12 *Education and Indoctrination*

CHILD PSYCHOLOGY

Educational psychology in Japan—if such a term is permissible at all—serves to cast the youthful mind in the mold of social tradition and subservience to the state. Restriction of movement begins in earliest infancy when the baby, for about two years, is almost continually carried on its mother's back during its waking hours. The infant quickly learns to restrain itself and to accept the discomforts arising from its mother's movements. If there are older children in the family, they help their mother carry the older babies and are entirely responsible for them. Infants are overprotected from cold but never overfed.

Life in a Japanese house of old-fashioned design also serves to hamper the child's movements severely and to train him for communal responsibility. The flimsiness of these houses, many of which consist of wooden framing and paper, makes it dangerous to play. Young children who dare to crack paper walls or, worse still, to disarrange the lintel may be punished severely. (One of the more brutal punishments is the *moxa*: fragments of wax are rolled, applied to the body, and then set on fire.) Learning to sit "correctly" in Japanese fashion is another way of acquiring physical discipline, since it is very painful at the beginning. Bowing, too, is taught to the children as a means of body control.

The foremost law of education is cleanliness. The Japanese conception of physical cleanliness far surpasses Western ideas. Any excretion of the body is regarded as pollution; consequently, eating, which causes some of the excretions, is not considered a particularly pleasurable function. Also, any kind of sickness is unclean and must be "washed away."

When the children become older, about five years of age, they have to adjust themselves to the social system into which they are born. The importance of the boys grows and far surpasses that of the girls. Both boys and girls are taught early in life to keep think-

ing of their respective status and task in society. A boy, for example, has to obey his father and elder brothers blindly, but he does not have to listen to his mother because she is a woman. This attitude makes the boys' life one of activity while it represses the energies of the girls. Being passive by compulsion and habit, they are rarely the source of friction. There can be nothing worse than a girl behaving in a boyish manner. The family watches closely to see to it that their girls are not called *otokorashii*, "like a boy."

Boyish aggression is checked only by the father or older brothers. All female members of the family are exposed to the terrorizing tactics of the "young master." It has been pointed out that the separation of the male from the female world is typical of Japanese psychology. Male is light and active; female dark and passive. Even foreign nations are classified as virile or effeminate ones.

Virility also means success. Consequently, a boy's failure in school is a disgraceful thing. The schools respond to this with severe discipline and rigid examinations. Like the Spartans, the Japanese boys are taught to hide their emotions and to ignore pain. There is nothing more contemptible than a "sissy" in Japan; the result of hundreds of years of training in the spirit of *Bushido* has left its mark. Japanese education is as basically formal and ceremonial as Japanese life. Progressiveness in the Western sense is no part of Japanese educational psychology; the idea of using manual work alone furnishes the pretext for some activity teaching. The Japanese have been interested in American methods of progressive education from this point of view only; they did not understand—or perhaps deliberately overlooked—the fact that modern American education is the result of political democracy.

PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

For more than two thousand years education was the privilege of the ruling classes. The common people had no part in it so far as literacy and formal learning were concerned. Informal education, outside of school, was always used to indoctrinate the people in the ideals which emanated from religious sources, and were consequently part of the prevailing social and national morality. There was only one Buddhist priest, Kukai, who in 828 made an attempt to introduce schools for the common people. He failed quickly;

however, his name has lived on as that of one of the greatest educators of old Japan.

For the high-born, there were court schools, somewhat similar to the court or palace school founded by Charlemagne in Europe. It was Prince Shokotu who introduced these schools for formal learning. Otherwise, the nobility had its sons trained mainly in the virtues of *Bushido*; institutions for the education of future higher officials offered training in literacy according to the Chinese model schools. The Chinese example was followed throughout the time of the Tokugawa Shogunate.

The Tokugawa, conservative as they were, introduced the custom of teaching common people in the *Tera-Koya*, a school attached to a temple. As in the Chinese schools, established by the feudal lords for the children of their vassals, which remained strictly Confucian and thus an acceptable model for the Japanese rulers, so the ideals of Confucianism were also taught, in a condensed and simplified form, in the *Tera-Koyas*. Throughout the period of the Tokugawa the main tenets of pedagogy were: formation of the individual's character; adjustment of the individual to the family and the state; education for good government; striving toward "universal peace"—under Japanese hegemony. For similar purposes, schools for adults (*Shingaku* and *Hotokuyo*) were established in order to introduce to the people in popular form important aspects of the Japanese world conception. Educational facilities were organized for the needs of boys only. Female education remained strictly limited because the social position of women was so inferior to that of men. The Confucian texts expressly dwell upon the "seven reasons for the repudiation of wives," the "five faults of women," or the "three steps of subordination of women."

At the time of the Meiji restoration there were about 16,000 *Tera-Koya* schools in Japan. Most of them were very primitive with only one teacher in charge of instructing pupils in the rudiments of the three R's and the inevitable subject of "morality." It was not until 1890 that education became compulsory for all children from six to twelve years of age regardless of their social status.

The educational reforms introduced by Emperor Meiji were the result of two divergent tendencies. The necessity for an adaptation to the Western world in certain aspects of Japan's national

life was recognized as urgent but, on the other hand, a complete adaptation to the West had to be avoided in order to maintain the fundamental Japanese ideals. The *Kokutai*, a word that expresses integrally all the ideals of the Japanese realm in political, religious, and social aspects, was to be preserved through appropriate instruction; yet cognizance was taken of Western ideas in so far as they could strengthen the *Kokutai* in its competition with the West.

Thus the educational philosophy of Japan is quite different from that of any Western nation. The imperial "rescript on education," issued by Emperor Meiji on October 30, 1890, may be regarded as the foundation of Japan's educational philosophy. Its implications are so important and far-reaching that a full quotation seems appropriate:

The Imperial Rescript on Education

Know ye, Our subjects:

Our Imperial Ancestors have founded Our Empire on a basis broad and everlasting and have deeply and firmly implanted virtue; Our subjects ever united in loyalty and filial piety have from generation to generation illustrated the beauty thereof. This is the glory of the fundamental character of Our Empire, and herein also lies the source of Our education. Ye, Our subjects, be filial to your parents, affectionate to your brothers and sisters; as husbands and wives be harmonious, as friends true; bear yourselves in modesty and moderation; extend your benevolence to all; pursue learning and cultivate arts, and thereby develop intellectual faculties and perfect moral powers; furthermore advance public good and promote common interests; always respect the Constitution and observe the laws; should emergency arise, offer yourselves courageously to the State; and thus guard and maintain the prosperity of Our Imperial Throne coeval with heaven and earth. So shall ye not only be Our good and faithful subjects, but render illustrious the best traditions of your forefathers.

The Way here set forth is indeed the teaching bequeathed by Our Imperial Ancestors, to be observed alike by Their Descendants and the subjects, infallible for all ages and true in all places. It is Our wish to lay it to heart in all reverence, in common with you, Our subjects, that we may all thus attain to the same virtue.

The 30th day of the 10th month of the 23rd year of Meiji.
(Imperial Sign Manual. Imperial Seal.) [1]

[1] English translation used from *Japanese Education*, a pamphlet by professors K. Yoshida and T. Kaigo, Japanese Board of Tourist Industry, Tokyo, 1937.

Clearly, this reform was not based upon the introduction of liberal or progressive aspects of universal education but upon new administrative and organizational methods only. The educational philosophy remains in the tradition of Japanese historical conceptions, namely, based upon the ancient morality code as it developed through a synthesis of Shinto, Confucianism, and Buddhism. The unchangeableness of ancient traditions prevails against modern principles of curriculum building, teaching methods, and educational opportunities. As long as family code, ancestor idolatry, and emperor worship form the very core of religious nationalism, not even the official abolition of feudalism can end the division into castes and classes whose educational standards differ widely. To be sure, the free common elementary school is now the uniting element for the majority of children of all classes, but most of the groups who attend are *heimin* or ordinary citizens. The children of wealthy or aristocratic families are usually sent to a peers' school so as to preserve the distance between them and the masses of the people. The more well-to-do *heimin* send their boys to secondary schools and colleges. Most families of the lower income groups will try everything, even selling their daughters, to secure as good an education as possible for their sons in order to open better vocational prospects for them for the greater glory of the family.

Japan's industrialization did not upset her educational philosophy. Western influences have remained limited to formal or technical matters. The aim of Japanese schools is today, as it has always been, the formation of "moral" personality. Only a few vocational institutions stress utilitarianism. Herein lies one of the most fundamental differences with Western education which, particularly in America, is predominantly utilitarian.

One more detail of interest should be mentioned. The schools in Japan are all free of denominational ties. Belief in National Faith Shinto remains a prerequisite because it incorporates belief in the "soul of Japan." But there is no religious instruction in any of the sects to which the children may belong. Instead of such instruction, moral training is offered as one of the main subjects to be taught from the first year in school. By indoctrinating the pupils in the most essential points of morality, patriotism is made a subject of religious content. In fact, moral training is the cornerstone of

the Japanese curriculum throughout the years of education of youth, no matter in what type of school the student may be.

Summarizing, one could say that the Japanese school is not a school in which talents are furthered or careers prepared. Education, in the Japanese interpretation, is moral instruction, and every subject taught remains but a subdivision of the general moral sciences. Consequently, educational administration is totally centralized and uniformly organized throughout the mother country and the colonies. This is the reason why the French school system was used as the Western model when Emperor Meiji introduced his educational reform. Even later, when Prussian methods were adopted, the system of administration remained as centralized as it has always been in France.

THE SCHOOLS

The kindergarten, *Yochien*, for children between three and six years of age is well known in Japan but is not compulsory. It is used more frequently as a preparatory school in cities than in rural regions. The basic form of education is the lower elementary school, *Jinjo Shogakko* (lower little school), offering a free compulsory six-year course for boys and girls between the ages of six and twelve. It is a type of unified school which did not exist in some European countries whose system was much more democratic than Japan's. There is coeducation during the six years of elementary schooling only.

Like the French, the Japanese have established a higher elementary school offering supplementary courses of two to three years. These institutions are called *Koto Shogakko* (higher little school) and are not compulsory. However, about 60 per cent of lower elementary-school pupils usually follow their studies up to the higher elementary school. For boys whose parents are in a position to afford further studies, a five-year course at the *Chugakko*, Middle School, follows. It aims to perfect and round out the general course of the elementary school. The middle-school graduate may then enter a three-year secondary training at the *Kotogakko* (higher school), which prepares for the university.[1] There exists a type of

[1] Exceptionally bright boys may be permitted to skip higher primary school and complete the middle-school course in four instead of five years.

higher school for girls, *Kotojogakko*, which, however, does not offer more than a five-year course beyond the primary school and sometimes even less.[1] It should be stressed that participation of women in university studies has not as yet been officially regulated. Rarely are women granted admittance to the state institutions of higher learning except two: the Nippon College for Women and the Imperial Academy of Music in Tokyo, the latter being the only coeducational institution of higher learning in the Japanese Empire.

There are a number of vocational and professional schools: some of them require graduation from the Middle School or a corresponding period of study at the *Kotogakko*. They are a kind of technical college. The university, of course, takes the highest rank in the school hierarchy. There are imperial, state, public, and private universities which generally embrace the departments of law, medicine, literature and philosophy, science, economy, commerce, and agriculture. Institutions which possess only one of these departments are not called "universities" but "Higher Schools." Students who have not completed the full course at the *Kotogakko* may take a preparatory course at a university.

After three to four years of study, the degree of *Gakushi* may be attained (approximating the master's degree) which entitles the student to participate in post graduate studies that may lead to a doctorate. Japanese universities are organized differently from American colleges. They have adopted the continental European system of being higher professional schools whose freshmen, after an extremely rigid examination upon graduation from secondary school, have reached the level of American college Juniors.

All schools, except those of public elementary character, require fees and some additional expenses. Students usually live in dormitories and must wear school uniforms.

Teachers are greatly esteemed. Clearly, such reverence comes from the doctrine of Confucianism which demands respect for "nobility, age, and virtue." The teacher is regarded as a man worthy of the respect due the elders. "Teacher" is *sensei* in Japanese, meaning a person older than oneself. All teachers are *sensei* whether they teach in an elementary school or at a university. Of all intellectual

[1] There are no middle schools for girls.

professions, teaching is the most respected, and the social rules to be observed by students stress this fact. Possibly this admiration for teachers has decreased somewhat in the big cities but throughout the rural communities, representing the majority of the population, *sensei* are still at the top of the social ladder and their rule is unchallenged by parents.

Teacher-training seminaries are highly developed and the standards required are high even for elementary teachers. No one is permitted to teach unless authorized by the state. Teachers in public or state schools have to pass repeated examinations during a long period; teachers in private schools or at universities receive licenses only for the positions they occupy and must pass another examination should they go elsewhere.

The elementary curriculum is based upon moral training, civics, oral and written Japanese, some arithmetic, and drawing. The middle and higher school students, in addition, study Chinese language and literature and at least one European language, usually English but also German and French. Science and geography are always supplemented by handicraft training, including gardening which is so dear to the Japanese and part of the drill for formal etiquette. Textbooks are closely supervised by the Ministry of Education. A text for moral education in elementary schools shows the following chapter headings (first school year):

> Significance of the emperor's birthday; Your teacher; Do not quarrel; Keep things in order; Be alert; Do things in order and take good care of them; Do not conceal your faults and never tell a lie; Have sympathy for other people and do not make trouble for others; Serve and obey your parents; Your family (father and mother, brother and sister); Be loyal to your country and to your friends.

In most cases, morals are presented by means of fables and stories. The names of the heroes in these stories are usually not those of living persons. The observation of national holidays which coincide with religious celebrations is another important device of moral training.

In spite of the intense militarism already preached in schools and emphasized through the obligation of postelementary students to wear uniforms, physical education is regarded as a part of moral training, general discipline, and self-control. Much is being done

to give hygienic enlightenment. The state of health in Japan was never very good; Japanese national maladies are bad eyes, bad teeth, and bad stomachs. School doctors now watch the physical condition of students, and textbooks help further health consciousness, in order to check these conditions. But so long as rice and fish remain the basic components of the Japanese diet, regardless of whether the necessary vitamins, proteins, and minerals are available or not, it cannot be expected that the national state of health will improve.

TRENDS OF YOUTH IN JAPAN

For many centuries, education in Japan was directed toward the perfection of the body for warlike purposes. It was the era of education of knights when intellectual learning hardly extended beyond the borders of Chinese literary formalism. Many of the great leaders and knights were illiterate. The medieval age concentrated upon a purely literary type of education, strictly formalized according to Confucian rites, and just as strictly nonutilitarian. The modern period has stressed more general knowledge, but has still maintained a strong formalistic attitude, far removed from Western utilitarianism. It has systematized moral training to a greater extent than ever before throughout Japan's long history. Nevertheless, American and European influences have penetrated to a certain extent. How did they influence the mind of Japan's youth?

In 1927, R. Sekiya wrote *The Book of Education*, which analyzed the inclinations and viewpoints of young men and women. It should be understood that this statistical essay was written at a time when Japanese "liberalism" was at its height. It was then that the government began to worry lest Western films and books destroy the venerable traditions of the National Faith Shinto.

Against six "desirable inclinations" of both sexes, Sekiya found fifteen negative tendencies among which figured prominently an increase of skepticism, a revolt against custom and morality, and a recklessness in stating one's own opinion. Girls had in addition developed the desire to become economically independent, to choose their own husbands after careful deliberation, and a great love for calisthenics.[1]

[1] R. Sekiya, *The Book of Education*, Tokyo, 1927. Quoted by Kamao Murakami, *Das Japanische Erziehungswesen*, Japanese-German Cultural Institute, Tokyo, 1934, pp. 253–254.

In order to combat such "dangerous" trends as disregard of tradition, independence of thought, reliance on mass action and feminine desire to determine when and whom to marry, "thought guidance" was developed into a system of strict supervision of children and adolescents. On holidays and free weekdays, teachers paid surprise visits to the homes of their pupils in order to check up on their conduct. In some towns, authorities demand that students post their names on their front doors to facilitate supervision. All minors are forbidden to drink or smoke, and many high schools prohibit their students leaving the parental home without permission unless accompanied by an adult member of the family.

YOUTH MOVEMENTS AND "THOUGHT GUIDANCE"

So much indoctrination is incorporated into the home and school life of young people that the establishment of youth organizations further to strengthen patriotism and loyalty toward the regime appears almost superfluous. As a matter of fact, only in recent years has the government begun to give its attention to extracurricular activities for boys and girls at various age levels.

There had been associations of young men before the time of the Meiji restoration. They stressed discipline and loyalty and saw to it that these old Japanese virtues were drilled into youngsters from eight years of age up to twenty. The twenty-year-olds were allowed to take their places in the ranks of the adults. Fundamentally, this was education in accordance with the spirit of *Bushido*. Japanese educators claim that Lord Baden-Powell, founder of the Boy Scouts, used the old Japanese youth associations as models.

Actually the Boy Scouts, founded in 1908 in England, were imitated by the Japanese in 1922 as *Shonendan*, meaning "boys' league." Two years later, a naval branch, the Navy League of Boys, was established. Here is the oath which the young Japanese members of *Shonendan* must take:

In agreement with my unshakable conviction and my honor, I herewith swear

1. To honor the divine will and to respect the imperial family
2. To serve others, humanity as well as my fatherland
3. To obey the law of the Shonendan [1]

[1] Murakami, *op. cit.*, p. 48.

Not related to this organization is the so-called Red Cross Youth, consisting mainly of elementary pupils whose task it is to develop their physical and mental strength for the sake of "national morality" and "general humaneness."

More important is the *Seinendan*, a League of Young Men, whose historical beginnings can be traced to the thirteenth century. The heroism of Japanese youth during the Sino-Japanese and the Russo-Japanese wars induced the authorities to modernize these associations. In 1915, the position of *Seinendan* was clarified and, five years later, it became "autonomous," that is, it was to be supervised by the director of social education of each prefecture. Members range from twelve to twenty-five years of age. In 1937, there were about two and a half million male and one and a half million female members, the latter newly organized into a corresponding association for the *Joshi-Seinendan*, the Japanese League for Girls.

The activity of these leagues is very different from that of their counterparts in the totalitarian countries of Europe. While physical exercises are part of the program, cultural and moral education takes up by far the largest share. Lectures, concerts, theater performances, continuation schooling for elementary students, knowledge of the homeland, voluntary service for the community, study trips, assistance in case of emergency and accidents, and "neighborly thinking" are the main purposes of the two *Seinendan*. In other words, Japanese ideology, cultural subject matter, and the striving for a new collective living experience seem to outweigh military drill.

However, the government was alive to the desirability of conditioning the minds of those who were to be the future soldiers. It began to make use of ideological propaganda a long time before the world knew what this really meant. It sought to inculcate the creed of Imperial Japan in order to direct the minds of the students into desirable channels. For this purpose, lectures on the political and spiritual destiny of Japan have been given for years at all the institutions of higher learning by the best scholars of the land.

The individual districts have followed the matter up by organizing a "Prefectural Institute for National Culture" and a "Prefectural Society for Thought Guidance." They are quite frank in stating that these establishments are to serve for the guidance of

youth in the path of correct political and spiritual attitudes. In 1932, the Ministry of Education founded a governmental "Research Institute of National Culture" with the purpose of advancing national culture in its old and new manifestations. The Institute does research and attempts to apply its findings to practical life. The most important subjects dealt with are history, philosophy, literature, education, political science, economics, natural sciences, and current thought. Much subtler than the Nazi-Fascist propaganda ministries, these organizations formulate a master plan for teaching the mental attitudes desired by the political leaders. The schools, from the elementary level to the university, must adopt these formulas and indoctrinate their students accordingly. The youth associations, controlled by the prefects and directors of social education, do the same. Thus there is an ideological unity which is stronger and deeper than anywhere else, with the possible exception of the Soviet Union.

The only type of schools where premilitary instruction is a main part of the curriculum are the *Seinen-Kunenyo*, training institutions for physical fitness with additional vocational schooling. Young men between the ages of sixteen and seventeen are accepted. The institutions are usually maintained by their respective communities and subsidized by local industries, mining enterprises, or business concerns. There is a four-year course; classes meet at times when they do not interfere with the young people's jobs. However, during the four years, the following program must be completed: one hundred hours of moral training, two hundred hours of general education, one hundred hours of vocational subjects, and four hundred hours of semimilitary exercises. The schools are voluntary, yet almost one million participants received premilitary and ideological training in recent years, prior to the entry of Japan into the Second World War. The beginning of Japanese setbacks in 1943 brought about a serious curtailment of high-school and university education, technical training being the only exception. Such youth organizations as are still functioning must concentrate their efforts on the war for which they were all prepared.

With the help of its educational institutions, the Japanese government has developed generations which are willing tools in its hands. For Japan's young people, the spiritual motivation of any war

would overshadow its imperialistic aspects. To go to war meant to go on a crusade for Japan.

Death has a different connotation in Asia and Europe. The Japanese do not fear death, on the contrary, they seek it because to die for Japan means to be revered as one of the eight hundred myriad gods. The schools take great care to teach this type of morality which denies the value of the individual for the greater glory of the "eternal soul of Japan."

CONCLUSION

Different from Nazi-Fascism, the danger of Japanese totalitarianism to the West is not of an ideological character. The ideas of Shinto are part of the Japanese national mind and tinged with an Asiatic mysticism whose philosophy has always attracted Western thinkers but whose character and peculiar type of morality are difficult for the average Western mind to grasp.

The danger came from the ever-widening physical expansion of Japan which threatened to overrun all Asia in preparation for ultimate world conquest. In the end, Japanese designs menace the security of Western nations, both in America and Europe, and will continue to remain a potential threat unless Japan is forced to renounce for all times Emperor Jimmu's dream of world rule.

Japan is dangerous because her people have been objects of fanatical propaganda and indoctrination for centuries. The greater part of these people live under miserable conditions, having been forced to sacrifice even the smallest comforts of life to the military Moloch. Yet they do not resent such conditions greatly. They are ever ready to sacrifice their lives for the cause of the emperor.

Consequently, Japan is a danger, not only in war but also in postwar years. The cost of Japanese aggression and of the underestimate of Japan's preparedness and war-making ability has been great. Her participation in the war has been doubly effective, at least in the beginning of the conflict, because she acted in conjunction with the Axis. But her adherence to the Axis was wholly a matter of political and strategic expediency. She would not hesitate to make war on any nation which stands in the way of her quest for world rule. Fundamentally, much more is at stake, namely, the issue of eradicating from the mind of a people, conditioned by an

unbroken tradition of centuries, the central belief in a role which it has assigned to itself. Until this problem has been solved, if it can be solved at all, extreme care must be taken that Japan's military defeat is followed by a defeat of her national ideology.[1]

[1] Cf Joseph C. Grew, *Report to the Nation*, Simon & Schuster, Inc, New York, 1942.

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