

The Development and Evolution of Tenrikyo Under the Mikado System in Modern Japan

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Abstract—In the new period of the end-of-the-curtain reform, Japan has successively produced many new religions focusing on the interests of the present world, advocating equality and fraternity, and most of them have been active up to now, which is a major feature of Japanese religion. However, from the Meiji Period to Showa Prewar Period, establishment of Mikado System in modern times, Shintoism was established as a state religion, and various new religions were severely persecuted. In this political context, these new religious groups have had to change their teachings and become supporters of the government.

Keywords—new religion; Tenrikyo; Mikado system; evolution

I. INTRODUCTION

Japan's Tenrikyo, founded in 1838 by Nakayama Mika, is known as the "three new religions at the end of the curtain" together with the Sumi Buddhism in 1814 and the Kim Gwang in 1859. The religious idea of Tenrikyo, which breaks away from the shackles of the traditional Japanese religions, Buddhism and Shinto, is regarded as the pioneer of religious reform in Japan, with the pursuit of the interests of the world as the core, advocating equality and fraternity, and opposing the oppression of the power class. Nishiyama Shigeru, a scholar of religious sociology in Japan, pointed out that the charm of the study of new religions lies in the fact that in the process of the emergence, growth, development and decline of these new religions, religious cultures such as doctrines, ceremonies and religious organizations will constantly adapt to the changes of society, and the believers will also accept the changes of these doctrines in the changes of society.[1]⁽⁵⁾ Under the system of Mikado in modern times, the line of "national Shinto" was established, which was "worship God, respect the emperor and patriotism", in order to avoid being banned by the government, the relationship between Tenrikyo and the Japanese government gradually changed from opposition to cooperation, and reformed the organization and doctrine of the church.

II. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF HEAVENLY RELIGION

Mika Nakayama, founder of Tenrikyo, was born on April 18, 1798, in a landlord's family in Sammyida Village, Yamakushi-gun, Yamato (Today, Sammyida Town, Tenri City, Nara County, Japan), formerly known as Mika Maekawa. Her parents are very devout Pure Land believers, influenced by the family environment, the weak and introverted Nakayama Mika was fascinated by Buddhism and yearned for

Pure Land in her childhood. In 1810, a 13-year-old Mika married her cousin Yoshiyuki Nakayama and became a housewife of an ordinary rural landlord family. On October 23, 1838, the 41-year-old Mika invited the veteran City soldier to hold a "Blessing platform" prayer ceremony for the eldest son with foot disease. Because the witch who was supposed to sit on the "Blessing platform" was absent for some reason, Mika was executed on her behalf. The next morning, Mika bathed herself in cold water and sat on the "Blessing platform", while City soldier chanted scriptures on the side. The atmosphere was solemn and mysterious. Suddenly, the look of the Mika changed greatly, like a changed person, loudly declared: "I am the primitive god, the real god, because of the origin cause of this house, this time to save the world a line of living beings and come here, want to use the beauty of Mika as my God niche"[2]⁽¹⁾. The phenomenon of "Deity Attached Body" lasted for three days. On the 26th, Yoshiyuki agreed to the request of the "god". This is the founding of Tenrikyo. Tenrikyo believers regard October 26, 1838 as the founding of religion day and Nakayama Mika as their ancestor.

After the founding of religion, with the decline of family business, her family fell into extreme poverty. In the "valley bottom" experience of making a living through her own labor, Mika deeply realized that the power class exploited and extracted the people at the bottom of the society, and carried out her early missionary activities by praying for peace of property and curing diseases. The basic doctrines, mythological system and relief ideas of Tenrikyo doctrine gradually formed in the religious practice of Meiji. The foundation and core of the doctrine of Tenrikyo are Divine music song, Royal pen first, Royal finger Picture, which is regarded as the "three original canon of Tenrikyo", and the creation myth of Tenrikyo, the Ancient Records of the muddy Sea. Tenrikyo regards "Heavenly Prince's Order" as its main religion god, and calls it "the God of Moon and Sun Parents". According to the myth of creation of Tenrikyo, the world was initially a vast sea of mud. The God of Moon and Sun Parents thought that such a world was too boring. They used white snakes and human fish in the mud sea as the embryonic form of husband and wife to breed human beings. They also successively used killer whales, turtles, eels, plaice fish, puffers and black snakes as "props" for human body and various functions.[3]⁽²⁵⁻²⁹⁾. The God of Moon and Sun Parents

is the creator and patron saint of human beings. However, people did not realize the existence of God, so there were eight kinds of negative emotions such as stingy, greed, hatred, preference, resentment, anger, selfish desire, pride and so on. So the God of parents descended to mankind disease, but this is not the punishment of god, but the guide to the happy life of mankind, that is, the "divine attraction". Tenrikyo advocates that people purify their hearts and feel the existence of the God of parents, so that they can get rid of the disturbance of "heart dust" and feel the joy of life, and translate it into concrete actions, so as to realize the "vibrant world".

III. OPPOSITION PERIOD

Since the Meiji Reform, under a series of modern reforms carried out by the government, industrial civilization has replaced agricultural civilization, the wave of westernization has risen, the old social order, the economic structure has disintegrated, and the society has fallen into sharp turmoil. In addition, local tax reform has not reduced farmers undefined taxes, compulsory military service and compulsory education have further increased their burden. In this context, traditional Japanese religions, such as Buddhism and Shinto, have gradually become conservative, or have cooperated with interest groups to seek practical etiquette. They have lost their religious purity in the hearts of the people and cannot become the spiritual dependence of the people [4]⁽³⁹⁻⁴¹⁾. Therefore, the modern new religion represented by Tenrikyo, which was based on the pursuit of the interests of the world, was supported by the Japanese people, especially the lower class, and radical intellectuals dissatisfied with social change. Meiji believes that all people in the world are children of God and equal brothers and sisters, but because of the domination and rule of the power class — "Gaoshan" has resulted in inequality, and "Gaoshan" is the obstacle of "saving a list of divine undertakings of life". The ideal world of heavenly religion is to create a world of plenty and peace, free from disease, oppression and suffering, in which all people can "live happily". In the doctrine of heavenly religion, death is regarded as the complete realism of life's "reboot" and the equality concept of saving "a list of all living beings in the world", and the basic concepts of feudal society, such as the family concept based on ancestral care, identity system and paternity, are totally negated.[5]⁽⁵²⁻⁵³⁾ On the other hand, after the Mingzhi Reform, in order to establish the national consciousness and nationality consciousness of the Japanese people and safeguard the Mikado's rule, the government of the New Reformation carried out the "national enlightenment" movement, which integrated the royal Shinto and the shrine Shinto, based on the myth of discipline and taking the Mikado as the highest worshiper, trying to carry out the "unity of sacrifice and government" in Japan. In 1872, the Ministry of Education established and promulgated the "Three religious constitutional rules" of "Respecting God and Patriotism; Following Heavenly Principles and Humanities; Supporting the Mikado and Observing the Purposes of the Mikado". In Tokyo, it also set up the Great Religious Academy and the Middle and Small Religious Academies as the executing organs of the "Shinto state Enlightenment" movement, which intensified the oppression and banning of folk religions. Tenrikyo regards relief at the bottom of valley as its

foundation, disease as a God-guided view of disease, family view centered on couples and so on. Its essence is the spiritual confrontation of the Japanese people against the ideological control of "national Shinto" and "national enlightenment" in the early Mingzhi period. Its creation myth fundamentally denies the "myth" of the Emperor and shakes the theoretical foundation of the Mikado's system. So the Japanese government regards it as an irreverent existence. In 1874, after the establishment of Nara Mid-Religious Academy, an investigation was launched into the Heavenly religion. The 77-year-old Meiji was taken to the police station for questioning. In order to restrict the rapid development of Heavenly religion, the Japanese government monitored and arrested Tianli religion believers for obstructing medical treatment and disturbing public order, destroyed their assembly halls and prohibited their participation. Mika herself was arrested by the police on many occasions. In January 1886, more than 300 believer of religion came to visit Mika's home. After hearing the news, the police drove the assembled believer away and took the 89-year-old Mika to the police station for detention. This was the eighteenth and last arrest of Mika, whose physical condition was seriously deteriorated after 15 days in prison. In February of the following year, Nakayama Mika died.

IV. ADAPTATION PERIOD

With the aging of Nakayama Mika, the ancestor of religion, the "seat-pillar" system centered on Fanjiang, Yizang and Nakayama Shinnosuke was formed. Nakayama Shinnosuke, originally named Enomoto Shinnosuke, is the grandson of Nakayama Mika. In 1880, he became the adopted son of Mika and changed his name to Nakayama. After the death of the only son of Mika in 1882, Shinnosuke became the pillar of the first generation of Tenrikyo. "Pillar" has always been held by the "ancestor's blood successor" and is the leader of Tenrikyo after "ancestor". Fanjiang Yizang who used to be a construction worker, became a Tenrikyo believer in 1864. He was the most trusted missionary cadre of Nakayama Mika. After the death of Mika, she became the "Seat" of Tenrikyo. "Seat" is the spiritual inheritor of the ancestors. Like Mika, it receives the revelation of God through "Deity Attached Body", and there is no fixed successor. After the death of Meiji, the survival and development of the Tenrikyo has become a realistic problem that the successors have to face. On the one hand, because of the antagonistic attitude between Mika and the Meiji government, Heavenly religion has always been in the state of "illegal religion". Not only has its religious activities been strictly banned, but also it has been criticized from all walks of life. On the other hand, the Meiji government's policy towards the new religious groups has been loosened. In 1882, the Meiji government declared the separation of administration and religion after the failure of its attempt to establish "Unity of sacrifice and government", and then promulgated the Constitution of the Great Japanese Empire in 1889. It adopted the policy of solicitation and gentleness towards the new religious groups. Under the premise of "not violating the obligations of its subjects", it was recognized by the government as "sectarian Shinto". Therefore, joining the "sectarian Shinto" means that the survival of religious groups can be guaranteed, but at the same time, these new religious groups must conform to the government's

"national policy" and become the promoters of "national enlightenment".

In 1885 and 1888, Tenrikyo was recognized as "the sixth-class Church under the direct jurisdiction of Shinto" and "the headquarters of the Church under the direct jurisdiction of Shinto". According to The Ancient Records of the Muddy Sea, the God of heaven is the "ten pillar god" including "the God of parents on the moon and the sun", "the embryonic form of husband and wife" and "the props of all", which is called "the Fate of heaven". However, in the Statute of Shinto Heavenly religion of 1888, at the request of the Shinto Bureau, the God of Tenrikyo was partially replaced in accordance with the Ancient Records. In 1896, the Ministry of the Interior issued a decree banning the Tenrikyo Church in order to exert pressure on the Tenrikyo. Faced with the government's blatant interference, Tenrikyo had to continue to make concessions, replacing "Heavenly Fate of the King" in the Statute with "Heavenly Great God". In 1903, Nakayama Shinnosuke led the compilation of the Canon of Tenrikyo, also known as the "Meiji Canon". There are ten chapters in the Canon. The first three chapters are "Chapter of Respect for God, Chapter of Respect for the Mikado and Chapter of Patriotism". Especially in its "Chapter of Respect for God", the myth of the creation of human beings by the gods of parents on the moon and the sun is abandoned, and the "eight million gods" in the classical Shinto are the ones that nourish all things. The "Heaven Great God" worshiped by this religion is only ten pillars of gods of the "most prominent spiritual virtue" among them. In 1900, school for Heavenly religion was established for the purpose of training Shinto teachers. Instead of using the original textbooks such as Divine Music Song as the teaching content, school for Tenrikyo adopted Canon of Tenrikyo, Abstracts of Religious Decrees and Essentials of Shinto History as the teaching materials. Because of the doctrinal "Shintoism", in 1908, Heavenly religion finally gained the qualification of "independence of one faction". Among all the 13 sects of Shinto, it is the latest to gain independence.

After gaining the independent qualification of "sectarian Shinto", in order to sweep away the negative evaluation of the church from all walks of life, Tenrikyo began to actively assume social responsibility as a recognized religion. During this period, in order to revitalize the national morality and promote the local improvement movement, in 1912, Under-Secretary of the Interior, Takejiro Jiro put forward the requirement of Buddhism, Shintoism and Christianity that "three churches should be the same" in order to improve the spiritual development and improve the social condition. Yoshitaro Matsumura participated in the meeting as the agent administrator of Tenrikyo. Immediately after the meeting, Heavenly Religion printed and distributed 20,000 copies of the pamphlet The Combination of Three Religions and Tenrikyo in the street. Not only to the believers in the religion, but also to express to all walks of the community its "special thanks to the government for its kindness", and Tenrikyo "supports the national system of our country, clarifies the great meaning of respecting the Mikado and being patriotic, and in order to prevent and solve various social problems that hinder the national education and the progress of national morality, and enrich the quality of our believers. Our religion will not be

afraid of the sarcasm of the world, with the heart of sincere struggle to promote the date of arrival, with a view to the development of the national movement. Our religion will fully implement the spirit of Educational royal language, Wushen imperial edict, army royal oracle, implement the resolutions of the combination of Three Religions and be grateful to the gods and Mikado. The believers of this religion will adhere to the correct doctrine, receive the relief of the gods, and stand in the world as loyal citizens". [6](59)

V. THE PERIOD OF "PANDERING"

From 1910 to 1920, centered on the "Taoist be Friends", the religious journal of Tenrikyo, the intellectuals in the church launched a movement of modern interpretation of the original books such as Divine Music Song and Royal Pen First. Taoist be Friends ' s reports in this period were mostly based on the background of World War I and the rice riot, and criticized the rising individualism and egoism under the rapid development of capitalism and material civilization, correspondingly, they praised the spiritual civilization of East Asia and Japan. Since the end of World War I, the situation in Asia has changed dramatically. The scholars of Tenrikyo have pointed their criticism at the Western countries. They believe that "the outbreak of the World War is due to the hegemonic struggle between the two major powers in Europe. In other words, it cannot be overstated to call it the struggle for international desire, because the evil of unlimited desire corrupts the national power in the struggle and destroys civilization". With the "degeneration" of European civilization, "the time for world transformation is coming, and the world will therefore open up a new situation for a turning point". Therefore, Heavenly religion believers need to "fight against the non-nationalism that hinders Japan's sound development and eliminate dangerous ideas that endanger national life and cause social chaos"[7] ⁽¹⁻⁶⁾. In the mythological system of Heavenly region, the place where the gods of parents created the world is called "the original place", and the place is where today's Heavenly region is based. Therefore, in the mouth of the scholars of Heavenly religion, Japan has become the "root of human creation" and the core of "world relief". Compared with Japan, other countries are "branches and leaves". Only when the roots are strong, can the branches and leaves flourish and bear the fruits of civilization. The scholars of Tenrikyo take this as an extension to advocate "the decline of the West and the rise of Japan", and establish "the relief and unification of the world spirit" as the religious mission of Tenrikyo.

After the outbreak of the war of aggression against China, the whole country of Japan entered the wartime system. On November 4, 1938, Nakayama Masayoshi was summoned to the residence of the Minister of Culture. The Director of religion waiting there, Matsuo Matsuzo, asked Nakayama Masayoshi to "expect you to make a great contribution to the country"[8] ⁽²⁰³⁻²⁰⁶⁾. At the end of the conversation, Nakayama Masayoshi, who dared not neglect at all, immediately handed in his Royal petition, in which he wrote: "This time, the Religious Bureau of the Ministry of Culture pointed out that Evil religion needs to pay more attention to its religious doctrines and many other issues. After hearing about many issues, I am panicked. Now I am ready to make a concrete plan, and hereby sincerely ask for instructions." Since then, on

December 8, Nakayama Masayoshi handed over the specific plan to Minister of Culture, Toshio Araki, and on December 26, he announced to the church that "in order to inherit the great ideal of the imperial kingdom, face the great current situation of building a new order in East Asia, observe the true meaning of the national mobilization, consolidate the spirit of the unity of the imperial kingdom, and devote sincerely to the strength of the whole religion in order to achieve the great cause of glory. Our religious scholars, who bear the great responsibility of revitalizing the national spirit, take the lead in honoring the sincerity of serving the country in order to preach the true meaning of our national body, and take the spirit of the road of God as the criterion to demonstrate and propagate our mission, and feel the great importance of our responsibility very much. In order not to violate the name of Shinto, it is determined to correct our religion". [9]⁽¹⁻⁵⁾

After the announcement of the policy, Nakayama Masayoshi was good at setting up the "Reform Committee of Tenrikyo" in this department the next day to recover all the "unstable doctrine books" in the educational institutions of Heavenly religion and in the religion, such as Divine Music Song, the Ancient Records of the Muddy Sea, and so on. He gave inflammatory speeches to the preaching teachers of Tenrikyo, such as "the Construction of the new order in East Asia and the Mission of the Religion" and "the responsibility of the religionist behind the weapon". At this point, the Tenrikyo completely abandoned the opposition with the government and mobilized the strength of the whole religion to invest in the war of foreign aggression waged by the Japanese government.

VI. CONCLUSION

To sum up, from the founding of religion in 1838 to the defeat of Japan in 1945, the development of Heavenly religion can be divided into three stages. First, it is the time when the ancestor was alive from 1838 to 1887. During this period, the basic doctrine of Tenrikyo came into being, which embodied the obvious pursuit of the interests of the present world and the color of human-centered. Under the severe religious persecution, it was in sharp opposition to the Meiji government. The second was from 1888 to 1914. At this stage, the number of Heavenly religion believers increased greatly, and the organization of the church was further improved. After the death of its ancestors, under the leadership of Nakayama Shinnosuke and FanJiang Yizang, Tenrikyo carried out a "Shintoism" reform of its doctrine in order to seek the recognition of the government. Finally, from 1914, Nakayama Masayoshi took charge of Tenrikyo and established the "Pandering" route within the church. The church abandoned the confrontation with the Japanese government, quickly approached "imperialism" and "militarism", and vigorously supported foreign aggression and expansion. On December 15, 1945, in order to eliminate militarism, abolish national Shinto and implement complete separation of religion and politics, the Allied General Command in Japan issued the Shinto Directive. In 1946, the Constitution of Japan was promulgated, which stipulated the principles of freedom of religion and separation of religion and politics, and the modern Mikado system was disintegrated. In the aspect of Tenrikyo, in October 1945, Nakayama Masayoshi began to implement the "restoration"

within the religion. In 1949, the Canon of Tenrikyowas compiled. Compared with the "Canon of Meiji", the contents of "Chapter of Respect for God, Chapter of Respect for the Mikado and Chapter of Patriotism" were deleted, and the religious thought of Nakayama Mika was returned.

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