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*Christian Converts and
Social Protest in Meiji Japan*

Irwin Scheiner



CENTER FOR JAPANESE STUDIES
THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

CHRISTIAN CONVERTS
AND SOCIAL PROTEST
IN MEIJI JAPAN

奉教趣意書

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千八百七十六年第一月三十日 明曜誌トナン

CHRISTIAN
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IN MEIJI JAPAN

IRWIN SCHEINER

CENTER FOR JAPANESE STUDIES
THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
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*Dedicated to the Memory of My Dear Friend
Joseph R. Levenson*

And when your sorrow is comforted (time soothes all sorrows) you will be content that you have known me. You will always be my friend. You will want to laugh with me. And you will sometimes open your window, so, for that pleasure . . . And your friends will be properly astonished to see you laughing as you look up at the sky! Then you will say to them, "Yes, the stars always make me laugh!" And they will think you are crazy. It will be a very shabby trick that I shall have played on you . . .

Antoine de Saint-Exupère, *The Little Prince*

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My wife's aid can never be registered in any tangible terms. I can only thank her for the pleasure and joy our marriage has offered me.

Tokyo, 1969

I. S.

1

introduction

THE modern English social historian Noel Annan has suggested that for the present-day historian Ranke's call for history "wie es eigentlich gewesen" should not be rendered as "what actually happened," but "what it was really like." The two translations are not differentiated by fact but by a distance in social-psychological feeling. Lord Annan's reinterpretation of the classic canon on nineteenth-century historiography may also indicate that major lines of interpretation of European political, economic, and social development have been settled and that contemporary historians of the West may now give their time to the analysis of the psychological impact of the changes that have already been brilliantly described. Historians of Japan, like those of most of East Asia, have only begun to examine the political and social history of the classic past, and only recently have described the men and institutions engaged in Japan's attempt to deal with modernization.

The excitement of what "happened" in the Meiji era, 1868-1912, the successes of economic development, and the enormity of the institutional changes have absorbed most present-day students of Japan in

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the story of development. As yet, Japanese history is mostly a tale of economic and social progress, and even when it is a study of unsuccessful political parties and arrested social movements, it amounts to a description of the amazing virtuosity of Japan's adaptation to the necessities of a modern world. Nowhere has there been a discussion of the confusion necessarily generated by the rapidity of the change or of the agony created in the lives of many whose attitudes, expectations, and even successes depended on the continuance of now abolished institutions. Historians have ignored the settled conditions of most samurai and instead concentrated on the study of the minority of activist samurai leaders who, with the backing of only a few *han* (feudal domains) sought to overthrow the old order and whose success in doing so has made the study of the modernization of Japan the prime concern of historians. The history of the Meiji period may have been an over-all political and industrial success story, but for a fuller understanding of the conditions of that success it is also necessary to understand "what it was really like" for the members of the old elite to be estranged from the proponents of revolution and what many members did to assure their own social and psychological position in a world they had not expected.

For a long time, historians have recognized that the Restoration was not only a political but a profound social upheaval and that many attempts were made to adjust to it. The samurai-led Popular Rights movement was rooted in a combination of samurai dissatisfaction with their new role under the Meiji government and the conviction that Western liberal ideas should be used to guide the further development of modern Japan. There were leaders of the Restoration, too, who were dissatisfied with the direction of reform and appalled at the fate of the samurai

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because of new class-leveling legislation. Some, like Saigo Takamori, the most eminent samurai leader of the Restoration movement from Satsuma domain and a leading member of the oligarchy that ruled Japan in early Meiji, left the government and rose in rebellion. Within a decade of the Restoration, groups of former samurai had joined together to foment rebellion while others, seeking a more peaceful and modern way to show their opposition, had formed political associations based on Western ideas.

Historians and sociologists have demonstrated that a study of the Restoration must begin with an analysis of the social structure and values that enclosed and guided the samurai world. Not only did these values, as Robert Bellah has shown in his study of Tokugawa elite morality,¹ provide the victors with the will to remake Japan. They also must have provided all samurai with a notion of what to expect if they performed their duties properly. Not only, as Albert Craig has indicated, in his analysis of Chōshū domain,² one of the two most important domains in the Restoration movement, did Chōshū samurai live in a “structured field” which defined their horizontal and vertical relationships, their loyalties and associations, their friendships and ambitions. Most samurai also lived in domains where their highest loyalty was to their lord and where their ambitions were seen in terms of success in their domains. To know what the Restoration was “like” for a samurai, it is necessary to understand his assumptions about social hierarchy, authority, and individual achievement. From them

¹ Robert N. Bellah, *Tokugawa Religion* (Glencoe, Illinois, 1957).

² Albert M. Craig, *Chōshū in the Meiji Restoration* (Cambridge, Mass., 1964).

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the samurai derived his expectations and a sense of his identity.

Yet, no formal explanation of the structure and values of Tokugawa society could evoke the complexity of emotional and intellectual choices faced by many samurai who felt no quick allegiance to the Meiji government, but knew that past loyalties, accepted ideas, and old achievements no longer were rewarded or even sanctioned. For many samurai, the destruction of the domain and the elimination of its authority also became a problem of individual identity. Their sense of superiority had been legitimized by the domain government, and their performance rewarded by position in the domain hierarchy. Their personalities had taken shape as they learned their status in the *han*. The destruction of Tokugawa institutions simultaneously shattered the meaningfulness of past ideas for these samurai.

But past ideas and past expectations unavoidably shaped samurai perception of new ideas as well as their hopes for future success. The form of the adaptation of old values to new ideas and old statuses to new possibilities was unpredictable, however. For the young samurai Protestant converts who form the major part of this study, the radicalness of their choice of a Christian value system to replace the past one, was as much subject to their taste for their past positions and values as to a sense of dissatisfaction with them. Their estrangement from power and from the institutions that gave status meant that they had to build an intellectual structure which could restore their sense of identity and a new world within which they could succeed to authority. Christian samurai lent their strength to associate themselves with a value system that seemed to offer structural similarities to their past order, gave a meaningful order to the new world, and

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promised future success for the believer. Their realization of the discrepancy between present possibilities and past values made it intellectually and psychologically necessary to seek a new doctrine. At the same time, their acceptance of a new belief helped to transform their understanding of the world and their desires in it.

Samurai converts were unique and even eccentric in their choice of a Western doctrine, but their agony was shared by most serious Japanese intellectuals who tried to come to terms with the dissolution of past institutions. Converts and nonconverts drew ideas and sanctions from the past to justify their uses of Western ideas; they asked: how do we understand the new, what is our relation to the new order, and who are we? The converts were asking the same questions as many other former samurai critics of the government, and both groups tended to fuse problems of identity with problems of social status so that, in their eyes, social reform and self-cultivation became one. In the last chapter, I attempt to show how many former samurai critics of the Meiji government melded an idealized concept of the past with Western concepts in order to create an intellectual substitute for past institutions and an identity for the present. As sensitive individuals and serious intellectuals all these men (Christian and non-Christian) had to cope with the problem of a new loyalty to a society and government they were trying to understand. In doing so they created polarities in criticism of the state that influenced all subsequent criticism of the Japanese orthodox ideology.

To examine the impact of modernization on these deraciné intellectuals, I studied one cohesive segment of this class, the samurai convert. Japanese Christianity had its origins in the upheavals of the Restoration, when samurai lost their former status in

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society. It was samurai who became converts, in fact, samurai from domains that had not joined in the Meiji Restoration.

In the present inquiry, I will attempt to show that the impact of the Meiji Restoration destroyed the meaningfulness of Confucian doctrine for these declassé samurai. Through Christianity, the samurai attempted to revive their status in society by finding a doctrine that offered a meaningful path to power. But in doing so, they had to accept a new theory of social relations. Ultimately, as the converts' understanding of society became totally informed by the Christian doctrine, they accepted a transcendent authority that brought them into conflict with society about them. Therefore, to understand the development of a Christian opposition in Meiji society we must begin with the conversion experience itself.

2

PROTESTANT EVANGELISTS AND CHRISTIAN SAMURAI

AMERICAN and English Protestant missionaries entered Japan under the provisions of treaties signed in the late eighteen fifties. Entry was restricted to a few ports, and proselytizing was prohibited. Japanese were forbidden by laws in existence for more than two hundred years to join or even take part in services conducted by Christian clergy. Missionaries were thus legally restricted from extending their influence over the countryside and incapable of presenting their message to any Japanese within the treaty ports. Even after 1873, when the proscription had formally ended, Christianity was merely tolerated by the government, held in severe opprobrium by a good part of the intellectual and political elite, and superstitiously feared by the great mass of people.¹ Still, within ten years of the missionaries' arrival, small bands of samurai in search of Western knowledge and language began to gather about the missions. Later many of them joined

¹ Winburn T. Thomas, *Protestant Beginnings in Japan* (Tokyo, 1959), p. 162.

or founded congregations in the ports of Yokohama, Kobe, and Nagasaki. As private mission schools drew samurai to the ports and then into the church, requests by domain leaders for Western teachers served as the fulcrum to bring Christianity into some of the interior domain.

Partly because of this initial pattern of proselytizing, Christianization in Japan developed an interesting social pattern. In Meiji Japan, 30 percent of the converts to Protestant Christianity were of samurai origin. Almost all converts in the first decade of the era came from this stratum. Throughout the first three decades of the period a high percentage of the converts were young men, usually students at high schools or universities. Although the religion during most of these three decades was proscribed, it was not difficult to recruit from the universities. Also, because of the same pattern of proselytizing, a vigorous Christian movement, even if small in numbers nationally, appeared in some domains and urban centers.² Thus in spite of many difficulties, after the first thirty years the missionaries were happy at the success of their proselytizing and the promise of future evangelical success. By 1889 there were 34,000 converts, 300 churches, numerous lower schools, and a number of important Christian universities. Most important, Japanese Christians were publishing one of the major journals of the time as well as providing intellectual stimulus and inspiration to a number of other political and critical magazines and newspapers of the period.³

² Sumiya Mikio, *Kindai Nihon no keisei to kirisutokyō* [Christianity and the establishment of modern Japan] (Tokyo, 1950), pp. 97-98. Sumiya is here quoting directly from Kozaki Hiromichi, *Nihon ni okeru kirisutokyō no genzai oyobi shōrai* [Christianity: its present and future in Japan].

³For a summary account of the journal, see Takeda Kiyoko's

Compared with China, where missionaries had been working for many decades, these were astonishing results. Few peasants in China had been converted, and the literati-gentry rejected Christianity and became its implacable enemy. Whereas Chinese Christian churches were starved for native intellectual leadership, Japanese converts became evangelists upon conversion and quickly spread the Word in lectures, journals, and books. Scarcely a Chinese church had a native preacher. On the other hand, from the very outset of the Christian mission in Japan three principles were established: a native church, a native clergy, and a national self-supporting church.⁴

The key to these differences lies in the character of the convert himself. Where Christian leaders of both the West and Japan might in later years decry the highly intellectual, middle class, and urban character of Protestantism in Japan, it appeared in Meiji Japan to both the missionary and the convert that the fortuitous evangelization of the samurai held promise for the successful evangelization of Japan. The samurai formed a literate stratum as well as being a group traditionally oriented toward the acceptance of leadership. Both characteristics were important for the development of a strong, independent Japanese Christianity.

The conversion of Japanese, especially of the samurai, is related directly to the Meiji Restoration.

article, "Rikugo Zasshi" [Cosmos Journal], in *Shisō* [Thought] (Tokyo, 1962), Vol. XII.

⁴ Wataru Saba, ed., *Uemura Masahisa to sono jidai* [Uemura Masahisa and his era] (Tokyo, 1937-41), IV, 489-490, 520-526. Hereafter referred to as *UMTSJ*. This is a multivolume collection of documents, articles, memoirs, autobiographies, etc., pertaining to Christianity in Japan from the late Tokugawa to Showa. I have made extensive use of Vols. 1-5.

The treaties that allowed the entry of the missionaries hastened the breakdown of the *bakufu* (shogunate) system. It was the Meiji government that lifted the prohibition against Christianity. The periods just preceding and following the Restoration were vibrant with political conflict and doctrinal dispute. There was no consensus among the samurai leadership on either the intellectual or political form that a Japanese national sovereignty should take. Converts to all ideologies were present everywhere, and the subsequent and often rapid apostasy of the same converts seemed to be just as prevalent.⁵ Among the samurai a simple division appeared: Westernizers or non-Westernizers. During the eighteen seventies the activity of the Westernizers increased and spread; by the eighties this group provided the most important intellectual leaders of the period. The conversion experience can be treated as a part of the intellectual Westernization of Japan. But in spite of this intellectual tendency, both the anti-Westernizers of the period and the Westernizers who did not join the church interpreted the convert's baptism as an indication of his subtle estrangement from Japanese values. Even when government censure of the Christians was replaced by friendly interest in the eighties, there was no overwhelming feeling of good fellowship. Why was Christianity opposed by so many in spite of the hospitality to Western ideas?⁶ In spite of constant opposition, why did a hard core of the traditional leadership—the samurai—become Christians? Who were they; how

⁵ A good example of such a case is found in Marius Jansen's article, "On Studying the Modernization of Japan," in *Asian Cultural Studies* (Tokyo, 1962), III, 1.

⁶ Thomas, p. 161 (see n. 1), quotes Ebina's discussion of the difficult position and the prejudice that Japanese Christians always faced.

did they understand Christianity; what assumptions about society and politics appeared as a result of their Christian experience? Simply, how far can their acceptance of Christian values be regarded in fact as an estrangement from Japanese values and society? The answers to these questions must be sought in the activities of the earliest Protestant missionaries.

Protestant Missions to the Japanese

Several decades before Perry's arrival in Japan, American Protestant evangelists became interested in Japan. In Boston the ladies' auxiliary to a men's Bible Society discovered a delightful Japanese-made basket. Aware of the fact that no missionaries had yet gone to Japan, they began to solicit funds for the establishment of a missionary society in Japan. At the same time, missionaries stationed on the coast of China attempted to enter Japan by returning castaway Japanese sailors or by seeking provisions for their ships; but their entry was forcibly rejected.⁷ The Japanese sailors returned to China with their missionary benefactors where they aided the missionaries in learning Japanese and in preparing translations that could be used when eventually the missionaries could land. And in Boston collections continued to be made for the day when Japan would finally be opened to the West.⁸

Perry's Black Armada broke Japan's seclusion in 1853. In 1858 the United States, represented by Consul-General Townsend Harris, concluded a treaty

⁷ *UMTSJ*, I, 319.

⁸ *UMTSJ*, I, 206; Otis Cary, *A History of Christianity in Japan* (New York, 1909) pp. 13, 30-31. Cary wrote a two-volume history of Christianity in Japan which is still the best narrative account in English or Japanese of Protestant Christianity in Japan.

with the shogun, and similar treaties by other Western nations followed shortly thereafter, opening four new ports to Westerners, Western trade, and the practice of Christianity. Foreigners were still forbidden entry to the interior of the country; the treaties confined Christianity to the ports, and Christian worship was limited to the Westerners.⁹

Within four years of Harris' treaty, eleven Protestants from the China mission were sent to Japan. First, Dr. S. W. Williams and E. W. Syles of the Episcopal Church entered Nagasaki. Thomas Liggins of the same church entered in 1859, and J. C. Hepburn of the Presbyterian Church arrived in Kanagawa in the same year. He was soon followed by Samuel R. Brown and D. B. Simmons of the Reformed Church. Before the end of the year, G. F. Verbeck of the Reformed Church had landed in Nagasaki. Jonathan Goble of the Baptists arrived in Kanagawa in April 1860, and a year later James Ballagh of the Reformed Church landed in the same port. Two years later D. Thompson of the Presbyterian Church arrived in Kanagawa. One year after the Restoration the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions for the first time specifically assigned a missionary, Dr. D. C. Green, to the mission of converting the Japanese.¹⁰ He and his work were supported by funds that had been collected initially by the Boston Women's Auxiliary.

All these missionaries were Americans and all were to become influential. In the eighteen sixties and seventies, European mission societies were less interested in Japan. It was American Protestantism that dominated Christian activities and contributed the

⁹ Cary, II, 36, 39-40.

¹⁰ *UMTSJ*, I, 206, 232; Cary, II, 36, 43, 45-49.

most influential missionaries to Japan.¹¹ This dominance even led *The Church at Home and Abroad*, a Boston monthly devoted to mission activities, to assert that if Japan was to be Christianized it must be done by Americans.¹² Japan was seen as a cultural protégé of the United States, and the missionaries turned toward it with a sense not merely of Christian duty but with a feeling of cultural pride.

Christian evangelism in Japan had a dual character. First, the missionaries devoted most of their energies to the task of proselytizing. Although they represented different denominations, their common beliefs so outweighed their minor theological differences that they were able to achieve the united efforts which so characterized American Protestantism in early Meiji Japan.¹³ Secondly, the missionaries were both conscious and unconscious carriers of the American cultural, political, and social traditions. Ever since 1786, with the founding of the first American Missionary societies to evangelize American Indians, most American missionaries and their organizations had agreed that proselytization must be accompanied, if not preceded, by education, and for many this also meant the introduction of American social institutions and political ideas. As one missionary wrote in 1823, he hoped that soon “the red man and the white man shall everywhere be found, mingling in the same benevolent and friendly feelings, fellow citizens of the same civil and religious community, and fellow heirs

¹¹ Thomas, p. 174.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 73. Thomas quotes from *The Church at Home and Abroad*, June 1887, p. 548.

¹³ *UMTSJ*, II, 151 contains a letter from the missionary William E. Griffis in which he calls for a nondenominational mission in Japan. Also see, Tamura Naomi, *Shinkō go-jū-nen* [My faith of fifty years], Tokyo, 1926. pp. 26-27.

to a glorious inheritance."¹⁴ Most American missionaries to Japan shared the same assumptions. Secular and religious aspects of the West were so indivisible to them that Christianization assumed the character of Westernization, and Westernization implied the necessity of conversion to Christianity. Since to the American missionaries many of the Western social and political developments of the nineteenth century had to accompany or even precede successful evangelization, they felt that the utility of the West's culture and society could not be considered independent of its normative system. They linked Western science to Western norms, which were directly attributable to Christianity, and they identified American and English institutional progress with Christian beliefs. An obvious strategy of evangelization was to present Christianity in terms of its position in Western intellectual development. This was a convenient strategy, for although Christian doctrine was suspect, other Western ideas were beginning to be eagerly sought. The adoption of Western cultural attributes by the Japanese provided a logical entree to religious conversion. The missionaries, impatient with Japan, believed that they could use Western knowledge to expose tradition to ridicule at the same time as they led the students of Westernism to the logical conclusion that Protestant Christianity stood at the base of Western development.¹⁵

None of the missionaries expected immediate success. They realized that their work would be difficult so long as the treaties restricted their activities

¹⁴ Robert F. Berkhofer, *Salvation and the Savage* (Louisville, University of Kentucky Press, 1965), p. 11; and see his Introduction and Chapter I.

¹⁵ *UMTSJ*, I, 464-467. A letter from the missionary Brown indicates that this certainly is his idea of the Japanese mission.

and the shogunate banned Christianity. They were well aware that they were constantly watched by a suspicious government that threatened imprisonment or even death to any Japanese who came in touch with them.¹⁶

Necessity thus forced the missionaries to forego direct preaching, but happily an alternative consistent with their attitudes toward the essential meaning of evangelism was found in teaching Western culture and science. Most opportunities for teaching came after the Restoration, but preparation for this task began during their earliest years in Japan. The missionary first turned to his study and prepared language texts for other missionaries and then translated the Scriptures. For example, Liggins, who felt that the basic aim of the missionary was to remove Japanese prejudices and misunderstandings about Christianity, hoped to do this by using textbooks that relied heavily on Christian doctrine. To accomplish his aim, he procured such works as Schurner's *History of England* and E. C. Bridgeman's *History of the United States* from China and translated them into Japanese.¹⁷

Samurai Students and Missionary Teachers

The Restoration brought a new government into power, but its immediate policies did not greatly aid the missionaries. Anti-Christian placards were renewed; Japanese who acted as language teachers to the missionaries were kept under close police surveillance, and some were arrested. The Japanese transla-

¹⁶ *UMTSJ*, I, 465-467. Brown writes constantly about these problems in the early days of his preaching. Also see Cary, II, 50.

¹⁷ *UMTSJ*, I, 229, 464-467. Williams spoke at length about the necessity of careful preparation of the missionary as well as of materials before even beginning evangelization. Also see Cary, II, 43, 51, 53-54.

tion of the Bible was confiscated from Williams' home by the government.¹⁸

Although Christianity was still proscribed in 1869, missionaries had begun to preach in Yokohama. Schools were founded in Tokyo, Yokohama, Kobe, Nagasaki, and Osaka. By 1871 Christian activity in Tokyo caused worried government officials to break up Bible classes. In the same year, private prayer meetings held for foreign residents in Yokohama were being attended surreptitiously by Japanese studying under missionaries.¹⁹ As a result of these meetings nine Japanese asked to be baptized, and by 1872 they and two earlier converts joined Ballagh in founding in Yokohama the first Japanese Christian Church.²⁰ At the end of the year most missionaries attended a convention in Yokohama to establish a policy of proselytizing and to prepare and discuss translations of the Bible.²¹ Before the convention they tried to persuade Japanese officials to cease their persecution of Christians and for the first time appealed to their own governments for assistance in getting the anti-Christian edicts repealed.²²

In spite of its continued opposition to Christianity, the policy of the government was beginning to change. The Meiji emperor had declared in his Char-

¹⁸ Cary, II, 67-68.

¹⁹ Kuyama Yasui, ed., *Kindai Nihon to kirisutokyō* [Modern Japan and Christianity] (Tokyo, 1956), I, 42. There are three volumes to this set of interesting discussions by a number of Japanese scholars. There are neither footnotes nor bibliographies in any of the volumes. Volume I covers the Meiji period and II and III cover Taishō and Shōwa Japan respectively.

²⁰ Yamaji Aizan, *Kirisutokyō hyōron* [A review of Christianity] (Yokohama, 1913), p. 28; *UMTSJ*, I, 392; II, 88.

²¹ *UMTSJ*, II, 49. For discussions of the translations of the Bible see also pp. 2, 9, 101, 120-132, 186-192.

²² Cary, p. 79.

ter Oath of 1868 that "knowledge was to be sought all over the world." In 1873 a pioneer Westernizing association of intellectuals, called the Meirokusha, was founded for the purpose of studying all aspects of Western knowledge and their applicability to Japan. One leading member of this group was Nakamura Masanao, who had become a Protestant in 1871 in spite of the proscription against Christianity. In the same year the Roman Catholic descendents of a group of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century converts, newly discovered in Nagasaki, were punished by dispersion throughout the country. In protest against the punishment of Roman Catholics and the continued proscription of Protestant Christianity, Nakamura sent a petition to the emperor declaring that to persecute Christianity was inconsistent with the emperor's declared aim of a liberal spirit of education and knowledge. He declared that to seek only the arts, inventions, and machines of the West was meaningless, and that "in general, we may say that the condition of Western Countries is but the outward leaf and bloom of their religion, and religion the root and foundation on which their prosperity depends."²³ Nakamura believed that unless persecutions ceased, Western nations would hate Japan. By 1873, the Iwakura mission discovered the truth of these assertions when it sought revisions of the extraterritorial treaties. Western nations refused to consider revisions while Christianity was proscribed. Iwakura telegraphed to Japan describing his difficulties, and the proscription was withdrawn.²⁴

Christianity was no longer forbidden but neither

²³ *UMTSJ*, I, 74-76. For a discussion of Nakamura's study of Western thought see *UMTSJ* on Christian ideas and Westernization.

²⁴ *UMTSJ*, I, 319.

was it sanctioned. The government took no legal measures against it for the next sixteen years, but educational policies and job opportunities often discriminated against the missionary and the Christian convert. Beyond that, as a result of its cultural identification with the West, Christianity was sought or disdained as national feeling toward things Western either rose or fell. When Christianity was identified with Western governmental policy toward Japan — even some of the more pro-Western ideologues saw it as an instrument of Western policy — it was dealt with at best as useful in encouraging concessions from the West; and when Japan was at odds with the West it was regarded with distaste. Under these circumstances conversion was tantamount to political ostracism.

The period of intense missionary persecution was over by 1873, and events seemed to be fulfilling missionary aspirations. For example, missionary-led schools were often founded by native initiative rather than by missionary exertions. The elders of the old Kuwano domain recruited Reverend Brown in 1873 to teach several of the youngsters of the clan.²⁵ Brown accepted this post only shortly after he had left his teaching post at a central government-sponsored school in Niigata. The leaders of Kumamoto requested Verbeck to seek an American who could establish and lead a school of Western learning in their domain. Verbeck himself was asked to teach in Nagasaki as was W. B. Griffis in Fukui. E. B. Clark was called to Shizuoka. When the central government itself founded an agricultural school in Hokkaido, it asked the president of the University of Massachusetts, W. B. Clark, to set

²⁵ *UMTSJ*, I, 466, 478-479, 482-483. For documents on *han* schools and Meiji education see (anonymous) *Nihon kyōiku-shi shiryō* [Japanese education history materials] (Tokyo, 1890), I; henceforth referred to as *NKSS*.

the guidelines.²⁶ Each man, whether sponsored by missionary societies or not, insisted that in teaching Western learning he had to teach Western ethics. Most Japanese involved with these schools were primarily interested in obtaining the techniques and learning of the West. In most cases lack of funds made the missionary schools the only available source of such knowledge. As it became increasingly evident that Western knowledge was a major means for samurai to retain their status or to move upward, the missionary schools came to have great appeal for members of this stratum. Although a few domains had begun to educate their own elite in Western subjects, samurai from most domains had to go to Yokohama, Tokyo, Kobe, Nagasaki, and Osaka for this purpose.²⁷ Edo, the political center of Tokugawa Japan, had throughout the latter portion of the period been the congregating point of the earnest, politically questioning samurai. Even more attention was focused on Tokyo after the Restoration, when the imperial seat was shifted there from Kyoto. At the same time domain life was uncertain. Former allies of the shogunate worried about the future as leadership passed into new hands and a new oligarchic alliance became evident. Domains which had been undecided during the latter part of Tokugawa and had hedged during the war that ended the shogunate became increasingly undesirable places for the politically ambitious. These fears were confirmed when in 1869 the domain leaders turned their registers over to the central government and again in 1873 when the samurai lost

²⁶ *UMTSJ*, I, 293-294, 544-545. From pp. 500 to 600 there is extensive biographical information on missionaries who came to Japan. See also Cary, II, 74.

²⁷ *UMTSJ*, I, 577, Honda Yoichi's memoirs record his reasons for going to Yokohama to seek an education.

their legally privileged status.

Uemura Masahisa, who later became the leading figure of the Presbyterian Church in Japan, was one of the former samurai who flocked to Yokohama.²⁸ His family, high-ranking direct retainers (*hatamoto*) of the shogun, found life in changing Edo unendurable. He wrote years later:

In Keio [last years of the *Shogunate*] and in Meiji many people lost their houses . . . they roamed about the city like boats which had lost their oars in the sea. . . . When we reflect upon the situation and the spirit of our parents, we can only feel as if our hearts were breaking. Our house in Tokyo was not pleasant, and my parents thought it foolish to spend many days in Tokyo with empty hands. We moved to Yokohama in 1868.²⁹

If life in Tokyo was unendurable for Uemura's family, life in Kumamoto, the capital of one of the largest and most important domains of the Tokugawa period, was even more frustrating for domain leaders who felt that the Satsuma-Chōshū accession to power eclipsed their own aims. Because of internal conflicts at the time of the Restoration, they were unable to participate in the great change but still retained their political ambitions. In domain conclaves the questions of how to act and what to do in the new situation were thrashed out. For a number of years before the Restoration, Western knowledge had been sought under the influence of Yokoi Shōnan. Now, in 1871, one of his nephews high in the councils of the *daimyō* (feudal lord of the domain) suggested that if a select group of highly capable samurai were educated in Western knowledge, the domain could jump to the forefront

²⁸ *Ibid.* For biographical sketch of Uemura, see I, 191-194.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 676.

³⁰ This problem will be more fully discussed in Chapter III.

in leading Japan. Domain ambitions could thus be realized by a quick preemption of the advantages of Western knowledge and teaching.³⁰ For this reason domain spokesmen asked Verbeck to find an American teacher to lead such a school. Further evidence indicates that, in about 1873, missionaries began to be besieged by Japanese seeking Western education and training.³¹ In Kobe, Green and Gulich found at various times forty to eighty men seeking to enter their schools.³² Ballagh and Brown in Yokohama saw their tutorial sessions grow into schools attended by many samurai.³³ In Tokyo the demands for Western knowledge led Hepburn and four others to found the Tsukiji college.³⁴

Most students attending these schools came from samurai families.³⁵ Like members of the Kumamoto and Kuwano domains, they sought Western knowledge as a means of recapturing status in the changing world. Robert Bellah has suggested in another context that samurai norms were achievement-oriented. But, as Bellah also argues, samurai achievement (or "performance," to use Bellah's term) was sanctioned and rewarded by promotion (thus legitimized) by the domain which he served.³⁶ During the early Meiji period a samurai remaining in the old domain would

³¹ Takeda Kiyoko, *Ningen-kan no sōkoku* [Rival views of man] (Tokyo, 1959), p. 72. Henceforth referred to as *NKNS*.

³² *UMTSJ*, I, 211.

³³ *Ibid.*, pp. 349-350; Kuyama, p. 44 discusses Ballagh and Brown's school.

³⁴ Cary, II, 78. For information on other missionary schools, see *UMTSJ*, I, 264-265, 472, 477-478, 482-483.

³⁵ *UMTSJ*, I, 525; Sumiya, *Kindai Nihon no keisei . . .*, p. 79, quotes Green on the great number of samurai who enter Christian schools; see also Cary, II, 107, where he quotes Green's report to his home mission.

³⁶ Robert N. Bellah, *Tokugawa Religion* (Glencoe, Illinois, 1957). Bellah gives a Parsonian analysis of motivation and values

have to give up any hope of a political future, which was the most acceptable career in terms of these norms. If he were ambitious enough to leave home and family to go to Tokyo, he would almost surely become interested in Western knowledge and techniques and would enter by necessity one of these schools, where Western learning was easily and cheaply available. Uemura, for example, was constantly reminded by his mother "that I was a son of a samurai and had to become gallant and great. . . . I had to revive our family and distinguish myself in the world."³⁷ How was this to be done? He records in his notebooks: "My father learned of the benefits of Western learning from some person and told my mother that Western learning was the best way to rise in the world. Therefore my mother began to look for a teacher of Western learning and wanted to give me a Western education."³⁸ In Uemura's case, his mother first found a Western school headed by a Japanese named Ishikawa. After attending this school for a few months Uemura was distressed by the incompetence as well as the dissipation of his teacher. He left and soon after drifted into Mr. Ballagh's school.³⁹ Notes and memoirs of others attending this school suggest the same motivation.⁴⁰

The backgrounds of those samurai who became leading Christians reveal one other striking fact: most of them came from domains on the losing side of the Restoration battle. Yamaji Aizan, a perceptive social

of the Tokugawa samurai. His basic question is, in lieu of the Protestant ethic, what impelled the samurai to be achievement-oriented?

³⁷ *UMTSJ*, I, 676.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 677; also II, 589-590.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, I; for biographies and memoirs of converts see pp. 313, 240-248.

historian and reporter of the time, commented: "Who converted to the new faith? . . . Uemura Masahisa, a son of a shogunate samurai. He experienced all the suffering of a defeated member of the shogunate. . . . Honda Yoichi, a son of a samurai family of defeated Tsugaru domain."⁴¹ He continued to list other converts, all of whom came from domains on the wrong side at the time of the Restoration. Yamaji, who himself was drawn to Christianity at an early period in his career, concludes that conversion was a direct result of the declassé mental state of the samurai after the Restoration.

The government of the Restoration knew that it needed new, capable men for the management of the new household. It was generous in gathering new talent and actively recruited any person with talents to respond to demands of the new age. . . . However, even though the victors showed their generosity they could not cast off their pride, and although the defeated were received warmly they could not be free of the feeling that they were hurt. Although the war was an old story, the wounded heart of the defeated was not completely healed. Therefore it is natural that the realistic young men who enjoyed the new age and who advanced with it appeared mostly among the victors, and those young men who criticized the age and harbored new beliefs to fight against it came mostly from the defeated. . . . They did not hope to be included in the glory of the secular world. They had little hope that they could occupy good positions in the secular world. . . . [This is] without exception the situation in which Christianity was transplanted into Japan.⁴²

With two or three exceptions, the entire leadership of the early Christian Church shared this background.

⁴¹ Yamaji Aizan, *Gendai Nihon kyōkai shiron* [Essays in the history of the modern Japanese church], p. 288.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 289; also in Yamaji, *Kirisutokyō hyōron*, p. 28.

Some came from the *Sabaku* [Support-the-shogunate] group, which wanted to open the country to the West. Many had believed that reform of the Tokugawa system was inevitable, but they had hoped that change would be accomplished under the shogunate's leadership. Honda Yoichi and many others had joined shogunate irregulars in order to fight the Satsuma-Chōshū-domain forces which dominated the Restoration movement; Okumo Masatsuna had even joined one of the imperial princes to fight the Restoration armies.⁴³

If conversion was the result of defeated samurai's estrangement from power, an explanation is required of how and why Christianity resolved that estrangement. This is possible only by a more comprehensive understanding of samurai ideals and ideas. But to speak of estrangement as the sole reason for conversion is to oversimplify the complex ideals, ambitions, political comprehension, and motivation of the samurai. Even if the estrangement was the dominant malaise of the defeated samurai, it was political — a result, at least in part, of frustrated ambitions — and social and psychological, since status was synonymous with political power. Samurai status had inevitably been coupled with domain political legitimacy. After the Restoration, many samurai could no longer believe that their past social position would ensure their success in the present or that their past beliefs could secure them rewards in the future. Because their ambitions remained alive, the samurai in early Meiji sought Western knowledge to assert themselves in the world. When they accepted Christianity, however, they adopted more than the mere utilitarian value of Western knowledge and techniques; they accepted a

⁴³ Sumiya, *Kindai Nihon no keisei* . . . , p. 16.

large segment of Western social and political norms. Seen in this light, estrangement gave the impetus that caused some samurai to redefine their social and political situation in terms of a new normative synthesis and, eventually, to find in that synthesis an alternative path to power. In order to demonstrate this process, it is necessary first to establish the relationship between the preaching of the missionaries and the desires of the samurai; the missionaries' social principles and the converts' norms; and the missionary personality and the samurai psychology. As a start, we may ask what was taught, why, and how it became a convincing argument to some of this declassé stratum.

The Evangelists

Converts in the period 1871-1881 were for the most part students or graduates of the missionary-led schools. Not all students at these schools became Christians, but in some cases, such as the Kumamoto *han* school led by Captain Janes and the Hokkaido agricultural school directed by Clark, virtually the entire senior class was converted.⁴⁴ Attendance at these schools was very high, in comparison with missionary schools in China where after many years of evangelical effort it was still low.⁴⁵ When we realize that government schools and numerous academies sponsored by local governments were also headed by missionaries, we can see that the Christian missionary effort must have had considerable impact on the samurai stratum.

The zeal of the students was reciprocated with similar vigor by a highly committed, well qualified,

⁴⁴ *UMTSJ*, I, 341-343; for notes and memoirs of Sapporo students see also Kuyuma, pp. 51-52.

⁴⁵ Thomas, p. 91; also see Paul Cohen, *China and Christianity* (Cambridge, 1964) for comparative data.

and intensely evangelical missionary group. To them Christianity as a social creed carried with it the responsibility of social action, so that they could not be content with a narrow-minded policy of conversion. Within the limits of Japanese law, missionary doctors proceeded to the interior of the country where they cared for the sick, and aided Japanese medical men without insisting on preaching the creed. Eventually joined by the full force of the missionary groups and converts, they led in the formation of orphanages, homes for the blind, and hospitals.⁴⁶ Personal action by the missionary in its best sense revealed the social vocation of the doctrine to the Japanese, and provides us with a sense of the totality of the missionary's commitment to Western culture and its humane obligations that impressed the converts.

The missionaries' decisiveness and commitment to their ideals, especially in the face of adversity and difficulty, was particularly convincing since, as Uemura Masahisa pointed out, the samurai held these qualities in great esteem. Since low student-faculty ratios in most schools fostered personal relations, the impact of the missionaries' personal commitment was forcefully and easily made. Letters, notes, and memoirs of the converts reveal their awe at the missionaries' spirit⁴⁷ and indicate the intensity of the feelings held by students in these schools for their teachers. "Even if he was a foreigner," Kanamori Tsurin writes of Janes, "he was like a teacher and parent who loved us. Without a word our hearts responded to his, we loved him and he taught us with an increasing affection."⁴⁸

⁴⁶ *UMTSJ*, I, 253, 260 and II, 375-379 for Shimada Saburō's praise of the contribution of the missionaries to Japanese social service.

⁴⁷ *Ibid*, I, 487-488 and Tamura, pp. 91-95.

⁴⁸ *UMTSJ*, I, 517-518.

Yoshida Kanetaro in Niigata, where the Reverend Palm's fame was renowned, notes that it was said that "Confucius might have been a person like Mr. Palm.⁴⁹ Verbeck was regarded as "a sincere gentleman . . . generous and he taught kindly and generously."⁵⁰ To these may be added the encomiums to Brown, Hepburn, Ballagh, and others by their students.⁵¹

The Japanese students felt that the missionaries were truly concerned with the secular as well as the religious development of Japan. Uemura said of Verbeck that "his life was spent for the development of Japan and he emotionally enjoyed her development."⁵² Brown is quoted as saying: "If I had a hundred years to live I should give them all to Japan."⁵³ The intensity of Ballagh's preaching impressed the Japanese with his devotion not only to Christianity but to Japan and the Japanese. Missionaries such as Ballagh treated the samurai with respect; he "treated us as *bushi*," they said.⁵⁴ Although the dangers of conversion were great, and a number of disciples of Ballagh were even arrested, Ballagh did not allow them to seek solace in castigating the state. When his disciples were later released, Ballagh told them: "'Although you are in danger, you should not be displeased with your position. Christian disciples should follow the law of the state.' [Although] we could flee to America, he further told us [the disciples], this would not be in the Christian spirit. He told us to prepare to be exiled anywhere by the law. These teachings convinced me that he came

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 86-87.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 317-318.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 215, 304, 501, 561, 575; Uemura's praise of the missionaries can be found on pp. 435-436.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 289.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, pp. 462-463.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 578.

to this country for the country's sake."⁵⁵ Brown in 1872 told his disciples precisely the same thing:

His instructions on this point [i.e., arrest] were as follows: even we were sentenced to death, to accept this judgment is not at all to hurt the name of the Christian. It is an easy matter to ask the American diplomatic representative at the legation to protect us. However, it is not necessarily wise to plan our safety by avoiding difficulties. It is the duty of gentlemen to follow the state law. He told us that we should behave bravely as gentlemen. When I heard this, I realized that the noblemindedness of Christian ethics was finer than the Way of the bushi in Japan.⁵⁶

The same spirit moved the samurai attending Janes' school in Kumamoto. *Bushi* loyalties were appealed to and hastened conversion when the samurai recognized many of their ideals in Christianity. It was further aided by their conviction that the missionaries were devoting themselves and Christianity to the betterment of Japan.

This concern for the progress of Japan reflected the missionaries' assumptions about historical process. It was this concern that served to direct their attitudes concerning Japan and the Japanese and their missionary activities, so that the samurai converts always self-consciously thought of themselves as *Japanese* Christians and missionaries always spoke to them as Christians who were citizens of a Japanese state. Niijima Jō, founder of the Christian Dōshisha University in Kyoto, stated the Japanese converts' feeling best when he said that he sought to serve God and nation, both missions motivated by the same principles.⁵⁷ Williams

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 579.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 575-577.

⁵⁷ Sumiya, *Kindai Nihon no keisei* . . . , pp. 8-9.

made apparent the missionaries' great concern for the direction of Japan's development when, in the early days of his mission and surrounded by only a small band of converts, he spoke of the future success of the mission in these terms:

There is popular opinion to some extent. Unceasingly year by year the power of popular opinion has grown. . . . The merchant class has . . . learned of the position of the merchant class in other countries; they have awakened to the rights of the merchant class; by and by they will claim these rights. . . . Our age is sure to come and it is sure to come surprisingly earlier than people think it will. We can expect the time when the bourgeoisie will grow and their voice will have its proper power in parliament.⁵⁸

The accuracy of Williams' prophecy is secondary to his view that a particular pattern of historical development must precede or accompany successful Christianization. He made the point more clearly when he said: "In these early days of sowing the seed in Japan we can preach to samurai and meanwhile watch for the fomentation of a 'modern civil society' and development of a bourgeoisie (third estate) who can be evangelized as well as form the base of the new civil society."⁵⁹ Apparently the ethics that stimulated these missionaries to evangelize Japan embodied a particular synthesis of nineteenth-century English and American ideas about modern society. Williams states that Christianity's success in Japan was dependent upon social change and the rise of a modern society.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.* This letter was written before Western parliamentary concepts were considered seriously by any group of Japanese. For Ballagh's letters that express exactly the same tone, see *UMTSJ*, I, 407-408.

⁵⁹ Sumiya, pp. 9-10.

Christianity was the religion of a society governed by the concepts of a third estate. Modern society was a civil society; in effect, a society of free and equal citizens. To realize such a society “the commercial and industrial class joined with patriots [samurai] will engage in an anti-feudal struggle.”⁶⁰ Thus, this new society will be antithetical to the structures and beliefs of feudalism. Evangelization for the missionary was not an isolated task but a part of the entire process of modernization. From this assumption emerged the missionaries’ concern not only with religious development but with political, economic, and social development as well. Many samurai, imbued with deep loyalties to their society, found this view attractive. The deep concern of both missionary and former samurai with Japan’s development created a strong and sympathetic bond.

The National Church

At the level of practical application, the Protestant missionaries declared at their second conference in 1883 at Osaka that they would encourage the establishment of native churches with a native clergy and native funds. The convention proclaimed missionary unanimity on a policy that ministers like Green, Brown, and Ballagh had been advocating since their arrival in Japan.⁶¹ Green, in fact, had arrived in 1869 with explicit instructions from his board to encourage a self-supporting autonomous church in Japan.⁶² J. B. Davis, who collaborated with Niijima in the founding of Dōshisha, had already suggested in 1875 that at the

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶¹ *UMTSJ*, I, 476. On p. 181, see Griffis’ letter urging the development of a national independent church.

⁶² Thomas, p. 171.

earliest possible moment proselytizing in Japan should be turned over to the Japanese and that self-supporting churches should be established.⁶³ Japanese converts attending the Osaka conference were in unanimous agreement with the missionaries. Kanamori Tsurin, a representative of the Japanese clergy at the meeting, discussed with the missionaries what everyone saw as the primary issues: how fast these goals could be accomplished, and what should be done with overseas funds. There was some discussion and division on the question of independence, with some members of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions arguing that independence should only be encouraged after individual churches became self-supporting. However, by 1883 the increasing pace of conversion suggested to everyone that this standard could easily be met.⁶⁴

Political circumstances had initially forced the missionaries to limit their proselytizing to the city and to former samurai. In order to guarantee the development of a self-supporting church, they continued to concentrate their efforts in the city where the resources of a large population could be drawn upon and among classes who were literate and curious as well as sufficiently wealthy to maintain the church.⁶⁵ It is difficult to know whether in any specific instance missionaries consciously projected Williams' vision of social progress and Christian conversion into their everyday evangelizing. But in most cases they did feel, as Green wrote in 1874:

⁶³ For information on the Reverend Davis, see Watanabe Minoru, *Niijima Jō* (Tokyo, 1959), pp. 106-108.

⁶⁴ Cary, II, 164-170, 240-241; and on p. 106 he quotes the missionaries' report on their success in Japan. Also see Thomas, pp. 93-96, 140-143.

⁶⁵ *UMTSJ*, II, 237-238; Thomas, pp. 87-88.

God has seen fit to make the influence of missionary work in Japan felt first and most strongly by the intelligent classes [in effect, the samurai]. Whatever may be right elsewhere, those who have become Christians hitherto are of this class, both here [Kobe] and in Yokohama and Yedo [Tokyo]. . . . Whatever might be right elsewhere there ought to be no question about having the Japanese support their own party and build their own churches from almost the first, if not the very first.⁶⁶

These missionaries saw the future of Christianity in Japan as dependent upon the leadership of this early group of samurai converts. The fervor with which the declass  samurai became Christians convinced the missionary that they were the agents who could bring about the rapid conversion of all Japan. The same intensity that awed the missionary led the samurai to sacrifice, scrimp, and save to establish self-supporting independent churches.⁶⁷

Indeed, independence was a vital issue to the Japanese converts. Samurai concern with a church led and supported by Japanese had preceded the formal discussion and proclamations of the Osaka conference on the same matter. It was also a matter of principle for many samurai students at the missionary academies to refuse offers of financial aid.⁶⁸ For example, Oshikawa Masayoshi, a leading Christian convert, rejected offers of aid and determinedly badgered any students who accepted a missionary stipend.⁶⁹ A number of returned students like Paul Sawayama chose to take

⁶⁶ Cary, II, 107.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

⁶⁸ *UMTSJ*, IV, 489-490, 520-526. Independence from missionary control is a constant demand of the convert. Uemura in his journal continually discusses its importance. In Volume I is a quote from an Ebina Danj  speech in which he expresses his pride in the independence of the Japanese church.

⁶⁹ Cary, I, 275.

poorly paying pastorates after refusing well-paying government jobs and then at the same time refused to allow the churches to receive any endowments from the missionaries.⁷⁰

Missionaries undoubtedly welcomed development of an independent church as evidence of genuine conversion. Sawayama, among the Japanese, best expressed this conviction:

It is said that it is obstinate or ambitious for our church to undertake to supply all the money and undertake self-support without the help of any foreign mission society. This is not true. Once we have received help we will relax and lose our diligent spirit.

The spirit of self-support makes Christians think that the church is their own and it cultivates an independent and diligent spirit toward our duties. Once we have received money from others we may feel that the church belongs to others and thus neglect our duties. Pastor and church members must endure together and from this mutual love is born.⁷¹

Statements by most Japanese converts, however, suggest that they extended this interpretation of the character of a self-supporting, independent church to a more extreme position. Tamura Naoomi, an early Meiji convert and an important Christian social critic of the era, in his autobiography gave the reasons for the establishment of an Independent Presbyterian Church in 1876.

The Christian Church in Japan was full of the spirit of independence from its beginning. . . . Christian churches in Japan should exist for the Japanese and sovereignty should lie with the Japanese. He who holds financial

⁷⁰ *UTMSJ*, II, 222 contains a list of converts who refused aid; also see pp. 240-247, and I, 56-58; Kuyama, p. 60.

⁷¹ *UMTSJ*, I, 39, 40, 55.

power is certainly sovereign. If we were under the power of the missions and favored it, we would have no right to insist that sovereignty lie in our own hands.⁷²

A year before this, an elder and ten members of the Tokyo Presbyterian Church withdrew and formed an independent body called the Nippon Kyōkai (Japan Church). According to a historian of the Presbyterian Church in Japan, "the motive of organizing this new church consisted in enforcing an extreme anti-foreign principle of independence because all the churches at those times were under the assistance of foreign churches and missionaries."⁷³

These quotations and events suggest that three principles dominated the establishment of an independent church: 1) that Christianity's growth and sustenance in Japan were dependent upon development of a community of native believers engaged in a campaign to work within the church; 2) that they sought to establish a Japanese church controlled by Japanese with Japanese interests always present; 3) that antimissionary spirit was always prevalent among Japanese Christians, since even to the convert the missionary sometimes represented varying interests. In simple terms, the converts were nationalists obsessed with a fear of domination by the West.⁷⁴

The act of conversion to Christianity must be seen as a gesture that engaged the samurai convert in the great debate of the time: how can Japan retain its national sovereignty and how can she become strong enough to resist Western incursions? In general, Western studies in Japan were begun with all these aims in mind and, as was demonstrated throughout

⁷² Tamura, pp. 22-25.

⁷³ As quoted in Cary, II, 121-122.

⁷⁴ Examples of this are found in *UMTSJ*, II, 205.

the period, Western thought was accepted consciously or in many cases unconsciously with objectives stated in the Tokugawa period by Hashimoto Sanai, a late Tokugawa Confucian thinker: "Acquire mechanical aids from others, retain righteousness, sympathy, and filial piety as our own," or even more bluntly summarized by Sakuma Shōzan, an outstanding student of Western science in late Tokugawa Japan, as "Eastern morality, Western arts [i.e., technology]." ⁷⁵

It is difficult to summarize the intellectual assumptions of Japanese nationalism. All Japanese thinkers of the first three decades of Meiji Japan were obsessed with the problems of national sovereignty, and this obsession was ably summarized by the slogan "fukoku kyōhei" (wealthy country, strong defense). Even radical liberals like Nakae Chōmin were willing to put the extension of liberal rights as second to the establishment of a strong sovereign nation. ⁷⁶ Yet to draw out of this any clear ideas about the nation is difficult, perhaps impossible. However, Maruyama Masao has tried to abstract from Japanese behavior of the period a sense that traditional ideas of ruler-subject relations were transferred to the sphere of international relations.

When the premises of the national hierarchy were transferred horizontally into the international sphere, international problems were reduced to a single alternative: conquer or be conquered. In the absence of any higher normative standards with which to gauge international relations, power politics is bound to be the rule. ⁷⁷

⁷⁵ Maruyama Masao, *Thought and Behavior in Modern Japanese Politics* (London, 1963), pp. 140-141.

⁷⁶ Hayashi Shigeru, *Kindai Nihon no shisōka tachi* (Thinkers of modern Japan) (Tokyo, 1961), pp. 9-17.

⁷⁷ Maruyama, p. 140.

International relations were seen primarily as a question of hierarchy based on the supremacy of superiors over inferiors.

Though this is an oversimplified statement, it is plausible to think that traditional ideas of social order acted as guidelines for Japanese political behavior. Norms of political behavior were thus dominated by social tradition. Also indisputably clear throughout the period is the political nature of almost all thinking. Questions of morality and ethics as found in traditional Confucianism were always questions of attitude toward authority rather than simply behavioral norms for the individual *qua* individual. For example, the government's most conscious effort to institute and legislate its ideas of proper political behavior appeared in the Educational Rescript of 1890. In effect, attitudes on political behavior were expressed via educational and moral scriptures. The Rescript itself is less important than the famous apologetic, which in effect defined the Rescript's role, written on it in 1891 and 1893 by the leading conservative philosopher of the time, Inoue Tetsujirō. In his first treatise, *The Interpretation of the Imperial Rescript*, Inoue defined the Japanese state ideology in sociomoral terms. "By cultivating the moral action of loyalty [to one's lord] and filial piety the foundation of nations can be made firm and by cultivating the true spirit of collective patriotism, preparation can be made for unexpected accidents."⁷⁸ The establishment of patriotism, loyalty, and filial piety were the major objects of the Rescript. Moreover, Inoue equated loyalty and filial piety with patriotism. After extended argument, he concluded that everything was dependent on relationships of

⁷⁸ Funayama Shinichi, *Meiji tetsugaku-shi kenkyū* [Studies in the history of Meiji philosophy] (Kyoto, 1959), pp. 148-149.

loyalty and filial piety in household and village and that cultivation of these virtues of the individual led to loyalty to the country.⁷⁹ A consciousness that one must sacrifice, indeed die, for his lord and country emerged.

Inoue dealt directly with Christianity in his second treatise, *The Conflict of the Church with Education*, where he identified it as the major enemy of his national ideology. He emphasized the irreconcilability of Christianity with the national principles of the Rescript. Christians neglected their obligations as subjects, disturbed peace and order, lacked respect for the emperor, and hoisted a foreign nation's flag. He concluded: "The main point of the Rescript is nationalism, but Christianity [not only] lacks the nationalistic spirit, it is opposed to it. Thus, it must be irreconcilable with nationalistic principles."⁸⁰

Inoue's criticisms of Christianity were not new; he merely summarized two decades of anti-Christian criticism. Probably spurred on by the cancellation of the proscription on Christianity in 1873, Yasui Sakuken had established the major tenets of criticism: Christianity fostered disloyal and unfilial behavior.⁸¹ Yasui expressed Confucian strictures; a conservative but Western-oriented critic like Kato Hiroyuki assailed Christianity in the same terms: Christianity was opposed to Japanese *kokutai*, the belief that Japan had an incomparable moral and political heritage based on the rule of a divine imperial line unbroken for ages eternal. Fukuzawa Yukichi, a leading figure of the mentioned pioneer Westernizing association, the Meirokusha, bitterly attacked Chris-

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 149.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 141-142.

tianity in his daily newspaper, *Jiji Shimpō*.⁸² In 1882 in successive issues of the journal he wrote: "Christianity is baneful to our national power"; "we do not care to discuss the truth or falsity of religious systems; but looking at the matter from a statesman's point of view we hold that in self-defense the foreign religion should be banished from these shores."⁸³

Whatever the personal rapport of missionary and convert might be, dependence upon missionary tutelage or financial support led anti-Christian critics to call the converts "rice Christians," "satellites of a foreign power," "beggar students" who have lost their independence.⁸⁴ Tamura Naomi implied in his autobiography that being called rice Christians led Japanese converts to emphasize their independence; as we have seen Tamura emphasized the need for Japanese Christians to assert their independence and sovereignty in a manner similar to Japan's attempt to assert its own sovereignty.⁸⁵ Niijima in becoming a Christian sought to serve both God and nation;⁸⁶ Uchimura stated he sought to serve Jesus and Japan. Samurai converted to Christianity because they believed Christian principles could help in the establishment of a new strong Japan. The converts were nationalistic Christians eager to emulate, but not be subordinate to, the West. Missionary concern with the development of Japan was happily noted, but when the missionary was assailed as a foreign agent and the convert called his

⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 155; Takeda, *NKSK*, p. 23.

⁸³ Sumiya, *Kindai Nihon no keisei . . .*, pp. 51-52; *UMTSJ*, II, 524; Yamaji, *Kirisutokyō hyōron*, pp. 74-75.

⁸⁴ *UMTSJ*, I, 523-525.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, III, 444; Tamura, pp. 26-27.

⁸⁶ *NKNS*, p. 43; Hitomi Enkichi, ed., *Kindai bungaku kenkyū sōsho* [The modern literary studies library] (Tokyo, 1956), I, 331-338. This volume contains memoirs and notes on leading figures of the Meiji literary and cultural world.

lackey, the new convert sought to express his independence and the nationalism of the Christian Church through a self-supporting autonomous church.

Evidence of the importance of the independent church in proselytizing is easily found. The Congregational Church took the lead in establishing itself as self-supporting and independent. The Congregational Church became the largest single denomination in Japan.⁸⁷ Out of its congregation came Christians who entered into political affairs and party politics, as Christianity propelled a number of men into the heart of political struggle.⁸⁸ Kozaki Hiromichi and Uemura Masahisa and a number of others, for example, attacked traditional concepts of loyalty and filial piety, and they did so apparently in the attempt to establish an alternative political tradition and means to modernize Japan.⁸⁹ Both men were also leaders of an independent antimissionary church. Thus the political character of conversion and the problems of Japanese nationalism must be taken into account in discussing the rise of the independent church. In extending an alternative view of the character of modern Japan the Christians had to confirm their own independence and thus establish their nationalism. In later years their failure to influence the character of the new state led some of their membership to either flee the movements into radical parties, to move away from any social or political standard, or in the most extreme cases to redefine, compromise, and bend their own principles to the prevailing ideas of the national polity. But for many Christian converts their success in establishing an independent, self-supporting church permitted

⁸⁷ Thomas, p. 6.

⁸⁸ Sumiya, pp. 91-92, 133-134.

⁸⁹ Funayama, pp. 128-129; Takeda, *NKSK*, p. 74; Kuyama, pp. 107-109.

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them to argue convincingly that they were Japanese Christian nationalists, with a new vision, however, of what patriotism entailed.

3

alienation and CONVERSION

ON THE last Sunday in January, 1876, thirty-five young men from Kumamoto climbed a hill on the outskirts of the city and entered into a covenant with Christ, pledging themselves “to enlighten the darkness of the Empire by preaching the Gospel, even at the sacrifice of their lives.”¹ Halfway up Mount Hanaoka, they stopped and knelt to look at the old castle town below, while Yokoi Tokio read aloud from John, chapter 10:

I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and go in and out, and find pasture. . . . I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for his sheep. . . . And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold and one shepherd. Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I may take it again.

¹ Cary, p. 123. There is some disagreement on the day that the oath was taken. Some later recalled it as a Saturday rather than a Sunday. Although only thirty-five signed the proclamation, forty men went up the hill.

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With Yokoi's reading completed, the thirty-five finished their climb to the peak where with apostolic passion they declared their devotion to Christ and their entry into the faith.

In vowing their oath of shared conviction and brotherhood, they promised to study, proclaim, and espouse Christ's doctrines "in order to dispel the ignorance of the people . . . [who] have no idea of its beautiful concept . . . [and who] are steeped in prejudice and worn out ideas." It was their 'bounden duty as patriots and signators of the covenant to espouse with enthusiasm . . . solidarity, caution, and perseverance . . . the cause of Christianity and make known its fairness and impartiality." They vowed to do so "with even the sacrifice of their lives. Since at present the majority of people are opposed to Christianity . . ." Thus, "the lapse of faith of even one of our number invites the scorn of the multitude and frustrates the very purpose for which we are banded together."²

After Kose Saburō had read their proclamation, several others rose to lead the group in prayer. Ebina Danjō, one of the leaders of the band, later recalled, "From here we could look down at Kumamoto castle. It was a grand view. At that moment, I remembered a proverb. 'A castle at the top of a mountain cannot be hidden.' I could understand the meaning of the saying."³ The conversion of these boys from the Kumamoto Yōgakkō (the school especially established for the study of Western science and institutions) on

² Watase Tsunekichi, *Ebina Danjō Sensei* [The teacher Ebina Danjō], (Tokyo, 1937), pp. 110-112. Kanamori Tsurin, Miyakawa Keiki, and Yokoi Tokio first thought of preparing the oath. All three, however, felt incapable of properly phrasing it. The writing was left to a fourth, unnamed person.

³ Watase, pp. 111-113

the summit of Mount Hanaoka became a major symbol of the rise of Christianity in Meiji Japan.

The acceptance of Christianity by the thirty-five who climbed Mount Hanaoka was in many ways typical of the conversion experience of early Meiji Christians. The training received at the Yōgakkō and the tensions and conflicts that preceded conversion at the school exemplify the experience of the two other major groups of converts, the Sapporo and Yokohama bands. But the direct confrontation of the young samurai with his family and the domain authority is most dramatically presented in Kumamoto. While students at Yokohama and Sapporo resided far from home and were separated from parental and domain authority, Yōgakkō boys lived in the major city of their domain, studied at a domain-sponsored school, and were required to study Confucian texts with a Confucian master. In their conversion they experienced all the political, psychological, and intellectual conflicts that traditional society could muster.

In all other respects the history of the Kumamoto conversion is similar to that of other bands of young converts who appeared in Sapporo and Yokohama in the early years of Meiji. From these bands as from the Kumamoto group there arose outstanding leaders of the Protestant church. Many similar conversions of less famous groups and isolated individuals occurred throughout Japan in the early Meiji period. Notable preachers, active politicians, and committed Christian laymen also rose from the ranks of these people.

In numbers, the Kumamoto band certainly did not exceed that of the groups of faithful surrounding Ballagh and Brown in Yokohama, or the many students who accepted baptism at Sapporo. Kumamoto band preachers such as Ebina and Kozaki were no more outstanding than Uemura of the Yokohama

band and Uchimura Kanzō of Sapporo. Most of these men cooperated in founding the journal *Rikugo Zasshi* [Cosmos] in Tokyo; they as well as many other members of these bands formed outstanding evangelical churches in Tokyo as well as in the interior of the country; and all bands became associated with important Christian higher schools. Moreover, each group produced numerous and fervent disciples.

It is possible to point to differences in the character of theological argument expressed by Uchimura, Uemura, Kozaki, and Ebina, but for the first two and a half decades of the Meiji period neither they nor their missionary mentors chose either to teach a complicated doctrine or to argue sectarian distinctions. All missions — Janes at Kumamoto, Clark at Sapporo, and Ballagh at Yokohama — emphasized the teaching of the Bible as the basic doctrine of Christianity and the ethical and evangelistic character of Christian teaching, while deemphasizing dogmatic theology. Only with the entry of liberal theology in the late 1880's was the unanimity on theological doctrine broken. In fact, according to Uchimura, the inability of the opponents of the new theology to present a convincing rebuttal was a result of the simplicity and barrenness of the theology initially taught by the missionaries to all early converts. Whereas Uchimura in the 1890's deplored the Christianity of both missionary and convert as this-worldly, these very secular concerns had prompted all early converts to find in the ethical teaching of Christianity the basis of Western progress. Moreover, this was the reason why they believed Christianity should be accepted.

The converts were accepting the missionaries' identification of Western progress with Christian ideas when, as Uchimura suggested, they maintained that religious ethics and the social and political be-

havior of man were inseparable. Almost unanimously in the 1880's they rejected the belated attempt of some missionaries to provide a more complex theology to Japan by establishing as fundamentals of the Japanese church the standards of faith and discipline of the Westminster Shorter Catechism, the Westminster Confession of Faith, the Heidelberg Catechism, and the Canon of the Synod of Dort. While allowing individual members to adhere to these dogmas, the new samurai Christians declared that for the Japanese church as a whole it was only necessary to accept the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, and the Apostles' Creed as basic creeds. Thus while liberal theologians impugned the authority of the Bible, they did not contest the primary secular concerns that were always articulated in the behavior and beliefs of the convert. In fact, liberal theology reinforced many of the attitudes that had fostered conversion.

The common intellectual and social concerns of all early converts were paralleled, as we have already seen, by their similar social backgrounds. The Kumamoto band was largely drawn from the samurai of Kumamoto domain. While the Sapporo and Yokohama bands were formed of samurai from all over Japan, they too were declassé and estranged from the government. Members of all bands had entered Western training schools determined to restore their status and insure their future in the new world by the use of Western ideas and techniques. Whether they went to the Sapporo Agricultural School sponsored by the central government, the Kumamoto Yōgakkō founded by the domain government, or the private school of Ballagh and Brown, these young samurai were taught to associate Western progress with Christian ethics and doctrine. Even before he received any missionary preaching, Nakamura Masanao, who by Confucian

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tradition was accustomed to associating firm moral structures with a stable social order, concluded that Western institutions and ideas were permeated and rooted in Christianity. The force of this association later led Nakamura to convert. This is paralleled by the apparently naive reasoning that led Tamura Naomi of the Yokohama band to convert:

I had no special reason to be baptized. I was still a nationalist and had not understood the spiritual meaning of Christianity. I was interested in Christianity simply because I thought that it was a religion in a civilized nation and much more modern and cultural than Buddhism or Shintoism. Thus only Christianity could bring us the culture of Europe. The idea of God was in my mind but the spiritual problem of "Christ" or his resurrection by God occupied my mind only very slightly.

I am sure that the Tsukiji college band who were baptized at the same time were much the same kind of Christians.⁴

Not surprisingly, at the Kumamoto Yōgakkō also, Janes' emphasis on the importance of Christian ethics and doctrine for the understanding of modern learning was important for the conversion of the band. While Ballagh and Brown at Yokohama and Clark at Sapporo explicitly and rather early in their teaching identified Western progress and learning with Christianity and Christian ethics, Janes, who came to Kumamoto in 1871, waited until 1874 when his classes had become proficient in English and somewhat conversant with Western ideas before raising questions about the relationship between the Western learning he expounded and the Western developments he discussed with Christian doctrine, ethics, and beliefs.

⁴ Tamura, p. 300.

Modern physical theories about the nature of the universe which were discussed in the science class led Janes to raise questions about cosmic order and the creation and creator of the universe. Discussions of evolution in geology allowed Janes to speak of progress in history and ultimately to discuss the Bible as the key to knowledge and Christianity as the ethical source of modern constitutional Europe. These young men of samurai families had come to the Yōgakkō to study Western ideas and techniques. By personal inclination as well as by domain encouragement, they aimed to use these ideas and techniques in the hope of becoming leaders of a new Japan. Thus, when Janes offered to teach Christianity to the group, most of these boys felt impelled to attend; nonetheless they were prepared to deride and resist any ethical instruction he proffered. While the domain had selected these students for their intellectual ability, it had also hoped when founding the Yōgakkō in 1871 that the graduates would later serve Kumamoto interests. Therefore, the domain attempted to certify the students' moral virtue by insisting on their listening to Confucian lectures.

It may be argued that the samurai converted because of their encounter with Western missionaries, but it must be remembered that it was the fact of their alienation, even their hostility to Japanese society, which made them receptive to a proscribed religion and ethical system. The ideological synthesis presented by the missionary offered both a key to understanding and a means of copying Western progress and institutions. As we will see, however, the adamancy with which the young samurai converts, especially those from Kumamoto, resisted the traditional authority of family and domain, also suggests that a disposition existed not to honor and even to resist *all*

traditional authority. What this psychological disposition was and why it was ultimately satisfied by conversion to Christianity must be explained before we can understand the character of Christian conversion as well as Christianity in Japan.

The Kumamoto band is ideal for the examination of the conversion to Christianity of the samurai. The training received at the Yōgakkō and the tensions and conflicts that preceded and followed conversion at the school, typify the experience of all other bands and show more clearly the direct confrontation of the young samurai with his family and the domain authority. Although I will illustrate the character of samurai conversion by examples drawn from all over Japan, I will use the Kumamoto example to describe more fully the causes and results of conversion.

Conversion: Malaise and Alienation

Converts to a new faith glory in the electrifying effects of having found truth; apostates speak with rancor of their disappointment with the faith they left. Twenty years after his conversion to Christianity, Ebina Danjō, who exemplifies the feelings of many converts, located the source of his faith in the uncomfortable feeling of loss of status, order, and authority that overcame him with the Restoration.

Since I came from a *bushi* family I had to lose the person whom I had respected as a lord. Even my attitude toward my parents changed. The four classes became equal. The *bushi* felt that when farmers and merchants got equal power all good form had disappeared. Even art and music were destroyed.

Confucianism which had ruled the human spirit for many years was also destroyed. The Confucian classics

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lost their value. All this was a result of the Restoration. In such an age we were raised.⁵

Ebina thus expressed his anxiety over the moral and social cataclysm that he feared the samurai faced. Besides sharing this same feeling, others also showed their resentment and hostility toward the Meiji government by directly opposing its formation and rationale. Although, for example, the authority of the emperor had now been confirmed by reference to tradition, some shogunate adherents, as well as many retainers of *fudai han* — domains allied to the Tokugawa — felt that however inevitable the overthrow of the Tokugawa might have been, to bow to the new government was degrading. As Uemura wrote a decade after the Restoration,

Changes of the age were unexpected when the Restoration began and the authority of the Tokugawa feudal government fell. . . . These changes were unavoidable; but both daimyo and samurai regretted the changes. It is said that those who know the current of the age and follow it are wise, those who resisted the emperor and fought the emperor's army . . . were those who did not know the relations of lord and retainer. . . . Those who assert such an opinion do not know the true relations of lord and retainer.⁶

Not unexpectedly, Uemura, son of a *hatamoto* family, defended resistance to the emperor.

I think those who took the side of the Tokugawa and resisted the army of the emperor at the time of the Restoration did so out of a loyalty which Japanese had grown up with since olden times. [By resisting] they attacked the frivolous men who truckled to the currents of the age.

⁵ *UMTSJ*, II, 9.

⁶ *Ibid.*, I, 657-658.

If none had shed his blood [defending] the old feudal system, the Japanese conscience would have come to an end. . . . Therefore I cannot agree with those who felt that those who resisted the army of the emperor were traitors. When the fever of reverence for the emperor has died down, we can rewrite the modern history of Japan.⁷

Uemura was only one among many samurai converts who vehemently opposed the Meiji order. Among his fellow students at Ballagh's Academy, Honda Yoichi had initially come up to Yokohama to oppose the Satsuma-Chōshū clique.⁸ Yamada Toronosuke of Hirosaki had for a time considered joining the Satsuma rebellion; and Ibuka Kajinosuke from Aizu domain had with his father⁹ fought against the imperial forces at the time of the Restoration. Also among the converts were adherents to Eto Shimpei's rebellion and samurai from Kōchi sympathetic to Itagaki's opposition to the government. Many leaders of Kumamoto and the students at the Yōgakkō also resented the assumption of powers of government by the new domain alliance.

Uemura's protest against the cavalier destruction of past loyalties was accompanied by a feeling of distress at the emptiness and chaos of the time. This feeling was undoubtedly heightened when, as Ebina so aptly pointed out, it was government policy in the early years of Meiji to destroy everything of the past one thousand years. "It was a destruction of morality, all former morality was destroyed."¹⁰ After his baptism Kozaki reflected on his impressions in early Meiji and noted that for him the Restoration had meant

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 405.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, II, 9-10.

the extirpation of religious principles from education and the lack of any ethical-religious basis to politics.¹¹

Hostile and depressed, revengeful and confused, these young samurai who were to convert to Christianity were clearly opposed to the political trends of the time. Whereas some might have supported the Meiji governmental reforms had they been undertaken under *bakufu* (shogunate) leadership, they deeply resented these reforms of the new oligarchy. These young converts believed that so long as the Satsuma and Chōshū samurai monopolized high offices of the central government, they had no hope of joining the ruling elite. In this way, they felt estranged from the new political order in Japan. Furthermore, the Confucian moral order had given them authority and status. Moral chaos and the destruction of traditional lord-samurai relations destroyed proper Confucian relations and deprived loyalty and filial piety of any meaning. They were left alienated as well as estranged from the new political order.

Members of a political elite are expected to defend not only the political order they lead, but also the ideological foundations of it. But what could be expected in the case of these young samurai? The ideological foundation of their authority had been lost while the consciousness of their past status remained an important part of their psychological makeup. Moreover, they saw their traditional authority denied and apparently without any function.

Max Weber discusses the problem of conversion,¹² asking who in society is most susceptible to conversion to a new religion. He examines the conditions under which conversion is possible — conditions

¹¹ *NKNS*, p. 83.

¹² Max Weber, *The Sociology of Religion*, trans. by Ephraim Fischhoff (Boston, 1963), pp. xxxviii-xlix, and ch. VI.

which lead particular groups to make a break with an established order.¹³ He discusses various sensitivities to stimuli existing outside the established order. These sensitivities constitute what we now call alienation; they contain the elements which are more readily "available" to be stirred by prophetic movements.

Weber begins his study by analyzing those groups who are most deeply embedded in traditionalism, those who are least alienated. For one, the peasantry is firmly rooted in the traditional culture. In Japan, I would add, the peasants are tied to the primitive animism of the locality; moreover, they are burdened with the prejudices and fears that years of total subjugation to an authoritarian ruling order have left them. The unknown is feared; if it is made unlawful, as Christianity was, it is abhorred. The eye of the peasant is no turned outward, but inward to the community where years of experience of traditional cultivation teach what is best. Weber finds other groups that fit into the same category: "Those most heavily involved in secular responsibility are least susceptible to prophecy or alienation."¹⁴ Here he discusses those with institutionalized military functions, a feudal nobility, or a bureaucracy. Each of these groups has a heavy investment in maintaining the established order, simply to make it work. There is a dual character to the function of these groups: On the one hand, they need a realistic sense of their capacity to command resources to rule, on the other, they must have a sense of their "right" to do so. What is involved is the legitimization of their power. In all cases, Weber finds such groups conservative, not susceptible to "stimuli"; on the contrary, they need the past and its symbols to honor their rights in order to command the resources to rule.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. xxxix.

Paradoxically, the samurai, the feudal nobility in Japan who staffed the bureaucracy, provided the leadership and most of the membership of the early Meiji Protestant Church. Yet this fact confirms rather than refutes Weber's example. The institutionalized order in Tokugawa Japan defined political rights and political order in moral terms. In this period all samurai were members of the ruling elite from the time of their birth. After the establishment of the Meiji government, they were ignored and cut off from power. Samurai from domains not active in the Restoration were made incapable of ruling. Many felt that no longer would have an opportunity to join the ranks of the new political elite, and for this reason they felt estranged. The Restoration also redefined the sociomoral-political order in such a way as to destroy hereditary relationships that had given all samurai rights to rule. For as Ebina Danjō said of his feelings following the Meiji Restoration: "I had to lose the person whom I respected as lord. . . . The four classes became equal. The *bushi* felt that when farmers and merchants got equal power all good form had disappeared." Now declassé, a tension existed between what the samurai thought they should be and what, in fact, they were. Convinced that they deserved high status, they despised the new order that offered a lowly one. Young men such as those at the Kumamoto Yōgakkō or those in the schools of Ballagh in Yokohama, were in the first instance more interested in the retention of a remembered status than in the definition of a total sociomoral system. Uemura's parents, for example, told him that since he was a samurai, he must be gallant, great, and successful. In Kumamoto, Kozaki entered the Yōgakkō in order to prepare himself to become a great leader. In this sense, Western ideas, notably those of Christianity, were thought helpful to this

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end while demonstrating what they already knew, that the ideology of the past could not help them retain their status. If there were tension between past status and declassé reality, there would be further tension between these young converts and their fathers and the authorities who continued as traditionalists.

The final resolution of the tension came through the direct rejection of the latter's authority by the acceptance of the new Christian synthesis of Western ideas and institutions. Rejection of the traditional was personal as well as intellectual. Acceptance of the new contained a personal transference of loyalty as well as an attachment to a new social order. Obviously not all samurai were estranged or alienated; and among those who were so affected by the Restoration, not all became Christians. It is clear, however, that a feeling of loss and distaste preceded conversion to Christianity rather than appearing as an apologetic for it.

For conversion the personal and intellectual relationship of missionary and young samurai was critical. The character of this relationship reveals even more about the loss of traditional authority and the search for a new one. Most missionaries were committed abolitionists, and all represented the stern puritanical cast of American Protestantism. Earnest moralists, they established schools that had rigid standards of learning and discipline. Like E. B. Clark and many other missionaries, Leroy Janes had served as an officer in the Union Army during the American Civil War. A West Point graduate, he took as his educational model for the Yōgakkō Dr. Thomas Arnold's Rugby School. Janes believed, as did Arnold, that the teacher must be a moral model and a moral preceptor, and that secondary-school education must instill within a youth a firm Protestant code. Like Arnold, he was primarily

interested in character formation. Arnold's Rugby School aimed to shape boys who could serve a Christian state. Ultimately Janes sought to create Christian men who could shape a modern state.

Students at the Yōgakkō lived in dormitories, rose early, and led spartan, regimented lives. Academic standards were rigorous, and students who failed to meet the standards Janes set were immediately dismissed from the academy. Janes' academic philosophy and methods reflected Arnold's educational aims while representing the ethical considerations that led all Christian missionaries to offer Christianity as the basis of Western civilization. Clark and Ballagh taught Christian ethics, and when doing so, spoke of the character of the Christian man. Janes related all these elements noting that the basis of any modern strong nation was the ethical Christian man — a man of free conscience who combined social responsibility with firm individualism. He declared: "It is a fundamental undertaking to increase national power by encouraging industries, but it is even more necessary to make men." Men are made by "religion and education," and the small nation such as Switzerland "retains her independence among the world's powers because she is the most educated of nations. Those who wish to sacrifice their life for their country ought to take up either way [religion or education]."¹⁵

For the moment let us ignore the implications of the philosophical relationship between ethics, the conscience of man, and national development, and concentrate on the relationships between the young former samurai and the missionary. In the previous chapter we saw how impressed samurai were with Christianity as a supplement to bushido. They also

¹⁵ *UMTSJ*, I, 498-499.

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constantly spoke of the missionary's love of them.¹⁶ It was the intensity of missionary affections and their commitment to Japan as well as to Christianity that attracted the youth. Kanamori wrote of Janes: "Of course we were afraid of the Bible [i.e., Christianity], but we believed in our teacher and followed him."¹⁷ Kozaki wrote of his Kumamoto experience: "It was at his [Janes'] prayer meeting that I came to be impressed by him. With open eyes I gazed upon his attitude while praying and recognized that the tears that came from his eyes as he concluded prayer were for Japan and for the world. This was the beginning of my search for faith."¹⁸

The missionaries with their stern moral rectitude, their fervor and commitment, were respected as teachers in the moral mold of the Confucian scholar. As we will see, they also brought new ethics and teachings that were more in line with the demands of Westernizing. Apparently, in many cases missionaries were not only figuratively referred to as parents by their students; they and their new ethics replaced parental as well as the Confucian mentor's authority. When they spoke of the creation of a new man for a new Japan, they could come by their convictions and education to symbolize this man. Converts at Sapporo and Yokohama were really living as students abroad. They were far from their home domain and lived in a foreign-dominated environment. Far from parents and home, they could regard the missionary as father and teacher without directly confronting their parents. Nijjima, for example, could write his parents from the

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 517-518.

¹⁷ Hitomi, p. 125.

¹⁸ Kozaki Zenshu Kankokai [Association to publish the collected works of Kozaki (Hiromichi)], *Kozaki Zenshu* [Collected works of Kozaki], (Tokyo, 1938), III, 24-25.

United States referring to his new Lord and parent, God, without having to challenge his parents face to face.

In Kumamoto none of the Yōgakkō were far from home and domain opinion could be easily affronted. Conflict between some students and their parents over proper behavior and filial piety preceded conversion. Ebina Danjō's father had angrily ordered him to cease his studies at the Yōgakkō, and when he refused his father began a hunger strike. With their conversion many of the band were recalled home. Yokoi Tokio's mother threatened suicide unless her son recanted his faith. Yoshida Sakuya's father drew his sword, and Yoshida announced that he would be happy to die by his father's hand. Kanamori Tsurin was locked up in the house of a relative and lectured to by the leading Confucian scholar of the domain, Takizaki Sado, on the respect due family and domain.

Kanamori questioned the correctness of Takizaki's analysis and in fact repudiated his authority. Yoshida's father dropped his sword in disgust. One youth while apparently agreeing to follow family orders ran off to Kyoto to study at the Christian Dōshisha Academy. Ebina who had earlier waited out his father's hunger strike and returned to school, now offered his moral support and example to his friends, and finally joined the thirty who came back to the Yōgakkō without recanting.¹⁹

When news of the conversion on Mount Hanaoka reached the Kumamoto community, some of the students believed that a large group of samurai would attack the school and kill the converts and Janes. Janes drew his pistol, and his students spent the evening preparing to defend themselves and their faith. No

¹⁹ *UMTSJ*, I, 495-497. Watase Tsunekichi, pp. 87-90.

attack took place at that time; however, a revived *shimpuren*, a coterie of Kumamoto samurai violently opposed to Westernization, did attack only a few months after Janes and his students had left Kumamoto.

Kozaki, who at first was determined to resist conversion, lectured Janes on Confucian ethics. Confused by Janes' refusal to answer and the steadfastness of Janes's ethical commitment, he faltered in his convictions and began a rigorous study of Christianity. Unable to succeed in his new determination to find some resolution of his past ethics and his new belief that faith was needed, and further confused about Christian doctrine, he consulted Janes. Janes told him that study alone would not help, that "a fool can never know the mind of the wise. Similarly man can never know the Almighty God." Stirred by Janes, Kozaki said, "That night I earnestly prayed for the first time and finally decided to believe in Christianity."²⁰

Similarly, throughout Japan converts came to the faith and fought vigorously against parental authority, Buddhist attacks, and the general suspicion of the populace. Evidently resistance to these attacks by society was usually made easier by the beginning of emotional ties to a new authority — the transference of filial piety from parent to missionary — making easier the intellectual road to transference from feudal lordship to the lordship of God. It also appears that however emotionally difficult it was for the students to face their parents after conversion, the old ties had already begun to weaken.

Each case of conversion may have been prompted by a series of apparently different events, but in every case alienation was the result, and alienation was

²⁰ *UMTSJ*, I, 501.

overcome by the transformation. Ebina Danjō's conversion reflects this transformation. His conversion came after a series of intellectual adventures which I shall discuss later, but his acceptance of God as Lord must first be seen as both psychological and social since conversion ended his apathy and resolved his agony at the loss of all past relationships.

Ebina first discussed his loss of a sense of personal mission because of the death of his lord. "Because the young lord was dead, there was no one to whom I could offer my life."²¹ Ebina felt a sense of loneliness and personal aimlessness.

When I first realized it was my duty to make God my lord, it was then for the first time that my conscience gained authority. I was exceedingly happy. This was the rebirth of my whole life. As for my faith, my conscience being bound to God, its power was restored. I dislike referring to this as being "saved," but I was drawn up to a very splendid place.²²

As Watase Tsunekichi has said, this experience was "the grasping of God as his father and himself as his beloved son. It was a noble transfer from one lordship [Confucianism] to another."²³

Ebina portrayed his conversion dramatically. His language is that of the theology student, the minister who has often reflected on the character of conversion. Others, probably no less estranged or alienated, made the move from traditional loyalties to Christianity under even more dramatic circumstances than Ebina;

²¹ Fred Notehelfer, "Ebina Danjō: A Christian Samurai of the Meiji Period," in *Papers on Japan* (Cambridge, Mass., 1963), II, 10. For other cases of conversion see *UMTSJ*, I, 742-752.

²² Notehelfer, p. 47.

²³ Watase, p. 40.

however, no detailed record of their feelings is available.

There is, for example, the case of thirty local samurai who were still in Fukuoka prison in 1879 for sympathizing with and joining Saigo's abortive revolt. Undoubtedly they had joined, as most of Saigo's adherents had, out of distaste for the government that had destroyed samurai status. With the revolt suppressed, they were imprisoned. Preachers from Dōshisha, American and Japanese, visited and preached at the prison for a number of months. When these samurai were about to be released, they all promised to help Niijima, president of Dōshisha, spread the gospel in Fukuoka. After returning home, one sold his house and land to raise money to help finance evangelical work in Fukuoka. Many others became peddlers and used their profits to help in the founding of a church. Most of the thirty sponsored the bringing of a Dōshisha-trained minister to Fukuoka, and all became leaders of the Fukuoka mission.²⁴

The pattern of revolt, imprisonment, and conversion illustrates the relationship of samurai estrangement to Christianity. Despair led these samurai to radicalism and revolt, but defeat did not lead them to a reconciliation with government policy; rather, their opposition to the government continued by the acceptance of a despised religion. The very radicalism of the samurai revolt and the abruptness of their acceptance of Christianity demonstrate the relationship of estrangement and conversion. In the absence of complete evidence, it is difficult to state in definitive terms whether their conversion carried with it an explicit recognition of a new lordship. But their defeat, the defeat of the samurai class in Satsuma, certainly

²⁴ Watanabe, pp. 211-212.

carried with it a sense of loss of status. Their acceptance of a life of poverty in order to serve the church and the mission suggests the acceptance of a new ethic and service to God, the new lord, and the church.

Perhaps this story is overdramatic, but it indicates the relief found in a new belief when hostility to the new government had led to revolt and defeat. Certainly conversion and its accompanying relief are no more dramatic than Ibuka of Yokohama who was able to reconcile himself to the Restoration when he was told, "It was the providence of the Lord."²⁵

Toward Conversion: Samurai Ethics and Christian Preaching

The most consistently reiterated claim of the samurai was that Christianity had to be accepted for the sake of Japan's modernization. Even non-Christian intellectuals of the Meirokusha had shown that whatever small interest they had in Christianity was due to its function in Western culture. Primarily out of a desire for Westernization, Nakamura Masanao asserted that it was necessary to accept Christianity as the national religion of Japan. To modernize Japan, Christianity was necessary. Thus, Nakamura concluded, the emperor should take the lead and be among the first to be baptized.²⁶

In contrast to most of the members of the Meirokusha and many leaders of Japan who sought Western knowledge as technical knowledge, Nakamura sought the spiritual, ethical roots of Western civilization. Lecturing in 1875 before the Meirokusha, he lamented the "slave spirit" of the populace. Obviously, he said, the Restoration had not prepared the popu-

²⁵ Kuyama, p. 71.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 83.

lace to work and to read; indeed, "the people are not changed." Reform was necessary, and, to do this, religion, ethics, and art were needed. With Christianity, the mainstay of Western civilization, Nakamura said, Japan could be reformed on the Western model.

Nakamura was concerned more with the ethical content of Christianity than with any particular theological viewpoint. First trained in Confucian doctrine, Nakamura later took up Dutch studies, and finally as a result of his Western studies became interested in Christianity. Like Uemura and many other converts, he received his introductory indoctrination in Christianity by reading W. A. P. Martin's *Tendo Sakugen* [*The final cause of the universe*] in Chinese.²⁷ Martin interpreted Confucianism in such a way as to make it a precursor of Christianity and explained Christianity with Confucian terminology. Nakamura found that Confucianism, as interpreted by Martin, possessed a personified creator similar to the Christian God. He was to conclude, as Kozaki, Ebina, and many others were, that Christianity was an extension of or, as Nakamura said, "one step beyond" Confucianism toward an understanding of reality.

Chinese texts, translations of the Bible, and analyses of Christianity other than Martin's were primary aids in the conversion of the Japanese. In fact, it was even a leading Japanese scholar of Confucianism, Yokoi Shōnan, who suggested the relationship of Confucianism to Christianity, indeed even announced the superiority of Christianity to Confucianism. He was the founder of *jitsugaku*, the School of Practical Studies, an institution that attempted to synthesize the doctrine of the two dominant Confucian schools in Japan,

²⁷ Ibid., p. 69; Sumiya, *Kindai Nihon to Kirisutokiyō . . .*, p. 61.

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shushi (*Chu Hsi* in Chinese) and *ōyōmei* (*Wang Yang Ming* in Chinese). Again, as with Nakamura, the importance of Christian ethics was emphasized. "The chief purpose of Christianity is in recommending goodness to others by making ethics its mainstay."²⁸ In one of Yokoi's most famous poems he said:

In the Western world there is an orthodoxy.
Its teaching comes from God.
It leads people by its commandments.
It recommends goodness and punishes evil.
Both the upper and lower [parts of society] believe in it.
It establishes law according to its teaching.
Government and teaching are inseparable.
There are three teachings in our country;
However, the spirit of our people is not attached to them.
Both Shinto and Buddhist deities are absurd.
Confucianism is no more than a literary art.
Today we see many evils in government and in their
teaching.²⁹

Yokoi was not a convert, and though his interests in Christianity and the West led him to send his nephews to the West, he had no direct influence on the conversion of the samurai. However, his emphasis on Christian ethics, his understanding of Western success as a result of Christian spirit, and finally his use of Confucian terminology to understand Christianity, were all shared to some extent by the converts.

Nakamura and Yokoi's interpretation of Christianity paralleled in good part the precise teaching of the missionary. Nakamura had used as his basic text Martin's *Tendo Sakugen*, which Ballagh and Brown distributed. The young samurai attendants at the Yo-

²⁸ Kuyama, p. 114.

²⁹ *NKNS*, p. 72.

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kohama school were able to read Chinese, and the first Bible given to them was in Chinese. Chinese texts were important since it was to be at least a decade after the Restoration before missionaries, with the aid of samurai converts, translated the Bible into Japanese. Moreover, the importance of the Bible was great since the missionaries taught a fundamentalistic Bible Christianity while disavowing the use of any complicated dogma.

In 1872 the missionaries drafted a document which criticized the possible divisive effects of sectarian Protestantism. They feared that it would destroy the unity of the church and the mission. In the United States denominational and theological strife had been reduced at that time, and in Japan this spirit was carefully copied. The missionaries agreed that the mission's success depended on cooperation. Thus sectarianism should be avoided. As much as possible, missionaries agreed on methods of evangelization, and as far as possible they also agreed to use the same name and organization. In later years these missionaries were indicted for their theological naïveté as well as for their de-emphasis of theology. However, the program they followed did reflect the democratic assumptions of the American Missionary Society which held that faith and dedication were sufficient for proselytizing. As Ballagh stated more simply when instructing his converts before they established the first Japanese Christian Church, "Sincere prayer, reading the Bible with pleasure, urgent necessity for direct missionary work and profound friendship"³⁰ was all that was needed. The founding principles of the church echoed Ballagh's teachings: "Our church does not belong to any denomination. It is established only in the name

³⁰ Hitomi, p. 334.

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of Christ. Only the Bible is our standard. Those who study the Bible are servants of Christ and our brothers."³¹

While espousing Protestant unity and emphasizing the importance of the Bible, missionaries also emphasized the social ethics of Christianity. As we have already seen, they taught as basic parts of the Christian creed the ethics of love and brotherhood of the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, the Sermon on the Mount, and the principles of the Apostles' Creed. In behalf of their monotheistic religion, the missionaries rejected Buddhist and Shinto icons. In behalf of their social creed they called for monogamy, and as a result of their puritanism they passionately preached against the evils of smoking and drinking.

Missionaries did not merely hang gospel signboards outside their churches. From 1873 on they led their converts in the formation of prison reform leagues, schools for the blind, a campaign against prostitution, and education for women. Between 1870 and 1882 the missionaries founded thirteen girls' schools. Christianity, the missionaries said, demanded the reform of traditional male-female, and aristocratic-commoner relationships. These intentions of the missionaries were early perceived by the convert. One non-samurai convert, Tomeoka Kasuka, declared that it was his realization that Christianity taught equality of all which led him to Christ. Tomeoka, writing about his conversion, said: "I was impressed by the statement that the soul of the merchant and that of a *bushi* are equal before God. The idea of such a God opened my eyes."³² In fact, the Japanese churches themselves were often called by names which de-

³¹ Kuyama, p. 44.

³² *Ibid.*, pp. 124-125; *UMTSJ*, I, 502.

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scribed their efforts to reform customs rather than their religious activities. One reason for this was the general hostility toward Christianity. However, the character of preaching and activity of the missionary and the response of the convert suggest that Christianity was considered an instrument of social reform and change.

The broader aims of social reform were also tied to human development. As the Reverend Davis asserted at the Osaka Conference, pastoral training should emphasize love of Christ and engender a spiritual change which touched the individual heart. Like other missionaries, when he presented the Christian idea of God, he exalted the idea of the free independent individual, just as Janes, for one, linked personality, Western progress, national reform, and Christianity.

The interrelationship of all these elements appears most clearly in the Kumamoto case. It was there that young converts found in the concept of the Christian God both solace and a means of satisfying personal ambition. They sought a key to the modernization of Japan in the Christian concept of the free individual. They discovered that the synthesis of ideas which solved the problem of their moral alienation and political estrangement also responded to their ethical inclinations.

4

WESTERNIZATION AND CONVERSION

Kumamoto Yōgakkō

KUMAMOTO, with its income of 720,000 *koku* (13,500,000 bushels) of rice, was among the richest *tozama* domains of the Tokugawa period.¹ Although it was situated in Kyushu near the dissatisfied and rebellious southern domains that led in the Restoration, Kumamoto did not take part in the struggle against the shogunate. Yokoi Shōnan, one of the leading ideologues of the Restoration, was a Kumamoto samurai, but he was exiled by the domain for his policies and thought during the *bakumatsu* period (1853-1868). Traditional loyalties of the domain to the shogunate were stronger than the “disloyalties” of the dissidents within the domain who labored to support the struggle against the shogunate.

Throughout the latter part of the *bakumatsu* period, Kumamoto was rent by debate. The domain bureaucracy was dominated by the *gakkō-tō* (school

¹ Kumamoto Ken, *Kumamoto Kenshi* [History of Kumamoto prefecture], (Kumamoto, 1961), I, 14 and 123. The *Tozama* (“outer lords”) were those lords who swore allegiance to the Tokugawa family after they established their hegemony in 1600.

faction) who were advocates of a court-domain-shogunal alliance, and followers of the Tokugawa-sponsored *shushi* Confucianism. Although this faction dominated bureaucratic offices in the domains, it never received the full support of the samurai. There was also, as might be expected, a strong faction who wished to return the emperor to power and expel the foreigners, the *shimpuren*. In addition, many supporters of Yokoi's policy and philosophy remained active during his exile. Joined together in the *jitsugaku* faction they represented a minority of domain samurai who preached a policy of open ports as opposed to the prevalent anti-foreignism and a philosophy that synthesized *shushi* and *ōyōmei* Confucianism as opposed to the more acceptable and traditional *shushi* Confucianism of the shogunate and Kumamoto.²

Yokoi's followers constantly criticized domain policies. Even when young samurai from the domains were sent by the dominant school faction to Edo and Nagasaki to study Western science, and to *rangaku* academies (schools of Western studies influenced by the Dutch), the *jitsugaku* members criticized domain policy as too traditional. They claimed that the bureaucratic leadership was trapped in a philosophy that did not allow flexible policies. Yokoi and his group emphasized that the domain needed a flexible policy that could adjust domain and national policy to changing internal and external conditions. Critical of domain policy, they explicitly attacked the slavish rote learning of the classics and the literal interpretation of Confucian texts endorsed by the *gakkō-tō*. The *jitsugaku* group asserted that policy should rise from experience and practice rather than through any mechanical ap-

² *Ibid.*, pp. 276-278, 668-669. Also, see Kumamoto Ken, *Kyō-ikukai Kumamoto ken kyōikushi* [A history of education in Kumamoto prefecture], (Kumamoto, 1931), I, 309-319, 487-489.

plication of rote-learned principles.³ To them, as to Yokoi, to know implied the necessity of applying knowledge to practical affairs. Once this was accomplished, texts should be discarded rather than preserved dutifully and deified as was the practice of the *shushi* and *gakkō-tō* followers. Moreover, they said, rather than simply knowing about things, in effect a simple memorizing of books, one should gain insight about the nature of things. For example, Yokoi wrote:

In learning, knowing and understanding are two different things. Useless is the knowledge of the principle of the world and the manifold things and their variations if there is no practical way to apply it. . . . On the other hand, what is called understanding means that if we read books and understand their principles deeply, these become our possessions and the books themselves become nothing but dregs which can be discarded. The principles which have now become ours by this method can be used and applied to separate and discrete things.⁴

In sum, Yokoi insisted on “the study of the Principles of Nature in order to assist Heaven [and] . . . the study of the Principles of Nature in order to maintain the welfare of the people.”⁵ Out of this spirit of inquiry and search for practical principles of government, Yokoi advocated the study of Western science and an educational program that combined Western studies with the spirit of this Confucian synthesis. But the Kumamoto system of education remained unchanged. And it was only a partial compensation for his lack of

³ Kindai bungaku kenkyū shitsu [The Modern Literature Study Group], ed. *Kindai bungaku kenkyū sōsho* [Modern Literary Study Series], (Tokyo, 1961), X, 108. Henceforth referred to as *KBKS*.

⁴ Kosaka Masaaki, ed., trans. and adapted by David Abosch, *Japanese Thought in the Meiji Era* (Tokyo, 1958), p. 30.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 105.

influence in the domain that he was able to induce his nephews, Yokoi Saheita and Taihei, to begin their study of Western subjects. By June of 1866 both nephews had gone to the United States in order to prepare themselves to follow their uncle's policies.⁶

Within Kumamoto during this period both the *gakkō-tō* and the *jitsugaku* group had established their own educational academies. Both academies continued into the Meiji period but with important changes in their influence on domain education and policies. In the early 1860's a young samurai of good family, Kozaki Hiromichi, for example, entered the school-faction academy, the *Jishūkan*, where he was trained as a warrior in the traditional military arts of *jujitsu* and swordsmanship, and in the use of the spear.⁷ Even more important, he was trained to be a Shushi Confucian bureaucrat. When news of the Restoration brought about a change in domain leadership and the *jitsugaku* (Practical Studies) faction took over most of the important domain bureaucratic positions, the result was a major change in educational policy.

Lord Hosokawa Morihisa, disappointed at the eclipse of his domain's influence in national affairs, first purged his bureaucracy and then accepted the advice of the recently returned Yokoi Taihei. Hosokawa sought new means to reassert Kumamoto's influence on the national scene. Taihei, now his chief advisor, suggested that in order to progress Japan must adopt Western culture. Kumamoto's hopes, he said, rested on its youth: if trained quickly in Western knowledge, they could take the leadership of Japan. As a result, shortly after the Restoration, the Western Academy (*Yōgak kō*) was established and the old traditional con-

⁶ *KBKS*, p. 105.

⁷ Kozaki Hiromichi, *Reminiscences of Seventy Years* (Tokyo, Showa 8), pp. 6-7. Hereafter referred to as *Reminiscences*.

servative school (*Jishūkan*) and other faction academies were closed. Immediately after its establishment, Kozaki as well as more than five hundred young samurai applied for admission.

The primary purpose of the school was to provide instruction in Western techniques and knowledge. However, it must be remembered that the impetus behind its establishment come from the *jitsugaku* faction. As Kozaki said, "I began to learn the teachings of the *jitsugaku* faction when I entered the Yōgakkō."⁸ In fact, throughout the existence of the Yōgakkō lectures on Western science and knowledge were always complemented by Takezaki's classes on the ethics and practices of *jitsugaku*.

Later in 1875 when Janes's lectures on Christianity were first beginning to take a firm hold on the youth at the academy, he found himself competing for influence with Takezaki. Takezaki, an adherent of Yokoi Shōnan's philosophy, joined Janes in his experiments in practical farming, sericulture, and the encouragement of local industry, but on the question of ethics he substantially disagreed with Janes's teachings. Yokoi Shōnan had said, "Have knowledge in detail about Yao, Shun, and Confucius/ Go into detail on Western techniques of machinery/ Will then the nation not become richer, will then the nation not become stronger?/ Declare these fundamental truths over the four oceans/."⁹ These principles for Takezaki and Yokoi Taihei became the major precepts behind the founding of the Yōgakkō. Essentially they sought to study Western science in order to declare as well as understand the essential principles of Confucius. When the revival of Christian teaching became a possibility, these men sought to protect their students

⁸ NKNS, p. 69.

⁹ Watase, pp. 115-116.

from the teaching of any Christian preacher. Students were kept from going to Nagasaki and Yokohama, and when ultimately it was decided to hire a Western instructor, a teacher with a military background rather than missionary training was chosen.

In the first years of the school, 1871-1874, the *jitsugaku* faction succeeded in attracting the interest of most students of the school. Attendance at Takezaki's lectures was compulsory for all Yōgakkō students, many of whom became deeply immersed in his ideas. Ebina often spoke of his interest in *jitsugaku* training and its importance for his later development. Kozaki was impressed by Takezaki's ideas of Confucius. All students attended lectures on "Learning and Questioning," "Western Learning," and Kumazawa Banzan's *Shugi Washo* [Collection of Principles of Japanese Books].¹⁰ In these teachings, as in Takezaki's, the understanding of teachings through practice and experience was stressed. Prepared by this approach, the students were able to grasp the challenge made to Takezaki's assumptions by Janes's new ideas and his emphasis on their relationship to Western practices. Practical Studies principles demanded comparison with Janes's teachings when he presented Western progress as the fruit of Christian principles and ethics. Practical Studies thought, by its emphasis on the implementation of knowledge through practice, established grounds on which debate could be held. When Janes presented his argument for the practice of Christianity on the understanding it gave of the world and its role in the West, his argument was instantly understood by the students who had been trained by Takezaki. His principles and his argument were bolstered by the principles that the Practical Studies claimed to

¹⁰ NKNS, p. 69.

be its own. Therefore, a dialectical argument was unconsciously engendered by the meeting of Janes and the *jitsugaku* group. Simply stated, the importance of Christianity for Westernization was given additional weight by the relationship between principles, ethics, and practice taught by Takezaki. Not surprisingly then, many of the Yōgakkō students were led by these dual teachings to think about the truth of Christianity and the necessity for conversion if they were to understand the West and if Japan was to become modernized.

The Academy

Hosokawa in 1870 was easily convinced of the necessity of a domain academy of Western studies. However, there still existed within the domain in 1870 strong opposition to the establishment of a Western training school. *Shimpuren* spirit had not yet died and was in fact not easily destroyed. Indeed, in 1876, five years after the establishment of the Yōgakkō, a reconstituted *shimpuren* arose in revolt against the Meiji government. Thus the idea of a Western academy in Kumamoto was strongly resisted in 1870. But opposition was not as great as the hostility aroused by the suggestion that the domain employ a foreign teacher, especially when Christianity was still banned in Japan. Precedents for Western studies already existed in the domain. Yokoi Shōnan, like his followers, had studied Western books and techniques. Yokoi had read widely in Western history and had spoken admiringly of heroes such as Washington and Peter the Great. Moreover, for a number of years students from the domain had been sent to Nagasaki and other port cities to study at the schools of Western studies, but as yet no foreigner had resided in Kumamoto.

However implacable the opposition, once com-

mitment to Western education existed in the domain, it was easy enough to demonstrate the need for a Western teacher as well as a local academy. Records of the students sent outside the domain were poor. Away from parental discipline and domain authority, their personal deportment had been bad. Sending students outside the domain did not seem to be the best means to educate them. Beside this, many Christian ministers lived in the port cities. The danger from Christianity, it was argued, was greater outside the domain than within it, where domain authority could always be vigilant. Nonoguchi Tameshi, an important domain retainer studying in Nagasaki at the time, agreed with Taihei that, "since Western European culture is indispensable, a Western school must be established within the domain."¹¹

Taihei still had to answer arguments against the appointment of a foreign teacher to the school, including the arguments of those who, although not personally opposed to the establishment of a Western school or to the hiring of a foreigner, felt that the time was not ripe, that they should await the decline of anti-foreign sentiment. Yokoi Taihei could not accept this argument. Several decades, he said, will pass before feelings have changed. He used his knowledge of the United States to strengthen his argument. There, he said, is a nation of immigrants, but it still takes many years before new immigrants are accepted and then antagonism toward them continues to be great. Why wait, he concluded; the situation will be no different in the future. We must invite foreigners right now. Let us allow them to teach; now is the time when initiative by the domain is required.¹² Taihei's argument

¹¹ *KBKS*, p. 109.

¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 109-110. This is quoted from "Kyushu bungaku," No. 32, Supplement, 1893.

was made more compelling by national events. The Meiji oligarchy was entrenching itself. How long could Kumamoto wait? Especially when Hosokawa and his newly appointed advisors had great ambitions for their domain and samurai. Taihei's argument carried, and preparations were made to establish the Yōgakkō and hire a Westerner.

Taihei's vision of Westernization was broad. He and other *jitsugaku* members for a number of years had spoken of the need for Western science and medicine. Therefore he was making an almost conventional demand when he asked for a modern hospital and medical school in the domain. A hospital and a medical school offered no danger to the morals and spirit of the domain. Even before hiring an instructor for the academy, a Dutchman residing in Japan, Dr. C. V. Mansveldt, was asked to come to the domain to establish the medical school. Once the domain was accustomed to a foreigner in the domain it would be easier to bring in the dreaded foreign teacher. Mansveldt accepted, and in March 1871 began work to establish a medical school and a hospital that were later to train a number of famous Meiji physicians.

While Mansveldt was beginning to establish himself in the domain, a domain contact agent in Nagasaki asked Dr. Verbeck to search for a proper teacher for the domain. Hosokawa established only one condition of employment: the domain wanted neither a farmer, worker, merchant, nor missionary; they wanted a warrior. Verbeck later said, "The *han* [domain] wanted a strong man; they feared that a weak one would only produce weak men." However, the inducements to the teacher were great. The foreign instructor would be given full authority over school affairs. He would be paid four hundred yen per month (approximately \$400) which, in fact, was a salary much

higher than that offered by any other domain school.¹³ Verbeck referred their request to his home board, the Dutch Reformed Mission in the United States.

In the United States, the Dutch Reformed Mission, through the offices of Reverend Theodore Scudder, was quickly able to contact Captain Leroy L. Janes, a former artillery officer and Scudder's son-in-law. Janes had been a professional soldier and was a deeply religious man. At West Point, he had been very religious and had earned his highest grades in ethics. After the Civil War he appears to have been at odds with himself. Refusing an army assignment in Alaska after the war, he began farming in Maryland. The trip to Japan offered him an occupation and a mission. He accepted the post in Kumamoto.

When Mänsveldt finished his preparations in July 1871, Janes was already on his way to Japan. Even before this, in early 1871, the domain began to make preparations for building the school. First it was suggested that the Yōgakkō be constructed in the site of the old *Jishūkan*, but the study of Western ideas in the school of the sages was disturbing, even to many who had accepted the necessity of the study itself. Some felt that though only Western ideas and techniques were to be studied, there was still the danger that some students might become Christians.¹⁴ Finally a decision was made: the Yōgakkō would be constructed in the castle town Kumamoto on the site of the old castle.

The domain planned to construct Western-style buildings for the school. A contractor from Nagasaki was hired, and materials were ordered from all over the country. The school itself was to be one large

¹³ Inoue Hisao, *Gakusei ronkō* [A study of students] (Tokyo, 1963), pp. 531-536, 567.

¹⁴ *KBKS*, p. 109.

building containing an auditorium. Tables and benches for about a hundred people were to be installed in the auditorium. Next to this building was an old house with four rooms, each of about 40 square yards, and one large dining hall where bread and meat, American style, were to be served. To the rear of these buildings a dormitory was built, with thirty-five rooms of 20 square yards apiece, each room to hold bunk beds for six students. On completion the dormitory and school were the first Western-style buildings in the domain; they also contained the first glass windows in Kumamoto. For a number of years they were among the chief tourist attractions in the city.

In 1871 the central government was reaching out and beginning to control all local governments. Kumamoto domain as of 1871 became a *ken* (prefecture) with Hosokawa as government-appointed governor rather than *daimyo*. The school, begun under domain auspices, now became the personal responsibility of Hosokawa. It was still a Kumamoto school, not a Meiji government school. Hosokawa took responsibility for all its costs. Workers were put on a day-and-night schedule; it was hoped that school facilities would be ready when Janes arrived in August 1871. Unfortunately the schedule could not be met, and the buildings waited for completion until October of that year.¹⁵

Janes landed in Yokohama in August and was met by Nonoguchi, as Hosokawa's representative, and by Verbeck, who was to act as Janes's agent. While in Yokohama, Janes signed his copy of a three-year contract. He arrived in Kumamoto on August 23 after a short sea journey. There was a final exchange of contracts, and agreement on his responsibility and privileges was reached. Although the contract stated that

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 95, 110.

Janes was to make all rules and establish educational policies for the school — “in order to change present conditions” — education in Chinese classics and ethics was to be continued.¹⁶

The leaders of the domain had braved public opinion in appointing a foreigner as head of the school, but they were still fearful of Christian influences entering the domain. Moreover, they were unsure of public reaction. Consequently Janes was to be accompanied on his trips by two or three men in case of an “unexpected occurrence.” All of his activities were placed under surveillance. Whenever he left the school he was asked to report to the authorities.¹⁷ These actions and policies were attempts by Hosokawa and his advisors to preserve Confucian ethics. Fears of Western ideas had not yet died.

Janes and the Kumamoto School

Janes's entry into the domain astride a white horse furnished by Hosokawa and escorted by two troops of soldiers drew the people of Kumamoto into the streets. His seat drew their admiration and his military bearing satisfied samurai requirements.¹⁸ The prefectural authorities also appeared happy with their choice. Janes was given full authority over Western education as promised in his contract; and the prefecture also agreed to Janes's demand that all other teachers, with the exception of Nonoguchi, who was retained as manager of general affairs, be dismissed.¹⁹ Janes had specific educational ideals that he felt he alone could implement. Janes therefore became not

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 96.

¹⁷ *NKSS*, II, 221-223.

¹⁸ *KBKS*, p. 94.

¹⁹ *UMTSJ*, I, p. 500.

only the head master; he was the only master at the school.

Immediately after his arrival, Janes began to test and enroll students for the school. Out of the five hundred applicants, only forty-six were accepted. Of this group, only half remained after the first year. The other half, unable to pass Janes's rigorous examinations, were asked to leave.²⁰ Those remaining were to assist Janes in his instruction of the next year's entering class, a class approximately double that of the first. This policy of using upper classmen to tutor lower classmen continued for two reasons: first, as a necessity. While Janes remained the only instructor, enrollment increased constantly. During both his third and fourth years at the academy, there were entering classes of forty or more. It was impossible for Janes to teach all classes. Therefore, upper classmen were delegated tutorial tasks under Janes's supervision.²¹

Janes also had more substantive educational reasons for the adoption of a monitorial as well as tutorial system. Both these systems, as well as his emphasis on self-study, he often said were meant "to direct the students to enlighten themselves . . . to direct the students to have minds that can rule themselves." "I am merely a guide," Janes said. "I don't teach, I only show you where to go."²²

One result of this method of instruction was an intensification of the normal leadership role played by upper classmen in all schools. Yōgakkō upper classmen were respected for their seniority in age (ages at the school ranged from 13 to 22) and for their position as mentors and interpreters of school rules and spirit.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ *KBKS*, p. 112; see also *NKSS*, II, 221-223.

²² *KBKS*, pp. 112-115. A list of all rules and regulations of the school is given in *NKSS*, II, pp. 221-223.

In effect, the system encouraged the emulation of all upperclassmen's beliefs and led easily to the spread of these beliefs throughout the school. As Tokutomi Sohō said in reference to his part in the Mount Hanaoka ceremony, "I was just thirteen or fourteen years old, seven or eight years younger than the upper classmen. I was, so to speak, one of the followers of the seniors. We, the juniors, blindly followed the upper classmen."²³

When Janes emphasized in his teaching the importance of individual character, he implicitly endorsed the emulation of the tutorial staff as well as of himself. His conduct set standards, and his monitors became models of these standards. The status of his model students became even more important since within the school individuals were judged by their ability rather than by the status their family had held in the domain. Students were seated by ability rather than by their samurai ranking. The conversion of the better students and the better upper classmen set a moral style for a good part of the academy and in effect set for the younger students a moral standard at odds with that of the elders of Kumamoto as a whole.

Whether by plan or accident, Janes successfully implemented the ideals of Thomas Arnold's educational system. In Kumamoto, students lived under strict house rules as well as under the supervision of the master and his tutors.²⁴ Janes lived near his students. He acted as friend, teacher, and moral guide. He hoped that the example of his character as well as his teaching would establish the ideals of the Christian gentleman.

²³ *UMTSJ*, I, 513-514.

²⁴ *NKSS*, II, 220-221.

Curriculum

Janes was initially engaged for three years; after the third year his contract was extended for another three. But in the beginning of his stay in Kumamoto he planned a four-year program. Instruction was given in English, mathematics, geography, history, physics, chemistry, psychology, and astronomy. The academy curriculum, it is interesting to see, was almost exactly the same as in the school of Ballagh and Brown.²⁵ Janes did not know Japanese and had no intention of learning it. Since all classes were to be given in English, during the first year he taught only reading, spelling, writing, and pronunciation. A spelling book, a Webster's dictionary, and a reader were handed to every student. For the entire first year students mainly learned the mechanics of English.²⁶

Janes pictured himself as moral preceptor as well as a guide to Western knowledge. Even during his first year at Kumamoto when he primarily taught English grammar, he was able by personal example to achieve both goals. He taught sternly and efficiently; he missed no classes nor did he take any vacations. He was inflexible in administering the rules. Classes began at 8 or 9 in the morning and continued with only a luncheon break until 4 or 5 in the afternoon. Students were tested frequently, and Janes exhorted them to long hours of self-study which he felt was the basis for developing individual character and independence. The key to Western development was the independent, ethical man. As we will see, Janes's teaching tied Westernization and Christianity to the character of such a man. Students who were lazy, he scathingly criticized; if they were slow to learn, "he taught them affection-

²⁵ *UMTSJ*, I, 46-47.

²⁶ *KBKS*, p. 112.

ately," and if they made quick progress, he praised them greatly.²⁷ He neither smoked nor drank, and he instituted dormitory rules which forbade the students to do so either.

Although the system was based on Janes's interpretation of the best educational ideas in the West, he also emphasized the importance of the samurai spirit. School rules exhorted the students to behave as samurai. They wore their two swords to class, and they were frequently reminded of their role as members of an elite.²⁸ For some, bushido became identified with Christianity. Both systems were concerned with ethics, commitment, and activity for a higher good.

Curriculum and Conversion

Domain officials in 1870 were at first unsure of the level of training to be offered at the Yōgakkō. Certainly they knew little about Western-style college or university training. Janes too, when he first arrived in Kumamoto, was unsure of the character of the school. Ages of the students varied greatly; so did their previous training. The youngest students were thirteen, the eldest twenty or twenty-two. Some students had received all their training in Confucian academies; a few had already begun their study of Western books. Janes's decision to give all instruction in English deferred any immediate need for determining the general grade level of education until the students had received elementary instruction in the language.

Once a decision was made, however, Kumamoto authorities and Janes conferred upon the school a

²⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 111-114.

²⁸ *NKSS*, p. 220. Other regulations said: students should always be polite; homosexuality is forbidden; no borrowing or lending of money; students are not allowed to go home during the semester.

status that went well with the experimental character of Western education in the domain. The Yōgakkō was to be a preparatory school, between elementary and university education. If possible the Yōgakkō would be converted into a college, but in 1871 it was simply a preparatory school. Janes's program of education was to provide an introduction to the West, to modernization, and finally to Christianity.

Ultimately it was not the academic level of the school but the needs of the students impelled to enter it that determined the curriculum. They sought practical means to political leadership for themselves and their old domain. "When we entered Kumamoto Yōgakkō . . . most students wanted to become politicians," Kozaki wrote in his autobiography. "When anyone asked us, 'What was your purpose?' most answered, 'I want to become a councilor of state.'"²⁹ This singleness of purpose, this ambition complemented their elders' feelings of distress at their inability to "join the central government" through either their own actions or the authority of their domain. Domain elders regretted their inability to act; older students spoke with great emotion of politics to their juniors, who among themselves could think of nothing but becoming councilors of state.³⁰ The problem of "how," the question of "when," were always present. In 1871 with the establishment of the school, all felt that a step toward the answer had been taken.

Undoubtedly Janes was at first unaware of the political turmoil in Kumamoto and among his students. His program of education merely met his employers' broad demands to "change present conditions" and bring fresh air into the culture of Kumamoto by introducing the practices and ideas of the

²⁹ Kozaki, *Reminiscences*, p. 26.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 26-27.

West.³¹ However, by relating all courses to practical questions of Western development, he did more than simply bring "practical training" to the domain. His teaching even before he spoke of Christianity was laden with Western cultural values. He saw Japan as backward ethically as well as intellectually and industrially. Thus, whatever he taught, whether it was astronomy, mathematics, history, or geography, was related to Western experience, Western achievement, and Western superiority. Janes was a cultural chauvinist, an academic simplifier and, as a result, a master propagandist. But that was what the Kumamoto school boys were most prepared to appreciate: achievement, simplification, and propaganda.

Janes did not discuss Christianity during his first three years in Kumamoto. Even if the religion had not been proscribed, the students' language competence was not capable of handling it. Of equal importance, the premature teaching of Christian doctrine might have raised unnecessary hostilities without contributing to evangelization. To Janes, Christianity was primarily an ethic that could be introduced by the demonstration of proper human conduct and the training of disciplined boys. Making men of good character was in essence making Christian men. In 1874 he made clear his reasons for imitating Arnold's Rugby School. "What I have tried to do is to direct the students to enlighten themselves and refine their morality."³² Abstention from alcohol and tobacco, and proper attitudes toward study were simply methods to lead students to ethical behavior and toward Christianity.

His role, however, was not merely to present

³¹ *KBKS*, p. 75.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 115.

Western ethics; he must also introduce and interpret the processes of development in the West, for its history and science were for Janes clear evidence of the truth of Christianity. Christianity provided the basis for Western culture as well as its spirit. Janes tried to lead his students to this view before discussing Christianity. His 1874 speech revealed his method and intent when he asked why he devoted himself to teaching. The answer was clear: "Since the opening of this school I realized that education will bring great benefits to the nation." If one wished to understand the rise of a nation, he continued, it was necessary to study the historical experience of Europe and America.³³ For Janes, a nation must emulate the West to modernize.

Other missionaries had assumed a similar relationship between Japanese development, Westernizing, and Christianity. In the 1850's the Reverend Williams had stated his belief in the inevitable rise of a bourgeoisie in Japan. Though his evidence was scant, he read into the appearance of a merchant class and the stirrings of public opinion in Japan an inevitable cry for a legislature. It was clear for Williams that Japanese modern history would parallel that of Western modern history, since he assumed that Western history, its progress and its development, was typical of the progress that all nations would follow, whatever their location and whatever their past. He shared with many of his nineteenth-century missionary colleagues a faith in a unilinear theory of progress. Christianity in his scheme was an integral part of the process. It neither preceded nor followed modernization, but rather accompanied it, being as inevitable a phenome-

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 116.

non of the modern state and as necessary a condition for its success as the rise of the bourgeoisie.

There is no doubt that Janes shared Williams' assumptions. Furthermore, Janes expressed his conviction in his lectures at the Yōgakkō while Williams' statements about Japanese development had only appeared in letters to his Western friends. All of Janes' courses had implicitly endorsed this view of progress, but in his lectures on history and physical geography he expressed these ideas more explicitly. He traced the history of the West from the great river valleys of Egypt and Mesopotamia to that of the modern world.³⁴ He laid down the principles to be acquired through a study of world history and then ranged through the histories of Rome, England, France, and the United States. Undoubtedly his lectures were general, but each course was supplemented by contemporary English-language texts.³⁵

Most students had studied Chinese and Japanese history before they entered the Yōgakkō. But these courses, many claimed, were boring. Undoubtedly many of them felt, as Fukuzawa often said of traditional history, that it was a dull recital of dynastic policies and traditional moral adages. Janes's classes were different: his theses were new and they held meaning for contemporary Japan.

Janes stressed development and change. At heart an evolutionist, he demonstrated in his course on physical geography to Ebina's fascination "the fact that the world had come through various ages before

³⁴ Notehelper, p. 25.

³⁵ *KBKS*, pp. 113-114. Janes's texts were: Parley and White, *World History*; Hume, *History of Rome*; Pinock, *History of France*; Goodrich, *British History*; Quackenbush, *American History*.

man was finally born into it.”³⁶ Moreover, Janes emphasized the importance of the historical experience of the West for modern Japan. In his nonacademic lectures he criticized the domain system as inefficient and lauded the modern state. He thus argued for the development of a modern nation state. Moreover, when teaching debate in speech classes he made his class memorize the speeches of outstanding American and British parliamentarians such as Burke, Webster, and Clay. Each Friday the students were required to declaim, and as Ebina said, they were especially asked to absorb the spirit of the speaker rather than his mere words and sentences. Janes had no doubts that in the near future Japan must have a legislature if it was to become a modern nation. “In the meantime,” he wrote, “it will be of great benefit to practice speeches, since in a national assembly speeches are of prime importance.”³⁷ Obviously he was saying that Japan must copy the West to enter the modern world. But the argument of necessity was made even more compelling by the force of his argument for the inevitability of historical development. Ebina, for one, was most impressed by the arguments. At this time, he was just beginning to be aware of the idea of progress. When he conveyed his discovery to Janes, Ebina was excited to find that such a theory already existed.³⁸

Studies in historical development were complemented by readings in *Investigation of Natural Laws* by G. P. Quackenbush and Norton and the study of physics.³⁹ The students were excited by this new world of learning. Janes not only gave new knowledge, he also gave it political relevance. Geography, for exam-

³⁶ Notehelper, p. 25.

³⁷ Watase, p. 84.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 81.

³⁹ *KBKS*, pp. 114-115.

ple, opened their eyes to new rivers, mountains, and countries in the world, but Janes also made clear how the West had used natural resources to industrialize. Japan too, he added, could become a strong industrial nation with its water power and coal.⁴⁰ The Practical Studies faction had said that to gain meaning principles must be put to practical use. Now the students saw the evidence of practical techniques in the success of the West, but what were the principles involved? Though all of this was exciting and important for the students' understanding of a modern nation, even more important was their discovery of the idea in Quackenbush's text that in the natural world everything happened according to natural laws, not according to chance.⁴¹ Janes pursued the subject further: if this was a world of order, not chance, was there not a creator who had ordered the world and its development? "Does not the perfect order of this universe in spite of its boundlessness suggest that there was one who presided over the universe?"⁴² It was on the basis of this historical and scientific evidence that Janes suggested that it was necessary to study Christianity. The question he posed was clear: if history is a story of development, how can it be understood, predicted, and used to one's advantage? The answer was to be just as clear: to know the Bible was to realize the order that the creator imposed on the world. By becoming Christian, one could understand the nature of existence and be able to play a creative role in the world.

Yokoi Shōnan had already said that Shinto and Buddhist deities were absurd, and furthermore, "Confucianism is no more than literary art."⁴³ He had said

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 171-172.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 119.

⁴³ *NKNS*, p. 70.

in *Idle Talk at Numayama* [*Numayama Kanwa*]: “Study of the principles of nature is necessary to know the reason inherent in things.”⁴⁴ Janes had given the reason that was inherent in things and had given it historical fact and logic.

Conversion reflected the use of this historical paradigm. Kozaki, for example, after his first year of study at the Yōgakkō, remained convinced that Confucianism was superior to Christianity. He was content to study only Western techniques. Certainly, he said, his reason did not allow him to believe in religion by faith alone. Gradually he became impressed by Janes’s sincerity and faith, but this merely led him to doubt Confucianism; it did not convince him of the necessity of becoming a Christian. Finally, when he did break with Confucianism, it was with the belief that Christianity was the perfection of the spirit of Confucianism and the teaching of Confucius.⁴⁵ As he later was to say, Confucianism had served well in its time, but it had been only a preparation for the true religion, Christianity.

Kozaki’s conversion reflects the importance which a developmental view of history played in the conversion of the Kumamoto band. Also, paradoxically, Kozaki, like Ebina and others of Kumamoto, converted because he had imbibed well of his earlier Confucian tradition. Kozaki and Ebina testified to the relationship of tradition to Christianity. Christianity, Kozaki said, was the perfection of Confucianism; and Ebina wrote in reference to his own conversion, “I owe much to Kumazawa Banzan!”⁴⁶ One view of this relationship suggests a similar view of a higher being, God, in both *ōyōmei* and Christianity. Takeda Kiyoko has said

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 73-75.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 75.

that conversion to Christianity from *ōyōmei* was made easier by the transposition of the concept *tentei* and *jōtei* into God. Before this, *tentei* and *jōtei* were interpreted simply as an impersonal heaven or reason.⁴⁷ For most Confucian philosophers, the concept “God” was superfluous. They believed that the universe existed and grew because of the unceasing changes and interactions of the cosmos. *Jōtei* and *tentei* were used to denote these natural principles.⁴⁸ But in Tokugawa Japan, these concepts had gradually begun to change meaning. The Practical Studies group, for example, reinterpreted the tradition. Heaven, Yokoi Shōnan had said, was something more than reason, it possessed a personal character.⁴⁹ More than one convert suggested a similar idea. Matsumura Kaisuke, for example, wrote in *Shinkō gojūnen* [*My belief of fifty years*]: “Isn’t the so-called God of Christianity called *tentei* or *jōtei*? Therefore I must have believed in the existence of God since childhood.”⁵⁰

Ebina used this new explanation of *jōtei* as a defense for his conversion. He used tradition to explain away apparent apostasy as well as his conversion. “When I learned Christianity I thought that the *jōtei* taught in Confucianism and the God taught in Christianity were the same thing; they reduced to the same source.”⁵¹ Conversion, indeed, according to Ebina, was not apostasy, but a logical extension of *ōyōmei* ideas. Tradition was used in an untraditional way. Thus, values of the historical past were identified with development in the historical present.

Practical Studies, Ebina said, helped him sur-

⁴⁷ NKNS, p. 71.

⁴⁸ Fung Yu-Lan, *History of Chinese Philosophy* (Princeton, 1953) trans. by Derk Bodde, II, 638-643.

⁴⁹ NKNS, p. 70.

⁵⁰ Sumiya, *Kindai Nihon no keisei . . .*, p. 30.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

mount many difficulties of conversion. Whereas *shushi* Confucianism ordered unconditional acceptance of parental authority — “if we remonstrate with our parents three times and cannot make them listen to our advice . . . we must obey them”⁵² — the Practical Studies school allowed him to follow his own conscience. Ebina was in effect explaining his own estrangement and his alienation from traditional parental authority. He used tradition to flaunt parental authority in order to follow a proscribed religion. *Oyōmei* offered a conceptual link between the idea of God in Christianity, the personified creator, and the Confucian past. In this sense, Confucianism gave the Kumamoto band the intellectual equipment with which they could understand the idea of God, but more important it gave them a useful intellectual tie to the past. Though the concept of *jōtei* was useful in the comprehension of the Christian God, the idea of *jōtei* did not make it necessary to seek the Christian God. It was Ebina’s sense of loneliness and his aimlessness that led him to seek a new authority. It was when he realized that “it was my duty to make God my Lord . . . that [my] conscience gained authority.”⁵³ To accept Christianity was to accept a new authority and a new lordship. What gave impetus to the acceptance of the new lord was the apparent success of Western history and development.

Christian identification with Confucianism was also made on practical grounds. There was an easily understood relationship between the practical Confucian spirit of the Practical Studies school and the Christianity taught by Janes. Christianity, Kozaki said, was an extension of Confucianism, and as the Mount Hanaoka oath declared in 1876, Christianity

⁵² Watase, pp. 87-91.

⁵³ Chapter III, pp. 58-59.

provided a key to understanding and practicing the ideas and practices of the West. "Since we have been studying Christianity we have recognized many things. . . . Thus, at last, we now want to spread it in order to enlighten the people. There are, however, so many who do not know the excellence of Christianity and they stubbornly continue to observe old ideas. . . . At this moment, if one wishes to serve the nation, then one must stand firmly, sacrifice one's life and explain how Christianity is fair and right. This is what we seriously want to do."⁵⁴ In the oath, Christianity was identified with the nation and the development and administration of the nation. Conversion was identified with political action, practical acts, and with Westernization. Because of its identification with Western historical development Christianity was associated with Western practice.

In preaching Christianity Janes had declared that the Bible offered insight into the modern world. After 1875 when teaching English literature and history, he said that the foundation of European and American civilization was the spirit of Christianity. To understand these civilizations it was necessary to read and understand the Bible. To understand the mystery of the universe and its creation, it was necessary to know and worship God.⁵⁵

Janes had convinced his students of the important role Christianity played in the historical evolution of Western civilization before they swore allegiance to the faith on Mount Hanaoka. The Mount Hanaoka oath indicates the identification in the minds of the Kumamoto band of the secular concerns of Westernization and the spiritual aims of Christianization. There was neither contradiction nor duality between

⁵⁴ *KBSK*, p. 121.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 119.

the concerns of the spiritual man and that of man on earth. The band clearly said that to be a patriot one must be a Christian; "if one holds the spirit to serve the nation, then one must stand firmly, sacrifice one's life and then explain how Christianity is fair and right."⁵⁶ Indeed, one could only serve the nation by being a Christian.

The association of patriotism with conversion marks an extraordinary change in the aims and means of the Kumamoto student body. Even though the Meirokusha intellectual, Nakamura Masanao, had associated Westernization with ethical and intellectual reform, and even though the doyen of Practical Studies, Yokoi Shōnan, had at times linked the borrowing of Western techniques with a need to assimilate Western ideas, they represented only a minority opinion. Before Janes entered Kumamoto, domain leadership as well as most of the students at Yōgakkō had become convinced merely of the superiority of Western techniques. As a student motto declared, "Only Western industrial civilization is necessary to make Japan strong."⁵⁷ The students would concede nothing more to the West. Janes could teach them Western techniques, but they would convince Janes of the superiority of Japanese spirit. Once in the school many said, "We thought we would teach Janes morality and spirit. We had little idea of receiving it from him." Kozaki, moreover, took every opportunity to preach to Janes the virtues of the Confucian way and the Confucian heaven. Janes must see, Kozaki said, that "all came from heaven, to obey heavenly law is the supreme way of man."⁵⁸

Because the traditional samurai role was defined

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 121.

⁵⁷ *UMTSJ*, I, 499.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 500.

in terms of Confucian principles, it acted as a standing refutation of Western ethics. Nothing was more important than duty for a samurai. In *Shido* [Way of the samurai], Yamaga Sokō⁵⁹ — an important Neo-Confucian philosopher and historian of the early Tokugawa, who lived from 1622 to 1685 — had said that the Confucian ethic was the foundation of bushido. Though “letters and arts were both praised . . . the essence of the teaching was the necessity of individual sacrifice.” The samurai must be able to discern what is of greatest value in the world; of greatest importance was the lord, then in descending order, father, older brother, teacher, and husband. Above all, Yamaga said, the “country is more important than person.”⁶⁰

Young samurai entering the Kumamoto Yōgakkō were moved by the same spirit and objectives. Kozaki spoke of his future aims when entering the school: “I decided . . . to set as my aim the establishment in the future of the rule of right [*ōdō*] and to become a responsible person and adjust the confused society that existed before and after the Meiji Restoration.”⁶¹ Exactly these desires motivated others to enter the Yōgakkō. Moreover, the new converts used almost the same terminology to explain their conversion as Kozaki had in entering the *Yōgakkō*. The members of the Kumamoto band on Mount Hanaoka vowed their willingness to serve the nation as well as their Lord God. Samurai determination and commitment remained the same; rather, there was a transfer from one lordship to another, and from one definition of proper political objectives to another. It was the samurai concept of duty toward the lord that later obliged Ebina to make

⁵⁹ David Magarey, Earl, *Emperor and Nation in Japan* (Seattle, 1964), pp. 37-39.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 42-43.

⁶¹ *UMTSJ*, II, p. 114.

the Christian God his Lord. The same sincerity and a similar commitment to political action identified preconversion samurai activities with postconversion samurai beliefs. The Christian commitment of the samurai can easily be likened to bushido sincerity. As the first proposition of the Mount Hanaoka oath declared, "Everyone who comes to believe is to promise each other to be his brother, to advise each other, remove wrong, bring about the good, and then carry out what he believes."⁶² The converts themselves asserted that by converting they were following the traditional virtues. Shortly after their avowal of faith on Mount Hanaoka, their student opponents charged them with disloyalty to Hosokawa and with a lack of reverence for the Yōgakkō. At a hurriedly called school convocation, Ebina spoke in defense of the converts. "Our commitment to Christianity was a commitment to truth. By becoming Christians we did what students at this school must do."⁶³

For a Westerner, their commitment and the sincerity of their conversion became apparent in the tenacity with which they held on to their beliefs when attacked by parents, elders, and classmates. But when Ebina used "commitment" and "sincerity," he was not referring merely to the intensity of their beliefs. He saw conversion in terms of traditional acts of virtue and duty, and he saw loyalty, sincerity, commitment in terms of their cultural significance. Ebina stated that the crisis of the samurai arose early in the Meiji period, when he felt he had no one "to whom he could give his life."⁶⁴ In the past, he said, "a retainer gave his life for his lord, the lord from whom he received a

⁶² *KBKS*, p. 121.

⁶³ Watase, p. 117.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 56.

stipend.”⁶⁵ Without this relationship, he as well as other samurai had no one to whom “we could truly sacrifice our lives,”⁶⁶ as Ebina wrote. In converting, he was restoring the traditional relationship of lord and retainer, with all the duty, loyalty, sincerity, and commitment that relationship involved. Conversion restored his identity by restoring his social status. Since Ebina’s sense of social superiority was as much psychological as social, the loss of his lord had left his life “aimless.” But when Christian ideas once again made the world intelligible — predictable and controllable — for him and authority in it had been assured by his service to God, he felt psychologically secure and socially superior.

Ebina’s conversion indicates that the perception of an identity crisis for a samurai was established by his training. Certainly the general symptoms characteristic of all identity crises can be found in Ebina’s adolescence. He felt “lonely,” his life was “aimless,” and he sought for a “brightness” to light up his life.⁶⁷ But, significantly, Ebina felt that it was his “loss of a lord” whom he could serve that left him aimless. He had been taught to an obedient subject; as he later said, “Obedience was a principle of our youth.”⁶⁸ Samurai obedience, however, was specifically directed, with obedience to the lord by far the most significant dependency relationship. The samurai received from this relationship social status as well as social and psychological security; the destruction of this relationship was a social catastrophe and thus a personal disaster. After the Restoration, Ebina desperately needed to recover his position in society, a position dependent

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 65.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 66.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 65.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 113.

upon the traditional relationship of retainer to one and only one lord.

The significance of this loss and its relevance to Ebina's conversion is pictured in his own description of his conversion. As we will see, Ebina used Christian terminology, but he used it in the imagery of a traditional Confucian relationship. His conversion took place at one of Janes's evening Bible classes. That evening Janes chose as his discussion topic "Prayer and the Bible."⁶⁹ Ebina had long felt that prayer, especially to Buddhist and Shinto gods, was stupid. No samurai, he said, could take prayer seriously;⁷⁰ obviously, he inferred, it was demeaning for a samurai to pray. But Janes's insistence on the importance of prayer interested and troubled Ebina. Janes began his lecture with a command: "Prayer is our duty, it is an obligation owed the creator."⁷¹ Ebina was immediately provoked by Janes's evocation of duty. First, he was startled—"Duty! It sounded as thunder."⁷² He felt awakened by a sense of responsibility:

A sudden bright light came through a window in my mind, thunder boomed upon me; it struck me apart. Prayer is a Duty! It was wrong that I did not pray. My spirit was moved, my whole self was overthrown. I prayed!⁷³

Ebina, of course, described in classic Christian terms a second birth. Certainly the tortures preceding his conversion indicate the need to resolve a spiritual crisis. He felt that he was being torn apart by an inner struggle: one part sought truth, another obstructed

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 96.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 95.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 96.

⁷² *Ibid.*

⁷³ *Ibid.*

it, and a third sought to harmonize it.⁷⁴ Peace was impossible. His only hope, he said, was to grasp "heavenly principles with very natural and sincere feelings: conscience must be the springboard to such recognition."⁷⁵ Ebina had reduced his social crisis to a personal crisis of identity; thus, when he described his conversion he indicated the one aspect of the Christian relationship to God that was most significant to him: Duty.

It was in fact the need to serve that brought Ebina to his spiritual crisis and to Christianity. Throughout his life at the Yōgakkō before the conversion, he repeatedly described his loss and his search for duty. He had often watched Janes pray, but it was difficult for him to understand the relationship to God which Janes created through prayer. At the evening Bible class, Janes made it clear: "Through prayer," he said, "we associate with God."⁷⁶ Ebina instantly realized that the relationship of man to God was guided by man's duty to God.⁷⁷ *Ōyōmei* ideas had already suggested the possibility of a being who existed in heaven. Ebina recognized in this relationship a model of the one which he had with his lord before the events of the Meiji Restoration had interrupted it. By relating the principles which Janes had been demonstrating in discussions of physical geography, mathematics and history with his own place in the world, he was able to restore his identity. His conversion marked a reconciliation of his needs and his past with the new principles.

Thus he said,

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 90-95.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 90, 131.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 96.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 96-97.

WESTERNIZATION AND CONVERSION

It was a great shock! Is it not wonderful to be so associated with God? I had been seeking a relationship with men of knowledge. I wanted to know the emperor, and now I could live in association with God in Heaven. It was his great gift to me. God is the majesty of the cosmos. By prayer I could be related to Him. My spirit grew!⁷⁸

Ebina found “the Restoration of his state of mind, his conscience restored and his selfish mind defeated.”⁷⁹ With his position as retainer to a lord once more secure, he felt less troubled. “Harmony now prevailed.” Now with conscience intact, he could be “sincere,” and he understood his Duty. Now “I could ask everything of God; I became his servant. The relationship of lord and retainer was now that of God and me. I began, as the Bible said, ‘a new life.’ Now a servant of Christ, I grew to be a new man.”⁸⁰ For Ebina the crisis was over.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 84.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 97.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

5

TOWARD SOCIAL CRITICISM

SEVEN years after the proscription on Christianity was withdrawn, Protestant churches began a rapid growth that was to be sustained for almost a decade. Numerous churches were founded throughout the country, congregations flourished everywhere, and Christian tracts of all kinds were in demand.¹ In Kyoto, for example, popular bookstores willingly stocked Bibles, Christian tracts, and ethical writings, in both English and Japanese. Within a month of putting Christian materials on sale, the leading bookstore in Kyoto had sold sixty-two copies of the gospel, nine copies of the New Testament in Chinese translation, and forty-five other tracts. During the period, church attendance was markedly higher than even their growing membership would indicate. Hundreds of non-Christian auditors attended church services, and thousands more

¹ Kuyama, pp. 115-116.

were attracted to the numerous symposiums and lectures sponsored and conducted by Christians.

By May of 1883 the editors of the leading Japanese Christian journal of the time were so impressed by the attendance and fervor of these meetings that they wrote, "Christianity will be able to win a victory within eight years."² Police officials who attended the same meetings as government observers were also impressed by the intense expression of Christian belief and the increase of attendance at the meetings. One official warned the government of the dangers of subversion stemming from the ever-increasing evangelical passion that blazed openly at meetings. He feared that Christian evangelical fervor and Christian belief might easily flow into republican militancy.

The pace of institutional growth was so rapid that we cannot discount the editor's statement as the overoptimistic passion of a believer or the fearful warning of the official as merely another indication of the paranoia of the government. Membership, for example, from 1883 to 1885, jumped more than 120 percent.³ In 1879 there had already been 1,617 believers and 44 churches. Now in 1885 there were 11,000 Christians and 168 churches.⁴

Attendance at church-sponsored functions had grown ever since the withdrawal of the anti-Christian placards in 1873, but from 1880 on every meeting hall was crowded. In 1878 the first nation-wide meeting of Protestants was held in Tokyo. Twenty-seven representatives of twelve locals and 500 other interested observers attended.⁵ Two years later, 4,000 dedicated Christians attended the Third Nation-Wide Christian

² *Ibid.*, p. 125.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Sumiya, *Kindai Nihon no keisei . . .*, p. 95.

⁵ Kuyama, p. 115.

Meeting in the same city. In 1878 Tamura Naoomi, the famous Christian social reformer, was impressed when a relatively small hall was packed to hear a Christian oratorical meeting. But in 1881 at a similar meeting in Ueno Park in Tokyo, 10,000 people attended. All Tokyo, Tamura reported, was visibly impressed; he felt that "this meeting breathed a very fresh air into Christianity in Tokyo and became a key to the new world of Christianity in Japan."⁶ Of course, Tokyo was the cosmopolitan center of Japan. Students interested in the West flocked to the city. But Tokyo was not an exception. On October 12-13, 1880, shortly after he had been ordained, Kozaki Hiromichi spoke in Gumma prefecture before a thousand men and women.⁷ In Kyoto in 1880, Niijima Jō, founder and president of Dōshisha, baptized twenty-seven. In the next year, in response to a Buddhist anti-Christian convocation, he organized Kyoto's first Christian public meeting. Four thousand attended.⁸ The Osaka *Nippon*, not a particularly pro-Christian newspaper, commented in an editorial column upon the impact of the meeting. "Is this a current tendency due to the power of God or that of human energy? In this center of Shinto and Buddhism, that this happens is evidence of the growing freedom of the mind in Japan."⁹ Four years later Dōshisha became the center of a great revivalistic outburst. More than 200 students bore Christian witness and were baptized. Kyoto became the staging area of a great evangelical revival that soon spread throughout Japan. Although almost every student at Dōshisha wished to leave the school and spread the gospel throughout the land, Niijima convinced

⁶ Tamura, pp. 90-91.

⁷ Watanabe, p. 176.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 153.

⁹ *Ibid.*

most of them that they must remain at the school to study in order to prepare themselves for the greater future tasks of the ministry. But Niijima permitted three of the students to travel and evangelize as representatives of the school. Even they were only following in the steps of many earlier graduates who had already preached the gospel and founded thriving churches in the prefectures of Okayama, Gumma, Hiroshima, Joshū, and on the island of Kyushu.¹⁰

During the same period, Dōshisha grew into a major educational institution. After lengthy negotiations with the Meiji government, Niijima had received permission to found a Christian-sponsored school in the Kansai area. But the mayors of both Kobe and Osaka would not allow him to establish a school in their cities. Finally he turned to Kyoto. As soon as the Buddhist clergy of Kyoto heard of Niijima's intentions to establish a school in their city, they roused the Kyoto populace against Niijima. But in Kyoto Niijima gained the support of influential members of the city council, and in 1875 he received their permission to found Dōshisha. In that first year, only eight students attended its classes. None of them were Christians nor were any of them interested in Christianity. They were barbers, former policemen, and blind masseurs who had entered hoping to pick up English in order to help themselves in their trade. When the Kumamoto band arrived in Kyoto, they were shocked by the entire lot. Kozaki, with little Christian charity, described them as "a rubbish pile full of all uncleanness. The majority were such a rascalion lot that we gazed on them in amazement, seeking vainly for words with which to describe

¹⁰ Kuyama, p. 125.

them."¹¹ Within three years, however, 98 students from 21 prefectures were enrolled, and among them were more than 20 members of the Kumamoto band who came to Dōshisha after leaving the Yōgakkō. By the mid-eighties 275 students attended the normal and theological schools, of whom 205 were professing Christians.¹² By 1888, 670 students were enrolled, three-fourths in the five-year collegiate course and the others in the Theology School. Moreover, due to rising academic standards at the school, one-third of the applicants in 1888 were rejected.

Within that same period, Dōshisha had added to its normal and theological courses a special Girls' Secondary School, a Nursing School, and a three-months "short course" in general studies. In 1875 Dōshisha was the only Christian-founded school offering an advanced education, but with ten years of its founding four other Christian secondary schools and colleges were established; and by 1890, forty-four special schools for girls' education had been created.¹³ By the end of the decade of the eighties all were prospering.

From these schools, especially from Dōshisha in the earliest period, emerged the Japanese Christians who took over the pulpits of the foreign missionaries, founded new congregations, and led the great revivalistic meetings of the decade. Dōshisha's growth, therefore, not only reflected the growing interest in Christianity, but in great part guided its interest by sending out a native clergy whose intellectual commitment and passion attracted the attention of the community.

¹¹ Paul F. Baller, Jr., "The American Board and the Doshisha, 1875-1900" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Education Department, Yale University, 1947), p. 62.

¹²*Ibid.*, pp. 73, 87.

¹³ Hitomi, p. 342; Kuyama, p. 121.

Every summer Dōshisha students went out on the evangelical circuit responding in some cases to requests by interested persons, but more often going on their own initiative into virgin areas to spread the gospel. In 1877 Niijima with the assistance of a few students extended his evangelization outside of Kyoto, Osaka and Kobe into the whole of the Kansai area. In the same year, Ebina Danjō, through Niijima's assistance, received an invitation to preach in the town of Annaka in Gumma prefecture. Throughout the summer of 1878, Dōshisha students streamed into the Kansai area, preaching at already established churches, founding new churches, and baptizing new converts. The same year Kanamori Tsurin traveled through Okayama prefecture proselytizing and converting. In many cases these young men brought Christianity into areas where missionaries had not yet gone and where missionaries were forbidden by law to enter. Every fall a few more students from these areas, eager to enter Dōshisha, would appear in Kyoto. After one summer's preaching in Tokyo by Ebina, Kozaki, and Niijima, about thirty students from Tokyo Imperial University, including Onishi Hajime, later to become one of Japan's leading philosophers as well as an important Christian apologist, left the government university and applied to enter Dōshisha. In 1883, after a successful mission into the region near the Amāgi church in Okayama, Komeyama Noboru sent three young men back to Kyoto to enter Dōshisha.¹⁴ Dōshisha's growth, therefore, is not merely a reflection of the increasing interest in Christianity in Japan; it also indicates the ever accelerating process by which Japanese replaced foreign missionaries in the leadership of the Church and the importance of the new leadership in

¹⁴ Watanabe, pp. 168-175.

the evangelization movement of the eighteen eighties.

The era of spectacular Christian growth in Japan began just after the first ordained Japanese entered their pulpits. On June 12, 1879, Dōshisha graduated its first theological class; it was, in fact, Dōshisha's first graduating class. Every one of the fifteen graduates was a member of the Kumamoto band who left the Yōgakkō after conversion and entered Dōshisha in order to continue his theological studies. A year before, in 1878, the young men who had been converted by Ballagh in Yokohama and then had founded the Yokohama Church were also ordained. Thus, within the same year the original converts at Yokohama and the Kumamoto band became preachers, and the first great wave of evangelization by Japanese began. From Yokohama, Oshikawa Masayoshi went to preach in Niigata, and Uemura Masahisa, Tamura Naomi, and Ibuka Kajinosuke went to Tokyo where they led parishes respectively at Shitaya, Ginza, and Kojimachi.¹⁵ Uchimura Kanzō from Sapporo was already actively involved in Christian work within that city.¹⁶ Soon Kozaki Hiromichi joined the three in Tokyo and began preaching in Kyobashi. Wada and Koda also went to Tokyo, Wada as a teacher and Koda as a preacher. Their classmates dispersed throughout the country. Ebina went to Annaka, Yokoi founded a church in Imaji, Kanamori Tsurin continued his evangelical work in Okayama, and Ukita Kazutami went from Kyoto to a new church in Osaka. Both Shimomura and Fuwa returned to Kyushu: Fuwa stopped at Fukuoka to continue Nijima's work with the rebels of the Satsuma rebellion, and Shimomura went home to Kumamoto to carry out the work that the band had

¹⁵ Kuyama, p. 116.

¹⁶ Takeda, "*Rikugo Zasshi*," p. 109.

left when going to Dōshisha.¹⁷ Three others, Morita, Yamazaki, and Ichikawa, remained to teach at Dōshisha, and Miyagawa and Kato became instructors at the Dōshisha Girls' School.¹⁸

The efforts of these men transformed the Christian mission and community from an isolated and alien outpost led by foreigners into an influential community of intellectuals, critics, and teachers centered on a national church led by native preachers.

Among the nations of Asia, only Japan emerged with an important native clergy which had status and prestige. In China and India converts were of peasant stock. The upper strata of society, the literati and Brahmins, rejected Christianity and opposed its introduction into the country. Japan was different; samurai became Christians — it was they who by 1880 brought Christianity to all of Japan.

In the other nations of Asia it was easy to despise the evangelists as foreigners, intruders, and imperialists, and their converts as illiterate, unthinking "running dogs" of the invaders. In Japan this was impossible. The samurai were members of the traditional ruling elite, literate and conscious of their role as leaders of their society. Protestant Christianity in Japan was important because of the men who became Christians.

But it is not sufficient, in explaining the influence of Protestantism in Japan, to say that a native clergy, even drawn from the elite, replaced the foreign missionary. Japanese Protestantism could have become parochial and socially disinterested, as did the Japanese Catholic and Greek Orthodox communities. When, however, samurai received Protestantism through the Confucian framework, they assumed Christianity to

¹⁷ Watanabe, p. 211; Kuyama, p. 117.

¹⁸ Watanabe, p. 156.

be the historically necessary supplement to Confucianism. For them, Christianity had historical and social relevance. Samurai like those from the Kumamoto band found in Christianity a theory of development that was morally satisfying. Protestant Christianity was important to the converts because they found in it a social and moral theory feeding their hopes that they could continue to be leaders of their society. In 1880 the editors of the *Rikugo Zasshi* addressed themselves to this point in their initial editorial thus: "We have learned about Christianity and confirmed that it is the spirit of civilization. We have planned therefore to interpret and circulate the doctrine to the world."¹⁹

With the appearance of a native clergy in the late seventies, Christianity began to be absorbed into the intellectual life of Japan. The leading political and social journal of the period 1880-1890, *Rikugo Zasshi*, was founded by Christians, but read by many members of the intelligentsia, non-Christian as well as Christian. The editors of the journal did not restrict themselves to discussions of parochial Christian problems. They discussed science, politics, philosophy, and most of all, the future of Japan. To these men, as to most Christians, Christianity was pertinent and essential to any discussion of modern thought and Japan's modernization. From the editorial board of the journal emerged a number of the most important critical social thinkers in Japan. One of the early converts, Tokutomi Sohō, became a leading social critic and edited one of the most important journals in Japan, the *Kokumin no Tomo* [The nation's friend], in the late eighties and early nineties. Another early convert, a leading Presbyterian minister, Uemura Masahisa,

¹⁹ "Hakkō no shui" [Our intention in publishing]. This was the lead article of the first issue of the *Rikugo Zasshi*. It is reprinted in full in *UMTSJ*, III, 420-426.

was a leader of the literary revolution, and a third Christian leader, Nijima Jō, was one of the most important educators in Japan.

Few in Japan ignored or could ignore the Christians. The growth of their schools, the extension of their programs to reform prisons, found orphanages, and abolish prostitution, the success of their lecture series, the sale of their books, certainly suggests the extent of their social interest and the intensity of their influence. In addition, many leading non-Christian intellectuals made Christianity the subject of attack or approbation. Whether or not their opinions were favorable, they always had something to say about its importance. The government constantly shifted its attitude toward Christianity. Its initial hostility gave way to temperate endorsement, followed in turn by an all-out assault to destroy the influence of Christianity and the Christians. In the course of the onslaught, Christian teachers lost their jobs and Christian bureaucrats saw promotions pass them by. The government watched Christian convocations closely, registering speakers and auditors alike as suspicious persons. But in spite of, or perhaps because of, the hostility of the government, the Christians remained important, and young men entered Christian schools, converted, and in their turn became leaders of the Christian Church in Japan.

Dōshisha, in particular, produced not only men like Kozaki and Ebina but also, for a number of decades, a succession of others like Abe Isoo, Murai Tomoyoshi, and Kishimoto Nobutake. They shared the pulpits of the earlier clergymen, taught at the Christian universities and elsewhere, and took over the editorial tasks of journals like the *Rikugo Zasshi*. Some of them became leading social critics of the early twentieth century and the first socialists in Japan. Whether

socialist or antisocialist, they drew sanctions for their programs of social criticism from Protestantism. As programs of social criticism developed, Japanese Christianity itself was transformed from what was first considered a supplement to Confucianism to what became a new theory of society.

The Christian Critique: Argument

Importation of the YMCA movement was one of the means by which the young ministers brought Christianity to society and from which a new social criticism developed. In early 1880 Kanda Nobutake returned from the United States with news of the YMCA movement. Kozaki, who had already been introduced by Sugiyama Tokichi to one member of the Yokohama band, Uemura Masahisa, met with Kanda, Tamura, Ibuka, Hiroiwa Nobuyasu, Genra Yujiro, and Yoshioka Koki, all young Japanese ministers preaching in Tokyo, to discuss the formation of a similar YMCA organization in Tokyo. They all approved, formed the Tokyo "Y," and elected Kozaki president. Independently, Kanda set off to the Kansai area to found a similar organization in Osaka. Almost immediately the leaders of the Tokyo "Y" began to hold a monthly open discussion series on Christianity, politics, and science at Iwamura Hall in Asakusa. The series was an immediate success. In a two-day meeting in 1880, four thousand attended the first session and three thousand others the second. In 1881 the group held meetings in Ueno Park and Shintomiya Hall. Three or four thousand people came to the latter indoor meeting while about ten thousand interested listeners jammed into Ueno Park. At each meeting seven or eight speakers addressed the throng.²⁰

²⁰ Sumiya, *Kindai Nihon no keisei . . .*, pp. 77-78.

Most of the Tokyo intelligentsia to whom the lectures were directed were caught up in discussions of political theory and the liberal movement. It was the heyday of the early political parties. Many were also excited by the discussion of Darwinian theory. It was to precisely all these points that Japanese Christians wished to address themselves. The YMCA symposiums were debates rather than lectures. Professor Edward S. Morse, an American zoologist teaching at Tokyo University, was invited to discuss Darwinian evolutionary theory. He discussed evolution and followed it up with an attack on Christianity. Immediately, Uemura and Kozaki offered a rebuttal to his contentions. They spoke of the alliance of science and Christianity. Indeed, Uemura believed that modern science was a result of the development of Protestantism. They, in their turn, attacked atheism. Discussions developed on politics and freedom. Tamura, for example, lectured on "True Liberty" and Kozaki discussed the meaning of patriotism in a lecture entitled "Love of Country." The debates were eagerly followed. Tamura Naomichi described them as "passionate, violent, and even warlike. Half of the audience supported the Christians, the other half their opponents. When we attended the meetings, both speakers and listeners were under extreme tension as if all of us were going into a battlefield."²¹ To these young men, Christianity was pertinent and essential to any discussion of modern thought and Japan's modernization.

Spurred by the success of the lecture series, in November 1880, the group decided to publish the lectures as well as their own writings, and with added assistance of Uchimura Kanzō and Tsuda Sen founded the journal *Rikugo Zasshi*. During the next decade

²¹ Tamura, pp. 88-91.

the *Rikugo Zasshi* became the most widely read Japanese journal of social and intellectual criticism.

In discussing the function of the magazine in the first issue, the editors expressed their belief in the effective role Christianity could play in Japan. After a general statement of their intention to publicize Christianity as the "spirit of civilization," they described their program more specifically: "With the establishment of the Youth Assembly (YMCA) in Tokyo, in which we aim to teach morality and study the truth of Christianity, our plans matured. As a result, we decided to publish this journal."²²

This association of Christianity with Japan's modernization, if new to the Tokyo intelligentsia, differed in no way from the Kumamoto band's oath on Mount Hanaoka. The social assumptions of the editors of the *Rikugo Zasshi* were already apparent in the reasons given for the conversion. Conversion and now political and social criticism were impelled by the same need to reestablish a stable social order. However, while restoring their own sense of identity the editors also constructed a new framework of understanding. Now, in the *Rikugo Zasshi*, they generalized their feelings into social commentary and criticism. In the same first issue, Uemura and Kozaki established the reason for social criticism and the objectives of social reconstruction. "In order to maintain society we have to establish order. . . . There must be some force which governs this order and gives it balance." While crediting the Restoration with small successes ("Literature, medicine, politics, and law have made progress"), they found serious failures ("customs and morality have not only failed to progress, they have retrogressed").²³ This was essentially a restatement of

²² *UMTSJ*, III, 420.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 421.

their past assessment of the effects of the Restoration; in fact, at this point their criticism was no different from that of many of the traditional thinkers who disparaged the modern and called for a return to Confucian morality. But while the basis of criticism remained socio-moral, and thus traditional, they gave new content to morality, and thus gave birth to a new tradition. Their phraseology was innocent—"Christianity must advance this backward morality"²⁴—but the implications were revolutionary.

Conversion had been effected in terms of tradition. But, in the transposition, Christianity assumed the significance given tradition. Kozaki regarded Confucianism as "backward morality": it was antiquated and socially irrelevant. As the editorial argued:

In our country there have been many forces that have governed our minds. The most influential has been the idea of filial piety and loyalty [*chūkō*]. The idea must have been good and beautiful, but it is not supreme. Since our civilization has progressed and many relationships in society have changed, the idea of filial piety and loyalty can no longer be the best idea by which present relations in society should be governed. For example, the relationship between lord and subject has now become that of government and people. The idea of loyalty has now changed to patriotism.²⁵

Kozaki and Uemura no longer found it necessary to suggest, as they had when converting, the resemblance of Christianity to Confucianism. They saw Christianity as the perfection of Confucianism, but this implied renewed social consciousness and a renaissance of moral values. They began to defend Christianity not in terms of tradition but of its relevance

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 424.

to change. There was a continued need to elucidate ideas by which "relations in society should be governed," but the process which had led to conversion was now inverted. They wrote:

The feudalistic morality of filial piety and loyalty must be replaced by ethics based upon mutual love and equality of human rights. True religion is necessary in order to sustain new morality.²⁶

In saying this, they were using the authority of a non-societal, absolute, and supreme source to justify their advocacy of a new morality and a new sociomoral system.

Furthermore, they distinguished between Western civilization and its institutions and Western morality. They discussed the West and its institutions not as models to be copied, as the *Jiyū Minken* (Popular Rights movement) advocates did, but as one possible expression of the virtues of true religion. "Christianity has been misunderstood. . . . Behold present European nations. In those countries where Christianity flourishes, culture, learning, national power and patriotism and the relationships between parents and children are most strikingly advanced."²⁷ In pointing to Western developments, they were not simply establishing the possibilities of historical parallels or calling for the emulation of Western institutions. They were indicating that the superiority of the West rested in its superior moral system. Christianity, rather than being a hindrance to national sovereignty and strength as Fukuzawa claimed, was a bulwark of national power. Rather than destroying the peace of the community, as Inoue Enryō and other Confucianists

²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 424-426.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 425.

claimed, Christianity was a source of public health. Western strength rested on a new moral code and on changed social relations.

Once they distinguished between the ethical basis of Western civilization and some of its institutional results, they could criticize the Popular Rights movement and — in effect — all the political efforts of the time, because of their ephemerality. They wrote: “Though the spirit of the Popular Rights movement is valuable . . . the movement is only a means not an end. Unless there is some supreme idea which governs the movement, it will not be able to accomplish its purpose.²⁸ And, in concluding their criticism they attacked all of the self-seeking, ambitious politicians of Japan who only sought “to attain honor and fame. Unless we devise some Way [Moral Road] there will be no order, our nation will become a political debating society.”

Christians were not the only ones discussing the moral chaos of the time. At the turn of the decade, 1878-1883, government officials, conservative intellectuals, and Christian writers discussed the existing moral despair and the danger of social chaos. Their concern was a phenomenon of the time, and there was considerable evidence of social chaos: the Satsuma rebellion in 1877, the growing protest of former samurai through the political movements, and the Fukushima riots in 1882. In response to the political protest, the government established strict censorship regulations. It restored instruction in Confucian morality in the lower schools as a countermeasure to the radical movements, Christianity and peasant unrest. Motoda Eifu, the emperor's Confucian tutor and adviser, prepared an imperial rescript in 1879 calling for a return to Confucian morality. He wrote: “The essence of educa-

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 423.

tion, our traditional national aims, and a watchword for all men, is to make clear the way of benevolence, justice, loyalty, and filial piety.”²⁹ In Tokyo in 1881 an assembly of Confucian scholars discussed the moral decay of the period and preached the necessity of a return to the old Confucian virtues. Government officials, in the same year, discussed the use of Shinto as a moral cement to unify the country, and Yamagata advocated the use of Buddhism for the same purpose.³⁰ Earlier, in 1879, Ito Hirobumi gave his opinion on the need for educational reform to the emperor.

Because of the intensity of this change [reform since the Meiji Restoration], many of the elegant and beautiful things in our tradition have also disappeared. This I take to be the single greatest cause of our present moral decay. [Moreover] . . . the samurai lost not only their fortunes but also their sense of direction as well. As a result they have become discontented.³¹

A year earlier, Iwakura Tomomi wrote of his fears of the rapid disintegration of society and of the dangers of samurai disenchantment with the regime because of their poverty. “Unless the *bushi* are rescued from poverty, they will become infected with the violent theories of freedom.”³² Within the year, in fact, Ōkubo Toshimichi, the most prominent official in the government, was assassinated by a disenchanted young samurai who gave as one of his reasons for the murder

²⁹ Herbert Passin, *Society and Education in Japan* (New York, 1965), p. 227.

³⁰ Sumiya, *Kindai Nihon no keisei* . . . , pp. 60-64.

³¹ Passin, p. 231.

³² Tōyama Shigeki, “Ishin no henkaku to kindai-teki chishikijin no tanjō” [Restoration changes and the growth of the modern intellectual], *Kindai Nihon shisōshi kōza* [Lectures in Modern Japanese Intellectual History] (Tokyo, 1959), IV, 188.

Ōkubo's role in destroying the status of the samurai.³³

Many former samurai did join the Popular Rights movement. Even some of them continued to feel culturally uprooted and isolated, as did many others who did not and could not return to the Confucian doctrine or find any moral satisfaction in the new Western doctrines. Yamaji Aizan described the young former samurai:

The university faction at Tokyo University (the Darwinians) merely drove us to the depth of darkness without giving any means of solution. We had to pursue something to find light. It was the Christians who fought best against that confusion. At this time the Dōshisha faction began their preaching.³⁴

It was at this time that YMCA attendance grew, that *Rikugo Zasshi* readership spread throughout the intellectual elite, and, as Yamaji Aizan said, that respect for the Christian bloomed in earnest.

Society and the Individual: Concepts in Transition

The late seventies and early eighties were the years that the Christian revivalistic spirit spread from Dōshisha throughout Kyoto and then to the country as a whole. Although, as earlier in the Meiji period, many converts were young students and former samurai, the language of conversion had changed. Ebina and Uemura, and many members of the Kumamoto and Yokohama bands, had described their conversion in terms of their lost status, the meaninglessness of past ideas, and their own impotence, but the new converts described their conversion or attraction to Christianity

³³ Masakazu Iwata, *Ōkubo Toshimichi* (Berkeley, 1964), p. 254.

³⁴ Yamaji Aizan, *Kirisutokyō hyōron*, pp. 106-107.

in terms of their strong concern with the shortcomings and injustices of existing institutions and beliefs. Some of them expressed their dissatisfaction with the current social amorality and the selfish concern for individual prestige and advancement. Kashiwagi Gien, for example, left a government school in Tokyo where, he wrote, all he found was "student speculation on their future salaries and their political ambition." At Dōshisha, which he entered almost immediately after leaving Tokyo, he discovered, "The students had the spirit to be reformers of Japan. I felt as if I were in a different world."³⁵ About the same time, as a result of the preaching of the new group of Japanese ministers and the "Y" meetings, Yamazaki Tamenori, Yokoi Tokio, and Wada Seiki also left Tokyo University to attend Dōshisha. They were joined by another group of bright young men, including Onishi Hajime, Kawano Shigezo, Yuasa Tamenori, and Uchida Yasuya.³⁶

For both groups, the Kumamoto and Yokohama bands and the later converts, it was the moral spirit, the sense of community, and the ideal of sincere commitment that attracted them to Christianity and to Dōshisha. In fact, when the Kumamoto band entered Dōshisha in 1876, they instituted with Niijima's permission the rules, regulations, and military discipline of the Yōgakkō. It was the discipline that had guided them to Christianity, and the spirit that must be imbued in the students at Dōshisha in order that they could guide Japan to moral reform. It was by the cultivation of morality through discipline that men could be guided to their calling.

In their essay, Kozaki and Uemura spoke of re-

³⁵ *NKNS*, p. ii.

³⁶ *Watase*, p. 145.

turning to a society which would again be guided by moral imperatives and would again see men as distinctively moral agents. They appeared to write in a Restoration spirit, but when they argued for love of God and the equality of man, their contentions were socially and morally radical. They emphasized conscience, a traditional samurai virtue, but personal conscience within the Christian context carried new social connotations.

Ebina, for example, had described his conversion as an ethical union with God in which he had a momentary experience of the Lordship of God. In the transfer of his allegiance from one lord to another repentance played no role, nor did he feel any sense of sin or forgiveness such as might be expected in a typical Western conversion experience. It was because he came to Christianity out of *jitsugaku* Confucianism that he put great emphasis on conscience. *Jitsugaku* thought stressed knowledge and character, in the sense of inner appropriation of the teachings. Because of this initial synthesis of the ideas of Confucianism and Christianity, Ebina was first led to stress in his theology the inherent consciousness and goodness of man.³⁷ During his experience of conversion Ebina also felt that his "orientation in self became orientation in God,"³⁸ and he transferred his moral allegiance from a secular authority to a superior, transcendent authority. From that time on, his own moral conscience was sanctified and guided by a higher nonsocial source.

Kozaki, too, came to Christianity from Confucian-

³⁷ Charles U. Germany, "Dominant Theological Currents in Japanese Protestant Christianity from 1920 to 1958 with Particular Reference to the Nature of Their Understanding of the Responsibility of Christianity to Society," Ph.D. Dissertation, Joint Graduate Studies Program, Columbia University, 1959, p. 38.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

ism; indeed, he always claimed that he had not deserted Confucianism when he converted. "Confucianism," he later said, "was the preparation for Christianity as the Old Testament was the preparation of Paul and the Jews for the Messiah."³⁹ Like Ebina, Kozaki stressed the doctrine of "moral self-cultivation [in Confucianism] which makes men recognize . . . true righteousness [and thus] the depths of their sins and the necessity of religious-mindedness."⁴⁰ It was the idea of moral consciousness, or "sincerity," which led the members of the Kumamoto band to feel free to convert and to confront their parents. Ultimately, however, conscience or the moral sense became the sole dictate of man's obligations. Out of this interpretation of Christianity grew Kozaki's, as well as Uemura's, Uchimura's, and other later Christian Socialists', criticism of Japanese society and Confucianism. In 1886, Kozaki explicitly attacked the Confucian idea of society when he compared *ōdō* — in Confucian terminology, the righteous government — with Christianity.

Ōdō is a visible government while Heaven is an invisible one. *Ōdō* is confined to one country, but Heaven extends to all nations. The government of *ōdō* is confined to one generation, but that of Heaven works eternally. *Ōdō* makes the distinction between upper and lower, and observes this distinction rigorously. In Heaven there is no such distinction. Every man is equal before God. He endeavors to help all of them. *Ōdō* makes it a rule to teach from upper to the lower and from nation to the individual. In Heaven, teaching goes from the lower to the upper, and from the individual to the entire nation.⁴¹

³⁹ *NKNS*, p. 69.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 70.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

For Kozaki, as for Max Weber, Confucian society was one in which man “adjust[s] to the outside, to the condition of the ‘world.’ A well-adjusted man, rationalizing his conduct only to the degree requisite for adjustment, does not constitute a systematic unity. . . . Such a way of life could not allow man an inward aspiration toward a ‘unified personality,’ a striving which we associate with the idea of personality.”⁴²

Motoda Sakunoshin, president of Rikkyo University (an Episcopal-sponsored school in Tokyo), made precisely the same point in 1909 when he assessed the impact of Protestant ideas in Japan.

In our country there was no concept of society, there was only the concept of nation and family. They were conceived as the major forms within society. The nation, of course, was the highest and most important. Everything—life, property, even individual morality, had to be sacrificed for the nation. Anything, any measure, was holy in realizing the nation’s objectives.

Public life when devoted to the nation was separated from the individual’s private life. Public life dominated the whole of the private life of the individual. Public and private life could not be one.

For Christianity, if man is bad as a private individual, his public success means nothing. The stimulus and idea of unifying public and private life came from Christianity. The idea that in order to rescue the nation the individual must be saved and become healthy came from Christian thought.⁴³

⁴² Max Weber, *The Religion of China*, translated by Hans H. Gerth (Glencoe, Illinois, 1951), p. 235. Weber compares Confucianism and Puritanism in Chapter VIII.

⁴³ Sumiya Etsuji, “Kirisutokyōto no shakai kairyō to jissen” [The thinking and practice of Christian social reformers] *Dōshisha daigaku keizaigaku ronsō* [The Dōshisha University economic review], VIII:6 (November 1958), 11.

For Motoda, the objective of Christians was to develop the concept of individual personality and private life; as a consequence of the creation of a private moral self, the absolute authority of family and nation over the individual would be broken. Society existed only when individuals participated as free, equal moral beings rather than, as they did in Japan, as subjects or objects of family and national authority. When private morality was distinct from public morality, the individual was a subject, not a free man.

Although Motoda was an antisocialist, his views were shared by all Christian socialists and many non-Christian socialists of the period. All rooted their criticism of Japan in a reevaluation of the social system. Motoda and the socialists shared even more: a similar evaluation of Christianity in terms of social ethics. Motoda said, "With Christianity there will be a change in the concept of social justice,"⁴⁴ and Murai Tomoyoshi, a Christian socialist, wrote that the realization of Christian ideals would usher in the age of humanity, the moral age, the society of a Christian heaven.⁴⁵ Both groups also had a similar consciousness of the social and moral changes involved. For the Christian, the question of Westernization, historical change, and moral reform were conceived as different facets of the same problem. In his book, *Shakai kairyō ron* [A theory of social reform], Iwata Tokuji wrote:

The problem is how to reform the character of man which is deteriorating, and how to make it good; how to make a good society and escape from this deteriorating society. Christianity offers the only method by which this can be realized. It is an urgent task for our society to examine

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ Murai Tomoyoshi, *Shakai shugi* [Socialism] (Tokyo, 1899), pp. 148-149.

Christianity and see how it can arrest the deterioration and fall of society.⁴⁶

It was in their assessment of Western modernization that the Christians were led to a moral and social critique of their society. The Japanese Christian social ideal grew out of the synthesis of nineteenth-century ethical Christianity and the idea of progress and democracy. But the creation of a new society was dependent upon respect for individual personality, and social change was a result of the appearance of the Christian man. Social reform and the growth of Christianity depended upon the sincerity and commitment of those who bore Christian witness.

While many converts found in Practical Studies thought and bushido sanctions for their expression of sincerity, commitment, and individuality, Christian belief demanded, as Nijima Jō said, the "cultivation of a person so that conscience was his weapon."⁴⁷ Initially, Christianity was accepted as an ethical code, although with divine sanction rather than secular authorization, and emphasis was put on the conscientiousness with which the individual carried out the code. Since doctrine was simple and theological training negligible, the subjective and behavioral evidence of the Christian calling was emphasized rather than the orthodoxy of thought of the individual believer. Ebina Danjō, for example, stressed the immediate experience of conversion, when the individual felt "the consciousness of God as his Father and himself as His beloved son."⁴⁸ Ebina always placed great trust in his own experience, and he knew no greater authority in

⁴⁶ Iwata Tokuji, *Shakai kairyō ron* [An essay on social reform], (Tokyo, 1888), pp. 42-43.

⁴⁷ *NKNS*, p. 13.

⁴⁸ Germany here quotes Otsuka Tsukiji, p. 40.

Christianity than that. All humanity shared to some degree the character and nature of God, he wrote. And, he continued, through the experience of finding and understanding God, he, Ebina, shared the experience of Christ who also had been brought to know his likeness to God by the Father.⁴⁹ This faith in his own experience, and his belief in the moral cultivation of the believer as well as his critique of traditional theology, led him to relate all reform, social and spiritual, to personal moral cultivation.

Tokutomi Sohō eventually left the church, but even after his apostasy he stressed the cultivation of character for the future reform of society. Indeed, Tokutomi's attack in his journal, the *Kokumin no Tomo*, on the corruption of Japan's politicians grew out of the Christian idea of the individual and the cultivation of personality, as did his advocacy of a "Second Restoration" under the leadership of the spiritually and morally cultivated youth of "Young Japan." Tokutomi identified the rootless but moral youth with all the oppressed in society, but he placed "Young Japan" to the forefront of a restorationist, moral revolution because of their spiritual qualities. Although no longer a Christian when he edited the journal, his image of the great personality and the moral man was drawn from the character of Niijima. As Tokutomi wrote of Niijima:

I found in him a true teacher. . . . He was more a man of the heart than of the mind. His prayer could move a mountain and his passion could wring tears from a stone. As a human being, of course, he had defects . . . but I would say that he was truly a great model for Japan's man.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰ Watase, p. 125.

For Tokutomi, moreover, it was the passion, personality, and conscience of Niijima that brought him to Christ. Again, it was an emphasis on the role and experience of the moral man that was important for the interpretation of Christianity. Tokutomi thus described his baptism: "I think that the major cause for my baptism was . . . that I believed *sensei* [master, i.e. Niijima] in order to come close to Christ and to God. I approached God through Niijima *sensei*."⁵¹ Throughout Niijima's correspondence with Tokutomi appear references to the need of the individual to cultivate his conscience in order to prepare for the reformation of Japan.

Moreover, the great Christian revival that began and took fire at Dōshisha in the early eighties and then spread throughout Japan rose not from doctrinaire Christianity but from a passionate quest for a moral union with God. In the revivals, the students searched for a deeper religious experience, emphasizing piety and stressing the internalization and subjectivity of the faith.⁵²

The emphasis on self-cultivation and the importance of sincere commitment in Japanese Christianity derive in part from men like Ebina. Ebina, however, was not an influential figure in the church until the end of the decade of the eighties. In the early part of the decade, Niijima was the most influential leader, teacher, and preacher in Japan. The idea of "cultivation of conscience as a weapon" for social reformation, the individual personality, and the importance of the Christian calling for the moral and institutional reformation of Japan were emphasized in Niijima's memoirs, letters, lectures, and sermons. In establishing

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵² Germany, p. 14.

TOWARD SOCIAL CRITICISM

Dōshisha as a private, Christian-sponsored school, he hoped to cultivate the independent, moral individual. Only through Christian training and education free of government influence, he felt, could the independent spirit be cultivated. In his endorsement of the private self and in his emphasis on the individual, he implicitly challenged the moral authority of the state. In fact, Niijima's emphasis on private education was, at the least, a covert attack on government-sponsored morality. The Christian man, as envisaged by Niijima, could be nothing but a challenge to the concept of man, as servant of the state, developed by the authorities. It is, therefore, through an examination of Niijima Jō, and his idea of conscience, society, and Christianity that the transformation of Christian thought into social thought, as well as the challenge of Christianity to Japan can first be seen.

6

niijima jō: the conscience of a christian

ON the graduation day of Dōshisha's first theological class, Niijima called the entire student body into a convocation honoring the fifteen graduates. In his speech, "one of the best and most passionate I was ever to hear," Ebina later said, Niijima spoke to them of their mission.¹ In the peroration he commanded them: "Do everything by your spirit. I send you to the world as if I am John the Baptist and you are believers going into society. Go! Go! By the hand of the divine God you will be guided."²

Niijima's purpose never changed. It was to society at large, to Japan, not to particular parishes and churches that Niijima dedicated these and all succeeding students. He felt much like John the Baptist, that "while not that light but sent to bear witness of that light [he] could have no other destiny" than to convert

¹ Watase, p. 155.

² Watanabe, pp. 156-157.

and educate “men of pure faith” who would “sacrifice themselves, forget themselves, and love truly their nation.”³ Never did Niijima have any doubts of his calling, nor of the difficulties that might be involved in the mission of preaching the gospel in Japan. Indeed, his Christian faith and mission as an evangelist defined his social role as a Japanese.

My views of ministerial duty are to preach the gospel of the salvation of men. My desire to enter the ministerial work is due to the need for it in Japan, and my hope, that I may be of some service in supplying that need. I expect to meet with some difficulties and trials; yet I shall count all joy, not only to believe *in* Christ, but also to suffer for his name. It is my purpose to give my life for this work.⁴

Niijima wrote this in 1875 but, paradoxically, the life that he then proposed to give to his country he had almost lost earlier in fleeing Japan. Eleven years earlier Niijima had stealthily slipped past the shore patrol to board an American ship anchored at Hakodate.⁵ He sought refuge aboard the ship in the same way that youngsters in other lands went to the sea and foreign lands: out of curiosity, excitement, and often a feeling of frustration. As soon as Niijima left Hok-

³ Otsuka Setsuji (ed.), *Niijima Jō Shokanshu* [Selected Letters of Niijima Jō], (Tokyo, Showa 29), p. 147.

⁴ Arthur Sherburne Hardy (ed.), *Life and Letters of Joseph Hardy Neesima* (Boston, 1892), p. 167.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 1-3. For information on Niijima's early life, I am dependent on three memoirs he wrote, two of them shortly after he arrived in the United States, the third in the early eighteen eighties. These three memoirs are reprinted in Hardy's collection, pp. 3-47. I will not give individual citations for material quoted from the memoirs. Also, I will not note all grammatical or spelling errors in Niijima's memoirs or letters. When Niijima wrote his memoirs he was still half-literate in English. I see no point in noting every one of his errors.

kaido on board the American brig *Berlin*, he became a political refugee and according to Tokugawa law a criminal who could be punished by death.

Social convention, not individual inclination, marked Nijjima as a political rebel. In no conventional or overt fashion did he advocate political action. He was not of the dispossessed; nor was he a declassé rebel. Nijjima was a member of the privileged caste of his society. He was a samurai of a domain, Annaka (in present-day Gumma prefecture), allied to the shogunate. At his birth in 1843, his hereditary position as a member of the elite and the shogunate's position as ruler of its society both seemed secure. Son of the calligraphy master of the domain, and grandson of the steward of the *daimyō's* household, he was tutored by his parents to occupy a responsible position in the domain bureaucracy. By the age of sixteen he was a clerk and tutor in the Edo household of the *daimyō* of Annaka. Almost his entire life had been spent within the courtyard of the *daimyō*. At one time he was selected to serve in the private bodyguard of the *daimyō*, and at another he was one of three samurai of the domain selected to enter into a joint Western training program of the shogunate and domain. Indeed, he was one of the select of his domain. Although at times he was disturbed by the personal behavior of his *daimyō*, he used the domain to gain appointment to shogunal academies. He sympathized with the shogunate's dilemma after 1853, but he also was attracted by many ideas of the samurai of the western domains. Yet his political beliefs and loyalties at no time became clear enough for him to join any divisive faction.

Certainly, Nijjima expressed dissatisfaction with the capriciousness of his *daimyō*. And having had the opportunity in the late eighteen fifties and early six-

ties to read in Chinese a book by Dr. Elijah C. Bridgman on the history of the United States, he “wondered [his] brain . . . picking out presidents, buildings, free schools, poor house . . . [and] murmured myself . . . O Governor of Japan! . . . If you must govern us you must love us as your children.” His curiosity about the West and Western knowledge was aroused, but he still conceived of government in terms of personality, duty, and obligation and not with an imagination kindled by images of civil liberties, republican government, and democratic institutions. Later, in Edo Bay, he saw merchantmen and warships of the West anchored side by side with the smaller Japanese junks and barges. Impressed and fearful of the might of the West, he, as many other young samurai, grew ever more curious about the countries that could produce so much material power.

Curiosity, an insatiable and continuing desire to study the Chinese classics, as well as a new hope to begin more extensive studies of the West, had already made Niijima a disgruntled young man. Rather than serving as a petty bureaucrat, he wanted to return to his quarters and open his volumes of Chinese works. Rather than teaching stubborn youngsters in the *daimyō's* household, he wished to go to the house of his classics masters or, perhaps, to the study of the “Western scholar.” But his *daimyō* would not allow it. Forced to appear every morning at the office of his *daimyō*, by afternoon Niijima fled to his teacher's house, and by evening he returned home, beaten and laughed at by his lord, and severely scolded by his parents.

Outside the courtyard as well as within, Niijima's life was dominated by his *daimyō*. Niijima, in fact, was unable to establish a private will and life distinct from the public demands of his domain leader. Early in his adolescence he learned that even the most hon-

ored of the *domain's* retinue were totally subject to *daimyō* decree. An elder of the domain, who had doted on Nijjima from his infancy, had so often rebuked the *daimyō* for his extreme arbitrariness and excessive drinking that he was ordered to leave Edo and return to Annaka. Ostensibly a promotion to a more responsible post, it was really a demotion to rid the *daimyō* of a too honorable critic. Nijjima “wept bitterly” and later remembered that “this was one of the great [i.e. significant] events that happened to me.” But young Nijjima continued to receive the favors of the *daimyō*, who indulged his interest in study. The *daimyō* allowed him to begin Dutch, encouraged his interest in Chinese, and promoted him to assist the classics master. Unfortunately, shortly before Nijjima’s fifteenth birthday, the *daimyō* died and was succeeded by his younger brother. “Far inferior to his deceased brother,” Nijjima wrote a number of years later, “all the affairs of the prince’s [*daimyō*] court assumed a different aspect. He found his enjoyment chiefly in eating and drinking. He often listened to his favorite mistress for promoting and rejecting his officers. I felt that all my hopes for carrying out my study was gone.” Shortly afterward, Nijjima was forced to leave his studies and enter the service of the *daimyō* as a clerk in the domain office at Edo. Life was a drudgery. “I must stay in the office every day,” he later wrote, “Ah! I could not get out from there to learn Holland [Dutch].” On those occasions that he fled the office, his office master, *daimyō*, and parents reprimanded him. He felt trapped. “In those days,” he wrote, “it was almost next to impossible to disobey [one’s] father’s commands. So I was bound to obey him.” Totally frustrated, Nijjima “often exclaimed within myself: My prince is gone and my teacher also. The friend at Annaka, on whom I hung the last cord of my hope, is also taken away from

me. What unfortunate fellow I must be. Who will help me to continue my study? What will be my fate in future? I felt I was left almost alone and helpless in the world.”

Although neither orphan nor indigent, oppressed peasant nor deracine intellectual, rebellious ideologue nor even social reformer, Niijima felt oppressed by his society, helpless and alone. As a Japanese, however high born, he was bound by tradition to accept his ascribed task and subsume his private desires within the public weal. There were, of course, personal obligations as well. As Niijima wrote, “a tender cord which bound me to my parents and grandfather tied me also to the prince.” It seemed all social relations entangled Niijima. Indeed, during the early eighteen sixties, “the time [that] the country was in fearful commotion [and] assassination and bloodshed occurred here and there almost every day,” Niijima could only think of ways of escaping his lord’s service. “I was utterly disgusted with the prince’s service. I often planned to run away from home in order to get rid of it, but I was not bold enough to do so. I was fondly attached to my home. . . .” Even during this time of public disaster, Niijima could not escape his personal trials and turn toward politics. Continually, he attempted to escape the *daimyō’s* “square enclosure” in Edo. Though he later claimed sympathy with the opponents of the shogunate, he connived in the early sixties to enter the shogunal naval academy in order to have time to study. Private distractions obliterated all public concerns.

Niijima’s interest in navigation gave him the opportunity, even if only for several weeks, to escape. The *daimyō* of Matsuyama, an important *fudai* magnate and friend of the Annaka *daimyō*, owned a schooner that frequently traveled up and down the

coast of Japan. In order to gain practical experience in navigation, Niijima was able to obtain permission to ship aboard for a trip to Osaka and then onward to Tamashima, a seaport beyond Okayama. "It was my first experience," he joyfully recorded, "in mingling with different people and seeing different places." Osaka itself, where he first tasted beef, whetted his appetite for travel. He knew he had to leave Edo, even Japan; his mind was "filled by a fresh idea for freedom; I planned to get rid of my obligation to my prince."

First, however, on Niijima's return, the routine had to be continued, at least until the early spring of 1864, when Niijima on an early morning stroll ran into a friend, a retainer of the Matsuyama *daimyō*. Already, he had spent many mornings, after furtive tutorial sessions with the Western scholar, looking at the Yankee square riggers in Edo Bay. Through an acquaintance who dealt with American merchants, he had been told that, if he got to Hokkaido, one of these ships would allow him to stow away and then take him to the United States. Now the Matsuyama samurai asked him if he were interested in joining the retinue of his *daimyō* for a trip to Hokkaido. The connections were already made. Niijima had come to know an important councilor of Matsuyama. Through his intervention, the Matsuyama *daimyō* requested that Niijima join his company for a trip to Hakodate. Although an earlier request by Niijima for permission to travel to Hokkaido had been rejected, the Matsuyama *daimyō's* request could not be refused; Niijima received permission to leave.

Since reading Bridgman's *Historical Geography of the United States*, Niijima had gone on to read other tracts and magazines on the Western world. All, like Bridgman's, were in Chinese translation; and all, like

Bridgman's wove Christianity into their discussion of Western institutions. First, Nijjima read the magazine published for the China Mission by Dr. John Williamson; then he went on to read several Chinese tracts published in Shanghai and Hong Kong. Although still a skeptic, he read them with interest and "reverential awe." Perhaps it was also a relief to spend the night reading books that ran counter to the injunctions of his master. Of course, in Edo, there were no missionaries from whom he could obtain any explanation of questionable points in Christianity. In fact, Nijjima later gave as one reason for his trip to Hokkaido his search for a Christian missionary, Père Nicholi. But at least one point, he later wrote, struck home. "Having recognized God as my Heavenly Father, I felt I was no longer inseparably bound to my parents." Even if Nijjima did not understand the theological ramifications of monotheism in 1864, the psychological and social ramifications of the doctrine were appropriate. Nijjima could see himself as a child of God, owing his existence and loyalty to Him rather than to his parents and *daimyō*. At least, Nijjima was well prepared to seek any justification to escape his *daimyō*. Many years later, Nijjima claimed that he had then discovered that "the doctrine of Confucius on the filial relation were too narrow and fallacious. I said then: 'I am no more my parents'. . . . A strong cord which held me strongly to my father's home was broken asunder at that moment. . . . This gave me courage to make a decision to forsake my prince, and also to leave my home and my country temporarily."

The Cultivation of a Conscience

When Nijjima arrived in Boston, he was the prey of misgivings about his future. "I am ashamed," as he

wrote in his half-literate English to the Captain who had brought him to the United States, of

my shameful condition . . . because I left home very wickedly. . . . I am concerned about it as much as my brain would melted out, and when such musings fell on my head I could not read books at all, I would not do anything very cheerfully, and I looked around myself long time as a lunatic, because it confused my mind very much. But I know not yet will I take what course of my life. . . . Alas! I am poor and foolish. I have no one around me to relieve me except you.⁶

Alone and lonely in Boston, Niijima's flight gave him no sense of moral accomplishment. He as yet had found no intellectual or emotional ties to replace the cord he had broken on leaving Japan.

Niijima was accustomed, even before his arrival in Boston, to "many musings in my head" which "made me some sickness too. I would not like to see anybody and would not desire to go out to play myself, but I liked only to stay in a peaceful room."⁷ As he reported to Alpheus Hardy, the owner of the ship that brought him to Boston, one Japanese doctor had told him, "Your sickness comes from your mind; therefore you must try to destroy your warm mind, and must take walk for healthfulness of your body, and it would be more better than many medicines."⁸ In Boston in 1865 as earlier in Edo, Niijima was too absorbed in his own musings, fears, and sense of isolation to regard his flight from Japan as anything but an impetuous act.

At a later time, however, his flight from Japan was invested with great significance. Looking back in

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 11. Letter to Captain H. S. Taylor.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 5. Letter to Alpheus Hardy.

⁸ *Ibid.*

1874, Niijima defined his leaving as a decisive moral act, deliberately conceived as the beginning of a quest. Thus he told an Evangelical Conference in Rutland, Vermont: "When I think of myself, eleven years ago when I was in Japan, I could not bear to watch the day by day decline of my nation; every day she came closer to fatal danger. Hence, I possessed the ambition to travel around the world."⁹ He now read his personal frustration into a conscious act of social and moral revulsion. His isolation gained historical significance in retrospect. Autobiography became Christian allegory. Once a refugee, he had sought relief of mind and body in the United States. As a convert, he could not rest until he had offered that same body in missionary service for the salvation of his country. Niijima translated his psychological problems into a historical perception, his musing into moral questioning, and his isolation into Christian mission. Obviously, his historical sense was guided by his intellectual and emotional transformation. Intellect and an awakened sense of passionate mission, as guided by his conversion, became the force to determine his future tasks and the guide to memory.

In 1874 he expressed this psychological transformation — his faith and loyalty to God: his piety — in terms of his sense of "calling" or mission. When refusing a Japanese government offer to join the Education Ministry, Niijima told Tanaka Fujimaro, later vice minister of education, "I cannot give up the purpose that I have long promised myself. My destiny is not mine." Niijima now felt himself an instrument of God, his piety an expression of Christian loyalty, or as Tanaka said to him: "You, friend Niijima, are a true slave of Jesus Christ." Three years earlier, Niiji-

⁹ Watanabe, pp. 321-325.

ma had written Iida Itsunosuke, an elder of his domain, of the demands his understanding of the role of a Christian made on him as a Japanese.

Since I have learned well the great principle of one True God, namely the magnanimous and virtuous Gospel of Christ, I would like to teach this principle to men willing to learn and teach them what is love of a nation, benevolence for the people, and the morals to allow oneself to be true to one's conscience.

I believe there is nothing but this principle which will enrich and strengthen the nation and the individual. . . . I think if one is a man who truly loves his nation then he must love this principle.¹⁰

Pious, militant, dedicated, and most important personally secure, Niijima possessed a heroic self-centeredness that stood in brilliant contrast to the indecisive meanderings of his past. Converted, Niijima was autonomous; as a Christian, he gained freedom and at the same time acquired an ethic that sanctioned — indeed, committed him to — a mission of reform. “I have consecrated myself to the work of my Master,” he wrote Hardy in 1872, “I must try to seek opportunity to discharge my duty to Him and my benighted fellow-creatures. I would rather preach or teach truth which is in Christ Jesus with the bread of affliction than to do any other things with the [sic] earthly luxuries, pleasures and honors.”¹¹

Niijima did much more than rewrite and rethink his past. Conversion did more than commission him to save the souls of his countrymen. In finding in himself the will and capacity to change his country, he gave the individual a historical role. He demanded that men make society according to the demands of

¹⁰ Otsuka, p. 71.

¹¹ Hardy, p. 131.

their conscience instead of submitting to the dictates of society. In converting, he found himself as an individual, and in so doing, made himself significant.

Niijima rendered his life a moral quest only after he had found himself as a Christian man. Before this, he was confused and overwhelmed by his own insignificance. Most men find, Erik H. Erikson has written,

some central perspective and direction, some working unity, out of the effective remnants of [their] childhood and the hopes of [their] anticipated adulthood; [they] must detect some meaningful resemblance between what [they have] come to see in [themselves] and what [their] sharpened awareness tells [them] others judge and expect [them] to be.¹²

Some young men, however, are unable to adjust to the expectations their parents and society hold for them. They cannot find in their lives any meaningful resemblance between society's expectations and their aspirations. They are unable to forge any perspective and direction that allows them to live happily in their society. They cannot find an identity. Niijima's hopes for a scholarly career, the remnant that remained of his childhood aspirations, and the role his *daimyō* demanded of him were in conflict. He was reminded constantly of his powerlessness to carry out his childhood desires. His ineffectuality was underscored by the fate of his exiled friend as well as by his disappointment with his own posts as tutor, clerk, and bodyguard in the *daimyō's* retinue. Since Niijima's aspirations were so clearly opposed to his prospects, he found it impossible to work out "some central perspective . . . some working unity" that would allow him to rest within his society. For a while he succumbed to the di-

¹² Eric H. Erikson, *Young Man Luther* (New York, 1962), p. 14.

lemma: he was sick, sought every excuse to escape his tasks, and was even a mild delinquent. Love for his parents compounded his problem. As the eldest son, he was expected to succeed to his father's post and perhaps even rise above it. Because of the duties and love he owed his parents, he was bound even more closely to his society. Love was binding and duty demanding. The dual bonds of family and lord had to be broken simultaneously, or not at all. Intertwined as they were, Niijima could not remain at home while refusing to serve his lord. Incapable of accepting his role in society, an unable to find any alternative within his society to absolute submission to tradition, he fled.

Ephraim Flint, Jr., an Andover Seminary student and Niijima's tutor, wrote to Professor J. H. Seelye of Amherst in 1867: "As soon as truth reached his mind, he seemed to embrace it. His religious progress has been remarkable. I think he was converted before he reached Andover [Phillips Academy]." ¹³ Niijima had been "all ready to embrace" Christianity before he landed in Boston. While in Japan, the mere suggestion of a creator and lord more powerful than his daimyo relieved him of the onerous task of serving the domain. The idea of a God who was owed a greater love than that due his parents had been sufficient justification to break his ties with the past. Niijima had mourned the loss of his first daimyo as he saw his hopes crippled by the capriciousness of the new lord. He became distraught by the death of the retainer exiled to Annaka and, because of this additional loss, felt isolated and without benevolent guidance for the future. But, once isolated, he also felt less bound to his domain. Only

¹³ Hardy, p. 69.

one thought stayed me [from leaving Japan], that my grandfather and parents would sorrow about it, and it balanced my mind little while. But after one reflection came upon my head, that although my parents made and fed me, I belong indeed to Heavenly Father; therefore I must believe him; I must be thankful to him, and I must run into his ways. Then I began to search some vessel to get out from the country.¹⁴

To Niijima, God offered an alternative service and authority to lord and parents, and a justification for flight. God freed him. Before he left Japan he was sensitive to another authority as a personal refuge, but once he left, he was bound to accept God. Once on board ship he wrote: "Every night after I went to bed I prayed to the God:/ Please! don't cast away me into miserable condition./ Please! let me reach my great aim."¹⁵ And in a short note he left with Taylor, the captain of the ship, he described his independence upon Taylor because of his break with his country and domain and his poignant search for knowledge. "If I not understand good knowledge, I may not come back to Japan to see my prince, family, friends, because of my shameful condition, and they will worth me as a dog or cat because I left home very wickedly, hoping to get some knowledge."¹⁶ If he could find no ties, no knowledge, no benevolence from God or from Taylor, Niijima could never return to Japan. Alone and ignorant, he felt worthless. He left his servitude in Japan in order to find knowledge, but he had merely traded his unwanted service and ties with lord and family for a dependence that, he hoped, would be more benevolent. He was bound to God by his break

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

with the past, not by ties to a new ideology or to a new perspective.

Niijima's sensitivity to Christianity was due to his frustration with the authority of his lord and the oppressiveness of duty and family. His earliest feelings toward God were not different from his feelings toward Taylor or, later, toward Hardy. To Niijima, each of them was a benevolent personality who would save him from servitude. They, as his dead lord and his doting elder, were masters, who would free him and allow him to study. God, the powerful Creator, Niijima prayed and hoped, would save him and let him reach his great aim. God would relieve him from his ties to Annaka. Taylor, too, would take him from Japan, act as his paternal patron, take him to Boston, and allow him to study. "When I first saw the ship's captain, H. S. Taylor," Niijima wrote, "I begged to him . . . Please! let me go to school and take good education."¹⁷ He was afraid that Taylor would fail him, or that Hardy would "give me some great [a lot of] work to do. I must work almost all day. Although I will not loathe some work, perhaps it will hinder good time of my study."¹⁸ If he could not study, "if you," he wrote, speaking of himself, "must go to sea again," his flight had failed and he was worth as little as a dog or cat.¹⁹

Within his first week in Boston, Taylor had told him that the decision for his future would be made by Hardy. Fearful of what might happen when he was brought to see Hardy, Niijima left still another pleading note with Taylor. "Please let me hear that Mr. Hardy will let me go to . . . school."²⁰ But Niiji-

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

ma's interview with Hardy was a failure. Nervous and still barely able to speak English when he was brought to the ship owner's office, Niijima could respond only in whispered monosyllables to Hardy's questions about his reasons for coming to the United States. For the moment, Hardy decided to place Niijima in a home for indigent and foreign sailors. While there, Niijima was asked to prepare a memoir. After vividly portraying the turmoil of his years of emotional indecision and his search for knowledge, faith, and God, Niijima concluded his memoir with a plea, a certainty, and a prayer: "Now I know the ship owner, Mr. Hardy, may send me to a school, and he will pay all my expenses. When I heard first these things from my captain my eyes were fulfilled with many tears, because I was thankful to him, and I thought too: God will not forsake me."²¹

Nor did Hardy forsake him. Hardy was deeply moved by the eloquent and pathetic memoir. As a member of the Boston Mission Society that sought to convert the people of the Orient, and aid all homeless, God-seeking foreigners, he would have to be moved by Niijima. In him, he had a pagan who had traveled half-way around the world seeking God. Hardy promised to stand the expense of educating Niijima. Niijima had found a patron.

By September of 1865, Niijima was on his way to Phillips Academy at Andover. After Niijima finished his work there, earnestly and profitably, Hardy sent him on to Amherst College in 1867; and ultimately, on graduation from Amherst, Niijima chose, to the delight of Hardy and by the sponsorship of Professor J. H. Seelye of Amherst, to enter Andover Theological Seminary.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

From the autumn of 1865 until the summer of 1875, Niijima was gradually absorbed into the community and faith of post-Civil War Massachusetts. Seeking a patron and seeking knowledge of the West, Niijima found a new idea of community; he found faith and salvation. He shared in the Protestant Christian experience of his friends and teachers. While at Phillips Academy at Andover, he boarded with a middle-aged spinster and her sickly brother. At first extremely reluctant to take the young Japanese as a tenant, Miss Mary E. Hidden later viewed Niijima as a symbol of the unity of interest and community that Christianity gave to man. On his departure from Andover in 1867, she wrote Mrs. Alpheus Hardy about the influence that Niijima had had on her.

From the first I have felt that it was a privilege to have his influence thrown in my way. It has been a talisman often-times to check my forgetfull heart, and for this reason even I am very sorry to have him leave us. In him we are brought to see how truly we are one in Christ—the whole family of man. My dear Mrs. Hardy, I feel that as God in his providence has given you the means and the heart to take this Heaven-directed wanderer into your charge, you have found a diamond of which the world is not worthy, of which you may well be proud, and that there will come into your soul a wealth of satisfaction which is its own reward. Joseph will shine anywhere.²²

The Hiddens lived in a large, pleasant farmhouse on the outskirts of Andover. Joseph, as Niijima was called by his American friends, was their only boarder. "We made him a regular member of the family," Miss Hidden wrote Mrs. Hardy in 1866. "He sits with us all the time and shares all the privileges of the family. It is not often that we find one who can be received in

²² *Ibid.*, p. 67.

this way without a feeling of intrusion, but he is an exception.”²³ While the Hiddens made him comfortable as a member of the family and not simply as an alien boarder, Mr. and Mrs. Ephraim Flint, Jr., who occupied another wing of the house, became warm friends of Niijima. Ephraim Flint, Jr., then completing his theological course at Andover Theological Seminary, took great interest in the young man and gave considerable time to his instruction in Christianity. Under his tutelage, Niijima was guided in his reading of the Old and New Testaments as well as the study of arithmetic, geography, and English. By January 1866, Niijima’s letters were filled with discussions of his reading in the Bible. To Hardy on January 1, 1866, he reported, “I have memorized Beatitudes, Lord’s Prayer, Golden Rule, 22nd Chapt. Matthew 37 verse, 3rd Chapt. St. John 16th verse, 1st and 23rd Psalms, and Ten Commandments . . . and I have read out from the Old Testament the escape of Israelites from Egypt,”²⁴ and on and on. In April he reported that he was translating the Gospel of John into Japanese.²⁵ In July he wrote excitedly to the Hardys, apparently having just been captured by a new image of their relationship. “So you (like the Samaritan) relieve me from the misery, and help me get good education, therefore I will call you my neighbor. Nay, I will call you my mother whom God gives me.”²⁶ Niijima now became the good neighbor, sitting with the sick aunt of Miss Hidden, and praying with her through the night.

Always there were friends to visit and families waiting to welcome and talk with him. He often

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 51.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 82.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 55.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 56.

visited the Hardys in Boston. Some weekends he was a guest of Captain Taylor's mother and father at North Chatham. Other weekends he rested at Taylor's home in Charlestown. Later when Flint graduated, he visited him at Hinsdale. On one trip to Chatham, Niijima missed his stop. He was first befriended by the conductor who let him off at New Bedford. Then he was guided and offered aid by the Reverend Wheelock Craig, who took him to a hotel, paid his bill, and invited Niijima to visit him and his congregation at any time.²⁷ Wherever Niijima visited a church, its parishioners greeted him warmly and welcomed him into their homes.

Within a year of his arrival at Andover a Mrs. Shedd of the town requested permission from the Hardys to enroll Niijima in the congregation of the Seminary Church. Like Miss Hidden, Dr. Samuel H. Taylor, principal of the preparatory school, and especially the Flints, she noted, as Ephraim Flint wrote, "Joseph's mental and moral development with intense interest and the greatest pleasure."²⁸ As Flint wrote to Hardy in 1867:

We expect no higher pleasure in any work this side of heaven than we have experienced in instructing and attempting to guide Joseph in the way of virtue and knowledge. Though I have taught for years, I have never been so interested in the mental and moral development of any other pupil. Our labor for him has been one of love.²⁹

For Flint, as for Miss Hidden, Niijima was an example of the gratifying effects of the word of God and the community of Christ.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 61, 84.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 69.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 67-68.

He has been a most faithful and diligent student of the Bible, and has fastened his soul upon it. I have never known a person more absorbed than he in the Word of God. He has apprehended its meaning more readily than that of any other book. As the meaning of some new passage has flashed upon his mind his soul has been most profoundly moved.

His religious progress has been remarkable. . . . As soon as truth reached his mind he seemed to be all ready to embrace it. He does his duty faithfully, fearlessly. Without doubt he would go to the stake rather than deny his Master.³⁰

As for Niijima, he waited only for the Hardys' approval. "If you . . . approve it, I shall join it [the church] the next communion." He added that the charity that he had received from Hardy, indeed the selfless aid he had been given, had been vital instruments for his own salvation, and that Hardy, as a result, would receive "increased reward in Heaven."³¹ Now he could do no less than Hardy; the fact of Niijima's salvation demanded even more.

Now I believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God who died for our sins, and we shall be saved through Him. I love Jesus more than anything else. I cast whole self to Him and try to do right before His sight. This is my vow. I will go back to Japan and persevere to turn the people to Jesus from Devil. I determined myself to Jesus so fast that nothing can separate my love from Him. But my flesh is weaker than my spirit, therefore I wish to join church and unite in Christ, that I may grow more Christ like and I may do good to my nation for his name's sake.³²

However ready for conversion Niijima might

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 69.

³¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 58-59.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 59.

have been on his arrival in the United States, his sensitivity was still guided by a samurai and Confucian understanding of social relationships, and a samurai's rejection of his lord and master. But during his first year in the United States, Niijima's perception of man and community as well as his understanding of God went through a radical transformation. Niijima's ideas now reflected Miss Hidden's faith in the "family of man" all one in Christ and Flint's belief in the one true way of virtue and knowledge. After a year in the United States, Niijima saw Mrs. Hardy, his patron's wife, as his neighbor who aided him in time of trouble. Mr. Hardy was his companion in the church. He and Hardy were brothers because of their similar search for salvation through Christ; they shared a similar duty to Christ. By uniting with others in a church, Niijima found his devotion to Christ strengthened, and his dedication to the service of others became greater. Through his duty to Christ and because of his salvation through Christ, he recognized his individuality as well as his obligation to others, his nation, his family and friends. He recognized that through this shared belief in Christ and through union within the church, man lived in a cooperative community. Moreover, Niijima's position in the church, like his relationship to God and to Hardy, was achieved through faith and service, not through birth. All men under God were individuals, free and equal: equally free to find salvation through Christ and equally obliged to serve Christ. Because of their individual relationship to God they owed a duty to others. Yet they were all brought together in brotherhood and community because they were all children of God. In the Hiddens, Niijima found a new family and in Massachusetts a Christian community. Through Christianity, Niijima found his individuality and his community — a com-

munity so exclusive that it included only believers and one so inclusive that anyone could join it and all of Japan could be brought into it.

Conversion was not merely a religious act. In becoming an American Christian Niijima was led to assume within his faith not only the dictates of the Bible, the Ten Commandments, and the Golden Rule, but also the social norms that guided his mentors, patrons, and friends in their political and social life. Perhaps these norms — in particular piety and the cultivation of conscience — were always implicit in Protestantism, but for many Americans they had formed the nucleus of the faith. In fact, that Niijima became a nineteenth-century New England Congregationalist set him off from his Japanese countrymen in almost the same way that it set him off from his past life experience. Christianity guided his perception of the role and rights of the individual and from Christian principles he derived his concept of the nation.

Niijima's American experience became the key to his activities in Japan, but he emphasized particular aspects of the American Christian faith. Of course, the emphasis represented a selectivity due to the necessities of evangelizing in Japan, but it also represented a selectivity growing from a foreigner's perception of American Christianity.

The Christian training Niijima received at Amherst and Andover emphasized pietism — the assumption that every individual was by himself responsible for “deciding the rightness or wrongness of every issue . . . in terms of a higher moral law.”³³ The Christian was committed to demonstrate his piety and his morality on every question he faced. He was bound to

³³ William G. McLoughlin, “Pietism and the American Character,” *American Quarterly*, Summer, XVII, No. 2, Part I, p. 73.

resist any complicity with evil by taking immediate action whenever he faced a moral question, or any other kind. He was to act and commit himself, and take all opportunities to implement his decision "not only for himself and in his own home and community but throughout the nation and the world."³⁴ The pious were activists; necessarily and unavoidably, they were missionaries. For the pious, faith found testimony in action.

When Niijima entered Amherst in 1867, the sense of moral crusade that had pervaded the speeches and thought of many professors and students during the Civil War still remained. They, like President Stearns, had seen the war as a holy crusade. God, Stearns had said, demanded the suppression of the rebellion. Amherst took great pride in its role as a Christian, evangelical school. Only a year before Niijima entered, the school had undergone one of its great revivals of the century. Although this was the last of the great revivals at Amherst, during Niijima's days at Amherst teachers and students felt that education must mean Christian education and that all thought must be informed by the Christian spirit.³⁵ Niijima's tutor, Julius H. Seelye (and later one of Amherst's great presidents) wrote, "unless we make Christian culture the informing idea of all our educational edifice, unless we make the Bible its cornerstone and top stone, the edifice itself will crumble."³⁶ "Tell the alumni of 1921 [designated as Amherst's centenary year]," Stearns declared at the commencement in 1872, "that the sentiment of the administration under which you graduated was 'the highest education and all for

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ Thomas LeDuc, *Piety and Intellect at Amherst College* (New York, 1946), p. 19.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

Christ.’”³⁷ From the time of its founding, Amherst had gloried in her efforts to save every freshman, and every freshman was imbued with the inspiration to go out and save the world. At his graduation in 1867, the future political scientist John W. Burgess defined the Amherst spirit in his baccalaureate address, “For her [Amherst] earnest Christian scholars and men, this college must be esteemed the first; and it will be so, as long as its foundation is that fervency of prayer, and strong faith in the promises of Evangelical Religion which have hitherto characterized it.”³⁸ For Seelye the moral results of education were its most important issue. All the influence that the college had should conspire to make the student pure and upright.³⁹ While the function of the university was the fostering of research and the quest for truth, the object of the college was the development of character.⁴⁰ Only when the individual was guided by God and regenerated through Christ could society hope to move forward. Social progress depended upon the spirit of the pious. “Every great uplifting of society in the modern world,” Seelye said in his baccalaureate sermon of 1888, “every advance in the modern world, every advance in purity, in social order, in liberty, in law, has been preceded by some great quickening and exaltation of religious life.”⁴¹ Amherst imbued its students with the passion to make moral law the basis of social order in the United States and the world, making every student a missionary of the calling of Christ. Amherst education was clearly vocational in aim, conservative in spirit. The elements that invigorated Am-

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 45.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 46.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 47.

herst teaching, "the lively conscience and the sense of mission," were conservative. Amherst defended the old faith, and Amherst was maintained in order to perpetuate a definite set of values. Every individual, it was felt, was responsible both for getting himself into harmony with the moral law and for transforming his society into the perfection which God recognized on earth as in heaven. The responsibility was not new, and the mission was long known. In earlier writings in the United States this responsibility was viewed largely in terms of personal salvation. Morality had been seen as the responsibility of the individual man. But at Amherst an emphasis on "character-training" introduced into the field of conscience a temporal value. Man not only sought eternal salvation, he had to behave in such a way that personal integrity in everyday life was a value independent of his desire for salvation. For Stearns and Seelye the training of character became the prime objective of the college. As Stearns declared in 1872, character was of more consequence than intellect, being "chiefly made up of moral principles, right purposes, appropriate emotions and practical wisdom."⁴² Indeed, for him, unprincipled intellect could be a curse.

As a number of historians of the era have suggested, this emphasis on character and the "subjective" evidence of the faith indicated that dogma had disintegrated and theology as an intellectual discipline had fallen into disuse.⁴³ The religious impulse still remained, but it was founded on psychological appeal rather than on intellectual imperatives. Certainly this was true at Amherst. Stearns was no longer a simple

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 26.

⁴³ See LeDuc cited above, and Christopher Lash, *The New Radicalism in America, 1889-1963* (New York, 1965), especially Chapter I on Jane Addams.

dogmatist; he no longer assumed that Biblical authority could be unquestioned. Rather than pointing to the Bible as divinely inspired, he pointed to its practical value. Within it could be found the greatest ideas and conceptions man had ever had. With it, he felt, man could understand the course of secular events.⁴⁴

Religion for many Americans had stopped being a field of speculation. For them, as the father of Jane Addams told her, character had come to mean that "You must always be honest with yourself inside, whatever happened."⁴⁵ As late as 1910 she could consider this "perhaps, on the whole as valuable a lesson as the shorter catechism contains."⁴⁶ For those who put such great weight on character, religion was no longer a set of rigorously argued postulates, but rather an ideal of personal conduct.

Nijima would have agreed with the spirit and aims of the two Addamses, for many essential points he carried to Japan revolved around the character of the individual. But the impulse to good works that Jane Addams knew she had but could not explain, the necessity to serve which she assumed without the necessity of theological argument, could not be so simply assumed by Nijima. Jane Addams' sense of service and of role was for Nijima the perception of a new role and the key to understanding a different society. Christianity as he found it in the United States constituted for him a new perception of social process and a new view of the role of the individual in society. Christianity as taught at Amherst and as assumed by many Americans, carried with it implicitly a consciousness of the stake every individual had in his society. Amherst taught its students to be conscious of this stake

⁴⁴ LeDuc, pp. 38-39.

⁴⁵ Lash, p. 4.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 4-5.

and of the duty the individual owed his society because they were Christians. This was character-training.

At Amherst the emphasis on character-training and in America the emphasis on piety identified individual godliness with the individual's secular attitudes and activities. Francis Wayland, one of nineteenth-century America's leading moral philosophers, whose book, *The Elements of Moral Science*, Niijima used as a basic text at Dōshisha, contended that "conscience or the moral sense . . . that faculty by which we discern the moral quality of action" supported the claims of duty.⁴⁷ Wayland, in fact, wrote that all public affairs were directed and judged by the intentions of individuals. Ultimately, the individual and his intentions, rather than the group, bore the onus of social responsibility.⁴⁸ Wayland wrote before the Civil War, but his books were widely used in the United States throughout the century and were taken to Japan by the missionaries. In post-Civil War America the emphasis on conscience and the awareness of the individual's secular duties became more important than any theological rationale for them. Moreover, the defense of particular secular institutions was considered a part of the Christian duty. Stearns defended the Union during the Civil Wars as a part of his Christian duty. He even identified the destiny and mission of New England with the intentions of the Almighty.⁴⁹ As for Amherst, its object was to "second the effort of the Apostles themselves in extending and establishing the Redeemer's empire."⁵⁰

⁴⁷ Wilson Smith, *Professors and Public Ethics* (Ithaca, 1956), p. 39.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 41.

⁴⁹ LeDuc, p. 27.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

For Niijima, the redemption of Japan became identified with the cultivation of the moral conscience of the individual. Character-training was the basic and essential purpose of education. By cultivating the conscience, not only was the individual saved but the basis for secular progress was established. In character-training Niijima found the key to secular progress. After his return to Japan, he always identified the development of American universities, with their emphasis on Christian moral cultivation, and the development of the spirit of liberty in the United States. "The Christian university," he wrote in 1884, "was the safeguard of freedom; and . . . [I] do not doubt that their [U.S.] free institutions are the outcome of this spirit."⁵¹ Ultimately he, as many Americans, identified all American institutions with the Christian spirit. At this point, the character of Christianization and Americanization so converged in his mind that personal salvation and the ideas of individual moral cultivation were identified with the proper aims of the nation, and were essential for the progress of the nation. Even the commercial and industrial success of a nation, he wrote in 1881, were dependent upon the moral spirit of her people.

In identifying secular progress with the cultivation of conscience, Niijima had reduced the problem of modernization to the question of individual self-reform. He had made progress a concomitant of moral development. Secular and religious were identified; national aims became identical with the objectives of the pious.

But in Japan, the advice of Jane Addams' father, to be always honest with oneself, was not enough. Such a view assumed that the individual could be confident

⁵¹ Hitomi, pp. 342-343.

that his personal freedom would not be interfered with, confident of the congruence of individual moral purpose and national purpose. In fact, Niijima had fled Japan because of his inability to escape the oppressive power of his *daimyō*. After he returned to Japan, he often spoke of his fear of government interference. Like many other Christians, he was faced with the problem of making respect for the individual a matter of public concern, and freedom of conscience a matter of national policy. As Motoda argued, only when this distinction was made could man be free and not a servant of the state. Although character-training lay at the end of a chain of assumptions about God, man, and society in the United States, in Japan it was only the beginning. The purpose of character-training in Japan was not conservative but revolutionary.

Ideas for Niijima had become social levers. His interpretation of American Christianity, his understanding of conversion and the Christian's responsibility, allowed him to transfer his solution to personal problems into the public sphere. As his perception of the role of the individual developed, his behavioral norms became identified with the demands of modernization. His was the language of ideology. His ideas demanded a commitment to action because they established a claim to truth.

7

the founding of a school and the cultivation of a nation

Two years after Nijjima arrived in the United States, four of the most powerful *tozama daimyō* joined forces to overthrow the Tokugawa shogunate. At the same time that Nijjima was entering his second semester at Amherst, Satsuma samurai were entering Edo, and shogunate and *fudai* retainers were scattering to their home domains. The first news of the rebellion reached Nijjima at Amherst on February 21, 1868, the day before Washington's birthday. There was civil war in Japan, he reported to Mrs. Hardy, and *daimyō* had risen against the shogun. He wrote that the shogun's residence, only a short walk from his parents' home in Edo, had been burned by a mob of Satsuma samurai. "But I do not feel anxious about my folks because I demand [sic] them under the protection of the Al-

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mighty Hand.”¹ But news from Japan took only one paragraph of his letter. After all, he was living in America, and the next day he would celebrate a holiday, an American one. “Thank you for the holiday and congratulations on the event,” he continued. “I salute you all for the day, for the gift of the hero to this nation, and for independence. I should like to see such freedom in my country.”²

Two months later, Niijima received a letter from his sister describing the confusion in Edo. His family was afraid that the city would be attacked, and his father wanted him to return home immediately. But Niijima refused to return on his father’s command. “I am not his [Niijima’s father’s] own,” he wrote Mrs. Hardy. “How can I go back now, having a plow on my hands. I must prepare myself for my Master’s work.”³ Besides, he felt that this was not his war. “If I go back now I suppose I need go to war. I do not wish at all to kill myself in such a barbarous war.”⁴ His war, Niijima wrote, was with Satan, and his weapons were “the helmet of salvation and the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God.”⁵

Still, Niijima did want to return to Japan. He refused to return to fight in a barbarous war and he refused to return because of his father’s command, but he never refused to serve or aid his country. Indeed, shortly after hearing about the Restoration he wrote, “I want to do my utmost for Japan.”⁶ Even before the Restoration, he had joined a student missionary society on matriculation at Amherst and had declared

¹ Hardy, p. 81.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*, p. 83.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ Sumiya, *Kindai Nihon no keisei* . . . , p. 17.

that his ultimate objective was to return to Japan and there teach the gospel. What troubled him were the conditions under which he could return. This worry remained even after his father wrote of the great changes in the country, with "most of the people of high ranks cut[ting] their hairs short and dress[ing] in the American style" and of talk that "the educational system of the Western nations would soon be introduced."⁷ Niijima had violated the Tokugawa proscription on leaving the country. Would he be punished by the new government? "What can I do in order to return to Japan?" he asked Iida Itsunosuke. "Will you help me get permission to return?"⁸

Whatever his difficulties, once he returned he must be allowed to teach. "I have one thing I must teach. . . . I have learnt well the great principle of a sole God." He knew now, he assured Iida, "the methods by which to enrich and strengthen the nation," all of which were derived from Christianity. "I must work to teach this principle after I return to Japan. This is real Truth."⁹

Niijima knew that he could never return to Japan as the retainer of a feudal lord and as the subject of his father. It was impossible. "I am no longer my father's," he had written Mrs. Hardy, nor was he any longer his lord's. His life belonged to God, his new Lord and Father. "I became a Christian in order to be free," he wrote, "I don't want to return and submit, and deferentially receive a stipend." As a Christian, he concluded, "I am a subject of both God and my country and will serve both."¹⁰

His love of Japan had never been greater, for "since I left Japan, I have become more concerned

⁷ Hardy, p. 89.

⁸ Otsuka, p. 71.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 71.

¹⁰ Sumiya, *Kindai Nihon no keisei* . . . , p. 17.

about my nation, and my love for the people of my nation has become stronger and stronger.”¹¹ But his feelings for Japan had changed. He had arrived at a totally different concept of Japan as a state and had discovered the concept, totally new for him, of the individual. These two ideas could not be separated — to Niijima, the state and the individual were inextricably related. More than a decade earlier, before he had fled to the United States, Niijima had begged the rulers of Japan to love their subjects. Now he sought not love but freedom and soon would argue that a modern state must have free citizens. A decade earlier, he had sought permission from his lord to remain in a quiet room and there continue his solitary studies. Now he asserted his independence to act because he was already a free man and could not be bound to a feudal lord. Niijima was, of course, free and independent while he remained in the United States; but the freedom he spoke of was personal; it was internal. Niijima was free because he was a Christian, because he was moral, and because he knew the “truth”; not because he lived in the United States. He would not lose his freedom when he returned to Japan. In fact, it was because he was free, because he was a Christian, that he returned to Japan a patriot. As he wrote later, “[those] who will be activists, love truth and freedom, respect morality and the true principle . . . will devote [themselves] to our nation Japan.”¹² He felt that the cultivation of free and moral men would lead to the creation of the modern state, because such men would “strengthen the independence of Japan and bring about the peace and happiness of our nation.”¹³ But

¹¹ Otsuka, p. 71.

¹² Watanabe, p. 134.

¹³ *Ibid.*

to be free and moral, men must know and be guided by the true principle. The modern state would have to be molded and led by Christian men.

Niijima's contention that religion and morality were the basic influences on human character was hardly new. Japanese Confucianists and American preachers, as well as many American Protestant laymen, argued precisely this point. Many of them also argued that the health and prosperity of a nation depended upon the cultivation of individual morality. As a moral philosopher, Niijima argued within this tradition. But when he discussed the character of the individual, he was not concerned with the relationship of an individual's conscience to his social system but to eternal truth. Niijima defined the "cultivated" man not vis-a-vis his society and its norms but rather in terms of absolute values. The individual, however, was the repository of Christian virtue, and it was his actions that made the good society. An individual whose conscience was cultivated by Christianity was a good citizen, not because he was "loyal" to any dynasty or government but because he was responsible both for getting himself into harmony with the moral law and for transforming his society into the perfection which God recognized on earth as in heaven. For Niijima, the pious man was a patriot. He actively sought to make his society a moral one. The good society was dependent on such men, yet they, because of their relation to God, both served and transcended their society.

During Tanaka Fujimaro's visit to the United States in 1872, Niijima told him that he saw it as his destiny to bring these principles to Japan. Tanaka had arrived in Washington, D.C., as a member of the Iwakura Mission. Before leaving Japan, he had been appointed Commissioner of Education for the mission. While traveling in the United States and then later in

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Europe, he was expected to prepare a report on the educational institutions of every country he visited. In March of 1872, soon after his arrival in the United States, Tanaka asked Niijima and twelve other Japanese students to establish a set of rules for Japanese students abroad.¹⁴ Among even this group of adventurous students who had gone abroad to study, Niijima was a maverick. A year under his thirtieth birthday, Niijima was older than any of the others. He had already spent seven years in the States; he had been trained at an American preparatory school; he had graduated from Amherst in 1870; he was now in his second year of theological study at Andover Theological Seminary. Among the group, Niijima was the only Christian. He, alone among the students, was not supported by the Japanese government. From Niijima's first meeting with Tanaka, he made clear his independence from the Japanese government and his individuality. On the first meeting of the group of students with the commissioner, when the thirteen entered the legation anteroom and were introduced to Tanaka, they bowed deeply. "I," Niijima reported to Hardy, "stepped back into a corner standing erectly, and passed the Legation Minister, Mori Arinori, a note. 'I have not received a single cent from the Japanese government. So he [Tanaka] had not right to treat me as a slave of the government.'"¹⁵ Mori turned to Tanaka, after quickly reading the message, and introduced Niijima. "It is," he told Tanaka, "at my request [that] Mr. Neesima came here, not as a bondman, but with his kindness to give you some advice concerning education. . . . He is a lover of Japan, but not a slave."¹⁶ Ta-

¹⁴ Hardy, pp. 115-121.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 120.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

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naka stepped forward, bowed to the erect Niijima and shook hands with him.

In spite of Niijima's initial truculence, a strong friendship and feelings of mutual respect developed between Tanaka and Niijima. Tanaka respected Niijima's independence, certainty, and individuality. The United States was totally strange to him, and he needed an educated English-speaking guide. Niijima was perfect for the job. He found that Tanaka had a real and open-minded interest in American education. "He is . . . a man of broad view,"¹⁷ he wrote to Hardy. Probably they could help each other. "I may possibly do him some good, especially for promoting Christ's kingdom in Japan. If I do show him some favor, he might become a great favor for my future labor."¹⁸ Tanaka was right: Niijima was independent and certain. Nor was Niijima wrong in his judgment. In the 1880's Tanaka opposed all efforts to reinstitute Confucian education in the lower schools, supported religious freedom, and finally was removed from office because of his insistence on continuing the experiment in American education.¹⁹

Shortly after Tanaka's first meeting with Niijima, he asked Niijima to prepare a prospectus for Universal Education in Japan.²⁰ Niijima consented, delighted: it served his purpose. "I think," he wrote Hardy, "it is a most important mission [task]." It might "be some service for opening the country to the light of *truth* and *life*. Pray for this untiring soldier of the blessed cross," Niijima concluded, "for I feel my active battlefield has come within my sight."²¹ Through

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 130.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ Herbert Passin, pp. 70-71, 82-83, 149.

²⁰ Hardy, p. 124.

²¹ *Ibid.*

the Tanaka mission, even through Tanaka himself, Niijima felt he might begin his mission of evangelizing and saving Japan.

Even before Niijima finished his report, Tanaka requested him to join his entourage on its trip through the United States and on to Europe. With the completion of the mission, he hoped that Niijima would return to Japan as an official of the Education Ministry. To the first request Niijima agreed, but only after several weeks of indecision. Only after Mori assured him that the "embassy will respect me as a free Japanese citizen,"²² did Niijima ask Hardy's permission to take leave from Andover in order to travel with the mission for a year. "My great obligation is to you," he wrote Hardy when asking his consent. "I am your minor and cannot decide on the matter without consulting you." Ultimately, Niijima feared that Tanaka thought him as "useful" and would "lay a snare to catch and take me back to Japan and make use of me for the [sic] educational purposes."²³ While he would consent to join Tanaka's entourage — that is, if Mr. Hardy approved—he would never join the Education Ministry.

Temporary employment by the government might be useful, Niijima thought, especially after Hardy encouraged him to join the mission and Professor Seelye told him "[you] better go," but it was not his "predominant choice to commit myself to the hand of the government."²⁴ Niijima always felt it necessary to balance the net gain of associating himself with the government, "though I may do some good," with the potential danger of any association with the Japanese government. "They may keep good terms with me;

²² *Ibid.*, p. 126.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 130.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

they may invite me with a word like honey and treat me as a hired servant, and then they may gradually lay hold of me."²⁵ The major danger of hiring himself out to the Japanese government, he wrote, was that "if I connect myself with the government I shall be its slave."²⁶ Niijima worried constantly that the government was trying to trap him by having him join the bureaucracy, or even by merely asking to reimburse Hardy for his expenses on behalf of Niijima's education. This fear, however, was less a personal fear of individual exploitation than an expression of his fear of ideological and moral entrapment. He feared for his moral freedom. If the government succeeded in paying his financial debt to Hardy, he would inevitably be placed in a feudal relationship with the Japanese government. "If he [Mr. Hardy] receives . . . payment from Mori," Niijima wrote Mrs. Flint, "I shall be bound up to the Japanese government by that sum of money."²⁷ Again, he would be bound by a feudal stipend. Niijima's remembrance of his past status, the unconditional bondage of vassalage, remained; he was ever fearful of the danger of tyranny.

Niijima hoped to serve Japan, but he drew a distinction between Japan and her people and the particular system under which the country was then governed. As a Christian, Niijima's love for the Japanese people was certain, but his relationship to the government was not. While his commitment to God as his Lord was complete and absolute, Niijima's relationship with any secular sovereignty was conditional. "I have already recognized the Sovereign King, the Savior, as my Lord and government," he wrote Hardy in 1872 on receiving Tanaka's offer, "and shall not

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 102

need any other government.”²⁸ Tanaka was partly correct; Niijima was indeed a slave of Jesus. But Tanaka did not understand the character of Niijima’s loyalty. It was true that while Niijima served God and the true principles of God, he could not serve any government that imposed itself between him and his mission by demanding unconditional loyalty: the loyalty and filial piety to the state and emperor that Inoue Tetsujirō, the philosophical apologist for the conservative government, demanded of all Japanese citizens was impossible for Niijima to accept. It was also true that Niijima’s loyalty to God’s truth was unconditional, that of man to a master, while his service to Japan was conditioned by the demands of his loyalty to God. For Niijima, however, this did not represent a divided loyalty. By attempting to bring Japan into harmony with God’s truth, he simultaneously served both God and Japan. Niijima’s mission as a Christian made him a Japanese patriot.

During their year together, Niijima emphasized to Tanaka the essential harmony of his loyalty to God and his commitment to Japan. Men cultivated by Christianity, he said, would be good citizens, and a nation cultivated by Christian truth would be a great nation. “If a man loves virtue [Christian truth], he indeed is a true man and does know how to take care of himself. . . . If the whole nation loves truth and virtue, they will govern themselves, nor give and cause much trouble to the government. The strength of a nation is the strength of their virtue and piety.”²⁹ Niijima ultimately argued that an individual made virtuous by Christianity was a good citizen because he was moral. The thrust of his argument hardly seems revolution-

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 130.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 128.

ary, and his discussion of national strength in terms of moral catchwords was common in Meiji Japan. Yet, Niiijima's contentions were radical in Japan. He demanded commitment to abstract truth over that of secular government: only by a demonstrable commitment of the entire nation to a transcendent authority and idea, rather than to any limited temporal authority, would a nation be led to wealth and power. Between 1872 and 1873 Niiijima outlined the skein of his argument to Tanaka. First, Niiijima attacked the old, with its emphasis on intellectual skills. "I never knew any person [to] become virtuous by studying the philosophy of Plato or books of Confucius."³⁰ Education of the intellect alone, he said, does not make either virtue or strength. "Sharpened intellect will be very much like a sharp knife," he continued. "He [the intellectual] may ruin his fellow creatures."³¹ Intellect was limited and, Niiijima contended implicitly, secular authority itself was limited and imperfect. He then turned to a discussion of the absolute strength of Christian belief, with echoes of the ideas of Seelye and Stearns that a nation depended upon the individual cultivated by Christian morality. "There is truth in the Christian religion. We ought to take truth *because it is truth* and not as a mere instrumentality."³² Christianity, Niiijima told Tanaka, was good not because it forced the individual to respect the state, but because it instructed him in morality. Christianity freed the individual to be virtuous. Truth could never be an instrument of a state, nor could the individual be a functionary of a secular lord. But, Niiijima continued, the strength of a state depended upon the freedom of

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² *Ibid.*, p. 129.

the individual soul. Almost all his discussions with Tanaka ended with Niijima's assertion of the need for "education of the soul." Again, here is an echo of Seelye and Stearns. For Niijima, as for his mentors, an intellect without moral cultivation was dangerous. But, Niijima concluded, "if a man loves virtue . . . if the whole nation knows truth and virtue . . . there is power in the Christian religion to make men free and vigorous. [Indeed] the strength of a nation is [their] strength and virtue."³³ Niijima's argument was revolutionary: to develop and be strong a nation must look to the cultivation of the free, unfettered individual. When the individual was freed by his commitment to transcendent truth, when the individual was moral because of his knowledge of Christian principles, and when the individual was pious and loved his fellow men as children of God, the state would prosper. Rather than disciplining its public by the Confucian virtues of loyalty and filial piety, a nation to be strong must allow its citizens to be free and independent. Niijima was a patriot, but it was patriotism conditioned by his new concept of the state and its people.

Niijima stated this explicitly in a speech many years after founding Dōshisha.

Dōshisha's purpose was not to serve one man, or even only Christianity. It was founded in order to help the culture of the nation. The establishment of a university is related to the rise and fall of nations. Thus it [the founding of Dōshisha] is a national undertaking.³⁴

But again and again Niijima found it necessary to prove to his opponents that Christian commitment was a patriotic commitment. Replying to the usual at-

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 128.

³⁴ Watanabe, p. 244.

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tack, that Christians sold their soul and country to foreigners he said:

The reason I established a private university was not to give our nation to foreigners, but instead to truly cultivate businessmen, politicians, literary men, all people who will be activists, love truth and freedom, respect morality and the true principle, and, therefore, devote themselves to our nation Japan. And by these principles, they will strengthen the independence of Japan, and bring about the peace and happiness of our nation. That is all I intended to do.³⁵

In defining the state in terms of the individual's relationship to transcendent authority and truth, Niijima called attention to the tensions that would exist between the Christian vision of the state and the Meiji idea of government. Inoue Tetsujirō would insist on the unconditional loyalty of the individual to his government and father. Niijima would insist that only when the individual was allowed to be free would the state be strong. Niijima's mission was to destroy this tension by creating a body of men whose commitment to Christianity would make them virtuous, and who by their virtue would help lead the nation toward the health and prosperity of the Western world. Through the preaching of Christianity, Niijima would save the souls of men and give strength to the nation.

The Mission to Japan

A year after Niijima returned to the United States from his trip with Tanaka, he graduated from Andover Theological Seminary. He was one of nine students selected from his class to speak at graduation:

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 324.

the subject of his address, delivered in Japanese, was "The Preaching of Christ in Japan."³⁶ The subject was most appropriate. Niijima had already been appointed a corresponding member of the Japan mission of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. He had pledged himself to return to Japan and preach the gospel.³⁷ Most of the summer of 1874 he spent in preparation for his return and in farewell visits to friends. He spent the latter part of August with Mr. and Mrs. Hardy at their summer home in Bar Harbor, Maine. In late September, accompanied by the Hardys, he returned to Boston, and on September 28 he was ordained at the Mount Vernon Church in Boston. Aiding in his ordination was the Reverend Ephraim Flint, Jr., who extended the right hand of fellowship, and appearing as representatives of other large churches in the area were Professor J. H. Seelye and Dr. J. L. Taylor, principal of Andover Academy. In the audience were, of course, Mr. and Mrs. Hardy.³⁸

During his year of travel with Tanaka, Niijima had investigated the educational systems of most countries of Europe. He had traveled from the United States to England, visited most of the major countries of western Europe, and then continued on to Russia.³⁹ During the year they were traveling together, he and Tanaka had discussed education and its effect on a nation. What was the best method? What were the best institutions? What, in fact, was the purpose of education? Niijima had argued the necessity of spiritual education accompanying the education of the intellect. By the time Niijima returned to Andover, he had decided that in Japan, as at Amherst, he must combine

³⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 167-168

³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 166-167

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 168.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 140-165.

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evangelization with education in order to carry out his Christian mission successfully. Through education, through the moral cultivation of individuals interested in Western education, Niijima would lead Japan to Christianity.⁴⁰

Education, seen as a tactic of evangelism, was not new. Most missionary educators discussed the spread of Christianity and the flowering of the West as if the two were indissolubly related. For the missionaries we have discussed, this convenient tactic was the truth. Some early missionaries had believed it sufficient to indoctrinate potential converts in only the rudiments of theology and the Bible, but as Jerome Davis discovered quickly, "many of the Japanese attracted to Christianity are samurai . . . most of them [have] as keen minds naturally as you would meet in any college in America. All the knowledge, discipline, and experience I possessed were called into requisition every hour I talked with them."⁴¹ Indeed, Davis wrote, it would be unwise to ordain a man who lacked knowledge of science.⁴² Davis was fully confident that science and all other Western knowledge would demonstrate the truth of Christianity. For Davis and Green, his colleague in Kobe, it was necessary to give the convert a thorough education because only in that way could the convert demonstrate the truth of Christianity to his hostile society and government. Faith alone was not enough. The convert must logically and intelligently challenge the assumptions of his society, and he must be prepared to use his knowledge of secular learning to "successfully grapple with the materialism

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 169.

⁴¹ Baller, p. 28, as quoted from the *Japan Mission Papers*, October 1, 1873.

⁴² *Ibid.*

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of the government institutions.”⁴³ As Green wrote to the American Board, unless the convert had such an education, unless he had a knowledgeable verification of his faith, he would have fixed upon him “the odium of being the tool of foreigners.”⁴⁴ Davis agreed. But he also had another worry: this one was truly tactical. The Japanese government was rapidly founding its own modern educational institutions, and soon the best minds of the younger generation would be flocking to government institutions to be filled with materialistic learning. Western knowledge at that time was marketed at a premium. The challenge to the mission was clear. “Unless we can start a thorough school at once,” Davis wrote, “we will lose to our work most of the Christian young men around us and our hands are tied . . . we must have a Christian college.”⁴⁵ Once such a college was established, however, Davis was confident that an educated, native ministry could successfully grapple with any ideas or questions raised by the government materialist apologists. Without the school, Davis was certain that the mission’s work would be handicapped. Unable to educate the best minds, he wrote, “we [would have to] content ourselves, for the present to a great extent, with a class who would be as much out of place in this age of educational activity as a backwoodsman Methodist preacher of 1800 would be in the Massachusetts pulpit of today.”⁴⁶

Davis’ future collaborator in the founding of Dōshisha, Niijima, saw an even greater problem: without a Christian college, not only would the mission fail, but Japan would face catastrophe. Davis, like most other missionaries, had noted with joy that many con-

⁴³ *Ibid.*, pp. 28-29.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 29.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

verts were former samurai; Niijima believed that the conversion of the samurai was the key to the conversion of Japan. "If we win them [the samurai]," he wrote, "we shall certainly win the whole sunrise empire."⁴⁷ As he told Hardy, the samurai were better educated; they were accustomed to leadership; and they could carry the whole nation to the cross with them. But most important, he added, "they will be more faithful to the Master."⁴⁸ With his sense of the Tokugawa past and his knowledge of the demands of piety, Niijima recognized a similarity between the absolute commitment of the samurai to his feudal lord and the absolute commitment of the Christian to God. The samurai were "strictly trained to faithfulness to their feudal master."⁴⁹ Niijima realized that, unless the former commitment was broken, unless the ties to the Confucian idea of loyalty and filial piety were destroyed, an acceptance of a new lord would be impossible. He had transferred his own loyalty from *daimyō* and parents to a greater Lord and Father. Upon a similar shift of loyalty by the Japanese, and particularly by the samurai, the future of Japan depended. "National prosperity or misery," he wrote, "hangs upon the pivot of this particular class. . . . If we let them swim away from the gospel net, they will certainly be caught by the Devil's hand."⁵⁰

The problem of morality that pervaded Niijima's thought was related to his sense of a rising tension between loyalties and, ultimately, between authorities. For Davis, the samurai were merely members of the better class and thus would produce a more intelligent breed of convert. But because Niijima was a sam-

⁴⁷ Hardy, p. 171.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

urai convert himself, he saw that the samurai faced a choice of authorities and that upon their choice hinged the fate of Japan. Only if Japan turned to Christ could it be saved, and only if the samurai led the way could Japan as a whole be converted. "Christian education," Niijima wrote, "will be a *power* to save the nation."⁵¹

Before leaving the United States, Niijima appealed to Hardy and Secretary Clark of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions for aid in founding a higher school in Japan, but he received little encouragement. Certainly, they believed that Niijima's suggestion was praiseworthy and that education could be of service to religion. But education, they felt, was not the primary object of the mission. Niijima remained determined to carry out his plan. He knew of the changes in education in Japan; he wanted Christianity to gain the fruits of this interest in the West. Just before he left the United States in early October of 1874, he was invited to attend the sixty-fifth annual meeting of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, being held at Rutland, Vermont. On Friday, October 9, he was asked to address the meeting, as were others who were about to leave for mission stations. Niijima had just finished another conversation with Hardy about his project and, fired by the problem that had long exercised him, he rose to speak. He needed no notes or prepared speech; his plan was certain, he knew the major need of his country, and he was certain of the necessary instrument for proselytizing.⁵²

When I return to Japan, I will establish a university in order to carry out "sincere education" providing true culture and on this basis strengthen the roots of society,

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵² *Ibid.*, pp. 169-170.

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and by demonstrating the glory of this culture in the Orient, I will help the destiny of my nation.⁵³

Japan, he said, faced an immediate crisis: the mission must act quickly. Niijima continued explaining to the group the events of the last seven years in Japan. The Restoration, he said, represented the end of the nightmare of feudalism that had brought his country to the edge of disaster, but it had not brought peace and order. His country was shattered. "At this moment, the social order is broken, all moral rules are in disorder and the people do not know where to go." The chaos and moral confusion, moreover, was not provoked simply by the change in political regime. Nor did a change in regime promise a renaissance. "The stagnation of the East is caused by the fact that Christianity is not there."⁵⁴ For this reason he asked the group for money to establish a Christian school where Christian men could be raised to spread the gospel and save his country. Within a few minutes of the conclusion of his talk he was pledged more than \$5,000.⁵⁵

Throughout his life, Niijima would return to the theme of Japan's moral and social stagnation, which could only be prevented through Christianity. In 1883, he wrote to Itagaki Taisuke, a leader of the Popular Rights movement, "Japan stagnates." Only men with a firm belief in Christianity, men of conscience and sincerity, could save the country.⁵⁶ To the Kumamoto band, his first students, his argument was not new. They, as he, found Western progress wedded to Christianity's growth. Whereas they and most Ameri-

⁵³ All quotations from Niijima's speech are taken from Watanabe, pp. 321-325.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 323.

⁵⁵ Hardy, p. 172.

⁵⁶ Otsuka, pp. 154-155.

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can missionaries emphasized the ineluctable progress of the West, he noted that even in the West civilizations like Greece and Rome had fallen into decay because they had failed to accept Christianity and the suzerainty of Christ.⁵⁷ Other missionaries had seen in the rise of Christianity as inevitable a development as the progress of manufacturing, commerce, the appearance of a middle class, and the development of constitutional government. To Niijima, there was no inevitable process by which Japan could be Christianized, democratized, and industrialized. In the same letter to Itagaki, he said, "Even now Europe does not make progress to a true culture. This is because the people there believe, but do not believe satisfactorily."⁵⁸ Even America, his land of Utopia, faced danger, he feared. As early as 1869 he had reported to Mrs. Hardy on a sermon of a secretary of the American Board:

[He] stated to us very vividly in what fearful point the American people stands now. They have 8,000,000 Irish people and many Germans and French, 4,000,000 Negroes in the South, many thousands of Chinese and a few Japanese on the Pacific Coast. Unless the American people stretch out their hand to enlighten, elevate and educate them with the Christian truth they will ruin the free institutions which is the pride of the nation. . . . All heathens look at America as the center of the Christian light. If the center of the light has not much intensity, how could it enlighten those who are lying in the remote dark corners? My dear friend, let us pray earnestly for those Christians who live for themselves and not for Christ.⁵⁹

⁵⁷ *Ibid.* Niijima's intentions were often better than his grasp of history.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ Hardy, p. 92.

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Fourteen years later, he again picked up this theme when writing to Itagaki. Now he developed this point further and expressed his doubts about the possibilities of progress in a non-Christian country.

Is manufacturing prosperous? Is commerce well managed? Do they enjoy freedom? Can they maintain their civil rights? Do they have profound knowledge? Do they promote universities and raise men of ability? When from this viewpoint we observe Japan, it is as if we wander through the Sahara Desert in Africa. Men who worry about humanity should cry when they examine the situation in Japan.⁶⁰

For a country without Christianity, Niijima saw no hope of progress. There, society stagnated, "art, science, and politics became the slaves of selfish desires . . . [and ultimately] rotted."⁶¹

But if Niijima felt that all societies faced potential disaster, he saw no society as inevitably doomed. No society was tainted or limited by its past history or permanently blessed by its present form. The United States faced danger; Europe could decay; but Japan could also rid itself of its present corruption. To Kurahara Tadanobu, former elder of Annaka domain, Niijima wrote in 1883, "we may treat the bad customs and practices [in Japan] which makes everything rot; we can reform them all."⁶² But political change, from shogunate administration to Meiji government, for example, was not enough. As he had told the meeting of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions in 1874:

When I think about Japan, I know one undoubtable

⁶⁰ Otsuka, p. 155.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 154.

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 47.

truth: the future peace or danger, the happiness or unhappiness [sic] of the more than thirty million Japanese can not merely rest upon the betterment of political affairs or the progress of material civilization. These things are definitely related to one thing: if the real merits of enlightenment can function effectively and if the direction of education is able to be guided in an adequate manner.⁶³

Ultimately, only through the education, conversion, and the careful cultivation of the conscience of the individual could Japan be guided from her chaos to moral and social peace.

Education and Conscience

Niijima had specific ideas about the form and function of Christian education in Japan. Although he, like most educators, explicitly recognized the social purposes of education, he also saw education in terms of moral and spiritual objectives; he hoped to cultivate “a person so that his conscience was a weapon.”⁶⁴ Frequently during the Meiji period, Niijima as educator of the spirit was contrasted with Fukuzawa Yukichi, exponent of English utilitarianism, as educator and apostle of materialism. Fukuzawa emphasized the importance of Western science and the importation of Western knowledge and rationality for Japan’s modernization. Niijima, although certainly encouraging the importation of Western science and knowledge, saw as the urgent need of Japan, as his former student Tokutomi Sohō wrote, “the importation, as soon as possible, of the foundation of civilization, its spiritual

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 273.

⁶⁴ *NKNS*, p. 13.

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and moral basis.”⁶⁵ But if it is possible to contrast Fukuzawa as the advocate of practical reform with Niijima, the promoter of subjective reform, it is also necessary to point to Niijima’s ideas about spiritual change in terms of their social objectives. As Tokutomi wrote in the same essay:

Niijima wanted his students as churchmen not merely to pray or sing hymns, but also to be men who would strictly hold to God-given principles of right and what is good for human kind. Or as politicians, to be not merely clever politicians, but politicians who love the people of their country. Or, if they are men of letters, they should not merely write well, they should also love truth and justice. Or if they become entrepreneurs, they should not only be skillful businessmen, they should also be men who are honest and love their neighbors. Or if they are common men, they should not merely seek food and clothes, they should also seek a higher and better living in their deeds, character and disposition.⁶⁶

National progress depended upon the moral reformation and cultivation of the whole people of a nation, not merely a few. “A few heroes are not sufficient for a nation,” Niijima wrote. “The people must be educated.”⁶⁷ He felt that the Orient, and Japan in particular, was rotten and doomed—the people and government corrupt with “dirty human mind[s] which [are] spoiled by the illness and evils of the world.” A total reformation of the Japanese spirit was needed, or Japan could have no hope of progressing into the modern world. “I wish to clean the dirty human mind,” Niiji-

⁶⁵ Fujiwara Kiyozo, *Meiji Taishō Shōwa kyōiku shisō gaku-sestu jimbutsu shi* [A history of people and theories in Meiji, Taisho and Showa education thought] (Tokyo, 1943), I, 390-391.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 391.

⁶⁷ Kuyama, p. 135.

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ma wrote Itagaki. "By doing so, I wish to raise a new human being . . . a new mind. . . . [without] this new mind, how can the art and techniques of Western culture contribute to the human being?"⁶⁸ The government's efforts merely to copy the material civilization of the West were marked for failure, since the government misunderstood the roots of Western success.

Our nation, at the present wishes to develop Western arts and sciences, and thus cultivate a new land. . . . All she does is imitate their [Western] education. Japan does not absorb the pure and sound morality on which Western civilization has been developed. If this is the situation, we can not copy the developments of the West at all.⁶⁹

In establishing a Christian school, Niijima was not satisfied to use it only to draw individuals within the "gospel net." He was explicitly concerned with Japan's modernization. Perhaps, in fact, he followed a Western model more consciously than did any other reformer of the era. He took his educational ideals from those found at Amherst. Seelye and Stearns had believed that it was the purpose of the college to convert every student, cultivate his conscience, and as a result make him a good citizen. For Niijima, too, the purpose of the college was the conversion, the cultivation, and education of the individual for a higher moral and national purpose. Only when an individual "is able to respect his own spirit, be obedient to the command of conscience, is a human being able to respect Providence. The individual can only love others when he accepts the cultivation of the spiritual aspects of the human being. Those who are newly born be-

⁶⁸ Otsuka, pp. 156-157.

⁶⁹ Fujiwara, p. 752.

cause of their Christianity come to respect and love the Creator.”⁷⁰

Nijijima’s purpose and command is so clear that it hardly needs explication: a modern state must be built on the inviolability of conscience. Only when an individual’s conscience has been schooled by the true principles can he undertake the structural changes necessary for modernization. This theme appears in almost every essay, letter, lecture, and sermon Nijijima gave. To Itagaki, he wrote: “I believe that culture cannot rise without Christianity: Christianity is the origin of culture.”⁷¹ But why was this so? In 1888 he gave the explanation to Ōkuma Shigenobu.

As you know, I devoted all my life to religion and education. This is the reason I never openly engaged in politics. My patriotism has been one of deed. I bore so many things [injustices] because I expected my hopes to bear fruit in the future. All that I have been considering, day and night, was nothing but the education of youth who will carry out my future work: in other words, the cultivation of good material that will work for the structure of a new Japan. All that I am concerned with is the betterment of the individual, the betterment of society, the betterment of politics, and the betterment of all matters concerned.⁷²

In every address to a Dōshisha graduating class he returned to this theme. He exhorted the students to work for reforms, for only they could lead Japan.

Nobody but you will dare to die for the sake of our nation. Only you can take full responsibility in this time of crisis for the reform of Japan. I hope that you never try

⁷⁰ Watase, p. 336.

⁷¹ Otsuka, p. 155.

⁷² *Ibid.*, pp. 212-214.

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to save your life, if it is necessary to die for the sake of Japan. . . . Today there are many scholars, bureaucrats, and journalists. But none of them is good enough to manage the world. . . . You must dare to take the responsibility of managing the world. . . . You must die for the sake of the world. This is what I expect from all of you.⁷³

Although unable to attend the 1887 commencement at Dōshisha, he addressed a letter to the graduating class. He was proud of the students' achievements, and he had high hopes for their future.

Five years have passed since you came to Dōshisha. . . . You have behaved as gentlemen, you have tried hard, and you have studied well. This not only gives me pleasure, it gives pleasure to Dōshisha and our nation. Now you graduate. You will have long and varied futures. It must be said that you are men who have been selected to stand to the forefront of our Lord, the angels, and our people. Go ahead, you distinguished men. If we cannot expect leadership from you, to whom then can we turn for the reform of our nation? . . . Work hard and rely upon our Lord. . . . Devote yourselves to our nation because of His great principles. Keep your spirit and willingness pure. . . . Learn from history to understand the importance of human life. Do not be controlled by private considerations. Fulfill your duties that are assigned by our Father.⁷⁴

Niijima was concerned with the training of future leaders for Japan, but they would be leaders of Japan because of their Christianity and not in spite of it. They were patriots because they were reformers; they were reformers because they devoted themselves to the nation on the basis of God-given principles. In an early letter to Tokutomi Sohō, one of his favorite students, Niijima described the role Christians would

⁷³ Fujiwara, pp. 759-760.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 120.

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play in Japan. Only Christians could reform Japan; as for the rest of the intelligentsia, he was only contemptuous.

I hope that you do not share the life of the so-called small politicians and easy-going journalists. Do not hold to their hopes or ambition. Until you are 24 or 25, I hope you will cultivate your spirit, learn history and master art and science, in short, devote yourself to self-cultivation. You must never simply rise and fall with society itself. I, also, sincerely hope that you will work for the reform of society with such strong ambition that you may turn the courses of a hundred rivers. . . . In Tokyo there are many temptations of the flesh. . . . But I believe that a true man does not fall into these temptations and will concentrate in shaping his will and so encouraging himself that he may stand above the high, white clouds. . . . It is the time that the human being must learn and then practice what he has learned. It is our Lord's great gift that we live at a moment so different from that of our ancestors. Do not love your personal ambition because of little cause. Nor change the course of your ambition because you fall into temptation. Hold firmly to the great purpose which is not for the present but for the future cure of society. Achieve your goal for the sake of the Lord's name, and, also, for the sake of the betterment of people who are suffering so deeply.⁷⁵

For Niijima, the key to social reform was self-reform. Only when an individual had internalized Christian beliefs and Christian principles could he be free of contemporary social fashion and ambition. Guided by his transcendent belief and his inner code, he could lead. With the acceptance of the Lordship of God, with a consciousness of the truth, he could be free. The Christian was not bound by government con-

⁷⁵ Otsuka, pp. 133-135.

tract or stipend, by ambition, or by national mores. Bound only by God, he was free to reform his society.

As for the ultimate aims of these reforms, Uemura Masahisa, the leading clergyman of the Presbyterian Church, stated them bluntly. The nation herself, Uemura said, "is designed to help perfect human nature and to help man march toward the divine." Hence, the freedom and authority of conscience cannot be interfered with by the government, since by emphasizing duty to God, "we are devoted to the freedom of conscience and the maintenance of the rights of faith."⁷⁶ Ultimately, all teachings opposed to God's truth should be abolished. "The society of man should be subject to His teaching." National law must come into accord with the moral law.⁷⁷ Piety, inevitably, defined patriotism.

Although Niijima never joined the Jiyū Minken movement and never campaigned on the behalf of any political movement, he was clearly and self-consciously a political, in fact, a social reformer. Not only had he founded Dōshisha in order to inculcate his students with Christian values; Dōshisha as a private, nongovernment university was a symbol of the type of education that had spawned and nurtured Western freedom. Niijima believed that "education was closely related to the destiny of a nation." In fact, the development of civilization in North America, Niijima wrote, "[and] the cause by which its system and culture were developed are, in short, the result of the forces of enlightenment . . . [and] the force of enlightenment is so great there because they had the proper means of education."⁷⁸ As for the proper objectives of education, he was explicit: "It would foster the spirit of liberty."

⁷⁶ *NKNS*, p. 99.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

⁷⁸ Otsuka, p. 276.

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The ideal university will respect freedom, spontaneity, conscience, and religious freedom. All in all, as in the United States, the Christian university was the ideal school, "it was the safeguard of freedom . . . and without doubt her [the United States'] fine institutions were the outcome of this spirit."⁷⁹ In founding Dōshisha, Nijjima stated clearly that his objective was to try to lead Japan on to the American model. Nijjima modeled his school on Amherst; he took that school's ideals of the cultivated individual as his own.

Certainly Nijjima's view that education should be used to determine and inculcate national goals was shared by most of the government's education leaders. Mori Arinori, Minister of Education, and Inoue Kowashi, an important government consultant on the constitution and education, believed that the purpose of education was to point out the direction the nation should take. "If we want to maintain the prestige of Japan among the powers and achieve everlasting greatness," Mori wrote in the late eighteen eighties, "we must cultivate and develop our national spirit. This is possible only through education."⁸⁰ Nijjima would have agreed with Mori's general sentiment. But when the new national university was created, Mori supported regulations stating that the purpose of the university was to teach arts and sciences essential to the state. In preparing these regulations, it was also clear that the drafters were not concerned with the individual but with the state.⁸¹ It was for this reason that Nijjima had feared a government monopoly of education. He was first cautious: "I do not believe it as a

⁷⁹ Watanabe, p. 343.

⁸⁰ Joseph Pittau, "Inoue Kowashi, 1843-1895, and the Formation of Modern Japan," *Monumenta Nipponica*, Vol. XX, Nos. 3-4, p. 271.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

fruitful method to consign all educational undertakings to the government alone." But the divergence of his viewpoint with theirs was clear. "Education should be concerned with the development of human ability,"⁸² he wrote. Education by the government is "likely to be artificial and coercive. . . . they [the government] will not educate people who will be independent, develop their own view, not be ashamed of themselves on earth or in heaven, or men who will seek their destiny independently."⁸³

The contrast between Niijima's and Mori's educational objectives points up the totally different views of modernization between the Christians and the government. Inoue described his and Mori's educational objectives in the early nineties:

The fundamental principles of Mori's educational policy was education based on the *kokutai*. . . . Fortunately in our country we have one beautiful treasure which is incomparable with that of any other country. This is the *kokutai* based on the imperial line unbroken for ages eternal. Nothing but the *kokutai* can be the keynote of education. No other country has a history like ours: our people have been loyal to the emperors of an unbroken line from the beginning of the country and they will be loyal to all future emperors as long as the national land continues to exist. Therefore, we should make the *kokutai* the principle of our education. Nothing else can be the basis of our educational system, and this was the principle of the late Mori.⁸⁴

Kokutai was the cornerstone of education, Inoue wrote, as well as of the constitution. "Loyalty to the emperor as the living symbol of *kokutai* was to be in-

⁸² Watanabe, p. 343.

⁸³ Fujiwara, p. 752.

⁸⁴ Pittau, p. 272.

stilled into the minds of the children as the first value."⁸⁵ The state as symbolized by the emperor was to be apotheosized through education as well as in political theory. Indeed, after the publication of the Education Rescript of 1891, Inoue wrote that the rescript "should be always considered as a document above politics making it the universal principle of morality in the nation."⁸⁶

For Mori and Inoue, education was used to instill an ultranationalistic concept of the state. Japanese were taught to be subjects and servants of a divine emperor, and the function of education was to create an absolutistic concept of the state. Inoue, in fact, carefully deleted from Nakamura Masanao's draft of the rescript the suggestion that "loyalty and filial piety derived from a religious attitude of respect for the teachings of the Lord of Heaven."⁸⁷ Loyalty, Mori and Inoue argued, could not be divided. Ultimately, this might lead to a morality other than *kokutai*. For Inoue, only the state and emperor were morally and politically absolute.

The intellectual and moral crisis was clear. The one point of agreement shared by Mori, Inoue, and Nijima dramatized their differences. In Inoue's description of his and Mori's principles, he wrote, "in Europe there is a religion which serves to confirm the spirit of the young. There is no such creed in our country."⁸⁸ For Nijima, Christianity must be brought to Japan. Only in that way could she emulate the West. For Mori and Inoue, a theory of *kokutai* must be resuscitated in order to hasten the unification and modernization of Japan. But, most important, they founded

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 275.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 274.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

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a myth of the state that made dissent criminal and immoral. Niijima had begun the battle with the imperial myth, but he had just begun it. It was his students and his fellow Christians that elaborated on “patriotism” as the alternative to “loyalty” and on “individuality” as the only alternative to “filial piety.” Throughout the eighteen eighties, the Christians developed a theory of political order in direct opposition to what would be the aims of the Education Rescript. In fact, it could be argued that the Education Rescript was written as an answer and response to the Christian argument for a modern state.

8

LOYALTY AND CRITICISM

At the time of his conversion in 1882, Abe Isoo, one of Niijima's students and the most important Meiji Christian Socialist, wrote, "We Christians believed that we must lead Japan to a second Restoration, a spiritual one." When he wrote of his activities and thought at Dōshisha, he and his fellow converts had taken the Restoration as the significant event of modern Japanese history. But the significance Abe noted in his diary was that "the Restoration brought drastic change in the political organization of Japan." The fact of change, not the Restoration of the emperor marked the era for Abe. The necessity for further change, spiritual change, and not an urgency to rush forward to serve the imperial government prompted these converts to turn from religious communion at school to evangelism in the country. Newly inducted into the church, Abe felt that "we, each one of us, as Christians had the aspirations and assumed the responsibility of being little saviors."¹

¹ Abe Isoo, *Shakai shugisha to naru made* [Until I became a Socialist] (Tokyo, Showa 7), pp. 94-95.

Abe spoke of Restoration, but by 1886 two of Nijjima's earlier students were writing on the need for total Reformation. In that year Kozaki Hiromichi published one of the first major Japanese tracts in Christian apologetics, *Seikyō Shinron* [A new theory of politics and religion]. In the same year, Tokutomi Sohō finished his prophetic work, *Shōrai no Nihon* [The future of Japan].

The reforms of the Restoration, Kozaki wrote, were of great importance, "one could [even] say that with the abolition of the domain and the establishment of the prefecture system our Reformation had finished." But Kozaki himself could not accept this.² "The period of change is not even mid-way. *This period is the period of a great Reformation and we are engaged in the achievement of this Reformation.*"³

With as deliberate a choice of symbolic language as Kozaki, Tokutomi also contrasted the present and future needs of Japan with the limited and even backward-looking program of the Restoration.

The present transformation is a progressive and not a retrogressive one. The field in which we now do battle is not the last, but the first; the present departure is not one of despair but of hope. . . . This age is one of hope. For this reason we should speak of the *Resurrection* of Japan rather than of the transformation of Japan. In any event, the old Japan has died. The Japan of today is a new Japan. The question remains what of Japan's future?⁴

Tokutomi left Dōshisha and broke his formal ties

² Kozaki Hiromichi, *Seikyō shinron* [A new theory of politics and religion] in *Kozaki zenshū* [Collected Works of Kozaki] (Tokyo, 1938), III, 299.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ As quoted in Kosaka Massaki, p. 202. Tokutomi Sohō, *Shōrai no Nihon* [The future of Japan], (Tokyo, Meiji 20), pp. 3-4.

with the church, although he retained its evangelical fervor and used its prophetic form. He saw reform to be not merely desirable, nor even simply inevitable. It was indispensable, a necessity for progress and the condition of survival. As Tokutomi warned his contemporaries in an editorial in the *Kokumin no Tomo*, "If we wish to survive and enter the victors' camp . . . we have one destiny. We must allow . . . politics, commerce, literature, religion, [and] customs to be progressive, be democratic."⁵ In Tokutomi's eyes, Japan was destined to reform; not only did national survival demand it, nature had ordained it. "Country gentlemen," large landowners and yeoman, had brought capitalism to the nation. Feudalism had passed, and a commercial society had appeared; rule by the military force of the aristocracy had given way to the dominance of commerce and the middle class.⁶ Now, Tokutomi predicted, to reform itself, Japan "need merely allow the demands of the people, society, and nature to develop naturally."⁷

Tokutomi, Abe, and Kozaki all held an apocalyptic vision of Japan's transformation. As Christian evangelists and Christian apologists, Abe and Kozaki naturally assumed a responsibility for the proselytizing of their religion and the prosperity of their church. But also, like their mentor Nijjima, they believed that Christian mission imposed radical social obligations on all believers. Only Christians, Abe argued, could "assume the responsibility of being little saviors"⁸ and

⁵ Tokutomi Shohō, "Hoshuteki hando no taisei" [The general trend of the conservative reaction]. in *Kokumin no Tomo* [The Nation's Friend], editorial, October, Meiji 20. Quoted in Uete Michihari, "Nihon no shisō zasshi" [Japanese thought magazines] in *Shisō* [Thought], March 1962, p. 177.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 116.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 117.

⁸ Abe, p. 95.

carry out the necessary spiritual reformation. New men, men reborn, not merely new ideas or institutional changes, were needed to carry Japan to a Second Restoration.

Ultimately, Tokutomi too likened Japan's Second Restoration to a national conversion experience guided by men alienated from their country's past. "Old men of the Tempō [period] vacillat[ed] on the near shore . . . the middle-aged men, half-breeds who were born out of the marriage of feudal and Western elements, loitered on the bridge."⁹ Restricted by their past ties and past status ("influenced by the ideology and institutions of the old age"),¹⁰ they might help destroy the old but they could not lead Japan to a new era. Only the young "were born into this world with the destiny . . . to conquer and reform. . . . The fate of the young men of Meiji is the fate of the world of Meiji."¹¹ But before they could reform Japan and "reform [its] peoples minds," Tokutomi wrote, they "must master their [own] hearts and follow an internal spiritual phenomenon [which] can only be bought with their [own] hearts."¹²

Tokutomi's criticism of the Meiji government was not new; his representation of social strain in Japan

⁹ Kenneth Birger Pyle, "The New Generation: Young Japanese in Search of National Identity, 1885-1895," Ph.D. Dissertation, The Johns Hopkins University, 1965, published by University Microfilm, Inc., 66-4961, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1966, p. 28.

¹⁰ As quoted in Uchida Yoshihiko, *Nihon shihonshugi no shisōzo* [Japanese capitalist thinkers], (Tokyo, 1967), p. 113.

¹¹ Hirabayashi Hajime, "Ukita Kazutami to Tokutomi Sohō [Ukita Kazutami and Tokutomi Sohō] in *Kumamoto bandō kenkyū* [Studies of the Kumamoto band], edited by Dōshisha Daigaku Jimbun Gakku Kenkyū Shō [The Dōshisha University Institute of Humanistic Studies Research Center], (Tokyo, 1965), p. 419.

¹² *Ibid.*

as the consequence of a substantial cultural conflict was. His polarization of society into "young" and "old", divided between "adopters of the material phenomena [of the West]" and "followers of the spiritual [culture of the West],"¹³ between an "Age of Destruction" and the coming "Age of Construction"¹⁴ constituted a moral critique of the present society and a social program for its reconstruction. For Christians like Abe, Kozaki, and Nijima, the sustained commitment to secular reform exemplified individual Christian vocation and Christian piety. For Tokutomi, however, only the young were sufficiently alienated from their society to want to reform it, and only they were sufficiently deprived to want to appropriate the "inner spirit" of Western culture. Nevertheless, in both cases, the character and belief of the individual, not his past social status, would determine his social role. This shift in individual consciousness, symbolized by a new concern with both the role and social conditions of the "have not" and a recognition of both the legitimacy and primacy of the "demands of the people, society, and nature,"¹⁵ represented a major change in the cultural conception of political criticism as well as in the social character of the critics. In the late eighties, in fact, because of the breakdown of the Popular Rights movement and the narrow political concerns of its argument, the Christian defense of private conscience provided the only relevant social critique of the Mori and Inoue argument for the "absolute value" of the national polity. (As Mori and Inoue wrote, "Nothing but the *kokutai* . . . based on the imperial line unbroken for ages eternal . . . can be the keynote to our education. Our people have been

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 420-421.

¹⁵ Uchida, p. 117.

loyal to the emperors . . . from the beginning and they will be loyal to all future emperors as long as the national land continues to exist.”¹⁶ At a time when the distinction between the private (societal) and the public (state) domain remained unclear to many and was denied by some, the Christian argument for the autonomy of the spirit and of conscience provided the most important defense of society against the polity, and, ultimately, supplied the only premises with which a social movement could rise.

Late Samurai and Early Romanticists

Tokutomi was not the first to beseech his countrymen to reform, to “prove ourselves before it was too late . . . [and] do what the West was doing,” lest, as he warned, the West “would do it for us.”¹⁷ Early Meiji Westernizers had also quickly assimilated the language and ideas of progress as seen in the work of Buckle, Guizot, and Spencer. Fukuzawa much preceded Tokutomi in demanding reform, warning of its necessity, and asserting its predictability. A similar fear of Western domination impelled him to support government-sponsored reform although he always added the qualifying phrase “at present, in the present historical situation.”¹⁸ Nonetheless, he remained a constant critic of the government. He supported all government efforts to strengthen Japan in order to retain her independence, only to criticize the government for the superficiality of its reforms. As an intellectual, he felt it was his duty to refuse any gov-

¹⁶ Pittau, p. 272.

¹⁷ From *Shōrai no Nihon*, p. 218.

¹⁸ Joseph Pittau, *Political Thought in Early Meiji Thought* (Cambridge, Mass., 1967), p. 63. Tokutomi Sohō, *Shin Nihon no seinen* [Youth of new Japan] (Tokyo, Meiji 34), p. 18.

ernment office in order to remain free to tax the government for its shortcomings. Doubt, he wrote, was the origin of Western civilization.¹⁹ Skepticism, in fact hostility, toward the government was a virtue. Throughout the eighties, Fukuzawa questioned the legality of oligarchic rule — “its basis of power was so dubious.”²⁰ Indeed, he wrote, the Meiji government ruled neither by right of merit nor intelligence, but simply because its members came from the victorious clans.²¹ Fukuzawa insisted that further reform was required, a constitution demanded, and a legislature necessary, not simply because the West had it, but because only with a Diet could public opinion be reflected and the government gain public approval.²² Obviously underlying Fukuzawa’s writings was the assumption that national strength depended upon public approval, and that government policy should reflect public opinion.

Tokutomi and Fukuzawa shared much, not the least of which was an appeal to their readers and followers to remain constant in their opposition to the government. Fukuzawa not only attacked Satsuma-Chōshū rule; he vilified shogunate retainers who entered the government. As late as 1891, he censured Katsu Kaishū and Enomoto Buyō, former shogunate naval commanders, for serving the Meiji government. Traitors to their past masters, he wrote, they lacked the “*bushi* backbone” that enabled men of true samurai spirit to live in isolation from power and in hostile opposition to the usurpers of their lords. “A pride in endurance,” as Fukuzawa entitled his article,

¹⁹ Carmen Blacker, *The Japanese Enlightenment* (Cambridge, England, 1964), p. 56.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 118.

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² *Ibid.*, p. 119.

characterized the ethos of the samurai.²³ Indeed, “a *bushi* ethic was the basis with which to build a nation.”²⁴ Although critical of Japan’s feudal tradition, Fukuzawa still found in its *bushi* ethic the “will to endure.” “Pride in endurance” arose from the samurai ethic, the source of the spirit by which a man could remain patient and independent while isolated from power. This ethic was also the source of the strength with which a small country could face and withstand the pressure of larger ones.²⁵

Indeed, in a generation dominated by the ideas of the Western style critics of the Meirokusha and the Popular Rights movement, leading newspapers and journals were led by men nostalgic for the old shogunate days. Although hardly estranged from his times, indeed barely as critical of conservative Meiji bureaucrats as he had been of shogunate administrators and feudal customs, Fukuzawa praised the constancy and continued loyalty of shogunate retainers like Kurimoto Joun and Narushima Ryūhoku.²⁶ Never political critics themselves, Kurimoto only wrote and rewrote his memories of the shogunate and the customs of the past while Narushima sought rem-

²³ Tōyama, “Ishin no henkaku . . .,” p. 184.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ Kurimoto had risen to the rank of *Wakadoshiyori* [Younger-elder], a high bureaucratic post in the shogunate and had been in the pro-French party. In the late *bakumatsu*, he spent nearly three years study in France. When he joined the *Yūbin Hōchi* in June of 1874, he was nearly 52 years old. In the same year, Narushima was appointed chief editorial writer of the *Chōya Shimbun*. Narushima, who also had been of the pro-French faction in the shogunate, had held the post of foreign-affairs magistrate in the Tokugawa administration. For this and other information on the early Meiji press, see: Albert Altman, “The Emergence of the Press in Meiji Japan,” Ph.D. Dissertation, Princeton University, 1965, published by University Microfilms, 65-13, 123, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

nants of Edo culture in Tokyo and searched out gossip among the geisha. But as editors of leading newspapers of the time (Kurimoto of the *Yūbin Hōchi* and Narushima of the *Chōya Shimbun*) they recruited their staffs from among the publicists of the Popular Rights movement and from the graduates of Fukuzawa's private academy. Promised complete editorial freedom by Kurimoto, men like Yano Fumio, Ozaki Yukio, and Inukai Tsuyoshi who were later famous as political critics and liberal parliamentarians, joined the *Yūbin Hōchi*. Sage-like and content to live in patient political isolation, as Fukuzawa was to describe him, Kurimoto himself preserved his samurai independence and made its cultivation the basis of his editorial policy.²⁷ "If we the samurai are excluded from society," an editorial of the *Yūbin Hōchi* announced in October 1874, "then who is left in it? All that are left are spiritless, powerless, obedient, ignorant people and an oppressive government. . . . We firmly assert the power of the *shizoku*. . . . We respect them because of the firmness of their spirit and the highness of their mind and thought."²⁸

A generation of young journalists, mostly former shogunate retainers and all former samurai, cultivated this antigovernment spirit and savored their role as the "Warning Bell of Society."²⁹ In article after article in the multitude of newspapers and journals of the time, in the short-lived and small-circulation *Hyōron Shimbun*, *Kokai Shimbun* and *Saifu Shimbun* as well as the popular *Yūbin Hōchi*, these journalists demanded the "overthrow of the oppressive government" and called for "freedom [even if] we must get it

²⁷ Tōyama, "Ishin no henkaku . . .," pp. 184-185.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 187.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 184, 187-189.

by blood," and took it as their right and obligation to do so as samurai.³⁰ Since the common people were selfish and the government oppressive, they alone because of their "shishi humaneness" were the conscience of the nation and "responsible for the safety of the country."³¹ Fukuzawa did not regret the Restoration or unalterably deplore oligarch policies. Nor did he ever lament the lost past. Nevertheless he chose only the best among his students at Keio to serve Kurimoto. While clearly a supporter of "Civilization and Enlightenment" (*bummei-kaika*) and decidedly a proponent of all class-leveling legislation, he praised the samurai pride of Kurimoto and wrote of Saigo, Satsuma-rebellion leader and Restoration hero, shortly after the abortive samurai counter-revolution in Satsuma, that ". . . it would be blessed for our country, if its people's spirit could produce a second Saigo; but, alas, this does not seem possible . . . and I can only grieve."³² Even though opposed to the rebellion, Fukuzawa commended the spirit that provoked it and the man who led it. But even when Fukuzawa praised Saigo as a man of great samurai spirit, and damned former supporters and retainers of the shogunate like Katsu and Enomoto as men "whose deeds not only betrayed the spirit of the Mikawa bushi, but also broke the great spiritual principle of the Japanese people, a pride in enduring,"³³ he did not claim any

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 188.

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² Maruyama Masao, "Chūsei to hangyaku" [Loyalty and treason], *Kindai Nihon shisōshi kōza* [Lectures on the history of modern Japanese thought], (Tokyo, Showa 35), VI, 411, Maruyama has furnished me with a magnificent collection of quotes, as well as stimulating the ideas of this essay.

³³ Maruyama, p. 411. Henceforth unless otherwise noted all references to the "Chūsei to hangyaku" article will be simply listed under Maruyama.

great virtue for most samurai of the near past. Five years earlier, in 1872, in the *Gakumon no susume* [Encouragement of learning], Fukuzawa had depicted Tokugawa samurai officials as “gilded hypocrites.” Pious in their declaration of loyalty to their lords (“even in death . . . retainers were expected to show their devotion”) and proud of their stoicism even when faced with starvation (“poverty is a condition of the warrior, as is loyalty and patriotism”),³⁴ they, Fukuzawa sarcastically observed, habitually accepted bribes and fostered corruption.

But when in Meiji, “the so-called highest duty of all [*taigi*] lay in merely obeying the orders of the government,”³⁵ as Fukuzawa reported, the very law of the land made a mockery of the samurai idea of loyalty. Enomoto had grandly preserved his virtue to the last day and battle fought by the shogunate. With thousands of other shogunate retainers he finally yielded and of necessity accepted defeat. When, however, as Fukuzawa wrote, “sixty to seventy thousand former retainers gathered helplessly in Shizuoka, forced into beggary, with their homes confiscated by the imperial forces . . . [and] their ancestral tombs left barren to become haunted nests for raccoons.” Katsu and Enomoto “served the new masters.”³⁶ While Katsu and Enomoto and other “self-proclaimed first-rank supporters of the shogunate became imperial subjects,” samurai from domains in the Tōhoku who had served their masters loyally were left homeless and helpless in the streets because they, Fukuzawa ironically noted, “might be said to have made a mistake in choosing

³⁴ Harry D. Harootunian, “Introduction,” in Bernard S. Silberman and H. D. Harootunian, *Modern Japanese Leadership* (Tucson, 1966), p. 13.

³⁵ Maruyama, p. 411.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 410.

their road."³⁷ When former shogunate retainers like Katsu and Enomoto, "loyal supporters of the *bakufu*," enlisted in the service of the new government and "adjusted themselves to the new principles,"³⁸ not only did they repudiate their own past bonds, they gratuitously deprived all samurai of their identity.

A constant critic of the past pretensions to loyalty by the samurai ["subjects of the daimyo who publicly pretend to be loyal . . . but if you look at them they are all . . . hypocrites"],³⁹ Fukuzawa could only be cynical toward the parody of loyalty exhibited by Katsu and Enomoto. These men "gather where *taigi* is and get their salary from *meibun* [name and status], but they are only afraid to lose their newly won positions."⁴⁰ Caustically and harshly Fukuzawa developed his argument about the relativity of loyalty in historic and, especially, in Meiji Japan, "when right and wrong can only be judged by whether or not [you] have won the battle, 'if you win, you are the army of the Court [*chōtei*]; if you lose, you are the rebels.'"⁴¹ Yet, as his argument and language revealed, the hypocrisy of some samurai of the past did not prevent many shogunate retainers from fighting vigorously and passionately for the Tokugawa cause, and the apparent ambiguity of the idea of loyalty did not ease the pain and pathos of the loser when forced to accept defeat and homelessness. Ultimately, in fact, Fukuzawa did not question the loyalty of samurai on either side of the Restoration struggle. As for the question of loyalty, both at the time of the Restoration and during the Seinan War, he wrote that since they were

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 389.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 411.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 408.

“clashes of two loyal forces . . . not even a single hair can be placed between loyal subjects and disloyal rebels.”⁴² Nor did Fukuzawa find it possible during the Satsuma rebellion to attest to the “justice” [*gi*] of the imperial cause or even to attribute a “higher duty” to the activities of the imperial forces.

Taigi-meibun has no relation to the code of morality . . . [and when] the army of the government claim that they fight for justice [*gi*], the rebels say the same. Their intentions are no different. . . . If we should praise the bravery of those who fight for power and risk their lives, then we can say, that there are many brave and virtuous spirits.⁴³

Inescapably, when Fukuzawa attributed justice to both sides, and ultimate morality to neither, he confuted the possible claim that the action of the imperial supporters could be justified in the name of “higher duty,” or by necessities of *meibun*—that political function should correspond to social name or status. It was apparent, and explicit in Fukuzawa’s argument, that Katsu and Enomoto had acted from political opportunism. But, if Katsu and Enomoto’s defection was no more that self-interest — and it could be little more if the imperial cause lacked moral authenticity — then by the same reasoning, the action of the shogunate loyalists could not be seen as anything more than a logical expression of their traditional obligation. Politically, in terms of self-interest, they had chosen unwisely. Yet, because of the character of traditional samurai morality, they had acted consistently and, therefore, legitimately. Indeed, in lieu of any other proper institutional roles or values, they

⁴² As quoted by Maruyama from *Teichō koron* [An essay on 1877].

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 409.

had no other choice. The shock of the Restoration for the many dispossessed samurai of the shogunate and its allies made the reaffirmation of traditional loyalty a necessity for samurai identity.

Present-day scholars of the Tokugawa period, like the political scientist Maruyama Masao, have maintained that samurai activities never extended beyond his specific collective group. While initially dependent upon a synthesis of the pledge by samurai of service to his lord who in return gave him his grace [*on*], and the idea of a master-servant relationship rationalized by the Chinese concept of an objective higher "justice" [*gi*], feudal loyalty gradually became institutionalized into a fixed pattern of customary exchanges. The grace of a lord became expressed by a material prize [*onsho*] of land or money to his follower. As seen in his vassals' eyes, the grace "inherited through many generations" [*fudai-sōden*] and "accumulated over many generations" [*jūdai*] came to acquire the character "of an unwritten right on the part of the servant and a set of obligations on the part of the master which could not be reversed."⁴⁴ No longer stated as the product of a set of specific pledges between lord and vassal, service became identified with the conception of loyalty to a tradition, and, in effect, to the institutions representing that tradition. A samurai's right to an office depended neither upon specific and simple personal exchanges of pledges nor solely upon abstract principles of justice. Indeed, the Tokugawa nostrum, "Even if a master should fail to behave like a master, a servant should never fail to behave like a servant,"⁴⁵ suggested that a samurai's loyalty to his master's house and its traditions should override particu-

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 388-389.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 389.

lar lapses of his lord. When Uemura Masahisa defended the actions of shogunate loyalists who had opposed the imperial forces, he did not speak of higher justice, but rather identified the loyal and conscience-directed actions of the samurai in carrying out the "true lord-vassal relations"⁴⁶ with the defense of the old feudal system. Most samurai maintained loyalty to the established sources of legitimacy upon which their status rested. Loyalty could not transcend these ties to tradition. A samurai's rights to power inhered in the legitimacy of the Tokugawa institutions, and his loyalty was to the accumulated and inherited rights that gave him his position in society. As one shogunate patriot wrote in response to a Restoration leader who praised the "imperial grace since over three thousand years," "During the three hundred years of grace our grand-parents and parents lived, and they bore to us this grace. This grace is closer to us and greater than that grace of three thousand years ago. That grace is further and much smaller. . . . Should we ally ourselves with our distant and unknown ancestor and discard our grandfather and father?"⁴⁷ Due in part to the development of domain institutions which embodied all essential elements of the lord-samurai relationship, loyalty came to represent more than the heavy investment samurai had in "maintaining the established order and making it work," as Weber has written of involvement in a bureaucratic-military order. Now, samurai "personal respect . . . [was also] very much bound up with the completeness of his identification with this [established] order."⁴⁸

Paradoxically, although Fukuzawa had treated past samurai claims to loyalty as mere pious sham, he

⁴⁶ *UMTSJ*, I, pp. 657-658.

⁴⁷ Maruyama, pp. 388-389.

⁴⁸ Max Weber, *The Sociology of Religion*, pp. xxxviii-xxxix.

now affirmed that loyalty was the major attribute of the samurai tradition, and, indeed, argued its necessity for samurai identity. In the late eighties and early nineties, he grieved over the defection of shogunate retainers, not because of their treachery to their past lord (since he questioned the legitimacy of shogunate institutions and found little merit in them), but rather because they “betrayed the spirit of the Mikawa bushi” and thus swindled themselves of their identity. Loyalty, Fukuzawa wrote in the eighties, had become an “independent virtue.” “In the course of its development loyalty is not limited solely to the lord-vassal, superior-inferior relationship; its functions extend to the most minute, most distant aspects of [all] human relationships.”⁴⁹ Yet, as Fukuzawa argued shortly after the Restoration, *taigi* alone could never justify a transfer of loyalty from shogunate to emperor. Nor did his later consideration of loyalty as an “independent virtue” make beggary more palatable in the seventies or help explain to defeated shogunate retainers why they “had made a mistake in choosing their road.” At the time of the Restoration, of course, Fukuzawa had not treated loyalty as a cultural abstraction or as an object or symbol of orientation alone. The Restoration left men homeless, put them into the streets, and defiled their ancestral tombs. Clearly, he then wrote, “What was denied yesterday was accepted today. What was unjust yesterday is thought just today.”⁵⁰ Obviously, he had suggested,

⁴⁹ Albert Craig in his essay, “Fukuzawa Yukichi: The Philosophical Foundations of Meiji Nationalism,” in Robert E. Ward, (ed.), *Political Development in Modern Japan* (Princeton, 1968), has perceptively noted this development in Fukuzawa’s thought, p. 131. But it is my contention that Fukuzawa, in reality, had been using “loyalty” as an independent variable since the Restoration.

⁵⁰ Maruyama, p. 403.

shogunate retainers not only lost their positions; they found that all justification for their action had disappeared. In the feudal past, one high shogunate official wrote, tradition had demanded that a "bushi's" honor and obligation could only be justified when he died in pursuit of his master's orders or for his master's life."⁵¹ Now by holding to that dictum they were declared rebels. Indeed, Fukuzawa argued, when deprived of their social and political status and when their past right to authority was questioned, samurai must sustain loyalty as a private behavioral ideal in order to maintain their identity and independence.

The necessity in Westernization for a spirit of individual independence, not a logical reading of the past, guided Fukuzawa's extrapolation of loyalty from its institutional context. Western nations, he wrote, prospered because their people possessed a spirit of independence. "Those who lack an independent spirit cannot care deeply about their country."⁵² Primarily concerned with the rapid Westernization of Japan, he sought to create, as he wrote in both *Gakumon no susume* and *Bunmei-ron no gairyaku* [An outline of civilization], "the climate for the independence of the people."⁵³ Yet, in Japan, government Westernizers commanded "obedience to the order." Afraid to lose their newly won positions," defectors from the *bakufu* sold out their lords, while those who had virtuously fought for their masters grappled for their identity as they were deprived of all their social roots. Even in his essay about the virtuous Saigo he allowed a sarcastic commentary about the state of his countrymen: government officials "who call Saigo a traitorous rebel will undoubtedly change their attitudes quite easily and

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 389.

⁵² Craig, p. 119.

⁵³ Maruyama, p. 412.

swiftly [if he wins] and newspaper reporters . . . will applaud the great achievements of the army general Saigo Takamori."⁵⁴ Even here, Fukuzawa indicated, the unthinking would render praise to Saigo, just as they had frivolously changed their loyalties, because it was "the major trend of the times and of the world."

Of course, Fukuzawa had already known that most samurai were "gilded hypocrites." For him Katsu and Enomoto merely exemplified customary samurai practice. It took an emergency of great moment and an opportunity of great delicacy to impel him to resurrect the samurai as the national hero and loyalty as a cultural value. The Restoration provided the opportunity — long awaited by Fukuzawa — to reform Japan on the model of a Western nation. But, he wrote, a questionable authority supported by a dubious principle of higher duty quickly led many of the elite to an unquestioning "obedience to the order." In contrast to the West, "where civilization does not arise by the actions of the government from above,"⁵⁵ Fukuzawa argued, the Meiji government demanded unquestioning obedience in order that "from above [and] from outside"⁵⁶ civilization could be brought to Japan. In the West "[civilization,] without fail the product of the middle-classes, . . . expresses the tendency of the people [not the government], and it can expect to progress only as the people stand independent and parallel to the government."⁵⁷ But in Japan, "deceived by a false conception of civilization, the spirit of resistance declined, under the present circumstances, day by day."⁵⁸ Modeling his ideal common-

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 410-412.

⁵⁵ Craig, p. 110.

⁵⁶ Maruyama, p. 412.

⁵⁷ Craig, p. 110.

⁵⁸ Maruyama, p. 412.

wealth on those of the West, Fukuzawa praised the pride, independence, and "will to endure" of Kurimoto and Narushima because they exemplified the middle-class spirit of independence that created Western civilization and would function as the spirit that could modernize Japan. Kurimoto himself, in fact, drew the same parallel. "The [*shizoku*] are the so-called middle class. . . . The samurai are needed as the middle class in order to utilize the policies and tell the people what popular rights are."⁵⁹

Not only did Fukuzawa, like Kurimoto, draw this unlikely parallel between the social roles of the middle class and the samurai, he consciously distilled principles of behavior out of past samurai ideals to serve the present. Samurai loyalty, a principle whose application by samurai Fukuzawa had abused as relativistic and opportunistic, he now reinterpreted as the Japanese equivalent to Western private, internalized values. Fukuzawa coupled samurai loyalty to his lord's house — "the externalizing tendency in feudal thought," as Maruyama has suggested — with the private and emotional drives of the bushi as a principle "fixed within individuals as their inner energy for taking an independent, personal action of their own."⁶⁰ Fukuzawa's identification of traditional samurai loyalty with middle class "independence," like the young journalists' union of samurai humaneness with popular rights, suggested, as Lamartine remarked of the dying July monarchy, that "the world has jumbled its catalog."⁶¹ It also implied that the samurai

⁵⁹ Tōyama, "Ishin no henkaku . . .," pp. 187-188.

⁶⁰ See the extensive discussion of this problem in Maruyama, pp. 387-392.

⁶¹ As quoted in Clifford Geertz, "Ideology as a Cultural System," in David Apter (ed.), *Ideology and Discontent* (Glencoe, Ill., 1964), pp. 128-129.

knew that they had lost their roots. ("Nothing was more difficult," Lamartine had written, "than to give a good definition of oneself in religion, in philosophy, in politics. . . . These times are times of chaos.")⁶² When Fukuzawa wrote about the disaffection of some and the expropriation of many samurai, he, at the least, knew that the world was in a state of flux: "What was unjust yesterday is thought just today." The joining of *bushi* values and Western ideology and the identification of the "unattached intellectual" (as Fukuzawa saw himself and represented many of his allies) with both the samurai of the past and the pioneer modernizer of the present suggest that he could safely idealize the values of the samurai since the samurai had died as a class. When deprived of all institutional links to the past, many former shogunate officials retained their pride by preserving their political independence and their memories of the past. Young samurai sustained themselves by glorifying their character. Fukuzawa, perhaps most consciously of all, cultivated the "spirit of resistance" and "independence" as the transcending ideal of the samurai. In extrapolating loyalty from its past context, Fukuzawa, like all disaffected samurai, romanticized the past. Socially unattached, they raised to a higher level all they did and all they were. As Novalis wrote of his life, "In giving a noble meaning to the vulgar, a mysterious appearance to the commonplace, the dignity of the unknown to the known, the semblance of infinity to the finite, I romanticize it."⁶³ The former samurai sought, in sum, a higher level of cause and meaning for all they did. Fukuzawa reinterpreted custom in order to sanctify samurai opposition to the government, and he

⁶² *Ibid.*

⁶³ As quoted by Karl Mannheim in *Essays on Sociology and Social Psychology* (London, 1953), pp. 128-129.

cultivated the sensitivities of the unattached samurai in order to foster a critical opposition. Aware of the sensibilities of the newly unattached, tied now to the past only by affection and deprivation, and estranged from the new government, he allowed them a critical role in the modernization of Japan because they were the only stratum sufficiently free to identify with the new and sufficiently deprived to need to do so.

The Cult of Alienation and the Problem of Personality

Tokutomi had written that Fukuzawa and his generation resembled "half-breeds . . . born out of the marriage of feudal and Western elements." Among them, even the radical republican Ueki Emori lamented *bushi* status deprivation, which in context meant that he feared the demoralizing effects of "class equality" [*heimin byōdō*].⁶⁴ To be sure, he deplored "the old feudal period . . . when the people were subjects and servants of one monarch," but he retained its class distinctions and used it to accuse commoners of servility. ("For a long time commoners have been little concerned with affairs of state . . . [and] have little vitality and knowledge.") Commoners, he sarcastically reported, can only be "law-abiding citizens who, it must be said, have the personal traits desired by the autocratic government."⁶⁵ Past experience, in this instance elite snobbery and the customs of behavior, determined for Ueki, as it had for Fukuzawa, the mood and range of his response to Westernization and the Meiji government. Consciously restrained by his past attachments, he "loved the old feudal spirit," and revered the "incomparably rare and beautiful spirit of the *bushi*."⁶⁶ A polemicist for the rights of the people,

⁶⁴ Maruyama, p. 422.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

he burdened commoners of his time with the failure of their ancestors to carry out a "rebellion against the government." On matters of their own concern such as the land tax, he sneered, "they have occasionally raised a peasant rebellion."⁶⁷ He praised only the feudal elite, "men of knowledge, men of vitality who possess a spirit of independence and hearts to be patriots."⁶⁸ Since Ueki deprecated the commoners' abilities and regarded them as men "who follow imperial orders without knowing right from wrong,"⁶⁹ he reserved the leadership of Japan—to adapt Maruyama's words — for that "unique social status" which preserved the independent spirit. With the passing of the samurai, he warned, their "rare, beautiful spirit . . . may never again be attained."⁷⁰

Fukuzawa agreed with Ueki on many fundamental points. In the eighties, he had deliberately praised the samurai "religion of loyalty" as the source of their strength and the basis of their virtue, but he rejected the Confucianization of the people. He approved of its moral effects but "its advantages," he said, "[were] not worth the efforts required to master it." He recommended instead the "implantation of religion"⁷¹ as the best means of raising the morality of the masses toward that of the samurai. The education reformers, Mori and Inoue, argued for the historical tangibility of the incomparable "*kokutai* based on the imperial line unbroken for ages eternal," but advocated its use as the basic creed of education and state by direct analogy with Christianity in the West ("in Europe there is a religion which serves to confirm the spirit

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 422-423.

⁷¹ Craig, pp. 131-132.

of the young").⁷² Like them, Fukuzawa and Ueki sought in Japan's past both the spirit and the class to hasten development and assure national integration. Through analogy they "married" the West to Japanese custom and the customary leadership, and thus absorbed Western ideas and spirit within traditional social categories rather than using them to transcend the past and revolutionize Japan. Clearly, when they conceived of samurai loyalty and the samurai themselves as "functional equivalents" to classes and values in the West, all value inhered in the analogy itself and not in the traditions that formed it. In the short run, this helped attract primary attention to the problem of strengthening the nation rather than to the transformation of national values.

Tokutomi differed from Fukuzawa and Ueki in that he did not hold prized memories of the past or admire the samurai and their ethic. Although he wrote glowingly of Yoshida Shōin, a *bakumatsu* ideologue, Tokutomi regarded him more as a revolutionary thinker than as a Confucian one. In Tokutomi's interpretation, Yoshida was "an extreme radical among radicals," and "a revolutionary — what he taught breathes the spirit of revolution, what he preached was the manner of its accomplishment."⁷³ When Tokutomi appealed to the young men of Japan, to the "unattached" and the "have nots," to take the lead in "fostering a Second Restoration," he undoubtedly meant to draw a parallel and liken himself to Yoshida who had called for an uprising of the "unattached hero." But Tokutomi misjudged or misread the historical situation. Yoshida had made his appeal only to the traditional elite. While he drew his followers

⁷² Pittau, "Inoue Kowashi . . .," pp. 273-274.

⁷³ Kosaka, p. 205.

from among the *rōnin* and samurai detached from their feudal obligations, he assumed that their "ethic of commitment [to reform] had grown out of their class morality."⁷⁴ Tokutomi, from the first, abhorred "samurai characteristics," disdained that "aristocratic smell" that permeated all reforms of Meiji, and consistently criticized the "characteristics of the former samurai" (*shizoku-sei*),⁷⁵ that Fukuzawa praised so lavishly.

Tokutomi, as much as Fukuzawa, or Ueki, or as Yoshida, sought "strong [and] independent men"⁷⁶ to lead modern Japan. But Tokutomi thought less in terms of class than in terms of merit. He looked for "the young men of ability." "At a time when the culture of Japan is to take a further step toward progress," he wrote, the "capable men suited to this age" and the only men destined to lead it were "born in this promising age."⁷⁷ Unlike Fukuzawa, who found the Japanese equivalent of the middle-class, the core of the nation and the managers of reform, among those of "samurai spirit," Tokutomi loathed that class, loathed its reputed "spirit," and all past "custom, usage, and tradition . . . the repository of authority . . . in a feudal society." Fukuzawa saw only the social utility of custom. Tokutomi found it outrageous that, at a time of "Reformation" when Meiji society was "from a moral standpoint . . . a naked society" and when "Oriental phenomena have gone . . . [and] the old men of old Japan have left," the "moral code which controls Western society" had not yet been imported. Tokutomi

⁷⁴ Harry D. Harootunian, "*Jinsei, Jinzai and Jitsugaku: Social Values in Leadership*," in Silberman and Harootunian, p. 106.

⁷⁵ Uchida, p. 117; Uete, p. 116.

⁷⁶ Hirabayashi, p. 419. *Shin Nihon no seinen*, p. 135.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

not only rejected the utility of custom; he found "Oriental style politicians" and all of "today's elders" useless to society and "unfortunately a troublesome burden in a progressive age."⁷⁸

Much of Tokutomi's argument followed that of Herbert Spencer. In discussing social evolution Tokutomi wrote it was inevitable that society evolved from an "aristocratic society ruled through force to a democratic one dominated by wealth."⁷⁹ On status and contract he observed that "the world [Japan] has changed from government by decree to government by contract,"⁸⁰ and that with the liberation of man from past authority society "will follow the law of the economic world regardless of social status."⁸¹ He expressed respect especially for the autonomous individual who is ruled by his own conscience, and he emphasized that only under the leadership of individuals who had absorbed the spiritual qualities of the West could Japan modernize. If new Japan was "to prosper . . . [and] make her glory known to all corners of the earth," he wrote, "young men of Meiji . . . must master their hearts and follow [the] internal spiritual phenomena [of the West]."⁸² Only capable young men, conscience-bound, could lead ("since a democratic society is one in which people must seek a living for themselves").⁸³

Tokutomi believed that progress was "all of a piece," like Spencer who had written in *Social Statics* that "progress . . . is not an accident but a necessity.

⁷⁸ Kosaka, pp. 199, 203; Hirabayashi, pp. 420-421; Pyle, pp. 31-32. *Shin Nihon no seinen*, p. 16.

⁷⁹ Uete, p. 116.

⁸⁰ Pyle, p. 31.

⁸¹ Uchida, p. 114.

⁸² Hirabayashi, p. 119.

⁸³ Uchida, p. 109.

Instead of civilization being artificial, it is a part of nature."⁸⁴ In his essay "Hoshuteki hondo no taisei" [The general trend of the conservative reaction] in the October 1887 issue of *Kokumin no Tomo*, Tokutomi wrote that national development had as its necessary condition the adaptation of government institutions to the demands of the people for "progressive democracy."⁸⁵ Unable to accept Fukuzawa's belief that men of "samurai spirit" could be conceived as the middle class, the core of the nation, he wrote that modernization would only be carried out when an indigenous middle class arose. He looked to the success of the "country gentlemen" in industrializing Japan.⁸⁶ Nor could he accept the use of traditional samurai ethics, as Fukuzawa had, to hasten development. "We have imported Western techniques, politics, scholarship . . . and we hope to build a Western society. [But] we must assuredly import the Western code of ethics which alone can coexist with the progress of knowledge."⁸⁷ For Tokutomi, as for all Spencerians, the necessity of adapting human character to the conditions of life was as fundamental to ethical progress as it was to social change.

When Tokutomi accepted the Spencerian idea of a universal process of social development, he carefully refuted the idea of a unique Japanese character and implicitly indicated his antagonism to traditional Japan. With his apotheosis of the hostile young men freed from custom, he articulated his own alienation from Japan. Born only five years before the Restoration and educated almost completely at the Kuma-

⁸⁴ Richard Hofstadter, *Social Darwinism in American Thought* (Boston, 1955), p. 40.

⁸⁵ Uete, p. 117.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 116.

⁸⁷ Pyle, p. 22.

moto Western School and Niijima's Dōshisha, Tokutomi's most crucial ties to the past remained peculiarly autobiographical rather than specifically Japanese. Always passionately attached to Niijima, he remained a Western-educated and essentially unaffiliated Christian. Although he left Dōshisha a year before his graduation, broke with the church, and, later, in his autobiography questioned the passion of his earliest Christian convictions ("I did not know much about religion, I merely followed my elders [onto Mount Hanaoka]"), he never denied his youthful distaste for tradition and his continued attraction to Christian spiritual principles.⁸⁸ He joined the Kumamoto band "in order to break away from the *jitsugaku* 'shell.'" ⁸⁹ Christianity, at the very least, "seemed more interesting than lectures on the Confucian classics [*The Great Learning* and the *Analects*]." ⁹⁰ He entered Dōshisha, not because of his conversion, but "because I rebelled against the traditionalism in Kumamoto." ⁹¹ Though he found "difficulties in being an orthodox Christian," ⁹² he nevertheless recognized that within Christianity was the ethical substance to overcome the moral vacuum of Meiji and that within the Christian spirit could be found the modern alternative to custom. Therefore, he constantly exhorted the young "to receive God's [*jōtei*] blessings." In the *Kokumin no Tomo* he preached unceasingly the doctrine of the autonomous man who is responsible to his "own conscience and to God." ⁹³

Tokutomi derived his categories of evolution

⁸⁸ Hirabayashi, p. 418.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

⁹² Pyle, p. 14.

⁹³ Uete, p. 117; Hirabayashi, p. 419.

and adaptation, destruction and transformation from Spencer. But his specific representation of the battle of youth against the aged evokes a sense of an anomalous Japanese crisis of traditions and antagonistic generations, as opposed to Spencer's impersonal attempt to establish a science of sociology in order to teach men to think of social causation scientifically. Contrast, for example, Tokutomi's remonstrance, "our Meiji society from a moral standpoint, must be said to be a naked society," and his admonition, "old Japan has died. The Japan of today is a new Japan. The question remains: what of Japan's future. [This is] a task which must be accomplished by a second revolution of the Japanese intellectuals [the young men of Meiji],"⁹⁴ with Spencer's plea from Mill's *On Liberty*, his therapeutic call for a return to natural law, "setting up as an ethical standard the right of every man to do as he please, subject only to condition that he does not infringe upon the equal rights of others."⁹⁵

It followed naturally from Spencer's argument that the state should be given only a minimal role in the organization of society. Whenever possible society should be allowed its natural unimpaired growth. Tokutomi understood Spencer's argument, but he did not believe that the state was in any ultimate or abstract sense the great impediment to progress. When he spoke about the state, he dealt with it concretely. For example, he would rage against the authoritarianism of the Sat-Chō clique. Anxious to overthrow it, he feared the reactionary affects of that oligarchy and attacked the "Oriental style politicians" as perverters of modernization. He stood opposed to government

⁹⁴ Kosaka, p. 203. I have for purposes of analysis pulled together quotations from two sources: the question from *Shōrai no Nihon* and the answer from *Shin Nihon no seinen*.

⁹⁵ Hofstadter, p. 40.

manipulation, "politicism" (*seiji-shugi*), as he called it, with a determined radical "populism" (*heimin-shugi*) which would lead to "a nation oriented to the welfare of the common people."⁹⁶ Again and again he wrote that since the Restoration had been carried out under the aegis of the aristocracy, the "aristocratic smell" of the old society pervaded Meiji institutions.

Spencer had written that progress depended necessarily upon the adaptation of human character to the conditions of life. Tokutomi fully agreed. Japan had borrowed Western institutions, imported its techniques and ideas; yet, as Tokutomi wrote, Japan remained tied to the past, "led by old men who had been born in the Tempō era." As he warned in *Shin Nihon no seinen* [*Youth of new Japan*], feudal custom and the continued leadership of the old elite, not merely state power, hindered future development and corrupted the young. While in the democratic societies of the West, young men remained independent, "sought to become self-supporting and thought seriously about their future lives," in Japan young men were taught the techniques of the West, but were required "to think [that they] should rely on the [good will] of others."⁹⁷ Although an entire generation had been educated in Western law and science, convention required them "to kow-tow and bow to others." Bound by rules of status and procedure, Tokutomi concluded, "the secret of success was not hard work, but sophistry . . . manliness was [considered] barbaric and sycophancy [thought] elegant."⁹⁸

As Spencer suggested, progress, however inevitable, required conflict. Universally, individuals best

⁹⁶ Uete, pp. 116, 119; Hirabayashi, p. 420.

⁹⁷ Uchida, pp. 109-110.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 110.

adapted to the dynamic factors of evolution strove to take leadership from past elites. Once again Tokutomi was specific where Spencer had been general. In Japan, Tokutomi declared, the conflict was insistently cultural and decidedly generational, not simply the result of some generalized struggle for survival. Meiji leaders desired sycophants as followers, men who possessed, as Tokutomi pungently summarized, "the prerequisites for harlots who sell their coquetry and love."⁹⁹ Reform, however, demanded men of "zealous sincerity," progress needed men of conscience and "vocation" (*shokubun*), and revolution required youth "[who are] naturally endowed 'with populist, reforming, and progressive tendencies.' It is always this class [youth] who must be drawn upon when it becomes necessary to cleanse society of corruption."¹⁰⁰

Tokutomi's language was hardly extravagant given the crisis he saw within and about him. Resurrection was needed for a society morally empty. "Custom . . . destroyed," he wrote, "feudal society [was] subverted."¹⁰¹ A spiritual reform was definitely required. Yet, men of Tempō clung to past custom, since there was no need for them to be "guided by internal demands." They called for their old privileges and saw no necessity to make "politics, society, religion and customs progressive."¹⁰² To establish "their perfect ideal man" — the sycophant, the kow-tower, and the coquette — they used education, teaching the young that success did not reward ambition, sincerity, or a will of iron but came to the "young man who rel[ie]d on others for his living."¹⁰³ Young men, however, had

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁰ Uete, p. 117; Kosaka, p. 206.

¹⁰¹ Kosaka, p. 203.

¹⁰² Uete, pp. 117-118.

¹⁰³ Uchida, pp. 110, 112.

been cut off from the past as a result of that "period of destruction," the Restoration. They found no moral authority in its customs or in their elders. They "possessed nothing" and "experienced [only] the agony, loneliness, and disappointment"¹⁰⁴ of living in a coarsely materialist world. As one essayist in the *Kokumin no Tomo* wrote, they had been driven "to the depth of darkness without [being] giv[en] any means of solution by materialists [positivist thinkers.]"¹⁰⁵ In light of his own conversion experience, Tokutomi believed that because of their break with tradition and their distress at the spiritual malaise of Meiji these young men alone could look inward "to master their own hearts" and look outward beyond social convention "to know the spirit of the [new] age."¹⁰⁶ Only they, from their necessity to find an identity, would find the new spirit of the "heart," the knowledge and the character to reform Japan.

Although alienation and impoverishment marked the youth for revolutionary leadership, Tokutomi assumed that only a process similar, if not totally comparable, to religious conversion would render them actually capable of leadership. To quicken youthful consciousness of their individual autonomy and thus of the necessity for responsibility, Tokutomi prepared to publish the *Kokumin no Tomo*. "Anyone who wishes to know the spirit of the age, understand public affairs, breathe the newest purest intellectual and moral air in Japan," he announced on the cover of the January 1889 issue of the journal, "must read this magazine."¹⁰⁷ His success was immediate; as one youthful reader, Sakai Toshihiko, a later well-known socialist

¹⁰⁴ Uchida quoting Yamaji Aizan, p. 128.

¹⁰⁵ Yamaji, *Kirisutokyō hyōron*, pp. 106-107.

¹⁰⁶ Uete, p. 117; Hirabayashi, p. 402.

¹⁰⁷ Uete, p. 111.

theorist, recalled: "Our reverence and attachment to Tokutomi and the Minyūsha was almost absolute."¹⁰⁸ Minyūsha was the leading translating bureau and publisher of Western books and articles. With the astonishing success of his publication (within a year it had a circulation of well over ten thousand, the largest circulation of any journal of the Meiji period), Tokutomi felt free to carry his message on to a daily newspaper. In all his publications, Tokutomi seemed to remind youth of their responsibility. "You should not forget that you [alone] are the friends of progress." Early in 1887 he had told them of their task: "Come, come, strong boys of reform. Today . . . our society must make another reform."¹⁰⁹ Later he remarked on the condition of society and cautioned young men not to heed too closely to "the present values of the academic and educational worlds [which] are not the ones which you should follow."¹¹⁰ In the same spirit and with clearly an identical message as Niijima who told his students, "if we cannot expect leadership from you, to whom then can we turn? Work hard and rely upon our Lord,"¹¹¹ Tokutomi wrote, "conquer and reform — you have the fate to become reformers." Nor could this reform be accomplished, he cautioned, simply by "mastering material enterprises and techniques of the West." Rather, he said, "I desire you young men of Meiji to master your hearts and observe the spirit [of the West]."¹¹² Only when the young, as the "new citizens," received "God's blessings" would they "lead the old men . . . born in the Tempō era [rather] than be led by [them]."¹¹³ Only then would Japan be "baptized

¹⁰⁸ Hirabayashi, p. 418.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 419-420.

¹¹⁰ Uchida, p. III.

¹¹¹ Fujiwara, pp. 759-760.

¹¹² Hirabayashi, p. 419.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*

in the culture and spirit of the West [and God].”¹¹⁴ As Tokutomi argued, “the aim of the Reformation was not to overthrow society, but to put it into better order.”¹¹⁵ The essential component of the Resurrection of Japan was a spiritual reform by which the individual would order his “heart.”

Most of Tokutomi’s associates on the *Kokumin no Tomo* discussed the cultural crisis and analyzed the conflict of generations. One long-time friend, a member of the Kumamoto band and a professor of Western history and political science at Dōshisha, Ukita Kazutami, dramatized the generational conflict by specifically contrasting Fukuzawa, leader of the Meirokusha in the seventies, with Tokutomi, founder of the Minyūsha in the eighties. “Although their learning [was] not necessarily very deep, nor their theories very profound,” Ukita began, in his comparison of the two men, “they possess[ed] the unusual talent of being able to reveal what their world desired to express but [could] not.”¹¹⁶ But, Ukita continued, they came out of different worlds and different eras. Fukuzawa borrowed the system of Western democracy and the spirit of its materialism. Tokutomi, however, took the spirit of democracy, adopted the internal spiritual values of Western civilization, and while realizing their value for the strengthening of the nation, emphasized their benefit for the individual.

Another close friend, the journalist Yamaji Aizan, intuitively and more broadly contrasted the values of the generations they represented. “They [in the earlier generation] worship only clothes, [but] forget to evaluate human character. They analyze a constitution, [but] have never discussed it from the viewpoint of a citizen

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 419, 422.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*

of a constitutional state. Their statements can never elicit the sympathy of others." Essentially, he concluded, "they are not guided by their internal demands in acquiring knowledge."¹¹⁷ Ultimately, Ukita and Yamaji, like Tokutomi, suggested that the spiritual crisis of the young reflected both their moral liberation from the past and the beginning of their autonomy as individuals. But the road to individual autonomy demanded more than merely the rejection of custom. It required as well the positive task of internalizing new values (to restate Yamaji, it required that they do more than "discuss from the viewpoint of . . ."). It demanded that they seek in "God's blessings" the source of moral authority outside and beyond the confines of Japanese society.

Early Westernizers, such as Fukuzawa, had revived, not challenged, past values and old castes. Since Fukuzawa so often considered Westernization in instrumental terms (as something good for strengthening the nation) and since he dealt with abstract categories (the middle class, or its assumed and convenient equivalent, the samurai), he emphasized the social rather than the individual dimension of Western development. Since he ignored the subjective meaning of belief (or as Yamaji stated it, he forgot "to evaluate human character"), it was easy for Fukuzawa to conceive of religion simply in terms of whether it "preserves habits of righteousness." In the West, he recognized, Christianity supplied the spirit to support the state by "attract[ing] men's hearts and [therefore] preserv[ing] virtuous ways." But in Japan, all "religion lack[ed] this efficacy in society at large." Therefore, he decided at the end of the decade of the eighties that "to provide a focus for the spirit [that was] lack-

¹¹⁷ Uchida, p. 128.

ing” it was necessary “to depend . . . on the Imperial house . . . to uphold morality.”¹¹⁸ Like Inoue Tetsujirō, the leading philosophical apologist for the government, who declaimed on the virtue of loyalty and filial piety as the means of cultivating national strength, Fukuzawa recognized the need for the emperor and many values of the past as instruments for the strengthening of Japan.

Tokutomi and his generation, however, found little to applaud and much to dislike in the past. Tokutomi thought it ridiculous to use Eastern values to buttress Western institutions, since he regarded society as a whole — Spencer had taught him something — and not as a patchwork quilt. Or as one correspondent wrote in *The Japanese* [*Nihon-jin*], a magazine of the same period that rejected both the wholesale importation of the West and the eclecticism of their elders, it would be futile to attempt to adopt only the “best part of another culture.”¹¹⁹ Tokutomi even more explicitly had stated, “We must assuredly import the Western code of ethics,” since we have adopted their institutions.¹²⁰ Rather than trusting to custom or traditional morality, he repeatedly wrote, Japan’s survival depended on the adaptation of all institutions and values to “the demands of the people.”¹²¹ But “[only] the young intellectuals of the time,” he continued, “[could] revive the morality of the mass society.”

In his model for action Tokutomi substituted the authority of an immanent “mass morality” for that of custom, the Christian idea of individual “inner morality” for that of bushido, and the leadership of the young and the unattached for that of the samurai.

¹¹⁸ Craig, pp. 131-135.

¹¹⁹ See Pyle, on *Nihon-jin*.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 22.

¹²¹ Uete, p. 117.

He idealized the evolutionary process and substituted the concept of adaptation to it for the traditional idea of obeisance to the past. For him, individual conversion functioned as a means to bring order to society, since, once converted, the individual had both the knowledge and the will to understand natural processes. By his synthesis of Christianity and Spencerianism, Tokutomi popularized Niijima's call for the "cultivation of a person so that conscience was his weapon." But if, as one American scholar of ideology has stated, the function of ideology "is to make an autonomous politics possible [i.e., to free men from habitual judgment] by providing the authoritative concepts that render it meaningful, the suasive images by means of which it can be sensibly grasped,"¹²² then Tokutomi succeeded only partly. He challenged conventional sentiments, but he failed in his task of providing some separate and distinct authority and cultural model. In lieu of *kokutai* with its emotional ties to the emperor, and loyalty and filial piety with its rich political resonances, Tokutomi could only proffer adaptation to an essentially amoral, even apolitical, evolutionary necessity. Christianity, however, provided a superior challenge to the politics of tradition both for those who found it "disruptive, since it plants the seeds of dispute everywhere,"¹²³ and for those who thought it admirable since it possessed a clear transcendent theology, an explicit morality, and a specific ideology. Indeed, many felt that some ideology, no matter what, was needed. The romantic novelist Kitamura Tōkoku wrote:

What we lack today in ideology is creative power. It has

¹²² Geertz, p. 63.

¹²³ Uchida, p. 129.

been long since we have had it; now we must gather ourselves together to establish in this land that creative power by which we can stand firmly, without shame, in the world of the nineteenth century. . . . Arise, Poet! Arise, you truly great Ideologist! ¹²⁴

Conscience and Transcendence

Tokutomi not only attacked the Meiji political leadership, he subverted their authority by making politics irrelevant to progress. His concepts were revolutionary because they were apolitical. He showed disdain for political manipulation which, he believed, reflected only the style of "Oriental . . . politicians." Politics became at best, or at most, a reflection of social necessity and society's will. The collective wisdom of the people or individual judgment, not government policy and the desires of the politicians, should always prevail. For the authority of the state and tradition, he substituted the will of the people and the free expression of individual conscience. He was critical of the institutionalized morality of his time, which he censured for reflecting "Oriental phenomena" — Confucian doctrine and past customs. As befitted an economic determinist, Tokutomi subsumed politics under economics. He argued: custom had once ruled the past; economic necessity would become sovereign in the present. He substituted individual economic initiative, industry and the mass "vocation" for work for that of politics. These, he stated, were more important for Japan's national development.

However rationalized by Spencerian doctrine, Tokutomi's distinction between society and polity was essentially a moral one. Since he assumed that nothing less than a transcendent authority could inform the

¹²⁴ Hirabayashi, p. 422.

judgment of the individual and confirm the right of autonomy to the individual conscience (youth must "receive God's blessings"), he, it seemed, inevitably raised questions about the character and source of political authority. Yet, at the time of the publication of the Education Rescript, Tokutomi assured his readers that his individualistic philosophy and democratic ideals were easily accommodated under its doctrine of loyalty and filial piety and the rule of the emperor. Although Tokutomi attacked the conservative apologist Inoue Tetsujirō for characterizing Christians and Christianity as unfilial and thus subversive, he adapted Christian doctrine to Rescript pronouncements rather than defending Christian ideals. Christianity, he wrote, attacked neither the monarch nor the family system. "If [it had], how could monarchy and the family remain established institutions in the West."¹²⁵ Never, in fact, did the political implications of a transcendent God and an autonomous conscience seem to enter his argument. Tokutomi had assumed the universality and inevitability of certain economic processes. He encouraged his readers to stand aloof from politics and conventional opinion by internalizing Christian ethics and the spirit of God and the West. Since economic processes transcended the operation of any political system, and individual decision depended upon the deliberate avoidance of political involvement, he never had to confront the question of the legitimacy of the authority of the emperor. Conscience for Tokutomi, like the middle class for Fukuzawa, was simply an invention by which Japanese could assume a likeness to their Western counterpart and thus aid in the necessary adaptation to the best economic practice and further the modernization of

¹²⁵ Pyle, pp. 158-159.

Japan. As the alienation of the individual had freed him from the past, the doctrine of the independent conscience allowed him to join freely in the modernization process. It also justified his alienation from the past. God and ethics, like independence and the middle class, for Fukuzawa, were constructs to allow the free development of Japan.

Uchimura Kanzō had written that in this second decade of Meiji "the revolution of the nation's conscience took place."¹²⁶ But conscience alone did not commit the individual to a fundamental critique of his society nor in fact, did justification by conscience necessitate any social commitment. Essentially, conscience without the authority of a carefully constructed theological doctrine did not legitimize any political action. In practice, the doctrine of the autonomous conscience often allowed a retreat from social action and social commitment, and merely provided the individual with an explanation for his own alienation from society. Indeed, many young men asserted the authority of conscience in order to rationalize their disillusionment with society and their deep alienation from it.

Tokutomi, in fact, encouraged his followers to reject the contemporary world as unacceptable and unnecessary. But since he never provided them with any authoritative symbol that obliged them to work for social improvement, or an ultimate authority that would emotionally and psychologically, not merely philosophically, involve them in the organization of a new society, he lost his influence on many of the alienated youth. Many, incapable of remaining isolated in society, accepted the psychological and moral authority of the imperial state. Others, however, un-

¹²⁶ Kuyama, p. 139.

willing to accept the corruption of their society and incapable of surrendering their moral autonomy, had no alternative but the rejection of the political and moral authority of the state. They sought some ultimate personal transcendence and salvation.

Kitamura Tōkoku, for example, at the age of seventeen, had committed himself to the total reform of his society. "Like [Victor] Hugo," he wrote in 1885, "I wanted to dominate a political movement with the brilliant power of my writing."¹²⁷ A year earlier, Kitamura had pictured himself "like another Christ," but "consecrated" to politics and full of the "ardent desire," as he wrote, "of sacrificing myself entirely for the benefit of the people." No less determined to be a philosopher than a statesman and savior, Kitamura also promised to "destroy completely the 'survival of fittest' philosophy now flourishing in Europe."¹²⁸

Kitamura had prepared himself for the roles of liberator, benefactor, and if necessary martyr. As he wrote his fiancée three years later, he "burned with the fire of ambition."¹²⁹ But Kitamura was beginning to have serious doubts. Less and less did the effort seem worth the goal. "Society," he observed, "became more corrupt by the day." Instead of welcoming the greater challenge, he was led to despair by the magnitude of the decay. He lost confidence in his ability to provide the leadership he had once enthusiastically sought. The moralists whom he had once wished to lead, and the "politicians with perfume in their mouths" whom he had once wished to guide, as well

¹²⁷ Kosaka, p. 271.

¹²⁸ Francis Mathy, "Kitamura Tōkoku: The Early Years," *Monumenta Nipponica*, Vol. XVIII, No. 1-4, 1963, p. 9.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.* All following unfooted quotes are from two long letters of Kitamura. They are printed on pp. 9, 16-17.

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as the citizens for whom he had once wished to sacrifice himself, all

in their grab for fame . . . repress violence with violence. Men and society are motivated by greed and personal advantage. Even those who most loudly cry out against this greed and selfishness do not themselves know how to help the world, because they too are selfish and cannot reproach themselves for their own greed.

"Saddened by the low state to which man had fallen," Kitamura knew "the inadequacy of [his] vision . . . ; it [was] not adequate to see the world as it really [was]." As he had earlier suggested and continually warned, he never could accept the Spencerian theory of success and defeat. He could not even accept a society "that places the administration of the world in the hands of social economics alone" but forgets that even in worldly fame there is anguish.

Disillusioned with society, "indignant at the violence of the political world," Kitamura became estranged from that political world. Since even the best of worldly men, "the moralists who make pretense to such fine exteriors," and the closest of his friends "forgot the time in their grab for fame," Kitamura felt "ashamed and repentant" of his own worldly ambitions. Certain that Japan would "fall into the abysmal state of Rome," and surprised "at the general tendency of the world," he also realized "the inadequacy of [his] power." He felt indignant, inadequate in his understanding of the world, and powerless to change it. "Nor can my own power of thought," he wrote in dismay, "measure the things of heaven and earth." Alienated from his society because of his powerlessness and hostile to it because of his failure to save it, he damned it. He determined to escape. "Foul corruption will with awesome power destroy the world of Japan." But,

“if there were no way [he] could save the world of Japan, [he] would at least be free and unrestrained.”

While in this mood, which he called an “excess of melancholia,” Kitamura represented himself as a man who had been both “proud and mistaken.” Once he had believed in the strength of “man’s power alone.” Allies with whom he had plotted political triumphs to save the world, he now disdained as men who did not know “how to help the world because they too are selfish and cannot reproach themselves for their own greed.” Guilty of the sin of pride himself, his friends full of greed, all equally wrong because they had ambitiously sought fame and success, he could find only in his Christian fiancée “the luscious fruit of the vine which has grown in God’s vineyard.”¹³⁰ While he sought success through his own weak efforts, she “with the teachings of the true God would save the world.” He was oppressed by his powerlessness. “Nothing could be done with man’s power alone,” he wrote, attributing his mistakes and failure to his “ambition and vanity.” To symbolize his break with the past and to indicate his repudiation of past corruption and vanity, Kitamura sought union with God and His messenger. “Through the hands and mouth of the one person I love best, [God] has given me an invitation and seated me at the side of the powerful Holy Spirit and caused me to conceive the desire of promulgating the glories of God throughout the nation.”¹³¹ If he could not succeed alone, he would escape; but through his escape from the corruption of pride he would grasp the power to save himself and exemplify the way to save the world. On March 4, 1888, several months before his marriage, Kitamura was baptized.

He was “no longer fighting on earth for a reputa-

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

¹³¹ This and preceding unfootnoted quotes: *Ibid.*

tion and a good name, but fighting now to make known the blessings of God," he wrote. His union with God as well as his turn inward to conscience ("to purify my soul") clearly indicated his alienation from the world. As even his poems on the most romantic of themes of love and passion show, his failure continually grieved and directed him. In one lengthy narrative poem, the devil asks the hero why he is so pained as he sees the world brought to destruction. "Because I have seen the frightful conditions of the world," the hero Motoo answers. But, the devil asks, "why should that grieve you?" "I did not really hate the world I'd left; I had not really forgotten it completely," Motoo answers.¹³² Although Kitamura too sought in theology and in God some transcendental force which would give him the authority to free himself from the corrupt earth, he could never forget it.

Kitamura read theology for his own purposes, a reading determined by his own frustrated ambitions and social disillusionments. With the authority of a theology of transcendence, he could explain his own failure as inevitable (and therefore sufferable), since they reflected the natural powerlessness of man who had only in callous self-regard and vanity considered his own will as a determining influence on events. Autonomy reflected man's submission to God's truth and could be realized only by a rejection of "worldly ambition and vanity" and by a "joining [of the individual person] to the spirit of the universe." But, as the early converts and Tokutomi would have it, never would Kitamura acknowledge that man could by his own will, however well guided by intelligence or moral behavior, find himself in a position to fulfill himself and attain full autonomy "to come alive again." Only

¹³² *Ibid.*, pp. 36-37.

through his communion with God could man establish a proper example for all mankind and thus affect secular affairs positively. For man to wish to affect social reform by his direct engagement in social movements, Kitamura felt, was willful as well as vain and doomed to failure.

Kitamura, however, sought salvation rather than independence. His theology as his politics reflected his horror at his alienation from authority and the necessity to take responsibility for his own actions. Unable to accept responsibility for his own ideas and unwilling to clash openly with his old friends, apparently incapable of really establishing his autonomy, Kitamura found solace in obedience. "Lead[ing his] life in accordance with God's will . . . listen[ing] to God's command."¹³³ As his political aspirations seemed to culminate with a desire for self-destruction, his martyrdom, his communion with God would allow him the full accomplishment of his self-abasement. He could "purify his soul" only when he "proclaimed . . . [his] unworthiness."¹³⁴

For all the eminent Protestant theologians of the Meiji period, however, man's ability to establish a transcendent communion with God assumed the autonomy of personality, a heavenly recognition of the "subjective personality," as Uemura Masahisa wrote, and not a negation of human will.¹³⁵ Although in all his theological works Uemura began with an assumption similar to that of Kitamura, saying for example, that "true freedom is found by true obedience [to

¹³³ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*

¹³⁵ *NKNS*, p. 93. The phrase appears throughout Uemura's *Shinri Ippan* [Common truth] collected in *Uemura Masahisa chosaku* [Writings of Uemura Masahisa], IV, hereafter referred to as *SI*.

God],”¹³⁶ he conclusively deemed this proof of man’s “right to autonomy” rather than a demonstration of the debasement of the individual will. But what perhaps distinguished Uemura most from Kitamura was his understanding of the character of a transcendent communion, and underlying even that his analysis of authority. Kitamura surrendered to God only after he doubted his ability to make proper judgments; he obeyed in order to relieve himself of the responsibility of choice and the consequences of individual decision. Kitamura submitted, he did not transcend. Uemura, however, had a determinedly evangelical view of Christianity and the Christian. He recognized that man’s capacity to commune with God (“that which distinguished him from the beast”)¹³⁷ lay in man’s humanity. “What is most noble about the human race and that which makes man the leading creature in creation,” he wrote in the first pages of his major theological work *Shinri Ippan* [Common truth], “is the fact that they are not satisfied with what they are or with what they have, but cast their eyes upon far higher realms and fix their eyes upon high ideals.”¹³⁸

But, Uemura warned, although God “endowed man with conscience to know of the existence of God,”¹³⁹ He never ordered man to realize his God-given capabilities. Throughout his argument Uemura allowed man the capability to recognize God and His works—“God revealed His great law of justice and show[ed] [His] intent to make man good.” He further described man’s “conscience” as the reflection of “the image of God” which at an instant would allow him the recognition of “justice” and the full understanding

¹³⁶ *SI*, pp. 96-97.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 98.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

¹³⁹ *NKNS*, p. 93.

of "right and wrong." But God had also given man the "right to subjective autonomy in heaven," which meant that it was man's conscience and not God's omnipotence that revealed the "categorical imperative which orders him to know goodness."¹⁴⁰ Man, therefore, had the right to discriminate. He himself bore full responsibility for all his actions.

Crucial, of course, to Uemura's argument was not only the "capacity [of man] to know the truth of religion," but also a recognition "that religion was the experience of man's consciousness . . . something which was deeply related to the unconscious domain of man."¹⁴¹ By making man more than a social creature ("the religious heart was inseparable from man's heart"),¹⁴² he inhibited the domination of society over the individual. Man transcended his society. When all religious experience became private experience, society lost its legitimate claim to man's total consciousness. Religion, in sum, allowed man to make a distinction between the private and social realms. Uemura positively extended this proposition for the Christian by endowing conscience and human reason with a touch of the divine: "human reason was based on the eternal reason of God." When Uemura also wrote that conscience granted man knowledge of "the distinction between right and wrong [which was] the eternal principle of God's nature,"¹⁴³ he more than assumed the independence of man in the realm of morals. He made it a necessity for Christians to assert their moral autonomy by a direct political confrontation with the state. "As a man who believes in the existence of God who is greater than any master," Uemura wrote at the time

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁴¹ *SI*, pp. 21, 33.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, pp. 10-11.

¹⁴³ *SI*, pp. 35, 103.

of the Rescript controversy in 1893, "as a man who has the conviction that others and I are equally the children of God, and who aspires in his heart for the great ideal of a divine nation, I regard it as a foolish policy to try to make me possess the same spirit as that held by those who have no such faith."¹⁴⁴ Uemura refused the government legitimate domain in the political as well as the moral realm in matters concerning private conscience.

Within the same decade both leading members of the liberal establishment and conservative leaders and ideologues had regarded the state as an inseparable moral and political unit. Fukuzawa considered the state itself, as he wrote, a "self-reliant individual" with a "moral personality."¹⁴⁵ Even the liberal translator of Rousseau's *Social Contract* Nakae Chōmin, who always reserved to himself the right to criticize the specific government of the time, regarded the emperor as the moral personification of Japan and as somebody like a god. "The *Tenshi* [the emperor] is the most reverent person above all; and we, the Diet, and the government are to be humble before him. . . . He is to place Himself above the people of the nation and His reverence almost equals that of a God." Through the auspicious leadership of the emperor, Nakae imparted a historical-moral meaning to the Japanese nation. The nation itself stood as one indissoluble moral political unit, due to the historic relations of emperor and people: "Since the days of Jimmu Tennō, the emperor had been of one continuous lineage. He has reigned with a grace and wisdom and loved His people like parents have loved their children." The emperor

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁵ David Abosch, "Kato Hiroyuki and the Introduction of German Political Thought in Modern Japan: 1868-1885," Ph.D. Dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 1964, p. 234.

himself was the embodiment and source of this morality. "The reverence of our emperor [*Tenshi*]," Nakae concluded, "is incomparable to any other country of the world."¹⁴⁶ As a result, the individual himself became absorbed within the historical continuum, without a moral personality of his own, a child forever obliged to present his loyalty to the emperor and thus to the nation. Ito Hirobumi, the Meiji leader most responsible for the drafting of the constitution, reserved a special moral and religious role for the emperor. "The emperor alone," he wrote, "can be a backbone for the nation. Therefore . . . we [referring to his fellow drafters] have tried to reserve a respect for the imperial house and not to restrain the royal prerogatives." "All the religions of Japan," Ito wrote, "lacked the power . . . to persuade the people's hearts" and foster their national loyalty, only the emperor could unify the nation morally because Japan "had always been a country governed by the very hands of the *Tennō*." Ito and his chief aide, Inoue Kowashi, endeavored to cultivate among the people a religious view of the emperor. Moreover, by interpreting the constitution itself as an imperial creation, "yielded [to the country] by the special grace of the *Tennō*,"¹⁴⁷ they hoped to assume for the government a share of the religious reverence pledged to the emperor. Thus, they could make the government as well as the emperor an unassailable moral entity. In all these interpretations, the political authority of the state bore an absolute moral authority because it possessed a self-sufficient "moral personality."

But Uemura insisted on the distinction between

¹⁴⁶ Takeda Kiyoko, "Tennō shisō no keisei" [The formation of the Tennō system ideology], *Nihon rekishi: Kindai* [Japanese history: Modern] (Tokyo, 1962), III, 287-288.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 279-281.

a religious-moral realm, definitely private and individual, and an essentially amoral political-social realm whose only moral function was that "designed to help in the perfection of human nature. . . . The nation," however, he concluded, "should not make herself the ultimate end."¹⁴⁸ Certainly, he never could consider the state or society as the embodiment of morality, or as its source. Uemura clearly maintained this distinction between the public world and the private one. "Political lords should not violate conscience. They should not intrude into the divine realm governed by God. I wish to adhere to freedom of conscience and to maintenance of the right to faith."¹⁴⁹ This religious definition of the natural rights of man, which Uemura claimed for all men because of their ability to know God's reason, had political implications only for the Christian.

All men were capable of making moral choices, but the burden of the Christian was greater. Christian piety required a constant expression of moral distinctions. Since "conscience not only show[ed] the great law of justice, but also indicat[ed] God's purpose to make man good," Uemura wrote, man's "maintenance of faith [and] the freedom of [his] conscience" could not be assumed passively. The Christian must and could only demonstrate his "right to subjective autonomy" by his obedience to God's injunctions. In fact, even disobedience to an authority that impinged on man's allegiance to God became a necessity of Christian faith. In support of the right to freedom of conscience and in order, Uemura wrote, "to maintain the right to faith, [the Christian] is expect[ed] to stand up in the world and make clear the distinction between

¹⁴⁸ NKNS, p. 99.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

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God's [realm, that of conscience] and man's. Christ respected this right so much that he was crucified for rebelling against the authority of his time."¹⁵⁰ When conscience revealed to man God's reason and His great law of justice, Uemura continued, "a gentleman of righteousness and high virtue must struggle against . . . popular trends of society"¹⁵¹ that would interfere with his freedom of faith. Christians had no choice but to resist political or social incursions into the realm of conscience.

For Uemura, man's obedience to God determined his "freedom of conscience," his moral autonomy. Guided by his conscience, he had to obey God. He understood the righteousness of His reason. "Man cannot, by any means, be rid of the realm of obedience," Uemura wrote. Since man's right to subjective autonomy depended on his moral discrimination (which explicitly required the recognition of God's authority in the realm of conscience), when the Christian failed to defend his faith, he disobeyed the imperatives of conscience. Without the guidance of conscience and the authority of God's reason, man lost his ability to discriminate. He lost his moral freedom. "If [man] did not obey God," the divine source of his freedom, Uemura wrote, he had no right to claim moral autonomy. "He [had] to obey the world." Man's right to spiritual independence depended upon his piety. When he failed to demonstrate his faith, which provided the only objective evidence for his spiritual preeminence and moral autonomy in the world, he had no choice but to submit to the desires of the secular world. "If man is not spiritual," Uemura continued, "he is materialistic. If he does not obey what he should obey, he

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 99.

¹⁵¹ *SI*, p. 100.

has to surrender to what he should not obey. True freedom is in the belief in God, the governor of earth and heaven, and in carrying the cross which Christ carried and merging himself in Him."¹⁵²

Uemura liberated the conscience of man, but to do so he had to free him of the past and depoliticize him. Although Uemura's major books and articles concerned matters of faith and church policy, and although his major theological concepts were necessarily drawn from Western thinkers, he always considered the social effects of his ideas on the Japanese Christian. He always, for example, wrote of the ideas "which have been cultivated by wrong education." Or, as he also wrote in *Shinri Ippan*, "as long as you cling to old habits and ideas merely for sentimental reasons, without taking a bold step or loyal attitude to the truth, you will never be able to reach ultimate truth. . . . We should not be afraid to tear out old ideologies."¹⁵³ Even more specifically, he drew the distinction between the much praised "strained endurance" of the *bushi* and Christian ethics. "Bushido is merely the ethic of the *bushi* class. It is an ethic by which they maintain their dignity and status."¹⁵⁴ Christian ethics, however, had little to do with status or man's political future. While a samurai's ethic bound him to his assigned position in society and thus always to the status quo, Christian dogma, Uemura wrote, "makes much of man's dignity as a child of God. . . . [It] makes man responsible for himself."¹⁵⁵ Autonomy for the individual conscience in its total effect meant the emancipation of the individual from the constraints of family (filial piety) and the emperor (loyalty) prescribed as

¹⁵² *NKNS*, p. 97.

¹⁵³ *SI*, pp. 41-43, 116.

¹⁵⁴ *UMTSJ*, p. 600 (from *Fukuin Shimpō*, Meiji 31.)

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

essential for all Japanese by the Education Rescript as well as by a host of Japanese ideologues. Since to obtain even this measure of autonomy would indicate a lack of reverence for the emperor as the moral embodiment of Japan, Uemura suggested that all Christians as Japanese comply with the formal obligations of citizenship but "at the same time . . . believe in the obligation to God."¹⁵⁶ With his doctrine of two realms, Uemura tried to preserve for the Japanese Christian a sense of his "right to autonomy" by regarding compliance with government orders as always a matter of the Christian's discriminating conscience. An obligation to the government, in short, did not interfere with the necessary obedience to God. This distinction may appear to modern Westerners as an illusory distinction, since instead of activating Christians to change the world, Uemura appeared to suggest that they merely ignore it. But, in fact, Uemura made some major distinctions. One of the prevailing customs in Japan was, as he wrote, "to look upon religion as some kind of instrument without considering its moral or its value to the individual conscience."¹⁵⁷ Men like Fukuzawa had regarded bushido and loyalty as ideals which provided men with the energy and even hostility to hasten modernization. As he revealed when he finally concluded that the state was the "moral personality," he believed that service to the state, not to conscience, was the major object of all good men. Ethics gave backbone to the people and guided them. By imbuing society with an absolute moral force, he hoped to bind all men to the service of the nation. Uemura, however, wrenched men away from this total subservience to the state. He provided them with a series of images of

¹⁵⁶ *NKNS*, p. 99.

¹⁵⁷ *SI*, p. 38.

themselves as free men and a justification for their own spiritual alienation which at the same time encouraged them to formulate an anti-institutionalist cultural revolution. Speaking directly to his onetime disciple Kitamura, he wrote, while "the world wanders on the point of despair . . . [perhaps] the world can be the very place to seek and discover."¹⁵⁸ In essay after essay, he attempted to demonstrate that social values as well as moral ones derived from the individual conscience and not from the state. "A sense of righteousness and morality is not derived from interests, experience and laws which are set by man's [government]. . . . Social approval is not necessarily identical with righteousness. Righteous persons try to improve a society and [they must] judge a country." Humanity, he often added, "was created for truth and justice. . . . Even if political power was in the hands of tyrants, we know righteousness."¹⁵⁹ For the first time in modern Japanese history he offered an alternative to politics other than the advice, "you are only to retire from the world and keep your mouth shut."¹⁶⁰ He gave the Japanese a sense that by a refusal to accept the moral values of the institutions of family and state, an individual could turn to God and to the church and there find the confirmation of his own identity by his belief and the community of conscience. As the novelist Shimazaki Toson suggested, man could pursue the establishment of a new self through confession to God.¹⁶¹ In the late eighties and nineties, as Yamaji Aizan wrote, Uemura, "that man with a fat and short body who looks like the head of the carpenters guild of old Edo," had made such an impression on many of the young "that we [the

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 100.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

¹⁶¹ *NKNS*, pp. 91-92.

youth] could not sleep at night as we tried to read [his] *Shinri Ippan*.”¹⁶²

As, however, Uemura and all Christians learned after the publication of the Education Rescript and the new education codes, neither the government nor its apologists allowed distinctions to be made between the private realm of conscience and man's political obligations. In the late eighties when the teachings of the conservative German pedagogue Johann Friedrich Herbart were imported into Japan, taught at the Tokyo Imperial University by his disciple Emil Hausknecht, and used as the basis for all governmental edicts of Japanese educational thought, the sensitivity of the Japanese leadership to a doctrine of dual loyalties or two realms was made quite clear. The Japanese translator of F. W. Lindner's exposition of Herbart's ideas carefully deleted all mention of Christianity in the text. Wherever Lindner discussed God, the translator substituted the word *Tennō*. Also, by a calculated substitution of the five moral rules of Confucianism—benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom, and sincerity—for the five ethical objectives of the Herbartian educational system—sincerity, perfection, goodwill, justice, and consideration—the translator skillfully tied the ethical religious obligation of the individual into a traditional morality of submission to the state. Using educational doctrine for state purposes, the translator even considered the Herbartian injunction that one “should have a loyal spirit to the imperial house” as too weak a sanction, since it allowed the student to consider himself as an autonomous being. Instead, he wrote, “a law-abiding spirit is a member of the society.”¹⁶³ The Christian doctrine of the

¹⁶² *Ibid.*

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, pp. 245-248.

“right to subjective autonomy,” the right to freedom of conscience and religion had to be regarded as subversive, as Inoue Tetsujirō wrote, because it estranged the Japanese subject from his moral duties to society. Inoue regarded all Japanese as subjects, not individuals. They “were part of the organism like a hand or foot to carry out the emperor’s ‘will.’ ” The family, he explained, exemplified the authority of the emperor throughout the nation: “The family head represents the ancestors of the family and he takes over the ancestors’ work. The unbroken imperial line throughout all the ages is the basis of *kokutai* and as such is the most notable head in the greatest family.”¹⁶⁴ As a result, the individual’s right to freedom of religion, stated in the constitution with the seemingly innocuous condition “as long as they [Japanese subjects] do not disturb the peace and order and carry out their duty as subjects,”¹⁶⁵ became subsumed within an injunction to absolute obedience to the family head. In short, even in his private actions the individual had to carry out his public duties. While Uemura had said that man’s religious nature was both natural and prior to all other acts, Inoue wrote that allegiance and obedience of the family member to his family head “as the natural expression of human nature” was only inferior to one’s loyalty and obedience to the emperor. “The imperial house was [the] head of the family.”¹⁶⁶ Loyalty through the doctrine of filial piety always subsumed the individual within society. By his doctrine of necessary obedience of the individual to God as a condition of his “right to subjective autonomy” Uemura had unavoidably suggested that the only alterna-

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 249.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 248.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 249.

tive to submission to the state was estrangement and opposition to all its institutions. Without even raising the question of political loyalty or social reform, Uemura had provided his followers with a specific morality and a clear transcendent theology that made criticism of their society a necessity.

Epilogue: Consequences of a minority doctrine

Christianity did not end simply as a doctrine that failed to convince. From 1898 on, the *Rikugo Zasshi* served as the organ of a group of social-reformist Christians. Under the editorship of Kishimoto Nobutake and Abe Isoo, the magazine became the leading socialist journal in Japan. Murai Tomoyoshi, as well as Abe Isoo and Katayama Sen (later the foremost Japanese in the International Communist movement) published articles on the socialist movement and asserted its necessity from a Christian point of view. Non-Christians such as Kōtoku Shūsui (in the first decade of the twentieth century the most eminent socialist and then anarchist polemicist) published articles in the journal from a socialist point of view. At the end of the century, contributors to the journal organized the first major discussion group on socialism. From the members of this group came the organization of the first, even though short-lived, Socialist party; of the six founders of the party, five were also members of the Protestant movement. Although by about 1905 most non-Christians had seceded from the Christian segment, socialists in general still agreed that the most important and significant leader of the movement was Abe Isoo. Even after the Russo-Japanese War, when most socialists had joined the majority materialist point of view, the Christians remained active. Under the leadership of the novelist Kinoshita Naoe, and

with the aid of Abe Isoo, they published the important Christian-Socialist magazine *Shin Kigen* [The new age]. Christian Socialism, as an independent party and point of view, died after the demise of the magazine. Well into the period after World War II, however, Christian socialists formed a significant minority of the Socialist party and a major plurality of both the left- and right-wing factions. Katayama Tetsu is still the only socialist premier Japan has had, Kawakami Jōtarō remained the leader of the left-wing socialists until his death, and even today the Democratic-Socialist party has a significant proportion of Christians in its leadership.

The leadership of Christians in the institutional life of Japan remains a small significant movement. For example, the major labor movement of the Taisho and Showa periods, like the first Socialist party, was established in the Unitarian Meetinghouse in Tokyo. This "Friendly Association," the *Yūaikai*, later split; the Christian leadership gradually lost its hold on the membership. Nevertheless, one of the major strikes of the Taisho period, the Kawasaki shipyard strike, was led by the charismatic preacher Kagawa Toyohiko.

What remains significant for modern Japan is the point of view the Christians consistently presented. The major Japanese scholars of Christianity, Takeda Kiyoko and Sumiya Mikio, have ended the story of major Christian opposition with the mid-nineties when men like Kozaki Hiromichi and Uemura Masahisa apparently ended their opposition by consciously turning to church affairs and away from conflict with the government. But these scholars have approached the Christian attempt with too much optimism and with too little consideration of what the Christians could and might do. Many Christians, and these they

duly applaud, remained consistent in their opposition to imperialism and to the Russo-Japanese War. Steadfastly pacifists, men such as Kashiwagi Gien, Abe Isoo, Kinoshita Naoe, and a number of others provided the major financial and popular support of the pacifist movement through their churches. The little red wagon laden with socialist propaganda that a group of students pushed from Tokyo to Kyushu and then up to the Northeast was welcomed by a majority of the Protestant ministers, if not always by their congregations. The members of the congregations did almost always support actively the reform movements which opposed prostitution and election corruption and sought prison reform and family modernization.

Even when they left the active social reform movement, men like Kozaki, Uemura, Ebina, and Uchimura contributed to a point of view that became the basis for a democratic movement. As Yoshino Sakuzō, an active member of Ebina's Hongo Church, wrote:

The logical basis of democracy lies in personalism. . . . Ultimately, however, it is to religious faith that one must look for this strength. And it is Christianity, I feel, which most clearly incorporates personalism as an active ingredient of its faith. For Christians, all men are sons of God, and as such carry a spark of divinity within them. . . . Thus it is that the Christian faith inevitably finds embodiment as democracy wherever in society it appears.¹⁶⁷

When these pastors left the social movement, they did not recant their basic principles. Uemura and Kozaki continued to insist on the importance of an independent conscience when they argued the necessity of two realms. Uemura protected the freedom of the individ-

¹⁶⁷ Takeda Kiyoko, "Yoshino Sakuzō," *Japan Quarterly*, XII (Oct.-Nov. 1965), 523.

ual by asserting that conscience could not be impinged on by the government. He insistently argued that the individual moral realm should be inviolate. Kozaki protected his church from any interference by the government. Uemura defied the government by holding a service over the body of a member of his congregation who was executed for allegedly associating with the Kōtoku plot to assassinate the emperor. Tokutomi Roka, the Christian novelist and brother of Tokutomi Sohō, defended Kōtoku and the necessity of opposing the emperor system in a speech at the leading governmental preparatory school, the Number One Higher School in Tokyo.

Men such as Ebina and Uchimura also rejected active political life, but they too retained their basic ideas. Ebina continued to argue that the individual could always share in the divinity of God. He believed that God was always present and that every man through his conscience and understanding of God could transcend his society and share in the character of Christ. This was hardly a doctrine that supported the divinity and special character of the emperor and the state. By the first decade of the twentieth century, Uchimura had so despaired of effecting social reform or even Church reform that he left all organized movements. He too argued that all Christians could effect a spiritual union with God through their own spiritual efforts. He rejected earthly affairs, seeking for himself and his followers a special apocalyptic union beyond and transcending the earth. This viewpoint allowed many of the young to find a special spiritual and moral salvation beyond the specific limits of their society. Other men, like Abe Isoo, turned from organized social movements to small group associations. Finding a special quality in even such banal activities as the play

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of baseball, they believed they could encourage a movement among the unorganized which would emphasize the role of the free individual voluntarily joining with his friends in a cooperative effort.

All these movements and ideas encouraged the rise of an apolitical tradition, but one with positive effects for the individual. As Kozaki had written in the eighties, no politics might be the solution when men had no other choice than to become the objects of an autocratic government. Christianity provided a positive aspect to the retreat which many found necessary when faced with the tyranny of a totally encompassing regime. Christians contributed to the tradition of moral resistance to the government when no real political opposition was possible, by making apolitical activities an effective means of defending the ideals of individuality. They created out of their defense of conscience an anti-institutional argument that began the apolitical tradition in Japan.

BIBLIOGRAPHIC ESSAY

THIS study is based on numerous biographies and autobiographies, collections of memoirs and letters, theological texts, political essays, and articles. Most of them have been important to my understanding of Christianity; they have helped me develop a perspective and made me sensitive to a series of problems. Yet, many of these, although important to my initial grasp of the problem, have not borne directly upon this study and therefore no formal citation of their use or of their value to me appears in either the footnotes or the text. Other sources have been so valuable to this study that even listing them in my footnotes scarcely indicates their importance and the full character of the materials they contain. To indicate the variety and value of the sources I used I am adding this bibliographic note.

Most important to me, and the basis for any study of Protestant Christianity in Meiji Japan, is *Uemura Masahisa to sono jidai*, in six volumes, edited by Wataru Saba. As one bibliographer of Christianity in Japan, Ozawa Saburō, has written, it represents the highest level of Japanese Christian studies. Around his documentary study of Uemura Masahisa and his times, Wataru has assembled every bit of material that could

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be used to write a history of Protestant Christianity in Meiji and Taisho Japan. He has selected from the memoirs of Christian converts discussions of the conditions of their conversion, the character of their feelings, assembled chronologies of their life, translated materials on the background of missionaries, and provided full chronologies of their lives, contributions, and writing. In his collection he has carefully edited discussions on the translation of the Bible and hymns, collected materials on the attitudes of Japanese Christians to missionaries, patriotism, and to Christian belief itself. Janes's speech to the Kumamoto *han* leadership on Christianity and education is included as well as extensive excerpts from the theological and political writings of men like Ebina, Kozaki, Yamaji, Uchimura, and Uemura. Many selections are taken from magazines like *Rikugo Zasshi* and Uemura's own journal, *Fukuin Shinpo*. In addition, for a one-volume bibliography and chronology of Meiji Christianity, see Ozawa Saburō's *Nihon protesutantoshi kenkyū*, Tokyo, 1964.

Of almost equal importance to me as *Uemura* has been the *Rikugo Zasshi*. From its founding in 1880 through the first decade of the twentieth century, the *Rikugo Zasshi* was the most important Christian periodical in Japan. Kozaki Hiromichi, as editor and contributor, used the magazine to propagate Christian doctrine and to deal with every major social and intellectual question raised in the Meiji period. Most of Kozaki's own writings took shape in article form in the journal. In it are also found every Christian thinker and many non-Christians of Meiji. Kozaki's interests were broad and so were the magazine's. He introduced the first serious statement about Marxism and socialism. Side by side with statements by Uemura on Christ, arguments over the historical Jesus and the

meaning of "higher criticism" and liberal Christianity are frequently found discussions of patriotism, evolution, the natural rights of man, and the evils of the emperor system. In the late nineties two young social Christians, Abe Isoo and Kishimoto Nobutake, took over editorial leadership of the magazine. From that point on almost every issue included discussions of social problems and socialism, as well as discussions of religion and the peace movement. Included in the journal were summaries of the discussions of the new Socialist Study Group, discussions of socialism by Abe, Murai, and Katayama Sen, and political discussions by the non-Christian radical and future anarchist, Kōtoku Shūsui. The journal provides a full sense of the social meaning of Christian belief to the Meiji Christian. Takeda Kiyoko has given a good summary of the general contents of the magazine in her article "*Rikugo Zasshi*" in *Shisō*, vol. 12, 1962.

Another journal that has been of great importance, though its publication covers a period beyond the scope of this book, was *Shin Kigen*, edited by the Christian Socialists Kinoshita Naoe and Ishikawa San-shiro with the assistance of Abe Isoo from 1905 to 1906. Begun after the split between the Materialist Socialists and Christian Socialists in 1905, Kinoshita tried to present the Christian approach to socialism and social problems. Often, in fact, Kinoshita and his writers spent more time criticizing the Christian church for its social irresponsibility than opposing the Materialists. What is most striking, however, is its concern, similar to that of the *Rikugo Zasshi*, with criticism of the traditional family and its discussions of the intellectual and spiritual problems of living in a traditional society. The journal was reprinted in one volume in Tokyo, 1961, with an introduction by Sumiya Mikio.

Of greatest importance have been collections of letters, autobiographies, and biographies of Japanese Christians and American missionaries. Excerpts from memoirs appear in Wataru's collection, but there is no good one-volume Who's Who of Japanese Christianity to guide the student. Ozawa has prepared a short and incomplete bibliographical guide in the book listed above. Most important for my study has been Watase Tsunekichi's documentary biography *Ebina Danjō sensei*. Watase, a student and disciple of Ebina, has incorporated into his chronological statement of Ebina's life personal papers, published materials, and autobiographical sketches by Ebina as well as the evaluation of Ebina by friends and associates. The study has been particularly helpful in recreating Ebina's conversion experience. Ebina himself wrote an autobiography, much of which has been included in Watase's volume, called *Kirisutokyō gairon mikankō, waga shinkyō no yurai to keika*. Watase's book is much more valuable as it draws on a greater number of sources than Ebina did in his own sketch and also because Watase is unobtrusive, confining himself to brief introductory paragraphs for each section. For my analysis of Niijima I have used the biography by Watanabe Minoru, *Niijima Jō*, Tokyo, 1959, but more valuable has been his letters. His Japanese letters have been edited by Otsuka Setsuji, *Niijima Jō shokanshu*, Tokyo, Showa 29, and his English ones by Arthur S. Hardy, *Life and Letters of Joseph Hardy Neesima*, Boston, 1892. By moving back and forth from English correspondence to Japanese and from letter to letter Niijima reveals himself and his changing feelings and perceptions. One contemporary novel by a former student at Dōshisha, Tokutomi Roka, *Kuroi me to chairo me*, Tokyo, 1928, was particularly interesting since it gave an insider's view of the school and the students'

attitude toward Niijima and the missionaries. In 1935 a collection of memoirs and biographical sketches centering on Dōshisha and its students was published under the title *Dōshisha romansu*. Abe Isoo's autobiography *Shakai shugisha to naru made*, Tokyo, Showa 7, was interesting because it revealed the ever-optimistic development of an important Christian Socialist of modern Japan and because it drew a sensitive picture of the confusion in one samurai household following the Restoration and the conditions at Dōshisha that led to conversion. Kozaki Hiromichi's autobiography has appeared in both English and Japanese. In Japanese his *Jijoden* appears in Volume III of the *Kozaki zenshū*, Tokyo, Showa 13, and in English as *Reminiscences of Seventy Years*, Tokyo, Showa 8. Both volumes have interesting discussions of Kozaki's days in Kumamoto domain. Most of my biographical material on Uemura has been drawn from Wataru's volume. Other autobiographies of importance, because of their discussion of the conversion experience and the early Christian church, were Tamura Naomi's *Shinkō go-jū nenshi*, Tokyo, 1926, and Matsumura Kaiseki's *Shinkō go-jū nenshi*, also Tokyo, 1926. I also spent a week in Harvard's Houghton library reading the letters of missionaries of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. Most of the letters I examined were from Dōshisha teachers and were concerned with the development of the school, theological arguments at the school and student-teacher relations. Most often these letters came from either Dwight Learned or Jerome Davis. Many biographies have been written about the missionaries. These I have found most valuable have been J. Merle Davis, *Davis-Soldier and Missionary*, Boston, 1916; Takaya Michio, *The Letters of Dr. J. C. Hepburn*, Tokyo, 1955; and the Rev. M. L. Gordon's description of missionary

activity in *The Story of the American Board's Mission to Japan*, Boston, 1901. There are also biographies of J. C. Berry, a medical missionary, Hannah Riddle, missionary to the lepers, and others.

Theological tracts and essays have been important. Other than the ones collected in the sources mentioned above, most valuable have been Kozaki Hiro-michi's *Seikyō shinron*, Volume III, *Kozaki zenshū*, and Uemura Masahisa's *Shinri ippan* and "Shinkō to kyōri" in the *Uemura Masahisa chosaku*, Volumes IV and VI. Selections from the writings of Ebina and other Christians have appeared in their autobiographies or the magazines cited above. My understanding of Ebina's theological thought has been much aided by Dohi Akio's analysis in *Kumamoto bandō kenkyū*, edited by the Dōshisha University Humanistic Research Group, Tokyo, 1965. Among the many studies of Japanese Protestant theology, I have found Funayama Shinichi's chapters in his *Meiji tetsugaku-shi kenkyū*, Kyoto, 1959, and Kumano Yoshitaka's *Nihon kirisutokyō shingaku shisō shi*, Tokyo, 1968, most stimulating. Funayama's discussions of Kozaki, Nakamura, and Uemura are rather short, but his conclusion that all fail to make any serious attempt to deal with ontological questions is interesting. Kumano refuses to use the term theology in discussing Japanese Protestant thinking, since he believes that Japanese Christians never systematically elucidated and explained the truth and content of the Christian faith. Instead he uses the term "theological thought."

Even before the formal introduction of the American "Social Gospel" into Japan, missionaries spelled out the tenets of social responsibility of the Christian to their students and parishioners. Janes's speech to the *han* leadership as well as his lectures to his students, which were printed in *Kyushu Bungaku*, No. 31, Sup-

plement, 1893, and later reprinted in *Kindai bungaku kenkyū sōsho*, edited by the Kindai bungaku kenkyū shitsu [Modern Literary Studies], Tokyo, 1961; make clear his belief that Christians bear important social responsibilities for education, and for reform of the social system. Similar ideas are seen in the sermons presented by Ballagh, Green, and Davis. Examples selected from their sermons can be found in *Uemura Masahisa to sono jidai*. Dwight W. Learned, professor of theology and economics at Dōshisha, was the most interesting proponent of the importance of carrying "the Bible in the right hand and an economics text in the left." For several decades from the founding of Dōshisha, he discussed the defects of capitalism, introduced socialistic and communist thought, and talked about the necessity of a socially responsible capitalism. During the year I spent using the Dōshisha library, Professor Sumiya Etsuji (now president of Dōshisha) allowed me to examine Dr. Learned's lecture notes. During the Meiji period several of Learned's manuscripts were translated by: Ise Tokio, *Keizaigaku ryakuron* (Meiji 12-14); Miyagawa Noriteru, *Keizai shinron* (Meiji 20); and Ukita Kazutami, *Keizaigaku no genri* (Meiji 24). In his autobiography Abe Isoo discusses Japanese and American Christian efforts to establish orphanages and reform prisons in Okayama. Yamamuro Gunpei, leader of the Salvation Army during the Meiji era, discusses the importance of social reform and social enterprises for Japanese Protestants in "Kirisutokyō to shakai kairyō" in *Kaikyo go-jū nen kōen shū*, Tokyo, Meiji 43. For an outline of Japanese social reform projects see Takenaka Katsuo's *Nihon kirisutokyō shakai jigyōshi*, Tokyo, Showa 15, Sumiya Etsuji includes a discussion of Christian economic and social thought in *Nihon keizaishi no hitokoma*, Tokyo, Showa 23. Also see the books by Iwata Tokuji and

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Abe Isoo cited in the bibliography for a broader understanding of the character of Christian social thought. For a discussion of Christian work among the outcastes, Hayashi Utako's article "Shakai kairyō," also collected in *Kaikyo go-jū nen kōen shū*, is particularly useful.

The indispensable guide to all Meiji publications on Christianity, original works and translations, is *Nihon kirisutokyō bunken mokuroku*, Meiji, edited by the Ajiya bunka kenkyū iinkai [Asian Cultural Research Committee], Tokyo, 1965. The volume is carefully edited, well indexed, arranged according to category of publication, and provides the library locations of the books.

I have consistently found the studies of Sumiya Mikio and (Cho) Takeda Kiyoko interesting and provocative. Both Sumiya and Takeda are committed Christians and fervent social democrats. Both are concerned with the social modernization of Japan and both are sensitive interpreters of the possibilities of the development of a modern attitude toward man. Their great distaste for war and their belief in a Marxian evolutionary process leads them to be overly critical of any Christian compromise with the Meiji government and any failure by the Christian to support the peace movement. Nevertheless, their suggestive studies have aided me whether I agreed or disagreed with their interpretations. Some of their most important works are listed in the bibliography.

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