

**Japan's "Spiritual Front": Overseas Shinto and Shrines in Manchuria, 1931–  
1945**

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## ABSTRACT

Shinto, as an all-encompassing term for its distinctive faith, deities, architecture, and rites, has long been regarded as being uniquely Japanese. However, a retrospective study on its history during the first half of the twentieth century will show that Shinto was by no means restricted to Japan but a legacy illuminating the multicultural nature of the Japanese empire and suggesting how a variety of leading forces and participants in Japan had adapted it to dealing with such cultural and ethnic diversity. In this paper, I argue that the expansion of Shinto in Manchuria from 1931 to 1945 was state-oriented, but instead of being a strictly top-down and well-organized national project, it was rather a field where numerous ideological negotiations took place among the Japanese government, Kwantung Army officers, progressive Shinto theorists, Japanese agrarian settlers, and so forth. I firstly present the general framework of Shinto in Manchuria as a spiritual frontier on which the “universal Shinto” and “exclusive Shinto” competed and collaborated with each other for the expansion of the Japanese colonialism and imperialism in Manchuria. Then, I examine the Japanese government’s and Kwantung Army’s close relations with the development of Shinto in Manchuria with a top-down approach. Finally, I study the role of the Japanese immigrants in the proliferation of settler shrines and how their efforts tallied with the government’s political agenda from a bottom-up perspective.

**Keywords:** Overseas shrines, Shinto in Manchuria, Shinto studies, Japan-Manchukuo relations, Japanese colonialism

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## INTRODUCTION

## Toward a “non-Japanese” Shinto

Japan’s religion of conquest was brought to an end on December 15, 1945. On this date, State Shinto was disestablished and reduced to the position of a privately supported sect. Although deprived of special legal privileges and endowments, the national faith of Japan still continued to exist, with latent possibilities for good or evil to the world.

Daniel C. Holtom (1947)<sup>1</sup>

Being an American expert in both Christianity and Shinto, Daniel C. Holtom, who documented the coronation of the Emperor Hirohito and witnessed the capitulation of Japan, made the above claim, identifying Shinto as the “national faith of Japan” and reaffirming that the once privileged State Shinto had come to its end.<sup>2</sup> In retrospect, Holtom’s assertion seems to be out of date, for it juxtaposing “State” and “Shinto” as if the state was the sole player assuming full control of Japan’s Shinto policy and shrine affairs. Meanwhile, his argument about State Shinto also ushers us to pursuing several contended questions, for example, what actors besides the state had involved themselves in the configuration and proliferation of this Shinto ideology? How did such an ideology follow these actors’ path of expansion en route to some important Japanese colonies such as Manchuria? Moreover, how had the history of the overseas expansion of Shinto complicated its attribute as a Japanese religion?

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<sup>1</sup> Daniel C. Holtom, “Foreword to revised edition written on May 3, 1947,” in *Modern Japan and Shinto Nationalism: A Study of Present-day Trends in Japanese Religions* (New York: Paragon, 1963).

<sup>2</sup> Holtom, “Foreword to revised edition written on May 3, 1947.”

Before we proceed to explore these queries, let us first look at how some Shinto historians and religious scholars had responded to the concept of State Shinto. Helen Hardacre, for instance, suggested that Ise Shrines (*Ise Jingū* 伊勢神宮), as the apex of the State Shinto ideology, were elevated to the most significant shrines only recently after the Meiji Restoration rather than an old tradition from time immemorial, and many historical Shinto rituals and ceremonies practiced before 1945 and nowadays were in fact modern inventions.<sup>3</sup> In the meantime, Jolyon Thomas dismissed the conventional dichotomized approach to Shinto and Japan, which divided Shinto into an oppressive state-driven cult and a benign exotic belief and Japan into a devout villain and a civilized fellow blessed with “religious freedom” upon the turn of its defeat and the Allied Occupation.<sup>4</sup> He argued that the term “State Shinto” was coined by the US occupiers in order to pinpoint an enemy and substitute it with the universal idea of “religious freedom” even though such a value had already existed and practiced in prewar Japan.<sup>5</sup>

The history of Japan’s acquisition and management of Manchuria from the early twentieth century to the end of the World War II had been a well-studied topic in the past twenty years by historians such as Louise Young, Yoshihisa Tak Matsusaka, and Mariko Tamanoi, encompassing the political, economic, and demographic aspects of the history of Manchuria under the Japanese rulership.<sup>6</sup> However, the historians of Manchuria generally devoted their writings to the more tangible and conspicuous sides of Japan’s colonization of Manchuria, such as the structure of the Manchukuo government, the military presence of the

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<sup>3</sup> Helen Hardacre, *Shinto: A History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 359, 362, 371–3.

<sup>4</sup> Jolyon Baraka Thomas, *Faking Liberties: Religious Freedom in American-occupied Japan* (Chicago & London: The University of Chicago Press, 2019), 8.

<sup>5</sup> Thomas, *Faking Liberties*, 144, 149.

<sup>6</sup> Louise Young, *Japan’s Total Empire: Manchuria and the Culture of Wartime Imperialism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998); Yoshihisa Tak Matsusaka, *The Making of Japanese Manchuria, 1904–1932* (Cambridge & London: Harvard University Asia Center, 2001); Mariko Tamanoi, *Memory Maps: The State and Manchuria in Postwar Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2009).

Kwantung Army, or the plutocratic rule of the Southern Manchurian Railway Company (SMR).<sup>7</sup> The more concealed and incorporeal religious dimension thus attracted little scholarly attention. On the other hand, the historians specialized in Shinto, including Helen Hardacre and Jolyon Thomas, had limited their research scope primarily to the Japanese archipelago, investigating the development of concepts like State Shinto and religious freedom in the Japanese society.<sup>8</sup> Few of Shinto historians in the English-speaking world seemed to have looked beyond the current national borders of Japan and studied another facet of Shinto which had extended geographically beyond Japan and flourished ephemerally alongside the Japanese empire on the foreign land of Manchuria.

To break through the confines of the historiographies of both Manchuria and Shinto, this paper aims to superimpose an extra layer of Shinto onto our current historical understanding of the Japanese Manchuria and broaden the scope of Shinto studies to Japan's previous sphere of influence on the continent. I devote this paper to examining the proliferation of Japan's overseas shrines in Manchuria from 1931 to 1945 and the roles played by the Japanese state, emigrants to Manchuria, and some of the progressive Shinto theorists in shaping Shinto into a transnational belief and complicating its possible meanings to not only the Japanese but also other East Asian ethnicities. I chose this historical period because the Mukden Incident in 1931 prompted a crescendo of Japan's political and military involvement in the Shinto and shrine management as well as other affairs in Manchuria, thus

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<sup>7</sup> Yamamuro Shin'ichi 山室信一, *Manzhouguo de shixiang yu huanxiang* 滿洲國的實相與幻象 [The reality and semblance of Manchukuo], trans. Lin Qizhen 林琪禎, Shen Yuhui 沈玉慧, Huang Yaojin 黃耀進, and Xu Hongxin 徐宏馨 (New Taipei: Baqi wenhua, 2016); Shimada Toshihiko 島田俊彦, *Kantōgun: Zai Man Rikugun no dokusō* 關東軍：在滿陸軍の独走 [Kwantung Army: Japan's maverick land force in Manchuria] (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 2005); Matsusaka, *The Making of Japanese Manchuria*.

<sup>8</sup> Helen Hardacre, *Shinto and the State, 1868–1988* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), 3–7; Thomas, *Faking Liberties*, 1–13.

resulting in a massive influx of Japanese settlers mobilized by the government and the mushrooming of both settler shrines and government-funded shrines.

I argue that the expansion of Shinto in Manchuria from 1931 to 1945 was state-initiated, but instead of being a well-planned coherent empire-wide campaign, it was rather a battleground where numerous political negotiations and ideological haggings took place among the moderate imperialists, radical ultra-nationalists, progressive Shinto theorists, and Japanese agrarian settlers. These various participants constituted the linchpin of the grand proliferation of Shinto beyond Japan proper and were avatars of the state who, in Tamanoi's words, "carried the state with them to Manchuria."<sup>9</sup> As my following three chapters and my archival documents will reveal, the development of Japan's overseas shrines during the first half of the twentieth century was culturally variegated and entailed a wide spectrum of the multi-ethnic opportunities and challenges that different policymakers and thinkers in Japan would have to manage by envisaging and experimenting new "ways of deities," as the name of Shinto had conveyed.

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<sup>9</sup> Tamanoi, *Memory Maps*, 50.

## CHAPTER ONE

## Shinto as a “Failure” in Manchuria

Contrary to the popular belief that Japan utilized Shinto as a state ideology to naturalize local inhabitants and facilitate its colonial governance, Japanese Shinto in Manchuria presented itself as a unique case whose shrines were constructed for serving the local Japanese immigrants primarily and differed from those in Taiwan and Korea where the natives were required to visit shrines regularly and pay homage to Amaterasu Ōmikami 天照大神, the officially designated national deity of Japan.<sup>10</sup> Despite the idiosyncratic nature in terms of the function of shrines, Manchuria accommodated the second most shrines among the territories under Japan’s colonial sway.<sup>11</sup> While it can be easy to regard the expansion of Shinto in Manchuria as a success in terms of the number of shrines constructed, some Japanese Shinto theorists of the time such as Ogasawara Shōzō 小笠原省三 (1892–1970) and Ashizu Kōjirō 葦津耕次郎 (1878–1940), in fact, viewed it as a failure from the perspective of Shinto as a popular faith that should be rooted in the masses and its potential to grow as a universal religion. From the viewpoint of these theorists, instead of reaching out to the locals through

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<sup>10</sup> Holtom, “Chapter VI: The Overseas Expansion of State Shinto,” in *Modern Japan and Shinto Nationalism*, 153–4; Chen Xiaofa 陈小法, *Riben Qinhua-zhancheng de jingshen duliu: “Zaihua shenshe” zhenxiang* 日本侵华战争的精神毒瘤：“在华神社”真相 [The spiritual tumor during Japan’s invasion of China: The truth about Shinto shrines in China] (Hangzhou: Zhejiang gongshang daxue chubanshe, 2015), 93–6; Zushi Minoru 辻子実, *Shinryaku jinja: Yasukuni shisō o kangaeru tame ni* 侵略神社—靖国思想を考えるために [The invasion shrines: Rethinking the Yasukuni thoughts] (Tokyo: Shinkansha, 2003), 205–6.

<sup>11</sup> According to the Shinto historian Sagai Tatsuru 嵯峨井建, there were roughly 345 shrines erected in Manchukuo until 1945, ranking the second most among the overseas territories under the Japanese rulership below Korea (1,049 shrines in total) and above Taiwan (184 shrines). See Sagai Tatsuru 嵯峨井建, *Manshū no jinja kōbōshi: “Nihonjin no iku tokoro jinja ari”* 満洲の神社興亡史—日本人の行くところ神社あり [The rise and fall of the Japanese shrines in Manchuria: “Where there are the Japanese, there are shrines”] (Tokyo: Fuyō shobō, 1998), 16; Tsuda Yoshiki 津田良樹, Nakajima Michio 中島三千男, Kim Hwaja 金花子, and Kawamura Takeshi 川村武史, “Kyū-Chōsen no jinja atochi chōsa to sono kentō—Zenranandō, Wajungun o chūshin ni” 旧朝鮮の神社跡地調査とその検討—全羅南道、和順郡を中心に— [Examination and reflection on the previous shrine sites in the former colony of Korea—Focusing on Jeollanam-do and Hwasungun], *Nenpō: Jinrui bunka kenkyū no tame no himoji shiryō no taikēika* 3 (2006): 289–90.



priesthood and missionary work as Christianity had done, Shinto in Manchuria was limited to serve only the Japanese settlers and did not embed itself in the local peoples' spiritual life. I dedicate this chapter to examining how a group of Japanese Shinto theorists explored the possibilities of making Shinto a "universal religion" and how their vision, though at odds with the Japanese government's exclusive policy, constituted the spiritual landscape of Shinto in Manchuria as a crucial link.

As a progressive Shinto priest and theorist, Ogasawara was unusual in terms of his bold proposal for re-orienting and re-configuring Shinto into an encompassing religion that could speak to people of different ethnicities and gain the popular support not only in Japan but also across the overseas territories of the Japanese empire. Ogasawara was born into a hereditary Shinto priest family in 1892 in the remote Aomori Prefecture and completed Shinto courses at Kokugakuin University 国学院大学.<sup>12</sup> According to the scholar Suga Kōji 菅浩二, the fact that Ogasawara was brought up in a peripheral prefecture far away from the political and economic centers of Japan such as Tokyo accounted for his nonconformist approach to Shinto.<sup>13</sup> Being distant from the pivot of modern influence allowed him to gain inspiration from vernacular Shinto belief and practices which tended to be all-embracing and unsettled, and contrasted sharply with the exclusivity of the state-oriented Shinto reserved only for the people who were defined as the "Japanese." For Ogasawara, Shinto should base itself on a particular land and in the local community, and shrines ought to reflect this notion by enshrining the indigenous deities of that land and the ancestors of the locals.<sup>14</sup> As he lamented in his book *Examination on the Ethnic Unification of the Japanese and Koreans*

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<sup>12</sup> Suga Kōji, "A Concept of 'Overseas Shinto Shrines': A Pantheistic Attempt by Ogasawara Shōzō and Its Limitations," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 37, no. 1 (2010): 54.

<sup>13</sup> Suga, "A Concept of 'Overseas Shinto Shrines,'" 54.

<sup>14</sup> Suga, "A Concept of 'Overseas Shinto Shrines,'" 56.

*Based on the Korean Shrine* (朝鮮神宮を中心としたる内鮮融和の一考察) published in 1925, “Although there is no doubt that the Emperor Meiji (*Meiji Tennō* 明治天皇) should be enshrined in the Korean Shrine for his majestic achievement of unifying Japan and Korea and bringing the 17 million Korean people to Japan’s governance, we also feel woeful and disappointed about why the legendary forebear and the great creator of the land of Korea was not revered alongside the Emperor Meiji in the Shrine.”<sup>15</sup> This suggestion deviated drastically from the government’s definition of Shinto as a representation of the state and shrines as the grounds where the state-designated rituals could be exhibited.<sup>16</sup> Consequently, his appeals were often rejected by the Japanese government, for instance, the idea of enshrining Dangun 檀君, the purported ancestor of the Korean people, in Korean Shrine (*Chōsen Jingū* 朝鮮神宮) and the effort to interpret local deities and spirits as the Japanese deity Kunitama-no-Ōkami 大国魂神 as in the case of Peking Shrine (*Pekin Jinja* 北京神社).<sup>17</sup>

Ogasawara’s endeavor to make Shinto and shrines inclusive to other ethnicities appeared to be consistent both chronologically and geographically from Korea to Manchuria

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<sup>15</sup> The original Japanese text reads, 「明治天皇は、朝鮮併合の御偉蹟あり、一千七百萬の新附の民をして、長く其の鴻業を仰がしむるに最も偉力ある神であるから、當然奉祀すべきであるが、何故に朝鮮国土創造の偉人を併せ祀らなかつたのであらうかと、われ等は痛歎して措かないものである。」 See Ogasawara Shōzō 小笠原省三, *Chōsen Jingū o chūshin toshitaru Naisenryūwa no ichikōsatsu* 朝鮮神宮を中心としたる内鮮融和の一考察 [Examination on the ethnic unification of the Japanese and Koreans based on the Korean Shrine] (Tokyo: Kenshō nihonsha, 1925), 12.

<sup>16</sup> Ogasawara Shōzō 小笠原省三, *Kaigai no jinja: Narabini Burajiru zaijū dōhō no kyōiku to shūkyō* 海外の神社—並びにブラジル在住同胞の教育と宗教 [On overseas shrines: With a focus on the education and religions of the Japanese compatriots residing in Brazil] (Tokyo: Shintō hyōronsha, 1933, reprinted by Tokyo: Yumani shobō, 2005), 192.

<sup>17</sup> Suga, “A Concept of ‘Overseas Shinto Shrines’,” 56, 65; *Pekin Jinja chinzasai ni Ogasawara shokutaku shutchō-kata no ken* 北京神社鎮座祭ニ小笠原囑託出張方ノ件 [Regarding the commissioned dispatch of Ogasawara Shōzō for the enshrining ceremony of the Peking Shrine] (Tokyo: Gaimushō gaikō shiryō kan, 1940).

and then China. As early as 1925, he had written books and articles attesting to the common progenitor of the Japanese, Koreans, and other peoples on the Asian continent.<sup>18</sup> In his book *Examination on the Ethnic Unification of the Japanese and Koreans Based on the Korean Shrine*, he had argued for the customs of ancestor-worshipping and filial piety as common practices in the Korean Peninsula and East Asia in which Japan and its shrines were the paragon of such a time-honored tradition.<sup>19</sup> After categorizing the Japanese and Koreans as one people, he proceeded to declare that Dangun, the legendary founder of the Korean kingdom, was traditionally said to be the Japanese ancestral deity Susanoo-no-Mikoto 須佐之男命, and the local beliefs in Korea were derived from and inspired by the Izumo culture in Japan (where Susanoo was banished in Japanese mythology).<sup>20</sup> Ogasawara's claim was later applied to Manchuria, connecting the Izumo belief system in Japan from the peninsula to the continent. As a result of this genealogical and mythological claim, 12% of the overseas shrines in Manchuria were devoted to Ōkuninushi-no-Kami 大国主神, a descendent of Susanoo and the major deity enshrined in the Izumo Grand Shrine (*Izumo taisha* 出雲大

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<sup>18</sup> According to Oguma Eiji, the claims arguing for the close relationship between the peoples in Japan and Korea had appeared as early as in the Edo period, exemplified by a group of Confucian scholars in Japan such as Tō Teikan 藤貞幹. Such claims later lent a hand to the Japanese ethnographers like Tsuboi Shōgorō 坪井正五郎 and Torii Ryūzō 鳥居龍藏 during the 1890s toward the 1910s to develop the pan-Asianist discourse on the prehistoric inter-connected ancestry and customs of the Northeast Asians with the Japanese people at the center. See Oguma Eiji, *A Genealogy of 'Japanese' Self Images*, trans. David Askew (Melbourne: Trans Pacific Press, 2002), 65–6; Prasenjit Duara, *Sovereignty and Authenticity: Manchukuo and the East Asian Modern* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2003), 182–3.

<sup>19</sup> The original Japanese text reads, 「祖先を崇拜し、其の遺志を顕彰昭述する事を専念するは、東洋人の特性である。殊にそれはわが日本人に於いて最も顕著である。其の実例をわれ等は『神社』に於いて視る事が出来るのだ。」 See Ogasawara, *Chōsen Jingū o chūshin toshitaru Naiseniyūwa no ichikōsatsu*, 7.

<sup>20</sup> The original Japanese text reads, 「わが出雲地方の主権者であった素佐之男命は、朝鮮創成の神と云はる檀君であると傳へらる事を見ても、神代に於ける鮮地の大部分は出雲系統の支配下に在り、多く出雲文化の恩澤を蒙ってゐたものであらう。」 See Ogasawara, *Chōsen Jingū o chūshin toshitaru Naiseniyūwa no ichikōsatsu*, 9.

社).<sup>21</sup> In addition to Korea, Ogasawara also argued broadly with regard to the deity enshrinement issues of the major shrines in Japan's overseas colonies, such as the Korean Shrine, Taiwan Shrine (*Taiwan Jingū* 台湾神宮), and the State Foundation Loyal Spirit Shrine (*Kenkoku chūreibyō* 建国忠靈廟) in Manchuria. He opposed the military's conduct of including only the Japanese national deities into the pantheon enshrined by the overseas shrines. As he wrote in 1933, "...forcibly maintaining entities alienated from peoples' actual lives through the state power would make shrines lose their religious nature and make them something like a kind of monument."<sup>22</sup>

Besides putting forward his vision of Shinto in publications, Ogasawara also exerted actual influence on the shrine construction and deity enshrinement affairs in Manchuria and China proper by leading the Japanese Shinto mission to Manchuria in 1936, advising on the government's religion policies and convening training seminars for would-be Shinto priests as a consultant affiliated to the Kantō Bureau in 1939 and 1940. In 1936, he was dispatched to Manchuria and northern China as an inspector for giving the local students lectures on the ethnic affinity in East Asia and assessing the role of schools, libraries, hospitals, and other establishments as "cultural facilities" for promoting the value of ethnic unification.<sup>23</sup> In 1939 after the outbreak of the Second Sino-Japanese War, Ogasawara was sent to China again for training provisional Shinto lecturers and priests and counseling the government officials on

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<sup>21</sup> Inamiya Yasuhito 稲宮康人 and Nakajima Michio 中島三千男, "*Shinkoku*" no zan'ei: Kaigai jinja atochi shashin kiroku 「神国」の残影: 海外神社跡地写真記録 [The afterglow of "the Country of Gods (Kamikuni)": Photograph records of the sites of overseas Japanese shrines] (Tokyo: Kokusho kankōkai, 2019), 111.

<sup>22</sup> Hardacre, *Shinto: A History*, 432.

<sup>23</sup> The original Japanese text reads, 「最近ノ満洲及北支那ハ、文化的施設ヲ益々必要トスル情勢ナルヲ慮リ、本会常任理事小笠原省三ヲ満支両国ニ派遣シテ満洲国及北支那方面ノ学校及図書館、病院其の他文化諸施設ノ実況ヲ視察セシムルコト...」 See *Manshū oyobi Hokushina shisatsu-in haken hojo-gan* 満洲及北支那視察員派遣補助願 [Supplement to the edict of the commissioned dispatch of inspectors to Manchuria and Northern China] (Tokyo: Gaimushō gaikō shiryō kan, 1936).

the miscellaneous details regarding shrine construction in order to meet the drastically growing demand for Shinto shrines in the occupied China as the Japanese troop thrust southward rapidly.<sup>24</sup>

Ogasawara's employment history within the Japanese government, combined with his advocacy of a less ethnocentric, more impartial form of Shinto, seems to suggest his ardor for realizing such an inviting plan which would integrate the Japanese and the colonials and benefit both sides. However, it should also be noted that the progressive Shinto theorists like him were no less determined than the military officers and colonial governors when it came to cementing the sovereignty and supremacy of the Japanese imperial governance over its overseas colonies. In fact, Ogasawara himself was an initiator and architect of Japan's overseas shrine project on the continent, which aimed to include more non-Japanese populations into the belief of Shinto and bring them under the regulation of shrines since shrines were not only religious facilities but also connected to the household registration system (*koseki* 戸籍).<sup>25</sup> Thus, for Ogasawara, incorporating the indigenous foreign deities into the pantheon of Shinto was also a method that appealed to the colonials and assisted in the implantation of Shinto in the local peoples' mind.<sup>26</sup> In this regard, the Shinto theorists and

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<sup>24</sup> The original Japanese text reads, 「今次事変（支那事変）ノ結果邦人ノ各地進出ニ伴ヒ支那ニ於ケル神社ノ新設ハ益増加ノ傾向ニ在リ事変後既ニ保定、太原、石家莊ノ各地ニハ新ニ神社創建セラレ杭州、南苑ハ目下造営中ニシテ其ノ他北京、天津、張家口、濟南、南京等ノ主要都市ニ於テモ大規模ナル造営又ハ遷座ノ計畫アリ...状勢ニ應シ神社設立地ノ選定、神社設立ニ關シ先領事官ノ指導、神社規模、祭式、神職ノ統制上係官ヲ支那各地ニ出張セシメ現地ノ事情ヲ調査セシムルコト必要ト認メラルル處本省ニハ神祇神社ニ關シ...小笠原省三を特ニ外務省臨時囑託トシテ...北支ニ於ケル神社設立状況ヲ視察セシメ」 See *Chūkaminokoku e shutchō o mei-su* 中華民國へ出張ヲ命ス [Edict of the commissioned dispatch to the Republic of China] (Tokyo: Gaimushō gaikō shiryō kan, 1940).

<sup>25</sup> Shinto shrines divide the people under their regulation into mainly two categories—*ujiko* 氏子 and *sūkeisha* 崇敬者. *Ujiko* are the parishioners who live within the territory of a shrine, and *sūkeisha* are the lay supporters of a shrine but live away from its territory. Both *ujiko* and *sūkeisha* are expected to make contribution to the shrine (*kishin* 寄進) and take part in the shrine's *matsuri* festival. See Shimonaka Yasaburō 下中彌三郎, ed., *Shintō daijiten* 神道大辞典 [Encyclopedia of Shinto] (Kyoto: Rinsen shoten, 1972), 179, 816.

<sup>26</sup> Nakajima Michio, "Shinto Deities that Crossed the Sea: Japan's 'Overseas Shrines,' 1868–1945," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 37, no. 1 (2010): 23–4.

the Japanese government were not at variance with each other in terms of their ultimate goal of consolidating the Japanese influence in East Asia and making Japan the sole leader of Asian peoples. What they disagreed about were the role that Shinto should play in the empire's expansion and whether it should be constructed as a universal religion that could engage peoples of other ethnicities in Japan's imperial project or as the exclusive epitome representing the Japanese race alone.

Although the Shinto theorists like Ogasawara envisioned an encompassing form of Shinto that could transcend the boundaries of the Japanese race and territories, the military government which upheld ultra-nationalism were committed to displaying the exclusivity of Shinto as the mainstay of the Japanese spirit and supremacy over other peoples.<sup>27</sup> The contention between these two parties, in fact, suggests a continuous trend of Japan's increasingly augmented colonial and military actions since the late nineteenth century. But instead of displaying a clear line of peaceful inheritance, this trend comprised a series of negotiations and disputes between the prudent imperialism and the more aggressive expansionism. From this perspective, Ogasawara belonged to the former group who favored the steady development of Japan's national interests on the continent, and he viewed Shinto as an indispensable means for achieving this goal by transforming the colonials into Japanese citizens. For example, when the Kwantung Army planned to construct the State Foundation Loyal Spirit Shrine in Hsinking (*Shinkyō* 新京), which was modeled after the Yasukuni

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<sup>27</sup> The Commissioned Investigation Committee on the Shrine System, for instance, instructed explicitly that shrines should be defined as the premises with main halls where the pantheon of the Japanese Empire were enshrined and public *matsuri* festivals were performed, and for the purpose of public worship. The original Japanese text reads, 「第二條：神社トハ社殿ヲ備ヘ帝国ノ神祇ヲ鎮祀シテ公ニ祭典ヲ執行シ公衆参拝ノ用ニ供スル所ヲ云フ」 See Jinja seido chōsa-kai, Ōkura-shō 神社制度調査会, 大蔵省 [Investigation Committee on the Shinto Shrine System, Ministry of Finance], *Jinja seido chōsa-kai dai 50 kai tokubetsu iinkai haifu sankō-sho* 神社制度調査会第 50 回特別委員会配付参考書 [Reference book distributed by the 50th Special Investigation Committee on the Shinto Shrine System], 13th June, 1935 (Tokyo: National Archives of Japan, 1935).

Shrine (靖国神社) in Tokyo, Ogasawara persuaded the Japanese military authorities in both Manchukuo and Japan to also enshrine the spirits of non-Japanese dead soldiers into the Loyal Spirit Shrine to reflect the unification of the diverse ethnicities under the rule of Manchukuo.<sup>28</sup> According to Suga, this was probably the last successful endeavor of Ogasawara in realizing his vision of the “universal Shinto.”<sup>29</sup>

Japan’s expansion and governance in East Asia, in Manchuria especially, seemed to be a series of struggles for balancing, and eventually failed to strike a balance, between the aspiration for the inclusive and equal East Asian co-prosperity sphere and the creation of the exclusive and superior Japanese race. On the one hand, a group of progressive Shinto theorists of the time, such as Ogasawara Shōzō, Ashizu Kōjirō, and Sakamoto Koremaru 坂本是丸, had proposed a more incorporative form of Shinto nationalism by including the deities of local peoples into the enshrining pantheon and employing local women as the priestesses or shamans (*mikannagi* 御巫) of the overseas shrines. On the other, the Kwantung Army and the military government in Japan were eager to consolidate the uniqueness and superiority of the Japanese race and were vigilant to the syncretism between Shinto and any native faiths or religions.

Ashizu, for instance, had forewarned the danger of overlooking the faiths of the local peoples in Japan’s colonies by criticizing the Korean Shrine for its refusal to enshrining the national gods and tutelary deities of the Korean people (建邦の神). In the collection of his speeches *Ashikabi* あし牙 published in August 1925, Ashizu argued mournfully, “Enshrining only Amaterasu and Emperor Meiji and excluding the Korean national gods in the overseas

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<sup>28</sup> Suga, “A Concept of ‘Overseas Shinto Shrines,’” 64–5.

<sup>29</sup> Suga, “A Concept of ‘Overseas Shinto Shrines,’” 65.

shrines built in Korea will induce the heavenly nemesis and people's resentment. The shrines have become the bane of the Japanese and Korean races who now bear a grudge against each other."<sup>30</sup> In 1938, one year after the Marco Polo Bridge Incident and two years before his decease, Ashizu reiterated the importance of taking the deities of other ethnic peoples into account by suggesting that Japan should help China to establish itself as a "moral state (道義国家)" based on the reverence for the ancient Chinese emperors Yao and Shun (堯舜国家), which was tantamount to Japan with the worship of the Japanese emperor being its moral foundation (天皇国家).<sup>31</sup> In this regard, Ashizu's attitude toward Shinto was partly different from Ogasawara in that Shinto was the exemplar on which other countries could model themselves and establish their equivalents; nevertheless, both of them believed that Shinto and its related moral values and political system could be universal.

The Japanese military government's attitude toward the Shinto affairs, especially the issue of deity enshrinement, in Manchuria generally corresponded with its policy in Korea, but with the major difference that the Shinto belief in Manchuria was used to emphasize its distinctive and exclusive role in shaping the self-awareness of the Japanese nation while, in Korea, Shinto was deployed to acculturate and naturalize the Korean people. Although it is reasonable, with hindsight, that the Japanese military leaders declined the Shinto theorists' petition to making Shinto a universal religion and an effective means to including other ethnic peoples into the "Japanese race" from a nationalist perspective, the theorists and petitioners, from a more inclusive imperialistic viewpoint, regarded the government's

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<sup>30</sup> The original Japanese text reads, 「韓国当初の神社（国家的神社）に、皇祖及、明治天皇を奉斎して、韓国建邦の神を無視するは...必ず天罰と人怒を招来すべきものなり。」 See Ashizu Kōjirō 葦津耕次郎, "Chōsen Jingū ni kansuru ikensho" 朝鮮神宮に関する意見書 [Critique on the Korean Shrines], in *Ashikabi* あし牙, August 1925 (Tokyo: Ashikabikai, 1939).

<sup>31</sup> Ashizu Kōjirō 葦津耕次郎, *Nisshi-jihen no kaiketsu-hō* 日支事変の解決法 [The solution to the Second Sino-Japanese War] (Tokyo: Kinsensha-insatsujo, 1938), 1.



decision as a failure because it prevented Shinto from basing itself in the colonials' spirit and kept this Japanese belief alien throughout Japan's colonization in Manchuria and in Asia. In this sense, it seems that these two sects of nationalist and imperialist Shinto were both working toward the prevalence and triumph of the Japanese people over their Asian colonials, but instead of resorting to reconciliation, the two sects often competed with each other. According to Suga, the progressive Shinto theorists like Ogasawara were chastised by the governmental agencies and Shinto priest associations such as the Board of East Asia Development (*Kōa-in* 興亜院) and Association of Shinto Development on the Continent (*Tairiku shintō renmei* 大陸神道連盟) as being "heretical and xenophilous" for their insistence in including the local deities into the Shinto pantheon.<sup>32</sup> This condemnation intensified as ultra-nationalism became prevalent in Japan after the outbreak of the Second Sino-Japanese War in 1937 and particularly after the signing of the Tripartite Pact in 1940.<sup>33</sup> As a result, although the number of shrines in Manchuria increased drastically during the Shōwa period, the right of accessing these facilities was restricted to the local Japanese community, and after the defeat of Japan in 1945 and its subsequent repatriation from Manchuria, most of the shrines were immediately destroyed, abandoned, or readapted for other purposes by local inhabitants.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Suga, "A Concept of 'Overseas Shinto Shrines'," 65.

<sup>33</sup> Suga, "A Concept of 'Overseas Shinto Shrines,'" 66.

<sup>34</sup> The original Japanese text reads, 「...神社創建の特徴をいくつか挙げることができる。まず数でいえば、圧倒的に昭和期に片寄っている。」 See Sagai, *Manshū no jinja kōbōshi*, 77.

## CHAPTER TWO

## The Imperial Government and State Shinto

The development of Shinto in Manchuria, instead of being a national project fully manipulated by the state, was rather an arena where the Japanese politicians, Shinto theorists, and other players wrangled, negotiated, and appropriated. Among these various actors, the Japanese state was arguably the foremost player in initiating the colonization of Manchuria and the proliferation of Shinto shrines in the 1930s and 40s. However, before delving into this subject, it is crucial to review both terms of the “Japanese state” and “State Shinto” which have been called into question by scholars in political science, history, and Shinto studies. The historian Carol Gluck, for instance, challenged the conventional historiography which had pinned down the “Japanese state” headed by a coterie of military usurpers as the single salient victimizer responsible for the wars waged by Japan, leaving out the Emperor Hirohito with impunity. She described such a narrative as “history in the passive voice” and “victims’ history.”<sup>35</sup> As Louise Young later argued, this simplistic historical view exempted not only the emperor but also the society and citizens of Japan from war responsibilities.<sup>36</sup> The arguments of the previous scholarship suggest that the definition of the “Japanese state” is highly flexible and contextual, susceptible to one’s historical presumptions and political stratagems.

In this chapter, I identify the Japanese government and the army as two most active components of the state. By making this demarcation, I do not mean that these two institutions comprised the state in its entirety. I am rather in accordance with Young’s point that all individuals mobilized for the empire were, in fact, “extensions of the state,” no matter

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<sup>35</sup> Carol Gluck, “The Idea of Showa,” *Daedalus* 119, no. 3 (1990): 12–3.

<sup>36</sup> Young, *Japan’s Total Empire*, 7–8.

whether they were grouped in the public or private sectors.<sup>37</sup> Meanwhile, as the discord between the government officials and Shinto theorists had shown in the previous chapter, the constituents of the state were not often in tune with one another, as also revealed in the relations between the Japanese government and the army. While the government was supposed to check the power of the military, the army had gradually become out of control ever since it won the Russo-Japanese War in 1905. As a consequence of its victory, Japan obtained the Kwantung Leased Territory (*Kantō-shū* 関東州) at the southern tip of the Liaodong Peninsula, which laid the foundation for its subsequent acquisition of the entire Manchuria. The expansion of Japan on the continent and the growing prowess of the Kwantung Army also resulted in the discrepancy of policy-making and governance between its inner territory (*naichi* 内地) and its overseas colonies (*gaichi* 外地), typically Manchuria.<sup>38</sup>

Another phrase “State Shinto” can be equally perplexing. State Shinto, as Helen Hardacre noted, is sometimes misleading because of its strong implication of the state’s monopoly of the regulation and proliferation of Shinto and shrines. Such a connotation may easily eclipse the equally significant impact of the civic support and contribution to the spread of Shinto during the age of the empire.<sup>39</sup> For instance, the erection of the Meiji Shrine (*Meiji Jingū* 明治神宮) is often viewed as the epitome of State Shinto and the pivot of Japanese nationalism. Nevertheless, it could not have attained such popularity and magnitude if the Shrine did not enjoy the support from the Japanese society in which a variety of Shinto priest associations, scholars, journalists, and laity propped up its existence.<sup>40</sup> Let us first look

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<sup>37</sup> Young, *Japan’s Total Empire*, 9.

<sup>38</sup> Young, *Japan’s Total Empire*, 29–30.

<sup>39</sup> Hardacre, *Shinto: A History*, 440.

<sup>40</sup> Hardacre, *Shinto: A History*, 423–4.

into how the government and the Kwantung Army of Japan, which comprised two important parts of the state, initiated the Japanese emigration to Manchuria and functioned toward the overseas expansion of Shinto shrines.

### **The Japanese Government**

The Japanese government, like the state, is also flexible and inclusive, which can refer to the home government in Japan, the Kantō Bureau (*Kantō chō* 関東庁) overseeing the Kwantung Leased Territory, the South Manchuria Railway Company (SMR), and sometimes the Kwantung Army. For the government's role in the expansion of shrines in Manchuria, the Mukden Incident in 1931 served as a watershed. Before the Incident, the branches of the Japanese government such as the Kantō Bureau and the SMR were the main players initiating the shrine construction plans, transportation of the necessary labors and materials, and the importation of Japanese Shinto priests and architects from Japan proper.<sup>41</sup> After the Incident, although the government remained as an important manager of the Shinto affairs in Manchuria, its leading role was taken over by the Kwantung Army. Since many Kwantung Army officers were also occupying governmental positions, the originally separate roles of the government and the army had coalesced in the aftermath of a series of coup d'état at home and the Mukden Incident in the front. As a consequence, from checking each other's power, these two institutions moved toward coalition under the sway of a group of audacious and belligerent young army officers.<sup>42</sup> The military government and the army cooperated in

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<sup>41</sup> Kōshurei Regional Office 公主嶺地方區事務所, ed., *Kōshurei yōran* 公主嶺要覽 [Handbook about Kōshurei] (Kōshurei: Minamimanshū-tetsudō shomu-bu chōsa-ka, 1925), 77–82; Manchurian Information Center 滿洲事情案内所, ed., *Manshū jijō* まんしゅう事情 [The situation of Manchuria] (Hsinking: Manshū jijō annai-jō, 1936), 108–10, 111–15.

<sup>42</sup> Yoshihashi Takehiko, *Conspiracy at Mukden: The Rise of the Japanese Military* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963), 95–102.

transforming Shinto into an ideological and political tool to assist the naturalization of the colonials in Taiwan and Korea and the patriotic education for the Japanese expatriates in Manchuria.<sup>43</sup>

As a crucial turning point of Japan's political structure and Shinto policy, the Mukden Incident was staged by the Kwantung Army leaders on 18 September 1931, namely Itagaki Seishirō 板垣征四郎 (1885–1948) and Ishiwara Kanji 石原莞爾 (1889–1949), to create a pretext for invading Manchuria in order to ward off the potential threats to Japan posed by the Soviet Red Army from the north and Chiang Kai-shek's nationalist troop from the south. The Japanese army bombed a section of the railway lines owned by the SMR and blamed the Chinese army led by Zhang Xueliang 張學良 (1901–2001) for such a sabotage. As a result, the Kwantung Army assumed the control of Manchuria and facilitated the establishment of the puppet state Manchukuo six months later on 1 March 1932.<sup>44</sup>

The Mukden Incident also served as the turning point for the different kinds of shrines built in Manchuria. Prior to 1931, the major type of shrines was the so-called “urban shrines (都市型神社)” built in the cities of the Kwantung Leased Territory and within the SMR zone (*Mantetsu fuzokuchi* 滿鉄附屬地). According to Nakajima Michio 中島三千男, 31 out of 38 shrines built during the period from 1905 to 1932 were located within the SMR zone, which constituted around 80% of the total number.<sup>45</sup> After 1931, especially after the establishment of Manchukuo in 1932, the number of the shrines in Manchuria grew exponentially with the

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<sup>43</sup> Suga, “A Concept of ‘Overseas Shinto Shrines’,” 50.

<sup>44</sup> Shimada Toshihiko 島田俊彦, *Kantōgun: Zai Man Rikugun no dokusō* 関東軍：在滿陸軍の独走 [Kwantung Army: Japan's maverick land force in Manchuria] (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 2005), 135–149.

<sup>45</sup> Inamiya and Nakajima, “*Shinkoku*” no zan'ei, 109.

government-funded shrines (官社) and settler shrines (開拓地 (団) 神社) being the majority.<sup>46</sup>

The military government and the army also worked together to motivate the destitute farmers in Japan to Manchuria who were expected to become the empire's frontier, advancing Japan's presence into the remote rural areas and confronting the hazards of the Soviet and the Chinese.<sup>47</sup> As the anthropologist Mariko Asano Tamanoi noted, her interviewees, who were once dispatched from Nagano Prefecture (長野県) to Manchuria as agrarian settlers, "often used the term *kokusaku* 国策 (national policy)," which specifically meant the "state-initiated Manchurian colonization."<sup>48</sup> In addition to the concern about national security, the emigration campaign also aimed to solve the urgent problem of the lack of land for the rapid-growing population especially in the rural areas of Japan.<sup>49</sup> Most of the farmers were from the mountainous northeastern prefectures which were densely populated and deficient in arable land, such as Nagano, Aomori, Iwate, and Ishikawa.<sup>50</sup>

One of the results of this national policy was the burgeoning of the settler shrines in Manchuria, built by the Japanese emigrants in their settler villages. From 1932 to 1945, more than 300,000 agrarian settlers were mobilized to cultivate the land in Manchuria, and they were expected to become permanent residents on this foreign land and not return to Japan proper.<sup>51</sup> From 1932 to 1943, 101 shrines were erected in the villages of these emigrants.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Sagai, *Manshū no jinja kōbōshi*, 77.

<sup>47</sup> However, according to Mariko Tamanoi, the so-called "epitome of Japanese agriculture" and "a typical Japanese farmer who only cultivates rice" were the images invented by the Japanese government to contrast with the Chinese and Korean farmers in Manchuria. In reality, the Japanese agrarian settlers grew cash crops other than rice and relied on the agricultural technology and knowledge possessed by Chinese and Korean farmers in order to survive. See also Tamanoi, *Memory Maps*, 39.

<sup>48</sup> Tamanoi, *Memory Maps*, 36.

<sup>49</sup> Sidney Xu Lu, *The Making of Japanese Settler Colonialism: Malthusianism and Trans-Pacific Migration, 1868–1961* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 227.

<sup>50</sup> Sagai, *Manshū no jinja kōbōshi*, 237.

<sup>51</sup> Mariko Tamanoi, ed., *Crossed Histories: Manchuria in the Age of Empire* (Ann Arbor: Association for Asian Studies; Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2005), 9.

<sup>52</sup> Inamiya and Nakajima, "*Shinkoku*" no zan'ei, 110.

With limited financial and human resources, most of the shrines were constructed ad hoc and in a very simple style, comprising only the main hall (*honden/shinden* 本殿/神殿) and the *torii* gate (鳥居).<sup>53</sup> The naming of these shrines also reflects their impromptu nature since most of the shrines were named after the villages' locations in Manchuria or the settlers' hometowns in Japan, such as Hadaho Shrine 哈達河 (ハダホ) 神社 and Nagano Shrine 長野神社.<sup>54</sup> Although it was the Japanese government that directed this massive colonization project, there is no clear evidence suggesting that the government directly sponsored the construction of the shrines in these frontier villages. I will further explain the features of settler shrines in the third chapter.

On the other hand, this seemingly spontaneous mode of settler shrine management does not mean that the Japanese government was absent. It was rather present at a grander scale and in a more impalpable manner. For instance, the agrarian settlers received farm tools, rice seedlings, and land from the government upon their arrival in Manchuria.<sup>55</sup> Compared with the influx of the Chinese or Korean farmers whose farming style was much more self-reliant, the Japanese colonization of Manchuria was more government-oriented, with the government supplying the necessary farming equipment and tilled land purchased from the local farmers at a considerably low price.<sup>56</sup>

Another example is the location of these shrines. The majority of these shrines were concentrated in the northeastern provinces of Manchukuo bordering the Maritime Territory of the Soviet Union, which included Ryūkō Province 龍江省, Hinkō Province 濱江省, Sankō

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<sup>53</sup> Inamiya and Nakajima, *"Shinkoku" no zan'ei*, 110.

<sup>54</sup> Sagai, *Manshū no jinja kōbōshi*, 79.

<sup>55</sup> Tamanoi, *Memory Maps*, 40.

<sup>56</sup> Tamanoi, *Memory Maps*, 37.

Province 三江省, Kantō Province 間島省, and so forth.<sup>57</sup> The geographical distribution of these shrines indicates that the Japanese government expected the agrarian settlers to consolidate Japan's national interest and sphere of influence over the newly-conquered territory on the continent and ward off the Soviet's encroachment from the north. Even though the settlers might have considered their migration as a self-driven decision and the construction of shrines as a continuation of their customs, they, in fact, reified the Japanese government's colonization strategy by extending the Shinto practice and the Japanese influence onto the continent. In this sense, even though the Japanese agrarian settlers were individuals that belonged to the private sector, they were mobilized for the political and military end of the empire and became the "extension of the state," as Louise Young had noted.<sup>58</sup>

In addition to the government-funded agrarian emigration and shrine locations, the design of the annual festival calendar of Manchukuo also divulged the Japanese government's clandestine manipulation of the Shinto affairs in Manchukuo. According to the *Compilation of the Model Answers for the General Knowledge Examination about the Manchukuo Empire: Civil Service Examination* (満洲帝国常識模範論説全集：文官考試問題対照) published by the Manchurian Judiciary Association (満洲司法協会) in 1942, the regular *matsuri* festivals of the State Foundation Deity's Shrine and the State Foundation Loyal Spirit Shrine were designed to contain grand, medium, and minor festivals (大、中、小祭) which ought to display their close connections with the Japanese festivals. The grand festival was held as the national foundation festival (建国祭) and meant to offer reverence

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<sup>57</sup> Inamiya and Nakajima, "Shinkoku" no zan'ei, 110.

<sup>58</sup> Young, *Japan's Total Empire*, 7–8.



and gratitude to Amaterasu for her benediction. The medium festivals included the ritual for bountiful harvest called *Kikoku-sai* 祈穀祭 which was modeled on the Japanese *Kinen-sai* 祈年祭 and the harvest ritual *Jōshin-sai* 嘗新祭 after the imperial ritual *Kanname-sai* 神嘗祭 / *Niname-sai* 新嘗祭 in Japan. The minor monthly festivals *Gettan-sai* 月旦祭 and *Tsukinami-sai* 月次祭 were also claimed to have the shared roots in the Japanese and Manchurian traditions (日満共に古くより行はれて来た).<sup>59</sup> The festival and annual event (*nenchū-gyōji* 年中行事) calendar of Manchukuo, albeit retaining the so-called Manchurian traditions, exhibited the strong influence of the Japanese government on its contents, which was based almost entirely on the Japanese prototype.

### **Kwantung Army**

The active role of the Japanese government and the Kwantung Army in facilitating the Shinto shrine proliferation in Manchuria was hardly distinguishable from the early 1930s toward the mid-1940s. Notwithstanding, I still divide them into two categories because the Japanese government represents a broader range of duties overseeing the territories both at home and overseas while the Kwantung Army exhibits a stronger sense of regionalism in Manchuria, often overturning the government's decisions or forcing the government to recognize its military actions.<sup>60</sup> Meanwhile, the Kwantung Army consisted of a group of young ultra-

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<sup>59</sup> See *Manshū-teikoku jōshiki mohan ronsetsu zenshū: Bunkan kōshi mondai taishō* 満洲帝国常識模範論説全集：文官考試問題対照 [Compilation of the model answers for the general knowledge examination about the Manchukuo Empire: Civil service examination] (Hsinking: Manshū shihō kyōkai, 1942), 47–51.

<sup>60</sup> Ogata Sadako 緒方貞子, *Manshū-jihen to seisaku no keisei katei* 満州事変と政策の形成過程 [The Mukden Incident and the making of Japan's foreign policy] (Tokyo: Hara shobō, 1966), 7–9.

nationalist military officers who advocated a more aggressive attitude toward China and Russia and a more direct control over Manchuria.<sup>61</sup>

As a pivotal part of the Japanese state, the Kwantung Army, with the support of the military government in Japan, dominated the scene of the state-funded shrines in Manchuria which were centered on the veneration of Amaterasu and Emperor Meiji and excluded any other non-Japanese deities.<sup>62</sup> These officially sponsored shrines, notably the Kantō Shrine (*Kantō Jingū* 関東神宮), the State Foundation Deity's Shrine (*Kenkoku Jinbyō* 建国神廟), and the State Foundation Loyal Spirit Shrine (*Kenkoku Chūreibyō* 建国忠霊廟), displayed the Japanese superiority over other ethnic groups in Manchuria, underlying the proclamation of “five races under one union (*gozoku kyōwa* 五族協和).”<sup>63</sup> The Kantō Shrine located in Ryojun 旅順 was one of the salient examples in this sense. In the *Edict of Constructing the Kantō Shrine* (関東神宮創立ノ件) issued in 1938, the cabinet of the military government explained the aims of the Kantō Shrine as cultivating the type of citizens who were patriotic and loyal to the Japanese throne (忠君愛国ノ實ヲ擧ゲントスル), being the bedrock of transplanting the Japanese national culture to Manchuria (國風移植ノ大本トシテ), and galvanizing the national spirit of the overseas Japanese expeditionary forces and settlers (國民精神ノ振作ヲ圖ラントス).<sup>64</sup> Besides its significance to the Japanese in Manchuria (在滿

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<sup>61</sup> Ogata Sadako 緒方貞子, *Manshū-jihen to seisaku no keisei katei*, 29–33.

<sup>62</sup> Holtom, “Chapter II: Shinto and Japanese Nationalism,” in *Modern Japan and Shinto Nationalism*, 43.

<sup>63</sup> The “five races” defined by the Manchukuo and Japanese government included the Manchus (滿), the Japanese (日), the Han Chinese (漢), the Mongols (蒙), and the Koreans (朝). See Kawamura Minato 川村湊, *Bungaku kara miru “Manshū”*: “*Gozoku kyōwa*” no yume to genjitsu 文学から見る「満洲」: 「五族協和」の夢と現実 [“Manchuria” seen from literature: Dreams and reality of the “Five Races Under One Union”] (Tokyo: Yoshikawa kōbunkan, 1998), 7.

<sup>64</sup> *Kantō Jingu o sōritsu seraru* 関東神宮ヲ創立セラル [Regarding the founding of the Kantō Shrine] (Tokyo: National Archives of Japan, 1938).

邦人), the shrine was described as being also important for the close relationship between the Japanese empire and the Manchukuo (日満両帝国ノ緊密関係...ニ徴スル).<sup>65</sup> From the perspective of the army and the military government, the Kantō Shrine should be based on the Japanese nationalism, as a means of purveying the necessary patriotic and moral education for the Japanese expatriates in Manchuria. The Shrine was also expected to fortify the relations between Japan and Manchukuo as a response to the onset of the Second Sino-Japanese War one year before its construction.

Apart from the Kantō Shrine, perhaps the most representative initiatives of the Kwantung Army that demonstrated its leading role in the importation of State Shinto into Manchuria was the establishment of the State Foundation Deity's Shrine and the State Foundation Loyal Spirit Shrine in Hsinking (today's Changchun 長春), the capital city of Manchukuo, in 1940. While the settler shrines that scattered across the Manchukuo's northern frontier adjacent to the Soviet Union were decentralized, the state foundation shrines were highly state-driven. These two shrines were expected by the army to be the kernel of patriotism for the Manchukuo citizens and the pinnacle of the Japan-Manchukuo affinity.<sup>66</sup> The State Foundation Deity's Shrine, for example, was devoted to Amaterasu Ōmikami in order to display such an alleged diplomatic rapport. Even though Puyi 溥儀 (1906–1967), the nominal Emperor of Manchukuo and head of the state, was a descendent of the Qing Manchu royal family, the previous emperors of the Qing dynasty were not enshrined in this important

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<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> Tsuda Yoshiki 津田良樹, "Manshūkoku Kenkoku-chūreibyō to Kenkoku-shinbyō no kenchiku ni tsuite" 「満洲国」建国忠霊廟と建国神廟の建築について [Regarding the construction and appearance of the State Foundation Loyal Spirit Shrine and the State Foundation Deity's Shrine of Manchukuo], *Kanagawa daigaku 21 Seiki COE Puroguramu 'Jinrui bunka kenkyū no tame no himoji shiryō no taieika' kenkyū sankakusha kenkyū seika ronbunshū* (March 2008): 71.

national facility.<sup>67</sup> Another monument, the State Foundation Loyal Spirit Shrine, also exhibited an overt connection to Japan. The Shrine was modeled on the Yasukuni Shrine and erected to accommodate and enshrine the spirits of the dead Japanese soldiers and soldiers of other ethnicities who fought for Manchukuo.<sup>68</sup> According to Sagai Tatsuru 嵯峨井建, a Shinto historian who studied Japan's overseas shrines, the two state foundation shrines were established with the aim of “unifying the minds of alien ethnic groups under the Japanese spirit (異民族を精神的に統一するため),” which contrasted with the settler shrines built for the Japanese residents' own purposes and termed by Sagai as “shrines of common people (*Tamigusa no yashiro* 民草の社).”<sup>69</sup>

The Japanese government and the Kwantung Army were two powerful and influential components of the Japanese state that collaborated in the proliferation of Shinto in Manchuria by motivating the Japanese agrarian immigration and establishing the state-funded shrines. For the role of the government, it facilitated two paralleling processes—the top-down project of the farmers' resettlement to Manchuria and the burgeoning of the settler villages and shrines at the grassroots level. The Japanese government after 1931 had been taken over by a group of military ultra-nationalists.<sup>70</sup> To support the Kwantung Army's policy of reinforcing the Japanese influence over the newly founded Manchukuo, the government launched massive emigration campaigns that aimed to transport the impoverished farmers from Japan

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<sup>67</sup> Nakata Seiichi 中田整一, *Puyi de lingyizhong zhenxiang: Micang Riben de wei Man huanggong zuigao jimi* 溥仪的另一种真相: 秘藏日本的伪满皇宫最高机密 [Another truth about Puyi: The top secret preserved in Japan regarding the royal family of Manchukuo], trans. Kiire Kageyuki 喜入影雪 (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 2009), 98–100.

<sup>68</sup> Tsuda Yoshiki, “Manshūkoku Kenkoku-chūreibyō to Kenkoku-shinbyō no kenchiku ni tsuite,” 71.

<sup>69</sup> Sagai, *Manshū no jinja kōbōshi*, 13.

<sup>70</sup> Walter Skya, *Japan's Holy War: The Ideology of Radical Shintō Ultrationalism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2009), 229–30.

proper to Manchuria. The agrarian settlers, in turn, played an active role in building settler shrines across the foreign land as a continuation of their customs.

The Kwantung Army, in the meantime, contributed to augmenting the sway of Shinto over Manchuria through erecting the state-funded shrines in Hsinking, the capital of Manchukuo. The Japanese government and Kwantung Army complemented each other in inserting the state-funded shrines on the top level and the settler shrines on the grassroots level into the local religious scene of Manchuria. As the discussion of settler shrines in this chapter has partly disclosed, the proliferation of Shinto in Manchuria was neither a purely state-driven campaign nor a fully decentralized process. In the next chapter, I will explore how the Japanese agrarian immigrants and their acts of shrine-building had complicated the narrative regarding the expansion of overseas shrines as a state-funded process.

## CHAPTER THREE

## Japanese Immigrants and Settler Shrines

The Japanese government and the Kwantung Army were two key players from 1931 to 1945 in mobilizing peasants from the poverty-stricken prefectures of Japan to Manchuria, and these emigrants, in turn, built shrines in their settler villages, in which most of them enshrined only the deities of Japan and served local Japanese villagers. This exclusive characteristic displayed by the settler shrines, in fact, has been a source of religious ambiguity and political controversies by which the Japanese government maneuvered to successfully take over the right of managing Shinto affairs from Manchukuo while the Shinto theorists regarded such religious exclusivity as a failure. As a part of the national policy of agrarian expedition, the settlers and their shrines in Manchuria demonstrated the manipulation of the Japanese state as a hidden force in the background even though the behavior of constructing these shrines was unprompted and spontaneous on the façade. I will illustrate this argument based on the geographical locations of settler shrines, the administrative right of managing them, and their exclusivity as an imported Japanese religion.

One of the most manifest aspects that indicate the intervention of the state is the geographical distribution of settler shrines. Most of these shrines, especially those built after the establishment of Manchukuo in 1932, were located in the northeastern provinces of Manchukuo contiguous with the Russian Far East.<sup>71</sup> According to Nakajima Michio's research, there were 18 shrines built in Ryūkō Province, 16 shrines in Sankō Province, and 14

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<sup>71</sup> Inamiya and Nakajima, *"Shinkoku" no zan'ei*, 110.

shrines in Hinkō Province (Fig. 1).<sup>72</sup> Based on the statistical data of the Japanese population in the Manchukuo provinces published in 1934, the number of Japanese residents in northern Manchuria, though not as many as those in southern Manchuria, was not negligible. For instance, there were 4,151 Japanese people in Harbin ハルビン, 1,368 in Kantō 間島, 368 in Qiqihar 齊々哈爾, and 336 in Konshun 琿春 upon the time when the census was conducted.<sup>73</sup> The locations of these shrines, combined with the demographic distribution, suggest that the Japanese agrarian settlers in northern Manchuria were not simply self-reliant, free-standing farmers, they were also agencies of the state motivated and transported by the government to expand the Japanese presence to the rural areas of Manchuria and fortify the northern border of the Japanese influence sphere against the Soviet's military threat.<sup>74</sup>

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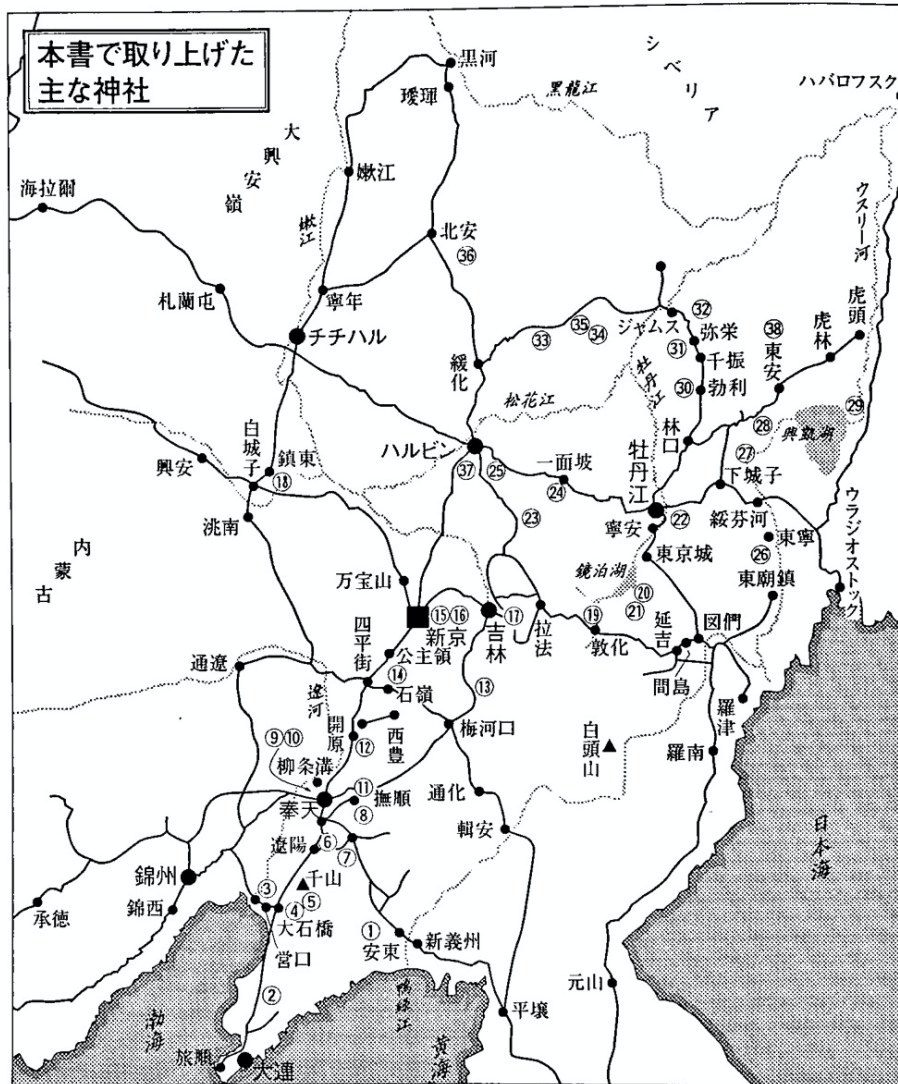
<sup>72</sup> After its foundation in 1932, Manchukuo inherited the administrative divisions of the Republic of China, which had five provinces in the Northeast of China (中國東北). Until 1941, the Manchukuo government had established 14 more provinces, and there were eventually 19 provinces in total. While the map of the Figure 1 on the next page shows the administrative divisions of Manchukuo in 1934, the provinces mentioned in Nakajima's article were created between 1934 and 1941. The Ryūkō Province 龍江省 occupied the southern part of the Kokuryūkō Province 黑龍江省 in Figure 1, whereas the Sankō Province 三江省 took up the northern part of the Kitsurin Province 吉林省. The Hinkō Province 濱江省 covered the middle part of the Kitsurin Province. See both Inamiya and Nakajima, "*Shinkoku*" no zan'ei, 110, and the map *Manshū teikoku yōzu* 滿洲帝國要圖 [Outline map of the Manchukuo Empire] below.

<sup>73</sup> *Shitsugyō taisaku shiryō dai 2 shū: Manshūkoku imin ni kansuru shiryō* 失業対策資料第2輯：滿洲國移民に関する資料 [Materials for unemployment issues II: Documents regarding the issues of emigration to Manchukuo] (Tokyo: Tōkyōfu gakumu-bu shakai-ka, 1934), 17–9.

<sup>74</sup> Zushi, *Shinryaku jinja*, 221.







- |        |          |          |         |
|--------|----------|----------|---------|
| ①安東神社  | ⑪撫順神社    | ⑳国士神社    | ㉑弥栄神社   |
| ②瓦房店神社 | ⑫開原城子河神社 | ㉒牡丹江神社   | ㉒宝清神社   |
| ③營口神社  | ⑬駅馬神社    | ㉓五常神社    | ㉓大古洞神社  |
| ④大石橋神社 | ⑭公主嶺神社   | ㉔沖河神社    | ㉔加能神社   |
| ⑤千山神社  | ⑮新京神社    | ㉕天理村神社   | ㉕藤津比古神社 |
| ⑥遼陽神社  | ⑯第一陣神社   | ㉖東寧神社    | ㉖氷川神社   |
| ⑦本溪湖神社 | ⑰新站神社    | ㉗城子河神社   | ㉗志士神社   |
| ⑧新屯神社  | ⑱竜山神社    | ㉘哈達河弥栄神社 | ㉘蔵王神社   |
| ⑨奉天神社  | ⑲南台子神社   | ㉙船上神社    |         |
| ⑩太夷宮   | ㉚鏡泊神社    | ㉚読書神社    |         |

Figure 2 Locations of settler shrines in Manchuria<sup>76</sup>

<sup>76</sup> Sagai, *Manshū no jinja kōbōshi*, 3.

In addition to the abovementioned distribution pattern, based on the map created by Sagai Tatsuru, the settler shrines also appear to scatter along the railway in the north of Manchukuo (contrasted with the urban shrines along the railway in the south). Both types of Shinto shrines were mostly concentrated at the two sides of the railway running from southwest (the Kwantung Leased Territories) to northeast across Manchuria and lining up the major cities such as Dairen 大連, Mukden 奉天, Hsinking 新京, Harbin, and Botankō 牡丹江 (Fig. 2). This indicates that the settler shrines were made possible because of the railway network operated by the South Manchuria Railway (SMR) Company, and the railway played a significant role in inserting the forces of the Japanese empire into the rural areas of Manchuria by transporting the necessary human and other resources to the designated settlements in the countryside.

On the other hand, Sagai's map also suggests that the settler shrines did not reach the remotest fields of Manchuria away from cities and railway infrastructure as what Chinese and Korean farmers might have done.<sup>77</sup> According to Tamanoi's interviews with the surviving Japanese emigrants to Manchuria, the mode of Japanese agrarian colonization was that the state institutions such as the SMR Company and local colonial government purchased the already tilled land from Chinese and Korean farmers and redistributed them to the Japanese settlers for cultivation.<sup>78</sup> Therefore, although the acts of shrine construction among the settlers were indeed spontaneous as an extension of their customs in Japan proper, the geographical distribution of these shrines vouchsafed that many organizations of the state, such as the SMR Company, Kantō Bureau, and even the heads of the emigrants' villages,

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<sup>77</sup> Sagai, *Manshū no jinja kōbōshi*, 3.

<sup>78</sup> Tamanoi, *Memory Maps*, 28.

together enabled the presence of these settler shrines and even predetermined where they were located in Manchuria.<sup>79</sup>

Another aspect that reveals the state-oriented nature of settler shrines is the administrative right of managing these shrines. According to Nakajima, it was the Japanese government that was responsible for regulating and overseeing the settler shrines and shrine affairs overall in Manchuria, even though the Manchukuo government should be the one in charge of the religions within its border.<sup>80</sup> The Japanese government justified such an expropriation of right by declaring the pedagogical significance of Shinto for the Japanese people and consequently the government's due right to manage Shinto as a crucial part of its education policy. This government's stance on the Shinto and shrines in Manchuria seems to be consistent throughout the period from 1931 to 1945 and even before the founding of Manchukuo. As early as in 1925, the Academic Affairs Division of the Department of Civil Affairs under the Kantō Bureau (関東庁内務局学務課) had published a handbook named *The Shrines and Religions in Southern Manchuria* (南満洲ノ神社ト宗教), which separated "Shinto shrines" and "religions" as two different topics.<sup>81</sup> While "religions" contained Buddhism, Christianity, Daoism, Confucianism, Lamaism, and so forth, "Shinto and shrines" were defined as the innate morality of being patriotic and revering the deities, ancestors, and emperors of Japan (these three categories were often referred collectively).<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> Young, *Japan's Total Empire*, 352–4.

<sup>80</sup> Inamiya and Nakajima, "*Shinkoku*" *no zan'ei*, 111.

<sup>81</sup> The "Kantō Bureau" had two names in Japanese. Before the founding of Manchukuo in 1932, it was called *Kantō-chō* 関東庁; after that, its name was changed to *Kantō-kyoku* 関東局 for the sake of better organizing the Japanese institutions in Manchukuo. See Kantō Bureau, *Kantō-kyoku shisei sanjūnenshi* 関東局施政三十年史 [The 30-year history of the administration of the Kantō Bureau] (Tokyo: Toppan insatsu kabushiki-gaisha, 1936), 42–44.

<sup>82</sup> The original Japanese text reads, 「由来敬神崇祖報本反始ノ觀念ニ富メルハ、全ク我日本民族ノ特性ニシテ…」 See *Minamimanshū no jinja to shūkyō* 南満洲ノ神社ト宗教 [Regarding the shrines and religion in South Manchuria] (Dairen: Kantō-chō naimu-kyoku gakumu-ka, 1925), 4.

The spontaneous and unplanned growing pattern of the settler shrines in Manchuria also enabled the Japanese government to claim that Shinto transcended usual religions and was an inherent attribute of the Japanese race. This deliberate mystification of the definition of Shinto gave the Japanese government a proper pretext for taking over the right of managing Shinto affairs in Manchuria by excluding it from the category of “religion.” In the *Booklet of the Education and School Affairs Regarding the Settlements in Manchuria* (移住地学務提要) published in 1938 by the Manchuria Colonization Company (満洲拓殖公社), the author equated the education policy for Japanese immigrants in Manchuria with the shrine policy by suggesting that both policies had been preserved from the rescission of the Japanese exterritoriality in Manchukuo since they represented the backbone of the upbringing for the Japanese people and were inextricable from the education for the nation of Japan.<sup>83</sup> In this booklet, Shinto was elevated as the crucial key to the Japanese national spirit, which excluded people of other ethnicities from participating in it, and there was no mention of Shinto as a religion.

The government’s attitude toward overseas Shinto shown in the official document *Edict Concerning the Establishment of the Department of Education under the Kantō Bureau* (関東局ニ在満教務部ヲ設置スル等ノ件) issued in 1941 also concurs with those in previous publications. In this edict submitted by the Privy Council of Japan (*Sūmitsu-in* 枢密院), which was an advisory institution serving the Emperor of Japan, to the Emperor Shōwa,

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<sup>83</sup> The full version of the original Japanese text reads, 「在満日本人の教育行政は、神社行政と共に治外法権撤廃の留保條項となり、両者の行政に関する事務は挙て駐満全權大使の管掌する所となった。此の所以は固より日本独自の教育精神の真髓を一層徹底拡充する要あるに起因することは言を俟たないが、亦一面行政の本質上日本の国民教育と密接不可分の関係を有し、他面全満日本人教育の一元化を図り、且つ学校経営の適正合理化を期し以て治外法権撤廃後に於ける新事態に即応せしめようとした結果に他ならない。」 See *Ijūchi gakumu teiyō* 移住地学務提要 [Booklet of the education and school affairs regarding the settlements in Manchuria] (Hsinking: Manshū takushoku kōsha, 1938).

the very first clause states, “In order to facilitate our empire’s command over the administration of the shrine and education affairs in Manchukuo, (it is necessary to) create a Department of Education under the regulation of the Kantō Bureau.”<sup>84</sup> What underlies this stratagem is that the Japanese government and Kwantung Army took advantage of the ambiguity of settler shrines and argued that Shinto and shrines were inseparable from the national spirit of Japan and the cultivation of such ethos, and thus should be governed by the designated Japanese institution as a part of the educational curriculum designed for the Japanese in Manchuria.<sup>85</sup>

This glaring division imposed on Shinto and other religions helps to explain why the Kwantung Army and Japanese government returned the right of governing other religions such as Buddhism and Christianity to the Ministry of Civil Affairs (民生部) of the Manchukuo government as a gesture of abrogating the exterritoriality previously enjoyed by Japan after the founding of Manchukuo but insisted in seizing the right of administering Shinto and shrines in Manchuria.<sup>86</sup> This policy contrasted Shinto sharply with other religions and resulted in the elevation and, more importantly, isolation of Shinto from the popular support. As a consequence, the belief of Shinto was restricted to only the Japanese migrants and was not rooted in local peoples, for example, Chinese and Korean farmers or Manchu and Mongol natives. This policy eventually resulted in the outright demolition of Shinto shrines by the locals in Manchuria as a final gesture of retaliation after the exodus of the Japanese colonizers.

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<sup>84</sup> The original Japanese text reads, 「第一條 帝国が満洲国ニ於テ行フ神社及教育ノ行政ニ関スル事務ヲ掌ラシムル為関東局ニ在満教務部ヲ置ク」 See *Kantō-kyoku ni Zaiman-kyōmubu o setchi-suru nado no ken* 関東局ニ在満教務部ヲ設置スル等ノ件 [Edict concerning the establishment of the Department of Education under the Kantō Bureau] (Tokyo: National Archives of Japan, 1941).

<sup>85</sup> The original Japanese text reads, 「教育における日本独自の国民精神の陶冶と不可分一体である神社」 See Inamiya and Nakajima, "*Shinkoku*" no zan'ei, 111.

<sup>86</sup> Inamiya and Nakajima, "*Shinkoku*" no zan'ei, 110–1.

As discussed above, the third aspect that uncovers the state's role as a hidden force in the process of settler shrine proliferation is the exclusivity of Shinto claimed by the Japanese government. In fact, the shrines were exclusive by themselves even without the government's assertion. As Nakajima pointed out, in terms of the co-enshrined deities, 95% out of 302 shrines in Manchukuo were devoted to Amaterasu, and 46% of them enshrined Emperor Meiji. In addition, there were also 12% of these shrines dedicated to Ōkuninushi-no-Kami, which was not entitled as a national deity but had a strong connection with the Izumo Grand Shrine in Shimane Prefecture (島根県).<sup>87</sup> It transpires that almost all of the overseas shrines in Manchukuo had worshipped either the national deities of Japan designated by the state since the Meiji period or other major Japanese deities related to conquest and state-building. Therefore, the shrines had already been the de facto avatars of the Japanese state even before the government's interference in the regulation of Shinto affairs in Manchukuo.

Apart from the side of the Japanese settlers, the government of Japan also intervened in the affairs of shrine construction and enshrinement to make sure that the shrines would not be devoted to any non-Japanese, non-officially designated deities. In the *Regulations Concerning the Shrines in Manchukuo and the Republic of China* (在滿洲国及中華民國神社規則) issued in 1936, as a part of the policy adjustment to integrating the Shinto policy in both Manchukuo and China, the Kantō Bureau instructed that anyone attempting to build a shrine should obtain the official permission from the Japanese consular officers in Manchukuo and China and ought to report the enshrining deities of the planned shrine among other details such as the motives, its location, name, sources of funding, etcetera.<sup>88</sup> Through

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<sup>87</sup> Inamiya and Nakajima, "*Shinkoku*" no zan'ei, 111.

<sup>88</sup> The original Japanese text reads, 「第一條 滿洲国及中華民國ニ於テ神社ヲ設立、移転、廃止又ハ併合セムトスルトキハ所轄帝国領事官ノ許可ヲ受クベシ。第二條 神社ノ設立ノ許可ヲ受ケムトスルトキハ其ノ氏子又ハ崇敬者ト為ルベキ者二十人以上ノ連署ヲ以テ左ノ事項ヲ具シ所轄帝国領事官ニ願出ヅベシ：一、事由；二、設立地；三、神社名；四、祭神；五、例祭日...」 See "Zaimanshūkoku oyobi

such an edict, the Japanese government was able to censor the establishment and management of the overseas shrines in Manchukuo and ensure that these shrines would only pay homage to the national deities of Japan.

As an example indicating the exclusive and also the coercive nature of the Shinto shrines in Manchukuo, the local Chinese people were forbidden from visiting the shrines but still needed to show respect for them.<sup>89</sup> According to the interviews conducted by the researchers of overseas shrines (海外神社跡地グループ) at Kanagawa University, including Tsuda Yoshiki 津田良樹, Nakajima Michio, and the others, the Chinese people who lived through the Japanese colonial rule in Northeast China recalled that most of the “Japanese temples (Ch. *Riben-miao* 日本廟, referring to the shrines)” were built near the Japanese towns.<sup>90</sup> They were required to make an obeisance to the shrines whenever they passed by in front of the *torii* gates but visiting the shrines was strictly prohibited.<sup>91</sup> For instance, for the Kōshurei Shrine (公主嶺神社), the interviewee Ji Pu 季浦 said, “Chinese people did not visit the shrine, and they were not allowed to do so... Although we were accustomed to it, its existence meant very little for us.”<sup>92</sup> The shrine was turned into a park, and its main hall became the park manager’s office right after the repatriation of the Japanese people.<sup>93</sup> This interview confirms that the shrines in Manchukuo were built for serving the Japanese settlers

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Chūkaminokoku jinja kisoku” 在満洲国及中華民国神社規則 [Regulations concerning the shrines in Manchukuo and the Republic of China], *Kanpō*, June 6, 1936 (no. 2827), 212.

<sup>89</sup> Tsuda Yoshiki 津田良樹, Nakajima Michio 中島三千男, Horiuchi Hiroaki 堀内寛晃, and Shang Feng 尚峰, “Kyū Manshūkoku no ‘Mantetsufuzokuchi jinja’ atochi chōsa kara mita jinja no yōsō” 旧満洲国の「満鉄附属地神社」跡地調査からみた神社の様相 [Survey report on the history of Japan’s overseas shrines in the South Manchurian Railway Company Zone in Manchukuo], *Nenpō: Jinrui bunka kenkyū no tame no himoji shiryō no taikēika* 4 (2007): 262.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, 225.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, 274 and 279.

<sup>92</sup> The original Japanese text reads, 「中国人は参拝しない、また参拝することも禁止された... 神社は見慣れたものだったが、神社に対してあまり関心はなかった。」 See *Ibid.*, 274.

<sup>93</sup> The original Japanese text reads, 「日本人引き揚げ後、すぐに公園の事務室になった。」 See *Ibid.*, 274.

exclusively and represented the uniqueness of the Japanese race, which in turn resulted in the disconnection of Shinto from other local ethnic groups.

The exclusivity of the deities enshrined by the overseas shrines, together with the unique pedagogical, non-religious status of Shinto upheld by the Japanese government, turned out to be a double-edged sword that successfully maintained the “purity” of Shinto by confining it to Japanese communities, but on the other hand, prevented Shinto from connecting other ethnic groups to the customs and national identity of Japan. As a consequence, the Shinto practices and shrines in Manchuria vanished alongside the abrupt collapse of the Japanese empire in 1945, and virtually no shrines remained in China’s northeastern provinces nowadays—a fact that many Japanese scholars such as Sagai Tatsu, Yamamuro Shin’ichi 山室信一, and Tsuda Yoshiki in retrospect described as a “mirage (*maboroshi* 幻).”<sup>94</sup> Also, the series of acts, such as retaining the right of Shinto management and accommodating only the Japanese deities in the shrines, reveal that the state was actually quite active in the background, maneuvering the growth of Shinto and shrines into assisting its colonization project in Manchuria and the consolidation of the Japanese nationality, which was reckoned by the government as being beneficial to Japan’s long-term success on the continent.

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<sup>94</sup> Sagai, *Manshū no jinja kōbōshi*, 291; Yamamuro, *Manzhouguo de shixiang yu huanxiang*, 17–20; Tsuda Yoshiki 津田良樹, “Maboroshi no ‘Manshūkoku’ Kenkokushinbyō o fukugen suru” 幻の『満洲国』建国神廟を復原する [Restoring the mystical “State Foundation Deity’s Shrine of Manchukuo”], *Himoji shiryō kenkyū* 16 (June 2007): 24–5.



## CONCLUSION

### An Ambivalent Quest for Shinto Expansion

The history of Japan's overseas shrines in Manchuria has been a topic of constant disputes both during the age of the Japanese empire and at present, as I have shown in this paper. I first analyzed how the arguments of some progressive Shinto theorists in Japan such as Ogasawara Shōzō and Ashizu Kōjirō had complicated the discussions surrounding Shinto by attempting to transform it from a mere national belief to a universal religion that could serve as the key to gaining loyalty from the colonials and unifying them under the rule of Japan. In the chapter two, I traced the proliferation of overseas shrines in Manchuria back to the national projects and nation-building process initiated by the Japanese state. In the third chapter, I explored the ambivalent and ambiguous status of these overseas shrines constructed by the Japanese settlers, which were situated at the intersection between the empire-wide state initiative and Shinto practices as a spontaneous faith.

The spread of Shinto and overseas shrines in Manchuria, as one aspect of Japan's colonial expansion in East Asia, reflected a series of the continual internal disputes between Shinto as the epitome of the Japanese supremacy and as the panacea for resolving the ethnic problems in the empire's overseas colonies. The overseas shrines were a bridge connecting the missions between safeguarding the uniqueness and purity of the Japanese race and unifying East Asian peoples against the imminent menace of the West (particularly the Americans) and a crossroad torn by the ideas between the rigorous ultra-nationalism upheld by the Japanese army officers and the moderate imperialism exemplified by a group of Shinto theorists. These wavering and back-and-forth ideological struggles had recurred throughout Japan's colonization of Manchuria and had imbued the settler shrines on the front with the

same ambivalence—these facilities were both religious and political and both vernacular and official as the outposts of the Japanese presence and influence.

The overseas shrines in Manchuria were limited to meeting the needs of the Japanese colonizers, whereas those in Korea and Taiwan were actively adopted for the colonial project of naturalizing Koreans and the inhabitants of Taiwan into imperial citizens, which represented the two sides of the spectrum of Japan's colonial policies.<sup>95</sup> Despite this difference, the overseas shrines in general, as Ogasawara had once cautioned with foresight, were not ingrained in the spiritual landscape of the local peoples in Japan's overseas colonies. Most of these shrines were demolished immediately after the retreat of the Japanese diaspora and had since then been condemned to oblivion, with very few vestiges remaining outside of Japan.

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<sup>95</sup> Emer O'Dwyer, *Significant Soil: Settler Colonialism and Japan's Urban Empire in Manchuria* (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2015), 6.

## GLOSSARY

- Amaterasu Ōmikami* 天照大神  
*Ashikabi* あし牙 [“Sprouting Reeds” (published collection of Ashizu Kōjirō’s speeches)]  
 Ashizu Kōjirō 葦津耕次郎  
 Botankō 牡丹江  
 Chiang Kai-shek 蔣介石  
*Chōsen-jingū* 朝鮮神宮 [Korean Shrine]  
 Dairen 大連  
*Dangun* 단군 檀君  
*gaichi* 外地 [outer territories (referring to the overseas colonies of the Empire of Japan)]  
*Gettan-sai* 月旦祭  
*Hadaho-jinja* 哈達河神社 [Hadaho Shrine]  
 Harubin ハルビン [Harbin]  
*Hinkō-shō* 濱江省 [Hinkō Province]  
*honden/shinden* 本殿/神殿 [main hall (of a Shinto shrine)]  
 Hōten 奉天 [Mukden]  
*Ise-jingū* 伊勢神宮 [Ise Shrines]  
 Ishiwara Kanji 石原莞爾  
 Itagaki Seishirō 板垣征四郎  
*Izumo taisha* 出雲大社 [Izumo Grand Shrine]  
*Jōshin-sai* 嘗新祭  
*kaigai jinja* 海外神社 [overseas shrines]  
*kaitakuchi(dan)-jinja* 開拓地（団）神社 [settler shrines]  
*Kanname-sai* 神嘗祭  
*kansha* 官社 [government-funded shrines]  
*Kantō-chō/Kantō-kyoku* 関東庁/関東局 [Kantō Bureau]  
*Kantō-chō Naimu-kyoku Gakumu-ka* 関東庁内務局学務課 [Academic Affairs Division of the Department of Civil Affairs under the Kantō Bureau]  
*Kantō-gun* 関東軍 [Kwantung Army]  
*Kantō-jingū* 関東神宮 [Kantō Shrine]  
*Kantō-shō* 間島省 [Kantō Province]  
*Kantō-shū* 関東州 [Kwantung Leased Territory]  
*Kenkoku Chūreibyō* 建国忠霊廟 [State Foundation Loyal Spirit Shrine]  
*Kenkoku Jinbyō* 建国神廟 [State Foundation Deity’s Shrine]  
*Kenkoku-sai* 建国祭  
*kenpō no kami* 建邦の神 [national gods or tutelary deities]  
*Kikoku-sai* 祈穀祭  
*Kinen-sai* 祈年祭  
*Kōa-in* 興亜院 [Board of East Asia Development]

*Kokugakuin daigaku* 国学院大学 [Kokugakuin University]  
*kokusaku* 国策 [national policy]  
*koseki* 戸籍 [household registration system]  
*Kōshurei-jinja* 公主嶺神社 [Kōshurei Shrine]  
*Manshū-jihen* 滿州事變 or *Jiuyiba shibian* 九一八事變 [Mukden Incident]  
*Manshūkoku Minsei-bu* 滿洲国民生部 [Ministry of Civil Affairs of the Manchukuo government]  
*Manshū takushoku kōsha* 滿洲拓殖公社 [Manchuria Colonization Company]  
*Mantetsu fuzokuchi* 滿鉄附屬地 [South Manchuria Railway Zone]  
*Meiji-jingū* 明治神宮 [Meiji Shrine]  
*Meiji Tennō* 明治天皇 [Emperor Meiji]  
*mikannagi* 御巫 [priestesses or shamans in the Shinto tradition]  
*Minamimanshū tetsudō kabushiki-gaisha* 南滿州鉄道株式会社 [South Manchuria Railway Company (SMR)]  
*Nagano-jinja* 長野神社 [Nagano Shrine]  
*Nagano-ken* 長野県 [Nagano Prefecture]  
*naichi* 内地 [inner territory (referring to the Japanese archipelago)]  
*nenchū-gyōji* 年中行事 [annual festivals and events]  
*Nihon-zoku/Nippon-zoku* 日本族 [Japanese race]  
*Niiname-sai* 新嘗祭  
*Ogasawara Shōzō* 小笠原省三  
*Ōkuninushi-no-Kami* 大国主神  
*Pekin-jinja* 北京神社 [Peking Shrine]  
*Puyi* 溥儀 [Aisin Gioro Puyi]  
*Riben-miao* 日本廟 [Japanese temples (referring to Shinto shrines)]  
*Ryojun* 旅順  
*Ryūkō-shō* 龍江省 [Ryūkō Province]  
*Sakamoto Koremaru* 坂本是丸  
*Sankō-shō* 三江省 [Sankō Province]  
*Shimane-ken* 島根県 [Shimane Prefecture]  
*Shinkyō* 新京 [Hsinking (the capital of Manchukuo)]  
*Sūmitsu-in* 枢密院 [Privy Council of Japan]  
*Susanoo-no-Mikoto* 須佐之男命  
*Tairikushintō renmei* 大陸神道連盟 [Association of Shinto Development on the Continent]  
*Taiwan-jingū* 台湾神宮 [Taiwan Shrine]  
*torii* 鳥居 [torii gate (at the entrance of a Shinto shrine)]  
*Torii Ryūzō* 鳥居龍藏  
*Tō Teikan* 藤貞幹  
*Tsuboi Shōgorō* 坪井正五郎  
*Tsukinami-sai* 月次祭

*Yasukuni-jinja* 靖国神社 [Yasukuni Shrine]  
Zhang Xueliang 張學良

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