

from: American Anthropologist, 1973

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"Spiritual Education" in a Japanese Bank¹

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Many Japanese companies train their new employees according to a philosophy of "spiritualism," a set of ideas about human psychology and character development that inspired much of the country's pre-war education. "Spiritualism's" debts to the Zen, Confucian and samurai traditions are quite apparent. It emphasizes social cooperation and responsibility, an acceptance of reality, and perseverance. Its educational methods emphasize specially constructed training experiences. As a case study in the anthropology of education, Japanese company spiritual education points to the value of (1) studying educational processes outside formal school systems; (2) considering native concepts of psychology in analyzing educational processes; (3) finding relationships between educational techniques and techniques found in religious conversion, psychological therapy, and social initiation; and (4) discovering avenues of education that proceed by non-verbal means.

DURING the last few years Japanese media have given considerable attention to the startling increase of company training programs devoted at least in part to *seishin kyooiku*, a manner of training commonly translated as "spiritual education." As many as one-third of all medium and large Japanese companies may now conduct such programs as part of their regular in-company training.² The accounts of these in the media have been impressionistic and generally critical with journalists in particular labelling company "spiritual education" practices as unwanted and unwarranted echoes of Japan's pre-war educational philosophy, universally condemned in the early post-war period as militaristic and stultifying to individualism and the democratic impulse. This harsh judgment is entirely predictable and not without some validity, but a closer examination of the phenomenon of company *seishin kyooiku* is in order before any reasonable conclusions as to its nature and political implications may be made.³ Furthermore, spiritualism (*seishin-shugi*) is much more than a sensitive public issue in Japan; it is a key to much that Japanese now

regard as traditional and foreigners regard as Japanese in the nation's ongoing cultural pattern. Spiritualism provides a very definite philosophy of socialization and human development, one that underlies such well known pursuits as flower arranging, judo, and the study of the tea ceremony. At one time it inspired the training of the country's samurai and, more recently, her pre-war youth.⁴ Spiritualism offers a perspective by which individual character continues to be widely judged today. Company spiritual education is, in summary, but the most recent manifestation of a very long and still quite vital Japanese orientation to issues of human psychology and education and for this reason the subject is of far greater interest than the matter of resurgent nationalism alone would imply.

In this article I wish to describe a company spiritual training program in which I was a participant for its three-month duration in 1969.⁵ The full scope of the program is too varied to permit a complete account and consequently only the major activities that are focal events of the instruction and a few themes of training life will be described in detail. The patterns underlying these activities will be discussed

Accepted for publication January 26, 1972

as they provide something of a definition of the concept *seishin* and as they indicate the methods by which individual spiritual strength is fostered. Finally, a few observations about the implications of this material for the anthropology of education are presented. In a previous paper (Rohlen 1970b), I have considered Japanese company training from the point of view of theories about initiation rituals and consequently this topic will not be taken up here.

The training program studied is conducted by a bank located in one of Japan's large regional centers. The bank has three thousand employees, two thousand men and one thousand women. *Seishin* education is given routinely to all new men and to many others in the course of their mid-career training. The program described here involved 120 new men, all recent graduates of high schools and universities. It began within several weeks after their graduation and lasted for three months. During that time they lived together in a modern five-story training institute located near the bank's home office. Training sessions lasted between ten and sixteen hours per day, six days a week. The time devoted to *seishin* education was estimated by the training staff to be about one-third of the entire introductory program. The remaining two-thirds is devoted to training new bank members in the numerous technical skills expected of them in their job. This estimate of the division of time between spiritual training and technical training, however, ignores the fact that individual performance in the task of learning banking skills is commonly interpreted according to *seishin* concepts and even many aspects of recreation, such as the songs taught the trainees are, in fact, vehicles for *seishin* messages.

While unquestionably this bank's program varies in many details from the *seishin* training of other companies, the goals and methods involved are essentially the same according to my experience and inquiry. The similarities among all of them are to be found in the underlying patterns and con-

cepts of *seishin kyooiku*. It is the purpose of this paper to clarify and document what these are.

Japanese who have had no personal contact with company spiritual education tend to associate it with the moral education (*shuushin kyooiku* or *dootoku kyooiku*),⁶ practiced in the public schools before the war. This was essentially education in nationalism and social propriety based in the teaching of parables and reverence for national symbols. In a very much altered form, moral education does survive in the bank's training program, but the morality is considerably altered in content and presentation. Today, the institution sponsoring the training is the prime focus of morality, whereas before, the nation, in the person of the emperor, was central. Instead of rituals of nationalism, the bank today draws attention primarily to its own symbols. Through such daily actions as singing the bank song, reciting its motto, learning of its history, saluting its flag, being told of the "company spirit" and hearing inspirational messages from its leaders, the trainees are taught pride and respect for their bank. The nation is not ignored, but rather the company stresses the service given to Japan by the bank and urges its trainees to fulfill their responsibilities to the nation through loyalty to their company. It is not uncommon that service to the bank even be characterized as service to the entire world and to world peace, so organic is the model of social life taught by the bank. No matter what the ultimate benefit, however, the message is that the moral man is the man who works hard for his own company. The bank and all other institutions, according to this view, serve as intermediaries between individual intentions to aid the greater society and the actual realization of national well being. By virtue of its intermediary position, the bank is properly an interpreter and defender of social morality and its practice of moral and spiritual education is done not only for the good of the bank, but also for the entire society.

It is an oversimplification, however, to

describe the moral education of the bank exclusively in terms of a narrow focus on loyal role fulfillment. The content of the program includes many elements borrowed from the pool of inspirational stories of other countries. The diary of a missionary's medical work in Vietnam, the pronouncements of President Kennedy, and the opinions of the Ethiopian olympic marathon champion are among the instructional materials drawn from international sources. "Foreigners do this," or "abroad the custom is such and such" are common and powerful arguments in the bank's moral instruction program.

In addition to foreign influence, the bank's program utilizes the prestige of scholarship and science whenever convenient. Writings of famous professors that are consistent with the bank's message are found on the required reading lists and scholars from the regional university lecture occasionally on inspirational topics at the bank's institute.

Yet the overall aim of the moral instruction program is not to "brainwash" or greatly manipulate the thinking of the trainees. This, it is agreed, would be an impossibility. What is intended is that the trainees become familiar with the point of view of the bank, its competitive circumstances, and its intention to contribute to the social good. This moral perspective will hopefully strengthen their will to perform their work properly in the future. In this way, moral education, which is almost exclusively verbal in nature, fits into the spiritual training program in which the emphasis is primarily on learning through experience.

The more dramatic means for teaching the company's values are a series of special training events. The five reported here—*zazen*, military training, *rotoo*, a weekend in the country, and an endurance walk—are the most fascinating of a larger group of such activities. They constitute an important part of the introductory training program and find occasional application in mid-career courses. Because individual experience is the

key element in these lessons, I have occasionally inserted observations of my own reaction to the events in the course of the following description.

ZEN MEDITATION

During the three months of training, Zen mediation (*zazen*) was practiced on three different occasions.⁷ The longest and most thorough of the three sessions took place during the second month of training, when the trainees, in three separate groups, visited a large and well known Zen temple several hours bus trip from the training institute. This temple, with its many fine buildings and lovely gardens, has long been supported by the leading industries of the area. It has a tradition of being the foremost institution in the region for the training of new Zen priests and, although the number of new priests has diminished somewhat from earlier days, the temple has become extremely busy providing brief Zen training sessions for sports teams, student groups, and business trainees. One priest mentioned that because the calendar for such training was very crowded, requests had to be made long in advance.

On arrival the trainees were lined up and marched into the temple to a small room where they deposited their shoes and baggage. They were then conducted to a hall large enough to accommodate the entire group of forty. A priest, the instructor, asked them to sit formally on their knees. Once seated, he informed them of the temple's rules and procedures and explained in detail the special manner of eating meals in a Zen temple. He left and the group sat for some time in silence. When he returned, he brought with him the head priest. The trainees were instructed to bow their heads to the floor, and to stay in that position until the head priest's greeting was ended. For about three minutes, they bowed in this manner while he spoke of the tradition, rigors, and purpose of Zen. When the head priest finished all sat up and silently accom-

panied him in drinking tea before he left.

The instructor next asked the group to try to sit in the lotus position, and while they struggled with this, he went on to explain the procedures of *zazen*. He emphasized that it was very important to sit up straight. "This will bring one's 'spirit' [*Aokoro*] and body together in harmony," he said. "Sit up straight and you won't waver, either in spirit or in body. If you don't waver, you won't go astray or become confused." Next he explained the method of counting breaths, telling them to breathe in and out very slowly, taking as long as possible without becoming uncomfortable. "This serves to preserve the unity of spirit and body. It may be quite helpful for you in your work, since it will teach you the power of spiritual concentration. When you are bothered or worried, you can overcome such interferences and perform more efficiently," he added.

Next the long wooden paddle, the *kyosaku*, was explained. "You are struck by the *kyosaku* or more literally given the *kyosaku* for the purpose of supporting your determination." He then demonstrated how he would walk up and down the room carrying the pole across his shoulder. Stopping before someone he demonstrated how the person was to bring his hands together in a praying position in front of him, bow, and receive two blows across the back between the base of the neck and the top of the shoulder blades. Before assuming the regular *zazen* position, the person was to bow once again to the *kyosaku*, this time with gratitude.

With the conclusion of the priest's introduction, we underwent two half-hour sessions of Zen meditation. There was no tranquility or concentration, however. Everyone was obviously uncomfortable and throughout the group there was constant movement. The priest walked up and down, stopping frequently to apply the *kyosaku* to individual backs. The loud "wack, wack" as it struck created considerable anxiety. I tried to concentrate on adjusting my breathing

and maintaining the proper count and rhythm, but the noise and motion and the recurring thought that perhaps the priest would stop and strike me made the simple task of mentally counting up to ten over and over very difficult. The more I tried to forget my concern with the progress of the priest the worse my anxiety grew. When I was finally struck by the priest, the pain was inconsequential compared to the relief and physical release I experienced. Afterwards for a few minutes at least I could relax and begin to concentrate. Others told me of having the same response to the *kyosaku*.

In between the two half-hour sessions, the trainees were instructed to stand and walk in single file around the hall. Keeping their hands in a praying position and their eyes slightly lowered, they were to maintain concentration on breathing and counting as they walked. These brief walking sessions are designed to provide respite from the pain and discomfort of sitting, yet it seemed that just as the circulation in my legs began to return we were instructed to begin another half-hour of painful sitting. The moments when these walking sessions ended were poignantly described as ones of regret and resignation.

After the first full hour of *zazen*, the group was marched single file into the adjoining mess room where all again sat in the lotus position along low, narrow tables. Hymns were passed out and for five minutes the trainees chanted Buddhist hymns following the lead of the priest. Eating utensils were then passed out, and first soup and then an unappetizing rice gruel were dished out by younger priests running in a squatting position along the line of tables. The recipients were told to bow as the priests passed. Without a word everyone ate these offerings. There was an opportunity for seconds, but most, hungry as they were, refused. Next, hot water was poured and, using it, each cleaned his bowls in turn until only the final one contained warm water and residue. This awful stuff we were told to drink in one gulp. Nothing was left over, and all the utensils were ready for use at the next

meal. The entire proceedings had not taken twenty minutes. During the short break after lunch everyone complained bitterly about the food.

With the end of the break we returned to the large hall for another hour and a half of *zazen*. Although tranquility was the goal, most trainees continued to struggle with the uncomfortable sitting position. A few stealthily glanced at their watches to find out how much time remained before the next opportunity to stand and walk around. Yet, most were seriously attempting to breathe and concentrate as the priest instructed. This was the best way to survive the endless discomfort. At the end of this session the priest explained that it was quite natural to feel pain and impatience. Just to learn to sit correctly takes considerable practice and enduring the pain was just the beginning. He repeated that a straight back, counting, the half opened eyes, and a position of weightlessness for the shoulders are the keys to learning to sit without discomfort. This, he said, was the first step in really learning to concentrate one's spirit.

When the group was told that for the next ninety minutes they were to work silently clearing the gardens and other buildings there was considerable relief. Some went to clean the outhouse and others helped clean up around the kitchen. One detail raked leaves and pulled grass along a path. The priest instructor was unbelievably meticulous in his pursuit of even the smallest weed and leaf, but his example was ignored by many of the trainees who, forgetting their joy at being relieved from the trials of *zazen*, lazily wandered about with rakes over their shoulders.

After work in the garden, the group did another hour of *zazen* and then had dinner exactly on the pattern of the previous meal. From six to seven they were given free time to wander about the temple. Some trainees found a small snack stand in a park adjoining the temple grounds and, against instructions, purchased snacks which they greedily consumed. All agreed the temple food was

terrible. Without exception, they observed that all one could possibly think about was enduring each half-hour session until the bell rang and the walking session began. Their discomfort and distraction were so great they said that little or nothing of Zen as a religious experience or as a methodology for anxiety reduction could be appreciated.

From seven until nine that night, the *zazen* practice continued. The temple hall by that time had become quite cold, but there was no relief for the seated trainees. At nine we went to sleep. There was some talk and some illicit eating of food bought at the snack stand, but very soon everyone was asleep.

It was pitch dark and bitterly cold at 3:00 a.m. when the trainees were awakened and brusquely told to get up, to fold up their sleeping gear, and to assume the *zazen* position. Soon after, they were marched to the main hall where, once more sitting, they joined fourteen priests of the temple in an hour long ceremony involving the chanting of prayers, occasional prostrations, and long passages when only the priests chanted. There were no cushions in this hall and the floor was excruciatingly hard. My stomach was empty, and it was very cold. The high point of my difficulties during the two-day session was reached.

Breakfast, served at 5:30, was no different from the two previous meals, and yet many more asked for seconds. By that time some were famished, and the hot soup tasted good on such a cold morning. From six to seven, there was another free period. Most trainees tried to sleep covering themselves with the cushions as best they could. Most were too tired, shocked, and unhappy to talk with one another. I recalled the treatment of prisoners of war a number of times, and found it quite easy to understand the breakdown of morale and social cohesiveness among them. All I wished to do was escape into sleep.

The next hour was spent again sitting and chanting in the main hall of the temple. The head priest gave a half-hour lecture. My

outline of his talk, written afterwards, is as follows:

- (1) A brief history of Zen Buddhism.
- (2) An explanation of the concept that according to Zen teaching each is to find the answers for his own problems within himself and not from the explanation of others.
- (3) Temptations, such as the desire to eat, drink, have sex, and be loved, cause people to become confused and disoriented in life.
- (4) The purpose of Zen is to assist individuals in perfecting (literally "polishing") their own character. This is a process which must last throughout one's life.
- (5) Self improvement involves learning to become less selfish and to be of greater benefit to one's company and to others. Improvements in the ability to serve others inevitably mean greater benefit for the individual himself.
- (6) A company or any group of people working together requires cooperation and good relations. These things can only be attained when people are not selfish.
- (7) Just as the temple has rules to benefit its priests and guests, so any company has rules that must be supported by its members.
- (8) Concerning labor-management relations, there should be no strikes, but rather the two parties should work in harmony together to improve production. The profits of this cooperation should be shared alike between both parties.
- (9) Training of any kind must be painful and difficult for only in this way can the improvement of character be accomplished.
- (10) He admonished the trainees to be firm of heart and steadfast in spirit. Think for yourself and don't be swayed or silenced by others.

For the rest of the morning we practiced *zazen* for a final time. No one seemed any more comfortable or adapted to the sitting position, and the squirming continued. My legs continued quickly to become numb and often I could not stand in order to walk around at the end of the half-hour sessions. The only consolation during the last two and

a half hours was the knowledge that with each minute we were getting nearer the end.

During the ride back there was much comment about the pain, and the terrible food, and how one of the hardest events of the three-month training was passed. While very few of the trainees were impressed by what they had learned of themselves or the nature of Zen experience, many were deeply impressed by the strict discipline and dedication of the younger Zen priests training at the temple. Some indicated that in the future, when they felt depressed or sorry for themselves, they would remember the stern, simple lives of those priests. *Satori* ("enlightenment"), *mushin* ("selflessness"), and other Zen concepts were no more comprehensible after the two days than they had been previously, but the Spartan ways of Zen living had become tangible realities for the trainees.

VISITS TO MILITARY BASES

The first trip to a Japanese military installation for training came in the second week of the program. The trainees, sixty at a time, went to an army base not far from the city. The purpose, they were told, was to learn to maintain group order. This was the first activity outside of the training institute and the first organized *seishin* event. The young men were noticeably nervous on the bus going to the base. Most of them rode silently looking out the window. After arrival, they were assigned to several barracks and given army fatigues to wear. These were cast-off uniforms that gave them an appearance more like guerrillas than members of a regular army.

In the afternoon of the first day, after a lunch in the enlisted men's mess, the trainees were run through an obstacle course and then given the Japanese army physical fitness test. Nothing particularly frightening occurred and people grew more relaxed. During the occasional breaks, there was much joking about being in military uniforms. In particular they took great pleasure in saluting one

another. A respectful appreciation for the precision of passing regular army units also developed.

The following morning everyone sat through a two hour program of military history concluded by an explanation of why Japan's Self-Defense Forces needed strengthening. The talk was skillfully presented and illustrated with many anecdotes which the trainees found interesting. While this was obviously propaganda and out of place in a bank's training program, no one seemed offended. Later, the bank's instructors explained that listening to this lecture was one of the conditions for the use of base facilities and the services of the drill sergeants. The director of training in the bank commented that he would much prefer not to use military facilities, but no other source for teaching military drill was available.

The mood on the bus home was in marked contrast to the gloomy atmosphere going out. There was much ebullient yelling back and forth and noisy rubbernecking at girls along the way. Everyone gaily saluted the driver and his assistant as we descended from the bus.

Near the end of the three months, we again went to a military base, this time the former Naval Officer Candidate School at Edajima—"Japan's Annapolis."⁸ Today it is still in use as a school for the Self-Defense Force Navy. Some years after the war, a museum for the various personal effects, diaries, reminiscences, and other illustrations of the brief days of Japan's suicide pilots was established on the base. The director of this museum is a man who began collecting these mementos after the war as evidence of the true attitudes and character of the pilots. He has given himself the mission of explaining or reinterpreting the *kamikaze* to a generation of younger Japanese who know very little of their actual lives or character. The day and a half visit to Edajima was made primarily to see the museum and hear the director's explanation.

Our group was prepared for the visit by watching several recent commercial movies that depict the life of midshipmen training

there during the war. According to the movies, only the cream of Japan's young men could enter Edajima after having passed the most rigorous academic and physical tests. In one movie it was described as the most difficult school to enter in Japan. The movies emphasized the character strength and camaraderie of the young men, qualities making more tragic the fact that most were destined to die shortly after graduation. Having seen these dramatic portrayals of Edajima, the young bankers were duly impressed with its tradition and its almost sacred quality for pre-war generations.

In an hour lecture, the director of the museum told of his impressions of the suicide pilots and the lessons their example might hold for young people in a peaceful, modern Japan. His lecture, entitled "What is Man's Mission in Life," had a stirring impact on the trainees.

He began by describing the education given at Edajima. In addition to physical and intellectual skill, perfection and alertness were also demanded at all times. Midshipmen arriving at the top of a long flight of stairs might be asked, for example, to say how many steps they had just climbed. Discipline was so strict that many grew to hate their officers and yet they would never complain openly, for to do so was to fail training. Teachers at the school also accepted great personal suffering without complaint, for the spirit of the place was endurance and sacrifice for the nation. Newcomers gradually acquired this spirit and passed it on. The epitome of this was that after 1941, young men coming to Edajima realized that they were in fact volunteering to die. In the classrooms of Edajima, he claimed, there was much discussing of the small possibility Japan had for winning the war. He stressed that preparation to serve one's country up to and including death was not something that began with the suicide pilots. It was the spirit at Edajima long before the war. He told of a pilot of one of the miniature suicide submarines that set off for Hawaii at the time of Pearl Harbor departing with the final words, "We are bound to lose."

Such stories of courage and uprightness continued a while longer and then he observed:

Nobody wishes to experience unpleasant things, but unpleasant things are part of life and nothing of significance can be achieved without suffering. Today's individualism ignores this fact and easily becomes empty egoism. The men at Edajima had the kinds of individualism and independence that focus on the mission to serve one's country, not on the pursuit of pleasure. The trouble with today's student movement is that they know nothing of the discipline and sacrifice required to change society for the better. Soon enough they are fighting among themselves. There was a young cadet at the academy who, because he opposed a certain rule in the school, sat in the same place for many weeks, fasting and drinking only water to show his opposition. His action was respected by the others because he didn't complain or criticize, but rather demonstrated the sincerity of his objection by personally suffering. How many so-called revolutionaries today are prepared to do that kind of thing?

He told a story about the novelist Kawabata Yasunari. During a visit to a grade school near the end of the war, Kawabata asked the youngsters if there were any in the class willing to die for Japan. One young boy stepped forward and said, "I will." Kawabata asked his reasons with the observation, "If Japan loses, do you think your death will be regarded as a loss? If Japan wins, do you think you will be honored?" The little boy replied, "Mister, aren't you being misleading? I know that Japan is going to lose." Kawabata bowed to the little boy.

Through such anecdotes the courage of Japan's wartime youth, particularly those volunteering to become suicide pilots, was presented. Their spiritual strength, not their zealotry or their naiveté was emphasized. The *hamikaze* were Japan's best, the museum director concluded. They were the best informed about Japan's impending defeat, and yet they volunteered to die without even, in most cases, an opportunity to see family or friends a last time. There is a

popular song about the fellowship of the suicide pilots, and the fact that they would never again meet at cherry blossom time. The image of these young men taking off on warm spring afternoons is truly a tragic one, and the museum director at the end recalled this scene. Sitting very straight in their chairs, the trainees, to a man, were weeping silently as he finished.

The visit to the museum proper the next day was made in silent interest with none of the troublemaking spirit that the trainees usually brought to their excursions. Once inside, they were allowed to wander about on their own looking at the many rooms of paintings and other mementos of naval history until they reached the rooms containing the story of the suicide pilots. The trainees were deeply affected by the similarity in age between themselves and the young men who died in 1945. They noticed how beautifully written the pilot's diaries were. According to their own statements, it was a moving experience.

Later, after inspecting the base, teams were assigned to row heavy, cumbersome longboats, traditionally part of Edajima training. The difficulties of developing coordination in the crew were stressed. Later, the group climbed a nearby mountain that is climbed at a run every day by cadets of the school. The ascent was made at a jogging pace, and the trainees were amazed to learn that their speed, which they thought to be fast, was twice as slow as the cadet average.

As in the previous visit to an army base, people were extremely courteous and pleasant, and the group did not taste much of the rigors and hierarchy of military life. They were, however, keenly interested in the memories and past glories of the place and they drank up the mood created by the old buildings. It was July and the sunburnt cadets in their summer whites, the ocean breezes, and the pride of the academy combined to create an almost irresistible spell. Without this atmosphere the explanations of courage and purpose might have had less impact, but being at Edajima removed much of the historical distance between the

hamikaze and the young bankers their age.

ROTOO

For two days during the latter part of the second month of training, the group stayed at a youth center sponsored by the Japanese government. This center located on a mountainside overlooks a large agricultural valley and just below is the market town for the area. Early on the morning after arrival the trainees were instructed to go down into the town and find work from the residents. Instructions were to go singly from house to house offering to work without pay. They were to do whatever their host asked of them. It was strongly emphasized that this was not to be a group operation. Each was to go alone and work alone for the entire day. In addition, the trainees were disallowed from making any explanation for themselves or their reasons for volunteering to work. They could offer no more than their name and their willingness to work.

They dressed for the exercise in white, nondescript athletic uniforms, common throughout Japan. Without benefit of a social identity or a reasonable explanation for themselves, the trainees were sent out to make a most unusual request of strangers. Their reliability would not be vouched for by their relationship to a known institution like the bank. They were thus made dependent on the good will of the people they met.

This form of situation, difficult as it would be anywhere, is of particular difficulty in Japan where, as a rule, strangers ignore one another and social intercourse between them is unusual and suspicious. Approached by an unknown person with a request like this the common response would be a hurried and not very polite refusal. People doing *rotoo* in Japanese cities have met refusals perhaps four times out of five. It was with considerable consternation, therefore, that the trainees left for the town below.

At first they wandered about from street

to street. Many were reluctant to leave their friends and go alone to the front gate of some house. In the case of some groups, they walked four or five blocks together before anyone mustered the courage to make his first approach to a house, but gradually the groups dispersed. The common experience was to be refused two or three times before finally locating a house or shop where they would be allowed in and given work. All agreed to having been very anxious about the first approach, but found the second and the third easier to make as long as people were polite. An impolite refusal created considerable upset, but was rare. Those who did take them in were regarded as warm and understanding people for whom they were very happy to work hard. The common pattern was to volunteer to do things that even the host would not have thought to ask. This was partly to avoid going out again seeking another house and partly from a felt desire to be of help.

Boys who had been raised on farms tended to go to the edge of town seeking familiar work with farming families. The majority found work in various small shops. One helped sell toys and another assisted a mat maker, a third delivered groceries, and another pumped gas. One rather clever young man found work in a small roadhouse by the bus station. He quickly established himself as more than just a dishwasher by showing his skill in mixing cocktails. An instructor happened to notice him working there and was angered by the lack of seriousness with which this trainee regarded the day's exercise. The offender was told he had selected an inappropriate place. Instead of doing service for some respectable family, the young man was busy swapping jokes with the customers and waitresses of a roadhouse. He was sent away from the place and told to find other, more appropriate work. Later he was roundly criticized for taking *rotoo* lightly.

When the group had all returned, a general discussion of the day's experience was held in the auditorium. It was soon apparent that comments from the floor would not be

forthcoming, so the instructor in charge had each squad talk over their impressions of the day and discuss the relevance of the *rotou* experience to the question, "What is the meaning of work?" As usual, a variety of opinions emerged. Some trainees had had such an interesting and pleasant time with their hosts that it had not occurred to them to think of their tasks as work. When this was noticed, it was generally observed that enjoyment of work has less to do with the kind of work performed, and more to do with the attitude the person has toward it. The bank's reasons for utilizing *rotou* centered on establishing precisely this lesson.

The actual intent of *rotou*, as it is used by some Buddhist temples, is, however, somewhat different. It is used as a method of shocking people out of spiritual lethargy and complacency. The word *rotou* actually means something like "bewilderment" and refers to the state of insecurity established when the individual is divorced from his comfortable social place and identity. In the course of begging for work, that is, begging for acceptance by others, the subject learns of the superficial nature of much in his daily life. It is expected that his reliance on affiliations, titles, rank, and a circle of those close to him will be revealed, and, perhaps for the first time, he will begin to ask who he really is. *Rotou* also provides a unique opportunity for a trusting and compassionate interaction between strangers. After a *rotou* experience it is unlikely that the person will continue to disregard the humanity of others, no matter how strange they are to him in terms of social relationship. It is hoped that this will foster a greater warmth and spontaneity in the individual.

From the point of view of the bank, however, there are additional purposes for this training, ones that help explain why *rotou* is included in a training program for new bankers. It has been the experience of many people from the bank that the meaning of work and attitudes toward work have been changed by doing *rotou*. The anxiety of rejection and isolation mounts with each refusal until finally, when some kindly per-

son takes the individual in and gives him work, a cathartic sense of gratitude for being accepted and allowed to help is created. No matter what the work, even cleaning an out-house, the sense of relief makes the work seem pleasant and satisfying. Work that is normally looked down upon is, in this circumstance, enthusiastically welcomed.

After such an experience, it is difficult to deny the assertion that any form of work is intrinsically neither good nor bad, satisfying nor unsatisfying, appropriate nor inappropriate. Pleasure in work, it must be concluded, varies according to the subject's attitude and circumstances. Failure to enjoy one's work is interpreted in the bank as essentially a question of improper attitude, and *rotou* exemplifies the teaching that any work can be enjoyable with a positive attitude. Since it must assign rather dull and methodical tasks to many of its employees, the bank finds this lesson of obvious value.

WEEKEND IN THE COUNTRY

One weekend was spent on a small island about an hour's boat ride from the city. The educational purposes for this special session were varied. According to our leaders, we were expected to learn something of self reliance and the kind of ingenuity engendered by simple, rural living conditions. The weekend's activities were also to provide many opportunities to let off steam and be as boisterous, rowdy, and aggressive as we wished. Several activities designed to teach us a greater appreciation for social inter-dependency and social service were also included. Finally, living together in quarters more cramped and primitive than those at the Institute was to be part of our general experience in *shuudan seihatsu* (group living). All of these goals were outlined to us upon arrival at the prefectural youth hostel on the island.

The hostel was a large barn-like building of two stories with wooden bunks upstairs and a large open room downstairs. The atmosphere of the hostel was in the boy scout tradition even to the large stone fire-

place, and a collection of handicrafts displayed on the walls. The beach was a twenty-minute jog from the place and in the opposite direction on the hillsides were tangerine groves and small vegetable gardens belonging to local farmers.

With the unloading completed we gathered in the main room in our usual squad formations and listened to a short explanation from the head of the training section:

In the city, in our modern and well equipped training institute, we have no chance to let loose and become rough and tumble, so we have come out here to let you express your energy and youthfulness. While all of you are bankers and therefore are expected to be proper and decorous when working as bankers, we want you to have a more aggressive spirit burning inside. This weekend will be a chance for you to find out just how boisterous and full of fight you can be. So don't hold back. Throw yourself into the activities we have planned as completely as you can. Finally, we are also going to help some farmers in their fields, and we hope that all of you will learn and benefit from this experience.

The leader then divided the room into two groups, had them face each other and instructed everyone to yell out in a loud voice, "*washoo, washoo*," one group alternating with the other. We then began doing squat jumps thrusting our arms high over our heads yelling *washoo*. The two groups alternated and a piston effect was created, one group jumping up and yelling followed by the other. After ten or fifteen minutes of this the room seemed filled with a weird frenzy. The heat, constant rhythmic yelling, and unceasing motion made me feel a bit afraid, as if I had been locked in a boiler room with a monstrous engine. When the exercise ended, and it seemed interminably long, we collapsed with exhaustion. This was our introduction to what the trainers had in mind when they said they wanted us to be full of energy and boisterousness. I was fascinated to realize that our training went from the extremes of silent Zen meditation to this mass explosion of energy and noise.

The first morning before dawn the group

ran in formation to a wide, empty stretch of beach facing the open sea. A light rain was falling and the wind off the ocean soaked our thin athletic outfits. After the usual calisthenics we separated into squads arranged in lines facing the wind. Led alternately by each in the squad we screamed commands at the top of our lungs. Most were quite inhibited at first, but eventually all were yelling as loud as possible. Next we practiced swinging wooden swords up and down as one would in practicing Japanese fencing. Intersquad *sumo* matches, marked by more effort than skill, were the last events held on the beach before breakfast. The run through the rain back to the hostel for breakfast seemed particularly long.

During the morning on both days we went off with various farmers who had agreed to put us to work in their fields. We were provided with scythes and other farm equipment and under the farmers' direction we weeded gardens and cut grass under tangerine trees. Some of the trainees worked strenuously while others loafed. The farmers were not inclined to make the trainees work harder, and the project was much like other work details we had experienced, even though it was explained to us as service (*hoshoo*) to the farmers.

When we got back to the hostel that afternoon people were asked to comment on their experience. The general opinion was that being directed to go out and help farmers who had obviously been rounded up by our instructors and persuaded to allow us to work for them provided very little sense of actual service. Some said they enjoyed the work, others said they found it inappropriate to training as bankers. It was agreed that to learn about service to others the work should be voluntary. The primary lesson for the city boys had little to do with service; they had learned more about farmers and their contribution to society.

Incidentally, the president of the bank would like someday to have all new men spend their entire first year farming together. He feels the long, arduous agricultural cycle is the best education in per-

sistent effort and due reward. He has spoken of this on numerous occasions, and the director of training may have instituted the service to farmers routine as a response to the president's vision.

The second afternoon was spent playing contact sports on the beach. Stripped to our waists and divided into two teams, we played several games popular in the old Japanese navy, *kiba gassen* and *boo-taoshi*, and then held a *sumo* wrestling tournament. In the first game, each side creates a set of mounted warriors with one man riding on the shoulders of three compatriots. Starting from opposite sides of the field, the two teams charge and the side that forces the other's men to the ground first is the winner. The second game involves the defense of standing poles, one for each team. The object is to attack and tear down the opponents' pole while preserving one's own. At each end of the field the attackers assault the other's defenses by leaping upon the group, surrounding the pole, tearing people away from it, and wrestling with the people who come to reinforce the defenders. Neither of these two games took much over fifteen minutes, but they were fiercely contested and some of the less aggressive trainees were quite evidently frightened to have to fight their fellow trainees. The rest of the afternoon was devoted to a round robin *sumo* tournament among the squads with contestants from each squad matched by size.

During the time on the island squads were assigned cooking, clean-up, and other chores, and the conditions and organization of life in the hostel followed the usual camp patterns even as far as singing songs around a great bonfire the last night. After the entertainment and singing, the program ended with all standing arm-in-arm in two great circles around the fire swaying back and forth singing the bank's song and the very sentimental song of the *hamikaze* pilots.

ENDURANCE WALK

Ever since the first day, the trainees had

heard about the twenty-five mile endurance walk to be held sometime near the end of the training period. The daily morning mile run and the other climbing and hiking activities were explained as preparation for this event. On the morning they were to begin the endurance walk, there seemed to be a high level of anticipation and readiness even among the weaker and less athletic trainees.

The program was simple enough. The trainees were to walk the first nine miles together in a single body. The second nine miles were to be covered with each squad walking as a unit. The last seven miles were to be walked alone and in silence. All twenty-five miles were accomplished by going around and around a large public park in the middle of the city. Each lap was approximately one mile. There were a number of rules established by the instructors. It was forbidden to take any refreshment. During the second stage, each squad was to stay together for the entire nine miles and competition between squads was discouraged. Finally, it was strictly forbidden to talk with others when walking alone during the last stage. The training staff also walked the twenty-five miles going around in the opposite direction. Some dozen or so young men from the bank, recent graduates of previous training programs, were stationed along the route and instructed to offer the trainees cold drinks which, of course, they had to refuse. This was the program and there was no emphasis at all placed on one person finishing ahead of another. Instructions were to take as much time as needed as long as the entire twenty-five miles was completed. The walk began around 7:30 a.m. and finished around 3:00 p.m. There was no time limit and many had not gone the full twenty-five miles, but the collapse from heat prostration of a few led the instructors to call the event off at a point where most had a lap or two remaining.

On the surface, this program was simple enough, but in retrospect it seems to have been skillfully designed to maximize certain

lessons related to *seishin*. When we began, the day was fresh and cool and it seemed as though we were beginning a pleasant stroll. Walking together in one large group, everyone conversed, joked and paid very little attention to the walk itself. The first nine miles seemed to pass quickly and pleasantly, and the severe physical hardship that we had been expecting seemed remote.

Forming up into squad groups at the beginning of the next nine miles we were reminded again not to compete with other squads. But discovering squads close before and behind, the pace began escalating and resulted in an uproarious competition that involved all but a few of the squads. Each time a team would come up from the rear, the team about to be overtaken would quicken its pace, and before long trainees found themselves walking very fast, so fast that those with shorter legs had to run occasionally to keep up. There was much yelling back and forth within each squad, the slower and more tired people crying out for a reduction in speed, the others urging them to greater efforts. A common solution was to put the slowest person at the head of the squad. This not only slowed the faster ones down, but forced the slow ones to make a greater effort. The competing squads were so fast that within four or five miles they had already begun to lap those squads that stayed out of the competition. By the end of the second nine miles the toll on the fast walkers was obvious. Many, besides suffering from stiff legs and blisters, were beginning to have headaches and show evidence of heat prostration. Some lay under a tree by the finish line sucking salt tablets. It was noon by that time and the park baked under the full heat of a mid-June sun.

Any gratification the leading squad found in their victory was soon forgotten. At the finish line, there was no congratulation and no rest. Squads were instructed to break up and continue walking, this time in single file and in silence. Soon a long line of trainees stretched over the entire circumference of the course. Having already covered eighteen miles, the last nine at a grueling pace, most

were very tired.

At that point everything was transformed. The excitement and clamor of competition was gone. Each individual, alone in a quiet world, was confronted by the sweep of his own thoughts and feelings as he pushed forward.

My own experience was to become acutely aware of every sort of pain. Great blisters had obviously formed on the soles of my feet; my legs, back, and neck ached; and at times I had a sense of delirium. The thirst I had expected to be so severe seemed insignificant compared to these other afflictions. After accomplishing each lap, instead of feeling encouraged, I plunged into despair over those remaining. My awareness of the world around me, including the spectators in the park and the bank employees tempting us with refreshments, dropped almost to zero. Head down I trudged forward. Each step was literally more painful than the one before. The image of an old prospector lost on the desert kept recurring in my mind. The temptation to stop and lie down for a while in the lush grass was tremendous. Near the end I could do no more than walk for a minute or two and then rest for much longer. The others around me seemed to be doing the same thing. It was hard to be aware of them for very long, however. After a rest, it was very difficult to stand and begin again. For some reason it was heartening to discover that six or eight of the trainees had fainted and were prostrate under a shady tree at the finish line where they were receiving some medical attention. I, too, wanted to lie there with them, and yet I felt encouraged by the fact that I had not yet fallen. "I was stronger, I could make it," I thought to myself as I passed by. Other moments brought feverish dreams of somehow sneaking away. I reasoned that no one would notice if I slipped out of the park and returned just when the event was closing. Bushes became places I could hide behind, resting until the group was ready to go home. I kept going, I suppose, because I feared discovery. Although in a feverish state, I was in some sense quite capable of

looking objectively at my response to this test of endurance. The content of lectures about *seishin* strength came back to me. I could see that I was spiritually weak, easily tempted, and inclined to quit. Under such stress some aspects of my thoughts were obviously not serving my interest in completing the course. Whatever will power I had arose from pride and an emerging, almost involuntary, belief in the *seishin* approach. If I was to finish, I needed spiritual strength. It angered and amused me to realize how cleverly this exercise had been conceived. I vowed over and over never to get involved in such a situation again, and yet, within days, when the memory of the physical pain had dimmed, I was taking great pride in my accomplishment and viewing my completion of the twenty-five mile course as proof that I could do anything I set my mind to.

These were the most notable activities of the *seishin kyooiku* program during those three months. In addition, there are a number of other aspects of spiritual training that deserve our attention. These efforts are less dramatic and are conducted on a "day in day out" basis.

In order to sponsor an intense group life (*shudan aishaku*) for its trainees, the institute staff has devised a number of interesting procedures and episodes. All leadership and direction of daily activities is placed in the hands of the trainees themselves who take turns commanding the various twelve man squads and assuming overall leadership of the entire group. Such things as clean-up, kitchen and service details, the morning and evening assemblies, scheduling, and travel are all directed by the young men on a rotation basis. It was expected that a strong appreciation for the burdens of leadership and the need for cooperation would develop under such conditions. The most poignant illustrations of the necessity for order in group living come whenever the entire retinue of one hundred twenty travelled as a unit. The value of group discipline and coordination learned during the early sessions of military drill was evident at such times, and waiting

at stations and elsewhere the young men enjoyed watching other less orderly groups of young people struggle with the problem of keeping together.

Closely related to the matter of group living is the popular theme of teamwork (*chiimu unaku*). While this is a borrowed term, it is also closely related to the traditionally important value of *wa* (usually translated as "harmony"). The form of organization for most competition is the team, and the regular squads usually serve as the basis for other activities. Studies related to banking, pursuit of hobbies, and other less obviously group oriented pursuits are arranged to require teamwork. While competition between individuals was seldom encouraged, group competition was a major means of motivation throughout the training period. It should be stressed that emphasis on teamwork is so common in Japanese society that none of the young trainees, even those who were critical of other aspects of the program, complained of an over-emphasis on subordination of the individual to the group.

Physical conditioning has a definite role in spiritual training. Each morning and evening group exercises were held. On these occasions lectures on physical fitness were delivered, twice by outside specialists. Whenever feasible, the instructors had the trainees hike and even run to their destination. It is not unusual for lectures at the institute to be interrupted by an instructor for the purpose of correcting trainee posture, and the value of good posture, both to health and to mental concentration, is often stressed. Underlying these efforts is the assumption that good physical condition and proper posture are fundamental to the development of spiritual power.

Newcomers who have trouble developing enough skill and speed to pass the bank's standard abacus test find that practicing the abacus is an exercise with strong *seishin* overtones. The practice required is long and tedious, and there are no shortcuts to developing speed. Practice is left entirely up to the individual trainees, but the instructors

watch their response to this situation with great interest. Those that do not practice or who give up easily are privately cautioned in *seishin* terms and encouraged to try harder. The moral that dogged persistence will solve the problem is one that lies at the heart of *seishin* oriented thought. Practicing the abacus, like many other aspects of the overall training program, is not officially described as part of spiritual training, but because of the wide applicability of its principles, *seishin* philosophy influences it and most other training activities.

DISCUSSION

As already mentioned, *seishin kyooiku* is commonly translated as "spiritual education," but the meaning of "spiritual" in this case is far from clear to non-Japanese. Certainly, the education described above is quite different than, say, the "spiritual education" of Christian churches. For Japanese the concept *seishin* is sufficiently general and vague to allow many interpretations and variations,⁹ yet underlying the diversity are common patterns of thought and practice which may be described.

If we begin by using experience as the groundwork for our explication of Japanese "spiritualism," then perhaps for Westerners it would be useful to keep in mind the parallels between the activities described above and the practices of such quasi-educational organizations in the West as summer camps, Sunday schools, sports teams, boy scouts, and military training. These all claim special qualities and abilities in the socialization of both adults and youth which formal public education, according to the claims, cannot or will not offer. We have no over-reaching word for the special kind of education these institutions offer in common, but it is not too difficult to appreciate certain similarities underlying all of them.

In Japan, training in social membership and the cultivation of the individual (*shuuyoo* and *kyooyoo*) have for centuries been very serious enterprises regarded as imperative to the creation of an orderly

society, individual character and personal fulfillment. In the Chinese tradition the properly organized state is believed to depend on leadership by men of outstanding character, and the Japanese, especially during the Tokugawa period (1600-1868), have also emphasized this perspective. In China, personal development was primarily the concern of the scholar-official and activities and disciplines of a scholarly nature were accordingly emphasized, whereas in Tokugawa Japan, the pursuit of the same basic goals was strongly flavored by the fact that the Japanese elite was largely military in outlook and experience. In both China and Japan the social benefit of such training was seldom separated from the acknowledged benefits to the individual, and various arts and military skills, such as judo and the tea cult in Japan, were appreciated as important paths of spiritual growth. A point to note is that unlike in the West, there arose no distinctions encouraging the separation of the individual and the social or the sacred and the secular in education.

After the Meiji restoration of 1868, the responsibility for spiritual education in Japan shifted from local governments, private academies, and commercial enterprises to the new national educational system. Until defeat in 1945 the government pursued a policy of spiritual education for the masses based on a combination of the teachings and methods of Confucian China, the samurai heritage, and the morality of the Tokugawa merchants. What the West has long attempted to accomplish through religious schools, youth organizations, and sports, the Japanese chose to institutionalize in the public school program proper, a fact the reformers of the American occupation hardly appreciated in their enthusiasm to root out the "totalitarian," "nationalistic," and "militaristic" strains in Japanese education. According to spokesmen for companies now practicing *seishin kyooiku*, this approach was for Japanese synonymous with education in good citizenship, and when it was purged from the school system, an educational vacuum was created. Company

spiritual training, they explain, is but an attempt to reinstitute conventional and necessary socialization practices which, for political reasons, the government has been reluctant to revive. Does spiritual education mark a revival of Japanese militarism? Companies assert they are experimenting with this form of education for the more immediate reason that they wish to produce more highly socialized and effective employees. The fact that spiritual education has deep historical connections with the Japanese military tradition serves to color spiritual training, they say, but it does not mean that it is militaristic in the usual sense of the term. Spiritual training is primarily the product of a reaction against both the loosening of social ties in contemporary Japan and the Western influence that is blamed for this trend.

How may we define the term *seishin*? If the frame of reference is a very general one contrasting physical and mental, the concept *seishin* would most likely be placed in the mental column. Attitudes, will power, concentration, and many other "mental" qualities are important aspects of spiritual power. Yet this kind of distinction obscures more than it clarifies, for the physical/mental distinction is not central to the concept. It is true that the "mind over matter," and "power of positive thought" philosophies approach the meaning of *seishin*, but there are differences. In the case of traditional Japanese thought, the mind/body duality (which does exist in Japanese expressions such as *nikutaiteki* "physical or corporeal") is overridden by the concept *kokoro*, important in Zen and in many traditional forms of education. *Kokoro*, translated "heart" or "spirit," represents the broad area of individual psychosomatic unity. The state of an individual's *kokoro* may be composed or disturbed, and there are numerous terms for both of these. Composure implies that both the mind and the body operate properly, efficiently and in harmony; in the state of disturbance, the mind and body are accordingly upset, un dependable, and involved in an adverse way

with one another. Both of these states may be distinguished as to degree. Learning to achieve composure is one goal of *seishin* training, and a composed *kokoro* is regarded as a major source of *seishin* strength.

Many lessons in bank training are specifically aimed at teaching the trainees how to attain composure, or at least to awaken in them a greater awareness of the interrelationship of the physical and mental aspects of disturbance. Zen meditation and the emphasis on posture are two outstanding examples. Yet, composure is not an end in itself so much as it is a basis for more effective individual action. The standard by which spiritual strength (*seishinryoku*) is measured is performance. The outward manifestations of strength are such things as the ability to endure trouble and pain, a coolness in the face of threat, patience, dependability, persistence, self-reliance, and intense personal motivation; qualities we would associate with "strong personal character." Yet spiritual strength is not measured by performance, no matter how spectacular, that results solely from cleverness or physical power, although these qualities are often interpreted as products of spiritual strength.

Illustrations of *seishin* strength hinge on difficulties that test a man's will, particularly his will to carry on in some social purpose.¹⁰ Most often these difficulties are "psychological" (actually psychosomatic) in nature. They include fear, disillusionment, boredom, loneliness, and failure, as well as the more obvious problems of physical pain and the temptations of easy reward. Any form of stress that tempts a person to resign his effort or to escape a problem is relevant as a test. Similarly, any quality that helps the individual pass such tests is part of his spiritual strength. For this reason verbal education in morality can be regarded as contributing directly to spiritual power, if it provides conviction and strengthens the individual's resolve to carry on.

Education for spiritual strength uses artificially created tests to build up staying power for life's actual tests. The most dramatic examples in the bank's training

program are the endurance walk and *zazen*. The designs for tests are usually quite well considered, for there are a number of factors governing their success as educational devices. First they can be neither so easy that they are not really tests, nor so hard that they cannot be passed. Secondly, the experience of passing them must reveal to the individual both the process of temptation and the methods of dispelling it. That is, the trainee must be prepared to experience the test in *seishin* terms, and this often requires considerable teaching, in the normal sense, before the event.

The test must also be of some relevance to the trials of real life either by virtue of imitation or analogy. An endurance walk may not seem very relevant to work in a bank, but the instructors pointed out that the temptation to take a forbidden drink of water "which costs nothing" is like the temptation to steal from one's own bank. An analogy was also made between the arduousness of sitting in *zazen* and the problem of maintaining concentration during mundane clerking in the bank.

No matter what form of test is devised for training purposes, the key element in the whole process is the experience of emotional wavering and the "spiritual" struggle within the individual to carry on until the test is completed. Passing any *seishin* test is not a matter of scoring high, or coming in ahead of others. Competition is within the self, and success is marked by completion of the ordeal. Enduring one test to its conclusion will make completion of subsequent, similar tests less difficult, it is assumed. During the moments of greatest wavering, the individual experiences his own individual weaknesses with heightened awareness and on the basis of this self-knowledge, he is enabled to proceed to overcome such weakness and prepare to endure even greater tests in the future.

According to *seishin* thought, "incorrect" attitudes are often the source of personal difficulty.¹¹ What is meant by attitudes in this instance is not opinions, such as political opinions, but rather the issue is the person's

general attitude toward things around him to which he must personally respond. For example, the bank's purpose in using *rotou* is to teach a better attitude toward work, one that is positive and enthusiastic. With such an attitude, according to *seishin* theory, the individual could better enjoy working as well as work better. The basis of a proper attitude, in this meaning of the term, begins with acceptance of necessity and responsibility. Instead of fighting life's requirements, such as work, the most satisfactory attitude is to acknowledge and accept necessary difficulties. To regret or attempt to avoid them only leads to frustration, disappointment, and upset. The dimension accepting/resisting, which is consistently important throughout Japanese life, is the key to evaluating the "correctness" of a person's attitudes, and judgments depend less on verbal expression than on other actions. Complaining, criticizing, arguing, and other forms of resistance constitute examples of the kinds of actions that evidence improper attitudes. Ready acceptance of unpleasant or difficult tasks, on the other hand, illustrate a man's correct attitude. Those who complained during training, for example, were asked to reconsider their attitude.

While *seishin kyooiku* seeks to sponsor an accepting attitude¹² toward all of life's necessities, greatest attention is paid to developing the proper attitude toward social responsibilities.¹³ The requirements of a social system and the interdependent quality of society, both of which make the diligent performance of every role important, are taught as the basic facts of life. The necessity that individual responsibility to the role assigned by the system be accepted and fulfilled follows from this fact. In the bank's training, improper attitudes toward tasks and exercises were frequently pointed out by the training staff, and much of the morally oriented lectures and reading focused on teaching acceptance of the necessities of social life. One such reality, international economic competition, was an ever-present theme in these discussions.

While social realities are underlined, indi-

vidual requirements, other than the most elementary necessities, are ignored or treated as unimportant. It is a firm principle that individual needs and desires are properly challenged and controlled as part of the program to develop spiritual strength, and there are numerous historical cases in which the coincidence of a desire to toughen up trainees on the part of the instructors and a desire to demonstrate spiritual strength on the part of the trainees have resulted in endurance tests causing serious injury and even death in extreme cases. In the post-war period the training activities of student outing clubs have produced the only examples of how a *seishin* orientation can produce tragic results when the limits of physical endurance are ignored.

For any person, the correct and most satisfying goals according to *seishin* thought are fulfillment of his social role and achievement in his chosen personal pursuit. These goals are assumed to be self-evident. The spiritually strong man is by definition a contributor to society. He excels in cooperation and service to others because he has mastered the art of self-discipline. The bank's training program strongly emphasizes social values such as cooperation, yet these are regarded by the training staff as rudimentary lessons that, once learned, allow the individual to graduate to more independent kinds of spiritual development. Training to social necessities is also stressed because of its immediate relevance to the trainee's transition from being a student to membership in the bank, and because it is felt that today's young people are not learning in the public school system to subordinate themselves to the group. Executives of the bank state that socialization should not be of such concern to companies; it is more appropriately carried on in the family and the school but, as already mentioned, they feel these other institutions, particularly the new "progressive" schools, have failed to perform this function adequately.

A few more characteristics of the *seishin* approach to education should be noted briefly:

(1) In *seishin* education, emphasis is placed on non-verbal forms of behavior. A well behaved, but silent class, for example, is not necessarily an indication of lethargy, stupidity, or the failure of the teacher. It is likely to be interpreted as evidence that students are well disciplined, receptive, and respectful. In some instances, a *seishin* orientation may take a skeptical view of verbal logic and its forms of understanding, favoring experience as the basis of knowledge instead.

(2) Rather than viewing difficulties and hardships the students face as barriers to education and therefore things to be overcome by better facilities or improved methods of instruction, *seishin* based education is liable to regard problems in the educational situation (as valuable assets) to the training process itself. They are tests and therefore useful. Environmental problems are viewed as opportunities rather than as the source of failure.

(3) A knowledge of self and self-reflection (*haku* and *hansel*) are stressed in *seishin* training and the blame for difficulties or failure, individual or social, will be placed most heavily on spiritual weakness rather than on a lack of knowledge or inadequacy of social organization. The *seishin* approach to social betterment gives precedence to spiritual reform over social reform. Schools are viewed as instruments of change and improvement, but their influence should be over individual character rather than over the shape of society.

(4) Rather than encouraging students to consider themselves as different from one another and thus sponsoring individualistic thought and creativity, *seishin* education sponsors outward conformity to teachers' examples and group standards. Nonconformity is viewed as disruptive of group unity and a sign of individual character weakness. It is thought that conformity is made from conviction, not dullness, and that to conform to the group is difficult, rather than easy.

(5) *Seishin* education aims to help the individual achieve contentment through the

development of an ordered and stable psyche free from confusion and frustration. This is to be attained through the gradual conquest of *waga* or *ga* (one's primitive self, or Id in Freudian terms). The phrase expressing this process, *waga o korosu* (literally "kill the self"), is a common expression related to the *seishin* approach.

(6) Whenever possible in *seishin* education competition is organized along group rather than individual lines and many events have no obvious competitive quality. This is not because competition hurts feelings, but because it disrupts group unity and because the real competition takes place within each individual.

(7) The unchanging nature of spiritual problems and their solutions is a basic assumption of the *seishin* approach. Teachers, parents, and senior students are, by virtue of greater experience and training, spiritually more advanced and therefore worthy of respect and authority. Age does not become a sign of out-datedness, and intergenerational continuity and concord in the unchanging pursuit of spiritual strength is encouraged.

I would, in conclusion, like to offer a few observations on the significance of this material to the emerging field of the anthropology of education.

(1) The bank example represents a kind of education which to date has received very little attention. It is not centered in a school system; it involves adults; it is not universal for the society; and it is operated by a kind of institution that in other societies may conduct little or no education at all. Such conditions would hardly attract the attention of anthropologists about to study education, and yet, at least in Japan, such forms of education are quite significant. It is my impression that educational anthropologists have devoted relatively far too much attention to studies of schooling, schools, and school systems and not enough to religious education, sports training, military indoctrination, and the countless other ways societies seek to improve and integrate their members.

(2) The manner in which *seishin* concepts regarding human psychology and the methods of *seishin* education interlock indicates that the cross-cultural study of education must take cognizance of the culture's "common sense" psychology in analyzing the intent and methods of any educational endeavor. That is, there is a broad area of overlap between concepts of education and those of psychology in any situation, and the educational anthropologist dealing with a non-Western educational system should be prepared to inquire deeply into the psychological understandings of the people involved. One benefit of a greater attention to ethnopsychology in education would be a greater clarification of how our own native psychology influences the manner in which we pursue educational goals.

(3) The similarity between the bank's program and processes and methods found in certain Japanese forms of psychiatric therapy (see, for example, Reynolds 1969), Zen training, religious rituals of individual reform (Wimberley 1969), and practices of therapy for criminals in Japan illustrates a simple lesson, namely, that educational efforts which seek some kind of character change or improvement are perhaps best studied within a single theoretical framework, one that will also adequately account for other kinds of psychological transformations. At various points in the training reported here, for example, anxiety or deprivation was artificially intensified and then reduced, creating a strong sense of relief and catharsis which served to strengthen certain intended directions of change in a trainee's view of himself and of his relationship with society. The parallels between education and such processes as initiation, therapy, and conversion would deserve more attention.

(4) Whether the bank's program is to be labelled education, initiation, socialization, conversion, or therapy is not, however, a profitable question to ask, except as it illustrates the pitfalls of viewing education as equivalent with schooling. There is a strong academic inclination to understand educa-

tion as verbal instruction leading to improved storage and manipulation of symbolic information. This is what explicitly happens in schools between teachers and students. Yet learning and maturation may be sponsored by many means, not just verbal instruction. *Seishin kyooiku* emphasizes experience and the development of spiritual strength. There are, no doubt, many other valued avenues of human growth which are as unlike Japanese spiritual education as they are unlike classroom instruction. The use of various hallucinogenic drugs to educate religious initiates and train practitioners is one widespread example.

Just as the study of kinship began to make notable headway only after considerable skepticism arose about the ethnocentricity of the concerns and impulses which originally gave it momentum, so the anthropology of education could benefit from a reexamination of its implicit understanding of education.

NOTES

¹The fieldwork on which this paper is based was supported by NDMH Pre-doctoral Fellowship No. 5-F01-MH-36190-04. An earlier version of this paper was read at the 99th Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, November, 1970, San Diego.

²This is my estimate based on (1) correspondence with the Industrial Training Association of Japan concerning the number of their members practicing *seishin kyooiku*, (2) reports reaching me or the bank about other company training programs, and (3) mention in magazines, newspapers and on television of the increase of *seishin kyooiku* in companies.

³The material on company *seishin kyooiku* of a descriptive nature in Japanese includes articles in Nakamura (1966), the special issue entitled "Seishin Kyooiku Tokushuu" of the magazine *Sangyoo Kunren* (1968), and Rohlen (1969, 1970a). In English, there is only Rohlen (1970b, 1971) for descriptive information. There are however, a large number of books in English that describe educational methods in Japan that come under the broad heading of *seishin kyooiku*. They include the writing on sports training, Zen, and pre-war education. Of

special interest is Minami (1953:126-167) for his discussion of wartime spiritualism. Benedict (1946) also discusses training and discipline in her analysis of Japanese character.

⁴See, for example, Nitobe (1905), Benedict (1946), Suzuki (1959), and Minami (1953). Unfortunately, explanations of Japanese arts and sports in English seldom mention the *seishin* foundations or much of their methodology.

⁵This study of the company's training program was part of a general study of the ideology and social organization of the bank which has been reported in Rohlen (1971).

⁶For an account of this see Hall (1959).

⁷Kapleau (1965) offers a thorough account of the procedures and philosophy of *rinpai* Zen, the same sect as the temple visited by the trainees. Suzuki (1965) describes something of the life in a Zen temple where training is conducted.

⁸Toiland (1970) mentions the Edajima tradition as it affected Japanese military spirit during World War II.

⁹The term *seishin* has many applications, including *seishin no ai* (platonic love), *seishin bunretsu* (psychoanalysis), *seishin gaku* (mental science), and *seishin* (the spirit of independence). Many of these are Japanese translations of foreign concepts and perhaps it is not correct to argue for a single meaning for the word, yet, once the broad, inclusive perspective of human psychology at the foundation of the *seishin* concept is grasped the differences among the various applications recede in significance. My understanding is that *seishin* is a universal, human quality. Its character, strength, and development are relative to such factors as culture, education, experience, and the individual.

¹⁰Many of the most commonly encountered values about personality, such as expressed by *nintai* (fortitude), *gaman* (patience), *shimbo* (endurance), *gambaru* (tenacity), and the like point to this form of behavior. Of course, loyalty is hardly meaningful without the ingredient of persistence.

¹¹Here I have in mind the expressions *wakoro-gamae*, *taido*, *kokoro no mochikata*, and *mono no kangakata*, all of which translate as attitude.

¹²To receive or accept in a *sunao* manner. *Sunao* is translated as gentle, obedient, and honest.

¹³In the case of bank training, *sekinin* (responsibility) is frequently used, but the concepts *on* (beneficence), *giri* (obligation),

and *gimu* (duty), emphasized by Benedict (1946) are seldom heard. My impression, however, is that *sekinin* is often used to support the same behavioral patterns that *gimu* and *giri* allegedly supported in the pre-war company situation.

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