shinto as a religion.¹⁴

In this regard, other Christian missionaries were more consistent in their criticism of the nonreligious-shrine doctrine. The above-mentioned American missionary D. C. Holtom, for example, discusses this directly in several of his works, starting with his dissertation in 1922. Similar to Holtom, the German Protestant missionary Emil Schiller (1865–1945) wrote a series of reports about the contemporary problems of reverence at shrines that were published between 1923 and 1931 in the *Ostasien-Jahrbuch* of the German Protestant Ostasienmission.¹⁵ In his focus on premodern Shinto, Martin is

13. See especially Aston’s theoretical work on Shinto (Aston 1905).

14. In the end, Martin arrives at a distinct evolutionist model according to which “Shinto polytheism” is more advanced than the “polydemonism” (shamanism) of North Asian peoples. Even if Martin does not mention it, Berthon surmises that this concept has been adopted from Katō Genchi’s already mentioned English essay of 1926 where Katō postulates Shinto having developed from “pandemonistic” origins to polytheism. See Katō 1926, p. 62ff.

15. Antoni 1998, pp. 307–16.

therefore rather of Berthon's "scholar"-type, when we compare his work with that of other contemporary Christian missionaries. In any event, Martin's case illustrates the growing concern of missionaries regarding the issue of Shinto, which supports Nakai's point that in the 1920s Shrine Shinto took on a new dimension that threatened the daily work of these people.

MERGING JAPANESE AND GERMAN NATIONALISM

Hermann Bohner (1884–1963), the main protagonist of Michael Wachutka's chapter, was a contemporary of Martin and Holtom and was also trained as a missionary. However, his religious background did not prevent him from becoming a supporter of State Shinto or, at least, of Japanese nationalism.¹⁶ Wachutka portrays Bohner as a kind of romanticist who believed in his nationalist ideals to an extent that he ended up at odds with politicians who used the same nationalist ideologies for immediate political gain. In this respect, Bohner was not so different from Arthur Moeller van den Bruck (1876–1925), the author of *The Third Reich* (1923), a book that had a great impact on the early Nazi movement, including Hitler's *Mein Kampf* (1926). Bohner admired Moeller's book and regarded it as a counterpart to the *Jinnō shōtōki* 神皇正統記 (1339) by Kitabatake Chikafusa, or rather, as Wachutka shows, to modern nationalist interpretations of this medieval text. Bohner therefore set out to elucidate the inner affinity between the two works by translating the *Jinnō shōtōki* into German and adding a huge body of annotations that exceeded the original text by far. In his commentaries, Bohner finds the essence of Shinto as well as the idea of "national essence" (*kokutai*) embodied in Chikafusa's actually quite simple emphasis on the "unbroken line of our emperors." While this is in accordance with contemporary Japanese depictions, Bohner goes on to construct a kind of nationalist religion or "Shinto theodicy," claiming that both the *Jinnō shōtōki* as well as the *Third Reich* were "conversations with God," "self-dialogues," and "conversations with the eminent Us." At the same time "each author is faced by the personal-

16. Other German missionaries like Wilhelm Gundert (1880–1971) and Gerhard Rosenkranz (1896–1983) were equally sympathetic to Japanese nationalism and Shinto. However, while the activities of these people were influenced by the growing National Socialism in Germany, Bohner spent most of his life in Japan and seems to have had second thoughts about the political realities in Nazi Germany.

ity of his own nation,” “a personality, which like every Ego is real and yet not tangible.” Thus, Bohner literally regards the nation as a living personality whose character is embodied in its past.

In these mysticist conceptions, Bohner became the pioneer of a discourse that differs strikingly from the positivist rationalism of Revon’s and Florenz’s generation. This discourse grew even stronger among the next generation of German scholars of Japanese studies, who clearly felt it their mission to “translate” Japanese nationalist ideals into a German nationalist idiom. My own chapter explores this German Shinto scholarship on the basis of the early volumes of *Monumenta Nipponica* (1938–1943), where it occupies an unexpectedly large share of the journal’s thematic scope.

In addition to Bohner, the most ambitious authors in this new nationalist vein were Horst Hammitzsch (1909–1991) and, somewhat surprisingly, the Catholic priest Heinrich Dumoulin (1905–1995). With regard to Shinto studies proper, Dumoulin was certainly the most prolific writer. While Dumoulin’s main topic, *kokugaku*, was covered by Hammitzsch as well, Dumoulin’s articles are much more substantial. Nonetheless, the general interpretation of *kokugaku* of both authors is quite similar: They regard *kokugaku* as a kind of emancipation movement towards true Japaneseness. The prevailing nationalist ideology in Japan is seen as the outcome of a long cultural evolution of Shinto, in which *kokugaku* played a key role. This evolution is regarded with particular favor, and is also compared to the rise of nationalism, or rather the “*völkisch*” consciousness, in Germany.

Despite their identification with the nationalist agenda, it is difficult to dismiss the intellectual merits of these authors’ work as entirely worthless. Especially in the cases of Dumoulin and Bohner—who both left numerous well-annotated translations—we get the impression that the need to echo the zeitgeist moved them to do quite substantial amounts of research with considerable scholarly meticulousness. Even if it is hard to admit, we must acknowledge that nationalism became a kind of fuel for their research. The political realities of their time, however, be it the enforced reverence at shrines, the nonreligious-shrine doctrine, or the failure of Restoration Shinto in the early Meiji period, are hardly ever mentioned by these German Shinto authors.

CONCLUSION

In a sense, the academic discourse on religion and Shinto can be regarded as a canvas upon which the theatre of the state has cast its shadows. While this may not permit us to construct a three-dimensional picture of the historical reality, it does reflect the political trends quite accurately in that each generation of scholars had a tendency to explain what they considered important as the necessary result of a logical, unilinear sequence of events. Seeking such a logical sequence, these scholars usually followed—consciously or unconsciously—the prevailing ideologies, or shaped these ideologies in accordance with political interests. Some of the case studies in the present volume testify to this truism with disturbing clarity.

In the conceptions of Shinto discussed in the chapters of this volume, we have encountered the pragmatic historiographical discourse by Miyaji Naokazu that could be brought in line with the bureaucratic nonreligious-shrine doctrine; a discourse based on a universalist conception of religion that borders—in the case of Anesaki and Katō—on a kind of nonconfessional theology; the “ethnologicistic” and “Orientalistic” forms of nationalism that hardly mention Shinto at all; the early Western interest in Shinto as a case of “primitive nature religion”; the Christian insistence that Shinto was religious in character; and finally, the attempt to identify “Kokutai Shinto” with *völkisch* German nationalist concepts.

It seems possible to divide these various concepts into essentialist and pragmatic depictions of Shinto. According to my understanding, most Japanese discourses on Shinto-related topics follow the pragmatic form. I call them pragmatic because they usually deal with the nonreligious-shrine doctrine by not mentioning Shinto at all, or by setting up ad hoc definitions of different forms of Shinto without questioning whether these definitions ultimately contradict one another or not. On the other hand, Japanese scholars of religion and many Western scholars shared an essentialist approach to Shinto. There seems to be even a kind of coalition between Western interpretations and the religious studies approach, especially with Katō Genchi’s views of Shinto, which are cited by numerous different authors in the West. A common feature of these essentialist approaches is an attempt to establish Shinto as a single coherent religion, often in opposition to Buddhism or as a more “primitive” stage in an evolutionary concept of religious development.

As hinted by Hayashi Makoto, such concepts became the mainstream depictions of Shinto in the postwar period and are therefore the probable source of the initially mentioned stereotype depictions of Shinto.

The prewar essentialist conceptions of Shinto, which reached their peak among German sympathizers of Japanese nationalism, tended to interpret Shinto as the quintessence of a premodern, traditionalist Japanese culture. Concerning the modern period, they either ignored or idealized the role of Shinto, but rarely went into the details of shrine politics. On the other hand, the essentialist emphasis on Shinto as a religion tended to overlook the importance of ritualism as a traditional form of legitimacy in Japan, as observed by Isomae. From a Western point of view, it is indeed hard to imagine that ritualism without any additional explanation would suffice to create a national consciousness. Thus, Western observers have long looked for a quasi-religious message (be it fabricated or real) at the core of State Shinto. This is also true for the postwar critics of State Shinto. At least when reflecting on my own initial conceptions, I realize that I regarded State Shinto as a kind of corrupt theology like that preached from the pulpit in Germany, where Hitler and Goebbels ultimately followed a role model created by Christian clerics. In the Japanese case, however, theology was not the dominant form of nationalist agitation. As Isomae argues, Japanese nationalism was rather based on patterns of reverence and taboo towards the *tennō* that defied verbal explanation.

The question of whether (State) Shinto should be regarded as a religion or not was, and still is, directly related to our respective concept of religion. As we have seen, concepts of religion are actually in constant flux both among different contemporary discourses and in the diachronic development of religious discussions. Postwar religious studies tend to broaden this concept so that all kinds of religion (with or without a founder, a doctrine, etc.) can be compared to one another. When it comes to State Shinto, however, there is still a tendency to regard it as a kind of “false religion” or “false theology.” Such a view can be traced back not only to the critical definitions of State Shinto by Christian missionaries or the Shinto Directive of 1945; it can also be seen as the simple reversal of the affirmative visions of Shinto by prewar German scholars who were seeking for the true national faith of Japan. The chapters of this volume, however, lead to the conclusion that we cannot consider State Shinto a perversion of an existing religious faith. Rather, it

was a series of attempts to establish Shinto itself. In this process, the nonreligious-shrine doctrine was only one among several contenders. While this doctrine had an enormous influence, in and of itself it was used for different purposes and was never left uncontested. State Shinto can be probably used as an umbrella term for all practical and ideological uses of this doctrine, as well as for other concepts that tried to replace it in the name of nationalist Shinto. However, State Shinto did not exist as one clearly defined ideology. To fully understand its multivocal currents, it is necessary to broaden our understanding of “false religion” or “ideology” in the same way that we have broadened our concept of religion, putting the emphasis less on the doctrinal and more on the performative aspects of nationalist agitation.

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Religion, Secularity, and the Articulation of the “Indigenous” in Modernizing Japan

ISOMAE JUN'ICHI

POSTCOLONIAL THEORIES OF RELIGION

Recent debates about “religion” and “secularity” have focused increasingly on the principle of separating state and religion. Yasukuni Shrine in Tokyo and Islam are among the most typical topics in question. Generally speaking, the so-called critical intellectuals in Japan have fundamentally diverging reactions to these topics. In the case of the homage paid by Japanese prime ministers to the war dead at Yasukuni Shrine, the separation of state and religion is almost inevitably put forward as the reason why they should refrain from doing so. On the other hand, Japanese intellectuals question the validity of the same principle in the case of Islam, since the separation of state and religion is seen as a product of Western enlightenment, which applies only to a specific historical and regional context. Here we encounter two opposing attitudes regarding the question how a non-Western society under Western influence should cope with its own social problems: in the first case, Western principles must be applied without fail, while in the second case these principles are regarded as not entirely appropriate for the realities of non-Western societies. This behavioral twist may be best described in the words of social anthropologist Talal Asad, who stated that even people outside the Western world live “in a world in which ‘the West’ is hegemonic” and where “the old opposition between modernity and tradition” no longer functions. Instead they find themselves in a convoluted state “at once modern and traditional, both authentic and creative at the same time.”¹ From this point of view, even the Islamist claim for the unity of state and religion and the revival of Islam are fundamentally new phenomena resulting from resistance against Western secularization,

1. Asad 1996.

and cannot be explained only by principles directly derived from premodern Islamic traditions.

As has been eloquently described in recent studies on the relationship of colonialism and religion, non-Western countries, in order to avoid colonization by Western superpowers, have no other option than to promote Westernization if they want to have their autonomy recognized. On the other hand, a country that opens its doors “defenselessly” towards the Western world may still end up in a state of colonization, culturally dominated and politically exploited by the West. If we consider the above-mentioned separation of state and religion under these suppositions, we realize that the problem lies in the fact that non-Western societies are drawn into the Western concept of religion and its related systems. Thus, rather than ask whether or not the separation of state and religion should be enforced in Japanese society, it is necessary to concretely investigate when and how this principle was introduced into modern Japan and which functions it performed.

In the Japanese postwar society, separation of state and religion has been seen as a universal principle of Western enlightenment introduced to prevent the instrumentalization of religion by nationalist ideologies. Yet in Western societies, separation of state and religion is rather the exception than the rule, and even among those that are generally believed to have achieved its realization, i.e., the United States and France, substantial differences still exist. Asad comments on these heterogeneous aspects within Western societies:

For even in modern secular countries the place of religion varies. Thus although in France both the highly centralized state and its citizens are secular, in Britain the state is linked to the Established Church and its inhabitants are largely nonreligious, and in America the population is largely religious but the federal state is secular.²

While elite intellectuals of the Meiji period, like Shimaji Mokurai 島地默雷 (1838–1911) or Inoue Kowashi 井上毅 (1844–1895),³ did not go as far as

2. Asad 2003, p. 5.

3. Shimaji Mokurai, was trained as a Shin Buddhist monk, joined the Iwakura Mission (1871–1873) for some time, and served as a religious adviser of the Meiji government (see also below, note 19). Inoue Kowashi was another Meiji government adviser and co-drafter of the Meiji Constitution.

theorizing about the discrepancies between political systems and social realities, they were well aware of this diversity at the time the Constitution of the Empire of Japan (promulgation in 1889) was drafted. They created labels like “state-religion system” for Great Britain, “supremacy of state over church” for Prussia, “system of publicly acknowledged religion” for France, or “separation of state and religion” for the USA, and finally opted for the Prussian model of “religious tolerance” as stated in Article 28 of the Constitution, which reads: “Japanese subjects shall, within limits not prejudicial to peace and order, and not antagonistic to their duties as subjects, enjoy freedom of religious belief (*shinkyō no jiyū* 信教ノ自由).”⁴ In contrast to the present constitution (adopted in 1947), which clearly provides that “the State and its organs shall refrain from religious education or any other religious activity” (Article 20.3),⁵ the Imperial Constitution consciously avoided issues pertaining directly to the separation of state and religion. Once the Constitution was promulgated, the system it established came to be taken as a given and the possibility of a perspective objectifying it was lost. After Japan’s defeat at the end of World War II, which meant the end of this system, religious policies were reorganized under the guidance of the United States. This time, the separation of state and religion according to American law came to be regarded as the universal model.

Starting from the above mentioned issues, this essay aims at a new look on how the separation of state and religion in modern Japanese history was related to State Shinto, and in which way the dichotomy of the “religious” and the “secular” articulated itself in modernizing Japan. I will conclude this discussion with some general thoughts on the tennō system in modern Japanese society.

4. National Diet Library. “The Constitution of the Empire of Japan.” Trans. by Itō Miyoji. URL: <http://www.ndl.go.jp/constitution/e/etc/co2.html> (2012/10/20).

5. Ibid.

THEORIES ON STATE SHINTO AND THE SEPARATION OF STATE AND RELIGION

A recent essay titled “Postwar State Shinto and Shrines as Religious Organizations”⁶ by the religion scholar Shimazono Susumu 島藺進, created somewhat of a stir in Japanese society. In this essay, which was meant as a comment on the general interest in the “Yasukuni question,” Shimazono argues that even in the postwar society “State Shinto has not vanished. What is more, it has never been abolished.” According to Shimazono, the word “State Shinto” has been used in two ways so far: in a narrow sense—used by Shinto scholars such as Sakamoto Koremaru 阪本是丸 or Ashizu Uzuhiko 葦津珍彦—“it refers to ‘Shrine Shinto’ that had been defined as nonreligious and was therefore excluded from the category of religion,” while in a broader sense—used for instance by the scholar of religion Murakami Shigeyoshi 村上重良—“it refers to a combination of Shrine Shinto, Imperial Shinto, and ideology of national essence (*kokutai* 国体).”⁷ In other words, State Shinto in the latter sense also includes the prewar tennō system and its ideology of “national morality” (*kokumin dōtoku* 国民道德) exemplified by veneration of the Imperial Rescript on Education and the imperial portrait (*goshin'ei* 御真影).⁸

Shimazono himself advocates a broader definition of “State Shinto” based on an understanding that also includes all the ritualistic aspects originally related to the notion of Shinto. This “imperial ritualism or Imperial Shinto [...] is the core of State Shinto as it exists within the present system of law.” Shimazono further explains the nature of this imperial State Shinto in the following way:

Imperial ritualism consists of rites performed by the tennō as a descendent of the Great Deity Amaterasu. By their reverence towards the tennō, who possesses the characteristics of a sacred king

6. “Sengo no kokka shintō to shūkyō shūdan to shite no jinja” 戦後の国家神道と宗教集団としての神社 (Shimazono 2006).

7. Shimazono 2001, pp. 324–26.

8. In the prewar period, every school had to have a copy of the Imperial Rescript on Education (*Kyōiku chokugo*, drafted in 1890) together with an imperial portrait. Both were the objects of special ceremonies at important school events.

(*saishiō* 祭祀王), the Japanese people are connected to a system of state deities.⁹

According to this interpretation, even postwar imperial rituals are obviously Shinto-like activities. Since any form of Shinto is now regarded as a form of religion, and since the tennō is regarded as a symbol of the Japanese people, his ritual performing of rites for the native deities (*kami*) must be interpreted as a breach of the postwar constitution’s provision of separating state and religion.

On the other hand, constitutional jurist Hirano Takeshi 平野武 points out that “the word ‘State Shinto’ (*kokka shintō*) was not in common use before the war, but became widely known only after the so-called Shinto Directive.”¹⁰ Before that time, i.e., from the Meiji period to 1945, which according to postwar scholars was the period of State Shinto, the term was virtually nonexistent in official or academic contexts. Postwar scholars therefore have not been able to find the term in prewar society, even if they have claimed its existence. Therefore, State Shinto must not be regarded as a precondition that influenced all sorts of political decisions before the war, but as an analytical term for a political process that took shape in an erratic succession of legal provisions.

Since State Shinto is a terminus ex post, conclusions as to when it came into existence, or whether or not it indeed existed, depend largely on its respective definition.¹¹ In other words, we cannot expect univocal agreement if we pose the question in the traditional substantialist way: “What is State Shinto?” Yet this does not mean that we should discard the term altogether. Instead, we should compare the meanings individual scholars have given to “State Shinto” in order to come up with the most plausible interpretation of reality. We should therefore put the question on the terminological efficiency of the different concepts.

9. Shimazono 2006, p. 484.

10. Hirano 1995, pp. 163–64.

11. Isomae 2007a.

To this end, it seems necessary to recall the definition of State Shinto in the *locus classicus* of the term, the Shinto Directive¹² issued by the GHQ.¹³ The following relevant statements can be extracted from this legal document:

2.a. The purpose of this directive is to separate religion from the state [...].

2.c. The term State Shintō within the meaning of this directive will refer to that branch of Shintō (*Kokka Shintō* or *Jinja Shintō*) which by official acts of the Japanese Government has been differentiated from the religion of Sect Shintō (*Shūha Shintō*)¹⁴ [...].

2.e.(2) Shrine Shintō, after having been divorced from the state and divested of its militaristic and ultranationalistic elements, will be recognized as a religion if its adherents so desire [...].¹⁵

By using the term “State Shinto,” the Shinto Directive introduced two new points of view regarding the relation between Shrine Shinto and the state, namely the principle of a firm institutional separation of state and religion and the definition of Shrine Shinto as a religion.

As already mentioned, in prewar Japanese society it was little questioned whether or not the system of State Shinto was in conflict with the separation of state and religion as opposed to “freedom of belief.”¹⁶ The latter was interpreted in the sense that “the state should not intervene in personal matters of religious activity,”¹⁷ which is, according to a widely accepted juridical interpretation, also possible under a system that does not provide separation of state and religion. Within these preconditions, the Japanese government did not opt for the religious system of any particular contemporary Western

12. Issued on 15 December 1945, by the full title: “Matters relating to the abolition of government protection, support, supervision and proliferation of State Shinto or Shrine Shinto.” For the complete English version, c.f. Hardacre 1989, pp. 167–70.

13. General Headquarters of the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers; the occupation government headed by General Douglas MacArthur.

14. “Shūha shintō 宗派神道 aruiwa kyōha shintō 教派神道” in the Japanese version.

15. Quoted from Hardacre 1989, p. 169.

16. For criticism from Christian and also some Buddhist factions, see Kate Wildman Nakai’s chapter in this volume. [Editor’s note.]

17. Ōishi 1996, p. 236.

nation, but applied a specific form of religious tolerance that abstained from enforcing a single belief in a state religion. Certainly, the tennō system, with Shrine Shinto as its main supporter, played the role of a state religion. Yet in order not to be drawn into an ideological contest with religions like Christianity or Buddhism, or to avoid criticism from Western countries for adopting an anti-Christian state religion, the government assigned Shrine Shinto to the realm of “morality” (*dōtoku* 道德) that defined the civic duties of “Japanese subjects.” The distinction between “morality” and “religion,” however, always remained ambiguous, since morality, which was inseparably related to the power of the state, actually interfered in the realm of individual religion. The result of this policy was that any religious organization could gain official recognition as long as it did not object to the tennō-centered nationalism spelled out in the form of “national morality” (*kokumin dōtoku*). General opinion holds that Shrine Shinto actively became a device of state ideology after the Russo-Japanese War (1904–1905). In principle, however, the system had already taken shape between the abolition of the “national evangelists” (*kyōdōshoku* 教導職)¹⁸ in 1884 and the proclamation of the Imperial Constitution in 1889.

The fact that the religious policy of the Meiji government did not comply with the separation of state and religion can be gathered from the “Critical Petition Regarding the Three Reaching Principles”¹⁹ issued in 1872 by the already mentioned Shin Buddhist monk Shimaji Mokurai. This petition is

18. The translation “national evangelists” for *kyōdōshoku*, lit. “agents of the way of the teaching,” is borrowed from Hardacre 1989. National evangelists were appointed by the Great Teaching Institute (Taikyō-in), a body set up after the abolition of the Ministry of Shrine Deities (Jingishō) in 1872 to promote a set of religiously influenced moral teachings. They included Buddhist as well as shrine priests. [Translator’s note.]

19. *Sanjō kyōsoku hihan kenpaku sho* 三条教則批判建白書. The three teaching principles referred to here were set up by the government in 1872 as guidelines for the Great Teaching Institute (see note 18) and consisted of three simple phrases: “(1) respect for the gods and love for the country, (2) making clear the principles of Heaven and the Way of Man, (3) reverence for the emperor and obedience to the will of the court” (Hardacre 1989, p. 43). Shimaji, who was instrumental in the Ministry of Shrine Deities being replaced by the Ministry of Religion (Kyōbushō) in 1872, rightfully sensed an attempt to oust Buddhists from the campaign for a national religion and thus opted for a more sophisticated model (see also Nitta 2000, pp. 254–56; Fujii 2002).

considered to be the first demand for the separation of state and religion ever put forward in Japan. Yet, while Shimaji maintains that “state and religion are different and should never be mixed since ancient times,” he holds, on the other hand, that “it was because of the interrelationship of state and religion that country became country and man became man for the first time.” Based on the dualism of absolute and mundane truth, he argues that religion must serve the government as soon as it has been separated from the state. For the sake of clarity, I would like to point out an inherent contradiction in Shimaji’s claim for the separation of state and religion. He writes that “institutional conspiracy of state and church (religious institutions) and institutional fusion of political and religious authority should be avoided, and their domains and respective fields of authority should be kept separate. Both should acknowledge the independence of their respective domains.”²⁰ This assertion, however, does not fit well with what he calls the “interrelationship of state and religion.”

From these facts we can detect, among other things, that prewar Japan did not comply with a model of society where “politics and religion” or “morality and religion” were clearly differentiated according to the principle of separating state and religion. Nevertheless, immediately after the war this principle was installed by the GHQ, taking the constitution of the United States as its model. It was a quite common phenomenon also on an international level: at this point in time, the *laïcité de l'État* became constitutional in France, and Germany also carried out the separation of state and religion that had been present to some degree already in the Weimar Constitution. Yet there were certainly different approaches to this separation, ranging from the Soviet Union’s hostility towards religion to the benevolent “nonconcern” of the United States. In the case of Japan, one might have easily expected a hostile stance, since the separation of state and religion was obviously motivated by the desire to abolish State Shinto. Yet, while the first paragraph of the Shinto Directive states that “militarism and ultranationalism perverted Shinto principles and beliefs,” Shrine Shinto itself was acknowledged as a religious belief just as Christianity or Buddhism are. As a result, shrines were regarded favorably even by the GHQ, but the ambivalence regarding their relationship to the tennō remained, leading to continuous discussions concerning their role in state ceremonies, discussions that continue to the

20. Ōnishi and Chiba 2006, pp. 10–11.

present day. This was only partly in accord with the intentions of the GHQ; to some extent it went against their expectations.

Regarding the intentions of the GHQ, the core principle of their occupation policies was to rule and reform Japan by means of the tennō system. To this end they denied the status of a living deity to the tennō but kept his relation to the people unchanged. Yet, while Shrine Shinto was to be "divested of its militaristic and ultranationalistic elements," the GHQ did not question the intimate relations between the various shrines and the tennō system (as reflected in the fact that many shrines venerate *kami* related to the imperial family, or that the tennō serves the *kami* in various imperial rituals). If only on a symbolic level, the tennō system thus still kept its religious characteristics. Under the pretext of freedom of religion, the tennō's performing of imperial rituals to his divine ancestors was seen as "the tennō's personal matter," notwithstanding the fact that he was publicly regarded as a symbol of the Japanese people. This is the reason the question of imperial ritualism has remained unsolved in the postwar period, as has been pointed out by Shimazono Susumu.

This limited perception of the tennō system reveals at the same time how the Japanese side regarded the problem: Scholars of religion, Shinto scholars, and bureaucrats welcomed the GHQ's tolerance as a lucky turn of events. Even before the war, doubts had been raised time and again whether enforced reverence at shrines was in accord with the constitutional freedom of religious belief, but arguments that the tennō system itself might violate the constitution were virtually unheard of. This can be easily criticized from today's point of view, but if we consider that the tennō monarchy was the very foundation of the modern Japanese nation state, this kind of perceptual limitation, namely the tacit approval of the tennō system as a kind of invisible entity beyond the law, was probably unavoidable.

The question we have to ask at this point is how this axiomatic approval of the tennō system became possible. We will have to reevaluate the genealogy of its "extralegal" status. This will lead us to the introduction of the concept of religion in Japan and to the question how the tennō system, under the pretext of an "indigenous tradition," was seen as a blank space left out in the Western conception. In this respect, I would like to raise another point included in the Shinto Directive, namely its definition of Shrine Shinto as a form of "religion." By addressing the concretizations of "religion" and "secularity" in prewar society, which included the tennō system, we should arrive

at a perspective different from the postwar discussions, which are based on the precondition of the separation of state and religion.

THE CONCEPT OF RELIGION AND ITS FLUCTUATIONS

When Shrine Shinto, which had hitherto been regarded as “ritualism” (*saishi* 祭祀), was redefined as “religion” (*shūkyō* 宗教) by the Shinto Directive, this led to tremendous changes regarding the status of Shrine Shinto in Japanese society. Based on the doctrine of the nonreligious nature of shrines, religion and ritualism had belonged to different categories in prewar society or were at least officially regarded as different. The borderline between religion and ritualism at that time is plainly illustrated in the following citation from a newspaper essay published in 1890 by the *Tōkyō nichinichi shinbun*:

When we speak of ceremonies (*matsuri* 祭), we refer to ritualism (*saishi*) in the sense of paying homage to the graves of our ancestors or offering flowers and incense to their ancestor tablets at home [...]. Every act of commemoration can be called a ceremony. Teaching (*oshie* 教) on the other hand, bears the meaning of religion (*shūkyō*). It can refer to the tennō or to the Buddha or to any other object of veneration to which we turn in awesome piety as our place of spiritual peace and refuge.²¹

The categories established here reflect the official Shinto policies embodied in the prewar doctrine of the nonreligious nature of Shinto shrines. This doctrine regarded religion as a matter of *individual* faith that everyone could choose freely, in contrast to ritualism, which was a *public* activity and the duty of every loyal citizen. Reverence at shrines was defined as ritualism in order to extricate it from the competition for believers seen as characteristic of religions like Christianity or Buddhism.²² Many contemporary intellectuals saw this distinction as based on the “separation of official and private” (*kan-shi no betsu* 官私ノ別), that is, the political decision that “Shinto, be-

21. The article with the title “On the division of ritual and teaching” (*Saikyō bunri ron* 祭教分離論) by a certain Haanshi 破闇子 is quoted from Yasumaru and Miyachi 1988, p. 274.

22. See Isomae 2000.

ing the foundation of our national essence (*kokutai*), should be promulgated by official governmental institutions.”²³ Without this separation of official and private, ritualism and religion would immediately flow into one another, for as even the above-mentioned newspaper author observed: “Since rituals (*saishi*) are one part of any given religion, I would never say that religion has nothing to do with ritualism.”²⁴

Aside from political considerations of the above sort, Shrine Shinto might be seen as a kind of religion. For believers in other religions this meant that there was a constant danger that the veneration of shrines as a public duty might intrude on the right of religious freedom. The legal situation regarding the nonreligious status of shrines and the separation of religion and ritualism was indeed undecided, as pointed out by the Shin Buddhist scholar Hanada Ryōun 花田凌雲 (1873–1952) in 1926, when he mentioned “the widely known fact that there exists no juridical statement on the question whether [worship at] shrines is religion or not.”²⁵ The Constitution and other judicial documents merely clarified that freedom of faith was guaranteed “within limits not prejudicial to peace and order.” Questions such as whether worship at shrines was religious or ritual, or how such categories were to be defined, were discussed in pamphlets of the government such as the *Jinja hongī* 神社本義 (Fundamental Meaning of Shrines, published in 1944 by the Jingiin), but these statements remained on the level of individual opinions without juridical consequences. Under such extrajudicial conditions, or rather because the nature of Shinto shrines was never defined judicially, debates on this issue were left unresolved time and again. Freedom of belief, therefore, could be wider or narrower depending on the official attitude re-

23. “Shintō wa waga kokutai no kiso nareba tokubetsu kansei o motte senpu seshimubeki” 神道ハ我国体ノ基礎ナレバ特別官制ヲ以テ宣布セシムベキ. “Proposal for Separation of Shrine Staff from National Evangelists” (*Shinkan kyōdōshoku bunri ni tsuki ikensho* 神官教導職分離につき意見書, 1883), quoted from Yasumaru and Miyachi 1988, p. 67.

24. Yasumaru and Miyachi 1988, p. 274.

25. Quoted from the report by the Committee for the Study of Religious Administration (Shūkyō Seido Chōsa Inkai 宗教制度調査委員会, 1926 [vol. 1], p.5). See note 36.

garding shrines. For prewar Japanese society this meant in practice that the amount of religious freedom varied from period to period.²⁶

Under these conditions, the concept of “religion” became a matter of great concern for intellectuals of the time. Intimately related to ritualism, the respective definitions of religion determined not only the nature of shrines but also the extent of religious freedom.

The Japanese term *shūkyō* came into common use as the standard translation of the English word “religion” around 1877. At that time we also see the beginnings of a tacit tolerance of Christianity and the competition between various religions for adherents among the common populace. In the 1890s, when governmental shrine policies had to be brought into line with the professed freedom of religion, we observe an increasing demand for a “precise definition” of religion.

Academic discourse on religion appeared for the first time in Japan in the form of comparative religion introduced by Inoue Tetsujirō 井上哲次郎 (1855–1944) and others, or, somewhat later, with the introduction of the field of religious studies by scholars such as Anesaki Masaharu 姉崎正治 (1873–1949) and Katō Genchi 加藤玄智 (1873–1965).²⁷ Japanese definition of religion can be arranged into two groups: one centered on belief and the other centered on practice. The former is the dominant stream of religious studies in Japan pushed forward by Anesaki, who took Western Protestantism as the model for his image of religion. In his *Shūkyōgaku gairon* 宗教概論 (General Introduction to the Science of Religion), published in 1900, which laid the foundation for the discipline of religious studies in Japan, Anesaki advances the following definition:

Religion is not simply the history of a single confession or sect, but a concept based on the understanding that all religions are realities of the history of human civilization, and are, as products of the human mind, part of the same process of production.²⁸

This definition is based on a psychological viewpoint that regards the relations between god(s) and humans as “products of the human mind.” Focus-

26. For a concrete example, see the “Yasukuni incident” as described by Kate Wildman Nakai in this volume. [Editor’s note.]

27. See Isomae 2003, chap. 1, and Hayashi Makoto’s chapter in this volume.

28. Anesaki 1982, p. 1.

ing on the religious consciousness of the individual believer, Anesaki maintains that in spite of their differences, the various religions or confessions can be understood as variants of the same phenomenon of “religion.” Religion is therefore not part of a sacred realm or a transcendental sphere. Since everyone possesses some religious inclinations, it belongs to the mundane world and, moreover, is secularized in the sense of “privatization.” No longer excluded from the secular, the sacred can be found within man himself, which in Japan paradoxically led to a new mysticist search for the essence of religious experience. Anesaki, for instance, recounts his own religious experiences in the following way:

Lying alone on the sand at the seashore I enter the realm of the unconscious (*mushin no sakai* 無心の境) [...]. Even if time passes and people change, there is always the unchanging tune of “now” in the flow of eons. Light, do you embrace me? Wave, do you invite me? Body, dissolve in the water, heart, melt away with the light! When I am in this way no longer myself, I cannot help being attracted by such reverberations inside my breast.²⁹

Anesaki’s emphasis on his individual experience clearly draws on the Christian stress on *belief*. From this point of view, religious folk traditions reflect nothing other than “ailments” of religion in the form of superstition. In contrast, Katō Genchi, who had studied together with Anesaki under Inoue Tetsujirō, somewhat belatedly (1938) came forward with another definition of religion, in which Shinto is emphasized as an indigenous religion:

The field of religious studies made a huge progress when it no longer understood “religion” exclusively as universal religions like Buddhism, Christianity and Islam, but also included tribal beliefs of primitive societies³⁰ or national creeds that prospered among

29. Anesaki 1970 [1903], p. 248.

30. Katō uses the term *shizen minzoku* here, which is obviously derived from the German *Naturvolk* (“people of nature”). “Primitive society” is probably the closest English equivalent in texts of the period, although it has slightly different connotations. [Translator’s note.]

common people since ancient times and regarded them with serious academic concern.³¹

Needless to say that this point of view led Katō to an affirmative recognition of Shrine Shinto as a form of religion:

I began to understand that a national religion, as for instance state Shinto (*kokkateki shintō* 国家の神道), even if it does not possess all aspects of a universal religion or a personal religion, is of foremost importance among all religions.³²

Nevertheless, Katō was in full accord with his colleague Anesaki and their common teacher Inoue Tetsujirō that religious belief consciously held by the individual devotee makes up the core of any concept of religion.

In an attempt to overcome this limitation, Yanagita Kunio 柳田国男 (1875–1962), the founder of Japanese folklore studies, put forward an interpretation of Shinto that initiated yet another array of definitions of religion. In his “Personal View of Shinto,” first published in 1918, he wrote: “Any conclusion that shrines serve no other purpose than to pay respect to our forefathers or to exceptional personalities is not based on firm ground, I believe.”³³ He thereby criticized the “national morality” ideology of the Bureau of Shrines³⁴ which tended to interpret all *kami* as men. On the other hand, he was equally dissatisfied with the contemporary interpretations of Shinto scholars and regarded “the thinking about the *kami* that we actually find in rural villages [...], which has neither a doctrine nor a founder” (p. 246) with utmost esteem. Yanagita’s emphasis on communal practice rather than on individual belief influenced a new generation of scholars, who from the 1930s onward began to revise the ideas of Anesaki and Katō. In the form of religious folklore studies introduced by Uno Enkū 宇野円空 (1885–1949) or

31. Katō 2004 [1938], pp. 294–95.

32. Ibid., p. 295. On Katō’s usage of the term “State Shinto”, see also the introduction, p. 6, note 5. [Editor’s note.]

33. Yanagita 2000, p. 245.

34. Founded in 1900 within the Home Ministry, the Bureau of Shrines (Jinja Kyoku 神社局) was solely responsible for the administration of shrines, while all other religious bodies including Sect Shinto were administered by the Bureau for Religions (Shūkyō Kyoku 宗教局). Both offices replaced the Bureau of Shrines and Temples (Shaji Kyoku 社寺局), which had been installed in 1877.

religious anthropology established by Furuno Kiyoto 古野清人 (1899–1979) and others, Yanagita's views gradually developed into the most common approach to non-Western religions.

This practice-oriented view of religion also spread in the West, as contact with developing countries intensified through colonialism. While religious practices were initially placed at the lowest level of an evolutionary scale that was topped by Christian theology, they gradually came to be regarded as phenomena that deserve special consideration.³⁵ In present-day Japan, interpretations according to the Protestant model still prevail but practice-oriented understandings of religion have begun to erode the preeminent importance attached to religious belief. *Shūkyō* (religion) in the present sense of the word has therefore developed from multiple levels of meaning. At the beginning of the twentieth century, Anesaki and Katō, who were heavily influenced by a Protestant concept of religion, created the first standard interpretation. At the same time, the obvious differences between Christianity, with its fully developed theology, and Japanese Shinto aroused a feeling of discomfort that found its verbal expression in the writings of Yanagita Kunio and Uno Enkū. As the fierce debates within the Committee for the Study of Religious Administration³⁶ between 1926 and 1928 indicate, serious doubts were raised concerning the official doctrine of the nonreligious nature of

35. The above-mentioned social anthropologist Talal Asad, for instance, regards "the development of prescribed moral-religious capabilities, which involve the cultivation of certain bodily attitudes (including emotions), the disciplined cultivation of habits, aspirations, desires" as characteristics not only of Islam but also of medieval Catholicism (Asad 1996). Originally, this kind of religious practice must not be seen as "an autogenetic impulse but as a mutually constituting relationship between body sense and body learning." It is a fatal error of modern Western interpretations centered on belief to downplay such practices as "obscure meanings" or as "symbols to be interpreted" (Asad 1993, pp. 77 and 62).

As Asad further states, "... in contemporary Protestant Christianity (and other religions now modeled on it), it is more important to have the right *belief* than to carry out specific prescribed practices. [...] Belief] has now become a purely inner, private state of mind, a particular state of mind detached from everyday practices. [...] The system of statements about belief is now held to constitute the essence of 'religion,' a construction that makes it possible to compare and evaluate different 'religions'" (Asad 1996).

36. The Committee for the Study of Religious Administration was an advisory board installed by the government between 1926 and 1928. Its purpose was to devise

Shinto shrines. The concept of religion, therefore, held conflicting implications that were never resolved one way or the other. These “fluctuations of the concept of religion” are still valid today, as Shimazono Susumu explains:

While *shūkyō* has been established as the Japanese equivalent of “religion,” the Japanese term does not carry the same connotations as the original. [...] In today’s Japanese society, there is much confusion as to what *shūkyō* actually means, especially when one asks what the main religion of Japan is [...]. In this sense, the Western concept of “religion” has not yet neatly settled in Japan. Rather, it is widely recognized that there is a certain perplexity regarding the concept of “religion.”³⁷

Similarly fluctuating meanings can be also observed in the case of “ritualism” (*saishi*), which served as the counterpart of religion in the nonreligious-shrine doctrine. In the wake of the Meiji Restoration, the slogan “unity of cult and government” (*saisei itchi* 祭政一致) was put forward as one of the major political tenets. This idea deteriorated quite rapidly, however, as can be gathered from the fact that state rituals were soon distributed to a number of quite different institutions: ordinary shrine rituals were overseen by the Bureau of Shrines of the Home Ministry, rites of the Imperial Palace by the Bureau of Ceremonial Matters (Shikibu-ryō 式部寮), and ceremonies at Yasukuni Shrine by the Army Ministry. State rituals, therefore, were not performed according to a consistent, well-coordinated plan of the government. Certainly, these rituals had some obscure characteristics in common, since they were all directed towards Japanese *kami* and did not belong to a “religion” such as Christianity or Sect Shinto, but neither the government nor the general populace had a clear picture of the pantheon in which all these *kami*—ranging from imperial ancestors to imperial loyalists and heroic citizens—existed and how they might be related to each other.

This lack of clarity, however, is a most natural consequence of the fact that apart from its reliance on the tennō system, Shinto does not possess an explicit theology. Rather than being a fundamental defect, this ambiguity took on an important meaning as a blank space for ritualism that is beyond

the legislative framework for a religious policy that would treat the three religions Christianity, Buddhism, and Sect Shinto as equal.

37. Shimazono 1998, p. 63.

logical criticism. The fact that only shrine ritualism and its relation to religion became an issue was probably due to its intimate connections with “national moral education” (*kokumin kyōka* 国民教化), which was always in latent conflict with the people’s freedom of faith. Especially at the time of the Russo-Japanese War, shrine ritualism became intertwined with the national morality discourse propagated by the Ministry of Education. In the words of Kōno Seizō,³⁸ “Shinto makes up our national morality, it is indeed the force behind the Imperial Way.”³⁹ In this way, shrines came to be regarded as the arena of national morality. Thus, the oppositions “ritualism/religion” and “morality/religion,” which had been regarded as being different up to that time, became synonymous within the nonreligious-shrine discourse. Through the equation of the nonverbal physical practice of rituals with “moral behavior,” the nonreligious-shrine doctrine was equally drawn into the secular realm of morality.

Morality, however, was yet another term endowed with a number of meanings. While scholars in the tradition of Western enlightenment, such as Inoue Tetsujirō and others, simply contrasted it with religion, adherents of Shinto, as for instance Kōno Seizō, used it more or less as a synonym for “national essence” (*kokutai* 国体) or the tennō system, which defied a precise definition. Especially from the 1920s onward, morality in the latter sense was emphasized by Shinto scholars and conservative circles. Morality embodied a public space that subsumed also the private realm. In the same way, the indigenous ritualism at shrines transcended the distinction between the “secular” and the “religious.” In both cases, the concepts of Western enlightenment were increasingly rejected. At the same time, Shrine Shinto was purged of folk religion elements that were rooted in everyday life. Ironically, this made the conservative plan to integrate Shinto shrines into the curriculum of nationalistic propaganda a fruitless effort.⁴⁰

Since Japanese society before the war did not separate religion from the state and did not draw a clear-cut juridical distinction between “religion and politics” or “religion and morality,” a definition of religion that allowed

38. Kōno Seizō (Shōzō) 河野省三 (1882–1963) was a professor at Tokyo’s Shinto university Kokugakuin Daigaku, which he headed from 1935 to 1946. A leading scholar of Shinto, he was also actively engaged in nationalist propaganda.

39. Kōno 1933, p. 12.

40. As Endō Jun shows in this volume, the facelessness of State Shinto was perceived as a problem even among bureaucrats.

the nonreligious nature of shrines and the possibility to alter the scope of religious freedom was probably the only possible strategy. As demonstrated above, both religion and morality were highly ambiguous terms that were related to each other: a change in the meaning of one term was likely to bring about changes in the other term's meaning as well. Based on this interrelatedness of religion and morality, even the borderline between public and private became fluid. New interpretations of where the one ended and the other began circulated one after the other. All in all, they pointed to the extremely difficult choice between a collectivist or an individualistic conception of human life, and further, between moral or religious norms of human behavior.⁴¹

After the war, the GHQ's policy of separating state and religion merely cemented the ambivalences found in the concept of religion and the non-religious-shrine doctrine in its background, by providing an institutional framework for them. Certainly, the principle to separate state and religion had learned a lesson from the long history of conflicts between religious and secular powers in Western societies, but it cannot be regarded as fitting for all societies, as Islamic societies demonstrate. Regarding present debates about Yasukuni Shrine, it is equally difficult to understand the relations of state and religion, or the role of ritualism, if one does not consider how religious discourses originating in the West were articulated under the above-mentioned peculiar circumstances of Japan.

At this point we should pay special attention to Shimazono's remark that by way of imperial ritualism, religion leaks into the public sphere and may thus endanger the freedom of religion. If we consider this only from a religious perspective as a continuation of State Shinto, however, we will encounter problems in grasping the actual state of affairs. It becomes difficult to understand the historical process by which religious and nonreligious discourses articulated themselves if we attribute all these phenomena a priori to the category of religion. As Talal Asad claims, "there cannot be a universal definition of religion." Rather, a "definition is itself the historical product of

41. The following statement by José Casanova, who criticizes the dualism of Western enlightenment, may help us to understand the problem in the Japanese case: "[...] modern walls of separation between church and state keep developing all kinds of cracks through which both are able to penetrate each other; [...] religion and politics keep forming all kinds of symbolic relations, to such an extent that is not easy to ascertain whether one is witnessing political movements which don religious garb or religious movements which assume political forms" (Casanova 1994, p. 41).

discursive processes.” This pertains also to the terminology of present scholars, which cannot be treated as a transhistorical commodity.⁴² Being the core of Japanese national identity, the tennō system assumed its multilayered character through various oppositions, such as “religion/morality,” “religion/Shinto,” and “Western/indigenous,” not only before but also after the war, and is therefore not simply a phenomenon of State Shinto or religion.

The tennō-centrism of the *kokutai* ideology can be found in the first article of the Imperial Constitution, which stipulated that “the empire of Great Japan will be governed at all times by the tennō.” On the other hand, Articles 4 and 55 provided that the tennō, as a constitutional monarch, should be controlled by the constitution, the parliament, and the government. In this regard, he was confined “within” the constitution as the highest organ of the state. [...] The first article, however, clearly defined him as an absolute power “beyond” the constitution. Moreover, his absoluteness of imperial power was not just founded on “divine right,” as in the case of Western absolutism, but rather on “sacred kingship by a *kami*.” The “contradictions” in these imperial conceptions could only be solved by presenting the tennō as a “living *kami*” (*arahitogami* 現人神).⁴³

As the above quote from Kan Sanjun indicates, the tennō in the modern tennō system was at the same time a sacred king clad in the traditional aura of holiness and a constitutional monarch who embodied Western civilization and enlightenment. This status beyond the law, which can be neither described as religious nor as secular, is the core of imperial authority in the tennō system. We therefore have to ask how the tennō system acquired such an extralegal status and why it continues to hold it even now.

THE TENNŌ SYSTEM AS AN ENTITY BEYOND THE LAW

As we have seen above, the nonreligious shrine doctrine was not shared univocally by the entire population in prewar Japan. Rather, Shrine Shinto was open to different interpretations depending on the respective definition

42. Asad 1993, p. 29.

43. Kan 2001, pp. 58–59.

of religion. In a judicial gray zone, which prescribed neither a state religion nor the separation of state and religion, several opinions, including those of the government, existed side by side. As soon as these opinions went beyond shrine ritualism and questioned the imperial authority residing in its background, however, they were countered by immediate repression, even in times of comparative religious tolerance, as we can see from the scandal in 1890 caused by the Christian teacher Uchimura Kanzō refusing to bow to the portrait of the emperor,⁴⁴ or Kume Kunitake's critical writings on Shinto from 1892.⁴⁵ Neither Uchimura nor Kume intended to reject the tennō system as such, but since they expressed an objection against its authority in their speech and conduct, public punishment was the only answer to be expected. Moreover, this punishment was not executed directly by organs of the government, but was initiated in the name of the entire society by conservative scholars or right-wing political organizations. It was therefore not a judicial matter, but a kind of self-censorship arising from within society, demonstrating how deeply rooted respect towards the tennō system was at that time. In this sense, we should regard the tennō system not as being held up forcefully by state power, but rather as an entity beyond the law that in the eyes of the people could never become the object of criticism. Katō Genchi, for instance, who insisted on the religious nature of Shrine Shinto, did not point out the conflict with the freedom of faith inherent in such a conception, but while pushing Shinto up to the status of a state religion tried to squeeze in religious freedom:

Founded on the belief in the rule of our divine emperor, state Shinto (*kokkateki shintō*), the national religion of Japan, has existed in the mind of the Japanese people since times immemorial, long before Article 28 of the Constitution was drafted. Ranking even higher than the Constitution, it has formed the essence of the Constitution. According to my understanding, the idea of Article 28 is to allow

44. Uchimura Kanzō 内村鑑三 (1861–1930) was forced to resign from his post at the First Higher School after he failed to bow before the newly promulgated Imperial Rescript on Education during a public ceremony.

45. Kume Kunitake 久米邦武 (1839–1931) was forced to resign as a professor at Tokyo Imperial University after he published an article with the title “Shinto Derives from an Ancient Custom of Worship of Heaven” (*Shintō wa saiten no kozoku* 神道ハ祭天ノ古俗).

missionary religions from abroad, such as Buddhism or Christianity, as long as they accept state Shinto as Japan’s national religion and do not get into conflict with it.⁴⁶

Such interpretations of Shrine Shinto as the state religion were not only held by Shinto scholars like Katō, but also by opinion leaders like Minobe Tatsukichi 美濃部達吉 (1873–1948), a representative of democratic liberalism in the Taishō era. Whether they belonged to the conservative or the liberal camp, they all took the position that shrines related to the tennō system should be exempted from the scope of religious freedom, since this would expose them to competition with other religions. Even critical interpretations of Shrine Shinto stopped short of asking questions that might put them into conflict with the tennō system, drawing the line of their criticism here. Therefore, scholars who opted for a different concept of religion than that of Katō eventually arrived at similar conclusions. Anesaki, for instance, who wrote about his own mystical experiences, argued that “the ‘self’ is the center of everything; it is the focal point reflecting the macrocosm.” Still, “one of the centers that unites microcosm and macrocosm in vivid and harmonious communication [...] is the basis of all activities we call ‘state.’ The center of every individual microcosm exists in harmony with the macrocosmic center of the state (or race).”⁴⁷ Thus, Anesaki regarded the state as a fusion of individual consciousnesses in a kind of superego.⁴⁸ In a similar way, Uno and Furuno, who applied a practice-oriented concept of religion, voiced sympathy for the idea of the “Great East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere” and came forward with studies on the new Japanese colonies.⁴⁹ No matter what concept of religion they opted for, they all found themselves united in their support of the tennō system, which they regarded as the essence of ancient Japanese cultural traditions. They imagined the tennō system in the form of the unchangeable “national essence” (*kokutai*), an unfathomable outer sphere that was metareligious, metahistorical, and beyond any definite verbalization. Matsuura Hisateru 松浦寿輝 has aptly explained *kokutai* in the following way:

46. Katō 2004 [1938], pp. 300–301.

47. Anesaki 1904, p. 29.

48. See Isomae 2002.

49. See Hayashi Makoto’s chapter in this volume, esp. pp. 64–67.

In contrast to the pompous ostentation of *kokutai* as an oversensitive *signifiant*, the *signifié* related to it is extremely feeble, almost inexistent. It seems as if *kokutai* did not possess a concrete, explicit meaning but was just a pretext to trigger all kinds of statements concerning it. The noise produced by all these statements seems to have served no other purpose than to enhance the symbolic value of *kokutai*. [...] In this case, if somebody asked what *kokutai* was, such “problematization” would have been regarded as an unconceivable topic that ought to be suppressed. What was protected by the taboo of any questions of this type was probably the tennō system, which means that the tennō system can be identified with *kokutai* itself.⁵⁰

As Yasumaru Yoshio explained somewhat earlier, within Japanese society there was a movement searching for the nation's original traditions, which originated in resistance to Japan's integration into the Western world after the country was opened to the West in the late days of the Tokugawa shogunate. At the same time, there was a call for a historical authority within the country that could replace the shogun. According to Yasumaru, these are the reasons why the tennō system was regarded as Japan's existential foundation in modern Japan.⁵¹ Yet its supreme authority was not regarded solely as the fundament of the Japanese nation-state. It was not merely a single cultural element articulated within the sphere of historical contingency. Like the Christian god in the eyes of his believers, it had to be imagined as the shining unfathomable “beyond” that was unaffected by historical change. In Japanese society, which lacked the idea of a transcendental origin as in monotheistic Christianity, a transcendent entity in the form of an unbroken line of living deities seemed suitable for replacing the Christian god as the founding principle for the nation-state. Moreover, the tennō was both a constitutional monarch based on a Western concept that claimed universal validity, and a sacred king embodying the particularities of Japanese culture, as pointed out by Kan Sanjun. He therefore transcended the opposition of “Japan” and the “West,” or rather, he was perceived as the invisible foundation from which the “secular/religious” dichotomy arose and as such, identical with the empty signifier *kokutai*, an extraliminal existence and therefore beyond the scope of any rational critique.

50. Matsuura 2000, pp. 316–17.

51. Yasumaru 1992, chap. 7.

Only Protestants and Marxists, who were rooted in Western thought, possessed a means of objectifying the tennō system and resisting it. Both relied on a specific worldview that required utmost commitment and which therefore could provide a basis for their adherents to confront the tennō system. Yet in the end, monotheistic transcendence as preached by Protestantism could not take root in the world of critical Japanese intellectuals, and did not result in the rejection of the tennō system as such. While differing from the official mainstream, most believers did not think that their convictions were entirely incompatible with it. The situation finally changed when true Marxism entered the intellectual world of Japan from the 1920s onward, after a secular form of Christianity had prepared the ground in the form of Liberal Theology.

People who believe in the doctrines of a specific religious group have always been few in Japan. Therefore, questions of religious freedom arising from the “religion/shrine” opposition never gained serious footing in the broad strata of society. However, when the exploitation of the people through state powers represented by the tennō was raised as a major topic—as for instance in a statement by the Communist Party in 1932—this secular problem, which pertained to the common people, aroused interest among large numbers of intellectuals, regardless of whether they were devotees of a particular religion or agnostics. Marxism in Japan began with the analysis of the capitalist economy and as an antireligious ideological movement. When Marxists were confronted with the massive enforcement of tennōism from 1933 onward, however, in their opposition they had to address the historical origins of the *kokutai* ideology as well.⁵² According to my examination of academic texts from this period, this was the first time that modern Japanese intellectuals repudiated the existence of the tennō system directly. The Marxist critique interpreted the tennō system as a secular phenomenon and unmasked the limitations of the allegedly unbroken existence of the tennō dynasty. It claimed that the origins of Japanese people reached back to much earlier times. By doing so, however, it based the national identity on the same logic of historical essentialism as did the tennō system.

In the end, Marxism was not able to pinpoint the extralegal status of the tennō system within the realm of the secular, since the tennō system belongs not only to the sphere of secularity but to that of religion as well. As we have

52. Isomae 2007b, pp. 110–62.

seen in the case of national morality, it transcended the “secular/religious” dichotomy in a way that has not yet been acknowledged within the discourse of historical studies. Rather, academic disciplines such as history or religious studies helped establish such oppositions as “secularity vs. religion” or “morality vs. religion,” and these oppositions established the tennō system as an unfathomable entity. Thus, it was extremely difficult for these disciplines to question the tennō system, of which they themselves were part. In this perspective, the appropriate strategy for dealing with the extralegal nature of the tennō system today is not to just repeat the criticism based on historical essentialism or on the principle of the separation of state and religion. Rather we should ask how phenomena like the tennō system—which seem to tower above historical contingency that belongs to the secular and the religious, and that at the same time transcends them—manifested themselves within the historical context. We should objectify the process of this manifestation in terms of a genealogy of nonhistoricism. It seems necessary not to be content with the respective discourses of history or religious studies, but to create new forms of expression in order to characterize the extralegal nature of the tennō system within society. The established discourses of religious studies and history presume universal validity for both the religious and historical conceptions of the tennō system, although these conceptions are only one expression of it in their respective fields. In order to objectify what has been projected as beyond history, we must first deconstruct these presumptions. Above all, we should not forget that the extralegal status of the tennō system is not a transhistorical fact, but a historical product resulting from the confrontation of modernizing Japan with the Western world. It appears in the guise of an extraliminal entity precisely because it occurred within the framework of Westernization.

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Nationalism and the Humanities in Modern Japan

Religious, Buddhist, Shinto, and Oriental Studies

HAYASHI MAKOTO

This chapter discusses the emergence of “humanistic studies” (*jimbun-gaku* 人文学)¹ in modern Japan. Rather than Shinto studies alone, the broader context of Shinto and nationalism in academic discourse will be addressed. As an academic discipline, Shinto studies were of a rather limited scope but the topic of Shinto was taken up also by other disciplines. Nationalism, on the other hand, did not necessarily go hand in hand with an interest in Shinto. As I will try to show, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century the entire field of the humanities was affected by nationalism to some extent but in the process of differentiation into specific academic disciplines, each branch developed its own kind of nationalist discourse.

PERIODIZATION

The development of the humanities before World War II can be roughly divided into three periods. The first period was inspired by new contacts with Western learning in the wake of the Meiji Restoration in 1868, but it was not until 1877 that the humanities became part of an academic curriculum. The University of Tokyo was founded in this year—at the time the only university

1. The term *jimbungaku* is the Japanese standard translation of the Western concept of “the humanities” or the German *Geisteswissenschaften*. In the West, however, these latter terms have recently met with criticism for their implicit Euro- or logocentric implications. *Jimbungaku*, on the other hand, could be retranslated as “studies of human culture,” implying a concept less biased by Western humanism. [Translator’s note.]

in Japan—and included, among others, a faculty of literature. In the next years, several private and public colleges came into being, but most of them were only devoted to particular applied disciplines such as politics or law.² All in all, during this first period, humanistic studies in a Western sense were not fully developed.

The second period spans from the Sino-Japanese War (1894–1895) to World War I (1914–1918). In this period, growing numbers of the intellectual elite went abroad to study, and upon their return to Japan they introduced Western scholarship, thereby laying the foundations of humanistic studies proper. New imperial universities were founded in Kyoto (Kyoto University, 1897), Sendai (Tōhoku University, 1907) and Fukuoka (Kyushu University, 1911). In this period, scholarship in the humanities took on a new dimension and developed on a broad scale.

The third period lasts from the end of World War I to the end of World War II in 1945. In this period, the technical sciences, medicine, and economics were given primary importance by the state.³ In addition, we observe the founding of the first full-fledged private universities, some affiliated with religious institutions. Both state and private universities contributed to the establishment of large academic societies in all kinds of subjects. In addition, there was an increasing academic interest in Asian studies, since in these years, Japan began to invade and colonize other Asian countries.

It is no mere coincidence that the three periods of humanistic studies sketched above are framed by wars. Warfare not only accelerated the modernization of Japan as a whole, it also had a distinct impact on scholarship, including the humanities. In the following, I would like to take a closer look at this impact during the latter two periods, leaving out the first period in which humanistic studies proper were not yet fully established.

THE SECOND PERIOD IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF HUMANISTIC STUDIES

The second period starts with Japan's first modern war (the Sino-Japanese War, 1894–1895) and is marked by Japan's first experiences as a coloniz-

2. Nakura 1984, p. 133.

3. Naka and Itō 1984, pp. 142–50.

ing power. After defeating China, Japan seized control of Taiwan in 1895. Japanese rule met with hostile resistance by the Taiwanese people, however, and the island remained unstable for almost twenty years. In 1910, Japan annexed Korea and turned it into a Japanese colony.

In 1894, the Japanese government also signed the Anglo-Japanese Treaty of Commerce and Navigation, which was followed by similar treaties with other countries in 1896. These new treaties became effective in 1899 and led, among other things, to a change in the legal status of foreigners. Whereas foreign residences had previously been restricted to designated areas, foreigners were now allowed to travel and stay officially in the country, conduct business, and possess freehold property.⁴

Academic activities expanded significantly in this period, as reflected by the above-mentioned founding of imperial universities in Kyoto, Tōhoku, and Kyushu. What was the impact of these events on the field of the humanities? In the following, I will analyze this question by focusing on religious studies in general, Buddhist and Shinto studies, and, in addition, Oriental studies.

Religious Studies

The academic study of religions was first established in the second period, when Anesaki Masaharu 姉崎正治 (1873–1949) began to lecture on this subject at the University of Tokyo⁵ in 1898. In 1905 Anesaki became the first professor of the newly founded Chair of Religious Studies (*shūkyōgaku kōza*).⁶ Kyoto University followed suit, setting up a chair of religious studies in 1907 that was held by Matsumoto Bunzaburō 松本文三郎 (1869–1944), a scholar of Buddhist studies. In 1913 the famous philosopher Nishida Kitarō 西田幾多郎 (1870–1945) took over this post for one year.⁷ A closer look at the his-

4. This was called “homeland cohabitation” (*naichi zakkyo* 内地雑居). Initially, many voices were raised against this policy because of fears that there would be a massive spread of Christianity due to the intrusion of foreigners into Japanese society.

5. The university’s initial name, Tōkyō Daigaku, was changed to Teikoku Daigaku 帝国大学 (Imperial University) in 1886. In 1897, when Kyōto Teikoku Daigaku became the second imperial university, the name changed again to Tōkyō Teikoku Daigaku (Tokyo Imperial University; 1897–1947).

6. Tōkyō Teikoku Daigaku 1942, pp. 396–99.

7. Kyōto Teikoku Daigaku 1943, pp. 664–65.

torian of religion Anesaki Masaharu shows that he was of particular importance for the development of Japanese religious studies.⁸ In 1900, Anesaki went to Germany, where he studied indology under Paul Deussen. When he returned to Japan, he took on the newly established chair for religious studies at the University of Tokyo. Anesaki had written his doctoral dissertation on early Buddhism in India, but later turned his academic interests to Nichiren Buddhism, Christianity, religious art, and Prince Shōtoku (574–622), the ingenious statesman and early mentor of Japanese Buddhism. In 1913 he was invited to teach at Harvard University for two years, where he lectured on Japanese religion and morals. Although Anesaki had studied indology and Buddhism in the West and spoke a number of Western languages, he nevertheless chose Japanese religious history as his specific field of research. As evidenced by his invitation to Harvard, he was considered a representative of Japanese religious studies who could explain Japanese religion to a foreign audience.

While Japanese history, literature, or folklore studies tended to adopt a more nationalistic perspective, scholars of religion did not contribute directly to the emerging national self-esteem. The field of religious studies originated in the West and was introduced to Japan as a discipline based on Western logic and Western concepts. Those Japanese scholars who turned to the study of religion were therefore Western-oriented. They clearly differed from other scholars in the field of the humanities in that they used “religion” as a new concept derived from Western thinking.

In addition to this role in academic discourse, scholars of religious studies at the University of Tokyo also fulfilled a number of practical political tasks related to the antagonisms of Sect Shinto, Buddhism, and Christianity at that time. Holding an equal distance to each of them, religious studies provided a place where proponents of these faiths could meet. In 1912, for instance, Tokonami Takejirō 床次竹二郎 (1867–1935), who was then the vice-minister of the Home Ministry, sought Anesaki’s help in establishing an ecumenical forum of representatives from Sect Shinto, Buddhism, and Christianity, referred to as Sankyō Kaidō 三教会同 (Assembly of Three Religions). Tokonami created this assembly in order to mobilize religious spe-

8. A detailed biography of Anesaki has been compiled by Isomae and Fukazawa 2002, pp. 30–109. See also Isomae Jun’ichi’s chapter in this volume, pp. 34–35.

cialists for “national education” (*kokumin kyōka* 国民教化). Members of the Sankyō Kaidō were expected to serve the state as teachers and models of moral behavior, strengthening national integration “in the spirit of autonomous self-government” (*chihōjichi no seishin* 地方自治の精神), and to “overcome the deleterious trends of the time by restoring the health of society” (*jidai fūchō no kenzenka* 時代風潮の健全化).⁹

Buddhist Studies

The beginnings of Buddhist studies as an academic discipline can be traced back to 1879, when the scholar and Sōtō monk Hara Tanzan 原坦山 (1819–1892) lectured on Buddhist texts at the University of Tokyo. Other similar lectures followed, although a chair of Buddhist studies had not yet been founded. In 1899, Takakusu Junjirō 高楠順次郎 (1866–1945), the “father of modern Buddhist studies” in Japan, became a professor of linguistics at the University of Tokyo and two years later, assumed the chair of Sanskrit studies. Takakusu received his first religious education at Futsū Kyōkō 普通教校 (the later Ryūkoku University) in Kyoto, studied Sanskrit under Max Müller (1823–1900) in England, and was one of the first to introduce Western research on Sanskrit and Pali to a Japanese audience. Other students of Müller were Nanjō Bun'yū 南条文雄 (1849–1927) and Kasahara Kenju 笠原研寿 (1852–1883), who both edited critical editions and bibliographies of Buddhist classics. In modern Japan, Indian and Buddhist studies were thus launched by students of Müller. Therefore, Müller’s influence could be felt stronger in Japanese Buddhist studies than in his proper field of research, religious studies. Under Anesaki, the two fields were still part of the same discipline, but in time Buddhist studies gradually became a separate subject.

Shinto Studies

The term “Shinto studies” (*shintōgaku* 神道学) is said to have been first coined in Japan in 1917. Thus, in a strict sense, Shinto studies per se did not exist in the second period. Nevertheless, research on Shinto was done under different labels. One place to carry out such research was the Institute for Imperial Classics (Kōten Kōkyūjo 皇典講究所), a college for Shinto priests founded in 1882. The same year also saw the foundation of a college

9. Yi 1992, pp. 123–27.

for Shinto priests at the imperial shrines of Ise, the Jīngū Kōgakkān 神宮皇學館.¹⁰ In addition to providing training and education for priests, these schools had some academic research on their agenda. Research on Japanese history, literature, and law was pursued especially at Kokugakuin 国学院, originally a branch school of the Institute for Imperial Classics founded in 1890.¹¹

At the beginning of the second period, Shinto shrine priests started a movement to restore the Department of Shrine Deities (Jingikan 神祇官)¹², which was also a protest against the government's financial and organizational cutbacks at that time. With the exception of the imperial shrines at Ise, the government had reduced financial support for Shinto shrines to such an extent that the average Shinto priest was seriously threatened by poverty. Moreover, shrines had been put together with Buddhist temples under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Shrines and Temples (Shaji Kyoku 社寺局). The protesting priests achieved their goals to some extent in 1900, when the Bureau of Shrines and Temples was divided into two: one responsible for supervising "religious" institutions, and the other, the Bureau of Shrines (Jinja Kyoku 神社局), devoted exclusively to the administration of Shinto shrines. The establishment of this office is generally regarded as the inception of institutional "State Shinto."¹³ From then on, shrines were officially regarded as "nonreligious" sites of national rites. The entire populace was expected to participate in this national cult, irrespective of their individual religious beliefs.¹⁴

10. Kōgakkān Daigaku 1972, pp. 21–28.

11. Kokugakuin Daigaku 1970, pp. 107–29.

12. The Department of Shrine Deities had been established as a major governmental office in the Nara period, but later went into decline. At the time of the Meiji Restoration it was reinstituted as the leading government office, but soon reduced to the level of a ministry (Jingishō 神祇省, "Ministry of Shrine Deities"). Subsequently, it was incorporated into other ministries and effectively abolished in 1872. [Translator's note.]

13. Sakamoto 1994, pp. 305–11.

14. See Kate Wildman Nakai's chapter for a detailed discussion of this process.

Oriental Studies

In 1894, the year that also witnessed the beginning of Japan's first war against China, "Oriental history" (*tōyōshi* 東洋史)¹⁵ was introduced as a new subject in middle school education following a proposal by Naka Michiyo 那珂通世 (1851–1908), a scholar of East Asian history who was also active as a teacher in secondary education. A number of textbooks on Oriental history for middle schools appeared in rapid succession. Oriental history was established as an academic subject at the University of Tokyo in 1910, with a focus on Chinese studies.¹⁶ Due to its roots in Western scholarship, Oriental studies differed greatly from the traditional "Chinese learning" (*kangaku* 漢学). The founder of Japanese Oriental studies, Shiratori Kurakichi 白鳥庫吉 (1865–1942), for instance, regarded the idealized emperors of Chinese antiquity such as Yao, Shun, or Yu as fictional and rejected the idea that they were actual historical personages. This was a great shock for traditional scholars of Chinese learning, who revered these figures as saints. Compared to the latter's natural respect towards China, the Oriental scholars' iconoclastic approach resulted in the relativization of Chinese culture by Western scientific methods.¹⁷ The shift from traditional Chinese learning to Oriental studies was therefore a change from veneration to relativization. Oriental scholars who had been trained in Western scholarship and Western languages revisited Chinese history and Chinese philosophy from a Western angle. In addition, the Japanese victory over China in the Sino-Japanese war of 1894–1895 was an important turning point that led to a shift of the Sinocentric geopolitical view of Asia to a perspective that placed Japan at Asia's center. Oriental studies stood in the vanguard of this movement. The decline of Sinocentrism be-

15. The term *tōyō* 東洋 is usually translated as "Orient" and is often used in contradistinction to *seiyō* 西洋, "Occident" or "the West." However, the Western conception of the Orient places the Oriental heartlands in the Islamic countries of the "Middle East," whereas in Japanese the term *tōyō* refers to the "Far East," i.e. East Asia, or even more specifically, to Chinese culture. Ironically, the terms *tōyō* and *seiyō* are of Chinese origin and refer to the (barbarian) countries to the east and west of China. Thus, in Chinese *tōyō* would include Japan but not China. On the other hand, Japan is sometimes excluded from *tōyō* in the modern Japanese conception of the term. [Translator's note.]

16. Ogura 1974, pp. 36–38.

17. Goi 1976, pp. 102–104.

gan of course much earlier and increased notably at the time of the “Opium War,” 1840–1842.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE THIRD PERIOD

World War I aroused a keen interest in economics and the natural sciences in Japanese political circles. In 1918, the so-called University Law (*daigaku-rei* 大学令) changed the academic system dramatically. The imperial universities founded faculties and institutes of natural sciences and economics, and new facilities were built, above all, for the natural sciences and medicine. Private colleges were given the right to become regular universities. As a result, graduates from these private schools were granted the same status as graduates from imperial universities.¹⁸ Subjects that fell under the faculty of letters no longer had the same privileged position they had formerly held. However, although this might imply that studies related to religion were no longer considered useful, this was not the case. This period also saw the increasing attraction to Socialism and Marxism among students. The government reacted to this development with alarm. Several officials held the opinion that religious specialists could make a positive contribution to moral betterment and national education. One of these was Okada Ryōhei 岡田良平 (1864–1934), minister of education at the time of the enactment of the new University Law, who planned to establish a research institute and a second chair for religious studies at the University of Tokyo in addition to that of Anesaki. For some time, the plan even included the establishment of four more chairs for religious studies, but a change of government led to the abortion of this idea. However, two years later a chair was established in Shinto studies (1920) and six years after this, three chairs in Indian studies (1926), a development that in the end can be seen as the fulfillment of Okada’s plans.¹⁹

Religious Studies

Religious studies experienced great changes in this period, at both a scholarly level and an institutional level. With regard to scientific methodology,

18. Naka and Itō 1984, pp. 150–51.

19. Hayashi 2008a, p. 81.

we should mention the applied fieldwork carried out by students of Anesaki, including Uno Enkū 宇野円空 (1885–1949), Furuno Kiyoto 古野清人 (1899–1979), Sugiura Ken'ichi 杉浦健一 (1905–1954), and Tanase Jōji 棚瀬襄爾 (1910–1964). Another scholar who combined religious studies with ethnology was Akamatsu Chijō 赤松智城 (1886–1960), who had graduated from Kyoto University. Thus, a new generation of scholars of religion took a particular interest in ethnology and sociology. They studied the ethnological theories of James Frazer, Edward Tylor, Robert Marrett, and Wilhelm Schmidt, as well as the sociology of Emile Durkheim, introduced them to larger circles in Japan, and eventually carried out ethnological studies of their own. In other words, the founding fathers of Japanese ethnology all began their research within the area of religious studies. Given the contemporary focus in Western ethnology on questions of an “ur-religion” or the origin of religion, it was actually quite natural that Japanese scholars of religion turned to ethnology.²⁰

In contrast to Anesaki, who emphasized the emotional and irrational aspects of religion, scholars like Uno regarded religion primarily as a social phenomenon and turned their attention to collective religion rather than individual beliefs. In their fieldwork they focused on various Asian indigenous religions: Uno studied rice cults in Malaysia; Akamatsu, who held a position at Keijō University in Seoul, did fieldwork on shamanism in Korea and Manchuria; Furuno investigated aborigines from the highlands of Taiwan (Takasago-zoku 高砂族); and Sugiura and Tanase did research in Southeast Asia. The range of these ethnological studies clearly reflected the expansion of Japanese colonialism. At the same time, government officials too began to regard these studies with growing interest.

On the institutional level, chairs of religious studies were established at the imperial universities of Tokyo, Kyoto, and Tōhoku. Many colleges affiliated to Buddhist or Christian groups—colleges that had been promoted to university status under the new University Law—also founded chairs for religious studies. In 1930, scholars from the imperial universities as well as from private religious universities formed the Japanese Association for Religious Studies (Nihon Shūkyō Gakkai 日本宗教学会), which became a collective umbrella organization. Already in 1924, a Japanese Colloquium on Religion (Nihon Shūkyō Konwakai 日本宗教懇話会) had been formed in order to stage an

20. Chōn 2008, pp. 118–24.

international conference on world religions. When these attempts failed, a Japanese Conference on Religions (Nihon Shūkyō Taikai 日本宗教大会) was held in its stead in 1928, commemorating at the same time the enthronement rites for Emperor Shōwa. At this conference, several political measures were univocally approved, including the fight against Communism, the support of the League of Nations, and a reversal of the prohibition of religious education. Anesaki and many other scholars of religion put all of their efforts into the organization of this conference.²¹ While important figures from the Buddhist, Christian, and Sect Shinto communities made an appearance at the conference, scholars of religion from the universities did all the work. As in the case of the Sankyō Kaidō mentioned above, the fact that members of the three religious communities got into contact, met at certain places, and initiated common projects was due to the efforts of scholars from the University of Tokyo.

Buddhist Studies

Similar to religious studies, the imperial universities of Tokyo, Kyoto, and Tōhoku established chairs of Buddhist studies as well. In addition, Buddhist studies became a necessity for private Buddhist universities that had gained official recognition by the Ministry of Education. Until that time, the education of Buddhist clerics had consisted of the subjects “fundamental teaching” (*shūjō* 宗乗) and “additional teachings” (*yojō* 余乗), i.e., the primary doctrine of each school and the doctrines of other schools. Since this did not comply with the form of an academic discipline, the traditional curriculum was now augmented with Western-style philological research on Sanskrit and Pali texts. In other words, Japanese Buddhist studies came to be characterized by a combination of traditional studies of the (Chinese) Buddhist canon and methods of philological investigation introduced from the West.²² This resulted in huge editorial projects such as the *Nihon daizōkyō*, the *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō*, and the *Nanden daizōkyō* producing critical editions of canonical texts.²³ Hatani Ryōtai 羽溪了諦 (1883–1974), professor for Bud-

21. Nihon Shūkyō Konwakai 1928; Hayashi 2008b, p. 168.

22. Hayashi 2002, pp. 35–43.

23. The fifty-one volumes of the *Nihon daizōkyō* 日本大藏經 were edited by Nakano Tatsue 中野達慧 et al. from 1914–1921. The one hundred volumes of the *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* 大正新脩大藏經, generally known as the Taishō Canon, were edited

dhist studies at Kyoto University, remembered this period in the following words:

It goes without saying that during the Meiji period, the scholarly circles in our country imported Occidental scholarship from all directions and imitated it in any manner they could. Only we Buddhist scholars, who were familiar with difficult Chinese Buddhist texts, were able to present new material to the learned circles in America and Europe. We not only published original research, we also made the Sanskrit Buddhist texts transmitted to our country known to the public, introduced Western Buddhist scholars to the Buddhism of Japan, and contributed by no small means to their benefit. We therefore represented the pride of Meiji scholarship.²⁴

While Hatani refers to the Meiji period in these recollections, the editions of the Buddhist canon were actually published from the Taishō period (1912–1926) onward. It was in this period, therefore, that the strengths of Japanese Buddhist studies made themselves truly visible. As we will see below, the confidence of Buddhist scholars like Hatani in being better than Western scholars at mastering Chinese texts was also typical for Japanese Orientalists.

Shinto Studies

The first chair for Shinto studies was established in 1920 at the University of Tokyo, and the scholars Katō Genchi 加藤玄智 (1873–1965), Miyaji Naokazu 宮地直一 (1886–1949), and Tanaka Yoshitō 田中義能 (1872–1946) were granted teaching positions. In 1933, a chair for Shinto history, sponsored by Shinto priests from Kyoto, was established at Kyoto University.²⁵ It was included in the faculty of Japanese history and employed a number of lecturers, including Yanagita Kunio 柳田国男 (1875–1962), Orikuchi Shinobu 折口信夫 (1887–1953), and Harada Toshiaki 原田敏明 (1893–1983). In contrast to Jingū Kōgakkai at Ise or Kokugakuin University, which regarded the

by Takakusu Junjirō et al., 1924–1934. The *Nanden daizōkyō* 南伝大藏經 (Canon of Southern Buddhism) was edited again by Takakusu and others, 1935–1941.

24. Hatani 1971, p. 41.

25. Hayashi 2005, p. 68.

training of Shinto priests as a crucial aspect of their mission, the institutes at University of Tokyo and Kyoto University emphasized academic research and strove to gain wider recognition for the significance of Shinto among the general populace. According to Isomae Jun'ichi, "Shinto studies or Shinto study groups tried to unify research on Shinto, which hitherto had been carried out independently within the fields of philosophy, Japanese history, or religious studies. In order to do so, however, they had to establish Shinto as a worthwhile object of study."²⁶ Thus, the imperial universities of Tokyo and Kyoto were expected to present a meaningful explanation of Shinto for the general public that went beyond the traditional learning and liturgical training of Shinto priests.

Oriental Studies

As public and private universities and colleges expanded in the wake of the new University Law, facilities to teach Oriental studies increased as well. In 1920, several journals on history and Chinese studies were founded. In 1924, the Oriental Library (Tōyō Bunko 東洋文庫) was opened to the public, and in 1929 part of the war reparations from China was used for the foundation of Tōhō Bunka Gakuin 東方文化学院, an institute for Oriental studies, which became the publisher of the *Tōhō gakuho* 東方学報, a journal on Oriental studies.²⁷ The above-mentioned Shiratori Kurakichi taught at the University of Tokyo while Naitō Konan 内藤湖南 (1866–1934) held the chair of Oriental studies in Kyoto. Under their guidance, scholars of Oriental studies appeared in large numbers. Thus, the development of Japanese Oriental studies proceeded in the same pace as the occupation and colonization of neighboring countries such as Taiwan (1895), Korea (1910), or Manchuria (1932). In the words of Shiratori,

It seems just and fair that research on Oriental matters should be done by Oriental people. However, Western scholars have been the pioneers in the field of Oriental studies. As in politics, this has been seen as a pillaging and violating act, which we have had to endure with bitter feelings. Presently, as Asian nations become weaker and weaker and are almost on the verge of dying, it is perhaps im-

26. Isomae 2003, p. 215.

27. Ogura 1974, pp. 40–41.

possible to expect the scholars in these countries to improve their scholarship. However, in a country like ours, where in contrast to other Asian nations, progress is being made in all parts of society, [...] we should combine our efforts to make up for this fault and excel, above all, in Oriental studies.²⁸

Here, Shiratori associates Western Oriental studies with the Western invasions of Asian countries, regarding Westerners as “pillagers” and “violators.” Since other Asian countries were too weak to take on the task of developing Oriental studies, he regards it as *his* duty to better Western scholars. Oriental studies should be led by Oriental people. Since the West had taken the initiative, however, Shiratori saw only one place, where Japanese scholars had a chance to recover from their setback: “There is only one place left for us. It is Manchuria and China, the place where the war is happening, the place where the war broke out, the place that must come under the custody of Japan.”²⁹ Japanese scholars were certainly effective in collecting material and undertaking fieldwork in colonized Manchuria and Korea, activities that were, according to Shiratori, motivated by the desire to expand Japanese Oriental studies and to outrival Western scholars. Listening to Shiratori it seems as if the scientific showdown between East and West and the carnage of war were taking place in the same setting. His arguments are based on the following premises: 1) the antagonism between East and West is of primary importance; 2) since, with the exception of Japan, Asian countries are weak and in decline, Japanese scholars alone are capable of doing research on Asia; and 3) Japanese Oriental studies will eventually surpass their Western counterparts. While Shiratori’s remarks pertain to an academic field, it suffices to replace the term “Oriental studies” with “the state” in order to arrive at a justification of Japanese colonial rule and occupation under the pretext that the Japanese state, in opposition to Western powers, had to save the other Asian countries from decline. Catchphrases such as the “Great East Asian Culture Sphere” (*daitōa bunkaken* 大東亜文化圏), or “Great East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere” (*daitōa kyōeiken* 大東亜共栄圏) served as euphemisms for Japan’s colonial aggressions. The other scholars mentioned above also used and supported these catchphrases.

28. Shiratori 1970 [1901], p. 3.

29. Shiratori 1971 [1929], p. 386.

JAPANESE HUMANITIES AND THEORIES OF COLONIZATION: TAKAKUSU JUNJIRŌ AND UNO ENKŪ

In the 1930s, when Japan was already preparing for the war that culminated in World War II, several scholars mentioned above engaged in debates on Japanese superiority in Asia. The buddhologist Takakusu Junjirō, for instance, wrote a book called *The Essential Philosophy of Asian Peoples* (*Ajia minzoku no chūshin shisō*, Takakusu 1936) in defense of Japanese colonization in Asia. His ideas were by no means superficial posturing influenced simply by contemporary politics; Takakusu's support of totalitarianism was rather based on his personal scientific convictions:

When we ask what China possesses after having thrown away the treasure of Confucianism, the pride of the country, we find nothing but feces left by the West. There is no way out of the country's ruin. The same is true of India. [...] While India produced the enormous treasure of the Buddha, to whom people all around the world bow their heads, Indians are not going to escape the ruin of their country because they, in the end, abandoned this treasure.³⁰

According to Takakusu, China and India themselves were to be blamed for their decline since they had abandoned the traditions of Confucianism and Buddhism, respectively. While Oriental wisdom originated in these countries, it had been neglected and fallen into decay. The only way to study Confucianism or Buddhism was to do research in Japan. Only Japanese scholars were able to recount and convey Oriental wisdom. In other words, those in charge of representing Oriental wisdom were Oriental or Buddhist scholars like Takakusu himself. We can readily see that Takakusu's arguments take on a form quite similar to that of Shiratori. This likeness seems to have arisen from a common position shared by scholars of Buddhist, Indian, and Oriental studies.

As already mentioned, Uno Enkū, a professor of religious studies at the University of Tokyo, was the teacher of numerous pioneers of ethnology in Japan. Uno, who had studied under Marcel Mauss in France, not only

30. Takakusu 1936, pp. 376–77.

familiarized his students with German, French, and British ethnology and sociology, he also conducted his own fieldwork in Malaysia. Using theories of ethnology, he insisted that Japan shared a basic agricultural culture with Southeast Asian countries distinct from China:

If we look at Japanese folk culture from an ethnological perspective, its various forms and structures seem to derive from what recent theories would call an agrarian culture sphere. With regard to religion, such agricultural culture spheres typically place great importance on the dead and on ancestor worship. Thus, our country, which called itself the “Land of Abundant Reeds and Ears of Rice” (Toyo-ashihara-mizuho no kuni 豊葦原瑞穂国) and was based on agriculture, exhibited several material and spiritual characteristics of an agrarian culture sphere, and even had a matriarchal social system. At the level of religion, several facts attest to ancestor worship having been directed at female ancestors, the *miyo* 母祖. However, due to the ensuing intense contact with Chinese culture and philosophy, many elements of ancestor worship were reinterpreted in terms of Confucian morality. Ancestor worship therefore changed and was directed to ancestors in the male line, this being typical for the continental cultural sphere of cattle breeders, who emphasized patrilinearity. As has been repeated several times, however, ancestor worship in our country did not originally derive from China. There is a much older view of the ancestors with its own forms, ideals, and corresponding cults. These are not the spirits of the ancestors as Western scholars imagine them to be, and their worship was not merely derived from the fear of their spells. Rather, these ancestors were considered people living together with the present Japanese populace, working for and supporting their ethnic communities.³¹

According to Uno, the basic ethnic culture in Southeast Asia was agrarian and comprised worship towards maternal divinities and ancestors. Although elements from Indian and Chinese cultures were superimposed onto this basic culture, these are merely superficial phenomena. When such elements are sifted out, one arrives at the basic culture, and the similarities and con-

31. Uno 1936, pp. 49–50.

nections between the various ethnic groups of “Asia” become apparent. This theory of a basic cultural sphere reduces the influences of India and China to surface phenomena that do not penetrate to the fundamental cultural core. The significance of Indian and Chinese cultures is thus relativized, the basic culture being regarded as the older, more pervasive, and more vital element. According to Uno’s theory, belief in female ancestor deities is a characteristic of the original agrarian culture sphere that can be found in Japanese Shinto and ancestor worship as well as in Southeast Asia as a whole. While the outline of Uno’s concept is indebted to Wilhelm Schmidt’s *Kulturkreislehre*,³² Uno asserts that the living realities of these ethnic cultures cannot be grasped by Western concepts such as “ancestor spirits,” “animism,” or “primitive religion.”

The fact that Japan belongs to this ethnic cultural sphere of Southeast Asia leads Uno to postulate “an affinity that [we Japanese] feel at the bottoms of our hearts. [...] On the basis of this brotherliness, Japan of today has shouldered the mission to become the leader of these peoples.”³³ In other words, the Japanese are predestined to become the leaders of the people in South Asia due to their brotherly feelings. In this sense, Uno too was a defender of the “Great East Asian Culture Sphere.”

Thus, Uno appears to share the nationalist discourse of Orientalists, including that of buddhologists like Takakusu, but his views differ from theirs in one decisive aspect. In the eyes of the Orientalists, Japanese leadership was legitimized by the fact that Japan was the only Asian country that had not endured the experience of colonization, and that it had successfully managed to become a modern nation. As the leader of Asia, Japan would now represent Asia in its confrontation with the West. According to this view, Japan had to pass a double elimination process. First it surpassed China and India to become the leader of Asia. At the same time, Japanese scholars of Oriental studies proved to be the only ones capable of transmitting the Eastern wisdoms of Buddhism and Confucianism. In a second step, Orientalists would have to fight against the modern civilization of the West using Oriental wisdom as their weapon. The first struggle was a fight among Asian countries for supremacy and modernity; the second struggle was a fight with

32. Schmidt (1868–1956) postulated an *Urkultur* that split up into three basic cultural circles: agrarian planters, totemistic hunters, and nomadic cattle breeders. The agrarian circle is marked by matriarchy, similar to Uno’s conceptions.

33. Uno 1942, p. 28.

the West for Eastern spiritual culture. This ambivalence corresponds to the duality inherent in Japan's modernization. While Japan appears as the most Westernized nation when compared to other Asian countries, it still regards itself as the representative of Asia when compared to the West.

In Uno's theory of basic cultures, on the other hand, there is no double elimination process nor is the issue about winning or losing at all. Uno emphasizes the significance of a basic culture below the surface culture, which makes it necessary for the Japanese to acknowledge their affiliation to the Southeast Asian cultural sphere. This region, which had earlier been colonized by Western powers, was now occupied by Japan. In Uno's opinion, in contrast to the Western colonizers, a basic culture linked these countries and the Japanese, which included cultural similarities as well as feelings of solidarity. For Uno, Japan could take over the leadership of Southeast Asia only under the condition that it came to accept its kinship bonds with these ethnic cultures.

Thus, although neither the Japanese Orientalists nor ethnologists questioned their country's hegemonic ambitions, their theoretical frameworks justifying these ambitions were fundamentally different. For the Orientalists, Japanese supremacy was grounded on modernization and war, whereas ethnologists emphasized the recognition of cultural affinities.

CONCLUSION: TWO FORMS OF NATIONALISM

From the time of the Sino-Japanese War to the end of World War II, Japan was an imperial state that possessed colonies. Imperial Japan had to deal with a number of ethnic groups and later, with a number of puppet states. In this period, the humanities were intimately connected to this colonial rule and developed in tandem with it. This was most obvious in the case of Oriental studies, but religious studies, Shinto studies, and Buddhist studies all seem to have been directly influenced by Japanese colonialism as well. Religious studies produced a number of ethnologists, whose fieldwork in Korea, Manchuria, Taiwan, and Southeast Asia offered firsthand reports about these countries. Shinto and Buddhist studies were originally directed to the training of clerics, but as soon as they were established as academic disciplines in the imperial universities, the general populace became their intended audience, and they took on the task of extolling the uniqueness of Shinto and

the superiority of Japanese (Mahāyāna) Buddhism, respectively. The Shinto studies program at University of Tokyo, for instance, never educated priests, but rather attempted to provide a meaningful conception of Shinto in the context of State Shinto.³⁴ Religious studies was not only a hub for other academic disciplines, it also played a political role by providing common ground for concerted actions between Buddhist, Shinto, and Christian groups. Before the war, scholars of Shinto and religious studies were mostly interested in matters within Japan, but later they also became engaged in assimilation politics in Korea or Taiwan.

To help explain the different means that scholars from the different areas of the humanities used to fulfill their roles in the context of Japanese imperialism/colonialism, I would like to propose the terms “Orientalistic nationalism”³⁵ and “ethnologicistic nationalism.” The first term describes the ideological attitude found in Oriental studies. By “Orientalistic nationalism,” I refer to the ideological expedient of replacing the traditional sinocentric viewpoint with the perception of Japan as the center, a view that subsequently led to the notion of the “Great East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere.” This “Orientalistic nationalism” could also be found in Buddhist studies with respect to India. This kind of nationalism typically consisted of premises such as the following:

1. A new geopolitical consciousness of Asia with Japan replacing China as the center. In order to achieve this goal, after the Sino-Japanese War the subject Oriental studies was established in middle schools and, later, at the university level.³⁶ During this period, Western languages replaced Chinese as the language of the educated in Japan. Oriental studies introduced the notion that the role of Asia’s leading nation had shifted from China to Japan.
2. Spiritual leadership in all matters pertaining to Asia. Since the other Asian nations had been robbed of their languages, they were no longer

34. On this topic, see also Isomae Jun’ichi’s chapter in this volume. For the education of shrine priests, see Endō Jun’s chapter, pp. 166–67.

35. Since this term is derived from Japanese Oriental studies, i.e., Japanese sinology, it has different connotations than Edward Said’s famous concept of “Orientalism” (Said 1979). Structurally, however, both concepts hold many parallels in common.

36. Hamashita 2004, pp. 232–39.

able to explain their culture, their history, or their religion. Thus, it was Japan's duty to take over this discourse. The wisdom inherent in Oriental culture, history, and religion could only be conveyed by the Japanese.

3. Opposition between Western materialism and Eastern spiritualism. As the leader of Asia, Japan had to convince the West of the depth of Asian wisdom and culture.

In contrast to these premises, Uno's view can be called an "ethnologicistic nationalism." It was based on the conviction that the Japanese shared a basic culture with the ethnic peoples of Southeast Asia and were therefore tied to them by feelings of closeness and brotherliness, a relationship that could never be comprehended by Westerners. Since Southeast Asia had been colonized by the West, it was Japan's duty to expel the Western powers and rule these countries. Compared to the two-sided logic of "Orientalistic nationalism," "ethnologicistic nationalism" consisted in a rather homogeneous self-awareness. Quite similar thoughts can be found in the folklorist theories of Yanagita Kunio, who was also convinced that it was possible to rediscover the fundamental layers of ancient beliefs if the surface influence of foreign culture was removed.

Both Orientalistic and ethnologicistic nationalism originated in the relationship between Japan and its neighboring countries. The former was directed at China and the nations surrounding China, adopting the latter's traditional hegemonic pretensions by putting Japan in its place. The latter constructed an intimate relationship between Southeast Asia and Japan on the basis of their common cultural sphere. Since World War II, with Japan having lost all its colonies and being reduced to a country of only a few islands, nationalism in Japan has acquired a unilateral perspective. Prior to the war, however, a number of peoples and countries were under Japanese rule, which necessitated a theoretical framework explaining their relationship to Japan. In this respect, "Orientalistic nationalism" offered such a framework with regard to China and its neighboring countries, while "ethnologicistic nationalism" played a similar function with regard to Japan's relation to Southeast Asia. As both aspects became superfluous after the war, Oriental studies and ethnology no longer defined themselves based on nationalistic ideologies, but limited themselves strictly to academic activities. Nationalism has become a unilateral phenomenon, and Japan's perception of itself as a colonial power has fallen into oblivion.

Let me add a last word on Shrine Shinto after the war. When the system of State Shinto was officially dissolved by the so-called Shinto Directive of December 1945, Shinto faced an existential crisis. The Allied Forces, however, decided that Shinto might continue to exist if it purged itself of all nationalistic elements and became a religion for individual believers. In order to prove that Shinto had originally been a religion in this sense, the Shinto world turned to scholars of religion and folklore studies for help. Kishimoto Hideo 岸本英夫 (1903–1964), a scholar of religious studies, and the folklorist Yanagita Kunio were invited to Kokugakuin University to explain their respective views on the relation of religion and Shinto. Thus, after the war Shinto studies quickly converged with religious studies.³⁷ Scholars of religion attested to the religious nature of Shinto, and folklorists like Yanagita and Orikuchi Shinobu passionately argued that Shinto was originally derived from common folk beliefs. Orikuchi created the neologism “Shinto religion” (*shintō shūkyō*), which became a catchphrase in the folklorist discourse on Shinto. Thus, the end of World War II marked not only the abolition of State Shinto but also the change of Shrine Shinto from a “nonreligion” to a “religion.” It is important to keep in mind that scholars of religion and folklore studies appeared as skillful defenders of “Shinto as a religion” only after Japan’s defeat in World War II.

37. Hayashi 2008a, pp. 85–86.

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Colonial Empire and Mythology Studies

Research on Japanese Myth in the Early Shōwa Period

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Throughout the centuries the myths that head the two early national histories *Kojiki* (712) and *Nihon shoki* (720) have been subject to ongoing reinterpretation, with many finding in them an expression of the distinctive features of Japanese polity, identity, and religion, i.e., Shinto. In 1899 this long history of reinterpretation entered a new phase with the publication of an essay by the Meiji literary critic and commentator Takayama Chogyū 高山樗牛 (1871–1902) entitled “Myth and History in the Divine-age Chapter of the *Kojiki*” (*Kojiki jindaikan no shinwa oyobi reki-shi* 古事記神代巻の神話及歴史). In this essay Takayama compared Susanoo, the unruly younger brother of the sun goddess Amaterasu, with the figure of Indra in Indian mythology and concluded from their similarities that the Japanese people originally came from the south. The essay sparked a debate over the character of Susanoo, a debate that in turn spurred the development of the modern study of mythology in Japan.¹ From the publication of Takayama’s article to the present day, Japanese mythology studies have had a strong comparative orientation. Researchers have sought to compare Japanese myths with mythologies from other places in the world with the aim of discovering which regions influenced Japanese mythology and determining to which typology Japanese myths belong. Intertwined with this focus on comparative typology has been a concern for mythology as an expression of national character, or ethnicity.² Below I will explore some of the forms

1. For a detailed analysis of the “Susanoo debate” and the work of Takayama Chogyū, see Hirafuji 2001, 2004, 2005, and 2006.

2. The term *minzokusei* 民族性, which in some cases has been translated as “ethnic nationality,” is rendered in this article by both “ethnic character” and “ethnic-

that this dual focus on comparative typology and ethnicity took in the period when Japan claimed status as an imperial power and holder of colonies. I will pay attention in particular to the period following the Manchurian Incident of 1931 so as to see the impact on these orientations of the steady move towards a wartime footing.³

JAPANESE MYTHOLOGY STUDIES IN THE EARLY SHŌWA PERIOD

Specialists in the study of mythology such as Ōbayashi Taryō 大林太良 (1929–2001) and Matsumura Kazuo 松村一男 (b. 1953) have previously undertaken to survey the modern history of the field in Japan. In his *History of Japanese Mythological Studies* (*Nihon shinwa no kenkyūshi*, Ōbayashi 1972), Ōbayashi Taryō, a scholar of cultural anthropology and mythology, demarcated mythology studies in modern Japan into four periods: 1) 1899 to 1921; 2) 1922 to 1945; 3) 1945 to 1958; 4) 1958 to the present (1972). The second period covers the era addressed in the present essay. According to Ōbayashi,

... the second period started in 1922, when Matsumura Takeo published two articles in the academic journals *Kokugakuin zasshi* 国学院雑誌 and *Chūō shidan* 中央史壇, articles that can be called a prototype of Japanese mythology studies. This period lasted until the Japanese defeat in 1945. [...] The most important feature of this

ity.” The word is derived from *minzoku* (“ethnos,” “ethnic group,” “people”), which is in itself a controversial term that has been compared to “race” in racist discourse. These terms are all rather imprecise, however, *minzoku* corresponding best to the German “Volk,” which in the interwar period also included nationalistic overtones (Doak 2001, pp. 3–10). *Minzokusei*, therefore, seems to correspond well to the German “*Volksgeist*” or “*Volkscharakter*,” terms that can frequently be found in National-Socialist discourse. At the same time, however, *minzokugaku* 民族学 (lit. “study of the *minzoku*”) is also a standard translation for “ethnology.” [Translator’s note.]

3. Some scholars, including in recent times the Jungian scholar Kawai Hayao 河合隼雄 (1928–2007), have taken a psychological approach to the issue of myth and ethnicity, seeking in the myths evidence of the distinct national character of the Japanese. I will omit this approach from consideration here.

period is the emergence of a new approach, which applied ethnological knowledge and theories to the field of Japanese mythology.⁴

Ōbayashi further explains that “from the late 1920s onward, new scholars appeared on the stage who greatly advanced the study of Japanese myths.” Among these scholars, in addition to Matsumura Takeo 松村武雄 (1883–1969), Ōbayashi mentions Matsumoto Nobuhiro 松本信広 (1897–1981), Oka Masao 岡正雄 (1889–1982), Mishina Shōei 三品彰英 (1902–1971), and Numazawa Kiichi 沼沢喜市 (1907–1980). Matsumura Kazuo, who arrives at a similar periodization of mythology studies, lists the same names, with the exception of Numazawa.⁵

I certainly agree with Ōbayashi and Matsumura Kazuo that scholars such as Matsumura Takeo, Matsumoto Nobuhiro, Oka Masao, and Mishina Shōei established the foundations of the modern study of mythology in Japan. Active before and after the Pacific War, the four have exerted a tremendous influence on later researchers, particularly the first postwar generation of scholars of the Japanese myths. However, very little research has been done about the character of the mythology studies that these four men conducted under the Fascist regime of the 1930s and 1940s, or how their mythology studies were related to the sociopolitical conditions of this time.⁶ It is this issue that I shall focus on below.

JAPANESE MYTHS AND ETHNICITY: MATSUMURA TAKEO

A graduate of the English Department of Tokyo Imperial University, Matsumura Takeo took an interest in mythology from his days as an undergraduate and wrote his doctoral dissertation on the mythology of ancient Greece. Apart from teaching English at Urawa Higher School, he lectured on mythology at Tokyo Imperial University and Kokugakuin University and in 1922

4. Ōbayashi 1972, p. 163.

5. Matsumura's periods are 1) Meiji and Taishō, 2) Early Shōwa, and 3) Later Shōwa to present (Matsumura 1997).

6. In fact, a few recent studies have been done on Oka and his cooperation with the war effort as an ethnologist, including establishment in the midst of the war of the Ethnic Research Institute (see below, pp. 98–99). These studies do not mention Oka's treatment of mythology, however.

also obtained a government scholarship to study mythology in Europe. He is perhaps best known as the author of *Fundamentals of Mythology* (*Shinwagaku genron* 神話学原論, 1940–1941), wherein he discusses a wide range of Western theories on mythology, and for his postwar four-volume work *Studies of Japanese Myth* (*Nihon shinwa no kenkyū* 日本神話の研究, 1955–1958), which aims at a comprehensive analysis of the elements of Japanese mythology. Praised by colleagues as “the highest authority of Japanese mythology studies,” he is indeed the most eminent scholar of mythology in the early Shōwa period.

During his long career, beginning in the 1920s and lasting until his death in 1969, Matsumura published a large number of articles and books. Ōbayashi Taryō (1971a) divides Matsumura’s oeuvre into two phases: those of his “formative period” (1921–1929) and the “mature” works of the 1940s and 1950s. Strangely, Ōbayashi does not mention Matsumura’s output from the 1930s at all, and thus it appears almost as if Matsumura did no research during this decade. This, however, is not the case. As might be expected from his academic background, Matsumura’s overall approach to the subject of mythology is rooted in comparative typology. From the mid-1930s to 1945, however, he also published several works dealing with the relationship between Japanese myths and Japanese ethnic character (*minzokusei*).

In 1934, for instance, Matsumura published *Ethnic Character and Myth* (*Minzokusei to shinwa* 民族性と神話), wherein he takes up the Egyptians, Greeks, Romans, Northern Europeans, Celts, and Japanese, and examines how the ethnic character of these peoples are reflected in their respective mythologies. He finds the distinctive feature of Japanese myth to lie in the pervasive presence of the “founding spirit (*kenkoku seishin* 建国精神) focused on the nation and the emperor.” Another defining characteristic of the Japanese is their abhorrence of impurity (*kegare*) and darkness, manifested in the mythical episodes of Izanagi’s escape from the land of the dead and subsequent ablutions to purify himself from its pollution and the banishment of Susanoo from the High Plain of Heaven for his destructive and defiling actions there. This fastidiousness led to the development of specific purification rituals (*misogi harae*). Matsumura explains this as follows:

[The Japanese] have been more sensitive than many other peoples (*minzoku*) to impurity (*kegare*) and defilement (*tsumi*) and concerned to cleanse themselves physically and spiritually. Therefore

they have not only developed immensely complicated purification rituals, but have also preserved them through the ages. These are important points to keep in mind.⁷

To be sure, other peoples also have purification rituals, but, Matsumura argues, in the Japanese case they are distinct in terms of 1) the variety of methods employed, 2) thoroughness in practice, 3) continuity and ubiquity, and 4) multiplicity of deities associated with such rituals, thus showing that the Japanese are particularly anxious to rid themselves of impurity and defilement.

In this publication, Matsumura deduces the ethnic characteristics of the Japanese from his interpretation of their myths, but he treats these myths as being of a comparable nature to those of other regions and does not conclude that the Japanese are superior to other ethnic groups. According to his own testimony, he “avoided all value judgments as far as possible and simply sought to group elements according to their similarities and differences and the sources of those similarities and differences” (Matsumura 1934a, p. 436). Despite the commitment to scientific objectivity that he shows here, Matsumura exhibits a quite different stance in an article entitled “Japanese Mentality as It Appears in Folktales and Folk Beliefs” (*Mintan minzoku shinkō ni arawaretaru Nihon seishin* 民譚民俗信仰に現れたる日本精神), which appeared the same year (1934) in volume 8 of a series called *Lectures on the Japanese Mind* (*Nihon seishin kōza* 日本精神講座).

Lectures on the Japanese Mind was put out from 1933 to 1935 in twelve volumes by the publishing house Shinchōsha and included laudatory messages from Konoe Fumimaro 近衛文麿 (1891–1945), then president of the House of Peers and later prime minister, and Tokutomi Sohō 徳富蘇峰 (1863–1957), a leading figure in the ideological mobilization of the nation for war. In his commendation Tokutomi wrote:

For Japan in the present time of crisis, national unity is of utmost necessity. To realize this goal, people must be separated from slavish admiration and imitation of Western thought in order to awaken to the just and impartial Imperial Way (*kōdō* 皇道). [...] Promotion

7. Matsumura 1934a, p. 417.

of this Imperial Way is the main purpose of *Lectures on the Japanese Mind*.⁸

This citation illustrates quite vividly the tone of the series, and indeed, Minami Hiroshi 南博 has called it a “compilation of Fascist *nihonjinron*.”⁹

Matsumura's contribution to these *Lectures* overlaps in theme with *Ethnic Character and Myth*, but is far less measured in tone and content. Matsumura gives as the definitive features of the Japanese mind: “1) a unique devotion to the nation and the emperor, 2) a sturdy and straightforward sense of purity, and 3) a noble and refined simplicity.”¹⁰ He gives particular attention to the implications of “devotion to the nation and the emperor.” Among other things he draws significance from the fact that the episode of Izanagi and Izanami giving birth to the land mentions the different regions that they produce one by one. This, he holds, demonstrates that the Japanese people had a remarkably well-developed “concept of the nation” (*kokka kannen* 国家観念) such as was not to be found in the mythologies of other peoples. Moreover, the relationship between the emperor (tennō) and the people is not that of ruler and ruled, but “main and branch houses.” In other words, the Japanese people as a whole were part of a large family structure headed by the emperor. “Keeping this precious relationship between emperor and people constantly in their minds, the Japanese strive day and night for the prosperity of their emperor and their nation. This must be called the loftiest characteristic of the Japanese mind.”¹¹ In addition to this greater emphasis on tennōism, Matsumura states in a stronger form the points about the concern for purity that he had already singled out in *Ethnic Character and Myth* as a characteristic of the Japanese outlook. The Japanese are not simply more sensitive to impurity than “many other peoples”; they are more sensitive than “all other peoples.”

A similar “ethnicist” interpretation of myth can be found in Matsumura's article “The Japanese View of Life as It Appears in Folklore” (*Denshō ni arawaretaru Nihon minzoku no seikatsu rinen* 伝承に現れたる日本民族の理念), published in 1943, in which Matsumura again ponders the relationship between the Japanese people and the tennō. While other ethnic groups, as

8. Tokutomi 1933, p. iv.

9. Minami 1994, p. 155.

10. Matsumura 1934b, p. 72.

11. Matsumura 1934b, p. 82.

for instance the Greeks, did not regard their kings as divine beings, “for our Japanese people, the tennō was indeed a god. He was a living deity.”¹² He further asserts that it can be read from the Japanese myths that the Japanese people took “serving the emperor as the highest and utmost ideal of their life.” Underlying this ideal was the perception that both the Japanese land and Amaterasu, the ancestral deity of the tennō, were alike products of the divine couple Izanagi and Izanami. Therefore, Matsumura argues, for the Japanese people the land where they lived was inseparable from the imperial house.

Despite the focus on ethnic character in the above-mentioned works, in his two-volume *Fundamentals of Mythology*, published in 1940 and 1941, which deals with mythology in general rather than Japanese mythology as such, Matsumura hardly touches on the link between ethnic character and myth. Instead he addresses topics such as the definition of myth, how myths develop and change, and the intellectual history of mythological interpretation. Similarly his four-volume *Studies of Japanese Myth*, published between 1955 and 1958, which sums up his research on Japanese mythology, does not address the link between myth and devotion to the imperial house that he had taken up in the wartime years and makes virtually no attempt to draw connections between the myths and Japanese “ethnic character.” This seems to imply that the attempt to discuss ethnic characteristics on the basis of mythology lay outside the mainstream of Matsumura’s own research interests. This would also explain a rather equivocal remark that he makes in the preface to *Ethnic Character and Myth*. Here he states that in the course of his studies he had become aware of the importance of the relationship between myth and ethnic character or mentality, and thus had decided to take up this topic; with regard to his personal approach to mythology, however, such research was “a kind of digression.”¹³ This is presumably the reason why he did not include “ethnicist” topics in works such as *Fundamentals of Mythology* and *Studies of Japanese Myth*, which represent the main themes of his academic studies.

Whether because Matsumura himself characterized them as a digression or his wartime writings on ethnicity were later seen as being of little value, postwar researchers have almost entirely ignored them. Surely, however, we

12. Matsumura 1943.

13. Matsumura 1934a, p. 2.

should keep them in mind as an example of how research on the Japanese myths functioned ideologically to strengthen devotion to the imperial house and tennōism in the wartime years.

JAPANESE MYTHS AND SOUTHEAST ASIA: MATSUMOTO NOBUHIRO

The second eminent figure in mythology studies of the early Shōwa era, Matsumoto Nobuhiro, is known for having exerted a major influence on theories on the origin of Japanese myths through his detailed demonstration of the similarities that they shared with myths from Southeast Asia (*nanpō* 南方). Matsumoto studied Oriental history at Keiō University and went to study in Paris, a center of Chinese studies at the time (1924). Like Matsumura, Matsumoto initially emphasized comparative typology. In the 1930s, however, his interests shifted, more fundamentally than with Matsumura, toward questions of ethnicity, and his research from this perspective came to take on a strong political coloration.

In Paris Matsumoto initially studied under the famous sinologist Marcel Granet (1884–1940), but gradually he seems to have become interested in Indochina, and in the end he wrote his doctoral thesis on the topic “Japanese and Austro-Asian Languages” (*Le japonais et les langues austroasiatiques: Étude de vocabulaire comparé*) under the guidance of Jean Przyluski (1885–1944), a scholar of linguistics and Buddhism. According to the French system at that time, to obtain a doctoral degree it was necessary to submit a second thesis together with the main one. For his second thesis Matsumoto first planned to write on the Ainu under Granet’s guidance, but he also studied with the anthropologist and scholar of comparative religion Marcel Mauss (1872–1950), who pointed out to him the similarities between Japanese and Polynesian mythologies and urged him to explore this topic. For his second thesis Matsumoto thus carried out comparative research on Japanese and Southeast Asian myths. This thesis, published in 1928 under the title *Essai sur la mythologie japonaise*, was the first French study on mythology by a Japanese author. Following his return to Japan, Matsumoto also published a Japanese translation in 1931.

This study is marked by two novel features: firstly, Matsumoto interpreted Japanese mythical episodes by relating them to concrete rituals;

and secondly, he compared them with myths of a “southern” typology from Southeast Asia or the Austro-Pacific region, pointing out their similarities. He notes, for instance, the resemblance between the story of the Maori hero Maui, who fishes land from the ocean, and Izanagi and Izanami’s creation of the first Japanese island by stirring a spear in the sea. Similarly, he compares the wedding of Izanagi and Izanami to the marriage of siblings in the myth of the Ami people of Taiwan. Throughout he repeatedly calls attention to the presence of such “southern” elements in the Japanese myths. In the words of Ōbayashi Taryō, the value of Matsumoto’s study lies in the fact that

... he interpreted the myths as connected to rituals, in particular seasonal ceremonies, thereby looking at myth in the context of ritualistic organizations. Moreover, he made use of mythology research from abroad, thus opening the path to a truly comparative approach in the field of Japanese mythology. We should remember [Matsumoto’s] *Essai* not only as the starting point of his own studies, but also as a work that elevated the overall standard of Japanese mythology studies and introduced research on the Japanese myths by Japanese scholars to an international audience.¹⁴

Upon his return to Japan, Matsumoto established himself as a specialist in typological research on Japanese mythology as well as of Indochinese studies. He became more and more interested in Southeast Asia, especially after a one-month journey to Indochina in 1933,¹⁵ and also shifted increasingly from philological to ethnological methods of investigation.

At about the same time as his trip to Indochina, Matsumoto began to comment on the political implications of mythology studies, and also to speak about Japanese colonial policy. In 1934, for instance, in an article on the Japanese myths that he contributed to a multivolume series on Japanese history published by Iwanami Shoten he emphasized the importance of research on the myths as “the fount of our national essence (*kokutai*)” and “the sustenance of our national faith.”¹⁶ In another article of the same year, he argued that, judging from evidence in the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki*, relations between Japan and Korea in antiquity had not been that of military

14. Ōbayashi 1971b, p. 402.

15. On the significance of this journey for Matsumoto’s research, see Itō 1988.

16. Matsumoto 1978a [1934], p. 125.

conqueror and conquered but had been based on trade. Amaterasu, he held, is portrayed as having shown an attitude of compassion and love in unifying Japan and extending her rule overseas. As such the myth of Amaterasu carried lessons for the present.¹⁷ Clearly, in making such statements Matsumoto had in mind the contemporary policies of Japanese colonial rule of Korea.

In the same way, Matsumoto began to make political comments on the relationship between Japanese and Southeast Asian mythologies that went far beyond the identification of Southeast Asian elements in Japanese myths as found in his *Essai sur la mythologie japonaise*. For instance, in *Peoples and Cultures of Indochina* (*Indoshina no minzoku to bunka* 印度支那の民族と文化), published in 1942, he argued that mythological and linguistic similarities indicated that the Japanese shared the blood of ethnic groups from Southeast Asia. He inferred from this that in their advance into Southeast Asia the Japanese were in a more advantageous position than the white Western powers such as the French who currently controlled the region politically.¹⁸

Similar arguments can be found in an article of the same year entitled “The Ethno-historic Significance of the Great East Asian War” (*Dai tōa sensō no minzokuteki igi* 大東亜戦争の民族的意義). Here Matsumoto maintained that Japan’s expansion into the vast region extending from north to south that had become the stage of the Great East Asian War was only possible due to the fact that the Japanese people incorporated elements from both northern and southern Asia.¹⁹

From the mid-1930s onward, there had been loud calls for Japan to advance its interests in Southeast Asia—the so-called “southern expansion doctrine” (*nanshinron* 南進論)—and the military had begun to extend its position in Southeast Asian regions such as Indochina. It seems likely that in these circumstances Matsumoto’s research on comparative mythology and Indochina received increasing attention. His above-mentioned remarks from 1942 about Japan’s links with Southeast Asia should be seen in this context. In 1940 the Research Council for National Policy (Kokusaku Kenkyūkai 国策研究会), an influential private organization with close ties to the military and government established in 1933 to carry out research in various areas

17. Matsumoto 1978b [1934], p. 228.

18. Matsumoto 1942a, p. 335.

19. Matsumoto 1942b.

and formulate policy proposals, had created as a subunit the Study Group for Ethnic Questions (Minzoku Mondai Kenkyūkai 民族問題研究会). This subunit, of which Matsumoto became a member, conducted research on conditions among the peoples of Southeast Asia and how Japan should deal with them. As a specialist on Indochina, Matsumoto also was appointed to another subunit established by the Research Council for National Policy, the Study Group on Ethnic Groups of the Southern Regions (Nanpō Shominzoku Jijō Kenkyūkai 南方諸民族事情研究会). From these facts we can surmise that Matsumoto's research assumed importance in the context of the formulation of policy proposals calling for Japan to put greater weight on Southeast Asia. Matsumoto himself seems to have understood that his research had an important role to play in these circumstances. In the above-mentioned article on the significance of the war (Matsumoto 1942b), for instance, he called for major changes in the field of ethnology so that it could contribute to the education of Southeast Asian ethnic peoples as loyal subjects of Imperial Japan.

As already mentioned, Matsumoto's research on the relationships between Japanese and Southeast Asian mythology was originally inspired by Marcel Mauss. At that time, no entity such as the "Great East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere" as yet existed, nor was his research motivated by political intent. As the policy of expansion into Southeast Asia began to take shape in the 1930s, however, the parallels between Japanese myths and those of Southeast Asia that Matsumoto had identified took on a political significance, since they could be used to justify the "Southern expansion doctrine." Matsumoto, too, seems to have seen the value of his research as lying in this point and to have used the same argument to stress his studies' importance. Today, the influence of Southeast Asia on aspects of Japanese mythology is commonly recognized, and Matsumoto is credited as the first scholar to have perceived these links. We should also recall, however, that at the time when the notion of a Great East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere was being loudly touted, the affirmation of those links also served to legitimize Japanese colonial rule.

JAPANESE MYTHS AND THE NORTH: MISHINA SHŌEI

In discussions of the history of Japanese mythological studies, Matsumoto Nobuhiro, who emphasized the "southern" typology of Japanese myths, is

standardly paired with Mishina Shōei, who instead compared them with “northern” mythologies.

Mishina studied history at the Kyoto Imperial University, specializing particularly in ancient Korean history. From 1928 to the end of the war, he was engaged as a professor at the Naval Engineering College in Maizuru. In 1937 he was posted to the United States where he acted as a visiting professor at Yale and continued his studies under the anthropologist Robert H. Lowie.²⁰ After the war, he taught at Ōtani and Dōshisha Universities.

Mishina adhered primarily to empirical historical methods, but also applied the concept of “culture areas,” which he had encountered in his studies with Lowie. He used this concept, for instance, in his comparison of Japanese and Korean myths, an approach that has been highly praised. The scholar of religious anthropology Sasaki Kōkan 佐々木宏幹, for instance, situates Mishina in the history of studies of Japanese mythology as follows:

Along with Matsumoto, it was Mishina Shōei who contributed significantly to the comparative study of Japanese mythology. Like Matsumoto, Mishina started from historical and philological methods. He painstakingly collected material for comparison from the northern parts of Asia, in particular from China and Korea, and established a new typology of features characteristic for Nippo-Korean myths.²¹

In a similar way, Yoda Chihoko 依田千百子, a scholar of Korean mythology and folklore studies, has praised Mishina’s work as “the foundation of Korean mythology studies,” pointing out that “he studied myths from different angles, including the relation of myth to ritual, the critical evaluation of text sources, and the impact of economic and social developments on myths.”²²

Yet, it is important to note as well that Mishina conducted his major comparative studies of Japanese and Korean myths in the period of Japan’s colonization of Korea. We must therefore ask whether the power relations between ruling Japan and ruled Korea had an impact on his research and

20. Born in Vienna, Austria, Lowie (1883–1957) was one of the most productive and influential students of the “father of American anthropology,” Franz Boas.

21. Sasaki 1977, p. 42.

22. Yoda 1991, p. 10.

in what ways his perspective on Korean myths may have been related to the circumstances of colonization.

Mishina's most important prewar works on mythology are *Theories on National Founding Myths* (*Kenkoku shinwa ronkō* 建国神話論考, 1937), *Studies on Nippo-Korean Myths and Legends* (*Nissen shinwa densetsu no kenkyū* 日鮮神話伝説の研究, 1943), and *Myth and Culture Area* (*Shinwa to bunka kyōiki* 神話と文化境域, 1948).²³ In addition, Mishina also discusses Korean myths in a chapter on "Myth and the Spirit of the Age" (*Shinwa to jidai seishin* 神話と時代精神) in his *Outline of Korean History* (*Chōsenshi gaisetsu*, 1940), an introductory work for general readership. Below I would like to use these texts to explore Mishina's stance on several points relevant to questions of ethnicity and comparative approaches to cultural relations between Korea and Japan.

One telling issue is Mishina's approach to the story of Dangun 檀君, the legendary founder of an ancient Korean kingdom, supposed to have been established in 2333 BCE. At the time the evaluation of the tale of Dangun, who had come to be regarded in Korea as the ancestor of the Korean people,²⁴ was a matter of debate between Japanese and Korean scholars. In 1929, Imanishi Ryū 今西龍 (1875–1932), a specialist in Korean history and archaeology who was then concurrently professor at Kyoto Imperial University and Keijō Imperial University (in present-day Seoul) published an article titled "Thoughts on Dangun" (*Dankun-kō* 檀君考) in which he argued that the tale of Dangun, the earliest known mention of which is in *Samguk yusa* 三国遺事, dating from the late thirteenth century, was not in fact of ancient origin. Although the story might be based on that of an old local god, the form in which it appears in *Samguk yusa* had been constructed, Imanishi asserted, in the mid-Goryeo period (918–1392) out of Buddhist and Daoist elements.²⁵

23. *Myth and Culture Area* was originally written before 1944.

24. Dangun has continued to be revered as the "national founder" in Korea down to recent times. In the postcolonial period, in South Korea the calendar was officially dated from 2333 BCE, the alleged beginning of Dangun's rule, until 1961. In North Korea, an excavation in 1993 of the site held to be Dangun's grave reportedly discovered "Dangun's bones," thereby proving his historicity. On present understanding of the Dangun story from the perspective of mythology, see Matsubara 1997 and Nozaki 1998.

25. Imanishi 1970.

Imanishi was also a member of the editorial board for a history of Korea published between 1932 and 1942 in thirty-seven volumes by the Japanese Governor-General of Korea. This publication project further fueled the Dangun debate. While Korean scholars called for the history to start with the account of Dangun's founding of the original Korean kingdom, the Japanese scholars involved, headed by the eminent historian of Japan and professor at Tokyo Imperial University Kuroita Katsumi 黒板勝美 (1874–1946), rejected this demand on the grounds that Dangun was nothing more than a mythological figure.²⁶ Regarding this response, the present-day researcher Kawamura Minato 川村湊 has noted that the rejection of the Dangun myth by Japanese scholars shows “elements of an ideological battle in which mythologies of the ruled people were oppressed by the ruling people” since the same scholars were ready to begin accounts of Japanese history with the myths of Izanagi and Izanami and Amaterasu.²⁷

What was Mishina's position on the Dangun issue? Mishina had studied under Imanishi at Kyoto Imperial University. Indeed he begins *Studies on Nippo-Korean Myths and Legends* with a eulogy for his former professor in which he notes that Imanishi's lectures were what introduced him to Korean history. It is thus perhaps not surprising that Mishina's view of Dangun was quite similar to Imanishi's. In *Outline of Korean History* he writes that since the Dangun legend “first appears in *Samguk yusa*, present scholarship regards it as dating from the mid-Goryeo period.”²⁸ Pointing to Buddhist elements in the legend, he further asserts that these are evidence that it was a product of the mid-Goryeo period, the apex of Korean Buddhism. Indeed, he shows a quite dismissive attitude toward the legend, holding that as a representative expression of the medieval (rather than ancient) Korean mentality, “from the perspective of the study of mythology, its content is of no particular interest.” Of greater “significance as cultural history” is another legend, that of the founding of the kingdom of Silla by Hyeokgeose 赫居世 in the first century BCE.²⁹ This latter legend, which is recorded in *Samguk sagi* 三国史記

26. On this Dangun debate, see Kawamura 1996, Lee 2005, and Nozaki 1998.

27. Kawamura 1996, p. 27.

28. Mishina 1940, p. 26.

29. Mishina 1940, p. 24.

(1145), written a century before *Samguk yusa*, can be taken, Mishina holds, as a more genuine expression of the ancient Korean mentality.³⁰

Evidence of Mishina's stance regarding comparative studies can be found particularly clearly in his *Studies on Nippo-Korean Myths and Legends*. In this work he argues that the comparative study of mythology demonstrates, on the one hand, the relationship between the Japanese and Korean peoples as "compatriots" (*dōhō* 同胞). On the other, having historically been subject to the sway of its continental neighbors—the Chinese, Manchus, and Mongols—Korea, in contrast to Japan, had failed to preserve and develop the original true ethnic character expressed through mythology.

In the preface, Mishina noted the implications of this situation for the contemporary relationship between Japan and Korea. Although Korea may have appeared to have lost its intrinsic ethnic characteristics as a result of its long subjection to its continental neighbors, those characteristics could be extracted through close analysis of what myths and legends remained. Further, comparison of these myths and legends with those of Japan would prove the closeness of the Japanese and Korean peoples and enable Koreans to discover their own image in the ancient culture of Japan. At the end of the preface, Mishina writes:

For [Japanese and Koreans] who today have been able to become compatriots under the scepter of our emperor, ancient culture is truly an appropriate means. To become real compatriots, we must first return to our ethnic origins in the Age of the Gods and start from there. It would mean unprecedented pleasure to this author if his book were to succeed to at least some extent in drawing a picture, from mythical accounts, of how we compatriots were raised in the same cradle.

Just as I was preparing the manuscript for the present book, it was announced that military conscription is to be implemented on the Korean peninsula. I therefore lay down my brush convinced that the day is not far ahead when these two compatriot peoples, who in

30. Mishina also expressed reservations about the significance as mythology of a third legendary founder, Gija 箕子, who was equated with a scion of the ancient Chinese Yin dynasty described in the Book of History (*Shangshu* 尚書). This legend, with its Confucian overtones, Mishina took to be a product of the early modern period.

antiquity grew up together, will join in leading forward the various peoples of Great East Asia under the scepter of our emperor.³¹

In other words, present-day Japanese and Koreans could be turned into “real compatriots” (*shin no dōhō* 真の同胞) by “returning to our ethnic origins in the Age of the Gods” through mythology studies, which would show that Japanese and Koreans were such compatriots in ancient times.

Mishina sets out his argument about the relative state of preservation and development of mythology in Korea and Japan in the following opening chapter, “Japanese Myth Seen from the Perspective of East Asian Mythology.” Noting that it is generally understood that Japanese myths are intimately related to the four regions of “Manchu-Korea, the Southern Regions (*nan'yō* 南洋), India, and China (Shina 支那),” he continues that the Southern Regions and India were “not a matter of immediate concern,” and that instead he would largely focus on the relationship with “Shina” and “Manchu-Korea.”

Regarding China, Mishina states that in spite of the great influence of Chinese culture on ancient Japan, Chinese myths and legends had surprisingly little impact on Japanese mythology. Of course, this did not mean that there was no Chinese influence at all, but already in early times Chinese culture had developed under Confucian influence in an “intellectualist and realist” (*jissaishugiteki* 実証主義的) direction. As a consequence, “the Chinese people had lost their ‘feeling for myth’ (*shinwa suru kokoro* 神話する心).” In Japan, by contrast, “Even in the present age of intellectualism, our own people have not lost this ‘feeling for myth’.”³² Therefore, Mishina argues, China’s legends and tales did not have the power to leave an imprint on Japanese mythology.

As for relations between Japan and the Manchu-Korean region, although cultural contacts had always been close, as far as mythology was concerned, the myths of this region had remained “underdeveloped” and therefore were by no means equal to those in Japan. In the case of the Manchu peoples, the primary reason for this “underdevelopment” was that they had continued to rely on a seminomadic form of agriculture and thus had not achieved the ritual sophistication of true agricultural ethnic groups. Moreover, they lacked inquisitiveness and therefore remained “a people unaccomplished in mythology.” Koreans, on the other hand, were an agricultural people and

31. Mishina 1943, p. 3.

32. Mishina 1943, p. 5.

were known for having highly developed ritualism. One would thus expect them to have developed myths as well. The reality, however, was different. This was due to the influence of “Chinese intellectualism and realism.” Like China itself, Korea “became indifferent to myths, unable to love and foster myths” (p. 10). Fortunately a few tales of founder heroes, such as the above-mentioned story of Hyeokgeose, had been transmitted to later generations. Owing to the surrounding general circumstances, these had been “preserved in their undeveloped form until later ages.” Precisely for this reason, from the perspective of comparative mythology, they were of particular value as source material in order to understand the “original form of our own mythology, which in later ages underwent a remarkable development both as myth and in terms of its political significance. [...] In any event, Korean myths and legends provide a most important reference for the study of our own ancient mythology” (p. 11).

Thus, Mishina acknowledges the closeness and importance of ancient relations between China and “Manchu-Korea” on the one hand, and Japan on the other. Nevertheless, he contrasts China and Japan as societies that have or have not lost their “feeling for myth.” In a similar way, while acknowledging that Korean legends could be used to understand the original form of Japanese myths as well as vice-versa, he juxtaposes Japan and “Manchu-Korea” in terms of the development or underdevelopment of myth.³³

We can see a similar tendency in Mishina’s employment of the concept of “culture area.” This concept, articulated by the American cultural anthropologist Clark Wissler (1870–1947) focuses on similarities in cultural phenomena such as diet, religion, and social structure to be found in neighboring cultural communities, and tries to demarcate the range where such common elements can be identified. In *Myth and Culture Area*, Mishina adopted this method to explain the cultural characteristics of myths on the Korean peninsula, particularly the legends of founding heroes like Hyeokgeose and Talhae 脱解 of Silla and Jumong 朱蒙 of Goguryeo.

Mishina first identified four types of founder hero stories: the egg-born type (the hero is born from an egg), ark-drifter type (the hero is set adrift in a boat), divine-procreation type (the hero’s mother is impregnated by sunrays,

33. Mishina repeats the argument about how Japanese myth developed in contrast to what happened in Korea in a later chapter where he takes up the implications of the existence of multiple variants in the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki* of the story of “the descent of the Heavenly Grandson” as the ruler of Japan.

etc.), and beast type (the first ancestor is held to be an animal). To establish the typologies characteristic of Korea, he went on to evaluate how this typology applies to myths from regions bordering the Korean peninsula that had historical contacts with it, examined the distribution of stories of the same type, and identified the culture area to which this type belongs. He arrived at the conclusion that the egg-born type and the ark-drifter type were related to the peoples of the southern maritime region, i.e., Indonesia, Indochina, and Taiwan, while the beast type and the divine-procreation type bore connections with northern peoples like the Manchus and the Mongols. He noted, however, that the beast type could not be found in Korea. The reason, he surmised, was that this type originated from nomadic culture areas and therefore did not develop in the agrarian Korean society.

Based on this analysis, Mishina argued that Korean founding hero stories possessed a composite structure: while they were fundamentally based on southern elements, superimposed on these were Manchurian and Mongolian elements as well as Buddhist and Daoist legends. This composite structure, Mishina asserted, was typical of Korean culture in general:

The composite structure detected in the myths of Korean founding heroes can be found not only in myths but must be called a characteristic of Korean culture in general. Mythology unquestionably serves to alert us to the distinguishing features of Korean culture. Putting aside the basic issue whether history may be said to unfold and cultural structure develop in a dialectical way or not, we can at least say that in more than two thousand years of Korean history, traces of a dialectical development are extremely rare. Rather, it shows a clear heteronomous pattern, having been shaped by waves of dominant cultures and political powers arriving from all directions—southern regions, northern regions, China, and India. Even in the most representative product of primitive culture, in mythology, this characteristic is already clearly apparent.³⁴

In contrast to this view of Korean myth and culture as exhibiting a composite nature shaped by “heteronomous” influences, Mishina reached a quite different conclusion regarding Japanese founder hero myths. “While Japan is situated at the center of a [larger] culture area, our ethnic founder hero

34. Mishina 1948, p. 266.

myths show the characteristics of a unique culture area.”³⁵ Mishina’s general position was that the founder hero legends of various peoples were suitable subjects of analysis for identifying cultural characteristics because they generally preserved old traditions. In the case of Japan, however, the situation was different:

This special place that we occupy within the primitive culture area centered on our land suggests that we need to think of it in terms of historical rather than geographical circumstances. The fact that our founding myths do not share the features of those of the surrounding primitive culture area indicates that they are culturally and chronologically new phenomena or that they have been transmitted within a culturally advanced ethnic society.³⁶

The fact that the myths of deities like Amaterasu or Susanoo—what could be considered Japan’s founder hero myths—were preserved in many different variants in the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki* was, Mishina asserted, another indication that they had “the characteristics of the mythology of a highly advanced culture.”³⁷

Thus, in his comparison of Japanese and Korean myths, Mishina pointed out their close relatedness and mutual influences, but he also contrasted them by attributing a composite character that remained stagnant and underdeveloped to Korean myths and a distinctive, advanced mythology to Japan. In this manner of comparison, we may well find a reflection of the actual contemporary power relations between the objects of his research, Japan as ruler, on the one hand, and Korea as ruled, on the other.

If we move from mythology to his general view of Korean history and the Korean people, we see a similar perspective. In the preface to his *Outline of Korean History* (1940), which was, as mentioned above, written for a broad audience, Mishina explains the necessity of studying Korean history as follows:

For us, who are striving to build a new East Asian world, our compatriots on the peninsula are the people we can rely upon most fully,

35. Ibid.

36. Mishina 1948, p. 268.

37. Ibid.

and this will certainly be always the case. In fact the shared ancestry (*dōsosei* 同祖性) of the Japanese and Korean peoples is currently the topic of investigation, and in the future the two necessarily must become true compatriots able to walk united under the imperial roof stretching to the eight corners of the world. The author, who believes this firmly, also is convinced that we must feel the same empathy for their history and study it as we would our own.³⁸

Mishina titled the first chapter of his history of this “compatriot” country “The Heteronomous Character of Korean History.” In it he argued that the “heteronomy” that was the fundamental feature of Korean history had been determined by Korea’s peninsular geographical position. As a peninsula, Korea was constantly affected by the waves of change on the continent, but because it was situated on the periphery, it always stood apart from the mainstream of such change. Thus Korean history also came to be marked by “dependency” (*fuzuisei* 附随性).³⁹ In addition to its peripheral geographic position, Korea was situated between the powerful nations of China and Japan. Nevertheless, Korea proved unable to develop under the influence of these neighbors:

Should one try to explain Korean history on the basis of the historical concept of “development,” one cannot avoid the realization that there is very little evidence of historical dialectical development. In terms of objective trends, Korea has had extremely limited independence in its history.⁴⁰

Musing on the external powers that affected Korea, Mishina maintains that Korea’s attitude of obedience had resulted in its being used by the Chinese with their “ceremonialism,” “intellectualism,” and “pragmatism.” As a consequence the country had been placed in a predicament and left to suffer disasters. The Mongol and Manchu forces, on the other hand, had carried out a “military conquest.” This had been conducted with a “certain attitude of expansiveness typical of nomadic peoples,” but it was ultimately based

38. Mishina 1940, preface, p. 2.

39. Ibid.

40. Mishina 1940, p. 4.

simply on force unaccompanied by government or culture. Regarding Japan, Mishina argues:

The Korean enterprises of our country in antiquity as well as in more recent years were marked neither by subjugation nor by mere self-interest. In antiquity, Japan protected both Kudara [=Baekje] and Mimana [=Kaya], thus enabling them to establish their own states. This was a peaceful, benevolent kind of dominance, not the Mongolian type, which deliberately aimed at conquest, or the Chinese, which was intellectual and formalistic. If we put it in one word, we may call Japan's attitude empathic or protective, transcending the difference between self and other in order to build a beneficial common world. This was and will always be the basic spirit of our country. [...] This country of Japan, which in the past grew up sharing the same spirit as Korea and which today has matured so remarkably and is building a splendid historical world, has embraced the Koreans as compatriots and called them back to their native home. Here, for first time, Korea is able to make a fresh start in its true form.⁴¹

In this passage, Mishina infers from the examples of ancient Baekje and Kaya that the Japanese manner of ruling Korea was marked by empathy and protection. Korea's foreign relations with other peoples had resulted in its "becoming dependent on outside authority and its spirit of self-assertion lacking a quality of autonomy. Instead an attitude has been nurtured of partisan factionalism, in which people look to depend on others" (p. 8). This mentality that "derived from an attitude of dependence on outside authority" also showed itself in the general patterns of thought of the Korean people (p. 9). Now, however, it was possible for Korea, "supported by Japanese empathy, for the first time to sublate [in a dialectical sense] its peninsular historical character."

Thus, Mishina maintains that Japan and Korea were intimately related to each other, "sharing the same spirit," but that Japan had matured to greatness while Korea had not. In addition, Korea became dependent on "external powers" due to the influence of neighboring countries. Only through Japanese empathy would Korea be able to overcome its "peninsular historical

41. Mishina 1940, pp. 6–7.

character” of dependence, peripherality, and heteronomy. It is understandable that in his recent analysis of Japanese research on Korean history, Lee Man-yol 李萬烈 has severely criticized *Outline of Korean History*, in which Mishina developed this perspective, for creating “a systematic theoretical foundation for the colonialist view of Korean history characteristic of Japanese imperialism.”⁴²

To see how comparative approaches and notions of ethnicity figured in such a perspective, it will be instructive to briefly set it against the backdrop of the general discourse on Korea current among Japanese intellectuals of the time. Mishina was far from alone in his view of Korea as undeveloped and in regarding heteronomy as the ethnic characteristic of the Korean people. From the Meiji period on Japanese intellectuals had subscribed widely to the image of a “backward Korea,” and the thesis that the Korean people lacked a sense of national autonomy because from antiquity they had come under the sway of neighboring areas such as Japan and China had served in tandem with discourses on “the common Nippo-Korean ancestry” (*Nissen dōsorōn* 日鮮同祖論) to justify Japanese colonial rule over the peninsula.⁴³

The historian Kida Sadakichi 喜田貞吉 (1871–1939), who taught at Kyoto and Tōhoku Imperial University and is known among other things for his advocacy of “the common Nippo-Korean ancestry” thesis is a case in point. In his *Korean Annexation and Japanese History* (*Kankoku heigō to kokushi* 韓国併合と国史, 1910), Kida argued that because the northwestern part of the peninsula was linked to the continent, while the southeastern part was oriented towards Japan, the Korean people had never managed to establish a sovereign state, or to interact with China and Japan on an equal level. Several kingdoms had come into existence in the course of Korean history, but none had developed into a strong, independent state. Rather, they had sustained themselves by heeding what was happening in the countries around them and by “following the major country.” Japan, on the other hand, Kida held, had never treated foreign cultures or races badly, but assimilated them with magnanimity. Kida therefore acclaimed the annexation of Korea, likening it to a prosperous stem family (Japan) taking in and protecting a weak branch family (Korea).

42. Lee 2005.

43. For theories on Korean stagnation and dependency, c.f. Lee 2005, Duus and Kobayashi 1998, and Kang 2004. For a discussion of general Japanese discourses on Korea in the modern period, see Kang 1984.

Mishina shared much with Kida in his perspective on Korean history. To be sure, he kept a certain distance from outright advocacy of theories on common ancestry. As we saw above, in his *Outline of Korean History* he simply mentions that the issue is currently the subject of investigation, and in his essay “Japanese Myths seen from Oriental Mythology,”⁴⁴ he states that “many further considerations are necessary before we can fully acknowledge a common ancestry of Japan and Korea, as is maintained by parts of the academic community.”⁴⁵ Yet, when it comes to Mishina’s conviction that Japan, which had achieved a civilized state, should “embrace” Korea, trapped by its traditional heteronomy in a stage of cultural retardation, we certainly have to position his ideas within the framework of colonialist discourse, as Lee points out in his critical analysis.⁴⁶

Mishina portrayed ancient Korea and Japan as intimately related to each other, with their myths showing them to be “compatriots raised from the same cradle.” At the same time, he contrasted Korean mythology, which remained in an undeveloped state, with the highly developed Japanese mythology. In his research on culture areas, he pointed out the composite and heteronomous nature of myths from the peninsula, on the one hand, while on the other he presented Japanese myths as having developed in a fashion that showed them to be the product of a distinctive culture area. This comparison of Japanese and Korean mythology in terms of underdevelopment and heteronomy clearly belongs to a colonialist discourse. Much the same must be said of his contention that the Dangun myth was a creation of Korea’s medieval period, not of antiquity. Given the context of the ongoing debate between Japanese and Korean scholars over this issue and the fact that Mishina put forward this view in an influential publication meant for the general reader, Kawamura Minato is undoubtedly correct that in effect this amounted to the “repression of ethnic mythology.”⁴⁷

44. *Tōyō shinwagaku yori mitaru Nihon shinwa* 東洋神話学より観たる日本神話 (Mishina 1943), first published in 1940.

45. Mishina, 1943, p.10.

46. Mishina’s *Outline of Korean History* was republished after the war in 1952. A few expressions regarding the “heteronomous character of Korean history” were modified, but by and large the text remained unchanged.

47. Kawamura 1996.

OKA MASAO AND JAPANESE MYTHOLOGY: THE IMPACT OF THE VIENNESE SCHOOL OF ETHNOLOGY

The published oeuvre of Oka Masao is comparatively small, but his attempts to explain the heterogeneity of Japanese culture as the result of the overlapping of different culture complexes that had come into Japan from elsewhere in antiquity had a tremendous influence on the postwar academic community. In the words of Ōbayashi Taryō and Yamada Ryūji 山田隆治, “If one views research on Japanese historical ethnology by the postwar generation as a whole, no single scholar left a larger impact than Oka Masao.”⁴⁸ Sasaki Kōkan likewise describes Oka’s studies as having exerted an immense influence on Japanese postwar studies of myth from an ethnological perspective.⁴⁹ On the other hand, several authors have shown that Oka was also a representative figure in the wartime collaboration of ethnology and the military, since he put great effort into the establishment of the Ethnic Research Institute (Minzoku Kenkyūjo 民族研究所) in 1942–1943 and played a central role in its activities, which were supported by the military regime.

After graduating from the Department of Sociology at Tokyo Imperial University in 1924, Oka studied for some time under Yanagita Kunio 柳田邦夫 (1875–1962) and helped to put out the journal *Minzoku* 民族 (Ethnos). In 1929, he made his way to Vienna in order to continue his studies at the Institute for Ethnology of Vienna University. There he was deeply inspired by scholars like Wilhelm Schmidt (1868–1954) and the Southeast Asian specialist Robert Heine-Geldern (1885–1968). In 1930–1933, Oka drafted a doctoral dissertation titled “Kulturschichten in Alt-Japan” (Cultural Strata in Ancient Japan) that was clearly indebted to Schmidt’s theory of “cultural circles” or complexes (*Kulturkreislehre*). The dissertation, coming to 1,452 pages in the original manuscript, has been published only in 2012, and I have only had access to a translation of the table of contents, but I could gather its contents to some extent through explanations by Sumiya Kazuhiko⁵⁰ and through the postwar symposium “The Japanese People: Cultural Origins,” held in 1948, that was largely based on this work (for this symposium, see below).

48. Ōbayashi and Yamada 1966, p. 9.

49. Sasaki 1977.

50. See Sumiya 1979 and 1988.

In “Kulturschichten” Oka tried to reconstruct the ethnic groups of ancient Japan, i.e., the ethnic culture complexes that formed Japanese culture. In doing so, Oka also dealt with mythology, which he analyzed from the perspective of cultural circles in the same way as language or material culture. Oka’s particular focus on mythology was probably due to the fact that Schmidt’s Viennese school of historical ethnology also emphasized mythology, holding that mythological comparisons could be used to determine the cultural circle to which the bearers of a given myth belonged, and ultimately to detect the historical development of this cultural circle.

In 1935 Oka went back to Japan but he returned to Vienna in 1938 to take up an appointment as visiting professor and head of the newly founded Institute for Japanese Studies at the University of Vienna.⁵¹ His lectures there dealt with “Japanese ethnology, prehistory, language, as well as myth and religion.”⁵² In addition, he traveled to the Balkans and lectured as a visiting professor in Budapest.

Oka again returned temporarily to Japan in 1940 to assist the sociologist of religion Furuno Kiyoto 古野清人 (1899–1979) and others in the movement to establish a national institute for ethnic studies. With the outbreak of war between Germany and Russia, it became difficult for him to go back to Europe, so he resigned his visiting professorship in Vienna and devoted all his energies to the establishment of an institute of ethnic studies in Japan. In 1942 it was decided to establish the Ethnic Research Institute under the direct administration of the Ministry for Education, and it was officially inaugurated the following year. The explicit purpose of this institute was the study of ethnic groups in order to facilitate the smooth operation of colonial administration. Its operating funds came from military circles, in considerable measure owing to Oka’s excellent relations with people from the army. While the institute was nominally headed by the sociologist Takata Yasuma

51. At that time, this institute was on Berggasse in Vienna’s ninth district. Some say that it was located at Berggasse 7, where Sigmund Freud had had his famous psychoanalytical practice. According to Josef Kreiner, who studied under Oka’s successor in Vienna, however, the institute was situated in a neighboring building (Kreiner 1979, p. 472).

52. Kreiner 1979, p. 471.

高田保馬 (1883–1972), Oka became its executive director and remained its central figure until the end of the war.⁵³

Subsequent to an article published in 1935 titled “The Tale of Shooting the Sun” (*Taiyō o iru hanashi* 太陽を射る話), in which he took up the distribution of this legend, Oka seems to have ceased undertaking research on Japanese myths. A key reason seems to be a general change in his attitude towards ethnological studies. According to Nakao Katsumi 中生勝美, Oka’s travels in the Balkans during his second stay in Vienna had led him “to harbor doubts about the approach of the Viennese School and to shift his attention to the current state of living societies and to Anglophone theories of social anthropology.”⁵⁴

This shift in his perspective is apparent in the lecture “Various Problems of Current Ethnology” that he gave at the first Seminar of Ethnological Studies held in October 1942. Here he stated that none of the three main trends in ethnological studies—evolutionism, cultural historicism, and functionalism—had led to satisfactory results in studies relevant to the East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere. What was needed was an “ethnology focused on present circumstances” (*genzaigakuteki minzokugaku* 現在学的民族学). A “presentist ethnology” was one that would engage in research on the ethnic groups that were the objects of governmental administration so as to contribute to the formulation of appropriate ethnic policies. Oka argued for the necessity of such an approach as follows:

Essentially, an ethnic group is an entity marked by specific historical and sociological conditions, but together with its historical structure it is also an actual living organism endowed with future potential. Therefore, ethnic research requires investigation of present circumstances as well as historical research. Study of ethnic policies, ethnic government, and ethnic movements is thus something closely linked to ethnology; indeed, it is its foundation. Ethnology must become the cornerstone of ethnic policies by clarifying the present actual character or structure of an ethnic group that is the object of governmental rule, by investigating its ethnic consciousness, intentions and the nature of its activities and inclina-

53. For details on Oka Masao and the Ethnic Research Institute, see Nakao 1997 and Sakano 2005. For an essay in English, see Doak 2001.

54. Nakao 1997, p. 58.

tions as they are structured by the group's experience and feelings. [...] The immediate tasks of Japanese ethnology are truly immense, but I believe that through our common effort we can surmount this crisis, nurture Japan's own ethnology, and thereby respond to the demands of the present situation.⁵⁵

In other words, Oka had come to see ethnology's *raison d'être* as lying in participation in the formulation of ethnic policies in order to rule effectively a given ethnic group. For this purpose, the methods of Anglophone social anthropology, which emphasized actual fieldwork, were of much greater service than the historical methods of the Viennese school of ethnology. According to Nakao Katsumi, although the example of the ethnology of Nazi Germany was a factor in the founding the Ethnic Research Institute, the actual research conducted there did not look at all to German ethnology. Rather the books translated at the institute reflect the strong influence of Anglophone social anthropology.⁵⁶ We may conclude that Oka's ethno-historical research on Japanese mythology was abandoned in the midst of his quest for an ethnology that would be of use in the war.

When the Ethnic Research Institute was dissolved after the war, Oka moved from Tokyo to Nakano Prefecture, where he lived from hand to mouth. He was drawn back into academic life only in 1948, when Egami Namio 江上波夫 (1906–2002), Yawata Ichirō 八幡一郎 (1902–1987), and Ishida Eiichirō 石田英一郎 (1903–1968) staged a symposium with the title “The Japanese People: Cultural Origins and the Formation of the Japanese State.” This symposium started from a discussion of Oka's Viennese dissertation on “Kulturschichten.” As a consequence Oka once again began research on the formation of Japanese culture and resumed investigation of myths as one aspect of that research. In other words, he returned to the historical approach favored by the Viennese school of ethnology.

While Oka's theories are no longer accepted as is, in a modified and amplified form they constitute one of the starting points for discussion of the typology of Japanese myths, as can be seen from the research of Ōbayashi Taryō and others. We may attribute the disjuncture in Oka's academic career, his separation of himself from the Viennese School and even from the study of Japanese myths, to the circumstances of the time. Conversely, just

55. Oka 1942, pp. 121–22.

56. Nakao 1997, p. 58.

such a process helps explain why the approach of the Viennese school of ethnology became the focus of attention in postwar Japan, whereas its heyday in Europe was, in fact, long past.

EPILOGUE

The 1948 symposium on Japan's ethnic and cultural origins is famous for the so-called horse-rider theory presented by Egami Namio, who argued that the kings of ancient Japan derived from horse-riding tribes coming from the continent. In the wake of the ensuing debate about the origins of Japanese culture, research on Japanese mythology again became relevant.

Works by Matsumoto, Mishina, and Oka, especially those that were unrelated to colonization and contained no political statements, were reprinted after the war and were widely acclaimed for their academic value. Matsumura Takeo likewise put together a compendium of his scholarly oeuvre, but did not refer to his research on ethnicity and myth. As a result, the research of these scholars during the war and their political statements at that time were largely ignored. Scholars like Ōbayashi Taryō, who began their careers after the war, selected only those parts of the work of the prewar scholars that they considered to be of a high academic level, and from these segments constructed a history of mythology studies in Japan.

Mythology often deals with the origins of a people or a state, which is why research on myths is easily connected to ethnic identity or nationalism. As we have seen, Japanese mythology research during the war was conducted with an awareness of the relationship between Japan and its colonies. Postwar research on Japanese mythology has paid little attention to this point, and even today, prewar mythology studies are often cited uncritically or used for facile *nihonjinron* theories about the origins of the Japanese people or the typology of Japanese culture. The present essay cannot take up this issue in detail, but it is surely necessary for those engaged in the study of mythology today to have a clear idea of the circumstances of wartime studies on Japanese myths and to keep in mind the ways in which scholars of that period were involved in a nationalistic agenda.

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Coming to Terms with “Reverence at Shrines”

The 1932 Sophia University–Yasukuni Shrine Incident

KATE WILDMAN NAKAI

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; *Sūmitsuīn 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” (*shintō* 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 (*keii* 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 refigured 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.

Obedying 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 (*raihei*), 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.

Batiffol’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. *Nihonjingawa 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 Shinshokukai 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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Shinto Research and Administration in the First Half of the Twentieth Century

The Case of Miyaji Naokazu

ENDŌ JUN

In analyzing the relation of the modern Japanese nation-state to Shinto and Shinto shrines, we must take into consideration the circumstances surrounding shrines. If the modern shrine system is to be considered an ideological apparatus of the state in the Althusserian sense,¹ the actual nature of the Home Ministry's Bureau of Shrines (Jinja Kyoku 神社局, 1900–1940), which was the administrative core of the shrine system, needs to be clarified. We also have to examine how educational activities and research on Shinto took place within the context of this ideological apparatus (and whether they in fact functioned fully as part of such an apparatus or not).

The case of Miyaji Naokazu 宮地直一 (1886–1949) is of particular interest in this respect, since Miyaji was not only an official of the Bureau of Shrines in the Home Ministry but also a scholar engaged in teaching and research of the history of shrine deities (*jingi* history)² at Kokugakuin University and Tokyo Imperial University. Moreover, these two social roles of Miyaji were intimately related to each other. In this essay I will give a general overview of Miyaji Naokazu's activities and consider how they should be understood within the context of the modern shrine world and Shinto.

1. See Althusser 1970.

2. *Jingi* 神祇, lit. the gods of heaven and earth, is often used as a synonym of *shintō* 神道 and can be translated as “Shinto” accordingly. In our context it is important, however, that Miyaji preferred *jingi* (a term that arguably has more historical and concrete connotations with shrine rituals) to the broader *shintō* (which refers more to doctrines or teachings), at least in his earlier writings. I therefore translate *jingi* as “shrine deities.” [Translator's note.]

MIYAJI'S ACADEMIC CAREER

During his life Miyaji engaged in a wide range of activities. The list below provides a chronological overview of those bearing directly on the subject of this article.

- 1886 24 Jan., born in Enoguchi, a village in Kōchi prefecture.
- 1908 Graduates from Tokyo Imperial University, Faculty of Letters, Department of History. Enters graduate program.
- 1909 March (23 years of age), assumes an adjunct position in the research section of the Home Ministry's Bureau of Shrines.
15 June 1909—31 March 1910, appointed to lecture on "*jingi* history" at the Training Program for Shrine Priests attached to the Institute for Imperial Classics.
- 1915 1 May (29 y.), appointed as an adviser (*sanji* 参事) to the Office for the Construction of Meiji Shrine.
- 1918 10 Aug. (32 y.), appointed as adjunct lecturer at Tokyo Imperial University, Faculty of Letters; lectures on *jingi* history at the Department of Japanese History.
- 1919 29 July (33 y.), appointed to regular position in the Shrine Bureau research section.
- 1920 17 Sept. (34 y.), lecturer on *jingi* history at the newly founded Chair for Shinto Studies at Tokyo Imperial University.
- 1922 March (36 y.), appointed lecturer at Kokugakuin University.
April, earns a doctoral degree for his thesis "A Historical Survey of Shrines Centering on the Three Shrines of Kumano."
- 1923 April (37 y.), from this year serves as professor at Kokugakuin University.
- 1924 20 Dec. (38 y.), appointed head of the research section at the Shrine Bureau.
- 1933 (47 y.), classes on the history of Shinto begin to be offered within the History Department at Kyoto Imperial University; Miyaji appointed as lecturer on *jingi* history.

1938 11 March (52 y.), appointed as professor at Tokyo Imperial University (Chair of Shinto Studies).

1946 31 March (60 y.), retires from Tokyo Imperial University.

1949 16 May, dies at the age of 63 in Azumino, Nagano prefecture.

INSTITUTIONS AND ASSOCIATIONS RELATED TO SHINTO SHRINES

Shrines in modern Japan had links to a variety of organizations and associations. To follow Miyaji's career, it will be helpful to identify those institutions most closely related to the state's supervisory authority at the time he served in the Home Ministry (1909–1949) as well as nationwide shrine priest associations that were active during the same period. These included:

- The Bureau of Shrines (Jinja Kyoku) of the Home Ministry (1900–1940); in 1940 this was elevated in status and from then until 1946 was known as the Chamber of Shrine Deities (Jingiin 神祇院).
- The Ise Shrine Imperial Academy (Jingū Kōgakkan 神宮皇学館); founded in 1882, from 1903 to 1940 it functioned as a state college for training shrine priests. In 1940 it was made a state university and from then until 1946 was known as Jingū Kōgakkan Daigaku.
- The Institute for Imperial Classics (Kōten Kōkyūsho 皇典講究所, 1882–1946); Kokugakuin University (1890–today) is an offshoot of this institute.
- The National Shrine Priests Association (Zenkoku Shinshokukai 全国神職会, 1902–1941); from 1941 to 1946 known as Association of Shrine Priests of Great Japan (Dainippon Shinshokukai 大日本神職会).
- The Ise Shrine Service Foundation (Jingū Hōsaikai 神宮奉斎会, 1899–1946); an incorporated foundation for organizing and promoting reverence for Ise Shrine, this institution was a restructured form of the earlier Shintō Jingū-kyō 神道神宮教, an association that although not officially recognized as one of the “religious” Shinto sects, shared various characteristics with them.

Together these institutions formed the framework of State Shinto, which came to an end in February 1946. Among them, the Shrine Bureau, as a governmental office, was of a different character from the others. As Sakamoto Koremaru has pointed out, Home Ministry bureaucrats' understanding of Shinto was not always congruent with that of the priests actually serving in shrines throughout the country, a situation that resulted at times in sharp confrontations between these parties.³ There were certainly intimate connections between the Institute for Imperial Classics, the National Association of Shrine Priests, and the Ise Shrine Service Foundation, ranging from their joint compilation and publication 1906–1908 of *Jingi zensho* 神祇全書 (Compendium of Texts on Shrine Deities), a collection of medieval and early modern texts about major shrines and deities, to their collective effort immediately after the Second World War to work out a common conception of the future world of Shinto shrines, but even these organizations were not always of the same opinion. When we try to understand the world of shrines at Miyaji's time, it is essential not to overlook these differences.

MIYAJI'S ACTIVITIES AS A SCHOLAR-BUREAUCRAT

Born into a family from Kōchi prefecture that traditionally had many ties to shrines and *kokugaku* scholarship, Miyaji began to work in an adjunct position at the Home Ministry Shrine Bureau in March 1909, one year after entering graduate school. The Shrine Bureau was at that time divided into two departments, one responsible for overseeing matters concerning the most prestigious category of shrines, the so-called “state shrines” (*kankoku heisha* 官国幣社, more literally “shrines receiving offerings from the national and regional governments”), and one responsible for prefectural shrines and shrines of lower rank. As a researcher, Miyaji engaged in work pertinent to both departments, for the “survey of shrine histories” (*jinja kōshō* 神社考証) in which he was employed was directly connected to the system of shrine ranks established in 1871. Under that system, shrines throughout the country were assigned to a category—“imperial shrines” (*kanpeisha* 官幣社), “national shrines” (*kokuheisha* 国幣社), “prefectural shrines” (*kensha* 県社), “village shrines” (*sonsha* 村社), etc.—or remained “unranked” (*mukakusha*

3. Sakamoto 2003, p. 296.

無格社). The first two categories, which comprised a total of ninety-seven shrines in 1871, were further subdivided into several rank levels. Over time new categories were added and the ranks of individual shrines were adjusted, so that by 1945 there were more than 220 shrines in the top two categories. Since various perquisites were attached to the different categories and ranks, including, for shrines in the top two categories, a degree of official financial support, ranking was a matter of substantial concern for shrines and their priests.

“Historical shrine survey” entailed in the first instance evaluating the documentary basis for a given shrine’s rank or its elevation to a higher rank—documents substantiating its historical importance and pedigree. To make such appraisals required a specialized knowledge beyond what could be expected of an ordinary bureaucrat. Sakamoto Koremaru has termed those such as Miyaji who engaged in this kind of work “scholar-bureaucrats.”⁴ The expression captures the hybrid situation of people who commanded a high level of scholarly knowledge, but who, unlike their peers based in universities, carried out their research in a nonacademic environment.

The first major step in Miyaji’s bureaucratic career was his employment at the Office for the Construction of Meiji Shrine (Meiji Jingū Zōeikyoku 明治神宮造営局). Following Meiji Tennō’s demise in 1912, a movement to erect a new shrine dedicated to him soon took shape. To create a new shrine of this sort, it was necessary to carry out an investigation of historical precedents so as to decide on appropriate shrine treasures, rituals, and such.

Miyaji was initially employed in an adjunct capacity by the preparatory committee that conducted a preliminary review of these matters, but when the Office for the Construction of Meiji Shrine was formally established in 1915, he was appointed as an “adviser” (*sanji* 参事) to it. As such he was able to play a significant role, next to that of the “senior advisers” (*san’yo* 参与), in decisions concerning the shrine’s concrete shape. Considering that Miyaji was still only twenty-nine years old and held no more than an adjunct position at the Shrine Bureau, this assignment can be regarded as an exceptional promotion. As Miyaji’s son Harukuni testified, “Mother once told us, after having been appointed to this honorable task [... Father] literally forgot to

4. Sakamoto 2003, p. 296.

eat and drink and hardly ever returned home from the office, devoting all his energies to the foundation of the august shrine.”⁵

In June 1919, when the construction of Meiji Shrine was still under way, a reform of the Bureau of Shrines brought about an increase of its personnel.⁶ One month later, Miyaji and Ogino Nakasaburō 荻野仲三郎 (1870–1947), who had been employed by the Shrine Bureau as an adjunct researcher already before Miyaji, were appointed to permanent positions as research officials (*kōshōkan* 考証官). Miyaji started his bureaucratic career as a “higher official of fifth degree.” In 1924, when a separate research department was newly established within the Shrine Bureau, Miyaji was appointed its head.

Ideological Premises

The ideological framework that guided the administration of Shinto shrines at the Home Ministry was marked by the doctrine that shrines were sites of state rites and the manifestation of reverence for gods and ancestors (*keishin sūso* 敬神崇祖) but that such rites and reverence were not of a “religious” nature (*jinja hishūkyō ron* 神社非宗教論). According to Sakamoto Koremaru, virtually all Shrine Bureau bureaucrats conducted their work on the basis of a firm belief in the nonreligious nature of shrines, a notion that had become a central part of the prevailing “state ideology.”⁷

An important factor behind the prevalence of the emphasis on “reverence for gods and ancestors” among Shrine Bureau officials was the nature of the education that many received at the Law Faculty of Tokyo Imperial University. In 1891, Hozumi Yatsuka 穂積八束 (1860–1912), who was a professor in the Law Faculty from 1889 to 1912, published an essay in which he criticized the Civil Code that had been compiled under the direction of the French legal scholar Gustave Boissonade (1825–1910) for being incompatible with Japanese customs and values. In this essay, titled “The Civil

5. Miyaji (Harukuni) 1980, p. 6.

6. The consecration ceremonies for Meiji Shrine were held in November 1920, but the construction office was not disbanded until 1927.

7. Sakamoto 2003, p. 308. Recent discussions on this topic are mentioned among others by Isomae Jun'ichi in this volume. For further discussion of some of the arguments advanced at the time, see the chapter by Kate Wildman Nakai.

Code Means the Destruction of Loyalty and Filial Piety,”⁸ Hozumi argued that Japan was a country based on “veneration of ancestors” (*sozenkyō* 祖先教). Seen from this perspective, Shinto shrines were places for expressing profound reverence for the founding gods of the nation and ancestors. Other forms of beliefs or cults traditionally associated with shrines were blackened out. Hozumi’s elder brother Nobushige 穂積陳重 (1856–1926), who was also a professor of law and who took part in drafting a revised version of the Civil Code, shared the same perspective.

Nakagawa Tomojirō,⁹ the head of First Department of the Shrine Bureau,¹⁰ noted at a symposium on the history of the Shrine Bureau held in the 1940s that he had studied under Hozumi Nobushige and that he was asked about the “relation of ancestor belief and law” at his graduation examination. Faithful to his teacher, he explained that ancestor belief was “*keishin sūso*, i.e., showing reverence to shrines and reverence to the ancestors,” which was the foundation of the law in Japan. He went on to explain that, based on this recognition, he had come to realize the necessity to elevate the prestige of shrines.¹¹ According to this view, shrine worship was informed by or even identical with ancestor veneration. Considering the fact that most government bureaucrats at that time graduated from the Faculty of Law at Tokyo Imperial University, we may suppose that Hozumi Nobushige and Hozumi Yatsuka had considerable influence on how these officials interpreted Shinto.

Was this general understanding of Shinto prevalent among Home Ministry bureaucrats held by the “scholar-bureaucrat” Miyaji Naokazu as well?

8. “Minpō idete chūkō horobu” 民法出て忠孝亡ぶ. Hozumi Yatsuka’s essay created a stir, and was a key factor in the postponement of the enactment of the so-called Old Civil Code in 1892. The version of the code subsequently drafted by Hozumi Nobushige and others and finally came into effect in 1898.

9. Nakagawa Tomojirō 中川友次郎 (1873–1945) graduated from Tokyo Imperial University’s Law Faculty in 1897 and was employed the following year in the Home Ministry office responsible for overseeing the reconstruction of Ise Shrine. Later he became head of the Shrine Department within the Bureau of Shrines and Temples and put all his energies in creating an independent Shrine Bureau. Following the establishment of the Shrine Bureau in 1900, he headed it for two terms before assuming other administrative posts, including governor of Gunma prefecture (*Shintō jinmei jiten* 1991, p. 217).

10. The department responsible for overseeing major shrines.

11. Jingiin Kyōmukyoku 1942, p. 24.

Shibata Minoru 柴田實 (1906–1967), a scholar of Japanese cultural history who analyzed Miyaji's "jingi history," answered this question affirmatively, arguing that Miyaji's work is based on the "ideology of Meiji State Shinto" that can be equally found in the *Essays on Shrine Deities* (*Jingi-shi* 神祇志) by the Mito scholar Kurita Hiroshi 栗田寛 (1835–1899). According to this ideology, "kami are people, ancestors; worship and reverence to them is gratitude to the ancestors (*hōhon hanshi* 報本反始) in ritual form."¹² Shibata emphasizes in particular that Miyaji regarded the narratives of *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki* as factually true. This has been pointed out also by Nakamura Naokatsu.¹³

On the other hand, Miyaji certainly did not see ancestral rites as totally subsuming belief in deities. At a meeting of the steering committee for the Committee for the Study of Shrine Administration (Jinja Seido Chōsa Kai 神社制度調査会)¹⁴ held in 1930, Miyaji even stated his opinion that shrines were in fact of a *religious* nature.¹⁵ Thus, even if Miyaji's thinking, broadly speaking, may have fit within the framework of the ideology of Meiji period State Shinto, his concrete view of Shinto was not necessarily in line with the general Shinto interpretation propounded by Home Ministry bureaucrats.

Survey of Shrine Histories

Miyaji Naokazu is generally regarded as having exercised a strong authority over prewar shrine administration as it affected individual shrines throughout the country. Since his main responsibility within the Shrine Bureau was

12. Shibata 1980 (appendix), pp. 84–85. Kurita Hiroshi devoted most of his energies to the completion of the Mito school's 250-year-long project, the *History of Great Japan* (*Dai Nihon-shi* 大日本史), which first appeared in modern print in 1906, seven years after Kurita's death. "Essays" (*shi* 志) on topical issues were an important element of this encyclopedic work, and Kurita was largely responsible for compiling the section of these essays that dealt with deities and shrines.

Hōhon hanshi (lit., "recompensing benefices received from the ancestors and recommitting to the origin"), a Confucian formulation found in Chinese classics such as the *Book of Rites*, was a favorite slogan of Mito thought.

13. Nakamura 1958.

14. For the Committee for the Study of Shrine Administration, see the chapter by Kate Wildman Nakai, p. 117.

15. Sakamoto 2003 (appendix), pp. 299–300.

the “survey of shrine histories,” we need to ask what was the connection between this function and his presumed authority.

As mentioned above, “survey of shrine histories” in the Shrine Bureau was undertaken primarily as part of the procedures for elevating a shrine’s position within the hierarchy of ranks headed by the so-called *kankoku heisha* (state shrines). The motives for seeking a shrine’s elevation and the bodies requesting such a promotion were diverse, but the Shrine Bureau received great numbers of these requests. Careful inspection of a shrine’s background was necessary to decide whether a particular request should be granted or not. This was basically what “survey of shrine histories” at the Shrine Bureau meant.

According to Ōba Iwao 大場磐雄 (1899–1975), who was involved with such research from 1925 to 1947, when a shrine was nominated or applied for promotion, the first step in considering the application was to send the documents submitted by the shrine to the research section, which thereupon conducted an “investigation of pedigree” (*yuisho shirabe* 由緒調) based on them. Only if the documentation passed this inspection did the matter proceed to the next stage of evaluating the shrine’s financial resources and other conditions. Because the research section put particular weight on written records, applicants would at times fabricate documents or borrow them from other shrines.¹⁶

Under these conditions, survey of shrine histories was not simply a matter of objective investigation; it also involved exercise of a certain authority toward shrines. From the time he was appointed to a regular position as research official within the Shrine Bureau, Miyaji held the ultimate responsibility for its shrine investigations. Regardless whether he himself was also interested in such research for academic reasons or not, from the shrines’ point of view it was an expression of administrative authority.

Exceptional shrine rituals

Another major project to which Miyaji contributed during his time in the Shrine Bureau was the “investigation of exceptional shrine rituals” (*tokushu shinji* 特殊神事).¹⁷ Initiated around 1924 by Sagami Shin’ichi 佐上信一

16. Ōba 1967, pp. 15–20.

17. “Exceptional shrine rituals” are defined in the *Great Shinto Encyclopedia* of 1937 as “Rituals of special origin in the history of a particular shrine that do not

(1882–1943), who then headed the Shrine Bureau, this project consisted of a general survey of special rituals that did not accord with the current nationwide ritualistic standards but were peculiar to individual shrines. Information about such rituals was collected from “state shrines” (*kankoku heisha*) throughout the country.¹⁸

The precondition for a category like “exceptional rituals” was the existence of a ritual standard common to all shrines in all parts of the country. Such a standard set of rituals was devised by the government at the beginning of the Meiji period. It consisted of a number of stipulations regarding the rituals to be performed as well as the details of how to conduct them. Based on a draft by Konoe Tadafusa 近衛忠房 (1838–1873), a court noble who was appointed to serve as head priest of Ise Shrine, and Senge Takatomi 千家尊福 (1845–1918), the head priest of Izumo Shrine, these stipulations, which are generally known as “Meiji rituals” (*Meiji saishiki* 明治祭式), were promulgated by the government in 1875. In 1914, a new law on shrine rituals¹⁹ went into even greater detail. In principle, every shrine was to perform rites according to these stipulations, but shrines also had their own particular ceremonies, and these were referred to as “exceptional rites.”²⁰

Another precondition for the identification of a category of “exceptional rituals” was the reshaping of the Shinto clergy through bureaucratization. In the first years of the Meiji period, the government redefined Shinto priests as “priestly officials” (*shinkan* 神官) and held them to be state bureaucrats subject, like other bureaucrats, to transfer from one post to another. Most powerful local shrines had been run by traditional priestly lineages (*shake* 社家), but the government’s new policy on shrines cut the ties between shrines and these families and in place of the latter installed “priestly officials” brought in from elsewhere. Some came to feel, however, that this policy also had the inadvertent effect of weakening reverence towards shrines and belief in their rituals. As Sagami Shin’ichi later put it, the continuous transfer of this new type of shrine priest from one shrine to another had led to a decrease of

accord with the general ritual regulations or customs followed at shrines these days. Often priestly dress differs from the general code in these cases. [...] Also called antique rituals (*koshikisai* 古式祭)” (*Shintō daijiten* 1937, p. 1040).

18. Jingiin Kyōmukyoku 1942, pp. 42–43.

19. *Kankoku heisha ika jinja saishi no rei* 官国幣社以下神社祭祀令, imperial decree no. 10 of Taishō 3 (1914).

20. Mogi 2004.

“private rituals” (*shisai* 私祭) in comparison to “official rituals” (*kansai* 官祭) stipulated by the state. Among such “private rituals,” “exceptional rituals” had suffered all the more. In Sagami’s view, “exceptional rituals” were an effective means for strengthening ties between shrines and parishioners (*ujiko* 氏子) and enhancing reverence for the shrine. Thus he had recommended conducting a survey of these rituals so as to encourage their revival.²¹

In this way, even bureaucrats became aware of the fact that the bureaucratization of priests and the unification of rites might endanger “reverence” for Shinto shrines and seized on “exceptional rituals,” which symbolized the individual features of Shinto shrines that state policy otherwise played down, as offering a clue for overcoming this dilemma.

Miyaji Naokazu agreed to Sagami’s view pointing out that “Meiji rituals” (i.e., those stipulated by the state) tended to be carried out strictly and formalistically, while “exceptional rituals” were treated lightly, almost as if they were something unofficial, and therefore the general public was not even aware of their existence.²² A distinctive feature of Miyaji’s perspective was that he connected these rites with shrine research and stressed their importance as indicators of a given shrine’s special character. While the Shrine Bureau’s survey of shrine histories was done primarily on the basis of historical documents, as described above, it appears that Miyaji also regarded rites as source material for this kind of investigation. More information is needed, however, to decide whether rites were really taken into consideration in the bureau’s research on shrine pedigrees.

One other form of historical investigation that fell under the purview of the Shrine Bureau was that connected to the construction of new shrines or restoration of existing ones. Here the concern, as mentioned above in regard to the building of Meiji Shrine, was to clarify the most appropriate architectural forms.

Miyaji’s role within the sphere of shrine administration was thus basically that of a scholar. If we look only at his research, based on a careful consideration of written sources, his activities were quite in line with modern scholarship’s striving for objectivity. The site where he conducted his research, however, was the meeting point of state authority and various social

21. Jingiin Kyōmukyoku 1942, pp. 42–43.

22. Miyaji’s position is revealed in a lecture on “exceptional rituals” that he gave in March 1925 at the Fifth Seminar for Shinto Priests organized by the Home Ministry. A report of this lecture was published in the magazine *Ōyashima* (Miyaji 1925).

groups (shrine priests, local society, regional government units, etc.). Under these conditions, the decisions made on the basis of his research were a fundamental element in the power wielded by this site.

MIYAJI'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO PRIESTLY EDUCATION

Apart from his activities in the Shrine Bureau, Miyaji is known among present Shinto scholars as the first modern author who created a comprehensive "history of shrine deities," i.e., a general outline of Shinto history. This "*jingi* history" first took shape in seminars that he conducted for shrine priests. Thus to examine the implications of this situation, let us first briefly consider the nature of the prewar training and qualification system for shrine priests and how Miyaji was involved in it.

In 1882, the Institute for Imperial Classics was founded as a private institution where students could acquire qualification as a shrine priest (*shinshoku* 神職). At first the Home Ministry issued instructions indicating that to become a priestly official (*shinkan*) at the lower level of ranked shrines ("shrines of prefectural level and below") one should be a graduate of this institute or to have passed an examination conducted at it or one of its branch offices.²³ In 1886, the institute proposed a system for licensing priests on the basis of knowledge and merit (the so-called *gakkai* 学階 system); this was eventually approved with some revision by the Home Ministry and promulgated in 1890.²⁴

This established a licensing system separate from the specifications for graduating from school. The regulations issued by the government in 1902 for the appointment respectively of priests of "state shrines" and of priests of "prefectural shrine level and below" made a *gakkai* license a necessary

23. "Only persons with a certificate of graduation from the Institute for Imperial Classics or persons with a certificate of successful examination are allowed to apply as priestly officials at shrines of prefectural level and below" (*Naimushō tatsu*, otsu, #46 [1882/8/30]). With regard to imperial and national shrines, the Home Ministry stipulated that head priests (*gūji* 宮司) and vice head priests should be appointed by the government following a recommendation by the Home Minister, while lower priests should be appointed by the respective prefectural government.

24. *Naimushō shirei*, kō, #35 (Kokugakuin Daigaku 1994, p. 191).

qualification in both cases.²⁵ In the case of the former, it was specified that the appointee as priest at a “state shrine” had to have obtained a *gakkai* license from the Institute for Imperial Classics. From 1903, graduates of the several divisions of the Ise Shrine Imperial Academy were also granted qualification to become shrine priests. In 1909, the Home Ministry entrusted the Institute for Imperial Classics with the creation of a new tripartite facility for priestly education. This facility consisted of a regular section for training shrine priests (Shinshoku Kōshūka 神職講習科), a short three-month training course for shrine priests (Shinshoku Kyōshūka 神職教習科), and a short seminar offering training in the performance of rituals (Saishiki Kōshūka 祭式講習科). In this way, a program for priestly education separate from the institute’s normal curriculum was established.

In this period of large-scale reorganization, Miyaji was responsible for lecturing on *jingi* history at the regular and short-term training programs at the Institute for Imperial Classics (the Shinshoku Kōshūka and Shinshoku Kyōshūka). The Institute for Imperial Classics published his lectures at the regular program shortly thereafter as *Jingishi* 神祇史 (History of Shrine Deities, Miyaji 1910). A second volume, *Zoku Jingishi* 続神祇史 (Continued History of Shrine Deities, Miyaji 1912), appeared two years later. These works were much more comprehensive than any previous studies in this field and set a new standard as research studies on *jingi* or Shinto history. At the same time, the fact that Miyaji developed these works in the context of his courses for shrine priests and published them early on as teaching materials also seems to have contributed to his outline of “*jingi* history” becoming a standard reference work in the field of Shinto studies.

As can be gathered from Miyaji’s academic background as a history department graduate as well as from his general historiographical approach, *jingi* history was, in his eyes, a field of Japanese history. Therefore, from the beginning he did not aim at a comprehensive study of “Shinto” in the sense that, for instance, scholars of folklore or religious studies did. Nevertheless, the main arenas for Miyaji’s activities—whether the Shrine Bureau or the

25. *Kankoku heisha oyobi kanbesho shinshoku nin'yō no rei* 官国幣社及神部署神職任用令 (imperial edict #28) and *Fusha kensha ika jinja shinshoku nin'yō kisoku* 府社郡社以下神社神職任用規則 (edict of the Home Ministry 内務省令, #4).

programs for training shrine priests at the Institute for Imperial Classics—were always deeply connected with shrines and “Shinto.”²⁶

“JINGI HISTORY” AND “SHINTO” IN UNIVERSITY TEACHING

In 1918 a turning point occurred in the history of modern higher education in Japan with the enactment of a new University Law. An extraordinary pedagogical commission set up to deliberate on educational needs had pointed in its report to the need to reform the university system so as to develop more fully “cultivation of the human character” and “fostering of a patriotic spirit.” The University Law based on these recommendations set forth conditions for elevating private schools to university status and facilitated the establishment of additional faculties and departments in various fields. One such new department was the position in Shinto studies (*Shintō kōza* 神道講座) inaugurated in 1920 in the Faculty of Letters at Tokyo Imperial University.²⁷ The instrumental figure in the establishment of this position was the professor of Japanese literature Haga Yaichi 芳賀矢一 (1867–1927). In the faculty meeting that debated creating the position, Haga called for it to be put at the head of all others, but this recommendation was rejected. The people charged with offering its lectures were Tanaka Yoshitō 田中義能 (1872–1946), Katō Genchi 加藤玄智 (1873–1965), and Miyaji Naokazu.²⁸

26. Regarding Miyaji’s contribution to priestly education, we should also mention the system of examinations to qualify as a shrine priest developed for those who did not graduate from a Shinto college or take lectures there. As mentioned above, the Home Ministry had envisioned such a system already in 1882 (*Naimushō kunrei* #4), but it was not realized until 1925 (Kokugakuin Daigaku 1994, p. 195), when a committee for overseeing the examination for the upper levels of shrine priests was set up. Miyaji was appointed to serve as an adviser to the committee and was responsible for supervising the examinations on the subject of history. He also discussed the coverage of the examinations in a journal intended for those planning to take them. Again, this was a field where his administrative functions overlapped with his academic activities.

27. See also Hayashi Makoto’s chapter in this volume, pp. 58, 61.

28. On Katō Genchi, see the chapter by Isomae Jun’ichi, pp. 35 and 42. From 1919 until his death in 1927, Haga served as president of Kokugakuin University, where he also played a key role in its elevation to university status under the terms of the same University Law of 1918 (see below).

Miyaji had already begun lecturing on “*jingi* history” in the History Department of Tokyo Imperial University in August 1918.²⁹ This was immediately after the extraordinary pedagogical commission issued its report. When the position in Shinto studies was founded in 1920, Miyaji lectured on the same subject there. As his primary affiliation continued to be with the Shrine Bureau, he undertook these academic activities as an adjunct lecturer. Three years after the founding of the position in Shinto studies, a department office was attached to it, but as Miyaji later wrote, even after that there still was not a full-time professorship, nor, institutionally speaking, were any students formally affiliated with the department.³⁰ The position in Shinto studies thus seems not to have been a full-fledged independent *kōza*, but in actuality was probably nothing more than a facility for offering lectures. After Tanaka and Katō left in 1933, two other adjunct instructors gave lectures on Shinto-related subjects on a temporary basis, but Miyaji, who continued to offer lectures on *jingi* history, seems to have remained as the central figure within the Shinto studies position.

Under the new University Law, changes also took place at Kokugakuin, the educational facility that had developed out of the Institute for Imperial Classics and had become an independent institution in 1890. Under the provisions of the University Law, Kokugakuin was elevated to university status in 1920. In 1922, in addition to his regular position at the Shrine Bureau and his lectures at Tokyo Imperial University, Miyaji was appointed lecturer and in the following year professor at the new Kokugakuin University. Both were adjunct positions. At the same time, he continued to lecture as well in the training programs for shrine priests at the Institute for Imperial Classics proper.

A major shift in the environment surrounding the place of Shinto studies in university education came with the movement toward greater state control over thought and education in the wake of the Manchurian Incident of 1931. In 1935, the Ministry of Education founded the Council for Educational Reform (Kyōgaku Sasshin Hyōgikai 教学刷新評議会) as an advisory organ to provide recommendations for correcting “aberrations” in education “by taking as the basis the true meaning of the *kokutai* 国体 (‘national essence’) and the essential principles of the Japanese spirit.” In other words,

29. On this aspect of Miyaji’s activities, see also Endo 1996a, 1996b.

30. Miyaji 1942.

education was to be reshaped in the spirit of the nationalist ideology that had become more and more essential in the eyes of the state.

Miyaji was a member of this Council for Educational Reform, which in its report on university education put particular emphasis on the establishment of faculties, departments, and positions related to the *kokutai* and Japanese culture. New positions in Japanese thought and theories of the *kokutai* were founded at the Imperial Universities of Tokyo and Kyoto, the two leading institutions of higher education, as well as at the two pedagogically oriented universities (*bunrika daigaku* 文理科大学) in Hiroshima and Tokyo intended particularly to train middle school teachers. The establishment of these positions at the nation's most important academic institutions was intended to foster a reform of education along totalitarian lines.

In the same vein, efforts were made to expand positions in Shinto studies at the Imperial Universities of Tokyo and Kyoto. In Kyoto contributions from the Kyoto Association of Shrine Priests had already made possible the establishment of a position in Shinto studies in 1933, and Miyaji had been lecturing there on *jingi* history. In 1938, the position in Shinto studies at Tokyo Imperial University was endowed with a full professorship for the first time. Miyaji took up that position, resigning as the head of the research section of the Shrine Bureau. He continued to take part in Shrine Bureau functions on an adjunct basis, but from this point the main arena of his activities shifted from governmental administration to the university.

In a period when the state was increasingly promoting nationalism, it is by no means clear whether this tendency can also be detected in Miyaji's academic activities. On the one hand, he took part in several projects related to nationalism. He served as a member of the general committee for the association established in December 1933 to commemorate the six hundredth anniversary of Emperor Go-Daigo's Kenmu Restoration. In June 1935 the Japanese History Department, the Japanese Literature Department, and the Shinto Studies Departmental Office at Tokyo Imperial University jointly organized a symposium to commemorate the six hundredth anniversary of the death of the imperial loyalist Kusunoki Masashige 楠木正成; as noted above, Miyaji was the key figure in the university's Shinto studies program at this time. In October of the same year a committee was established to prepare for celebrations in 1940 of the 2,600th anniversary of the founding of the Japanese empire, and Miyaji was appointed to it as an adjunct adviser. On

the other hand, I have not found any materials that offer evidence of his own motives and sentiments at these occasions.

New Interpretations of Shinto

As regards his academic studies, in this period Miyaji seems to have arrived at a new understanding of the history of Shinto in the ancient period. This can be seen in the notes for the lectures he gave at the university in 1936, which were later published as *Preliminaries of Shinto History* (*Shintōshi josetsu* 神道史序説) and in *Intellectual Trends in Shinto* (*Shintō shichō* 神道思潮, 1943).³¹ In these works, Miyaji interpreted Shinto history as the history of the relations between *kami* and men. Moreover, he explained the development of *kami* worship as an evolutionary process leading from individual belief to lineage-centered belief to national belief. This new interpretation can be gathered in particular from Miyaji's explanations concerning Amaterasu.

Miyaji assumed that lineage deities in the ancient period derived from two congruent processes: the deification of human beings and the anthropomorphization of deities. When one lineage succeeded in unifying the country, they attributed this to their lineage deity, which was consequently worshiped by not only the clan but the whole country. On the other hand, there were also nature deities, among which the sun deity came to hold the highest status. On the grounds that they were both of the highest status, the imperial lineage deity and the sun deity were identified; this was how Amaterasu came into being. According to Miyaji, the development of Amaterasu was therefore at the same time the development of a national deity.

In this interpretation, it seems as if Miyaji applied the evolutionary notion of "from polytheism to monotheism" to the history of Shinto. At the same time, he appears to have moved away from viewing *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki* as a repository of historical facts. Or perhaps he was seeking an explanation of the origins of the *kami* and the state that was both organic and rational. It is certainly not impossible to surmise a nationalistic motivation behind these ideas. Given the present scarcity of evidence, however, it is difficult to arrive at a final conclusion in this respect.

Another noteworthy aspect of Miyaji's research in this period is that it was introduced to an international audience by the historian Asakawa

31. See Endō 1996b.

Kan'ichi 朝河貫一 (1873–1948), who in 1931 published an article on the place of religion in the social and economic history of Japan in the famous French journal *Annales d'Histoire Économique et Sociale*.³² In this article, Asakawa referred in particular to Miyaji's study of the Suwa Shrine 諏訪大社,³³ which he praised as exemplary from a socioeconomic history point of view since Miyaji laid out the shrine's development from its origins to its acquisition of status in the medieval period as a powerful landholder. Besides Miyaji, Asakawa also mentioned Tsuji Zennosuke's 辻善之助 *History of Japanese Buddhism* (*Nihon bukkyōshi no kenkyū* 日本仏教史之研究, 1931), Hiraizumi Kiyoshi's 平泉澄 *Relations between Shrines, Temples, and Society in the Medieval Period* (*Chūsei ni okeru shaji to shakai to no kankei* 中世における社寺と社会との関係, 1926), and a study on regional branches of the Ise Shrines by Mikami Sukeaki 三上左明 (1899–1931), an author whom Miyaji also evaluated highly. Asakawa's appreciation of Miyaji's work suggests a need to reconsider its implications within the context of prewar studies of socioeconomic history as well as the history of religion.

THE DEMISE OF STATE SHINTO AND MIYAJI'S POSTWAR ACTIVITIES

After Japan's defeat in World War II, the circumstances surrounding Shinto shrines changed radically. The so-called Shinto Directive issued by the General Headquarters of the Allied Powers in December 1945 effectively abolished “the protection, support, supervision and proliferation of State Shinto or Shrine Shinto by the government,” as was indicated already by the title of this legal document.³⁴ In effect, the national status hitherto held by shrines was denied, and the various institutions linked to Shinto and shrines with which Miyaji had been involved were disbanded. The Jingiin—the enlarged version of the Bureau of Shrines, established in 1940—was dismantled and the establishment of any other governmental office with similar functions was thereafter forbidden. Already before the Shinto Directive was issued,

32. Asakawa 1931 [1993].

33. Miyaji 1931.

34. The directive's title reads: “Matters relating to the abolition of government protection, support, supervision and proliferation of State Shinto or Shrine Shinto.”

people associated with the Institute for Imperial Classics, the National Association of Shrine Priests, and the Ise Shrine Service Foundation had jointly debated how to deal with the changes that were sure to come and had arrived at a decision to try to secure shrines' survival by having them become "religious" institutions. Miyaji undertook to draft a "Prospectus on Establishing Shrine Religion" (*Jinjakyō setsuritsu shuisho* 神社教設立趣意書), but opinions diverged, and ultimately it was decided to try to win recognition for shrines as public interest corporations (*kōeki hōjin* 公益法人). After several twists and turns, the Association of Shinto Shrines (*Jinja Honchō* 神社本庁) was founded in January 1946 as a religious corporate body. At the same time, the system of official shrine ranks was abolished, which obviated further governmental administrative involvement in research on the basis for assigning shrine ranks.

As regards priestly education, the Institute for Imperial Classics, which the Home Ministry had entrusted with that function in the prewar period, lost its public, governmental character. While Kokugakuin University was allowed to stay in existence, public support of priestly education was forbidden.

Academic research and teaching on Shinto was likewise permitted only at private universities. The positions in Shinto studies at Tokyo and Kyoto Imperial Universities were abolished, as was the Ise Shrine Imperial Academy (*Jingū Kōgakkan*), which had achieved university status in 1940. With the abolition of the position in Shinto studies at Tokyo Imperial University, the departmental office attached to it was transformed in March 1946 into the Office for Research on Popular Religion (*Minkan Shūkyō Chōsashitsu* 民間宗教調査室). Miyaji remained there until the end of the same month, when he reached retirement age and left the university world.

Outside the university, however, he remained active as the head of the private Institute for Popular Religious Studies (*Kokumin Shinkō Kenkyūjo* 国民信仰研究所), set up with contributions from the shrine world. Moreover, feeling that the Occupation authorities did not deal appropriately with the so-called sacred or *shintai* 神体 mountains,³⁵ he initiated a study group on

35. *Shintai* hills and mountains were in many cases the object of worship (*shintai*) of a certain shrine. The most famous example is Mt. Miwa in Nara prefecture, worshiped by the Ōmiwa 三輪 Shrine. [Translator's note.]

mountain cults, which published an important series on this topic.³⁶ Nevertheless, it appears as if Miyaji began to step back from active research. In 1947, a newly founded Study Group on Shinto Religion (Shintō Shūkyō Kenkyūkai 神道宗教研究会) included figures such as Ōba Iwao, Kojima Shōsaku 小島鉦作, and Kondō Yoshihiro 近藤喜博, who were at the same time members of another study group, the Shintōgaku Kenkyūkai 神道学研究会, headed by Miyaji, but Miyaji himself did not join the new group. Moreover, he almost completely ceased to publish in academic journals. According to Nishida Nagao 西田長男, Miyaji's student in his later years, by that time Miyaji had become just a gentle old man.³⁷

In these last years, Miyaji's interests focused on compiling a comprehensive history of Hotaka 穂高 Shrine in Azumino, Nagano prefecture. Since his study was based on materials stored by the shrine, Miyaji traveled quite frequently to Azumino. In May 1949, immediately after having finished the manuscript of his study, Miyaji, who was then in the sixty-fourth year of his life, died unexpectedly in the house of a parishioner of Hotaka Shrine.

SUMMARY

To analyze Shinto studies under the influence of State Shinto, it is essential to clarify the concrete circumstances under which such studies were carried out. As we have seen, the sites of Miyaji Naokazu's major activities were the Shrine Bureau, where he was involved in administration as well as research on shrine histories, the Institute for Imperial Classics, where he participated in the training of shrine priests, and Tokyo Imperial University and Kokugakuin, where he taught and conducted academic research. Among these institutions, the Shrine Bureau was the arena most central to his activities. While standing at the center of shrine administration and conducting the type of research demanded by his position, he also pursued his own studies. Neither was his position at the Shrine Bureau without connection to his participation in the training of priests and university education. Miyaji's wide range of activities was therefore a product of the complex relations

36. See Nishida 1965. The series *Collected writings on mountain cults (Sangaku shinkō sōsho, 1958–1959)* included four volumes by Ōba Iwao, Hori Ichirō, Miyaji Naokazu, and Higo Kazuo.

37. Nishida 1965, p. 155.

between the different institutions related to Shinto and Shinto shrines. It remains the topic of later studies to analyze these relations and Miyaji's role therein in detail.

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The Ethnographer, the Scholar, and the Missionary

French Studies on Shinto at the Beginning of the Twentieth Century

JEAN-PIERRE BERTHON

In late nineteenth-century France, Japanese studies in general and Shinto studies in particular were not yet part of a well-structured academic milieu as were, for instance, Chinese or Indian studies. Japanese studies in France reached a scientific level comparable to English and German studies on Japan only in the 1920s, when two members of the *Ecole française d'Extrême-Orient*, Noël Péri (1865–1922) and Claude Maître (1876–1925), published on Buddhism and *noh* (Péri) and on Buddhist art and historical literature (Maître).

Within the topical framework of this volume, I would like to start a little earlier and present three largely forgotten figures of French studies on Japan who, with somewhat qualified success, left their imprint on the “prehistory” of French research on Japanese religion, with special reference to Shinto. The three are George Bousquet (1846–1937), Michel Revon (1867–1943), and Jean-Marie Martin (1886–1975). Each represents an emblematic figure in French contacts with Japan during the Meiji era: the “travel-ethnographer,” the “scholar,” and the “missionary.” Another important intermediary of this sort is the learned “antiquarian” and connoisseur of aesthetics, art, and religion, typified by Emile Guimet (1836–1918), the founder of today’s *Musée national des arts asiatiques*.¹ In line with the focus of this volume, however, I will concentrate here on the other three figures.

The author wishes to thank Wolfram Manzenreiter of Vienna University for his valuable comments and suggestions related to this essay as well as Bernhard Scheid for his numerous questions that helped to improve it.

1. Frank 1986.

In a recent article on French opinions about Japan at the time of the Russo-Japanese War, Patrick Beillevaire points out that Japan was commonly regarded as a “secular (*laïc*) empire” at the beginning of the twentieth century.² France, on the other hand, at the time was deeply immersed in the debate over the separation of Church and State. Although French accounts on Japan contain detailed information on Buddhist and Shinto places of worship, deities, and festivals, and on material manifestations of religious matters, the authors typically arrive at the conclusion that the Japanese are indifferent towards religion: “Buddhists, Shintoists, they do not know themselves what they are, or rather, they are one or the other, or even both, depending upon time or occasion,” writes André Bellesort, an essayist, traveler, and member of the Académie Française.³ In general, Bellesort regards Shinto more favorably than Buddhism. “One [Shintoism] breathes primitive innocence and the bountifulness of things (*la bonté des choses*); the other [Buddhism] exhales an infinite sadness and an odor of ashes.” Regarding the importance of Shinto in the life of the Japanese, Bellesort maintains:

Shintoism is not only the worship of the Imperial Majesty; it is also the religion of Japanese nationalism. [...] Young children are presented to the protecting Shinto deity when they visit the local sanctuary (*miya*). Whatever religion they choose—Confucianism, Buddhism, or even foreign religions—the Japanese soul will keep forever the vainglorious and naïve imprint of the former gods of the country.⁴

GEORGE BOUSQUET: OBSERVATIONS AND REFLECTIONS OF A TRAVEL-ETHNOGRAPHER

Bellesort’s statements on Japanese religion seem to reflect the perspective of George Bousquet (1846–1937) whose influence on French travelers to Japan has been profound. Apart from Gustave Boissonade de Fontarabie (1825–1910), who was charged with drafting the Japanese penal and civil code in the Meiji era, George Bousquet is probably the best-known French

2. Beillevaire 2000, p. 214.

3. Bellesort 1902, p. 189.

4. Bellesort 1902, p. 197.

legal scholar sent to Japan. As a legal adviser to the Japanese government, the young Bousquet—he was only twenty-seven years old when he arrived—stayed in Japan from 1872 to 1876. Together with Boissonade he taught French language and law at several Japanese law schools that had been established shortly before his arrival.

In spite of his juridical preoccupations, Bousquet was fond of long journeys and traveled widely in Japan. He could not access the remote provinces of the empire without Japanese guides but in contrast to “ordinary travelers” he commanded some elementary Japanese. *Le Japon de nos jours et les échelles de l'Extrême-Orient*,⁵ the book I would like to present briefly, is Bousquet's best-known work and one of the most read reports on Japan at the end of the nineteenth century.⁶ In the foreword to this eyewitness account, he writes that he discovered “a civilization older, equally sophisticated, and not less mature than ours.” While not an ethnographer by academic training, Bousquet stresses the necessity of observing the country firsthand before trying to understand its political and social system: “If one wants to learn about the political and social conditions of Japan, it is first necessary to go across the land, visit temples, study the inhabitants and their customs, question its institutions, and gradually penetrate up to the very heart of the race.”⁷ Spending time among the common people is the prerequisite to discover “the secret of the primitive customs and the original civilization of Japan,” meaning the customs and manners as they were in ancient Japan. In the following narrative, however, Bousquet tends to emphasize the vices and shortcomings

5. “Today's Japan and the Scales of the Far East.” Bousquet 1877, two volumes of 428 and 469 pages respectively. The chapter “Religion” first appeared in *Revue des deux Mondes* (Bousquet 1876, p. 297–341) under the title “La religion au Japon. La rivalité du shintô et du bouddhisme, le dogme chrétien devant les philosophes japonais.”

6. This wide readership is one reason why I take this author as a representative of the “informed travelers” to Japan of the time. Other examples include George Weulersse (1903), a historian and holder of a scholarship from the French government, active in Japan at the beginning of the twentieth century, or the above-mentioned André Bellesort (1902), correspondent from Japan for *Revue des deux Mondes* in 1895. On French travelers to Japan, see the valuable anthology edited by Patrick Beillevaire (2001).

7. Bousquet 1877 (vol. 1), pp. 48–49.

of the Japanese rather than their good qualities.⁸ His ethnographic approach notwithstanding, he even looks at times with contempt on Japanese culture and society.

The structure of the book is quite unusual, since it combines descriptions of the country with personal reflections. While the first part of the first volume is entitled “Outside(s)” (*Les Dehors*) and the second part “Internal Life” (*La Vie interne*), in fact all kinds of ethnographic observations—based not only on Bousquet’s travel records, but also on moral, economic, political, artistic, and religious considerations, not free from value judgments—appear indiscriminately throughout the entire text. A kind of appendix added to the end of the book explains its subtitle, “Scales of the Far East”; it is the account of the author’s long return “from Yedo to Paris” by way of Hong Kong, Canton, Macao, Manila, Singapore, Java, Ceylon, and Aden.

In his general introduction to Shinto, Bousquet writes about the resurrection of “pure Shinto,” which he defines as “the cosmogonical and religious theory that attributes a divine origin to the ‘mikadonian race’ [sic].” He wonders “with many sinologists, whether the *kami* (or ‘spirits’) cult finds its historical root in primitive Chinese religion with which Shinto presents striking analogies.”⁹ On the other hand, he relates Shinto myths to classical Greek mythology, since both share a similar kind of pantheism. In spite of many oversimplifications, his observations are quite original since they consist of two kinds of discourse: a learned discourse based on published sources (which he sometimes forgets to mention) and a discourse drawn from his personal experiences. Based on his observations of Shinto ceremonies Bousquet maintains that Japan’s primitive cults are little more than elementary forms of ritualism. Noting the absence of pious ceremonies at regular intervals as in the monotheistic religions of Europe, he writes: “Every single *kami* has one or several days dedicated to its memory, during which the people are engaged in festivities around the *kami*’s temple or ‘*mya* 社’ (sic): they do not revere the *kami*, they honor him.”¹⁰ He adds that a great number of these *miya* are abandoned or closed, and that the others are run by simple laymen who are their caretakers.

8. For this peculiar point, see Siary 1990. On Bousquet’s work in general, see also the critical review by Thomas Baty in *Monumenta Nipponica* (Baty 1953, pp. 70–72), an important contribution on European sources of knowledge about Japan.

9. Bousquet 1877 (vol. 2), p. 68.

10. Bousquet 1877 (vol. 2), p. 71.

According to Bousquet, Shinto does not “move” the Japanese and does not count among their major preoccupations. “The *kami* way is filled with shortcomings”: it teaches nothing (apart from ancestor worship) and lacks a code of morality or rules of behavior because “according to the learned Shinto theologians, the inhabitants of the empire of the rising sun, having been created by the gods, naturally possess the knowledge of good and evil.” Bousquet, however, concludes from this lack of an explicit moral code that “One can see how the absence of a moral law leads to the theory of passive obedience.” He goes on to describe in great detail the concrete measures taken by the Meiji government in order to restore *kami* cults to the detriment of Buddhism. To give just one example, he deals quite extensively with a ceremony held July 17, 1873, at the Shiba temple (Zōjōji 増上寺) in Tokyo where Shinto emblems—a mirror and a sacred paper strip (*gohei* 御幣)—were installed “in place of the foreign idols,” i.e., Buddhist statues.

In line with his conviction that the visible manifestations of religion must be studied among the people, Bousquet traveled not only to regions open to foreigners but also remote areas, and reported on pilgrimage sites, Shinto and Buddhist funerals, ancestor cults, and annual events (*nenjū gyōji* 年中行事). These ethnographical notes are dotted with severe criticism of Japanese religiosity—the “primitive cult” (Shinto) is described as a kind of “obtuse paganism”—and its relatively weak influence on contemporary Japanese society in general.

As Bousquet saw it, “there is no possibility that Shinto will ever take the place of the ‘great religion’ [Buddhism],¹¹ as professed by a large majority of the Japanese, because to this end it would need a symbol, a dogma, a moral doctrine, everything that gives vitality to and facilitates the propagation of a religious faith” (p. 78). Concerning the place of the Japanese emperor within Shinto ideology, Bousquet, in line with most essays written in France at the time, maintains that it will hardly continue in the years to come, even if the emperor’s divinity is often mentioned. Instead, he notes that “in order to follow the ‘*kami* way’ it suffices to obey the Mikado’s will. This is how the absence of a moral law leads to the theory of a passive obedience” (p. 76). Although this “*politique* of Shinto,” to use Bousquet’s terminology, has not

11. This is not to say that Bousquet regards Buddhism as a better religion than Shinto. While recognizing its capacity to attract people, he denies its merit for the individual, Buddhism being a religion of “vanity,” “nothingness,” and “illusion.”

been respected by “men in high positions, who often deceived the imperial majesty,” he adds that this “dogma” has nevertheless remained, as it were, rooted in the popular consciousness.

Bousquet’s description of the religious situation less than ten years after the political revolution that, in principle at least, restored the emperor to power and established a kind of civic ideology around him, is again in congruence with other French travelers’ accounts of the time:

While Buddhism is Japan’s dominant religion, there is, strictly speaking, no state religion. According to variations in political circumstances, one kind of worship can be favored more than another; but none is the object of exclusive protection. [...] The government is laic and worries very little about the “state of consciousness.” From its point of view, there is one single dogma that replaces all religious dogmas, namely the infallibility of power.¹²

This interpretation presupposes the priority of the collective versus the individual. “Incapable of formulating a line of conduct for himself, the private individual is readily subjected to the line imposed on him” (p. 129). The close connection between religious indifference on the one hand and full devotion to authority on the other is indeed one of the commonplaces in the descriptions of Japanese manners of the time. It can be found, for instance, in Rudolf [Rodolphe] Lindau’s *Un Voyage autour du Japon* (published in Paris, 1864), which may have been one of Bousquet’s sources of information.

In addition, Bousquet mentions the difficulties Christianity encountered in Japan and predicts nothing good about its future. All in all he seems extremely pessimistic concerning the potential for Christianity’s success in Japan: “We should accept that there are peoples who do not worry about Christianity.”¹³ Bousquet seems to reach this conclusion not so much from

12. Bousquet 1877 (vol. 2), p. 126.

13. Bousquet 1877 (vol. 2), p. 132. Bousquet even provides a detailed review of the violently anti-Christian manifesto *Benmō* by the eminent late Edo Confucian scholar Yasui Chūhei (aka Sokken, 1799–1876), quoting an English translation by John Gubbins, which was published in Yokohama in 1875 as “*Bemmo*”, or an “*Exposition of Error*”: *Being a Treatise Directed against Christianity* (Bousquet, 1877 [vol. 2], pp. 120–25). Since there was also a German translation done at the same time, there must have been considerable interest in the work by the foreign community.

the Japanese adherence to Shinto or Buddhist cults, but rather from the absence of a moral system. This criticism may have been related to his work as a legal adviser to the Japanese government. According to Bousquet, the Japanese lack what only Christianity could bring them: a doctrine of good and evil. For want of this knowledge, they are “incapable of great virtues.”

MICHEL REVON: SHINTO MYTHS “IN THE LIGHT OF COMPARATIVE SCIENCE”

Michel Revon (1867–1943) left his mark on the history of Japanese studies in France as the first holder of chair of “Japanese civilization,” established in 1920, at the Faculté des Lettres of the University of Paris, where Revon taught Japanese literature and history.¹⁴ A brilliant jurist and a doctor in law, Revon had been invited by the Japanese government to come to Japan as a legal adviser to the Ministry of Justice, succeeding Georges Appert, another French jurist. During his stay 1893 to 1899, he also taught French law at Tokyo’s Imperial University (Teikoku Daigaku). At the same time, Revon became interested in Japanese culture and began to research Japanese literature, religion, and art history (in 1896, he even completed a doctoral thesis on the painter Hokusai, which he sent to the University of Paris). After his return to France in 1899, he became active in various academic circles. Besides a widely acclaimed anthology of Japanese literature (Revon 1910), he published several studies on *norito* (Revon 1908a, 1908b, 1913) and an imposing work on Shinto mythology (Revon 1904, 1907), which I take as the main source for my analysis of his views of Shinto.

Initially, Michel Revon envisioned his study of Shinto as the first volume, entitled *Primitive Japan*, of a comprehensive history of Japanese civilization. He changed his plans, however, since this would imply that Shinto was a primitive cult rather than a proper “religion” in the general understanding of the time. Revon was extremely critical of such a conception. He considered it inconceivable that a people as advanced as the Japanese should have existed entirely without religious dogmas, sacred books, or moral codes, as, for instance, Basil H. Chamberlain had maintained in his *Things Japanese*

14. A chair in Japanese language had been established already in 1863 at the École des Langues Orientales; the initial appointee was Léon de Rosny, 1837–1914.

(1890). Revon therefore decided to deepen his knowledge of Shinto based on the abundant research published by his predecessors and on recent findings in the field of history and ethnography of religion. In the end, however, he focused less on issues of dogma or morality than on an attempt to recover Shinto's original character as a "natural religion."

Revon's conception of Shinto started from the hypothesis that "its national side lets us penetrate the spirit of Japanese civilization, while its universal side could cast some light on the general history of religions, as soon as it is illuminated by scientific comparison."¹⁵ To these ends, he planned to restore primitive Shinto by separating it from "forgeries" and "sophistications" and then to compare its numerous myths and rituals with mythologies and religious practices from other cultures. This is the method Revon followed in his studies of *norito* rituals. One can perceive here the influence of Ernest Satow¹⁶ — the "first of the Japanists," as Revon calls him — whose ambition was to demonstrate that Shinto could have been the oldest of the "natural religions" of humanity.¹⁷

Revon's scientific project is therefore to "study Shinto in the light of comparative science." Writing about the sacred books of Japan and the rituals recorded in them, Revon notes: "These religious rites reveal today a meaning that neither indigenous commentators nor European translators have been able to grasp until now."¹⁸ His plan was to study first "the theoretical, then the practical side of this primitive religion, i.e., Shinto gods on the one hand, Shinto rituals on the other."¹⁹ In the end, however, he did not find the time to write the planned second volume on rituals and just gave an outline of his as-

15. Revon 1907, pp. 14–15.

16. Articles by Ernest Satow (1843–1929), such as "The Revival of Pure Shiñtau" (Satow 1875) or "Ancient Japanese Rituals" (Satow 1879–1881) published in *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan*, were a profound source of influence on Revon's reflection about "real Shinto," or, in Satow's words, "the belief actually held and the rites practised by the Japanese people before the introduction of Buddhism and the Chinese Philosophy" (Satow 1879–1881 [part I], p. 95).

17. Revon's approach also shows parallels with that of W. G. Aston, whose own study of Shinto, *Shinto: The Way of the Gods*, was published in 1905, or with the approach of Karl Florenz (see Bernhard Scheid's chapter in this volume, pp. 237–39). Of course, Revon differs with Aston on the interpretation of specific points, as for instance the nature of *norito*.

18. Revon 1913, p. 23.

19. Revon 1913, pp. 16–17.

sumptions in his studies on *norito* published in 1908 and 1913. In the lineage of Frazer, Tylor, and Mauss, and faithful to the distinction drawn between magic and religion, Revon considered *norito* (“the central point of ancient worship”), not as “prayers”—the term by which they were rendered in English by the pioneers of Japanese studies—but as “magic formulas,” i.e., “an order, or an action forced on the gods, making it possible to tame them.”²⁰ Revon based this interpretation on examples drawn from different peoples and civilizations, especially ancient Greece and India.

For Revon, the supernatural world of the gods was a mirror of the natural world as the Japanese in the ancient past observed or imagined it. In this sense, study of the gods will naturally lead to a study of ancient Japan. Thus, Revon, who was actually a good philologist with a solid sociological and ethnographical background, embarked on a “systematic” investigation of Shinto deities, comprising their origins, types, nature, geographical environment, and history. The proposed method was as follows: First, one should study the old documents as raw materials without any influence from commentators; second, one should compare the religious ideas of the Japanese within time and space, thereby “casting light on the ancient documents with the use of contemporary beliefs [...]” However, “to avoid any confusion with Buddhist and Confucian concepts, one must observe these beliefs only among common people, preferably in remote villages that still preserve their old customs.”²¹

This stress on folklore studies appears to resemble the approach of Yanagita Kunio 柳田国男 (1875–1962), but Revon’s and Yanagita’s aims were actually diametrically opposed to each other. Whereas Yanagita tried to rediscover specifically Japanese ancient beliefs (*koyū shinkō* 固有信仰) by studying the practices of the common people (*jōmin* 常民), Revon—in accordance with Satow—expected to find one of the “natural religions” of humanity in “ancient Shinto.” Thus, Revon’s Shinto gods are ultimately the gods “of all the primitive religions, sharing the same origin, the same evolution, and the same myths” (p. 17).

Confronted with an abundance of deities—“nature gods” and “spirit-gods,” “naturistic gods” and “animistic gods,” “precise gods related to some natural object” and “amorphous gods wandering in the invisible world”—Revon employs a highly sophisticated classificatory system consisting of two

20. Revon 1908b, p. 214.

21. Revon 1907, p. 16, note 1.

general categories: “well-identified gods with a name deriving from natural phenomena” and “animistic gods and indistinct or anonymous spirits.” These categories are further subdivided into more specific types defined by secondary characteristics. Some of these specific types seem related to his personal fondness of literature.²² For example “myths that do not aim to satisfy a desire for knowledge, but simply a pleasure to tell stories,” a pleasure that constitutes a “common heritage of humanity” according to Revon.

The critical apparatus that accompanies Revon’s text is impressive. In an abundant number of footnotes, sometimes covering up to 90 percent of the entire page, Revon not only compares Shinto cults and customs with examples from other civilizations, but also discusses different points of view advanced by other scholars. In one case, for instance, Revon devotes a footnote of three consecutive pages (pp. 27–29) to the description of a meeting of the Hikaku Shūkyō Gakkai 比較宗教学会 (the first Japanese society for the study of comparative religions, established in 1896), held in Tokyo in 1899. In this meeting, the etymology of the term *kami* was discussed with great vigor.

In his report of this meeting, Revon echoes ideas about the “feeble religious feelings” of the Japanese that we have already encountered above with Bousquet and others: “They have an easy but not very fervid piety. They venerate rather than revere. They are simply courteous towards the gods as they are towards everything *superior*.”²³ The difficulty of defining the term *kami* reflects this indifference, according to Revon. He goes on to comment on no less than ten explanations of *kami* based on the etymology of this word, including one by Hirata Atsutane 平田篤胤 and another by Takahashi Gorō 高橋五良, quoted from the latter’s work *Shintō shinron* 神道新論, published in 1880. Coming back to the 1899 meeting, Revon further reports that “the Japanese scholars parted without being able to find a conclusion” and summarizes their debate as follows: “All in all, these etymologies are of later invention, and the only acceptable etymology is the one based on the general meaning of the word *kami* in the Japanese language, which simply means by *kami* ‘superior’” (p. 28).

22. Indeed, Revon is better known and praised in France for his *Anthologie de la littérature japonaise des origines au XXe siècle*, published in 1910, than for his work on Japanese religions and rituals.

23. Revon 1907, p. 27; emphasis in the original.

Such a conclusion follows Revon's motto: "Find the original element under the varnish of civilization." Thus, Revon tries to eliminate the Chinese elements. After arriving at a "pure Shinto" in this way, he connects its elements, such as the worship of the sun or the moon, to contemporary Japanese practices. By doing so, he hopes to be able to link Shinto texts and Shinto rituals with the cosmogonical myths of other peoples. Yet his ultimate aim to demonstrate the universalism of Japanese religious creeds and behaviors sometimes leads him to ungrounded generalizations. If, for instance, some foreign scholars maintain that a given myth is of Chinese origin while Japanese scholars insist on its native character, Revon takes this as evidence that the myth in question is "Chinese and Japanese at the same time" and therefore "universal." On the whole, Revon wants to remind us that Japanese myths contain too many universal characteristics to be able to determine independent origin or specific influence, for "the natural evolution of Shinto seems to us [...] similar to that of all the primitive religions."²⁴ For him, the life of the gods should be seen as a mirror of the material, moral, and social life of the first inhabitants of Japan.

Revon regards himself as a faithful chronicler of a lost world that died with the introduction of Buddhism, or rather, the introduction of elements from continental civilization. In the last chapter of his book, which is given the somewhat nostalgic title "The end of the gods," Revon maintains that Buddhist or Confucian doctrines should have been refuted from the very moment they entered Japan: "As soon as Buddhism appears, Shinto is lost, [...] as can be demonstrated by the fact that] from the middle of the sixth century, foreign influences affect the old pantheon and bring it to ruin."²⁵ In this short chapter, he summarizes all the "strange metamorphoses" of Shinto, from the invention of "riyôbou-shinntô" and the continental influence of "Yinn and the Yang" and the "Yih-king" to the awkward zeal of Motoori and Hirata who "bring close to them the opponent that they intend to overturn." Then, regarding the religious situation of the modern period, Revon concludes: "But quite to the contrary, the savage apostles of religious nationalism accepted everything from abroad that they seemed to want to exclude. They felt that the unpolished religion of their forefathers could not satisfy modern intelligence" (p. 388). Between the lines, one can feel that Revon hoped for a true

24. Revon 1907, p. 58.

25. Revon 1907, p. 383.

recovery of Shinto, but was frustrated in this by the continuous emergence of other religious currents—the revival of pure Shinto by the Wagakusha 和学者, the preachers of Shingaku 心学, and the first new religions (Tenri-kyō 天理教 and Renmon-kyō 連門教)—which, gradually, from the eighteenth century, bereaved Shinto of its authentic attributes, starting with its “antique divine figures.” “It is in vain that the Japanese government, after the Meiji Revolution of 1868, tried to build up again these fallen deities” (p. 389). The attempt to reconstruct original Shinto in order “to increase the glory of the dynasty was useless.”

All in all, Revon says little about the religious situation of Japan at his time. Although he took the opportunity to present his general view on modern Japan at a conference held in 1904 at the Sorbonne, he scarcely mentioned religious aspects. He simply pointed out the vanity of the efforts of “our missionaries” to preach Catholicism to a people that does not need a “new Church” in that the Meiji government had just enacted the full separation of Buddhism (Revon calls it the “official church”) from the state.²⁶ In the concluding remarks of *Le Shinntoïsme*, he notes sadly that the forced conversion to the “new worship” did not change a single thing in people’s attitudes: they continue to preserve their “Buddhist superstitions.” While the Meiji Restoration, “this daring attempt,” had been successful from a political point of view, it failed in its approach to religious matters, since the “official worship did not have any echo inside people’s heart.”²⁷ Nevertheless, Revon continues to believe that in spite of the abandonment of the former gods and “the death of the old Shinto for ever, the heart of the Japanese remains faithful to the spirit of this religion [Shinto]. [...] The two thousand year old sun always glitters on the mountains of the divine archipelago” (p. 391).

In conclusion, Revon differs from Bousquet and Martin, to be discussed below, in that his work exhibits strong personal feelings and great sympathies for Japan and its culture. Published in a period of intellectual effervescence in the social sciences, when several schools had already investigated a host of religious materials from ancient or non-Western cultures and begun to discuss problems of methodology—not to speak of the controversies surrounding totemism or the concept of magic—Revon’s writings on Shinto did not receive much praise. Marcel Mauss, for instance, wrote in a short but

26. Revon 1904, p. 26.

27. Revon 1907, p. 390.

extremely critical review of *Le Shinntoïsme* in *L'Année sociologique*: "Mr. Revon continues the publication of his general articles on Shintoism. They are mainly directed towards mythology and the identification of gods. This second-hand work is merely a collection of references, and its only originality lies in its—sometimes inaccurate—comparisons with other religions."²⁸

JEAN-MARIE MARTIN: A STUDY OF SHINTO MYTHS BASED ON JAPANESE SOURCES

The missionary Jean-Marie Martin was born in 1886 in a small village belonging to the diocese of Tarbes, in the Pyrenees. In 1903, he entered the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris, a Roman Catholic missionary order. Two months after his ordination to the priesthood in March 1910, he left France and went to Japan (Nagasaki). Apart from military service during the First World War, he remained in Japan until his death in 1975 in Fukuoka. Gifted with great linguistic and intellectual talents, he studied Japanese under Father Eugène Joly (1871–1966) in Miyazaki, but it was while working with Father Emile Raguét (1854–1929)—famous for his useful French-Japanese dictionary and his excellent translation of the New Testament into classical Japanese (*bungotai* 文語体)—that Martin decided to devote himself to the study of Shinto. During a long stay in Southern Kyushu (Kagoshima, Moji, Kumamoto), he frequently met Buddhist monks as well as Shinto priests and began to develop a specific interest in Shinto. After several years of textual research, he finally published his views on Shinto in two volumes that appeared in 1924 and 1927 respectively.²⁹ In 1938 he was called back to the Fukuoka Mission in order to prepare an enlarged edition of Father Raguét's dictionary. To this work, which was to become his opus magnum, he dedicated fifteen years.

28. Mauss 1906, p. 295. In the same review, written after the first edition of *Le Shintoïsme*, Mauss is, by contrast, quite enthusiastic about a lengthy article on Japanese literature by Claude Maître (Maître 1903–1904): "The principal sociological results are interesting assumptions regarding the formation of the mythological and ritual tradition of Japan, and particularly about the importance of the myths and legends of the clans and the great noble families of these clans."

29. *Le Shintoïsme, religion nationale. I. Les Origines. Essais d'histoire ancienne du Japon* (1924) and part 2, *Le Shintoïsme ancien* (1927).

As regards Shinto, Martin asked an apparently simple question: Is Shinto a religion? The question became complicated, however, since the official answer by the Japanese Ministry of Education was that “Shinto is not a religion; it is only the civil worship of the dynasty’s ancestors, the great men of Japan, and the known or unknown heroes who died for the protection of the country.”³⁰ Under this pretext, the government justified enforced visits of shrines and reverences to their *kami* (*jinja sanpai* 神社参拝) especially at schools and universities, in spite of the general freedom of religion guaranteed by the constitution of 1889. Like most other Christians, Martin was especially concerned about the obligation to do *jinja sanpai* also at private Christian schools.³¹ He even notes in the foreword to his second volume on Shinto the courageous behavior of Professor Anesaki Masaharu 姉崎正治 of the Imperial Tokyo University who “did not hesitate to support the Christian missionaries’ claims” against these visits.³²

Thus, the official doctrine of “nonreligious Shinto” became the very reason for Father Martin to take up the study of Shinto: “Since pagan Japanese are not qualified to decide whether Shinto is a religion or not, the only method likely to provide results is to question the texts.” To this end, the author compiles diverse elements from these ancient texts. In his view, this was the only successful route to comprehend Shinto beliefs and practices: “It is impossible to understand modern Shinto, if we do not know first the ancient Shinto which survives in it, and its understanding supposes already a certain introductory knowledge of the history of primitive Japan and of its civilization.”³³

As regards Martin’s sources, he notes that with the exception of a few works by Western scholars such as Chamberlain, Aston, and Revon, he relied primarily on Japanese texts and scholarship. He used the conventional Kōgakuin 皇学院 editions of *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki* as his most important

30. Quoted from Martin 1927 (foreword), pp. 1–2. The citation sums up the central point of a draft sent to the Committee for the Study of Religious Administration (Shūkyō Seido Chōsakai), which was set up in May 1926 and included Sect Shinto, Buddhist, and Christian representatives, as well as administrative officials and other important figures.

31. On Christian reactions to *jinja sanpai*, see also Kate Wildman Nakai’s contribution to this volume.

32. Martin 1927, Foreword, p. i.

33. Martin 1924, p. 3.

primary sources and works by Tsuda Sōkichi 津田左右吉 (*Kojiki oyobi Nihon Shoki no shin-kenkyū* 古事記及び日本書紀の新研究) and Tsuda Keibu 津田敬武 (*Shintō no kigenron* 神道の起源論) for an analysis of history and mythology. For Japanese prehistory, he relied heavily on the work of the noted anthropologist and archaeologist Torii Ryūzō 鳥居龍藏 (1870–1953) who was also a Catholic (*Yūshi izen no Nippon* 有史以前乃日本). In addition, he dealt critically with the following authors and theories: Arai Hakuseki 新井白石 (1657–1725) and his euhemeristic theory according to which the “gods” of the myths were human rulers who had been apotheosized by later generations; Kume Kunitake 久米邦武 (1839–1931) and his reinterpretation of the “Divine Age” (*jindai* 神代); Ishikawa Sanshirō 石川三四郎 (1876–1956), a socialist historian for whom Japanese mythology is permeated by Semitic elements (*Kojiki shinwa no shin-kenkyū* 古事記神話の新研究); and Kimura Takatarō 木村鷹太郎 (1870–1931), a controversial historian and philosopher who situated the origins of the Japanese people in Western Asia and likened biblical characters to the *kami* and to Japanese legendary heroes (*Yasokyo no Nihon-teki kenkyū* 耶蘇教の日本の研究).

Based on these sources, Martin sketches a brief history of ancient Japan, commenting especially on the Chinese contributions to Japanese civilization. Shinto appears to him as a set of beliefs, superstitions, and customs that incorporated new Buddhist elements and were thus gradually modified. These “infiltrations of Buddhist thought”³⁴ are demonstrated, for example, in his analysis of *norito* dedicated to the emperors and to deified heroes. He also points out that Japanese modern historians tend to regard mythological legends, such as the descent of the divine grandchild (*tenson kōrin* 天孫降臨) or the conquests by Jinmu Tennō, not as “remains buried in old writings” but as narratives of real events. As an example, Martin quotes a passage from a primary school textbook (*kōtō shōgakkō* 高等小学校)—probably a simplified paraphrase of the Imperial Rescript on Education—according to which the divine commandment to rule the earth by Amaterasu to her grandson Ninigi is the fundament of the imperial bloodline’s destiny to rule the nation “as long as heaven and earth exist.”

According to Martin, the profound contempt Japanese have always professed against foreigners (the *nanbanjin* 南蛮人 of the sixteenth century) is constituent of this civil morality inculcated in school children through his-

34. Martin 1924, p. 59.

tory and moral textbooks teaching that “Japan is a unique country in the world, outside and above the common law which governs the universe; Japanese school children are the sons of the gods.”³⁵ Already in ancient times, the Yamato court used religion “to maintain the allegiance of the conquered peoples.” The author deduces from *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki* that “all the myths manifestly intend to make people think with great conviction that the imperial dynasty has received the mission to govern the country from heaven” (p. 93). Considering the beginning of the “historical period” of Japan, Martin describes at length the introduction of Buddhism and the great reforms of Taika with the purpose to help the reader to get a better understanding of these politico-religious events, “insofar as they can shed light on Shinto history.” Thus, it is against Buddhism and Confucianism that he imagines Emperor Tenmu—who revered Buddha and his doctrine—giving Shinto its sacred books because, as he writes, “Shinto should not undergo any eclipse.” As a skillful man of faith (did not Buddhism spread thanks to its canonical writings?), but also as a fine connoisseur of politics, Father Martin describes Emperor Tenmu as a man of great vision. He regards the preface (*jobun* 序文) of the *Kojiki* as proof of that vision.

Martin does not deny the existence of a moral sense in Shinto (“It is highly improbable, at first glance, that the Japanese people, so gifted with feelings, lacked a moral sense”), but adds in the same vein how imperfect this moral sense was. Fortunately, Shinto morals benefited much from Buddhism and Confucianism, which “improved the general manners of the Japanese society exceptionally.”³⁶ In the course of this argument, he criticizes W. G. Aston’s derogatory view of Shinto ethics.³⁷ Finally, Martin tends to the opinion that the gods are not indifferent to individual moral behavior, for they remove sins (*tsumi* 罪) and pollutions (*kegare* 穢れ) from the faithful through purification rites such as *harae* 祓 and *misogi* 禊 ceremonies.

In contrast to continental Shamanism (Siberian and, to some extent, Korean), which consists in Martin’s view merely of exorcism and divina-

35. Martin 1924, p. 75.

36. Martin 1927, p. 100–102.

37. Martin disapproves especially of the following statement by Aston: “There is no stronger proof of the rudimentary character of Shinto than the exceedingly casual and imperfect sanction which extends to altruistic morality. It has scarcely anything in the nature of ethics” (Aston 1905, *Shinto, the Way of the Gods*, cited in English in Martin 1927, p. 104).

tion, Shinto fully justifies its appellation “way of the gods.”³⁸ Thus, Martin maintains that Shinto polytheism is superior to the polydemonism of North Asian people. This differentiation is based on the evolutionist theories of the time applied to the Japanese case. Even if Martin does not mention it, he must have been aware of Katō Genchi’s *A Study of Shinto, the Religion of the Japanese Nation* (Katō 1926). In this much praised work, Katō employs several dual categories of classification, drawing a picture of Shinto development through different phases, such as, among others, polydemonism and polytheism. Considering the wealth of materials at his disposal, Martin could have easily avoided the reproduction of such unfortunate judgments on the beliefs and cults of the various peoples that immigrated to the Japanese archipelago.³⁹

In a last passage on “the vicissitudes of Shinto through history,” Martin deals with the difficulties Shinto had to release itself from the pernicious influences of foreign systems of thought and forms of worship, such as, in Martin’s words, “the infiltrations of Chinese superstitions in the ritual,” or

38. Martin 1927, p. 278.

39. As mentioned, Martin notes from time to time, that he relies exclusively on Japanese sources, except for two or three Western scholars such as Aston, Chamberlain, or Revon. If we look at the further development of French studies on the Japanese religious worldview in relation to Shinto mythology during the twenties and thirties, we first encounter Charles Haguenauer (1896–1976), the “father” of French japonology. One can mention “L’adresse du dignitaire de la province d’Izumo” (Haguenauer, 1929) and more generally his *Selected Studies* on religion (Haguenauer 1977). In addition, we have to turn our gaze to two young Japanese scholars who studied in France during this period: Matsumoto Nobuhiro 松本信広, a former student of Marcel Mauss who published in French an important study on the analogies of Japanese mythology with Asia meridional countries (Matsumoto 1928), and Matsudaira Narimitsu 松平齊光, Doctor of Paris University, who studied myths and Japanese beliefs from the point of view of folklore, with publications referring mainly to *matsuri* festivals (Matsudaira 1955). In an article on the god Susanoo and the relations between mythology and folklore studies published in 1959, Cornelius Ouwehand writes about Matsumoto’s study that it “still offers the most reliable and intelligent survey of Japanese mythology now at our disposal in any Western language” (Ouwehand 1959, pp. 384–85). In the same article, he also praises at length the importance of Matsudaira’s research on Japanese festivals for a better understanding of the Japanese gods (*ibid.*, pp. 402–403). On Matsumoto, see also Hirafuji Kikuko’s chapter in this volume, pp. 82–85.

“the invasion of Buddhism,” or Chinese Confucianism, the particular influence of which is often pointed out. From such statements we can clearly infer that Martin analyzes the present situation (the 1920s) of Shinto through the lens of contemporary Japanese historians. This leads him to the conclusion that “the Kannushi and the Kangakusha are about to set free Shinto from Buddhistic influence,” and that “the Wa(gaku)sha 和(学)者 are completing the patriotic work of liberation by cutting the mooring ropes which have until today connected Shinto to Chinese philosophy.”⁴⁰ According to Martin, “when Meiji Tennō, playing the role of Jinmu, restores Shinto in its original purity, all the preliminary works of criticism and clearing had been fulfilled.”

HESITANT STEPS ON THE PATH TO SHINTO STUDIES

What can be inferred from these three contributions to the French “prehistory” of Shinto studies? Do they justify the optimistic judgment that Eustace Haydon (1880–1975), a pioneer in the study of world religions, expressed in 1926? In a useful summary of recent progress in the field of religious studies, he dedicates the following short passage to Japan:

The ancient religion of Japan, submerged for a millennium and a half by Buddhism, was revived as a national religion in the middle of last century. The task of scholarship has been to recover the primitive religion apart from the rationalization and secularization of it in the modern period. The criticism of the texts of the Kojiki and Nihonji [*Nihongi*] has begun. Revon has shown the nature of the Norito as spoken charms. [...] Several scholars have attempted to penetrate to the early religion by way of the mythologies.⁴¹

“Secularization” of Shinto would have been indeed an interesting topic to explore, but Revon and Martin, the only French scholars who could have given an account of it, did not pay due attention to the transformations of Shinto. Anglophone authors like Basil Hall Chamberlain (*The Invention of a New Religion*, 1912) or later D. C. Holtom (*The Political Philosophy of Modern Shinto*, 1922), on the other hand, did throw a new light on the complex

40. Martin 1927, p. 347.

41. Haydon 1926, p. 31, originally published in English.

relations between Shinto and the state that resulted in a new configuration of Shinto divided into two parts within which the “national deities”—well researched by Revon and Martin—saw their status strengthened. Martin, the missionary, and Revon, the scholar both studied early Shinto through the mythologies but their backgrounds and aims were different. As a missionary, Martin was concerned with the future of Christianity facing a new form of Shinto. However, he did not take the time to study this new Shinto thoroughly, even if he pointed out the fact that Shinto, as a religion, is based on numerous “temples” (*jinja* 神社) not dedicated to *kami* selected as most important by the government. Furthermore, he seemed aware of the fact that the establishment of State Shinto—i.e., the civil cult that Martin calls the “official religion” of Japan—may make it even more difficult for missionaries to continue “Christian propaganda.” Unfortunately, Martin ended his historical survey of Shinto myths at the threshold of the Meiji era, abandoning his promise to write a second book on modern Shinto.

While Michel Revon is still remembered as a pioneer of Japanese language teaching in France, his work on Shinto is largely ignored. Regarding the methodological tools at his disposal, Revon’s studies of ancient Shinto mythology and ritual (*norito* prayers) may be seen indeed as disappointing. On the other hand, if one considers the scope of his work, the mass of quotations from primary sources and the abundant number of elaborate footnotes, it is quite surprising that nothing of it is cited by Bernard Frank in his seminal overview of “Cinquante ans d’orientalisme en France (1922–1972). Les études japonaises.”⁴²

Bousquet’s contributions to Shinto Studies are certainly the least accurate in terms of scientific methodology and even contain some depreciatory remarks on Japanese culture and religion. However, his vivid ethnographic descriptions provide a keyhole for the understanding of popular religion (Shinto and Buddhist) in the Archipelago. Chronologically older, his work remains a vestige of a certain French curiosity and, at moments, compassion for Japan. Concerning Shinto and its relationship with nationalism, which is the main topic of this volume, Bousquet’s conclusions predict without ambiguity a somber future for Shinto. To be fair, we should add that these visions may be influenced by Bousquet’s difficult experience as a jurist who strove

42. Frank 1973.

with all his energy to change what he perceived as feudal customs and to transform Japanese law accordingly.

In contrast to many ethnographical studies, the emergent “religious studies”—especially in their philological approach—tended to privilege continuation over change. While Bousquet was an impatient intellectual who desired a faster and deeper transformation of Japanese society, Revon and Martin deplored that Japan was willing to strip off what they perceived as its true religious and cultural clothes. They regarded Shinto as the indigenous religion of Japan linked to an immemorial past and looked for the unchanging features of *kami* devotion in the course of history. They did not study Japanese myths to get a better understanding of the present religious situation but to shed light on “ancient Shinto,” which they regarded as the essence of eternal Japan or, to use Father Martin’s expression, as the “true (Shinto) religion.” Both were still considering Shinto as a religion when Shinto was about to transform itself into a national civil cult with the emperor at its apex, as the symbol of an everlasting state.

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“A Living Past as the Nation’s Personality”

Jinnō Shōtōki, Early Shōwa Nationalism, and *Das Dritte Reich*

MICHAEL WACHUTKA

The *Jinnō shōtōki* 神皇正統記, written in 1339 by Kitabatake Chikafusa 北畠親房 (1293–1354), was first introduced to a broader Western audience by the British consular official and japanologist William George Aston, in his pioneering book *A History of Japanese Literature*, first published in 1898. Aston did not present it in a particularly favorable light. In his eyes, the *Jinnō shōtōki* was a typical product of the Nanbokuchō 南北朝 period (1332–1392)—which was characterized by a schism between the Southern and Northern Courts—that Aston regarded, together with the following Muromachi period, as a “dark age [being] singularly barren of important literature in Japan.” Almost nothing of what was written at that time “deserve[s] more than a passing notice.” He describes the first of the six volumes of *Jinnō shōtōki* as “purely mythical. [... Its] account of the creation of Japan [... is] taken partly from *Nihongi*, but mixed with Chinese philosophy and Indian mythical cosmography in the strangest manner.” The subsequent volumes are nothing more than a “brief and meagre [résumé] of the history of Japan.”¹ Aston admits that “if there is also much that we are inclined to set down as mere platitudes, it is fair to remember that Kitabatake was the first Japanese writer who attempted to apply philosophical principles to actual politics, and that what seems trite to us may have appeared novel and striking to contemporary readers.” Nevertheless, he was also quick to note

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1. Aston 1907, pp. 164–65.

that “modern critics bestow on him a lavish praise which to us seems hardly deserved.”²

Aston’s opinions about the *Jinnō shōtōki* were put into perspective by the German scholar Karl Florenz (1865–1939), another early European japanologist, in his anthology *Geschichte der japanischen Litteratur* of 1906. Florenz generally has more positive things to say about the *Jinnō shōtōki*, especially those passages in which “the author discusses the nature of specifically Japanese phenomena.”³ On the other hand, he wholeheartedly agrees with Aston’s negative opinion about volume six, in which Kitabatake deals with his own time but fails to give a detailed first-hand account of contemporary events. Moreover, Florenz quotes Aston to the effect that

[This volume] is very disappointing. [...] Chikafusa has not thought it proper to give more than a short and barren account of the events in which he was a principal actor. Most of this volume is taken up with dissertations on the principles of government, which, however necessary for a comprehension of the motives and ideas of Japanese statesmen under the old regime, are not very interesting to the European reader.⁴

Perhaps due to these disparaging words, it was more than thirty years before the first translation of the entire *Jinnō shōtōki* was completed. It was undertaken by the German japanologist Hermann Böhner (1884–1963), and published in German in 1935 by the Japanese-German Cultural Institute (Nichi-Doku Bunka Kyōkai 日獨文化協会) in Tokyo. This translation was followed in 1939 by a second volume containing Böhner’s extensive and meticulous commentary and annotations.⁵ Contrary to Aston’s prognosis, Böhner’s translation received a great deal of interest and both his volumes were highly

2. Aston 1907, p. 166.

3. Florenz 1906, p. 343. All translations from non-English sources are my own.

4. Florenz 1906, p. 343; originally in Aston 1907, p. 166.

5. Böhner’s translation of *Jinnō shōtōki* and the ensuing work of commentary established and consolidated his emerging reputation as one of the most knowledgeable observers of Japan and prolific translators of Japanese sources. Two other major works around that time that earned him respect were his 1934 annotated translation of the ninth-century collection of Buddhist tales *Nipponkoku genhō zen’aku ryōiki* 日本国現報善惡靈異記 as *Legenden aus der Frühzeit des japanischen Buddhismus* and the 1940 *Shōtoku Taishi*, a thousand-page magnum opus of translations of all

praised in scholarly as well as popular reviews. Obviously, the contents of Kitabatake's work had not changed. What had changed by the time the translation was available for the scrutiny of Western readers, was the basis for its assessment in the prevailing circumstances in both Europe and Japan.

In his extensive, 188-page introduction to the *Jinnō shōtōki*, Bohner counters Aston's harsh critique by pointing out Aston's lack of sensitivity to the real subject matter.⁶ Rather than merely focusing on the many dates, names, and facts, which can easily appear strange, dry, and dead for the uninitiated occidental observer,

...we would do well initially to leave the strange exterior we cannot grasp unanswered—as we readily did for the longest time with regard to the ancient world [of Greece and Rome]—and try to see whether there is something else that might appeal to us, and whether there might be something lying behind the names, facts, and dates that is somehow related to us. Although there may be some aspects of this book that we would not have understood in other times, today these aspects may, however, be nearer to us. The immediate present seems to have an air of the *Jinnō shōtōki*.⁷

Bohner's introduction gives three reasons why the *Jinnō shōtōki* might indeed arouse interest: first, as a great work of literature praised by many Japanese for both its style and content; secondly, as a book that profoundly influenced later texts such as the Mito school's extensive tome on Japanese history, the *Dai Nihon-shi* 大日本史, and thus, as a vital stimulus for the decisive currents at work in the establishment of modern Meiji from 1868; and lastly, as one of the fundamental texts of higher education "that nearly no Japanese who reached a leading position [in society] was able to bypass during the crucial years of his development, and therefore this work merits special attention in terms of modern contemporary pedagogy."⁸ Five years earlier, Bohner had already expounded this three-fold significance of Kita-

available sources on that ancient Japanese prince. Various installments of this latter work appeared after 1936.

6. Bohner 1935, p. 2.

7. Bohner 1935, pp. 2–3.

8. Bohner 1935, p. 1.

batake's book in similar terms in a lecture delivered on 9 April 1930 at the Tokyo-based German East Asiatic Society, OAG.⁹

The third notion resonates clearly in a review of Bohner's translation published in the inaugural edition of *Monumenta Nipponica*. It calls the *Jinnō shōtōki* "a Bible-book of Japan's folk-national weltanschauung and a standard work of national education."¹⁰ A later reviewer repeats these remarks and attests that they accurately "express this work's significance for the *present*. When today, a German japanologist strives to make the Japanese nation (*Volk*) as a whole understandable to the German people, he first of all has to start with the [notion of what is] significant for the present times within the Japanese nation."¹¹

In order to understand the import of Kitabatake Chikafusa's *Jinnō shōtōki* for that period, I examine the contemporary meaning of the expressions "folk-national weltanschauung" and "standard work of national education." Furthermore, I investigate the crucial question of what made this book, which six hundred years earlier argued for the legitimate rule of the Southern Court during an imperial schism, so important for the modern Japanese nation in the early twentieth century.

I begin with an overview of *Jinnō shōtōki*'s reception from the early Meiji period until the 1930s. This will reveal the shift in the evaluation of this work, and the reason for attributing "contemporary relevance" to it. Next, I explain how one source of such relevance, the concept of *kokutai* 国体, Japan's national essence or polity, is expressed in the *Jinnō shōtōki*. For many contemporary Japanese commentators, the national essence was encapsulated in the work's opening passage that describes Japan as a *shinkoku* 神国 or "divine country," wherein the sun goddess bequeaths her line of rule to all eternity. This perpetual divine presence was seen by many as the epitome of Shinto itself. This demands in turn an examination of the role Shinto actually plays in Kitabatake's work.

In order to make accessible to uninitiated readers back in Germany the "Shinto" concepts of *kokutai* and *shinkoku*—imbued as they are with an almost metaphysical essentialism—Hermann Bohner compares the *Jinnō shōtōki* to Arthur Moeller van den Bruck's work *Das dritte Reich* (1923). This

9. Bohner 1930, p. 8.

10. "...ein Bibelbuch der völkisch-nationalen Weltanschauung Japans und national-pädagogisches Standardwerk" (Kraus 1938, p. 285).

11. Zachert 1940, p. 311 (emphasis in the original).

seems to demand an exploration of both the personal background of Moeller van den Bruck and the socio-political situation in Germany at the time. Such an exploration will also shed light on Bohner's possible reasoning for choosing *Das dritte Reich* as a foil of comparison. I finally delve into Hermann Bohner's own personal and intellectual background to understand better his reasons for referring to *Das dritte Reich*. The conclusion returns to the paper's title, "A Living Past as the Nation's Personality," in order to clarify further the significance of the *Jinnō shōtōki* in early Shōwa period nationalism.

THE *JINNŌ SHŌTŌKI* SINCE THE EARLY MEIJI PERIOD

The new Meiji government from the outset sought knowledge far and wide (in accordance with the Imperial Oath of 6 April 1868), but it also emphasized the importance of new forms of national education. Leading *kokugaku* 国学 (national learning) scholars such as Yano Harumichi 矢野玄道 (1823–1887) and Hirata Kanetane 平田鉄胤 (1799–1880) were commissioned to investigate the educational system. They quickly submitted their proposals, and on 31 October 1868 the government announced the establishment of an Institute for Imperial Studies, the Kōgakujo 皇学所 in Kyoto. The institute's regulations categorized the texts to be used for its curriculum under the headings "sacred scriptures" (*shinten* 神典) and "history works" (*rekishisho* 歴史書), and divided them into three grades of difficulty: lower, middle, and upper. The *Jinnō shōtōki* was the first book on the list of history works to be taught in the lower grades.¹²

Meiji period *kokugaku* societies, such as the Great Eight Island Academic Society (Ōyashima Gakkai 大八洲学会), founded in 1886, focused on editing historical accounts. Kitabatake's work was one of the first such editions they published. Some of the society's leading scholars delivered private lectures on the *Jinnō shōtōki* for Emperor Meiji, and in its attempt at edifying the broader populace, the society's private school, Ōyashima Gakkō, established in late 1891 with students from all over the country, used this book in its first-semester classes. Already on 10 June 1883, at the opening ceremony of the Shigaku Kyōkai 史学協会, the predecessor of the Ōyashima

12. For a more in-depth history of this Institute for Imperial Studies, with detailed background information and sources, see Wachutka 2012, chap. 3.1.

Gakkai, Maruyama Sakura 丸山作樂 (1840–1899) had expounded the necessary form and style for a true national history in the new era. He described why the *Jinnō shōtōki* was best suited as a model for a modern, national historiography:

The literary style [...] should be taken from Lord Kitabatake's *Jinnō shōtōki*. The reason is that although the *sankagami* [i.e., the narrative-style “three mirrors” of history *Ōkagami* 大鏡, *Mizukagami* 水鏡, and *Masukagami* 増鏡] as well as other medieval historical works to some extent embrace [a literary] style, there is nothing that exceeds the *Jinnō shōtōki* with regard to its spirit. This *Shōtōki* records an abundance of marvelous matters. Although it extends to absurd Buddhist matters [...], the Lord took a stand, and with a brilliant and powerful brush clearly defined the highest principles of one's moral obligations [i.e., the true relationship between sovereign and subject]. Although it expands its scope by including both China and India, it made our country paramount, and truly achieved the style of a national history.¹³

The importance of the *Jinnō shōtōki* is also evident in Bohner's first encounter with the work. In November 1914, shortly after the outbreak of World War I, Bohner was brought to Japan as a prisoner of war from the small German concession of Tsingtao (Qingdao) in northeastern China, where since 24 April of that year he had taught at the missionary school and studied under the famous missionary-cum-sinologist Richard Wilhelm (1873–1930). Being already well versed in Chinese history and classical literature, and fascinated by China's cultural grandness, Bohner started to learn Japanese during his six-year imprisonment in the Matsuyama and Bandō camps. Although reluctant at first, he slowly developed an interest in Japan, and after his release in 1920 he embarked on a mission to study the culture of Japan, his new home where he lived for almost fifty years. When posing the fundamental question of “what Japan actually is,” he was invariably referred to the *Jinnō shōtōki*.¹⁴ Among the many existing textual editions, the one most frequently recommended to him was that compiled by Keigetsu 桂月, i.e., Ōmachi Yoshie 大町芳衛 (1869–1925), in summer 1924. Keigetsu was a jingoistic poet, critic, and

13. The complete speech can be found in Wachutka 2012, chap. 6.3.

14. Bohner 1935, p. 2.

member of the afore-mentioned Ōyashima Gakkai. This “extremely widely used” edition was intended for high school students, and thus provided a window “into the heart of contemporary Japanese education.”¹⁵

In his edition, Keigetsu guides the reader with short explanations about individual passages of the *Jinnō shōtōki*, and Bohner quotes Keigetsu at the beginning of his own volume of annotations. In his introduction, Keigetsu states the reason for its “contemporary relevance.” The case is unambiguous:

The *Jinnō shōtōki* expounds Japan’s unique national essence (*koku-tai*) of having a single [unbroken] tennō line through ten thousand generations. With this work, history truly begins in Japan for the first time. All Japanese people should have read this book and thus know about our country’s national essence (*kokutai*), which is incomparable throughout the world.¹⁶

JINNŌ SHŌTŌKI AND THE CONCEPT OF JAPAN’S NATIONAL ESSENCE (*KOKUTAI*)

Keigetsu’s remarks clearly reveal a shift in the assessment of the *Jinnō shōtōki*, if we compare it with statements by Japanese authors from the early and middle Meiji period. In Meiji, *kokugaku* circles rather focused on the philological aspects of *kokugaku*’s Edo period legacy; only later were its politico-theological aspects emphasized. Stripped of most of its religious Shinto affiliations, Meiji *kokugaku* primarily dealt with ancient history, Japanese literature, language, and traditions.¹⁷ By contrast, nationalist zealots in the years before and during World War II used the concept of *kokugaku* as an ideological framework for strengthening the imperial state, resonating with Hirata Atsutane’s radical writings on the Japanese spirit and Japanese superiority. The *kokugaku* scholar and linguist Yamada Yoshio 山田孝雄 (1873–1958), for instance, strongly rejected the assumption that *kokugaku* was solely concerned with philological learning. Instead, in his 1939 work *Kokugaku no hongi* 国学の本義, he insisted that the principal objective of

15. Bohner 1939, p. 9.

16. Quoted in Bohner 1939, pp. 12–13.

17. For a detailed account of these and other aspects of Meiji period national learning (*kokugaku*), see Wachutka 2012.

kokugaku was to clarify Japan's national polity or essence (*kokutai*). Interestingly enough, Hermann Bohnner extensively used Yamada's edition of the *Jinnō shōtōki* for his translation. Although there were several manuscripts and other textual editions at his disposal, the only real help available in interpreting Kitabatake's text was, he stated, Yamada's monumental exegesis *Jinnō shōtōki jutsugi* 神皇正統記述義 of 1932.¹⁸

Yamada Yoshio taught for many years at Tōhoku Imperial University in Sendai. In 1940, he assumed the position of founding president of the renamed Kōgakkan University in Ise. In 1941, he became a counselor at the Jingiin 神祇院, and in 1945 the director of the Kokushi Henshūin 国史編修院 (Institute for the Compilation of National History).¹⁹ In particular, he concentrated his research efforts on the *Man'yōshū* and the *Kojiki*, as well as on Hirata Atsutane. Today, Yamada Yoshio is primarily known as an influential grammarian. However, he was also an autodidactic scholar of Japanese philology and literature, and had a profound knowledge of Shinto. Yamada's extensive textual-critical edition of the *Jinnō shōtōki* influenced most later Japanese editors of the work, and was subsequently referred to as a "masterpiece."²⁰

In addition, Yamada Yoshio was the author of *Kokutai no hongī* 国体の本義, an explanation of the Japanese national essence written in 1933. Three years later, in 1936, it was reprinted in a popular edition, or *fukyūban* 普及版, and thus reached a wide readership. It antedates the Ministry of Education's infamous *Kokutai no hongī*, published a year later in 1937 under the same title. Yamada was also a member of the latter book's compilation committee. Hence, we can safely assume that Yamada Yoshio was one of the main theoreticians of *kokutai* ideology in the 1930s and 40s. We thus find in

18. Bohnner 1935, pp. 183–84. Bohnner consistently misreads Yamada Yoshio's personal name as Takao.

19. As an external bureau of the Naimushō 内務省, the Jingiin was an administrative organ that in 1940 replaced the Jinja Kyoku 神社局 or Bureau of Shrines. The Jinja Kyoku, in turn, had been established in 1900 together with the Shūkyō Kyoku 宗教局 or Bureau of Religions. Their predecessor, the Shaji Kyoku 社寺局 or Bureau of Shrines and Temples, was split in two under Imperial Order No. 163 (see also the introduction to this volume, pp. 2–4). Throughout World War II, this Jingiin handled matters of shrines, the priesthood, and the dissemination of religious belief. It was abolished in 1946 under the forced separation of state and religion.

20. Iwasa 1965, p. 31; and 2003, p. 289.

his person a direct link between the positive assessment of the *Jinnō shōtōki* during this period, and the intellectual framework that fostered this assessment. Despite the fact that Yamada Yoshio was expelled from public service after Japan's defeat in World War II on account of his ultranationalism, he was nevertheless awarded the *bunka kunshō* 文化勲章 (Order of Cultural Merit) in 1958 for his achievements.

JINNŌ SHŌTŌKI AND SHINTO

Closely linked to the twentieth-century discourse on national essence is the concept of Japan as a *shinkoku* or *kami no kuni* 神国, a “divine country of the gods,” which in turn is based on the belief in the perpetual work of the Japanese deities. Hence, the famous opening passage of the *Jinnō shōtōki* is cited as the key text in the Ministry of Education's *Kokutai no hongī*. It appears in the first chapter, entitled “Kokushi o ikkan suru seishin 国史を一貫する精神” (The True Meaning of our National Entity) of Book Two, “Kokushi ni okeru kokutai no kengen 国史に於ける国体の顕現 (The Manifestation of our National Entity in History).”²¹ The opening passage of the *Jinnō shōtōki* reads:

Great Japan is a divine land. The heavenly progenitor laid its foundation at the outset, and for all eternity the sun goddess bequeaths her line of rule [therein]. Only in our country is this true. Nothing like that exists in other countries. This is why it is called the divine land.²²

Many Japanese commentators not only saw these sentences as encapsulating Japan's national essence, but also interpreted their suggestion of a perpetual divine presence as the epitome of Shinto itself. When pondering the book's first line as a summary of the entire work, Bohner explains:

Japan is *shinkoku* 神国, realm of the gods [...]; this is Japan's *kokutai* 国体 [...]; this identifies the theme carried throughout the book. The observation begins with the creation of the world, con-

21. The translation follows Hall and Gauntlett 1949, pp. 105–106.

22. Yamada 1932, p. 1; Iwasa 2003, p. 15; cf. Bohner 1935, p. 191; and Varley 1980, p. 49.

tinuously traces this theme further, step by step through the eras [...] “always anew, always afresh,” “*arata ni*,” it reveals itself, up into the immediate present. [...]

[T]o the foreign observer, it must be pointed out here that a close relation in character [of the notion of a divine land] exists to Shinto. Whatever Shinto is and however complex its outer appearances are, one does not err, particularly not in the eyes of the Japanese observer, if one says: Chikafusa here aims well at what Shinto [...] is; he expresses it; he says what Shinto originally was and still wants to be today. And to many Japanese observers, it is also very important that the foreign onlooker knows about this relation in character, notices and acknowledges it.²³

A valuable hint as to Bohner’s own views on the role of Shinto in this context can be found in his first essay on Japan, published in 1927, which deals with the *Jinnō shōtōki*. Indeed, the title already contains a clear indication of what in Bohner’s eyes is the true intent and core of Kitabatake’s work, namely, a “Shinto theodicy.”²⁴ More precisely, Bohner regards the work as an attempt to give hope in the dark hours of warfare and decay, to affirm a divine justice and providence amidst the chaos and moral evil that surrounded its author. Bohner’s assessment of the close relation in character between the *Jinnō shōtōki* and Shinto was later echoed in the West. For instance, the influential postwar anthology *Sources of Japanese Tradition* likewise acknowledges *Jinnō shōtōki* as “the most important document of medieval Shinto,” without giving any reasons or further explanations for this claim.²⁵

A more contemporary Japanese commentator, Shirayama Yoshitarō 白山芳太郎, argues that Kitabatake Chikafusa’s views on Shinto are rooted in the mythological foundation of the imperial reign and the promise made by the deities that it will be preserved eternally.²⁶ Based on the notion that

23. Bohner 1935, p. 4.

24. Cf. Bohner 1927.

25. Tsunoda, de Bary, and Keene 1964, p. 267. This is still true of the revised and expanded second edition, published in 2001 as *Sources of Japanese Tradition, Volume One: From Earliest Times to 1600*. Here, however, this sentence has been slightly amended. The *Jinnō shōtōki* is now “one of the most important documents of the Shinto revival of the medieval age” (p. 358).

26. Shirayama 1984.

heaven and earth are everlasting and that Japan is a country of the *kami*, Shirayama sees Kitabatake developing an unprecedented case for a national consciousness. Kitabatake's thoughts on Shinto can furthermore be seen in his discourse on the rightful way of succession, which in turn is based on a discussion of the nature and importance of the three imperial regalia, the mirror, sword, and jewels.²⁷ Such diverse and vague allusions lead to the question of the role Shinto plays in Kitabatake's work. Given that the term *shintō* 神道 itself is only found three times in the entire text, we need to take a closer look at the context in which the word "Shinto" is actually used.

Kitabatake expounds on why the lifespan of Japan's divine rulers suddenly became significantly shorter at the point of transition between the later earthly deities and the legendary first human sovereign, Jinmu 神武, and in so doing rejects the Indian-Buddhist idea of historical decline. Instead, he ascribes this change to a curse by the mythological figure Iwanaga hime 磐長姫. In an episode narrated in the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki*, the heavenly grandson Ninigi no mikoto 瓊々杵尊, Jinmu Tennō's great-grandfather, was once offered the hand in marriage of either the beautiful Konohana Sakuya hime 木花開耶姫, whose name means Princess Flowering-tree-blossom, or her older sister Iwanaga hime, Princess Rock-long. He chose Konohana Sakuya hime, and so her unattractive sister, offended by the rejection, pronounced a curse to the effect that the life of the emperors would no longer be as eternal as the rocks, but henceforth as brief as the blossoms of a flowering tree. Alluding to this mythological passage to explain the change in life span, Kitabatake writes that "the way [the workings] of the gods (*shintō*) is difficult to infer."²⁸ The next occurrence of the characters 神道 (*shintō* or *kami no michi*) is in his account of the fifteenth sovereign, Ōjin Tennō 応神天皇. After stating that rectitude is the primary intent (*kokoro*) of the two deities Amaterasu and Hachiman, Kitabatake continues by saying that "if one departs from the way of the gods (*shintō*), especially in this country, which is a country of the gods (*kami no kuni*), one cannot even for a day receive [the blessings of] the sun and moon."²⁹

27. Shirayama 1984, p. 270.

28. Yamada 1932, p. 96; Iwasa 1965, p. 66; cf. Varley 1980, p. 84. Although otherwise very meticulous and precise, Bohner (1935, p. 217), for unknown reasons, omits this sentence in his translation.

29. Yamada 1932, p. 165; Iwasa 1965, p. 82; cf. Bohner 1935, p. 233; and Varley 1980, p. 108.

These two passages are rather general in nature, but the only other occurrence of the term Shinto—actually the first to appear in Kitabatake's work—merits a longer citation of its context. It is a key passage for the whole book. Kitabatake delivers a long narrative describing the creation of the world and of Japan from the Indian-Buddhist and Chinese-Confucian points of view, and then turns his attention to Japan proper. He writes:

Only in our country has the receipt of the imperial throne (*hitsugi* 日嗣) been without iniquity from the primordial separation of heaven and earth until the present day of our generation. Although at times [the throne] was passed on collaterally, it remained [always] within the same family, as [the succession] inevitably found its way back to the rightful [direct] line. This is due to the shining deity's (*shinmei* 神明 [=Amaterasu]) forever new august pledge, and this is what differs from all other countries. Although it is said that the workings of the gods (*shintō*) are not easily revealed, it would create confusion if the origin [this fundamental point] is not known. It is to prevent such evil that I have committed some [thoughts] to writing. Intending to expound how, since the age of gods, [the imperial reign] was righteously received and transmitted, I have omitted matters that usually can be heard [are common knowledge] and accordingly have named [this text] Chronicle of the Divine Sovereigns' Direct Line [of Reign].³⁰

The first book of the *Jinnō shōtōki* ends with this passage. The second then begins with an account of the Japanese "Age of the Gods." According to Yamada Yoshio's exhaustive exegesis *Jinnō shōtōki jutsugi* (1932), this passage reveals the true aim and main objective of the entire book. Yamada claims that from the outset, the *Jinnō shōtōki* naturally divides into two grand themes. The first theme is already found in the book's famous opening sentences cited above. The second is "our national essence" (*kokutai*), which for Yamada is the fundamental principle running throughout the work.³¹ Following this argumentation, the real significance of the *Jinnō shōtōki* is thus neither its account of the imperial line's legitimacy nor its views on appropri-

30. Yamada 1932, p. 38; Iwasa 1965, p. 49; cf. Bohner 1935, p. 199; and Varley 1980, pp. 60–61.

31. Yamada 1932, p. 39.

ate conduct for Japanese sovereigns. Rather, its significance, particularly for Japan of the early twentieth century, is in its underlying politico-religious ideology that supported an emperor-centered national identity.

The concept of *shinkoku* was of course nothing new, even in Kitabatake's day. The term can already be found in the *Nihon shoki* of 720, where the King of Silla, aware that the invincible army of Jingū Kōgō 神功皇后 was approaching, acknowledges the superiority of Japan: "I have heard that in the East there is a divine country (*shinkoku*) named Nippon [...]. This divine force must belong to that country. How could we resist them by force of arms?"³²

The term *shinkoku* can also be found in the last of the six ancient official court chronicles, the *Sandai jitsuroku* 三代実録 (901), where it is used in the imperial edicts of Jōgan 貞観 11/12 (January 870) sent to Ise and the Iwashimizu Hachiman 石清水八幡 Shrine seeking divine assistance against outside attack.³³ However, the *Jinnō shōtōki* evinces a clear shift in the implications of the term. Japan is no longer a "divine country" simply because it is protected by the deities and shielded against malevolent adversaries from outside. Instead, it now has obtained an internal divine quality. Only Japan is reigned over by divine sovereigns of an unbroken dynasty perpetuated in a direct line that originates in the sun deity Amaterasu herself, and is "as eternal as heaven and earth" (*tenjō mukyū* 天壤無窮). In this complex theological view of a transcendental history, it is the innate divine origin that defines the sacredness of the imperial throne, a miraculous quality that also extends to all people in the realm. Indeed, at one point, Kitabatake writes that "the ten thousand people [= everyone] under heaven are all divine beings."³⁴ In general, Kitabatake's text led to the understanding of Japan as a sacred realm, since the land, the sovereign, and the people were generated by, or descended from, the *kami*. Kitabatake Chikafusa's development of such an explicitly national consciousness based on Japan's divinity—while including Chinese Confucian and Indian Buddhist ideas in a clearly subordinate role—owes much to his close personal connection to Watarai 度会 (or Ise 伊勢) Shinto. Kitabatake was profoundly influenced by Watarai Ieyuki 度会家行 (1256–1356?), whose works he copied and whom he met at Ise for a secret initiation into Watarai Shinto. Based on oracles received from Amaterasu,

32. Aston 1993, vol. 1, p. 230.

33. Yamada 1932, p. 1; Bohner 1935, p. 177; Naumann 1994, p. 52.

34. *Tenka no banmin wa mina shinbutsu nari* 天下万民皆神物也. Yamada 1932, p. 547; Iwasa 2003, p. 157; cf. Bohner 1935, p. 309; and Varley 1980, p. 230.

Watarai Shinto stressed the “fundamental basis of heaven and earth” by “making the proper origin the origin.” Indeed, many arguments within Kitabatake’s skillful explanation of historical causation can already be seen in his work *Gengenshū* 元元集 of 1337, an eight-volume historical compendium written in Ise during a temporary retreat from the battlefield.³⁵

In short, Kitabatake adds an explicit political dimension to the earlier religious belief within the concept of *shinkoku* of the country as divinely protected. This dimension was born from the notion of a divinely initiated, unchangeable, yet always renewable and continuously living past. History thus is the very source of sacredness. Sacralized history constitutes the essence of the divine sovereign’s legitimacy, and is invoked to strengthen politically the contemporary heir of the correct and direct line of reign.

This leads us back to the second grand theme visible in Kitabatake’s work, according to Yamada Yoshio’s exegesis: Japan’s *kokutai*. The importance of *kokutai* and *shinkoku*—as well as the vital role of Kitabatake as the man who put these notions into words—was an almost ubiquitous theme in early Shōwa intellectual discourse. Contemporary foreign observers were of course not impervious to this fact. The American missionary and ethnologist Daniel C. Holtom (1884–1962), in his 1943 study of Shinto nationalism in modern Japan, summarizes the religious basis and content of contemporary Japanese nationalism that is to be found in the Shinto concepts of *shinkoku* and *kokutai*:

Japan is “the Land of the Gods.” This is the name that patriots throughout a long history have liked to give to their homeland [...] it means that the very islands themselves, the people, their racial characteristics, and the unique form of their national life are something more than the resultants of ordinary geographical and historical forces. From the beginning they have received the far-distant future and gave to land and race and institutions an initial divine character that must be forever theirs. It means that these ancestral

35. The best English source on Watarai Shintō is Teeuwen 1996. On Kitabatake Chikafusa’s relation to Watarai Ieyuki, see pp. 151–62. Kitabatake’s views on Shinto are specifically dealt with in Shirayama 1984. See also Bohner 1935, pp. 178–79; and Naumann 1994, pp. 53–54.

deities are eternally living in the spirit world from which they mold the destiny of the present according to their unchanging purposes.³⁶

Holtom's words encapsulate the ideas of *shinkoku* and *kokutai* as epitomized at that time by the Japanese Ministry of Education's *Kokutai no hongī*. After quoting the *Jinnō shōtōki*'s opening passage on Japan as a land of the gods and describing these sentences as "an apt statement on the incomparable nature of our Imperial line", the editors of *Kokutai no hongī* insist that "the spirit of the founding of the Empire has continued throughout history unbroken to the present time, and is a power that will transcend the morrow. Accordingly, in our country, national history begins and ends with national entity, and is a self-expression of [this] national entity."³⁷

Bohner, with his often quaint diction, which intermingles deep and pensive words with lavish cadences of prose difficult to convey in lucid English, describes the *Jinnō shōtōki* as a book of intense "listening and response." When everything seemed surrounded by darkness, Kitabatake hearkened attentively to history and history answered like an animated, soul-filled echo. Bohner, anticipating Holtom's perception, adds that "the past from the earliest beginnings becomes relevant for present times, gives counsel, and truly comes to life; here and now, tomorrow, and in the remote future."³⁸ Kitabatake's concept of Shinto as seen in the *Jinnō shōtōki* is a perpetual working of the gods, due to which the continuously living past of the Japanese realm as a sacred entity is eternally alive in the present. For the contemporary Japanese observer, this work epitomized Japan's divinely initiated eternal and unchanging *kokutai*. The influential national historian and Shinto priest Hiraizumi Kiyoshi 平泉澄 (1895–1984) drew a similar conclusion: the nexus and apex of Japan's national essence can be clearly seen in the *Jinnō shōtōki*.³⁹

36. Holtom 1963, p. 13–14.

37. Hall and Gauntlett 1949, p. 106. Precisely the same idea lies behind Keigetsu's claim, mentioned earlier, that all of Japan's history starts with the *Jinnō shōtōki*, as found in his 1924 edition of the work for high school use.

38. Bohner 1935, p. 12.

39. Hiraizumi 1933.

JINNŌ SHŌTŌKI AND DAS DRITTE REICH

Besides explaining the book's relevance in contemporary Japan, Bohner sought to orientate his German readers by seeking out correlations to and analogies with their own culture. In his introduction, he frequently alludes to similar concepts deployed *inter alios* by Otto von Bismarck, Giovanni Battista Vico, Johann Gottfried Herder, or Friedrich Nietzsche, as well as to comparable events in European history. For instance, Bohner compares the abortive thirteenth-century Mongol invasion of Japan and the divine wind *kamikaze* 神風, which allegedly scattered the Mongol fleet, to the annihilation of the Spanish Armada. He points out that a commemorative medal was minted in England bearing the biblical motto *Deus afflavit et dissipati sunt* ("God blew and they were dispersed"). Bohner considered one particular work to possess a mystique of the national ideal with a personified, living, and eternal history similar to that expressed in the *Jinnō shōtōki*. This was Arthur Moeller van den Bruck's *Das dritte Reich* of 1923. Bohner refers to it directly several times, often echoes its opinions, and in one section, quotes extensively over more than three pages.⁴⁰

Arthur Moeller van den Bruck (1876–1925) was not a politician, but an art historian, literary bohemian, and political commentator. He lived several years abroad, mainly in Italy and France, returning to Germany shortly before the outbreak of World War I. He spent the war years in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Press and News Bureau, where he was responsible for refining propaganda releases. At the same time, he continued to publish his own essays on art, politics, architecture, Dostoyevsky, and his hatred for "the West," especially for France as Germany's major adversary in the war.⁴¹ As the American professor of political science Gerhard Krebs observed in the early 1940s, Moeller's experiences abroad as well as the destruction of the war made him "ultimately discover the eternal Germany beyond the state,

40. Without indicating the actual page numbers, smaller omissions in between, or the reshuffle in the middle, Bohner (1935, pp. 12–14) consecutively quotes pp. 235–37 and pp. 232–34 of Moeller van den Bruck (1931). It could not unfortunately be verified whether Bohner quoted from this or the original 1923 edition. It is plausible that the textual shuffle and even some of the omissions from Bohner's quote were in fact the later work of Moeller's acquaintance, Hans Schwarz, who edited the posthumous third edition of Moeller's book, the only edition easily available today.

41. Lauryssens 1999, p. 40.

namely, the German nation, of which he was by birth a part and from which, he found, one could not secede at will."⁴² Slowly, Moeller developed his own theories of Germany's downfall, and also formed a vision of her recovery and return to a leading position in the world. At the same time as Oswald Spengler was painting a depressing picture of the period in his famous work *Der Untergang des Abendlandes* (The Decline of the West), which attributed an innate "Faustian soul" to the occident that ultimately would lead to its destruction, Moeller's *Das dritte Reich* gave chiliastic hope for a better future. He paired an almost eschatological universalism with a socialism centered on the nation as a cultural unit, thus mythologizing the German "cultural soul," the aspect that would overcome the destruction, chaos, and perceived mistreatment by the Western powers after World War I. Profoundly inspiring Hitler with his ideas, Moeller van den Bruck adopted and greatly popularized the famous concept of a "Third Reich" lasting for a thousand years.⁴³ Interestingly, Moeller in his preface prophesized that

... the idea of the third Reich is *an idea of weltanschauung* that elevates above reality. [...] The German people are only too inclined to cherish self-delusion. The idea of the third Reich could become the biggest of all self-delusions it ever harbored. It would be very German if it would rely on, and if it would soothe itself with, this idea. It could be destroyed by this idea. This has to be pointed out. The idea of the third Reich, which, as our highest and ultimate idea of *weltanschauung*, we cannot give up, can be fertile only *as an idea of reality*: when we manage to carry it away from the illusionary and fully integrate it into the political [...].⁴⁴

He thus called for the "politicization of the German nation."⁴⁵

In addition to his literary endeavors, Moeller van den Bruck in 1919 co-founded and became the doyen of an influential conservative debating circle called the "June Club," in bitter reminiscence of the Treaty of Versailles that

42. Krebs 1941, p. 1086.

43. On the long history of the concept of an everlasting ("Imperium sine fine") Third Reich ("Tertium regnum") from the time of the first Roman Empire and the early Christian church, see Dempf 1931.

44. Moeller van den Bruck 1931, p. 7 (emphasis in the original).

45. Moeller van den Bruck 1931, p. 8.

was signed on 28 June 1919. It was here that Adolf Hitler delivered one of his first political speeches.⁴⁶ In a private debate after this speech, Hitler was noticeably impressed by Moeller van den Bruck and his group's vision. Moeller van den Bruck on the other hand was rather critical. He saw Hitler distorting the message with his "proletarian crudeness," and until his death in 1925 kept his distance from the National Socialist activities represented by Hitler.⁴⁷ Although neither mentions the other, *Das dritte Reich*, published in 1923, and Hitler's *Mein Kampf* of 1925–1926 show parallels in their thinking and arguments. Both, for instance, contain many unfounded ideas mixed with a large dose of mysticism. A major difference, however, is that Hitler sees the new Germany built on racial purity that is biological, whereas Moeller van den Bruck calls for a spiritual racial purity.⁴⁸ In a 1974 interview, Otto Strasser, a good friend of Moeller and also closely acquainted with Hitler from 1921, reminisced that

[Hitler] stole a revolutionary idea equal to *Das Kapital* and *The Origin of Species* from under the nose of one of my best friends. Without Hitler, Moeller van den Bruck would have become a household name, on a par with Marx and Charles Darwin. [...] Moeller van den Bruck took his life on the day he realized that Hitler was betraying his ideal. [...] Hitler, of course, had borrowed the title of Moeller van den Bruck's book for his own use. People tend to ignore it today, but up to 1930 *The Third Reich* was widely read and discussed in Germany, much more so than *Mein Kampf*.⁴⁹ [...] This

46. Prominent members of the June Club were, for instance, the wealthy steel magnate Heinrich von Gleichen, art critic Paul Fechter, political activist Otto Strasser, the later Reich Chancellors Heinrich Brüning and Franz von Papen, as well as Albrecht Haushofer, who later was indicted in the 20 July 1944 plot to assassinate Hitler (Laurysens 1999, pp. 55–56). The SS subsequently shot Haushofer in April 1945. Incidentally, his father, Karl Haushofer, a famous professor of geopolitics with close relations to Rudolf Hess as well as Japan, wrote a long review article on Böhner's translation of *Jinnō shōtōki*, comparing it to Dante's roughly contemporary work *Divina Comedia* (cf. Haushofer 1938).

47. Schwierskott 1962, pp. 144–45.

48. Krebs 1941, pp. 1103–104.

49. According to Strasser, 130,000 copies of *Das dritte Reich* had been sold by 1933. In comparison, Hitler's book had sold about 24,000 copies by 1930, according to a publisher's royalties ledger that was later confiscated (Laurysens 1999, pp. 150

got on Hitler's nerves and he ordered Alfred Rosenberg to start a smear campaign in the [newspaper] *Völkischer Beobachter* against Moeller van den Bruck.⁵⁰

According to Strasser, after raids on his home and the confiscation of his private papers, letters, and manuscripts, Moeller van den Bruck's books were among those publicly burned shortly after midnight on 10 May 1933 in huge bonfires on Berlin's Opernplatz. Unfortunately, Strasser's report cannot be verified. It does seem to be the case, however, that up until the early 1930s, much homage was paid to Moeller van den Bruck by National Socialist officials. For instance, a contemporary German observer, trying to elucidate the "spiritual foundation [...] upon which the present National Socialism is based" in a presentation before a scholarly society just a week after Hitler came to power in March 1933, declared that "[t]hese foundations were essentially laid by a single man: Moeller van den Bruck."⁵¹ After Hitler's assumption of power, however, this praise quickly fell silent, and once the dictatorship had established itself, Hitler set about discrediting Moeller van den Bruck. Moeller van den Bruck's approach and intentions were even termed "un-German" and "not leading towards National Socialism."⁵² Thus, Strasser is correct to state that "His name had to be erased from the conscience of the German people because Hitler was the visionary, not a mentally unstable dandy and a despised intellectual who shot himself in a mental asylum. [...] With *The Third Reich* out of the way, Adolf Hitler's *Mein Kampf* was promoted as the highest form of literary art."⁵³

Das dritte Reich was Moeller van den Bruck's final statement of his belief in a "new nationalism." It accused, challenged, and appealed in a style as forceful as Nietzsche's exclamatory manner of writing. It was the passionate manifesto of an embittered patriot in whom despair was mingled with hope for a promising future. In broad strokes, it paints the glorious history of the First Reich, the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation, the Sacrum Ro-

and 152). Despite Strasser's assertion, however, it is not necessarily the case that Hitler adopted the concept of a "Third Reich" exclusively from Moeller, as the concept had already existed for many centuries; see note 43 above.

50. Lauryssens 1999, p. 150.

51. Adam 1933, p. 8.

52. Schwierskott 1962, pp. 150–52.

53. Lauryssens 1999, p. 151.

manum Imperium Nationis Germanicæ, which lasted from 800 to 1806, and the Second Reich, the Wilhelmine German Empire of 1871 to 1918. It is a painstakingly meticulous manuscript full of contrasting poetic visions, grand prophecies, and apocalyptic predictions.⁵⁴ Moeller van den Bruck asserts that the wish to unite all Germans into one Reich had been a central feature of German patriotism and statesmanship for centuries. On every page, he professes a spiritual kinship to Hegel, Nietzsche, or Houston Stewart Chamberlain (1855–1927), the British-born author of such works as *Die Grundlagen des Neunzehnten Jahrhunderts* (The Foundations of the Nineteenth Century), published in 1899. This was to be one of the main sources for the pan-Germanic movement of the early twentieth century.⁵⁵ Moeller van den Bruck's book, in its juggling of images, moods, and ideas as well as its mystifying of practical problems into abstract ideological questions of principle, is a typical example of "political romanticism."⁵⁶ The conservative revolution that Moeller van den Bruck summoned to usher in the Third Reich would, as he says, remain within the "continuity of history" and thus had for its support "the momentum of the millennia that lie behind."⁵⁷

Hermann Böhner's aim was to illustrate the inner affinity of both worlds and to bring the *Jinnō shōtōki* "closer to those who otherwise might have no connection to its overall character." In so doing, he likened Kitabatake's work to Moeller van den Bruck's *Das dritte Reich* maintaining both were concerned with the same ultimate question of "who we are." Böhner furthermore claimed that both texts were "conversations with God," "self-dialogs," and "conversations with the eminent Us." He portrays their apparently similar contents as well as both authors' experiences in highly emotive terms: "As though by a gigantic, transcendent epiphany, a Dæmonion,⁵⁸ a personality, which like every Ego is real and yet not tangible, each author is faced by the

54. Lauryssens 1999, p. 102.

55. Houston Stewart Chamberlain later assumed German citizenship and became the son-in-law of the German composer Richard Wagner. Interestingly, he was also the brother of the well-known British japanologist Basil Hall Chamberlain.

56. Kaltenbrunner 1969, p. 146.

57. Cited in Krebs 1941, p. 1089.

58. Dæmonion is a mystical inner voice in Socratic terminology that controls one's fate and averts one from making mistakes. Often taken to be what we would call "intuition," it is rather a form of "divine madness"—a gift from the gods that inspires poetry, mysticism, love, music, and even philosophy itself. Socrates' characterization

personality of his own nation.”⁵⁹ The respective nation’s personality for both authors is thus mirrored in the national ideal of a divinely inspired continuously living past. In other words, as Bohner sees it, they share the mystique of a transcendent eternal history, responsive to the pivotal ultimate question of “who we are.” Such comparison was designed to enable the German audience better to appreciate and acquaint themselves with the *Jinnō shōtōki*.

Why then did Bohner choose Moeller van der Bruck’s work as a foil of comparison? The answer may be found in his personal and intellectual background.

HERMANN BOHNER ON POLITICS AND THEOLOGY

The German Federal Archives contain very few documents pertaining directly to Hermann Bohner, which indicates that he had only rare “official contact” with the government of the German Reich. Any assessment of his political persuasion has to rely on circumstantial evidence. Some correspondence dated 30 November 1937 can be found in the so-called “Amt Rosenberg.”⁶⁰ Accordingly, the Office of Foreign Relations recommended Bohner, who just had returned to Japan a few weeks earlier after a half-year stay in Germany, for possible talks and lectures as an expert on Japan and the Far East, should he return again to Germany for a longer home leave.⁶¹ Two letters, dated 5 June 1937 and 26 April 1938, between the sinologists Walter Fuchs, who was in China, and Fritz Jäger, professor at the University of Hamburg, mention that earlier in 1937 Bohner had been offered an appointment at the University of Munich, but for unknown reasons the negotiations had come to nothing. In the 1938 letter, Jäger writes that the University of Leipzig was also looking for a japanologist and Bohner would probably be the first choice.⁶² In Bohner’s personnel file at the Reich Ministry of Science, Education, and

of the phenomenon as “dæmonic” suggests that its origin is divine, mysterious, and independent of a person’s own thoughts.

59. Bohner 1935, p. 12.

60. This was the department under the direction of Alfred Rosenberg, who functioned as “the Führer’s representative for the control of the NSDAP’s complete intellectual and ideological training and education.”

61. BArch, NS 15/ 27, Bl. 241; and NS 15/ 260, Bl. 47.

62. Walravens 2005, pp. 125 and 132.

Culture, however, there is no record of an offer of employment at Munich, but an entry dated 6 February 1940 does mention that he declined the chair in Leipzig.⁶³ A report by the Saxon State Ministry of Education to the Reich Ministry describes how, after more than eight months of fruitless negotiations, during which Bohner drove the responsible officials to despair, they terminated their offer.⁶⁴ An entry for 1942 in Bohner's file mentions that he was again suggested for Leipzig and in 1943 for Vienna and Frankfurt.⁶⁵ Be that as it may, Bohner never in fact held a chair in Germany and instead, was active in his adopted country, Japan. Entries for 25 March, 8 July, and 12 August 1941 indicate exchanges between the Office of Foreign Relations, the Office of the President, and the Reich Ministry of Science, Education, and Culture concerning the possibility of awarding Bohner the honorary title of professor. This however was "at the moment declined," although it is not clear whether a government office or Bohner himself was responsible for this decision.⁶⁶

After the war, on 10 December 1954, President Theodor Heuss awarded Bohner the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany for his long-time contributions to Japanese-German cultural relations.⁶⁷ The decoration was presented by the German consul general of Osaka-Kobe on 1 February 1955 at a special meeting of the German East Asiatic Society's regional branch in Kobe.⁶⁸ The citation for this honor mentions Bohner's earlier receipt of the Japanese Fifth Order of the Sacred Treasure, Gold and Silver Rays (*kun gotō zuihōshō* 勲五等瑞宝章). This award was typically bestowed on civil servants who devoted themselves to the state. As lecturer in German, history, literature, and Greek at Ōsaka Gaikokugo Gakkō 大阪外国語学校 from April 1922 and thus a civil servant of the Imperial Japanese government, Bohner of course had had to adhere to the guiding principles of education as outlined in the Imperial Rescript on Education of 1890, which manifested the state's

63. BArch, [ehem. BDC] R 4901, No. B 1091.

64. Worm 1994, pp. 177–78.

65. BArch, [ehem. BDC] R 4901, No. B 1091.

66. Ibid.

67. The award was based on Chancellor Konrad Adenauer's 16 November 1954 list of proposals no. 319.

68. BArch, B122/ 38.721.

kokutai doctrine.⁶⁹ Additionally, on 1 October 1935 Bohner became a—rather reluctant—member of the National Socialist Teachers' Organization, which also maintained chapters abroad, as his membership card shows.⁷⁰

While there is no indication that Bohner was a member of the Nazi party, he had some direct relations with the German government. For example, he received a monthly stipend of three hundred Reichsmark for the period of 1 April 1944 to 31 March 1945.⁷¹ The last entry in his personnel file at the Reich Ministry, dated 12 February 1945, approves this research stipend.⁷² However, the printing of Bohner's *Jinnō shōtōki* translation in 1935 and 1939 was not funded by German money. Instead, the printing cost was financed by the conservative Harada Shakuzenkai 原田積善会 founded in 1920 by the banker Harada Jirō 原田二郎 (1849–1930). It should also be noted that the Japanese-German Cultural Institute, which published the translation, functioned as a rather one-way instrument of cultural propaganda for the Japanese cause. Nevertheless, the two successive German co-directors at the time the two volumes appeared—Wilhelm Gundert and Walter Donat—were both deeply involved in the Nazi political machinery, and did their best to propagate Nazi policies among the German community in Japan.⁷³ Additionally, in 1942 the German embassy in Tokyo commissioned Bohner to compile a book of “fairy-tales and stories from Japan,” intended to be used as a Christmas present for German children in the Far East.⁷⁴

During the height of the war, Bohner furthermore contributed three articles to the monthly journal *The XXth Century*. This English-language jour-

69. The Imperial Rescript on Education is the first official state document in the Meiji period that uses the word *kokutai*. It begins by saying: “Our Imperial Ancestors have founded Our Empire on a basis broad and everlasting and have deeply and firmly implanted virtue; Our subjects ever united in loyalty and filial piety have from generation to generation illustrated the beauty thereof. This is the glory of the fundamental character of Our Empire (*waga kokutai no seika* 我力国体ノ精華), and herein also lies the source of Our education.”

70. BArch, [ehem. BDC] NS 12/ 1840, No. 326471.

71. This monthly stipend had been approved in continuation of a research stipend granted on 5 May 1943 as stated in a letter of 1 February 1945 by the president of the German Research Foundation to the Office of Foreign Relations and the Reich Ministry of Sciences, Education, and Culture. See BArch, [ehem. BDC] DS/ W.

72. BArch, [ehem. BDC] R 4901/ No. B 1091.

73. Hack 1995 and Worm 1994.

74. Bohner 1955, p. 37.

nal, published in Japanese-occupied Shanghai from October 1941 until June 1945, was financed by the German Foreign Office. While by no means an outright propaganda tool, it nevertheless carried regular contributions from high officials of both Japan and Germany. These officials include Honma Masaharu 本間雅晴 (1888–1946), the Japanese general who conquered the Philippines and faced the death penalty after the war, and Baldur von Schirach (1907–1974), the Nazi youth leader and head of the Nazi administrative district of Vienna, who was also later convicted of war crimes. Bohner, however, was apparently invited to contribute articles due to his expertise on Japanese history and thought, and not on account of his Nazi sympathies. In his introductory remarks to Bohner's first article, entitled "Mirror, Sword, and Jewel," published in January 1942, the journal's editor-in-chief Klaus Mehnert (1906–1984) wrote:

[I]t is necessary to consider realities and facts, but once in a while we should also turn to the imponderables, to the invisible essence of a nation, her spirit and ideas, on which she must rely in times of decision. So we have asked a man who stands outside of the political controversies of the day to write on what he would consider the essence of Japan.⁷⁵

The other two articles that Bohner published in this journal were "The Path of the Bushi" in April 1943 (4:44) and "The Battle of Sekigahara" in April 1944 (6:50) respectively.

Mehnert's claim that Bohner kept a distance from politics is further supported by the fact that after the war, Bohner was neither interned by the Allied Occupation forces, nor was he repatriated like the vast majority of Germans in Japan. As a close acquaintance described him in a personal reminiscence, Bohner was a rather apolitical and shy person, who often kept his distance from others, as he suspected they might take advantage of him and his knowledge.⁷⁶ He has frequently been portrayed as a somewhat eccentric, solitary person. Besides, his early background in the *Wandervogel* youth movement, with its romantic ethos of getting back to nature, freedom, and pristine folk-culture, fostered his love for long hikes in the history-

75. *The XXth Century* 2:7 (1942), p. 29.

76. Schinzinger 1981, pp. 21–23.

steeped Yamato basin.⁷⁷ Bohner, in extensive annotations to *Jinnō shōtōki*, also provides a wealth of detail about geographical locations and their connection to mystic stories and real history. He moreover explicitly writes at the beginning of his volume of annotations that “history emanates from the local sphere.”⁷⁸

Bohner’s poetic-mystical and ornate diction might be attributed to the Protestant environment in which he was originally trained as a missionary and theologian. Indeed, throughout his life in Japan he held services for the German community in the Osaka-Kobe area.⁷⁹ His attempt to elucidate the *Jinnō shōtōki* with extensive quotes from Moeller van den Bruck is most probably not to be explained by his sympathy with Nazism, or by the Nazi use of Moeller van den Bruck’s ideas. Rather, the explanation is perhaps to be found in his naïve yet deeply felt spiritual affinity with Moeller van den Bruck’s metaphysical grandeur. It must be noted that Moeller van den Bruck was himself inspired not only by Nietzsche, Wagner, Chamberlain, and Stefan George, but also by the Protestant thought of Martin Luther. Moreover, Moeller van den Bruck himself was a descendent of a family with a long tradition of evangelical ministry, traceable to the late seventeenth century.⁸⁰ Hermann Bohner too was born into a missionary family and had studied Protestant theology and philosophy at the University of Tübingen in southern Germany.⁸¹ Hermann’s wife, Hanna Blumhardt, whom he first met in Tsingtao, and Richard Wilhelm, his teacher and friend, both came from the nearby village of Bad Boll at the foot of the Swabian Alps, where Wilhelm also worked as a vicar before being sent as a missionary to China.⁸² As men-

77. Gundert 1964, p. 3.

78. “Geschichte geht vom Raum aus” (Bohner 1939, p. 1).

79. Schinzinger 1981, p. 26.

80. Lauryssens 1999, p. 114.

81. Hermann Bohner was born on 8 December 1884 in Abokobi in the Gold Coast. His father, Heinrich, was stationed in Africa for thirty-five years as a missionary for the Protestant Basel Mission Society.

82. Hermann Bohner and Richard Wilhelm also were brothers-in-law as Wilhelm was married to Hanna’s sister Salome Blumhardt. Their father, Christoph, and grandfather Johann Blumhardt were famous Protestant pastors, who greatly influenced the discourse on Christian eschatology with their ideas on the perennial in-breaking of God’s kingdom into the present. In Bad Boll, the Blumhardts hosted an informal literary and theological salon frequented by such famous literati as Hermann Hesse and Karl Barth. Hesse was the grandson of the India missionary Her-

tioned above, Bohner went to Tsingtao in summer 1914 to take up a post at the local missionary school. Just like Richard Wilhelm, he went there as a member of the Allgemeiner Evangelisch-Protestantischer Missionsverein. This mission society had been founded in 1884 and only a year later began its work in China and Japan.⁸³ It was in that society's journal, *Zeitschrift für Missionskunde und Religionswissenschaft*, that Bohner's first Japan-related article was published in 1927.

Hermann Bohner was thus brought up within evangelical Protestantism and stayed for most of his life closely connected to its worldview, or more precisely, that of Württemberg or "Swabian" Pietism. Pietism at that time regarded the prevailing Christian orthodoxy as spiritually unproductive and found its roots, in part, in the mystical spirituality of an earlier era and the power of individual meditation on the divine. Swabian Pietism especially, often echoed mysticism with its reliance on intensity of feeling and sentiment, over ritual or intellect, as the technique to experience the intimacy as well as ultimate spiritual reality of God. It is furthermore well documented that amid the contemporaneous conservative stock of ideas, revivalist Pietism eagerly fused with romanticism and thus helped to form the uniquely meta-physical, idealistic nature of German romantic philosophy.⁸⁴

All things considered, it seems evident that Hermann Bohner's extensive quotes from Moeller van den Bruck's *Das dritte Reich* in his explanations of the *Jinnō shōtōki* were not due to his propensity for the Hitler-style "Germanomania" of the 1930s and 40s. Rather, a more persuasive explanation is to be found in his philosophic-theological upbringing and the prevailing European *zeitgeist* prior to his settling in East Asia. Bohner may best be characterized as a "national romanticist" who, in the words of one obituary writer, felt it his "mission to trace the 'divine' in Japan."⁸⁵

mann Gundert and thus the cousin of the Japan missionary Wilhelm Gundert, one of the two German co-directors of the Japanese-German Cultural Institute, who also had studied theology in nearby Tübingen.

83. In 1929, the Allgemeiner Evangelisch-Protestantischer Missionsverein (General Evangelical Protestant Mission Society) changed its name to Ostasienmission or East Asia Mission. After a split-up during World War II, its main successor today is the Deutsche Ostasienmission, DOAM.

84. Schwierskott 1962, p. 89.

85. Gundert 1964, p. 3.

CONCLUSION

The title of this essay, “A Living Past as the Nation’s Personality,” is taken from Hermann Böhner’s comparative assessment of the *Jinnō shōtōki* and *Das dritte Reich*. Some further clarification is finally in order. The concept of “nation” signifies here a “cultural community” of people living in a particular place and sharing the “eternal common value” of a unifying past that lives on into the present as the center of their cultural sphere. Böhner saw how both Kitabatake Chikafusa and Arthur Moeller van den Bruck in a particularly dark moment for their respective nations tried, through their writings, to re-invoke a spirit of the past, elevate this spirit into a transcendental beacon, and thus bring hope for a renewed and glorious future. Hermann Böhner evoked their affinity in accordance with his own background of Pietistic mysticism and thus endeavored to bridge the gap between the “Deutschtum und Japanertum” (Germanness and Japaneseness) articulated by these two paragons of national consciousness.⁸⁶

From early on, Böhner called the *Jinnō shōtōki* a “Shinto theodicy.” Another prominent German commentator on Japanese-German relations during the 1930s, Karl Haushofer, labeled it a “theodicy of the Reich,” of the [national] realm. He saw in the *Jinnō shōtōki*’s grand narrative “its author’s flight of mind (*Seelenflucht*) into the nation’s eternity.”⁸⁷ Although on the surface these descriptions might appear quite different, they are actually not that far removed from Moeller van den Bruck’s “Third” or “Thousand Year Reich.” This Reich “restores the nation’s ‘eternal values’, without which man loses contact with nature and with God.”⁸⁸ For Moeller van den Bruck, nature expresses its will through nations and is a composite of many elements: geographic factors, economic spheres, and individual genius. Behind these, there may be still mightier forces at work: cosmic relationships, in which physical relations are linked with metaphysical necessities.⁸⁹ The German word *Reich*—derived from the Latin word *regnum*, i.e., “reign”—means realm or kingdom. However, in this specific German context, it designates not only a kingdom of governments and politics, but also a kingdom of the

86. Böhner 1935, p. 12.

87. Haushofer 1938, pp. 162 and 156.

88. Lauryssens 1999, p. 104.

89. Krebs 1941, p. 1093, note 12.

spirit.⁹⁰ Moeller van den Bruck's vision of this new German *Reich* has an unmistakably sacred and even eschatological dimension.⁹¹ Its bearers, according to Moeller van den Bruck, possess the quality of leadership as an inborn gift coming from the "inherited knowledge" of historical relationships, which they have "in their blood."⁹² With all its mystic associations, such a *Reich* thus combines *regnum* and *sacerdotium*. In Bohner's assessment, this *Reich* is similar to the Japanese concept of a divinely initiated "national polity" that manifests in the perpetual reign of a sacred line of "divine sovereigns." Indeed, Alois Dempf, a contemporary Catholic philosopher and historian, commented in 1931 on Moeller van den Bruck's allusions and prophecies in *Das dritte Reich*, arguing it was common to all humanity to believe in the "divine ordination" of history.⁹³

Moeller van den Bruck was insistent that the state was "related to the two notions [of 'throne' and 'altar'] and their two spheres thus seem intertwined [... T]he father-figure of the nation and the father-figure of God complement one another and form a unity upon which the state is based. Throne and altar guarantee the permanency of temporal matters and timeless resolutions."⁹⁴ The belief in a sacred history and a nation's divine providence is by necessity intertwined with ideas about practical politics. In his *Jinnō shōtōki*, Kitabatake at one point explicitly writes that "in antiquity, deity (*kami* 神) and sovereign (*kimi* 皇) were one entity and therefore [the expression] 'to preside over rituals (*matsuri* 祭)' meant 'to preside over government (*matsurigoto*

90. During the early centuries of the Holy Roman Empire, the emperor had the special authority to appoint the pope. In reciprocation, the pope would crown the next emperor. Similarly, the secular authorities appointed church officials within the individual states. Disputes over investiture eventually led to conflicts between secular and religious powers, the best-known incident being the Investiture Controversy between the Holy Roman Emperor Henry IV and Pope Gregory VII. The sovereigns' belief in the Divine Right of Kings as well as struggles for primacy and hegemony between the throne and altar, or state and papacy, continued into the late nineteenth century and the time of the so-called *Kulturkampf*, or cultural struggle, between Prussia and Rome.

91. Kaltenbrunner 1969, p. 152.

92. Krebs 1941, p. 1099.

93. Dempf 1931, p. 171.

94. Moeller van den Bruck 1931, p. 233.

政)’.⁹⁵ Kitabatake uses the compound word “*jin-nō*” 神皇 or “divinity–sovereign” in the title of his work, and this inherent unity between the sacred and the sovereign and the “correct succession” (*shōtō* 正統) has been interpreted as Kitabatake’s view on the origin of Shinto itself.⁹⁶ In other words, Shinto for Kitabatake centers on *saisei itchi* 祭政一致, the unity of ritual and politics manifested in the divine sovereign. The emperor as high priest performs state rituals (*sai, matsuri*), while as political sovereign he oversees government (*sei, matsurigoto*). The imperial office in short is defined by the unity (*itchi*) of these two functions.

Kitabatake’s articulation of such a view of “sacred politics,” or practically applied “political theology,” is what makes his work—and by extension Bohner’s translation—momentous in the eyes of early twentieth century observers in both Germany and Japan. Kitabatake was a vital voice in the articulation of notions of *kokutai* and *shinkoku* that were imperative in early Shōwa intellectual discourse. Thus, years of continuously amplified state indoctrination since the Meiji period culminated in a renewed assessment of *Jinnō shōtōki* as a true “Bible-book of *folk national weltanschauung* and a standard work of *national education*.” This is what was truly significant for the nationalist agenda of both Japan and Germany.

95. Yamada 1932, p. 217; Iwasa 1965, p. 97; cf. Bohner 1935, p. 246; and Varley 1980, p. 131.

96. Shirayama 1984, p. 257; Nauman 1994, p. 49.

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In Search of Lost Essence

Nationalist Projections in German Shinto Studies

BERNHARD SCHEID

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 *mikuji* 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 Bohner (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 Bohner, 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 Bohner 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” (Bohner 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 Bohner 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 Bohner, 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. Bohner 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 *ko-kutai*—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 post-war 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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