



Tennō to Shintō: GHQ no shūkyō seisaku
The Allied Occupation of Japan 1945-1952 and Japanese Religions

天皇と神道：GHQの宗教政策

By William P. Woodard, Leiden: Brill, 1972.

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Kim Seungtae, Torch Trinity Graduate School of Theology, Korea

Lasting from 1945 to 1952, the allied occupation framed the structure of modern Japan, and GHQ occupied the center of post-war Japanese politics. In order to understand the structural characteristics of modern Japan, it is essential to grasp the politics of GHQ and their impact on various aspects of life. Yet the half century and many reforms that have occurred since the occupation ended make it difficult to trace a consistent line of policies. Since 1970s under hegemony of the Liberal Democratic Party, since the 1970s rightists have called for a return to the militarism that had reigned during the war. The post-war Constitution, which pledged its commitment to maintaining global peace, still guides Japanese politics. A debate about amending the constitution arises amid growing concern about right-wing goals. In 1992, Japan dispatched self-defense troops abroad as part of the United Nation Peace-Keeping Forces. 2007 saw the Office of National Defense promoted to the department level, giving an image of Japan on the way toward becoming a greater military power. Japan has justified its prior military expeditions against the neighboring countries and its previous colonial policy as a

self-defense mechanism against the onslaught of European imperialism. It distorted its history in a way that eliminated its shameful doings and the prime minister's visit to the Yasukuni Shrine made a new splash in the press. An apparent return to the past, militarism has provoked anxiety in the neighboring countries like Korea, China, Taiwan and others.

In connection with rightist leanings in modern Japan, the imperial system and Yasukuni Shrine bring into focus an important issues of religion with ideological implications. Above all, the religious and ideological policies of GHQ offer an ideal avenue for understanding a range of issues related to religion and ideology. Although still not translated into Korean, *The Allied Occupation of Japan 1945-1952 and Japanese Religions*, owes its high reputation to the author's unrivalled, orderly and detailed treatment of GHQ.

Initially published in the Netherlands by E.J. Brill Co. Inc., Professor Abe translated and published Woodard's work in Japanese under the title of *Emperor and Shinto: Religious Politics of GHQ*, but without translations of the original notes and appendices.

Born in Michigan in 1896, William P. Woodard graduated from Union Theology Seminar in New York. He served as a missionary in Japan from 1924 to 1941, and then again for 10 years as a missionary for Japanese residents in Korea from 1943 to 1953. In 1936, he contributed an essay to the Korea Mission Field entitled "Japanese Christian Work in Chosen." His repatriation to the United States coincided with the outbreak of the Pacific War. During the war he served in the United States as a Japanese language instructor at officer candidate school. In October 1945, he returned to Japan and served on the research staff for the Religions and Cultural Resources Division of GHQ. Even after the withdrawal of GHQ from Japan, he remained in the country, serving until his repatriation in 1966 at the International Religion Research Institute which he established in 1956. He taught Japanese religion at Clairmont College and passed away in 1973, one year after the publication of this book. In 1922, he obtained a Master's degree in literature from the

University of Chicago, and a PhD in theology from Karamas College in 1961. As William Kenneth Bunce remarks in his foreword to the original edition, no one writes with more authority about the religious policies of GHQ and their impact on Japan than William Woodard. Today, the University of Oregon library preserves Woodard's supporting materials.

In explicating the religious policies of the GHQ, the author's first-hand involvement in the planning and implementation stages gives a vivid account of Japanese reactions to the policies, and their implications for Japan.

The principle of religious freedom, a natural concern derived from the concept of basic human rights, underlay GHQ's policies, and the author wanted this ideal to take a firm foothold in Japan. This principle found its niche in the consciousness of Japanese despite an uproar of denouncement on GHQ's religious policies. The sediments of militarism and ultra-nationalism generated the most persistent obstacles to the realization of this ideal. Shintō, which deified and sanctified the emperor as the Heavenly Being, represented the religious underpinning that bolstered these obstacles. By promulgating the Civil Liberties Directive on October 4, 1945, GHQ eliminated restrictions on political, civil and religious freedom. The Educational Directive issued on April 22 did away with the military and ultra-nationalistic orientation of education. The Shinto Directive dated December 15 terminated the governmental role as the guardian, supporter, preserver and watchdog for Shinto and its shrines. On the first day of 1946, Emperor declared himself a "human emperor," which was tantamount to divesting the imperial lineage of divinity. A series of directives sought to tear down Shintoism and the absolutist traditions of imperial authority, while achieving true religious freedom, and implementing the principle of separating religion from the state. The Constitution, the Religious Corporations Ordinance and the Religious Juridical Persons Law manifested these reforms. These laws separated the Yasukuni Shrine from the state, and established as independent all religious organizations as defined by the Religious

Corporations Ordinance promulgated in February 1946. Woodard's analysis demonstrates the full extent to which the disputed Prime Minister's visit to the Yasukuni Shrine, together with the Prime Minister's repeated call for state ownership of the shrine, run afoul of the fundamental principle that GHQ sought place at the center of Japanese politics. To this end, Woodard's book remains most helpful in understanding the religious issues related to the Yasukuni Shrine and the rightist trend of Japanese policy. The efforts to undue the separation of religion and state should be seen for what they are, and completely renounced as a diversion from progress.