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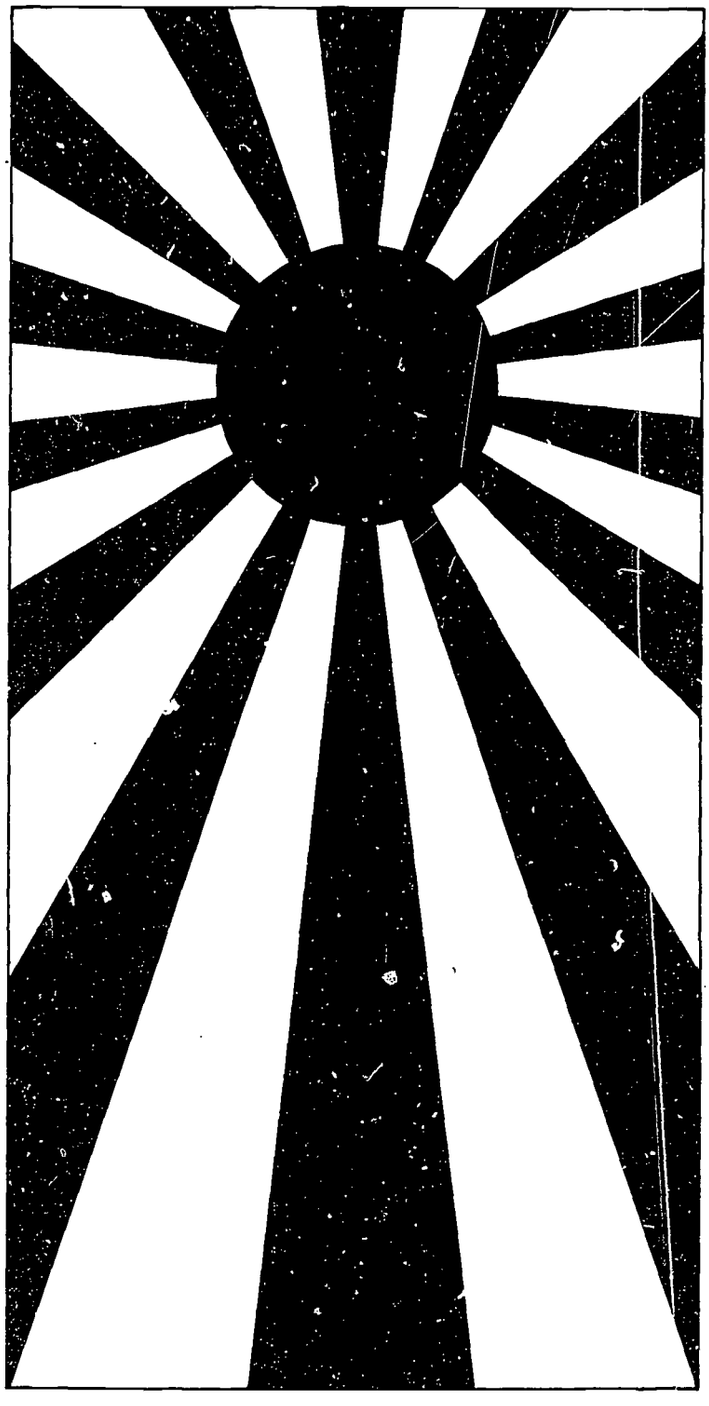
ABSTRACT

The purpose of this individualized instructional packet, one of a number of such packets issued by this source, is to assist teachers as they individualize instruction to meet the needs, interests, and abilities of students. Intended for use at the 9th grade level, it may be used as a directed study with a unit on Religion or Japan. Some skill in formulating a hypothesis and using evidence, as well as some knowledge in Buddhism and Confucianism are required. An instructors' section sets forth pre- and post-test questions and answers; major ideas of the lessons; behavioral objectives; and sources of student readings provided. The student section includes the test questions, and three lessons which are based on five student readings. Students are asked to formulate hypotheses on the basis of the readings, and then to find evidence to support or revise their hypotheses. Major ideas from the three lessons are: 1) Shintoism was based in part on the creation of Japan and the divinity of the emperor; 2) Shintoism before the influence of Confuciansim and Buddhism was a simple nature worship of any manifestation of power or beauty, with an "eighty myriads" of deities; and 3) Shintoism has undergone changes since 1945, for example it is now supported locally rather than by the state, and practitioners are now free to formulate their own beliefs. (Author/JLB)

SHINTOISM



SECONDARY EDUCATION

IIM SOCIAL STUDIES

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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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FOREWORD

This is one of the many individualized instructional packets compiled or revised by the General Education Branch, Office of Instructional Services, Department of Education.

The purpose of these packets is to assist teachers as they individualize instruction to meet the needs, interests and abilities of students.

An updated list of all such packets published by the General Education Branch through the Teacher Assist Center is printed each year and distributed to schools and libraries. The list contains the titles of the learning packets, level (primary, elementary, junior high or high school) and subject area.

We hope these individualized instructional materials prove helpful to students and teachers as they cooperatively plan objectives, evaluate learning, and plot next steps.

Margaret Y. Oda
Director
General Education

Arthur F. Mann
Assistant Superintendent
Office of Instructional Services

Instructions to the Teacher

This Learning Packet can be used as a directed study with a unit on Religion or Japan. You may substitute or add to the readings found in this packet.

Identification of Learners

This Learning Packet is for the 9th grade. Some skill in formulating a hypothesis and using evidence is necessary. Some background knowledge in Buddhism and Confucianism is also required.

Special Instructions

Materials included in this Learning Packet are readings from the following:

1. Forman, Henry The Truth Is One, Harper and Row, 1954.
2. Fitch, Florence Their Search For God
3. Noss, Man's Religion
4. Seidensticker, Edward Japan (Life World Library) Time Incorporated, 1961.

Evaluation

Post-test will be the same as Pre-test. Key to test:

1. d
2. b
3. b
4. a
5. d

Major Ideas

Shintoism was based in part on the creation of Japan and the divinity of the Emperor.

Shintoism before the influence of Confucianism and Buddhism was a simple nature worship of and manifestation of power or beauty with an 'eighty myriads' of deities.

With the coming of Buddhism and Confucianism, Shintoism went through many changes, adopting and adapting beliefs and practices from both.

Shintoism has undergone changes since 1945, such as from state support to local support, and practitioners of the religion are now free to formulate their own beliefs.

Behavioral Objectives

Given a reading, the student will hypothesize about the beliefs of State Shintoism that the American Occupational Forces found objectionable.

Given a reading, the student will find evidence to support his hypothesis or revise his hypothesis.

Given a reading the student will formulate a hypothesis about the effect of Buddhism and Confucianism on Shintoism.

Given a reading, the student will find evidence of the hypothesis or revise the hypothesis.

The student will formulate two hypotheses about the changes in Shintoism based on what he has learned.

STUDENT SECTION

SHINTOISM

Pre-test

Complete the pre-test, making sure you follow the directions. When you are finished taking the test, take it to your teacher for evaluation.

Purpose of the Pre-test

If you successfully complete the pre-test, you need not complete this Learning Packet. If you did not do well, do not be discouraged, but go on to Lesson 1.

Pre-test and Post-Test

Using a separate sheet of paper, select the best answer. Ask your teacher for the key to the test.

1. Before the end of World War II, a Shinto shrine needing funds for extensive remodeling would have:

   a. Asked the local people for contributions
   b. Held a big 'bazaar'
   c. Asked the bank for a loan
   d. Ordered the government for funds

2. A Shinto shrine in Japan might have had, before 1945:

   a. A picture of Buddha
   b. A picture of the emperor
   c. A picture of Confucius
   d. A picture of General Tojo

3. The best known diety in Shintoism is:

   a. Amida Buddha
   b. Amaterasu Omikami
   c. Susano o no mikoto
   d. Jimmu Tenno

4. The Shinto shrines in Japan tend to be alike in:

   a. Architecture
   b. Dieties (spirits, or gods)
   c. Beliefs
   d. Chants and rituals

5. Shintoism since 1945 has:

   a. Declined and lost popular support
   b. Increased sharply in support and attendance
   c. Adopted Christian ideology
   d. Managed to regain most of the support of the people

Lesson I

Major Idea

Shintoism was based in part on the creation of Japan and the divinity of the emperor.

Behavioral Objectives

Given a reading you will hypothesize about the beliefs of State Shintoism that the American Occupation Forces found objectionable.

Given a reading, you will formulate a hypothesis and find evidence to support this hypothesis or revise it.

Instructions

On a separate paper, do the following problems.

Learning Activities

1. Locate Reading # 1 in this Learning Packet. Based on the reading, formulate a hypothesis about the beliefs in Shintoism.

2. Locate Reading # 2 in this Learning Packet. Formulate a hypothesis based on the reading then find evidence for your hypothesis. Based on the evidence, reformulate or revise your hypothesis.

Lesson II

Major Ideas

Shintoism before the influence of Confucianism and Buddhism was a simple nature worship of any manifestation of power or beauty, with an 'eighty myriads' of deities.

With the coming of Buddhism and Confucianism, Shinto went through many changes, adopting and adapting beliefs and practices from both.

Behavioral Objectives

Given a reading, you will formulate a hypothesis about the effect of Buddhism and Confucianism on Shintoism.

Given a reading, you will find evidence of your hypothesis or revise your hypothesis.

Instructions

On a separate sheet of paper do the following problems.

Learning Activities

1. Locate Reading # 3 in this Learning Packet. Based on the reading, formulate a hypothesis about the effects of Confucianism and Buddhism on Shintoism.

2. Locate Reading # 4 and Reading # 5 in this Learning Packet. Based on the reading state one or two hypotheses. Find evidence to support your hypotheses or revise them.

Lesson III

Major Idea

Shintoism has undergone changes since 1945, such as from state support to local support, and practitioners of the religion are now free to formulate their own beliefs.

Behavioral Objectives

You will formulate two hypotheses about the changes in Shintoism based on what you have learned, using readings of the last two lessons.

Instructions

On another sheet of paper, do the following problem.

Learning Activity

Predict the future of Shintoism. You must project into the future. State the prediction in the form of a hypothesis. Use evidence from the readings of the last two lessons.

Quest

1. Write a research paper on one or more of the topics below:

   a. What were the attitudes and beliefs of the Japanese in Hawaii about Shintoism and the emperor before World War II?

   b. Did the people of Japan believe the Emperor to be a God before World War II?

   c. Are there any differences in the beliefs of the people in Hawaii and in Japan with regard to Shintoism?

2. Do a study of Shintoism as it is practiced today in Hawaii.

3. Visit a Shinto shrine. Observe the architecture. Draw a diagram or a picture of it. Then visit another Shinto shrine. Compare both. Is there a distinctive style of architecture of a Shinto shrine?

4. Do some reading on the subject of Animism. Write a short paper on its relationship to a religion such as Shintoism.

Furman, Henry — Reading No. 1

The Truth is One

In General MacArthur's report on the "Political Reorientation of Japan," we read on page 467 the now famous memorandum on the "Abolition of Government Sponsorship, Support, Perpetuation, Control, and Dissemination of State Shinto (Kokka Shinto, Jimja Shinto)." It is dated 15 December, 1945. It frees the Japanese from the state-imposed form of Shinto, assures them of complete religious freedom and promises Sect Shinto and Shrine Shinto, purged of its militaristic and ultra-nationalist elements, the same protection as all other religions. The myths of superiority must be delected. In short, at present Shinto is no longer a state religion.

Only a few days after MacArthur's memorandum, on New Year's Day, 1946, the Emperor Hirohito sent this message to his people.

"The ties between Us and Our people have always stood upon mutual trust and affection. They do not depend upon mere legends and myths.

Furman, Henry

Reading No. 2

The Truth is One

When chaos had separated in Heaven and earth there dwelt on the Plain of High Heaven innumerable deities much as men live on earth. Two of the deities, Izanagi, the male-who-invites, and Izanami, the female-who-invites, were elected by their fellow divinities to create, consolidate and give birth to the Islands of Japan. So the two divinities descended by the Floating Bridge of Heaven (Rainbow), and when they reached the lower end of this bridge, they began to create--in this wise. Izanagi pushed down his jeweled spear into the muddy, briny mess and churned it until it became thick and glutinous. When he withdrew the spear "the brine which dripped from the point of the spear coagulated and formed an island." That was Onagoro-Jima, the Self-Coagulating Island.

According to Nihongi, a scripture dated A.D. 720, Izanagi and Izanami became husband and wife, settled on that island and set about producing a family of lands and countries. The first fruits of their conjugal union were the eight major islands of Japan. After that they produced a number of deities, some thirty-five in all, the last offspring being Kagu-Tsuchi, the God of Fire. In giving birth to this fiery god, Izanami was so badly burned that she sickened and died.

When after her death Izanami departed for the dark land of Yomi, the disconsolate Izanagi followed her, hoping to induce her to return with him to the world above. But he was even less fortunate than Orpheus and Euridice. For, when he found her, Izanami upbraided him: "My lord and husband, why is thy coming so late? ... Do not look on me." But he did look and what he saw horrified him. Her body had already begun to decompose and maggots were swarming over it. Shocked, he exclaimed, "What a hideous and polluted land I have come to"--and he fled.

That visit to the nether regions had important consequences.

"Why didst thou not observe that which I charged thee?" cried after him the indignant Izanami. "Now am I put to shame!" And she sent the Ugly Females of Yomi to pursue her husband and to slay him. He managed to elude them by pelting them with peaches. But at the Even Pass of Yomi, the gateway, Izanami herself caught up with him. He seized a great rock, blocked the way and uttered the words, "Our relationship is severed." That was the formula for divorce.

The very first thing he wanted upon his return from Yomi was a bath to get rid of the pollution inevitable in that sad country. He leaped into the sea. His washing of himself gave birth to a number of deities including the God of Good and Bad Luck. When he washed out his left eye, the dirt of that became the Sun Goddess. The dirt from his right eye became the Moon God, and Susa-no-wo, the Storm God, came from his nostrils. Many a scholar has wondered how a people, so noted for love of beauty, came to have a mythology like this.

It was Izanagi, we recall, who gave birth to the Sun Goddess, and also to her brother, Sus-no-wo, the turbulent Storm God. He was a rude, noisy deity, who was assigned to be ruler of the nether region. Before going there to take up office, he ascended to Heaven to say farewell to his sister, the Sun Goddess. She did not like his manners and, before going forth to meet him, took the precaution of arraying herself not only in a jeweled necklace, but in manly garb which included a sword and bow and arrows. They stood facing each other on opposite sides of the River of Heaven, as the Chinese call the Milky Way.

His intentions, Susa-no-wo called across to his sister, were strictly honorable. He suggested that they produce some children, but by a singular method. This method, somewhat reminiscent of our facts-of-life explanations of the birds and the bees, was to bite off parts of the jewels and swords they were each wearing, crunch them thoroughly and blow away the fragments into space. That seemed a harmless plan enough, and eight children came into being this way. Various Japanese families claim descent from those children, but the important thing is that one of the families is that of the Mikados. That is how the Mikados came to be descended from the Sun Goddess.

Susa-no-wo has already been described as rude, but he was even worse than that. He was unseemly and shocking. He let loose the piebald colt of Heaven in his sister's rice fields and sacred weaving hall, and even committed unmentionable nuisances in her hall while she was having a celebration. In her chagrin and indignation the Sun Goddess withdrew herself into the Rock-cave of Heaven, leaving the world to unmitigated darkness.

The consternation among the heavenly deities was great. They tried various devices by which to lure the Sun Goddess from her cave. One of them was to dig up a Sakaki tree of Heaven with five hundred branches. On the high branches they hung strings of jewels, on the middle branches a mirror and on the lower branches pieces of cloth. They recited a liturgy in her honor. It availed them nothing. Then

Ame no Uzume, "the Dread Female of Heaven," mounted a tub and danced an indecent dance, which made all the eight hundred myriads of gods shake the very Plain of Heaven with their laughter. The goddess in the cave, wondering how they could laugh with so much abandon when she had left the world in darkness, opened the door a crack. Strong hands seized her at once and she was prevented from re-entering the cave. They presented her with the mirror and the necklace of jewels--two of the sacred treasures every Japanese emperior receives at his coronation. The third, the sword, was later found in the tail of a dragon by Susa-no-wo.

Amaterasu Omikami was looking down upon the islands of Japan and, turning to her grandson, Ninigi, she informed him that her descendants were the ordained rulers of that island realm. "Do thou, my August Grandchild, proceed thither and govern it. Go, and may prosperity attend the dynasty, and may it, like Heaven and Earth, endure forever."

So saying she gave him the three treasures, the necklace, the mirror and the sword, and told him to oook upon the mirror as though it were herself. Ninigi, obedient to his grandmother, "thrusting apart the eight-piled clouds of Heaven, clove his way with an awful way-cleaving and descended to earth." He first touched on the island of Kyushu, married and begot children. The grandschild of one of them was Jimmu Tenno, the first human sovereign of Japan who supposedly began his reign at Yamato in 660 B. C.

In the eighteenth century there arose a great scholar. Motoori, to whom the admixture of Buddhism and other foreign elements in Shinto were an offense. He devoted himself to the old forms of Shinto and wrote a commentary on the Kojiki that is still used by scholars and students. His pupil Hirata carried on the work with even more zealous energy. To him, Buddha was admissible into the Shinto pantheon only in a very inferior place. The work of both Motoori and Hirata contributed markedly to the weakening of the Shogunate and to the restoration of the Mikado in 1868.

Motoori's ideas would have delighted Hitler. Perhaps they delighted Tojo. The Mikado, he said, is a direct descendant of the gods. Japan, briefly, is ruled by a god. It follows that Japan is superior to any other country, since none of the others are ruled by a god or by any off-spring of gods. Since no other nation is the equal of Japan, it follows all must pay homage to Japan's sovereign. As to the quality and character of the sovereign, that does not enter into human calculation at all. The ways of gods are inscrutable and past understanding. Whatever the prince does is right. Altogether this was an excellent setup for chauvinism, reaction and, as events proved, aggression.

A government Department of Shrines was established. By the year 1872, Shinto was officially taught in the schools. "Obedience to the gods!" was the central tenet, and the visible god on earth was the Emperor. The Department of Shrines was later divided into a Bureau of Shinto Shrines, under the Department of Home Affairs, and a Bureau of Religions under the Department of Education. The Shinto Shrines were government supported.

But the State Shrines, government supported, became the god-houses most favored. The shrine usually stands upon high ground in a grove among pines and cryptomerias, those magnificent conifers that rise to eighty, ninety and even a hundred feet. At the entrance stands the torii with the upward-turning curved ends of the crossbar. A worshiper stopped at a fountain before approaching the shrine, dipped his hands and rinsed his mouth as a purification. Then he bowed to the shrine, clapped his hands, rang the bell hanging from the eaves, left an offering in a box, prayed, bowed with great reverence and departed. All this before the outer shrine. Beyond it stood the inner sanctuary. That was not entered by the worshipper. It contained the shintai, some object connected with the god of the shrine, a mirror, a sword, a bit of writing, or a crystal ball.

But the most sacred and the most honored of all shrines in Shinto is the shrine at Ise, situated on the main island, on the shore of the Inland Sea. Dedicated to the Sun Goddess herself, that shrine is identified with the origin of the Japanese state and her government. Here, four miles of shrines connect the shrine of Amaterasu with that of Toyo-Uke-Hime, the Food Goddess. The shrine of the Sun Goddess, the Inner Shrine, contains those immemorial imperial regalia which the goddess sent down from Heaven by her grandson, Ninigi--the mirror, the sword and the stone beads.

There were certain fixed state ceremonies at Ise and at certain other important shrines, like the cremony of purification, a sort of imperial absolution of sins, twice each year. The regular daily worship and prayer, called norito, continued without interruption. When a new Emperor was about to mount the throne he worshipped at Ise in person. When war was declared on some foreign power the Emperior, likewise, announced it to the gods, in person, at the Imperial Shrine of Ise.

In religion, it has been said, we have first symbols and forms; next, mythology; and last, philosophy. In Shinto, only the first two stepping-stones have been passed. The third has not yet been reached. Not improbably, one reason why Shinto seems never even to have struggled to reach the Ultimate was the turn it took toward military prowess. Even from earliest times, the Way of the Gods really became the way of the Samurai, the way of the warriors. Whatever the elements supplied to

Bushido, "the knightly warrior's way," by other religions, such as Zen Buddhism and Confucianism, Shinto supplied the absolute devotion to clan chief, country and Emperior that made it a religious duty. In universal religions, the first duty is to God. In nationalistic Shinto, the first duty is to the Emperor. In 1890 the then Emperor issued a famous rescript on Education which made Shinto both an instrument of policy and an instrument of patriotism. The Yasukuni shrine in Tokyo, which hold the name of all the war dead, became a sort of temple of patriotism. Lest any Japanese should be attracted by Buddhism, Confucianism, or Christianity, one professor announced that Shinto includes them all, that the founders of those other religions were but the missionaries of the god of Shinto. And the Emperor of Japan is that God's vice-regent on earth.

Fitch, Florence Reading No. 3

Their Search For God

The Religion of the Primitive Japanese was simple nature worship; their "kami," deities, were a volcano, a river, a flowering tree--any manifestation of power and beauty. They believed that Japan was the land of the gods, who lived in its forests and mountains, on steep cliffs and in waterfalls, who "make the trees bloom" and "weave broacade of autumn leaves," who ride in the butterfly in the evening and the firefly at night. Nature, man, and the deities all have the same creative impulse, the same urge toward life and progress; all are kami. Even the soil of the land, so lavishly endowed with beauty, is sacred. "Whatever is, is divine spirit." This is the basis of all religious thought in Japan.

No building is necessary to make a spot sacred in Japan. A waterfall is heaven-given power coming down to earth; a mountian is the divine spirit on earth reaching upward toward its heavenly source; a grove of lofty trees is a sanctuary of the Universal Spirit. Tree-worship is found in many early religions; in Shinto it is still alive and strong. Many small shrines nestle under the branches of trees which were old before the shrines were built. Larger shrines are in the midst of groves.

The early shrine was a simple structure like a Japanese house. Modern shrines are not very different; the Japanese believe that the simplest is the most pure because it is closest to the divine age. The buildings are of wood, the most abundant material in a land of mountains and forests. The gabled roof is covered with thatch or bark. The dignity yet lightness of the roof, the fine proportions and slight curves are the chief beauty of Shinto architecture.

There are no idols in Shinto shrines, for Shintoists think of their gods as spirits, but the symbol of the deity is in the sanctuary. It is never seen even by the priests, but is kept in a box covered with a cloth.

Shinto shrines are always open, at night as well as during the day. A worshiper comes at will for his brief ritual of cleansing, communion with the spirit-world, petition, and thanksgiving. He rings a bell over the entrance, claps his hands--an ancient form of showing respect--, throws a coin or small package of rice into a box or net inside the hall, takes off his shoes as Japanese etiquette requires, then enters to pray.

Seidenstickler, Edward Reading No. 4
Japan

Shinto also has a virtual monopoly on weddings. An advanced, modern young couple will sometimes note that because civil procedures are in any case necessary besides whatever religious ceremonies are observed, the latter might as well be dispensed with. Christians may also be suspicious of shrines and priests. But almost everyone else goes through Shinto rituals, complete with go-betweens, even though an increasing number of urban couples come together by their own design rather than by those of marriage arrangers.

On auspicious days in the spring and fall (people tend not to be married in the inclement seasons), crowds of affianced persons, go-betweens and relatives pour in and out of the large shrines, grist for the efficient wedding mill. Though the organdy veil and the bridal train are becoming somewhat more common, most brides still prefer the kimono and high, cloth-capped coiffure of tradition. Bridegrooms are almost always in morning coats and striped trousers. Whatever the garb, the swishing of sacred branches and the drinking of sake are pure Shinto. The proceedings are speeded up a little, perhaps, to fit the busy schedule of the shrine, but they are fundamentally unchanged from very ancient times. Few Japanese feel really married unless they have taken the prescribed nine sips of sake.

But not all rituals and beliefs are Shinto. Faith in fortune tellers is widespread, and their origins go back into Chinese prehistory. Even a member of the intelligentsia will sometimes consult a master of divination in selecting a name for a child, or, indeed, a substitute one for himself, if he feels that the products of his artistic or commercial talens should be tagged with a more elegant and fetching name than the one his parents gave him.

Even in the heart of Tokyo, a person who has just bought a house can be a victim of augury. If he is to take possession on February 1, say, he must consider it sufficient cause for having the contract violated if the current occupant has consulted an almanac and discovered that it would be dangerous to move until such time as the winter solstice is further away than the vernal equinox.

The ceremonies associated with death and the dead are largely Buddhist. Funerals, memorial services and cemeteries provide the chief income of Buddhist temples, except for the famous few that live off tourists. In a recent short story, one of the characters, a young student priest, describes the limited nature of the profession for which he is preparing himself:

"I knew when people would come calling us. In a certain house a certain person dies. A person of this world disappears from this world. Those who are left come to think that we are necessary. They remember that in this world there is a group of aliens who have connections with the other world. They come for us. We take our places like experts beside the corpse."

The idea of life after death is prominent in Japanese folklore and festivals, though not always clearly or systematically formulated. Information about apparitions is detailed: they have no feet, they come at two in the morning" when the grasses sleep, "they are likely to be encountered beneath willows by river banks on rainy nights, and they do a great deal of complaining.

The dead are the focus of the greatest festival in Japan, the midsummer Bon. Everyone who possibly can goes home to the country for it. In the cities Bon has been set at mid-July under the Gregorian calendar, but in the countryside it still reaches its climax under a July or August full moon--whichever of the two months contains the seventh full moon under the old Chinese lunar calendar. At the beginning of the festival, lanterns or torches escort the spirits of the dead from cemeteries to the houses that once were theirs. During the several days of the festival the spirits, together with everyone else, are feasted, invited to dance and otherwise made to feel at home. Then, under the full moon, they are escorted back to their resting place again, sometimes with bonfires, sometimes with the lanterns that escorted them at the beginning of the festival, sometimes aboard lighted boats drifted out to sea or down a river.

Japan offers no more moving and beautiful sight than a little provincal coastal village on the last night of Bon. Pale green jewels of lanterns trail up the hills to the cemeteries, which are like swarms of fireflies in a mist--the smoke from the incense seeing the dead back to the skies. Down at the waterfront those whose dead are buried far away see them off on tiny, candlelit boats, white jewels on the receding tide. The silver light suffusing the scene makes one realize how much has been lost in the cities, where the full moon is no longer a part of the festival.

Of the major religions, Shinto--literally "the way of the gods"--has been in the country the longest. It is the native Japanese faith. In its fundamentals Shinto is not an organized body of thought. It is rather the worship of myriads of natural deitieies, with great emphasis laid on ritual cleanliness. The Japanese feeling for nature and fondness for washing would thus seem to be very ancient.

Primitive Shinto offered only vague explanations of spirit and the afterworld. It was no match for the subtleties and precise formulations of Buddhism, which began in India and came to Japan in the Sixth Century from China and Korea.

Noss

Reading No. 5

Man's Religion

Always adept in improving their methods and skills in the practical arts, once the way is shown, they quickly learned all that the Chinese could teach them about pottery-making, metal working, wood carving, farming, horticulture, gardening, silkworm culture, road and bridge building, and canal dredging. Almost at a bound the people passed from a primitive to a relatively advanced type of material culture. In the realm of social relations, Confucian ideas brought about permanent changes of emphasis in morals. There followed in particular a powerful re-enforcement of the ideal of filial piety. Old Shinto had been mainly a haphazard cult of nature-worship, loosely tied in with ancestor-worship; it now took on the aspect of history's most comprehensive ancestor-cult. Not only did the emperor's descent from the sun-goddess receive stress, but the higher officials began to trace their own descent from the deities most closely related to the sun-goddess, while the common people were supposed to be descendants of the more distantly related deities; so that the mythological basis was laid for the claim (so beginning of this) that the whole people were organically related to the emperor by a divine family relationship.

But an even greater impact was made upon the Japanese by Buddhism, coming by way of China largely. When this religion came to Japan in the 6th century, it brought with it an exciting literature, a new, rich art, and fresh insights in every field of human thought and action, especially in logic, medicine, and social service. Buddhism broke down Japanese provincialism by bringing the overseas world into the religious picture; for in the eyes of the Buddhist priests, the seats of religious reality and authority lay, not in Japan but in India and China. The conservative, provincial-minded clan leaders were affronted by this, but Buddhism had so much to contribute to Japan that its best, most progressive minds were irresistibly attracted to it. From the first it made its conquests in the highest quarters. After a short period of resistance, the members of the imperial family adopted Buddhism wholeheartedly. The aristocracy of the court followed suit. As temples multiplied, the common people were gradually won over.

One important result of the new ferment of ideas was the attempt, under imperial sanction, to put into writing the native myths and traditions still current among the local clans. In 620 A. D. appeared the Kujiki, or Chronicle of Old Events, which gave the history of the emperors from Jimmu Tenno onward; in 712 A. D. the more comprehensive Kojiki or Chronicle of Ancient Events, with which we have already become acquainted, was completed, it being intended as a history of Japan from

the creation of the world to the middle of the 7th century A.D. Paralleling it, with variations and additions that give it greater historical accuracy, was the Nihonji or Chronicles of Japan, issued in 720 A.D. Almost a century later, about 806 A.D. appeared the Kogoshui or Gleanings from Ancient Stories, a defence of the practices of one of the ancient priestly guilds connected with Shinto. Still later, in the first quarter of the 10th century, came the Engi-shiki, an important compendium of Shinto rites and ceremonies, especially those relative to the imperial cult. All these treatises showed the influence of Chinese and Buddhist ideas. Foreign modes of thought were evident, for example, in the opening paragraphs of the Kojiki and Nihongi, much as the influence of Greek philosophy shows in the first chapter of the Fourth Gospel. The Kojiki and Nihonji were deeply indebted to overseas thought for their political orientation, which led them to endow the imperial line with a sovereignty reaching back to remote time and grounded in a divine order of things.

Ryobu or Mixed Shinto

By the 8th century, when Buddhism had obtained a prevailing influence over the governing classes, a closer integration of Shinto and Buddhism seemed desirable. Opportunely, certain Buddhist priests of the Hosso and Shingon sects made the discovery, through a series of religious visions that the native gods of Japan were in reality Buddhas and Bodhisattvas who had "reappeared" on the Japanese islands. Amaterasu, the sun-goddess, was identified as a manifestation of the Buddha Vairocana; Hachiman, the war-god, was found to be the guise assumed on Japanese soil by the Bodhisattva Kshitigarbha, and so on. The result of accepting these identifications was the so-called Ryobu or Mixed Shinto (literally, "the Two-fold Way of the Gods"). In this syncretism, the deities of the Buddhist pantheon were given the honored position of "the Originals," while the deities of the Shinto pantheon were thought to be their Japanese appearances or manifestations.

It is not surprising that Shinto almost succumbed in this crisis. (In India Hinduism reabsorbed Buddhism by a similar rapprochement, and at this same period of time.) Certainly Ryobu or Two-sided Shinto had immense influence on the thought of Japan. It won the intellectuals. In ensuing years most of the Shinto shrines made room for Buddhist worship in the "Inner Sanctuary," and were quite generally served by Buddhist priests. The latter introduced into the old Shinto rites images, incense, sermons, and elaborate ceremonies. The simple primitive appearance of the Shinto shrines was greatly altered by the exterior application of the intricate ornament of Buddhist temples, and by the addition to the shrine property of pagodas, drum-towers, large bells, assembly halls for preaching services, and the like; even the unadorned Shinto gateway, or torii, was supplied with curves and ornate decoation. So pervasive did the Buddhist influence

become, that it is quite true to say with W. M. Horton, that "down to the Meiji era, Japan might fairly be described as a Buddhist nation," though one adds, as Dr. Horton aptly does, the qualification that this only holds good "in the same sense in which certain western nations have been described as 'Christian.'" A deadly parallel!

Japanese appropriation and adaptation of Buddhism (especially in its Pure Land form) continued to the beginning of the 13th century, when public order dissolved in four hundred years of feudals strife, during which the emperor, his religious headship of the nation thoroughly obscured by Buddhism, vainly strove to control the powerful nobles and the samurai or military class. At the end of the 16th century a shogun or dictator arose from the Tokugawa family, who unified the political order and brought an end to the centuries of feudal warfare. This marked the beginning of the period of the Tokugawa Regime (1600 to 1867 A.D.). It was a period of some importance to Shinto, for during it occurred its own revival or renaissance.