

## SCHOOL EDUCATION AND RELIGION IN JAPAN

Chido TAKEDA

### I. The place the problem is

There are very few modern countries that have no constitutional provisions for guaranteeing the religious freedom as one of the fundamental human rights and majority of them adopt the principle of separation of religion and State. But not a few countries seem to have been involved in troubles how to deal with the problem of relationship between the school education and religion. Even in America where the condition of the religious world is seemingly simpler than that of Japan, a great many questions have been raised about religious freedom, relationship between church and State, and school education and religion. America is a country where the Bible is predominant although she has different denominations of Protestantism, Catholicism and Judaism. In Japan, on the contrary, coexistent are so many kinds of religion heterogeneous by nature—Shinto, an indigenous religion to this country, Buddhism, a religion introduced from Asiatic Continent, which is originally even atheistic, Christianity or monotheism relatively recently introduced from the West.

These big three religions respectively have various sects and subsects. Moreover, since the termination of the Great World War II, innumerable kinds of religion have come into existence taking advantage of release of the State control over the religious world of this country, and not a few of them are now flourishing.

America has a national character of respecting religious freedom since the very beginning of her history. It can rather be said that the spirit of seeking after the religious freedom founded America. Japan became able to enjoy religious freedom in its true sense only since the postwar days. The condition of the educational world, too, is not equal in the both countries. There is a big difference between the two countries with regard to the tradition, the system and the policy in many fields.

Nevertheless, there is a matter which attracts the common attention of the discerning eyes of the both

countries. It is the problem how should be the relationship between education and religion. Although under the different social conditions, the both countries are coming across the time when they must reconsider whether or not the present school education may be left as it is from the viewpoint of the religious education. For, the reconsideration from the standpoint of humanism on the overdoing of the materialistic culture and the establishment of the spiritual ideals to meet the moral decay are the common social requirement in the both countries.

The problem of religious education in school has been occasionally discussed among men with eyes since the dawn of the modernized Japan and especially in these postwar two decades. But it cannot be said that people in general take keen interest in this problem. They seem even not to understand satisfactorily what is the focus of the problem.

When we take up the problem of religious education in school, we are inclined to judge in a common sense how the religious education should be carried on in a classroom. It is true that this method is being devised by some institutes also in Japan. But we must remember that there lies a major problem which should be solved prior to devising such a method. The fundamental problem is, in a word, whether or not the religious education is allowed to carry on in school, especially in the public schools. The present education system of Japan does not unconditionally recognize the religious education in school.

The Constitution of Japan flatly states:

"The State and its organs shall refrain from religious education or any other religious activity." (Article 20, Paragraph 3)

Therefore, it is necessary for us to consider in the first place on the fundamental problem why inclusion of religious education in school education brings us so serious a problem.

### II. Prohibition of religious education

In the history of Japan, like in that of Europe and

America, religion and education were in a close relation. Especially since the Nara Period (710-794 AD) the role Buddhism played for education was great. As Hōryūji (founded in 607 AD) has a name of Hōryū-Gakumon-ji (Hōryū Academic Temple), big Buddhist temples had an important function as an educational institute at that time. But it may be undeniable that these temples served as a school mainly for priests and a few nobles but not for people in general. In the Edo Period (1603-1867), the Tokugawa shogunate treated Buddhism as a state religion and at the same time adopted Confucianism as the ideology for guiding national morality for executing its cunning policy for taming people. Concurrently, the old Shinto was restored. Thus in the Period the two major religions and the main stream of national ethics were coexistent. At that time, primary education for common people was managed at large by the hand of local Buddhist temples. But the people experienced no sense of religious freedom, not to speak of opposition and conflict between religion and education which had frequently been seen in the Western history. They met the Meiji Period (1868-1911) without any experience of awakening to the spirit of religious freedom. It was after the Meiji Restoration that the relationship between religion and education was taken up as a problem in its modern sense.

The new Government of Meiji attached most importance to enhancement of the Imperial prestige based upon the ideal of revival of the Imperial rule. Therefore, it adopted Shinto as an instrument for unifying the popular mind. Shinto has had as its top shrine the Grand Shrine of Ise since before the age when Buddhism was officially introduced to this country (538 AD). The Grand Shrine enshrines the Sun Goddess who is believed as the ancestress of the Imperial household. Shinto includes many other shrines which enshrine the Imperial ancestors and persons meritorious especially for the Imperial household. Therefore, it was the religion which was in the closest relation with the Imperial household. The Meiji Government granted Shinto of this kind the situation of State religion in place of Buddhism. Such Shinto is called "State Shinto."

In July, 1872, a new school system modelling mainly after the system of France was enforced for the purpose of giving primary education to all children and higher education to volunteers. And the principle of separation of church and State was for the first time formally

established in Japan. The State Shinto, however, was ceased to be treated as a religion in the field of the State administration at least but became protected by the State as a mere national cult transcending religions. Here started the notorious religious policy of the Meiji Government which separated the faith of Shinto and the national cult. This policy caused many troubles in the educational and religious worlds in Japan. So far as the State Shinto was concerned, it was openly treated as something super religious in the field of school education. The principle of separation of religion and education was adopted on the surface but the religious education based upon Shintoism was practically carried on.

The reformation of the educational system made by the first Ito Cabinet in 1885 established the system of national education and attached most importance to the moral lessons. This policy aimed at covering up the weakness which the hasty introduction of the Western civilization had caused to the spiritual education in school. The normal schools or government training schools for teachers adhered to nationalism so strongly that they admitted no religion but the State Shinto. In 1890, Emperor Meiji promulgated the Imperial Rescript on Education which urged all the people to observe the moral items listed in it. The Rescript was forced to the people as the highest guiding principle of national education and moral life on the basis of Emperor-system so fanatically that all the educators and students had to obey it as the most sacred and authoritative instruction to them. At every school event and others a school master or a leader of a meeting recited the Rescript in a most solemn attitude and all attendants had to stand erect and listen most attentively to it in a most respectful manner. Thus the Rescript strictly reigned the Japanese educational world for more than half a century till the end of the World War II.

On the surface of the system, therefore, the separation of religion and education looked like maintained but the practical contents of education were thickly colored with the ideology of State Shinto which was inseparable from the Emperor-system.

The same inclination can be found with regard to the provision of the religious freedom stipulated in the Constitution of Greater Japanese Empire promulgated in Feb. 1889. It is true that the Constitution provided an article concerning the guarantee of religious freedom following after the examples of the advanced nations.

Article 28 states:

"Japanese subjects shall, within limits not prejudicial to peace and order, and not antagonistic to their duties as subjects, enjoy freedom of religious faith."

Thus the old Constitution guaranteed the freedom of religious faith but this freedom was often infringed by the officials. Because the religious freedom was recognized only within the limits "not prejudicial to peace and order" and "not antagonistic to their duties as subjects." But these terms were quite ambiguous in their meaning and remained a room for one-sided interpretation of the officials. When a case was judged as falling under these limitations, it was possible to be suppressed or restricted by means of a mere ordinance, not to speak of by laws.

Moreover, the meaning of "their duties as subjects" was interpreted as including "to pay homage to *kami* of State Shinto." If State Shinto was taken as a religion as majority of the people so understood despite of the Government policy, it must be said that this provision did not perfectly guarantee the freedom of faith.

On the other hand, with the removal of prohibition of Christianity in the early Meiji Period, the foreign religion rushed into Japan and around by this time Christian schools opened their doors here and there. Several Buddhist sects also founded schools of middle and higher grade. These schools, however, could not enjoy freedom to conduct their religious education for long time because the Government took an attitude indifferent to religion or even antipathy toward it. This was because since the issuance of Imperial Rescript on Education which included as the core the idea of Emperor as the absolute, the spiritual education was compelled to conduct completely based upon it. Thus religions other than State Shinto were completely ignored and shut out from school education.

The following Instruction No. 12 of Ministry of Education issued on 3 Aug. 1899 was the administrative disposition for protecting the idea of national entity and morals in the Rescript from disturbance by religion—especially by permeation of Christian thought.

It states:

It is necessary from the standpoint of the school administration to make the general education stand outside of religion. Therefore, the government and public schools, and the schools under the application of provisions of the laws and ordinances relating to curriculum shall not be permitted to conduct religious education or to observe any religious ceremony even out of the regular course.

This Instruction was quite radical. Any kind of reli-

gious education and performance of religious ceremony was prohibited even at private schools under the application of the School Ordinance, not to speak of public schools.

The instruction was not necessarily wrong so far as it concerned any sectarian education. The educational world at that time in Japan, however, under the strong influence of the State policy of wealth and military strength, ignored or rejected religion as superstitious or anti-nationalistic. The leading scholars and educators at that time were engaged in animated discussions over the problem of opposition between the national education and Christianity. It was Christian schools that were mostly oppressed. They had to wipe out Christian color from their principle of education in order to retain the privileges on the same level given to public schools.

The education thus disregarding and neglecting religion, however, exposed its defect with the lapse of time. Reconsiderations were aroused if the education excluding religion might have descended to formalism and failed to give students a beautiful ideal or a burning enthusiasm. A certain leading politician in the field of education cried.

"One of the reasons for that the school education is not successful in moral education lies in negligence of religion. However much the discrimination of good from bad may be taught, the moral education would be of no use, if there is no support of a strong conviction indispensable for doing various goodneses and removing various evilnesses. For this reason, it is absolutely necessary for the school education to foster religious sentiment. It is nothing but an oppression to religion that religious education is prohibited even at a private school under the management of a religious organization. Because neither knowledge concerning religion is given nor religious sentiment fostered in school, the mass of people lack the ability of selecting religions and become indulged in a superstition or an evil religion." (Statement of Seijun Ando made at his assuming the position of Parliamentary Councilor of Ministry of Education, in 1927).

Moreover, in the latter part of 1920's the materialistic ideology became gradually rampant. This was a great menace to the Government and the necessity for adopting religion in school education was more and more keenly felt in various fields in order to check this thought.

### III. Relaxation of restrictions for religious education

In view of these conditions, Ministry of Education issued on 2 Dec., 1932 by the joint name of Religions Bureau and Normal Educational Affairs Bureau a notification to Mie Prefecture, which states as follows:

—Instruction No. 12 of Ministry of Education issued on 3 August, 1899 aims at prohibiting the schools concerned to teach a doctrine or to perform ceremonies of a certain specific denomination, sect, church and others but it does never restrict to foster religious sentiment in general. Concerning this matter it was instructed at the conference of the chiefs of Educational Affairs Division (of prefectures) held in this Ministry in 1928 that it was necessary to contrive to foster religious faith or sentiment in order to expect perfect moral education in schools. Therefore, the interpretation of the Instruction should not be made too strictly unless a doctrine of a certain specific denomination, sect, church and others is taught or ceremonies thereof are performed—.

Furthermore, the notification of Vice-Minister of Education dated on 28 November, 1935 more positively points out the particulars to be more regarded concerning fostering religious sentiment at schools.

(The preamble is omitted)

I. Religious education should be spontaneously conducted on the basis of religious faith at home and at the same time should depend upon the cultivation by activity of religious organizations. School education should retain an attitude of neutrality and impartiality toward all the denominations, sects, churches and others.

II. Schools should retain the following attitude toward the sectarian education at home and community.

1. It is required not to hurt religious mind fostered at home and community, to pay attention to religious demand revealed from inner mind of a pupil and not to neglect or despise it in the least.
2. A right faith should be respected but at the same time a superstition which injures the public order and good manners should be destroyed by all means.

III. To conduct sectarian education at school shall not absolutely be permitted but it is quite necessary to contrive to foster religious sentiment through school education for the purpose of contributing to formation of character. (However, as school education, needless to say, should be carried on based upon the Imperial Rescript on Education, no religious sentiment shall be fostered by the quality and method contradictory to the Rescript.)

The special hints in school education in relation to fostering religious sentiment are roughly as follows:

1. At teaching moral lesson and civic course more consideration should be given to the field of religion.
2. At teaching philosophy more efforts should be made for deepening understanding on religion and fostering religious sentiment.
3. In the history of Japan attention should be paid in dealing with the religious influence exerted to the national culture, the religious inspiration great men received, biographies of great religious men and so forth.
4. In the other lessons too proper attention should be paid to the religious side in accordance with the quality of teaching materials.
5. It would be one of conveniences to provide proper reference books relating to religions to contribute to pupils' cultivation.
6. In the events of a memorial service, a science-festival, an excursion and a trip, these chances should be utilized for fostering religious sentiment.

7. It would be a good method to let pupils listen to a lecture on mental culture given by a religious man of virtue and others at a proper chance unless it hinders school lessons.
8. Toward the organs of study concerning religion or mental culture of teachers and pupils in and out of the school, a proper guidance should be given and let them retain a generous attitude.
9. Special attention should be paid not to be partial to a specified sect or denomination at practising each particular above mentioned.

The religious sentiment education made its appearance in such a process but the execution of it was accompanied by many difficulties contrary to expectation.

First of all, the abstract and vagueness of the term, "religious sentiment education" itself made the execution difficult. This term is generally interpreted as "to educate a human being into one who lives with an attitude filled with a pious mind." Religious sentiment or deep reverence to the sacred should be produced generally when one is converted to a specific religion. Therefore, it was doubtful whether it was possible to implant this kind of mental attitude by means of the education impartial to any religion. Even if this had been possible, it was another question whether or not possible for the teachers who scarcely had religious experience to handle it.

Under these difficult situations, about the religious sentiment education prior to the war, there was only much argument which could never arrive at a conclusion.

Meanwhile, Japan was going to rush into the Great War II. Driven by the necessity of inflaming the spirit of nationalism all the more, State Shinto color was thoroughly implanted in the people's mind as a religious sentiment. This policy aimed at unifying the people's mind rather than fostering religious sentiment. But anyway, an unexpected result was produced for the religious world as well as the educational world in Japan.

### IV. Revival of the problem of religious education in the postwar days

The problem of religious sentiment education was largely taken up again in the postwar days due to the idea that a religious spirit should have been adopted as the support for a new spiritual education in place of the Imperial Rescript on Education which was supposed destined to be abolished in near future (actually it was abolished in June, 1948 by the Diet) and to the reflection on the fact that the way of education disregarding religion since the Meiji Period was the remote cause of confusion of thought and moral degeneracy.

Immediately after the termination of war, the first taken up problem about religious education was concerning private schools. Ministry of Education issued No. 8 Instruction concerning improvement of dealing with religious education at private schools 16 Oct. 1945.

It states:

A private school may hereafter conduct a religious education and perform a religious ceremony out of the curriculum prescribed in the laws and ordinances in accordance with the following provisions, irrespective of No. 12 Instruction of Ministry of Education in 1899.

1. Measures shall be taken not to infringe the freedom of faith of a pupil.
2. Express clearly in the school regulations that education is conducted and ceremonies are performed based upon a specified sect or denomination.
3. Pay attention not to impose too heavy burden to mind and body of a pupil at practising the above-mentioned particulars.

This instruction liberated private schools to conduct any kind of religious education. Therefore, the schools standing for a religion became able to conduct complete religious education depending upon their own faith instead of an ambiguous way of mere fostering religious sentiment. But such kind of schools number very few in comparison with schools in general.

The promulgation of what is called "Shinto Directive" issued by the Occupation Forces 15 Dec. 1945 [the full title of the directive—Abolition of Government Sponsorship, Support, Perpetuation, Control, and Dissemination of State Shinto (KOKKA SHINTO, JINJA SHINTO)] changed all phases of school education with regard to the moral education which had been under the strong influence of State Shinto. The Shinto Directive mainly aimed at preventing the revival of militarism and ultranationalism which had utilized State Shinto as an instrument for their indoctrination. The Directive, however, affected in the contrary direction from its true intention and caused public schools purposely to keep at a distance from religious problem. At the general reformation of the educational system which was going on in the newly born Japan, the leaders of the educational world could have no definite view concerning religious problem. The teaching materials and guidance programs of religion were taken up in the civic course which was the core of the curriculum of the new school system but about how to deal with religion, many questions and misunderstandings were raised.

## V. Provisions of the Constitution and other important law in connection with religious education

The writer previously stated that the Constitution

flatly prohibits religious education by quoting Article 20, Paragraph 3. Is it really the case?

The Constitution of Japan states:

Article 20. Freedom of religion is guaranteed to all. No religious organization shall receive any privileges from the State, nor exercise any political authority.

No person shall be compelled to take part in any religious act, celebration, rite or practice.

The State and its organs shall refrain from religious education or any other religious activity.

Article 89. No public money or other property shall be expended or appropriated for the use, benefit or maintenance of any religious institution or association, or for any charitable, educational or benevolent enterprises not under the control of public authority.

These articles are not, of course, applied only to Shinto but in view of the past influence of Shinto exerted to the educational field and of the fact that Shinto used to receive many privileges from the State and that the people, especially officials and students were compelled to take part in a certain religious act, celebration, rite or practice of Shinto, the aim of these articles is supposed to be immediately directed to the past Shinto.

The Article 20, Paragraph 3, however, is apt to be misunderstood that the State and its organs are prohibited to conduct any kind of religious education. If so, it would be a serious question for the future of this country. Because it is possibly concluded that this country desires to secularize herself if not to be anti-religious. This must be said far from the ideal of the Constitution.

At the committee meeting of the amendments of the Constitution in the 90th session of the Diet held in 1946, the then Minister of Education Kōtarō Tanaka explained to the effect that the article concerned meant to prohibit education concerning a certain specific religion but did not mean that the State denied the value of religion or took an attitude anti-religious or non-religious.

The 90th session of the Diet made the following resolution on 15 Aug. of the same year.

We who have resolved eternally to abandon a war and to entrust all the safety and life of the people to the justice and faith of the world should develop a movement for the world's eternal peace with the conviction of "war is crime." For this purpose, we should popularize far and wide the ideas of universal brotherhood, love of our fellow men and social service based upon religious self-consciousness, and at the same time let the people respect cultivation of religious sentiment and expect enhancement of morality and elevation of culture.

In order to avoid a superficial interpretation of Article 20, Paragraph 3 of the Constitution and to manifest the spirit of the above-mentioned resolution, the Fundamental Law of Education (enforced 31 March, 1947)

states:

Article 9. (Religious education)

- (1) The attitude of religious tolerance and the position of religion in social life shall be valued in education.
- (2) The schools established by the state and local public corporations shall refrain from religious education or other activities for a specified religion.

It is true that the spirit of the Constitution stipulates strict separation of the State power and religious activity but it does not deny the role of religion lying at the basis of education. It is regrettable, however, that the strict literary interpretation given to the wording, "— shall refrain from religious education or any other religious activity" has given us an impression of excluding all religious factors from the school education.

The policy of separation of religion and State—more adequately expressing—separation of "church" and State originally aims at and has its basis on the principle of religious freedom. Separation of religion or church from public schools fundamentally aims at securing "religious freedom." The separation of religion and education, however, has produced not only a trend that nothing about religion is taught by school but also a tendency that religion is ignored or even opposed by school. In other words, secularization of school education is running to extreme.

The inclination of secularization is found in all the fields of education—school education, home education and social education. Anyway, the separation policy which had its origin in the spirit of respecting religion was now deviating from its proper spirit.

In view of these trends and tendencies the Educational Reform Committee composed of nearly fifty eminent men of learning and experience including President of Tokyo University made a recommendation along the line of the Fundamental Law of Education to the Government.

The recommendation by the Educational Reform Committee concerning relation between education and religion (adopted by the 71 general meeting, 2 July, 1948)

1. Relationship between school education and religion

Fostering of pious sentiment based upon religious mind is one of the spiritual foundations indispensable to establishment of a pacific, cultural, democratic country and proper cultivation of religious desire which is an important phase of human nature especially accords with the original mission of education. Therefore, the relationship between education and religion is a grave problem which requires a careful consideration in view of the spirit of the new Constitution.

Generally speaking, the places where education concerning religion is practised could be divided into three—school, society and home. A certain specific religious education, needless to say, should be given through each faith, function, ceremony of respective sects and at the same time should depend upon edification activities of religious organizations. In school education also a proper attitude toward reli-

gion should be maintained.

Therefore, we have carefully deliberated based upon the spirit of the new Constitution and the Fundamental Law of Education on the subject how religion should be treated in school education in the first place, and finally arrived at the following conclusion.

1. In the private schools which claim to stand for a certain specific sectarian education may strengthen and drive home its specific religious guidance without restraint covering all the curriculum.
2. In all the public and private schools in general other than the above-mentioned schools (Hereafter, abbreviated merely to schools) practice of a certain specific religious education should strictly be avoided and an attitude impartial to all the denominations, sects and churches should severely be taken. It is needless to say, however, that efforts should be made for giving correct knowledges and understandings about religious phenomena in the society and it is desirable to respect religious influence to students in home and society and to pay attention to cultivate religious desire revealed in student's inner mind.
3. When objective knowledges about religion are given, the particulars to which special attention should be paid in school education are roughly as follows:
  - (1) At teaching civic course, sufficient understanding should be given about the role which religions play in the life of individual and society.
  - (2) At teaching history, efforts should be made for calling deep attention to the influence which religions exerted to the national culture and inspirations which religions gave to individuals.
  - (3) In the other lessons and studies too, appropriate attention should be paid to the relations to religion in accordance with the quality of teaching materials.
  - (4) It is desirable to provide reference books concerning religion, but in this case attention should be paid not to be partial to one sect or one denomination.
  - (5) Toward the faith which obviously runs counter to the science and morals of the time and infringes the public order and good manners, the welfare and others of the society, proper improving guidance should be given, but at dealing with the teaching materials and others, the speech and deeds such as hastily contempting or denying the religious faith should be refrained.
4. Concerning cultivating spontaneous religious mind, the particulars to which special attention should be paid in school education are roughly as follows:
  - (1) Through all the lessons and studies attention should be paid to fostering general religious sentiment.
  - (2) The freedom of religious faith being respected, guidance should be given to hold mutually generous attitude toward the believers of the different sects.
  - (3) Concerning religious books, proper reading guidance being given, fine arts, musics, films, dramas and others in relation to religion should equally be utilized.
  - (4) In order for religious sentiment to be spontaneously fostered, school facilities and other surroundings should be completely arranged to the possible extent.
  - (5) Teachers and students may positively hold a meeting in connection with respective religions within the school and receive guidance of a religious man for the purpose of study, culture or seeking the truth, but the school authorities should hold fair attitude toward them.
5. The curriculum of training organs for teachers should include science of religion to deepen fundamental knowledge and general understanding toward religion.
 

(By the way, the Educational Reform Committee also adopted the recommendation concerning the relationship between social education and religion, and home education and religion at the general meeting on 27 Aug., 1948.)

As shown in the above-mentioned recommendation,

the necessity of giving knowledge "about religion" in public schools began to be acknowledged in addition to mere fostering religious sentiment. Regardless of the standpoint that religion is positively or negatively acknowledged, since religions actually have existed and are existing as a big role in the society, it must be said quite natural that the education to give "objective" knowledge of religion to students should be conducted even in public schools. In reality, however, even fundamental knowledge about religion is hardly given in public schools. This problem must seriously be reconsidered in the religious world as well as the educational world.

The effect of the Shinto Directive, on the other hand, directly worked upon a group visit under the sponsorship of a public school not only to Shinto shrines but also to all the religious institutes. The No. 101 notification issued 9 July, 1948 by Ministry of Education prohibits public schools to visit all the religious institutes alike.

This was popularly called, "the notification for off limits to a shrine or a temple." The main contents concern prohibition of public schools to let students visit a shrine, a temple, a church or a religious man under the instruction of school. Teachers must not instruct a subject which cannot be fully studied without visiting such an institute or a religious man. The notification also prohibits public schools to invite a religious man to listen to him on a religious problem during school hours.

Nikko, Kyoto, Nara and others used to be meccas of school excursion or trip. If students cannot touch any religious institute even at their visit to these places, the excursion or trip would be reduced to meaningless. These steps deprived students of a chance of studying even about national treasures or other cultural properties under the custody of a shrine, a temple or a church.

This restriction was relaxed to some extent by the notification issued by the name of Vice-Minister of Education dated on 25 Oct., 1949 after the frequent petitions of the religious world.

Ministry of Education instructed in detail to all the officials concerned the particulars concerning religious education in schools by the way to relax the restriction of group visit to a religious institute. The whole sentence except the preamble will be given below:

Concerning the civic course and others, and treatment of religion in the primary and secondary education.  
(the former part is omitted.) After we studied and conferred not

only about the teaching of civic course but also about the matters concerning religion in the primary and secondary education at large, we have got the following conclusion. It is requested to study carefully about the following particulars and pay attention not to mistake.

1. Concerning visitation to religious institutes including a Shinto shrine, a Buddhist temple, a church and others under the sponsorship of a public school.
 

Schools must not sponsor to visit a shrine, temple, a church or other religious institutes for the purpose of participating in worship, a religious ceremony or a festival. The meaning of the sponsorship of school is that a school makes a plan to visit in a group or that an individual child or pupil is imposed by school to visit a shrine, a temple, a church or other religious institutes.

The visitation to a shrine, a temple, a church or other religious institutes under the sponsorship of school for the purpose of studying a national treasure or a cultural property, or for the other cultural purpose is permitted under the following conditions.

  - (a) Children and pupils must not be compelled.
  - (b) On a trip sponsored by school, a group of children or pupils who visit a shrine, a temple, a church or other religious institutes must not participate in a ceremony or a festival of the religious institute concerned.
  - (c) When a school sponsors to visit a shrine, a temple, a church or other religious institutes, a teacher or a leader must not make them salute or observe other ceremonies by order.
  - (d) A school must not sponsor to visit Yasukuni Shrine, Gokoku Shrine (including a shrine which used to be Gokoku Shrine or other shrine sacred to the spirits of the war dead) and a shrine which enshrines mainly the war dead.
2. Concerning the selection and treatment of the teaching materials in connection with religion at public schools.
  - (a) According to the educational target, it may be included, if necessary, the facts concerning founders, usages, systems of various religions, physical establishments of religious organizations, activities of welfare and education, various events of religious history and others. In these educational materials, no expression must be used such as that a doctrine, a usage, a system, an experience or others of a certain specific religion is denied as valueless or that a certain specific one is especially highly estimated. Neither must be assumed that science and religion are inconsistent. This is not precluded from ascribing natural phenomena to natural causes.
  - (b) In the civic course importance must be attached to clarifying what sort of a role religions have played in the social life. In a proper grade, the significance of freedom of religious faith must be taught based upon the contents of the Constitution and other laws.
  - (c) Textbooks of literature and linguistics may include religious teaching materials so far as they are selected on the ground that they are of literary or linguistic value. However, at treating them attention must be paid not to run counter to the purpose for selecting the teaching materials concerned.
  - (d) In guidance of music, fine arts and architecture, works under a religious influence may be used as teaching materials. It is desirable to study religious influence exerted to artistic expressions.
  - (e) A school library may be provided with books and periodicals concerning religion for reference and study.
  - (f) Objective study (comparative study or special study) on doctrine, history, philosophy and psychology of various religions may be provided as electives for senior high school. However, it is necessary to pay attention not to let it serve as religious education for a certain specific religion.
3. Concerning the voluntary religious activities of children and pupils of public schools
  - (a) It is free for a child or a pupil to participate as a person in a religious ceremony, festival and other functions performed by a religious organization out of school hours. A teacher may do in the same way.

- (b) Junior high school pupils may organize a voluntary religious group as an activity out of the regular school hours.
  - (c) To the activity of this kind, a school must afford conveniences of utilizing school facilities on the same basis of affording to the other organizations of pupils within the school. A school must afford conveniences of this kind non-discriminately and impartially to any religious group of pupils. It is necessary to let them know far and wide beforehand about this effect. Each school authorities should have authority to decide whether or not to let them use a lecture hall, a class room or other facilities for an activity of organization of pupils out of school hours.
  - (d) A religious group of pupils may request a teacher to participate in the activity as an advisor or a member in a private capacity.
4. Concerning relationship between a religious man and school education
- (a) A public school may invite a priest and a believer of a religious organization to have them give a lecture on the subject other than a field of religion. In such a case, it is necessary to let them well understand beforehand that they must not make interpretation of a doctrine and a religious ceremony or dissemination thereof.
  - (b) A priest and a believer of a religious organization who are engaged in teaching at a public school must not appear in a class room wearing a religious robe. Needless to say, they must obey all the rules controlling conduct and responsibility of a teacher.
5. At a public school, school authorities have direct responsibility to have the custody of school buildings. Therefore, when the school authorities let a religious organization other than a pupils' organization use a school building out of school hours, they should judge in accordance with the provisions of Article 85 of the School Education Law.
6. The particulars above-mentioned are not applied to a private school.

A private school has a liberty to decide its own educational policy or practices in connection with all religious education and voluntary activities except the matter that no militaristic or ultra-nationalistic dogma must be taught.

By the way, the above-mentioned notification seemed to be issued through an informal suggestion to Ministry of Education by the competent authorities of Occupation Forces, because we can find the materials in the "Memorandum for the chief of staff" dated on 9 Sept., 1949 which was prepared by Religion and Cultural Resources Division of CIE, GHQ. Although the memorandum seemed not to be formally adopted by the Supreme Commander, it is evident that this was informally suggested to the Japanese Government. For, what stated in the memorandum was positively embodied in this notification.

Anyway, this notification could be said a temporary conclusion to the confusion of the views concerning the relation of religion to education, which had been produced by the issuance of the Shinto Directive. It is undeniable, however, that there was a tendency of keeping the problem of religion at a distance in the public schools even after the issuance of this notification. This was mainly attributable to the excessive regard to the

Shinto Directive which had been issued primarily for the purpose of preventing the revival of militarism and ultra-nationalism but not for abolishing Shinto itself. In this civic course, the core of the educational reform, the leaders concerned had been unable to have any definite view about how to deal with the teaching materials and guidance programs of religions including Shinto. The notification seemed to give a solution of these questions.

After the issuance of the notification in 1949, the course of study concerning the civic course was revised three times. The last revision was published in 1958 and became effective in April, 1961. This revision provides "hours of morals" in the curriculum, in which fostering religious sentiment is to be dealt with.

In short, the Japanese educational world has not yet arrived at an ideal conclusion with regard to the religious education in school.

## VI. Conclusion

The writer has described an outline of the changes of religious education system in Japan, which have not yet arrived at a practical conclusion. But we think that there may be a possibility of getting a solution of this complicated question. We reconsider that Japan might be adherent too strongly to the principle of freedom of religion in Western style. There is an inclination in the West that "religion" definitely signifies to believe in something like God or the absolute being. In many cases, when one believes in an absolute being, one is apt to take a standpoint inconsistent with the other beliefs. When those who have different faiths live together in a community, there must be some guarantee not to violate the others' faiths. Here arises the necessity of guaranteeing others freedom of each religion. There is even hostility among the religions in the West. This is evidently shown in the Western history. We are afraid that the direct import of this principle might have more complicated the school religious education in Japan.

Japan is said a country which is less pious than the Western countries. All the religious education in home, society and school is weaker than that in the West. Japan has only a few Sunday schools. Neither she devises a system of the released time religious education seen in America. Is Japan really a less pious country?

It is true that the religious population is said far exceeds the real population of this country. This means



