

MEIJI BUDDHISM: RELIGION AND PATRIOTISM

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State Shintoism and Buddhist Persecution.

THAT THE MEIJI RESTORATION WAS BROUGHT ABOUT BY A COMBINATION of forces (such as the development of commerce, industry and capitalism) which were united under the slogan of the Restoration of Imperial Rule which, in turn, was concocted by the students of the Hirata School of Shintoism under the impending atmosphere of Western encroachment to the Far East, meant that the character of the Meiji government was, to a large extent, influenced by Shinto ideology geared to inculcate nationalism. That the political idealism of Shintoism constituted an all out revivalism of a pre-historic society, meant that the new government represented not merely a transformation of power from the samurai government of the Tokugawas to the Emperor, but the establishment of a theocracy based on the dogma of the divinity of the Emperor around which nationalism gathered forces. Shintoism, having resigned itself to playing a minor role under the Tokugawas, now entertained ambitions of restoring its ancient prestige and asserting its authority over Buddhism—its major foe in the game of power politics.

As one of its seven executive offices, the new government established the Office of Shinto Affairs¹ on January 17, 1868. Its functions were: to disseminate the policy of the state, to advance the idea of the unity of state and Shintoism, and to propagate the Shinto way of life, rooted in the mythological ambiguity of the *Kojiki* and *Nihon Shoki*. As means of restoring the purity of Shintoism—undefiled by Buddhist elements—the Shinto-Buddhist Separation Policy was announced on March 17, 1868 and enforced the following month under the authority of the Office of Shinto Affairs.

The separation policy was not of the kind that aimed to challenge the rational basis of the *honji-suijaku* theory² (Shinto-Buddhist syncretic theory). It represented efforts, on the part of the Shintoists, to expel Buddhist priests, who heretofore assumed social and economic prominence within the Shinto-

¹ The Office of Shinto Affairs (*Shingi-kan*) was originally established sometime between 673 and 686, at which time it was empowered to perform the rites and ceremonies dedicated to the gods of heaven and earth, and charged with administering Shinto shrines, Shinto priests, and their parishioners; its Office was held either by the Nakatomi or the Inbe clans. In the Meiji period, the Office was revived and dominated by students of the Hirata school, such as Kamei Korekane (1822-1884), Fukuba Bisei (1832-1907), Hirata Kanetane (1801-1882), etc.

² Although information concerning the *honji-suijaku* theory can be observed in the Nara literature, its theory contributed in developing syncretic institutions during the late Heian and Kamakura periods; it was organized, however, into a system of doctrine during the Edo period and became the dominant popular belief then. The influence of Shinto-Buddhist syncretism can be observed in most concrete form in the architecture of Shinto-Buddhist shrines, a good example being the Nikko shrine. Shinto-Buddhist shrines incorporated the ceremonial instruments and practices of Shingon Mikkyo Buddhism and chanted Mikkyo sutras. Shinto-Buddhist syncretism added religious depth to the simple "doctrine" of Shintoism but it also adulterated the purity of native belief and institutions.

Buddhist shrines and temples, and to realize a greater secular authority of which they were deprived under the Tokugawas. Measures were taken to strip off Buddhist titles, such as Bodhisattva, Kannon, and the like, from Shinto deities. Even Buddhist statues and ceremonial instruments kept in the Imperial palace, were removed and Buddhist rites traditionally observed there were replaced by those of Shintosim.

In enforcing the Separation Policy, the Meiji government repeatedly made itself known that the policy was not designed to exterminate Buddhism but to restore the two religions into their original and distinct forms. Nevertheless, the Meiji government—eager to revive the ancient society of theocracy—lost sight of the significance of the new era and failed to bring about what might have been an enlightened program of religious reform. That the Meiji Restoration was promoted under the propelling forces of theocracy, meant that whether the government willed it or not, the Separation Policy was pregnant with elements that were to kindle the fire of anti-Buddhist sentiments. It was carried beyond the conceptual realm of restoring the purity of the two religious forms and translated itself into vicious acts of violence and destruction.

Simultaneously with the announcement of the Separation Policy, Buddhist statues, ceremonial instruments, sutras, and the like, were either burnt, destroyed or removed, and Buddhist priests were expelled from Shinto-Buddhist syncretic shrines, such as the Hiyoshi Sanno Shrine in Daizen-ji in Tottori, Atsuta Shrine in Aichi, Nikko Shrine in Tochigi, Kan-ei-ji in Tokyo. These acts of violence paved the way for a nation-wide anti-Buddhist movement.

Meiji anti-Buddhist movement revealed two distinct patterns: that executed under the influence of the Hirata school of Shintoism and that of the Mito school of Confucianism, although cases involving the combination of the forces of the two schools were also observed. The former was vicious and thorough and demanded the people's unconditional conversion to Shintoism as were the cases in Satsuma in Kyushu, the Island of Oki in Shimane, Ise in Mie, Mino in Gifu, Tosa in Kochi and others. The latter was primarily designed to reorganize the economy of the territory by eliminating the non-productive elements of society, into which category Buddhism fell. As such, conversion was not demanded and Buddhist temples—although having been eliminated in considerable number—were nevertheless preserved within the range considered economically feasible, as were the cases in Toyama at large, Matsumoto in Nagano, the Island of Sado in Niigata, and others. The fact that a great number of the leaders of the Meiji Restoration were affected (directly or indirectly) by the Shinto-classicists, meant that they regarded Shintoism, nationalism and militarism as progressive forces; Buddhism, as a reactionary force.

Anti-Buddhist movement was observed between June, 1868 and July, 1871 when the daimyo jurisdictional territories were in the process of being transformed into prefectural governments. Anti-Buddhist movement, therefore, was carried out during a transitional period, under circumstances of political instability, social chaos, and emotional excitement, to an extent not anticipated nor intended by the central government. The anti-Buddhist movement

of early Meiji period—like that of the Edo period—never had the support of the people who were accustomed to Buddhism or Shinto-Buddhist syncretism for centuries. The movement proved successful only in destroying the irreplaceable acts and treasures of antiquity and in leading people into confusion.

While anti-Buddhist movement was taking place on the prefectural level, the central government was absorbed in instituting a system of thought control aimed at propagating the cause of Imperial Rule. Shinto missionaries were dispatched to disseminate national policy and to spread the Great Doctrine (of the unity of state and Shintoism). In spite of the zeal with which they attempted to propagate the Doctrine, however, results proved contrary to expectation. Public apathy inevitably developed from thought control and, in the face of a vicious anti-Buddhist movement, the sympathy of the people was turning to the Buddhists.

The *Daikyo-in* (the College of the Great Doctrine), therefore, was established in 1873. It gave recognition to Buddhism and mobilized the Buddhist priests, as well, to propagate the doctrine of “patriotism and reverence to the Emperor and (Shinto) gods” and to enhance the cause of the Great Doctrine. Although the Buddhist priests were required to assume a subordinate role, their infiltration into the College disturbed the Shinto priests. The Buddhist priests, on the other hand, joined the College with varying degrees of apprehension. The Shin priests generally opposed the Great Doctrine as well as the intent of the College. Others, however, having gained state recognition and thus having been assured of their livelihood (matters which they had taken for granted under the Tokugawas), willingly submitted themselves to the dictates of the College. While the Shintoists spread the gospel of anti-Buddhism, the Buddhists, in haphazard manner, preached the *dharma*. The missionaries of the College thereby became the target of ridicule rather than the instrument of thought control. The great Doctrine created an awareness of its inherent danger among the conscientious Buddhist leaders and awoke them from the sheer idleness to which they were long accustomed.

Buddhist Attack on Christianity: The Seeds of Nationalism.

Shimaji Mokurai (1838-1911)—a Buddhist exposed to Western ideologies—vehemently opposed the Great Doctrine, zealously advocated the separation of state and Buddhism, pointed out the folly of the government in trying to force a faith of its own preference upon the people, and made clear that the freedom to choose one's own faith has no bearing on the slackening of patriotism. He received the strongest support from the Shin *samgha*. His views stirred public criticism against the government and, in May 1875, the College of the Great Doctrine was dissolved.

By contributing to the dissolution of the College, Buddhism actually paved the way to bringing about the freedom of religion, which the Meiji constitution was ultimately to provide in 1890, and set itself on the proper path toward modern reform. By voicing opposition to the Great Doctrine, it placed itself against the principle of the unity of state and Shintoism. By opposing state interference with religion, it identified itself as favoring freedom of religion. However, Buddhism had to purge itself of feudalistic elements within, reorganize its *samgha*, and provide positive means to cope with the

demands of the new period. Nevertheless, as the Meiji leaders busily absorbed themselves in gaining the knowledge of the West and failed to develop democratic institutions, the Buddhist leaders likewise accepted the Western concept of freedom of religion and failed to create the ideal image of the modern man. Buddhism did not make a comeback by its own efforts but through two external factors.

While the Buddhists were demonstrating their dissatisfaction over the Great Doctrine, Saigo Takamori, Itagaki Taisuke, Eto Shinpei, Fukushima Taneomi, Goto Shojiro, and other nationalists were strongly advocating the occupation of Korea as a bulwark against China and Russia. Iwakura Tomomi, Kido Takayoshi, and Okubo Toshimichi, knowledgeable of Western power and of Japan's, opposed them. The dissatisfied elements of Saga (led by Eto Shinpei) and those of Kumamoto (led by Otaguro Tomoo, Kobayashi Kotaro and others) rebelled against the central government in 1874 and 1876, respectively. Saigo, supported by a group of dedicated followers, rebelled in Kagoshima in 1877.

Circumstances dictated that the government compromise with the Buddhists and bring about means to gain the support of the people who were, on the whole, Buddhists. A factor of far greater significance that actively contributed to Buddhist revivalism, however, presented itself, if one views faith becoming stagnant when inactive, becoming active when purpose is found, and purpose frequently taking the form of attacking its competitor. Buddhism found activity by allying itself with the state and attacking Christianity. Whether the path it chose to tread favored its development as a religion appropriate to the new period, however, remained uncertain.

In spite of the fact that Catholicism was officially outlawed under the Tokugawas, it nevertheless managed to survive underground in such areas as Uragami in Nagasaki. It continued to be suppressed after the new government of Meiji was established. Suppression of Christianity inevitably invited the protestation of the Western nations. Pressed from the West, the Meiji government finally lifted the ban in 1873. Protestantism entered Japan at about this time.

By allying itself with the state, which idealized the ancient society of Imperial Rule based on a Shinto mythology, and by attacking Christianity (the carrier of the idea of the separation of church and state), Buddhism severed itself from a direct involvement in a progressive program of religious reform. Buddhism—which lay idle under Tokugawa feudalism and absorbed itself in the development of sectarian dogmas, under the uninvigorating environment of cultural isolation—could not entertain hopes to contribute to bringing a new historical movement without incorporating new ideas. On the other hand, Christianity, although not necessarily forming the ideological nucleus of modern civilization, was nevertheless a contributing factor to its realization. Hence, the fact that Buddhism assumed the leading role in attacking Christianity, inevitably resulted in identifying itself as an element detrimental to the development of progressive thought and democratic institutions.

Signs of a democratic movement began to reveal themselves and critical views on government were freely expressed in the 1880's. The government took

to indoctrinating its citizens with traditional Oriental ethics and morality to counter liberal ideas and to solidify the basis of Imperial Rule it had zealously formulated. On the other hand, leading citizens—although not necessarily to Christianity as a whole—did not hesitate to join hands with the Christians to challenge the government. Thus, by attacking the Christians and allying themselves with the state, the Buddhists inevitably identified themselves as anti-democratic, if not reactionary, elements.

The battle of words exchanged between the Buddhists and the Christians during this period, not only reflected a doctrinal difference but a political one as well. In the 1890's, an all out attack on Christianity took place merely on the ground that Christianity opposed the dogma of the divinity of the Emperor. Buddhists allied themselves with the state and in doing so affirmed, supported, and endorsed the Meiji constitution which smelled of Shinto mythology and Confucian-oriented codes of ethics.

Having suppressed the rebels of the provinces, the state then took to consolidating itself, politically and economically. By the late nineteenth century, it was prepared for military adventures in foreign lands. In order to bring Korea under its control, Japan engaged in wars with China in 1894-1895; with Tsarist Russia in 1904-1905. Buddhist leaders willingly supported the state in both instances. The two wars actively contributed in developing industry and, inevitably, labor movements which Buddhist leaders also supported the state in suppressing.

Acknowledging the fact that Japanese Buddhism had (with some notable exceptions) consistently espoused the cause of the state since the time of its introduction, it did so during periods when political ideologies were not clearly defined nor systematized. On the other hand, Meiji Buddhists lived in a society exposed to democratic, socialist, and pacifist ideas, but nevertheless revealed themselves as a body hostile to progressive movements. By placing itself in opposition to democratic movements and in support of the state, Buddhism was no longer able to cultivate independent thought appropriate to the new age. It had to faithfully follow the dictates of the state.

Inouye Enryo (1858-1919)—a Shin priest exposed to Western philosophy and science and the founder of Tetsugaku-kan (the present Toyo University in Tokyo)—most aptly demonstrated the attitudes of the Buddhist intellectuals of the time. He devoted much effort in writing books such as the *Haja Shinron*, *Bukkyo Katsu-ron* and others which were designed to defend the "rationalism" of Buddhism and to condemn the "irrationalism" of Christianity. On the other hand, in his *Nihon Rinri Gaku-an* and *Chuko Katsu-ron* (published in 1893), he glorified the Imperial Institution, demanded absolute loyalty of its citizens to the Emperor, advocated the unity of loyalty and filial piety, and attempted to justify the codes of ethics and a system of order of a pre-modern society. Inouye's works did not reveal any penetrating thought. In any case, that he was a Shin priest engaged actively in defense of Buddhism, that he entered the public arena in order to enhance the cause of Imperial Rule, meant that his views provided the *raison d'être* of modern Japanese Buddhism and influenced, in no small measure, the path that modern Japanese Buddhism was to take.

Buddhist Attempts at Religious Reform: Assets and Liabilities.

Recognizing the fact that religions are the products of ancient societies, those which have overcome and survived the challenges of history and established themselves as "universal" religions, maintain the potential to contribute to the march of time. Revivalism then, at times, can become a progressive element; it becomes a reactionary force when it is incapable of grasping the basic forces promoting historical changes. Inouye Enryo, influenced by modern scientific reasoning, attempted to drive out non-rational elements that were inherent in Edo-nurtured Buddhism.

The fact remains, however, that Buddhism is not merely a system of philosophy but also a soteriological doctrine that demands the practices of *silā* and *samādhi* and the cultivation of *prajña* as instruments for realizing its ideals. In this respect, Fukuda Gyokai and Shaku Unsho command recognition, inasmuch as they attempted to revive the original spirit of Buddhism of strengthening the spirit of the individual man. Unsho (1836-1909)—a *Vinaya* master of Mt. Koya—indignant at the irresolute attitudes of his colleagues, descended the mountain monastery in May, 1868. Deploring the corruption of the Buddhist priesthood, he urged them to re-examine themselves with honesty and frankness. Gyokai (1806-1888) also criticized the Buddhist priesthood and called for the complete overhaul of the *samgha*. They became increasingly positive in proportion to the intensity with which the anti-Buddhist movement developed. At a time when the Buddhist priests—having been stripped of their dignity and secular power which they previously enjoyed under the Tokugawas—remained bewildered and occupied only with matters related to their own survival, Unsho and Gyokai spelled out the ultimate goal of Buddhism and the path that lay before them. Aside from the question of whether the views of this man constituted a positive step toward religious reform or not, the fact remains that their sharp criticism did succeed in rousing the Buddhist leaders from indolence and idle dreams. Their efforts, though commendable (because they worked within the confines of the established order), essentially suggest that their forms of revivalism inevitably led to merely restoring the old form of Buddhism, from which a spirit capable of meeting the new challenges of history, could not have emerged.

One who was able to merge the rationalism of Inouye and the spiritualizing qualities of Gyokai and Unsho was Kiyosawa Manshi (1863-1903), a Shin priest of the Higashi Hongan-ji Temple. Reviving the pure-faith doctrine of Shinran—based upon the premise of the possibility of "evil" men gaining direct access to enlightenment through faith and faith alone—Kiyosawa reorganized the Shin doctrine (whose spiritual vitality had worn itself out under the uninvigorating atmosphere of the Tokugawas) to meet the spiritual demands of the Meiji intellectuals. These intellectuals had been exposed to Western civilization and had awakened to realize the dignity of the individual man, only to be defeated in their bitter civil rights battles against the state. The merging of individualism and spiritualism characterized Manshi's thought.

Paralleling Manshi's spiritualizing movement, a Christian brand of very similar quality developed. A social critic and a poet by profession, a romanticist by nature, and a Christian by choice, Kitamura Tokoku (1869-1894)

was a son of a humble samurai. He worked as a domestic servant at the foreign settlement in Yokohama, married a woman of his choice at the age of twenty, and committed suicide at twenty-five. Disillusioned with the failure of the civil rights movements, he took to writing, reflecting strong influences of Goethe and Byron. But Christianity was the pillar of his idealism. He conceived of individuality as the inner core of life, which needed to be cultivated, and regarded the social expression of it as the significance of democracy. The fact that neither the time nor the society in which he lived were fully ripened enough to support his idealism, inevitably led Tokoku into flights of fantasy. The contradiction between idealism and realism inevitably led him to take his own life.

In the face of political defeat, Tokoku found compensation in a realm of higher ethical principle, attempted to seek therefrom the freedom of the spirit, but failed in its realization. Manshi trod a similar path, but in his attempt to seek the freedom of the spirit, he was actually entering the original domain of Buddhism, which deepened the awareness of his contingency and the meaning of human existence in direct proportion to the weight of the problems of reality he confronted. The modernization of Japanese Buddhism does not mean the uncritical acceptance of Western civilization nor the wholesale negation of it. Manshi conceived of practice and meditation—the indispensable elements of Buddhism that were conceived, formulated and experimented in the long procession of Japanese history—as the means through which the spiritualization of modern man was possible. The failure of Tokoku and the success of Manshi are not suggestive of the superiority of Buddhism over Christianity but suggest that Buddhism was far better domesticated than Christianity insofar as the Japanese mentality of that time was concerned.

If Inouye Enryo represented a group that catered to the state, and Kiyosawa Manshi, to the spiritualization of the intellectuals, those who rallied to the support of the common men were Sakino Koyo, Watanabe Kaigyoku, Takashima Beiho and others who founded the *Bukkyo Seito Doso Kai*—the Pure Buddhist Society, organized in 1900. The Pure Buddhist Society attempted to free itself from the bonds of the established *samgha*, the dictates of institutionalized Buddhism, and the interference of state power. It dedicated itself to the establishment of its independence, to pursue the ideal goal of Buddhism, and to actively involve itself in promoting social reforms. Although it lacked the spiritual depth of Manshi's movement, it manifested a far greater advance in social action. Boldly criticizing Japan's involvement in a war against Russia while opposing socialism, it, however, showed sympathy to the causes of the proletarians and, in fact, cultivated friendly relations with Kotoku Shusui, Sakai Toshihiko, and other left wing radicals.

Be that as it may, neither the spiritualization movement of Manshi nor the social actions of the Pure Buddhists can be conceived as dominant Meiji ideologies. The fact remains that their movements soon faded into obscurity. The reason is obvious. That Buddhism lent itself to Tokugawa feudalism, meant that it established its roots in the rural communities; that modernization of Meiji Japan was primarily directed to the developing of industry, meant that the rural communities were, to a large extent, deprived of the

benefits of modern civilization. Manshi and the Pure Buddhists catered to the urban intellectuals who remained outside the main stream of Buddhism. Furthermore, the fact that the urban intellectuals were exposed to a variety of Western ideas of a very positive nature, meant that Buddhism had had to offer something radically original, practical, and effective, were it to entertain hopes of assuming the ideological leadership in a period marked by the impact of Western civilization. Western democracy, rationalism, socialism, and the like, were far better systematized and more effective for coping with the social realities of the modern period than were those ever hoped to be conceived by the Meiji Buddhists.

The pendulum of time inevitably swayed the urban intellectuals away from Buddhism. Members of the civil rights movements were liberals, Christians, and socialists, although there were such men as Ueki Edamori (a Protestant-turned-Buddhist), Uchiyama Gudo, a socialist-Buddhist, and others. Despite the existence of a few liberal Buddhists, the main stream of Buddhism allied itself with the state which favored absolute monarchy, opposed liberal movements, and placed itself against progressive ideologies.

Religion and Patriotism: The Limits of Meiji Buddhism.

Inasmuch as the Meiji period represented a time when Japan was in the process of emerging as a modern state, and patriotism was the greatest unifying force by which the modern state could be realized, the relation between religion and patriotism of this period needs to be examined before any hasty conclusion may be formed against the Meiji Buddhists. Fukuzawa Yukichi (1834-1901)—a son of a humble samurai, knowledgeable of the West, and the founder of the Keio Gijuku—the origin of the present Keio University in Tokyo—is typical of a Meiji intellectual. A liberal who was fully exposed to the lofty idealism of the West, he was a staunch supporter of the principle of "industrialization and militarization," based upon his contention that Western powers are capable of creating the lofty idealism of freedom and liberty as well as demonstrating themselves as ruthless colonial powers. Said he,

Taking an interest in Christianity during a period when there is a Western fad, is as natural as one taking to summer clothes in summer. My sympathy lies with those who are obliged to consume so much of their time in such a trifling matter at this most demanding moment of history.

Fukuzawa is representative of those who had detached themselves completely from the bounds of conventional thought and were attracted to Western rationalism, utilitarianism, pragmatism, and nationalism.

On the other hand, some of those who conceived of Christianity as the source of Western civilization and either defended or encouraged it as a means of absorbing Western civilization, were Nishi Amane (1829-1897)—a law expert and an instructor at the Kaisei-jo, the origin of the present Tokyo University; Tsuda Masamichi (1829-1903)—also a law expert and one of the members involved in the drafting of the Meiji constitution, and Mori Arinori (1847-1891)—the Minister of Education who was assassinated on the day of the promulgation of the constitution by a Shinto fanatic. All these men represented Christian liberals.

Nitobe Inazo (1862-1933), on the other hand, was most representative of a Christian nationalist. Married to an American, he assumed the role of an

interpreter between Western and Japanese ideas. A student of William Smith Clark (1862-1886)—the American educator-missionary to Japan—Nitobe held doctoral degrees in law and agriculture and assumed professorship at the Imperial University of Kyoto and Tokyo. However, he is best known in the West as the author of *Bushido* (the way of the *samurai*) which Theodore Roosevelt is alleged to have purchased in great quantity. He defended the Japanese practice of *seppuku*—better known in the West as *hara-kiri* (a vulgar expression that no *samurai* would have ever dreamed of uttering), as a refined art of suicide institutionalized by the *samurai* during the period of feudalism. When queried as to its justification from the standpoint of Christian ethics, he replied: "I am a Christian. However, I do not believe that Christianity is the standard of world ethics." He cited examples in Greek and Roman histories where suicide was not condemned, pointed out a case of *hara-kiri* in a Shakespearean play, and concluded that the tradition of condemning suicide probably originated during the Middle Ages in Europe.

The Japanese Christians loyally adhered to the *samurai* codes of ethics and succeeded in attracting the Meiji intellectuals of *samurai* breeding. Tolstoi's humanism—conceived as the merging of Christian idealism and *samurai* discipline—also attracted the intellectuals, humanitarians, and the romantic lovers of tragedy, which the Japanese are.

Uchimura Kanzo (1861-1930), a son of a *samurai* and also a student of Clark, was baptized in 1878 and studied in the United States from 1884 to 1888. Although he is primarily known for his stand against institutionalized Christianity and an advocate of *mu-kyokai-shugi* (non-Church Christianity), what actually characterized his brand of Christianity was his incorporation of the discipline of the *samurai* and the rationalism of the West, thereby capturing the interest of many Japanese intellectuals. Despite his having studied in the United States, he was not swayed into accepting all things Western. In fact, he did not care much for the life of the West. In his heart, he was a *samurai*. His motto was the "two J's," Japan and Jesus. His loyalty to Jesus was of the same quality as that of a *samurai* to his lord. Said he, "I for Japan; Japan for the world; the world for Christ; and Christ for God." Soon after his return to Japan from the United States, he was employed as an instructor at an American mission school in Niigata, but resigned his post as a result of a disagreement with American missionary teachers over a school policy.

Uchimura favored a system of religious education geared to the development of a Japanese Christian, not to the development of a Christian in the image of the Americans. Uchimura's *Representative Men of Japan*, published in 1894, deals with Nichiren (a militant Buddhist leader of the Kamakura period), Nakae Toju (a neo-Confucian humanist of the Edo period), Saigo Takamori (a militant nationalist of the early Meiji period), and others. But Uchimura was not a Shinto-like-nationalist, as can be attested by the fact that he boldly refused to give the proper sign of reverence—a bow, normally expected of a Japanese—to the Imperial Rescript on Education (which was recited by school principals of all educational institutions on days of national celebration) on the ground that such a display is a right reserved only for God. Uchimura was charged with *lese majeste* in 1891. But he made clear

the difference between reverence to God and respect to the Emperor. Although he supported the state in war against China in 1894, ten years later, he opposed the war against Russia on humanitarian grounds. The *samurai* were ascetics who despised the overt display of intimate love and sexuality. Tolstoi despised music; Uchimura, plays and novels. However, Christianity did develop a higher dimension of loyalty than the *samurai*. Said Uchimura, "Love of one's country must be sacrificed before the love of God." Uchimura's love developed into international dimension and took the form of a universal love of humanity.

The Japanese Christians of this period were extremely conscious of their ethnic identity, and neither Nitobe nor Uchimura were exceptions. The aspiration for the development of a Japanese Christian personality was most dramatically demonstrated by a group of young co-eds in Miyagi Girls' Middle School—a Christian mission school in Sendai—where Saito Fuyu, Kohira Koyuki, Miyata Shin, and others protested by leading a strike in 1891 against the Americanization program of the school, instituted at the expense of neglecting the curriculum necessary for the understanding of their own cultural heritage. As far as patriotism was concerned, hardly a shade of difference existed between the ethnic-conscious Christians and the nationalists. Many Christians supported the Imperial Rescript on Education. The case of a Christian teacher—plunging herself into fire to save the Imperial Rescript and the pictures of the Emperor and the Empress from destruction—commanded the respect of the nation.

A *samurai* brand of loyalty that characterized Japanese patriotism, involves an absolute and selfless sacrifice for a cause or an ideal under which the preservation of honor takes priority over life. Loyalty to one's lord at the risk of life, most dramatically represented in the Kabuki drama of the forty-seven ronins, is the theme that always guarantees not only a packed house, but also an emotionally touched, tear-shedding audience. In the Meiji period, loyalty among the Japanese was simply shifted from lord to Emperor. The difference between the loyalty of the nationalists and the Christians was not one of substance but of the object to which it was directed. Buddhist patriotism failed to be strained through the meshes of modern civilization. It, therefore, failed to discover an objective beyond the narrow confines of nationalism. It was the liberal intellectuals, Christians, and socialists, who endeavored to create a parliamentary government and to promote civil rights movements in the early twentieth century. The Meiji Buddhists were inadequately equipped to involve themselves in progressive social actions.