

Chapter 5

After the Manchurian Incident

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The Coalescence of Various Currents after the Manchurian Incident

The following intentions coalesced after the Manchurian Incident; the Ministry of Education's intention to control the thought of students and create a powerful ideology, triggered by caution against Marxism; the Ministry of the Interior's intention to suppress the thought of the people; the Military's intention to intervene in education, inspired by the idea of Total War and influenced by the ideas of Katō Genchi and Uesugi Shinkichi. This was the "Shisō Taisaku Kyōgi linkai [Consultative Committee for Measures against Ideological Problems]" established in April 1933 by a prime minister, Saitō Makoto.

This committee was composed of members representing each of the four ministries: the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of the Army, and the Ministry of the Navy. The significance of this committee is explained by Kubo Gizō as follows; This committee was followed by the establishment of Naikaku Shingikai [the Cabinet Council] and Naikaku Cyōsakyoku [the Cabinet Research Bureau], which also included military representatives as investigators, and these organs later evolved into the Kikakuin [the Planning Commission]; In these institutions, the military eventually became central to influence national policy; The participation of the military in this committee was significant in the sense that it was this committee that set the precedent (*Syōwa Kyōiku Shi* [A History of Syōwa Education], vol.1, p.168)

The committee presented a "Kyōiku · Syūkyō ni kansuru Gutaiteki Hōsaku [An Draft of Specific Measures on Education and Religion]" based on the original draft prepared by Naimusyō Keihokyoku [the Department of Security of the Ministry of Interior]. The three main points of the draft were as follows; To clarify and spread Nihon Seishin [the Japanese spirit] as a national guiding principle; To strictly enforce the control of dangerous ideas, both physical and personnel, and to formulate measures for the perfect prevention and suppression of dangerous ideas; To destroy the foundations of dangerous Ideas through Social

Policies. This proposal was approved by the Cabinet on September 15, 1933, as the "Shisō Taisaku San Taikō [Three Major Principles for Measures against Ideological Problems] ".The "clarification of the Japanese spirit" and "control of dangerous ideas" are no longer the policies of individual agencies, but rather national policies that the government as a whole must address.

With this cabinet decision, a government-wide system was established for the promotion of the Japanese spirit and the control of ideas. Then, the Ministry of Education promoted "Gakuseibu [the Student Affairs Department] " to "Shisōkyoku [the Bureau of Thought] " and appointed Itō Nobukichi as its first director. Itō led the ideological policy of the Ministry of Education practically through Kokumin Seishin Bunka Kenkyūjo [the Institute for National Spiritual Culture] , and later through Kyōgaku Sassin Hyōgikai [the Council for the Renewal of Teaching and Learning] and Kyōiku Singikai [the Council for Educational Reform] (Kubo Gizō, *Nihon Fashizumu Kyōiku Seisaku Shi* [A History of Fascistic Education Policy in Japan] , p.220).

There is another noteworthy point about this committee. That is, "Kiken Shisō Taisakuan [the Proposal for Countermeasures for Dangerous Ideas] " proposed by the Army Ministry to this committee, served as the basis for the pamphlet "Kokubō no Hongi to sono Kyōka no Teisyō [The Essence of National Defense and the Advocacy of Strengthening it] " prepared by the Army Newspaper Group in October 1934, which became a problematic issue. The arguments in this pamphlet were carried over to the proposals made by the military representatives in Kyōgaku Sassin Hyōgikai, which was established after the "Tennō Kikansetsu Jiken [An incident in which the theory that the emperor is an organ of the state was rejected] for the purpose of "clarifying the National Polity"(Kubo, *Syōwa Kyōiku Shi*, vol.1, p.173).

The problematization of "Kokubō no Hongi to sono Kyōka no Teisyō" was one that evoked a criticism by political parties as a political interference by military personnel ("Rikugun Pamphlet Mondai").This pamphlet explained the necessity of controlling speech and thought from the perspective of Total War as follows; Ideological propaganda is a method of warfare in which the enemy is hunted down without the use of weapons, the enemy country is destroyed, and the enemy forces are crushed; It is necessary for the state to control media of

communication in peacetime and to take all possible measures against the ideological warfare that is going on in peacetime.

Tennō Kikansetsu Jiken

It was the *Tennō Kikansetsu Jiken* (1935) that raised the demand for "National Polity clarification" and "thought control" to its peak and brought about a situation in which the government itself had to formally determine the content of the theory of National Polity. This incident, in simplistic terms, was as follows; Until this incident, it was common knowledge in Japanese public law society that "the sovereignty is vested in the legal entity, the state, and the emperor is not the sovereign, but an organ of the sovereign state and he is the highest authority to unite governing powers, however, he must comply with the provisions of the Constitution in the exercise of his powers (*Tennō Kikansetsu*); However, private-sector nationalist organizations, led by Minoda Muneki, who organized Genri Nihon Sya [the Association of Fundamental Japan] , or others, began to argue against this theory on the grounds that it was contrary to the "National Polity"; This movement influenced the debate in the Reichstag, and the government was forced to ban the writings of Minobe Tatsukichi, a representative of this theory.

However, when it began to become an issue in the Imperial Diet, the Cabinet of Okada Keisuke, while disagreeing with the idea of *Tennō Kikansetsu*, was reluctant for the government to decide on the validity of the academic theories or eliminate the diversity of them, addressing as follows; "It is appropriate to leave it to scholarly debate" (Matsuda Genji, the Minister of Education); "We have no choice but to leave it to the academics" (Okada Keisuke, the Prime Minister). Gradually, however, the pursuit of members of Diet, the military, and some extremists led to the following policies being implemented; "Kokutai Meicyō no Kunrei [the Instruction for National Polity Clarification" by Minister of Education (April 9, 1935): The banning of Minobe's major books by the Minister of the Interior (on the same day): Two "Kokutai Meicyō Seimei [the Statement for National Polity Clarification]", issued by the Cabinet (August 3 and October 15, 1935).

The government issued statements on "National Polity Clarification" three times. But that's not because it wanted to thoroughly dismiss Minobe's theory.

The fact was rather the opposite. In the first "Kokutai Meicyō no Kunrei", although Minobe's main writings were banned, it did not explicitly deny the theory of Minobe, only stating that "Any discourse that creates doubts about the essence of the national polity should be severely disciplined". Even in the first "Kokutai Meicyō Seimei", the wording of the statement denied the fictitious theory, which was different from Minobe's theory as follows; "If there is a theory that the emperor has not governing powers, but is only an organ that exercises them, it is contrary to the essence of our national polity, which no other country in the world can compare to". From this process, we can see that the government of the time was struggling to avoid a clear rejection of the Minobe's theory. However, this resistance was hollow, and eventually the government was forced to say the following in its second "Kokutai Meicyō Seimei"; "The so-called Tennō Kikansetsu, which asserts that sovereignty resides with the state and not with the emperor and the Emperor is an organ of the state, is contrary to our sacred national polity and is grossly misleading in its essence, and must be thoroughly eliminated".

The course of this incident is explained in detail in Miyazawa Toshiyoshi's *Tennō Kikansetsu —Jiken:Shiryō wa Kataru, I · II* [The Incident of *Tennō Kikansetsu*: Historical Documents Speak]. As I read through this article, I couldn't help but chuckle. The reason for this is that the Okada cabinet, under various pressures, stepped in to reject the Minobe's theory, which "resembled the postwar change in attitude of the Japanese government" in its assessment of the Great East Asia War. The Japanese government initially took the position that the evaluation of the war "should be left to the judgment of future generations." Eventually, however, some legislators, movement groups, the biased media and foreign interference pushed them to say that it was an aggressive war. And finally, it was included in the criteria for school textbook examinations to take into account the intentions of neighboring countries for the writing of modern history disregarding objective fact check. It's true that "the Japanese lack remorse for the pre-war period and have not learned their lesson".

By the way, when *Tennō Kikansetsu* was under intense criticism in the Imperial Diet, Emperor Syōwa supported the theory and repeatedly made the following statements to *Jijūbukancyō* [the chief of his military staff], Honjō Shigeru;

Of course, Status aside, I'm no different from you physically. Therefore, any

argument that keeps me stuck for the purpose of eliminating *Kikansetsu* is mentally and physically painful (*Honjō Nikki* [The Honjō's Diary], Tokyo: Hara Syobō, p.203, March 11, 1935);

Kyōikusōkan [The Superintendent of Military Education] explain that the emperor is the subject of national governance. If the emperor is the subject of national governance, then the state is recognized as a legal entity and the emperor is considered to be a part of the state. The argument, then, is exactly the same as the so-called *Tennō Kikansetsu*, only the wording is different: If the sovereignty were to rest with the emperor rather than the state, it would invite the criticism that it was tyranny. And it would be bound to be difficult to explain international commitments, international bonds, etc. (ibid.p.206, April 9, 1935);

Isn't it a contradiction for the military to insist on the sovereignty of the emperor while going against my views? (ibid.p.211, May 22, 1935).

In response to the Emperor Syōwa's statements, his chief of military staff, Honjō, replied, "In the military, the Emperor is believed to be *Arahitogami*. Treating the emperor like a human being on the basis of *Kikansetsu* is extremely difficult with regard to the education and leadership of the military (ibid.p.204, April 4, 1935). His naval staff, Idemitsu Banpei, even said the following; "I think it is wrong for Your Majesty to say, as the way your vassals handles some affairs from time to time does not agree with your views, that it is not consistent with your sovereignty, and, furthermore, to express your interpretation of National Polity." (ibid.p.211, May 22, 1935).

If the words of Idemitsu represented the thinking of the military, then the military, while strongly advocating the theory of emperors sovereignty externally, stood for a thoroughgoing *Kikansetsu* internally. By the way, in the statement explaining the reasons for the coup d'état of the "2.26 Jiken [February 26 Incident carried out by a young army officer]" in 1938, words such as "Bansei Issin taru Tennō Heika [The Emperor, the eternal and only God]" and "Hakkō-ichiu [The Idea of World Unity by the Emperor]" were written. However, the statement explaining the reasons for the coup d'état of the "5.15 Jiken [May 15 Incident]" in 1932 did not contain any such words related to "Arahitogami." The changes during this time are not negligible.

The Compilation of *Kokutai no Hongi*

The government, which rejected Kikansetsu by issuing the second "Kokutai Meicyō Seimei," was inevitably forced to publicly define the meaning and content of the "Kokutai [National Polity]" that it affirmed. Then the budget of the Ministry of Education for fiscal year 1938 included funds for the compilation of a book on the essence of the National Polity, and Shisōkyoku [the Thought Bureau of the Ministry of Education] began compiling a book named *Kokutai no Hongi* (published in March 1937). The process of compilation is described in detail in the above-mentioned *Syōwa Kyōiku Shi*, vol.1. In this process, the item "Arahitogami" appeared in the draft prepared by the Ministry of Education (p.376), and Inoue Takamaro, who was a member of the compilation committee, also made the following statement; "If it is not possible to make it clear that the emperor is *Arahitogami*, and to convince the people that he is *Arahitogami* and bring them to worship him, I think it is meaningless to compile *Kokutai no Hongi* (p.388). Thus, the "Arahitogami" finally appeared in the official documents. This is the reason why the reference to the emperor as "Kami" appeared in elementary school textbooks in 1939, and why the term "Akitsumikami" was written in them in 1941, as already mentioned in Chapter 1.

In the completed *Kokutai no Hongi*, it is stated at the beginning of the book that Japan was not founded when Emperor Jimmu ascended the throne, but when Niniginomikoto, the grandson of Amaterasu, descended to the earth (*Tenson Kōrin*) as follows; The beginning of Japan was when the emperors ancestor Amaterasu ordered her grandson Niniginomikoto to come down to the country on earth and rule over it (pp.9-10). *Kyōiku Cyokugo* [the Imperial Rescript on Education] (1883) and *Kokutai Ron Shi* [The History of the National Polity] (1921) were premised on the judgment that the accession of Emperor Jimmu was the founding of Japan, but, in 1937, the governments view was changed to that Japan was founded at the time of *Tenson Kōrin*.

Kokutai no Hongi determined *Tenson Kōrin* as the "founding of Japan." But it doesn't mean that the book further claimed the emperor to be Absolute God. It writes the following about "Arahitogami"; "The Emperors are *Arahitogami* who govern our country obeying the intention of their ancestors. *Akitsumikami*, or *Akitsukami*, or *Arahitogami*, does not mean the so-called Absolute God or the

omniscient and omnipotent God, but rather that the Emperors ancestors reside in their descendants, the Emperors, who are with their ancestors and the source of the development of their subjects and the land forever, and that they are infinitely sacred and awe-inspiring”(pp.23-24).

If we only look at phrases that “they are infinitely sacred and awe-inspiring,” it is no different from saying that Arahitogami is Absolute God. But on the other hand, it also says that “*Akitsumikami*, or *Akitsukami*, or *Arahitogami*, does not mean the so-called Absolute God or the omniscient and omnipotent God.” In other words, its a paradoxical way of saying so that “Arahitogami is as close to Absolute God as possible, but it is not Absolute God.” The reasons for this statement are not clear, but the following facts may be relevant; During the editing process, Watsuji Tetsurō, who was one of the members of the editorial committee, said, "In particular, I think it is a serious issue whether we can describe the fundamental definition of the concept of National Polity in a way that would convince modern Japanese intellectuals. I hope that this committee will fully consider this point.”(*Syōwa Kyōiku Shi* vol.1, pp.385-386): In the Report of *Kyōgaku Sassin linkai* [the Committee for the Renewal of Teaching and Learning] , which was established to examine the concrete realization of the *Kokutai Meicyō* [Clarification of National Polity] (November 1935), it was stated that "it is important not to let people have a formal and dogmatic view of the national polity, fail to perceive accurately the complexity of the actual society, become impatient and deviate from the path of creative renewal. At this point in time, it was probably still necessary to give some consideration to those who expressed similar concerns as expressed by Kiyohara Sadaino in *Kokutai Ron Shi* [The History of the Theories of National Polity] published in 1921.

It is true that *Arahitogami* appearing in *Kokutai no Hongi* had a meaning similar to Absolute God. However, in the eyes of those who consider the emperor to be Absolute God, it seems to have been unsatisfactory. They criticized it the following; "If the emperor could not be Absolute Being, then the emperor was viewed as a Relative Being, and this may be a lesser degree of reverence than the degree of reverence we hold for the Absolute Being." (Taniguchi Masaharu, *Taima Hōsai to Kigan* [Enshrining and Praying a Charm at Ise Jingu Shrine] *Seycyō no Ie*, October 1937).

In an article *Shin-Nihon-Gaku Juritsu eno Doryoku* [The Efforts to Establish a New Japanology] (*Tennō-Zettai-Ron to sono Eikyō* [The Emperor Absolutism and Its Influence] ed. Taniguchi Masaharu, 1941), written by Ozeki Teiichi, he divided the theories of the emperor into "the position of Absolute God" and "the position of deities with human nature", with his reservation that this category was the "general trend." He included in the former category Kakei Katsuhiko, Tanaka Yoshitō, Inoue Tetsujirō, Katō Genchi, Imaizumi Sadasuke, Yasuoka Masahiro, and others, while in the latter category included Kōno Sheizō, Orikuchi Shinobu, Yamamoto Shinya, Kiyohara Sadao, Kihira Masami, Minoda Muneki, Mizoguchi Komazō, and Satomi Kishio. Regardless of the validity of the individual classifications of the advocators in this article, this is sufficient evidence that there were two positions within the view of the emperor as a divine being, one saw him as Absolute Being and the other saw him as a Relative Being, and that the difference between two positions was recognized.

The Prime Ministers Public Announcement of the Emperor as Absolute God

Arahitogami which appeared in *Kokutai no Hongi* (March 1937) was not an Absolute God itself. Then, when did *Arahitogami* as Absolute God claimed by Katō Genchi, Murakami Shigeyoshi, and others appear in the official statement of the government? To my surprise, it was in 1944. In July of that year, taking responsibility for the worsening war situation, the Tojō cabinet resigned and was replaced by the Koiso cabinet. Koiso Kuniaki, who had become Prime Minister when hopes of victory had vanished, delivered a speech via radio as follows.

It goes without saying now that the Emperor is Absolute God of the universe: The entire nation will exert all its power in this belief, and the absolute power that exists in the universe will emerge: By doing so, the highest morality of mankind will be established, and with Gods help, the supplies needed to win the war will come naturally(*Asahi Shimbun* [Asahi Newspaper] , August 9, 1949).

The almost hopeless deterioration of the war situation led the prime minister to demand that the people should believe in *Arahitogami* as Absolute God, overstepping even the view of the emperor in *Kokutai no Hongi*. This was the reason the government professed *Arahitogami* as Absolute God. In light of this

background, we can make sense of the reason why, in the drafting process of so-called *Ningensengen* [the Emperor Shōwa's declaration that he was an ordinary human being], the emperors entourage insisted that it was undeniable that the emperor was "Deity's Descendant" but that it was acceptable to deny that he was *Akitsumikami*.

The question that arises here is, why did Murakami Shigeyoshi, the leading authority on "State Shinto", assert that the theory of the emperor as Absolute God, which had not yet been asserted in *Kokutai no Hongi* (March 1937), had continued to exist since the establishment of the Imperial Constitution (February 1889)? Murakami was born in 1928. He was sixteen years old in 1944 when Prime Minister Koiso appealed to the people to believe in the emperor as Absolute God. The prime ministers words, spoken at a time when Japan was on the verge of defeat, must have left a deep impression on the minds of the people of that time. If you look directly at the sun, any view around you will disappear. The speech of Koiso must have left an imprint on the hearts and minds of the people that was so powerful that it blew away any historical background. By this reasoning, Murakamis argument was an argument that mistakenly assumed the "result" that appeared at the end of the various events as the "cause" that existed from the beginning before the events.

Konoe Fumimaro and "The Declaration for the Construction of a New Order in East Asia"

The "Hakkō-ichiu" Theory had not yet appeared in *Kokutai no Hongi*. It referred to Emperor Jimmus edict to build the *Kashihara* Palace as a capital city, but it was not linked to "Japanese mission of world domination", only to the following; "Kami have entrusted his ancestors with the management of the country and commanded them to establish justice." "which is why the emperors ancestors founded this country long ago and the emperors have ruled it by virtue." (pp.67-68). At the end of *Kokutai no Hongi*, under the heading "Our Mission," it is only stated as follows; "Nowadays, the mission of our people is to take in and refine Western culture on the basis of our national polity, to create a new Japanese culture, and to contribute positively to the development of world culture" (p.155).

The first time "Hakkō-ichiu" appeared in an official government document was

Kihon-Kokusaku-Yōkō [the Outline of Basic National Policies] announced by the Second Konoe Cabinet on August 1, 1940. Behind this outline was the third "invoker" of *Arahitogami*, or the vision of building a power bloc called *Tōa-Shin-Chitsujo* [the New Order of East Asia] .

The world order of post-World War I was shaped by the Versailles regime in Europe and the Washington regime in the East Asia. It is said that the Washington System led by U.S.A was a way for the U.S.A., which had lagged behind in entering the Chinese market, to make up for the delay by forcing Japan, Britain and France to respect the sovereignty of the Republic of China and open their doors and provide equal opportunities. However, when the Great Depression occurred in 1929, Western countries began to abandon free trade and set up bloc economies in order to survive. The U.S.A., with its vast territory, enacted a high tariff tax law called the Hawley-Smoot Act in June 1930, and shut itself off from the rest of the world. Britain, which controlled about a quarter of the earth's surface, summoned members of the British Empire to a conference in Ottawa, Canada, in 1932 and agreed to a block economy for a preferential customs union. Faced with this international situation, the opinion that Japan must have an economic bloc in the Asia for self-sufficiency emerged, and the calls for the overthrow of the Washington regime were getting louder (Watanabe Syōichi, *Nihonshi kara mita Nihonjin: Syōwa Hen* [The Japanese People from the History of Japan: The Syōwa Era] , Tokyo:Syōdensya, pp.177-186).

In December 1934, Konoe Fumimaro, President of the House of Peers, wrote an article titled "Kokka-syugi no Saigen [The Recurrence of Nationalism] " in *Gekkan Ishin* [the Monthly Magazine of Restoration] published by Heibonsya, in which he said; "Japan also sympathized with the internationalism and collaborationism that dominated the world after the European War, and since the Paris Conference, We have approved the maintenance of the territorial status quo according to claims of Western countries. It was conditional upon the coming of a free world as far as human migration, import and export of goods. However, in reality, both in their own country and in their territories of the Orient which should be ruled by colored peoples themselves, they exclude all colored peoples, of course include in Japanese, and close their doors to trade as well, while they insist on equal

opportunity and openness only in the Far East Asia. This policy may be natural for them from the standpoint of their national interests, but for Japan, which is currently achieving rapid economic development, it is very difficult to accept." (pp. 59-60).

Even since Konoe was a bureaucrat in the Ministry of Interior, he had been critical of the Anglo-American-oriented world order, publishing an article entitled "Eibehoni no Heiwasyugi wo Haisu [Rejecting Anglo-American-oriented Pacifism]" (*Nihon oyobi Nihonjin* [The Japan and Japanese], December 1918). Subsequent changes in domestic and international circumstances provided him with the opportunity to express his aspirations, both at home and abroad, in the capacity of Prime Minister.

When the China Incident sparked by the Marco Polo Bridge Incident in July 1937 began to drag on and become bogged down, the first Konoe Cabinet began to think that the situation would be brought under control by bringing out the number two leader of the KMT government, Wang Zhao-Ming, to form a pro-Japanese government. As part of the maneuvers for this purpose, the "Tōa Shin Chitsujo Kensetsu Seimei [The Declaration for the Construction of a New Order in East Asia]" was issued in November 1937 (Yabe Teiji, *Konoe Fumimaro*, Tokyo: Jiji-tsūshinsha, pp.97-98), as follows.

What our empire wants is to build a new order that will ensure the stability of East Asia forever. The purpose of this fight against China is the same. The purpose of building this new order is, based on the cooperation of Japan, Manchuria and China in all political, economic, cultural and other fields, to establish a relationship of mutual assistance and linkage, establish international justice in East Asia, achieve joint defense, create a new culture and achieve economic integration.

Regardless of Prime Minister Konoe's true intentions, this declaration resulted in the Japanese government declaring that the construction of the blocs sphere in East Asia under Japanese influence was Japan's objective in the Sino-Japanese War. In other words, Konoe Cabinet declared to the world that it was going its own way, away from the Washington regime, and because of this, the declaration completely hardened the government of U.S.A. (*Syōwa-shi no*

Ronten [Issues in the History of the Syōwa Era] ,Tokyo: Bungeisyunjūsyā, pp.105-114).

From the Ogikubo Meeting to the Tripartite Pact

The first Konoe Cabinet resigned in January 1944, and was followed by a series of weak and short-lived cabinet of Prime Minister Hiranuma, Abe and Yonai. In the meantime, the U.S.A-led economic blockade of Japan, including the notification of the abrogation of the U.S.A-Japan Trade Treaty, has been gaining pressure, and anti-American/British fervor has been growing in Japan. On the other hand, with regard to the war in Europe, which began with Germanys invasion of Poland in September 1939, news of German victory came one after another from the spring of 1940. They gave rise to a shout “Dont miss the bus!” and the demand for the conclusion of the Tripartite Pact was growing, especially among the Army. Under these circumstances, Konoe again took up the position of Prime Minister, carrying the hopes of the majority of the people. It was July 22, 1940.

Prior to assuming the office of Prime Minister, Konoe invited Tōjō Hideki, the prospective Minister of Army, Yoshida Zengo, the prospective Minister of the Navy, and Matsuoka Yōsuke, the prospective Minister for Foreign Affairs, to his private residence in Ogikubo for a meeting on July 1939 in order to reach an agreement on basic diplomatic policy. The so-called “Ogikubo Kaidan.” The following four points were identified as the “fundamental agreement of global policy.”

- 1) Strengthen the Axis of Japan, Germany and Italy in order to build a New Order in East Asia in response to the rapid changes in the world situation and in a timely manner.
- 2) Sign a non-aggression agreement on the border with the Soviet Union and build up an undefeated military force against the Soviet Union within the period of validity of the agreement.
- 3) Actively deal with the British, French, Dutch and Portuguese colonies in East Asia in order to include them in the New Order.
- 4) Avoid unnecessary conflicts with the United States, but have a firm determination to eliminate any U.S.armed interference in the construction of the New Order in East Asia.

Based on this agreement, *Kihon-Kokusaku-Yōkō* [the Outline of Basic National Policies] was decided on July 26 in 1940, after the inauguration of the second Konoe Cabinet. In this Outline, the term “Hakkō-ichiu” appeared for the first time, explaining that the Konoe cabinet's foreign policy of establishing a bloc's sphere of influence was derived from the "founding spirit" of Japan; “The national policy of the Empire of Japan is to build a strong alliance between Japan, Manchuria and China, with Japan at the center, and to build a New Order in Great East Asia in order to establish world peace based on the great founding spirit of *Hakkō-ichiu*.”

This *Kihon-Kokusaku-Yōkō* was published on August 1. Explaining this, Foreign Minister Matsuoka said, “Japanese current diplomatic policy is based on the *Kōdō no Dai-Seishin* [the great spirit that has existed since the founding of Japan with our emperors] , and first of all, to establish *Dai-Tōa-Kyōei-Ken* [The Blocs Sphere for The Mutual Prosperity of Greater East Asia] with Japan, Manchuria and China as part of it.” The term “Dai-Tōa-Kyōei-Ken” was first used in this discourse. And he immediately met with the German ambassador to Japan, Otto, and began to confirm Germany's intentions for the Tripartite Pact. Since then, negotiations for the Tripartite Pact were carried out under the leadership of Foreign Minister Matsuoka and were concluded on September 27.

They say that the agreement at the Ogikubo Meeting was not intended to lead to the conclusion of the Tripartite Pact and Konoe did not necessarily agree with it. It seems that he finally agreed to the conclusion because he hoped to avoid the outbreak of war between Japan and the U.S.A. by the pressure of the "Eurasian Continental Alliance" proposed by Foreign Minister Matsuoka. It is said that the idea of The Alliance was to form an alliance with Germany and Italy first, and then, through the mediation of Germany, to develop this alliance into a four-party alliance involving the Soviet Union, and to use the power of this alliance to establish a balance of power with the United States and Great Britain in order to resolve both Japan-U.S. relations and the China Incident.

From the Tripartite Pact to *Shinmin no Michi* [The Way of the Vassals]

The Tripartite Pact stipulates; “Japan shall recognize and respect the leading

position of Germany and Italy in building a New Order in Europe,” and “Germany and Italy shall recognize and respect the leading position of Japan in building a New Order in Great East Asia.” In the imperial rescript issued on the occasion of the conclusion of this treaty, the significance of the treaty was explained as follows; “Spreading great justice throughout the world and bringing the world together as one family was the policy set by my ancestors, and I am always striving to achieve this policy.” “Ensuring that all countries are run as they wish and that their people are secure is a great plan and it will take a lot of time for it to realize. My subjects! With a clear understanding of our national polity, and with deep thought, and with an eye to the distant future, unite to overcome the present emergency and support this country for eternity.”

Based on the ideas embodied in the imperial rescript on the conclusion of the Tripartite Pact, *Shinmin no Michi* [The Way of the Vassals] was compiled to explain to the people the national policy of establishing a bloc based on *Cyōkoku no Seishin* [the founding spirit of the country] and the alliance with Germany and Italy for that purpose. While the central theme of *Kokutai no Hongi* [The True Meaning of The National Polity] , published in March 1937, was "Kokutai" (of which "Arahitogami" was a part), the theme of *Shinmin no Michi*, compiled and published by *Monbushō-Kyōgaku- Kyoku* [The Teaching and Learning Bureau of the Ministry of Education] in July 1941, was indeed “Hakkō-Ichiu.”

The first chapter of *Shinmin no Michi* is entitled "Construction of the World New Order" in which "Japanese world-historical mission" (*Cyūkai Shinmin no Michi* [The Commentary of The Way of the Vassals] , Tokyo: Asahi-Shimbun-Sya, p.20) is described at length as follows; The mission is to "contribute to the creation of a moral world in which all nations cooperate with each other in harmony, and all people live in security according to their characteristics" (p. 22): Which is the "Konpon Seishin" [the essential purpose] of the Tripartite Pact(p. 20): In order to realize this mission, Japan must occupy a leading position in East Asia: "Politically, Japan must help the regions within the Great East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere that were colonized by the Western invasion of the Orient and liberate them from Western domination, economically, Japan must eradicate Western exploitation and establish a self-sufficient economic system of coexistence and co-prosperity, and culturally, Japan must revive Oriental culture and contribute to the creation of a righteous world culture by stopping pursuit of

Western culture" (p.21): "The founding spirit of our nation, which is to make all nations one family, is the basic principle of the new world order" (p. 20). In short, the concept of the bloc's sphere was linked to Japanese founding spirit through the medium of the theory of *Hakkō-Ichiu*.

Mundane Conclusion and New Reasoning

To summarize briefly the conclusions drawn from the above considerations, it can be said as following; The rise of the theory of Absolute God of the Emperor in the Syōwa Era was due to the hardening of the theory of National Polity under the influence of communist ideology, the idea of total war, and the vision of building a power bloc, which was caused by the drastic changes in the international environment surrounding Japan: Furthermore, the public declaration of Absolute God of the Emperor at the end of WW II was brought about by the worsening of the war situation: Therefore, the assertion that "the monotheistic view of the emperor had been taught since the Meiji Era and had continued to dominate the Japanese psyche, and as a result, the people had harbored fantasies of world domination and devoted their lives to war without sparing a moment's thought," is nothing more than a narrow-minded "myth" and an "illusion" derived from ignorance of the world upheavals and the complex relationship between domestic and foreign ideas that were linked to them.

If so, my conclusions drawn from the above reasoning merely confirm what had already been written by Helen Mears in 1948 and by Takeyama Michio in 1955.

The stronger the power of tradition, the more it is used to integrate the people under war plans in times of national emergency. But tradition is not the cause of war. Once a war is decided upon, tradition becomes a means of uniting the people under war plans in the name of defense. By doing so, the politicians make the complex reasons of war easier for the people to understand.

The U.S.A. also used tradition to unify its people under the war, but somehow it is often forgotten. We fought in the name of democracy and Christianity.- (omission of middle part)- Our flag is not a military symbol. Likewise, without the war, the emperor would not be a military symbol for the Japanese. (Helen Mears, *Mirror for Americans: JAPAN*, Boston: Houghton

Mifflin Company, 1948, translated by Itō Nobuji, Tokyo: Media Factory, pp.162-163)

The public response in a crisis is also expressed by the form in which it was historically established. History is always a powerful force to be reckoned with, especially in difficult times for foreign relations. Even in the Soviet Union, during the war, communism was ducked and history came out. When reminiscing about those days, the trend of revivalism in Japan was born out of a sense of crisis and deepened in response to it. The facts came first, and then the myths spread. As modern warfare has flared up, antiquity has been revived. The cause came first, and then the latent preconditions became apparent (Takeyama Michio, *Syōwa no Seishinshi* [The History of the Spirit of the Syōwa Era, p.120).

Emperor worship in the Syōwa Era was assumed as an illusion: 'The ideal emperor should have been something like this in our country's ancient past. An emperor with the character of the Syōwa Era is not a historical fact and has not been created since the Meiji Era. - (omission of middle part)- I don't think that an explanation of the origins of the emperor worship, "*which began Mitogaku* [A theory developed in the *Mito* domain in the late Edo period] " can elucidate the movement of ideas in the Syōwa Era (Takeyama, *ibid*, p121).

Mirror for Americans: JAPAN and Syōwa no Seishinshi are excellent works. Both books are full of insights that cut through "Illusions" of not only "Arahitogami" and "Hakkō-Ichiū," but also many others that are still alive today. Even though such profoundly insightful achievements existed from the point of departure after the war, why don't empirical researches have emerged to bring these insights to more accurate perceptions and deny the "Illusions"? Why, in spite of the fact that historical researches are much more advanced than they were immediately after the defeat, the "Illusions" are still alive and continue to be advocated? I speculate on the cause of it as follows.

The role of a counter ideology to Marxism came to be expected to the National Polity in the early Syōwa Era. In an attempt to respond to this expectation, supporters grew of the theory that the idea of the emperor as Absolute God and Japanese domination of the world was the spirit of the Meiji Restoration and,

going back further, the very ideals on which Japan was founded. This kind of thinking seeks to justify the new ideology by finding its roots in the distant past and asserting that this is exactly tradition; to put it in today's popular discourse, it is the "Invention of Tradition".

Such attempts grew in strength from the early Syōwa Era, and the "Invented Tradition" was imprinted as truths among the intellectuals who experienced the Era. Next came the occupation forces who were convinced, through the discourse of D.C.Holtom, that the discourse of Katō Genchi was true. And while shutting down any opposition, they propagated that the ideas of "Arahitogami" and "Hakkō-Ichiu" were the cause of the war, and carried out thorough reformations. In other words, the imprint of the "Invented Tradition" was endorsed by the occupation forces. The occupation forces left Japan after nearly seven years of brainwashing for Japanese people, however, the "Invented Tradition" that they reinforced was further amplified by the revolutionary people so called "Shinpoteki Bunkajin [the progressive cultural people]" and others, and finally came to dominate the post-war minds of Japanese people as an unquestionable fact. In order to convince you of this reasoning, in the next chapter, I will again try to follow the course of history from a different angle.