

Chikuro Hiroike's Concept of Supreme Morality and the "Unbroken Line of Succession of the Imperial House of Japan"

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Contents

Introduction

1. Hiroike's historical study of the Imperial House of Japan and the Emperors
2. The moral interpretation of the myth of the Imperial ancestress, Amaterasu Omikami
3. Hiroike's close collaboration with Nobushige Hozumi, L.L.D.
4. The Imperial Rescript on Education and Shigetake Sugiura-Ou
5. The sacred virtues transmitted by successive Emperors
6. The sacred virtue of the reigning Emperor Akihito

Introduction

What is the general view of Dr. Chikuro Hiroike today? The following description of him in the *Koudansha Biographical Dictionary* (*Koudansha Nihon Jinmeidaijiten*) may be taken as representative:

Chikuro Hiroike (1866-1938) was a historian and educator whose life spanned the period from the Meiji to the early Showa eras. Born in Buzen-Shimoge County, Oita prefecture, on March 29, 1866 (Keio 2), he was a primary school teacher for some years before moving to Tokyo in 1895 (Meiji 28) to work on the compilation of the *Encyclopedia of Ancient Things Japanese*. He became a professor at the *Jingukougakukan* in 1907 (Meiji 40). He expounded Moralogy (Moral Science) and founded Moralogy College (the present Reitaku University) in 1935 (Showa 10). He died on June 4, 1938 (Showa 13), at the age of 73. Among his publications are: *Toyo Hoseishi Gairon*, and the *Dotoku Kagaku no Ronbun* [translated into English as *Toward Supreme Morality*].

All of this is correct as far as it goes. It is certainly the case that Hiroike distinguished himself as an historian and educator. Devoting himself early in life to the study of the past, he went on to become a specialist in the history of Far Eastern law, and in his later years he was also held in high regard as an educational practitioner. Among his many important achievements in this latter field were the establishment of Moralogy as a new science and his attempts to disseminate it both inside and outside Japan. But while accounts of his life such as that given above are not inaccurate, they are far from complete.

When, for example, we review his thinking about history and education, one prominent feature that quickly attracts our notice is his strong interest in, and profound respect for, the Imperial House of Japan. This characterized both his study of history and his educational practice throughout his life.

In what follows, therefore, the focus will be on Hiroike's thinking about the imperial house of Japan. Using his own writings and the thoughts of his predecessors, I will first describe in a little detail how he identified Japanese "supreme morality" in the "sacred virtues" transmitted across the aeons of history by the imperial house with its unbroken line of succession, and how he put these "sacred virtues" at the center of his system of Moralogy. I will then examine his concept of the "sacred virtues" of the emperors from my own perspective. The discussion will therefore cover the following six points:

- (1) How Chikuro Hiroike became interested in the history of imperial house of Japan and how his historical research progressed.
- (2) The way he arrived at a new moral interpretation of the myth of how the Imperial Ancestress of Japan, Amaterasu Omikami, concealed herself in a cave.
- (3) The insights it is presumed Hiroike gained from Nobushige Hozumi, L.L.D., (Professor of the University of Tokyo) during their close collaboration in Tokyo.
- (4) The Imperial Rescript on Education of Emperor Meiji and a comparison of Hiroike's thinking about it with that of Shigetake Sugiura-Ou who revered it.
- (5) A historical examination of how the sacred virtues emphasized by Hiroike can be identified in successive emperors.
- (6) The sacred virtues as exemplified by the present Emperor Akihito (the 125th in the line of succession).

Limitations of space mean that the first four points can only be treated rather briefly here, but the final two will be developed in more detail. For further information, please refer to the footnotes at the end of this paper.

1. Hiroike's historical study of the Imperial House of Japan and the Emperors

Hiroike seems to have started studying Japanese history and the classics seriously in 1883 (Meiji 16) at the age of 17, after studying under Gansho Ogawa¹⁾. He rapidly began to compile educational teaching material on these subjects, and when he was just 25 he published his first independent work, the *History of Nakatsu*.²⁾

In 1892 (Meiji 25), after moving to Kyoto at the age of 26, he began to study and write about the history of the imperial house of Japan and quickly started to edit and publish the *History for the Layman*, again entirely on his own initiative. This journal, which continued to appear for more than two and a half years, carried articles based on the field work he conducted on the historical remains to be found in and around Kyoto. Hiroike commented on various historical personages but paid especial attention to the relationship between the Emperors and the people, and almost every issue of the journal contained some of the fruits of his research into the achievements of the most important Emperors from the 1st, Emperor Jinmu, to the 50th, Emperor Kanmu, written in easily understandable language.

In 1893 (Meiji 26), Hiroike published *An Unofficial History of the Imperial Household*, which treated significant historical events in the four centuries between the Ōnin War (1467-77) and the Meiji Restoration (1867) in order to delineate "the actual situation of the imperial house of Japan in the age of samurai rule" and "the relationship between the imperial house of Japan and the public." The conclusion to which his research led him here was that "people enjoyed their lives when the imperial house flourished and were in trouble when it declined" (*Hiroike Hakase Zenshu*, Hiroikegakuen Jigyobu, 1975, vol. 1, p. 465).

Hiroike's study of the history of the Imperial house of Japan intensified and deepened during the decade or so after 1895 (Meiji 28) while he was engaged in helping to compile the *Encyclopedia of Ancient Things Japanese*.³⁾ Dr. Yori-kuni Inoue, who had singled out the young researcher, suggested to him what became his central task in these years. As Hiroike recounts, "Around the 30th year of the Meiji era, Dr. Inoue told me to make a thorough investigation into the characteristics of the polity of the country. In particular, he told me to investigate 'why alone the imperial house of Japan enjoys an everlasting unbroken line of succession while monarchs elsewhere in the world all disappear in several or dozens of generations.'"⁴⁾ So, as Hiroike recollected thirty years later in 1927 (Showa 2), "I made up my mind to explore and determine the

real cause of the unbroken line of succession in the imperial family.”⁵⁾

Clarifying the true reasons why the imperial house of Japan has lasted so long without any break in the line of succession was (and remains) a vast and daunting undertaking, of course, but the young Hiroike devoted himself to an exhaustive study of this problem from his early thirties on. One early result of his efforts was an ambitious plan, requiring great expertise, to compile “Biographies of Successive Emperors”. Hiroike intended to divide the contents into three sections: the Emperors themselves; their wives and families; and the customs of the Imperial House. He would provide historical outlines and include relevant original documents (in ancient Chinese and Japanese) for each section. To promote a better understanding of, and gain support for his project, he produced draft manuscript studies of two emperors, Emperor Daigo (regnal years 897 to 930) and Emperor Murakami (regnal years 946 to 967) who were especially famous for their moral character in the Heian era. Then, in 1898 (Meiji 31), he submitted the project and these manuscripts to the head of the Imperial Household Ministry, Mitsuaki Tanaka.

In his thirties and forties, his studies expanded still further to include the history of Far Eastern law, as well as Japanese and Chinese grammar. The materials he gathered were to provide the basis for the lectures he gave on these topics at Waseda University and Jinguogakkan College and for two seminal publications, *An Introduction to Far Eastern Law and The History of Far Eastern Law—the Main Discourse*. These works are not unrelated to his study of the history of the Imperial House and its unbroken line of succession, though. In fact, through his comparative study of the concepts of law and the systems of kinship between China (as well as Korea) and Japan, Hiroike achieved a deeper recognition of the unique as well as the universal aspects of Japan (and especially of its Imperial House).

2. The moral interpretation of the myth of the Imperial ancestress, Amaterasu Omikami

Hiroike, then, having been interested in the Imperial House of Japan since his youth, first studied actual historical events associated with the successive Emperors of Japan and then tried to clarify the most important factor behind the unbroken line of succession of the Imperial House of Japan. He continued to make steady progress in this endeavor and in his developing interest in history of Far Eastern law as he moved from helping to compile the *Encyclopedia of Ancient Things Japanese* to researching and teaching at the Jinguogakkan College in Ise after 1907 (Meiji 40).

In *An Introduction to Far Eastern Law*, he compared Chinese and Japanese history and argued that "democracy or individualism developed" in China but "monarchism or nationalism developed" in Japan. However, he also indicated that "As a matter of fact...although 'imperial socialism' governed the country in the ancient era of the saintly ideal, political revolutions repeatedly occurred at other times in China...[while] 'imperial socialism' has always governed the country of Japan and no revolution against the imperial house has ever happened. In Japan, the ruler and the public have cooperated together, and the country has flourished as time has flowed by" (*Hiroike Hakase Zenshu*, vol. 3, pp. 298-299).

On the other hand, a belief exists that in the ancient era of the saintly ideal in China, some saints existed of a "moral character consistent with Providence", such as Yao (堯), Shun (舜), and the Duke of Zhou (周公旦). On this subject, the traditional "fact" that Confucius, whose words and deeds set standards for the whole nation, apotheosized those "saints" was the reason why Hiroike regarded him as a "real saint" (*Hiroike Hakase Zenshu*, vol. 3, pp. 147, 153).

In 1908 (Meiji 41), while the Ching dynasty was still in power, Hiroike visited various parts of China, mainly to conduct field research for his study of the history of Far Eastern law. In the process, he later recalled, he came to realize that among the descendants of Confucius "persons of wisdom have appeared one after another in a clear lineage down to today...and it is a fact that there have been many great persons who are his collateral descendants as well...another very long-lived phenomenon which has lasted to the present day...All this resembles the unbroken line of succession of the imperial house of Japan, and it was then that I began to recognize the concept of supreme morality in Moralogy."

On his return from China in 1908, Hiroike moved to Ise to lecture on "the history of law" and "the history of Shintoism" at Jinkogakkan College. Later that same year, Waseda University Press published his work on *The Shrines of Ise*, the first chapter of which, entitled "The Shrine of Ise and the National Polity," is worthy of attention for the manner in which it presents a theory of national polity with the Shrine as its center. Similar ideas are to be found in the following notes made by Hiroike for his "Lecture on Shintoism":

A comparison between the national polities of China and Japan [shows]...these nations are completely different in respect of the basis of their religious faiths...In this matter, Japan is a country of ancestor worship pure and simple: people worship their own ancestors, and they also absolutely worship the ancestors of the emperor of Japan... People

in China, however, do not worship their ancestors alone but also Tian (Heaven, 天)... In our country, we look up to the descendants of Amaterasu Omikami, the imperial Amaterasu Omikami of Japan... In China, people look up to those they call saints who have a moral character consistent with Tian (Hajime Ide, *Hiroike Chikuro no Shiso to Shogai*, Hiroikegakuen Shuppanbu, 1998, pp. 57-58).

In other words, Hiroike recognized that the forms of “ancestor worship” were quite different in Japan and China. Further, he realized the importance of Amaterasu Omikami as the ancestress of the Imperial House, which has been the preeminent family of the entire Japanese people.

Of course, the heavenly Amaterasu Omikami in the myth and emperors in history are different. Hiroike carefully distinguished these two, but the deities in the myth (which belongs to the “mythical age” described in the *Kojiki* and *Nihonshoki*) are personified. Therefore, Hiroike, “having acquired a deep religious faith as a result of his encounter with Tenrikyo” in 1909, discovered “the fact that the true spirit of Amaterasu Omikami at the time she concealed herself in the rock cave was nothing but the actualization of the great religious virtue of *benevolence, tolerance and self-examination*,” which, he writes, confirmed for him that “this spirit is the glorious essence of the national polity with the unbroken line of succession and at the same time the fundamental source of education in this country.”

Amaterasu Omikami or *Ohirumenomuchi* (“The Goddess of the Sun”) is worshiped as the highest ancestral goddess of the Imperial House. The well known mythical episode of her “concealment in a rock cave” occurred when she hid herself in response to repeated outrages committed against her by her younger brother, Susano O no Mikoto. But a detailed comparison of the versions of this episode given in the *Kojiki* and the *Nihonshoki* reveals a very important difference. The *Kojiki* gives the fact that she “saw and was over-awed” as the reason why she concealed herself in the cave. The *Nihonshoki*, on the other hand, records that she “was angry” when she went into hiding.

On this point Hiroike, taking a hint from the theory of Masakane Inoue (a Shintoist of the middle Edo period), accepted the *Kojiki* version and proposed his own interpretation, namely that Amaterasu Omikami examined herself and took all responsibility for what had happened upon herself because she felt such deep anguish for her ancestral and parental deities that she should meet such outrageous opposition and persecution from Susano O no Mikoto. Hiroike argued that her concealment in the rock cave was “based on her recognition that she needed further moral discipline, and by this means she newly perfected a character imbued with the supreme morality of benevolence, tolerance and

self-examination." This was Hiroike's new interpretation of the episode from a moral standpoint.⁶⁾

It is noteworthy that this new analysis was not merely a theoretical exegesis of literary texts. In 1914, Hiroike had been severely criticized by some of the leaders of Tenrikyo regarding his ideas about the movement's doctrine. He did not refute the criticisms, explaining that "Self-examination means to recognize that the cause of an incident is due to one's own lack of virtue and to reflect on oneself" (unpublished manuscripts, cited in *Chikuro Hiroike: Father of Moralogy*, p. 317). "One strengthens one's moral character only by reflecting upon oneself over each event, apologizing for one's ineptitude, and appreciating the ordeal that God has given him. This is the only way toward the salvation of humankind" (*Diary*, I, 292-293, [entry for April 7, 1915] cited in *Chikuro Hiroike*, p. 318). He then resigned as the principal of Tenri Middle School. Because his own experience and the new interpretation of the myth of Amaterasu Omikami are one and indivisible, the moral science or moralogy which he expounded has tremendous persuasive power.

Furthermore, the sacred virtue of Amaterasu Omikami, who perfected the supreme moral character of "benevolence, tolerance and self-examination," was passed on by successive emperors who understood that the "tasks" of their *matsurigoto* ("rulership") were to serve the deities inwardly and to love people outwardly. Hiroike believed that, in addition to the supreme morality attained by Amaterasu Omikami, the emperors who succeeded her accumulated such great goodness that they made possible the unbroken line of succession of the Imperial House (section 5 below contains further remarks on this point).

3. Hiroike's close collaboration with Nobushige Hozumi (L.L.D)

It can be said, then, that Hiroike clarified the key background factor behind the unbroken line of succession of the Japanese Imperial House.⁷⁾ Although, the method of his argument in this matter still contains some difficulties not easy to resolve, we can nonetheless appreciate that his theory is neither mere speculation nor casuistry, since he remained sincerely committed, in every single one of his books and theses, to try to provide every possible objective verification by means of scrutinizing relevant original documents old and new, as well as consulting innumerable reference books published at home and abroad.

Such an academic approach might have flowed from his inherent genius and educational training. But I think he could also have been greatly influenced in this by the academic attitudes of those of his teachers whom he knew and

interacted with in Tokyo. Noteworthy among these are Dr. Yorikuni Inoue and Dr. Jojitu Sato, who were deeply involved in the work of editing the *Encyclopedia of Ancient Things Japanese (Kojiruien)*, as well as Dr. Nobushige Hozumi, a professor of Tokyo Imperial University.

The first two of these figures were specialists in the positivistic bibliographical study of the classics and history of Japan and China, while Dr. Hozumi was an erudite scholar of civil law, familiar with Western classics and history. We could therefore say that Dr. Inoue and Dr. Sato gave Hiroike a thorough training in the classical learning of Japan and China, while the instruction he received at the same time from Dr. Hozumi was based on an intimate knowledge of Europe and America.

In fact, Hiroike later mentioned that Dr. Hozumi, who was ten years his senior, advised him when they first met in 1898 (Meiji 30) that “One should learn legal philosophy before reading law...He told me, firstly, to do a comparative and historical study of law using a positivistic approach.” Following that first encounter, Hiroike “read Hozumi’s books and papers and felt a great resonance with Hozumi’s personality and ideology. Hiroike respected Hozumi as his teacher of morality...[and] became a pupil of Hozumi in 1902 or 1903...” (*Chikuro Hiroike: Father of Moralogy*, pp. 194, 195).

As chief examiner of the national law code committee for three years after 1893 (Meiji 26), Dr. Hozumi worked hard on discussing and drafting the sections in the Civil Code on “kinship” and “succession”; the former of these included the institution of the “family”, and especially the head of the household, while in the latter the succession of the “rite of ancestor worship” was regarded as important for an individual succeeding to a house.

Since monotheistic westerners, who neither believed in the religious concept of “ancestor-worship” nor followed this custom, might have found its introduction into the public legal system unacceptable, Dr. Hozumi, who drafted the Civil Law in Japan, gave a lecture entitled “Ancestor-worship and Japanese Law” at the International Congress of Orientalists in Rome in 1899, three years after the Code had come into force, in order to spread understanding about the traditional provisions of Japanese law among western intellectuals. This lecture was published in English by Maruzen two years later.

At exactly this time, after being recommended to study the comparative history of law by Dr. Hozumi, Hiroike wrote *An Introduction to Far Eastern Law*, which was published in 1905. As its subtitle reveals, it was a “study of the meaning of the word ‘law’ in the Far East (Japan and China).” Naturally, therefore, most of the authorities cited were Chinese and Japanese, but some Western books were also referenced⁸⁾, and a translation of Dr. Hozumi’s

English lecture was included at the very start of the first chapter.

In answering criticisms of his lecture by westerners, Dr. Hozumi noted the fact that the custom of ancestor-worship had existed in ancient Europe, citing evidence presented in *The Ancient City* by Coulanges and *The Aryan Household* by Hearn et al. Hiroike also quoted several parts of these books⁹⁾ in his doctoral dissertation, *A Study of Ancient Kinship Laws in China*, which he submitted in 1910 (included in *The Main Discourse of the History of Far Eastern Law* published five years later). It is not clear, however, if Hiroike gained such information directly from his teacher or learned about it by another route.

In a lecture entitled "Rites and the National Polity" in 1912 (Taisho 1), Dr. Hozumi developed his views as follows: "The greatest difference between our nation, Japan, and other countries is that the polity of Japan reflects this consistent ancestor-worship...We could not have this kind of polity without the ancestor-worship in the Imperial House passed down from Amaterasu Omikami...The main factor behind the unbroken line of succession of the Japanese Imperial House is its respect for the Ise-shrines (where Amaterasu Omikami was worshiped). The polity of our country is reflected in the concentration of the worship of Amaterasu Omikami not only by the Imperial House but also the whole nation...In our country, worshiping one's ancestors is the basis of education (moral education) and daily life."¹⁰⁾ This perspective on the national polity and ancestor-worship is almost the same as that to be found in Hiroike's lecture of a few years earlier. It seems very likely that they deepened their common understanding and their belief in this perspective through intimate communication.

4. The Imperial Rescript on Education and the Shigetake Sugiura-Ou

While Dr. Hozumi made no further attempt to explain of his views on ancestor-worship, Hiroike, being convinced that this fact had important implications, developed it at great length and eventually established Moralogy and worked for its dissemination on this basis. At its center lies his clear belief that "supreme morality" in Japan is nothing but "the sacred virtues" transmitted by the Imperial House through its "the unbroken line of succession." What are the similarities and differences between this conception, and the views of the Imperial House and of morality dominant in Hiroike's time (from the later Meiji to the early Showa eras)?

The expression, "the unbroken line of succession," was frequently used during the transitional period near the end of Tokugawa era; thus Article 1 of

the Constitution of the Great Empire of Japan, proclaimed in 1889, prescribed that “the Great Empire of Japan is governed by the Emperor of the unbroken line of succession.” This adjectival phrase is significant in indicating the Emperor’s long and honorable history, something that was also apparent in the fact that, once the National Constitution and the *Koshitsu Tenpan* (Imperial Household Law) were ready for enactment, Emperor Meiji first paid a visit to the *Kyuchu Sanden* (Three Palace Sanctuaries) where he informed “his ancestors’ holy spirit” about their main points. Furthermore, when Emperor Meiji attended the promulgation ceremony for the National Constitution, he made the following remarks:

My ancestors, Amaterasu Omikami and successive emperors, created this empire and have succeeded to it eternally with the help of the ancestors of the Japanese nation. Owing to our nation’s love of, and obedience toward the country, together with their fidelity and courage, as well as my ancestors’ virtue and authority, this country has been able to continue with its glorious history....

This describes how the country of Japan was founded by the cooperation of the ancestors of both the Imperial House and the nation, and its glorious history was also made possible by the coordination of the Imperial House and the nation, in other words, both of Amaterasu Omikami’s and the succeeding emperors’ virtue and authority, and of faithful and courageous nations’ service. This point was elaborated on by the Emperor Meiji in *The Imperial Rescript on Education*, which became law on 30 October, 1890 (Meiji 23), as follows:

- (1) Our Imperial Ancestors have founded Our Empire on a basis broad and everlasting and have deeply and firmly implanted virtue;
 - (2) 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.
 - (3) 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.
- (translated by Ministry of Education in 1907)

As we can see here; (1) our ancestress and other ancestors not only founded this nation but also established the fundamental source of “virtue” [ethics and morality]; (2) these [the guidelines for education] are the teachings of our Imperial Ancestress and other ancestors, and therefore Emperor Meiji and his descendants should follow them together with the people; (3) the Emperor aspired to cultivate “virtue” together with (or, rather, set an example to) the people and hoped earnestly that the blessings of “virtue” would prevail among the whole people. This means that “the Emperor was, on one hand, “the head

of the state" who "governs" the nation (or, more concretely, "presides over the sovereign power"), and on the other, a "sage" who put into practice the moral teachings of his ancestors and brought moral benefits to the whole people.

Accordingly, in Japan between the middle of the Meiji era, when the Imperial Rescript on Education was promulgated as the fundamental principle of education of the people, and 1948,¹¹⁾ there was a requirement to educate the people so that they would treat the Emperor (and the Imperial House in general), who abided by the teachings of "the Japanese Imperial Ancestress and other ancestors," as the model for their own education and to endeavor to discipline themselves by practicing those teachings. For example, Unsho Risshi, the Shingon priest under whom Hiroike had studied since about the age of 30, published *An Explanatory Booklet on the Imperial Rescript on Education* and insisted on "moral education based on the law found uniformly in Shinto, Confucianism, and Buddhism."

One example of this can be found in the lectures on "ethics" that Shigetake Sugiura,¹²⁾ Hiroike's elder by ten years and someone with whom he was in contact, gave for seven years to Crown Prince Hirohito (later the Emperor Showa), beginning in 1914 when he was 13 years old. The theme of his lectures was that the Crown Prince should set a good example to the people in the practice of morality; thus he told him that "the Imperial Rescript on Education is the basis of the morality which Meiji Emperor made known to the people," but at the same time "the Emperor declared in it that he would practice it himself", which meant that, "Crown Prince! You yourself should practice it." As we can see, for example, in the following passage entitled *Makanu Shushi wa Haenu* ("You cannot reap the harvest without seeding"), Sugiura's ideas were very close to those of Hiroike.

There is an archaic saying, *Sekizen no Ie ni Yokei Ari* ("Happiness will visit the family that has done good deeds")... Reflecting carefully on this, we notice that in the course of its 122 generations, the imperial house of Japan has always been benevolent to the nation, has striven to govern the country well, and has nourished its history continuously. The Empire of Japan today is the product of what the imperial house of Japan has practiced. We should acknowledge this, the fundamental reason why Japan has prospered.¹³⁾

All the evidence provided so far shows, then, that far from being strange, it was in fact quite natural for Hiroike, from the 40th year of the Meiji era on, to have become convinced that "the sacred virtue" transmitted by the emperors in their "unbroken line of succession" was in fact "supreme morality" in Japan. However, the real distinctiveness of his theory lay in his view of the content of

this “sacred virtue” or “supreme morality,” it being, as described above, the highest morality actually practiced in the form of the “benevolence, tolerance and self-examination” which Hiroike detected in the myth of Amaterasu Omikami, the Imperial Ancestress. It was not merely a perfect, flawless ideological principle.

And it was this morality that was transmitted by successive emperors as the descendants of “the Japanese Imperial Ancestress,” and imparted further to other “aristocratic families” and “semi-aristocratic families”. Hiroike argued that this morality had universal characteristics in common with that of the world “sages” like Confucius (and his descendants) in China, Sakyamuni in India, Socrates in Greece and Christ in Judea.¹⁴⁾ His thinking here was not imbued with any dogmatic admiration of the Japanese Imperial House. Rather, he relativized “the sacred virtue” of the Japanese Imperial House by viewing it from the perspective of world history, and tried to reveal it to everyone as the highest morality that can be learned and transmitted not only by the Imperial family but by people in general.

5. The sacred virtues transmitted by successive Emperors

Our first task here is to clarify the nature of the “sacred virtues” that Hiroike convincingly identified as “supreme morality” in Japan and which he argued had been transmitted by successive emperors in their unbroken line of succession. I will give my own view on the subject and cite actual instances of the behavior of various emperors as evidence.¹⁵⁾

Hiroike based his argument on classics such as the *Kojiki* (*Records of Ancient Matters*). In order to understand these classics properly, we must try to reconstruct as fully as possible in our imaginations the world of the ancient Japanese. For them, the *Kami* (deities) and humankind were inseparable; they believed that the *Kami* were the source of *Inochi* (life) which creates all things, including human beings. *Inochi*—consisting of the body (*Nikutai*, *Mi*) and the mind-heart (*Seishin*, *Kokoro*)—is transmitted from ancestors to their descendants.¹⁶⁾

The Japanese Emperors are not, then, merely biological creatures who have inherited the genes of their parents. Norinaga Moto-ori (1730-1801), who studied the Japanese classics in great depth during the Edo period, wrote, “The successive Emperors are the children of Amaterasu Omikami, (the ancestral deity of the Imperial Household). Therefore, they were called the children of the deity in heaven or the children of the Sun” (*Kojiki-den*, vol. I). Indeed, from ancient times, occupants of the Imperial Throne were called “Children of

the Deity in Heaven" (*Amatsu Hitsugi*) and the Crown Prince was called "Son of the Children of the Deity in Heaven" (*Hitsugi no Ko*). Successive Emperors and Crown Princes conceived of themselves as children of the Sun or of Amaterasu Omikami, offered prayers to their ancestors and parents, and endeavored not to disobey their teachings. More concrete detail is needed here.

Firstly, Amaterasu Omikami, "the heavenly ancestress" respected as the ancestral goddess of the Imperial Household, is worshipped at the Shrine of Ise, at other shrines and in many homes throughout Japan as the goddess who shines on all things like the sun. In addition, according to the myths, the stories of "the age of the gods" set down in the *Kojiki* (*Records of Ancient Matters*) and the *Nihonshoki* (*Chronicles of Japan*), the Goddess Herself plowed a field in Takamagahara (the "heavenly country" in Japanese mythology) and performed the ceremony of *Niiname* in which She offered the first harvested grains of the year to the gods and goddesses.

In this way, Amaterasu Omikami was not only worshipped as a deity, but was also seen as a modest goddess who herself served and worshipped other deities. From this documentary evidence, it can be inferred as a "fact" that successive Emperors up to the time of the compilation of the *Kojiki* and the *Nihonshoki* (at the beginning of the 8th century) worshipped their ancestors and deities in nature and were at the same time themselves called *Akitsumikami* (living gods) and respected as such by the people.

Emperor Jinmu moved eastward from Kyushu, defeated his enemies, established his base in Yamato (the present-day Nara prefecture), and ascended the throne. Prior to his enthronement, he said "I will do my best in response to the grace with which *Amatsukami* (*Amaterasu Omikami*) gave us the country, and will spread the spirit in which *Ninigi-no-Mikoto* (the grandson of *Amaterasu Omikami* whom She ordered to govern this country) cultivated justice for the people." Moreover, shortly after his enthronement, he said, "the soul of our imperial ancestor (*Amaterasu Omikami*)...enlightened me. Now...I will worship *Amatsu Omikami* and discharge my filial duties." He then created the *Matsurinoniwa* (the site for religious services) and enshrined *Amaterasu Omikami*.

This episode is recorded only in the *Nihonshoki*, and so might have been added at the time of its compilation. Even so, it is of great significance that this official history of Japan recorded an episode in which the great Emperor Jinmu, who founded the country, remembered the great virtues of the ancestral gods and goddesses when he ascended the throne and performed this ceremony in order to thank them.

The 40th Emperor, Temmu, having succeeded his brother Emperor Tenji, reigned from 673 to 686 during the Asuka era. He initiated the project to compile the official history of Japan and is credited with the great achievement of establishing a centralized government based on the legal codes (*ritsuryo*), following the example of the great empire of the Tang Dynasty. For this he was praised in the *Manyoshu* (the oldest collection of *tanka* poems) in the following terms, *Ookimi ha Kami ni simaseba* (“Since the Emperor is the *Kami* ...”).

In addition to this achievement, the Emperor Temmu sent his daughter, the Princess Ooku, to the Ise Shrine as a shrine maiden with the names of *Saiou* (or *Itsuki no Himemiko*) and *Mitsueshiro* (“She who serves Amaterasu Omikami as a stick”). He also inaugurated the practice of the *Shikinen Sengu* Ceremony, in accordance with which the main building of the Ise Shrine (with its special ornaments and cloths) is reconstructed every twenty years (the next Empress, Jitou, was actually the first to carry out this ceremony): repaired all the shrines throughout the country at government expense; and began the practice of sharing the *Heibutsu* (offerings to the *Kami*) with the Shinto priests who gathered from all over the country at the *Kinensai* (“prayer ceremony for a good crop”) every February.¹⁷⁾

In the early Heian period, the 59th Emperor, Uda (regnal years 887-897), who had had a fervent faith in Buddhism since his childhood, became a Buddhist priest after abdicating and was known as *Ho-oh* (“an abdicated emperor who has joined a Buddhist order”). Before this, though, his reign had been marked by great achievements, for he appointed able men of letters and government officials like Michizane Sugawara. This he was respected by posterity as “the sacred lord” or “the sacred emperor,” as was his son, Emperor Daigo, and his grand son, Emperor Murakami. Moreover, in 888 (Ninna 4), soon after the settlement of a serious yearlong dispute with Mototsune Fujiwara, the most influential man in politics at that time, Emperor Uda made the following entry in his diary:

My country is a country of gods and goddesses. Every morning, therefore, I will pay my respects and worship all the various gods in heaven and on earth in all directions. I will start to worship the gods today and will never forget to do this even for a single day.

This shows that Emperor Uda felt that the dispute had been settled by the special providence of the gods, and so he decided to worship respectfully all the gods in all directions every morning and began this practice immediately. The performance by the Emperors of *Gantan-Shihouhai*, the worship of the gods in all directions before dawn every New Year’s Day,¹⁸⁾ had begun 70 years

previous, in about 818. Extending this practice, Emperor Uda began the daily ritual of respectfully worshipping all the gods in all directions, and this *Maichou-Shihouhai* ("the daily morning worship of gods in all directions") has been performed by successive Emperors ever since. While, there must, of course, have been days when it was not observed for a variety of reasons, we find in the opening pages of the *Kinpishou*, a great book written by the 84th Emperor, Jyuntoku (regnal years 1210-1221), the following account of the regulations of the Imperial Court:

- (a) The Shinto rituals should have priority over all other things. Emperors should display piety all the time, every day. Emperors should not sleep with their feet pointing towards the Ise Shrine and the Sacred Halls of the Imperial Court.
- (b) Early every morning, the Emperor should purify himself at a bath in the Imperial Court and sit on the special platform (constructed of earth with its surface painted and strengthened with lime) in the southeast corner of the Imperial Court. The Emperor should concentrate his mind on gods and turns to the southeast from Kyoto, and make a bow, praying and making vows to Amaterasu Omikami in the Ise Shrine and the Sacred Hall of the Imperial Court, and to the gods in the Iwashimizu Hachimangu Shrine, the Kamigamo Shrine and the Shimogamo Shrine which are the most important shrines after the Ise Shrine. Therefore the Emperor should not participate in any unclean activities (such as meeting Buddhist monks and nuns, or people in mourning) from the previous midnight and should observe these rituals before breakfast.

This practice of *Maichou-Shihouhai* was described in more detail in the *Nichyuugyouji* written by the 96th Emperor, Go-Daigo (regnal years 1318-1339). Moreover, the *Tooji Nenjyu Gyōji*, written in the early Edo period by the 108th Emperor, Go-Mizuno-o (regnal years 1611-1629), quotes the above-cited extract from the beginning of the *Kinpishou* and comments, "Even now this regulation is strictly observed."¹⁹⁾

Our examination of the main examples of the respect shown by successive Emperors to the gods of heaven and earth, especially Amaterasu Omikami, allows us to say that this is the most important of the "sacred virtues" practiced by the Emperors generation after generation, in an unbroken line lasting well over a thousand years. Thus, Hiroike's conviction is supported by very solid historical evidence.

6. The sacred virtue of the reigning Emperor Akihito

The final fact to be demonstrated here is that the sacred virtues of religious piety and fervent respect for ancestors are also exemplified in the utterances of the current (the 125th) Emperor, Akihito, and in those of his *tanka* poems that have been made public.²⁰⁾

Crown Prince Akihito, the eldest son of Emperor Showa, was born in December, 1933 (Showa 8). In August, 1945 (Showa 20), while he was in the 5th grade at the Gakushuin Elementary School, he found himself facing the prospect of Japan's defeat at the end of World War II (the Pacific War) and wrote an essay entitled "Building up the New Japan," of which the following is an extract:

Today's Japan is in the extreme distress. ... to claw our way up from this distress ... we, Japanese, have to keep the spirit of preserving the fundamental character of the country... and have to build a new Japan which is even more excellent. ... This all rests on my shoulders. In order to build the new country, I have to be like the Emperor Meiji, who was looked up to by all nations, in leading this country.

In this composition, the Crown Prince, even though he was only eleven years old, already recognizes his obligation to reconstruct Japan, and to fulfill this he decides to train himself so that he would be "respected by everybody," just as his great-grandfather, Emperor Meiji, had been. It is clear that he was succeeding to a tradition here; his father, Emperor Showa, and his grandfather, Emperor Taisho, had also modeled themselves on Emperor Meiji.

While attending the Gakushuin Junior High School, Crown Prince Akihito was for several years tutored in English by an American, Mrs. Elizabeth Gray Vining. She wrote about the young Crown Prince in the following terms: "His Imperial Highness is honest and modest in himself and others. ... He has a strong sense of responsibility and deep love for Japan and the Japanese people. He is fully aware of his duty and accepts it seriously. Moreover. ... he has deep sympathy."²¹⁾

For about ten years from Showa 24 (1949), Crown Prince Akihito was also tutored in various other subjects by Dr. Shinzo Koizumi, a former president of Keio University and Consultant to the Board of the Crown Prince's household, with the aim of providing him with the knowledge and insight necessary for an emperor. Dr. Koizumi's talks with the Crown Prince often centered on quotations from the Analects of Confucius, and Prince Akihito later said, "One of my favorite words is *chujyo* (忠恕 - sincerity and compassion). The Analects of Confucius say, 'The way of a great man is *chujyo* alone. This is the spirit of

being true to one's conscience and being as considerate to the hearts of others as one is to one's own." Among the other books that he and Dr. Koizumio read carefully together were *Teishitsuron (On The Imperial Household)*, in which Yukichi Fukuzawa discusses the social role of the Imperial household, and *King George the Fifth: His Life and Reign* by Harold Nicolson (1952). Dr. Koizumi selected the latter work because he thought it would be useful for the Crown Prince as a future Emperor; it contains, for example, the following thoughts: "A constitutional monarch can play a role as an advisor of morality. ... For this purpose, a monarch must be selfless and judicious, and a person who is respected and trusted as a morally reliable person."²²⁾

2009, the year in which I write this, is the 30th anniversary of Crown Prince Akihito's marriage to Michiko Shoda in Showa 34 (1959), and the 20th anniversary of his accession to the Imperial Throne in Heisei 1 (1989). Looking back at his achievements over the past 50 years, it is manifest that the Crown Prince, by heredity and training, has thoroughly come to understand and practice the "Supreme Morality" which Hiroike expounded. I cannot, of course, describe his sacred virtues fully here, but the following are some examples: while respecting his ancestors and the gods in nature he never forgets "self-examination", and while engaged in rituals, memorial services and acts of encouragement, he remembers the victims of wars and disasters, and his benefactors and predecessors in various fields. He has composed many *tanka* poems on these occasions, some of which are given below (those marked with an asterisk are taken from the website of the Imperial Household Agency):

1. The *Utakaihajime* or the annual poetry competition held at the beginning of the year at the Imperial Palace (in 1957, aged 23.)
A candle light is burning quietly,
In the Sacred Halls in the Imperial Court
The low voice of singing
With sound of a *koto* (Japanese zither) echoing.
2. Condoling on the death of the Consultant to the Crown Prince, Shinzo Koizumi (in 1966, aged 32)
While sitting before his departed soul for some time,
I heard his voice in those good days.
3. The *Niinamesai* (in 1970, aged 36)
Lightened by the firebrand
On a wooden floor,
I walked on
Calling to mind the ancient time
4. The *Utakaihajime* (in 1974, aged 40)

- When I advanced toward the shrine
 On a wooden floor.
 The sky of the new year
 Began to grow light
5. The festival of the sixtieth anniversary of the Meiji Jingu Shrine (in 1980, aged 46)
 At the gathering of celebrating many years,
 Looking back on the achievement of my predecessor,
 I call to mind his reign.
 6. Keeping Vigil for the Former Emperor (in 1989, aged 55)
 Recalling his face
 In those good days,
 I was at the dark shrine.
 7. The festival of the fiftieth anniversary of the Oumi Jingu Shrine (in 1990, aged 56)
 I call to mind
 The ancient time
 Of the Emperors
 Who laid the foundations of Japan
 8. The *Daijosai*²³⁾ (in 1990, aged 56)
 I call to mind
 The memory of my father
 Engaged in the rites of the *Niinamesai*
 As I perform the ritual
 Of the *Daijosai**
 9. On the Eruption of Mt. Unzen (in 1991, aged 57)
 Ashes gather deep
 On the ground
 On which people labored
 Month after month, year after year,
 To earn their livelihood*
 10. The forty-five anniversary of the *Nihon Izokukai* (The Japanese Association for the Bereaved Families of World War II) (in 1992, aged 58)
 The bereaved families
 Of people who died in the war
 I think of the long time
 They had to endure.
 11. The View from the Okinawa Peace Memorial Hall (in 1993, aged 59)

My eyes range over
The site of a battleground
That saw fierce fighting,
And beyond it, lo, the sea
Calm and peaceful meets my gaze.*

12. Iwojima (in 1994, aged 60)
The valiant men who
Fought with all their heart and soul,
Here, unto this day,
Lie at rest below the ground
And the isle is sorrowful.*
13. The great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake (in 1995, aged 61)
I am sad at heart
To see the rain pour down on
People who to flee
The threat of quakes must stay
Shelterless in open air.*
14. The Mudslide Disaster in Nagano Prefecture (in 1996, aged 62)
The raging mudflow
Wrought most terrible havoc:
The search for bodies
In the freezing cold river
Today too was carried on.*
15. The sighting of wreck of the Tsushima-Maru (in 1997, aged 63)
Foundered, with lives
Of the young evacuees
Held in her embrace,
The ship has been discovered
Far down in the ocean depths.*
16. Thinking of those people stricken by the disaster of torrential rain (in 1998, aged 64)
The people living
In places that were hard hit
By the terrible
Concentrated heavy rains,
How will they pass the Winter?*
17. Okushiri Island (in 1999, aged 65)
After six whole years,
Revisiting that island

- Of calamity,
 As I come closer I find
 An island all over green.*
18. A mourning visit to my mother (in 2000, aged 66)
 The path that I have
 Come and gone so many times,
 I go now once more
 In this late evening to see
 My dear departed mother.*
19. Visiting Niijima and Kozushima (in 2001, aged 67)
 Any number of
 Tracks of rockfalls and landslides
 Whitely visible,
 On these isles that underwent
 The evils of a fierce earthquake.*
20. The Shosoin Repository (in 2002, aged 68)
 I look with great awe
 On this storehouse, recalling
 The men who kept safe
 These many precious objects
 For more than a thousand years*
21. The reclaimed settlement of Ohinata at Karuizawa (in 2003, aged 69)
 When I went to meet
 The people who worked so hard
 To open that land,
 I could see Mount Asama
 With its cloud crown at the top.*
22. Visiting the Earthquake Disaster Areas of the Chuetsu Region in
 Niigata Prefecture (in 2004, aged 70)
 Ravaged by earthquake
 The valley's terraced rice-fields
 Are ruined wasteland-
 My heart sore pained, I see them
 A Yamakoshi hamlet.*
23. Visit to Saipan (in 2005, aged 71)
 Down below this cliff,
 Multitudinous the lives
 That people lost here,
 Where the ocean is so deep

And the seas are blue and clear.*

24. Miyakejima (in 2006, aged 72)
While the gas continues
Still spurting from the mountain
On this their Island
The people tell me that
They are happy to be back.*
25. The Occupation Museum of Latvia (in 2007, aged 73)
Is this how they spent
Their days of imprisonment
In Siberia,
Freezing and bitterly cold,
Our soldiers of the last war.*
26. The Iwate-Miyagi Nairiku Earthquake (in 2008, aged 74)
Disaster has struck
With more missing as time passes
Grieved am I and pained
As We receive updates
Here in Kita-Akita.*

The true heart of the current Emperor is expressed in these *tanka* poems (the *tanka* that he wrote in Heisei 21 have not been made public.) In December 1998 (Heisei 10), he said, "The duty of the Emperor is to think of the history of past emperors who prayed for the happiness of the nation, and to render great service to the country and the people." He has carried out the idea expressed in these words in his sincere daily observance of rituals and in his public service; in so doing he completely exemplifies the sacred virtues we have been discussing, typifying "Supreme Morality" and actualizing it in present-day Japan.

Conclusion

A century has passed since the time when Chikuro Hiroike was engrossed in research aimed at understanding why the Japanese Imperial Household has continued in "an unbroken line of succession"; he arrived at the conviction that the "true reason" for this was the fact that the sacred virtues found in the myth of Amaterasu Omikami and the achievements of successive Emperors were exactly the same as the "Supreme Morality" practiced by the great sages of the world.

To conclude, then; I have traced the history of this phenomenon and

verified the concrete achievements of some of the most important Emperors as well as the current one. As a historian living in Japan today, I think it is fully possible to conclude that the most important reason why the Japanese Imperial Household has continued for so many years is the elevated morality of the Emperors. This can be seen in the fact that many of them carefully studied the “sacred virtues” handed down to them by their ancestors and tried sincerely to cultivate their own virtue; their relationship with the nation has thus been one of “mutual trust, and mutual love and respect.”²⁴⁾

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Notes

- 1) Gansho Ogawa (1812–1894) opened a private school, Reitaku-kan, where he taught the Chinese classics and English literature, with the aim of “advocating reverence for the emperor and patriotism, and developing ethics and morals.” Hiroike entered the school at the age of 17 and later described its impact on him as follows: “For the first time in my life I understood...the greatness of my country, which formed the basis of my various research endeavors...” (The Institute of Moralogy, *Chikuro Hiroike: Father of Moralogy*, The Institute of Moralogy, 2005, pp. 27–28).
- 2) Other early publications included: *Shogaku Shushin Yousho (A New Textbook for Morals in Primary Schools*, 1888) in three volumes, each of which included fifty sayings and explained them with the aid of examples of well-known individuals both ancient and modern; *Shogaku Rekishi Uta (History Poems for Primary Schools*, 1889) which described, in seven-and-five-syllable poems, the key events of Japanese history from the mythological age to the Meiji period; *Nakatsu Rekishi (A History of Nakatsu*, 1890), a study of the history of Hiroike’s native town of Nakatsu from ancient to modern times. Shikazo Mori, a professor at Kyoto University, valued this last work highly, commending it for “(a) the very scientific research method it employed; (b) the breadth and fullness of its scope; and (c) the vast coverage of information and thoroughness of content...it is an astonishing pioneering work that holds its own place in the study of Japanese history” (*Chikuro Hiroike: Father of Moralogy*, p. 96).
- 3) It consists of a thousand volumes in Japanese binding, and fifty-one in Western binding. Of the original one thousand volumes, Hiroike was responsible for two hundred and forty-eight (*Chikuro Hiroike: Father of Moralogy*, pp. 171, 176).
- 4) Hajime Ide, *Hiroike Chikuro no Shiso to Shogai*, Hiroikegakuen Shuppanbu, 1998, p. 129.
- 5) Chikuro Hiroike, *Toward Supreme Morality*, III, p. 382.
- 6) For modern people accustomed to practical rationalism, this interpretation of myth—

treating the story of gods and goddesses as if they recorded the words and deeds of human beings, and thinking about their meaning accordingly — may seem incomprehensible. But in order to achieve a deep understanding of classical literature, we need to get as close as possible to the sensibility and common sense of ancient people. After all, ancient Japanese people thought that the *Kami* (gods) and *Hito* (people) existed in an indivisible relationship. The word *Kami* in this case signifies something completely different from the absolute creator of monotheistic religions. Since *Kamis* in the Japanese classics are referred to as the *Kami* of *Musubi* ("giving life") and *Ubusuna* ("germination"), they represent the source of *Inochi* (lives) and give birth to all things, including human beings. *Inochi* are passed down from ancestors immemorial to their descendants forever. Therefore, descendants without exception, looking back at their own origins, make every effort to worship their ancestors, absorb the teachings of those who came before them and out them into practice as much as possible, all the while thanking them for their benefits.

- 7) Hiroike later clarified this point as follows: "...I continued to study on the same theme... until around 1907 I was able to ascertain that the first cause of the unbroken succession lay in the sacred virtue of the Imperial Ancestress, while the second cause lay in the sacred virtue of the successive emperors....In 1908 I visited China with the object of investigating the Chinese laws and discovered that the descendants of Confucius and Yan Hui possessed unbroken lines of succession either as peers or quasi-peers. Remembering then that there were among the Japanese peers so many holders of unbroken lines of succession, and taking into consideration the facts of the two nations in contrast, I felt my historic insight a great deal exalted. Soon after this I had the good opportunities to acquire various kinds of collateral evidence concerning supreme morality, so was able to feel quite sure of the real greatness of the sacred virtue of the Imperial Ancestress and had firm reason to believe that her sacred virtue was the basic cause of the unbroken Imperial line of succession" (*Toward Supreme Morality*, II, pp. 423-424).
- 8) Austin, *Lectures of Jurisprudence*, Haynes, *Law of Equity*, Jherring, *Der Kampf ums Recht*, Maine, *Ancient Law*, Smith, *Elements of the Law*, the Bible, and a book on law by Boissonade.
- 9) E.g. *The Ancient City*, p. 94; *The Aryan Household*, p. 80.
- 10) Nobushige Hozumi, *Saishi Oyobi Rei to Houritsu*, Iwanami Shoten, 1928, pp. 128, 131, 138. Dr. Hozumi wrote the following *tanka* on being given a peerage in 1915: "If my father and mother were alive, how happy I am. I could tell them about the great blessing." His wife Utako wrote a *tanka* when she and her husband visited Kashiwara Shrine: "Oh, Kashiwara Shrine! I think of god of this shrine where my distant ancestor (that is, the ancestor of the Hozumi family, Umamadeno Mikoto) also served." These *tanka* (pictures of the strips of paper on which they were written appear at the start of this book) reveal how much both of them respected and loved their parents and ancestors.
- 11) The Imperial Rescript on Education first appeared as the words of Emperor on the subject of education without the countersignature of the Deputy Minister. Therefore, even in 1945, Saburo Ienaga could write in *Kyoiku Chokugo no Shisoshiteki Kenkyu* (*Shigaku Zasshi*, Vol. 56, No. 12, 1947) that: "It is a universal lesson filled with the morality of the modern state." But GHQ (the military command of the American Occupation in Japan) "requested the diet to resolve to abolish it" in order to eliminate it from public education. But it had a deep-rooted influence even after the Basic Law

- of Education (*Kyoiku Kihon Hou*) came into effect and so both the House of Representatives and the House of Councilors resolved to eliminate it; it lapsed in June 1948.
- 12) Shigetake Sugiura (1855-1924), a scientist, graduated from the Science Department (*Daigaku Nanko*) of Tokyo University before studying in England. On his return to Japan, he became an educator, teaching "Ethics" as the principal of Tokyo Eigo Gakko (Nihon Junior High School) from 1897. His achievements there led to his appointment as lecturer on "Ethics" to the Crown Prince.
 - 13) Shigetake Sugiura (Matazo Ikari, ed.), *Rinri Goshinko So-an*, (2nd year, 2nd term, No. 4, 1st ed. Dainichisha, 1936; in a small paperback edition, Mikishobo, 1984). Moreover, in *Sugiura Shigetake Zadanroku* (Iwanami Bunko), he writes "If one does a good deed secretly, one will get a good reward..Great people will be respected by future generations because they accumulated good energy (human virtue) more than other people in their time."
 - 14) Details are provided in Chikuro Hiroike, *Toward Supreme Morality*, vols. II, III. The reasons Hiroike wrote *The Origin of the Japanese Constitution (Nihon Kenpo Engenron)* was, he says, "to actualize the sacred virtues of benevolence, tolerance and self-examination to be found in the supreme morality that our Imperial ancestress and the successive emperors have made a reality; as an act of respect for the historical customs and laws of our country, and of esteem for the order of mankind and nature; to allow people, as a result, to enjoy happiness according to their virtue; and to develop our culture" (*Hiroike Hakase Zenshu*, vol. 4, 3rd edition, Hiroikegakuen Jigyobu, p. 389). He aims here at a universality beyond nationality.
 - 15) My book *Rekidai Tenno no Jitsuzou* (The Institute of Moralogy, 2009) described these virtues as exemplified in particular instances of the conduct of the main emperors. Sections 5 and 6 of the present paper cite examples of the virtues inherited by successive emperors as evidenced by their conduct in serving and worshipping the deity. Dr. Hiroike says that emperors in succession "served and worshipped the deity and loved the people" (as noted above at the end of section 2 of this paper.) There are too many examples of the love of the Emperors for the people for us to show them all here, but the general outline is made clear in *Kokushi*, (5 volumes, Benseisha, 2000), a work by Kurakichi Shiratori who acted as lecturer to the Crown Prince and used this book to teach him for five years.
 - 16) Different eras and different religions have various ideas about the relationship between *kami* (gods) and *hito* (human beings). In Japan, especially in ancient society, as the myths in the *Kojiki* and *Nihonshyoki* show, people believed that the gods gave birth to numerous *hito* as well as *mono* (animals, plants and other things in nature). They did not believe that one absolute God created all things; instead as parents (*kami*) gave birth to children (*hito*), there was a relationship of *inochi* (life) between *kami* and *hito*. Incidentally, the Japanese word *hi* (ヒ) means both sun (日) and (霊) soul (spirit) (both are the ancient special *kou*-type usages of *kana*). *Hi* (火) is the ancient special *otsu*-type usage of *kana*. This word also probably meant the source of energy and vital force, the same as (日) and (霊). It is said that the word *hito* (霊処) comes from the place (処) where *hi* (霊) is found.
 - 17) The *Shikinen Sengu* Ceremony was in abeyance for a hundred years during the period of the civil wars, but was revived at the start of early modern period and has been performed continuously down to modern times. At present, with the permission of His Majesty, believed to be the descendant of Amaterasu Omikami, preparations for the next ceremony, the 62nd, are ongoing; it is scheduled to take place in October, 2013 (see

- my book, *Ise Jingu*, Kodansha, 1993).
- 18) See "Gantan-Shihouhai no Seiritsu" in my book, *Heianchou Gishikisho Seiritsushi no Kenkyu*, Kokusho Kankokai, 1985. This *Gantan-Shihouhai* has been performed solemnly and continuously down to the present near the Emperor's residence (usually in the front yard of the *Shinkaden*, but from last year, out of consideration for the age of Emperor, on the veranda of the Emperor's residence) at about 5 a.m. every New Year's Day (see my book *Tenno no Matsurigoto: Shouchou toshiteno Saishi to Koumu*, NHK Shuppan, 2009).
 - 19) This *Maichou-Shihouhai* was performed at the Emperor's Kyoto Palace until the start of the Meiji era (1868). Since the Imperial Palace moved to Tokyo, the Emperors have sent the chamberlain to the shrine in the Palace (the *Kyuchyu Sanden*) to worship on their behalf every morning, but they have been careful about their behavior in this. The Emperor often worships at the *Kyuchyu Sanden* during the *Jyunsai* ceremony (which takes place three times every month), but only on the morning of the first day of the month; on the 11th and 21st of the month he has someone worship there on his behalf.
 - 20) The words of the current Emperor while he was Crown Prince are included in Itsuo Sonobe (ed.), *Shin Tennoke no Jigazo*, Bungei Shunju, 1989; the remarks and *tankas* belonging to the first ten years after his enthronement are to be found in Kunaicho (ed.), *Michi*, (NHK Shuppan, 1999); and those of the past ten years were published in a sequel to *Michi* (2009). The website of the Imperial Household Agency provides an English translation of both these latter books. The *tankas* written as Crown Prince, together with those of the Crown Princess are available in *Tomoshihi*, (Fujiingahousha, 1986).
 - 21) Elizabeth Vining (trans. Ichiro Koizumi) *Koutaishi no Mado*, Bungeishunjusha, 1953, pp. 509-510. When the Crown Prince, aged 16 and a freshman at the Gakushuin High School, was asked "What does your Highness want to be?" he replied without any hesitation, saying in English "I shall be the Emperor." On hearing this, Mrs. Vining was impressed that "His Highness realizes his destiny and accepts it."
 - 22) See *Jyoji 5 Sei Den in Kuni o Omou Kokoro, Koizumi Shinzo Zenshu*, vol. 10, Bungei Syunjyusha, 1966. Before his visit to Britain on May, 1998, the present Emperor also recalled how "I read the biography of King George V with Dr. Koizumi...In that book, it is said that the King consults, encourages and warns... I was deeply impressed with the attitude of King George V, working steadily and with sincerity for the country and its people" (*Michi*, p. 17).
 - 23) The first *Ninamesai* performed by a newly enthroned emperor is called the *Daijosai*. The *Ninamesai* is a rite, performed annually on November 23rd, in which the Emperor makes an offering of the newly harvested rice to the deities, expresses his gratitude to them for having protected the crops, and then partakes of the rice offering in communion with the deities.
 - 24) The Imperial Edict for Building A New Japan (*Shin Nihon Kensetsu nikansuru Shosho*), popularly known as 'The Emperor's Declaration That He was a Human Being' (*Tenno no Ningen Sengen*) was written and made public at the direction of GHQ in order to deny the divinity of the Emperor. Yet even this document begins, at the request of the Emperor Showa, by including the Five Oaths (*Gokajyo no Goseimon*), i.e. those made in the first year of Meiji (1868) to the gods in heaven and on earth for the realization of the renewal of everything. Moreover, the Emperor reconfirmed the unity of the Imperial Throne and its subjects in the words: "The bond between ourselves and you, the people, is cemented by mutual trust and love unchangingly. It did not arise from mere

myth and legend.” See *Shin Nihon Kensetsu no Shosho* in my *Koshitsu no Dento to Bunka*, Hiroikegakuen Shuppan, 1996.