

REMINISCENCES OF RELIGION IN POSTWAR JAPAN

FOREWORD TO THE JAPANESE EDITION

The greatest social changes in the history of Japan took place following the end of World War II,¹ and the religious world was no exception. When a history of religions in Japan is written the postwar years will bulk large in the minds of the people as an epoch-making period.

What was the background and purpose of reforming the religious system of the country? What was the attitude of the various religions at that time, and what activities did they engage in? For the benefit of future generations it seems necessary to make a faithful record of those days, because a correct knowledge of the postwar period will be absolutely indispensable in the future for an understanding of the religious situation of this country, especially in regard to various problems relating to freedom of religion.

The Union of New Religious Organizations of Japan is an association of organizations that gained the freedom to carry on their normal activities by virtue of the postwar reforms. Consequently in 1961, in connection with the 10th anniversary of its founding, the officers of the Union decided to make an

1. World War II did not legally end until April 28, 1952, when the San Francisco Peace Treaty became effective. Here, as elsewhere in this book, the expressions "end of the war," "after the war," etc., refer to the end of hostilities. Ed.

Reminiscences of Religion in Postwar Japan

accurate record of the religious world in the postwar period and established a research division for this purpose. This book has been compiled from materials collected by this division but, because of its small staff and the short time devoted to this task, we are afraid that there are not a few errors which need to be corrected. We would be very pleased, therefore, if any reader will point out any inaccuracies and thus help in the preparation of a better record at some future date.

Tokuchika Miki

February, 1963

Tokyo

PREFACE

When we come to think about it, the war was indeed a big gamble in which the whole nation took part. Japan was carried away by its head-strong military authorities in a final game of "all or nothing." She lost the bet fairly. The gamble resulted in complete defeat.

Japan's destiny was severely shaken. She stood on the brink of ruin. The devastation of the cities caused by bombing and fires fills us with a sense of horror. Many countries have been completely obliterated in this way. They have prospered for a short time, only to be left in devastation, never to rise again. It was feared that this would happen to our country, but Japan once again stood on her feet. The people endured indescribable difficulties, but they did not abandon the effort to rebuild the country anew. This was almost a miracle. We should never forget it.

Who among the Japanese people at that time could have dreamed of today's prosperity? Japan has changed with such great speed that the whole world has looked on in wonder.

Religious conditions have also changed greatly. It may not seem so, but among all postwar social phenomena the changes in the field of religion have been the most remarkable. Let us consider three of these: the establishment of religious freedom, the abolition of State Shinto, and the rise of the new sects.

In prewar Japan the hand of the government haunted religious organizations. This has disappeared today. Church and state have been separated and freedom of religion has been established

in a new sense. Freedom of religion was legally guaranteed in the Meiji Constitution, but how many new sects suffered to the degree of extinction because of official oppression! Whenever a new sect became influential, it was falsely accused of disturbing peace and order. Its buildings were destroyed, its stone monuments were broken up, and its holy scriptures burned. Such things happened often.² If this did not occur, then interference was carried out under the guise of protection and supervision.

All this has disappeared. Freedom of religion is now taken as a matter of course, — so much so that there is danger of it being neglected. In Japan, where the officials and the government are powerful, separation of church and state can be said to be indispensable for the realization of true religious freedom.

The second remarkable change is the disappearance of State Shinto. From the early years of Meiji the existence of State Shinto was an unusual feature of the Japanese religious world. The Meiji Constitution distinctly guaranteed freedom of religion in Article 28;³ but at the same time participation in the functions of State Shinto was forced on the nation. In order to resolve this contradiction, the government adopted the policy of dealing with State Shinto as if it were not a religion.

However, the whole world which fought Japan regarded State Shinto as a source of narrow-minded nationalism and militarism and was intent on taking some measures against it. The question of what measures should be taken, of how Shrine

2. The description applies to Ōmoto, which was suppressed in 1937, but there is no record of it happening to any other sect. Ed.

3. For the text of Article 28 see p. 130.

Shinto should be dealt with, was the object of the whole world's attention. In connection with the religious policy of the Occupation Forces, this was the most important subject raised immediately after the end of the war.

The religious policy of SCAP was formulated against this background. It called for the abolition of State Shinto. However, on the principle of protecting freedom of religion, it permitted Shrine Shinto to continue to exist. This was an excellent way of dealing with this matter in view of the international situation. The response of the Shintoists was also splendid. Undaunted by the crisis they succeeded in creating a new nation-wide system of Shrine Shinto, and thus it emerged as the largest religious organization in the country.

The third remarkable fact is the rise of the new sects. The life of the people immediately after defeat was extremely difficult. The shortage of materials, including food, was serious. The lack of housing was so extreme that many people were without a roof to sleep under. They slept in open places with their clothes on. A great many people had nothing but the clothes they wore when they were repatriated. The situation was so serious that it was said that in order to survive a person had to shut his eyes to the misfortune of all the others.

Under such circumstances many people appeared who were inspired by a new insight and taught their religion wherever they could. The people gathered around them, and new sects were established. Some of them grew rapidly. Not a few that had been underground suddenly appeared in the open. It was said that the number of new sects amounted to six hundred⁴

4. See p. 170ff.

including large and small. Their development was indeed surprising.

There were several reasons for this phenomenon. The first was the social unrest and the difficulties of life. People who were in a desperate state sought the help of religion. The second reason was the establishment of freedom of religion. With the removal of government interference, religions were literally set free and were on their own. The third reason was the inability of the established religious organizations.

Thus, amidst the abnormal and complicated social conditions existing under the Occupation, the religious situation in Japan changed, but the process was not an easy one. Each scene presented desperate problems for some people who were confronting situations that called for bloody effort and sacrifice which could not be talked about without tears.

However, because of the speed with which things happened in those days, they are fading from men's memory. We have almost forgotten the happenings of only sixteen or seventeen years ago. The details of those events which form an important page in the modern history of Japan have been forgotten already. Therefore an accurate record should be made of what happened at that critical turning point in history. Otherwise a source of trouble will remain for a thousand years.

The purpose of this book, I am told, is to preserve a "record of the facts." This is, indeed, very appropriate, and I pay my sincere respect to Messrs. Tokuhide Miki, Mamoru Mishima, Motoyuki Naganuma and Inarimaru Sakuma of the Research Department of the Union of New Religious Organizations of Japan, who participated in the preparation of this

Reminiscences of Religion in Postwar Japan

publication.

Hideo Kishimoto

February, 1963

Department of Religious Studies

Tokyo University

Tokyo

CHAPTER I

THE ALLIED FORCES ARRIVE FREEDOM OF RELIGION ESTABLISHED

With the end of the war freedom of religion was brought to our country. However, it was a by-product of the Occupation and not something the Japanese desired and gained by their own efforts.

THE ALLIED FORCES ARRIVE

The religious world at the end of the war

On August 15, 1945, the long war came to an end with the unconditional surrender to the Allied Powers. At the same time the country fell into great confusion, the religious world being no exception. During the war the leaders of the religious world were obliged to cooperate in the war effort regardless of their personal desires. Many sects were merged half forcibly. Some were compelled to rewrite parts of their doctrine, and their religious activities were restricted by legislation such as the Peace Preservation Law.

With the coming of peace the leaders were released from these restraints, but they still did not know what direction the Occupation policy would move. Confronted with a destroyed land, devastated spirits, and an extreme scarcity of materials, especially food, they were at a loss as to what to do.

Under these circumstances the Higashikuni Cabinet appointed the world-renowned Christian clergyman, Toyohiko Kagawa,

as a Cabinet consultant and advocated repentance by the hundred million people.¹ It also called a meeting of the leaders of all religious groups on September 14, to adopt "a Plan of Religious Activities for the Reconstruction of Japan." On September 20, the Greater Japan Wartime Religious Patriotic Society (*Dai Nihon Senji Shūkyō Hōkoku-kai*), a semi-government organization for the wartime regimentation of religion which had the Minister of Education as its president, was reorganized as the Religious Society of Japan (*Nihon Shūkyō-kai*), a genuinely private organization. By such means the government sought to meet the new situation and endeavored to utilize religion in the reconstruction of the country. The religious leaders, however, were spiritless. They only repeated the expression, "unquestioning compliance with the Emperor's wishes and protection of the national polity," and waited for instructions from the government.

The Allied Forces began to arrive on August 28. General MacArthur, the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (SCAP), landed at Atsugi airfield on August 30. The General Headquarters immediately began to demobilize and abolish the Japanese army and exterminate militarism.

In the field of religion all prisoners accused of crimes connected with religion were ordered released. On October 9, Tokuchika Miki of Hito-no-Michi, Onisaburō Deguchi and Isao Deguchi of Ōmoto, Aijirō Onishi, Satoru Kishioka and Yoshio Yamaura of Tenri Hommichi,² who had been accused of lese

1. This is the popular figure used for the prewar empire. The population of Japan proper at that time was approximately 70 million. Ed.

2. These were six prewar leaders of unrecognized sects. Ed.

majesty and of violating the Peace Preservation Law, were released. Among the Christians who had been oppressed for prophesying the end of the world were Gempachi Nakafuji and Gorō Mori of the Kiyome Church, Akiji Kurumada, Yutaka Yoneda and Tosaji Obara of the Holiness Church, and Shirō Ogura and Magoji Fukazawa of the Seventh Day Adventist Church. Thus with surprising speed SCAP³ initiated its strong policy in the field of religion.

SCAP's religious policy

The religious policy of SCAP consisted of three major principles: the separation of religion and state, the elimination of militaristic and ultranationalistic ideas, and the establishment of religious freedom. In other words, SCAP aimed at establishing a society in which people could freely believe, or not believe religion and in which all religions would be on a basis of equality. Moreover, all laws and ordinances concerning religion were ordered to be amended in accordance with these three principles. Although SCAP intended to "treat all religions equally," Christianity to some extent received special consideration throughout the Occupation.

In the early stages SCAP over-estimated the role which religion had played in Japan's ultranationalism. This was especially the case in respect to the idea that the shrines had been the spiritual support for ultranationalism and that Shrine Shinto was dangerous. SCAP insisted that "responsibility for

3. The Japanese text says "GHQ," but there were two general headquarters, one for the Far East Command, that is, the U. S. Armed Forces, the other one for SCAP. General MacArthur was in charge of both. However, the one referred to in the text is always SCAP, therefore this term is used. Ed.

the war lay first with the military authorities, second, with the financial groups, and, third, with shrine officials and priests.” Thus, SCAP was very strict and sensitive about completely abolishing state control over religion and thoroughly weakening Shrine Shinto.

Establishment of Religions Division

A Religions Division⁴ was established in the Civil Information and Education Section (CIE) in November, 1945, with offices in the NHK Bldg., Uchisaiwai-chō, Tokyo. Its mission was as follows :

1. To expedite the establishment and preservation of religious freedom and to encourage the Japanese people to develop a desire for religious freedom.
2. To prohibit Japanese Government sponsorship, support, perpetuation, control, and dissemination of Shinto.
3. To maintain vigilance to see that militaristic and ultranationalistic organizations and movements did not hide behind the cloak of religion.
4. To maintain liaison with religious organizations in order to insure their understanding and cooperation with the information and education objectives of the Supreme Commander.
5. To assist in making recommendations to the Supreme Commander on matters pertaining to the protection, preservation, restitution, salvage, or other disposition

4. This was later combined with the Cultural Resources Division to form the Religions and Cultural Resources Division (RCR). Ed.

of religious articles and religious buildings.

6. To assist in formulating policies relating to Christian missionaries.
7. To approve designs for all new issues of Japanese postage stamps and currency.

The importance SCAP attached to driving out every vestige of State Shinto from all areas of Japanese public life can well be imagined from the fact that the Religions Division was given authority to approve the designs on postage stamps and currency.

Dr. W. K. Bunce, Chief of Religions Division

Dr. W. K. Bunce, a student of oriental history and chief of the Religions Division, in prewar days had been a teacher in the Matsuyama Higher School. He was well-informed in regard to things Japanese and in charge of religious matters for SCAP throughout the entire Occupation.

Dr. Hideo Kishimoto, an associate professor (later, professor) at Tokyo University was a consultant⁵ of the Civil Information and Education Section in the fields of religion and education. He accomplished a great deal in establishing good relations between SCAP, on the one hand, and Japan, on the other.

In recalling the beginning of the Religions Division, Dr. Kishimoto wrote as follows:

Incidentally, I should like to comment a little on

5. This was an informal arrangement. Dr. Kishimoto was not at any time an employee of either SCAP or the Japanese Government. Ed.

Dr. Bunce's character.⁶ His wife is the daughter of a missionary who lived a long time in Japan. She was born here and speaks Japanese rather well. Dr. Bunce himself, I believe, used to teach at a higher school in Matsuyama, Shikoku. He always showed a friendly attitude and said that he wanted very much to come to Japan in order to help in the reconstruction of the country.

It was the Civil Information and Education Section of SCAP, that is, CIE, that drafted the Shinto Directive. This was located in a room of the present NHK (National Broadcasting Corporation) Building at Tamura-chō,⁷ Tokyo. The Chief of Section was Brigadier General Dyke.

In the very beginning there was only one room with six officers headed by Dr. Henderson, a professor of Columbia University, who at that time was a lieutenant colonel in the army. These six officers were in entire charge of the administration of education in Japan. We often joked about how such a small number could take charge of such a large business. One of

6. This partial quotation is taken from Dr. Kishimoto's testimony before the Constitution Investigation Council Mar. 9, '60. It seems strange that the compilers, who are generally sympathetic toward the Occupation, should have omitted the following sentences from the Japanese text: "...because in present-day Japan it is often said that America enforced such a religious policy, or Shinto policy, in order purposely to weaken Japan. We cannot deny this entirely, but I think that it is very much exaggerated. It can safely be said that he personally had no idea of suppressing Japan by any means. Ed.

7. This address is different from the one given above. Uchisaiwai-chō is right; Tamura-chō is the street-car stop. Ed.

the six was Dr. Bunce, who became responsible for Shinto and the religious policy.

It is said that the main reason he was assigned to SCAP was to take charge of the reorganization of university education in Japan. However, on arrival in Tokyo he was given the task of handling Shinto and the religious policy because there was no other well-qualified person available. But he did not have even an elementary knowledge of Japanese religions and traditions. Therefore, I even gave him several introductory lectures on Japanese religions in the corner of a room in the National Broadcasting Corporation Building. He studied very hard and seemed to absorb knowledge rapidly.

Religions Division added new members later and enlarged its structure. Moreover, all the staff studied very carefully and showed a sympathetic attitude toward this country's religions. Nevertheless, the Division was very strict in regard to implementing the above-mentioned three principles.

FREEDOM OF RELIGION ESTABLISHED

Abolition of the Religious Organizations Law, enforcement of the Religious Corporations Ordinance

The Civil Liberties Directive of October 4, 1945, which ordered the abolition of the Religious Organizations Law of 1939, was the first step in the implementation of the Occupation's religious policy of eliminating government control of and

interference in religious organizations.⁸ This law was abrogated and the Religious Corporations Ordinance, which replaced it, was promulgated on December 28, 1945.

The Religious Organizations Law raised the status of religious bodies in Japanese society, but in giving authority for the state to interfere seriously with religion it provided the basis for the wartime regimentation.

The Religious Corporations Ordinance, however, was not concerned about matters of faith. Its sole concern was with property, both fixed and movable. When the conditions relative to property were fulfilled, any religious organization could become a religious corporation. It left no room for the state to interfere in religion.

Moreover, in order to become incorporated, it was not necessary to secure official permission. All that was required was that the regulations be registered. Thus, it followed the principle of incorporation by registration and in doing so clearly reflected the intention of SCAP to thoroughly separate religion and state.⁹

In the beginning SCAP did not intend that there should be any legislation replacing the Religious Organizations Law.

8. In this context the term "religious organization" is used in Japan to refer to shrines, temples, churches, sects and denominations, and similar organizations. Ed.

9. It might be mistakenly concluded from this that SCAP drafted the Religious Corporations Ordinance. This was not the case. The ordinance was first drafted by the Religious Affairs Section of the Ministry of Education and then submitted to SCAP for approval. CIE insisted on the elimination of certain provisions that were deemed to interfere with religious freedom or involved the state in religion. Finally, on December 28, 1945, after having been approved by a large majority of the sectarian leaders and CIE, it was promulgated by the government. Ed.

However, if new legislation had not been enacted these corporations would have had to dissolve when the Law was abrogated.¹⁰ Obviously, this would have resulted in the troublesome procedure of liquidation for each of the organizations concerned and the possibility of more difficulty in connection with the reversion of residual property. Moreover, religious organizations would have lost the privilege of tax-exemption which they had hitherto enjoyed. Thus the effect would have been very serious for the religious world.

The Ministry of Education authorities, however, "as a means of protecting the status of incorporated (religious) bodies and opening the way for others to become incorporated," urged CIE to permit the drafting of a new ordinance for the sole purpose of maintaining their properties. Finally, as a result of negotiations¹¹ between government authorities, religious leaders (Hotatsu Nitta, Masateru Sugano, Ryōjun Ōmori, Tatsuo Satomi, Tatsuo Doi, Mitsuru Tomita, and others) and Dr. Kishimoto, on the one hand, and Brigadier General Dyke, Chief of CIE, Dr. Bunce, Chief of Religions Division, on the other, permission was given to enact legislation for the incorporation of religious bodies. Thus through the abolition of the Religious Organizations Law, religious organizations were able

10. This statement overlooks the fact that the Occupation wanted religious organizations to incorporate under article 34 of the Civil Code. Admittedly this would have involved re-incorporation and possibly some minor modification of the Civil Code, but it would have been no more difficult in the end than it was for religious bodies to reincorporate as they did in 1951-3. Ed.

11. The use of the word "negotiate" is inappropriate here and elsewhere in this volume. CIE frequently consulted with government officials and religious leaders before deciding what course would be followed, but in no sense did it ever regard these consultations as negotiations. Ed.

to organize and carry on their activities with complete freedom.

The Shinto Directive

On December 15, 1945, in order to separate Shrine Shinto from the state and to weaken it (literally, “take the bones out”) SCAP issued a memorandum to the Japanese Government entitled “Abolition of Government Sponsorship, Support, Perpetuation, Control and Dissemination of State Shinto (*Kokka Shintō, Jinja Shintō*),” which is popularly called the “Shinto Directive.”

From the beginning of the Meiji era shrines had been treated as institutions for the conduct of state ceremonies and festivals and not as religion. Shrine officials and priests, including not only those serving government and national shrines (*kan-kokuhei-sha*), but also prefectural and lower grade shrines, were treated as government officials. Thus the shrines were a part of the state.

Through this directive SCAP forbade the state and local public bodies to treat the shrines in any special way, such as giving them financial grants from public funds, or regarding shrine priests as government officials. Other matters prohibited were: the collection of contributions (for shrines, temples, churches, etc.) and the distribution of amulets by public or neighborhood associations, the utilization of public facilities in connection with religious ceremonies and festivals, the placing of small Shinto altars (*kamidana*) in government offices or public schools, the conduct of ceremonies to purify building sites and celebrate the completion of the framework of public buildings, the conduct of, or participation in ceremonies to give

notice of the assumption of a new position on the part of government and public officials in their official capacity, teaching of Shinto doctrine in public schools, and sponsoring visits and worship at shrines in groups under the leadership of a teacher.

Moreover, the Directive stated: "Shrine Shinto, after having been divorced from the State and divested of its militaristic and ultranationalistic elements, will be granted the same protection as any other religion in so far as it may in fact be the religion or a philosophy of Japanese individuals." From this it became apparent that unless Shrine Shinto was separated from the special protection of the state and became independent as a genuine religion of the people, it would not be allowed to continue to exist.¹²

This measure meant a complete change in the status of shrines, especially since the beginning of the Meiji era. It was indeed a severe measure for them. However, in view of the fact that America was filled to overflowing with very unfavorable sentiments toward the shrines, and that there were many extreme views, such as that Shrine Shinto, with the Grand Shrine of Ise at the top, should be destroyed, it was a matter for rejoicing that permission was received from SCAP for them merely to continue to exist.¹³

12. This statement is correct, but it is incorrect to conclude from this that shrines were obliged to become incorporated under the Religious Corporations Ordinance. This was their choice (see p. 143f.). Ed.

13. There is no evidence that any large body of the American people even knew anything about Shinto shrines, or even the Grand Shrine of Ise. It is impossible, therefore, that they could have even dreamed of suppressing or destroying them. Ed.

Consequently, the Shrine Board and other government offices concerned with the administration of shrines and the Jingū Kōgakkān [a government institution for the education of shrine priests], were abolished in February, 1946, and shrines, after being separated from the Ministry of Home Affairs, were placed under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education on the same level as other religions. Thus Shrine Shinto started anew as a religion.

The Emperor denies being divine

With the abolition of the Religious Organizations Law and the separation of shrines from the state, the legal basis for freedom of religion came into existence in outline and all religions were to be treated equally. In addition to this, a matter of very great importance was the Imperial Rescript issued on New Year's Day, 1946, by which the Emperor denied that he had divine character as a man-god (*ara-hito kami*).

It is said that the contents of the rescript were decided in a conference between Brigadier General Dyke and Premier Kijūrō Shidehara.¹⁴ At any rate, it put an end to ultranationalism. The concept of the Emperor as a man-god had been misused not only for the suppression of religions but there was a tendency to use it to restrict religious faith. Since the beginning of the Meiji era (1868) it had made the establishment of freedom of religion difficult. Therefore, it had an especially revolutionary significance for the religious world. It may be said, then, that this rescript created a situation that made the establishment of freedom of religion possible.

14. This is generally recognized as being incorrect. Ed.

The new constitution and freedom of religion

The finishing touch in the establishment of religious freedom was the new Constitution, promulgated November 3, 1946.

Article 28 of the Meiji Constitution read :

Japanese subjects, within limits not prejudicial to peace and order, and not antagonistic to their duties as subjects, shall enjoy freedom of religious belief.

Thus, when the expression “ within limits not prejudicial to peace and order, and not antagonistic to their duties as subjects ” was interpreted in a broad sense, the state could interfere with religions and control them in any way it liked.

In contrast with this the new Constitution states in Article 20 :

Freedom of religion is guaranteed to all. No religious organization shall receive any privileges from the state, nor exercise any political authority.

No person shall be compelled to take part in any religious act, celebration, rite or practice.

The State and its organs shall refrain from religious education or any other religious activity.

Article 89 states :

No public money or property shall be expended or appropriated for the use, benefit or maintenance of any religious institution or association, or for any charitable, educational or benevolent enterprises not under the control of public authority.

Thus the state is legally unable to interfere with religion or

faith, or to treat any specific religion unequally. Religion has become completely separated from the state and freedom of religion has been firmly established.

Freedom of religion acquired but...?

In this way, freedom of religion has been brought to our country. However, it is nothing but a by-product of the Occupation and was not obtained by the Japanese through their own efforts or because of their eager desire for it. It is only a new system, so to speak, handed down from above. That this was understood by the Occupation can be seen from the fact that one of the duties of the Religions Division of CIE was "to encourage the Japanese people to develop a desire for religious freedom."

Since the promulgation of the new Constitution many things have occurred to jeopardize freedom of religion. Sometimes religious organizations have depended on the authorities. At other times government officials have tried to restore their control over religion. Moreover, politicians and intellectuals constantly appear who readily insist that religion should be controlled. This is because, not having been desired by them, nor acquired by their own efforts, the people do not know the importance of religious freedom in the life of man. In short, freedom of religion in our country is in an immature state; and this is one of the biggest subjects for the religious world to face in the future.

CHAPTER II

RELIGIONS MAKE A NEW START

The great Christian offensive—The advance of the new sects—The established religions still depend on the authorities—Continued groping in the rapidly changing world.

A DARK WORLD

Are there any such things as kami or buddhas ?¹

Between the end of the war and the year-end, freedom of religion was brought to our country and all religions were put on a basis of equality. In the midst of such rapidly changing conditions, however, many religious people were at a loss as to what to do, and they were a long way from engaging in active missionary work. Moreover, the social situation was very unfavorable for religious activity.

The most troublesome thing at the time was the extreme desolation of the human mind. For several years after the war the mind of the people became more and more barren. Defeated in a war which the people were convinced they could not lose, the Emperor, who had been the symbol of the divine country, Japan, denied his divine character.

Naturally there was great spiritual confusion. Many people, out of opposition without any ideological foundation, asked materialistically, "Are there any such things as kami or bud-

1. *Kami mo hotoke mo aru mono ka.* *Kami* signifies a pluralistic Shinto concept of deity which generally should not be translated. Ed.

dhas?" This was like a password, any time and any place. According to a public opinion survey by the Jiji Press in 1949, some 56.4% of the people believed in religion in contrast to 43%, or nearly half, who were non-believers. The following year, with the recovery of some stability, believers amounted to 71.2% and non-believers to 28.8%. But in 1948 believers decreased to 59.7%, while the percentage of non-believers rose to 34.7%. Thus for several years the religious mind of the people was greatly disturbed.

Advancing economic difficulties

In addition to this, depressed economic conditions accentuated the difficulties of engaging in religious activities. Religious leaders themselves were suffering extremely in their daily existence. The people wanted food for the day instead of spiritual salvation. When the leaders wished to make a trip for religious purposes, it was difficult to get a ticket because tickets were rationed, and, even if they succeeded, it was not easy to get on board because of the extremely crowded conditions. When they wanted to write letters or prepare leaflets, they had no paper. They even lacked candles and other things needed in ceremonies.

War damage to shrines, temples, and churches

Many shrines, temples, and churches suffered from war damage, with Christianity heading the list with a loss of 23%. This was because its facilities were concentrated in cities and towns. Sectarian Shinto lost 15% of its churches, Buddhism 6% of its temples, but only 1% of the shrines were destroyed

or damaged. Moreover, at that time, rehabilitation could not even be considered. Under such circumstances, when the great majority of the denominations and sects were greatly handicapped, Christianity, in brilliant limelight, launched a great evangelistic movement.

Table I

War-damaged Shrines, Temples, and Churches

(Based on statistics published by the Ministry of Education)

	Total	Damaged	Area in sq. ft.
Shrine Shinto	110,479	1,374	2,967,840
Sectarian Shinto	16,521	2,540	5,612,312
Buddhism	78,219	4,609	22,912,920
Christianity	1,924	446	1,770,804

THE CHRISTIAN BOOM

The Allied Powers desire to make Japan a Christian state

Christianity, which had suffered from official suppression and public disfavor during the war, was in a decidedly advantageous position at the end of the war in being the religion of the victorious powers. The greater part of the Allied Forces, except the Soviet Union, desired that Japan become a Christian nation and General MacArthur, himself a devout Christian, openly said :

“ Japan, which has undergone war and defeat, will offer the greatest chance for propagation such as Christianity has never experienced. Through defeat the Japanese people have become aware of the shallowness of the myths and legends which were the basis of their faith. The spiritual blank produced by this will constitute a very favorable field for

Christian evangelism.”²

He also declared, “The evangelization of Japan will require one thousand young missionaries,” and so, naturally, the Occupation strongly supported Christian activities.

For a while in the postwar days travel by civilians between Japan and foreign countries was greatly restricted, but church leaders were exceptions. Mrs. Tamaki Uemura, president of the national YWCA, who visited America in April, 1946, was the first Japanese allowed to go abroad. Moreover, many foreign religious leaders, including Archbishop Spellman, who was in charge of Catholic chaplains of the American forces overseas and came to Japan in September, 1945, as General MacArthur’s special guest, later visited our country several times. At one time he reported, “Japan will probably become a Christian country in the end.”

Interest in the evangelization of the country became very great in Europe and America, Protestant circles in the latter country being especially eager. As early as 1943 the American Bible Society made preparations by printing a large Japanese edition of the Bible. At the end of the war, with a great feeling of superiority, they set about Christianizing Japan saying, “Let us save the Japanese who are misled by crude religions.”

Within the country, as soon as the shock of defeat had subsided, an American boom developed rapidly and, as the desire for European and American culture increased, many essays concerning Christianity were published in the vernacular newspapers and magazines. The reason given for this was that the

2. This message was given to the American churches in 1949. Ed.

people had to know about Christianity, if they were to understand the spiritual basis of America's culture.

Christian Movement for the Establishment of a New Japan

It was against such a background at home and abroad that various Christian denominations became active, but the one that displayed the most brilliant activity was the United Church of Christ in Japan (*Nihon Kirisuto Kyōdan*).³ This denomination is a union of some 34 Protestant denominations which was organized in 1941 in connection with the enforcement of the Religious Organizations Law. Due to the abolition of that law in December, 1945 it was expected that many denominations would withdraw from it but, because of a world tendency favoring Protestant union, only two or three groups having different creeds seceded.⁴ Thus the United Church continued as the main stream of Protestantism.

In June, 1946, this denomination sponsored a National Christian Rally at Aoyama Gakuin in Tokyo inaugurating a three-year "Christian Movement for the Establishment of a New Japan" which had as its goals the conversion of three million souls, doubling the number of churches, and establishing Bible classes in every city, town, village, etc. Special emphasis was placed on evangelism by means of itinerant speakers, and an

3. The word "United" does not appear in the Japanese name and was not used in the early postwar period. It was added to the English name later in order to distinguish between it and the Church of Christ in Japan (*Nihon Kirisuto Kyōkai*) which was established in 1950. Ed.

4. As a matter of fact about half the affiliated churches and preaching centers withdrew but, because these were mostly small, the membership loss due to both wartime attrition and secessions was about 72,000 of about 185,000 in 1942. Ed.

extensive movement developed throughout the country with Messrs. Toyohiko Kagawa, Michio Kozaki, and others as the main speakers.

This movement created quite a sensation at various places and Dr. Kagawa's drawing power was especially great. As a result of his effort alone 20,000 decisions were made during the first half year.

Table II

The Christian Movement for the Establishment of a New Japan

The Kagawa Meetings

Dates	Meetings	Attendance	Decisions
July 1946—Sept. 1947	696	386,255	83,593
Oct. 1947—Mar. 1948	225	126,033	46,744
Apr. 1948—Sept. 1948	197	109,887	25,310
Oct. 1948—Mar. 1949	128	69,286	21,267
Total	1,219	691,461	186,914

Table III

The Christian Movement for the Establishment of a New Japan

Other Speakers

(130 man-days)

July 1946—Sept. 1947	—	264,830	11,464
Oct. 1947—Mar. 1948	653	99,113	126
Apr. 1948—Sept. 1948	568	42,030	—
Oct. 1948—Mar. 1949	179	87,648	—
Total	1,900	493,621	11,590

The end of the movement, however, was somewhat anticlimactic, because only 200,000 decisions were acquired in the three years. Thus, if the number was as reported, they were a long way from the goal of three million souls. But in view of the fact that at the beginning the total number of Protestant church

members⁵ was around 170,000, the results may be regarded as having been rather satisfactory.

Quonset hut churches on the scorched earth

Many American church leaders who came to Japan immediately after the war promised that their churches would cooperate with the Japanese churches in supporting evangelistic work, aid in the rehabilitation of the war-damaged churches, and help in the livelihood of the ministers. What attracted some attention, however, was twenty Quonset huts contributed by American churches in 1948 and erected as new churches on the scorched earth. Consequently the rehabilitation of the Christian churches, including these Quonset huts, was very remarkable.

According to the Ministry of Education, the percentage of rehabilitated war-damaged shrines, temples, and churches between August, 1947, and March, 1948, was as follows: Christian (Catholic and Protestant) 28%, Shinto shrines and churches 10%, and Buddhist temples 16%, which shows the great advantage Christianity had over the others.

Distribution of Bibles printed in America

The most effective means of propaganda was the selling of Japanese Bibles produced abroad and contributed by the American Bible Society. They were made of such fine paper and so beautifully printed that they looked like a present from

5. The text uses the term *shinto*, that is, "believers," but the obvious meaning is "church members." The number of Christian "believers" outside the churches is generally considered to be much larger. Ed.

fairlyland. Moreover, the price was cheap. A 700-page Old and New Testament in B6 size was ¥20.⁶ This greatly pleased not only the people interested in Christianity but also the intellectuals in general who were hungry for good books. With dramatic effect a total of some 2.4 million copies were sold out at once.

This occurred in 1947 when the paper shortage was greatest and the newspapers in tabloid form were so small that people said, "Not even a lunch box can be wrapped in them."

A Christian boom breaks out

Thus in 1947-48 a Christian boom, highlighted by the Christian Movement for the Establishment of a New Japan and the sale of the Bibles, seemed to be coming. It was also a time when many young people visited the churches, attracted by their exotic atmosphere and cultural flavor rather than by the faith itself. Moreover, it became the fashion for government offices and companies to hold frequent Bible classes and meetings to study Christianity.

A Christian Prime Minister on stage

Then amidst this boom the Socialist Party came into power in the general election in April, 1947. Consequently at the first session of the Diet under the new Constitution, Mr. Tetsu Katayama, chairman of the party's executive committee and a member of the United Church of Christ, was elected Prime Minister. He was Japan's first Christian premier.

6. The exchange rate at that time was ¥270 to \$1. Thus, ¥20 equalled about seven cents in U.S. currency. Ed.

Mr. Katayama thus explained his ambition: "I believe that democratic government is penetrated with Christian love and the humanitarian spirit. I also believe that in the future the Japanese government must be led by the ethical views of Christianity."

In response to this statement, General MacArthur expressed his satisfaction in these words: "For the first time in history, Japan is to be led by a Christian leader — one who throughout his life has been a member of the Presbyterian Church." Moreover, five other Christians became members of the cabinet. It looked as if the Christian boom had reached political circles.

Catholicism continues on its way

Catholicism has a stronger international background than Protestantism, and among Christian denominations SCAP treated it with special consideration by such means as receiving Cardinal Spellman as a special guest immediately at the end of the war. It was explained that this was due to political considerations arising from the strong criticism in Catholic circles in Europe and America because an atomic bomb had destroyed Nagasaki, a place sacred to Catholicism. Overseas aid was also frequently given. For example, the Pope presented \$20,000 for the rehabilitation of the churches, and the American bishops O'Hara and Ready, who came to Japan in July, 1947, promised the cooperation of American churches in the work of rehabilitation.

Despite having such a fortunate background, however, the Catholic Church did not develop any showy movement as did the United Church of Christ in Japan. But in 1949 it attracted attention by holding larger-scale commemorative celebrations at

various places where they received the right arm of St. Francis Xavier which had been brought from Rome by the Pope's special messenger, Archbishop Gilroy. The occasion for this was the 400th anniversary of the arrival of St. Francis Xavier, who brought the gospel to Japan for the first time. Among the participants were pilgrim groups from America, Australia, Italy, Spain, etc.

The Catholics, including Dr. Kōtarō Tanaka, presented keen arguments in regard to various social problems. Father Flanagan, founder of Boys' Town in the USA, came to Japan in 1947. However, except for these cases, which were widely written up in the newspapers, the movement of the Catholic Church was generally on a modest scale.

It steadily increased and strengthened its missionary force and prepared for the future by gradually planning the extension of its religious influence and the development of social welfare and educational work. (According to a Vatican announcement, up to January 1, 1948, a total of 326 Catholic missionaries had been admitted to Japan by SCAP.)

Archbishop Spellman, about whom there was much talk abroad to the effect that he would be a candidate for becoming the next Pope, came to Japan again in the summer of 1948. Referring to the question of the Emperor's conversion to Christianity, which was rumored at that time, he said, "Former Baron Kumakichi Nakajima apparently said something to the effect that it would be ideal if the Emperor as moral leader were converted to Catholicism and also the people became believers. However, I heard nothing at all about it in my interview with the Emperor. Even if people became Catholics

for convenience sake, in my opinion the believers are always believers.”

It may have been the Catholic Church's policy to extend its religious influence in its own way instead of taking advantage of the times and sacrificing the quality of the believers for the sake of quantity.

Many rumors about the Emperor's conversion

Rumors that the Emperor would be converted to Christianity were deeply rooted. They arose because it was presumed that Japan might become a Christian country in accordance with SCAP policy and because the Empress often met foreign religious leaders and frequently visited monasteries and farms connected with Catholicism. The Emperor himself, however, answered the question of a foreign correspondent in August, 1948, by saying, “I pay respect to foreign religions, but I think that it would be better for me to conform to my own religion.” Thus by indirection he denied his conversion and, although rumors continued for some time, for the moment the problem was settled.

SHRINE SHINTO IN A COLD WINTRY WIND

The Shrine world laments its declining fortune

In contrast with Christianity, which took advantage of the times, Shrine Shinto “lamented its declining fortune” as every one was talking noisily about abolishing the Emperor system.

In December, 1945, His Highness Prince Morimasao Nashimoto-no-miya, the Supreme Priest of the Grand Shrine of Ise,

the Honorable Kiichirō Hiranuma, the vice president of the Institute for the Study of Japanese Classical Literature (*Kōten Kōkyū-sho*) and the Honorable Rentarō Mizuno, the president of the Association of Shrine Priests (*Dai-Nihon Jingi-kai*), were designated Class A war crimes suspects, which seemed to indicate that the future for shrines was going to be very difficult.⁷

As the separation of shrines from state control had been anticipated at an early stage, the leaders of the shrine world endeavored to devise measures to cope with the situation, the first concrete proposal being a plan to form a “Shrine Sect” (*Jinja-kyō*), which was to be a religious organization of shrines with a chief priest and doctrines. However, Uzuhiko Ashizu objected to this plan saying,

“The absence of a fixed, written doctrine or of definitions is an important characteristic of Shrine Shinto. Any attempt to devise a superficial, shallow, written doctrine is a violation of the Great Way of Shinto. The essential nature of shrines is that they must in all respects belong to the people as a whole. It is running counter to the fundamental principle of shrines for them to adopt a sectarian existence, like a Buddhist sect or a Christian denomination, and to be in apposition to people belonging to other religious sects.”

He suggested that the shrines should become incorporated under the Civil Code for the purpose of observing festivals and

7. At the time this conclusion was only natural, but the charges against these three were not in any way related to their positions in the Shinto world. This was entirely coincidental. Ed.

ceremonies, and that a national league of shrines should be established. Many people agreed with him.

Start of the Shrine Association

However, the Shinto Directive had been issued and made it clear that the only way shrines could continue to exist was for them to become religious organizations.⁸ Thereupon, the shrine leaders, including Messrs. Shigeru Yoshida (former Minister of Welfare and later general secretary of the Shrine Association), Naoichi Miyaji, Toyoo Hase, and Munenori Miyagawa inaugurated the "Association of Shinto Shrines" on February 2, 1946, which became a religious juridical person embodying in its make-up the spirit of the plan for a league of shrines.

The association is a comprehensive organization of shrines throughout the country. Although it provides that "the Grand Shrine of Ise is its spiritual fountainhead" (*honsō*), it establishes no doctrine but attaches importance to the special characteristics of each individual shrine.

Mr. Toyoo Hase assumed the position of head of the association but shortly after was replaced by Nobusuke Takatsukasa, and Mr. Munenori Miyagawa became the general secretary. Altogether 88,057 shrines scattered throughout the country joined it, but about 900 shrines, including Yasukuni, Fushimi Inari, Sumiyoshi, Ōmiwa, Kasuga, Kumano-ni-masu, and Kumano-Nachi remained aloft and became independent religious juridical persons.

8. In a sense this is correct, but the shrines did not have to be incorporated under the Religious Corporations Ordinance. From the beginning CIE favored the incorporation of shrines under the Civil Code and proposed this to Mr. Kazumi Iinuma of the Shrine Board as late as December. Ed.

The Grand Shrine of Ise : The fundamental spiritual center of shrines

In connection with the shrines becoming religion,⁹ the question uppermost in the minds of the leaders was how to deal with the Grand Shrine of Ise. It was the Home Ministry's desire that the Grand Shrine be exclusively under the jurisdiction of the Imperial Household Ministry and not be made a private religious juridical person. This was on the ground that historically it was an integral part of the Imperial Household. Moreover, it was the earnest desire of the shrine world that, besides the Grand Shrine of Ise, the shrines which observed festivals sponsored by the Emperor, that is, those to which imperial messengers were sent, and shrines having a special relationship with the Imperial Household, that is, those shrines among the former government and national shrines devoted to the veneration of emperors and imperial ancestors, should also remain under the jurisdiction of the Imperial Household Ministry.

At that time, however, a strong view prevailed in America against the shrines, especially the Grand Shrine of Ise, which was above all other shrines. Consequently, it was quite natural that SCAP would not permit this. Consequently, the shrine world decided to have the Grand Shrine of Ise, which on the surface was separated from the Imperial Household, as the spiritual fountainhead (*honsō*) of all the shrines, and to support it unitedly.

9. Since the Meiji Restoration the Japanese Government had treated shrines as not being religious institutions. Ed.

From ancient times shrines have had a horizontal relationship with each other, but no vertical, that is, no superior-subordinate relation has ever existed among them. This is because each shrine is an independent entity with a unique history, and is not a branch of the Grand Shrine. There are, in fact, shrines that are even older in their origin than the Grand Shrine. Therefore, having the Grand Shrine as the spiritual fountainhead of all other shrines does not mean that there is a relationship such as exists between a head temple and subordinate temples. It means that the shrines all keep their independence but have the Grand Shrine over them, and at the same time protect it because of its unique and respected history.

At the beginning of the Association of Shinto Shrines the argument as to "whether or not shrines are religion," which had been carried on since the Meiji Restoration, was much discussed. Needless to say, however, no conclusion was ever reached. Whatever these arguments might be, after the Shinto Directive was issued the shrine world, willingly or not, had to hang out the sign of religion.

Shrine Shinto and doctrine

Although the shrine world re-started as a religion, it had some difficult problems. The first was that, under the conditions existing at that time, the shrines would not be able to continue to maintain a separate existence apart from the people merely observing ceremonies and festivals as they had done in the past. It was argued that the shrine priests as men of religion should endeavor to spread their faith in order to win

the people and that doctrine and scriptures were indispensable as basis for teaching.

Originally, however, Shinto had had several theological (*sic*) currents, which were difficult to unify, and there was even a strong view that the very non-existence of a fixed doctrine was an important characteristic of shrines. Therefore, it was very difficult to devise any doctrine. Nevertheless, for about four years after the organization of the Association of Shinto Shrines, the head of the Education Section, Dr. Sokyō Ono, and others drafted a tentative plan, but as the existence of shrines became stabilized this problem was ignored.

Remarkable decrease of visitors and financial difficulties

A second problem was caused by a very great decrease in the number of worshippers and the financial difficulties that arose because of this. From the fall of 1945 until about 1949, the number of worshippers decreased notably. This was caused mainly by the loss of prestige owing to defeat in war and transportation difficulties. It was said that the shrines were so lonely that even at Ise none but the shrine workers ever crossed the Uji Bridge.

To illustrate this, while visitors to the Outer Shrine numbered 4.3 million in 1942 and 3.7 million in 1943, the total was 600,000 in 1946 and 470,000 in 1947. Such a decrease of visitors, in addition to the suspension of subsidies by the state, caused serious financial difficulties, especially in the case of the former government and national shrines.

Concerning the grants from the national treasury, it was very often said in the postwar days that the “shrines received a

large amount of aid from the state both before and during the war," but, as a matter of fact, such grants were surprisingly small. In 1936, for example, the total amount for all government and national shrines was \$293,600 (¥587,200), that is, about 13% of their combined total income.¹⁰

The method of allocation had nothing to do with the rank of the shrines. On the contrary, the practice was to give a small amount to shrines with large incomes and a large amount to those with a small incomes. Although Fushimi Inari and Kompira were first grade Government Shrines (*Kokuhei Taisha*),¹¹ they were granted only about \$250 (¥500) a year, while a Special Government Shrine (*Bekkaku Kampei Taisha*) received about \$5,000 (¥10,000) which constituted 60% of its total income. Incidentally, the Grand Shrine of Ise received about \$115,000 (¥230,000) in 1942, which was only about 10% of its total income.

Consequently, although a decrease in the number of worshippers and the discontinuance of subsidies could do little harm to such shrines as Fushimi Inari, which is supported by a deeply rooted folk belief, shrines which were not closely connected with the people and were maintained by means of national subsidies, suffered a great deal.

10. Until the "Manchurian Incident," which began on September 18, 1931, the yen-dollar exchange rate was approximately 2:1. Subsequently the rate dropped to as low as 5:1 and then improved slightly in favor of the yen. During the war, of course, foreign exchange was strictly controlled. To avoid confusion the yen figures for the pre-surrender period are converted at the 2:1 rate. Ed.

11. Only Fushimi Inari was a *Koakuhei Taisha*; Kompira was a *Kampei Chūsha* (second grande Government Shrine.)

The crumbling parishioner system

The disturbance of the parishioner system (*ujiko seido*) also caused a great deal of harm to many shrines. Before the termination of hostilities all the people living in a given area were regarded as parishioners (*ujiko*) or worshippers (*sūkeisha*) of certain shrines and it was customary to half compel them to make contributions through the local neighborhood associations or similar groups that took charge of collecting the money. With the termination of hostilities, however, the "pious feelings toward the kami" of many people declined noticeably. Moreover, the Shinto Directive prohibited neighborhood associations and similar groups to collect money for the shrines, and the parishioner system reached a critical stage.

Under these mounting conditions almost all the shrines fell into the depth of distress. Kompira Shrine in Shikoku, which is said to have neither decreased its staff, delayed the payment of salaries, nor reduced bonuses even in the postwar days, was a rare exception. According to the 1948 Yearbook of Religions there was a deficit of nearly \$14,000 (¥5 million)¹² in the \$16,444 (¥7 million) 1946 budget of the Grand Shrine of Ise. Yasukuni Shrine had only about \$1.00 (¥300) income a day and under the circumstances was very anxious regarding the future.

Many shrines narrowly escaped a critical situation by making big reductions in their staffs. In 1948 the Grand Shrine of Ise, for example, reduced its staff nearly 40 percent. Some shrines

12. The official postwar conversion rates for \$1.00 were as follows and all yen sums are converted in accordance with the prevailing rate: Septemder 19, 1945—¥15., March 1947—¥50., July 1948—¥270., April 1949—¥360. Ed.

sold parts of their precincts piece by piece, while others permitted the performance of questionable activities. A by-product of their financial difficulties was a sudden increase in the number of shrines which promoted shrine weddings.

Yasukuni Shrine and Gokoku Shrines

The continued existence of Yasukuni Shrine and Gokoku shrines¹³ was also a difficult problem. Since SCAP regarded Yasukuni Shrine and such shrines as the 51 designated Gokoku shrines as symbols of militarism, it did not, as a matter of course permit the enshrinement of the war-dead. Moreover, it considered whether it should abolish them entirely or, if their existence were permitted, it took a strong position that the contents of the rites and festivals should be revised into "something peaceful." It was for this reason that Yasukuni Shrine and the Gokoku shrines were excluded from the application of a law, enacted in 1947, which provided for the free transfer to the shrines and temples of the titles of their state-owned precincts.¹⁴

Negotiations with [SCAP], which made possible the continued existence of Yasukuni Shrine and the Gokoku shrines were the most prolonged and difficult of any that concerned the shrines, but in the end they were permitted to continue.¹⁵

13. Shrines devoted to the veneration of the war-dead. Ed.

14. In most cases title to the shrine and temple precincts had been taken over by the Meiji government, so this was in effect a return of the individual institutions. Ed.

15. In reference to the inappropriateness of the word "negotiate" see p. 126 n. 11.

Shrines and the Allied Forces

In addition to such problems, the shrines had to meet the sharp critical eyes of various circles at every point. It was considered quite natural that the shrines should be oppressed by the Occupation but, although SCAP was very strict in regard to the enforcement of the Shinto Directive, it generally displayed a broadminded attitude toward the shrines after their re-start as religious institutions.

From 1946 relations between the United States and the USSR continued to deteriorate. After the suppression of a general strike on February 1, 1947, SCAP policy rapidly took on a deepened color of anti-communism, and it began to develop Japan into a powerful member of the anti-communism camp. A softening attitude toward the shrines was one manifestation of this.

However, in the beginning the attitude of Occupation soldiers toward the shrines was very high-handed. At the Grand Shrine of Ise, for example, there occurred several cases of soldiers driving jeeps to the very front of the Outer Shrine. At the Inner Shrine a guard had a pistol pointed at him when he tried to stop a soldier from driving a jeep over the Uji Bridge in disregard of the notice forbidding this. When an order prohibiting possession of swords (September 14, 1945) was enforced, "many excellent blades owned by shrines as treasures were taken away from the treasure houses; and there was even a case where this order was used as an excuse for requiring the opening the inner sanctuary that contained a sword as a

divine symbol.¹⁶

However, it was not long before their attitude became more calm and few acts were deliberately committed that injured the sanctity of shrines. In view of the disgraceful affairs at the Grand Shrine, SCAP later posted Military Police at the famous shrines in the big cities¹⁷ in order to prevent any disrespectful acts by Occupation soldiers.

People throw stones at shrines

In contrast with this the attitude of the Japanese people toward the shrines was rather more severe than that of the Occupation. A quotation from a newspaper article at that time, which reveals the tendency of that period, is given below.

Occupation Soldiers Respect the Shrines

Since the issue of the MacArthur directive concerning State Shinto last year-end, there has been a tendency on the part of the government and public offices to misunderstand it as though it was a purge directive and to go so far as to interfere with the people freely worshipping at shrines (e.g. Miyagi and Miyazaki prefectures). Because of this directive some people are overanxious and hesitate even to take off their hats, not to speak of bowing, when they pass in front of a shrine. It is very deplorable to see such an extreme development.

This writer recently witnessed a scene near the Hie

16. Cf. *Jinja Honchō Jū-nen-shi* (The Ten Years' History of the Shrine Association).

17. This statement is incorrect. In Kyōto, for example, military police were never placed at any shrine throughout the entire Occupation. As far as is known the stationing of military police at shrines had nothing to do with what occurred at Ise. Ed.

Shrine at Akasaka, Tokyo, where a father reproved his child for bowing as they passed in front of the shrine, saying, "Don't worship the shrine, because it was purged by the Occupation Forces." I was dumbfounded at it

In contrast with this the attitude of Occupation soldiers toward the shrines, being piety itself, shows a depth of religious education

When a British vice admiral came to Tokyo on urgent business, he took a spare moment to worship formally at the Meiji Shrine by offering a sprig of the sacred tree to the spirit of Emperor Meiji. A Gurkha soldier on patrol scolded a Japanese college boy who was passing in front of Yasukuni Shrine without taking off his cap. These are very good examples showing how respectful the attitude of even the soldiers of the lowest rank of the Occupation are toward the shrines. It is noteworthy that they give practical instructions to thoughtless Japanese people.

(*Jinja Shinpō*, September 9, 1946)

As this article states, some local government and public officials, regarding severe treatment of shrines as an act of loyalty to the Occupation Forces, especially suppressed shrines and not a few people in general attacked the shrines in their "declining fortune." There were many robberies of metal articles by vagabonds and of sacred trees in the precincts by parishioners.

Under the pretext that "what belongs to the shrine belongs to the parishioners," they felled trees and either sold them or used them for fuel before the shrine priests knew anything about it. Others did not listen to the remonstrances of the priests, while still others felled trees in conspiracy with the priests. Finally in April, 1947, the Ministry of Education issued a notifi-

cation concerning the prohibition of secretly cutting trees in state-owned precincts. In addition to this, the popular oppression of shrines, both visibly, materially, and spiritually, took place in various forms until 1949-50.

Among the persecutors there were possibly some who did so on an ideological basis, but the greater part were those who formerly spoke ill of people who were unpatriotic and did not bow toward the shrines, and who looked down on Christianity.

As reactionary tendencies return, many of these people have once more become "pious" followers of the shrines.

DISPIRITED SECTARIAN SHINTO

Sects at a loss, sects relieved

The thirteen sects of so-called Sectarian Shinto¹⁸ were affected differently by the termination of hostilities. It depended on their respective standpoints, even though they were all called Shinto.

Tenri-kyō and Konkō-kyō tended to suffer from restraint during the war on the ground that they had unique deities which did not exist in old Shinto, and doctrines that were inconsistent with State Shinto. Therefore, these two were given freedom and relief. The other eleven sects, however, worshipped the kami of old Shinto as their deities and there was more or less loyalty and patriotism in their doctrine. Therefore the

18. Shintō Taikyō, Kurozumi-kyō, Shūsei-ha, Izumo-taisha-kyō, Fusō-kyō, Jikkō-kyō, Taisei-kyō, Shinshū-kyō, Ontake-kyō, Shimri-kyō, Misogi-kyō, Konkō-kyō and Tenri-kyō.

coming of the new age produced a big crisis for them.

Tenri-kyō and Konkō-kyō released from restrictions

Tenri-kyō was under strong oppression during the war. Its creation myth, the Ancient Record of the Muddy Ocean (*Doro-umi-kofuki*), was prohibited, a part of the Sacred Songs (*Mikagura Uta*) was deleted, under pressure the doctrine was re-written, and toward the end of the war more than ten thousand teachers and believers were mobilized daily for service in the coal mines. It was driven into such a miserable condition of affairs that religious activities were impossible. Consequently the believers, who numbered 355,000 in 1941, decreased to 171,000 in 1945.

This being the case, as soon as the war came to an end, Tenri-kyō set about restoring its doctrine and recovering its religious influence. The restoration of the doctrine, the re-organization of the sectarian system, and a revision of the regulations were completed by the end of 1947, and October, 1949, saw the approval and distribution of their scriptures. The recovery of their religious influence, however, did not proceed smoothly, being obstructed by such things as the loss of propaganda facilities in the war and the difficulties the teachers experienced in their daily livelihood. It was not until 1949 that its missionary activity was fully restored.

Konkō-kyō was not openly oppressed, although it was restricted during the war on the ground that the faith of Ikigami Konkō Daijin ran counter to State Shinto. Its restoration was easier than that of Tenri-kyō and its religious influence seemed to increase gradually in the postwar period. However, due to

a concentration of its churches in urban districts, its war-damage was large, and there was serious trouble within the chief abbot's family, which had continued from the prewar days. The former chief abbot Iekuni Konkō, who in 1950 was driven from his position by the force of public opinion within the sect, established a separate sect, Tenchi Konkō-kyō, in the "sacred precincts" (the founder's grave) of the headquarters in 1950. Therefore, Konkō-kyō showed unexpected difficulty in its extension work.

Shinto sects distressed with the times

The greatest problem for the other eleven sects was how to confront the suddenly changed times. These sects, with few exceptions, worshipped the spirits of the successive imperial ancestors, in addition to their principal deities, and stressed loyalty to the Imperial family and patriotism. However, the Emperor had denied his divine character and the spirit of loyalty and patriotism, which had been famous as the flower of the Japanese spirit, was disliked and regarded as a dangerous idea. Even use of the word "patriotism" was feared, and the tendency of the time went so far as to be contrary to the position of SCAP authorities that "there was no reason why the Japanese could not have a consciousness of patriotism as Japanese" (Religions Division chief, Bunce, at a roundtable talk under the sponsorship of the Religions League of Japan).

Confronting such a completely new age, each Shinto sect was very much at a loss as to what it should do. A few sects like Shinshū-kyō, whose chief abbot was Tadaaki Yoshimura, kept its traditional doctrine, because "the significance of the sect's existence would be lost if the doctrine were changed."

But many others, such as Shūsei-ha, whose chief abbot was Hōtatsu Nitta, revised their doctrines considerably in order to adapt their sects to the times. Yet, regardless of how the doctrines were revised, the essential character of the sects could not be changed and, amidst the loneliness of being rapidly separated from the times, they were fearful regarding the future.

Schisms threaten the sectarian foundations

In addition to this, successive secessions severely shook the foundations of the various Shinto sects, Tenri-kyō, Konkō-kyō, and Kurozumi-kyō being exceptions. In the prewar and war years, new sects and movements that were not able to become legally independent, for their own convenience, affiliated with one of the [officially recognized] Shinto sects and carried on propaganda as churches of the sect concerned. With the enforcement of the Religious Corporations Ordinance, however, they seceded one after another and became independent. Moreover, there were not a few teachers of the sects concerned, who seceded and established independent movements because of bad feeling toward the sect officials.

Consequently, each of these Shinto Sects, but especially Shintō Tai-kyō and Fusō-kyō, suffered a great deal of damage. Even Shinshū-kyō, which suffered relatively slight damage, is said to have lost 40 churches and 200 teachers. Hence, because of the sudden change in national thinking, all the prewar Shinto sects except Tenri-kyō and Konkō-kyō, which in the past had been permitted to engage in appropriate activities, and Kurozumi-kyō which, although it believed in the Sun Goddess, had room for development because of its unique doctrine, came to a

complete deadlock in their propagation. Because of secessions they also lost heavily in their human and financial resources, and their future was dark with shadows. Like Shrine Shinto, many of the Shinto sects, experienced "a cold wintry wind" every day for several years immediately after the end of the war.

THE BUDDHIST WORLD IN TROUBLE

Successive schisms in the Buddhist world

The first thing that happened to the Buddhist world in the postwar period was schisms and secessions. Buddhism at the termination of hostilities was proud of its 50 million believers and it exerted very great influence among the religions of the country. Therefore, more than all other religions, it should have been in a position to carry on important activities for the salvation of the people and world but, as a matter of fact, the established Buddhist sects experienced only repeated dissolutions and internal troubles.

Based on the reasoning that "differences in detail should be ignored and agreement in principles be upheld," during the war its fifty-six sects were reduced to twenty-eight. However, there were cases, such as that of the Sammon (Enryakuji) and Jimon (Onjōji) sects of Tendai which, although their teachings were the same, had led a cat-and-dog life for a long time. Their merger was completely superficial and formal, and when the Religious Corporations Ordinance was enforced, they separated and returned to their former state. Besides these, there were cases of schism and independence appearing one after

another. Together with an increase of new sects of Buddhist lineage, the total number of Buddhist sects was 260 in 1951.

Many ugly disputes

In connection with these schisms, those for the purpose of restoring the prewar status quo were generally accomplished quietly, but those which arose out of postwar conditions and were caused by a conflict of interests or personal feelings were generally followed by a great deal of mutual recrimination, although there were some exceptional cases which took place without ill-feelings. Moreover, many cases were brought before the court, and not a few of them were frowned upon by the public.

The most surprising instance of secession was the withdrawal of the Grand Head Temple Chion'in in Kyoto from the Jōdo Sect and the foundation of the Hompa Jōdo Sect. This was not merely the secession of a subordinate temple. It was the withdrawal of the sect's Grand Head Temple, the [historic and spiritual] center of the sect and of the sect's spiritual leader, its chief abbot, Dr. Shinkyō Mochizuki. The head temple of the Jōdo Sect, the Chion'in, was at Kyoto while the administrative office of the sect, headed by the Rev. Tatsuo Satomi as general secretary, was in Tokyo.

This administrative office of the sect managed affairs in a dictatorial manner without any regard for the opinion, not to say denunciations, of the Grand Head Temple. On the contrary, it forcibly revised regulations of the sect in order to strengthen the general secretary's authority. Therefore, in December, 1947, Chion'in and a large number of subordinate temples withdrew

and organized the True Jōdo Sect (Hōmpa Jōdo-shū). However, the reason for the schism was not differences about matters of faith but antipathy towards the administrative office which should have been under the authority of the Grand Head Temple.

Serious corruption in the administration had long been a common cause of trouble in all sects. Ugly disputes centering in the power of the administration repeatedly took place. Men of political ability grasped this power without regard for their character or merit as men of religion, and such persons controlled the sect by means far more cunning than politicians. Such examples were not rare. Some sects ceased to be religious bodies and descended to the level of the union system, where professional religionists struggled with one another over their respective rights and interests. The secession of Chion'in from the Jōdo Sect can be said to be one of the noteworthy happenings which exposed this inside condition of the Buddhist world.

Besides this there was the case of the Great Head Temple, Hokekyōji, in Nakayama, Chiba prefecture, well known as the place for the observance of ascetic practices, which seceded from the Nichiren Sect in March, 1946 and founded the independent Nakayama Myō Sect. The Nichiren Sect did not recognize this secession, and the dispute continued for several years. The temple supporters filed a suit to nullify the secession on the ground that the chief-priest, Nichikō Utsunomiya, had acted arbitrarily. But in the end its independence as Myō-shū, as it was called, was recognized.

Other cases were the establishment of the Kūkai Sect by the

secession of 120 temples from the Kōyasan Shingon Sect in July, 1946, and the secession of the Great Head Temple, Kurodani Konkai Kōmyōji from the Jōdo Sect in September 1946. After the war the Buddhist world was violently shaken for several years by such events. Finally there was even “a mysterious case” involving general secretary Gotō of the Myōshinji Sect of Rinzai-zen who during his term of office secretly registered his own temple as independent.

Many big temples become independent

Another new tendency in the postwar years was for large, financially rich temples to secede from their sects and become independent. The first example of this was the case of Shitennōji in Osaka, which seceded from the Tendai Sect in January, 1946, and founded the Wa Sect. At that time the Religious Corporations Ordinance had just come into existence and no one expected such a secession to occur. It was said that even the Ministry of Education authorities were at a loss as to how to deal with the problem, not to speak of the surprise of Tendai Sect authorities. This was followed until 1949 by the secession of the Kurama Temple in Kyoto, also of the Tendai Sect, which founded the Kuramagu Sect in 1950, of Sensōji in Tokyo [the famous Asakusa Kannon Temple] which founded the Shō Kannon Sect, and of Hōryūji which withdrew from the Hossō Sect and became known as the Shōtoku Sect. There were others.

Many of these secessions occurred because of dissatisfaction with the sect administrations or because of economic problems. The sect headquarters were trying to check them, but even today

some leading temples desire independence on the ground that they gain little by belonging to sects which only impose heavy taxes.

For a long time Buddhism had been existing under the authority and protection of the state. The government strictly forbade the temples to establish new sects, to become independent, or to transfer from one sect to another, and through this very restraint helped the established sects in their maintenance and security. With the establishment of freedom of religion, however, all this (protective) framework was removed and the sectarian bodies had no outside protection. But they had depended upon the authorities for so long that they had lost their religious prestige and sufficient power to check even schisms due to self interest or personal feelings.

Long continued domestic discord

In addition to schism and secessions, many sects were troubled by continued internal discord. The internal disputes of the Nichiren Sect and Sōtō Sect were often reported by the newspapers. There were innumerable internal troubles in other sects as well. However, in addition to these “troubles from within,” the established Buddhist groups were threatened by many “troubles from without.”

Abolition of the family system and the Buddhist world

The first difficulty from without was the breakdown of the family system following the democratization of the country. Since the Tokugawa period Buddhist temples had been maintained by the supporter (*danka*) system. “The religion of the

family” was passed on from one generation to another, and this system continued to support temples in security. With the establishment of the democratic Constitution, however, the family system, which had formed the foundation of the supporter system, was destroyed. But even when the system was abolished the “family,” which had been deeply impressed on the minds of Japanese, was not easily and hastily blotted out. Consequently, the abolition of the “family system” did not make itself felt on the supporter system at once. Still it was an undeniable fact that the Buddhist world was made very anxious, because, if the idea of the “family” were gradually weakened, wouldn’t the supporter system be destroyed?

Great offensive of Christianity and new religions

In addition to this unfortunate prospect the great evangelistic offensive of Christianity and the rapid advance of the new sects violently shook the foundation of the established Buddhist sects that were proud of their security.

In order for Buddhist sectarian bodies to maintain their future existence, after finding their way out of this situation, it was not only necessary that the Buddhist faith should be received as the family religion. It was also necessary, by means of vigorous religious activities, to replant it as a living faith for each individual. However, although from one point of view the long continued supporter system had, on the one hand, secured the financial support of temples, it had, on the other hand, resulted in an irrecoverable by-product, that is, the loss of the religious power of the temples.

The temples that were maintained by the supporter system

could be maintained only by the observance of memorial services and caring for the graves, instead of by means of religious activity. Many modern priests, who have grown up in this hothouse of hereditary priesthood, have neither teaching ability nor faith and can do nothing but perform formal ceremonies.

Unbelieving priests

According to the *Chūgai Nippō* (February 9, 1949), when the subject of how to promote a religious movement of the Tendai Sect was discussed at the general meeting of the adherents, the conclusion was that “because the priests have no faith, any attempt to promote a religious movement would fail unless belief were first planted in them.”

The following dialogue between Professor Kishimoto of Tokyo University and Chief Abbot Shiio of Zōjōji, as reported in the *Shūkyō Tsūshin* (January 21, 1948), reached almost the same conclusion.

Kishimoto: It is alright for sectarian activities to concentrate on activities related to the cultivation of faith (*kyōka katsudō*) but in the present state of Buddhist sectarian bodies, isn't this only a part of their activity?

Shiio: It isn't even a part.

Kishimoto: If there is no other world for us to live in, I think that it is inexcusable that religious bodies should not be engaged in the cultivation of faith.

Shiio: They are not religious bodies. After all, temples today are private property held by the persons concerned, and Buddhists [priests] are nothing but people living by means

of this property

Under such conditions, in the confused period immediately after the termination of hostilities, a few high priests of the established sects, including the Chief Abbot of the Sōtō Sect, Rōsen Takashina, and the Chief Abbot of Zōjōji, Benkyō Shiio, — disregarding their age and in spite of the difficulties of travel — left the foot prints of their religious work all over the country. In general, however, religious activity was extremely dull and openly exposed a lack of religious ability.

Great damage caused by the farmland reform

The agricultural land reform of 1946 was also a great source of “trouble from without.” In prewar days there were temples which were maintained solely by the profits from their vast farmland holdings but, as a result of the farmland reform, all but a very small area of rice fields, the product of which was “offered to the Buddha” (*bukku-den*), was lost.

It is not clear how much farmland belonging to the Buddhist temples was released but, except for a few, including the Jōdo Shin Sect which depended very little on farmland, a large number of temples sustained a great loss. According to a publication of the Sōtō Sect, its temples lost 49,000 acres (20,000 *chō*) of vegetable fields and rice paddies and 3,430 acres (1,400 *chō*) of forests and undeveloped land. When this loss was converted into an annual sum [at the current price as of 1959], it amounted to \$3 million (¥1,100 million) or an average annual loss of \$200 (¥72,000) per temple. Myōshinji (Rinzai-zen) is said to have lost 4,030 acres of rice fields and

2,491 acres of vegetable fields which was equivalent to an annual loss of one million dollars. (According to "The Temples of Japan" [*Nippon no Jiin*] by Yuiken Kawawada.)

Serious financial difficulties of temples

Damage caused by the farmland reform, the ruin of the formerly powerful supporter class, war-damage and destruction by fire of temples in the cities, and the dispersion of supporters and believers — an accumulation of these bad conditions — drove many temples into an extremely difficult existence which caused them to resort to various measures.

Some sects plunged into the manufacture of medicine. In 1948 the Kōyasan Shingon Sect, for example, collected a huge sum of money in cooperation with its subordinate temples for this purpose, but it ended in bitter failure. It not only lost its capital, but also was left with a debt of \$8,333 (¥3 million) which made the finances of the sect more difficult than ever. Incidentally, in 1960 the sect succeeded in reconstructing its finances by cutting down a part of its forests and using the \$160,000 (¥70 million) received from it to pay its debt.

Such enterprises may be permissible, but some engaged in questionable activities in order to make profit, the most disgusting of such cases being the temples that were turned into restaurants. After July, 1947, when many restaurants and eating places were obliged to close because of delays in the food rations, many people met secretly in temples, churches, and public halls to eat and drink. The fact that many temples also rented rooms for such occasions attracted a great deal of severe scorn.

Many temples for sale

Moreover, many temples were offered for sale because of the impossibility of maintaining them. The *Chūgai Nippō* for August 31, 1948, described the situation as follows :

“ It is only natural that recent economic conditions have made the management of temples difficult. Moreover, it is a fact that where the temple supporters have been completely exterminated by war or natural disasters, or supporters are not needed because a temple can be maintained on the income from forests or farmlands, there is a tendency for them to be offered for sale on the ground that they have no supporters or that they cannot be maintained under present-day conditions. A certain temple in Osaka recently offered its main hall for sale at the price of \$2,222 (¥800,000) and the priests' living quarters at \$1,390. (¥500,000). Our company knows of more than ten temples that have concluded a sale. Moreover, some temples have recently asked us about the procedures for dissolution. Thus unusual changes are openly taking place.”

Buddhist sects in difficulty

The established Buddhist sects were threatened by the violent offensive of Christianity and the new sects. They had problems caused by the lack of religious ability, corruption in their sectarian administration, city temples damaged by war and fire, financial difficulties due to the farmland reform, uneasiness over the supporter system following the breakdown of the family system, etc. Nevertheless they continued to make progress during the confused and difficult postwar period.

NEW RELIGIONS ADVANCING RAPIDLY

The Jikōson case : an overture

In January, 1947, when waves of red flags were continually appearing on the Imperial Palace Plaza and social unrest seemed to reach a peak, the people were seething with gossip about a mysterious religious sect. It was the case of "Jiu-kyō." When the Kanagawa city police were about to arrest Jikōson, who had predicted extraordinary celestial and terrestrial phenomena, they were attacked by the unexcelled Grand Champion *sumō* wrestler, Futabayama, who engaged them in a free-for-all fight. Another famous follower was the chess champion, Gō Seigen.

The foundress of Jiu-kyō, Jikōson, or Yoshiko Nagaoka, who was 45 years old at the time of these events, claimed that she was one on whom Amaterasu Ōmikami had descended from heaven as a human being. Pointing out the miserable social conditions after defeat, she said, "This is divine punishment on those who have forgotten Amaterasu Ōmikami." She taught that in order to restore this world to the rule of the kami, that is, a theocracy, very extraordinary celestial and terrestrial phenomena would occur in the near future and those who had forgotten the kami would be exterminated and only those who believed in Jikōson would survive. At the dawn of that day one of her associates, Tokujirō Katsugi, who claimed descent from Tsukiyomi-no-mikoto, would assume the imperial throne and reconstruct the country. Moreover, thirty-three persons, who were to become kings and presidents all over the world,

had already been born.

The headquarters was at Kanazawa City. Thus she prophesied: "There will be four natural disasters this year, the first of which will occur on January 15." The fanatical believers met and, according to an investigation made by the authorities, "The voluntary offerings made by the believers amounted to the vast sum of ¥250,000 in cash, six sacks (*hyō*) of rice [one sack weighing about 144 lbs.], innumerable vegetables, and miscellaneous food stuffs." The police, regarding the doctrine of Jiu-kyō as ultra-nationalistic and like State Shinto, conducted a raid on the pretext that there had been a violation of the Ordinance Prohibiting the Possession of Swords and the Ordinance Prohibiting the Movement of Staple Food, and on suspicion of fraud, which resulted in the free-for-all fight of Futabayama. No conclusive items were found, however, and even after that Jikōson appeared at various places and was much talked about. She was soon abandoned by Futabayama, Gō Seigen, and others, who were close to her, and faded into an inconspicuous existence.

Public opinion regarding Jiu-kyō was extremely severe, and people made fun of the fact that even such masters or geniuses as Futabayama or Gō Seigen were bewildered by this evil religion. According to the poet Hachirō Satō,

"How many new religious sects have appeared on earth, faded out, or remained since the years of Meiji? (People of leisure, please count them.) While I am thinking it is amazing, another has appeared." (*Tokyo Times*, January 22, 1947.)

However, despite the severe criticism of intellectuals, a society filled with the unrest and suffering of the postwar days “becomes a most favorable field for Christian missionary activities” (General MacArthur), on the one hand, and offers an excellent chance for the creation and advance of new religious movements, on the other.

With the case of Jiu-kyō as an overture, various new religious sects announced themselves one after another, some of which soon burst like a bubble, while others advanced on the road toward great developments.

New religious sects flooding the country

The rapid increase of sects was one of the remarkable social phenomena of the postwar period. In accordance with the Religious Corporations Ordinance, anyone could establish a religious corporation simply by making regulations and registering. Therefore, when the ordinance was enforced, a rapid increase of religious corporations occurred.

As a matter of fact, from the spring of 1946, Shinto and Buddhist sects, which had been forcibly united during the war period, began to secede and revive. Some seceded from their established sects and announced themselves under new names. Others that had been religious associations (*kessha*) under the Religious Organizations Law during the war became religious corporations. Again others created completely new religions. By the end of October, 1947, some 207 denominational bodies had applied to the Education Ministry for incorporation. Incidentally, while the number of sects and denominations prior to the Religious Corporations Ordinance was 43 (Shinto 13,

Buddhism 28, Christianity 2), within less than two years they increased about five-fold.

Among those 207 bodies there were 14 Shinto, 51 Buddhist and six Christian groups that belonged to the so-called established religions. The 136 remaining were regarded as newly established sects, of which nine were of Shinto lineage, 43 of Buddhist lineage, seven of Christian lineage, and seven were unclassified. The reason why there was an especially large number of Shinto lineage (66%) was that, as mentioned above, before the termination of hostilities, even when a sect with proper doctrine came into existence, it was not recognized as a religious organization. Hence, there was nothing else for it to do but to affiliate with one of the established sects. In this case, since some Shinto sects had loose internal control over matters relating to their doctrine and organization, many new sects that were unable to become independent borrowed "the eaves" of one of these sects and carried on their activities as churches belonging to them. With the enforcement of the Religious Corporations Ordinance, however, all of these churches simultaneously became independent.

The increase in the number of sects continued throughout this period and it was said that roughly "there was an average increase of one new sect a week." By the end of 1951, there were 720 with 258 classified as Shinto, 260 as Buddhist, and 46 as Christian, while 156 were unclassified (NHK "Shinto Hour," April, 1949).

Some corporations motivated by tax-exemption

Among these rapidly increasing sects were such big prewar

names as Ōmoto, Hito-no-Michi, and Seicho-no-Ie. In addition to these, some sects that came into existence in the postwar days extended their influence steadily. But there were many bubble-like sects which sprang up in order to take advantage of the times. They had neither a basic organization nor believers. It was said of some that the believers were only the family of the founder, or in the case of one sect a visit to its headquarters revealed that it consisted of only two bottles of sacrificial wine on an empty orange box in a narrow upstairs room of a cleaning establishment. Such were the unamusing funny stories that were being passed around in those days.

Not a few religions had very striking names and teachings. Denshin-kyō (literally, Electricity Deity Sect), founded by a dealer in electric goods in Ōsaka, may be representative of these. It worshipped Tenchi Denki Ōkami (literally, Heaven-and-Earth-Electricity-Great-Deity) and Edison "in gratitude for the favor of electricity." Some, such as Kōdōchi-kyō, which will be discussed later, were incorporated merely for the purpose of tax-exemption. Then there were those that conducted religious activities, but did not become religious corporations, and there were pseudo-religions, such as "The Helpful Old Man" (Otasuke Jiisan), an old faith curer (*kitō-shi*) in Ichikawa City, Chiba Prefecture, who brandished a sword in front of an altar and shouted, "Anything, even bed-wetting can be cured." His advertisements reading, "If you sit down in silence, you will make a good hit" (*Damatte suwareba, ichido de pitari*), were displayed in the newspapers and streetcars, and he was very prosperous for some years immediately after the war. But when an NHK radio commentator criticized him, he

suddenly declined.

The great development of Reiyū-kai

In the confused period immediately after the war such sects, small and large, flooded the country. The ones that made rapid and remarkably brilliant progress were Reiyū-kai and Risshō Kōsei-kai, both of which are of Nichiren lineage and attach importance to memorial services for ancestors.

Reiyū-kai, which was founded in 1925 by Mrs. Kimi Kotani and Mr. Kakutarō Kubo, was only a poor organization until about 1934. Then it began to develop rapidly, especially after the outbreak of the Greater East Asian War, when it stirred up a fanatical faith among middle-aged women by an intense method of guidance (*o-michibiki*). By 1943, it had grown into a great sect, priding itself on a million believers.

Moreover, benefitting from the fact that during the war period it had the nun, Princess Murakumo, as its president, the society was able to escape oppression, and it suffered no war damage. On the contrary it had the good fortune to get permission to carry on its teaching in various places in the country wherever the believers were dispersed. Although it was hard hit in 1944 by the death from disease of Mr. Kakutarō Kubo, it survived the war with almost no damage, and the extreme suffering of society for several years during the postwar period provided a very favorable chance for extending its influence.

Moreover, under the powerful leadership of President Kimi Kotani, it promoted stronger "guidance" which resulted in the number of members swelling to 700,000 families or some 2 million followers in 1949, and it became the most powerful

among the new sects. (As a rule the number of believers reported by any sect is somewhat exaggerated. Thus, in 1948, the most prosperous period for Reiyū-kai, the exact membership was supposed to have been 250-300,000.)

The surprising advance of Kōsei-kai

The Dai Nihon Risshō Kōsei-kai, that is, “The Great Japan Establish-Righteousness and Complete Fellowship Society,” which after the war dropped the “Great Japan” from its name, was founded by Mr. Nikkyō Niwano and Mrs. Myōkō Naganuma, who seceded from Reiyū-kai in 1938. It started with twenty believers who used an upstairs room of Mr. Niwano’s milk shop as a training hall. They were led by the “divine voice” (*kami no koe*) revealed through Mrs. Myōkō and, being encouraged by an inconspicuous but ardent “guidance” during the war, they devoted themselves to the formulation of their doctrine.

President Niwano recalls that at that time they gave guidance mainly to people suffering from disease or family trouble, and only about 10% or 15% of those helped remained after getting rid of their troubles. The development of its religious strength was not remarkable. In 1942, there were 500 member-families and, after many difficulties, they built a small headquarters with about 900 sq. ft. of floor space. Even at the end of the war there were only 1,300 affiliated families. But from then on the faith of Kōsei-kai, as it was commonly called, began to spread with surprising speed among the populace tortured by suffering and unrest, and again its building became too small.

In 1948, a worship hall with 7,200 sq. ft. of floor space was

built, and in 1950 the re-inforced concrete 3-story Second Training Hall with 36,000 sq. ft. of floor space was erected. But still this was not large enough to take care of its rapidly increasing membership, which at the end of 1950 was 60,000 member-families or about 300,000 individual believers. Moreover, although it was smaller than Reiyū-kai, Kōsei-kai, which had not been known to even exist until the end of the war, in a few years became one of the leading new sects of the country.

Memorial services for ancestors attract the populace

Spearheaded by the notable growth of these organizations various other bodies became very active after becoming independent of Reiyū-kai. Besides, there was also the extraordinary advance of Sōka Gakkai. These lay organizations based on the principles of the Lotus Sutra were very successful in attracting a great many believers, and “needless to say,” according to Mr. Niwano, “the reason for this was in the greatness of the Lotus Sutra.” However, it is not conceivable that the profound contents of the Lotus Sutra would at once be deeply understood by the populace. With the exception of Sōka Gakkai, what impressed the mind of the populace was the idea of memorial services for ancestors which these sects advocated. Although the Japanese are indifferent to “living ancestors,” they have the strange habit of warmly commemorating deceased ancestors (*ihai ni natta sosen*, literally, “those that have become memorial tablets”). For such Japanese the teaching that all misfortunes are directly or indirectly caused by ancestors, and that by properly serving the ancestral spirits one can be save from all

troubles, is very easy to accept and understand. Moreover, small group meetings (*hōza*) for guidance in regard to everyday life and suffering, and Kōsei-kai's concrete explanation of the cause and solution of sufferings by means of "aspect divination" and onomancy, were very effective in stirring up faith. Reiyū-kai and Risshō Kōsei-kai, thus, continued their remarkable development in giving "actual salvation" to the people suffering amidst the confused postwar world.

Mr. Tokuchika Miki reconstructs PL Kyōdan

The comeback of Hito-no-Michi and Ōmoto attracted the world's attention. Hito-no-Michi Kyōdan, which used to have a big 18,000 sq. ft. hall and one million believers, was dissolved during the great persecution of 1937. It also had the misfortune to have its founder, Tokuharu Miki, and his successor, Tokuchika Miki, imprisoned on the charge of lese majesty. The following year Tokuharu died in prison from disease, and when Tokuchika was cleared and released by Gen. MacArthur's "Civil Liberties Directive" (Oct. 4, 1945) his health was completely broken. He was "all skin and bones," and because of an injury to his coccyx, he could not even sit down. However, about twenty former Hito-no-Michi teachers who, even after the oppression, had secretly formed an organization called *Musubитай*, (literally, "United Group") waited for an opportunity to become re-established.

In September, 1946, Miki decided to announce the founding of PL Kyōdan and set about establishing it as a religious organization in the home of his wife's parents in Tosu, Saga Prefecture.

The founding declaration stated :

“ Life is art. Man can only know the significance and charm of life when he leads a life of art. What is life as art? It means that each person freely expresses his individuality at his place of work. One's individuality cannot be expressed to a high degree unless one is free from self-interest and selfish desire and, living objectively apart from one's own ego, seeks the welfare of mankind. Freed from our ego, we are going to express our individuality in a very natural and free way, and at the same time implant this idea into people in order to cooperatively contribute to world culture.”

They started all over again, renaming the organization PL, an abbreviation for “ Perfect Liberty,” and revised the doctrine, ceremonies, and technical terms in a fresh sense notably different from those of Hito-no-Michi.

At that time the headquarters at Tosu was only a six mat²¹ (9' x 12') room and few people assembled there. It was a very solitary new beginning for a big organization which used to fill to overflowing a large 1,008 mat hall. But, hearing that their society had been re-established, the former believers in various places gradually began to return and a modern-style organization in the American mood with such things as dancing and meetings in a bright atmosphere that had charm, and to gather again many new believers, although it was criticized for its “ colonial atmosphere ” (meaning that it imitated the Occupation.)²²

As a result the number of believers, which was only about

21. One mat is 3' x 6'.

22. See Hiroo Takagi, *Nihon no Shinkō-shūkyō*.

10,000 at the beginning of 1947, grew so rapidly that by the end of 1949 there were 230,000 followers and the headquarters was moved from Tosu, first to Hamamatsu and then to Shimizu. Thus PL Kyōdan began to move on the way from ruin to a great organization.

The comeback of Ōmoto Aizen'en

The oppression of Ōmoto-kyō in 1935 was carried out so furiously and with such hatred that the two headquarters at Ayabe and Kameoka were completely destroyed. Each of the stone steps was cut up with chisels and every rock in the garden was blasted. (The Hito-no-Michi headquarters was not destroyed.)

Reconstruction of the organization on the ruins of the old was not an easy task. When Onisaburō Deguchi was released from prison at the end of the war, he was already 75 years old and not very strong. Therefore reconstruction was carried out by his son-in-law, Isao Deguchi, and in December, 1945, the name, Aizen'en (literally, Garden of Love and Goodness), was adopted, and the first steps toward a new life were taken. (Subsequently, the name was changed to Ōmoto Aizen'en, and then to simply Ōmoto.)

Aizen'en emphasizes that "All things should return to the mind of the Kami." It teaches that "The mind of the Kami is love and goodness. Without love and goodness, neither peace nor welfare in its true sense can be realized. The mind of love and goodness spontaneously comes out by prayer and true faith in the Kami. Therefore the establishment of the true faith of the love-and-goodness-movement is fundamental. Faith in

Aizen'en is devotion and obedience to the absolute Kami who is the basis of the cosmos. We believe that Ame-no-minakanushi-no-ōkami, God, Lord of Heaven (*tenshu*), Heavenly Ruler (*tentei*) and Amida Nyorai referred to in the Buddhist scriptures are all the names of the absolute Kami. Aizen'en calls this Kami Ōmoto-nushi-ōkami, or Ōmoto-sume-ōkami, and teaches that the garden of love and goodness developed within the mind by true faith should be extended to the individual's home and business. Its ideal is to make the whole world into "the world of Miroku," the world of the Kami of supreme love and benevolence.

Reconstruction progressed steadily, and in 1949 the membership was 27,000. (Incidentally, about 1935, in its most prosperous period the membership of the Shōwa Shinsei-kai, an affiliated organization, was three million. However, according to judicial authorities, the followers of Ōmoto-kyō itself numbered about 300,000, although the sect claimed there were only 50,000.)

Through its influence on various religious movements in Japan and abroad Aizen'en promoted the peace movement. From its view that life is religion and that for the solution of the food difficulty faith and agriculture must go together, it developed the "Aizen Mizuho Movement" in order to popularize a method of increasing the yield of crops through faith. In these ways it showed a very keen sense of the times but in comparison with the unusual and bizarre actions of the former Ōmoto-kyō period, its actions were very common-sense and modest. This is probably a reflection of the characters of Onisaburō and Isao, the old and new leaders.

Onisaburō died from disease in January, 1948, at the age of 78, and even though he was subject to a variety of criticisms, he was the great star of the new sects in the Taishō and Shōwa eras.

In contrast with Ōmoto, the second patriarch of Hito-no-Michi, Mr. Tokuchika Miki, took himself charge of the reconstruction and, on the ground that “in the Hito-no-Michi period, because of the oppression of the authorities, 70% of the teaching was false and only 30% was true, a drastically new doctrine was taught” (*PL News*). In the case of Ōmoto, however, although they say that, owing to the death of Onisaburō, written oracles were abandoned and completely new doctrines established, it was not possible for them to do this entirely.

Seichō-no-Ie suffering from war cooperation

“One who reads my words will be cured from all disease and live forever beyond death because he knows the true aspect of life.” Seichō-no-Ie of Mr. Masaharu Taniguchi, who says that if one reads his works all suffering will vanish and eternal life will be gained, cooperated very directly for the [realization of the] national policy during World War II. Having the senior military authority, Lieutenant General Kusuzō Tsujimura, as chairman of the board of directors, the sect gloriously advanced even to the continent and it was said that, “wherever the sun flag marches, it [Seichō-no-Ie] advances even to the hinterland.” Because of its extreme cooperation during the war, and Mr. Taniguchi’s ultra-rightist nationalism, its influence was weakened for several years after the war, but it saved reserve strength and waited for its chance to develop. (According to

the 1948 Religions Year Book, members of the Sōai-kai were 600 ; the subscribers totalled 40,000.)

Conspicuous color in a drab era : "The Dancing Religion "

Two new sects were helped rather than hindered by the widespread attacks of journalists which they experienced soon after the end of the war. These were the "Dancing Goddess," or Tenshō Kōtai Jingū-kyō, and "O-hikari-sama" (the Lord Light), or Sekai Kyūsei-kyō. The "Dancing Goddess," the foundress, Sayo Kitamura, was a 46 year old housewife of an ordinary farmer at Tabuse, Yamaguchi prefecture. She was very pious by nature and from 1942 practiced such asceticism as purifying herself in water (*misogi*) six times every day. Then, on May 4, 1944, the male part of the god, Tenshō Kōtai Jingū (said to be both male and female), the Absolute God of the universe, descended into her abdomen and the female part followed on August 11, 1945, immediately prior to the end of the war. Thus the foundress became "the only child of god," the savior, bearing the Absolute God of the universe in her body, who gave various teachings and prophecies through her.

The purport of this teaching is, that "Human beings ought originally to be angels who are in God's service, but they have become maggots of egoism. Therefore, Tenshō Kōtai Jingū has descended from heaven in order to build a Kingdom of God by saving the world of maggots." This point is quite similar to Jiu-kyō, which teaches that Jikōson, who is the present existence of Tenshō Kōtai-jin, intends to rebuild this world. (Moreover, these two religions rose at about the same time.)

However, in contrast with the fact that Jiu-kyō advocated reconstruction of the world based upon extraordinary phenomena in heaven and earth, Tenshō Kōtai Jingū-kyō teaches that God's Kingdom is to be realized by means of planting right belief in each person. Despite similar doctrines, this difference seems to be the point at which Jiu-kyō died away and the Dancing Religion developed smoothly into a religious organization.

Tenshō Kōtai Jingū-kyō attaches importance to reflection and penance. It teaches that if the soul (*tamashii*) is cultivated and the six spirits (regret, desire, hatred, affection, love and desire to be loved) are purified into selflessness, the body becomes God's shrine, and (the believer) becomes an angel. However, because of the law of cause and effect (*innen*, something like original sin) man cannot be saved through his works of penance, great as they may be. Only Ōkami-sama, as the organization calls the foundress, has the power to cut through the law of cause and effect so that the maggots can be reborn as angels.

Ōkami-sama preaches with a very sharp tongue. She sometimes requires each of the believers to repent by pointing out his weakness, and she speaks very ill of men in authority or fame, calling them "maggots and beggars." This stinging tongue has been very helpful in attracting people. (In 1946, she went around preaching: "Don't let the maggots eat the rice which we have produced by hard work," and she was accused of obstructing the delivery of requisitioned rice.)

The dance which made this religion famous at one leap is called the "dance of selflessness." It is said to be the visible expression of the delight which arises in the mind like a fountain

when the soul is nurtured and saved by God. The way of dancing is not stylized, except that it is necessary to shut the eyes.

When foundress Kitamura stood at Sukiyabashi in Tokyo in March, 1946, and called to the people on the street, her eccentric preaching and the strange dance of her believers created a sensation. Thus the existence of the "Dancing Religion" was reported all over the country by newspapers and news films, and after that many people were attracted and converted by the intense character of the foundress. For several years after the end of the war the believers, propagating this teaching by dancing and singing on the streets of Tokyo and elsewhere, added a conspicuous color to the drab side of life.

This sect, which is entirely run by laymen who receive no salary, reported in 1949 its total number of adherents to be 300,000. So, although journalists attacked it severely with criticism and ridicule, this served as its biggest and best propaganda. Ironically the believers express their appreciation by saying: "The large-scale treatment of the news films and newspapers is God's means of disseminating this teaching to the world" (*Shūkyō Tsūshin*, No. 72).

World Messianity thrives on criticism

Sekai Kyūsei-kyō, World Messianity, or literally, the World Salvation Sect, of Mr. Mokichi Okada, grew on more severe criticism and ridicule than the Dancing Religion. About 1947-48, when medical supplies were extremely scarce, "the religion which cures all kinds of disease by spiritual waves radiated from the palm" was much talked about and attracted many

people. World Messianity was first known as Nihon Kannon Kyōdan, that is, "The Japan Kannon Sect," and then as Nihon Miroku Kyōkai, that is, "The Japan Miroku Church." Merely by receiving the spiritual waves emitted from the palms (*jōrei*, or pure spirit) of not only the founder but also of the teachers illness is cured and poverty as well as other troubles are removed. As the founder himself said, this teaching is thought "to be mysterious only because it is far beyond anything that has been taught up to the present by religion and science." Moreover, there was an affair in which the founder was sent to the procurator's office on suspicion of tax evasion, which strengthened public criticism far more bitterly than in the case of Tenshō Kōtai Jingū-kyō.

It was only after the war that World Messianity became well known, but it had appeared already before the war. Mr. Mokichi Okada joined Ōmoto-kyō in the latter part of the Taishō era and worked in it actively as a central official. In his later years, if we think that Mr. Okada sometimes became extremely coarse in disdaining everybody, he also had other sides. He was a great lover of art and showed prudence in making plans. Thus, he revealed his charming character and it has been said that "perhaps he was the last man to have succeeded to the mysterious side of Onisaburō Deguchi" (see Akio Saki's *Kyōso*). He seems to have received not a little influence from Mr. Onisaburō while he was in Ōmoto-kyō.

However, in 1934, when Mr. Okada became confident in his own spiritual ability and felt that there was a danger in the Ōmoto-kyō way of doing things, he withdrew and founded a sect in Tōkyō called Ōshindō. Then, the following year he formally

organized a legal religious association (*kessha*), called Great Japan Kannon Society (Dai-Nihon Kannon-kai) and began to disseminate his healing method under the name, "Okada's Divine Spirit Finger Pressure Healing" (*Okada-shiki Shinrei Shiatsu-ryōhō*). This was the first sprout of World Messianity.

The Great Japan Kannon Society from that time on steadily gathered believers but was oppressed in 1936 because of alleged violations of the Medical Practitioners Law. Therefore he renamed it Great Japan Health Society (Dai-Nihon Kenkō Kyōkai); but he again experienced persecution and was forced to make a written pledge to abandon all medical work, which resulted in the dissolution of his organization.

However, Mr. Okada was too strong a man to give up because of such things, so he endeavored to train practitioners as usual without any organization. Then, when the Pacific War broke out, a rumor was spread that he not only performed medical treatment but that a charm written by him, bearing the Chinese characters for "Radiant Light," had miraculous influence. Consequently, many devotees appeared from among politicians, military men, and other well-known persons. Moreover, because of this the authorities tacitly permitted his movement as an "underground organization," and this was its status when the war ended. It seems that at the end of the war this religion already had quite a number of admirers and considerable financial power, because in 1944 it bought Shinzansō at Hakone for \$80,000 (¥160,000), and Tōzansō at Atami for \$350,000 (¥700,000).

In 1947, when religious activity became completely free, Mr. Okada organized the Japan Kannon Sect (Nihon Kannon Kyō-

dan) and undertook the dissemination of its teaching on a large scale.

This rather fantastic teaching spread rapidly despite public antagonism, and in 1950 Mr. Okada combined the Nihon Kannon Kyōdan with the Miroku Kyōkai and others of his previous organizations, and founded World Mesianity. At first the Japanese name was read Sekai Messhiya-kyō, but this reading was later changed to Sekai Kyūsei-kyō. At that time it had 100,000 members.

A tax evasion case occurred again in May, 1950, and the founder was found guilty. Nevertheless, he continued to teach that illness, poverty, and war could be removed by the "pure-spirit technique" (*jōrei*); he propounded the idea that medicine was poison, and he insisted upon a non-fertilizer type of farm cultivation. Consequently this organization continued to be strongly attacked by the public; but under the grand ideas of Mokichi Okada it continued its brilliant progress toward establishing "an earthly paradise" where there will be neither illness, poverty, nor war.

Contrast between Christianity and the new religions

Christianity backed by secular power

In the confusion of the immediate postwar period, among the various religions which were revived under the completely changed social conditions which developed with the termination of hostilities, Shrine Shinto did everything it could in order to merely exist, and the established Buddhist and Shinto sects were

stagnant. It was only Christianity and the new sects that were aggressively active, and there was a marked contrast in the attitude and progress of the two.

Christianity was completely changed from the prewar and war years, when it was regarded as heretical and was persecuted. With the supreme power of the Allied Forces as its background Christianity was granted many privileges, including stupendous financial aid from various foreign countries. This was without doubt very advantageous in the dissemination of the faith, but it was also remarkable that many people approached the Church under the mark of faith in order to reap the secular advantages accruing from having a connection with Christianity, the religion of the victorious nations.

The case of group conversion at Saga-mura

The mass conversion at what was then Saga-mura, Kajikagun, Kyōto prefecture, is a good example of the tendency at that time. In 1949, in this quiet farm village of something over 500 families (population 2,400), which is located in a foggy gorge between the cities of Ayabe and Fukuchiyama, and has as its principle product bamboo sprouts, one thousand villagers gave up their ancestral Buddhist faith and converted to Catholicism.

Saga-mura was composed of two groups of three communities each which were dead-locked over the question of establishing a junior high school.

However, the Catholic Church at Maizuru at that time was trying to evangelize Saga-mura with a recently converted influential leader of one of the communities as a nucleus, while the

villagers, who had been suffering from a shortage of essential materials, were feeling obliged to the Church for bicycle tires, sneakers, and a great deal of other LARA goods received.

The leaders of one group, the Inner Community, noting this situation, planned to attract a Catholic private junior high school into the village. They were told that the Church was willing to build and manage a school if the whole village converted to Catholicism. With this began a huge canvassing for the influential leaders of the other group, the Front Community, with the chief priest of a Sōtō-Zen temple at the center, who promoted an intense opposition movement. Hence, although the people of the Front Community did not go along with them, almost all the 1,000 people of the Inner Community were converted to Catholicism, and dedicated the public hall of the small community, Hōonji Buraku, as their church.

This result of the great Christian offensive at that time was a big shock to the religious world. But this was not a case of conversion based on faith. It occurred because many of the villagers were led by leaders who tried to utilize Catholic social influence.

Saga-mura later

Needless to say, those who suffered the most damage from this event were the Buddhist temples in the village. There were five temples in Saga-mura with only 360 supporting families, so they were in extreme economic distress which group conversion only made worse.

According to the Religions Times (*Shūkyō Jihō*), during the *Bon* season of the year, when the priests visited their supporters'

homes to chant short sutras for the sake of their ancestors, they were turned away. There was even the unamusing story of a priest who dared to chant, "Jesus Christ, the Great Buddha to be (Dai-bosatsu)!" "Mary, the Goddess of Mercy (Maria Kannon)!"

According to an investigation by the publishers of this book, the Shin Shūkyō Shimbun Co., in January, 1961, a junior high school was not built at Saga-mura but there is a Catholic kindergarten and a fine church with a foreign priest in charge. Instead of more than one thousand converts there were about six hundred. Some of the six hundred had once given up their membership in the Church but were forced back because of ostracism by the villagers.

According to the missionary of Hōonji Church, the Rev. F. David Weir, C. Ss. R., there were cases of people converting to the Church and leaving it again, and receiving baptism three times.

Many expedient conversions

Immediately after the mass conversion at Saga-mura, about two thousand families (6,000 persons) in the Ashihara district, in the slum quarters of Nishinomiya city, planned to become Catholics. However, in the end this mass conversion did not occur, because the whole plan had only been for expedience' sake in connection with the opening of a free clinic. At that time people were continually being converted singly and in groups to Christianity, especially to Catholicism.

According to the 1950 Christian Year Book, there was also the following case: "A Buddhist temple of the Ōbaku Sect in

Ōita prefecture announced its conversion to Christianity and its plan for building a chapel within the precincts of the temple. This attracted many peoples' attention. It was said that in the beginning it was converted as a result of correspondence evangelism by a Protestant minister, but that it soon became connected with the Catholic Church. In the end, however, although the sect built a building, no one furnished funds, so that the priest was arrested on suspicion of fraud."

The new religions growing up amid sneers and ridicule

In contrast with Christianity, which attracted people with its brilliant power as its background, the new sects had to face sneers and ridicule, and open the steep way with their own hands. Although they received freedom of action from a legal point of view, the tendency was still deeply rooted in various quarters that a new sect was at once a superstitious and an evil teaching. If a new sect showed even a little notable activity, public opinion headed by the journalists, without attempting to learn its real character, always concentrated severe attacks on it in order to crush the sprouts of its development.

The lynch case of Makoto Kyōdan

As an example of a new sect that underwent cruel oppression because of this tendency, there is "the case of Makoto Kyōdan" which took place in 1950. Makoto Kyōdan is a sect which was founded by Mr. Shinjō Itō and his wife, Yūshi. It has its headquarters at Tachikawa city. At the time it was said to have 50,000 believers and to have become rather conspicuous locally.

The characteristics of this sect is a mental discipline, somewhat like Zen meditation, by means of which a man of spiritual ability, "a medium," gets guidance to deepen his faith and attain the Buddha Way. Now, it happened that a suit was brought against Chief Abbot Shinjō Itō, claiming that this sect had "lynched" a believer in the name of mental discipline. The chief abbot was arrested, and a thoroughgoing investigation of the sect was initiated by the authorities.

This was very good material for a journalistic attack on a new sect, so all the newspapers, without listening to its explanation, railed at it as a bogus religion which committed violence under the good name of religion.

Moreover, because of these attacks, the sect fell into a condition one step short of ruin. The cold stares and persecution of society against the family of Mr. Itō were very strong and while the trial was pending, it became so serious that not a single grain of rice was found in the offering box.

As the official investigation proceeded, however, the case proved to be a surprising one, and it became evident that this was a sincere religious sect. The mental discipline involved was entirely religious "training," and if at times someone was beaten it was like the warning stick of Zen Buddhism and certainly neither a "lynch" nor a violent act.

Moreover, the accuser, was a young man who had been one of the highest leaders of the sect, but hated it because he had been reproved by the chief abbot for his evil love affair with his own disciple, a young woman believer, and had been reproached by his fellow-believers also. In addition to this, the trouble was aggravated by the agitation of people who envied

the rapid development of the sect.

Therefore, although the verdict should have been "not guilty," because just at that time respect for human rights was being abnormally stressed, this suit claiming an infringement of human rights was handled one-sidedly. Consequently, the fact that the chief abbot exerted a little violence when he reproved his beloved disciple for his bad behavior was emphasized and the chief abbot was declared guilty. The sect was barely able to continue to exist by adopting another name.

It was reorganized, renamed Shinnyoen, and now has 120,000 believers.

This Makoto Kyōdan case is an example which clearly reveals the tendency at that time when people in general, with government officials and journalists in the lead, regarded new sects as evil and were intent on oppressing them without studying their real character.

Christianity for young intellectuals

At that time Christianity and the new sects in this way were in directly opposite social positions. Moreover, the class of enquirers and the motives for conversion were also in contrast. The Christian seekers were mainly intellectuals, a greater part of them being young men and many of the motives for conversion were spiritual. According to a study of the young people's societies of the various denominations, made by the National Christian Council in 1950, the motives for conversion were mostly spiritual (seeking a basis of life—28.7%, search for truth — 12.6%, thought problems — 7.9%), while practical problems only in a few cases became motives for

conversion (family problems — 8.6%, disease — 4%, unemployment — 0.1%).

New sects for those who suffer from living difficulties

In contrast with the above, those who sought the new sects were mainly the “common people,” and the greatest motive for conversion was suffering. According to “The Faith of Risshō Kōsei-kai” by Mr. Ikuta Tsurufuji, the motives for conversion of the then members of Risshō Kōsei-kai were classified as : disease — 68%, bad conduct — 16%, and misfortune — 6%. (This study should not be entirely accepted, because it was one-sided, but it seems to tell the truth to some extent.)

These tendencies were generally the same in each of the new sects. In Christianity, which had the air of authority, besides the people who genuinely sought faith, there were many who wanted to get in the good graces of the Occupation by becoming Christians, who wanted to master English conversation by attending church, or who attended church because they liked the atmosphere of the church. At the same time in the new sects, because of the tendency of the people to stare coldly at anyone who joined a new sect, many converts were in the mental condition of being driven into a corner to seek salvation even though this was regarded as bad.

Both groups showed active movements despite all the contrasting differences. The “Christianity boom,” however, soon went out fleetingly, while the new sects, disregarding the cold treatment of the people, became rooted deeper and deeper.

CHAPTER III

VARIOUS PROBLEMS UNDER THE OCCUPATION

At the moment of the defeat, the social system in our country was quickly reformed and the people's thought and life were also largely changed. The religious world was naturally influenced by this and for several years was in the throes of transition.

The religious administration under the Occupation

The religious world in the midst of difficult problems

For several years after the war our country underwent many unprecedented changes. With the Constitution as the center, the laws and institutions were renovated in order to achieve "democratization." The people's life and thought, which had been released from restrictions, underwent quick changes, and many serious social problems were provoked by the destruction of war and the confusion due to rapid social developments.

This was also true of the religious world which was surrounded by many difficult problems.

Religions Division of SCAP takes charge

The main agencies responsible for handling the various problems related to religion during the Occupation were the Religions Division of SCAP, the Religious Affairs Section of the Ministry of Education, and the private Religions League of

Japan. Needless to say the one that assumed supreme authority was Religions Division. This Division, later renamed Religions and Cultural Resources Division, took a strict attitude towards a thoroughgoing implementation of the Shinto Directive, which was one of the fundamental policies of the Occupation, but in regard to other problems it was generous and treated all religions fairly.

At that time public opinion in the West showed a strong desire to Christianize Japan. General MacArthur openly supported Christianity in an arbitrary manner. The military chaplains energetically promoted the Christianization of the country in speech and action. And there were many things that made it difficult to treat all religions objectively. Under those conditions, therefore, the attitude of Religions Division in endeavoring to treat all religions impartially — without leaning too much on Christianity — should be highly regarded.

Nevertheless, there are some persons who recently have criticized this policy as showing the intention of the American Government to utilize religion in order to conciliate Japan.

In November, 1945, when the Emperor went to the Grand Shrine of Ise to report the end of the war, the chief of the Civil Information and Education Section, Ken Dyke, said in regard to the criticism of foreign correspondents: "The Emperor is free to visit the shrine in his private capacity; and it is up to him to decide whether his visit is private or public." Another critic (Mr. Akio Saki, in *Zusetsu Nihon Bunka-shi Taikei* [Illustrated Outline of Japanese Cultural History]) used this as an example of how "the American Government very early showed its intention of utilizing Shinto," but this is clearly

a distortion.

At that time the relations between America and Soviet Russia were still cooperative and America, which had had bitter experience with the bravery of the Japanese and regarded State Shinto as the source of this bravery, took the position that it was necessary to abolish State Shinto in order to weaken Japan militarily. Therefore, the Occupation did not think about "utilizing Shinto," on the contrary, their attitude should be regarded as an appropriate manifestation of the idealism often found in Americans who intended to realize a utopia of religious freedom of their own making.

At any rate, for Occupation Forces in a country that had surrendered unconditionally the policy of SCAP regarding religion was very sympathetic and warm. Moreover, the fact that Dr. Hideo Kishimoto and Dr. Naoichi Miyachi, both of Tokyo University, earnestly informed Religions Division in detail about the actual condition of Japanese religions contributed a great deal to the normalization of SCAP's administration.

The importance of the Religions League

The Religions League of Japan (*Nihon Shūkyō Remmei*) was regarded by Religions Division as important for the promotion of its religious policy. This League, which was established in May, 1946, after the reorganization of the Religious Society of Japan (*Nihon Shūkyō-kai*) which itself had developed from the Greater Japan Wartime Religious Patriotic Society (*Dai-Nihon Senji Shūkyō Hōkoku-kai*), was composed of four organizations: the Association of Shinto Shrines, the

Sectarian Shinto Federation, the Buddhist Federation and the Christian Liaison Committee. The directors were selected in the proportion of three each from Shrine and Sectarian Shinto, two from Christianity, seven from Buddhism, and three from men of learning and experience. Thus Buddhism had a strong voice.

The chairman of the board of directors was Mr. Seijun Andō, a prewar politician from the religious world. He retired from the political world, and devoted himself to the League, because he had been purged. The standing director of the League, Mr. Kōchi Yoshida, also a purgee, was the chief of the Religious Affairs Section of the Ministry of Education at the end of the war. He had assisted in drafting the Religious Corporations Ordinance before he was purged because of his responsibility in the wartime oppression of Christianity.

The Religions League became weakened after Mr. Andō retired as chairman in 1950. The position was rotated among the member-organizations and the scale of the office was reduced. But when Messrs. Andō and Yoshida were there, it was rather influential. It actively sponsored a number of activities and did some publishing.

Although Messrs. Andō and Yoshida were both affected by the purge directive, Religions Division had good relations with them. In order to bring about a thoroughgoing separation of religion and state, it wanted to develop a strong non-governmental organization like the Religions League and to remove from the government such organs as the Religious Affairs Section. Therefore, it always maintained a favorable attitude toward the Religions League.

The Religious Affairs Section of the Ministry of Education facing abolition

In contrast with this, the Religious Affairs Section of the Education Minister's secretariat, was in a miserable position. Under the Religious Corporations Ordinance it had no important business to do, like e.g. authentication etc., but was busy with the allocation to religious organizations of such rationed goods as paper, dresses, costumes, utensils, materials for the rehabilitation of war damage or with disposal of the state-owned precincts of temples and shrines or forests. With this kind of business it somehow maintained its existence. Since GHQ often expressed its opinion that from the standpoint of separation of religion and state it was not desirable to have an organ like the Religious Affairs Section in the government structure, the position of the Religious Affairs Section became more and more weakened.

When the structure of the Ministry of Education was re-organized in 1948, it was inevitable for the Religious Affairs Section to be abolished, and in May of the same year, the Religions Division, informed the Ministry of Education to the effect that the intention of CIE was tending in the direction of abolishing the Religious Affairs Section. At last its abolition became a question of hours.

That the Religious Affairs Section was driven into such a position was, of course, due to the strong influence of the chief of the Religions Division, Dr. Bunce, who was all in favor of a thoroughgoing application of the principle of separation of religion and state. In addition to this, the then chief of the

Religious Affairs Section, Mr. Shigeru Fukuda, had aroused the strong antipathy of the Religions Division and also was on bad terms with the standing director of the Religions League, Mr. Yoshida. Under these circumstances the Religious Affairs Section was in a state of complete isolation. This worsened its position.

Public opinion rescuing the Religious Affairs Section

However, a helping hand was extended from unexpected quarters to the Religious Affairs Section just before abolition. It was the public opinion of the religious world.

As circumstances were favoring abolition of the Religious Affairs Section, Mr. Yoshida and others who wished to please GHQ were busy to persuade everybody that the abolition was necessary. In the meanwhile, however, the Ministry of Education changed the chief of the Religious Affairs Section and the new chief, Mr. Yoshio Shinohara, made strenuous underground efforts in extreme secrecy in order to heighten the public opinion in favor of continuing the Religious Affairs Section.

Consequently, each religious organization began to clarify its attitude of supporting the Ministry of Education, and the public opinion of the religious world more and more expressed the desire that the Religious Affairs Section be continued.

As an example may be taken the "Survey of public opinion in regard to continuation or abolition of an organ for religious affairs" made by Chūgai Nippō-sha in September, 1948, among superintendents of religious organizations, general secretaries of sectarian affairs, chief-priests of large temples and churches, officials in charge of religious affairs of each prefectural govern-

ment office and men of learning and experience. Those favoring abolition were only 19.8%, while 79.7% wished its continuation.

Under these conditions the Religions League of Japan conferred on the final attitude to be taken concerning this problem at its meeting of directors in August, 1948. Handicapped by the fact that the standing director, Mr. Yoshida, who had been the leader of the group favoring abolition, retired for domestic reasons immediately before the meeting, the abolition group completely disappeared and the affiliated organizations proposed as opinion of all that the continuation of the Religious Affairs Section was absolutely necessary. The result of this all was the ironical situation that the secretariat of the Religions League, which had been leading in the abolition movement, had to report to the quarters concerned the general wish of the religious world that the Religious Affairs Section should be continued.

As a result of seeing through the tendency of the religious world, the chief of the Religions Division, Dr. Bunce, remarked: "When such an organ as the Religious Affairs Section exists, religious organizations will forever be depending upon it and can not become autonomous. Because, under the new Constitution, no section of the government is allowed legally to interfere with religions, the ideal for religious organizations would be to establish a strong autonomous organ apart from the government and to employ specialist lawyers to negotiate efficiently with the government. On the other hand, however, as the religious world in present-day Japan has no such central organ and no quick establishment thereof is desired, it is un-

avoidably recognized that it is necessary for an organ to exist which deals with matters of liaison between religious organizations or between the government and religious organizations" (October 12, 1948, at the joint press conference of religious reporters in Tokyo). The "unavoidable" recognition of the existence of the Religious Affairs Section rescued this section of the Ministry of Education from abolition.

An occupational disease of the religious world: worship of authority

In this way, what rescued the Religious Affairs Section from its crisis was the public opinion of the religious world. The ostensible reason for the religious world to desire the continuation of the section was that "it is necessary as an organ to execute the Religious Corporation Ordinance." (According to the above-mentioned survey of public opinion made by Chūgai Nippō-sha, among those favoring the continuation, 26% gave this as their reason. With this percentage this reason ranked first of all.) However, under the Religious Corporations Ordinance there should have been no difficulty even if the Religious Affairs "Section" had been reduced to some minor office.

It would be most reasonable, however, to regard the fact that the religious world demanded continuance of the Religious Affairs "Section" in accordance with the tendency of putting the government above the people or the worship of authority prevalent in the religious world.

When this problem was under discussion, an old Buddhist priest remarked: "Religious affairs, which used to be dealt with in a 'Bureau' (*kyoku*), are now handled in a 'Section' (*ka*).

This is clear evidence of making light of religion. In order to make the state respect religion, a movement to promote the status of the section to a bureau should be begun now." It should be noted that this happened despite the fact that the survey of public opinion by the *Chūgai Nippō* named among the top class of the religious leaders as many as 24% who answered that this was necessary "for the sake of the State's respect of religion."

Dr. Hideo Kishimoto stated in the *Tōkai Mainichi* in January, 1948: "Generally speaking, the leading classes of the established religions favor the idea of putting the government above the people even in this age. They feel honored when they can participate in a government project and are eager to meet the intentions of the government." The lack of the spirit of autonomy and independence, and a strong tendency of relying upon authority are abuses which are like an incurable disease in the religious world of our country.

From the standpoint of religious freedom, not to interfere with religion and to permit religious organizations to make independent activities would be the true sign of the state's respect for religion.

The men of religion in our country, however, advocate religious freedom on one side and at the same time desire the protection of authority, feeling joyful "to meet with the intentions of the government." They commit this contradiction and never endeavor to develop the way they should go by their own efforts only.

In the back of the attitude which the religious world showed in regard to the problem of continuation or abolition of the

Religious Affairs Section, a strong authority worship and dependence upon authority seemed to be present. Putting aside the question whether the continuation of the Religious Affairs Section was good or bad, this was a regrettable phenomenon.

Moreover, even today when more than ten years have passed, these abuses remain deep-rooted in the whole religious world, in the established religions as well as in the new sects.

In this sense also, the way of establishing religious freedom in our country may be called very long and steep.

(To be continued)