

**REMINISCENCES
OF
RELIGION IN POSTWAR JAPAN**

(Continued from Vol. VI, No. 3)

**VARIOUS PROBLEMS CONCERNING
THE SHINTO DIRECTIVE**

The very influential Shinto Directive

The Shinto Directive issued on December 15, 1945, separated Shinto from the State and restrained the doctrines of various religious organizations of Shinto lineage. Since its promulgation, GHQ sometimes tried to apply it thoroughly, continuing to make precautions for the State not to connect with Shinto again, endeavoring to remove ultranationalist and militaristic colors out of religion and warning "ultranationalist, militaristic organizations and movements not to masquerade under the good name of religion."

The activities of the Special Investigation Agency in accordance with the Organizations Control Ordinance which have been mentioned above aimed, so to speak, at controlling the principles and movements that were prohibited by the Shinto Directive. Besides this, the influence exerted by the Shinto Directive was directly or indirectly seen in various fields.

Strict restriction upon monuments to fallen soldiers and others

The removal of monuments to fallen soldiers and bronze

statues in various places in the postwar days was one effect of the Shinto Directive.

With regard to monuments to fallen soldiers, the following measures were taken :

1. As to monuments to fallen soldiers and others, those of a militaristic or ultranationalist character must not be built. Those under construction must be suspended.

2. Those in schools and school grounds must be removed. Those in public buildings, on their grounds or on land for public use and clearly helpful for propagating and inspiring militaristic and ultranationalist ideas must be removed. As a result of this, the monuments to fallen soldiers, the bronze statues and others that were removed till the end of April in 1948 numbered 5,967, those that were moved to inconspicuous places or remodelled being 1,844.

The measures taken were so strict that even a plan of a society of relatives of fallen soldiers to build a peace tower for enshrining memorial tablets of all fallen soldiers from the Satsuma Rebellion in 1877 to the Pacific War was prohibited for fear of conflicting with the Shinto Directive (1950, Kumamoto Pref.).

Public funerals prohibited

With regard to funerals and memorial services for the war dead, militarists and ultranationalists, the following acts were prohibited or restrained :

1. to perform public funerals ;
2. for public organs to sponsor or to support funerals, memorial services or other ceremonies ;

3. to lend public facilities for these ceremonies ;
4. for government or public officials to attend in their public capacity ;
5. for teachers to lead children or students to funerals for the war dead, meeting the ashes etc. or to enforce people in general to attend such services.

Restrictions also on the designs of stamps

Ceremonies for purifying building sites and ceremonies for the completion of the framework of public buildings were not allowed in the early stage even when these were held under the sponsorship of non-government people, but as late as 1949 only ceremonies held voluntarily by the contractor were allowed.

Furthermore, in regard to the designs of postage stamps and current money GHQ issued a directive and prohibited to use “portraits of militaristic or ultranationalist leaders,” “symbols of militarism and ultranationalism,” “sceneries of territories no longer under Japanese rule” and “pictures of shrines and other Shinto symbols.”

School children's entry into a shrine or a temple prohibited

GHQ made efforts to remove the colors of militarism, ultranationalism and Shinto in this way. What gave the greatest shock to the religious world among these various measures was the disposal taken in accordance with the notification of the Education Ministry, “Concerning the treatment of the course of study in the part of civics,” issued July 9, 1948.

This is generally called “the notification of the prohibition

of entry into a shrine or temple.” The main contents were prohibition for pupils of government or public schools to visit shrines, temples, churches or men of religion under the direction of a school and to invite men of religion to lecture on problems of religion during school hours.

This notification created a great stir in the religious world. Mostly affected by it were travels of schools for educational purposes.

Visits of school children to a shrine under the sponsorship of a government or public school were prohibited from the first by the Shinto Directive but visits to shrines made under the name of study of cultural properties were allowed even after the issue of the Directive.

GHQ, fearing that visits of school children to shrines or lectures by Shinto priests might help the revival of Shinto ideas, intended to prevent this danger through this notification. But GHQ which wanted to deal with all religions equally could not prohibit only visits to shrines, but had to prohibit also visits to temples or churches.

Consequently, as a result of this notification entry of a temple, not to speak of a shrine, became impossible on the occasion of a trip for educational purposes or an excursion. This was a problem of life or death for temples in a sightseeing place or people engaged in the tourist trade, and the school itself could not remain indifferent.

In addition to it, government or public schools had become quite nervous with regard to shrines since the issue of the Shinto Directive.

At that time simple contact with a shrine often caused

danger. For example, when a school went on excursion to Kamakura and took lunch in the precincts of a shrine the leading teacher made children collect the trash. This being regarded as "compelling school children to clean the shrine," the teacher and the principal were dismissed. Similar cases happened frequently at various places.

Therefore, the definite prohibition of entry into a shrine or temple was of use to prevent happenings of this kind, but on the other hand under the actual conditions in Japan, it was very difficult to make a schedule for an excursion if shrines and temples could not be visited.

This notification was strictly observed for more than a year.

As an exception, there was the case in Tochigi Prefecture where the notification was interpreted, with the understanding of the local military government, as not to apply to the shrines and temples at Nikko: "Visits of shrines and temples at Nikko include little of religious significance but are made only for the study of cultural treasures," therefore with regard to only the shrines and temples at Nikko, "even on an excursion led by a teacher, voluntary visits of students and pupils may be allowed if they have disbanded before entering the precincts." In almost all other districts, however, the notification was enforced literally with the result that many shrines and temples became more and more desolate and also suffered financially to a pretty extent.

It was said that there were some schools which suspended an excursion or planned a trip to a hot spring after taking many pains to make a schedule.

Although the notification was eased . . .

Through the repeated petitions of the Japan Religions League, the Shrine Association and the Buddhist Federation this notification was eased to the effect that "Visits to a shrine, a temple etc. under the sponsorship of a school for studying a national treasure or a cultural property, or other cultural purposes are permitted under the condition that they are neither compulsory nor ordered" (Notification of the Vice-Minister of Education, October, 1949).

Even though the entry of a shrine or temple was permitted by this notification, because of the condition that such a visit might not be compulsory nor ordered, the school authorities could not but be nervous.

Therefore, although schools which made visits to shrines or temples increased, there were very few children who went as far as the worship hall or the main hall of a shrine or a temple with a long approach for "observation study," since they had to disband before entering and to leave the visit to the free will of the children.

We give here an example of the Inner Shrine of Ise. "School children were to be disbanded before the Uji Bridge, but 80 or 90 percent of them went to souvenir shops at once and those who went over the bridge were only 10 or 20 percent. Moreover, the greater half of these became weary and came back after a while," and as the school side did not give them any preliminary explanation of the shrine or temple, "the greater part of them did not know about the enshrined deity of the Grand Shrine by about 1951." (According to Mr. Hideo

Igaki, Chief of Guards of the Grand Shrine.)

These conditions continued for several years, and it was only since September of 1952 that school children openly made study tours of a shrine or a temple by group.

The Ōyama incident which shocked the shrine world

The Shinto Directive was lying heavily on the Shinto world through the whole period of occupation.

As to the execution of the Directive, there were many differences according to various localities, since the competent local military governments had different views to some extent.

Especially in the prefectures of Kagoshima, Yamaguchi, Ibaragi and others it was said that the Directive was executed in a very strict manner. It is possible that the authorities believed that because the Meiji Restoration and Japanese militarism had received their impetus from these areas, it was necessary to deal with them more severely than with other places.

It is an undeniable fact that on the other hand there were among the Japanese government and public officials certain persons who oppressed shrines by brandishing the sword of the Shinto Directive and regarded strict treatment of shrines as an act of loyalty towards the Occupation.

Consequently, as in various places many cases happened that could be called violations of the Shinto Directive due to a trifle, educators, politicians, officials, not to speak of men of the shrine world, could not but be too timid in order not to run counter to the Directive.

At such a time the Ōyama Incident at Afuri Shrine in Ōyama,

Kanagawa Prefecture, surprised the shrine world. The Ōyama Culture Promotion Society (president, the chief-priest of Afuri Shrine, Mr. Kiyoshi Meguro) held an exhibition of works of art in a building within the precincts of Afuri Shrine for six days from November 7 to 12, 1946.

The society collected and exhibited paintings, calligraphies, handicrafts, 31-syllable Japanese poems, 17-syllable Japanese verse and others from among the people in general and children of national schools in Naka-gun and Hiratsuka-shi in Kanagawa Prefecture. Even if a shrine was used for this purpose, the exhibition was meant to be purely cultural. At the closing ceremony on the last day, the prefectural school inspector, Mr. Minoru Sada, the chief of the School Affairs Section of Naka-gun, Mr. Tokujirō Harada, and others were attendants as guests, and Mr. Harada gave a congratulatory address.

However, the office of the Yokohama District Procurator, attentive to the facts that the exhibition was held at a shrine, the president of the sponsoring organization was a chief-priest of a shrine and that the school inspectors supported it, prosecuted Messrs. Meguro, Sada, Harada and others as suspect of running counter to Ordinance No. 311 (Ordinance concerning Punishment for Acts Harmful to the Occupation Purposes) and the Shinto Directive. It was taken for granted that Mr. Meguro attempted to disseminate the doctrine of Shinto utilizing public educational organs, and that Messrs. Sada and Harada supported Shinto in their public capacity.

Consequently, at the first trial in August, 1947, the accused Meguro was sentenced to six months in prison with a stay of execution for two years, the accused Sada and Harada were

declared not guilty. However, the decision of the second trial in April, 1949, was heavier than that of the first; the accused Meguro was sentenced to one year in prison with a stay of execution for three years, the accused Sada and Harada were sentenced to a fine of Yen 5,000 each. This created serious stirs in shrine and education circles.

Later the case was brought to the Supreme Court. In July, 1951, when the recovery of independence was nearing, the exhibition of works of art was at last recognized as not aiming at the dissemination of Shinto doctrines, and all accused were declared not guilty. The Shinto Directive exerted such a large influence in various ways.

THE VARIOUS PROBLEMS AROUND EDUCATION AND RELIGION

Rebuilding of education and problems of religion

At the same time of the termination of the war, the educational world was also confronting a difficult situation and a miserable reality.

Although the Shinto Directive demanded that teaching materials containing militaristic and State-Shinto-like ideas were taken out of circulation, no new textbooks were published. Therefore, school children used textbooks parts of which regarded as militaristic and State-Shinto-like were painted over in black.

Many school rooms were lost through war influence, and "school rooms with the sky as a roof" were opened at various

places. However, such an education disregarding religion gradually showed defects with the passage of time. A reconsideration took place and it was felt that "education excluding religion degenerates to formalism and cannot give beautiful ideas or burning enthusiasm." Also severe criticism of the present situation was made: (a) To teach clearly the difference of right and wrong, good and evil, the backing of a strong faith is indispensable in order to do various goods and to keep away from various evils. For this purpose, it is absolutely necessary to foster religious sentiment in school education. (b) Prohibition of religious education even at a school under the management of a religious organization is oppression of religion. (c) Because a school neither gives knowledge regarding religion nor fosters religious sentiment, the masses of the people lack the ability to discriminate religions and become drowned in superstitions or evil religions. (Member of the House of Representatives Seijun Andō at the time of assuming the position of Parliamentary Councillor of Education in 1947.)

Furthermore, the fact that materialism entered quickly into our country in the early years of Shōwa gave real concern to the rulers, and the idea that it was necessary to adopt religion into education in order to check materialism was strengthened in various quarters.

Although the necessity of religious sentiment education was recognized

It was in 1935 that the Ministry of Education issued the Vice-Minister's Notification, "Matters concerning fostering religious sentiment" for the purpose of easing Instruction No. 12.

By this notification, the Ministry of Education defined the religious education which had been prohibited by the Instruction in 1899 as to “teach a doctrine of a certain specific Shinto sect, Buddhist sect or a Church, or conduct a ceremony thereof.” Such things were still strictly forbidden but it was strongly urged that schools should foster religious sentiment thereafter “because it is naturally allowed to foster religious sentiment in order to help to cultivate the character of the pupils. However, there have been regrettable points about education, sometimes lacking in proper management.”

The education of religious sentiment was accepted in theory but its practice met difficulties beyond expectation.

First, the fact that, the term, “education of religious sentiment,” itself was very abstract and ambiguous made the practice difficult.

This term is usually interpreted as “to educate man to live in an attitude filled with religious and pious sentiments.”

However, “the religious sentiment” with which one highly respects *kami* and *hotoke* should come from entering a certain specific religion, and it was doubtful whether it was possible to obtain this through an education impartial to any religion. It was also doubtful whether it was possible for teachers with almost no religious experience to give such education.

Under these difficult conditions education of religious sentiment in the prewar days ended only in arguments but was not realized at all.

“In these days the waves of the Pacific War had already been raging and they were bound to agitate the nationalistic consciousness all the more. Therefore, fostering the religious

sentiment came to be practised in an unexpected form of infusing a color State of Shinto into the people's mind in a thoroughgoing way. Needless to say, this aimed at unifying the people rather than fostering religious sentiment. As a result, something religious that was lacking in education could be supplied to some extent and children could grasp something eternal in deities or in a form of the state." (Dr. Hideo Kishimoto, in *Shūkyō Tsūshin* No. 42.) This was an unexpected result for the religious world.

The question of sentiment education revived in the postwar days

The reason why the problem of the education of religious sentiment was taken up again in the postwar days lies in the fact that it was considered useful to adapt religious sentiment in such a way as to become a support of a new spiritual education in place of the Imperial Rescript on Education which had died away, and that education without religion, as it had been practised since the Meiji era was considered a remote cause of the confusion of thoughts and the decline of morality.

Soon after the termination of the war the 90th plenary session of the House of Representatives of the Imperial Diet made a "Resolution Concerning Religious Sentiment" as follows; "We who made the resolution to entrust to the fairness and faith of the world all the security and existence of the people by means of abandoning war forever should develop a movement for fostering the world's everlasting peace in the firm conviction that war is a crime. For that we should popularize and make generally known the ideas of world brotherhood,

neighborly love and social service in religious self-consciousness and social service in religious self-consciousness and at the same time expect some heightening of morality and elevation of culture by making the people respect the cultivation of religious sentiment." From other sides, too, voices for strengthening the education of religious sentiment were heard.

The Japan Religions League was especially interested in this problem because Mr. Seijun Andō, the chairman of the board of directors, had been stressing the necessity of the education of religious sentiment since the early years of Shōwa.

The All Japan Religious Peace Conference in May, 1947, also took up this problem as one of the most important subjects and petitioned to the first session of the Diet under the new Constitution, the "establishment of a subject or a chair in regard to religion at normal schools, the University of Science and Literature (i. e. the former Higher Normal School, at present the University of Education) and other training schools for teachers." Furthermore, it held lecture meetings at various places with Dr. P. H. Vease, Consultant of Religious Education in GHQ (Professor at Yale University), and others as lecturers, and explained the necessity of religious education. It also examined the way religious education, especially sentiment education, should be given.

However, the practice was impossible

However, although the education of religious sentiment which "educates man to live with a religious pious mind" was waited for in various circles, it could not get rid of the rock which it had struck in the prewar days.

In case of private schools religious education became completely free through an instruction of the Ministry of Education in October, 1945.

Therefore, schools based on religious principles became able to conduct thoroughgoing religious education in accordance with each religion instead of ambiguous "sentiment education." However, schools of this kind were very few in proportion to the whole number of schools. Especially, among primary schools were as few as only 5 percent.

Therefore, in order to stabilize thought and to elevate morality through the promotion of religion, it was necessary to bring "religious sentiment education," impartial to any religion, into government and public schools. However, a method to implant in the mind of children respect of *kami* and *hotoke* impartially to a certain specific religion could not be found. Furthermore, even if a method had been devised, since religious freedom was guaranteed and at the same time freedom of non-believing in religion was also guaranteed under the new Constitution, it was impossible for government and public schools to support religion even a little bit.

It was also insisted that similarly as in America where schools give pupils an opportunity to go to the church they belong to by sparing lesson hours, in Japan also schools should have planned to foster the religious mind by making contact with Sunday schools or men of religion outside of school. This, however, was also impossible in Japan where the religious situation is very complicated and schools have no understanding of religion.

For this reason, the movement to promote the education of

religious sentiment which was so loudly cried for ended in only a reaffirmation of the natural facts that in order to promote a religious mind throughout the nation it was necessary to interest religious organizations in this work, or that something like Sunday schools should be established.

Establishment of civics and religious education

The plan to bring the education of religious sentiment into government and public schools, thus ended in a failure.

However, apart from the education of religious sentiment which aims at awakening the religious mind of school children, an education aiming at giving pupils some general knowledge concerning religion should be given even at government and public schools since religion has a great influence on society.

As a matter of fact, however, at government and public schools even a preliminary knowledge concerning religion is scarcely given.

This is a problem worthy of reconsideration for the religious as well as for the educational world.

In the postwar days, with the establishment of the new school system of six years primary school, three years junior high school and three years senior high school, civics was introduced as a subject in primary, junior and senior high schools. In the course of civics, teaching materials concerning religion were adopted and knowledge concerning religion was to be given to some extent.

In the first course of study published in 1947, the problems concerning religion were taken up as follows :

Reminiscences of Religion in Postwar Japan

Question of primary school, third year: “How are the national religious ceremonies and festivals performed in the various parts of the country?”

Question of primary school, fourth year: “What roles did temples and shrines play for our ancestors?”

Unit of junior high school, third year: “What influence has religion had on social life?”

The course of study further mentions the concrete guidance plans in regard to these questions (units). The guidance plan, for example, concerning the question of primary school, fourth year: “What roles did temples and shrines play for our ancestors?” shows the following arrangement of teaching materials:

- (1) To know that temples and shrines are useful.
 - A. To talk together and enter in a picture places in which temples and shrines are located and used to be located in the old days in our town (village).
 - B. To hear about the history and legends of temples, shrines or *hokora* (a small shrine) in our town (village).
 - C. ...
 - D. To observe merchants gathering at festivals and to discuss about them.
 - E. ...
 - F. To observe the year-end fair, the “*Tori-no-ichi*” fair and the thanksgiving festival and to hear about them.
 - G. To read or to hear about the story of “*monzen-machi*.”*
 - H. I. ...

* Streets in front of the gate or on both sides of the approach to a temple or a shrine.

Reminiscences of Religion in Postwar Japan

- J. To hear or to see a picture of a temple school.
 - K. To study the history of our school. (To hear about various kinds of schools.)
 - L. To hear from an old man how useful the temple was for the people in the old days.
 - M. N. ...
 - O. To make a drama after hearing the story of the introduction of Buddhism.
 - P. To hear stories of excellent Buddhist priests or of Buddhist priests who did much for society.
- (2) To know about the ancient primitive faith.
- A. To hear about the religion and the customs of the Ainu (if possible, to see them).
 - B. To hear about the legends of the deity of the hearth, the deity of fire and other deities.
 - C. ...
 - D. To make various legends into a verse or a picture-story show.

The following is a summary of the arrangement of teaching materials in the unit of junior high school, third year: "What influence religion has had on social life?"

- (1) What kinds of religion are there?
 - A. In case of Japan (at home, in society)
 - B. Religions in the world (origin, development, doctrine, form, classification of religions)
- (2) How has religion been developed?
 - A. The principal religions in the world (Buddhism, Christianity, Mohamedamism)

Reminiscences of Religion in Postwar Japan

- B. Development of Japanese religions (Shinto, Buddhism, Christianity and other religions)
- (3) What influence does religion have on individuals and society?
- A. What social activities are done by religious organizations? — Social, educational and religious functions.
 - B. What influence does religion have on life and culture of society?
 - C. What are religious acts: religious desire, religious experience, religious life, etc.
- (4) What relation is there between religion and democracy?
- A. Concerning freedom of the individual and respect of human rights, what relation does a certain religion have? — The liberalistic thought and the religious reformation in Europe.
 - B. In what relation are religion and the modern spirit? — The modern spirit, science and religion, social progress and religion.
 - C. What is the significance of freedom of religion? And in what relation are freedom of religion and democracy? (The above summary depends on Mr. Tsuneki Fukagawa.)

The course of study in the edition of 1947 is said to be an adaptation of the plan of the State of Virginia in America in which the role of the Christian Churches has been replaced by that played by that of shrines and temples. It had some points not suited to the complicated religious conditions of Japan so that it could not be said perfect. It was, however, something epochmaking that some knowledge concerning religion was to be given at government and public schools.

Religious teaching materials at once shut out

However, when teaching materials dealing with religion in civics in this way were published, strong views of agreement and disagreement were voiced in various quarters.

In the religious world, the greater part to the fact that the new education dealt with religion, but one part, including the Catholic Church, opposed it on the ground that there was a fear that erroneous knowledge would be given by teachers wanting in knowledge on religion, and that it was possible for the education in civics not only to give knowledge concerning religion but also to go so far as to give "religious education" partial to a certain specific religion. Thus this problem was much discussed.

Amid these discussions, however, the above-mentioned notification of the Ministry of Education was issued in July, 1948, "Concerning the Treatment of the Course of Study, Civics" (generally called "Notification of prohibition of entry into shrines and temples").

This notification meant to prohibit school children to visit shrines, temples or churches upon order from the school or to hear a lecture on religion from a man of religion invited to the school. The reason was that there was a fear of conflicting with the Shinto Directive if the course of study was not given correctly.

This notification, as a matter of fact, made the study of religion in civics based upon the above-mentioned course of study almost impossible.

It had been issued in line with the intention of GHQ. Al-

though GHQ had agreed to the inclusion of religious education in the school curriculum, measures were taken to keep children from visiting shrines and meeting shrine people and so to prevent the dissemination of Shinto ideas.

At any rate, because of these conditions, the treatment of religion in civics was completely baffled in at the start by this notification from the Ministry of Education. Moreover, as this notification was issued after troublesome disputes, since then authorities of the Ministry of Education as well as the educational world became to show a very negative attitude toward the treatment of religion. Consequently, when the course of study was revised in 1951, everything concerning religion disappeared from civics.

Later developments

Conserving the later treatment of religion in civics, a second time revision of the course of study was made in 1955, after the recovery of independence.

This revision was undertaken during the term of office of the Minister of Education, Mr. Seijun Andō, who had come back to the political world. This revision adopted for the first time teaching materials concerning the position of the Emperor and concerning geography and history. This, of course, was criticized as reactionary by leftist groups. The course of study in the edition of 1955 planned to foster moral sense and religious sentiment through the study of the life and the spirit of excellent artists, thinkers and men of religion. A certain improvement was the idea of teaching religion through history.

The third revision was made in 1958 and formally enforced

in April, 1961. In accordance with this revision, an "hour of moral education" was added to the curriculum, and the policy was adopted to study religious sentiment in connection with moral. In reality, however, religion came to being treated very lightly.

After these many turns and twists, the education of today at government and public schools continues to neglect religion as in the prewar days.

As a result, children are growing up without possessing any knowledge concerning religion. Moreover, there are not rare examples of teachers of government and public schools half-openly inspiring children with anti-religious thoughts.

These tendencies would clearly run counter to Article 9, 1 of the Fundamental Law of Education: "Tolerant attitude in relation to religion and the position of religion in the social life shall be respected."

Even when knowledge concerning religion is to be given at government and public schools, if it is treated by anti-religious teachers or teachers lacking in religious knowledge, the fear is justified that the contrary result is produced.

It would not be right, however, to leave the actual condition of today's education to take its own course, that not only gives no knowledge about religion but also aids anti-religious tendencies despite of religion being a great social factor.

It would be necessary for the religious world to be more interested in this problem and to take proper countermeasures.

(To be continued.)