

Inazo Nitobe

Yoshiro Hayashi PhD (Tokaigakuin University)

林 美 朗

Introduction

Inazo Nitobe was born in Morioka City in 1866. He is an agriculturist who consecutively served as professor at Sapporo Agricultural School, Kyoto Imperial University and Tokyo imperial University after graduation of Sapporo Agricultural School and Tokyo imperial University. He is also an international pacifist who climbed the ladder up to the post of the assistant director of UN Secretariat and chairman of the Pacific Conference in the hope of becoming “a bridge over the Pacific Ocean” and “a bridge of world peace”. On the other hand, he is an international promoter of the Japanese culture who wrote BUSHIDO-The Soul of Japan, of which reinstatement is being called for today by others.



However, Inazo Nitobe had repeatedly been suffering from depression with a mild manic phase or manic-depressive phase since his young days. Particularly, his acquisition of the degree of Doctor of Agriculture and publication of the famous BUSHIDO coincides with the convalescent stage of the severe depressive phase that started from 1887 when he was a student of Sapporo Agricultural School.

In this paper, I would like to discuss the secret of writing BUSHIDO, a book promoting the Japanese culture internationally in the context of depression. Not a hackneyed pathology of creation such as an increased creativity in the convalescent stage of depression but his extensive knowledge and culture as well as his profound knowledge of the Japanese culture which were cultivated thoroughly in the depressive phase seem to be concerned with the writing of BUSHIDO.

His Life History⁽¹⁾

Chronological Record

- 1862 Born at Tsukasa-koji, Morioka
- 1866 His father Jujiro died
- 1871 Adopted into the family of his uncle Ohta Tokitoshi
Went to Tokyo His grandfather died
- 1873 Entered Tokyo Foreign Language School

	Interest in Christianity		Went to Ikaho for change of air
1877	Entered Sapporo Agricultural School	1898	Went to the West Coast of America for change of air
1878	Converted into Christianity with Kanzo Uchimura and was baptized	1899	“The History of the Development of Japanese Agriculture” — Doctor of Agriculture, the first in Japan “BUSHIDO-The Soul of Japan”
1879	Eye disease, anxiety-depressive state saw “the light of his father” (mysterious expression) Interest in Carlyle	1900	Inspection tour of Europe
1880	Neurasthenia Seki, his mother died Obtained SARTOR RESARTUS	1901	Engineer at the Government-General of Taiwan
1881	Graduated from Sapporo Agricultural School Appointed to an office of development Neurasthenia, diminution of vision-depressive state	1904	Full-time Prof. at the Department of Law, Kyoto Imperial University
1883	Entered Tokyo Imperial University Want to be “a bridge over the Pacific Ocean” Michio. His second eldest brother died Disillusion toward the University (non-religious)	1906	Doctor of Laws Principal at the First Higher School
1884	Studied at Johns Hopkins University in America	1909	Concurrently serving as Prof. at Tokyo Imperial University
1885	Touched on the thought of Quakers which is skin to Zen	1911	Went to the United States (Japan-American exchange Pro.)
1886	Lectured on “The State of Affairs in Japan” Encountered with Mary Elkington	1913	Reigned from his office as the Principal at the First Higher School Full-time Pro. at Tokyo Imperial University
1887	Assistant Prof. at Sapporo Agricultural School Studied in Germany A conception of BUSHIDO	1918	First President at Tokyo Women’s University
1888	Shichiro, his eldest brother died Nitobe family name	1919	Inspection tour of Europe and America
1891	Married Mary Elkington Prof. at Sapporo Agricultural School	1920	Deputy chief of UN Secretariat Stayed in Geneva Want to be “a bridge for world peace”
1892	His beloved child was born and the child died young Slightly neurasthenia	1926	Retired from the office A member of the House of Peers
1894	Founded the Enyu Night School 1897~depressive	1929	Chief director of the Pacific Problem Investigation Council
		1933	The 5 th Pacific Conference (Canada) Died in Victoria, 71 y.o

Chronologically, it was a time when the yearning for the West began to mix with the heightened literary and military arts — BUSHIDO spirit on the eve of the Meiji Restoration. His

grandfather and parents were a chief treasurer-retainer of a daimyo (feudal lord). His grandfather and father are a agriculturist who dealt with the development of newly reclaimed rice fields. Jujiro, his father was extravagant and known for his eccentric conduct. After the death of his grandfather and father, that is, in 1872, the decree abolishing the wearing of swords was issued, leading to the loss of BUSHIDO spirit both nominally and virtually.

His mother Seki is said to be intellectual and wise, typical of a good wife and wise mother. After the death of his father, Inazo always respected his mother who was fighting alone and sometimes he had a feeling of starvation of love. In character, he is said to be an unruly boy, short-tempered, irritable, active, extroversive, bold and skeptical. According to Mieko Kamiya², however, he was of compulsive personality of anthropobia-perfectionism or cyclothymia. Diverting his feeling of being unsatisfactory of his family and to seek an occupation that contributes to his country.

At age 16 (1878) while in Sapporo Agricultural School, he along with Kanzo Uchimura et al. became a believer in Christianity and was baptized. From around age 17 he suffered from eye disease or trigeminal neuralgia owing to over reading and fell into anxiety-depression. At around that time, he had a mystical spiritual experience of having seen the light of his deceased father. While taking his step-by-step improvement as a blessing of Got, he tried to get closer to Got and though baptized he fell into skepticism about how to live in the spirit of Christ

per se and his wish to be in a direct contact with Got.

He had an increasing interest in Thomas Carlyle who maintains that the theory of the existence of Got and the doctoring of the immortality of the soul are not something that can be resolved, but it is a problem that can be resolved only when it is believed. However, his eye disease (trigeminal neuralgia) worsened so much as to present a neurasthenic condition the following year. His mother Seki died that year. His failure to be with his mother when shi dies seems to have accelerated his depressive condition at that time. In SARTOR RESARTUS he encountered then, he felt as if something about himself were written and said, "the more I read, the more points echoing my mind there were, so I read it repeatedly to relieve myself from my agony".

I would like to next quote a part of the SARTOR RESARTUS³. — The highest whom I knew on Earth I here saw bowed down, with awe unspeakable, before a Higher in Heaven: such things, especially in infancy, reach inwards to the very core of your being : mysteriously dose a Holy of Holies build itself into visibility in the mysterious deep ; the divinest in man, springs forth undying from its mean envelopment of Fear (Book Second, Chapter II). This paragraph reads he identified himself with Teufelsdr?ckh, a leading character who lost his father in childhood and his mother in his youth, and empathized with him while thinking about the influence of his own mother.

Thomas Carlyle is a slightly

schizophrenic British critic and historian in the 10th century. A part describing his mysterious experience of having heard a call of somebody when he was walking on a street of London may remind us of Inazo's own mysterious spiritual experience of having seen the light of his deceased father. Upon hearing voices "what art thou afraid of? wherefore, like a coward, dost thou forever pip and whimper, and go cowering and trembling?", he said "as I so thought, there rushed like a stream of fire over my whole soul; and I shook base Fear away from me forever" (Chapter VII). He cannot help but empathize with the idea of Carlyle who tried to overcome the same agony after losing his father and mother. In "The Everlasting Yea" in Chapter IX, he asserts "its howl went silent within me" by becoming selfless as in Zen Buddhism, saying "Annihilation of Self had been happily accomplished". Here Carlyle has attained so-called spiritual enlightenment.

As described above, Inazo was deeply impressed by the course of Carlyle, but he says that the existence of Got and Buddha is not something that can be resolved or proven by a study no matter how profound it is. It is something that can be resolved only when one believes in Got or Buddhism, "annihilation of Self" or becoming selfless. In other words, it is something that can be resolved only when one identified oneself with Got or Buddha, I think. In Buddhism, Gigen Rinzai, a Zen monk, for example, preaches that Buddha is not something that is sought outside but it is one hearing his preach in front of him that is Buddha, if one

become a leading character in each situation as one is, that is Buddha.

Be that as it may, Inazo Nitobe had since inclined to the direction of associating himself with Got. Even after graduating from Sapporo Agricultural School and being appointed to an office, his neurasthenic condition persisted. After the disease improved slightly, Inazo determined to enter Tokyo University to further study agricultural administration or agricultural economics at age 21. In a interview at the entrance examination, Inazo is said to be asked by the then Prof. of Literature Shoichi Sotoyama, "What are you going to do?". Inazo is said to have replied, "I want to be a bridge over the Pacific Ocean." "I want to be a go-between to reply Japanese thought through abroad and spread the foreign thought in Japan." Professor Sotoyama reportedly is said to be answered at his reply saying, "I don't understand what you are talking about. What do you mean?".

However, even Tokyo University he entered with full hope fell short of his expectation. In addition, Michio, his second elder brother died. Thinking that Japan and himself would lag behind unless he does something religious and goes out a broad world, he left Tokyo University halfway and went abroad to study at Johns Hopkins University of America the following year. There he encountered a meeting of Quakers (members of the Society of Friends) where modest women gather. He felt familiar with their sincere, simple and pure states of mind which has something akin to Zen. In 1886, he gave a lecture on "The State of Affaires

in Japan". Immediately thereafter, he met with a talented girl called Mary Patterson Elkington whom he marries later.

In the same year, he was ordered by his senior Shosuke Sato to become assistant professor at the Sapporo Agricultural School and to study in Germany. He arrived at Bonn the following year. In Germany he met with Prof. L0vely, a great Belgian scholar. He was then asked about ethics, morals-religion in Japan, which seemed to have served as a cue to his writing BSHIDO later. In 1889 while studying in Germany, his eldest brother Shichiro died, and Inazo resumed the family name Nitobe. On January 1, 1891 he at last married Mary Elkington in Philadelphia.

He returned to Japan in February the same year and was immediately appointed to the post of Professor at the Sapporo Agricultural School. He lectured agricultural administration, settlement theory, economics English literature and ethics there. While serving as an engineer at the Hokkaido Government Office, he was then energetically engaged in education, guidance on the development and writing books. He was quite busy and his activity may be called abnormal and manic. Amid such a busy life, a child was born. However, the child died in less than a week. The shock of Inazo and his wife was so great that his wife had to return to America temporarily. His wife returned to Sapporo soon, but Inazo himself fell into a neurasthenic state. For recuperation, he resigned all the posts including that at the Sapporo Agricultural School and went to Ikaho

for a change.

Even at Ikaho, he always had SARTOR RESARTUS of Carlyle at hand. The two took such a hardship and agony as a blessing of Got and overcame them by confronting such a sorrow and hardship. Here I feel a bit uneasy about that they understand Buddhism as a pessimistic, negative thought trying to escape from the life and hardship. Even in Buddhism, confronting the reality full of agony is the starting point and that the cause thereof is studied thoroughly is the same, I think.

During recuperation at Ikaho, he touched au his study on the agricultural administration 1-2 hours a day, and published it as "Main Discourse of Agriculture" in 1898. After that, he went to the Pacific coast of America and published a paper "The History of the Development of Japanese Agriculture". He was awarded a degree of Doctor of Agriculture, the first of its kind in Japan the following year. About the question of ethics, morals and religion in Japanese education asked by Prof. Lovely, a great Belgian scholar, he was unable to get it out of his head, which born a fruit in the form of publication of "BUSHIDO-the soul of Japan" in America 10 years later after going through the sorrow, hardship and pain of sickness⁴.

The secret of creation of "BUSHIDO-the soul of Japan"

"BUSHIDO-the soul of Japan" is a summation of the so-called general settlement of account of the morale system of Japan, of which origin goes

back to Shinto of Japan, Confucianism and Buddhism. With the Christian thought added thereto, it has come into being, I think.

The secret of creation and the cause of its coming into being of "BUSHIDO-the soul of Japan" are summarized as follows.

Primarily, Inazo was brought up in a BUSHIDO-like environment. It coincided with the age when the spirit of BUSHIDO was beginning to be lost. Keenly feeling the greatness of ancestors and his responsibility, he was ambitious and strove to raise the reputation of his family and to seek an occupation that contributes to his country.

Having had an experience of the neurasthenic state (anxiety-depression), a spiritual, mysterious experience of seeing the light of his deceased father and encountered with SARTOR RESARTUS of T. Carlyle, he engaged in introspection. On the other hand, he encountered a thought of Christianity (Quaker) which has something akin to Buddhism and felt familiar with it. By changing of air after the loss of his child, he made a comprehensive survey of his past studies and at the same time digged up the thought of BUSHIDO in Japan which lacked the thought of morales and ethics and established it on the belief that education is for the country (Japan) by viewing Japan from outside. It may be said that Inazo overcome the sorrow, hardship and pain of sickness, got close to Got and attained cure and spiritual enlightenment by publishing "BUSHIDO-the soul of Japan".

As describe above, Inazo Nitobe

seems to have gone through the manic phase (mild) subsequent to the depressive phase occurring 2-3 times up to the creation of "BUSHIDO-the soul of Japan". The cycle of this phase seems to be 5-6 years as told by Mieko Kamiya. Of course, the time-course characteristics of the mild manic state, acquisition of the degree of Doctor and publication of "BUSHIDO-the soul of Japan" being positioned in the convalescence from the depressive phase can be pointed out. Not only his creativity increased in that stage, but also the profound knowledge culture-scholarship in Japanese literature nurtured in the sick phase as well as the cordiality of his introspection-belief seem to be concerned with the publication of "BUSHIDO-the soul of Japan".

In addition to the basic personal quality and influence of his ancestors, the accumulation of such knowledge and aspiration seem to be greatly concerned with the coming into being of "BUSHIDO-the soul of Japan", an international book on the Japanese culture and the reinstatement of BUSHIDO that still continues even today.

Conclusion

In this paper, I took a glimpse at the life history of Inazo Nitobe and considered the secret of creation, the cause of its coming into being of "BUSHIDO-the soul of Japan" etc. I would like to end up by confirming the fact that not only his creativity increased in that stage, but also the profound knowledge culture-scholarship

in Japanese literature nurtured in the sick phase as well as the cordiality of his introspection-belief seem to be concerned with the publication of “BUSHIDO-the soul of Japan”.

Reference

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