

The Illusion of Living God “Arahitogami” and “State Shinto”: What did invoke Absolute God?

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Part 1

The Illusion of Living God “Arahitogami”

Chapter 4

From World War I to the time of the Manchurian Incident

Ideological Issues and Governmental Responses in Japan since World War I

In Japan, politically, it was the era of Taishō democracy, and ideologically, it was a “Period of Agony” [*Hanmon Jidai*] in which individualism, skepticism and atheism were in vogue. Japanese government, concerned about this trend in national thought, gradually introduced measures in the fields of schooling and social education with the aim of deepening the public's awareness of the “National Polity.” However, this does not mean that the theory of *Arahitogami* was immediately incorporated into the government's official documents and policies (as I have already mentioned, it did not appear in elementary school textbooks until 1941). It took quite a few years for that to happen, and there was a certain background to it. In this chapter, I would like to explain the circumstances that led to the formation of that background. In other words, what was the “caller” which invoked the theory of *Arahitogami* to the surface of society?

After *Taigyaku Jiken* [The Great Counter Incident] (1910), the state of the nation's moral thought had become increasingly problematic, but it was not until World War I that the idea of rejecting the emperor system came to be recognized as a serious problem for the future of Japan. The reason for this is that as a result of the World War I, one after another the monarchy disappeared. For example, in Russia the imperial regime collapsed and the Soviet Union emerged (in November 1917), and in Germany and Austria-Hungary, the imperial regime collapsed and was replaced by a republic (in November 1918).

So it is not surprising that some people were concerned that the political situation in Europe might have a serious impact on Japan's domestic thought.

In September 1917, Terauchi Masatake's cabinet established “Rinji Kyōiku Kaigi [the Provisional Council of Education] as an advisory committee directly under the Prime Minister (until May 1919) in order to solve the school system reform problems that had been pending since the middle of the Meiji era. This committee made 12 reports in response to nine consultations from the Prime Minister. In addition, the committee members who gathered in this council submitted a proposal to the Prime Minister in January 1919, entitled 'Proposal on General Policy Prescriptions for the Complete Effectiveness of Education.' As can be seen from the fact that this proposal was originally called 'Proposal for the Unification of direction of national thought,' it was a proposal to clarify 'the true meaning of the national polity' in order to unify the direction of national thought, and to call for a change in policy to make systems and institutions in fields other than education more appropriate for the 'the National Polity' concerned about 'the disorder of national thought' and 'the many fallacies of the effects of warfare in Europe.'

However, the content of the 'National Polity' outlined in this proposal was not outside the scope of the conventional theories of the “Virtue and Loyalty” and the “Nation as Family”. In addition, once the proposal became known to the public, people such as Yoshino Sakuzō, Inukai Tsuyoshi and Nitobe Inazō criticized the proposal as following; 'It would be meaningless unless social discontent based on the disparity between rich and poor was first addressed.': 'It is impossible to achieve unity of national thought.': 'the conventional education is a pseudo-education that has no real meaning.'(Kubo Yoshizō' A History of Fascist Education Policy (Nihon Fashizumu Kyōiku Shi)', Tokyo: Meiji Tosyo, pp. 65-6).

There was no way for the government to unify the national thought, and there was no choice but to extend the traditional policy of quantitative reinforcement of measures, i.e., to repeatedly emphasize the dignity of the national polity in the classroom and at school events, instead of clarifying and unifying the meaning and content of the national polity. This is why the reinforcement of school events became more prominent after the mid-1920s. However, there was one difference from the previous years; the emphasis on 'the wonderful practice of honoring and

venerating ancestors' was emphasized in the 'Proposal for general policy prescriptions that will complete the effect of education': As a result, school events linked to shrines, such as shrine worship and shrine services, became more prominent.

The dominance of the "myth" denial discourse

Why didn't the theory of the emperor as "Arahitogami" spread to the public immediately, despite concerns about the impact of the collapse of the monarchy in Europe on Japan? The reason is that, at the time, there were a lot of negative views, especially in academic circles, on believing Japanese "myths" as facts and taking the emperor based on them. Examples of them are listed below.

In 'Jindai Shi no Atarashii Kenkyū [A New Study of the History at the Age of Kami] ' published in September 1913, the ancient historian Tsuda Sōkichi wrote; It is needless to say that the history about the age of Kami is not a history based on factual information ('Tsuda Sōkichi Zenshū',vol.1,Tokyo: Iwanami Syoten, p.15): The history about the age of Kam is a story made to explain the origin of legitimacy of rule by the emperor, and therefore its author must have been a man who worked at the court (Ibid., p.44). In short, he argued that the myth was a fiction and could not be believed as fact.

In October 1921, Minobe Tatsukichi, one of the standard-bearers of Taisyō Democracy and a member of the mainstream of constitutional law at Tokyo Imperial University, wrote in his book ' Nihon Kenpō Daiikkan [The Constitution of Japan, Vol.1] '; There was a time when 'the sovereign was recognized as a Kami or a descendant of Kami or his representative,' but this 'view of the sovereign as a Kami' is 'absolutely impossible to reconcile' with 'the idea that the sovereign is in the state and a component of the state' (the theory of the Emperor as an organ of state): The "Nation as Family" Theory is also 'based on the mythological legend that all people come from the same ancestor and the religious belief that the spirit of the ancestor has been transmitted to the sovereign, and the theory is an offshoot of the idea that the sovereign is a Kami' (Ibid.,p.322): 'The theory of the sovereign as an organ of the state, regardless of whether or not they use the word "organ", is generally accepted except those who determine to close their eyes to the truth" (Ibid.,p.323). In other words, he

argued that myths could not be the basis for the monarch's constitutional status. This view had shaped the common sense view of the emperor by the high-ranking bureaucrats who studied under him until 1935.

In January 1921, the Bureau of Shinto Shrines of the Ministry of the Interior (*Naimusyō Jinjakyoku*) published 'Kokutai Ron Shi [The History of the Theories of National Polity]' with the aim of 'clarifying the origin of our national polity and ensuring that our people have a thorough understanding of it. This was in response to the 'Proposal on General Policy Prescriptions for the Complete Effectiveness of Education' (January 1919) by the Provisional Education Council mentioned at the beginning of this section. At the end of the book, the editor Kiyohara Sadao (a Shinto historian, commissioned by the Shinto Shrine Bureau at the time) wrote about his thoughts on the future direction of the theory of national polity as follows;

If we want the people to understand and believe in this [theory of national polity], we should use a theory that is consistent with the scientific knowledge that most of the people have as common sense: Myths should be most respected as the ideals and spirit of the people: But Myths are only respectful, and it is dangerous to try to explain the dignity of our national polity on the basis of these: This is because the people who already have a preconceived notion of the Darwinism that is incompatible with the myth of the birth of the nation by Kami, are unable to believe in this myth(Ibid.,p.373). What a surprise, Kiyohara calls it 'dangerous' to preach the dignity of the national polity on the basis of "myths".

According to Kiyohara, the so-called 'excellence of the national polity' refers to 'the solidity of Japan as a nation' which is friendly, harmonious, and orderly, regardless of status; The reason for this solidity lies in the establishment of the 'Ichidai Sōgō Kazoku' [the idea of one big family] by the development of the 'Tenson Zoku' [a race who have a legend that their ancestors came down from heaven] and by the conquest of other races by 'Tenson Zoku'; Another reason is the formation of a sense of shared ancestry based on 'ancestor worship'; In other words, the idea of looking up to the imperial family as the head family was formed and in this context, the idea that loyalty and filial piety were one and the same thing came to be.

After stating the above, he repeats again at the end as follows; There are many people who say that our country's national polity was established by "Tenson Kōrin no Shincyoku" [Amaterasu's declaration that her descendants will rule this country forever] ; However, that idea is wrong; Regardless of whether the declaration exists or not, the process of formation of our society to date affirms the "Bansei Ikkei no Kōi" [imperial throne of a lineage that will never change] , and denies any other systems of governance; The declaration is merely an expression of that fact; In the historical accounts of our Kami, history and mythology are mixed up half and half; Because of this, some insist that the declaration is a type of mythology, not a historical fact, and an expression of the ideals of the ancient people; In my opinion, on our national polity, whether the declaration is a true fact or merely a myth is not the fundamental question; Whether the declaration is historical fact or myth, i.e. expression of national ideals, it do not change the social facts of our country, and therefore have no influence on the theory of our national polity(Ibid.,p.379).

Kiyohara argued that "the idea that the Japanese national polity was settled by the Amaterasu's declaration is wrong. It has been established historically." In the way he said this, I sense the same nuances as the so-called "Emperor's Declaration of Humanity" of New Year's Day, 1946,as follows; The bond between me and my people has been forged through mutual trust and respect, and it doesn't just come from myths and legends. His argument was, of course, his personal opinion. But it did not pose a problem at all that his opinion appeared in an official book, published by the Shrine Bureau of the Ministry of the Interior, a government agency that, to today's sensibilities, was supposed to be the very center of the ideology defending the Emperor and Shino Shrines. That was the environment of thought about myths and legends in the Taisyō decade.

In the same article, Kiyohara sharply criticized the theory of emperor's sovereignty, which states that 'the emperor is the subject of the governing authority' and 'the state exists and operates solely for the benefit of the Emperor alone' as follows; It enforces the sanctity of the Emperor to the people on the basis of cold jurisprudence, resulting in the so-called "pulling down a favorite by favoritism", chilling people's loyal passion for the emperor and rendering the sacred virtues of successive emperors meaningless (Ibid.,p.380). Thus, both the myth and the theory of emperor's sovereignty were openly criticized at the time.

Moreover, in a collection of documents prepared by the Ministry of the Interior with the intention of guiding national thought in a direction favorable to the government. This fact should deserve more attention.

According to Konno Nobuyuki, a historian of modern Japanese thought, after World War I, 'from the side of anthropology, the creation of a new image of ancient history was actively promoted in a way that did not rely on the myths of the *Kojiki* and the *Nihonsyoki*' ('Kindai Nihon no Kokutai-ron: "Kōkoku-shikan Saikō [The Theory of National Polity in Modern Japan; Revising the evaluation of historical theories that emphasize the legitimacy of the emperor system] 'Tokyo:Perikansya, p.61). As proof of his argument, Konno quotes Torii Ryūzō's assertion, an anthropologist and professor at Sophia University, which appeared in his article "Rekishi Kyōkasyo to Kunitsu-kami [The History Textbook and Kami born in the land of Japan] " (' Jinruigaku Zasshi [Anthropological Journal] 'Vol.39, No.3, in March 1924). The following are Torii's words in the article; In the history textbooks compiled by the Ministry of Education, the first page is devoted to the mythology of Japan's founding and begins with a simple description of the Chronicles of Kami based on *Kojiki* and *Nihonsyoki*; In today's day and age, I would like to see more academic writing on the ancient history of Japan, at least in junior high schools and high schools; This is because the public's knowledge has generally advanced to the point where they no longer believe in myths and legends as they are (p.131). According to Konno Nobuyuki, 'with the development of anthropology, the legitimacy and the sanctity of the myths of the *Kojiki* and *Nihonsyoki* were greatly undermined' ('Kindai Nihon no Kokutai-ron: "Kōkoku-shikan Saikō', p. 61).

There is the following testimony by a Shintoist, Ashizu Uzuhiko, about the state of elementary schools and junior high schools around 1921; At our junior high school, the students were taught the Imperial Rescript on Education through reading ceremony by the school principal, but the atheistic education was not the same as the education led by the Japan Teachers Association today; It's strange for me to see kids these days to hear about humorous ghosts in their class; In our time, the Enlightenment, combative scientific ideas intended to defeat superstition, were prevalent in schools; When I was in the sixth grade of elementary school in Akasaka, a teacher, Mr. Hosoi Cyōsaku, overheard my friend talking about ghosts and scolded him, citing Nakae Cyōtmin's sermon on

atheism(“Shinto-kyōgaku nitsuiteno Syokan [A Letter on Shinto Theology]”
Ashizu Uzuhiko Sensyū [Anthology of Ashizu Uzuhik’s Papers]
Vol.1,Tokyo:Jinjya-shinpō-sya,p.304).

It is clear from the testimonies I have cited so far that, even though myths were included in school textbooks, the people did not necessarily believe in them as they are. What, then, changed the common sense of the people and led to the popularization of the "Arahitogami" theory, leading to its appearance in official documents? Three ideological movements played a major role in the development of such a situation, either as the "caller" or the "mastermind".

Thought control brought about by fear of “communism”

When the Provisional Council of Education(*Rinji Kyōiku Kaigi*) was deliberating on 'Proposal on General Policy Prescriptions for the Complete Effectiveness of Education,' Mizuno Rentarō, the former Minister of the Interior, expressed his optimism about the impact of the European situation on Japan as follows; I am not necessarily pessimistic about the new trends that will emerge in Japan as a result of the upheavals in Europe; Japanese history is unique, so we don't have to worry so much about our national thought('Shiryō · *Rinji Kyōiku Kaigi* [Materials of the Provisional Council of Education] ',Vol.5, ed. Ministry of Education, p.414). As a result of Mizuno's assertions, the original draft of the Proposal, which stated that 'Due to the influence of the European upheavals, many erroneous ideas that have been born in the world of thought in our country are becoming more and more influential' (*Ibid.*,p.23), was replaced in the final draft with the vague statement that 'Due to the various influences of the present situation, the changes that have been born in the world of thought in our country are becoming more and more predictable in their consequences' (*Ibid.*, p.55).

However, Mizuno and the other members of the Provisional Education Council were naive in their expectations. The reason why is that the Soviet Union, which emerged next to Japan as a result of the European War, was a nation that used ideology as a tool for invasion against other nations. As soon as the military threat of imperial Russia was dispelled by victory in the Russo-Japanese War, Japan was exposed to the supra-nationalism threat of exporting

the revolution by the communist Soviets. The problem of thought in Japan was no longer at the level of "we'll be fine as long as our thoughts are solid."

Soon after the revolution in 1919, the Russian Communist Party formed the Comintern as an organization to promote the world revolution, and in response to this, communists in various countries began to form branches of the Comintern, i.e. the Communist Party. The first Communist Party was formed in Japan in July 1923. After it collapsed by police roundups, it was reunited in December 1926 by the direction of the Comintern and with its financial support. The following year, the new executive committee members of the Japanese Communist Party (Tokuda Kyūichi and Fukumoto Kazuo) visited Moscow. Then, the Comintern, led by Nikolai Bukharin, ordered them to make "Abolition of the Monarchy" the party's policy (Theses of 27). In response to this order, JCP appeared in front of the masses in the first general election in February 1928 under the party's policy of "Abolition of the Monarchy". Of course, the Comintern gave the plan and funds for its campaign at that time as well, and it is said that the Comintern even ordered the cadres of the JCP to arm themselves with pistols (Itō Takashi 'Nihon no Kindai 16: Nihon no Uchi to Soto [Japan's Modernity 16: Japan's Interior and Exterior]', Tokyo: Cyūōkōron-shinsya).

Initially, the Japanese government tried to counter JCP as the branch of the Comintern with a policy of strengthening the police and security legislation. This policy included arrests of communists and the order to disband JCP under the Security Police Law [*Chian-keisatsu-hō*] and moreover the enactment of the Public Order Maintenance Law [*Chian-iji-hō*] of 1924, which was enacted in parallel with the establishment of diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union.

Article 1 of the Public Order Maintenance Law stipulates that anyone who organizes an association for the purpose of revolutionizing the National Polity (*Kokutai*) or destroying the private property system, or who joins such an association knowingly shall be punished with imprisonment, with hard labor or not, for not more than 10 years. It is the first time that the term "National Polity" has appeared in law. In these circumstances, the "National Polity" appeared in law as a restriction on freedom of association. This was due to the fact that, for the first time in Japanese history, a group that openly advocated the "Overthrow of the Emperor System" was born in the country, and that it was not only under

the control of a foreign power, but also a group which even uses the means of terrorism.

The content of the "National Polity" that the government envisioned as something to protect at this time, was limited to the scope relating to "the Emperor's right to rule," as stipulated in Article 1 of the Imperial Constitution. This is evident from the repeated answers of a government member, Yamaoka Mannosuke, Director of the Criminal Investigation Bureau of the Ministry of Justice, at the Committee on the Public Order Maintenance Law in the House of Representatives of the Fiftieth Parliament of the Empire. The term "Arahitogami" did not appear in any of his answers (Teikoku-gikai · Syūgiin linkaigiroku [the Committee Meeting Minutes of the House of Representatives in the Parliament of the Empire] 44, Tokyo: Rinsen-syoten, 1987).

During the Committee's questioning, Kiyose Ichirō, a committee member, asked the following question; The Emperor holds various powers, including the right to declare war, make peace, and command the army: Do these rights fall within the scope of the National Polity? In response to this question, Yamaoka answered; The National Polity means only that the right to rule Japan belongs to the Emperor whose bloodline will never change eternally: Therefore, the question what rights fall within this right belongs a different category (March 3, 1924).

Hisa Syōhei, a committee member, also asked the following question; Could you explain to change some of the governing powers that the Emperor has [and its relationship to revolutionizing the National Polity]? In response to this question, Yamaoka responded as follows; That case does not apply to revolutionizing the National Polity: I think the question is about reducing or changing the governing powers that the Emperor has: There are two types of sovereign powers of the Emperor, which exercised by the Emperor himself and delegated to others: There is nothing wrong with turning the Emperor's own right to rule into a matter of delegation if it takes the form of a constitutional amendment: It is not at all revolutionizing the National Polity [which this law prohibits].

With regard to Yamaoka's answer, Suzuki Masayuki said, "It should be noted that even if the system of 'reigns but does not rule' were to emerge by ceding matters of direct exercise to matters of delegation, this would not constitute a '

revolutionizing the National Polity ' as long as it was carried out in a legal manner('Kōshitsu-seido [The Emperor System] ',Tokyo:Iwamami-syoten,1993,p 160), and commented that "through the constitutional interpretation of the National Polity, the government has in effect recognized that the National Polity can coexist with democracy" (ibid. p.61).

From January to April 1926, students of Kyoto Imperial University were arrested for the first time under the Public Order Maintenance Law (the "Kyōdai-jiken"). Furthermore, in 1928, a large number of students (148 students of 32 schools, from Tokyo Imperial University to Higher School for the Development of Female Teachers in Tokyo) were arrested in a nationwide roundup of Communist Party members (the "3 · 15-Jiken"), which took place immediately after the first general election. These incidents shocked government leaders by exposing the infiltration of communist ideology into the elite class that would be at the heart of the state in the near future. They came to recognize this situation as an "Shisō-Kokunan [Ideological National Crisis] " that would shake the foundations of the nation.

Mizuno Rentarō, who held the position of Minister of Education at that time, could no longer have the same optimism as he did in 1919. In an order issued in April immediately after the "3 · 15-Jiken," he instructed the principals of schools directly controlled by the Ministry of Education and the prefectural governors as follows; The spread of communist ideology " threatens to destroy the foundation of national existence": Therefore, in order to "eradicate extremely biased ideology", "we must clearly articulate the concept of the National Polity so that the students will be able to understand the true meaning of the National Polity. And We need to solidify their thought" (Kubo Gizō 'Nihon Fashizumu Kyōiku-Seisaku-Shi [The History of Japanese Educational Policy on Fascism] , pp.170-171).

This sense of crisis manifested itself, on the one hand, in the revision and strengthening of the Public Order Maintenance Law by emergency edict, and on the other hand, in the new policy of strengthening the thought control agencies. In June 1933, the government established Special High-Security divisions(Tokkōka) in every prefecture in the country, and the Ministry of the Interior established a new security division (Hoanka) and police officers

(Keimukan). Also, in October of the same year, the Ministry of Education established a Student Division (Gakuseika) within its Bureau of Academic Affairs (Senmongakumukyoku) to investigate students' thoughts and to monitor their behavior; Later, structure and functions of the "Gakuseika" were gradually expanded to them of the "Gakuseibu" (July 1929), the "Shisōkyoku" (May 1934), and the "Kyōgakukyoku" (July 1937), which became the core of the policy for ideological education.

In May 1932, as the crackdown on the Communist Party became more and more severe, the Comintern ordered the JCP to issue a "Thesis on the Situation in Japan and the Mission of the Communist Party" (32Thesis), which was published in the "Red Flag" on July 10. In this thesis, the mission of the Communist Party was to overthrow the combination of the three blocks of "Emperor System of Absolutism (Tennōsē)," "Land Ownership of Landlord" and "Monopoly Capitalism." As is known, the Japanese term "Tennōsē" derives from this "32Thesis".

Marxism was an invasive and ultra-nationalist ideology in the sense that it did not give up terrorism or war to achieve its goals, and it was also a strong cult ideology in the sense that it had an eschatology that misled people under the guise of science. Japan, which was in the midst of a "Period of Agony (Hanmon Jidai)", was forced to confront this ideology, and was forced to reform itself in order to survive as a nation against the ideology. This is one of the reasons for the tragedy of Japan in the Shōwa Era.

The penetration of communism brought to Japan not only restriction on freedom of association and reduction in freedom of thought. As the social problems created by modernization became more serious, some conservative thinkers embraced the ideas of a controlled economy and totalitarianism, which led to the emergence of the syncretic idea of "National Socialism with the Emperor at the center." Moreover, this ideology was partially combined with individualism and various religious ideas. That situation created more suspicion and distrust. In the result, the ideological problem was complicated and led to social confusion that was difficult to resolve.

The Complexity of "Shisō-Kokunan [The Ideological National Crisis] "

The following agreement has already been almost reached at the Japanese Academic Society of Modern History that after the Russo-Japanese war and WW1, there was a revolutionary change in the international situation, which had a profound effect on the state of Japanese thought, and that we cannot ignore this change and make a direct connection between the Meiji and Shōwa periods. Based on this premise, Tsutsui Kiyotada criticized the "Meiji-Taisyō-Shōwa continuity theory (Meiji-Taisyō-Shōwa Renzoku-Setsu)" of Maruyama Masao's style, which argued that the principle of the imperial system (Tennō-Sei) was established in the Meiji era and then developed into the ultra-nationalism of the Shōwa era, as follows (The "Meiji origin theory" for "Arahitogami" discussed in Chapter 1 is based on the "Meiji-Taisyō-Shōwa continuity theory");

At the end of the Meiji Era, roughly from the Russo-Japanese War to the beginning of the Taisyō Era, there was what is known as "Period of Agony [*Hanson Jidai*]", and the idea of Syūyō [cultivation] and Kyōyō [education] emerged at that time. From about the time of Fujimura Misao's suicide at Kegon Fall in 1903 to the early years of the Taisyō Era, the people of the first generation of ultra-nationalists of the Syōwa Era were almost entirely included in these agony youths. Ōkawa Syūmei and Inoue Nissyō were born in 1886, and Kita Ikki was born in 1883, which means that most people enter their adolescence around the end of the Meiji Era.- (Omit the sentences in between)-. As a result of their agonizing youth at the end of the Meiji Era, all of these people were influenced in one way or another by individualism, although there are various routes to this, and they all had a very strong sense of individualistic problems inside. For example, in the case of Kita Ikki the argument is structured in such a way that first the dignity of the individual is established, next the Japanese society is constructed, and last the emperor is placed on top of it as a symbol ("Taisyō Demokurashii" kara 'Syōwa Gunkokusyugi' e" ["From 'Taisyō Democracy' to 'Showa Militarism'," pp.7-8, in *Kindai Nihon Bunka-Ron* [Modern Japanese Culture] I; *Kindai Nihon eno Shikaku* [Perspectives on Modern Japan], Tokyo:Iwanami-Syoten).

The people of the first generation [Ōkawa Syūmei, Inoue Nissyō, Kita Ikki,

etc.] were all, in the end, people with life or ego problems that could not be solved by the Meiji and traditional nationalism. After they had gone through various ideological experiences, they appeared among the young men from the end of the Taisyō Era to the early Syōwa Era by writing books. At this time, Japanese society was facing a crisis, and for the young people who felt threatened by it, the loyal and patriotic books written by the traditional nationalists were old-fashioned and totally unacceptable. I think it can be interpreted that only the discourse of the people named here is able to answer the concerns of the next generation (ibid.p10).

In other words, Tsutsui says, one cannot talk about the "ultra-nationalism" of the Syōwa Era without mentioning the popularity of individualism and the Agony derived from it.

Iokibe Makoto said the following; In addition to Ishihara [Kanji], Kita Ikki, Inouye Nissyō, and some of the leaders of the February 26 Incident [2.26-Jiken,1936] , such as Isobe Asaichi and Andō Teruzō, were also under the influence of Nichiren's thought: If we recall this fact, it is hard to deny that Nichiren's thought had some influence on Japanese politics and foreign affairs in the 1930s: - (Omit the sentences in between)- The reason why I have chosen to focus on the influence of Nichiren religion on Ishihara Kanji is because I believe that if the influence of Nichiren is ignored, an important aspect of Ishihara's thought and action, as well as the political history of Japan in the period leading up to the Pacific War, will be missing("Ishihara Kanji niokeru Nichiren Syūkyō [The Influence of Nichiren Religion on Ishihara Kanji] 1", pp.123-124 'Seikeyronsō' published by Hiroshima Daigaku Seikei Gakkai [The Association of Political Science and Economics of Hiroshima University, February 1970] .)

If these theorists are correct, then those people's vision is nothing short of too narrow, who talk about the ideological problems of the Syōwa Era based solely on their preconceived notions of "mythological education" or "education of Arahitogami" that was believed to have existed since the Meiji Era, without considering the influence of communism, individualism, Nichiren Buddhism, or any other religious ideologies.

The National Polity theory as a "counter ideology"

Returning to the problem of communism, in July 1931, the Ministry of Education established “*Gakusei Shisō Mondai Cyōsa linkai* [the Committee to Investigate the Problem of Student Thought] ” in order to establish “fundamental measures for the problem of student thought.” The establishment of this committee is said to have been prompted in part by a proposal by Kawai Eijirō, a professor at the Imperial University of Tokyo, as follows;

To this day, while the government and the schools educate the students under strong compulsion, the best students have been taken into the camp of Marxism. This must be considered as a very big flaw in the education of the government and schools: The flaw is that there has never been a system of thought in Japan to date that is capable of countering the ideological system of Marxism: And even today, there is ultimately no system of thought that could recapture the best and brightest students from the camp of Marxism: As long as there is no such a system of thought, I think it is ultimately impossible for us to guide the students by good thought. Therefore, the biggest problem is that it is necessary to establish an enormous system in Japan that can resist the system of Marxism, which includes entity theory, epistemology, desire theory, moral philosophy, social philosophy and social thought, etc. (“*Gakusei Shisō Mondai no Kōsatsu · Ge* [Consideration of the Problem of Student Thought, vol.2] ,p24, ' *Shisō Cyōsa Shiryō* [A Collection of Documents surveying the Thoughts] ' vol.11,published by Student Affairs of Ministry of Education, August in 1965).

In essence, Kawai is saying that the moral education that has been based on the Imperial Rescript on Education since the Meiji Era cannot stand up to Marxism at all, so the Ministry of Education should take the lead in creating a new, powerful ideology that can stand up to the ultra-national ideology as Marxism.

The “*Gakusei Shisō Mondai Cyōsa linkai* [The Committee to Investigate the Problems of Student Thoughts] ” was organized by the Minister of Education, Tanaka Ryūzo as its chairman, and consisted of thirty-nine members, including Yoshida Shigeru, Kihira Tadayoshi, Rōyama Masamichi, and Koiso Kuniaki, in addition to Kawai Eijirō. In May 1932, after about a year of deliberation, the committee decided and announced a draft report to the Prime Minister. One of

the items that needed to be implemented in the draft was the following proposal; To establish an influential research institute whose purpose is to make clear the principles of our National Polity and National Spirit, to elevate our National Culture, to criticize foreign ideas, and to build a theoretical system that is sufficient to oppose Marxism.

Based on this proposal, in August of the same year, “Kokumin Seishin Bunka Kenkyūjo [The Institute of National Spiritual Culture] ” was established within the Ministry of Education and an undersecretary of state for education has been appointed its director. The mission of the institute was to promote a system of thought that could oppose Marxism, that is, to promote the Japanese spirit, to educate teachers of all schools, except universities, and to provide conversion education for "Sakei Gakusei [Students affected by Marxism] " who had been expelled from institutions of higher education(Kubo Gizō 'Syōwa Kyōikushi · Jyō —Senzen · Senjika Hen [The History of Education in the Syōwa Era, Part I; Pre-war and Wartime] ',Tokyo:Sanichisyobō,p.344.) Thus, an era has come in which the "Japanese spirit," "national spirit," and "national polity" are expected to play a role as “ideology against Marxism.” In order to oppose the communist ideology, which stands on the sole and absolute belief, there is a need for a sole and absolute ideology that surpasses it. No longer is there any room for tolerance, such as allowing various theories of national polity.

According to Sakamoto Takako, it would be impossible to talk about Japan in the 1930s without mentioning the Soviet threat. It was the "Soviet-Japanese Cold War" and the fight between the government and the Communist Party at home was "part of the international war between Soviet Russia and the Empire of Japan." ('Rekishi Kyōiku wo Kangaeru [The Consideration of Historical Education] ', Tokyo: PHP Kenkyūjo, pp.186-190.) Shimizu Ikutarō once said the following about the reason why security legislation and political police were a popular phenomenon in Western countries after the First World War; The countries of the world at that time did not want their countries to become like the Soviets, so they followed the example of "Soviet Russia, which has the world's leading political police" and enhanced their own political police; “I think the proceedings of history is an utterly nasty one.” ('Sengo wo Utagau [The Doubt about Postwar] ', Tokyo: Kōdansya, pp.29-32.)

To sum up these theorists' arguments, I guess, in order to survive the Cold War with the Soviet Union and to protect oneself from it, Japan had to "Sovietize" oneself, to communalize (absolutize, squeeze) its thought and policy. If so, then what the post-war intellectuals saw in the "emperor absolutism" was actually a dark shadow of the ultra-nationalist ideology of communism that they admired. Takeyama Michio wrote the following about his impressions of the National Polity theory, which he heard from a young colonel in the early Syōwa Era; The emperor system which he portrayed as "Ikkuun Banmin [One Emperor and All People] ", was the system which a powerful people stood on the consensus of the people and seemed to me to be somehow similar to Stalin(' Syōwa no Seishin Shi [A History of the Spirit of the Syōwa Era] ', Tokyo:Kōdansya, p.48.)

The military's intervention in education brought about by the "Total War Philosophy"

The second thought that served as the "caller" which invoked the theory of *Arahitogami* to the surface of society, was the "Total War Philosophy" created by World War I. To put it simply, "In order to win future wars, it is not enough to have a strong military, but to have the ability to mobilize all of the nation's political, economic, ideological and informational capabilities for war in a comprehensive and efficient manner.

The Army and Navy had begun vigorously researching and studying the situation from the outbreak of World War I. This activity not only increased the momentum in the military to prepare for Total War, but it also attracted the attention of political and business circles and produced numerous reviews and monographs on it in the world of popular opinion (Kōketsu Atsushi 'Kindai Nihon no Sei-Gun-Kankei—Gunjin-Seijika Tanaka Giichi no Kiseki [Modern Japanese Political-Military Relations: The Footsteps of Tanaka Giichi as Military Politician] ', Daigaku Kyōiku sya, pp.204-205.)

Tanaka Giichi, after the death of Yamagata Aritomo, became the supreme leader of the army in the Taisyō decade, and later entered the world of politics and became the president of the Seiyūkai (one of Japanese political parties). He is also known as a man who worked hard to spread the idea of Total War to the public. He explained his motivation for entering politics as follows; in light of his

war experience and the situation in Europe, he came to believe that the relationship between the Japanese military and politics had to be fundamentally changed (Kōketsu, *ibid.* p.206). He believed that the era in which we could simply distinguish between "politics and the military" was over. As is typical of Tanaka's ideas, the spread of the Total War concept made it difficult for the military to stay within the framework of the Imperial Instruction for Soldiers (1882), which preached that "Military personnel should not be swayed by public opinion, nor should they be involved in politics." The military could no longer be indifferent not only to politics, but also to thought and education. Thus, the attitude of the military towards politics, ideology and education became very different from that of the Meiji Era.

On the other hand, the Taisyō decade was a time when the anti-military and disarmament trend was dominant, and it was said that "Soldiers were everywhere the target of scorn by people on the street, and it was uncomfortable to wear military uniforms on a train" (Shigemitsu Mamoru 'Syōwa no Dōran [Syōwa Disturbance] • Jyōkan [Vol.1]' Tokyo: Cyūōkōron-Sya, p.14,). This made it difficult for the military to intervene blatantly in the field of ideology and education by advocating the idea of Total War. Under these complicated circumstances, the so-called "Ugaki Gunsyuku [Ugaki's Disarmament]" conducted by the Minister of Army, Ugaki Kazushige, cleverly met the seemingly contradictory demands of disarmament and preparation for Total War. Instead of responding to the call for disarmament by abolishing four divisions (about 12,000 men), he promoted the modernization and rationalization of the army with the budget generated by the consolidation.

Furthermore, in April 1924, Ugaki enacted the "Rikugun Geneki Syōkō Gakkō Haizoku Rei", which established a system for assigning active duty officers to schools above junior high school level to provide military training to students. According to Kubo Gizō, there were three aims of this "assignment order"; (1) To train a large number of junior officers to respond to the massive mobilization of troops in wartime: (2) To preserve the surplus officers created by disarmament and to prevent them from losing their jobs: (3) To establish military control of national education and systematic military control over the people (Kubo 'Syōwa Kyōikushi' p.139).

Indeed, Ugaki himself later wrote about the purpose of this "Assignment Order" as follows; I have believed deeply over the last few years that the army must by all means act as a central organ to assist the emperor, apart from peacetime, in an emergency. This is the reason why I have tried to assign active officers to the various schools above the secondary level, to train ordinary young men, to teach them to respect the armed forces, to promote their physical strength, to make them a right people, and at the same time to bring them into closer relations with the army. I wanted the Army to lead all the people and, if necessary, the Army to be able to lead all the people in a major operation under the Emperor('Ugaki Kazushige Nikki [Diary of Kazunari Ugaki] I', Tokyo: Misuzu-Syobō, p.497.): It was a huge task for me to be able to extend my influence over the schools (1,200-1,300) where the students who will be at the heart of the nation are studying. Depending on how I do it, in the future, it won't be hard to dominate the entire education world (ibid.p.498.)

With the Total War Idea, it's not surprising that Ugaki would say this. It's not clear what exactly Ugaki himself had in mind about the substance of "dominating the entire educational world". However, as a matter of fact, when a reversal of public sentiment took place, in which the marked contempt for soldiers in the latter half of the Taisyō Era, as mentioned above, was replaced by extreme admiration and expectation for them after the Manchurian Incident of 1931, the officers assigned to schools became a powerful lever for the military to intervene in education.

Some of the most famous military interventions in education include the following incidents; an incident at Sophia University in 1932, that some students in military training refused to visit the Yasukuni Shrine and became a problem: The Dōshisya University's "Kamidana [a small altar in the Shinto style] " incident in 1935, that the principal removed a Kamidana set up by students on the martial arts field and became a problem: Furthermore, the "Dōshisya Program of Education" incident in 1937, that Dōshisya University was forced to delete the phrase "Christianity shall be the basis of moral education" from its program and to write the phrase "Worshipping Kami and the Emperor, Patriotism and Humanity shall be the basis ." These were all incidents caused by the officers assigned to schools. Assigned officers were legally subject to the supervision of each school principal to whom they were assigned, but the prevailing social climate made

such principal authority good for nothing. Just as the teachers of the Japanese Teachers' Union, riding the post-war educational climate, made the authority of principals good for nothing. Then, the rise of the military, steeped in "Total War Ideology", caused the "Arahitogami" theory that permeated the military to affect education and the nation in general.