State Shinto and the Use of Shrines in Japanese Colonies

By Cary S. Takagaki

In the third month of 1868, the newly formed Meiji government announced its intention to return to the *ritsuryo* system of government that had been in place during the Nara and Heian periods. This was a system that held to the concept of unity between church and state (*saisei itchi*). Thus, the Jingikan, Office of (Shinto) Deities (often translated as Office of Kami Worship), was revived in that same month as one of seven departments in the Dajokan, the administrative organ of the state, and in an attempt to "purify" the tradition, a policy of separating Buddhism from Shinto (*shinbutsu bunri-rei*) was adopted.[1] However, in July of 1869, the Jingikan was given the highest rank of all government offices, placing it above the Dajokan, and in the following year an Imperial Rescript on the Enshrinement of the Kami was issued, asserting that, along with various Shinto gods, all the emperors of Japan were to be worshiped as *kami*:

> Now that the imperial dignity has passed to Us, small and frail of form though we be, we are afraid both night and day that there will be some want in Our performance of the Imperial duties. We thereby enshrine with the Jingikan (The Office of *Kami* Worship), the *kami* of Heaven and Earth, together with the eight *kami* of Kamimusubi-no-kami, Takamimusubi-no-kami, Tamatsu-memusubi-no-kami, Ikumusubi-no-kami, Taramusubi-no-kami, Omiyame-no-kami, Miketsukami and Kotoshironushi-no-kami, and along with them, the souls of all past Emperors. By this rescript, we vow to worship and serve them reverently. It is Our desire that all the people of the realm will respectfully conform to this act.[2]

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[1] For a discussion of the role of the Jingikan in English, see Nelly Naumann, "The State Cult of the Nara and Early Heian Periods," in John Breen and Mark Teeuwen. *Shinto in History* (Richmond, Surrey: Curzon Press, 2000), pp. 47-67.

[2] Stuart D.B. Picken, *Sourcebook in Shinto* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2004), p. 93. The "eight *kami*" refer to the "Eight Deities of the *Jingikan,*" (*hasshinden*) which first appeared in the *Kogoshui* of 807. See Naumann, p. 55.

With this rescript the emperor was promoted as a *kami* in human form (*arahitogami*), as were his ancestors, and this explained his "divine" status (i.e., *akitsu mi kami*).[3]

A second rescript, the Imperial Rescript on the Dissemination of the Great Teaching (*Daikyo Senpu*), was issued in February of 1870. This reasserted the unity of religion and the state and proclaimed a commitment to spread an "official" Shinto:

> With the greatest respect, We have considered how our ancestral *kami* established the basis of the nation, how they ordained the imperial succession which should be transmitted through the ages and how those in that succession subsequently pointed the Way. Thus was worship and government united, as were the minds of the people. As the way of government was taught from Heaven, the manners of the people, even to the humblest, became elegant...As reign succeeds reign, we stand at the beginning of an age when all things will be renewed. It is therefore an appropriate time to make clear the original and fundamental teaching about government in Japan, Our direct Imperial rule in the Unity of Worship and Government, and through this act, to make plain to the realm, the Great Way of Restoration.
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> We hereby appoint teachers (*senkyoshi*) with instructions to disseminate the Way throughout the nation. Our subjects, give heed to this rescript.[4]

The above mentioned *senkyoshi*, Office of Proselytizers, was established within the Jingikan to carry out the task of disseminating "the Way."

In 1871 the Dajokan continued its policy of bringing Shinto under its control by making all shrines government institutions. Thus, Ise Shrine became the head shrine under which all other shrines in Japan were ranked, and all Shinto priests were dismissed and new ones appointed by the government.[5]

These policies appear to reflect a concern by the new Meiji government to return to the ideal of a state where the emperor held actual, and not only titular, power. But, of

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[3] Murakami Shigeyoshi. *Nihon hyakunen no shukyo* (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1968), p. 141.
[4] Picken, pp. 92-93.
[5] For details of the shrine system and ranks of Shinto priests see, Wilbur M. Fridell, "The Establishment of Shrine Shinto." *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies*, vol. 2, no 2-3 (June-September 1975), pp. 145-159.

course what was really at work here was an attempt by the oligarchs of the fledgling government to establish a strong nation state by utilizing the religious authority of the emperor to gain the support of the people and to legitimize the state's authority. Although the revival of eighth century institutions may seem archaic, the utilization of symbols such as the emperor and traditions such as Shinto, facilitated the transformation of Japan into a modern nation state. Japan, of course, was not unique in this respect—almost all states at one time or another have legitimized themselves with links to the sacred, and almost all religions, at one time or another, have claimed the authority to make themselves the basis of governments.

Accordingly, when Shinto came to be seen as a hindrance in the nation building process the government took steps to lessen its power. This was seen when, on August 8, 1871, the office of the Jingikan was abolished, and its role was assumed by the Jingisho, Ministry of *Kami* Worship (sometimes translated as Ministry of Shinto Deities). As the office was now just one of many ministries, its rank was lower than it had been. On March 14 1872, the status of Shinto was further diminished when the Jingisho was incorporated into a Ministry of Religions (Kyobusho). It seems that the role of religion, and specifically Shinto in the nation building process gradually came to be reassessed as the Meiji oligarchs came to recognize that the administrators in the Jingikan were not able, or were unwilling, to adapt to the reality of religious tolerance being a fundamental tenet of the modern nation state:

> Iwakura [of the Iwakura Mission, 1871-1873] headed a mission to negotiate revision of treaties, and everywhere he went he encountered the demand for freedom for Christian missionaries to proselytize freely within Japan as a precondition for negotiation. Toleration in religious matters was clearly one of the accoutrements of a modern nation Japan needed to gain recognition as such by her trading partners. It was evident that some

compromise with Christianity was inevitable, but Shinto leaders remained adamantly opposed.[6]

Thus, it appears to have been the intractable attitude of the Shinto clergy that was at issue here, and not the use of Shinto per se. Accordingly, the government remained committed to utilizing Shinto to mould Japanese citizens. Therefore, just a month after the establishment of the Ministry of Religion, the government established the Office of the Great Teaching (Taikyoin), mandating it to promote three precepts, or principles, that were to be held by all Japanese: "(1) 'respect the *kami* deities and love the country,' (2) 'observe the way of heaven and practice the way of humanity,' (3) 'serve the emperor and respect the will of the imperial court.'"[7]

However, owing to the government's ability to control those who could propagate the teachings (i.e., the *kyodoshoku*), the state's control of Buddhism and its blatant use of Shinto soon came under fire by both secular and religious elements.[8] Mori Arinori, Japan's first envoy to Washington from 1871 to 1873, criticized the percepts, arguing that this showed the government's lack of concern for freedom of religion, and Shimaji

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[6] Helen Hardacre, *Shinto and the State, 1868-1988* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), p. 31.

[7] Yusa Michiko. *Japanese Religious Traditions* (Upper Saddle N.J.: Prentice Hall Inc., 2002), p. 96.

"…this *Taikyoin* was a privately funded body, set up with government approval in January 1873 at the suggestion of representatives of the majority of Buddhist sects to coordinate propaganda, and to serve as a forum for cross-sect discussion on a range of issues…[but] the *Taikyoin* was effectively hijacked by a pro-Shinto lobby, and rapidly metamorphosed into a closely monitored institute for Shinto-propaganda." Nitta Hitoshi, "Shinto as a 'non-religion': the Origins and Development of an Idea", in John Breen and Mark Teeuwen. *Shinto in History* (Richmond, Surrey: Curzon Press, 2000), p. 254.

[8] "Under regulations issued in April and July 1874, all temple abbots and anyone wishing to preach had to undergo training, pass tests and be ranked as *kyodoshoku*, and so the implication of the government's retention of this right to appoint them was that it had won the *de facto* right to appoint and dismiss all Buddhist priests." Nitta, p. 260.

Mokurai (1838-1911), a Buddhist priest of Nishi Hongan-ji, asked that religious groups be allowed to remain independent of the Taikyoin: "Mori and Shimaji pointed out the contradiction between the Western concept of separation of church and state and the government's program for popular education, which relied on the clergy as teachers."[9]

Thus, the government came to recognize the problems with its relation to religious traditions, and in March of 1875 issued the following memorial:

> The *Kyobusho* and Buddhist and Shinto propagandists (*kyodoshoku*) should be abolished, the administration of ritual should be placed under the jurisdiction, as before, of the *Shikiburyo*; shrine priests should be entrusted with ritual at national and regional shrines. Preaching should be left to those who wish to engage in it. People should be free to select which religion, if any, they wish to adhere to; this will not be a matter for the court or for the law. [10]

Thus, in April of 1875, the government mandated that religious organizations create their own educational institutions and, as long as they promoted the Three Principles, be allowed to propagate their teachings unimpeded by the government, This rendered the Taikyoin redundant, and in the following month it was dismantled. In November of the same year the Meiji government issued a verbal agreement to religious freedom: "Far from supporting the government, religion at this time, owing to the divisions it was itself causing, simply added to the government's woes. It would hardly be surprising if the government began now to doubt the value of religion and to seek to distance itself from it."[11]

Nevertheless, the Meiji government was unwilling to abandon completely the use of Shinto traditions in the nation building process. Therefore, in keeping with its now

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[9] Kasahara Kazuo, ed. *A History of Japanese Religion*, translated by Paul McCarthy and Gaynor Sekimori. (Tokyo: Kosei Publishing Co., 2001), p. 528.
[10] Nitta, pp. 257-258.
[11] Ibid, p. 259.

official recognition of the separation of church and state, it came to promote what it called Shrine Shinto, which, it argued, was not a religion, and in a category different from Sect Shinto, which, it argued, was a religion.

Tanaka Yoritsune, chief priest of the Ise Shrine, and Senge Takatomi, chief priest of the Izumo Shrine, argued for this viewpoint, that is, that Shinto could be seen as a non-religion:

> The fact that the words for both 'ritual' and 'government' are read *matsurigoto* in Japanese constitutes a great teaching, a constant reminder of origins. This teaching is the source of all the teachings of the world. This teaching has been inherited by emperors over the ages and there was never a change to its substance. Consequently, there is no distinction between deity and emperor: the Way of the kami (*shinto*) and the Way of the emperor (*kodo*) are one and the same. Here lies the essence of Japanese teachings; all ethics springs from here; the foundation of the *kokutai* lies here. These teachings we also know as *kannagara no michi*, the Way that sprang from the deities and is coeval with the deities. It should be clear as day that this *kannagara no michi* is not to be spoken of in the same breath as those religions that were founded by the wisdom of men.[12]

The argument, then, was that, "Shinto was synonymous with the Imperial Way, and so it was not possible to view it as one with other religions. Shinto was above those other religions and so was non-religious."[13]

In January 1877, the Ministry of Religion was dissolved and a new Bureau of Shrines and Temples, Shajikyoku, was established in the Home Ministry. This was the first step in separating the administrative and religious aspects of religious institutions. Accordingly, in 1900, the Shajikyoku was replaced by the Shukyokyoku (Bureau for Religions), which dealt with Buddhism and other "religious" traditions, and the

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[12] "Daikyokan setchi kengensho," as translated in, Nitta, p. 262. For the original Japanese, see, Sakamoto Ken'ichi, *Meiji Shintoshi no kenkyu* (Tokyo: Kokusho Kankokai, 1973), pp. 300-303.

[13] Nitta, p. 262, quoting Sasaki Seishi, in the article, "Meiji 23nen Jingikan setchi undo to Yamada Akiyoshi," in *Nihon daigaku seishin bunka kenkyujo kyoiku seido kenkyujo* 18 (1985), p. 96-97.

Jinjakyoku (Bureau of Shrines), which dealt with shrines. As the politician Oda Kan'ichi (1856-1909) noted: "Finally, in the year 1900, the government understood. It split the earlier *Shajikyoku* into a *Jinjakyoku* and a *Shukyokyoku*. The former now takes responsibility for what we mean by state Shinto; the latter is charged with Christianity, Buddhism and the various sects of Shinto—what we might call religious Shinto…"[14]

Thus, the argument went, when the Japanese government actively promoted State Shinto, either at home or abroad, it was not promoting or privileging one religion over another, it was simply endorsing nationalistic ceremonies and ideologies.

Overseas Shinto

In the prewar years Shinto spread to meet the needs of Japanese emigrants, and this was the case even when that emigration was domestic. Thus, when the government offered subsidies and encouragement to former samurai to move to Hokkaido, they brought with them their local deities. For example, "In Ebetsu, a statue of Kato Kiyomasa (1362-1611), the daimyo of Kumamoto, on Kyushu, that the ex-warrior colonists had carried with them from Kumamoto as the symbol of the deity of Nishikiyama Shrine in Kumamoto at once became the guardian *kami* of the entire settlement."[15]

Japanese emigrants going overseas also brought their deities with them. In Hawaii in 1898, Hilo Daijingu, enshrining Amaterasu, was established.[16] Amaterasu was also enshrined in Tokyo Shokumin Chi Jingu ("Tokyo Colony Shrine") in Brazil: "Japanese expatriate communities were organized very much like the prefectural associations in

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[14] Sakamoto Koremaru. "The Structure of State Shinto: its Creation, Development and demise," in John Breen and Mark Teeuwen. *Shinto in History* (Richmond, Surrey: Curzon Press, 2000), p. 273.
[15] Kasahara (2001), p. 538.
[16] Maeda Takakazu, *Hawai no jinjashi* (Tokyo: Taimeido, 1999), p. 12.

Japan's big cities that maintain local identity, with the shrine as the focus of social cohesion. Overseas shrines provided a spiritual bond with the home country…overseas shrines helped expatriates maintain their Japanese culture."[17]

This would explain the choice of Amaterasu as the main deity in these shrines. However, the case was different on the continent.

Shanghai Shrine, established in 1933, was supported by local Japanese residents, as was Kyoryu Shrine in Pusan, Korea (established in 1894; the name of this shrine was changed to Ryutozan Shrine in 1899). The former shrine was dedicated to Amaterasu, Emperor Meiji, and Emperor Jimmu, emphasizing imperial Japan in a cosmopolitan urban center. However, the latter shrine was dedicated to Amaterasu, Omononushi no Kami, and Kunitama Daijin, the latter two gods associated with managing land, or making land habitable, as well as Uwatsutsu no O no Mikami, Nakatsutsu no O no Mikami, and Sokotsutsu no O no Mikami. According to the eighth century history, *Nihonshoki*, the latter three gods, referred to as the Sumiyoshi no Sanjin, guided the regent, Empress Jingu (a.k.a., Empress Jinko), in her conquest of Silla in the third century.[18] This, perhaps, reflects the view of the Japanese residents of Shanghai and Korea—they were not simply emigrants who needed a connection to their Japanese heritage, they were also in some sense imperialists with intentions on their new homes.

Given the conscious use of Shinto by the early oligarchs of the Meiji government, it follows that the tradition would also be used overseas once Japan adopted imperialism

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[17] Kasahara (2001), p. 538. For details on the Tokyo Shokumin Chi Jingu, see Ogasawara Sh¦ z?, *Kaigai no jinja* (Tokyo: Yumani Shobo, 2005), pp. 17-18.

[18] Sakamoto Taro, ed. *Nihon shoki*. Nihon koten bungaku taikei, vol. 67 (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1967), p. 340. For an English version of the text see, Aston, W.G. trans. *Nihongi. Chronicles of Japan From the Earliest Times to A.D. 697* (Vermont and Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle Co., 1972), vol. 1, p. 235, 237.

as part of its nation building program; if State Shinto was non-religious, and simply a manifestation of the Imperial Way, then, of necessity, it would have to follow wherever imperial Japan went. However, the spread of Shinto to meet the needs of Japanese emigrants was different than the active promotion of State Shinto in colonies by the government.

In medieval Japan when a warlord's tutelary *kami* was installed as the local deity, the people's worship of that deity signified their submission to his rule. Accordingly, "The Meiji expression of this pattern is to be seen in the placement of Ise as highest shrine in the nation, to which all Japanese were putatively connected by a tie of common descent from the imperial house and a concomitant obligation of obeisance."[19]

Thus, "Just as the Ise cult was extended over the main islands to symbolize the hegemony of the new Meiji regime, colonial subjects of the empire were expected to pay obeisance to Japanese deities as a mark of their submission to imperial authority,"[20] and this was reinforced by the fact that shrines in the colonies were controlled by the Japanese military.

As noted above, with the Meiji Restoration Japan embarked on a policy of domestic imperialism with respect to Hokkaido in order to maintain sovereignty over the island, demarcate its northernmost borders, and to ensure that foreign powers recognized that it was populated by "Japanese." Thus, the establishment of Shinto shrines on the island not only served the needs of the many Japanese who were being encouraged to settle to Hokkaido, but also proved helpful in accomplishing all of these goals.

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[19] Hardacre, p. 84. See also Yoneji Minoru. *Sonraku saishi to kokka tosei* (Tokyo: Ochanomizu shobo, 1974), p. 31.
[20] Hardacre, p. 95.

Sapporo Shrine (ranked as a minor national shrine in 1871, but upgraded to a minor imperial shrine in 1872, and eventually to a major imperial shrine in 1899), was the official shrine of Hokkaido as it had been designated the protecting shrine of the prefecture. This shrine actually replaced the Hakodate Hachimangu in Hakodate, which was connected to the Matsumae, who had been *daimyo* in Hokkaido since the late 16th century. Basically, then, one tutelary deity was replaced by another. But why was this seen as necessary?

The answer lies in the nature of the deities. Hachiman, a god associated with war, was the main deity enshrined by the Matsumae who, when they arrived on the island, were faced with the challenge of subduing the indigenous Ainu population. However, by the beginning of the Meiji period, since the Ainu no longer presented a threat, the situation on the island had changed. Accordingly, the deities Okunitama, Onamuchi, and Sukunahikona came to be housed in the official shrine of the prefecture. These were tutelary gods of newly developed territory: Okunitama "Great Master of the Land," and Onamuchi were seen as deities who could make land habitable, and Sukunahikona was seen as a deity who assisted Okinitama. These, then, were more appropriate gods for the many Japanese immigrants who came from Honshu and Kyushu to cultivate what was, at that time, relatively undeveloped land. However, the promotion of Shinto shrines in Hokkaido not only served the cultural and spiritual needs of the many new Japanese settlers; since Shinto shrines were under government jurisdiction, it also reinforced the control held over the island by the newly formed Meiji government.

Similarly, the promotion of Shinto shrines by the government overseas was also for more than just ministering to the needs of the Japanese in their new homes. This was

especially the case when official shrines were erected in Japan's colonies, where emigration of Japanese was not a primary consideration. Promotion of State Shinto overseas was, in effect, one more method of imposing Japanese hegemony on newly acquired territories.

However, the problem with establishing shrines in Japan's colonies was that, State Shinto, although ostensibly non-religious, could nevertheless be interpreted in such a way as to stress not only the divine origins of the imperial family, but also the Japanese peoples themselves. If this was the case, then where did this leave the peoples of the colonies who were made to participate in ceremonies at Shinto shrines? Did this interpretation not exclude them, to some extent, from Japanese nationalism? Did this not reduce them to second class citizens, permanently the "other'? This problem was recognized by the Japanese themselves:

In the *Shukyo Nenkan* ("Yearbook of Religion"), published in the early part of 1939, Mr. Hideo Horie writes on the subject, "The Shinto Shrine Problem Overseas" ("Kaigai ni okeru Jinja Mondai"). The major problem, argues Mr. Horie, is that of the adjustment of the exclusively nationalistic aspects of State Shinto to the universalism that ought to inhere in constructive international intercourse…[21]

Although recognizing the exclusive nature of State Shinto, Horie argued;

"Shinto must go overseas…as the unique institution of Japanese political expansion…All this, however, does not necessarily involve an exclusive attitude toward non-Japanese peoples. On the contrary, it affords opportunity for sharing the blessings of the matchless Japanese community life with other races and nations and furnishes grounds for the hope thereby these gentile peoples may be deepened in feelings, united in loyalty, and broadened in human benevolence…Shinto…is not a thing which the state or the people of the nation should regard selfishly" [22]

Horie then presents his interpretation of the universal nature of the tradition:

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[21] D.C. Holton, *Modern Japan and Shinto Nationalism* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1943), p. 157.
[22] Ibid., p. 158

"The nationalistic character found in the shrines does not inevitably veto a universal character… Shinto is broad. It includes humanitarianism and righteousness." [23]

Nevertheless, the author still privileges the Japanese, not only as the leaders of their Asian neighbours, but also in being able to thwart the agenda of Western powers which, he argued, had been promoted under the guise of "internationalism":

> The spirit of Shinto, which is the fundamental directive principle of our national life, must be utilized for the purpose of elevating the races of neighboring territories where the national relationships are complicated. Indeed, by means of this spirit of Shinto foreign peoples must also be evangelized. The self-interested internationalism, which has come into existence apart from the give and take of ordinary intercourse and which up to now has fought with the weapons of craft and deception, must be brought to its senses by the saving presence of the pure and holy spirit of Shinto.[24]

The "universal" spirit of Shinto, appears to have been a sense of sincerity, i.e., *makoto*, *magokoro*, or *shinjitsu*.[25] Nevertheless, D.C. Holton, writing in 1942, was able to see clearly the agenda behind this rhetoric:

> In a system of moral and political control under which truth is identified with official standardization it is easy to see how the essence of sincerity becomes conformity. The great liberalizing principle of Shinto, its contribution to the universalizing of the spirit of man comparable with the love of Christianity and the compassion of Buddhism, now, in its practical manifestations, finds its scope of expression only within the specifications of military and political utilitarianism.[26]

Thus, Holtom goes on to observe,

> If Shinto really includes a humanitarianism that is effective in transfusing "self-interested internationalism" with good will, then all concerned must have like access to making contribution to the new whole, and personality, both individual and collective, must be respected. The experience of Japanese-dominated people has brought them deep misgivings on this score, not to say bitter resentment.[27]

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[23] Ibid.
[24] Ibid., p. 158-59.
[25] Ibid., p. 159.
[26] Ibid., p. 162.
[27] Ibid., p. 163.

That is, despite such rhetoric, colonial subjects were acutely aware of the position they occupied, and realized that State Shinto would not allow them to attain parity with mainland Japanese. The reality of this was nowhere more evident than when the question arose as to the enshrining of Koreans who had died in the Russo-Japanese War: "Only a few priests favored enshrining colonials who had died in battle; the majority favored restricting this privilege to 'real' Japanese, by whom they meant those born in the home islands of Japanese parents."[28]

Overseas Shrines

Taiwan became a colony of Japan in 1895 after the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-95, and almost immediately Shinto shrines were erected. In 1900, Taiwan Jinja (later promoted to the higher rank of *jingu*) was established in Taipei, and was given the designation of imperial shrine of major grade (*kampei taisha*), which was, next to Ise, the highest rank for a shrine. It enshrined Prince Kitashirakawa no miya Yoshihisa (1847-95), who had died in the conquest of Taiwan, Amaterasu, and the above mentioned three traditional protective *kami* of newly settled areas, Okunitama, Onamuchi, and Sukunahikona. By 1945, there were some one hundred and thirty three shrines of various size and rank in Taiwan, sixty-eight of which were recognized as *jinja.*[29] Prince Kitashirakawa and the three protective deities were prominent in almost all of these shrines, even to the exclusion of Emperor Meiji, who appears in only a handful of locations, emphasizing the subjugation of the island by the Japanese people.

The Treaty of Portsmouth had granted Japan the southern half of the island of Sakhalin, the part below the 50th parallel, after the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905. In

[28] Hardacre, p. 95.
[29] Sonoda Minoru, ed. *Shinto shi daijiten* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 2004), p. 1211.

1910, Karafuto (the Japanese term for Sakhalin) Shrine was established in the city of Toyohara. This shrine was also given the designation of imperial shrine of major grade, and it too enshrined the three protective deities, no doubt as they were seen as protecting the northernmost limits of the Japanese empire. By the end of the war there were some one hundred and twenty-seven shrines on the island.

When the Japanese took over the railway rights in Manchuria after the Russo-Japanese War, Liaodong Peninsula came under the administration of the governor general of Guandong Province (i.e., the commander of the Guandong Army), and shrines were quickly built in this area of China. Among them were Anto Shrine, established in 1905 and Senzan Shrine, established in 1908.[30] The former enshrined Amaterasu, and the later Amaterasu and Okuninushi mikoto. Bujun Shrine was established in Bujun (Chin., Fushun), and the deities enshrined here were Amaterasu, Okuninushi mikoto, Kanayama hiko no mikoto, and Kanayama Hime no mikoto. Okuninushi mikoto, the "Master of the Great Land," as already seen, was associated with managing land, and the latter two deities, as their names imply, were closely related to mining activities, appropriate in an area where large coal reserves were being exploited.[31] The deities at Ryoyo Shrine, also established in 1909, were Amaterasu, Toyo'uke daijin, Emperor Jimmu, and Emperor Ojin. Amaterasu and Jimmu, of course, represented the imperial and divine tradition of Japan. Toyo'uke daijin, a deity associated with agriculture, was included as the area was being developed for farming, and Emperor Ojin, who was identified with Hachiman, the

[30] Sagai Tatsuru. *Manshu no jinja koboshi* (Tokyo: Fuyo Shobo Shuppan, 1998), p. 21.
[31] Nakano Kyotoku. *Tennosei kokka to shokuminchi dendo* (Tokyo: Kokusho kankokai, 1976), p. 90.

deity of war, was appropriate for an area that had been the site of tension between Japan and Russia since the end of the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-95.[32]

In this way, then, Shinto deities seem to have become not only symbols of Japan's imperialistic aspirations, but also symbols of its economic ambitions in the area.[33]

With the outbreak of war with China, an emergency order sped up the creation and consolidation of shrines overseas. In 1940, there were twenty-seven shrines in China in areas occupied by Japanese, but by the end of the war there were at least fifty.[34] Morever, once the war with China began, there was a shift to enshrine Amaterasu and the Emperor Meiji as the main deities—Amaterasu connected the imperial line to the gods, and Emperor Meiji represented the modern nation state of Japan. Perhaps more importantly, the worship of Emperor Meiji also "…exalts the ideas of the greatness of the national life and the indispensability of its imperial foundation, and assumes more of the aspects of a worship of the state than it does of direct emperor worship."[35]

The Japanese military established seven shrines in Manchukuo in 1933, the year after the creation of the puppet state, and the process of shrine building accelerated rapidly: in 1936, nineteen shrines were built and in 1939, twenty-one.

P'u-i, the last Manchu emperor of China who had abdicated in 1912, was made chief executive of Manchukuo in 1932 by the Japanese Guandong army, and then emperor of Manchukuo in 1934, assuming the name, the Kangde Emperor. His role was purely ceremonial as the September 1932, Protocol Between Japan and Manchukuo

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[32] Ibid., p. 90. For an account of Emperor Ojin as Hachiman, see Brian Bocking, *The Oracles of the Three Shrines* (Richmond, Surrey: Curzon Press, 2001), pp. 60-61.
[33] Nakano, p. 90.
[34] Murakami (1968), p. 144.
[35] D.D. Holtom, *The National Faith of Japan, A Study in Modern Shinto* (London & New York: Kegan Paul, 1995; originally published in 1938), p. 175.

(Nipponkoku Manshukoku Giteisho) left the Japanese government responsible for the security and defence of the state. By 1940 there were 137 shrines in Manchuria. But this was a significant year as it marked the 2,600th year since the traditional date of the founding of the Japanese empire, and so under the guidance of his advisors, P'u-i issued the following imperial rescript:

> Out of his own profound experience and conviction, Emperor Kangte [i.e., Emperor Kangde] has decided to enshrine the spirit of Amaterasu-Omikami in the new national shrine of Manchukuo and to pray for the welfare of Manchurians through the providence of the Sun Goddess. As an auxiliary of the shrine, a shrine dedicated to the memory of those who died for the founding of Manchukuo will also be established.[36]

The rescript emphasized that, although the leader of an autonomous state, the Manchurian emperor voluntarily sought the protection of Japanese gods for the people of Manchukuo. The principal deities enshrined in the puppet state were Amaterasu (in one hundred and twenty-seven of the country's shrines), Emperor Meiji (in seventy-four shrines), and Okuninushi no mikoto (in thirty shrines). However, these deities, of course, reflected the ambitions of the Japanese Guandong army in having created this state; the former two deities representing the presence of Imperial Japan in the region, and the latter a commitment to the taming of the resources of the land.[37] Not surprisingly then, with the beginning of the Pacific War and the resulting glorification of the Japanese empire, shrine building increased, more than doubling, and there were 302 shrines in the state by 1945

In 1919, Chosen Shrine (Jinja, later Jingu) was established in Seoul, the site of the Japanese Governor General of Korea. This shrine was given the designation of imperial shrine of major grade, appropriate for the capital of a Japanese colony, and housed

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[36] Holton (1943), p. 170.
[37] Nakano, p. 90.

Amaterasu and Emperor Meiji. By 1937, there were also four National Shrines of Minor Grade *kokuheisha*, fifty-three *jinja*, and three hundred and fifteen small shrines (i.e, *jinshi*) in the colony.[38]

In 1939, two years after the start of the Sino-Japanese War, Fuyo Jingu was established in Puyo (Jpn., Fuyo) the ancient capital of Paekche, one of the three kingdoms that occupied the Korean peninsula from the first century B.C.E. to 668 of the common era. Given the city's historical significance, the shrine was accorded the rank of an imperial shrine of major grade. Appropriately, the four *kami* enshrined here were figures associated with the conquest of Korea in the past. They were, Emperor Ojin, Empress Saimei, Emperor Tenji, and Empress Jingu. Tradition holds that Ojin's mother, Empress Jingu, when pregnant with him, put a stone in her sash to delay his birth, and set off for Korea, which consequently recognized Japan's suzerainty when she subdued the country. As we have already seen, Emperor Ojin was associated with Hachiman, the deity of war, but according to accounts in the *Nihonshoki* and *Kojiki*, it was also during his reign that there were increased relations with Korea following the conquest of the peninsula by his mother.

Empress Saimei (594-661; the 35th and 37th monarch of Japan in the traditional count[39]) was said to have set off to render aid to Paekche when it came under attack from Silla and T'ang China, although the accounts relate that she died before she could get there. It was under her son, Emperor Tenji/Tenchi (38th emperor, r. 662-671) that Japan

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[38] Nakano, p. 278.

[39] Empress Saimei ruled first as Empress Kogyoku, succeeding her husband, the Emperor Jomei, but abdicated after three years, allowing her brother to ascend the throne as Emperor Kotoku. However, upon his death, the crown prince refused the throne, and Kogyoku re-ascended the throne as Empress Saimei.

abandoned Korea. Thus, in 1939, three monarchs associated with Japan's colonial interests in early Korea were enshrined in the ancient capital and Tenji, in effect, returned to claim the peninsula for Japan once again.

Shinto shrines were not only symbolically important in the colonization of Korea. The imposition of State Shinto ceremonies, especially in the school systems, had the practical function of indoctrinating the Korean people, and so, by the end of the war in 1945 there were over a thousand shrines in the peninsula. This practical concern, then, also helps to explain the establishment of overseas shrines with the expansion of the Japanese empire:

> The extension of control into realms beyond the island territories and the penetration of Japanese populations into overseas areas have had as their proper accompaniment the setting-up of Shinto shrines in new places and the worship of the deities of the homeland as the guardians of new ventures. Even more significant for the international aspects of Japan's rise to hegemony in the Far East is the fact that the conception of the unity of government and religion has necessitated the establishment of shrines to home gods as agencies of political administration. Given the nature of the Japanese state and its inseparable association with Shinto belief and ritual, it is impossible to think of a political control apart from a vigorous determination to secure the subordination of conquered populations to the central religious interests of the state. Where go the Japanese armies there go the Japanese gods.[40]

And, indeed, where the Japanese army went, Shinto shrines soon followed: although Singapore Daijinu had been established in Singapore in 1922, on February 17, 1942, two days after the island fell to the Japanese a new shrine was established, utilizing the new name affixed to the island, Shonanto Jinja. Tarakan Jinja was established in Indonesia in 1942, soon after the occupation of the archipelago. The islands of Palau were ceded to Japan after World War 1 at the Treaty of Versailles, but a shrine had been established there as early as 1911. However, shrine building accelerated from 1939 to

[40] Holton (1943), pp. 156-157.

1940, and Nanyo Jinja, established in 1940, held the rank of Imperial Shrine, major grade.[41] Akatsu Jinja was established in Saigon, San'a Jinja on China's Hainan Island, and Hokoku Shrine on Bogor, Java.[42]

In order to enforce uniform policies on overseas shrines, the Department of Home Affairs (which had ultimate control of the affairs of State Shinto, both domestically and abroad), adopted the following regulations in 1938:

1. Amaterasu Omikami shall be enshrined and worshiped as the chief deity.
2. In general the sanctuary shall be constructed in Japanese *gongen* style…
3. Priests shall be Japanese Shintoists and at the same time men who possess an understanding of national polity. For this purpose a training agency shall be newly established in collaboration with the National Association of Shinto Priests and with the Japanese Classical Literature Research Institute.[43]

Resistance to Shrine Worship

The issue of refusal by indigenous peoples to worship at shrines overseas was addressed in this statement, issued in 1936 by the chief of the home office of the South Heian province (Heian nando, the present day province of South P'yongan Province in what is now North Korea):

As a matter of fact the shrines are public agencies whereby the ancestors of the Imperial Family and people who have rendered distinguished service to the state are enshrined, and where the subjects of the state may offer true reverence and commemorate their meritorious deeds forever. Thus the fundamental idea differs from that of religion. That is to say, from ancient times down to the present the shrines have been national institutions expressive of the very center and essence of our national structure. Thus they have an existence totally distinct from religion, and worship at the shrines is an act of patriotism and loyalty, the basic moral virtues of our nation.

Schools, whether or not they are founded by governmental or private agencies, and regardless of whether or not they are supported by religious groups, all without exception have their primary significance in the cultivation of national character. It is, accordingly, entirely proper that educational institutions which are charged with the

[41] Kasahara Kazuo, ed. *Nihon shukyo shi*, vol. 2 (Tokyo: Yamakawa shuppan sha, 1977), p. 328
[42] Murakami (1968), p. 145.
[43] *Jinji nenkan* ("Jinji Yearbook"), Tokyo, January, 1939, p. 402, translated in Holton (1943), p. 169.

important duty of developing Japanese subjects, should carry out worship at the shrines for educational purposes. It is on no grounds permissible that school principals and teachers who unite their educational functions with those of religious propagandists, should confuse religion and education and be deficient in an understanding of the system of laws and ordinances which the state has established….[44]

Accordingly, if Korean teachers or foreign Christian missionaries refused to partake in Shinto rituals, they were relieved of their duties.[45] For example, in 1935, the educator George McCune, a son of missionaries, and the missionary Samuel Moffett were forced to leave the country because they would not allow their students to participate at Shinto ceremonies. Eventually, however, most Methodists and Presbyterians complied with Japanese government regulations, which had the effect of making it more difficult for Koreans to continue resisting the orders.

The Vatican itself came to accept the official Japanese assertion that attending Shinto rituals was a civil rite, and on May 25, 1936, the Office of the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda Fide at Rome instructed Catholics in Japan to comply with the Japanese government's instructions to attend Shinto ceremonies. The proclamation asserted:

The Ordinaries in the territories of the Japanese Empire shall instruct the faithful that, to the ceremonies which are held at the Jinja (National Shrines) administered civilly by the Government, there is attributed by the civil authorities (as is evident from the various declarations) and by the common estimation of cultured persons a mere significance of patriotism, namely, a meaning of filial reverence toward the Imperial Family and to the heroes of the country; therefore, since ceremonies of this kind are endowed with a purely civil value, it is lawful for Catholics to join in them and act in accordance with the other citizens after having made known their intentions, if this be necessary for the removal of any false interpretations of their acts.[46]

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[44] *Jinja fusampai mondai ni tsuite* ("Concerning the Refusal to Participate in Worship at the Shrines"), translated in, Holton (1943), p. 167.
[45] See Nakano, p. 257-59
[46] Holtom (1943), p. 99

In conclusion, although what has been briefly outlined here shows how Japan utilized Shinto in its nation building and imperialist ventures, it should be pointed out that this was not the only religious tradition thus employed: "Led by the military, the state increasingly equated orthodoxy and 'peace and order' with a rigid interpretation of Japan's 'national polity' (*kokutai*). At the same time, government agencies pressured the established religions into eliminating alleged discrepancies between their teachings and the imperial myth,"[47]

To avoid persecution, most religious groups gave into government pressure. Buddhists supported Japan's imperialist ventures, rationalizing such aggression as ultimately leading to the peace of East Asia as a whole, thus reinforcing the government's 1938 call for a "New Order in East Asia" (*Toa Shinchitsujo*), and the later 1940 assertion that it was creating a "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere" (*Dai toa kyoeiken*). Accordingly, "Imperial Buddhism" (*Kodo Bukkyo*) was promoted and encouraged by the Japanese military.

Japanese imperialists saw no conflict of interest when Christian missionaries took up activities in Korea and Manchuria not only as a means of making converts, but also as a way of showing support for the state; for Japanese militarists, "Japanese Christianity" (*Nipponteki Kirisutokyo*), could be just as effective as Shinto in imposing the authority of imperial Japan. Thus, in 1938 the To-A Dendokai (Association for East Asian Evangelism) was formed and military chaplains were sent to China to service not only Japanese Christian soldiers, but also any Christian residents of the country. Moreover, as the 1930s progressed, Japanese Christians came to meld Christianity with Japan's

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[47] Sheldon M. Garon, "State and Religion in Imperial Japan, 1912-1945," in *Journal of Japanese Studies*, vol. 12, no. 2 (Summer 1986), p. 300.

traditional spirit, thought, and religion. By stressing Christianity's compatibility with *tennosei*, (i.e., the emperor system) the *Nipponteki Kirisutokyo* movement actually became hostile to Western Christianity and "Japanese Christians" felt a sense of responsibility to take over missionary work in Japanese colonies and occupied territories from Western missionaries who were being forced out by Japanese government policies.

Of course Shinto, being perceived as an indigenous tradition (at least compared to Buddhism and Christianity), with its connection to the imperial family, was a more convenient medium to connect traditional Japan with the newly formed nation state. Nevertheless, the issue here is that a variety of venues were utilized by Japanese militarists to carry out their ambitions. In some sense imperialism on the religious/spiritual landscape was just as important or effective as imperialism on the battlefield.

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