PATRIOTISM AND RELIGION

IN

JAPAN

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To

Dr. Peter K. Emmons
and
Dr. Roland B. Lutz

whose missionary zeal and personal interest
in the writer have been a source of
great inspiration to her and
have encouraged her to
persevere toward a
missionary
goal

this thesis

is gratefully dedicated

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ABBREVIATIONS

MRW ... The Missionary Review of the World

JCYB ... The Japan Christian Year Book

TASJ ... The Translations of the Asiatic Society of Japan

TJSL ... Translations and Proceedings of the Japan Society, London

INTRODUCTION

PATRIOTISM AND RELIGION IN JAPAN

INTRODUCTION

A. Statement of the Problem

One of the outstanding characteristics of the East today is the religious ferment. In Japan one is impressed with the spirit of nationalism which seeks to identify State Shinto as closely as possible with patriotism. By such a union Japan hopes to preserve the national culture in the face of the innovations that come into the country from without.

The western world is fairly familiar with the effort on the part of the Japanese Government to make observance of Shinto a national test of loyalty even among Buddhists and Christians. Thus the government makes Shintoism, the indigenous cult of Japan, mandatory. All citizens must go to some Shinto shrine at stipulated occasions and bow reverently. But at the same time the government officially declares that this is not an act of worship; it is purely patriotic and on a par with the salute to the flag in an Occidental country.

Japan subscribes to the theory of the totali-

tarian state. She is engaged in a feverish campaign to unify, to deify, to glorify the state as the highest object of man's service and devotion. This situation has created a baffling problem for Christian Missions, for Christianity not only claims to transcend national boundaries but refuses to accord them any religious significance. This perplexing state of affairs demands an answer to the question "Is State Shinto a Religion?"

B. Importance of the Problem

There is deep concern in this problem by all who are interested in Foreign Missions because its solution will determine the future of Christianity in Japan and in all her dependencies. The following quotations may well be cited in order to impress upon the reader's mind the importance of the present problem:

> "It would be good if we could see the break-up of this system [Shinto] but, on the contrary, its hold on the people seems to be getting stronger of recent years. The influence of the government and of the system of national education, thrown on the side of preserving the ancestral faith, is for the present, so strong that only an individual here and there breaks away. This must change eventually, but for the present, Shinto is the most formidable foe of Christianity in this Empire."[1]

> ". . . the problem of adjustment of the Christian enterprise to the rites and ceremonies of Shinto

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1. Edgerton Ryerson: Shinto and Its Modern Developments, p. 57.

> becomes one of the most delicate and serious problems which the church faces."[1]

A Secretary of the Board of Foreign Missions of one of our large denominations has recently stated the seriousness of the problem thus:

> ". . . a problem has arisen which constitutes one of the most difficult living issues in the history of Christianity's missionary expansion."[2]

Another writer states that:

> "Christians in America and throughout the world should be aware of the serious situation that confronts the Christian Church and the missionary force in Japan and Korea today. It arises out of the growing insistence of the Japanese Government that their Christian subjects engage in 'Shrine Worship' throughout the Empire."[3]

C. The Purpose of the Study

It is the writer's purpose to make a careful study of the history of Shintoism with a view to discovering the origin of the shrine problem and its present day interpretation by (1) the Government of Japan, (2) unofficial Japanese, and (3) the Christians. The study also will endeavor to consider the problem as it exists in Chosen today. From this investigation the author hopes to come to a decision concerning the shrine problem and

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1. Laymen's Foreign Missions Inquiry, Vol. VI, p. 20.
2. Annual Report of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., 1936.
3. Francis S. Downs: "A Crucial Hour for Christians in the Japanese Empire," The Presbyterian Banner, March 26, 1936, p. 7.

to discover the possibilities of its solution with reference to the future of Christian Missions in the Japanese Empire.

D. The Sources

It has been necessary to use very largely secondary source material for the historical background and political philosophy of modern Shinto. However, only such sources are used as are known to be authoritative. Part of the material for the study of this shrine problem has been obtained from personal letters of missionaries on furlough from Japan and Chosen;[1] part of it has been received through correspondence with the Foreign Board Secretaries of the various denominations supporting missions in Japan and Chosen; and part of it has been secured from personal interviews with nationals and missionaries from Japan and Chosen. The writer has made use of recent data pertinent to the shrine problem found in monthly periodicals at the Missionary Research Library, Union Theological Seminary, and the Foreign Missions Library of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A.

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1. The writer was obliged to limit her correspondence to those missionaries on furlough because of Japan's strict censorship of the mails both in and out of the country.

E. The Method of Approach

1. Since the shrine problem has its roots in the past, the writer will begin with a brief study of the history of Shintoism. The salient features of Shintoism as revealed by its early history will be treated in this discussion. Then a study will be made of the modern developments of Shinto as found in Japan today with a view to distinguishing between its three forms.

2. The next step will be a consideration of the political philosophy of modern Shinto by tracing the official enactments, relative to the status of the shrines, from the time of the Restoration in 1868 to the present. Such a study ought to reveal the relationship of the state to the Shinto shrines.

3. Having laid the background for the investigation, the writer will then present the interpretation of State Shinto by unofficial Japanese. This will be done by reviewing two general interpretations of contemporary Japanese Shintoists. Some objections to the interpretation of State Shinto by the Japanese Government will be stated.

4. For further study the writer will consider the interpretation of State Shinto by the Roman Catholic Church in Japan, and also by the Protestants in Japan and Chosen. An attempt will be made to point out wherein lies

the difference between the problem in Japan and that in Chosen.

5. Finally, in the light of the facts discovered, the writer will arrive at a conclusion concerning the shrine problem and will indicate some suggestions for its solution in the future.

CHAPTER I

HISTORIC SKETCH OF SHINTOISM

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A. First Period of Shinto

The beginning of the period of Primitive Shinto cannot be definitely ascertained because it takes us back into an indefinite mythological area in which the fixing of dates is a doubtful undertaking. This first stage, sometimes called Old Shinto, ended with the introduction of Buddhism in A.D. 552. Although the source material bearing on this period was not written until a later date, poems, songs, chants, and liturgies were kept alive by tradition. During this period the uncultured ancestors of the Japanese worshipped as gods the powers of nature, to whom they ascribed all human attributes.

The cult was exceedingly simple. Unpainted, unadorned wooden shrines were the centers of worship. No images were to be found in the early day, though the presence of the spirits was indicated by fluttering pieces of notched paper. A gong above the entrance could be sounded to call the attention of the spirits to the coming of worshippers. The rituals were motivated primarily by the desires to safe-guard the food supply, to ensure the success and permanence of the governmental regime, and to secure release from ceremonial impurity. The great

deities were aspects of nature interpreted in terms of human social experience.[1]

The beginning of Shinto takes us back to those primeval days when men were gods, and Japan was the land of the gods. The ancient mythology is largely embodied in two books, the Kojiki, and the Nihongi, both of which were published early in the eighth century A.D., but contain myths that come from a much remoter period. As certain of these old tales have an important bearing on modern Shinto, a brief summary of one or two will not be out of place.

> "The mythological record begins on the high plain of heaven with seven generations of obscure deities who have had little influence on subsequent thought and worship. The first important gods are Izanagi and his consort Izanami. The Nihongi tells us, 'Izanagi and Izanami stood on the floating bridge of heaven and held counsel together, saying, "Is there not a country beneath?" Thereupon they thrust down the "jewel spear of heaven" and, groping about with it, found the ocean. The brine which dripped from the point of the spear coagulated and formed an island which received the name of Onagoro-jima. The two deities thereupon descended and dwelt in this island. Accordingly they wished to be united as husband and wife, and to produce countries, so they made Onagoro-jima (said to be a small island near Awaji, in the inland sea), the pillar of the centre of the land.'
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> "The deities then gave birth to the Islands of Japan. They next proceeded to give birth to a number of deities, the rock-earth prince, the wind gods,
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1. D. C. Holtom: "The Political Philosophy of Modern Shinto," Transactions of The Asiatic Society of Japan, Vol. XLIX, Part II, pp. 6-7.

the god of the moon, the god of trees, the goddess of food, etc. In giving birth to the god of fire, Izanami sickened, died, and went to the land of Yomi--or darkness. Thither her divine husband pursued her and met with many strange adventures. On returning from Yomi, Izanagi bathed in the sea to purify himself from the pollutions of the underworld. The lustration was prolific in the production of deities, the gods of good and ill luck and certain of the ancestors of the families of local chieftains. From his left eye was born the Sun-goddess, from his right eye the Moon-god, and from the washing of his nose, the boisterous deity, Susa-no-o, the rainstorm personified. Susa-no-o's behaviour was rough and rude. He broke down the divisions between the rice-fields and sowed them over again; and, worst of all, he flayed a piebald colt of heaven with a backward flaying, and flung it into the sacred weaving hall, where the Sun-goddess was at work upon the garments of the deities. Deeply insulted the goddess of the sun retired to a cave and left the world in darkness. Consternation prevailed among the deities of heaven and, meeting on the dry bed of the river of heaven, they took counsel as to how they might entice her forth. A great branch of a sakaki tree was bedecked with jewels, offerings of cloth and, in the midst, a mirror. Uzume, the Dread Female of Heaven, arraying herself in a fantastic manner, stood on a tub and performed a somewhat indecent dance, stamping until the tub resounded, and uttering inspired words. The great concourse of deities laughed heartily. The Sun-goddess, wondering at the noise and laughter in the darkness peeped out, and was immediately seized and dragged forth. Thus to the great joy of all, the world had light again.

"The mirror mentioned in this story is said to have been bequeathed by the Sun-goddess to her grandson Ninigi, with these words: 'When you look into this mirror regard it as looking on me, myself.' Ninigi descended from heaven to govern the 'Central land of Reed-Plains' (Japan), and in turn bequeathed the mirror to his grandson, Jimmu Tenno, the first human emperor, who, according to the official chronology, ascended the throne in 660 B.C. Subsequently it was enshrined at Ise, where it has remained, according to tradition, till the present day. The Sacred Mirror of Ise is one of the Three Sacred Treasures (the

other two being a jewel, and a sword found in the tail of a dragon by Susa-no-o), which form the Imperial Regalia, and are symbolic of the continuity of the throne. The Emperor traces his lineage to Jimmu, and through him to the Divine Ancestress, the Sun-goddess."[1]

B. Second Period of Shinto

The second period of Shinto extends from the introduction of Buddhism in the sixth century A.D. to about the middle of the eighteenth century. With the coming of Buddhism, it became necessary to give a name to the indigenous cult of Japan in order to distinguish it from its new rival. It was then called Kami no Michi[2] (the Way of the Gods) in Japanese, and Shinto in the Chinese as pronounced by Japanese.

In this second phase of its history Shinto is widely overshadowed and to a large extent absorbed by its

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1. Ryerson, op. cit., pp. 9-11.
2. In the Japanese sense, the word Michi or Way seems vaguely to mean both religious teaching and practice, and Kami means gods or deities, sometimes souls or spirits. This is the religious meaning of the Japanese word Kami. It has another significance which is not religious but quite secular. Literally, the word Kami means higher, upper, above, and superior. Therefore, anything, man or beast, which is higher than ourselves is entitled to be called Kami. These two conceptions of Kami, religious and secular, are mixed up or blended, so puzzlingly that it happens very often that no one can tell which is which. (What Is Shinto? Published by the Board of Tourist Industries, Japanese Government Railways, p. 12.)

great rival. This fusion of the two faiths which took place in the eighth and ninth centuries became known as the "Two-fold Way of the Gods." Buddhist idols and relics found their way into Shinto temples, and in the domestic religion of the people the rites of the two cults were observed without any thought of their diverse origin.

Before the close of the sixth century Buddhism had deeply penetrated the government itself. Emperors and high governmental officials now became Buddhist and services were held in the palace. Finally, Buddhism was propagated by imperial order and Buddhist festivals became affairs of state. By the opening years of the ninth century the doctrinal assimilation of Buddhism and Shinto had been accomplished. Now Buddhist rites were conducted at Shinto shrines while the priests prayed to Shinto gods under Buddhist names.[1]

> ". . . This syncretism is not to be understood as entirely the result of a popular evolution expressing a genuine amalgamation, but also as a clever piece of statesmanship on the part of Buddhist propagandists, resulting in the production of a theology that explained the deities of the native pantheon as the transmigration of the gods of Mahayana Buddhism. The Sun Goddess, Amaterasu-Omi-Kami, the central deity of the Japanese system, was equated with the great Buddha, Vairochana, the center of the 'world of things' and the 'world of thoughts' and thus a theological basis was established upon which all the other deities of both religions could be identified

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1. Cf. Holtom, op. cit., pp. 7-8.

as emanations of this central life."[1]

The theology of Shinto even at this stage was meagre. "Possibly its whole content can be summed up in the phrase, 'Fear the gods and obey the Emperor,' and the notion that the land, its people, and especially the ruler, are divine."[2]

For many centuries Shinto existed almost exclusively in this mixed form. Only a few temples, like those at Ise, were able to resist successfully the intrusion of Buddhism. Yet in spite of this triumph of Buddhism, the native cult still survived in many of their common beliefs and practices. The seeds of the old plant lay hidden away undisturbed in the literature of ancient Shinto ready to germinate in proper season into a life that was to quicken the whole nation. This season of the quickening of the old came in the next period of Shinto development.[3]

C. Third Period of Shinto

The third phase of Shinto history is found between the opening years of the eighteenth century and the

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1. Holtom, op. cit., pp. 8-9.
2. George W. Knox: The Development of Religion in Japan, p. 65.
3. Cf. Holtom, op. cit., p. 9.

Restoration in 1868. This is the period known as the Japanese Renaissance. In it two outstanding characteristics are manifested: the development of a national consciousness, and a revival of ancient learning. Old libraries were ransacked, ancient manuscripts unearthed, and the early history of Japan subjected to careful investigation. The interest in studying this ancient literature was largely due to patriotic and religious motives. The investigators tried to discover the pure foundations of Japanese ideas and institutions and to create a renewed reverence for the Imperial family. Research of this kind together with other forces prepared the way for the overthrow in 1868 of the military rulers, or Shoguns, and the restoration of the government to the Emperors.

> "As it was, the emperor was restored and the Japanese have rallied around him with a passionate devotion which evokes our admiration and surprise. No theory of the 'divine right of kings' is more far-reaching and complete than the Japanese. But it goes a step further and asserts divinity of the very person of the emperor. He is their divine ruler, and commands their loyalty and obedience by a right seldom claimed in all history and never in modern times except in the island empire."[1]

But there was a religious as well as a political side to the Japanese Renaissance. Kada Azumamaro (1669-1736), Kamo Mabuchi (1697-1769), Motoori Norinaga

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1. Edmund D. Soper: The Religions of Mankind, p. 239.

(1730-1801), and Hirata Atsutane (1776-1843), four great scholars of the past, in their historical studies, brought to light again the religious condition of the nation before the introduction of Buddhism. (This was possible because the combination of Buddhism and Shinto was more of a mechanical mixture than a fusion of the two faiths.) These scholars interpreted the old Shinto as the proper religion of the Japanese people. Their efforts have been called "The Revival of Pure Shinto."[1]

D. Fourth Period of Shinto

The modern period beginning with the Restoration in 1868 brought Shinto to the foreground and made it the religion of the day.[2] Buddhism was disestablished and many Buddhist temples that occupied the places once held by Shinto shrines were restored to the care of the Shinto priests. Although an effort was made to return to the ancient Shinto simplicity, many of the old decorations and ornaments of Buddhism may still be seen. Shintoism was superintended by a Council for Spiritual Affairs, of equal rank with the council that controlled temporal matters. However, its importance in the government rap-

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1. Edgerton Ryerson: Shinto and Its Modern Developments, p. 6.
2. Tasuku Harada: The Faith of Japan, p. 6.

idly diminished, and in 1877 its position was that of a subordinate bureau. Finally a decree was issued which declared Shinto to be merely a convenient scheme of governmental ceremonies, and put it once more back into its old place.[1]

Japan's coming into intercourse with foreign powers has done much to awaken the patriotic sentiment of its people. In recent years there has been a strong tendency to regard Shinto as the peculiarly national faith by emphasizing the "spirit of Japan." On the part of the government there has been an effort to present Shinto as a merely political philosophy and to empty it, as far as possible, of its religious content.[2] Two instances may be cited which indicate the government's repeated steps to intensify the cult, namely:

> "The Coronation, which was the occasion for the most thorough diffusion of State Shinto ideas and practices of recent years. We had hymns to the Emperor, prayers in all the schools of the Empire, facing Ise [shrine] when the Emperor went into the sacred enclosure, all sorts of ceremonies at the state and local shrines, and tons of literature inspired and sent out by the government."[3]

> "The erection and integration in the life of Japan of the Meiji Shrine in Tokyo. This is the focus of the national cult on its recreational side, of national games, etc.; and shares with Ise the chief place in the linking up of State Shinto with the

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1. Cf. Knox, op. cit., p. 77.
2. Herbert Gowen: A History of Religion, p. 385.
3. Charles Braden: Modern Tendencies in World Religions, pp. 146-147.

army and national policy. There is being built up over the country a network of local shrines to the Emperor Meiji."[1]

The Emperor's position in the national life of Japan is probably unique in the world.[2] He is not thought of merely as the supreme executive, but by reason of his divine quality, all power inheres in him, and he can bestow it on whom he will.[3] "He is venerated, not as a man who derives his power from the nation but as a being of divine descent from whom the nation derives its power."[4] European dictators, when compared with the Emperor of Japan, are but dummy despots.[5] Belief in Him as the divine descendent from the Queen Goddess, Amerarasu-Omi-Kami is taught from the kindergarten age upward.[6] The Japanese school books state, "We Japanese look up to our Emperor as to a God," and "The Japanese Emperor is divine."[7]

Recently there has been a movement which de-

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1. Braden, op. cit., pp. 146-147.
2. William Paton: Christianity in the Eastern Conflicts, p. 24.
3. Ibid., p. 24.
4. Arthur Brown: One Hundred Years, (A History of the Foreign Missionary Work of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.), p. 676.
5. Sydney Greenbie: "Man-God of Japan," Readers Digest, April, 1936, p. 86.
6. Ibid., p. 86.
7. "Japanese Shrines and Emperor Worship," Missionary Review of the World, March, 1937, p. 136, (By a Resident of Japan).

mands that loyalty to the present Emperor shall be equal to the loyalty to the Sun Goddess, and that the test of national loyalty is the worship of the "Ancestress of the Imperial line."[1] On this sentiment the present government builds a blind, fanatical, violent adoration, reinforced by every modern mechanical means of propaganda and punishment.[2] A quotation from an article in the Readers Digest entitled the "Man-God of Japan" will serve to illustrate this point:

> "Newspapers which print Imperial Household without capital letters are suppressed. No man, or image of a man, may be placed above the Emperor if he is passing. When the Emperor's car goes by, all blinds must be drawn, no one may remain on balcony or roof, workers on steel structures must scurry to the ground, blinds in streetcars must be drawn, and no person may stand upon even an eight-inch doorstep. A striker once set himself atop a smokestack and nothing could bring him down until warned that the Emperor was to pass."[3]

In discussing the transformation of Shinto from a worship of many "gods" to the practically exclusive worship of emperors, Griffis is quoted as having said, "In short the Mikado tribe, or Yamato clan, did in reality capture the aboriginal religion and turn it into a great political machine."[4]

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1. Cf. MRW, March, 1937, p. 136.
2. Cf. Greenbie, op. cit., p. 86.
3. Ibid., p. 86.
4. James Cannon: "Shinto;-Literary Sources and Popular Cultus," Review and Expositor, July, 1925, p. 300.

A recent observer made this significant statement in commenting on the reaction of the Japanese people as a whole to the government's policy: The spirit of loyalty and reverence felt by the people for the Emperor "has taken on a religious exaltation never surpassed in the history of Rome itself."[1]

Another person remarked: ". . . the military are making of it [Shinto] an equivalent of that cult of the Caesars which served to hold the Roman Empire together."[2]

Beyond what the authorities have done to secure the utmost loyalty to the central government, there has been a marked non-official movement to accentuate the values of emperor worship and the place of Japan as central in the life of the world.[3] This idea has been supported by some of the new Shinto sects and by modern Shinto scholars in a rationalization of Shinto.[4]

Since the Enthronement Exercises in 1928, State Shinto has enjoyed a revival. This has renewed the emphasis upon the "spirit of Japan" designated by the Japanese as "kokutai."[5] For many centuries the Japanese have

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1. Sidney L. Gulick: Toward Understanding Japan, p. 39.
2. E. L. Allen: "Japan in Crisis," East and West Review, April, 1936, p. 146.
3. Cf. Braden, op. cit., p. 147.
4. Ibid., p. 147.
5. John Archer: Faiths Men Live By, p. 134.

exhibited a consciousness of unity and national character.[1] They have a profound conviction of divinity in themselves, in their islands, and in their institutions.[2]

> ". . . Thus it is evident that Nippon was established in a way not to be found in any other country: the creator gods, and 'Michi' the will of the gods, and the Emperors, the descendants of the gods who inherit the 'Michi' and rule, and the subjects who work united with the Emperors in one body, and the territory, the material element that fulfils the work of the gods - these five have crystallized into one . . . All of this has led to Nippon's national activity and social progress, its politics, learning, military power, industry and all other things expanding for the purpose of carrying out the gods' will. . . The study of Nippon Kokutai is the duty of us Nipponese, and the decree of the Emperors Jimmu and Meiji is that we shall concentrate to set a good example of a righteous country before the world."[3]

Kokutai, then, "is the solidarity of the nation persisting through the centuries."[4]

The fact that the interests of Shinto occupy a position of special importance in this program of moral unification will be evident in the following chapters of this paper.

Before leaving the historical study of Shintoism, it may be well to distinguish State Shinto from the other two types of Shinto faith which are apparent in Japan today. A popular expression of Shinto is in the

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1. Cf. Archer, op. cit., p. 134.
2. Ibid., p. 134.
3. Paton, op. cit., pp. 26-27.
4. Cf. Archer, op. cit., p. 134.

form of a large number of Shinto sects which are admitted by all to be genuine religious organizations with both creeds and works. There are thirteen of these sects some of which are further sub-divided. While they had their beginning before the opening of the present century, their chief progress has been made within the last twenty-five years. A second type of Shinto takes the form of a domestic cult which is the same in quality with State Shinto, save that, whereas the former is an unorganized complex of primitive beliefs and offices, the latter represents the national centering of traditional elements in the Sun-goddess as the first link in the unbroken lineal succession of the Emperors of Japan.[1] The third type, to which reference has already been made, is an official cult known as State Shinto or Shrine Shinto. The Shinto shrines were originally built as places of communion with the spirit world. It has been a matter of great difficulty to separate these shrines from the religious consciousness of the Japanese nation. In this situation the so-called shrine problem of the present study lies concealed.[2]

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1. Cf. Archer, op. cit., p. 140.
2. The Japan Christian Year Book, 1930, p. 37 ff.

E. Summary

From this brief sketch of the history of Shintoism, it is plain that there are four distinct phases in the development of Shinto:

First: Shinto was originally a nature worship but later added the worship of deified men.

Second: When Buddhism was dominant in Japan, Shintoism as a distinct religion was quiescent, and yet in spite of the triumph of Buddhism the native cult still survived in many of their common beliefs and practices.

Third: The restoration of the government to the Emperors brought about the inauguration of a movement with the object of renewing the traditional reverence for the Imperial family and of returning to the old ways.

Fourth: The modern period is characterized by the reestablishment of Shintoism as the national faith of Japan and later by an official effort to eliminate it of its religious content. This attempt has led the Japanese Government to decree certain changes in the status of State Shinto. It is to these official enactments that we now turn.

CHAPTER II

THE POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY OF MODERN SHINTO

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A. Introduction

The point of view of the Japanese Government concerning the real status of the Shinto Shrines must be considered by those seeking a solution to the Shrine problem. From childhood the Japanese people are taught that attitudes and usages connected with the Shinto Shrines are vitally related to good citizenship.

> "To be a good Japanese requires loyalty to certain great interests for which the shrines are made to stand. This interest is deliberately fostered on a large scale by the government. The shrines and their ceremonies are officially regarded as probably chief among the agencies for the promotion of what is commonly designated kokumin dotoku, or national morality. They are thus accorded a place of distinction among the approved instrumentalities for combating dangerous tendencies in the thought-life of the people and for firmly uniting the nation about certain important social and political institutions."[1]

Hence, really to understand the modern Shinto situation, it is necessary that the reader take cognizance of the government's efforts to solve her national problems. This she has tried to do by means of a series of laws and departmental regulations. To these official enact-

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1. The Japan Christian Year Book, 1930, "Modern Shinto As a State Religion," p. 37.

ments relative to Shinto Shrines the reader's attention is now directed.

It seems advisable to pause a moment and answer the question, "What is a Shinto Shrine?" In Japanese law the institutions which are called shrines in English are generally designated jinja, meaning deity (kami in original Japanese) and sha, or ja, which in this connection should be rendered house or dwelling place.[1] The shrine or jinja then is a dwelling place in which the deity or deities of Shinto are supposed to live; that is, they are holy places where the kami may be found and communicated with.[2]

> "Japanese law permits the use of the term jinja only in connection with the traditional institutions of original Shinto wherein the kami are enshrined . . . Jinja is thus a modern Sino-Japanese legal designation and does not represent the early Japanese usage."[3]

The shrine or jinja may be a small god-house of stone or wood found by the wayside, or it may be the Great Shrine of Shinto at Ise with its costly buildings and varied objects of ceremony and art. Shrines which are recognized by the government in its classifications are divided into twelve groups. At the head of the classification appears the Grand Imperial Shrine of Ise, list-

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1. Cf. JCYB, 1930, p. 40.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.

ed as one great shrine, but really consisting of a group of sixteen shrines. Below these are arranged eleven groups which vary from government and national shrines down through those of prefecture, district and village to a large group of more than 62,000 shrines which are designated as being without rank, the so-called Mukakusha. Outside of these lie tens of thousands of little shrines that are not officially recognized in any way.[1] Although the total number of Shinto shrines is unknown, those counted by the government number about 115,000.[2]

B. Official Enactments Relative to the Shrines Between 1868 and 1875

The first main event pertinent to the present study at the time of the Restoration in 1868 was the establishment of Shinto as the State Religion of Japan. One of the first acts of the new government was to abolish the ancient Jisha Bugyo ("Board of Commissioners for Temples and Shrines") and to establish a Department of Shinto ranking at the head of all the other departments of the government.[3] Propagandists were appointed by the

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1. Cf. JCYB, 1930, p. 41.
2. Arthur J. Brown: One Hundred Years (A History of the Foreign Missionary Work of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.), p. 673.
3. D. C. Holtom: "The Political Philosophy of Modern Shinto," TASJ, Vol. XLIX, Part II, p. 12.

government to proclaim the teaching of revived Shinto to the nation. In the third year of Meiji the Emperor issued a Rescript defining the relation of Shinto to the nation and the intention of the government regarding the same:

> "We solemnly declare: The Heavenly Deity and the Great Ancestor established the Throne and made the succession sure. The line of Emperors, following one after the other, entered into possession thereof and transmitted the same. Ceremonies and government were united and the innumerable subjects were of one mind. Government and education were made clear, above, and the manners of the people were beautiful, below. Since the Middle Ages, however, there have been sometimes periods of decay, and sometimes periods of progress; sometimes the "Way" has been plain, sometimes, darkened, and the period during which government and education were not spread abroad was long. And now in the cycle of fate (all this) is reformed. Government and education must be made plain that the Great Way of belief in the Kami may be propagated. Accordingly, we newly appoint propagandists to proclaim this to the nation. . . Do you our subjects keep this decision in mind."[1]

In November of the third year of Meiji the central government by the aid of "officials in charge of propaganda" attempted to carry out a program of popular instruction in the unity of Shinto and the state.[2] This undertaking led to the development of an opposition to Buddhism stronger than any known before or since in Japanese history.[3] Buddhism was severely attacked during the

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1. JCYB, 1930, pp. 46-47.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.

later Tokugawa period by the Shinto revivalists and by the Japanese Confucianists. The aroused nationalists attempted to eliminate all Buddhist influences from the Shinto shrines.[1]

The new government immediately began to cover up all traces of Buddhism. Legislation was initiated requiring that Buddhist priests attached to Shinto shrines should immediately relinquish their offices, and that all shrines should give up the use of Buddhist images as sacred enshrined objects in which the kami were supposed to take abode. All Buddhist materials within the shrine premises were ordered removed. With the removal of Buddhist influences, the nature of the offerings placed before the Kami reverted more and more to those listed in the norito of the Engishiki and characteristic of original Shinto.[2]

The net result of the program of iconoclasm was far different from that contemplated by the official propagandists. The faith of the masses of the nation was a practically inseparable blend of Shimbutsu, or Shinto-Buddhistic elements. The government quickly perceived that the attempt to pry the two apart was creating a serious wound in the thought-life of the nation.[3] Con-

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1. Cf. JCYB, 1930, p. 47.
2. Ibid., p. 48.
3. Ibid., p. 49.

cerning this matter certain observations were made by Professor Kono of the Tokyo Kokugakuin Daigaku - a careful student of Shinto history:

> "The anti-Buddhist movement not only wrought great damage to the power and organization of this great religion, but confused the faith of the people at large . . . In this disturbed atmosphere the problem of the government was one of great difficulty. The strengthening of the national government and the unification of the public mind demanded as a prime necessity the promulgation of loyalty to the Mikado and the fostering of a unified national psychology as a means of attaining corporate unity . . . To precipitate a struggle between Buddhism and Shinto at a time when the whole nation was in a ferment of new adjustment might spell disaster."[1]

The exclusive position of Shinto lasted for a short time. The anti-Buddhist movement finally led to a brief amalgamation of Buddhism and Shinto as a new attempt at a state religion. In April 1872, the Department of Shinto was abolished and a Department of Religion, which included within its jurisdiction the affairs of both Buddhism and Shinto, was set up in its stead.[2]

Buddhism was thus again accorded full government recognition on a par with Shinto. In May 1872, the authorities created a new office known as Kyodo Shoku, literally "the profession of teaching and leading." Shinto and Buddhist priests were appointed to this office without discrimination. Their main duties were stated in

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1. JCYB, 1930, pp. 49-50.
2. Ibid., p. 50.

three articles which were to guide religious instruction.

> "Article I. To embody the principles of reverence and patriotism.
> "Article II. To make plain the Laws of Heaven and the Way of Humanity.
> "Article III. To lead the people to respect the Emperor and to be obedient to his will."[1]

These principles of instruction were supplemented and clarified by a long list of subjects. Among those specified are the following: the virtue of the (national) deities, the benevolence of the Emperor, the immortality of the soul, the creation of the world by the heavenly deities, patriotism, the nature and meaning of Shinto festivals, services for the repose of deceased souls, the significance of the Restoration, loyalty, Shinto purification, the national organization of Japan (Kokoku Kokutai), and how mankind differs from the lower animals.[2]

Preaching places were established within the shrines themselves in order to facilitate instruction according to the "three principles."

> "All priests and Kyodoshoku serving in either the large or small shrines of the country shall understand a small kyoin to mean a preaching place in front of a shrine. The main duty of the priests shall be the instruction of parishioners in accordance with the three principles. They should lead the people to study so widely that there will be no one who is ignorant. Thus civilization will be promoted and the fundamental principle of the

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1. Holtom, op. cit., p. 15.
2. Cf. JCYB, 1930, p. 51.

unity of religion and the state will be realized."[1]

An important enactment of the same year legalized Shinto funeral ceremonies conducted by Shinto priests. The law states,

> "Prior to this it has been forbidden for Shinto priests to conduct funeral services, but hereafter on application for a Shinto funeral on the part of parishioners, it is permitted to give assistance to the chief mourners and conduct ceremonies."[2]

In the late spring of 1872 various sects of Buddhism requested the government for permission to establish Shinto-Buddhist Union Institutes where preachers and teachers for Kyodo Soku appointment could be thoroughly trained, where students could be instructed in the three principles, and where occidental civilization could be examined. The requests were granted and the government itself took steps in the same direction. In January of 1873, there was officially established a so-called Dai Kyoin (Great Institute of Instruction), the purpose of which was to give centralized direction to the work of those appointed to Kyodo Soku. Buddhist and Shinto priests were ordered to unite their efforts in teaching and preaching, and mutually to overlook their private beliefs.[3]

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1. Holtom, op. cit., p. 15.
2. Ibid., pp. 15-16.
3. Cf. JCYB, 1930, pp. 51-52.

Under the influence of this government policy a state religion of a dual nature made its appearance. The Japanese Government, however, soon realized "that it was trying to plow with a team that could not pull together."[1] The government became convinced

> "that the interests of national unification under the Imperial Family could best be met by Shrine Shinto alone. Buddhism could be dispensed with, but the government could absolutely not let go of Shinto."[2]

Accordingly, in May 1875, the Japanese Government made formal dissolution of the partnership with Buddhism and any further union was prohibited.[3]

One of the first problems that had confronted the Japanese Government, when faced with the task of uniting the affairs of the state with those of Shinto, was to introduce order into the confusion that had grown up in the control of Shinto shrines during the long period of Buddhist dominance and state neglect. The problem was solved by a proclamation issued in 1871 which reads thus:

> "The affairs of the shrines are religious festivals pertaining to the nation and are not to be controlled by a single person or by a single family. Since the Middle Ages . . . the offices of the Shinto priesthood have become hereditary . . . The incomes of the shrines have been made family
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1. Cf. Holtom, op. cit., p. 16.
2. JCYB, 1930, p. 54.
3. Cf. Holtom, op. cit., p. 16.

> stipends and treated as private property. This widespread practice has continued so long that Shinto priests have come to form a different class from ordinary people and warriors. This does not agree with the present form of government which is the unity of religious affairs and the state. Owing to the greatness of the abuse a reform is now instituted: all priests from those of the hereditary priestly office of the Great Shrine of Ise down to the various priests of all the shrines of the country hereafter shall be carefully selected and appointed. By Imperial order."[1]

The law abolishing the hereditary control of the priestly office was followed in 1872 by an enactment directed toward the separation of public and private worship in Shinto. The law states:

> "Up to the present people have resorted in numbers to shrines and temples established on private premises and have worshipped there. This practice has a natural tendency to take on a form of public worship. This is wrong. All such worship is forbidden hereafter."[2]

In 1873, a law was issued which affected the regulation of ceremonies of Government Shrines. The law declares:

> "Up to the present in case of the official festivals of Government Shrines an officer of the Board of Ceremonies has been sent to participate in the rites. Hereafter, with the exception of the Grand Shrine of Ise, the local governor shall participate in the official ceremonies of Government Shrines."[3]

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1. D. C. Holtom: "The Political Philosophy of Modern Shinto," TASJ, Vol. XLIX, Part II, pp. 19-20.
2. Ibid., p. 20.
3. Ibid., p. 23.

C. The Chief Alterations in the Status of the Shrines Since 1875

In April 1875, uniform rituals and ceremonials for Shinto shrines were established by law. Concerning these new forms of worship the government made this statement:

> "Confusion in the ceremonies of the shrines has continued from the Middle Ages. At the opening of the Restoration the Office for Shinto (Jingikwan) was established and the deterioration of the ancient ceremonies was with difficulty remedied and the revival thereof was promoted. The grade of the shrines of the entire country was established . . . A fixed form of ceremony for use in presenting heihaku and offerings to the gods is now necessary. Accordingly, in obedience to the Imperial command and after investigating ancient usage as well as considering the needs of the present, a fixed form of ceremony has been determined upon. In this, that which is superfluous has been eliminated without sacrificing the true spirit of antiquity."[1]

By 1882 developments in popular religion had created a situation that necessitated further discrimination on the part of the government. Various popular sects incorporating large portions of orthodox Shinto, but at the same time involving departures from the official cult, were multiplying and seeking recognition by the state. As a means of meeting this situation, the government divided Shinto institutions into two classes, Jinja ("Shinto shrines") and Shinto Kyokai ("Shinto

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1. Holtom, op. cit., pp. 21-22.

churches"). All Shinto sects were given the latter title and were debarred from using the former.[1]

On January 24th, 1882, a regulation promulgated by the Home Department reads as follows:

> "From this date on the right of Shinto priests to exercise the function of teachers of religion and morals (Kyodo Shoku) is abolished. Priests shall not take charge of funeral services. Exception: For the present, priests connected with shrines of prefectural rank or lower may do as before."[2]

Two years later the office of Kyodo Shoku was finally abolished. Shinto priests connected with shrines lower than those of government or national grades still conduct funeral services with legal recognition.[3]

In January 1877, religious affairs passed under the control of a new office, namely, The Bureau of Shrines and Temples in the Department of Home Affairs. This new bureau was to supervise religious affairs until the legislation of 1900. In this year the Bureau of Shrines and Temples was abolished and a Jinja Kyoku ("Bureau of Shrines") and a Shukyo Kyoku ("Bureau of Religions") were established in the Department of Home Affairs. The former office was put in charge of the official cult, and the latter of Shinto sects and other religious bodies.[4]

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1. Holtom, op. cit., pp. 23-24.
2. Ibid., p. 25.
3. Ibid., p. 26.
4. Ibid., pp. 17 and 27.

One of the most significant orders issued in 1911 relating to the shrines is that affecting public schools. Translated the order reads:

> "Concerning visitation at Local Shrines on the Occasion of Festivals. The sentiment of reverence (keishin) is correlative with the feeling of respect for ancestors and is most important in establishing the foundations of national morality. Accordingly, on the occasion of the festivals of the local shrines of the districts where the schools are located, the teachers must conduct the children to the shrines and give expression to the true spirit of reverence. Also, either before or after the visit to the shrines the teachers should give instruction to the children concerning reverence in order that they may be made to lay it deeply to heart. This is announced by government order."[1]

In 1913, the Bureau of Religions was transferred from the Department of Home Affairs to the Department of Education. Imperial Ordinance Number 173 reads as follows:

> "The following reorganization is effected within the Department of Education.
>
> "Article I. The Minister of Education shall take charge of matters relating to education, science, and arts, and religion.
>
> "Article IV. The following three Bureaus are established within the Department of Education:
> 1. The Bureau of Special School Affairs.
> 2. The Bureau of Common School Affairs.
> 3. The Bureau of Religions.
>
> "Article VI. The Bureau of Religions takes charge of the following matters:
> 1. Shinto sects, Buddhist sects, Buddhist temples, buildings used for religious purposes, and all

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1. Holtom, op. cit., pp. 41-42.

affairs relating to religion.
2. Matters concerning the preservation and protection of ancient shrines and temples.
3. Matters concerning Buddhist priests and religious teachers."1

In 1914, the Norito, officially issued in 1875, were revised by the Department of Home Affairs. The point to which attention is called is the inclusion of prayers for material and national blessings as the following quotations from government Norito will show:

> "Bless and prosper with peace and tranquillity the mighty Reign of His Sovereign Augustness, with majestic Reign, with prosperous Reign, for a thousand myriad long continued autumns. Grant to care for and to bless (all), from the Imperial Princes and their offspring to the people of the land; prosper them like the luxuriant manifold branches of the mulberry tree, and make them to serve the kami."2

In the Norito appointed for New Year's Day is the prayer:

> "Protect this new year and prosper it as a good year, as a rich year. Bless the Great House of His Sovereign Augustness with the strength and the eternity of the rocks. Keep the land (ame no shita) in peace, make the (five) cereals plentiful, cause industry to make progress more and more, and prosper the people with increasing abundance. Cause thy Great Glory to shine more and more together with the light of the first rising sun of the year."3

In December 1929, the Home Office appointed a Commission of thirty-one distinguished scholars and gov-

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1. Holtom, op. cit., p. 29.
2. Ibid., pp. 287-288.
3. Ibid., p. 289.

ernment officials to investigate the status of Shinto shrines and their practices.[1]

> "The commission . . . was unable to bring in any report of significance owing mainly to differences of opinion within the ranks of the commission itself relative to the religious status of the shrines."[2]

The committee has now abandoned its task without having come to any agreement as to whether or not State Shinto is a religion.[3]

The religious bill proposed in 1902 delegated to the Minister of Education a power which would exceed that possessed by the Popes of the Middle Ages. His authority would extend equally over Shintoists, Buddhists, Christians, and over every single teacher of every religion. The bill was defeated because of the fear of unfavorable foreign opinion and the feeling that it placed Christianity on too free and favorable a footing. In 1927 and 1929 similar bills were withdrawn before voted on becuase of the strong opposition within and outside of the Diet.[4]

In the light of this past experience the pres-

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1. Cf. JCYB, 1936, p. 74.
2. Ibid.
3. William Paton: Christianity in the Eastern Conflicts, p. 29.
4. Susan Ballard, "The Proposed Bill of Religions in Japan," The East and the West, January, 1927, pp. 52 ff.

ent Cabinet in 1935 drafted a bill for the control of Religious Organizations.[1] This bill renewed the discussion in the secular press concerning the religious nature of State Shinto. The following statement is taken from the Tokyo daily, the Yomiuri Shimbun:

> "Regarding the religious bill, a member of the commission on religious affairs in the Education Ministry asked secretly whether the government intends to control shrines from the standpoint of their religious activities. A government official replied that it has no such intention, for shrines are not regarded as religious centers. In other words, the government is evading the issue and does not mean to settle it. The inquirer recognized that shrines do engage in religious activities. Yet the government takes the stand that they are not religious in nature. The point at issue is whether there is anything religious about shrines. It is undeniable that there is. The government simply adheres to the policy of drawing a line between shrines and other religious institutions. It has the Shrines Bureau in the Home Ministry and the Religious Bureau in the Education Ministry. This is a mere administrative distinction. The government official's reply to the question was based on the government's traditional policy. As an official, he could probably have given no other answer, but it is beyond question that the shrines do involve religious elements. For the government to make an unnatural distinction between them and other religious institutions only confuses the public."[2]

In a recent article in the Japan Christian Quarterly there is an excellent summary of the special relations existing between the Shinto shrines and the

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1. William Axling: "Problems Faced By National Christian Council," Japan Christian Quarterly, Winter Number 1937, p. 66.
2. JCYB, 1936, pp. 75-76.

Japanese state, which have been passed under review in the laws already considered. The summary is as follows:

> "1. The government has insisted for many years and still adheres to the interpretation that State Shinto Shrines are not religious. They commemorate the memory of the nation's builders and those who have made outstanding contributions to the nation's life.
>
> "2. These shrines are national structures and are maintained by national funds.
>
> "3. The priests who serve at these shrines are not looked upon nor treated as religious leaders, but as government officials.
>
> "4. The purpose of these shrines according to the government's repeated declaration is to foster the spirit of reverence for the nation's builders, cultivate patriotism and serve as a system of social control.
>
> "5. The government considers obeisance at these shrines purely an expression of patriotism and respect for heroic personalities of the past."[1]

D. Summary

It has been necessary to omit a great many details of official enactments relative to the shrines. However, from the above summary it is evident that between 1868 and 1875 Shrine Shinto was the State religion of Japan, part of the time exclusively so, and part of the time in conjunction with Buddhism. During this period Shinto possessed most of the special marks of relig-

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1. Axling, op. cit., p. 67.

ion that have been noted, namely, sacred places where deities were communicated with, sacred rites and ceremonies, organized priesthood, Shinto purification, services for the repose of deceased souls, instruction in such subjects as the immortality of the soul, the creation of the world by the heavenly deities, and the difference between mankind and the lower animals.

Since 1875 it is apparent that the government has advocated the "separation of religion from politics" but at the same time has exercised complete jurisdiction over the Shinto shrines which are regarded as contributory to the unification of popular sentiments of loyalty and patriotism. On the basis of these changes the government persists in maintaining that the Shinto shrines are not religious. However, it appears from the above discussion that the changes wrought by the government in the status of State Shinto since 1875 have had almost nothing to do with the real content of shrine worship itself.

CHAPTER III

THE INTERPRETATION OF STATE SHINTO BY UNOFFICIAL JAPANESE

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A. The Objections Raised by Non-Shinto Japanese

For the past fifty years the Japanese Government has maintained that State Shinto is not a religion.[1] This assertion has called forth criticisms from progressive politicians, journalists and scholars among the Japanese people themselves.[2] Objections have been raised on three grounds:

1. The Shinto shrines have always been treated as religious institutions by the Japanese people.[3] They were recognized as such by the legislation of 1872[4] and are so regarded today by the vast majority of the Japanese people.[5] The same shrine that is used for an official ceremony is visited by the ordinary worshipper out of purely religious motives and the enshrined spirit is supplicated for prosperity in business, for health and long life, for relief in drought, flood and famine, for food, clothing and shelter, as well as for the prosper-

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1. Cf. The Japan Christian Year Book, 1931, "Recent Discussion Regarding State Shinto," p. 51.
2. Cf. D. C. Holtom: "The Political Philosophy of Modern Shinto," TASJ, Vol. XLIX, Part II, p. 49.
3. Ibid.
4. Ante, pp. 30-31.
5. Cf. Holtom, op. cit., p. 49.

ity of the state and success in war.[1]

> "The shrines are thus not merely inspiring monuments to the greatness of the past; they are the sacred places of Japanese religion where unique access is gained to an unseen spirit-world."[2]

The popular interpretation is acquiesced in by the government in its licensing the sale of charms at the shrines. The shrine law states on this point: "Shinto priests in compliance with the requests of the people may distribute charms and sacred images but this must not be done out of covetousness and impure motives."[3]

The government has also made concessions by permitting the lower grades of Shinto priests to conduct funerals.[4] It maintains that such a grant is necessary since in certain districts some people desire Shinto funerals but do not want them conducted by any of the Shinto sects.[5]

Mr. Tatsuguchi Ryoshin, a non-Christian member of the Imperial Japanese Diet, in December, 1918, expressed his approval of the shrines as memorials to ancestors and those who have contributed meritorious service to the state, but criticized the present position thus:

"I wish to say, however, that the priests of pre-

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1. Cf. Holtom, op. cit., p. 50.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Ante, p. 36.
5. Cf. Holtom, op. cit., p. 52.

> fectural grade and below perform funeral ceremonies and preach sermons; they distribute amulets and charms and offer prayers. They function exactly as the priests of Buddhism. Thus it is that our ancestral ceremonies have become religious and the Shinto priests have become religious teachers. This confusion of religion and the shrines has in it the following great dangers:
>
> "1. That the dignity of the shrines be injured and the good traditions of our ancestor worship be destroyed.
>
> "2. That the shrines finally take on the form of a national religion and become the cause of the persecution of other religions."[1]

2. The rites performed at the shrines are of a genuinely religious nature, in spite of anything that government officials may say to the contrary.[2]

> "It is true that the government attempts to distinguish between shuhai or suhai, ("worship"), and sukei or shukei, ("reverence"), maintaining that at the official shrines the latter is offered, directed toward the commemoration of those who have been conspicuous for loyalty to ancestors, emperor and state in the past. But when investigation is made of the rites which are employed to express this reverence, it is found that even officialdom makes use of religious ceremonial. These rites are based on the ancient ceremonies of the Engi Shiki. They include norito (prayers), shinsen (food offerings), and harai (prayers for the expulsion of evil). It is impossible to maintain that these are mere forms devoid of true religious significance."[3]

3. The government's action is criticized as a violation of the Japanese Constitution.[4] Article XXVIII of the Constitution promulgated on February 11, 1889,

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1. Holtom, op. cit., pp. 54-55.
2. Ibid., p. 55.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid., p. 57.

reads as follows:

> "Japanese subjects shall, within limit of law, not prejudicial to peace and order, and not antagonistic to their duties as subjects, enjoy freedom of religious belief."[1]

It is maintained that the position of the national government on "shrine worship" creates a situation that interferes with the exercise of religious liberty. Different non-Shinto religious bodies have made public utterance calling attention to this situation. For example, the Nihon Kirisuto Kyokai declares:

> "When the Government authorities encourage this worship at the shrines, yea, and even almost compel school children to take part in the same, it is clear that they are violating the Constitution of the Empire as well as infringing upon the freedom of faith guaranteed by the Constitution."[2]

In spite of such criticism the government has persisted in maintaining its position that the shrines are not religious institutions.

B. The Ethical View-point of Shinto

The interpretations of Shinto by contemporary Japanese Shintoists resolve themselves into two general classes, (1) the nationalistic-ethical and (2) the nationalistic-religious.[3]

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1. JCYB, 1931, pp. 51-52.
2. Holtom, op. cit., p. 59.
3. Ibid., p. 69.

> "Both forms of interpretation are equally penetrated by a point of view which Japanese Shintoists attempt to expound as the mark of the fundamental social mind of their race, namely, a group consciousness or social and political loyalty which is represented to be of such strength as to dominate and very frequently to eliminate individualism . . . Under the stimulus of modern conflicts with external forces this social mind has become extraordinarily self-conscious and is manifesting itself in the form of a nationalism which, as set forth by a large group of Japanese apologists, is supposedly supported by a patriotism which is unique in human history."[1]

The term "nationalistic" has been applied to both forms of interpretation of Shinto. The difference between the two lies largely in the philosophical explanation of the basis of Shinto. The first named attempts to develop a Shinto pantheon out of the heroes of Japanese political history while the second definitely ties up communal ancestralism with pantheism or with idealistic monism.[2]

The formation of the nationalistic-ethical interpretation concurs with the official announcement that Shinto is not a religion, and builds largely on the proposition that Shinto deities are human beings.[3]

Let us first consider the political application of the nationalistic-ethical interpretation.

In modern Japan the subject called Kokumin

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1. Holtom, op. cit., p. 69.
2. Ibid., pp. 69-70.
3. Ibid., p. 70.

Dotoku ("national morality") is being given a great deal of attention. In the form of apologetic here under discussion Shinto is practically identical with Kokumin Dotoku, that is, Shinto is now interpreted as either the system of national morality itself or as the unique spirit which produces the system. It is identified with the development of Japan from the beginning and is regarded as vitally necessary to the maintenance of the Japanese state. The primary motive of its program of Shinto education is the development of reverence for the past, respect for authority, and loyalty to existing institutions of the state. It inculcates ideas of the unique sanctity and moral authority of Imperial Rescripts, together with special regard for the Imperial House of Japan and the assurance that Japan is unsurpassed and impregnable. In such a way protection of Japanese institutions is now secured by a psychological and educational program that attempts to strengthen the inner spirit.[1]

Exponents of modern Japanese thought, sooner or later, revert to the ethical teaching of the Imperial Rescript on Education, promulgated in 1890. The government and a large number of writers on the subject are agreed that the Rescript on Education must be taken as

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1. Cf. Holtom, op. cit., pp. 70-71.

setting forth the basis of contemporary Japanese ethics, both public and private.[1] The official English translation of this Rescript is here given for purposes of reference.

"Know Ye, Our Subjects:

> "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, and herein also lies the source of Our education. Ye, Our subjects, be filial to your parents, affectionate to your brothers and sisters; as husbands and wives be harmonious, as friends true; bear yourselves in modesty and moderation; extend your benevolence to all; pursue learning and cultivate arts, and thereby develop intellectual faculties and perfect moral powers; furthermore, advance public good and promote common interests; always respect the Constitution and observe the laws; should emergency arise, offer yourselves courageously to the State; and thus guard and maintain the prosperity of Our Imperial Throne coeval with heaven and earth. So shall ye be not only Our good and faithful subjects but render illustrious the best traditions of your forefathers.
>
> "The Way here set forth is indeed the teaching bequeathed by Our Imperial Ancestors, to be observed alike by Their Descendants and the subjects, infallible for all ages and true in all places. It is Our wish to lay it to heart in all reverence, in common with you, Our subjects, that we may all attain to the same virtue."[2]

Ever since the Imperial Rescript on Education was issued the Japanese Government attached extraordin-

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1. Cf. Holtom, op. cit., pp. 71-72.
2. Ibid., p. 72.

ary importance to it. As a result it has come to be regarded as a sort of condensed sacred Scripture of the official cult, especially by advocates of the nationalistic-ethical school of Shinto.[1] The position of this school is well set forth in the writings of Tanaka Yoshito, a lecturer on Shinto in the Tokyo Imperial University. From Tanaka's point of view a sufficient indication of the practical norm of Japanese social and political obligations is to be found in the Imperial Rescript on Education.

> "The Imperial Rescript on Education gives the essential elements of Shinto. That is to say, it expresses the last testaments of our Imperial Ancestors, which must be kept by our people."[2]

Tanaka takes the position that the origins of the moral propositions of this rescript are to be found in the indigenous development of the Japanese race. For him Shinto alone expresses the true spirit of the Japanese people.

> "The essential meaning of Shinto is thus to be determined by reference to the qualities of this spirit. The heart of the cult is not religion at all in the ordinary sense; it is Yamato Damashii, the peculiar psychological endowment of the race."[3]

According to Tanaka the fundamental psychological characteristics peculiar to the Japanese people are as fol-

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1. Cf. Holtom, op. cit., p. 77.
2. Ibid., p. 78.
3. Ibid.

lows:

> "(1) An intellectual nature capacitating for orderliness and unification.
> (2) A vivacious and practical emotional nature.
> (3) A disposition toward development and expansion."[1]

The manifestation of Yamato Damashii in the actual life of Japan constitutes Shinto.[2]

This national spirit of Japan is no recent and transient achievement. The divine ancestors especially the sacred emperors have embodied the very essence of this spirit and have revealed its virtues.

> "Furthermore the deeds and examples of all of our emperors from ancient times down to the present, have exerted a mighty influence on our people and have become the norm of national action in politics, in religion and in ethics, thus completely regulating the activities and utterances of the nation. Thus, both the basis and the norm for the activities of the Japanese race have their origin in the deeds of our sacred ancestors. This is Shinto.
>
> "The most revered of all the kami are those of the successive generations of the Imperial Line, beginning with the Divine Ancestress, Ama-terasu-o-mi-kami. The matters that have been disclosed by these successive generations of kami, beginning with Ama-terasu-o-mi-kami, constitute the principal part of Shinto."[3]

Tanaka affirms that there is a difference between the Japanese and other races. This fundamental difference manifests itself primarily in the attitude toward the state. From the foreign point of view the

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1. Holtom, op. cit., p. 79.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid., p. 80.

state is subordinate to individual rights; from the Japanese point of view individualism is abandoned in favor of a state life organized around the principle of imperial sovereignty. This fact has given extraordinary stability to Japanese political institutions.[1]

In summing up Tanaka's point of view it is seen that Shinto is simply the historical manifestation of the unique Japanese Spirit which underlies religion, ethics, politics, and education. This interpretation harmonizes with the official declaration that Shinto is not a religion, although Professor Tanaka, himself, would go much farther than the government in admitting genuine religious elements in Shinto.[2]

Mr. Kono Shozo, professor of Shinto in the Shinto University of Tokyo, is one of the most recent writers on the subject. As a Shinto scholar of national reputation and as a teacher of the Shinto priesthood, his views are of special influence and importance. In his exposition Shinto is likewise expounded as a nationalistic-ethical system wherein Japanese racial psychology finds its most characteristic expression. Although Professor Kono recognizes that there are religious elements in Shinto, he says the strictly nationalistic and ethi-

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1. Cf. Holtom, op. cit., pp. 81-82.
2. Ibid., pp. 83-84.

cal elements are vastly more important.[1] He defines Shinto as "the moral system of the Japanese people which has developed on a foundation of the idea of reverence from a center in the Great Deity, Amaterasu-o-mi-kami."[2] A further definition says,

> "Shinto is that practical, nationalistic, or better, imperialistic morality which has for its central life the spirit of sincerity and which from ancient times has been the constant spiritual power and dynamic of the Yamato race."[3]

Concerning reverence for the Imperial Family Kono says:

> "The sentiment of reverence for an Imperial Line unbroken from time immemorial, whereby ruler and subjects are made one and by means of which the national life is protected, constitutes the life of Shinto and is the source of the happiness of the Japanese nation."[4]

Other characteristics found in Shinto, according to Kono, are: a strong and ardent love of country, ancestor worship, hero worship, faith in the grace of Heaven and the aid of the gods, an emphasis on the activities of the present world, a regard for cleanliness (including the idea of religious purification), and an emphasis on etiquette.[5]

The religious application of the nationalistic-

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1. Cf. JCYB, 1931, p. 57.
2. Holtom, op. cit., p. 84.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid., p. 85.
5. Ibid.

ethical interpretation is to be considered next. One of the practical values of the purely ethical interpretation of Shinto is that it is calculated to eliminate all basic difficulties lying between actual religion and the fostering of national morality through the medium of Shinto ceremonials.[1]

In this connection, it is noted that Dr. Hiroike Senkuro in his exposition gives the weight of his support to the interpretation that, from the standpoint of national law, the official Shinto shrines are not religious institutions. He believes that both the religious and the nationalistic-ethical functions may be discharged at the same shrine and even in the same ceremony without conflict or inconsistency.[2] His conclusions are based on an acceptance of official enactments as final. He interprets the religious laws of 1882 and 1900 to mean that the shrines are not religious institutions.[3]

In explaining the official position Hiroike says that the shrines are cult centers where reverence and gratitude toward the great leaders of Japanese history are expressed and not properly places where pri-

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1. Cf. D. C. Holtom: "The Political Philosophy of Modern Shinto," TASJ, Vol. XLIX, Part II, p. 89.
2. Ibid.
3. Ante, pp. 30-31.

vate supplication is offered to the spiritual world.[1]

Hiroike admits that there are certain ceremonies conducted at the shrines which may be interpreted as having in them the elements of prayer. But from the standpoint of national law the matter of prayer for the future has no relation whatever with so-called religion. At the same time Hiroike admits that if one regards the material from an academic or sociological point of view, there is no objection to saying that the activities of the official shrines are based on religious ideas and that the rituals bear a religious meaning. Yet, he says, there is no reason why, from the standpoint of the law, the shrines should be regarded as religious institutions.[2]

He further argues, in case either individuals or groups make entreaties at the shrines for such benefits as good crops or large hauls of fish, there is no conflict with national law if the priests conform to the meaning of such prayers and, by using the proper ritual, present the supplications to the deities.[3] The priest is to take advantage of the direct contact with the people in order "to explain to the parishioners the necessity of reverence and respect toward ancestors, and

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1. Cf. Holtom, op. cit., p. 90.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid., pp. 90-91.

to make clear the great principles of loyalty and filial piety and thus cultivate a moral faith."[1]

In conclusion Hiroike says:

> "The shrines transcend all religion and are of such a nature as to require the veneration (suhai) of the nation as a whole. This reverence (sonsu) is an important part of the national morality and is not be be adjusted according to individual choice."[2]

C. The Religious View-point of Shinto

The most elaborate attempts that have been made by contemporary Japanese scholars to set forth Shinto as a religion are those undertaken by two prominent and extreme exponents, Dr. Kakehi Katsuhiko of the Law Department of the Imperial University, and Dr. Kato Genchi, lecturer on religion in the same institution.

Dr. Kakehi desires to expand Shinto into a great, all-inclusive world religion, embracing within its fold Buddhism, Confucianism, the Shinto sects, Taoism, Mohammedanism, and Christianity.[3] "Shinto," says Kakehi, "is the faith at the basis of all religions." "It is the religion of religions."[4]

In Kakehi's theology, the basis of all life

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1. Cf. Holtom, op. cit., p. 91.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid., p. 99.
4. Ibid.

is "The Great Life of the Universe." "The deep and mighty consciousness existing within us is god (kami)."[1] The idea of God is found necessary to a rational explanation of the world; yet God is to be known not simply intellectually but also through human emotional and volitional experiences.[2]

In order to make the transition from this monistic theology to old Shinto, Kakehi declares that the first deity mentioned in the Kojiki, namely, Ame-no-mi-naka-nushi-no-kami ("The Deity August Lord of the Center of Heaven") is identical with the Great Life of the Universe.[3] This Absolute Power has its unique and full revelation in the Japanese race. The expression of the Great Life of the Universe found in the early history of Japan is ancient Shinto. What is found in the old religion "is not a philosophy, is not a theory; it is the spirit itself; nay, it is the Great Life itself."[4]

Kakehi provides for the worship at local shrines of this "Great Life of the Universe." This he accomplishes by expressing the "Great Life of the Universe" in a sort of trinity selected from the deities mentioned in the mythical record of whom the Sun-goddess,

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1. Holtom, op. cit., p. 100.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid., p. 102.

Ama-terasu-o-mi-kami, is one.[1]

Dr. Kakehi's theological exposition leads to an interpretation of the person of the Japanese Emperor.[2] The Emperor as a descendant of the Sun-goddess is thus connected in an unbroken genealogical line with the Great Life of the Universe, itself.[3] Kakehi says,

> "His person [the Emperor's] constitutes the central point at which these things are realized here below. Therefore, the Emperor is god revealed in man. He is Manifest Deity . . . Above all things else, we must so serve as to increase the divine radiance of the Emperor. Ever worshipping His excessive light, we must determine to extend and exalt the divine essence which we, ourselves, possess."[4]

He further states,

> "The Emperors of our country are persons equipped with qualities without parallel in the world; they are both the centers of (religious) faith and of temporal power."[5]

Kakehi contemplates a world-wide expansion of Shinto. "The center of this phenomenal world is the Mikado's Land [Japan]. From this center we must expand this Great Spirit throughout the world."[6]

> "The extent to which Kakehi goes in merging his religious program with the Japanese political system, makes the future of Shinto identical, not with that of idealism, but with Japanese imperialism. Nationalism is here built into a re-

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1. Holtom, op. cit., p. 105.
2. Ibid., p. 106.
3. Ibid., p. 107.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid., p. 108.

> ligious cult that seeks to find its sanctions in the unalterable nature of the Absolute. Further, the feeling of obligation to extend the system throughout the world takes on the form of an intense religious fervor."[1]

Throughout his exposition Kakehi seems to have two objectives:

(1) To strengthen the national spirit of the Japanese by supplying a religious foundation for a confidence of superiority as a chosen race.

(2) To utilize the popular belief in Shinto as the basis of a political apology for the "Theory of Imperial Sovereignty" with a world-wide application.[2]

Dr. Kato has the highest qualifications to render an authoritative exposition of the religious nature of modern official Shinto.[3] He is thoroughly familiar both with the ancient documents of Japan and with the modern literature on Comparative Religions.[4] In October of 1935, he published a monumental work of nearly fourteen hundred pages, entitled Shinto no Shukyo Hattatsu Shi teki Kenkyu ("A Study of the History of Religious Development in Shinto").[5] Concerning Dr. Kato's

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1. Holtom, op. cit., p. 109.
2. Ibid., p. 110.
3. Ibid.
4. Cf. Albertus Pieters: "Emperor Worship in Japan," International Review of Missions, July, 1920, p. 343.
5. Cf. The Japan Christian Year Book, 1936, "State Shinto During 1935," p. 71.

recent publication D. C. Holtom makes this significant statement:

> "This represents the ripened fruit of a life time of specialized study on the part of the most widely known of contemporary Japanese Shinto scholars, and should go a long way toward closing the argument as to whether State Shinto is or is not a religion."1

Dr. Kato is much less philosophical than Dr. Kakehi, and depends more on historical research and the study of contemporary literature.[2] He attempts to build up his thesis in a progressive, orderly fashion using materials furnished by the study of Comparative Religion.[3] His important points are summarized in the following pages.

Dr. Kato agrees with Dr. Kakehi that the Emperor is divine and supports his view by citations from Japanese historical documents.

> "The position occupied by Ten and Jotei among the Chinese or by Jehovah among the Jews has been held in Japan from ancient times by the Emperor."4

> "From ancient times the Emperor has been called by such titles as Aki tsu kami (Manifest Deity), Ara hito kami (Incarnate Deity), and Ara mi kami (Incarnate Deity)."5

All of these titles, according to Dr. Kato's exposition,

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1. JCYB, 1936, p. 71.
2. Cf. Holtom, op. cit., p. 110.
3. Ibid., p. 111.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.

may be taken as essentially the same as the titles "Most High" and "Lord" applied to Jehovah.[1]

This unique divine position of the Japanese Emperor is further seen in the difference that exists between foreign coronation ceremonies and those of the Emperor of Japan. In the former case the king receives his crown from a priest who is the representative of God, in the latter the Japanese Emperor is his own representative, announcing his own succession directly to the spirits of the Imperial Ancestors.[2]

Kato next discusses the attitude of loyal subjects towards the occupant of the throne. He concludes that their loyalty to the Emperor is identical with religious faith.[3] The latter he defines as that attitude of consciousness which is found in absolute trust in and complete personal self-surrender to the object of worship.[4] According to Dr. Kato the vital element in Shinto is precisely this religious attitude towards the throne.[5]

> "Shinto is not simply ethical consciousness as related to secular affairs; its fundamental principle subjectively stated, is that it maintains in loyalty an attitude of consciousness which rivals that of

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1. Cf. Holtom, op. cit., p. 111.
2. Ibid., p. 112.
3. Ibid., p. 113.
4. Cf. Pieters, op. cit., p. 345.
5. Ibid., p. 346.

> religious faith. This is Tenno kyo (Mikadoism), the characteristic product of our national spirit, which worships the Emperor as divine. For this reason Shinto is in truth nothing other than a national religion."[1]

The discussion now turns to the consideration of the nature of religion, introduced to support the author's main contention that Shinto, with Emperor Worship as its vital element, is a religion and truly entitled to rank as such.[2] Dr. Kato finds the essential thing in religion to be the relation of the human to the divine. "Religion," he says, "is a practical means whereby man enters into vital relationship with some object or objects regarded as divine."[3] Such objects of religious faith may be either naturalistic or ethical.[4] The human, mental attitude toward the religious object may be called faith.[5]

Dr. Kato classifies Shinto as a 'theanthropic' religion. In this class deities are found among men and in nature.[6] There is no sharp line of demarcation between deity and humanity. Gods become men and men become gods.[7]

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1. Holtom, op. cit., p. 113.
2. Cf. Pieters, op. cit., p. 346.
3. Cf. Holtom, op. cit., p. 113.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid., pp. 113-114.
6. Ibid., p. 114.
7. Cf. Pieters, op. cit., p. 347.

The author maintains that modern official Shinto is not merely a system of ethics divorced from religion; its basis is religious.[1]

> "Therefore, from the Japanese standpoint, that attitude of consciousness which stimulates loyalty to the Emperor, regarded as man, when he is regarded as Deity, immediately becomes filled with the content of an enthusiastic religious faith which offers body and spirit as a holy sacrifice. Wherefore, if one regards this merely from the standpoint of morality, it may be designated the unique patriotism of the Japanese. This is the secular aspect of Shinto. It must not be forgotten, however, that Shinto possesses fundamental aspects as well as external, that it is a national religion which worships the Emperor as divine."[2]

The essential nature of Shinto he states as follows:

> ". . . the life or essence of Shinto is the unique Japanese patriotism touched by the nationalistic religious enthusiasm of Japanese people . . . From ancient times on this has been called Yamato Damashii, the Soul of Japan. It may also appropriately be termed Mikadoism or the nationalistic adoration of the Emperor. The psychological attitude of the Japanese as directed toward the Emperor is neither mere respect nor simple obeisance; it is reverence and adoration, that is to say, it is worship (suhai). This is the ultimate truth of Shinto. Shinto is not merely moral consciousness. It must never be forgotten that it includes the white heat of a fervent religious devotion, namely, Mikadoism, the nationalistic adoration of the Emperor."[3]

Dr. Kato uncomprimisingly maintains the religious character of the shrines, their festivals and cere-

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1. Cf. Holtom, op. cit., p. 114.
2. Ibid., p. 115.
3. Ibid., pp. 115-116.

monies.[1] He points out the facts that prayer is a prominent part of Shinto ceremonies and that priests minister in divine things.[2]

> "Although it does not appeal to the authority of a Founder, or of sacred books, it has a source of doctrinal authority far beyond these; for as a national religion Shinto accepts as its doctrinal authority directly the authority of the State."[3]

Again he says,

> "The shrines cannot be limited as being merely edifices where past heroes are commemorated in an ethical sense. The affairs of the festivals are pure religion. To regard these as other than religious is indeed a biased interpretation and must be pronounced an extreme misrepresentation of the shrines."[4]

In closing Dr. Kato's exposition, the writer refers to a review of his recent book printed in the Japan Christian Year Book for 1936.

Dr. Kato subdivides National Shinto into two phases, namely Kokutai Shinto and Jinja Shinto. The latter, or "Shrine Shinto," refers to that phase of the national life which is centered in the shrines and their ceremonies. The former, Kokutai Shinto, that is, "National-structure Shinto," signifies the moral theory and practice, the sentiments, attitudes, and national habits in the Shinto tradition which are regarded as indispensable to

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1. Cf. Pieters, op. cit., p. 349.
2. Ibid., p. 348.
3. Ibid., pp. 348-349.
4. Holtom, op. cit., p. 116.

the maintenance of the characteristic national structure of Japan. According to Kato, Kokutai Shinto furnishes the fundamental principles and the inner spirit of the Japanese national education.[1]

Dr. Kato insists that all forms of Shinto must be classified as genuine religion. He says,

> "Just as the writer regards Sectarian Shinto as a variety of religion, so also, he regards National Shinto as a variety of religion."[2]

Again, he says,

> "Along with Sectarian Shinto, I regard National Shinto, embracing both Kokutai Shinto and Jinja Shinto, as a variety of religion - a religion with aspects differing from those of Buddhism and Christianity, to be sure, but nevertheless always a religion."[3]

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1. Cf. JCYB, 1936, p. 73.
2. Ibid., p. 74.
3. Ibid.

CHAPTER IV

THE INTERPRETATION OF STATE SHINTO BY CHRISTIANS

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A. The Interpretation by Roman Catholics in Japan

In 1918, the Roman Catholic Church in Japan objected to "shrine worship" on the ground that it is a real religion. At that time the Bishop of Nagasaki made the following proclamation:

> "The members of the Catholic Church, without hesitation, will join in paying due reverence toward the nation's distinguished men as a part of patriotic duty. Nevertheless, however generous our frame of mind may be with regard to this view of the shrines (government view), we cannot give our support to it . . . Shrine worship is indeed poor in religious ideas judged from the inner worth of religion, but is amply furnished with a wealth of ceremonialism fixed by law. It is an organized form of reverence paid to supernatural beings and must be regarded as a religion. Moreover, it is a religion forced upon the people, and if it be different from Shinto, it may not inappropriately be called shrine religion . . . We regret exceedingly that as Catholics we cannot accept the interpretation of shrine worship given by the government, nor can we visit the shrines and engage in the services for the dead nor can we ever pay respect to the so-called gods."[1]

This position concerning State Shinto taken by the Roman Catholic Church has often brought it into conflict with the Japanese authorities. In the spring of 1933, a missionary in Gifu province antagonized the pre-

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1. D. C. Holtom: "The Political Philosophy of Modern Shinto," TASJ, Vol. XLIX, Part II, pp. 55-56.

fectural authorities with the result that the right of propagating the Christian faith was withdrawn. The issue concerned doing obeisance at the Great Shrine of Ise.[1]

The clash between the Department of Education and the Roman Catholic Church arose over the question of her students paying homage at the Yasukuni Shrine in Kudan, the great national shrine where the spirits of soldiers who fall in battle are enshrined. The Jochi University, a Roman Catholic institution, forbade its students to pay visits to this shrine at the time of the Spring festival. The Department of Education, taking the attitude that this was not a religious function urged their attendance. The church authorities refused to yield.[2]

Since May 1936 the Catholic Church seems to have adopted a more lenient policy with regard to State Shinto than that held formerly. In a letter from the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith sent to the apostolic delegate in Japan this statement was made:

> "Japanese Christians may join in State Shinto ceremonies, since these, it is held, are patriotic rites only, inculcating reverence for national heroes; in the same way, Christians may attend wedding and funeral ceremonies if the rites performed have lost

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1. Cf. Toyohiko Kagawa: Christ and Japan, pp. 86-87.
2. Ibid., p. 87.

their religious significance."[1]

B. The Interpretation by Protestants in Japan

The reader is fairly familiar by now with the general problem presented by State Shinto. The particular form in which the Christians in Japan have to meet the issue is in the field of education. The writer desires to call attention to a number of specific problems which the present-day interpretation of Japanese nationalism creates for the Christian schools. In presenting these problems the Christians' attitude toward State Shinto will be made clear.

1. The Rescript Reading Ceremony. Ever since the Imperial Rescript on Education[2] was issued in 1890, the Department of Education has ordered that it should be read with appropriate ceremony on stated occasions in all the schools of the country. In recent months, however, all schools have been forced to lay more emphasis upon the ritual used when reading this document - the method of reading, the white gloves of the reader, the bowing and doing reverence. In addition to the ceremonies held on the four great national holidays the an-

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1. "Survey - Roman Catholic Church," The International Review of Missions, January, 1937, p. 102.
2. Ante, pp. 49-50.

niversary of the promulgation of the sacred Writing is also celebrated with a ceremony. In almost all of the Christian schools during these ceremonies an opportunity is sought to teach the Christian doctrine of God and to inculcate a Christian attitude of loyalty to the state. It is doubtful whether this policy can long continue.[1]

In November, 1936, the Department of Education required all schools to present copies of the program used at the Rescript ceremony, and to explain the nature of the care taken of the sacred Document when not in use.[2]

2. Shrine Worship. In Japan most Christian schools accept the official statement that the shrine ceremonies are non-religious and permit their students to go there to pay respect. These schools have not adopted the custom voluntarily, but either social pressure or demands by patrons of the school have compelled a decision.[3] In some Christian schools attendance at the shrines is optional; in others, the entire student body is taken under the direction of the military officers and head teachers to pay reverence. In a certain boys' school the military officer invariably chooses a Sunday to take the students to the shrine. In colleges the

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1. "Japanese Shrines and Emperor Worship," The Missionary Review of the World, March, 1937, pp. 136-137.
2. Ibid., p. 137.
3. Ibid.

pressure is not so great as in the middle schools. The authorities are more lenient in Tokyo and vicinity than in other districts.[1]

The general attitude of the churches today seems to be one of non-conformity, if this policy can be carried on without attracting attention. But if pressure from outside becomes great, then conformity is the policy adopted.[2]

3. Iconolatry. It is considered a great honor for a school to receive a Portrait of the Emperor.

> "The Portrait must be kept in a fireproof safe when not in use; a teacher must sleep each night in the same room ready to protect the sacred Portrait with his life; acts of reverence must be made when passing the Portrait or the container of it, and the Portrait is on display only on the ceremonial occasions when the Imperial Rescript is read."[3]

Until recently most Christian schools have avoided receiving the Portrait by pleading the lack of a suitable place in which to keep It. In the autumn of 1936 all Christian higher schools were questioned by the Department of Education as to whether or not they possessed a copy of the Portrait. If they had a copy they were asked to tell how It was treated; if they didn't have a copy an explanation was demanded. In the summer of the

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1. MRW, March, 1937, p. 137.
2. Confidential Copy.
3. MRW, March, 1937, p. 137.

same year (1936) leaders of the National Christian Education Association advised all Christian schools to apply for the bestowal of the Portrait and to make the Rescript-reading ceremony as impressive as possible.[1]

> "As stated above, the Portrait is displayed on ceremonial occasions when the Rescript is read. This causes difficulties for Christian schools. Officials of the Department of Education have recently (November 1936) advised the Christian schools that a chapel, having symbols of the worship of the Christian God, was not an appropriate place for the display of the Portrait. One College which possesses a beautiful chapel must hold the Rescript-reading ceremony in another building, because the authorities forbade displaying the Portrait in the chapel unless a curtain were drawn across the stained glass window showing the Ascension of Christ. In another College a group of disaffected students and alumni forced the resignation of the director on the ground that he had read the Rescript from the steps of the chancel, and not from the altar, the most holy place in the room, thereby 'damaging the sacredness of the Emperor.' When the cry of 'national polity' is raised, a school, whether Christian or not, is helpless, for such matters may not be discussed publicly."[2]

4. Shrines in Schools. In 1935 the Department of Education advised all schools to erect "praying places to the Sun Goddess" in their compounds. The matter has not been pressed on Christian schools in Japan proper, but in the colonies the order has been taken more seriously. Its significance lies in the fact that the shrine is referred to as "a praying place" -

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1. MRW, March, 1937, p. 137.
2. Confidential Copy.

a clearly religious term. It would be impossible for a Christian to pray before such a shrine, and unthinkable that a Christian school should erect one on its compound. This memorandum offers one more opportunity for opponents of Christianity at some future time to bring pressure to bear upon Christian schools.[1]

5. Religion in the Schools. Since 1935 the government, in an effort to secure religious sanction for its policies, has been emphasizing the importance of religious education in schools. A distinction is made, however, between cultivating the spirit of religion in the pupils and teaching the doctrines of a religion. The government memorandum issued in 1935 stated explicitly that "no religious teaching will be permitted that runs contrary to the Imperial Rescript on Education." This makes the Christians uneasy, for they never know how the Rescript will be interpreted next.[2]

> "A few years ago when the service of a certain church was being broadcast at Christmas time the phrase, 'Lord save the Emperor,' caused the church such difficulty that a revision of the prayer book was necessary. The phrase 'King of kings and Lord of lords' was indicated as unacceptable for Christian worship. Recently Paul Kanamori's 'The Way to Faith,' was withdrawn from circulation because of its monotheistic arguments. The public press has also criticized the Christian doctrine of the Kingdom of God because its basic

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1. Confidential Copy.
2. MRW, March, 1937, p. 137.

> virtue of love is contrary to loyalty, the basic virtue of the Japanese Empire. Hymns used in Christian services (both English and Japanese translations) might be construed as treasonable. Opponents of Christianity are looking for the slightest deviations from the present interpretation of national loyalty. Christians are concerned lest they should be forced to teach dogmas which run counter to fundamental Christian principles."[1]

The Christians in Japan are deeply concerned about these problems, but their concern is modified by certain factors which people outside the main islands may not possess. A knowledge of these factors may serve to make clear the reasons for the Christians' attitude toward State Shinto, and also, to explain the comparatively few conflicts with the Japanese Government as compared with those of Chosen, Formosa, and Manchukuo.

1. The Japanese Christians feel that the officials charged with the enforcement of the law are trying to make everything as easy as possible for the schools and churches to abide within the law without offense to their conscience. The high officials themselves are being pressed by the Shinto Fundamentalists into a position which they would not take if left to themselves. They resort to almost any compromise in order to avert trouble which would involve them into a lese majesty incident.[2]

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1. MRW, March, 1937, p. 137.
2. Ibid.

The Christians realize that the men who are enforcing the law and ruling the country are chiefly atheists or agnostics. Moreover, the men of the Meiji Restoration, who devised the present cult of National Shinto, were rationalists and atheists.[1] When such men use the words, "God," "worship," etc., the Christians feel that they are referring to something quite different from the worship which Christians ascribe to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.[2] The Japanese Christians, therefore, are able to conform to many ceremonies without scruples which would be quite impossible for the Koreans, for instance, who do not have this historical understanding. Those in charge of enforcing the law realize the necessity of not violating the constitutional guarantee of religious freedom and of not forcing an issue which will antagonize the strong theistic sects of Buddhism and Christianity.[3]

2. The Japanese Christians realize that historically the Shinto cult was not intended to be religious, much less to infringe upon the right of religious liberty. They believe that when this present tension is passed the original purpose of the founders of the con-

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1. MRW, March, 1937, p. 137.
2. Confidential Copy.
3. MRW, March, 1937, p. 137.

stitution will be maintained. Therefore, if the government will consistently maintain its position that the shrines are non-religious and that reverence paid at the shrines is merely an act of loyalty and not of religious worship, they will follow willingly. Meanwhile, through their representatives, they insist upon the reform of Shinto and the removal of religious elements from the shrine ceremonies.[1]

> "Christians in Japan are fearing a new era of persecution, but if it comes it will not be precipitated by themselves. It may be quite possible that they can be forced into a position which clearly is untenable, and if that time comes, they will willingly face persecution and death as they did centuries ago."[2]

3. Another factor to be considered is the government's meaning of the words used for "God," for "worship," for "divine." It is unfortunate that the word adopted for "God" (kami)[3] in Japan is identical with that used for the Shinto divinities. The etymological significance of the word is little more than "exalted being." Many Protestant Christians when referring to God use the term "Heavenly Father," while others always qualify the word kami by phrases asserting the uniqueness, eternity, and fatherhood of the Christian God.

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1. MRW, March, 1937, pp. 137-138.
2. Confidential Copy.
3. Ante, p. 12.

Even though the Shinto Fundamentalists and many of the ignorant common people attribute divinity to the Sun Goddess and the Imperial Ancestors, the Christians know that the ideas differ greatly from those which they hold concerning the Heavenly Father.[1]

> "They believe moreover that the great masses of intelligent people look upon the Imperial Ancestors and the kami as being something quite different from what the Christians mean when they say "God." When an Atheist in a government department insists that a Christian bow his head to a Picture or a Document, or clap his hands before a Shrine, there must be a catch in it somewhere. And, knowing that this is true the Christian does what he is told. Unfortunately, owing to the hysterical state of many "patriotic" leaders, it is impossible to air the differences involved, but the Christians are thinking things through secretly and discussing them in their prayer meetings and small groups."[2]

To the Japanese "worship" has not the same connotation as to the Westerner. Worship is often paid to the spirit of a faithful dog, to spirits of needles broken while sewing, and to spirits of broken dolls.[3]

> "Bowing the head is not reserved for what Westerners term 'religious' occasions. The sentiment of awe at the center of the Japanese idea of worship enters into many social conventions and habits. It is possible for Christians therefore to bow at shrines, even though these same shrines may be used by others for religious purposes. It means little more to them than taking off our hats at the same shrine would mean to us."[4]

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1. MRW, March, 1937, p. 138.
2. Confidential Copy.
3. MRW, March, 1937, p. 138
4. Ibid.

Many Japanese Christians do not go voluntarily to the shrines, but if an issue is pressed, they conform rather than precipitate a crisis which might be far-reaching in its results.[1]

> "When such vague notions are common in Japan regarding the meaning of 'God,' 'worship,' and 'spirit,' many missionaries feel that it is better to leave the distinguishing of the things that differ to Japanese Christians. They are men and women of a high order of intelligence, they have gone through controversies with the Government in the past with credit and if they cannot find a way out of this present crisis, they are ready to pay the price in persecution."[2]

The Japanese Christians, realizing that far more important issues[3] are in the air, try to avert an open break with the government which would afford an additional opportunity for their enemies to attack them.[4]

The above summary reveals the way in which Japanese Christians, both nationals and missionaries, are trying to face the shrine problem in the field of education. The Christian Church also has had to think through the situation, define its attitude, and determine its action. It has voiced its views through the National Christian Council of Japan. In the last annual meeting of that council on November, 1936, the consensus of

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1. MRW, March, 1937, p. 138.
2. Ibid.
3. For a brief summary of these issues see The Missionary Review of the World, March, 1937, p. 138.
4. Ibid.

opinion was stated as follows:

> "1. Christians should recognize the national character and value of these shrines and as loyal citizens pay homage to those whose memories are enshrined there.
>
> "2. Christians should accept the government's interpretation that these shrines are not religious and help to make that interpretation known and understood in their own circles and among the people at large.
>
> "3. Christians should press for the elimination of the religious features connected with these shrines and their ceremonies.
>
> "4. Christians should help all concerned to an understanding of the difference between the obeisance paid at these shrines to the nation's notables and the worship of God."[1]

Although Toyohiko Kagawa is not a scholar of Shinto, his opinion concerning the status of the shrines is interesting to note since he is the outstanding Christian national in Japan today. He has changed his viewpoint in the past few years and now agrees with the educational authorities. The writer quotes from his book, "Christ and Japan."

> "Let me define my own position. Whenever I visit the Great Shrine of Ise I do not worship Ama-Terasu-O-Mikami as a goddess. I do, however, remove my hat and bow reverently. The guard on duty finds no fault with this. The educational authorities ask nothing more."[2]

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1. William Axling: "Problems Faced by the National Christian Council," Japan Christian Quarterly, Winter Number 1937, p. 68.
2. Toyokhiko Kagawa: Christ and Japan, p. 88.

And again, he says:

> "Personally, I find myself in agreement with the attitude of the educational authorities that the shrines of state Shinto should be treated as monuments to the builders of the nation and not be looked upon as religious institutions. There is no need of showing respect for shrines of doubtful and unworthy origin. But our hats should come off in respect for the nation's builders."[1]

The Christian nationals are divided on the issue. Some of them accept the government's statement at face value that State Shinto ceremonies are purely patriotic. They do obeisance at the shrines in the same spirit as we visit our patriotic monuments, for example, Washington's Tomb or the Lincoln Memorial. Although many missionaries have accepted the same interpretation, some of them find it difficult not to see anything religious in the shrines. A missionary writes:

> "The Japanese claim their 'reverence' is the same as the reverence of the Westerner who takes off his hat before the tomb of a hero. We have accepted that viewpoint of theirs, and have felt we could not judge their conscience, even though some of us have found it hard not to see something religious in the shrines."[2]

Concerning the reverence paid to the pictures of the Emperor and Empress, this same missionary states:

> "Some of our missionaries, too, oppose the pictures, but here again we've felt we could not judge the conscience of our Japanese colleagues who appear entirely sincere in their contention that the re-

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1. Kagawa, op. cit., p. 89.
2. Confidential Communication.

spect paid the pictures does not conflict with their worship of God - that there is no compromise in it for their conscience."[1]

On the other hand, quite a few missionaries and nationals classify all Shinto shrines as religious. Some of their reasons for believing so are as follows: (1) The architecture and furnishings of all shrines (Sect Shinto and State Shinto) are the same with the exception of the Fox shrines; (2) the priests are dressed the same and they perform the same sort of ceremonies, at least on ordinary occasions; (3) the ordinary people (non-Christians) seem to perform the same kind of worship, such as offering prayers, at both shrines.[2]

It is evident that most Japanese Christians recognize the religious elements in State Shinto, but the patriotic part of it, with them, outweighs the religious aspects. They have accepted the government's interpretation of State Shinto and have adopted the policy of avoiding a direct collision with the state. They are endeavoring to put into the minds of those whom they may influence a truer notion of God and of worship, so that false and crude notions may die away.

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1. Confidential Communication.
2. Ibid.

C. The Interpretation by Protestants in Chosen

The policy of the Japanese Government to demand absolute allegiance to State Shinto is carried out wherever the flag of Japan flies. In fact, it seems as if shrine-worship is being pressed in Chosen with even greater vigor than in Japan proper.[1] For Christians in Chosen a crucial situation immediately arises, for they have not the patriotic feeling for the Emperor and the national heroes that the Japanese have, and they regard the demand to engage in shrine-worship as equivalent to a return to idolatry.[2] Furthermore, in Chosen most of the shrines are dedicated to the Sun Goddess, whereas in Japan most of them are dedicated to Japanese heroes.[3] The difficulties confronting the Christians are increased by the requirement made by the churches that believers renounce ancestor worship as a condition of membership and that a reversion to ancestor worship shall constitute grounds for dismissal.[4]

In order to foster patriotism the Japanese Government has adopted compulsory attendance at the Shinto

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1. William Paton: Christianity in the Eastern Conflicts, p. 30.
2. Ibid.
3. MRW, March, 1937, p. 136.
4. Cf. JCYB, 1936, pp. 67-68.

shrines as an integral part of its educational system.[1] All government schools are compelled to go to the shrines at stated intervals and make obeisance. This requirement has given no special concern to national schools whose students have naturally acceded to the government's orders.[2] The efforts of the officials to require the Christian schools to attend and participate in ceremonies at the Shinto shrines have precipitated, up to the present time, a situation that has been disturbing several Protestant denominations with Missions in Chosen.

Many Christians feel that doing obeisance at the shrines is contrary to the worship which is to be given to God alone.[3] Although the government makes constant protest that these ceremonies are purely patriotic, they have felt that the declaration of the government does not change the essential nature of what occurs in these ceremonies.[4]

> "At a certain point in the ceremonies the officiating person calls the spirits of the dead to descend and enter the shrine, whereupon he lays before them gifts of food and flowers, addressing them in the name of those who have gathered, offers an incantation in the nature of a prayer, and requires all present to bow before them in a method inseparably

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1. Charles Bernheisel: "The Present Status of the Shrine Question in Korea," Christianity Today, February, 1937, p. 227.
2. Confidential Copy.
3. Editorial, Women and Missions, March, 1936, p. 393.
4. Confidential Copy.

> connected in Oriental practice with worship. The spirits are then formally dismissed and certain other rites are performed to which no objection is raised."[1]

It is this act of "worship" which the Christian missionaries and nationals feel they cannot perform. They declare their readiness to practice any patriotic ceremony that does not require them to bow in worship to any other than God Himself.[2] This, they feel, the government requires them to do when they demand obeisance at the shrines.[3]

The majority of the missionaries of certain denominations declare the shrines to be a part of the Shinto religious system and therefore any obeisance rendered at them is a religious act that is not permissible to Christian people.[4]

Earnest efforts have been made to reach a form of observance possible to Christian consciences and yet acceptable to the state, but any proposal suggested has always been refused.[5] "The state demands its worship on its own terms."[6] Since the Japanese authorities will not recede from their position, some Missions have al-

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1. Editorial, op. cit., p. 393.
2. Confidential Copy.
3. Ibid.
4. Cf. Bernheisel, op. cit., p. 227.
5. Samuel Fisk: "Should Christians Bow the Knee?" The King's Business, February, 1937, p. 77.
6. Paton, op. cit., p. 30.

ready decided to withdraw from secular educational work rather than maintain the schools by an unworthy compromise of Christian principles.[1] The denominations that have accepted the government's statement at face value are not confronted with this serious problem.[2]

In conclusion, the reader may note the fact that most of the missionaries and nationals in Chosen consider State Shinto to be a religion and that they cannot do what the shrine ceremonies require without sacrificing their Christian witness and doing despite to their Christian profession.

D. A Parallel Case of State Shinto in Manchukuo

Japan has also extended her power over Manchukuo and is convinced that it should be integrated with the Japanese Empire. To accomplish her purpose Japan has established a military authority over these resentful people. Such a military regime has enlisted a low type of man to rule in Manchukuo. These men are not the liberal civilians of Tokyo, but the fanatical exponents of a military mystical faith.[3] They are trying to eradicate the Chinese culture of the Manchurian population

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1. Cf. Bernheisel, op. cit., p. 227.
2. Confidential Communication.
3. Cf. Paton, op. cit., p. 44.

and to weld them into a spiritual unity with the people of Japan.[1] Hence, the Japanese Government is attempting to institute in the schools in Manchuria the compulsory worship of Confucius, a Chinese sage whom all Chinese honor. The authorities have been clever enough not to institute a Japanese cult such as State Shinto because Manchukuo, nominally, is a free and autonomous state, entirely independent of Japan. But the government is using the same principle of a state-religion here as in Chosen and Japan proper. A Japanese official speaking to a group of school-teachers in Manchukuo was reported as having said that

> "they must strive to get the recognition of the state as the first obligation to be acknowledged-then . . . religion would not stray from the path."[2]

Such a policy cannot be enforced without coming into conflict with the Christian Church that is true to its message and duty. The Christian Church recently has clashed with the rulers in Manchukuo and today is facing a problem similar to that in Japan and Chosen.[3]

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1. Cf. Paton, op. cit., p. 44.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid., p. 43.

GENERAL SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

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A. A Decision Concerning the Shrine Problem

In writing this thesis it has been the writer's purpose to make a careful study of the history of Shintoism with a view to discovering the origin of the shrine problem. It has been pointed out that the shrines were originally built as places of communion with the spirit world and that the so-called shrine problem has arisen because of the failure, on the part of the Japanese Government, to separate these shrines from the religious consciousness of the Japanese nation. From the investigation of the shrines the author has hoped to come to a decision concerning this shrine problem and to discover a possible solution in accord with the future progress of Christian Missions in the Japanese Empire.

Shinto is the primitive indigenous religion of Japan which prevailed until the introduction of Buddhism in the sixth century A.D. When Buddhism was dominant in Japan, Shintoism as a distinct religion was quiescent, yet the native cult survived in many of the common beliefs and practices of the Japanese people. It was revived by the Pure Shinto scholars of the eighteenth century and developed in the nineteenth into State Shinto and into the various Shinto sects.

Prior to the Restoration of 1868 the Shinto shrines were looked upon as the private property of certain families in which the Shinto priesthood was hereditary, or else they were in the hands of the Buddhists. Drastic changes in both cases were among the first acts of the new government. The hereditary system was abolished and the government assumed the power of appointing the Shinto priesthood. The shrines were placed under the Department of Shrines and Temples. But when it became a question as to whether or not shrines were religious edifices, the Department of Shrines and Temples was divided into two, one known as the Bureau of Shrines and the other, the Bureau of Religions. The former was made part of the Ministry of Home Affairs which from that time took complete charge of the shrines. The latter was put under the Ministry of Education and to it was committed the care of such matters relating to religions as might in any way be the concern of the state. By this administrative change, the shrines were completely separated from ordinary religions and put into a special category. Thus, it has come about that Shrine-Shinto, in the eyes of the state, is now not regarded as a religion.

It is true that the government has advocated the "separation of religion from politics" and has put

forth an effort to eliminate State Shinto of its religious content. But this end has not been realized. The official statement that State Shinto is not a religion does not alter the truth of existing facts concerning the shrines.

The clue to the true estimate of the religious quality of State Shinto lies in the fact that the common people who visit the official shrines reserve no area of religious devotion loftier, nor any object of worship more real than the deities enshrined there. To them State Shinto is a real religion and at its shrines religious exercises are performed.

The major activities of State Shinto center in sacred ceremonies performed within the sacred shrines by an organized group of official priests. Acting in the capacity of the Great High Priest, the Emperor often officiates at the shrine ceremonies. The official priests offer up prayers (Norito) for the people, the Emperor, and the nation, perform wedding ceremonies, hold funeral services, sell religious charms and function as religious leaders. Priests and laymen must observe the rites of purification before entering the presence of the enshrined kami. The deities are regarded as objectively existing entities of a superhuman spirit world. The immortality of the soul is accepted as a

fact underlying the state rituals. The ideal of sacred obligations of loyalty to the Emperor is inculcated as a primary essential. The changes which the government has wrought in the status of the shrines since 1875 have had almost nothing to do with the real content of shrine worship. Its inner life today is practically the same as the state religion of 1868-1875.

Loyalism and ancestralism were not primary factors in the genesis of the shrines. These features have been attached to the shrines and emphasized as primary mainly because of the political interests of the Japanese Governments. By demanding attendance at the State shrines the authorities are trying to foster patriotism to a supreme degree. The futility of forcing such a policy upon subject peoples, such as those in Chosen and Manchukuo, is evident.

State Shinto has but one center - the Emperor. He is the ruler and high priest whose absolute authority is never questioned. Such an attitude of devotion and obedience as is exhibited toward the Emperor is genuine deification, demanding for him what can properly be yielded only to God. Everybody is being trained through the technique of religion to give supreme loyalty to the god-Emperor and to the State. So the patriotism of Japan may readily be termed a religion; in fact, it is about

all the religion many Japanese have.

Judging from the form and content of State Shinto, the writer has come to the conclusion that State Shinto is a religion.

B. A Possible Solution of the Problem in the Light of the Future of Christian Missions in the Japanese Empire

It is inevitable that Christianity should be regarded as the chief rival to the claims of a totalitarian state. Its international character and its resistance to neo-Shinto make it an object of suspicion to the ultra-nationalist spirit so rampant in the Japanese Empire today. The continued development of Shinto and the strengthening of its hold on the people present a serious menace to the Christian Church. It is not easy to be a loyal Christian and at the same time a patriotic Japanese. How is the Church to cope with this situation? What is her task today? These are the questions that are demanding answers by those interested in Christian Missions in the Japanese Empire.

This difficult and challenging situation not only creates a problem for Christian Missions, but also affords an opportunity to render service to Japan. Christianity, with its world-wide nature and positive teachings on human life, has already played an important

role in the nation's life in the past. It still has a great part to play in moulding the Japanese spirit.

One of the greatest services Christianity can render Japan today is to help its people dissociate these two principles of organized religion and national policy and reorganize them in truer relations with better perspective. Even if the Japanese Government were willing to make a clear distinction between Shinto and "Kokutai" the common people would not be ready to adjust themselves to it. Such a change would necessitate a process of education. Herein lies the opportunity of the Christian agencies at work in the Japanese Empire in helping to solve the shrine problem. The people must be brought to distinguish between loyalty to the Emperor and that supreme fealty which is reserved for God alone.

The majority of Christians throughout the Japanese Empire recognize the religious elements in State Shinto, but they also realize that nothing will be gained by antagonizing the authorities. The missionaries feel that it is better to leave the interpretation of State Shinto to the Japanese Christians, for they can interpret it in their own racial terms, following their own racial spirit and temperament. Hence, the Christians in Japan proper have adopted the policy of avoiding direct collison with the state and of making an intelligent ad-

justment to State Shinto in keeping with all reasonable requirements of citizenship, but without sacrificing their full self-respect as Christians.

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