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# Native Roots and Foreign Grafts: The Spiritual Quest of Uchimura Kanzō

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Native Roots and Foreign Grafts: The Spiritual Quest of Uchimura Kanzō

by

Christopher A. Born

A dissertation presented to  
The Graduate School  
of Washington University in  
partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree  
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Christopher A. Born

*Washington University in St. Louis  
August, 2017*



For Sarah

## ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Native Roots and Foreign Grafts: The Spiritual Quest of Uchimura Kanzō

by

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Doctor of Philosophy in Japanese Language and Literature

East Asian Languages and Cultures

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Marvin H. Marcus, Chair

Between 1875 and 1890, Japanese academics, writers, legal experts, and intellectuals discussed and debated a host of new ideas and programs in the rapidly-expanding national media. Of great consequence were the 1890 Imperial Rescript on Education and the Meiji Constitution. The first sought to establish a strong nativist basis for a Japanese identity under the aegis of an imperial hegemon. The second sought to create a structure for modern citizenship based on Western notions of law and social contract. These seemingly antithetical documents came to symbolize the problematical status of the individual in Meiji Japan. They would become the touchstone of a larger discussion that concerned the Christian intellectual Uchimura Kanzō (1861-1930), who in 1891 refused to bow before a document bearing the personal signature of Emperor Meiji.

My dissertation positions Uchimura Kanzō as a pivotal figure in an ongoing examination of, and debate regarding, notions of citizenship, national identity, the proper role of writers and

intellectuals, and the very notion of subjectivity and selfhood. Uchimura's traditional values, social idealism, resolute Christian faith, and embrace of Western literary icons such as Dante Alighieri, Thomas Carlyle, and Johann Goethe helped inspire his deeply principled promotion of the inviolability of one's personal credo and the responsibility of individuals to act for the greater good.

Placing Uchimura in the late-Meiji intellectual and literary context, the dissertation will study three key autobiographical works written by Uchimura in the early 1890s. These will be compared to the work of important literary contemporaries, with an eye to the key role of the print media in the discussion and dissemination of ideas concerning the individual, the state, and the construction of a national identity. My interdisciplinary analysis, which will incorporate historical, religious, philosophical, and literary approaches, will illuminate the manner in which Uchimura Kanzō's life and writing both reflected the Meiji context and contributed to Japan's national discourse at the turn of the twentieth century.

# Introduction

Uchimura Kanzō (1861-1930)<sup>1</sup> is widely known as the Christian intellectual who in 1891 refused to bow before a document bearing the Meiji emperor's signature at a ceremony welcoming the Imperial Rescript on Education. But his long and distinguished career is marked by his contributions as a religionist who pioneered the modern Japanese adaptation of Christianity in the form of the *mukyōkai*, or “churchless,” movement. He is also widely regarded as a social critic who advocated pacifism and liberal reforms.<sup>2</sup> Through many publications, seminars, and lectures that he gave over the years, Uchimura influenced a multitude of students, some of whom would go on to become important authors, intellectuals, and public officials.

In short, Uchimura Kanzō was a pivotal figure on the Meiji intellectual and cultural scene. Curiously, though, little attention has been paid to his writings. Despite having published eighty-four separate *tankobon* titles (small bound volumes) and having written enough to fill more than forty volumes in the standard edition of his collected works,<sup>3</sup> Uchimura is not generally considered a *literary* figure per se.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> In keeping with conventional practice regarding Japanese names, unless a scholar or author is working exclusively in the European-American context, the family name appears first, followed by the given name. Thus, Uchimura is the family name, and Kanzō is the given name. Authors who used a pen name, such as Shimazaki Tōson and Kitamura Tōkoku, will be referred to by their pen names— in these cases, Tōson and Tōkoku.

<sup>2</sup> This was in a variety of periodicals, including the *Yorozu chōhō*, the most widely circulated newspaper of its time, where he served as the English language editor from 1897 to 1903.

<sup>3</sup> As published in the 2001 Iwanami edition of his collected works and letters.

<sup>4</sup> In the preface to the *Catalogue of Research and Publications by and about Uchimura Kanzō* (*Uchimura Kanzō chosaku kenkyū mokuroku*, Tokyo: Kyōbunkan, 2003), the compiler notes, Within Japan, if we were to line up the studies of notable figures, or at least personages from the *kindai* (modern) period, the name of Uchimura Kanzō would certainly be included. Within these studies, rather than as a literary personage, the emphasis is on his role as a religious figure. But increasingly, perhaps we can no longer consider him as simply a religionist, but a thinker, a critic, and a literary persona (3).

Yet a closer look at Uchimura's work reveals the extent to which he was engaged in, and in turn engaged, the Meiji literary community. Not only did he write treatises on the aims and benefits of literature, he also set about producing literary works that befitted these aims. Incorporating Christian concepts, Romantic philosophy, poetry, classics of world literature, and belletristic prose, Uchimura strove to create edifying and uplifting literary works for his readers. Moreover, his self-referential works point to the construction of a modern individual identity that emerged as an important literary concern in the 1890s but, with Uchimura, reflected a unique view of the self and the role of the individual in society.<sup>5</sup>

This dissertation will examine Uchimura's early literary works and situate them within the context of the Meiji literary community while also calling attention to his distinctive mode of self-expression. In so doing, I will discuss the development of the concept of subjectivity and the place of literature in society at large and the Tokyo-based literary community—the so-called *bundan*— as it developed during the 1880s and 1890s. My focus will be three major autobiographical works of Uchimura Kanzō, and how the author uses these works to chart his spiritual journey, a by-product of which is a literary voice that complements others developing in the late Meiji period. Informed by the phenomenological hermeneutics of Paul Ricoeur and Charles Taylor's approach to modernity and selfhood, this project seeks to tease apart and analyze the many threads of discourse found within Uchimura's texts, then situate these threads in the context of the intellectual, literary, political, and religious trends of the late Meiji period in order to revisit and offer new insight into images of selfhood and individuality.

Uchimura Kanzō was born into a low-ranking samurai (*bushi*) family in the city of Edo. Like others of his generation, he was raised studying the canonical Confucian classics but early

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<sup>5</sup> In some ways, Uchimura's representation of the self resembles the nascent Romanticism of the 1890s.

on he made the move to foreign studies, with the advent of the Meiji period and its valorization of Western knowledge. Uchimura excelled at English and decided to study science at the Sapporo Agricultural College in 1878. Upon matriculation, he converted to Christianity. In addition to life sciences, he encountered classical Western philosophy and literary canon.

Uchimura went on to study in the United States, at both Amherst and Hartford Seminary, between 1884 and 1888.<sup>6</sup> While at Amherst, Uchimura was drawn to American Puritanism, insofar as its devotion to Christ resembled the *bushi* doctrines of loyalty and commitment to one's liege lord.<sup>7</sup> Uchimura also became a devotee of American romantic poetry, especially works that praised great men, love of God, and love of neighbor. During his time at the Hartford Seminary, he pursued studies of Goethe and Shakespeare and became powerfully drawn to Dante and Carlyle. Upon his return to Japan, Uchimura taught English literature and Western history at the First Higher Middle School (*Daiichi kōtō chūgakkō*),<sup>8</sup> the preparatory school of Tokyo Imperial University. In 1891, due to his refusal to bow before an image of the Imperial Rescript on Education, Uchimura lost his position. He then turned to writing as a source of income. It was during this time that he began to make what would be his strongest contributions to the Tokyo-based *bundan*. Exploring the significance of these sadly neglected works is a key aim of this dissertation.

As a convert who embraced aspects of the West but grafted them onto native roots, Uchimura during this time was forced to refine his thinking about literature and his identity as

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<sup>6</sup> This was precisely the span of Mori Ōgai's period of study in Germany.

<sup>7</sup> Caldarola, Carlo, "Non-Church Christianity in Japan" in *Culture and Religion in Japanese-American Relations: Essays on Uchimura Kanzō, 1861-1930* (Ann Arbor: Center for Japanese Studies at University of Michigan, 1985), p. 103.

<sup>8</sup> By the mid-Meiji period, The Higher Middle Schools were essentially elite high schools; Daiichi was the most prestigious and claims many famous authors as alumni, including Natsume Sōseki.

both a Christian and a Japanese. As Kenneth Pyle and others have argued, during the mid-Meiji period key debates over the role of Western civilization and the molding of a Japanese national identity loomed large in the media.<sup>9</sup> Proponents of the *Min'yūsha* coterie advocated a radical Westernization agenda, while the *Seikyōsha* embraced a more nuanced view of modernization.<sup>10</sup> Moreover, as Atsuko Ueda has argued, a key literary debate during this period concerned the purpose of literature itself in modern Japan and the role of fiction in particular. A noteworthy development in this regard was the literary manifesto *Shōsetsu shinzui* (The Essence of the Novel, 1885) by Tsubouchi Shōyō, which promoted fiction as the appropriate literary vehicle for communicating universal human truths.<sup>11</sup> Uchimura, from a Carlylian perspective, agreed that literature should aim to tell the truth but held that fiction was not sufficient to the task. Borrowing from Carlyle and his interpretation of German philosophy,<sup>12</sup> Uchimura believed that great literature was inspired by God and insights into human experience. Its purpose was to transmit important ideas to future generations and was therefore a serious undertaking that ought

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<sup>9</sup> Pyle, Kenneth, *The New Generation in Meiji Japan*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1985), pp. 3-13.

<sup>10</sup> The *Min'yūsha* ("Friends of the Nation," led by Tokutomi Sohō), were pro-Westernization and promoted radical change within Japan. They published the youth-oriented *Kokumin no tomo* (The People's Friend) and *Kokumin shinbun* (The People's Newspaper) carrying works by Mori Ōgai, Futabatei Shimei, Uchimura Kanzō, and other important figures within the *bundan*. While students of Spencer and Bacon, but also the Confucian and native canon, the *Seikyōsha* ("Society for Political Education", led by Miyake Setsurei, who had studied with Ernest Fenollosa at Tokyo Imperial University) could not accept Tokutomi's ideology of Westernism and promoted re-interpreting Japan's intellectual heritage in light of recent Western ideas. The *Seikyōsha* began publishing the *Nihonjin* (Japanese) magazine as an outlet for their ideas in 1888 as a response to the *Min'yūsha*. For more details, see Kenneth Pyle, *The New Generation in Meiji Japan*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1966), 42-66.

<sup>11</sup> Shōyō advocated transitioning away from literary traditions of the past, including rejecting didacticism and embracing the use of vernacular in fiction. See Atsuko Ueda, *Concealment of Politics, Politics of Concealment: The Production of "Literature" in Modern Japan* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007), 28-57.

<sup>12</sup> Carlyle was influenced by Romantic authors and philosophers, especially Kant, Fichte, Schiller, and Goethe.

to be entrusted to individuals of high character who could see the world for what it was, communicate their ideals and thereby change society for the better. Yet, this burden of transforming society would run up against the agenda of the Meiji state, and individuals would come into great conflict with the dictates of the state.

### **Biographical Overview**

The following biographical sketch will provide the overall arc of Uchimura's career while pointing to key moments that shaped his literary and social consciousness. It is understandably challenging to encapsulate a long and multifarious career in a short space.<sup>13</sup> My aim here is to provide a framework for understanding the overall shape and significance of Uchimura Kanzō's career, within its social and cultural contexts. This ought to help illuminate the works to be studied in the chapters that follow.

Uchimura Kanzō was born in Edo into a modest *bushi* family who served in the administration of the Takasaki *han* (present day Gunma prefecture).<sup>14</sup> Uchimura Kanzō's father, Yoshiyuki, was a scholar of Wang Yangming neo-Confucianism and, according to Uchimura Kanzō, could recite most of the sayings of Confucius from memory.<sup>15</sup> Yoshiyuki held an official

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<sup>13</sup> John Howes' *Japan's Modern Prophet* and Miura Hiroshi's *Life and Thought of Kanzo Uchimura* are chief among English language studies; Suzuki Norihisa's *Uchimura Kanzō* (Iwanami Shoten, 1984) and *Uchimura Kanzō no hito to shisō* (Iwanami, 2012), Kamei Shunsuke's *Uchimura Kanzō: Meiji seishin to dōhyō* (Chūo Kōron, 1977), Sekine Masahiro's *Hito to shisō: Uchimura Kanzō* (Century-Kiyomizu Shoin, 1967) provide a wealth of details both biographical and philosophical, while Ohara Shin's *Uchimura Kanzō no shōgai* (PHP Kenkyūsho, 1992) and Masaike Megumu's *Uchimura Kanzō den* (Kyōbunkan, 1977) give even more detail.

<sup>14</sup> Howes, 21.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 23. Wang Yangming (1472-1529) was a Ming period thinker who rejected the dominant orthodoxy of the Cheng-Zhu school of Neo-Confucianism, which was based on the Song period thought of Cheng Yi, Cheng Hao, and Zhu Xi. The Cheng-Zhu school was pragmatic in its orientation, and rejected metaphysical realms and unobservable phenomena. Wang Yangming was influenced by Zen and promoted the idea that one's thoughts and one's actions are the same, and that the underlying universal principle (*li*) can be understood by looking within the self (pure



post at Edo, acting as an emissary between the lord (*daimyō*) of Takasaki, Ōkochi Teruna, and the shogunate.<sup>16</sup>

By the late 1850s, the shogunate in Edo (as well the various feudal domains) was well aware of the advanced technology— military, transportation, industrial, and so forth— possessed by the Western powers and it sought to further research and mastery of advanced technology.<sup>17</sup> Uchimura’s father was tasked with assessing military technology in the mid 1860s. However, a few months after the Meiji restoration, the Uchimura family was relocated to Ishimaki, to the north of Edo, where Yoshiyuki was given the responsibility of administering the Takasaki province. He kept rising in rank, but it was in a dying system. Once the central government no longer needed Teruna Ōkochi’s services, Yoshiyuki was also out of a job. By 1872, at just forty years of age, he retired, his official career at an end.<sup>18</sup>

This also meant that the young Kanzō was now responsible for the financial well-being of his family, as he was now designated the head of the household. That same year, Uchimura began studying English at Teruna Ōkochi’s English school, which Teruna had established in 1869.<sup>19</sup> Yoshiyuki bought a small house in Tokyo and, out of duty, continued to serve his former

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knowing, *liangzhi*). This is in contrast to Zhu Xi, who claimed that *li* can be discerned through continuous observation (*gewu*). Ordering the world according to *li* will bring about harmonious society. This was the dominant approach favored by the Tokugawa, who looked to Zhu Xi Neo-Confucian principles for practical governance. (As opposed to Buddhism, which they felt was too otherworldly and inefficient as a philosophical basis for practical operation in this world.)

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 22

<sup>17</sup> Fukuzawa Yukichi, one of the early proponents of western knowledge and “practical learning,” wrote in his autobiography about officially sanctioned learning of gunnery and naval technology in Osaka around 1859, and after realizing the futility of further Dutch studies, he went on to study English. *The Autobiography of Fukuzawa Yukichi*, Eiichi Kiyooka, trans. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), 80-87; 90-93. In addition, this quest for technological mastery set about their agenda of technological innovation (as brilliantly explored by, among others, Shiba Ryōtarō).

<sup>18</sup> Howes, 22.

<sup>19</sup> Howes, 26.

lord, despite receiving no compensation for it. This had the effect of placing the Uchimura family in very difficult financial straits.

The 1870s witnessed the rapid dismantling of vestiges of the old shogunal regime and its social order. The *bushi* had lost power and were forced to reinvent themselves. During the Edo period, the shogunate imposed a Confucian social hierarchy which separated people into four distinct statuses: military, farmer, artisan, and merchant (*shi-no-ko-sho*), with the military enjoying the greatest privileges and the merchants at the bottom. Now, these status distinctions were eliminated, and a new class of commoners (*heimin*,) was formed. Overnight, these *heimin* were faced with the new challenge in creating modern citizenship. As the knowledge of modern democracy found its way into Japan, citizens and authorities alike debated the rights and responsibilities of citizenship. As the Japanese nation-state developed, the citizens found themselves running up against the imperial order, exacerbated by the imperial decrees relegating individuals to the status of subjects.

During the 1870s, Western business, government, technology, agriculture, and industrial production were further studied, examined, and adapted to the Japanese context. These advances began to flow from the elites to the newly-minted *heimin* in both classroom and the media. Under the ideal of *risshin-shusse*, young men were encouraged to study hard and enter careers that would benefit the nation. Inherited from the West, the modern concept of *ryōsai kenbo* (good wives, wise mothers) offered women an opportunity to have a stake in the household and to carve out a realm of their own. Previous generations had greatly valued education, but in the Meiji period, access to education was greatly increased. By 1874, Uchimura began his formal education in English at the government-sponsored Tokyo School of Foreign Languages. He was an excellent student and possessed a high aptitude for the English language. The natural course

would have been for Uchimura to proceed to Tokyo Imperial University, but it was too expensive for him to attend, given the meager stipend allotted to former bureaucrats. When representatives of the *kaitakushi*— the bureau tasked with developing the frontier lands of Hokkaidō— appeared at the Tokyo School of Foreign Languages with the offer of full scholarships and the promise of future government employment, Uchimura found a solution to his economic dilemma. He became a member of the second class to matriculate at the newly formed Sapporo Agricultural College (SAC).

At Sapporo, events transpired that would help chart Uchimura’s future course. First, he entered the college with two classmates from the Tokyo School of Foreign Languages, Miyabe Kingō (1876-1951) and Nitobe Inazō (1862-1933). The three would go on to become lifelong friends, each achieving notable success in their respective careers. Miyabe went on to become an important authority on botany, while Nitobe became a distinguished internationalist and statesman.<sup>20</sup>

Second, Uchimura became a Christian while at Sapporo. Though he had previously seen and heard missionaries and heard hymns being sung in churches in Tokyo, he had no actual knowledge of Christianity. Uchimura was introduced to Christianity in the form of the “Covenant of Believers in Jesus,” which William S. Clark, the first president of Sapporo Agricultural College, pressed all new students to sign. While the college was not expressly Christian, Clark, the foreigner tasked by the *kaitakushi* (the government bureau tasked with developing the frontier land of Hokkaido) with organizing and establishing the school insisted on the inclusion of Christian morality and Biblical knowledge within the curriculum. Clark was seen

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<sup>20</sup> While Uchimura was in America, Nitobe studied at Johns Hopkins University. He became an important interpreter of Japanese culture for the American audience. His English-language book, *Bushido: The Soul of Japan* (1899) ‘repurposed’ that concatenation of samurai values, *bushidō*, into an essentialist work that sought to glorify native ideals.

as crucial to the mission of the school; he had been the third president of the Massachusetts Agricultural College (MAC), and was an expert in biology and zoology. At first, the *kaitakushi* was wary of Clark's intentions, and refused to allow Clark's inclusion of Christianity, but as Clark threatened to walk away from the project, the government gave in to Clark's demands. Initially, Kanzō was staunchly opposed to Christianity and all other Western doctrines, but he eventually overcame his objection.<sup>21</sup> Along with his classmates, he decided to sign the document and was baptized in 1878 by the American Methodist missionary, M. C. Harris.<sup>22</sup>

Third, now that they were Christians, Uchimura and his friends needed to figure out what that meant and how this new, "foreign" faith would affect their lives. This was a period of searching and invention (i.e. how to conduct a church service, how to read the Bible),<sup>23</sup> learning and synthesis. Eventually, the young cohort banded together to create a church that was independent of any established denomination. Uchimura's lifelong embrace of independence from Western ecclesiastical authority and penchant for a personal Japanese interpretation of the Christian scriptures began in his student days at Sapporo. This church would serve as his ecclesial home, even when he was separated from it by distance after leaving Sapporo, or by the differences brought on by his independent theology.

Finally, Uchimura honed his intellect and expanded his horizons beyond the confines of Japan. At Sapporo he was introduced to the canon of Western literature while also studying mathematics and science. Upon graduation from SAC in 1881, Uchimura took a position with the *kaitakushi* bureau as an ichthyologist and developer of fisheries. He would stay at Sapporo until December, 1882.

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<sup>21</sup> Uchimura Kanzō zenshū, vol 3: 13-15e (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten), 2001. Hereafter, UKZS Volume#: Page#.

<sup>22</sup> This will be further explored in Chapter 3.

<sup>23</sup> UKZS 3:18-22e

It is unclear precisely why Uchimura left his post in Hokkaidō,<sup>24</sup> but he returned to Tokyo and took a position at the Gakunōsha, a new school founded by Tsuda Sen (1837-1909), which was dedicated to the teaching of agricultural techniques together with instruction in Christian principles.<sup>25</sup> But this position would not last long, as Tsuda unexpectedly closed the school while Uchimura was on break at a resort in Ikaho.<sup>26</sup> He returned to government service and worked in fisheries science once again, creating a catalog of fish and dictionary entries on Japanese fish species for Dr. Chamberlain's dictionaries.<sup>27</sup>

During this time, Uchimura became emotionally troubled. He was anxious about his career, poor health, and the demands of supporting his family, who had been his dependents since his college days. Uchimura worked hard to cultivate a sense of spiritual respite and wellbeing at this time, but to no avail. His scientific character and deep sin consciousness evidently stood in his way. In his desire to find revival among the Christian community within the capital, he gravitated toward a sentimental, morally lax Christianity. With a "childish

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<sup>24</sup> Howes, 47. Howes notes that Uchimura "enjoyed the contact with nature," but "detested the human contacts." Apparently, the people he met during his travels were rough and disagreeable to him, and this was enough to make him miserable. Eighteen months into his contract, he resigned.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 48.

<sup>26</sup> See Howes, 51. Uchimura was jealous of his friend Miyabe's recent engagement and plans to study abroad in the United States. This, in conjunction with a career crisis, led Uchimura into depression (evidenced in a letter Uchimura sent to Miyabe) as well as his rash decision to become engaged to Asada Take.

<sup>27</sup> Basil Hall Chamberlain (1850-1935), author of *Things Japanese*, was a Japanologist who lived in Japan from 1873-1911. In 1886 he became a professor at Tokyo Imperial University. In a letter Uchimura wrote to Miyabe Kingo (December 1883,) he noted that "I am pretty busy at present. Am entrusted with the 水産慣行調, principally Natural History Dep't of the same. The next year, I shall probably be out the whole year, if God will give me sufficient bodily strength. I am also preparing the Catalogue of Japanese Fishes to be inserted into Dr. Chamberlain's New Dictionary of Japanese and English. It will probably take a year at least. I also wrote a 70 pages book upon Fishery, which will be published next January. A student comes to me every night to write out my lectures." UKZS 36: 86-87 and Howes, 52. Uchimura's research into salmon, herring, and cod, and his earlier studies in Hokkaidō on developing abalone fisheries contributed greatly to fishery research.

innocence and a foolish, naïve openness,” he plunged into the “fashionable Turkish bath” of Tokyo Christian society.<sup>28</sup> According to Sekine Masao, Uchimura enjoyed mixing freely with the opposite sex in the atmosphere of liberality and equality between men and women within church circles.<sup>29</sup> In addition to sentimentality, Miyabe would later note that Uchimura himself softened his hard Samurai edges, experimenting with Romanticism and writing poetry.<sup>30</sup> In addition to the other sources of stress, Uchimura was also beset by anxiety related to witnessing his friends succeed in ways he had not. This is perhaps what led him to so quickly enter into a relationship with Asada Také in the summer of 1883.

Nitobe Inazō had introduced Kanzō to Také at a Christian conference in Annaka, Gunma hosted at a church founded by Niihama Jō. Uchimura was quickly smitten by Také, who was a member of the church there. Také was an intelligent, modern Christian woman, one with whom Uchimura could freely converse.<sup>31</sup> She was highly educated, having studied at Dōshisha University in Kyoto before transferring to a school for women at Yokohama. Her English

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<sup>28</sup> This odd phrase refers to how there were many different Christian denominations sending missionaries who encompassed a broad spectrum of doctrines from conservative, relatively orthodox Protestant teachings to Unitarian, universalism. In addition to the modern non-Christian schools, the missionaries advocated for the education of women and set up schools for that purpose. Thus, some Meiji women in the Christian orbit were able to participate in political and religious discussions, from temperance to women’s rights. For instance, Kishida Toshiko (1863-1901) and Fukuda Hideko (1865-1927) challenged the Confucian patriarchy as part of the Freedom and Rights movement (until women were banned from participating in political activities in 1890), and in 1886 the Women’s Christian Temperance Society sought to ban prostitution and polygamy. See Walter, Lynn, ed. *Women’s Rights: A Global View* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2001), pp. 143-145

<sup>29</sup> Sekine Masao, *Uchimura Kanzō*. (Tokyo: Century/Kiyomizu Shoin, 1967), p. 35.

<sup>30</sup> Idem. Interestingly enough, throughout his youth, Uchimura would keenly feel the struggle between his deeply ingrained sense of *bushidō* and his Romantic notions. His ideals, keen sense of duty, sin-consciousness, and need for salvation all collided, the results of which can be seen in his literary output of the early 1890s.

<sup>31</sup> Howes, 54.

language proficiency enabled her to pursue an interesting correspondence with Uchimura.<sup>32</sup> In a matter of months, they were engaged. Over and against the objections of Uchimura's parents, Kanzō and Také were wed in the fall.<sup>33</sup> At first, this seemed like a good match. But the following year, despite the objections of the Christian community and the intervention of friends, they were divorced. The marriage lasted a mere seven months.<sup>34</sup>

The Japanese Christian community was surprised and disappointed by Uchimura's behavior. Uchimura's rising star had been besmirched by his own rashness. As a result, his parents agreed that it was in Kanzō's best interest for him to go study abroad until things blew over. Uchimura's four years in America would shape his future in a number of important ways. First, he became much more aware of his sense of national identity and patriotism. Second, he gained a keen awareness of and frustration on account of racial injustice. Third, he developed an abiding wariness of Western and Japanese colonial ambitions. Fourth, this period began the

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<sup>32</sup> Idem. English would become the lingua franca among the Tokyo intelligentsia. The ability to converse in English can be seen as an attractive mark of modern status and acculturation.

<sup>33</sup> Details of the ceremony can be found in Clara A. Whitney, *Clara's Diary*, (Tokyo: Kodansha International, 1977), 327-328.

<sup>34</sup> Uchimura was ambivalent about the marriage from the start. He had already tried to break off the engagement, but felt duty-bound to keep his pledge to Také. Howes notes that Uchimura felt that his mother did not get along with Také and expected her to fall in line like a dutiful bride and forsake her identity as an educated, modern woman. Uchimura attempted to mediate, but according to letters to his friends, Také did not take kindly to her husband's "rebukes." (Howes, 55) Uchimura was put in a position where he had to choose between placating his mother or his wife. Ultimately, he chose his mother's side. While away on church-related business in Sapporo, Uchimura wrote to his friend that according to "the testimonies of 4 to 5" people, Uchimura came to believe that she had somehow "betrayed" him (Howes, 55). Uchimura never explicitly reveals what his particular concerns were. Howes suggests that whether she was spending time with other men or caused some kind of rift with her mother-in-law is unclear. But Kanzō evidently used this "betrayal" as a pretext to divorce her. Despite her being pregnant with their child, Uchimura sent her back to her family, and cut all ties with her. According to his correspondence with his friends in Japan, Také wrote to Uchimura while he was in America, attempted to reconcile with him. Puzzlingly—and in contradiction to many Christian teachings on marriage and reconciliation, and the urging of his community—he stubbornly refused to read her letters. Only later in life did he connect with his daughter and support her financially.

development of his own understanding of theology in conjunction with deep study of the Bible and canons of Western literature. All of this drove his dedication to living for the “two J’s,” that is: Jesus and Japan.<sup>35</sup>

Uchimura left Japan from Yokohama in 1884, and after arriving in California he travelled across the country by train, arriving in Philadelphia in late December. There he met a wealthy philanthropist named Wistar Morris, who encouraged him to visit Elwyn, Pennsylvania. In Elwyn, he was received by Dr. Isaac Kerlin, the head administrator of the town’s government-funded mental hospital and school for mentally disabled children. Uchimura spend the first half of 1885 working as an orderly and remedial educator for the residents of the hospital.

Upon his arrival in Elwyn, Uchimura was still quite distressed and guilty over his failed marriage and divorce.<sup>36</sup> From his conversations with Kanzō, Kerlin recognized Uchimura’s depression, as well as his physical infirmities. Kerlin saw to it that Uchimura received proper nourishment and rest while also giving him space to “wrestle with his spiritual problems.”<sup>37</sup> Later that spring, Uchimura spent two weeks recovering in Gloucester, Massachusetts, evidently achieving some peace of mind and sense of purpose and direction. Having largely recovered from his depression, he once again began to think about how he might best serve God and

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<sup>35</sup> In following chapters, these themes will be treated in depth.

<sup>36</sup> Uchimura’s missionary friend M.C. Harris had encouraged him to read the Biblical book of Hosea, which concerns a prophet who was told by God to seek out, marry, and become reconciled with a woman who would frequently betray him and remain unfaithful to him. The unfaithfulness of the woman and the relentless pursuit for reconciliation out of deep love was a “type” or symbol of God’s faithfulness to Israel. Harris wanted Uchimura to see this side of God and become reconciled to his Také. Uchimura had never read the Hebrew Bible before this time, and he became quite intrigued. Ultimately, he was very much taken with the prophets, especially Jeremiah. He would frequently read Jeremiah at Elywn. Nonetheless, the distress and rejection Jeremiah experienced on behalf of his people did not alleviate Uchimura’s depression. See Howes, *Japan’s Modern Prophet*, 59-62.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 58.



country.<sup>38</sup> In the meantime, his friend Nitobe Inazō, who knew of Uchimura's melancholia through their active correspondence, asked Nijjima Jō (1843-1890) to help Uchimura. Nijjima had suggested that Uchimura enroll at Amherst, where Nijjima himself had studied as a young man, and he was also able to negotiate scholarship support.<sup>39</sup> That fall, Uchimura began his studies in earnest.

At Amherst, Uchimura was mentored by the University's president, Julius Seelye. Seelye became an important influence both intellectually and spiritually, encouraging Uchimura to explore the external, Christ-oriented elements of his faith and to focus more on the atonement of Christ for the sins of not just the world, but of Kanzō himself.<sup>40</sup> In addition to Greek and German, Uchimura studied history, literature, philosophy (interestingly, the only class he ever failed), natural science, and mathematics.<sup>41</sup> Uchimura graduated from Amherst in two years and went on to study theology at Hartford Theological Seminary in Connecticut. At first, he sought out theological study with the aim of a clerical career, but due to the perceived hypocrisy of the

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<sup>38</sup> Based on his reading of the Hebrew Bible, Uchimura's deep sense of Confucian responsibility to family and liege lord also began to transform into a sense of duty to one's nation. As Howes notes (58), Uchimura began to wonder if prophets might not yet be born in modern times, as God's agents of change in the world, to fulfil this role for Japan and the world.

<sup>39</sup> Nijjima Jō (Also known as Joseph Hardy Neesima) was the first Japanese to receive a bachelor's degree in the United States. Despite the risk of capital punishment if he were apprehended by the Tokugawa authorities, he left Japan in 1864 to study Christianity and science at Amherst, where he was mentored by Julius Seelye. He also studied theology at Andover seminary and traveled with the Iwakura mission from 1870-1871, where he served as a translator. When he returned to Japan in 1875, he became the founder of Dōshisha University and an important figure in the life of the "Kumamoto band" (an important Meiji Christian community, to which Tokutomi Sohō belonged).

<sup>40</sup> See Sekine, *Uchimura Kanzō*, pp. 47-49; Howes, pp. 65-70. These details will be explored in later chapters.

<sup>41</sup> Sato Masahiro, *Uchimura Kanzō to gendai: kibō no arika*, (Tokyo: Kyobunkwan, 1991), p. 110. While Uchimura had a rudimentary background from his first B. S. degree, Uchimura was never exposed to the discipline of Western philosophy, as the Sapporo Agricultural College had no instructors who were qualified to teach the subject. As an agricultural school focusing on natural sciences, Sato argues, they had no need for such instruction.

academic environment at Hartford and his failing health, he decided to leave the seminary in 1888 and return to Japan, ready to serve Jesus and Japan in his own way.<sup>42</sup>

Upon returning to Japan, Uchimura became the principal of Hokuetsu Gakkan in Niigata prefecture, a school he had been told was founded a year earlier by local Japanese. He soon learned, to his surprise, that the school had been founded by an American missions board.<sup>43</sup> Uchimura quickly grew at odds with the board, since they allowed foreign missionaries to volunteer their services as English teachers but refused him the freedom to develop the curriculum as he saw fit. Uchimura wanted his students to have a firm grasp of Japanese cultural history and religion before introducing Christianity. Thus, his first teaching position upon returning to Japan led Uchimura to continue in his belief that foreigners had little respect for the Japanese. (And yet, as was the case with his first wife Také, he did not seem to respect *them* or find any validity in their points of view.)<sup>44</sup> Things came to a head when Uchimura allowed a priest from the Nichiren Buddhist sect to give a lecture on the Confucian *Analects*. Ultimately,

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<sup>42</sup> In his autobiography, Uchimura complained about the attitudes of the American ministerial students in Hartford, claiming that they were only concerned about money and the size of their congregations. He wanted no part of such a ministry and decided to leave the seminary (*How I Became a Christian: Out of My Diary* in Uchimura Kanzō *zenshū*, 40 vols. (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2001), 3:117. Yet this may be an overstatement. Miura notes, “The view that Uchimura had no intention of becoming a missionary when he entered HTS is based on [*How I Became a Christian*.] He wrote, ‘I made up my mind to study Theology, but upon one important condition; and that was that I should never be licensed.’ However, Tsunao Ohyama thinks this part of his autobiography is fabricated, for in a letter to Kingo Miyabe, who was studying at Harvard University at that time, Uchimura wrote, ‘By the time I go back to Japan, I want to be a good, intelligent priest.’ In the other letter sent to Miyabe from Hartford, he said, ‘I wish to become a good, intelligent clergyman.” Miura Hiroshi, *The Life and Thought of Kanzō Uchimura* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), pp. 33-34.

<sup>43</sup> Miura, p. 35.

<sup>44</sup> Howes, p. 71.

Uchimura resigned from the school and returned to Tokyo. That July, he married a childhood friend, Yokohama Kazuko.<sup>45</sup>

While Uchimura had been away, the favorable sentiment towards Western ideas and culture had begun to sour. Influential nationalists in the media and the government affected a “revival” of sorts, that sought a revalidation of Japanese traditions and values. As part of this process, the government sought to clamp down on democratic ideals that posed a danger to the order of society (as well as their own power).<sup>46</sup> The Imperial Rescript on Education (1890) strongly endorsed proper “subjecthood” of Japanese vis a vis the emperor. This effectively trumped the “rights and liberties” of modern citizenship. Rather than “inalienable” or “natural” rights, the Meiji Constitution of 1889 bestowed rights insofar as they benefitted the stability of the nation and the body politic.

Despite Uchimura’s frustration towards certain foreigners, he did not reject all of them, nor did he distance himself the Western ideas and culture he had embraced. The same is true for the Japanese thinkers he respected, whether from the Buddhist, Shinto, or Confucian perspective. It is no understatement to say that Uchimura’s behavior and resulting interaction with others was complex. Between 1889 and 1891 Uchimura served as an instructor at the elite First Higher Middle School. But his decidedly pro-Western stance and staunch Christian moralism earned him few friends on the Japanese side. The situation reached a head at the official ceremony marking the promulgation of the Imperial Rescript on Education. The occasion called for a

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<sup>45</sup> Miura, p. 36.

<sup>46</sup> Statists sought to delineate the power and the function of the Emperor. Itō Hirobumi sought a constitution based on the Prussian model while statesman and member of the Genrō Inoue Kowashi (1844-1895) sought to use Tokugawa nativist *kokugaku* ideas to prop up the “unbroken” imperial line. These and other figures wished to give legitimacy and sovereignty to the Emperor while moving away from a “westernized imperial axis.” See Gluck, Carol. *Japan’s Modern Myths* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), 76-78.

formal bow before the document bearing the signature of the Emperor, but Uchimura simply nodded his head instead of performing the requisite bow. Uchimura's antagonists chose to go public with his perceived slight.<sup>47</sup>

The situation spun out of control as newspaper articles began to attack Uchimura and his Christianity as incompatible with loyalty to the Emperor. While the school administration was trying to deal with this situation, Uchimura contracted pneumonia and almost died. Friends came to his aid and wrote many articles to exculpate Uchimura and defend the Christian position Nijima's was so pointed it was censored by the police. In his weakened state, he allowed a letter of resignation to be written on his behalf. Tragically, Uchimura's second wife, who had waited on him hand and foot, also contracted the disease and died a few weeks later. Upon his recovery, then, Uchimura found himself under even greater financial and emotional stress. After a few months of preaching at local churches, he moved to Osaka to work as a principal for another Christian school. This school was in precarious financial shape and closed its doors not long after Uchimura arrived. While in Osaka, he remarried once again, this time to Okada Shizu, the daughter of a former samurai and judge who was a well-known instructor of traditional Japanese archery.<sup>48</sup>

Uchimura then moved to Kumamoto, in Kyushu, where he taught English for three months until that school failed as well.<sup>49</sup> At Kumamoto, he also began to write what would

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<sup>47</sup> Uchimura's dilemma regarding the bowing gesture preceded the ceremony and his actions. He was not sure how to reconcile the Biblical injunction against bowing before other gods with the formal *jigi*, the respectful bow from the hips.

<sup>48</sup> Howes, p. 83.

<sup>49</sup> Having gone through five teaching positions in as many years, Uchimura gained the reputation of being a "breaker of schools." See Miura, p. 38-39 and Howes, pp. 77-78.

become his first major work, *Consolations of a Christian*.<sup>50</sup> During this time the *lèse majesté* incident, seemingly forgotten by the public, was trotted out by Inoue Tetsujirō and his allies in an attempt to further discredit Christianity and expel Christian teachers from the academy due to the “danger” they posed through their ostensible training of Japanese youth to be disloyal to the Emperor.

Having failed as an educator, Uchimura moved to Kyoto in the summer of 1892 and began his career as a writer in earnest. During this time, Inoue Tetsujirō revisited the events of years before to highlight his belief that Christianity and the *kokutai* (the national body politic) were incompatible. Between 1893 and 1896, Uchimura used his pen to respond to these attacks. His output was prolific; he published eight books, (two in English) and a number of major articles, one of which was an open letter to Inoue. The three autobiographical books which constitute focal texts for this project (and are considered his major works) explain his beliefs, ideology, and rationale for his individualism and resistance to statist dogma. He provides deep, moving accounts of his frustrations with alienation, rejection by his friends, poverty, personal setbacks due to his failures, and physical suffering. These three works give the reader a window into Uchimura’s interior space, and appealed to his young and growing readership. While his first-person accounts of his travails did not sell well initially, over time they attracted a larger audience, gaining popularity through many reprints, and are still widely read today.

This was in part due to his growing fame as a frequent author appearing in important periodicals. In addition to his notoriety born of Inoue’s “Conflict between Religion and Education,” his articles written for *The People’s Friend* (*Kokumin no tomo*) gained him

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<sup>50</sup> Due to his work with the YMCA, as well as his connections to Niijima Jō whilst in America, and his popularity as a lecturer, Uchimura was connected to Christians in all three Christian “bands.”

recognition as a thoughtful author.<sup>51</sup> Readers who became familiar with Uchimura through his political and social commentary were now drawn to his earlier publications, which also revealed a strong individual who held fast to his convictions. As John Howes notes, “readers who had hoped to act as individuals found in Uchimura’s early works arguments that both urged independence and pictured the dire consequences of independent action in Japan.”<sup>52</sup> In fact, though most of Uchimura’s readers were not Christian, what attracted them to these texts was his independence. One possible explanation for Uchimura’s popularity is that his readers resonated with the universal appeal of a man of sincerity struggling to come to terms with his own failings.

Thanks to the expanded readership, Uchimura was now earning enough money to support himself as an author. As his reputation grew, he was invited in 1897 to become the English language editor and later a contributor to a new liberal daily newspaper, the *Yorozu Chōhō*. It would go on to become the most widely-circulating Japanese periodical in the late 1890s and early 1900s. For six years, Uchimura wrote commentary, political criticism, satire, and polemical articles. He encouraged his readership to consider his point of view while also bitterly criticizing perceived enemies, both foreign (Mercantilist and colonialist powers, as well as well-intentioned but patronizing missionaries) and native (Especially statesmen from the former Satsuma and Chōshū domains, the “mammonism” of Fukuzawa Yukichi, and the environmental disaster triggered by owners of the Ashio copper mine).<sup>53</sup> While at *Yorozu*, Uchimura also founded *The*

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<sup>51</sup> Especially the “Justification of the Korean (sic) War” in 1895 and “Observations of the Times” in 1896). *Observations*, an article “of disillusion that dealt with the contents of the Treaty of Shimonoseki gained Uchimura almost overnight recognition as one of Japan’s ablest writers.” Howes, 88.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 90.

<sup>53</sup> A telling selection of his English commentary may be found throughout volume 4 of the *Uchimura Kanzō zenshū*, especially pp. 64-5; 68-9; 77-106; 146-71.

*Tokyo Independent* (*Tōkyō dokuritsu zasshi*), a favorite with young intellectuals, and a journal entitled *The Biblical Study*.

When the publisher of *Yorozu Chōhō* abandoned his left-leaning liberal principles and supported the government's belligerent stance in the run-up to the Russo-Japanese War, Uchimura, now an ardent pacifist, resigned his position with the newspaper. After a brief interlude with a smaller periodical, he focused his attention on *The Biblical Study*, which he would publish until his death in 1930. The journal, which had a monthly circulation ranging between 2,500 and 5,000 copies, became the basis for Uchimura's *mukyōkai* or "non-church" Christian movement.<sup>54</sup> Uchimura withdrew from public life until 1917, when he began lecturing on the occasion of the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Protestant Reformation. Uchimura was greatly disappointed that the U.S., his "second homeland," had declared war on Germany and could not mediate a peaceful solution to the wartime carnage in Europe. Realizing the failure of human intervention in the pursuit of peace, Uchimura turned his attention to God's intervention in history. He would go on to lecture on the Second Coming of Christ with evangelists from other Christian denominations.<sup>55</sup>

Toward the end of his life, Uchimura composed a number of theological treatises while also lecturing, holding gatherings, teaching, and mentoring many students. Between 1926 and 1928, Uchimura published an English language magazine entitled *The Japan Christian*

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<sup>54</sup> The *mukyōkai* is essentially a "church" without denomination, buildings, sacraments, or formal organization. However, it still needed a unifying center. *Biblical Study* served as its center, and it proved crucial in stimulating discussion and promoting lectures, as well as Christian doctrine suited to the concerns of modern Japan. The magazine was a uniting factor for *Mukyōkai* members, and served as a "virtual" meeting space for adherents. See Suzuki Norihisa, *Uchimura Kanzō no hito to shisō*, (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2012) pp. 146-154 and Akae Tatsuya, "*Kamijō no kyōkai*" to *Nihon kindai: Mukyōkai Kirisuto-kyō no rekishi shakai gaku*, (Tokyo: Iwanami, 2013), 80-87.

<sup>55</sup> Miura, 50-51.

*Intelligencer*. This was a continuation of his earlier projects. Similar to the challenges he issued to his Western audience in *How I Became a Christian* and *Representative Men of Japan*, *The Japan Christian Intelligencer* described Japanese customs, ideas, and Christian concerns to a foreign audience apt to misapprehension of Japan. Uchimura's exasperation over the airs of superiority put on by foreign missionaries never left him.<sup>56</sup>

Uchimura's writings became his greatest legacy to his followers. Although Uchimura was reluctant to identify himself as the founder of a sect or denomination, the *mukyōkai* movement represented both his vision and his legacy after his death in 1930. The fact that it eventually turned into a formal organization would likely not have met with his approval. To this day, local affiliates of the *mukyōkai* still conduct small-group Bible study and lectures. During the Second World War, and especially during its aftermath, followers of Uchimura—for instance, the first postwar Tokyo University president and *mukyōkai* member, Yanaihara Tadao; and textbook author Ienaga Saburō—sought to continue Uchimura's legacy of inquiry, questioning of state dogma, and social criticism.

## Literature Review

Recent Japanese scholarly publications on Uchimura range across many areas of study, including biographical, theological, historical, and literary. One volume of note is Satō Masahiro's *The Place of Hope: Uchimura Kanzō and the Present Age* (*Kibō no arika: Uchimura Kanzō to gendai*, 1991), which includes a useful study of modern Japan through the comparison

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<sup>56</sup> A key idea for Uchimura was that Japanese Christianity should be an indigenous expression of a Biblical faith, in the way that Luther was a product of his German culture, Tyndale of English culture, and Calvin of Swiss. As a lifetime student of the Bible, (and evidenced by his letter to a missionary, Ms. Parmalee) Uchimura felt that he did not need foreigners to explain theology to him; he could read and interpret the text with rigor and care.



of Uchimura and Mori Ōgai, as well as evaluations of the imperial system, Uchimura's philosophy, and Japan's relations with East Asia based on Uchimura's thought.

Another impressive study, which places Uchimura in the context of the emperor system, individualism, and the construction of nationalism, is Nishida Takeshi's *Modern Japanese Aporia: Various Aspects of Modernization, the Self, and Nationalism* (*Kindai Nihon no aporia: kindaiika to jiga, nashonarishumu no shosō*, 2001). Nishida places Uchimura squarely at the center of these fraught issues, before discussing the Sino-Japanese and Russo-Japanese wars. In a similar vein, Nambara Kazuhiro's *History of Thought in Modern Japan: from Fukuzawa Yukichi to Maruyama Masao* (*Kindai Nihon seishinshi: Fukuzawa Yukichi kara Maruyama Masao made*, 2005) locates Uchimura in the struggle for individual rights and agency versus the might and right of the state, and it explores Uchimura's Christian response to the increasing authority of the *kokutai* and *kokka* and how humanistic socialism was a natural complement to Uchimura's position.

From the religious studies perspective, Akae Tatsuya's *The Church on Paper and Japanese Modernity: The History and Sociology of Mukyōkai Christianity* (2013) traces the development of local *mukyōkai* gatherings and explores how Uchimura's magazine, *The Biblical Study*, tied these geographically diverse meetings into a cohesive organization. While Uchimura did not wish to found a denomination, nor did he seek to oppose the mainline churches, his work united those who found themselves to be "outside" of the church. Akae also revisits the conflicts within the organization, especially after the death of Uchimura, the differing factions regarding patriotism and support for the Pacific War, and how the *mukyōkai* believers made large

contributions to postwar society.<sup>57</sup> Similarly, Iwano Yūsuke’s volume, *The Church as Non-Church* (*Mukyōkai toshite no kyōkai*, 2014) examines the transformation of the non-church movement into a church-like organization, something which Uchimura lamented before his death. In conjunction with Kyōbunkan publishing house, members of the Imaikan (Uchimura’s lecture hall in Meguro, now a museum and meeting space maintained by a group of *mukyōkai* adherents) released a book to commemorate the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Uchimura’s birth. Entitled *God is Our Fortress* (*Kami koso warera no toride*, 2012), this book comprises personal recollections, reexaminations of Uchimura’s religious thought in society (particularly on the atonement), and an audio CD of Yanaihara Tadao’s 1961 lecture on Uchimura’s place in the history of Japanese thought.

Yanaihara’s key points are that Uchimura managed to span the “old” Japan with the “new,” connecting East Asian countries with Western countries, and that he sought to extend Japan’s reach beyond its local region to the global stage. Yanaihara argues for Uchimura’s special role in Japanese history, as one who could explain important ideas from the West to the Japanese intelligentsia, while at the same time being among the first to introduce Japan to the West. Moreover, despite that which he shared with other pioneering figures such as Fukuzawa, Nishi Amane, Nakae Chōmin, and Kōtoku Shūsui, Uchimura was the only Christian in that group. The others disdained religion, while Uchimura embraced it as essential for social betterment. Although all of these Meiji pioneers labored to introduce aspects of Western

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<sup>57</sup> Some of these important followers of Uchimura include educators Morito Tatsuo (1888-1984), Nambara Shigeru, Takagi Yasaka, and Yanaihara Tadao, all of whom worked for postwar education reform within the government. (Howes, 350). Maeda Tamon (1884-1962) became a diplomat, and Sawada Renzō (1888-1970) became Japan’s first representative to the United Nations. Sawada “thus fell heir to the work of the Japan Council of the Institute of Pacific Relations that had been founded in part by Nitobe, Takagi, Yanaihara, and Tsurumi in 1925.” (Howes, 350).

democracy and philosophy to a modernizing Japan, only Uchimura emphasized the spiritual demands of modernization, for which he was attacked by the state.

Yanaihara also remarked that the media's positive treatment of Uchimura (in the *Mainichi* and *Yomiuri* newspapers) on the occasion of the centennial of his birth was strikingly similar to that of Fukuzawa Yukichi just a few years earlier. Yanaihara commented that no other Meiji figures had been thus treated by the media in the postwar era. Fukuzawa had established Keio University and had a number of institutions named after him, while all that remained of Uchimura was his writings. Nonetheless, Uchimura remained an important and imposing figure during the thirty years that had passed since his death in 1931.

Suzuki Norihisa's many volumes, most recently *Uchimura Kanzō no hito to shisō* (2012) and *Kindai Nihon no baiburu: Uchimura Kanzō no "Kōsei e no saidai ibustu" wa dono yō ni yomarete kita* (2011), continue to explore religious topics in their historical, biographical, and literary contexts, underscoring Uchimura's legacy in the diverse sectors of Japanese society that he touched.

While Uchimura-related scholarship is well represented in Japan, there are a mere handful of major English-language studies. From the religious studies perspective, Arima Tatsuo devoted a chapter to Uchimura in *The Failure of Freedom*, in which he explores Uchimura's view of history and Christian teleology.<sup>58</sup> Robert Lee's dissertation, "Religious Evolution and the Individuation of the Self in Japanese History" combines systematic theology and sociology as he examines the role of faith in the development of the individual in the socio-religious context of modern Japan.<sup>59</sup> Referencing Talcott Parsons, Clifford Geertz, and Robert Bellah, Lee examines

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<sup>58</sup> *The Failure of Freedom* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1969).

<sup>59</sup> "Religious Evolution and the Individuation of the Self in Japanese History" (Unpublished dissertation, Harvard University, 1974).

how human beings relate to the divine, and how the individual may transcend mere biology to make sense of existence in this world. Lee uses Uchimura as a case study to examine how a new adherent of a foreign religion may relate to certain foreign elements while struggling to maintain a cultural identity that is grounded in the society of his birth. Along with providing key biographical and historical details, Carlo Caldarola's "Non-church Christianity in Japan: Western Christianity and Japan's Cultural Identity" discusses the indigenization of Christianity in Japan, paying careful attention to how members of the *bushi* class (including Uchimura) became converts and the nature of their relation to native and the newly-adopted culture.<sup>60</sup> In 1981, the Center for Japanese Studies at the University of Michigan released a series of essays entitled *Culture and Religion in Japanese-American Relations: Uchimura Kanzō, 1861-1930*. This volume contains the work of a number of important Uchimura specialists touching on his career in both America and Japan.

From the political perspective, Kimitada Miwa's dissertation compares Uchimura to two other well-known Sapporo Agricultural College graduates, discussing their educational backgrounds and their relationship to the imperial state.<sup>61</sup> Hiroko Wilcock's *The Japanese Political Thought of Uchimura Kanzō (1861-1930): Synthesizing Bushidō, Christianity, Nationalism, and Liberalism* delves into the political ideas of Uchimura, discussing how he wove disparate strands of political discourse into a cohesive alternative to the totalizing and essentializing state polity known as *kokutai*.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Carlo Calderola, "Non-church Christianity in Japan: Western Christianity and Japan's Cultural Identity" (Ph. D dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 1971).

<sup>61</sup> Kimitada Miwa, "Crossroads of Patriotism in Imperial Japan: Shiga Shigetaka (1863-1927), Uchimura Kanzō (1861-1930) and Nitobe Inazō (1862-1933)", (doctoral dissertation, Princeton University, 1954).

<sup>62</sup> *The Japanese Political Thought of Uchimura Kanzō (1861-1930): Synthesizing Bushidō, Christianity, Nationalism, and Liberalism* (Lewiston and Lampeter: Edward Mellen Press, 2008).

Most recently, Chiba Shin and Shibuya Hiroshi's edited volume, *Living for Jesus and Japan: The Social and Theological Thought of Uchimura Kanzō*, presents a variety of perspectives on Uchimura's place in the development of theology in Japan, as well as situating Uchimura's biography within the context of intellectual history.<sup>63</sup> Arguably the most authoritative work on Uchimura is John Howes' *Japan's Modern Prophet: Uchimura Kanzō: 1861-1930* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia, 2005). This exhaustive intellectual biography surveys the details of Uchimura's life, the development of his thought over time, and his impact upon Japanese history. Howes also situates Uchimura's literary activities within the context of his trajectory from renegade and outcast to outspoken social critic. I should note that John Howes' *Japan's Modern Prophet* (2005) was translated into Japanese and published in 2016. With the passing of Dr. Howes in March 2017, the release of this translation stands as a fitting tribute to his productive career.<sup>64</sup>

A number of studies make passing reference to Uchimura's contributions as a mentor to young authors, elucidating how Uchimura interacted with the Meiji literary community. Others touch on the contribution of Christian thought to the Romantic (*Rōman-ha*) movement, which promoted emotional expression and poetic, spiritual interpretations of nature, and White Birch (*Shirakabaha*) coterie, which labored to produce humanistic, idealistic narratives while promoting Western aesthetics.<sup>65</sup> Yet there are no English-language studies of Uchimura's

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<sup>63</sup> Chiba and Shibuya, eds., *Living for Jesus and Japan: The Social and Theological Thought of Uchimura Kanzō* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2013).

<sup>64</sup> As I was preparing the final sections of this manuscript, thinking to contact Dr. Howes regarding his generous offer to serve as a reader and dissertation committee member, I learned of his recent passing. Dr. Howes' guidance and encouragement have meant a great deal to me. It is my hope that this study will honor his memory in some small way.

<sup>65</sup> A noteworthy example is Donald Keene's *Dawn to the West* (New York: Holt, 1984); another is Tomi Suzuki's *Narrating the Self: Fictions of Japanese Modernity* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996).

autobiographical works and literary ideals. Japanese scholars, though, have paid attention to this important aspect of his career. Karatani Kōjin discusses Uchimura's faith and subjectivity in *How I Became a Christian* in the context of his exposition of the "discovery of landscape" in his important study, *Origins of Modern Japanese Literature*.<sup>66</sup> In *Transformations of Sensibility*,<sup>67</sup> Kamei Hideo challenges Karatani's view and suggests that central to understanding Uchimura's subjectivity is his notion of creatureliness—namely, that his relationship to God and nature is based on his identity as an individual that can have a relationship with an almighty other. In addition to compiling the Iwanami edition of the Uchimura's collected works, Suzuki Norihisa has written several volumes on this topic. *Authors in the Orbit of Uchimura Kanzō*<sup>68</sup> traces many contours of Uchimura's literary thought and the influence of Uchimura on young Meiji authors. Likewise, Suzuki's introduction to and exposition of Uchimura's *The Greatest Heritage for Future Generations*<sup>69</sup> discusses his literary legacy, as well as the influence of Uchimura's thought on scientists and public intellectuals.<sup>70</sup>

By calling attention to Uchimura's spiritual autobiographies and situating him within the domain of Meiji literary and intellectual discourse, this dissertation aims to expand the understanding, and treatment, of identity formation in the 1890s, as well as expand upon the case that Suzuki Norihisa and John Howes have made for Uchimura as an important writer and cultural figure worthy of serious consideration.

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<sup>66</sup> Durham: Duke University Press, 1993.

<sup>67</sup> Ann Arbor: Center for Japanese Studies, University of Michigan, 2002.

<sup>68</sup> *Uchimura Kanzō wo meguru sakka-tachi*, (Tokyo: Tamakawa Daigaku Shuppan, 1980).

<sup>69</sup> *Kindai Nihon no baiburu: Uchimura Kanzō no "Kōsei e no saidai ibustu" wa dono yō ni yomarete kita*, (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2011).

<sup>70</sup> In the *Catalogue of Research and Publications by and about Uchimura Kanzō (Uchimura Kanzō chosaku kenkyū mokuroku*, Tokyo: Kyōbunkwan, 2003), the list of works referencing or studying Uchimura spans 259 pages. Studies published since 1945 begin on page 95, and end in 2003 on page 269—a total of 183 pages.

## Chapter Outline

Chapter 1 of this dissertation examines the background of the political, religious, and media developments that characterized the second half of the Meiji period. This chapter establishes the historical context, changes over time and continuities with the past, and most importantly, the movements which emerged on the literary and journalistic scene, thereby setting the stage for Uchimura's contributions to modern Japanese literature.

Chapter 2 provides an overview of Uchimura's career as an author. Although his earliest works are historical accounts and Biblical commentary, he moved on to publish essays and personal narratives. As his reputation grew, Uchimura engaged in literary and social criticism, and as mentioned above he eventually landed a position as the English language editor of Japan's prominent liberal journal, *Yorozu Chōhō*.<sup>71</sup> While at *Yorozu*, he also founded the *Tokyo Independent Journal* and *The Biblical Study*.

This chapter also addresses the works and authors that Uchimura has cited as influential— Thomas Carlye's essays, Dante Alighieri's *Divine Comedy*, and Johann Goethe's *Werther* and *Faust*, among others— and examines how these works informed his authorial agenda. It locates Uchimura's thinking within the context of some of the concerns of the Tokyo *bundan* (literary community) and examines how his ideas both complement and challenge prevailing notions of individualism, nationalism and modernity. It discusses how Uchimura's

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<sup>71</sup> According to James L. Huffman, in 1899, *Yorozu Chōhō* was second to the *Jiji Shimpō* (a rival publication, founded by Fukuzawa Yukichi in 1882), reaching a yearly circulation of 13,822,792 outside of Tokyo, as compared with *Jiji Shimpō*'s 20,142,383 non-Tokyo readers. See James L. Huffman, *Creating a Public: People and Press in Meiji Japan*, (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1997), 473, n. 94. *Yorozu* was vastly popular with students, and by 1900 it boasted a daily circulation of 150,000. See Noguchi Yone, "Journalism in Japan" in *The Bookman*, Vol. 19. March-August, 1904, 154.

ideas were received and how he sought to implement these ideas in his own writing. In addition, the chapter surveys the development of Uchimura's style and literary influences, the intellectual networks to which Uchimura was connected, and how one can frame the trajectory of Uchimura's career as he moved into various modes of journalistic writing, criticism, and religious commentaries—which collectively situate him within the larger scope of modern Japanese cultural history and its chief intellectual currents. Finally, this chapter discusses concepts of subjectivity and interiority within the context of self-writing from both Western and Japanese perspectives. A key concern is the literary understanding of the individual localized within modernity, and how concepts of self-conviction—and self-doubt—relate to narrativity and identity formation in the late Meiji period.

Chapters 3 through 5 center upon Uchimura's three major personal narratives, drawing relevant comparisons with both Japanese and Western works and paying attention to the critical reception of his works by his readership. Throughout these chapters, I also make reference to Japanese authors who have held forth on Uchimura's importance including Masamune Hakuchō (1879-1962) and Dazai Osamu (1909-1948). Written over the span of twelve months, Uchimura published *Consolations of a Christian* (*Kirisuto shinto no nagusame* 基督教徒の慰め, Feb. 1893), *The Search for Peace* (*Kyūanroku* 求安録, Aug. 1893), and in English, *How I Became a Christian: Out of My Diary* (1895),<sup>72</sup> works that I regard as a trilogy of spiritual autobiography. As they were written in sequence, they have a natural coherence and reveal how Uchimura worked through his life to make sense of his lived experience. Showing how these three texts

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<sup>72</sup> Published in Japan by *Keiseisha* in 1895 as *How I Became a Christian*. That same year, Fleming Revell published text as *The Diary of a Japanese Convert* under the pseudonym “Jonathan X”.



work together as a corpus describing a coherent narrative trajectory—a movement from suffering and doubt to wholeness and peace—is a crucial aim of this dissertation.

Chapter 3 explores Uchimura’s rhetorical style and the shaping of his autobiographical persona, while examining how he reimagined and analyzed his personal experiences in light of political, religious, and literary concerns. In *Consolations of a Christian*, Uchimura responds to external authority and creates a persona that clings to faith despite bleak circumstances and mounting doubts. His authorial persona attests to his convictions, and making veiled attacks on the statist ideologues, he creates a coherent narrative that, in each chapter, goes through what can be seen as Luther’s triadic cycle of *oratio– meditatio–tentatio*; that is, suffering brings about prayer and problematization of existence (*oratio*), rumination, study and meditation on faith, looking to God for answers (*meditatio*), and then the temptation and doubt (*tentatio*) that leads one back to prayer.<sup>73</sup> This text, akin to the suffering and refinement of the soul found in Dante’s *Purgatorio*, depicts a narrator that is hectored by his own sin-consciousness and the unending suffering brought on by his failures. This work does not leave the reader with the sense that Uchimura’s narrator has come to a place of peace or wholeness, or a state of “salvation.” However, when read in concert with the other two major works taken up in this study, it becomes clear that this book is best read as an integral part of the trilogy.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>73</sup>“Theology, in Luther’s agonistic vision, is not merely a cognitive or speculative discipline but a form of un/knowing appropriated through *tentationem* (*Anfechtungen*).” According to Luther, a passive life of “Prayer, study, and temptation make the theologian.” See Simon D. Podmore, *Struggling with God: Kirkegaard and the Temptation of Spiritual Trial*. (Cambridge: James Clark & Co., 2013), 101.

<sup>74</sup> Despite publication dates ranging from 1893-1895, all three works were written in 1893. According to the letters Uchimura sent to his American friend, Dr. David Bell, *Consolations* was completed by March of 1893, (UKZS 36.379) while *The Search for Peace* was “nearly ready” to be sent to the press by the end of April 1893 (UKZS 36.373). He later explained to Dr. Bell that he had already written the first four chapters of *How I Became a Christian* in June of 1893 (UKZS 36:381). Thus, the works can be read as a trilogy of self-writing.

The focus of chapter 4 is Uchimura's *How I Became a Christian*. Written for an American audience (as well as a Japanese readership with English proficiency), this text has multiple aims. Uchimura creates an autobiography that justifies his authority (pedigree, training, education, and vocational life), criticizes what he considers to be false notions of Christianity, excoriates the perceived hypocrisy of Western Christendom, and, like other spiritual autobiographies, narrates his conversion experience, moving away from his tendency toward self-love and ever closer to God, his "ultimate good." This chapter examines the interplay between the experiences of conversion (initial intellectual assent to abiding belief) and Uchimura's ability to recognize his own narrative progression from a fearful, ineffectual character to one with agency to stand for his own convictions.

Chapter 5 delves into *The Search for Peace*, the most theologically dense volume of this trilogy. Moving out of the *Purgatorio* of *How I Became a Christian*, by the second-half of the work, Uchimura's narrator can leave the place of confession self-recrimination and find "paradise regained." As a deeply apologetic text (one of his aims was to steer the Christian community away from "new theology" which contradicted orthodox Protestant doctrine as Uchimura understood it), it contains the strongest description of the intersection of faith and experience, and demonstrates the spiritual maturation of the narrator. While there is still an abundance of suffering and doubt, the work centers on the peace that the narrator finds in the atonement of Christ, thereby freeing him from that which perplexed him above all else: sin and failure to be the individual he wished to become. Moving from an inward focus on his own failure to a trust in the external goodness of God, the peace Uchimura's narrator seeks is found in the forgiveness of sin, which pacifies his troubled conscience.

Finally, the conclusion examines the enduring legacy of Uchimura, from mentoring relationships with important authors to the influence he exerted on members of the educational and scientific communities. It also explores contemporary responses to Uchimura's literary works, while summing up his enduring contributions to the Japanese Christian community and the intellectual world of postwar Japan.

## **Uchimura Kanzō: A Chronology**

1861: Born on March 26 in Edo at the compound of the Daimyo of Takasaki *han*  
(1868: *Restoration of Meiji Emperor* as Japanese sovereign)  
(1873: *Rebellion led by Saigō Takamori, the “last” samurai*)  
1874: Attends Tokyo School for Foreign Languages  
1877: Attends Sapporo Agricultural College, converts to Christianity  
1881: Graduates Sapporo Agricultural College, is employed with *Kaitakushi*  
1882: Returns to Tokyo  
1883: Marriage to Asada Také  
1884: Divorce from Asada Také, flight to United States, employment at Elwyn  
1885-1887: Student at Amherst  
1887-1888: Student at Hartford Seminary  
1888: Returns to Japan, second marriage  
1889: Instructor at First Higher Middle School  
1891: Lèse-majesté incident, death of second wife, Osaka and Kumamoto teaching  
1892-1895: Writing in Kyoto, releases major works, submits articles to major publications  
1894-1895 Sino-Japanese War; initially Uchimura supported it, then vehemently reverses his position.  
1897-1903: Staff position at *Yorozu Chōhō*  
1902: Establishes *The Biblical Study* magazine  
(1904-1905 *Russo-Japanese War*)  
1917: Lectures on Luther, Second Coming  
1926-1928: Publishes *Japan Christian Intelligencer*  
1930: Dies on March 28 in Tokyo

# Chapter 1:

## **The Mediascape of the Meiji 30s: Background and Developments**

The interplay of native ideas and foreign concepts was central to the cultural and spiritual development of the Meiji period. Attempting to modernize while maintaining a distinct cultural identity was a major concern for leaders within academic, media, governmental, and literary spheres.<sup>75</sup> Throughout the 1870s and early 1880s, key figures attempted to create new alloys of thought with which to build and stabilize the political structure of the nation. Meiji oligarchs experimented with the creation of a national mythos by combining the familiar elements of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Shinto alongside the newly introduced ideas found in capitalism, British utilitarianism, French egalitarianism, German philosophy, Protestantism and natural science. They made use of concepts that were beneficial for their project, twisting and changing ideas to substantiate their position. From political movements to legal documents, philosophy to religion, literature, arts, economics, social structure—even individual identity—virtually no aspect of life was untouched by the new imperial project. And, while the oligarchs had many supporters, others resisted their willful misapprehension of these various strands of discourse. As

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<sup>75</sup> Kenneth Pyle effectively describes two approaches to this dilemma:

The new generation emerging in the 1880s expressed two divergent answers to this need for historical orientation. One response was to liken the revolutionary transformation of Japan to historical development in the West, to see Japan as following a path of social advancement discernible in the history of more advanced Western nations, to regard this progress as a fixed, universal pattern of development to which all progressing nations conformed... The alternative response of young Japanese was to argue the compatibility of progress and cultural autonomy and to seek something in their national past that they and the world could esteem as uniquely Japanese, something of their own that need not be sacrificed in the course of modernization” Kenneth Pyle, *The New Generation in Meiji Japan: Problems of Cultural Identity 1885-1895* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1969), 21-22.

the government clamped down on public expression of discontent, dissenters turned to the press in order to discuss, combat, and promote their positions.

As different sides sought to sort out and make sense of these strands of discourse, many turned their attention to finding the right admixture of ideas and practice. The third decade of the Meiji Period (1887-1897) was one of intellectual re-examination, fine-tuning, and coalescing. This chapter examines the intellectual experimentation of the 1880s and 1890s, describing the intersection of native and foreign ideas in order to set the stage for the development of modern literature, the conception of individualism, and the spiritual conditions to which Uchimura was responding.

From the mid 1870s until the late 1880s, the systems of thought that had informed Japanese politics and the notions of Japanese identity were reexamined. Confucianism was at times lampooned and rejected when it interfered with attempts to modernize. Many intellectuals regarded Confucianism as a fossilized relic. Fukuzawa Yukichi (1831-1901), a proponent of “practical learning” (*jitsugaku* 実学) took a universalist approach, advocating the adoption of Western forms where applicable in order to increase Japan’s progress, but he did not explicitly advocate the rejection of Japan’s past.<sup>76</sup> In 1873, the *Meirokeisha* or “Meiji Six Society” banded together to discuss Western ethics and values in the drive to promote “civilization and enlightenment” (*bunmei kaika*) in Japan.<sup>77</sup> Their “Meiji Six Magazine” (*Meiroke zasshi* 明六雜

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<sup>76</sup> “For Fukuzawa, Japan could gain its rightful and unique place among the nations of the world only by diligently seeking knowledge (*chishiki*) and the reason or logic (*dōri*) that inheres in all things.” Dennis Washburn, *Translating Mt. Fuji: Modern Japanese Fiction and the Ethics of Identity* (New York: Columbia, 2007), 8.

<sup>77</sup> The *Meirokeisha* was an intellectual group named after the year of their inception, *Meiji rokunen* 明治六年. It was comprised of a number of notable statesmen, reformers, and forward thinkers including Fukuzawa Yukichi, Mori Arinori (1847-1889), Katō Hiroyuki, Nishi Amane, and Nakamura Masanao (1832-1891), among others.

誌) published articles debating which foreign philosophical and cultural grafts were feasible.

Heavily influenced by Kant and Mill, Nishi Amane wrote a series of essays attempting to navigate between the traditionalists and the modernizers. In terms of modern political ideas (Mill), Nishi wrote that the government should stay out of moral education and only become involved in matters of law with regard to “individual rights and responsibilities in a secular state.”<sup>78</sup> But at the same time he acknowledged that moral standards were being eradicated by modernization, “so he stressed the need for a code of public morality to balance the increasing emphasis on individualism.”<sup>79</sup> Nishi’s concerns represent the central challenge of coming to grips with the notion of the individual and one’s role in society.

Here, Nishi is arguing for individual rights and freedom on the one hand, but on the other, he turns to a classical Confucian notion that government has a role in moral education. This is a perfect example of the *bakumatsu* (end of the shogunal era) and early Meiji zeitgeist: Japanese Spirit, Western Knowhow (*wakon yōsai*). That is, adapt technology that will aid Japan’s modernization efforts, while taking care not to lose hold of tradition. “Tradition” is the key to defining identity in response to external threats.<sup>80</sup>

By the 1890s, Confucian ideas were rehabilitated and mixed with re-interpreted Shinto in order to support the creation of state ideology. This arrangement would become especially useful for the Oligarchs as Inoue and other conservative proponents of statism (*goyō shisōka* 御用思想家) would use *kokugaku* and Neo-Confucian ideas to attack Christianity as incompatible with the

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<sup>78</sup> Ibid., 9.

<sup>79</sup> Idem.

<sup>80</sup> Washburn astutely notes, “The assertion that modern identity may be defined by reclaiming—or even just recalling—the values that inhere in Japan’s cultural traditions is on its face compelling. The affective power of Miyake [Setsurei]’s appeal to tradition may be difficult to appreciate now, but it is crucial to understanding the radically nationalist turn Japan later took in the 1920s and 1930s” (p. 10).

national polity (国体 *kokutai*) in their attempts to root out forms of opposition to the Meiji state.<sup>81</sup> Indeed, determining which philosophical and religious elements to include in the amalgam of the *kokutai* was a core concern for the Meiji authorities and their challengers.

The *kokutai* signified a highly-charged “concept of a mystical national polity.”<sup>82</sup> *Kokutai* ideologues imagined the nation to be a unique and sacred shared community.<sup>83</sup> They asserted that the cohesive “national essence” stemmed from all being bound to the divine emperor as his subjects. According to the myths contained in Japan’s earliest written text, the *Kojiki*, they believed that the unbroken imperial line descended from the sun-goddess, Amaterasu.

For proponents of the state, then, the notion of *kokutai* represented a unified, homogeneous pedestal of support for the imperial authority. Accordingly, the divine Emperor should not be questioned; his will was good for the people. As Confucius reasoned in Analects 12.19, the relationship between the ruler and the ruled should be like the wind on the grass; when the wind blows, the grass must bend. In the same way, the Oligarchs (especially Itō Hirobumi 1841-1909) would repurpose Confucian ideas of loyalty and authority and meld them with Shinto myths to make the Emperor’s decrees sacrosanct, thereby ensuring their own imperially-bequeathed authority. Under this ideology, the Emperor was the great Confucian father, and the imperial subjects, the body of the *kokutai* were his children, all brothers and sisters, united under the respect for and obedience to the Emperor.

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<sup>81</sup> Inoue, while not a Buddhist himself, was all too pleased to publish a number of scathing attacks on Uchimura Kanzō in Buddhist magazines that were eager to support him. In the 1880s, there was a strong Anti-Buddhist sentiment in political circles; that they could unite Buddhist and nationalist factions against a common enemy, Christianity, was no small convenience.

<sup>82</sup> Carol Gluck, *Japan’s Modern Myths*, 15-26. This notion of the *kokutai* was handed down to the people through the “twin tablets” of Meiji Constitution (1889) and the Imperial Rescript on Education (1890).

<sup>83</sup> Benedict Anderson’s concept of nations being socially constructed “imagined communities” is readily applicable to the *kokutai* paradigm.



Opponents of the *kokutai* ideology—including members of the Freedom and Popular Rights Movement, Christian converts, and in future decades, Marxists and socialists—understood the *kokutai* ideology to be one of absolutist government and totalizing discourse. Giving the political establishment free reign to act on behalf of the emperor while using this ideology to squelch dissent became an alarming development after the promulgation of the Meiji constitution and the Imperial Rescript on Education in the 1890s. This political and quasi-religious ideology was the catalyst that changed Uchimura from educator to author and activist.

How to modernize while re-inventing and “branding” tradition (so to speak) in order to serve the purposes of the Meiji oligarchs becomes a main factor in the effort to consolidate power and national identity. The interpretation of “Tradition” also plays a key role in the conflict between the national polity (*kokutai*) and modern subjecthood. This process created a new relationship between the individual to the state.

## **Religion**

From the early 1600s Christianity was strictly forbidden upon pain of death, and remained underground until it was legalized in 1873. However, after diplomatic ties were restored with the West, the first Protestant missionaries arrived in Japan in 1859, but they could not openly engage in evangelistic activities. Instead, like Guido Verbeck in Nagasaki, some set up schools for learning English, science, and mathematics. Others, like James C. Hepburn in Yokohama, devoted themselves to the medical missions, translation of the Bible, and selling books that explored Christian themes.<sup>84</sup> Still, despite the goodwill of the missionaries, the Tokugawa-era wariness towards foreign religion remained within a majority of the Meiji oligarchy into the 1860s. However, the view of the authorities softened to a degree, as the benefit

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<sup>84</sup> See Otis Cary, *A History of Christianity in Japan*, Vol. 2. (Rutland: Tuttle, 1976), 46-53.

of foreign knowledge was recognized and the importance on learning English increased.

Once legalized, the missionaries began to form churches and Sunday-schools, the first at Kobe, and the second at Tokyo in September of 1873.<sup>85</sup> That same year the Presbyterian mission in Yokohama organized a presbytery and built the first Union chapel; Nakamura Masanao (translator of Smiles' *Self-Help*) was also baptized. By 1875, fifty churches had been established, mostly in Tokyo and the Kobe-Osaka area, but by 1876, three churches had been established by members of Dōshisha in Kyoto.<sup>86</sup> The first YMCA was organized in 1880, and the following year, they had established the *Cosmos* magazine (*Rikugo zasshi*) as a vehicle to explore Christian ideas and literature. In 1881, the missionaries and churches began having mass meetings, renting out traditional theaters as spaces to accommodate the growing audiences. Otis Cary notes that from 1883-1888, it was a time of great expansion for Christianity, despite the organization of Buddhists who wished to stop the growth of this “foreign” religion:

After a while, the efforts of the Buddhists against Christianity took the form of what was known as the *Yaso Taiji* or Movement for the Extermination of the Religion of Jesus. Priests and others visited different parts of the country delivering lectures, forming societies, and stirring up the people to resist the progress of Christianity. One of the leading arguments they advanced against it was that it required its followers to abstain from war, and therefore, in case Japan should be attacked, they would do nothing to defend their country.<sup>87</sup>

As time went on, some members of this movement would attack church buildings, throwing stones and destroying windows. Buddhist priests also refused to allow the burial of people who had converted to Christianity, making it a great hardship for families who either became Christian or remained Buddhist but had Christian members.<sup>88</sup>

Similar to the *Yaso Taiji*, Fukuzawa Yukichi also delivered a lecture, saying that religion

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<sup>85</sup> Ibid., 100; 104.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid., 110-127.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid., 179.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., 177-178.

was “necessary for controlling the hearts of the people,” but, while he could see the merits of Christianity, since Buddhism had long been in Japan, he said that he was “disposed to give all my assistance towards preventing Christianity from trespassing on the dominions of [Japan.]”<sup>89</sup> In later essays, Fukuzawa expressed fear that Christianity in Japan would eventually bring about the formation of a political party that was antithetical to the native values of Japan. Fukuzawa went on to say that Buddhism should be the only religion in Japan (as he did not see Shinto as such) and that supporters of Shinto should join with the Buddhists in opposition to the spread of Christianity.<sup>90</sup> He would continue to publish similar ideas in the *Jiji shinpō*, declaring Buddhism to be essential to the welfare of Japan insofar as it can be used to shore up the state:

That Christianity is baneful to our national power is evident...But educated people care nothing about it and relegate the whole thing to the priests. This is a dangerous tendency of the time. Unless assisted by the influence of the upper classes, nothing can obstruct the intrusion of Christianity. Moreover, Buddhist priests are immoral and shameless, and without energy of spirit. We do not believe in Buddhism, nor do we respect the priest. Our concern is for the national power, in the conservation of which that religion must be utilized.<sup>91</sup>

Later, to the surprise of many, Fukuzawa would modify his position to promote feigning conversion at a national level in order to bring about positive treatment from the West, but in private, maintaining Buddhist beliefs. Again, speaking from the perspective of what he felt was best for the state, Fukuzawa wrote,

It would be sufficient to make it publicly known that Japan is a Christian country...We do not mean that the majority of our countrymen should be Christians. A small number, one for every hundred, will be sufficient. All that is required is the assumption of the title of a Christian country. The steps are necessary for the Christianization of the country are to register the creed of Japanese Christians, permit the conduct of funeral ceremonies by

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<sup>89</sup> Ibid., 157.

<sup>90</sup> Idem.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid., 158-159.

missionaries, and gradually introduce baptism among the upper and middle classes. We cannot attach too much importance to Japan's entrance into the comity of Christian nations.<sup>92</sup>

Some intellectuals gave what Cary refers to as “patronizing” support for Christianity in the mode of Fukuzawa. For instance, Professor Toyama of Tokyo Imperial University wrote two articles in 1886 that promoted the advantages of receiving language education from foreigners, particularly for young girls. Likewise, he recommended trying Christianity on, as if it were the garb of the Westerners. It could be seen as a “tool for advocating the causes in which [Toyama] was interested.”<sup>93</sup> Toyama and Fukuzawa had some influence and did drive some to consider the utility of conversion.

But, that does not explain the steady growth of the church in the late 1880s. This growth can be attributed to the exposure to new ideas through education and the circulation of Christian books (and the Bible in particular). In addition, the interest in Western culture and new social interactions attracted men and women of all social classes to meet together as one group. Indeed, another important factor was the mass meetings and emotional revivals conducted among the youth in the urban centers.

Yet, the fervor of the 1880s would eventually wane by 1890. Cary attributes the slowing of Christianity in Meiji Japan to a number of factors both internal to the church and external. Internally speaking, Cary cites the disappointment with the results of individual conversion, that converts could not rapidly change their lives or be purified from evil; some Christians were bad examples and fell into sin and hypocrisy; some acutely felt the power of temptation in their lives but could not follow the moral codes of Christianity; many heard of the terrible evils that existed in so-called Christian lands; and finally, doubt concerning whether Christianity was indeed a

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<sup>92</sup> Japan Weekly Mail, July 12, 1884 in Cary, *A History of Christianity in Japan*, Vol. 2, 174.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid., 183.

“great power” for “national and individual salvation.”<sup>94</sup> Externally speaking, it came in the form of a cooling towards western civilization on a national level, as well as governmental fears of mass rallies leading to riots, and finally the promulgation of the Imperial Rescript on Education and the Meiji Constitution. Uchimura’s autobiographical writings respond to a variety of the issues for Christians that Cary identified as they played out in his own experience.

### **Church and State Issues**

During the 1880s, not only was Western religion a concern for the Meiji authorities; Buddhism also was troubling to oligarch Itō Hirobumi. The state was soon to rely on its own Nativist interpretation of *kami*-worship as codified into State Shinto doctrines. The sacredness of the emperor as a living *kami*, the glory of Japan as the nation of the Sun-goddess, Amaterasu, and the Confucianist ideology of Nishi, Inoue, and others were only efficacious if the people accepted these doctrines. As the oligarchs reformulated Shinto to make the imperial office sacrosanct, other religions were seen as a threat to their edifice.<sup>95</sup> Seen as detracting from the sanctity of the Emperor Meiji (and incompatible with nativist religion), Buddhism became the statist’s first target for attack in the late 1870s, only to be followed up by a new, more vehement denunciation of Christianity in the 1890s. Again, the authorities were chiefly concerned with stability. As Trent Maxey explains:

The outbreak of the Satsuma Rebellion a month after the Ministry of Doctrine was closed

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<sup>94</sup> Ibid., 215.

<sup>95</sup> They relied on the ideas of Shinto essentialist and progenitor of the *kokugaku* movement, Motoori Norinaga (1730-1801). Norinaga was influenced by Confucianism but rejected it in favor of studying the “Ancient Way” of the earliest extant Japanese texts, the *Kojiki and Man’yōshū*. A later follower of Norinaga, Hirata Atsutane (1776-1843) expanded on Norinaga’s scholarship and stressed Shinto as crucial to Japanese identity. Naturally, from the early 1800s on, foreign ideas such as Buddhism (as well as pre-Song Confucianism, and Christianity) were attacked by both the *kokugaku* intellectuals and proponents of Wang Yangming Neo-Confucianism. Once *kokugaku* began to influence government policy, it became more difficult to resist these ideas.

distracted the Meiji government from the matter of religion until the early 1880s, when the controversy known as the Pantheon Dispute (*Saijin ronsō*) and the Freedom and People's Rights Movement returned people's attention to the theocratic character of the imperial institution. Promising to produce a constitution and a representative assembly to deflect the *minken* movement, Itō Hirobumi and other key architects of the modern state engaged anew the matter of religion, apprehending it as the 'greatest problem' confronting the state.<sup>96</sup>

But as part of the unequal treaties and external Western pressure, freedom of religion was necessary to demonstrate the high ideals of "civilization." One way that the Meiji government responded to these twin concerns in the mid-1880s was to create firm walls between sectarian organizations and the political structure, while also ensuring that religious organizations were indirectly administered,

... Thus preventing them from 'relating to national governance in the future.' Separating sectarian organizations from the political realm addressed not only diplomatic considerations but also the fear that sectarian conflicts, be they intrasectarian disputes among Shinto clerics or potentially violent clashes between Buddhist adherents and Christian missionaries, would undermine the state.<sup>97</sup>

From the 1870s until the 1890s, Buddhism, which had co-existed syncretically with Shinto for over a millennium, was regarded as "tainting" the purity of the Shinto doctrines that supported the imperial position, and was therefore officially spurned and suppressed (*haibutsu*). For instance, the government disentangled Buddhism from the state in 1875 in order to promote their Shintoist vision through the Great Promulgation Campaign. Based on the ordinances of the 1870s, state rituals no longer included Buddhist elements. Shinto became the state religion, and Buddhist adherents were supposed to practice their faith in private. However, the issue of funeral rites became of great concern, as Buddhists could not continue private burial practices insofar as cremation was forbidden.

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<sup>96</sup> Trent Maxey, *The "Greatest Problem": Religion and State Formation in Meiji Japan*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2014), 140.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, 141.

At the same time, Western powers decried the lack of religious freedom for the growing Christian church within Japan. To address Buddhist and Christian pressures, Inoue and Itō decided that it would be better to extend religious freedom to all—including Christians and Buddhists in 1884—in order to appear religiously neutral.<sup>98</sup> Buddhism could be “co-opted” by the state and be used as a foil against the spread of Christianity. By the mid 1890s, Buddhism had been rehabilitated as a means to support the government, especially where socially and politically beneficial.<sup>99</sup> For example, practical concerns arose over the amount of land needed for Shinto burial versus Buddhist crematory practices. Returning to cremation would aid in city planning, as well as overall hygiene.<sup>100</sup> Additionally, the appearance of religious tolerance would prevent quarrels between various Christian and Buddhist groups over special treatment by the state internally, and remove external diplomatic pressure over the treatment of Christians.<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> Oligarchs eventually recognized the right for religious freedom at the individual level, but were still wary of non-Shinto influence. In 1884, the government abolished the system of religious control that had been put in place to prevent Buddhism and Christianity from becoming a state religion. As Itō and Inoue did not wish to allow special treatment for Christians, they extended more freedoms to Buddhists as well, including private burials, while also attempting to co-opt Buddhist clerics into their own nationalist movement. Inoue and Itō argued, “If Japan could regain full sovereignty only becoming the first Asian country to adopt Western civilization, then the only prudent choice was to permit the free exercise of the Christian faith... Inoue proposed the pragmatic solution of casting the state as religiously neutral, neither pro-Christian nor anti-Christian.” (Maxey, 170)

<sup>99</sup> Isomae Jun’ichi, *Religious Discourse in Modern Japan: Religion, State, and Shintō*, (Leiden: Brill, Nichibunken Monograph Series 17, 2014), 106.

<sup>100</sup> This was also beneficial for the Meiji state, which needed to find an efficient way to deal with death and burial; according to ideology, in 1873 the state declared cremation to be inhumane. Yet, in the 1880s, German and other foreign studies showed the benefit of cremation. As Carol Gluck argues, the example of Buddhist burial and Western science creates a “conceptual blend” or “blended modernity.” In a geographic location pressed for space, the crematory practices of Buddhism (bolstered by Western studies) were once again eminently preferable. Gluck’s notion of “blended modernity,” that is, the sense that there are multiple “modernities” born of native and Western blends, informs many aspects of this study. See Carol Gluck, “AHR Roundtable—The End of Elsewhere: Writing Modernity Now” in *American Historical Review* (June 2011), 686.

<sup>101</sup> See Maxey, 174-182.

Buddhists argued that their beliefs and social programs were compatible with the state, emphasizing their long history as a unique dimension of Japanese national identity.<sup>102</sup> Temples were recognized as important cultural and artistic properties, Soon, despite legal protections, it was the Christians' turn to defend themselves. The statist apparatus turned against these “metaphorical foreigners” who, like Uchimura, were considered incompatible with the essence of the *kokutai* due to their perceived refusal to cooperate with the state, worship of a “foreign” god and strong links to the Western church. Having gained more recognition by the state, the Buddhists and the statist would join forces in the press, with Inoue Tetsujirō using Uchimura as an example of this “foreignness” and “disloyalty.”<sup>103</sup> After Uchimura's *lèse majesté* incident, Christianity was considered a “foreign enemy” of the state, to the extent that in June of 1892 the prefectural governor of Kumamoto, Matsudaira Masanao (1844-1915), declared that teachers in

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<sup>102</sup> In 1889, Nichiren cleric Furuya Isshin and Tendai leader Murata Mokujin explained to Yamagata Aritomo that they would not allow their freedom of thought and religion to contradict the state; they “promised to draw the ‘bounds of propriety’ that the unrestrained exercise of free belief might violate” (Maxey, 196). In other words, they were committing themselves to maintaining harmony and state stability by supporting state dogma and refraining from trying to influence state policy. This move demonstrated loyalty and would prevent further marginalization. (197).

<sup>103</sup> Inoue Tetsujirō's “Conflict between Education and Religion” *Kyōiku to shūkyō no shōtotsu* (1893) was a chief polemic in the ensuing debates between Christians, Buddhists, and Statists over loyalty, education, and the Japanese spirit, or *seishin*. Prior to its publication, Inoue's arguments were carried in many Buddhist periodicals, including “Three Treasures Magazine” (*Sanpō sōshi* 三宝叢誌), “Buddhism” (*Bukkyō* 仏教), “National Religion” (*Kokkyō* 国教), “Pure Land News” (*Jōdō kyōhō* 浄土教報), “Esoteric Pure Land News” (*Mitsugon kyōhō* 密嚴教報), “Vairocana News”, (日宗新報 *Nisshū shinpō*), “Manichaeism News Magazine” 明教新誌 *Minkyō shinshi*, “Defense of the Faith” (護教 *Gokyō*), “Buddhist Review” (仏教公論 *Bukkyō kōron*), “Friends of Religion Magazine” (教友雜誌 *Kyōyū zasshi*), “Illumination” (伝燈 *Dentō*), “Life in Heaven and Earth” (活天地 *Katsu tenchi*), “The Rain of Dharma” (法雨 *Hō'u*), “Shakyamuni” (能仁 *Nōnin*), “True Buddhist Army” (真仏教軍 *Shin Bukkyō gun*), “Walled Garden of Flowers” (花の園生 *Hana no sonō*), “Four Brights, Exceeding Mist” (四明余霞 *Yonmei yoka*) and many others. See Sekine Bunnosuke, *Nihon seishin-shi to Kirisuto-kyō* (Osaka: Sōgensha, 1985), 53.



state schools who professed Christianity were to be immediately removed from their positions.<sup>104</sup> Due to cooperation between members of the Buddhist establishment and the statist, Uchimura frequently found himself at odds with a coalition of Buddhists and statist, as seen in Inoue Tetsujirō's *Conflict Between Education and Religion* and the resulting anti-Christian articles that were carried in a variety of Buddhist publications.

### **Censorship**

From 1868-1872, the imperial government had issued codes that continued the Tokugawa legacy of suppressing materials that could lead to instability. Political instability and resistance to the government resulted in harsher censorship and press regulations. In attempting to quash Saigō Takamori's 1873 call for an invasion of Korea, the government proceeded to "set a precedent for most subsequent press regulations by forbidding publication of anything that might tend to 'agitate the hearts of the people or incite lewdness.'" From this would develop the virtually inseparable pairing of public peace and public morals.<sup>105</sup> In other words, the direct result of Saigō's and Itagaki's challenges to authority was a swift clamp-down on the press. Proponents of free speech still sought greater freedom; the Imperial Diet had unsuccessfully tried to ease the restrictions on the press and the power of the Home Minister for "nine straight times," but these reforms died in committee.<sup>106</sup> Some of the more punitive articles were removed from the press code in the tenth Diet, but the codes remained largely unchanged. The resultant press regulations of 1897 gave the Home Minister and the Foreign Minister the authority to block the sale of materials that would erode the authority of the state; Article 32 in particular "added 'desecration of the dignity of the Imperial House' to the list of severely punishable offenses of

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<sup>104</sup> Idem.

<sup>105</sup> Jay Rubin, *Injurious to Public Morals: Writers and the Meiji State* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1984), 21.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*, 26.

advocating ‘destruction of the political system’ and ‘overthrow of the foundations of the state.’”<sup>107</sup> While there were periods of reduced enforcement, this system would remain largely unchanged, growing more stringent until the end of the Pacific War in 1945. During this time, imprisonment, even death, awaited those who disobeyed.

### **The New Generation of the 1890s**

In the 1870s, the push for Western technology presaged Fukuzawa Yukichi’s claim that adopting Western thought would lead Japan forward in the world. By the early 1880s, as evidenced by the actions of the Freedom and People’s Rights movement and the governmental response, commoners and elites engaged in debates over political structure and philosophy of the “nation.” Yet, as the 1880s wore on into the 1890s, the excitement for new Western ideas waned. Intellectuals of the new generation, who had seen many material changes in the name of “Civilization and Enlightenment,” had not seen the “spiritual revolution” that erstwhile members of the *Jiyū minken undō* had come to expect as an outcome of modernization.<sup>108</sup> The excitement for parliamentary reforms was useless, as Yamaji Aizan quipped in 1890, if “politicians were still thinking like feudal lords.”<sup>109</sup> Vocal factions began to develop, some, like Tokutomi Sohō’s Friends of the People (*Min’yūsha*), were in favor of making a clean break with the past, advocating total Westernization. Influenced by Smiles and Spencer, Tokutomi and his followers believed that Westernization was equivalent to the universalizing forces of modernization, and should be adopted; Tokutomi himself felt completely alienated from the culture of his forbears and believed that the existing Japanese institutions must be wholly discarded in favor of Western

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<sup>107</sup> Idem.

<sup>108</sup> Pyle, 24.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid., 25.

ways.<sup>110</sup> Consisting of a few Christian associates who had also attended Doshisha University, the *Min'yūsha* continued to hold up Western examples as the only model for progress, attempting to convince the public through the publication of the weekly magazine *Kokumin no tomo* (The People's Friend) and later, through the group's daily paper, *Kokumin shinbun* (The People's News). Under the aegis of his *heiminshugi* (Popular Egalitarianism), Tokutomi advocated *laissez-faire* economics, limited government, dismantling the extended family system, the emancipation of women, and a social ethic that would effect the liberation of "the individual from group control and cultivate self-support, self-expression, and self-responsibility."<sup>111</sup> Tokutomi's publications, which also included the introduction of Western literary genres, sold extremely well throughout the 1890s and 1900s.<sup>112</sup>

Others, like the Society for Political Education (*Seikyōsha*), looked to create a more nuanced view of modernization. Completely breaking with the past was unnecessary. Miyake Setsurei (1860-1945), Shiga Shigetaka (1863-1927), and Kuga Katsunan (1857-1907) advocated the reevaluation of Japanese tradition and created the *Nihonjin* (Japanese People) magazine as a counterbalance to *Kokumin no tomo*. For the *Seikyōsha*, "the strength and vitality of the nation depended upon its preservation and upon making all borrowings compatible with it..."<sup>113</sup> In *Nihonjin*, Inoue Enryō (founder of the *Tetsugakkan* [House of Philosophy]) had written of his

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<sup>110</sup> Ibid., 37.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid., 45.

<sup>112</sup> There was a great "boom" in biography in the 1890s. Echoing the English Men of Letters series, this seventeen volume series, sponsored by *Min'yūsha*, was published between 1894 and 1903. See Marcus, *Paragons of the Ordinary*, 22-24. Contributors included Futabatei Shimei (1864-1909), Mori Ōgai (1862-1922), Yamada Bimyō (1862-1922), Uchimura Kanzō, and many others. *Kokumin no tomo* also included numerous translations of European and American literature, with special care given to introduce biographies and history in the mode of Carlyle's "Great Men." Beginning in 1899, *Hakubunkan*, the publisher of *Taiyō*, also produced a series of biographies that praised exemplars of the Japan's samurai past.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid., 55.

acute worry that “Our people are no longer Japanese. The country is no longer Japan... If we want Japan to always be Japan, we must preserve Japanese spirit and thought, Japanese customs and traditions.”<sup>114</sup> The Seikyōsha criticized all forms of “foreign worship,” including two specific forms: political behavior (which had allowed government leaders to acquiesce to the demands of the unequal treaties) and political theory (which denigrated Japan as inferior to the “most advanced” Western civilization.<sup>115</sup>

The Min’yūsha and Seikyōsha represent two influential axes of response to Westernization. Undoubtedly, other intellectuals of the 1890s, like Inoue Tetsujirō and Takayama Chogyū, completely rejected Westernization, but had no real way to escape the vicissitudes of globalization. Uchimura Kanzō, however, represents yet another approach. Though he was criticized as a Western shill and anti-Japanese traitor, he was neither. Christianity was seen as foreign, and therefore at odds with the emerging nationalism of the 1890s.<sup>116</sup> And in some ways, like his friends in the Min’yūsha, he advocated a complete rejection of certain aspects of the Japanese past—most especially Buddhism and Shinto in favor of his Christian worldview. But, like the Seikyōsha, he advocated a selective reception of Western ideas. For Uchimura, Christianity was beneficial to society and the building of common morality, but he rejected the Western drive for colonialism. Uchimura criticized Western notions of cultural superiority,<sup>117</sup> and argued that the universalizing beliefs of Christianity could be accepted

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<sup>114</sup> As quoted in Pyle, 64.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid., 65.

<sup>116</sup> “As one academic forthrightly confessed: ‘I do not say Christianity is opposed to the purpose of national education because it is not nationalistic but rather because it is foreign.’ In effect, Japanese Christians in the early nineties served the ideologues as metaphorical foreigners in whose alien reflection the silhouette of patriotism emerged that much more clearly.” Carol Gluck, *Japan’s Modern Myths*, 134-135.

<sup>117</sup> Namely, that in order to become “modern” or “civilized” one must emulate the culture of the European Americans and accept the colonial attitudes of Spencer, among others. Uchimura was

without embracing the negative aspects of the West, which had become integrated into the so-called Christian culture over many centuries (after all, Christianity's roots are not Western). Christianity could complement elements that were already in place, making for a stronger amalgam. Borrowing from Emerson's title, Uchimura's *Japan and the Japanese* (written in English, published in 1895 by Min'yūsha) praised the paragons of the past, including Saigō Takamori, Buddhist reformer Nichiren (1222-1282), and Wang Yangming scholar Nakae Tōju (1608-1648).<sup>118</sup> Uchimura criticized Japanese government officials who led through greed and corruption while holding up figures from Japan's (and the West's) past as worthy of emulation.

### **Mid-Meiji Media**

From their inception, the Japanese print media served to inform the public regarding national and international concerns. As a forum for public discourse, the print media in the mid-Meiji period expanded to serve as the chief vehicle of intellectual exchange. Despite government regulations, the printing press was a great loom weaving complex cloth out of disparate threads of discourse. In 1874, Mori Arinori's (1847-1889) *Meiroke Zasshi* (Meiji Six Magazine) began its promotion of "Civilization and Enlightenment" (*bunmei kaika*) and ideas of social change. By 1880, graduates of Doshisha, in cooperation with the newly-formed Tokyo YMCA, began publishing *Rikugo Zasshi* (*Cosmos*), a general interest magazine with a pointedly Christian perspective.<sup>119</sup> In 1884 Iwamoto Yoshiharu's (1863-1942) female interest magazine, *Jogaku Zasshi*, began publishing articles covering topics ranging from literature to politics, world history

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also frustrated with missionaries promoting the adoption of Western religious practices along with doctrine. He believed that doctrine could be separated from practice, especially culturally-appropriate expressions of worship and prayer.

<sup>118</sup> Both Uchimura and Mori Ōgai shared a veneration of the paragons of the past; Uchimura would frequently refer to them and Ōgai would devote the final decade of his literary career to chronicling the lives of Edo period worthies.

<sup>119</sup> Jon T. Davidann, *A World of Crisis and Progress: The American YMCA in Japan, 1890-1930* (Lehigh University Press: Bethlehem, PA, 1998), 64.

to etiquette. As mentioned above, Tokutomi Sohō modeled his *Kokumin no tomo* on the American journal, *The Nation*, covering a variety of topics from a strongly pro-Western stance. By 1890, Uemura Masahisa (1858-1925) realized his ambition to create a periodical that introduced European literature to a wide audience while challenging nativist ideals. This was *Nihon Hyōron*. And perhaps the most influential general interest magazine of them all, *Taiyō*, was founded by the Hakubunkan publishing house in 1895, under the editorship of Takayama Chogyū (1871-1902).

These are just a few of the important carriers of Meiji cultural discourse and debate, and they collectively achieved a large readership.<sup>120</sup> There was a dazzling variety of new political ideas, social issues, and developments in literature and the arts from which one could choose. As intellectuals teased out their ideas and discussed them among their various cohorts, they

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<sup>120</sup> By the mid 1890s, Min'yūsha's *The People's Friend* reached 25,000 subscribers. (John D. Pierson, *Tokutomi Sohō, 1863-1957: A Journalist for Modern Japan*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), 165.) Hakubunkan's *Taiyō* reached 100,000 subscribers (Jihei Hashiguchi, "The Rise of Modern Japan" in *World's Work*, vol. 7, 1904, p. 4345). In "Journalism in Japan" (*The Bookman: An Illustrated Magazine of Literature and Life*, vol. XIX, March 1904-August 1904, 154) Yone Naguchi indicates that prior to 1900, *Yorozu Chōhō*'s daily circulation was 70,000 per day, but it climbed to 100,000 "within a year or so" and then exceeded 150,000. In addition, he indicates that

The *Nichiroku Shinpō* claims to be the most widely circulated paper in Japan. Both of them are modelled on the type of the *Journal or the World*. They boldly exposed the private secrets of high-standing personages. They did almost anything for their own purpose. Their success influenced the other papers, which began to imitate them in a mild way. The dignity of our old papers disappeared. They turned into business enterprises.

And there is the *Yomiuri*, whose chief attraction is its literary department. Koyo and Rohan, two prominent novelists, are on it (sic) for the last fifteen years. Beside the *Chuo* and *Mainichi*, there is the *Asahi*, whose circulation is great.

Uchimura joined *Yorozu* in 1897, and parted ways in 1903 as *Yorozu* began to pander to statists and chase greater sales. In the same article, Noguchi notes that school children widely read the English columns of newspapers (that would certainly indicate Uchimura, as he wrote the English columns for *Yorozu* and it had reached a high circulation prior to his departure. Huffman also notes that the *Yorozu* sold for half the subscription rate of other papers (24 sen vs. 50 sen per month) and appealed to the urban poor, depending on its higher circulation to recoup costs. (James L. Huffman, *Creating a Public: People and Press in Meiji Japan*, (Honolulu), 232, 243.

submitted articles and editorials to the periodical press. Having entered the public arena, they were at times assailed, at times defended by their peers. I will discuss how public debates in the mid-Meiji press created a space for a broad exchange of ideas, thereby democratizing knowledge and informing modern intellectuals.

Literary disputes (*ronsō*) have long existed in Japan.<sup>121</sup> Such disputes typically involved religion, politics, and the proper role of language and literature in society. By the third decade, the scale and outreach of Meiji *ronsō* was vastly expanded thanks to the rise of modern print media. When the Tokyo periodicals (Such as Uchimura's *Tokyo Independent*) were circulated in the middle schools of the countryside, students could gain access to new knowledge that would help shape their future. As Masamune Hakuchō (1879-1962) explained in his memoirs of Uchimura Kanzō (1861-1930), through these publications *bungaku seinen*-- young 'literary youth' who yearned for a career in literature could follow the thinkers they admired.<sup>122</sup>

Key debates set the tone for the ongoing discourse. Uemura Masahisa's *Nihon hyōron* editorial, "A Word Concerning Idealism in Literature," can be seen as the opening salvo<sup>123</sup> in the well-known 1894 dispute between Mori Ōgai (1862-1922) and Tsubouchi Shōyō (1859-1935) regarding "Submerged Idealism"—the so-called *Botsurisō ronsō* debate—which was published

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<sup>121</sup> Confucian, Nativist, and Buddhist scholars have been debating for centuries. For instance, in the debate entitled *Kakaika*, or "Cutting through the reeds", the 18<sup>th</sup> century nativist intellectual, Motoori Norinaga, engaged Ueda Akinari in a variety of arguments ranging from philological concerns to the theological. When Akinari insisted that Norinaga was wrong to base his historical understanding on the *Kojiki*, and that the Dutch maps show that Amaterasu could not shine over the entire world at once, Norinaga countered, using an ad-hominem attack:

"It is a *karagokoro* argument to make regarding the divine Sun Goddess, and though it is annoying to have to defend this position even now, I will explain it briefly. To ask about which works contain the legend of the Sun-Goddess shining over the all countries of the world is stupid." MNZS, vol 8, 404.

<sup>122</sup> Masamune Hakuchō, "Uchimura Kanzō," in *Gendai bungaku zenshū*, vol. 14: Masamune Hakuchō shū, (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1960).

<sup>123</sup> Okano Takahiro, *Kindai Nihon meichō kadai* (Tokyo: Yūmei shobō, 1962), 289-290.

in Shōyō's *Waseda Bungaku* and Ōgai's *Shigarami Zōshi (The Weir)*. Ōgai supported the German positivistic view of literary idealism, while Shōyō resisted using literature as a platform for creating meaning. Instead, he advocated for facticity and observation of reality, not metaphysics or the representation of ideas and ideal forms.<sup>124</sup> Echoing this was *Kokumin no tomo* contributor Yamaji Aizan's (1864-1917) confrontation with noted Christian Romantic Kitamura Tōkoku (1868-1894), editor of *Bungakkai*. Aizan, supported by the realist Tokutomi Sohō, insisted on pragmatism and facticity, assailing Tōkoku's poetic idealism.

Another particular debate, Takayama Chogyū's exchange with Uchimura Kanzō over Uchimura's ideals of "great literature," also concerns aesthetics, pragmatism, and idealism. Uchimura heavily supported literary idealism insofar as he believed that literature could be used a platform for communicating religious ideals. He also believed that the most important use of *bungaku* was to transmit one's most important thoughts and observations as a testament to future generations. But, he also favored facticity and the observation of nature, while disdaining works that he considered immoral. Like Ōgai and Tōkoku, Uchimura favored literature as a platform for the discussion of ideas and the interpretation of inner experience. Like Shōyo, he believed literature should observe nature and present the facts. But, in contrast to the others, he emphasized strongly Christian spiritual and moral components.<sup>125</sup> Like other Meiji *bunjin*,<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>124</sup> For more, see Michele Marra, *Modern Japanese Aesthetics, A Reader* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1991), 45-48 and Donald Keene, *Dawn to the West*, Vol. 1 (New York: Holt, Reinhart, and Winston, 1984), 189-190.

<sup>125</sup> *The Japan Weekly Mail* (September 17, 1898, p. 290), which frequently covered Uchimura, notes his pessimism towards Japan's *bunmei*, particularly "Two other articles from the pen of Mr. Uchimura Kanzo lie before us. Both alike are extremely pessimistic in tone. Mr. Uchimura's writings, however, are usually interesting and instructive. There is no doubt that he is very earnest and very sincere, in addition to being well informed on the history of Christianity in Japan. An essay entitled *Konnichi no Kannan* dwells on the general unrest of the Japanese mind and the wrong use that it has made of principles 'borrowed from' Western lands, such as the principle of liberty, for instance."



Uchimura argued for the elevated status of literature in modern Japan, but from his own particular and points of view. They all regarded great literature— *daibungaku*— as a keystone of civilization.

Uchimura also participated in debates over religion and politics, especially after the publication of his spiritual autobiographies. But instead of finding his inspiration in Buddhism or the doctrines of *kokutai*, Uchimura promoted an indigenized form of Christianity that grafted Biblical morality onto the existing stock of *bushidō*. Rather than focusing on the whole body politic, Uchimura believed that progress would come through the change of individuals' hearts, one by one. Through Japanese Christianity, Uchimura believed that Japan would become great and fulfill its divinely-ordained calling to be a light to Asia, and even the Western world. This again is in stark contrast to Fukuzawa Yukichi's injunction to "leave Asia" behind and join the West, or Tokutomi Sohō's later support for the imperial state as a way to regenerate society and restore Asian "autonomy" on the continent,<sup>127</sup> and the eventual call to "overcome modernity" that went forth during the war in the Pacific. By 1895, Uchimura neither advocated war nor colonization; he was more interested in the Christianization of Japan in order that Japanese could do good works for their Asian neighbors.<sup>128</sup>

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<sup>126</sup> Meiji *Bunjin* (文人) were inheritors the Confucian ideals of the Edo literatus, as exemplified by Ōgai and Kōda Rohan (1867-1947).

<sup>127</sup> Tokutomi's criticism of Japan's "backwardness" in favor of total Westernization gave way to a new conservatism that propped up the increasingly militarized state while criticizing the "decadence" of the Taishō period. See "*Shōwa ishin ron*" and Tokutomi's February 25, 1933 column in the *Osaka mainichi shinbun* as quoted in de Bary et al. *Sources of Japanese Tradition: The Modern Period*, Vol. 2. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 545-546. For his apparent *tenkō*, Uchimura would come to great odds with his one-time ally.

<sup>128</sup> Uchimura initially believed that Japan could help modernize Asia and free it from oppression and poverty. In his English language article "Justification for the Korean (sic) War" (*The People's Friend*, 1895), Uchimura enthusiastically supported the Sino-Japanese war. Later, he reversed himself and refuted his earlier support after he came to the realization that state rhetoric of

As has been shown, Uchimura was no stranger to controversy. In the aftermath of the *lèse-majesté* incident (*fukei jiken*),<sup>129</sup> champions of statism saw a chance reinforce their views of the nation and expand their audience in the press. Hundreds of books and articles were written in support of and pointedly against Uchimura and other Christians, with critics questioning their loyalty to the state.<sup>130</sup> As if the numerous anti-Christian articles printed in Buddhist periodicals during 1892 and Inoue's 1893 *Conflict Between Education and Religion* were not enough, a "major literary battle" (as John Howes puts it) ensued, generating 21 volumes and 220 articles both for and against Christianity.<sup>131</sup> Uchimura wrote only a single open letter to Inoue in response, questioning Inoue's training in and understanding of Western philosophy and indicating that Inoue's chauvinism was incompatible with the Western philosophers he claimed to understand. Western philosophical works were indeed influenced by Christianity, and so was their sense of nation and patriotism. In this way religion, literature, and politics became grist for public discourse. Interestingly enough, Inoue would find himself the subject of similar attacks a few decades later.<sup>132</sup>

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"freeing" the Koreans from the yoke of the Qing was ultimately an excuse to annex Korea and steal their wealth.

<sup>129</sup> "Kōtō chugakkō no fukei jiken 高等中学校の不敬事件 [The *lèse majesté* incident at the higher preparatory school], *Nippon* 日本[Japan], DCXXVI (Jan., 1891), 2.

<sup>130</sup> Gluck, Carol. *Japan's Modern Myths* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), 133.

<sup>131</sup> Howes, John. *Japan's Modern Prophet: Uchimura Kanzō: 1861-1930* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2005), p. 80.

<sup>132</sup> According to intellectual historian Maruyama Masao, this was over a very simple mistake; Inoue had misprinted the Chinese character for benevolence (*jin* 仁) rather than god (*jin* 神) when writing the Emperor Ōjin's name. This inferred that the emperor Ōjin was not divine. The rightists in the late 1920s seemed to be even more committed to their beliefs than the previous generation. Upon hearing of this, Uchimura reflected upon how the tables had so dramatically turned, wondering if this was not orchestrated by God almighty. See Tōyama Mitsuru, *Inoue Tetsujirō shi no jingu kōshitsu ni taisuru dai fukei jiken (bungaku hakase)* (Anonymous publisher, 1926). <http://www.meitan.j.u-tokyo.ac.jp/detail/7819>

Although Uchimura had become something of a pariah, his compelling autobiographical works and numerous articles about literature and Christianity earned him recognition as a public intellectual, gaining him a small following. By 1897, his past was largely forgotten by the public (perhaps his “sin” was forgiven, so to speak), insofar as he was asked to be the English language editor of the liberal journal, *Yorozu Chōhō*, where he would continue to hold forth on matters literary, religious, and political.

### Literature in the Mid-Meiji Period

According to Haruo Shirane, what genres of writing constituted *bungaku* and which texts were construed as worthy for inclusion in canons of Japanese “literature” was debated and developed over centuries. The *Genji ippon kyō* (Genji One Volume Sutra, 1176), a twelfth-century text by the Buddhist priest Chōken

reveals that the genre hierarchy as it existed in the late Heian and early medieval periods was, roughly speaking, from top to bottom: (1) Buddhist scriptures; (2) Confucian texts; (3) histories such as the *Records of the Historian* (*Shi chi, Shiki*); (4) Chinese belle-lettres (*bun*) such as the *Anthology of Literature* (*Wen hsüan, Monzen*), a collection of Chinese poetry and literary prose; (5) Japanese classical poetry (*waka*); and (6) vernacular tales (*monogatari*) and stories (*sōshi*), as well as diaries (*nikki*) and related writings in the kana syllabary. The genre hierarchy here follows the Chinese model, with religious/philosophical texts, histories, and poetry held in high regard, while fiction is relegated to the bottom.<sup>133</sup>

This genre hierarchy continued to persist for many years. Chinese-based genres were preferred while native texts were evaluated upon how they related to Chinese genres. Shirane notes that compilers and commentators of native, *kana*-based texts held in low regard “frequently attempted to elevate that genre or text by giving it traits borrowed from higher genres or canons.”<sup>134</sup> For instance, Ki no Tsurayuki’s *kana* preface to the *Kokinshū* (Collection of Old and

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<sup>133</sup> Haruo Shirane, *Inventing the Classics: Modernity, National Identity, and Japanese Literature* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), 4.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

New Poems, 905) attempted to “raise the authority of the *waka*, hitherto considered a low ‘private’ form, by drawing on Chinese poetry and poetics.”<sup>135</sup> The *Tale of Genji* and *The Tales of Ise* became considered to be “high” literature through their association with *waka* (which was considered a higher form than the *monogatari*) and a “reconfiguration as history (biography), which was, along with poetry and scripture, considered the highest genre.”<sup>136</sup> Likewise, linked verse (*renga*) authors drew on the authority of the Nijō school of *waka* poetry to elevate their art, and Matsuo Bashō drew on classical Japanese poetry and Chinese traditions “in an effort to make haikai, considered lowly entertainment, part of a high poetic tradition.”<sup>137</sup>

However, by the eighteenth century, wary of what they perceived to be foreign influences, *kokugaku* (national learning) scholars sought to invert the existing genre hierarchy, placing the native texts found at the bottom above the foreign, Chinese-oriented texts—especially religious, philosophical and historical—that had previously been considered literature of the highest merit. This presaged the “the most important genre change” to occur “in the definition of literature itself.”<sup>138</sup>

As was true in Europe prior to the nineteenth century, literature “in the broadest sense meant anything that was related to reading and writing.”<sup>139</sup> During the Edo period, *bungaku* 文学 was viewed from a similar perspective. As Atsuko Ueda notes,

*Bungaku* referred not only to a paradigm of knowledge that had to be studied but also to the ideological forces that shaped the ordering system that was “lived” by people. Even in Meiji Japan, such a definition of *bungaku* remained. Nishi Amane (1829-97), for example, says in the opening passage of *Hyakugaku renkan* (*Encyclopedia*, 1870): “*Bun* and ‘the way’ are two things that grew out of one; when *bungaku* flourishes, the way is bright.... If the *bun* does not flourish, then ‘the way’ will never be illuminated.” *Bungaku*, in other

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<sup>135</sup> Idem.

<sup>136</sup> Idem.

<sup>137</sup> Idem.

<sup>138</sup> Idem.

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

words, involved a definite moral element; it was a study of the “right” and “good” paths embodied by the *kangaku* classics.<sup>140</sup>

Thus, for Edo and early Meiji thinkers, *bungaku* had a moral component and was crucial for creating an educated, upstanding, and civilized populace. But, this would change as Japanese intellectuals reconsidered literary genres from nineteenth-century European perspectives.

In mid-nineteenth century Europe, the definition of literary genres narrowed from the religious, didactic, or historical genres and shifted to focus on that which was creative or imaginative, “with a particular stress on the genres of poetry, the tale (prose fiction), and drama, as opposed to other forms such as rhetorical persuasion, didactic argumentation, and historical narration.”<sup>141</sup> This shift, according to Shirane, led to the rise in prestige of the novel, “which came to enforce the notion of literature as imaginative or creative writing.”<sup>142</sup>

In the Meiji period, scholarly Japanese evaluation of literary genres followed suit.

“The term *bungaku* embraced two notions: literature as humanities or belle lettres, a concept that fused earlier Japanese and Chinese notions of literature and learning with the broader European conception of literature as humanities, and a more narrow notion of creative or imaginative writing, which derived in large part from Europe. In the latter half of the Meiji period, there was a rapid shift toward the latter, corresponding to the shift in Europe from the early eighteenth-century notion of literature as humanities to that of imaginative literature in the nineteenth century.”<sup>143</sup>

Uchimura, as shall become more evident in the next chapter, identified literature more with the former, and less with the latter. Identifying with the past, Uchimura did not praise creative or imaginative works for their mediation of life and emotional expression, but was more enamored of the religious, poetic, and historical (biographical). While some of the texts he cites as “great literature” of the West were, indeed, creative works of history, drama, prose, and poetry (such as

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<sup>140</sup> Atsuko Ueda, *Concealment of Politics*, 8-9.

<sup>141</sup> Shirane, 6.

<sup>142</sup> Idem.

<sup>143</sup> Idem.

the *Taiheiki*, *Chūshingura*, Goethe's *Faust*, Dante's *Divine Comedy*, and the poetry of Wordsworth and Walt Whitman) what he was drawn to was primarily the religious and biographical aspects he found within these texts. For him, thinking similarly to the literati of the past, literature had little merit unless it could communicate religious or historical themes that could instruct or inspire the moral character of the reader.

From 1885-1886, literary scholar, editor, and Shakespeare translator Tsubouchi Shōyō penned his famous work of literary criticism, *The Essence of the Novel* (*Shōsetsu shinzui*). Shōyō challenged the Edo literary conventions and recommended a break with the fiction of the past.<sup>144</sup> In particular, Shōyō criticized the didacticism (*kanzen chōaku*) that marked the *yomihon* works of Takizawa Bakin (1761-1848) and the once-popular Chinese vernacular tales.<sup>145</sup> For Shōyō, this kind of stilted moralism was anything but realistic. In short, Shōyō promoted a turn towards the Western novel, recommending the accurate—and effectively plotted—presentation of human emotion, customs, and manners. Due to his insistence on the transition from didacticism to psychological realism, Shōyō's *Essence of the Novel* has been, somewhat mistakenly, regarded as a point of origin for a modern Japanese literature.<sup>146</sup> As Atsuko Ueda has shown, the ideas

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<sup>144</sup> Following the explanation of Nakayama Akihiko, Atsuko Ueda explains that Shōyō's theses reflected the ideas already circulating within the literary sphere; he was the first to assemble these concerns over accurate representation of *ninjō* and *fūzoku* into a manifesto. As early as 1881, authors were asking similar questions to Shōyō:

Hattori Bushō (1842-1908) refers to emotion and customs as the main topic of *shōsetsu*. Nakajima Katsuyoshi (1858-1932) defines *shōsetsu*'s aim as the portrayal of emotions and customs. Sakazaki Shiran's (1853-1913) "*Shōsetsu haishi no honbun o ronzu*" (On the Primary Role of *Shōsetsu Haishi*, 1885), published prior to *Shōsetsu shinzui*, also states, "What is *shōsetsu* after all? It is a medium that describes manners and emotions, and it is possible to call it a mirror of truthful depiction. See Atsuko Ueda, *Concealment of Politics, Politics of Concealment* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007), 4

<sup>145</sup> *Baiwa shōsetsu*, fictional stories adapted from Chinese sources, e.g. Tales of the Water Margin (*Suikoden*)

<sup>146</sup> Interestingly enough, though Shōyō was reacting to premodern literary practices, it was the law of the land that hampered progress in the realm of realism. Jay Rubin shows that Bakin and

Shōyō presented were already circulating within the *bundan*, but Shōyō was the first to present them in a cohesive “manifesto.” However, as Ueda points out, it is also notable that after Shōyō published this amazing “manifesto” not much happened; few people acknowledged it or engaged with it. But, his ideas still represent an important shift in the understanding of importance of fiction.

Echoing others, Shōyō was attempting to remove what he saw to be an unfair stigma associated with *shōsetsu*, arguing that the novel had the potential to become an art form *par excellence*. Shōyō’s complaint was that most early Meiji fiction was merely recycling the style and content of Edo-period popular fiction. Thus, he suggested that the novel is a prose version of the poem, an art-form that can reveal the artist’s feelings and understanding of the world that individuals inhabit. In contrast to verse, the novel is free of the constrictions of meter, diction, and length. He explained that

The novel attempts to describe human nature and social conditions. It should reveal what is obscure, and give a realistic portrayal of the mysteries of destiny in man's life by spinning the thread of an original idea into a skillful web of emotions and cleverly devising innumerable dénouements from a myriad of mystery-shrouded beginnings. The perfect novel is therefore able to communicate subtleties which neither an artist's brush nor poetry nor theatre can properly convey. Because, unlike poetry, it is neither encumbered by prosody nor restricted in length, and because, unlike painting and drama, it is so constituted as to appeal directly to the mind, the novelist has ample scope to develop his ideas. It is this which gives the novel a place in art--ultimately, perhaps, it may even enable it to outstrip drama as the greatest of the arts.<sup>147</sup>

Shōyō also criticized the “abstractions” he saw developing in the depiction of ideas rather than “reality”. According to Michele Marra, Shōyo was responding to

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others were merely following Edo publication censorship codes; had they not they would have been arrested, their works banned, and they would have been forced to pay expensive fines. See *Injurious to Public Morals: Meiji Writers and the State* (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 1984), 19.

<sup>147</sup> Tsubouchi Shōyō, *The Essence of the Novel*, translated by Nanette Twine.  
<https://archive.nyu.edu/html/2451/14945/shoyo.htm#chap2.2> accessed 8/9/2017

[Ernest] Fenollosa's promotion of “ideas” as an appeal to Japanese artists to portray thoughts and, therefore, to concentrate their efforts on the depiction of existential and social problems. For Shōyō, the grasping of an idea meant giving a faithful representation of things “as they are.” Shōyō's resistance to what he perceived as the abstractness of idealism is clear in the series of essays known as *Bi to wa nan zo ya* (What Is Beauty?, 1886). This text shows how indebted he was to Nakae Chomin's translation of Veron [L'Esthetique], which became the basis of Shōyō's strong criticism of idealistic philosophy.<sup>148</sup>

While Shōyō attempted to put these ideals into practice in his *Manners and Lives of Contemporary Students* (*Tōsei shosei katagi*, 1885-1886), he was unable to achieve the interiority he so much desired. Shōyō engaged the dynamic between idealism and realistic concerns, the ambition of students and the difficulty in navigating romantic relationships. Although regarded as a literary failure, *Manners and Lives* does attempt to depict contemporary social life and customs of male students in the late 1880s. Though he criticized the didacticism of Bakin, he was still greatly influenced by the style and conventions of Edo popular fiction, and was unable to create the “realism” he proposed and he still imagined the lives of students from the perspective of his own “ideas.”

However, Futabatei Shimei, under Shōyō's mentoring, published what has been considered to be (albeit debatably) Japan's first modern novel, *Ukigumo* (Drifting Clouds). Futabatei had dropped out of Tokyo Foreign Language School where he had been studying Russian realism—Turgenev in particular—and much to the chagrin of his father, decided to become a novelist. *Ukigumo* is a work of social criticism wherein two male characters of different social backgrounds are pitted against each other over a common love interest. Influenced by Russian literature, Futabatei incorporated attention to space and time in his

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<sup>148</sup> Michele Marra, *Japanese Aesthetics, A Reader*, 43.



narrative, but maintained and explored earlier notions of Japanese aesthetics.<sup>149</sup> Due to Futabatei's contribution, the deep interest in depicting interiority can in part be traced back to the introspection found within 19<sup>th</sup>-century Russian fiction.<sup>150</sup> The “superfluous” protagonist of *Ukigumo*, Utsumi Bunzō—especially when considering the abject failure of the individual—can be likened to Turgenev's quixotic *Rudin*.<sup>151</sup> The Russian attention to psychological realism and discussion of interior states easily fits with Tsubouchi's recommendations found in *Essence of the Novel*. Likewise, Futabatei's use of the evolving vernacular *genbun itchi* style marks a pronounced break with the styles of the past and a move toward a modern literary discourse.

Futabatei's adaptation of Russian novelistic realism can be said to represent one pole of the drive to represent the interior world of the modern self; Mori Ōgai's German romanticism and idealism can be said to represent the other. In 1888, when Ōgai returned from his studies abroad, he “almost single-handedly” transformed the *bundan*.<sup>152</sup> Beginning with *The Dancing Girl (Maihime)* in 1889, Ōgai's *German Trilogy* is said to be “characterized by the *Sturm und Drang* intensity... inspired by his four years in Germany.”<sup>153</sup> These works of fictionalized autobiography were just the beginning of a distinguished career; he produced high-quality literary translations (the most famous being Goethe's *Faust*), envisioned and published what would become important literary journals, wrote numerous works of historical fiction, created detailed biographies of samurai worthies from historical documents of the Tokugawa period,

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<sup>149</sup> For more on the specific Russian styles and authors Futabatei referenced, see Janet Walker, “The Creation of *Ukigumo*” in Thomas Rimer, Ed. *A Hidden Fire: Russian and Japanese Cultural Encounters 1868-1926* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995), 35-38.

<sup>150</sup> Odagiri Hideo, “*Nihon ni okeru jiga ishiki no tokushitsu to shokeitai*” in *Kindai Nihon shisōshi kōza*, vol. 6, (Tokyo: Chikuma shobō, 1960), 53-54.

<sup>151</sup> Futabatei and the Russian “Superfluous man” (Rus. *lishnii chelovek*, Jp. *yokeisha*) is discussed by Hiroko Cockerill, *Style and Narrative in Translations: The Contribution of Futabatei Shimei*, (New York: Routledge, 2006), 128.

<sup>152</sup> Marvin Marcus, *Paragons of the Ordinary*, (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1995), 1.

<sup>153</sup> Keene, *Dawn to the West*, 356.

mentored young hopefuls, and perhaps most importantly, inspired the romantic movement within Japan. All this he undertook while maintaining a medical career in the military, eventually rising to the rank of surgeon general.

By the 1890s, familiarity with European texts and remixing them with native elements was a crucial component of the literary sphere's absorption of modern ideas. And the *Bungakkai* coterie stood at the gateway of this trend. These authors were strongly attracted to the promise of equality, the value placed upon the individual, and the pursuit of romantic love.<sup>154</sup> This is apparent in their expressions of romantic idealism, lyrical poetry, and exploration of aesthetics and the arts. But they do not reject the literature of the past; like the Seikyōsha, and Uchimura for that matter, they were looking to meld native elements with new material. For instance, in *Jogaku zasshi*, Shimazaki Tōson translated Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis* into *Joruri*-esque verse and set it alongside spring poems from the *Man'yōshū* that had similar seasonal cues, subject matter and affect.<sup>155</sup> Here, Tōson was looking to nativize Shakespeare, locating the English playwright's poetry within the dramatic style of the Japanese theater and connecting it to subject matter of the past in the idiom of early modern stage productions. As the erotic, emotional dimensions of Shakespeare's poetry would not fit the stylistic or linguistic constrictions of the *waka*, Tōson was experimenting with another way to represent the emotions he found within. This use of Shakespeare can be seen as a step in the direction of *shintaiishi* modern verse.

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<sup>154</sup> While many of them had become Christian converts in their youth, the romantic love they pursued was often at odds with the Christian morals of the time, causing much internal consternation.

<sup>155</sup> Yano Hōjin, *Bungakkai to seiyō bungaku*, (Kyoto: Monshobō, 1951), 1; 14-15 Yano (1893-1988) was a student of Ueda Bin and Kuriyagara Hokuson, studying English literature at the University of Kyoto. Tsubouchi Shōyō was an important translator of Shakespeare's plays and adapted them for the *jōruri* puppet theater.

*Shintaishi* poetry, according to one of its earliest proponents, Inoue Tetsujirō, was to be the native poetry of the Meiji era. Inoue argued that the *waka* of the past and Chinese poetry (*kanshi*) written by Japanese should be considered Japanese; if modern poetry was to be influenced by European forms and ideas, it was no less Japanese: it was appropriate for its era.<sup>156</sup> Rather than use carefully selected seasonal words and classical diction, the first *shintaishi* poets realized that European poets “used everyday language, rather than a special poetic diction preserved from antiquity.”<sup>157</sup> Thus, for Inoue and his colleagues at Tokyo Imperial University, and later, Shimazaki Tōson (who is considered Japan’s pioneering *shintaishi* poet), breaking with the form and language of the past would allow for new, direct expression of emotion. While the earliest experiments in translating European poetry in *Shintaishishō*—undertaken in 1882 by Toyama Masakazu (1848-1900), Yatabe Ryōkichi (1851-1899) and Inoue Tetsujirō—may have been somewhat clumsy and roundly criticized, Shimazaki Tōson would bring this new style into its fruition—a new, powerful vehicle for self-expression.

Influenced by Wordsworth, Shelley, and the Bible, Tōson’s *shintaishi* poetry sought to allow a degree of free, direct emotional expression that had not been seen since the *Man’yōshū*. In his 1897 collection entitled *Seedlings*, the six poems that make up *Six Maidens* integrate Western themes and express feelings of and connected to romantic love. Written from the perspective of six women belonging to different social classes, from nobility to outcastes, Tōson presents direct sentiments while using classical language and lines of five and seven syllables.<sup>158</sup>

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<sup>156</sup> Keene, *Dawn to the West*, vol. 4, 196.

<sup>157</sup> *Idem*.

<sup>158</sup> Yoshida Seiichi wrote, “The significance of Tōson’s poetry in the history of Japanese literature and thought was that it represented a liberation of the emotions, especially the romantic emotion, from feudalistic dictates. He wrote with passion, above all when he wrote from a woman’s viewpoint, of the moving beauty of love hitherto considered a sin.” as quoted in Keene, *Dawn to the West*, vol. 4, 209.

For example, consider the third stanza of the poem “Okinu,” where a forgotten, blind woman intones:

あゝあるときは吾心	Aah, sometimes my heart
あらゆるものをなげうちて	spews out all that is within,
世はあぢきなき浅茅生の	And I come to think that the world
茂れる宿と思ひなし	Is but an empty thatched roof house.
身は術もなき蟋蟀の	My body is but a grassy plane
夜の野草にはひめぐり	Filled with unskilled crickets
ただいたづらに音をたてて	As the awful din arises
うたをうたふと思ふかな	Shall I sing a song composed thereof?

(Translation mine)

In this poem, Tōson uses familiar poetic imagery of loss and emptiness, but contrasting the empty world of the thatched house, he connects the thatch on the empty house to the grassy plain that he imagines Okinu’s body to be. The thatch is cut down and covering an empty place, but Okinu’s body is vibrant, alive with living grass. However, this vast place is a place of cacophony and contradiction. Can crickets really have no skill? And what would the sound of an army of artless crickets be? The reader is left to wonder, as Okinu thinks that she will use these irritating sounds within to compose a song of her complaint. This stanza shows the creativity of Tōson in his attempt to express the poetic desolation that a blind, lonely woman might feel.

In another example from *Seedlings*, “First Love,” Tōson uses the imagery of an apple tree, flowers, and receiving an apple as a token from a potential lover:

まだあげ初めし前髪の	When I saw you under the apple tree
林檎のもとに見えしとき	Your front hair swept back for the first time,
前にさしたる花櫛の	I thought, seeing the flower-comb in front
花ある君と思ひけり	That you were a flower too.

やさしく白き手をのべて	Stretching out your gentle, white hand
林檎をわれにあたへしは	You gave me an apple.

薄紅の秋の実に  
人こひ初めしはじめなり

I felt a first stirring of love  
In the pale crimson of that autumn fruit.<sup>159</sup>

The language is not modern but expresses strong feelings of romance, especially in connection with the beauty of the subject and her connection to the nature by which she is surrounded. This poem is also strongly lyrical, but not bound by the syllabic meter and traditional imagery of the *waka* or *haiku*. Keene notes that in another poem in this collection, “*Nigemizu*,” Tōson goes so far as to emulate the alternating lines of eight and six syllables as found in translated Meiji Christian hymns. For example:

夕暮れ静かに	In the still of evening
祈りせんとて	Thinking I will pray,
世の患いより	From the troubles of the world
しばしのがる	I hide myself a while.

(Translation: Keene)

According to Keene, “these lines echo almost word for word a hymn.”<sup>160</sup> The kind of poetry found in *Seedlings* was indeed new and surprising. Of this collection, Edwin McClellan noted that “These poems may strike the Western reader as being at best rather unoriginal. But what may seem to us today as undistinguished lyrical verse—and here we are speaking merely of the content, not the language—can very easily have seemed novel and exciting to the Japanese public of 1897.”<sup>161</sup>

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<sup>159</sup> Translation: Donald Keene, *Dawn to the West*, Vol. 4, 210.

<sup>160</sup> Keene, 212. Keene may be referring to the hymn, “I Love to Steal A While Away” by Phoebe Hinsdale Brown (1818), in the *Nihon Kirisuto Kyōdan* hymnal (1954), *sanbika* 319. The text of the first stanza in Japanese is: わずらわしき世を/しばしのがれた/そがれ静かに/ひとり祈らん. Indeed, the imagery and words presented (*yo no wazurai*, *shibashi nogaru*, *shizuka ni inori sen*) are similar. It is also plausible that Tōson’s alternating lines of six and eight syllables reflected Chinese poetic influence.

<sup>161</sup> As quoted in Keene, 212.

In the 1890s, Tōson and his fellow *Bungakkai* authors did not stop with Shakespeare or the later English romantics; they gave particular attention to Goethe (especially after the landmark publication of Ōgai's translation of *Faust*), Byron, Wordsworth, and Emerson, engaging in frequent readings and discussion. Later, the *Bungakkai* circle would turn to medieval and renaissance European authors and painters, then slowly turn their attention to European modernity. As Tōson explained in later years:

Our little magazine [*Bungakkai*] had run for five years, which we can divide into approximately three periods. The first period was time of our earliest excursions. Some of us had already launched, while others were still making preparations. One could say that we were searching through *koten* (classical) literature, and at the same time we were stepping out into the middle-ages and on through the beginnings of modernity. For others, the literary lives of Carlyle, Emerson, Matthew Arnold,<sup>162</sup> Byron, and Goethe frequently took up residence within our youthful hearts. In this first period, when Kitamura Tōkoku was active, and Yamaji Aizan assailed him with his particular strain of utilitarianism, Tōkoku mounted a most vigorous defense. Truly, Tōkoku's most beloved topics were the inner life and the freedom of the spirit. In those days we were all tormented by the various problems that arise at the intersection of faith and the arts. Hoshino Tenchi kept his thoughts hidden away, as if in the Zen temple at Kamakura, while Tōkoku, with the mantle of a poet, went out to evangelize the Tōhoku region.<sup>163</sup>

By and large, the 1890s *bundan* had enshrined realistic fiction and romantic poetry as “pure literature,” or *junbungaku*.<sup>164</sup> However, the notion of *bungaku* was still applicable to other

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<sup>162</sup> Sasabuchi mentions how Arnold's *The Study of Poetry* informed Tōkoku's Goethe-Carlyle ideas of expressing or mediating “poetic beauty and truth” in “*Shin Nihon no shijin*,” published in *Kokumin no tomo*, No. 28, August 1888. Likewise, In “Pleasure and Practicality” *Kairaku to jitsuyō*, part of *Meiji bungaku kanken*, Tōkoku alludes to Matthew Arnold: “Poetry functions as a critique of life. In our own lives, its logic, its beauty can console and preserve.” Sasabuchi Tomoichi, “*Bungakkai*” to *sono jidai*, Vol 1 (Tokyo: Meiji Shoin, 1961), p. 80.

<sup>163</sup> Shimazaki Tōson “*Sōshun*” as quoted in Sasabuchi Tomoichi, “*Bungakkai*” to *sono jidai*., Vol 1 (Tokyo: Meiji Shoin, 1961), p. 19.

<sup>164</sup> Nishi Amane had argued for biography as an acceptable literary genre. In his *Nihon bungakushi* (Japanese Literary History, 1890), Nishi asserts that any text of *bungaku* “skillfully expresses man's feelings, ideas, and imagination with a certain style, combines pleasure and utility as its objective, and conveys general knowledge to the majority of people.” As opposed to other kinds of texts, this type of literature is *junbungaku*. See Michael Brownstein, “From Kokugaku to Kokubungaku: Canon-Formation in the Meiji Period,” in *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, Vol. 47, No. 2 (Dec., 1987), 448.

kinds of texts. Some authors looked to Confucian texts of the past and the biographies of “great” or “representative” figures from Japan’s past, as well as China, Europe, and America. Prior to the Meiji era, biographical texts concerning samurai elites tended to be limited to establishing genealogy, one’s accomplishments, and a few anecdotes from the subject’s life.<sup>165</sup> As Saeki Shōichi’s *Nihonjin no jiden* (1982) brought to light, self-writing of Confucianist samurai elites, like Yamaga Sokō’s *Testament of an Exile* and Arai Hakuseki’s *Told Round a Brushwood Fire*, mixed elements of *kanzen chōaku* (reward the good, punish what is evil) with personal conviction. In contrast, the lives of the Tokugawa *chōnin* or townsfolk were at times didactic, at times—as in Mitsui Takafusa’s advice for becoming a successful merchant, *Chōnin kōken roku* (Some Observations on Merchants, 1727)—humorous.<sup>166</sup>

Nakamura Keiū’s (1832-1891) popular translation of Samuel Smiles’ *Self Help* (*Saikoku risshin hen*, 1871) introduced Japanese readership to the idea of “great men” who should be studied and emulated. The contents of this so-called *Meiji no seisho* or “Meiji Bible” fit with Confucian concepts such as earnestness, hard work, honesty, and benevolence. A scant few biographies were published between 1868 and 1888, but by the early 1890s, demand for biographical texts sharply increased (the so-called *denki būmu*). In July 1893, Tokutomi Sohō’s *Min’yūsha* began publishing a series called *Twelve Great Men of Letters* 十二文豪.<sup>167</sup> In many

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<sup>165</sup> Marcus, *Paragons of the Ordinary*, 16. For a thorough discussion of examples of early modern biographical and autobiographical texts, see Marcus, pp. 8-22.

<sup>166</sup> Kept in private hands until the 19<sup>th</sup> century, this hand-copied testament of the successful merchant, Mitsui Takafusa, was written for the benefit of future generations of the Mitsui family. Some consider this work a “Code of the *Chōnin*” in contrast to the *bushi*. See John Whitney Hall, ed., *The Cambridge History of Japan*, Vol 4. (Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press), 767.

<sup>167</sup> This selection of Japanese and foreign authors included the aforementioned Edo literatus Arai Hakuseki, English romantic poet Lord Byron (1788-1824), English biographer and historian Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881), *jōruri* playwright Chikamatsu Monzaemon (1653-1725), American essayist and poet Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882), German romantic novelist and philosopher Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832), French romantic dramatist and author of political

ways, these authors' works are representative of the types of literature that Iwamoto Yoshiharu, Tokutomi Sohō, Kitamura Tōkoku, Shimazaki Tōson, and Uchimura Kanzō praised in their own works. They are exemplary literary figures that stood for their convictions and created texts that would stand the test of time. Taken as a whole (in the context of their producer—the pro-Western *Min'yūsha*—and the *bungaku seinen* who read them),<sup>168</sup> it is worth noting the correlation of the thought and action of the figures represented. Not only are they influential thinkers who introduce new literary ideas from the Euro-American context; they also include exemplars of Confucian morality and pathos.

Not all of the 1890s literary movements emphasized Western ideas, even if they were somewhat influenced by them. The *Ken'yūsha* (Friends of the Inkstone), led by Ozaki Kōyō (1869-1903), advocated a neo-*gesaku* revival of romantic sentimentalism, but written in a modern vernacular language. In some ways, Kōyō's realistic works resemble the Edo *yomihon*—Kōyō after all was responsible for a revival of *gesaku* literature. But they contain modern themes specific to the Meiji period, even if presented from the idealistic standpoint. *Konjiki yasha* (*The Golden Demon*, 1897-1902) is a tour de force of sentimentalism and melodrama. In this work, Kōyō weaves in themes of the relationship between money and power, and how money can destroy human relationships and alter the social fabric.

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fiction Victor Hugo (1802-1885), English essayist and historian Thomas Macaulay (1800-1859), Edo Confucian scholars Ogyū Sorai (1666-1728) and Rai Sanyō (1781-1832), Edo writer of Takizawa Bakin (1767-1848), and Russian novelist and Christian intellectual Leo Tolstoy (1828-1910).

<sup>168</sup> *Bungaku seinen* were literary youth who wished to join the *bundan*. *Min'yūsha* took out full page advertisements important periodicals to promote their *Twelve Men* series, including *Katei zasshi*, *Haigi tetsugakurontakahashi gorō cho*, and their own *Kokumin no tomo*. As they appeared each month, these volumes were critiqued in *bungaku seinen*-oriented periodicals including *Waseda bungaku*, *Seinenbun*, and *Shōnenen*. The editors of youth oriented periodicals thereby widened the audience for the series.



At the same time, Kōda Rohan's (1867-1947) idealism placed a high value on Japanese aesthetics and devotion to the arts. Rohan's impressive command of classical literature informed his elevated prose style and rich imagery. His fiction explored his personal sensibilities in the classical idiom. Rohan's highly acclaimed *Buddha of Art*, for example, is a story about a sculptor who "finds in art a deliverance from the bitter disappointments of this world."<sup>169</sup> Using the image of Otatsu (a woman whom he adored, but was out of his reach due to her marriage to a Marquis), the sculptor created a nude image of the Pure Land Buddhist Bodhisattva of mercy, Kannon (Guanyin). The creation of art itself brings about the salvation of the artist—a theme that would be further developed in *The Five-Storied Pagoda* (and later reversed by Akutagawa in *Hell Screen*, where contending with the "hellish" state of his mind, art accomplishes the final damnation of the artist, Yoshihide.) While the text is written in an archaic, highly complex idiom, Rohan was able to communicate the emotions of an artist in an idealized form.<sup>170</sup> Like Uchimura, Rohan eschewed popular themes, adhering to his own type of realism and allusions to the classical Chinese tropes and philosophical concerns of Edo literati.

### Meiji Linguistic Changes

In the 1880s, literary translation possessed a transformative power within the *bundan*. As authors became acquainted with the usage of the vernacular in European texts, they began to experiment with the modern Japanese vernacular in poetry and prose.<sup>171</sup> Throughout the Edo

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<sup>169</sup> Keene, *Dawn to the West*, 154.

<sup>170</sup> Keene notes that Masamune Hakuchō and Masaoka Shiki had difficulty deciphering Rohan's complex, obscure language.

<sup>171</sup> Of course, the general public did not themselves read or produce English works; what is more, translated works were not *always* well received outside of the *bundan*. *The Japan Weekly Mail* of 1895 notes that the *Kokumin Shinbun*

. . . attributes the want of good Japanese translations of the works of Shakespeare, Milton, Goethe, and so forth to the incomprehensible prejudice of the public against translated

period, pseudo-Chinese prose (*kambun*), Chinese poetry (*kanshi*), and native Japanese poetry (*waka* and *haiku*) made use of highly-conventionalized language and imagery; in the Meiji period, revising and reforming Japanese language and literary genres became key to the cultural modernization effort. Most crucial was the rise of a literate citizenry who consumed and contributed to modern media. As Shōyō and Futabatei advocated (and implemented) the use of the vernacular, others—like the *shintaiishi* poets—sought to escape what they believed to be the outmoded constraints of native verse forms. Still others, like Yosano Akiko and Masaoka Shiki, were able to express themselves within structures of native verse to produce very “modern” forms of self-expression.

Members of the Freedom and People’s Rights movement used the translation and adaptation of the political novel to encourage liberal reforms in the 1880s. Later, those with sufficient command of the English language, like Wakamatsu Shizuko (1864-1896),<sup>172</sup> would select poetry and novels for translation that would foster a female readership while strengthening claims for freedom and rights for women.

Moreover, in the 1880s literary translation of foreign works would have a transformative effect within Japanese society. Initially, students of foreign languages were introduced to new

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books of all kinds. The result is that the best translators are deterred from entering the field, and the Japanese public is thus denied the inestimable benefit and pleasure derivable from studying European works of world-wide fame. Such a state of literary seclusion must be broken up. Foreign literature must be imported, and the *Kokumin* advises Mr. Tsubouchi to complete the translation of Shakespeare, Mr. Morita to undertake the translation of Hugo, Surgeon-General Dr. Mori the works of Göethe, and Mr. Uchimura those of Milton. (*Japan Weekly Mail*, “The Spirit of the Vernacular Press During the Week,” May 30, 1896, p. 598).

<sup>172</sup> Wakamatsu, a graduate of mission schools, was highly adept at English and was first published in Iwamoto Yoshiharu’s *Jogaku zasshi* in 1886. She went on to publish more than fifty articles in *Jogaku zasshi*, and in 1889 she married Iwamoto. Wakamatsu became the principal of the Christian Meiji Girls School (*Meiji jogakkō*) and is best known for her brilliant translation of Burnett’s *Little Lord Fauntleroy* in 1890.

ideas, but once these students began to translate the texts and circulate them, their ideas and values spread to a larger audience.<sup>173</sup> During the first few decades of the Meiji period, British Utilitarianism (Spencer and Mill) made a deep impression through Nakamura's translation of Smiles' *Self Help*, as did Freedom and Popular Rights movement translations of Locke, Montesquieu, and Rousseau. However, Marx's *Communist Manifesto* and Theodore Woolsey's *Communism and Socialism in Their History and Theory: A Sketch* (1880, translated in 1882) introduced controversial political ideologies into the intellectual arena.<sup>174</sup> This would spur further discussions within the literary establishment, as they sought to promote ideas that they found helpful to the state in an attempt to counter the influence of ideas that were disruptive to their cause.<sup>175</sup>

However, in the eyes of some, translation itself was not enough, neither was localization or adaptation. Some, like the English language pages of the Japan Daily Mail and *Taiyō*, lamented the lack of English-language ability within Japan on the one hand (and the understanding of foreign critics), while urging Japanese youth to find the skills to write creditable books in English.

For example, in 1895—the same year Uchimura published *How I Became a Christian* and *Representative Men of Japan*—the English language editor of *Taiyō* wrote:

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<sup>173</sup> Confucian intellectuals had long since imported Chinese texts on history and politics, so the interest in foreign sources of knowledge is nothing new. However, the older Chinese texts could be read as *kanbun* sources. Now, new Western knowledge required translation. See Andre Haag, "Maruyama Masao and Katō Shūichi on *Translation and Japanese Modernity*" in Indra Levy, ed., *Translation in Modern Japan*, (Routledge: London and New York, 2011), 34-36., 33.

<sup>174</sup> Haag, 33.

<sup>175</sup> For instance, Fukuzawa's 1879 *Reforming the Sentiments of the People* expressed his concern that socialism and social movements, aspects of European modernity, could threaten the stability of the government. He considered translation to be another "technology" like the railroad and telegraph that could introduce communism and socialism. See Haag, 34-36.

A young man with a reputation of being a 'bright fellow' and of knowing English pretty well goes abroad, prosecutes his studies in, say, one of the best American colleges, comes home with a degree, and people expect him to be a 'thorough American' as far as language is concerned. Why not do away with the expensive services of a foreign teacher in this or that middle school and put this young man in his place? Does not a Japanese stand an immensely better chance of success in teaching when compared with one not familiar with our vernacular? Such questions have been often asked and invariably answered in one way. Then alas! Under the influence of an evil star this young man writes a book! And revelations are made, under the scalpel of the critic, that would cause tens of thousands of young students of English to fling away their pens in despair.<sup>176</sup>

Rather than giving up the idea of writing in English, the editor resolves that Japanese youths should fearlessly write in English, there being no way to improve without trying. To write in English and be taken seriously by the foreign press would have been a boon in the attempt to be rid of the unequal treaties. He goes on to complain that foreigners always see Japan from the outside, as a storehouse of curiosities and curios, but never getting any deeper. He notes that no Japanese actually read the English papers, so there is no way for the Japanese to learn of what is going on in those papers unless they engage them in English. He concludes:

We would urge our fellow scholars of the English language to write more; for our part we are laboring under the hope that practice may someday make perfect. Any little articles in English from their pens would do more towards encouraging the study of the language than a lengthy one in our vernacular presenting the manifold reasons for its wider cultivation. It is a pity that this means of usefulness is not more encouraged.<sup>177</sup>

Of course, within a few years of this publication, more Japanese writers and intellectuals *would* write more English works, including Tamura Naoomi's depiction of Japanese familial life, *The Japanese Bride* (1893), Nitobe Inazō's quasi-nativist work, *Bushidō: The Soul of Japan* (1899) and Okakura Tenshin's *Book of Tea* (1906) and *Ideals of the East* (1904). These works, like Uchimura's *Representative Men*, were attempts to do just what the *Taiyō* editor had called for: write persuasive works in English that help explain Japanese ideas to a multifarious foreign

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<sup>176</sup> "Must a Japanese give up the idea of ever learning to write English?" (*Taiyō* No. 4 Vol I. April 5<sup>th</sup>, 1895, pp. 1-2) One wonders if he were not referring to Uchimura specifically.

<sup>177</sup> Idem.

audience. Some in this audience would be admirers, especially those in the art world such as Ernest Fenollosa and the French impressionists.<sup>178</sup> Others were fascinated with Japan's ascendancy in the wake of their imperial victories over China and Russia. Moreover, the media wanted to target those who had a negative view of Japan or even Asians in general—such as American supporters of the unequal treaties or the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act (and subsequent laws limiting Japanese immigration.)

In sum, Uchimura stands at the intersection of all of these countervailing forces. He promoted the translation of foreign literature, voiced his opinions about government and the individual's rights, all the while sampling and remixing ideas from the past and from the West. Uchimura also became a strong advocate for the idea that literature can serve as a vehicle for social progress and individual growth. The next chapter explores how Uchimura embarked on his career as a writer and was molded by various literary influences, and how he sought to transmit his ideas to the *bundan*. Moreover, it examines how individualism and narrative identities appeared as a response to all of these experiments.

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<sup>178</sup> As an *oyatoi gaijin* (hired foreigner), Ernest Fenollosa (1853-1908) was an instructor in philosophy and political economy at Tokyo Imperial University. He was also an art historian and avid collector of Japanese art—including popular prints, which were not regarded as “high art”. His extensive collection would become the basis of Boston's Museum of Fine Arts' holdings. As European artists became familiar with Edo-period prints, artists including Van Gogh, Degas, and Whistler incorporated the visual style of these prints (so-called *Japonisme*) into some of their works.

# Chapter 2:

## A Foray into the Bundan

Uchimura wrote the three autobiographical works considered in this study at a feverish pace over the span of twelve months, between 1892 and 1893. Chronologically speaking, he published *Consolations of a Christian* (*Kirisuto shinto no nagusame* キリスト信徒の慰め) first (*Keiseisha*, February 1893), followed by *The Search for Peace* (*Kyūanroku* 求案録, *Keiseisha*, August 1893), and *How I Became a Christian: Out of My Diary* (*Keiseisha*, May 1895), which he also published in the United States as *The Diary of a Japanese Convert* (Fleming Revell, late 1895, possibly October). The first two were written in a classical, essayistic Japanese style, while he wrote the third in a Victorian register of English prose.<sup>179</sup> All three works reveal aspects of Uchimura's inner life, but each leverages his personal experiences for different purposes. Rather than attempting to survey these works chronologically in order of publication, this project treats each work thematically, examining the different facets of subjectivity revealed within. The present chapter examines the circumstances that led to Uchimura's foray into the *bundan*, the nature of self-writing, and the literary currents that informed his work.

*Consolations of a Christian* was Uchimura's first book-length work. In the wake of the *Lèse-majesté* incident of 1891, on account of which he lost his health, spouse, livelihood, and reputation, Uchimura became *persona non grata* among educators and government elites in Tokyo, who supported the nationalistic ideas expressed in the new constitution and Imperial Rescript on Education. Some Christians distanced themselves from Uchimura, reasoning that it

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<sup>179</sup> Uchimura is not alone in this high-level of English expression. A fair number of Meiji-period Japanese wrote in English. And their English was, for the most part, very good. Many wrote for the English-language newspapers that were published in Japan.

was not an act of worship to show respect to the emperor. Others found his act to be noble, embracing him and defending him within the Christian community and the press.

After recovering from his bout with pneumonia, Uchimura found himself deep in debt. In an attempt to pay for his living expenses (as well as those of his parents and siblings), Uchimura gave lectures on the Bible at both the Hongō Christian church and Kyōbashi United Christian church, relying on special collections and the kindness of friends. But because he stopped pursuing theological studies midway through his program at Hartford Seminary, he lacked the qualifications to become a full-time minister, and so was only permitted to serve in this part-time manner.<sup>180</sup>

During this period Uchimura frequently visited Fukui Bunnosuke, the owner of the Keiseisha publishing house, for moral and economic support. Uchimura could not afford food for himself, so during the hot summer Fukui would serve Uchimura eel *donburi* (a dish the Japanese believe would give physical stamina during hot spells) and *yōkan* sweets, of which Uchimura was quite fond. Uchimura had only a tattered kimono ensemble to wear, and Fukui himself would wash and dry Uchimura's grimy garments which caused Uchimura to rejoice and repeatedly bless Fukui.<sup>181</sup> The bond forged between Uchimura and Fukui was enduring; when Uchimura was living in Kyoto between 1892 and 1895, Keiseisha would become his main publisher.<sup>182</sup>

Uchimura could not endure these dire economic straits for long. In July 1892, he left Tokyo for western Japan and new, promising educational positions. Yet, as was mentioned

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<sup>180</sup> See Suzuki Norihisa, *Uchimura Kanzō no hito to shisō* (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 2012), pp. 106-107.

<sup>181</sup> *Ibid.*, 107.

<sup>182</sup> Some of Uchimura's other works from this time period, such as *The Greatest Heritage for Future Generations* and *Representative Men of Japan* were also published by Ribendō of Kyoto and Tokutomi Sohō's Min'yūsha.

earlier, Uchimura failed in these ventures as well. Ashamed and penniless, he arrived in Kyoto in late 1892, with the intention of becoming a writer.

At this juncture, becoming a full-time writer was a real possibility for Uchimura. He had already gained a small following through his articles covering a broad range of topics from literature to Christian theology, from education to science.<sup>183</sup> In 1892 alone, Uchimura published over twenty-five works, including extensive studies of fisheries science,<sup>184</sup> most notably a catalog of important species of Japanese fish to be included in Chamberlain's *New Dictionary of*

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<sup>183</sup> See UKZS 1.113-146. While studying abroad in the United States, to offset some of his costs, Uchimura published a number of explanatory essays in English. "Moral Traits of the *Yamato-Damashii* (Spirit of Japan)," published in the *Methodist Review* in 1886, attempts to introduce the American readership to Japanese poetics and the aesthetics of the warrior culture. Uchimura includes a poem by Motoori Norinaga, which he translates into Victorian prose: "Would'st know the heart of Yamato?/ Its type is the Sakura blossom,/ That scatters its odorous sweetness/ Beneath the sun of the morning." Presaging Nitobe Inazo's *Bushido: The Soul of Japan*, this essay seeks to praise the virtues of the samurai and shows how Japan's spiritual nobility and devotion to a cause is praiseworthy. Uchimura also introduces his readers to the story of *Chūshingura* and how no samurai could serve two masters, similar to Jesus' teaching that a person cannot serve both God and money. Uchimura posits that a Christian faith built upon samurai virtue is highly efficacious. This idea, as many other scholars have pointed out, would remain with Uchimura for years. In the same year, Uchimura published "Japanese Poetry" in the *Amherst Literary Review*, which he begins as follows: "Now that Japan is coming into notice among the civilized nations for its tea and silk and fancy goods, and its people are becoming better known than as 'Chinamen without queues,' it is a matter of great regret that its literature is almost a matter of no concern to the Occidentals." He then goes on to explain a number of Japanese poetic images, pivot-words, pillow-words, syllabic schemes, and the importance of nature. One can appreciate the challenge of introducing a radically different poetic system to a Western audience. These essays dovetail nicely with my discussion of Uchimura's awareness of ethnicity and poetics in *How I Became a Christian* (Chapter 3).

<sup>184</sup> Upon graduating at the top of his class at Sapporo Agricultural College in 1884, Uchimura "started working as a sea-food technologist for the Hokkaidō government. In that capacity, he completed a monumental work, *On the Cultivation of Abalone*, compiled the first fish catalogue in Japan, and made some valuable contributions to the study of methods of fertilizing herring eggs." Arima, Tatsuo, "Uchimura Kanzō: A Study of the Post-Meiji Japanese Intelligentsia" in *Harvard Papers on Japan*, vol. 1, eds. Albert Craig and John K. Fairbank (Cambridge: East Asian Research Center, Harvard University, 1963), p. 133. Chamberlain recognized Uchimura for his contributions to the field of ichthyology.



*Japanese and English*,<sup>185</sup> as well as essays on the Christian church in Japan.<sup>186</sup> In December of 1891, *The Cosmos* (*Rikugō zasshi* 六合雑誌) published Uchimura's comparison of "Dante and Goethe" 「ダンテとゲーテ」. In March of 1898, *Waseda Bungaku* listed this essay (reprinted in *Kirisuto-kyō shinbun*) among important essays on literary developments.

His two "great literature" or *daibungakuron* essays, "Why Is There No Great Literature?" *Naze ni daibungaku wa idezaru ya* 「何故に大文学は出ざる乎」 (*Cosmos*, July 1895)<sup>187</sup> and "How Shall We Achieve Great Literature?" *Ikanishite daibungaku wo en ya* 「如何にして大文学を得ん乎」 (*The People's Friend*, October 1895),<sup>188</sup> appeared at the end of his period of feverish self-writing. In these essays, Uchimura presents numerous critiques of Japanese literature. In the first he argues "literature requires high ideals to produce," yet the *bundan* did not have a "global spirit" and had not "conducted studies of global literature." He felt Japanese society feared the power of individual creativity and was too militaristic. He regarded literature as a serious undertaking and held the opinion that would-be literati should not spend their lives in

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<sup>185</sup> "The six monographs that appeared in 1884 reflect a simultaneous interest in several important fields of research. As part of his work, Uchimura prepared studies on salmon, herring, and cod. He also left unpublished another catalogue that, if it had been made available to other researchers, would have materially advanced fisheries science in Japan. He later thought so little of it that he appears to have given it to one of his followers as a memento. These works taken with the research on abalone he did in Sapporo constitute a significant segment of the pioneer work in Japanese science" (Howes, 53). For further details on these volume, see UKZS 1.31-99, as well as Uchimura's *Catalogue of Japanese Fishes*, 日本魚類目録 (182 pp.) available from Hokkaidō University at :<http://hdl.handle.net/2115/23313>

<sup>186</sup> These included his vision concerning Japanese Christianity's role in the international community (i.e., that a Japanese Christianity presents an antidote to cultural imperialism and the hypocrisy he saw in America), impediments to the growth of Christianity in Japan, and his idea of the 'Christian home' (i.e. 「日本の天職, 理想的伝道師」, 「現今我国に於て基督教の振はざる一大原因」, 「クリスチャン・ホーム」).

<sup>187</sup> UKZS 3.177-184, July, 1895.

<sup>188</sup> *Ibid.*, 185-201, October, 1895.

dissipation and frivolity. Under such conditions, Uchimura believed, a Japanese Dante or Shakespeare could never appear. In the second essay, Uchimura proposed four ideas regarding how literature might change for the better in modern Japan. First, he called for creating learning that encourages deep thought. Second, he advocated rigorously studying works of world literature that comported to his sense of “greatness” to get a sense of globalism. Third, he recommended observing nature to discern what is factual about the world. And fourth, he argued for the encouragement of what he considered to be a strong moral character.<sup>189</sup> Beyond the importance of these essays to understanding Uchimura’s literary ideals, they demonstrate how prolific an author he was, as well as his deep dedication to classical Christian literature— what he considered to be “Great Literature.”

Throughout his works, Uchimura refers to Dante, Goethe, and Carlyle and looks to them as literary paragons. Peering into Uchimura’s works and perusing his personal library at the University of Hokkaidō reveals a fervent interest in and deep scholarly appreciation of these authors. Uchimura’s copy of Henry Francis Cary’s translation of the *Divine Comedy* into blank-verse English, which bears the inscription “J. K. Uchimura, Hartford, Conn. Sept. 1887,” is carefully and copiously annotated in the margins, as are his copies of Thomas Carlyle’s *Collected Works* and many others. While Dante’s *Divine Comedy* was first introduced into Japan by Mori Ōgai as an example of *Terza Rima*<sup>190</sup> in an article published in *Shigarami zōshi* in

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<sup>189</sup> Unlike Shōyō’s *Shōsetsu shinzui*, Uchimura does not offer any specific devices or methods of literary craft, just principles.

<sup>190</sup> This is the lyrical schema Dante used throughout the *Divine Comedy*, which, according to the Oxford English Dictionary is “An Italian form of iambic verse, consisting of sets of three lines, the middle line of each set rhyming with the first and last of the succeeding (*a b a, b c b, c d c*, etc.)” See “terza rima, n.” OED Online. March 2017. Oxford University Press. <http://www.oed.com.libproxy.wustl.edu/view/Entry/199651?redirectedFrom=terza+rima> (accessed April 25, 2017).

October, 1891,<sup>191</sup> Uchimura was less interested in the literary construction and more interested in the content, the cosmology, and theological themes found therein. While at Amherst, he studied Goethe in the original German, and in *How I Became a Christian*, Uchimura claims to have been quite moved by this “*welt-Bibel*.”

Like other intellectuals of the day he provided lists of book recommendations. In “Famous men and my library shelf” *Meishi to shobako* 名士と書箱, published in *Sekai no Nihon* in 1897, he lists the books that were of most interest to him at that time. These include *The Taiheiki*, *The Bible*, *The Collected Works of Thomas Carlyle* (especially *Oliver Cromwell*), *Dante’s Divine Comedy*, Julius Müller’s *The Christian Doctrine of Sin*, and three American poets: James Russell Lowell, William Cullen Bryant, and Walt Whitman.<sup>192</sup> In this list, echoing the pre- and early-modern conceptions of genre hierarchy, there is a dramatized record of Japanese history, an epic Western poem, Victorian essays and prose, works on theology, and grouping of poets—but no *novels* or other *fictional* works.

In this respect Uchimura was somewhat of a contradictory literatus; he was a *bunjin* who professed to hate “literature,” especially the *shōsetsu*. The first and only novel Uchimura claimed to have read was Harriet Beecher Stowe’s *My Wife and I* (1871), regarding which in *Dokusho yoroku* he says, “For me, novels (*shōsetsu*) are lies, so they hold no interest. They have no love for the law, so they don’t speak of the law. My heart and mind cannot reconcile the law with novels.”<sup>193</sup> When he references “the law,” one way to interpret this term is that he may be referring to both God’s laws, or the Judeo-Christian moral code he had embraced, and his

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<sup>191</sup> Ōgai had first encountered the *Divine Comedy* in its German translation by Streckfuß while studying abroad in Germany. See Nogami Soichi, “*Meiji Taishō ki no Dante kenkyū*” in *Studi Italici* (14), 1-6, 1966-01-20.

<sup>192</sup> UKZS 4: 29

<sup>193</sup> 「…余に取りては小説は虚偽であるから面白くない、法律は情がないから詰らない、余の脳と心とは小説と法律とは如何しても向かない。」 UKZS 16.507

enduring Edo warrior ethos. *My Wife and I* caused him offense on two fronts when Stowe presents the ideas that a woman might want a career outside of the home and that alcoholism is a disease moreso than a moral failing. Uchimura's traditional views on women in the home were complemented by Victorian views from the West.<sup>194</sup> In line with the Temperance movement in the West (which also emerged in Japan after 1886), he was also a strict teetotaler and frequently wrote about the problems of alcohol consumption. Literature, in Uchimura's view, should not encourage such moral failings. This was a view of literature that comported well with the pre-nineteenth century view of literature that Shirane identified, *viz* books that tell lies should be downplayed in favor of more edifying works of history, poetry, essays, and religious theses on morality.

Uchimura solidly supported didacticism and biographical writing; his support for fiction was limited to how it could instruct the reader on points of religion, morality, and scientific facts. In this way, he was quite pre-modern in his thinking. However, it seems that Uchimura was not completely at odds with some of the ideas of Tsubouchi Shōyō. In *Shōsetsu shinzui*, Shōyō criticized Takizawa Bakin's *Hakkenden* as an example of "untruth." The eight characters who personify the cardinal Confucian virtues are psychologically false and stilted. They are idealized examples of *kanzen chōaku* (didactic tales, lit. "reward the good, punish evil") and not "truthful depictions of humans of the present" as *ari no mama*.<sup>195</sup> That is to say, authors should not construct human characters who do not comport the believable emotions, behaviors, and internal concerns. Characters merely created to illustrate a moral point are one-sided and dishonest. Uchimura rather holds both views in tension: fiction should not "lie," which is to say it should

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<sup>194</sup> See Howes, John, *Japan's Modern Prophet*, (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2005), 54-55, especially with regard to his divorce from Asada Také.

<sup>195</sup> Atsuko Udea, *Concealment of Politics, Politics of Concealment*, (Stanford, 2005), 61.

depict human beings as they are, but as he constructs his narrator, it is clear that he wants the reader to understand key aspects of the human condition as he tries to make sense out of his experience and reconstruct it in text. This was what Uchimura attempted to do in his spiritual autobiographies—create *welt-Bibels* of his own that lay bare his internal struggles with faith and experience, but in the construction of his narrator, create a platform for his moral teachings. In Uchimura’s view, “literature” should not contradict what Uchimura considered to be the universal morality found in the Bible nor the indispensable heroism of the self as depicted in *daibungaku*. Like the twelfth-century priest Chōken, Uchimura placed religious and moral texts at the top of his hierarchy, but replaced *kanzen chōaku* with Christian morality. This last item was especially important for Uchimura and should not be understated.

### **Self-Identity Localized Within Modernity**

During the postwar era, many commentators and theorists attempted to define the “modern self” in contrast with “selves” that preceded modernity. However, as we read self-reflective writing from Japan’s past, such as the *Kagero Nikki*, *Sarashina Nikki*, and various samurai testaments like Yamaga Sokō’s *Haisho zampitsu* (Last Testament of an Exile) and Arai Hakuseki’s *Oritaku shiba no ki* (Told Round a Brushwood Fire), it is clear that authors constructing personal experience respond with the same emotional intensity, internal concerns, frustrations with class and status, romantic love, and personal moral standpoints found within modern accounts. The same is true in the earliest examples of Western autobiography, including the psalms of King David, Socrates’ *Apology*, the *Meditations* of Marcius Aurelius, Augustine’s *Confessions*, Boethius’ *Consolations of Philosophy*, and many others. Like “modern” self-writers, classical writers invent a self from the refiguration of their memories of events to create a cohesive narrative.

While the concept of the “modern self” has fallen out of favor over the past few decades (for the above reasons, as well as the admission that there are many kinds of modernities to which individuals respond,) I would like to propose a different analytical framework for understanding identity formation in the modern period, based on the work of Charles Taylor and from the phenomenological viewpoint of Paul Ricoeur. Reframing the enterprise of “self-writing” under the aegis of Charles Taylor’s concept of individuals who struggle to make sense of life amidst questions born of the modern condition allows for a better treatment of Meiji self-writing. Rather than trotting out the old trope of Japanese Westernization and authors’ emulation of Western forms, examining Uchimura’s foray into the *bundan* from the standpoint of an individual who is attempting to crystallize the Platonic idea of the “highest good” and align his life narrative to this good (in Uchimura’s case, the Christian God) draws a more accurate picture of his self-writing.

In Uchimura’s works, there is a constant struggle to make sense of faith and suffering. Like many moderns and pre-moderns alike, while he attempts to remain faithful to his ideals and to his God, the all-too-human narrator confesses that he cannot find inner peace. Throughout his autobiographical trilogy Uchimura grapples with a desire to become a “good” person, all the while frustrated with the fact that he cannot do the “good” that he wishes, but ends up doing the “evil” that he does not wish to do. He recounts many missteps and misguided attempts to live the Christian life through discipline and self-control, and how he hurt others and failed to live up to his own ideals. Uchimura turns inward in order to make sense of his struggles and find meaning in his suffering.

From the phenomenological standpoint, the self comes into existence through the act of narration, creating a fiction of sorts.<sup>196</sup> In remembering, re-examining life events, and creating a narrative, individuals find meaning in what seems a hopeless jumble of ineluctable circumstances. For Ricoeur, selfhood and subjectivity are found within narratives. In *Oneself as Another*, Ricoeur explains that there are two selves that make up selfhood. One self, the ipse, is the body we all have. It is the “what” of the self, which is a persistent object in this world. The second self, the idem, is the shifting identity that is made up of narratives; it is the part of us that can be seen as “other.” Narrative identity is formed through moral agency and the ability to keep promises; staying true to one’s convictions.<sup>197</sup> Much of Uchimura’s self-writing is about his suffering for conviction, and grappling with ways to continue to keep firm. This “keeping firm” establishes the enduring notion of a subject; the thing that is still “me” despite all the passage of time and the vicissitudes of desire. Through narration of life experience, the subject gains a cohesive story and has the ability to attest to belief, act, and stand in the world. This repetition of stories creates identity. Uchimura’s self-writing not only tells the reader who he says that he is, it also tells he himself who he is in the midst of great struggles and changing circumstances. Therein we can localize Uchimura’s individual selfhood within the alienating, and changing circumstances of society in modernity.

In terms of larger, social or national narratives, Ricoeur is helpful for understanding how individuals frame or re-frame stories that attest to national identity. In keeping with the dialectic of the self, Ricoeur introduces another dialectic, that of ideology and utopia. For Ricoeur, nations derive identity from foundational experiences that are transmitted through narratives.

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<sup>196</sup> See David M. Kaplan, *Ricoeur’s Critical Theory* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2003), 87-93.

As Ricoeur explains in *From Text to Action* (1991):

Ideology is a function of the distance that separates the social memory from an inaugural event that must nevertheless be repeated. Its role is not only to diffuse the conviction beyond the circle of founding fathers, so as to make it the creed of the entire group, but also to perpetuate the initial energy beyond the period of effervescence. It is into this gap, characteristic of all situations *après coup*, that the images and interpretation intervene. A founding act can be revived only in an interpretation that models it retroactively, through a representation of itself.<sup>198</sup> (249).

That is to say, the stories a nation tells about itself create identity. Ideology tries to crystallize the meaning of founding or key events through reenactment of these stories. Utopia, on the other

hand, is a function of individuals who challenge the dominant narratives in an attempt to

reconfigure or recalibrate the social narratives to create something new. Ricoeur scholar David

Kaplan explains “utopia always calls a society into question, from an imagined, possibly critical vantage point; the negative function is to provide an escape and retreat from social reality.”

Utopia exists in a dialectical relationship with Ideology. Ideology is always conservative, and

seeks to reinforce narratives of the dominant group within society. However, there is a danger

that utopia may become a new ideology, waiting for another, new utopian mode to challenge

what has become ideology. In Uchimura’s writings, his narrator functions in both roles. When he

speaks out of Christian ideology, he attempts to communicate and reinforce the key, foundational

narratives of his belief system. When he is speaking against the ideology of the Japanese statist

(as is discussed below) he functions from the perspective of utopia, “calling society into question”

from his imagined, critical vantage point, so as to create an escape from the social reality he

finds himself.

The organization of literary connective tissue linking the consciousness of the individual

to romantic, naturalist, humanist, and later Marxist movements has informed much of the

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<sup>198</sup> Paul Ricoeur, *From Text to Action: Essays in Hermeneutics, II*, trans. Kathleen Blamey and John B. Thompson. (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1991), 249.



postwar discourse on Japanese literature. As was discussed in the previous chapter, commentators have generally marked the genesis of realism with Shōyō and his contemporaries, and then observed the emergence of subjectivity in Ōgai and Bungakkai Romanticism. Later, the fleshing out of the “self” continued with the naturalism of Kunikida Doppo and Tayama Katai and the eventual embodiment of the narrating subject within the *watakushi shōsetsu* (I-novel), a genre term retroactively coined by Kume Masao (1891-1952) in 1925.

As Tomi Suzuki has shown, the I-novel discourse has become the preeminent lens for understanding modern Japanese literature. Suzuki argues that the I-novel “circulated as a powerful and uncanny signifier without a fixed, identifiable signified, generating a critical discourse that informed not only the nature of literature but also views of Japanese selfhood, society, and tradition.”<sup>199</sup> From the 1920s into the postwar era, commentators and scholars like Nakamura Murao (1886-1949) have considered the I-novel as the most “authentic” kind of literary narrative, since they claim it is “unmediated” and “truthful.” Kume used the term *watakushi shōsetsu* to refer to an autobiographical novel, rather than the German *Ich-Roman*, which actually referred to novels narrated from the perspective of a first-person protagonist (but not necessarily autobiographical).<sup>200</sup> It was Kume’s understanding of *watakushi shōsetsu* and its popularization that led the *bundan* to broadly accept this definition in subsequent years. Suzuki also mentions Uno Kōji’s (1891-1961) observation that certain first-person novels by members of the humanist *Shirakaba-ha* (White Birch Society) were readily “identified” with the author.” However, earlier *shōsetsu*, whether first person or not, were often tied very closely to the author, as in the case of Mori Ōgai’s *Maihime*, Shimizu Shikin’s *Koware yubiwa*, and others. In Kume, Nakamura, and Uno’s constellation, “the self is seen

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<sup>199</sup> Tomi Suzuki, *Narrating the Self: Fictions of Japanese Modernity*, Kindle location 37.

<sup>200</sup> *Ibid.*, location 686.

as the basis of art and art in turn is celebrated as the means of expressing the self.”<sup>201</sup>

According to Kume, the main point of the I-novel is to communicate the “actual” or “true self” (*honmono no watakushi*) regardless of how boring or mediocre the self being depicted is.<sup>202</sup> Thus, Kume focuses on sincerity as the definitive feature of the I-novel. Kume borrows the Chinese expression “living as if drunk, dying as if dreaming” to characterize life in this world, and says that if a text “realistically” (如實), faithfully represents this difficult to understand life, it not only has artistic merit, but artistic merit will come about through this endeavor. For Kume, *watakushi shōsetsu* are interesting because through the sincere narration of lived-experience, the novelist “uncovers a portion of human truth.”<sup>203</sup>

### **Sincerity as Authenticity**

Thus, the sincerity of Uchimura’s narrator and the revelation of his experience fits what became the dominant reading pattern of the I-novel discourse. Moreover, regardless of how one responds to the moral or religious content of Uchimura’s texts, it is clear that Uchimura attempts to construct a narrator that is, above all else, sincere. Uchimura frequently praises sincerity as a virtue throughout his works. In his *Representative Men of Japan*, when praising Ninomiya Sontoku, he writes “His simple faith was this, that ‘*the sincerity of a single soul is strong enough to move both heaven and earth.*’”<sup>204</sup> And later, in the same work he quotes Sontoku, saying “Sincerity alone can turn Misery into Happiness; arts and policies

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<sup>201</sup> Ibid., location 714-713. However, the very mediocrity of the individual was arguably an attraction for the Meiji reader. One need only review the works and criticism of Futabatei Shimei or Tayama Katai to recognize the fact that mediocrity actually carried a certain cachet.

<sup>202</sup> Kume Masao, “‘*Shi*’ *shōsetsu* to ‘*shinkyō*’ *shōsetsu*” in *Nihon kindai bungaku taikai*, Vol. 58 (Tokyo: Kadokawa shoten, 1972), 417.

<sup>203</sup> Noriko Thunman, “The Autobiographical Novel/Short Story *Watakushishōsetsu*” in Gunilla Lindberg-Wada, ed. *Literary History Toward a Global Perspective*, Vol. 2 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2006), 25.

<sup>204</sup> UKZS 3: 235e.

avail nothing.”<sup>205</sup> And in the section entitled “Individual Helps” (perhaps alluding to Smiles’ *Self Help*) he writes of Sontoku, “Himself a wholly self-made man, he knew of no case which industry and sincerity of heart could not bring up independence and self-respect.”<sup>206</sup> This same sincerity he applies to some of his other paragons, Nichiren, Uesugi Yōzan, declaring it to be critical to individual agency. Uchimura’s understanding of the English work, sincerity, and its relation to the Japanese term *seijitsu* 誠実 can be found in his “Observations of the Times” (*Jisei no kansatsu*, 1895):

In English, there is the term “sincerity.” It has the same meaning as *seijitsu*. It is a Latin compound consisting of two terms: *sine* (無し), without, and *cera* (蠟), wax. Sincerity (*seijitsu*) means “without wax.” We can learn much from the meaning hidden within this term.

At the end of the glory days of the Roman empire, the morals of the people had declined to the point where it could not be recovered. The people gave lip service to patriotism, but had no sincerity of belief. Religion was ridiculed; morality became the plaything of the politicians, media, and merchants, to the extent that the world became a place of utter deceit. While the government still maintained sovereignty, the military had great force overseas, and poets praised the glory of the people, and politicians continued to expand all these fronts, decay was rampant in their very dwellings. Pipes leaked water, and the Tiber river overflowed its banks. The mansions of the wealthy appeared beautiful on the outside, but their foundations were unreliable. This was due to the fact that the construction managers and master carpenters were affected by the societal decay of the era. They were only concerned with outward appearances, building with only the external beauty in mind. Construction was course, and the stones for building were degraded. In the end, they applied white wax to the corrupted flagstones in order to beautify the exteriors. Thus, when the Roman citizens contracted a builder to construct a stone house for them, they would secure a special promise from the builder of record that they would build the house *sine cera*, or “without wax.” This is how the word *sincere* gained its meaning. Without wax, building materials can stand up against wind and rain, and metal pipes can handle the pressure of water. This is most profound.<sup>207</sup>

Then, Uchimura goes on to discuss the state of Japan’s morality and insincere people in government and media, keeping with the theme of false construction and white-washed walls.

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<sup>205</sup> Ibid., 242e.

<sup>206</sup> Ibid., 239e.

<sup>207</sup> UKZS 3: 239

Sincerity is a cardinal virtue for Uchimura, as is veracity. This is yet another reason why some have considered Uchimura's *Consolations of a Christian* and *The Search for Peace* as prototypes of the I-novel

### **Memory and Narrative**

In this sense, then (similar to Carlyle and later European romantics), the “self” is mediated through art and constructed “faithfully” in literature. However, the notion of a “faithful” construction of the self is fraught with contradictions. A simplistic understanding of mimesis may lead some to believe that one can recall memory as factual, and one may be able to write down objective facts concerning one's experience, but this is patently false; the process of recollection and memory recall is notoriously and inevitably unreliable.<sup>208</sup> How the human brain encodes what is experienced is always subjective and liable to error upon recall. What we think we “know” changes over time and is subject to modification based on our emotions, anxieties, and external social pressures. For example, immediately after the end of the Pacific War, Japanese civilians participated in taped interviews by the occupation government. They frequently repeated the typical ideas with which they had been indoctrinated during the war years. And yet, fifty years later, when some of these interviewees heard their own statements, they were somewhat shocked and could not come to terms with their own words, which seemed so foreign so many years later. Sharalyn Orbaugh explains that

The interviewees had unconsciously, and probably very gradually, over the course of the fifty years since the war, rewritten the narrative of their wartime experiences to fit the later paradigms of recovery and democracy. Listening to themselves on tape, several of

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<sup>208</sup> Simons, Daniel J. and Christopher F. Chabris, "What People Believe about How Memory Works: A Representative Survey of the U.S. Population." *Plos ONE* 6, no. 8 (August 2011): 1-7. *Academic Search Premier*, EBSCOhost (accessed November 22, 2016).

them wanted to disavow their own words, to separate themselves from the immediate experience of that time.<sup>209</sup>

The secondary literature on memory and narrative is vast and rapidly proliferating. Accordingly, in this example one can see a clear instance of how subjective and malleable memory is. As we recall the past in changing contexts, it becomes clear that new, socially acceptable ideas can alter the stream of memory, almost completely changing the conception of one's own experience. In terms of the creation of identity, it is no wonder that scholars have cast aspersions on the idea of the "modern self" or defining the "self" to begin with. In light of Ricoeur, a defining factor of the self within the modern context is the unreliability of memory, the importance of narrating and making sense of lived experience, and the subject's awareness of how others perceive the subject.

Much like the *shintaiishi* poets, in the case of the I-novelists who were trying to capture the nuance of their lived experiences and emotions in prose, they employed a rhetoric of confession, taking artistic liberties as they reconstructed their memories. However, authors such as Akutagawa Ryūnosuke had a different strategy for communicating his experiences and emotions. He was squarely against this kind of self-writing. For instance, in *Toeido zakki*, in the note "Confession" (*Kokuhaku* 告白), Akutagawa wrote:

Everyone has been constantly saying, 'Write more about your life; courageously confess!' It's not that I don't confess. To some extent, I do confess my own experiences in my novels, but not everyone can comprehend it. They tell me to make myself the protagonist of my works, to write about my present circumstances as if they were extraordinary events without a second thought. You would, of course, see this as listing myself as main character along with the other pseudonyms and real names written in the index of my life. That alone is something I cannot endure.

First of all, I find it odious to take out and write the innermost details of my life to appease the burning curiosity of everyone else. Second, to make such confession for the sake of money or fame is odious. Say, for example, I write about a sexual encounter I had, in the manner of Kobayashi Issa. Then, I publish it in the New Year edition of *Chūō*

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<sup>209</sup> Sharalyn Orbaugh, *Japanese Fiction of the Allied Occupation: Vision, Embodiment, Identity*. (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 8.

*Kōron*. The readers would all be titillated; the critics would praise it as a turning point. Friends would say it has finally all been laid bare—such thoughts make my skin crawl.

Strindberg would never have published “Confession of a Fool” if he had any money. At the same time, when he did publish it, there was no call for it to be translated into Japanese. For me as well, if it came to a point where I couldn’t eat, maybe I’d resort to the same kind of lifestyle. It is only a matter of course for such times as these. Though I may be flat-broke now, I’m making do with this transient life. And, though I am often wracked with illness, the condition of my mind is somewhat normal. I don’t see any signs of me becoming a masochist. Isn’t that just what people who want to expose the shame of their sufferings in the form of a confessional novel are?”<sup>210</sup>

In *The Rediscovery of the I-Novel (Watakushi shōsetsu saihakken)*, Nishida Masayoshi claims that confession in the I-novel was akin to “ego-shedding” and was more in line with the Buddhist idea of “no-self.” It was not about finding the self at all.<sup>211</sup> According to Maeda Ai, postwar scholars considered the construct of the *kindai jiga* (modern self) to be a notion that was formed in the 1880s, after a few decades of dealing with external pressures forced the political and intellectual establishment to consider what it meant to be a “modern Japanese subject” adequate to the times.”<sup>212</sup> This is an important consideration, as a key concern for Inoue Tetsujirō was the creation of “Japanese subjects” or *heimin* who were to become the flesh and bones of the *kokutai*. Subjectivity was secondary to subject-hood. Those “others”—like Uchimura, and later socialists and Marxists—who found their own subject-hood under scrutiny would turn to literature to work out their own subjectivity through narrative means. In summarizing Maeda, James Fujii remarks that:

Their [governmental officials’, intellectuals’, and writers’] efforts, alas, would collectively help reify the *kindai jiga* as an ideology to an inferior status relative to its manifestation in the West. Programmed for “failure”—whether we look to the postwar political scientist Maruyama Masao’s self-exhortatory criticism of Japanese subjectivity

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<sup>210</sup> Akutagawa Ryūnosuke *zenshū*, vol.10, (Tokyo: Iwanami, 1996, 282-283). Translation mine.

<sup>211</sup> See Fowler, *The Rhetoric of Confession*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 14: n21.

<sup>212</sup> James Fujii, ed. in Maeda Ai, *Text and the City: Essays on Japanese Modernity* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004) 5-6.

(*shutaisei*) or even more recent exceptionality affirmations of Japanese identity—ultimately problematic resolutions would be offered over the decades...<sup>213</sup>

Maeda ultimately turns to an entirely different set of parameters for discussing subjectivity, moving away from literary language and Cartesian queries of existence to focus on embodiment and the relation of the subject to urban space.

This problematization of the *kindai jiga* is not without precedent. Marxist intellectual historians frequently return to the root of their thought, discussing the contradictions of modern capitalism and the alienation of individuals from the environment as they become lumped into the commodity of labor. From the materialist perspective, the modern individual emerges within the system of economic, technological, theological, and political changes that occurred over time. According to Odagiri Hideo, in hierarchical feudal societies the individual was heavily reliant upon one's familial and social connections and could not operate independently of the land to which one is connected. Respect is commanded by the nobility but not returned. In the European context, one important indicator of modernity is Protestant Christianity. Protestantism came about as a utopian resistance to papal and feudal authority and in essence removed the mediation of the church hierarchy, allowing the individual direct access to God. In addition, Protestantism promoted the equality of all under God and paved the way for the advent of democratic ideals.<sup>214</sup>

As the modern epoch continued to unfold and new economic opportunities arose, the individual could expand beyond the boundaries of native place; he or she could pursue employment in growing urban enclaves. Working in an urban setting also allowed for another development: leisure time and the search for pleasure. Leisure time and economic prosperity

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<sup>213</sup> Idem.

<sup>214</sup> *Kindai Nihon shisōshi no kōza*, vol. 5 (Tokyo: Chikuma shobō, 1960), 16-19.

allowed the individual to consider the conditions in which they were living. In urban centers people were unmoored from familiar ways of relating to others. The neighbor one knew in one's native place was exchanged for complete strangers next door. The urban world was dangerous from the perspective of who one might encounter and led to many questions (Were they criminals? What class were they? Were they single? Married?) Moreover, the transportation system put people into close proximity with these unknown others, while opening individuals up to the dangers of falling from open train cars, bursting at the seams with riders.<sup>215</sup> Leaving home meant isolation from family and the web of previous community relationships, forcing the subject to deal with the world of strangers, bureaucrats, and employers. This isolation led to the loneliness that Natsume Sōseki would later claim to be the “price we pay for modernity” and our strong egoism.<sup>216</sup> The individual now had to navigate unfamiliar terrain while attempting to make sense of these new experiences. In many respects it was the anxiety of being stripped of one's moorings that led some writers to want to write about their most immediate situations. It was an attempt to ground the self in this new world.

### **Phenomenology of the Self**

From a phenomenological viewpoint, the self should not be considered “modern” or even something that can readily be defined. It is a mirage, illusory, found and constructed through language and narrative. Charles Taylor's ideas, which build on the grand Heideggerian tradition of locating the self within the world, are most helpful and indeed quite relevant for the exploration of Uchimura's subjectivity. However, modern conceptions of morality—the internal instincts, as well as social compulsion toward action—do inform what should be considered

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<sup>215</sup> See Alyssa Freedman, *Tokyo in Transit: Japanese Culture on the Rails and Road* (Stanford: University of Stanford Press, 2011), 44-55.

<sup>216</sup> Natsume Sōseki, *Kokoro*, 33.



“modern” about the *kindai jiga*, not only in the West, but in Japan as well. In this constellation, it is not just the attention to interiority but the quest for making sense of life, the alignment to the good, and the contesting of moral frameworks that together make up the modern self. The modern self rises from the examination of experience in the matrix of these elements. According to Taylor, it emerges from the context of the background moral/aesthetic frameworks, which every society has and which inform the questions about existence its members ask. Taylor defines frameworks in three axes or “dimensions”<sup>217</sup>: the value of human life, the demands of moral obligations, and dignity based on one’s role within society. He goes on to say that:

Frameworks provide the background, explicit or implicit, for our moral judgments, intuitions, or reactions in any of the three dimensions. To articulate a framework is to explicate what makes sense of our moral responses. That is, when we try to spell out what it is that we presuppose when we judge that a certain form of life is truly worthwhile, or place our dignity in a certain achievement or status, or define our moral obligations in a certain manner, we find ourselves articulating inter alia what I have been calling here ‘frameworks’.<sup>217</sup>

How we derive a meaningful life (e.g., being attentive to family, finding artistic expression, making social contributions, etc.) is situated within the dimensions of our moral framework. In addition, our moral frameworks determine what Plato would call the “Highest Good.” Prior to the modern epoch, individuals looked to ideal forms, nature, and the metaphysical (i.e. God Himself) as the arbiters of Truth and the “Highest Good.” However, freedom and self-determination, concepts formed largely during the Enlightenment, deeply questioned the external validation of “goods.” The modern rejection of the notion that our “good is founded in some natural order is seen by utilitarians as the repudiation of paternalism.”<sup>218</sup>

From Francis Bacon onwards, the modern moral sense became such that individuals determine

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<sup>217</sup> Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of Modern Identity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989), 26.

<sup>218</sup> *Ibid.*, 82-83.

for themselves what is the “Highest Good” without a grounding in nature or theology. According to Taylor, for some, the “Highest Good” is a fulfilling career; for others, family life, pursuing various passions, even money and power. This is Uchimura’s complaint: each person is to be the best individual judge of one’s happiness. Our own sense of goodness comes from social values and how we compare to others in light of them. Morality becomes a list of “oughts” that, while they resemble Christian principles of altruism and benevolence, are nevertheless situated in a secularized realm that praises rationality and independent, individual thought. Even though the conception of external “Higher Goods” still exists, it is suppressed as the individual seeks to define his or her own “Highest Good.” According to Taylor,

This mixture of Kantian and naturalist conceptions has yielded the picture of the human agent so familiar in much contemporary moral philosophy. Iris Murdoch captures it in a memorable fashion: “How recognizable, how familiar to us is the man so beautifully portrayed in [Kant’s] *Grundlegung*, who confronted even with Christ turns away to consider the judgment of his own conscience and to hear the voice of his own reason. Stripped of the exiguous metaphysical background which Kant was prepared to allow him, this man is with us still, free, independent, lonely, powerful, rational, responsible, brave, the hero of so many novels and books of moral philosophy.”<sup>219</sup>

Here, the familiar “modern condition,” complete with its contradictions of freedom and loneliness, rationality and isolation, creates the protagonist who ventures out into an uncanny world to make sense of experience based on a self-determined morality. However, this too is an illusion of sorts, as no one can escape society’s moral frameworks. Taylor goes on:

Their conception of freedom and their epistemological suspicion of strong goods bind together utilitarians and naturalists of all sorts, as well as Kantians, in this suppression [of the awareness of the place of higher goods in our moral lives]. And in this another motive concurs as well. A central feature of the Enlightenment morality, in which it shows its roots in Christianity, is the stress on practical benevolence. This was a crucial theme with Bacon, where it was still expressed in Christian terms, and he passed it on to his more secular spiritual successors. Our scientific effort should not serve simply to create objects of contemplation for us, but should serve to ‘relieve the condition of mankind.’ Practical charity is enjoined on us. The Enlightenment took this up in intensified form, and it has

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<sup>219</sup> Ibid., 84.

become one of the central beliefs of Western culture: we all should work to improve the human condition, relieve suffering, overcome poverty, increase prosperity, augment human welfare. We should strive to leave the world a more prosperous place than we found it.<sup>220</sup>

Returning to the Meiji era, the vast spectrum of ideas and concepts of “Highest Good” is evident in the works of the intellectuals who embraced them. Whether it was the Christian God, the State, or the People, ideological/utopian intellectuals like Uchimura, Inoue Tetsujirō, and Takayama Chogyū declared their alignments and sought to encourage morality, and sway others to share in their views.

Taylor also explains that, similar to Confucian ideas of society, the self exists within a web of relationships, a self among selves that does not exist without others to reflect upon it.

To know who I am is a species of knowing where I stand. My identity is defined by the commitments and identifications which provide the frame or horizon within which I can try to determine from case to case what is good, or valuable, or ought to be done, or what I endorse or oppose. In other words, it is the horizon within which I am capable of taking a stand.<sup>221</sup>

And the horizon that determines what is good and where to take a stand will in turn inform thoughts and actions that the self takes. Soon after his marriage, while in the throes of sincere love, Tōkoku issued an attack on the *bundan* with regard to how various men treated women. In “The Pessimistic Poets and Women” (“*Ensei shika to josei*,” *Jogaku zasshi*, February 1892), he writes that women need to be valued, to be loved in a way that does not reinforce their inculcated self-hatred. Men should not push women about and then get jealous when they turn their attention to others. Based on his powerful alignment to romantic love, Tōkoku takes a stand against the social horizon with regard to the agency and value of women. He, as a self, has a relationship to his wife, as well as to society, and sees romantic love as his “Highest Good,” to

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<sup>220</sup> Ibid., 84-85.

<sup>221</sup> Ibid., 27.

which he has the strongest alignment. Tōkoku wrote, “Romantic love is the secret key to life. Where there is love, there the future generation is found. Take away this love, and what remains in life to savor?”<sup>222</sup> Later, Kinoshita Naoe, Masamune Hakuchō, and Shimazaki Tōson would recount that this commentary received feverish feedback; Kinoshita wrote that this phrase was the first sword slash, the first great cannon shot fired for love within modern Japan.<sup>223</sup> Tōkoku’s ideals were shocking because they promoted other-centered love, a love that appreciates the spouse and seeks their good. In contrast to centuries of arranged marriages for the good of the *ie* (ancestral home), for Tōkoku, the love between husband and wife was to be the foundation of society.

While he was by no means a perfect, understanding husband (as evidenced by the letters he sent home to his wife, Mineko), he still tried to put his ideals into practice. He wrote that she was not merely his other half, but he was hers *as well*. When he was depressed, she would lift him up, and she often supported him; he needed her and admitted this. She was not an accessory to his grand life. He recognized that she was independent; while they ought to have patience and forbearance for each other, her character indicated that she was the one who was more patient and understanding—and he admired her for it. For Kitamura Tōkoku, then, the ideal of love was a “Highest Good” toward which he struggled to orient his life. But ultimately, unable to reconcile his ideals of love and marriage, his marriage ended in utter failure. Seeing no other options in this struggle, Tōkoku committed suicide in 1894.

### **Uchimura’s Literary Ideals: *Daibungaku ron***

In the case of Uchimura’s literary ideals, his ideas about the self and experience bear a resemblance to Taylor’s. In terms of finding meaning in life, Taylor explains that “our being

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<sup>222</sup> Irokawa Daikichi, *Kitamura Tōkoku*, (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1994), 217.

<sup>223</sup> *Idem*.

selves [that is, existing as an individual self] is essentially linked to our sense of the good, and that we achieve selfhood among other selves.”<sup>224</sup> This selfhood or identity can be found in the societal relationships we have but also in the interrelated selves written in books. Having established the parameters for the self and the alignment to the “good,” let us return to Uchimura’s treatise to the *bundan* on “How shall we attain Great Literature?” (*Ikanishite daibungaku wo en ya*, 1895). Uchimura writes,

Floodwaters do not rise higher than their wellspring. Poems cannot become greater than the poet. Dante himself was greater than his *Commedia*. Because the greatness of the words is the greatness of the writer, in his confessional writings Victor Hugo said, ‘For half a century I have been writing thoughts in prose, verse, history, drama, romance, tradition, satire, ode and song—I have tried them all; but I feel I have not said the thousandth part of that which is in me.’ In his critique of Carlyle, Emerson said, ‘Had I not encountered Carlyle, I could not measure his strength of spirit, his steadfast ability to bring plans to fruition. To know his works is to know some small part of him.’ Mrs. Cobbs said of the poet Tennyson, ‘Tennyson’s poems are the man himself. I feel that once you have talked with him in person, his poems gain more value and become more precious.’<sup>225</sup>

For Uchimura, the literary works that stem from a noble character contain aspects of the self. One can meet that self as it speaks forth from the text within which it is contained.<sup>226</sup> One’s works, as Akutagawa would later explain, do “confess” one’s life. Discussing Goethe, another of his favorite authors, Uchimura goes on to say:

Think on Goethe. We should view the entirety of his forty volumes as his autobiography... For those who do not know his spiritual history, if they but turn to Goethe and learn from him, they will find him to be the chosen son of true Genius.

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<sup>224</sup> Taylor, 53.

<sup>225</sup> UKZS 3: 197-198. All Uchimura translations are mine, unless otherwise noted.

<sup>226</sup> This sense of having dialogue with the author’s “self” is clear when considering the marginalia in the Uchimura Kanzō memorial library collection housed in Hokkaidō University. When he was reading Carlyle, he jotted passionate notes of agreement, including, “Too strong, my master” or “Yea!” in English, while inserting notes of frustration with Japanese politics using *kambun* in the margins of his texts. For more on the extent of engagement with Carlyle and Uchimura’s emulation thereof, see Oota Yūzo, “Uchimura Kanzō: The Carlyle of Japan” in Ray A. Moore, ed., *Culture and Religion in Japanese-American Relations: Essays on Uchimura Kanzō* (Ann Arbor: Center for Japanese Studies at the University of Michigan, 1981).

However, his genius alone is not responsible for his *Wilhelm Meister* and *Faust*; it is the personal experience of the spirit, the victory of heart and soul— this is what we should value most of all in his writings. If we cannot, we shall rank Goethe among Shelley or Byron, nothing more.<sup>227</sup>

This is the crux of Uchimura’s argument about how to achieve “Great Literature” in Japan. He believes that cultivating a noble character that endures spiritual strife will produce great works. In other words, romantic poets are notable and worthwhile, but they do not provide the same sustenance for the soul as those who, like Goethe, imbue their works with experience, with the struggle against mediocrity and self-satisfaction. For Uchimura, this noble character that rejects falsehood, struggles for justice, and recounts life “as it is” (*ari no mama*) is the crucial ingredient missing from Meiji Japan.<sup>228</sup> For him, true to his latent samurai ethos, battling the self and battling the world leads to better knowledge of the self. As the self changes over time and is examined, Great Literature can result. This noble, refined, self—writ large in the text—is what has the power to create beauty and challenge injustice. Herein lies Uchimura’s sense of the

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<sup>227</sup> Idem.

<sup>228</sup> When other writers do write *ari no mama*, he does not seem to acknowledge them. It may be simply because he refused to read or acknowledge the *shōsetsu*—what was now considered “literature” in the late Meiji period. In addition, Uchimura’s idealist position of the heroic mode along with his stringent moral code colored his views of what is “real.” Again, many of Uchimura’s ideas mirror Carlyle; in Uchimura’s words:

Consider Carlyle. According to him, in Richter’s estimation, “Luther’s prose is a half-battle.” Carlyle’s prose itself is also thus; literature is the most incredible part of him. Whereas he could not achieve the path of action and, he busied himself with his task of producing unending prose. **‘To write is an exercise in small details; what is great is to live a life that is brave and strong.’** Once, he wrote about the secret of the English *bundan* saying, ‘Sweep away utterly all frothiness and falsehood from your heart; struggle unweariedly to acquire, what is possible for every god-created Man, a free, open, humble soul: *speak not at all, in any wise, till you have somewhat to speak*; care not for the *reward* of your speaking but simply and with undivided mind for the *truth* of your speaking.’ His *Chartism* and *Past and Present* offer a defense of the lower classes against the indolent nobility; his *History of the French Revolution* is a great sermon on the virtue of providence; his biography of Oliver Cromwell is an apology for this misunderstood hero. His biography of Frederick the Great is about how the unending politics of a time turned to sour indignation; were he not filled with the greatest of virtue (*daigi*) he would not have been able to keep his pen blazing across all those pages (UKZS 3.199).

*kindai jiga* that permeates his autobiographical works. Struggle, change over time, reflection, and narration bring about this self. As Taylor explains,

My sense of self is of a being who is growing and becoming. In the very nature of things this cannot be instantaneous. It is not only that I need time and many incidents to sort out what is relatively fixed and stable in my character, temperament, and desires from what is variable and changing, though that is true. It is also that as a being who grows and becomes I can only know myself through the history of my maturations and regressions, overcomings and defeats. My self-understanding necessarily has temporal depth and incorporates narrative.<sup>229</sup>

In addition to alignment to the Highest Good (for which Uchimura time and again praises Dante), sensitivity to feelings and compassion for the situation of others is another facet of *daibungaku*. This romantic sentiment is easily located in the lyrical trend that led to Tōson's poetry of the late 1890s. Uchimura wrote,

Consider Pushkin, Ibsen, and Dickens. They are true examples of those who, moved by love and justice, entered the world of Great Literature. They are passionate observers who were overcome by heartfelt sorrow and pain. Unable to find places of great knowledge and learning, they peered in on things with a heart of love. Learning is a mechanism, but feelings are life. With learning, perhaps the rules of high-flown rhetoric may be discovered, but unless ardent feelings can melt these all together into a new form, there will be no poetry, no music.<sup>230</sup>

Here, Uchimura's ideas are reminiscent of Ki no Tsurayuki's poetic dictum of *kokoro* (heart) and *kotoba* (words) in the preface to the great *Kokinshū* poetic anthology. To create art, pathos and feelings must be merged with the "mechanical learning" of style and prose that he urged earlier in his essay, where Uchimura cited the transformation of Ōtaka Gengo's crude sentiment:

*Uguisu no hatsune wo  
kiku mimi wa betsu ni shite oku  
mononofu kana*

The brave warrior keeps apart  
The ear that might listen  
To the warbler's song<sup>231</sup>

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<sup>229</sup> Taylor, 50.

<sup>230</sup> UKZS 3.199

<sup>231</sup> Ōtaka Gengo 大高言語 (1672-1703), one of the famous forty-seven loyal retainers from Akō domain in western Japan. He is known for this rough *haiku* that he flung at the feet of his master when encouraged to learn poetic style, as Nitobe writes in his *Bushidō: The Soul of Japan*,

Uchimura goes on to say that as one hones one's literary style one may produce good prose.

Reflecting on Goethe's words, even though we can see the beginnings of exquisite, noble poetic sentiments, they were not written with elegant, beautiful words. Over time, as he learned to welcome a heart of skill and practice, he was able to write:

<i>Mononofu no</i>	The brave warrior
<i>uguisu kikite</i>	When hearing the warbler's song
<i>tatsu nikeri</i>	He stands at ready

And in this, the world received a *haiku* of truly soul-stirring bravery and beauty. Literary words (*bun*) are adornments; unpolished words should never be thought of as literature.

### The Influence of Dante and Goethe

Uchimura was no stranger to the classical literary disciplines; Masamune Hakuchō noted that during his sojourn in America, Uchimura wandered the streets with a battered copy of the *Kokinshū* anthology and would hold parties for the sake of reciting the verses.<sup>232</sup> In this essay Uchimura's traditionalist ideals meet his Western proclivities, showing forth his hybrid nature. His yearning for the uprightenss or *isagiyosa* of the past speaks to his samurai heritage. At the same time, his drive for literary progress is undoubtedly part of the Meiji spirit, but his recommendations are nevertheless unique. This is especially evident towards the end of the essay, where he quips:

*Aesthetics, belles-lettres—beauty in and of itself— becomes the subject of intense study, but nary the jot and tittle of ethical religion.*<sup>233</sup> For this reason, you seek after beauty in the

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“Versification and the Warbler's Notes.” Of Gengo, Nitobe continues, “His master, undaunted by the crude sentiment, continued to encourage the youth, until one day the music of his soul was awakened to respond to the sweet notes of the *uguisu*, he wrote, “Stands the warrior, mailed and strong/To hear the *uguisu*'s song/Warbled sweet the trees among” (Nitobe Inazō, *Bushidō*, 44).

<sup>232</sup> Masamune Hakuchō “Uchimura Kanzō” in *Gendai bungaku zenshū*, vol 14. (Tokyo: Chikuma shobō, 1960), 372.

<sup>233</sup> 「倫理宗教の啄を容るる所にあらずと」 The character 啄 *taku* refers to the falling leftward stroke of calligraphy, 丿. This is one of the eight strokes found in the character 永 and is part of the *eiji happō* 永字八法; “The Eight Principles of Ei,” which is the Tang dynasty notion that if beginners can master all the strokes within 永, they are on the path to beautiful



*filth of the turbid harbor of the self. When there is no yearning for uprightness within the heart, you cannot discuss beauty. **Sighing after beauty, as is found in your estimation, you will find Dante to be just a useless character. What value might you possibly find in the inestimable Bible? You satisfy yourselves with twenty sen literature, including those illustrated novels.***<sup>234</sup>

***“Beautiful is that beautiful does.”***<sup>235</sup> *Writing of good, moral doings, this is what can be called beautiful. Should not the actor who wishes to portray the loyal retainer Ōishi Kuranosuke*<sup>236</sup> *sit in Zen meditation for 17 days whilst reflecting on the life of Kuranosuke? The shame of it is that due to the influence of the Jōruri chanters, the reputation of Kuranosuke’s excellent works has been damaged. The self-indulgent literati who go off on their quests for beauty have no principles. **But we must flee from the pollution of those unethical, immoral, unprincipled, unchaste literati. It would seem that glorious profits come from their literary style. Their arrangement of words might appear to be sheer elegance, but instead, they indicate great danger.***<sup>237</sup>

Here, Uchimura laments that many attempts to create belles-lettres are hollow, as they have no character, no ethical substance. He accuses would-be aesthetes of being mere dilettantes who

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calligraphy. According to the Iwanami *Kōjien*, the *eiji happō* is one calligraphic teaching of the hidden transmissions of calligraphic skills; the *shohō denju* 書法伝授. It is important to see how Uchimura was referring to Jesus’ words in Matthew 5:18, “For verily I say unto you, Til heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, til all be fulfilled.” The “jot and tittle” or ἰῶτα ἔν ἡ μία κεραία, not one iota (i.e. *yodh*) or single point (i.e. the extension of smooth stroke on the top of a *daleth*) is referring to the Hebrew calligraphic strokes that make up the scriptures. Jesus promises this right after his sermon on the mount, which Uchimura just quoted.

<sup>234</sup> A 20 sen coin was 1/5 of a yen in the Meiji period. According to the wage charts in Robert Percival Porter’s *Japan, the New World-power* (London: Oxford University Press, 1915, 337-338), on average most laborers could expect less than one yen per day. The *Japan Weekly Mail* (June 5, 1897) estimated that civil officials received an average annual salary of 244 yen in 1895. Thus, a 20 sen book was no financial hardship; Uchimura’s implication was that this cheap fiction was satisfactory for the masses.

<sup>235</sup> He presents this phrase in English, with a Japanese translation emphasized with *nijūmaru* [◎◎◎] *boten* (emphasis markings), akin to bold, underlined emphasis in English.

<sup>236</sup> Ōishi Kuranosuke was the chief retainer of Asano Naganori, whom he and the other forty-six loyal retainers avenged, as described in the celebrated *bunraku* play, *Chūshingura* (*A Treasury of Loyal Retainers*). The play commingles fiction with fact; Kuranosuke was depicted as Ōboshi Yuranosuke, who adopted the pose of a drunken womanizer as a strategy of subterfuge in order to bring about his aim of avenging his lord. Uchimura laments that in later years, Kuranosuke’s fictionalized reputation had no basis in historical documentation, but audiences believed him to have become such a miscreant.

<sup>237</sup> UKZS 3: 200-201 The use of underlining, italicization, and bold text is an attempt to reproduce Uchimura’s frequent use of *bōten* (傍点) and *wakiten* (脇点).

have no depth. Thus, they cannot properly evaluate true beauty when they see it; the literati of the day, in his opinion, are no more than evaluators and purveyors of pornography. Ignoring the impressive contemporary works of Rohan and Kōyō (if he had even read them),<sup>238</sup> he enlists *Chūshingura* as an example of fiction that destroys the noble characters it depicts. Instead, he insists on looking to the examples of the world literature that he had identified earlier: Shakespeare, Homer, the Bible, Goethe, and especially Dante. (See Figure 1)

It is worth pointing out that Uchimura also argues for the blending of the arts and sciences, with natural science guiding the subjects the arts ought to depict. He writes that for all of Dante's excellent spirit, he had only acquired the scientific knowledge of the middle-ages. Dante's cosmology was incorrect because he did not have more advanced scientific knowledge. Rather than rejecting the spirit of Dante and proceeding in sterile, scientific inquiry, though, Uchimura insists that the poetic spirit of Dante coupled with the natural sciences can produce new, exciting content (See Figure 2, where Uchimura notes Dante's sense of medieval astronomy in *Purgatorio*, Canto IV). He considers the poetry of the day to be dull and lacking not because of style, but due to the lack of new content, similar in some ways to the criticisms of Masaoka Shiki and Shimazaki Tōson. For example,

Once upon a time, we composed poems on mountains and sang of rivers, but now the myriad waters are fit for the subjects of a thousand poems. One drop full of amoebas is worthy of one hundred volumes of philosophical poetry. New poetic themes of great merit emerge from the trajectories of comets as they whiz across the solar system. If you wish to compose poems about this earth, there are verses in its crags and peaks; elegant music in its gems and minerals. Make foxes and wolves, frogs and snakes the content of your hymns; compose your elegant verses on the circulatory system, which was heretofore unknown. To write on flowers in bloom, you need not visit Yoshino, you

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<sup>238</sup> Uchimura was at least familiar with some of Rohan's work. In discussing Nichiren's insistence upon the superiority of the Lotus Sutra, Uchimura notes that in *Shōnen bungaku*, Rohan had made a clear explanation of Nichiren's position that reciting the Nembutsu could not stave off future natural disasters. See *Nichiren Shōnin wo ronzu* (1894) in UKZS 3: 127. In all of Uchimura's works, he never once mentions Kōyō by name.

should go out into the nearby fields and find all you need in the surrounding flora. Those who connect to nature with deep compassion cannot fail to find elegant verses within the rocks, nor fail to see the poetry in the grasses. **Lament, now, you men of words and images, ink and brush**, for though you would be friends with the ancients, you have little communion with nature.<sup>239</sup>

Uchimura explains that the wisdom of the past was only ignorant of scientific progress; thus if one can cultivate the wonder of the past along with the purity of religion found in ancient society and meld it with the unfolding scientific discoveries of the modern era, new Dantes may yet be found. “All our steps point forward to the future; **creation lies in the past while its perfection comes with the future**. Ancient truths and new modes of learning: these are the steps forward that will constitute all wisdom.”<sup>240</sup> He cites Wordsworth as the poet that awakened him to this realization; he claims that Wordsworth “turned the science of his day into poetry” and that

“one single blade of grass brings out hymns of hope from the septuagenarian poet. The well-known ‘Excursion,’ ‘Laodamia,’ and ‘Evening Ode’ are all similar with the sense that ‘all earth serves the beauty of hope.’ Concomitant with the appearance of the poet Wordsworth is the spiritualization of nature.”<sup>241</sup>

And it is also important to point out that Uchimura is attempting to reclaim the natural heritage of Japanese poetry that he believes is lost, but which can be recovered with both scientific inquiry and Christianity. Connecting to what he believes to be Wordsworth’s principles, he says:

We must sanctify our thinking with regard to nature. We [Japanese] have a deep sense of the places where God intersects with nature, high and low, in and out. Shakespeare is rumored to have said, ‘There is a voice in the grasses and the trees; the flow of the river is a composition.’ We find this more fully realized in Wordsworth.<sup>242</sup>

With this spirit, we connect with nature. What is nature, can it not become a poem? When he listened to the nightingale, Wordsworth composed the following:

Often as thy inward ear  
Catches such rebounds, beware—

意を留めよ爾の心の耳朶に  
反響此の如きものの触るる時

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<sup>239</sup> Ibid., 190-191.

<sup>240</sup> UKZS 3: 190

<sup>241</sup> Ibid., 194.

<sup>242</sup> Ibid., 193.

Listen, ponder, hold them dear;  
For of God—of God they are.

静聴熟思してに収めよ  
是れ神の声——神の声なればなり<sup>243</sup>

Uchimura has been cleverly weaving references to *Chūshingura* throughout the text. Now he harkens back to Ōtaka Gengo's reaction to the night warbler and connects it to Wordsworth's response to hearing a nightingale. Both composed poetry, but rather than the mechanical production of adorned rhetoric, as in the example of Gengo, Uchimura is calling attention to the observation of nature under the aegis of contact with the divine. For Uchimura, the poetic spirit of the past can be reclaimed through scientific observation of nature, which reveals truths about God and one's own character. It is also important to note that as an earnest student of both the arts and sciences, throughout his career Uchimura struggled to reconcile scientific progress with religious faith, as is evidenced across the spectrum of his collected works.<sup>244</sup>

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<sup>243</sup> Idem.

<sup>244</sup> It is worth noting that Uchimura did *not* advocate a totalizing scientific worldview, or an aggressive, dismissive attitude towards human experience, as did some of the European Romantics. Bernard Kuhn says it well:

The presumptuous and triumphalist tone of a great deal of modern science is arguably an inheritance passed down from its founders during the seventeenth century, notably Francis Bacon, who equates knowledge with power and declares that the aim of the new science is “to conquer and subdue [Nature] to her foundations” and “with united forces [turn] against the Nature of Things, to storm and occupy her castles and strongholds and extend the bounds of the human empire, as far as God Almighty shall permit” (Bacon in Midgeley 41). For Rousseau, Goethe, Thoreau, and indeed, for the Romantics generally, it is Galileo and Newton, their followers, and scientific materialists of all stripes who come to represent what is wrong with modern science: its aggressive attitude toward nature and human nature, its dismissive attitude toward all forms of knowledge acquisition that do not adhere to the standards of scientific method, and, above all, the extension of its reductionist, atomistic assumptions into their domains, such as politics, psychology, and imaginative literature, where they tend to fail miserably.

The Romantic poets, we must remember, are not less guilty of these universalizing impulses so evident in natural science. At the height of European Romanticism, the German *Naturphilosophen*, with whom Goethe is often falsely allied, seek to unite poetry and the sciences through aesthetics and remake the world. Wordsworth fashions himself as the “chosen son”; Shelley famously declares that “poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world”; and Emerson declares his belief in the prophetic role of the poet as “seer” and “sayer”: “Poets are thus liberating gods” (*The*

Naturally, Uchimura raised more than a few eyebrows with his ideas. In response to his first *bungakuron* essay “Why is no Great Literature being produced?” Suzuki Norihisa noted that the *Japan Weekly Mail* completely ignored Uchimura’s literary ideas and attacked him on his minor points about freedom within education.<sup>245</sup>

Uchimura received some praise in the *Taiyō* literary column in September 1895, which noted that the essay was an insightful work that was faithful to the essence of literature— “a ray of light” in the *bundan*— but was at the same time excessively moralizing and pedantic. Suzuki draws attention to the fact that Tsubouchi Shōyō, inspired by Uchimura’s work, wrote in 1895, “Why are there no excellent books?” 「何故に好脚本は出さるや」.<sup>246</sup> Suzuki also notes that *Teikoku Bungaku* (*Imperial Literature*) published a piece criticizing the “Daibungakusha” (‘literary eminence’) without citing Uchimura by name, implying that Uchimura does not have the literary training to realize that literature hinges on factors such as context and cultural paradigms. One culture’s “great literature” might be formed of different ingredients than that of another. In other words, as the *Teikoku bungaku* commentator quipped in his response to Uchimura, you “can’t get bread from sake rice.”

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*Poet* 276). Romantic literature is populated with heroic poets, who, on the wings of imagination, aim to unite that which has been rent asunder. Like Bacon, who in his novel *New Atlantis* (1626) conjures up a utopian world ruled by natural philosophers and governed by their principles of experimentation, the Romantics also strive to create a perfect world, according to their conceptual categories.

See Bernhard Kuhn, *Autobiography and Natural Science in the Age of Romanticism*. (Burlington: Ashgate, 2009), 17-18.

<sup>245</sup> Suzuki Norihisa. *Uchimura Kanzō wo meguru sakkatachi*. (Tokyo: Tamakawa daigaku shuppan, 1980), p. 18. It is worth noting that Uchimura was not alone in this sentiment; others at that time were calling for a reform of literature, clamoring for a Japanese Shakespeare, Dickens, Bronte, etc.

<sup>246</sup> *Ibid.*, 19.

It should be noted, however, that Uchimura did actually believe that Meiji Japan had the ingredients for “great literature” as he saw it. In fact, there were “great” works of literature (in his premodern sense) found in Japan’s recent past—but only insofar as they were related to matters of faith and politics. In April of 1897, Uchimura would write (in English,)

Since MOTO-ORI NORINAGA in the early part of last century, finished his great commentary on the *Kojiki*, giving thirty-five years of his best time to this stupendous task, no great work in line of national literature has been forthcoming in this country. Even as late as the beginning of the present century, however, solid literary productions were not rare, the one hundred and twenty-five volumes of the *Man-yo-shu Kogi* by KAMOCHI MASADZUMI of Tosa being another monument of what a Japanese could do in the days when railroads and telegraphs were unknown to him... The cause of this literary poverty is not difficult to find. Nothing cripples the intellect so much as the lack of faith. MOTO-ORI had his intense faith in his nation’s gods, in the superlative excellence of its institutions, and in the unique position it occupied in the world. His whole energy was directed to this one purpose of glorifying his nation and his gods. SAN-YO with his political faith did produce works proportionate to *his* faith. But we of the present generation, with our vaunted intellectual attainment, [are] sadly lacking in this great intellectual stimulus. What we call our faith is a conventional faith patched up by our men in authority to meet the pressing need of the time. The miserable literature of the day betokens, better than anything else, the moral vacancy of the present Japanese society.<sup>247</sup>

In this note of social critique, Uchimura ties faith and literature together while lamenting the intellectual progress of modernity. He praised Norinaga for his commentary on the *Kojiki*, noting that through his faith, Norinaga’s intention was to bring glory to his gods and his nation.

(Something which Uchimura himself seeks to do, time and again, albeit replacing the *kami* with the Christian God.) He also praises Rai San’yō, who, modelling his work on the *Records of the Grand Historian*, Sima Qian, wrote a twenty-two-volume history of shogunal Japan, the *Nihon Gaishi* (1822). San’yō also wrote sixteen volumes on Japan’s political history and three volumes on morality and character. This is clear evidence of Uchimura’s understanding of literature.

In July of 1897, *Waseda Bungaku* carried Uchimura’s *Bungaku kyoku gaikan* 「文学局外観」, or “An Outsider’s View of the Literary Bureau,” wherein he again criticizes the

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<sup>247</sup> UKZS 4: 118

Japanese literary establishment, arguing that there is nothing being written in Japan that has the power to console and bring joy in the manner of Handel's *Messiah* or Dante's *Divine Comedy*.<sup>248</sup> He acknowledges his own reputation of being a malcontent but suggests that there is nothing in Japanese literature to ease his discontent. As he had been stringently attacked by statist and their Buddhist allies in the press, Uchimura lays blame for the degradation of Japanese literature at the feet of nationalistic sentiments and what he pejoratively referred to as "modified Buddhism," making the claim that the Buddhist establishment in Japan had become entirely joyless, merely clinging to the idea that "all life is suffering."

Uchimura is quite critical of Buddhism here and elsewhere. It may be that Uchimura did not clearly understand Buddhism, and at times, he is quite confusing. On the one hand, he frequently criticizes the Buddhist establishment, but on the other, he praises individual Buddhist figures, such as Nichiren, and comments that Buddhists who do good works and have honest hearts are "children of God." In fact, Uchimura saw Buddhism as one of the foreign grafts that took root in Japan and informed its morality. Now, he believed that Christianity could enhance or even perfect what Buddhism began. In trying to explain what he saw as the moral frameworks of Japan to his Western audience, in "Moral Traits of the Yamato-Damashii" (1886) he wrote,

In discussing and illustrating the third element of morality which seems a part of the primitive spirit of my country, mention of Buddhism with its modifying influences, must not be neglected; for a religion inculcating kindness to the "meanest thing that feels" could not fail to increase tenderness in all human relations and permeate the hearts of people with a deeper feeling of brotherhood. One may say that the source of the Buddhist faith is humanity as a source found in the heart of an Indian prince whose unconquerable sympathy for human suffering impelled him to discard his royal state and seek, in lowly guise, some means for the alleviation of the world's miseries. So far as man could succeed, he won success. His doctrines may be gainsaid, his religious system may be wrong, but none among us doubt that his humanity knew no bounds;

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<sup>248</sup> Elsewhere, as in *Kyūanroku*, Uchimura ties liturgical music to the heights of artistic production: Poetic words set to music in the worship of God are to be revered, and have a spiritual power within.

Wherefore within the city fire-illumed  
 Are not these punish'd, if God's wrath be on them?  
 And if it be not, wherefore in such guise  
 Are they condemn'd?" He answer thus return'd:  
 "Wherefore in dotage wanders thus thy mind,  
 Not so accustom'd? or what other thoughts  
 Possess it? Dwell not in thy memory  
 The words, wherein thy ethic page<sup>1</sup> describes  
 Three dispositions adverse to Heaven's will,  
 Incontinence, malice, and mad brutishness,  
 And how incontinence the least offends  
 God, and least guilt incurs? If well thou note  
 This judgment, and remember who they are,  
 Without these walls to vain repentance doom'd,  
 Thou shalt discern why they apart are placed  
 From these fell spirits, and less wreakful pours  
 Justice divine on them its vengeance down."

"Oh, sun! who healest all imperfect sight,  
 Thou so content'st me, when thou solvest my doubt,  
 That ignorance not less than knowledge charms.  
 Yet somewhat turn thee back," I in these words  
 Continued, "where thou said'st, that usury  
 Offends celestial Goodness; and this knot  
 Perplex'd unravel." He thus made reply:

"Philosophy, to an attentive ear,  
 Clearly points out, not in one part alone,  
 How imitative Nature takes her course  
 From the celestial mind, and from its art:  
 And where her laws<sup>2</sup> the Stagirite unfolds,  
 Not many leaves scann'd o'er, observing well

<sup>1</sup> *Thy ethic page.*] He refers to Aristotle's Ethics: "Μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα λεκτέον, ἄλλην ποιησαμένου ἀρχὴν, ὅτι τῶν περὶ τὰ ἦθη φευκτῶν τρία εἰσὶν εἶδη, κακία, ἀκρασία, θηριότης." *Ethic Nicomach.* lib. vii. c. 1. "In the next place, entering on another division of the subject, let it be defined, that respecting morals there are three sorts of things to be avoided, malice, incontinence, and brutishness."

<sup>2</sup> *Her laws.*] Aristotle's Physics. — "Ἡ τέχνη μιμεῖται τὴν φύσιν." Arist. ΦΥΣ. ΑΚΡ. lib. ii. c. 2. "Art imitates nature."—See the *Cultura* of Alamanni, lib. i.

—l' arte umana  
 Altro non è da dir ch' un dolce sprone,  
 Un corregar soave, un pio sostegno,  
 Uno esperto imitar, comporre accorto  
 Un sollecito attar con stud e' ingegno  
 La cagion natural, l' effetto, e l'opra.

Poetic inter-  
 pretation of  
 Nature!  
 Aristotle,  
 nature of  
 Scapto,  
 Macedonia

Dissertation on Art!  
 profound!

Figure 1: Marginalia on nature and art written by Uchimura in his copy of the *Divine Comedy*. (Courtesy of University of Hokkaidō)



From the mid quadrant to the centre drawn.  
 I, wearied, thus began: "Parent beloved!  
 Turn and behold how I remain alone,  
 If thou stay not."—"My son!" he straight replied,  
 "Thus far put forth thy strength;" and to a track  
 Pointed, that, on this side projecting, round  
 Circles the hill. His words so spurr'd me on,  
 That I, behind him, clambering, forced myself,  
 Till my feet press'd the circuit plain beneath.  
 There both together seated, turn'd we round  
 To eastward, whence was our ascent: and oft  
 Many beside have with delight look'd back.

Midaval  
 Astronomy.

First on the nether shores I turn'd mine eyes,  
 Then raised them to the sun, and wondering mark'd  
 That from the left<sup>1</sup> it smote us. Soon perceived  
 That poet sage, how at the car of light  
 Amazed<sup>2</sup> I stood, where 'twixt us and the north  
 Its course it enter'd. Whence he thus to me:  
 "Were Leda's offspring<sup>3</sup> now in company  
 Of that broad mirror, that high up and low  
 Imparts his light beneath, thou mightst behold  
 The ruddy Zodiac nearer to the Bears  
 Wheel, if its ancient course it not forsook.  
 How that may be, if thou wouldst think; within  
 Pondering, imagine Sion with this mount  
 Placed on the earth, so that to both be one  
 Horizon, and two hemispheres apart,

<sup>1</sup> *From the left.*] Vellutello observes an imitation of Lucan in this passage:—

Ignotum vobis, Arabes, venistis in orbem,  
 Umbras mirati memorum non ire sinistras.  
*Phars.* lib. iii. 248.

<sup>2</sup> *Amazed.*] He wonders that being turned to the east he should see the sun on his left, since in all the regions on this side of the tropic of Cancer it is seen on the right of one who turns his face towards the east; not recollecting that he was now antipodal to Europe, from whence he had seen the sun taking an opposite course.

<sup>3</sup> *Were Leda's offspring.*] "As the constellation of the Gemini is nearer the Bears than Aries is, it is certain that if the sun, instead of being in Aries, had been in Gemini, both the sun and that portion of the Zodiac made 'ruddy' by the sun, would have been seen to 'wheel nearer to the Bears.' By the 'ruddy Zodiac' must necessarily be understood that portion of the Zodiac affected or made red by the sun; for the whole of the Zodiac never changes, nor appears to change, with respect to the remainder of the heavens."—*Lombardi.*

Figure 2 (Courtesy University of Hokkaidō)

and when we have made due allowance for the corruptions and superstitions which have crept into Buddhism, the inventions of his crafty followers, we may rightly accord all honor to this noblest of the sons of India for the incalculable benefit he brought to the Eastern world in causing men *to feel for men*. We, as heathen, welcome with overwhelming joy the advent of the Greater Light to rule our day, but we are no less grateful to the Father of all mankind for the lesser light by which he hath ruled our night.<sup>249</sup>

Here, Uchimura praises Buddhism insofar as it was an expression of what he saw to be God's incomplete revelation of natural law in Japan. For Uchimura, Buddhism was a "lesser light" that awaited God's further revelation in Christ. Thus, as was the case with the American missionaries, Uchimura's rejection of some aspects of Buddhism, but warm embrace of others may be evidence of one of the ways in which he approaches the world: criticizing those with whom he cannot find areas of agreement, and drawing near to those with whom he can.

In *An Outsiders View*, then, concluding his treatment of faith and literature, he maintains that joy can be found in the suffering of life. Again, this can be connected to his earlier notion that suffering which produces nobility of character leads to a wiser, more heroic self that will produce much gain for the enlightenment of others. For Uchimura, this is the hope of life eternal and a true meaning for the human life he found in the Bible; herein lies one of his deepest inspirations for great Western literature.

This time, Uchimura's ideas were enthusiastically received by some of the younger generation (Masamune Hakuchō, Mushanokoji Saneatsu, and Arishima Takeo), who even after leaving the Christian faith still retained a Christian humanist stance.<sup>250</sup> Others of his own generation remained skeptical, though. In August 1898, Takayama Chogyū, supported by Inoue Tetsujirō, wrote an open letter to Uchimura, *Uchimura Kanzō-kun ni atau* (内村鑑三君に与う),

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<sup>249</sup> UKZS 1: 114

<sup>250</sup> Leaving the Christian faith but maintaining a sense of humanism inspired by their brush with Christianity is evident in the works of many *Shirakaba-ha* (White Birch Coterie) authors.

in *Taiyō*,<sup>251</sup> claiming to have long been an avid reader of Uchimura. Echoing earlier criticism found in the *Taiyō* literary column, Chogyū claimed that Uchimura was excessively idealistic and failed to write about the reality of this world. What's more, his Christianity was naïve and harmful to the state. Chogyū adjures Kanzō to give up writing about politics, philosophy, and religion, since he is neither politician, philosopher, nor religionist. Chogyū wants to awaken Kanzō to his true calling, which in Chogyū's estimation is to be a *poet*, one who rises above these lesser roles. Citing Uchimura's beloved Dante, he goes on to say that if Dante had been a politician or had never been exiled from Florence, we would not have the *Divine Comedy*; that is, the work was a product of his circumstances and experiences, not his scientific knowledge, his theological study, or his greatness of character, as Uchimura claimed. Chogyū was a staunch critic of poetry, having accused Shimazaki Tōson's new-style Romantic verse of being injurious to the "harmonious and rational communication between poet and reader," and he evidently favored the emergence of a "national poet" who would serve the state.<sup>252</sup> Knowing Uchimura's past and belief that literature exists to pass on our thoughts and ideals to future generations, Chogyū ironically wonders why Uchimura does not just don the mantle and become the Dante of Meiji Japan. In this way, Uchimura could write a national poetry that weds politics and emotion.

Uchimura published a short response to Chogyū in November 1898.<sup>253</sup> Writing in the elevated classical epistolary style, Uchimura explained that he was thrilled to be considered among the ranks of statesmen, philosophers, and literati but was deeply disappointed that Chogyū should take the same stance that Inoue Tetsujirō had already taken years before. They

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<sup>251</sup> *Takayama Chogyū zenshū*, vol. 2 (Tokyo: Hakubunkan, 1927), pp. 486-492.

<sup>252</sup> Bourdaghs, Michael. *The Dawn that Never Comes: Shimazaki Tōson and Japanese Nationalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), pp. 7-8.

<sup>253</sup> "A Response to Literature Professor Takayama Rinjirō", UKZS 6: 213, originally in Uchimura's own magazine, *The Tokyo Independent*.

may have called him a hypocrite and a liar, he states, but ultimately the accusations held no weight since Chogyū and Inoue were themselves deluded; he believed Chogyū and Inoue were leveraging Confucian and *kokugaku* ideas to support their jingoism. For the benefit of the state, they wanted Uchimura to reject Christianity and embrace ‘Japanism’ (*Nihonshugi*) and to focus on facts, on material things. For Uchimura, this would be a sadly misguided course. He goes on to accuse them of using their own so-called facts to support the state while at the same time desiring the state to submit to their version of the facts.

This *ronsō* would go on to affect its participants. Uchimura became more entrenched in his position, while Chogyū modified his own. Toward the end of his life, Chogyū developed a serious interest in romanticism and individualism. As he evaluated Nichiren’s love of country and considered the topic of religion versus the state,<sup>254</sup> Chogyū would have a change of heart, identifying more with Uchimura’s position as he began to appreciate the role of Buddhism in Japan’s philosophical development.<sup>255</sup> In his book, *Religion and Nationalism in Modern Japan*, Tokoro Shigemoto reasons that Uchimura’s words left an indelible impression on Chogyū and perhaps played a role in his reconsideration of *Nihonshugi*.

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<sup>254</sup> At the heart of Chogyū’s Nipponism was a tension between the universal ideal on the one hand and a concrete and particular Japanese reality on the other. Chogyū attempted to answer the question “what does it mean to be Japanese in the modern world?” by concentrating on the particular and practical concerns of Japanese life, concerns which had been shaped by Japan’s unique history.” Shinohara Koichi, “Buddhism and the Problem of Modernity in East Asia: Some Exploratory Comments Based on the Example of Takayama Chogyū” in *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies*, 8,1-2 March-June 1981, pp. 35-49.

Similar to Uchimura’s Christian freedom to love the state without being a slave to its dogma, in Chogyū’s case, the “radical transcendence” of Buddhism freed him from the false use of Shinto symbols and Confucian elements that propped up his *Nihonshugi* ideas. Shinohara concludes that the inner tensions of these Confucian and Shinto ideas were resolved in Chogyū’s turn to Nichiren-ism.

<sup>255</sup> Tokoro Shigemoto. *Religion and Nationalism in Modern Japan*. (Tokyo: Tomiyamabo, 1966), 143.

Ironically enough, Inoue Tetsujirō was himself accused by extreme rightists of *lèse-majesté* in 1926.<sup>256</sup> According to Maruyama Masao, Inoue had made a simple typographical error that made it appear that imperial line was not divine. When writing the name of emperor Ojin, Inoue had selected the wrong *kanji*, using the character for benevolence (仁) in place of the proper character for *jin* in emperor Ojin's name: divinity (神).<sup>257</sup> This simple mistake made it appear that the emperor was not divine, which resulted in great trouble for Inoue. The ideological rightists in the late 1920s seemed to be even more committed to their beliefs than those of the prior generation. Uchimura reflected upon how the tables had so dramatically turned, wondering if this had not been orchestrated by God almighty.<sup>258</sup>

As previously mentioned, in 1893, Inoue Tetsujirō had attacked Uchimura “in a series of articles claiming that Christianity was incompatible with traditional Japanese beliefs.”<sup>259</sup>

Just as the polemics began to die down, Inoue, miffed by an attack made by Kashiwagi on his *Chokugo engi*, rekindled the flames of controversy. In all frankness it must be pointed out that, except for Uemura Masahisa, Japanese Christians in general did not seem to object to the Rescript as such (though some did warn that if the Rescript were interpreted as nullifying the power of conscience or reason vis-à-vis the state, such an interpretation would be contrary both to the spirit of Christianity and to the Constitution). It was at this juncture, however, that Inoue took up the cudgels to argue that ‘the basis of the Rescript is, in short, nationalism, and Christianity not only lacks this spirit to a great degree but is actually contrary to it.’<sup>260</sup>

Having studied philosophy in Germany, Inoue “used the authority conferred upon him by his training abroad to support traditional ethics, or more accurately, the ethics that the

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<sup>256</sup> Tōyama Mitsuru. *Inoue Tetsujirō shi no jingu kōshitsu ni taisuru dai fukei jiken (bungaku hakase)* (Anonymous publisher, 1926). <http://www.meitan.j.u-tokyo.ac.jp/detail/7819>

<sup>257</sup> Maruyama Masao, *Studies in Intellectual History of Tokugawa Japan*, trans. Mikiso Hane (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974), xvii-xviii.

<sup>258</sup> UKZS 39: 323

<sup>259</sup> Howes, 80.

<sup>260</sup> “(Kyōikujiron 27 [November 1892], no. 272 as cited in Yamazaki and Miyakawa 1966, p. 122).” See Winston Davis, “The Civil Theology of Inoue Tetsujirō” in *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 3/1 March 1976, 10.

Japanese state sought to make orthodox.”<sup>261</sup> Inoue labored to legitimize the idea of *kokutai* with the Meiji emperor as the head of the Japanese family, bringing in tropes from *kokugaku* and rehashing age-old claims about the divinity of the emperor, stretching back to the goddess Amaterasu.<sup>262</sup> For Inoue, Uchimura’s Christian faith made him a traitor. He could not be a proper patriotic Japanese if he did not accept the emperor as the divine father figure.<sup>263</sup> Thus for Inoue at this time, Christians—and Uchimura in particular—could not be considered part of the national family. The ensuing firestorm in the press kept Uchimura’s name in the public eye. Interestingly enough, Uchimura refrained from defending himself save for one letter, *Open letter to my Colleague Inoue Tetsujirō, PhD* (文学博士井上哲次郎君に呈する公開状). In this letter, Uchimura

“refuted the outrageous charges made against him and then continued with the following argument: You have used poor historical method by presenting only one point of view when you know that good history requires you to judge all

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<sup>261</sup> Howes, 80.

<sup>262</sup> In his *Chokugo engi*, Inoue argued from a Zhuxi Neo-Confucian perspective that obedience to one’s lord was a crucial part of the Imperial Rescript on Education, and that Christians were not morally bound to do so; therefore, they were not good Japanese patriots. Later, in *Kyōiku to shūkyō no shōtotsu* (*The Clash between Education and Religion*), Inoue argues that since Christians believe in a singular “Heavenly Father” as God, they cannot believe in the divinity of the emperor, who was a direct descendent of the sun-goddess, Amaterasu.

<sup>263</sup> In Inoue Tetsujiro, “*Kyōiku to Shūkyō no Shōtotsu*” in *Meiji Bungaku Zenshū*, vol 80, (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo, 1942), 124-146, Inoue aims quite scathing attacks at Uchimura’s Christianity and patriotism:

However, when they criticize my opinions, Christian believers do not take this point under careful consideration. And why? I wish to make clear what I am now warning you of. Christians are excessively unfair in their thinking and must not understand my concerns. If they continue to persist, they will all appear defiant... Mr. Uchimura’s act of *lèse-majesté* has surely gained sympathy. Because the Christians grow and flourish under the protection of so many foreign missionaries, they have become poor in their spirit of patriotism (*hanahada aikoku no seishin ni toboshiki nari*). If they were brimming with patriotic pride, they would somehow pay obeisance to the Imperial Rescript on Education. Those who have no love of country and cannot bow in honor of the Imperial Rescript are no more than shameful, gutless worms, the likes of which have never been seen before.

points of view impartially. You say that we should respect the Rescript, but do its consequences warrant respect? Has public morality improved, and do the students apply themselves more diligently? You criticize the Christians, but do you not realize that they act out of the same patriotic motives that animate you? Finally, as a specialist in Western philosophy, you admire the works of Spencer, Mill, and Rousseau. Do they not pose at least as great a threat to political orthodoxy in Japan as Christianity poses?”<sup>264</sup>

Inoue never responded to Uchimura’s open letter. But Uchimura’s move to counteract Inoue was an important one, and it would serve as an opportunity for vindication amidst the flurry of articles defaming both Uchimura and Christianity.<sup>265</sup> Even by the time Uchimura had achieved a large readership, Christians were still the “other” against which the edifice of the state and state religion could be constructed. Uchimura’s response to Inoue, coupled with what might be considered his indirect response, *Consolations of a Christian*, reveals a strong, resilient self, a prime example of Ricoeur’s idea of the idem self. This constructed self attests to its positions in order to resist and overcome the challenges of anti-Christian rhetoric and persecution at the hands of state and society, thereby explaining the narrator’s positions to a society that might not fully understand his intentions and behaviors.<sup>266</sup> In this way, *Consolations of a Christian* is important for understanding how Uchimura viewed his life, the integration of his Japanese and

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<sup>264</sup> Howes, 81.

<sup>265</sup> Carol Gluck, *Japan’s Modern Myths* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), 135. The use of the “metaphorical foreigner” against which the state could rally was also helpful in 1912, when Inoue turned his attention to socialists; Christians had not “contravened the *kokutai* in recent years,” he argues, but Christianity and its altruism had been “Japanized” sufficiently to fit with the notions of Confucian benevolence and Buddhist compassion.

<sup>266</sup> See Nambara Kazuhiro, *Kindai Nihon seishin shi: Fukuzawa Yukichi kara Maruyama Masao made*. (Okayama Daigaku kyōiku shuppan, 2006), 58-59. Nambara notes that Christians, along with the socialists, were the chief critics of the imperial system of “thought-ism.” Uchimura certainly should count as one of the first. 「明治期のキリスト教の政治思想上に含意を代表的に示しているのは言うまでもなく内村鑑三である。彼は明治維新における『邦土』の奉還は皇室の威権を増したが、自分には『全身奉還』の任務があるとする。すべてを神に引き渡し、内村はしばしば永遠の『宇宙』の生命に参考する喜びを語っている（『求安録』）。そうして彼は日本の使命は西洋と渡洋『媒介者』となることであると言う。」

Christian identity, and his role in Japanese society. John Howes indicates that this work “describes the solace offered by the Christian faith to one who suffers because he has attempted to live according to its high ideals. At the same time, it defends the author’s integrity.”<sup>267</sup> In this work, Uchimura’s narrator holds fast to his faith, refusing to take the easier road of placating the authorities. Instead, he explains his positions and actions, all the while looking to God to find meaning in and to make sense of his travails. Unfortunately, the reader is not left with a sense that the narrator is “saved”—the account is more akin to endurance in suffering, almost like in Dante’s *Purgatorio*, which Uchimura explicitly refers to in the preface of *The Search for Peace*.

Taken as a trilogy of spiritual autobiography, one sees the progression of not just faith, but also the struggle of the self, the examination of experience, and the creation of interiority that leads to the ability to leave the interior space and act within and upon the world. Temerity gives way to individual conscience, standing indefatigably for its own convictions. The next chapter examines this more fully as we turn our attention to how Uchimura attempted to fulfill his vision of *daibungaku* in *Consolations of a Christian*.

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<sup>267</sup> Howes, John. *Japan’s Modern Prophet*. (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2007), p. 90.



# Chapter 3:

## Confession, Refutation, Lament, and Consolation

*Consolations of a Christian* is Uchimura's first autobiographical text and is indispensable for understanding how Uchimura viewed his life, the integration of his Japanese and Christian identity, and his role in Japanese society. John Howes points out that this work "describes the solace offered by the Christian faith to one who suffers because he has attempted to live according to its high ideals. At the same time, it defends the author's integrity."<sup>268</sup> While Uchimura never explicitly mentions any connection, the title could be seen as an homage to Boethius (480-524 CE), whose *Consolation of Philosophy* is an important confessional work written from the author's prison cell. In 523, Boethius, knowing that he would soon receive the death penalty for alleged treason, wrote of his dialogues with Lady Philosophy, who came to encourage him in his despair. Boethius tackles the problems of how a good God could allow evil in the world and how fortune is fickle. Lady Philosophy counsels Boethius, saying that the mind is the one "true good" and that joy comes from within, not from one's circumstances. Uchimura's *Consolations* addresses these same themes in various ways. Boethius was inspired by Augustine and was a crucial influence for Dante, whose own Beatrice is prefigured by Lady Philosophy. Educated in the Western classics, Uchimura would no doubt have encountered this foundational text. For Uchimura, "consolation" (*nagusame*) does not refer to kind words or a pat on the back; it means to be given encouragement by God himself when in the most difficult of circumstances. Suzuki Norihisa explains how *nagusame* (慰) took on new meaning over time after Uchimura's use of the term. Prior to Uchimura's use, *nagusame* generally had a weaker,

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<sup>268</sup> Howes, John. *Japan's Modern Prophet*. (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2007), 90.

pessimistic meaning— merely to say nice things to someone who is sad or to cheer someone up. But Shōgakukan’s *Nihon kokugo daijiten* (second addition, vol. 10) added the following definition: “Within Christianity, God speaks encouragement to those who are in sadness or in pain.” 「キリスト教では、悲しみや苦しみある者を神が励ますことをいう。」 Suzuki ties this usage to the biblical account of the “Sermon on the Mount” (Matthew 5) where Jesus calls those who suffer “blessed,” as in “Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.” 「哀しむ者は福なり其人は安慰を得べければ也。」 That is to say, God himself will comfort those who suffer. Suzuki cites Uchimura’s *Study of Job* (UKZS 25), where Uchimura argues that the non-Christian Japanese meaning of *nagusame* does not have the “power” that the English world “comfort” implies. Uchimura understands “comfort” to mean imbuing others with strength, to have strength be with someone.<sup>269</sup> In this work, Uchimura’s narrator holds fast to his faith, refusing to take the easier road of placating the authorities, social norms, and even his temptations. Instead, he explains his positions and actions, all the while looking to God to find meaning in and to make sense of his travails and give him strength.

But more than this, *Consolations* is a work that demonstrates Uchimura’s literary ideals and represents an attempt to create the *daibungaku* that he so strongly promoted. First, as he found in Goethe, Uchimura tries to show the triumph of the will in its fight with internal doubts and external pressures. He represents his feelings and his struggles, universalizing and then generalizing his own experiences as problems a Christian (particularly in Japan) may face, in an effort to show how one may look to the ultimate good (God) to be one’s consolation in times of distress. As he believed was the case, the narrative becomes a way for the reader to know

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<sup>269</sup> 「comfortは『力を共にする、力を分つ』の意味を持つから、『力を共する』のだと解する。」 See Suzuki Norihisa, *Uchimura Kanzō no hito to shisō*, (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 2012), 111.

Uchimura's "self." Second, Uchimura "observes" nature, frequently referring to the beauty and grandeur of natural scenery and the mystery of the cosmos. He discusses the yellow ochre of the earth at a particular Buddhist temple before describing the types of flowers found there. Third, he looks to works he considered great literature—the Bible, Dante, Carlyle, classical Japanese and romantic European poets—and draws upon their words and ideas to inform his own. Fourth, he uses this work as a way to encourage deep thought by challenging the prevailing notion of loyalty to the *kokutai* and showing instead how one can be a patriot without embracing government dogma—the very thing for which Uchimura was under frequent attack. Finally, he attempts to create a noble character that can serve as an instructor and an example for the present, as well as for future generations. As he remarked, natural science observes facts in the physical world; theology is the science of observing facts of the spiritual world. Along these lines, he believed experience is the laboratory of faith, making this work a record of that laboratory experiment.

But the reader must be careful here. Although *Consolations* is drawn from Uchimura's lived experience and embodies many autobiographical elements, rather than reading this work as an autobiography (*jiden*), Uchimura explained that it would profit the reader more if the reader were to read it as a work that offers encouragement and consolation. In the preface, dated January 28, 1893, Uchimura wrote:

For those who pass through this life in relative ease, having no pain that requires the heart to be consoled, or no form of bodily suffering, when they encounter the spiritual writings of a sanctified heart, they will either simply criticize the writer or limit themselves to dissecting the text to uncover the author's personal experiences. Those who do so will find little profit in reading this text.

However, for brothers and sisters who have faith and human compassion, dear friends who share the same heart and soul as the author and commune with the spirit of God, who have been steeped in sorrow, and with God's spirit can achieve a sympathetic understanding, I believe that this text might afford great profit.

This text is not the author's autobiography; it is the author's representation of the sufferings of a Christian believer. Establishing the perimeter of personal misfortune, using the principles of Christianity, I have labored to create a work of self-consolation.<sup>270</sup>

Uchimura is telling his readers to read with the eyes of faith and a mutual understanding of human suffering, or—without explicitly saying it—in the way he read Goethe and Dante. Uchimura mixes the lessons learned from personal suffering with theological insights to create words of encouragement for those in similar situations. Yet at the same time, Uchimura's audience would have certainly understood *Consolations of a Christian's* deeply personal relevance. This is perhaps why he included the above note, insofar as his life was already exposed to public scrutiny. Anyone acquainted with the news of the day and Uchimura's synchronous essays would have recognized the flow of his narrative, how his chapters paralleled his travails, starting with the death of his wife and ending with chronic illness.<sup>271</sup> Unquestionably, the experiences of failure, poverty and loneliness profoundly affected Uchimura, and the means by which he stood fast against these dreadful giants became major themes in his literary works.<sup>272</sup>

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<sup>270</sup> UKZS 2: 4

<sup>271</sup> Suzuki Norihisa makes this point in *Uchimura Kanzō: hito to shisō* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2012), 10.

<sup>272</sup> As John Howes describes it,

Poverty compounded the pangs of loneliness and in part conditioned his every act. Uchimura had no savings. According to one source, shortly after his refusal to bow, the family had to move into a home in Tokyo where a hanging straw mat performed the function of a door. At the time of Uchimura's third wedding, Shizu was shocked to find that her groom had rented a suit for the ceremony and owned practically nothing but stacks of books and a battered suitcase that he used for a desk. One of the Sapporo chums, Ôshima Masatake (1859-1938), who had moved to Kyoto to teach at Dôshisha, recalls that he invited Uchimura over to his house about once a month during this time. On such occasions, he served *sukiyaki*; after they had finished, Uchimura would, with suitable apologies, lift to his mouth the iron pan in which it had been cooked and drink the remaining juices. How could any act have better mocked the memory of his brave valedictory in Sapporo? Here, a little over a decade later, he sat almost begging at the table of one of those who had hazed him into his new faith. Howes, *Japan's Modern Prophet*, 85-86.

Based on his circumstances and his treatment by society, Uchimura was cognizant that other Meiji-era Christians would suffer similar setbacks and painful circumstances due to a personal conviction to not yield to the demands of the statist, the overbearing nature of foreign missionaries, and what he saw as the hypocrisy of the Japanese clergy.<sup>273</sup> In this way, the work is also an evangelistic text, explaining the Christian worldview (as Uchimura understood it) to a reader who may sympathize with Uchimura's failings and use them as a lens to see how suffering is endured with Christ, who thereby gives meaning to life. By the end of the work, the reader becomes keenly aware of Uchimura's sense that despite being rejected by the world, he believed that God would never reject him; his commitment to conviction was worth suffering all things. The loss of health, wealth, and life itself were all in service of the refining of the Christian's character in order to form the believer into a more loyal, useful servant of Christ *and* the state.<sup>274</sup> Moreover, while enduring intense periods of self-doubt, under the attack of multiple inner-voices that discourage, blame, and hector the sensitive conscience, the Bible and the spirit of God have the power to cut through all of this

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<sup>273</sup>Of course, Christians within Japan were also frustrated with Uchimura for not having more tact in his dealings with the Rescript ceremony, and Uchimura knew it. In *Consolations*, his third chapter deals with "When One is Rejected by the Church." Further evidence of this awareness comes from a letter he wrote to his American friend, William Bell, regarding those who criticized him [from within]. He wrote, "One body of Christians has turned against me, and have fled from what I respect and support. I know that they have criticized me, calling me a coward, a flatterer. These are primarily members of the Presbyterian church." 「一団のクリスチャンたちが、ほこをさかしまにして私に向け、私が敬礼することに同意した事を非難して、卑怯者よ、へつらい者よ、といて罵っていることを知りました。彼らは大部分長老教会の信者です。」 Masaike Megumu, *Uchimura Kanzō den*, (Tokyo: Kyōbunkan, 1977), 210.

<sup>274</sup>"Uchimura's loyalty to Christ did not diminish his samurai spirit of self-denial and dedication but set these motivations and actions in a higher or transcendent context from which Uchimura would critically judge the nature of his loyalty (to Christ) both in his actions in his roles in the in society. In short, in his loyalty to Christ, Uchimura acquired an extremely sensitive conscience which in future years set him apart from his own countrymen." Lee, Robert. "Religious Evolution and the Individuation of the Self in Japanese History;" Unpublished dissertation, Harvard University, 1974, 248.

and encourage the flagging soul. Through the pains and setbacks of life, reminiscent of Tolstoi's narrator in *A Confession*, Uchimura seeks to assign meaning to his experiences. Armed with an impressive grasp of European and American literature, the Bible, and classical Greco-Roman philosophy coupled with native concepts of self-writing, poetics, and historiography, Uchimura weaves together a thoroughly modern work that helped establish his reputation as a sophisticated and compelling writer.<sup>275</sup>

### Structure, Synopsis, and Genre Gradations

With his *Consolations of a Christian*, Uchimura mirrored his recent travails. Its six constituent chapters are as follows:

1. When losing one's beloved (愛するもの々失せし時 *Ai suru mono no useshi toki*)
2. When abandoned by one's countrymen (国民に捨てられし時 *Kokumin ni suterareshi toki*)
3. When abandoned by the Christian Church (基督教会に捨てられし時 *Kirisuto kyōkai ni suterareshi toki*)
4. When failing in one's undertakings (事業に失敗せし時 *Jigyō ni shippai seshi toki*)
5. When driven into poverty (貧に迫りし時 *Hin ni semarishi toki*)
6. When suffering from an incurable ailment (不治の病に罹りし時 *Fuji no byō ni kakarishi toki*)

Each chapter addresses its denoted concern, the various ways of looking at the problem, difficulties encountered by the sufferer, ways in which the author made philosophical and religious connections, analysis of personal experiences, and through metaphysical argumentation the narrator's conscience makes peace with God and finds resolution.

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<sup>275</sup> In many ways, as shown in Chapter 1, Uchimura embodies this same modern, Meiji perspective of national pride on the one hand, while grafting helpful Western elements onto traditional values. Again, for Uchimura, Christianity was a way for Japan to become *more fully* Japanese, alongside the establishment of a Japanese Christianity differing from its expression in the West. It was not antithetical to *kokutai*, but rather could enhance national pride and advance Japan's role in the world. This echoes the ideas presented by both the *Min'yūsha* and the *Seikyōsha*.

Uchimura's audience would have been familiar with the details of his life, and it is also fair to expect that today's reader will identify with many details of his personal experience as expressed in the text and empathize with Uchimura's situation. Suzuki Norihisa explains that,

'When losing one's beloved' touches upon the death of his wife after the *lèse majesté* incident. Needless to say, 'When abandoned by one's countrymen' deals with the prevailing view of Uchimura being an enemy of the state. 'When abandoned by one's church' reveals the censure from within the church that Uchimura received throughout his stay in Osaka. 'When failing in one's undertaking' deals with his failures in the educational workplace at Hokuetsu Gakkan and the Daiichi Kōtō Chūgakkō, and 'When driven into poverty' corresponds with his life in America and after the *lèse majesté* incident; as for 'When suffering from an incurable ailment', it is a fact that Uchimura was semi-comatose due to the effects of influenza, and prior to that he had a bout of intestinal typhus. In the end, there is no problem in reading this book as the author's autobiography.<sup>276</sup>

Uchimura did not explicitly counsel readers *not* to regard his work as autobiography, but rather that they will receive the most *profit* if they see it as an attempt to find consolation—encouragement, and divine sustenance—in difficult situations.<sup>277</sup> Although we can still read it—perhaps with less profit—as an engaging autobiographical narrative, we can perhaps find greater value in reading the work to gain a better understanding of how Uchimura used his faith and

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<sup>276</sup> Suzuki Norihisa. *Uchimura Kanzō no hito to shisō*, (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2012), 110.

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reason to attempt to create what he considered “Great Literature.”<sup>278</sup> Interestingly enough, one of Uchimura’s early admirers, noted Naturalist author and critic Masamune Hakuchō (正 宗白鳥 1879-1962) explained that this is precisely how he read *Consolations of a Christian*, though he did so in a more pointed way. Hakuchō recalled reading *Consolations* with a different kind of “enchantment” from other works he had read in *Kokumin no tomo* and *Kokumin shimbun*.<sup>279</sup> Hakuchō, who became a Christian in his youth but then subsequently rejected his faith and became quite cynical and pessimistic, is known for his realistic works, which attempt to communicate emotion in an unvarnished way.<sup>280</sup> Hakuchō would also go on to become an important literary critic and chronicler of Japanese literary figures. In his memoir of his experiences with Uchimura, Hakuchō recounted that in his teen years, he became disenchanted with Confucius and Mencius, preferring to read anything from Tokutomi Sohō’s *Min’yūsha*

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<sup>278</sup> See Chapter 2 discussion of *Daibungakuron*

<sup>279</sup> 「…内村の筆に成るものを、もつと読みたくなつて、『基督信徒の慰め』と、『求安緑』とを購讀した。蘇峰その他、私の読み馴れみた文章家の文書とはちがった魅力が感ぜられたのであつた。この書を今度久し振りに讀み返して、これは内村の作品として最も傑れたものではないかと思つた。」 Masamune Hakuchō, “Uchimura Kanzō” in *Gendai Bungaku Zenshū*, vol. 14: *Masamune Hakuchō shū*, (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1960), p. 350.

<sup>280</sup> According to Michael Bourdaghs,

…There are two dominant narratives of the history of literary realism in early-twentieth-century Japan: one is a heroic epic, the other a tragedy. In the heroic version, a narrative constructed in part by naturalist writers such as Masamune Hakuchō [(1879–1962)], Tayama Katai [(1872-1930)], and Tōson himself, the naturalists are celebrated as marking the successful culmination of the drive to develop a realistic modern novel in Japan, carrying to fruition the project begun by Futabatei a few decades earlier. In the tragic version, associated most closely with the critic Nakamura Mitsuo [(1911–1988)], the realistic novel develops steadily up through Tōson’s *The Broken Commandment*, whereupon forward progress suddenly halts, and the supposedly degenerate form of the I-novel takes over. In this version, it is the purported turn away from the social—in I-novels such as Tayama Katai’s “Futon” (The Quilt) or Tōson’s *Haru* (Spring) and *The Family*—that marks the tragic failure of Japanese literature to develop a truly modern realist novel. *The Dawn that Never Comes: Shimazaki Tōson and Japanese Nationalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), 109.



publishing house, including Uchimura's essays in *Kokumin no tomo*. Hakuchō was also particularly impressed with another of Uchimura's early books, *Representative Men of Japan*. As Hakuchō reflects back on his experience, it is clear that Uchimura's commentary on Japanese literature and great books, as well as his works on living as an individual with purpose and integrity, made a great impression on the young Hakuchō. But Uchimura's *Consolations of a Christian* and *The Search for Peace* exercised the most influence on him, one he could not fully understand at the tender age of seventeen. Reflecting on *Consolations*, Hakuchō explained that

... This text pierces the heart of the reader. The experiences that were described within this text were represented as if they were portrayed in a realistic novel (*shōsetsu toshite arugamama ni byōsha sareta nara*), where the ups and downs of human life stick in the reader's mind. This was something that I did not expect of Uchimura, who hated fiction (*shōsetsu*) and stage drama. This is because Uchimura never recognized that the Bible should be read like the most excellent fiction (*shōsetsu*), nor had he ever tasted the rich drama held therein.<sup>281</sup>

Here, Hakuchō identifies what may be one of the chief reasons for Uchimura's popularity as a writer: he portrayed his experiences in a way that is similar to those who were writing realistic novels. This is perhaps why some have called attention to the some of the similarities between Uchimura's texts and the representations of deep emotion and probing of lived experience found within the *watakushi shōsetsu*. Hakuchō has a great deal more to say about Uchimura, especially regarding his views on literature, and about the influence Hakuchō received in his earlier days. Hakuchō helps us see in Uchimura's works a certain literariness that impressed him and other *bundan* notables. As Hakuchō suggests, while Uchimura claimed to hate *shōsetsu*, he still wrote

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<sup>281</sup> この文章が読者の胸に追って来るのである。ここに叙せられてゐるやうな體驗が、小説として有るがままに描寫されたなら、波瀾ある人生として読者の心を惹いたであらうが、それは内村に期待されないことであつた、小説を嫌ひ演劇を嫌つた内村は、聖書が傑れた小説として讀まるべく、演劇味に富んでゐる事が氣づかなかつたのである。」  
Ibid., 352.

as if he were creating *shōsetsu*. The irony is that Uchimura claimed to “hate” fiction, but still constructed his life in texts that could grab the attention of his audience. In Hakuchō’s view,

... Uchimura was by nature a lover of drama and fiction (*shōsetsu*) and his oratory had a dramatic effect. Because of this, for a time, young men and women flocked to hear his lectures at the great hall in Ōtemachi, filling it to capacity. I think it best to say that Uchimura’s *Consolations of a Christian*, in whichever of its editions, was the *watakushi shōsetsu* of that era. Although Uchimura was prejudiced against *shōsetsu* and drama, he had a great affinity for poetry. By nature, he was a lover of poetry. Because of this, he made the teachings of Christianity crisp and bright. Even during his vagrant wanderings in the streets of America, he kept a copy of [Norinaga’s] *Kokinshū tōkagami* [古今集遠鏡] in his travel bag, and later he would even publish his own first-rate commentary on the *Kokinwakashū* in his magazine *Dokuritsu zasshi* [独立雜誌]. Uchimura loved to recite Japanese poems (*waka*), but even so, when holding a gathering to recite one thousand poems consecutively, he lamented that so many of these poems of blind passion and lust should be recited by unsullied lips.<sup>282</sup>

In the same way that Uchimura eschewed the fiction of his day, but took liberties in recounting his suffering, Uchimura employed theatrics in his public lectures while downplaying the theater. Hakuchō points to the popularity of Uchimura as a type of *dramatis personae*, explaining that Uchimura’s rhetorical style at the lecture podium could draw a crowd, moreso than his content.

For Hakuchō, Uchimura was clearly a literatus, a *bunjin*: and erudite figure, with a deep literary sense and a love of literary pursuits. And based on Uchimura’s understanding of classical poetry and drama (evident in his *How Shall We Attain Great Literature?*), it is unsurprising that Hakuchō should have developed such an opinion of Uchimura.

This *bunjin* 文人 persona is something typically ascribed to a wide array of literary figures from critics to authors, but it tends to evoke a strong (often eccentric) personality and an aura of deep study and learned authority. During the Meiji period, the *bunjin* occupied the role of public intellectual, whose voice was respected concerning a variety of topics. Again, an apt comparison to Uchimura is Mori Ōgai. While Uchimura imbibed American Romanticism (in the

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<sup>282</sup> Ibid., 372.

tradition of Longfellow, Whitman, and Lowell), Quaker ideals, Puritan morality, and American theology, Ōgai was poring over the work of Schopenhauer, Hegel, and Kant. Yet, both were exposed to Dante, Goethe, and Schiller in the same years. In addition, Uchimura was exposed to the literary ideals of Kant and Fichte through Carlyle. Carlyle espoused a view of Romantic philosophy concerning poetry as expression of universal truth, the purest art, which cannot be manufactured but must be created. Therefore, while their philosophical outlooks were different and their literary tastes would diverge (Ōgai loved to read novels in his spare time),<sup>283</sup> they both promoted ideas of what makes for good literature and labored to create texts that suited their ideals. Both wrote for a variety of magazines and newspapers, including Sohō's *Kokumin no tomo*. Both came from a samurai family and served in the government—Uchimura as an agricultural specialist and Ōgai as an army medical doctor. Both started their own magazines and interacted with and mentored students who would go on to have important careers in literary and governmental positions. Both were “eternal malcontents,” but rather than being an observer or “bystander,” as Dower and others have pointed out about Ōgai,<sup>284</sup> Uchimura never stopped attempting to change society, even after he withdrew from the public.

Ōgai had an open mind and explored a number of topics ranging from sexuality and romantic relationships to historical fiction that explored the themes of loyalty and filial piety.

Uchimura, on the other hand, could not tolerate subjects he deemed immoral or incompatible

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<sup>283</sup> "Since childhood I have liked novels, and so, after learning foreign languages, whenever there is time I read foreign novels." Mori Ōgai, "*Mōsō*" (*Delusion*), trans. Dower in *Monumenta Nipponica*, Vol. 25, No. 3/4 (1970), 419.

<sup>284</sup> "To the re-examination of tradition, Ōgai brought expertness, a disciplined and detailed knowledge of Western literature, science, and political, social, and philosophical thought. His involvement and authority in these fields set him apart within his own time and, in the final analysis, from his time. He was finally, in his own words, a bystander." John Dower, "Mori Ōgai: Meiji Japan's Eminent Bystander" in *Harvard Papers on Japan*, vol. 3, eds. Albert Craig and John K. Fairbank, (Cambridge: East Asian Research Center, Harvard University, 1963), 57.

with his Christian ideals. For instance, in 1897, in an English-language editorial he penned for the *Yorozu chōhō*, Uchimura criticized and lamented the mixture of alcohol and the recounting of sexual exploits among professors at a fall retreat (most likely one he attended while at the First Higher Middle School):

Let us draw one more pornograph, this time not of licentious foreign professors, but of those of our own kith and kin. The scene is a country-hotel, where a group of fifteen or twenty sensei and professors rendezvous in a sham-encampment to pass a chilly autumnal night. After much medicating with liquid-fire, the bacchanalia begins. One professor recounts his sinful exploits and the story he gives reminds one of us who happens to be there, of the street scenes of the city of Sodom near the time of its final destruction. Alcohol sends him to sleep, and silence follows for a quarter of an hour or so. Now the story is taken up by another professor whose narratives sound to our ears more like the brays of asses or the neighs of horses than the rational speeches of a man. Next comes the professor of Ancient Japanese Literature, usually considered a gravest of men (sic), with his contribution to the subject in discussion; then the professor of Natural Philosophy, a highly-intellectual looking man when you see him in his class-room, with the ditto from his own experience; and so on and so on. Even the principal himself is not displeased with the whole of discourses delivered in this singular conclave of eminent savants and literati. Long after midnight, steeped in the air highly charged with alcoholic fumes, they all go to sleep,—a sublime scene to see representatives of the highest intellect and morality of the nation, thus huddled together into one confused mass, all snoring like asses or horses after their day's works are done!

Now let Hogarth's brush<sup>285</sup> be employed, and another scene be drawn, where these very professors go through with all solemnity the patriotic worship they are called upon to perform. Loyal and patriotic professors, all these; and the nation's youths are being taught and guided by them, not in science and literature only, but in all the 'peculiar virtues of the land.'<sup>286</sup>

Again, he laments the morals of the literati and the learned, noting what he perceives to be a lack of sincerity in their careers and personal lives. In his essay "How Shall We Attain Great Literature" he explains that *bunjin*

"ought not to be drunkards, nor do they need to, in fact they mustn't enjoy the pleasure quarters. Literature is a serious profession, a profession for the brave; it is war, a war

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<sup>285</sup> William Hogarth (1697-1765) was an English painter, noteworthy for painting a series of "modern moral subjects" that included two series of six images ("The Harlot's Progress" and "The Rake's Progress") that lampooned the progression of what he saw to be the sexual immorality of his day.

<sup>286</sup> UKZS 4: 77-78

waged against the soul. It is war against the improper, against deceitfulness and shallow aesthetics. The use of brush and inkstone should be regarded as the work of the hidden life.”<sup>287</sup>

In short, Uchimura accepted what he thought was worthy and rejected what he thought to be immoral or insipid. He had a clear sense of the purpose and power of literature, and he exhorted his readers to consider his alternative points of view. Thus, he engaged his readership on his own terms, to the fascination and bewilderment thereof.<sup>288</sup>

### **Ōgai and Uchimura: Examination of Death**

While they were written at different stages of each author’s life, Uchimura’s *Consolations* and Ōgai’s *Mōsō (Delusion)* make for good examples of the personal concerns and travails of these two *bunjin*. While Uchimura frequently turned to Carlyle and others in the Anglo-American orbit, Ōgai turned to Schopenhauer and a host of German philosophers. Both engage the reality of death; both invoke personal details from their respective lives; both question how to live with an orientation to their moral frameworks; and both attempt to justify their respective worldviews.

Thinking about death, Ōgai writes:

It would be wrong to say, however, that I am calm concerning the extinction the self. It is vexing to lose this thing called self without or learned what it is while it existed. It is regrettable. To pass one’s life ‘living as drunk, dying as asleep,’ as the Chinese scholars say, is regrettable.<sup>289</sup> And as I regret this and am vexed by it, I feel acutely an emptiness in indescribable sadness.

This becomes anguish. It becomes a deep pain.

I often suffer this pain during those sleepless nights in the *garçon logis* in Berlin. Then I think that the things I have done from birth up to now have been superficial and

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<sup>287</sup> UKZS 3: 181

<sup>288</sup> It is valuable to read Uchimura with a sense of his rhetoric: defining “what is” by contrasting with “what is not.” Uchimura can be seen as frequently taking elements of Japanese culture that he loved and building upon those while eliminating that which he felt was improper.

<sup>289</sup> Ōgai uses the same Chinese turn of phrase as Kume Masao to invoke the difficulty of understanding lived experience, 醉生夢死.

fruitless. I experience the sharp feeling that it is nothing more than playing a role upon the stage. At such times fragments of Buddhist and Christian thought which I have read in books and heard from others rise in my mind without order, and immediately disappear. They disappear without bringing any comfort. I look repeatedly at all the inferences, all the facts, of the natural science I have studied up to now, seeking if there is not something, somewhere, which will give comfort. But it is all in vain.<sup>290</sup>

Here, we see the universal pain of the individual trying to come to grips with the fact that nothing can truly prepare one for death. All the experiences, all the learning, all the observation of life means nothing when the individual's existence ceases. Ōgai's narrator attempts to find peace by looking to Hartmann's theory of the Unconscious but to no avail. Stirner, and Mill could not placate him because they, too, admit that the individual's consciousness comes to an end. Ōgai's narrator is looking for life that extends to eternity, but Schopenhauer lets him down as well: his concept of enduring beyond the grave is found in the humanity that the one who dies leaves behind. This does not console the one who is contemplating the end of individual existence. The narrator turns toward Buddhism, and considers that perhaps the Japanese ideas of life and death had better answers than these philosophers. But in the end, the narrator cannot find meaning, but attains a kind of peace about his existence. Existence lasts within the narrative of the mind. He may not fear death, but he does not appear ready for it. He ends his reflection:

With the feeling of an unfinished dream, without fearing death, without longing for death-thus the old man spends the remainder of his days, days that are already numbered.

Like a long chain, this old man's memory of the past sometimes runs over the traces of ten years in an instant. Then his penetrating eyes open wide, he stares at the distant sea and sky.

This is a scrap scribbled down at such a time.<sup>291</sup>

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<sup>290</sup> Mori Ōgai, "Delusion (*Mōsō*)", trans. John Dower in *Monumenta Nipponica*, Vol. 25, No. 3/4 (1970), 420.

<sup>291</sup> *Ibid.*, 430.

Throughout his autobiographical trilogy, Uchimura's narrator also reflects on death and the search for meaning in life. But rather than German philosophy or Buddhist beliefs, he refers to classical Western ideas, famous authors, and principles he learned from the Christian faith. At the end of *Consolations of a Christian*, reflecting on life and death, Uchimura writes:

You do not know whether concept of the coming future will comfort you or not. When I explain this to you, you respond with the fear of pain. But the hope of many of the greatest heroes and holy men in this world has been faith in the existence of the future. Up until his death, Socrates continued to argue for the inextinguishable soul of man. When the old preacher, John Robinson, heard from the doctor news of his grave condition, he said to his friend, "Is death not an easy thing?" When Swedenborg was on the verge of dying, his friend asked him what was in his heart, and he replied, "I feel the joy of when I was young and wanted to go visit my grandmother." Victor Hugo, the French poet and novelist, whose works shook Europe to its foundations, was heavily criticized by highly respected religionists and politicians who had written that he was a nihilist and an atheist. When he was eighty years of age, he had the hope that belongs to the prime years of life. One day, he confessed his faith in life after death, saying,

I feel myself the future of life. I am like a forest once cut down; the new shoots are stronger and livelier than ever I am rising, I know, toward the sky. The sunshine is on my head. The earth gives me its generous sap, but heaven lights me with reflection of unknown worlds. You say the soul is nothing but the resultant of the bodily powers. Why, then, is my soul more luminous when my bodily powers begin to fail? Winter is on my head and eternal spring is in my heart. There I breathe at this hour the fragrance of the lilacs and violets, and the roses as at twenty years. The nearer I approach the end, the plainer I hear around me the immortal symphonies of the words which invite me. It is marvelous, yet simple. It is a fairytale, and is history...<sup>292</sup>

And:

On the day before his death, John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, faced his friend a number of times and with strength regained, said, "The greatest joy is God and God with us." Among all the things that human beings have, the God of all creation is the highest good, the most precious. God exceeds all wealth and possessions, the health of the body, wife and children, and anything we could own. I worry about wealth being stolen or wasted. My country, my church, or my friends may reject me. Work and vocation may animate me greatly, but this body of flesh will certainly pass away. But from eternity to eternity, what I must lay hold of is God himself. What humans value is much lower than that of the God most high; we will never be satisfied with these things.<sup>293</sup>

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<sup>292</sup> UKZS 2: 69

<sup>293</sup> Ibid., 70.

Here, Uchimura's narrator is asking the same questions, or at least has similar concerns to Ōgai's, and looks to other authorities to help him find answers. Each responds in kind to the philosophical standpoint and religious worldview they inherited, and tries to find resolution to the problem of mortality.

Not only does *Consolations of a Christian* fit within the context of Meiji autobiographical texts, Uchimura's first autobiographical work connects with the greater tradition of Japanese self-writing. As Marvin Marcus has pointed out, Japanese modes of self-reflective writing have a long-established history.<sup>294</sup> Beginning with the Heian era (794-1185), the earliest examples of this tradition are numerous. Canonical works of classical Japanese, such as Ki no Tsurayuki's *Tosa Diary*, The Mother of Michitsuna's *Kagerō Diary*, *The Sarashina Diary*, and *The Pillow Book* of Sei Shonagon are but a few prominent examples. Many important diaries date to the subsequent Kamakura era (1185-1333). These include Fujiwara no Teika's *Chronicle of the Bright Moon*, as well as the *Diaries of Nun Abutsu*, and the anonymous *Journey Along the Seaside Road*.<sup>295</sup> Numerous diaries of priests and soldiers were produced in the Muromachi period.<sup>296</sup> During the Edo period, the output of autobiographical *zuihitsu* works expanded greatly.<sup>297</sup> *Zuihitsu* would continue into the Meiji period—and well beyond. One need only look at the deeply personal and highly crafted *zuihitsu* of Natsume Sōseki, Kōda Rohan,

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<sup>294</sup> Marvin Marcus, "The Impact of Autobiography on the Meiji Literary Scene" in (*Biography* Vol. 15, No.4) pp. 371-72.

<sup>295</sup> For more on Kamakura-era diaries, see Keene, Donald. *Seeds in the Heart* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 825-865. Of course, Uchimura's *How I Became a Christian* was given the sub-heading, "Out of my Diary"; Uchimura's "diary" aspects will be addressed in Chapter 4.

<sup>296</sup> *Ibid.*, 971-998.

<sup>297</sup> *Zuihitsu*, or "following the brush," is an essayistic genre which includes various kinds of memoiristic writing. See the numerous volumes and editions of the *Nihon Zuihitsu Taisen* and Steven D. Carter's *Columbia Anthology of Japanese Essays* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014), pp. 105-360.



Kōda Aya, Uchida Roan, and Uno Chiyo, to name but a few.<sup>298</sup> Even Uchimura himself wrote *zuihitsu*, which were read by Dazai Ōsamu while Dazai was hospitalized in 1935.<sup>299</sup> In this way, literary precedent paved the way for an autobiographical reading of *Consolations of a Christian* and my placing it within the parameters of modern Japanese self-writing.

I should note that central to this text is the frequent questioning of faith. Are the voices the narrator hears from heaven or hell? Will God listen to his prayers? Does God really help the poor? Is failure the mark of one who is a naïf? Should he compromise himself to become successful? How strong is the temptation to find influence through money and power? Will his sickness ever go away? Perhaps God has abandoned him, as the satanic voices say while urging him to quit his quest for justice and uprightness; wouldn't it be better to simply cheat the system

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<sup>298</sup> As a testament to the enduring popularity of *zuihitsu*, note the two-hundred volume set entitled *Nihon no mei zuihitsu*, published by *Sakuhinsha*. Yanagita Izumi's *Zuihitsu Meiji bungaku* (Tokyo: Shunjusha, 1936) contains numerous *zuihitsu* that indicate the contextual development of the genre. This is an excellent source for further research into this genre, especially with regard to political ideologies, foreign literature, education, freedom, the individual, and personal expression.

<sup>299</sup> Although it was much later, Uchimura's personal works had an enduring effect upon a number of authors. How his ideas of 自然 and 神 were read is a major theme of Suzuki Norihisa's *Uchimura Kanzō wo meguru sakkatachi*, (Tokyo: Tamakawa daigaku shuppan-bu, 1980). For specifics on Dazai, see *Uchimura Kanzō wo meguru sakkatachi*, 150-152. Prior to writing *No Longer Human*, Dazai wrote, "For an entire week, Uchimura Kanzō's collection of personal narratives (*zuihitsu*) was always near my bedside. When I thought I might copy two or three sentences, it was of no use. I felt like I would have to cite the entire thing. At the same level that this book was "nature" (*shizen*) it was also quite a frightening book. I must confess to how completely I was enveloped by it. It caused me to loathe "Tolstoy's Bible," and wouldn't you know it, I came running to Uchimura's book of faith. Now, I am silent, like a tiny insect. I feel like I have taken my first step into the world of faith." 「内村鑑三の随筆集だけは、一週間くらし私の枕もとから消えずにみた。私は、その随筆集から二三の言葉を引用しようと思つたが、だめであつた。全部を引用しなければいけないやうな気がするのだ。これは「自然。」と同じくらしに、おそろしき本である。私はこの本にひきずり廻されたことを告白する。ひとつには、「トルストイの聖書。」への反感も手伝つて、いよいよ、この内村鑑三の信仰の書にまゐつてしまつた。いまの私には、虫のやうな沈黙かあるだけだ。私は信仰の世界に一步、足を踏み入れてゐるやうだ。(「碧眼托鉢 (三)」の 'Confiteor' 『日本浪漫派』 二の三、一九三六年三月)。」

and become rich? Or why not just forget God altogether and commit suicide to get out from under his burden of debts? When he has no money, no friends, and no prospects for the future, these voices assail him constantly. But then, in the midst of all this spiritual turmoil, the narrator finds encouragement from authors he loves to read, cites passages of the Bible, and claims to hear God's voice, sometimes in still, small ways, but other times in deep, resonant, stentorian tones.

### **Examples and Analysis**

Let us now turn our attention to the stylistic, thematic, and structural details of *Consolations of a Christian*. Throughout this text, Uchimura deals with lament and frustration, his feelings regarding that lament, and how a Christian believer might tackle such a situation armed with theology and principled reasoning so as to attain the strength and encouragement to continue living, believing, and working. He also injects his deep emotional responses into each situation. For example, with regard to death, he writes of his guilt in not appreciating his spouse while she was alive, his despair at unanswered prayer, and his coming to grips with the pain of loss. When dealing with being rejected by his nation, he explores feelings of alienation and of having no home to which he might return. He recounts the accusations leveled against him and decries the superficiality of the church that has also rejected him. But for each lament, after a thorough examination of the situation, he arrives at a consolatory conclusion. In one way, this intense self-centeredness may be another reason that Hakuchō and others saw this work to be a “prototype” of the *shi-shōsetsu*.

Uchimura's style, as Hakuchō mentioned, is engaging for the reader. He anticipates questions and objections that the reader may have, invokes the words of authors and personae with whom the reader may have no prior contact, and piques the curiosity to track down his

off-handed references.<sup>300</sup> Like other essayists of his day, Uchimura relies on a wide variety of classical Japanese rhetorical devices (especially the classical oratory form of *refutatio*) to emphasize his assertions, enlist the sympathy of the reader, and assist his argumentation. One common device is hypophora, in which he raises one or more initial questions in order to discuss them at length. By setting the parameters for his argument, he is able to challenge his own views or take on the words of a skeptical reader, only to defuse them at length. The questions are often presented in the form of those “other voices” that come from within—or without—such as when the voices are attributed to Satan, angels, and even God himself. This draws the reader closer to Uchimura’s narration while also revealing something about Uchimura’s thought process. A good example of this aspect of Uchimura’s style comes from chapter one. After the *lèse-majesté* incident, Uchimura had been criticized as disloyal, and his patriotism was called into question. Christianity was declared to be incompatible with the essence of the *kokutai*, since it required ultimate loyalty to the Christian God, not the emperor. Uchimura wished to show that “patriotism” as the ideologues understood it was not the only way to view love of country. He wrote:

‘How should one cultivate a patriotic heart?’ Frequently, I hear the following answers: ‘teach national literature’ and ‘have the national anthem be sung.’ But, patriotism is something that, like people, develops naturally—just like one’s own thoughts and feelings, or the growth of one’s own body. While these citizens invoke the word ‘patriotism’ as a duty, they lose their patriotism. A child who merely invokes the words ‘filial piety’ is no filial son. They fill the air with the noise of their empty words, blocking the true pathways of patriotism. Because I am one who truly loves my country, I do not wish to become one who drones on about patriotism.<sup>301</sup>

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<sup>300</sup> He may be showing off his knowledge; it is similar to *honkadori*, (allusive variation) but using texts and contexts of Western prose. Akutagawa’s use of Western stories alongside Japanese historical contexts has also been seen as a type of *honkadori*. (See Keene, *Dawn to the West*, 556-591).

<sup>301</sup> 「如何にして愛国心を養成すべきや」とは余輩が暫々耳にする問題なり、曰く国民的の文学を教ゆべしと、曰く国歌を唱えしむべしと、然れども人若し普通の発達を為せば彼に心情の発達するが如く、彼の軀軀の成長するが如く、愛国心も自然に発達すべきも

Using hypophora, he asks, “How should one cultivate a patriotic heart,” and then he gives examples of the incorrect answers he hears. They are merely paying lip-service (*tatema*) to love of country, but he claims to have a truer understanding and internalization of love for country (*hon*). In giving his own answer, he uses parallelism, as is also typical of his style: “While these citizens invoke the word ‘patriotism’ as a duty, they lose their patriotism. A child who merely invokes the words ‘filial piety’ is no filial son.” He links the idea of the so-called “patriots,” who *koshō* 呼称 (call out by name, hearken unto) “patriotism” as some kind of performance or duty but without any real understanding of the thing itself, to a child who can *shō suru* 称する (to name, call, speak) the words “filial piety.” Knowing what filial piety is does not make this child a filial son.<sup>302</sup>

Turning to the hyperbolic, Uchimura criticizes these ideologues who say they are patriots by countering that they have no idea what patriotism is and yet have the gall to call Uchimura anti-patriotic. Uchimura refuses even to engage them because those who argue about patriotism do not know what it is. In this way, it becomes almost preterition: disregarding a matter by pretending to omit it. Finally, in his repetition of the noun, patriotism, *aikoku* 愛国, rather than using *kore* or *are*, has the effect of epistrophe, repeating

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のなり、義務として愛国の呼称するの国民は愛国心を失ひつつある国民なり、孝を称する子は孝子にあらざるなり、愛国の空言喧しくして愛国の実跡を絶つに至る、余は国を愛する人となりて、愛国を論ずるものとならざらんことを望むものなり。(UKZS 2:17)

<sup>302</sup> This may also be a play on words, which could also be read, “the child who intones the words ‘filial piety’ is no Confucius *kōshi* 孔子”. Inoue and other critics of Uchimura were using Confucian rhetoric to defend the Imperial Rescript on Education, which invokes loyalty and filial piety toward the emperor as key features of Japanese identity and a fundamental duty incumbent upon Japanese citizen-subjects.

a word or phrase at the end of successive clauses and sentences. In this one example are many rhetorical devices that Uchimura deftly employs in his argumentation.

Other times in his text, he uses procatalepsis or “prebuttal” to anticipate objections to his position and then immediately explain his position, without setting up a longer schema. He frequently uses the classical Japanese anaphora of *nanzo...muya* 何ぞ...むや and *nanzoya* 何ぞや to further argue his point with rhetorical questions. For example, when dealing with clergy in the church who attacked him, he was wondering how best to deal with them as a Christian. Echoing the style of St. Paul in one of his letters to the early churches, Uchimura writes,

As I continue to deceive myself, my true nature has become that of an evil spirit. Well then, shall I completely reject my Christian identity and return to my former life in the World? Nay, let me not stop there, shall I attack what has been until now, my Christian church? Well, how can I pray to the God of my enemies? How can I revere and study the bible of my enemies? I am a Unitarian, an atheist, a hypocrite, one who must not associate with God’s church, I am a wolf, I am a fanatic... well then, from now on, let me study Hume, Bolingbroke, and Gibbon, and cut down the Christian church with one stroke.<sup>303</sup>

Of course, Uchimura would never become a traitor or become an atheist or mouth anti-Christian sentiments like those just mentioned. As he has shown, he frequently prays, reads, and cites the Bible: this is crucial to his identity and the source of his inspiration, morality, and spiritual well-being. I should also note that, in addition to rhetoric from both

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<sup>303</sup> 余は自己を欺きつつありしもの余の真性は悪鬼なりしなり、何ぞ今日よりは基督信徒たるの名を全く脱し普通世人の世涯に帰らざる、否な、斯に留まらずして余の今日迄基督教会を攻撃せざる、何ぞ余の敵の神に祈るを得むや、何ぞ余の敵の聖書を尊敬し研究するを得むや、余はユニテリアンなり、無神論者なり、偽善者なり、神の教会に属すべからざるものなり、狼なり、狂人なり、よし今より後はユーム、ボーリンブローク、ギボン、インガソールの輩を学び一刀を基督教の上に試みばや。(UKZS 2: 26)

classical Western and Japanese traditions, he employs argumentation that is drawn from the scripture itself. Not only does he quote the scripture, but he merges his own words with it, paraphrases it, and presents arguments inspired by the words of the psalmists, Isaiah, Job, and Paul. These are especially pertinent when he describes the feelings of suffering, abandonment, and encouragement— examples of which will be discussed below.

However, in the above case, the classical *nanzo...muya* hyperbole then sets up Uchimura to argue against those who had attacked him in the press and within church circles, as well as the skeptical reader, whom he often addresses directly (*dokusha yo*). He expresses why none of these things are true about him and that because his faith is in Christ alone, he does not need to worry about what others say: Christ himself shall judge Uchimura according to Uchimura's *faith*. Whether or not the church on earth rejects him, God does not reject him—because of his belief and his commitment. This sense of relying on the external judgment of his “highest good” increasingly becomes central to his self-understanding. Undoubtedly, Uchimura makes good use of the rhetorical tools at his disposal to move his reader along with engaging examples and lofty prose, comparable with others who wrote in the *kanbun* style, stretching back to the Edo period.<sup>304</sup> Uchimura's language, and even the construction of “others” with whom to debate are part and parcel of the larger Meiji rhetorical tradition. For instance, in “Letter to my Fellow Sisters” (*Dōhō shimai ni tsugu*, 1884), as Rebecca Copeland points out, Nakajima (Kishida) Shōen “avails herself of a clever rhetorical style whereby she introduces contrary arguments and then demolishes them one by

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<sup>304</sup> For instance, one might think of Norinaga's *kakaika* dispute with Akinari, wherein he takes pot-shots at Confucian thinkers, and refers to Akinari as “A certain crazy-man” (彼狂人) when discussing Akinari's ideas.

one with sharply honed logic and snappy wit.”<sup>305</sup> Here is a short example of her use of the hypothetical interlocutor:

論者 毫もこれを論ぜず。只これ男子は強し女子は弱し故に同等ならず。同権ならずと孟浪に論じ了れるは何ぞ議論の疎かなるや。故に或論者の謂ゆる強弱を以て尊卑貴賤を定むるの論は道理なくして取るには足らざる愚論にぞはべるなり。  
(「自由燈」第2号 1884年5月18日)

Interlocutor: “I shall not argue with you in the slightest. Men and women are unequal because men are strong and women are weak. They do not have equal rights.” Thus, they continue their fruitless argumentation. Isn’t (*nanzo*) their debate quite foolish (*ya*)? Therefore, through what they call “strength and weakness,” commentators of both high and low status unreasonably argue on, persisting in their empty rhetoric. (translation mine)

Copeland cites Nakajima’s dismissal of the “strengths and weaknesses” logic, where Nakajima compares the strength of sumo wrestlers to that of ordinary men: if relative strength were the determining factor in the hierarchy among men, then sumo would rule the land, and the aristocrats would “surely count themselves beneath the lowest of our low—the former outcasts. Where is the sense in such logic?”<sup>306</sup>

Uchimura also employs mischievous criticisms of authority, and enjoinders the reader to cling to conviction and challenge what he considered to be wrong. It is also clear that he resonated with Thomas Carlyle, and attempted to bring the spirit of Carlyle to his texts.<sup>307</sup> In a letter to his American friend David C. Bell, Uchimura noted (in English) that:

They say I am a little Carlyle and am too erratic to go on with others. Let God’s will be done. Though struggles in the school are thus nothing but sound and smoke, those in the literary field wear a brighter aspect. My little book entitled the “Consolations

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<sup>305</sup> Copeland and Macphail, “*Kishida Toshiko (1863-1901)*” in Copeland and Ortobasi, eds. *The Modern Murasaki* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), 60.

<sup>306</sup> *Idem*.

<sup>307</sup> For a thorough treatment of Uchimura’s reception and emulation of Carlyle, especially Uchimura’s sense of Carlyle’s sincerity, frailty, and trust in the divine, see Ōta Yūzō, “Uchimura Kanzō: The Carlyle of Japan” in *Culture and Religion in Japanese-American Relations: Essays on Uchimura Kanzo, 1861-1930*, (Ann Arbor: Center for Japanese Studies at the University of Michigan, 1981), 55-69.

of a Christian” met a marked success, and it is being sold very fast. Little side-shots I marked at professional clergymen offended some of them, but at large all the religious papers spoke very highly of the book. I think the second edition will be called for within a week. It is only 3 weeks yet since it was given to the public.<sup>308</sup>

In this letter, Uchimura also admits to “little side-shots” (pot shots) that offended the clergy. Like Carlyle, while discussing his own experiences from a historical standpoint, he takes veiled shots at the statist and Christians alike. We see that this was done on purpose. In line with his section on patriotism, Uchimura was using the text not only to call attention to his own suffering, but also to criticize what he believed to be lacking within society. He builds himself up to be the hero of his own work, using suffering to gain sympathy, but also using his experiences as an arena for discussing his ideals and challenging the status quo.

### **Recasting of Experience and Alignment to the Good**

Uchimura’s first chapter attempts to tackle one of life’s most complicated and distressing situations: having to work through the pain of the loss of a loved one. By way of this example, Uchimura addresses a common problem for believers: even when one has strong faith and prays, God remains silent and appears not to answer prayer:

Aah, my God, we demand of thee the things that we need. I prayed with all the fervor I have, but thou hast taken my beloved from me. Oh father, I believe. Having faith is easy for those whose requests have been answered, but then, drawing close to you is difficult for those thou hast not answered. The latter are exceeded by the former. As one who has received special grace from thee, if my fervent prayers are directed unto thee because thou hast not answered me, thou certainly hast heard my prayers.

Aah, I thank thee, I thank thee that because thou knowest I can endure this great trial, thou hast not heard my prayer. It is not because I am not fervent enough, but instead (according to your grace) I suffer because I am too sufficient in my fervency. Aah, am I not blessed?

Oh my beloved father, I believe that thou hast not sent troubles to me in order to punish me. We think that the word “punishment” must exist in your dictionary. Punishment is a word that is based on the law, but in the sphere of Christ, such a word is unnecessary; it is a noun that has no meaning at all. If, by force, this word must exist, then its definition would be “the grace of God who appears darkly.” From time to time,

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<sup>308</sup> UKZS 36:372



thou wilt discipline thy children whom thou lovest through the word known as “punishment.” Thou shalt drive the teachers of thy church to return to the scriptures and read them in depth. Help them to repent of their errors.<sup>309</sup>

Uchimura’s narrator does not seem convinced by his own words. He asks, with irony, “Am I not blessed?” God has not heard his prayer, and he is deeply saddened and frustrated by God’s silence. Like the prophets Jeremiah and Isaiah, he accepts God’s judgment and God’s discipline, but he neither enjoys it nor does he find in it much consolation. His narrator has been too fervent in prayer, demanding God to bend to his own will. He interprets God’s silence as discipline: something that God sends in order to bring about internal change, even repentance. This is an honest expression of one who is attempting to have a relationship with the divine and stay aligned to God, even in the midst of suffering. Uchimura is not pretending to be a happy Christian, nor does he believe that one’s faith should bring about one’s desires. Rather, in faith, he embraces suffering while, like Moses or Jeremiah, frankly speaking of his frustrations with God back to God and taking God to task for God’s action or lack thereof.

The following example is complicated by Uchimura’s sense of guilt for mistreating his wife during his sickness. He was severe to her, but she treated him with respect. She wore herself out for him, and he was an ingrate. Now that she is gone, he has feelings of tortured guilt:

Since losing my beloved, my guts are gripped with the pain of remorse. I can hardly bear it! When she still walked this earth, I was so accustomed to her love. The times when I would frown in disgust, she would reward me with a gentle smile. Without revealing her true feelings, she would show concern for me all the more. At times she would feel guilty, and even when she was extremely sick, she would focus her attention on my care and encouragement—and for many months she wore out her body and her spirit in nursing me back to health. I would bark at her with the roughest of words, and she never responded in kind. She was nothing but kind and did everything with loyalty, while I, time and again, treated her with harshness and insolence. Recalling this, I feel nothing but shame before heaven and earth, and have lost the one who deserved to live on: she was

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<sup>309</sup> UKZS 2:11

the blameless one. I am wracked with remorse over my inability to repent, and my body is tortured in the eternal flames of hell.<sup>310</sup>

His lack of love shown to his wife is rooted in what he considers his sinful, fleshly self. She took care of him in his illness and was good to him despite his harshness. As he reflects on his experiences, now that she has died he feels intense guilt in retrospect. He realizes he deserves to be punished for his sin, and yet she was the one who died. While he was not sensitive to her when he was harsh with his wife, he feels responsible for her death and later, suffers deep guilt. As is clear here and throughout his autobiographical trilogy, Uchimura possesses a sensitive conscience that is easily seared with guilt. The guilt connected to his sin-consciousness is also central to the self that emerges in this text. The narrator constantly gazes inward and is disgusted by the person he has become and the actions he has undertaken. He tries to make sense of the situation and must look outward to society and to God to navigate the interior and exterior moral frameworks within which he must operate. Once he understands the experience, he looks to God for forgiveness and consolation that he may attest to the person he is and the person he wishes to become. In a way, this is consistent with the confessional works found in the West as well as the Japanese tradition of revelatory tales, or *zange mono*. In both cases, the act of confession is used to

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<sup>310</sup> UKZS 2:13-14 「余は余の<sup>うしない</sup>失いものを思ふ毎に余をして常に<sup>だんちょうこうかい</sup>断腸後悔<sup>た</sup>殆ど堪ゆる能はざるあり、彼が世に存せし間、余は彼の愛に慣れ、時には<sup>ふきょう</sup>不興を以て彼の<sup>びしょう</sup>微笑<sup>むく</sup>に報い、彼の<sup>しんい</sup>真意を解せずして彼の余に対する<sup>くりよ</sup>苦慮<sup>ぞうか</sup>を増加し、時には彼を<sup>かせき</sup>呵嘖し、甚だしきに至りては彼の<sup>びょうちゅう</sup>病中余の<sup>えんじょ</sup>援助を乞ふに当たって一<sup>たとひ</sup>仮令数月間の<sup>かんご</sup>看護の<sup>ため</sup>に余の身も精神も<sup>あば</sup>疲れたるにもせよ一<sup>ことば</sup>荒らかなる<sup>おお</sup>言語を以て、之に<sup>おお</sup>応せざりし事ありたり、彼はすべて<sup>にうわ</sup>柔和にすべて<sup>むく</sup>忠実なるに我は幾たびか<sup>げんこく</sup>厳酷にして不実なりしや、之を思へば余は地に<sup>は</sup>恥ぢ天に恥ぢ、<sup>むく</sup>報ゆべきの彼は<sup>ゆるし</sup>失せ、<sup>こ</sup>免を乞ふの人はなく、余は<sup>こ</sup>悔ひ能はざるの<sup>こうくわい</sup>後悔に<sup>くるし</sup>困められ、無限地獄の火の中に我身を<sup>せ</sup>責め<sup>た</sup>立てたり。」

propel the narrative forward, manipulating the narrative in order to suit the didactic purpose of the author. Uchimura falls within this tradition as well.

The second chapter, on the theme of being rejected by one's countrymen, is most central to his laments and treats what is a direct cause for all of the other problems he endures. Though it is the second of six chapters, the reader ought to consider it as addressing the central problem of the work. It opens with a direct statement that leaves no doubt as to Uchimura's position:

“Patriotism [the love of country] is the natural state of humanity. It is not what compels me to love my parents, wife, and children, because I cannot help but love them. As a general offering of one's feelings, is there anyone who does not love the country that gave him life? Even birds and beasts recognize their dwellings; needless to say, when it comes to man, [they are] like the Jewish patriots of long ago, who sat on the banks of the rivers in Babylon longing for their homeland of Zion and composed the following with flowing tears:

‘O Jerusalem, If I should forget you,  
    may my right hand forget its skill!  
If I do not remember you,  
    If I do not make Jerusalem  
Above my every joy  
    Let my tongue cling to the roof of my mouth.’  
(Psalm 137, 5-6 ESV)<sup>311</sup>

This is patriotism and none other. This true feeling has touched my soul, nay, is a part of my soul; I could not have learned this from any other place.”<sup>312</sup>

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<sup>311</sup> Scripture quotations are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

<sup>312</sup> 「愛国は人性の至誠なり、我の父母妻子を愛する強ひられて之を為すにあらず、愛せざるを得ざればなり、普通の感能を供へしものにして誰か己に生を与えし国土を愛せざるを得ざるものあらんや、鳥獸且つ其棲家を認む況や人に於てをや、曾てユダヤの愛国者がバビロン河の辺りに座し、故国のジオンを思ひでて、涙を流して弾じて曰く、イルサレムよ、もし我汝をわすれなば、／我が右の手にその巧みをわすれしめたまえへ／もし我汝をおもひいでず、もし我イルサレムをわがすべての喜歡の極となさずば、／わが舌を顎につかしたまへ、／と、是れ愛国なり、他にあるなし、此の真情は我が靈に付着するもの、否な、靈の一部分にして、外より学び得たるものにあらざるなり」  
(UKZS 2:16)

Uchimura not only establishes his patriotic feelings as something natural to all humanity but also projects his own universal love for country back into the Biblical story of the Judean captivity in Babylon after Jerusalem and its temple were destroyed in 586 BCE. In the psalm he quotes, the Jewish captives are longing for their lost homeland and *cannot* be consoled because of it.<sup>313</sup> Their captors insisted they sing songs of their homeland, “the LORD’s songs,” but they could not bear to do this in a foreign land. In Uchimura’s thinking, God and one’s homeland are inextricably connected, much as one is linked in love to one’s family.<sup>314</sup>

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<sup>313</sup> Interesting questions arise: in 1893, how much context would the average Meiji reader have had regarding this particular psalm, and how familiar did Uchimura expect the uninitiated to have been with the Babylonian captivity? The Psalms were one of the first books of the Bible translated into Japanese, by Guido Verbeck. While speculating to a certain degree, Howes infers that,

“...readers are expected to have learned but little from living, at the same time they are expected to have learned much from books. Uchimura simplifies his written style for readers by use of a sentence structure that clearly indicates the relationship between its various parts, but the recondite Chinese characters presuppose a considerable degree of literacy. His allusions and quotations also assume acquaintance with Western history, language, and literature. He refers in passing to William Penn, the missionary David Livingston, the nineteenth-century American financier-philanthropist George Peabody, and pioneer social workers John Howard, Elizabeth Fry, and Stephen Girard. He also quotes such Western staples as Milton’s *Paradise Lost*, Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*, Goethe’s *Faust*, Lowell’s *The Vision of Sir Launfal*, and Carlyle’s *Cromwell*. They appear along with many other writers who, like the English poets Thomas Hood and John Gay, are now little remembered in their homelands. Although Uchimura translated most of the quotations from these authors, he did not translate a number of them, and readers must have brought to bear either plodding patience or considerable background to follow his train of thought. In addition, the reader was expected to know the Bible well enough to accept Christianity and the church as normal parts of life. In these various ways, the works were addressed to members of that group who, like Uchimura, had received elite training that equipped them to consider themselves both Japanese and Western” (Howes, *Japan’s Modern Prophet*, 94).

<sup>314</sup> Early thoughts on patriotism and the Bible can be found in his reprise of his sojourn in America found in *Ryūzanki* (Record of an Exile), as well as *How I Became a Christian*, where he discussed his encounter with Jeremiah while working in a mental hospital:

I peeped into Jeremiah, though the Superintendent once gave us a notice that he would not allow any Jeremiah upon his ground, for such would set the whole house to weeping

Uchimura remarks upon why people might question the patriotism of a person such as himself. He explains that while America was richer and had superior technology to Japan's, he does not love America more than Japan. He makes similar claims regarding England's political system, the arts of Italy, German philosophy, and French law. While they all may excel Japan in some way, they do not constitute grounds for disdaining Japan. Though Mt. Cotopaxi<sup>315</sup> is taller than Mt. Fuji, he is more impressed with Fuji, since he is reminded of it in Cotopaxi. These, he claims, are the natural sentiments of any true Japanese man (*yamato*

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in sight of all the miseries in the Hospital. And lo! What a book! So human, so understandable; so little of future-tellings (*sic*) in it, and so much of present-warnings! Without a single incident of miracle-working in the entire book, the man Jeremiah was presented to me in all the strength and weakness of humanity. 'May not all great men be called prophets?' I said to myself. I recounted to myself all the great men of my own heathen land and weighed their words and conducts (*sic*); and I came to the conclusion that the same God that spoke to Jeremiah did also speak to some of my own countrymen, though not so audibly as to him; that He did not leave us entirely without His light and guidance, but loved us and watched over us these long centuries as He did the most Christian of nations. The thought was inspiring beyond my power of expression. Patriotism that was quenched somewhat by accepting a faith that was exotic in origin, now returned to me with a hundred-fold more vigor and impression. I looked at the map of my country and wept and prayed over it. I compared Russia to Babylonia, and the Czar to Nebuchadnezzar, and my country to helpless Judea to be saved only by owning the God of Righteousness... For two years from this time I read almost nothing from my Bible but the Prophets. The whole of my religious thought was changed thereby. My friends say that my religion is more a form of Judaism than the Christianity of the Gospels. But it is not so. I learnt from Christ and His Apostles how to save my soul, but from the Prophets, *how to save my country*." Uchimura Kanzō, *How I Became a Christian: Out of My Diary*, (Tokyo: Kyōbunkan, 1971), 141-142.

Written in English in 1893 and first published in English and Japanese in 1895, we can see the construction of Uchimura's reception of the Hebrew prophets as well as his own desire to be a prophet for Japan and the recovery of the patriotic spirit which had somewhat waned after his initial conversion to Christianity. This, too, was written during the time his dedication to Japan was questioned and declared incompatible with his religious belief.

<sup>315</sup> Mt. Cotopaxi is a strato-volcano located near Quito, Ecuador. One of the highest volcanoes in the world, it reaches 19,347 ft. By way of comparison, Cotopaxi has the same general shape as Mt. Fuji, which reaches only 12,389 ft.

*danshi*).<sup>316</sup> In his writings on Japan's mission in the world,<sup>317</sup> Uchimura claims that Japan ought not to be concerned with profit or with gaining territory through wars; instead it ought to be a servant of the world— *sekai no Nihon*, that is “The World's Japan.” He believes this will be possible if Japan can embrace helpful ideas from the West and then merge them with the spirit of Japan (a reprise of the *wakon yōsai* credo). This spirit, as found in the figures he selects for his *Representative Men of Japan* (1895), is one that is committed to a cause, immovable, and adept at perfecting the minutiae of technology and arts from abroad. If Japan can learn from the West and then perfect what is missing in Western thought, Japan's *mission* (*tenshoku* 天職) in the world can be fulfilled: to aid global progress by fixing the things the West has lost sight of, despite its impressive progress in areas scientific, philosophical, and religious. Love for Japan means discovering what the true nature of Japan's uniqueness is—the commitment to fortitude and righteousness found in the brave figures of the past, including Nichiren and Saigō Takamori, and then using this for the benefit of the world. To love these things is true patriotism.

Next, he moves to the crux of his argument: is it a contradiction to claim that one simultaneously embraces patriotic feelings and love for God?<sup>318</sup> For Uchimura, loving God is

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<sup>316</sup> Ibid., 17. Note the use of the word *Yamato* to denote Japan. This is a fraught term, as Uchimura is surely aware. One may recall Norinaga saying that the *Kojiki* is pure *Yamato-kotoba*, and that Tsurayuki's *kana* preface to the *Kokinshū* proclaims that *Yamato kotoba* form seeds in the human heart from which sprout myriad leaves of words.

<sup>317</sup> *Nihon no tenshoku* (1892, UKZS 1: 284-296), *Sekai no Nihon* (1896, UKZS 3: 260-268)

<sup>318</sup> He questions whether being exiled means being forsaken by God, as the people try to speak for God:

But, if patriotism is a true feeling, and the love of truth and for the God of truth is also a true feeling, within a perfect society there should be no contradiction between the two. Loving God for the sake of the country, one can serve the people as a sanctified patriot. In every society, if people are rejected by the country, they are rejected by God. At that very time, truly the voice of the people is the voice of God. (*Vox populi est vox dei*).

a way of loving his country. However, he introduces another doubt that must be addressed: if society has abandoned him, does that mean he is utterly alone? Uchimura lists a number of famous Western exiles or rejects, including Jesus Christ, Socrates, Scipio Africanus of Punic War fame, and Dante Alighieri.<sup>319</sup> He notes their innocence but also that society had turned its back on them. Uchimura's contention is that because they loved their respective countries, they did not conform to the things they thought were wrong, and they therefore suffered for it. That is to say, their non-conformity did not make them unpatriotic; their love for homeland compelled them to follow their conscience. Uchimura follows this up by having his first-person narrator list that of which he had been accused: being a radical, being greedy, seeking fame, etc., and then questioning whether these accusations are true.<sup>320</sup> This is a tactic he employs throughout *Consolations*, in order to come to his own defense as he proceeds through the answers to these questions:

“While I acknowledge that at I am not perfect, neither is today's society. But, having been rejected by my compatriots, there may be some sins of which I am guilty that I am completely unaware of. The first is being a radical. This first sin is the root of my second sin: my unending quest for fame. I am greedy and strong-willed. Is it not possible that these sins are the cause of the misfortunes in which I am trapped?”<sup>321</sup>

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When rejected by the country, there is no man in heaven or on earth, even God himself, who can be brought to court.

<sup>319</sup> Uchimura had studied the life of Dante and was particularly impressed with the time when Dante was exiled from his native Florence.

<sup>320</sup> Again, it is important to note that while these things were said about Uchimura, the fact that they were said about him is not so important as that the narrator he constructs suffers these things and that this narrator is able to use these experiences as a chance to discuss faith and philosophy without the specifics of daily events.

<sup>321</sup> 「余は現在の此余自身を以て不完全なるものと認むると同時に亦今日の社会を以て完全なるものと認むる能わざるなり、而して余の国人に捨てられし、罪或はにあらん、余の不注意なりし其一なり、余んの過劇なりしは其二ならん、余の心中名誉心の尚よ未だ跡を絶たざるあり、欲心も時に威をたくましふするあり、余の此不幸に陥りしは或は是等の為めならむ乎。」 (UKZS 1:18)

This type of self-questioning is generally followed by an interspersing of extemporaneous prayers and interjections of personal anguish, marked with the conventional *cri-de-coeur* expression “Aa” (嗚呼). In this particular case, after acknowledging his character flaws and the possibility of his own lack of patriotism, he continues:

“Aah, having now said this, what shall I do? Having just written that which should have remained hidden, are there not those who will laugh at my folly as I continue to justify myself? It is time to remain silent. Or at least I should be grateful that I may now stop talking. Of course, ordinary feelings need not be concealed. To be sure, I stood behind my own countrymen and cooperated with foreigners as much as possible; I came to be known as a Japan-maniac, and actually, this gave me great joy. But my own countrymen, in whom I have put my trust, abandoned me. Returning home, I had no hometown to return to, and I had no friends to rely on.”<sup>322</sup>

Uchimura’s narrator is not actually assenting to his accusations but is citing them in order to refute them, using examples of his faithfulness to Japan and zeal for his country in explaining Japan to foreigners. Simply having studied abroad and gaining a strong background in Western learning did not make him a traitor; it only made him more committed to the goal of reforming Japan. Thus, he felt rejected despite his faithfulness to Japan. He further describes his feelings of loneliness using the metaphor of a faithful wife suffering on her husband’s account.<sup>323</sup>

“My present position is like that of a poor wife, who, ever trying to be faithful to her only husband and praising him on every possible occasion, was divorced by her loving husband on a trivial misunderstanding. Like her, I have no house under heaven to hide me; I am ashamed to see others, and am left alone with unspeakable sorrow and loneliness”<sup>324</sup>

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<sup>322</sup> UKZS 2:18

<sup>323</sup> It is tempting to compare this example to the “misunderstanding” that led to the divorce of his first wife, Asada Take. For more details on the controversy surrounding Uchimura’s divorce and his questionable reasoning for it, see Masaike Megumu, *Uchimura Kanzō den* (Tokyo: Kyōbunkan, 1977), 87-95.

<sup>324</sup> Translation: Hashimoto Akio, “‘Jesus and Japan’ in the Thought of Uchimura Kanzō” (Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, STM Thesis, 1983), note 54, 42-43.



The misunderstood narrator is using a strong image of a good, faithful woman, cast aside for frivolous reasons, who has nowhere to go. He then responds with words of consolation in the form of a prayer:<sup>325</sup>

“Aah, my God, you have become my hidden home. Where there is no place for my pillow, I am taken into your bosom. Where there is no place in this world for my feet to stand, my whole heart traverses the heavens. Just as it takes surrounding darkness to look at the stars of the sky, as I climb to the highest heaven because I want to touch eternal benevolence, it is not the same as isolation from the company of the world below; my countrymen have rejected me, but I have gained the spiritual world.”<sup>326</sup>

While the narrator is suffering rejection and isolation, God becomes his sanctuary, his place of solace. As he draws nearer to God, the pains of this life do not compare; society may have rejected him, but he has heaven as his true homeland, his spiritual *furusato*.

Uchimura then returns to the examples of trials various misunderstood patriots had to endure before he turns to problematic political policies he is unable to address in this rejected state.<sup>327</sup> This is especially difficult for the narrator because, as a true patriot, he desires to address the ills of his land and help the country to advance. Afterwards, the narrator moves to describe how after being rejected by his country he is a “citizen of the world,” citing the German term *Weltmann* in conjunction with an inscription in Holyoke concerning astronomer Alexander von Humboldt: “Alexander von Humboldt, Born in Germany, a

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<sup>325</sup> The content of this 「嗚呼」 example is evocative of Psalm 32: 7: “You are my hiding place; you will protect me from trouble and surround me with songs of deliverance” (ESV).

<sup>326</sup> 嗚呼神よ、爾は余の隠家となれり、余は枕する場所なきに至て余は爾の懐に入れり、地に足の立つべき処なき、に至て我全心は天に逍遙するに至れり、周囲の暗黒は天体を窺ふに当て必要なるが如く、三階の天に登り、永遠の慈悲に接せむと欲せば、下界の交際より遮断さるるに若かず、国人は余を捨て余は靈界に受けれたり。」

<sup>327</sup> 「余の国人に捨てられしよりは然らず、余の実業論は何の用かある、誰が奸賊の富国策を聴かむや、余の教育上の主義並びに経験は何かある、誰が子弟を不忠の臣に委ねるものあらんや、余はこの土に在りてこの土のものにあらず、この土に関する余の意見は地中に埋没せられて、余は目も口もなき無用人間となりたり。」 (UKZS 2:19)

Citizen of the World.” In another extemporaneous prayer, the narrator then refers to himself as one from an entirely different world: an alien, someone not even from this planet (宇宙人). More than a metaphorical foreigner, he now considers himself completely apart from this world. He began by being rejected by his countrymen; having no home, he took refuge in the spiritual world and became a citizen of the world, but he ultimately finds himself an alien, one who must seek his true home elsewhere.<sup>328</sup>

This sense of alienation was by no means unique to Uchimura. In *The Culture of the Meiji Period*, intellectual historian Irokawa Daikichi suggests that Meiji intellectuals, who were looking for a “home,” both figurative and concrete, keenly felt the *angst* of modernity.<sup>329</sup> Irokawa explains that the collapse of the Freedom and Popular Rights movement of the 1880s came as the result of governmental suppression, economic depression, and the buildup of the landlord system. This movement materialized in the agrarian provinces, remote from Tokyo. But, as the provinces destabilized, young intellectuals who had been swept up in these movements fled to the cities.

600,000 small farmers went bankrupt, and over 2,000,000 people saw their households break up. The radical sector of the People’s Rights movement resisted this by resort to force and clashed with the army and police units a number of times, but

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<sup>328</sup> Uchimura’s subject position of loving Japan but also being a citizen of the world is continued in his *Kibō no kūki*, published in *Yorozu chōhō* in 1901. In this essay, he expresses deep disappointment with the political establishment, the sense that Japan can “receive” from other nations what it cannot find within, and the idea that he is part of the global brotherhood of humanity, regardless of race. See Irokawa Daikichi, *The Culture of the Meiji Period*, Marius B. Jansen, ed. (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1975), 206-207. Irokawa argues that mid-Meiji intellectuals had been criticized for isolating themselves from the masses, remaining in the metropole. Had these “giants,” including Yanagita Kunio, Deguchi Nao, Tanaka Shōzō, and Uchimura, been operating in a world where the urban and rural interacted within a larger contact zone, as they had in the early 1880s, perhaps their “mature” seeds of culture would have become “a truly national culture.” (207)

<sup>329</sup> *Ibid.*, 199, 202.

the coordinated Jiyūtō uprisings they had hoped for never took place, and as a result the Kabasan, Chichibu, and Iida incidents were suppressed one by one.<sup>330</sup>

Irokawa argues that the second generation of Meiji intellectuals (born between the 1850s and 1870s) “... were bruised in spirit and pessimistic in outlook; they set out with doubts about the optimistic views of politics that had been held by the first generation” (202). Many of these intellectuals were a mix of “former samurai, a portion of the old merchant class, and urbanized intellectuals,” including those who fled the countryside after the economic destabilization of the farmlands.

Throughout *The Culture of the Meiji Period*, one of Irokawa’s chief concerns is the alienation of Meiji individuals from their traditional homes and lands. Some became quite estranged from their native place and sought to make sense of this experience in their writings. As Western ideas permeated the intellectual sphere, individuals became increasingly inclined to free themselves from being bound to the local *ie* (home and traditional family lineage) that had sustained the family for generations.<sup>331</sup> Rather than being tied to folk religion with its traditional celebrations of the ancestral spirits, or the demands of the extended family, “modern” intellectuals tried, and often failed, to break away from such constraints.<sup>332</sup> And yet, leaving home would come at a certain emotional cost. Irokawa points

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<sup>330</sup> Ibid, 199. These incidents of democratic uprisings occurred in Ibaraki and Shizuoka prefectures between 1885-86 after the dissolution of the *Jiyūto* party.

<sup>331</sup> Ibid., 26-28. Also, in *Injurious to Public Morals* (Seattle and London: University of Seattle Press, 1984), Jay Rubin notes that by the early twentieth century, “The struggle between the hero’s individual needs and the demands of the family. . . would emerge as a dominant theme of the modern Japanese novel.” (p. 69) Examples include Futabatei’s *Heibon* (1907), Tōson’s *Ie* (1911), and Sōseki’s *Kokoro* (1914).

<sup>332</sup> The attempt to break from the traditional family system was quite challenging. Shimazaki Tōson’s struggles with the extended family are explored in great detail in *Ie*.

to Yanagita Kunio's *Tōno monogatari* and *Yama no jinsei*<sup>333</sup> as examples of the "sickness of soul" associated with the loss of home, an ensuing rejection of modernity, and an attempt to return to a rustic, simple life, untainted by modernity.<sup>334</sup> Thus, he concludes:

During the last half of the Meiji period—after the suppression of the early democratic movement and after the firmly established control of the emperor system, the bourgeoisie, and the landlord class—"modernity" was something that hemmed in the people with greater oppression and suffering than ever.

... After the 1880s and the development of the parasitic landowner system, when Japanese "folk society," which had been essentially different from European "civil society," began to show characteristics of a more bourgeois culture, that new society proved to be even more different from its European counterparts. Many Japanese intellectuals responded with cries of despair.<sup>335</sup>

Irokawa points out that the constant comparison of Japan's modern arts, literature, and politics to those of Europe and America is the reason many intellectuals were in despair.

They saw something they yearned for but could not produce at home. They looked back to the society of Edo and its *seken dōtoku* (世間道徳 common social morality, crucial for living harmoniously within the anonymity of the urban sphere), only to find it largely erased.

Irokawa points out that when:

... young spirits of Japan in the 1880s and 1890s discovered the romance of individual dignity or human liberation in Protestantism—or when in the words of Byron and Goethe, they suddenly awoke to become conscious of the "self"—they were brought to a change in values as though in response to a sudden wind. From that moment, these young [people] seem to have begun to feel that they were a race apart, virtual aliens among native Japanese.<sup>336</sup>

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<sup>333</sup> As part of Yanagita's folklore studies (*minzokugaku*) he compiled the *Tōno Monogatari*, which are traditional tales passed down from generation to generation, and recited by Sasaki Kizen, a native of Tōno in Iwate prefecture. These traditional tales depict the rustic life of the past and are deeply rooted in the landscape around Tōno. In the same manner, *Yama no jinsei* recounts regional beliefs and worship of the mountain *kami*. These narratives are deeply tied to the "folk" of the countryside.

<sup>334</sup> Ibid., 40.

<sup>335</sup> Idem.

<sup>336</sup> Idem.

Irokawa concludes that for *bunjin* coming of age after the collapse of the Freedom and Rights movement (including Ichiyō, Ōgai, Sōseki, Tōkoku, Takamura Kōtarō, Uchimura, and Yosano Akiko),<sup>337</sup> “it was natural to rebel against the psychological atmosphere of Meiji society. It seemed hopelessly dark, archaic, and dehumanized.”<sup>338</sup> When they realized that what they saw in the European and American models was “illusory” (especially in the case of the focus of this study, Uchimura’s *How I Became a Christian*), these intellectuals were better able to criticize the societies of both Japan and the West. For many, this resulted in further alienation and despair. For Uchimura, criticism of Japanese and Western modes of modernity offered a chance for reform and a way forward.

In the late Meiji period, authors like Kunikida Doppo (a one-time *deshi* of Uchimura) and Shimazaki Tōson grappled with the dislocation of modernity and the problems of the loss of the native place, as well as the reconstruction of that place from an ideological perspective. Stephen Dodd notes, “As a manifestation of ideology, *furusato* literature represents the efforts of literary producers who are not only seeking a stable map with which to anchor themselves in a disruptive modern society but also dialectically engage in the further construction of their own realities.”<sup>339</sup> As authors sought to make sense of their shifting, fragmented experiences, the feeling of nostalgia, of longing for a vanished “home,” caused them to attempt to reconstruct the idealized home of the past, weaving together themes of nature, tradition, “pure” relationships, thereby grounding one’s place in history. Dodd also notes that the urban landscape frequently reminded some authors of what they lacked, or had moved away from. Even if their experiences in the “primal landscape” of their youth were

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<sup>337</sup> See Irokawa’s list of notable “carriers of Meiji culture” in *Ibid.*, 200-202.

<sup>338</sup> *Ibid.*, 209.

<sup>339</sup> Stephen Dodd, *Writing Home: Representations of the Native Place in Japanese Literature* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004), 9.

but imperfect, the early memories of childhood (as in the case of Tōson) took shape “only through the perspective of his experiences in Tokyo.”<sup>340</sup> Thus, the urban landscape also not only affected the identity of place, but also shaped the self that remembered and longed for the idealized home of the past. The furusato narratives created self-identity and place-identity for authors struggling to make sense of past and present experiences.

As such, this alienation and attempted rediscovery of a “true home” can be further understood from a phenomenological perspective. Martin Heidegger,<sup>341</sup> the noted (and somewhat controversial) German philosopher,<sup>342</sup> held that in the modern era, we live in a general state of *angst*. This *angst* is attributable to various unnatural factors, such as being swallowed by a technological and contrivance-driven existence, which alienates us from the real world. As a result, we experience an uncanny, but nonetheless powerful, fear or anxiety. This is not the same as “ontic anxiety,” which is a fear of something that does not threaten one’s life or safety and can be ameliorated through counseling and/ or medication. Rather, this *angst*, which some have incorrectly translated as “dread,” is a state of alienation, of being unable to return to one’s true home. The more we are distracted by inauthentic modes of existence, subject to being herded together, to the overwhelming force of industrialization and mechanization, to an alienation from nature and from one another, the greater one’s

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<sup>340</sup> Dodd, 75.

<sup>341</sup> Active from the 1920s until his death in the 1970s.

<sup>342</sup> While many of his ideas on ontology are helpful, other ideas are not. Heidegger was a professor at the University of Freiberg, whose former student, Kiyoshi Miki was quite influential at the Kyoto School. However, during the Second World War, Heidegger was a member of the Nazi party and wrote a number of anti-semitic works in his “black notebooks” from 1931-1941. He was banned from teaching in 1949 as part of the de-nazification of Germany. While Heidegger privately admitted that his political activities were the “greatest mistake of his life,” he never publicly apologized for his support of the Nazi regime. See Victor Fariás, *Heidegger and Nazism*, (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1987) and Heinrich Wiegand Petzet *Encounters and Dialogues with Martin Heidegger, 1929-1976*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 37.

sense of *angst*. Heidegger reasoned that in this relentlessly technological age, we rely upon gadgets and other distractions to combat our underlying sense of *angst*, but to no avail.<sup>343</sup>

The alienation from “home” and the anxiety this produces are clearly reflected within *Consolations of a Christian*. Having remarked that he finds his home in the cosmos with other exiles and that he has wandered the spheres of Dante,<sup>344</sup> Uchimura’s narrator returns to his earlier connection to the Judean exiles in Babylon and ties the state of alienation and longing for home back to the motif of the divorced woman. He prays,

“However, even if I am an alien, can I forget my homeland? Aah, my God, if I should forget my homeland, Japan, I should forget the skill of my right hand. If a child could forget one’s mother, then I could forget my own country. Just as the woman who had a divorce letter foisted upon her yearns for her husband more and more, I ardently yearn for the country that has cut itself off from me. I wake up in the morning and my partner is not there. I face the night with no lover. I am completely alone; I have no home to return to.”<sup>345</sup>

This lament leads to a prayer for God to sustain him in this time, after which he likens himself to that faithful woman who, while rejected, has not rejected her husband in turn and

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<sup>343</sup> For Heidegger, to get rid of *angst*, one must come back into contact with Be-ing (*seinde*) and the ultimate existence (*Dasein*: “*das in die welt sein*”-- something akin to falling into rhythm with the Dao.) To escape *angst*, one must remove the distractions of modernity and live the life of meditative thought, which will allow for space to be cleared in the mind and in the daily, hurried routines. *Angst* is the absence of *dasein*. By addressing *angst* and calling it what it is, one can begin to find one’s way back “home” to earlier, primordial states of being, uncomplicated by the strain of modern existence and the clutter and clash of modernity.

<sup>344</sup> The Apostle Paul explained that he had a vision of God’s glory, where a “certain man” (most likely himself) was “caught up to the third heaven” (2 Cor. 12:1-6). In *Paradiso*, Dante conceives of heaven being made up of the orbiting planets, much like hell was a series of concentric rings. The planets all rotate around the center of God’s love. The more holy a person’s life, the closer to eternity one’s dwelling place. Dante’s third sphere, Venus, is for the souls of those who did good out of the virtue of love, but lacked self-control.

<sup>345</sup> 「然らば、宇宙人となりしに由り余は余の国を忘れしか、嗚呼神よ、若しわれ日本国を忘れば、わが右の手にその巧みを忘れしめよ、若し子たるものがその母を忘れ得るなれば余は余の国を忘れ得るなり、無理に離縁状を渡されし婦は益々其夫を慕うるが如く、捨てられし後は国を慕うは益々切なり、朝は送るに良人なく、夕は向かふるに恋人なく、今は孤独の身となりて、齊ふべきの家もなく」(UKZS 2:21)

continues to praise his virtues, though he is gone. He believes that one day, just like the faithless husband, Japan will admit its mistakes, and that he will be received once again. Owing to the adversity, his faith in God sustains him, and from this faith he derives ultimate consolation in this situation.<sup>346</sup>

Though the narrator has rejected the prevailing ideas of patriotism, he contends that his notion of patriotism shows the depth of love for his country. Because he had been attacked by the statist as a traitor, he somewhat arrogantly implies that those who claim to be patriots are not only less patriotic than he, but that their conception of patriotism is flawed.<sup>347</sup> His Christian faith is not at odds with his love of country; rather, it only increases

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<sup>346</sup> It is strange that he employs this motif of the faithful wife/ faithless husband, insofar as he had divorced his first wife, Take, after overhearing rumors that she may have been unfaithful to him. His divorce caused a considerable stir in the small Japanese Christian community; his friends tried to convince him of his rash mistake. Some speculate that Uchimura wanted to divorce Take because she was “too modern” and clashed with his overbearing mother. Uchimura’s parents had been against the marriage all along, and it was no small task to convince them to support the marriage. Uchimura himself was torn over siding with his bride or his mother. Perhaps this is why he was eager to dissolve the marriage. John Howes notes that “Before Uchimura became a professional student of the Bible in 1900, his works that took the form of commentary in fact served other purposes. *The Book of Ruth* reads like his self-justification before the rest of the Christian community for his divorce and refusal to accede to Take’s requests for reconciliation.” John Howes, *Japan’s Modern Prophet: Uchimura Kanzō, 1861-1930* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2005), 104.

<sup>347</sup> This was especially true of the self-appointed interpreter of the Imperial Rescript on Education, Inoue Tetsujirō, and by extension, *Kokutai shinron* author and Tokyo Imperial University president Katō Hiroyuki, who had abandoned his pro-*minken* position and supported the chauvinist *kokutai* discourse. See Nanbara Kazuhiro, *Kindai Nihon seishin-shi: Fukuzawa Yukichi kara Maruyama Masao made* (Okayama: Daigaku kyōiku shuppansha, 2006) pp. 6; 25-27, and especially 41-43. 「『我が臣民克ク忠ニ克孝ニ』と教示するこの教育勅語いちいち注釈を加えているのが、同じく帝国大学教授であった井上哲次郎であった。井上は『国君』の臣民に対する関係は『父母』の時子孫に対すると同じようなものであり、教育の法はその国の臣民に適するように発達させることであるとしている。そうして楠正成のように皇室のために一命を擲って臣民の節義を全くしたことは千年間も摩滅しない美談であると述べる。終わりには、今上天皇陛下が自ら皇祖皇宗の遺訓に基づいて理想に達するように希望する以上、臣民たるものは陛下の穎慮に副うところがなければならない、



this love, despite having been rejected by his countrymen. He will remain faithful to Japan even if Japan is unfaithful to him. For Uchimura's narrator, this is the essence of true love and devotion. Though he is not perfect, he proclaims that he is not guilty of the sins of which he has been accused. He derives consolation from his clear conscience and defends his actions based on his biblical worldview, claiming that he has his society's best interests at heart. Despite being an alien, despite his spiritual "exile," which he likens to the Babylonian captivity, he cannot forget Japan and will always love his homeland.

The act of defining patriotism was important for Uchimura to introduce through his writing. Because those in the media and government were attacking not only his actions but the entirety of the Christian faith because of his behavior, he felt the need to justify himself. He also sought to take back the definition of "love of country" from those who had gained a dominant position and had the ability to define Uchimura's "patriotism" (or lack thereof) through their constructed lenses. Rather than Christianity weakening his patriotic sentiments, it enhanced them. Loving his fellow man and seeking the good for humanity— this is the mark of Uchimura's patriotism. As he discussed what was necessary to foster the growth of patriotism, Uchimura believed that, rather than simply being incompatible with the expectations of patriotic, *pro patria* sentiment, his Christian beliefs exceeded the state-sponsored chauvinistic dictates of the day.<sup>348</sup>

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と畏まっている。(『勅語衍義』) p. 42. On the same page, Nambara goes on to say that this kind of thinking provoked considerable alarm on the part of introspective, independent intellectuals. Those defending individuality would find Inoue's reasoning to be a mockery of the ideals of individualism. This is quite apparent in Ōnishi Hajime's *Kokka shugi to kojū shugi*.<sup>348</sup> From this reasoning is born the "Two J's" of "Jesus and Japan." Uchimura's tombstone is engraved with "I for Japan, Japan for the World, The World for Christ, And All for God." This represents his understanding of how his love for Jesus and Japan could transform the world.

In Chapter three, Uchimura furthers this idea of alienation, but here it is cast as alienation of a more nefarious type. He explains how his church, the community of faith upon which he had relied, did not abet him in his time of need. This institution, while divine, is comprised of human beings, who let him down time and again. As a result of his abandonment by the church, Uchimura in this chapter uses for the first time the expression, “I have become without the church,” or, “I have become *mukyōkai*” (余は無教会となりたり), which heralds his well-known “non-church” agenda.<sup>349</sup> Also of note is that at the beginning of the chapter he issues a warning to his non-Christian readership that he will make use of specific Christian terminology that may be incomprehensible to the theologically uninitiated. He hopes that the all-powerful God of the universe will give understanding to those who do not understand these terms. Needless to say, one may rightly conclude that this chapter is aimed at the Christian church itself.

Uchimura begins by explaining that human beings are by nature “gregarious animals,” and in comparison with the other animals, such as solitary cranes whose plaintive cries are unheard by others, or the wild mountain goats of the Rockies, humans must band together for community and mutual support. He goes on to explain that he was born into a country that did not embrace the Christian faith. Including his family and other acquaintances who have “hated” their country and joined the Christian faith, he estimates there to be several thousand believers in total. But since they believe Christianity to be the only road to salvation, they have no recourse but to reject or “hate” their country.

Regardless of whether or not they were justified in their actions, Uchimura’s lament is that the tight-knit community of believers, his mother church in Hokkaidō, has left him out in the cold. He fondly looks back on their spiritual life together and misses the fellowship and religious

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<sup>349</sup> UKZS 2: 36

exercises he experienced there. They rejoiced in being rejected by society but never thought the fellow believers in their midst might reject one another.<sup>350</sup> But now, he believes that the Christian church is not a pure fellowship, as there are indeed within it who do not side with him for his “high-principled ideas” (*kōketsu no shisō*) and “brave undertakings” (*yūsō no kōseki*).<sup>351</sup> He did not necessarily think about how his refusal to bow would put increased pressure on other Christians; they, too, suffered attacks as a result of his actions. While many defended him, others were not as convinced that bowing to the Imperial Rescript or supporting the imperial authority was as problematic as he believed. However, Uchimura was resolute in his positions. Uchimura goes on to cite scriptural passages he considers to be the central doctrines of Christianity, noting (without actually quoting) Exodus 20:3-5,<sup>352</sup> Deuteronomy 10:20,<sup>353</sup> and Matthew 4:10.<sup>354</sup>

Thereafter, he quotes Galatians 1:11-12:

For I would have you know, brothers, that the gospel that was preached by me is not man's gospel. For I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ. (ESV)

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<sup>350</sup> He is referring to idea of rejoicing in suffering for the Gospel. Christ says in Luke 6:22, “Blessed are you when people hate you and when they exclude you and revile you and spurn your name as evil, on account of the Son of Man!” And he says in John 15:18, “If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you.” Throughout this work, Uchimura returns to the theme of suffering with Christ and that, “a student is not above his master.”

<sup>351</sup> *Kōketsu* 高潔 is a key term that appears frequently in Uchimura’s writings, especially on what he thinks “Great Literature” entails. The character *ketsu* 潔 is also read as the adjective *isagiyoi* 潔い. Both imply purity and honor, the “manliness” or “uprightness” of the pre-modern Japanese character that he praises so frequently.

<sup>352</sup> “You shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments.”

<sup>353</sup> You shall fear the LORD your God. You shall serve him and hold fast to him, and by his name you shall swear.

<sup>354</sup> Then Jesus said to him, “Be gone, Satan! For it is written, ‘You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve.’”

Attempting to show his orthodoxy and that he is trying to honor God in both thought and deed, he adjures others to take note of his witness, tying himself to the Gospel received in the same way as the Apostle Paul received it—a heavenly message that transcends human origin. Next, he goes on at considerable length reiterating his point and using rhetorical devices to show how his thinking is in line with Biblical theology and that what others say about him is incorrect. Typical of his rhetorical style (as mentioned above), he writes,

Aah, am I not a great sinner (*dai akunin*)? I have been declared heterodox by those theologians who are thought to be erudite. Am I not truly a heretic? For the past ten years, have I not embraced Christian faith, and been welcomed by all denominations on account of preaching the same faith of the greatest Euro-American preachers? And yet, some high and moral Christians have called me an atheist. Am I not truly an atheist? Has my name not resounded through the religious world? For the past ten years or so, some professors and a few veteran missionaries have labored to spread through India, China, Japan, but now they have called me a unitarian. *Am I not truly a **unitarian** that rejects the means of atonement and relies on my own path of good works?*<sup>355</sup>

Then, to illustrate how excruciating it is for him to be declared a false Christian, despite what he believes to be all of his commitment and bravery, Uchimura writes that he was a “candle before the wind” and even— paradoxically— considered suicide on account of his faith at this time (which he brings up again when dealing with poverty in Chapter 5). He reached the endpoint of the corruption of his faith (*shinkō no daraku no saishūten ni tassen to seri*). He ponders the death of John Stuart Mill, who died whilst angered about the cruelty of certain authorities, and the final years of Thomas Paine, whose last years were spent, like Uchimura, entangled with crude theologians. These men were in his estimation the same type of atheist he is being declared to be. He feels kinship with and sympathy for them. To show how badly he has been treated, he

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<sup>355</sup> UKZS 2: 25 Uchimura frequently makes use of emphatic marks and underlining in Japanese in order to emulate bold and italic type in English. I have rendered his text into English as such, where appropriate.

declares, “*Aah, how many times have Christian believers produced the suffering of atheists?*”

Then he makes a very puzzling comparison:

I once heard of a healthy person who lay down to sleep on a pristine bed, but had contracted a dangerous illness, and due to the suffering from this illness, he never rose from his bed again. If you were to ask him, he would say that a perfectly healthy person had all at once become a serious case. When people wish to distance themselves from God, or wish to attack God’s church, they become devils and the children of devils.<sup>356</sup>

Here Uchimura is giving a twofold message. The first is that bad Christian behavior is often the root cause of a person’s atheism. But the second is that for both Christian and atheist, when they are living a life apart from God, they suffer from an illness they are unaware of, and if they attack the people of God, the illness will persist. While he does not come out and say it, the illness—being apart from God in mind and in church<sup>357</sup>—is sin itself.

Here is where Uchimura brings in the reversal, the consolation that comes for his faith, even when he has essentially reached the point where there is no longer any faith left. He turns to God and says,

But oh, my God, my savior, thou hast saved me from this dangerous place. The Bible is the surest armor for when people use the Bible to cast blame upon me. Though the church and theologians have cast me out, I cannot cast aside the Bible. This is a sign that thou hast not rejected me. Like your servant, Luther, I cling to the Gospel as I go to the book of Galatians. I read in his clear German commentary on that book, “From this point on, no one shall assail me. Jesus has placed his seal within me.”<sup>358</sup>

It is important to understand why Uchimura brings up Luther and Galatians. Paul’s letter to the Galatians was written to a small church in present-day central Turkey. This church was divided over the importance of Hebrew law and whether or not it was applicable to non-Hebrew believers. The legalists insisted that new, non-Hebrew converts should undergo the rite of

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<sup>356</sup> UKZS 2: 26

<sup>357</sup> In *The Search for Peace*, Uchimura emphasizes in great detail the sense that sin is really separation from God more than action.

<sup>358</sup> UKZS 2: 27

circumcision to remain a part of the family of God, as had been required by the law of Moses. But Paul argued that the Hebrew law was applicable to Hebrews alone. For Paul, even if Hebrews become Christians, they should follow the Hebrew law; non-Hebrew believers, however, are exempt, as the law was only given to Hebrews. While Christianity is an Abrahamic religion, Paul was explaining how in Christ it is nevertheless a universal religion; the old codes were no longer necessary, since Christ fulfilled all of the Hebrew law. Luther was especially drawn to Paul's letter to the Galatians in his battles with Roman Catholic theologians, who insisted on a type of salvation based on one's good works, not only faith in Christ. Luther was also called a heretic, cast out by the church, and called a traitor to his polity. The grace of God Paul describes in his letter to the Galatians encouraged Luther to the utmost. Luther, like Uchimura, had a seared conscience and feared God's punishment. In his early years as a monk, he doubted God's grace and was fearful that his works could never be enough to please God. Paul, however (prefiguratively contradicting the medieval doctrines of the Roman church), stressed that salvation comes by God's grace alone through faith alone:

Know then that it is those of faith who are the sons of Abraham. And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham saying, 'In you shall all the nations be blessed. So then, those who are of faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith. (Galatians 3:7-9)

Uchimura finds himself in a situation he feels is comparable to Luther: rejected by an orthodoxy which is not truly orthodox, his conscience is clear because he is approved by God on account of his faith, not by the mere performance of the law. While his position differs from the church at large, he reasons that he is not an atheist, since he strongly believes in God and turns to God for consolation, no matter what others think. He also turns to others who have been in similar situations, as he frequently does in this work. This gives him great comfort to continue in his *mukyōkai* state, excommunicated but alone with God. And yet it is difficult to be alone, even

though he has reasoned that he does not need the approval or fellowship of the orthodoxy. The rest of the chapter continues in this vein, concluding thus:

*But, being that I am a human being, [a gregarious animal], from time to time I wish to experience the joy of gathering with others to worship and pray in temples built with human hands. Because I stand as one who is a danger to the church, I can only write down my feelings, having no privilege to publically exhort others. Then I will sit alone and occupy a dark corner of the church. I shall sing with the assembly within my heart, pray with those assembled in my heart. Chief of heretics that I be, I have no permission to stand in public before the high altar and solemnly preach the Gospel, I say unto those who mourn with the grief of a widow, who cower before the eyes of all like one dressed in rags, who seek God's forgiveness of sins from the darkest places, 'Let us speak of the poverty, loneliness, and grace of Jesus of Nazareth.' Aah, my God, though I have left the church, I can never leave thee. Though the grief of being rejected by the church is grief indeed, I will be satisfied because thou hast not cast me away. What I desire is to never leave thee for the reasons that the church has rejected me''<sup>359</sup>*

This chapter provides a strong example of the type of self that suffers in its quest to make sense of one's experience. Uchimura has tried to hold fast to his convictions and his alignment to the highest good, but the people whom he holds most dear have rejected him. He is criticized and alone and has almost lost faith. However, he reasons that God has not rejected him, even when his faith was wavering and he was in the throes of suicidal thoughts. He reexamines his moral framework, realigns himself to the highest good, and finds the courage to continue in his quest to live a meaningful life through the examples of others and the source of his faith. In his conclusion, Uchimura mentions that he cannot undertake public ministry but will *write his feelings* as a way to exhort others. He cannot attend the assembly of the church, but he can use his self-writing as a way to connect with others who are rejected, mourning, impoverished, and alone.

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<sup>359</sup> UKZS 2: 37 I selected “thee” and “thou” in certain translations to reflect Uchimura's use of 爾 and 汝.

## The Voices of Consolation

Chapter four moves in a new direction, away from the pain of loss and alienation toward the pain that comes from failure at business enterprise.<sup>360</sup> For Uchimura, his “work” (*jigyō*) was to serve God and country. Certainly he welcomed material profits, but laboring for his unpopular ideals did not enrich him. Chapter four examines the relationship between faith and failure and takes up the problem of when God neither hears prayer nor blesses the plans of the faithful. He looks to examples of American entrepreneurs and British missionaries who used their time and money to serve humanity; he wants to do likewise in Japan. But he ultimately fails and struggles to make sense of his experiences. This chapter also includes the voices of evil spirits, his own self-recrimination, and a fictionalized retelling of the encounter between Jesus and Satan in the wilderness as found in Matthew 4. He also (unfairly) criticizes the Buddhist doctrine of *hōben* (expedient means), saying that while relying on *hōben* may be a tempting shortcut to find success, in the end, these means are built on compromises and cheating.

After examining the work of missionary David Livingstone in Africa, Christian Friedrich Schwarz in India, and the philanthropy of William Penn and George Peabody in America, Uchimura concludes that he, too, on account of his faith, should be able to succeed in mission enterprise or philanthropic service. He writes:

Believing in the God of the universe, I wanted to achieve great things for all mankind through my work. Success was inevitable; since God exists, there is no way my endeavors should fail. See, the great industrialists of this world failed on account of their lust for profits; they do not believe in the God of glory. But not me— my work is for the good of the public, for their profit, for God! If I should fail, then God does not exist. This true path would be a fallacy. . .

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<sup>360</sup> *Jigyō* 事業, a term that for Uchimura conveys the multiple meanings of industry, one’s job, one’s work, one’s occupation, trade. Notably he does not use the term vocation, *tenshoku* 天職.



But, my beloved reader, *I did fail*. Years of plans and prayers fell through. My failure did not just affect me, and the injury was not to myself alone. It affected my dependents, right down to my faithful wife and my hard-working mother. I was ridiculed by society; my friends blamed my recklessness, and my enemies rejoiced at my misery.<sup>361</sup>

His failure is an all-encompassing one, one that shakes his faith and self-worth. In this way it is different from other literary representations of failure from the same era.

A worthwhile comparison is Kōda Rohan's (1867-1947) "My Failure" (*Waga shippai* わが失敗), published in the first volume of *Taiyō* in 1895. Like Uchimura, Rohan was exposed to Chinese classics, was a student of Neo-Confucianism, and had a deep commitment to belles-lettres. In addition, Rohan served as a telegrapher in Hokkaidō from 1885 to 1887, when, like Uchimura, he left government service and went on to become a writer. Unlike Uchimura, however, Rohan was a devotee of Edo fiction and an avid reader of Buddhist texts. When he returned to Tokyo from Hokkaidō, he learned that his father had converted from Nichiren Buddhism to Christianity after hearing the sermons of Uemura Masahisa. Out of respect for his father, he attended Uemura's lectures and became quite familiar with Christianity, taking particular interest in lessons on the Apocalypse.<sup>362</sup> However, despite his father's conversion, he did not consent to be baptized and instead maintained his Buddhist faith.

Similar to Uchimura, Rohan's "failure" is written in an engaging first-person narrative, using the same elevated *wakan konkōbun* style. Rather than failing as a husband, in his job, or

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<sup>361</sup> UKZS 2: 39-40.

<sup>362</sup> See Mulhern, 27. She sums up his youthful religious and literary makeup thus: "... Rohan believed in Confucian teachings; admired John the Baptist; yearned for the heroes of Chinese and Japanese romances; began to write Chinese poetry and philosophical speculations; took a job for a living; and then at twenty-one faced a value crisis in his life." Chieko Irie Mulhern, *Kōda Rohan* (Boston: G. K. Hall, 1977), p. 26.

falling into poverty, Rohan's *kushindan* narrative<sup>363</sup> focuses on something seemingly trivial: he failed at woodworking, having been unable to get a knack for working with the requisite tools. But he became smitten one day with the idea of making a writing desk and bookshelf. He decided to start small, with a simple box or tobacco tray, but try as he might, he could not get started properly. He detailed his struggles just to hone and polish his shaving plane to a keen edge.

I did not want to burden my heart by failure on the second day; of course on the third I could not muster the courage to sharpen the blade of the plane. I left the carpentry shop and took a stroll in the vicinity of Asakusa with the intention of sorting out my future occupation, whereupon my eyes came to rest on a house that was being repaired. The carpenter was expertly shaving a board with his plane. On my way back to the shop, I kept recalling the failure of yesterday and the day before, wondering just how I could start afresh tomorrow and the following day.<sup>364</sup>

Soon thereafter, and much to the consternation of Rohan's narrator, he discovers that his efforts at planing boards had indeed come to naught:

The next day, when I went to square up the joint of planed boards with a ruler, I noticed irregular, uneven pits and protrusions. When I thought about the wasted effort that led to this situation, I quickly planned to smooth out the surface. But because I did not have a plane and could not otherwise create a smooth horizontal surface, I didn't really take much time to think about it but foolishly wondered if I could use a rasp, or a file with emery cloth in between. I couldn't help but think that a sword-polishing stone might do the trick.<sup>365</sup>

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<sup>363</sup> This story fits into the 1890s genre of *kushindan* 苦心談 narratives— accounts of struggle and hardship experienced by aspiring writers.

<sup>364</sup> Kōda Rohan, "Waga shippai" in *Taiyō*, Vol 1, no.1 *zatsuroku* column, 258) 「二日の失敗は我が心を阻ましめざるにあらねば、三日めは流石にまた鉋を磨がん勇氣も無く、木工業を中止して、単に本来の目的に協はしめんための所行とし浅草あたりを散歩しけるに、ある家の修繕普請をなせる大工の易げに板を削り居りしが眼に留まりて、歸る道すからは昨日一昨日の失敗を如何にして明日にも明後日にも拭ひ去り得べき歟との考へののみ思ひ入りぬ。」

<sup>365</sup> Ibid, 259. 「其後吾が鉋の臺木を定規にて檢るに甚だ不規則なる凸凹を寛やかに做し居れるを認めたり、此の為にこそ無益の勞をなしつれと思ふものから急に水平面ならし

Here we see the hapless narrator, away from the carpentry shop, without a plane, intent upon fixing his mistakes in ways that would make anyone even vaguely familiar with woodworking cringe. There is simply no way to straighten a board with a whetstone. The irony is humorous and reminds one of Sōseki's often self-deprecatory *shōhin* narratives. After he gets the boards in somewhat workable condition, he decides to continue but is unable to accomplish anything:

With the planing appearing to be more or less accomplished, it seemed I was partially done. However, in no way was I able to make even one small box or one small willow-shaped tobacco tray. I shouldn't even have to say it, but my failures only increased with the handsaw, awl, hammer, and ruler. Aah, they were just like my days and nights with the plane! On what day would I ever be able to make the bookshelf and desk that I desired? It is far off in the distant future, I'm afraid.<sup>366</sup>

One can sense his frustration and incredulity at his own ineptitude, but knowing Rohan, this is also a veiled compliment for those artists and artisans who can produce works of beauty and imagination. This narrative deals with frustration and failure in a particular type of work, but not the sort of anxiety that comes from abject failure in achieving one's life goals. Rohan's depiction of failure reveals the frustration born from unreachable goals; however, his identity is not shaken by it. For Uchimura, his failure left him utterly broken and unable to progress.

Uchimura's reconstruction of the inner voices of temptation gives the reader a unique view into his psychic interior. He writes:

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めんとくはだ 企てね、されど他に鉋無ければ水平面を得べき方なく、しばし 少時考え得ざりしが、愚かにもさめ 鮫やすり、とくさ 木賊、乃至はないし 金剛砂布こんごうしゃふを用ふるか、さらずば砥石の類を用ひてと案じ出したり。

<sup>366</sup> Idem. 「その一半をもて我は今や単に鉋ん就きては殆ど成功を見んとするに至れり、されど我はおほ 猶一の小箱をも一の柳形の煙草盆をも造る能はず、そは云ふまでも無く、鋸、てっつい 鋸、いひきとう 鉄鎚、いひきとう 罫引等、のものに就て失敗を重ねざればなり、噫鉋にすら月日を経る是の如し、書棚、文机を造り得るに至らんは抑そも何の日に事にかあらん、遠い哉哉。」

An evil spirit took advantage of the opportunity and whispered into my ear, saying, ‘You fool, you! Don’t you know the secret to the “expedient means”<sup>367</sup> of success in business? What a pity, your childish thinking allowed you to blindly think that character alone could bring about your works. Look at those great entrepreneurs. When they finished at school, they gained the adulation of the entire world. Even though they might feel some modicum of shame, if you think of the incalculable profits afforded to the ranks of thousands who follow in their paths, wouldn’t it be better to be like them? You need only to twist your will a bit and bend your knees. Think of the huge piles of money you could amass!

Didn’t Napoleon say it best, ‘Divine providence always favors the largest army’? These words should become the motto of all entrepreneurs! Look, even if some preacher always extols the benefits of the path of righteousness, doesn’t he build himself a new worship hall? Surely, will he not make use of worldly methods to propagate his doctrine? The path of justice is truly followed in the heavenly realms, but in the human world, you have to mix in a scheme or two. Come on, from now on, you need to grow up a little bit.

Enough with the “truth” and “for my country” stuff. Not only are your failures piling up higher, but your innocent wife, children, and parents are all getting stuck with you in your sad state. And besides, if you don’t change your methods, you’ll never make a profit for the public you seek to serve so much. If you don’t think of your country, or the condition of your beloved wife and children, God won’t achieve anything through your pointless requests. Scheming is what’s required in our world. Rest assured that schemes and lies will change your situation.<sup>368</sup>

Here, the satanic inner voice assails Uchimura for his ideals. Similar to when Satan tried to entice Christ to bow before him and receive recognition, dominion, and adulation from the world, Uchimura constructs a voice urging him to compromise his integrity and use cunning and craft to get the money he needs to do the work he wants to do. The voice gives him many reasons for why he ought to abandon his ideals. Uchimura continues:

Aah! Who can fight back against such a skillful interlocutor? Surely, he has the right conclusion. Based on my own experiences, I know that the path of righteousness is ineffective. This diabolical reasoning, might it be instead a voice from heaven? Based on our own experiences, we can come to know the actual truth of things. Experience goes

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<sup>367</sup> Uchimura misappropriates the Buddhist term 方便 (*hōben*), but in the alternate *kanji* compound 法便. In general, the “expedient means” are the “Upaya” that Mahayana Buddhism offers as a way to reach enlightenment quickly through the merit of other bodhisattvas—a source of great compassion. Uchimura’s sense is that the “expedient means” allow doctrine and practice to be changed to suit the fancy of the hearer or the circumstance that may allow for a desired outcome.

<sup>368</sup> UKZS 2: 40

against my hopes and desires: “do not hesitate to correct mistakes.”<sup>369</sup> Well then, how as an impartial scholar, as a man of courage, can I go about dismantling the superstitions of former days and thus make up for my past failures with a just a few schemes and a little money—for the benefit of my country?<sup>370</sup>

Uchimura almost acquiesces to this temptation and even has a Confucian rationale that convinces him that this new line of thinking may be acceptable, even heavenly. However, the voice of God enters the picture and reminds him of his identity and encourages him to attest to his beliefs and stay true to his ideals:

And then, by the by, I hear a voice from within, its tone as if it came resonant from a deep, mystical, eternal place—a voice that seemed to have the power of the authority of the cosmos—shaking my entire body, that says, “**RIGHTEOUSNESS IS RIGHTEOUSNESS!**” And afterwards, silence, utter silence.

Aah, what shall I do? Could anyone resist such a voice? If I were to try, wouldn't I just be knocked over by this same voice saying, “**HOLD FAST TO RIGHTEOUSNESS?**”...

Aah, Eureka! Enlightenment at last! Aah, my God, righteousness is more precious than work. No, righteousness **IS** the great calling; there is no greater calling than holding onto what is right.<sup>371</sup>

After this, he quotes Matthew 4:1-11 and constructs the thoughts that may have gone through Christ's mind when he was tempted by Satan's three entreaties; namely, if you are hungry, prove that you are Christ by making these stones become bread; if you really are the Christ, prove it by throwing yourself off this mountain so that God can save you; and finally, bow down before Satan, and you can have all the luxuries and adulation of this world. In terms of failure in vocation and the temptation to be recognized for doing great things, Uchimura reconstructs Christ's experience while tying it to his own in the following way:

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<sup>369</sup> This is from the *Analects* of Confucius, 1.8: “Confucius said, ‘Gentlemen are undignified if they are frivolous, and they aren't stubborn in their learning. They should attach importance to loyalty and honesty and shouldn't be a friend with worse people than themselves, and *should correct mistakes without hesitation.*’”

<sup>370</sup> UKZS 2: 40-41

<sup>371</sup> *Idem.*

Putting aside the thought of philanthropy, Jesus went up to the temple as invited, and when he looked upon the crowd of tens of thousands below, the evil spirit once again whispered in his ear, saying, ‘You want the crowds to hear your ideas, but you’re just a commoner from *Nazareth*. No one will ever recognize your genius in the true estimation of your words. So, why not just throw yourself down from here into the crowds? They’ll be amazed at your abilities and will pay attention to you then. You’ll become popular with the people in just one move, and you’ll have them in the palm of your hand.’

But a voice from heaven said, ‘The truth is not propagated through threats and cannot be reached through such means. You are deceived if you rely on the opinion of the people to enlighten them. This tests God. As a way to save the world, the “expedient means” (*hōben*) are of no value.’

Christ was not to be a philanthropist. He was not to amaze the eyes and ears of the people so that they may be saved through the “expedient means.” One time, he climbed a high mountain and saw the crowds of people below, scattered about the capital city. He thought about how to turn his native land into the paradise of God, and pondered in his heart about the great means by which he might redeem the world. He thought of becoming a politician; perhaps he might fix the world through social reforms. He thought, ‘I have the ability to govern and control this world. I could expel the Romans in one fell swoop. I could lead God’s chosen nation, the Jewish people, in changing the world by forming the greatest republic of them all. I would govern with benevolence and give charity, and nurture them along with love and sweetness. If only I just establish a kingdom of truth on this earth...’

But his inner conscience would not allow him to indulge these noble hopes. His work was not to move even one step in the direction of carrying out social reforms through a splendid doctrine of justice. He was to obey without fail, he was to be obedient. Despite feeling compelled to use smooth, harmonious, and enduring political tactics, he was to rely on principle alone to accomplish the work of saving this world.

‘Be gone, Satan! Bother me no more with your flattery! Even if I cannot bring about the salvation of this world, even if I remain unknown to my people and leave this world as a hermit, even if you say my work will never appear in this physical realm, I must obey my God and be used for His purposes alone.’

Here, Christ made up his mind, and now that his life’s path was made plain to him, nothing the devil could say or do would convince him to do otherwise. So, the devil left him, and at last angels came and attended to him.<sup>372</sup>

Uchimura then turns to the French struggles for religious freedom under Henry of Navarre and compares how his “expedient means” of giving in to the Catholic hierarchy led to the eventual decay of France. Cromwell’s spectacular failure in England, on the other hand, led to the awakening of liberal democracy around the world. He also notes the loyalty of Kusunoki Masashige and his failure in supporting the restoration of Emperor Godaigo. As late Edo

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<sup>372</sup> UKZS 2: 43-44

loyalists believed, while the Southern Court failed to bring the imperial line to power, the rebellion was nevertheless a forerunner of the Meiji Restoration. For Uchimura, principles matter more than results. Ultimately, he discovers that failure is not sin; sin is compromising one's beliefs in order to gain the world. He remains aligned to his concept of the "highest good" while negotiating among the moral frameworks of Christianity, Buddhism, and Confucianism. Additionally, the example of Christ and his temptation helps Uchimura make sense out of his own circumstances. Failure turns into success when viewed from the standpoint of uncompromisingly holding on to his ideals. The promises of faith triumph over short-term gains. From the perspective of Ricoeur's notion of selfhood, this is Uchimura's *idem* self, attesting to his beliefs of "who" he is in reference to the world that cannot know who he is without this attestation.

### **Divine Reason**

Chapter five, "When driven into poverty" (貧に迫りし時 *Hin ni semarishi toki*), follows naturally from failing at enterprise. As he was responsible for the welfare of his parents, his brother, his wife, and now his daughter, Uchimura had a tremendous financial burden to bear. Clearly he was no stranger to the plight of the poor: above and beyond the obvious issues of hunger and privation, he laments the spiritual and social difficulties of poverty and problematizes the concept of wealth. Money is crucial to survival and is therefore a necessary evil of modernity:

Of the 404 diseases that plague humanity,<sup>373</sup> there is none worse than poverty. Since the heart is a flower, leave it be as a flower. Who should be roused to think of an old garment, worn out in the dark recesses of the mountains? For all human beings in this world of gold, money is power; it rules with absolute authority. Money alone bestows upon us the

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<sup>373</sup> Uchimura is referring to the hundreds of diseases that Buddhist doctrine identifies as plagues upon human existence. They are categorized as imbalances among the elements of earth, water, fire, and wind.

rights of citizenship. Without money, neither learning nor virtue can make a citizen out of a single one of us. In this greatly vaunted 19<sup>th</sup> century, people who have not money hardly count as people at all.<sup>374</sup>

To reveal these frustrations and expound on the injustice of the situation, chapter five has a clear rhetorical strategy. Uchimura brings out six consequences of falling into poverty through repetition of the phrase “*hin yori kitaru kutsū no uchi ni Y kore hitan no dai X desu.*” that is, “Among the pains brought about by the onset of poverty, the Xth-most grief is Y.” They are listed below in order:

1. ...貧より来たる苦痛くつうの中に世うちの友人れいぐうに冷遇れいぐうさるる是れ悲嘆ひたんの第一とす。
2. ...貧より来たる苦痛くつうの中我父母妻子うち ふうさいしの貧困ひんこんを見る是れ悲嘆ひたんの第二とす。
3. ...貧より来たる苦痛くつうの中他人うちに腰ひざをかがめざるを得ず是悲嘆ひたんの第三なり。
4. ...貧より来たる苦痛くつうの中に心うちに卑陋ひろうなる思想しゆしゆつの湧出する、是悲嘆ひたんの第四なり
5. ...貧より来たる苦痛くつうの中に寒固孤独かんこごどくの念、是悲嘆ひたんの第五なり。
6. ...貧より来たる苦痛くつうの中にこの絶望だらくに沈うちづむ事、この無限だらくの墮落だらくを感ずる事は悲嘆ひたんの第六なり。

1. ... Among the pains brought about by the onset of poverty, the chief-most grief is the coldness shown by one’s friends in this world.
2. ... Among the pains brought about by the onset of poverty, the second-most grief is seeing the impoverishment of your father, mother, wife and child [brought on by your own actions].
3. ... Among the pains brought about by the onset of poverty, the third-most grief is groveling on your knees before others.
4. ... Among the pains brought about by the onset of poverty, the fourth-most grief is the profusion of unwanted, horrible thoughts.
5. ... Among the pains brought about by the onset of poverty, the fifth-most grief is shutting off and becoming cold-hearted to others.
6. ... Among the pains brought about by the onset of poverty, the sixth-most grief is the sinking into the loss of all hope, and the feeling of limitless decay and corruption.

Of particular importance is the sense of abandonment by friends and the “profusion of unwanted, terrible thoughts” that plagues him. Uchimura remarks as follows:

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<sup>374</sup> UKZS 2: 50



When I was well renowned, I had friends, but when I became poor, I had friends no longer. Before I fell into poverty, people trusted me. But as soon as my pockets were empty, no one trusted a thing I said. When I would go to visit a particular friend, I was not welcome. When I asked him for help, he treated me with disdain. He who had prayed with me, who together had promised before God to be used of God, who called me brother—now, on account of my poverty, will have absolutely nothing to do with me.

Poverty's descent	<i>ochiburete</i>
When my sleeves are wet with tears	<i>sode ni namida no</i>
The innermost part	<i>kakaru toki</i>
Of the human heart, surely	<i>hito no kokoro no</i>
Is plain for all to see	<i>oku zo shiraruru</i>

Do not trust your friends, until you fall on hard times. Friends in this world are like your own shadow. They walk about with us in the light of the sun, but when we go into dark places, they soon leave us. Among the pains caused by the onset of poverty in one's life, the chief-most sorrow is the cold treatment given by friends in this world.<sup>375</sup>

And later:

But the nastiest thoughts, which I hate the most, are those that attack my innermost feelings in this time of poverty. While fighting off my external enemies, at the very same time, I must shore up my inner mind to fend off these extreme attacks. Among the pains brought about by the onset of poverty, the fourth-most grief is the profusion of unwanted, horrible thoughts.<sup>376</sup>

Poverty is the result of one's rejection by society and church and one's failure in vocation.

It only compounds the grief of his dire situation. Hardship and privation are lamentable, but the loss of relationships and the consequent inner turmoil make it all worse. Again, the reader is presented with a state of mind beset by voices of condemnation, both from within and without.

After realizing the hopelessness of his situation, Uchimura's narrator wonders how his debts can be paid. He muses upon the possibility of suicide and how suicide might be the only escape from poverty. Uchimura reminds the reader that Romans, such as Cato and Cicero,

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<sup>375</sup> UKZS 2: 50-51

<sup>376</sup> UKZS 2: 52

countenanced suicide as a noble way to repay one's debts.<sup>377</sup> He then discusses a woman who threw herself into a river to escape her debts, quoting Thomas Hood's (1799-1845) poem, "The Bridge of Sighs":

In she plunged boldly—  
No matter how coldly  
The rough river ran—  
Over the brink of it,  
Picture it—think of it,  
Dissolute Man!<sup>378</sup>

Contemporary scholarship may suggest alternate readings of this poem, but Uchimura evidently read it as a figure of debt and repayment. This poem depicts a woman who had become pregnant out of wedlock, and at a loss to conceal the pregnancy, in an excess of shame and guilt, she took her own life to atone for her "sins." Her beauty becomes almost a talisman, fetishized as perfect and cleansed, emerging from the mud and making her presentable before God and society. Death marks her repentance. The final stanza of the poem, which Uchimura does not quote, makes this clear:

Owning her weakness,

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<sup>377</sup> 「嗚呼我如何にして此内外の攻撃に当らんか、貧は此身に附くものなれば此身を殺さば貧は絶ゆべし、自殺は羅馬の賢人カトー、シセロ等の許せし所、貧てふ無限無終の苦痛より遁れんが為めには自殺は唯一の方法ならずや "He that dieth payeth all his debts." (死者は悉く負財を返還す)、我の社会に負ふ処、我の他人に負ふ所、我は之を返却するの目的一つとしてあるなし、我は死してのみ此借財より脱するを得るにあらずや」 UKZS 2: 52. Interestingly, Uchimura does not discuss the *bushidō* ethos that elevated suicide as a noble and honorable act. In November 1912, after the ritual suicide (*junshi*) of General Nogi Maresuke, Uchimura devoted a number of short articles to the subject of suicide. In "Jisatsu hinin" 自殺非認, Uchimura mentions that although the Bible does not explicitly forbid suicide, its teachings strongly oppose it. (UKZS 19: 54) In "Kawarazu Kirisuto" 変わらずキリスト, he states that while he could sympathize with the actions of the general and his wife and indeed argue for the propriety of suicide, it is not for Christians to do so. God does not demand nor expect suicide to show remorse or loyalty.

<sup>378</sup> "The Bridge of Sighs" *The Oxford Book of English Verse: 1250–1900*. Ed. Arthur Quiller-Couch (Oxford: Clarendon, 1919).

Her evil behavior,  
And leaving, with meekness,  
Her sins to the Savior!

This notion of taking one's own life to atone for sins and debts is clearly contrary to biblical doctrine, but it allows for a literary allusion that addresses whether or not suicide might allow one to escape from debts. Turning to the Bible and Greco-Roman philosophy, Uchimura reasons that suicide is a great sin against the self and hence rejects it as a valid option for escaping from poverty.<sup>379</sup> Likewise, suicide will not solve the problems faced by those left behind. Uchimura concludes that one must endure the pain, swallow one's pride, and work for those who are unworthy of respect.

Uchimura then responds to the six grievous consequences of poverty with eight points of encouragement.

1. There are so many poor people in the world, so it is easier to bear the burden of poverty when one acknowledges that one suffers together with the tens of thousands of others.
2. Think of Jeremiah, of Daniel! Search deeply, and entrust to your will whichever parts of Chinese and Japanese history you like, and there you will find many friends who endured the pains of poverty; they are like the stars of the heavens.
3. Christ was also poor, and said, 'Blessed are the poor.'
4. If the goal of obtaining wealth is pleasure, then pleasure can be had without wealth: 'My mind to me a kingdom is.'<sup>380</sup>
5. Noting that it is a joy to entrust one's troubles to God, quoting Matthew 6:25-41, he says: "Seek first the Kingdom of God and its righteousness: all these other things [clothes, food, money, etc.] will be given to you. Why do you trouble yourself about tomorrow? Let tomorrow worry about its own problems. The labors of this day are sufficient for today." Then he goes on to quote Kant and Emerson.
6. According to Scripture, the poor are blessed, and those who follow God's decrees have no fear of starvation.

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<sup>379</sup> 「然り若し宇宙の大真理として自殺は神に対し己に対し大罪なりとの教訓の存せざりしならば貧の病を療治する為めに我も我身に此法を施さんものを、然れども嗚呼我神爾の恵は我死せずして我を此苦痛より免れ得せしむ、爾に依てのみ貧者も自尊を維持し得べく、卑陋ならずして高尚なるを得るなり。

<sup>380</sup> Again, this is reminiscent of Lady Philosophy's words to Boethius, that the mind, the inner life, is the source of all joy despite external circumstances.

7. Living for wealth today does not build up “treasure in heaven” [Matthew 6:19-34]. “Those who are to be pitied in this world are those who have wealth and do not use it for the benefit of others.”
8. Those who put their trust in wealth are not part of God’s kingdom. There are things of more value in this world, namely truth and justice. “Truth is food not only for the heart, but the whole body. The overflow of the spirit is the true, immortal medicine. Oh, ye poor, rejoice, for yours is the kingdom of heaven.”<sup>381</sup>

In keeping with his general theme, Uchimura’s eight points of consolation are primarily based on biblically-informed reason, examples from the past, rededicating the self to trust in God, and submitting the self to God even when the circumstances of life would dictate doing otherwise. Uchimura never loses sight of the ideal of Christ, who surrendered his will (self) to God and allowed himself to be crucified to win atonement for humanity. Uchimura takes the sermons of Christ at face value and uses them to bolster his own flagging spirit. In the end, he redoubles his

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<sup>381</sup> (1) 世の中の貧者が多くて「一人にして忍び能はざるの困難も万人共に之を忍べば忍び易し」

(2) 「貧苦ひんくにおける汝の友人は多き事そうてん蒼天の星の数かずすの如し。」

(3) キリストも貧乏だったので、「彼は貧者の友なりし、貧しきものは幸いなり。」

(4) 富は貧である時もあり、「若し富を得るの目的は快樂にありとならば、快樂は富なしにも得らるるなり、”My mind to me a kingdom is” (心ぞ我の王国なり)、我は貧にして富む事を得るなり。

(5) 自分の苦勞くろうや問題を神様に任せば幸いで、聖書のマタイ伝6章25-41節を引用した。「爾曹そう先づ神の国と其ただしき義とを求めよ然らば、此等のものは皆なんぢらに加えらるべし、是故に明日の事を憂慮おもひわづらふなかれ、明日は明日の事を思ひわづらへ一日の苦勞は一日で足れり。」後に、謙虚けんきょについてカントとエメルソンを引用しました。

(6) 「善人の貧」について、聖書によれば、神様の命令を従う人は餓死する恐怖はない。

(7) 富の為に生きてはならなくて、永遠の宝たからでもない。「世に最も憫察びんさつすべきものは富と有して之を使用し能はざる人なり。」

(8) 金を信用する人は天国の民にならない。天国は本物の「ホーム」であり、「心理は心の食物なるのみならず亦身体しんたいの食物なり、我の滋養じようは天より来たるなり、浩然こうぜんの気は誠に実に不死の薬なり、貧しきものよ悦よろこべ、天国は汝のものなればなり。」

(UKZS 2.54-59)

efforts to reject the world and trust the exterior power of God to enable him to deny the self and follow the path of Christ.<sup>382</sup>

### **Consolation in bodily suffering**

The final chapter of *Consolations of a Christian* takes on the feeling of hopelessness endured whilst suffering an incurable illness and the frustration that stems from being incapacitated and unable to work. Uchimura writes,

When contracting an incurable disease, the loss of hope originates from two places. These are: the sufferer cannot be healed and regain one's former health, and because one suffers such illness, one is useless to the world.<sup>383</sup>

This chapter may be somewhat more fictionalized, because while he had suffered from pneumonia and influenza, Uchimura did not receive any type of terminal diagnosis. This chapter also includes longer *shintaiishi* poems created by Uchimura that are both reflective of the situation of a chronic sufferer and heavily theological in content. For example, based on his own reflections, he writes a poem of compassion in the form of a prayer for those who suffer:

Give thy light in some way to those in deep distress  
And thy life to those who suffer  
Though they seek after death, it cometh not  
They who desire it outnumber those who would dig for hidden treasure  
If they could go down to the grave  
They would gladly welcome it with great joy  
Oh, that thou might grant them light  
Who have been thrust upon this hidden path of God<sup>384</sup>

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<sup>382</sup> This is in keeping with Paul's words in his letter to the church in Galatia, where he says, "And those who belong to Christ have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires." (Galatians 5:24, ESV) Much of the Greek New Testament speaks of "dying to the self" and "living unto God." Dying to the self is part of becoming "born again." It is a one-time action at conversion, but also a life-long process (sanctification.)

<sup>383</sup> UKZS 2: 60

<sup>384</sup> UKZS 2: 61

This poem reminds the reader of the previous chapter, where Uchimura's narrator contemplates suicide and longs for death. Now the narrator is begging God for death to release him from the pains of illness and idleness. Just prior to this poem, he remarks,

This world of joy has no use for the one who, like me, is suffering illness. As existence itself is the seed of all suffering and pain, I long for my death as the laborer longs for the sunset at the end of the day. There is no enjoyment in the fragrance of the plum blossoms for me; I feel nothing at the unending performance of the nightingale's song. Now, I have not even a smidgeon of desire to stand myself up and take the path that leads to making a name for myself and a heritage for future generations. No longer can I find the joy that comes from exhausting heart and strength for country and countrymen to bring about their salvation. The poet Goethe said, "To be of no use is to be dead" (Unmütz sein ist todt sein). More than being of no use to anyone in this world, my existence plagues the world. If I cannot save others, I should not harm them. Aah, God of grace, couldst thou not allow me to leave this earth even one day sooner? Now, I desire none but what thou desirest, but for me, death would be the greatest gift.

Uchimura's despair is deep and dark, devoid of the Christian joy that he seeks. He sees his life as a waste and all his sins and failures as inescapable. He compares himself to a useless soldier who, at the climax of a battle, sees the horses and hears the drums but is unable to fight.

Throughout the chapter, Uchimura's narrator emphasizes how faith should counteract the discouragement of being diagnosed with an incurable illness. He reasons:

When I sink into hopeless despair, eternal desire yet again builds my strength. Christ is an eternal storehouse of inexhaustible hope. Through Him alone, the dead, whitened stump may bud again, and flowers may bloom in the desert. The prophet Ezekiel saw the dried bones come to life again, a fact that he observed with his own human eyes. (Ezekiel 3:17)<sup>385</sup>

Part of Uchimura's problem concerns doctors and modern medicine. He explains that human science has only come so far. Even if there are no solutions yet, over time, cures may be found through modern science, but that does not help the one who is ill today. Some doctors are inept, and even the famous doctors are not the ultimate authority on health: God is. He calls God

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<sup>385</sup> UKZS 2: 62

the “doctor of doctors” and laments that modern science has denied the possibility of miracles and faith healing. He compares God to a clockmaker who knows the inner-workings of all the clocks he has created. In the same way, God knows the inner-workings of the body. He encourages faith in divine healing but cautions against trusting in so-called faith healers (especially the Buddhistic and Shinto variety) and spurning the use of modern medicine (as some of these faith-healers apparently did). He reasons that medicine is also a gift from God and that to not use quinine to cure malaria or visit the doctor when bones are broken is utter folly. He adjures the reader to seek medicine but also to seek God in faith for supernatural healing when medicine fails.

Uchimura’s second reason for despair is the inability to work and the feeling of uselessness that comes from long-term illness. In response, he reasons that while Christianity and other religions teach the importance of work, and despite his feelings to the contrary, Christianity nevertheless does not teach that one’s value comes from one’s work. In this second section, he addresses the reader as *nanji* 汝, which he frequently uses when writing in the voice of God addressing him. In this case, he could also be directly addressing himself, in order to encourage himself in these circumstances. As he did earlier, when discussing Christ’s mission to the world, Uchimura reminds himself that Christ did not suffer and die so that he could achieve success in his vocation, but rather to save the world and Uchimura’s soul. He recalls that the salvation of the soul is more important than the healing of the body, that God loves the soul more than the body, and therefore when despairing over his health, he should rejoice that God has saved his soul. He also writes that as much as human beings are idolaters, chasing after idols of wood and stone, they also worship work and productivity, another idol. Citing Psalm 51, he reasons that

work should be an offering of thanksgiving to God, not the source of one's pride.<sup>386</sup> He compares himself to Mary and Martha of Bethany, who were friends of Christ. Martha was anxious over serving Christ dinner and making sure her house was in order, but her sister Mary was more interested in spending time with Jesus and listening to what he had to say. Martha asked Christ to reprimand her sister for not helping with her preparations, but Christ said that while Martha was anxious over many things, Mary had chosen the better path. Uchimura seeks to have his mind transferred from the position of Martha to that of Mary, where he can let go of his ambition and toil and instead rest in Christ.

### ***Honkadori: Hymnody and Scripture***

Next, the narrator appears to come to a place of peace concerning his inability to labor and produce. He gives a short preface and then presents a *shintaisi* style poem in six stanzas.

When you sing, “Nothing in my hand I bring, simply to the cross I cling.” (Rock of Ages), as oft you do, you completely miss the significance of the profundity therein. Therefore, you find yourself in the present situation where you are unable to do any work at all.

Here, Uchimura is referring to the third stanza of Toplady's “Rock of Ages,” a popular Anglican hymn that was one of the first English hymns translated into Japanese in 1874 by the Japanese Protestant church in Kumamoto:

Nothing in my hands I bring,	十字架の外に
Simply to Thy cross I cling;	頼むかげなき
Naked, come to Thee for dress,	わびしき我を
Helpless, look to Thee for grace:	憐れみたまえ、

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<sup>386</sup> For you will not delight in sacrifice, or I would give it;  
 You will not be pleased with a burnt offering.  
 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit;  
 A broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise. (Psalm 51:16-17)



Foul, I to the fountain fly,  
Wash me, Savior, or I die.

み救いなくば  
生くる術なし。<sup>387</sup>

The use of this hymn reinforces the narrator's lack of ability to contribute to his work or his salvation. The narrator is learning to give up his pride and his self-reliance in order to rely on the mercy of Christ. The pride we have seen earlier in *Consolations of a Christian* is now being changed to humility. This is the profundity he misses when he sings this hymn. The poem, below, reflects the change of heart.

My service of this world  
Is not for the sake of  
Spreading my will throughout the world  
But for the sake of receiving God's grace  
That his will might be honed herein

我この世につかわされは  
我が意を世にはる為ならで、  
神の恵みを受けんため、  
そのみむねをばとげんためなり

The valley of tears and the garden of laughter  
Sadness shall come along with joy  
If you receive joy, the twain shall come  
If it be the will of God

涙の谷や笑みの園（その）、  
悲しみは来ん喜びと、  
喜び受けんふたつとも、  
神のみこころならばこそ。

Though I cannot but desire the  
Strength and boldness of the brave  
And the burning eloquence of the preacher  
Naught can be done but leave it to his will

勇者のたけき力をも、  
教師のもゆる雄弁も、  
われ望まぬにあらねども、  
みむねのままにあるにはしかじ。

No matter how weak this body  
I must labor for this beginning  
Though I know not, God knows  
I entrust this useless body to the Lord

弱き此身はいかにして、  
そのつとめをばはつべきや、  
われは知らねど神はしる  
神に頼る身は無益ならぬを。

The small works are not small  
Those that cover the world are not great  
I mould my will to the small  
And leave the great to thine

小なるつとめ小ならず、  
よ蓋ふとても大ならず、  
小はわが意をなすにあり、  
大はみむねによるあり。

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<sup>387</sup>This translation is still in use in the as Hymn 260 in the *Sanbika* hymn book of the Nihon Kirisuto Kyōdan (United Church of Christ). Note the alternating lines of six and eight syllables.

Take my hand in thine, O Lord,	わが手を取れよわが神よ、
Lead me in thy paths	我行くみちを導けよ、
My aim is thy will alone	われの目的は御意をば、
And for such, if it may be so, I shall endure all. <sup>388</sup>	為すか忍ぶにあるなれば。

Similar to Tōson’s *First Love*, this un-named poem has no particular syllabic count, but is divided up into stanzas of four lines. In terms of language, it has the quality and register of a Biblical psalm. The first stanza is about the narrator relinquishing his will and aims, harkening back to the earlier chapter where he struggles with God’s discipline and unanswered prayers. The second makes use of scriptural language. In this instance, we see Uchimura creating his own type of *honkadori* allusions to western texts. The “vale of tears” is a term derived from Psalm 84: 5-6 (KJV)

Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee; in whose heart are the ways of them.  
Who passing through the valley of Baca make it a well; the rain also filleth the pools.

While the Hebrew text refers to the “Valley of Baca,” Jerome’s Latin Vulgate Bible translated this phrase as “vallis lacrimarum” or “valley of tears.” Likewise, the “garden of joy” could be referring to Isaiah 51:3 (KJV):

For the Lord shall comfort Zion: he will comfort all her waste places; and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody.

Psalm 84 expresses the longing for God’s presence, and the assurance that God will not withhold blessings from his people. The section from Isaiah is a prophetic message of reassurance to a people who have been forgotten by God and are looking for God to act on their behalf. Thus, in

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<sup>388</sup> UKZS 2: 65-66

this stanza, Uchimura ties the joys and sorrows of life to the will of God, and looks to God for all good things.

The third and fourth stanzas build on the image of the strong relinquishing strength. Even if he cannot be strong, or have the words of the preacher that he desires, he must trust in God above his own will. The fifth stanza deals with what the narrator has come to view as the contradiction of the Christian life: the small actions taken in God's name are not small. The things done out of love and service, though they may not make a name for the narrator, these are the great works. This is a source of great consolation for the heart that desires sincerity and veracity, but cannot bring about the great works he desires to do. The last stanza, then, ties all of this together by admitting that his will must be God's will, and he will trust God's wisdom and leadership; it is enough to endure all for God's sake. Uchimura's narrator finally recognizes his self-centeredness and asks God to lead him, rather than his own thoughts and desires. Here, he is making a point to subjugate the self to the will of God and rely on his faith, rather than his own agency in the world. By so doing, he will gain the agency he desires.

Immediately after the poem, Uchimura has a dialogue with himself, bringing up multiple discouraging ideas he has expressed. As his narrator reconstructs the feelings he had when dealing with an incurable illness, he was still restless, and unable to yield to God's will. He compares himself to a useless soldier that cannot show up to the field of battle. He complains that coral at the bottom of the sea is hidden from view. He declares that a lotus blooming in the shadow of a mountain is useless (no one is around to notice its beauty). He laments that flowers blooming in the nooks of the stones in a ditch are useless to those who cannot see them. He realizes that these flowers may be forgotten by people for so many years, but in time, the wind

will bring their scent to many. In all of these, Uchimura feels great frustration about not being of use to this world, but he finds a way out of this moment of self-doubt. He submits that God can see the sick who suffer, and finds beauty in them. The narrator finds encouragement from the fact that being ill also has a spiritually transformative power. Switching to the memory of his second wife, who died after nobly enduring his own illness, he declares that God is with the sick and sends angels to their beds, changing them to be like angels. He remembers how angelic his wife was as she herself lay ill and dying. Switching back to natural imagery, he compares his wife's face to marble, and her voice to that of crickets, and her tears like the morning dew. Like God, he saw her beauty in her sickness, and in some way, appears to find respite from the guilt over how he treated her. He reasons that transformed into the form of an angel, like the angels of heaven, she is still with him, spurring him on and encouraging him in his spirit.

From there he moves on to another type of encouragement: reading the Bible and contemplating the goodness of God. He says that all the stories in the Bible are there to raise the spirits of the reader and that pondering God's providence should lift one out of despair:

Well then, if you have the feelings and sensation common to all, limitless joy is already with you. As of right now, you cannot roam the mountains and fields and travel about through nature, communing with the God of nature. You are not able to gather together with great ladies and gentlemen to exchange ideas, and the opportunities to plan great works are not open to you at this moment. But, if you can read and understand the 48 *hiragana* characters, that great work of world literature, the Bible, is with you. Through this, you may be encouraged, and ought to be brought to tears. It is a love song to you (Song of Solomon). For your sake, tales of great battles have been recorded (Joshua and Judges). There are tales of womanly virtue and bravery (*teisō bidan*) in the Book of Ruth. There are poems of lament against injustice (Jeremiah). It is fitting for all feelings, as you move through experiencing joy, anger, pathos, and peace, it will never become wearisome or boring to you. Read the Bible over and again with joy!

But if you cannot find even the strength to read books, there are other joys that have been prepared for you. Namely, you should quiet your heart and reflect upon the providence of God. God made humanity and gave us the freedom to commit sin, and then God came up with the plan to save us from sin. Think about how God made this world, and you yourself, the object of his salvation. Have there been written any plays or dramas that can

exceed this tragedy, this comedy? We must read the *Romance of Providence* with the same sighs and cries of Paul.

‘Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!

For who has known the mind of the Lord,

Or who has been his counselor?

Or who has given a gift to him

That he might be repaid?

For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever.

Amen’ (Romans 11:33-36)<sup>389</sup>

Here again, Uchimura ties joy to literary and philosophical exercises, especially ones that are spiritually uplifting. Echoing Boethius’ lady Philosophy, joy comes from within despite the exterior circumstances. However, this joy relies on faith in that beyond the self to find encouragement for the inner being

Finally, Uchimura looks to faith in the afterlife as the ultimate encouragement. In addition to the Bible, he references Socrates, Swedenborg, John Wesley, and Victor Hugo (whom he translated and quoted at length). Christian or not, all believed in the inextinguishable, eternal soul. Even if one’s bodily illness is incurable, it is not the ultimate end. As Hugo said, “The tomb is not a blind alley; it is a thoroughfare.” Uchimura draws comfort from the promise of eternity, especially Hugo’s statement, “When I go down to my grave I can say, like so many others, ‘I have finished my day’s work.’ But I cannot say, ‘I have finished my life.’ My day’s work will begin again the next morning.”<sup>390</sup>

### **Salvation or Desolation?—The Conclusion of *Consolations of a Christian***

Still reflecting in this vein, Uchimura’s narrator concludes the chapter (and the book) with the following statements:

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<sup>389</sup> UKZS 2: 68

<sup>390</sup> UKZS 2: 70

Among all the things that human beings have, the God of all creation is the highest good, the most precious. God exceeds all wealth and possessions, the health of the body, wife and children, and anything we could own. I worry about wealth being stolen or wasted. My country, my church, or my friends may reject me. Although work and vocation may animate me greatly, this body of flesh will certainly pass away. But from eternity to eternity, what I must lay hold of is God himself. What humans value is much lower than that of the God most high; we will never be satisfied with these things. No, but in fact, what I believe is this:

‘For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.’ (Romans 8:38-39, ESV)

You have God, what else can you demand?

Because there is hope for restoration, the fear of incurable illness lessens. Relying on this hope is consolation and joy. You have a treasure and a hope that overcomes life. Again, you have a heavenly calling during your illness; you must not lose all hope.<sup>391</sup>

Uchimura concludes that finding God is the only thing that matters in life; all else is secondary. This New Testament theme of yielding up the self (desires of the flesh) and living for, (or unto) God is central to the self that emerges in this text. The struggles with faith and suffering produce character and perseverance for the narrator, who remains mired in sin, doubt, suffering, and rejection. The only thing left to him is God, as all else has been stripped away. Struggling to make sense of these experiences, Uchimura proclaims that “God is the highest good” toward which he aims. The experiences he narrates point to his quest for the highest good while also reiterating his need to reject the ego that suffers at the hands of others to find the self that rests in God.

In the next chapter, we will further explore Uchimura’s experiences with human failure, sin, and disappointment, and how his weary self finds the way create a hybrid identity that is both Japanese and Christian. Through his narration of experiences leading up to his intellectual

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<sup>391</sup> UKZS 2: 71

conversion, his attempts to atone for his own mistakes, life in America, and ongoing spiritual changes, the narrator creates a new self that embraces a prophetic voice of authority with which to engage his Anglophone readership.

# Chapter 4:

## *How He Became a Christian: Individuality, Interiority, Ineffability*

The examination of inner life through self-expression was a major preoccupation of *kindai* literary figures in the third decade of the Meiji era (1868-1912). Deeply aware of the changes in language, narration, story, and focus, authors like Futabatei Shimei and Mori Ōgai created protagonists who reflected upon their personal circumstances and revealed multiple layers of interiority. As critic Karatani Kōjin pointed out in *Origins of Modern Japanese Literature*, we can see a contrast between the style and purposes of Futabatei Shimei and Mori Ōgai. In 1889 Mori Ōgai wrote *Maihime (The Dancing Girl)* in classical prose, but endeavored to create a work that broke with the past. Although Higuchi Ichiyō's style can be seen as purposefully Saikaku-esque, the story itself—the emotional states of the characters, setting, and plot—is notably modern.<sup>392</sup> It is easy for the reader to sympathize with Ichiyō's characters in *Growing Up (Takekurabe)* as they come of age and lose their innocence. For instance, Mori Ōgai praised Ichiyō's ability to depict the local flavor of the Yoshiwara district and create vibrant, believable characters in this work:

What *is* remarkable is that the characters who haunt this area are not the brute beasts in human form—the copies of Zola, Ibsen, and the rest—presented by the assiduous imitators of the so-called Naturalist school, but human beings with whom we can laugh and cry together... This author, who has painted the “local coloring” of Daionji-mae so

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<sup>392</sup> Ihara Saikaku (1642-1693), one of the most popular writers of the Edo (1600-1868) period, is known for his earthy, humorous tales (“Higuchi Ichiyō,” Omori Kyōko, in *Modern Murasaki*, 133) depicting Japanese life in a highly stylized way. Rather than “romantic” love or *ren'ai*, a frequent theme of his works is *eros* in the mode of *shoku* and *iro* (sexual or physical love). Karatani notes that Meiji authors were aware of this difference, as the concept of *ren'ai* was given significance in light of imported Western notions of romance. Romantic love was much more consuming: “One did not lose oneself in *iki* as one did in romantic love.” Karatani, Kōjin (2012-10-01). *Origins of Modern Japanese Literature* (Post-contemporary interventions) (Kindle Locations 2060-2065). Duke University Press. Kindle Edition.



effectively that one might say it has ceased to exist apart from “Growing Up,” without leaving any trace of the efforts such portraiture must have cost her, must truly be called a woman of rare ability.<sup>393</sup>

The fiction of Ōgai and Futabatei makes a break with the past and is also unmistakably modern. Though Ōgai wrote *Maihime* in the classical literary signature, it reflects the author’s recent experiences studying abroad in Germany. Rather than taking place in the familiar environs of Japan, his work is set in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, aboard a Japan-bound ship returning from Germany. Using his lived experience, Ōgai crafted a groundbreaking story that explored the tensions between duty and personal desire. Such a theme can in fact be seen as a vestige of the old *giri-ninjō* dynamic so prevalent in Edo-period drama and literature. It is a story of guilt and remorse: Ōgai’s protagonist, Ōta Toyotarō, abandons his pregnant German paramour, Elise.<sup>394</sup> Ōta returns home out of duty to accept a position in the government, and the story ends with Ōta’s remorseful memory of having abandoned his lover, who had descended into madness on account of having been abandoned.<sup>395</sup> Some consider this story modern due to the depiction of the “different aspects of the protagonist’s subjectivity,” “visual mastery of the modern, rational subject,” and “the unconscious stirrings of desire of a Romantic self.”<sup>396</sup> Maeda Ai also points out that this “short story of an affair across cultural and class boundaries” be read in the context

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<sup>393</sup> Yoshida Seiichi, *Higuchi Ichiyō kenkyū* (Tokyo: Shinchōsha, 1956), 95-97 as quoted and translated in Keene, *Dawn to the West*, 180.

<sup>394</sup> Ōta’s college friend, Aizawa Kenzo, who was the secretary for the Japanese foreign minister in Berlin, had advised Ōta to return to his senses, recover his honor, and leave Elise.

<sup>395</sup> This is one of many examples of Meiji student love affairs that did not go well for either party. As *ren’ai* replaces the older dynamic of *iro*, a different kind of trouble emerges for the lovers involved. Unlike Saikaku’s “Greengrocer’s Daughter,” whose protagonist Oshichi dies of a lovesick heart, in Elise’s case, the reader is not given a clear resolution. Literary scholar Kamei Hideo sees *Maihime* as part of a cautionary program for Meiji youth: for some (including Shiba Shirō, Ōgai, Tokutomi Sohō, and later Natsume Sōseki) romantic love and political success did not mix. See Kamei Hideo, *Transformations of Sensibility*, (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2002), 57.

<sup>396</sup> Leslie Pincus in Maeda Ai, *Text and the City*, 295.

of the individual sense of alienation within the foreign, urban environment.<sup>397</sup>

Futabatei's *Ukigumo* (*Floating Cloud*), widely regarded as Japan's "first modern novel," was written in an inchoate form of the modern vernacular,<sup>398</sup> at the enthusiastic prompting of his mentor, Tsubouchi Shōyō.<sup>399</sup> Starting in 1887, Futabatei labored to create his own realistic novel that showcases the conflicted inner life of Utsumi Bunzō, whose ineffectual nature makes success in the world (or *risshin shusse*) an impossibility for him. This lack of agency in the world allowed the author to focus on Bunzō's interiority. By juxtaposing these two works, Karatani demonstrates just how complex and fluid the literary landscape was in the late 1880s. Ōgai used an elevated, classical literary style to engage modern themes, while Futabatei attempted to create a vibrant interiority using the nascent vernacular prose. Both authors are representatives of a period marked by innovation and experimentation.

In a similar vein, Kitamura Tōkoku and Uchimura Kanzō also contributed to the 1890s development of selfhood as a key literary concern. In the same way that Ōgai and Futabatei reflect late-Edo *gesaku* styles and themes while incorporating progressive impulses in their development of *shōsetsu*, in their critical essays, personal essays, articles, and poems, Tōkoku

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<sup>397</sup> Maeda, 303.

<sup>398</sup> *Ukigumo* was published serially between 1887 and 1889, so the reader can see how Futabatei alters his narration and discourse style over time. In stark contrast to Marleigh Ryan's position, Kamei argues that rather than Russian literature, in which Futabatei was well versed, *Ukigumo* is informed by the earlier *kanbun fūzokushi*—humorous storytelling narrated in a pseudo-Chinese style popular in the late Edo and early Meiji periods. This evolution of the *gesaku* style does not allow Futabatei the full range of emotional expression to show the interiority of Bunzō.

Realizing this lack, the second half of the novel reflects a shift in style, allowing the narrator to become much more sympathetic towards Bunzō. See Kamei; pp. ix, 12, 21-22.

<sup>399</sup> For greater insight into the shift towards psychological realism and the emergence of *shōsetsu* (fiction) as the dominant literary form, see Atsuko Ueda, *Concealment of Politics, Politics of Concealment: The Production of "Literature" in Modern Japan*, (Stanford University Press, Stanford, 2007), p. 15. Ueda argues that many literary historians point to Shōyō's *Shōsetsu shinzui* as the true origin of modern Japanese literature because it employs a number of tropes and clichés regarding an "'inward' turn that ultimately endorsed the centrality of "'emotions, customs, and manners' in the *shōsetsu*.'" But doesn't she then refute the claim?

and Uchimura also struggle with the concept of selfhood, narrative voice, the purpose of literature, and the exploration of interior states in genres other than the *shōsetsu*. In *The Culture of the Meiji Period*, social and intellectual historian Irokawa Daikichi notes the importance of the “process of independent thought and individual transformation”<sup>400</sup> of Meiji intellectuals in inspiring the spiritual renewal of the “masses” of modern Japan.<sup>401</sup> While these intellectuals were essentially writing for one another as opposed to addressing the emerging mass readership, their works became broadly read, as they were published in the popular print media of the mid-1880s— for instance, Tokutomi Sohō’s *Kokumin no tomo* (The People’s Friend) and Iwamoto Yoshiharu’s *Jogaku zasshi* (Women’s Education Magazine), both of which gained an impressive circulation.<sup>402</sup> Irokawa rejects the ‘top-down’ view that focuses on an intellectual elite creating social and cultural change, and instead privileges a ‘bottom-up’ approach whereby social change and understandings of modernity emerged on a local and personal level. He argues that Kitamura’s “Discourse on the Inner Life” (*Naibu seimei-ron*, 1893), “My Prison” (*Waga rōgoku*, 1893), and “Secret Palace within the Mind of Each” (*Kakujin shinkyū-nai no hikyū*, 1892) “laid the foundation for the consideration of ‘self’ or ‘ego’ in Japan...”<sup>403</sup>

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<sup>400</sup> Irokawa Daikichi, *The Culture of the Meiji Period*, Marius B. Jansen, ed. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), 210. Irokawa argues that the intellectual tendency was to “look down” on the masses; Uchimura and Tōkoku inspired the masses through an exploration of authentic individuality at a time when the familial *ie*, the political system, and various voices in the media were attempting to construct a homogeneous *kokutai*.

<sup>401</sup> At its height, *Yorozu chōhō* reached a daily circulation of 140,000 copies. For more on Meiji circulation figures, see James Huffman, *Creating a Public: People and Press in Meiji Japan*, (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1997), 239-246.

<sup>402</sup> *Maihime* debuted in *Kokumin no tomo* in 1889.

<sup>403</sup> Irokawa, *The Culture of the Meiji Period*, 210. Here, Irokawa cites Tōkoku’s *Hōraikyoku* (Ballad of Eternal Youth), 1891:

“My eyes, strangely enough, look within and not without/They pierce every mystery within me, without exception/But more surprising still, the eyes that started within when I was in the light/now search without instead once it is dark.../I seem to feel two conflicting spirits/One divine, the other human, within me/That will struggle without end

From 1883 to 1885, Tōkoku was a political activist “interested in citizens’ movements, until fear of harsh government suppression—and disillusionment with the violent tactics of his colleagues—led him to take up his pen”<sup>404</sup> in the last five years of his short life, which ended with his suicide. While his friends in the Freedom and People’s Rights movement sought to both liberate the Korean people from the Qing Empire and foment revolution in Japan, Tōkoku’s new course was an attempt to influence the political world as a writer, aiming to work in the didactic, utilitarian mode of Victor Hugo.<sup>405</sup> However, after his friends were apprehended for their plots, he extricated himself from the sphere of political activism. Inspired by Byron, Shelley, Milton, and Carlyle, Tōkoku would later go on to champion idealism and romantic love in the pages of *Jogaku zasshi* and *Kokumin no tomo*. And as leader of the *Bungakkai* (Literary World) coterie, Tōkoku spearheaded the romanticist movement of the 1890s.

Like Uchimura, Tōkoku had become a Christian at a young age. For both, Christianity allowed for spiritual freedom at a time when the state was clamping down on overt political expression.<sup>406</sup> Christianity promised rewards that no state could bestow, and membership in an

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until I die, forever/tormented and ill.” as an example of a “kind of agony” that was “unknown to Japanese of earlier times. Tōkoku pondered this agony deeply.”

<sup>404</sup> Fowler, Edward. *The Rhetoric of Confession*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), p. 78.

<sup>405</sup> This aspiration ended with his political ambition, as he would soon reject utilitarianism, taking up the banner of idealism against Yamaji Aizan and others in the Min’yūsha. See Francis Mathey, “Kitamura Tōkoku: The Early Years” in *Monumenta Nipponica*, Vol. 18, No. 1/4 (1963), 9. Also, see Donald Keene, *Dawn to the West*, (New York: Holt, 1984), 191.

<sup>406</sup> Ōgai, Tōkoku, and Uchimura—all idealists—had tremendously high expectations for romantic love but dealt with disappointment in different ways. Uchimura got a divorce and departed for America; Ōgai returned to Japan and agreed to an arranged marriage. He subsequently was divorced, and then remarried. Despite being one of the first Japanese authors to seriously consider the relations between men and women as sublime, Tōkoku, too, was unhappily married.

eternal community that no human could revoke.<sup>407</sup> Christianity also pointed to the importance of selfless love for one's neighbor, and introduced the concept of distinct types of "love."<sup>408</sup> Closely tied to the Bungakkai credo, Tōkoku imbibed deeply at the font of the English romantic poets, and earnestly sought to define the role of literature within society. In line with the European romantic tradition (as found in Fichte, Goethe, Carlyle, and Wordsworth), the poet was to be the arbiter of reality who used his creative vision to construct new works from the experiences of life—and Tōkoku sought to fashion his interior world into a literature that would demonstrate his ideals of love and faith.<sup>409</sup> These are themes that Uchimura frequently revisits in works written between 1892 and 1895. In addition to romantic (and theological) notions of telling "truth" as both prophet and poet, Uchimura was motivated by the sense that loyalty to God and one's own conscience were crucial parts of the inner life.

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<sup>407</sup> Tōkoku wrote, "I fervently hoped to become a great politician who could save the declining fortunes of the pathetic East and who would be willing to sacrifice himself to benefit all people. I wanted to exert myself in the political sphere as Christ had done in the religious sphere" (Tomi Suzuki, trans. in *Narrating the Self*, Kindle Location 406-407, Kindle Edition). Jesus of Nazareth had promised many times that his kingdom was not political, was not of this earth, however, many of his followers believed him to be a political messiah. Recent scholars (N. T. Wright, John Howard Yoder, and Stanley Hauerwas) recognize the political dimension of Christ's earthly ministry in the establishment of a radically different community.

<sup>408</sup> For the modern Japanese readership, concepts of divine and romantic "love" became difficult terms to translate. See Saeki Junko, "From *iro* (eros) to *ai*=love: The case of Tsubouchi Shōyō" in Levy, Indra, ed. *Translation in Modern Japan* (London and New York: Routledge, 2011), 73-97; and Yokota-Murakami Takayuki, "Translating Literature, Love, and Sexuality: Negotiation of the Ideologies in Early Modern Japan," in Theresa Hyun and José Lambert, eds., *ICLA '91 Tokyo: The Force of Vision 4*, , 71-80.

<sup>409</sup> This echoed Shōyō's point that fiction could tell "truth" despite being a construction of the imagination. Uchimura also held to this romantic notion as derived from his almost obsessive reading and quotation of Carlyle and Goethe. Keene points out that Tōkoku's long narrative poem, *The Prisoner's Poem* (*Soshū no shi*, 1889), which was inspired by the imprisonment of his Freedom and Popular Rights comrades, borrows from Byron's *The Prisoner of Chillon*, but is *even more* romantic than Byron's poem:

. . . His prisoner is incarcerated with his sweetheart, rather than with his brothers (as in Byron), and at the end, when they are freed by an amnesty, the happy pair are united in marriage. Tōkoku's poem reveals a trust in the providence of God that was alien to Byron's hero, who regained his freedom with a sigh (Keene, *Dawn to the West*, 193).

In *Naibu seimei ron* (1893), Tōkoku argues that religion and ethics are important for literature, but are not the sum total thereof. Tōkoku claims that there needed to be a “revolution” in Meiji thought toward the inner life, which some of his friends had already begun.<sup>410</sup> In recent years, he asserts, there had been a great collision between Buddhism and Christianity, between one “truth” of the East and one “truth” of the West. He did not wish to attack one at the expense of the other (unlike Uchimura.) He pointed out that the “tree of the inner life” needed to be planted and grown within the heart (borrowing from Tsurayuki’s notion of seeds in the heart), but no one really knew how to put that into practice. Neither philosopher nor religionist could really explain the inner life to him. What he recommended was using literature (as thought *cum* artistic skill) as the vehicle for uncovering the inner-life:

Let me leave behind [religion, ethics, and philosophy] and discuss the motive force of the inner life according to literary arts. Literature (*bungei*) does not need to explain the inner life from the front gate, as religion, or perhaps philosophy does. Nor can it. As a person who believes that literature is mutually supported by thought and art together, if there is thought but no art, then there is no literature. If there is art, but no thought, then there is no literature. Take all the canons of Chinese writing; it is difficult for them to reach the level of literary art; this is why I say that thought alone definitely cannot be called literature.

Tōkoku goes on to accuse those so-called proponents of erudition (*bibungaku*) of making fun of human nature, causing him great pain. They are formalists, who can barely mouth the forms of Confucian morality, merely attempting to depict the basest of human emotions and sexual desire in a realistic fashion. They cannot know the loves of Plato, Dante, or Byron. What does he propose in exchange? Allowing the heart of emotion to control the individual, and allow the inner life to inform religion and art. This, for Tōkoku does not come from realism, but the inner life, the spirit, that comes from the inspiration of nature. The individual’s interpretation of

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<sup>410</sup> Kitamura Tōkoku, “*Naibu semei ron*” in *Gendai Nihon bungaku taikei*, vol. 6 (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1960), 147.

experience is the wellspring of art and thought—both crucial ingredients to creating literature.<sup>411</sup>

While writing in different genres, both Tōkoku and Uchimura interacted with the political and literary domains through their romantic, Christian, and idealistic concerns.

Uchimura Kanzō's autobiography, *How I Became a Christian*, has been the subject of a number of Japanese studies of the development of the ego, subjectivity, "landscape," and "sensitivity." Irokawa locates Uchimura Kanzō within the matrix of authors exploring Christian freedom and vibrant inner life, while Karatani Kōjin mentions Christian faith as the source of subjectivity for those who, like Uchimura, were members of the erstwhile samurai class.

According to Karatani:

By abandoning their worldly rank as masters and subjecting themselves entirely to God, they gained subjectivity. It was by means of this inversion that Christianity sent shock waves through the ranks of the fallen samurai of the Meiji era. There were, of course, a few—Nishida Kitarō, Natsume Sōseki—who sought transcendence of suffering through Zen, cultivating a spirit of detachment. But in the end it was only Christianity which made a "new life" possible for this class.<sup>412</sup>

Karatani puts forward the idea that the samurai relinquished their earthly masters unwillingly after the Meiji restoration and found a new master in the God of the Bible. But Christianity alone did not account for the development of subjectivity; it was also linguistic changes (i.e., via *genbun itchi*), the discovery of "landscape," and "inversion." Discovering "landscape" implies

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<sup>411</sup> According to Francis Mathey:

Tōkoku follows Carlyle in his transcendental view of the universe and in his deep distrust of and opposition to matter. There is in most of Tōkoku's work an unbridgeable abyss between spirit and matter (68).

See "Kitamura Tōkoku: Essays on the Inner Life" in *Monumenta Nipponica*, Vol. 19, No. 1/2 (1964), 66-110.

<sup>412</sup> Karatani Kōjin, *Origins of Modern Japanese Literature* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2012), Kindle Locations 2131-2135. However, one might wish to take Karatani to task on this point. Sōseki's well-known failure to achieve any solace through meditative or spiritual practice became the source of his very jaded view of religion (Zen in particular). His novel *Mon* plays upon the impossibility of escaping one's sorry circumstance via religious practice (again, Zen meditation in particular). We can contrast this with Uchimura, who claimed to have found solace (and eventually his life's purpose) in his religious sensibilities.

the demarcation of the interior self and the exterior world. The artist or writer mediates nature through the artistic reconstruction of human experience. For Karatani, “confession” is an “inversion” that takes defeat and twists it around into the act of a strong will.<sup>413</sup> Most authors who “confessed” were in a position not of power, but rather weakness. Naturalists advocated “confession” of one’s inner torments and angst as a *literary* objective.<sup>414</sup> They were moved by something, had failed at something, were on the margins of society, or found themselves caught in the mechanism of a system they could not escape. Thus, for Karatani, this kind of confession or “inversion” is the point at which the “modern subject came into existence.”<sup>415</sup> This inversion, Karatani argues, comes from the Christian sense that in addition to improper actions, feelings themselves are prohibited, and due to this prohibition, constant inner surveillance and monitoring (and therefore confession and absolution) are necessary.<sup>416</sup> But another aspect of this inversion is one of power over the narrative. Through confessing, the confessor claims power and imposes an order on the circumstances narrated. Thus, confession is not an attempt at cleansing the soul so much as it is taking charge of the narrative.

Uchimura’s early personal works can be read through this lens. After the *lèse majesté*

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<sup>413</sup> Ibid., locations 2137-2143.

<sup>414</sup> Kunikida Doppo wrote, “Only by putting down precisely what you feel and expressing your thoughts frankly and without deception or decoration, no matter how awkward the attempt, you can create a genuine and appealing work of literature” (Trans: Edward Fowler, *Rhetoric of Confession*, p. 73).

<sup>415</sup> Karatani, *Origins of Japanese Literature*, Locations 2194-2197.

<sup>416</sup> “In the Christian New Testament, for example, it is written that ‘You have heard it said, ‘Thou shalt not commit adultery,’ but I say unto you that whoever looks at a woman with lust in his heart has already committed adultery in his heart.’ This statement contains a frightening inversion. All religions, including Judaism, have prohibitions against adultery. But in Christianity we find an inversion unprecedented in any other religion, for adulterous feelings, rather than acts, become the object of prohibition. To maintain this kind of conscience requires one to exercise constant surveillance over one’s inner thoughts. One must keep watch over one’s ‘interiority’ at all times. One must scrutinize the passions that surge up ‘within.’ It is this surveillance, in fact, that produces interiority. In the process the body and sexuality are discovered.” Karatani, *Origins of Modern Japanese Literature*, Kindle Locations 2011-2017.



incident, he found himself on the margins of the *bundan* between 1891 and 1897. Through retelling his experiences, Uchimura's narrator bears witness to a strong sense of self that seeks to make meaning out of his personal suffering. This type of recounting and instruction can be seen as generating something of value for his reader and for posterity. He also examines his motivations, his feelings, and ultimately his actions in order to justify himself.

But, it is important to note, as Kamei Hideo did, that Karatani also read Uchimura's *How I Became a Christian* through a distinctly Japanese lens, reading Uchimura's words in translation. After all, *How I Became a Christian* was written in English for an Anglophone—specifically American—audience, as well as Japanese with English proficiency. Karatani points to Uchimura's "discovery of landscape" when Uchimura reconstructed the narrative of his conversion to Christianity at Sapporo. In the passage below, Karatani found the "discovery of landscape" in Uchimura's connection to the Christian God. He argued that Uchimura's subjectivity was based on a sense of his connection to a singular, eternal God.<sup>417</sup> Exteriority and a sense of the world can only exist because of Uchimura's inner life. Earlier, Karatani explains that the concept of "landscape" is derived from Descartes' idea of otherness being anything which is "alienated from the human" individual. When a human being begins to distinguish that which belongs to one's own body from the "otherness" in the world, the phenomenon of "landscape" is born. However, "interiority" is more than just the "cogito" of Descartes, but more in line with Pascal's question of "Why am I here, and not there?"<sup>418</sup>

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<sup>417</sup> This is akin to Sasabuchi Tomoichi's claim that the individual in Japanese Romanticism was influenced by Protestantism, specifically Calvinism, which places a heavy value on the sense that God predestines individuals for salvation, and likewise (and in contradistinction to Luther), for damnation. The individual realizes that he or she bears the image of God and is a unique creation with a purpose and a destiny. See Sasabuchi Tomoichi, *Rōman shugi bungaku no tanjō*, (Tokyo: Meiji shoin, 1958), 51-57.

<sup>418</sup> Karatani, *Origins of Japanese Literature*, Kindle Locations 1676-1706

Uchimura writes:

Oh how proudly I passed by temple after temple with my head erect and conscience clear, with full confidence that they could punish me no longer for my not saying my prayers to them, for I found the God of gods to back and uphold me. My friends noticed the change in my mood at once. While I used to stop my conversation as soon as a temple came in view, for I had to say my prayer to it in my heart, they observed me to continue in cheer and laughter all through my way to the school. I was not sorry that I was forced to sign the covenant of the “Believers in Jesus.” Monotheism made me a new man. I resumed my beans and eggs. I thought I comprehended the whole of Christianity, so inspiring was the idea of one God. The new spiritual freedom given by the new faith had a healthy influence upon my mind and body. My studies were pursued with more concentration. Rejoicing in the newly-imparted activity of my body I roamed over fields and mountains, observed the lilies of the valley and birds of the air, and sought to commune through Nature with Nature’s God.<sup>419</sup>

Karatani reads the above passage solely from the perspective of Uchimura’s rejection of polytheism in favor of monotheism, with the latter in effect liberating Uchimura to “see” and describe the landscape around him. However, as is crucial to one’s understanding in general, Kamei accuses Karatani of failing to note the context and audience of Uchimura’s text. Consider the following:

Yet, as we can infer even from the translation, with its passages, such as “marveling at the lilies blooming in the valleys, at the birds soaring through the skies,” the experiences from the earlier time that Uchimura recalls and records here have been transformed into an imaginary projection directed at readers from Christian nations: they are refracted through expressions characteristic of the Bible.

That is to say, in a similar vein to Tōson recasting Shakespeare in the form of *jōruri* plays and borrowing Shakespearian phrases to express his own experiences of redemption, Uchimura borrows Biblical language and a Biblical register to explain his experiences to the reader. The “lilies blooming in the valleys” and “birds soaring through the skies” are phrases borrowed from Jesus’ teaching on freedom from anxiety where he says,

Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And which of you by

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<sup>419</sup> “How I Became a Christian” in UKZS 3:17-18e.

being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life? And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.<sup>420</sup>

Uchimura continued to invoke the Biblical register throughout his trilogy—for both his American and Japanese readership—especially borrowing from the language of the prophets Isaiah and Jeremiah, and the psalms of King David.

Kamei continues:

Karatani's methodological consistency might perhaps have been preserved if he had grasped this point in particular. Uchimura's autobiography was directed mainly toward American Christians and so of course was written in English. What Karatani calls Uchimura's "discovery of landscape" could only occur under the "system" formed by these two preconditions. . . . Uchimura says nothing more than that the days of his youth were dominated by "heathen superstitions."

Also:

... This [conversion] experience occurred independently of his conversion to Christianity; in fact, Uchimura agonized over his inability to see in this nature any of the signs of God mentioned in the Bible. When we view the expressions of sympathy with nature found in his autobiography against this sort of experience, the partiality of those expressions, their projected or imaginary quality, becomes apparent. Even if we could see anywhere in Uchimura's autobiography the articulation of a "landscape," we would have to regard its "origin" as being the "origin" of a certain kind of linguistic expression.<sup>421</sup>

Thus, as Kamei alludes, proper attention to Uchimura's audience and an understanding of Biblical allusions in the Judeo-Christian literary tradition are necessary to one's understanding of Uchimura's autobiography and the development of the modern self within his text. In Uchimura's work, what we see is on the one hand, a well-established native tradition of diaries, personal essays, and reflective writing, and on the other, the influence of Western confessions, *apologias*, autobiographies (Augustine, Boethius, Cellini, Rousseau) and biographies (Carlyle, Benjamin Franklin, Frederick Douglass), and Judeo-Christian theology positing our relationship

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<sup>420</sup> Matthew 6:26-29 (ESV)

<sup>421</sup> Kamei Hideo, *Transformations of Sensibility*, trans. Bourdaghs, et al., (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2002), 239-240.

to the divine, to nature, and to society. Uchimura encompasses all of these in his autobiography.<sup>422</sup>

As Saeki Shōichi has noted, by the time that Western autobiography became available in Japan on a larger scale, readers were quite ready to accept Western works. However, there was no major shift to Western autobiographical style within the *bundan*.<sup>423</sup> Rather than the creation of literary narratives, or employing the writer's "contract" with the reader that Philip Lejeune identifies as a key element of Western autobiography, Meiji self-writing (as we see in the case of Tanaka Shōzō [1841-1913] below) continued to follow the traditional Japanese pattern of memoir and diary: giving evidence of one's *bona fides* to construct a position of authority, reconstructing life events, offering a challenge to the authorities, and a maintaining a didactic component throughout to attest to one's identity. Uchimura's *How I Became a Christian* (which contains many entries from his American diary) is readily locatable within the context of Edo expressions of self and *apologia*, with a view towards Yamaga Sokō (1622-1685) and Arai Hakuseki (1657-1725) in particular.<sup>424</sup>

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<sup>422</sup> In Uchimura's case, though his literary commentary of 1894-1896 has a strong Romanticist component (especially with regard to Goethe, Wordsworth, and Carlyle), the intellectual and spiritual heritage of Puritanical New England shaped his experiences from the time he attended Sapporo Agricultural College until the end of his stay in America in 1888. Ōgai, on the other hand, had a completely different experience in Germany. Ōgai can be credited with introducing German Romanticism to Japan, but his experiences and the literary fruits thereof were substantially different from Uchimura's.

<sup>423</sup> Uchimura and Fukuzawa are quite exceptional in this regard. As Marvin Marcus notes, "Franklin the exemplar held a certain fascination both for Meiji writers and for society at large. But his autobiography as a literary narrative in its own right appears not to have been at all 'influential,' except perhaps in the case of Fukuzawa. The literary mainstream would largely ignore the public self, the larger social and political sphere, and instead explore that heretofore uncharted realm which Kitamura Tōkoku (1868-1894), the great proponent of romanticism, referred to as *naibu seimei* (the inner life)." Marvin Marcus, "The Impact of Western Autobiography in Meiji Japan," in *Biography*, Vol 15. No. 4, 378.

<sup>424</sup> Yamaga's *Last Testament of an Exile (Haisho zanpitsu)* and Arai Hakuseki's *Told Round a Brushwood Fire (Oritaku shiba no ki)* both begin with their parentage, childhood excellence in

## Uchimura and The Edo tradition of Self-Writing

Both Yamaga and Arai establish their educational background, being careful to establish how young they were when they started their education in the Confucian classics, the degree of their lexical skills, and how they served their lords with distinction. This is in order to attest to their identity as scholars, textual, and moral authorities in their own right. Once this identity is established, they are able to discuss their grievances with their treatment by the authorities for holding fast to their internal convictions.

For example, Joyce Ackroyd contends that Arai wrote his autobiography for two reasons: the first being to leave a record of his life and a defense thereof for his children. The other is that he may have been offering a vision of passive resistance against the authority of the shogunate:

The vehemence of Hakuseki's expression bears out the disturbed state of his feelings as he wrote. Clearly, he regarded bequeathing to his descendants a testimony to his own actions and motives as a necessary precaution, his sole means of self-justification, which his own sense of his worth demanded. Hani Gōro in *Arai Hakuseki: Fukuzawa Yukichi* (1936) describes *Oritaku shiba no ki* as “an expression of passive resistance to feudal repression,” an autobiography of far greater significance than the crude memoirs of the time, which were themselves constricted by feudal bonds; it represents an awakening of individual awareness, and is thus a pioneer work of self-knowledge.

Some may reject Hani Goro's claim as wide of the mark. However, no one can deny that while Hakuseki was an unequivocal supporter of an ideal Confucian state, he was passionately hostile to the venality, negligence, and stupidity of the Tokugawa bureaucracy. Certainly his whole life illustrated his independence of mind and determined self-assertion and self-realization; during his entire career as Ienobu's adviser, he opposed officialdom, and Books II and III of his autobiography are replete with strictures on various aspects of the administration. The very writing of *Oritaku Shiba no Ki* after he was excluded from affairs and avoided by society demonstrates a spirit that refused to be quelled. At this time, though under physical restraint—his movement out of his house was restricted—and obliged to be highly circumspect in speech, he yet enjoyed the intellectual freedom to think as he saw fit and to set down his free-ranging thoughts in a private document like *Oritaku shiba no ki*. The highly tendentious statements in this autobiography strongly suggest resistance to feudal repression. A similar spirit of

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Confucian learning, and continue to their careers, frustrations with the Tokugawa government, and advice to future generations. Uchimura also follows this universal paradigm at the beginning, but like his Japanese forbears, he includes frustration with career and society, and a didactic component of what the reader can learn from his experience.

defiance, cloaked under an outer mantle of discretion, is clear in Soko and Sadanobu. And when we note Fukuzawa's impudent flouting of the authorities, we must realize that it is absurd to accept the lip service paid to the *force majeure* of feudalism as having sprung from the hearts of the strongest intellectuals.<sup>425</sup>

What is universal about Arai's autobiography is, as Ackroyd identified, the sense that no one can prevent individuals from having their own free thoughts, even if their speech is curtailed. But what is particular to the context of Edo Japan is the author's engagement with the ethics and moral frameworks of the day. Hakuseki's strong education, evidence of filial piety—and as Ackroyd argues, pride in his past, self-justification and frankness—serve to substantiate Hakuseki's autobiography as a noteworthy document for not only his heirs, (for which he intended limited circulation) but also those who would come into contact with it. The argument that he resisted “feudal repression” as one who was rejected by society is believable, not only in the context of Yamaga Sōko and Fukuzawa Yukichi, but also that of Uchimura Kanzō who was soundly rejected by the Meiji educational and intellectual communities. Indeed, a chief reason for writing autobiography can be said to be self-justification and persuasion to the reader for whom it is intended.

Later Edo autobiographies also demonstrate the movement in this direction, especially in what educational texts were mentioned, and the types of works created by literati. Moriyama Takamori (1738-1815), who received high praise from Matsudaira Sadanobu, was a highly educated samurai scholar. Moriyama wrote a number of collections of essays on customs and material culture, as well as a diary that formed the basis of an autobiography. In *Pearl Diver's Roasted Seaweed* (*Ama no takumo no ki*), Moriyama mentions Arai's “bitter” memoir while striving to create something positive and useful for future generations. Moriyama does not wish to fill his descendant's heads with negative feelings, but wants them to serve their lord. While he

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<sup>425</sup> Ackroyd, Introduction in *Told Round a Brushwood Fire*, 22-23.

stresses that he did not like *sodoku*, the blind recitation of texts as a “priest would recite a [Sanskrit] sutra”, or the Chinese texts he recited as a child, he loved anything native, especially folktales and literature written out in the *kana*:

Looking at old Arai’s Hakuseki’s *Oritaku shiba no ki*, I made up my mind that I should write my own memoir. As I start to pick up my brush, it is really improper, even presumptuous. Indeed, a memoir is by nature something that shouldn’t be circulated outside of one’s family. However many times one’s descendants should serve the public, they must not forget the favor of their lord. For a time, they might possibly carry the recollection of their father’s past. After these thoughts flow out, and are freely spoken, one’s descendants will become useless. They should be smarter than that. For the time being, wishing to leave them at least some small regard for public service, I will entrust my own record to that same foolish brush.

When I was six, my mother taught me to read. When I was a little more than ten I finished learning the Four Books, the Five Classics, Smaller Learning, the Tang shi xuan, and other ancient texts. There being no difference to my childish heart (*osanaki kokoro ni*), I was just committing them to memory like some monk reading a sutra. But still, at my mother’s side, my waking thoughts and bedtime tales were of the ancient acts of the holy and wise, the conduct of the famous generals and brave warriors of the Yamato, and the ways of filial piety, benevolence, and duty. She also told me a number of folk tales including:

*The sparrow whose tongue was clipped, The old man who made the dead tree bloom, The Monkey and the Crab, The Rabbit and the Tanuki, Hachikazuki, Yuriwaka, The Camphor Tree, Minamoto Yoshitsune, Minamoto Tametomo, Arata Yoshisada, Binshiken, Hakuyu, Kiso no Yoshinaka, and Mencius’ Mother.*

She told me these tales countless times. I first heard them as a child, but even now, whenever I recall these blessed memories, it is difficult to suppress my reminiscent tears. Because of all this, in no time at all I held no fear of books. Kana texts: historical records, military strategy, even *jōruri katari*--anything I could get my hands on--they were all captivating to me. Even by lamplight, I would read late into the night, and likewise, I would read by the light of the moon. Indeed, to my childish heart, the soft letters were pleasing to the eye, they were so interesting, I just read on and on. However many times I read true *kambun* texts, they do not stay with me. No matter how many times I look at them, high prose and far-flung texts are just no use to me.<sup>426</sup>

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<sup>426</sup> Moriyama Takamori, “*Ama no Takumo no Ki*,” in *Nihon Zuihitsu Taisen*, 2nd series, 22 (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1995), 201-202.

Not surprisingly, Moriyama's text is not full of *kambun-esque* constructions, nor is it dense with Chinese characters. He uses many native Japanese words (*yamato kotoba*) and comes across as an earnest devotee of native Japanese texts. Though he has learned the Chinese classics that every other educated samurai knew, they are of no interest to him. He does not praise their moral worth, as Yamaga or even Katsu Kokichi does. Instead, he merely mentions them before exhaustively listing the tales his mother used to tell him at bedtime. Most of these are native to Japan, though he mentions a few touching Chinese tales such as *Mencius' Mother*, *Binshiken*, and *Hakuyu*. The rest are either warrior tales found in popular works like *Tales of the Heike*, or folk tales the likes of which Yanagita Kunio collected in the Meiji period.

Perhaps Moriyama is sympathetic to the *kokugaku* sentiments. Roughly a contemporary of Motoori Norinaga (1730-1801), he echoes Norinaga's ideas that Chinese texts were useless, and that Confucians had no use for mystical tales. But he does not go as far as rejecting them outright. While the lofty moral texts held no interest for him, he did not criticize them. As part of the stories his mother told him, Moriyama did mention some Chinese stories, including *Bishiken*, *Hakuyu*, and *Mencius' Mother*.<sup>427</sup> Of note, too, is that Moriyama does not seem to be bragging, and he does not resort to the false humility seen in Hakuseki and Yamaga's autobiographies.<sup>428</sup> Since he has nothing to prove in his *zuihitsu*, his words are neither charged with pride nor are they full of bitterness. Rather, they are an exercise in freedom, recounting a child's joy of discovery. In addition, Moriyama's attention paid to the lyrical, moving qualities of the *kana texts* reminds us of Motoori Norinaga's emphasis on "sympathy" with the story and characters.

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<sup>427</sup> This story was frequently told as an epoch of filial piety. In his Taisho recollections of his Meiji childhood, *Gin no Saji* (1912), Naka Kansuke also mentions being deeply moved by *Mencius' Mother*.

<sup>428</sup> See Saeki Shōichi and Teruko Craig, "Autobiography in Japan" in *Journal of Japanese Studies*, Vol. 11, No. 2 (Summer, 1985), p. 364-365.



Norinaga argued for the importance of *mono no aware* in his *Essentials*, “it is a literary work’s capacity to stimulate the cultivation of...sensitivity, and not its potential utility for promoting moral edification, that is the only legitimate criterion for evaluating a work of literature.”<sup>429</sup>

Moreover, Moriyama’s expression of his own emotion regarding the texts he read make for another good example of Moriyama’s “awareness” of *mono no aware*; in his *Personal Views on Poetry*, Norinaga wrote that “when men speak of what they feel in their hearts, this is an awareness of *mono no aware*.”<sup>430</sup> Like Norinaga, instead of arguing for “moral utility” of texts as a Confucian might, Moriyama speaks from the heart and praises the aesthetic quality of what he enjoyed reading.

The move away from stilted moralism to honest confession is furthered in Matsudaira Sadanobu’s autobiography. Matsudaira (1759-1829) was the daimyo of the Shirakawa domain, and the senior councilor (*rōju shuza*) of the shogunate from 1787-1793.<sup>431</sup> While Matsudaira was known as a moralist who enforced strong sumptuary laws and celebrated Confucian frugality, his autobiography is much more personal and free, even dealing with his sexuality. Matsudaira was a well-educated bureaucrat, who was thoroughly familiar with both ways of *bun* and *bu*.<sup>432</sup> Unlike Yamaga Sokō, who hardly mentioned his personal life, such as wife and

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<sup>429</sup> Nosco, *Remembering Paradise*, 179.

<sup>430</sup> *Ibid.*, 178.

<sup>431</sup> For more details, see Herman Ooms’ *Charismatic Bureaucrat: Political Biography of Matsudaira Sadanobu* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975).

<sup>432</sup> Matsudaira’s humorous satire of daimyo life, *Daimyō Katagi* is full of witty references to all sorts of Chinese Confucian texts, as well as contemporary scholarship and attitudes. No doubt, he was a first-class writer. The first words of *Daimyō Katagi* are as follow: “Some people claim that ‘art’ in the martial arts really means giving up the use of weapons, but that is a farfetched notion invented by musty Confucian scholars.” *Monumenta Nipponica*, Vol. 38, No. 1 (Spring, 1983), 20-48.

children of his own,<sup>433</sup> Matsudaira delves into his inner thoughts as well as his personal feelings and history. As Saeki Shōichi observed:

After Hakuseki and Sokō, Matsudaira Sadanobu's *Uge no hito koto* will come as a surprise to the reader. It has no sense of tension or urgency; Sadanobu tells his story with grace and ease and amplitude of spirit. A man of exquisite taste, eminent statesman, composer of waka, essays, several *sharebon*, and even a skilled garden landscapist, he was a dilettante in the best sense of the word. Nothing escaped his scrutiny, not even his *vita sexualis*, and unlike Hakuseki or Sokō who ignored the subject altogether, he wrote about it with the utmost candor and self-possession.

“From the time I was thirteen or fourteen I was attracted to young girls, but since prohibitions concerning such matters were very strict, I did not know women until I was married at the age of nineteen.”<sup>434</sup>

Unlike Arai Hakuseki or Yamaga Sokō, Matsudaira recounts the course of his emotions and sentiments. He discusses his love for his sick wife as she lays dying as well as his concubine.

Saeki continues:

Such caution may strike one as excessive or as indicating the height of seigniorial arrogance. All the same, at a time when most domainal lords thought nothing of establishing a veritable harem, I should think that his scrupulousness is rather to be commended. The more so since Sadanobu was apparently most constant and loving to this concubine, especially after Mineko's death, going so far as to say that he "loved" her.

“My concubine became sick around the fourth month. Remedies and cures of every kind were ministered, but to no avail. She finally died. I was grieved and saddened, for I loved her deeply [*ito aishitarikereba*].

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<sup>433</sup> “The diary of Yamaga Sokō (to which he gave the title *Nenpu*, or Chronology), for example, although informative in other respects, is emblematic in its silence on his personal life. His marriage (to an unnamed wife) is recorded dismissively in four crisp characters— ‘I was married’ (*konrei ari*). The deaths of his children were to receive little more— ‘The girl Take died of smallpox on the fourth of the month. Being in mourning I could not present myself for duty’; ‘My foolish son [a conventional form] Satarō died of a sudden illness; I buried him at Hōrinji’; ‘The girl Yasu died, infected by smallpox. Her mother is my concubine.’ Then later, recording the birth of a son and the consequent death of the same woman—now named— ‘Mansuke was born. Fuchi, my concubine, died.’” Harold Bolitho, *Bereavement and Consolation: Testimonies from Tokugawa Japan*, (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2003), pp.9-10.

<sup>434</sup> Saeki Shōichi. “Autobiography in Japan,” trans. Teruko Craig in *Journal of Japanese Studies*, Vol. 11, No. 2 (Summer, 1985), p. 364

This concubine of mine was not given to jealousy, and was, moreover, upright in character. On moonlit nights we would together stroll around the garden, and now that I think over it, I realize that it is ever since her death that the sight of the moon fills me with melancholy. People will no doubt laugh at me for being overly attached, but is this not better than being heartless and unfeeling?"<sup>435</sup>

Matsudaira's words echo Yamaga Sokō's anti Neo-Confucian assertion: "Anyone who eliminates human desire is not a human being at all."<sup>436</sup> Later Edo autobiographies of *bunjin* like those of Moriyama Takamori and Matsudaira Sadanobu indicate a growth in feeling as well as the desire to communicate their own humanity. Rather than simply justifying their positions and ideas, calling attention to their scholarship and skill, they show deeper connection to their experiences.

This connection to experience is perhaps most evident in Katsu Kokichi's picaresque autobiography, *Musui's Story* (*Musui Dokugen*, 1843). Katsu Kokichi (1802-1850) was a low-ranking samurai who refused to live the conventional life of austerity, propriety, training, and service. As did others, Katsu wrote his autobiography for his descendants (家訓 *kakun*, precepts for one's family); instead of creating a positive guide for the future or a justification for his thinking, he creates a negative example that he adjures his readers to *not* follow. By far, Katsu's work is the most personal, the most "authentic" for lack of a better word. Katsu's construction of his life and experiences is one of shame and failure—in which he takes a certain kind of pride. For example, in his introduction, Katsu writes:

It is important to make something of oneself, gain honor and fame, and bring prosperity to one's family. Look at me, for instance. Forsaking reason and commonsense, I wasted my time in activities unworthy of a human being. Not once did I hold office, and because of me, the house of Katsu, which had served the shogun honorably for generations, was disgraced. A more telling example

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<sup>435</sup> Idem.

<sup>436</sup> Yamaga Sokō, "Haisho Zanpitsu" in Peter Nosco *Confucianism and Tokugawa Culture*, 14.

you'll never find. True, I've finally come to my senses, but no amount of regret is going to do much good. I am regarded by my fellow men as a ne'er-do-well...<sup>437</sup>

Explaining his poor choices, he holds himself up as the counter-example to all the goodness and pride seen in previous examples of Edo period autobiography. In his introduction, Katsu reminds his potential readers of proper etiquette and morality—values he recognizes as good, yet failed to adhere to himself. This might seem hypocritical, but as he is writing his autobiography under house arrest, after “retiring” he is attempting to recast himself as one who has reformed. Thus, he toes the “official” line. He writes:

From the age of eight or nine leave all else and devote yourself day and night to your studies and the military arts. Read as many books as you can—better that than some half-baked learning. Girls—from the age of ten learn how to arrange men's hair in proper samurai style and fix your own hair as well. Take up sewing. From about thirteen do things for yourself and learn to read and write as well as the average person. For then, even after you are married, you will have no trouble arranging your household...Boys—aim to be strong and sturdy of body. Eat simple food and work at mastering the military arts. If possible, strive to excel in at least one art. Serve your master the shogun with utmost loyalty and your parents with filial devotion. Treat your wife and children with benevolence and your servants with compassion. Be conscientious in your job; associate with friends in truth and sincerity. Be ever thrifty, eschew luxury, and wear simple clothes. Cultivate relations with those who are upright and seek their advice in following the path of righteousness. In choosing teachers, select those who are virtuous and without pretense, even if they are not of the first rank in their professions.<sup>438</sup>

Katsu is eminently practical, even if he was not highly educated. It is noteworthy that Katsu prescribes the type of learning that Yamakawa Kikue describes in the Mito domain, especially for girls; this is in keeping with the educational and social values of Tokugawa Nariaki's day. He encourages his readers to read many books, but tells them to avoid “half-baked” learning—perhaps this refers to impractical philosophy or highly theoretical scholarship.

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<sup>437</sup> Katsu Kokichi, *Musui's Story: The Autobiography of a Tokugawa Samurai*, Teruko Craig, trans. (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1988), p. 5.

<sup>438</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 2-3.

Still, Katsu was not entirely ignorant of *bun*, though he chiefly excelled at *bu*. He recounts how he began learning Judo at age nine, and horseback riding at age ten. Only by the late age of twelve did he begin the task of Confucian learning, when his

...brother, Hikoshirō, arranged for me to begin school. He took me to the shogunate academy in Yushima. I began by studying the Chinese classic, *The Greater Learning*, with Moki Minokichi and Sano Gozaemon, officials in charge of the school dormitory. I hated studying and every day slipped out through the fence into the Sakura riding ground, where I spent hours riding. At most I learned to read five or six pages of *The Greater Learning*. The two teachers soon sent word that they didn't want me, which suited me just fine.<sup>439</sup>

Looking at Katsu's writing style, his lack of high-level education is quite evident. Katsu uses rough verb endings, refers to himself in the familiar first-person, *ore*, and uses few Chinese compounds. There were several mistakes in his original text, of both character, punctuation, and naming, which have been corrected and edited over time in various print versions.<sup>440</sup> Yet, Katsu still attained a "common" level of literacy and was able to encode his experiences into text. This text is just as useful as a historical document as earlier, more erudite texts. Moreover, Katsu's text evidences the growth of the autobiographical (*jigajōkyō*) consciousness that developed over time. While he did not hold Confucian learning in high esteem, he still professes to valuation for learning in general. Similar to earlier autobiographers, Katsu does try to justify his life and behavior, not as one who is morally virtuous, but one who treats people fairly and well, and is benevolent. Despite having a penchant to visit the Yoshiwara and get into street brawls, he still tried to get an official post, was loyal to his friends, treated his family well, was generous, and, if we are to believe him, he was a first-class swordsman who could solve almost anyone's problems when they came to him for help.

In this way, Uchimura's autobiography comports itself with earlier Japanese

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<sup>439</sup> Ibid., 19-20.

<sup>440</sup> Ibid., xix.

autobiography.<sup>441</sup> Before turning to an account of his personal experiences, it bears noting that Uchimura begins by discussing his family background, mentioning his grandparents before praising the moral and intellectual acumen of his parents. Uchimura also makes sure to include Confucian learning and a justification of his intellectual *bona fides*, while describing the position and perspective of the samurai class from which he descended.<sup>442</sup> It cannot be said that simply because a portion of his audience is Western, Uchimura felt obliged to elaborate on what these values were (respect for one's lord, duty, frugality, honesty, etc.). Even the serious Arai and the reckless Katsu Kokichi (1802-1850) do the very same thing, although they are worlds apart in terms of form and purpose. (And of course, Uchimura can become somewhat tedious in the repetition of these values, but he does so in order to construct his identity as an authority who experienced difficult things, but came through them due to his principles.)

Furthermore, this same native legacy can be seen in the Meiji autobiography of Tanaka Shōzō, who converted to Christianity later in his life. While more traditional, Tanaka's project is relatable to Uchimura's self-writing. Written in classical Japanese, *The Tale of Tanaka Shōzō* (*Tanaka Shōzō mukashi banashi*) also builds on earlier Edo tropes of Confucian upbringing and

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<sup>441</sup>While autobiographical in nature, his Japanese work, *Consolations of a Christian* (*Kirisuto Shintō no Nagusame*, 1893) covers aspects of Uchimura's life that occurred after his return to Japan. Some have said that *Consolations of a Christian* presages the I-Novel. In *Nihonjin no Jiden*, Saeki refers to this text as 「私小説というに近いものだった」 (60) while John Howes, echoing Masamune Hakuchō, argues in *Japan's Modern Prophet* that *Consolations* is a “proto” I-Novel. Reasons for this are that Uchimura used his own lived experiences as a model for his text, but does not refer to them in detail. In the introduction to his text, Uchimura explicitly warns the reader not to look for autobiographical details; this is not *jiden*, but an example of the suffering that a Christian encounters. Yet at the same time, such an account could be fit within an autobiographical schema, depending how one defines ‘autobiography.’ As with *shishōsetsu*, ‘autobiography’ raises thorny questions of genre definition.

<sup>442</sup>Indeed, his autobiography is a *tour de force* of Confucianist self-presentation. Ōgai can be said to have aimed at something similar with his *shiden* biographical studies late in life; in contrast to his German trilogy, these amount to a sort of ‘displaced’ autobiography with a deep Confucianist subtext.

traditional ethos, but in response to modern crises.<sup>443</sup> As should be expected, his autobiography reads like a chronicle or personal history, beginning with his parentage and childhood. Similar to Katsu's picaresque memoir, Tanaka's is replete with stories of struggles to learn Confucius and Mencius, running away from school, pigheadedness that led to his lack of filial piety, and a bad reputation that caused his mother to castigate him. Finally, he discusses his maturation, his learning to work hard, and his devotion to his cause. Like Shimazaki Tōson, rather than belonging to one of the *bushi* clans, Tanaka was born into a farming family; his father was the village headman. In addition to becoming the village headman himself, he founded a local newspaper, *The Tochigi News*, in 1879, and became a member of the prefectural assembly in 1880. By 1890, he was elected to the lower house of the Diet. Yet Tanaka never lost his commitment to the concerns of the local farmers. Earning the ire of local elites, Tanaka was thrice imprisoned for his refusal to back down.

As Japan modernized, the demand for natural resources was insatiable, and by 1880, the output of the Ashio Coppermine, which had been in existence since the beginning of the Tokugawa period, was greatly increased. However, due to new, ecologically unsound mining methods, the water in the Watarase River became polluted by copper tailings. This polluted water affected not just the health of the farmers, but their agricultural output as well. Tanaka was the only member of the Diet to champion the cause of his Tochigi neighbors, and when he retired from government service, he personally petitioned the Emperor Meiji to redress the grievances of

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<sup>443</sup> While in prison, Tanaka accepted Christianity after reading the Bible in 1902. He was known to carry the Meiji Constitution in one sleeve of his *hakama*, and the Bible in the other. Christian writer and activist Kinoshita Naoe (1859-1937) befriended Tanaka and in 1921 published *Tanaka Shōzō-ō*, which contained Tanaka's autobiography and other materials. In 1926, Kurihara Sanzaburō published it in its entirety along with a preface and collection of Tanaka's poems. For a modern version, see Tanaka Shōzō, *Tanaka Shōzō mukashibanashi*, (Tokyo: Nihon tosho sentā, 1997).

the affected farmers.<sup>444</sup> Tanaka's refusal to conform and commitment to his conscience alongside his literary activities earned him the reputation given to 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>-century *bunjin* (serious literati whose works merit the attention of the reader and further circulation), something typically assigned to Confucian thinkers like Yamaga Sokō. From prison, Tanaka had written a number of letters, essays, and an autobiography that, like Arai's, challenged the political norms of his day and championed his own philosophy.

Though Tanaka's autobiography is not marked by a well-developed interiority, the reader is presented with a portrait of a *gijin*, one who lives for righteousness and principle. This commitment to cause, along with the sense that a former farmer could justly resist a former samurai (turned wealthy developer), are showcased toward the end of the narrative. Where Tanaka recreates the dialogue between himself and Mishima Michitsune, it reads almost like a stage play, where the democratic hero takes on the wealthy villain. There is even a dramatic escape from police and the avoidance of low-level bureaucrats while Tanaka is hot on the trail of incriminating evidence against Mishima.<sup>445</sup>

Evangelist of "Civilization and Enlightenment" and "Practical Learning," Fukuzawa Yukichi published his own autobiography, *Fukuō jiden* 福翁自伝 (*The Autobiography of*

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<sup>444</sup> Uchimura was also a great advocate for the farmers, frequently writing scathing commentary in the *Yorozu Chōhō* against the government for its inaction in the face of this environmental disaster. Uchimura also personally backed Tanaka, especially when he was criticized by the mine's owner, Furukawa Ichibei, as "living off the peasant movement" (See Kenneth Strong, *Ox Against the Storm: A Biography of Tanaka Shozo: Japan's Conservationist Pioneer* (Kent: Japan Library), 108-109).

<sup>445</sup> "Here I was, a member of the Standing Committee of the Prefectural Assembly, having to hide in the bushes from a collection of petty bureaucrats and geisha girls! Society's a strange thing, I thought, sighing and smiling at the same time. Then I went on to Yanada District, gathering evidence from Otani, Osa, Tanuma, Inamura and other villages." (Translation by Strong, 51).



*Fukuzawa Yukichi*) in 1899.<sup>446</sup> This was just four years after the publication of Uchimura's *How I Became a Christian: Out of My Diary*. In Fukuzawa's case, he dictated his work to a secretary and explicitly called it *jiden*, or "autobiography," while Uchimura's *How I Became a Christian* instead makes use of diary entries Uchimura wrote while in America. Fukuzawa was an early and ardent proponent of Western know-how, empirical science, rational thought, pragmatism, and a progressive social agenda. Although he espoused an egalitarian doctrine,<sup>447</sup> Fukuzawa was not an adherent of Christianity or of any other religion, for that matter. Rather, he gained inspiration from exemplars such as the self-made Benjamin Franklin, whom Uchimura also respected as the "disciple of common sense" and free thought.<sup>448</sup>

Nor was Fukuzawa intending for his work to be edited for a Western audience. One striking contrast between Fukuzawa and Uchimura concerns their position regarding Japanese *kami* (deities). Fukuzawa recounts his skepticism regarding the Shinto *kami* and the admonitions to obey their dictates or suffer the consequence, while Uchimura remarks on his dutiful reverence. Both claim that their parents had no strong religious sensibilities. Yet each responds

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<sup>446</sup> Interestingly enough, Tanaka had an interview with Fukuzawa to gain admission to Keiō University, which Fukuzawa founded.

<sup>447</sup> Fukuzawa is well known for rejecting Confucian hierarchy through his saying, "Heaven does not create one man above another." His *Gakumon no susume*, or "On the Encouragement of Learning," alongside Nakamura Keiu's translation of Samuel Smiles' *Self Help* (often referred to as the Bible of *risshin shusse*), were key texts that introduced young intellectuals and writers to Anglo-American individualism and empiricism. Yet, like Uchimura, he advocated Confucian values where they were employed for good and rejected them when used for suppression.

<sup>448</sup> Marcus also points out that it is not the interiority of Franklin that made him popular, but rather the "Franklin of the Thirteen Moral Precepts" and the man's transformation into an American version of Confucius that "gains currency in the Meiji" (378). In service of the *kokutai*, the Meiji state (which had rejected Uchimura's individualism and dedication to conscience) trotted out Franklin, celebrating his example to help reinforce Confucian morality. Rather than using Franklin as a supporter of the Confucian moral order, Uchimura included the apocryphal story of Franklin's deistic engagement with the *philosophes* as part of his anti-statist commentary on the biblical *Book of Ruth*. See *Book of Ruth: A Tale of Heroic Virtue (Teisō bidan: Rutsuki 貞操美談路得記)* in UKZS, 2:259-263.

to religion in contrasting ways. Much like Franklin's mode of reason and logic, Fukuzawa employed a scientific approach to testing the claims of divine punishment. He took some of the paper *omamori* (charms for protection) in his house and violated them, once by trampling one under his foot; another time, he "took it to the *chōzu-ba* (privy) and put it in the filth."<sup>449</sup> He confessed to being a little afraid, but nothing happened. Having received no punishment, he went so far as to remove the sacred items from smaller shrines and discard them. This was how Fukuzawa freed himself from the bondage of superstition.

Uchimura, for his part, claims to have been so fearful of the various Japanese gods that he could hardly pass a shrine without bowing and paying some sort of obeisance. One god required him to refrain from eating beans, while the other called for him to spurn pears. Another, as it was believed, would cause liars and oath breakers to spew forth blood from the mouth and die on the spot. By his own admission, these doctrines and practices ultimately led Uchimura to find comfort and solace in the God of the Bible (even if only to escape from the confusing and contradictory domain of *kami* worship). Monotheism allowed Uchimura to escape the injunctions and requirements of the Shinto *kami*. Uchimura's spiritual quest begins with replacing several gods with the single Christian God, and thereby removing himself from the cycle of superstition. As the life narrative progresses, it begins to comport itself with Christian autobiographical literature, in particular Augustine's *Confessions* and Dante's *Divine Comedy*. The movement from unbelief to an intellectual assent, and then from intellectual assent to deep-seated belief.

*How I Became a Christian*, represents a spiritual quest that charts the narrator's growth in faith as he struggles with the challenges of daily life. Writing gave Uchimura the space he needed to explain his experience and construct a persona that had the power to stand under the

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<sup>449</sup> Fukuzawa Yukichi, *The Autobiography of Yukichi Fukuzawa*, Eiichi Kiyooka, trans. (New York, Columbia University Press, 1960), 16.

banner of its own convictions.<sup>450</sup> Uchimura wrote that he was frequently asked to come before religious gatherings in the United States to recount his conversion experience in just fifteen minutes. Much like Augustine, he went on to say how difficult and demeaning this was, since conversion is a “gradual process.” Indeed, Uchimura provides some very sardonic observations on being reduced to the “talking, tamed rhinoceros” expected to mouth the requisite “Here’s how I found God” account before the meeting moved on to the more serious business at hand.<sup>451</sup> All of these factors— Uchimura’s samurai heritage, Confucian moral upbringing, and Shinto-Buddhist religious sensibility— figure into his account, particularly regarding his childhood years.

As he proceeds with his life story, the real work of self-scrutiny and inner struggle begins. His early conversion at Sapporo Agriculture College can be seen as a decision to accept one religion and thereby abandon another. Young Uchimura had not fully understood the implications of his “decision.” Thus, told in retrospect, the practicality and the practice of this new, barely-established faith remain something to be worked out over the course of this narrative. In terms of a work of confession, or *apologia*, *How I Became a Christian* plots the trajectory of a new believer’s ascent to faith, struggle with doctrines and practice, the individual’s struggle with sin (i.e., the knowledge that one cannot live up to the teachings of one’s faith, that one’s desires

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<sup>450</sup> In *Japan’s Modern Prophet*, John Howes explains that *Consolations of a Christian*, *How I Became a Christian* and *The Search for Peace* end with the aim of showing how ultimately the believer, and Uchimura in particular, must stand on one’s own, regardless of what others think or say (97).

<sup>451</sup> “But the worst lot in these shows falls to some specimens of converted heathens who happen to be there. They are sure to be made good use of, as circus-men make use of tamed rhinoceroses. They are fetched up for shows; and such wonderful shows! Till but recently bowing before wood and stones, but now owning the same God as that of these white people! ‘O just tell us how you were converted,’ they clamour; ‘but in fifteen minutes and no more, as we are going to hear from the great Reverend Doctor So-and-So about the ways and means and rationale of the mission.’” UKZS, 3:154E

cannot be brought fully under control), grappling with the Christian concepts of justification (or atonement)<sup>452</sup> and sanctification,<sup>453</sup> and how to find peace of mind in the midst of one's daily struggles.

*How I Became a Christian* is not just a record of his day-to-day experiences; it is a narrative reconstruction of memory, nearly ten years removed from the actual experience. As is the case with most autobiography, this reconstruction allows the reader to see what was important to Uchimura's "experiencing" persona, as well as to Uchimura the author, who is recasting the "character" at a given time and place. However, Uchimura uses this text to justify his faith before his readership and validate the individual convictions of his faith as he moved from being a recent convert to a person of deep faith. Moreover, faith motivates the individual to hold to his conviction. The "how" of becoming a Christian is not the "why." The "how" is the process, the end of which is the individual who refused to back down in 1891.

As with the Uchimura of his boyhood, who felt compelled to follow the dictates of various shrines and temples and feared subsequent lapses and divine retribution from the

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<sup>452</sup> In Uchimura's estimation, the concept of "Atonement" meant that God's forgiveness is not earned by believers, but rather God gives these gifts and promises solely out of his mercy and grace. This great comfort became Uchimura's joy, as he had a very keen awareness of his own shortcomings. Yet only a few Christian mentors in America could help Uchimura come to this awareness of saving grace. Throughout much of *How I Became a Christian*, there exists a tremendous dilemma. On the one hand, Uchimura's faith grows through his reading of the Bible and interacting with Kerlin and Seelye, but on the other, Uchimura's experiences in the United States generated a profound sense of loss or disillusionment and a deliciously sardonic and jaundiced view of American society and values. He would carry both of these paradoxical extremes with him when he returned to Japan.

<sup>453</sup> Sanctification means "to be made holy." For Uchimura, this is the process by which the believer "works out his own salvation with fear and trembling" (Philippians 2:12). The idea is that while a Christian believer's sins are paid for once and for all through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, he or she still is infected by sin and commits sins. Sanctification, then, is the process through which a believer deals with his or her own imperfections and tries to reform his or her former ways. Faith in God allows God to work in the life of the believer to help the believer to "die to self" so that his or her own sinful desires and actions are no longer in control.

offended *kami*, Uchimura the young man is harried by his sense of guilt and the impossibility of escape from sin—and retribution. A major theme for Uchimura’s narrator is his struggle to find peace in the world, searching for consolation and encouragement from the Bible and from the other Christians he encounters along the way. But his youthful understanding of Christianity made it difficult for him to see past the “sentimental Christianity” that was much discussed by Uchimura early on, but effected little change in his life.

For example, after Uchimura graduated from Sapporo Agricultural College (SAC), having studied biology and specializing in ichthyology and fisheries science, he became a minor official with the government of Hokkaidō.<sup>454</sup> As part of his official duties, Uchimura travelled widely throughout Japan to survey marine life and ecology. Uchimura wrote that while on a “scientific tour,” he stayed at an inn where the innkeeper was a notorious drunkard who liked to invite others to drink with him. Teetotaler that he was, Uchimura notified the innkeeper that he would not drink any alcohol that evening. He counted it as a triumph that the next morning, the drunkard had not even brought out any alcohol for himself, much less invite the young Uchimura to drink along with him. But looking back on this early experience, Uchimura remarked that these types of experiences for Christ were somewhat sentimental and thus failed to satisfy the longing in his soul for powerful, purposeful living. Even if he could find joy in seeing a sinner repent or change his ways, this was not the stuff of the true Christian life. There was no inner peace. He reflects as follows:

But the vacuum in my soul was not to be obliterated by a few experiences such as these, the more so as Sentimental Christianity, itself a vacuity, had made it larger and more conspicuous than ever before. Failing to find the desired satisfaction in my own land, I, Rasselas-like, thought of extending my search to a land differently constituted from my own— even to Christendom, where Christianity having had undisputed power and

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<sup>454</sup> Graduates of SAC were expected to become bureaucrats working on the development and expansion of the Hokkaidō ‘frontier,’ under the auspices of the *kaitakushi* 開拓使.

influence for hundreds of years, must, I imagined, be found Peace and joy in a measure inconceivable to us of heathen extraction, and easily procurable by any sincere seeker after the Truth. The pain of separation from dear ones, the expense almost unbearably heavy to one of my circumstances, and above all, that saddest of all human experiences, roaming a penniless exile in a strange land— all these were to be cheerfully borne that I might win the coveted prize, and so make my existence endurable.<sup>455</sup>

In this way, Uchimura looked to the West as a “promised land” where he could find surcease from his inner troubles. Surrounded by fellow Christians, he could perhaps find the balm he sought. Sadly, upon arriving in America, Uchimura noted the vast disparity between the image of Christianity he had come to believe in as it was explained to him in Japan, and the reality of the “Christians” he found in America. Uchimura had assumed that Western Christians were as serious about living in accordance with the teachings of the Bible as he himself was. Instead, Uchimura paints a picture of a nation whose inhabitants, albeit nominally Christian, were uniformly venial, vituperative, racist, condescending, greedy, and shallow.

The bulk of Uchimura’s early experiences in America were as an orderly at a mental institution (where he was trying to subjugate his ego by serving the “least” of the world).<sup>456</sup> Under the care of Isaac Kerlin, whom Uchimura regarded as an exemplary mentor, he was given space and time to regain his physical strength while working through his mental anguish. Motivated by personal penance, he served others. The “two Uchimuras” (both the young man working and studying abroad in America *and* the Uchimura narrator who reflects upon and recounts the experience) reveal intense personal convictions that cannot be shaken. While Uchimura seeks to become “meek” in a Biblical sense by working at the mental institution in Pennsylvania (that is, subordinating one’s willful self to one’s spiritual beliefs), his pride cannot

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<sup>455</sup> UKZS, 3: 76E

<sup>456</sup> In Matthew 16, Jesus promises that if a person wants to become great, he or she must die to his or her self, take up their “cross” and follow him. This is similar to the Buddhist “no-self” or “*muga*,” forgetting the ego in order to serve others. Again, Uchimura struggles with the prideful ego; his narrator knows he should serve others before himself, but he often cannot do so.

be pushed around by exterior things. He bristles at the treatment he and his countrymen receive at the hands of the residents of this “holy land” and will not settle for simple explanations or platitudes. Likewise, he admits to having harbored a very naïve image of “Christian America” that left him sorely disappointed. For example, the opening of chapter six is worth quoting at length:

That I looked upon Christendom and English-speaking peoples with peculiar reverence was not an altogether inexcusable weakness on my part. It was the same weakness that made the Great Frederick of Prussia a slavish adorer of everything that was French. I learnt all that was noble, useful, and uplifting through the vehicle of the English language. I read my Bible in English, Barnes’ commentaries were written in English, John Howard was an Englishman, and Washington and Daniel Webster were of English descent. A “dime-novel” was never placed into my hand, and as for slangs—the word itself I did not learn till long after my living among English-speaking people. My idea of the Christian America was lofty, religious, Puritanic. I dreamed of its templed hills, and rocks that rang with hymns and praises. Hebraisms,<sup>457</sup> I thought, to be the prevailing speech of the

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<sup>457</sup> A puzzling expression. It may be coming from the law/gospel dialectic of Hebraistic (Old Testament) vs. Hellenistic (New Testament) thought. According to Matthew Arnold (whom Uchimura frequently referenced),

But there is a saying which I have heard attributed to Mr. Carlyle about Socrates, — a very happy saying, whether it is really Mr. Carlyle's or not, — which excellently marks the essential point in which Hebraism differs from Hellenism. "Socrates," this saying goes, "is terribly at ease in Zion" Hebraism, — and here is the source of its wonderful strength, — has always been severely preoccupied with an awful sense of the impossibility of being at ease in Zion; of the difficulties which oppose themselves to man's pursuit or attainment of that perfection of which Socrates talks so hopefully, and, as from this point of view one might almost say, so glibly. It is all very well to talk of getting rid of one's ignorance, of seeing things in their reality, seeing them in their beauty; but how is this to be done when there is something which thwarts and spoils all our efforts? This something is sin; and the space which sin fills in Hebraism, as compared with Hellenism, is indeed prodigious. This obstacle to perfection fills the whole scene, and perfection appears remote and rising away from earth, in the background. Under the name of sin, the difficulties of knowing oneself and conquering oneself which impede man's passage to perfection, become, for Hebraism, a positive, active entity hostile to man, a mysterious power which I heard Dr. Pusey the other day, in one of his impressive sermons, compare to a hideous hunchback seated on our shoulders, and which it is the main business of our lives to hate and oppose. The discipline of the Old Testament may be summed up as a discipline teaching us to abhor and flee from sin; the discipline of the New Testament, as a discipline teaching us to die to it. Matthew Arnold, *Culture and Anarchy* (London: Smith, Elder & Co, 1869), 151-153.

American commonality, and cherub and cherubim, hallelujahs and amens, the common language of its streets.

I was often told upon a good testimony that money is all in America, and that it is worshipped there as Almighty Dollar; that the race prejudice is so strong there that the yellow skin and almond-shaped eyes pass for objects of derision and dog-barking; etc., etc. But for me to credit such statements like these as anything near the truth was utterly impossible. The land of Patrick Henry and Abraham Lincoln, of Dorothea Dix and Stephen Girard— how could it be a land of mammon-worship and race-distinction! I thought I had different eyes to judge of the matter— so strong was my confidence in what I had read and heard about the superiority of the Christian civilization over that of the Pagan. Indeed, the image of America as pictured upon my mind was that of a *holy land*.<sup>458</sup>

This incredulity represents Uchimura's genuine sense of shock and deep disillusionment. His lofty ideals would time and again meet with the stark, often brutal nature of reality. Prior to his time in America, Uchimura had heard the virtues of Americanism preached, only to be let down by the hypocrisy and meanness he encountered. Given the intended audience, Uchimura proffers a direct critique of America based on his experiences, building up to an indictment of American society in the 1880s.

Published simultaneously in 1895 by Keiseisha in Tokyo under the title of *How I Became a Christian: Out of My Diary* and by Fleming Revel of Chicago as *The Diary of a Japanese Convert*, Uchimura's autobiography was not well received in all circles. However, in 1896 *The Nation* reviewed Uchimura's work in a very positive light:

The relations of Christendom and heathendom have not produced another book, from the heathen side, so interesting and valuable as this, which we can now recall. After some introductory matter, we have a journal covering the period of 1877-1878, and, what is of much greater interest and importance, the deliberate comment on this journal of the mature man... Mr. Uchimura's book has a peculiar value, far in excess of that of the preceding matter.<sup>459</sup>

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<sup>458</sup> UKZS, 3:79E

<sup>459</sup> In December, 1893 and again in January of 1894, Uchimura wrote to his American friend, David Bell, that he was worried about whether or not Fleming Revell would publish his work. He wondered if perhaps it was too accusatory in tone and in its critique of American "Christendom." See UKZS, 36: 385; 392.



The reviewer goes on to say that in comparison with America, Uchimura reveals that Japan's "heathendom" has less crime and no racial prejudices (like the anti-Chinese sentiment, and the legacy of slavery; however, racial prejudice was by no means absent from Japan). He also notes that Uchimura was confounded by the "lotteries, intemperance, lynching, political corruption, and religious jealousies," and was irritated by the air of superiority coming from American Christians, especially with "pity" for "heathens" being used as a missionary motive. The reviewer then quotes Uchimura, "Though we despise godless science, yet scienceless evangelization we do not put much value upon. I believe faith is wholly compatible with common sense, and all zealous and successful missionaries have had this sense in abundance." Then he concludes, "this is one of many pungent sayings that our missionaries should con (*sic*) and inwardly digest."<sup>460</sup> Most interestingly, rather than Uchimura's Confucian heritage, his record of conversion, the diary of his college days in Japan, or the internal struggles that Uchimura presents, the American reviewer was impressed most by the author's critique of America and his stance vis-à-vis missionaries and mission enterprises, and, identifying the true intent of the piece, how Americans might learn from Uchimura.

Other contemporaneous accounts by Japanese writers and intellectuals living abroad in America detail similar difficulties and disappointments; Uchimura, in other words, was not alone in his disillusionment, and this is one of the reasons he decided to express himself in English.<sup>461</sup>

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<sup>460</sup> *The Nation*, vol. LXII, May 28, 1896, p. 421

<sup>461</sup> "Inevitably many Japanese found that America betrayed their great expectations, but the Americans' penchant to preach about their own virtues probably magnified the disappointment of the Japanese. It smacked of hypocrisy. Beyond this disillusion lay a deeper psychological trend: a reaction against the head-over-heels Westernization of the country during the 1870s and 1880s. Something had been lost in that process, it was feared, and the time had come to reassert Japan's own particular identity." Duus and Hasegawa, eds., *Rediscovering America: Japanese Perspectives on the American Century*, (Berkeley and London: University of California Press, 2011), 18-19.

How could a country whose citizens made such great claims about its civilization be so crass?

How could the land of Lincoln be a land of larceny? What of the freedom and equality promised to all?

He went on to discuss his experience with racism:

But strong and unchristian as their feeling is against the Indians and the Africans, the prejudice, the aversion, the repugnance, which they entertain against the children of Sina are something which we in heathendom have never seen the like. The land which sends over missionaries to China, to convert her sons and daughters to Christianity from the nonsense of Confucius and the superstitions of Buddha—the very same land abhors even the shadow of a Chinaman cast upon its soil. There never was seen such an anomaly upon the face of this earth. Is Christian mission a child's play, a chivalry more puerile than that engaged the wit of Cervantes, that it should be sent to a people so much disliked by the people who send it? (UKZS, 3-84)

And yet another:

I have cautiously kept back my nationality from my readers, (though by this time it must be pretty well known to them). But I must make this confession that I am not a Chinaman myself. Though I am never ashamed of my racial relationship to that most ancient of nations—that nation that gave Mencius and Confucius to the world, and invented the mariner's compass and printing machines centuries before the Europeans even dreamed of them—yet to receive in my person all the indignities and asperities with which the poor coolies from Canton are goaded by the American populace, required nothing less than Christian forbearance to keep my head and heart in right order. Here again, American Hebraisms, which are applied even in the nomenclatures of horses, are made use of in the designations of the Chinese. They are all called "John," and even the kind policemen of the city of New York call us by that name. "Pick up those Chinamen" was the polite language of a Chicago coachman, to whom we paid the regular fare, and did nothing to hurt his vanity as a protégé of St. Patrick. A well-clad gentleman sharing the same seat with me in a car asked me to have my comb to brush his grizzly beard; and instead of a thank you, which we in heathendom consider as appropriate upon such an occasion, he returned the comb saying, "Well John, where do you keep your laundry shop?" An intelligent-looking gentleman asked us when we did cut our cues; and when told that we never had cues, "Why" he said, "I thought all Chinamen have cues." That these very gentlemen, who seem to take peculiar delight in deriding our Mongolian origin, are themselves peculiarly sensitive as to their Saxon birthright, is well illustrated by the following little incident: A group of young Japanese engineers went to examine the Brooklyn Bridge. When under the pier, the structure and tension of each of the suspending ropes were being discussed upon, a silk-hatted, spectacled, and decently dressed American gentleman approached them. "Well John," he intruded upon the Japanese scientists, "these things must look awful strange to you from China, ey!" One among the Japanese retorted the insulting question, and said, "So they must be to you

from Ireland.” The gentleman got angry and said, “No, indeed not. I am not an Irish.” “And so we are not Chinese,” was the gentle rejoinder. It was a good blow, and the silk-hatted sulked away. He did not like to be called an Irish.

(UKZS 3:88-89)

Here again the reader is reminded of a deep sense of pride that will not fold at the sight of injustice but will instead call it out for what it is. In his great frustration, Uchimura was not afraid to speak his mind and give a critical account of America. To call attention to the uncivil behavior he endured in America, his ironic use of the word “heathendom” (the opposite of Christendom) shows that he held many aspects of Sino-Japanese civilization in high regard, and wondered why Americans maintained such airs of superiority. Taken in conjunction with the Duus and Hasegawa volume, Uchimura’s disparagement of “American Civilization” reflects a larger trend that took place in the 1880s: a turning inward caused by deflated hopes and disappointment with western culture. Uchimura attempted to take the good with the bad and emphasize the best of both worlds, promoting the strengths of his native culture and what he learned of the West. Unlike the *Min’yūsha* (Friends of the People), he did not advocate a program of total westernization, but thought more along the lines of the *Seikyōsha* (Society for Political Learning) which promoted a selective embrace of things western when deemed helpful.

However, the rejection of westernization was accelerating. While Uchimura was away in America, intellectuals at home had already begun to look to traditional Confucian values and native institutions for inspiration.<sup>462</sup> When he returned to Japan in 1888, Uchimura continued to praise those European and American ideals that he felt had contributed to western success and “greatness.” But Uchimura’s advancement of the idealized Western past and Christian values in

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<sup>462</sup> See Carol Gluck. *Japan’s Modern Myths* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), 102-127.

a time of reawakened nativism caused much of the rejection he experienced and later discussed in *Consolations of a Christian*.

Despite the un-Christian attitudes and behaviors of the “Christian” West and the resulting challenges to his faith, Uchimura never abandons his Christianity. Nonetheless, he occasionally wonders if it might not have been an easier life had he never converted. For instance:

O heaven, I am undone! I was deceived! I gave up what was really Peace for that which is no Peace! To go back to my old faith I am now too overgrown; to acquiesce in my new faith is impossible. O for Blessed Ignorance that might have kept me from the knowledge of faith other than that which satisfied my good grandma! It made her industrious, patient, true; and not a compunction clouded her face as she drew her last breath. Hers was Peace and mine is Doubt; and woe is me that I called her an idolater, and pitied her superstition, and prayed for her soul, when I myself had launched upon an unfathomable abyss, tossed with fear and sin and doubt. One thing I shall never do in future: I shall never defend Christianity upon its being the religion of Europe and America. (UKZS, 3:90E)

Here, Uchimura confesses that his faith is challenged by the hypocrisy of American Christianity, and that he might have been better off to never have associated Christianity with America—but to go back now is not possible. He trusts that the Bible is true, but due to America’s shortcomings, he cannot confirm the verity of his faith simply because it is the religion of Europe and America. For Uchimura, Christianity must be valued on its own merits, not by the behavior of its adherents. Moreover, peace, for Uchimura, cannot be found in “Christendom”:

If it was Christianity that made the so-called Christendom of to-day, let Heaven’s eternal curse rest upon it! Peace is the last thing we can find in Christendom. Turmoils, complexities, insane asylums, penitentiaries, poor-houses! (3:89E)

And in addition, the sectarian controversies of western Christianity also greatly confounded him, robbing him of the peace he sought:

Woe is a conscientious heathen-convert in the midst of all these controversies. His mind is hurled from one end of the intellectual universe to the other, with no position safe from some attacks of most ponderous nature. Once more I thought of peace and serenity in my grandma’s “heathen” faith. Say not, O ye sect-bound Christians, “Better one year of

Europe than a cycle of Cathay,” for you promised us a peace which you really do not have. (UKZS, 3:103-4E)

This frustration with disunity and sectarianism was what led him to say “I have come to be without the Church” (*yo wa mukyōkai to naritari*) in *Consolations of a Christian*, a position that ultimately became the rationale for his non-sectarian, “not-churchist” *Mukyōkai* movement.<sup>463</sup>

Thus, the American practice of Christianity could not provide surcease from Uchimura’s inner turmoil. And yet, his frustrations with American religion did not shake his faith in Christ. Rather, he likens the situation in America at the time to that of a dilapidated structure that may once have been a proud edifice but had since deteriorated and degenerated. The religion of the Bible, as Frederick Douglass noted,<sup>464</sup> was certainly *not* the same as American religion, but that should not detract from the Bible itself.<sup>465</sup>

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<sup>463</sup> UKZS, 2:36

<sup>464</sup> Uchimura refers to Douglass a number of times in his collected works, including his 1896 *The Essence of Western Culture* (*Seiyō bunmei no shinzui* 西洋文明の心髓). Therefore, it is clear that Uchimura was at least aware of Douglass’s autobiography. He mentions Douglass as one of a number of geniuses born of African heritage:

“The wilds of Africa are not without its geniuses; precisely because their societies are still developing, heaven has sent them great geniuses. Since they should be employed for the good of society, society cannot advance if it does not recognize their abilities. Have they not been born in the Americas? Frederick Douglass was a leader at the forefront of United States politics. Another is Mateo, who directed the reform movement in Cuba.”

UKZS, 3:219. And clearly, Uchimura is not himself immune from the racist view.

<sup>465</sup> Of these “Christians,” Douglass wrote:

They attend with Pharisaical strictness to the outward forms of religion, and... neglect the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith. They are always ready to sacrifice, but seldom to show mercy. They are they who are represented as professing to love God whom they have not seen, whilst they hate their brother whom they have seen. They love the heathen on the other side of the globe. They [send] missionaries to instruct him; while they despise and totally neglect the heathen at their own doors. Such is... my view of the religion of this land; ... that which is revealed in the words, deeds, and actions, of those bodies, north and south, calling themselves Christian churches, and yet in union with slaveholders. It is against religion, as presented by these bodies, that I have felt it my duty to testify. Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* (Kindle Edition), 108.

## Wang Yangming and the Inner Life

To his dismay, Uchimura found that neither performing rituals and attempting to live a pure life, nor dwelling in what had seemed to be a promised land could solve his dilemma. The words of comfort from others and the kindness he encountered remained external to him, ringing hollow. His hope for peace while in the West still needed to be worked out from within.

The impulse to look inward for answers most likely remained from his youth, when he grappled with the teachings of Neo-Confucianism.<sup>466</sup> Constant self-observation is a major concern of the of the Cheng-Zhu school— a Song period Neo-Confucian philosophy favored by the Tokugawa family for its pragmatism and social organization and enjoining literati to find the organizing principle of the universe (*li* 理) through careful external and internal observation. The Cheng-Zhu school held that consistent observation of nature and natural relationships was the key to understanding how the world worked, how human beings functioned in the world, and what one's place was in the cosmos. Inspired by Zen, Wang Yangming (Jp. Ō Yōmei) encouraged people to look within themselves to bring about the unification of thought and action. Wang Yangming rejected the Cheng-Zhu focus on observation, as no amount of self-observation could give him peace: he could not become a *kunshi* (a paragon, within the Confucian ethical order) without finding another path to self-cultivation. Wang Yangming developed the idea of sitting still, similar to Zen meditation, as a way to eliminate self-centered desires and allow one's innate moral goodness to emerge. This would allow one to act properly in the world.

That Uchimura held Wang Yangming in high regard is evidenced by the section entitled “The Inward Man” in his *Representative Men of Japan*:

There were two distinct stages in [Nakae Tōjū's] intellectual career. The first was when he with his countrymen of the time was brought up in the conservative Chū [Zhu

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<sup>466</sup> See Karatani, *Origins of Japanese Literature*, 41.

Xi] philosophy, which above all other things, enforced ceaseless examination into one's own self. We can imagine the sensitive youth made doubly sensitive by his constant introspection into the lack and weakness within himself, and all the effects of undue self-examination are plainly visible within his early life and writings. His *Notes and Commentaries upon Great Learning* composed in his twenty-first year was written under this mood. We fear his natural modesty under the pressure of disheartening philosophy would have turned him into a morbid recluse, as it did many souls like him, had not a new hope been reached out to him in the writings of that progressive Chinese, Wang Yangming...I think I am stating a well-established fact in Japanese History when I state my own observation that the Chinese culture in the form of Yangming-ism has never produced timid, fearful, conservative and retrogressive people out of us...<sup>467</sup>

Like the youthful Wang Yangming, Uchimura's own interior focus pushed him to despair.

His other mentor in America, Amherst president Julius Seelye, seemed to understand what plagued the young Uchimura. In some ways, Uchimura carried an element of the same fear of purity and divine judgment he felt toward the Shinto *kami* over into his Christian faith.<sup>468</sup> The only difference was that he was now afraid of one God, not many *kami*. Uchimura could not escape from guilt, impurity, and hypocrisy. In a conversation with Seelye, however, Seelye reasoned that if God is *love* as well as *just*, then one who knows God has nothing to fear. In the twilight years of his life, Uchimura would reminisce:

Seelye called me in one day and said, "Uchimura, you shouldn't always look within yourself. Why do you not cease this introspection and look up at Jesus who atoned for your sins on the cross? You are like a small boy who plants a tree and then every day pulls it up by the roots to observe its development."<sup>469</sup>

Howes explains that "Seelye had intuitively set his finger on the source of the problem. He had also provided the spark that transformed into conviction the formless aspirations that Kanzō had

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<sup>467</sup> UKZS 3: 263e

<sup>468</sup> While working at the hospital in Elwyn, Uchimura confessed, "I went to New England where I had some friends from my native land, for I thought something 'lucky' might come out by change of locations. My heathen trust in 'good lucks' always cropped out when I came to extremities" (UKZS, 3:109). He was greatly relieved when he learned from Seelye's chapel sermons that "God himself can make us pure" (3:114).

<sup>469</sup> Uchimura as quoted in Howes, *Japan's Modern Prophet*, 65.

brought with him.”<sup>470</sup> His actual “conversion,” then, came about through his conversations with Seelye.<sup>471</sup> Like Wang Yangming and Martin Luther before him, getting rid of guilt and constant self-reflection and relying on the *tariki* or “other” power of God’s grace provided the power to escape from the doldrums of stagnant self-cultivation.<sup>472</sup> Emerging from the fear of a wrathful God and developing trust in a merciful God allowed Uchimura to progress forward, giving him the courage to move from ineffectuality to strength—standing for convictions with trust, not fear.<sup>473</sup> This becomes evident in his diary entry of July 31, 1886. Of a particularly stormy night, he wrote,

I disliked thunder, and I always thought my end did come when it rattled right above my head. In my heathen days, I called in the help of all my protecting gods, burnt incense to them, and took my refuge under a mosquito-net as the safest place to flee from the “wrath of heaven.” And oft in my Christian days as well, my faith was put to the severest test when “God roared” in the cloud. But now by the grace of God I was thunder-proof, for fear of all sorts had departed from my heart by the revelation of the crucified Jesus unto me. I said in my heart, “Strike, O Thunder, for I am safe.”<sup>474</sup>

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<sup>470</sup> *Idem.*

<sup>471</sup> “I believe I was really *converted*, that is turned back, there, some ten years after I was baptized in my homeland. The Lord revealed Himself to me there, especially through that one man—the eagle-eyed, lion-faced, lamb-hearted president of my college.” UKZS, 3:129E.

<sup>472</sup> Martin Luther, whom Uchimura frequently refers to, lived in terror of the wrath of God for many years. A key turning point for Luther was when he read Romans 1:17, “The just shall live by faith alone.” See Roland Bainton, *Here I Stand: A Life of Martin Luther* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1978), Ch. 3. In 1917, in the margin of his copy of Agate’s *Luther and the Reformation*, Uchimura wrote “My faith” (*wa ga shinkō*) beside the section detailing Luther’s theology of salvation by grace alone through faith.

<sup>473</sup> I am grateful to Andō Hiroshi, professor of modern Japanese literature at the University of Tokyo, who pointed out to me that one of the greatest difficulties for modern authors that either became Christian or were influenced by Christianity was navigating the duality of “Law,” or the justice of God on the one hand, and “Gospel,” or the loving, forgiving nature of God, on the other. This struggle is the reason many either left Christianity or adopted a Buddhistic understanding thereof. (As Fowler notes, “Tōkoku was sympathetic to a Buddhist perspective... For him, transcendence did not mean the salvation of a personal soul so much as it meant the escape from the vicissitudes of life,” *The Rhetoric of Confession*, 85). This navigation is at the center of Uchimura’s autobiographical literature.

<sup>474</sup> UKZS 3:121e



Juxtaposing Uchimura's recollection of Seelye's words with the passage above reveals the ultimate collision of Uchimura's superstitions with the reassuring grace of God. Here we can access some crucial information about *how* Uchimura's internalization of threads of Zhu Xi thought and pietistic Christianity caused him such inner turmoil. The Cheng-Zhu school advocated constant self-reflection to rid oneself of human desires. Wang Yangming, on the other hand, advocated discovering the inner goodness or "pure knowing" (*liangzhi* 良知) with which heaven endowed every individual, which sprang from simultaneous action. The mind is an inner light that shapes the world; pure knowing would lead to right thought and proper action. Uchimura, like the young Wang Yangming, could not find the right thought and pure action within himself, and he was pained by it. He was inspired to leave the inner-world, and act.<sup>475</sup>

Pietistic Christianity, which developed in Germany and England in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and found its way to America during the Great Awakening of the 1730s and 1740s,<sup>476</sup> focuses on

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<sup>475</sup> Moreover, Mencius, upon whom Wang Yangming based a number of his ideas, taught that human beings have "sprouts" or beginnings (*duan* 端) that heaven gave every person's heart/mind (*xin* 心): benevolence (*ren* 仁), righteousness (*yi* 義), ritual propriety (*li* 禮), and wisdom (*zhi* 知). If one cultivated these four "sprouts," one could become a genuinely good human. If not, then one would fall into evil. Cultivation is crucial, but one can also try too hard and be stymied, as in the case of Uchimura. Mencius tells a story about a certain farmer and his mistaken idea of cultivation:

Among the people of the state of Song there was a farmer who, concerned lest his sprouts not grow, pulled on them. Obliviously, he returned home and said to his family, 'Today I am worn out. I helped the sprouts to grow.' His son rushed out and looked at them. The sprouts were withered. Those in the world who do not 'help' the sprouts to grow are few. Those who abandon them, thinking it will not help, are those who do not weed their sprouts. Those who 'help' them grow are those who pull on the sprouts. Not only does this not actually help, but it even harms them.

Brian W. Van Norden, trans. *The Essential Mengzi: Selected Passages with Traditional Commentary*, (Hackett Publishing: Kindle Edition, 2009-09-15), 17-18.

<sup>476</sup> The Great Awakening was a revivalist movement among the churches in the American colonies centered on intense preaching, enthusiastic experiences, and efforts towards spiritual regeneration. It came at a time of instability, international conflict, and economic uncertainty. See

one's feelings and one's actions rather than God's external declarations and promises. It encourages a hermeneutic approach to the Bible that is based on personal experience, and the interpretation of world events in light of an eschatological view of time.<sup>477</sup> Rather than relying on the grace of God to cover every sin, pietism seeks to create an inner motivation to please God and scrutinizes every sinful behavior. Thus, it differs from the traditional Lutheran and Reform traditions, which emphasize forensic justification<sup>478</sup> and reliance on the written word of God, and instead gives "heightened evangelical emphasis to the experiences of conversion, sanctification, spiritual regeneration, and healing."<sup>479</sup> If Uchimura did not experience a "true" conversion, or did not see evidence of healing and regeneration in his life, this would have also added to his despair.<sup>480</sup>

Seelye could plainly see the results of Uchimura's unbalanced admixture of the pietistic Christian and Neo-Confucian worldview. He ascertained that Uchimura had yet to understand the crux of the hope of redemption that Christians embrace. In short, Uchimura was still "becoming" a Christian. Stop looking to the self, says Seelye; stop pulling up your roots in an attempt to "help" your sprouts of faith to grow. Learn instead to rely on God, on the other. After his first "conversion," Uchimura not only maintained a self-critical mindset (which Mencius and Wang Yangming had warned of) but also retained the nomocentric (based on divine law) fear of God

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J.M. Bumsted and John E. Van de Wetering, *What Must I Do to Be Saved?— The Great Awakening in Colonial America*, (Hinsdale: Dryden Press, 1976), 2-3; 9-17.

<sup>477</sup> See Schneider and McDonald, *German Radical Pietism*, (Plymouth: Scarecrow Press, 2007), 22-25.

<sup>478</sup> In other words, God declares the sinner righteous because of faith, so the sinner can find respite in the words of God regardless of his or her feelings.

<sup>479</sup> This is the root of today's American evangelicalism. See Gary Dorrien, *The Remaking of Evangelical Theology* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998), 3-4.

<sup>480</sup> Indeed, in *How I Became a Christian*, Uchimura criticizes evangelical or "Pentecostal" rallies and meetings and the emotional responses that quickly fade as "sentimental Christianity." (See UKZS, 3:73) In Chapter 5, I will return to this topic in my examination of Uchimura's third autobiographical account, *The Search for Peace*.

fostered in his childhood and reinforced by his theological background.<sup>481</sup> Though he would continue to wrestle with these issues, once he became aware of his propensity to overanalyze his interior self, he could also look to God's grace and love to assure his cultivation into a righteous person.<sup>482</sup> This is why Uchimura could write, "Christianity is more and higher than Heathenism in that it makes us keep the law. It is Heathenism plus Life. By it alone the law keeping becomes a possibility. It is the Spirit of the Law. It of all religions works from inside."<sup>483</sup> Uchimura does not give up on moral cultivation (keeping God's laws) but learns that to do so comes from God's power that works *within*. It was then that the new, strong self began to develop. Uchimura then decided to return to society and find a way to initiate reform.

In a way, the voice of Uchimura the critic or "prophet" in a Biblical sense might have been a different reaction to the "inversion" that Karatani posits.<sup>484</sup> Karatani explains that

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<sup>481</sup> In *Representative Men*, Uchimura also notes, "That [Yangming scholar Tōjū] clearly made distinctions between man-made Laws (法, *nomos*) and the externally-existing Truth (道, *logos*) is shown by the remarkable saying that follows: 'The Truth is distinct from the law. Many taking one for the other are greatly mistaken. The Law changes with time, even with saints in their land. Much more when transplanted in our land. But the Truth is from eternity. Before the name of Virtue was, the Truth was and prevailed.'" (UKZS 3: 264e) Here, Uchimura also is claiming that Nakae's ideas were preceding the revelation of Christ in Japan.

<sup>482</sup> "Growth outside always means growth inside. You are troubled with some intestine lethargy. You go to your physician, and he medicates upon you, nostrums after nostrums. But nothing heals you, and you begin to lose faith in your doctor. Finally, you come to the true knowledge of your trouble. You turn your attention from inside; that is, you forget yourself, and go to some outside work, cultivation of cabbages, it may be. Then you begin to breathe freely, your biceps-muscles get bigger and firmer. Gradually you feel your trouble is gone, and you are now a stronger man than before. You healed yourself by reflex influences. You gave yourself upon cabbages, and cabbages healed you." (UKZS 3: 158e)

<sup>483</sup> UKZS 3: 147e

<sup>484</sup> Uchimura wrote, "May not all great men be called prophets? I said to myself. I recounted to myself all the great men of my own heathen land and weighed their words and conducts; and I came to the conclusion that the same God that spoke to Jeremiah did also speak to some of my own countrymen, though not so audibly as to him; that He did not leave us entirely without His light and guidance, but loved us and watched over us these long centuries as He did the most Christian of nations. The thought was inspiring beyond my power of expression." (UKZS, 3:108) Uchimura later concluded that he learned from Christ how to save his soul, but from the Hebrew

Christianity not only prohibits sinful actions, like theft, murder, adultery, etc., but equates the desire or compulsion, even the thought itself to be sin. Throughout all three of his autobiographical texts, Uchimura's narrator does struggle with his interior thoughts, constantly surveilling them. For Karatani, self-criticism drives confession; the "constant surveillance of one's inner thoughts" creates interiority, and the body is laid bare. The self-writing of the Naturalists became a way to escape from the repression of sexuality that came from the Christian injunction against sinful thoughts. Through confession one gains power over the narrative, hence freedom.

Yet, there is something more. Karatani also explains,

Uchimura's attitude should not be treated as one of humility. "I am hiding nothing. This is the truth"—his autobiography is presented to us as a confession. What this amounts to is an assertion that the reader is hiding truth while "I", however inconsequential a person I may be, have exposed it. Theologians may undertake the logical exercise of demonstrating that Christianity is the truth. But the "truth" which Uchimura narrates is an assertion of authority which precludes disagreement.<sup>485</sup>

Karatani is correct about Uchimura's assertion of authority—it is coming from the same place as Arai Hakuseki's assertion of authority in his own autobiography. Uchimura's narrator orders his experiences into a narrative in order to create his identity as a Christian and a Japanese. However, it is his confidence in the "truth" of his experiences based on faith in the divine Other that gives him the sense that feels he can "reveal truth." Once Uchimura learned to trust the grace of God, the excessive self-love of the narrator responds to the compassion and love of God. By the end of the narrative, the constant surveillance of his inner thoughts lessened: looking to the atonement of Christ, he did not have to worry about sin and purity any longer. While these

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prophets how to *save his country*. (UKZS 3: 119). Thus, he connects faith with patriotism and social action. John Howes' very title—*Japan's Modern Prophet*—calls attention to the centrality of Uchimura's engagement with the Hebrew prophets of old.

<sup>485</sup> Karatani, *Origins of Modern Japanese Literature*, 86.

thoughts would never fully vanish, trusting in the exterior work of Christ ostensibly gave him the confidence, maybe even pridefulness, to narrate his understanding of the world.

Rather than focusing on the interior alone, he could now focus on what was problematic in the exterior world around him. The role of the prophet is to announce the wrath of God to an impenitent society, but the prophet must have security in his convictions and his message, believing that the message itself comes from God. The new identity he discovers allows him to express the “truth” he saw to the exterior world. The strong “fortress” of the narrator’s new identity was in effect a response to the difficulties and disappointments Uchimura encountered in the United States. *How I Became a Christian* traces Uchimura’s transition from an immature “heathen” to one given new life. This new life allows for the construction of a narrative of self-transformation and the emergence of a strong “self.” No longer relying on his “self” alone but on the promise of God’s love and forgiveness, this new “self” can then speak words of indictment to both Japan and America out of strong conviction.

In November 1905, Uchimura wrote *How I Made Believers* 「余は如何にして信者を作りし乎」, published in *New Hope (Shin kibō)*. In this work, reflecting back on his early attempts to become an evangelist, Uchimura noted the exterior help he received in building and strengthening his faith, but there was one thing that none of his friends and counselors could provide: the freedom to be independent. Because he abruptly left Hartford Seminary and did not receive ordination, he could not effectively take on a leadership role within the established church hierarchy. The church’s refusal to give him permission to conduct evangelistic activities fueled his sense of rejection and frustration. He wrote that he cried out to God, wondering if he were indeed *not* qualified to evangelize. He found his answer in the following way:

The person who helped me in this time was Thomas Carlyle. He was supposedly not a member of the evangelical church, but time and again, he helped explain my difficult religious problems, and gave aid it time of crisis. When I was beset with problems over evangelistic activity, he so kindly spoke the following word to me:

“Veracity, true simplicity of heart, how valuable are those always! He that speaks what is really in him will find men to listen, though never under such impediments.”<sup>486</sup>

This quote from Carlyle, which is the very same one Uchimura would use as the epigraph for *How I Became a Christian*, became an abiding inspiration for Uchimura. His discovery came at a pivotal moment: Uchimura was looking for his own voice and was beset by what various authorities—both clerical and secular—thought about him. After receiving advice from Seelye, Nijijima, and others in America, Carlyle’s words gave Uchimura the freedom to be bold and ambitious for Christ in the service of others, as Clark had advised the first class at Sapporo Agricultural College so many years earlier: “Boys, be ambitious [for Christ]!” Uchimura sheds more light on how this passage from Carlyle affected him:

When I first read this passage in *Past and Present*, I said, “This is it! This is it!” If I wish to lead others, my problems for the most part originate with this mistake. If I can just plainly say what I believe, it should be enough: “Veracity, true simplicity of heart.” (*seijitsu kokoro no shin no ari no mama*). It must listen to the one saying this; *I failed because I tried to hide my self while desiring to listen to the feelings of others*. Well then, I don’t need to think about the others. If I speak about my own sin, salvation, and grace, I am determined now that when you begin telling me to cease my evangelistic work, just look: from henceforth I shall never lose hope in my evangelistic endeavors.<sup>487</sup> (Emphasis added).

Here Uchimura recounts what may be considered another “*eureka!*” moment. No longer was he a prisoner of his mind, rendered ineffectual due to over-analysis of his feelings while fretting about the whims of others. Carlyle was bold and said plainly what he thought and felt. Perhaps, through the difficulties of his time in America, the losses of the 1890s, and striking out on his own with his new magazine in 1903, Uchimura had learned to depend on the providence of God.

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<sup>486</sup> UKZS 13: 393

<sup>487</sup> *Ibid.*, 394.

Relying on God, as Seelye had recommended, allowed him to escape the oppression of his self-criticism and to speak, not from *inversion*, but from the sense that he is an individual who is justified by God and called to speak what he considered to be “Truth” to society, as a prophetic voice. This is an example of the strong self that emerges and grows in Uchimura’s autobiographical works. As this self confronts rejection and loss, setback after setback, it refuses to give in to the voices of despair that whisper in one’s ear. While he mistrusts his own heart and has crises of faith, his trust in his God and the strength drawn from the words of others buttress Uchimura and reinforce his self-possession.

In *How I Became a Christian*, Uchimura charts the details of his life, shares selections from his diary, notes his frustrations with the world, confesses his guilt, shares his sin-consciousness, and describes the process of becoming and *being* Christian. As Karatani notes, one can witness the force of “inversion” that comes from the consciousness of sinful feelings and the need to confess as a corrective.<sup>488</sup> One can also see how the self that Uchimura constructs in the text responds to “others” in his life: hypocrites, authorities, mentors, and an inscrutable God. Rather than the natural “landscape,” it is better to say that Uchimura’s interiority and sense of self-in-the-world came from a number of forces that together make up the virtual landscape of Uchimura’s deeply introspective gaze. These include youthful fears of the *kami*, the Wang Yangming injunction to constantly observe one’s thoughts and feelings, and the Christian struggle between the justice and grace of God. Uchimura had to overcome these nomocentric concerns to allow the self to become independent and gain agency. In this way he disentangled the various threads of moral discourse he encountered, struggling to rearrange them in a way that gave him a higher degree of self-knowledge and a confident, assured manner of being in the

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<sup>488</sup> As found in Western apologia and autobiography, from the psalms of David to Boethius, Augustine, and a host of others.

world. Putting his interior concerns on display, through confession and realignment to his faith, he tries to create what he saw in that “great literature” of the Japanese and European-American autobiographical traditions.<sup>489</sup>

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<sup>489</sup> See Chapter 2, where I discuss Uchimura’s literary worldview and his exhortations for Japan to create what he sees as “great literature” (*daibungaku*).



# Chapter 5:

## *Ad Paradisum: Finding the Way to Peace*

Written in the spring of 1893, *The Search for Peace* (求安録 *Kyūanroku*) has dual aims.

Uchimura's first aim was to create an orthodox confession of faith in response to the Unitarian theology, or "New Theology" as it was known, that was emerging in Japan:

Uchimura wanted to make clear 'what Christianity is.' With the U.S.-Japan Treaty of Amity and Commerce signed in 1858, and the seclusion policy and the Christian persecution policy ended accordingly, Protestant missionaries went to Japan for the first time. Thus, the modern thoughts of Europe and America were introduced to Japan. This was especially true when *Kyūanroku* was published, for it was thirty-five years after the treaty was signed, and new theologies had gained power in Japanese Christianity. Uchimura wanted to make clear 'what Christianity is' from an orthodox position.<sup>490</sup>

After its introduction in 1887, liberal theology or *Shin-shingaku* (new theology) had been growing in influence, and it had caused some conflict within Japanese Christianity in the early 1890s.<sup>491</sup> Liberal theology had been especially well-received by the Kumamoto band<sup>492</sup> and was

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<sup>490</sup> Lee Kyoungae, "Uchimura's View of the Atonement in *Kyūanroku* (*The Search for Peace*), in Shibuya and Chiba, eds. *Living for Jesus and Japan: The Social and Theological Thought of Uchimura Kanzō* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2013), 143.

<sup>491</sup> Liberal theology gained influence in the late-18<sup>th</sup> and early-19<sup>th</sup> century as European (primarily German) theologians began to doubt the historicity of the Bible (using Historical-critical hermeneutics and a Hegelian dialectical approach to the text). 19<sup>th</sup>-century liberal theology also doubted supernatural phenomena and the possibility of miracles and was aided by the wide adoption of Darwinian evolution and a scientific worldview. This perspective led to a focus on subjective faith rather than more objective tenets, such as scriptural inerrancy and the deity of Christ. It also brought with it religious universalism and established social justice as a central cause for the church. For a work sympathetic to Uchimura's position, see William L. Walker, *What About the New Theology* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1907); for an antithetical position, see John Paul, *What is New Theology* (Wilmore: Asbury College Publications, 1921). Walker was a minister in Glasgow, Scotland, and John Paul was a lecturer for Interdenominational Conventions, Japan.

<sup>492</sup> The "Kumamoto Band" was one of the three groups of early Meiji Japanese Christians who participated in evangelistic outreaches and formed a community of practice. The Kumamoto Band grew out of the efforts of Dutch-American missionary Guido Verbeck, the work of Niiijima Jō, and American schoolmaster Captain Leroy Lansing Janes. Janes was hired to oversee the Kumamoto Yōgakkō (Kumamoto School of Western Learning) in 1871. Teaching from a sincere

popular with the members of the first Congregational Church who attended Dōshisha Ei-gakkō (Doshisha English school).<sup>493</sup>

In 1891, Yokoi Tokio, pastor of the Hongō church and editor of *The Cosmos* (*Rikugo zasshi*), had published *Present and Future Christianity in Japan*, in which he promoted Unitarian theology.<sup>494</sup> Unitarian theology places less emphasis on the divinity of Christ, focusing instead on his moral teachings. From the classical Protestant perspective (of which Uchimura was a champion), this theological view is wholly incompatible with New Testament theology, which focuses on the atoning work of Jesus Christ through his death and resurrection.

Uchimura (and others, including Uemura Masahisa) published essays and articles strongly condemning the new theology, attempting to persuade Christians to remain true to the traditional doctrines of the Protestant reformation. After dealing with the anti-Christian attacks of Inoue and the state ideologues originating from without (in his *Consolations*), now Uchimura turned his attention to the internal disputations erupting within the Christian movement.

Lee Kyoungae is correct in her surmise that *Kyūanroku* is an attempt to explain and defend orthodox Christianity. Indeed, similar to *Consolations of a Christian*, the bulk of the work is concerned with theological argumentation and Biblical reasoning. As Lee notes, it is “the first-person record of Uchimura’s search for peace. He had an extremely strong conviction of sin and made an effort to escape from it and find inner peace.”<sup>495</sup> Moreover, as Leith Morton explains, “*Search for Peace* is unquestionably the most personal and perhaps the most telling

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Christian perspective, many former samurai converted to Christianity, and later helped establish Dōshisha University. The other “bands” were located in Yokohama and Sapporo.

<sup>493</sup> Lee Kyoungae, 144. This is another reason Uchimura would later write scathing attacks against Dōshisha theology.

<sup>494</sup> *Ibid.*, 145.

<sup>495</sup> *Ibid.*, 143.

statement that Uchimura ever made on the subject of sin.”<sup>496</sup> In all of his personal works, the dimensions of sin—including corporate, societal, and personal—are at the heart of Uchimura’s travails. Whether it is the concern over personal salvation from damnation, the questioning of culpability over failure, the pain caused by rejection at the hands of the all-too-human church, the hypocrisy of American Christianity, or the abuse by statist ideologues in the press, the problem of sin in the world beset Uchimura in all of his autobiographical works.

*The Search for Peace* is Uchimura’s explanation of how he found his “paradise regained.” Through the examination of personal experience, theological inquiry, and biblical attestation of faith, this work encapsulates the slow conversion process that enabled Uchimura to rely on faith in God’s grace rather than the agency of his own works. While the theological content of this work is central to Uchimura’s experience, rather than solely focusing on the theological aims of *Kyūanroku* (as Lee does in his recent study) this chapter closely examines the “first-person record of Uchimura’s search for peace.”

It is important to mention that Uchimura was attempting to present the reader with a comprehensive record of “real experience,” rather than a fictionalized one.<sup>497</sup> As with the other works in his autobiographical trilogy, according to Leith Morton, “*Search After Peace*<sup>498</sup> is, like *Sartor Resartus*, virtually an anatomy of conversion.<sup>499</sup> However, the anguish and suffering

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<sup>496</sup> Leith Morton, *Divided Self: A Biography of Arishima Takeo* (Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1988), 40. Morton’s title refers to Uchimura’s title for the second chapter of *The Search for Peace: Naishin no bunri*, Internal Schism. Morton discusses how this work was influential in the development of Arishima’s own conversion and how the frustrations with his own sin consciousness played a role in Arishima’s eventual apostasy.

<sup>497</sup> Uchimura’s literary hero, Thomas Carlyle, created Teufelsdröckh and the conceit of the narrator in *Sartor Resartus* to tell his conversion narrative in a quasi-novelistic form that is heavy on essayistic oratory.

<sup>498</sup> Uchimura refers to this work using this variant title.

<sup>499</sup> See Gerry H. Brooks. *The Rhetorical Form of Carlyle’s Sartor Resartus* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972), 3-4:

Uchimura experienced over sin are presented in a far more realistic, comprehensive form than in the ‘Sorrows of Teufelsdröckh.’”<sup>500</sup> In fact, prior to his publisher dropping the second half of his title, Uchimura’s proposed title for the work was *The Search for Peace: A Record of Real Experience*.<sup>501</sup>

Before embarking on his personal account, Uchimura begins with a quote in English<sup>502</sup> from Brother Hilary, the prior of the Franciscan monastery to whom Dante entrusted the manuscript of his *Purgatorio*:

“Dante has been here; as neither I nor any of the Brothers recognized him. I asked him what he wished. He made no answer, but gazed silently upon the columns and galleries of the cloister. Again, I asked him what he wished and whom he sought; and slowly turning his head, and looking around upon his brothers and me, he answered, ‘Peace!’ –Hilary”<sup>503</sup>

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Those who see *Sartor* as a work of “expression” explain and perhaps justify it as a work that reveals its author’s character, that exposes his ideas and his personality for all to see, that is unified by its origin in Carlyle’s mind and spirit. The view is, of course, encouraged by the knowledge that in the *Reminiscences* and in remarks recorded in James Anthony Froude’s biography, Carlyle identified incidents in *Sartor* as autobiographical. Froude himself said, mistakenly, that the book was written in tumultuous haste and was as a result “defective as a work of art” but was “for that very reason a revelation of Carlyle’s individuality.” The tendency to see *Sartor* as autobiography, however, did not begin when Carlyle’s statements about its autobiographical elements became public. Early critics say Book Second is “spiritual autobiography” without knowledge of Carlyle’s life. And modern critics have regarded the work as expressive independent of any actual correspondence between details in it and in Carlyle’s life.

<sup>500</sup> Morton, 42.

<sup>501</sup> And better that the publisher did modify the title, since the distinction between fictionalized and “real” is fraught with many difficulties.

<sup>502</sup> Boccaccio recounts how Dante entrusted his manuscript of *Purgatorio* to Hilary. See Cesare Balbo, *Vita di Dante*, (Florence: Felice le Monnier, 1853), 288-290.

<sup>503</sup> UKZS 2: 135. Here again, Uchimura showcases his devotion to Dante and his familiarity with secondary sources. Of course, the original words come from Boccaccio, as indicated by Balbo in the previous note. While I have been unable to locate the exact source of Uchimura’s quote, Brother Azarias’ translation of Hilary’s letter in “The Spiritual Idea in Dante’s ‘Divina Commedia,’” first printed in *The American Catholic Quarterly Review* (Vol XI, Jan-Oct, 1886), is quite close, and perhaps was Uchimura’s source: “‘Dante has been here,’ writes Brother Hilary; ‘as neither I nor any of the Brothers recognized him, I asked him what he wished. He made no answer, but gazed silently upon the columns and galleries of the cloister. Again I asked

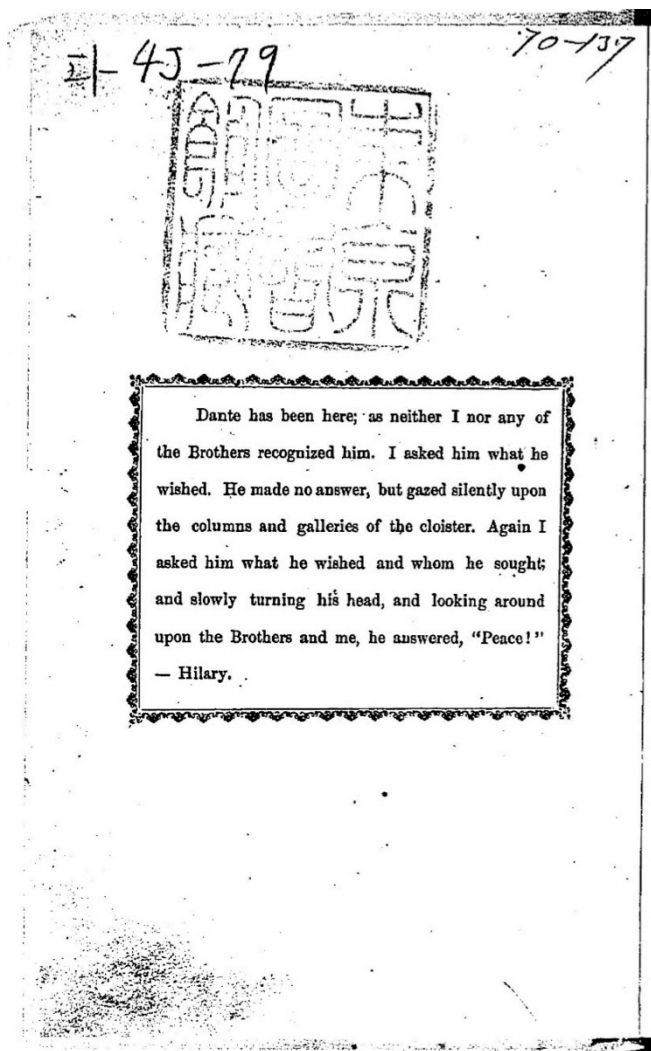


Figure 3. (Courtesy of National Diet Library)

After quoting Hilary, he begins his preface with a haiku from Matsuo Bashō:

口あひて	Opening one's mouth
腸見せる	And showing the intestines—

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him what he wished and whom he sought; and slowly turning his head, and looking around upon the Brothers and me, he answered, 'Peace!'" (427). Even the punctuation is the same. Uchimura removed the words, "writes Brother Hilary," which were added by Azarius to introduce the quote into his text. This was simply an editorial choice to create the epigram for Uchimura's *Search for Peace*. Brother Azarius' essay also appeared in a larger volume of his, *Phases in Thought at Criticism* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1892), 125-182.

柘榴かな<sup>504</sup> Aha—pomegranates!

He then quotes Jesus Christ in the Gospel of Luke 22:32:

爾(正に)帰ん時其兄弟を堅くせよ。<sup>505</sup>

“At the time when you shall return, strengthen your brothers”

The pairing of these quotes that follow the Hilary quote says much about Uchimura’s aims for this text. First, like Bashō, while it may be uncouth to do so, he shall dredge up things from deep within himself; this will be a confession akin to that of Augustine, Boethius, and Dante. Second, while he references Christ’s words to Peter, he does not include the first half of the verse, which reads, “But I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail.” The verse then ends with, “And when you have turned, again, strengthen your brothers.”<sup>506</sup>

Jesus speaks these words as he foretells Peter’s denial of knowing Jesus. He knows Peter will betray him, denying him three times, but he also knows Peter will repent and become an ardent believer and leader of the church. After the resurrection, Jesus asks Peter, three times, if he loves him; each time Peter responds, “You know that I love you.” In this exchange, Peter is confessing once for each denial, and Jesus responds each time saying, “Feed my sheep,” indicating his forgiveness.<sup>507</sup> Peter is restored in his relationship to Christ and entrusted with leadership in the fledgling church. In the same way, Uchimura has been restored in his

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<sup>504</sup> Uchimura Kanzō, “*Kyūanroku*” in UKZS 2: 135. Uchimura attributes this popular saying to Bashō, as does Saeki Shōichi, however this may be apocryphal. Nitobe also quotes this *haiku* in his *Bushidō: The Soul of Japan* (1899) saying,

“‘Only a pomegranate is he’—so runs a popular saying—‘who, when he gapes his mouth, displays the contents of the heart.’ It is not altogether perverseness of oriental minds that the instant our emotions are moved we try to guard our lips in order to hide them. Speech is very often with us, as the Frenchman defined it, ‘the art of concealing thought.’” (70).

<sup>505</sup> Idem.

<sup>506</sup> Luke 22:32 (ESV)

<sup>507</sup> See John 21:15-20.

relationship with Christ<sup>508</sup> and would be able once again to provide leadership and encouragement in the Japanese church. Just as Dante did, Uchimura would attempt to use his trying experiences to encourage others and to help them find peace. Alone, unable to find peace within himself, Uchimura turns to God and remains grounded in hope. The search itself bears witness to his faith:

“It is a mistake to say that I already received what I hoped for, and again, I do not say that I am already complete; for those who believe that they may lay hold of it, I only say: chase after it. I write to you that Christ will give it to you. My brothers, do not think that I myself take hold of it; I only work for this one thing, namely, to forget what lies behind and hope for what is ahead. God in Christ Jesus calls me heavenward for my true reward; I press on forward; this is my goal.”<sup>509</sup>

In this statement, it is also clear that Uchimura’s faith lies in what is promised in the Scriptures, namely the heavenly reward for the believer. He believes peace comes through the process of having hope in God whilst examining one’s feelings. He continues ruminating on life’s experiences and digesting “fruits” of his past (as in the Basho poem) that constitute the grist of his narrative. Peace, for the narrator, emerges from the inner strengthening that comes from God’s “consolation” after his narrator understands his deficient love towards God and others (as is found in the fourth terrace of Dante’s *Purgatorio*.) This faith in the scripture is less tentative than in the two other works; the peace of mind achieved by Uchimura’s narrator comes from his acceptance of the scripture at face value, the final overcoming of his doubts, and his resulting

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<sup>508</sup> Uchimura had a keen sense of his own sin, even original sin. For years, when he was living in America, he struggled with his sin and the concept of forgiveness. Understanding that not only did he love Jesus, but that he had Jesus’ forgiveness, gave Uchimura a newfound hope.

<sup>509</sup> 「我これらの望を既に得たりと言に非ず、亦すでに全せられたりと言に非ず、或は取ことあらんとて我ただ之を追求む、キリスト之を得せんと我を執らえ給へる也。兄弟よ我みづから之を取りと意はず、唯この一事を務む、即ち後ろに在るものを忘れ前に在るものを望み、神キリストイエスに由て上へ召して賜う所の褒美を得んと標準に向かひて進なり。」 UKZS 2: 135.

surrender of the will unto God.<sup>510</sup> Whereas *Consolations of a Christian* probes his faith in an attempt to resolve how to view suffering in the world through the lens of personal experience, and *How I Became a Christian* reveals the process of conversion from an act of the will to a trust in the external God that comes to dwell within, this work details how Uchimura can do nothing other than simply trust God’s word and use it—particularly the theology of the atonement—as the basis for his ongoing identity formation and the foundation of his sense of peace.

### **Platonism, Augustine, and the “Highest Good”**

Uchimura’s quest for self-understanding in terms of the Platonic ideal of the “highest good” is firmly grounded in the classical Western theological tradition. In this tradition truth is found in the revealed word of God, and lasting inner-peace can only come through the knowledge of—and communion with—the divine. Built on both Greco-Roman philosophy and the early church’s interpretation of the Hebrew bible, the idea is famously articulated in the fourth century in Augustine’s autobiographical examination of spiritual life, his *Confessions*. This canonical work is a record of Augustine’s conversion from a life of hedonism to one of godly contemplation. Central to the work is the opening paragraph:

“You are great, Lord, and highly to be praised (Ps. 47:2): great is your power and your wisdom is immeasurable” (Ps. 146:5). Man, a little piece of your creation, desires to praise you, a human being “bearing his mortality with him” (2 Cor. 4:10), carrying with him the witness of his sin and the witness that you “resist the proud” (1 Pet 5:5). Nevertheless, to praise you is the desire of man, a little piece of your creation. You stir man to take pleasure in praising you, because you have made us for yourself, and our heart is restless until it rests in you.<sup>511</sup>

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<sup>510</sup> While the idea of surrendering the will to God is a universal theme in most world religions (including Hinduism and Islam), in Uchimura’s understanding, rather than fatalism or attempting to gain God’s favor for salvation, he moves toward the understanding that salvation is a free gift, and surrendering the will is the appropriate response of gratitude.

<sup>511</sup> Saint Augustine, *The Confessions*, Henry Chadwick, trans. (Oxford: Oxford World Classics, 2008), 3.



Like Plotinus before him, Augustine's thesis is that no one can find peace of mind unless one first finds God. Human beings exist to glorify God, not humanity. Humanity is made by God and therefore cannot be greater than God. The inward life is aligned to God, and although it may become distracted by the pleasures of this world, the self ultimately seeks after God rather than the flesh. For Augustine, as with many Western spiritual autobiographers,<sup>512</sup> the self finds its meaning in the search for God. Uchimura strongly echoes these concepts in *The Search for Peace*.

The pivotal moment for Augustine came when he was in despair, sitting under a fig tree, contemplating his inner life, and reliving the guilt he felt over his past sins. Fearing punishment, he pleads with God. At the zenith of his anxiety, he writes that he became persuaded by a voice of a young boy or girl coming from a nearby house, possibly a church, chanting, "Pick up and read, pick up and read." He interpreted it as a divine command to open the Bible before him and read the first thing he laid his eyes upon. He writes:

So I hurried back to the place where Alypius was sitting. There I had put down the book of the apostle when I got up. I seized it, opened it and in silence read the first passage on which my eyes lit: "Not in riots and drunken parties, not in eroticism and indecencies, not in strife and rivalry, but put on the Lord Jesus Christ and make no provision for the flesh in its lusts" (Rom. 13:13-14, ESV).

I neither wished nor needed to read further. At once, with the last words of this sentence, it was as if a light of relief from all anxiety flooded into my heart. All the shadows of doubt were dispelled.<sup>513</sup>

In this passage, Augustine finds the beginning of the peace after which he was searching: the assurance of forgiveness and freedom from sin and disorder. For Augustine, conversion is an encounter with God; it comes in the form of simply believing the word of God and putting it into

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<sup>512</sup> Not only Christian, this is also the case in the Jewish and Islamic traditions. For an excellent selection of spiritual autobiographies, see Elizabeth Powers and Amy Mandelker, eds. *Pilgrim Souls: A Collection of Spiritual Autobiographies* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1999).

<sup>513</sup> *Ibid.*, 153.

practice. Augustine's conversion narrative serves as the inspiration for volumes of Western self-writing and even makes an appearance in Uchimura's conversion trilogy. The narrative also gives evidence of the classical theological understanding that the Scriptures are the revealed Word of God, the sole source of truth in the world. The sense is that one must order one's thoughts according to God's, abandon internal lust and anxiety of the heart, and only then will one gain an understanding of the truth. Relying on the Scriptures as the arbiter of truth creates a faith in that which is *extra nos* (outside of us), not simply an inner compulsion or fleeting feeling.<sup>514</sup> This, too, is a crucial part of forming an enduring faith and attesting to one's beliefs.

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<sup>22</sup> In *The Search for Peace*, Uchimura's theological position bears a strong resemblance to Lutheran doctrine. In his copy of Agate's *Luther: The Reformer*, on justification, Uchimura wrote, *Wa ga shinkō* or "My own faith" in the margin in 1917, the 400th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation (See Figure 2). Uchimura also frequently refers to Luther in *The Search for Peace*. Certainly, Luther, in the same vein as Augustine, sought to explain the personal experience of sin and grief (*anfechtung*) in his own writings. For this chapter, I have located areas of modern Lutheran theology that intersect with and affirm Uchimura's theological *weltanschauung* where appropriate. Lutheran theologian and anti-Nazi activist Dietrich Bonhoeffer delved into the problems of the self and salvation, and his own writings reflect the same struggle Uchimura labored to detail:

... The surrender of the self is both the will of God and the basis for Christian community: In speaking about love for the neighbor we said that love gives itself up to the other unrestrictedly, seeking nothing for itself. But to surrender oneself to the other means obeying God; it is based on surrender to God's will. *God's love, therefore, is at the same time self-surrender and will for community...* Community of love is based on unrestrictedly surrendering to the other. (SC 173).

Or again, "The You is willed while giving up the I" (SC 176).

Since the self is viewed as the problem, salvation must by definition come from outside oneself. By this Bonhoeffer means not only the *Christus extra nos* of traditional Lutheran soteriology. He also considers the human other, ethically challenging "You," an equally significant locus of redemptive encounter, the very means by which the present Christ is at work. Only by allowing the self, with its distorted and autocratic demands, to be silenced holds out any hope of engaging the redemptive contact that arrives from outside oneself, meeting persons at their boundaries and claiming their entire being with transcendent authority. Such encounter may feel shattering, forcing the self out of its familiar *incurvatus* [*homo incurvatus in se*: Luther's concept, derived from Augustine, as a life turned "inward" for oneself rather than "outward" for God and others] world and

Augustine's reliance on God's grace as revealed in scripture is no different than the faith Uchimura had to discover for himself. To understand the inner, he had to rely on the outer. To find justification of the self, he had to turn to the ultimate Other before engaging the community of Christians or the community of the state. To make sense of the self, he had to reconstruct experience based on his alignment to the ultimate good—God—as revealed in the Scriptures. This is what Lutheran reformers call the *norma normans*—that which “norms the norm” or is the only “true norm” for belief. In *The Search for Peace*, Uchimura's attempt to use Scripture to make sense out of his experience while also explaining the orthodox doctrine of the atonement is part and parcel of this tradition that can be traced back to Augustine.

### **Internal Schism**

As with Uchimura, Augustine also had an “internal schism”—an awareness of two selves, the unconverted and the converted, the flesh and the spirit. He also needed to make sense of his life in time and space from both the perspective of the life he alone remembers and that of the life that God and others remember.<sup>515</sup> Uchimura also struggled with making sense of experience in light of what is objectively true and what is subjectively false. And he became aware that the person he had been prior to his conversion was markedly different from the person he was becoming. The truth about himself, the sum total of the present self and the past self that is gone, is still known and remembered by God. Thus, he concerned himself with searching for

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into disorienting and unaccustomed focus on another; but this is the shape of salvation itself, salvation that is necessarily and solely *extra nos*.

Lisa E. Dahill, *Reading from the Underside of Selfhood: Bonhoeffer and Spiritual Formation* (Eugene: Princeton Theological Monograph Series/Wipf and Stock, 2009), 53.

<sup>515</sup> This is something that Ricoeur takes pains to explain in his hermeneutical philosophy of *Time and Narrative* and *Oneself as Other*.

the “truth” of his own existence as he revisited his memories, ordered them in text, and interpreted them, judging his past and present in light of God’s word in the Scriptures:

Of the two life figures Augustine himself incarnates, in his narrative doubly documented as before and after conversion, only this latter figure for transcendence determines his judgement of his life. For inflexibility and irony are the role in Augustine’s theory of time and eternity. Inflexibility in that Augustine allows the measure of a man’s life to be in his mind, while he insists that the models by which a man judges his life exist outside of time. Irony in that a man’s power over time is thus aggrandized, even as his potential for independent judgement in time is minimized. To Augustine’s mind, a man interpreting his life without the Truth is a man telling tales, all individual and all invalid. Only a man relying on the Truth is a reliable narrator of his life. Reliable, Augustine would say,

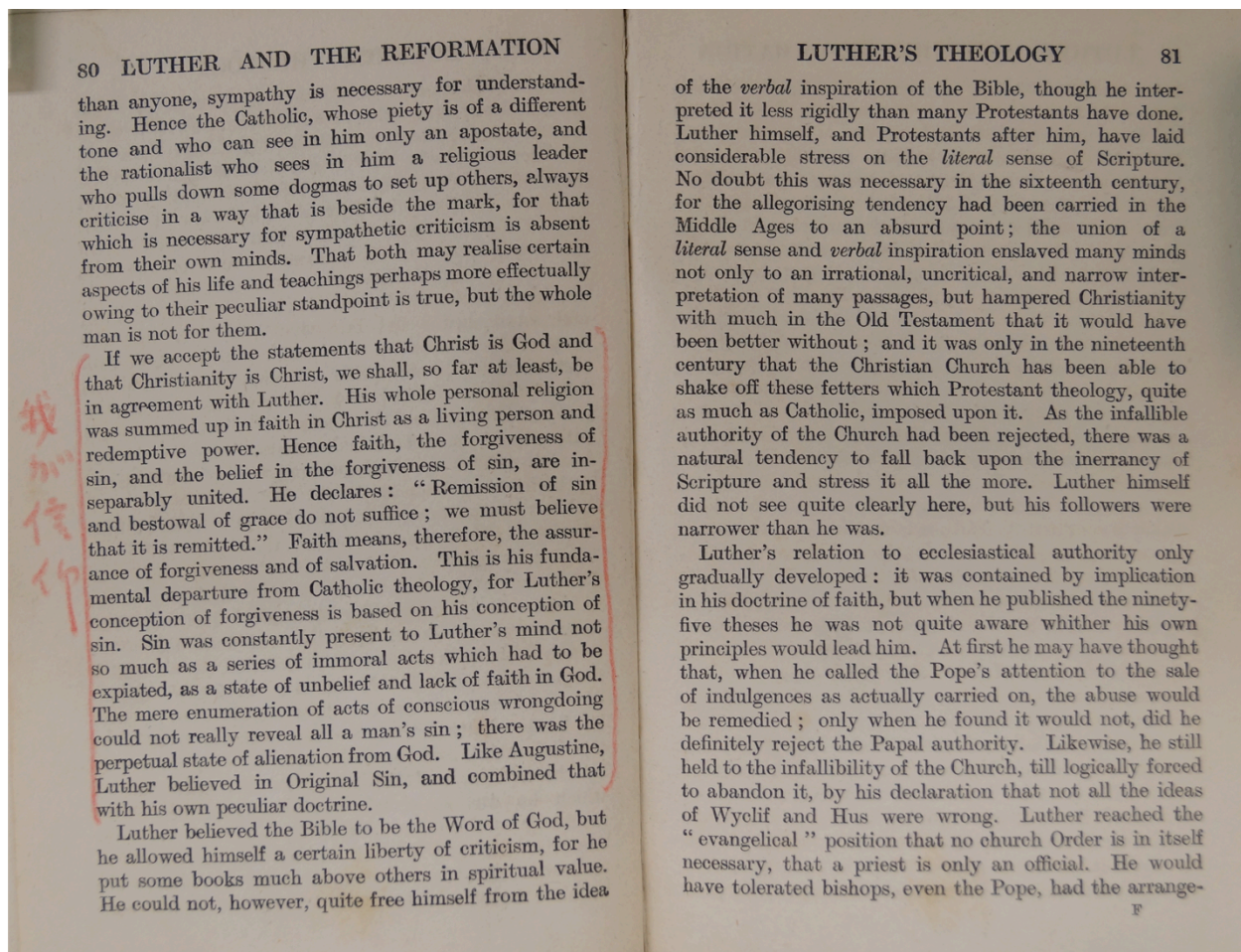


Figure 4. Uchimura’s copy of Leonard D. Agate, *Luther the Reformer* (London: The People’s Books, date unlisted), 80. Courtesy Uchimura Kanzō bunko, University of Hokkaidō.

because the stable truth grants him a sure judgement of his life. Restricted, some might say, because a stable truth yields always the same judgement of a life. A judgement that

is personal, as faith is personal, but a judgement that is persistent, not subject to reconsiderations of falsehood and ‘truth,’ of sin and serving God, of the Christian view of this world and faith in the next.<sup>516</sup>

Uchimura’s purpose is no different. He, too, seeks to interpret his own experience in light of temporal and narrative time, relying on God’s ‘truth’ to counteract the inner voices of despair and external voices of discouragement that he encounters.

In *The Search for Peace*, Uchimura’s opening lament (悲嘆) emphasizes the paradoxes of human life. As he sees it, we ought not to commit sins, yet we do. We should be clean, but we are filthy; we should ascend to the heights of angels, but we sink to the level of beasts. It is easy to fall but hard to rise, and so forth. He uses these contrasts to show how capricious and contingent human life is and to illustrate the concept of sin itself. Echoing the words of St. Paul (as he frequently does throughout this text), Uchimura writes:

What I wish to do, I do not; I do that which I hate. I am formed of two selves, which always fight one another. Truly, truly, life in this world is but one tremendous war. Long ago, Seneca wrote to his friend Lucilius, saying, “Vivere, mi Lucilii, militare est.” (To live, my Lucilius, is to wage war.) As such, who can claim that life is joy? For me, there is never a day’s rest from this war. Every day, within the confines of my heart, I witness *Sekigahara* and Waterloo.<sup>517</sup>

Here, Uchimura brings up the primordial battle between the spirit and the flesh, the inner man and the outer man—the desire for the good versus the desire for evil—that have beset many a classical writer. He goes on to say:

People do not admit the deficiency of their inner life (*naibu no ketsubō*), but instead they validate the external. They do not wish to satisfy the inner, but only look to the outer. I do not realize that I am my own enemy; my inner pains well up and overflow to the outside of me. So, let us examine the root cause of all the fights and quarrels from the beginning

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<sup>516</sup> Elizabeth de Mijolla, *Autobiographical Quests: Augustine, Montaigne, Rousseau, and Wordsworth* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1994), 36.

<sup>517</sup> UKZS 2: 138

of the world until now—as all of them are struggles born of these passions, where the individual’s discontent bubbles forth and drenches others.<sup>518</sup>

What is this root cause? As was true for Augustine (and later, Luther) Uchimura agrees: it is the desire for God despite one’s inability to find God. It is the paradox of desiring to be aligned to the greatest good yet incapable of fully achieving this.

In the first part of his work, Uchimura takes the reader through a series of failures or false ideas he enlisted in the service of escaping sin and doing good works. The chapter titles constitute a series of attempts to purge or “remove sin” (*Datsu zai jutsu*): revival, learning, studying nature, charitable works, and studying theology and missions. Each of these is drawn from Uchimura’s “real experiences” with these attempts. He then includes three more counterfeit “ways to forget sin” (*Bōzai jutsu*): the “home” (he claims that there is no such thing as a happy home; it is simply a false ideal); hedonism (it leads to greed and nations abusing others, and cannot change the inner person); and optimism (one cannot be freed from sin if one does not even know that one is a sufferer confined to an invisible prison).

Within these chapters, Uchimura provides powerful examples of his fruitless labor in attempts to “give” to God and surrender himself to God in sacrifice. One of the fullest examples comes from chapter five, when he revisits his experiences at Hartford seminary. Uchimura remarks upon how much of Meiji society hated evangelists and how he himself as a *Yamato danshi* could not stand foreign missions groups and the intrusion of their values systems into the life of the Japanese, especially how they meddled with the family and tried to get the Japanese family to look and behave like the “Christian family” found in the West. However, he still felt an inner need to become an evangelist, and out of a sense of duty that if he were to sacrifice himself for God as an evangelist, he might find peace in this world. Uchimura reasoned that if he were to

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<sup>518</sup> Idem.

become an evangelist, this might win him favor in God’s eyes. In an almost stream-of-consciousness voice, he declares:

Give this last sacrifice to God. If I can perform this greatest penance, and receive it unto myself, God will give me peace. “Skin for skin”—All that a man has he will give for his life. (Job 2:4) To save our souls, I must not refuse to become an evangelist. Only, use the peace that thou wilt give unto me. I will go against my desires and my own will. I think that I will die to myself, and I must therefore become an evangelist. At this time, truly, my decision is to abandon the world, which is the decision of a sinner to come to Jesus. “Oh Lord, now I come. Wash me in the blood of the cross.”<sup>519</sup> In the end, I made up my mind, and left my life of charity work at the mental hospital, and entered the theological seminary.<sup>520</sup>

Here, Uchimura recounts how he was trying to show God his devotion and respond to an inner calling he felt compelled, but curiously unwilling, to do. He felt compelled not because he desired to labor to save the souls of others, but rather because he felt it was “skin for skin.” He reasoned that the only way he could find peace was by extinguishing his own desires and serving God in this way. As expressed in *How I Became a Christian*, this reasoning comes from that kind of joyless, sentimental faith that tries to produce fruit through manufactured feelings and acts of the will.

Uchimura’s time at the seminary did give him a modicum of joy, but the negatives greatly outweighed the positives. He was glad for the opportunity to study the Bible in depth but did not like the cushiness of the environment or the attitude of his fellow students. He wrote that the need to sacrifice, to suffer for his faith, was necessary to generate the discipline and demonstration of devotion that would lead to his own salvation. While at the seminary Uchimura was still living under the impression that he could please God and save himself through his own actions. He remarks as follows:

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<sup>519</sup> This is a quote from Lewis Hartsough’s 1871 hymn, “I Hear Thy Welcome Voice”: “I am coming, Lord/ Coming now to Thee:/ Wash me, cleanse me in the blood/ that flowed from Calvary.”

<sup>520</sup> UKZS 2: 167.

I left the secular world and cast off my desires for worldly fame and glory. In order to save my soul and leave it unto God's grace, I shut myself up in a solitary room at the seminary. Through prayer and fasting, I labored to gain life's greatest blessing. Of course, the seminary of today is not the monastery of ancient times. There is a gymnasium, a bathhouse; not one of the delights of the enlightened world of culture is denied the student. Therefore, I did not encounter even one of the sufferings of Savonarola's Dominican monastery at Bologna or Luther's Augustinian monastery at Erfurt. Nay, if I were to compare life there with the charity hospital, it was a place of peace and comfortable joy. Truly, from the moment I entered the seminary, the first concern I had was that life at the seminary was much too enjoyable. The thirty-four hours of instruction normally required of a regular institution of higher education was reduced to less than twenty hours of theological study. The single month of summer vacation at the charity hospital was exchanged for five; it was closed the entire summer... As a seminary student, I could not believe that there was any level of self-sacrifice.

But despite not having physical comfort, I had no small degree of spiritual joy. Every morning we had prayer meetings. There was a quiet library, famous lecturers, the discipline and training of elder faculty that had great power and influence on my development. Especially, the study of Greek and Hebrew put me into direct connection with the minds of those who wrote the Scriptures. I felt as though Moses himself were teaching me; I felt the joy of hearing Paul directly. That feeling, that joy, in large part makes up for the suffering I have endured until now. I thought that if this were the main part of seminary training, it would produce good fruit in the life of the theological student, yielding a hundred-fold in the service of today's Christian organizations. But sadly, Biblical scholarship accounts for only a small part of this education; fields of study such as Biblical history, church history, apologetics, Biblical theology, experiential theology, organizational theology, sacred worship, hymnody, elocution, homiletics, pastoral theology— these and others I cannot remember are excessively complex and cannot save the soul.

Aah, for me, the environs of the Holy Seminary could not free me from my sins. I have understood that a tile-roofed wall several layers deep cannot prevent the devil's incursion. I've awakened to the fact that morning and evening prayers and incessant singing of hymns cannot destroy the power of the devil within my heart. They are of no avail. Habits reduce the efficacy of even the best things. Use a potent medication too often and it loses its effect. Daily Bible, prayer and music, as dutiful performance, as professional study, will in the end strip away God's holiness. My heart, on its own, could not produce a sympathetic response.

From dawn to dusk, we quote Scripture. Sermons are critiqued, as are the merits of hymns. Sometimes theological debates erupt in tones bereft of respect, with unjustifiable abuse, even taking God's holy name in vain— much like natural scientists fighting over fossils. Sometimes, when discussing hymns, they smash masterpieces of extreme beauty to bits— exalted works by the likes of Haydn and Mendelssohn that could make the gods weep. Being there, I discovered within my heart a danger I had never experienced before: the sin of corruption.

“Therefore, I tell you every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven people, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven.” (Matthew 12:31, ESV)



“You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain.” (Exodus 20:7, ESV)

Because of God’s commands, I sought to escape from this dangerous, difficult place. As this sin of dishonoring God’s name is the sin of these teachers, this danger is real for them.<sup>521</sup>

He found that even those training to be fully dedicated to the service of God were just as full of sin, pride, and hypocrisy as he. There was no escape from the world, even within the cloister, and the community he sought was broken due to pride and egocentrism. Uchimura concludes somewhat snidely as follows:

I do not believe that seminary students should be criticized as having the worst conduct; however, I do believe that for their part, where they lecture on purity and upright morality, their thinking is abysmally coarse and vulgar. They do not possess nobility of character and must be avoided at all costs. Flee from them.<sup>522</sup>

He therefore resolved to make a living teaching science and history and live out his Christian life as a layman.

When Uchimura tackles hedonism as a way to “forget” sin, he uses it as a vehicle to criticize selfishness and greed within society. For him, hedonism is writ large throughout history. Gaining wealth at the expense of other nations, colonial interests, wars, oppression of others—these too are the result of unquenchable human desire. Uchimura reasons that advanced nations such as England cause all sorts of problems for the developing world. Rather than the now-colonized natives, it is the developed nations that are barbaric:

Macaulay’s so-called “desire that seeks to pacify life’s circumstances”— is this not the engine of human progress? In the past four hundred years, human desire has caused the transformation and domination of the lands inhabited by the joyous American natives. The awakening of England’s powerful constitutional politics is the result of desire. The

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<sup>521</sup> UKZS 2: 168-9

<sup>522</sup> UKZS 2: 172

barbarians possess desires that are not those of mere children [the native peoples]. The increase of desire is the omen of knowledge; without desire there is no progress.

Moreover, Uchimura ties unbridled desire to Spencerism,<sup>523</sup> which was popular among apostles of progress within Meiji Japan.

All of these branches of philosophy come from the arrangement of well-informed people. The British apostles of the philosophy of greed have broadcast their embrace of Bentham and Spencer throughout the world. My own Japanese countrymen worship and extol them to the utmost degree. "It is the word of Spencer!" they say. "It must be true, because he said it!" His words are uncritically endorsed by my fellow countrymen. Since they worship him so deeply, they enrich themselves according to their jealous intentions. They elevate the philosophy of greed to holy writ and teach it as a cardinal principle. We give our assent and wholeheartedly agree with his explanations. We wish to become his true disciples.

But, if confronted by Spencer's proclamations I am carried off by his erudition and accept his hypotheses within the very core of my being, my own principles become the principles of greed, whereupon I shall apply his thinking to my own works. This will not alleviate my suffering; I cannot find an escape through the words of Spencer. Nay, society is organized accordingly. Even if you say that Spencer's evil ideas are a temporary salve to administer to my conscience that wishes to fight against him, the underlying suffering that I endure will never decrease. This cruel and brutal world appears before me, towering high above; I can neither evade nor satisfy it.<sup>524</sup>

Even if Uchimura were to accept natural desire and behave as a greedy, jealous, egotistical individual, he could never alleviate the root cause of his suffering. His sin-consciousness may be muted by the palliative effects of this popular philosophy, but the underlying condition would remain. Uchimura goes on to explain, in his high-flown rhetorical style, that according to the ideals of Spencerism, all that is good is transformed into what is evil, but still called "good".

The heart of desire evolves; what should become love evolves into death, as does "life". Sin evolves, just like that which is called morality; thought cannot be attained and is reduced to absurdity. The secret of the "alchemy" of materialistic evolution is limitless time. Spread across time, stones can become man. That which is not must become that which is. As desire must also become love. Aah philosophy, philosophy! While thou

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<sup>523</sup> Herbert Spencer (1820-1903) was a leading English philosopher who advocated the desires of the individual over society and extolled the benefits of scientific principles over and against the religious. Spencer was an early proponent of social Darwinism, a misapplication of Darwin's ideas of "survival of the fittest" in support of mercantilism and colonialism.

<sup>524</sup> UKZS 2: 175

attemptest to fill in the depths of human insight which thou canst not penetrate, thou wouldst change sin into virtue with thine alchemical equipment. Be amazed! Be amazed!

The crude strength of hedonism has no power to change my inner nature. I have felt no need to examine this in depth. The spiritual experiences of the Christian believer are not included in the materialists' ingredients.

For Uchimura the promise of the fulfillment of fleshly desire does not lead to benevolence or true understanding of experience. Based on human insight alone, one cannot act morally; “the good” does not come from the admixture of materialism and egotistical greed. The self that Uchimura describes here attempts to ignore its conscience and live according to Spencerian principles, but it is left empty and confused. If his countrymen live in this way, they too will be confused and continue to abuse others, never finding contentment. Returning to his earlier thesis, and echoing Augustine, Uchimura explains that humanity cannot be at peace unless and until it finds God. Desire and consumption—the dictates of the ego—cannot be substituted for the divine.

None of Uchimura's methods to “remove” or “forget” sin were successful. The paradox of desiring God yet being unable to do “good” becomes especially clear in part two of *The Search for Peace*. At the beginning of part two, Uchimura remarks as follows in the chapter entitled “The Origin of Sin”:

Neither “revival” nor learning, charitable works, missions and evangelism, or anything else that can be written of in this world, can provide a successful method to forget sin (忘罪術 *bōzai jutsu*).<sup>525</sup> Since I have not been able to find peace, shall I not abandon these? Is there anything in this universe that can fill my hollow soul? Having desire, the things that attempt to satisfy it are just like an unchanging law of the universe. Is not desire the promise of fulfillment? And so, my desire is the insatiable desire of this world.

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<sup>525</sup> The Western concept of sin as applied and interpreted within Japanese culture is the subject of many studies. The word *tsumi* 罪 means “crime,” but was assigned the meaning of “sin” in the biblical sense. It is difficult to explain the Judeo-Christian concept of sin in this context; to say that all people are “criminals” is completely different than “sinners.” Uchimura reduced the complexities and nuances of the notion of “sin” to the term *tsumi*. Essentially, *tsumi* is anything that is the opposite of *zen* 善, or goodness.

“O spirit, that dost prefer,  
Before all temples the upright heart and pure  
Instruct me for thou knowest. . .  
. . . What in me is dark  
Illumine; what is low, raise and support;  
That to the height of this great argument  
I may assert eternal Providence,  
And justify the ways of God to men.” –Milton

What is sin anyway? It is not different from my anger, from my secret theft. However, how am I angry? How do I steal? No matter how much I desire goodness, I do not do good things, but instead, I do the evil things that I do not desire to do. Evil is an occlusion, utter excrement! It is said to comprise the love of sex, witchcraft, hatred, contentiousness and fighting, jealousy and envy, fits of rage, factionalism, false teaching. It is said to be:

“sexual immorality, impurity, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and the like.” [Galatians 5:19-21, ESV]

These so-called works of the flesh, as they are symptoms of a sickness that exists within the heart and soul—surely one who has these symptoms suffers from this illness. I know how pointless it is to fight against the desires of the flesh. But, where is the headquarters of my enemy? If I can find the root of this disease, I can completely wipe it out.<sup>526</sup>

Here, Uchimura problematizes “good” and “evil.” In his opinion, a human being, no matter how many good works one does, no matter how hard one tries to remove improper desires, no matter how much one tries to reform, cannot become “good” on one’s own.<sup>527</sup> Even the best attempts are still riddled with the “disease” of sin—the one thing Uchimura cannot escape, that which robs him of peace. He continues:

Responding to the problem of “what is called ‘good,’” Christ says, “What is good is God alone.” Filial piety is good, benevolence (*jin*) is good, but the result of benevolence and virtue (*zen*) is God himself. Those who know God become “good” (*zen*). Religion and morality, works and faith are two faces of the same thing. If you take away one, you cannot know the other. The Bible shows that the “good person” is the “one who walks together with God.” (Genesis 5:22). Separating from God and serving idols is to leave the good and do the work of evil. That is to say, those who do evil things are the true

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<sup>526</sup> UKZS 2: 185-6

<sup>527</sup> Note the parallel here with the Mahayana Buddhist notion of *tariki*—salvation and peace of mind attainable only through the agency of what amounts to divine intervention.

idolaters. Whether Christian believers or Buddhist adherents, those who highly value righteousness and seek justice are the children of God and scions of “Israel.”

If God is good, then naturally we can say that evil is that which is separate from God. Theft, murder, adultery— committing such acts separates one from God, although the results themselves are not sin. If I kill someone, I am punished by the state for the crime of murder. The sin of killing, however, is not that I have killed someone but that I have abandoned my God. When God is with me, and I am with God, should I somehow wish to commit a sin, I am impervious to it. If, in my unperfected state, I speak ill of others, this is caused by my inner feelings of desire, my boastfulness, my lack of love for others. This separates all people from God. If I can return to God, I can become a good person. This alone is the path that enables one to escape from sin.<sup>528</sup>

In Uchimura’s reasoning, the insatiable desires concomitant with the natural state of imperfection, constitute an incurable disease. Everyone naturally acts in accordance with this diseased state: that which is evil.<sup>529</sup> For Uchimura, God has defined what is good, since God alone is “the highest good,” but “diseased” humanity cannot do the work of the good. This “other” self, the flesh, is always at war with the spirit within, which desires to do good. Thus, for Uchimura, like Augustine before him, the only way to find peace is to find God, to walk with God, and to rely on God; in other words, to allow oneself to be saved by God, not through one’s active pursuit of God.

But this is elusive, and one cannot attain a perfect union with God: the contingencies of life and the injustices of the world keep getting in the way. Uchimura was not alone in his ruminations on sin and suffering. Indeed, Meiji authors frequently wrote of their personal setbacks, failures, inadequacies, and their sense of anxiety and frustration related to guilt.<sup>530</sup> For

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<sup>528</sup> UKZS 2:188-9

<sup>529</sup> This stems from Augustine’s doctrine of original sin and Luther’s further explication that through Adam and Eve’s fall, all humanity is cursed with a sinful nature which cannot be escaped through human effort. Humanity must look to God’s own actions to free the individual from the consequences of sin. See Jairzinho Lopez Pereira, *Augustine of Hippo and Martin Luther on Original Sin and Justification of the Sinner* (Gottingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2013), 98-113; 265; 278-80.

<sup>530</sup> Again, according to Karatani, the inversion and interiority that come from self-examination are born of Christian thinking in Meiji Japan. A notable exception is Endō Shūsaku, many of

instance, in one sense, the character Sensei in Natsume Sōseki's *Kokoro* is beset with profound guilt over his role in the suicide of his friend K. Sensei frequently visited K's grave at Zōshigaya cemetery in order to remember his friend and reflect upon his regrettable deeds. Regarding Sensei's frequent visits to the cemetery, Hosea Hirata explains that:

Sensei's *hakamairi* thus can be seen as the ritualized act of a historical man needing to abolish what seems to constitute the cause of his intolerable suffering: a mode of time that points to his past act as an indelible, irreversible one, as well as a value system (ethics) that proclaims it an evil one. He needs to escape from this structure of time.<sup>531</sup>

As with the narrator of Uchimura's autobiographical works, Sōseki's Sensei is wracked by guilt and unable to find a solution. There is no forgiveness. Ultimately, according to this reading, Sensei chooses to end his own life to atone for his misdeeds— as Uchimura's narrator had considered at various junctures in these texts. However, in the context of his ethical system (to use Hirata's term), Uchimura has the hope of God's forgiveness, which provides a counterbalance to the flawed "flesh." In this hope, he has another way out of his despair.<sup>532</sup>

One of the bleakest expressions of Uchimura's personal despair comes at the midpoint of this long chapter on "The Origin of Sin":

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whose Japanese protagonists, in contrast to his portrayal of Westerners, are characterized by the lack of 罪意識 (sin-consciousness) that motivated naturalists and I-novelists alike. Endō's protagonists are more profoundly affected by a deep sense of suffering that comes from sin in the world, and at an unconscious level. See Ascenso Adelino, *Transcultural Theodicy in the Fiction of Shūsaku Endō* (Rome: Editrice Pontificia Università Gregoriana, 2009), 14; 50; 103-105; 12-113; 330.

<sup>531</sup> Hosea Hirata. *Discourses of Seduction: History, Evil, Desire, and Modern Japanese Literature* (Cambridge: Harvard East Asia Monographs, 2005), 199.

<sup>532</sup> Husserl distinguished between the "body" and the "flesh," where the "flesh refers to my lived, embodied experience, and my body refers to the object others can experience." Uchimura's interpretation of the "body" and "flesh" mirrors this understanding. See David Kaplan, *Ricoeur's Critical Theory* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2003), 93. In terms of Christian theology, the flesh is the natural, unregenerated self that is responsible for sin. This self must be subjugated and held in check by the spirit, the regenerated self animated by God's spirit, which makes the new creature alive. This flesh constitutes one half of Uchimura's internal schism, against the desires of which he wages constant war.

Aah, but for me, I must find peace and harmony. Where is the road to that ideal land where I am made to do [what is good] but not what I hate? Not according to greed, not according to what is most pressing in necessity, but with the calm expanse of time belonging to the noble prince of trailing clouds, can I forget myself through a heart of love for others? Not having pride in victory, not being in despair over failure, resting while continuing to work, working while continuing in rest, enjoying my life, continuing to be consumed for the sake of God and country—is there not a path in this widening universe that can make me into the ideal man I wish to become? Aah, my life is one of pain, akin to *Arabian Nights*. In the middle of the precipice of this world, I am clinging to the base of the stalk of life. Below me is the open maw of the snake called death, and I am waiting to fall down into it. This rodent-like creature called time keeps nibbling away at the imperiled root of the stalk of life. And in this dangerous state, the grasses of wife and children grow lush, offering just a small taste of unfolding eternal hope. Shall I receive what I desire? Aah, if there were but a microphone that could pick up the collective unvoiced cries of the hearts of humanity, and I could hear all those voices of pain and sadness, it would rend the heavens and move the earth. Aah, is there nothing that can save me? Aah, Messiah, will you not descend? Does the cosmos only exist to reveal its despair? Does God not exist? Has he rejected humanity?<sup>533</sup>

Here, Uchimura has come to the end of his rope and expresses an acute lack of agency. He is waiting to fall into the open jaws of death. And this is not only so for himself, but Uchimura sees this as the end of us all, lamenting the unfulfilled desire of humanity, the inability to accomplish our goals before we die, the inability to act morally and justly, to become the ideal self—with a life of purpose and meaning—that we wish to become.

Immediately thereafter, and by way of a corrective to his bitter angst, Uchimura begins a new section entitled “The Sound of Joy.” Here, the reader encounters more “voices” that Uchimura claims to hear (Augustine’s, for instance), but there are gnawing doubts as well. Can he really trust these exterior words to comfort his anxiety? This section can be described as an enumeration of spiritual encouragements, drawn from hymns to Biblical quotes and even poetry (Goethe). He writes:

In the middle of the night of despair, this voice cries out:

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<sup>533</sup> UKZS 2: 196

“Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem and cry to her that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned, that she has received from the Lord’s hand double for all her sins.” (Isaiah 40:1-2, ESV)

“Can a woman forget her nursing child, that she should have no compassion on the son of her womb? Even these may forget, yet I will not forget you. Behold I have engraved you on the palms of my hands; your walls are always before me” (Isaiah 49: 15-16, ESV)

“But for you who fear my name, the sun of righteousness shall rise with healing in its wings. You shall go out leaping like calves from the stall.” (Malachi 4:2, ESV)

Listen to the voice of the angels of heaven,

“Christ ist erstanden!  
“Freude dem Sterblichen  
“Den die verderblichen  
“Schleichen, erblichen  
“Mängel umwandten.

Christ is ascended!  
Bliss hath invested him,  
Woes that molested him,  
Trials that tested him  
Gloriously ended”  
(Goethe’s *Faust*, 738-742)

Aah, what a sound! It is so exceedingly wonderful I can scarcely believe it!

*Die Botschaft hör ich wol, allein nur fehlt der Glaube.* –Goethe’s *Faust*, 765  
 (“Your messages I hear, but faith has not been given.”)

“The Lord who all our foes o’ercame,  
World, sin and death, and hell overthrow  
And Jesus is the Conqueror’s name.” –C. Wesley.

And according to this kind of life, he saved this world and myself.<sup>534</sup>

At this point, Uchimura quotes the 53<sup>rd</sup> chapter of Isaiah in its entirety. In this chapter, Isaiah describes the suffering of the servant of God, who was “despised by the world,” a “man of sorrows,” who was “acquainted with grief.” This servant was “pierced for our transgressions” and “crushed for our iniquities,” and “with his wounds, we are healed.”<sup>535</sup> Next, Uchimura quotes Acts 16:31: “And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house,”(KJV) followed by John 3:16: “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

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<sup>534</sup> UKZS 2: 197-8

<sup>535</sup> According to Christian doctrine, Isaiah 53 portrays the suffering and death of Jesus Christ as the atoning sacrifice for the sins of the world.



(KJV) In a few short pages, Uchimura displays how the answer to his despair is the life and atoning work of Jesus Christ, and that his faith in Christ is the only answer to his sinfulness and to the unvoiced cries of the entire world.<sup>536</sup>

The problems of internal schism—the flesh that will not do what the spirit wills, the self that cannot be aligned to the highest good—and the problem of unrequited desire (or desire run rampant for useless or harmful aims) are solved by faith in the atonement: God’s action on behalf of the sinful world fulfills all longing and sets humanity free from the effects of sin. Salvation is not accomplished through one’s own works, nor is it an act of the will. Rather, it is something God does for all. Uchimura concludes this pivotal chapter with the following words:

You say that this sounds like superstition, but it is the Truth of Truths. Human experience verifies it. I do not believe this gospel because it is written in the Bible. My whole life is a response to it. My own experience is its proof. History verifies it, and Nature teaches it. If not through faith, there is no way for humanity to be saved.<sup>537</sup>

What is remarkable about this text, when read in the context of the crises found within *How I Became a Christian* and *Consolations of a Christian*, is that it reveals a new certainty, an abiding attestation of faith— even in the face of lingering doubts— in the “other,” the external work of God in Uchimura’s life. As he constructs his narrative of salvation in these three texts, Uchimura’s narrator finally has arrived at a place where he no longer believes in the superstition of undertaking actions to get “God off his back.”<sup>538</sup> He has fully moved away from the

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<sup>536</sup> In *A Life of Jesus*, Endō Shūsaku explains that, “The religious mentality of the Japanese is— just as it was at the time when the people accepted Buddhism—responsive to one who ‘suffers with us’ and who ‘allows for our weakness.’” Endō Shūsaku, *A Life of Jesus* (New York: Paulist Press, 1973), 1. Uchimura’s emphasis on atonement and the suffering of Christ with and for him corroborates Endō’s viewpoint.

<sup>537</sup> UKZS 2: 201

<sup>538</sup> See Gerhard O. Forde, *Theology is for Proclamation* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990), 14-15. Forde explains that when theology is not proclaimed, and the individual does not hear God’s words, the conscience is always looking to escape or appease God as judge. The believer is likely

obeisances of his youth and has taken Seelye's advice to heart, looking to atonement as a means of achieving peace. He is no longer looking within for answers to his problems, nor is he relying on his personal capacities. The volatile, fearful self of the other two works gives way to an affirmation of trust in the goodness of God. His struggle with the ravages of sin leaves him with no alternative other than the unconditional embrace of faith in God.

### **The Search for Peace, Part II: Exposition and Application**

The last four chapters are dense with theologically-informed argumentation employed to reinforce Uchimura's newfound understanding. "The Explanation of Faith" (*Shinkō no kai*) is an attempt to describe the difference between blind faith in falsehood (i.e. 2+2 does not equal 5; this is a fact, and no one should have faith in what is demonstrably false) and belief in reasonable ideas informed by logic and historical fact. "Paradise Regained" (*Rakuen no kaifuku*) explores the Christian teaching that Christ came to perfect the fallen universe and cure the disease of human sin, through which the universe was corrupted in the first place, and the narrator cites numerous examples of famous theologians and thinkers who relied on God's salvation *extra nos*. "The Philosophy and Principles of the Atonement" (*Shokuzai no tetsuri*) attempts to explain that, although those who have not undergone the same experiences as Uchimura may arrive at different conclusions, faith stands as the most compelling explanation for a variety of phenomena. "The Last and Final Problem" (*Saishū no mondai*), which comprises only a single page, emphasizes the futility of relying on the self. Key themes from these chapters will be discussed below.

"The Explanation of Faith" contains theological word studies in Hebrew and Greek, comparative philosophical argumentation, and numerous exercises in logic. Uchimura writes that

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to create an image of God that is not accurate due to sin and guilt. God's forgiving grace is understood in gospel proclamation.

faith is not disbelief of facts, nor is it believing in something which ought not to be believed (one does not see a deer and claim that it is a horse; this would be utterly foolish—this is referring to the famous Chinese story where Zhao Gao called a deer a horse, the origin of the word *baka* 馬鹿) but instead it is agreeing with the historical prophecies regarding the advent of Jesus in the world and the congruencies of the Bible with world history. Based on historical facts, Uchimura’s narrator extrapolates that belief in the subject of these facts is truth.<sup>539</sup> He compares this to geometry— how one can ascertain the measure of an unknown angle within a triangle if he knows the other two. For him, faith is believing in and agreeing with underlying truth; whether or not one can see and verify this truth, one can grasp it through observation and study.<sup>540</sup>

According to this understanding, Uchimura’s narrator remarks on being able to stop looking at his past failures and mistakes, to ignore what the world says about him, and instead to trust what God has revealed in text and in nature regarding salvation in the world. Relying on what is written about God and what he has observed in nature and through science, he is able to free himself from nagging fears and self-doubt while looking to God for surcease and trusting what God’s words say about the individual who has faith.<sup>541</sup> As is typical in Uchimura’s

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<sup>539</sup> 信仰は実なり、故に信仰せらるるの (Object of faith)も、信仰するもの(Subject of faith)も実ならざるべからず、実ならざる人は信せざるなり、不実の人の信ずる人も物も世に存するなし、彼は友人親戚を悉く疑ふのみならず亦宇宙の大原則をも疑ふなり、自然は真実なる慈母にして、疑を懐ける子供には何をも給せず。UKZS 2:204 This also relates to the Confucian reverence for the authority of ancient texts.

<sup>540</sup> Again, returning the ideas found in his essay *How Shall We Attain Great Literature*.

<sup>541</sup> This is the theological explanation of “objective justification” or “forensic justification”: God does not hold the sinner accountable for the sins committed or for the sinful nature of the individual but instead “declares” the sinner to be justified on account of the atoning sacrifice made by Jesus’ death and resurrection. Moreover, God’s final say on the individual’s salvation does not negate the problem of sin or suffering in the world. This is found in Luther’s “theology of the cross” where he “calls a thing what it is” (a rectification of names, one might say— a

narrative exposition, after introducing many philosophically-supported and reasoned attempts to encourage his faith, he observes that his doubts still interfere with the acquisition of perfect faith. Here he confesses that his very nature inclines him to doubt. Yet he still wants to believe, though his nature is to do the contrary.<sup>542</sup> He seeks proof that his sins are actually forgiven; this comes from God alone. Since humanity longs for God and can only be satisfied by God, the narrator concludes that the eternal problem is that the universe— including humanity— is incomplete, since all things are in a diseased state, longing for fulfillment. This concern he addresses in the penultimate chapter.

### **Paradise Regained**

“Paradise Regained” is the strongest example of Uchimura's mode of apologia for the faith that has given him hope and endowed his life with a degree of narrative coherence. Borrowing from the title of Milton's canonical work, Uchimura delves into how the incomplete, longing universe can find fulfillment. He maintains that this deep, universal longing stems from the world's need for a savior: “The appearance of Christ is necessary in this world of despair. Christ came to perfect the universe. By Christ alone can the world become that upon which we may rely, and in Christ alone can we know that all creation is not a failure.”<sup>543</sup> Arguing from the authority of Scripture, he quotes Isaiah 45:22: “Turn to me and be saved, all the ends of the earth,” and John 3:14-15: “As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.” (ESV) These two

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forerunner of Kant's *Ding an sich*, viz a fundamental thing, unmediated through perceptions and unknowable) and refuses either to explain away suffering or to doubt the goodness of God (theodicy) in the midst of extreme difficulty. See Grenholm and Gunner, eds. *Lutheran Identity and Political Theology* (Cambridge: James Clarke & Co., 2015), 107.

<sup>542</sup> UKZS 2: 208. This is difficult, since throughout Uchimura's autobiographical works, at times faith appears to be passive, and at other times a strenuous act of the will.

<sup>543</sup> UKZS 2: 209-210

examples reveal Uchimura's understanding of faith that relies upon Christ for salvation. It is noteworthy that he chose to highlight Christ's words about himself in John 3. Referencing Numbers 21, Jesus compares his future crucifixion to the bronze snake God instructed Moses to put on a pole to heal the Israelites, who had been plagued by venomous snakes during their wandering in the desert. All who looked upon this bronze serpent in faith would be healed and would not die. Jesus meant that he would bring about eternal healing (from sin and death) for those who believed in him. Uchimura holds that this is the proof he needs for his faith. Salvation comes from being firmly connected to and relying upon the highest good. He quotes Emerson, who said that he relied on his will to motivate him, not the wind, saying, "hitch your wheel to the star." Uchimura ties this idea of "hitching to the star" to his staying connected to Christ, who said that "apart from me you can do nothing." In other words, all ability, all good actions flow from a connection to God; human actions account for nothing. What is essential is faith alone. Like the snake on the pole, Uchimura maintains, Christ is the panacea for the otherwise incurable disease of sin.

Throughout his autobiographical works, Uchimura revisits the connections between the will, intention, character, and fortitude on the one hand, and sacrifice, duty, failure, and endurance on the other. His narrator vacillates between trusting in the former and attempting the latter. The self yearns to succeed through action and work<sup>544</sup> but ends up failing, experiencing rejection by others. In this work, the narrator comes to the conclusion that will, character, and fortitude are necessary, as are sacrifice and a sense of duty— cardinal virtues, after all, for this erstwhile samurai. But while necessary, per his experience, they do not suffice. Yet because they are necessary, they ought not to be rejected.

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<sup>544</sup> Again, this echoes the "unity of thought and action" credo of *Yōmeigaku*.

Next, using the example of Augustine's conversion (as quoted above), Uchimura explains that when an individual turns to and relies upon this medicine of faith in Christ, one's life of unfulfilled desires (a hell of sorts) changes for the better (the gateway to paradise). He writes,

A young man of prodigious sensual appetites came to Rome from Numidia. Though he was not yet thirty, he had become a great author, making a name for himself throughout the Italian literary world due to his literary skill and elegant rhetoric. Yet, for all his learning and skill, he could not escape the control of the dog of fleshly lust. He lived in sin with three different women and had an illegitimate child. Though he knew the folly of his ways, he enjoyed being a slave to his passions. One morning, he was perusing the Scriptures, and the church gained Saint Augustine while the world of lust and passion lost a great drunkard. What he read was:

Let us walk properly as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and sensuality, not in quarreling and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provisions for the flesh, to gratify its desires. (Romans 13:13-14)<sup>545</sup>

Uchimura then writes of Martin Luther's travails with sin as an Augustinian friar. During a violent thunderstorm, he had prayed in superstition that should he be saved from the storm, he would take orders and become a monk. After the storm passed, and against the vehement wishes of his father, who had paid for Luther's education as a legal scholar, Luther made good on his promise. He attempted to please God by prayer and fasting, seeking to control the desires of his flesh, but to no avail. He still feared divine punishment for his sins. Uchimura recounts that Luther was not able to find any hope in the words of his superior, Staupitz, but instead he found hope in the words of Romans 3, "The righteous shall live by faith alone." His narrator then dramatizes the Reformation as another spiritual battle saying,

God had forgiven Luther's sins, and the universe continued to reject this cast-out child, but in later years, when the kings and lords of this world stood on the banks of the Rhine in resplendent clothing, and their servants stood at the ready to protect the old order of superstition, resisting the high crown armed with the words of Romans 3, Luther was that brave man who stood on the banks of the Rhine and fired the opening salvo for religious freedom.<sup>546</sup>

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<sup>545</sup> UKZS 2: 211

<sup>546</sup> Idem.

In true Carlylian fashion, Uchimura dramatizes history as a means to comment upon the current state of affairs. He ties faith alone, one of the cries of the Reformation, to the battle for religious freedom against the polity of church and state. No doubt this is yet another veiled attack against certain elements of the Meiji Christian community and the statist who sought to squelch freedom of conscience and faith.

Following this reference to Luther, Uchimura refers to the conversion narratives of John Bunyan, the sermons of Charles Spurgeon, and works from other Christian writers. He quotes hymns and psalms (especially Psalm 51, composed by King David after his affair with Bathsheba, in which he asks God to create in him a clean heart and renew a right-minded spirit within him). He then begins a new section on the peace that God bestowed upon him after he surrendered his will to that of God.

Occasionally, there is a voice that sinks into the very fiber of my being, saying, “Your offerings have been received. Throw out your old clothing and wear the robes of righteousness that I have prepared for you.” I respond, “Thy servant is here, may it be done to me according to your gracious will.” At times, I have felt Christ’s righteous power pouring out of him into my body (Mark 5:30). And, one by one, feelings of joy, peace, and thanksgiving have filled my heart, and I am plucked out of my seat, removed straightaway to fields tucked away in deep forests where sparrows nest in the branches, and I can hear the faint bleating of sheep in the distance. I cross the pure, running brook and fall to my knees and offer a prayer of thanksgiving. There are no petitions left in my prayers, only unending words of thanksgiving for what God has done for me in Christ.<sup>547</sup>

Uchimura’s narrator then connects a number of threads— the Meiji restoration, loyalty to one’s lord, and the authority of the government— and proceeds to compare these to his relationship with God, God’s expectations, and his individual agency. He compares the peace he feels to what he imagines it must have been like with the advent of the Meiji restoration when the hundreds of Tokugawa era daimyo returned their hereditary lands as tribute to the Emperor. Recognizing that

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<sup>547</sup> UKZS 2: 216-217

the Emperor owned these lands and had every right to control them, they returned to him what he was due. (One wonders if this was how they actually felt!) Out of his benevolence, the Emperor allowed the daimyo to receive one tenth of the stipend they had formerly received. They had been relieved of their “unprofitable labors” and were able to bask in the glory of the imperial court. The Emperor became solely responsible for the well-being and “nourishment” of the people, but amidst his great glory and dominion, he now had to deal with the daunting challenge of keeping Japan safe from its enemies and administering the land.<sup>548</sup>

Next, the narrator remarks that he is but a small lord of a tiny kingdom— namely, himself. Unlike the daimyo, he refuses to hand over all his “territory” to the ultimate authority of the universe. He knows he ought to but is unable to carry out the works that God would have him do, as he is constantly warring with his neighbors and cannot set up good “diplomatic ties” with them. He continues,

Still, I have not yet filled the office for strategic action against my neighbors. The central authority of this universe, the heavenly emperor, comes and incessantly demands tribute from me. He commands me, saying, “I have given you 5000 pieces of silver, now pay me the profit of my investment.” But if I have done nothing to support this aim, I will be a worthless servant that will be cast into the darkness, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth (Matthew 25). Even though I know the joy and profit of following the dictates of the king, when pressed with business of my kingdom and doing the things I ought not do, all in spite of the commands of the king, what will happen when the debts of my unpaid yearly tribute continue to pile up? With my many battles and fights, I have no thoughts of myself treading on thin ice. I cannot escape the fate of this lifetime of joylessness. In the midst of dejection and melancholia, I have wasted so much precious time.<sup>549</sup>

Here, Uchimura references one of Jesus’ parables, in which a king gives each of his three servants a sum of money and expects them to put this money to work. The lazy servant knows the king is a harsh master and in fear buries the money in the ground, ready to return it when the king returns. When the king returns and asks for his due, the first two servants account for their

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<sup>548</sup> UKZS 2: 217

<sup>549</sup> UKZS 2: 218



activities: they made a good return on the investment, and the king rewards them with more money. When the lazy servant is called to account and returns the original sum, the king calls the servant wicked, saying that he should have at least deposited it in the bank so that it could gain interest. He takes the money away from the lazy servant and gives it to the one who had doubled his money. The king says, "For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have an abundance. But from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. And cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." (Matthew 25:29-30).

As Uchimura applies this story to his own narrative, he too is afraid that God will demand an account of his actions and find him lacking. How, then, can he find peace? He again cites fortitude and sacrifice but realizes that these will not suffice. At this point the voices of the "moral scholars" and "new theologians" chime in and tell him simply to try harder and to trust in the self. He writes:

But am I not commanded to offer God the entire domain of my body? I often think, can I offer God all that I have, my body, my soul, and all things? God cannot know the extent of my poverty. A bird in the hand is worth more than two in the bush. It is good to not let things slip through one's hands. I must give one tenth of my income, and through my loyalty, I must make God my lord and be his subject. I must reform my conduct, and as God's true servant, I must do nothing that is shameful. But, I cannot so easily agree to hand over my whole body to God. But from the side, the moral scholars and new theologians join in a chorus of agreement, saying, 'You, riddled with countless diseases, will you ever fulfill your duty? God has given you the law of morality, and you surely have the power to put it into practice. Did not Saigō Takamori say, "Wishing to become a sage, the heart that sees the true path of the ancients' will but says that it cannot be reached, is like one who hopes for a fight but flees from it in cowardice." The theology of the atonement of Christ makes people lazy and weak, but the brave masters of erudition and knowledge do not care one bit about intentions. You must learn from the perfect example of Christ; character can do anything. Strengthen your resolve, remove yourself from the pleasure of company, and show the world the example of the perfect life.'

Thinking of this, and thinking of Him, it is clear that I have maintained independence from God for a number of years. I have protected my territory, I have given full tribute, and I have protected the dominion of my liege lord. But in the end, poverty has prevented my plans for surrendering all my land to him. It goes against my own heart

of responsibility. I will not reflect back on the ridicule coming from the moral scholars. I have the resolve of a single man, which is to give over to God my body, my soul, all desires, hopes, loves, and my will. But look—I have just recently begun to obtain a modicum of wealth. All my life I have wanted to get wealth, but have never gained it, only lost—but now I really can get it. If I throw myself away, I can gain myself. The result of giving back my whole self will not endow me with a tenth of the stipend I had formerly received: God, the universe, and eternity have already been given to me.

After returning my territory, my life truly has become one of joy and peace. My duty is simply to await God's command. All good things that I receive are not the fruit of my labor. If God were to bestow on me a year-end bonus of faith, I should be able to accomplish his great demands. Again, God has given me what is worth a hundred times my labor. Concerns over food and clothing are completely absent from my heart. "He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all, how will he not also graciously give us all things?"<sup>550</sup>

This narrative regarding territory, duty, and tribute to God as liege lord is an adaptation of what Luther called the "wonderful exchange"—the exchange of the self and its sin for the work and righteousness of Christ. German theologian Paul Althaus explains,

In faith Christ's work becomes our own. Luther feels that it must be expressed thus: Christ in his love has made himself one with man. Now man in faith makes himself one with Christ. Christ takes everything which is ours, our sin, the agony of our death under the wrath of God and in the power of the devil, upon himself and gives himself and everything which belongs to him, his innocence, his righteousness, and blessedness to us as our very own. This is the 'wonderful exchange.' Faith, however, is the way in which man allows this 'wonderful exchange' to take place in him; through faith he holds himself to it and risks his life on it. Christ says to man, 'Your sin is mine and my innocence is yours.' Faith says to Christ, 'My sin lies on you and your innocence and righteousness belong to me.' Thus this blessed exchange takes place only through faith. Faith is the wedding ring through which Christ's marriage with the soul and therewith the 'wonderful exchange' takes place. Through it Christ and the soul become 'one body' and along with this the sharing of property and of suffering is also effected. Faith is thus a part of reconciliation itself.<sup>551</sup>

Thus, the narrator's attainment of peace comes from exchanging himself and his works for Christ's and becoming one with him in spirit. Rather than being a servant who lives in constant fear of failure, he becomes a free agent that experiences all the benefits of God as his lord. This

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<sup>550</sup> UKZS 2:219

<sup>551</sup> Paul Althaus, *The Theology of Martin Luther* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966), 213.

frees the narrator from his gnawing anxieties: work and duty cease to be drudgery but are instead recreated as free choice. The sense of duty may spur one on to persevere when in distress, but it is not liberating. This, then, allows Uchimura to remark as follows:

He who cries, “Duty, my duty!” is doomed never to complete it. The sense of duty is but a crutch. It puts pressure on the intentions of the will, but utterly destroys the ability to commence. It is just like school. No matter how interesting the coursework or curriculum, when it becomes too overpowering, the sweetness of learning is turned to bitter labor. Or as with undertaking a noble task— when seen as an obligation, the work becomes dry, tasteless slavery. The root cause for the success of those Christian believers who came to do great works is that they have the ambition to do so within their hearts. It is because, before God, their selves are justified, and before man, they have no need for praise and adulation. In the world of commerce, one has success if one can amass great fortunes. If the famous general does not have victory in battle, shall he not fight? For this reason, he yearns for the battlefield and the freedom to act, and in joyous battle he chases the enemy into poverty. Listen, did not Ōishi Kuranosuke storm Kira Kōzukenosuke’s residence?<sup>552</sup> First, he dispatched twenty brave warriors in secret, checked with a servant girl to see if Kira was inside, and all attacked with one accord. When Kira was in the privy, they hacked off his white head. Yet their purpose had long since been in the palm of their hands. From the pent-up anger of years of labor, there was not a single worry within the hearts of these brave warriors. What was death to them? Their intent was clear as they sacrificed their lives. There are no clouds hanging over the moon in the floating world. En garde! (*Iza*) In this one battle, you will have your consolation! Sharpen your blades, take your bow to the spaces between rocks, you now possess the true bravery of the warrior (*kimo*). Spend your bodies for your lord! Let your thoughts be pure as snow and scatter like the spring wind at the break of dawn. Aah, who can resist the edge of the spear of the righteous warrior with no regrets?

Christ said, “Have no fear, I have overcome the world.” (*nenekēla*, Gr. ‘I have conquered,’ present perfect tense). What will the moral scholars and the Unitarians say to the evangelical Christian believer whose great wellspring of peace and courage is the internal present-perfect victory of Christ? Christ has already completed all things for me, on my behalf. My justification is already in heaven with Christ. I have already been purchased through his blood. What I should receive, I have already received from him. Well then, en garde! In repayment of my debt, for the remainder of my lifetime, I shall enjoy the battle.<sup>553</sup>

As in his *How Shall We Attain Great Literature*, Uchimura yet again employs the *Chūshingura* epic as the epitome of bravery, loyalty, and uprightness. But here he adds the sense of freedom

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<sup>552</sup> This refers to the loyal retainers’ planning and execution of their vendetta against Lord Kira, as famously dramatized in *Chūshingura*.

<sup>553</sup> UKZS 2: 220-221

that comes from abandoning the self in order to serve a higher purpose. Uchimura weds the Christian idea of “losing one’s life to save it” with the warrior ethos.<sup>554</sup> Now, the “wonderful exchange” has allowed Uchimura’s narrator to become the warrior-persona he wished to be: free to act without compulsion, free to live a life without guilt and worry, and free to fight one’s battles. The concept of “sacrifice” (as he had envisioned it when entering the seminary) has been transformed into an offering given out of thanksgiving. The earlier motivation of fear and begrudging acceptance of a disagreeable task changes to the sense of eager anticipation to freely choose whichever tasks he sees fit, since the narrator now believes that God is for him, not against him. He surrenders the self in order that he may truly find it.

Uchimura’s narrator struggles with the external pressures of society and the internal pressures of duty, fortitude, and failure. In *How I Became a Christian* and *Consolations of a Christian*, the narrator struggles with these while examining his life experience in order to attest to the self as he has come to understand it. Like Augustine, he holds himself up to the light of what he believes to be God’s truth in order to discover what is true about himself. Now in this text, to find one’s true identity, Uchimura’s narrator must lose it and be given a new one in Christ. He must overcome his own deficient love and allow God’s love to reign in his life. This is his path to paradise.

The very brief final chapter of *The Search for Peace* may seem inconclusive and vague at first glance. Here Uchimura’s narrator observes as follows:

I have come to know the path to attain peace. However, knowing the path to peace surely does not get me onto the path. Faith in Christ is salvation, but again, faith in Christ is a gift from God (Ephesians 2:8). I believe, and not only am I saved, I am caused to believe and caused to be saved. I have become enlightened

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<sup>554</sup> This concept is found in Luke 9:23-24: “And [Jesus] said to all, ‘If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it.’”

to the fact that I have no power to save myself. As this is so, what then shall I do? I will simply ask God alone for faith. Christian believers must pray without ceasing; their lives are a singular prayer. Because they are not yet perfected, they must continue to pray. Even if they cannot pray well, they must pray. Those who are blessed must pray, those who are cursed must pray. I shall pray for those who are raised to the highest heavens, and those who descend into the depths of the underworld (*yomi*). I who have no power, *all I can do is pray*.

“But what am I?

An infant crying in the night

An infant crying for the light

With no language but a cry”<sup>555</sup>

### **The Wonderful Exchange**

Uchimura’s narrator declares his lack of agency and inability to effect salvation and seems unsure that he will actually find himself on the “path of peace.” However, in light of the “wonderful exchange,” this admission of having “little power” is appropriate: he has taken all of the blame and all of the duty off of himself and transferred them to the heavenly other. He has received faith, will continue to ask for more faith, and will pray for the faith of others, that they too may find peace. Instead of soaring with Dante among the inner-spheres of heaven and catching a glimpse of God himself, he prays both for those who rise up to heaven and for those who would descend into the inferno; he himself, it would seem, has not actually left *Purgatorio*. However, for an individual living in the modern world, he still must struggle with the demands of one’s mundane existence. But through faith and a new self that fully relies on God, he can endure.

The final poem he cites is “In Memoriam A.H.H.,” which Tennyson wrote in his grief over the death of a friend. Tennyson, too, grapples with finding peace through religious faith but still has doubts. He cannot find that deep conviction; humans cannot really know anything, and

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<sup>555</sup> UKZS 2: 249

what will happen at his own death? Having judged that his faith is a dream, the poet concludes as follows:

Behold, we know not anything;  
I can but trust that good shall fall  
At last — far off — at last, to all,  
And every winter change to spring.

So runs my dream: but what am I?  
An infant crying in the night:  
An infant crying for the light:  
And with no language but a cry.

Uchimura's coda may at first glance appear pessimistic and unsatisfying. However, there is another avenue of interpretation here.

In his "Sunday Afternoon in Spring," the concluding episode of Natsume Sōseki's *Within My Glass Doors* collection of personal essays (1915), the noted author observed:

Someone has remarked that however thoroughly we read the classics of confessional literature—Augustine, Rousseau, de Quincy—in the final analysis, ultimate truth is beyond the capacity of human expression. Far be it from me to regard my own work as 'confession.' My sin—if it's proper to speak of it as such—is in having cast my shortcomings in an excessively positive light. Some may not be pleased with this. But I've risen above this. Looking out upon the great expanse of humanity, I can only smile. And as I cast the same gaze upon myself, the author of these trifling accounts, it's as though someone else had written them all. And I can only smile.

The nightingale continues to chirp in the bushes. The spring breeze occasionally stirs the leaves of the orchid, as though remembering to do so. The cat sleeps peacefully, exposing the wound on its head to the healing rays of the sun. The children, who had been playing around in the garden with their balloons, have all gone off to the movie theater. The house is still and hushed, as is my spirit. And so I open wide the glass doors, and bathed in the quiet light of the spring, and in a mood of quiet rapture, I bring this work to a close. And when it's done, I will lie down here on the veranda and take a nap. (*Garasudo* 39, 1915)<sup>556</sup>

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<sup>556</sup> Translated by Marvin H. Marcus in *Reflections in a Glass Door* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2009), 154.

Sōseki ends his series of reflections by recognizing that, as with earlier writers of confessional accounts, he is unable to express ultimate truth. No one really is. His narrator sees the futility of trying to confess anything and the difficulty of putting one's experiences in a coherent form. By this he suggests that all of us possess our stories and the need to make sense of that which we experience. And when one's reflections come to an end, life itself continues. Sōseki finds solace in this moment of tranquility and peace of mind, and moved by its soothing embrace, he prepares to rest.

By way of comparison, Uchimura likens himself to an infant crying in the night. Infants have no power, no agency, and they cry for their parents, seeking food and comfort in the night. Uchimura connects this "crying" to his prayer for faith and for others. Implicit here is that his parent, God, will respond and see to his needs. As with Sōseki's nap, the infant sleeps knowing the peace that will come after one's needs are addressed. Both narrators are admitting to their inability to fathom life's mysteries, and they leave it to the reader, to the metaphysical "others," to conjure the meaning of their words.

Finally, Uchimura's use of Tennyson's image of the infant crying in the night is akin to Luther's famous words, written just before his death: "Wir sind alle bettler, hoc est verum"—"We are all beggars, this is true." The Luther of the "wonderful exchange" believed the effects of this exchange to be true until the end. He had nothing to give to his salvation, nothing to offer to God, but God exchanged all he had and took on Luther's own poverty. In *The Search for Peace*, this same idea motivates Uchimura's narrator: to find the self, one must lose it; to find strength and will, one must surrender it; and to find peace, one must yearn for faith and cry out for it, like an infant. This is decidedly not a pessimistic or vague sentiment. It means that Uchimura's

narrator found peace in regarding himself as a child, a beggar, unable to do other than expect good things from God. He no longer had to face up to duty and expectation and the failure to achieve one's goals. Rather, he could trust God to do the work for him. The pride of Uchimura's narrator gave way to humility as he admitted he could not rely on the self he had so carefully constructed. The only answer was to "shed" the ego and embrace a Christian identity that required total reliance on God.



# Conclusion:

## A Life Bravely Lived, Out into the World

Upon the completion of his trilogy, Uchimura Kanzō ceased writing explicitly confessional literature. The initial public reception of his personal narratives seems to have frustrated him, and he appears to have lost the desire to produce more of the same. In December of 1893, he wrote to his American friend and benefactor that:

My book MS. [*How I Became a Christian*] is ready-- has been ready for three weeks--but the Spirit within me says, Wait. I have written so much about my personal experiences this year, and have had them so rudely handled by the indiscriminating editors of both religious and secular papers, that I have now no courage left to expose more of myself, at least for some time.<sup>557</sup>

After its initial publication, *How I Became a Christian* received strong criticism from the *Japan Daily Mail*, which had a demoralizing effect.<sup>558</sup> However, upon the publication of the American version of this work, his spirits were somewhat buoyed by its unexpectedly successful sales and glowing reviews. As a result of his growing audience abroad, foreign missionaries began to seek him out for interviews and wanted to learn more about his perspective, rather than attempting to reinforce Western missiological principles.

After this period of self-writing drew to a close, Uchimura turned his attention to a diverse set of topics, ranging from comparative geography and divine providence in history (*Reflections on Geography, Chirigaku ko*, 1894) to missiology (*The True Spirit of Christian Ministry, Dendō no seishin*, 1894). In addition to his Great Literature essays (1894-1895), he

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<sup>557</sup> 12/14/1893, to Dr. David Bell, UKZS 36: 385.

<sup>558</sup> However, he benefitted from the English editorial support of Mary Nitobe, and his second edition was the version sent to Fleming Revell for publication in America. According to Uchimura's letters, this version, despite Mr. Revell's initial hesitation to publish it due to its heavy-handed criticism of American Christianity, sold quite well.

turned to explaining the Japanese moral character and virtues for Western readers (*Japan and the Japanese/Representative Men of Japan*<sup>559</sup> 1895). He eventually turned as well to political and social criticism. However, true to his interpretation of Goethe and Carlyle, he continued to weave his life experience and deeply-held beliefs as he attested to his selfhood in these newer works.

From 1894 onwards, as evidenced in his essays and articles addressing the nation, Uchimura found resolution to the ‘anomie’ (as Howes puts it) of the autobiographical trilogy. In the years that followed the publication of his trilogy, he once again began to engage society and the world. Uchimura’s ongoing lectures and publications bear witness to his having achieved a convincingly cohesive narrative, together with the sense of agency he had sought. No longer was he living a life turned inward; he now focused on the outward life. This newfound sense of *jiga* gained expression as a public intellectual, lecturer, and respected author.

In Kyoto, he established a “Monday School,” akin to a Christian version of the Tokugawa-era Confucian *juku* academy, where he gave lectures on a variety of religious and historical topics from a pointedly Christian point of view. This would become the model for later Biblical Studies Society meetings—the main intellectual and social gathering for Christians who were part of the *mukyōkai* movement. There, he began to attract students for the first time since failing as an educator.<sup>560</sup> As of March 1896, this school had become quite successful and

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<sup>559</sup> The second edition of this work, *Representative Men of Japan*, is an homage to Emerson, whose well-known *Representative Men* had inspired Uchimura. It is worth noting that this work, which preceded his friend Nitobe’s *Bushidō: The Soul of Japan* by two years, and Okakura’s *Book of Tea* by eight, was the first attempt by a Japanese to address Western audiences and attest to what the author believed to be “great” or noteworthy about Japan. This was at a time when racial essentialism was still an acceptable position. Uchimura’s thinking in the 1890s combined essentialist ideas with teleological concepts of history based on his view that the West enjoyed God’s special blessing in history, and that providence now allowed the small nation of Japan to maintain its sovereignty and challenge the evolving world order.

<sup>560</sup> Writing in English, Uchimura explained that

generated a good source of income for Uchimura, gaining for him a certain degree of acclaim in Kyoto.<sup>561</sup> He continued to lecture in this format, but as time went on he was invited to teach at a Christian summer institute, lecture at a Christian school in Kumamoto, as well as to deliver public lectures, such as his summer lecture at a YMCA retreat in Hakone entitled “The Greatest Legacy for Future Generations” (*Kōsei e no saidai ibutsu*, 1894, published in 1897).

This essay, along with *Japan and the Japanese*, became (and would continue to be) one of Uchimura’s best-selling works. In this humorous and self-deprecating lecture, Uchimura argues that failure is acceptable, and that the greatest thing people can contribute to the future of society is “a live bravely lived.” In addition, he reiterated his view that the role of literature (*bungaku*) is to transmit our thoughts and the details of our bravely-lived lives as a legacy for future generations.<sup>562</sup> Suzuki Norihisa notes that Uchimura’s lecture became akin to a “*Kindai*

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... I recently opened what I call a ‘Monday-school of Christian Doctrine.’ In order to have only a select few in my class, I chose specially this busiest day in the week, and tuition of 50 cents per capita for a term of three months! Never was Christianity preached in such a fashion in this country! But such arrangements were imperative, seeing that with the spread of my name (you will kindly allow me such an expression) so many rabblies (sic) are thronging to me for the sake of mere curiosity. I usually have over-full meetings whenever I advertise my preachings (sic) in this city. But I always feel miserable after addressing such an audience. A fee and scheduling for Monday evening at 6:30 *sharp* has reduced the number to about 20, and I am perfectly satisfied.

... After all, this life is worth living. [Suggesting perhaps that Uchimura was indeed considering suicide as he had discussed in *Consolations*]. There are more sorrows than joys only to the unchristian and the reprobate. With my Greek New Testament, a set of Carlyle, and a little income supplied by a bookseller in this city sufficient to procure us rice and sweet potatoes and meat thrice a week, I am (sic) happy contented man.” (Letter to David Bell, 2/14/1895. UKZS 36: 428-429).

<sup>561</sup> ‘My Monday-school was closed the week before last. The total number of pupils,--19. The “gross earnings”,--9 yen 50 sen, and the “net income” to the lecturer---8 yen 79 sen=\$4.8125 in U. S. Gold. A splendid pay for a course of twelve lectures extending over the course of three months!’ (UKZS 36: 436 Letter to David Bell, 3/18/1896).

<sup>562</sup> Shōgakkān’s second edition of the *Nihon kokugo daijiten* presents a quote from this speech as an example of what constitutes *bungaku*: “I am certain that *bungaku* is the tool for transmitting the core thoughts we hold most dear to future generations” 「文学といふものは我々に心に常に抱いて居るところの思想を後世に伝へる道具に相違いない。」

Bible” of sorts for Meiji youth. In this work of “*Shippai gaku*” or “learning from failure,” Uchimura encourages those young people who could not live up to the prevailing credo of ambitionism—*risshin shusse*— to live according to their principles and take risks to do important things. According to Suzuki, this work inspired a diverse group of intellectuals, authors, scientists, and politicians to live boldly and produce great results.<sup>563</sup>

Uchimura’s convincingly authentic voice and his exhortation to stay true to one’s values while embracing failure clearly resonated with younger members of the *bundan*. At the same time, however, Uchimura’s exhortations to bold action became an inspiration for youth to persist despite failure and setbacks, rather than bask in abjection and ineffectuality. In a way, like Shimazaki Tōson, Uchimura did have family problems and agonized over the results of his messy divorce, but stopped short of risking his family to advance his literary career. And unlike Mori Ōgai, he did not maintain a detached, clinical distance from his experiences. He produced authentic expressions of frustration and despair as he wrestled with his faith. His rejection of future glory and his “bravely lived life” were the means by which he extracted himself from his guilt and alienation. These are but a few reasons that Uchimura’s works began to resonate with a readership that extended beyond the small Christian community.

Interestingly enough, not long after their initial publishing runs, sales of Uchimura’s books began to swell; by 1894 a second edition of *Kyūanroku* was being published, and he received editorial help from Mary Nitobe for his revised edition of *How I Became a Christian*.

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<sup>563</sup> Suzuki lists prominent figures of the Meiji era who, while not disciples of Uchimura, were inspired by his lecture to undertake great works. These include botanist Ōga Ichirō (1883-1965), who developed the Ōga waterlily (*hasu*), Aoyama Akira (1878-1963), the only Japanese to work on the Panama Canal project, Kyoto School philosopher Nishida Kitarō (1870-1945), playwright and Shakespeare translator Kinoshita Junji (1914-2006), and many more. See Suzuki Norihisa. *Kindai no Baiburu: Uchimura Kanzō no “Kōsei e no saidai ibutsu” wa dono yō ni yomarete kita ka?* (Tokyo: Kyobunkan, 2011), 6.

Some Europeans began to translate Uchimura's work into foreign languages—he mentioned that a Dutch gentleman from Nagasaki had already translated *Japan and the Japanese* into Dutch. And by the summer of 1894, Uchimura remarked to Bell that “my Japanese books are now being scattered over Corea (sic), China, and Formosa, and are doing *their* mission work among the poor soldiers camping there.”<sup>564</sup> All of this activity finally rescued him from the poverty he so desperately lamented in the pages of *Consolations of a Christian*.<sup>565</sup>

However, as a public intellectual, Uchimura was occasionally taken to task by his critics: Now that the September Equinox is near, literary hacks must return to their business. My last essay in Kokumin-no-Tomo on *Naze ni daibungaku wa idezaru ya* has called forth lots of criticisms. (sic) I am now taken as an extremely proud, egotistic (sic) man, which I own is true to certain extent. Often pressed for money, I am compelled to pour out my bile as it is, *undiluted*, and often repent about it afterward.<sup>566</sup>

Uchimura's *Justification for the Corean [sic] War* bolstered his reputation among the nationalists, but puzzled his Christian readership. First published in *Kokumin no tomo* (August 1894), this essay helped launch his career as a serious commentator, garnering for him a new national recognition and distancing him from the derision of Inoue and others. Getting published in *Kokumin no tomo* “had gained him a position equivalent to that accorded the author of a lead article in the *New Yorker*. He had at last become known and had contacts.” (Howes, 128) In this essay, Uchimura argues that, as of old, there are times when “righteous wars” should be fought.

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<sup>564</sup> UKZS 36.421. And later, according to Masaike Megumu, after Uchimura turned to pacifism during the Russo-Japanese war, the influence of his pacifist writings led a certain Japanese naval officer to dive off of his ship into the waters to rescue drowning Russian soldiers at the Battle of Tsushima. See Takahashi Yasuhiro, “Uchimura Kanzō and his Pacifism”, 63 n3.

<sup>565</sup> It seems that Uchimura found some joy in his new endeavors, especially his intellectual pursuits. Throughout 1895, he devoured the collected works of Carlyle and incorporated Carlyle references into his lectures and articles. Quoting Carlyle from his correspondence with Emerson in a letter to Dr. Bell, he writes: “Books are lasting things; Lectures are like corn ground into flour; there are loaves for to-day, but no wheat harvests for next year.---Books too are a triviality. Life alone is great; with its infinite spaces, its everlasting times, with its Death, with its Heaven and its Hell, Ah me!” (UKZS 36: 421).

<sup>566</sup> UKZS 36: 423, to Nitobe Inazō, 9/8/1895.

He believed that Japan was truly going to liberate Korea from the Qing and assist in its modernization process. He believed that Japan was acting out of a “brotherly regard” for its neighbor, that Japan had been insulted by China over Korea for too long, and that no Western power would have endured the treatment Japan had received from China. Believing that Japan has a role to play in the progress of history, he enthusiastically promoted its actions on the world stage.

Still, as the war continued and the aims of the government became clear, Uchimura came to regret his turn toward imperialism and recanted his defense of the government. It is hard to reconcile Uchimura’s initial support for violence and colonial activity with his subsequent embrace of pacifism.<sup>567</sup> Despite his many criticisms of the West, the “might makes right” stance of the Western powers, and the patronizing stance of Western missionaries, prior to the Sino-Japanese War Uchimura still appears to have regarded the West as the special beneficiary of God’s providence and approval.<sup>568</sup> He would again have to “repent” for his egoism. In 1896, he published what amounted to a somewhat reluctant retraction of his pro-Government bellicosity in the form of “Observations of the Times” (*Jisei no Kansatsu*, in *Kokumin no tomo*, August 1896).

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<sup>567</sup> According to John Howes, Uchimura’s support of the war is perhaps indicative of the fact that, at that time, he experienced an “...implicit confusion of approval from the Western powers with the expression of God’s will. Japan could have acted as a tool in God’s scheme of history without their approval. In fact, his analogy that Japan’s action demonstrated the small progressive power in battle with entrenched conservatism might have held equally true in an attack on the West. But at this juncture in his development, his personal psychic needs required Uchimura to identify God with the actions of the nations that seemed to personify his will.” (Howes, *Japan’s Modern Prophet*, 129).

<sup>568</sup> Regarding the contradictions resulting from Uchimura’s *Justification for the Korean War*, John Howes comments that “No single item in Uchimura’s corpus has damaged his reputation more than this “justification.” The pacifist works that Uchimura wrote ten years later, just before the Russo-Japanese War, include some of the most outspoken in Japanese history. Any researcher has difficulty when attempting to reconcile these later statements against war with Uchimura’s fervent acceptance of this particular war” (Howes, 128).

While it is indeed difficult to reconcile his later positions with those of his “justification,” Uchimura’s Carlylian “Observations of the Times” underscores the maturation of his views and the flowering of his spirit of independence. Uchimura’s devotion to and close reading of Scottish essayist Thomas Carlyle’s works of history and social criticism during this period considerably influenced his thinking; *Observations on the Times* was an attempt to produce his own version of Carlyle’s *Signs of the Times* in its criticism of the political culture of the day. This rather long but popular essay was for him:

... A kind of Jeremiad upon the recent state of affairs of our corrupt society. It took our reading public by storm. The first edition of about 15,000 copies was sold on the day of publication, and in the city of Tokio, a single copy of it was sold for 20 cts. the day after, the regular price being 6 cts. Every paper gave its opinion of my essay, and contrary to my expectations not a single voice of dissent from my observations was raised against me. The papers and reviews that used to be always antagonistic to Christianity and me, now endorsed my views. My friends think I avenged by this essay of mine all the wrongs my countrymen heaped upon me during the past 6 or 7 years.<sup>569</sup>

Echoing his essays on “great literature,” Uchimura criticizes the *bundan* for not producing works of ethics, or for that matter, not putting any value on creating works of literary merit. For his first major point (*Kōtoku to shitoku no bunri*), Uchimura stresses that Japan does not have the ethical capacity for “greatness.” (Howes 130) He criticizes the unjust behavior that marked the personal lives of government officials, claiming that they cannot lead since they are so corrupt. The people themselves countenance such behavior, since they follow their leaders.<sup>570</sup>

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<sup>569</sup> Letter to David Bell, 9/4/1896. UKZS 36: 449. Uchimura began to read Jeremiah during his stay in Elwyn, Pennsylvania, and it became one of his favorite books of the Bible. Uchimura identified with Jeremiah throughout his lifetime, and from 1896 onward he sought to become a prophet for Japan, much like the Hebrew prophets of old, calling attention to social ills and demanding repentance.

<sup>570</sup> Using Confucian argumentation, he remarks: “... When the war is over... all the people busy themselves in the celebration of victory: when they go bottoms up with tens of thousands of bottles of beer, slaughter hundreds of cattle, and think of killing Chinese soldiers in terms of a wild boar hunt... If the Japanese are men of benevolence and righteousness, why do they not

His second major point (in the section, *Kokumin no zaiaku to sono kenchiku mono*) builds on the first: it is owing to their education and training that people cannot act in an ethical manner. For Uchimura, in the end, all societal problems and perceived lack of progress can be traced to a lack of authentic ethical and religious values. He ends this essay as follows:

Since there are many who exalt and expand the statist lies, ethics with Japanese characteristics simply do not exist. There can be no “Japanese” religion. *The truth is greater than the state. Those who do not follow and obey the truth only make use of the truth for their own aims, and in the end, become cast-off children of the truth. Japanese people labor to make use of religion but surely hate to be directed by it. For this reason, their concept of religion is completely bankrupt.*

In what may Japan find reason to boast? There is nothing that we have that the world does not possess. The people of this world have much that we do not. Japan does not have major world religions like the Jewish or the Indian people, nor does it have the great literature of the Greeks. It does not have the robust legal code of the Romans, and has not produced the explorers of Spain. It has not fought for the political freedom of its people, as did Holland. Japan does not have the majestic mountains of Peru, nor have we the wide-open plains of Russia. Aah, in what shall we take pride? In the grandeur of the scenery of the eastern mountains? In the features of the beautiful women of the eastern seas?<sup>571</sup>

For his “Observations of the Times” essay, *Kokumin no tomo* paid Uchimura fifty yen, a tidy sum. From this point on, he gained a reputation as political commentator. For this reason, in addition to his English language proficiency and overall knowledge of the West, the publisher of *Yorozu Chōhō*, the newspaper that criticized both foreigners and the Meiji government alike, invited Uchimura to move to Tokyo and join its staff as English-language editor and critic, guaranteeing him a steady income.<sup>572</sup> Thus, in 1897 Uchimura returned to Tokyo, where he would stay until his death in 1930. Uchimura remained with *Yorozu* until 1903, when he left due to irreconcilable differences regarding the paper’s editorial stance, the point being that *Yorozu*

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respect and honor the Chinese? Why do they not devote themselves to the leadership of Korea? (Translation: John Howes, 130).

<sup>571</sup> UKZS 3: 258-9.

<sup>572</sup> Howes, 134.



had turned to the right and lent its support to the Russo-Japanese War. Henceforth, Uchimura left the sphere of public political commentary. Instead, he turned to the journals he had started while at *Yorozu: Tokyo Independent Magazine* and *The Biblical Study*. In addition, he continued his *juku* meetings and focused on the training of his cohort of students.

### **Uchimura Sensei**

While there is no space here to list their names and accomplishments, Uchimura's students and disciples would go on to play important roles in literary, educational, and political spheres. Many came to him from top-ranked Tokyo institutions.<sup>573</sup> Others were attracted to him due to his writings in *Yorozu* and the *Tokyo Independent*. Some were young literary aspirants—most notably, Arishima Takeo (1878-1923), Osanai Kaoru (1881-1928), Masamune Hakuchō (1879-1962), Mushakōji Saneatsu (1885-1976) and Shiga Naoya (1883-1971).<sup>574</sup> Others were academics, like Yanaihara Tadao (1893-1961) and Nambara Shigeru (1889-1974).<sup>575</sup> Still others

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<sup>573</sup> Nitobe, who had become principle of the First-Higher Middle School, sent Uchimura many prospective students.

<sup>574</sup> Uchimura exerted a strong influence on the *Shirakaba-ha* (White Birth coterie) authors, although they would eventually strike out on their own. Uchimura would expel others who supported them. Insofar as he maintained a strict focus on Christian doctrine—especially from the legalist perspective—these young people, who struggled with passion and sexual desire, were put to shame before Uchimura and wrote of their inability to live up to his expectations. This became especially clear in Osanai Kaoru's serialized I-novel, "*The Apostate*." Shiga also wrote of the mentorship of "U-Sensei" regarding his marital problems, in *Ōtsu Junkichi*. For more on Shiga's relationship with Uchimura and his personal life as reflected in *Ōtsu Junkichi*, see Shibuya Hiroshi (40) and Yamanouchi Hisaaki, *The Search for Authenticity in Modern Japanese Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978, p 84), and Maya Mortimer, *Meeting the Sensei: The Role of the Master in Shirakaba Writers* (Leiden: Brill, 2000, p 90). Also, on the troubles Uchimura experienced in teaching and retaining *deshi* who would represent him well, see John Howes' "Maturing Vipers," in *Japan's Modern Prophet*, 345ff. (Uchimura had compared the danger and fear of having unpredictable disciples to hatching vipers' eggs.)

<sup>575</sup> Nambara and Yanaihara served as president of Tokyo University, from 1945-1948 and 1951-1957, respectively. Nambara also was a member of the House of Peers in 1946 and consulted on the postwar constitution of 1947, and he served as chair of the Education Reform Council in 1947. In addition, one of the *deshi* whom Uchimura expelled for sympathizing with Arishima's departure, Tanaka Kōtarō (1890-1974), became the first chief justice of Japan's Supreme Court under the postwar constitution. After his departure from Uchimura's circle, Tanaka joined the

like Fujii Takeshi (1888-1930) and Tsukamoto Toraji (1885-1973) became learned evangelists, while Tsukamoto and Yanaihara continued the legacy of the *mukyōkai* meetings after Uchimura's death. In addition to their advocacy of an independent Christianity, Uchimura's disciples also maintained a strong pacifist position of resistance throughout the Pacific War.<sup>576</sup> After his death, having left no named successor to his movement, many of Uchimura's *deshi* produced personal memoirs of their time with Uchimura and continued in his footsteps. There were many encomiums and reminiscences; some praise and revere their *sensei* (for instance, Tsukamoto's *Uchimura Kanzō sensei to watashi*), while others recall their initial attraction to, and subsequent disillusionment with, Uchimura— for instance, Masamune Hakuchō's *Wa ga shōgai to bungaku* (*My life and literature*) and Shiga Naoya's *Uchimura Kanzō sensei no omoide* (*My Recollections of Uchimura Sensei*). Hakuchō sought to explain the contradictions of Uchimura— how significant a literary figure he was despite his professed “hatred” of drama and fiction. Shiga remarks that he was far more interested in Uchimura's character and mentorship than in the man's literary works. This high regard eventuated in Shiga's seven-year period of study with Uchimura.

### **Uchimura Kanzō's Enduring Legacy**

Uchimura's legacy is multi-faceted and broad. Foremost are his contributions to literature, intellectual and philosophical inquiry, the spirit of independence, and his inspirational stature

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Roman Catholic church. In addition, Nambara became the mentor of Maruyama Masao, renowned political scientist and historian of Japanese thought. Thus, Maruyama was a *magodeshi*— a disciple once-removed— of Uchimura's. See Howes, 347.

<sup>576</sup> These included Yanaihara Tadao, Suzuki Sukeyoshi, and Asami Sensaku, “who went further from their mentor's position, engaged in resistance to Japanese militarism, and were persecuted by the military regime during WWII.” See Takahashi Yasuhiro, “Uchimura Kanzō and his Pacifism” in Shibuya and Chiba, eds., *Living for Jesus and Japan: The Social and Theological Thought of Uchimura Kanzō* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2013), 63 n7.

among Japanese Christians from many denominations. This impressive range is clear in Japanese scholarship on Uchimura and his treatment by the national media in the present day.

Most recently— in 2012 and again in 2016— NHK (*Nihon Hōsō Kyōkai*, the government-run public broadcasting outlet) produced special features on Uchimura as part of two different series on Japan’s intellectual history. The 2012 feature and its accompanying book (“What have the Japanese come to think: Taishō edition, “An advanced country,” Japan’s future path”)<sup>577</sup> explores the lives of Uchimura Kanzō, Nitobe Inazō, and Yanagita Kunio. In the section on Uchimura, the feature examines his samurai background, his conversion to Christianity, and how Uchimura arrived at his pacifist position in response to the war with Russia.

The second NHK feature, broadcast in January of 2016, focused on Uchimura in the context of its “Masterpieces in 100 Minutes” (*Hyappun de no meicho*) series. In the episode (and accompanying book) entitled *All Live into ‘Eternity’* (*Hito wa mina ‘eien’ wo ikiru*), Uchimura is reintroduced to the NHK viewership by way of presenting how he had endeavored to embody the values of the five figures he had discussed in his *Daihyōteki Nihonjin* (*Representative Men of Japan*). The 2016 feature also stressed Uchimura’s ideal of a life bravely lived resonating into the future, and how the spirit of his *Last Testament for Future Generations* still speaks to a post-Fukushima (3/11) Japan. This book, along with Nitobe’s *Bushidō*, continues to sell well in Japan.<sup>578</sup>

In 2007, Dōmon Fuyuji released *Uchimura Kanzō no “Daihyōteki Nihonjin”* (*Uchimura Kanzō’s “Representative Men of Japan”*).<sup>579</sup> This volume seeks to explain Uchimura’s biographical sketches to the current generation, while also including the author’s thoughts on

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<sup>577</sup> Nihon hōsō kyōkai, *Nihonjin wa nani wo kangete kita: Taishō hen, “ittō koku,” Nihon no kiro* (Tokyo: NHK Shuppan, 2012).

<sup>578</sup> Howes, *Japan’s Modern Prophet*, 112.

<sup>579</sup> Tokyo: PHP, 2007.

how important it is for Japan to recognize eminent figures of the past and find ways to emulate their social agenda. Winner of the 43<sup>rd</sup> Akutagawa Prize, Dōmon is known for works that focus on history and human suffering. At age 17, he was confronted with the fear of death. He first read *Daihyōteki Nihonjin* in the months immediately before the end of the Pacific War, after he had been recruited to join the *tokkōtai*— the notorious “*Kamikaze*” suicide squadron. When the war ended, Dōmon went on to become a successful businessman, eventually rising to the level of division chief (*buchō*) of his company.

In comparison with Mori Ōgai’s treatment of Tokugawa era “paragons” of Confucian virtue, where he points to the excesses and bloodlust of the warrior class on the one hand, and their dutiful and dedicated service on the other hand, Uchimura, in *Representative Men of Japan*, constructs his paragons as not only worthy of emulation, but also having been true to their values and directed by their individuality and independence. Uchimura personally resonated with the moral character of the figures he selected; this is abundantly clear for readers of his text. As evidence of his hybrid value system (the values of Christianity built upon the root of *bushidō*), he venerates the historical figures who rejected the worst aspects of society and promoted what he saw as the best in Japan’s past. These figures are archetypes for the type of reformer Uchimura wished to become. As evidenced by the recent treatment of his work, Uchimura’s spirit of independence, selective recombination of Christian and samurai ethics into a modern Japanese context and his passionate embrace of self-reliance point to the enduring appeal of his *Representative Men of Japan*.

Finally, in 2015, a new Japanese translation of *How I Became a Christian* (entitled *Boku wa ikani shite Kirisuto kyōto ni natta ka*) was released by Kōbunsha as part of its *Koten*

*shin'yaku* (New Translations of Literary Classics) series.<sup>580</sup> The translator, Kōno Junji, is well-known for his translations of non-fiction works. This new translation of Uchimura's work has been received with much acclaim.<sup>581</sup>

### **Concluding Remarks**

In this dissertation, I have revisited the Japanese intellectual climate of the 1880s and 1890s, seeking to knit together prominent threads of discourse that marked the Meiji intellectual, philosophical, and religious scene. I have discussed problems related to modernization, the alienation that comes from the inexorable spread of modern urban civilization, competing literary trends, and the quest for authenticity and interiority that concerned important literary figures. Within this context, I have compared Uchimura's drive for "the ultimate good" (God) with that of Kitamura Tōkoku and explored how Uchimura and Mori Ōgai underwent similar transformative experiences in the West. Both were scientists and both wrote about the self and the interface of self-expression and the modern condition. I also examined Uchimura's style, how his works were received, and key figures with whom Uchimura debated and interacted. In sum, I have pointed to a network of connections that Uchimura established with the Meiji *bundan*. But most significantly, I have interrogated his unique role as a social critic, a man of faith, a modern-day prophet, and a deeply sensitive and principled individual.

Rather than focus on Uchimura's position as a religious figure or social activist, I have sought to explore Uchimura's spiritual quest as he constructed his Japanese and Christian identity vis-à-vis his autobiographical works. With the trilogy that forms the crux of this

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<sup>580</sup> This new translation makes the text more accessible to a contemporary audience, insofar as Suzuki Toshio's 1935 translation of *How I Became a Christian* was written in a difficult classical style. It bears noting that translations appropriate to successive generations have been produced. Yamamoto Taijiro's was published in 1955, and Suzuki Norihisa's was published in 1972.

<sup>581</sup> <http://www.sankei.com/life/news/150419/lif1504190026-n1.html>.

dissertation, we are introduced to the reflections of a sensitive and fragile soul who questioned the faith and superstitions of his youth, who agonized over failed ventures, endured disease and poverty, and contended with rejection by the state, his religious peers, and his closest friends, and who turned to personal narrative to ruminate upon these experiences. What resulted was a body of literature that both illuminates the self and offers instruction and inspiration for readers in similar circumstances.

Through these three works, I have explored Uchimura's hybrid literary connections between Japan and the West, highlighting how he crafted a personal voice capable of interacting with both traditions. In line with Tomi Suzuki and Karatani Kōjin and their respective studies of interiority, I have sought to reexamine the concept of the Japanese *kindai jiga* and to explain how Uchimura's personal voice negotiated the complex modern context of Japan at the turn of the twentieth century. Here he engaged the same questions and challenges that beset other Meiji authors, but from a different perspective. Referring to the concept of the *idem* and *ipse* selves and the utopia/ideology dialectics of Paul Ricoeur, I have discussed how Uchimura's narrator finds agency once he is able to navigate the framework of both Japanese and Western values, to create a cohesive narrative that makes sense of personal experience, and then finally to discover a rationale for 'exiting' the interior world and establish a *modus vivendi* with the world outside of himself.<sup>582</sup> Relying on faith in God alone, the narrator continues to cast off the overweeningly prideful ego, finding surcease from his sin-consciousness, no longer needing to dwell upon his failures, managing to live a principled life with confidence and conviction.

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<sup>582</sup> Uchimura's rationale resembles that of Augustine and Luther and their conceptualization of a life that is turned inward, *incurvatus in se*, and how this self-absorbed spiritual life prohibits action on the behalf of others.

Unlike noteworthy Meiji literary protagonists such as Sōseki's Sensei in *Kokoro*, Uchimura's narrator is freed from the cycle of self-recrimination and ineffectuality. However, like later authors of I-novels, his agenda can be seen as one of attempting to creating sincere works through the representation and reordering of lived experience. He reconstructs his experiences in his texts to make sense of his actions and his suffering. Grounded in spiritual reflection, Uchimura's narrator attests to the hybrid self that emerges from a bifurcated identity that embraces disparate aspects of Japan and the West and incorporates them into a coherent narrative. Engaging in somewhat tedious, self-indulgent exposition of personal inadequacies and pathologies, Uchimura strove to relate his lived experience in order to attest to his beliefs. Here he could be said to emulate the gravity and integrity that marked the writings of Tokugawa *bunjin* such as Arai Hakuseki and Yamaga Sokō. Emerging from his season of reflection, Uchimura's actions in the world strongly suggest that he had constructed an identity that allowed him to continue to attest to the *idem* self forged in the fires of his failures and spiritual angst.

Although Uchimura is regarded as an important cultural and intellectual figure in Japan, his works are still largely unexplored in American academia. I have greatly benefited from the outstanding scholarly work of John Howes and Suzuki Norihisa. In particular, conversations with Professor Howes were instrumental in moving me along the path that has led to this dissertation.

Nonetheless, considering the man's stature, together with the fact of his impressive forty-volume collected works, the proverbial book has by no means been closed on Uchimura Kanzō. Many avenues of study remain open. As for myself, one thing that I have come to realize in the course of this study is how intimately connected Uchimura was with the people and issues that animated his intellectual and cultural milieu. Hence, one area that begs further investigation is the relationships he had with his literary colleagues and disciples, how they remembered him,

and how they responded to Uchimura the man and came to understand— and be inspired by— his writing. In addition, I would like to further explore the enduring impact of Uchimura’s writings, especially in contemporary Japan. Here, the tools of digital humanities offer promising avenues of exploration.

Another enticing area of interest is to research and catalog the copious marginalia located in Uchimura’s library, currently housed at the University of Hokkaidō. Here, too, digital resources would help reveal what Uchimura was reading at key junctures, how he read and understood certain works, and what range of influence they exerted on him. Yet another area concerns Uchimura Kanzō’s pioneering role as a modern Japanese author writing in English. Of interest here would be a comparison of Uchimura’s *How I Became a Christian* with other important English-language works— most prominently, Okakura’s *Book of Tea*, Nitobe’s *Bushidō*, and Tamura Naoomi’s *Japanese Bride*.

Finally, insofar as I have translated a number of previously untranslated chapters of *The Search for Peace* and *Consolations of a Christian*, moving forward with annotated translations of these works— which would include theological explanations and biographical details concerning the literary and historical personae Uchimura referenced— is something that I am considering.

I should mention in conclusion that this study has been limited to a small number of Uchimura’s literary works published during the 1890s. Uchimura Kanzō, though, was active throughout the Taishō era (1912-1926) until his death in 1930. As John Howes, Suzuki Norihisa, and some present-day members of the *Mukyōkai* explained to me when we met, little attention has been paid to Uchimura’s important study of the atonement in the New Testament book of



Romans, which can be seen as the culmination of his earlier work.<sup>583</sup> They all encouraged me to examine this work in light of my current project as a future research project. Taking all of this into account, I am confident that this study is but the beginning of what promises to be a rich field of inquiry for years to come.



**Figure 5. Stamps from the Japanese postal service’s Cultural Figures stamp series (文化人, 1954) Top row: Mori Ōgai, Natsume Sōseki, Hishida Shunsō. Bottom row: Uchimura Kanzō, Noguchi Hideo, and Fukuzawa Yukichi.<sup>584</sup>**

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<sup>583</sup> Chiba Shin’s recent “Uchimura Kanzō on Justification by Faith in his *Study of Romans*,” in *Living for Jesus and Japan* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011) provides a good overview of this topic, which does indeed bear further research.

<sup>584</sup> <http://www.kaitori-daikichi.jp/blog/archives/77938.html>, accessed 5/25/2017 at 12:38PM.

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