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THE RELIGION OF DIVINE
WISDOM
JAPAN'S MOST POWERFUL
RELIGIOUS MOVEMENT

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INTRODUCTION

When we try to make a study of present-day Japanese religious life, we have by no means covered the subject when we have made some research into what has always constituted the three principle religions of Japan: Buddhism, Shintoism and Christianity. Many other movements have sprung up which cannot be brought under these three main divisions. When one travels through the length and breadth of the gorgeous Japanese isles, one is struck by the great number of temples which at a superficial glance one would probably classify immediately as being Shintō through and through. However, after having studied its doctrine thoroughly, we come to the conclusion that we cannot classify these temples as Shintoism, for what is taught there differs in many aspects from the Way of the Gods.

Far the biggest of these modern religious movements which already boasts of a history of more than one hundred years and which covers all the Japanese isles with thousands of temples, is the *Tenrikyō* 天理教: the Religion of Heavenly Wisdom (or Divine Reason), founded in 1838. With a rather un-Japanese noisy audacity they proclaim loudly to everyone who wants to listen, or perhaps better to those who are brought to listen, their gospel of joy and bright living in terms such as:

“Everyone has a longing for peace and happiness. It is the most natural human desire. Why then, is our life full of varied strifes and conflicts, our happy home life disturbed, and our peaceful social life destroyed?

Moreover, they say, the world is divided into two parts, and has waged a struggle within itself instead of settling its problems in a give-and-take spirit. Why should we set out to fight one another? Truly this is one of the grave problems confronting all men in the world.

We are all human beings. Why could we not look upon things from that point of view? If we had mutual love among ourselves, this world of ours would be converted into a brighter and happier world. The cause of all our troubles is our shortcomings in the love of humanity. Human beings today are driving themselves into a trap. Today we must love mankind as never before.

This is our reason for introducing to the people of the world, the teaching of Nakayama Miki 中山みき, the Foundress of *Tenrikyō* 天理教, the Religion of Heavenly Wisdom, in order that the true happy life and the real peace of the world may be realized and that we may all become brothers and sisters.”¹⁾

With this exalted program in mind, a new and vigorous religious movement spread all over Japan, dashes out into the world in order to preach a gospel of deliverance, of healing and happiness to all mankind. And they do this methodically and with youthful enthusiasm. They differ from the way other great religions generally work in the East. They certainly do not display much Oriental poise, reserve or refinement. On the contrary the young *Tenrikyō* teachers are encouraged to show off, to try their paces, to throw their weight around, to learn by doing even though it makes their voice later on a little over-strident and unsure. It is considered to be a virtue for the *Tenrikyō* propagandists to enter (I would nearly venture to say to break into) the houses of sick people, even when they are not welcome, in order to propagate their doctrine. They are encouraged to go out among the people and if they have not poured out the *Tenrikyō* perfume over at least one person a day,²⁾ that particular day must be considered a loss, and on that day the young *Tenrikyō* preachers are in several parishes not even entitled to their usual portion of rice.

One must acknowledge that they have great results. In a short time they are known all over the Japanese isles. They have a few million believers,³⁾ 14,200 churches with 80,000 preachers and at the present moment they

1) Taken from one of the numerous speeches of the present *Shimbasira* 眞柱, Patriarch of *Tenrikyō*, Nakayama Shōzen 中山正善. These addresses have been published at Dōyū-Sha 道友社 in Nara Prefecture. The above mentioned sermon has also been published as a separate pamphlet. In present-day *Tenrikyō* publications we find many variations on this same theme, and it is a subject extremely dear to them.

2) *Nioi-gake* 匂ひかけ, a *Tenrikyō*'s technical term which one constantly finds in all their publications. It means the pouring out of the perfume of the *Tenrikyō* faith over the people. Vide, *Tenrikyō Kyōten Kōwa* 天理教教典講話, by Tashiro Takuji 田代澤治, pp. 104-8.

3) It is not possible to give the number of *Tenrikyō* adherents with any amount of accuracy. Those who have been a long time in Japan and who have studied this country seriously know only too well that you cannot make religious statistics in the East, just as one does in Europe or in the Americas. There are no baptismal registers, there is no accurate counting; even the information from the Religious Department of the Ministry of Education is not very enlightening. In their religious outlook, the people of the East tend strongly toward eclecticism. This is not only the case with the Japanese, but this holds true for China just as well. The Chinese tend to be

are constantly expanding. I think this is sufficient reason for the publication of this study.

Tenrikyō has been called—certainly not without some reason—the Christian Science of modern Japan. There are, indeed, a few similarities between them. In both movements faith-healing plays a prominent rôle and both movements profess to displace a negative evil, manifested in the form of the maladjustments of sickness and wrong, by establishing a normal relationship with the great health-giving stream that flows from the Great Source of all life, although this source is interpreted in totally different ways. Both have the rather astonishing belief that there is no such thing as suffering. There is no evil, no sickness, no pain and even no death. Mary Baker Eddy

Confucianists while they are successful and to become Buddhists or to practice Buddhism when they are confronted by tragedy and death. One can, therefore, only smile if one reads: In Japan there are so many million Buddhists and so many million Shintoists. Due to the process of amalgamation of Buddhism and Shintoism that has gone on in Japan for more than 1,000 years these two religions remain together in the hearts of the Japanese people. No revival of pure Shintō or pure Buddhism has ever succeeded to separate them in the hearts of the faithful. The most severe Government interference has been powerless in this respect. Even in spite of the forceful separation of Shintoism from Buddhism made in the Meiji era, the people in general do not give their allegiance exclusively to one or the other, but regard themselves as being Shintoists and Buddhists at one and the same time.

To the question which is stronger, Buddhism or Shintoism, one can only answer with Reischauer: "The resultant of the union between Buddhism and Shintoism is strongly Buddhist on the philosophical side, on its popular religious side it often seems more Shintoistic." (From Reischauer's *STUDIES IN JAPANESE BUDDHISM*, pp. 230-231). Therefore once again, it is impossible to give the number of Tenrikyō adherents with any amount of accuracy. They do not know it themselves. Speaking about numbers I heard alternately: 2, 3, 5 and 7 million adherents. The number of the faithful seems to fluctuate very much. However, far better than trying to fix the number of adherents, is to listen to the heartbeat of the Japanese nation as a whole, to feel the pulse of the Japanese spiritual life, to watch Tenrikyō in action. This done, one must acknowledge that their power is great, their influence widespread. If any greater catastrophe occurs in Japan, Tenrikyō steps forward and helps in the rehabilitation of the damaged country. Before the last war they were the most zealous in *Kinrōbōshi* 勤勞奉仕, in the voluntary labour in front of the Imperial Palace and elsewhere. When the war broke out Tenrikyō organized *Hinokishintai* ひのきしん隊, a Sacred Labour Regiment which was placed at the disposal of the State. As the Japanese Empire sprawled out over the Asiatic continent, peaceful Tenrikyō missions followed in its wake and for example in Manchuria preachers busied themselves with immigration movements. Immediately after the war their zeal flagged a little and we did not hear much about them. However, at the present moment they are once more vigorous and their influence is strong all over Japan. After all they have at the present moment 14,200 churches and 80,000 zealous preachers and these numbers are accurate indeed. Of course I have many more statistics at my disposal. I have even a whole voluminous Tenrikyō Yearbook of the latest statistics, but if I were to give them here, it would only confuse the foreign reader and he most certainly would misinterpret them.

claimed to have "discovered" Christian Science in the year 1864. Her Oriental counterpart had her first revelation in 1838. The writings of both religions are full of stories of miraculous healing while at the same time they both teach us how through God-bestowed power we may cast off the largely self-imposed burdens of heredity, of chronic disorders which, they proclaim, do not exist in reality or at least they deny the purely physical causes of bodily weaknesses. The missionaries of both churches carry their gospel of faith-healing and joy over the Pacific in opposite directions: Christian Scientists come to Japan and the apostles of Tenrikyō go to America, Hawaii and Brazil. The missionary enthusiasm of both religious movements is very great, indeed. Every intelligent visitor to the Japanese shores who wants to get some inkling into Japanese cultural and religious life, will sooner or later meet Tenrikyō in some form or other.

Among the innumerable shrines and temples which we find throughout Japan the Tenrikyō *kyōkais*¹⁾ (churches) are conspicuous by their extreme neatness and the crowds of worshippers which they constantly attract and thus quite naturally I became interested in this faith of the Tenrikyō believers who impressed me by their extreme zeal, their tenacity, their unwavering determination, their streamlined propaganda, and yet who at the same time annoyed me by their huge drums and their faith-healing digressions. When they held their great and beautiful exhibition in Tōkyō some three years ago, my interest was still more aroused. They certainly know how to attract the attention of the Japanese people. A distinguished and most zealous Tenrikyō *kyōshi*²⁾, Inoue Kakuji 井上覺司, guided me all through the extensive exposition halls. He introduced me into the literature on Tenrikyō and invited me to visit the center of the world, the cradle of the human race, Tambaichi 丹波市 near Nara, which has quite recently developed into a municipality, called Tenri Shi 天理市. I went there to study Tenrikyō at the place of its origin and to have discussions with the religion professors

1) Tenrikyō's 天理教 places of worship were formerly called *kyō* 講, fraternity. They changed this name into *kyōkai*, 教會, church, when they received official Government recognition.

2) In the beginning the Tenrikyō preachers were called *Otasukenin* おたすけ人, savior, saviour, rescuer, helpmate; later they were called *Yōboku* よふぼく, timber, construction material (to build up the Tenrikyō world of the cheerful life.) When Tenrikyō received Government recognition in 1908 the Tenrikyō preachers were called *kyōshi* 教師, teacher. The present Patriarch Nakayama Shōzen 中山正善 has quite recently stressed again the name *yōboku*, so that at the present moment we hear both names.

of the Tenrikyō University.

That was how I became more acquainted with this religious movement. Since then I have visited several times the Tenrikyō headquarters in Tenri Shi, and I have had many pleasant conversations and friendly discussions with very distinguished Tenrikyō leaders. These discussions took place in a most agreeable and cordial atmosphere. In the beginning I was surprised at the apparent harmony of a faith, which in parts seemed very strange to me, with a modern broadmindedness, an openness to new ideas and a great insight into contemporary philosophical and theological problems. There can be no doubt that Catholic and Protestant theology is studied intensely in Tenri Shi, and they follow closely the latest developments in Christian theology. It seems to me that some explanations of certain Tenrikyō doctrines and even their terminology have been borrowed from Christian sources. This should not surprise us very much, when we know that those who wield the greatest influence in Tenrikyō are real scholars in comparative religion. The professors, Japanese gentlemen of a high moral calibre, keep themselves well informed about the latest philosophical and theological publications. They are extremely fond of Kierkegaard, especially his views concerning man, not in the category of being but in the category of becoming, and they are well acquainted with the works of K. Jaspers and G. Marcel on whose *Journal Métaphysique* they asked me to comment. I was pleasantly surprised while discussing contemporary philosophers that we were even now and then on common ground. Their huge library of some 500,000 volumes with tens of thousands of the most valuable books, testifies clearly to their earnest efforts and thorough research.

Gradually I became more and more acquainted with this religious movement. I have studied nearly all the existent literature on the subject and thus it may not be altogether out of place to relate here some personal experiences as well as the fruits of some further study. In doing so, it will be the first time that some kind of coherent survey of this great religious movement has been given in a Western language by an outsider. The Tenrikyō people complain very much that practically nothing of importance on their religion has been published in any foreign language. This is very true indeed. I myself went through all the publications on Tenrikyō in Western languages, but I think they do not deserve a place in the biblio-

graphy.¹⁾ Generally they are in pamphlet form and—with a few laudible exceptions—written in an indigestible French, German, English, Spanish or Italian. I do not deny that the task is very difficult. Tenrikyō's ideas are often so hazy and now and then written in such a complicated Japanese style, that it is a well nigh Herculean task to re-express those ideas in Western categories and to give a well balanced, detached, objective and at the same time complete account of all the Tenrikyō doctrines. How far I have succeeded in this undertaking, I cannot of course judge by myself.

If this little book, imperfect and incomplete as the author admits it to be, in some way or other could serve as a key to a further objective survey of this great religious movement, the author will consider himself richly repaid.

In order to arrive at conclusions and estimates as objective as possible, I have endeavoured as far as possible in the following pages to allow the Japanese speak for themselves. I take this opportunity to thank most sincerely all the people at the Tenrikyō headquarters who have been consistently kind to me and without whose help the following lines could never have been written.

1) There are three praiseworthy exceptions.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

After a first superficial contact and after a first glance at Tenrikyō writings, I was not a little surprised at the number of similarities with or borrowings from Christianity which I encountered. True, I have not sufficient arguments for establishing a direct relationship between parts of the Christian teaching¹⁾ and Tenrikyō, nevertheless it gives one sufficient food for thought if one reads the solemn opening of the Tenrikyō catechism: *Ware wa moto no Kami, jitsu no Kami de aru* 我は元の神・實の神である。I am the God of origin, I am the true God.”²⁾ I could not help thinking of the words of the Old Testament when God revealed Himself to Mose: “I am Who am”³⁾ and of numerous Old Testament revelations. Furthermore I thought of the words of the Apocalypse: “I am Alpha, I am Omega, I am before all, I am at the end of all, the beginning of all things and their end.”⁴⁾ I thought of the words of the Creed: “True God of true God.”

1) The way in which these Christian teachings may have reached Nakayama Miki 中山みき cannot be told with any amount of accuracy. This will remain a mystery for times to come, perhaps for always. Of course, one can form quite a number of hypotheses, theories and suppositions, but the most careful research has not given me any solid arguments for anyone. As a matter of fact, in *Tettsui Ichimei Tenrikyō Bemmo* 鐵槌一名天理教辯妄, a Hammer-blow on or Refutation of Tenrikyō, by Amano Muhendōjin 天野無偏道人, written in 1896 as well as in some other booklets, is told that Miki had been instructed in the Christian religion by a Christian *rōnin* 浪人 (masterless warrior or knight-errant), and that she has taken over from him several Christian elements. However hard I tried, I could not get hold of a copy of this particular book.

It may be that Miki has contacted one of the ±20,000 Christians who have kept burning the torch of the Christian faith in spite of the most severe persecution history has ever known; it may be that she has contacted *hanare*-Christians, the so-called separated Christians, this group apart who have mixed Christianity with all kinds of superstitions and of whom there is a number until the present day; it may be that there is some direct influence from Catholic or Protestant missionaries who entered Japan immediately after the *Sakoku* 鎖國 period, the period of seclusion; it may be that Christian influences entered Tenrikyō at a later date and after the death of the foundress; it may be that the Christian reminiscences are due to Miki or Master Iburi's (her successor) *anima humana naturaliter Christiana*. But whatever supposition there may be, there are no conclusive proofs for any one. One can only trace Christian vestiges with some kind of exactness and point them out here and there. A step further brings us into unknown territory; any apodictic statement would be scientifically untenable.

2) *Tenrikyō Kyōten* 天理教教典, p. 3.

3) Ex. III, 14.

4) Ap. I. 8, XXI. 6, XXII. 13.

While reading the *Tenrikyō Kyōten* 天理教教典, one is struck by the words: “The spectacle of this world is one of people going around in darkness of mind and trusting only their own thoughts and their own judgments. All this misery comes from the fact that they do not know God the Parent, nor can they come into contact with Him. God showed great mercy towards mankind. He came down and revealed Himself through Nakayama Miki 中山みき, taking her as mediatrix and as His elected shrine.” When I read these words I was reminded of St. Ignatius’ words in his *Spiritual Exercises*: “How the three Divine Persons were looking down upon the whole flat or round of the world, full of men. . . . The composition, seeing the place. Here it will be to see the great room and round of the world where dwell so many and such diverse nations. . . . To see the persons, each and all of them; and first those on the face of the earth, in such variety both in dress and mien, some white and others black, some in peace and others at war, some weeping and others laughing. . . . How they regard the whole face and circuit of the earth and all nations in such blindness.”¹⁾

In some further readings of the *Tenrikyō* catechism I found a few Christian traces in the story of the creation: “In the beginning this world was only a chaotic muddy sea, *doroumi* 泥海. The Creator did not like this chaotic situation, *konton taru sama* 混沌たる様, and the idea came to Him: ‘Let us create man and let us enjoy their cheerful living.’”²⁾ I think we do not need any intellectual twisting to establish here a connection with the first chapter of Genesis, and all the more so because the *faciamus hominem* finds its equivalent even in the verbal form: “*Ningen wo tsukuri tomo ni tanoshimō* 人間を造りともに楽しもう.”³⁾

A central theme in *Tenrikyō* is its teaching about *kashimono karimono* かしものかりもの, Things lent and borrowed. Miki taught that our human body is something that we have received from God only as a loan, and consequently God can do with us as He pleases. “The greatest scholar or the most powerful dictator in this world cannot do whatever he likes with his body. In order to please God we should make use of our body as long as

1) *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius* by Rickaby, p. 85–86.

2) *Tenrikyō Kyōten*, p. 25.

3) *Op. Cit.*, p. 25.

possible, being extremely careful not to harm it through sickness. When we die, we should return our body to God with deep gratitude.”¹⁾ While reading this I thought of many Christian prayers expressed in numerous last wills “I restore my body to the blessed Trinity . . .” or the words from the commendatio animae: “Mayest thou return to thy Maker who formed thee out of the earth!”

In several Tenrikyō publications we can read that their faith has many points of contact with other religions and that there are many analogies and resemblances to Christianity. However, I have not yet come across any statement that their teaching has been really taken from Christianity. Says *Tenrikyō Seinen Kyōtei* 天理教青年教程, Tenrikyō’s young Men and Women’s Textbook: “The doctrine of our Tenrikyō has indeed affinities with the teachings of Buddhism and Christianity. Christ’s view of God that we should call Him Father, is very close to Tenrikyō.”²⁾ While touching the subject of *innen* 因縁 (karma), Tenrikyō explains it with words such as: “We shall reap what we have sown.” This brings us reminiscences of the words of Holy Scripture: “He who sows sparingly will reap sparingly; he who sows freely will reap freely too. A man will reap what he sows.”³⁾

To my mind there is no difficulty in discovering Christian vestiges when we read prayers like the following: “Appearing before God the Parent (a modern Tenrikyō preacher readily agrees that he means the same here as Christians do when they say, ‘Our Father Who art in heaven’), Who is enshrined here I say with deep respect: ‘Thou, O God hast created man as well as this world out of a shapeless chaos and Thou hast conserved us for such a long time, and thanks to these benefits I have grown up so far. Never, not even for one moment, will I forget all Your graces and I am forever thinking of how to show my gratitude.’

“May the hearts of all men become serene so that our world may become prosperous and bright. May the disciples of God become enlightened so that they may devote body and soul to the service of God, and of all mankind. May Your wonderful protection be always with us, O God, and

1) *Tenrikyō to wa* 天理教とは, p. 13-14.

2) *Tenri Seinen Kyōtei*, No. 3, *Tenrikyō no Honsbitsu* 天理教の本質 by Nakayama Keiichi 中山慶一, p. 197.

3) 2 Cor. IX. 6, Gal. VI. 8.

may the brightness of Your doctrine be shown. In union with the whole congregation, I pray: ‘May it be so.’”

“Since I have resolved to devote myself to answer Your graces, deign to accept my firm resolution and lead us all to a world of happiness where people live in perfect harmony and peace, and where all serve You, *Tenri-Ō-no-Mikoto*. In union with the whole congregation, I pray: ‘May it be so.’”

“We, all the soldiers of God in this parish, have made the firm resolution to face bravely all kinds of troubles and sufferings in order to serve You, O God, while we follow the example of our Foundress. Deign to make up for our short-comings. In union with the whole congregation, I pray: ‘May it be so.’”¹⁾

In the prayers said during the Tenrikyō funeral service we read: “How inscrutable are the ways of God,” which reminds us of course of St. Paul: “How incomprehensible are His judgments, and how unsearchable His ways”²⁾

After having read all these texts which seem to have been borrowed from Christianity we do not wonder that instead of being regaled with Shintō stories about happy reunions of deities, brides and bridegrooms are now feasted with far more solid “wedding cakes.” I might mention in passing that nowadays real Western cakes are used. They pronounce, through the mouth of the *kyōshi*, their marriage vows as follows: “I deeply thank Thee, omniscient God the Parent for Your presence. From now on we will assist each other through life, and will lead, joyfully, a happy life together, keeping the example of the Foundress always in mind, no matter what troubles may happen. Please accept our true and sincere mind in this vow and protect us both always. This, I pray respectfully on behalf of the couple.”³⁾

The foundress taught time and again that we have to do our best for the sake of others, and then we shall be blessed ourselves. And further, “*hito wo tasukete waga mi tasukaru* 人を助けて我身助かる” if you save others

1) *Tenrikyō Saibun Sakurei-shū* 天理教祭文作例集, edit. by Ono Yasuhiko 小野靖彦, p. 7, 13 & 24.

2) Rom. XI 33.

3) Op. Cit. p. 94.

you will be saved yourself,"¹⁾ which reminds us, of course, of the text of St. James: "He who causeth a sinner to be converted from the error of his way, shall save his soul from death and shall cover a multitude of sins."²⁾

In the well-known *Mikagura Uta* みかぐら歌³⁾ about which I will speak later more extensively and which they themselves translate as "Dancing Psalms," God the Creator repeatedly addresses to us His divine complaint: "Since the beginning of this world I have looked round everywhere to see if there be anyone who would understand My heart. I will take away from you all uneasy burdens if you come to the innermost Sanctuary of My heart." Who would not think here of the words: "Consolantem me quaesivi et non inveni," and of all that is connected with the devotion to the Sacred Heart. Furthermore we find in Tenrikyō writings quite a number of words and expressions which are of Christian origin such as *go shōten* 御昇天, ascension, *biseki* 秘蹟, sacrament, mediatrix and the like.

However, I ask my readers to be extremely careful in making any final conclusions and to remember well the heading of these introductory lines: "First Impressions." More thorough contact and deeper research have brought forth quite different colours from the *Tenrikyō* Spectrum. For, besides Christian vestiges we find in the *Tenrikyō* doctrine a very great amount of Shintoism, Buddhism and some Confucianism. These teachings have been mixed by Miki with many revelations which she claims to have received directly from God the Parent as we shall see later. To my mind, in Miki we find a clear example of a well-known Oriental characteristic: the inclination towards religious eclecticism, combining the most diverse elements from various religious systems. This characteristic, I think, goes together with their distaste for absolutes, which I will mention later. One can even speak of Miki's genius which shows itself in her immense power to absorb alien thoughts into her own expansive religious system. And while studying

1) *Seibun Iin* 正文遺韻, by Moroi Masaichi 諸井政一, p. 211. *Shinjitsu no Michi* 眞實の道, p. 207.

2) *Jac.* V 20.

3) *Mikagura Uta* is a song composed by Miki herself. It has been written in *hiragana* 平假名 and it has a quite peculiar style. We may even say that it has been composed in the local dialect, spoken by uneducated people of that time and of that particular province. The performance of this "dancing psalm" constitutes the main ceremony of the Tenrikyō liturgy. (Vide. p. 119)

the diverse streams that flow into the Tenrikyō lake, I was often reminded of thoughts as expressed in Sufi mysticism, like ibn-ul-Arabi's saying:

“My heart is capable of every form, it is a pasture for gazelles and a monastery for Christian monks

An idol-temple of the pilgrim's Kaaba and the tables of the Torah and the book of the Koran;

I follow the religion of Love, whichever way his camels take; my religion and my faith is the true religion.”

Before I try¹⁾ to give a more coherent account of the substance of the Tenrikyō faith, it is necessary first to give a general view of the life and personality of this fearless and intrepid woman who inaugurated this active and powerful religious movement and who occupies a most exalted place in the mind of all sincere Tenrikyō believers. She performed countless miracles and prophesied events with an astonishing accuracy. She is mediatrix between God and men. Again, according to Tenrikyō believers, the revelations given to her are the most perfect ever bestowed on human beings. With her the fullness of the revelation—partly given in Christianity and other religions—has become an indisputable fact and other revelations are no more possible. The good revelations, given through other religions, have been preserved by Nakayama Miki, I was informed, and this is the reason why we find Christian and Buddhist vestiges. With this simple explanation they seem to overcome easily all difficulties and all objections. The foundress has even

1) I use the word “try” advisedly, for Tenrikyō's ideas are often so illusive and clouded, contradictions are occasionally so apparent, intellectual somersaults are so frequent that it would be a colossal task to bring about some kind of unity. Matters have become still more complicated because I have the strong impression that present-day Tenrikyō has already deviated from its original teaching. They possess a remarkable gift for making modifications. Their future doctrine will be adjusted—I am sure—and will follow closely developments in Buddhism and Christianity, while severing more and more the ties which give them still a strong outward Shintō appearance. Within 25 years *kaburimono* 冠物, *kagami* 鏡, *shimenawa* 七五三繩 and other Shintō externals will have disappeared. Postwar Tenrikyō administration differs considerably from pre-war regulations and some democratic principles have been taken up. Formerly the Patriarch (*Shimbashira*) had more or less absolute control; at the present moment administrative and financial affairs are handled by a newly created administrative head, the patriarch retaining control only over doctrinal matters. Yet there is also a *kyōgikai* 教義會, committee of doctrine. In choosing future patriarchs, the system of primogeniture in the direct Nakayama line has been abandoned, at least on paper. However, the person selected must still be a descendant of the foundress. Tenrikyō's stress on miraculous healing power recently brought about the introduction of medical science into its educational system. This all goes to show that they can adapt themselves very quickly to the need of the times and the changed circumstances.

her place in the so-called Tenrikyō Trinity, for God as Creator is *Tenri-Ō-no-Mikoto* 天理王命, as Ruler the *Moto-no-Kami* 元の神, the *Jitsu-no-Kami* 實の神 and as Savior the *Oya Sama* 教祖.¹⁾ However from the way in which the magisterium of the Tenrikyō Church gave me this information, I was convinced that they are by no means certain of this. Their Trinology is very far from being fixed so that we may speak, *salva reverentia*, of a tentative Trinity. They readily agree that their faith stands only at the beginning of its development, and they informed me that a complete moral theology has still to be constructed. I even got the impression that they are trying to build a kind of hypostatical union into the edifice of their doctrine. They informed me that the *Oya Sama* as Savior is equal to God, however not as Creator. The reverence paid to the foundress is proportionate to her exalted position. At the *Kyōso Den* 教祖殿 in *Tenri Shi* 天理市 a kind of perpetual adoration is going on. Uninterruptedly day after day, night after night the watch is taken up by the *Kyōshi* who alternate every half an hour; for though united with *Tenri-Ō-no-Mikoto*, she is still present there and she will remain there until the fulfillment of the times when the manna, the *kanro* 甘露, the sweet dew will pour from above.²⁾ Three times a day meals are served for the ever present foundress and every evening the hot bath is prepared for her. What a lively faith, I thought, that can bring forth and foster day after day, year after year such great acts of devotion. Who is this great and strong personality who brought into existence the most vigorous religious movement of present-day Japan?

1) The name of the foundress is written with the characters: 教祖. In ordinary Japanese these characters are pronounced as *kyōso*. However, when the new Tenrikyō catechism was compiled, the Tenrikyō teaching authority proclaimed that henceforth these characters should be pronounced as *Oya Sama*. Vide, *Zoku Hitokoto Hanashi* 續ひとはなし, p. 1.

2) This is their *Rorate coeli desuper*. The believers live in a kind of advent and they all look forward to the messianic time when neither temples nor prayers are any more necessary and when all the people will be perfectly happy, immovably fixed in virtue and goodness. At some time in the future this period lasting for all eternity, will dawn upon this earth. (Heaven and hell do not exist.) An opening has been left in the roof of the temple through which the nectar will pour down.

LIFE OF THE FOUNDRRESS

When we ask an average Japanese the meaning of *hinagata* 雛形, he will answer us that it may mean a small clay model of a house or something like it; a ship builder may think of a blue print of a new vessel. But nobody will ever conceive that this word conveys the faultless ideal of a holy life which has to be emulated and imitated by all men and women in order to perfect one's personality. Yet, this is the very meaning which Tenrikyō believers ascribe to this word *hinagata*. Says one of Nakayama Miki's biographers: "If we think of the word *hinagata*, many will conjure up the idea of some outward form or appearance, but in our meaning of the word it has a strong connotation of fervent life and of life's abundant vitality."¹⁾ Indeed *hinagata* is one of Tenrikyō's many technical terms by which the faithful mean the life of Nakayama Miki which has to serve as an absolute example and a faultless pattern for all the believers. Numerous are the *hinagata* sermons, preached by the present *Shimbashira* 眞柱 (Patriarch) of Tenrikyō and by many other preachers.²⁾

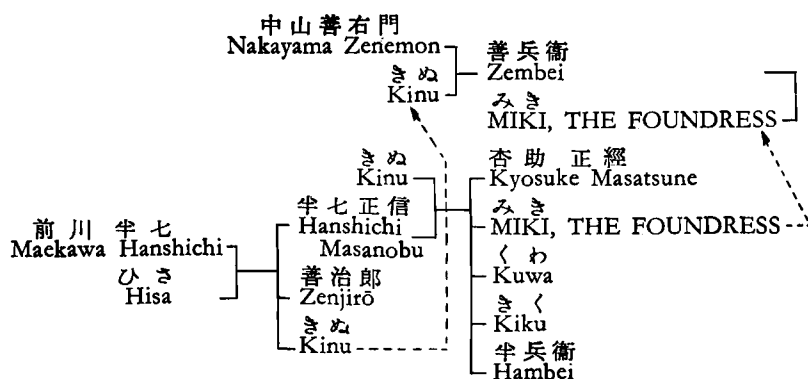
Any one who would try to write a scientifically well-founded biography of the foundress of Tenrikyō, comes up against an enormous wall of difficulties for the simple reason that there does not exist any authentic life. Numerous (over 50) are the popular publications, but these have no much historical value. If one inquires at the Tenrikyō headquarters, the constant rejoinder of the Tenrikyō high priests, is: "We are working very hard on it and at some future date we hope to publish a reliable biography." Many trials have been made, but so far they have all been rejected by the teaching authority of Tenrikyō as not being satisfactory. Even the biography compiled by Nakayama Shinjirō 中山新治郎, the grandson of Nakayama Miki, the first Patriarch of Tenrikyō and the father of the present one, has not been published and it is kept at the headquarters in manuscript form, for it is not considered to be completely satisfactory. Consequently it is not available. At the present moment the Tenrikyō high priests are working

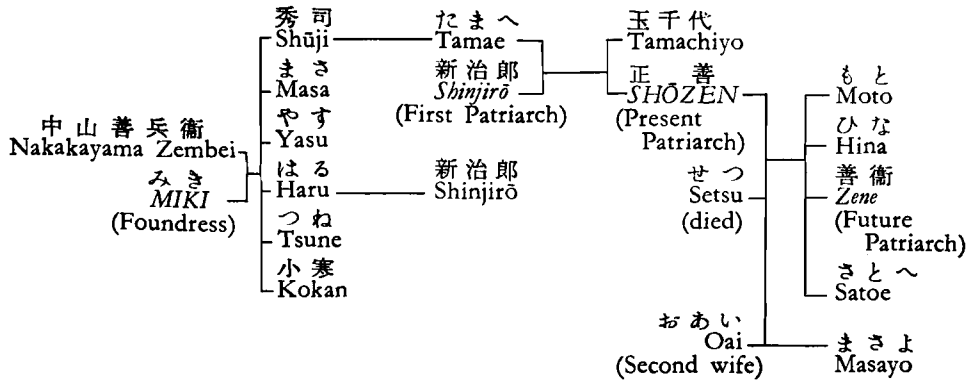
1) Preface of Matsuoka Kunio 松岡國雄 in *Hinagata Shikan* ひながた私観, p. 1.

2) Vide *Shimbashira Kunwashū* 眞柱訓話集, Vol. I-XII.

on a new biography of which a part will be published in the English language. Once I got a glance at the manuscript. When I asked whether I could make use of it, my request was politely refused. Evasive answers such as: "We have still to work several years on it, it is not yet completely reliable, we ourselves are not yet satisfied. . . ." fortified my first impression that all writings and other documents concerning the foundress are enveloped in a kind of secrecy. They rather like to hide things from an inquisitive foreigner.

Nakayama Miki was born in the small village of Sammaiden 三昧田 of the Yamato 大和 Province on the 18th of the fourth month in the tenth year of Kansei 寛政 (solar calendar: June 2nd, 1798). Quite extraordinary phenomena such as multi coloured clouds hovering over the place of her birth, accompanied the appearance of the woman who, according to Tenrikyō believers, was destined by *Tenri-Ō-no-Mikoto* to become a new Saviour of the world. She was born as the first daughter of 前川半七正信 Maekawa Hanshichi Masanobu who seems to have been a man of some standing in the Tōdō 藤堂 clan. Later she married into the Nakayama family and became thus Nakayama Miki. I find it extremely strange that in no biography of the foundress has any family lineage of Nakayama Miki appeared. This is all the more remarkable since in Japan family trees and all that pertains to it, are considered of the greatest importance. However, through the kind assistance of a distinguished Tenrikyō preacher I secured an authentic family genealogy both of the Maekawa and of the Nakayama family, which I outline below. In doing so, they will be published for the first time in any language, including Japanese.





The little child Miki seemed to have been a very gentle baby, who was brought up for the first two years of her life by a nurse, after which she was taken under the care of her own mother. From early childhood she had an inclination to do some useful housework instead of playing outside with other children, and she soon succeeded in weaving cotton and making her own dress. All kinds of virtues have been ascribed to her from her early youth to such an extent that an author mentioned that “even her earliest childhood is so outstanding that to us it seems like an enigma and is difficult to believe.”¹⁾

The family atmosphere at the Maekawa's was a deeply religious one and for generations the members had been very devoted followers of the *Jōdo Shū* 浄土宗, this great Japanese Buddhist sect. From early childhood Miki was instructed in the tenets of this particular sect and when we later come across Buddhist vestiges in her gospel we have not to go very far to reach their source.

As was the custom in those days, girls married at an early age hence when Miki was thirteen years old, she married into the Nakayama family. On September 15th of each year the Imperial Shrine of *Isonokami* 石上 held under its auspices annual festivals. One year, Miki, accompanied by her father, paid a visit to a family named Nakayama of the nearby village of *Shōyashiki* 庄屋敷. This family, related by blood to the family of Maekawa, was also one of respectable ancestry and in good circumstances, performing duties as headman and councillor of the village, and widely known as a big land owning family. The eldest son of this family, who was then over twenty years of age, was looking for a proper life-mate. On this day of the festival

1) *Kyōso-sama Go Shōden* 教祖様御小傳, by Ikoma Fujio 生駒藤雄, p. 10.

the fathers of the two families agreed upon a marital union between their children. When the subject was later broached to her, the foundress declined the offer on the ground of her anchoretic intentions. It was not until her parents had spoken strongly in favour of the arrangement that she was at last prevailed upon to agree to it on the condition that, after marriage, she would be able to continue her devotional services to Buddha each morning and evening.

“ I (Nakayama Keiichi 中山慶一, a leading Tenrikyō author) believe that the Buddhist monks' conventional preaching about the instability of this world appealed to her, only because she always tried to find out the cause of the people's misery which she constantly witnessed. ‘ In the Jōdo sect there is a strong belief in the great merciful and benevolent Amidabutsu who constantly tries to save people. The power of man is limited but Amida-butsu is almighty. He extends His kind hands of salvation to whomsoever believes in Him. Leave off all the human speculations and clinch to the mercy of Amidabutsu. Repeat the *nembutsu* 念佛 earnestly.’ (When we read in *Mikagura Uta* みかぐら歌: *Namu Tenri-Ō-no-Mikoto* 南無天理王命, the traces are to be found here.) When the foundress heard this kind of sermons she must have felt as if she found the key to solve the problem which incessantly occupied her mind. And thus she must have been attracted toward the Jōdo sect.”¹⁾

As a wife, she was faithful to her husband, and pious towards her parents-in-law. Her attitude towards maids and servants was very considerate, we are informed. In addition to her household duties, she took also part in farm work. Her parents-in-law were so pleased with the manner in which she managed affairs that they were happy to announce themselves as retired from active life in favour of the young couple, turning all household management over to the mistress who was no more than sixteen years old. Since that time Miki, as mistress of the household, took charge of all family affairs.

When she had reached the age of nineteen years, her faith in the service of Buddha had become so outstanding that she was initiated at the temple, called Zempuku-ji 善福寺, in the village of Magata 勾田, into the service of deliverance called *Gojūsōden* 五重相傳, which is one of the highest ritual

1) *Watakusbi no Oyasama* 私の教祖様, by Nakayama Keiichi, p. 122.

forms of the Jōdo sect. This ritualism is performed after seven days of special devotional services, and it is seldom taught to people of younger ages. That Nakayama Miki had her mind prepared for an initiation of such a high order and so early in her life, shows the fervour of her religious faith, so we are told.

This particular Buddhist initiation consists first of all of a series of lectures generally divided over six days which have a strict timetable of religious exercises. On the fourth day which is called *Chūnichī* 中日, the middle day, a *teidoshiki* 剃度式, a kind of Buddhist tonsure, takes place, after which the receiver is considered to be a special disciple of Buddha. The retreatants, dressed in a special purified garment, have to listen to a recitation of parts of the work of Hōnen Shōnin 法然上人, especially to his *Senchaku-shū* 選擇集 in which we find things essential to securing birth into the Pure Land by means of the *nembutsu*.

In a following series of lectures the retreatants have to meditate on the *Matsudai Nembutsu Jushuin* 末代念佛授手印,¹⁾ written by Seikō Shōnin 聖光上人, the successor of Hōnen Shōnin. When the retreatants are inculcated into the practice of the *nembutsu*,²⁾ then they will be saved. Nakayama Miki has certainly been deeply impressed by the saving power of the *nembutsu*. Later she would combine the words Amida Butsu with *Tenri-Ō-no-Mikoto*, as we shall see in the prologue of her *Mikagura Uta*. After the above mentioned lectures the head of the retreatant is shaven, and it is told in the biographies that Miki underwent this ceremony as well as the series of lectures with keen attention and extreme piety. And we can well imagine how she repeated since then countless times the *Namu Amida Butsu*: "I adore Thee Buddha of Eternal Life and Light."³⁾ The retreatant has to make a vow at the end of the shaving ceremony to repeat the *nembutsu* at least 300 times a day during life time⁴⁾ and can thus attain rebirth into the Pure Land.

1) The Nembutsu Doctrine Certified and Sealed by My Own Hand for Future Generations.

2) The Nembutsu is the recitation of *Namu Amida Butsu* 南無阿彌陀佛 (Sk. *Namo'mitab hayabuddhaya*.) This prayer formula taken directly from the Sanskrit may be translated: "Oh save me, thou Amida Buddha." It is made up of six Chinese characters, commonly called the sacred name of six characters. *Hōnen the Buddhist Saint*, by Coates and Ishizuka, p. 350.

3) See Reischauer *Studies In Japanese Buddhism*, p. 104. See also *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist terms* by W. Soothill, p. 298. Both translations are right.

4) It is said of Hōnen Shōnin that he repeated this prayer sometimes as often as 60,000 or even 70,000 times in one day, thus concentrating his mind and heart on Amida. He also dis-

After this ceremony Miki listened to the *Ryōge Matsudai Nembutsu Jushuin Shō* 領解末代念佛授手印鈔, written by *Ryōchū Shōnin* 良忠上人, the third patriarch of the Jōdo sect and the founder of the Temple at Kamakura 鎌倉, during which the retreatant was further inculcated with the saving power of the *nembutsu*. And how fervent did Miki undergo this spiritual training! It is told in her life that the abbot *Hōyo Shōnin* 報譽上人 had never met such a devout and sincere retreatant who was so strict in all her spiritual exercises.

After all the above facts which show clearly that Miki's young mind was completely moulded by the teachings of Buddhism, one is surprised to hear from biographers that Miki's ideas are highly original and that we cannot speak of other religious influences having worked upon her. I found only one biographer¹⁾ who in the face of such overwhelming evidence as shown above, concedes these influences. However he speaks about them in such a way as if they were necessary for Miki's mind in order to prepare her for the future revelations. The others generally deny any connection between the doctrines of Buddhism and Tenrikyō, e.g. Nakayama Keiichi 中山慶一 has the conviction that Miki never indulged in dreams of any rebirth in the Pure Land, neither was she ever intoxicated by forlorn Buddhist meditations.²⁾ Serizawa even goes so far as to write the nearly unbelievable fact that the ever wise Miki must certainly have felt only disillusion as a result of her *gojūsōden*.³⁾ I could give here a whole list of biographers who contradict themselves with regard to Jōdo sect influences on Miki, mentioning alternately that the foundress was deeply impressed by the mercy of Amida-butsu and became ignited to teach other people this way of salvation, and writing later that no real connection can be found between the teachings of the Jōdo sect and Miki's personal revelations. What can a foreign biographer in the face of such statements do else but wonder over the inscrutable ways of such minds which can talk about a "practical truth" which is not true in fact, who can reason with their feelings and who have a distinct dislike of clear logic, and who can deny the undeniable principle of contradictions.

claimed any great knowledge of the Scriptures, saying that besides being in his dotage, he was so busy with the *Nembutsu*, he had little time left to read them.

- 1) Nakanishi Ushirō 中西牛一郎 in his *Kyōso Godenki* 教祖御傳記.
- 2) Nakayama Keiichi: *Tenrikyō Kyōten Kōwa* 天理教教典講話, p. 161.
- 3) *Tenri Kyōgaku Kenkyū*, 天理教學研究, No. 5, p. 92.

Here we touch the intricate problem of differences in intellectual approach and processes of reasoning. We of the West normally follow an analytic approach in the intellectual sphere and delight in clear-cut distinctions and divisions. The Oriental mind on the other hand has a distaste for such analytical separations. The Orientals feel a natural repulsion toward all intellectual activity which distinguishes things one from another and opposes them one against the other without ever reuniting them. They unite intelligence to feeling, intellect to affection, and abstract idea to concrete life. This happens time and again in Tenrikyō writings and it makes it certainly not easy for a Westerner to give a logical and coherent account of the subject matter.

It is told in the biographies that Miki was very much devoted to her parents-in-law, and that she was always at their disposal no matter how busy she was. She never rebuked them, nor did she ever speak ill of them. She used to give massage treatment to her parents-in-law nearly everyday, even when she was tired out.

In July 1821 when she was twenty-three years old, Miki's father-in-law, Nakayama Zenemon 中山善右衛門, died. Two months later she was found to be in the family way. In the following year, though she herself was in an advanced stage of pregnancy and even up to the month of childbirth, she would often carry her aged mother-in-law on her back and take her around the yards or bring her with her on a visit to friends and acquaintances. On July 24th in the fourth year of *Bunsei* 文政 (1822) she gave birth to a boy, who was named Shūji 秀司.

From now on motherhood added to the duties of the young mistress. In addition to all the time and work involved in nursing the child, she performed not only the management of all household affairs, but it is told that she was always at the disposal of others. It is noteworthy that all biographers have extolled her efficiency in all that she undertook.

New qualities of her character became visible as she advanced in age. Her husband was in illicit love with the house maid, called Kano かの. The foundress seemed to have exercised great restraint and patience. She even thought that the misbehaviour of her husband was due to her shortcomings. Full of little attentions as usual she tried to conceal her anxiety and she showed great charity even toward the maid, giving her now and then some little

presents. Once, it is told, this particular maid tried to poison Miki in order to take her place as housewife. Fortunately Miki had a narrow escape from death. Her acquaintances suspected the maid of having poisoned Miki and they questioned her severely, but Miki went even so far as to defend the maid, saying that her stomach had not been in good condition at that time.

With the growing of years, she seemed to have advanced in kindness and other virtues. Stories tell us how she once caught a poor villager who tried to steal rice from the family's storehouse and how she made him repent his evil deed; how she gave food and clothes to poor people and how she exercised all sorts of other virtues.

When she was twenty-eight years old she gave birth to her first daughter Masa まさ. Two years later she got a second daughter, called Yasu やす. In the fourth month of the eleventh year of *Bunsei* 文政 (1828) her mother-in-law whom she had so devotedly served since the first day of her married life, passed away.

More or less about this time it happened that a certain wealthy family in the neighbourhood had great difficulties in sustaining a baby for lack of milk. Miki with three children of her own, frequently fed this weak child from her own breasts and she gave it other attendances, until she finally took the little boy into her own household in order to give him better care. The child showed a remarkable improvement in his physical condition, much to the joy of his parents and of the foundress. But this happiness did not last very long. One day, the child was suddenly caught by smallpox fever. The illness took a turning to the worst. At that time, a child hardly ever recovered from this grave disease. The parents of the child, who had already lost five of their children, were really heart-broken.

In the sight of their deep lamentations, Miki, so tender-hearted by nature, could not remain without her heart being deeply touched and she felt a kind of responsibility, because the child caught the illness while under her care. In order to save the child at all cost, the foundress turned over her own second daughter temporarily to the care of another family, and devoted herself, day and night, to the nursing of the sick boy. Doctors were called in, medicines were tried, ritualisms of great magic power were invoked but all in vain. Finally Miki decided to seek the divine power of Gods and Buddhas. She offered her prayers at a Kannon Temple the *Nigatsudō* 二月堂 in Nara 奈良,

and at the *Kasuga* 春日 Shrine of the same place. She went also to the *Daiishi* 大師 of *Hieda* 稗田 and the *Fudō* 不動 temple of Musashi 武藏, thus praying to Shintō deities and Buddhas alike. She is said to have offered the life of her two daughters and her own, if the Gods so desired. Her prayer seemed to have been answered, for the child recovered miraculously. This event holds an outstanding place in the countless biographies of Miki and it is very much extolled; even American overstatements make a mild impression when compared with the Japanese descriptions of this incident.

From this time on smallpox occupies quite a place in the Tenrikyō writings even to such an extent that it is mentioned as being the the beginning of *yorozu tasuke* 萬すけすけ, that is countless forms of relief of salvation.¹⁾ We find in the Tenrikyō Holy Scripture in Miki's *Mikagura Uta* the following verse: "The healing of smallpox forms the entrance to salvation."²⁾ It seems that during those days this particular healing was most desired and hence the reason for mentioning it. Nowadays it has been substituted by t. b. and there are countless present-day Tenrikyō publications on how to be cured from t. b. through this miraculous healing power.

Divine Revelations

It happened during the autumn of 1837 that Miki's eldest son Shūji, while he was working in the field, was suddenly overcome by a tremendous pain in one of his legs. Doctors were called in, but they were of no avail. A *yamabushi* 山伏, an itinerant priest, called Nakano Ichibei 中野市兵衛, was asked to practise a kind of mystical ritualism upon the patient, using a certain woman Soyo そよ as medium; the pain stopped immediately. However, some time later the pain started even fiercer than before; ritualisms were again applied with the same temporary success. These strange proceedings of renewed attacks and subsequent relief happened at least some 8 times. In so far as Miki was concerned, signs of strange phenomena began to cast their shadows. Repeatedly she felt as if her body were being shaken. One author remarks here that Miki began gradually to attune herself to the movements of the Universe.³⁾ He does not explain these mysterious words

1) See *Tenrikyō Yōgi* 天理教要義, by Ikoma Fujio 生駒藤雄, p. 27.

2) See *Mikagura Uta* V 2.

3) From *Oya-Sama* 教祖様, by Serizawa Kōjirō 芹澤光治良 in *Tenri Jihō* 天理時報.

and it seems as if every reader is free to make his own interpretations. About a year later Miki and her husband Zembei and their son Shūji became victims of a painful experience. The itinerant priest was again called in, but since Mrs. Soyo was absent, Miki herself acted as medium. While the ritual proceeded, suddenly one of the heavenly deities forced himself upon the hospitality of Miki. The expression of her face became severe and her whole appearance took a dignified air. When asked what deity had descended upon her, she replied: " *Ten no Shōgun* 天の將軍, the Heavenly General." At this the *yamabushi* reverently asked: "Who are you, Heavenly *Shōgun*, who descended upon this woman?" Then a voice was heard: " *Ware wa moto no Kami, jitsu no Kami nari*, 我は元の神・實の神なり, I am the True and Original God. I have a predestination to this Residence. Now I have descended from Heaven to save all the human beings. I want to take Miki as *Tsuki-Hi's yashiro* 月日の社 Shrine of God and mediatrix between God the Parent and men."¹⁾

All the bystanders were struck with awe. When Miki's husband came to his senses, he vehemently asked the deity to withdraw himself, pleading that his wife was a mother of four children who needed all her attention. However, the deity was stubborn and even menaced the whole family with extinction if his divine invitation should not be accepted.

In the usual Japanese way, a family council was held to which were invited also friends and religious authorities. After three days of thorough deliberation, they came to the final conclusion that nothing else could be done but to accept the divine invitation. Only after this conclusion was made the foundress recovered from her trance. At the same time all the members of the family felt themselves completely recovered from pain and sickness. This very day is considered as being the foundation day of Tenrikyō. It was 26th of the 10th month of the 9th year of *Tempō* 天保 (1838), when Miki was 41 years old. In numerous publications Tenrikyō authors try to give all sorts of mystical interpretations why exactly this particular date and this particular year have been selected by the deity. But since I am afraid that Western readers will not be able to catch up with their (I should nearly say) mystical reasoning, I may be allowed to bypass these interpretations in silence.

1) *Tenrikyō Kyōten*, p. 3.

This first revelation, which according to the Tenrikyō believers was given to Nakayama Miki, was only the beginning of a long chain of divine intimacies between the Gods and this elected woman. Only a short time after this first heavenly descension, a new and strange happening occurred at the house of Miki. One night, while she was sleeping in her room, a big noise was suddenly heard just above her. When she got up she had the feeling as if she had been placed under some heavy pressure. Later she explained that the 10 deities—who as the reader will see later, play such prominent rôles in Tenrikyō's cosmogony—had forced themselves upon her in succession; first *Kunitokotachi-no-Mikoto* 國床立命 and then the other nine deities. We may safely accept that during the visits of these 10 deities the first seeds were sown in Miki's mind about the origin of this world and of mankind, which knowledge would ripen in later years to a fantastic jungle of trees and plants as we shall see later.

The very place where all these mysterious happenings had occurred form today the center of Tenrikyō's worship, for in this place the *kanrodai*, an 8.2 feet column consisting of 13 different hexagonal layers, has been erected as a kind of eternal remembrance of the divine happenings. We read in the canonical writings: "This house is the residence where I created men and the universe. Here I came down for the revelation of mankind."¹⁾ At this point of the biographies of Miki, the authors unanimously stress the fact that it must by now be clear that Tenrikyō is a revealed religion, just as well as Islam and Christianity.

From this time on, Miki by Divine Command began to practice charity to such an extent that she got into trouble with her husband and with all her relatives. She began to give away all family treasures, furniture and even food that had been stored up in her house. Everyone tried to stop Miki's charitable prodigality, but without success. Many neighbours and villagers were convinced that she was possessed by a fox, a badger or some other evil spirit. Mr. Zembei was advised to take stern measures. One day he ordered her to put on a white dress and to place herself before the family shrine. Here before the spirit of his ancestors, he called her to attention and threatened her with persecution. However, the elected one remained ob-

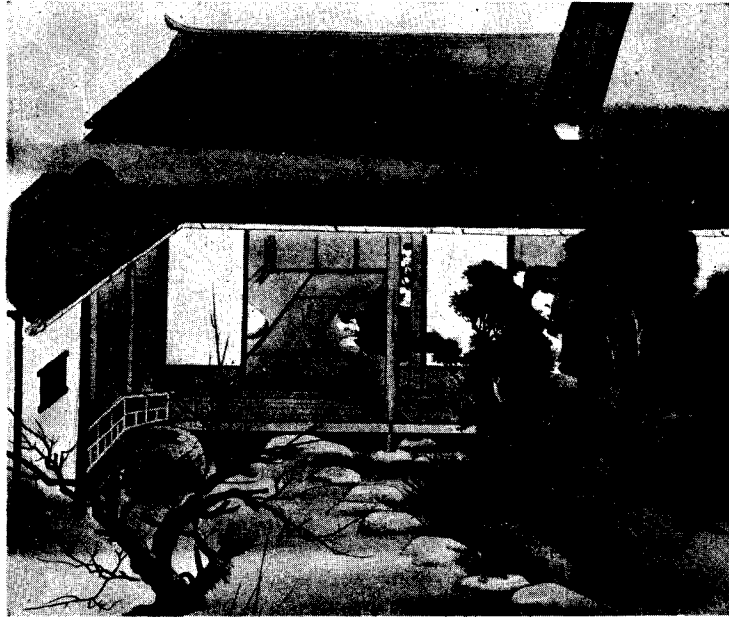
1) *Ofudesaki* おふでさき VI 55 & 56.



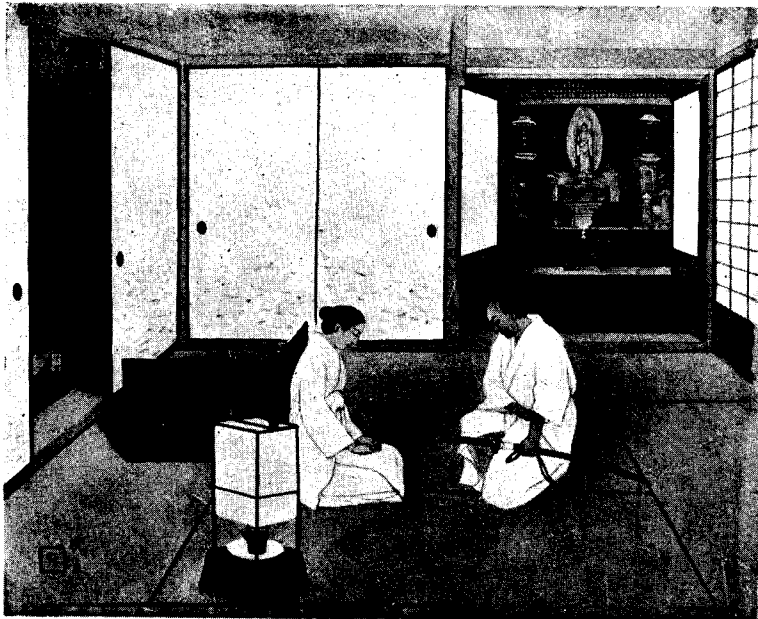
The birthplace of Nakayama Miki in Sammaiden.



Miki receives the *gojūsōden* and becomes a confirmed follower of the Buddhistic Jōdo sect.



Tenri-Ō-no-Mikoto descends for the first time on Miki: "I am the True and Original God." To the left Miki hidden in a mystical cloud; to the right the relatives struck with awe.



One day Miki's husband ordered her to put on a white dress and to place herself before the family shrine. Here before the spirit of his ancestors, he threatened her with persecution.

stinate, nay, became more than ever convinced of her divine mission, and her generosity became even greater. During this time it often happened that Mr. Zembei got up in the night and took the family sword in his hand in order to drive away the evil spirit of his wife, for he really thought that she had become insane or possessed by some evil spirit.

In the biography of the foundress written by the first patriarch of Tenrikyō, Nakayama Shinjirō 中山新治郎, we read how Miki one day addressed her husband as follows: "Upon divine command I wish our house to be pulled down. If you refuse you are opposing God's will." When Mr. Zembei refused this extraordinary request of his wife, the foundress became ill and was unable during 20 days to take any food or drink. A family council was held once again to discuss what steps should be taken for the recovery of the patient. As a consequence, the divine will was invoked and they received promptly the answer to tear down the house. People were called in to start the demolition upon which Miki recovered suddenly. On seeing this the members of the family thought to have given sufficient proof of their good will and they stopped further demolition of the house. However, this seems to have been contrary to the divine command, because the foundress became ill once again. A new family council was held and we hear of another divine oracle, demanding solemnly once again to tear down not only a part but the whole house. At this pertinent request of the deity, the members of the family council became angry and they insulted the divine spirit with such words as: "You are only a god who brings troubles and who impoverishes people (*bimbōgami* 貧乏神). You can never be the true God, for only an evil spirit can cause man to suffer. We request you to go out of her."¹⁾ The biographers tell us that at this refusal the sufferings of the foundress became so great that the members of the family could see no other solution but to submit to the divine request. And once again the foundress was restored to health.

At this point the biographers stress very much the heroic generosity of the foundress. And although her life must be a pattern, a *hinagata*, for all the faithful, when zealous Tenrikyō believers try to start out on the same adventure of giving away possessions and personal belongings to the poor,

1) From *Hinagata Shikan* ひながた私観 by Matsuoka Kunio, 松岡國雄, p. 21.

they are strongly refrained from doing so. Instead, they are advised to give their treasures to the Tenrikyō Headquarters who know best how to make use of earthly possessions for the service of God. However, the faithful are not always satisfied with this answer and consequently this whole subject of *tsukushi hakobi* つくしはこび (offering) forms a very delicate spot of Tenrikyō in action. Later I will touch this subject more extensively.¹⁾ Only one small illustration of the foregoing may be given here.

In a Tenrikyō monthly magazine for preachers, *Michi No Tomo* みちのとも, we read: “Often people come to us and ask us questions such as: ‘If we have in our immediate neighbourhood poor families, why should we make contributions to the Tenrikyō church which is so far away? Is it not much better for our salvation if we give our money or our treasures to these poor neighbours of ours; by doing so do we not follow much more closely in the steps of our Foundress, whose life is, after all, our *binagata*, our model and pattern!’”²⁾ The author of this article in *Michi no Tomo*, tries to solve the difficulties by making the distinction between *tsukushi hakobi* and charity as we shall see later.³⁾

Since the opinions of Miki and the members of the family began to differ everyday more and more, we do not wonder when we hear that Miki’s mind became a little unstable; several times she became so despondant that she tried to drown herself. However, each time as she approached the pond or the well, she became suddenly paralyzed and could move no more. At the same time a divine voice was heard, warning her against such an undertaking. As soon as she gave up the idea of committing suicide, she became physically normal again and she could walk back home.

How it was possible that such an elected one like Miki could ever dream of committing suicide is a subject widely discussed in numerous biographies and also in present-day Tenrikyō articles. On the whole I have not found any denial of this fact, but the explanation forms a bone of contention among the Tenrikyō authors. In order to explain Miki’s strong desire to commit suicide, several authors are inclined to accept the explanation that it was due to a too sudden development in the life of the foundress. They mean that

1) Vide p. 108.

2) *Michi no Tomo*, Aug. 1953, p. 45.

3) See p. 110.

during the first years of the revelations she was still very much an ordinary human personality, not yet completely imbued by the divinity. And so it was merely the voice of her own, weak human nature, which she attempted to obey. However, there are other authors who do not accept this evolution in the mind of the foundress as an explanation. According to these Miki had become from the very moment of the first revelation a shrine of God and hence formed one personality with *Tenri-Ō-no-Mikoto*. But in this case how explain her desire to commit suicide? This difficulty is solved in several ways, but perhaps to foreign readers the most interesting one would be the interpretation of Ikoma Fujio 生駒藤雄. He makes use of Christian terminology and writes that God the Parent was burning with the desire to save mankind to such an extent that He wanted to sacrifice His own life. Thus we have to understand this desire of Miki to commit suicide as being the desire of God Himself to sacrifice His life for mankind. After all God as Creator is *Tenri-Ō-no-Mikoto*, but as Saviour He is Miki.¹⁾ How one can deny here the influences of the Christian teaching seems to me a mystery.

In the sixth year of *Kaei* 嘉永 (1863) Mr. *Zembei*, Miki's husband, died at the age of 66. Miki declared that from now on her heart should be more than ever undivided and that she should consecrate herself completely to the service of the deity. Her former mansion which had not yet been brought down completely, was now demolished to the ground. Freed from this possession her joy became nearly ecstatic and she invited the demolition squad to a feast dinner and poured out before them *sake* and entertained them as she had never done before. All the possessions which Miki from now on could call her own, consisted of a plot of land of 3 *chō*, or less than 8 acres and a little shack of only two small rooms. In the meantime her eldest daughter as well as her third daughter married and the foundress was henceforth left alone with her eldest son Shūji 秀司 and her youngest daughter Kokan 小寒. Friends and relatives who had so far treated Miki with consideration, began to change their attitude. No visitor came to see her any more and people looked upon her scornfully and with great suspicion. The biographers stress here the fact that although waves of persecutions and objections and sufferings of all sorts came over her, they never touched her

1) Vide p. 13.

deeper self, and she remained unmoved and intimately connected with the divinity. She should experience all these things—here the reader will hear familiar words—in order to leave behind an example, so that mankind should follow her foot-steps. These words of course seem so indicate Christian influence. She also passed through all these tribulations in order to experience all human frailties and adversities, so that she could have compassion on mankind, which words, ring also rather familiar in Christian ears.¹⁾

The biographies devote quite some space to those days of poverty and loneliness during which Miki's son Shūji and her daughter Kokan were her only solace. They were extremely kind and devoted to their mother. Notwithstanding her great poverty she went on spreading great charity all around and giving away even the little things which were left to her, until she reached a zero point of poverty. The son would often go out to the neighbouring villages to sell vegetables in order to make some kind of living for the family of three. It was in these same days, too, that Miki, having no oil to burn, would often sit in bright moonlight at the spinning wheel. At Tenrikyō exhibitions I saw a beautiful Japanese scroll painting on which we see the foundress weaving cotton in the mild light of a beautiful moon. Recalling those days of her life, Miki would later say that she had not even been visited by the mice, because there was no food to get. This time of utter poverty lasted 9 years, during which time her two children remained always with her, without any complaint serving their mother with great devotion.

About this time we hear of the first propagation of the Tenrikyō faith. Miss Kokan, who was at that time just 17 years old, went with a few disciples of the foundress to 大阪 Osaka and there she stood at many street-corners

1) All these thoughts are expressed in Tenrikyō language as follows: “*Hin ni ochikire, hin ni ochikiraneba, nangi naru mono no aji ga wakaran*, 貧に落ちきれば貧に落ち切らねば難儀なるものの味は分らん, if one does not fall to the bottom of poverty one will never understand real sufferings.” (Words of the first patriarch in his biography of the foundress) “*Mizu demo ochikireba agaru yō na mono de aru*, 水でも落ち切れば上るようなものである, even water if it falls deeply down, comes up once again.” (*Tenrikyō Yōgi*, p. 17) The image is probably not too clear to foreign readers; it sheds perhaps some light if we compare it with the third expression touching this subject: “*Ichiryū mambai ni shite kaesu hodo ni*, 一粒萬倍にして返すほどに.” This means, freely translated: You shall be later richly rewarded for all your impoverishment. (*Tenrikyō Yōgi*, p. 17).

and proclaimed for the first time the name of *Tenri-Ō-no-Mikoto*. This particular city was chosen for the first *Nioigake* 匂ひかゞり, the first pouring out of the Tenrikyō perfume.¹⁾ It seems rather sure that this first street preaching consisted merely of the continuous repetition of the words: *Namu Tenri-Ō-no-Mikoto* 南無天理王命 " without anything else.²⁾

Gradually the time approached that Nakayama Miki herself should step forward to propagate the divine teachings which by now had ripened in her mind. In order to convince eventual believers in her divine mission, she began to exercise a kind of miraculous healing power. We read in one of the canonical writings³⁾: "The miraculous salvation of painless childbirth and the healing of smallpox form the entrance to salvation." We can see here from the very beginning of the propagation of the Tenrikyō faith that their idea of salvation is very intimately connected with recovery from physical sickness. Sometimes corporal well-being seems to be the beginning of salvation; sometimes these ideas seem to be identical in Tenrikyō writings. It will already be clear to every reader that the Christian idea of salvation and that of Tenrikyō are poles apart. Miki then started her gospel of deliverance and she dashed out into the world in order to preach her doctrine or better to cure all sorts of diseases because in the beginning we know of no doctrine at all; interior salvation and recovery from outward diseases were mixed up to such an extent that one is even inclined to accept that this constituted one and the same thing, at least in the beginning. Among Miki's miraculous healing powers *Obiya yurusbi* 帯屋許し, the granting of painless childbirth, takes the first place. When she was 58 years old, she granted for the first time this *obiya yurusbi* to her third daughter. From this time on until the present day we often hear about this *obiya yurusbi*, which has played such a prominent rôle in the propagation of the Tenrikyō faith.⁴⁾ Biographers extolled the happy delivery of Miki's daughter very much. Just at the time when the child was about to enter the world, a violent earthquake shook the birth-room heavily. Yet the baby was safely delivered thanks to Miki's miraculous assistance. About the way in which she performed her miracles the sources are rather reticent, and I have the impression that present day

1) See p. 109. 2) See p. 18. 3) *Mikagura Uta*, psalm V. 2.

4) The number of *obiya yurusbi* granted at Tenrikyō Headquarters, is published every month. During March and April 1954, were granted 10,101 painless childbirths.

Tenrikyō preachers also decline to answer anyone who tries to make this investigation. It seems that Miki's miraculous healing power went into action after she had caressed several times a woman's abdomen and had breathed 3 times over it. Soon her fame spread and many women came to her house, asking for a miraculous delivery. This was the way in which Miki became known, even to such an extent that people called Miki "the goddess of childbirth." However the "miraculous salvation" which she granted, was not only an easy childbirth but she also cured several other diseases, and the stories about miraculous recoveries are numerous.

In the first year of *Ganji* 元治 (1863), Miki met the man who was destined to become a kind of co-founder of the Tenrikyō religion. When the wife of a certain carpenter called Iburi Izō 飯降伊藏, was cured miraculously from the aftermath of her miscarriage, the carpenter became at once convinced of Miki's divine mission. Several biographers inform us that Miki had prophesied the appearance of this man who should become her great successor and apart from the foundress the only person who would produce canonical writings. When his wife was cured so quickly, the happy carpenter made at once the plan to build a shrine dedicated to Nakayama Miki. However, the foundress declined this offer and she said that she would rather prefer a place of service, *tsutome basbo* 勤め場所 of only 6 square feet. Mr. Iburi obeyed reverently and started the building at once, on September 13, 1864. When the frame of the roof was put up, a great celebration was held. Many invitations were sent out and now we hear for the first time of some kind of religious dance which would later develop into the *kagura zutome* 神樂勤, the main service of the Tenrikyō liturgy. At the same time, the first collision was to take place with another religion. When the celebration came to an end, one of the believers invited the guests to his house. They were told by Miki to worship at any shrine they would happen to pass. When they, therefore, came to a certain *Yamato* 大和 Shrine, they went into the *torii* 鳥居 gate, started to beat the drums and loudly proclaimed: "Namu Tenri-Ō-no-Mikoto," "Save us, o Tenri-Ō-no-Mikoto." This kind of worship was something new and offended unaccustomed ears. The Shintō priest in charge of the shrine became furious and accused people for having profaned the sanctuary by their unbecoming conduct. Three days and three nights they were held in custody and their drums were confiscated. The consequence

of this unfortunate accident was that nobody wanted any more to go on with the building of the place of worship. Only Mr. Iburi remained faithful to the foundress and he continued with the building project and soon the place of service was finished. In the meantime, Miki did not only heal all kinds of diseases but she began from now on to grant mystical powers to other people, which is called in Tenrikyō's terminology *sazuke* 授け. We hear for instance that the foundress went to the home of Yamanaka Tada-shichi 山中忠七 and granted him the *koe no sazuke* 肥の授, the power to make a concentrated manure; this I shall explain later.¹⁾

About this time, for some unknown reason Miki started with a fast of 30 days during which time she only took a little *omiki* 御神酒, sake offered to God. At this point a certain biographer Serizawa Kōjirō 芦澤光治良 makes several comparisons between Christ and the foundress of Tenrikyō.

“When Christ separated Himself from His disciples for solitary prayer and fasting, He was generally moved by human misery and was about to make an important decision. Is it not highly probable that Miki was also about to enter a new phase of her life and stood also before great undertakings? It is thought that she nearly despaired *zetsubō* 絶望 for she was faced with an extremely difficult dilemma: on one side there was the divine proposal made to her for establishing the kingdom of God on this earth and on the other side the well nigh impossibility of realizing this great undertaking. At such moments she must have lifted up her eyes to God with great fervour, because she felt herself nearly crushed under the heavy task that God had put on her shoulders. It was also at such moments that Jesus prayed and fasted in solitude. Miki has done exactly the same and this great fast of hers in the first year of *Ganji* 元治, is indeed the most clear expression of her intense prayer.

It is said that Jesus communicated with God the Father. Will it not be highly probable that Miki also had her communication with God in her prayers during her long fast? Jesus has not told to the Apostles what kind of communications He had in His prayers with His heavenly Father; Miki has not done so either.”²⁾ The above quotation may show the readers how far Tenrikyō writers sometimes can go in establishing some similarities with

1) See page. 96.

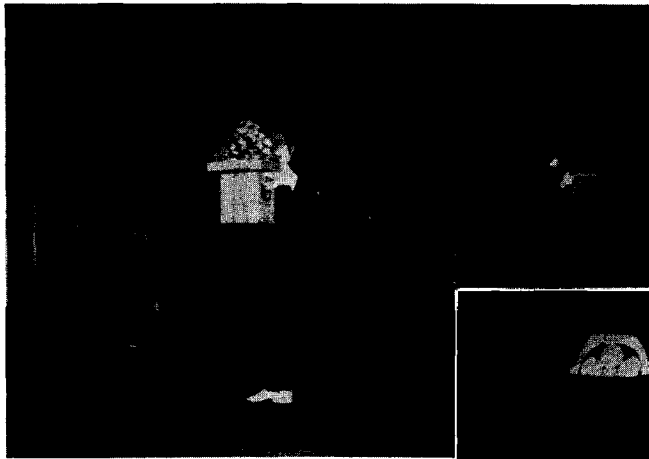
2) *Tenri Jibō* 天理時報, Jan. 1, 1953, *Oya Sama* 教祖様.

Christianity, at all cost. I experienced the same with my numerous conversations with leading Tenrikyō teachers. Whenever I asked them with all the tact at my command, how it could happen for instance that certain original teachings were dropped and that other new doctrines came to the forefront, they always pointed to so-called similarities in the history of Christianity. I have the conviction that this tendency springs from their following reasoning: "Christianity is the greatest religion in the world and it is a religion of very high standing. We also are trying to establish a world religion and consequently there must be great similarities between these two religions." And of course they like to establish as many as possible. Therefore, whenever a foreigner approaches Tenrikyō preachers and asks them the question: "Is it not true that the affinity between Tenrikyō and Christianity is very clear?" they are rather pleased with this question and only too glad to give an affirmative answer.

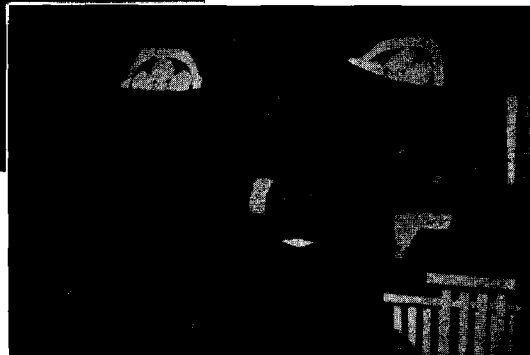
So far, we have seen that Miki was not afraid to deal with outside opposition. Still firmer was her attitude towards heretical opinions of the first Tenrikyō believers. We read that one day she went to the house of one of her followers who proclaimed that also in his house a shrine of *Tenri-Ō-No-Mikoto* was established. Her faith could not tolerate this and the intrepid woman demolished the altar of this Mr. Sukezō 助造. He had to repent and his road to Canossa consisted in a meek and humble following of the foundress back to *Shōyashiki* 庄屋敷 village, where the foundress lived, while he carried on his back a heavy bale of charcoal as a token of his sincere repentance.

In the meantime outside persecutions began to increase. During the summer of the first year of *Kaei* 嘉永 (1865) Miki was visited by the chief priest of a Buddhist temple *Hōrinji* 法輪寺 at the village of Tamura 田村, together with a band of Buddhist monks. They came to condemn the new faith openly. This time the defense of the Tenrikyō faith was taken up by Miss Kokan whose clear argumentation, it is said, confounded all the Buddhist priests.

In the same year the foundress received a visit of quite a different kind. A chief priest of a Shintō shrine, Moriya Chikuzen 守屋筑前, acting as an inquisitor, went to Miki's house in order to test the new faith and he gave to the foundress a long series of questions. But as the biographers tell



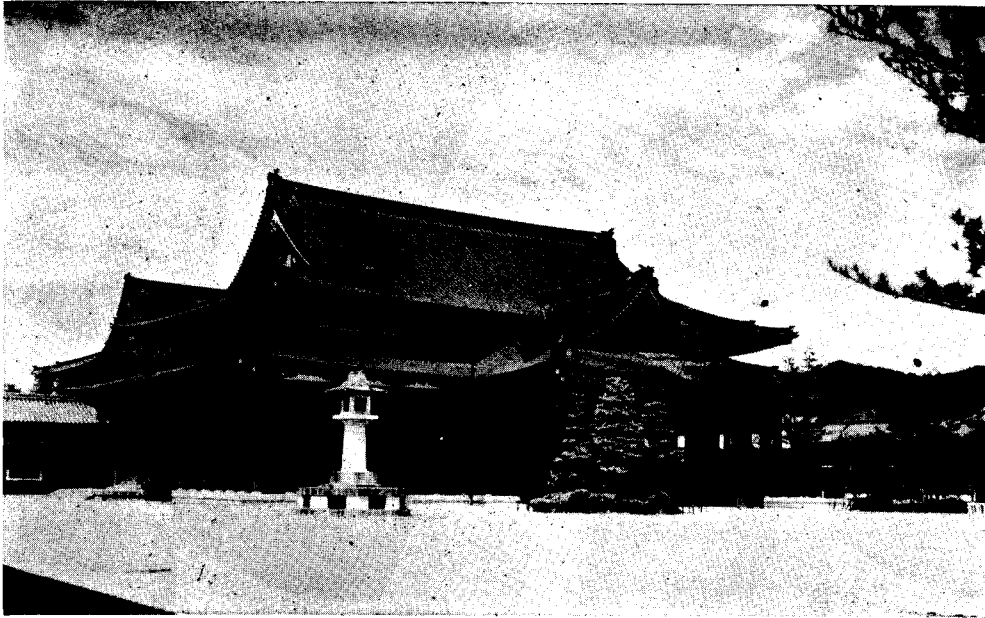
The Foundress though passed away is still present. Three times a day meals are served and every evening the hot bath is prepared for her.



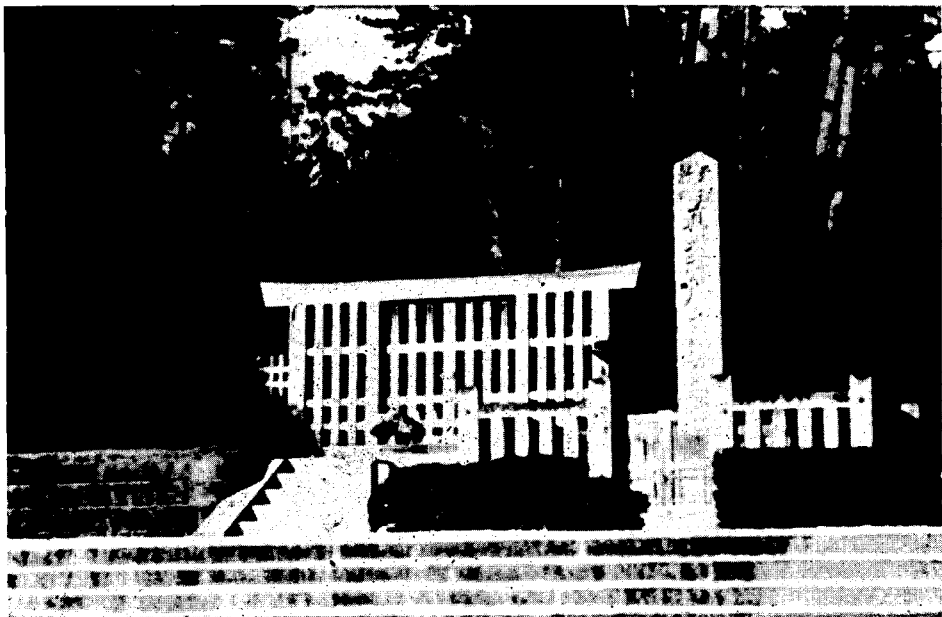
The adoration of the Foundress goes on uninterruptedly.



From far and near sick people come to Miki. For fear of official interference, they have to stay outside.



Not far from Miki's birthplace stands the Kyōso Den, the shrine of the Foundress.



Mausoleum of the Foundress.

us, Miki's answer was so clear and so much to the point that this Shintō inquisitor became very much impressed by her lucidity. Instead of condemning her, he strongly advised her to take the necessary steps in order to obtain official recognition of the authorities. Also Miki's immediate followers advised her in the same way. Through the good offices of the above-mentioned Moriya Chikuzen, Miki received a letter of recommendation from a local governor, Mr. Fukaya 深谷. Mr. Shūji, her eldest son, went now to Kyōto 京都 where resided the man who was in charge of all the ecclesiastical institutions of the country. Against all expectations the permission was obtained and for the first time in its history Tenrikyō was now free to be preached all over Japan. However, the name *Tenri-Ō-no-Mikoto* had to be changed into *Tenri Ō Myōjin* 天理王明神.¹⁾ When the foundress was informed about it, she was not at all enthusiastic and even protested against this action undertaken principally by her eldest son Shūji. It may be that she suspected here heretical tendencies. Even the official recognition of her religion did not make her happy: "Although you may be jubilant at the present moment, just wait and see; next year a great change will take place and torrents of blood will come over you. *Daimyō* 大名, lance-bearing warriors and palanquinbearers will be abolished." With these words Miki prophesied the coming of the *Meiji* 明治 era and the abolishing of the feudal system, so the biographers inform us.

In the meantime the great political change of the Meiji Restoration was about to come into effect. The Emperor was restored to his former dignity and Shintoism became the religion par excellence. Ruthless persecutions were imposed on Buddhism for the simple reason that it had been protected by the former shogunate and that it had been imported from a foreign country. Every new born baby had from now on to be registered at a Shintō shrine, instead of at a buddhistic temple as was the custom during the Tokugawa period. I often wonder in what direction Tenrikyō would have developed if this strong revival of Shintoism had not happened just at the time when Tenrikyō was about to take shape. Would not the buddhistic

1) It is not clear why this change occurred. It may be because the name *Tenri-Ō-no-Mikoto* would not make much impression on the people, while *myōjin* 明神 is a name which indicates a high rank of deity. "There are several different opinions about the exact meaning of *myōjin*, but it is at least sure that this is a very honourable title for a deity. (*Shintō Dai-jiten* 神道大辭典. Vol. III p. 325).

influences have gone much deeper than they are at the present moment? However this may be, Tenrikyō liturgical services gradually began to be moulded into a definite form. Up to the second year of *Keiō* 慶應 (1866) the Tenrikyō religious chanting consisted merely of the words: “*Namu Tenri-Ō-no-Mikoto* 南無天理王命” repeated over and over again; once again, this reminds us, of course, very strongly of the *nembutsu* 念佛 of the Jōdo sect to which Miki had belonged as we have seen before. From now on the words: “*Ashiki wo harōte, tasuke tamae, Tenri-Ō-no-Mikoto* あしきをはらうてたすけ給へ天理王命, sweep away all evils and save us, o *Tenri-Ō-no-Mikoto*” came to the forefront. A few gestures were added and thus we see the great liturgical prayer *Mikagura Uta* 御神樂歌 coming gradually into form. In the beginning of 1867 the foundress started with the composition of the famous *Mikagura Uta* which was completed a few years later. Shortly afterwards she introduced all the accompanying gestures as well as the music. The *Kagura zutome* 神樂勤,¹⁾ this principal liturgical function of Tenrikyō was perfected in its present form in 1868, and from that time on further revelations would be given to mankind through the writing brush of Miki. In the beginning of 1869 she started her career as an author, which period lasted for 14 years. The biographers tell us that she wrote her inspirations down whenever the divine spirit moved her. And when she was under inspiration it did not make any difference whether she wrote it in complete darkness or in broad day-light; her brush remained as steady and her *hiragana* 平假名 as clear as written in bright day-light. During these years the 17 books of *Ofudesaki* おふでさき were completed. She would write no more.

A story which happened around this period may be a typical example of the syncretism which pervades the whole of the Tenrikyō religion. In 1870 Mr. Shūji's eldest daughter, a child he begot by his illegitimate wife, died. A Shintō funeral ought to follow but the local buddhist authorities made such strong oppositions that the family Nakayama decided to conduct the funeral service partly according to the Shintō ceremonial and partly in buddhist style. The latter part of the funeral service was held at the *Zempukujī* 善福寺 temple where the burial took place. The biographers tell us that this daughter

1) *Kagura Zutome* is the performance of *the Mikagura Uta* with all the gestures, fans, music a.s.o.

of Mr. Shūji was later reborn as a child of his and his legitimate wife. As such she received the name of Tamae たまへ, who would later become the mother of the present *Shimbashira* 眞柱.

While Miki became everyday more filled with the divinity she thought that the time had come to separate herself from the common people. After all she had to fulfill a divine mission, and as such she should be recognized by people and looked up at with awe and great reverence. From now on she insisted that her rice be cooked on a separate fire in a separate kettle which was to be used by nobody else. The reason, as the biographers tell us, was that otherwise people would not accept the words of the foundress as spoken under divine inspiration; after all her words should be accepted as a divine oracle. There were so many followers who came to her for some temporary benefit, *goriyaku* 御利益. They wanted only to be cured from sickness and consequently they were inclined to take this religion as one of many *minkan shūkyō's* 民間宗教, popular religions. From far and wide the lame and blind came to Miki's house and begged to be cured.¹⁾ In order that this should not continue and that people should clearly understand that she acted henceforth as the mediatrix or the shrine of God the Parent (*Tsuki-Hi no yashiro* 月日の社), she took the necessary measures. She ordered *bekka betsunabe* 別火別鍋, separate fire and separate vessel and she wore from now on only red garments to make people understand that she was not an ordinary person. We read in her *Ofudesaki*: "Since I am the mediatrix between God and men I must be set aside and live in a special and separate room."²⁾ From now on we hear that the faithful who visited the foundress were always eager to receive a *goku* 御供, amulet from her. As such served in the beginning one of the things in her room which were at hand or simply some food. But since the number of the believers increased considerably she decided to give a definite amulet. First she distributed *hattaiko* はつたい粉, which should serve as *goku* 御供 for an easy childbirth. Later *kompeitō* 金米糖, a kind of sugar candy took its place.³⁾

It seems that very few records have been handed to posterity concerning

1) In order to evade difficulties with the police, the sick people were often not allowed to enter Miki's house.

2) *Ofudesaki* IX 5.

3) *Hinagata Shikan* ひなかた私観, by Matsuoka Kunio 松岡國雄, p. 167.

the period from 1868 until 1878. Yet during this time Miki seems to have had a very important revelation as a consequence of which the cornerstone of the Tenrikyō faith was laid. Beforehand one has to know that the Tenrikyō faith brings its believers to a kind of expectation. They believe in a kind of advent and they all look forward to their messianic time when neither temples nor prayers are any more necessary and when all the people will be perfectly happy, immovably fixed in virtue and goodness. At some time in the future when the heavenly food has come down from above, this period lasting for all eternity, will dawn upon this earth.

Once the people have tasted this manna the time of fulfillment will have come. It is of course understood that this heavenly manna or this divine dew must come down somewhere and according to the revelations this would happen at the very spot where mankind had been created.

It happened in 1875 when Miki was working in her garden that she suddenly felt that her limbs could not carry her any further. At the same time she heard mysterious voices which told her: "The holy place on which you stand and from which you cannot move, is the cradle of the human race." Others were blindfolded and brought to the same place. When they arrived, they also lost the use of their limbs temporarily and were as if nailed to the ground. This very place has been coined by Miki the *jiba* ぢば of Tenrikyō.¹⁾ Now Nakayama Miki ordered the *kanrodai* 甘露臺 to be made.²⁾ This sweet-dew-stand is a kind of column of hexagonal shape

1) The word *jiba* ぢば has two different meanings. The original and the most important one is the name of the cradle of the human race; this is the place where the *kanrodai* stands. In a broader sense *jiba* means all the extensive temple grounds at Tambaichi, now called Tenri Shi 天理市, Tenrikyō city. Countless are the stories and songs about this *jiba*. Professor Ueda Yoshinari 上田嘉成, lecturer at the Tenrikyō seminary, summed up the paramount importance for the faithful of *jiba*, the holy place at Tenri Shi in the following words: "It is the very object of our faith. It is the place of origin of all mankind. It is the place where the work of salvation was inaugurated and where our headquarters are established. Finally it is the place where our foundress, though invisible, remains always among us for all eternity. (From *Tenri Seinen Kyōtei* 天理青年教程, 3, p. 51.)

The Tenrikyō people write *jiba* generally as ぢば and not with the two characters 地場, the reason being that the name *jiba* is said to be derived from *jii ba-a* ぢいばあ (爺婆) grandparents. This suggests the atmosphere of our native home, so we are informed.

2) The whole story about the revelations with regard to this *kanrodai* and its later erection differ according to different Tenrikyō authors, and the whole subject is extremely hazy. For instance, it is not clear when these particular revelations came over Miki, neither are the subsequent events. I have asked Tenrikyō preachers several times for exact information, but they

and the divine revelations with respect to this *kanrodai* (its form, size, material, place) are numerous indeed (especially in chapter 9 of the *Ofudesaki*),¹⁾ and they are full of mystical meanings. The height has been fixed by the foundress as 8.2 feet and the column consists of 13 different hexagonal layers which fit into each other by all sorts of incisions. The diameter of the first layer is 3 feet, of the second and the thirteenth is 2.4 feet. All the other layers have a diameter of 1.2 feet. On top stands a kind of cup which can hold 2.4 gallons. This cup is made of wood, but at the fulness of time this chalice as well as the whole column will be remade of stone, and then the *kanro* 甘露, the sweet dew, will pour down from heaven into this cup. The huge modern temple of Tenrikyō has been built around this *kanrodai* 甘露臺. In order to receive this sweet dew, also called *jikimotsu* じきもつ, the roof over the *kanrodai* has a great square opening. When this sweet dew has fallen down from above and when the faithful have taken this heavenly nectar, they will be always happy, immovably fixed in virtue and wisdom and will always live to the age of 115 years. The faithful look forward with great longing to this messianic time.

When this place of worship was fixed definitely, numerous persecutions came over the foundress and her young religion. One day the *kannushi* 神主 of the Shintō shrine of *Isonokami* 石上 went to the foundress to investigate her faith, the final result being that several policemen were sent to the place of worship and they confiscated the holy mirror, bamboo screens, lanterns and all other paraphernalia of the place of worship. A short time later, the foundress was summoned to report herself to the temple of Yamamura 山村. A famous nun of Imperial lineage presided over this particular temple. This very place was chosen as the place of inquisition. It was popular conviction that the foundress was possessed by an evil spirit and in that case the holiness of the place would bring her to her senses and reveal her true self. Again here her answers must have been very clear and to the point, for we hear that the people became very much impressed. Miki was also

told me that it was impossible to give on this particular subject more precise information. The *jiba sadame* じば定め, the fixing of the place of *jiba* has several readings according to different authors. (*Michi no Tomo*, February 1953, *Kyōgo Kaisetsu* 教語解説 by Nakayama Shōzen). Which kind of form and shape was given to the first *kanrodai* ever made, cannot be known with any kind of accuracy. There is in this respect no agreement among the biographers of Miki.

1) Vide p. 141.

subjected to a medical examination, after which she was ordered to perform the dancing service. It seems that the authorities, for the time being at least, were satisfied and she was treated politely and even invited to a tea party. Later, however, we hear of more persecutions and the foundress was several times jailed. But she remained steadfast in her faith. Once when she was imprisoned, her beloved daughter, Miss Kokan, died. The biographers tell us that she did not show any grief at all, but she merely said: "My poor child, you will come back soon again."

In the meantime, the persecutions became fiercer. The officials objected foremost to the dancing service. However, the more severely it became forbidden, the more fiercely were the performances urged by Miki. The faithful were more careful and only once in a while would this sacred service be held with the necessary precautions. In the meantime the physical condition of the old foundress weakened very much. When the biographers begin to write Miki's last illness and its accompanying phenomena, their style becomes a little elevated and the descriptions get a definite dramatic and mystical touch.¹⁾ Following in the foot-steps of these biographers, I will try to end this short life of the foundress more or less in the same style.

It is January 26th, 1887. Only a few hours are left to Nakayama Miki to consummate her mission in this world. Although divine providence has fixed her age at 115 years, the age which everyone of us will reach when the fulness of time has dawned upon this world, the ninety-year-old Japanese woman—the foundress of a formidable religious movement—cannot bear it any longer in the old and decrepit garment of her body. The desire to save the whole world has become too intense and she has asked *Tenri-Ō-no-Mikoto* to shorten her life and to take her to the ravishing raptures of his elysian company. The request has been graciously granted.²⁾ As in a flash, she surveys the 90 years of her life which have passed: years of poverty, insinuation, depreciations, persecutions, trials and troubles, years of abysmal darkness and of bright flashes, of disappointments and of fulfillment, of deep sorrow and of ecstatic delight. She lies down in her little room surrounded

1) When during the general convention of 1952 the present patriarch spoke before a huge gathering of Tenrikyō preachers about the last days of the foundress, he became several times overwhelmed with emotion.

2) This fact was made known only two hours after she passed away (*o sugata wo kakushita* 御姿を隠した, hid her appearance), through an oracular revelation made to Master Iburī.

by her faithful, assisted by Master Iburi who will carry on the torch of the newly lit faith through the whole world. At his death the fulness of the divine revelation would come to a definite close. The condition of the great patient becomes worse and worse. "How do you feel now," asks a bystander, and the visionary begins to speak like an oracle: "Hark and listen, I will smooth and flatten the whole world. Keep the doors open, I will smooth the world.¹⁾ And in order to do so I will take leave. Listen, tell me: shall I smooth the world with the portals flung open or with the closed doors?" The bystanders do not understand the words of the visionary, and thinking that there would be more light if the portals of the temple were open, they answer: "Let the doors be open." Then the dying answers: "Open ye wide up. From now on all things will change."

Then one of the bystanders asks the patient: "Shall we call for a doctor?" Her answer is very strongly in the negative: "*naran naran naran* ならん, ならん, ならん." Modern commentators are extremely anxious to tell us that this does not mean that Miki has refused doctors and medicines, but it means that her illness was a visitation from God Who wanted to take her out of this world in order to save the world through her. In a weak voice she tells those present: "This is the sign that the world will change." Her followers again do not understand these words, and they pray in order to know God's holy will. The divine will would reveal itself in the oracular language of the woman who is about to pass away: "The holy service, the *kagura sutome* must be performed immediately. There is no more time to lose at this crucial moment. Do you fear the law of men more than the law of God?"²⁾ Her grandson will put her mind at ease and satisfy completely the will of the foundress: "Those who have no fear of death, step forward and come together." Singers, dancers and musicians take up their position in the nearby temple and after a few moments the melodies of chant and dance accompanied by musical instruments become audible from the adjoining sacred precincts. With an ecstatic expression, the foundress

1) The words: "I will smooth the whole world," indicate according to Fukaya Tadamasu 深谷忠政 the spreading of the Tenrikyō faith all over the world.

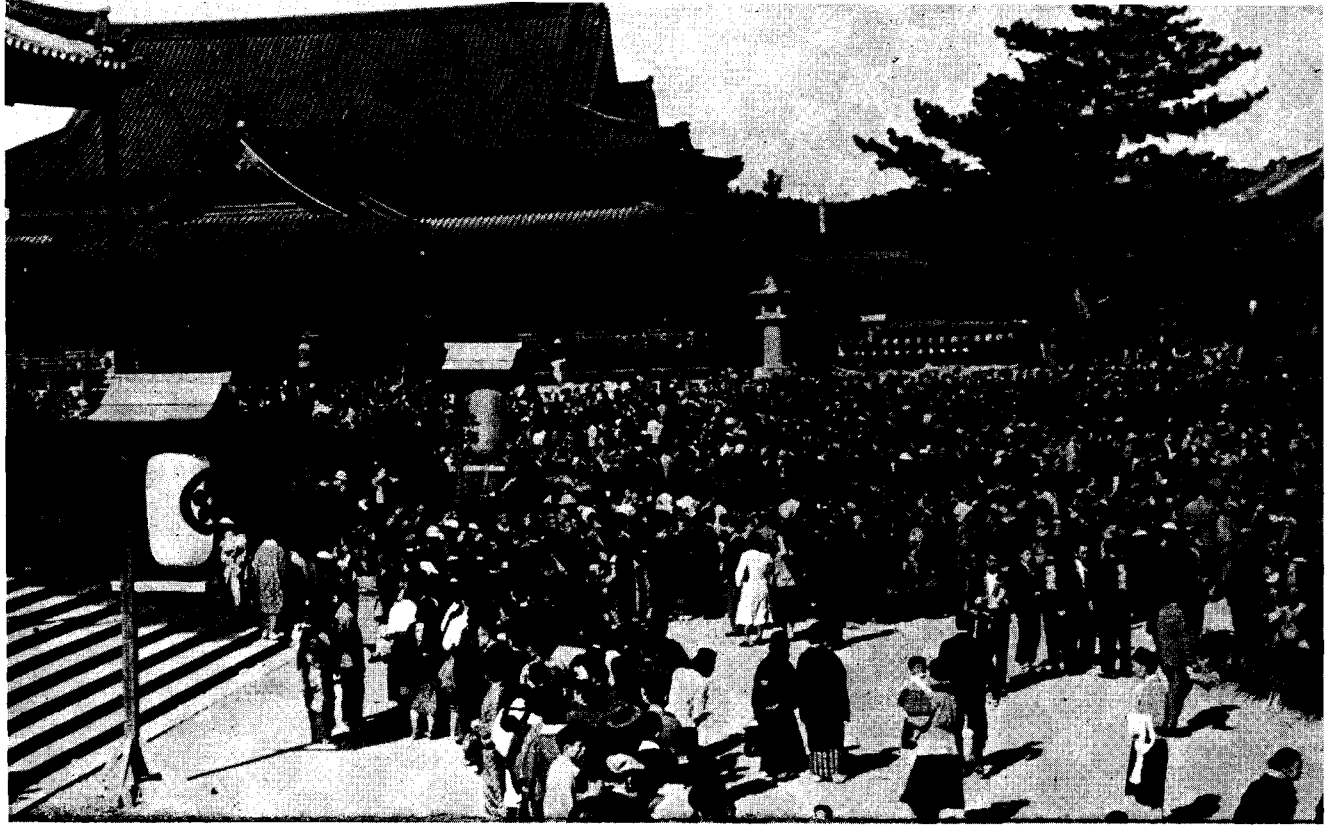
2) As mentioned above Tenrikyō was strongly persecuted and all their religious ceremonies, especially the sacred dance, were strictly forbidden by the police. The performers were therefore told to put on two pairs of socks and double underwear. These would keep them warm and prevent them from catching a cold in the frigid prison which they certainly expected would follow.

listens to them. An ethereal smile ripples over her face: “*Asbiki wo harôte tasuke tamae Tenri-Ō-no-Mikoto*. Sweep away all iniquity and save us, O God of Heavenly Wisdom”. This overture of the *Mikagura Uta* is always repeated 12 times, and it still stirs dancers, singers and all the faithful to a kind of religious enthusiasm. The dying foundress lies with her head to the North like every faithful Buddhist and has her face turned to the West where lies the *jōdo* 淨土, the blissful land of paradise. And now she falls into a coma which seems like a profound sleep. When the bystanders approach they discover that her divine soul has left her body in order to embrace the whole universe. A few go to the temple to break the sad news. When they arrive, the sacred dance round the *kanrodai*, the sacred column, has just ended and lo! although nobody has opened the portals, the doors are wide open. Nakayama Miki’s divine mission to save the whole world has begun. It is January 26th, 1887, two o’clock in the afternoon. Her soul has become one with *Tenri-Ō-no-Mikoto*. The veil of the Tenrikyō temple has been rent in twain from top to bottom, and now the faith of heavenly wisdom will be extended until the end of the earth.

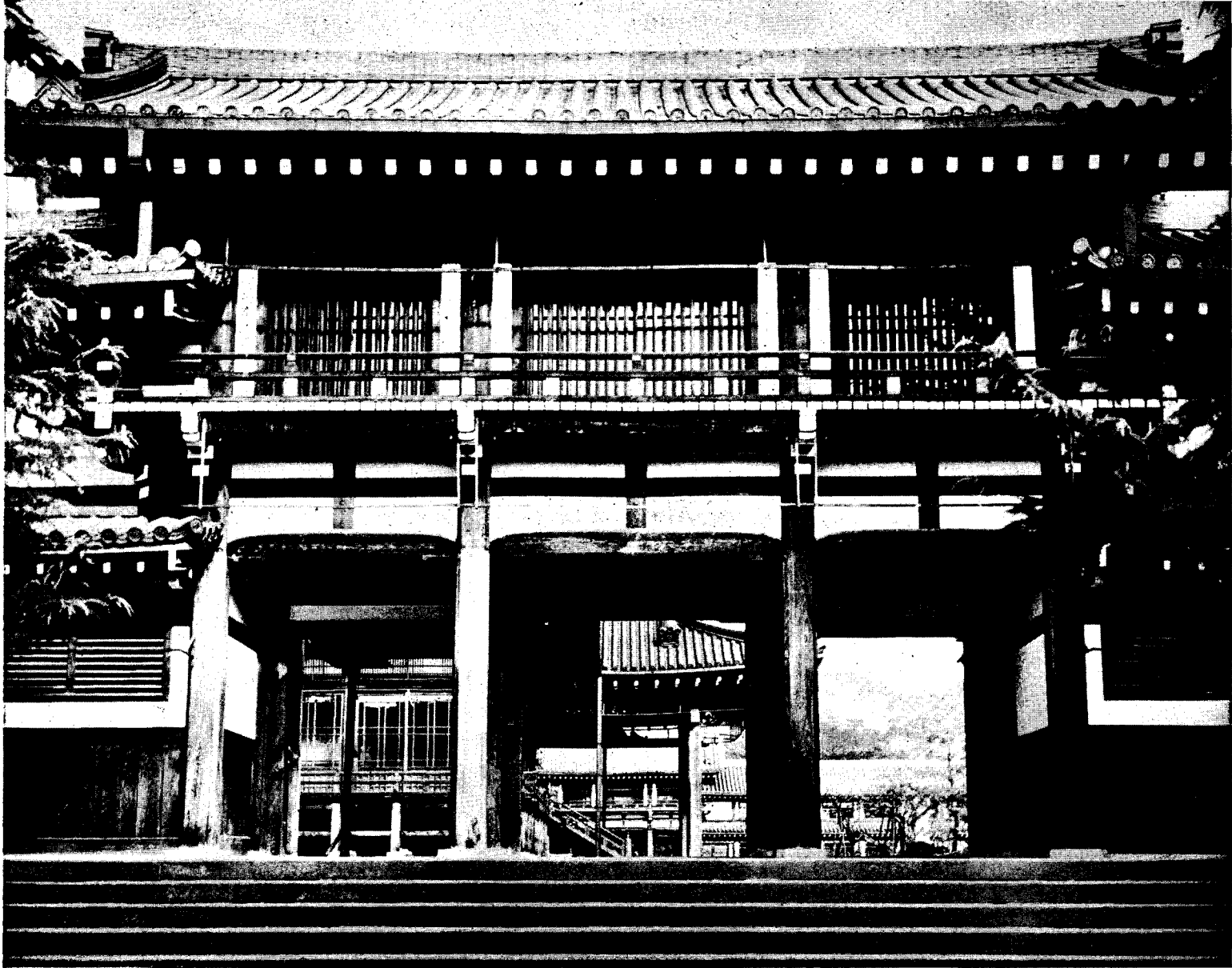
When the performers of the sacred dance heard of the death of Nakayama Miki they were at first very much distressed. The ritual had been performed especially for the recovery of the foundress. Time and again she had said that she would live to the age of 115 years and yet she had left this world. However, the oracular revelation made to Master Iburi, that it had happened according to Miki’s own desire, for the sake of the world’s salvation and the speedier propagation of the faith, gladdened their hearts, fortified their minds and enraptured their spirits.¹⁾

However this immense joy was only felt by the performers of the sacred

1) The content of Master Iburi’s revelation as written in the *Osashizu* おさしづ, is as follows: “Now I will start with the construction of roads all over the world to pave the way for Tenrikyō. Divine wisdom which the foundress has kept locked in her alone shall henceforth be given through the *Honseki* 本席 Master Iburi. The foundress passed away because she loved all her children so much. She shortened her life voluntarily by 25 years in order that Tenrikyō may find its way through the world easier and in order that all people in the world may be saved. From now on the situation will change completely. See what the future will have in store. Now, you are all disappointed, discouraged and downhearted because of the death of the Foundress. But don’t you remember that I asked you: ‘Shall I smooth the world with the portals flung open or with the closed doors?’ And you answered: ‘Let the doors be open.’ I have done just as you wished.” From *Tenrikyō Kyōgaku Kenkyū* 天理教教學研究 No. 2, p. 23, by Fukaya Tadamasu 深谷忠政.



Pilgrims come from far and near to pay homage to the foundress.



Outside view of the beautiful corridor connecting the mother temple with the shrine dedicated to the foundress.

dance. Over the other followers fell a deep gloom and the biographers tell us that a great confusion and disappointment was everywhere discernable as a result of the foundress' death. Even Master Iburi could not put them at ease, and in the real Japanese way many conferences and consultations took place. One of the subjects of worry was the fact that no doctor in the neighbourhood was willing to give a death certificate. During lifetime Miki had been in such a competition with the general practitioners, that their antagonism went on even after Miki's death. At long last one medical doctor was found who reluctantly came over and he provided the mourners with the needed certificate. This deed, we are told, made him an outcast among his colleagues. Another and more important point of discussion was the question where the corpse should be buried. One group arguing that Miki's soul and her residence were two inseparable entities, advocated a burial in the premises. Another group, considering that no burial would be allowed unless it would happen in a place destined for it by the law, wanted to look for such a suitable place. Finally a third group, knowing that official permission for a special graveyard would not be given so soon, advocated to bury the foundress temporarily in the family grave of the Nakayama's and later to bury her definitely in a mausoleum. This last proposal was finally accepted. And the followers who still remained very gloomy, began to make arrangements for the funeral which followed some 6 days later.

I mention these conferences, because even today the doctrinal discussions with respect to the death of the foundress have not yet ended, and here I feel some creed is in the making which has not yet found its definite shape. Time and again I enquired about this subject but the Tenrikyō high priests are rather reluctant to broach this subject. On the whole they are not interested in her grave at all, for they say, "nothing is there." We cannot speak about mortal remains because Miki has now become one with *Tenri-Ō-no-Mikoto*. Whereas all other people are reincarnated in many other lives endless times as we shall see later, Miki has lived only once for good. Her death is often called *go-shōten* 御昇天, ascension, which seems rather strange since they do not believe in any heaven. And one asks naturally: "Ascension to where?" but never an answer is given to this question. Thousands of people gathered on the day of the funeral in order to pay

their last homage to Miki. The service was conducted by a well-known *kannushi* 神主 Moriya Hideo 守屋秀雄 with the assistance of two other Shintō priests. He gave Miki the posthumous Shintō name *Mamichi Iyabiro Kotoshiru Hime no Mikoto* 眞道彌廣言知女命. True to her spirit she received also a Buddhist name: *Shigakuken Renyo Kegan Chihō Daishi* 至岳軒蓮譽華岸智寶大姉.

Later a great mausoleum had been built, high up on a hill, overlooking the vast temple grounds at Tenri Shi and since then no day has passed without visitors coming from far and near.

HISTORY OF TENRIKYŌ

We have already seen in the former chapter that the day on which the first revelation came to Miki, is considered as the foundation day of Tenrikyō. From that date until the present time some 110 years have passed. During this period a great interior and exterior development of this new religion has taken place. So far we have seen that the increase of the number of worshippers had urged Miki to build a place of service. However, we can only speak of a *kyōkai* 教會, a real Tenrikyō church, shortly after her death. The birth of this first Tenrikyō parish developed more or less along the following lines:

We have seen that because of the change in government the original permission granted to Tenrikyō, had become invalid. Consequently difficulties with the authorities went on as before. Since people kept on coming in great numbers, measures had to be taken to evade the watching eyes of the officials. Mr. Shūji got the bright idea of applying for a hotel and steam bath license from the prefectural government. In this way people could come and worship under the disguise of hotel guests. However, it did not take long before the officials became aware of the real situation. In order to evade new difficulties, Tenrikyō placed itself in 1880 under the administration of the *Jifukuji* 地福寺, a Buddhist temple at *Kongōzan* 金剛山. Things were arranged in such a way that the church was set up nominally as a buddhist institution.¹⁾ Higure Yūtei 日暮宥貞, a buddhist bonze, was appointed the superior and Mr. Shūji was to act as vice superior. It is highly interesting that the name of *Tenri-Ō-no-Mikoto* 天理王命 was changed and God the Parent was henceforth called *Tenrin-Ō-Nyorai* 天輪王如來 or *Tenrin-Ō Buddha*, and thus the faith was from now on taught under buddhist disguise.

The reader should know that the persecution of Buddhism had already stopped and the revival had already taken place. The new Government had become very much afraid of the Christians who had now left their hiding places and had come out into the open. They wanted to persecute

1) *Kyōsa Sama go Shōden* 教祖様御小傳, by Ikoma Fujio, p. 184.

them, but in the meantime foreign powers had appeared under whose heavy pressure freedom of religion had been established. The Government officials themselves thought the teaching of Shintoism too weak for competition with the formidable might of Christianity. Therefore, they allowed the buddhist revival in order to have a strong antidote against the new teaching of Christianity which gradually began to spread.

The Tenrikyō authors, perhaps being afraid of the strange impression which the above mentioned change from *Tenri-Ō-no-Mikoto* to *Tenrin-Ō-Nyorai* should make, stress the fact that the foundress herself was definitely against this manner of handling religious affairs. However, there are also authors who could clearly see the point and the difficulties of Mr. Shūji. After all he was in a very difficult dilemma and he had undoubtedly acted with the best of intentions.

In the meantime, the number of followers increased greatly and we hear that in the provinces of Yamato 大和, Kawachi 河内, and Settsu 攝津 quite a number of fraternities were established. Yet, this situation was not considered ideal, and in order to keep the foundress out of trouble and to make it possible for all the believers to make their pilgrimages without any fear of official intervention, they tried to obtain an official charter with the right to establish a *Tenri Kyōkai* 天理教會.¹⁾ With this purpose in mind many methods had been tried, which had not been very successful in the beginning. For instance we hear about the failure to establish a *Tenrin-Ō-Sha* 天輪王社 and a *Dai-Nippon Tenrin Kyōkai* 大日本天輪教會. Finally after so many plans had come to naught, the grandson of the foundress, who became later the first patriarch, received the permission in 1885 to call himself a teacher belonging to the *Shintō Honkyoku* 神道本局, a Shintō Head Office. At this time Tenrikyō had already some 30 organized fraternities, *kōsha* 講社 and tens of thousands of followers. With a recommendation of the chief of the *Shintō Honkyoku*, a new application was made to the governor of Ōsaka Prefecture for the official permission to establish a *Tenri Kyōkai* 天理教會. However, this permission was not granted, as also were later applications.

In 1886 two representatives from the *Shintō Honkyoku*, Utsumi Masao

1) The name *Tenrikyō Kyōkai* 天理教教會 has come in use much later.

内海政雄 and Furukawa Toyooki 古川豊彰 accompanied by the chief of the *Ōgami Kyōkai* 大神教會, Kojima Moriya 小島盛可, paid a personal visit to *jiba* in order to acquaint themselves with the prevailing conditions, and after having met the foundress, they expressed their admiration for the faith and advised her to place her religion for the time being under the administration of the *Ōgami Kyōkai* 大神教會 until the official permission for conducting a *kyōkai* of their own should be obtained.¹⁾ Such was the state of affairs at the time when the foundress died.

On the first anniversary of her death, special services were held which were suddenly interrupted by policemen. The faithful desired now with new vigour to receive official permission for conducting an independent *kyōkai*. From now we will often hear that the divine will has been invoked. In what does this really consist? It seems that the people went in such cases to Master Ihuri, who placed himself before a little shrine, worked himself up into a kind of trance and uttered while in this state oracular language, which was extremely difficult to understand. In this case, for instance, he answered: "Now, now a hard road, indeed. There is reason for difficulties. How, you cannot say. I have told you already. I have washed it out clearly. I do not deny that it is difficult. I have led you along all sorts of roads. I wash everything clean."²⁾ These unintelligible words mean according to the official interpretation of the Tenrikyō: "Difficulties have already come over us. They have a very clear meaning. Their purpose is to cleanse our mind and to fortify our will, and to divide the sheep from the goats." There are many other of these oracular pronouncements as hazy and incomprehensible as the one given above and their exegesis has developed considerably. It is not of course up to an outsider to estimate the value of these doctrinal explanations which often leave the field of normal logical reasoning. I can only give here a general impression received after having gone through many Tenrikyō books. These books have given me the personal conviction that the original Tenrikyō doctrine carries already such a barnacle encrustation of commentators, that one, sometimes, wonders whether the whole dogmatic edifice will not eventually come down under the sheer weight of its ponderous and voluminous exegesis.

1) *Gozonmei no Koro* 御存命の頃, by Takano Tomoharu 高野友治, p. 163.

2) *Osashizu* おさしづ, March 9, 1889. *Osashizu-shō* おさしづ抄, p. 41.

The oracular advices of Master Iburi were followed up in such a way that they applied at the prefectural government for an official recognition of Tenrikyō. The delegation went by ship to Yokohama and proceeded from there to Tōkyō. There they had to exercise patience for five days. Finally they were notified by the governor that their application had been formally granted. This was the first time that Tenrikyō received an official recognition from the Imperial Government. The first officially authorized *kyōkai* was built in Tōkyō immediately, 42 Kita-Inari-chō Shitaya-ku 下谷區北稻荷町 42 番地. Two weeks later the first *kyōkai* was opened and a great celebration was held. Covered with laurels the first Patriarch, the grandson of Nakayama Miki returned to *jiba* with some members of the delegation. Others were left behind in Tōkyō in order to commence now the propagation of the faith in the Imperial capital. The great joy over the establishment of the first *kyōkai* in Tōkyō was somewhat tempered by the fact that a bone of contention had appeared. After all, *jiba* is the center of the Tenrikyō faith and one cannot think of any important center outside *jiba*. For this reason, many people wanted to transfer the headquarters straight away back to *jiba*. However, it was feared that such a step, if taken immediately after the issue of the official charter, might offend the officials in charge. This difficulty was solved by setting up for the time being a branch of the *kyōkai* at *jiba*. In modern Tenrikyō eyes such a procedure is extremely offensive, if not completely heretical. It is therefore not surprising to hear that uneasiness mounted. The divine will was again invoked and it seems that the oracular advice had stressed the importance of *jiba* to such an extent that all hesitation was put aside and the headquarters were removed to *jiba*, and the Tōkyō *kyōkai* was degraded as a branch office of the Tenrikyō headquarters. At this point, the Tenrikyō books assume again an elevated style. We hear of a new sacred spirit of enterprise which had come over the followers, and that an insatiable zeal reigned everywhere. We hear of the faith spreading like a sacred wild fire. Countless stories of miracles follow. We hear of the blind who regained sight, of cripples who threw away their crutches, of halo's of glory which radiated from the doctrine and which dispelled all gloomy clouds. The brilliant sun of Tenrikyō had by now really risen and should enkindle from now on all the beautiful isles of Imperial Japan. Tenrikyō apostles were sent out and we hear of their going in all directions, to

Kawachi 河内, and Kii 紀伊 provinces, to Ōsaka 大阪 and to the regions of Mutsu 陸奥, to the Saitama 埼玉 and Tochigi 栃木 prefectures, to Kōbe 神戸 and Kyōto 京都, to Hokuriku 北陸 and Echigo 越後. Hand in hand with the exterior development an interior evolution took place. We hear of the institution of *besseki* 別席, a Tenrikyō expression for a special course to be given for future confirmed followers.¹⁾ We hear of the establishment of the *Dōyū* 道友 Publishing Company which has brought out so many books and which is still very prominent at the present moment. We hear of all sorts of regulations put up for the proper management of affairs in the propagation of the faith; we hear of the issuing of the first number of one of their most important periodicals *Michi no Tomo* みちのとも. The apostolic zeal of the Tenrikyō preachers could not confine itself to the narrow borders of the island country. We hear of their going to Korea in 1893 and two years later to China and the Loo Choo Islands, and in 1896 to Formosa.

It is my personal view of Tenrikyō that their religion is intimately connected with national feelings and the love for their country. In their sacred writings Japan shines out above all other countries in the world. Tenrikyō steps in whenever there are great upheavals or national movements. When the Sino-Japanese war broke out, the Tenrikyō faithful were extremely zealous in raising funds for the country, and recruiting workmen to be sent to the front line. Immediately after this war many *tsumesho's*, 詰所, lodgings, began to be built, and the little village *Shōyashiki* 庄屋敷 developed quickly into a fairly large town. The tenth anniversary of the death of the foundress was observed with great solemnity, and we hear of more than a hundred thousand people flocking together in the Tenrikyō headquarters. One day later while pilgrims were still there a special memorial service was held for all the soldiers who fell in the Sino-Japanese war.

Partly because of the great success of the new religion, and partly because of the unique way of its propagation and of its religious services, a strong antagonism arose among a considerable part of the Japanese people to such an extent that the Government went into action. In 1896 a secret order was given to every prefectural government to exercise a more strict control over Tenrikyō. The Tenrikyō problem became a newspaper topic

1) See page. 99.

and the new religion was depicted as some obscure cult, full of evil. Some newspapers even printed for several months a whole serial on the religion of Nakayama Miki. The menace of officialdom became so serious that the *Shindō Honkyoku* threatened to exterminate the new religion unless the new regulations were complied with to the letter. These regulations pertained to the doctrine and the liturgy of Tenrikyō. As always happened in times of difficulties after the demise of the foundress, Master Iburi invoked the divine will, which seems to have spoken quite clearly with the words: "I will gladly endure for you all sorts of trials, for I love all my children."¹⁾ After this oracular advice several conferences were held with the result that it was decided to modify the faith through the following points.

1) Women would no more take part in the dancing service at the headquarters. Besides, no masks should be worn, but they should be put on a stand in front of the dancers.²⁾ The *kagura zutome* round the *kanrodai* should be regularly performed.

2) The daily morning and evening services should be restricted in such a way that only a few lines of the prelude of the *Mikagura Uta* should be recited.³⁾

3) Miraculous healing power should not be exercised without the consent of a doctor.

4) Economy should be practiced in the building of the new temples and all extravagances should be avoided. A more strict supervision should be introduced for the erection of new churches.

5) Pious amulets will henceforth be given only at the headquarters. The amulets for painless childbirth will be given only to those of the faithful who are sincere and convinced of their religion.

6) The uniformity of teaching will be introduced.

7) The name of *Tenri-Ō-no-Mikoto* will be changed again, this time

1) *Osashizu-shō* おさしづ抄, p. 644.

2) See p. 118.

3) This part consists only of the following lines:

"I will speak to you a little while. Hark and listen to God's words.

I never tell you any evil things.

The creation of heaven and earth was a model of how I created husband and wife.

Thus was the beginning of this world.

Sweep away all iniquity and hasten to save us.

Once the world is purified, then erect the sacred column."

in *Tenri Ōgami* 天理大神.

8) The use of *samisen* 三味線 and *kokyū* 胡弓 should be discontinued.¹⁾

On these matters divine wisdom seems to have spoken quite clearly and it is said that the advice was given in the same way as a father should have given advice to his child.

It seems that by the above innovation the authorities were reconciled, yet there rose great troubles from within, which are often harder to eliminate and much more difficult to overcome than outside persecutions. A certain Iida 飯田 who was in charge of a temple at the village of Ando 安堵, boasted over his private revelations, which, he said, were a par with those of Nakayama Miki. Of course, such a serious heresy could not be tolerated and a commission was sent to the temple to bring down the altar, and Mr. Iida was promptly dismissed. There are other stories of rebellion of headquarter members, but it seems that the authorities have promptly dealt with them. Peace and unity came back to the young Tenrikyō fold, and overseas missions could now be carried on with renewed vigour. In 1910 a great parish was opened in North-East China and the faith penetrated as far as Tschungtschun 長春, and from here branch *kyōkai*'s were established in Ryojun 旅順 (Port Arthur) and Dairen 大連. Two years later a temple was built in Fungtien 奉天 (Mukden). Altogether some 27 *kyōkai*'s were established in these regions. However this does not mean that there was a large number of followers among the Chinese people. Generally the faith was only propagated among the Japanese immigrants. We hear even of a mission opened in London, but this one, as did so many other overseas missions, became only a still-born child. And even at the present moment I do not know of any non-Oriental being a Tenrikyō believer.

So far we have seen that the new religion had received the official permission to open temples everywhere. However, we could not yet speak of an independent sect or religion. Now steps were taken to sever the relations with the *Shindō Honkyoku*. After many applications were filed, independence was finally granted in 1908. However before this permission was given, the headquarters had to be reorganized completely, the Tenrikyō catechism had to be compiled, and all the rules for training teachers had to be codified.

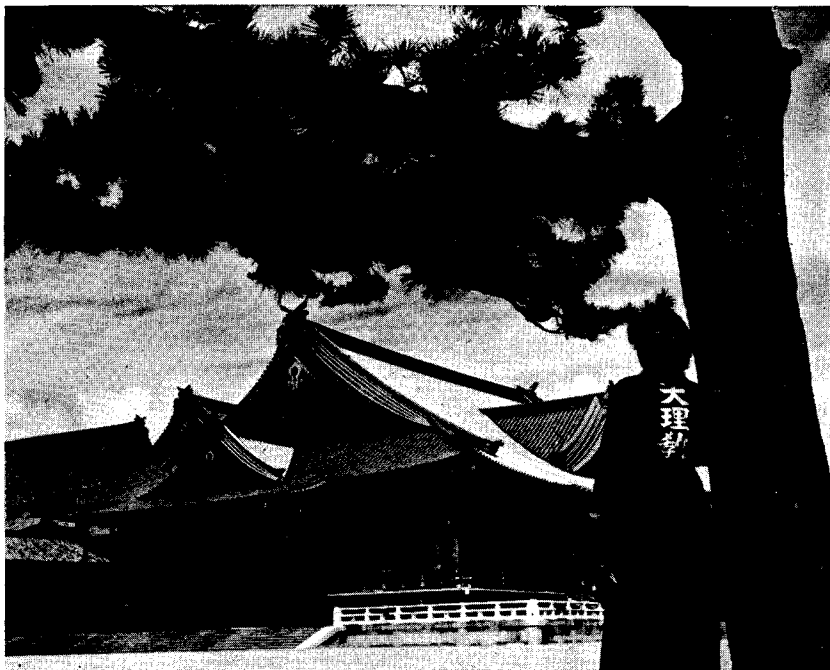
1) See p. 118.

In the meantime at the headquarters a new temple was built, new offices were created and a Tenrikyō Mission School was established. The young Tenrikyō tree began to spread out its branches. In 1913 a huge building in the honour of the late foundress was started, which was completed a year later. During all these expansions of the new buildings at the headquarters, the *hinokishin* 木のきしん, the holy labour,¹⁾ was very much used. After all, the faithful offered freely to work for a considerable time at the construction of the huge temples. Thus all the buildings could be built with a minimum of expenses. The 40th anniversary of the death of the foundress was observed with great festivals. And we are informed that some 600,000 faithful flocked to the headquarters. Never before in the history of the Japanese Railway, had so many people been brought to one place.

Shortly after the 40th anniversary of the foundress' death, a general council was held at the headquarters of all the Tenrikyō leaders. The main subject of discussion was that of the overseas propagation. One of the decisions of the general council was that the first patriarch, Nakayama Shinjirō 中山新治郎, should go on his first visitation tour to Korea and China. It seems that this visit was a source of inspiration for all those who were engaged in mission work. As a result three different mission headquarters were established. The necessary propaganda material for the expansion of the faith was now prepared and we hear of the translation of the Tenrikyō doctrine in various languages.²⁾ Since the activities of the headquarters became more and more complex, new offices and departments were established. In the Tenrikyō literature we hear now about the repeated visits made by Nakayama Shōzen 中山正善, the second patriarch who generally resides at the Tenrikyō headquarters in Tenri-shi. Up until now, this patriarch has visited nearly the whole world. His latest book: *Tanemaki Hikō* たねまき飛行 about his travel all over Europe and the Americas provides really very interesting reading. At the present moment (July 1954) he has again left the Japanese isles on a three months trip to the United States. On this apostolic travel he is accompanied by his wife, his son

1) See p. 105.

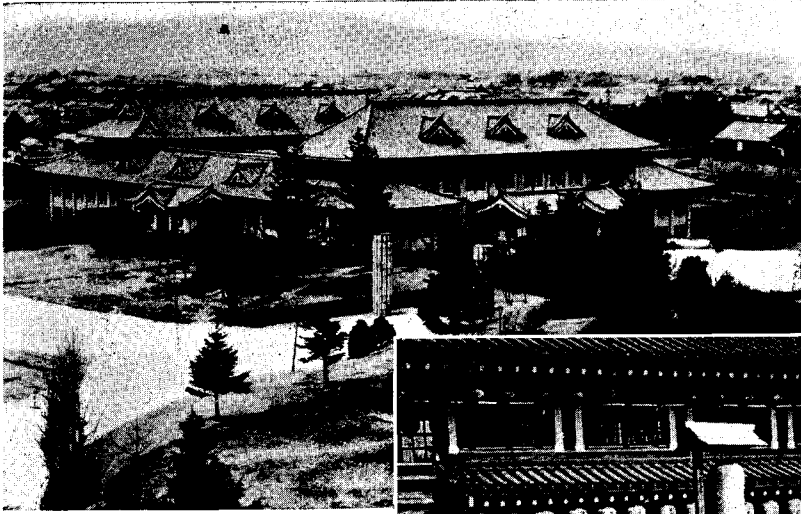
2) One should not expect too much. The author has seen practically all the publications on Tenrikyō existent in non-Japanese languages. Generally they do not exceed the pamphlet form and they are not too well written.



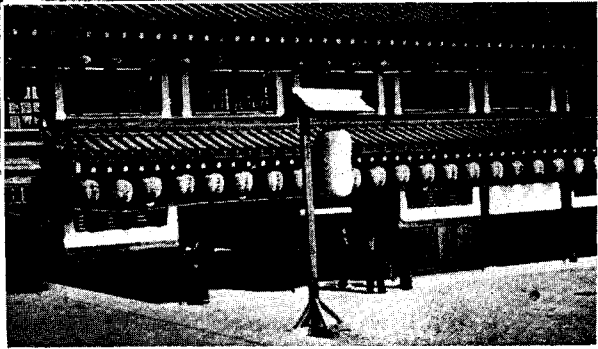
The Mother Temple of Tenrikyō in Tenri Shi.



The same inside.



Tenri High School.



The temple corridors outside.



The beautiful temple corridors inside.

and three members of the Tenrikyō headquarters.

It is very clear to every student of the short history of Tenrikyō that an expansion takes generally place during the great memorial days. Thus, it was the case in 1936 and 1937, years of the golden jubilee of the foundress and the centennial of the foundation. New buildings were erected, and the fervour of the faithful showed itself in the construction of a beautiful corridor, which is still the pride of present-day Tenrikyō. Since the number of pilgrims had increased greatly, countless *tsumesho's* 詰所 were built there. Every visitor to Tenri Shi can see a whole town of *tsumesho's*, lodgings for visitors and pilgrims. In the meantime social activities increased, orphanages were established, youngmen's and youngwomen's associations extended, and we hear of many more expansions and activities. In the midst of this fervour the war between China and Japan broke out in 1937 and the faithful established everywhere emergency committees on the continent as well as in Japan. As the Japanese Army marched forward, Tenrikyō preachers followed in its wake, with the result that many churches were built all over China. They did not mix in political activities. We see them coming to the forefront when it was question of medical services, work among orphans and the rehabilitation of destroyed areas. According to a very well-known commentator, Hasegawa Nyozeikan 長谷川如是閑, it seems to be true that the only people who really worked unselfishly for the people of war-torn China, were the Tenrikyō faithful.

When world war II broke out and the Japanese Empire sprawled out all over the Asiatic continent, the mission seminary at the headquarters became a bee-hive, full of activities. While the military war-lords of Japan tightened more and more their grip on the people and while the "thought police" started everywhere investigations, we can understand that Tenrikyō did not remain untouched by it. During that time all religions in Japan had to comply with the regulations of the military war-lords in so far as outward organization was concerned. Also Christian missions had to make the necessary changes. However, these of course never touched the doctrine, and whenever military men inspected books of Christian doctrine and tried to make modifications, they came up against a granite wall of opposition and no Christian domination in Japan has yielded even one inch. This, however, cannot be said of Tenrikyō. The Education Ministry made

tremendous changes in Tenrikyō doctrines and their rituals. Only Oriental flexibility of mind could bend so far. Here we notice also very clearly the great sense for compromise that the Japanese certainly have. One often wonders how they manage to conciliate the most opposite opinions in social, political, economic or religious life, and it often seems to an Occidental that their souls are in some measure divided. They have no taste for absolutes. They do not make a clear-cut distinction between justice and injustice, the legal and illegal, truth and error. One might even say that for the Japanese there is always a kind of no man's land lying between two absolutes. The military clique in Japan was in 1940 fairly powerful and they seemed to be quite successful. Consequently there must be some sense in following their directions. Besides if they should oppose, they would have to face the surging waves of extreme nationalism. This would be impossible, and consequently it would be rather imprudent not to comply with the changes, however drastic they might be.

Their most important canonical writings such as *Ofudesaki* and *Osashizu*, were simply abolished. The *kagura zutome* was forbidden and a complete revision took place of the *Mikagura Uta*. A Westerner wonders how the teaching authority of Tenrikyō could comply with such things. The doctrine was completely reformed and a new catechism, the so-called *Tenrikyō Kyōten Engi* 天理教教典衍義, (Detailed explanation of the Tenrikyō Doctrine) was published in 1940. According to the lines of this new Tenrikyō manual, thousands of Tenrikyō preachers were re-educated. Once again, one wonders how a strong religion could change overnight and comply in doctrinal questions with the military authorities. If one reads the *Tenrikyō Kyōten Engi*, one enters a completely different atmosphere. Formerly Shintō teachings and Buddhist teachings went hand in hand with the revelations of Nakayama Miki. Besides, as we have seen we could also notice some Christian vestiges in the make-up of Tenrikyō. However, since the great war started in the Far East, the Tenrikyō doctrine became Shintō through and through. Every reader who knows something of Shintō will see this clearly enough if he only glances over the 10 titles of the chapters of this new Tenrikyō catechism :

1) *Keishin* 敬神, Reverence Towards the Gods, among whom are mentioned *yaoyorozu no kami* 八百萬神, the 8 million gods; and we find for the first time introduced *Amaterasu Ōmikami* 天照大神. Again for the first

time we find a quotation of the *Nihon Shoki* 日本書紀. *Tenri-Ō-no-Mikoto* is nowhere mentioned, but the name was changed in *Tenri Ōgami* 天理大神, being in this catechism a collective name for 10 gods.

2) *Sonnō* 尊皇, Reverence for the Emperor, which forms the biggest chapter of this new Tenrikyō catechism and which was completely in line with the exaggerated teachings of military dictators about the *akitsu kami* 現神, the living god. The whole atmosphere of this chapter is Shintoistic through and through, and one can understand that the Tenrikyō teaching authority agreed only reluctantly. In so far as the faithful were concerned, one can easily guess that this new teaching was accepted with no resentment whatsoever.

3) *Aikoku* 愛國, Patriotism; which treats of the Japanese country and people as the chosen land and the chosen race, and we hear all the non-sense about the divine land with its people of virtues, unparalleled and unequalled in the whole world.

4) *Meirin* 明倫, Clarifying the Laws of the Universe, in which we are at least reminded that this new catechism has something to do with the Tenrikyō religion, for we read: *Tenri ni shitagau mono no seikatsu ni wa, kanarazu kagayakashii shōrai ga yakusoku sareru* 天理に従ふ者の生活には必ず輝かしい將來が約束される, to those who obey the divine wisdom a bright future is promised.¹⁾

5) *Shūtoku* 修徳, Fostering of Morality; which chapter is rather difficult to understand for the simple reason that the compilers tried here to provide some Tenrikyō food in Shintoistic coating.

6) *Futsujo* 祓除, Purification; in which we notice a combination of the Tenrikyō 8 kinds of dust with the shintoistic purification.

7) *Rikkyō* 立教, Establishment of the Religion. Here we find Nakayama Miki mentioned for the first time, and one is very much astonished that she is shown as a model of patriotism and emperor worship. This seems to me a great distortion, because in no biography of the foundress is anything mentioned about her attitude towards the emperor.

8) *Shinon*, 神思, God's Benevolence. In this chapter we find a clear adaptation of the Tenrikyō teachings to the then prevalent ultra right-wing

1) *Tenrikyō Kyōten Engi* 天理教教典衍義, p. 58.

tendencies.

9) *Kagura* 神樂, Sacred Dance. We find here mentioned both the *Mikagura Uta* as well as the *kagura zutome*, but completely robbed of their symbolical meaning. After all the military clique would never tolerate a faith in Tenri Shi as being the center of the world and being the origin of the human race.

10) *Anshin* 安心, Ease of Mind: This final chapter ends in an exhortation to revere the emperor and to foster the patriotic spirit.

This new faith had to be preached henceforth. A two years course was started to re-educate some 12 thousand of the best Tenrikyō preachers. At the same time, as the Japanese Empire sprawled out over the Asiatic continent, Tenrikyō overseas missions were established everywhere. Together with the new faith, a new organization was set up. Formerly all the Tenrikyō churches were divided into 5 classes: *dai-kyōkai* 大教會, *chū-kyōkai* 中教會, *bun-kyōkai* 分教會, *shi-kyōkai* 支教會 and *fukyōsho* 布教所. From now on there should be only *dai-kyōkai*'s 大教會 and *bun-kyōkai*'s 分教會. When the war with America broke out, the faithful organized their *hinokishin-tai* ひのきしん隊, sacred labour battalions, and they put them at the disposal of the nation.

Just one or two months after the surrender, the original Tenrikyō doctrine was revived and at the present moment one hears nothing about emperor worship, patriotism or of Japan being the land of the gods. How long this will last, only the future can tell us. The restoration of the doctrine brought about the complete new edition of the *Tenrikyō kyōten* 天理教教典, the Tenrikyō catechism, which was published in October, 1949 and which gives us the doctrinal teaching of present day Tenrikyō, as we shall see in Chapter 4. With the restoration of the doctrine, a vital activity has taken hold of the Tenrikyō faithful all over Japan. Everywhere feverish efforts are going on, and like mushrooms, new Tenrikyō buildings come up everywhere throughout the beautiful isles of Japan. Since democratic ideas began to invade the Japanese isles, the organization of the headquarters had to be modified completely. The Tenrikyō Patriarch had to yield some of his powers to boards and religious offices. At the present moment the administration inside their headquarters, ranks as follows:

眞 柱
SHIMBASHIRA

(Patriarch)

内 統 領
UCHI TŌRYŌ

(Director of Liturgy)

常 詰
JŌZUME

(Special assistants of
the Omote and Uchi Tōryō)

表 統 領
OMOTE TŌRYŌ

(Director of Administration)

本 部 員
HOMBUIN

(Staff of the Headquarters)

They are assisted by the *Kyōgikai* 教義會 (their Holy Office), the *Kaikei Kansakai* 會計監査會 (Board of Auditors), the *Shimpankai* 審判會 (Board of Judges) and the *Kenteikai* 檢定會 (Board of Examiners). Besides, there are the congregations of internal communication, of youth movements, of parish problems, of diocesan problems, the congregation de propaganda fide and many others. There are also a number of institutions such as the Tenrikyō Theological School, the Training School for Preachers, the educational institutions conducted by the Tenri University Corporation, Tenri University, Tenri Short Course University, institutions attached to the University, Tenri High School, Tenri Junior High School, Tenri Primary School, Tenri Kindergarten, Tenri Colleges, and finally the Tenrikyō Ichiretsukai Corporation, which is an educational institution especially for Tenrikyō children. A really first-class library with more than half a million books testifies clearly to the sincere cultural interests which are pursued at the headquarters. Attached to the university is a Tenrikyō institute of Asiatic Culture which publishes *Yamato Bunka* 大和文化, an interesting quarterly and the Bulletin of the Tenri University Institute of Religious Culture, a monthly of good standing. On the beautiful and spacious temple grounds in Tenri Shi, we find furthermore a museum, a gymnasium, kindergartens and an orphanage. Well known also are the several lecture halls and the well-equipped Tenri Pool. Expansions and increase in the number of citizens have justified the creation of a new town, Tenri Shi 天理市, as it has been called since April 1st, 1954. This new town comprises Tambaichi and a few neighbouring villages.

At the present moment feverish efforts are going on in order to prepare

for the 70th anniversary of the death of the foundress. In the Tenrikyō weekly *Tenri Jihō* 天理時報, we find nowadays regular articles about all sorts of plans for a huge religious festival as a worthy commemoration of the foundress. New buildings are going up, old ones restored and lodgings are expanded. The Tenrikyō people are certainly determined to keep abreast of the time. Quite recently they have applied for permission to build a short wave radio station, and soon the Tenrikyō propaganda will be sent on the air to distant countries in several languages.

DOCTRINE OF TENRIKYŌ

Painstaking research of practically all the existing prominent Tenrikyō publications, besides numerous conversations with the professors of the Tenri University and with the high priests of the Tenrikyō religion, brought me to the conclusion that Tenrikyō's central dogma from which all other teachings derive their meaning, is their Genesis, their doctrine on the origin of the world and of mankind, a highly complicated story, full of allegories, mystical meanings, nay even "beyond human comprehension and which no language can describe."¹⁾ It is a noteworthy example of the shifting of emphasis which we can perceive in present-day Tenrikyō, that modern Tenrikyō preachers should very much like to bypass, or at any rate would prefer to keep the story of the origin of the world more within bounds. In present-day Tenrikyō, we witness the phenomenon that what originally constituted, and in the eyes of the Tenrikyō teaching authority still constitutes, the very core of the doctrine is much less emphasized than it was some 20 years ago. A study of former editions of their sacred writings and numerous conversations with Tenrikyō preachers have confirmed this opinion of mine. The impossibility of harmonizing their Genesis with present-day scientific data may be the main reason for this shifting of emphasis. True, they still stick to the story; yet nowadays they rather prefer not to speak or to write very much about it.

This Tenrikyō story of the creation is called: *Doroumi Kōki* 泥海古記, *Moto hajimari no hanashi* 元はじまりの話, or *Moto no ri* 元の理. It has been revealed directly and repeatedly by the foundress. A part of it has been written down by the foundress herself in the *Ofudesaki* おふでさき, especially in Part VI. A few scattered thoughts about this subject we find in her *Mikagura Uta* みかぐら歌. But the greatest part is to be found in the writings of Yamazawa 山澤, and Nakata 仲田 in the 14th year of Meiji, and in the writings of an unknown author in the 16th year of Meiji. These latter writings are considered to be the real prototype of the story, of which some

1) *Seibun In*, 正文遺韻, Moroi Masaichi 諸井政一, p. 141.

4,000 varieties have emerged since then.¹⁾

In the 7th year of Meiji (1874) when Nakayama Miki was in a state of supreme exaltation, she spoke the words: "This time I will reveal to you most extraordinary things. Please listen with an equanimity of mind."²⁾ The authoritative interpretation of the present *Shimbashira* 眞柱 of the foregoing holy script runs as follows: "The exalted form of these opening words, conveys to us that the pronouncements of the foundress constitute indeed the voice of God the Parent Himself. They express a declaration of God the Parent as well as indicating the manner in which people should accept it, keeping constantly in mind that the Foundress acted as a mediatrix."³⁾

In the original state of this world, when chaos reigned supreme, God the Parent looked down from above into the muddy ocean and the idea came to Him: "Let us create man and let us enjoy their cheerful living."⁴⁾

At the very start of this Genesis we come up against an enormous problem: "Who is this God the Parent?" The foundress herself used in her writings the words: *Kami* 神, much more often *Tsuki-Hi* 月日, then later *Oya* おや, and quite exceptionally *Tenri-Ō-no-Mikoto* 天理王命 Who uses 8 deities as His tools.⁵⁾ Besides, the Tenrikyō catechism uses the term: *Oyagami* 親神. Thus, at the very start of this Tenrikyō revelation we are already confronted with the great problem: whether Tenrikyō is a monotheistic or a polytheistic religion. So far I cannot find sufficient evidence that Tenrikyō started as a purely monotheistic religion. On the contrary I am strongly inclined to the opinion that the foundress' idea of God was a polytheistic one or at least that it was not clear in her mind. There is even one text in the foundress writings which admits only a pantheistic interpretation⁶⁾.

The Japanese verbal form, being the same in single and plural, gives us no key for a solution. The whole atmosphere of the *Ofudesaki*, however,

1) These versions have not appeared in print but only in handwriting.

2) *Ofudesaki* おふでさき VI, 1.

3) *Zoku Hitokoto Hanashi* 續ひとことはなし, by Nakayama Shōzen 中山正善, p. 117.

4) *Tenrikyō Kyōten* 天理教教典, p. 25.

5) The two deities, *Kunitokotachi-no-Mikoto* and *Omotari-no-Mikoto*, cannot be called tools, because they are considered the Gods of origin of all things.

6) "Kono yō wa, ichiretsu wa mina Tsuki-Hi nari このよふはいちれつはみな月日なり, This world, this universe is after all Tsuki-Hi." There are also some texts which suggest a kind of dualistic theism.

is one indicating many Gods. We simply have to argue here in terms of “atmosphere,” “impression” and the like. The Tenrikyō publications are extremely hazy and inconsistent when touching this subject. We come up against a kind of mysticism, which blocks out all logic. Besides, in the Japanese text of Nakayama Miki’s writings, it is often extremely difficult, nay sometimes completely impossible, to know with exactness who is the subject. Often it can be Miki herself, or *Tsuki-Hi*, or both, or perhaps even the *tōhashira no kami* 十柱の神, the ten gods which play such a prominent rôle in the Tenrikyō story of the creation.

In the most authentic interpretation of the Tenrikyō genesis, Moroi Masaichi writes very clearly: “The Moon Deity, after having fixed the space where the beginning of this world should come into effect, went to the Sun Deity for consultations, and they both found it a very sad thing that there was nobody in the muddy ocean to adore them.”¹⁾ The above authentic interpretation of the story of the creation is to me a sufficient proof that Tenrikyō did not start as a monotheistic religion. However, no one can doubt that presentday Tenrikyō believes in one original God, the Creator of the universe. The latest edition of their catechism and especially their present-day interpretation leaves no doubt about it.²⁾

1) *Seibun Iin* 正文遺韻, by Moroi Masaichi 諸井政一, p. 125.

2) Yet one is startled when one hears a modern interpreter saying: “The *Oyagami* 親神 idea is both theistic as well as pantheistic,” and with an illusion to Jaspers’ “Umgreifende,” this Fukaya 深谷 speaks of “*Hōetsu shinron* 包越神論.” However, this kind of theology seems to be rather an exception or at any rate merely in the making. In my conversations with the professors of the Tenri University, I heard several times that the God idea of the Tenrikyō has something in common with pantheistic Buddhism in so far that God is personal in finite personal beings and impersonal in finite impersonal beings. To the question as to whether God is personal they reply sometimes yes, at other times both yes and no. Our idea of God has something of theism and pantheism, they say once in a while, including both, being neither, and transcending all. In the face of such statements as above, one can understand that their reasoning is not so easy to follow for a Westerner. The Japanese approach to theological and philosophical problems seems to alternate between the matter of fact and the mystical, and tends to reject what seems to Westerners a rational dependence upon analytic methods. Yet, notwithstanding the above strange reasoning, if we follow their latest interpretation, we must acknowledge that post war Tenrikyō is a monotheistic religion. The present-day catechism is very clear on this subject for we read in the *Tenrikyō Kyōten*, p. 36: “We adore and pray to God the Parent under the holy name of *Tenri-Ō-no-Mikoto*. He is indeed the true and original God who created the universe.

“You know nothing about Me who am the Creator of this world.” (Ofu. III, 15) God the Parent is the originator of mankind. Everything in this world lives under His protection, and we can actually perceive His omnipotent patronage and dominance over us.” Nowadays they generally accept the idea of one true God under the name of *Tenri-Ō-no-Mikoto* and the 10 other so-called

At the very beginning then, there was no division between heaven and earth, water and land; there were no human beings, but just one vast muddy ocean. An authoritative interpreter tells us that we have to take the words: *Doroumi* 泥海 not in the literal sense, but these words will merely indicate the chaotic state of the universe.¹⁾

After the first consultation which took place between the Moon Deity, called *Kunitokotachi-no-Mikoto* 國床立命, and the Sun Deity *Omotari-no-Mikoto* 面足命, a great need was felt for the tools and models necessary for the creation of man. Among myriads of loaches *Tsuki-Hi* 月日 discovered a white snake (*mii* みい, or *shirogutsuna* 白くつな) and a merman (*gigyo* きぎよ or *ningyo* 人魚), both having a human face. This merman was gifted with such a disposition that he would serve well for the first seed of mankind. Consequently he received the divine invitation to act as the first male principle.²⁾ As reward, the merman would be exalted to the status of original parental being and as such worshipped by mankind. The merman hesitated a considerable time, even refusing the invitation in the beginning, but finally yielded to the divine request. Next, the white snake was asked to surrender her body and to serve as seedbed for the making of the first species of human kind. *Tsuki-Hi* gave them the names of *Izanagi-no-Mikoto* 伊邪那岐命 and *Izanami-no-Mikoto* 伊邪那美命.

After the consent of these two deities, the rough model of a couple

deities, are but His faculties, or His attributes. It seems to me that we have to deal here with a unification process, a kind of amalgamation of deities which has taken place in several religions in a certain stage of their development.

In the Greek religion the Orphic verse says: "Zeus, Hades, Helios, and Dionysos are one" (George Moore, *History of Religions*, p. 591). And, Julianus also says: "Zeus, Hades, Dionysos are one and are Serapis" (ibid). In Vedic India the poet sings: "Oh, Agni, thou art born Varuna, thou becomest Mitra when kindled; all the gods are in thee . . . Indra, Mitra Varuna, Agni, for the poets give many names to the one." In the *Kujiki* 舊事紀 (chronicle of ancient matters, date of compilation unknown but generally based on the *Kojiki* 古事記, *Nihon Shoki* 日本書紀 and *Kogo Shūi* 古語拾遺) the Sun-Goddess, the Moon-God, *Ame-no-Sagiri-no-Kami* or the God of Heavenly Mist, *Kumi-no-Sagiri-no-Kami* or the God of Earthly Mist—these four deities have been artificially amalgamated as one Deity, *Ame-Yuzuru-Hi-Ame-no-Sagiri-Kumi-Yuzuru-Tsuki-Kumi-no-Sagiri-no-Mikoto* 天讓日天狹霧國禪月國狹霧尊.

1) *Vide Seibun In* 正文遺韻, p. 141.

2) Like a thin thread goes through all the writings of Tenrikyō the teaching of Yin and Yang, the *On-yō-dō* 陰陽道 or *In-yō-gaku* 陰陽學, those two principles, female and male, earth and heaven, regressive and active, which by their operation upon the five elements (fire, water, wood, metal and earth) produce all phenomena.

came into existence. Yet, they lacked the tools necessary for the generation. Consequently, God the Parent summoned from the North-West a dolphin (*shachi* 鯨鯨) and from the South-East a tortoise (*kame* 龜), to act as the generative forces in the merman and the white snake. *Tsuki-Hi* required furthermore the services of an eel (*unagi* 鰻) in the East, a flat-fish (*karei* 鰈) in the South-West, a black snake (*kuro gutsuna* 黒ぐつな) in the West and a globe-fish (*fugu* 鰐) in the North-East. They were summoned to the presence of God. He took them one by one in His mouth, tasted them and observed their nature, after which, He decided that they should become the instruments for eating and drinking, breathing and speaking, severing the relationship at birth and death, and the like. They all received a shintoistic name: the eel was called *Kumoyomi-no-Mikoto* 雲讀命; the flat-fish, *Kashikone-no-Mikoto* 桴根命; the black-snake, *Ōtonobe-no-Mikoto* 大斗之辨命; and the globe-fish, *Taishokuten-no-Mikoto* 大食天命.

Hereafter the Moon Deity and the Sun Deity ate all the loaches (*dojō* 泥鰱) which were in the muddy ocean and whose number was exactly 900,099,999. The loaches swallowed by the Moon Deity became the souls of men, while those eaten by the Sun Deity became the souls of women. However, for the conception of mankind, the following manipulations were still necessary. The dolphin, representing the male organ, was placed in the center of the body of *Izanagi-no-Mikoto* 伊邪那岐命 in whom the spirit of *Kunitokotachi-no-Mikoto* 國床立命 was incarnated. On the other hand the tortoise, representing the female organ, was placed in the center of the body of *Izanami-no-Mikoto* 伊邪那美命, in whom the spirit of *Omotari-no-Mikoto* 面足命 was incarnated.

Now finally all things were ready for the conception of mankind, which should take place in Tenri Shi at the very spot where the *kanrodai* 甘露臺 was erected a few years ago.¹⁾ It thus happened that 900,099,999 years before *Tenri-Ō-no-Mikoto* came down on Nakayama Miki, the first meeting took place between *Izanagi-no-Mikoto* and *Izanami-no-Mikoto*. The position of their bodies was such that they lay with their heads to the North and with their faces in a Westerly direction (*kitamakura nishimuki* 北枕西向). This meeting lasted 3 days and 3 nights with the result that an offspring numbering

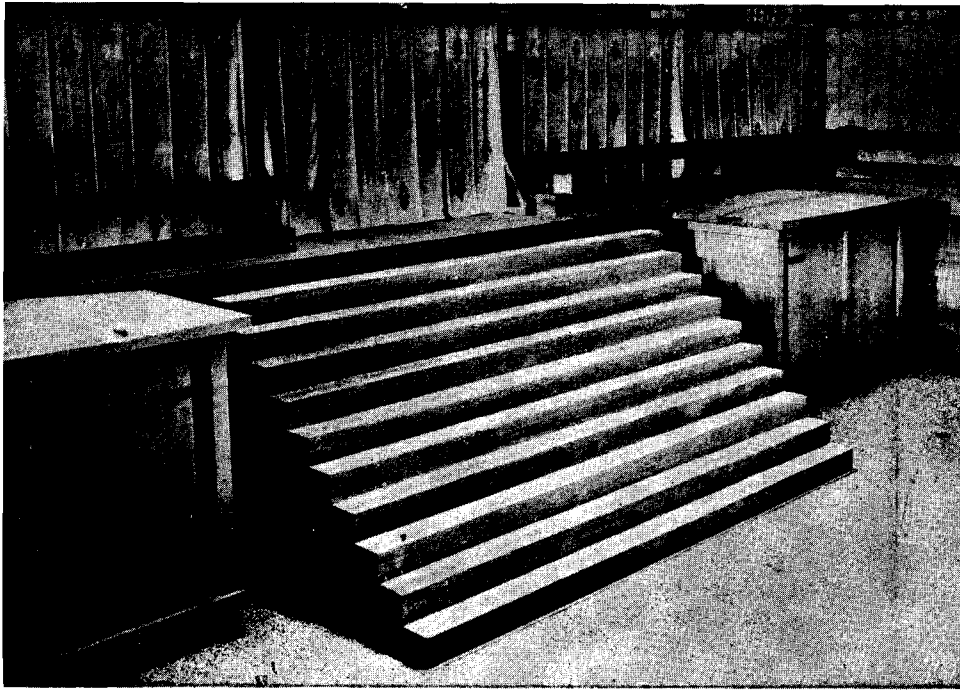
1) Vide p. 36.

900,099,999 was conceived.¹⁾

After having grown up for 3 years and 3 months in the womb of *Izanami-no-Mikoto*, they entered into the light of this world. This was the first delivery of humankind, which lasted 75 days. This period is still called *Obiya-chū* 帶屋中. The long time required, was not in vain, for 900,099,999 pigmies or perhaps better, would-be human beings who were not to grow up higher than 3 inches, saw for the first time the light of this world. During the first 7 days of this *Obiya-chū* a delivery took place over the distance of 7 *ri* 里 in the Province of Yamato, near the place where the foundress was born. And afterwards a delivery of 4 days took place in the other parts of the Province of Yamato. These two periods lasting together 11 days are called *Obiya-aki* 帶屋明き, the dawn of delivery. The offspring of these first deliveries formed the first species of the Japanese race. The other deliveries took place all over Japan, and these offspring formed the first species of the Chinese, Indian and all the other races.

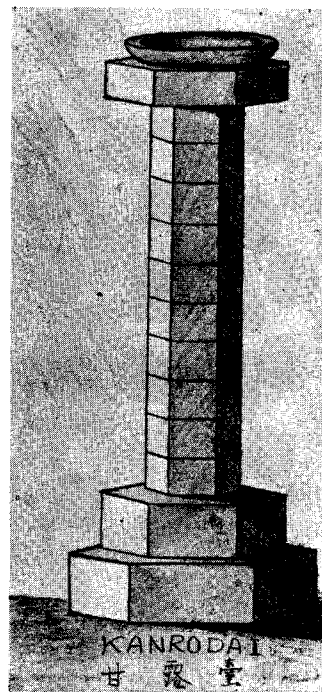
At each delivery God the Parent breathed over the creatures who saw for the first time the light of this world. When the delivery was completed, *Izanagi-no-Mikoto* retired forever. The human beings, brought into existence, were all half an inch tall at birth. In the course of 99 years they grew up

1) It is highly interesting to compare Miki's account of the courtship between *Izanagi-no-Mikoto* and *Izanami-no-Mikoto* with the account as related in the *kojiki* with which she was undoubtedly familiar: "Courtship of *Izanagi-no-Mikoto* and *Izanami-no-Mikoto*. Having descended from Heaven onto this island, they saw to the erection of a heavenly august pillar, they saw to the erection of a hall of eight fathoms. Tunc quæsit, Augustus Mas-Qui-Invitat a minore sorore Augusta Femina-Qui-Invitat: 'Tuum corpus quo in modo factum est?' Respondit dicens: 'Meum corpus crescens crevit, sed una pars est quæ non crevit continua.' Tunc dixit Augustus Mas-Qui-Invitat: 'Meum corpus crescens crevit, sed est una pars quæ crevit superflua. Ergo an bonum erit ut hanc corporis mei partem quæ crevit superflua in tui corporis partem quæ non crevit continua inseram, et regiones procreem?' Augusta Femina-Quæ-Invitat respondit dicens: 'Bonum erit.' Tunc dixit Augustus Mas-Qui-Invitat: 'Quod quum ita sit, ego et tu, hanc coelestem augustam columnam circumeuntes mutuoque occurrentes, augustarum i.e. privatarum partium augustam coitionem faciemus.' Hac pactione facta, dixit Augustus Mas-Qui-Invitat: 'Tu a dextera circumeuns occurre; ego a sinistra occurram.' Absoluta pactione ubi circumierunt, Augusta Femina-Qui-Invitat primum inquit: 'O venuste et amabilis adolescens!' Deinde Augustus Mas-Qui-Invitat inquit: 'O venusta et amabilis virgo! Postquam singuli orationi finem fecerunt, Augustus Mas-Qui-Invitat locutus est sorori, dicens: 'Non decet feminam primum verba facere.' Nihilominus in thalamo (opus procreationis) inceperunt, et filium (nomine) Hirudinem (vel Hirudini similem) pepererunt. This child they placed in a boat of reeds, and let it float away. Next they gave birth to the Island of Aha. This likewise is not reckoned among their children." (Transl. Chamberlain).



The place where the column stands and where the *kanrodairutome* is performed. This basement invisible to the believers is strewn with white gray gravelstones. The cabinets placed at the four corners, contain the sacred masks.

The Sacred Column indicating the centre of the world. In the cup placed on top, the manna of longevity will come down.





Practice of the *teodori*, Tenrikyo's liturgical dance.



Listening to a lecture course about the Tenrikyō doctrine.

to 3 inches, after that they all perished.

Afterwards, two other deliveries took place and in the meanwhile they grew up to a length of some 4 inches. The mother spirit, *Izanami-no-mikoto*, seeing them, rejoiced and exclaimed: "How happy I am, at last, that they have grown up to such a height. Soon, they will become complete human beings of five feet high." When all human beings had died away for the third time, they were, 8,008 times, reincarnated in the forms of birds, worms, beasts, a.s.o. They, also, died away with the exception of one female monkey who survived them all. This female monkey is considered to be the incarnation of *Kumisazuchi-no-Mikoto* 國狹土命. In the body of this ape five men and five women were conceived by the grace of *Tsuki-Hi*, and when they were brought forth they grew up as real and complete human beings, though much smaller in stature, namely 8 inches.

The first delivery of our human species was ten at one time but gradually they began to be born single, as boy or girl. When they had grown up to 8 inches, the muddy ocean began to move and water became separated from the land and heaven became divided from the earth. When they had grown up to 1 foot 8 inches they increased to the original number of 900,090,000. When they had grown 3 feet tall they began to speak, and when mankind had grown up to 5 feet the earth took its final shape as it is now. Those who were in the Yamato Province remained on the isles now known as Japan, while those who were born in other provinces, when the earth took its final shape, landed happily on China, India, Arabia and all the other countries of the world. In the numerous explanations of the story of this creation, the supremacy of the Japanese race as being the oldest in the world is often stressed. Later we will see more clearly how the Tenrikyō religion goes often hand in hand with Japanese patriotism.

However, we should not imagine ourselves as having lived always on land, for the Tenrikyō story tells us that human beings lived for 900,099,999 years in water. During the first 6,000 years of our life on land *Tsuki-Hi* taught humankind all the necessary wisdom, and during the following 4,000 years *Tsuki-Hi* taught humankind to express itself by symbols and letters. "For such a long time since the creation, God the Parent has not only watched over our growth with His parental boundless benevolence, but also taught us properly and exactly in proportion to our growth. The growth

of mankind and the development of human culture are indeed due to His divine providence.”¹⁾ And thus ends the Tenrikyō story of the origin of this world and of mankind.

Now let us have a look at close range at these *tōbashira no kami*, 十柱神, these ten gods whose presence and constant mentioning give the Tenrikyō story of the creation such a distinctly shintoistic flavour. One really wonders how it is possible that modern Tenrikyō teachers can still deny in so far as their doctrine is concerned any direct connection with the Shintō religion. They have their own explanation on this subject: “Nakayama Miki,” so I was informed by the Tenrikyō teaching authority, “used so many names of Shintoistic gods in order to make the story of the creation comprehensible for the people with whom she lived. If she should have used other names, the simple and uneducated people of Yamato would never have understood her. Therefore, in order to accommodate herself to her audience, she used the names with which all people were already familiar. And thus they could more easily understand that divine revelation had come over her.” This is one explanation. A well-known liturgical manual says that government action was responsible.

“Since the restoration of our doctrine²⁾ was announced and together with the enormous change of the international situation, many people have insisted that we should wipe out completely the Shintoistic colour which has been put on Tenrikyō. Looking back at the past, it is indeed true that our sect was once for a short time under the control (jurisdiction) of Shintoism. At a time when the Government did not recognize any religion unless it belonged to Shintoism, Buddhism or Christianity, it was completely unavoidable to have a Shintoistic colour put all over our religion. However this never touched the core of our doctrine which is quite original.

At the present moment, many regulations are changing in our sect. The hierarchy has been abolished, and our priests are, henceforth, called: *Tenrikyō kyōshi* 天理教教師, or teachers of Tenrikyō. The Study Committee for the Ritual has been organized, and at the present moment many discussions are taking place on the reformation of ritual and ceremonial clothes.

1) *Tenrikyō Kyōten*, 天理教教典 p. 31.

2) They mean here: the *fukugen kyōgi* 復元教義, the restoration of the doctrine which took place two months after the end of last war, Oct., 1945.

Therefore, the time when a totally original and far reaching scheme has been developed and the so-called Shintoistic colour has been wiped out completely, will come soon."¹⁾

In the lines which follow I will try to show why I cannot agree with the author of this prayer book. To my mind many parts of their doctrine have been taken from Shintoism. A short time after the descent of *Tenri-Ō-no-Mikoto* on Nakayama Miki, she received another visit, this time from 10 different deities. The story goes that a big noise was heard above the ceiling of the room wherein the foundress slept. When she awoke she felt a sensation as if she had been placed under some heavy pressure. The deities who had forced themselves upon Miki's hospitality are the following :

1. *Kunitokotachi-no-Mikoto* which we find in the *Kojiki* 古事記 and written in the following characters: 國之常立尊, His Earthly Eternally Standing Augustness. However, Tenrikyō writes this deity with the following characters: 國床立命, indicating that he is the male Spirit of Foundation of this world. He is also known in Tenrikyō as *Kumimisadame-no-Mikoto* 國見定之命. According to the foundress, this deity guards the eye and water in all its forms, as moisture, vapour, rivers and seas. Of all things the water comes first and without it nothing could exist. He appears in heaven as the Moon and presides over the North. He has the form of a grand dragon with one head and one tail. In Buddhism he is called *Senju Shaka* 千珠釋迦²⁾.

1) *Tenrikyō Saibun Sakurei-shū* 天理教祭文作例集. Preface.

2) From *Seibun Iin* 正文遺韻, by Moroi Masaichi 諸井政一, p. 128. These identifications of the Shintō Gods with buddhas need some explanation:

When Buddhism came to Japan, the Buddhist priests—for the sake of an easier reception of the new creed—introduced the Shintō deities into their pantheon. In this way originated *Ryōbu Shintō* 兩部神道, dual or twofold Shintō, also called *Shinbutsu Konkō* 神佛混淆, a syncretism of Buddhism and Shintoism. The Shintō deities were considered merely so many avatars or temporary manifestations of Buddha. The first recorded instance of a Shintō deity being styled *bosatsu* 菩薩 (i.e. bodisattva) is that of the *Usa Hachiman* 宇佐八幡 in 783. Buddhas were considered the originals or prototypes in heaven whereas the Shintō deities were their earthly manifestations. They are one and the same in origin, the only difference being in their appearances. "All the heavenly and earthly deities, the ancestral deities, mountain-deities, and sea-deities are nothing else but different manifestations of the fundamentally true one. Therefore they are all manifestations of *Mida* (Skt. Amitayus and Amitabha) or *Dainichi* 大日 (Skt. Nahavairocana). For this reason, and others, in the doctrine of both *Tendai* and *Shingon* Sects, we meet the true original One from which spring all the different Shintō *kami* manifestations." (*Ryōbu-Shintō-Kuketsusō* 兩部神道口訣抄, Vol V., p. 13.)

The universe was considered as a manifestation of one truth under two categories: noumenal and phenomenal. Thus for instance, *Amaterasu*, the sun-goddess, became a Buddha under the

2. *Omotaru-no-Mikoto* which means according to the usual interpretation of *Kojiki* 古事記 His Perfect Exterior Augustness, but according to the Tenrikyō revelation we have to call this deity Her Weighty Augustness. She appears in the heaven as the Sun and rules over the South. She presides over fire and heat. She is represented with a Serpent with 12 heads and 3 tails with a sword at each end. Each of her 12 heads gives the protection to mankind. At the same time the 12 heads signify the 12 months of a year and the 12 hours of a day. This deity becomes after conception everyday heavier and heavier, and this is the reason why she got the name: *Omotaru* or growing in weight. She guards the warmth in human body. In Buddhism she is called *Sanson no Amida* 三尊之阿彌陀 and *Seishi Kannon* せいし観音.

These two deities which to my mind have been borrowed from the *kojiki*, form in Tenrikyō a *futatsu-bitotsu no ri* or a two-oneness. They form together *Tsuki-Hi* and they serve as the mother and the father of all human-kind. Through their protection only man can freely exist as he does at the present moment. The other 8 deities which follow, cannot claim a separate existence, but they have to be considered as the tools of *Tsuki-Hi*.

3. *Kunisazuchi-no-Mikoto* 國狹土命. According to the Shintō interpretation, His Augustness the Earthly Narrow Land. However, according to Tenrikyō she is a female deity and she presides over metals and over the skin and sinews of the human body, and all sorts of bindings and relationships. She is represented as a tortoise. This deity was used to serve as the first female organ. In the sky she is seen as the *Gensuke*-star. In Buddhism she is *Fugen Bosatsu* 普見菩薩 and *Daruma Daishi* 達磨大師.

4. *Tsukiyomi-no-Mikoto* which we find in the *kojiki* written as 月夜見尊, the Moon Dark Piercing Augustness, but who has been changed in the Tenrikyō interpretation as 月讀命, His Moon Reading Augustness. He is represented as a dolphin. He is vigorous and daring and serves, therefore,

name of *Dainichi Nyorai*, and the war-god *Hachiman* (*Ōjin Tennō*) was identified with Amida. It is highly interesting that in many instances the Shintō priests themselves came forward and proposed identifications. The application of similar dualisms was different according to different sects.

Nakayama Miki having been for a long time a devotee of the *Jōdo* sect, introduced dualisms as applied by the *Jōdo Shū*, however she has established also dualisms in her own way.

It is quite remarkable that in present day Tenrikyō we hear no more of any dualisms or identifications. My conversations with Tenrikyō theologians gave me the impression that they want to efface all vestiges of syncretism between Tenrikyō and Buddhism, at least in so far as the doctrine of this world's origin is concerned.

as the first male organ. He protects the bones in the human body. He appears in the heaven as the star *Hagun* 破軍 or the Great Bear, and he presides over the North-West. In Buddhism he is *Hachiman Bosatsu* 八幡菩薩 and *Shōtoku Taishi* 聖德太子.¹⁾

5. *Kumoyomi-no-Mikoto* 雲讀命, Her Cloud Reading Augustness. It is a female deity and her figure is like that of an eel. If we try to catch this with our hand, she slips easily through our fingers. This seems to be the reason why this deity governs all the human movements of entry and exiting, eating and drinking. In the heaven she appears as the morning star. She assists mankind in evading suffering. In Buddhism she is called *Monju Bosatsu* 文殊菩薩 and *Yakushi Nyorai* 藥師如來. In the petition for the Government recognition of Tenrikyō, this name was dropped because it was completely foreign to Shintō cosmogony. They substituted the name: *Toyokumunu-no-Mikoto* 豊斟淳尊. However, since the end of the last war the first reading has been revived.

6. *Kashikone-no-Mikoto* 惶根尊, which means Her Augustness the Awe Inspiring Lady and she is the consort of *Omotaru-no-Mikoto*. However, in Tenrikyō the sex has been changed and she has become a male deity who presides over inhalation and exhalation of human breath and over the wind. His earthly representation is that of a flat-fish. This association with the flat-fish is apparently due to the resemblance of this fish to a fan which naturally suggests air in motion. Through the help of this deity we are told that we can breathe and speak. In Buddhism he is identified with *Dainichi Nyorai* 大日如來 and *Hōnen Shōnin* 法然上人.

7. *Taishokuten-no-Mikoto* 大食天命,²⁾ which means according to the Tenrikyō interpretation Her Augustness the Great Eating Heavenly King. Her figure is that of a poisonous globe-fish. Consequently this deity governs the death of mankind. When Tenrikyō applied for Government recognition, this deity was dropped from the list and they substituted instead *Ōtonoji no Mikoto* 大戸之道尊. It is extremely noteworthy for Tenrikyō's far-reaching accommodation to current trends that during the last war this name had been

1) Shōtoku Taishi (A.D. 573-621) is the posthumous name given to *Umayado no Ōji* 厩戸皇子, a prince to whose patronage the early success of Japanese Buddhism is largely attributable.

2) This name is not found in the *Kojiki*, but has been taken most probably from the Buddhist name: 帝釋天 *Taishakuten*, the mighty Lord of Devas.

changed again into *Ōhirume-no-Mikoto* 大日靈尊, which is after all the same as *Amaterasu Ō Mikami*. In Buddhism she is called *Kokū Bosatsu* 虛空菩薩 and *Myōken Bosatsu* 妙見菩薩.

8. *Ōtonobe-no-Mikoto*, which we find in the Shintō literature written as 大戸之邊尊¹⁾ and which we can translate as Her Augustness the Lord of the Great Place. Tenrikyō changes again the sex and writes this deity as 大斗之辨命. He presides over human deliveries and governs at the same time the germination of crops. In the heaven he appears as the evening star. In Buddhism he is identified with *Fudō Myō-Ō* 不動命王²⁾ and *Kōbō Daishi* 弘法大師.

9. *Izanagi-no-Mikoto* 伊邪那岐命, His Augustness the Male deity who invites. He presides over paternity and he is represented by a merman and he is a deity of the male sex. In the Tenrikyō story of the creation he had the most important duty as we have seen before. It is rather peculiar that Tenrikyō identifies this God with *Amaterasu Ō Mikami*, which is of course totally different from the Shintoistic interpretation. He appears in the sky as the *Tanabata* star, or the Vega.

10. *Izanami-no-Mikoto* 伊邪那美命, Her Augustness the female deity who invites. She presides over maternity and the germination of seeds. She has the form of a white snake. Her great task in the creation of mankind was to serve as womb for the human seeds. She is also associated with the *Tanabata* star, or the Vega.

After the foregoing close look at these ten deities, we may safely conclude that Tenrikyō's story of the creation is Shintoistic through and through. Now that we are going to treat the other parts of the Tenrikyō doctrine, we will see that Tenrikyō's spectrum has still many other colours to show.

Kashimono Karimono

Since God is our creator, then we cannot claim anything as being our own property, and thus follows another central theme of Tenrikyō, namely its teaching about *Kashimono karimono* かしものかりもの, (things lent and borrowed). "People live as if all the treasures, joys, our body and all that

1) There are 6 other different ways of writing this same deity. She is the spouse of *Ōtonoji no Mikoto*.

2) It is a special term of the Shingon Sect, applied to its most important Bodhisattva.

they possess are their own property completely. Acting in this way is nothing else but breaking the harmony and order of the universe, society and the family. In thus doing we have betrayed the will of God and then God will warn us in various ways, by sending us sickness and other adversities. We should look, therefore, at all these troubles and sufferings as warnings and signs of God by which He guides us and by which He opens our minds to the truth.”¹⁾

Nakayama Miki taught that our human body is something that we have received from God only as a loan, and consequently God can do with us as He pleases. “The greatest scholar or the most powerful dictator in this world could never make use of his body as he pleases. In order to please God we should make use of our body as long as possible, being extremely careful not to harm it through sickness. When we die, we should return our body to God with much gratitude.”²⁾ The texts in the canonical writings about *Kashimono karimono* are legion: “All human beings are loans from God and I really wonder whether people think of it when they use it.”—*Ofudesaki*, III, 41.

“Man is a loan from God. Therefore, I, God the Parent, can do with it just as it pleases Me. Have you never realized this truth?”—*Ofudesaki*, III, 126.

“If you cannot understand the truth that your bodies are nothing but a loan from God, you can understand nothing.”—*Ofudesaki*, III, 137.

“Men are all loans from *Tsuki-Hi*.”—*Ofudesaki*, VI, 120.

“What do people think of the following story: They are all loans from *Tsuki-Hi* and therefore they are His children.”—*Ofudesaki*, XIII, 46.

In *Osashizu* おさしづ we find the following texts:

“The bodies of men are indeed a loan from Me. Only your mind belongs to you.”
—*June 1, 1889*³⁾

“You have borrowed your body from Me. Only your mind is your own property and the workings of your mind shall influence your body.”
—*Feb. 14, 1889.*

1) Vide *Tenrikyō to wa* 天理教とは, by Hashimoto Takeshi 橋本武, p. 15.

2) Vide Op. Cit. pp. 13-14.

3) Since the *Osashizu* おさしづ is more or less in the form of a chronological record, the texts are generally quoted by dates.

The catechetical explanation of the above mentioned holy script is the following: “The exquisite structure and the delicate functions of our human body have not been devised by our parents. They are not set in motion by our own strength. On the contrary, all these things are graces and favours due to God’s protection and benevolence.”¹⁾

While the above words of the *Tenrikyō Kyōten*, and especially its ponderous exegesis, suggest very strongly a creation by a personal God, with the following words of the same Tenrikyō catechism we enter rather a pantheistic atmosphere: “That we have been born and that we can live peacefully in this world is due to the fact that we are constantly nursed by God’s warm and merciful bosom which is the embrace of heaven and earth.”²⁾

After this pantheistic digression the *Tenrikyō Kyōten* proceeds: “Consequently it is not only due to God’s preservation of heat and moisture but also due to His other careful guidances that we can make free use of our body.” However, this use is not unconditional, but only when we use our body according to God’s will. The text tries to explain this with the following words: “However boastful we may be of our strength and knowledge, when we become sick we shall be confined to our bed and we shall suffer from fever, and thus we are completely deprived of the free use of our body. If we ponder over these things we will certainly understand the truth that our bodies are only loans from God.”

“Since such is the case with our bodies, we must use them according to God’s divine intention. However, we often forget this truth and we make use of our bodies only for our selfish purposes. By doing so we will lose God’s protection and consequently we shall fall sick.”³⁾ In all sorts of variations we meet this idea in Tenrikyō that if we leave the right path, our bodies more than our souls become stained with various diseases.

We read for instance in *Tenrikyō Kyōten Kōwa* 天理教教典講話: “We do not live by our own power, but we are, so to say, lived in or kept in life (made to live) by God (*ikasarete iru* 生かされている). However, only too often people think that they live by their own strength. And this great fallacy brings over us diseases and unhappiness. However, unless we grasp

1) *Tenrikyō Kyōten*, p. 65.

2) *Op. Cit.* p. 65.

3) *Tenrikyō Kyōten*, p. 65-66.

the truth that our human body is something borrowed (*mijō karimono no ri* 身上かりものの理) we shall never enjoy the true happiness and we shall suffer from diseases and miseries of all kinds.”¹⁾ And we read in *The Outline of Tenrikyō*: “Bodily ailment is an act of injunction by the Parent against the unnatural action of man who tries to make selfish use of what he has only borrowed, according to the reason of the ego; it is a taboo the Parent has placed on free use of what He has given in trust. That we can not dispose of disease or misfortune after our own will, no matter how much we may try, chafe, fret or fume or strive, is the proof that our body is a thing, not of our own, but borrowed.”²⁾

The energetic spokesman of Tenrikyō writes: “If you understand that we have borrowed our bodies from God, then you will come quite naturally to the realization that our bodies will get out of order when we use them arbitrarily against the will of God. And this disorder we call sickness or disease.”³⁾

So far we have seen the Tenrikyō teaching about our bodies being loans from God. It is considered to be a central theme of Tenrikyō and the religious professors exalt this truth to such an extent that they declare: “No religion has gone so far in proclaiming man’s complete dependence on God.” We read for instance in *Tenrikyō Nyūmon* 天理教入門: “The old religions also preach that clothes, food and shelter are given by God or Buddha, but they have not gone so far in their teaching as to state that the human body is a loan from God.”⁴⁾ If the author should have studied only for one day the Christian teaching about God’s absolute and constant preservation necessary for our existence, that if He should withdraw but for one moment this preservation, every existent being and consequently also man, would instantly cease to exist and vanish into naught, surely if the distinguished author should have known this Christian teaching, he would never have written the above lines. For the very existence of man his very esse is a continuation of his creation. Man has borrowed being itself.

While our bodies are loans from God, we have only one faculty over which we can dispose freely, namely our mind. When everwe make wrong

1) *Tenrikyō Kyōten Kōwa*, by Tashiro Takuji 田代澤治, p. 653.

2) Op. Cit. p. 195.

3) *Tenrikyō Nyūmon* 天理教入門, by Fukaya Tadamasa 深谷忠政, p. 12.

4) Op. Cit. p. 12.

use of this faculty we pile up dust on our soul, and herewith we have come to another important theme of Tenrikyō's teaching.

Hokori

I shall first give here various texts of the canonical writings about the different kinds of dust, which Miki considered to be the source of all unhappiness of mankind.

"I have looked round all over the world and I have gone all through the history, but I have found nothing which is essentially evil."—*Ofudesaki*, I, 52.

"Indeed there is nothing which is essentially evil, but there is only dust which covers merely the surface."—*Ofudesaki*, I, 53.

"Now a start has been made to clean the hearts of all the people in the world, and in this undertaking God will serve as broom."—*Ofudesaki*, III, 52.

"If you have been cleansed completely from dust, then you shall receive miraculous salvation."—*Ofudesaki*, III, 98.

"Any kind of pains and sufferings, any kind of fever and any kind of loose bowels are caused only by *hokori*."—*Ofudesaki*, VI, 10.

"Wash away all evils and save us, o *Tenri-Ō-no-Mikoto*.

Sweep away all iniquity and save us, God of Divine Wisdom."—*Prologue of Mikagura Uta*.

"When you speak ill of others, then dust will be aroused and your path through life will become more narrow."—*Osashizu*, Feb. 6, 1890.

"Reserve and scruples are causes of dust."—*Osashizu*, June 14, 1901.

In the Tenrikyō catechism we do find some material about the different kinds of dust. For completeness' sake, I will let it follow here: "We, human beings, often being ignorant of the truth of our dependence on God, sometimes think that we can do just as we like and make a wrong use of our mind for selfish purposes against the will of God, Who is so anxious that all mankind should live harmoniously together. God compares such a wrong use of our mind with dust. Of course this dust is not such a serious thing, because we can blow it off easily. The sooner we start with cleaning, the easier the work. If we do not give it the necessary attention, however, it accumulates to such an extent that the cleaning will be a tremendous under-

taking.”¹⁾

“Thanks to God’s blessings we can make free use of our minds. However, if we should do this against His Will, a towering pile of dust forms itself on our minds. In this way—we can even be quite unaware of it—our minds will become extremely clouded and they will lose their original purity. Finally our minds can become so dirty that our situation will become completely hopeless. Such a perversion of mind is called dust. These kinds of dust will annoy others and will disturb the peace of the world. For this reason God taught us to reflect on ourselves constantly and never to hesitate in sweeping the dust from our minds.”²⁾

“In order to assist us in the cleansing of our minds, God warns us through the following different red lights: *oshii* 惜しい (stinginess), *boshii* 欲しい (greed), *nikui* 憎い (hatred), *kawai* (partiality), *urami* 怨 (animosity), *haradachi* 腹立ち (anger), *yoku* 欲 (covetousness) and *kōman* 高慢 (arrogance). Besides God told us: ‘I dislike lies and flatteries.’ Having mercy on these perversions of our mind, God warns us through sickness and other troubles, in order that we should start with the cleansing of our mind. In doing so He wants to bring us to a bright and joyful life. When we have swept away all the dust, God shall grant us His miraculous salvation, and consequently we shall no more become ill or weakened, but we shall always enjoy splendid health.”³⁾

In many Tenrikyō books we hear the constant melody with numerous variations that it is extremely difficult, nay practically impossible to keep ourselves completely free from dust. Therefore, we have to be constantly on our guard, and we must be always active in removing this dust from our mind. In order to bring home this truth more forcibly, the Tenrikyō believers are exhorted to clean their temples and their own houses thoroughly. If one goes to the Tenrikyō Headquarters in Tenri Shi, one can witness the minute cleaning of the enormous temples and their surroundings at least twice a day. Wherever you enter in any one of the *tsumesho*’s 詰所, the great boarding houses for the reception of hundreds of thousands of pilgrims in Tenri Shi, everywhere it is spotlessly clean: indeed a great

1) *Tenrikyō Kyōten* 天理教教典, p. 67.

2) Op. Cit. p. 68.

3) *Tenrikyō Kyōten*, p. 68–69.

achievement especially in Japan.

It will already be clear to the readers that there is an enormous difference between the Christian conception of sin and its counterpart in Tenrikyō, the 8 kinds of dust. The teaching authorities at Tenri Shi often stress this difference and they exalt their own conception of human weakness. “Here we can see clearly the difference of our foundress’ view on sin from the view taken by other religions. She did not look at these sins and weaknesses as something horrifying but she merely said: it is only dust that touches the outer surface.”¹⁾ “Those who are outside Tenrikyō, call the human weaknesses evils, imperfections or sins and harmful to human society. However, God the Parent did not wish to hurt His children by calling these human weaknesses such hideous names, and therefore He revealed through Miki that they are merely dust which touches us only at the outside.”²⁾

I can see their point, but to my mind there is a grave misunderstanding in so far as they fail to realize that there are two very devastating things which happen to those who come into contact with Christianity and with Christ: an overwhelming sense of shame and at the same time a glorious feeling of liberation. Yet curiously enough, in the lines which follow immediately in the same text, Tenrikyō doctrine comes very near Christianity when they propound: “Sickness and all kinds of sufferings are only holy signs of God’s Heart, burning full of parental love toward us. If we understand this, we will take all these adversities as so many signals that we must search our conscience. Looked at from this point of view, we will never fear sickness or adversity, but we will use them as means for rebuilding us spiritually.”³⁾

But then again, they veer off to unexplored regions, when they state: “After having cleansed ourselves from all dusts, then we can easily reach the age of 115 years in perfect health and without any illness.”⁴⁾ This alludes to the holy text from *Ofudesaki*: “God wishes intensely that we should reach the age of 115 years.”⁵⁾ Of the contention that we all shall reach this age when the fullness of time has come, I will treat later.

1) *Tenrikyō Kyōten Kōwa* 天理教典講話, by Tashiro Takuji, p. 59.

2) *Tenrikyō Yōgi* 天理教要義, by Ikoma Fujio, p. 188.

3) *Op. Cit.* p. 192.

4) *Op. Cit.* p. 194.

5) *Ofudesaki*, III, 300.

In the 8 kinds of dust, mentioned before, we see clearly the Japanese characteristic, that of avoiding any analytic approach and clear distinctions. The Western mind with its analytic power delights in sharply defined distinctions and clear-cut divisions without any overlapping of categories. There is nothing of this in Tenrikyō teaching. They are concerned with concrete reality and they have a great distaste for pure speculation and analytical separations. Hence the constant overlapping of the different points and the merging into each other, as we can perceive in the explanation of the 8 kinds of dust, such as propounded by the greatest Tenrikyō theologian, Moroi Masaichi, and of which I will give here a translation in slightly condensed form :

“ 1. *Hoshii*, greed.

This means (1) to desire more than we deserve, (2) to desire more than we can afford and (3) to desire something which other people possess. In such cases we are forgetful of our own status in life and we will always be dissatisfied; this perversion of our mind we call *hokori* of greed. Whenever a desire comes up in our hearts, we have first to reflect upon our own standing and whether we can afford such things. If not, we have simply to cut down our desires, for if we allow them to go on, they will seduce us to criminal acts. If we go on buying beyond our financial capacity, then many dusts will come over our mind.

2. *Oshii*, stinginess.

This means (1) to be reluctant to pay our taxes and other public duties, (2) to be reluctant to return what we have borrowed, and (3) to be reluctant to lend to those who are in need. It is also the dust of *oshii* if we dislike to give presents to our close relatives and friends when convention asks us to do so. We also call it *oshii* whenever we lack the necessary liberality, and whenever we are unwilling to give alms to people who are in distress. It is also a clear sign that the dust of *oshii* has come over us, if we do not sacrifice our own time for the sake of others. However, our idea of *oshii* goes still further. If after some generous deed we should feel sorry that we have given so much, in such a case also the dust of stinginess has come over us.

3. *Kawai*, partiality.

It is quite natural that every human being should have affections. However, we should not be overwhelmed by them or give them only to certain people. For instance, a great love for one's own child will spoil it. Such a blind love of parents for their children robs other children of affections which we owe them also. An exaggerated love for a girl can destroy a man completely. This kind of partiality affects many people, and therefore it is a great sin (*tsumi* 罪).

4. *Nikui*, hatred.

This happens when we hate an innocent person for the simple reason that we feel a kind of antipathy towards him. It is also the dust of *nikui*, if we hate people who have unknowingly offended us. We find this unfortunately too often in a mother-in-law's hatred for the bride, and in the hatred of a step-mother for her step-children. All these wrong attitudes belong to this kind of dust. We should have a great love for all mankind, because we are all brothers and sisters.

5. *Urami*, animosity.

When our feelings are stirred up because our plans have been thwarted, then the dust of *urami* has come over us. It is also *urami* when we grumble because other people are unkind to us. It belongs also to the dust of *urami* if we misinterpret the kindness of others. If we dislike unfriendly acts committed through carelessness, then also we will be covered with the dust of *urami*. If we ascribe our own failure and shortcomings to other people's actions, then again the dust of *urami* has come over us. Especially if we harbour ill-feelings towards a friend who has told us the truth about our shortcomings; by doing so we commit the sin of *urami*.

6. *Haradachi*, anger.

This dust will come over us if we become angry because someone has told us things distasteful to us. It is still worse if we become angry because somebody has made a careless mistake. If we get into a temper when a minor unpleasant thing occurs to us, then the dust of *haradachi* has beset us. If we are lacking in generosity and patience, this shortcoming will result

in *haradachi*-dust. For instance if a husband gets angry toward his wife and children because they did not serve him enough. There are even people who explode in such a scolding that they become almost unbearable and all this because somebody has made a careless mistake. Let everyone take it to heart that such mistakes cannot be avoided completely, and that we have simply to bear them as situations brought upon us by God.

7. *Yoku*, covetousness.

If we want to dress up better than others the dust of *yoku* will come over us. The same will happen if we go out for material profit in an unreasonable way. If a man is covered with this kind of dust he will have an insatiable desire for ever more possessions. People of this kind will even try to make great profits in times of distress, war or other calamities.

8. *Kōman*, arrogance.

If we exalt our own knowledge and if we pretend to know many things with which we are unfamiliar, then the dust of *kōman* will come over us. All kinds of snobbery also belong to *kōman*. If one goes his own way, whether it is reasonable or not, if we deny the statements of others and if we criticize more than necessary, then we commit the sin of *kōman*. Arrogance is most certainly a serious dust, for when we are covered with it we have not the courage to make apologies, and we get angry at the slightest pretext. If a woman is a beauty and she is so proud of her appearance that she behaves like a queen with respect to others. More or less the same thing happens if a man thinks himself very clever or powerful.”¹⁾

In the above translation I have given Tenrikyō’s moral theology in its entirety. More material on this subject does not exist. The scarcity of the subject matter—I was informed at the headquarters—is only attributable to the fact that theirs is a young religion. Besides during the last war much material with regard to their doctrine was burned. This did not happen through enemy action, but they themselves destroyed nearly all their religious sources, apparently under Government pressure. During the last war the Tenrikyō teaching did not fall in line with the then rampant exaggerated imperial and imperialistic Shintoism. The Tenrikyō teaching

1) Vide, Moroi Masaichi, Op. Cit. pp. 159-170.

authority is at the present moment working on the subject and within some 50 years they expect to have developed a moral doctrine accommodated to time and circumstances. To that end they study diligently the moral teaching of the world's great religions. When I visited the great library at Tenri Shi I was impressed by the rich collection of books they possess on Catholic and Protestant theology.

Their Doctrine of Reincarnation

It is quite remarkable that on the subject of predestination and reincarnation, the article of faith to which we have come now, practically nothing has been written in the present-day Tenrikyō catechism. Yet, it is a central theme and a most important article of their faith, often mentioned by the foundress during her life and still more so by Master Iburi. The Tenrikyō propounders themselves give for the extreme abbreviation of this Tenrikyō dogma in their catechism the following reason: "In whatever way you may look at it, this subject about wrongs committed in a previous life, is something dark, something which burdens man and something which gives him a gloomy outlook. However, we have to teach people the joy of a bright living and therefore we must mention it as little as possible."¹⁾

What strange reasoning in the realm of belief! Here again steps in the spirit of compromise which I mentioned before. They do not see the point that although such a behaviour might be reasonable in the realm of politics or business, it can never work in the field of religion. Of course I do not doubt their absolute honesty, and one cannot but have respect for their good intentions. Moreover, in addition to this spirit of compromise, there is nowadays another element which works more or less in the same direction.

Japan is at the present moment, in so far as her intellectual life is con-

1) "Once the preaching touches this subject, our hearts become darkened and we can no more go on listening in high spirits. Did the readers not experience the same sadness? Have you not become overwhelmed by melancholy when you heard this story of causation? If we repeat this article of faith over and over again, we will gradually become disgusted with all our preachings, even to such an extent that we will renounce the Tenrikyō faith completely. In such a case, one may think, it would have been better never to have mentioned it."

"One believer complained: 'When I heard for the first time this story, I felt as if I were caught in a cob-web. If one is in such a state, how is it possible that one should be bright! I often think, I should have been much happier, if I had never heard this story at all.'" (*Michino-Tomo*, September, 1953, pp. 30 & 22).

cerned, in an extremely perplexed situation. There are on one side the voices and beckonings of the past. Those they would like to follow instinctively. In so far as Tenrikyō is concerned this shows itself clearly in the numerous speeches of the Patriarch in which he exhorts the faithful to a 復元 *fukugen*, restoration of the spirit of old. Yet, with the same instinct they feel that one cannot bypass Christianity, or proclaim loudly teachings which are in direct opposition to this greatest of all world religions. In between are also the wooings of Western life and Western culture which are in their minds somehow connected with Christianity—which is of course only partly true.

Buddhists, Shintoists and Tenrikyō people alike, feel the need for some kind of readjustment in order that the things of the past: habits, customs and beliefs, may fit in, in some way or other with the novelties from the West. This need for readjustment works differently in different religions, but it seems to me that this pushing in the background of Tenrikyō's reincarnation doctrine stems partly also from this desire to bridge the chasms between the past and the highly modern present.

The texts in the canonical writings with regard to the doctrine of reincarnation and all that belongs to it, are numerous:

“All men are children of God. God gives them warnings through *innen* 因縁 because He loves them so much.”—*Osashizu*, Nov. 20, 1887.

“You will probably not know what *innen* is. Consider the world as a mirror. Although man reincarnates constantly, your body reflects the works of your mind.”
—*Osashizu*, Feb. 15, 1888.

“If nothing has been accomplished, this is certainly due to *innen*. If things do not go as we have planned, this is also due to *innen*.”

—*Osashizu*, Dec. 18, 1890.

“Consider very well the *innen* in the relationship between parents and child, for it is all due to *innen* whether one's child is good or bad.”

—*Osashizu*, Mar. 11, 1891

“We must go through all kinds of *innen*. We simply cannot escape it.”

—*Osashizu*, May 20, 1891

“Everybody must understand what *innen* is. If you resign yourself to *innen* as to your fate, you will never escape its grasp.”

—*Osashizu*, Jan. 30, 1892

“It is a good penance for the *innen* of our previous lives if we persevere and accept all kinds of unbearable things. The *innen* of our previous lives can only be erased in this way.”
—*Osashizu*, Mar. 23, 1899

“Do not think that a man lives only one life. He will be reborn over and over again. Hark and listen carefully: your offspring will inherit the consequences of your previous lives.”

—*Osashizu*, Oct. 3, 1900

“If we should resign ourselves to the thought that nothing can be avoided because of *innen*, then we will get nowhere.”

—*Osashizu*, Dec. 22, 1903

So far the texts of the holy script which are more or less understandable. I could give here numerous other quotations but they will be as meaningless to the reader as they are to the author. They are so misty and hazy and so inconceivable; they consist of such an unintelligible jargon (at least for the Western mind) that I should nearly say: of all the vagaries which the human mind has evolved from its inner consciousness, the palm must surely be given to the mass of rules for the guidance of the Tenrikyō believer in *innen*. Besides, Tenrikyō's *innen* doctrine carries already such a barnacle encrustation of commentators, that one sometimes wonders whether this wing of their dogmatic edifice will not eventually come down under the sheer weight of its ponderous and voluminous exegesis, or at least will change its outward appearance considerably.

It is extremely difficult to me to find the right English equivalent for this Buddhist term. It consists of the two characters: 因緣, cause or causes, in Sanskrit *Hetupratyaya*. *Hetu* 因 is primary cause, *pratyaya* 緣 is secondary cause or causes, e.g. a seed is 因, rain, dew, farmer, etc. are 緣. Perhaps, we may call it in English, destiny, predestination or perhaps better: effects, produced through our behaviour in former existences. We are here of course completely on Buddhist ground and I do not see an essential difference between Tenrikyō's teaching and the Buddhist doctrine of transmigration in its crude form. I mean the belief that when the soul departs from the body, it simply changes its abode from one body to another. The nature of the new body is more or less determined by the character and conduct of the soul during its occupation of the body which it has just left. I do not see either an essential difference between Tenrikyō's *innen* and the Bud-

dhist idea of *karma* 業.¹⁾

We should not wonder about the fact that Tenrikyō's teaching on this subject is Buddhistic through and through. We know from the previous chapter that Miki has been from her early childhood a devout believer in Buddhism. However, here also Tenrikyō makes slight changes and introduces new technical terms. The term, by which a Tenrikyō believer expresses his (temporary) leave of this world, is *denaoshi* 出直し. We do not die, but we come back. We read in their obituaries: "Mr. so and so *denaoshimashita* 出直しました." Miki said: "*Denaoshi* is just like taking off old clothes and putting on new ones." One of the leading teachers of Tenrikyō writes in a Tenrikyō magazine, "*Yōki* 陽氣," how an old devout believer spoke about *denaoshi*: "My second son *denaoshita* (died) soon after he came back from China where he had been a Tenrikyō missionary. God must have made him *denaosu*, because we acted against God's will, calling him back from the continent where he had the divine mission to

1) It may perhaps be a little clarifying if we compare the *innen* and *karma* idea with what we call heredity. Between these two there are certainly some similarities. H. Warren makes an enlightening comparison between two different eggs as we read in his "Buddhism in Translations" (p. 210-12). "Why cannot a swallow's egg hatch out a lark? or a lark's a swallow? Is there any difference perceptible between the two eggs in respect of composition or structure, adequate to account for the difference in the result? If not, how is it that the egg of the lark will never hatch out into any other kind of a bird than a lark, and that a swallow's egg must always yield a swallow? Now although it is true that if we take the eggs before the first sign of an embryo has appeared we may not be able to detect any physical or chemical difference that would seem to account for the difference in the result, yet we know the why and wherefore of that difference. A swallow's egg cannot hatch out a lark because of the difference in heredity. The countless influences that affected the ancestors of that egg, and the numberless actions performed under those influences are in some mysterious way stored up in that egg, and must bear their own fruit and none other. Therefore a swallow's egg cannot hatch out a lark, because a lark is the result of an entirely different set of conditions; as we might say, its *karma* is different. But of course the Buddhists do not mean heredity when they use the word *karma*. *Karma* expresses, not that which a man inherits from his ancestors, but that which he inherits from himself in some previous state of existence. But with this difference the Buddhist doctrine and the scientific doctrine of heredity seem very similar.

Not all deeds, however, are fruitful and perpetuate existence. *Karma* is like heredity in that it is an informing principle which must have an embodiment. Just as the informing principle of an egg would never find expression without the accompaniment of yolk, albumen, and other material constituents, so *karma* embeds itself in objects of desire in order to form that factitious entity which goes by the name of man. If *karma* be performed in a state of pure passionlessness, that is, without attachment to anything, then it is barren. The fruitful *karma* will be quickly undermined and not suffered to bear the full fruit it otherwise would have done. Like a tree whose nourishment has been poisoned, the being who performs such *karma* will cease to be. Thus a being without *karma* is as arbitrary a conception as a chicken without heredity, that is, one formed by a creative fiat independent of antecedent conditions."

save the Chinese people. Then the next year, I visited my third son, in Ōsaka. When I saw the face of his wife who greeted me at the door, I said: 'Ah! he is going to be born by you. That is wonderful!' Surprised at these words, she protested: 'No, father, I do not think so, for I have no symptoms of it.' Yet, after all, a boy was born, just as I said. Soon, they came to see us with the new born baby. When they entered the room of my house, the baby looked upward and turned his head round and round. As he went on uninterruptedly, they hastily came to call me in the Church. When I arrived, he was still turning his head round. Then I said: 'Ah! just as I told you. He is my *denaoshita* (dead) second son. And he is just looking around, having come back to his old cozy home. Now let us pray.' And at once, he kept his head quiet."¹⁾

How is this *denaoshi* explained in Tenrikyō? They firmly believe that our soul is immortal and therefore when the body dies, the soul goes on with its life. But where? Well, it is very simple. Returning our body to our Creator, our immortal soul borrows again a new body, and according to the foundress' teaching—and here we see again the slight difference with the original Buddhist teaching—we shall borrow a new body in accordance with the way in which our mind (*kokoro* 心)—the only faculty with which we can work according to our free will—has worked in our life. These various works of our mind will be evaluated by God the Parent and we receive our new body accordingly.

Consequently Tenrikyō seems to make a distinction between mind and soul which Buddhism does not.²⁾ The receiving of new bodies goes on indefinitely, and here again we see a difference with Buddhism and their doctrine of Six Ways, or still better, Six Classes of Beings: *jigoku* 地獄, hell (Sk. *Naraka*),³⁾ *gaki* 餓鬼, hungry spirits (Sk. *pretaloka* or *pitrisaya*)⁴⁾, *chiku-*

1) *Yōki*, June, 1952, pp. 22-23.

2) "Here I should like to touch upon the problem of our *tamashii* 魂, soul. We believe that the soul leaves our body when it dies. But where will it be going to? Nobody knows. God the Parent has seldom given revelations on this subject; much more often He refers to our *kokoro*." *Michi no Tomo* 道の友, September, 1953, p. 17.

3) Divided into eight burning hells and eight cold ones. On each of the four sides of every burning hell there are four smaller ones, i.e. sixteen around the margins of the eight, making a total of 136. The picture which Buddhism draws of the lot of the beings in these various hells surpasses any imagination. The tortures mentioned makes Dante's *Inferno* like a quiet fairy tale. On various *kakemono's* 掛物 I have seen pictures of these Buddhist hell inhabitants, horrible beyond imagination.

4) The realm of hungry ghosts has two great divisions; one being located under Mt. Sumeru

shō 畜生, beasts (Sk. *tiryag yonigata*),¹⁾ *shura* 修羅, fighting and bloodshed (Sk. Asura),²⁾ *ningen* 人間, man (Sk. *manusyaloka*),³⁾ and *tenjō* 天上, heavenly beings (Sk. *devaoka*).⁴⁾ Of these 6 realms of beings, Tenrikyō seems to have accepted into their cycle of existences only *chikusbō* and *ningen*. When the question was put to the foundress whether the number of human beings had increased or decreased since the first creation, she replied that since many animals have been reborn as human beings thanks to their good deeds, the number of men has increased.⁵⁾ Besides, one of the most authoritative propounders of Tenrikyō writes: "It happens that man, neglectful of God's benevolent love, has to pay back to God a debt far beyond his capacity. In such a case God the Parent has to degrade him to the status of horse or cow."⁶⁾ However, these are exceptions. According to Tenrikyō's teaching we are generally reborn again only as other human beings.

Consequently they deny also the last realm of heavenly beings, into which Buddhist speculation places all the gods and superhuman beings of Brahmanism and other religions and which is again subdivided into numerous

but above hell, and the other above the surface of the earth in the air near the base of the mountain. The characteristics of beings in this realm are greed and passion which exist in various degrees.

1) There are 3,400,000,000 different kinds, including birds, beasts, dragons, serpents, shells, worms, insects, etc., creatures differing in their manner of birth, mode of existence, appearance, organs of locomotion, manner of feeding, etc. There are birds that feed on flesh like beasts, others devour their own species, and in general we may say that "they suffer untold agonies in mutual strife and slaughter."

2) These *shuras* like fighting and bloodshed. The Asuras are sometimes regarded as devas, because they are so strong; sometimes they are classified as Pretas and sometimes as animals, because their forms are very like the latter. The Asuras are sometimes engaged in making war with Sakro-devanam-indrah, the king of the Heaven of 33 Cities. Pride, strife and cruelty are the characteristics of beings in this realm.

3) For human habitations we have the four continents (Sk. *caturdvipako lokadbatub*) in the salt seas surrounding the foot of Mount Sumeru—to the East of the mountain Purvavideha (Jap. *Tōhō-tsubadai* 東弗婆提, lit. excellent body in the East), to the West Avaragodaniya (Jap. *Saikuyani* 西瞿耶尼, lit. the land in the West where the people use cattle for money), to the North Uttarakuru (Jap. *Hokkurijū* 北俱盧洲, lit. the excellent land in the North), and to the South Jambudvipa (Jap. *Nanembudai* 南閻浮提, lit. the continent where grows the jamboo tree). Of the four, the northern continent is the most excellent, for the inhabitants live a perfectly peaceful life, in a perfect congenial environment. But this seeming good turns out to their disadvantage; for living as they do in comfort, they have no noble spirit of aspiration. This is why a Buddha is never born there, and so birth into this land is counted one of the eight misfortunes of men.

4) There are twenty-eight heavenly regions in all, which may be classified under three heads—(A) those of the world of desire, (B) those of the ethereal world, and (C) those of the non-material world.

5) Vide *Seibun Iin*, p. 279.

6) *Seibun Iin*, p. 210.

divisions, heaven rising above heaven in endless numbers. All these beings, from the lowest hell to the highest heaven are bound together by the law of transmigration.

“ Beings pass from one state to another, either up or down, according to the law of merit and demerit. If merit outweighs demerit, a being will be born into a higher state, and if demerit is the greater, the birth will be in a lower state. No state is a permanent condition. Even the beings which have obtained birth into the highest heaven are still in the clutches of the law of *Karma* and Transmigration. Their life may be a happy one and it may last for thousands of years, but at the end of that time, unless they heap up further merit, they are doomed to sink again in the ‘ scale of beings.’ The very bliss of the highest heaven makes their lot all the worse when they must leave it. Such a being is said to suffer sixteen times more than beings in the lowest of hells, ‘ for only a King can mourn the loss of a kingdom.’ ‘ If man does not cut the coils of evil deeds, he is doomed eternally to drift about in this ocean of life and death. The beings in the Six Ways, then, are one and all still bound to the Wheel of Life and compelled to wander about in the ‘ dreadful cycle of existence.’ ”¹⁾

Once again Tenrikyō does not agree with these fantastic speculations. They have their own dreadful cycle of existence and as far as I conceive a cycle turning round and round in the realms of ordinary human beings only. (The reincarnation into an animal is a great exception.) Their final way of escape are not the four stages of enlightenment: the *shisei* 四聖²⁾ as in Buddhism. Their fulfillment and final goal consists in becoming human beings who will reach over and over again in this world the age of 115 years. These messianic times will have arrived when people have become completely cleansed from the 8 kinds of dust, and when the *kanro* 甘露, the sweet dew has come down from above, and when the real *kanrodai* 甘露臺, the real Sacred Column will have been built. (The present *kanrodai* is only a provisional one.) Then the people will be perfectly happy, immovably fixed in virtue and goodness. Then neither temples nor prayers will any more be necessary. Sickness and troubles will have ceased to exist and every-

1) From Studies in Japanese Buddhism, by Reischauer, pp. 206-7.

2) (1) *shōmon* 聲聞, hearers (Sk. *Sravaka*), (2) *enkaaku* 緣覺, enlightened one (Sk. *Pratyeka Buddha*), (3) *bosatsu* 菩薩, Bodhisattva (Sk. *Bodhisattva*), (4) *butsu* 佛, Buddha (Sk. *Buddha*).

body will enjoy perfect health. Then, the age of 115 years being reached, the garment of our body will be peacefully and serenely laid down and a brand new one will be put on. This cycle will be turning round and round for all eternity here on this very world which we now see.

The way in which Tenrikyō explains this *innen* brings to my mind some reminiscences of the words of Holy Scripture: "For what things a man shall sow, those also shall he reap." (Gal. VI, 8) *Innen* might be likened to the soil, they teach us. "We shall reap what we have sown." They do not differ essentially with popular Buddhism when they divide *innen* into *konsei no innen* 今生の因縁, causality of this life, and *zenshō no innen* 前生の因縁, effects produced by our behaviour in former existences. Moreover *innen* can also be divided into *haku-innen* 白因縁, white or good *innen* and *aku-innen* 悪因縁, bad *innen*. What *innen* of this life is, we read in *Shinkō Mondō* 信仰問答: "It is the result of the dust that we have piled up since we were born. However, the effects of this dust do not show up before we are 15 years old. The sickness of which children suffer, are the results of the dust of their parents.¹⁾ What is the *innen* of previous lives? It is all that sprouts in this life from the seeds that we have sown in our former existences. It is this kind of *innen* that appears in the relationship between parents and child, brothers and sisters, husband and wife. But what does it mean when we say that *innen* appears in the relationship between parents and child? It means that the very link between parents and child has come into existence by *innen*. All happenings occur through *in* 因 and *en* 縁, primary and secondary causes. We mean the same thing when we say: *inga ōbō* 因果應報, cause and effect in the moral realm, or sin and its penalty."²⁾

When the author goes on developing the idea of *innen* he leaves completely Buddhistic ground, and all that follows is purely Tenrikyō: "The reason why this world and mankind have been created and why they are constantly preserved by God the Parent, is in order that man should lead a cheerful life. This was the very purpose of God in the Creation of the world. This very intention of God we call *moto no innen* 元の因縁, the first causation, from which all other *innen's* derive their existence."

1) Other Tenrikyō authors, however, speak, in the case of a child's suffering, about the effects of the *innen* of the child's previous existences.

2) *Shinkō Mondō*, compiled by the Institute of Study on Religious Culture in Tenri University, pp. 110-112.

The Tenrikyō people stress time and again the difference of their conception of *innen* with that of other religions. By every means they try to change this rather gloomy article of their faith into something bright, something joyful in order to streamline it with their *yōkigurashi*.

“To my mind, the foundation of *innen* in Buddhism is to be found in the 12 different *innen*.¹⁾ However, we of Tenrikyō do not think in this way, and we never speak of a mere resigning to this concatenation of cause and effect. We do not look at *innen* from the outside, but we penetrate to the heart of the matter and we erase it completely.”²⁾ This is indeed a strong statement but one doubts whether the author is convinced of it himself, for immediately afterwards he proceeds: “We should not be crushed down under the heavy pressure of *innen*. In this attitude of mind one can see the fundamental difference of Tenrikyō with the other religions with regard to the problem of *innen*.”³⁾

Seldom do they stress so strongly the difference with Christianity as in the doctrine of reincarnation. “We do not believe in a future life beyond this world,” they say, “but we try to purify our mind in order to attain here on this world a cheerful life, after reincarnating over and over again. Therefore, a grave has no meaning for us except that it is a mere dumping place of old clothes.”⁴⁾

Earlier I have told how Tenrikyō in its doctrinal books destined for the faithful, bypasses more or less this article of faith about *innen*. Popularized Tenrikyō, however, speaks often about it in countless stories, out of which the gloomy sting of *innen* has been taken away. These tales have been constructed in such a way that the ending is always happy.

In the town of Sakai 堺 situated in the Senshū 泉州 Province, so runs one of the stories, there was a man who made his living by selling seaweeds from door to door. Ten years before he had lost his wife, and he lived now with his only daughter, a girl of 13 years. Since her early childhood, she had been a kleptomaniac and her habit of stealing had increased with the years. The father often scolded her severely, but it was of no

1) The *jūni-innen* 十二因緣, twelve nidanas or links are the concatenation of cause and effect in the wole range of existence. From A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhistic Terms, p. 206.

2) *Michi no Tomo*, September, 1953, p. 26.

3) Op. Cit. p. 26-7.

4) Op. Cit. p. 18.

avail. He became so distressed that he made up his mind to kill his daughter and afterwards himself. A few days later he fastened her to a pillar. The girl wept bitterly and she implored: "It is not I who wanted to steal. Everytime you accused me of stealing I made a firm resolution not to do it again. However, when I see things belonging to other people, somehow I cannot resist the temptation to take them away. But this time I promise you most definitely that I shall not do it again. I beseech you, please spare my life!" At these words the father relented and he did not kill his beloved daughter.

Yet, things did not improve, and completely at a loss what to do, he tried to contact the foundress for advice. The father told this story to one of the first disciples of Miki, Nakata Saemon 仲田佐衛門, who conveyed it to the foundress. Her reply was the following: "I will most certainly grant to the poor father anything he wishes. But first of all you have to ask him whether he will observe what God asks of him." The question was put to the sea-weed vender, who answered in tears: "I promise anything and I will keep my promise. It is an extremely sad thing for a father to have a daughter with such a horrible habit."

When Mr. Nakata conveyed the firm resolution of the father to the foundress, she spoke the following oracle: "In the previous life, the sea-weed vender's present daughter has been his wife. At that time he was quite well off. However, he had the habit of stealing in the same way as the girl does now. His wife (now his daughter) often severely admonished him and she tried to correct him, but he would not listen. She worried so much over this bad habit that she became ill and finally passed away. This bad *innen* caused her to be reborn as his daughter. And now he experiences the consequences of his bad deeds committed in his previous life."

When Mr. Nakata conveyed this story to the sea-weed vender, he became completely dumbfounded and, bathed in tears, repeatedly expressed his most sincere apologies, after which he returned home in high spirits. A month later he came to the foundress again, and with much gratitude he said that his daughter had completely recovered and that not the slightest vestige of her bad habit was left."¹⁾

The following story is set in the small town of Haruhara 榛原 situated

1) *Seibun In*, pp. 286-288.

in Nara Prefecture. A wealthy family in a neighbouring village sent a messenger to a preacher who was in charge of a Tenrikyō church and requested him to visit the particular family. The preacher consented and soon he arrived at the door. When he had been escorted into a guest-room, the father of the family told him :

“The child that you see over there in the garden is my only son and he is more or less an idiot. He is constantly busy, cutting out of the newspapers big squares; then he dips them into the water and dries them over a brazier. This he does over and over again, from morning till evening. All the children in the neighbourhood call him a big fool. This mad behaviour of our son put such a strain on my wife, that she made up her mind to kill the boy and herself. As a matter of fact, only a few days ago she tried to do so. She threw the boy and herself into a river, here at the back of our house. Fortunately someone passing by rescued both. Since then she behaves as a lunatic herself.” Saying this, the father sighed deeply.

“I can so well understand how you feel,” replied the Tenrikyō preacher, “I think I can help you. God has revealed to us that He would warn us through misfortunes which are the results of *innen* of our previous lives. Call all your relatives at once.”

When all had come, the preacher looked into their faces and he asked in an imperative tone: “Who is the man among you, who has stolen money from somebody who has been drowned. He is most certainly present and he is one of you.” All the relatives present were completely dumbfounded and with searching eyes they looked at each other. After a little while, however, one of the relatives stepped forward and furiously thundered: “How dare you, a preacher of Tenrikyō, put such ablunt question before us!! Have you any proof of your suspicion?” Again a dead silence ensued, when suddenly the sliding doors were opened and a 70-years-old man appeared. In a trembling voice he said: “It is all through my fault, through my great fault. What the Tenrikyō preacher has just said is perfectly right. You all here present, please forgive me.” And now bathed in tears he made the following confession:

“Some 40 years ago, I was fishing in a river, but I could not catch anything. Just when I was about to go home, something heavy became entangled in my net. When I took it in, I found a man who must have

been lying in the water for a few days. I became so frightened at the sight of the corpse that I threw it into the river and ran away. But then it occurred to me that there might be some money on the corpse, and this all the more because the man's kimono was a very gorgeous one and of an expensive quality. So I came back to the same spot; I dragged the corpse on land, and examined carefully his clothes. And lo! just as I anticipated I found a purse full of bank-notes. Of course the paper was completely soaked, but I dried them carefully. All in all there were 30 ten-yen notes. And at that time as you know, 300 yen was quite a lot of money. So I started a business with the money in which I was extremely successful. Afterwards I could build a gorgeous house and I could buy a nice lot of land." With a deep sigh, he said: "Now that I have come nearly to the end of my life, the effects of this sin of mine have become apparent in the stupid behaviour of my grandson."

All the relatives had listened in a deep silence, which was only broken when the Tenrikyō preacher got up and gave a powerful sermon on *innen* and the means of erasing it. The sermon was not in vain, for the family sold all their fields and all their land and they offered all their money to the Tenrikyō church. Then extremely happy days began for the family. The child recovered considerably, and nobody laughed at him any more. At the present moment both his parents are devoted preachers of the Tenrikyō faith."¹⁾

There are very many other stories about *innen*. The Tenrikyō Printing Press publishes a whole series of pamphlets which deal exclusively with wonderful stories about *innen*. They have always a happy ending. Families which were on the verge of dying out because of *innen* survived, thanks to their belief in Tenrikyō. We hear unbelievable stories of how families who could only take *tōfu* 豆腐, bean curd, because of *innen*, were rescued when they entered the Tenrikyō religion. We hear furthermore how *innen* exerts its great influence also in marital relations. They say time and again that it is a dark point indeed, but that the final outcome is bright if we live according to the tenets of the Tenrikyō religion. This claim of theirs takes a prominent position in their sermons and in the propagation of their faith.

1) From *Shinjitsu no Michi* 眞實の道, p. 191-194.

WAY OF SALVATION

A subject which begins to take a most prominent place in present day Tenrikyō is that of salvation, *Tasuke-ichijō* 救け一條. Not without reason do I say: begins to take place, for if one compares older Tenrikyō publications with the Tenrikyō literature turned out after the last war, one is surprised about the shift of emphasis with respect to the Tenrikyō doctrine of salvation. Formerly one did not hear very much about salvation as a special doctrine, but at the present day it has come so much to the forefront, that we may call it almost the most prominent doctrine of the present day Tenrikyō faith, ranking at least as high as their doctrine about the origin of the world.

“God the Parent appeared in this world through the Foundress who acted as mediatrix and He conveyed to her His divine intention, especially the one of saving the whole world. All the words and deeds of the Foundress had only one purpose: the saving of mankind,” says an important Tenrikyō publication.¹⁾

“All the world’s children are mine and I am only anxious to save them all.”²⁾ But when we ask ourselves how this salvation of mankind is accomplished, it is not so easy to give a short and clear-cut answer as we find in many other religions. It seems to me that the Tenrikyō idea of salvation is rather a complicated one. The salvation of mankind has to be considered by degrees, it works so to say step by step, it is a kind of an evolutionary process that finds its final crowning in present day Tenrikyō. To a foreign observer this problem becomes all the more complicated, since he discovers that the meaning of the word salvation differs according to times and circumstances. In the beginning of Tenrikyō it seems to me clear that no special spiritual meaning was attached to it. It all centred around deliverance from sickness and pain and it had hardly any connection with the soul and its spiritual life. Later in addition to this it received a connotation of deliverance from economical, social and domestic troubles. At the present

1) *Tenrikyō Kyōten Kōwa* 天理教教典講話, by Nakayama Keiichi 中山慶一, p. 53.

2) *Ofudesaki* おふでさき, p. 84.

moment it has a slight tinge of a purification of the soul. I am sure that Tenrikyō theologians will not agree completely, however the arguments they put before me, could not convince me that this opinion of mine is not right. They merely look at their canonical writings with a present day vision which becomes every day more influenced by Christian ideas. It is my personal opinion that this shift of emphasis from the healing of the body to a kind of deliverance of the soul from spiritual sickness has come about indirectly and probably unconsciously through the serious study Tenrikyō which of undertake of Christian writings, both Protestant and Catholic, theologians course they interpret in their own way.

In a certain sense we may say that the salvation started already at the act of the creation, for—so we hear—there would not have been any salvation if God the Parent should not have created and shaped mankind from the muddy ocean. Once mankind came into existence, God the Parent took the form of Gods, Buddha's and other saints, *kami ya hotoke ya seijin ni irikon-de* 神や佛や聖人に入りこんで, in order to bring about a spiritual growth or as they say to work out an indirect salvation. When the fulness of time *Shunkokugen* 旬刻限, however, had come, the work of the direct salvation started by the appearance in this world of *Tenri-Ō-no-Mikoto* through Miki Nakayama. The times of Gods and Buddha's had come to a definite end.¹⁾

But how can we achieve this direct salvation? Through works called *Otsutome* 御勤, *Osazuke* 御授け. In the Tenrikyō writings are mentioned quite a number of ways of salvation. Above all stands out the *Kanrodai zutome* 甘露臺勤²⁾ this *kanrodai* service can only be performed at Tenri Shi 天理市 at the very place where the sacred column, the *kanrodai* stands. We have mentioned

1) *Tenrikyō Kyōten Kōwa* 天理教教典講話, Nakayama Keiichi 中山慶一, p. 53-54.

2) "I say *tutome* and I mean the *Kanrodai-zutome*." *Ofudesaki* おふでさき X 21. The holy texts with connection to the *kanrodai* are numerous. I may mention here only:

"There is no other place which can claim to be the center of the world." *Ofudesaki* VIII 25

"This place of worship, is the place where man has been created." Loc. cit. VIII 36

"When we have swept the dust from our mind and from our residence (*yashiki*), then let us walk round the house, and where our feet will become immovable, there we must erect the *Kanrodai*." Loc. cit. VIII 83.

"After that, bring together the necessary performers of the *tsutome* and start with it, for your mind will be cheerful." Loc. cit. VIII 84

"You can find this column nowhere else, for this is the real pillar of Japan, *Nihon no hashira* (日本之柱)." Loc. cit. VIII 85

"Now that you have learned that *Tsuki-Hi* came down to this world, you should construct the *kanrodai* immediately." Loc. cit. IX 18

this sacred column before, but now that we are going to speak about the *Kanrodai tsutome* as one of the means of salvation, I have to elaborate here a little more on this subject. This sacred column is of hexagonal shape. The length has been fixed at 8:2 feet and the column consists of 13 different hexagonal layers which fit into each other by different incisions. The diameter of the first layer is 3 feet, of the second and the thirteenth is 2.4 feet. All the other layers have a diameter of 1.2 feet. All these measures, we are informed, have deep mystical meanings. However, the literature which treats this subject is to me completely understandable. When I asked Tenrikyō theologians for enlightening on this particular subject, they advised me not to trouble myself too much about it, for—so I was informed—only three or four Tenrikyō high priests can grasp the full meaning of this mysticism and it is impossible to explain it. Consequently no reader can expect revealing information on this particular subject from a poor outsider as I am. On top stands a kind of bowl which can hold 2.4 gallons. This cup is made of wood, but at the fulness of time, this chalice as well as the whole column will be remade of stone, and then the *kanro*, the sweet dew, will pour down from heaven into this cup. The huge modern and exceedingly beautiful mother temple of Tenrikyō in Tenri Shi has been built around this *kanrodai*. In order to receive this sweet dew, also called *jikimotsu* じきもつ or *jumyō-gusuri* 壽命藥, medicine for longevity, the roof of the

“If you mark well the place of the *kanrodai*, then there will be no danger.” Loc. cit. IX 20

“All what I have preached you has had only the purpose of establishing the *kanrodai* as soon as possible.” Loc. cit. IX 48

“As soon as this column is established, I will start with the *tsutome* and then every wish will be granted.” Loc. cit. IX 52

“When the *tsutome* will be performed around the *kanrodai*, no wish will remain unfulfilled.” Loc. cit. IX 54

“If you put a *hirabachi* 平鉢 (shallow bowl) on the column, then I will most certainly bestow in it the *jikimotsu*.”

“Nobody has known the true mind of the Foundress who will receive the gift from heaven.” Loc. cit. IX 62

“What do you think of this column, it is the Parent of Japan. (*Nibon no oya dearu* 日本の親である.)” Loc. cit. X 78

“The establishment of the *kanrodai* here in this place is an evidence that man has been created here.” Loc. cit. X 79

“As an evidence that I have created mankind there, I put up the *kanrodai*.”

Loc. cit. XVII 9

“When this *kanrodai* will be established as God desires, there will be no wish that cannot be granted.”

Loc. cit. XVII 10

temple has a great square opening. When this sweet dew has fallen down from above and when the faithful have taken this heavenly nectar, they will be always happy, immovably fixed in virtue and wisdom and they will always live to the age of 115 years. The faithful look forward with great longing to this messianic time of the *kandroai*. Then they will live in happiness for all eternity. For once the 115 years of age have been reached, one is re-incarnated again in another human body there to live again for another 115 years, and so on ad infinitum.

The *kanrodai zutome* is always performed by ten persons¹⁾ and it is a re-enacting of God's act of creation. The dancers represent the ten different Gods mentioned before.²⁾ During the performance they all wear different masks. Once every month the dance is performed. The ceremony takes place at the foot of the *kanrodai* in a kind of open square-shaped basement, situated some feet below the floor of the temple. This basement, invisible to the faithful, is strewn with grey white gravelstones. Each performer of this dance expresses in his movements the act of the creation which the *kami*, whose rôle he or she takes, performed while shaping mankind. Therefore this dance is also called *riburi* 理振 *り*, dance which expresses the divine wisdom. The gestures of the performers are considered so important that if only one dancer should make a wrong movement, the redeeming power of this whole particular dance, should be lost. For this reason the dancers have to go through a rigid training before they are allowed to participate.

Whereas the *Mikagura Uta* is performed in all the Tenrikyō *kyōkai*'s, this mystical dance round the *kanrodai* can take place in the mother temple at *jiba* only. The whole is a kind of mystical representation of the creation of mankind. I am afraid I cannot give more precise details for lack of accurate information. To my questions put to Tenrikyō preachers about this mystical dance I received only ambiguous and evasive answers. It would seem that that this dance falls within the terrain of their *disciplina arcana*. The young preachers are not too enthusiastic about it. I have a feeling that this

1) The dancers are always 10, namely 5 men and 5 women. "In these 10 performers God the Creator resides." *Ofudesaki* VI 30. In a wider sense, however, the number of those who participate (*tsutome ninjū* 勤め人衆) are 36 according to *Ofudesaki* X 26. Besides, the *Ofudesaki* X 27 prescribes 19 musicians for the accompanying music.

2) See p. 64.

ceremony will be discontinued or at least changed in the future, as will many other ceremonies which have such a strong Shintō flavour. Nobody is allowed to witness the dance, for reasons which are not clear to me. Time and again I asked the Tenrikyō high priests for the reason, but they always declined an answer.

Another name for this *Kanrodai zutome* is *Kagura zutome* 神樂勤, because the masks used in the performance are generally called *Kagura-men* 神樂面, masks used during a Shintō dance.¹⁾ Nothing has been recorded in the sacred writings with regard to the number and the kind of the masks. The Tenrikyō tradition shows us here a way out. In the *Osashizu* we read only that the number and the kinds of the masks should be as it was in the beginning. Now the first masks have been made in the 17th year of Meiji by order of the foundress. However, since these original masks have not been kept, nothing definitely can be told about it. At the present moment, the number of the masks is 10, besides there are two figures made of a kind of wood, representing a dolphin and a tortoise. Among the masks there are two lion masks, one *tengu* 天狗 or a long-nosed goblin mask, three human male masks, and four human female masks. The man who stands at the north side during the performance of the *Kanrodai zutome* and who represents *Kunitokotachi-no-Mikoto*, wears a lion mask. The woman standing at the south and who represents *Omotari-no-Mikoto*, wears a mask of a lioness. One of the male performers carries on his back a wooden dolphin and one of the female performers carries on her back a wooden tortoise. During the performance the following nine musical instruments are played: big drum, small drum, Japanese flute, *champon* チャンボン, wooden clappers, *surigane* 摺鉦, *koto* 琴, *samisen* 三味線, *kokyū* 胡弓 (three-stringed fiddle). The music is not too pleasing to Western ears. This *kanrodai* service is also said to restore the joy which pervaded the universe at the time of the creation. At the same time it acts as an appraisal for the favours bestowed on us by God the Parent and it asks for further divine protections. And if all the performers put their trust in God completely and if they dance in perfect harmony God the Parent Himself will become cheerful. The whole universe will thus receive an unspeakable brightness, for the whole atmosphere will become

1) These masks are only used in popular Shintō services.

laden with the cheerfulness which results from a peaceful harmony between man and God (*shinjin-waraku* 神人和樂). And therefore this dance is also called *yōkizutome* 陽氣勤, cheerful service.

We are furthermore informed that the power of this *kagura zutome* is so strong that whatever the people ask they will receive according to their wishes. Since this *tsutome* has the aim to save the whole world, it is also called the *tasuke zutome* 救け勤, service of salvation.

Since the Tenrikyō faith was propagated mainly among farmers, at least in the beginning, we hear of many other *tsutome's* of which 6 have connection with agriculture. These are the *koe no tsutome* 肥の勤, service which grants miraculous manure, the *baede no tsutome* 萌え出の勤, service of germination, the *mushibarai no tsutome* 虫拂いの勤, the service of extirpation of all kinds of worms and insects, the *amagoi zutome* 雨乞ひ勤, the service that asks for rain, the *ameazuke no tsutome* 雨あづけの勤, which was performed when too much rain had fallen and it is said to grant a miraculous cease of rain, and finally the *minori no tsutome* みのりの勤, the service which aims at an abundant fruit-bearing.

It seems that in present-day Tenrikyō all these minor *tsutome's* have been discontinued, for nowadays we hear only of the *kanrodai zutome* 甘露臺勤, *asayū no tsutome* 朝夕の勤, morning and evening service, *jūnisagari teodori no tsutome* 十二下り手踊りの勤, a service consisting of a dance during which the 12 chapters or psalms of the *Mikagura Uta* are sung.

During the *asayū no tsutome*, the prelude of the *Mikagura Uta* is recited with the accompaniment of music and dance, and it takes only some ten minutes time. Since I will mention this *Mikagura Uta* in a later chapter¹⁾ and since I have translated elsewhere²⁾ the whole text of this sacred Tenrikyō text, it is not necessary to go here into details. I may only mention here the *asayū no tsutome* takes place every morning and evening at every Tenrikyō *kyōkai*. The *jūnisagari teodori no tsutome*, however, is performed only once a month and it takes more than an hour.

Whereas all the *tsutome's* mentioned before belong so to say to the public prayer of Tenrikyō and to the ways of salvation for the whole of mankind or have at least a more general meaning, the *osazuke's* 御授け, divine grantings,

1) See p. 119.

2) See p. 131.

are ways of salvation by individuals for individuals, and they are destined only for the healing of all kinds of sicknesses and other temporal benefits. We are told that by several *sazuke's* all diseases can be definitely cured. If the desired results should not come about, the failure must be ascribed to the particular person who acts as mediator. He may not be of sincere mind, he may have forgotten the great truth of the creation of mankind, he may even have been forgetful of God the Parent. It goes without saying that with a mediator imbued with such a mind, a cure can never come about.

Since the beginning of Tenrikyō up until the end of the Meiji period we hear about a great number of *osazuke's*, divine grantings. e.g.

1. *Ōgi no sazuke* 扇の授け, a divine granting through the intermediate of a fan.

This one is the oldest of all the *Tenrikyō sazuke's*. Those to whom these divine favours have been granted, have received the power of the *ōgi no ukagai* 扇の伺, a method of knowing God's holy will while using a fan. It works in the following way: A sick man comes to a Tenrikyō believer who has received this *sazuke*, and the patient asks him what the will of God is with respect to his illness. Upon hearing this, the believer takes a fan and squats down on the floor in the Japanese fashion. He closes his eyes, while holding the fan on his laps. Soon he will sink in a trance and the fan begins to move. If the fan moves in an upward direction, the patient will recover. If on the contrary the fan goes down, the patient is doomed. Needless to say this particular *sazuke* could easily be misused as happened for instance in the case of a certain believer called Sukezō 助造, who was promptly condemned by the foundress as a heretic.¹⁾

2. *Koe no sazuke* 肥の授け, which has the power to grant a fertilizer of extraordinary efficacy.

When the foundress granted this charisma she spoke the words: "For life's journey you will need money, therefore I will grant you this *sazuke* for your travel expenses." This *koe no sazuke* consists of 3 *gō*²⁾ of *nuka* 糠, rice-bran, 3 *gō* of ash and 3 *gō* of soil. It is said that this small quantity is just as effective as 150 kg of artificial manure.³⁾ This *sazuke* is even mentioned

1) See life of the foundress, p. 32.

2) 1 *gō*=0.1598 quart or 0.048 gallon.

3) *Tenri Kyōgaku Kenkyū* 天理教學研究 6, p. 75 and *Osazuke no ri* お授けの理, p. 29.

in *Mikagura Uta*.¹⁾ There are several kinds of this miraculous fertilizer, a very strong one and another one which is less effective. In the latter case the divine granting must be mixed with an ordinary fertilizer. It seems that this *sazuke* does not work *ex opere operato* only, but in order to bring about the desired result faith and trust are necessary. This we find well illustrated in the story that we read in *Osazuke no shurui to sono ri* お授けの種類とその理.²⁾ Mr. Tsuji, the father of the present president of the Tenrikyō printing office doubted very much about the real efficacy of the *koe no sazuke*, “how could it be that such a small amount of that strange mixture, could bring about the same effect as 150 kg of artificial manure!” As a consequence, an extremely poor harvest followed. Then he felt very sorry for his grave sin of unbelief and he put all his trust in the divine providence. And lo, the next year the *koe no sazuke* brought an abundant harvest.

3. *Iki no sazuke* 息の授け, the granting of breath.

The man who has received this *sazuke* will be enabled of breathing the parental breath which is a kind of participation of the divine breath. This refers to the story of the Tenrikyō Genesis. Here we read that *Izanagi no Mikoto* and *Izanami no Mikoto* breathed upon every human creature as soon as it had come to existence and thanks to this divine breath they all grew up. In the same way this parental breath has a protective power over young children, which is necessary for their growth. Besides, this parental breath is said to grant any kind of miraculous healing. It is told in the life of the foundress how relatives of sick people came to her with a *kimono* or some other garment of the sick person. Then Miki took it into her hands and breathed upon these *kimono's*. As soon as the sick person had put on the *kimono*, a miraculous recovery followed. And from this story we must understand the great power of the parental breath. It is also told in the life of the foundress how she often distributed among her followers pieces of paper on which she had breathed. When the demand for these pieces of paper became too great, the foundress called a devout believer, Nakata Gihei 仲田儀兵衛, to her side and told him: “Now you also breathe over these pieces of paper.” Thus, we are told, the foundress granted this charisma of breath for the first time to a person.

1) See p. 132.

2) *Tenrikyō Kyōgaku Kenkyū* No. 6, p. 76.

4. *Jikimotsu no sazukeye* じきもつの授け, the charisma of giving away a special kind of food.

Those who have received this are entitled to distribute *goku's* 御供.¹⁾ The granting of *goku* is a custom practiced in all Shintō shrines. However, this particular Tenrikyō *goku* consists of some white rice dipped three times in hot water and it is said to have a great healing power. Another variation of this charisma is the *jikimotsu no kōsui no sazukeye* じきもつの神水の授け, the charisma of giving away a special kind of divine water. Before this miraculous water was taken by a sick person, it was necessary that the man who had received this *sazukeye* put some sugar into the water and he had to sip it a little three times in advance. After that ceremony the sick person was allowed to take it.

5. *Kanrodai no sazukeye* 甘露臺の授け, the charisma of the sacred column.

This *sazukeye* cannot so easily be granted, for the *osazukeye-nin* お授け人—the man who has received this charisma—has to perform quite a ceremony. First he must dance while singing the following words of the *Mikagura Uta*: “I will speak to you a little while. Hark and listen to God’s words. I never tell you any evil things. The creation of heaven and earth was a model of how I created husband and wife. Thus was the beginning of this world.” After this the man has to recite three times: “Sweep away all iniquity and hasten to save us. Once the world is purified, then erect the sacred column.” After this ceremony the patient has to come nearer and the sick part of the body is caressed three times.²⁾ Once this ceremony is over, it has to be repeated another two times. And then the cure is expected to follow.

6. *Mizu no sazukeye* 水の授け, the charisma of giving away a special kind of powerful water.

This particular charisma has never been granted by the foundress but by Master Ihuri only. Just as before also here the *osazukeye-nin* has to sip first three times before the patient is allowed to take something of this water. In the *Osashizū* we read that this is a kind of remembrance of the fact that the first conception of the human species took three days and three nights.

1) *Goku* is a kind of collective name given for food offered to deities and buddhas.

2) The number 3, together with 9, has a very sacred meaning in Tenrikyō and is very often used.

7. *Ashikiharai no sazuke* あしきはらひの授け, the charisma of evil sweeping, or *teodori no sazuke* 手踊りの授け, the charisma of dancing.

Whereas all the charismas mentioned above have ceased to exist at the present moment, only this *sazuke* has survived modern times and it is still very much in use all over Japan. All the devout Tenrikyō believers are strongly exhorted to prepare themselves for the reception of this *sazuke*. Once received this *sazuke*, one is entitled to perform the *Mikagura Uta* with all its ceremonies and to apply the redeeming power of it to sick people. In the latest official statistical yearbook of Tenrikyō, we read that they have 219,953 confirmed followers. This means all these people have received this charisma of the *ashikiharai*.

A quite special training is necessary before the reception of this sacred gift. They go into retreat during which the people have to listen to nine extensive lectures. Nine, I was informed, because a child lives 9 months in the mother's womb. Nine, I was further informed, because the conception of the human species took three days and three nights. $3 \times 3 = 9$ and consequently, so argues Tenrikyō logic, nine different lectures must be held. In order that the lectures will be taken well to heart, the people retire to a solitary confinement. Therefore, these lectures are called *be.seki* 別席, lectures given in a separated place. As spiritual preparation necessary for the man who follows the lectures, the *Osashizu* enumerates the following requirements.

1. He must keep his mind pure like a clear sky and he should sweep away all the dust from his heart and keep his heart in a cheerful state.
2. He should have amassed *kōnō no ri* 効能の理, vessels of great efficacy.
3. He must have understood the doctrine of salvation and practice it in all the deeds of his life.
4. He must possess the mind of salvation which is a mind of sincerity.
5. He must act first of all according to divine wisdom.
6. He should follow the commands of God with a sincere mind.
7. He should not forget the truth of the origin of this world, and he should always keep in mind the truth of *kashimono karimono* かしものか
りもの,¹⁾ and ponder over the life of the Foundress with a strong faith.²⁾

1) See p. 68.

2) *Osazukeno ri* お授けの理 by Ueda Eizō 植田英藏, p. 9-10.

Nowadays it seems that the above requirements are no more so strictly necessary, for we hear that even persons who have just entered Tenrikyō can immediately start this special lecture course. It was originally intended that these 9 lectures should cover quite a time spaced over 9 periods. However, when the Tenrikyō faith expanded more and more it would have been too much far the people to come from for away nine times to Tenri Shi. For this reason the Tenrikyō authorities have made the following regulations: If someone lives more than 100 *ri*¹⁾ from Tenri Shi, he is allowed to follow the whole course in one period; if he lives at a distance of more than 70 *ri*, he has to come for his *bessēki* twice; if over 50 *ri* three times; if over 30 *ri* four times; if over 20 *ri* five times; if over 10 *ri* seven times; and if he lives within 10 *ri* of Tenri Shi he has to come 9 different times to follow the *bessēki*. When the course has been completed an examination follows. However, it would be quite an extraordinary thing if someone should fail. Having passed this examination, they are now ready to receive the *sazuke* from the hands of the Patriarch. I have witnessed it several times how people line up before the room in which the Patriarch had taken up his residence. Nobody is allowed to see this ordination (called *manseki* 満席), which takes only a few minutes. The man or the woman proceeds to the front where the *Shimbashira* stands, and he or she squats down and stretches out both hands while the Patriarch speaks solemnly:²⁾ “*Sā-sā, ashikiharai-tasuke no kōnō no ri wo shikka to sazuke okō* さあさあしきはらひたすけの効能の理をしつかと授けおころ; Now come, and I bestow firmly on you a redeeming power which can be exercised through the performance of the *ashikiharai* dance.” After these sacred words, the miraculous power has been bestowed. The people are congratulated by friends and relatives, and they feel themselves as if they were reborn. After all, they are told time and again that henceforth more than ever before they have now become the children of God the Parent, and imbued with a new and fresh mind. After having received the *osazuke*, the *osazuke-nin* goes to another high priest of Tenrikyō where he listens to an additional instruction, called *kari-seki* 假席, which they compare with a kind of afterbirth. As scriptural proof

1) 1 *ri* = 2.44 mile.

2) Solemnly, for during this ceremony he takes the place of God: *Kami no dairisha to natte*, 神の代理者となつて.

for the healing power of this *sazuke*, are given the following texts from *Osashizu*:

“Herewith I give you a proof of salvation, the gift of the true God.”

“I give you one evidence for the sake of salvation.”

“I give you this sign (*shirushi* 印); now take it home as a good souvenir.”

“The *osazuke-nin* is the pillar of the nation; he is the treasure of the country.”

The man or woman who has received this *sazuke* has from now on the power to heal all kinds of diseases. But as has been said before, he or she must be a worthy instrument of salvation, otherwise the cure will never come about. The divine gift is compared with an extremely sharp knife that, if handled in a wrong way, inflicts injuries instead of serving our purpose. Above all, sincerity of mind is of absolute necessity, otherwise God will never give His graces to the sick people. This sincerity of mind one must have received during the 9 lectures. However, it often happens that people even after having gone through the lecture course have not yet purified their mind, and then of course a cure can never follow. The God of Tenrikyō complains even about the people’s negligence of the *sazuke*, for we read in the *Osashizu*: “I, God the Parent, Who has such a tender heart towards My children, I never refuse them and I give them all indiscriminately My *sazuke*, and I do not want to take it back. However, there are some people who return the gift to Me as soon as they have received it and there are still other people who lose the gift on their way home.”¹⁾

Fortified and armed with this *sazuke*, the Tenrikyō preachers go out all over Japan and they even go abroad in order to preach the Tenrikyō Gospel of deliverance and of healing. It is the most powerful weapon in the propagation of their faith. With this weapon in hand they visit the homes of the sick and enter the numerous hospitals of Japan. There they make their triumphs (and perhaps their defeat). After all, we read in their numerous publications that this *sazuke* is no medicine and yet it heals most certainly all human diseases. We must make use of it as often as possible and then it will become the greatest treasure of the village, the town or even

1) *Osashizu*, 7th day of the 7th month in the 23rd year of Meiji.

the province. On life's journey, often so hard and so difficult, we cannot do without this *sazuke*. We need it as our travel expenses, we need it as our food. This *sazuke*, we read further, accompanies us always as long as we keep our mind pure. After all the *sazuke* is given to the soul, the immortal, the eternal, and when we have passed out of this life and when we have put off our bodies like old clothes, the soul will carry on this *sazuke* in other bodies and in other existences.

This is their faith; this is their hope.

TENRIKYŌ'S DEVOTIONAL LIFE

Finally we have to say a few words about the devotional life of the Tenrikyō believers. It forms the last part of the Tenrikyō catechism and the whole pious life of this religion may well be expressed by the words: “*sange* 懺悔,¹⁾ *tannō* 堪能, *binokishin* ひのきしん, *tsukushihakobi* つくしはこび, *noigake* 匂ひがけ, *yōboku* 用木, and *yōkigurashi* 陽氣ぐらし”.

Sange

If we translate here the word *sange* as repentance or contrition, then it may be that Christian readers will think immediately of familiar ideas. However, the Tenrikyō idea of *sange* has a different connotation from its Christian counterpart. It is less internal, less spiritual; it is not something resulting from a deep interior guilt complex. In a previous chapter I have spoken exclusively about *innen*. *Sange* is one of the means used to erase the bad effects of our *innen*. But how this *sange* works is not quite clear to the author. The Tenrikyō literature on this subject is ambiguous. The Tenrikyō propounders stress very much the intimate relation of *sange* with bodily ailment and the difficulties of life. We read in the canonical writings: “I have given you sickness and troubles in order that you should feel contrition.”²⁾ It means a kind of introspection resulting not from sinful deeds but from bodily ailment or other calamities. We read in the *Osashizu*³⁾: “You have been deprived of the free use of your body, therefore ponder over things deeply and make contrition.” Tenrikyō propounders stress time and again that the relationship between contrition and the human body is not a superficial but a very intimate one. Tenrikyō reasoning runs as follows: *Tenri-Ō-no-Mikoto* has the dominion over us because our bodies have been borrowed from God, and consequently He can send us sicknesses. This he does in order to evoke in us a feeling of *sange*.

1) The characters 懺悔 are read *sange* as well as *sange*. Tenrikyō uses only the latter pronunciation.

2) *Osashizu*, September 22, 1890.

3) *Osashizu*, January 26, 1896.

It is true that Tenrikyō takes generally a benevolent attitude towards other religions, but in the final conclusion they always state that theirs the best, theirs the last fulfillment and the final crowning.¹⁾ Thus they do again with their idea of *sange*, for they state that it makes the crowning unification of the Christian idea of contrition with the buddhist enlightenment. They bring it also into relation with the *innen* of our previous lives. However the above lines will make it clear to the unbiassed and objective reader that nothing of the Christian idea of personal guilt for moral wrongs, committed in this life enters the Tenrikyō concept of *sange*.

Tannō

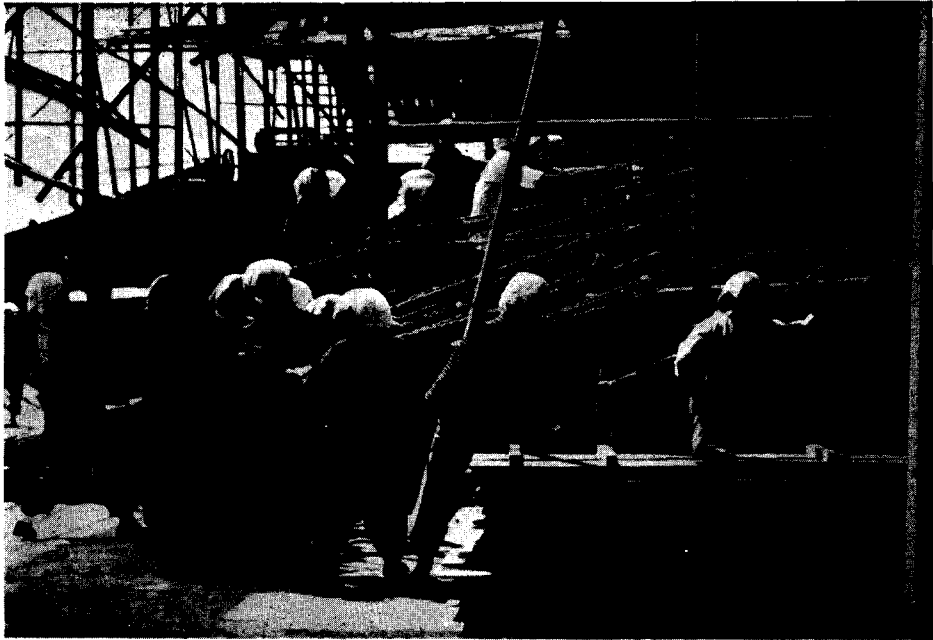
Here again we are dealing with a Tenrikyō technical term, and a dictionary is of no use to us. The Tenrikyō catechism defines *tannō* with the following words: "It is by no means a mere resignation or an enduring perseverance. It is to see the intentions of God the Parent in all that happens in our daily life, and consequently to live always in a bright way."²⁾ In the *Osashizū* we read: "*Tannō* is the *sange* for the *innen* of our previous lives."³⁾ It is difficult to understand how Tenrikyō can give such diverse definitions of *tannō*. The whole explanation of this particular subject is extremely hazy, even for Tenrikyō people, for we read in a very important Tenrikyō publication which is only destined for Tenrikyō believers: "So far there has been a tendency to translate the word *tannō* superficially as perseverance. Let us therefore in this book try to grasp the true meaning of *tannō*."⁴⁾ These words imply to my mind that even the faithful have often misunderstood this part of the Tenrikyō doctrine. Whenever this subject is treated in Tenrikyō literature only a few words are said about this *tannō* and these words become a starting point for lengthy digressions into unknown regions which seem to the author to have little connection with the subject matter. It seems to be true that *tannō* has an intimate connection with *sange* as well as with *innen*. Once in a while the Tenrikyō canonical

1) They call their religion *dame no osbie* だめの教 which outsiders will misunderstand, for *dame* does not mean here useless as one generally thinks but on the contrary: final and most important.

2) *Tenrikyō Kyōten*, p. 75.

3) *Osashizū*, Nov. 1st, 1889.

4) *Tannō no Kyōri* たんのうの教理, by Moroi Yoshinori 諸井慶徳, p. 5.



With free holy labour new churches are built. (Photo : P. Beltjens)



Hinokishin, the holy labour of Tenrikyō.



Soil carrying, one of the forms of holy labour.



The park in Nara is swept clean by Tenrikyō devotees.

A new church is going up in Nagoya with the help of *binokishin*. (Photo: P. Beltjens)



writings suggest that they are both one and the same. At least this is the impression of the author. All in all it seems to me a perseverance in high spirits during times of adversity, it is a powerful medicine which must give us strength to face cheerfully the gloomy forces which have come from the dark ages of our previous existences and which threaten us from times immemorial.

Hinokishin

The visitors to Tenri Shi will certainly be impressed if they witness the Tenrikyō Holy Labour of *hinokishin* ひのきしん, a word totally unknown to every Japanese who is not acquainted with Tenrikyō. For the faithful, however, it has a bright and joyful meaning. When one travels through the length and breadth of the beautiful Japanese isles, one can see everywhere Tenrikyō temples, often very beautiful, and unconsciously one thinks of the enormous funds necessary for the building of these magnificent places of worship. However, we are informed, in reality the expenses have been cut to a minimum because of the free manual labour offered by the Tenrikyō faithful in the form of *hinokishin*. This labour shows some slight similarity with the Christian corporal works of mercy. Miki's teaching with regard to this holy labour, finds expression in the words of *Mikagura Uta*: "Let us forget our greed and let us busy ourselves with *hinokishin*. This is the best fertilizer of our faith."¹⁾

"It is an extremely difficult task," says one of their publications, "to get rid of our own selfish desires. In a world where one asks a reward even for the most trifling work it is really something wonderful to stand at the disposal of others. Yet, this is not a mere dream. The foundation of such a new world where people forget their own desires, has been built by *hinokishin*. This is the way which leads to the construction of an ideal society." *Hinokishin* is even a powerful means of cementing marriage ties. We read in the *Tenrikyō Yōgi* 天理教要義: "When a married couple work together in *hinokishin*, their love will become stronger and they shall be blessed with brightness and peace. The result will be that the cheerfulness of this family will exert its salutary influence over neighbouring people."²⁾ "If you look round the world, you see an ever increasing number of people united in

1) *Mikagura Uta*, XI 4.

2) *Tenrikyō Yōgi*, by Ikoma Fujio 生駒藤雄, p. 205.

the holy labour of soil carrying.”¹⁾ In the beginning this soil-carrying with a *mokkō* もっこ, straw-basket, was the main expression of *binokishin*. Some people came even to think that *binokishin* consisted merely in carrying soil with a straw-basket, a task that involves really heavy manual labour. The reason why this lowly work was chosen as a pattern for *binokishin*, is not difficult to grasp. Humility of heart is of great importance for a life of faith, and this kind of heavy manual labour teaches us self-effacement. However, we should not think that *binokishin* means only some kind of hard physical labour. We read e.g. in the *Mikagura Uta: Hitokoto hanashi wa binokishin* ひとつことはなしはひのきしん; one short story is also a *binokishin*.²⁾ This means that to convey some kind of short message about God is also a fine and exemplary *binokishin*. However poor our wording may be, if we sincerely try to praise the greatness of divine grace or if we try to propagate the faith, this must also be called *binokishin*. Besides, to give alms, to visit the sick, in short every work which demands a real sacrifice, may be called *binokishin*. It is indeed true that whenever the author witnessed the *binokishin* of the Tenrikyō faithful, a bright atmosphere prevailed and the workers showed a great spirit of self-sacrifice. In the beginning of Tenrikyō, *binokishin* was rather an individual act and a kind of personal thanksgiving for divine graces received. Later it developed gradually into a group activity, and as such it is still visible throughout Japan. On May 18th 1932 Tenrikyō proclaimed its first “National Hinokishin Day,” which has been followed by many others.

Hinokishin acts often as a kind of a preliminary to the faith. New-comers are strongly advised to practice *binokishin* immediately and to avoid the spirit of criticism; then as they plod on seeking the light of *Tenri-Ō-no-Mikoto*, they will find themselves gradually in a state of deep faith. In and around the Tenrikyō churches, there is no place for beggars.

“We do not want to be of any help,” they invariably say, “to those who are in poverty because of their own laziness. Let them work and work with a sincere mind, and then poverty will never come to them. Those who refuse to work, we call enemies of the faith.”³⁾

1) *Mikagura Uta*, XI 3.

2) Op. Cit. VII 1.

3) From *Shinjitsu no michi* 眞實の道, p. 280.

The salutary effect of the mere firm resolution of devoting one's time to *hinokishin* is demonstrated by a well-known Tenrikyō story of modern times. It happened on February 10, 1950. A certain Nishimoto Gompachi 西本権八 was in the main temple at Tenri Shi. He had survived a severe bloodpoisoning. However, the lower part of his legs was still completely paralyzed. He addressed himself to a member of the Tenrikyō headquarters and asked his intercession by *Tenri-Ō-no-Mikoto*. The high priest then held a twenty-minutes sermon on the truth of *kashimono karimono* and that all our sicknesses had their roots in our minds.

“At the present moment you cannot work. When you are cured through the grace of God you must devote half of your time to the holy labour of *hinokishin*, while forgetting completely your own selfish desires. Can you make this firm resolution?” The patient replied strongly in the affirmative. Then the high priest applied the *osazuke* to the patient's legs, after which he shouted imperatively: “Get up on your feet.” Mr. Nishimoto tried twice in vain to stand up but at the third time he rose miraculously. Tears streamed down from the eyes of all those who witnessed this cure and they all thanked God's merciful benevolence. Bathing in tears Mr. Nishimoto proceeded quietly to the altar.¹⁾

The great weekly *Tenri Jibō* 天理時報, the Tenri Chronicle, carries every week at least one article on this holy labour. In *hinokishin* one can see Tenrikyō in action, one can understand how they can so easily build their beautiful temples and how they can make at the same time great propaganda for their religion. Summarizing we may say: *Hinokishin* is for the Tenrikyō faithful a sacred effort without thinking very much of any reward. It is living according to the desires of God the Parent and at the same time doing one's duty toward the society in which one lives.

“Let us forget our greed and let us busy ourselves with holy labour.

This is the best fertilizer of our faith.

However, they should work freely; only with such a mind they should come and work.

This soil carrying is really something wonderful, it is a holy labour.

1) Op. Cit. p. 292-293.

We dig out the soil at the grounds of the Holy Home and carry it to another place.”¹⁾

“ We should persevere in *hinokishin*, no matter how old we become or how high position we may have attained in life.”²⁾

In doing this we are on the road to the cheerful life, in striving thus we are on the way to the highest perfection as idealised and propounded by Tenrikyō.

Tsukushi-Hakobi

When we have lived a life of *hinokishin* and of *tannō*, we will gradually attain perfection which for the Tenrikyō faithful culminate in *makoto-shinjitsu* 誠眞實, in a true and sincere heart, radiating brightness and happiness. With such an attitude of mind we will better understand the will of God; wrong ideas will have no more influence upon us and nothing will stand in the way of leading a very happy life. Through the dazzling light of our true and sincere mind, we will understand all the articles of the Tenrikyō faith, especially that our bodies are only loans from God and that all the people of the world are each other's brothers and sisters. Our spiritual maturity will have reached its zenith and spontaneously we will translate our religion into practical terms through *tsukushihakobi* つくしはこび and *nioigake* 匂ひかけ. The former consists of any services to the Tenrikyō churches with the stress on donations and contributions. Here we touch a little sore spot of Tenrikyō. A detached observer cannot evade the impression that the faithful are often severely levied; if their fervour does not express itself in considerable contributions to the church, their zeal is considered not sufficient. It is considered a virtue for a Tenrikyō preacher to ask monetary donations from the faithful. Not without reason have the people made a pun on the opening words of *Mikagura Uta*: “ *Ashiki wo harōte tasuketamae.*” It runs thus: “ *Yashiki wo harōte ta-uri-tamae* 屋敷を拂ふて田賣り給へ, sell away your houses and rice-fields.”³⁾

In an article written by the president of the Tenrikyō printing press, the author tries to give the right answer to the numerous complaints, especially

1) *Mikagura Uta* みかぐら歌 XI 4-8.

2) *Kyōten Kōwa* 教典講話, p. 98.

3) In order to give the money to the Tenrikyō churches.

from the younger generation such as: "I dislike Tenrikyō because it always asks for monetary donations. When preachers from a higher church come to our parish they always ask for money." This may all be true, nevertheless *tsukushi* plays a most important rôle in our religion, even to such an extent that we can call it the life and bread of our religion. Even in our canonical writings we read: "There are many dogmas (which may not be clear to you) but if you really practice *tsukushi-bakobi*, all the articles of faith will become comprehensible to you."¹⁾ In our religion acting is more important than argumentations,²⁾ and therefore the religious act of *tsukushi-bakobi* is of paramount importance to us, Tenrikyō believers. "Why is the word, *tsukushi-bakobi* not mentioned in our catechism?" This question we hear time and again. The reason for this is that the importance of *tsukushi-bakobi* is so obvious that it speaks for itself, so there is no necessity at all to put it into our catechism.³⁾

Many faithful are of course naturally more inclined to give money to poor people rather than to the Tenrikyō churches. They do not see the point of having to contribute to a church far away while they are surrounded by very poor people. They defend their behaviour by the example of the foundress, who gave all her belongings to the poor. I can understand that this difficulty will bring quite a headache to the Tenrikyō preachers. "The distinction must here be made that charity is something between person and person, while *tsukushi-bakobi* is a matter between God and man, it is man's total devotion and the renunciation of himself for the sake of the construction of the Kingdom of God and it is deeply rooted in the truth that our bodies are borrowed from God."⁴⁾ This is the Tenrikyō solution of the above mentioned difficulty.

Yōboku

The building of a new world according to the principles of the Tenrikyō faith is often compared with the construction of a new house, for which

1) *Osashizu*, April 7, 1892.

2) *Ron yori shōko* 論より證據, the proof of the pudding is in the eating.

3) *From Michi no tomo* Aug. 1953, "The life of our religion, the doctrine of *tsukushi-bakobi*," by Fukaya Tadamasa 深谷忠政.

4) *Op Cit.* p. 45.

we need *yōboku* 用木, timber. In the canonical writings we read: “Now let Me speak to you for a while. I, God the Parent, urge you to gather *yōboku*.”¹⁾ “I do not want a few *yōboku*'s, but quite a number of them.”²⁾ “I do not make any discrimination whatever between man and woman. Any *yōboku* is useful to Me.”³⁾

Yōboku is a person who works for the salvation of others on behalf of God the Parent. Among the requirements necessary to serve as good holy timber, Tenrikyō mentions especially an obedient and submissive mind. As a stimulant for the people to become *yōboku*, the article of the Tenrikyō faith states: “We save ourselves if we try to save others.” The salvation of others is the primary task of man and woman who want to serve as *yōboku*. The apostolic work begins with *noigake* 匂ひかけ, the sprinkling of the perfume of the Tenrikyō faith over friends and relatives and to those who have never heard of Tenrikyō. It proceeds with the curing of diseases through *sazuke*. And their work is crowned by bringing new believers into the Tenrikyō fold. The construction of a new Tenrikyō temple is a necessary consequence.

Another important condition to serve as good *yōboku* is a fervent desire for the propagation of the Tenrikyō faith. This great desire will give us the necessary courage and even enable us to perform miracles as we read in *Shinjitsu no Michi* 眞實の道: “In a certain town a Chinese became seriously ill. The help of many prominent doctors was called in, but to no avail. The patient became worse and finally the doctors gave up all hope. In this desperate situation one of our believers, a certain Miss Kono 子の came to visit the patient. After an earnest prayer to God the Parent for the recovery of the Chinese lady, she turned to the husband of the patient who stood beside her and said to him: ‘I bet you that by tomorrow morning I bring down the fever to 36 degrees.’ The doctor who was present could not refrain from remarking: ‘Well, that will be a difficult task even for a Tenrikyō believer.’ Miss Kono thought within herself: ‘If I do not heal the patient, the Tenrikyō faith will be disgraced.’ She went into a pond in the garden where she prayed fervently during the whole night. Her fervent

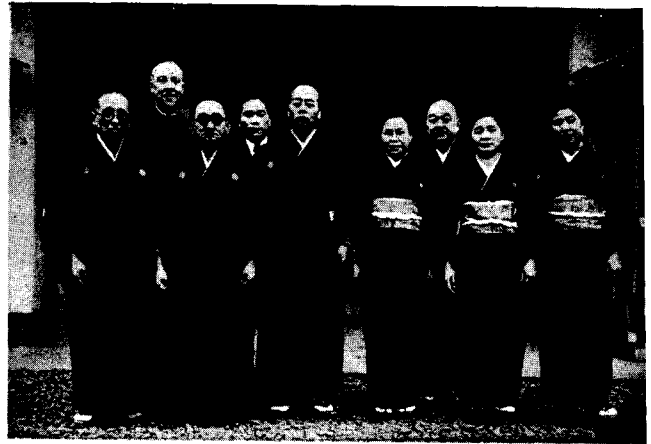
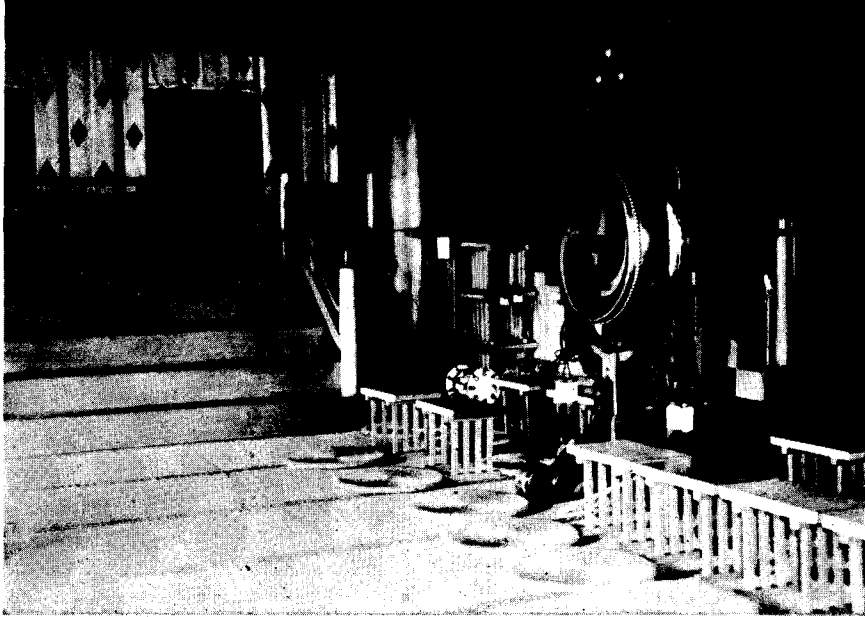
1) *Ofudesaki* III 128.

2) *Ofudesaki* III 129.

3) *Ofudesaki* VII, 21.



Yōboku, Tenrikyō believers who work for the salvation of others.
Different kinds of *yōboku*'s. (Photo : P. Beltjens)



There is no discrimination between man and woman, young and old, rich and poor. Any *yōboku* is useful.
(Photo : P. Beltjens and E. Feifel)

prayer must have been heard because the temperature of the patient sank to 36.8 degrees. The doctor proclaimed the healing a real miracle. Unnecessary to say the Chinese lady became soon an ardent follower."¹⁾

Age is also considered an import factor in the propagation of the faith. Only those who have been for a considerable number of years believers of Tenrikyō, can serve as *yōboku*. However, the regulations with respect to this point are no longer so severe as they were in the beginning of Tenrikyō. At that time three years of *tsukushi* つくし service, three years of *hakobi* はこび offerings, and finally three years of *ri no michi* 理の道 study and practice of the revealed truth, were considered necessary. Only then could one serve as good *yōboku*. Nowadays the requirements are not so strict and even a superficial acquaintance with preachers and confirmed followers convinces us that their intellectual training is not particularly thorough. After all they are constantly taught to learn by practicing rather than by studying. How they will be able of facing the difficulties which arise from modern philosophical currents, the developments of modern science and the latest anthropological findings, is a question that only the future can answer.

Yōkigurashi

The final goal of Tenrikyō, the real purpose of man's existence, is *yōkigurashi* 陽氣暮し, the bright and cheerful life. It is the very reason for which man has been created by God the Parent, the ultimate *raison d'être* of all our efforts, the ultimate end towards which all articles of the Tenrikyō faith point, the final trump for their apostolic endeavours. It is their coelestis urbs Jerusalem, their *beata pacis visio*,²⁾ their beatific vision, their ultimate reward for the attainment of which sacred dances are held, dynamic powers are let loose and colossal efforts are made. When the heavenly nectar has come down on this world, when the messianic time has approached, and mankind has reached a kind of eternal longevity, the heaven on earth will start for the Tenrikyō faithful.

It seems to me that the Tenrikyō theology of the times to come is still in its infancy, for nearly all the Tenrikyō publications fall into endless repetitions' when they treat this subject. The Tenrikyō believers are strongly

1) From *Shinjitsu no Michi*, p. 329-330.

2) Heavenly city Jerusalem, beatic vision of peace.

advised to live already now a life as bright and gay as possible, as a kind of anticipation of the fullness of time. To this end, they use all possible means which can produce a gay and jolly atmosphere. Time and again they are exhorted not only to overcome distress, but to go much further, to put a sop into the pan, to strive for brightness by all means. And yet the objective onlooker cannot escape the impression that he stands vis à vis some kind of enforced happiness, he faces a show of bright living; he does not doubt the sincerity of the people, yet he witnesses an étalage, a splash, a glitter, a strut, some kind of pomposity, a tour de force and he wonders how long one can stand this strain.

In this study, poor and insufficient as the author admits it to be, I have tried to describe the Tenrikyō faith as it is taught in their manuals and partly as it is practiced in their headquarters at Tenri Shi, and in the country. On the whole the zeal of the preachers is indeed exemplary and the faithful make, even betimes, heroic sacrifices for their religion. How they build their colossal temples, with free labour, reminds me a little of the building of the cathedrals in the Middle ages. However at this point the comparison finishes. Their *yōkigurashi* is happiness in this world and one digs in vain for the supernatural. "Men are all brethren," is one of their main tenets; "to teach them to live a cheerful life and to be happy so that they may enjoy terrestrial bliss, this eternal truth is the reason why *Tenri-Ō-no-Mikoto* came down on the foundress." But what is this eternal truth? It consists of the following earthly freedoms: freedom from want, from pain, from sickness and the like.

Of course we do not deny the really good points in the idea of *yōkigurashi*. Man is a social being, he lives in a world with others, he needs others. In devotion to others, in losing self in others, man reaches the fullness of his being, the perfection of his human life.

In order to live in peace and harmony with others, effort is required. That Tenrikyō stressed the necessity of cooperation and unselfish collaboration is indeed a very good and praiseworthy point.

I may be allowed to conclude this chapter with the words of a well-known Tenrikyō author: "*Yōkigurashi* is a task imposed upon all mankind. We, who are saved through Tenrikyō, are the forerunners who have to bear the brunt of it. Nobody else but we, can be called for this enormous

TENRIKYO'S DEVOTIONAL LIFE

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task. It is our glory as well as our heavy duty. While looking forward to the day in the very far future when this world will become immersed in the bright joy of *yōkigunashi*, we have to continue to work at the well nigh endless construction of the blissful life."¹⁾

1) *Tenrikyō Kyōten Kowa* 天理教教典講話 by Tashiro Takuji 田代澤治, p. 203.

THE RELIGION OF DIVINE WISDOM IN ACTION

It is January 26th, 1953,¹⁾ the anniversary of the death of the foundress. Although it is still mid-winter and very cold, more than 100,000 faithful have flocked to Tenri Shi by special trains from all parts of Japan, even from Northern Hokkaidō and from Southern Kyūshū. I was invited to be present at the festivities.²⁾ I left Tōkyō on the preceding day, and stayed overnight in Nara. The next morning I took an early train to Tenri Shi, the Rome as well as the Jerusalem of the Tenrikyō religion. Indeed it is their Rome, for here are their headquarters which we can perhaps describe as a kind of Vatican with several congregations which make the authoritative decisions with regard to doctrine, liturgy, administration, hierarchy and canon law of the Tenrikyō religion as we have already seen.

Tenri Shi is also the Jerusalem of the Tenrikyō because it was there that the foundress, Nakayama Miki, died 67 years ago. I arrived at 8:20 in the morning and Mr. Inoue together with an official of the *Hombu* 本部 were waiting for me. Within 20 minutes I arrived at one of the beautiful reception rooms in the Tenrikyō Vatican. "You are very welcome. Thank you so much for your enormous trouble in coming such a long distance while you are so busy. Please make yourself completely at home. You can give orders as you wish and we shall be always at your service, etc. The offertory (a kind of prelude to their ceremonies) has not yet ended, so there will be some time for a few light refreshments." The offertory makes a purely Shintoistic impression; it is the offering of fish, vegetables, fruit, sake, radishes and sweet delicacies and one can always witness this at any Shintō

1) The principal feasts of the Tenrikyō calendar are: New Year; The Great Vernal Festival, Jan. 26th; The Vernal Commemoration of the Dead, March 27th; The Anniversary of the Foundress, April 18th; Holy Labor Day, May 18th; Apostolate of the Press Day, Aug. 4th; The Day of Wayside Preaching, Aug. 18th; The Autumnal Commemoration of the Dead, Sept. 27th; The Great Autumnal Festival, Oct. 26th; Besides at least once a month—the date differing according to place and circumstances—takes place the solemn performance of the *Mikagura Uta*.

2) I was present at several of these festivities and I experienced always a very kind and courteous hospitality.

temple. The photographs published will make this more clear than any description can do. Generally it takes quite a time before the offerings have been placed at the different altars.¹⁾ The movements are slow and graceful.

“If it is not too impolite I would prefer to proceed immediately to the temple, for I should like to study as much as possible.” We stepped into our slippers and began our long walk through the seemingly endless corridors of the gorgeous temples. These corridors have been made of the most exquisite wood and they are swept and cleaned very minutely at least twice a day by hundreds of men and women.

After a long walk, we arrive at the main temple. In front and behind me tens of thousands of believers are squatting on the *tatami*, the Japanese mat floor. Many of them had already arrived the evening before. I am the only Westerner and move up to the reserved seat, that is to say the special mat which is laid out for my humble self. There I take my place and squat down uninterruptedly for 3 and a half hours. At the end of the ceremony I got up like an old man feeling extremely dizzy, a price which of course I gladly paid for the unusual experience which followed. When we arrived, the *kyōshi* had nearly finished their offertory which had taken just one hour and which was performed by some 25 Tenrikyō teachers, all ceremoniously dressed in the Nakayama *montsuki* 紋附. As mentioned before, I could not see any difference between this Tenrikyō offertory and the Shintō one. However, all that followed was purely and exclusively Tenrikyō.

A great silence is noticeable among the thronged crowds as the great ceremony is about to start. A long procession enters. First comes Nakayama Shōzen, the great grandson of the foundress. He is dressed in a black sheen silken *kimono*. He is revered very much by the faithful. After all he is the Patriarch of the Tenrikyō religion and the Vicar of Nakayama Miki, whose soul has now become one with *Tenri-Ō-no-Mikoto*.

Mr. Nakayama who is at the present moment on an apostolic tour through the States, is not so easily approachable, at least not for the ordinary Japanese faithful. The well-known “Lord of the forbidden Interior” or “People above the Clouds” (*unjōbito* 雲上人) a policy of former times is to my mind

1) In every Japanese Tenrikyō temple are always three altars: to the left the altar of the forefathers, in the centre that of *Tenri-Ō-no-Mikoto* and to the right the altar of the blessed foundress, Nakayama Miki.

still a little discernible in Tenri Shi. True, due to the influence of American democracy it has changed considerably if we compare it with the pre-war policy, yet some traces are still there.

Mr. Inoue Kakuji, who was the first to bring me into contact with Tenrikyō and who goes regularly, as do many other *kyōshi*, to Tenri Shi, told me that he has never yet succeeded in getting an audience or visiting Nakayama's private mansion. The most prominent politicians such as cabinet ministers, governors or members of parliament who are eager to contact him, especially during election time, never get a chance to do so. Since the Tenrikyō devout followers exercise quite an influence all over Japan, one can easily understand that if Nakayama should side with a political party, his support would be tremendous. However, he abstains completely from any political action. True, Tenrikyō has its own members of parliament—at the present moment 4—but they are there, merely to defend their religious rights and to occupy themselves with purely educational matters.

Behind Nakayama, but at a reverential distance, follow some thirty Tenrikyō high priests, all presidents, chairmen or prominent members of the different Tenrikyō congregations. Then enters the same number of women, all dressed in a black silk kimono with the Nakayama crest, an encircled plum blossom (which has become the Tenrikyō's *mon* 紋). First comes Mrs. Nakayama. She is Nakayama's second wife. His first wife who bore him 4 children, died on Feb. 5th 1946.¹⁾ He married again on March 20th, 1948 and he has one child by his second wife, the former Miss Komori Oai. Behind Mrs. Nakayama follow the wives of the other high priests. The Japanese well-known etiquette and their graceful display of beautiful ceremonial forms, now shows itself in all its brilliance and delicacy. They all bow deeply before the *kanrodai* 甘露臺, the sacred column. The women

1) Nakayama's 18-year-old daughter gave recently the following interview to the *Sunday Mainichi*: "Our home has no particular family customs. We simply do what we want to. My brother (20 years old) generally stays in Tōkyō (studies at Keiō University), and the other members go their own way, intervened by nobody. Father is away from home at least two-thirds of the month on account of his religious propaganda. The rest of the month, he is constantly kept busy with numerous visitors and guests. It is a rare occasion and therefore all the more pleasant when all the members of my family come together. Some may find this strange, but since I am accustomed to it from my early childhood, I take it only for granted. But if we do come together, then we have such a jovial time as one can hardly imagine. At such occasions my youngest sister, a tot of 3 years, plays the chief rôle."

proceed to the right and the men to the left. Nakayama squats down in the midst, facing the *kanrodai*. He is assisted by *Uchi-tōryō* 内統領 and the *Omote-tōryō* 表統領¹⁾ who act as deacon and subdeacon respectively. A great branch of the sacred *sakaki* 榊 tree is handed to him. He puts it into a kind of wooden stand, after which he begins to recite the following *saibun* 祭文 (prayer at a festival).²⁾

“On the occasion of the Grand Vernal Festival I am extremely glad to express my thanks for your faithfulness to come to *jiba* and to participate in the performance of our liturgy. Moreover I take this opportunity to return thanks for your toils and troubles, in devoting yourselves everyday and everywhere as head of a church, as preacher or as layman or laywoman. I take also this opportunity to pay my compliments to all the faithful in Japan. As I have spoken time and again the Grand Vernal Festival is the most significant day for us to know the Heart of God. In the presence of God the Parent, *Tenri-Ō-no-Mikoto* who is enshrined in this centre of the world, I pray with great respect: Thou, O God the Parent, hast created man and the universe out of chaos and thou hast ever since taken care of our growth. We will never, not even for a moment, forget these graces of Yours, and we are always thinking how we can repay them. Especially so, in this month of January—a memorable month in which our blessed Foundress passed away and took leave of this world. To that end she shortened her life by 25 years because of her deep love for us, her children, and during the last years of her life, having become the shrine of God, she left behind a perfect example in order to save all mankind. Therefore, in order to please the mind of God the Parent, we are now going to perform the Grand Vernal Festival; and to repay the favours bestowed on us by our Foundress, we are now going to dance cheerfully. May God graciously deign to accept our sincere childlike hearts, we who are eager to thank our foundress for the enduring of her trials. May God grant that this world become a prosperous one in which people’s minds will be purified completely. May God grant miraculous protection to the faithful who devote themselves to the service of God and who work for the salvation

1) See p. 55.

2) Formerly they used the term *norito* 祝詞, which is now disregarded in Tenrikyō, one of the numerous signs of gradually brushing aside some Shintō externals.

of others. Thus I pray respectfully to God, together with the whole congregation.”

During and after this prayer the sacred music begins, in a very high earsplitting tone—a tone not too pleasing to Western ears. Everybody will understand what I mean, when I explain that the musical instruments used, are: *taiko*, *shōko*, *shō*, *fue*, *shichiriki*, *ryūteki* and *kakkō*. (During the sacred dance, the *jampon*, *surigane*, *fue*, *hyōshigi*, *koto*, *samisen*, *kokyū* with the big and small drums, are used.)

Next follows the performance of the mystical dance—one of the climaxes of this Vernal Grand Festival. The ceremony takes place at the foot of the *kanrodai* in a kind of open square-shaped basement, situated some feet below the temple surface. This basement, invisible to the faithful, is strewn with grey white gravelstones. The ten performers of the *kanrodai zutome*, the mystical dance—Nakayama and 9 others, 4 men and 5 women—arise, even while the music is playing, and descend by four different staircases to the basement. Only the shuffling of their feet over the gravelstones can be heard. The number of the performers is always ten, in conformity with the ten appearances, instruments or organs of *Tenri-Ō-no-mikoto*. Nakayama standing in the North and facing South takes the rôle of the male deity *Kunitokotachi-no-Mikoto* 國末立命. His wife standing in the South and facing West takes the rôle of the female deity *Omotari-no-Mikoto* 面足命. The eight other performers also take up their positions: the four men in the West and the four women in the East. Then after all are masked—each wearing a different mask—they start their mystical dance which lasts some ten minutes. As I have mentioned before, my request to be present at this dance, was politely refused.

Whereas the *Mikagura Uta* is played in all the Tenrikyō *kyōkai*'s, this mystical dance round the *kanrodai* is performed in the mother temple at Tenri Shi only. Every dancer seems to make different gestures according to the nature of the *kami* whose rôle he or she has taken. As I have elsewhere mentioned the whole performance is a kind of mystical representation, or perhaps better, a re-enacting of the creation of mankind.¹⁾ I am afraid I cannot give more precise details due to lack of accurate information. To

1) See p. 93.

my repeated questions put to Tenrikyō preachers about this mystical dance, I received only ambiguous and evasive answers. It would seem that this dance falls within the terrain of their *disciplina arcana*.

Tenrikyō's Main Ceremony

Meanwhile six dancers, three men and three women appear in order to perform before the eyes of the faithful the *Mikagura Uta*. This dance constitutes the very centre of all Tenrikyō religious ceremonies all over Japan. It is always performed by six elected people who stand in front of the altar of *Tenri-Ō-no-Mikoto*.¹⁾ The faithful reverently squat down, sing unisono and imitate with their hands the movements of the dancers. All in all, this sacred dance takes some 50 minutes. The movements are by now rigidly fixed in their liturgical manual: *Teodori gaijō* 手踊り概要 (Outline of the *teodori*).

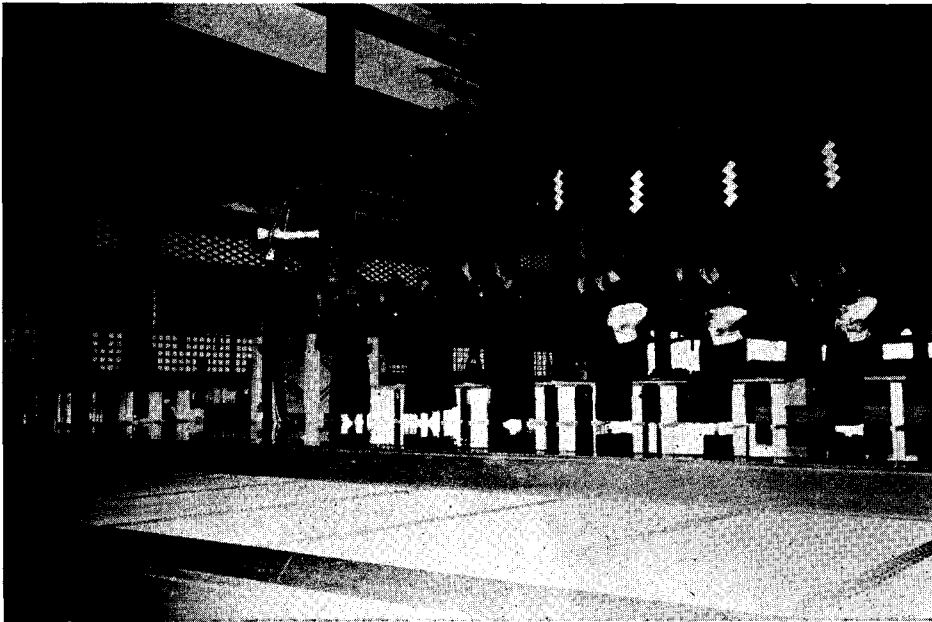
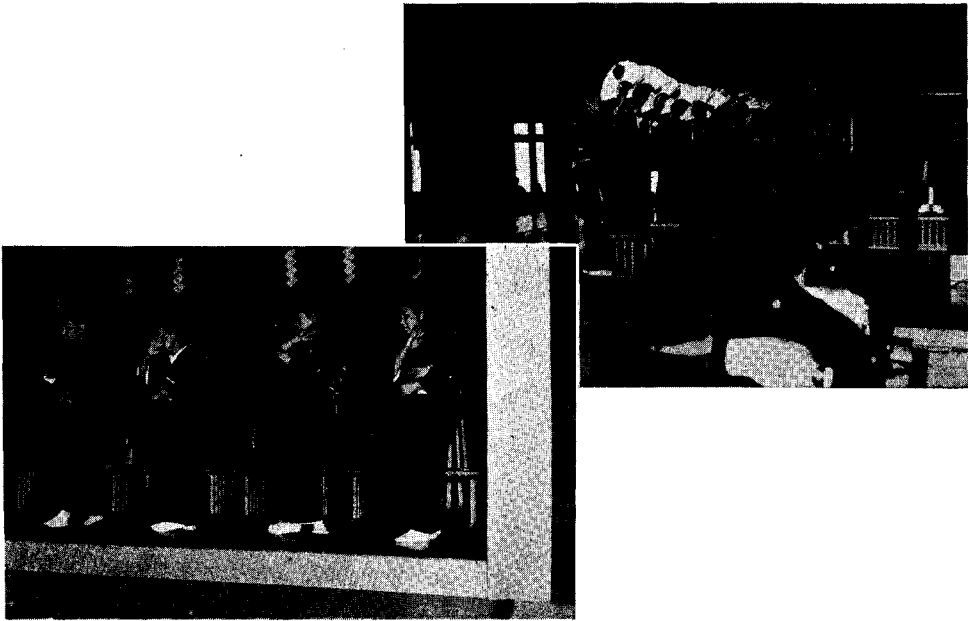
Shortly before this particular dance starts, I notice a certain tension on the faces of the faithful, expressive of a fixed determination, an indomitable will and an adamant resolution. Here one does not experience that calm which you find among Catholic congregations as they wait for the priest who will shortly appear from the sacristy in order to offer Holy Mass. Even more noticeably absent is the peacefulness which reigns in Buddhist temples prior to the recital by the monks of the sutras. On the contrary a definite tension is clearly discernible. All stretch and crane their necks. Then a dead silence ensues while the dancers make ready to start. Suddenly a colossal beat on the drum is heard and then begins the *Mikagura Uta*, the song of the sacred dance, the centre of Tenrikyō's worship, conceived and composed by the foundress, Nakayama Miki.

Here you notice no Oriental passivity or mental inertness, here no quietism nor inactivity, no calmful longing for yonder shore, no peaceful waiting for the light of *Amidabutsu*, no shaking off the human delusions and entering on the path which will lead away from these restless, tossing waves of the ocean of life, to the rest of Nirvana of wisdom and goodness and peace. Here, no desire for an intimate union with multitudes of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, here no fathoming of the mysteries of the sutras,

1) At the headquarters only very important persons are privileged to perform the dance in the mother temple. While I was there, one of the female performers was the only living person who has known Nakayama Miki personally.

no peaceful waiting for the evening of the day when the secrets of the hundred categories will be disclosed, and no desire for enlightenment in the Pure Land of perfect bliss. Here, no vague or ethereal dreaming over the great and wide expanse of space where lives no "ego" and where there is neither beginning nor end, neither coming nor going, but only the immensity of empty void. Here, in Tenrikyō's prayer, we do not move in a fleeting existence—on the contrary, one feels impulsive dynamics, energy, extreme zeal, effervescence, tenacity, unwavering determination with streamlined movements—a veritable assembly plant religion. The rhythm is quite peculiar and the drum will see to it that you don't forget it. Here again, we have worldly grace and expressive suppliant prayer combined. To the right, the women, all dressed in beautiful kimonos and to the left the same number of men, moving round alternately with or without fans. Graceful movements of arms and fingers, expressing sorrow, shame, invocation, obsecration or supplication according to the sacred text, catch the eyes. So, for instance, when they bring their hands against their temples they indicate pain and suffering, when the hands move up and down they express exhilaration and spiritual joy, when the text exhorts *binokishin*, the corporal work of mercy, they imitate the carrying of a load on the shoulders, a.s.o. At more or less regular intervals, heavy blows come down on the drum, in order to support the rhythm and to bring the faithful to some sort of enthusiastic pitch—to work them up to a kind of religious excitement. These sordine thuds on the muffled drum bring some kind of sombreness and demureness to the whole atmosphere. The melody, however, is fascinating—it revolves in one's head for hours. I can vouch for this personally even though I have not yet completely mastered the melody, and I'd venture to say that it must linger in Japanese heads for days or even weeks! All these things work together to create that indefinable mystical something which expresses itself on the faces of the Tenrikyō faithful when they speak about their religion or when they quote parts of this dancing psalm in ordinary conversation. Nakayama Miki, this uneducated simple woman, has indeed composed an Oriental melody and has clothed it with words which dominate to a certain extent, the minds of the faithful.

Meanwhile the dancers, after the fashion of magicians, suddenly throw open their fans and it is as if a flash of lightning illuminates the temple.

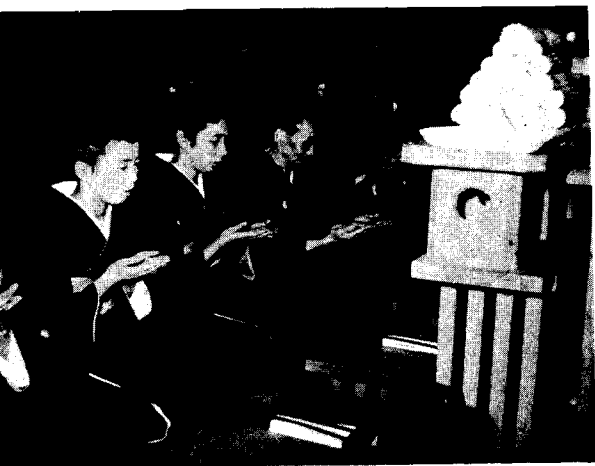


The *Mikagura Uta* in full swing. (Photo: E. Feifel)



Graceful movements of arms and fingers, expressing devotion, sorrow, shame catch the eyes.

(Photo : P. Beltjens)



The listeners and onlookers are rapt with attention, and they follow closely the chant and the movements.

Finally a colossal beating of the drum is heard and the ceremony comes to a close.

Nearly an hour has passed! Now an unexpected mental calmness and stillness comes over the faithful. It seems to me like a relaxation and alleviation of nerves and muscles; tension eases, enthusiasm dies down. The dancers return to their places among the faithful in order to follow the next point of the program: the sermon of the patriarch.

A kind of pulpit is erected, some 3 yards in front of me. Mr. Nakayama, having finished in the meantime his mystical dance at the foot of the *kanrodai*, ascends the pulpit in order to address the great crowds. It is interesting to note here, the facilities and inventions of modern technics the Tenrikyō people enlist for their propaganda purposes. For instance—a tape-recorder is put in motion when he starts his sermon, cameras flash and click, and a microphone, connected with numerous loudspeakers, picks up his voice and relays it over the vast temple grounds. Nakayama stands just in front of me, and now and then we look each other straight in the eyes. He has indeed an impressive appearance!

Sermon of the Tenrikyō Patriarch

“*Minasama*,¹⁾ thank you ever so much for coming so far to attend this Grand Vernal Festival. I take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude for your sacrificing efforts to lead a life according to the principles of the Tenrikyō faith in your respective positions, whether as ‘parish priest,’ ‘curate’ or layman. First I should like to give you, and through you, to the other faithful all over the country, my New Year’s message. As it is well known to you this day is the best time for us, the faithful, to understand the parental heart of *Tenri-Ō-no-Mikoto*. It is the day on which our Foundress passed away, shortening her life by 25 years because of her deep love toward her children and because of her great desire to pave the way for world-wide Tenrikyō.

‘In adversity man’s ambition is kindled.’ By these words of hers we

1) A month later I received this speech in print. Hence the above (abbreviated) translation.

understand why she desired so many trials for her faithful, namely that they should ripen spiritually.

Again, 'the way of God' means *yōkigurashi* or joyful life. This was the intention of God the Parent when He created mankind, because man finds his real self in a joyful life. However, for selfish purposes, man has abused his mind, the only faculty he can freely exercise. This means he has piled up dust (*hokori*, sin) for a long time, and thus this world has become a world of competition and very inhospitable. Yet, it should be a blissful world. The only way to *yōkigurashi* is to convert our mind and to sweep off the dust. When we are cleansed from all sorts of dust and when we perform the *kanrodai zutome*, which is in line with the law (or reason) of creation (*moto hajimari no ri* 元初りの理)¹⁾ we can be as it were reborn.

She sacrificed herself because of her strong desire to accomplish *kanrodai zutome* and to hasten the growth of the people. This after all is the reason for this yearly grand festival. This, too, is the philosophy which we must see in this great celebration. Keeping this in mind we have determined to do our best to come nearer to the world of *yōkigurashi*.

The real life of a believer begins with reflection and with an examination of conscience. First we should reflect how it was on the *moto ichi nichi* 元一日,²⁾ the day on which we received *osazuke* (Tenrikyō's confirmation). We all experienced on that day the pure delight of being granted the protection of God, and we were thoroughly sincere in our faith, forgetting all worldly things. Let us everyday keep this same spirit and this same delight. Then we shall find ourselves nearer to the world of *yōkigurashi*. Once again I repeat, it is very necessary to reflect often upon the *moto ichi nichi!*

The Foundress urged us to grow spiritual quickly. To that end she left behind not only her writings but also a model life, which enables even the blind or the illiterate to understand and to follow our religion. When we start our adventure of growing spiritually, let us look at our own lives and then compare it with *binagata* 雛形 the model of our foundress and correct

1) *Moto hajimari no ri* indicates the mind of the Creator when He created this world. In a broad sense, it also means *yōkigurashi*, the bright life.

2) *Moto ichi nichi* has several meanings. In the case of *Tenrikyō no moto ichi nichi* 天理教の元一日, it means the foundation day of Tenrikyō. *Kyōkai no moto ichi nichi* 教會の元一日, means the inauguration day of a new *kyōkai*. *Kojin no shinkō no moto ichi nichi* 個人の信仰の元一日 is the day on which the Tenrikyō believer has been confirmed.

it accordingly. Then there should spring out, the pure delight of pursuing the truth. If we have attained the fulness of faith, then our mind will be completely in harmony with the teaching of the foundress. Until that time, we must plod along, examine ourselves, see where our life is at variance with that of the Foundress and correct ourselves accordingly. Our criterion should be our Foundress' life and teaching rather than the norm of man's everyday natural thinking. When we devote ourselves entirely to our religion and to the salvation of mankind, we shall be extremely happy.

In three years time we will celebrate the 70th memorial festival of our blessed Foundress. Let us prepare ourselves for it now.

I hear people say that the world is now divided in two, although it is in reality one. From the view-point of God the Parent who created mankind, all the people in the whole world are brothers and sisters, his beloved children. Despite this fact, the world is, as I have said, divided into two camps between which lies an impassable abyss. The cold war threatens to become a hot war. I have the firm conviction that if each one of us keeps in mind the principle of *yōkigurashi* 陽氣ぐらし, the joyful life, our divided world will be united and become a world of brightness.

The way to peace is to make everyday a step toward *yōkigurashi*. When all people attain the mind of *moto ichi nichi* 元一日 as God the Parent taught, the world will become completely peaceful and the road to *yōkigurashi* will open up before us.

Let us show how we can all joyfully work together in the same spirit at this *jiba*, in the *binokishin* ひのきしん, the holy labour party which will be held in the afternoon. Now at the beginning of 1953, it is my hope that you will convey to all the faithful, the message which I have given you."

With this speech the official ceremony has come to a close. A graceful movement indicates to me that I may rise—not so easy after three and a half hours *suwaru* 座る, squatting on the flour in the Japanese way. We get into our slippers in order to shuffle back through the gorgeous temple corridors to the reception room, where a light lunch has been set out. During lunch I received a message from the patriarch inviting me to take dinner with him and to stay for a few days as his personal guest in his private mansion.

He was extremely kind to me and very courteous. He is exceedingly revered by the Tenrikyō faithful. At several Tenrikyō parish houses a

special wing is reserved for him and nobody is allowed to make use of it. His own private mansion is built in a beautiful Oriental style and decorated with an extremely fine taste. Only one huge room is of Western style. There I should meet him for the first time. After having waited for a few minutes a sturdy and robust figure enters. With manly and decided steps he walks to me, stretches out his hand and gives me a very cordial and quite un-Japanese handshake. He has indeed an imposing figure, this patriarch, who is at the same time an athlete and very proficient in *jūdō* 柔道, the Japanese wrestling.¹⁾ Having in mind to display all the Japanese etiquette at my command, I feel straight away that it won't do in these environments. At first glance one notices immediately this man is very broad-minded, he has been in Europe and the Americas and he can easily talk with any foreigner on a perfectly equal basis. He tries hard to accommodate himself completely to foreigners. He knows some German and quite a lot of English. Our conversation however was conducted in Japanese and I got the impression that he is a well educated gentleman and at the same time a man of great learning.

“You are very welcome, delighted to meet you and sincere thanks that you have come here from so far.” No bows, no other ceremonies, no special or reserved smiles. Instead he sits down straight away and goes *linea recta* to his subject.

“I see you are also a member of the Society of the Divine Word. Some 20 years ago the great ethnologist, Professor William Schmidt visited me. How is he doing? Recently when I was in Europe I had in mind to visit him. However, my time was extremely short and I did not pass through Switzerland. If you see him again or if you write to him, please give him my kindest regards. He is indeed a great scholar.”

He pushes a button, a servant enters and orders are given: “Bring immediately the six pre-war volumes of ‘Der Ursprung der Gottesidee.’” After a few minutes a heavy bookload is brought into the room.

“Professor, I should be delighted if I could get the post-war volumes.”

“I will order them immediately, Mr. Nakayama, and I should be very much honoured indeed if you kindly would accept them as a small *tsumaranai*,

1) He holds the sixth grade certificate of *jūdō* (*jūdō roku dan* 柔道六段). In 1951 he visited the *jūdō* hall in New York and he gave there a very good performance of this Japanese art of self-defense.



Worldly grace and an expressive suppliant prayer are combined together in the liturgical dance. (Photo : P. Beltjens)



Tenrikyō's patriarch, Mr. Nakayama, addresses the great crowds at the Mother Temple in Tenri Shi.



The dancers suddenly throw open their fans and it is as if a flash of lightning illuminates the temple.

worthless gift of mine. I could almost say: you both have something in common, you both have written many books, you are the patriarch of Tenrikyō and Professor Schmidt is the patriarch of my Society.”¹⁾

Another button is pushed. A few male and female servants enter and they bring coffee, fruit, delicacies and sweets. The conversation becomes very lively, although he is still a little hoarse because of the sermon which he had just held. His sermon was extremely enthusiastic and full of sincere fervour. There were also present two Tenrikyō *kyōshi*, who however practically did not speak. I asked about several points of the Tenrikyō faith, which he kindly explained and he wanted from me some information about Christianity. Our discussion was held in a most cordial and pleasant atmosphere.

What impressed me very much during our conversation was the fact of his total spiritual colourblindness with regard to racial questions and it made not the slightest difference whether he talked with a Korean, European, Indian or American. This was not pose, but dead sincere.

“Recently you have visited the Holy Father, isn’t that so, Mr. Nakayama?”

“Most certainly, and it was a delightful visit. I have spoken with the Pope, and he made a deep spiritual impression on me.”²⁾

1) This great scholar of world fame died in Feb. 10th 1954, in Fribourg, Switzerland. He is the founder of “Anthropos” and a voluminous writer on quite a number of subjects.

2) Nakayama gave in *Michi no tomo* 道の友 of Dec. 1953 the following account of his audience with the Pope: Yesterday afternoon (Oct. 16th) we were informed that we should be honoured with an audience. Mr. Kanayama 金山 who knows how to pull the strings was completely at ease, but as to me I felt slightly nervous. I wore a black suit. I should have preferred to wear a black *haori* 羽織 (Japanese coat), but since I had it not with me, I simply had to go in my black travelling suit. Mr. Kanayama was dressed up to date. It is of course quite natural for him since he is a diplomatist. We went to the detached palace of Castel Candolfo, the summer residence of the Pope. When we arrived a few persons were waiting, and we joined them in a small room. Soon the Pope appeared; he wore a round hat and he was dressed in such a way that it reminded me a little of Chinese style dress. The Pope greeted first Mr. Kanayama with a handshake after which the Japanese diplomatist knelt down and kissed the hand of the Holy Father. They conversed with each other intimately. After that Mr. Kanayama introduced me to the Pope. I stood with erect face, shook his hands and told him: “I have come from Japan and I feel it a great honour to meet you.” I honestly did not know whether my compliments were polite enough or not. I went on: “Because of my poor English I can not express my thoughts sufficiently, please kindly give me permission to speak in Japanese, and Mr. Kanayama will act as interpreter.” Having received this permission, I said in Japanese: “It has come to my knowledge that you have made great efforts for the holy purpose of establishing peace in this world, I have the same purpose in

We discussed furthermore, the religious life of Europeans and Americans, the future of Japan and many other topics.

“This house is completely at your disposal and you can give your orders as you wish, for I should be extremely pleased if you would consider yourself as my personal guest.”

Half an hour later I drove in his brand new American car all over the extensive temple grounds of Tenri Shi. In the afternoon I witnessed a *hinokishin*, a Holy Labour party, in which tens of thousands of the Tenrikyō faithful participated all of whom were in bright spirits. Nakayama himself gave a good example and dressed in the well known Tenrikyō *happi* 法被, the deep blue livery coat with the 3 white Tenrikyō characters, he dug and carried soil away like all the others. For more than a quarter of an hour a plane flew overhead, dropping religious pamphlets. Each pamphlet entitled the holder to a religious book. This then was Tenrikyō in action at the headquarters to where the faithful are constantly streaming, some out of pure devotion, others because of official duties but most of them in order to listen to the special lecture course, *besseki* 別席,¹⁾ which will prepare them for the reception of the divine granting, *osazuke* おさづけ. The headquarters always resemble a beehive full of activity and a great spirit of enterprise reigns everywhere. At the present moment a huge building, one of the

mind and I express my most sincere thanks and homage to you in the name of Tenrikyō. Moreover, I thank you very much for all that you have done for Japan especially after the last war.” After that I gave an outline of Tenrikyō. When Mr. Kanayama began to interpret my speech, the Pope spoke something to him in Italian. Mr. Kanayama was a bit uneasy; he would not interpret what I had spoken. I became a little worried and whispered to him: “What is the matter?” He said: “I am surprised the Pope knows Japanese. He sees to have understood what you have spoken, and he tells me the outline of your speech.” (Those who know Japan and the Japanese etiquette will understand what is really meant here. Note of the author).

After having received the blessing of the Pope, we shook hands once again. I got a feeling that we had become more intimate than before. Hereafter Mr. Kanayama presented a fine tapestry, a table cloth and a pearl necklace. I remember so well how the Pope rolled the pearls between his thumb and his other fingers. I told him that I was on the way home from Brazil, and I expressed my sincere esteem for the activities and efforts of the Catholic priests there; then, he smiled and shook my hands once again. Thus our audience ended. We received several medals with the Pope's figure. After the audience we had a memorial photograph taken with the chair of the Pope and the Swiss guards. I wanted to have a photograph taken with the Pope, but Mr. Kanayama denied my proposal, because he knew of no precedent in such case.

I heard that the Pope is well versed in more than ten languages, but I never thought that he understands even Japanese. Surely he must have an extraordinary gift for languages.”

1) See p. 99.

biggest in Japan, is being set up, destined to receive all those want to prepare themselves for the Tenrikyō confirmation. All the different departments at the headquarters are constantly busy and one is really impressed by the great zeal of the people.

Of course Tenrikyō in action in other parts of Japan has a different aspect. There the people do not come so easily under the spell of a streamlined propaganda. There we do not find many cultural or charitable institutions and there also we often hear many complaints about the difficulty of the rural propaganda.¹⁾ The Tenrikyō preachers complain very much of the formidable opponent which they meet in Buddhism, which still exerts such a strong hold on the country people. They prefer to go to the towns where missionary work is much easier, where conservatism is not so strong. But—as we are informed—if a preacher has faith, enthusiasm and perseverance, he will surely achieve his missionary purpose. Among their ways of propaganda, the visiting of patients takes an important place. Says one of their propounders: “Although the visiting of the patients in hospitals is an unattractive and hard undertaking for the preachers, their apostolic zeal will overcome these difficulties. Buddhism, Christianity and Tenrikyō preachers have each their own method for this apostolate of the sick. This propaganda activity must be done not only for the patients but for the families of the patients and for the staffs of the hospitals alike.”²⁾

My personal information and experience in Japan is that the Tenrikyō preachers meet with success when they visit the sick in their own homes. However their visits to hospitals bring seldom, if ever, the desired results. When many patients are together, they exchange among themselves their knowledge of and their experiences with Tenrikyō people and it seems that the resulting arguments are not too often in favour of the religion of divine wisdom.

Besides visiting the poor, the apostolate of the press and all other means of mass communications such as radio, films, television, theatrical performances etc. are very much stressed. They have produced a newsreel series *Michi no ugoki* 道の動き, the progress of our religion, which count now already some 15 different films. Coloured slides about *jiba*, and the

1) All that follows is a kind of summary from articles published in *Tenri Jibō* 天理時報.

2) *Tenri Jibō*, Dec. 1953.

life of the Foundress are made in large quantities and exported to different countries. Once in a while Tenrikyō makes a surprise and as it were peaceful attack on some remote village. A small convoy of several cars breaks the quietness of the village by loudspeakers and other such noisy propaganda. For the older folks *naniwabushi* 浪花節, story tellers give a performance, for youngsters films are shown and music played and little children are feasted with *kamishibai* 紙芝居, popular paper slides. After such a whole day of propaganda the convoy leaves the village and quietness prevails again. Some time later they come back to see whether the seeds have grown.

However it is Tenrikyō's experience that the above mentioned means of modern mass communications stir up the people for a short time only, but what really brings new believers into the fold is the personal contact which is therefore considerably emphasised. It is then a little surprising that the Tenrikyō propaganda leaflets speak of the relief work for public welfare, as the achievement of which they are most proud. It is true that the Tenrikyō faithful in case of natural disasters take an active part in relief work. During the time of the great floods in Kyūshū, the Tenrikyō people organized *binokishin* teams and they cooperated in the work of restoration and rehabilitation. Once in a while one can see them entering public parks armed with brooms, rakes, and shovels to clear away the mess left behind by the visitors. They enter prisons and admonish the inmates and try to bring them back on the path to righteousness.

Finally I would like to mention their overseas activities which lately have become very prominent again. Tenrikyō high priests make use of the world's airlines and go over to Europe and the Americas in order to study the mentality of the foreigners and how to accommodate their propaganda accordingly. It seems to me that at the present moment they try to construct a whole policy of psychological accommodation. In Hawaii, U. S. and Brazil they build their temples in the style of the foreigners in order to evade the danger of becoming a strange element in American or Hawaiian surroundings. They study the foreign cultures as a preparation for the preaching of the Tenrikyō gospel. How can we make our religion appeal to foreigners, is at the present moment one of the most important points of discussion at the headquarters, and it gives them many headaches. So far they complain of their little—if any—success; they complain about the scarcity

of propaganda material at their disposal and they try feverishly to improve this situation. To that end they produce pamphlets in European languages, but up to the present moment nothing very readable or attractive has appeared yet. I am sure, however, that this will be remedied in the future. They are after all an active and dynamic movement. Peaceful, spiritual recollection is not their strongest side. To where all the activities will finally bring them, is a question the future will answer.

TENRIKYŌ'S DOGMATIC ANTHOLOGY

In the following pages I will give some original translations from Tenrikyō's canonical writings. As such are considered the *Mikagura Uta* みかぐらうた, the *Ofudesaki* おふでさき, and the *Osashizu* おさしづ, the first two being the inspired writings of Miki herself and the *Osashizu* having been revealed to Master Ihuri. The Tenrikyō doctrine is based on these 3 holy scriptures.¹⁾ As I have mentioned before, the *Doroumi Kōki* 泥海古記 has also been directly revealed to the foundress. However, at the present moment—formerly it may have been different—it is no longer mentioned as one of the canonical writings, for reasons which are obvious when one goes through the whole story. However, that part of the *Doroumi Kōki* which has been written down by the foundress herself, is still considered as belonging to the canonical writings.

The *Mikagura Uta* was written when the devotional life of Miki was at its zenith. The greatest part was composed during the years 1866–1870. What has been added later is only a few lines. We are told that this song is very suitable for a choreographical accompaniment. The foundress herself made suitable gestures and composed the melody which is really fascinating. The song consists of one prelude and 12 parts. This prelude is always chanted during Tenrikyō's morning and evening prayers. Of all the canonical writings this *Mikagura Uta* is certainly the most understandable and consequently the most popular among the faithful. Many times I have witnessed the performance of this sacred dance. The rhythm is quite peculiar and one can easily understand that it makes a deep impression on the performers. This *Mikagura Uta* is the center of the Tenrikyō's worship. They express the fundamental doctrine of Tenrikyō in words "which easily move God and men alike," the foundress declared. All the movements are rigidly fixed in their liturgical manual: *Teodori Gaiyō* 手踊り概要, the outline of the *teodori*.

1) In the preface of the latest Tenrikyō catechism, the present patriarch Nakayama Shōzen writes: "This book is based on the *Ofudesaki*, *Mikagura Uta* and *Osashizu*, and compiled at the Tenrikyō headquarters.

MIKAGURA UTA THE SONG OF
THE SACRED DANCE¹⁾

PRELUDE

Sweep away all iniquity and save us, O God of Heavenly Wisdom.

I²⁾ will speak to you a little while. Hark and listen to God's word. I never tell you any evil things.

The creation of heaven and earth was a model of how I created husband and wife.

Thus was the beginning of this world.

Sweep away all iniquity and hasten to save us.

Once the world is purified, then erect the sacred column.³⁾

Since the creation I have looked round everywhere in vain to see if there was anyone who would understand My Heart.

This is quite natural, for nobody has ever taught you.

However this time, I your Parent appear to you all, and I explain to you all things in detail.

You used to speak about *Jiba*⁴⁾, God's dwelling in the Yamato Province, however you are uninformed about its origin.

If it is explained to you in full, a great yearning will come over you⁵⁾.

1) A Tenrikyō professor translated this title as: "Dancing Psalms." This translation seems to me a little confusing to the foreign reader who is not familiar with the *Shintō Kagura's* 神樂, the sacred dances of the Shintō religion. Wherever the text was not clear, I used the explanation of Nakagawa Kurakichi 中川庫吉 in *Chōseki Mikagura Uta* 朝席みかぐらうた.

2) With the first personal pronoun *Tenri-Ō-no-Mikoto* is generally indicated.

3) The *kanrodai*, see p. 92.

4) See p. 36.

5) A desire to go to Tenri Shi in order to know the Heart of God the Parent.

If you want to know, come unto Me and I will explain to you the origin of all things.

I, God the Parent, reveal Myself and I will explain to you everything in detail; then the whole world will rejoice.

I hasten to save the whole world; therefore you people in the world exult.

PART I

The fertilizer of great efficacy¹⁾ which is bestowed at New Year is something rare.

Smilingly the faithful receive this divine granting and strength comes over them.

Keep your minds always young like that of a three year old baby.

This world²⁾,

Is full of Divine Wisdom,

Flooding all over the Universe.

Sow the seeds of what you want to reap,

In Yamato there is always a rich harvest.

Come to Me and follow Me,

Our aim is fixed.

PART II

Rat-a-tat, pit-a-pat; the opening of the New Year's dance is extremely delightful.

When we start the mysterious building,³⁾ people will flock from everywhere.

1) The *koe no sazuke*, see p. 96.

2) The peaceful world of all the believers.

3) The renewal of the hearts of men through faith in *Tenri-Ō-no-Mikoto*.

Let all people know,
The improvement of the world.
If everybody follows Me,
The root of all evil will be cut.
If I save you from all suffering,
The cause of all diseases will disappear.
If you have a strong determination,
Peace will reign all over the world.

PART III

The place of holy service in Japan, is the place of the world's origin.
It is indeed a mysterious place of worship; I asked nobody to come.
Yet, people have come from all over the world and they started with
the building. This is indeed mysterious.

At long last you have followed Me so far, the real salvation will
come from now on.

I have been slandered always, nevertheless I will work a remarkable
salvation.

Do not ask for unreasonable things but come to Me with your whole
mind.

Whatever you may do, simply trust on God the Parent with your
whole heart.

There is no greater hardship than sickness; I¹⁾ also devote myself
to sacred labour.

Thus far you have believed although you did not know the God
of all Origin.

However without any doubt, the true God has now appeared.

1) Here Nakayama Miki is meant.

PART IV

Whatever people may say of you, God watches you, so be at ease.
The hearts of couples must live in harmony, then all things will
become clear.

Those who are around Me, watch how God works.

Day and night the holy service goes on, its noise irritating the
neighbourhood.

For I always hasten to save you, come to Me with a cheerful heart.
Swiftly I want to save the villagers, although they do not understand
My Heart.

Meditate profoundly over the salvation of all mankind.

Then the roots of all diseases will be torn out and your hearts will
become bright.

Here is the paradise of this world¹⁾ and I would like to go there soon.
Now your hearts are purified; be grateful for it.

PART V

Although there are many places of salvation all over the world,
The miraculous salvation of painless childbirth and the healing of
smallpox form the entrance to salvation.²⁾

God is just like water, He cleans the human heart from all the stains.
With the exception of God there is nobody free from greed and
passions.

You have always been very devout and cheerful.

Become merciful of heart, and come to Me with a gentle disposition.

1) In Tenri Shi.

2) See p. 22.

I spare you from suffering, this is the very place of salvation.

However not only here in Yamato, but I go out to all the countries of the world to save them.

This is *Jiba*,¹⁾ the origin of the world, this wonderful place has now been revealed.

If you are always devout, then let us form our confraternity²⁾.

PART VI

Human nature is full of doubt.

Because I perform miraculous salvation, I have understanding of everything.

The hearts of all people reflect in Me like in a mirror.

Until now you have performed the services well; thus you have laid a solid foundation for your salvation.

Sacred chant and dance go on for ever, therefore I grant you miraculous salvation.

You have asked Me excessively and in a thousand ways I have granted all prayers.

Whosoever, believer, you may be, do not entertain wrong desires.

After all you must believe and people with wrong desires must renew their faith.

Because until now you have believed, you all shall receive a special merit.

At long last the granting through the intermediate of a fan has become visible.³⁾ How miraculous this is!

1) See p. 36.

2) See p. 4.

3) See p. 96.

PART VII

One little story is also a good *binokishin*¹⁾, and also a good pouring out of holy perfume.²⁾

My heart is very profound, therefore I shall grant you everything.

Everybody in the world wants to have rice fields³⁾.

If there is a good plot of land, everyone is very eager to own it.

Man's desires are all the same, even I should like to possess such a land.

I do not force you to do anything, rather please yourself.

I wish to have rice fields⁴⁾, whatever may be the price.

The residence of God is the divine rice field, therefore whatever seed may be sown, it will sprout and bud forth.

This holy spot is the rice-field of this world, I also shall carefully sow My seed.

Now the whole world has come to here to sow the seed; those who have sown the seed, will have a rich harvest, even without a fertilizer.

PART VIII

How can it be that nowhere throughout the world, there is neither stone nor tree!⁵⁾

Yet I construct a mysterious building, even though I do not expect any help.

1) See p. 106.

2) See p. 110.

3) Nakayama Miki used to explain her teaching with parables familiar to the Japanese farmers.

4) According to the interpretation of Nakayama, churches are meant.

5) With stones and trees are meant servants and handmaids of God.

From all over the world people come together and the building will go up.

Forget all greed and be firmly determined in your hearts.

I have been waiting for endless times, I myself will not erect the building.

Be not excessive in haste, but meditate profoundly.

If your hearts have become purified, then start immediately with the building.

All the necessary stones and trees I have seen already deep in the mountains.

According to God's mind this tree here and that stone there have to be cut out.

Now the whole world has been purified.

PART IX

I go round all over the world and after having cleansed the people's hearts, I save them all.

I make you free from all discomfort and inconvenience, trust in God the Parent.

When I look at the hearts of men all over the world, I see everywhere greed.

Kill this desire in order that you may become God's temple.

All people of the world are the same, follow Me with determination in your heart.

Let each one come after Me in freedom, after having determined his mind.

Now the whole world must meditate seriously.

Even in the mountains we shall hear everywhere the service of *Tenri-
Ō-no-Mikoto*.

Although you perform the services faithfully, there is nobody who
understands My Heart.

You want to call My Name, here I am, come to Me quickly.

PART X

The hearts of men are difficult to understand.

Although I have performed miraculous salvation, I have appeared just
now.

Take quickly away the mud in the water.¹⁾

The greed of man is very deep; purify your heart and it will become
like paradise.

These words of Mine will become a seed for your thoughts.

I have spoken severe words in order to hasten your salvation.

All suffering comes from man's heart, blame yourself and not others.
Although sickness is great suffering, nobody understands the root
of it.

Up until now nobody knows the cause of suffering.

But at long last this cause has now become known; it is man's heart
itself.

PART XI

Here in Japan, *Jiba*, the Parent's home, has been indicated²⁾.

Man and wife united in holy labour, this is indeed the first seed of
human happiness.

1) In the water of your heart.

2) See life of Foundress, p. 36.

If you look round all over the world you see an ever increasing number of people united in the holy labour of soil carrying.

Let us forget our greed and let us busy ourselves with holy labour.

This is the best fertilizer of our faith.

However they should work freely; only with such a mind they should come and work.

This soil carrying is really something wonderful, it is a holy labour.

We dig out the soil at the grounds of the Holy Home and carry it to another place.

So far nobody has understood My Heart, this is indeed a great pity.

This year you had a rich harvest, though you did not use any manure.

How joyful we are, how grateful we are!

PART XII

In the first place let us leave all things to the Master Carpenter¹⁾ and let us do what he wants.

When you start with the mysterious building,²⁾ give your orders after having asked My Will.

The workmen over whom I have poured out holy perfume, come from all over the world.

If there is an able Chief Carpenter, bring him here.

We need four Chief Carpenters, ask My will about their ability.

Do not compel them by force to come here, gradually they will learn and come by themselves to Me.

The building is really something mysterious, once started there is no end of it.

1) The Foundress, according to the usual Tenrikyō interpretation.

2) The world of the cheerful life.

If you go deep into the mountains,¹⁾ take with you young and fervent carpenters.

Here comes the Carpenter Who arranges and prepares the lumber,
follows the Builder and the man who planes the wood.

Now at long last throughout the world the working team is complete.

The *Ofudesaki* was written during the years 1869–1882. It is divided into 17 small volumes, comprising 1711 verses. Every verse consists of two lines. Nearly all the revealed works have been written in *hiragana*. For this reason Tenrikyō is often called the *Kana no Shūkyō* 假名の宗教, the religion of which the revelations have been written in the Japanese vowel writing, *hiragana* 平假名. The language is poetical, full of parables and with a pleasant rhythm. However, they are often difficult to understand, for the language is not the ordinary colloquial Japanese of 100 years ago, but it is a kind of dialect as it was spoken at that time in the Yamato 大和 Province. Bright and vivacious flashes are intermingled with monotonous passages. They treat subjects such as the creation, *jiba*, the problems of evil and salvation, and the particulars of the *kanrodai*, Japan being the stem of the world, all other countries being branches, and Japan being the eldest brother and the other countries being younger ones. Miki herself called these writings *fudesaki*, but the faithful have always crowned them with the honorific “o” and thus they are now commonly called *Ofudesaki*.³⁾

Serizawa Kōjirō 芹澤光治良, who has written and who is still writing a nearly endless series of articles about the foundress in *Tenri Jibō* 天理時報, has informed us why the foundress wrote these revelations: “After Miki had instructed the people in the teachings of God, they often laughed at her and did not listen. Those who did listen came to her only for the alleviation of their personal troubles. The divine directions given by Miki were used merely for personal needs. When this sad situation became clear to

1) Into the wide world.

2) In present day Tenrikyō they refer to young preachers as being young and fervent carpenters (*Araki Tōryō* 荒木棟梁).

3) “This world is ruled by divine principles and I try to govern the universe with poetry. This I will not do by giving immediate directions, nor by oracular words, but with the point of my brush (*fudesaki*).” *Ofudesaki*, I 21 & 22.

Miki, she found it necessary to write her revelations down in order that they should be known as God's universal law."¹⁾ According to the present patriarch we can call all the poetic writings of Miki *Ofudesaki* in a broader sense. However, the *Ofudesaki* in sensu stricto comprise only the 17 volumes mentioned before. The other *Ofudesaki*'s are then called *Gesatsu Ofudesaki* 外冊おふでさき, unauthentic *Ofudesaki* or merely *Gesatsu* 外冊, unauthentic edition. It seems to me quite peculiar that the foundress stressed so much the fact that the revelations were given in poetical form: "This world is ruled by divine principles and I try to govern the universe with poetry." (*Ofudesaki*, I 21) "I hope all the people will comply with Me. However, if that should not be the case, I will give my warning in the form of verse." (*Ofudesaki*, I 23) As one of the proofs that the *Ofudesaki* contains no earthly wisdom but only directly inspired revelations, we are told that while under inspiration Miki could easily take up her brush and write fluently the verses one after the other. However, when she tried to write down thoughts of her own, her brush would move round and round in circles in such a way that she could not write down even one syllable.

OFUDESAKI DIVINE SCRIPT

Chapter Nine

1. All that I²⁾ have spoken so far, you have taken as human wisdom.
2. But what I will say from now on, you should accept as divine wisdom, since no human mind is involved.
3. Listen now attentively to all the things that I shall speak, for I shall not use a human mind.
4. *Tsuki-Hi* 月日 (God the Parent) will tell you everything in detail; Hark and listen to it with your whole heart.
5. I wish that the two persons, who are the shrine of God,³⁾ will

1) 教祖様 *Oyasama*, by Serizawa Kōjirō, in *Tenri Jibō*, the Tenrikyō Weekly, No. 1192, 1953.

2) This "I" may be Miki, it may be *Tenri-Ō-no-Mikoto*.

3) *Kami no yashiro* 神のやしろ which Tenrikyō theologians translate as mediatrix.

receive a separate room.

6. Whatever you want, I will take it to My Heart, and I will grant you salvation. Wait and see.
7. These are the fundamental conditions, upon which I can grant you salvation.¹⁾
8. Be not neglectful of what I say. Listen attentively and comply with it.
9. Whatever sickness you may have, I give you assurance that I shall heal it.
10. In reality disease does not exist among men. Nobody knows the origin of this world.²⁾
11. Because I want to inform you about this, I have taught you medical science which will serve as correction and fertilizer.³⁾
12. From now on I will explain everything in detail, therefore hark and listen attentively.
13. I have hitherto spoken to you about almost everything, but not yet about the most important truth.⁴⁾
14. Listen attentively to what I will say from today on. The mind of God the Parent is in haste.
15. The reason why I hasten so much is that God the Parent desires to come down to this world.
16. Listen and comply with this story. Then miraculous things will happen.
17. Look into the future of our religion. This is God's desire.

1) These conditions are: (1) To listen to Miki's words as coming directly from God and to act accordingly. (2) To prepare a special room for the foundress and Miss Kokan.

2) Only those who know the revelations of *Tenri-Ō-no-Mikoto* can understand that diseases are merely divine warnings.

3) Metaphorical language of which the precise meaning is not even known to the Tenrikyō theologians.

4) Mankind's origin.

18. If you perceive that God is in action, hurry to set up the Sacred Column.
19. I have revealed to you the place of *jiba* where the Sacred Column should be established.
20. As soon as this place is firmly fixed, no troubles will come over you.
21. Now look to where God the Parent proceeds to preach; He preaches in high and distant places.
22. When people come to know this story, they will be surprised how great God the Parent is.
23. Then the people in the world will say: When the day will come, all the hearts of men will be cleansed.
24. I am extremely sorry for the great troubles which you have experienced during the last 38 years.¹⁾
25. Now I will speak firmly about everything to all the people of the world.
26. I will let you know everything, but especially who is the God of origin.
27. Nobody understands why I speak these things.
28. I am eager to save the children all over the world; therefore I will let you know the Heart of God the Parent.
29. When I am now going to work the salvation, which has not existed so far, I must tell you first the origin of this world.
30. I will tell you about things that never have been told; e.g. Who is the God of all origin.
31. When you come to know the God of all origin, then I will grant you everything.

1) Since the time that Miki became the shrine of God.

32. Do not think this story is something told by humans. It is God the Parent Himself Who speaks to you.
33. Look round all over the world; how many kinds of diseases there are!
34. However serious the sickness may be, I will heal it, and besides I will let you know how I healed it.
35. From now on I will most certainly tell you the cure. Hark and listen with your whole heart and act accordingly.
36. Your troubles¹⁾ at the present moment are very hard indeed; bear it until the time when you will see the happiness.
37. I have warned you several times; meditate it over, time and again.
38. You have not taken heed of my warnings, therefore these troubles have come over you.
39. What do you think about this story? It has been told in order to reveal to you *Tsuki-Hi's* omnipotence.
40. God the Parent wishes ardently to let you know this truth as soon as possible.
41. I, God the Parent, have asked all the bystanders, but alas nobody has understood it.
42. What I have spoken is not only for now but especially for the times to come.
43. While I have spoken to you, I thought always of the future.
44. From now on I will speak for a short time only about the Sacred Column.
45. The present Sacred Column is only a simple model.
46. From now I will speak to you firmly about the shape of the Sacred Column.

1) These words are spoken to Miss Kokan.

47. The diameter of the lowest layer is three feet ; it is of hexagonal shape.
48. I have spoken in various ways how this column should be erected.
49. If the Sacred Column remains firmly at *jiba*, then all fear and difficulties will surely disappear.
50. If anyone obstructs this holy work, ordered by God the Parent, his breath shall be stopped.
51. When the people see the establishment of the Sacred Column, they will believe that our religion is the true religion and the veritable teaching of *Tsuki-Hi*.
52. Upon the completion of this column the *kanrodai zutome*¹⁾ will start ; then every desire will be fulfilled.
53. I do not fix any date for the erection of the column ; as soon as it is completed the holy service will begin.
54. Once the service has started, every desire will be fulfilled.
55. Now watch keenly, God the Parent will give you most certainly the *jikimotsu*.²⁾
56. Without real proofs, things will be unreliable.
57. From now on I will preach with exactness ; do not betray these words of mine.
58. You may wonder what I will speak to you ; it is about the shape of the Sacred Column.
59. Pile up the layers successively and on top one of 2.4 feet diameter.
60. If you place a wide bowl on the column, I will surely give you the medicine of longevity.

1) See p. 91.

2) See p. 92.

61. First of all the Foundress will receive the *jikimotsu*.¹⁾
62. Only God the Parent knows the real mind of the Foundress who will receive this gift from heaven.
63. God the Parent will grant this *jikimotsu*, only after He has seen the mind of the Foundress.
64. If she has received the medicine of longevity; the Foundress can distribute it according to her wish.

The greatest part of the *Osashizu* which the Tenrikyō people translate as Divine Directions, were written by Master Iburi during the period from January 4, 1887 to June 9, 1907. They comprise 33 books and 7,790 pages all in all. We must take these directions as immediate revelations of the divine will, we are told. The Tenrikyō people distinguish two kinds of divine directions: directions which were given unexpectedly and without any warning beforehand, the so-called “*Kokugen* 刻限,” and directions which were bequeathed after Master Iburi invoked the divine will, the *Ukagai ni taisuru Osashizu* 伺ひに對するおさしづ,” directions given as an answer on inquiries. Although the directions given as an answer to a particular invocation have a special bearing for that case and that person, nevertheless we are told they contain wisdom destined for all, and therefore we must regard all the divine directions as a really important source of spirituality.

It had come to the knowledge of the Tenrikyō faithful that the Home Ministry had issued a secret order to suppress the Tenrikyō religion. They promptly went to Master Iburi in order to hear the divine direction in this particular case. He fell into a trance and spoke the following words:

Osashizu The Divine Directions

“I tell you, you are accused of many things. The mere desire for something does not yet bring its fulfillment (unless God wishes so.) I, God the Parent, have arranged things in such a way, that the officials will accuse you. You will be certainly surprised by

¹⁾ According to the Tenrikyō explanation. The meaning of the words taken literally is not clear.

this behaviour of mine. You know that your numerous petitions to the local government have been rejected so that you cannot hope now for much success. I have decided that all the queries will be brought to you at once. At first sight this may seem awful, but at a more close investigation you will discover some good. Torrents will pour down and mountain-slides will occur, and you will be dumbfounded. However after rain comes sunshine and serenity will reign once again. You have only to persist in your faith and then I will help you. Those who oppose Me are also my children, but of course you, My followers, are much more so. Those who believe in Me but do not practice My teaching are no better than the unbelievers, as I have told you time and again. I am opposed by believers as well as unbelievers. The former are the most dangerous since they deprive the religion of its essential fertility. A persecution will bring them to the light and in doing so it will achieve some good. Therefore do not worry too much, but keep your faith ablaze. Mountain-slides are thundering downwards, water torrents are surging, gales are blowing, and yet no shelter will be found. Thus I purify my religion of muddy water (heretics). If there is so much defiled water, things will not go well. The only thing you have to do is to keep the torch of your faith burning. Whatever the officials will command you, you simply obey. I watch you."¹⁾

As mentioned in the history of Tenrikyō many liturgical and dogmatical changes had occurred. The name of *Tenri-Ō-no-Mikoto* was changed in *Tenri-Ō-Gami*, the use of amulets was restricted, the *kanrodai zutome* was now only performed by male dancers, etc. In such circumstances the faithful felt

1) The *Osashizu* of the 21st of the 4th month of Meiji 29 (1896).

uncertain and wanted to know God's opinion about the innovations. Once again Master Iburi fell into a trance and spoke the following *sashizu* :

“You will be distressed at these drastic changes of the liturgy and the regulations. My religion will seem to you darkened by foreboding shadows. Under these circumstances you need a special permission which I grant you herewith. And this will make all things clear to you.

Now come nearer my children. Nothing is stronger than truth. I granted you permission in order that your heart should not become confused. Look at each other in perfect harmony and bright days will dawn again. If you keep together the unity of faith and if you share all things together, the day of enlightenment will come and you will understand why these trials were necessary.

There is another thing I want to tell you. I have warned you very often that one goes easier astray on a broad road than in a narrow lane. To live in harmony is the Way of God. Share all things with one another and keep joy in your heart. This is very fundamental indeed. Ponder deeply over all that I have spoken, for there is always the danger of misunderstanding. The present persecution can be compared to a wooden knob from which new branches bud forth. No matter how big the obstacles may be or how great digressions you have to make, if you keep unity of faith, you will finally arrive at divine wisdom.”¹⁾

1) *Osashizu*, 29th of the 5th month of Meiji 29 (1896).



A Tenrikyō exhibition in a Tōkyō department store.



Visitors listening to the explanation of Miki's life.

A CHRISTIAN LOOKS AT TENRIKYŌ

Before I give a short evaluation of Tenrikyō from the standpoint of a Christian, as I write the closing lines of this little study, I think it advisable to say first a few words about two wrong attitudes people often take when facing or studying other religions. There is the attitude of mind which minimizes or even doubts the transcendency of Christianity over the other religions. To them Christianity is one out of the many existing religious traditions, perhaps a superior one, yet one out of many. In such case, I think, one ceases to be a Christian. This opinion is very widespread among Oriental intellectuals as well as among Western students of comparative religion.

Religious Eclecticism

In their religious outlook, the peoples of the East tend toward eclecticism, combining the most diverse elements from various religious systems. This characteristic goes together with their distaste for absolutes and constitutes one of the major obstacles to the growth of the Christian Church in Asia. To take one example of this eclectic tendency, the Chinese tend to be Confucianists when they are successful and to become Buddhists or to practice their Buddhism when they are confronted by tragedy and death. "Are not all religions more or less the same?" In hundreds of variations the Christian hears this remark, whether he stays in Japan, China, Indonesia, Korea or India.

In my conversations with Tenrikyō people, I often heard: "Many people feel only in Christianity a complete satisfaction for the longings of their soul; they should all become Christians. On the other hand many more people, especially in Japan, find themselves more at home in Tenrikyō. For those the teachings of *Tenri-Ō-no-Mikoto* are destined." Many Japanese agree with Gandhi when he expresses his conviction regarding the basic identity of all religions:

"I believe in the fundamental truth of all great religions of the world. I believe they are all God-given, and I believe that they were necessary for the

people to whom these religions were revealed. The tree of religion is one, and there is a certain physical equality between the branches. They are all growing, and the person who belongs to the growing branch must not gloat over it and say that his is superior. None is superior, none inferior to the others. The Allah of Islam is the same as the God of the Christians and the Ishwara of the Hindus.”

Ramakrishna says : “ A truly religious man should think that other religions are also paths leading to the truth.” In Japan one hears time and again : “ There are many roads that lead to the top of *Fuji San*.”

The greatest of the Moghul emperors, who ruled India from 1556 to 1605, founded an eclectic religion which was intended to unite Moslems and Hindus in a common royal religion. His aims and ideals were described by his friend and minister, Abu'l Fazl (1551–1602), in his *Ain i Akbari*—the Institutes of Akbar. In the inscription which was inscribed on a temple in Kashmir we read the highly poetical words :

“ O God, in every temple I see people that see Thee, and in every language I hear spoken, people praise Thee.
Polytheism and Islam feel after Thee.
Each religion says, ‘ Thou art one, without equal.’
If it be a mosque, people murmur the holy prayer ; and if it be a Christian Church, people ring the bell from love to Thee.
Sometimes I frequent the Christian cloister, and sometimes the mosque
But it is Thou Whom I seek from temple to temple.
Thy elect have no feelings with heresy or with orthodoxy : for neither of them stands behind the screen of Thy truth.
Heresy to the heretic, and religion to the orthodox.
But the dust of the rose-petal belongs to the heart of the perfume seller.”

“ Nevertheless ”, writes Christopher Dawson¹⁾, “ these noble lines must not blind us to the fact that the religion of Akbar, the *Din Ilahi*, was a purely artificial creation, designed to serve the interests of Akbar’s imperial policy, and to glorify his name, and that it never became a living religion.”

“ The men of every nation,” writes Prince Vajiranana, patriarch of the Buddhist Church in Thailand, “ should hold to their own faith. All religions

1) *Religion and Culture*, by Christopher Dawson, p. 210.

are the same. Strip away the ceremonies and doctrines and the ethical substance which is left is the law of truth and honesty and love. The unification of mankind is obedience to this common moral law, and in the bonds of human brotherhood is the real goal of living." A modern Moslem, S. Khuda Buksh, expresses a similar view: "It is only the clouded vision that sees differences between one religion and another. To one who has eyes to see and heart to feel, all religions appear as but the reflection of one and the same light."

The Hindu has no fanatical opposition to Christianity. So long as he is not asked to abandon his own religion, he is quite ready to appreciate what is good in Christianity. In fact, he would like to absorb it. There are even Hindus who maintain that the only reason why Mohammedanism in India was not absorbed in the Hindu system is that the process was cut short by the British invasion and conquest. When the government codified and stabilized Hindu and Moslem law and practice, the dynamic, fluid Hindu movement was thus confined.

In the Bhagavad Gita, one of the sacred books of India, Sri Krishna proclaims: "If any lover seeks with faith to worship any form of God whatsoever, it is I who am the founder of his faith."¹⁾

Now that the world has become physically one more than ever before, the founders of new universal world religions have become more numerous. Says a quite recent voice from India: "In spite of all appearances to the contrary, we discern in the present unrest the gradual dawning of a great light, a converging life endeavour, a growing realisation that there is a secret spirit in which we are all one and of which humanity is the highest vehicle on earth, and an increasing desire to live out, this knowledge and establish a kingdom of spirit on earth. . . . Even the obstacles of religious dogma are not so formidable as they were in the past. The progress of thought and criticism is helping the different religions to sound the note of the eternal, the universal, the one truth of spirit which life obeys, seeks for, and delights in, at all times and in all places." Of course for the Christian, faith in the unity of mankind is rooted in faith in God, in His work of creation and salvation, and unity is a goal which we, either as individuals or as a community, can never reach

1) *Through Eastern Eyes*, by H. van Straelen, p. 116-118.

through human efforts alone. Consequently the idea of the human race united in one spirit will remain a dream unless it is accepted from God as His supreme gift to mankind. The mystery of peace does not blossom from this sinful world, broken up as it is, by a multitude of individual, social and national egoisms; it came down from heaven in the holy night when the angels promised: "Peace on earth to men that are God's friends." And to those only who have accepted God's word, the promise is made: "And you who have been baptized in Christ's name have put on the person of Christ. No more Jew or Gentile, no more slave or freeman, no more male or female: you are all one person in Jesus Christ."¹⁾ As there is no man-made redemption, so there will never be man-made universality. This really Christian answer is perhaps a little hard to accept at first sight, and . . . it is the only saving-answer. This same response we have to give to Tenrikyō. Nakayama Miki, dying on the 26th of January in the year 1887, said to those who stood at her bedside: "Hark and listen, I will smoothe and flatten the whole world. Keep the doors open, I will smoothe the world." And Mr. Fukaya, one of the interpreters of her writings, says that the words, "I will smoothe the whole world," indicate the spreading of the Tenrikyō faith all over the world. Yet Nakayama Miki's words, whether she remembered or not, were the words first spoken by the Prophet Isaias: "Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low."²⁾ And whether Nakayama Miki remembered or not, these were the words spoken again by John the Baptist, in the 15th year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, when Pontius Pilate was procurator of Judea, and Herod tetrarch of Galilee. John the Baptist spoke of leveling the mountains and the valleys for the coming of Christ—that all mankind might see the salvation of God.³⁾ This is the only and our final salvation. The Christian believes indeed that in Jesus Christ the last word is spoken about man and his destiny. We have no longer to search for the meaning of our existence, we have only to accept it, for it is given to us. There is no denying that this basic admission implies a certain remoteness of the Christian from the pathos of the spiritual search of our contemporaries, from the self-importance of modern prophets uttering their findings or their

1) Gal. III 27.

2) Is. 40, 3-5.

3) Luke, III 1-6.

dreams about the new universal religion and the meaning of human life. So it must be when a mother watches over the feverish dreams of her child. It is not for her to follow the child into the hells of anguish or into the ecstatic dreams of bliss. Her hand remains still and cool on his brow. This is her task and her blessing.

Among the present-day Western students of comparative religion who deny the transcendency of Christianity, my readers will perhaps know Simone Weil and René Guénon, the former especially with respect to mysticism, the latter with respect to the dogma of the Holy Trinity.

Once again no Christian will even be tempted to fall into such a grave error. However there is another wrong attitude of mind and quite a number of Christians, even missionaries in past and present have become contaminated with it. I mean the posture of seeing in other religions merely gross errors, polytheistic wayward follies, useless speculations devoid of any meaning, inferior or mean superstitions, of seeing everywhere the work of the inimicus homo, of looking with some mild contempt down on these poor pagans. We certainly do not need to detract in any way from other religions in order to let Christianity shine forth. "On the contrary it appears in all its brilliance only when we acknowledge in the other religions the greatness of the realities which Christianity transcends."¹

I think that we Christians have to acknowledge sincerely the religious values which are to be found in other religions. A study of the history of Christianity is instructive on this point. At various times in the past, when other traditions have made themselves felt in Christian thought, there have always been some Christians whose attitude toward pagan cultures was hostile and contemptuous. There were Fathers of the early Church who derided Platonism as "the fables of madmen," there were medieval doctors who scouted the notion that Christians might have something to learn from the unbelieving Jews, and whose sentiments towards Aristotle and the Arabian philosophers were simply those of Charlemagne's knights: "Christians are right, pagans wrong."

Certainly we may excuse those who have thought thus in the past, but it should be clear by now that it is not in such men that the Christian Church

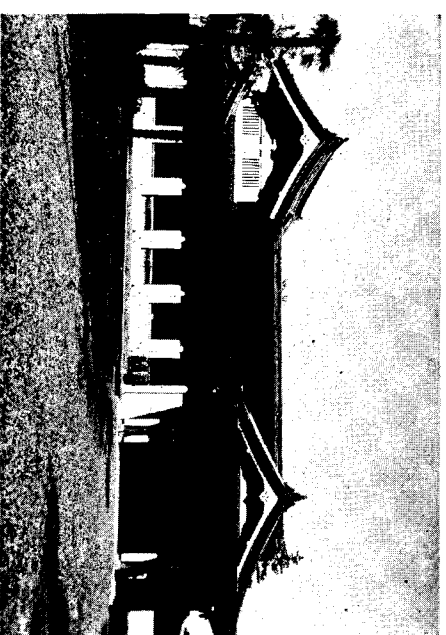
1) Jean Danielou in "Dokumente", 1952, p. 343.

has found its chief sources of intellectual enrichment and its most effective missionary apostolate. The most fruitful development has come from those others, a Justin, an Augustine, an Aquinas, who have rejoiced to find truth outside as well as inside the Church, and have proceeded confidently to build upon what they found, aware indeed that non-Christians have nothing to add to the content of Christian doctrine, but may have a great deal to add to the understanding of it.

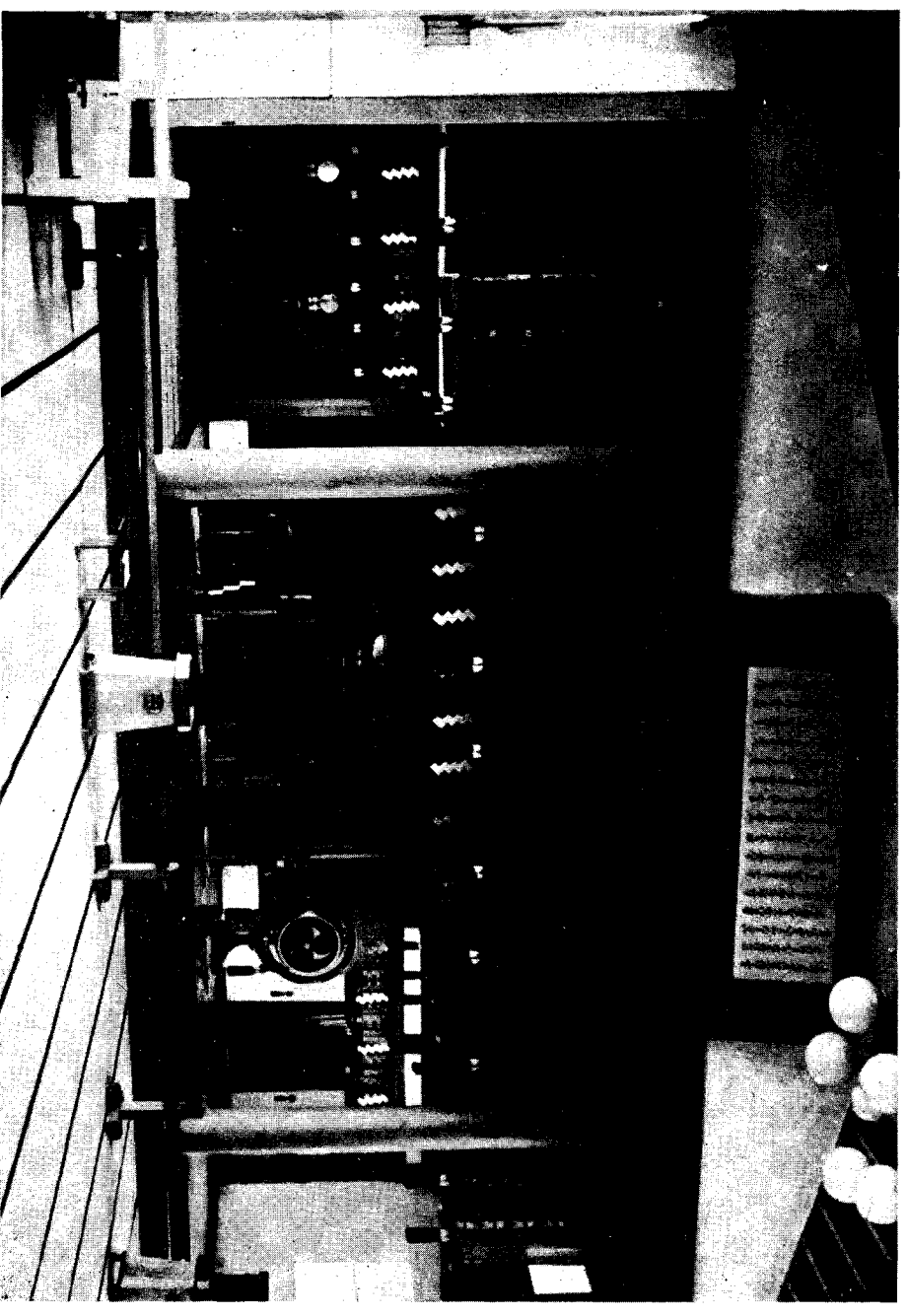
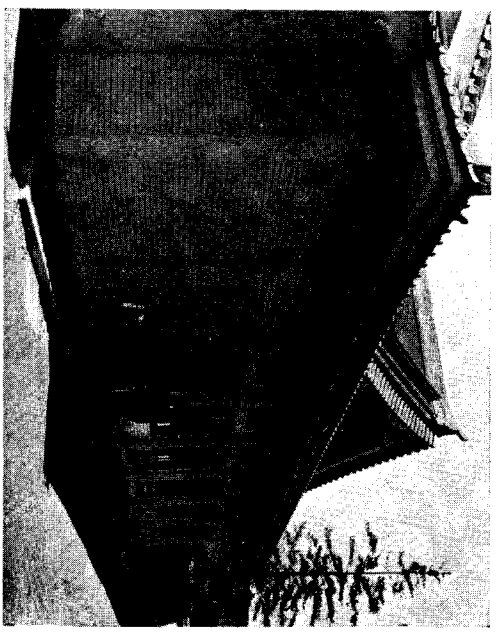
Very striking in this respect is the attitude of St. Thomas Aquinas. When he finds the Platonists speaking both of "God" and of "gods," he does not say: "Such is the folly of these polytheistic idolators." On the contrary, like St. Augustine before him, he remarks that the Platonists meant by "gods" what we mean by "angels" and proceeds to consider their doctrine on the point with respectful attention. It is noteworthy too that when he deals with the metaphysical exposition of certain religious truths, he passes over some respected names in Christian theology and prefers to use for his purpose the material provided by the pagan Aristotle, the Jew Maimonides, and the Moslem Avicenna. True, this method brought him fierce opposition, yet the succeeding centuries have proved beyond a shadow of doubt that his was the right course. Had he known anything of the philosophy of India, or of Laotze, Motze or Mentze, he would have used them as well and would have incorporated them into the edifice of his *Summa Theologica*.

One should treat with a kind of awe the religious feelings of other peoples. In so far as the Catholic Church is concerned I may be allowed here to quote the words of the present Pope: "The missionary has to set out with charity, taking advantage of what the non-Christian has conserved in his spirit, the noble and good sentiments that he feels in the depth of his heart, without giving offense by indiscretion, without altering the virginity of his thought or of his love, without jealousy and without pride, assimilating the riches of his culture and working it out through meditation."

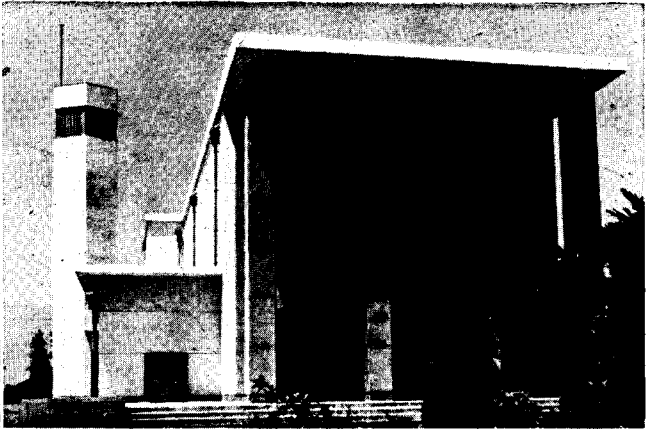
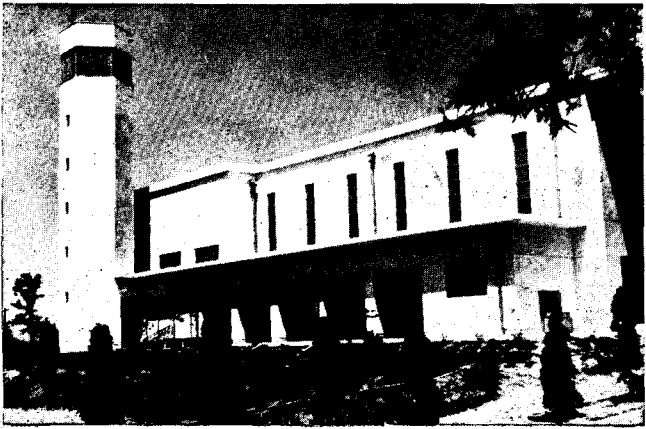
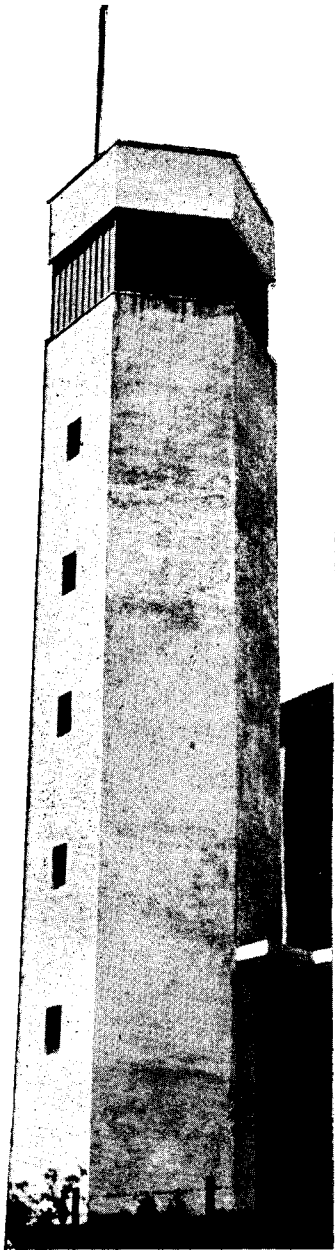
Now, coming to the closing lines of this little study on Tenrikyō in which I have tried to describe this new Japanese religion in a detached way giving as seldom as possible my personal view, I hope I do not trespass on the feelings of my readers if in the following lines I look at Tenrikyō from the standpoint of a convinced believer in Christianity. So far I have tried



A newly built temple in Tōkyō. (Photo : E. Feifel)



In every Tenrikyō temple are always three altars : to the left the altar of the fore-fathers, in the centre that of Tenri-O-no-Mikoto, and to the right the altar of Nakayama Miki.



In this ultra-modern style Tenrikyō temples are built generally outside of Japan. Once in a while one sees such a temple in Japan proper. The tower is of hexagonal shape in remembrance of the *kanrodai*, the sacred column. In the tower hangs a drum. When outside of Japan, they make use of a church bell in order to accommodate themselves to the taste of foreigners.

(Photo : P. Beltjens)

to describe Tenrikyō as it is taught in their manuals and partly also as it is practised in their headquarters, where, I repeat it once again, I have received a really good impression both from the faithful as well as from the clergy. However, I think it will be quite a different story if I should try to describe Tenrikyō as it is taught and practised in the country where activities and rituals center mainly round faith-healing, not always with edifying methods. On the whole, their zeal is indeed exemplary and the faithful make, betimes, even heroic sacrifices for their religion.

Yet, I cannot deny that I was, now and then, overwhelmed with sadness when I thought of the words of Christ: "If thou knewest the gift of God."¹⁾ After all Tenrikyō is to my mind a religion, of which the very centre, the primary importance lies in this world and their colossal efforts aim only at some kind of blessedness in this world. Their *yōkigurashi* is a state of natural happiness and one does not find supernatural treasures which is after all understandable since they do not recognize the other world, which is for the Christian the real world. While reading Tenrikyō publications and listening to their sermons, one hears time and again: "Men are all brethren, to teach them to live a cheerful life and to be happy so that they may enjoy terrestrial bliss, this eternal truth is the reason why *Tenri-Ō-no-Mokito* came down on the Foundress." Every Christian will notice here a considerable contrast with the sublime teachings of the Sermon on the Mount! And yet it is just this freedom from poverty and pain, which is the drawing card so to speak.

Another discovery which I made is the fact that one looks in vain for a devotional life as a Christian understands. Prayer is rare and short when compared with Christianity and it centers merely round well being and having one's mind at ease. One looks in vain for prayer books. The high priests of Tenrikyō say: "That will all come in due time, we are as yet a young religion." The same is said when one touches the moral problems. There does not exist any moral theology. I asked time and again their opinion about divorce, birth-control, and the like. There exists no definite attitude towards these problems. In hazy words, they refer to the life of the foundress as the real pattern; yet they agree there are no definite laws and every case has to be decided on its own. The most important thing is to clean

1) St. John IV, 10.

oneself from the eight kinds of dust and then all things are right.

Another thing that strikes me, after having gone through all their publications, is a certain monotony which pervades the Tenrikyō literature. It always comes back to three things, repeated over and over again in endless and not too attractive variations : *kashimono karimono*, things lent and borrowed, *yōkigurashi* and *hokori*.

I do not doubt about the sincerity of the people at the headquarters among whom are really religious personalities of great standing and who always speak and write with sincere esteem for Christianity, but I honestly could not suppress some misgivings and could not help doubting of the sincerity of some Tenrikyō teachers in the country when they proclaim solemnly in defiance of all reason to sick people : “ The cause for your tuberculosis is only the fact that you have disobeyed your parents ; you need no doctors or any medical care. You have simply to correct your attitude towards your parents and to send some money to the Tenrikyō temple, then your consumption will soon be cured.”

Another point that strikes me is that Tenrikyō has not stressed very much the study of the doctrine, a thing they themselves admit. Instead they have put all their energy at the disposal of propaganda purposes with the result that firstly : the doctrine has remained very vague ; secondly : the interpretations are often widely different among the preachers ; thirdly : the preachers are sufficiently informed only of those doctrines which are useful in the propaganda. Therefore if one is given a cross-section of the Tenrikyō faithful, one often doubts whether these people really understand the core of the doctrine. And if such is the case, can one call them faithful at all ! It seems that the future will bring many changes in this respect. Quite recently the intellectual training has become a little more strict.

It is also the author's opinion that Tenrikyō has changed very much since the day of its inception. During days of persecution they have given way even in doctrinal and liturgical points and thus they could overcome the tide of times. It seems to me that this can never last very long.

However, I would be the last person, to deny the really good points in Tenrikyō. It is indeed a good thing that Tenrikyō has stressed our social duties towards the public welfare. But they do not go much further than this. They remain in this circle, it is their final destination and in that circle

they turn round and round. The Christian however, although he acknowledges that he lives in time and that as a consequence he certainly has biological and sociological duties, he looks much further. His final destination transcends time and is planned on an eternal and spiritual basis. The Tenrikyō believer feels himself completely and definitely at home in this world; the Christian however moves in a totally different orbit. Despite its stupendous immensity, the world of matter is far too narrow for him, like his economic and social environment, it does not fit him. He will never adhere to natural life in its exclusive reality, as the Tenrikyō believer does. As Alexis Carrel has written so beautifully: "We know that we are not altogether comprised within its dimensions, that we extend somewhere else, outside the physical continuum. Man is simultaneously a material object, a living being, a focus of mental activities. His presence in the prodigious void of the intersidereal spaces is totally negligible. But he is not a stranger in the realm of inanimate matter. With the aid of mathematical abstractions his mind apprehends the electrons as well as the stars. He is made on the scale of the terrestrial mountains, oceans, and rivers. He appertains to the surface of the earth, exactly as trees, plants, and animals do. He feels at ease in their company. He is more intimately bound to the works of art, the monuments, the mechanical marvels of the new city, the small group of his friends, those whom he loves. But he also belongs to another world. A world which, although enclosed within himself, stretches beyond space and time. And of this world, if his will is indomitable, he may travel over the infinite cycles. The cycle of Beauty, contemplated by scientists, artists, and poets. The cycle of Love, that inspires heroism and renunciation. The cycle of Grace, ultimate reward of those who passionately seek the principle of all things."¹⁾

In this brilliant light of our time-and-space-transcending final destination, the Christian looks at this world as a mere shadow, a mere prelude to life, not life itself, an episode, a preparation. Christians are pilgrims, they are travellers, they have here no lasting, no abiding city. For them there stands no *kanrodai* in this world and no manna of longevity will come down on this world. A Christian can never settle down, he remains a pilgrim while here on earth. What has put him into the condition of being a pilgrim is a manna

1) From *Man, the Unknown*, by A. Carrel, p. 320-321.

of a quite different kind, it is what the Christian calls grace. Since the moment that a Christian has taken of this manna, he remains restless. Something has happened to him. Indeed something has been given to him in baptism, a quite different life, a supernatural life, a life of grace which is to him the seed of his eternal glory. This is the reason why all real Christians are pilgrims, why they are so restless, why they can never settle down on earth, why they feel so extremely sorry for all sincere Tenrikyō believers who think that they will always stay here in this world in unending cycles of 115 years. In this respect Christianity and Tenrikyō are poles apart, totally incomparable and so they can hardly be mentioned together on any equal footing.

The Great Success of Tenrikyō

But why then their colossal success? It would take another book to exhaust this subject, for many factors are responsible. It is my personal opinion that the following are the most important ones :

I. The zeal of preachers and faithful is indeed outstanding. Besides, their moral teaching is not too difficult, for after all the great problems which affect human nature most deeply, are explained from their doctrine of *innen* 因縁. If someone's nature is strongly inclined to immorality, his *innen* is responsible. Personal guilt in the Christian sense, plays a minor rôle. Of course human nature is fertile soil for this suggestion.

II. The faithful are for the greatest part simple honest people who are not critically inclined. They take easily the teachings for granted. Moreover everybody believes more or less in his own way. Scores of faithful honestly believe in 10 different *kami*'s, whereas modern Tenrikyō is definitely monotheistic as I have explained before.

III. The faithful among themselves are bound by strong ties. After every great ceremony they remain for a common meal, and endless intimate talks continue for hours and hours. Once entered, one cannot easily break away from the group and this all the more since the group feeling is very strong among the Japanese.

IV. In their exhortations we find a considerable stress on *genseteki rieki* 現世の利益, advantage in this world in whatever form it may be. This after all appeals strongly to human nature.

V. The Tenrikyō people themselves admit that seldom, if ever, does any one come for instruction of his own accord and by his own free wish. Generally they are people in distress whatever form this may take and they have been told that the Tenrikyō religion will bring the solution of their problems especially the cure of their sickness through the *sazuke* 授け. This is certainly a great stimulus for the people.

VI. They are thoroughly Japanese in their rituals, their chants, their dances and their buildings. Their main liturgy is accompanied by songs which remind one strongly of the Japanese *komori-uta*'s 子守歌, lullabies and *minyō*'s 民謡, folksongs, melodies which easily remain in their memories lifelong, and which exercise as it were some kind of magic power.

VII. The Tenrikyō religion is intimately connected with national feelings and the love for their country. It is the impression of the author that in their sacred writings, Japan is made to shine out above all other countries in the world. I have discussed this subject with Tenrikyō theologians who opposed this stand of mine. Their claims of being a world religion were of course, in disagreement with my stand. I should be perfectly willing to give way, but the texts from their canonical writings did not and do not, allow me to change this opinion of mine.

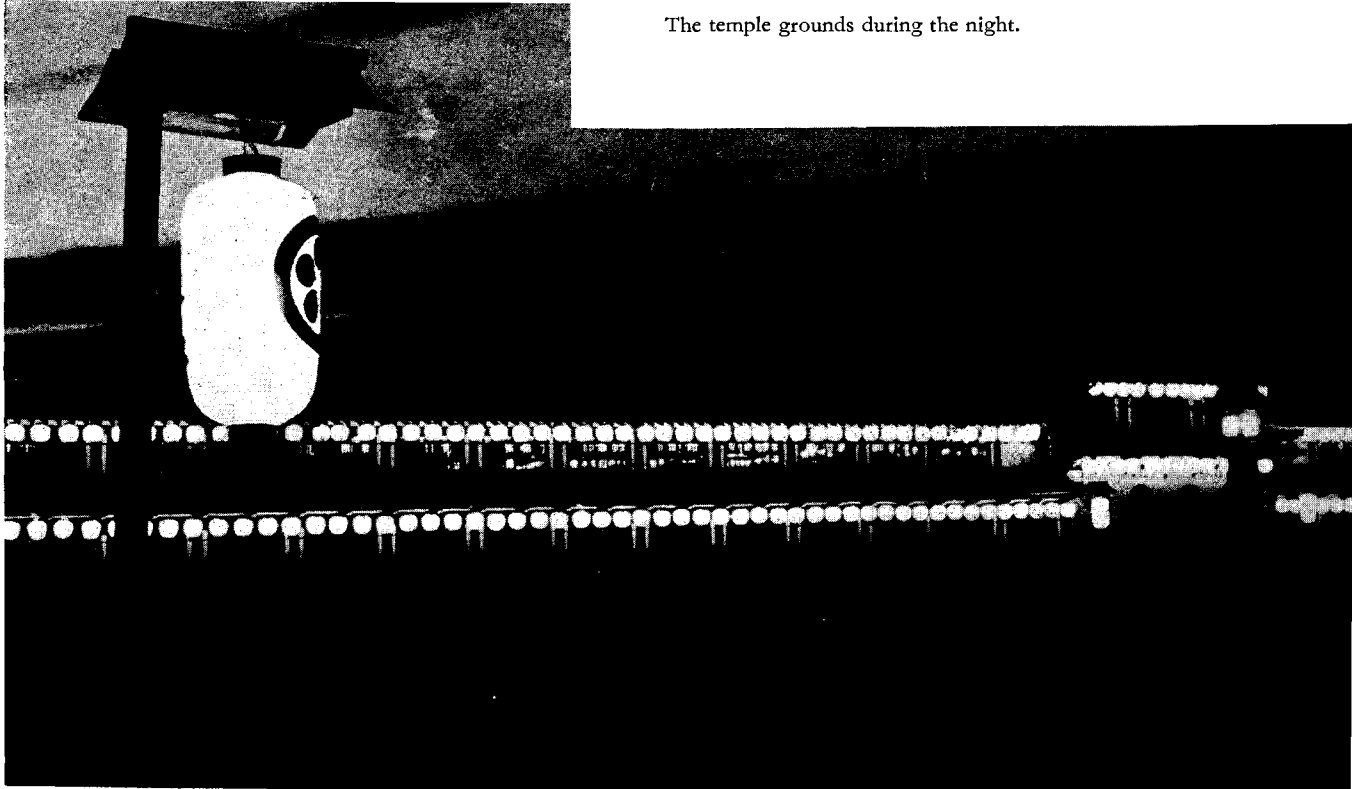
VIII. They make use to the utmost of their corporal works of mercy, as a propaganda of their faith. Their contribution to the welfare of society is loudly proclaimed from the rooftops.

IX. Nearly all the faithful are brought to Tenri Shi where they come under the magnetic spell of a streamlined propaganda and where they become impressed by the beauty and richness of the vast temple grounds and the graceful display of their liturgy. This confirms them in their faith and makes them even proud of their religion.

Let this suffice. It is incomplete, of course. I could go on and on, but I think it best to call a halt here. If then this little book, imperfect and incomplete as the author admits it to be, can contribute anything at all towards a little understanding of Japan's most powerful religious movement, the author will consider himself richly repaid. Again and again the reader may have come across quotations and official statements which are, to say the least, somewhat hazy and equivocal; besides I have mentioned a certain lack of logical coherence in Tenrikyō's dogma. Yet if I should myself be found

wanting in these same respects I must say with Socrates in *The Republic*:
“I can but suffer the penalty of ignorance; and that penalty is to be taught
by those who know.”

The temple grounds during the night.



Summer festival at the Tenrikyō headquarters.

Male preachers follow a strenuous course.



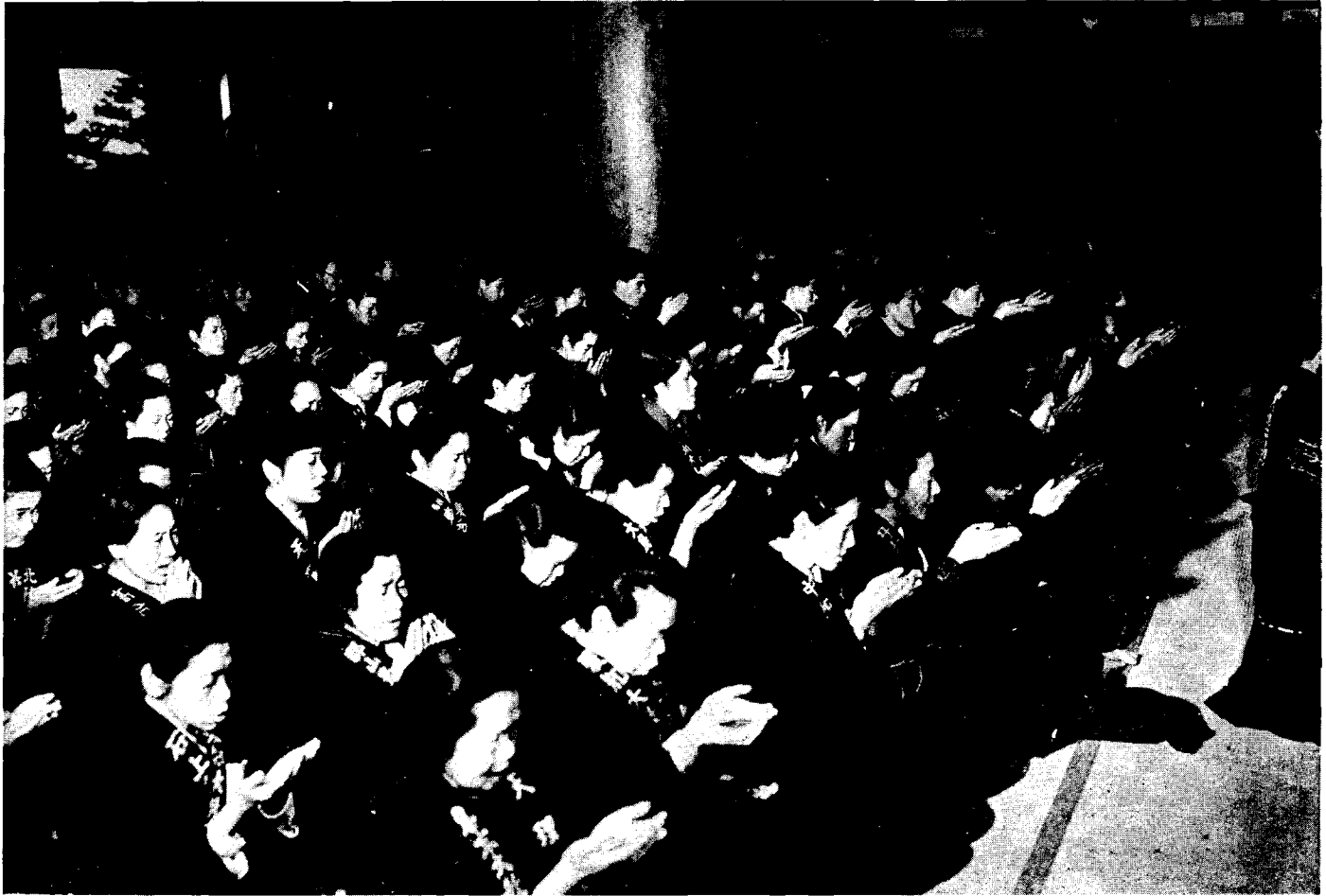
Streamlined education of Tenrikyo propagandists.



Ground-breaking ceremony before the erection of a new temple.



After the ceremony is over a meeting of the Tenrikyō priests takes place. (Photo : E. Feifel)



The sincerity of the believers is above question.

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