

Contemporary Social Change and Shinto Tradition

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It was in the latter half of the 1960s that the problem of modernization began to be discussed among scholars of religion in Japan. Even at that time, most adherents of the Shinto tradition regarded the idea with disfavor because they felt that the problem had been posed in strictly Western terms. From that time to the present, this attitude remains unchanged. In the Shinto world there is no indication whatever of any interest in the problem of secularization. Coming out of this kind of background and atmosphere, I have little confidence that my presentation can hold much meaning for this conference. What I propose to do, however, is to begin by describing the particular sociopolitical situation Shinto has been facing since the end of World War II. Second, I shall indicate some of the main ways through which Shinto has sought to respond to social change. Third, I shall present several concrete examples that may serve as material for discussion. Finally, I shall discuss some general problems that Shinto faces in connection with the modernization and secularization of Japanese society.

In order to discuss the problem of social change and Shinto tradition, it is essential to consider the position of Shinto in postwar Japanese society. Two events forced Shinto to change its form of existence. One was the Shinto Directive issued by the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers in 1945, the other the Constitution that took effect in 1947.

EFFECTS OF THE POSTWAR SOCIOPOLITICAL SITUATION ON SHINTO
The Shinto Directive and the 1947 Constitution. The Shinto Directive produced a number of consequences. (1) It denied as fictitious the national faith that had till that time been transmitted through the classical myths, and it required that every trace of myth be removed from educational pro-

grams. The directive also entailed a denial of the view of the national polity (*kokutai*) held by the Japanese people. (2) It accused Shinto of criminal responsibility for the war and effectively cut the affective bonds between the state and its history. (3) It ordered the termination of all use of government funds for Shinto shrines and rituals. As a result, the public character of the Shinto shrine came to an end. In conformity with the directive, the Emperor himself, at the beginning of 1946, issued what has come to be called his "Declaration of Humanity." With regard both to the traditional *kami* concept and the view of the Shinto ritual, this declaration caused great agitation throughout the nation.

The new Constitution also involved many consequences. (1) Using of the Emperor the cold and unfamiliar term "symbol," it abruptly and radically changed his status in law. This led to great confusion with reference to the traditional view of the Emperor. (2) It established complete separation between the state and religion. As a result, (a) Shinto rituals observed in the Imperial Household became private affairs of the Imperial family, (b) official services held at what were formerly national and governmental shrines lost their official character, (c) both the Grand Shrine of Ise, which from the beginning belonged to the Imperial Household, and Yasukuni Shrine, which by nature depended on government support, became private institutions – a disposition particularly difficult for Shinto adherents to tolerate, and (d) national holidays established during the Meiji period (1868-1911) were abolished. (3) It seemed to deny the continuity of the Japanese state and led to an atmosphere in which the national flag and anthem lost their validity.

The Association of Shinto Shrines and two key movements.
To Western eyes, these changes that Shinto has been obliged to undergo may seem to reflect some elements of modernization or secularization. To most Shinto people, however,

they signify nothing but artificiality and Westernization. On the basis of this way of understanding, the Association of Shinto Shrines has been working hard, especially since the conclusion of the Peace Treaty at San Francisco in 1952, to restore Shinto to its lost status and to revitalize the old tradition. Setting aside the question whether its efforts have been correct in relation to the situation, we should describe their content in some detail because these efforts constitute one of the most representative aspects of Shinto in postwar Japan.

The first movement in which the Association of Shinto Shrines led the way was to make possible the continued existence of Yasukuni Shrine. That was in 1946, and the movement also sought to obtain continuing government support for the shrine. In the latter respect the movement did not, of course, succeed, but it continues to the present day.

During these years, a secularizing development did take place with regard to the Peace Prayer ceremony held on 15 August at Yasukuni Shrine. Until 1963, the Emperor attended this ceremony, but since then, it has been held at the National Hall of Martial Arts in the form of a non-religious ceremony. This governmentally instituted change, greatly arousing not only the bereaved families of the war-dead but also Shintoists in general, gave added strength to the Association's movement on behalf of Yasukuni Shrine. In 1966 more than twenty-three million signatures were collected, and Diet members, as a result of this pressure, deliberated on a special law concerning the shrine. The first bill was presented in 1969, and succeeding bills were debated in the Diet in 1970, 1971, 1972, and 1974 – so far without success.

The second large movement undertaken by the Association was to reestablish 11 February as National Foundation Day. Begun in 1948, this movement too had to do with a matter of continued existence, in this case, of a day of national remembrance. From 1961 the movement changed. It sought

explicitly to restore National Foundation Day. In this case the movement led, in 1966, to a successful outcome.

Related movements and organizations. There are many other movements that should be included here, but I propose only to list them – with two exceptions that will be treated shortly. To be listed are the movements to maintain the national flag and anthem that have come down since the Meiji era, to establish in law the practice of naming the era after the reigning emperor, to restore the Grand Shrine of Ise to its former status, to write an autonomous constitution that will safeguard the position of the emperor as head of the nation, to have the Shinto rituals observed in the Imperial Household given the status of national rites, to restore the Imperial Rescript on Education, and to revive the spirit of Japanese nationality among the people.

The first of the two movements that call for a brief explanation is the one to permit governmental institutions to take part in religious ceremonies accepted as customary. For example, prior to 1945 it was permissible for students, traveling in school-sponsored groups, to visit famous shrines and temples and to have religious ceremonies performed. This kind of group pilgrimage, however, was prohibited under the new Constitution. When a visit of this kind did take place in Tochigi Prefecture in 1948, the principal of the school involved was severely censured. The Association of Shinto Shrines, taking up the case, sought to restore the status quo ante, and in 1952 it was successful in persuading the Ministry of Education to permit such visits.

Another example is that of a public funeral held in accordance with the rites of a particular religion. This too has been permitted by the government since 1952.

The chief example, however, of this kind of problem is that of the Shinto ceremonies held when a house is to be built, when the foundation is laid, when the framework

is completed, and just before moving in. In 1965 the city of Tsu in Mie Prefecture paid an honorarium to four Shinto priests for their services in purifying the site where a municipal athletic hall was to be built. A Communist, however, took the matter to court, claiming that the Constitution had been violated. The Tsu District Court found no violation of the Constitution, but in 1971 a High Court reversed the verdict. Yet during these very years, similar rites continued to be performed as traditional and customary. Thus when the cornerstone was laid for the Kyoto Prefectural Assembly building, Shinto rites were employed, and at the Japanese International Exposition of 1970, a Shinto grounds-purification ceremony was held. In accordance with this kind of social atmosphere, the Supreme Court, in 1977, rendered a verdict favorable to Shinto. This has encouraged the Association to proceed in the same direction with even greater strength in future.

The second movement to which particular attention is to be drawn is the movement to gain government funds for certain religious practices and ceremonies. Action to this end was begun in 1966. In 1970 a degree of success was obtained when the government decided to provide aid for the maintenance of folk arts, and in 1975 the government finally agreed to designate certain religious practices as "cultural properties" and maintain them as such.

In promoting the above movements, the Association of Shinto Shrines exerted itself to form several affiliate organizations. These include the National Foundation Day Celebration Association (1957), the Japan Teachers Association and the Shrine Consultative Association (1963), the Shinto League for Politics (1969), the Association for Rectification of the Relationship between Religion and State (1971), and the Association to Preserve Japan (1974). It is probably in connection with these developments that the Grand Shrine of Ise, in 1973, revised its festival calendar so as to discontinue

all festivals introduced since 1945. The abolished festivals are: Constitution Day, Culture Day, Adult's Day, and Labor Thanksgiving Day.

At this point I would like to propose two questions for discussion. The first is whether these various organizations, in relation to the modernization of religion and society, are to be assessed as reactionary. The second is whether they are to be considered indications of a tendency toward secularization within Shinto taken as a religion. In order to consider these questions adequately, we must, I believe, keep the following three points in mind: (1) the term "modernization" is often used, without awareness of doing so, to mean "Westernization"; (2) in Shinto, since there is no transcendent component, there exists no clear distinction between "sacred" and "secular"; and (3) several of the movements promoted by the Association for Shinto Shrines have in fact been successful.

BASIC SHINTO RESPONSES TO CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL CHANGE

The first stage in the modernization of Shinto was taken, in a somewhat unusual way, during the Meiji period. The second, more radical because of the social situation Shinto faced, began in 1945. The Shinto response during the second stage has two aspects. One is the matter of developing a systematic theology, the other, the task of education among the parishioners of each shrine and among Shinto adherents in general.

Theology. Shinto has, of course, its own theological history. For the most part, however, the ideas of the past have lost their hold on contemporary people and society. Moreover, because the government, from 1882 on, treated it as a non-religion, Shrine Shinto went through a period of vacuum as regards the development of a modern theology. Consequently, contemporary Shinto theologians, in shaping a theological

system, must do their work without benefit of a reliable foundation. Nevertheless, their efforts have borne some fruit in that Westerners and Japanese alike, primarily through comparisons with Christianity and Buddhism, have found it possible to come to a theoretical understanding of Shinto. Despite the devoted labors of these specialists, however, the development of a genuine theology is still impeded by several difficulties. When the Shrine Consultative Association, in 1966, asked 108 representative priests whether they thought it advisable to establish an orthodox body of doctrine, it received answers that can be classified as shown in table 1.

TABLE 1
Summary of Shinto Priest Responses as to Advisability
of Developing an Orthodox Body of Doctrine

Classes of Response	Number	Percentage
Advisable	24	22.2
Advisable under certain conditions	19	17.6
Inadvisable and/or impossible	16	14.8
Inadvisable, but some standardization desirable	49	45.4
Total	108	100.0

Source: Data adapted from *Jinja Honchō* 1969, p. 45.

To be more specific, the various answers, on the basis of which these classes were formed, are shown in table 2.

The reasons for opposing the idea are various, but the most representative reason is that historically, Shinto has never relied on any particular creed or body of dogma. Of the 65 opposing priests, 45 believe this intrinsic to the nature of Shinto. In this connection, 11 priests pointed out that each Shinto shrine, for specific historical reasons, has enshrined a particular kami. It is also a matter of considerable interest that 2 priests wanted to obtain Imperial sanction.

In any case, theology in Shinto is still on its way toward modernization.

TABLE 2
Content of Shinto Priest Responses as to Advisability
of Developing an Orthodox Body of Doctrine

Response	Number
<i>Advisable:</i>	
If developed on the basis of the Shinto classics	1
If not narrowly conceived	1
Without conditions	22
<i>Advisable if:</i>	
It is remembered that, by nature, these things cannot be rushed . . .	7
Made as inclusive as possible	6
Developed on the basis of the Shinto classics and other reliable sources	2
A financial and organizational foundation is laid first	1
Regarded as a matter of policy	1
Imperial sanction is received	1
Developed by stages	1
<i>Inadvisable and/or impossible because:</i>	
There are too many teachings	2
The "Principles of Shinto life" are quite sufficient	1
Of the nature and history of Shrine Shinto	10
Of the number of kami	1
Shrines are not churches	1
It is better to leave the matter to individuals	1
<i>Inadvisable, but some standardization desirable:</i>	
In order to provide a greatest common denominator	2
In view of the nature of Shinto	30
To adapt to the contemporary social situation	2
So as to obtain Imperial sanction	1
To accord with shrine history and Japanese history as a whole	1
If it is not done too hastily	1
To contribute to harmony among the people	1
If not too narrowly conceived	7
If not formulated in exclusive terms	1

TABLE 2 – *Continued*

Response	Number
To help establish an educational organization	1
To unify the diverse teachings	1
At this point in time	1
Total	108

Source: Data from *Jinja Honchō* 1969, p. 45.

Education. Just as it is difficult to foster a theological way of thinking in Shinto, it is also difficult to vitalize educational activities. The Association of Shinto Shrines, since 1946, has promoted the establishment of many affiliate organizations and through them has sought to realize its objectives. In 1947 it appointed several lecturers and education committee members. The following year it appointed a number of prison chaplains. The same year saw the formation of the Shinto Youth Organization and the Association of Shinto Women, and in 1949 each held a nationwide assembly. The Federation of Shrine Nursery Schools was begun in 1952, and two years later the Council of Education-Related Priests held its first meeting. In 1955 the Friends of Shinto Society and the Shrine Representatives Association were formed. From 1957 Children's Clubs were begun at shrines in a number of areas, and in 1959 a nationwide meeting of Parish Youth Associations was held. The national assembly of Shrine Boy Scouts took place in 1961.

Most of the educational work carried out through these organizations is connected with the matters referred to in the first section of this paper. Consequently it is difficult, in a sense, to say of them that they have performed the functions of religious organizations, for their work in the field of education is not directed toward developing individual

members into religious personalities. At the level of the local shrine, educational work is of course more individualized and more varied. It includes rites of purification, group pilgrimages to various shrines, individual counseling, group discussions, and the like. Yet even so, in general the purpose seems to be not so much to raise up religious persons but, more, to form ordinary, virtuous Japanese people who will respect their cultural tradition. Whether this purpose is proper to the nature of Shinto per se, or – from the angle of modernization – merely a symptom of pathological backwardness, may be a question worth discussing.

Additional data. Mention should also be made, in this connection, of the special actions undertaken by the Association of Shinto Shrines in order to promote educational activity. Thus in 1956, for example, the Association issued the “Principles of Shinto life,” since 1960 it has been sponsoring training camps for educational leaders, and in 1970 it opened a reading room for the study of Shinto teachings. It has also published many data and reference booklets. As a result of these efforts, local shrines throughout the nation have to some extent become modernized and enabled to carry out educational activities. For the information of the conference participants, it may be helpful to present some statistical data. Table 3 gives a general picture of shrine-related activities and facilities as of 1978. In addition, interesting materials that permit a glimpse of the modernization process are now available. Table 4 shows, for each Prefectural Shrine Association, the kinds of equipment available for educational programs as of 1957 and 1967. The differences between these two years are thus readily apparent.

Table 4 raises a number of questions, but answering them satisfactorily would call for another, more detailed survey. Even on the basis of the data given, however, we can form a few impressions relating to the problem of modernization.

TABLE 3

Shrine-related Activities and Facilities

Item	Area									Total
	Kantō	Hokkaidō	Tōhoku	Chūbu	Hokuriku	Kansai	San'in	Shikoku	Kyūshū-Okinawa	
<i>Activities</i>										
Lectures	345	8	264	233	182	315	386	107	300	2,140
Exhibitions	155	5	41	85	23	79	65	7	50	510
Movies	132	4	82	172	79	208	95	56	73	901
Theatricals	156	4	172	262	27	81	140	31	460	1,333
Athletic meets	35	2	36	45	7	31	29	13	86	284
Group excursions	463	8	171	386	110	356	211	65	97	1,867
Seasonal day-nurseries	34	0	31	1	14	148	20	3	28	279
Radio gymnastic exercises	450	4	154	387	494	302	247	55	184	2,277
Seminars	181	2	35	77	21	292	87	11	56	762
Children's Club meetings	194	0	43	100	43	94	93	20	129	716
Boy Scout meetings	25	3	13	22	28	31	11	10	8	151
Youth Association meetings	91	3	77	374	44	73	64	30	63	819
Women's Association meetings	119	8	108	434	24	159	205	73	113	1,243
Fellowship Group meetings	378	10	175	302	186	220	159	53	40	1,523
Other	239	9	91	185	25	385	121	84	80	1,219
<i>Affiliated facilities</i>										
Kindergartens	62	0	21	4	6	35	8	4	10	150
Schools	1	0	4	2	1	3	2	0	4	17
Libraries	8	0	1	2	1	3	1	1	1	18
Museums	17	1	9	14	15	25	19	5	14	119
Botanical gardens	5	0	3	5	5	5	2	2	2	29
Zoos	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	3	6
Gymnasiums	8	2	1	2	0	2	3	0	3	21
Athletic fields	105	0	40	23	6	13	26	5	32	250
<i>Social service facilities</i>										
Personal counseling rooms	8	2	10	2	1	29	5	3	4	64
Marriage counseling rooms	17	1	10	10	3	53	8	8	4	114
Medical clinics	1	0	0	0	0	2	4	0	0	7
Meeting rooms	932	7	197	778	247	268	186	49	178	2,842
Lodgings	33	1	13	17	1	37	18	11	3	134
Children's halls	15	0	2	9	0	0	9	0	0	35
Children's play parks	426	2	138	821	141	89	116	56	175	1,964

Source: Jinja Honchō 1978.

TABLE 4

Prefectural Shrine Association
Educational Equipment,
1957 and 1967

Prefecture	Equipment					
	Slide Projectors	8 mm Projectors	16 mm Projectors	Record Players	Tape Recorders	Loudspeakers
Tokyo	0-P	0	0-P	0-P	0-P	0-P
Kanagawa	(19)	0	2 P	(22)	0-P	(6)
Saitama	(5)	(1)	(1)	(7)	(3)	(4)
Gunma	10 P	0-P	0	1 P	0-P	0-P
Chiba	0-P	0	0	0	0-P	0-P
Ibaraki	(4)	0	0-P	0-P	3 P	5 P
Tochigi	7 P	(1)	3 P	(10)	2 P	1 P
Yamanashi	4 P	0-P	0	25 P	(1)	2 P
Hokkaido	5 P	0	(1)	(2)	(2)	(1)
Miyagi	8 P	0	0	(8)	(2)	0
Fukushima	23 P	0	0-P	1 P	1 P	0
Iwate	5 P	0-P	(1)	0	1 P	0
Aomori	(7)	0	0	3 P	1 P	2 P
Yamagata	6 P	0	(1)	3 P	1 P	3 P
Akita	6 P	0-P	0	0	0-P	0
Mie	9 P	1 P	1 P	(48)	4 P	10 P
Aichi	13 P	0	(1)	(16)	5 P	0-P
Shizuoka	16 P	0	0-P	(6)	1 P	5 P
Gifu	7 P	0-P	2 P	1	1 P	0-P
Nagano	8 P	0	0-P	0-P	1 P	0
Niigata	20 P	0-P	(2)	0	1 P	2 P
Fukui	21 P	0	4 P	8	3 P	6 P
Ishikawa	3 P	0	0	26 P	0-P	2 P
Toyama	3 P	1 P	0	4 P	1 P	0

TABLE 4 – *Continued*

Prefecture	Equipment					
	Slide Projectors	8 mm Projectors	16 mm Projectors	Record Players	Tape Recorders	Loudspeakers
Kyoto	3 P	1 P	(2)	(8)	8 P	4 P
Osaka	(6)	(1)	(2)	(15)	3 P	0
Hyōgo	26 P	(3)	1 P	(43)	7 P	20 P
Nara	5 P	0	0	(23)	(2)	(4)
Shiga	(4)	0	0	0	3 P	0
Wakayama	(3)	0	(2)	(2)	0	0
Tottori	1 P	0	0	(2)	0-P	0
Shimane	(6)	0	3 P	(12)	1 P	(2)
Okayama	(6)	0	0	(6)	2 P	(2)
Hiroshima	5 P	0	(1)	28 P	(3)	0-P
Yamaguchi	12 P	0	0	1 P	(5)	0
Tokushima	5 P	0	0-P	0-P	2 P	0-P
Kagawa	2 P	(1)	(1)	(15)	2 P	2 P
Ehime	1 P	0	2 P	1 P	0-P	1 P
Kōchi	3 P	0-P	0-P	2 P	0-P	0
Nagasaki	(5)	0	0	(5)	(1)	(3)
Fukuoka	42 P	0	(1)	(26)	3 P	15 P
Ōita	(4)	0	0	(3)	0-P	(1)
Saga	(2)	0	0	(3)	2 P	(3)
Kumamoto	4 P	0	0	(6)	0	1 P
Miyazaki	2 P	0	(1)	(1)	(1)	0
Kagoshima	1 P	0	0	(5)	1 P	(1)

Source: Jinja Honchō 1958, 1968.

Note: "P" means "possessed as of 1967." Parentheses mean that the item referred to, though used in 1957, was no longer in use as of 1967.

Here I shall restrict myself to one impression.

The "O-P" symbol indicates a change, such that a given Prefectural Shrine Association which did not possess a certain piece of educational equipment as of 1957 came to possess it as of 1967. The total number of such symbols is 37. Conversely, the parentheses indicate a change of such a kind that an item in use as of 1957 was no longer in use as of 1967. The total number of such symbols is 73. The difference between these two figures suggests to me something about the degree of modernization that took place during this particular ten-year period. That is to say, the kinds of equipment listed here, being available to few people in 1957, had an effective function at that time, but after ten years during which the socioeconomic situation changed rapidly, this was no longer the case. This inference is supported by two facts: (1) the item that fell into greatest disuse was the record player, and (2) the prefecture that possessed all the items listed as of 1957 but made use of none of them as of 1967 is Saitama – which borders Tokyo and stands out as a prime example of rapid urbanization.

SHINTO AND CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL CHANGE

Example 1. Fuji Sengen Shrine. As is well known, there are in the Shinto tradition many mountains regarded as *shintai* or "kami embodying mountains." The classic example of such a mountain is Mt. Fuji. In order to clarify this fact and obtain legal support for it, Fuji Sengen sought a court decision, but the court refused to consider the matter, and in 1954 Mt. Fuji became national government property. Three years later it became public knowledge that there was a plan to construct a cable car line on the Yamanashi Prefecture side of the mountain, and in 1959 a request to permit construction was resubmitted to the government. Observing this development, the shrine again took the matter to court. In 1962 it was finally decided that the top twenty

percent of Mt. Fuji belongs to the shrine.

Example 2. Nikkō Tōshōgū shrine. The degree of development in transportation media is doubtless one criterion by which to measure a society's modernization. Japan's transportation development began, of course, in the Meiji period, but since 1960, in conjunction with the spread of the automobile, the speed at which this development has taken place is almost unbelievable. As a result, demands for highway construction were heard from every side, and this situation led in turn to conflicts over shrine-owned land.

In the case of Nikkō Tōshōgū shrine, this kind of problem took a special form. In 1964 the Ministry of Construction, in order to widen the road that runs alongside the shrine precincts, ordered the felling of a number of Japanese cedars belonging to the shrine. Among the threatened trees was one nicknamed "Tarō," estimated to be over a thousand years old. The shrine, in order to maintain the dignity of its precincts and save "Tarō," brought suit. Its claim was supported, first by a District Court in 1969 and again by a High Court in 1973.

Several examples of this type of problem can be found. As a matter of information, they will listed and identified briefly.

(1) Nangū shrine in Gifu Prefecture. In this case the Tōkaidō super-express train was to run, according to the original plan, right through the shrine precincts, cutting them in two. This was in 1959. The plan was changed in 1961.

(2) The Grand Shrine of Ise. In 1960 the Japan Highway Public Corporation submitted to Mie Prefecture a plan for the construction of a highway. Since the plan threatened to ruin the natural beauty of the shrine precincts, the shrine office opposed it. The following year, the plan was changed. Similar problems arose in 1971 and 1973, but by this time the shrine had organized an Environmental Protection Com-

mittee. As a result of its actions, trouble was averted.

(3) Meiji Shrine. In 1959 the Japan Highway Public Corporation proposed to make one of the national highways cut through the shrine grounds. The success of the opposition to this plan is gratifying because for Tokyo citizens, deprived of almost all greenery by the city's urbanization, the shrine precincts constitute an important oasis.

(4) Suwa Grand Shrine. In this case too, a plan was made for an industrial development highway that would have cut through the kami embodying mountain of the shrine. This plan was revised in 1966.

In view of cases like these, the Association of Shinto Shrines, in 1971, initiated a survey of shrine trees in order to see how much pollution-caused damage they have suffered, appealing to each local shrine to give heed to this matter. Two years later, it gave more constructive form to this action by sending to every shrine in Japan a notice to carry out a tree-planting program.

Example 3. Hokkaido Jingū shrine. In this case the index of modernization was a mass-communication medium. In 1970 the Japan Broadcasting Corporation drew up a plan that would have entailed erecting a television tower on the summit of the shrine mountain, Jinjayama. In order to maintain the dignity due any shrine, the shrine office opposed the plan, and it was changed the following year.

One other case of this kind is that of Sakurai Shrine in the city of Takamatsu. In this case Japan Airlines, in order to put into effect its plan to enlarge the airport in the vicinity of the shrine, asked the shrine to move. That was in 1962, and of course the shrine rejected the proposal.

Example 4. Ikuta Shrine in Kobe. Historically, prayers for safety in travel have long been common in the Shinto tradition, but since the 1960s, they have become even more

widespread among private car owners. Ikuta Shrine, being located in the midst of a cluster of city buildings, constructed a parking lot within its precincts in order to carry out more effectively its rituals of prayer for safety. The city Tax Office, however, raised the question whether this could rightly be recognized as a religious activity. Thereupon, the shrine office clarified its stance, holding that the ritual purification and prayer for safety, as religious acts, are to be distinguished from the administering of the parking lot, a secular activity. This was in 1970.

About the same time, there was another shrine, this one in Tokyo, that had a parking facility built into the basement of its main building. This step was taken both to respond to the request of those living near the shrine and to obtain a steady income. It caused, however, great disturbance at the Association of Shinto Shrines because it violated both shrine dignity and the tradition that the main shrine building should stand directly on the earth. The Association response was to send to every shrine in the country a statement expressing its deep regret over this matter.

Example 5. Kanda Shrine. In order to look at another aspect of the relationship between Shrine Shinto and contemporary social change, I would like, in this last example, to introduce a matter of a somewhat different type. Kanda Shrine is located in downtown Tokyo, and its festival has been known since the Tokugawa period (1603-1867) as one of the three greatest Tokyo festivals. This festival, however, was discontinued for several years beginning in 1945. People sought to revive it from about 1952, but the police, for traffic-control reasons, hedged it about with regulations. Yet this festival, despite the rapid urbanization of Tokyo, has been carried out on a grand scale since about 1968. To some extent this reflects the tendency to develop a festival that will attract sightseers, to be sure, but when the Kanda Festival is com-

pared with others, this factor becomes practically negligible. It seems reasonable to suggest, therefore, that the urbanization process may tend not only toward an all-embracing secularization but also, and at the same time, toward a situation in which people seek to recover their traditional value orientation. Members of urbanized society seek, in other words, to revitalize their own humanity.

I should also mention at this point the fact that since about 1970 a number of traditional religious practices and festivals have been revived. To cite only a few examples, the festival popularly known as Onzo Festival of Ubue Shrine in Shizuoka was restored in 1968, and the Tanba Festival of Namami Tenmangū shrine in Kyoto Prefecture was resurrected in 1970 after an interval of a hundred years. It is also noteworthy that at Kasuga Shrine in Nara Prefecture, an "Association to Honor Kasuga Traditions" was founded in 1974, and that as a result of its activities a number of ancient rites have been brought back to life.

PROBLEMS OF SOCIAL CHANGE UNDERSTOOD AS
"MODERNIZATION" AND "SECULARIZATION"

Festival days and New Years days. To seek to rationalize a way of life with every means available is one of the most important elements in the idea of modernization. In Japan, this idea was given public statement by a women's organization in 1957, and they urged that it be put into practice as follows: (1) in celebrating New Years, use a printed picture of a pine tree instead of a real one, (2) economize on the celebrations for children reaching the ages of three, five, and seven, and (3) consolidate shrine festival days. The second point aside, this movement had a considerable impact on the Shinto tradition. With regard to the first point, the pine tree or pine branches known as *kadomatsu* symbolize our invitation to the ancestral kami to celebrate New Years with us. If replaced by a mere piece of paper, the essential

meaning of this religious custom would be wiped out. In point of fact, since that time the attitude of Japanese people toward New Years has, I believe, changed in a radical and quite unprecedented way. As for the third point, the shrines have not taken favorably to the idea of changing their festival days because the festival is supposed to be celebrated on a day that has a special meaning for the festival. Since that time, however, one can discern a tendency to change the festival from its original day to Sunday, especially in the cities, so as to attract as many people as possible. It seems true to say, therefore, that in this respect the modernization process has exerted a great influence on the Shinto tradition.

In connection with this tendency, there are other phenomena that also need to be considered. One is the increase in the number of people who visit shrines during the first three days of the new year. This has become especially noticeable since 1970. In that year the number was 45,120,000, the next year 52,340,000. In 1972 it was 54,180,000, and in 1973 it mounted to 58,600,000. In order to consider the matter more exactly, the statistics presented

TABLE 5

Shrines Visited during the Fiscal Year 1977

Range in Number of Visitors	Shrines in this Range
300 - 499	9,568
500 - 999	4,476
1,000 - 2,999	2,707
3,000 - 4,999	1,094
5,000 - 9,999	1,017
10,000 - 99,999	430
100,000 -	130

Source: Jinja Honchō 1978.

in table 5 may be of some use. The question is: what does this phenomenon mean? From a sociological viewpoint, more particularly, it is necessary to determine whether this phenomenon can be taken as an index of the desire of Japanese people for their traditional religion – a desire that the modern, rationalized way of life does not satisfy.

Commercialization. The next phenomenon to be considered is the trend toward commercialization that may arise from the process of rationalization. In the case of Shinto, wedding ceremonies, celebrations for three-, five-, and seven-year-old children, and New Years dishes have long been commercialized, and in 1973 even shrine talismans became department store items. This treatment of shrine talismans sprang from the distinctly Japanese social atmosphere written up in the newspapers as the “entrance examination hell.” Here the secularizing influence is indubitable.

Population depletion. When urbanization is taking place in one part of the country, it stands to reason that emigration is taking place simultaneously in some other part. This tendency became conspicuous in Japan from about 1965, so in 1968 the Association of Shinto Shrines undertook a preliminary investigation of the situation. Two years later it surveyed the situation of shrines with fewer than fifty households, and at that time all reported that they could manage without outside help. In 1972, however, when a survey of Kōchi Prefecture was carried out, it became clear that of the total of 2,205 shrines, 84 were already moribund, 19 were precarious, and 235 had neither priest nor parish representatives. In order to grasp this situation in perspective, it is also necessary to know that the total number of priests for the entire prefecture was only 288, of whom as many as 238 held concurrent secular jobs. This emigration phenomenon continued until about 1975. Since then, it seems

to have levelled off.

What to do about shrines where people to perform the services are no longer present is one of the problems in Shinto. The most common procedure is to co-enshrine the kami in a nearby shrine. If, however, the kami concerned has a special relationship to the territory of his original enshrinement or has to be served by a particular family, it is possible to pray for his or her ascension. At this point it may be important to mention that it is also possible to build a shrine in a place where people no longer live. Thus in 1963 a new damsite saw the erection of Dengen Shrine (“Shrine of the source of electrical power”).

Population concentration. Concentration of dwellings is also a representative index of urbanization. The problem for an established religion like Shinto stems from the fact that concentrated housing units are usually constructed in areas remote from ordinary residential areas – and in these remote areas there are no shrines.

Moreover, in an application of the rationalization principle to limited space, new housing projects leave no room in their original plan for a Shinto altar. In response to this situation, the Association of Shinto Shrines has begun to urge the use of a small altar that can be suitably situated in the dwelling.

It should also be reported that there are some cases in which residents of new housing units take it on themselves to build a shrine in their locality. To my knowledge, this happened in the city of Hikone in 1970 and in the city of Ichihara in 1972.

Academic disciplines and terrorism. One rather unusual phenomenon is that in which the desire to engage in scientific research serves to promote the secularization process. So far as Shinto is concerned, the discipline most active in this regard is archaeology, recently joined by other disciplines

from the humanities. On occasion they request permission to open and study kami embodying objects of worship. For example, the Ministry of Education Agency for Cultural Affairs, in 1975, sought permission to examine the object of worship of Suwa Shrine in Hokkaido. The shrine denied the request. The Association of Shinto Shrines had already distributed, in 1972, a notice advising the shrines, for the sake of maintaining the dignity of the Shinto tradition, not to comply with any such request.

Terrorism may seem an odd kind of subject to present for consideration here, but in fact it has an important impact on Shrine Shinto. Since 1960, a sizable number of shrines have suffered damage through arson. Because of this state of affairs in society, most of the large shrines now close their gates at night. This means that people can no longer go to the shrine for prayer whenever they like. As a result, the image people hold of the shrine has changed considerably, especially in metropolitan areas.

In connection with this matter of the changed shrine image (but without direct connection to the other facts just introduced), the Association of Shinto Shrines put into effect, beginning in 1970, a plan calling for the appointment of certain priests to a special mission, namely, to devote their talents and energies to serving declassified shrines. To date, the results reported appear quite satisfactory.

Recruitment, retirement, and ritual forms. Before concluding this paper, I should like to indicate three other problems having to do with Shrine Shinto's readiness to adapt to contemporary society. The first is that of the priest.

According to statistics showing the state of affairs as of the end of 1976, there were then 79,083 shrines belonging to the Association of Shinto Shrines, but only 18,235 priests. Among the latter, 11,239 (11,054 men and 185 women) were chief priests. This means that, on the average, one chief

priest served over seven shrines. Under these circumstances, it is almost inconceivable that they could carry on educational activities anywhere near adequate enough to meet the new needs to which contemporary social change may give rise. For Shrine Shinto, therefore, the training of as many good and able priests as possible is a matter of utmost importance. But in this connection Shinto faces a problem, namely, that the great majority of local shrines are served, generation after generation, by members of particular households. This is why most people who succeed to the priestly vocation carry out their tasks without any religious passion. This manifestly makes it even more difficult to change the situation from within.

Second, even in the case of what were formerly classified as national or governmental shrines, succession to the office of chief priest tends to be hereditary. Moreover, since there is no age-limit system in the Shinto world, young priests tend to lose their ardor before reaching a position where they can make use of their abilities. This makes the situation even worse. Recently, however, some shrines have begun to institute a mandatory retirement system.

Third is the problem of rules governing ritual procedures. Following the Meiji restoration, the various historic rituals were simplified. In a sense, this was the first step in the modernization of Shinto. In 1948, however, because of the radically changed status of the shrines, the ritual forms were revised. In 1970, after two decades of social change, they were revised again. This time, it was decided to revert to the ritual forms in use twenty years earlier, since the majority of priests regarded the ritual procedures of the Meiji period as better. For present purposes, the question whether this decision was right is not important, for the basic problem of Shinto ritual is whether to preserve traditional ritual forms or to make drastic changes. To illustrate, at present there is no provision in the ritual forms for active participation

by those in attendance. As a result, they often feel bored and lose all religious intensity. In order to meet the needs of today's people, it would seem necessary to make the rituals more spirited.

By way of conclusion, I venture to say that Shrine Shinto is for the most part too much in thrall to its own history. Whether this is intrinsic to the nature of Shinto, I do not yet know. It is my firm conviction, however, that every individual who adheres to the Shinto tradition today should devote himself to raising up Japanese people who will follow the way of religious Shinto and, through doing so, at once uphold the traditional value orientation of Japanese culture and make some contribution to the welfare of mankind.

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