

THE JAPANESE AND RELIGION

A Panel Discussion



CHAIRMAN: *Tsunamasa Furuya*

PARTICIPANTS: *Saburō Ienaga, Kazō Kitamori, Ichi Oguchi*

Chairman (C) In the four lectures which we have heard religion has been discussed from various points of view. Today, we want your frank opinion about the religious nature of the Japanese people. We think that the Japanese point of view regarding religion is quite different from that of Westerners. While the people in Western countries were born into and fostered by a Christian environment, the Japanese have had to choose their own religious faith out of many kinds of religions. It is true, of course, that Japan has many religions; but this very fact may be the cause of much religious indifference. In selecting one of the religious beliefs in Japan, one must go through the agony of making a decision.

When I went abroad, one of the most interesting things to me was that in entering some countries I had to state my religious affiliation. I usually wrote "no religion" in the column, and this was acceptable in most cases. However, sometimes it wasn't. In such cases, to avoid unnecessary discussion, I put

THE JAPANESE AND RELIGION

down "Buddhist." I joined the camp of the Buddhists, who are a majority in Japan. This status of having no religion seems to be a most difficult thing for foreigners to understand. Mr. Oguchi, will you please comment on this point?

Oguchi (O) This matter of selecting a religion is important. I think religion is something that we must choose, and in this connection we might think about Catholicism and Buddhism. In both these forms of religion people belong to some church or temple whether they believe in it or not. Thus, religion is nothing but a social institution. Mr. Ienaga may have a better knowledge of what I am talking about.

Such an aspect of Buddhism in Japan originates in the system of temple supporters (*danka*^a), which was established and developed during the Edo period by the Tokugawa shogunate. Besides, as a result of the anti-Buddhist movement of the Meiji Restoration, the religious world became very confused. However, new religious movements, that is, Sectarian Shinto and Protestantism arose and at present new religions are prosperous in Japan. Foreigners think that "new religions" are something quite new, something apart from the established religions. But this isn't the case. Most of these "new" religious bodies can be classified into one of the three established religions, Shinto, Buddhism, and Christianity, the traditional faiths in the Tokugawa period.

C Mr. Ienaga, please.

Ienaga (I) I am not a specialist in the field of religion, but I

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THE JAPANESE AND RELIGION

would like to clarify the definition of religion first. I say this because, when people say that the Japanese are not very religious, they do so from a Christian point of view, in which case the criticism is quite correct. But I think the Japanese scene needs a more careful examination. We may find the Japanese religious scene quite different from the Christian West. However, if we look back into the stone age we may be unable to find any difference at all, The situation did not basically change in the succeeding ancient societies and the feudal ages.

We can see the difference in the forms of religion and the character of piety, but not in the degree of piety. People are religious, Westerners and Japanese alike. Though we may say that the Japanese attitude toward religion from ancient times has promoted religious indifference among today's Japanese, I am quite opposed to the contention that the Japanese are religiously indifferent compared to other nations in the world.

C Mr. Kitamori may have something to say from the Christian point of view.

Kitamori (K) I like to take a different approach to the problem. I would like to tell you a story, the story of a typical white-collar worker in downtown Tokyo. He is fifty years old. He was baptized almost twenty years ago. Then he stopped going to church. He was one of the so-called "graduate believers." Yet he came back to the church several years ago and is quite active now. He even does some evangelistic work among his colleagues. He is devoted but the annoyed pagans gracefully interrupt his preaching with an expression which is a blow to

THE JAPANESE AND RELIGION

his good intention. They say, "No more talk about gloomy things, please."

The death of man and sin are gloomy topics to talk about at lunch. However, this isn't the end of the story. There is more to be said. Those who are quite reluctant to hear about unlucky things, think about them seriously when they are alone, or are awake at night. I think it is quite difficult to judge whether a man is religious or not. There is no standard criterion. It may be impossible to describe Japanese religiosity in a word. Japanese intellectuals are quite bashful in talking about religion. They are not used to talking intellectually about it. They feel some antagonism to religion. They are reluctant to talk about it and to attend church. But they read books on religion at home.

C Yes, that is true. They are quite reluctant to commit themselves or to join some religious group. People are sympathetic to religion, but they are not ardent enough to identify themselves with one of the religious bodies. They think such an action is something incompatible with the intellectual mind. I wonder what really is behind such a way of thinking?

K I think this way of thinking is caused by the Japanese sentiment which prefers the smart (*iki*^a) to the unrefined (*yabo*^b). These words are difficult to translate into a foreign language, aren't they? Parents are quite pleased to see their children go to church rather than to some clubs; yet they dislike to see their children be very eager and active at the churches. Parents usually advise their children not to be too involved in church activities. They wish the children to have loose ties with such

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THE JAPANESE AND RELIGION

things. They respect religion all right, but they don't love it. Church-going is better than drinking.

C The Japanese are described as being obedient to authorities. If they had not been so obedient, they would have been caught by some religion. But the Japanese are, as you know, not absorbed in any one type of religion. How could this happen? Mr. Ienaga, would you explain this situation and clarify it for us?

I Yes, I will. The Japanese are certainly obedient, as you say; but they are obedient to the traditional religion the authority of which was established in ancient times. As Mr. Oguchi has suggested, the Tokugawa government forced the people to register in one of the temples, and the people followed this instruction without any resistance. I would like to call your attention to Japanese folk religion which is usually called Shinto. I myself do not use this term at all. This folk religion is an agricultural cult widely practiced in ancient societies all over the world. This is not a faith to select, but a culture or custom in which one is born and brought up. The people's daily life, as well as their festivals, are deeply religious. For instance, the intellectuals, who claim to be through with religion, observe the age-old customs of the New Year cult, such as the use of rice-cakes (*mochi*^a) and sacred straw festoons (*shimenawa*^b). Of course, people forget the significance of these observances, but they cannot cast them away. So the Japanese are quite obedient to this type of religious life which is observed by the whole community. Yet they are quite reluctant to have a personal faith. They prefer to have ties as loose as possible with things which are not sanctioned by the whole community.

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THE JAPANESE AND RELIGION

C That's right. Christians observe wedding ceremonies and funeral services according to their own cult, but the common Japanese people observe wedding ceremonies according to the Shinto cult and hold funeral services in a Buddhist manner. Going to the shrine is observed by parents who take their new-born baby to the Shinto priest for a blessing. Such a custom is not the expression of their faith, but a mere borrowing of rites. At present even the system of temple supporters is declining, but I think parishes and parishioners remain just as they do in Western countries. Why is this?

O I think that they still exist as a system.

C Well, yes, in a sense. When some one dies, we remember the sect that our family supports. At least we ask the religious affiliation of the family.

O In carrying out a religious survey, we found that students do not know what a temple supporter is. Some may know some temple, but they do not care much about the sect to which the temple belongs. They are quite ignorant of the various sects.

I How do you explain this kind of ignorance?

O I think this has been caused by urbanization. Communities in rural areas keep the temple supporter system and observe their shrine festivals on the basis of the parishioner (*ujiko*^a) relationship. Rural people are held together by temples or shrines in their districts, and there is no room for newcomers to step in. This is a problem waiting for our careful study. In this campaign Tenri-kyo has won, while the "new religions" and Christianity have failed. After World War II the "new

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THE JAPANESE AND RELIGION

religions " blossomed with many followers in urban areas, but most of the Japanese population consists of farmers. The religion which becomes popular among the farmers will win in this pious Olympic.

K Mr. Ienaga, you spoke about the decline of the temple supporter system. I would like to suggest that, rather than being the effect of other religions, such as Christianity, this was caused by the dissolution of the tight community consciousness and the emergence of pragmatic individualism. People in rural areas, where this has not occurred, are still tied up in the family religion. Christians are not exceptions. For instance, a Christian farmer's daughter may stop attending church because of her marriage with a non-Christian husband. I do not insist that the interfaith marriage is the only reason for their stopping. The main reason seems to be that such communities are too conservative to accept individualism. On the other hand, family ties are easily cast away in urban communities, which make it easy for the individual to have his own personal faith.

C You are referring to Christianity?

K Yes.

C Speaking of Christianity, what do you think is the main reason for the slowing down of its expansion? Christianity was re-introduced into this country just one hundred years ago. Yet, while it has made remarkable progress in other parts of the world, it has only 500,000 or 600,000 believers* today. However, I don't deny its contribution to the intellectual

* 1959 statistics indicate a total church membership, Catholic and Protestant, of 678,258. Ed.

scene in Japan.

K We must take an historical approach to this problem. Christianity started its expansion under the Roman aegis after the fourth century. It was given the kind of protection that Japan gave to Buddhism. Converts were made by mass production. Christianity was introduced to the Germans, who had no tradition or philosophy strong enough to resist it. The missionary enterprise was easy to carry on and swift to expand.

The Christian movement in Japan faced a different situation. First, in the nineteenth century it was introduced into Japan where it met a hostile sister faith, Buddhism. Second, its evangelistic work suffered a great deal under the emperor system. Finally, it was in such a hurry that it forgot to change its costume and adjust itself to meet the new environment. This third point is without doubt a fault, yet, it had no other choice. The Japanese empire was too hard for it to cope with.

I I quite agree with you, Mr. Kitamori. When Catholicism was introduced into Japan in the sixteenth century, it made remarkable progress and yet it was eliminated. This elimination does not mean that it was a fake or that the believers were hesitant in their evangelism. Rather, it was persecuted by means of nation-wide political pressure aided by military force.

In the Meiji era Protestantism was introduced, and this time the peculiar idea of Japanese national polity (*kokutai*^a) was the biggest obstacle for its advancement, wasn't it? As we have remarked earlier, there are old and primitive religious

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THE JAPANESE AND RELIGION

cults and community rituals in rural Japan which are an obstacle to the entry of new religions. Yet, if Christianity had been introduced into Japan in the sixth century when Buddhism came in, it might have spread as Buddhism did. This seems quite possible when we look into the history of Catholic expansion in the sixteenth century.

The strength of the primitive religious cult in rural Japan is not the only reason for the Christian failure. Japanese nationalism was strong and it consciously rejected Christianity. The last time, we discussed the difference between Westernization,* didn't we? Christianity is a ring in the chain of modern culture made in Europe. The policy of the Japanese government was the adoption of military and industrial techniques, which were essential for the wealth of the nation, and the rejection of European ideas of politics and morals which endangered national unity. Thus, Christianity was eliminated from the list because it was a foreign element which, it was believed, would cause trouble in connection with the new ideas of national polity then forming about the Emperor. This governmental screening should be regarded as the greatest obstacle to the advance of Christianity.

C How about Buddhism? What were its difficulties with the indigenous folk religion?

I I don't think that there were any. Both religions were the same in nature, offering magical prayers for bumper crops, the prosperity of the country, and the avoidance of natural disasters and evils. As Mr. Kitamori pointed out the Buddhism, which was introduced in the sixth century and became the state

* See *Contemporary Religions in Japan* Vol. I No. 3 (September, 1960) p. 1.

THE JAPANESE AND RELIGION

religion, was quite different from the fundamental Buddhism established by Gautama for the enlightenment of individuals. Consequently, state Buddhism was almost the same as the indigenous folk religion in its function and was believed in as such. These two religions could cooperate for a common purpose without inviting any trouble.

I do not deny the recorded conflict in the *Nihon Shoki*^a, that is, the conflict between the Soga^b and Mononobe^c clans as to whether or not Buddhism should be accepted. But this conflict was nothing but a struggle for political leadership and far from religion *per se*. If this had been a religious issue, this kind of conflict would have been repeated again and again in the following pages of Japanese history. I don't think that this was a religious conflict, because this is the only conflict we hear anything about.

- C Now I understand the situation which caused the emergence of syncretism. Christianity must have been quite foreign to Japanese soil. Mr. Oguchi?
- O Mr. Kitamori may have a better answer to the problem. I would like to make this problem more specific especially in reference to the idea of God. When the Bible was translated into Japanese, the word "God" was translated as *Kami*. *Kami*, as you know, is a Shinto word, and this translation caused a confusion between the Christian idea of God and the Japanese conception of deity. So it is rather difficult for a Japanese to understand the Christian idea of God and its doctrine. I think that people engaged in evangelistic work must have a hard time trying to straighten out this confusion.

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- K** This problem of translation has been brought up frequently for discussion, and I think that the discussions usually miss the point. For a scholarly discussion we have to go back to the original text. The original Greek text uses the word *theos* to convey the Christian idea of God. And this *theos* is, as you know, an Olympean god who fights and becomes jealous. The English *God*, the German *Gott*, and the Latin *Deus* are dieties in their respective lands. Strictly speaking, they are quite different from the Christian idea of God. Yet Christianity has used these terms. So we have to raise questions about *theos*, *Deus*, and *God* if we are to question our usage of the Japanese word *Kami*.
- O** However, speaking of the word *kami*, it strongly reminds the Japanese people of the ancient indigenous dieties.
- K** This problem should be examined from a different angle than the religious. The political issue must be considered. The *kami* issue reminds us of Caesar worship in the Roman empire. From the fall of the Roman empire until it came to Japan, where the Emperor was *the* God, Christianity was never confronted with a political issue. Christianity has had bitter experiences in connection with this problem in both the Roman and Japanese empires. If a duel must be fought between God and *kami*, we can rationally settle the issue. But the political issue needs another kind of solution.
- O** That's right. In Japan religions or their organizations became powerful when they were united with politics. It is remarkable that religions developed through making use of governments, while the latter made use of the former. The Japanese believe that man becomes a *kami* and, according

THE JAPANESE AND RELIGION

to this kind of faith, the Emperor is a living *kami* (*Arahitō-gami*^a). Having carefully examined the different forms of polytheism, I wonder if the notion that man can be a *kami* should be classified as polytheism.

Is it right to call this polytheism such as was seen in Rome and Greece?

Everything was the object of adoration: nature, things, and men. We can recognize this kind of belief among the Romans and Greeks. I wonder if political leaders or military forces are the only reasons for the expulsion of those animistic beliefs?

- K** I should say that those beliefs did not have such a strong religious character as Christianity. They are not as universal as Christianity.
- O** I still think that there should be a religion suitable to a race settled in a farming area.
- I** Speaking of Christianity and her expansion in Japan, if the emperor system was the biggest obstacle, I would like to know the reason why Christianity has not made more noticeable progress since 1945, when the opposition between the emperor system and Christianity was dissolved.
- K** I think that in some classes the emperor system and the feudal system have been broken up, but in other classes they still exist unaffected. Mr. Oguchi may be able to give us a clear picture of what they are like in rural areas. I have an impression that there are a great many people who give adoration or homage to the Emperor. He was democratized all right. Yet this was done in a nominal sense and the

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THE JAPANESE AND RELIGION

substance remained as it was. It is impossible that the age-old feudal system was overthrown in a day on August 15th.

On the one hand, the defeat of Japan might have invited the rise of individualism, but this has taken the shape of egotism and caused chaos in various avenues of life. The new generation has no brains to think things through. They have become nihilistic and indifferent to religion, and their number is increasing. On the other hand, the people in rural areas still regard Christianity as a foreign religion and wicked in nature.

C We do not believe that Christianity is *the* religion. However, be that as it may, according to Mr. Kitamori, although State Shinto was abolished, it is still living in rural areas and in the mind of the pseudo-intelligentsia. As for Buddhism being attached to Shinto, this is also true. In urban areas Christianity has made progress, but realism or indifference to religion hinders its growth. I think it can be said that the Japanese people have no idea of ethics based on religion though they have a concept of religion. No one can deny the fact that Christianity is the backbone of ethics in Western countries, and that other religions, such as Islam, have a set of ethical disciplines, while Shinto and Buddhism in Japan cannot make any such claim. The failure of Japanese, I think, is described in the statement that the Japanese have no religiosity. Those who criticize Japanese religiosity criticize it from such an ethical point of view. What shall be our answer to such criticism?

O The relation of religion and ethics was analyzed by Dr. Oshima.* I wonder if there is any religion which is not

* See *Contemporary Religions in Japan* Vol. I No. 1 (March, 1960) p. 25

THE JAPANESE AND RELIGION

ethical. This reminds me of the so-called peace movement. When the need of a peace movement by religious groups is stressed, some religionists reply that religious groups and institutions need no special peace movement because religion is peaceful in nature. This is a misleading reply, as you know. If we just look at a page or two of any history book, we find bloody struggles among pious people on page after page. We can't say this kind of religion is ethical, can we?

C No, not at all. But what I mean is discipline rather than ethics.

O Speaking of discipline, I know some Islam believers living in Japan who, contrary to their moral code, drink wine and eat pork. They might be following the Japanese pattern, and may act like the Romans when they are in Rome. But, as this case clearly shows, religious discipline has been broken because people cannot keep the pace of modern civilization if they keep such observances strictly. For instance, usury may be a suitable illustration. Both Catholicism and Islam prohibit usury, but people cannot live in this age of capitalism if they stick to the old rules. Consequently, such a rule must be eliminated in practice, and thus the disciplines are loosened in general, I think.

I I think that religion and ethics were one and the same thing in ancient Japan, when what we call folk religion was the basis of society and regulated all community activities. So also in Japanese mythology, such as the *Kojiki*^a and *Nihon Shoki*, sin was not only moral and legal sin, but was also religious sin, deserving both punishment and atonement.

a. 古事記

THE JAPANESE AND RELIGION

I happened to meet a white-collar worker about thirty years of age, who did not know that I was a Christian. During our conversation religion became the topic of discussion. He told me that 80% of the German people were nominal Christians, but that actually most of them, including himself, were atheists.

Japan has only 300,000 or 400,000 believers.* This may be a small figure compared with Christian nations. Yet a comparison with Christian nations will have no sense at all, if the figures include a great number of atheists. We cannot depend much on statistics. I think religion is pure and clean when it is too small in numbers to associate with politics. Religion will be salt without taste, if it associates with political power, not to speak of engagement in secular war as pointed out by Mr. Oguchi. Religion faces the hardest trial in keeping itself clean when it becomes popular with the general public. Being a social institution, religion is generally speaking idealistic and clean, when it is separated from power. We believe Christianity is safe and sound when it is persecuted, as it was after the days of her founder, Jesus Christ.

C I see your point. Christians in Western countries, then, are something like Buddhists and Shintoists in our country.

K I would like to comment again on the relation between religion and ethics. When some Christian countries engage in war and use the atomic bomb, evangelism in Japan has a hard time, because the people in general identify Christianity with those Christians. Consequently, Christianity loses her

* Dr. Kitamori is apparently referring only to Protestants who total 376, 357. (see also the note on p. 7) Ed.

popularity as soon as some such Christian nations become unpopular. In power politics, national interest has priority over Christian piety. Politics is different in nature from ethics. Christians are Christians, as long as they live as individuals, but Christians think and act differently as a nation. This is the big problem.

C Then we must be content with the separation of "church" and state.

Now, I would like to change our topic to a discussion of the "new religions." My impression is that the "new religions" are growing rapidly in number and have gained a great many converts, several times the number of Christian believers. What do you think of this phenomenon, Mr. Oguchi?

C Well, one criterion of religious institutions is the number of believers, as well as the grand appearance of the headquarters buildings. When I question the necessity of such buildings, the leaders tell me that the believers wish or insist that the institution should have a large building. They expect worldly benefit, and test the value of a religion by its rewards. This expectation requires magical practices, and the common people expect this kind of a response from Christianity, as well as from Shinto and Buddhism.

Since 1945 the Catholics have been quite aggressive in their work. A certain village was reported to have been entirely converted to the Catholic faith. But, according to recent information, the whole village backslid to the old faiths. The villagers were attracted by the worldly benefits offered by the Catholic Church. The Church distributed relief goods and promised new buildings for a school and hospital.

THE JAPANESE AND RELIGION

When they found that these promises were not realized, they left the church and returned to their old faiths. They were disappointed because they looked for earthly treasures and paid no attention to piety.*

Protestants have had a similar experience. The Lacour team, for instance, did marvelous work with audio-visual campaigning in rural areas that Japanese ministers never had visited before. Yet such a campaign sometimes proves fruitless after the team returns home. People may throng to the churches because of curiosity, and stop coming to church when the Americans leave. There seems to be no religious aspiration among the common people.

K Speaking of the "new religions," we are informed that some group has gained a surprising number of believers and is sending its representatives to the Upper House. This is a new phenomenon in Japan, I believe.

O You are referring to the Sōka Gakkai^a, I believe. They are sending their representatives to local prefectural assemblies as well as the national Diet. At the last election all the candidates to the Tokyo Metropolitan Assembly were elected. The local leaders are very eager to help their communities and are responding to the daily needs of their fellow-believers. But their position in the Japanese political scene is quite ambiguous.

* Dr. Oguchi in this paragraph and the next appears to have based his comments very largely on newspaper reports. While it is true that in the village referred to there has been a change, the entire village was never converted and there is today a fine church in the village. Those responsible for the Lacour program regard it as highly successful. In five years some thirty churches were established. Ed.

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THE JAPANESE AND RELIGION

C The public was surprised to learn that Sōka Gakkai increased its number of believers in such a short period of time. This increase seems to have been the result of strong leadership. I wonder if this kind of increase is a typical Japanese pattern?

O No, it isn't. We must pay attention to the fact that the rank and file of members are well trained and organized, as in the case of the so-called circle movement among trade unionists. It is quite difficult to leave the organization once you have joined. This difficulty is found in many religious bodies and requires careful study. They do not have a rule prohibiting members to leave, but group morale is so strong, and the group is too cohesive for a member to leave.

The sense of unity shared by each member is wonderful. Human relations in religious organizations have been vertical, as far as the relation between charismatic leaders and the followers is concerned, but human relations in these "new religions" are not only vertical between leaders and followers. They are also horizontal among the followers. This is one of the important characteristic to be found in the activities of the "new religions."

C A new type?

O I don't think that this is a new phenomenon. In the Tokugawa period, for instance, people gathered in the temple and had an opportunity to talk to each other. Such gatherings were called "*kōa*" (associations). I think this phenomenon has changed into what we see among the "new religions."

C I think such religious organizations might become very

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powerful in politics.

- I The Honganji^a sectarian organization may be like this. Its basic power is located in the associations to which Mr. Oguchi has referred. Other old religious bodies have relied for their support entirely on the land given by their patron feudal lords, and they have neglected the human element and group dynamics. The Honganji has strong ties with each of the members who are bound closely together in the associations. The Honganji's amazing propaganda was carried on through the human relations in this association system.

There are two reasons, I think, for the rise of the "new religions." The first is that the state control of religious institutions was considerably weakened by Japan's defeat in 1945. The second may be the contradiction caused by the suffering in daily living after 1945. The people began to think for themselves, and they went to the "new religions," because they could not find a rational solution of the new contradictions and the established religions could not provide an answer to them.

- O Certainly the Religious Organizations Law (*Shūkyō Dantai Hō*^b) was as bad as the Public Safety Law. The abolition of this Law was the starting point of these "new religions," because they are now free to carry on any activities. Some people started "new religions" to make profit. One of the main characteristics of the "new religions" may be the power and activities of their young people. This phenomenon is nothing but the result of their concentrated efforts on youth work. The reason why the young people were attracted to the "new re-

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THE JAPANESE AND RELIGION

ligions ” may need careful study.

C Is there anything so attractive to youth? There must be something lively and active in the “new religions” while, as Mr. Kitamori pointed out, the established religions are so gloomy.

O The young people are looking for something to which they can dedicate themselves and the “new religions” have much appeal to their energies. The leaders of these “new religions” officially speak as if they expect a great deal from the youth; and they are generous in giving leadership to the young people. The social status of these people is very low; but as group leaders they feel their ego is raised and they are quite happy.

C Young people come to trade unions or “new religions” for the outlet of their energies. Is that so?

O The candidates for national election have this clearly in their minds.

C I think that this kind of enthusiasm among young people has something in common with the Marxist and socialist movement in the late twenties before the Manchurian incident. Mr. Ienaga, you may have something to say on this subject.

I I don't know much about this. My feeling is that the pursuit of individual happiness may be their most important objective. Young adolescents are quite sensitive about individual needs. During World War II people had to sacrifice themselves for the public and the country, and individualism was severely criticized. This is the age of individualism as well as selfishness. I don't speak from a knowledge of facts or from experience, but religion seems to be the place to respond to the needs of this individualism.

C Thank you, Mr. Ienaga. And now, gentlemen, I would like

THE JAPANESE AND RELIGION

to hear your opinion about religion and politics. There are political parties based on Christian principles. Christian nations, such as Italy and Germany, have this kind of political parties; but in Japan we do not have any. Though we have some representatives of religious groups, they are quite small in number. I wonder if it is possible for Japan to have such a party, Mr. Kitamori?

K I do not know much about politics. Some Christian statesman told me that the Japanese should not have a multi-party system. The moment Japanese Christians organize their own party, it will cause the emergence of a powerful Buddhist party. So this Christian gentleman thinks it wise, for the sake of the future of Christianity, not to organize such a party. This is what a prominent Christian statesman told me.

C So a religious party is questionable.

O Frankly speaking, I can see no possibility of such a religious party.

C You mean that religion and politics are different things.

O Some religious bodies are eager to organize their own parties, but it seems to be impossible to do such a thing. There is an association, which consists of such organizations, but its influence is not very strong and it faces rather strong opposition.

C We have roughly covered the main problems among Japanese religions. Finally, I would like to have your comments on religions in Japan.

O I would like to speak about the nature of religion. We have discussed this before, and I still believe that religion is something to be chosen. Religious beliefs should not be forced. This is a problem of the conscience. If some one is asked to

THE JAPANESE AND RELIGION

join some organization and is quite reluctant to do so, he had better refuse to do so. This refusal is easy for urban people, but it is difficult for rural people. So we must build up a new society in which people fear nothing, and can resist compulsion.

C How about it, Mr. Ienaga?

I I quite agree with Mr. Oguchi's statement; but I would like to add one word to what Mr. Kitamori said about the failure of religion when it holds power. A political party may have no way of judging itself about this matter of power politics. But religion has and should have a criterion to review itself in this matter. Religion must have a mirror to reflect its own haughtiness. Religion is not a machine to make profit, but a criticism of the actual world. In this point can be found the value of religion.

C Mr. Kitamori, please.

K Religion claims to be something different from the world. Yet, true religion must have her roots deep in the earth, and must share common responsibilities with the world. We Christians recognize this common responsibility. I hope all religions, including Christianity, will keep a well-balanced relationship with the world.

C We have talked on religions in Japan and find that the Japanese idea of religion is not the same as that of other countries. We like to think of the religions in the different frames of reference offered by each participant in this fruitful discussion. Thank you.

Note: The above manuscript is a translation of a broadcast transcribed from tapes loaned by the Japan Broadcasting Corporation. Editor.