

RELIGION & PHILOSOPHY

inquiry because it "cheapened" the spirit by its familiarity, says Schneider. In fact, he likened science to peeping under a woman's skin. In Christianity—which confuses shame with inhibition and the holy with the unnatural—Nietzsche confronted his values in reverse. In particular, he despised the positive value Christianity put on shamelessness, especially the shameless presumption of helping others. "Pity offends the sense of shame," he wrote in *Thus Spake Zarathustra*.

Perhaps only in art was the proper balance struck, Nietzsche suggested, because the artist was alternately bolder and more reticent than the "common" man. As his stormy relationship with Wagner evolved, he became fascinated by the comparison of music and words. Urging artists to exploit their experiences "shamelessly" and to avoid the "dangers" of modesty, he nevertheless saw shame at the heart of art. On the one hand, he found writers and poets shamed by the intrinsic limits of their medium; on the other hand, shame kindles respect for "appearances"—forms, tones, folds—in music, painting, and sculpture. To stop at the surface, to preserve the veil, Nietzsche believed, was to acknowledge the "indecent" of uncovering everything.

'New Religions' of Japan

"The Response of Three New Religions to the Crisis in the Japanese Value System" by Ted J. Solomon, in *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* (Mar. 1977), St. John's University, Jamaica, N.Y. 11439.

In response to the disorientation occasioned by defeat in World War II, hundreds of religious denominations and sects have flourished in Japan since 1945. While most sects can be classified as Buddhist, Christian, or Shinto, much of the nation's religious vitality revolves around the "New Religions," a term reserved for some 125 movements that have emerged since the late Tokugawa and early Meiji (1800–1870) periods.

The New Religions emphasize a theological conservatism adapted to modern social organizations, writes Solomon, Iowa State professor of philosophy. They thus present the Japanese with an attractive middle course: "the blend of traditional with modern values in a creative manner."

These New Religions include Soka Gakkai, Rissho Kosei-kai, and PL (Perfect Liberty) Kyodan, which, among them, have more than 20 million members. They place reaffirmation of traditional values (loyalty, nationalism, aestheticism) at the center of their beliefs. However, the creative synthesis of traditional and modern is often expressed in unusual and striking ways. PL Kyodan's emphasis on individual illness as an indication of sin, for example, has prompted the organization to maintain a Bureau of Computerized Mission. The Bureau keeps track of the illnesses of its 1.5 million members and

RELIGION & PHILOSOPHY

attempts to establish "mental structures" for various conditions.

The most remarkable re-formulation of religious values in a modern context involves Soka Gakkai. Not content to be a passive element in a technocratic society, it has formed a political wing, the Komeito, or "Clean Government" party. More remarkable still has been its success. Highly organized among the working classes, and serving as an ombudsman for the disadvantaged, Komeito is now the third largest party in the Japanese Parliament. There are 30 Komeito members in the House of Representatives, 24 in the House of Councilors (Senate), and more than 3,000 local Komeito officeholders nationwide. For the New Religions, observes Solomon, the sacred belongs "at the core as well as the circumference of an industrial society."

*Roman Catholics
and Anglicans*

"Anglicans and Roman Catholics on Authority in the Church" by Herbert J. Ryan, in *America* (Mar. 5, 1977), 106 W. 56th St., New York, N.Y. 10019.

A theological "study document" drafted in Venice by the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission has been widely understood as signifying the impending union of the Anglican and Roman Catholic communities under the primacy of the Pope. Despite "widespread misrepresentation" in the press, Ryan, a Jesuit and commission member, believes that the so-called Venice Statement could provide the basis for a "much-needed dialogue" on questions in which divergence between the two churches seems to be increasing.

When the document was released last January, press reports indicated variously that: (1) the statement was an "official document" of both the Anglican and Roman Catholic Churches; (2) Anglicans were prepared to accept the Pope as universal primate; and (3) the Archbishop of Canterbury would become a patriarch in the manner of the Eastern rite of the Catholic Church. *Time* headlined its account "Power to the Pope." The *Times* of London reported that commission members "found a convergence of belief to their surprise."

Actually, says Ryan, the assembled theologians found the *Times* article surprising. Although they reached agreement on Church authority, the "authority" is Christ's. The theologians developed no new structure to resolve the major differences between the Roman Church and the 23 autonomous Anglican Churches in Britain, the United States, and elsewhere; instead, the commission stressed the model of *koinonia*—communion of men with God and one another. Universal primacy is discussed in the Venice Statement in connection with the *episcopate*, or oversight function of bishops in promoting *koinonia*. But the Statement says only that in "any future union," a much weakened, collegial authority "should be held by the See of Rome." Although the Venice Statement makes clear that both communions share elements of a common tradition, on issues, Ryan writes, they "appear to be moving further apart."