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Politics, Religion, and National Integration in Wilhelmine Germany and Meiji Japan : A Comparative View on the Kulturkampf and the "Persecution of Buddhism"

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# Politics, Religion, and National Integration in Wilhelmine Germany and Meiji Japan: A Comparative View on the *Kulturkampf* and the "Persecution of Buddhism"

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#### 1. INTRODUCTION

In this paper, I shall consider the notoriously severe exclusion policy that the newly established governments of the early Wilhelmine and Meiji states employed against the local institutions of the Catholic and Buddhist churches, respectively, as being basically related to, as well as a partial phenomenological expression of, Germany's and Japan's transformation and integration into modern nation-states. By generally adopting a perspective of comparative history and relating the obviously unconnected historical events of Bismarck's *Kulturkampf* (cultural struggle) and the so-called persecution of Buddhism (*haibutsu kishaku*) in early Meiji Japan to the broader processes of national integration in those two countries, I hope to be able to demonstrate, historical differences notwithstanding, that these two events in fact had a good deal in common. Thus, if they are not treated as isolated historical phenomena, they might be more fully and appropriately comprehended.

Certainly, the specific goal of this symposium on Japanese civilization in the modern world is to address a variety of problems related to the formation and transformation of modern nation-states from a perspective that Umesao Tadao [UMESAO 1984: 10] has labeled "comparative studies of civilization" (*hikaku bunmeigaku*). Although it is clear that Umesao's approach is somewhat different

from my own, I would like to stress that what is most crucial in studying a historical phenomenon like the modern nation-state is not so much choosing a suitable approach—his being that of a cultural anthropologist and ethnologist, mine that of a historian—but maintaining a generally comparative methodology. It should be kept in mind that nation-states (*kokumin kokka*), as Nishikawa Nagao has aptly put it, "are situated within a global nation-state system, and that, while usually insisting upon their native originality, they actually tend toward mutual imitation and are quite akin to each other" in many respects [NISHIKAWA 1995: 6]. For this reason, the phenomenon of the modern nation-state should not and actually "cannot be comprehended on the basis of research related to just one single country" [NISHIKAWA 1995: 4].

What seems quite obvious in connection with the study of the nation-state itself, however, has all too often been ignored in a related field of research: namely, the modern history of religion in the so-called civilized world and its relation to nations and their states. With regard to the topic of this paper, I would argue (if this short anticipation may be permitted) that in the case of the international historiography on modern Japanese Buddhism, and its "persecution" in particular, it actually was the repeated failure to operate within a comparative analytical frame, as could have been created by examining the national integration processes within the global state system, that elevated a rather metaphysical and moralizing "discourse on the depravity of early modern Buddhism" (*kinsei bukkyō daraku ron*) and made it the most prominent theory on the causes of the *haibutsu kishaku* movements during the late Tokugawa and early Meiji periods. Needless to say, this theory was of very limited use for an analysis of the social, political, and also economic developments in connection with the manifold this-worldly affairs of religious institutions [KLEINEN 1995: 390–395].<sup>1)</sup>

As has often been noted before, Germany, Italy, and Japan, the subsequent Axis Powers, entered the global nation-state system almost simultaneously during the early 1870s. Within the European context, Germany and Italy clearly were national latecomers, so-called late nation-states. Japan, on the other hand, "formerly a minor power on the East Asian periphery" [NISHIKAWA 1995: 37], was the very first East Asian country to gain the Western powers' recognition as an "advanced" and "civilized" nation-state. In the late nineteenth century, of course, such categories as "progress" and "civilization," probably the two most important criteria for any contemporary judgment on whether a non-European country

In Japan, Fukushima Kanryū [1970] and Yasumaru Yoshio [1979] were among the first historians to offer a critical view on this academic orthodoxy and a new analytical approach to the particular historical phenomenon in question [FUJITANI 1992: 538]. To my knowledge, among Western scholars Paul B. Watt [1984: 188–191] and Martin Collcutt [1986: 146] were the first who clearly expressed misgivings about the adequacy of the orthodox view on the general character of Tokugawa Buddhism, followed, of course, by James Edward Ketelaar [1990].

"deserved" to be called a nation-state, rested completely on Western value standards.<sup>2)</sup> One should not, however, put too much stress on this rather artificial differentiation between Germany's and Italy's respective roles as national latecomers and Japan's role as a national pioneer. The concept of the nation, in the modern sense of the word, emerged as early as the sixteenth century in England, which was the first and, with the possible exception of Holland, remained the only nation for about two hundred years. In the late eighteenth century, the idea was adopted by England's American colonies, followed by France and Russia, before it finally started to spread throughout the whole world [GREENFELD 1992: 14]. Thus it is undeniable that not until the second half of the nineteenth century did Japan itself gradually adapt certain conceptual elements of the idea of the nation to its specific sociopolitical environment, and that Japan, just as and about the same time as Germany, took its first concrete steps on the international stage as a late nationstate while its society as a whole was still far from having developed anything that could be rightfully called "national consciousness."

If we generally accept the early German and Japanese nation-states as meaningful and suitable objects for historical comparison and actually take a closer look at the contemporary strata of economic, social, and political development in those two countries, we will have little difficulty pointing to a number of structural similarities and parallels. By taking up the historical events of the *Kulturkampf* and the "persecution of Buddhism," I hope to be able to demonstrate that the various politico-religious power struggles that took place during the early formative periods of those two nation-states were not exceptions. Before I deal with these events in more detail, however, I would like to outline my perception of the terms "nation," "nationalism," and "nation-state," as well as to add some general remarks on the function of religious institutions as "ideological state apparatuses" and their basic role in the integration of modern nation-states.

# 2. NATION, NATIONALISM, NATION-STATE

#### 1) Nation

Generally speaking, I consider the nation to be not some immutable ontological entity but an ideological construct and a certain kind of fabrication. In this respect, my view on the matter is probably in line with Benedict Anderson's well-known dictum that "the nation... is an imagined political community" [ANDERSON 1983: 15]. As soon as a certain number of people who exert sufficient influence on the overall public discourse within their "community consider themselves to form a nation, or behave as if they formed one" [SETON-WATSON

<sup>2)</sup> It would be no exaggeration to claim that in the late nineteenth century the semantic spectrum of the term "nation-state" was more or less coterminous with "civilization," and that in any case this meant nothing but "Western civilization" [NISHIKAWA 1995: 28].

1977: 5], this community already is or exists as a nation. In principle, I do not think that there are any more indispensable preconditions to a nation's existence as such. But adherence to such a proposition does not relieve one of the necessity of asking and elucidating what exactly the term "nation" designated in the process of modern history, unless one takes up a misleading "postmodernist" stance and does not mind operating with ideal-types that quite possibly thoroughly violate historical reality.

To offer an answer to this question: in late fifteenth century Europe, about the time it had gradually become customary to attach the modifier "of the German Nation" to the title "Holy Roman Empire," the term "nation," derived from the Latin word *natio* (whose original basic meaning was "something born"), clearly referred not to the whole populace of a given community but only to those upper echelons of society that were distinguished by their political privilege of representation at one of the various legislative assemblies of the time, such as the German Reichstag or the French *états généraux*. This social stratum was composed of the Three Estates of the Realm, of course, represented at the assemblies by feudal lords (nobility), high ecclesiastical dignitaries (clergy), and delegates from the various free cities (citizenry). It should thus be understood that the dominant meaning of "nation" at least until the French Revolution, and to a lesser degree even beyond, was a privileged "community of aristocrats" [ZERNATTO 1944: 363]: in other words, a social, intellectual, and economic elite.

Although this specific meaning clearly testifies to a premodern concept of the word, what I see as the proper contemporary use of the term has its origin in a semantic transformation and corresponding conceptual changes that, as I have already observed above, have been traced back as far as early sixteenth century England. As Liah Greenfeld [1991, 1992] has expounded, these changes occurred in the course of the unprecedented social, political, and economic advancement of a new, Henrician aristocratic class under the reign of the Tudors: as one way of rationalizing such upward mobility from quite humble walks of life, the prevalent idea of the nation as an elite could be "applied to the population of the country and made synonymous with the word people" [GREENFELD 1992: 6]. The intention was not to question the elitist character of what was called a "nation" but to elevate the lower classes of society into that elitist political community. Idealistic as this might have been, on a political level this community was then "perceived as fundamentally homogeneous and only superficially divided by the lines of status or class" [GREENFELD 1991: 337]. As a synonym of nation the term "people," a derivative of the Latin word populus with the contemporary connotation of "rabble," gradually lost its formerly derogatory meaning. Correspondingly, the concept of the nation itself changed to that of a political community that, in principle, consisted of a generally elitist and thus homogeneous people, being as such the supreme object of loyalty and the basis of political solidarity. This I consider to be the original modern concept of "nation"; it will be my basic definition of the term, for beyond this definition few, if any, universally valid statements on this otherwise varied

historical phenomenon can be made. From the late eighteenth century onward, when the concept was adopted on the Continent, national "uniqueness" and topics such as common culture and ethnicity certainly started to figure prominently in public discourse on the national question. It should be kept in mind, however, that the historical fact of self-ascriptions of certain cultural and ethnic characteristics within a growing number of communities in itself in no way guaranteed those communities' transformation into nations. Ascriptive characteristics did and could only "serve as the raw material for the latter... if interpreted as elements of nationality" [GREENFELD 1991: 338]. Although interpretations of this kind have repeatedly been made, it is highly misleading to include such categories as culture and ethnicity in the very definition of "nation."

#### 2) Nationalism

"Nationalism" is a much younger term than nation. In the late eighteenth century, the German philosopher J. G. Herder was the first who used it as a functional term in a broader sociopsychological context to denote the act of self-perception of a people. With only a few exceptions, however, his coinage had no lasting influence on public discourse and the very word finally disappeared. Astonishingly, it seems to be a historical fact that the term "nationalism" did not exist throughout most of the nineteenth century, later called the "age of nationalism" [KOSELLECK 1992: 318–319]. For this reason, its definition can hardly be derived from a lasting discursive tradition in modern history.

Because of the terrible experiences of World Wars I and II, much postwar research on nationalism adopted a highly negative view of its object. Here, the term was often employed to denote a certain kind of irrational ideology and intolerant political fanatism from which, for reasons that were all too obvious, modern democrats could only strive to dissociate themselves. This stance, of course, also partially responds to events of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, when nationalism had indeed made its way into public discourse as an affirmative term, used first by French and then, after World War I, most baldly by German chauvinist circles. The derogatory use of the term is definitely justified by contemporary standards of political ethics, but I would argue that it serves analytical purposes in scientific debate much better to employ "nationalism" as an ideal-type based on the definition of the "nation" given above. In this sense, it can be understood as a collective term for a variety of sociopsychological phenomena such as national consciousness and national identity. Nationalism should be considered as a "mode of perception" [GREENFELD 1991: 336] that defines the identity of the subject as the one who belongs to a nationalized people. The term thus refers to all related forms of political and cultural discourse, insofar as they assert such a principle of the subject's identification with a people addressed as a nation. According to Liah Greenfeld, this national principle, the perception of the people (nation) as the true source of the subject's identity, is the only indispensable criterion for identifying and defining nationalism [GREENFELD 1991: 337-338].

Otherwise, the varied historical phenomena that have been called by this name do not necessarily have any other common features. It is certainly true that different communities at different times constituted themselves as nations on the basis of such criteria as common origin, language, culture, race, statehood, and so forth. Such criteria, however, were always subjectively selected in the very process of developing that national identity. They might be historically explicable, but they were neither necessary nor sufficient prerequisites for the emergence of national consciousness. For this reason, essentialist theories of nationalism that look to an "objective" intersection of ascriptive characteristics in defining the term "nation" have fundamental problems dealing with the complexity of historical reality and do not stand up to closer scrutiny.

#### 3) Nation-State

It should be evident that in contrast to the nation and nationalism, the nationstate is neither a mere ideological construct nor a sociopsychological phenomenon, but something that has taken form; the nation-state is a political artifact that has gained tremendous momentum since the nineteenth century and now is the predominant type of state in the world. The Japanese scholar Kibata Yoichi has tried to define it in quite a neutral fashion as a "sovereign state consisting of a clearly fixed territory and citizens (i.e. a nation) who hold in common (kyōyū shite iru) a national identity" [NISHIKAWA 1995: 5]. But though it may appear easy and succinct, such a definition does not make clear that the so-called identity of a people, be it national or anything else, exists only as an intersubjective belief in such an identity. It therefore usually becomes self-perpetuating once it has taken sufficient hold in society. Nevertheless, an "imagined community" is still composed of individual and probably not entirely congruent conceptions. In addition, the belief in national identity has always been, and still is, of great interest to all kinds of interest groups that try to consolidate, influence, and shape it. Difficult as it might generally be to judge the extent to which changes in such a belief are directly attributable to conscious attempts to affect it, a sociopsychological phenomenon like national identity is better considered to be heterogeneous and in a state of potential flux. When the nation-state is seen in this light, speaking of it as consisting of "citizens who hold in common a national identity" seems to be an oversimplification.

Kibata's definition of the nation-state also does not take into account the case in which a state that claims to represent a nation is simply imposed from above by a small power elite, while most of its people have not yet moved in the direction of a possible "agreement" on the national question or are still far from having developed anything like a national consciousness. Indeed, this pattern historically has been the rule rather than an exception; and when the nation is subsequently "born" or integrated, this very complex process of extensively reshaping a particular population along national lines is usually accompanied by rather painful "birth pangs" in the form of fierce power struggles for political supremacy and cultural

hegemony among all those interest groups that wish or believe themselves to be, or simply feel that they must present themselves as, an "essential" part of the nation. Such a background suggests that the phrase "who hold in common a national identity" should be replaced with "who have succeeded in the struggle for participation in the nation itself, and thus in the national molding of its state." But even the various historical examples of "successful" national unifications from above should not fool us into thinking that struggles for exerting influence on the image of the nation can be resolved once and for all. And although casting a dominant image of a nation into a state certainly affects the stability of the intersubjective belief in a national identity, I would still refrain from speaking of "citizens who hold in common a national identity" when trying to define the nation-state. I prefer to argue that a nation-state is simply a state whose claim to represent a nation has gained sufficient internal and external recognition to guarantee its continued existence. If a national identity held in common by citizens were a suitable criterion for defining the nation-state, it would be especially problematic to assign historical states such as early Wilhelmine Germany and Meiji Japan to this ideal-type.

# 3. NATIONAL INTEGRATION, POLITICO-RELIGIOUS CONFLICT, AND IDEOLOGICAL STATE APPARATUSES

The project of integrating a people into a nation-state should be considered as a process that takes place on two interwoven levels: "system-integration" into the state, which is expressed in a functional self-description of the community as state, and "social-integration" into the nation, which manifests itself in a consensual self-description of the community as nation [KITTEL 1995: 39–47].<sup>3)</sup> Nishikawa translates this basic analytical differentiation into neo-Marxist terms when he argues that bringing into conformity a people within a nation-state "requires a full range of apparatuses for the integration into the state, including repressive apparatuses such as the government, the army, the police, etc., as well as ideological apparatuses such as schools, the press, or religious institutions. At the same time, a powerful ideology for the integration into the nation is indispensable" [NISHIKAWA 1995: 6].

One hardly needs to be reminded that according to Althusser's original distinction between the state as repressive state apparatus and its various ideological state apparatuses, established religious institutions not only belong among the latter but at least in premodern Europe were indeed the "one dominant ideological state apparatus" [ALTHUSSER 1994: 115]. Conversely, the powerful ideology Nishikawa refers to can easily be subsumed under what I have been calling "nationalism." Established religious institutions may thus be interpreted as an important

<sup>3)</sup> The analytical distinction between "system-integration" and "social-integration" that I have adopted from Kittel [1995] is based on Jürgen Habermas's "theory of communicative action" [HABERMAS 1981].

functional element in the process of national integration, on the systemic as well as on the social level. As ideological state apparatuses they are both institutions ultimately inherent in a state, which nowadays usually takes the shape of a nationstate, and institutions that, insofar as they are or eventually turn into an institutional realization of a specifically nationalist state ideology, interpellate individuals as national subjects. Since the ideas that are mediated in the course of the ideological communication process (i.e., the interpellation of individuals as subjects) are basically inscribed in the material practices and rituals of the various ideological state apparatuses [ALTHUSSER 1994: 128], these apparatuses go beyond supporting the national integration of their state, as soon as and to the extent that it claims to be a nation-state, to influencing its concrete design.

Though the ideological state apparatuses are generally integrative, we should not be deceived: the various public and private institutions that constitute these apparatuses are themselves important agents in the power struggles for political supremacy and cultural hegemony that, as mentioned above, usually characterize the integration of a people into a nation-state. In order to consolidate its state power, a power elite that has succeeded in imposing a nation-state on its people, and therefore has the repressive state apparatus at its disposal, must seek to exercise its national hegemony over and in the ideological state apparatuses [ALTHUSSER 1994: 112]. As it does so, institutions that are or merely appear to be sufficiently autonomous to represent a strikingly different image of national reality—and thus seem to threaten or challenge the officially prescribed images of the nation—run a high risk of being repressed and excluded from the nation and its state. But because they are ideological state apparatuses, those institutions at the same time tend to seek a prominent position within—and thus influence the overall appearance of—the very nation that the state claims to represent. If necessary, they compete with other institutions to reach and secure such a position or even support the exclusion policy that the repressive state apparatus might employ against one or several of their competitors on the national market.

The politico-religious power struggles that took place during the early formative periods of the Wilhelmine and Meiji states typify this kind of ideological conflict for national hegemony between those social groups that control the repressive state apparatus and certain institutions within the state, as well as among some of those institutions themselves.<sup>4</sup>) As already noted, in the late nineteenth century to express one's aspirations to become accepted as a nation-state generally meant to make advances toward the exclusive world of Western civilization.<sup>5</sup>) For the so-called late nation-states in particular, the nationalization (*kokuminka*) of a people through a state that itself claimed to represent a nation was at the very same time a civilizing process (*bunmeika*) that included the advancement of Western universalism, progressivism, rationalism, and capitalism, as well as Western science

<sup>4)</sup> Usually, such institutions belong to the same category of ideological state apparatuses.

<sup>5)</sup> In my opinion, this statement also applies to late-nineteenth-century Germany, which,

and technology, industrialization, urbanization, and so on [NISHIKAWA 1995: 31– 32]. Against this background, it is no surprise that irrespective of their stabilizing function as ideological state apparatuses within such nationalizing and civilizing states, religious institutions were often viewed as something essentially different superstitious and irrational, reactionary, or a threat to a cohesive public order—and thus repeatedly became the object of a national policy of exclusion.

The historical example of late-nineteenth-century religious institutions and their place within nationalizing-and thus civilizing-states such as the Second German Reich and the Japanese empire vividly demonstrates one of the most important characteristics of the modern nation-state, namely its internal inconsistency. Nishikawa deserves our general approval when he states that "the nation-state is an intrinsically inconsistent being that furthermore derives the very dynamism of its development wholly from its inconsistent character. The freedom it generates simultaneously entails suppression, the equality it leads to creates difference, the integration exclusion, and the universal principles (civilization) individual assertions (culture)" [NISHIKAWA 1995: 7]. With this important characteristic feature of the nation-state in mind, I shall now move on to the historical events of Bismarck's Kulturkampf and the so-called persecution of Buddhism in early Meiji Japan. In what follows, I shall demonstrate that as power struggles for political supremacy or ideological conflicts for national hegemony, these events indeed did not obstruct the integration of German Catholics and Japanese Buddhists into their respective nation-states; rather, through the complex mechanisms of the sociopolitical interplay of suppression (exclusion), resistance, and cooperation, they had their part in the genesis of quite étatistic nationalisms among those religious institutions and their respective supporters. To paraphrase Nishikawa's observation: Here the exclusion generated by the nation-state simultaneously entailed integration, and the national conflict it led to created (a sometimes tooth-gritting) national harmony.

according to the standards of French and Anglo-Saxon civilization, at that time still was a somewhat underdeveloped country. And although it is often said that throughout the nineteenth century many German nationalists opposed the image of a dominant French "civilization" with the essentialist and particularist idea of a specifically German "culture" [e.g., PROBST 1996: 30], Jörg Fisch [1992] has convincingly argued that the alleged difference between a civic and transnational concept of "civilization" in France and an ethnic and national concept of "culture" in Germany—*die deutsche Kultur* versus *la civilisation française*—was far less distinct at that time than Norbert Elias's influential thesis on the sociogenesis of the terms "culture" and "civilization" in Germany might imply [e.g., ELIAS 1989, 1992]. According to Fisch [1992: 722], Elias mistakenly applied a conceptual differentiation to the discourse on culture and civilization in late-eighteenth-and nineteenth-century Europe that took a clear shape only in the early twentieth century.

# 4. THE KULTURKAMPF AND NATIONAL INTEGRATION IN WILHELMINE GERMANY

Together with Chancellor Bismarck's anti-socialist crusade, which culminated in the 1878 passage and implementation (until 1890) of the infamous Anti-Socialist Law (Reichsgesetz wider die gemeingefährlichen Bestrebungen der Sozialdemokratie), the so-called Kulturkampf occupies an important place in modern German history; it was one of the most serious and far-reaching domestic struggles of the young Wilhelmine empire. Lasting from about 1871 until 1887, it was chiefly fought out between two groups: the Center Party (Zentrumspartei, the leading political organ of Catholicism in Germany), the Catholic Church, and politically active German Catholics, on the one side, and the imperial government under Bismarck (here especially Adalbert Falk, the Prussian minister for education and cultural affairs), in a loose alliance with the National Liberal Party (Nationalliberale Partei) and a large sympathetic group of German Protestant liberals, on the other. Eventually, the German Catholics themselves took over the term Kulturkampf as a slogan for their cause, though it was initially coined by an opponent—the politician Rudolf Virchow, head of the left-liberal Progress Party (Fortschrittspartei), on the occasion of the Prussian Lower House elections of 1873 [LÖNNE 1986: 152]. In the view of the vast majority of German Protestants and liberals, their general antagonism toward the various Catholic forces was "a campaign to protect the culture of the German nation against the antimodernism of the Catholic Church" [MOCHIDA 1996: 431]. Konstantin Rößler, to cite one of the most articulate Protestant defenders of the Kulturkampf, believed that "the German people will arrive at the point where they draw their national and religious life from the same source, both streams of life in innermost harmony," and predicted that a Protestant German nation would then become a "model... for the spiritual life of civilized peoples (Kulturvölker)" [quoted in SMITH 1995: 20]. Catholicism not only seemed hopelessly backward, antimodern, reactionary, and therefore incompatible with the Protestant vision of German civilization and the requirements of a modern nation-state on German soil, but it also carried the further blemish of foreign origin. For these reasons, most German Protestants and National Liberals did not find it too difficult to agree with Bismarck's consciously overwrought accusation that their Catholic fellow countrymen were "enemies of the empire" (Reichsfeinde) who took orders not from the German emperor but from Pope Pius IX.

If we were to reduce the *Kulturkampf* to a simple clash of two competing institutions on the religious market, it would probably be sufficient to refer to the later remark by court chaplain Adolf Stoecker that through the creation of a "Holy Protestant Empire of the German Nation" (Heiliges Evangelisches Reich Deutscher Nation) at Versailles, the tracks of God from 1517 (the beginning of the Reformation) to 1871 would have become visible [WEHLER 1995: 383]. His insolent observation illustrates the prevailing mood among German Protestants as well as

the pathos of their widespread politico-religious view that the foundation of the Second German Empire testified to the final victory of a specifically Protestant principle and the German spirit over the Catholic Weltanschauung and the Roman spirit [GRÜNDER 1985: 66]. Yet clearly the history of religious hubris within Christianity is as old as Christianity itself. And as Mochida Yukio, among others, has aptly observed, the events that were labeled *Kulturkampf* should be considered as really just the peak of a broader political conflict, one "not merely confined to problems related to culture or the belonging to a religious denomination" [MOCHIDA 1996: 431].

This conflict arose because even in the German Empire the liberal selfappreciation of the modern European nation-state, which called for national homogeneity as well as for the principle of equality before the law, was fundamentally at odds with the particularistic interests and fighting spirit of a Catholic Church that tried to defend its various traditional privileges and continued to demand a right to an extensive share in cultural, social, and political decisions far beyond the religious sphere. Influenced by a liberal attitude of mind characteristic of the modern bourgeoisie, and dependent on the cooperation of the National Liberal Party, which represented the interests of this social stratum in the Reichstag most effectively, the Prussian-centered government of the newly established German Empire pursued a policy of replacing "the historically evolved and institutionally established cooperation of state and church, secular power and ecclesiastical power, by a strict demarcation and separation of those two forces and spheres in as many areas of life as possible" [GALL 1980: 481]. Irrespective of this overall policy of secularizing public life, it should not surprise us that Bismarck, a man with a highly developed sense of practical politics (Realpolitik), might also have engineered the Kulturkampf in an attempt to point out and strengthen his own political image as a fighter for the old and pre-democratic order of society against a strong and politically independent Center Party. Though in comparison with his odious allies in the Reichstag, the National Liberals, these centrists appeared to be about as conservative as he himself, they at the same time organized themselves on a parliamentary and democratic basis. In this sense, the Kulturkampf was also an attempt to discredit and thus outmaneuver a dangerous parliamentary competitor in the market of conservative politics [GALL 1980: 473].

Yet the Center Party not only resembled Bismarck in its commitment to basically pre- and anti-democratic institutions—here the Roman Catholic Church, there the Prussian royal house and junkerdom<sup>6</sup>—but was furthermore certainly just as national-minded as the chancellor himself and his Protestant liberal allies

<sup>6)</sup> Ever since 1848, Bismarck's political aim had been to preserve and to strengthen the position of the royal Prussian government vis-à-vis the liberal power claims of the various German parliaments. After 1871, he desperately tried to keep the Reichstag as powerless as possible and refused to give leaders of the various political parties any positions of authority.

claimed to be. It was, in other words, the parliamentary expression of the German Catholic oath of allegiance to the German nation as such, even though the Catholics certainly had somewhat different visions of their particular German nation than did their Protestant compatriots. If we inquire into the earlier nineteenth-century development of Catholic political thought, especially in Catholic strongholds such as the various south and southwest German states, we find that an overwhelming majority of politically active German Catholics consisted of zealous patriots who fought for the liberation of their German homeland from the "French tyranny" and its unification under a single nation-state [LIL 1985]. And although these German Catholics had no choice but to abandon their anti-Prussian and anti-Protestant ambitions of unifying the various German states under a Great German Empire (Großdeutsches Reich, including also Austria and Bohemia) after Prussia had emerged victorious from the Austro-Prussian War of 1866 and the North German Confederation had been established, they nevertheless did not hesitate to support Prussia in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870–1871. Just as their Protestant fellow countrymen did, they sacrificed their lives to establish a German empire in the "little German tradition" (kleindeutsche Tradition) under Prussian leadership. On the occasion of the 1871 Assembly of the German Catholic Church (Deutscher Katholikentag) at Mainz, which was conducted very soon after the end of the Franco-Prussian War, the bishop of Mainz, Wilhelm Emanuel von Ketteler, combined the traditional cheers for the Pope with just as emphatic cheers for the German emperor, Wilhelm I, and thus gave expression to his German fellowbelievers' patriotism and loyalty to the German nation [MORSEY 1970: 33].

In the light of such evidence,<sup>7)</sup> one can only agree with Helmut Walser Smith that we should "understand the resistance of Catholic Germany to claims of the modern national state" in the context of a Europe-wide conflict between church and state,<sup>8)</sup> itself "a consequence of modern, liberal ideas of state- and nation-building," "and not conflate this resistance, as historians often do, with pro-Austrian feeling" or even something like "Catholic universalism." One would indeed "have to look very far in the Second Empire before finding a German Catholic... who truly believed a Catholic in Passau to be more akin to his coreligionist in Avignon than to his Protestant conational in Bayreuth" [SMITH 1995: 62–63]. A fundamental

<sup>7)</sup> Examples of national confessions among German Catholics are legion. Smith [1995: 63], to give just one more example here, cites another Catholic activist of the early 1870s who put the whole dilemma his German fellow-believers were faced with in a succinct statement: "we too are German in word and deed, we are true to *Kaiser* and *Reich*, we think and feel German," but "we do not have to betray our religion in order to be patriots."

<sup>8)</sup> It should be remembered that in Europe between about "1860 and 1890, Kulturkampf legislation was passed in Austria, Spain, Switzerland, Belgium, the Netherlands, and France—in Catholic as well as in Protestant countries" [SMITH 1995: 19]. Japan, I would add, was just another example of this general development.

confession to the German nation was the guiding principle of German Catholic policy prior to, and also after the establishment of, the Second Empire. Even at the peak of the *Kulturkampf*, German Catholics thought of their denomination as a distinct sociocultural group that belonged to, and unquestionably fought for its right to participate in, that particular political community the German nation constituted in their eyes; this claim to participation undoubtedly found its most vivid expression in the Center Party itself through which German Catholicism acknowledged the fragile parliamentary and democratic foundations of the Second Empire. We must keep such participation in mind to fully understand that Bismarck's accusations toward his Catholic conationals did not at all stand up to impartial scrutiny. From the outset, they were nothing but consciously false statements, made for political purposes.

Still, Bismarck did not have to look very far for all too obvious "evidence" that made it quite easy for him to denounce the German Catholics and the Center Party as "enemies of the empire" and, as planned, to increase his political attractiveness to the Protestant majority of the National Liberal forces in Germany. It was Pope Pius IX himself whose pronounced ultramontanism and ultraconservativism left the Catholic Church and its supporters open to attack by anyone who claimed to speak in the name of the progress, civilization, and enlightenment of a particular sovereign nation-state. During his papacy the encyclical letter "Quanta Cura" of 1864, with the infamous "Syllabus of Errors" (Syllabus Errorum), had been made public; in it, the Roman Catholic Church officially condemned the overall secularization of spiritual, social, and political life in the modern world and listed eighty "reprehensible errors of the time," which included naturalism, rationalism, communism, socialism, liberalism, and an especially precarious political issue: any form of Etatism and attempt at the separation of state and church. Likewise, it was Pius IX under whose aegis in 1870 the dogma of papal infallibility had been promulgated [see WEHLER 1995: 386-389].

To counter this general assault on modern society and statehood, which throughout the non-Catholic world was considered an anachronistic and illegitimate attempt by the church to interfere in the domestic affairs of the various nations and their states, Bismarck and Falk did more than fight a fierce rhetorical battle (or, more accurately in the case of Falk, an ideological battle) against the Center Party; their actions added even more fuel to the already open antagonism between German Protestants and Catholics. They took repressive administrative and legislative measures, closed the Catholic Department in the Prussian Ministry for Education and Cultural Affairs, and between 1871 and 1875 introduced a number of laws that were intended to strike deep into the Catholic Church's traditional sphere of influence and to put this religious institution in its place.<sup>9)</sup> The

<sup>9)</sup> For the most part, the following summary of *Kulturkampf* legislation is borrowed from Smith [1995: 40-41].

so-called pulpit paragraph (Kanzelparagraph) of December 1871 threatened dismissal from office and prison for those priests who "abused" their office to comment on state affairs in a fashion that disturbed public order. In March 1872, Prussia passed a law that arrogated to the state the sole right to inspect public and private schools.<sup>10)</sup> The Jesuit law of the same year, passed by the Reichstag, expelled the Jesuit order, as well as the Redemptorist and Lazarist orders, from German soil. It ordered their monasteries to be dissolved and stipulated that, in the case of individual German Jesuits, their citizenship rights be restricted; foreign-born Jesuits were to be driven from the empire. In May 1873, Bismarck introduced, and the Prussian Landtag passed, a series of bills that ensured state control over the appointment and education of priests. Known as the "May laws," these required of Catholic priests that they possess German citizenship, earn a certificate of German higher education, and pass an exam in philosophy, history, and German literature. The May laws also gave the state the right to veto the appointment of a priest to a particular parish as well as the power to relieve him of his position if he proved politically unacceptable. In 1874, the Reichstag passed an expatriation law that allowed the government to exile priests who resisted the May laws; in 1875, it continued its policy with a law that made civil marriage obligatory in the whole empire. In the same year, the Prussian Landtag passed the so-called breadbasket law (Brotkorbgesetz), which withheld further state financial support for all bishoprics. Finally, Prussia expelled from its territory all remaining monastic orders and congregations, except those that cared for the sick.

Since the Vatican, for its part, declared the May laws invalid and did not hesitate to excommunicate all those responsible for them, most German priests and bishops resisted the government's repressive measures and simply ignored the new legislation. In this stance, they were supported by the Center Party, an increasing number of other German Catholic interest groups and their powerfully eloquent press, and a mainly passive but very sympathetic Catholic population in the entire empire. The intransigent government reacted to this disobedience with various forms of force and coercion-for example, press censorship, bans on demonstrations and assemblies, exceptionally high fines, imprisonment, and Some simple figures illustrate the extent of the government's expulsion. persecution of Catholicism throughout the empire, but especially in Prussia: in 1876, at the peak of the Kulturkampf, all Prussian bishops had either gone into exile or were imprisoned, and about 33 percent of all Prussian parishes-more than 1,400 in total-had to manage without a "politically acceptable" priest [MocHiDA 1996: 434]. But neither this oppression nor Bismarck's pathos-filled declaration that the government would "not go to Canossa, not mentally and not physically," could force German Catholicism to yield to state authority. On the contrary, the

<sup>10)</sup> The fundamental importance of a centralized and homogeneous education of the masses for developing a national consciousness and for nation building has been most aptly analyzed by Ernest Gellner in his classic treatise, *Nations and Nationalism* [1983].

Kulturkampf so mobilized the various Catholic forces in Germany that from 1874 onward, the Center Party grew increasingly powerful. Eventually in 1881 it became—and until 1912 remained—the strongest political party in the Reichstag. And when in 1878 Leo XIII, a man ready to compromise, succeeded the ultramontane ideologue Pius IX in Rome's Holy See, the political situation was such that the Catholic Church could spearhead the abolition of major parts of the Kulturkampf legislation. After 1887, only the school inspection law, the "pulpit paragraph," the Jesuit law, and obligatory civil marriage remained in effect. With this result, the open political Kulturkampf between the government of the Second German Empire and the various Catholic institutions in and outside the empire was settled.

The deep cultural and ideological antagonism between German Protestants and Catholics could not be softened by any single official agreement on abolishing or enforcing a particular law, of course. Although Bismarck's Kulturkampf legislation may have been meant to contribute to, or simply enforce, a form of nationalizing the population of the first German nation-state that at the same time could lead directly to sociocultural homogeneity, it definitely effected the reverse. Smith is certainly right when he observes that "rather than assimilate the Catholic population, the repressive measures of the Kulturkampf deepened the cultural rift, already existent, between Catholics and Protestants. The rationalization and homogenization of German cultural and political life revived and politicized, rather than repressed or rendered harmless, the attachment of Catholics to their religious culture and to its rich, if to outsiders archaic, world of rituals and symbols" [SMITH 1995: 42]. Obvious as it seems to be, however, this rather negative part played by the Kulturkampf in the overall process of national integration in Wilhelmine Germany should be considered as really just one side of the coin. On the other side were two developments that were just as important and decisive for the overall appearance of the Second German Empire as a nation-state.

First, I would like to point to an observation Lothar Gall has made, namely that the *Kulturkampf* was the first major domestic event of the young German Empire that contributed significantly to lessening the population's resistance to increasingly deep intrusions of the state into all areas of private and public life [GALL 1980: 478]. The *Kulturkampf* gradually accustomed German society to these intrusions, thereby helping to reduce its resistance to a growing trend toward the "interventionist state" (*Interventionsstaat*). From the perspective of the systemic integration of the political community, this development can be seen as strengthening the inner cohesion and centralizing the power of the repressive state apparatus. Thus, I consider Gall's observation as supporting my thesis on the inconsistent character of the modern nation-state: namely, that the various forms of exclusion it has generated simultaneously entailed certain forms of integration. Of course, not only the Catholics but also the liberal Protestants and their church were in the end unable to prevent their increasing exposure to state intervention. In certain respects, however, this was the price the liberal and Protestant forces had to pay for their own tactics: in the course of their "enlightened" crusade against the backwardness and antimodernism of the Catholic Church, they had not hesitated to betray their own liberal ideals by applauding each restriction of civil rights that the repressive state apparatus had imposed on the Catholic clergy. Their general fight for political modernism, which among other things called for the liberal principle of equality before the law, was characterized by nothing but a utilitarian deployment of exceptional laws that deprived Catholic conationals of civil rights for which the German liberal forces themselves had fought ever since the Revolution of 1848.

A second development connected with the Kulturkampf was even more crucial to the nationalization of the Second German Empire. As Mochida has it, the Kulturkampf "heavily vitiated the nationalist tendency that had emerged during the Franco-Prussian War, and left behind a national rift that was difficult to cure" [MOCHIDA 1996: 436]. I do not agree with this assessment. Rather than vitiating the overall nationalist tendency among the German population, the Kulturkampf led to an exaggerated, if not pathological, increase of nationalist emotion. It not only provided the Protestant side with an easily accessible concept of a national enemy against which one's unbridled national enthusiasm could be directed, but at the same time it confronted the German Catholics with the traumatic experience of sociocultural and political isolation from the nation, as well as with the humiliation of being treated as second-class citizens. They almost desperately endeavored to overcome this special kind of national rift, their enforced isolation from the nation, and second-class status within the nation-state, while simultaneously holding on to their specific religious culture. In their efforts to "demonstrate that Catholics and their political leaders were the equal of other Germans in national feeling, if only they were given a chance to show it" [BLACKBOURN 1978: 176], the German Catholics, especially "those who led the Wilhelmine Center Party [...] were determined to appear 'two hundred per cent German'" [1978: 172] and to take advantage of any opportunity to prove their national reliability. This almost "hypertrophied nationalism" [WEHLER 1995: 960], displayed by the Center Party and various other Catholic interest groups from the 1890s onward, can hardly be interpreted as anything but a direct reaction to the national discrimination and exclusion German Catholics had to face during the Kulturkampf [WEHLER 1995: 906]. Here too, the nation-state revealed its inconsistent character: the attempt to exclude a culturally distinct group led to a reinforcement of that particular group's desire-and eventually "successful" struggle-for participation and national integration.

The phenomenology of the Catholic variant of Wilhelmine nationalism cannot be discussed in any detail here.<sup>11)</sup> Suffice it to say that as early as from the late 1870s onward, the Center Party supported the successive imperial cabinets on a

For a more detailed discussion of Catholic nationalism in Wilhelmine Germany, see also Maier [1964–1965] and Deuerlein [1970]; on German right-wing Catholicism (*Rechtskatholizismus*), see especially Ferber [1970] and Gründer [1984].

growing number of crucial votes in the Reichstag. It began to expose an attitude of obedience to government and state authority and thus revealed a more and more etatistic form of national conviction.<sup>12)</sup> Apart from statements of the flag-waving patriotism, and at times chauvinism, which were customary at the time, the Center Party's creed of an unquestioning performance of national duties probably found its clearest expression in the support of official government positions on such crucial occasions as Chancellor Bismarck's protectionist policy of the late 1870s, the German navy and Great Power policy under Emperor Wilhelm II, and eventually, most fatal of all, the Nazi Party's Enabling Act (*Ermächtigungsgesetz*) of 1933 [MORSEY 1970].

# 5. THE "PERSECUTION OF BUDDHISM" AND NATIONAL INTEGRATION IN MEIJI JAPAN

In a broad sense, the Japanese term haibutsu kishaku (abandonment of the Buddha and destruction of Buddhism) may also refer to various forms of teachings and measures in early modern Japan, the Tokugawa period (1600-1867), which were employed against Buddhism as such or against particular Buddhist institutions in several domains such as Okayama, Aizu, Mito, Tsuwano, Satsuma, and Chōshū. Usually, however, the term denotes a movement and a series of historical events of the very first years of the Meiji period (1868-1912), namely the anti-Buddhist iconoclasm, as well as the radical abolition and enforced merger of Buddhist temples and monasteries, that shook Japan most severely between about 1868 and 1871, and thereafter receded slowly until the mid-1870s.<sup>13)</sup> The movement was mainly initiated and supported by those adherents to the National Learning (kokugaku) and Restoration Shinto (fukko shinto) traditions who, by their appointment to the Office of Rites (Jingikyoku) and its successor, the Ministry of Rites (Jingikan), had been placed in charge of the new government's administration of religious affairs. Haibutsu kishaku was the most radical-but only quasiofficial, if not entirely lacking in official authorization-form of an attempt to implement a policy of the "separation of Shinto and Buddhist deities" (shinbutsu bunri) that, for its part, was pursued to establish a "purified" Shinto as the new state religion.<sup>14</sup>) It was thus in part an attempt to overcome the administrative and

- 13) For English-language studies of the early Meiji anti-Buddhist movement (which I do not intend to describe in too much detail here), see the first two chapters of James Edward Ketelaar's monograph [1990] and the articles by Grapard [1984], Collcutt [1986], Antoni [1995], and Tamamuro [1997]. Not the most comprehensive but definitely still the best analytical Japanese-language treatise on the subject is Yasumaru [1979].
- 14) It hardly needs to be added that we are touching on an attempt at "inventing tradition"

<sup>12)</sup> Smith [1995: 238] has also concluded that "the popular nationalist reaction against Catholic integration rendered the process of integration precarious and constituted an important pressure pushing the Catholic Center ever more to the right, ever closer to the government, tying it ever more tightly to official nationalist positions."

institutional dominance of the various Buddhist sects over their nativist competitors on the politico-religious market, a dominance that had been established and institutionalized under Tokugawa rule. At that time, repressive systems were introduced, in which the Buddhist temples were committed to participate: obligatory affiliation with a temple, or the so-called temple guarantee (*terauke*), and the "religious inquisition" (*shūmon aratame*). Just like its Meiji successor, *haibutsu kishaku*, as carried out in these domains, led primarily to the enforced secularization of Buddhist institutions, as Buddhist property was expropriated and priests unfrocked.

Yet these measures need to be understood as only one element, albeit an essential one, of the broader reform programs that, out of sheer economic necessity, had to be introduced by various local governments at the time. What lay at their root was not the fanaticism of a competing religious institution but the essentially pragmatic conviction of influential Confucian scholars and local government advisors, as well as of a handful of their feudal lords, "that temples, monasteries, and priests were idle and useless beings and that the financial maintenance of the Buddhist clergy by means of an [obligatory] parish system was one of the major causes for the economic impoverishment of the shogunate and the domains" [KASHIWAHARA 1990: 16]. Although it certainly cannot be denied that the very same pragmatism figured prominently in the early Meiji anti-Buddhist movement, too, one can hardly comprehend the sheer violence and excessive extent of this movement without taking into account the religious frenzy and exaggerated zeal of some National Learning and Restoration Shinto activists. Because of their useful capacity as "ideologues of the anti-shogunate forces... from Satsuma and Choshu" [YASUMARU 1979: 4], they had been promoted to what we might call the "forecourt" of state power and now claimed to act in behalf of the emperor, his government, and the new state.<sup>15)</sup>

Seen from such a perspective, the early Meiji anti-Buddhist movement appears as a kind of inglorious high point of the continual power struggles between competing institutions on Japan's politico-religious market: the radical consequence, as it were, of an increasingly anti-Buddhist mood among Japan's non-Buddhist intellectual elite, which had found exemplary expression in the influential literary work of the Restoration Shinto scholar Hirata Atsutane (1776–

here. Something that could be rightfully called a "pure" form of Shinto existed at no point of time in the history of Japan before the Meiji Restoration; nor did it come into existence as a result of the entirely arbitrary disentanglement of certain phenomenological emanations of what falls under the name of "Shinto-Buddhist syncretism" (*shinbutsu shūgō* or *shinbutsu konkō*).

<sup>15)</sup> In support of the thesis that the early Meiji government's religious policy "was never intended as an attack upon Buddhism" and that the *haibutsu kishaku* measures were "entirely carried out by ... foulmouthed" Shintoists "claiming to speak for the imperial

1843) and the Mito scholar Aizawa Seishisai (1782–1863). If we were to end the analysis here, however, our approach to the "persecution of Buddhism" in Meiji Japan would be too one-dimensional. Just like the *Kulturkampf* in the Second German Empire, *haibutsu kishaku* was part of a broader political conflict, not confined merely to the power struggle *between* religious institutions for greater participation and integration in the repressive state apparatus or to the compatibility of particular intellectual traditions with official state ideology. Here, too, the origin of superordinate conflict lay in the growth within leading circles of the new central government of a particular apprehension and vision of the modern nation-state: in principle, it tended to ignore the political class differences of the old feudal order, sought to transform all Japanese into national subjects without further distinction, and thus called for the "equality of the four classes" (*shimin byodo*) before the law and its ideological personification, the emperor. Such an apprehension, however, was fundamentally at odds with the particularistic interests of established Buddhism that, ever since the late seventeenth century, "had been

court" [KETELAAR 1990: 12], analysts have repeatedly pointed to the fact that in the ninth month of 1868, Okuma Shigenobu made a statement to exactly this effect in a letter sent to the Nishi and Higashi Honganji branches of the Jodo Shinshū denomination of Buddhism. As Ketelaar [1990: 13] has apply stressed, however, this letter "was a private communiqué sent directly to the Honganji and not an official public promulgation issued from within the Ministry of State [Dajokan]." It is entirely debatable if the letter should be interpreted as an expression of the Ministry of State's true intentions toward-or even official position on-Buddhism and its status, and thus as simply representing "the extreme discord current in the early Meiji political realm" [KETELAAR 1990: 13]. Arguably, it was an early de-escalation measure taken by a group of men within the new government who were interested in neither religious matters as such nor in the institutional dominance of any religious school whatsoever (which they could hardly control), but who tried to utilize the nativist antagonism toward Buddhism for their own political goals without ultimately risking the loss of either side's support. The early Meiji government not only considered it necessary to instrumentalize the nativist element of veneration of the imperial family but also, and just as important, probably found it difficult to avoid using the substantial donations of gold specie by which the Nishi Honganji in particular supported the imperial court and the restoration movement [e.g., KAMINE 1936: 319–322]. As will become clear, I personally tend toward the second view. Although I am fully aware that many would criticize such an argument as a retrospective fallacy, I would point out that as a result of the politico-religious events of the early Meiji period, Buddhism lost its administrative and institutional predominance; once the Ministry of Rites had been dissolved, the nativist forces could not realize their original goal of establishing a Shinto-centered state religion under their own leadership. What has subsequently been referred to as State Shinto was something quite different, a material and ideological fabrication solely created and controlled by the state. The repressive state apparatus thus significantly extended its basis of power. At the same time, it succeeded in securing the voluntary ideological and material support of all major Buddhist and Shintoist institutions.

incorporated into the secular power system, ... occupying a position which has to be described as that of a state religion" [YASUMARU 1979: 26]; now, not surprisingly, that religion sought to protect its various traditional privileges. As aptly emphasized by Fukushima Kanryū, probably the first Japanese scholar to do so:

the "persecution of Buddhism" basically had to do with the reorganization of the system of rule during the Bakumatsu and Restoration period, the accomplishment of rule over [Japanese] subjects; in other words, it was achieved in the course of the formation of the Restoration government's administrative power.... Haibutsu kishaku by far exceeded the level of confiscations of temple estates and the deprivation of the various privileges Buddhism had gained under the bakuhan system, where it had been granted a state religion-like position. Evidently, it possessed features of an oppression of religion (shūkyō dan'atsu).<sup>16</sup> In searching for its causes, one cannot simply skip this point and refer to topoi such as Buddhism's reduction to a mere shell, its moral corruption, or its pessimistic weltanschauung<sup>17</sup> [FUKUSHIMA 1970: 84].

Its initial political weakness notwithstanding, one can hardly resist the impression that the early Meiji central government, despite certain conciliating statements to the contrary, tacitly approved the anti-Buddhist iconoclasm pressed by the nativist forces, because it secretly welcomed an administrative and institutional weakening of established Buddhism and its clergy. Just as the government of the Second German Empire had done, it ultimately sought to replace the traditional and institutionalized cooperation of the state and religious institutions with a policy of strictly demarcating and separating secular and ecclesiastical power in as many areas of public life as possible. In one of the most decisive legal measures to realize this objective, the central government replaced the old population census system consisting of "religious inquiry census registers" (shumon ninbetsu aratame cho), which ever since 1671 had been compiled by approved Buddhist temples throughout the country, with a nationwide system of "family registers" (koseki) to be solely controlled by government officials. For the time being, the Family Register Act (kosekihō) of 1871 that established this new census system maintained old Tokugawa feudal class distinctions in the form of three broad categories: former court nobles and feudal lords (kazoku), people of samurai descent (shizoku), and commoners (heimin). Since only the imperial family (kozoku) was exempted from family registration, however, it simultaneously stressed "the qualitative difference between the emperor and ordinary subjects" and thus made all these national subjects "equal in their subjection to imperial rule"

<sup>16)</sup> I understand Fukushima's term *shūkyō dan'atsu* in the sense of the oppression of ecclesiastical power through secular power.

<sup>17)</sup> This is an extraordinarily important statement that should be taken very seriously. As indicated above, it used to be an academic orthodoxy among an older generation of scholars in and outside Japan to "illuminate" the causes of—and to a certain extent

# [JAFFE 1997: 511].

By introducing the new Family Register Act and subsequently implementing it during the so-called *jinshin* census registration (*jinshin koseki*) of 1872 and 1873, the central government did more than deprive established Buddhism of the very basis of its administratively and institutionally exceptional position within the repressive state apparatus; it also provided the decisive legal instrument for enforcing the Buddhist clergy's complete integration into, and subjugation to, a secularized sociopolitical system, as it fulfilled the requirements of the modern nation-state. In an extremely important article Richard Jaffe has argued that "as a direct result of their incorporation into the household registration system," Buddhist clerics "were methodically exposed to the same legal treatment as any other Japanese subject" [JAFFE 1997: 507]. In short, before the law the Buddhist clergy ceased to exist as the distinct social class it had formerly been—namely, the distinguished group of those who had held the privilege of official permission to

justify-the Tokugawa and early Meiji anti-Buddhist movements by pointing to the alleged depravity of early modern Buddhism and thus to the almost cathartic effect of its persecution. Ronald Stone Anderson's portrayal of Tokugawa Buddhism is characteristic: "During the Tokugawa regime, the Buddhists produced no virile movements, no remarkable personalities, and no spectacular influence on the historic scene. The monks became slothful, dependent, and corrupt. Unlike Europe, where the religious force of Puritanism stimulated reform in national life and let to the protest against despotism, the Buddhists led no political movements against the regime; they were not like the Protestant Christians of Europe interested in the welfare of the individual-they accommodated meekly to the Tokugawa police state.... Then, with the collapse of the Shogunate and the loss of official support, Buddhism reached its nadir both as a religious and a political force" [ANDERSON 1956: 32-33]. Comparable comments, if sometimes less harsh, have also been made by such eminent scholars as Tsuji Zennosuke [1955: 404-489; 1984: 27-102], Ienaga Saburō [1961: 8-12], Yoshida Kyūichi [1959: 2; 1970: 37-40], George Sansom [1931: 469], Charles Eliot [1935: 315], Robert Bellah [1957: 51], Joseph Kitagawa [1966: 166], and Byron Earhart [1969: 70]. And although the critical views of historians such as Fukushima Kanryū, Yasumaru Yoshio, and, in recent years, especially James Edward Ketelaar should have made the analytical inadequacy of this specific orthodoxy sufficiently plain-in fact, it was much more useful in revealing the moral values of its protagonists than in providing a useful analysis of politico-religious developments and power structures in late Tokugawa and early Meiji Japan [KLEINEN 1995: 394-394]—the uncritical adoption of this scientifically disappointing discourse continues even in most recent contributions to the history of modern Japanese Buddhism. So Brian Victoria writes, "the moral and spiritual bankruptcy of established Buddhism inevitably brought criticism and rebellion from within and without. It was all but inevitable that institutional Buddhism would face a day of reckoning" [1997b: 4; for a nearly identical statement, see also 1997a: 202]. This example should suffice to demonstrate how resistant to change even the most metaphysical and morally judgmental patterns of explanation actually are, once a scholarly community has grown fond of them.

"leave home" (*shukke*), "abandon secular life" (*datsuzoku*), and thus free themselves from quite a few social restrictions and economic burdens. Equally, ordination as a Buddhist ceased to be a radical and government-approved "break with secular society" [JAFFE 1997: 507–508]. Instead, it became an entirely private religious action in a quite modern sense, an action that had no relation whatsoever to public life as such and to an ordained person's legal status as a national subject.<sup>18</sup>) To cite Richard Jaffe one last time, the various legal changes that ultimately accompanied the introduction of the new Family Register Act "spelled the end of the clerical *estate* in Japan and facilitated the growing awareness on the part of the [Buddhist] clergy that they too were subjects of the Japanese nationstate" [JAFFE 1997: 508; my italics].

Viewed in such a light, the establishment of the early Meiji census system can be called an expression of the Ministry of State's extremely refined (but all the more effective for being tacit) continuation of the policy of exclusion that the nativist forces within the central government had initiated against the institutions of established Buddhism. The Buddhist clergy, much to the regret of all too zealous National Learning and Restoration Shinto activists, were eventually not entirely eradicated from Japanese soil;<sup>19</sup> yet in the Japanese nation and in the state under whose surveillance this nation gradually began to emerge, they were deprived of participating in an institutionalized form of wielding of state power,<sup>20</sup> as well as

- 18) Jaffe [1997: 507] is certainly right to remind us that religion, in a sense of something "restricted to a circumscribed, private, [and] voluntary realm," is a concept that did not emerge in Japan before the mid-nineteenth century. It cannot be repeated often enough that "there was no politics-versus-religion dichotomy in pre-modern Japanese societies" [McMULLIN 1989: 15] and that it is simply "incorrect to assume ... that politics and religion had different spheres of operation, the former having to do with public, 'thisworldly' issues, and the latter with private, 'other-worldly' ones" [McMULLIN 1989: 32]. From this it follows, to refer once more to the myopic "discourse on the depravity of early modern Buddhism" (*kinsei bukkyō daraku ron*), that it is likewise "incorrect to assume that the acquisition of political, economic, and military power on the part of clerics and the monastery-shrine complexes is *ipso facto* a sign of corruption, degeneration, and/or secularization, and ... that there was once a time in Japan ... when religious communities were utterly devoid of 'secular' power" [McMULLIN 1989: 32–33].
- 19) Still, by the mid-1870s Buddhism was reduced to a small fraction of its former capacity, in both the number of its clergy and its possessions.
- 20) To a certain extent, Buddhism's incorporation into the propaganda campaign carried out under the supervision of the so-called Great Teaching Academy (Daikyõin) could be considered an institutionalized form of such participation. Officially, however, the Daikyõin had a nongovernmental status [SAKAMOTO 1987: 55-61], and besides, the campaign it supervised was ill-starred from the beginning and ultimately came to nothing. Also, from what we know about its internal weaknesses and inconsistencies, on the one hand, and the overall complexity and coincidental nature of the formation of an ideological consensus in Meiji Japan (see especially [GLUCK 1985]), on the other, the campaign is unlikely to have had any substantial influence on the populace at all.

denied a distinct legal status of any relevance to their conduct and treatment as national subjects in the realm of public life. Naturally, this specific expression of a gradual secularization of public life affected all the other suppliers on Japan's religious market too, including those of the Shintoist tradition. But from the perspective of the integration of the political community, the systematic abolition of the Buddhist clergy as an estate is crucial because it eradicated one of the last major sociopolitical areas free of state intervention, transformed each single cleric into an ordinary national subject, and thus strengthened the inner cohesion and centralization of power of the repressive state apparatus. This action provides another example supporting the thesis that certain forms of national exclusion simultaneously entail certain forms of national integration.

One of the most important elements of the nativist justification of the early Meiji anti-Buddhist movement was the accusation that Buddhism was not only an institution inseparably linked to the detested world of Tokugawa rule but also a doctrine of foreign origin, intrinsically incompatible with Japan's true national character and the emperor's divine absoluteness. It is highly unlikely that such an ideologically distorted judgment matched the self-appraisal of most Buddhist clerics, or that these clerics, just because they were Buddhists, would have found it more difficult than any other Japanese contemporary to come to terms with the establishment of a modern nation-state under the alleged rule of an allegedly divine emperor. And even though a majority of Buddhist clerics seem to have shown little reaction to the news of the overthrow of the shogunate and the restoration of imperial rule, the words and deeds of some leading clerics of the Nishi Honganji branch of the Jodo Shinshū denomination clearly confirm that contemporary Buddhists did not consider themselves and their coreligionists as necessarily incompatible with, or even hostile toward, the new political conditions. In fact, these clerics did not even have to be persuaded of the "divine legitimacy" of the coup d'état by words or by force. Men such as Shimaji Mokurai, Ōzu Tetsunen, and Akamatsu Renjo, a well-known group of young Nishi Honganji priests from the Chōshū domain who eventually became highly influental advocates for the larger cause of early Meiji Buddhism, were themselves active fighters in the sonn $\bar{o}$  $j\bar{o}i$  (revere the emperor and expel the barbarians) and  $t\bar{o}baku$  (overthrow the shogunate) movements long before the final victory of the imperialist forces was in sight. Figuring most prominently among their ideological mentors were the socalled coastal defense (kaibo) priest Gessho (1817-1858)<sup>21</sup> from Suo province and Utsunomiya Mokurin (1824–1897) from Aki, two extremely radical pro-imperial activists of the Nishi Honganji branch. Both were closely acquainted with Yoshida Shōin (1830–1859) as well as with several of his adherents and had thus laid the foundations for the Nishi Honganji's quite intimate relations with influential Meiji

<sup>21)</sup> Not to be confused with the pro-imperial Buddhist priest Gesshō (1813–1858) of the Hossōshū denomination.

politicians of Chōshū descent, including Kido Takayoshi, Yamagata Aritomo, Itō Hirobumi, Shishido Tamaki, and Aoki Shūzō. It is not least because of this somewhat odd Chōshū alignment that established Buddhism eventually managed to overcome and survive what was probably its most severe persecution in the history of Japan.

A question of immediate relevance here is whether it is appropriate to speak of the existence of a specifically Buddhist nationalism in Bakumatsu and early Meiji Japan. As for the existence in Bakumatsu Japan of anything that could be rightfully called "nationalism" or "national consciousness," one must stress that this specific conceptualization of the problem is not new. To my knowledge, Maruyama Masao was the first Japanese scholar of intellectual history to comment on this particular question: "Before a people can become a nation they must actively desire to belong to a common community and participate in common institutions, or at least consider such a situation to be desirable.... [T]he birth of a national consciousness in the sense described above, [however,] did not occur in Japan until the Meiji Restoration" [MARUYAMA 1974: 323, 327]. And on the subject of Yoshida Shōin and the *sonnō jōi* movement he continued:

We shall then understand why the sonno joi movement cannot be directly linked with theses of modern nationalism such as national unification and national independence.... Shoin, searching for a driving force for the sonno joi movement, looked lower and lower in the society for it, from the bakufu, to the feudal lords, to their retainers, and to the ronin. But his last hope was the somo no shishi, the "men of high purpose from the grass roots," all of whom were, of course, samurai. He did not look any lower. What is noteworthy here is that it was this inability of premodern nationalist thought to extend itself broadly into the society that made possible the tenacious survival of feudal intermediary powers and thus prevented elements favoring centralization from gaining complete success.... Only in Shoin's thought in its final phase can we detect a vague indication of a premonition of the fact that a fundamental change in the entire system would be necessary to preserve the vrijdom of Japan against the foreign powers. In short, both in their efforts to extend their ideas among the people and to centralize political power, ... the sonno joi movement came to a halt at the last historical iron barrier of the feudal structure [MARUYAMA 1974: 352, 365, 366].

Even though I could not agree more with Maruyama's characterization of Shōin's thought as being ultimately trapped in feudal structures, my point regarding the problem of a specifically Buddhist Bakumatsu nationalism is quite different: it was precisely Nishi Honganji clerics such as Mokurin and Gesshō whose activities did *not* come to a standstill at the last historical iron barrier of the feudal structure. In words and deeds, Mokurin and Gesshō went further and were more radical than Shōin might have ever dared (though he was under arrest and thus being restricted in his freedom to act). Under the ideological influence of Mokurin, among others, Shōin eventually turned his back on the political vision of a "union of the imperial court and the shogunate" ( $k\bar{o}bu \ gatta\bar{a}$ ) and became a  $t\bar{o}baku$ 

advocate [MURAOKA 1968]. And Nakano Satoru has observed that "in contrast to Shōin, and from the viewpoint of Buddhist ethics, Gesshō was in a position that did allow him to teach sonno joi ideology to common people" [NAKANO 1973: 73]. Men like Gesshō and Mokurin were the ones who actually dared and strove to bring this kind of political thought to the social level of the ordinary man, provided him with a humble sense of being a political subject of history, and thus helped to create a starting point for the awakening of a national consciousness among the Japanese populace. Unlike Shōin, Gesshō took common people seriously; he went into small villages along the shore of Suo province and spoke to them, men and women alike, about the necessity of their spiritual and material participation in the coastal "defense of the country" (gokoku)<sup>22)</sup> Buddhist clerics such as Gesshō and his adherents thus provided an important link between the politically elitist shishi and Chōshū's lowest social strata; without them, the sonno joi and tobaku movements would have been deprived of a vital element. For these reasons, limited as his and his adherents' actual sphere of activity probably was, I consider it appropriate to characterize their specifically Buddhist thought and sociopolitical stance as being much more closely related to a modern conception of nationalism, as set forth in this paper, than Yoshida Shōin's pro-imperial discourse ever was.

What has been said so far about the history of Buddhism in modern Japan has sketched the picture of a number of religious denominations in the overall tradition of Japanese Buddhist thought, which, just like the Catholic Church and its various supporters in the Second German Empire, became a central object of political exclusion and persecution conducted by and in the name of a just-emerging nation-state whose very establishment some of them had actively helped to bring about, a nation-state with which most of them would have probably managed to come to some voluntary accommodation. Keep in mind, too, that in the twelfth month of 1868 Japan's first all-Buddhist representative body, the Alliance of United Sects for Ethical Standards (Shoshū Dōtoku Kaimei), reacted to the anti-Buddhist government policy by adopting the Nishi Honganji's stance and pledging itself to work for the "unity of the imperial law and the Buddha-*dharma*" ( $\bar{o}b\bar{o}$ *buppō furi*), relinquishing nothing of what it believed to be Buddhist principles but indeed falling back on a centuries-old Japanese tradition of presenting Buddhism as

<sup>22)</sup> For Gesshō's view of the women of Chōshū as crucially important to coastal defense, see especially Murakami [1979: 233–237]. That Gesshō's pro-imperial gokoku thought was not just the radical fantasy of an isolated fanatic within the Nishi Honganji branch should become evident from the fact that in 1856 Kōnyo, the twentieth head abbot of the Nishi Honganji, invited him to come to Kyōto and express his thought in a memorandum. In 1858, shortly after Gesshō's death, this writing was distributed to branch temples (matsuji) throughout the country as "A Treatise on the Defense of the Country through the Buddha-Dharma" (buppō gokokuron). For an annotated edition of the treatise, see Yasumaru and Miyachi [1988: 215–222]; for an annotated German translation of major sections of the text, see Kleinen [1995]. The most comprehensive collection of essays on Gesshō is Misaka [1979].

a guardian of the state that furthermore respected the "dominance of imperial law"  $(\bar{o}b\bar{o} ihon)$  [see Kleinen 1994: 19–23].<sup>23)</sup> Thus it comes as no surprise that while it was still recovering from the most severe excesses of the anti-Buddhist iconoclasm, established Buddhism began to display an attitude of ever-growing obedience to government and state authority, sought to take advantage of any opportunity to prove its national reliability, and eventually turned into what in postwar Japan has usually been referred to as "emperor system Buddhism" (tennosei bukkyo) [e.g., FUKUSHIMA 1986: 142].<sup>24)</sup> By now, at least within the academic world, it should be well known that as such, it actively supported and eagerly pledged itself to almost every act of military aggression that, between the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–1895 and the end of the Asia Pacific War in 1945, was conducted in the name of the Japanese emperor and the Japanese nation-state.<sup>25)</sup> In this paper, I do not intend to discuss the phenomenology of the Buddhist variant of the Meiji, Taishō (1912-1926), and early Showa (1926–1945) nationalism in any detail. It is enough to stress that really nothing of what in Western public discourse is usually perceived as being Buddhist—characteristics intrinsically such as tolerance, compassion, peaceableness, nonviolence, wisdom, and forth—has ever SO prevented institutionalized Buddhism from actively engaging in almost every allegedly mundane form of politics and conflict resolution history knows, in the history of Japan or of any other country. Of course, this observation applies with equal force

- 24) Although generally I prefer not to speak of the "emperor system," a term too often employed in oversimplifying an ideologically conditioned political community under an omnipotent and malicious totalitarian rule, I consider a term like tennösei bukkyö to be appropriate insofar (and only insofar) as it refers to the étatistic aspects of Japanese Buddhist nationalism until the end of World War II—describing established Buddhism's eagerness, as it were, to lend itself to and support the Japanese nation-state's overall domestic and international policy whenever possible.
- 25) In the postwar academic world, Japanese Buddhist nationalism has long been a rather neglected field of research. The examination of what at that time used to be identified as the cradle of Japanese national-chauvinism, namely the so-called State-Shinto, was given too much attention to discern in Buddhism more than a victim of religious suppression. Until Peter Fischer [1979] published his anthology and annotated bibliography on Buddhism and nationalism in modern Japan, except Holtom [1963, originally published in 1943], Anderson [1956], and Lee [1975], there had not been much substantial writing on the topic in the Western academic world. Only since the late 1980s, the situation has been gradually changing, so that by now, a comprehensive bibliography of Westernlanguage material on the topic would turn into a somewhat lengthy list, not to speak of the even larger number of Japanese-language contributions. Suffice it to say that in most recent times the focus of attention in the West has been on Zen Buddhism, nationalism, and war; see, e.g., Heisig and Maraldo [1995] and Victoria [1997a, 1997b].

<sup>23)</sup> Obedience to secular law had been an essential part of Shinshū doctrine ever since Rennyo, the eighth head abbot of the Honganji, had demanded it [ROGERS and ROGERS 1990].

to Christianity and most other institutionalized religions, too.

A last question to consider is that of modern Buddhism's precarious social integration into the Japanese nation. James Edward Ketelaar [KETELAAR 1990] has tried to conceptualize the process of Japanese Buddhism's national integration in terms of its image transmuting from that of national heretic into that of national martyr. By the end of the Meiji period, this crucial argument explains, Buddhism had so succeeded in its fight for a social position from which it could project itself as a natural entity of Japan's "immutable" culture that it actually appeared—given its former persecution—as a heroic Japanese martyr. This probably holds true for the image Buddhism imparted to the Western world. Buddhist clerics like Shaku Sõen were indeed invited and presented themselves to the 1893 World's Parliament of Religion in Chicago as ambassadors of the religious culture of the Japanese nation. And influential Buddhist scholars like D. T. Suzuki played a considerable part in conveying an image to the West of Zen Buddhism as definitely the most Japanese of all religious expressions. But inside Japan itself, I have my doubts as to whether established Buddhism ever before 1945 considered its desperate efforts for acceptance as an integral element of that specific variant of the Japanese nation whose image seemed to dominate public and official discourse to have been crowned with such success as Ketelaar's argument seems to indicate. We should not forget that in 1943, Daniel Holtom perceptively pointed to the existence of clear "evidence of an awareness on the part of Buddhism of the need of presenting her case favorably to the scrutiny of a Shinto-military control in the state," clear evidence of a "sense of uncertainty," as it were, that sharpened "Buddhism's awareness of the need of an apologetic in the presence of misunderstandings arising out of nationalistic prejudice" [HOLTOM 1963: 132-133]. Japanese Spirit and Japanese Buddhism (Nippon seishin to nippon bukky $\bar{o}$ ), to give just one example, a treatise by the Buddhist scholar Yabuki Keiki that in 1934 was published under the auspices of the Buddhist Federation of Japan (Bukkyō Rengōkai) and went through fifteen editions in two years, can hardly be read as anything else but a large-scale attempt by the then-official body representing all Buddhist denominations in Japan to vindicate Japanese Buddhism as being fully in line with what in Japan itself at that time was thought to be Japan's true national spirit.

The following passage from Yabuki's book demonstrates to what extent leading Japanese Buddhists, as late as 1934, still considered themselves as unjustly deprived of the national recognition they longed for:

[Buddhism] is a powerful reality that cannot be set aside with indifference. We will not consider here appraisals advanced on the ground of a discrepancy between the actual Buddhism and the Buddhism that ought to be. We may say, however, that a man's wife is not a stranger, and to turn her out because her mother and grandmother came from an outside family is to indulge in a kind of conduct which in and of itself is a violation of the Japanese spirit [translated in HOLTOM 1963: 135; my italics].

Holtom aptly comments: "It is a remarkable fact that one of the most

outstanding Buddhist scholars of modern Japan should find it necessary to write in this manner. Only a real sense of uncertainty in the presence of threatening and unsympathetic forces in the national life could lead a loyal subject of the state to go to such pains to justify the existence of a religion that was introduced from foreign shores fourteen hundred years ago" [1963: 135–136]. To this I would like to add only that ultimately, it was the memory of the traumatic experience of being excluded, humiliated, and almost eradicated in the name of an emperor who served as the "divine" personification of the very nation in which Buddhists clerics sought to participate that had evoked such a sense of uncertainty in the first place and that ever since had tied established Buddhism fast to official nationalist positions. Once more, the nation-state thus revealed its inconsistent character: the attempt at excluding a distinct social group led to the reinforcement of that group's desire for participation and integration.

#### 6. CONCLUSION

In the course of this parallel account of politico-religious conflict, exclusion policy, and national integration in Wilhelmine Germany and Meiji Japan, I have tried to clarify three broader assumptions.

First, Germany and Japan were latecomers to the global nation-state system. Thus, their emergence as internationally acknowledged nation-states and the subsequent nationalization of the people they claimed to represent took on the shape of a civilizing process that found its political expression in an overall rationalization of their respective systems of rule. One of the most crucial elements of these processes of political rationalization was the centralizing of state power and administration; and this could be accomplished only through a radical and onesided termination of the historically evolved and institutionally established political cooperation between state and church, secular power and ecclesiastical power.

But second, these processes of political rationalization were simultaneously entailed by rather irrational forms of ideological conflict and politico-religious power struggle. In their overall endeavors to exclude ecclesiastical institutions from the process of establishing the nation-state, the governments of the Second German Empire and Meiji Japan found ways to make use of the various antagonisms between the traditional religious competitors on their respective ideological markets. They took the risk of, or possibly could not avoid, getting involved in an ideological alliance with one competitor; but in so doing they gained the means of justifying the institutional suppression of the other. They carefully sought always to retain control over their ideological allies, but let those allies charge (or at times even took the lead themselves in charging) the suppressed competitors with being hostile to and intrinsically incompatible with the official image cluster of a national character that those ideological alliances had lent to the respective states and the peoples they claimed to represent.

And third, those politically active religionists who were thus confronted with

the humiliating experience of being excluded from and on behalf of the very political community they believed themselves to belong to and wished to participate in were not driven to despair and to passive resignation. On the contrary, they felt a greater sense of their national affinity and spurred on their desperate efforts to demonstrate that they were equal to their compatriots in national feeling and reliability. They never gave up the fight to participate in those political communities that they perceived their respective nations to be; and through this very struggle they eventually contributed significantly to the extreme heights of national sentiment and obedience to official nationalist positions in modern Germany and Japan.

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