

Christian Boom in Occupied Japan:

Seen from American Occupation Policy

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占領期日本におけるクリスチャンブーム
—アメリカの占領政策から見る—

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Abstract

Right after World War II, America began to execute an Occupation policy towards Japan. This Occupation period witnessed an unprecedented development in the spread of Christianity in Japan which was called "Christian Boom" by many scholars. The United States, especially SCAP and General MacArthur exercised a policy of propagating Christianity to Japan. Meanwhile, the Japanese, no matter the government or the citizens, showed great interests and embracement towards Christianity. These interacted with each other and formed the Christian boom in occupied Japan.

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I . Introduction

From 1945, right after World War II, to 1951, the United States conducted the Occupation policy over Japan. In order to help Japan gain a modern peaceful country, reforms in all kinds of realms were taken. To manage this, the United States set up an Occupation administration which was generally called SCAP (Supreme Commander of Allied Powers). Under the SCAP system, Washington conveyed its broad policies to SCAP, and then SCAP supervised and urged the execution of these policies in Japan. It could be said that the Occupation from 1945 to 1951 in Japan experienced huge changes in its political institution, economic structure, and cultural values, etc. Occupation was a unique period in Japanese history, because many important changes took place in Japanese society. Among these huge social changes, there is one phenomenon worth noting. That is the Christian boom that happened in occupied Japan.

With its Christian number always below 1% of the population, it is difficult for us to think that Christianity is a popular religion in Japan. However, in the particular historical period, Christianity did receive a warm welcome and developed rapidly. It might be the time in Japanese history when Christianity was the most popular. This can be elaborated from both the U.S. and the Japanese sides. On the one hand, out of some strategic necessity, the United States, particularly the SCAP authority and General MacArthur tried to spread Christianity to Japan. To make the Occupation policy, especially the democratization of Japan, smoother, the U.S. government cast a cultural policy which was centered on the propagating Christianity to Japan. From the beginning of the Occupation, the US government had made a decision to liberalize Japan by spreading Christianity to Japan as a main means of rooting up the militarism during the war. It seemed to be a common recognition for the Americans that their own religion could be a natural therapy for the ravaged Japan, especially for the spiritual dilemma caused by the failure of the war. The Occupation authority, especially the Supreme Commander General MacArthur, clearly realized the situation and took a constantly active attitude toward missionary activities in Japan. It is said that in MacArthur's office, there were two portraits, one was Abraham Lincoln, and the other was Jesus Christ. In his Occupation policies, MacArthur had placed Christian mission a considerably important position.

On the other hand, the Japanese government and people had shown great interest in Christianity. The war and the defeat had made Japanese people confused about their traditional values and sent them into a situation of so-called "spiritual vacuum". It was said that right after World War II there used to be complete denial of Japan's traditional culture within the mind of most common citizens. As the US administration and the Occupation authority exerted their efforts to introduce and propagate Christianity to Japanese people, Japan soon came to accept the foreign value as one of

the most important base for the reconstruction and rehabilitation. Not only the Christian circle, but also the government and the common people regarded Christianity as a most useful idea for the reconstruction of Japan. Therefore, the government took an oath to rebuild the country upon Christian values and morality; the citizens embraced Christianity with warm welcome; the Christian circle gradually expanded its organizations and converters. Bibles were distributed extensively. New churches were constructed while old ones were repaired. People with different identities, students, professors, peasants, government officials, all rushed into churches. A picture of "Christian boom" had gallantly shown in the history of occupied Japan.

It is because the importance and the uniqueness of the Occupation, this period has been attracting many scholars to research. The research on Occupation in Japan has become a systematic and comprehensive study including almost all the realms.¹ But still there are very few works focusing on Christianity in Occupation, especially not so many Japanese scholars explain the Christian boom from the perspective of American Occupation policy. When Takemae Eiji conducted an interview with William K. Bunce, Chief of Religions Division of GHQ, he also admitted that religion study was inadequate among the whole Occupation study.² Some scholars described the general picture of Christian development in Occupation.³ In his book *Inside GHQ: the Allied Occupation of Japan and Its Legacy*, Takemae Eiji mentioned religion reform in the Occupation and admitted that SCAP and MacArthur had played an important role by conducting religious policies of spreading Christianity in Japan.⁴ But he didn't go to the detail. As for the existing situation of Occupation religion study, most of the scholars are concerned about the American religious policy towards Japan under Occupation. They try to analyze GHQ's strategic plan for the religious reforms such as

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- 1 There are many famous Japanese scholars specialized on Occupation studies, and had offered abundant valuable studies on the Occupation history. For example, Takemae Eiji, *Inside GHQ: the Allied Occupation of Japan and Its Legacy*, London, Continuum, 2002; Iobeki Makoto, *Beikoku No Nihon Senryo Seisaku: Sengo Nihon No Sekkeizu (American Occupation Policy: Plan for Post-War Japan)*, Tokyo, Gendaishi Shuppankai, 1978; Yui Daizaburo, *Mikan No Senryo Kaikaku: Amerika Chishikijin To Suterareta Nihon Minshuka Koso (Unfinished Occupation: American Intellectuals and the Abandoned Thinking of Democratizing Japan)*, Tokyo, Tokyo University Press, 1989; Shiso No Kagaku Kenkyukai ed., *Nihon Senryogun: Sou No Hikari To Kage (The Merit and Demerit of Japan Occupation Powers)*, Tokyo, Gendaishi Shuppansha, 1978; Suzuki Eiichi, *Nihon Senryo To Kyoiku Kaikaku (Japan Occupation and Education Reform)*, Keisoshobo, 1983; and so on. Some western scholars focusing on Japan studies also had researched the Occupation, for example, John W. Dower, *Embracing defeat: Japan in the wake of World War II*, New York: W. W. Norton & Co. New Press, 1999; Theodore Cohen, *Remaking Japan: the American Occupation as New Deal*, New York: Free Press, 1987.
 - 2 Takemae Eiji, *Nihon Senryo: GHQ Kokan Kara No Syogen (Witness from the GHQ: high-Ranked Officials)*, Tokyo, Chuokoronsha, 1988, pp.302-305.
 - 3 For example, see in Ray A. Moore, Reflections on the Occupation of Japan, *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol.38, 4. (Aug., 1979); Russel L. Durgin, Christianity in Postwar Japan, *Far Eastern Survey*, Vol.22, No.2 (Jan. 28, 1953); Charles W. Iglehart, Current Religious Trends in Japan, *Journal of Bible and Religion*, Vol.15, No.2 (April., 1947); Ralph J. D. Braibanti, State and Religion in Japan, *Far Eastern Survey*, Vol.16, No.16. (Sep. 3, 1947)
 - 4 See in Takemae Eiji, *Inside GHQ: the Allied Occupation of Japan and Its Legacy*, London, Continuum, 2002.

the issue of Shindo Directive and the Emperor's Human Declaration (*Ningen Sengen*).⁵ A few scholars realized the special status of Christianity in Occupation and discussed the relationship of Christianity and democratization.⁶ As for western scholars, William P. Woodard, who used to work in the Religions Division of GHQ, published his book *The Allied Occupation of Japan 1945-1952 and Japanese Religions* in 1972, right before the year he died. Up to now, this is one of the most authoritative works on religion studies in Occupation. Later this book was translated into Japanese by Abe Yoshiya.⁷ William Woodard had the experience of talking to GHQ high-ranked officials and Japanese Emperor and politicians, he used lots of first-hand material. Still this is a book discussing mainly about Japanese traditional religions like Shindoism, with a small portion talking about Christianity. Lawrence S. Wittner in his article "MacArthur and the Missionaries: God and Man in Occupied Japan" discussed MacArthur's efforts in calling for missionaries to Japan from the United States. He gave a general introduction about MacArthur's consideration behind his policy of calling for missionaries to Japan.⁸ However he didn't analyze MacArthur's Christian mind and didn't talk about the detailed policies that MacArthur and SCAP conducted. In summary, the Occupation study in Japan is quite mature, nevertheless religion study especially study focusing on Christianity's role in US-Japan relations during this period is inadequate.

This article will mainly use the materials from the special collection of Occupation stored in Japan's National Diet Library. These included the directives and press releases of the Occupation authority, records of the church and missionary activities, and some newspaper journals at that time, some of which might have never been used before. With these materials, this article attempts to elaborate the "Christian boom" systematically from both the U.S. and the Japanese perspectives. By examining SCAP and MacArthur's efforts in promoting Christianity in occupied Japan and describing the Japanese embracement of Christianity, the article will supply a comprehensive picture of the "Christian boom" in Occupation. First, I will analyze the reasons that SCAP and MacArthur decided to propagating Christianity in Japan, especially explaining the formation of MacArthur's missionary mind. Second, I give detailed description and analysis of SCAP and MacArthur's policy of promoting Christianity.

5 See for example, Abe Yoshiya, "Senryogun No Tainichi Shukyo Seisaku (Occupation Power's Religious Policy towards Japan)," *Shukyo Kenkyu*, Vol.48, No.1 1974; Nakano Tsuyoshi, "Amerika No Tainichi Shukyo Seisaku No Keisei (The Formation of American Religious Policy towards Japan)," *Sokkai Daigaku Hikaku Bunka Kenkyu*, 1990, July, pp.100-135.

6 Okazaki Masafumi, "Senryo • Minshushugi • Kirisutokyo (Occupied Japan: Democracy and Christianity 1945-1952)," *International Cultural Expression Studies*, No.4, 2008, pp.161-172.

7 William P. Woodard, *The Allied Occupation of Japan 1945-1952 and Japanese Religions*, Leiden, Brill, 1972 (阿部美哉訳、「天皇と神道：GHQの宗教政策」、サイマル出版会、1988年)。

8 See in Lawrence S. Wittner, "MacArthur and the Missionaries: God and Man in Occupied Japan", *the Pacific History Review*, 1971.

Third, I elaborate the Christian boom in occupied Japan from different levels and try to offer a portrayal of the Christian boom. Finally in the conclusion, I summarize the reason for and the effect of the Christian boom, and also offer my own comments.

II. MacArthur's Missionary Mind and His Judgment about Postwar Japan

MacArthur's missionary policy owes its origin to his own perception of postwar Japan and the ideological feature of his deep consideration about the reconstruction of Japan. He had a strong will, from every aspect, to help the Japanese people to rebuild a new nation out of destruction caused by the war. However, among all the factors functioning in the process of fulfilling his Occupation mission, the mind-construction was put before material construction.

This had a lot to do with the situation of the Japanese people's mentality. Right after the end of World War II, a sense of national confusion hung in the heart of Japanese people. The defeat destroyed the myth of the absolute divinity of the Emperor and it was also a defeat of value, because the Japanese lost the foundation on which they were standing or thought they were standing.⁹ Under this circumstance, Christianity seemed to be a medicine that many Japanese people resorted to in order to cure their confusion. For example, "All is lost except faith in God" was the text of a telegram sent from Japan to American Christian friends at that time.¹⁰ US Administration and MacArthur saw the Japanese psychological situation clearly and took it as a golden time to expand Christianity to Japan.

Meanwhile, Christianity was also taken by MacArthur as a robust tool for promoting democracy in postwar Japan. There were few times in history when one nation had been in a position to impress another not only with its military might but also with its national ideals, but this is precisely what happened during the American Occupation of Japan (1945-52).¹¹ Namely, military Occupation as it was, at the same time another Occupation at the ideal level also took place. Obviously, from MacArthur's point of view, the promotion of democracy is the main agenda of US and SCAP in the Occupation, and the most effective way to help Japanese people construct a democratic idea which MacArthur thought should be done by the spread of Christianity. In MacArthur's mind, Christianity could play an important role in leading Japan to walk on to the road of democratization. In 1947, MacArthur wrote to a Christian minister James F. Boughton, "Democracy and Christianity have much in

9 Taaki Aikawa, Lynn Leavenworth, *the Mind of Japan: A Christian Perspective*, Valley Forge, [Pa.] the Judson Press, 1967, p.47.

10 James M. Phillips, *From the Rising of the Sun: Christians and Society in Contemporary Japan*, Mary knoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1981, p.4.

11 James M. Phillips, *ibid*, p.17.

common, as practice of the former is impossible without giving faithful service to the fundamental concepts underlying the latter".¹² This reflects that in his mind, democratization was the objective and Christianity was an indispensable condition to attain the objective.

General Douglas MacArthur said that 1,000 missionaries could win Japan to Christianity, the Southern California-Arizona Methodist Conference was told. Dr. Robert McKibben, Los Angeles Church of All Nations said, the general told him that young missionaries were Japan's most urgent need. Dr. Fred B. Trotter, Huntington Park, Calif disclosed a letter he received from General MacArthur which read: "Japan in the wake of war and defeat presents the greatest opportunity and challenge our Christian leadership has known throughout the Christian era."¹³ The letter pointed out that with the Japanese defeat came an abrupt awakening as to the superficiality of the myths and legends on which the Japanese had based their faith. The resulting spiritual vacuum, the general wrote, would offer a clear field for Christian leadership. It's also said that when Father Bitter, Rector of Sophia University and the Apostolic Delegate to Japan, reported a 45 minutes conversation with General MacArthur in 1946. In response to his request to bring to Japan four German Jesuits now studying in the U.S., the General said, "Don't bring over four, but 400, and bring them quickly. And if you wait ten years, you are just ten years late."¹⁴ He certainly thought that the vacuum demanded the most missionaries.

It is worth noting that MacArthur was a pious Christian and a conservative Republican, as well as his top aide, Major General Courtney Whitney. In America, generally conservatives tend to be religious Christians who also tend to be enthusiastic Wilsonian. The Wilsonians in general take the spread of American style democracy as their mission and put Christian belief as the mental base of this establishment of democratic institutions. The fundamental consideration of MacArthur's Occupation policy is to regard the Christianization of the world and the promotion of democracy as "will of God", which is based on the American missionary vocation.¹⁵ With this thinking, MacArthur tied his call for missionary and Christianity to the "democratization" goal of the Occupation. In his opinion, Christianity offered the Japanese people "a sure and stable foundation on which to build a democratic nation." He told the Foreign Missions Conference of North America that, "through their teachings... of the immuta-

12 Lawrence S. Wittner, *ibid*, p.82.

13 MacArthur: Japan Is Ready for Christianity, *Nippon Times*, Jun 24, 1949, from National Diet Library: Special Collection of Occupation, Box No.3489.

14 Father Bitter's Report to General MacArthur, *Nippon Times*, Dec. 16, 1945, National Diet Library: Special Collection of Occupation, Box No.CIE(B)07376.

15 Shimo Mononobu, *Monogatari Nihon Kirisutokyoshi: Nichibei Kirisutosha Gunzo O Tadoru (A Story of Japan's Christian History: tracing the Japanese and U.S. Christians)*, Tokyo, Shinkyō Press, 1998, p.555.

ble principles of Christianity,” missionaries had “infused knowledge and understanding of the democratic concept” and an “appreciation of the basic tents which govern our own free way of life”. Here it is obvious that MacArthur derived his generalizations from the American examples: if most Americans were Christians, then other American values were inseparably linked to Christianity. He said, “Our Christian faith has formed the sturdy cornerstone upon which has rested our national strength”¹⁶. Since Japan was to receive democracy on the American model, she would also need Christianity. This was the logic that MacArthur held: American democracy was firmly built on Christianity, so that if Japan needed to be democratized, then Christianity should be one of the basic elements for the reconstruction of Japan.

As stated above, MacArthur thought that there existed a huge spiritual vacuum in postwar Japan which was not only a hindrance for Japan’s reconstruction itself, but also a danger for American interests in Asia region. To solve this problem, MacArthur considered, it was urgent to spread American ideas to the Japanese. This was the basic work of the reconstruction of a new Japan. Meanwhile, as the general planner and conductor of Occupation policy, he followed the American administration to place democratization as a premium mission. As a conservative Wilsonian, he deemed that democracy had a strong relation with Christian values. If without Christian values in Japanese people’s mind, democratization would not be achieved. The Occupation of Japan was not a purely military Occupation, but was influenced greatly by MacArthur’s strong belief in Christianity, as he said “Firm Christian faith should be suitable for all the Occupation policies. Every one of the Occupation troops should put this into practice and with these efforts Japanese people’s understanding toward Christianity would naturally grow.”¹⁷ It can be said that in the inner working of the Occupation, Christianity played a rather important role.

III. MacArthur’s Missionary Guideline and a New Policy

1) MacArthur and SCAP’s Missionary Guideline

Both before and during the Occupation, MacArthur received a series of firm guidelines for the religious policy from the President and the Joint Chiefs of Staff. In mid-March 1944, the Inter-Divisional Area Committee on the Far East submitted a memorandum entitled “Freedom of Worship”, drafted by Japan specialists, Earle Dickover and Eugene Dooman. The memorandum recommended that “The state was not to interfere in any way with individual, nor was it to favor one religion or relig-

16 Lawrence S. Wittner, *ibid*, p.82.

17 Okazaki Tsukasa, *Occupied Japan: Democracy and Christianity 1945-1952*, *International Cultural Expression Studies*, 2008, No.4, p.162.

ious organization over another or to provide financial support in any form to such.¹⁸ This paper reached MacArthur in late 1945. Drawing upon traditional American ideals, and determined to smash the stranglehold of Shinto Militarism upon state power, Washington officials sought to guarantee religious freedom and to ensure the separation of church and state. Religious liberty was a key element of the Postdam Declaration of July 26, 1945, and was reiterated in the United States initial post-surrender policy for Japan, announced by the White House on September 1. "Freedom of religious worship shall be proclaimed promptly by the Occupation," declared the President's instructions and "laws, decrees and regulations which establish discrimination on the grounds of ...creed...shall be abrogated." The basic directive for post-surrender military government in Japan, which followed on November 3, focused on the privileged status of Shintoism, and ordered the Japanese government "to cease financial and other support of National Shinto establishment." With this consideration, MacArthur actually made Christianity a new cultural tool to counter the traditional Shintoism. As the function of Christianity loomed more and more clearly, SCAP gradually divert from the policy of religious neutrality toward one of "Christianity favoritism." The interesting thing is that while Occupation authorities set the rule of "separation of state and church", and called for a cease of any term of national support to any religion in Japan, they enthusiastically helped spread Christianity. Every legitimate effort was made by Occupation authorities to restore missionary.¹⁹ With the ending of Japanese government assistance to Shintoism and restraint of Christianity, Christian institutions were vastly expanded with the help of American funds. It was noted that Buddhist and Shinto complaints that "freedom of religion is only a theory with us because Occupation authorities are supporting the Christian movement".²⁰

On October 4, 1945, a SCAP directive on freedom of religion inspired the Christians to take immediate action to reorganize the Christian front as well as to endeavor large-scale evangelical work in Japan. On December 29, 1945, SCAP sent a dispatch to Washington. The dispatch explained that it was the policy to permit missionaries to return to Japan to a maximum extent number.²¹ This declared the beginning of the change in the missionary policy toward Japan. Christianity was practically dead during the war under the smothering pressure of discrimination and bigotry. The unprecedented growth of Christianity in Japan was shown nowhere as clearly as in the phenomenal sales of Bibles, which had become a best seller in this

18 Takemae Eiji, *ibid*, p.374.

19 History of the Non-military Activities of the Occupation of Japan 1945-1951, Nihon Tosho Senta, 1990, vol.21 Religion, p.47.

20 Takemae Eiji, *ibid*, p.378.

21 William P. Woodard: *The Allied Occupation of Japan 1945-1952 and Japanese Religion*, Leiden, E. J. Brill, 1972, p.219.

country. The general public was evincing a keen interest in Christian teachings. The young people who were dropping into churches in ever growing numbers, some out of curiosity, to listen to sermons, found that Christian teachings differ greatly from the Buddhist doctrine. In some villages the entire population attempted to get baptized after listening to the fervent sermons of some Christian preachers like Dr. Toyohiko Kagawa.

In 1946, a conference was held between the general and Lieutenant-Colonel Donald R. Nugent, Chief of SCAP's Civil Information and Education section, which included a Religion and Cultural Resources Division concerning about the missionary in Japan. The conference owed its origin to a letter from a Christian missionary complaining that, under Occupation policy, "Christianity was too favored". Centered on this issue, MacArthur made his imperative to Chief Nugent, informing him that "the Religion Division of the CIE section must make every possible effort to Christianize Japan", for as long as "no religion or belief was oppressed, then the Occupation had every right to propagate Christianity; that every assistance should be given in the propagation of the Christian faith"²². Nugent promised to orient Religion Division to MacArthur's policy guideline.

Meanwhile, new situations were emerging as the demand of a new missionary policy loomed. There was something rather ironical in the fact that at first American missionaries were resuming their work in the name of military Occupation. This almost made all feel uncomfortable: the Occupation authorities, the overseas mission agencies, and the Japanese as well. To change this embarrassing situation, Occupation authorities began to take steps to establish its policies towards missionary activities. Actually the official attitude of SCAP was a mixture of diverse elements. Many statements by SCAP officials initially displayed considerable favoritism toward Christian activities in Japan, and especially to Christian missionaries. For instance General Douglas MacArthur wrote a letter to Miss Elizabeth Whewell, an independent missionary, saying: "As you know, religious freedom is one of the greatest boons that the Occupation has brought to Japan, and I think you equally realize the hope and belief I entertain that Japan will become Christianized. Every possible effort to that end is being made and, had I my way, I would hope for a thousand missionaries for everyone that is now here."²³

MacArthur made similar statements privately to many visitors. Actually not only

²² D. R. Nugent Memo on "Christianity and the Occupation," Oct. 7, 1947, SCAP Manuscripts, Douglas MacArthur Memorial, Norfolk, Va., Box 1, quoted from Lawrence S. Wittner, MacArthur and the Missionaries: God and Man in Occupied Japan, *the Pacific History Review*, 1971, pp.78-79.

²³ General MacArthur's Letter of 4 October 1947 to Miss Elizabeth Whewell, Independent Missionary in Gifu Prefecture, Quoted from William P. Woodard, *the Allied Occupation of Japan and Japanese Religions*, Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1972, p.357.

MacArthur, numerous SCAP officials made pro-Christianity statement publicly and privately. However, in spite of personal statements by MacArthur and other officials endorsing Christianity, official religious policy of the Occupation came from the Religions Division of the Civil Information and Education section of SCAP. The ironic thing was that the policy was one of strict neutrality toward all religious groups. This meant Christian missionaries or churches were not supposed to receive any special favors. The Religion Division deemed that the policy of non-assistance to missionaries was believed to be very sound, though it seemed to be contradictory with the consistent spirit of strengthening Christian influence in Japan. The reason mainly lay in the rule of religious freedom. The Occupation authorities held one thing as self-evident: to spread Christianity to Japanese people, the core was to convey the message of religious freedom. Therefore, though they all wanted to Christianize Japan, they kept a neutral religious policy. Although some overseas mission societies were initially perplexed by the ambiguities between MacArthur's endorsement of missionary work and the actual SCAP policies of religious neutrality. They saw that the door was open for an unprecedented expansion of missionary work in Japan, if they just did it on a voluntary basis. For instance, a bishop Arthur J. Moore who had been in Japan since World War II wrote as follows when talking about the future of Christian work in Japan with excitement: "We desire to return to Japan to serve, 'not as overseers of their faith, but as helpers in their joys' in any area where there is need... We expect an enlarging opportunity for missionary work in the days to come, growing out of a splendid past... Our policy toward Japan may determine the whole future of our world mission, for it will show our capacity to rise above group loyalties to a common sense of mission in God's world."²⁴

It is clear that MacArthur's main idea and standpoint about missionary policy guideline had aroused a considerable response not only within the SCAP especially Nugent's Religion and Cultural Resources Division, but also in the Christian Circle. For them, MacArthur's guideline had supplied a good opportunity as well as an encouragement for their missionary work in Japan.

2) A New Policy on Christian Mission

On May 21, 1947, a new and broadened policy on the admission of missionaries to Japan was announced by SCAP, at a meeting of representatives from all the denominations active in Japan. Under this revised policy, it was anticipated that the flow of missionaries to Japan within the next three years would be greatly increased. This was in line with General MacArthur's desire to encourage Japanese understanding and

²⁴ Arthur J. Moor, *Christ after Chaos: The Post-War Policy of the Methodist Church in Foreign Lands*, New York: The Methodist Church, 1944, pp.37-38.

acceptance of basic principles which he had called "Christian ideals of tolerance and democracy" and the rights of all citizens to "live in the full dignity of self-respect as free men". Because of this, the Supreme Commander sank to facilitate the entry of as many qualified missionaries as possible.²⁵

The liberalizations of the policy included, first, the admission of missionary families (except babies under one year old) when it was demonstrated that proper housing and adequate medical facilities had been provided, and secondly, authorization to ship food, clothing, and other immediate necessities, including prefabricated housing, motor vehicles, motor fuel and auto maintenance supplies. Shipments of food will be allowed up to one ton a year for each person. Meanwhile, a special provision in the policy made it possible for a church formerly active in the missionary effort in Japan and now without representation in the nation, to send a representative to reorganize and reestablish its program. These visiting officials will be temporarily provided with quarters, meals, and transportation by the U.S. Army, until they can make their own arrangements.

It is worth noting that almost all the denominations and sects had their representatives attend this conference when the new missionary policy was announced by the Nugent, Chief of Religious Division. Among those attending the conference were:²⁶

Name	Denominations or sects
Miss Esther Bower	Japan Gospel Fellowship
Miss Mildred Craig	Conservative Baptist Church
Mrs. H. D. Hannaford	Presbyterian Church
Miss Jessie Wengler	Assemblies of God, Inc
Miss Elisabeth Whewell	Mine Mission
Bishop Benjamin Basalyga	Orthodox Greek Catholic Church of North America
Father Brune Bitter	Representative of the Apostolic Delegate
Mr. O. D. Bixler	Church of Christ
Mr. C. E. Carlson	Scandinavian Alliance Mission
Mr. John B. Cobb	Methodist Church
Mr. E. J. Davis	Christian Convention Church
Mr. Harold Cole	Osaka Christian Mission
Brigadier Davidson	Salvation Army

25 SCAP Press Release 13: 30 May. 21,1947, National Diet Library Special Collection of Occupation, Box No.CIE775017.

26 Documents from Religious Division, Civil Information and Education Section, SCAP, National Diet Library Special Collection of Occupation, Box No.CIE(D)04961.

Mr. W. A. Eckel	Church of the Nasarene
Mr. Carl Kriste	Evangelical and Reformed Church
Dr. Paul Mayer	Foreign Mission Conference of North American
Mr. Francis R. Millard	Seventh Day Adventist Church
Mr. L. O. Still	Church of Christ Cunningham Mission
Rev. K. A. Vaill,	Protestant Episcopal Church

Furthermore, on Nov 7. 1947, the representatives from PHW (Public Health welfare) section and CIE (Civil Information and Education) section attended conference regarding the subject of revising missionary policy toward Japan. Mr. William K. Bunce, Chief of the Religious Division, CIE and Mr. M. J. Evans, Chief of Welfare Division were the dominant character of this conference. This conference proposed a relaxing of policies regarding the admission of missionary into Japan for the purpose of extending the Christian influence throughout Japan as rapidly and widely as possible.²⁷

Under this new policy, missionary activities were spurred to develop at an ascending pace. MacArthur frequently used his extraordinary administrative powers to strengthen the Christian effort in Japan. Surveying the Christian religion in Japan in 1949, one missionary remarked: "The fact that the Christian religion is the religion of the Occupation gives it tremendous prestige." On MacArthur's orders, the Religions Division facilitated the activities of evangelic groups, allowing them to use Occupation facilities and introducing their leaders to the Supreme Commander and even to the Emperor. MacArthur not only encouraged the churches to send missionaries but asked for and received 10 million Bibles and hymnals translated into Japanese.

Dr. Esther Lowell Hibbard, the formal Deputy of American Mission Board Committee, in her memoir noted that American Mission Board had aspired to send missionaries to Japan since the war ended.²⁸ Therefore, the missionary policy was quite welcome to the missionaries. Although entry into Japan was strictly controlled, between August 1945 and December 1950, SCAP's G-1 and Religions Division invited 3000 evangelists to Japan.²⁹ According to a report by SCAP's Religion and Cultural Resources Division in 1949, Japan had far more Christian missionaries from abroad than in 1940. In 1949, there were nearly 1800 foreign missionaries in Japan, approximately 1150 of who were Catholic and 650 Protestant. In total, more than 1000 arrived

27 SCAP Press Release, Nov 8. 1947, National Diet Library Special Collection of Occupation, Box No.CIE775024.

28 Esther Lowell Hibbard, *Esuta Eru Hibado Jiden: Aru Senkyoshikko No Omoide (Autobiography: Reminiscence of A Missionary)*, Kyoto, Doshishajoshidaigaku, 1999, p.110.

29 Takemae Eiji, *ibid*, p.378.

since the beginning of the Occupation. Actually, after the policy was released by SCAP, there were nearly 75 missionaries entering Japan every month. In 1948 alone, there were 707 missionaries entering Japan, which was more than two times of the number in 1947 when 315 missionaries came into Japan. As a result of the new policy on Christianity, a total of 540 Catholic and 482 Protestant missionaries arrived during 1947 and 1948.³⁰ From these data, we could see that the policy issued by SCAP contributed greatly to the missionary activities. Because of this, more and more missionaries came to Japan and devoted themselves to the course of evangelization, which was quite an important attribution to the spread of Christianity in Japan.

3) MacArthur's Personal Favor for Christian Mission

MacArthur promoted Christian propagation not only by conceiving a policy in favor of the Christian mission and sending American missionaries to Japan but also personally expressed and exerted his support for Christianity in different occasions and in different ways.

On 10 July 1946, he confided to US Secretary of the Navy James Forrestal in Tokyo, that he was thinking of asking the Emperor to join the Christian faith. The monarch, MacArthur said was "typical of any well-bred wealthy young club man in western society who was used by the military as their stooge." The General evidently changed his mind, however. He later boasted to an American churchman that he had the power to make the Emperor and 70 million Japanese Christians overnight, if he so chose and he told American revivalist Billy Graham that Hirohito had indicated to him a willingness to adopt Christianity as Japan's new national creed. But the Supreme Commander rejected the offer, he told Graham, because it would be wrong to force any religion on a country.³¹

When Japan commemorated the 400th anniversary of the earliest Christian missionary St. Francis Xavier, General MacArthur expressed confidence that the Christian concepts which St. Francis Xavier brought to Japan 400 years ago would "ultimately grow and thrive" throughout Japan and the Far East. The Occupation Commander issued a brief statement commemorating the 400th anniversary of the early Christian missionary's arrival in Kyushu as Catholics from many foreign countries began arriving here for a two-week celebration of the occasion. In bringing Christianity to Japan, General MacArthur said, St. Francis Xavier "brought to the Far East the greatest concept the world has ever known. And here, I devoutly believe, it will ultimately grow and thrive, for it embodies the one thing that can not be destroyed-a sound idea."³²

30 Mar. 31, 1949, Press Released by SCAP, National Diet Library Special Collection of Occupation, Box No.CIE(A)07476.

31 Takemae Eiji, *ibid*, p.379.

32 Christian Concepts Brought by St. Francis Will Grow, SCAP Issues Statement on 400th Anniv. of Arrival, May 25, 1949, National Diet Library Special Collection of Occupation, Box No.3489.

The establishment of the International Christian University could be said one of the largest of postwar missionary enterprises. MacArthur also played an important role in putting forward this enterprise. The idea was raised by Dr. Ralph E. Diffendorfer, a prominent Methodist missionary, and then quickly gained the support of the Federal Council of Churches and the Foreign Missions Conference of North America, and later he also gained support of fourteen denominational mission boards. To put the idea into practice as soon as possible, they established a foundation to raise money for a Christian University. In 1948, when asked to assume the position of honorary chairman of the foundation, MacArthur accepted it and eventually became an avid supporter. To raise money for this foundation, MacArthur tried to persuade many Americans to donate. For example, he told John D. Rockefeller, Jr., in an appeal for funds "This Christian University is one of the most important things that America can do for Japan".³³

During his tenure, MacArthur received many letters from common Japanese people. This has supplied a useful channel for MacArthur to communicate with the common Japanese people, especially as a method for him to know their demand for missionaries and churches. Here are some letters to MacArthur.

Some wrote to MacArthur to express their opinion about Christianity and praised his policy in bringing missionaries to Japan. For example, on December 19, 1949, a letter wrote to MacArthur stated that religion has become quite degenerate in post war Japan and, therefore, requested that Christian churches be established in every city, town, and village, and American missionaries be assigned to these churches to conduct a thorough, nationwide evangelistic program. On June 16, 1949, a writer named Komatsu Eiki stated that eternal peace cannot be attained through the power of man but through the power of God. He felt that it was necessary to establish a world Sunday school so that Christians everywhere may cooperate in a common effort toward achieving eternal peace on earth. On February 17, 1950, Ikuhara Miroshi and Iseki Masuko Wrote to MacArthur and stated that "Japan is God's country and that God does exist". They requested that the Emperor be notified that Japan is a country of God. They also stated that Christianity is God's religion and requested that Christianity be propagated throughout Japan. They stated that "only through the power of God can Japan be saved from the present critical situation."³⁴

Some also directly asked MacArthur to help with their church construction or asked for American missionaries. On December 13, 1949, Sumida Kenichiro, a member of the Ishimi Masuda Church Fund Raising Committee, requested MacArthur's support

33 Lawrence S. Wittner, *ibid*, p.86.

34 Letters from Japanese People to MacArthur, National Diet Library Special Collection of Occupation, Box No.CIE(B)07376.

in the campaign being carried on the committee to raise 230,000 Yen for the purchase of a new church building. On July 1, 1949, a writer named Mizuki Momoyo requested that a Christian minister be sent to her village as soon as possible. She said that only Christianity can enlighten the inhabitants of remote farming regions and arouse their interest in national affairs. On December 15, 1949, Yamashita Yonekichi, a pastor, requested General MacArthur's assistance in building a new church. His original church called the Asakusa Nihonzutsumi Church was destroyed in April 1945. He said he had 35 members and more than 100 Sunday school pupils who were very anxious to have a church of their own and he planned to build a church so he asked MacArthur for help.³⁵

4) Reflection on MacArthur's Missionary Policy

MacArthur's missionary policy towards Japan had certainly encouraged the development of Christianity, but it also diverted from the basic religious policy he had declared to Japanese people at the beginning of the Occupation. In the new Constitution approved by GHQ and MacArthur, freedom of religion was highlighted. "Freedom of religion is guaranteed to all. No religious organization shall receive special privileges from the States, nor exercise political authority."³⁶ He also in different occasions noted that his task in terms of religion policy was to guarantee Japanese people's religion freedom. Nevertheless, his attempts to Christianize Japan had violated his own promise to Japanese people. The new missionary policy could certainly be seen as favoritism and encouragement to Christianity. While MacArthur abolished State Shindoism, he used his privilege to support Christianity in Japan. Actually inside GHQ, there had been opposition to MacArthur's missionary policy. William K. Bunce, Chief of Religions Division of GHQ, had expressed his anxiety to MacArthur. However, as the Supreme Commander of Occupation administration, MacArthur insisted his own stance and Bunce had to follow his decision.³⁷ In my opinion, for MacArthur, Christianity was both a goal and a strategic tool for his Occupation policy. He wanted to use Christianity to stabilize the Japanese society and to pave the way for democratization, as well as to contain the spread of communism in East Asia. Meanwhile, in his personal belief, Japanese should take Christianity as a permanent mainstream cultural value.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Constitution of Japan, Chapter 3, Article XIX, Cited from Takayanagi Kenzo, Ohtomo Ihio, and Tanaka Hideo eds., *Nihonkoku Kenpou Seitei No Katei: I. Genbun To Hon'yaku (The Making of the Constitution of Japan Vol. Documents)*, Yukaigaku, 1972, p.277.

³⁷ Ray A. Moor, "Soldier of God: MacArthur's Attempt to Christianize Japan," Ray A. Moor ed., *Tenno Ga Baiburu Wo Yonda Hi (When the Emperor Read the Bible)*, Kodansha, 1982, pp.51-53.

IV. The Christian Boom in Occupied Japan

1) Government Level

For MacArthur, one of the motives to spread Christianity in Japan was to promote democracy in Japan. This was manifested partly in the response by Japanese political leaders on Christianity. In Occupation period, Christian values were accepted by the political leaders, and was regarded as a moral basis of the reconstruction of Japan.

In 1947, Tetsu Katayama was elected as Japan's first Christian Premier. After his inauguration, Premier Katayama voiced his belief in Christian morality as the guiding principle of his administration. In an interview with three noted Christian leaders of the nation Katayama declared that it was his conviction that Japanese government should be guided by Christian morality and based on moral principles and humanism. He expressed the hope that Christians in this country would give him their advices as "the real democracy can grow in this country only on the basis of the Christian faith".³⁸ It's worth noting that when Katayama came into power, he even gathered the Christian Diet members to hold a religious service.

In 1946, as a result of the first general election under new Constitution, twenty Christians were elected into the Diet. In the 1947 election, twenty one Christians were voted into the Diet again. In the meantime, the so-called "Religious Senator Club" (*Shukyo Giin Kurabu*) was founded in 1947.³⁹ In the new Diet, besides Christian members, all the religion-related members, which altogether account more than fifty, joined together to establish the "Religious Senator Club". They hold a formal meeting every month, claiming that their aim is to produce a religious atmosphere in the cabinet, and to encourage Japanese people to lead a life with religious belief. On September 22, 1946, the members of both Houses of Japanese Diet received neatly bound copies of the Bible from the Japan Bible Association (Nihon Seisho Kyokai) to give them guidance and to raise their level of the culture. These Bibles were sent to Japan through the kindness of the American Bible Association. Those who were believers in Christianity were especially pleased to have their Bibles. Even six Communist members, who seemed to be foreign to the Bible, also possessed them. One of the party members was delighted at having a copy, saying "This is a suitable document with which to study cultural history."⁴⁰

Even the Emperor appreciated the spread of Christianity in Japan at that time. In 1948, the Emperor valued highly about MacArthur's missionary work in Japan. He ex-

38 Katayama Stresses Christian Morality in Administration, *Add Morning, Jiji Press*, Tokyo, June 9, 1947, National Diet Library Special Collection of Occupation, Box No.CIE740132.

39 Kiritutokyo Nenkan1948, Tokyo, Christian News Press, 1948, p.175.

40 Bibles Sent to Diet Members, *Nippon Times*, Sep22, 1946, National Diet Library Special Collection of Occupation, Box No.CIE740132.

pressed his gratitude for General MacArthur's guidance of the Japanese, for the help of the American people toward Japan's stabilization and rehabilitation, and for the work of the missionaries of all faiths in Japan, whose objectives and endeavors he admires.⁴¹

2) Public Level

As MacArthur and SCAP exerted their efforts to introduce and propagate Christianity to Japanese people, subtle change within Japanese people's mind occurred. Japanese people gradually became to accept the foreign value as one of the most important basis for the reconstruction and rehabilitation.

The head of the National Christian Council of Japan told the World Mission Assembly in 1948, "It is amazing how our people have lost all prejudices and misunderstanding of Christianity". Reverend Michio Kozaki, who was also moderator of the Church of Christ in Japan, said, "there is a lot to do and many obstacles, but Japan stands at the threshold of becoming Christian". "There is evidence that those who have lost the old patterns of life are turning to Christianity for life philosophy and salvation. Many feel that the new nation needs a new foundation which only Christianity can provide."⁴²

Doctor Senji Tsuru, a leader in the United Church of Christ in Japan, who was also president of Ferris Seminary in Yokohama, said that Japanese were groping for something spiritually substantial and reliable to ensure their future well being through Christianity. Tsuru said the Japanese would find what they were looking for "in true democracy founded on Christianity." He said Christianity "faces the brightest future in its history in Japan. More and more Japanese are embracing it because they are finding its principles make possible the way of life they seek."⁴³

The United Church of Christ was the most active Christian association in Occupation. As it was subjected to the Japanese government under war, the United Church of Christ reflected heavily on its war responsibility. In August, 1945, a nationwide repenting meeting was held in the association. At the same time, the United Church of Christ held a conventional meeting to consider about countermeasures for the reconstruction of Japan after the war.⁴⁴ In September, Premier Higashiku Ninomiya invited the leaders of the United Church of Christ and consigned a directive to the

41 "Emperor Receives Cardinal Spellman, Express Thanks to MacArthur, to Work of Missionaries of All Faiths", *Mainichi*, Jun 10, 1948, National Diet Library Special Collection of Occupation, Box No.3489.

42 Christianity Spreads in Japan, by the Associated Press Columbus, Ohio, Oct 8, 1948, National Diet Library Special Collection of Occupation, Box No.CIE740132.

43 Japanese Searching for Spiritual Guide, Washington AP, July 7, 1949, National Diet Library Special Collection of Occupation, Box No.3489.

44 Nihon Kirisutokyodan Senkyokenkyusho, *Nihon Kirisutokyodanshi Shiryoshu (A Collection of the United Church of Christ) Vol.3: Nihon Kirisutokyo No Saihen (Reorganization of the United Church of Christ)*, 1945-1954, Nihon Kirisutokyodan Shuppankyoku, 1998, PP.37-41.

leaders. The directive asked the Christians in Japan to help the government and people to overcome the suffering time right after the war, and noted that Christians should play an important role in stabilizing the post-war Japanese society.⁴⁵ This showed the Japanese government attached importance to Christianity's role in the reconstruction of Japan, and also demonstrated that the United Church of Christ had great influence in orienting post-war Japan. In 1948, Construction of New Japan Christian Movement (*Shinnihon Kensetsu Kirisutou Undo*) was initiated by the United Church of Christ. The Christians pledged to reconstruct a new Japan on the foundation of Christianity.⁴⁶ These activities proved that the United Church of Christ, as the main body of post-war Christian association, had been very active to infuse its influence to Japanese politics and society. Moreover, it had located itself as the pioneer to reconstruct a new Japan. This would certainly bring a Christian popularity among the Japanese people.

The general public was evincing a keen interest in Christianity. Especially young people and the students had developed a quite positive attitude toward Christianity, according to a survey. The Nippon YMCA was engaged in the investigation of the students' views on Christianity from 1950 to 1951. Object of investigation were 1632 students of 60 universities (believers 663, non-believers 959). The results were:⁴⁷

Questions:

- a) Do you think Christianity to be good as a principle?
 Yes: 622 (66.5%) No: 169 (17%) Neutral: 18 (1.9%)
 Don't know: 30 (3.5%) No answer: 120 (12%)
- b) Is Christianity useful and necessary to the society?
 Yes: 709 (73%) No: 127 (13%) Neutral: 18 (12%)
 Don't know: 29 (3%) No answer: 76 (8%)
- c) Which point of Christianity do you prefer?
 Morality: 251 (25%) Social service: 83 (8.5%)
 Atmosphere: 78 (8%) Easier in doctrine: 62 (6.5%)
- d) To what point of Christianity are you objectionable?
 Non-realistic: 126 (12.5%)
 Hypocritical: 102 (10.5%)
 Formal: 82 (8.5%)
- e) Why do you not become Christian?
 No chance: 138 (14%)

⁴⁵ Ibid, pp.43-44.

⁴⁶ Ibid, p.194.

⁴⁷ Students' View on Christianity, C. N. Sep. 27, 1951, National Diet Library Special Collection of Occupation, Box No.CIE740132.

Anti religious: 138 (14%)

From the survey we could see that though not so many people had become Christian, many did hold a positive view about the religion and many affirmed its role as a morality standard.

It is especially worth noting that in April, 1947, right before SCAP released its new missionary policy in May, General MacArthur received a letter of gratitude written by all the main Christian leaders. These people were Michio Kozaki, Moderator; Bishop Takao Doi, the Catholic Church in Japan; Bishop Tsugai, the Episcopal Church in Japan; Bishop Benjamin, the Greek Orthodox Church of Japan; and Masaki Imaizumi, Chairman of the All Japan Christian Union. The letter states, "We have the honor of extending to your Excellency the heartfelt greetings of four major Japanese Christian organizations..... As a result of the constructive measures taken by you as Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers our nation was saved from the peril which threatened it and is being enabled to pursue the task of building a New Japan along democratic lines..... Thoughtful Japanese now understand the meaning and the spirit of the injunction of our Lord Jesus Christ to 'love your enemies', and have a new appreciation of the power of religious faith in the lives of the American people. This spiritual object lesson is of even more value than the material assistance which your Excellency and the people of the United States have rendered us....."⁴⁸ From this letter, we could see how the Japanese people accept SCAP's policy on Christianity.

With this embracement of Christianity, more and more Japanese were turning to Christians rapidly. Pre-war number of Christians were given as 250,000, while in 1947, it was pointed out that there were over 600,000 Christians in Japan.⁴⁹ With official government recognition of Christianity, new converts were found daily among the ranks of students, factory workers, company employees and government officials. Meanwhile, establishment of Christian associations and Christian schools also boomed in the Occupation period. It is worth noting that most of the Christian research associations in Japan were also established in Occupation, with Christian History Institute (*kirisuto Kyoshi Gakkai*) established in 1949, NCC (*National Christian Council*) Center for the Study of Japanese Religion (*NCC Shukyo Kenkyusho*) in 1951, and Japanese Christian Academic Association (*Nihon Kirisutokyo Gakkai*) in 1952.

3) Christianity versus Communism

It is worth noting the development of Communism when talking about

48 Nippon Times, Apr 27, 1947, Japanese Christian Bodies Send Message of Gratitude to SCAP, National Diet Library Special Collection of Occupation Box No.CIE(B)07338.

49 Christian Converts Number 600,000, *Far Eastern section*, Japan, June 18, 1947, National Diet Library Special Collection of Occupation Box No.CIE74132.

Christianity's role in post-war Japan. Post-war Japan experienced fierce changes in cultural values. People lost their confidence in the traditional values and were eager to get access to new external values. It can be said that Marxism and Christianity were two parallel popular values right after the war. In the 1949 general election, 35 out of 115 Communist candidates were elected. Though 35 Communist seats among the full number of 466 Diet members do not carry an actual political power, this still demonstrated the swift advance of the Communist influence.⁵⁰ On the one hand, Marxism posed threat to Christianity. Especially when one of ministers of the Church of Christ Akaiwa Sakae announced his intention to join the Japan Communist Party, many Christians in Japan were shocked. And this soon became a focus dispute among Christian circle and Japanese society. Whether a Christian could simultaneously be a Communist was a hotly-discussed question. The Japanese Communists were different from Chinese Communist in treating Christians. They took every occasion to enunciate the policy that they would welcome Christians or people of any religious faith into their party.⁵¹ Communism had prevailed in China and USSR It could become the mainstream idea, if it continued to expand in Japan. That was the danger for Christians, because Communism simply believed in materialism which was contradictory with religious values.

On the other hand, Marxism also provided a chance for Christianity. To counter the development of Communism, SCAP and MacArthur diverted their neutral position towards religions. At that time because of the growth of Communism power in Japan's neighboring country China, Communism in Japan also expanded rapidly. Under such circumstances, it was possible that Japan was gradually oriented towards Communism. To contain Communism, MacArthur came to boost his support to Christianity and to utilize Christianity as a strategic tool. MacArthur told four Protestant leaders in the autumn of 1945, "Japan is a spiritual vacuum," "If you do not fill it with Christianity, it will be filled with Communism".⁵² To detain the spread of Communism in Asia, US felt it urgent to conduct missionary activities and bring Christianity to Japan. It is said that the missionaries in China was called to leave China for Japan, after the establishment of a communism regime in 1949. As China had been controlled by communism, missionaries confirmed their task to resist to Communism by spread the Gospel in Japan.⁵³ The Christian boom in Japan led to Christians' victory in post-war Japanese politics. Christian Katayama Tetsu was elected as the first Premier of Japan. Christian

50 Sadachika Nabeyama, "The Rise of the Japan Communist Party," *Contemporary Japan*, Jan-Mar, 1949, p.9.

51 Mitsuaki Kakehi, "Christianity versus Communism," *Contemporary Japan*, July-September, 1949, p.322.

52 Takemae Eiji, *ibid*, p.377.

53 From the Interview with Julie Crouse, June 25, 2009. Julie Crouse is an American missionary who came to work for the Gospel since 1960s. She knows some US missionaries who came during the Occupation and has a rich knowledge about the missionary activities in Occupation.

Diet members held the actual power. In contrast, Communism could not get the chance to enter the mainstream of Japanese Politics. In summary, Communism and Christianity were two competing political values in post-war Japan. Because of American anti-Communism strategy, Christianity overrode Communism and became a popular political value for a short period in Occupation.

V. Conclusion

The Occupation was the third time that Christianity had been introduced to Japan. The first was in the 16th century, when the Catholic Church grew to a greater population worldwide, and began to arrive in Japan; the second period was said to be the decades around Meiji Restoration when Protestants and Catholic missionaries came to Japan to spread the faith among those inquirers who set in Japan. Compared to the last two periods, the third time the Occupation experienced a rapid and extensive spread of Christianity in Japanese history. It is quite interesting to compare the Christian boom in Meiji era and Occupation. Both were time when Japan was forced to open to the west and was in a quite disadvantage position. Certainly both witnessed great development of Christianity. However, the popularity that Christianity received in the Occupation was far more than that in Meiji Era. The reason largely lied in the difference of Japanese official attitude. With the notices forbidding the propagation of Christianity among the Japanese published in the first year of Meiji, the government's stand against Christianity was one of unmitigated opposition.⁵⁴ In contrast, Occupation enjoyed a positive attitude towards Christianity from both the government and societal level.

Christianity reaped a boosted development in Occupation so that many called it a "Christian Boom". Some scholars like Matsuda Takeshi said this was a success of "American cultural policy and soft power".⁵⁵ A significant number of the Japanese people expected that Christianity would be made a compulsory religion in Japan after the surrender; their greatest single source of knowledge about America was through the missionary, hence they identified Americanism with militant Christianity.⁵⁶ It is no doubt that the postwar circumstance and the direct interaction of a western and Eastern culture had supplied a great chance for Christianity in occupied Japan.

Generally speaking, the Christian boom originated from three factors. First, the postwar situation in Japan had prepared the foundation for the Japanese people to yearn for the religion. Generally postwar Japan was under crucial destruction caused

54 William K. Bunce ed., *Religions in Japan*, Tokyo, Rutland, 1955, p.151.

55 See in Matsuda Takeshi, *Soft Power and Its Perils: U.S. Cultural Policy in Early Postwar Japan and Permanent Dependency*, Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2007.

56 Ralph J. D. Braibanti, State and Religion in Japan, *Far Eastern Survey*, Vol.16, No.16, Sep.3, 1947, p.185.

by the war and Japanese people not only suffered from the shortage of material sources, but also faced a doubt against their traditional ideologies which had supported their nationalistic pride. Therefore, when Christianity came across the border, it soon became popular among Japanese people. Second, the U.S. government and the Occupation authority made an effort in propagating Christianity in Japan. SCAP and General MacArthur had exercised a policy in favor of Christianity and encouraged an atmosphere of Christian belief in Japan. The directives and regulations on religion issued by the SCAP definitely spurred the spread of Christianity. Third, the Japanese official attitude and standpoint about Christianity encouraged the common citizens to accept Christianity and supported the Christian circle to expand. With these factors, Christian boom genuinely happened in occupied Japan.

Christian boom in the Occupation left abundant legacy for Japan. Though Christianity became less popular after the Occupation, Occupation actually symbolized something for Japanese Christian history. As stated above, almost all the main Christian research institutes active nowadays were established in the Occupation period; numerous universities and schools rebuilt in Occupation are still burdening the commitment of educating Japanese youth today; though Christianity doesn't play such an important role in Japanese politics now, some Christian politicians still openly admit their Christian identity. In 1947, in order to commemorate General MacArthur's first landing place in Japan at Atsugi Airport, the Community Church was established at the spot.⁵⁷ From this event, we can see how strong the relation between Occupation and Christianity was. It could be concluded that to some extent Occupation symbolized a golden period for the spread and development of Christianity in Japan.

The Occupation was such an important period for Japan's Christianity. However, the study on Christianity in Occupation has seldom been worked out yet. Christianity's role in the Occupation and US-Japan relations had been largely ignored. Therefore, to disclose the mysterious veil of the Christianity in Occupation, especially to explain the underlying origin for the Christian boom and to the Christian boom's contributing factors to Japan's reconstruction still remains an important academic task.

⁵⁷ Church Was Planned at Spot General MacArthur Landed: villagers at Atsugi Commemorate Epochal Event of SCAP's arrival, 1947 *Nippon Times*, National Diet Library Special Collection of Occupation, Box No.PHW02967.