

**CONTEMPORARY NATIONAL ETHOS OF JAPAN AS SEEN
THROUGH PRIMARY SCHOOL TEXTBOOKS : NATIONAL
LANGUAGE, SOCIAL STUDIES AND MORALS**

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PREFACE

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The present study is a modest attempt to trace the evolution of the national ethos of Japan, and examine its present nature as reflected in primary school textbooks. Japan was almost unknown to the world at large until the Meiji Restoration of 1868. Thereafter it came with a bang and shook the world with its dynamism and militarist stance. Ever since it has never ceased to draw attention.

Japan is perhaps the only nation in the world whose national ethos was sought to be changed in important ways following World War II. Such transformation is an unique feature and Japan is being closely watched by the whole world with keen interest with particular reference to the course it will take and the place it would carve out for itself in the community of nations.

Education everywhere is intimately connected with the national spirit or national ethos. In Japan, it has always been used as an instrument to nurture and propagate the national spirit; in a way it has been used as a tool to shape the minds of its people. The purpose of the present study, therefore, is to factually trace the extent to which education has helped to change the national ethos of Japan and how it would shape that ethos in the future.

In order to study the contemporary national ethos of Japan, it is necessary to study the gradual change it has undergone over the centuries. Chapter one discusses in brief the national ethos of Japan in historical perspective.

It is, however, beyond the scope of the present study to do so in the minutest detail. What is attempted here is to give only an outline of the evolution of the Japanese national ethos before the Meiji Restoration.

Chapter two traces the changes which occurred between 1868 and World War II, and the role of education in bringing about these changes. Chapter three discusses the establishment of a peaceful democratic nation through education after World War II. Chapter four explains school education, curricula, its formulation and implementation, major changes in the content of curricula in post-war years, and nature and types of textbooks. Chapter five attempts to examine the change in national ethos as reflected in the primary school textbooks in pre-war and post-war years.

I express my gratitude to Professor P.A. Narasimha Murthy, my supervisor as well as Head of the Centre for East Asian Studies, School of International Studies, for his untiring help and guidance without which this study could not have been completed. I also take this opportunity to thank Mr. Torakichi Noriage, Principal of Japanese Embassy School, New Delhi and Mrs. Taiko Uppal, my colleague, in procuring some of the important documents for this study. None of them, however, is responsible for the views expressed here. I take full responsibility for them, including the translations.

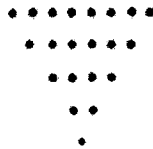
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CHAPTER I

**INTRODUCTION : NATIONAL ETHOS OF JAPAN IN
HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE**

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION : NATIONAL ETHOS OF JAPAN IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

A nation, to prosper, must be built on foundations of a moral character. This character is the principal element of its strength and the only guarantee of its permanence and prosperity. Japan is the best example of this. The people of Japan are known throughout the world for their cultural and ethical values such as wisdom, valour, morals and etiquette. Japan's astonishing growth during the last hundred years or so is attributed, among other factors, to the determination of the Japanese people to shape their own destiny, their sense of discipline and standards of morality in day-to-day life. These values are indigenous to Japanese culture and go back to the dim past.

The Japanese archipelago has been exposed to great foreign civilizing influences at every historical stage and the Japanese people have undergone a constant process of acculturation based on a blending of native and foreign traditions in cultural values and spiritual characteristics. However, loyalty to the Emperor and the State has been part and parcel of the Japanese ethos since the dawn of Japanese history. The continuity of this national spirit or national ethos, from one period to another without fundamental changes, is indeed a fascinating feature of Japanese history. The Japanese trace their ruling dynasty back to Jimmu Tenno, their first (mythical) Emperor and Japanese historians claim that he founded the Japanese Empire in 660 B.C. Since then,

one Imperial line, descended from the Sun Goddess, has ruled over Japan. However, it has been established through archaeological research that the Japanese people inhabited the Japanese islands for a long period extending over thousands of years in the period prior to recorded history. During this period, better known as the period of Yayoi and Jomon culture, there were individual communities or clans. In the absence of a written script, there are no written records to throw light on the characteristics of the early Japanese people as there existed no means of conveying thoughts and ideas, save through oral tradition which grew up around the ancestral deities. This oral tradition continued for centuries until written literature made its debut in the early 8th century A.D. when Kojiki (The Records of Ancient Matters, 712 A.D.) and Nihonshoki (The Chronicles of Japan, 720 A.D.) were compiled. These anthologies too are incomplete and motivated but nonetheless throw light on the legendary beginnings of the Japanese people and the Imperial family.

Shinto Cult and Its Essence

Shinto (way of the Gods) has been recognized as the native religion of Japan. The term "Shinto" was coined to distinguish the native religion from Buddhism and Confucianism.¹ Shintoism is primarily a system of nature

1 Ienaga Saburo, Nihon Dotoku Shisoshi, Iwanami Zensho (Tokyo, 1957), p.9.

and ancestor worship. It has no founder, no preachers and no fixed doctrines, yet it has been the core of Japanese people's thoughts and sentiments and played an important role in the moral life of the people. In the beginning, however, it was not a national religion and had no organized theoretical ideology and philosophy as such. There were different local cults. That was because society was divided into a large number of patriarchal units, called uji, which were small communities inhabited by households of the same ancestry and each clan worshipped its own clan-god (uji-gami).² In these uji cults, all natural objects were treated as spirits or deities and were worshipped as gods. Besides these, leaders of tribes and heads of clans were also treated as gods.³ Festivals were held to honour those gods and for that people had to cleanse body and soul. This concept of ritual purity was the most important factor forming the native religion. It was considered that people must obey the clan leader so as not to invite the wrath of god. This feeling for the clan

2 Sanson, G. B., Japan : A Short Cultural History (Charles E. Tuttle Company, Tokyo, 1976), p.37.

3 The Ministry of Education, Government of Japan, Japan : Its Land, People and Culture (Japanese National Commission for UNESCO, Tokyo, 1958), p.504.

leaders later formed the basis of respect for the Emperor, as the Imperial family was regarded as the supreme clan.

This primitive religion gradually developed into a national religion when the Yamato Court was established in the 5th century (around 400 A.D.) which gradually brought the whole of the country, except Northern Japan inhabited by Ainu, under its direct control.⁴ Individual clans were unified, and uji cults merged to form a national religion known as Shintoism. Though Shintoism was primitive, it was gracious and elegant and that is why even Buddhism and Confucianism could not supplant it and practices of Shinto religion have continued till today.

Adoption of Chinese Culture

In the 4th century A.D., through their contacts with the Korean peninsula, the Japanese people came to know about the advanced culture and government of China. Impressed by the Chinese pattern of government, the Yamato Court prepared the ground for the same to be introduced effectively in Japan. Along with Chinese civilization, Buddhism was introduced in Japan around the middle of the 6th century. In Buddhism was found the universal basis for the relationship of the ruler and the masses. Attempts were made to use the ideals of Buddhist philosophy for the ideological and national unity. This inflow of Chinese influence

4 Reischæur, Edwin O., Japan : The Story of a Nation
(Charles E. Tuttle Co., Tokyo, 1971), p.14.

was further accelerated by Prince Shotoku (572-622) who, by introducing Chinese models, paved the way for intense cultural and ideological progress. The proclamation of Seventeen Article Constitution in 604 A.D., introduction of Taika reforms of 645 A.D. and Taiho Codes of 701 were attempts for establishing an efficient and centralized administrative machinery.

Buddhism and Its Influence

Buddhism did not at first find acceptance with the common people. It was patronized and promoted by the ruling hierarchy. In Shotoku Taishi, Buddhism found the most ardent supporter and propounder. He put Buddhism under the protection of the State. A large number of scholars and priests visited China to learn more about Buddhism. Shotoku himself attempted an interpretation of the three scriptures, namely, Hokke, Shomon and Yuima.

Before the introduction of Buddhism in Japan, there was scarcely any culture worthy of name. Buddhism helped in elevating the culture of Japan from its primitive state. The trend begun by Shotoku Taishi did not end with his death, rather Buddhism came to play a more dominant role in all spheres of life during Nara and Heian periods. It refined and uplifted their religious life and gave it practical vigour.

In 710, the first permanent capital was established at Nara and the next five hundred years witnessed the growth of a refined, sophisticated culture. First of all, a bureaucratic government closely resembling to that of China was established. This marked the beginning of a powerful political entity which actually carried out the administration of the government in place of the Emperor and the same has continued till today. Once there was complete elimination of internal conflicts and confusion and national unity was achieved, the foundations of traditional culture, influenced primarily by Buddhism, were laid. Architecture, sculpture, painting, craftsmanship etc. blossomed forth which gave peculiar splendour and elegance to Japanese culture. The foundations of what are today regarded as the inborn qualities of Japanese thought and culture were laid during this period. Aestheticism in art, literature and architecture began to manifest as distinctive elements of Japanese life. A spontaneous appreciation of nature and seasonal changes were seen in the poetry of the time. Hanyoshu (collection of poems) is the mirror to the life and feelings of the common people during that time.

Buddhism spread rapidly as a result of sincere efforts of Shomu Tenno (701-756). Buddhism during this period was theoretically the same as it existed in China. It was the spiritual element which impressed the Japanese people.

Learning was still the privilege of the aristocratic class and, therefore, it did not exert much influence on the common people. A large number of Buddhist temples were built. Daibutsu (The Great Buddha) at Nara was also built during this period. The six sects of Buddhism, namely, Sanron, Jijitsu, Hossō, Kusha, Kegon and Ritsu were introduced one after another. Thus, while Buddhism existed with the upper class, Shinto beliefs continued to sway the masses. The co-existence of the two creeds tended to produce two important features of Japanese character - Buddhism shaped the moral and philosophical ideas while Shinto moulded the aesthetic and emotional outlook.

Soon an altogether different type of Buddhism emerged which overshadowed the six sects established during Nara period. These were the two new Buddhist sects, namely, Tendai sect of Saichō and Shingon sect of Kūkai which are credited with popularizing Buddhism among the common people.

In 794, the capital was shifted from Nara to Heian (present Kyoto). The Heian period (794-1192) was the golden age of Japanese culture. This period can be classified into two: first when aristocratic culture flourished under Chinese influence and second when their own culture developed free of any influence from abroad. During the Heian period, a hereditary aristocratic system was adopted which gave further stability to the Imperial system and as obvious from the

Nano Heian, meaning an era of peace and tranquility, this period saw on the whole the flowering of metropolitan culture centering around court life giving meticulous attention to elegance, style, formality and ceremonies.

One noticeable feature of Heian period was that the administration of government was freed from Buddhism.⁵ This gave Buddhism scope to break through the narrow circle within which it had developed during Nara period. Buddhism was in the process of being assimilated and thus the ground was prepared for a new stage in the development of Buddhism. Saicho(737-822) and Kukai (774-835) simplified Buddhism and Buddhism of a national character or to be more precise, Japanized Buddhism made its headway. An attempt was made by both these prelates to harmonize Shintoism with Buddhism. Sanno-ichijitsu Shinto of Tendai sect and Ryobu-shinto of Shingon sect are the examples of it.⁶ All these contributed to rapid development of Buddhism among common people.

Confucianism and Its Influence on Social Relationships

Along with Chinese culture and Buddhism, confucianism was also introduced in Japan. It was introduced without any clamour because it was not a religion concerned with

5 The Ministry of Education, n.3, p511.

6 Ibid., p.506.

belief in or worship of any god⁷ but it was a practical system of ethics and came to have a great bearing on social relationships in Japan. It exercised tremendous influence on the political system and the ethical life of the nation.

Shotoku Taishi's constitution of 17 articles was based on Confucian ethical laws. The compilation of Kojiki and Nihonshoki in the first decade of the Nara period for establishing the Emperor's status as an institution was inspired by the Confucian idea of Chu (respect for authority). The cult of the family which is the core of Confucian doctrine, was also successfully transplanted in Japan. Family has always been the base of society in Japan. This has been derived from the Confucian idea of Ke (filial piety). Ancestor worship of Confucianism was similar to that of Shintoism. On the whole, Confucianism was the most convenient model for the Japanese reformers. It was the result of this adherence to Confucian ideals that social life of the people during this time was based on morality and respect for authority. Filial piety, absolute loyalty to, and faith in the Imperial Institution were the ingredients of this morality.

Deviation from Chinese Influence

The development of the Kana script in the early part of 10th century liberated the Japanese from the dominance

7 Ibid., p.498.

of Chinese literary influences and helped them to build a rich native literature. To be more precise, culture adopted and adapted from abroad, mainly China, was given a distinctively Japanese flavour. Evolution of the Kana syllabry led to the development of typical Japanese literature, namely, Monogatari (combination of epics and lyrics), Nikki (diary) and Tanka and Choka (Japanese style poems). Literary compositions centering around the Imperial court, in which women writers like Sei Shonagon and Murasaki Shikibu were prominent, mirrored the sophistication and refinement of life. Monogatari, the most important literary style of the Heian period, reached its zenith with the Tale of Genji by Murasaki Shikibu. It portrays in vivid detail life at the Imperial court. Besides literature, in art and craftsmanship too, Japan became independent of Chinese influence.

Growth of Feudalism

This period of peace and tranquility was followed by an era of long and endless civil wars. After the law (Ritsuryo) of the seventh century, landed property gradually got concentrated in the hands of powerful families which showed scant regard for the central government.⁸ In their endeavour to grab more land, they fought against each other and plunged the whole country in a state of lawlessness.

⁸ Reischauer, n.4, p.39.

The court nobles, on the other hand, continued to lead a gay life in the court unmindful of what was happening in the realm. These warring families also employed retainers and tenants, skilled in martial arts, for self-protection and help realize their political ambitions. Centuries later these came to be known as Bushi or the warriors. There was an inexorable shift from civil to military rule and from aristocratic elegance to feudalism.

In the latter half of the 12th century, two powerful families, namely, Taira and Minamoto, contended for military supremacy. Finally, the battle of Dannoura (1185) sealed the fate of the Taira family when the rival Minamoto won this decisive battle to gain power. The leader of the Minamoto clan established the Bakufu or the "tent government" at Kamakura and this marked the beginning of a system of dual political authority. The Emperor at Kyoto became a mere puppet in the hands of the head of the military government at Kamakura, who actually wielded the political power.

This was a turning point in the history of Japan, as it not only resulted in the establishment of military rule which in one or other form continued till the Meiji Restoration of 1868 but it also brought about a marked shift in social and political values. After the death of Minamoto Yoritomo, the Hojo family which had blood relationship with Yoritomo took over the control of the government.

The Hojo rulers were successful in introducing an efficient administrative system. The Kamakura period (1192-1333) saw the synthesis of diverse cultural and the blossoming of an original culture. The period also saw the recrudescence of martial spirit. The developments during this period had far reaching consequences for Japanese society and culture.⁹

It was during the Kamakura period that the contours of a class structure based on occupation appeared for the first time.¹⁰ Since political power was won and retained with the help of force, the warrior class naturally enjoyed a high social status. Till then the warriors had been looked upon as tools in the hands of the court nobles. They now appeared on the political arena as an independent force. They pushed the court to the background but were careful enough to offer it security. It is interesting that the warrior class which had absolute power did not degenerate through profligacy and promiscuity but developed a stern code of conduct which eventually permeated other strata of Japanese society.

9 Reischauer, Edwin O., and Craig, Albert M., Japan : Tradition and Transformation (Charles E. Tuttle Co., Tokyo, 1978), p.49.

10 Ionaga, n.1, p.94.

A notable event of the period was the Mongol attempt, under the great Kublai Khan, to invade Japan in 1274 and 1281. This event fostered a sentiment of national unity among the Japanese. The nation faced the invader boldly and drove him back on both occasions. And the fortuous gale that helped the Japanese in keeping the Mongols at bay, the celebrated Kamikaze, came to be associated with a divine power which protected Japan. The faith in Kamikaze survived till World War II when Japan was shattered mercilessly by modern weapons.

Religion and Culture During Kamakura Period

Religion, especially Buddhism flourished. The Buddhists claimed that the powerful Mongol Armada was repulsed by the prayers offered by them. And credulous people believed this. The popularity of Buddhism also led to a proliferation of its sects; Jodo-shu of Honen (1133-1212), Jodo-Shinshu of Shinran (1173-1262), Rinzai-shu of Eisai (1142-1215) and Nichiren-shu of Nichiren (1222-1282), all took their birth during this period. They appealed to the masses because they did not insist on troublesome ceremonies and criticized ritualism. They offered easy way of salvation to the people by simplifying religious teachings and through practice of religion in daily life. Shinran and Nichiren in particular, endeavoured to carry Buddhist teachings to the common people.¹¹

¹¹ Sanson George, A History of Japan to 1313 (Charles E. Tuttle Co., Tokyo, 1974), pp.426-27.

It was due to their sincere efforts that Buddhism became a mass movement and naturalized. The upper classes too followed an esoteric Buddhism called Zen, popularized by Hojo Tokiyori (1227-63) and Hojo Tikimune (1251-84). The warriors and aristocrats adopted this creed as it offered salvation through self discipline, meditation and direct intuitive insights. The ascetic tradition of Zen was congenial to the fighting spirit of the Samurai. Zen prepared the warrior's mind to make the supreme sacrifice when the need arose for it. He did so with no qualms and no wavering.

There was a steady decline in literature due to civil wars and unrest. Nevertheless, a few works of merit appeared. Prose work generally lacked quality with some exceptions like Hojoki (1212) by Kamo-no-chomei and Tsurezure Gusa (1330) by Yoshida Kenko. Besides, a new type of literature, namely, war literature (Gunki Monogatari), which mirrored the state of affairs and temperament of the time, developed. For instance, in Shokuyuki, Hogen Monogatari, Heiji Monogatari and Heike Monogatari were recorded the rise and fall of different military houses. These were heroic epics and evidences of important role played by the samurai during this period.

Muromachi Period

The Kamakura government fell in 1333 as a result of Emperor Go-Daigo's attempt to re-establish Imperial rule.

For a short time the Imperial family was revived. Ashikaga Takauji, who was instrumental in bringing down the Kamakura Shogunate, placed a new Emperor Komyo on the throne at Kyoto. Go-Daigo fled to South of Yoshino and established a rival court there. Until 1392 there were two Imperial courts. Ashikaga Takauji established the capital at Muromachi in the suburbs of Kyoto and managed to hold a tenuous control over the government. But his successors proved more effective and they ruled for nearly 250 years. Throughout this period, central authority remained weak and local chieftains (daimyo) continued to expand their respective domains at will by amalgamating the smaller ones. In reality, these chieftains were appointed by the Bakafu as military governors to control the provinces but they became independent in due course and established military hegemony in their fiefs. They, however, avoided challenging the authority of the Shogun.

These military leaders constructed castle towns (Jokanachi) in their principalities and gathered ordinary bushi, giving them ranks, posts and allowances. Artisans came to settle around these castles to cater to the needs of the bushi. As a matter of course, commerce developed and a number of cities were born. These newly developed castle towns became the centres of politics, military affairs and commerce and throughout the country, there was overall growth of economic activity.

Religion and Culture

It is quite surprising that in this age of social instability, there was considerable growth of culture. As for religion, Zen flourished under the patronage of the court. The chief reason for the prospering of Zen was that it suited the mood and temperament of the time and the warrior tradition. Kyoto became the centre of cultural activity. A large number of Zen monasteries were set up throughout the country. As Zen gained popularity, the other older sects of Buddhism declined considerably. They tried to regain lost ground through the use of force. They raised armies of their own and engaged in conflicts. However, it did more harm than good and finally most of these sects were destroyed in the latter half of 16th century.

Zen, on the other hand, gradually penetrated into every sphere of life. Daito Kokushi and Muso Kokushi, two great Zen priests, are credited with making Zen a popular creed. Gozan literature was the culture produced mainly by Zen priests. They created tremendous interest among the people in Kanbungaku (learning of Chinese prose). They also conducted popular education in schools known as Terakoya (temple schools).¹² Cha-no-yu (Tea Ceremony) and Ikebana (Flower Arrangement) were the contributions of Zen to Japanese culture. Besides these, the most

12 Sanson, n. 2, p.376.

important literary development of this period was the Noh drama, which was also influenced by Zen.

It was also during this time that a rigid social order based on a four-fold classification of society into warriors, farmers, artisans and merchants came into being. The warrior class continued to dominate the system. Besides social superiority, they occupied the position of political superiority too. Both at the centre and in the provinces, the bureaucracy was manned by them. The code of social conduct they followed laid stress on loyalty, moral virtues and selfless devotion, though over a period of time there was a decline in the moral fibre of the warriors themselves. Personal ambition began to be placed above duty and obligation. The non-Samurai classes had no rights but only obligations. Especially peasants were in a precarious condition. They were neither allowed to live happily nor permitted to die. They were told to have been born to serve the Samurai and heavy taxes were levied on them. Merchants came at the bottom of this social hierarchy and they were treated as outcastes as they were not of any use to the country. Inter-class mobility was not possible at all.

Due to growth of castle towns, the Daimyo gained in power. Therefore, the central authority became very weak. In 1467 a bloody struggle for succession broke out which

culminated in a protracted civil war (onin-no-ran 1467-77). The weak central authority allowed the local magnates to have a free hand in their respective domains so much so that the established social order was completely ignored and those who had power dominated the scene. It was almost like the law of the jungle. The climax was reached in the latter half of the 16th century when these daimyo's rejected the authority of the Shogun and their conflicts got transformed from regional warfare to a titanic struggle for supremacy over the whole nation. This period is known as the period of civil wars (Sengoku Jidai). Peace and order was restored only by the end of the 16th century through the efforts of Oda Nobunaga (1534-82), Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1536-98) and Tokugawa Ieyasu (1542-1616). Oda Nobunaga began his mission of bringing the whole nation under his control in 1560 and by 1582 when he was killed by his own vassal, he had been successful in bringing more than half of Japan under his authority. The work left unfinished by him was completed by his successor Toyotomi Hideyoshi. Through a clever combination of force and diplomacy, he was successful in the unification of the country. He maintained a strict control over the country by disarming the farmers (Katanagari - the sword hunt) and by maintaining feudal discipline through strict laws. After his death in 1598, the struggle for power began once again, culminating in the battle of Sekigahara

in 1600. In this battle, Tokugawa Ioyasu emerged victorious, assumed the title of Shogun and established the Tokugawa Shogunate in Edo (present Tokyo) in 1603.

Tokugawa Period

The Tokugawa regime which lasted for over two and a half centuries held society under its tight control through a policy of isolation and maintenance of status quo. It was a period of peace and stability when military rulers were successful not in military expeditions but in civil reforms and promoting learning and scholarship. This period is also notable for the moral uplift of the people and the growth of the spirit of nationalism and ethnocentrism.

The Tokugawa rulers patronized neo-Confucianism of Chu Hsi as their official doctrine. Chu Hsi's philosophy appealed to the Tokugawa rulers due to its rationalism, its simplicity and its humanism. The moral doctrines of Chu Hsi emphasized the Five Human Relations, namely, monarch and subjects, father and son, husband and wife, elder and younger brother, and between friends.¹³ This principle of relations was very congenial to the Tokugawa society based on ethical principles. Hayashi Razan (1583-1657) was in

¹³ Sanson G. B., A History of Japan, 1615-1867
(Charles E. Tuttle Co., Tokyo, 1974), p.73.

control of the administration of neo-Confucian learning for generations; the office passing from father to son. Besides Hayashi family, Kaibara Ekken and a host of other scholars were spokesmen of neo-Confucianism and they endeavoured to bring Confucianist values into the life of people, especially the Samurai.

This excessive emphasis on neo-Confucianism staged the literary revival, especially history writing which is the core of Chinese learning. A large number of historical works were produced by a number of authors, including members of the Hayashi family; Arai Hakuseki (1657-1725) and Rai Sanyo (1780-1832) were other leading historians of the time.

Besides Chu Hsi's neo-Confucianism, a number of heterodox Confucian schools were also established. Chief among them were the Yomeigaku (learning of Wang Yang Ming) of Nakao Toju (1608-48) and the Kogaku (Ancient learning) of Yamaga Soko (1622-85) and Ito Jinsai (1627-1705). Besides these, Yamazaki Ansai advocated Suika Shinto, a combination of Shintoism and Confucianism. He was chiefly responsible for reviving the worship of the Imperial household.

Parallel with this Samurai-dominated intellectual development, there was another stream of learning dominated by the merchant class. With the development of castle towns as political and economic centres of feudal domains, the countryside prospered as well. This, accompanied by a rapid



growth of cities, led to the rise of merchant class and the flowering of a commercially oriented culture. Early Tokugawa Japan was highly productive in townmen's culture when immortal figures like Chikamatsu Monzaemon (1653-1725) a Kabuki playwright, Matsuo Basho (1644-94), a haiku poet and Ihara Saikaku (1642-1694), a novelist made their appearance. Noh drama during the 17th century was patronized by the Bakufu and Noh performance was a regular feature on all grand occasions.

Education and literacy made modest progress under the Tokugawa rulers. In 1615, Tokugawa Ieyasu issued Buke Shohatto (a set of instructions for the regulation of the military house) which called upon the Samurai to devote themselves to both learning and military arts, learning being placed in the first position.¹⁴ The same policy was pursued by his successors. In 1630, the Shoheiko, a Confucian academy was established by the Shogun. It marked the beginning of officially sponsored education for the Samurai class and it later became the model for Confucian schools for the Samurai in fiefs.¹⁵

The Shogun took keen interest in the education of the Samurai as they were to administer the country. Besides the Shogunal school, a large number of fief schools (hanko)

14 Passin Herbert, Society and Education in Japan (Columbia University Press, USA, 1965), p.13.

15 Ibid., p.14.

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were opened. These schools were initially exclusively for the Samurai. However, in the latter half of the Tokugawa period, commoners' children were also taken in, though on a low priority basis and by the early nineteenth century nearly half of the fief schools admitted commoners' children.¹⁶ In these schools, besides intellectual training and training in martial arts, pupils were given moral training laying emphasis on loyalty, filial piety and dignity.

However, the Shogun took very little interest in the education of the commoners. The Bakufu had to resort to obscurantism as it was necessary for maintaining the status quo being aimed at by it. Nevertheless, towards the end of the seventeenth century, local schools (Gogaku) were established for commoners for inculcating certain values like diligence, loyalty, profound diligence etc. to maintain the status quo. At the same time, another network of schools, namely, temple schools (Terakoya) was established for lower level commoners by public-minded citizens. The curricula in these schools differed from place to place. It ranged from general education like reading, writing and use of abacus to vocational and moral education. At the turn of the nineteenth century, there were as many as ten thousand temple schools in the country.¹⁷ Later on, some of these temple schools even taught western subjects.

16 Ibid., p.19.

17 Reischaeur, n.9, p.10.

Besides these two main streams of education, there were Private Academies (Shijuku) established by individuals. These were also initially meant for Samurai only but later opened their doors to commoners. These Private Academies provided all sorts of courses, from general education to specialized subjects. In 1867, just before the Restoration, they numbered as many as 1528.¹⁸ On the whole, there was considerable growth of literacy in Japan during this time.

The emphasis on history in Confucian learning gave rise, in the late seventeenth century, to a new intellectual movement, namely, Kokugaku (The National Learning Movement). It emphasized the importance of Japan's own literature and culture, resurrection of Shintoism, the native religion, and rejection of all alien cultures. Koichu Ajari (1640-1769), Motoori Norinaga (1730-1801) and Hirata Atsutane (1776-1863) were the chief spokesmen of this movement. Motoori Norinaga wrote the commentary on the Record of Ancient Matters (Kojikidon). Hirata Atsutane asserted Japan's racial superiority. This school of National Learning was quite successful in arousing national consciousness among the Japanese, rejuvenating their interest for traditional Japanese literature and reviving Shintoism.¹⁹

18 Passin, n.14, p.24.

19 Sansom G. B., The Western World and Japan (Vintage Books, New York, 1973), p.211.

This movement, therefore, was subversive to the Tokugawa Shogunate who took a hostile attitude towards it. Some scholars of this school were persecuted by the Shogunate. Kokugaku was instrumental in bringing down the Shogunate in the long run, as this movement assumed a political character in later years.

Another school worth noting was the Mito school of thought which rose to even greater heights and came to exert tremendous influence on the masses, especially in the early 19th century. The Mito School patronized by Tokugawa Noriaki (1800-1860) had distinguished personalities like Fujita Yukoku (1773-1806), Fujita Toko (1806-1853) and Aizawa Seishisai (1782-1863), who all advocated Emperor-centered nationalism. Through its historical study, the Mito school established that the Emperor was the descendant of the Sun Goddess and only he had the right to rule Japan. This school also framed the Japanese nationalistic ideology which came to be known as Kokutai. The Mito school, alike Kokugaku, was instrumental in weakening the position of the Bakufu as loyalty of the Samurai shifted from the Bakufu to the Emperor due to its teachings.

Simultaneously with this change in ideas and ways of thinking of the Japanese people, the Japanese society was also passing through rapid change. For instance, the merchant class, which was held in contempt by the Bakufu, had risen to political and social prominence. Many Samurai

and feudal chiefs were in debt to rich merchants. This made them restless and they realized that simply adorning to ethical values would not deliver the goods. Under these circumstances, it was but natural that there was erosion of values emphasized by the Bakufu. On the other hand, merchants led a gay life in towns and usually did not conform to the principles of personal and social ethics. This overall moral degradation gradually disintegrated the feudal society of the Bakufu. Farmers and artisans too were not in good shape, and there were peasant uprisings from time to time. The deteriorating social conditions as well as the political doctrines preached by Kokugaku and Mito scholars undermined the foundations of the Bakufu. It tried to prop up its faltering position through reforms but with little success.

Yet another force which provided a spur to the downfall of the Bakufu was the popularization of western learning.

Western Learning and the Development of Pragmatic Spirit

Christianity was the first ever intrusion of Western learning in Japan. However, it could not succeed and was banned during the early Tokugawa period. The missionaries were exiled, Churches destroyed and believers persecuted. Thereafter, no western learning was permitted for quite sometime. Anyone who tried to establish any contact with

the outside world was punished with death. During this period of isolation, only a little trade was carried out with the Dutch and the Chinese through the Port of Nagasaki. In 1720, however, the Shogunate relaxed its ban on western books, except those on Christianity.²⁰ This opened the doors for western learning and through its limited contact with the Dutch, the scientific ideas of the West were absorbed. Some branches of science like physics, chemistry, astronomy and medicine appealed to the Japanese and some of these were also taught in Japan. The result of these Western ideas was that the Japanese people realized the "superiority" of the Western culture and they also realized that the sure foundations of the State were laid in knowledge and not in ignorance. Thus, there was a growing demand for the opening of the country to the outside world. At the same time, as a result of the teachings of Kokugaku and Mito scholars, there was a popular demand for the restoration of the Imperial authority. There was tremendous pressure from foreign powers also who were constantly knocking at Japanese doors for the opening of Japan.

The country was, actually, divided over the question of dealing with the new situation. The Mito School backed the Bakufu over the seclusion policy. It gave the slogan

Sonno-Joi (Revere the Emperor and Expel the Barbarians).

Whereas Sakuma Shozan (1811-1864) and many of his contemporaries like Honda Toshiaki, Sato Nobuhiro, Takashima Shuhan etc. advocated technological and economic advancement, Sakuma gave the popular slogan

Wankon Yosai (Eastern Ethics and Western Science).

However, two dynamic personalities, namely, Yoshida Shoin (1829-59) and Fukuzawa Yukichi (1834-1901), who became legends in their own lifetime, had tremendous influence on the masses and brought about the downfall of the Tokugawa Shogunate. Yoshida Shoin had extreme radical and revolutionary ideas. He advocated immediate abolition of feudalism. Fukuzawa, through his numerous books on Western learning, suggested drastic renovation of the national life. If Shotoku Taishi was the propounder of Buddhism, Fukuzawa was the proponent of Western civilization in Japan. There was an allround criticism of Bakufu for its outdated policies and it was unable to cope with the situation efficiently and had to go when internal and external forces joined hands. The throne was restored to the Emperor after a bloodless revolution in 1868. It is worth noting that the Samurai played a positive role in the Imperial Restoration.

It was proved beyond doubt from Japan's experience during Tokugawa period that interaction is the soul of progress. Due to the selfish policies pursued by

Tokugawa Shogunato to retain its supremacy, the Japanese lived in a world of their own, restricted to a small strip of land for over two centuries. However, it provided an opportunity for the alien cultures which were adopted and adapted till then to undergo a process of fermentation and blossom forth into indigenous Japanese culture studded with high standards of morality, loyalty, filial piety, heroism and high sense of discipline. These moral values and a strong spirit of nationalism were deeply rooted in the lives of the people under such highly meaningful expressions as Bushido and Kokutai. These moral virtues were utilized to maintain national unity and social order. Though the Samurai were in power, there was not much of military activity throughout the Tokugawa period; rather there was more of intellectual activity and the masses showed appetite for knowledge. However, due to the policy of seclusion and xenophobic ideas, Japan had to pay dearly in terms of economic and industrial growth as it lagged behind the western nations by several centuries.

Japan began with a fresh enthusiasm after the Meiji Restoration and the overriding objective was to catch up with the West. The Meiji reformers used education for dual purpose, i.e., to reorient the national character to suit the new environment through adoption of utilitarian system of education of the West and as a tool to perpetuate and strengthen the values nurtured in Japan during the

preceding centuries. In other words, the slogan of Sakuma, namely, Wakon Yosai was applied. Thus during the Meiji period, Japan underwent a process of acculturation based on a blending of occidental and oriental traditions, resulting in the evolution of Japanese ethos with its distinctive cultural traits, quite different from that in the Tokugawa period.

CHAPTER II

PRE-WAR JAPANESE EDUCATION AND NATIONAL ETHOS

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Advent of the Meiji Regime

The strong shackles of feudalism which had held the nation together for over two and a half centuries were cut loose and a process of emancipation was begun in 1868 after the Meiji Restoration which brought about a total transformation of the national life. Modern Japan, as known to the world today, was born at this time. Therefore, it may not be appropriate to call it a mere restoration; rather it was a renaissance as it infused a new lease of life in the nation. The main tasks before the Meiji leaders were to transform the feudal society based on status to a change-oriented society suited to meet new requirements, to keep pace with the socio-economic changes in the world, to remove ignorance and enlighten people by eclectic introduction of Western learning and ideas. The Charter Oath (or Five Articles Oath) issued by the Emperor on 8 April 1868 clearly indicated the goals and objectives of the new regime. The Five Articles of this Charter Oath were as follows:

1. Deliberative assemblies shall be established and all matters shall be decided by public opinion.
2. The whole nation shall unite in carrying out the administration of affairs of state.

¹ Yanaga, Chitoshi, Japan Since Perry (McGraw Hill Book Company Inc., New York, 1949), p.48.

3. Every person shall be given the opportunity to pursue a calling of his choice.
4. Absurd customs and practices of the past shall be discarded and justice shall be based on the laws of heaven and earth.
5. Wisdom and knowledge shall be sought all over the world in order to establish firmly the foundations of the Empire.

First Decade of the Meiji Era

The primary target before the new regime was to modernize and strengthen Japan, and thus to cover the gap between the West and Japan. The slogan of the Meiji reformers, namely, Rich Nation and Strong Army (Fukoku Kyohei) actually incorporated a three-fold target viz. expansion of national power, strengthening of the national economy and creation of a strong army. The work was begun in this regard immediately after the restoration. First of all, a new government was established. The administrative structure was divided into legislative and executive branches. There were six ministries, namely, Civil Affairs, Finance, Military, Justice, Imperial Household and Foreign Affairs. And above all, there was the Office of Shinto Worship (Jinjikan). This was to enhance Emperor's prestige due to his close relation with Shintoism.

The process of renovation was begun by discarding all feudal elements from the scene. The daimyo were still in control of their fiefs and the new government was financially in a tight spot. Therefore, in July 1869, the daimyo were

made to surrender their holdings to the Emperor and were officially appointed the governors of their former territories. This system was, however, abolished in 1871 and a new prefecture system was instituted. This was aimed at ensuring national unity and improving the financial condition. The former daimyo were granted peerages together with many privileges which lasted till World War II.

Social hierarchy of the past was abolished and social equality (shiminbyodo) was proclaimed in 1871. At the same time, freedom of occupation was provided which indirectly contributed to economic growth. That was because now the unproductive class like samurai also became productive.² All economic restrictions were removed to promote economic activity. In the absence of sufficient private capital, government established a large number of capital industries under its control like iron foundries, shipyards, spinning mills, silk factories, cement plants, etc. In order to encourage industrialization, a slogan, namely, Proliferation of Industries and Increased Production (Shokusan Kogyo), was given by the Meiji reformers. These industries, initially nurtured by the government, were later sold to private capitalists. As for agriculture, all restrictions on cropping

2 Murthy, P. A. N., The Rise of Modern Nationalism in Japan (Ashajanak Publications, Delhi, 1973), p.109.

were removed. The Meiji government encouraged and commercialized agriculture because Japan at that time was basically an agricultural country, and it was the chief source of revenue. The taxation system was reformed in 1873 which substituted payment in cash in place of levy in kind.

At the same time, efforts were made to establish a strong army. In 1871, an Imperial Force of 10,000 men was formed and was trained along French lines.³ In 1872, the Ministry of Military Affairs was divided into Army and Navy Ministries and on 10 June 1873 the Universal Conscription Law was issued and a huge army under Saigo Takamori was created.

The Educational Reforms

Simultaneously with the reshaping of the national political and social structure, the educational system was also reoriented. Meiji reformers realized that education was the most strong means to introduce Western thoughts and ideas in Japan. The importance attached to education by the new regime was evident from Article V of the Charter Oath and the slogan, Civilization and Enlightenment (Bunmei Kaika). As seen in previous chapter, there was a great deal of scholastic pursuit during latter half of the Tokugawa period and

3 Reischauer, Edwin O., Craig, Albert, M., Japan : Tradition and Transformation (Charles E. Tuttle Company, Tokyo, 1978), p.138.

at the time of Restoration, nearly 60 per cent of the people were literate.⁴ Though education was quite common, it was feudalistic and non-egalitarian both in content and character. Therefore, the new regime was on the lookout for a highly utilitarian and practical system to meet the exigencies of the time.

Immediately after the Restoration, work had been begun in this regard. A large number of delegates were sent abroad to study various educational systems in Western nations. While the debate was going on in the new government regarding the nature of new educational system a large number of private schools were established along modern lines. For instance, 60 modern primary schools were started in Kyoto in 1869 and next year similar schools were started in Tokyo and Osaka.⁵

In July 1871, Mombusho (The Ministry of Education) was created. The newly created Mombusho under Oki Takato soon began work for an uniform education system throughout the country. The Iwakura Mission which left Japan in same year was especially assigned with the task of studying educational systems in Europe and America and help the Mombusho in preparing the national plan. However, before the Mission could

4 Ibid., p.104.

5 Passin, Herbert, Society and Education in Japan (Columbia University Press, U.S.A., 1965), p.65.

return, the Mombusho chalked out an elaborate plan under the guidance of Tanaka Fujimaro who had just returned after a close study of Western educational systems and this was proclaimed in 1872.

The Gakusei (The Fundamental Code of Education)

The new system was modelled after the French system and was a centralized educational system under the control of the Mombusho. This Education Code provided for the establishment of 8 university districts, 256 middle schools and 53,760 elementary schools. It made the education compulsory for every child, whether boy or girl, of school going age for a minimum of four years. The educational institutions were open to all without any social distinction. It also provided for the training of students in foreign countries and training of teachers under foreign teachers. However, it does not mean that the whole plan was implemented at one stroke. Rather by 1879, only 52 per cent of the planned number of elementary schools had been built and even in 1902, there were only 2 government universities, 222 middle schools and 27076 elementary schools.⁶

The Content of Education

Since Meiji leaders had opted for the doctrine of utilitarianism, great attention was paid to liberalize the content of education so as to train people for the practical

6 Ibid., p.73.

business of life. A close look at the curriculum at different levels of education reveals that the purpose of education was to impart knowledge required for materialistic advancement.

The Primary School Education was divided into two grades: lower and upper. Lower grade primary school curriculum comprised the alphabet, calligraphy, words, conversation, reading, morals (Oral Expression), grammar, arithmetic, hygiene, rudiments of geography and physics, physical exercises and group singing. There was also provision for the teaching of foreign language. In addition to these subjects, the upper grade primary school curriculum included geometry, the rudiments of history, natural history and chemistry.⁷

The middle school was also divided into lower and upper grades. The curriculum in the lower grade comprised Japanese language, mathematics, calligraphy, geography, history, foreign language, physics, drawing, archaeology, geometry, book-keeping, natural history, chemistry, morals, surveying and music. The curriculum in the upper grade comprised Japanese language, physics, drawing, archaeology, mathematics, calligraphy, geometry, algebra, book-keeping, chemistry, morals, surveying, economics, mechanics, zoology, botany and minerology.⁸

7 Murthy, n.2, p.195.

8 Ibid., p.196.

Simultaneously with the establishment of modern schools, a network of Normal Schools was created to provide trained teachers for the newly established schools. The first Normal School was established in Tokyo under the guidance of Marion, M. Scott (1843-1922), an American teacher. Soon similar schools were created in Kyoto, Osaka, Miyagi, Aichi, Hiroshima, Nagasaki and Niigata.⁹ A separate Normal School for women was also set up in Tokyo. By 1878, there were nearly 100 Normal Schools throughout the country. These schools offered a two-year general course. However, there were four or five-year courses as well. The curriculum in the Normal Schools comprised history, geography, literature, mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, natural history, morals, physics, economics, drawing, pedagogics and physical education.¹⁰

Growth of Liberalism

As seen earlier, the masses showed great interest in Western learning during the last stages of Tokugawa period. In 1855, a Bureau for Western Learning (Yogakusho) had been established by the Shogunate to collect information and carry on the translation of foreign works.¹¹ The process begun then was further accelerated with the official encouragement to Western learning by the new regime. Men like Fukuzawa,

9 Ibid., p.197.

10 Ibid., p.198.

11 Yanaga, n.1, p.128.

Nakamura, Kanda, Tsuda, Nishimura and Taguchi exercised tremendous influence on the masses through their writings. The most important of them was undoubtedly Fukuzawa Yukichi (1855-1901) who wrote a large number of books and was the greatest proponent of Western civilization in Japan. He advocated freedom, independence and equality. His book Gakumon-no-Susume (The Encouragement of Learning) opened with words like "Heaven does not create a man above a man or a man below a man. All men are equal without distinction."¹² Fukuzawa also started the Keio Academy in 1858 which was the leading school for training men in technical fields and later expanded into the Keio University.

Moreover, there existed a large number of groups formed by like-minded intellectuals. The most famous of these groups was the Meiji Six Society (Meirokeisha), founded in 1873. Though it was active for only about a year, it exercised great influence on the people through its fortnightly journal, Meiroke Zasshi. It was disbanded in 1875 when censorship laws were enacted.

In addition to the teachings of individuals and groups, a number of Western books were translated into Japanese to give the people an easy access to Western knowledge, Western literature of all types; from Robinson Crusoe to Jules Verne

12 The Ministry of Education, Government of Japan, Japan: Its Land, People and Culture (Japanese National Commission for UNESCO, Tokyo, 1958), p.494.

were translated and the translating of Western books was the chief literary activity of the period.¹³ Newspapers also were begun in 1875 and were the chief source of information on Western affairs.

Moreover, under the new educational system, a large number of promising students were sent abroad mainly to France, England, Germany and America. At the same time, a number of foreign experts were invited to teach in Japan. In addition, students who went abroad immediately after the Restoration returned with modern knowledge and ideas. All this brought about a total transformation of the social life in Japan. Modernization became synonymous with Westernization for the Japanese. Western styles were adopted in all spheres of life. The outcome was the emergence of a new social order and new political values. However, it does not mean that there was no resistance against these reforms. Actually in the midst of the political chaos produced by the battle of old and new ideas, the leaders introduced reforms. Of course, there was a lot of enthusiasm among the people in the initial years, but the conservative sentiment began to manifest around the middle of 1870s when the actual impact of reforms began to be felt. Therefore, there was a great deal of hostility from different

13 Reischauer, Albert, n.3, p.163.

sections of the society. Especially the samurai, who had enjoyed maximum privileges till then, felt disgruntled by the reforms. They rose in revolt from time to time. The peasants were also in none too happy position. Economically they were in a precarious condition and compulsory education had placed an unwanted burden on them. They felt that social and cultural contact with the West would contaminate Japan. Therefore, during the first decade of the Meiji period, there were as many as 200 peasant uprisings.¹⁴ The last open resistance by anti-modernization elements was the Satsuma Rebellion of 1877 under Saigo Takamori. The suppression of this revolt witnessed the complete elimination of feudalistic elements.

With the growth of liberal ideas, there was growth in violence, indiscipline and disorder, especially among the students. The Japanese youth were turning extravagant, pretentious and unrestrained under the impact of Western principles of liberty and individualism. The conservative elements attributed all the social maladies to the new educational system. The Gakusei, contrary to expectations, had not been very successful in its aim. The attendance in primary schools was 41.1 per cent and in secondary and higher education, it was merely 1 per cent and 0.3 per cent respectively. There was discontentment among parents over

14 Yanaga, n.1, p.62.

the content of education and at times they questioned the validity of the new educational system. Therefore, in 1878, the Emperor himself visited provinces and was alarmed by the growth of Western ideas.¹⁵ He, on his return, brought out: The Great Principles of Education (Kyogaku Taishi) in the form of an Imperial Rescript in 1879. Since Motoda Eifu, a Confucianist and adviser to the Emperor, was responsible for drafting this Kyogaku Taishi, he strongly emphasized that education must return to confucian principles of loyalty and filial piety which had been part and parcel of Japanese ethos for centuries.

Tanaka Fujimaro, the Education Minister, had altogether different ideas. With a view to decentralize the administration of education along American lines, he constituted a committee in 1877 comprising of senior men in the Mombusho to study the existing system and recommend the necessary changes in the administration. Based on this Committee's recommendations, a draft was prepared and placed before the Senate and in September 1879 the Education Act (Kyoikurei) was promulgated which replaced the Gakusei. Besides some minor changes, this Education Act decentralized the administration of education at local level. However, this system proved an utter failure and Tanaka gave way to Kono Tagama in 1880.

15 Passin, n.5, p.83.

Popular Rights Movement and Shift in
Educational System

As Western social patterns were adopted by the Japanese, there was a growing demand for a new political order along Western lines. Article 1 of the Charter Oath had guaranteed a sort of deliberative assembly. The Meiji leaders were not opposed to this movement, but they wanted to create the parliament within the framework of the Imperial system. The movement was initiated by Itagaki Taisuke of Tosa and Eto of Hizen in 1873. However, it was in the early 1880s that they could create a nationwide popular movement. The other leaders of this movement were Okuma and Kido. Though this movement died down after the promise for a national assembly by 1890 was made, it gave rise to fear in the minds of the leaders that free development of feelings and intellect of the people might result in the overthrow of the government centering around the Imperial House. Therefore, they hurried to chain the free development of thoughts through state controlled education. It, however, did not mean a reversion to the feudal policies of the past. Rather they chose the middle path, i.e., a synthesis of old and new. Hereafter, there was a tenacious adherence to traditional ideas and virtues. Thus, on the one hand, Japan embarked on the road to modernization by gleaning knowledge from all possible sources, and on the other hand, an attempt was made to retain the moral platitudes of the past so that people did not lose their individuality and originality.

Retention of native moral values was also necessary as a brake against modernization and its long-term impact on the Imperial institution. Thereafter, throughout the Meiji period, the system of indoctrination was used to make the people amiable and pliant to the government, loyal and obedient to the Imperial institution and dedicated to the national cause.

Kono, the new Education Minister, introduced far reaching changes in the existing set up and contributed a great deal towards the centralization of education. To begin with, the Education Act of 1879 was revised and in December 1880, the Revised Education Act (Kaisei Kyoikurei) was proclaimed which again centralized the administration of education. Thereafter, more changes were introduced in this Kaisei Kyoikurei in quick succession and the control of the government was extended from the administration of education to the content of education. From 1880, the Mombusho provided basic guidelines for the compilation of textbooks, as it was decided to control the content of education in order to check liberalism. These norms had to be strictly followed. In 1881, Inspection Officers (Torishirabe Kakari) were appointed to scrutinize the textbooks in use.¹⁶ And those textbooks which were found to be

16 Murthy, n.2, p.234.

spreading "dangerous ideas" against the Imperial institution were banned. Finally, in July 1883, the Mombusho made it obligatory that all textbooks should carry the stamp of Mombusho approval.

Through the changes introduced between 1880-84, moral education came to be given topmost priority in the primary and middle schools. The primary school was now divided into lower, middle and upper grades and the curricula comprised morals, reading, spelling, elementary arithmetic, music and gymnastics as core subjects. The nucleus of moral training was: Loyalty and Patriotism (Sonno Aikoku). A textbook called Shogaku Shushinkun (Morals for Primary School) prepared by Nishimura Shigeki, the Director of the Compilation Board of the Mombusho, was made the basis for all moral textbooks.¹⁷

Simultaneously with stressing moral sentiment among the pupils, the moral character of the teachers themselves was also emphasized because they were to be the source of moral inspiration for pupils. They were subjected to more rigorous moral training at Normal Schools and they were now trained under Japanese experts and not under foreigners. Mombusho gradually started replacing foreigners teaching in Japan with its own men. Teachers were forbidden from taking part in any political activities.

17 Ibid., p.234.

However, it was Mori Arinori who took the Japanese educational system to perfection. He was of the opinion that education should not be restricted to abstraction and ideology, rather it should be realistic. However, at the same time, he emphasized the subjectivity of the Japanese race, ethically. He warned that in the process of modernization, the true Japanese spirit should not be lost. Thus, in short, he emphasized the combination of progressive and conservative elements. Therefore, in 1886 he further re-oriented the education along nationalistic goals through a series of ordinances.

The Mori Ordinances and Further Changes in Education

The Dajokan was abolished in 1885 and a cabinet system was introduced in its place. Mori Arinori became the first Education Minister under this newly created cabinet system. Mori brought out a number of ordinances which went a long way in establishing strict government control over education.

The Primary School Ordinance of 10 April 1886

The Ordinance divided the primary education into lower and upper grades. The Mombusho had all powers pertaining to school administration, regulations, curricula etc. The curricula in the lower grade comprised morals, reading, composition, arithmetic and gymnastics. In the upper grade, the curricula, in addition to above subjects, consisted of history, geography, science, drawing, music and sewing (for girls).¹⁸

Moral instruction was given topmost importance. Though the number of teaching hours of morals was reduced, inter-disciplinary link between morals and other subjects was strengthened. In place of oral instruction, now "wise saying" and the "good deeds of great men" were taught.¹⁹

Likewise, the courses on history and geography were aimed at enhancing the position of the Emperor. These were linked with social and political values.

The Middle School Ordinance of 10 April 1886

All powers regarding administration, regulations and content of middle school education were placed with the Hombusho. There were 2 types of middle schools, viz., lower and higher. The curricula in lower middle school comprised ethics, Japanese, Sino-Japanese (Kambun), two foreign languages, agriculture, geography, history, mathematics, national history, physics, chemistry, spelling, drawing, music and gymnastics,²⁰ while the curricula in the upper middle school comprised law, medicine, engineering, physics, agriculture and commerce.²¹ As obvious from the content of middle school education, it was highly practical and was aimed at enabling students either to take up a job or prepare themselves for higher studies.

19 Ibid., p.250.

20 Ibid., p.252.

21 Ibid., p.253.

The Normal School Ordinance of 10 April 1886

The most important contribution of Mori was regarding the Normal Schools. He attached great importance to selection and training of teachers. Mori was of the opinion that moral instruction and patriotic indoctrination could only be ensured through proper training of teachers. According to the Normal School Ordinance, the Normal Schools were divided into ordinary and higher. The ordinary Normal School offered course of 4 years' duration. The curriculum comprised ethics, pedagogics, Chinese-Japanese composition, English, book-keeping, geography, history, national history, physics, chemistry, agriculture and handicrafts (for men), home economics (for women), drawing, music and physical education.²²

Those who had passed the ordinary Normal School were taken into the Higher Normal School at Tokyo. It offered a course of 3 years' duration. Trainees were trained here in one specialized subject.

The chief purpose of these Normal Schools was to train teachers who had a high moral character, who were patriotic, good-mannered and well behaved. Therefore, importance was attached to discipline, cultivation of loyalty, patriotism, dignity, obedience, punctuality etc. The intensive training of teachers during this time was chiefly responsible for the

22 Ibid., p. 258.

success of the new system and developing a strong spirit of nationalism among the pupils.

Imperial University Ordinance of 2 March 1886

There was only one university, namely, Tokyo University, at that time. Its name was changed to Tokyo Imperial University and as its name suggested, it was the training ground of loyal subjects useful to the state and society. Five colleges, one each for law, medicine, engineering, literature and science, were created. The Ordinance also provided for a postgraduate course. On the whole, University education was also put to the service of the nation. Thus the foundations of a nationalistic education system were firmly laid by 1886. However, this system of moral indoctrination took a final shape when the Imperial Rescript on education was proclaimed in 1890.

The Imperial Rescript on Education (Kyoiku Chokugo)

It was aimed at binding the people to confucianist and Shintoist traditions. Based on Confucian ethics, it highlighted the Confucian social relationships and vitalized the Confucian values like loyalty to the Imperial institution, filial piety, respect for authority, obedience, patriotism etc. It was successful in achieving its target to a large measure and came to cast a magical spell over the whole nation for the next half century, i.e., till the end of World War II. The Rules Governing School Equipment (Shogakko Setsubi Junsoku) issued in April 1891 made it mandatory for all schools to preserve a copy of the Rescript, the portraits of the Emperor

and the Empress and the national flag.²³ The Rescript was regarded a sacred document and the source of moral inspiration for all.

In 1891, the primary education was set in tune with the spirit of the Imperial Rescript. It was from this time that courses on morals, national language, history and geography started to be used as tools for inculcation of nationalistic spirit. Hereafter, education had a purpose and that was to train people of strong moral fibre. In other words, a long process of moral and political indoctrination through education was begun which was so vigorous that its effect persisted through the Taisho (1912-1925) and early Showa (1925 onwards) eras till the end of World War II when it was abandoned in favour of a democratic educational system.

The common masses accepted this education, strictly controlled by the State, without much of clamour which emphasized the fact that though outwardly they seemed to have changed when they were under an obsession of Westernization, ancient beliefs continued to control their minds. They were taught to accept with slavish docility whatever was taught by the authorities and the individual was not allowed to be firmly established in his own rights. People acted in a more conformist way than before and it was this docility of the Japanese people which permitted this centralized system of education to take roots.

23 Ibid., p.337.

Growth of Militarism

Simultaneously with moral uplift, militarism was also encouraged among the people. Universal conscription had already been introduced by the Meiji leaders had never thought in terms of maintaining a large military establishment as they considered the socio-economic reforms the immediate need. That was why the idea of military expedition to Korea, which came up in 1873, was abandoned in favour of these reforms. But by 1890, Japan had more or less accomplished its socio-economic goals and was fast catching-up with some of the advanced nations of West Europe. However, it was the aim of achieving the abolition of extra-territorial rights and revision of unequal treaties which was more responsible for this tendency to regard military efficiency as the supreme ideal of the State.

This issue haunted the minds of both Meiji leaders and the common masses alike till the treaties were successfully revised in 1899. These treaties had been signed by the Tokugawa Bakufu between 1854-58 under internal and external pressures.

After the Restoration, as the treaties could not be unilaterally ended, the only option before Japan was to revise them. However, though the issue was taken up for revision on several occasions, no amicable solution could be found as scant sympathy was shown by the concerned countries for a weak and backward Japan. Thus, the Japanese leaders wanted to come on competing terms with these countries and prove

that Japan was a strong and modernized country. However, for that modernization and strengthening of Japan, a strong economy and a strong military were necessary prerequisites. The Meiji leaders, with this purpose in view, went all out to strengthen and modernize Japan. The desperateness of Meiji leaders for the acquisition of autonomy was evident from a statement by the then Foreign Minister, Inoue Kaoru in 1887 which said in part that "in order to revise treaties, the Japanese must behave like foreigners."²⁴ The matter was regarded a disgrace for Japan and people's dissatisfaction was evident in the outburst of anti-foreign agitations from time to time. There was also a popular feeling that Japan should not hesitate to go to war to close this chapter for ever. Having failed to persuade the related countries to surrender territorial rights and revise the treaties through diplomacy; Japan was now determined to beat them at their own game, in other words, through the use of force. That was why it was decided to intensify inculcation of militarism and patriotism through education. The Meiji Constitution proclaimed earlier on 11 February 1889 underlined the same target, i.e., establishing supreme authority of the State and creating a strong sense of national sentiment. The Constitution was nothing but an oligarchical plan fitted into modern political framework. It was aimed at reviving and

24 The Ministry of Education, n.12, p.75.

strengthening the supremacy of the state which had been eclipsed under the popular rights movement and political controversy almost through the 1860s. This marked the beginning of a strong nationalistic ideology which, in due course, transformed into imperialism and fascism after 1930.

However, neither Japan nor any other country of the world could have foreseen this to be the starting point of Japan's move on the road to disaster. Nevertheless, this excessive emphasis on militarism was a perilous undertaking and a manifest error on the part of the imperial government. It was due to Japan's ambition to become a great power and also due to increase in Japan's global interests.

By 1890 the Japanese economy had developed to the stage where it required overseas markets for further expansion. The immediate market was Korea. However, soon it turned out to be more than economic interest and it was Japan's encroachment on Korea which brought her to a clash with China. Both countries wanted a free hand in Korea and the ultimate result was the Sino-Japanese war (July 1894-March 1895). To the utter surprise of the world, Japan came out victorious in the war, mainly through its modern naval force built in technical cooperation with Great Britain in 1894. Japan, as compensation, was to get Liaotung Peninsula and besides certain other concessions, a huge war indemnity. However, France, Germany and Russia, alarmed by the situation, intervened (better known as Triple Intervention) to compel Japan to settle with much lesser gains. This was, of course,

a bitter pill for Japan to swallow and it further increased the bitterness in Japanese minds towards foreign powers. If, on the one hand, victory in war gave tremendous confidence to Japan, the Triple Intervention further encouraged militarism in humiliated Japan. Hence, Japan decided to arm herself in a big way so as to ward off threats to her own security and her interests. And that is why more than 90 per cent of the compensation amount was diverted towards strengthening military.²⁵

Japanese victory in the Sino-Japanese war further enhanced Japan's reputation as an emerging force and expedited the abolition of extra-territoriality which was achieved in 1899, though tariff autonomy was recovered as late as 1911. In 1902, Japan signed the Anglo-Japanese alliance, the first Asian nation to do so with an European power.

The next dreadful thing to a battle lost is a battle won. Japan's victory in Sino-Japanese war gave rise to offensive militarism in that country in the first decade of the twentieth century. The first evidence of this was the Russo-Japanese war (1904-1905). Japan's victory in the war added fresh laurels to her repute as a big military power. Korea was Japan's next victim when Japan annexed Korea in 1910.

25 Hani Goro, Nihon Jinmin no Rekishi (Iwanami Shinsho, Tokyo, 1975), p.95.

Education After 1890

In the latter half of Meiji period, very few changes occurred in the educational set up as such. However, through some minor changes introduced from time to time, attempts were made to further improve and popularize the system already established. In 1894, the stress on patriotic cause was further intensified in primary school education. In August 1900, compulsory education was made free. In April 1903, the right of preparation of textbooks was conferred on the Mombusho. And in March 1907, compulsory education was extended to 6 years which came into effect from November 1908. Children were also provided with school stationery and other materials free of cost.

As for secondary education, the Higher Middle Schools were abolished in June 1894 and High Schools were created. These newly created schools were to train people in specialized fields.

As for higher education, three more universities, namely, Kyoto Imperial University (1897), Sendai Imperial University (1907) and Fukuoka Imperial University (1910) were opened.²⁶

Technical Education

Though the education philosophy had shifted from utilitarianism to nationalism, the ultimate purpose of education was the power and wealth of the State. With the growth of

26 Yanaga, n.1, p.102.

Japanese economy, a large number of modern industries had been established throughout the country and Japan required men with occupational skill in each field. Therefore, side-by-side with nationalistic indoctrination, technical education was also encouraged. However, the Meiji Government started giving importance to technical education only at the turn of the century. Till then, the gap had been bridged by private schools and colleges which were set up by the business community or individuals. These schools catered to the needs of the newly established industries, though patriotic ethics were an integral part of the curricula.

Among the private universities in the lead were Keio, established by Fukuzawa Yukichi, and Waseda, established by Okuma Shigenobu. Besides these, there were also industrial, agricultural, fisheries, commerce, navigation and apprentices' schools.

Though the purpose of private and state-controlled education was the same, they existed as two different streams: one providing skilled workers and the other the administrators. State-controlled education was attached more importance than private school education because it offered better opportunities in life; graduates of important universities found it easy to enter any profession. Those who failed to find a place in the important universities joined private universities and via them entered business and commerce.

Meiji Education: An Assessment

The Meiji period is regarded by many historians the brightest era of Japanese history of nearly two-thousand years and Meiji education is considered to be chiefly responsible for putting Japan on the road to modernization and transforming a divided nation into a national community. It was like a bull-dozer which levelled down not only the feudal barriers but also the feudal ideas and brought about a total revolution so that the nation could roll on to a new era.

After the Restoration, the Meiji leaders started off with the work-based system of education because they wanted to effectively utilize the manpower resources of the country through educating them along Western lines. However, with the growth of industrialization, the evils of capitalism began to manifest. The Popular Rights Movement of 1880s alarmed the Meiji leaders and, therefore, it was decided to combat through education the growth of liberalism which was inimical to Japanese national interests. Thus, there was a shift from the utilitarian philosophy to a nationalistic philosophy in education. The primary objective of this nationalistic philosophy was to subordinate all the forces of the nation to the Imperial institution. Thus, Loyalty and Patriotism (Chukun Aikoku) became the political doctrine of the Meiji regime and reflected the national ethos of Japan for more than half-a-century. In addition, obedience, diligence, respect for authority, etc.,

were certain other elements of this nationalistic indoctrination.

It was very successful in developing a strong spirit of patriotism and nationalism so much so that every Japanese existed for the nation and was always ready to perish for it. Although Japan revived the traditional Confucianist values which had been part and parcel of Japanese ethos for centuries, yet these did not hamper the process of modernization; rather they accelerated it and contributed towards the power of the State. That was because the Confucianist values were successfully grafted to the progressive ideas. Even after a shift from liberal philosophy in education, the Meiji education gave considerable importance to craft-centered curriculum and by the end of the Meiji period, Japan could educate the bulk of its scientists, technicians and engineers at home. It was due to this success of Meiji education that the same system was maintained until 1945 with some modifications introduced from time to time.

However, Meiji education is often held responsible for sowing the seeds of fascism, ultranationalism and imperialism. But that may not be wholly correct. It would be more appropriate to attribute these to the political environment prevailing in the country than to the system of education. The Meiji bureaucracy, absolute and all-powerful, skillfully utilized education as an instrument to foster a particular brand of political philosophy and this tradition was continued by successive governments. On the one hand, the

Meiji leaders advocated progressivism but at the same time recommended that traditional values should be retained. This traditionalism was obviously aimed at ensuring safety of the Imperial House and the government centered around it. The Meiji Government conceived all changes and carved them out within the framework of the Imperial system. A strong spirit of nationalism was deeply grounded among the people. They were denied a democratic government inspite of popular demand. People were encouraged to develop moral virtues, an inventive mind, a high sense of discipline, character based on principle and resolute action, but these were focussed on one overriding objective, i.e., expansion of national power. The cumulative result of the policies of the Meiji Government was that the Japanese people became self-centred; they were concerned with their own welfare and prosperity to the exclusion of others. And in due course of time, this nationalism of Japan degenerated into fascism, ultranationalism and imperialism.

Education in Post-Meiji Period: 1912-30 - Education and Growth of Liberalism

The death of the Meiji Emperor in 1912 brought an end to the golden era of Japanese history. During this short span of 50 years, Japan had made strides in all fields and what the West had taken nearly two centuries, Japan accomplished in two generations. Meanwhile, however, profound economic, social and intellectual changes had occurred in Japan. Universal literacy was achieved by early 20th century

and with the growth of literacy, there was mass awakening and growth of political consciousness among the people. At the same time, industrial revolution was accomplished and the Japanese economy had matured. The long continued contact with Western culture had completely transformed the manner of life of the people in general. However, as seen earlier in this chapter, the State-controlled education of Meiji period had been very successful in keeping people under strict control and checking the growth of socialism. Therefore, with the beginning of the Taisho era (1912-25), a new democratic wave started in Japan. Between 1912-18, the social environment changed rapidly which gave further impetus to the upsurge of democratic liberalism resulting in a movement, known as Taisho democracy during 1920s. The noticeable factor is that students and scholars were in the forefront of this movement.

At the end of the Meiji period, people were looking forward for a change in the educational policy because with the rapid economic growth, Japan now lived in an internationalist climate and the educational content needed to be re-oriented in view of the changed domestic and international environment. However, their expectations were betrayed when the same educational system was continued and there was no end to the obstinate advocacy of militarism and nationalism through education, to the total disregard of people's life.

A noticeable feature of Taisho period was the popularization of higher education. In the period from 1912-25, there were 42,654 university graduates and 240,357 college graduates.²⁷ The network of imperial universities was insufficient to cope with the growing demand for higher education as there existed only 4 of them. Therefore, there was stiff competition and the competition to success ratio was 7:1. Thus most of the students had to settle with the private institutions like Colleges (Seimongakko) and Higher Technical Schools (Koto Seimongakko).²⁸ As a result, there was considerable expansion of private educational institutions and under these circumstances it was but natural that students, unlike during the Meiji period, aimed at joining private companies or banks than civil services.²⁹ This change was naturally accompanied by a widespread criticism of the purpose of nationalistic education. It was argued that contents of textbooks were old-fashioned and did not suit the Taisho children. The course on morals was especially the target of criticism and there was a popular demand to scrap this course altogether from the curricula.

27 Passin, n.5, p.5.

28 Ibid., p.104.

29 Karazawa, Tomitaro, Nihonjin-no-Rirekisho (Kodansha, Tokyo, 1961), p.122.

In response to this criticism, school textbooks were revised in 1916-17 and now more emphasis was laid on internationalism. And the textbooks on national language carried more lessons on juvenile literature. In 1919, nearly one-third of the lessons were devoted to folk tales and children's stories.³⁰ Barring these minor changes, there were no other changes in the educational set up. Rather the Taisho Government tried to combat the left-wing movement through education. However, this democratic movement was gradually becoming irrepressible. The most important contribution in the upsurge of this movement was of a handful of scholars and teachers through their writings. The leaders among them were Dr. Yoshino Sakuzo, Professor of Political Science at Tokyo Imperial University and Professor Fukuda, an economist, who founded Reimeikai, a society for the popularization of democratic ideas in 1918.³¹ This encouraged students to actively participate in this movement. A student society, namely, Sinjinkai, was also founded in the same year which organized nation-wide students' movement latter during 1920s.

This movement was not restricted only to academic circles; rather it soon spread among the common masses. The Japanese economy grew rapidly benefiting from World War I. However, the common people benefited least from it

30 Ibid., p.149.

31 Yanaga, n.1, p.468.

and there was no substantial improvement in the standard of living of the people when compared to the level of actual economic growth during the same period. Labour was well-organized by now and the labour-management confrontations increased. The success of the Russian Revolution of 1917 provided an impetus to leftist thoughts; political dissent was mounting. Finally, the impoverished people stood up against the government when nation-wide Rice-Riots broke out in 1918. The temporary economic boom following the war further enhanced the democratic movement, as youth became bold because jobs were plentiful and there was no danger of losing jobs by free expression. Therefore, there was popular demand for democratic rights. This movement had its bearing on political parties too. The rise of Hara Kei, a commoner, to Premiership in 1918 marked the beginning of party government in Japan which lasted till the military took complete control of national affairs in the 1930s. However, this party government was also against the leftist movement. The Taisho government continued its frantic attempt to suppress this movement. Academic freedom was trampled upon. A number of teachers, scholars and students were persecuted for spreading "the dangerous thoughts". Besides government, a large number of rightist organizations like Amur Society (1901), Roninkai (1908), Dai Nihon Kokushi Kai (Japan Nationalist Society, 1919), Okakai (The Cherry Blossom Society, 1924), Seinen Kyushinto

(Radical Youth Party, 1924), Kokuhonsha (State Foundation Society, 1924), counter-attacked the democratic movement. All these rightist organizations strove to give direction to national thought and stimulate nationalism and popularize military ideas. With a view to promote nationalistic indoctrination, military training was introduced in the Secondary Schools, both private and public in 1925, and in the following year, military education was made an integral part of school education.³²

However, by late 1924, the leftist movement became uncontrollable and, therefore, in 1925 the Universal Manhood Suffrage Law was passed which came into effect from 1928 and all Japanese above 25 were given the right to vote. However, at the same time, the Public Peace Law was also passed which prohibited the formation of groups that advocated a change in the Japanese national polity. It diminished the significance of the universal suffrage as it was later misused by the government. Besides this, an official system of thought control was imposed by special thought police in 1925. Nevertheless, the next few years witnessed the growth of proletarian cultural movement. Already since 1920 proletarian movement had emerged due to growth of social consciousness among the people. Proletarian literature was the chief literary activity during this

32 Karazawa, n.29, p.151.

decade. A large number of proletarian political parties were also founded in the latter half of 1920s. The growth of radio network in early Showa period (1925 onwards) also strengthened this movement considerably. However, the world-wide economic depression around 1930 and the rise of military forces to prominence slackened the growth of this proletarian movement and ultimately around the middle of 1930s, it totally disappeared.

Education From 1930-45 : Growth of Ultrnationalism and Fascism

Around 1930 the domestic situation in Japan was very delicate. There was corruption of political parties and high officials, growth of anarchy due to growth of individualism, loss of motivation, maximization of personal wants and weakening of social restraint and long-continued economic distress. All these factors led to widespread criticism of party government and gave the military forces an opportunity to gain the upper hand. Popular opinion also favoured state socialism in place of capitalistic social organization. Thus, the downfall of party government in 1932 was followed by the rise of military to prominence. From 1932 till Japan's catastrophic defeat in 1945, the military was in control of the national affairs.

The primary target of these ultrnationalistic forces was to combat the social unrest and intellectual conflicts, revive loyalty to the Imperial institution and the strong spirit of patriotism. For that, they once again turned to

education. In April 1933, school textbooks were revised thoroughly. The chief feature of this revision was that a sound philosophical foundation was provided to the nationalistic education.³³ The nationalistic indoctrination was as strong as ever. The dogma of National Polity (Kokutai) and the concept of divine land were emphasized in all the textbooks. Actually the entire educational system emphasized ultranationalism and militarism. Even in most unlikely subject like physical education, students were taught that their body was not their own, but belonged to the Emperor. Therefore, it was their duty to take care of the body and be healthy and work for strengthening the Imperial institution.³⁴ Expressions like Self Annihilation for the Sake of Nation (Messhihoko), Loyalty and Patriotism (Chukun Aikoku), Way of the Subjects (Shinmin-no-Michi), Yield to the Powerful (Nagai mono ni makare yo) etc. were used frequently. The superiority of the Japanese race was emphasized and students were taught to be proud of being born as a Japanese.

Teachers who had been increasingly under leftist influence since early 1920s were pressurized by the military authorities so as to ensure their active participation in the militaristic and ultranationalistic educational programme,

33 Ibid., p.168.

34 Ibid., p.171.

as they were chiefly responsible for its success or failure. Between 1925-34 as many as 748 teachers were suspended on the charge of being Red.³⁵ Helpless teachers, in order to escape suspension, submitted to the authorities without any resistance. Therefore, they became a tool in the hands of military forces to advocate fascist and ultranationalistic education and develop a sense of service to the state among the pupils. Teachers themselves were indoctrinated in Normal Schools through a curriculum attaching foremost importance to martial arts. Every teacher had to serve a 5-month tour of duty in one of the military services in order to understand the military spirit.³⁶

Another step in this inexorable drive to control the minds of the people by the state was the institution of a Thought Bureau (Shiso Kyoku) in the Mombusho in May 1934. The purpose of this bureau was to control the thoughts and actions considered officially undesirable. And in April 1935, the Youth School Act (Seimen Gakko Rei) was proclaimed. The Youth Schools offered 1 to 7 years part-time continuation studies for graduates of the elementary schools. And these schools later became the place for inculcation of the spirit of imperialism, ultranationalism and fascism.

35 Ibid., p.143.

36 Duke, C. Benjamin, Japan's Militant Teachers: A History of the Left-Wing Teachers' Movement (An East-West Center Book, Honolulu, 1973), p.19.

Ultranationalistic forces which rose to prominence in 1932 gradually inched their way to achieve complete authority over the nation and in 1936 a state-controlled by the military was born. The cabinet became a puppet in military hands. People were taught that "war is the father of creation and mother of culture."³⁷ Already Japan's military adventures in Manchuria had won her many enemies. Japan's withdrawal from the League of Nations in 1933 had rendered her an international orphan. However, ultra-nationalistic forces, unperturbed by these, went ahead with their plans even to the extent of offending the whole world.

As for education, the most important change was the publication of Cardinal Principles of the National Polity of Japan (Kokutai-no-Hongi) in March 1937 by the Mombusho. It proved a turning point not only in the history of modern education in Japan, but also in the political history of that country. This document was an attempt to bind people morally and spiritually to the Imperial institution by establishing the divinity of the Emperor, vitalizing the way of the subjects and creating respect for the National Polity.

Kokutai-no-Hongi clearly demarcated the oriental and occidental traditions. It emphasized that the immortal National Polity must be revived and it attributed all social

37 Yanaga, n.1, p.511.

maladies to the evil tendencies like socialism, communism and individualism and ignorance of the fundamentals of the National Polity. It carried extensive details regarding the founding of the Japanese Empire and discussion of Imperial virtues. It was based on ancient ideals and principles of the National Polity of Japan like filial piety, loyalty and patriotism. This document clearly defined the norms for social and political thinking and behaviour for the Japanese people. Copies of Kokutai-no-Hongi were circulated throughout the country by the Mombusho and were to be used as teaching manual by teachers of morals. By March 1943, nearly 1,900,000 copies of this document had been sold.³⁸

Kokutai-no-Hongi was very successful in its target, i.e., awakening national sentiment and consciousness. But at the same time, it was chiefly responsible for giving rise to military psychosis which led to the debacle of World War II.

Japan's continuous encroachment on Manchuria further accentuated the tension between China and Japan and ultimately led to the outbreak of the China Incident in July 1937. Japan did not expect serious resistance from China, but

38 Hall, Robert King, Kokutai-no-Hongi (Cardinal Principles of the National Polity of Japan)
(Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1949),
p.10.

contrary to her expectations, China, helped by America, Britain and Holland, refused to yield and put up a strong resistance. At the same time, the unstable international situation had witnessed great many changes in foreign relations and the world tended to split into political blocs. And finally when the stage was set for a world war, two major groups emerged. Japan, West Germany and Italy formed the Axis Powers and starting with America, Britain and China, a total of 26 countries constituted the Allied Powers.

The Sino-Japanese conflict which started in 1937 soon turned into a full-scale war and lasted till 1945 and proved disastrous for Japan. World War II began in 1939, but Japan entered the war in December 1941 when it attacked Pearl Harbour.

A totalitarian state had been established in Japan by 1941. In order to mobilize the forces of the nation in support of the military cult, military education was further intensified. Already in 1938, the youth school education had been made compulsory. Mass media had no freedom and was used for propagating militarism. The National School Reform (Kokumin Gakko Rei) of 1941 introduced a fascist element in the already existing ultranationalistic and militaristic education. The elementary schools were replaced with National Schools (Kokumin Gakko) and compulsory education was increased from 6 years to 8 years. A new national course (Kokuminka) was introduced. New textbooks were compiled which clothed

the war with glory. All this created an unique national loyalty among the people. Every child aspired for a military career. Each individual was ready to perish for the nation. An evidence of this was the Kamikaze unit in the Japanese air force in which each member was charged with the suicidal mission of crashing his aircraft, laden with explosives, into an enemy target.

The Pacific War initially progressed favourably for Japan, but lack of resources and war materials and highly expensive China war changed the trend of war in favour of the Allied Powers and brought Japan to her knees. There was complete destruction of Japanese Empire. However, the final blow to Japan's hopes was the dropping of atomic bombs at Hiroshima and Nagasaki. This shattered Japan's hopes of recovery and surrender became inevitable. Thus on 13 August 1945, Japan accepted the Potsdam Declaration and surrendered unconditionally to the Allied Powers. Japan was occupied for the first time in its history by foreign powers.

If one looks back at the Japanese national character in pre-war years, one finds that Japan was a nation with high cultural standards. It was a society with refined and cultivated tastes, with a certain degree of spiritual inclination. Basically, the Japanese were nationalistic with a high sense of patriotism and love towards their Imperial institution. However, this patriotic fervour obliterated all the distinctions altogether. Japanese vanity had reached

its highest limits and the country was disillusioned in the process of pursuing idealism. The Japanese notion of morality began and ended with their nation and a shallow interpretation was given to morality. Political infidelity, repression, exploitation were not moral questions. In short, morality served as a cover for expediency and this morality was destined to rebound sooner or later.

CHAPTER III

POST-WAR CHANGES IN JAPANESE EDUCATION

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Dawn of Democracy in Japan

With the acceptance of Potsdam Declaration began the occupation of Japan by the Allied Powers. It was to last till the purpose of making Japan peaceful and democratic was realized. And the next seven years (1945-52) witnessed very dedicated and honest efforts on the part of Allied Powers to put the prostrate people of Japan back on their feet. Japanese occupation was predominantly an American show and, therefore, General Mac Arthur, a soldier and administrator, was appointed the Supreme Commander for Allied Powers (SCAP). He was entrusted with the task of rebuilding Japan along democratic lines so that she did not again become a threat to mankind.

In accordance with the Potsdam Declaration, Japan lost Taiwan, the Kurile islands, Okinawa, Bonin islands and all other territorial gains. Japanese jurisdiction was restricted to four main islands and some other tiny islands. The immediate tasks before SCAP were disarmament and demilitarization, democratization and political rehabilitation of Japan. SCAP realized that the boundless energies of the Japanese people could not be released for national reconstruction unless they were educated and motivated on right lines. Therefore, it was necessary, first of all, to remove exponents of militant nationalism or anti-democrats from

public office. The purge of Japanese leaders which followed saw the elimination of all undesirable elements from public office. Besides, a large number of war criminals were also arrested, tried and sentenced, some of them to death. All ultranationalistic organizations were disbanded.

All restrictions on political, civil and religious freedom were removed. The party system was revived. However, the most notable achievement of the SCAP was the constitutional reform. SCAP laid the basic guidelines for the new constitution and Japanese experts drafted the constitution. This draft endorsed by SCAP and the Emperor was promulgated on 3 November 1946 and came in force a year later. The fundamental principles of the new constitution were: (i) Renunciation of war; (ii) Recognition of basic human rights; and (iii) Popular sovereignty. The Imperial institution, after a long debate, was retained but now the Emperor became merely the symbol of national unity.

In a short span of two years Japan's capacity to wage war had been drastically reduced and the stage was set for the growth of liberal democracy. Thereafter, several missions headed by Edwin Pauley, Clifford Strike, Percy Johnson etc. visited Japan to investigate the need for further reforms and weakening of Japan. However, all of them recommended that there was no need to further weaken Japan. Therefore, attention was diverted to economic

rehabilitation which had been delayed due to the separation problem. In the economic sphere, the most important reforms were the land reforms and the dissolution of the Business Cliques (Zaibatsu). Agricultural land was reclaimed from absentee landlords and redistributed among the landless, aiming at equity in land ownership. Absentee landlordship was abolished and tenancy was reduced to 10 per cent of the farming families. Zaibatsu which had played a positive role in Japanese politics, especially since World War I, were dissolved. Labour Unions were established and the number of organized workers increased considerably. On the whole, there was a marked improvement in the social standing of workers.

The Allied Powers were very circumspect and vigilant when introducing any change. SCAP, in order to avoid repugnance of Japanese people, issued directives to the Japanese government which, in turn, carried out the reforms. However, it was ensured that the directives were faithfully implemented. The Japanese people also on their part showed affability towards SCAP which emphasized the fact that the Japanese people were sick of continuous warfare and were desperately in quest of peace. Moreover, seeing the sincere efforts of the Allied Powers, they showed more affability towards SCAP. In short, strong and healthy American guidance proved a magic wand for Japan and a key to all problems. Japan started almost from scratch in 1945, but by the end of

the Occupation period in 1952, it again was a proud member of the international community.

From State Education to Public Education

All educational activities had come to a standstill in 1944 when the Japanese nation as a whole was under an intense war atmosphere. Therefore, immediately after the Occupation forces landed in Japan in 1945, an attempt was made to revive educational activity. However, due to devastation and destruction during the war, there were no classrooms and no textbooks. Till new textbooks were printed, for about three months, the pre-war textbooks were used, but the objectionable parts, i. e., the portions where militarism and ultranationalism were extolled, were deleted.¹ Even after three months, these old textbooks were replaced with thin pamphlet-like textbooks printed on cheap newsprint.² It was an evidence of the sorry state of affairs in Japan after the war. The social life was disrupted. People were hungry and ill-clothed. The trail of disaster left behind by the great war and the spiritual shock had crushed Japanese vanity and the traditional belief that the Japanese race was invincible and the Japanese were

1 Karazawa, Tomitaro, Nihonjin-no-Risekisho (Kodansha, Tokyo, 1961), p.195.

2 Ibid., p.196.

born to rule mankind. Japan in the past half century had fought so many wars that there was a strong aversion to warfare and the Japanese people, more than anything else, wanted an end to all wars.

The Occupation forces, with the same goal in view, realized that if pre-war education was responsible for unmaking Japan, a rightly-oriented education could remake her. At the same time, it was also realized that only a democratic educational set up could ensure safety of democratic institutions and cultural values and such culture and democracy would ultimately contribute to welfare of human beings and realization of world peace. Therefore, more realistic and practical education, in place of abstract and ideological education, was aimed at.

Thus, the educational system was changed thoroughly in the hope that education would become the breeding ground of democratic citizens. The Civil Information and Education Section (C.I.&E) was instituted in General Headquarters (GHQ), the Office of the SCAP, to advise the SCAP about policies relating to education, religion and other sociological problems and develop patterns of democratic education. To begin with, GHQ issued four directives³ which clearly showed the radical nature of reforms the Allied Powers were aiming at.

3 Morito Tatsuo, *Daisan no Kyoiku Kaikaku - Chukyoshin Toshin to Kyokasho Saiban* (Daichi Hoki: Shuppan Kabushikigaisha, Tokyo, 1973), p.63.

1. The first directive was issued on 22 October 1945 entitled "Administration of the Educational System of Japan", declaring the object and basic policies of Occupation forces regarding the new educational system.

2. The second directive was issued on 30 October 1945 entitled "Investigation and Purge of Teachers and Educationists", to eliminate military and ultranationalistic elements from educational organizations.

3. The next directive was issued on 15 December 1945 abolishing all Shinto-based ideology in education which was the chief driving force for the Japanese programme of military expansion and ultranationalism in pre-war years.

4. The last directive in this series was issued on 31 December 1945 abolishing teaching of morals, Japanese history and geography which was held responsible for inculcating martial spirit resulting in irreparable harm to the nation.

Following these initial reforms, SCAP invited a US Education Mission to visit Japan and formulate the guidelines for the new democratic educational system for Japan. This twenty-one member mission headed by Dr. George D. Stoddard visited Japan in early 1946 and made a thorough study of educational institutions. Based on the recommendations of this mission, an official statement was issued by SCAP on 27 March 1947 which strongly advocated progressive education aiming at developing respect for individual worth

and values and freedom of research. It emphasized the principle of decentralization of power for democratization of education and criticized recitation of the Imperial Rescript or making obeissance before the portrait of the Emperor in schools and inculcating obedience towards superiors. This report further proposed a new 6-3-3-4 educational system (six years of elementary school, three years of lower secondary school, three years of upper secondary school and four years of university) with a total of nine years of free compulsory education and thorough revision of school curriculum. It also stressed the popularization of co-education, adult education, higher liberal education and re-education of teachers along democratic lines.

This report was prepared in cooperation with the Japanese Education Committee, especially constituted for this purpose and it became the basis for educational reforms introduced immediately thereafter. However, after the expiry of the term of this committee, a new Education Renovation Committee (Kyoiku Sasshin Iinkai) was constituted under the Prime Minister's guidance.⁴ It studied various educational policies in cooperation with the Mombusho, and Civil Information and Education Section and advised the government concerning educational reforms. Earlier, the Japanese Diet had passed

4 Ibid., p.63.

a resolution on 5 August 1946 entitled "Reconstruction of Japanese Education" in which it recognized the need for immediate reconstruction of education for cultivation of international friendship and attainment of a cultural level worthy of the confidence of other nations.⁵

The first and most important accomplishment of the Education Renovation Committee was the proposal regarding the Fundamental Education Act (Kyoiku-Kihonho). Most of the educational reforms introduced thereafter were based on principles and rules and regulations defined in this Fundamental Education Act and this Act was in turn enacted in accordance with the spirit of the constitution of Japan which came in force in May 1947.

This Fundamental Education Act replaced the Imperial Rescript which, till then, had formed the basis of education. It consisted of eleven articles and clarified the aim of education and established the foundation of education for new Japan. Article 1 of the Act said:

"Education should aim at character building and fostering respect for peace, love for society and nation and devotion for truth and justice, respect for individual worth, sense of responsibility and hard work, autonomous spirit and promotion of health." 6

5 Passin, Herbert, Society and Education in Japan (Columbia University Press, U.S.A., 1968), p.285.

6 Extracted from Gendaiyogo-no-Kisochishiki (Jiyukokuminsha., Tokyo, 1978), p.610.

It provided for equality in education with no discrimination on account of race, creed, sex, social status, economic position or family origin. The purpose of education was changed and henceforth public education was to be conducted without the introduction of a religious or political element. It emphasized creative and experimental classroom work and development of a sense of human solidarity and democratic spirit.

This was followed by a series of statutes. The first was the School Education Act (Gakko Kyoikuho). This Act greatly simplified the education structure by introducing the 6-3-3-4 system of education. Compulsory education was also extended from six to nine years. It classified the educational institutions into Kindergarden, primary school, lower secondary school, upper secondary school, university, special professional high school, school for the blind, school for the deaf, school for the physically handicapped and mentally retarded children, etc. In short, multi-lateral schools catering to all sorts of pupils were set up but the process they went through was uniform. This Act further dealt with the organization and management of the schools and discussed the aims, methods and principles of each type of school. In short, it brought about a total reorganization of educational structure by reorienting educational curricula, courses of study, textbooks, teaching methods and administration of education.

Reorientation of Educational Curricula

Alongwith renovating the educational set up, curricula was also changed thoroughly. School subjects were reorganized aiming at developing the democratic spirit. The basic principles for the reorganization of school curriculum were prescribed by the Enforcement Regulations of the School Education Act. However, the fundamentals for the organization of curriculum such as the objectives and the content of each subject were prescribed by the Mombusho in the "course of study" compiled separately for different levels of education. The same was supplied to all schools, and based on the course of study, each school compiled the curricula taking into consideration other factors such as interest and capacity of students, local and actual conditions in the school.

Major Changes in Contents of Curricula

(a) Abolition of the courses on morals, history and geography.

(b) Introduction of a new course on social studies which is the most significant change in postwar education. The purpose of this course is to develop among children better understanding of society, cultivate the social attitude and adaptability of children so that they become ideal citizens, establish correct human relations and contribute to the community in which they live.

(c) New Course in Homemaking - This course was earlier taught only to girls but now it was made compulsory for both boys and girls. It aims at providing knowledge concerning clothing, food and housing, significance of family life, and development of an active attitude toward improved family living as a member of the family.

(d) Encouragement for Individual Research - Self-study was attached foremost importance and children's self-reliance was encouraged to promote a harmonized development of mind and body through group activities in regular school events and classroom activities.

(e) Revision of Teaching Hours - The total number of teaching hours allocated for each subject per week were prescribed and classes were conducted accordingly. However, the length of each class was not indicated and it varied depending on the requirement.

These changes in curricula were common for both elementary and lower secondary schools as compulsory education was now for nine years and was regarded as a continuous process. The elementary school curricula now included Japanese language, social studies, mathematics, science, music, printing, handicraft, homemaking, physical education and individual research.⁷ However, one chief

7 The Ministry of Education, Government of Japan, Japan; Its Land, People and Culture (Japanese National Commission for UNESCO, Tokyo, 1958), p.533.

feature of the lower secondary school curricula was the division of subjects into compulsory and optional courses.⁸ The lower secondary school curricula consisted of Japanese language, social studies, mathematics, science, music, printing and handicraft and physical education as compulsory subjects and foreign language, vocation, homemaking, other subjects, special educational activities etc. as optional. In vocational education and homemaking, there were five subjects, namely, agriculture, commerce, fishery, industry and homemaking, and students were to opt for one or more subjects.⁹

Another feature of the lower secondary education was that vocational training was regarded as particularly important as many students took up jobs in companies after completing their studies at lower secondary school. Barring these differences, the guidance in the course of study and evaluation method were the same as in case of elementary education.

Upper Secondary Education

After the war, the aim of higher education has been to give higher liberal education and intensive technical training to help students acquire high professional skills and also elevate their cultural standard. In other words, it aims at developing each student's individuality and

8 Ibid., p.535.

9 Ibid., p.535.

training him to proceed in different directions. With this complete education in view, upper secondary curricula placed greater emphasis on optional subjects besides compulsory subjects like Japanese language, social studies, mathematics, science and physical education.¹⁰

Administrative Reforms

As seen earlier in this chapter, the wartime education was abolished immediately after the Occupation forces landed in Japan and in the process of renovation of the educational structure, the administration of education also needed to be changed thoroughly. A GHQ announcement in this regard said: "In order to achieve the target of education laid in the constitution and the Fundamental Education Act, the administration of education needs to be democratized in which autonomy of education is guaranteed."¹¹

With this purpose in view, GHQ aimed at weakening the Mombusho which was most powerful in educational affairs till then by introducing local Educational Boards (Chihokyoiku Iinkai) and expansion of the autonomy of university. In other words, decentralization of administration and introduction of an autonomous education structure along American lines were recommended. Stoddard's mission which had earlier visited Japan, in its report suggested the

10 Ibid., p.535.

11 Morito, n.3, p.66.

following administrative reforms:

- (i) Drastic reduction of direct control by the Mombusho over regional schools;
- (ii) Respect for the free will of the people in educational administration and planning; and
- (iii) Establishment of Educational Boards in every town, village, rural and urban prefectures and cities through direct election.

The Education Renovation Committee, working along these lines also recognized the need for the renovation of educational administration in its 17th meeting on 27 December 1946.¹² It supported the reforms suggested by the Stoddard Mission, but it further suggested that the Educational Boards should be financed by the local prefectural government and there should be one Board for every 10,000 people. However, in May 1947, it reviewed its earlier proposals and made the following recommendations.¹³

- (i) Local Educational Boards should have voting and execution rights and should be established gradually;
- (ii) In place of open direct election of members of these boards, election for only the recommended candidates should be conducted;
- (iii) The right of personnel management should be vested with the local boards in rural and urban prefectures;
- (iv) A sufficient gap should be given between the formulation of law regarding local boards and its actual implementation to create thorough understanding among people about these reforms and the real significance of democratic and decentralized education.

12 Ibid., p.102.

13 Ibid.. p.103.

There followed several rounds of talks and negotiations between the Education Renovation Committee and the Civil Information and Education Section regarding the ultimate reforms to be introduced. The draft proposal was finally prepared in June 1948 and was placed before the Diet for its approval. The basic features of the final draft passed by the Diet on 5 July 1948 were as follows:¹⁴

- (i) Institution of Local Educational Boards.
- (ii) Subsidy by National Treasury.
- (iii) Teachers in service to be candidates eligible for election.
- (iv) Remuneration for members of Local Educational Boards.
- (v) Transfer of the control of Upper Secondary School.
- (vi) Jurisdiction of the Superintendent.

Following the enactment of the law regarding Local Educational Boards, the new system was launched in 48 prefectures and five big cities (Osaka, Kyoto, Nagoya, Kobe and Yokohama).¹⁵ Establishment of these boards in other cities and villages was extended by two years. These boards were entirely independent of the Mombusho and performed the following duties:

- (i) Establishment, maintenance and abolition of schools.
- (ii) Compilation of curricula and their treatment.

14 Ibid., p.109.

15 Ibid., p.115.

- (iii) Decision on textbooks to be used.
- (iv) Appointment and dismissal of teachers.
- (v) Training of teachers.

Recruitment and Management

At the end of the war, like all other Japanese nationals, teachers were also in a demoralized and exhausted state of mind. Most of the educational institutions had ceased to function and teachers were jobless and in economic distress. Immediately after the start of the Occupation, the educational activity was revived and as seen earlier in this chapter, radical reforms were introduced and the educational structure was overhauled. Under the obsession of changing everything that belonged to pre-war years, teachers' training system, recruitment process, rights and duties, salaries, social welfare etc. were all changed.

The most noticeable reform regarding teachers was the recognition of the freedom of political and union activities. At the end of the war, there were nearly 400,000 teachers in Japan and seeing their pitiable plight, SCAP was of the firm opinion that unless their position was improved, a healthy educational atmosphere would not be possible. The immediate solution was a national level union representing all the teachers to safeguard their interests and upgrade their social status. The teachers, on their part, also had a genuine desire for leadership outside Mombusho. The Stoddard Mission, after a thorough observation of the situation,

recommended free union activities for them. And within no time, a large number of teachers' unions came up all over the country. It marked the birth of the post-war teachers' movement. SCAP, aiming at weakening the Mombusho, shrewdly encouraged these unions despite all opposition from the Japanese government. The rightist elements having already been eliminated during the purge (a total of 1,20,000 teachers or 22 per cent of the teaching population), these unions comprised primarily of leftists and were anti-government. Encouraged by the SCAP and the weakening power of the Mombusho, all teachers strongly felt the need for forming an united front representing all teachers of Japan, as a pressure group against the Mombusho. And finally in May 1947, Nikkyoso (Japan Teachers' Union) was formed when all small unions merged.

Nikkyoso welcomed the reforms by SCAP as they coincided with its own demands. The strong Nikkyoso compelled the Japanese government to ensure better working conditions for teachers in Japan. The introduction of the local educational bodies brought about a marked change and improvement in the administration of education and the process of recruitment of teachers.

The first step towards a teaching career was the acquisition of a certificate similar to the licensing system of the pre-war years. For that, Teachers' Training Colleges were set up in all prefectures replacing the Normal Schools

of pre-war years. These colleges provided 4-year training courses. Those candidates, who acquired the necessary credits, were issued a certificate. Thereafter, they applied to the Local Educational Board and the Superintendent of the Board selected the candidates along with the Principal of the School in which the teacher was to be installed. However, acquisition of the certificate was no guarantee for job. The Mombusho and Local Educational Bodies also provided for the in-service training of teachers. It included arranging seminars, lectures on curriculum and various subjects, sending teachers of elementary and secondary schools to universities for training etc. Special attention was given to the training of teachers of primary and lower secondary schools, i.e., teachers responsible for compulsory education.

The Prime Minister was made the chief administrative authority and he appointed the personnel of the Ministry and the educational and cultural agencies that were under the jurisdiction of the ministry. The national schools and the national educational research institutes were placed under the jurisdiction of the Mombusho, while all other educational activities were administered by the local educational bodies.

Poverless Mombusho

When democratizing the educational set up, it was the primary objective of the SCAP to render the Mombusho weak. This was realized to a large measure by decentralizing the

administration of education and encouraging and strengthening teachers' union. However, this process of weakening the Mombusho did not end there. The introduction of a new textbook system in April 1949 was also done with the same purpose. After the war, the National Textbook system of pre-war years was abolished and was replaced with the Authorization System (Kenteiseido) so that textbooks were not used again to inculcate nationalistic and militaristic ideas as was the practice in pre-war years.

Under the new set up, the Mombusho was to supervise, advise and allocate financial aid for educational activities under the jurisdiction of local educational bodies. It was also to approve the establishment of public and private universities and offer them administrative supervision and advice. It prepared budget estimates and drafted educational laws. In short, all national educational and cultural activities were to be administered by the Mombusho, but compared to the pre-war years, it was nothing but an institution of information, advice and assistance for all local educational activities.

Thus, this very ambitious educational system, a replica of the American system in both contents and method, was launched in Japan aiming at a state which is neither authoritarian nor despotic or aggressive but a liberal society standing for human sovereignty and liberty. In other words, occupational forces aimed at a total change in the way of thinking and psychology of Japanese people and the development

of their mental faculties along democratic lines. These plans appeared highly idealistic and abstract but somewhat overly ambitious, radical and unrealistic vis-a-vis the domestic situation. These educational reforms were more radical than those during the Meiji period because the Meiji authorities aimed at changing the national character over a long period of time whereas SCAP aimed at the same in a very short span and in the process it was but natural that the practical difficulties were overlooked.

Drawbacks of the Occupation Educational Reforms

1. A fundamental departure from oriental traditions to occidental traditions was made and most of the reforms were not in consonance with Japanese history, tradition and domestic circumstances. A better option would have been development of appropriate theory of state and national consciousness vis-a-vis international situation.
2. The educational reforms were made a part of political rehabilitation and often these were not examined from the point of view of educational needs.
3. Under the obsession of destroying pre-war educational set up at any cost, even the strong points of pre-war education were completely overlooked.
4. Political and economic rehabilitation was given top priority and moral and spiritual rehabilitation was relegated to the secondary position. In other words, in the process of materialistic pursuits, the moral aspect was totally

neglected. The reforms primarily aimed at destroying the spirit of nationalism and patriotism, typical Japanese virtues, and if SCAP failed to reorient the Japanese mind, it at least succeeded in destroying the moral virtues. Modern Japanese youth have turned egoistic, skeptical and epicureanistic and this is partly responsible for anarchism and violence that prevails among them.

5. The financial aspect in the implementation of the new system was completely ignored.

6. Power was taken away from the Mombusho before the local educational bodies were ready to assume it.

Despite the radical nature of reforms and the above mentioned major drawbacks, the new educational set up, introduced in 1947, has survived till today. However, it is not mere survival, but Japanese education system is today said to be one of the most efficient in the world. The system has been improved upon from time to time since its inception and there has been no fundamental departure from the democratic spirit, though several attempts have been made by the conservative elements which were rendered futile by militant leftist elements. How this "foreign system" transplanted in the Japanese soil, took firm roots, outlived all odds and the extent to which these educational reforms were successful in reorienting the Japanese mind along democratic lines, as also the nature of changes introduced by the Japanese government after the occupation was over, are discussed below.

The Japanese government had its own reservations and limitations regarding the new system and it strongly opposed some of the reforms. However, SCAP, determined and resolute, forcibly implemented the new system as a process of trial and error and it was declared that it was an attempt towards democratization of Japan and the faulty methods would be eliminated or altered, if required. Japanese government's cooperation, therefore, was of passive obedience than active enthusiasm.

Soon a large number of national, public and private educational institutions started functioning throughout the country. Especially popularization of private education saw the establishment of a large number of private educational institutions. Despite the economic distress, there was overall growth of educational activity. However, it does not imply that the new system was an instant success, rather in the beginning it seemed a misfit in Japan. The overall situation was far from satisfactory. By 1949 this new system had been implemented and the following problems came to the fore:

1. Japan had not yet recovered from the post-war economic distress and due to financial difficulties local educational bodies failed to carry out their duties and obligations.
2. There was extreme shortage of teachers, classrooms and textbooks.

3. Freedom of functioning of PTA (Parent-Teacher Association) and professional teachers' union was recognized after the war. Nikkyoso soon became more of a labour union and, therefore, education became a battle field for the conservative and reformist forces. Strikes and demonstrations increased which, at times, mounted to violent proportions. This unending struggle between the Nikkyoso and the government marred smooth functioning of the new system.

4. Communist dominance of Nikkyoso thwarted the idea of free education and the democratic concept.

5. The fundamental spirit of the decentralized system was to involve the common man in the control of education. However, in this regard the system failed miserably as the unfair hold of the political pressure groups over local educational bodies prevented boards from reflecting the real will of the people.¹⁶

Thus the merits and demerits of the system were exposed to all and the immediate alternatives for SCAP which emerged were as follows:

(1) Economic Rehabilitation of Japan

Financial limitations were the root cause of most of the problems. Smooth functioning of local educational bodies and establishment of more educational organizations necessitated more funds. Moreover, unrest among teachers was also primarily concentrated around low salaries.

(ii) Restrict Political Activities of Teachers

There was no end to the clashes between the government and the Nikkyoso and it seemed inevitable for the SCAP to intervene and ease the tense situation.

Therefore, simultaneously with economic rehabilitation, SCAP took several steps to check growing communist influence and restrict union activities by teachers. The reverse course was begun with the revision of the National Public Service Law in December 1948. This revision superseded the right to strike and bargain collectively by teachers' unions and teachers were debarred from participating in political activities except voting.¹⁷ This was followed up with a Red Purge in 1949 which saw the elimination of a large number of leftist elements. This Red Purge of 1949-50 was in direct contrast to that of 1946-47 when rightist elements had been eliminated.¹⁸ After this purge, communist influence declined considerably and the moderate elements gained ascendancy. In 1949 the Special Law for Public Service Personnel was passed which classified teachers into two categories, i.e., National Public Servants, those working in National Schools and Local Public Servants, those working in local schools.¹⁹ The former were now to be governed by the National Public

17 Duke, Benjamin, C., Japan's Militant Teachers : A History of the Left-Wing Teachers' Movement (The University Press of Hawaii, Honolulu, 1973), p.80.

18 Ibid., p.90.

19 Ibid., p.93.

Service Law. The Local Public Service Law was enacted in 1950. According to this law, the local public service personnel were debarred from joining any political parties and their political activities were greatly restricted. The result was that the Nikkyoso lost its official status as a national union. It lost its claim to negotiating rights with the Mombusho on behalf of the majority of teachers in the country as most of them were employed by local educational bodies.²⁰

These new laws were undemocratic in principle and in breach of the promise made by SCAP at the start of occupation. There was widespread discontent against this "reverse movement." Therefore, Nikkyoso became more hostile and led a determined resistance against these newly imposed restrictions. Thus, by 1950 the situation was not very clear as to the direction in which Japan was moving. In other words, the new system had been theoretically established but in practice it was far from satisfactory. SCAP still dominated the scene while the Mombusho and the Nikkyoso continued to be hostile to each other, and each one trying to gain an upper hand over the other.

In September 1950 the Second U.S. Education Mission visited Japan to evaluate the success of reforms. It found the situation quite satisfactory and simply recommended

20 Ibid., p.94.

more funds for the educational institutions to function smoothly. And it did not have any great significance and bearing whatsoever on Japanese education thereafter.

In the meantime, the economic situation improved considerably as Japan gained enormously from the Korean war of 1950. The situation improved automatically and Nikkyoso's priorities also changed and now it turned its attention to political issues like peace and neutrality of Japan, opposition to rearmament and military bases in Japan, etc.²¹

Revivalist Attempts and Countervailing Forces

On 8 September 1951, the U.S.-Japan Peace Treaty was signed which marked the end of American Occupation of Japan, though Japan regained its independence on 28 April 1952. As the occupation period approached its end, the Japanese government appointed the Committee for the Examination of Occupation Reforms Policy (Seirei Kaisei Shimon Iinkai) in 1951. It comprised of Ishizaka Taizo (President of Toshiba Electrical Manufacturing Company), Kimura Atsutaro (former Minister of Justice), Maeda Tamon (former Minister of Education), Nakayama Ichiro (President of Hitotsubashi University) and some other influential businessmen like Itakura Takuzo, Obama Ritoku, Hara Yasaburo etc.²² This committee was to study all occupation

21 Ibid., p.101.

22 Ibid., p.103.

reforms including education and recommend changes in the existing system, if necessary. The Committee in its report on Educational Reforms made the following recommendations:²³

- (i) More flexibility in the 6-3-3-4 system to accommodate and encourage vocational education by separating it from general education.
- (ii) Revision of the course of study for the general schools and the technical schools.
- (iii) Textbook compilation by the government.
- (iv) The Minister of Education to be the highest administrative authority.
- (v) Appointment of a Central Advisory Council to advise the Minister of Education regarding conduct of Japanese education.
- (vi) Revival of moral education.

The government agreed in principle with all these reforms and started working seriously in this regard. In addition, the Japanese government was also thinking in terms of establishing local educational boards in the remaining towns, cities and villages and revising the Board of Education Law. There were also signs of revision of the constitution to permit rearmament and to allow American military bases in Japan. All these reforms suggested that the Japanese government was aiming at a significant change and there was every likelihood of a reversion to the pre-war system of education in certain respects.

23 Ibid., pp.103-104.

Nikkyoso strongly opposed all these plans, especially the reintroduction of moral education. Through the code of ethics proclaimed by Nikkyoso in June 1952, it was pledged that teachers shall unite and fight against any infringement on freedom in education and shall seek proper government and education for peace, protect equal opportunity in education, fight against corruption in society and defend their rights.²⁴ In addition, PTA, yet another countervailing force, formed its National Federation in October 1952 and along with Nikkyoso was determined to frustrate government's plans.

However, inspite of stiff opposition, the Japanese government carried out a number of changes. First of all, in July 1952, the Subversive Activities Prevention Law (Hakai Katsubo Boshi Ho) was passed which replaced the American Occupation's Organization Control Ordinance.²⁵ And in August 1952 the Ministry of Education Law was revised which placed more power with the Mombusho. It was now given a hand in the administration of school education. Thus it is evident from the attitude of the Japanese government that it would have reverted to the pre-war system, but for the strong opposition from Nikkyoso and PTA. It was also due to these countervailing forces that other proposals of the Committee for the Examination of Occupation Reform

24 Ibid., p.107.

25 Ibid., p.109.

Policy were abandoned temporarily. In 1954, some special laws were enacted which established political neutrality of education and further restricted political activities by teachers. The interminable controversy between the government and the Nikkyoso continued all through.

Once again in 1956 more re-reforms were introduced. This time the government was thinking of revising the local education board system to restore political neutrality of the boards and ensure stability and efficiency of educational administration. There was also a proposal to revise the textbook system as it was felt that most of the textbooks were leftist-oriented due to Nikkyoso's influence.

In June 1956, the law regarding Organization and Management of Local Educational Administration (Chiho Kyoiku Gyosei no Soshiki Oyobi unei ni Kansuru Horitsu) was passed. The basic features of this revision were as follows:²⁶

(1) Introduction of nomination system

In place of direct election of members of local boards, the nomination by Chief of Local Public Body, (Chiho Kokyodan no Cho) after getting the consent of the Assembly, was introduced.

26 Morito, n. 3, pp. 110-112.

(ii) Establishment of Boards Throughout the Country

Due to several limitations, discussed earlier in this chapter, the local educational boards could not be established except in prefectures and five big cities. However, boards were established in the remaining cities, towns and villages.

(iii) Authority of Mombusho Over the Boards

The Mombusho was given power to demand explanation or conduct inquiry if it felt that the board was deviating from its appointed functions.

(iv) Political Neutrality of Education

With a view to maintaining political neutrality, it was stated that more than three members of a board should not belong to the same political group.

As obvious from the nature of these changes, government control over educational administration was gradually being tightened. This trend continued thereafter as well. In 1957, the textbook authorization system was further intensified. A number of officials were appointed by the Mombusho to make thorough investigation before granting authorization of textbooks. In July 1957, Teachers Efficiency Rating Plan (Kinmu Hyotei) was implemented which created a widespread controversy and the disputes between government and the Nikkyoso increased considerably over next several years. It was suggested in this plan to grant salary increment to only those teachers who were accorded a good rating.²⁷

27 Duke, n.17, p.138.

This plan was obviously aimed at subservience of teachers to the Mombusho because it was considered that teachers, in order to avoid poor rating, would abstain from taking part in Nikkyoso activities.

Nikkyoso naturally put up a strong resistance against this. There were demonstrations, strikes and violent struggles throughout the country. This controversy continued for a couple of years. However, the plan was implemented in 1958. In August 1958, the course of study was revised and the moral education was reintroduced. This new curriculum came in force from April 1959. Nikkyoso once again protested against these reforms but in vain. The interminable controversy which continued throughout the 1950s tarnished the image of the union and its membership reduced by 20 per cent between 1950 and 1960.²⁸ Since then, Nikkyoso has more or less been fighting for the betterment of teacher's economic position. Actually since then the course of study has been revised in 1968 and 1977. However, the reforms have been partial with no apparent danger of reversion to the pre-war system.

As is evident from the nature of changes since independence, the Japanese government initially made frantic attempts to revert to nationalism, if not militarism,

28 Ibid., p.164.

of the pre-war years. These attempts, however, were successful only to a small extent as the countervailing forces like Nikkyoso and PTA rendered these attempts futile through their militancy. In addition, Sohyo (General Council of Free Trade Union) established in 1950, with the backing of intellectuals, unions, leaders, students and young labourers, has been wholly and basically against these reactionary policies of the government. Thus one can say that democracy was established in Japan by 1960, as since then no serious revivalist attempts have been made by the rightist elements. Though the need for re-orientation and improvement of content is keenly felt these days, yet there is no danger of reversion. However, racial homogeneity, the spirit of nationalism and patriotism are still strong in the Japanese mind, especially in the pre-war generation. There is no doubt that the social environment has completely changed ever since war and seeing the modern Japanese youth, one can say that a new Japan is in the making. However, a more distinct picture would emerge at the turn of the century when the post-war generation will be dominating the scene,²⁹ and only then one would know the durability of post-war reforms and the extent to which the Japanese mind has been reoriented.

29 The life expectancy in Japan is 73 for men and 77 for women and on an average a Japanese youth starts his career at the age of 30.

CHAPTER IV

TEXTBOOKS AND CURRICULA

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As seen in the foregoing chapter, great many changes have occurred in the field of education in the post-war years, especially in the first decade after the war. The educational system of pre-war years advocating obedience, submission and self-annihilation for the sake of the nation was replaced with progressive education concerned with the spiritual, moral, mental and physical development of individual personality and developing consciousness as responsible and mature citizens. Unlike pre-war years, students are taught to separate chaff from grain and not merely glean knowledge indiscriminately. In other words, the development of general ability for independent thinking and judgement is always placed foremost, and not the acquisition of special knowledge. Attempt is made to provide the child with the power to draw a justly limited inference from observed facts. In short, school education in Japan teaches how to think than what to think, improves the mind, inspires true and worthy motives, develops self-control, restrains feelings and creates an inventive mind.

Schools

Primary School

Primary education in Japan caters for children aged 6-12 years and occupies the first six years of the nine-year education. Primary education in Japan aims at the following

objectives:¹

(a) Cultivation of autonomous and independent spirit, sense of cooperation and correct understanding of human relationships.

(b) Sound understanding of social conditions and basic necessities of life.

(c) Correct knowledge of the national language.

(d) Technical education and scientific observation of natural phenomena in daily life.

(e) Cultivation of manners and harmonized physical and mental growth.

(f) Basic understanding of music, fine arts, literary arts etc.

In order to achieve these aims, curriculum comprises national language, mathematics, social studies, science, music, arts and handicrafts, homemaking, physical education, moral education and special activities.² The curriculum is compiled in such a way that a progressive and systematic guidance is carried out. All children in the age group of 6-14 years attend primary school. There were over 10 million students enrolled with primary schools in 1975 and this

1 Mombusho, Shogakko Shidosho: Kyoikukatei Ippan hen (Kyoiku Shuppan Kabushikigaisha, Tokyo, 1978), pp. 27-28.

2 Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, Course of Study for Elementary Schools in Japan (Ministry of Finance, Tokyo, 1976), p.1.

number is expected to go upto 12.5 million by 1985.³

Lower Secondary School

Since compulsory education is considered to be a continuous process, it has similar objectives as primary education. Therefore, the lower secondary education is based on the education given in primary school. However, since continuance of studies after nine years of compulsory education is voluntary, full consideration is given to the pupils' stage of development and distinctive characteristics so that they can proceed in different directions. And for that the curriculum of the lower secondary school consists of (a) required subjects; (b) elective subjects.

The required subjects include Japanese language, social studies, mathematics, science, music, fine arts, health and physical education, industrial arts and homemaking while the elective subjects include foreign languages, agriculture, industry, commerce, fisheries, homemaking and other subjects which are considered necessary under the courses of study for lower secondary schools.⁴ These elective subjects have been introduced with consideration to pupil's future course of life and special interest of each pupil. One remarkable feature of lower secondary education in Japan is that more

3 Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, Educational Standards in Japan (Government of Japan, Tokyo, 1975), p.14.

4 Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, Course of Study for Lower Secondary Schools in Japan (Ministry of Finance, Tokyo, 1976), p.1.

than 90 per cent of lower secondary graduates go for higher studies. Out of 1,580,000 lower secondary school graduates, 1,450,000 went on to the upper secondary schools in 1975.⁵

Upper Secondary School

Upper Secondary Education aims at cultivating personality, high cultural standard, technical skills and moulding individual character. There are three types of upper secondary schools in Japan: Full-time (3 years), part-time and correspondence (4 years or more). As for the content of curriculum, unlike common curriculum for primary and lower secondary schools, curriculum differentiation begins at this level. The school course is divided into general and the specialized. The general course is meant for those who wish to go for higher education or those who want to get employment requiring no vocational training. Whereas the specialized courses are meant for those who require specialized education in certain vocational areas. On the whole, the upper secondary schools offer programme in areas like Japanese language, social studies, mathematics, health and physical education, art, foreign languages, domestic arts, agriculture, industry, business, fishery, nursing, science and mathematics, music and fine arts. These areas are further sub-divided into nearly 400 subjects. The upper secondary education is regarded as a complete education by itself as many students (nearly 60 per cent) take up jobs after graduation.

⁵ Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, n.3, p.16.

Special Schools

Special schools are those for mentally and physically handicapped children. These include schools for the blind, schools for the deaf and schools for the otherwise handicapped. Compulsory education at the special schools for the blind and deaf was introduced in 1948. The content of education at these special schools corresponds to that at ordinary schools but in addition, students are also given special education designed to compensate for their various handicaps. A separate course of study is compiled by the Mombusho for each type of special school and each school works out its own curricula accordingly. There were 196,000 persons enrolled with these special schools in 1975.⁶

Upper Secondary Special Training Schools

These special training schools were started in 1975 aiming at developing students' ability required for their working, daily life or raising their level of education. Most of these schools are privately controlled. Such schools offer various types of courses for a minimum of one year duration. Graduates of lower secondary schools can join these special training schools. The general course offered by these schools is, however, open to all irrespective of academic attainment.

6 Ibid., p.64.

Miscellaneous Schools

These schools provide graduates of lower secondary schools with vocational and practical courses (duration 3 months to 1 year or more) in dress-making, cooking, book-keeping, typing, automobile driving and repairing, computer techniques, etc. These schools were also started in 1975.

Curricula and Their Composition

It is the responsibility of the school to carry out appropriate education to achieve the target laid in the constitution, the Fundamental Education Act and the School Education Act of 1947. In order to achieve that target, formation of a meaningful and purposeful curriculum which provides the variety of instruction and training in view of abilities and aptitudes of pupils including practical instruction and training appropriate to their respective needs, is necessary. The significance of suitable curriculum is all the more great for the primary and lower secondary schools as its contents must conform with the gradual growth of children's mind.

Therefore, a Course of Study is separately compiled for each level of education by the Education Minister in accordance with the standards laid in the constitution and the rules and regulations regarding public education such as Fundamental Education Act, School Education Act and Enforcement Regulations of the School Education Act. This course of study forms the basis for the compilation of curriculum. This is then supplied to all schools and on the basis of it the

teaching staff of each school works out the suitable curriculum taking into account local conditions and the existing facilities in the school. At the same time, mental and physical growth and interest, zest, nature and talent of each child are also taken into consideration. In short, three factors, namely, local conditions, the existing facilities in the school and mental and physical growth of children which all have organic relation with one another, form the principal constituents of the curriculum besides the course of study. However, before the actual compilation of curriculum, the following factors are also given important consideration:

1. Grasp of Basic Rules and Regulations:

Before the formation of curriculum, thorough study of national laws on public education is a necessary prerequisite. In addition, basic regulations of Local Educational Boards for local schools are also thoroughly looked into.

2. Determining the Basic Policy of School Regarding Education:

It is the responsibility of each school to carry out appropriate education to achieve the target of school education defined by the national laws and the courses of study. For that each school works out the basic policy regarding education in the light of local conditions and actual conditions in school.

3. Course of Study and Selection of Contents:

In order to achieve the target of education fixed by national laws, the course of study and the school, appropriate selection of content of education from the course of study is done. When selecting the contents, the following factors are given proper consideration:

(a) **Moral Education:** The objectives of moral education are to cultivate morality in children which develops in them the spirit of respect for fellow men, and to rear the temperament which strives for the creation of a culture rich in individuality and for the development of a democratic nation and society.⁷ Therefore, moral aspects form an integral part of instruction for each subject and special activities.

(b) **Physical Education:** Physical education is simply not exercise or sports but its ultimate target is to create a healthy mind. It is, therefore, closely linked with all subjects, especially moral education, and is given considerable importance.

(c) **Political and Religious Education:** Teaching of politics is necessary for citizens but a school must not support or oppose any particular political party. In the same way, religious education is also essential but must not be inspired by any particular religion.

7 Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, n.3, p.200.

(d) Educational Activity Making Best Use of Ingenuity:
It includes the following activities: (i) Discussion;
(ii) Cultivation of artistic sentiments; (iii) Environmental
beautification; (iv) Sound understanding of natural features
and culture of the region.

4. Structure of Contents

- (i) Mutual link between subjects, morals and other activities;
- (ii) Providing scope for sound and systematic guidance, especially at lower level;
- (iii) Determining the target for each subject in the regular curriculum as also moral education and extra-curricular activities.

5. Clarifying the Role and Responsibility of Each Member of Teaching Staff

Distribution of courses, specifying the responsibility of each teacher, mutual cooperation between teachers are some of the important factors when framing the curricula.

6. Appropriate Allocation of Teaching Hours

Appropriate distribution of teaching hours for each course with special consideration for moral and physical education is carried out. Table 1 given below prescribed by Enforcement Regulations of School Education Act forms the basis for distribution of teaching hours in each primary school.

Table 1

Annual Distribution of Teaching Hours for
Primary Schools

Subject	Ist Year	IIInd Year	IIIrd Year	IVth Year	Vth Year	VIth Year
National Language	272	280	280	280	210	210
Social Studies	68	70	105	105	105	105
Music	68	70	70	70	70	70
Mathematics	136	175	175	175	175	175
Science	68	70	105	105	105	105
Arts and Crafts	68	70	70	70	70	70
Physical Education	102	105	105	105	105	105
Home Making	-	-	-	-	-	-
Moral Education	34	35	35	35	35	35
Special Activities	34	35	35	70	70	70
Total	850	910	980	1015	1015	1015

Source: Mombusho: Shogakko Shidosho: Kyoikukatei Ippan hen
(Kyoiku Shuppan Kabushikigaisha, Tokyo, 1978),
p. 38.

Based on this distribution of teaching hours, the weekly programme is worked out. Classes are conducted for a minimum of 35 weeks (240 days) in a year. However, a total of 240 days are allotted for one academic year. These additional 30 days are utilized for school functions or any other purpose.⁸ The duration of recess, school meals etc. is decided by the school. The number of teaching hours for each subject in one week are equally divided over 35 weeks of class teaching. Duration of one teaching hour is usually 45 minutes but it can be increased or decreased.

In the light of these basic guidelines, the curriculum is prepared in such a way as to promote the best use of facilities available and an ideal education. There is also provision for a special curriculum for the education of the handicapped.⁹ This curriculum must conform to the purpose of general education.

7. Implementation of Curricula

The first step towards the implementation of the curricula is the formulation of a teaching plan. However, sometimes it is difficult to differentiate between the curricula and the teaching plan. Curricula is the broad

8 Mumbusho, n.1, p.41.

9 Ibid., p.46.

outline of the teaching programme worked out by the school while the teaching plan is the selection of contents and order of their teaching, overall method of teaching, teaching material to be used etc., in other words, the minute details of day-to-day teaching, worked out by the individual teacher. Formation of this teaching plan is most essential for effective implementation of curricula already framed by the school. The course of study carries the basic guidelines for the formation of the teaching plan. The following factors are given special consideration when working out the teaching plan:

(1) Maintaining Strong Link Between Each Subject in the Regular Curriculum, Morals and Special Activities:

It is most essential at lower levels of education. For instance proficiency in national language is achieved not only by teaching national language but through maintaining its strong link with other subjects and special activities.

(ii) Ensuring Progressive and Systematic Guidance:

Courses of study clearly mention that the curricula must ensure progressive and systematic guidance. School textbooks are also compiled accordingly. However, ultimately it is the teaching plan which makes all the difference in this regard.

(iii) Thorough in the Treatment of Details:

The teaching plan is worked out to the minutest detail. For instance, the target of each subject, aspects to be emphasized, appropriate order of programme etc. are the essential features of the teaching plan. For example, in the case of national language, emphasis is to be placed on the writing part, besides reading and speaking and, therefore, when working out the teaching plan, this fact is borne in mind. Thereafter comes the actual implementation of the curricula. The following factors are given important consideration to ensure effective implementation of the curricula:

(a) Creation of a Language Environment:

Simply the course on national language is not adequate to teach children the correct usage of language. Therefore, in all other subjects, including morals, importance is given to language activity. In other words, a language environment is created in the school.

(b) Usage of Supplementary Books and Audio-Visual Method of Teaching:

The main teaching plan is worked out based on the prescribed textbooks for each course. Books other than textbooks and audio-visual method of teaching are also used depending on the requirement. However, excessive usage of such aids is avoided.

(c) Systematic Usage of School Library:

Every school library possesses various types of books, audio-visual teaching material and various other materials for effective

education of children. Therefore, teachers, besides using the library themselves, teach children how to make effective use of library.

(d) **Special Consideration for Mentally and Physically Handicapped Children;**

There are special schools for mentally and physically handicapped children. However, children with minor disability or disorder go to ordinary schools and a special consideration is given to such children to eliminate their disability. First of all, the nature and level of disability is investigated and accordingly appropriate education is carried out for such students. At the same time, a healthy relationship between disabled and other children is developed.

8. Weak Students

Capability differs from student to student and it is the responsibility of teachers to give proper guidance to weak students. However, even among weak students, some may be congenitally weak but most of them are weak in studies due to lack of interest. In such a case, it is the responsibility of the teacher to create interest in them by creating a congenial atmosphere so that children, even when studying, find it interesting and amusing.

9. Coordination Among Teachers

From the above factors it is obvious that for effective implementation of the curricula, close coordination among

teachers is a necessary prerequisite. In other words, implementation of curricula cannot be effectively carried out unless there is cooperation among the teaching staff.

10. Revaluation and Improvement of Curricula

When framing the curricula, an attempt is made to frame the most suitable curricula to carry out education most effectively. However, after its implementation the need for modifications and improvement arises inevitably. Therefore, at the end of each academic year (sometimes at the end of each semester), the success of the curriculum in general, the guidance plan and each subject in achieving their target is reviewed. And in case any modification is required, the matter is first deeply looked into and the cause of problem is traced. Therefore, the matter is discussed thoroughly by the teaching staff and the changes agreed upon unanimously by the whole teaching staff are carried out from the following academic year or semester.

11. Textbooks: Types and Preparation

Textbooks are the principal source of study material in schools. However, unlike pre-war years, education is not textbook-oriented; rather textbooks form only one essential part of school education and a large number of books other than textbooks are also used today in schools which have enriched materials for study.

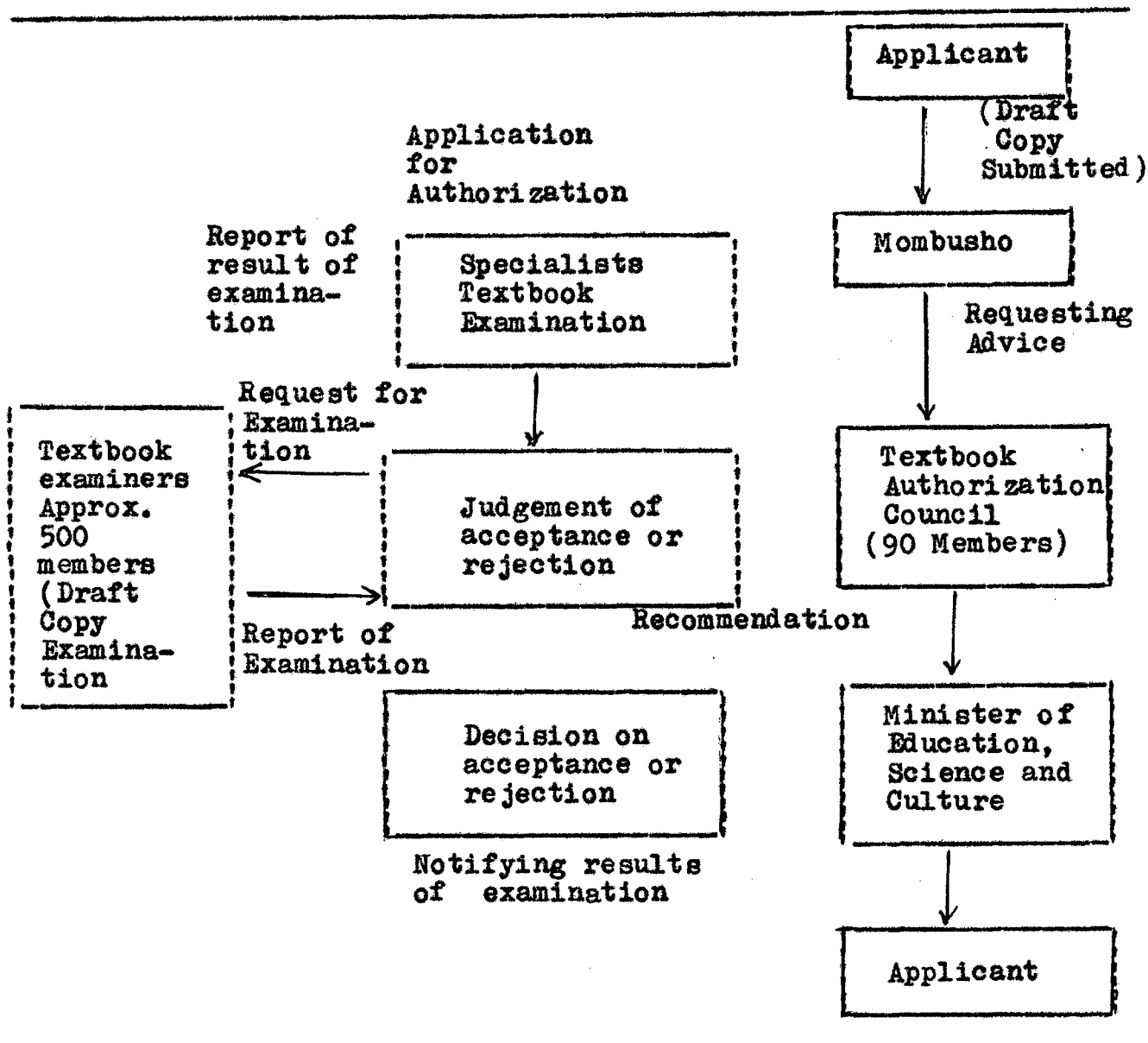
As seen earlier in the previous chapter, after the war the state textbook system was replaced with the

the authorization system in 1948. In other words, after the war, privately compiled books are accredited as textbooks by the Minister of Education on the basis of recommendations made by the Research Council for Textbook Authorization formed by teachers and persons with academic experience. By 1955 more than 100 private publishers published school textbooks and naturally there was very stiff competition among them for the sale of their textbooks. This gave rise to several malpractices like publishers or distributing agents bribing the school teachers' organizations for adopting their publications or teachers who were also authors, selecting their own textbooks. There was considerable leftist influence on the contents of these textbooks. The prices were also very high. Therefore, since 1955, authorization has been made more rigid. As for textbooks for compulsory education, the Minister of Education designates publishers based on applications from private publishing firms. In 1975, there were 29 such authorized textbook publishers.¹⁰ There is, however, no such restriction for publishing the upper secondary school textbooks. All textbooks are thoroughly examined and re-examined before the authorization is granted. The textbook making process is as shown in Chart I.

10 Mombusho (The Ministry of Education, Science and Culture), (Govt. of Japan, Tokyo, 1975), p.8.

Chart I

Textbook Making Process

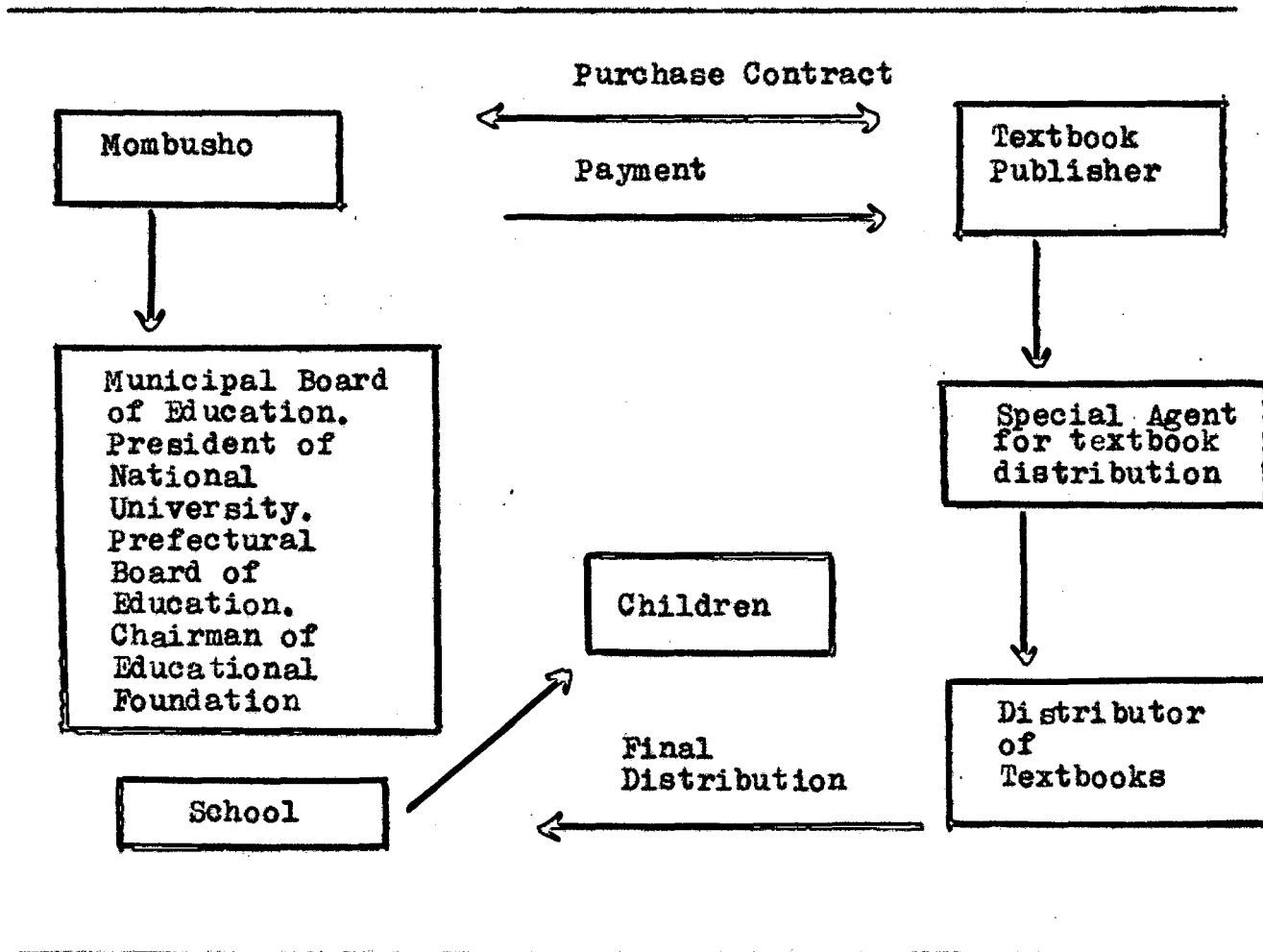


Source: Mombusho (The Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, Japan, 1975), p.8.

The authorized textbooks are then sent to local boards of education because in municipal elementary and lower secondary schools the Municipal Board of Education is the final authority for adopting the textbooks to be used, whereas in national and private schools, it is the principal of the school who decides about the textbooks. All children, throughout their compulsory schooling are provided with free textbooks. The Central Government disburses the expenses for this free supply of textbooks. The process of free distribution of textbooks is as shown in Chart II.

There are nearly 1300 different varieties of textbooks published for use in elementary, lower secondary, upper secondary and special schools. Thus, there is very stiff competition between the private publishers for sale of textbooks. The high prices of textbooks are also due to this factor. These days once again there is a widespread demand for improving the textbook system. All textbooks are published by private publishers except those dealing with vocational education in upper secondary schools and special education which are compiled by the Mombusho.

Chart II

Process for Free Distribution of Textbooks

Source: Mombusho (The Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, Japan, 1975), p.8.

History of Curricula in Recent Years: Revisions:

Curriculum standards have been revised several times since World War II to meet developments and changes in society through revision of the courses of study and Enforcement Regulations of the School Education Act. We have already seen in the previous chapter the major changes introduced in the curricula by SCAP. Soon after the implementation of the new system, it was found that the educational standards varied from region to region and from school to school. Therefore, in order to maintain uniform nation-wide standards of education, courses of study have been revised several times since then. But the discussion here is restricted only to the changes in the curricula for primary schools.

Revision of 1951:

Soon after the implementation of new courses of study in 1947, many problems came to the fore and it was felt that close link between courses for progressive and systematic guidance was necessary. Research for revision of curriculum began as early as 1948 when a Council for Curriculum comprising teachers, researchers and other learned persons was instituted in the Mombusho.¹¹ The Council submitted its recommendations in June 1950 and its chief recommendations

11 Mombusho, n.1, p.7.

were the improvement of courses in homemaking and independent research in primary schools, introduction of calligraphy, revision of total teaching hours and strengthening of moral education. Based on the recommendations of this Council, the courses of study for primary schools was revised. The basic features of the revised course of study were as follows:¹²

(a) Grouping of Courses in Four Categories:

- (i) National Language and Mathematics (Courses forming the basis of learning);
- (ii) Social Studies and Science (courses solving problems regarding society and nature);
- (iii) Drawing and Homemaking (creative subjects);
- (iv) Physical Education (for health).

At the same time, the total number of teaching hours for each of the above categories was also indicated.

Revision of Course on Home-making:

The course on Homemaking taught in the 4th and 5th standards was designed in such a way that repetition of other subjects was possible in this course.

Introduction of Calligraphy:

Calligraphy was introduced from the 4th standard as a part of the course on National Language.

12 Ibid., pp.8-9.

Introduction of Course on Extra-curricular Activities:

Independent research was replaced with extra-curricular activities. At the same time, a guide book on moral education was prepared based on the recommendations of the Council and it was emphasized that moral education was to be an integral part of school education. The same was said about physical education as well. Once again in 1955 the Council for Curriculum recommended the improvement of the course on Social Studies and accordingly a plan for improvement of the course was announced. In accordance with this plan, the course of study on Social Studies was improved and was published in December 1955. The chief characteristics of this revision were that moral education was made an integral part of the course on social studies, and the courses on history and geography were systematized. It was further added that the course on Social Studies should provide children with basic understanding of political, social and economic happenings throughout the world.

Revision of 1958:

Again soon thereafter, it was felt that school education was excessively empirical and it was necessary to give consideration to the systematic nature of each subject rather than earning grades. There was also great difference in the level of education from place to place. At the same time, the need for promoting teaching of science and technology and improvement of subjects on Science and Mathematics was also keenly felt.

With these problems in view, the Council for Curriculum conducted a study in 1956 and based on its recommendations, the course of study was revised again in 1958 which was enforced from April 1961. The important revisions were as follows:¹³

(i) The curriculum in primary school consisted of regular subjects, morals and extra-curricular activities.

(ii) The minimum teaching hours in a year for each subject and morals were prescribed.

(iii) The Minister of Education was made the authority to announce the course of study as the basis of curriculum. Moreover, till now there was a general edition of courses of study and separate volume on each subject but after this revision, a uniform course of study was compiled carrying all the items forming the basis of curriculum.

The chief characteristics of this revision were as follows:¹⁴

(i) Hours of teaching morals were prescribed and moral education was strengthened.

(ii) In order to upgrade basic scholastic abilities, contents of courses on national language and mathematics were revised and teaching hours for each of these subjects were increased.

13 Ibid., p.10.

14 Ibid., pp.10-11.

(iii) With a view to expand scientific and technological education, contents of courses on mathematics and science were revised and enriched.

(iv) Contents of geography and history were improved.

(v) Greater importance was attached to cultivation of artistic sentiments and improvement of health.

(vi) Elementary and lower secondary education was integrated and a strong link between them was established.

(vii) Education now aimed at meeting the future careers and personalities of pupils.

Revision of 1968:

The changes introduced in 1958 brought about a marked improvement in quality of education, quality of life and progress of culture and overall improvement in society. But, with the passage of time, the need for changes suited to individual talent and capacity were felt inevitable.

In June 1965 the Council for Curriculum carried out a survey and submitted its recommendations in July 1968. Based on these recommendations, the Enforcement Regulations of School Education Act were partially revised and the course of study was also revised which came in force from April 1971. The chief revisions of the Enforcement Regulations were as follows:¹⁵

15 Ibid., pp.11-12.

(i) Now the curriculum of primary schools was to consist of national language, social studies, mathematics, science, music, drawing, homemaking, physical education, morals and extra-curricular activities.

(ii) Standard hours instead of minimum hours were prescribed for each subject and moral instruction in primary school for each standard.

(iii) With the permission of the Minister of Education, the prescribed course of study may not be followed if the Minister was convinced that the special curriculum to be followed is suitable to achieve the target of education.

Changes in the Course of Study:

(i) Primary education now aimed at harmonious development of pupils as human beings and development of their abilities and personality.

(ii) Improvement of physical education.

(iii) Flexibility in the number of teaching hours.

Revision of 1977:

School education became popular with the passage of time, and by 1973, an unprecedented situation arose, i.e., that more than 90 per cent of students went voluntarily for upper secondary school after completing nine years of compulsory education. Thus, once again it seemed necessary to review the whole course of elementary, lower secondary and upper secondary school education, and maintain a close relationship between the three levels of education.

The Council for Curriculum started a survey in November 1973 and submitted its recommendations in December 1976.

The following proposals were made by the Council:

(i) Education should aim at rearing children with high human values and qualities.

(ii) Children should be provided with purposeful and perfect school life.

(iii) Importance should be attached to fundamental education required for rearing ideal citizens, but at the same time important consideration should also be given to individual worth and interest. Based on these recommendations, the Enforcement Regulations of School Education Act were partially revised on 23 July 1977 and the course of study for primary school was revised completely and the revised course of study was implemented in April 1980. The chief features of the new course of study are as follows:¹⁶

- (i) School Education Emphasizing Moral and Physical Education and seeking harmonized growth of intellect, body and mind.

Moral education is conducted through all the educational activities in school. Likewise, for leading a healthy and safe life and to seek a harmonized development of body and mind, the teaching of physical education is carried out through all the educational activities in the school. Today the school aims at developing the following:

16 Ibid., pp.13-18.

- (a) Creativity, intellect and independent thinking.
- (b) Love for mankind and nature.
- (c) Strong will power and autonomous spirit.
- (d) Correct approach and thinking towards work.
- (e) A practical society based on spirit of work and social solidarity among the people.
- (f) Harmonized growth of body and mind.
- (g) Rearing people who love their family, native place and nation and can command respect from others.

(i) Improvement of Object and Contents of Each Subject:

- (a) The contents were rearranged and improved keeping in view the grade, and the duration for which a subject was taught. And a close link between contents of teaching in primary, lower secondary and upper secondary schools was established. Earlier, too, a close link between subjects at different levels of education existed but now the contents of teaching were revised and linked strongly for the first time.

- (b) All those points which were overlapping were eliminated. In this respect especially the contents of courses on mathematics and science were rearranged and refined.

(iii) Decrease in Standard Teaching Hours:

The number of standard teaching hours was decreased and depending on the actual condition in school, the number of teaching hours vary from area to area. The standard teaching

hours in the 4th standard were decreased by 2 hours per week whereas in both 5th and 6th standards, 4 hours each were decreased. This reduction of hours is meant for decreasing the burden of students and these hours are to be kept free so as to carry out any activity which interests the students.

(iv) The object of each subject and "points of consideration for teaching the contents" were restricted only to essential aspects and guidance through spontaneous ingenuity of teachers was given full scope.

CHAPTER V

**CONTENTS OF PRIMARY SCHOOL TEXTBOOKS : NATIONAL
LANGUAGE, SOCIAL STUDIES AND MORALS**

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CONTENTS OF PRIMARY SCHOOL TEXTBOOKS : NATIONAL LANGUAGE, SOCIAL STUDIES AND MORALS

It is quite obvious from the foregoing chapters that there is a line of demarcation between the pre-war and post-war years in all respects when the pendulum swung from a long-term preoccupation with inculcation of nationalistic spirit to development of democracy. If after the Meiji Restoration of 1868, Japan broke away from feudalism, in 1945 it turned away from militarism and ultranationalism and moved along democratic lines. After the Meiji Restoration, Japan absorbed new ideas and was enriched by new experience, but continued even in an increasing degree to emphasize traditional values such as loyalty, obedience, submission, conformism and self-annihilation for the sake of the country. Education played a critical role in this. Education is in the final analysis an instrument for changing the system of thought and action. However, in pre-war Japan, it was utilized for maintaining the status quo in thought and action. School education had a strong moral tone and the curricula was used to indoctrinate youngsters mainly with the Japanese way of life and understanding their own society and country. Textbooks were compiled accordingly by the Mombusho. Especially those on History, Geography and Morals (Shushin) were used as tools to inculcate absolutely inviolable values. Since pre-war education was

textbook-oriented, the impact of textbooks was tremendous and long lasting. And that was why teaching of these courses was abandoned by the Allied Powers immediately after they took over. What was so dangerous about these courses? A content analysis of pre-war primary school textbooks on national language and those on history, geography and morals reveals that these courses were instrumental in shaping the mind and personality of the people and bringing about marked ideological changes largely responsible for the debacle of World War II.

Major Themes in Pre-war Textbooks

(a) Reverence for the Emperor:

The relationship of the monarch and his subjects formed the basis of the Japanese national character before 1945. After the Meiji Restoration when legal equality of all people was established and the Japanese people were under an obsession for changing everything, security of the Imperial Institution which was sought to be retained was threatened. Therefore, it was necessary to achieve subordination of all classes to the Imperial Institution. For that, the educational system as a whole and especially the courses on national language, history, geography and morals were utilized to inculcate and strengthen the ennobling sentiment, i.e., reverence for the Emperor. There was abstract deification of the Emperor and he was supposed to have divine origin, divine characteristics,

divine leadership and divine mission. The Imperial Rescript on Education based on the four virtues of righteousness, loyalty, filial piety and benevolence proclaimed in 1890, and the development of the theory of state based on the absolute authority of the Imperial Institution in 1937, were aimed at binding the people morally and spiritually to the Imperial Institution. School textbooks carried detailed accounts of the traditional history of the creation of the Japanese Empire, the divine origin and superiority of the Emperor, and the inviolability of the Japanese Imperial Institution. The portraits of the Emperor and the Empress and a copy of the Imperial Rescript on Education were preserved in every school. Everyday students were to bow before the image of the Emperor and the Empress. The contents of the textbooks glorified and extolled the Emperor justifying his inviolability. The Meiji Emperor was most frequently discussed in the textbooks on morals and national language.¹ Proverbs and pithy expressions were frequently used to ensure deference to the Emperor. Some of these expressions were: Bansei Ikkei no Tenno (Unbroken Line of Emperors), Kounfuyoku (Guard and Maintain the Prosperity of the Imperial Throne),

¹ Karazawa Tomitaro, Nihonjin-no-Rirekisho (Kodansha, Tokyo, 1961), p.99.

Kosokoshu no Goikun (Teachings of Our Imperial Ancestors), Tenshi (Son of Heaven), Tenno he no chu (Loyalty for the Emperor), Goseitoku (Imperial Virtues), Shinmin-no-Michi (Way of the Subjects) etc. Besides, a number of lessons were devoted to the Emperors to idolize them. Following are some instances from primary school textbooks used in pre-war years:

His Imperial Majesty The Emperor:

His Majesty the Emperor is the person who rules our great Imperial Japanese nation. The Emperor always treats his subjects as his children.

We, born as citizens of the great Imperial Japanese nation and blessed with such an August Personage, are most fortunate. 2

Loyalty:

Our whole country is like one big family with the Imperial family at the centre. Every Japanese Emperor treats his subjects as his own children and the subjects have always revered the Emperor as their Parent and have always followed the path of loyalty and patriotism. There are innumerable countries in the world but there is no other country which has a single line of Emperors and where both Imperial family and the subjects are one and undivided.

We are descendants of the subjects who were born in such a great country, who had venerable Imperial family and who have left

2 "Shushin", Textbook Series 4, vol.2, extracted in Ibid., p.170.

behind such laudable customs and traditions. Therefore, we must guard and maintain the prosperity of the Imperial throne. 3

(b) Loyalty for and Pride in Nation

Due to divine origin of the Japanese Empire, according to Japanese mythology, the Japanese race was considered to be superior to all other races of the world. Therefore, the textbooks narrated those unique national characteristics which established Japanese vanity. A clear-cut distinction was drawn between Japan and other countries of the world and it was stated that Japan had no parallel in the world. Pupils were taught to be proud of being born as Japanese. At the same time, the nation was placed above all else and inculcation of the spirit of obedience, loyalty, devotion and submission were the ideals of school education. Pupils were taught that their lives belonged to the nation and - the Emperor and they must be ready to sacrifice them any moment. Selfless devotion for the nation throughout their lives was demanded of them. Therefore, with the purpose of imbedding patriotism and nationalism among the people, expressions like Chukun Aikoku (Loyalty and Patriotism), Okuni no tame ni (For the Sake of the Country), Fukoku Kyohei (Rich Nation, Strong Army), Kokui (National Prestige), Nihon wa kami no kuni (Japan, the Land of Gods),

3 "Shushin", Textbook Series 4, vol.5 extracted in Karazawa Tomitaro, Kyokasho-no-Rekishi (Sobunsha, Tokyo, 1960), p.443.

Kyokoku Itchi (National Unity), Chugi Itto (Singlehearted devotion), Bankoku Muhi (Unparalleled in the World), Messhi hoko (Self-annihilation for the Sake of the Country) etc. were used frequently. A large number of lessons were also devoted to the discussion of national characteristics, including some times untruths and half-truths, to establish Japan's supremacy over other countries of the world. For instance:

Symbols of Japan:

As a symbol of Japan, there is a flag,
 A flag showing the rising sun.
 As a symbol of Japan, there is a mountain,
 Mt. Fuji the great mountain.
 As a symbol of Japan, there is a song,
 The worshipful song "Kimi ga yo". 4

Japan: From Ancient to Modern Times:

In this world many countries have come into existence and have disappeared. There were countries like Greece, Rome; and, in China, countries like Han, Tang, Mongolia etc. These countries flourished for sometime but were ruined with the passage of time. However, there is only one nation which stands with full glory since ancient times and will exist in times to come and that is our great country of Japan. Japan has existed since the age of Gods in pre-historic times. This land of Gods was formed by two Gods, namely, Izanagi and Izanami and since then this great country has always flourished.

At present, Japan is at war with America, England and their allies. Since the declaration of war on 8 December 1941 by the Emperor, the subjects of the Japanese

4 "Kokugo", Textbook Series 1, vol.1, Lesson 20
 extracted in Karazawa, nj, p.184.

Empire have pledged to obey the Imperial will and are determined to do their best for the monarch.

Already in the Pacific and various islands in the southern seas, there has been genesis of new Japan. As we know of the Great Eight Islands of Japan since ancient times, similarly this genesis of new Japan shall be conveyed to coming generations. And one day future generations will look upon with reverence the glory of the reign of Showa as we do for the reign of Emperor Jimmu and Emperor Meiji. Let us be discreet in our conduct and strive to create a commendable national history. 5

(c) Inculcation of Moral Values:

Due to the delicate social conditions of the 1870s and 1880s, it was realized that the need for morality in people was greater than ever before. Thus, inspiring and vitalizing morality was given top most importance. The course on morals was carefully designed for the purpose. It was decided to conform to conventionalities of Japanese society as they were the ripened results of a varied and long experience and could hold the nation together under the social system being aimed at. Textbooks on morals were carefully compiled and the themes ranged from simple etiquette like courtesy, humble deportment, honesty, respect for others, and generosity to national ethics. Thereafter this emphasis on moral values was intensified

5 "Shushin" Textbook Series 5, vol.3, Lesson 20
extracted in Ibid., pp.187-188.

more and more. For instance:

Honesty:

An honest shop-boy always informed his customers about the defects of things, if there were any, he sold. This boy later on became a big trader. 6

Counting-out Rhyme:

One, attach foremost importance to loyalty, respect and gratitude towards the Emperor and the nation.

Two, look after your parents and think of the deep love of father and mother.

Three, live happily with brothers and sisters like branches springing from the trunk of a tree.

Nine, always be ambitious even if you have a low status and less importance.

Ten, remember the teachings of the ancestors for the welfare of the family and the nation. 7

Hierarchical Relationships of Confucius

Family formed the basis of the Japanese Empire centered around the Imperial family because it was considered that a well ordered and well governed family is like a spring from which go forth the streams of national greatness and prosperity. To respect the ancestors and to bring prosperity to the family were regarded as

6 "Shushin", Textbook Series 1, vol.2, Lesson 17 extracted in Karazawa, n.3, p.291.

7 "Kokugo", Textbook Series 2, vol.6, extracted in Ibid., p.307.

national virtue. Filial piety i.e. dutiful respect for parents and homeland were emphasized. Pupils were taught to be loyal subjects and dutiful sons. Moreover, proper family relations like the relation between parents and children, husband and wife, brother and brother etc. were explained through these textbooks on morals. Phrases like Ko wa hyakko no ki (Filial Devotion is the Basis of Human Conduct), Ko wa toku no moto nari (Filial Piety is the root of virtue), Hato wa Sanshi no rei ari (The Dove Sits Three Branches Below Its Parents), Chuko Itchi (Loyalty and Filial Piety are One), Sosen o tattobe (Respect the Ancestors), Fubo o uyamau (Respect the Parents) were common. Following are two instances emphasizing the family-state concept (Kazoku kokka):

Our Ancestors and Our Homes:

Our home is the place which is governed by our ancestors and our parents pursue their will and look after the household affairs accordingly. Therefore, it is important to respect them and offer our gratitude towards them on all festivals.

The family honour is lost even if one member goes astray. Therefore, every member should do his duty, be prudent in his conduct, strive for the honour and prosperity of his family and try to elevate the name of the ancestors. In ancient days when Mori-no-Keimei was surrounded by Ezo and his strategy was exhausted, he wanted to escape. Thereupon, his wife said: "Your ancestors won the honour for family through bravery. It is shameful to escape and soil the name of the ancestors."

We always attach foremost importance to the family. For our ancestors we should prove to

be filial and obedient descendants and for our own descendants we should try to be honourable ancestors. 8

The Family Crest:

When talking of the family crests there are Imperial crests of the chrysanthemum of 16 rays and the Imperial crest of the leaf flower of the Paulownia imperialis. Then the floating chrysanthemum crest of the Kusu-no-ki family is well known and well respected. Even today this crest is a symbol of loyalty to the Imperial family. Another popular instance of piety is that of Soga brothers. There are a large number of crests symbolizing loyalty and piety. They are as many as the names of families such as Mitsudomoe (the crest of three comma shaped figures in a circle), Mitsuboshi (the crest of three stars in a circle), Yotsume (the crest of four squares), Hiyosei (the crest of nine stars), Unebachi (the crest of plum blossom), Sakura (the crest of cherry blossom), Tachibana (the crest of an orange), Sangaimatsu (the crest of three pine trees), Sasa-no-yuki (the crest of snow on bamboo leaves), Agari sagari no fuji no mon (the crests of wisteria, one up and one down), Take-no-ha (the crest of falcon feathers), Tsuru-no-maru (the crest of crane in a circle), etc. 9

(d) Social Work:

The importance of the spirit of cooperation for the development of a good living and prosperity was taught to students. They were also taught that one can be worthy of living only as a member of the country, as a member of

8 "Shushin", Textbook Series 2, vol.6, Lesson 5, extracted in Karazawa, n.1, p.90.

9 "Kokugo", Textbook Series 2, vol.7, extracted in Ibid., p.93.

the community and of a family and not as an individual. Through the textbooks, the spirit of cooperation, public welfare and public morality were inculcated and the effort towards self-reliance and self-support was linked with the effort to promote the spirit of social work thereby contributing to the advancement of the national strength.

Kotaro's Village:

There are about 150 houses in Kotaro's village but only 3 have tiled roofs. They are the village office, school and police station. Kotaro's house is immediately next to the village office. Kotaro's father is the village chief. He is very kind and looks after the welfare of the village. Sometimes he also visits the school.

Teachers of the school are all very kind and guide their pupils affectionately. The Policeman is also very kind. He patrols the village often to prevent thefts and epidemics. Therefore, people of this village have a sense of security and live in comfort.

Isn't Kotaro fortunate to live in such a village? 10

(e) Bravery:

Through exposure to heroic tales and songs, pupils were taught to be courageous, valiant, fearless and gallant and that they should have unflinching courage and chivalrous spirit to serve the nation better. For instance:

Devotion:

The Japanese fleet in order to stop the Russian war vessel from escaping, sank their own ship at the entrance to Port Arthur.

At that time, our soldiers were not afraid of losing their lives for the Emperor and fought bravely. 11

Kikuchi Kohel:

Kikuchi Kohel, a soldier was hit by a bullet while doing his duty but he did not remove the bugle from his mouth. He, therefore, died with the bugle in his mouth. 12

(f) Sense of Duty

The pupils were taught to realize their social obligations and duty towards the nation. Moreover, the sense of responsibility and moral obligation to do one's duty in fulfilment of the social obligations were developed among them. For instance:

Servant:

Otsuna at the age of 15 became a baby-sitter. One day as she was baby-sitting with the child on her back, a dog suddenly came and bit Otsuna. She got scared and tried to run away. But there was no time. Therefore, Otsuna put the child on the ground and she herself lied down over the child and shielded the child with her own body. The dog jumped on Otsuna and bit her repeatedly but Otsuna did not move a bit.

In the meantime, people came running and killed the dog and took Otsuna to her master's house. The child was not injured at all but Otsuna's wounds were serious and she died after some time. People admired Otsuna and erected a tomb as a mark of respect for her. 13

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- 11 "Shushin", Textbook Series 2, vol.2, extracted in Karazawa, n.3, p.279.
- 12 "Shushin", Textbook Series 3, vol.1, extracted in Ibid., p.724.
- 13 "Shushin", Textbook Series 2, vol.4, extracted in Ibid., p.291.

Mother of a Seaman:

It was during the war in the 27th and 28th years of Meiji that one seaman of Japan's war vessel Takachiho was crying while reading a letter in woman's handwriting. The captain who happened to pass by, seeing this thought it to be effeminacy and said: "Hey, what happened? Are you fed up of your life or yearning for your wife and children? Don't you feel proud that you are a soldier and are in the battle field? What's all this? One soldier's disgrace is one warship's disgrace and our disgrace is our Empire's disgrace."

The seaman was surprised on being scolded severely. He stood up and looked at the captain for a while and then lowering his head, he said: "This is too much. I do not have wife and children. I am also a Japanese. Therefore, why should I be reluctant to sacrifice my life. Please read this letter yourself."

Saying so, he handed over the letter to the captain. The letter read as follows:

"I have heard that you did not participate in the battle of Feng Dao and even at the time of Waiheiwei attack on 10 August you did not do anything special. Your mother really regrets this. What for have you gone to the front? Is it not to sacrifice your life to repay for the kindness of the Emperor? All people here in the village are looking after me and they say that since my only son has gone to war, I must be facing many inconveniences. Whenever I see their faces, I am reminded of your cowardly conduct and I feel that my heart would break. Everyday when I visit the Hachiman (The God of War) Shrine, I pray to the God for your brilliant achievement. Though I am scolding you but I do not hate you because I am a mother. Please try to understand my feelings with which I am writing you this letter."

Tears gushed from the captain's eyes on reading this letter. Holding the seaman's hand he then said: "It was really bad on my part to have said so. I admire the feelings and spirit of your mother. Your mortification is also justified. However, modern wars are different from the earlier wars and a soldier cannot perform a meritorious deed all alone. Officers as well as other soldiers must fight together. All have to obey order of the chief and have to try to execute the order diligently. Your mother says that you must sacrifice your life to repay for the kindness of the Emperor but we have not still got that opportunity. All the seamen of this war vessel regret that they did not get the opportunity to sacrifice their lives for the Emperor during the battle of Feng Dao. However, it cannot be helped. Nevertheless, there will be a glorious war. At that time, we all shall try to do something heroic and make Takachiho's name famous. You write about this to your mother so that she may feel relieved."

The seaman was listening to it with his head down. He then raised his hand in salute and left smilingly. 14

(g) Diligence

Students were taught that success and fame result from diligence. Therefore, one must be industrious, self-reliant and self-supporting and cultivate the spirit of diligence to work for the welfare of the country. For instance:

Frog and Spider:

A frog leaping at a weeping willow,
leaps and falls, falls and leaps.
Leaps and falls again and again,
Succeeds at last.

On a small windy branch,
 a spider weaves its web.
 Weaves but it breaks
 It weaves again and again,
 succeeds at last. 15

Where there is will, there is way:

If raindrops fall continuously from the eaves, a hole is made even in a stone. We human beings should be resolute and should not be tempted by anything. If we work sincerely and with devotion, we can penetrate the hardness of iron or stone. Even a small ant, if it works hard, can build a tower. A swallow can cross an ocean of 1000 miles. Therefore, we being human beings, must fix up one aim and apply ourselves to its attainment without idling away time. If we work in high spirits, there is nothing we cannot achieve. We can even move a mountain. 16

(h) Martial Spirit

As Japan had the tendency to regard military efficiency as the supreme ideal of the state, especially after 1930, inculcation of martial spirit was major theme in pre-war years. The course on music, since its introduction in 1889, was nothing but a program on militarism. Text-books on morals and national language carried a large number of lessons extolling militarism. In the 1905 textbook series, 7.5 per cent of lessons were devoted to militarism. In the 1911 textbook series, this percentage was 4 per cent; in the 1919 textbook series 2.6 per cent,

15 "Kokugo", Textbook Series 2, vol.3, Lesson 19, extracted in Ibid., p.96.

16 "Kokugo", Textbook Series 2, vol.7, extracted in Ibid., p.96.

in the 1933 textbook series 5.5 per cent and in the 1941 textbook series it was as high as 14.4 per cent.¹⁷

Following are the instances extolling militarism:

War Vessel (A Children's Song)

Go, Go war vessel of Japan
Go around Japan which is surrounded by sea,
Cross the surging waves of the sea
Go, Go war vessel of Japan.
Spread the glory of Japan
Upto the end of the sea. 18

Every Japanese is a Soldier

Japanese people are basically peace-loving people. But in case of emergency, everyone forgets about himself and his family and regards it a honour to be sent to the battlefield as a soldier to serve the Emperor. All Japanese men in the age group of 17 to 40 have to serve in the army. Therefore, every Japanese should build up his physique since childhood and when he grows up, after successfully passing the examination for conscription should aim at the honourable job of serving in the defence forces. 19

In addition to the above mentioned major themes, the other themes were self-confidence, benevolence, discipline etc. On the whole, it is quite obvious from these themes that contentwise education in the pre-war years was oriented towards indoctrination of the mind and subordination of the individual to the Imperial Institution and the State. The first and only concern was the nation.

17 Karazawa, n.3, p.535.

18 Extracted in Ibid., p.535.

19 "Shushin" Textbook Series 5, vol.4, Lesson 8, extracted in Ibid., p.499.

This obviously obstructed the progress of freedom and self-consciousness among people. Spontaneity of individuals was destroyed and tradition and spiritualism were emphasized. However, all this came to end with Japan's catastrophic defeat in 1945. Thus the cultural renaissance begun in the Meiji period proved in the long run to be a revolution to kill culture.

POST-WAR TEXTBOOKS

The socio-economic miseries that followed the war served as an eye-opener for the Japanese people. They realized, for the first time, how grossly they had been misguided. There was a genuine desire among the people to obtain peace at any cost. They could not afford any longer to observe with complacency the unfair dominance of military authorities. Therefore, in place of irrational morality of pre-war years developed righteous convictions, reasonable common sense and prudence. Force was replaced with reason and a free society was developed. Education came to have a broad human focus and the goals of education were now humanism, liberalism and individualism. It is evident from the fact that the textbooks on national language published immediately after the war had more than 80 per cent of literary contents while only 0.7 per cent on nationalism.²⁰

20 Ibid., p.642.

A content analysis of presently used primary school textbooks on national language, social studies and morals reveals the marked difference in contents from those in pre-war years. Unlike the common goal of all subjects in pre-war years, today the target of each subject is fixed separately, though the ultimate goal is to carry out progressive education.

MAJOR THEMES IN POST-WAR YEARS

National Language

After the war (actually after 1955), the primary school textbooks on Kokugo (National Language) were entitled Shinkokugo (literally new national language). It, however, does not mean that the language is new, rather the purpose and contents of this course are new and also perhaps to distinguish them from the textbooks on national language used before the war. Since in Japan the medium of instruction is Japanese, this course is given considerable importance. Thirtytwo per cent of the total teaching hours in the first year, 33 per cent in the second, third and fourth years, and 25 per cent in the fifth and sixth years are devoted to this course. The objectives²¹ of this course defined in the course of study on National Language are as follows:

21 Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, Course of Study for Elementary Schools in Japan (Government of Japan, Tokyo, 1976), p.5.

Children should be capable of expressing themselves correctly in the national language in day-to-day life.

It is, therefore, necessary to:

- Cultivate the faculty and attitude to consider and create things with the national language.
- Help them acquire knowledge and enrich their sentiment through grasp of, and expression in, the national language.
- Induce them to deepen their interest in national language to foster their love and affection for the national language.
- Make them conscious of the role of the national language as a means of communication and enable them to cultivate the attitude conducive to the elevation of social life.

Textbook contents are eclectically selected in order to achieve the above objectives. Contentwise this course is strongly linked with all other courses and, therefore, has a wide range. The main themes in the textbooks on the national language can be classified into the following:

(i) Training of Mind:

There can be no assured peace unless peace reigns people's mind. After the war, the need for rearing respect for democracy and developing a sound understanding of democratic institutions was considered most essential as Japan moved into new latitudes of peace and democracy. In other words, logical reasoning, right judgement, creative spirit, enriching the faculty of imagination and of sentiment and cultivating a will for always seeking a

right and strong life are basic essentials. Therefore, the textbooks on national language attempt to widen the outlook of pupils, mould their character and rear peaceful mind. The following example sufficiently proves the importance given to ingenuity of each pupil and the training of mind along democratic lines:

Significance and Method of Meetings

You all must have experienced a number of meetings of the class House (Gakkyukai) and the children's club (Jidokai). 22

Why do you hold these meetings?

These meetings are meant for considering something collectively. That is because we can get a better solution by discussing any matter collectively than deciding individually.

In a meeting, every member has the right to express his opinion freely. If one does not do so, it means he is not utilizing this valuable right. The decision taken by all in a meeting after thorough consideration should be acceptable to all. Thereafter, one should not make any irresponsible statement and should not indulge in independent action by saying that the decision was not acceptable to him. The significance of a meeting is to discuss collectively and share responsibility collectively.

When participating in a meeting one should be aware of the rules and regulations and should try to abide by them. Moreover, one should think about the topic of discussion and give his constructive opinion. Secondly, besides expressing his opinion, one should listen to

22 In Japan, every class has a class House and every school has a children's club. School curriculum allocates some hours for club activities from those provided for special activities. The purpose is to make children realize their responsibilities and get acquainted with the democratic systems.

others also with sincerity. Moreover, even if many people differ with you, you must listen to all of them attentively and pass a fair and impartial judgement. All convincing suggestions should be positively accepted and if you are at mistake you must try to rectify it honestly.²³

(ii) Expression

Thinking cannot be clear till it has expression. We must write or speak or act our thoughts or they will remain in a half torpid form. It is expression which develops our inward feelings. Composition is regarded as the most essential part of the course on national language. About 20-30 per cent of the total teaching hours of national language are devoted to composition.²⁴ A large number of lessons in textbooks are devoted to expression. Through exposition to different styles of writing, composition and expression, students are taught how to think and write properly. The ultimate purpose is the development of general ability for independent thinking and judgement, understanding of values, achievement of average level of intelligence and knowledge and make them see and imagine the world in an objective manner.

23 Extracted from Shinkokugo Rokunen-jo (Mitsumura Toshio, Tokyo, 1978), pp.19-21.

24 Fujiwara Hiroshi, Shogakko Shinkyoiku Kateikoza (Kokugo Teikokuchihō Gyosei Gakukai, Tokyo, 1969), p.262.

For instance:

Record of One's Impressions

Take any book which you have found most interesting and make an account of your impressions of the aspects you found most interesting and which impressed you most.

Use Cards

If you read any book carelessly, you will remember very little about it. And if you are to write an account of your impressions regarding it, you can write only the theme in brief. On the other hand, even if you have read a book thoroughly, you may forget about it with the passage of time. However, if you record the following points on a card, these will be useful for writing a statement of your impressions:

- The portions which impressed you most.
- The words and phrases you would like to remember or the portions which you find are beautifully written.
- Portions you found strange or interesting and portions you liked etc. And the portions which you could not follow.
- Your impressions after reading the book thoroughly.

After having made a card along these lines, let us try and write the account of impressions about that book. 25

(iii) Scientific Attitude

Of course, it is the purpose of the course on science to cultivate scientific attitudes and skills through actual study of science. However, through the course on national language students are made to comprehend the nature and life of mankind in general in simple language. Logical and objective grasp of natural features of the world and its cultures is aimed at and a spirit of international harmony is cultivated. Students' attention is drawn towards life around them, life throughout the world and how nature is linked with mankind etc. One example is given here to illustrate the point:

Micro-organism:

There are a large number of small germs around us which cannot be seen with eyes. These are known as micro-organism.

Nearly 290 years ago, a Dutch scholar observed dirty water and the food stuck in tooth with a microscope prepared by himself. He found a large number of germs in them. This was very surprising for the people. Once these germs were detected, the research regarding them flourished. As a result, soon the kinds of germs, their life, their growth and size etc. came to light one after another. Moreover, the relation between these microorganism and our life was also clarified.

What relation these invisible germs have with our life?

There are many harmful germs among the micro-organism. Food stuff rots if these germs enter it. And if we eat such food, food-poisoning is caused. More serious diseases can also be caused. For instance, diphtheria, scarlet fever, wheyn, typhoid etc. All contagious diseases are caused and spread by these germs.

On the contrary, there are also many germs which are indispensable for our life. You will be surprised to learn that bread is made by the power of these germs. Eatables like Miso, Soy (sauce), fermented soybeans, cheese etc. and drinks like sake, beer, grape wine etc. are made by micro-organism. Moreover, medicines like pencillin, streptomycin etc. are also made from these germs. It is interesting that diseases caused by one type of germs are cured by medicines made from other germs.

In this way, we have come to know about the deep relation of these germs with our life. However, through more researches, these germs would prove more useful to mankind. 26

(iv) Collective Effort

The spirit of teamwork among the Japanese people is today known throughout the world. Students are taught to help each other and bear each other's burden. A sound mutual understanding is developed among them. They are made to realize their duty as members of a group and to participate actively in group activities for the success of the group. The following summary of a tale bears out this succinctly:

Suimi

Deep in the sea there lived a big family of fish. All were red except Suimi which was black. Large fish used to attack them and eat a large number of them. Therefore, most of the fish were scared to go into the

open sea and remained in hiding among the bushes. Thereupon, Suimi suggested to other fish that whenever they go out they must swim together in the shape of a big fish and so they could scare away the bigger fish. 27

(v) Ethical Sentiments

The purpose of the course on national language is simply not imparting knowledge and pure intellectuality but also to inspire ethical sentiments through literary works rich in emotions, feelings, compassion etc. Respect and duty towards parents, love for brothers and sisters, sympathy for the sufferer, love for animals are emphasized. Pupils are taught to scatter the seeds of courtesy, humanity and brotherhood, and a spirit of benevolence is developed among them. For instance, the following excerpt from a textbook is pregnant with emotions and a sense of respect and duty for mother:

My Mother is a Fish Seller

It showed in early January..I was feeling very happy but my mother seemed worried.

I kept on thinking why mother is worried while we all children are happy. Finally I understood the reason. My mother goes to sell fish everyday in a car. However cold it may be, she has to go. Therefore, she cannot sit near the heater. If it snows, the car slips and that was why she was feeling worried.

This morning also she went hurriedly to the fish market after breakfast. After some time she came back carrying fish in a wooden box. There were many flatfish, shellfish and angler in the box.

She first weighed flatfish and arranged them in the box. Next she put shellfish in vinyl bags, weighed them and stapled them. Finally she washed angler and put them in a bucket.

After having arranged them all, she wrote the price tags. Her hands were red and swollen. I felt pity on her seeing her red hands.

I requested her to take rest but she said "No, it is not possible. Customers must be waiting". Saying so, she loaded all fish in the car.

I carried the bucket of fish for her. Mother got into the car and said "Kyo, thank you. I shall be back soon". I kept on looking at the car till it disappeared. While we were having orange and warming ourselves sitting around the kotatsu (fire place), I kept thinking that mother must be feeling cold. I wished she came back soon. Till today my elder sister arranged mother's bed whenever she got late. But today I decided to arrange her bed. 28

(vi) Social Behaviour

Students are made to grasp the significance of social life and cultivate the foundation of citizenship to live as members of a democratic nation and contribute towards the development of nation and society. A spirit of cooperation is developed among them to lead a happy social life. A sound understanding of values is created so that each individual behaves like a good citizen.

For instance, the following story emphasizes the mutual dependence of people in a society.

One and All

There are a large number of people who do not work only for themselves but also for others.

For instance, let us consider milk which we drink daily. Milk does not reach our place by itself. People working on the stock farms look after cows and milk them. Then there are people who take this milk to factories. People working in factories pasteurize the milk and fill it in bottles. This bottled milk is then supplied to milk vendors in cities. This is also done by people. These milk vendors then carry this milk to our places. Thus, so many people work behind one bottle of milk. You also must be helping your parents. At that time you are also working for all. 29

(vii) Internationalism

Since World War II, internationalism or the principle of cooperation among nations for the promotion of common good has been made an integral part of school education. While mostly Japanese people were discussed as ideals in pre-war years, today foreigners are more frequently discussed. For instance, Jean Henri Fabre, Robinson Crusoe, Henri Dunant etc. frequently appear in the textbooks. Citations of foreign countries and translations of famous foreign authors' works like Shakespeare, Leo Tolstoy etc are a regular feature of

present day textbooks on national language. Following is the summary of a lesson devoted to this theme.

Henri Dunant - Father of Red Cross

Henri Dunant known as the father of Red Cross was born in Geneva in Switzerland on 8 May 1828 about 150 years ago. Today Red Cross exists in more than 120 countries of the world and works for international peace and welfare of mankind.

It was during a fierce battle between Austrian forces and the combined forces of France and Sardinia on 24 June 1859 that Dunant came to Castigline, a place very near to the battle field. Dunant owned a flour mill in North Africa under French control. He required more land to expand his business. Therefore, he came to request Napoleon III of France for permission. However, seeing the sufferings of soldiers, he forgot about his own work and decided to do something. He formed a relief force which collected medicines, bandage, clothes, eatables etc. from people and helped the injured soldiers. Dunant nursed the enemy soldiers also with the same dedication as he believed that "people are all brothers". He continued to nurse the soldiers till the war was over.

Dunant returned to his native place in Geneva but he could not forget the agonies of soldiers in the battle field. In 1862 he wrote a book in which he explained the sufferings of soldiers he had himself seen. He appealed that there should not be any war in future. He also emphasized the need for a relief organization without any distinction of enemy or ally.

His intention was realized in February 1863 when a 5-member Committee was organized by Dunant and Swiss scholars and soldiers. This later became the Red Cross. Dunant visited a number of countries and appealed to people for cooperation and support. In October 1863, 16 European nations met in Geneva and the Red Cross was established.

Dunant sacrificed everything of his for Red Cross and himself led a poor life in Paris and London for a long time. In 1901 he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace which he politely refused but wanted the prize money to be used for Red Cross. He died on 30 October 1910.

In the Peace Declaration of Red Cross of 1948, the following words of Dunant are quoted:

"If all the people of the world live as one and act according to the dictates of their conscience, all wars can be prevented". These words of Dunant will remain for ever. 30

Thus it is quite obvious from the above themes that the purpose of the course on national language is to develop moral, intellectual and physical nature in harmonious proportions. Students are taught to follow the dictates of conscience. Their outlook is widened and inequality between one and the other is eliminated. Kind words and kind acts are inspired. Habit of holding passions, prejudice and evil tendencies under control is developed, and wisdom, honesty and the sense of responsibility are toned up. A classification of total number of lessons devoted to each of the above mentioned themes given in the accompanying table reveals the extent of importance given to each theme.

Table 1
Classification of Lessons Devoted to Each Theme in the Textbooks
on National Language

Theme	2nd.yr. pt.I	2nd yr. pt.II	3rd yr. pt.I	3rd yr. pt.II	4th.yr. pt.I	4th yr. pt.II	5th.yr. pt.I	5th.yr. pt.II	6th yr. pt.I	6th yr. pt.II
Training of Mind	2	2	1	1	1	2	4	1	2	2
Expression	5	3	4	4	4	4	4	5	4	4
Scientific Attitude	1	2	2	1	1	2	1	1	1	-
Collective Effort	1	-	1	-	-	1	1	-	1	1
Ethical Sentiments	1	3	2	3	3	1	1	2	1	2
Social Behaviour	1	1	-	1	1	1	1	-	1	1
International-ism	1	-	1	1	1	-	1	2	1	1

Note: In 1st year Part I and Part II students are taught only the rudiments of Japanese language.

(b) Social Studies

As stated earlier, the course on social studies was introduced for the first time as a regular course in 1947 although a course on civics had been introduced in 1931 in middle schools. However, it was nothing but a course on nationalism. Nevertheless, this course on civics became a prelude to the course on social studies after the war.

This course was the center of controversy between Occupation forces and the Japanese educationists because it was new for Japan and was considered to be a misfit in Japanese system. The Occupation authorities were of the opinion that for perpetual democracy and peace, a collection of qualities like disciplined intellect, clear thinking, knowledge of human nature, deep sense of morality, spirit of benevolence etc. was necessary. The course on social studies was designed with this purpose in view. The objectives³¹ of this course are to develop basic understanding of social life, understanding and love for history and traditions of Japan and cultivate the foundations of citizenship to live as members of a democratic and peaceful nation and society. And in order to achieve

31 Kobayashi Nobuo, Yamaguchi Kosuka, Shogakko Shinkyoku Katei Koza: Shakai (Teikoku Chihogyosei Gakukai, Tokyo, 1969), p.199.

these objectives, it is necessary to:

- develop correct understanding about the role of family and function of society and nation in connection with concrete social functions and along with developing love for family, society and nation, make them aware of the fact that respect and consideration for others is the basis of democratic social life.
- develop understanding about the relation between human life and natural environments and the importance of positive action with respect to nature and to cultivate love for native place, their own country and other countries.
- make them understand that Japan's culture, traditions and life have been developed historically, to foster an attitude to be always ready for working for the development of society and nation.
- broaden their capability to make the best use of basic data for correct understanding of social life and observe social phenomena and consider their significance and thus help them to develop capability for making correct social judgements.

Textbooks on social studies compiled in accordance with these objectives, cover a wide range of subjects like general culture, family living, occupations, citizenship and general infusion of wit to heighten civility etc. The major themes in these textbooks are the following:

Value of Work

The greatest asset of any nation is the spirit of its people. The course on social studies, besides personal idealism, aims at developing professional spirit as well. Through textbooks students are made to

realise how their lives are constituted around the labour of those engaged in production of commodities, daily-necessities, traffic, thus making them aware of the significance of the division of labour in society. They are introduced to gradual progress of the nation attained through the sincere efforts of their forefathers. Therefore, they also must subordinate their impulses and interests to the furtherance of the social life. Working conditions in different professions are studied and it is explained how each individual is dedicated to his job and works for his fellow people, society and the nation. Thus the consciousness of being the members of a city, town or village is developed among them. They are also taught to work willingly and with enthusiasm, putting their mind, heart and soul into work. To begin with, they are introduced to the life in family, school and neighbourhood and then the life in broader areas, i.e., life in the village, town or city and thereafter life in the region and society as a whole. Thus, the basic tissue of social life, i.e., the family and the home, the neighbourhood and the city, the society and the nation are built up. In short, students are made to realize their respective responsibilities, first as members of the family and then as members of the society and the nation.

Urban Life

The development and growth of cities has been remarkable in Japan during the last hundred years. Since Japan's embarkment on the road to modernization, an unending process of urbanization began and a large proportion of Japanese population is today concentrated in cities. People from different walks of life live together in cities. Most of the cities are linked with the neighbouring areas and a large majority of people travel daily to the cities even from distant areas. Therefore, urban life is very complex and for a sound understanding of urban life, students, to begin with, are introduced to the chief features of their own city or the geographical and demographic features, structure of population by profession, production activities, principal products, consumer life of the people, functioning of municipal office, prefectural government. Thereafter, the growth of their own city in historical perspective, changes in life styles of people, their profession and cultural activities, link between their own city and neighbouring regions and distant parts of the country, mutual dependence of people in society, comparison with rural life are discussed. The problems of urban areas such as pollution, traffic, housing are also discussed.

Rural Life

Japan is the most mountainous country in the world and the arable land is very scanty, limited to 16 per cent of the total area. Therefore, life in the countryside is full of hardships compared to those in cities. Simultaneously with urban life, students are also introduced to the life of people in farming, mountain and fishing villages. As for agriculture, students are introduced to major farm products, their distribution, utilization of land, production techniques, crop rotation, transportation of products to the market. And as for forestry and marine industries, students are made to understand the hardships faced by people engaged in them and modern production techniques used by them. They are also explained the deep relation between agricultural and marine products and people's lives and made to understand the importance of these jobs as they provide us with basic necessities of life. The organized activities among people of a rural community are also taught to them so that they realize the importance of cooperative life.

In addition to the above, in the first semester of the sixth and final year of primary school, students are introduced to Japanese history and culture, Japanese government and politics, the constitution, rights and duties of the citizens. And in the second semester of the sixth year, lives of the people in different parts of

the world, chief features of different countries, Japan in relation to different countries of the world, various international problems are studied. The ultimate purpose of this course is realization of mature and responsible citizenship and implicit brotherhood among the people.

The following illustration is aimed at teaching students that they are members of one great body and must consider that they are born for the good of the whole world and that goodwill and cooperation form the basis for building a better future; that we cannot exist without mutual help and we all must contribute for the realization of a peaceful international society:

Future Japan

Our country indicates its firm resolution to maintain peace in its constitution. Japan, being the only country to have experienced considerable damage by nuclear weapons, has always opposed the manufacturing or experiment of nuclear weapons in the United Nations General Assembly and on all other occasions.

In recent years, the growth of science and technology has been remarkable and the growth of atomic power and rockets has been startling. If these are used as weapons, the outcome will be disastrous. Therefore, hereafter also our country must strongly emphasize the proper use of science and technology for peace and welfare of mankind.

Japan by increasing its production capacity and stepping up its trade, has advanced to the extent that it is being called an economic giant. However, at the same time it has also been said of Japan that her foreign relations revolve around her own profit.

Since the oil problem of Arab countries, the era of pursuing nation-first principle by buying huge amounts of raw materials with money has come to an end. It is obvious from the oil problem that no country can advance without cooperating with other countries. There are also some developing countries in the world which have population problem and are even facing shortage of food-stuffs. Especially in Asia, there are many countries which, while struggling with poverty and pressure from big powers, are trying to achieve industrial growth.

It is important for Japan to know the requirements and hopes of these countries and provide aid and extend cooperation to them. We, in order to make these countries live in comfort, must make united efforts aiming at a peaceful world free of any warfare. 32

(c) Morals

As seen earlier, the course on morals (shushin) was banned by the SCAP after the war and whether the course on morals should be revived or not remained a topic of controversy for about a decade. Finally in 1958 moral education was revived as a regular part of the curriculum in primary schools. During all these years (1947-58), though moral education was not taught separately, it was made an integral part of courses on national language and social studies. And ever since the inception of this course as a regular part of the curriculum in

1958, it is, as seen earlier, still carried out through all the educational activities in school and is obviously given lot of importance.

However, the contents and purpose of this course are today quite different from those in pre-war years. Nationalistic morality is no longer to be seen and mostly individual and social morality is emphasized. The objectives of moral education are "to cultivate in children morality which serves as a basis for developing a personality which will never lose the consistent spirit of respect for one's fellow men, will realize this spirit at home, in the school and other aspects of life in the society which strives for the development of a democratic nation and society and which is able to make a voluntary contribution to a peaceful international society."³³

The course of study also provides the contents of moral education which forms the broad basis for the compilation of textbooks on this subject. However, the textbooks on moral education may or may not be used. Nevertheless, a content analysis of the textbooks on morals reveals that the main themes are the following.

33 Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, Course of Study for Elementary Schools in Japan (Government of Japan, Tokyo, 1976), p.200.

Character Building

The development of a right character in youth is most important before one develops a particular bent of mind. And a right character is one which is capable of standing firm upon its feet in the world of daily work, temptation and inclinations and able to bear the hardships of actual life. These qualities of mind call for good manners, honesty, benevolent feelings, courage and discipline.

The primary objective of the course on morals is to mould the character of youths. To begin with, the behaviour and language of pupils are stressed. True politeness, good manners and tidy mind are emphasized. Students are taught to lead a disciplined life. Punctuality, effective use and significance of time are stressed. They are taught to have a firm mind and act according to their own beliefs and should not be moved unreasonably by others or do anything against their conscience. Besides that, certain other values like honesty, faithfulness, sincerity and consistency in behaviour, courage to fight for the right cause, fairness and impartiality etc. are also emphasized. In short, integrity of mind, i.e., a person who is friendly, faithful and true, honest and fearless, just and chivalrous, is the first and the foremost objective of moral education. The following extract illustrates the point:

Work and Pleasure

For completing any work, a lot of hard work and dedication is required. Everyone, when asked to clean the garden or look after the school meals preparation, sometimes does not feel like doing the work. The tougher the work the stronger is such feeling. However, in this world there are many people who overcome such feelings and difficulties and do their work sincerely. From where do they get this power to continue the work till the end?

Last Sunday, I cleaned my garden. When I first went to the garden with a broom, there were many dried leaves scattered all around and the garden was overgrown with weeds. I felt that it was too much but I got down with the work.

I started my work by removing weeds. Plucking weeds one by one was an arduous job. And whenever I came across weeds which did not come out easily, I felt like giving up but somehow I continued.

After about an hour suddenly I noticed that I was finding it interesting and now I wanted to do the work thoroughly and sincerely. After completing the work when I saw the neat and clean garden, I felt really happy. I had never felt before this the pleasure of work. 34

Ethics

After character building comes moral uplift. Though the post-war value system in Japan is more conducive to the formation of a material infrastructure for the development of capitalism, it is not blind to the overall moral elevation and is more rational than in pre-war years and

the ultimate goal is universal good and promotion of the benefit of the whole world.

The value system in Japan revolves around three fundamental relationships, namely, relationship between individuals, between an individual and a group and between one group and another group. Therefore, first of all, esteem for human life and its safety and esteem for other's freedom as well as one's own are stressed. Students are taught to protect rights of others and are made to understand that one should be helpful to others and dedicate oneself to the good of the people and that one should carry out one's duties and obligations without fail and obey rules and regulations willingly. There should be mutual trust and one should be cooperative and friendly with others. One should be broadminded and forgive other's faults and understand and regard other's feelings. Pupils are also taught to esteem justice and act with righteousness and courage and at the same time must assert their rights within certain limits. In short, individual morality is given topmost importance.

The notion of a perfect society in Japan embraces the family at its center. Therefore, respect for all members of one's family and cooperation for making a good home are emphasized. They are made to understand the family and perform one's duties as members of the family. Finally, love and respect for all the people of the world

is stressed and a spirit of cooperation for peace in the world and the welfare of mankind is developed. The following extract from a textbook on morals is cited to show the emphasis placed on benevolent feelings, the sense of cooperation and the effort to inculcate the spirit of universal brotherhood among children.

Help Indian Children

Miss M. Kondo, a student of lower secondary school in Kawasaki city, Kanagawa prefecture, appealed to the people for donation for Indian children suffering from hunger through a newspaper on 2 July 1967. In response to her appeal a large number of gifts, eatables and donations worth 460,000 yen were received. The idea of helping Indian children came to Kondo's mind when in the Sunday school in a local church she learnt that Indian children did not have sufficient food to eat and even for one bowl of rice gruel they have to wait in long queue.

About 100 primary and secondary school children of the area went around to collect donations from people. Making use of the summer vacation, these children collected waste articles and donations from people. They also went from home to home to collect various things and money. They also contributed their own pocket money. Thereupon, Miss Kondo made the following appeal to the people through the newspaper:

"My family has 5 members. I am the eldest among brothers and sisters and a first year student of lower secondary school. I have many needs and always there is something or other I want to have. But when I learnt about the hard life of Indian people in the church I was really surprised. I also saw a picture in which I saw lean and thin children with gloomy faces standing in long queue for a bowl of rice. Thereupon, I came to know of a different world I had never known.

I do not come from a rich family. I do not easily get whatever I require. But I get sufficient food to eat and clean clothes to wear. I can, of course, contribute some rice and some money from my pocket allowance. But that may not be enough. Everyone has his own problems. Nevertheless there may be many people who would like to help the poor people of India. Our church will also provide help to the maximum extent.

I will be happy even if one person is there to help the pitiable Indian children. Those who support our movement, may send rice, money or anything. We shall hand them over to the Indian Embassy."

There was tremendous response to this appeal and more than 430 cheques and letters were received. One letter from a factory worker read as follows:

"I come from a poor family and till last year received livelihood protection from the government. But the pitiable plight of Indian children has moved my heart". Along with the letter there was a thousand yen cheque. 35

Idealism and Creativity

The moral education also pursues certain ideals.

It emphasizes that everyone should live for a worthy purpose in life and be ambitious and should be ready to bear hardships for accomplishing one's aim. Everyone should be capable of looking into one's own character and conduct and be conscious of one's own faults and strive for self-control and self-improvement. One should be responsible and behave in a genial way and act with

alacrity, have a pure mind and esteem beautiful and noble things. One should also learn to find one's own special capabilities and merits and try to strengthen them. Everyone should be rational in thinking and consider the reasons for things and should maintain a studious attitude. Every person must have originality and aptitude for research and cultivation of new ideas. At the same time one must try to learn from the achievements of others.

Idealism : How to Live

Our society is like an orchestra. An orchestra comprises various instruments like stringed instruments, wood-wind instruments, brass, percussion instruments etc. But for symphony, harmony of all instruments is necessary. Likewise, each individual is different and has his own characteristics. But can we say that one person is important and the other not? If we realize that all people are equal and live happily together, egoism will end. If we remember this when in school, at home, in town or village, everywhere and every moment, our society will have symphony of orchestra.

This way of thinking and way of living will have bearing on the whole nation. If this way of thinking is applied in politics, democracy is born in which each one of us is a hero and a peaceful nation which will not try to solve any problem with force will be born.

The morning has already dawned for Japan. However, in order to make this dawn bright, our sincere efforts are essential. 36

Creativity : A Child Incubating Eggs

Thomas (Thomas Edison), if unable to understand anything, would ask people about it till he understood. Sometimes people did not know what answer to make.

Once Thomas asked his mother "where does this goose come from?"

His mother replied: "It hatched from egg".

Thomas again asked: "Why from egg?"

"Because the mother goose incubated the egg daily", replied the mother.

"How come?", asked Thomas.

"It keeps the egg under its body", replied back mother.

"Byt doing so, the goose is born?" Thomas looked at his mother with a surprised look.

One day Thomas went to play and did not return. His mother got worried and went to look for him. When she looked into the henroost, she was surprised. She asked: "Thomas, what are you doing at this place?"

Thomas said: "Mother, please do not make any noise. I am sitting upon an egg. Soon a goose will hatch. Keepilooking."

In this way Thomas would himself try to do whatever he leant about. 37

Patriotism

Love for country is one of the loftiest virtues and a certain degree of patriotism and national enthusiasm is essential for any nation to survive in the present day world. But the present day patriotism in Japan is not that of oppression and terror of pre-war years, rather it is of peace and liberty. A patriotic spirit is cultivated by developing respect for the land, culture and traditions of the motherland. Students are made to realize their responsibility as Japanese and are taught to strive for the development of the nation. For instance:

Merits of Japan

These days a large number of foreigners come to Japan. Some come for sightseeing and some for studies. However, those coming for public performance of music or drama, for participating in political, economic or science conference or for friendly matches are also many. These days more Japanese people travel abroad. Their attitude towards foreign countries and foreigners has also changed, but the outlook of foreigners has also changed greatly.

Foreigners who have been staying in Japan for some time, discuss and praise, at times with envy, the merits of Japanese people. For instance, houses, though small inevitably having a small garden with pond, trees and grass, the sitting room decorated with the rose flower vase and the alcove decorated with a hanging scroll of pictographs or picture, decoration piece and colourful flowers etc are some merits of old Japan. However, even today one finds them.

Flower viewing and the scarlet maple viewing are like annual festivals. In recent years, mountaineering has become very popular. In olden days these must have appeared to the foreigners as the merits of the daily life of Japanese people who love nature. But what is the situation today when Japan has become an economic giant. Do Japanese still love nature?

The ingenuity of the Japanese people is also widely discussed. All things which are usual for us appear to foreigners as our merits. Of course, the tremendous popularity of Japanese camera, transistor, radio, television etc. throughout the world is the outcome of Japanese people's ingenuity.

Japanese people are also said to over-work. This is not necessarily an appreciation.

Japanese people have originality not only in technology but also in research. At the same time, Japanese people have the talent to make the best use of things taken from different sources.

This is obvious from the Japanese language also. There are no other people who use foreign words with such an ease and dexterity as Japanese people.

Our country is surrounded on all sides by sea. In the chain of islands extending from north to south, more than 100 million people of the same race live together speaking the same language. Of course, our country is small and does not have natural resources like iron, coal, petroleum etc, but Japan falls in temperate zone and the change of seasons is conspicuous with each season having its own charm. Haiku is unique and is not to be found in any other country of the world. Natural scenery is beautiful. Water is clean and in abundance. Those Japanese who have travelled abroad say that there is no other country which has such clean water.

Natural resources are meagre but due to Japanese people's inquiring mind, diligence and mercantilism, Japanese shops are flooded with delicious fruits and sea foods. The large variety of dishes tell of Japanese people's good sense of taste.

Moreover, it is also said that the Japanese people are polite and courteous. However, it does not mean that Japanese people will be praised always like this. 38

Table 2

Classification of Lessons in Textbooks on Morals Devoted to Each Theme

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI
Character Building	7	5	7	3	3	3
Ethics	13	15	11	12	8	8
Idealism & Creativity	2	2	3	6	5	6
Patriotism	1	-	-	-	2	-

38. Extracted from Atarashii Dotoku - Gonen (Kobun Shoin, Tokyo), pp.108-115.

The preceding analysis of the school textbooks currently in use reveals that education in Japan is progressive and is in direct contrast with the pre-war programme of indoctrinating citizens through school. Today the purpose of education is to train good citizens on the basis of right mental and moral attitudes. This objective is sought to be realized by placing emphasis on: (i) refined and gentle manners; (ii) fixed habits of thought and action; (iii) a character based on power and habit of reflection; (iv) sound standards of appreciation of beauty and worth; and (v) correctness and precision in the use of language, especially the mother tongue.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

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Japan is the only nation in the world whose national ethos has undergone important changes twice within a century; once when it broke away from feudalism in 1868 and again when it deviated from ultranationalism and fascism in 1945. There are, however, certain basic differences between the two changes.

The first change in the national ethos after the Meiji Restoration was brought about by the Japanese themselves. On the one hand, Meiji leaders introduced reforms of a radical nature and tried to change the outlook of the people, to transform the backward-looking feudal society into a forward-looking modern one. But on the other hand, traditionalism in values was emphasized to safeguard the Imperial institution and the government centered around it. As during the Tokugawa period, the focus of all attention, of loyalty and patriotism, was the nation. Thus, the nature of changes was very much restricted, and all changes were tailored to prop-up the entity called nation. Education was used for this dual purpose: to achieve parity with advanced nations and to retain Japan's originality.

The post-war shift in national ethos was in direct contrast with this. In the first place, this shift was brought about by the people who were alien to Japan. And, therefore, the changes introduced were also foreign for Japan. The reformers removed the mystic elements attributed

to the nation with Emperor as the head. In place of the nation, a certain amount of internationalism was injected. An attempt was made to force Japan come out of its shell and become an active and responsible member of the international community. Another feature of the post-war change is that certain notions which had failed to take root during the Meiji and the Taisho periods like freedom of expression, individualism, have been firmly established. Once again education was utilized for changing the national spirit, full of self-conceitedness and obstinacy, to one marked by freedom and democracy. Especially education at the primary level aims at rearing citizens who have a sound understanding of moral and human values, who are democratic and who contribute towards peace and welfare of mankind. This is quite clear from the content analysis of textbooks given in chapter five as also from the table given below:

Table 3

Classification of Lessons Devoted to Various Subjects

	Histori- cal	Politi- cal	Social	Interna- tional	Literary	Scienti- fic
National Language	2	-	19	9	20	12
Social Studies	10	4	25	7	-	-
Moral Education	-	-	28	5	5	1

The table indicates that the national language textbooks presently used in primary schools have about 30 per cent of the lessons devoted to social aspects, 32 per cent to literature, 19 per cent to science, 15 per cent to international affairs and only about 3 per cent to history. In the textbooks on social studies, 54 per cent are devoted to social matters, 21 per cent to history, 15 per cent to international affairs and 8 per cent to politics. And in the textbooks on morals, 84 per cent of the lessons are devoted to social matters, 7 per cent each to international relations and literature and only 1 per cent to science. This is suggestive of the fact that the present day education in Japan is sufficiently progressive, contentwise, education at the lower level is oriented towards the training of a free and open mind. It has helped the Japanese people to overcome their insularity to a great extent but internationalism has still not become a part of Japanese psychology. Ethnocentrism and racial-consciousness are still quite strong among the Japanese. Japan's foreign relations are basically centered around the economic relations. Culturally Japan has always been at the receiving end and is still closed to the outer world. This is evident from Japan's reaction to some contemporary issues. For example, in regard to the recent Indo-China refugee problem, Japan was ready to provide monetary aid to the refugees, but

would not provide them shelter in Japan because it feared that the Japanese people would not accept them as a part of their society.

The primary objective of education is to eliminate or rectify the basic human prejudices. Japan is slowly moving in that direction. Japan hopes to become an active member of international community not only economically but also politically and culturally. For that purpose the complex dynamics of education is being examined thoroughly in view of the present environment within Japan and outside.

From what has preceded so far, it may safely be concluded that since World War II, a definite change in the national ethos of Japan has taken place, and it has moved in the direction of a democratic system. There is no danger of a reversion to ultranationalism and fascism of pre-war type because: (a) memories and miseries of war are still fresh in the minds of the Japanese people; (b) Japan has no political interests and is content in playing a secondary role in international politics; and (c) the democratic system established during occupation has taken firm roots in Japanese soil.

The changes introduced during the occupation have endured for over 30 years without any fundamental departure from the democratic spirit. However, a distinct picture would emerge at the turn of the century when the post-war generation, having no experience of war, ultranationalism and fascism, assumes the reigns of power.

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