The Formation of Article 9 from the Perspective of the Influences of Christianity

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<Abstract>
When it comes to the Meiji Constitution, Ito Hirobumi – probably the most influential of all the oligarchs – concluded that only the imperial house can become the axis of the state of Japan. It is, therefore, no accident that the Meiji leadership undertook a new and even more dramatic effort to emphasize the centrality of the Emperor in the years leading up to the promulgation of the new constitution. After World War II, the Japanese Constitution was drawn up under the Allied occupation and was intended to replace Japan’s previous militaristic, absolute-monarchy system with a form of liberal democracy. However, the Japanese government still hoped to maintain the Emperor’s sovereignty. GHQ refused the Japanese government’s draft, and MacArthur suggested three principles called the ‘MacArthur Note.’ The main conflict is between Japanese culture(centering on the Emperor) and American culture(centering on Christianity). Compared with the Meiji Constitution, the current Japanese Constitution was greatly influenced by Christianity. The purpose of this paper is to deal with the formation of Article 9 from the perspective of the influence of Christianity.

*Key Words: Japan’s Constitution, Shidehara Kijyuro, Shiratori Toshio, Douglas MacArthur, Ueki Emori, Yoshida Shigeru. Christianity, Emperor, Meiji Constitution, Ito Hirobumi

I. Preface

With the collapse of the Bakufu system from internal conflict and the establishment of the Meiji Restoration – both of which occurred under the impetus of external pressures initiated by Commodore Perry’s visit to Japan – the Meiji government exerted itself to begin the process of centralization.

In reality, the Meiji government faced a great deal of confrontation and
conflict domestically; thus, it focused its energies on establishing a constitution – the pillar of the nation – and setting up a modern parliament. In the parliament, the Emperor reigned as an absolute being with sovereign power over all administrative, legislative and judicial functions. He not only concentrated all ownership of political power within himself, but also all spiritual authority. He was a god manifest as a human being, and all citizens were obliged to not only obey his commands externally, but to honor and respect him in their hearts and minds as well. The framers of the Meiji Constitution sought to stabilize the nation with the Emperor as its center and axis.

However, this system with the Emperor as the absolute head developed into hegemonic domination that led to territorial expansion and a pseudo-capitalist world-order conceived in the image of the law of the jungle. As a result, in the half-century running from the end of the 19th century through to 1945, Japan engaged in four major wars: the Sino-Japanese war of 1894~1895, the Russo-Japanese war of 1904~1905, and both World Wars – all in addition to the invasion of Manchuria in the 1930s. A famous Japanese Christian, Kanzo Uchimura, lamented the change in perception of the Japanese resultant from these conquests, saying: “Alas for my dear country, that under its young, inexperienced politicians of the Meiji Era, she accepted this Western civilization which is no civilization, in its entirety! That the first thing that Japan learned from Europe was about its army and navy is greatly to be deplored. True, Japan by her adoption of the Western methods of warfare has won her place among the Great Powers of the world within less than a century; but what has she lost? Forty years ago, she was the most beloved nation in the world; the whole world was open to her children; they were welcomed everywhere. But how different now! By three successive victorious wars, she gained Formosa, Korea and South Sea Islands; but with them, she lost the love of the whole world. Now the whole world is closed against her; her children are feared and disliked