

## **The illusion of Living God “Arahitogami” and “State Shinto”: What invoke Absolute God?**

### **Part 2 The Illusion of “State Shinto”**

#### **Chapter1 How was "State Shinto" invented: Tracing the Genealogy of “Illusion”**

##### **The Inventor of the State Shinto "Illusion": Katō Genchi**

As I confirmed in Part 1, the ideologies of "Arahitogami" and "Hakkō-ichiu" have not consistently existed since the Meiji Restoration. Therefore, "State Shinto" as the ideological injection device could not have consistently existed either. Then, how did the "illusion" of the existence of "State Shinto" as the device come about? Surprisingly, or perhaps not surprisingly if you think about it for a moment, the inventor of “State Shinto” was also Katō Genchi, one of the inventor of "Arahitogami".

It is a little-known fact that the term "State Shinto" became popular after the WW II, but before it, this term was not so commonly used. Even when it was used occasionally, it was only a narrow meaning term that referred to “the state control of Shrine Shinto.” It was Katō Genchi who proposed that this term should refer to a huge ideological device to inject the people with the idea that the emperor is “Arahitogami.”

Katō Genchi published his view of the Emperor as Absolute God in his book *Waga Kokutai Shisō no Hongi* [The Principle of Our National Polity] in 1970, and went on to write a series of books on Shinto throughout the Taisyō and Shōwa periods. His career during this period was as follows: In 1899, he was commissioned as a teacher of English at the Military Academy: In the same year, he was commissioned as a lecturer at the Faculty of Literature, Tokyo Imperial University: The following year, he became a professor at the Military Academy: When the Department of Shinto was established at Tokyo Imperial University in 1919, he became an assistant professor in the Department; His main job is as a professor at the Military Academy, but he also works at Tokyo Imperial University: He became a lecturer at Kokugakuin Daigaku [University to study Japanese

classics] in 1913. Through his writings during this period, his theory of "State Shinto" was gradually formed.

First of all, in *Waga Kokutai to Shintō* [Our National Polity and Shinto] published in 1919, he repeated that the Emperor for the Japanese is equivalent to "Yahveh" for the Jews and "Ten" for the Chinese, and that the loyalty to the Emperor is a kind of religion, which he called "Tennōkyō [Emperorism] ." And he stated that this idea is "the essence of Shinto and the core of Shinto" (ibid. p.77).

In *Shinto no Syūkyōgaku teki Shin-Kenkyū* [A New Study of Shinto from the Perspective of Religious Studies] ,published in May 1924, he reminded us that Yamato Damasyi [the spirit of the Japanese] , which appears in the form of religious passion for Arahitogami, is the great spirit of Shinto and its most important essence" (pp.271-273) and, using a term from Inoue Tetsujirō, he named this spirit as "Kokutai Shinto [National Polity Shinto] ." In this book, for the first time, he referred to the freedom of religion in a provision of the Imperial Constitution and began to argue that "as long as we Japanese, we must naturally or inevitably be believers in Shinto: Kokutai Shinto and Shinto Shrines. In other words, the Japanese people do not have the freedom to choose or not to choose Shinto: Kokutai Shinto and Shinto Shrine" (pp.386-387).

The framework of Katō's theory of State Shinto was completed in *Tōzai Shisō Hikaku Kenkyū* [ A Comparative Study of Eastern and Western Thought] ,published in 1923 based on his lectures at the Military Academy. In the book, Katō says the following: "Kokkateki Shinto [State Shinto] " can be called as "Cyūkō-Kyō [A Religion of Loyalty and Filial Piety] ," "Nihonminzoku-Kyō [A Religion of the Japanese Race] ," and "Tennō-Kyō [The Worship of Emperor] ; "Kokkateki Shinto [State Shinto] " is a combination of "Kokutai Shinto [National Polity Shinto] " and "Jinja Shinto [Shrine Shinto] ";While "Shrine Shinto" are administered by "Naimusyō Jinjakyoku [The Bureau of Shinto Shrines in the Ministry of Home Affairs] ", "Kokutai Shinto [National Polity Shinto] relates broadly to the entire Japanese people, all of whom are its adherents, and is taught by educators throughout Japan, with the Imperial Rescript on Education at its core"(pp.289-290): The "freedom of religion" recognized by the Imperial Constitution is the "freedom with conditions"; Therefore, "If there was a religion

that taught something that was contrary to the essence of our national polity, it would interfere with the peace and order of the nation, the government might prohibit it, which would not violate the freedom of religion granted by the Constitution"; "If there was a religion that taught something that destroyed the essence of our national polity as State Shinto, it would not be a violation of the freedom of religion granted by the Constitution if government officials forbade the propagation of such a religion among the Japanese people, which, in fact, should be best to prohibit it"(pp.334-335).

Furthermore, in *A Study of Shinto, The Religion of the Japanese Nation* published in the first year of the Syōwa Era (1926, reprinted by Routledge in 2013), Katō introduced the theory of "Kokkateki Shinto" to foreign countries. At the beginning of this book, he translated "Kokkateki Shinto" into English as "State Shinto" and explained that it consists of "Jinja Shinto [Shrine Shinto]" and "Kokutai Shinto [National Polity Shinto]". And he said that "while Jinja Shinto is expressed in Shinto rituals and shrines, "Kokutai Shinto consists of ethical teachings or moral instructions inseparably connected with the unique national organization and history of the Japanese people, formulated in the "Edict on Education" issued by the Emperor Meiji in 1890 (about the middle of the Meiji Era), and now inculcated in schools throughout the Empire."(p.2). In the last chapter, Chapter 20, he wrote that "Shinto, as theanthropic religion, has culminated in Mikadoism or Worship of the Mikado or Japanese Emperor, as divinity"; "Herein lies even at the present day, in my opinion, the essence life of Shinto inseparably connected with the national ideals of the Japanese people" (p. 206). In short, this book promoted the image of "State Shinto" as "the current state of Japan" to the rest of the world, saying that "State Shinto" exists in Japan as a huge ideological device that combines Shinto shrines and school education in order to inject faith in the "Arahitogami".

In Kato's theory of "Kokkateki Shinto [State Shinto]", emphasis is placed on "Kokutai Shinto [National Polity Shinto]" rather than "Jinja Shinto [Shrine Shinto]". In *Nihonjin no Kokutai Shinnen [The Japanese People's Belief in National Polity]*, published in April 1933, he included "Gunjin Cyokuyu [the Imperial Instruction to Soldiers]", "Boshin Syōsyo [the Imperial Rescript issued by Emperor Taisyō at the time of the Kantō Huge Earthquake in 1923]", "the Imperial Constitution," "Prince Syōtoku's Seventeenth Article Constitution," and

“Mythological parts of *Kojiki* and *Nihonsyoki*” as sacred texts for “Kokutai Shinto”, in addition to the Imperial Rescript on Education (p.75). Furthermore, in *Shinto no Syūkyō Hattatsushiteki Kenkyū* [A Historical Study of the Development of Shinto as Religion] ,” published in September 1935, it was even said that “the politics of our country is conducted by the spirit of Kokutai Shinto” (p.2).

*Jinja Mondai no Saikentō* [A Reexamination of the Shrine Problem] , published in May 1933, was written in the midst of the frequent problems of *Shrine versus Religion*, such as the problem of shrine visits in schools represented by *the Sophia University Incident* that occurred the previous year. In this book, Katō argued that the frequent problems with shrines were caused by the failure of the theory of non-religion of shrines that the government had adopted up to that time, and reiterated that the government must “proclaim State Shinto as the national religion that all the people should believe in.”

His arguments escalated further, and in his book *Shinto no Saininshiki* [The Reconceptualization of Shinto] published in October 1935, he proposed as follows: “If there was any foreign religion, whether Buddhism, Christianity or Islam, which respected the Emperor of Japan as human but could not worship as God in the light of each own faith, it should not be compatible with our National Polity, because our Emperor has the dual nature of God and humanity in our belief”; “The propagation of such religions should be prohibited in Japan.” (p.217).

From the above examination, it is clear that Katō's "State Shinto [Kokkateki Shinto] " already included the basic parts of the postwar image of "State Shinto [Kokka Shinto] " that I described in the Introduction of this book. By the way, Katō's argument was a "new theory" at the time it was proposed, and was not a common theory, although it later gained more supporters. It does not matter if the theory is a new theory or a minority theory, as long as it accurately captures and articulates the reality of the time. However, it is never the case with Katō's theory. It is evident from a careful reading of Katō's writings. Let me cite the most striking example. In *Shinto no Saininshiki* [The Reconceptualization of Shinto] , October 1935, he wrote the following.

“It is true that the Imperial Rescript on Education is read out in front of students at schools on various anniversaries. However, to what extent are students thoroughly taught that the Emperor Meiji, who issued the Imperial Rescript on Education, is *Jinnō* [the emperor as the Divinity] called as *Akitsuami* or

*Arahitogami*? Also, to what extent are students taught that the phrase "my ancestors" in the Imperial Rescript on Education includes the meaning of successive emperors as the Divinity? The Emperor Meiji, who is an emperor as the Divinity, and his ancestors, who were emperors as the Divinity, have been all taught to the students as mere human emperors. I'm very disappointed that in my memories of junior high school, high school, and college, there was no teacher used the word of *Jinnō* [the emperor as the Divinity] .”(p.310).

“The negative effects of education in Japan since the Meiji Restoration come from positivism, scientific universalism, and in addition, diplomacy and instruction that pander to and follow foreign countries. As a result, they interpret the emperor's ancestors as mere human ancestors mentioned in the Imperial Rescript on Education, and have no doubts about this interpretation.”

In short, Katō confesses that there has been no education since the Meiji Era to absolutely worship the Emperor and the Imperial Ancestors as *Arahitogami*. This confession is also consistent with the testimony of the Shintoist Asizu Uzuhiko, quoted in Part I, Chapter 4. In other words, both the Emperor and the Imperial Ancestors were taught as human beings in education, just as Inoue Kowashi, who drafted the Imperial Rescript on Education, intended. In the first place, since Katō was the proponent of the monotheistic view of the Emperor, there was no way such education could have been provided before him.

Katō states that one of the reasons for the lack of education on the Emperor as *Arahitogami* stems from the theory of "Shinto as non-religion," which ignores the religious aspects of Shinto or shrines and emphasizes only the moral aspects, and then says the following: "It is not ancestor worship, but ancestor memorial," and "The ancestor worship in this sense even a materialist could perform."(*Shinto no Syūkyōgakuteki Shinkenkyū*, pp.333-335). For this reason, he repeatedly calls for the abandonment of that theory. According to him, the theory is "a kind of official theory, a kind of publicly sanctioned Shinto theory, which has monopolized power until today" (*Jinja Mondai no Saikentō*, p.10). In other words, it was the official view of the government from the Meiji period until 1933.

If Katō was right in what he wrote, what exactly was the "Kokutai Shinto" that he was advocating, in which the Emperor was revered as *Arahitogami* and dominated education and politics? If it was different from the theory adopted by

the government, and if it was not educated in schools, where exactly did "Kokutai Shinto" exist? I found the answer in *Nihonjin no Kokutai Shinnen* [The Japanese People's Belief in National Polity] .

“All of our nation's education should begin here [from the Imperial Rescript on Education and other sacred texts of ‘Kokutai Shinto’] and return here. The foundation and guiding principles of all education in Japan, whether primary and secondary, higher education, business education, or military education, should be based on these. In other words, the education of the Japanese nation should have as its ultimate goal the cultivation of faith in the Emperor as God.”(p.75).

Let me tell you about the magic trick. What Katō called "Kokutai Shinto" was not something that actually existed, but was merely an ideal state that he envisioned as “what it should be.” Rather, precisely, because the education of the Emperor as a “Arahitogami [living God] ” was not actually conducted, Katō had to repeatedly emphasize that, equating the Emperor with the Christian God, the absolute obedience to him was the essence of Shinto and the guiding principle of education. And in order to make his ideal a reality, he repeatedly expressed it in his articles as if it existed in reality. After the Manchurian Incident, Katō's narratives became dominant, and a reality that matched his ideal began to emerge. This is where today's "illusion" of State Shinto originated.

### **The Mediator of Illusion: D. C. Holtom**

The first person who comes to mind when one pursues the flow of illusions from the original source to the present is D. C. Holt, whom W. P. Woodard describes as "a most pungent American critic of Shinto" and "whose theories have become so popularized that they have become the prevailing view of Shinto among Americans."("The Occupation and Japanese Religion," p.118 in *International Journal of Religion*, Vol. 3, No. 5-6). According to the research of Takahashi Shirō and Ōhara Yasuo, it was Katō Genchi who had a great influence on Holtom's theories of Shinto.

Holtom's major work is *Modern Japan and Shinto Nationalism*, published in 1943. In this book, the discussion is based on Katō Genchi's arguments and the discourses on "Arahitogami" and "Hakkō-ichiu" by various people, which had become popular after the Manchurian Incident, especially after 1935.

Holtom states the following: "The old communal form of religion that was normal in the West two thousand years ago exists in Japan as a powerful social and religious force." "This old is ever there as a vital, all-pervading influence, fundamentally conditioning his [the Japanese] mentality and conduct and supplying a pattern to which all else must be accommodated." "The protection and deepening of the loyalties of this old religious life in the presence of new knowledge and new forms of conduct constitute the major concern of the state education of modern Japan" (p.1-2)

He argues that "in any attempt at an appraisal of the forces that are working toward the creation of 'a new order in East Asia,'" we must thoroughly recognize "the religious foundations of the Japanese state" and "the fundamental position of the national faiths," and called it "State Shinto," using Katō's term. He explains the state of this "State Shinto" in the 1940s, including its history, as follows: "Anyone who would seek to discover the dominant trends of religious world of Japan today must find his important clue in the remarkable enhancement of the State Shinto that has been going on steadily since the beginning of the modern period in 1867. This development has seen increasing acceleration in the fifty years that have elapsed since the promulgation of Imperial Rescript on Education in 1890. In the decade that has just closed it has been stimulated to a new and previously unknown intensity." (p.2). "The modern Japanese state was deliberately established on a foundation which unified government and religion. In 1868 Shinto was made the state religion and has remained so ever since, in spite of strong statements to the contrary made largely on the basis of political necessity." (p.5)

According to Holtom, "State Shinto," which is a "union of government, education, and religion," has continued to develop since the Meiji Restoration. As a result, it gets today "the remarkable enhancement" and "a new and previously unknown intensity." And he says, this "State Shinto" have three doctrines.

The first is "the doctrine of the divinity of the emperor" (p.13). To prove this, he cites the discourses of Uesugi Shinkichi and Araki Sadao as well as Katō Genchi. In the revised edition of *Modern Japan and Shinto Nationalism* published in 1947, he added the following commentary on the doctrine of *Arahitogami* (This book is

not available, so I retranslate the Japanese translation by Fukazawa Chōtarō in 1950 into English): "The contents of the Japanese conception of the state are various, but some of it are based entirely on the idea that the emperor's will cannot be mistaken." (pp.251-252, Japanese edition). "The myth of Amaterasu was at the center of a form of belief that all Japanese people had to accept without question. The state propagated the idea that this ancient sun goddess was above all others, and the main goal of educational policy, especially at the lower levels, was to create a national character that would unconditionally accept the idea that the sovereignty of the emperor was closely tied to the worship of the goddess."(p.260).

The second doctrine is "a deep and widespread belief in a special guardship extended to the land and its people by the ancestral deities" (p.13).

The third doctrine is "the dogma of benevolent destiny." Holtom insists that "At the root of Japan's dedication to what she calls her 'holy war' in East Asia lies conviction that she is sent to be the savior of the world "(p.19). He also refers to "two imperial edicts which the *Nihongi* places in the mouth of the semilegendary first emperor, Jinmu Tennō" (p.20) and says "It [the first imperial edict] has been interpreted to mean that Japan is ordained by the will of the ancestral gods for the limitless extension of the imperial dominion and for ruling the entire world." (p.21):"From these Words [in the second imperial edict] has been derived the slogan, 'The Whole World under One Roof' (*hakkō ichi-u*), which Japanese authorities have pronounced the revelation of the great timeless mission of the nation, the keystone of Japanese diplomacy, and the declaration of the great ideals of the Yamato race."(p.21).

As a conclusion to the above argument, Holtom makes the following statement: "These few illustrations will prepare us for the assertion that Japan's national educational program gives large place to the inculcation of her particular brand of ecumenicity" (p.22); "We come around then to the conclusion that the principal agency for fulfilment of Japan's mission of benevolent destiny is her army."(p.23); "In such manner there is imparted to military command the quality of inviolability that attaches to the divine emperor himself. We may say without hesitation that entire educational process that goes on in the schools and the entire theory and practice of the army are set up so as secure a corresponding absolute obedience on the part of the subjects of the state. This is the fundamental virtue of modern Japan" (pp.23-24)."

In the revised edition of the book published in 1947, he lists the “ultra-nationalistic policies fostered by State Shinto” as “the rule of the world by the Emperor, the exaggeration of the superiority of the Japanese nation, the eccentricity with Japanese culture, the jealousy and exclusion of world homophobia, the superiority of Japan's national identity over that of other nations, tyranny based on supernaturalism and mythology, the denial of democracy by completely ignoring individuality, and the subjugation of conquered peoples to the Japanese nation.” (pp. 265-266, Japanese edition).

From what we have seen so far, it is clear that "State Shino", which was proposed as an ideal by Katō Genchi, was conveyed by Holtom to the rest of the world, especially to the Americans, as a reality of the 1940s that appeared as an result of the national policy since the Meiji Era, and as a motive for the war by Japan. As for the influence of his theory, we can trust the words of W. P. Woodard, quoted at the beginning of this section.

Robert O. Ballou, an American cultural historian, wrote a book titled “SHINTO: THE UNCONQUERED ENEMY; Japan’s Doctrine of Racial Superiority and World Conquests” published in 1945 and he wrote this book based on Holtom's previous views as follows: “But of even greater importance, from a long range point of view, is the fact that we were opposing our ideals of the equality of man, of self-government, of freedom, and of peace, to powerful and contradictory ideas which must be charged with much of the responsibility for Japan’s aggressive militarism--Shinto conceptions that the islands of Japan, the people, and their ruler are divine, that their mission is to conquer the world, and that all peoples owe homage to the divine emperor whose authority is absolute.” (p.3).

Although it is not possible to confirm the influence of Holtom, Helen Mears also wrote about the American view of the Japanese during the war in her book "Mirror for Americans: Japan" written in 1942 as follows: “Shinto, the religion of the Japanese, makes the Japanese believe that they are a superior race and commands the Japanese to 'conquer the world' in order to reign over the world by the Emperor as God. That's what we've been taught. This view of the Japanese people has been so enthusiastically discussed and widely propagated that many Americans have come to believe it to be true. In February 1944, the Conference

of Churches of Christ in the United States of America sent a telegram to President Roosevelt urging him to bomb two shrines of State Shinto in order to enlighten the ignorance of Japanese people that believe in "the divine emperor and the power of blessings by the emperor's ancestors."(*America no Kagami · Nihon*, Japanese translation by Itō Nobuji, Tokyo: Media Factory, July 1995, p.160. I have not been able to obtain Mears' original book, so I have retranslated Japanese translation into English). It was at this time that the claim of "State Shinto" as the cause of war emerged.

### **In The Beginning, There Was The Shinto Directive!**

What was the trigger for the "State Shinto" that came to be recognized as a "reality" with a history dating back to the Meiji Era, which was first advocated by Katō Genchi and incorporated by Holtom into various discourses of the 1940s, to come to haunt the consciousness of postwar Japanese intellectuals? It was the so-called "Shinto Directive" issued on December 15, 1945, by the occupying forces, who considered "State Shinto" to be an important target for remodeling Japan. It is a well-known fact that the drafter of the "Shinto Directive" was W.K. Bunce, the head of the Sub-Division of Religion in the Education and Religion Division of the Civil Information and Education Section at GHQ, who is said to have read Holtom's books with great enthusiasm. As a result, according to Ōhara Yasuo, the definition of "State Shinto" in the Shinto Directive "relies entirely on Holtom's view of Shinto" (*Shintō-shirei no Kenkyū* [The Study of the Shinto Directive, Tokyo: Harasyobō, p.326). The following is an excerpt of the main points of the "Shinto Directive".

At the beginning of the "Shinto Directive," the purpose of its issuance is enumerated.

- 1). In order to free the Japanese people from direct or indirect compulsion to believe or profess to believe in a religion or cult officially designated by state.
- 2). In order to lift from the Japanese people the burden of compulsory of financial support of an ideology which has contributed to their war guilt, defeat, suffering, privation, and present deplorable condition.
- 3). In order to prevent a perversion of Shinto theory and beliefs into militaristic and ultra-nationalistic propaganda designed to delude the Japanese people and lead them into wars of aggression.

These show GHQ's basic understanding of "State Shinto": that the State Shinto ideology was intended to lead the Japanese people into wars of aggression, and that the people were forced to believe in and support financially it, which led to war crimes, defeat, and other miseries.

Based on this understanding, the following orders were issued by GHQ in the "Shinto Directive": "prohibition of governmental sponsorship, support, perpetuation, control, and dissemination of Shrine Shinto," "abolition of public schools for Shinto research and education," "prohibition of Shinto education in general public schools," "prohibition of the publication of *Kokutao no Hongi* and *Shinmin no Michi* by public institutions," "prohibition of the use of terms such as *Daitōa-Sensō* [Great East Asia War] and *Hakkō-ichiu* [global unification under one roof] ," "removal of all physical symbols of State Shinto in public space," "prohibition of official visits to shrines," and others. In addition, the "Shinto Directive" provides definitions of important terms, and states that "The term State Shinto within the meaning of this directive will refer to that branch of Shinto (Kokka Shintō or Jinja Shintō) which by official acts of the Japanese Government has been differentiated from the religion of Sect Shinto (Shūha Shintō or Kyōha Sintō) and has been classified as a non-religious national cult commonly known as State Shinto, National Shinto or Shrine Shinto."

It also states that "Militaristic and ultra-nationalistic ideology, as used in this directive, embraces those teachings, beliefs, and theories which advocate or justify a mission on the part of Japan to extend its rule over other nations and peoples by reason of:

- (1) The doctrine that the Emperor of Japan is superior to the heads of other states because of ancestry, descend, or special origin.
- (2) The doctrine that the people of Japanese are superior to the people of other lands because of ancestry, descend, or special origin.
- (3) The doctrine that islands of Japan are superior to other lands because of divine, or special origin.
- (4) Any other doctrine which tends to delude the Japanese people into embarking upon wars of aggression or to glorify the use of force as an instrument for the settlement of disputes with other peoples."

This is the gist of the "Shinto Directive". From this we can see that GHQ's view

of "State Shinto" was as follows: The idea of a sacred emperor, people, and land derived from mythology was modified and abused as an ideology of war of aggression, which was the State Shinto ideology, and a device existed to inject this ideology into the people through state-controlled shrines and education. The post-war theory of "State Shinto" by the Japanese started from the view of "State Shinto" in the "Shinto Directive" imposed by the absolute power of GHQ. This is evident from the fact that the term "State Shinto" spread among the Japanese people as a result of this directive. No, no, no, it's more than a departure. We've been definitively shackled by the view.

### **The Expander of the "Illusion" of State Shinto: Fujitani Toshio**

The post-war theory of "State Shinto" derived from the "Shinto Directive" was later magnified by Japanese intellectuals into a huge "illusion." I would like to point out one fact that triggered it. As I have written before, Katō's theory of "State Shinto" was only a new theory that appeared at the end of the Meiji Era, although it became popular in the 1940s. However, after the restoration of Japan's independence, researchers at the Religious Affairs Division of the Ministry of Education came to regard his theory of "State Shinto" as the "pre-war prevailing theory, influenced by "Shinto Directive."(Umeda Yoshihiko, *Nihon Syūkyō Seidōshi* [The History of Japanese Religious System] , Tokyo: Hyakkaen, November 1962, pp 409-410. Inoue Eiyō, *Syūkyō Hōjinhō no Kisoteki Kenkyū* [A Basic Study of the Religious Corporation Law] , Tokyo: Daiichisyōbō, June 1969, p.41.etc.) This Division, to which they belonged, became the center of postwar religious administration, and as a result, their views also became highly influential in postwar religious studies.

In step with these movements, researchers such as Fujitani Toshio and Murakami Shigeyoshi emerged in the academic world, expanding "State Shinto" to the realm of megalomania. What they attempted to do was to portray "State Shinto" in the form of a scheme of constant expansion and upward development since the Meiji Era.

Fujitani Toshio, an abbot of Sōgenji Temple in the Ōtani sect of Jyōdo-shinsyū Buddhism, wrote the first volume of *Nihon Syūkyōshi Kōza* [A Course of the History of Japanese Religions] (Tokyo:Sanichi-syōbō), published in June 1959.

In this book, he included a chapter titled "The Establishment of State Shinto." In the chapter, he considers, the prayers of Emperor Kōmei to various shrines to ward off foreign enemies and the rise of the movement to revive *Jingikan* [the governmental office that worshipped Kami in ancient Japan] at the end of the Edo period, as a "Revival of State Shinto" (p. 257). He went on to discuss the period from the end of 1867 to 1871 under the title "The Policy for Shinto to National Religion" (p.260), and then from 1871 to the end of WW II under the title "Establishment of State Shinto" (p.271).

He states, "The ruling class, which was becoming increasingly inclined toward absolutism, adopted State Shinto as the ideology for the formation of a unified state with the Emperor as absolute monarch" (p.257). In other words, he equates the idea of "State Shinto" with the idea of "Sonnō" [nationalism that places the emperor at the center], which flourished at the end of the Edo period and during the Meiji Restoration and became the central idea of the new government. And he lists the following as components of "State Shinto", in addition to state-controlled shrines.

1) The imperial rituals and the government or school festivals held in conjunction with them: "The people of Japan, regardless of their religious beliefs, were obligated to participate in these national rituals."(p.277).

2) An argument for the non-religious theory of Shinto: It was "to cover up the contradiction between the compulsion of the people to worship shrines and the freedom of religion" (p.280).

3) The Imperial Constitution: Fujitani begins by discussing the reading of *Otsugebumi* [The document in which the emperor reported the establishment of the Constitution to his ancestors] in front of *Kashikodokoro* [A shrine in the palace, where the emperor's ancestors are enshrined] on the day of promulgation of the Constitution, stating that "the form of the promulgation of the Constitution was theocratic more over the contents of the Constitution itself" (p.281). Next, he states that Article 1 ("The Empire of Japan shall be reigned over and governed by a line of Emperors unbroken for ages eternal ") and Article 3 ("The Emperor is sacred and inviolable") of the Constitution were "provisions to force the people to believe in the mythical nature of the emperor" (p.281). Finally, with regard to the provision on freedom of religion in Article 28 ("Japanese subjects shall, within limits not prejudicial to peace and order, and not antagonistic to their duties as subjects, enjoy freedom of religious belief "), he explains that "the recognition of

the 'sanctity' and 'unbroken lineage' of the Emperor and the 'veneration' of shrines and their deities are 'duties as subjects,' and therefore denying them is 'interfering with the peace and order.'" (p.282). After stating the above, he concludes that Article 28 "forced the people to believe in a kind of religion that could be called 'State Shinto' or 'Tennōkyō [Mikadoism]'" (p. 28), and that "the drafters of the Constitution were thinking from the beginning to set 'monarchs' sovereignty' as the 'axis' that should replace religion. The State Shinto was formed to support this idea of sovereignty" (pp. 282-283)."

4) The Imperial Rescript on Education: It was "an attempt to make the emperor an absolute monarch as well as the source of national morality and it was treated as a 'scripture' or 'Bible' of *Tennōkyō* [Mikadoism] , and the worship of it was enforced" (p.283).

Readers, already familiar with Katō Genchi's arguments in detail, will immediately understand that Fujitani's arguments are heavily influenced by Katō's just by seeing the word "Tennōkyō [Mikadoism] ."

### **The Perfectionist of the "Illusion" of State Shinto: Murakami Shigeyoshi**

The postwar image of "State Shinto" expanded by Fujitani Toshio was given a clearer structure and historical classification, taking into account Holtom's arguments, by Murakami Shigeyoshi, a religious scholar, and it reached its climax. From his book, *Kokka Shinto* [State Shint] (Tokyo:Iwanami-syoten, November 1970), let me first quote some sentences that remind us of Holtom's way of speaking:

"State Shinto was the state religion and religious-political system that dominated the Japanese people until 20 years ago. During the eighty years between the Meiji Restoration and the defeat in the Pacific War, State Shinto exerted a broad and deep influence not only on Japanese religion, but also on every aspect of the people's daily lives. It is no exaggeration to say that the modern era of Japan has been fundamentally directed by State Shinto as far as ideology and religion are concerned"(p. i )

"State Shinto was an anachronistic system of state religion that fixed Shinto as an ethnic religion until the middle of the 20th century."(p. ii )

Murakami explains about ethnic religions as follows:

“Ethnic religions are the foundation of all religions and can be said to be older and more primitive than the founding religions [religions started by founders, such as Christianity and Buddhism].” (p.4).

“The ‘ethnic’ in ethnic religions does not refer to the concept of ‘nation’ that emerged with the formation of nation-states in modern societies, but mainly to ethnos in ethnology, i.e., a social group with the same race and language that has a low productive capacity and a small, semi-isolated living space.”(p.5)

“The basic characteristic of ethnic religions, in which the community as a social group and the religious group overlap completely, corresponds to this primordial stage of development in history.” (p. 5).

To be sure, Murakami sees Shrine Shinto as an ethnic religion, and ethnic religions as primitive religions before the formation of the state. It is only natural that Murakami, who believes in the stages of historical development based Marxism, defines State Shinto as an "anachronism," and I think he would have preferred to call it an "ultra" anachronism. Of course, his judgment could only be affirmed on the condition that “If his argument was compatible with prewar reality.” Let's take a look at the structure of his "State Shinto" theory to see what it was really about.

Murakami first defines "State Shinto" as "a unique ethnic religion that was formed by directly connecting Shrine Shinto and Imperial Shinto" (p.78), claims that this "State Shinto" was "reigning the public religions of Sect Shinto, Buddhism, and Christianity as a super-religious state ritual" (p.79), and names this state of reign as the “State Shinto System”(p.79). He cites four laws as supporting the “State Shinto System”: The Imperial Constitution (1889) "established the status of State Shinto as a public law directly connected it with the Emperor" (p.128); The Imperial Rescript on Education (1890) became "the ideological foundation of State Shinto" (p. 79) and "the de facto scripture of State Shinto" (p. 137); The Law for the Maintenance of Public Order (1925) was enacted as "a law of suppression to protect the doctrine of the National Polity of the modern emperor system" (p. 297); The Religious Organizations Law (promulgated in 1939 and enforced in 1940) was enacted as "a religious law to perfect the control and utilization of religions by imperialist fascism" (p.204).

Now, how was the "State Shinto System," which is said to have had the

structure described above, established and strengthened? Murakami explains this in terms of four time periods. They are as follows:

1) **The Formation Period: Meiji Restoration (1868) ~ Early Meiji 20's (late 1880's):** The State Shinto of the Formative Period of the Modern Emperor System: Instead of the policy of nationalization of Shinto at the beginning of the Meiji Restoration, the basic character of State Shinto was settled in the 10's year of Meiji by the separation of ritual and religion (p.78)

2) **The Completion Period of Doctrine: The promulgation of the Imperial Constitution (1889) ~ Russo-Japanese War (1905):** The State Shinto during the Establishment of the Modern Emperor System: Under the Imperial Constitution, Japanese religions were granted "freedom of religion" within the framework of the emperor system, and a State Shinto System was established in which State Shinto reigned the public religions of Sect Shinto, Buddhism and Christianity as a super-religious state ritual: Following the Constitution, the Imperial Rescript on Education was promulgated as the standard for the imperialistic indoctrination of the people, and became the ideological basis for State Shinto. At this stage, the doctrine of State Shinto was completed as the doctrine of the National Polity with reverence for Kami and ancestors as its main axis (p.79).

3) **The Completion Period of the System: Late Meiji 30's (late 1930's) ~Early Syōwa Period (early 1930's):** The State Shinto in the Period when Japanese Capitalism became Imperialism: The Ministry of Home Affairs established the administrative system of shrines, reduced the number of shrines, created "Kankokuheisya-hozonkin-seido [ a system of permanent subsidy from government funds for a small number of large shrines authorized by the government] , and established the rituals of shrines by laws or orders (p.79).

4) **Fascistic Period of National Religion: Manchurian Incident (1931) ~ Defeat in the Pacific War (1945):** The State Shinto in the Period of Imperial Fascism: The State Shinto reached its peak at this stage and fully demonstrated its true value as a weapon of spiritual control over the people (p.80).

After making the above classification of the developmental stages of State Shinto, Murakami states that there were three changes in the content of the ideology that was injected into the people at each stage. First of all, he argues that the "Doctrine of State Shinto" was completed in the "the Completion Period of Doctrine", which can be rephrased as the "Doctrine of National Polity," and that it had the worship of the emperor as its mainstay, leading to exclusionism. I quote

him on this point as follows:

"The Doctrine of State Shinto was the Doctrine of National Polity, or the idea of the national polity of the Empire of Japan" (p.141).

"The Doctrine of National Polity is, first and foremost, an assertion of the sanctity of the Empire of Japan, ruled by the divine Emperor, and is based on the political mythology of *Kojiki* and *Nihonsyoki* invented by the ancient state. These chronicles were called "Shinten [A classic recording of Kami's words] ", and the state power positioned the myths in the chronicles as the legitimate myths of Japan and made a series of political myths an important theme in school education, including *Tenson-kōrin* [The story of Niniginomikoto, grandson of Amaterasu, who came down to earth from heaven] . The government severely suppressed any criticism of these orthodox myths, as well as any objective research or questioning of them."(pp. 141-142).

"Under the State Shinto System, mythology was the ideological basis of state power and the government legitimized political rule in the name of the emperor by establishing legitimate mythology. In the Empire of Japan, myths lived in the realm of politics, and therefore the government needed to indoctrinate the people with myths and make the people believe in them thoroughly."(p.142).

"Mythology was regarded as a fact that could not be questioned, and this gave rise to the belief in the superiority of the world's preeminent national polity and the sense of election of the Japanese people as a people led by Kami, which became the rich soil for exclusionary nationalism." (pp. 142-143).

Murakami then goes on to say that at the end of "The Completion Period of Doctrine," the "Doctrine of Aggression" was added to the doctrine of State Shinto: "After the Sino-Japanese War, Japanese capitalism entered the stage of imperialism and rapidly became militaristic in its pursuit of economic and military domination of the Asian continent. Through the Sino-Japanese and Russo-Japanese wars, the State Shinto took on a military character. The doctrine of the National Polity became centered on the assertion of the absolute superiority of the "Shinkoku Nippon [The Divine Nation of Japan] " in the world and the sense of a holy mission to lead the whole world, as the result, War in the name of the emperor was unconditionally glorified as a holy war."(p.244).

Furthermore, Murakami argues that in the "Fascistic Period of National Religion," the "doctrine of aggression" became the center of the State Shinto

ideology.

“During the Fascistic Period of National Religion of State Shinto from the outbreak of the Manchurian Incident to the Pacific War, the invasive character of the doctrine of National Polity was amplified as the wars intensified, and the justification of holy war for world domination came to occupy the center of State Shinto doctrine. The doctrine of National Polity was focused on absolutizing the Emperor's rule for the domestic people, on the other hand, as the Japanese Empire embarked on its invasion of the Asian continent, it evolved into the frightening doctrine of Japan's sacred mission to conquer and rule other peoples and nations. The doctrine of world domination by "holy war" was based on the first Emperor Jimmu's decree of "Hakkō-ichiu".”(pp.106-107).

As I have already mentioned, the "Fascistic Period of National Religion " is recognized in Murakami's theory of "State Shinto" as the "peak period" and the time when "the true value of State Shinto was fully demonstrated.” In other words, according to him, what happened after the Manchurian Incident is the essence of "State Shinto," and the history since the Meiji Restoration has been an upward process of gradually exposing the true nature of "State Shinto.”

### **The Missionary to Constitutional Law Schools: Miyazawa Toshiyoshi**

It was Miyazawa Toshiyoshi, a major figure in postwar constitutional law circles in Japan, who popularized Murakami Shigeyoshi's theory of "State Shinto" in constitutional law circles. Miyazawa wrote the following in *The Constitution II* (New Edition, Tokyo: Yūhikaku, November 1971), referring to Murakami's book, *Kokka Shinto* [The State Shinto] :

“The Meiji Constitution established the divine right of emperor as its fundamental principle. As a natural consequence, it did not like to treat the religion that worshipped the emperor's ancestors as Kami (Jinja Shinto or Kannagara-no-michi) as same as other religions. In particular, in order to solidify the spiritual foundation of the Emperor's worship, which was considered a basic principle of the Meiji Constitution, it deemed that it was necessary to give the Shrine Shinto, which served as the basis for the Emperor's divinity, a nationalistic character. This is how the State Shinto was established.”

“There is a clear contradiction between the Meiji Constitution's provision of freedom of religion and the treatment of shrines as a national religion. How to explain this contradiction? The government at the time tried to resolve the contradiction with the logic that ‘Shrines are not Religion.’: ‘It is true that shrines

(as a national religion) are treated differently from other religions. If shrines were the same religion as Buddhism and Christianity, then special treatment of shrines alone would be contrary to the freedom of religion stipulated in the Constitution. However, shrines are not religion. They are merely ancestral festivals, not the religion as defined in the Constitution. Therefore, treating only shrines as special, giving them public status, and forcing the people to worship them has no bearing on the freedom of religion stipulated in the Constitution.' This is the content of the proposition, 'Shrines are not Religion.'"

"This point was also explained as follows: The Meiji Constitution recognizes the freedom of religion 'as long as it does not violate the duties of a subject.' By the way, believing in shrines is part of the 'duties of a subject.' Therefore, it should be understood that the freedom of religion guaranteed by the Meiji Constitution was recognized from the beginning only to the extent that it was compatible with the national religious status of shrines."

"By the way, from the very nature of religion, such a limitation was akin to denying the freedom of religion itself."(pp. 348-349).

Miyazawa wrote these sentences from the standpoint of explaining the religious situation created by the Imperial Constitution enacted in 1899. Because his description does not include the perspective of the gradual development of "State Shinto" in the modern era that Murakami's theory had, his readers are led to believe that the same situation in the 1940s existed since the time of the promulgation of the Imperial Constitution. He explained to postwar constitutional scholars that "Arahitogami" education had been thoroughly implemented from the beginning of the Meiji Era (p.352). He argues this explanation from the standpoint of someone who experienced the period himself, where is difficult to question for the postwar generation, who did not experience the period. It is clear from the judgments of the Supreme Court and the High Court cited at the beginning of this book that the false sermons of the great figure in the postwar constitutional world have left a huge cause of trouble on the constitutional and judicial worlds.