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# MEIJI PROTESTANTISM

in history and historiography

by

Aasulv Lande



UPPSALA UNIVERSITY 1988



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**STUDIA MISSIONALIA UPSALIENSIA XLVI**

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**ABSTRACT**

**Lande, Aa. 1988: Meiji Protestantism in History and Historiography**

The present study provides an analysis of two different but interrelated historical dimensions. The first dimension, the founding process of Japanese Protestantism, is analysed in its wider historical context on the basis of contemporary scholarship, particularly Japanese.

A second dimension: the ongoing historiographical interpretation of the founding process, is analysed from the foundation period itself up to 1945, against its contemporary historical background. The analytical approach takes account of the forms of history writing as well as its contents, in an overall comparative perspective applied to the Japanese and the Western material.

In the conclusion the interpretative trends which are identified through the analysis of the second, historiographical dimension are related to trends in contemporary interpretation of the foundation period. The conclusion thus focus on the relationship between prewar and postwar interpretation of Japanese Protestant beginnings.

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Bygland March 1988

Aasulv Lande

## NOTES ON SPELLING AND LANGUAGE

A diversity of words and phrases from non-English languages will be used in this book. For the Japanese language, the **Hepburn system** is used for transliteration.

Names of Japanese are given in order of indigenous convention: surname preceding personal name. The ambiguity of pronunciation of a Japanese personal name cannot be rendered in Latin script. In cases where no standard pronunciation is evident, I have made a choice between the acceptable options.

Japanese words or booktitles are frequently translated in order to facilitate the reading of the thesis.

Quotations and words from non-English, Western languages are not translated when the meaning is evident to a person who understands English.

## ABBREVIATIONS

<b>ALLGEMEINE</b>	<b>Der Allgemeine Evangelisch-Protestantische Missionsverein</b>
<b>AMZ</b>	<b>Allgemeine Missions Zeitschrift</b>
<b>CMS</b>	<b>Church Missionary Society</b>
<b>CMR</b>	<b>The Church Missionary Review</b>
<b>CSM</b>	<b>Church of Sweden Mission</b>
<b>CW</b>	<b>Complete Works</b>
<b>F&amp;S</b>	<b>Fukuin to Sekai</b>
<b>IMC</b>	<b>International Missionary Conference</b>
<b>IRM</b>	<b>International Review of Missions</b>
<b>ICQ</b>	<b>The Japan Christian Quarterly</b>
<b>ICY</b>	<b>The Japan Christian Yearbook</b>
<b>MRW</b>	<b>The Missionary Review of the World</b>
<b>RZ</b>	<b>Rikugo Zasshi</b>
<b>YC</b>	<b>Yorozu Choho</b>

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## **MELJI PROTESTANTISM IN HISTORY AND HISTORIOGRAPHY**

### **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION.**

#### **1.1 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY.**

##### **1.1.1 Historiography in International Church History.**

The history-writer has power over the present. The rulers, whether they are political, religious or academic, are therefore keen to enforce a writing of history on their own conditions, and which serve their own interests. For the losers of a battle or for those socially or religiously oppressed, history on the other hand can become a means of liberation. The conditions for a liberating use of history requires a presentation from the point of view of the oppressed. If they are given the opportunity to write their own history, a liberating process might be initiated or strengthened. Such history provides hope for the future.

These dynamics operate in the contemporary search for a "new" history. "History from below" has become a chief concern for liberation movements, whether they are of a Marxist type or are inspired by religious motifs. The idea is that history-writing is part of a liberating strategy. It may be applied to political history as well as to church history in the Third World.<sup>1</sup> It may also be applied to history-writing in Western societies, where a "history from below" is said to be needed by sectors in society which have been overlooked by the dominant political tradition.

For the new type of history-writing, i.e. "history from below", historiography becomes a valuable tool. Through historiographical analysis the previous history-writing is critically assessed and its interpretations and emphases, as well as the selections of

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<sup>1</sup> As to church history in the Third World, there is an early attempt at writing a church history "from below" by W.H.C. Frend in his "The Donatist Church", Oxford 1952. He gives in this study ample evidence that the Donatist church had an understructure of Maghrebian culture.

Yet, the church is not treated "as the outcome of the inner yearnings of the Berbers for an African Church", according to Ajayi 1969: 104. J.F.Ade Ajayi and E.A. Ayandele, distinguished Nigerian scholars, stress in the quoted article "the fact that greater understanding of the true nature of African Church history must proceed from a study of the interaction between Church and society, that is to say from a sociohistorical analysis of Christianity in Africa." Ajayi 1969: 96. Several church histories are analyzed and criticized from this "African" point of view in the article. The comprehensive work on African Church History by the distinguished Africanist Bengt Sundkler to be published 1988, similarly presents Church History from a distinct African point of view.

A similar perspective is taken by John C. B. Webster in his article on "The History of Christianity in India: Aims and Methods", Webster 1978. He traces the developments from a missioncentered history up to the modern trend of writing "the history of Christianity in the context of Indian history", Webster 1978: 122. Cf similar ventures also in South American, African and South Asian general history, Mørner 1970.

facts, are viewed in the light of their scholarly characteristics,<sup>2</sup> and the implicit or explicit political objectives.<sup>3</sup>

The Japanese situation differs vastly, in political and religious respects, from most countries of the Third World. One difference lies in the fact that Japan was never colonized, contrary to the fate of most countries in Asia, Africa or South America. Another difference lies in the prevailing political and economic system according to which riches are distributed in such a way to avoid the development of a rich minority and a poor majority in Japan. A third difference lies in the role of Christianity. Whereas Christianity in many Third World countries represent the masses, e.g. South America, the Philippines or South Africa, this is not the case in Japan. Farmers, fishermen and workers have, with a few outstanding exceptions, never been touched by the Gospel, at least not through the witness of the Protestant churches.<sup>4</sup>

This means that Japan cannot create a liberation theology or a history-writing "from below" in the same way as it is possible in many Third World countries. The needs of Japanese historiographical research emerge, subsequently, from a different situation.

This, however, does not mean that there is no active interest in Japanese Church History in Japan. Since the defeat in the Second World War, a major feature of Japanese

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<sup>2</sup> I will mention two Scandinavian contributions where ecclesiastical history is analyzed chiefly from a historiographical startingpoint.

The Norwegian missiologist and church historian Fritjof Birkeli treats the medieval founding of Christianity in Norway in a historiographic study entitled *Hva vet vi om kristningen av Norge?* (What do we know about the Christianization of Norway?). Combining chronological and thematic perspectives, Birkeli illustrates the development of the research on this subject in the 19th and 20th centuries. Covering various aspects of history writing such as sources, problems, theories and ideological presuppositions, he demonstrates that a pluralization of methodological as well as material problems develops. His study concludes with a sketch of a research programme, where theological as well as general historical aspects are taken into consideration and where a range of different sciences are brought to bear on the subject matter, Birkeli 1982, particularly pp 75 - 82.

A comprehensive view of the whole development of Church History in its relationship to dominating trends within Church- and general history, from the time of Eusebius, is given in *Kristendomens Historia*, Hallencreutz 1979: 65 - 79. He concludes by identifying different trends in modern church history, e.g. social history, universal history, history "from below" and ecumenical concern.

<sup>3</sup> I will illustrate this point by highlighting one political perspective in Scandinavian historiography.

The Dane Ib Thiersen provides an example of how a Marxist perspective on historiography is applied within a Western horizon. In an article he analyses instances of history writing in their dependence upon economical structures, exploitation and class structures, Thiersen 1975.

A similar example of a politically orientated historiography is provided by his compatriot Niels Kayser Nielsen. The latter applies a perspective of liberation in a critical analysis of sports-literature. Nielsen, *Den Jydske Historiker* no 19 - 20.

<sup>4</sup> Due to the conversion of whole communities to the Roman Catholic Church in her early Japanese history, the Catholic constituency comprises, even after World War II, large groups of farmers and fishermen. But, the Roman Catholics cannot be said to have influenced the masses of Japanese people more than the Protestants have. The approximately 1% Christians in postwar Japan, are in numbers divided between the two forms of Christianity, Catholic and Protestant. According to *Kirisutokyo Nenkan* 1980: 448f there were in 1979 1.003%, that is 1.123.022 Christians in Japan. 412.403 were Catholics and 710.619 were Protestants.

Protestant circles has been to critically assess its roots in Meiji Protestantism. In this enterprise both theological and historiographical critique is involved.<sup>5</sup>

### 1.1.2 The Basic Question in Contemporary Japanese Church History.

Developments since 1930 in Japan were marred by a military take-over of political power and an expansionist policy which brought Japan into conflict with both China and the Allied forces, and which ultimately led to its humiliating defeat in August 1945 after the devastating bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

The military forces claimed that their ventures in the 1930s were designed to strengthen the centralizing forces in a disintegrating Japan and ultimately to reinforce the political role of the Emperor.

In this regard they claimed to be the true heirs of the Meiji Restoration and the subsequent efforts to consolidate a modernizing Japan, which since its victory over Russia in 1905 had emerged as an international challenger to Europe and America.

The Protestant minority in Japan shared in the legacy of the Meiji period in the history of modern Japan. From 1872 we can trace the appearance of a self conscious Protestant movement, which interacted with other modernizing forces in the transformation of the traditionalist and feudal Tokugawa society with its Buddhist support.

From the 1930s the Protestant communities were confronted with new and serious challenges. On the one hand they were the heirs of Meiji Protestantism. On the other, they were not ready to be propagators for the military regime, in reinforcing the imperial element in the legacy from the Meiji period. Certainly Japanese Christians in the 1930s were nationalists, although they wanted to preserve a Christian identity whilst at the same time being loyal to the Japanese Government. Chapter Four illustrates more fully how Japanese Protestants during this period tried to define their role as heirs of Meiji Protestantism.

After the defeat of Japan in 1945 - and in the period of increased American involvement in the political affairs of the nation - there was a profound search for a new basis of Japanese self-identity. Critical questions were raised concerning the factors which led to the military take-over in Japan, and its devastating effects. Within the Japanese churches there was a critical quest concerning the validity of the theological basis of the previous Christian loyalty to the military regime. In fact there was a new awareness in the value of the so called Non Church Movement, which had been more reserved than most of the Mainstream Protestant Churches vis à vis Government regulations for Emperor veneration and the use of nationalist symbols in Christian worship.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> There is also a particular trend of sociological church history which reminds of the history writing "from below" in Third World countries. The representatives of this approach, Sumiya Mikio and Kudo Eiichi, will be introduced on the following pages.

<sup>6</sup> This interest in the Non Church Movement was taken up by Western theologians in the immediate postwar years. Emil Brunner visited Japan as a guest professor, and his interest in the movement can be documented in articles e.g. "Japanese Christianity" Brunner 1955, and "Die Christliche Nicht-Kirche-Bewegung in Japan", Brunner 1959. Michalson 1962 emphasizes the Biblical thought of the Non Church Movement, Michalson 1962: 9 ff. A further explanation of the interest in the Non Church Movement is given by John Howes, when he states: "The third point about Japanese Christian history concerns Uchimura's legacy and postwar concern over responsibility for the war. The majority of Protestants, precisely because they had accepted the state and had been so integrated into the mainstream of Japanese society, could not stand outside that stream and judge their nation's actions. Uchimura's more tentative acceptance of the Japanese state gave his followers a sense of responsibility to transcend their nationality if the state did not live up to their ideals. To this can be traced their record of greater opposition to the Second World War and their greater concern with maintaining the peace since the war. In their forthright criticism of the state they have provided good examples for those interested in the responsibilities of citizenship everywhere." Howes 1965:

These critical issues raised questions about Meiji Protestantism itself, which had been the commanding legacy of Protestant communities in the 1930s. Thus there emerged a critical concern in Meiji Protestantism, which was informed by a critical stance vis à vis the excesses of the 1930s and thereafter.<sup>7</sup>

Let me briefly characterize the different emphases in this critical study of Meiji Protestantism since 1945.

There is first a sociological school with Sumiya Mikio as the most pronounced representative.<sup>8</sup> He is deliberately concerned with the relationship between Protestantism and the class-structure of Japanese society.<sup>9</sup> He has analyzed Protestant beginnings in Japan from this perspective, and critically discussed the development of the emperor system in Meiji and post Meiji Japan.<sup>10</sup> Parallel to Sumiya, Kudo Eiichi from the Meiji Gakuin, a university in Tokyo dating back to the early Presbyterian mission, should be mentioned.<sup>11</sup> Kudo has more than Sumiya applied a purely sociological

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368.

<sup>7</sup> The professor Tsukada Osamu at the Episcopal university of St. Paul in Tokyo includes contemporary ideas, such as "Japanese Christianity", as well as ecclesiastical policies in his assessment of Christianity under the Emperor system, Tsukada 1981. The distinguished church historian at Doshisha University in Kyoto, professor Dohi Akio considers the relationship between Christianity and Emperor system in his article "Christianity in Japan", pp 45f. Cf also his study of Protestant church history, Dohi 1980; in particular pp 109ff.

<sup>8</sup> Sumiya, borne in Tokyo in 1916, is a graduate of Tokyo University with economics as his special field. He has already from the 1950s published works on the relationship between Protestantism and the social world of Japan. A pioneer work was *Kindai Nippon no Keisei to Kirisutokyo* (The Formation of Modern Japan and Christianity), appearing as an article in 1950. A pioneering sociological study, *Nihon shakai to Kirisutokyo* (Japanese Society and Christianity) came in 1954. A biography of the international Communist leader Katayama Sen appeared in 1959, reworked in 1977. Dohi Akio lauds the studies by Sumiya from the 1950s as pioneering achievements in the emerging sociological approach to Japanese church history, Dohi 1984: 23.

Among Sumiya's later publications on Protestant history in Japan are *Nihon no Shakaishiso, Kindaika to Kirisutokyo* (Social Thought of Japan. Modernization and Christianity) from 1968 and *Nihon Purotesutanto Shiron* (Thoughts on Japanese Protestant History) from 1983.

<sup>9</sup> Sumiya 1950/61: 20 ff highlights the relationship between Christianity and the middle-class. In this context, the People's Rights Movement is treated pp 54f.

In Sumiya 1968 the class-structure of the Japanese society is further emphasized. Sumiya discusses the formation of a Japanese middle-class, on pp 32ff and he concentrates on the relation between Christianity and the labour class on pp 42 - 57. Sumiya 1983 demonstrates his general concern for social thought in case studies on Meiji Christianity and in studies on Christian personalities, such as Uchimura and Kagawa.

<sup>10</sup> Cf the article *Gendai Nippon no Bunka to Shiso* (The Present Culture and Thought of Japan), Sumiya 1967: 67 - 90, see also a section on Uchimura, Sumiya 83: 124 f.

<sup>11</sup> Kudo is borne in Sapporo 1922 and graduated from the Department of Economics at Keio University. He is presently lecturing at Meiji Gakuin University. He also works in the Department of Evangelism of *Nihon Kirisuto Kyodan*, and serves as an advisor to the Christian Federation for the Liberation of *burakumin*. The word *burakumin*, literally means "community people", and signifies outcasts who for centuries have suffered social discrimination.

analysis of the early history of Protestantism in Japan.<sup>12</sup> For Kudo as well as for Sumiya, the research is strongly motivated by an evangelical concern. They have tried to develop a new strategy of evangelism in Japan. A third person, also from Tokyo's intellectual circles, who links Church History and sociological analysis is Morioka Kiyomi.<sup>13</sup>

Morioka is the best known of these three. Some of his works are published in English.<sup>14</sup> He works in the field of religious sociology, however with less theological motivation than the other two.<sup>15</sup>

An influence from this form of thinking is also seen in the more theological school of thought, with great interest in social reform and the social history of Japan. This approach contains a search for points of contact and relationships between Protestantism and popular movements such as the Peoples' Rights Movement, which was a decidedly democratic movement in the early Meiji period. They are very critical of the emperor-system and of Christian interactions with it prior to World War II. They are also critical of syncretism.

Dominating representatives from this school are among others Dohi Akeo,<sup>16</sup> a

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<sup>12</sup> Already in the journal *Meiji Gakuin Ronso* 1953 Kudo presented a substantial analysis of how the samurai-class accepted and interpreted Christianity. In his book *Nihon Shakai to Purotesutanto Dendo* (Japanese Society and Protestant Evangelism) from 1959, Kudo analyses the spread of Protestantism from samurai to rural communities and looks into the development of Protestantism during the process of industrialization. Kudo is concerned for the social and economic sides of Protestant development, and he shows a special interest in the rural phase of early Japanese Protestantism (Kudo 1959: 51-182). His *Meijiiki no Kirisutokyo* (Christianity in the Meiji Period) from 1979 contains loosely connected articles on social issues, separate social questions such as pollution and discrimination, and presentations of Protestant personalities. The book *Nihon Kirisutokyo Shakai Keizaiishi Kenkyu* (A Study of the social and economic history of Japanese Christianity) 1980, repeats the main themes of Kudo's research. But he also looks into religious characteristics of Protestantism and considers the process of conversion. Cf Kudo 1980: 17 - 22, 56 - 76.

<sup>13</sup> Morioka Kiyomi is borne in Mie Prefecture in 1923. He graduated from the Department of Philosophy at Tokyo Bunrika University. Morioka is professor of sociology at Tokyo University of Education.

<sup>14</sup> Cf the list of his English publications, Morioka 1975a: 201 - 203.

<sup>15</sup> *Nihon no Kindaishakai to Kirisutokyo* (Modern Japanese Society and Christianity) Morioka 1970, is a theological book as well as a historical study. It presents a historical sketch of Meiji Protestantism, particularly during the early Meiji era. Its first part, pp 13 - 194 emphasizes the process of conversion and church formation. Sociological aspects of church formation are analyzed, pp 65 - 194. This book, however, transcending the limitations of a merely sociological analysis, highlights Christian conflict with religion and nationalist policies, see pp 195 - 250.

*Religion in Changing Japanese Society* was published in 1975 and illustrates how Buddhism, Shinto and Christianity are influenced by the secularization process. The concern is academic rather than evangelical; cf for instance the presentation of the development of sociology of Religion in Japan from 1900 to 1967, Morioka 1975a: 171-184. A academic emphasis is found also in *Gendai Shakai no Minshu to Shukyo* (The Relation between People and Religion in Modern Society), Morioka 1975b.

<sup>16</sup> An example of a theological and critical Church History is Dohi Akio's *Nihon Purotesutanto Kirisutokyoshi*, published in 1980. His theological committment and critical concern is reflected also in "Christianity in Japan" from Thomas (ed) *Christianity in Asia*, and in articles in the journal *Fukuin to Sekai*. Cf F&S 1978 no. 2 - 4 on Tennosei to

church historian at the Theological department of Doshisha University in Kyoto, and his colleague at the same department, Takenaka Masao, professor of Ethics.<sup>17</sup> These professors are actively involved in the United Protestant Church of Christ in Japan (*Nihon Kirisuto Kyodan*) and also in the international, ecumenical movement.

Close to this school, but with a greater interest in the history of ideas and personalities is the outstanding historian at the International Christian University in Tokyo, Takeda Cho Kiyoko.<sup>18</sup> Her basic concern has been how Protestant ideas and ethos have become rooted in Japanese soil, in particular as represented by individuals.<sup>19</sup> Takeda has also brought into focus Christian women from early Protestant history.<sup>20</sup> All these three types of Protestant historical research in Japan after 1945 have met the challenge of the postwar situation with a combination of a "theology from below" and a sociological approach combined with a critical attitude to the emperor system and the Christian compromises with it. The latter point was however more dominating in the immediate postwar years. After 1970 there is a new recognition of the concern for interfaith dialogue, which was a characteristic feature at a certain stage of Meiji Protestantism.

One final school of Protestant historical research is the classical ecclesiastical school. A typical, and outstanding representative of this school was the greatest church

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#### **Kirisutokyo (The Emperor system and Christianity).**

His critical and theological analysis is applied also to methodological questions. Cf an article on church history writing in Japan, Dohi 1984.

<sup>17</sup> Takenaka Masao has graduated in Economics at Kyoto University and in Theology at Doshisha University. His doctorate is from Yale University. Takenaka applies a critical and theological principle on the historical development of Japanese Protestantism in *Reconciliation and Renewal in Japan* from 1957.

<sup>18</sup> Takeda Cho Kiyoko is borne 1917. She graduated from Kobe Jogakuin College and did postgraduate studies at several American universities. Takeda has been involved in ecumenical work since the Amsterdam World Conference of Christian Youth in 1939. She served as one of the presidents of World Council of Churches after 1971, when she succeeded D.T. Niles of Sri Lanka. See Rich 1974: 106ff.

<sup>19</sup> The book *Ningenkan no Sokoku* (Conflicting Views on Man) 1959, offers an analysis of educational principles during early Meiji, focusing the conflict between the emperor system and a Christian humanism.

In *Nihon Purotesutanto Ningen Keiseiron* (Formation of Man in Japanese Protestantism) 1963, Kinoshita Naoeshu (Works of Kinoshita Naoe) 1975 and for instance *Meiji Bungaku Zenshu* (Collection of Meiji Literature) 1977, Takeda has selected literature which highlights early Protestant history.

Takeda has been interested the question of defectors from the Christian faith. In the analysis of this question, she has focused persons who gave up Christianity. See *Dochaku to Haikyo* (Indigenization and Apostasy) 1967, *Haikyosha no Keifu* (Genealogy of Apostates) 1973 and the publication *Seito to Itan no Aida* (Between Orthodoxy and Heterodoxy) 1976, where Takeda pleads for the recognition of an area of creative tension "between Orthodoxy and Heterodoxy". Dohi Akio considers Takeda Cho a representative of a research method focusing the history of ideas. For a general classification of Takeda Cho's method of research, cf Dohi 1984: 29ff.

<sup>20</sup> In a special section on Women's Education, Takeda 1963: 153 - 189, contributions are included from pioneering women, such as Tsuda Umeko, Yasui Tetsuko and Hani Motoko. She has given a new perspective on an aspect of Women's Liberation in the article "Japans first Christian love letters; a glimpse at the correspondence of Danjo and Miyako Ebina, Takeda 1959: 212 - 18.

historian in Japan, Ishihara Ken.<sup>21</sup> He was a balanced, reflected ecclesiastical historian, showing a remarkable academic finesse. He passed away in 1978. Among his disciples is the Reformed pastor and historian Ono Shizuo.<sup>22</sup> It might also be proper to mention Ouchi Saburo, an outstanding and balanced postwar church historian with strong interests in the history of Christian thought,<sup>23</sup> and Kumano Yoshitaka, a theologian with strong concern for the ecclesiastical implications of theological ideas.<sup>24</sup>

### 1.1.3 Western Ventures in Japanese Church History.

Western scholarship on Japanese Protestantism has also flourished since 1945. There are two characteristics to be noted. First of all, Western studies on Japanese developments are intended to inform the West about what is going on in Japanese church life and theological circles. Secondly, it mostly explores Japanese - Western relationships, or the Western aspect of such relationships, such as mission history.

There is above all a linguistic reason for the limitations of most Western theological studies, and also for the accent on sharing information with the West. There is a tremendous need for qualified "theological journalism" to inform the Western public about what is going on in Japan, at the other side of the language barrier. There are only a

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<sup>21</sup> Ishihara Ken (1882 - 1976) is borne in Tokyo 1882. His father was a minister in *Nihon Kirisuto Kyokai*. In 1907 Ishihara enrolled at Tokyo Imperial University for philosophical studies. He came under the influence of the Christian philosopher Hatano Seiichi, and was baptized. Ishihara studied in Heidelberg 1921 - 1923, cf Dinkler 1977: 11ff. In Japan he worked at leading educational institutions, such as Tokyo Imperial University, Tohoku Imperial University and Tokyo Women's College. Chiefly, his research focused the global aspects of church history. Renowned studies such as *Kirisutokyo no Genryu* (The Origin of Christianity) and *Kirisutokyo no Tenkai* (The Development of Christianity) appeared in 1972. He did not, however, neglect Japanese church history. Among his contributions is *Nihon Kirisutokyoshi Ron* (View on Japanese Christian History) 1967. In *Kirisutokyo to Nippon* (Christianity and Japan) 1976, he shares his opinions on Japanese developments in a conversation about ecclesiastical issues. Ishihara stresses the missionary beginnings of Japanese Protestantism and the fact that early Protestantism came to in Japan via China, Ishihara 76: 145ff. Dohi Akio, who analyses Ishihara's methods of research, criticizes the "Europe-centeredness" of his approach, Dohi 1984: 18ff.

<sup>22</sup> Ono Shizuo is borne 1947 and has published *Nihon Purotesutanto Kyokaishi* (Japanese Protestant Church History), Ono 1986a and 1986b.

<sup>23</sup> Ouchi is borne in Sendai 1913. In 1937 he entered Tokyo University, but he has worked at other universities such as Meiji Gakuin University and Yamanashi University. For several years prior to his retirement, Ouchi was related to Tohoku University in Sendai. His research reflects a deep interest in the appearance of Christianity in his home district, the Tohoku area. He is devoted also to studies of the Meiji era. His *Nihon Purotesutanto Shi* (History of Japanese Protestantism) 1970, focuses ecumenism and theological ideas. He analyses the understanding of Biblical authority among Protestant leaders in *Kindai Nippon no Seishoshiso* (Ideas on the Bible in Modern Japan) 1960. He also treats personalities such as Kanamori, Kozaki, Ebina, Uemura, Uchimura and others). Cf *Nihon Bunka Kenkyusho Kenkyu Hokoku* (Research Report from Centre for Studies of Japanese culture) 1976: 239 - 244.

<sup>24</sup> Kumano was borne in 1899, and graduated from Tokyo Theological Seminary. He published books even before World War II. A central postwar publication is *Nihon Kirisutokyo Shingaku Shisoshi*. (History of Japanese Christian Theological Thought) 1968, which highlights the theology of Ebina, Kozaki, Uemura, Uchimura, Takakura, Kagawa and others.

handful of Western theologians who work comparatively freely with Japanese documents. There are presumably none who might do this on an equal footing with Japanese scholars.

But there is an additional reason why Western scholars take up studies with a strong Western background or implication. It might be put like this: A Westerner who has learned sufficiently to read, write and communicate in Japanese, should also have learned his proper position in the intellectual life in Japan. This position is beyond doubt a secondary one, at least for the time being.<sup>25</sup> Japan rules in her own intellectual world, also in the Christian part of it.

Among the persons from the Western world who have contributed to Japanese Protestant historical research is Charles Germany, whose study on Japanese theological history is translated to Japanese. For the Western public the historical surveys by Iglehart, Drummond and Philips are enlightening. In general they write historical journalism, and they are conscious of this.<sup>26</sup> Interesting studies have been written by Ernest Best,<sup>27</sup> on the economic reasons for Christian developments in the Meiji period. His scholarship is largely inspired by Sumiya.

As to Irvin Scheiner's study on the Meiji conversion processes<sup>28</sup> it is strongly dependent upon the Doshisha tradition, and also upon the studies of Sumiya and Takeda.<sup>29</sup>

This means, however, that Western scholarship on Japanese Protestant history is subsumed under contemporary Japanese categories. Best and Scheiner might be referred to the sociological school, Germany might be classified together with Dohi and Takenaka.

Drummond and Iglehart have an eclectic approach, and might be called writers of surveys. They pursue a classical tradition in the Western assessment of Christian developments in Japan, but they are also inspired by modern Japanese scholarship.

#### 1.1.4 Aims and Objectives.

Against this background, the aim is to set the contemporary interpretations of Japanese church history in context. That is to say, I want to illustrate how a Japanese interpretation of Church history gradually evolved, until a deliberate Japanese ecclesiastical history emerged after the Second World War.

I will do this through a comparative approach. This implies a scrutiny of the genres of literature in the evolution of Japanese Protestant history writing, parallel to contemporary Western material. The genre analysis will throw some light on the emerging process of Japanese history writing. I will also proceed to a content analysis, highlighting themes in Japanese Protestant historical reflection which are related to parallels in the Western interpretation. Changing accents and themes in the interpretations and new characteristics will be compared.

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<sup>25</sup> Robert Bellah, Edwin Reischauer and Donald Keene have attained leading positions in the Japanese academic world in Japanese religious studies, history and literature respectively. But Western personalities in that position are exceedingly rare.

<sup>26</sup> Iglehart intends to offer a "brief survey of the scene. It follows the main highway of accepted facts and events, and is without the apparatus of documentation", Iglehart 1959: 13.

Drummond introduces his well documented and balanced survey by stating that he is "not generally able to offer new or original interpretations of the many historical problems that intrigue the specialists", Drummond 1971: 11.

Phillips *From the Rising of the Sun*, published 1981, however, rather than a survey is a new presentation of post war church history in Japan.

<sup>27</sup> Best 1966.

<sup>28</sup> Scheiner 1970.

<sup>29</sup> Scheiner 1970: 248 - 255.

This historiographic process is divided into three periods: (i) The foundation period (1872 - 1905), (ii) the period of transition and alternative interpretations of the foundation period, (1926 - 1929) and (iii) the "dark years" in Japan under militarism and super-nationalism, which also include the years of the Second World War, (1930 - 1945). This third period is the time of a breakthrough in dialectical, un-historical theology in both Western and Japanese Christian and Missionary thought, though the Japanese context demanded considerable interest in Meiji Protestantism.

As a background to the historiographical study I present an interpretation of how Meiji Protestantism was formed. This is a historical study in its own right, with a deliberate effort to relate to characteristic themes and perspectives in the Japanese interpreters of this history since 1945. Thus the footnotes refer to modern Japanese scholarship not only as reference for the sake of documentation, but as a means of illustrating modern Japanese interpretative debate on the formation of Japanese Protestantism.

The objectives of this study are thus to add a new dimension to the present interpretation of the period of Protestant foundation in Japan, through a comparative historiographical analysis.

### 1.1.5 Concluding Observations.

This study thus operates at two levels: The secondary or subordinate level is a historical process, the foundation of Meiji Protestantism, which took place between 1872 and 1905. The primary level is the process of interpretation of this foundation period, during a span of years from 1872 - 1945. The problematic of the subordinate level is confined to a process which took place in the Eastern regions of Asia. But even on the secondary level the study is not confined to processes within this isolated area. It is related to the field of interaction between Western and Asian initiatives.<sup>30</sup>

As already noted, there is a vital historiographical discussion in Japan on the Meiji period and its repercussions on subsequent developments not least since the 1930s.<sup>31</sup> The interest in the Meiji era and the formation of Meiji Protestantism is also strong within contemporary Japanese Protestantism.<sup>32</sup> Even before World War II, Protestant

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<sup>30</sup> The Swedish historian Åke Holmberg views this epoch of world history from a perspective of international communication. He thus names the period from 1500 until the first World War "Man and the Ocean", Holmberg 1982: 9 - 242.

Similarly, Sundkler 1952: 4 and Hallencreutz 1976: 99 stress the global dimensions of missiology. "Studies of Mission thus include Church History in a world perspective, which comprises both our Church History and African, Asian and Latin American Church History", Hallencreutz 1976: 99.

<sup>31</sup> Cf 1.1.2. Cf also Toyama 1961: 295 - 406, a historiographical study on the Meiji Period covering works from 1961 to 1966.

Marxist scholars early developed an interest in the Meiji era: "When Japanese Marxist scholars first began to apply the theories and methodology of Marxian economics and historiography to analyze their own society, which was not until the late 1920ies, their research centered on the origin and growth of Japanese capitalism and the Meaning of the Meiji Restoration." Hattori 1980: 15.

<sup>32</sup> Permit me to point out, from the long list of works, Ebisawa Arimichi *Ishin Henkakuki to Kirisutokyo* (The Period of Restoration-reforms and Christianity) 1968, the publication of Doshisha *Nihon no Kindaika to Kirisutokyo* (Japanese Modernization and Christianity) 1973, Ozawa Saburo: *Bakusue Meiji Yasokyoshi Kenkyu* (Studies of Christianity in the transition from Tokugawa to Meiji) 1973, Ohama Tetsuya: *Meiji Kirisutokyo-kaishi no Kenkyu* (Studies of Meiji Christian History) 1979, Ota Aito: *Meiji Kirisutokyo no Ryuiki*, (A Riverbed of Meiji Christianity) 1979, and a book from the 1980ies by Oda Nobushi: *Bakusue Kirisutokyo Keizai Shisoshi*, (History of Christian Economic Ideas at the End of Tokugawa) 1982. Western scholars also work with problems of the Meiji era, for example Scheiner 1972, focusing conversion and social protest and Thelle 1982 analyzing

concern in the legacy of the Meiji period was quite decisive.<sup>33</sup> I have already illustrated how developments after the War have resulted in greater critical views on the formation and the relevance of this heritage.

There has to my knowledge not been any specialized study in the Japanese interpretation of the formation of Meiji Protestantism, although there is a considerable interest among Western observers in what Japanese Protestant scholars are thinking and producing.<sup>34</sup>

On the Japanese side the critique of Meiji Protestantism has encouraged a historiographical discussion on how the history of early Protestantism in Japan should be interpreted and assessed.

Firstly, attempts are made to display themes as well as sources and methods in the large number of historical studies on Meiji Christianity. The main motivation has been to direct Japanese research into fields considered fruitful for further studies.<sup>35</sup> Secondly, in postwar years an academic debate has risen between representatives of different methods of research in Christian History. One method is concerned with theology, whereas another method is sociologically oriented.<sup>36</sup> This academic debate, conducted within the academic theological field, shows the increasing relevance of problems of the historiography for leading church historians of the country.<sup>37</sup>

The investigation intends to carry on the motif of information, found in contemporary Western research, and at the same time present an analysis of Western and Japanese traditions of how the formation of Japanese Protestantism has been and is being interpreted.

There is an interesting link between theology and historical interpretation here. The presentation of emerging history writing in Japan will also illustrate a so-far overlooked dimension in the development of Japanese theological thought.

## 1.2 MATERIAL AND METHODOLOGY.

### 1.2.1 Occurrence of Sources.

The able, postwar scholarship on Japanese Protestant history, which I have briefly characterized, provides not only insights into the problems of interpreting the early period of Japanese Protestantism. It also provides lists of books and the presentations of early materials as well as references to early research on the subjects involved.

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religious dialogue. A Western commentator says: "Attention to any significant issue in Japanese life involves an initial concern with the Meiji period" Germany 1965: 1.

<sup>33</sup> Cf the work in 5 volumes by Saba Wataru Uemura Masahisa to *Sono Jidai* (U.M.and his Time) 1937-38/76.

<sup>34</sup> Supra 1.1.3, note 26.

<sup>35</sup> Cf the presentation of material and topics from the study of Japanese church history in Ozawa 1964. See also an article discussing sources and methods in local Japanese church history, Dohi 1980a: 10 - 15.

<sup>36</sup> Cf supra 1.1.2. Sumiya 1981: 73ff divides postwar Japanese research in Christian History into two categories. He says that one category emphasizes theology and ideas, whereas another is socially oriented. Similar views are found in the critical assessment of Japanese Christian history, Sumiya 1983: 163 - 185.

<sup>37</sup> Kudo thus maintains that the church should be seen as a social reality "... the group of believers, the church, is a concrete, social entity". Kudo 1980: 20. Sumiya views the history of the Japanese church as "salvation history". This point of view provides for criticism of ecclesiastical phenomena. Sumiya 1983: 176 - 184.

Some bibliographies contribute fairly accurate knowledge of existing books and articles from Japanese Protestant history during its first years. As far as literature in Western languages is concerned, the *Bibliography of the Japanese Empire* edited by Fr. von Wenckstern in two volumes is important. They cover "all Books, Essays and Maps in European languages relating to DAI NIHON (Great Japan) published in Europe, America and the East". The first volume covers the years 1859 - 93, the second 1894 - 1906.<sup>38</sup> The second volume contains a special list of Swedish Literature on Japan, edited by Dr. Valfrid Palmgren. "A Bibliography of Christianity in Japan" covering "Protestantism in English Sources" 1859 - 1959 published by International Christian University (ICU)<sup>39</sup> supports and completes the two volumes by Wenckstern as far as the English literature is concerned. In addition to these bibliographies, lists of available literature from postwar publications on Protestant History in Japan are also helpful in order to gain a picture of existing literature during the period up to 1945.

As to literature in Japanese, the International Christian University has also published a bibliography on Christian literature. A list of Christian Writings in Japanese during the Meiji Era exists. It covers the years 1859 - 1912, in other words starting already from the year when Protestant missions were allowed to enter Japan, a decade before the Meiji Restoration.<sup>40</sup> The Japan Conservative Baptist Mission has published a book-list which claims comprehensiveness as far as Christian Literature in Japan goes. "we sought to list all books from every viewpoint within Christendom. The only limitations were that a publication should be in print and generally have a value of ten yen or more to be counted as a book."<sup>41</sup> The bibliography claims to contain references to all literature available in Japan published before 1958. English and Japanese books are included. To several of the books, listed short, analytical reviews are provided.

I have obtained and selected literature chiefly from the libraries and archives of Doshisha University, Kyoto. Doshisha, founded 1875, is especially close to the Kumamoto tradition of Protestantism. But their library and archives contain a wide range of materials on Japanese Christian History, particularly, including sources from American Protestant missions.<sup>42</sup> In Japan, I have also used the libraries of Union Theological Seminary, the chief Theological seminary of Nihon Kirisuto Kyodan in Tokyo, and the Lutheran Theological Seminary. Though better selections of Episcopal and Roman Catholic books exist at educational centres of these churches, the libraries used, provide a variety of literature related to what I have termed Meiji Protestantism.

I have also used Scandinavian Libraries, which contain some Japanese literature in translation, and some Western books on Japan. Chief among these libraries are Wahls Bibliotek in Statsbiblioteket Århus, Denmark, the Swedish Institute of Missionary Research (SIM), the library of Church of Sweden Mission, the Library of the Theological Department, Uppsala University and the University Library in Uppsala. The last four libraries are found in Uppsala, Sweden. The Egede Institute of Missiology and Ecumenics, Oslo, has also provided material.

The Scandinavian Libraries have some German Literature on Japanese Protestant history, in particular publications from the Swiss East Asia Mission, as well as literature discussing the policies of the latter organization. Relevant articles are found in the missiological magazine *Allgemeine Missions Zeitschrift* (started 1874). All relevant articles of the Protestant Missionary Magazine *Japan Christian Quarterly* (started 1926) are also found in the SIM Library.

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<sup>38</sup> Wenckstern 1895 and Wenckstern 1907.

<sup>39</sup> Ikado 1966.

<sup>40</sup> International Christian University 1965.

<sup>41</sup> Yanagita 1958: Preface p.iii.

<sup>42</sup> A special list of existing literature is Shozo Bunken Mokuroku, (Inventory of Archival Documents), Doshisha 1967.

As there are considerable collections of American material on Japanese developments in the Doshisha Archives and Libraries as well as in the Scandinavian collections I have not found it necessary to embark on a more comprehensive investigation in American libraries or archives.

### 1.2.2 Selection of Representative Material.

From this material I have made a selection, in order to highlight the historiographical problems which I have opted for. It has been my aim that this selection of materials should be sufficiently representative for the three periods, as well as for the sources of my introductory study of the foundation period, and for the selection of the postwar interpreters of this period. I have tried to establish a solid base for illustrating the main interpretative alternatives, and their dominating variations and accents, rather than obtaining a complete coverage of all sources. The interpretation of the foundation period, as put forth in the first chapter, is based upon the same source material as the contemporary Japanese scholarship on this period. I will not give a detailed presentation of the material here, as this will be illustrated in the genre-analysis in each of the three chapters where I discuss how Meiji Protestantism was interpreted during the respective periods. I also present complete inventories of material in the dissertation. At this stage, I will just survey the material from the main historiographic traditions before and after the Second World War.

For the period 1872 - 1905 I have had access to the representative missionary material in reports from the mission field. In particular I mention the two volumes of *Proceedings* for the General Missionary Conferences in 1883 in Osaka and 1900 in Tokyo. The *History of Protestant Missions in Japan* by Rev. Verbeck which is included in both these volumes, together with the German missiologist Herman Ritter's account of thirty years of Protestant missions in Japan, provide representative missionary and missiologist thinking of Western writers on Protestant foundations.

Theological and spiritual aspects are enlightened through some missionary pamphlets and the magazine edited by Gustav Warneck, *Allgemeine Missions Zeitschrift*.

The early biographies on Joseph Hardy Nijima and the biographies by the American writer Griffis, also reveal representative interpretations of personalities related to early Protestantism in Japan; they are the main biographical material in the selection.

As to the Japanese material from this period, it is in general taken from magazines, in particular the YMCA sponsored magazine *Rikugo Zasshi* and the Presbyterian, church-oriented magazine, *Fukuin Shinpo*. Both magazines reflect historical consciousness in Reformed as well as in Congregational circles in Japan. This material is supplemented by books, which likewise reflect historical consciousness, although strictly speaking, there is no real concern with the writing of history. Among the books, I have included early presentations of Kozaki Hiromichi and Uemura Masahisa, as well as the radical publications on New Theology by Yokoi Tokio and Kanamori Tsurin. The third stream of Protestantism in Japan, the Non Church Movement, is reflected in my use of early articles, an autobiography by Uchimura Kanzo and an early publication, *Bushido*, by Nitobe Inazo.

In the period 1905 - 1929, the missionary interpretation is summed up in the standard monograph by Otis Cary on Japanese Christian history, which comprises sections on Protestantism together with Orthodox and Catholic history. As this book has extensive quotations, it not only provides us with Cary's perspectives, but offers other interpretations on Protestant history as well, particularly from Western viewpoints. In addition a variety of Protestant commentators from various Western countries, including missionaries and missiologists, provide us with perspectives on Protestant history in Japan. Of particular value have been contributions by the Swedish missiologist Gustaf Lindeberg, the German official of *Allgemeine*, J. Witte, and a French interpreter, Raul Allier. Also contributions from *Allgemeine Missions Zeitschrift* are utilized. The missionary Magazine, *Japan Christian Quarterly* (JCQ), however, provides the best material of interpretation from the missionary point of view. There are in addition, missionary biographies. From this period, the biography of the pioneer missionary from the American Board, Davis, is particularly noticed.

The Japanese interpretation brings out two important contributions during this period: The modernist interpretation by Yamaji Aizan, representing the spirit of Ebina and the approaches of the Kumamoto Band/Congregationalist groups, and the ecclesiastical interpretations by Yamamoto Teruhide which are in the footsteps of Uemura Masahisa and the Reformed tradition. These positions are supported by articles in *Fukuin Shinpo* and in various other magazines. Many of these articles and contributions come from the six volume collection of material by Saba Wataru, which was published in 1937-8. But some material has also been brought to my attention through Western magazines and books, f.i. a collection of essay material by M. Stauffer, where Japanese voices speak about the Japanese situation. I have also been conscious to include material from Uchimura Kanzo, in order to see how Non-Church Christianity, which he initiated, interprets Meiji Protestantism. His collected works have been the main source here - consisting of mainly Japanese and some English works.

In the last period there is a large output of Japanese material, from which I perceive a new Japanese, historical school, and I have particularly concentrated on the Congregationalist Uoki Tadakazu from Doshisha University and Hiyane Antei from the Methodist Aoyama Gakuin in Tokyo. Some articles, even from the Japan Christian Quarterly, articulate Japanese interpretations of Meiji Protestantism. I have also been concerned to introduce Ebina's interpretations in this context. However, there is also a more ecclesiastical tradition emerging, where the above mentioned six volumes by Saba Wataru, entitled *Uemura Masahisa to Sono Jidai* (U.M. and His Times), contain a collection of various kinds of materials highlighting Protestant history in the Meiji and Taisho eras. The book, which is loosely structured around the father-in-law of the author, Uemura Masahisa, emphasizes his ecclesiastical ideas. But there are other ecclesiastical histories as well, such as the one by Kozaki Hiromichi from the Kumamoto Band/Congregationalist church. In addition to the biographically-oriented collection of material by Saba, I have utilized other biographical material.

The Western literature on Meiji Protestantism in this period is poor, mostly consisting of articles from the Japan Christian Quarterly. The scarcity of Western material reflects a low emphasis on the history of missions during this period. A notable exception is a section on Japanese Protestant History by Kenneth Scott Latourette in his comprehensive study *A History of the Expansion of Christianity*, and Hendrik Kraemers section on Japan in *The Christian Message in a Non Christian World*.

### 1.3 BASIC CONCEPTS FOR COMPREHENDING THE PROBLEM.

#### 1.3.1 When did Japanese Christianity start?

There are reasons to believe that Contemporary Christianity in Japan begun after the second World War. For many overseas missionary groups, as well as for many Japanese, a new start was then made. Several new enterprises and many new missionary initiatives were begun. Another reason for seeing the beginning of modern Japanese Christianity in postwar years is in the new social context, which challenged Christianity in a radically new way.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Philips 1981: 1 - 3 argues that nothing short of a new start took place 1945 due to the powerful new challenges to the Church. Even their "deepest beliefs" were altered.

Hori Mitsuo raises the same question in an article called *Kyokai ni totte Meiji Hyakunen ka Sengo Nijunen ka*. (One Century Post-Meiji or Two Decades Postwar for the Church?) Hori 1968: 6 - 11. Against the view that contemporary Japanese Protestantism was formed in the Meiji era, the author claims that the Church should stress the postwar beginning. This view is motivated by his social concern. The utterance should be seen in light of the "Confession of Responsibility of the Nihon Kirisuto Kyodan during World War II" proclaimed by the Nihon Kirisuto Kyodan on Easter Sunday 1967. See Panel Discussion 1979.

However, prewar Church leaders and Christian believers to a large extent remained, institutions were rebuilt and prewar Protestant thinking still was alive. <sup>44</sup> I therefore prefer to use words such as 'renewal', to describe the postwar start in Japan.

One might consider another extreme, namely to search for the beginning of contemporary Christianity in the early Roman Catholic history in Japan from 1549 onwards. Not only would ecumenical and apologetic interests benefit from such ideas, as there are more substantial reasons for placing the beginning of Japanese Christianity in the 16th century. Let me mention just a few:

A Christian identity was carried on through the centuries, in spite of isolation, secretiveness and persecution.

The hidden Christians, came out of their anonymity in 1865, and became the nucleus of the Roman Catholic Church in Japan in the coming decades. Care for the discovered Christians became a chief pre-occupation for the early missionaries of the Church.

Even seen from outside, there was a continuity between the hidden Christians and the ones from the 16th century: popular sentiments and state law were conditioned by the fear of the 'evil religion' which Christianity generally was considered to be in Japan even for some decades after the opening of the country in 1853. People as well as the state saw the Christian newcomers as linked to the dangerous faith which had been encountered two to three centuries earlier.

However, I prefer to speak of a Japanese beginning of Christianity, even of Roman Catholicism, in the mid 19th century. I will give four reasons for this.

Firstly, the doctrinal understanding of Christianity was radically changed. A transformation, or even an eradication, had occurred through the centuries of hiding.

Secondly, a radical organizational and institutional change had been made in the 19th century. New schools, hospitals or theological seminaries were opened.

Thirdly, although strong images of the past remained, the content and formation of the new Christian church were radically remodelled.

Fourthly, the 19th century provided a different historical context, compared to feudal Japan in the 16th and 17th centuries.

On this background it seems justified to regress to the modernization process of the 19th century in order to establish Protestant beginnings in Japan.

### 1.3.2 Are there several "Beginnings"?

Several points favour the view that there was "one" beginning of Christianity in Japan in the 19th century. Roman Catholics arrived 1859, and Reformed Presbyterian Groups and Episcopalians also came in that year. One year later the Baptists arrived, and two years later (1861) the Russian Orthodox arrived. There was in other words a simultaneous start. One can also bear in mind that society regarded Christianity as one, in spite of the organizational plurality. The same view was held by the early believers.

One cannot, however, deduct a unified start from the appearance of a simultaneous start. Various mission organizations and Churches had different patterns of co-operation and overseas contacts. The organizations were to a large extent independent of each other. As far as they belonged to different denominations, they came to develop along different historical paths. This is underlined from the perspective of history-writing in several ways. If for instance the same person wrote on Protestant as well as on Roman Catholic developments, the two processes were treated separately, in clearly distinguished sections. <sup>45</sup> Writers on Roman Catholic History and on the various streams of Protestant History were, however, in most cases different persons, coming from and writing to

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Cf also Germany's skepticism to studies of Meiji, because that period so easily might become a "Land of No Return", Germany 1965: 1.

<sup>44</sup> Takenaka 1957/67.

<sup>45</sup> The account Cary 1909/76 is divided into a Protestant and a Catholic part. Similar divisions are found in Drummond 1971 and Ebisawa/Ouchi 1970.

different audiences. Therefore the perspectives of differentiation were underlined by the very dynamics of the process of writing history. Looking at the actual historical processes as well as at their interpretation by historians, the idea of plural beginnings is strengthened.

I therefore conclude that the degree of plurality of the "Beginnings" differs in accordance with the perspectives taken. From an organizational and Western sponsor-related point of view, there were many beginnings. If we move inside the Churches, however, we find how a strong consciousness of Christian unity was held, an attitude which led to an emphasis on oneness also in the beginning. This oneness is strengthened when the non-Christian outsiders' views are taken into consideration. Christians from various denominational traditions were seen as "one" in supporting the "evil religion".

In my investigations it has seemed convenient to make due reference to the organizational aspects in a somewhat wide sense. I will take notice of the historical plurality of the beginnings. But I will also use the privilege of viewing the beginning from its later "results", that is to say what it has led to a century or more later. It is natural to unite beginnings where the originally different processes have merged. I consider the development of the United Church of Christ (*Nihon Kirisuto Kyodan*) as providing special relevance. I am then led to speak of four types of beginnings.

**Separate Early Groups.** This category consists of two units, independent of each other: The Episcopal Church and The Russian Orthodox Church. Though developing independent of the Mainstream Protestants, they were not so tightly shut off as were the Roman Catholics. In particular, the Episcopalians were close. Postwar close relationships have developed. Though the Anglicans decided to develop their own Church separate from the Mainstream Protestants, expressing its distinctness over against these groups, it is not natural to distinguish this Church too rigidly from the Mainstream Protestants, when dividing into groups of beginnings.

**Roman Catholics.** In spite of different nationalities and societies getting involved in the work, there is a clear organic unity in Roman Catholic work from the 19th century onwards. The development followed historical patterns which were independent of Protestantism. Roman Catholicism saw its "breakthrough" in Japan 1865. That year a famous encounter took place between Father Petitjean and a dozen believers coming out of hiding. In the subsequent decades the care of the hidden Christians was a chief concern of the Church. The Roman Catholics were therefore tied to communities of farmers and fishermen in Kyushu villages. This was a start very different from that of the Protestants in their urban samurai-milieus and school-classes of Western Learning.

**Various Later Groups.** This even more complex category consists of separate churches as well as churches or groups of rather strong cohesiveness. Within the category, Baptists came first to Japan (1860), Pentecostals, Lutherans, Covenant Churches and others arriving later.

Rev. Barclay F Buxton from the British CMS became the initiator of the so-called "Holiness Christianity" in Japan. He arrived in Matsue, West Japan, 1890. In Evangelical circles he is often regarded as the "Beginning", and the term the "Buxton Band" is used to describe his early companions.

The category of "Various Later Groups" increased strongly in postwar years. There is an organizational variety within this category. In view of the cohesiveness among many of the groups, as well as a common evangelical ethos in several of them, they command interest in common groups and among the same historians.

It would be natural to regard the groups within this category and which adhere to the evangelical/holiness ethos as a natural unity from a history-writers point of view. Other later groups will then be more loosely connected with the central, evangelical ones.

**Mainstream Protestants.** This category comprises the organizations and churches which during the Second World War merged into the United Protestant Church in Japan on one hand and the Non-Church Movement on the other. It has developed out of group-conversions which took place in the classes for Western learning. The students, of mostly

samurai origins, in these classes were influenced by the Christian faith of their Western teachers, to the extent that closely tied groups of believers, so-called "bands", were formed. For later Protestant developments the group conversions in Yokohama, Kumamoto and Sapporo were especially significant, providing Christian leadership in the subsequent decades. These three "bands" developed later into two distinct Church traditions and one Non-Church structure. Later Japanese or foreign initiatives merged with these streams. The postwar United Church of Christ and the Non-Church Movement display many points of contact and command interest as for similar or identical milieus as well as for the concerns of the same Church-historians. Though different organizational patterns are at work in these traditions, they nevertheless constitute one "forum" and it is natural to regard it as an entity from a history-writers point of view.

All four categories of "Beginnings" command interest for historical research. Not only the Roman Catholic beginning with its prelude in the 16th century, but also the beginning of the Holiness tradition has provided points on which to focus interest in recent years. The latter interest is strengthened by the present admiration of a clear anti-militarist attitude among Holiness-believers during the fascist period in Japan from 1930s up until the end of the Second World War.<sup>46</sup>

The so called "Mainstream Protestants" are decisive in what is termed Meiji Protestantism. This is because Meiji Protestantism is considered to be the typical, representative and most influential Christian trend of the period, rather than the inclusive expression of the different Christian movements. The three bands will therefore be important in the concept. Meiji Protestantism is also a Japanese concept, i.e. a concept which focuses on forms of Protestantism which in a special way have an indigenous character. There is also a connection in history with the largest Protestant body in Japan, the Nihon Kirisuto Kyodan, which also favours the conception Meiji Protestantism being attached to this group of Mainstream Protestants. This concept also permits me to include aspects from other branches of Protestantism, because various branches of Protestantism were more or less closely related to each other.

### 1.3.3 Beginnings of Meiji Protestantism: 1872 - 1905.

The arrival of Protestant missionaries to Japan under legal provisions makes 1859 a significant year in Japanese Protestant History. The 50 years anniversary was also duly commemorated in 1909. Cary's celebrated *A History of Christianity in Japan* was one of the outstanding contributions in that connection. Another 50 years have passed. In 1959 the Fellowship of Christian Missionaries' publication, the *Japan Christian Quarterly*, devoted its four issues to the commemoration of Early Protestantism in Japan. One of the postwar classics in Western writing of Japanese Church History, i.e. Charles W. Iglehart: *A Century of Protestant Christianity in Japan*, was prepared for, and published, the same year.

There is another periodization, however, reflected in the Japanese magazine *Fukuin to Sekai*<sup>47</sup>. Articles of this magazine, tend to connect the beginning of Japanese

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<sup>46</sup> The oppression of the Holiness Church and the situation of Nihon Kirisuto Kyodan during the "dark years" are focused in the journal *Fukuin to Sekai*, no. 9. 1983. Included are Chiyozaki Hideo: *Danatsu no Rekisho o do ikasu ka* (How can the History of Oppression be kept Alive?) pp 41ff, Horinesu Kyokai no ayunda Michi (The Path of the Holiness Church) by Yamazaki Washio pp 13ff, *Horiness Danatsu to Kyodan* (The Oppression of the Holiness tradition and Kyodan) by Kashiwai So pp 20ff, and other articles. The book *Horinesu Bando no Kiseki*, 1984, (The track of the Holiness Band) was published by an editorial committee, under the leadership of Yamazaki Washio, a previous principal of the Tokyo Bible College. The book illustrates the persecution of the Holiness Church during the Pacific War. Cf the dialogue published in *Fukuin to Sekai*, Morioka 1984.

<sup>47</sup> Cf Hori 1968, Oki 1968, Ouchi 1968, Murakami 1969, all articles in *Fukuin to Sekai*.

Protestantism with the Meiji Era. The arrival of missionaries 1859 did not necessarily or completely imply the beginning of Japanese Protestantism. By connecting the beginning with the Meiji Restoration, the links of Protestantism to the whole modernization process is underlined in this Japanese perspective.

Though missionary initiatives were undertaken from 1859 onwards, there were few Japanese initiatives up to 1872. The first significant breakthrough of Japanese Protestantism occurred that year, namely the Yokohama revival, subsequent to which the first Japanese Protestant Church was organized. Similar group-conversions occurred in Kumamoto and Sapporo later in the 1870s.

Through the three decades from 1872 to 1902, Japanese Protestantism moved from a concern for society to an ecclesiastical emphasis. The latter concern came to dominate the thought and action of Japanese Churches through its subsequent history.<sup>48</sup>

By 1905 Protestantism in Japan had developed three distinct theological streams: socially inclined modernist thought, ecclesiastically inclined reformed thought and a trend of religious individualism based upon Biblical theology. Through the Christological debates between Uemura and Ebina 1901 - 02, the relationship between the two first trends became firmly established.<sup>49</sup>

Sociologically, Japanese Protestantism started as samurai churches. It moved into the rural areas in the late 1870s and early 1880s, settling, however, by the turn of the century into urban middle-class churches.<sup>50</sup> Subsequent development through the 20th century has not changed the basic sociological situation which developed around 1900.

Returning for a moment to the relationships between Protestantism and political developments of the country, it can be said that the Protestant beginning took place within the early and middle periods of the Meiji Era. Protestantism broke through in an early stage of the Meiji political system, reaching maturity when Meiji society celebrated the early fruits of its establishment: the military triumphs of the war with Russia 1904-5. At that time I regard Meiji Protestantism as having been established.

Organizationally, theologically and sociologically I therefore have a basis for considering the three decades from 1872 to 1902 as the foundation period of Japanese Protestantism. The general political development reinforces this periodization.

#### 1.4 STRUCTURE OF PRESENTATION.

This investigation, thus, is multidimensional. It has a historical component. The pre-dominant element, however, is a contribution to comparative historiography.

Chapter I gives my own interpretation of the formation of Meiji Protestantism from 1872 to 1905. I give particular attention to the modern Japanese discussion, where as already indicated, there is emerging a new and more positive interest in the early history of Japanese Protestantism since the critical revision from 1945 onwards.

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<sup>48</sup> Kumazawa Yoshinobu considers the development of Japanese Protestantism a theological progress and a social retrogression, Kumazawa 1976: 184. According to Ouchi Saburo, Christianity was embraced in Japan because it was considered helpful for promotion of social reform. Due to the external and internal crisis of the church in the Meiji 20s, however, this social interpretation of Christianity was replaced by a deeper understanding of the Gospel and a development of theology. This observation is particularly true of the Yokohama Protestant tradition, Ebisawa/Ouchi 1970: 433f, cf infra 2.2.2.1.

<sup>49</sup> The controversy "made explicit what had hitherto been only a latent potential, which could have developed either toward theological liberalism ... or toward the orthodox 'evangelicalism'... The tension between these theological camps was intensified as the churches found greater need for self-identity in order to cope with the country's socio-political pressures towards a Shinto-oriented ... nationalism". Ishida 1971: 214. See further infra 2.2.3.1.

<sup>50</sup> Kudo 1980 treats the transition to different social classes in detail.

In the subsequent chapter, I record findings from a comparative historiographical analysis of how Japanese and Western analysts have interpreted the historical process they were themselves part of. In the content analysis I distinguish between a first phase leading up to 1890 and the second phase when Japanese Christians encountered anti-clerical sentiments during a period of increasing Japanese patriotism and Emperor veneration. In a parallel analysis I identify characteristics in the Western interpretations from this early period.

Chapters III and IV follow suit with similar comparative accounts of Japanese and Western interpretations from the two successive periods 1906 - 1929 and 1930 - 1945 respectively. In order to make the findings more accessible, I preface these chapters with brief historical accounts.

The years from 1906 to 1929 are often seen as a time of transition from a period of the formation of modern Japan to the dramatic "Dark Years" from 1930 onwards. However, as to historiography, it is worth noting that it is during this transitional period that an independent Japanese Ecclesiastical history began to take form, represented in the first place by Yamaji Aizan and Yamamoto Hideteru.. On the Western side there is a transfer from Mission History to Missiology. During the "Dark Years" there is necessarily an extensive interest in assessing what exactly was the legacy of Meiji Protestantism. During these years, Western interest in the formative period in the history of Japanese Protestantism diminishes.

In the Conclusion, I draw the threads together and relate modern Japanese Church history to the historiographical trends prior to 1945.

## CHAPTER 2: THE FORMATION OF MEIJI PROTESTANTISM.

### Introduction.

The formation of Meiji Protestantism was a very involved process. It has also proved to be controversial in subsequent historical studies in Japan as well as among Western observers. This chapter gives an interpretation of this process with special reference to the current research priorities of contemporary Japanese ecclesiastical history.

The formation of Meiji Protestantism was a part of a wider transformation of Japanese society which is known as the Meiji Restoration of the late 19th century. It, thus, has to be seen within its wider historical framework. In order to appreciate the full extent of the modernization process during the Meiji Era - not least the religious dimensions - it is necessary to look back at the Tokugawa society which was made obsolete by the Meiji Revolution.

### 2.1 THE BACKGROUND OF MEIJI PROTESTANTISM: TRANSITION FROM TOKUGAWA TO MEIJI SOCIETY.

Tokugawa Society refers to the social system of the Tokugawa Period. The period started in 1600 when Tokugawa Ieyasu became a *de facto* ruler of Japan after the Sekigahara battle. In 1603 his position as *shogun* was approved by the Imperial Court. The centralized, feudal society, called the *shogunate*, was terminated and Imperial rule was restored in 1868.<sup>51</sup> Meiji, "Enlightened Era", (1868 - 1912) which started with the restoration of the Emperor was above all a time of modernization.

Protestantism can hardly claim to have decisively influenced the transformation process although it was part of the transformation package. To a large extent it was, however, conditioned by the dynamics of the transformation process. Therefore I will present a comparatively broad picture of this historical process as the background to our church historical account.

#### 2.1.1 Internal Contradictions in the Tokugawa Society.

Early Protestant History in Japan is, thus, intimately connected with the process of national transformation, which in turn is conditioned by the preceding history. Turning to a presentation of this history, I will draw a sketch of the economic, political and spiritual aspects of Tokugawa Society as they relate to the process of national transformation. Decisive preconditions of early Japanese Protestantism will also be highlighted.

##### 2.1.1.1 The Economic Situation.

Tokugawa Society was agrarian, with farmers constituting its economic foundation. On this basis there was stable economic growth from 1600 up to about 1750. The population increased to about 30 million, approximately 50% more than in 1600.<sup>52</sup> After 1720, towards the end of the Tokugawa period, population growth stagnated. This is partly explained by the fact that people led a better life: They consumed more and enjoyed the flourishing urban culture with its variety of amusements and artistic refinements. Little new land was cultivated after 1720 and there was little improvement in the methods of

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<sup>51</sup> For reference in Western sources, cf Reischauer 1958: 579 - 668, Storry 1960: 45 - 69, Sansom 1961: 385 - 406.

The specialist on modern Japanese history at Kyoto University, Inoue Kiyoshi, presents this period in Inoue 1965a: 235 - 286.

Cf a short presentation by the distinguished postwar Shintoist historian Kubota Osamu who taught at Ise Kogakkan University, Kubota 1962: 167 - 172.

<sup>52</sup> Reischauer 1978: 98.

farming.<sup>53</sup> It is therefore not surprising that farming was unable to sustain any further population increase.

Towards the end of the Tokugawa-period, three famine disasters made their impact: the Kyoho disaster in 1732 - 1733, the Temmei disaster in 1783 - 1787 and the Tenpo disaster in 1832 - 1836. In addition farmers were severely taxed by the feudal lords. As a result the farmers' economy worsened. An increasing number of farmers now became tenants of their land. In the mid-19th century about 25% of the land was cultivated by tenants.<sup>54</sup> The increasing poverty among farmers led to revolts and unrest in rural communities.<sup>55</sup>

The samurai (warriors) also became more and more impoverished towards the end of the Tokugawa period. The status of the samurai was above that of the farmers. As warriors serving their war-lords, *daimyo*, samurai were important parts of feudal society. The period of peace extending from 1620, however, alienated the samurai from his proper work, i.e. to administer the sword. Some samurai became farmers, others administrators. In either case, the samurai became increasingly poor and marginalized. Constituting 6% of the total Japanese population, largely employed in unproductive work, they were a financial burden on Tokugawa society.<sup>56</sup>

The economical situation of the *daimyo* had also deteriorated. A glance at the political structure facilitates a better understanding of this deterioration.

In Japanese tradition the Emperor was the ultimate ruler of the country. He resided in Kyoto during the Tokugawa period, utterly stripped of all political power. He was, however, treated with respect by the Tokugawa *shoguns* (generalissimo) and regarded as the ultimate source of legitimacy of the *bakufu* (shogunal government).<sup>57</sup>

The actual ruler, however, the *shogun*, governed autocratically. Three types of *daimyo* governed their domains. The *daimyo*, varying in numbers between 245 - 295, consisted of *shinpan* (collateral *daimyo*), *fudai* (hereditary *daimyo*) and *tozama* (outer *daimyo*). The first group was small; relatives or descendants of the first Tokugawa *shogun*, Ieyasu. The second group also enjoyed close relationships with the *Shogun*. The outer *daimyo* were added after 1600 and consisted of allies and enemies from the battle at Sekigahara. At times these *daimyo* governed large domains, but in all cases they were far away from the capital. *Tozama daimyo* were never offered any central offices in the Tokugawa administration.<sup>58</sup>

Tokugawa *Shoguns* controlled the *daimyo* by classifying them according to their political significance. The potentially dangerous *daimyo* were geographically and administratively kept at a safe distance from the *shogun's* centres of power. There was also a strong controlling mechanism in the so-called *sankin-kotai* system; an annual rotation of the *daimyo's* living quarters. All *daimyo* thus had to stay a part of the year in Tokyo and a part of the year in his own domain. Wife and children lived constantly in Tokyo. They were hostages at the mercy of the *shogun* when the *daimyo* were absent.

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<sup>53</sup> Reischauer 1958: 626 - 32.

<sup>54</sup> Reischauer 1958: 631.

<sup>55</sup> Sansom 1963: 183 - 7, Inoue 1965b: 40ff, Okada 65a: 230 - 263, Kitajima 1966: 403ff.

<sup>56</sup> The first Protestants came from samurai background. Their social situation conditioned in various ways the conversion, cf infra 2.2.2.1.

<sup>57</sup> Reischauer 1978: 86.

Kubota 1962: 170f maintains that the increasingly strong restrictions which were applied to the Emperor towards the end of the Tokugawa regime fostered the *sonno* (Honor the Emperor) movement in the Japanese people.

<sup>58</sup> See map in Reischauer 1978: 84 - 5, which shows type of prefectures.

There were social and cultural advantages of the *sankin-kotai* system. Communication was strengthened all over Japan and the culture of Tokugawa centres, such as Edo, was spread to various parts of the country. The control of *daimyo* movements also contributed to peace and stability. But financial costs were high. Expenses for travels, double living quarters and the long periods of stay in Tokyo were constant strains on the economy of the *daimyo*.

The *Shogun* as well had increasing economic problems. His administration was not efficiently organized in order to cope with the economy of the whole country. The different domains were in reality economically autonomous. The national administration was therefore dependent upon taxation of the *Shogun's* own domain. Controlling only 20% of the total area of Japan, his position as a national ruler was weak. Difficulty in moving resources between the domains, for instance in the case of natural disasters, contributed further to this weak position.

In contrast to the negative trends of economic development among farmers, samurai and *daimyo*, there were, however, some counter developments in agriculture as well as in economic life as a whole. Rice continued to be the most important crop, but variations in the crop developed.<sup>59</sup> A general differentiation of products developed and trade increased between various parts of the country. Contrary to the general, economic development among farmers, samurai and *daimyo*, industry and trade progressed steadily, and so did the power of the merchant-class. The family enterprise of Mitsui, for example, grew from a small *sake* (rice-wine) brewery in 1620 to a complex and powerful trade-establishment during the Tokugawa Era.<sup>60</sup> *Shogun* as well as *daimyo* were forced to borrow from the wealth of the developing merchant class, thus becoming increasingly dependent upon the commercial establishments.

In some districts economic developments were positive. Although small domains accumulated debts, larger domains in the periphery, like the *tozama*-domains of Satsuma and Choshu in West-Japan, developed strong economies. As a whole, however, the new economic trends only aggravated the stability of the established society. They pointed the way towards a new social and economic order.<sup>61</sup>

The Tokugawa *shoguns* practiced political isolationism as its foreign policy. From 1641 onwards, contact with overseas nations was strictly regulated. A supervised Dutch trade in Nagasaki and a restricted transport by Korean and Chinese vessels were the only contacts with countries abroad. Until the forceful intrusion into Japanese waters by Commodore Perry in 1853, all Western efforts to establish contact were rejected. The-

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<sup>59</sup> Okada 1965a: 85ff illustrates the growth of agriculture in this period, when new crops as well as new methods of farming contributed to increased harvests, especially around the big cities. Cf Inoue 1965b: 5 - 10. The *amaimo* (sweet potato) was introduced during this process (1734), Sansom 1963: 170.

<sup>60</sup> Reischauer 1958: 637 - 640. Cf Sansom 1963: 120 - 27.

<sup>61</sup> There is general agreement about the economic and political developments towards the end of the Tokugawa period. Kitajima 1966 treats various aspects of the development from 1785 of a system on its way to dissolution. Analysing the process of dissolution, he points to cultural and political phenomena but also to great disasters such as the *Temmei* catastrophe Kitajima 1966: 2ff and the *Tempo* catastrophe, Kitajima 1966: 403ff. The economic frustration within the established order due to changes in production and circulation priorities, provided the people with new occasions for resistance, which threatened the power of the *daimyo* cf Kitajima 1966: 507.

Okada 1965a follows the same line of presentation. In Okada 1965b: 6 the author also talks of the *bakufu yukizumari* (deadlock of the feudal administration) due to a variety of reasons. Economic reasons are, however, seen as decisive, Okada 1965a: 6f.

Inoue 1965b: 39 - 65 takes the same general stand. Inoue emphasizes the inconsistencies and violence of the *bakufu* (feudal) system.

Kubota 1962: 197 - 9 underlines similar reasons for the deadlock of the political system, but he stresses the suffering of the people in these circumstances.

reformed the foreign policy of isolation did nothing to solve the approaching political and economic crisis within the country.<sup>62</sup>

Under these circumstances, "spiritual" life such as religion and thinking, promoted a national transformation. We shall see how trends in Confucianism merged with indigenous Shinto-thought to become a central force in the preparation for change. Although Confucianism and Shinto stressing the status quo, legitimized the bakufu-system<sup>63</sup>, they also possessed a capacity for change.

#### 2.1.1.2 Spiritual Life.

Though Buddhist thought under given circumstances and conditions can promote social change, the Tokugawa Buddhist establishment was definitely on the side of the status quo.

Buddhism was organized as a State religion during Tokugawa. All families had to register at a Buddhist temple; a procedure originally intended to enforce the ban on Christianity.<sup>64</sup> The privileges gave Buddhism material security and social status which may have been contributing factors in its developing in a formalistic way. Ordinary people looked down upon this "formalistic" religion. Buddhist priests were also despised because of their alleged low moral standards.<sup>65</sup> Buddhism, eager to preserve the status quo of the Tokugawa system, did not substantially contribute to progressive political thought before the Meiji Restoration. The crisis of the Tokugawa system was also a

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<sup>62</sup> The strong political emphasis in the restoration process has led Robert Bellah to maintain that " ... the 1868 Restoration ..., cannot be understood as a 'bourgeois revolution', as the attempt on the part of the restricted middle class to overthrow 'feudalism' and win economic freedom", Bellah 1957/85: 184. Neither farmers, merchants nor artisans were spearheads of change, according to Bellah. He holds that the only class which was in position to lead the nation in breaking new ground was the samurai and its locus of strength was the polity, not the economy", Bellah 1957/85: 185.

But in view of the national economic crisis prior to the restoration and presupposing that political consciousness might be generated by economical factors, I am, however, inclined to side with a postwar historian from Tokyo University, Hani Goro, borne 1901. He represents the majority of Japanese historians in maintaining the economic factors were decisive for the development of the restoration. Although he allows for a sophisticated interplay of economic, political and spiritual factors in a social process, he maintains the priority of the economic aspects. He emphasizes the role also of the people in the Meiji transition from feudalism to freedom. Hani 1956: 58 - 72.

<sup>63</sup> Sansom 1973: 21.

<sup>64</sup> Largely based on Portuguese sources, C.R. Boxer treats the so-called "Christian Century" (1549 - 1650). Against this background, the ban on Christianity and the isolation of Japan for two centuries are seen, Boxer 1951.

<sup>65</sup> "Even Buddhist Scholarship lacked creativity and was characterized by formalistic exegesis. Many of the priests lived in luxury, protected and controlled by the government and supported by offerings from the parishioners. Many times the government had to issue regulations against the sexual debauchery of the priests", Tsuji 1955/70: 404 - 489. Quoted by Thelle 1982: 36.

Cf Kitagawa 1966: 165 - 166, who observes that alternative Buddhist organizations developed among pious groups. Cf also Tamamuro 1960: 3 - 237, in particular pp 193 - 5, referred to by Kitagawa 1966: 166.

crisis for the Buddhist religion within it. Rather than Buddhism, imprisoned as it was in the Tokugawa system, other spiritual forces pointed forward to political change.<sup>66</sup>

It is difficult to overestimate the significance of Confucianism for the restoration process and modernization in Japan. Confucian writings and ideas had already penetrated into Japan from its early contacts with the Asian continent - becoming decisive for the first Japanese Constitution promulgated by Shōtoku Taishi in the 6th century.<sup>67</sup> During the Tokugawa Era, neo-Confucian trends made their impact. In particular the thoughts of Chu Hsi (1130 - 1200) from Sung China played a dominating role in Japanese political thinking.<sup>68</sup>

Within Confucian ideas bearing on the coming restoration, those of Chu Hsi played a decisive part. The Japanese philosopher Hayashi Razan (1583 - 1657) obtained a dominating position.<sup>69</sup> Hayashi developed a number of doctrines according to which the Shōgun were legitimized as representatives of the Emperor,<sup>70</sup> but his deep interest in history pointed him towards restoration.

Inside the same Chu Hsi tradition, Yamazaki Ansai (1618 - 82) was more of a reformist. Although emphasizing along with Chu Hsi and his Japanese follower Hayashi Razan that norms were external and objective, based outside the traditions of history,<sup>71</sup> Yamazaki was deeply influenced by the Shinto understanding of the divine, especially as

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<sup>66</sup> This reactionary standpoint explains why Buddhism was questioned and even persecuted in the years following the shift of power in 1868, cf the *haibutsu kijaku* (Destroy Buddhism) movement, Okada 1965b: 188ff, Thelle 1982: 41 - 46.

The Buddhist formalism and traditionalism are seen as contributory causes to the anti-Buddhist movements in early Meiji. Kishimoto 1954: II. Buddhism did not recover until the period of patriotism around 1890, cf Kishimoto 1954: 215 - 28.

The reactionary feature of Buddhism and its fervent criticism of Christianity, Kishimoto 1954: 218 - 22, also explain why the early Japanese Protestants were more concerned with Confucianism than Buddhism. *Infra* 2.1.1.2, note 76; 2.2.2.1, note 143; 2.2.2.2.1, note 170; 2.2.2.3.1, note 197.

<sup>67</sup> The influence of Confucianism upon Japanese civilization was part of the enormous Chinese impact during the centuries. See Anesaki 1936/70: 30ff and Kishimoto 1954: 17f. This influence was not limited to the religious sphere, but extended into various aspects of the civilization. The life and thinking of the educated classes and of the ordinary people were affected, Kishimoto *ibid*.

Though various schools of Japanese Confucianism took different attitudes to social change, there was a general potential of reform in Confucian ideas, the so-called *ekisei-kakumei* (Revolutionary change of dynasty). This principle implies that although Heaven commissions the monarch to rule the mundane world, he can retain his authority only as long as he is faithful to the heavenly ordained mission, cf Anesaki 1936/70: 37ff and Inoue 1965b: 165.

<sup>68</sup> Chu Hsi (in Japanese Shushi) represents a philosophical synthesis of the "speculative thought", of the 10th and the 11th centuries, Ching 1977: 128. Chu Hsi understands the great ultimate as "source and principle of being and becoming and ... also the source and principle of all moral goodness", Ching 1977: 131. There is in other words and external, objective principle for behavior and moral, cf Hori (ed) 1972: 109.

In the Japanese society, Chu Hsi represented a "rigid, static system" and was opposed by progressive thinkers in the Tokugawa Era, Anesaki 1936/70: 31.

<sup>69</sup> His philosophy is characterized as both rationalism and humanism, Sansom 1963: 72. Either of these systems reflect non religious, secular attitudes.

<sup>70</sup> Sansom 1963: 74.

<sup>71</sup> Najita 1974: 31.

revealed in the person of the Emperor.<sup>72</sup> He thus merged central Shinto elements into a Confucian frame; he represents a trend which markedly points towards the spiritual base of the Meiji Restoration.

Another reformist development of the Chu Hsi tradition is seen in the Mito-gakuha (Mito-school of thought). The latter school emphasized loyalty to the Emperor, and sometimes even demanded that the bakufu should terminate its present policy of isolation. Aizawa Seishisai is known in this connection. In his book *Shinron* (A New Theory), 1825, he urged that Japan acknowledge the threatening danger outside its borders, appealing for modernization and moral awakening.<sup>73</sup>

It was not only in various branches of Chu Hsi thought that reformist ideas can be likened to an incoming tide, as they also developed in the Japanese Wang Yang-ming tradition. This Chinese founder, who stressed the role of personal conscience, carried on the subjective idealism of Lu Chiu-yuan (1139 - 1193).<sup>74</sup> As one of the influential Japanese within this tradition of thought, Nakae Toju (1608 - 48) should be mentioned. Although originally standing in the Chu Hsi tradition, he had made a transition to the subjective idealism of Wang Yang-ming.<sup>75</sup>

Through Nakae Toju and his disciple Kumazawa Banzan (1619 - 91), both of whom were authoritative samurai teachers, an amalgamation of the ideas of Wang Yang-ming Confucianism and National Shinto kindled the reformist commitments of the samurai class. An effect of this influence was the development of the warrior-ethos in Japan, the so-called "bushido".<sup>76</sup>

The Wang Yang-ming school is of notable interest for Protestant history as several early Japanese Protestants of samurai background were influenced by it. The subjective idealism of Wang Yang-ming, which emphasized personal convictions and individual conscience, positively mediated conversion to Christianity.<sup>77</sup>

An influential Confucianist in his own right was Ogyu Sorai (1666 - 1728). Differing

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<sup>72</sup> Najita 1974: 32f.

Kubota 1962: 201 regards Yamazaki as the pioneer of the widespread and popular *sonno* (Honour the Emperor) movement, which was a force in crushing the bakufu authority.

<sup>73</sup> Beasley incorporates Aizawa in the Mito-school tradition, Beasley 1973: 50f.

Najita similarly relates Aizawa to general developments of Japanese Confucianism. In a sophisticated analysis of Aizawa's thought, he demonstrates how pragmatic reflections led to adoption of the Emperor traditions, Najita 1974: 47.

<sup>74</sup> Ching 1977: 134f.

<sup>75</sup> Stenstrup 1980: 50f, Sansom 1963: 74f, Reischauer 1958: 658f.

<sup>76</sup> Stenstrup 1980: 171f, Sansom 1963: 74f, Reischauer 1958: 658.

<sup>77</sup> Cf the quotation: "We believed that it (Christianity) fulfills the spirit and real import of Confucianism." Kozaki 1933: 39. Kozaki himself conducts a dialogue with Confucianism in his book *Selkyo Shinron* (New Theory on State and Religion), published 1886. The spirit of the Kumamoto School, from which Kozaki and other influential protestants came in the 1870s, was influenced by *Jitsugakuha* (Confucian realism). *Jitsugakuha* was in turn influenced by Wang Yang-ming thought. Cf Mitsui 1980: 85, which regards *Jitsugakuha* as "...progressive and influenced by Wang Yang-ming thought."

There is in other words a connection between a strand of Confucian thought and early Protestantism.

The thought of Ebina, also from the Kumamoto School, moved in a Confucian framework, infra 2.2.3.3.2. Honda Yoichi, the founder of Japanese Methodism similarly displayed Confucian attitudes. The Confucian ideal is reflected in Honda's stress upon obedience to the Great Lord. Ono 1986a: 81.

from the external idealism of Chu Hsi <sup>78</sup> and the conscience oriented internal idealism of Wang Yang-ming, he argued for a state system based on social usefulness, in other words on utilitarian principles. <sup>79</sup> Although Ogyu legitimized the bakufu-government, he regarded it only as a useful system, not as sacrosanct. When the bakufu-system no longer functioned well for society, his ideology came to further and strengthen the transition to new institutions of government.

Within the framework of various Confucian schools, interest in Western Science was growing towards the end of the Tokugawa period. This interest focused on medicine, metallurgy and weapon-technique. <sup>80</sup> There was also a strong interest in Botany. <sup>81</sup>

These Western studies were "production oriented", Botany was seen as a valuable knowledge when producing medicine. <sup>82</sup> A name in this context is Hiraga Gennai (1728-79), a Chu Hsi Confucian who started systematic studies in Natural Science, especially in Botany. The side effects of contact with Western civilisation notwithstanding, in principle Western Learning was seen as a scientific technic rather than a spiritual foundation. The combination of a Western and a Confucian Japanese approach to civilization was thus formulated by Sakuma Shozan (1811 - 64) from the Wang Yang-ming school: "Eastern Ethics and Western Science". The slogan might serve as a representative expression of the subsequent modernizing ideas in Japan. In spite of his deep roots in the ethical traditions of the country, Sakuma met with much resistance. He was imprisoned and later murdered for his attempts at opening the country to Western civilization.

In the institutional realm of religion the preparation for modernization meant, first of all, a turn from Buddhism towards Shinto.

As we have seen above, <sup>83</sup> the interest of Tokugawa Confucianism largely became focused upon the Emperor, Japanese history and Shinto religion. Yamazaki Anzai tied his Confucian doctrines to the central Shinto deity Amaterasu Omikami, the Sun Goddess. Motoori Nobunaga (1730 - 1801) from the school of National Learning strongly recommended *Fukko Shinto* (Shinto Renewal), based on the old Japanese myths collected in "Kojiki". <sup>84</sup> The knowledge of Hirata Atsutane (1776 - 1843) of the same school

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<sup>78</sup> Cf supra 2.1.1.2, note 69.

<sup>79</sup> Najita 1974: 30 calls the school to which Ogyu Sorai belongs utilitarian. Reischauer, who terms it "Ancient Learning School", considers it a sharper opponent to the orthodoxy of Chu Hsi in the seventeenth century, than the school of Wang Yang-ming, Reischauer 1958: 659. Cf Stenstrup 1980: 165 - 7.

<sup>80</sup> Reischauer 1977: 74.

<sup>81</sup> Cf Sansom 1963: 189 - 92.

<sup>82</sup> Sansom 1963: 191.

The disciple of the Swedish pioneer Botanist Carl von Linné, Carl Peter Thunberg, who visited Japan 1775 - 76, also illustrates this. His knowledge in medicine was greatly appreciated by the Japanese. His publication *Flora Japonica* 1884, became a notable impact also in Japan. The use of Latin nomenclature in Japanese Botanical Science dates back to Thunberg, cf Okada 1965a: 121f.

The "production oriented" Dutch studies, later turned away from medical interests to military concerns. Okada 1965a: 126f.

<sup>83</sup> Supra 2.1.1.2.

<sup>84</sup> The historian Inoue points out that Motoori performs a liberating in the prevailing socio-religious system. He talks of "an attempt to liberate the human nature from Buddhist and Confucian oppression", cf Inoue 1965c: 64f. Okada 1965a: 110 - 113 expresses similar views. He also underlines the aesthetic aspects of Motoori's work, even pointing to the interpretation of the medieval novel *Genji Monogatari*, based on *mono no*

included Chinese philosophy, Dutch learning and even Roman Catholic writings. But for Atsutane the renewal of classical Shinto was the main theme. In this respect his activities went beyond scholarly concerns and he can be viewed as a nationalist oriented politician.<sup>85</sup>

**Summary.** The contradictory economical development of the Tokugawa era had thus already threatened the feudal order and the agrarian society which the bakufu were eager to retain. The position of the central government remained weak while new political and economical centers developed. Its foreign policy isolated the country. The ideas of Confucianism opened up political changes on various presuppositions. National traditions and institutions tied to Shinto and the Imperial Court appeared as alternatives to the increasingly ill-functioning state-system. The apparent conclusion is that Japan of the 19th century was prepared for the subsequent process of reform, due to internal economic, political and spiritual developments.

### 2.1.2 Pressure upon Tokugawa Society from Outside.

We have observed, within Japanese Confucianism, critical attitudes to the Bakufu policy of isolation. Several political thinkers supported Japanese armament, desiring a strengthening of national defence. Such tendencies reflected the international situation that developed towards the end of the 18th century. Western trade with China had increased. Russian expansion eastward had reached the Pacific Ocean and a row of new settlements had been built near the sea of Okotsk. Strategically as well as commercially, Japan was drawn more and more into the Western sphere of interest.<sup>86</sup>

After the ratification in 1842 - 3 of new treaties of commerce with China, in the wake of the opium war, the Western pressure increased significantly. Diplomatic as well as military means were successfully applied,<sup>87</sup> and Western demands for contact were consistently opposed and rejected.

The abrupt change of Japan's foreign relationships occurred in a diplomatic play, in two acts, during the years 1853 - 58.

The first act commenced when Commodore Perry, as the commander-in-chief of four American warships, anchored in Tokyo Bay July 1853, which was most unwelcome to the Japanese. Handing a letter from the American President to the Japanese authorities, the Commodore presented demands and gave a deadline for a Japanese reply. Demands included access to Japanese harbours for American ships, legal immunity for American castaways on Japanese shores and the establishment of full diplomatic relationships. Having notified his intention of returning next year for a reply, Commodore Perry left Japanese waters.

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aware (the sadness of reality), cf Okada 1965a: 65.

<sup>85</sup> On Atsutane, cf Saba 1937: 156-72. Najita maintains that although "Motoōri subordinated art to political need ... with Hirata, national studies turned into an angry call for action in the present." Najita 1974: 57f. Similar views are maintained by Inoue who says that Hirata "absolutized the Emperor system and an exclusivist, semi-religious political ideology", Inoue 1965c: 65.

The modern Shinto Scholar, professor Kubota Osamu who taught at the Shinto University Kogakkan Daigaku, says that Hirata added *jissenryoku*, (realistic efficiency) to the ideas of Motoōri, Kubota 1962: 189.

<sup>86</sup> The general political background of the American interests in Japan is illustrated by Okada 1965b: 8 - 18. Cf Fairbank 1965: 194 - 8.

But also Western religious interests were invested in the concern for trade and military security in Eastern waters, cf Cary 1909/76b: 11 - 18.

<sup>87</sup> Okada 1965b: 8 - 18.

Recognizing American military supremacy, the bakufu government concluded that resistance was unrealistic. Bowing to what they conceived as the inevitable, they decided to negotiate with the Americans. Upon the return of Commodore Perry next year, negotiations started and preliminary treaties were signed. All American demands were met.

The subsequent act was of a purely diplomatic nature. Townsend Harris arrived in 1856 and conducted negotiations with the bakufu officials until 1858. In the treaties then concluded, Japan agreed to open a number of harbours for American ships. Commercial and diplomatic relationships were established. Americans were granted rights of residence in certain restricted areas. "Even missionaries may actually come and reside in Japan".<sup>88</sup>

Two clauses from the treaties were particularly disturbing from the Japanese point of view. Until they finally were discarded during the late 1890s, they caused much trouble to Japanese - Western relationships. These clauses granted extraterritorial rights to Americans and stipulated uneven commercial conditions: whereas Japanese rights to levy taxes on imported goods was restricted, no restrictions applied to American taxation rights. During the subsequent months similar treaties with Holland, Russia, Britain and France were concluded. The politics of international isolation were definitively broken.<sup>89</sup> A period of economic dependence had started.

### 2.1.3 From Tokugawa to Meiji.

#### 2.1.3.1 Political Prelude to the Meiji Restoration.

By the 1850s, opposition against Tokugawa rule had grown to an irresistible movement. The symbol of the glorious emperor occupied a central role in this movement. A negative symbol was, however, more directly related to the American intrusion: the "detestable" barbarians. Two powerful slogans, *sonno* (Honor the Emperor) and *joi* (Expel the barbarians),<sup>90</sup> expressed the mood of the opposition.

The opposition expressed itself through unrest and lack of national discipline. Samurai who were trained in a fierce loyalty to their Lords and to the Emperor, left their local employment and joined opposition groups. In 1860 the leader of the Tokugawa government, Ii Naotsuke, was murdered by such a group of disaffected samurai. The Tokugawa leader Ii Naotsuke during his two years in the office of *Tairo* (Chief Minister) had succeeded in subduing the opposition. Therefore this murder, apart from demonstrating the bakufu's inability to impose social discipline, was politically very significant. Other political murders, attacks on the property of Westerners or violence against them, reflected the spirit of opposition.<sup>91</sup>

Strong dissatisfaction with bakufu's handling of the Perry incident boosted the anti-Tokugawa forces, and this gradually gave them the upper hand in Japanese politics during the 1860s. The most serious defiance to bakufu-authority came from domains already independent of its government. When two such domains, Satsuma and Choshu, in 1863

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<sup>88</sup> Storry 1960: 93.

<sup>89</sup> These clauses complicated Japanese Western relations, and also effected Protestant developments, *infra* 2.1.3.2.3.

<sup>90</sup> There was shrill and widespread opposition to the concessions to foreign pressure by Ii Naotsuke. The opposition was symbolized by the slogan "Revere the Emperor, expel the barbarians!", Storry 1960: 96. Reischauer says that "The slogans of *sonno* (honor the emperor) and *joi* (expel the barbarians), became the twin rallying cries of the opposition. Both had strongly anti-shogunate overtones and were therefore taken up with enthusiasm by the samurai and some "outer" domains that had always nurtured resentment of Tokugawa rule", Reischauer 1978: 126. The development is illustrated in more detail by Okada 1965b: 64.

<sup>91</sup> Kubota 1962: 202 - 4, Okada 1965b: 61 - 65.

became involved in military confrontations with Western powers,<sup>92</sup> the situation became intolerable for the *bakufu*. The incidents not only led to retaliation from Western powers. As the conflict between the *bakufu* and the domains conducting their independent foreign policy became intolerable, military confrontations between the *bakufu* and the domain of Choshu arose. These confrontations resulted in an alliance between Satsuma and Choshu. The alliance dated from 1866 and provided political as well as military leadership for the unsatisfied opposition. It contributed decisively to the shift in 1868 of political power in Japan.<sup>93</sup>

The *bakufu*'s struggle to chastise the rebellious Choshu led to its own destruction. The coalition of opponents, which was built on the Satsuma-Choshu axis, supported by the "outer" domains of Tosa, Nagoya and Hiroshima and the "collateral" domain of Echizen, occupied the Tokugawa Palace in Tokyo on January 3rd 1868. By this usurpation of power, government was returned to the Emperor; the act of "restoration". When the year had passed, all resistance to the new government had been subdued.<sup>94</sup>

### 2.1.3.2 The Modernization Process.

#### 2.1.3.2.1 The initial Meiji Spirit.

The samurai-led movement, firmly based in the anti-Tokugawa domains had gained power. The real power now largely rested in the hands of those samurai from the anti-Tokugawa domains, who had engineered the restoration, the so-called Meiji oligarchs. The change from opposition to power, necessitated a transformation from the spirit of critique to a spirit of positive construction. The ideal of *sonno*, reverence for the Emperor, was maintained in the new situation. The slogan of *joi* (Expel the barbarians) had, however, to be replaced. Now it sounded *fukoku kyohei*, (Rich country and military strength). The new government not only admitted the impossibility of expelling the barbarians. It was even actively interested in contact with Western countries. It wanted

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<sup>92</sup> From June 21 1863 onwards, in connection with a day set by the opposition for the purpose of expelling the barbarians, coastal batteries in Choshu and armed ships opened fire against Dutch and French vessels. Steam-vessels from Choshu fired against an American ship as well. Later in the same year, English vessels were involved in skirmishes with Satsuma-batteries, Okada 1965b: 102ff.

<sup>93</sup> The political development of these two domains became more and more influenced by the *sonno joi* movement, Okada 1965b: 124 - 132. Both these domains were also in a special way qualified for the leadership of the opposition movement: Situated in Western Japan, they were safely at distance from the central government in Tokyo. Both domains were large; among the 265 contemporary domains Satsuma was number 2, Choshu number 9 in tax income, Fairbank 1965: 211f. The number of samurai was comparatively large in both domains, all together 38.000. A strong economy had facilitated the obtaining of Western weapons and military strength. Both domains were internally solid, a feature related to their distance from the big urban centers. "Their backwardness contributed to their strength." Ibid.

But the people also had a role in the struggle against feudalism. The decisive turn against the Shogun among the citizens of Edo contributed to a swift change of power. As *bakufu* was supported by France, various embodied colonialist implications were ruled out, according to Inoue 1965b: 115f.

<sup>94</sup> Cf Beasley 1973: 95ff and Okada 1965b: 154ff.

to build a new nation through learning and adoption of Western technology.<sup>95</sup> These ideas are expressed in the Charter Oath of 1868.<sup>96</sup> The declaration envisaged a certain amount of democracy, (1), and reduced the class-thinking of Confucian origin, (3 - 4). The concluding paragraph (5) expressed the basic philosophy of reformation: to use Western knowledge in order to strengthen imperial rule.<sup>97</sup> Nationalism was a common ideological concern, expressed through the Charter Oath. The idea of nationwide co-operation is expressed in article two. In article five the principle of *sonno* is reflected. It remained a basic attitude for the political elite. The two principles of an open and critical spirit and a nationalist spirit dominated the political processes in the following years.

#### 2.1.3.2.2 The appearance of an "open" Spirit of Meiji: 1868 - 89.

There was a strong period of political stability during these early and middle years. The governing elite was a solid group of oligarchs. All persons mentioned below, are of samurai descent, with the notable exception of the court noble Iwakura Tomomi (1825-83). Saigo Takamori (1828 - 77) came from the domain of Satsuma, as did Okubo Toshimori (1830 - 78). Kido Koin (1833 - 77) came from Choshu. To a somewhat younger group belonged Matsukata Masayoshi (1837 - 1924) who served for several years as the minister of finance, Itagaki Taisuke (1837 - 1919) from the domain of Tosa, Okuma Shigenobu (1838 - 1922) from the domain of Hizen and famous as a politician and as the founder of Waseda University. The military leader Yamagata Aritomo (1838 - 1922) and the father of the Constitution Ito Hirobumi (1841 - 1909), later Prime Minister, both came from the domain of Choshu.<sup>98</sup>

"For forty years after the Restoration, Japanese policy was determined by men from only four domains, forming a group which was homogeneous in age, social origin, and political experience. This fact was vital to the success of the new government, for it gave consistency and continuity to its actions which enabled fresh habits to become deep-rooted before another generation rose to challenge them."<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> "...it was no part of the policy of the new men who ruled Japan to antagonize, much less to drive away the 'barbarians'. They realized that, to achieve a position of power in the world, their country would have to be modernized...But modernization could never be accomplished without Western help and advice," Storry 1960: 103.

<sup>96</sup> The Five Articles Oath of 1868.

1. Deliberative assemblies shall be widely established and all matters decided by public discussion.
2. All classes, high and low, shall unite in vigorously carrying out the administration of affairs of state.
3. The common people, no less than the civil and military officials, shall each be allowed to pursue his own calling so that there be no discontent.
4. Evil customs of the past shall be broken off and everything based upon the just laws of Nature.
5. Knowledge shall be sought throughout the world so as to strengthen the foundations of imperial rule.

From Bary 1958b: 137. Cf Fairbank 1965: 228, Beasley 1973: 101f, Okada 1965b: 172ff.

Five articles of denunciations were simultaneously promulgated. Certain Japanese practices from the feudal period but also the Christian faith were here denounced, Okada 1965b: 174.

<sup>97</sup> Fairbank 1965: 229.

<sup>98</sup> Beasley 1973: 98 - 116.

<sup>99</sup> Beasley 1973: 105.

Following the openness to Western political systems, democratic ideas found a natural response in Japanese informed opinion,<sup>100</sup> as well as in groups which felt marginalized in the new, Japanese society. A popular movement for representative, political institutions became influential in the development of Japanese political institutions. This was the People's Rights Movement.<sup>101</sup>

The People's Rights Movement was a forceful democratic power during the early years of Meiji. The consistence of the movement was not unlike that of the loyalist movement prior to the Restoration.<sup>102</sup> There was strong backing by samurai who were well informed about overseas matters. From 1873 onwards the samurai class as such lost its status and privileges in society. The change strengthened an already existing interest in the democratization of society.<sup>103</sup>

The termination of feudalism had created a new class of landowners. This class was, however, without political power. Poor farmers were even worse off, having to pay high monetary taxes. Both these groups saw hope in a system which provided more power to the people, as envisaged by the establishment of representative institutions. As will be proved presently, there was a strong connection between these groups and early Protestantism. The new landowners and independent farmers, together with the samurai, were the groups in early Meiji where Protestantism met with the highest response.<sup>104</sup>

The People's Rights Movement had its adherents even among the oligarchs. Itagaki was strongly related to the group, the same was the case with Okuma. Itagaki led the Jiyuto (Liberal Party) which was inspired by French radicalism and had its Japanese geographical base in the Tosa domain. Okuma founded and led the Kaishinto (Progressive Party), an urban party based ideologically upon British liberalism. Its geographical stronghold in Japan was Hizen. Both parties had their roots in the People's Rights Movement.<sup>105</sup>

A majority of the Meiji-oligarchs was, however, fearful of what this movement might lead to. In 1882 political meetings were submitted to supervision. The Liberal Party was dissolved in 1884, and the fate of The Progressives was later the same. The government strengthened the control of oppositional movements through the establishment of "Peace Preservation Regulations" in December 1887. These regulations permitted the police to seize persons suspected of being dangerous to law and order. Such clauses proved strongly disadvantageous to adherents of parliamentary government.<sup>106</sup> The emerging Protestant movement was inspired by such modernizing trends.<sup>107</sup> But the emergence of new patriotism became a severe challenge to Japanese Christians.<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> Beasley 1973: 120.

<sup>101</sup> To the development of "representative institutions", see Inoue 1965b: 163ff, Okada 1965b: 255f, Reischauer 1978: 176f.

<sup>102</sup> Beasley, 1973: 121.

<sup>103</sup> The samurai became frustrated with the change of political system. Samurai also backed an unsuccessful demand for a military attack upon Korea in 1873. The same year they lost their right to carry a sword and their annual stipend was replaced with a fixed sum of money once and for all. Such developments caused a situation of samurai unrest, cf Okada 1965b: 254f.

<sup>104</sup> *Infra* 2.2.2.2

<sup>105</sup> Reischauer 1978: 170f, Inoue 1965b: 173ff.

<sup>106</sup> Reischauer 1978: 171 - 2, Beasley 1973: 125.

<sup>107</sup> *Infra* 2.2.2.2.

<sup>108</sup> *Infra* 2.2.3.1.

The activities of the People's Rights Movement culminated about 1880 and they had disappeared by the end of the decade.

The process of political reform, which started in 1868 on the state level and which was influenced not at least by the People's Rights Movement, might be said to have culminated with the promulgation of the Constitution in 1889.

The formulation of the new Constitution had started in 1886, and was led by one of the oligarchs, Ito Hirobumi. He had returned from studies in Europe in 1883, and was particularly influenced by German constitutional thinking.<sup>109</sup>

The Constitution opened for the election of a national assembly in 1890, as promised already in the 5 Charters Oath. The National Assembly was structured with two chambers. "The Diet was given a real share in power in that the budget and all permanent laws required favorable action by both houses."<sup>110</sup>

The Constitution also secured religious freedom and a series of popular rights such as the liberties of speech, publication, public meetings and associations. It is said: "Considering the feudal background and the authoritarian experience of the men in control of the government and the unfamiliarity of the Japanese public with democratic ideas and institutions, the Constitution defined perhaps as liberal a system of government as could have operated successfully at that time."<sup>111</sup>

The rights of liberty were, however, safeguarded by clauses such as ... except in cases provided for in the law... or ... within limits not prejudicial to law and order.<sup>112</sup>

A decisive limitation on these rights was the understanding that the law was presented as a gift from the Emperor. The Emperor was "sacred and inviolable". Among rights exercised by the Emperor was the superior command of all Japanese war power, without requiring parliamentary control.

Such limitations point to the potentiality of reaction implied by the "Meiji Spirit" which led to a curbing of popular movements, liberal developments and put a brake on foreign influence.<sup>113</sup> When this dynamic of the Meiji spirit was released in the 1890s, openness disappeared.<sup>114</sup>

#### 2.1.3.2.3 The spiritual Basis of Modernization 1890 - 1905.

It is difficult to decide whether politics created nationalism or vice versa. The role of education in this interplay is also a delicate issue. Beneath the political actions of various kinds, however, was a strong substratum of nationalist spirit, different from the open spirit described above.<sup>115</sup>

Patriotism played a significant role in the political debate from the early years of Meiji. In 1873 the government planned a military attack on Korea. Saigo Takamori, one of the warmest supporters of military intervention, used patriotic motivations. The patriotic motivation also occurred in connection with the founding of political parties. Itagaki played on patriotism in this respect. In central, national documents such as the

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<sup>109</sup> Cf Beasley 1973: 130, Okada 1965c: 62.

<sup>110</sup> Reischauer 1978: 176. Cf Okada 1965c: 73.

<sup>111</sup> Reischauer 1978: 176.

<sup>112</sup> Reischauer 1978: 176.

<sup>113</sup> This tendency is identified by Inoue when he sees the Japanese political development in the period up to promulgation of the Constitution as *Minken kara Kokken e* (From Rights of the People to Rights of the State), Inoue 1966: 2 - 18. Cf Okada 1965c: 33 - 61.

<sup>114</sup> *Infra* 2.2.3.1.

<sup>115</sup> *Supra* 2.1.3.2.2.

Constitution (1889) and Rescript of Education (1890) it was particularly expressed. The latter document tied patriotism intimately to loyalty towards the Emperor.<sup>116</sup>

Patriotism was strongly felt when Japan tried to revise the early commercial treaties with Western countries. A final breakthrough occurred in negotiations with Britain 1894, after unsuccessful attempts in 1871-2 and in 1888. Both failures, particularly that of 1888 by Okuma led to strong anti-Western feeling.<sup>117</sup>

Strong patriotic influences were transmitted from the military sector. One notable event occurred in 1873 when Japan forced Korea to sign a commercial treaty. In 1894 Japan declared a war against China on the issue of Korean influence, and emerged as the victor. Korea was declared "independent", in other words no longer under Chinese administration. Japan also annexed Taiwan.

A climax of patriotism was, however, attained with the coming of the war with Russia, which developed from conflicting interests in Manchuria, Korea and the Liaotung Peninsula. The Japanese army and navy won a crushing victory over Russian military forces in 1905. Peace negotiations following the victory led to the recognition of Japanese rule in Korea and the transmission of Russian rights in South Manchuria to Japan. Having concluded a military treaty with Britain already in 1903, Japan had now demonstrated its force by the victory over Russia. By 1905 Japan had, in the eyes of herself as well as of others, attained the international status of which the oligarchs of 1968 had dreamed.<sup>118</sup>

Already during the Tokugawa period a respect for learning had been developed in close connexion with Confucianism. This continued into the modern time. In 1872 the government presented an educational scheme, comprising education from elementary schools to university education.<sup>119</sup>

The education provided practical and technical training according to Western standards. Responding to governmental initiatives, advanced students were sent abroad whereas experts were invited to the country and Western methods of cultivation were applied.<sup>120</sup> Outstanding educators like Fukuzawa Yukichi (1835 - 1901) also played a decisive role in this connection.<sup>121</sup> The ban on Christianity was dissolved in 1873 for

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<sup>116</sup> Beasley 1973: 141.

<sup>117</sup> Beasley 1973: 158 - 60.

<sup>118</sup> Beasley 1973: 173. Cf. Reischauer who writes in a section called "The fulfillment of the Meiji dream":

"The event that really won for Japan the full status as a world power and equality with nations of the West, was its victory over Russia, the biggest ... of the Western powers." Reischauer 1978: 187.

<sup>119</sup> After the age of 6, 16 months of compulsory education was established. The period of primary school had already in 1886 been set to 8 years, of these 4 years were compulsory for all, with 5 hours of school 6 days a week. The policies were efficiently applied: in 1906, 95% of all children in their school-age were pupils, Beasley 1973: 140.

Tokyo Imperial University, established in 1886, was the leading educational institution.

<sup>120</sup> Beasley 1973: 141.

<sup>121</sup> Fukuzawa's search for Western knowledge was in harmony with the principles of the Meiji leaders and the intention of the Five Charter Oath.

He undertook travels of study to USA and to Europe. Two famous publications are *Seiyo no Jiyo*, (Conditions in the West) 1st ed. 1866 and *Gakumon no Susume*, (The Encouragement of Learning) 1st ed. 1872. A famous quotation from the latter book is: "Heaven did neither create man above men, nor man below men." He also founded one of the leading universities in Japan, the Keio University.

Fukuzawa adopted Western philosophy and fundamental Western values, such as the sovereignty of the people and parliamentarism. In this respect he opposed the official

diplomatic reasons, following a diplomatic mission to Western countries in 1871-2, the so called "Iwakura Mission". In the new atmosphere, great educational ambitions developed in Protestant circles. Of great significance was the Doshisha University in Kyoto and the educational thoughts of Nijima Jo, to whom we will return.<sup>122</sup> Other Protestant educational institutions also developed.

The official moral instruction was, however, based on Confucian ethics and Emperor-oriented nationalism.<sup>123</sup> The potential conflict between Christian educational ideas, and the official ideas based upon the Imperial Rescript of Education from 1890, became acutely apparent in the "Uchimura incident" and the following debate.<sup>124</sup>

#### 2.1.3.2.4 Political and Economical Strategies of Modernization.

The early efforts of conscious modernization were of a political nature, in the initial establishment of new governing and administrative structures.

The process of reform implied some democratic, parliamentary developments. The Diet was established in 1890 providing prerequisites for the forming of political parties. During the years from 1891 - 98 struggles between government and parliament were rampant. The liberal politician Itagaki, who had supported the Popular Rights' Movement, dominated parliament. In 1900, however, a government party was founded. This led to stronger support of the government in the parliament, and subsequently to a more stabilized political period for the rest of the Meiji period (up to 1912).

Closely related to political reforms, military aims were given high priority in early Meiji planning. The policy expressed in the early Meiji slogan of *Fukoku Kyohai* (Rich country and strong military) had utmost priority because of the danger posed to Japan by Western countries.<sup>125</sup> A conscript army was established and this had a political function in breaking down class-privileges, as well as a military one. In 1877, Yamagata's conscript army defeated Saigo Takamori's army of samurai from West Japan. In 1878 the army was re-organized according to German ideals, whereas the fleet was based upon the British model. The whole process of communication was tied to military strategies. Military ambitions were, however, gradually turned from self defence and inner political aims to aggression against Korea and China.<sup>126</sup>

Yet modernization was by no means confined to building a new political and military establishment. It was a most inclusive process extending from a defined educational and spiritual base to law, economy, culture, affecting in the end almost every section of Japanese society. I shall illustrate the stages of economic development.

Economic reform started with agriculture, a policy which gave rise to a growing commercialization of farming. In turn land property accumulated and tenant relationships increased. Tenants lived on 20% of Japanese farmland in 1868. In 1890 this percentage was doubled.<sup>127</sup>

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<sup>122</sup> *Infra* 2.2.2.1.

<sup>123</sup> Reischauer claims that the idea of "Eastern Ethics and Western Technic" never functioned. He argues that no clear distinction was drawn between the two, cf Fairbank 1965: 266. Beasley 1973: 140, somewhat in contrast, holds that such a system of education "was to prove an essential unifying force in the Japanese body politic."

<sup>124</sup> *Infra* 2.2.3.1.

<sup>125</sup> Okada 1965b: 195 - 203.

<sup>126</sup> Inoue 1965b: 150. Cf Okada 1965c: 47ff, 117ff.

<sup>127</sup> Beasley 1973: 137.

Positive effects of the new agricultural policies were seen in an increased output of crops. From 1880 to 1894 the production of rice increased by 20%. The surplus of farming produce was one of the most important sources for the change in the whole pattern of production in Japan. Farming thus served the building of a new economic structure in the country. From agriculture, the Meiji-oligarchs proceeded to develop an economy increasingly based upon trade and industrial production.<sup>128</sup> In the mid-1880s cotton industries developed a surplus. Other types of industries developed and a strengthening of the transportation system, particularly the building of railways, furthered the change towards industrial production.

The state supported and subsidized private firms during the period of industrial development.<sup>129</sup> Private investors took over original state initiatives.

From the 1880s up to the turn of the century Japan gradually and steadily was transformed to a modern, capitalist, industrial society.

## 2.2 JAPANESE PROTESTANT FOUNDATION 1872 - 1905.

It is as part of this dramatic modernization process, based on spiritual and educational principles and extending into political and economic sectors of society that Japanese Protestantism emerges. As will be illustrated more fully in due course it can be disputed when exactly Japanese church history starts. In this survey I suggest that Japanese Protestantism begins in 1872. The previous period is a time of missionary explorations. With the new patriotic sentiments in Japan during the 1890s, there was a new phase from 1890 in the formation of Meiji Protestantism.

### 2.2.1 Protestantism a Missionary Movement to Japan 1859 - 72.

Japanese modernization developed from the interplay of a forceful Western intrusion and the indigenous preparation for renewal: politically, economically and spiritually. In this interplay, early Protestantism was on the side of the intruder.<sup>130</sup>

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<sup>128</sup> Beasley 1973: 143f.

<sup>129</sup> Beasley 1973: 148f.

<sup>130</sup> In contrast to early optimism voiced by missionaries, cf Green in Proceedings 1901: 89, Lindeberg 1918: 34ff and 227ff; postwar evaluations of Christian influence in Meiji Japan appear negative. Christian influence in isolated segments of society is admitted. Reischauer identifies an ethical influence and a general social influence, Reischauer 1977: 154 - 56, 221ff. The influence upon social movements is illustrated by for instance Sumiya 1950/61: 162ff, cf Hori 1972: 84f. The specific Protestant role in forming early Japanese socialism is brought out by e.g. Sumiya 1968: 162ff and Ebisawa/-Ouchi 1970: 390 - 408.

Although Kudo 1979: 44ff warns that Protestant influence upon early Meiji society should not be underestimated, contemporary scholars in general considers the Protestant influence in Meiji society is considered to have been weak, Fairbank 1965: 269f, Sumiya 1968: 278f.

A related issue is social concern among Japanese Protestants. The issue has been focused by several postwar church historians. Generally the historians share the view that a social commitment was strong among early Meiji Protestants. The Western scholar Iglehart thus finds Meiji Protestants to have been socially active, Iglehart 1959: 78f, 104ff. He represents the general view even among Japanese colleagues in this respect. Kumazawa 1976: 184, who talks of a social regression from 1900, implies a social concern of early Japanese Protestantism. The ethical and socially concerned character of early Japanese Protestantism is brought out by Ebisawa/Ouchi 70: 260 - 82, Dohi 80: 170 - 72. Sumiya says that there were two characteristics of the first Meiji Christians. One was to combine faith and the building of a new Japan. The other was a new moralism, a puritanism based on the discovery of the personality, Sumiya 1961: 17f. To this question

Politically and economically, Christian missions had their base in the Western expansion during the era of colonialism. According to the Western treaties negotiated with China up to 1858, national Christians and foreign missionaries were meant to be tolerated. The treaties with Japan, signed in 1858, followed the same pattern. The first missionaries arrived in Japan in 1859. The missionaries were, however, restricted to a few larger cities. For the Japanese themselves, Christianity was still a banned religion.

Religiously, the interest in mission was stimulated through the revival movements of the 18th and 19th centuries. Protestant interest in mission to Japan can be documented to 1828,<sup>131</sup> and practical attempts were not very much delayed.<sup>132</sup> The Protestant mission to Japan from 1859 onwards, however, in particular drew its inspiration from the so-called "second awakening", a revival movement starting in USA around 1858, later spreading to Europe. Corporate as well as individual prayer was strongly emphasized in this movement, and so was missionary service. The movement was of a "non-denominational" character.<sup>133</sup>

Protestantism was organizationally transmitted to Japan through two channels. The first was through Mission Boards and Church agencies. The first missionaries<sup>134</sup> sponsored through this "channel" set their feet on Japanese soil in 1859<sup>135</sup>. They represent the Western missionary "movement" in organized form.

They were not invited, but rather intruded themselves upon Japanese soil.

Through another type of channel, however, Protestants were invited or offered employment by Japanese agencies. Rev. G.F. Verbeck, one of the first missionaries, was for a considerable period employed by the Japanese Government, functioning in various capacities as an advisor. Several persons, arriving in the country as Government employed

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on the character of early Protestantism, see further *infra* 2.2.2.2.

There are reasons to follow Germany, however, who in a theological analysis of the issue, finds varying degrees of concern. He concludes that the so-called "liberals" were the socially most concerned groups, Germany 1965: 18, 48f. Kudo, who like Kumazawa 1976, demonstrates the existence of an unhealthy dualism between contemporary church and society also questions the simple image of a socially concerned Meiji Protestantism. In tracing contemporary dualism between faith and society back to early Meiji developments, he raises searching questions about the character of early Protestant social commitment, Kudo 1959: 240 - 46.

<sup>131</sup> According to *Missionary Herald*, the organ of American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, a gift of 27.87\$ was registered in March 1828 for "mission to Japan". This gift was gathered in the home of the Christian merchant William Ropes. A beautiful Japanese basket was displayed in his home. The group which gathered there wanted to support mission to the country from which this pretty item came. Cary 1909/76b: 13. cf. *infra* 3.1.2.2.2. note 262

<sup>132</sup> Protestant mission to Japan was attempted already in 1837. The Missionary Karl Gützlaff had several shipwrecked Japanese seamen living in his home. He wanted to return these, and at the same time start mission in Japan. Three missionaries joined an expedition, which had to return after three unsuccessful attempts at landing. Cary 1909/76b: 14 - 16.

<sup>133</sup> Neill 1964: 323 - 25.

<sup>134</sup> They were Rev. John Liggins and Rev. C.M. Williams from the Episcopal Church, J.C. Hepburn and his wife Clara from the American Presbyterian Board, Rev. Samuel Brown, D.B. Simmons and Rev. F.G. Verbeck with families, representing the Dutch Reformed Church in America. The six men mentioned here are "given the honor of inaugurating the work of Protestant missions in Japan", Cary 1909/76b: 46. Of special interest is also the arrival 1869 of missionaries from American Board, Cary 1909/76b: 70.

<sup>135</sup> A mission to the Ryukyu Islands had taken place from 1846, Cary 1909/76: 11 - 27.

instructors, exerted a profound influence upon Protestant history.<sup>136</sup> It goes without saying that this influence in no way was a desired part of their official assignment, and in fact contrary to what was expected of them.<sup>137</sup> Even Protestant missionaries were offered employment as experts or specialists on aspects of Western culture, e.g. teachers of English, regardless of their religious commitments. The borderline between Government and Church employment was not very sharp. Church employed missionaries also served as advisors to Government agencies for such issues as inviting or employing foreign personnel in Japan.

In the local Japanese environment, missionaries were regarded with suspicion.<sup>138</sup> A letter circulating in the Nagasaki area attacked Protestantism as a spiritual danger to the country.<sup>139</sup>

Some aspects of the missionary presence in Japan, however, were not contrary to official Japanese goals. Missionaries were not officially regarded as intruders in *persona*, only as far as they transmitted the Gospel to Japanese. They were, even so, in general not welcome, and they were met with suspicion from the majority of the public.

Though some ambiguity arises from the official employment of Christians, even of professional missionaries, there is no evidence of any substantial search for Christianity in Japanese society. Throughout the first decade of its missionary presence in Japan, Protestantism fell into the category of an unwanted intruder.

## 2.2.2 The First Phase of Meiji Protestantism, 1872 - 1889.

### 2.2.2.1 Conversions

**Joseph Hardy Nilijima: The true First fruit.** There had been few conversions to Protestant Christianity prior to 1872.<sup>140</sup> Individual conversions happened in the environment of various missionaries also during the following years. I will mention one extraordinary

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<sup>136</sup> Such a person was Mr.E.W. Clark, employed by the Government as a science teacher in Shizuoka. He arrived 1871. The same year Captain L.L.Janes arrived with his wife and two children, upon the invitation of the local government of Kumamoto in West Japan. Colonel W.S.Clark, President of Massachusetts Agricultural College was employed by the Japanese Government and to establish a similar institution in Hokkaido, 1876 - 77. In all these three cases, groups of believers developed around the foreign teacher.

<sup>137</sup> The official persecution of the hidden Christians disclosed in 1865 may illustrate the fear of a potential Christian movement. The so-called "Urakami incident" was a ruthless persecution of Christians in the Urakami community. It began in July 1867 and faded at last in 1873, after new religious laws had been effected.

<sup>138</sup> "The missionaries soon found that they were regarded with great suspicion and closely watched, and all intercourse with them was conducted under strict surveillance." Verbeck 1883a: 80.

<sup>139</sup> "What I pray for is that patriotic samurai in this country shall learn how these people (Christians,including Protestants) offend against the principles of fidelity and filial piety, what ambitious designs they have against the state." From a pamphlet probably written by a Buddhist priest who had studied Christianity under Rev. Verbeck in Nagasaki, A New Essay 1868.

<sup>140</sup> Cary mentions 13 instances of baptism, Cary 1909/76b: 56 - 62. Only ten of these are however called "recorded baptisms". The national resistance to Christianity was strong. Mr. Shimizu, a Buddhist priest, was thrown into prison for five years after he was baptised by Rev. Verbeck 1868, Ozawa 1973: 59 - 83. Ichikawa Ryunosuke was not even baptized, but the Christian sympathies of this teacher of Japanese language to the pioneer missionary of the American Board, D.C. Greene, led to his imprisonment 1871 and subsequent death in prison. Ozawa 1973: 83 - 106.

early conversion which took place already prior to 1872, as an introduction to the section. It is the conversion of Niiijima Jo (1843 - 90). Niiijima came from a samurai family on the side of the Tokugawa shogunate. He read a Chinese translation of the Bible in his boyhood, and was fascinated by Christianity. His fervent seeking for truth, led him to flee Edo for Hakodate, which offered greater possibilities for a Christian seeker. Later in the same year, 1864, he even left Hakodate, hidden on board a ship. The following year he eventually arrived in the country he sincerely yearned for, the USA. The owner of the ship on which Niiijima was finally brought to USA, Alpheus Hardy, was one of the trustees of the American Board. Having obtained a benefactor, Niiijima was able to complete a course in general studies as well as in theology, in a Congregationalist environment in the USA. After the new religious laws of 1873 had permitted Christianity in Japan, he returned in 1874, after 10 years abroad.

Few Christian personalities in the Protestant history of Japan have achieved the fame of Niiijima. His pious personality is seen as an ideal, his search for God, including his journey to America is appealing.<sup>141</sup> To Niiijima it was a burning desire to modernize Japan. Contrary to the dominating trends within the modernization ideology of Japan, Niiijima was convinced that a modern Japan should build upon a Christian foundation, "...If we give them (youth) some studies other than theology under through Christian instructors, there will be a grand chance to grasp a certain class of the youth, and evangelize them...It is our humble purpose to save Japan through Christianity."<sup>142</sup> On the initiative of Niiijima, in cooperation with the American Board, the Doshisha School (later it became a university) was founded in 1875. One of the pioneer Protestant communities in Japan, the so-called Kumamoto Band, attached itself to Doshisha, and the school became an important contribution by Japanese Protestantism to the modernizing process of the country.<sup>143</sup>

A significant Japanese Christian breakthrough in the Protestant context, was the occurrence of a series of "bands" of Christian youth. They clustered around one of the Christian teachers who worked in Japan after 1859. Young Japanese students of Western civilization or language were confronted with the Christian faith through their studies. The preoccupation with modernization led them to the Christian faith. Three such "bands" of central importance for Japanese Protestantism are focused upon in the following section.<sup>144</sup>

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<sup>141</sup> Hardy 1891/1980: i - ii.

<sup>142</sup> Niiijima quoted by Hardy 1891/1980: 288.

<sup>143</sup> Already in 1888, Tokutomi Soho describes the importance of Niiijima as an educator, Takeda 1977: 379 - 400. Cf Ritter 1890: 90. He still retains the image of an unchallenged educational pioneer within the Doshisha tradition, Wada 1973: 2.

Wada 1973: 6f regrets the tendency among biographers to draw a saintly image of Niiijima and pleads for an objective study of his life. As Niiijima worked in various fields and lived for a considerable time also in USA, Wada suggests a pluralist approach to the study of Niiijima Jo, Wada 73: 290.

An effort of renewed study is made by Takeda Kiyoko who has presented a selection of Niiijimas writings in a series of original Meiji literature, Takeda 1977: 1 - 44. Several articles are devoted to the study of Niiijima, as demonstrated by a comprehensive list of Niiijima Jo ni kansuru Bunken Noto (Writings concerning Joseph Hardy Niiijima), Kono 1982: 1 - 36. This bibliography indicates a growing scientific interest in the personality and work of Niiijima.

<sup>144</sup> The concept of "bands" remains significant in postwar interpretation of Meiji Protestantism. The concept provides opportunities of observing the process of Protestant breakthrough "from below". The popular study on Shizuoka Band, Ota 1979, and the publication Kumamoto Bando Kenkyu (Studies on the Kumamoto Band), Doshisha 1965, both illustrate that the "bands" played a decisive role in the process of Protestant breakthrough.

**Yokohama Band.** In 1859 the Presbyterian mission was established in Yokohama. Schools devoted to western learning, particularly in English, soon developed. Rev. Ballagh and the educational pioneer Dr. Brown were central in this educational activity. Some of the students attending classes conducted by missionaries, participated in a "week of prayer" for the foreign community, sponsored by the Evangelical Alliance in Yokohama January 1872. As a result of this series of prayer-meetings, held in the spirit of the "second awakening", 9 Japanese persons were baptized later in the same year. Verbeck writes: "...After a week or two the Japanese for the first time in the history of their nation, were on their knees in a Christian prayer-meeting, entreating God with great emotion, with the tears streaming down their faces, that he would give his Spirit to Japan as to the early church and to the people around the apostles...As a direct fruit of these prayer-meetings, the first Christian church was organized in Yokohama on March 10th 1872." <sup>145</sup>

The Yokohama Band, born in the classroom, was organized as a church in accordance with Presbyterian principles. Through this feature the ecclesiastical orientation of this band was already reflected. The band, and the church which was built around it, was expressedly ecumenical from its very beginning. Its name of *Nippon Kirisuto Kokai* testifies to its ecumenical nature: *Kokai* means "ecumenical church". Its policy was to establish a national church, not identified with any particular denomination. A simple

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Though "band" can be applied to many groups of young Japanese students or novices who gathered around a Christian specialist or teacher, it is mostly applied to three such groups. The best known bands are Yokohama Band, Kumamoto Band and Sapporo Band. Hirozaki Band, Bishop Williams Band, Shizuoka Band and "Buxton Band" are less known. Drummond 1971: 166 - 72 emphasizes the first three of these bands. But he also mentions Hirozaki Band, which was initiated by the Methodist missionary John Ing and the prominent Japanese church leader Honda Yoichi. Drummond also mentions "another circle of young men formed around the bishop of the Anglican Church in Japan, C. M. Williams". Iglehart 1959: 48 - 56 similarly speaks of more than three bands. Cf also the presentation of Shizuoka Band, a group of early believers who gathered around Mr. E. W. Clark, a science instructor in Shizuoka, Ota 1979.

The four issues in 1959 of the missionary magazine *JCQ*, however, focus the three-band only, Takaya 1959. This approach corresponds to a widespread understanding among Japanese scholars, Takenaka 1980: 235 - 7, Ebisawa/Ouchi 1970: 167, Fukushima 1982: 161ff, Kishimoto 1954/79: 288f.

But Meiji Protestantism is not exclusively confined to the bands. Ishihara 1967 and Dohi 1980 thus consider the Protestant development in Japan in a wider international, ecclesiastical and social context. There is also an indigenous, Japanese reason to avoid an exclusive three-band perspective. The bands focus the samurai beginnings of Japanese Protestantism. Neither the rural acceptance of Protestant faith in the 1870s and 1880s nor the urbanization of Protestantism after 1890 will be adequately assessed if the "band" concept is exclusively focused. In particular, if the number of bands is reduced to three, important aspects of Japanese Protestantism will be overlooked.

With these limitations, though, "band" is a very useful concept. It characterizes the early pluralization of Japanese Protestantism, Kishimoto 1954/79: 288f, Kudo 1979: 75 -90, Takenaka 1980: 235 - 237, cf also Iglehart 1959: 48 - 56. It also illustrates aspects of the modernization process, such as education, Ebisawa/Ouchi 1970: 167. The bands as exclusive, Protestant starting points, Ouchi 1957: 66, Kumazawa 1976: 179ff, is a perspective qualified by Ishida 1971: 29 - 39 and Kumazawa 1974: 181. Ishida and Kumazawa here point out that an indigenous, Japanese theology was borne within the bands. Social aspects and dynamics of the bands are explored also by some Western scholars, cf Caldarola 1969: 27 - 29 and Drummond 1971: 166 - 73. Also in light of continued developments, the role of the Yokohama, Kumamoto and Sapporo bands qualifies for a particular treatment.

<sup>145</sup> Verbeck 1883: 52 -3.

creed, mainly taken from the World Evangelical Alliance was taken for this purpose.<sup>146</sup> The idea of a national Protestant Church, a *kokai* was strong among Japanese Christians and early missionaries. It also coloured the later denominational development in several branches of Japanese Christianity.

This church was the beginning of the Presbyterian/Reformed family of churches in Japan. Uemura Masahisa (1857 - 1925) appeared early as the dominating leader of the group. From 1890 he was for several decades the central ecclesiastical personality in Japanese Protestantism.<sup>147</sup> The first leader of the Methodist church, Yoichi Honda (1848 - 1912), who founded the Hirozaki Band, also came from the Yokohama Band.<sup>148</sup>

**Kumamoto Band.** This "Band" was also conditioned by the Japanese quest for western learning. It consisted of students from Kumamoto School of Western Science (Kumamoto Yogakko). The school was established by the local authorities in Kumamoto, not by Western missionaries. The person charged with the leadership of the school, Captain L. L. Janes,<sup>149</sup> was educated at West Point Military Academy in the USA. In spite of his reluctance to teach Christianity, in compliance with the wishes of his employers, interest in the Western religion was awakened among the students. Bible-studies were held, and students who had been strongly impressed by the faith of Captain

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<sup>146</sup> Drummond 1971: 161.

<sup>147</sup> The collection of documents on Japanese Protestantism, Uemura Masahisa to sono *Jidai* (Uemura Masahisa and His Times), Saba 1937 and 1938, illustrates what Uemura means to Japanese Protestantism.

His role in church life and theology is frequently highlighted in the Protestant journal *Fukuin to Sekai* (Gospel and World). He is focused as an evangelist, see Saito 1964: 58 - 62, Ishihara 1965: 6 - 17, and as a representative of a "church centered Christianity" in a process of modernization, Ouchi 1965: 27 - 37. Although chiefly portrayed as an evangelist and church leader, other sides of Uemura are also brought up. For example, his conversion, churchmanship and national attitude are discussed in Ogawa 1975 and 1976.

Ishida views Uemura from an ecclesiastical point of view, Ishida 1971: 28 - 39. But Uemura also was a humanist, cf the analysis of his ideas on the human being, Takeda 1959b: 12f. Humanist leanings similarly appear in his thoughts on individuality, Takeda 1959b: 89 - 104.

<sup>148</sup> A popular presentation of his life is provided by Sunakawa Banri in Sunakawa 1965: 100ff. His achievements as a church leader are focused, pp 142ff. A special emphasis is laid on ecumenical ideas and efforts, pp 122ff, 147ff. Cf supra 2.2.2.1, note 144 and infra 4.1.4, note 355.

The ecclesiastical characteristics of Yokohama band, where he initially embraced Christianity, is well known. So is the ecumenical spirit of the band; Ebisawa 1959: 73-76, Sumiya 1961: 13 - 15, Ebisawa/Ouchi 1970: 5, Kudo 1979: 76 - 78.

As the Yokohama Band was formed around missionaries, relationships to the missionaries naturally are highlighted, cf Kudo 1979: *ibid.* Ouchi maintains that the ecclesiasticism in Yokohama mainly developed out of Rev. Ballagh's church centered teaching, Ebisawa/Ouchi 1970: 311. Cf also reminiscences such as Ogawa Seigo's book *Dowa kara Dowa e* (From fairy tale to fairy tale) 1980, where he illustrates from his own family the close relationship between missionaries and Japanese converts in Yokohama. Kodama traces the teaching and the study of English in *Meiji no Yokohama* (Yokohama in the Meiji Period) 1979. The missionaries are particularly viewed in Kodama 1979: 55-110.

Yokohama Band is also analyzed from genuine Japanese points of view. Its leader, Uemura, was deeply moulded in Japanese traditions, Dohi 1980b: 179ff. Cf also the chapter on *The Study of English in Yokohama*, prefaced by a presentation of Fukuzawa Yukichi's ideas on linguistic studies also, Kodama 1979: 26ff.

<sup>149</sup> Supra 2.2.1 note 136.

Janes subscribed to the "Hanaoka Covenant" in 1876.<sup>150</sup> The covenant expressed the firm aim to live as Christians and to serve Japan. After this event Christian converts at the school were subjected to much harassment and persecution.<sup>151</sup> The school was closed because of the spreading Christian influence.

In the confusion the students were transferred to the recently established Doshisha School in Kyoto, the nucleus which later developed into Doshisha University. Here they soon became the dominating group.<sup>152</sup> An alliance was formed between the free and independent Kumamoto Band and the Congregational Church, which supported Doshisha and with which Nijima was connected. Gradually, persons from Kumamoto Band achieved leading positions in the Congregational church as well as in Doshisha.

Different from Yokohama Band, whose dominating leader was Uemura Masahisa, Kumamoto Band had a varied leadership. Among its prominent leaders were Kozaki Hiromichi (1856 - 1938), Ebina Danjo (1857 - 1937) and Miyagawa Tsuneteru (1857-1936). Kozaki, who is noted for his support of Biblical criticism, also emphasizing social aspects of Christianity, but adhered none the less to an orthodox tradition.<sup>153</sup> Ebina became the proponent of a "New Theology".<sup>154</sup> Miyagawa also leaned in the same direction. For many years he was the cherished administrative leader of the Congregational church. Two prominent persons from Kumamoto Band left the Christian church in the

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<sup>150</sup> After the Kumamoto School was closed, Captain Janes returned to America, where a severe family conflict culminating in Mrs. Janes' suit for divorce in 1882 became apparent. Mrs. Janes claimed that her husband was guilty of "conjugal infidelity" while in Japan. The mission and most missionaries sided with Mrs. Janes. The accusations are, however, refuted by Japanese as well as by a leading representative of the American Board missionaries, Rev. Green. The Japanese students of Janes largely took the side of their former teacher.

Captain Janes, whose name was not forgotten in Japan, several years later, in 1893, accepted a professorship in Kyoto. He was now most critical to missions and traditional Christianity. It became apparent in a series of lectures which he was invited to give at Doshisha University. Even former friends found his criticism of missions and missionaries too harsh, and the series was discontinued.

Some American Board material on Janes is still restricted, and little research on his later personal and spiritual developments exists. Thus the relationship between Captain Janes and the radicalization and even defections of his students Kanamori and Yokoi remains unexplored. Cf Notehelfer 1973: 27 - 42.

<sup>151</sup> Mitsui Hisashi tells in detail how family conflicts were provoked by the new faith, Mitsui 1980: 159 - 180, cf also Kozaki 1933: 19 - 23.

<sup>152</sup> Takenaka 1980: 209 ff.

<sup>153</sup> Although Kozaki is noted for his early support of Biblical criticism, Kozaki 1933: 91f, cf Kumazawa 1976: 181, he is mostly counted among the "non liberal voices". Germany 1965: 12. His social concern is expressed in the book *Sekyo Shinron* (A new Theory on State and Religion) 1886, where a Christian view on man and society is confronted with Confucianism, cf Drummond 1971: 185.

Postwar research has highlighted the conversion of Kozaki, which was also a reflected transition from Confucianism to Christianity, cf Takeda 1957a: 65f, Mitsui 1980: 181 - 192. His early Tokyo evangelism and the editorship of the YMCA magazine *Rikugo Zasshi* are studied in later years, cf Sugii 1973: 131 - 166, Imanaka 1984: 139 - 160.

<sup>154</sup> Cf Yuasa 1942: 4 (Ebina) " ... fostered the growth of modern progressive thought in the church". Germany says that "Ebina was always a pivotal figure. His influence was wide and profound", Germany 1965, 20. Kozaki counts Ebina as the "founder of New Theology", Kozaki 1933: 362 - 9. On Ebina cf *infra* 2.2.3.3.2.

1890s: Kanamori Tsurin (1857 - 1945) and Yokoi Tokio (1857 - 1937) This question will be further elaborated upon in due course. <sup>155</sup>

The Kumamoto Band was typified by a theological liberalism, with and emphasis on social aspects of the Christian message as well as strong nationalist concerns. Independence of foreign missions was strongly emphasized. The Congregationalist church under the leadership of Kumamoto Band pioneered the Japanese Protestant independence movement. <sup>156</sup>

**Sapporo Band.** A third significant band in early Protestant history was grouped around Colonel William Smith Clark (1826 - 1886). As president of Massachusetts Agricultural College, he was invited by the national authorities to establish an agricultural university in Japan. He tried consciously to exert a Christian influence. <sup>157</sup> Christian ideas were presented in his teaching. He also held Sunday services in his private home. The entire class, in all 15 students, were converted to Christianity during eight months of study under Colonel Clark. They signed a **Covenant of Believers in Jesus**, formed by Clark in 1877. <sup>158</sup> The converted class then in turn tried to lead the next year students to the new faith. <sup>159</sup> All together the "band" came to comprise about 30 students, who later functioned as a tightly-knit fellowship in the Methodist Church of Sapporo. Financial problems and dissatisfaction with the missionary-dominated leadership and the structure of the church led in 1881 to the formation of the "Sapporo Independent Church". **"The Sapporo Band ... formed themselves into a congregation after their own devising"**. The church was democratically structured, but Uchimura was the unchallenged leader. <sup>160</sup> In this Band an individualist "inner" form of Christian faith developed early, as can be seen in the covenant formed in Sapporo, and as later represented by such personalities as Uchimura Kanzo and Nitobe Inazo. The Sapporo Band developed a particular "spiritual character" and the mystical aspects of faith were given great emphasis. <sup>161</sup>

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<sup>155</sup> Infra 2.2.3.3.2.

<sup>156</sup> Kumazawa 1976: 181 The theological liberalism of Kumamoto Band is stressed in Kumazawa 1976, cf also the dissertation Ishida 1971, which focuses the theological attitude of the band. Its social concerns are identified in Doshisha A 1965: 6. In the publication *Nihon no Kindaika to Kirisutokyo* (Japanese Modernization and Christianity) Doshisha B 1973, the Band traditions are related to Japanese Modernization.

Mitsui, discussing whether Kumamoto Band was nationalist, as alleged, or not, maintains that nationalism was a general aspect of Meiji Christianity, rather than a particularity of Kumamoto Band. He claims that social concern was a typical feature of Kumamoto Band, Mitsui 1980: 235 - 7.

<sup>157</sup> Cary 1909/76b: 124.

<sup>158</sup> Uchimura 1895/1971: 27 - 28.

<sup>159</sup> "to convert the Freshies by storm", cf Uchimura 1895/71: 25

<sup>160</sup> Ritter states that already before 1883 this group formed a congregation "die sich nie eine Missionsgesellschaft anschloss." (which never joined a missionary society), Ritter 1890: 47, cf Iglehart 1959: 56.

<sup>161</sup> Sapporo Band is called "spiritual" by Uchimura himself. See Mitsui 1980: 235 - 7.

Caldarola compares the spirit of the Sapporo Band and the Non-Church Movement to the spirit of Zen Buddhism: "Obviously, the Mukyokai have not borrowed their mystical approach from the West. Their mysticism is strictly indigenous, and it derives from an application of their traditional approach to reality, particularly the Zen approach", Caldarola 1979: 96.

Fukushima, a Kyodan pastor and scholar serving in Hokkaido, has, however,

Among the leading persons of the Sapporo Band was Nitobe Inazo (1862 - 1933), who became famous as an internationalist and educator. Attracted by Christian mysticism, he developed contacts with the Quakers, whom he later joined.<sup>162</sup>

Uchimura Kanzo (1861 - 1930) has, however, remained in memory as the unchallenged leader of the Non-Church group. His conversion history,<sup>163</sup> his conflict-oriented type of faith<sup>164</sup> as well as his "non-church theology"<sup>165</sup> have characteristic features of individualism. Uchimura also engaged strongly in the peace issue.<sup>166</sup>

This band has remained outside formal ecclesiastical organizations and denominations through the years and up to present time.

**District Conversions.** Another phase of conversion followed after the Protestant breakthrough in the bands. We term them "district conversions". From about 1877 (Meiji 10) to the end of the 1880s, Christianity expanded outside the larger cities. There was an increase of churches in Chiba, near Tokyo, from 1877 to 1881. From 1885 to 1887 Gumma and Okayama were particularly receptive to Christianity. The time in between, 1881-1885, was a time of economic depression and of standstill for church growth in the districts. After 1887 the rural Churches regressed, and this decline continued in the 1890s.<sup>167</sup>

Kudo gives a detailed analysis of the situation in the Okayama and Gumma Churches. He demonstrates a clear connection between industrial and social development on the one hand and receptivity to Christianity on the other. In Gumma the Christian Church had an intimate relationship with the silk industries.<sup>168</sup> Rev. Ballagh from Yokohama Band was among the involved missionaries. But young Japanese Christians as we have encountered them in the bands, filled with a burning missionary spirit, dominated the expansion drive.<sup>169</sup>

**Summary.** In the bands, young students gathered around a Western teacher in order to get acquainted with Western language and civilization as a means towards building a "New Japan". Entangled in the modernization process, they indirectly encountered the "Western faith".

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structures in mind when he refers to the Sapporo Band and Christian developments in Hokkaido. He identifies three contributions of the Band in Hokkaido; (1) Puritan Christianity introduced by W.S. Clark, (2) The direct influence of the Band upon Christian developments in the region and (3) the establishment of an independent church, Fukushima 1982: 199f.

<sup>162</sup> Ebizawa mainly points out the international achievements of Nitobe, Ebizawa 1959: 93 - 96, similarly Horiuchi in the biography *Nichibei no Kakebashi*, (Bridge between Japan and America), Horiuchi 1981. Takeda Kiyoko discusses Nitobe's type of faith, Takeda 67: 27 - 54, cf a discussion of his religiosity in the substantial study on Nitobe's life and thought *Nitobe Inazo - Shogai to Shiso* (N.I. - his Life and Thought), Sato 1980: 381 - 482.

<sup>163</sup> Cf Uchimura 1895/71, Takeda 1957a: 7 - 10 and Takeda 1967: 9 - 12.

<sup>164</sup> Takeda 1957a: 13 - 26 illustrates the conflict with the emperor worship, cf Ishihara 1976: 105.

<sup>165</sup> Cf Michalson 1962: 9 - 35 and Dohi 1980b: 187 - 94.

<sup>166</sup> Sumiya 1983: 108f.

<sup>167</sup> Yamamori 1974: 33 - 35.

<sup>168</sup> Kudo 1959: 16 - 26.

<sup>169</sup> Kudo 1959: 49 - 58.

The three bands represent characteristic variations within the Japanese acceptance and interpretation of Protestantism in early Meiji. One ecclesiastically and orthodox, one liberal and socially concerned and one spiritual and individualist stream were formed.

#### 2.2.2.2 Context of Conversions.

This presentation of the early formation phase in Meiji Protestantism can be qualified further if we look more closely into the social composition of the emerging Japanese church. Two main categories can be identified.<sup>170</sup>

##### 2.2.2.2.1 Samurai

As already noted, a majority of the early converts to Protestant Christianity came from samurai families.<sup>171</sup> This applies to the handful of pre-1872 converts and to the bands. The samurai were particularly predisposed to receive the new faith. They had opportunities to obtain and read Bibles in the Chinese language. Samurai boys went to Western schools where they met persons from Western countries. Therefore they became less prejudiced towards the Western religion. Samurai from clans opposing the government were particularly open to the new faith. Their possibilities of obtaining a carrier in government circles were limited, but the western learning offered by missionaries provided alternative opportunities.<sup>172</sup>

The initial personal motivations for a change of faith were not generally seeking for personal security. The converts from the bands entered Western schools because of their interest in Western civilization. They desired "to serve the national society"<sup>173</sup> They became Christians when "they saw Christianity through the personality of their teacher".<sup>174</sup>

##### 2.2.2.2.2 Independent Farmers

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<sup>170</sup> There has in postwar research also been a focus on women, cf the article Ozawa 1957. Church historians such as Dohi Akio, Sumiya Mikio and Takeda Cho Kiyoko have raised the question of Protestantism and women's liberation, Kurabashi 1986a and 1986b. Cf also a biographical presentation of twenty women from early Protestant history in Japan, Takamizawa 1969.

<sup>171</sup> A good deal of postwar scholarship is devoted to the conversion dynamics of early Japanese Protestantism, particularly within the samurai class. I have therefore included sections on the samurai, cf supra 2.1.1.1 where their social and economic conditions are described, and supra 2.1.3.2.2, which highlights their political frustration.

Already Takenaka 1957/67: 1ff pays attention to social aspects of the conversion problematic, identifying loyalty and moral heritage among samurai as reasons for their turn to Christianity in a period of crisis. In Kudo 1959: 37 - 43, where the author analyses the historical role of the samurai, conversion is viewed against a social background. In Sumiya 1961: 15 - 22 and Ebisawa/Ouchi 1970: 166ff, the sociological analysis of samurai conversion dynamics is carried on. Contemporary Western scholars largely follow Sumiya in his sociological analysis of conversion, cf Best 1966: 2 and Scheiner 1970: 9 - 48,

<sup>172</sup> Kudo 1959: 16 - 26, Ebisawa/Ouchi 1970: 167f.

<sup>173</sup> Ebisawa/Ouchi 1970: 169. Cf Kudo 1980: 30 where he argues that early converts saw Christianity as vital for Japanese progress.

<sup>174</sup> Shimada Saburo *Kaikoku Jireki* (A Chronicle of the Opening of Japan) Vol I 1907: 166, quoted by Ebisawa/Ouchi 1970: 168.

During the period of receptivity in the districts, as exemplified on the previous page in Gumma and Okayama, the Christian alternative was embraced also by well-situated and independent farmers and business men.<sup>175</sup> Like the samurai, these groups of people had sought modern knowledge and a new life style to meet the demands of the changing times. Socio-economic factors relevant to the growth of Protestantism as a whole, were parallel to those promoting the Popular Rights Movement. Protestantism had a close and intimate relationship to this movement. Both movements possessed common interests in countering feudalism.<sup>176</sup>

The converts "found in Christianity a new religio-ethical concept which emphasized the equality of all humanity, created by God and redeemed by Christ. This concept was accepted as the Gospel by those who had been thought of as inferior to the warrior class in the feudal age".<sup>177</sup>

#### 2.2.2.2.3 Common Ethos among Converts.

In the central cities, the samurai-dominated churches continued their existence, although a development towards a middle class constituency of the churches increasingly took place from the 1890s. When the district churches from about that year waned alongside the Popular Rights' Movement, the middle class came to exercise dominance within Protestant churches.<sup>178</sup>

Though there was a difference of patterns between the three groups of converts: individuals, the bands, and the district converts, there was a strong common ethos among all of them. They embraced Christianity as a new type of ethic, corresponding with their attitude to modernization.

The features of this ethos were egalitarianism and individualism. The two were a united whole, rooted in ideas transmitted through Christianity. Egalitarianism was based on the basic equality of all human beings, as implied in the gospel. Individualism was also regarded as being of great importance. The transformed individual was thought to be the necessary basis for the modernization of Japan.<sup>179</sup>

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<sup>175</sup> Kudo Eiichi has brought to the attention of postwar readers that although Japanese Protestantism started as a samurai movement, it later passed through a flourishing phase in rural areas. Kudo 1959 illustrates the Protestant transition from samurai to farmers and later to city intellectuals. Two decades later, Kudo similarly pleads for a renewed understanding of rural Meiji Protestantism, see the section *Meiji Nosonshakai to Kirisutokyo* (Rural Meiji and Christianity), Kudo 1980: 109 - 192. Kudo's interest in early rural Protestantism is intimately connected with a certain methodological approach. Praising the sociological approach of Sumiya Mikio (On Sumiya 1950 and later writings see Kudo 1980: 144f), Kudo refutes what he terms a leader-oriented and city-oriented interpretation of Japanese Protestant history. If social and economic aspects of church developments are investigated, churches in rural areas also become interesting, he maintains, Kudo 1980: 111.

<sup>176</sup> Compare the development of the People's Rights Movement when the open spirit of Meiji dominated, *supra* 2.1.3.2.2. Kudo 1980: 135 - 37 highlights the parallelism between Protestantism and the People's Rights Movement.

<sup>177</sup> Dohi in Thomas (ed): 41.

<sup>178</sup> Kudo 1979: 24ff.

<sup>179</sup> The postwar debate on early Japanese Protestant history tends to connect conversion and early interpretation of Christianity; the emphasis is, however, on interpretation.

The egalitarian attitude of early Protestantism also is focused by contemporary historians, cf Sumiya 1983: 17f, and Ebisawa/Ouchi 1970: 268. The latter refers to Kozaki

There were areas of close contact between this new ethos and the official policy of modernization. According to the "Charter Oath" <sup>180</sup> "Evil customs of the past ...(should)... be broken off... and ...knowledge ... be sought throughout the world".

There were also areas of contact between the Protestant ethos and traditional Japanese thought. Wang Yang-ming was relevant thought emphasizing individual cons-

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Hiromichi's criticism of Confucianism.

The individual or individualist feature of early Protestantism is highlighted as well. The early postwar work by Takeda Ningenkan no Sokoku (Rivalry about the View of Man), provides one example, cf the section "The new ego as seen by Uemura", Takeda 1959b: 89 - 104. In *Seito to Itan no Aida*, (Between Orthodoxy and Heterodoxy) Takeda 1976, personalities such as Fukuzawa Yukichi p. 5, Uchimura Kanzo pp 5f, Nitobe Inazo pp 6f and others are studied. The study focus on ways of self transformation in the modernization process. Christianity is seen in a wider context of self transformation as transformation of self by means of "God", pp 33 - 70.

Imanaka similarly treats the role of Christian individuals in the modernization process. *Nihon no Kindaika to Kirisutokyo* (Japanese Modernization and Christianity) focus personalities such as Yokoi Shozan (1809 - 1869), Yamaji Aizan (1864 - 1917) and Toyotomi Ikkei (1822 - 1914), Imanaka 1973: 89 - 114.

Ishihara Ken illustrates the trend in more general terms. In the book *Kirisutokyo to Nippon* (Christianity and Japan) 1976 he stresses the individualist character of early Japanese Protestantism, Ishihara 1976: 105ff, cf statements by Kudo 1980: 60. Similarly, Sumiya considers "puritanism based on the discovery of a personality" as a Protestant characteristic, Sumiya 1983: 17f. Individualist aspects of early Japanese Protestantism is actually brought up in a number of contexts. Ebisawa/Ouchi 1970: 260 points to change of individuals as a prerequisite of modernization whereas Kudo 1979: 45 - 51 treats "a protesting personality".

In several of her works, Takeda Cho Kiyoko views conversion against the background of national traditions. In *Ningenkan no Sokoku*, she considers two types of conflict with Japanese ethos emerging from the Meiji conversions. There is one conflict with the concept of god in popular Japanese faith, another with the Confucian concept of Heaven. Takeda 1959b: 6 - 7. In her *Dochaku to Haikyo* (Indigenization and Apostasy) 1967, she classifies Protestant conversions according to five categories: *Talbotsugata* indicates a compromise with religions or with political absolutism, *koritsugata* means isolation from environment, *talketsugata* is a way of opposition to religion or state ideology as typified by Nijima Jo and Uchimura Kanzo. In *tsugikigata* Protestant faith is grafted into already existing traditions, typified by Ebina and Kozaki, but also to some extent by Uchimura. The fifth category is *haikyo*, defection. It comprises people who turned to socialism/ anarchism or to nationalism. Takeda opts for a reinterpretation of the faith of the "defectors", as their exclusion by immature churches was conditioned by a rather narrow conception of standards. See Takeda 1967: 3 - 22. For a similar approach to early Protestant interpretations of Christianity, cf Dohi 1980b: 170ff and Dohi in Thomas (ed): 40ff.

In *Seito to Itan no Aida* (Between Orthodoxy and Heterodoxy) 1976, Takeda considers how Christian believers interpreted their faith in a tension with traditional Japanese religion and the totalitarian state. She is not merely an objective historian presenting a detached historical analysis and interpretation of Meiji Protestantism in this presentation. Through her plead to legitimate a creative tension between "Orthodoxy" and "Heterodoxy" attitudes found in the early converts, she reveals a deep personal concern in the Meiji Protestant legacy, cf Takeda 1976: 102.

<sup>180</sup> Cf a translation of the Charter Oath, supra 2.1.3.2.1, cf also the section on Confucianism, supra 2.1.1.2.

science. Wang Yang-ming thought also mediated Christian faith on genuine religious levels. Christianity was considered a fulfillment of Confucianism.<sup>181</sup>

At times, however, an attitude of non-conformity, was strong in the groups of converts.<sup>182</sup> One aspect of this might be found in a Christian deviation from the national ideology of modernization, the latter being based, as we have seen, upon the slogan of Sakuma Shozan: "Eastern Ethics and Western Science". Christians pleaded for a modernization which would transcend "Eastern Ethics" and instead based on a Christian democratic spirit.<sup>183</sup>

Another aspect of this non-conformity was revealed in the interaction between those adherents of a "new" supreme God and their local communities,<sup>184</sup> which were tied together in patterns of traditional, religious observances<sup>185</sup> and deep rooted social conformity. The new, Christian commitment challenged old religious practices,<sup>186</sup> and established a new social order which led to tensions. The Protestant Sunday observances, which were strictly demanded by Puritanism, frequently led to tensions between Protestantism and traditional communities.<sup>187</sup> As an extension of this situation there were also harsh conflicts with Buddhism, above all with Shin Buddhism, which was firmly supported by countryfolk.

### 2.2.2.3 Inner Structure of Meiji Protestantism 1872 - 1889.

#### 2.2.2.3.1 The Ecclesiastical Frame of Protestant Formation.

From 1872, Protestant conversion and church formation began to take place. During the

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<sup>181</sup> Kanamori told his Confucian teacher: "In your lectures on the Great Learning you taught us that the way of getting at knowledge was by investigation, and that in all things we should not depend upon mere presuppositions." Kozaki 1933: 21. Kozaki personally feels that the absorption in Confucianism was a help towards faith, "Jesus says: 'Think not that I come to destroy the law and the prophets, I come not to destroy but to fulfil'... In proceeding from Confucianism we have not rejected the one and replaced it by the other. We embraced Christianity because we believed that it fulfills the spirit and real importance of Confucianism" Kozaki 1933: 37, supra 2.1.1.2 note 27.

Cf also Kudo 1980: 47f and Best 1966: 171 - 8, on Wang Yang-ming and Christian conversion.

<sup>182</sup> Early Protestantism implied an attitude of adaption, but non-conformity was nonetheless important for the evangelical dynamics, infra 2.2.2.3.2.

<sup>183</sup> Ebisawa/Ouchi 1970: 167 - 8.

<sup>184</sup> Kozaki writes about the persecution which occurred after the group conversion at Kumamoto: "As soon as this incident became known to their near relatives, severe persecution broke out. Some were placed in solitary confinement at home, some were cast out of their families, all were subjected to strong pressure of various kinds to renounce Christianity. This was the chief cause to the school being closed that summer", Kozaki 1933: 20 - 21.

<sup>185</sup> Kudo 1959: 65.

<sup>186</sup> Cf the quotation: "The Christian monotheism laid its axe at the root of all my superstitions ... Monotheism made me a new man." Uchimura 1895/1971: 29.

<sup>187</sup> Kudo 1959: 65 and Dohi in Thomas (ed): 41. Cf also Yamamori 1974: 32 - 41, which analyses the reasons for growth during the period of expansion.

two decades up to 1891, the churches rapidly multiplied.<sup>188</sup> The numerical increase levelled off towards the end of the 1880s. During this period the formation of churches and institutions was divided between five Protestant and two Catholic groups. To get an overall picture, we include sections on all seven groups.

**Episcopal Church.** The Protestant Episcopal Church from the USA had arrived already in 1859 to Japan. Later the British societies the SPG and the CMS arrived. The English Bishop Edward Bickerstedt initiated the organization of a Japanese Episcopal Church, *Seikokai*,<sup>189</sup> in 1887. The church was at that time open to the idea of uniting with other Protestant churches, as the name *kokai* indicates. But the other Protestant groups considered the *Seikokai* initiative for establishing Protestant unity unacceptable.<sup>190</sup> The Episcopal church had a moderate growth during its first years.<sup>191</sup>

**Baptists.** The Baptists came to Japan in 1860, when Rev. Goble from the American Baptist Free Mission Society arrived.<sup>192</sup> Goble had participated in Perry's expedition 1853. Because they only had a few missionaries and also neglected education in its first years, the Baptists took a peripheral role in the early development of Japanese Protestantism.

In 1900 a "National Convention" for Baptists in Japan was formed. Two mission societies were then at work in Japan, as the Southern Baptist Union in 1891 had joined with the American Baptist Missionary Union.

**The Russian Orthodox Church** in Japan owed its beginning to Father Nikolai (1836-1912). He arrived in Japan in 1861 as pastor to the Russian Consulate in Hakodate, Hokkaido. Father Nikolai became the centre of a "band", as did so many of his Protestant colleges. The church grew rapidly during the first years of its existence.<sup>193</sup>

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<u>Year</u>	<u>Number of pastors.</u>	<u>Number of baptized.</u>	<u>Numerical growth.</u>
1872	0	22	
1882	56	5.092	5.070 (10 years)
1888	106	23.026	17.934 ( 6 years)
1891	306	31.360	8.334 ( 3 years)

Proceedings 1901: Appendix.

<sup>189</sup> The name *Seikokai* means "Holy Catholic Church". The word *kokai* (catholic or ecumenical church) was also used by the Presbyterians to name their church in Yokohama 1872.

<sup>190</sup> Bishop Bickerstedt proposed in a letter to the Protestant missions in Japan that Protestants should unite. The letter included the manuscript of a sermon. It said that the Anglican Communion not only encompassed features which were found in various Protestant churches, but also that the Episcopal church was the only communion which had "touch and contact with them all", Thomas 1959: 149 and Imbrie 1914: 14 - 17.

This attitude was found insulting by the other Protestant groups, and promoted a scism between *Seikokai* and Japanese Mainstream Protestantism. In joint Protestant reports, however, the Episcopal Church is commonly included, cf Proceedings 1883: 57 and Proceedings 1901: 879 ff.

<sup>191</sup> In 1888 *Seikokai* reported 2.582 members.

<sup>192</sup> Goble's financial support was so meager that he had to return to the USA. He later worked in Japan for the American Baptist Missionary Union, and even as an independent missionary. Cary 1909/76b: 52.

<sup>193</sup> In 1883 there were 148 orthodox churches and the number of believers, children included, was 8.863, Cary 1909/76a: 413. Cary gives an account of the early history of the church, pp 373 - 431.

**Roman Catholics.** Roman Catholic Missions started when missionaries from the Paris Foreign Missionary Society arrived in 1862. An astonishing event took place on March 17th 1865. On that day a group of "hidden Christians" contacted the Catholic Father M. Petitjean who worked in Nagasaki.<sup>194</sup> Roman Catholic work was largely devoted to the "hidden Christians" during the period. A severe situation occurred when the Urakami Christians were persecuted from 1868 - 70. The persecution was not completely stopped until 1873.

In 1891 Japan was organized into 4 vicariates, with each having one suffragan bishop subordinated to the bishop of Tokyo. Administration and leadership of the Roman Catholic Church was largely directed from Rome.<sup>195</sup>

**Mainstream Protestants.**<sup>196</sup> The following groups: Presbyterians, Methodists and Congregationalists belong to the groups we have called "Mainstream Protestants". The "Non-Church Movement also belongs here.

The **Presbyterian/Reformed Churches** grew out of the work which centered on Yokohama and the "Yokohama Band". Church work was of central importance to this group of Protestants. The emphasis was placed on Church unity as well as on achieving independence from overseas's missions. The "painstaking attempt to form an organic union with the Congregational Churches" was given serious consideration by this church.<sup>197</sup> The process towards independence was steady and gradual, financially as well as administratively. Complete independence was achieved in 1894.

This Protestant stream was together with the Congregationalists the largest Protestant groups during the early years.<sup>198</sup>

Protestant education found its strongest expression through the founding of Meiji Gakuin University in Tokyo. The education of women in particular was emphasized within this Protestant tradition.<sup>199</sup>

The **Methodist Episcopal Church**, the **Methodist Church of Canada** and later the **Methodist Episcopal Church (south)** founded the work of this denomination.

The growth of the Methodist branches of Protestantism was fairly fast.<sup>200</sup>

There was, as we have seen above,<sup>201</sup> a special link between the Yokohama Band and Methodist work. Honda Yoichi who came from the Yokohama Band, joined the missionary J. Ing from the American Methodists, who arrived in Japan in 1877. Together they went to North Japan, where the so-called Hirosaki Band was formed.

The Methodists were reluctant to unite with the rest of Protestantism as well as

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<sup>194</sup> Cary 1909/76a: 282 - 290.

<sup>195</sup> Dohi in Thomas (ed): 42.

<sup>196</sup> Cf supra 1.2.3.

<sup>197</sup> A Presbyterian/Reformed report calls the efforts to merge with Congregationalists, "memorable among the events" between 1883 and 1890. Proceedings 1901: 885.

<sup>198</sup> The Nihon Kirisuto Kyokai had with its 7.551 members, the largest constituency among Protestant groups in 1888.

<sup>199</sup> "In 1867 Mrs. Hepburn began this work, now (1883) grown to large proportions, by forming a little class for boys and girls at Yokohama...In Tokyo too, Mrs. Carrothers had begun a small girls' school in 1870... These faithful beginnings soon produced good fruit in the conversion of a few of the pupils, and eventually resulted in the establishment of one of the earliest and leading girls' schools, the Isaac Ferris Seminary at Yokohama". Proceedings 1883: 45. Cf also supra 2.2.2.2 note 170.

<sup>200</sup> In 1888 4.491 members were recorded.

<sup>201</sup> Cf supra 2.2.2.1, in particular note 144.

slow to form a united, Methodist Church. Due particularly to the painstaking efforts by Honda Yoichi, Methodist denominational unity was established in 1907.

Methodists founded many social and educational institutions. Aoyama Gakuin in Tokyo became a large university.

The Congregationalist Mission arrived in 1869, through missionaries sent by the American Board. They soon became one of the largest Church families in Japan.<sup>202</sup>

The church early on gained a qualified Japanese leadership. The pastors Niiijima Jo and Sawayama Paul had studied in the USA and were ordained there. The church strongly emphasized indigenous leadership.

The attempt to unite Congregationalists and Presbyterians "ended finally in failure and frustration, because of the negative attitude of the Congregational leaders towards the aggressive Presbyterian movement"<sup>203</sup>

The Congregationalists kept a visible social and cultural profile. The Doshisha University in Kyoto was its main educational centre. Another important educational institutions was Baika Girls' School in Osaka. This school was built completely with Japanese funds, after an initiative by Sawayama Paul.<sup>204</sup> The medical work of Dr. Bary during the early years, and literary work through magazines, pamphlets and books, are notable characteristics of early Congregationalist work.

The Non-Church Movement in this early phase was still in a period of incipient formation. The Sapporo Band was formed in 1877, and in 1881 the nucleus of this band organized themselves into the Sapporo Independent Church. The Non-Church Movement, which was intimately connected with the leader, Uchimura Kanzo, was, however, not launched in a formal sense until 1901, when Uchimura began publishing "Mukyokai", which became the magazine of the the Non-Church Movement.

No record of the number of disciples was kept. Some indication can however be found. The first issue of one of his regular publications, the *Seisho Kenkyu* (Bible Study), appearing in 1900, sold over 3000 copies. With his growing popularity in the 1920s, the number exceeded 4000. His regular lectures in Tokyo drew an audience of 350 at that time.<sup>205</sup>

#### 2.2.2.3.2 Evangelical Dynamism

There was a characteristic evangelical dynamism which was based on a social concern and related to different aspects of the social and religious conflict in Japan.

Early Meiji Christians accepted Christianity, not only for the sake of their personal security, but rather for the purpose of reforming the nation.<sup>206</sup> The new faith provided them with a frame of reference for the founding of a new society.<sup>207</sup> This structure was no obstacle to the evangelization process. Demonstration of the new ethical principles was seen as a basic form of evangelism.<sup>208</sup>

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<sup>202</sup> In 1888 Congregationalists reported 7.093 members.

<sup>203</sup> Dearing 1901: 898 ff.

<sup>204</sup> Drummond 1971: 180 - 1.

<sup>205</sup> Sekine 1967: 102ff.

<sup>206</sup> "State ethics was a considerable part of their ethics". Ebisawa/Ouchi 1970: 264.

<sup>207</sup> Germany 1965: 3.

<sup>208</sup> Sumiya identifies two main features in early Meiji Protestantism. One was a combination of faith and nation building, another was a new puritan moralism based on the discovery of the personality, Sumiya 1950/61: 17 - 18.

Early Japanese Protestantism had in other words and ethical emphasis. But evangelical preaching and *ribaibaru* (revivals) was a significant part of the pattern. It may

The evangelization took place in an atmosphere of conflict. We have seen that the conflict with Japanese traditions and with the modernization policy of Japan was not embracing. There were areas of common concern. However, when the relationship to Japanese religion is taken into consideration, one might talk of a spiritual warfare during the years up to 1890.<sup>209</sup>

The conflicts were not necessarily diametrical to successful evangelization and growth. During the 1880s the dynamics of controversy, at least to a certain degree, favoured Christian progress. The strong conflicts accompanying the evangelization of rural Japan, led to a revival in 1883 - 1884. The spiritual effects of the revival strengthened the mission to rural Japan.<sup>210</sup>

#### 2.2.2.3.3 Unionism and Denominationalism.

During this period Japanese Protestantism gradually developed along denominational lines. From the missionary side the presuppositions were given in the denominational structure of Protestant missions. Japanese leaders with a close relationship to Western missionary Boards also came to support denominationalism, as was the case with the Congregationalist leader Niihama Jo in the negotiations with Presbyterians towards the end of the

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therefore be adequate to emphasize with Germany more independently the evangelical character. Germany claims that early Meiji Christianity Meiji was "ethical and evangelistic" Germany 1965: 3, cf Abe 1955: 147 - 49, quoted by Germany 1965: 4.

According to Germany, the ethical emphasis supported an evangelical purpose: "First the ethical character of the Puritan Christian expression provided early Christian converts with a frame of reference for the founding of a new society ... The second purpose for the ethical emphasis in early Christianity was to serve, not society, but the Church". Germany 1965: 4 - 5.

<sup>209</sup> Early Christians opposed Buddhism. One example was the pamphlet by the Congregationalist missionary Gordon 1892, *Bukkyo Tanomu Ni Tarazu* (The Insufficiency of Buddhism). Lack of cultural creativity, support of status quo in society, various doctrinal inconsistencies, mistaken interpretation of original Buddhism and unreliability in matters of salvation were here listed among the alleged drawbacks of Japanese Buddhism.

A Japanese Protestant, Takahashi Goro, illustrates similar standpoints. In the articles Takahashi 1881 and 1882, he states his views on Buddhism. He identified doctrinal shortcomings, Takahashi 1881 and 1884. The lack of absolute ethical principles in Buddhism disqualified it from becoming a proper basis for state morals. He also accused Buddhism for idol worship, thus only appealing to underdeveloped areas. He argues in other words that Buddhism possesses no capacity whatsoever, to function as a basis for modern nation, Takahashi 1884. Cf Lande 1979: 39 - 99.

Among Buddhists, the attitude to Christianity similarly was one of warfare, cf Thelle 1982: 75 - 77 and Kudo 1980: 129 - 31.

<sup>210</sup> Japanese historians view revivals in early Japanese Protestant history from various standpoints.

Kudo views them against a socio-political background, Kudo 1959: 99. In Ohama 1979: 79 - 106, they are more specifically considered to be responses to resistance.

A psychological perspective is taken by Sumiya, when he describes the phenomenon as a "personality faith", Sumiya 1961/82: 80 - 81. Cf the psychological evaluation by Iglehart who terms them "emotional", Iglehart 1959: 72 - 4.

1880ies.<sup>211</sup> There are good reasons to claim that the early Japanese Protestants did not possess a reflected, consequent unionist ecclesiology.<sup>212</sup>

The so-called *kokaishugi*,<sup>213</sup> a term which we may render as "ecumenism", is none the less one of the most striking features of early Japanese Protestant history. When the first Protestant Church was founded during 1872 in Yokohama, it named itself "Nihon Kirisuto Kokai", thus signaling a wish for Protestant catholicity. In its first church constitution it says: "Our church is not partial to any sect, believing only in the name of Christ in whom all are one, and believing that all who take the Bible as their guide, diligently studying it, are Christ's servants and our brothers. For this reason all believers on earth belong to Christ's family of brotherly love."<sup>214</sup>

Unionism was rooted in Western awakenings, The Japanese "Evangelical Alliance" was influenced by a strong supra denominational mood in contemporary China<sup>215</sup> and by Western missionaries in Japan.<sup>216</sup> But it also was strongly endorsed by Japanese believers. Japanese Protestants argued that Church divisions were part of Western Church history, and thus were unfamiliar to Japanese realities. They also argued that the concept of "one God" implied the idea of "one church". Desiring a church without Western dominance (which included denominationalism) the Japanese argued strongly for the *kokai* idea.

Though Japanese Protestantism developed denominations, the idea of unionism inspired important joint projects and structures. In the first hand we can mention *Zenkoku Kirisuto Shinto Dai Shinbokkai* (The National Conference of Christian Fellowship). The conference was first convened in 1878. Great gatherings were held every second or third year. In 1885 the name was changed to the "Evangelical Alliance". The

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<sup>211</sup> See Cary 1909/76b: 193 - 95 on the proceedings. Kozaki Hiromichi, who was deeply involved in the process, regrets that no positive decision came. He blames Davis and Nijima for not supporting the unification scheme, Kozaki 1933: 83 - 5.

Ouchi, who has the advantage of a historical distance to the events, considers the incompatibility of Congregational and Presbyterian church order to be the decisive reason for the failure, Ebisawa/Ouchi 1970: 236.

The Church Historian Dohi Akio also give both parts a share of the blame, but adds theological and psychological reasons for the negative outcome by observing that Congregational leaders had a negative attitude to the "aggressive Presbyterian union movement", Dohi in Thomas (ed): 44.

<sup>212</sup> Dohi Akio in an article maintains that the *kokaishugi* (Ecumenism) which was manifested in Yokohama Church in 1872 was a denominational indifferentism. He argues in support that, in the beginning, inconsistencies between Presbyterian and Congregationalist Church structures never were problematized; Biblical interpretation was not applied to historical Christianity and it was not even acknowledged that a national church partly is an expression of Western denominationalism, Dohi JCQ 1966: 126 ff.

<sup>213</sup> *kokai* = official gathering, in other words a catholic assembly. The common word for church is *kyokai*, an assembly based on a certain teaching, *kyo*. *Kokaishugi* is generally rendered "unionism" or "ecumenism".

<sup>214</sup> The substance of the first rule in the Constitution of 1872, as rendered by Cary 1909/76b: 77., cf supra 2.2.2.1.

<sup>215</sup> Ebisawa/Ouchi 1970: 178 - 9. Cf supra 2.2.2.1.

<sup>216</sup> At a joint missionary conference in 1872, a statement was passed, endorsing unity in name and organization of the Protestant churches that be founded in future. The majority of Congregationalist, Presbyterian and Reformed missionaries participated. Missionaries from CMS and American Episcopal Mission did not attend. Absent was also the leader of the Russian Orthodox Mission, Father Nicolai. All were nevertheless invited to participate in a joint project of Bible translation. Cary 1909/76b: 79.

National Christian Council of Japan, from 1923, is a continuation of this early Fellowship.<sup>217</sup>

The Tokyo Seinenkai (YMCA) was also a supra-denominational fellowship, founded in 1880.

Magazines like *Shichi-Ichi Zappo*, edited by Congregationalist groups from 1875 and *Rikugo Zasshi*, published by the Tokyo YMCA from 1880, were also expressions of supra-denominational ideas. The translation of the Bible was a non-denominational project undertaken by missionaries from the Mainstream Protestant churches together with the Episcopalians. Japanese Christians participated in the process. The New Testament was finished by 1880, and the entire Bible by 1888.<sup>218</sup> Though organizational unity never significantly broke denominational barriers, we can conclude that the idea of one, united Protestant church was alive up to 1890.

### 2.2.3 Meiji Protestantism and the Challenge of Patriotism, 1890 - 1905.

#### Introduction.

After a period of youthful enthusiasm in Japan during the years 1872 - 89, there followed a time of crisis with new challenges during the years from 1890 - 1905.<sup>219</sup> I will illustrate how conflict between Christian and Japanese ethos took place during a period of reinforced patriotism in Japan. The most relevant illustration of this conflict was Uchimura's protest in 1891 against Emperor veneration. There was a need to reconsider the basis of Protestant identity in Japan, and this phase is rich in new theological articulation.

#### 2.2.3.1 A Wave of Nationalism.

It might seem a contradiction that Christian groups so burning with national zeal and so committed to national tasks as they were, should be estranged through national or patriotic movements. At least two reasons should be considered.

One is sheer misunderstanding, created by the centuries of barring Christianity from Japan as a dangerous and heretical faith. In spite of the lifting of the ban in 1873, misconceptions and prejudices disappeared much more slowly.

The other reason is that the type of nationalism current among the Protestants differed from prevailing ideas in the country at large. The Christian concept of the new Japan was related to a democratic concept of administration and supported by an individualistic concept of persons which permitted the liberty of religious commitments; however, this was contrary to the prevailing traditions in Japan. The contacts between the Protestant movement and the People's Rights Movement have illustrated some of these attitudes.<sup>220</sup>

In the Uchimura case, Protestant attitudes were in sharp contrast to the emerging general patriotic views in Japan.

#### The Uchimura Episode.

As already mentioned, Uchimura Kanzo was the leader of the Sapporo Band. Living for some years after graduation in Sapporo and Tokyo, he left for a period of study in the USA, during the years 1884 - 1888. Returning to Japan, he worked for a while at "Hokuetsu Gakkan", a school in Niigata Prefecture. But conflicts about theological issues

<sup>217</sup> Ebisawa/Ouchi 1970: 213 - 216.

<sup>218</sup> Cf Cary 1909/76b: 233 f. The postwar historian Ouchi Saburo emphasizes the role *Shinbokkai* (Fellowship of Believers) played as an expression of *kokaishugi*. He does not consider the joint Bible-translation to be ecumenically significant for the Japanese churches, Ebisawa/Ouchi 1970: 213ff, 223ff.

<sup>219</sup> Supra 2.1.3.2.3.

<sup>220</sup> Supra 2.1.3.2.2 and 2.2.2.2.

with missionaries at the school made him leave. He was then employed at the governmental Tokyo First High School in 1890. At a ceremony where all teachers and students, in turn, proceeded to bow in front of the Imperial Seal at the **Rescript of Education**, a copy of which was on display, Uchimura took an alternative choice. In his own words "Hesitating in doubt, I took a safer course for my Christian conscience, and in the august presence of 60 professors ... and over 1000 students, I took my stand and did not bow!"<sup>221</sup>

The episode forced Uchimura to leave the school. His act became known all over the country as a symbolic expression of Christian lack of patriotism. Thus it led professor Inoue Tetsujiro at Tokyo University to attack Christianity in a series of articles 1891 - 1892, entitled: *Kyoiku to Shukyo no Shototsu Ronso* (The Conflict between Education and Religion). Inoue claimed that Christianity was incompatible with the due loyalty of a Japanese citizen. Christians were traitors and opponents of the **Kokutai** (National Policy), as this policy was expressed, in the **Rescript of Education**.

The hostile articles met with able responses from Christian writers, but public opinion supported the views of Inoue.<sup>222</sup>

The episode symbolized the situation into which the Christian churches now entered. A sharp tension between Christian ideals for the nation and the emperor-based ideology of modernization now was displayed. Christian institutions and individuals became targets of suspicion and explicit criticism. Christian schools were under particular pressure to accept the **Rescript of Education** as their basis.

#### **The Formation of the Non-Church Movement.**

It might be proper at this moment to view the Uchimura episode in connection with the ecclesiastical fellowship in which he stood, from the early days of the Sapporo Band. The dynamics of this movement are clearly reflected in the attitude of Uchimura during the "episode" in 1891.<sup>223</sup>

As already noted, the emerging Mukyokai was closely tied to the person of Uchi-

<sup>221</sup> Uchimura 1891/1933: 207.

<sup>222</sup> Ouchi gives much attention to the Uchimura event and the following debate, see Ouchi/Ebisawa 1970: 282 - 295. He sees the affair as utmost important in modern Japanese history of ideas. In particular he emphasizes the conflict between personal conscience and the absolute authority of the central Japanese government. "This was the first time a person had objected to the absoluteness of the emperor system on the basis of a value attached to the human self; a value based on the atonement of Christ", Ouchi/Ebisawa 1970: 283.

Prominent Protestants, such as Honda Yoichi and Yokoi Tokio, immediately reacted to the early attacks by Inoue Tetsujiro. In the later stages of the debate Uemura Masahisa of the Yokohama tradition and Onishi Iwai (1864 - 99), one of Niiijima's disciples are particularly noted by Ouchi for able Christian responses.

Inoue claimed that for three reasons Christianity was unsuitable in Japan: (1) Christianity does not consider the various nationalities having special values or characteristics. All are similar. (2) Loyalty and filial piety which are basic principles in the **Rescript** and in Japanese morality, are not so in Christianity, see Mt. 8, 21f. (3) Christian love is universal, whereas love in the **Rescript** varies according to the relationships.

The common points brought out by Uemura and Onishi are summarized by Ouchi as follows: (1) The *kokka* (state) is not an ultimate value. (2) Love of fatherland is not denied, the basis of patriotic love is, however, universal and lies in a relationship to God. (3) The commitment to this love must be based on personal conscience, Ouchi/Ebisawa 1970: 287 - 292.

Ouchi see the strong Japanese reactions to Uchimura's act against the persistence of *jakyokan* ( the understanding that Christianity is a heresy) since the Tokugawa period.

<sup>223</sup> Supra 2.2.2.1 and 2.2.2.3.1.

mura. He was the leader. It was never formally organized and that was according to his will. It centered around lectures, Bible studies and publications, all by Uchimura.

In addition to the concentration on Uchimura himself, the movement was based on the Bible. Uchimura considered the Bible infallible, a feature which also became characteristic of his group. There was a direct connection between his Biblical faith and his stance vis-à-vis Emperor veneration in 1891.

Furthermore, there was a unity between the social concerns of Uchimura in this episode and his other concerns about farming, ideological debates, and above all, particularly from the Russo-Japanese War 1904/5 onwards - his concern for the peace issue. Uchimura developed a strong Biblically motivated pacifism. He resisted wars of any kinds and advanced Biblical motifs for his primary cause of peace. In this connection he initiated a special project of planting forests after the Danish model, in order to create an alternative to Japanese imperialism.

What, however, might be the strongest and most decisive element in the thought of Uchimura, is his understanding of the second coming of Christ, in other words, an eschatological perspective. His strong quest for absoluteness and the purity of truth, which can be discerned behind his protest in 1891, and his opposition to church organizations, as well as in his peace ideology - reflects this orientation. One of the evangelical church traditions in Japan, the "Holiness Churches", has also been closely influenced by Uchimura's ideas on the second coming of Christ. The whole idea of a churchless Christianity also reflects a definite yearning for truth. The idea of a churchless Christianity implies that no Kingdom of God will arise until Christ returns. Churches and organizations are but faulty and miserable structures. Only when the eschatological dimension of Uchimura's thought is acknowledged, his conflict with the Emperor veneration, and his non-church theology can be grasped.

#### 2.2.3.2 Towards urban Middle-Class Protestantism

The process of conversion to Christianity was severely retarded by this new, patriotic atmosphere.<sup>224</sup>

Theological frustration within the church provides part of the explanation. The nationalist atmosphere made conversions to a foreign faith less attractive. The conditions for accepting the Christian faith improved, however, after 1895 when Japan achieved a breakthrough in the treaty-negotiations with the Western nations.

**Protestant setbacks in Rural Japan.** Protestantism had passed through an early period of being dominated by the samurai constituency and a period of a positive reception among certain classes of farmers. But with the turn of the decade 1890, the positive response in rural areas ended abruptly. In addition to the general patriotic atmosphere of the day, economic conditions contributed to the change. From about 1890 the national economical policy destroyed the basis for independent, middle-scale farmers and independent merchants, the groups which in particular had joined Protestant churches in the districts. Religious individualism found less room under those circumstances. Pressures against Protestantism increased to the extent that Protestant churches simply ceased to exist in rural areas during the 1890s.<sup>225</sup> Sharing the fate of the Popular Rights' Movement, Protestantism disappeared from rural Japan and returned to the cities.

Japanese industrial policies led to the formation of a new urban society. The

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<sup>224</sup> The number of baptized persons in the Protestant churches were 37.360 in 1900, whereas the figure was 31.360 in 1891. This shows an increase of 5.708, compared to an increase of 26.268 during the years 1882 - 1891. *Proceedings* 1901: Appendix.

<sup>225</sup> Kudo analyses in great detail the disappearance of churches in rural areas. Kudo 1959 : 49 - 144.

working class was never really drawn to the Protestants, in spite of certain individuals with a strong social concern <sup>226</sup> and regardless of Christian socialist commitment. <sup>227</sup>

Protestant believers from the 1890s onwards, were mainly recruited from the so-called "urban middle class".

### 2.2.3.3 Inner Structure of Protestantism.

#### 2.2.3.3.1 Organizational Aspects

Uchimura Kanzo and his Non-Church Movement, which continued the traditions of the Sapporo Band, kept the idea of supra-denominationalism alive. This movement, which was established about 1901, never joined any of the existing denominations, nor did it structure itself as a denomination. Organizationally uncommitted, it kept the early visions of a *kokai* alive.

Though Congregationalists and Presbyterians developed different church models in this period, the ecumenical vision was upheld through the *Shinbokkai* (Fellowship of Believers), later organized as the "Evangelical Alliance". From 1900 onwards this organization sponsored a nationwide evangelization movement. Apart from the period 1902-1911 when Ebina Danjo was excluded due to his theological views, this organization took an inclusive ecumenical attitude.

Whereas organic church merger had occupied top priority on the agenda of Japanese Protestantism in the previous decade, the interest now turned to the inner structuring of its denominations. In the light of nationalist inclinations of the day, and considering the degree of maturity already achieved, it was but evident that relationships to overseas' mission agencies would take high priority.

#### 2.2.3.3.1.1 Independence and Organization.

**Independence vis-à-vis Missions.** After the defeat of the unionist idea in the 1880s and in an atmosphere of nationalist pressure towards the churches, the early unionism gave way to the development of the denominational system. Within firmly established denominational frames, the concern now turned to independence vis-à-vis Missions.

Organizationally, the Presbyterian-Reformed Church of Christ in Japan, decided in 1894 on a synodal administration of the Church, where missions co-operated, but were free to start new enterprises. In 1897, however, the church took a step ahead in the quest for nationalization, by refusing missionary work independent from the presbyteries. <sup>228</sup>

In the Congregational Church, the reception of overseas funds for Home Mission was

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<sup>226</sup> The founder of Salvation Army in Japan, Yamamuro Gumpei (1872 - 1940) worked diligently for the people of low status in society. Fame and affection also spread among the poor and non privileged masses. Drummond 1971: 224 - 6. His main contributions, however, come post Meiji (after 1912). Cf Ebisawa/Ouchi 1970: 528, 542.

<sup>227</sup> The fact that 5 Protestant Christians were among the 6 founders of Japan Social Democratic Party demonstrates a Christian contact with the labor movement. Some of these Protestant founders were, however, Unitarians, and thus marginal in ecclesiastical Protestantism, cf Dohi in Thomas (ed): 51.

Katayama Sen (1859 - 1933), a Japanese socialist leader with international reputation, was for parts of his life a committed Christian. On Katayama cf Sumiya 1977: Foreword and pp 1 - 42, 44, Ebisawa/Ouchi: 397, 399.

Infra 2.2.3.3.2 note 246.

<sup>228</sup> Cary 1909/76b: 275.

terminated in 1895. The spirit of independence and national assertion also led Mission Boards to reduce the number of foreign personnel.<sup>229</sup>

**Independence and Creeds.** The drive for independence also affected the formulation of the Creeds. The Church of Christ accepted the classical Creeds of Christendom in 1890, adding a preamble in order to make them relevant to the Japanese situation.<sup>230</sup>

The Congregationalists formulated a simple Confession of Faith in 1895, reflecting considerable doctrinal tolerance.<sup>231</sup> Paragraphs 3 and 4 especially expressed the national situation.

**Independence and Schools.** Many Protestant denominations had established educational institutions. After the promulgation of the Rescript of Education and in the wake of the Uchimura incident, these institutions came under considerable national pressure.

At Doshisha University, founded in 1875 by Nijima in co-operation with the American Board, outside pressure added to a Japanese drive for administrative independence. In these circumstances, the Board of Doshisha chose to replace the Christian foundation with The Imperial Rescript of Education. After a lengthy crisis, involving state as well as foreign interests, the Christian basis was restored in 1898.<sup>232</sup>

Not all schools proceeded in the same way. Ferris Seminary in Yokohama, rooted in the Presbyterian Missions, was the first to apply for official recognition. When it was made clear that morning prayer and church services could not be performed with the

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<sup>229</sup> Cary states that "The year 1890, however, was that in which the conservative reaction was severely felt. The work of missionaries was so crippled by the criticism of prominent Christians that ere long it seemed to both the Mission and the Board that further increase of the force would be unwise." Proceedings 1901: 912.

<sup>230</sup> The preamble sounded:

"The Lord Jesus Christ, whom we worship as God, the only begotten Son of God, for us men and for our salvation was made man and suffered. He offered up a perfect sacrifice for sin; and all who are one with Him by faith are pardoned and accounted righteous; and faith in Him working by love purifies the heart.

"The Holy Ghost who with the Father and Son is worshipped and glorified, reveals Jesus Christ to the soul; and without His grace man being dead in sin cannot enter the kingdom of God. By Him the prophets and holy men of old were inspired; and He speaking in the Scriptures of the Old and the New Testament is the supreme and infallible Judge in all things pertaining unto faith and living.

"From these Holy Scriptures the ancient Church of Christ drew its Confession; and we holding the faith once delivered to the saints join in that confession with praise and thanksgiving:

"I believe in the Father almighty etc ..." Cary 1909/76b: 234.

<sup>231</sup> "We who, believing and revering Jesus Christ as Saviour, are called of God, do greatly mourn over the present condition of the world, and assembled here in prayer unto God, and in the rich enjoyment of the Holy Spirit's gracious influence, we determine to proclaim the Gospel and to establish the kingdom of God according to the following principles:

1. That all men should repent of all sin, and through Christ should return unto obedience to the Heavenly Father.

2. That all men being the children of God, the great principles of love and sympathy should be upheld among them.

3. That the home should be purified by maintaining the principles of monogamy; and the mutual duties of parents and children, elder and younger brothers should be fulfilled.

4. That the nation should be elevated and the welfare of mankind promoted.

5. That the hope of eternal life should be perfected through faith and righteousness". Cary 1909/76b: 259. Cf supra 2.2.2.1.

<sup>232</sup> See Cary 1909/76b: 255 - 58, 266 - 7, 277 - 88.

adaption of official status, the school decided to withdraw its application and to continue as an independent institution.

#### 2.2.3.3.2 Theological Emphases.

Within Protestant thought, the 1890s brought an ideological earthquake, deeply affecting Christian self-understanding in Japan.

The understanding of basic Christian foundations was shaken, and so were the relationships to the whole modernization process and to the Japanese national ethos concerning religion and political ambitions. The time was not only a period of crisis. It was also a time when a process of consolidation was at work as well as a period of commitment and theological articulation. In any rate it defined Protestant identity in Japan for decades to come.

There had been a diversified theological development in Japan since the bands were established. The socially oriented book by Kozaki,<sup>233</sup> from the apologetic period already had a slightly different emphasis from the more faith oriented book of Uemura.<sup>234</sup> This indicates a difference between the Kumamoto and Yokohama bands, which during the coming decade became even more marked.<sup>235</sup>

Moderate efforts to present a theology open to the trends of the time were made in Kozaki's paper of 1889, where he considered the question of Biblical inspiration. Kanamori Tsurin and Yokoi Tokio launched a more radical critique of the character of the Christian revelation and the authority of the Bible, so much so that they later had to leave the Church. After challenging personal experiences, however, Kanamori took up evangelistic duties again after being in ecclesiastical wilderness for some years. The main concern of Yokoi and the young Kanamori was to open Christianity to indigenous spirituality in Japan. Through such openness Christianity should be made a relevant force in the process of Japanese modernization, in conformity with the Meiji spirit.<sup>236</sup>

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<sup>233</sup> Kozaki 1886.

<sup>234</sup> Uemura 1884.

<sup>235</sup> The differences between Uemura's *Shinri Ippan* and Kozaki's *Seikyo Shinron* indicate characteristic emphases of the two bands. Kumazawa in particular stresses the role of the bands in Japanese theological development, Kumazawa 1976: 180f.

<sup>236</sup> From a conservative evangelical viewpoint, the theological whirlpool is seen as a fight with "wolves", Yanagita 1957: 51.

Ouchi Saburo, regards the outcome of the theological confrontations as a victory of orthodoxy and Christian truth. In fact the confrontations are seen leading up to a discovering the Gospel as the ultimate basis of church-identity, Ebisawa/Ouchi 1970: 13f, cf also Kumazawa 1976: 184.

Other theologians emphasize the immaturity of early Japanese theology. Ishihara Ken compares with the Western situation and claims that early Japanese Protestantism lacks a qualified indigenous theology, Ishihara 1967: 120. Up to 1914 he considers Japanese theology still un-developed, Ishihara 1967: 189.

Other historians likewise admit early Japanese theological immaturity, but claim that adulthood was attained during the crisis of the 1890s. In either case immaturity is seen explaining why the confusion of the 1890s occurred, cf Ebisawa 1959: 146 - 52 and Ishida 1971: 22 - 27.

As to explanation of the theological crisis, it is worth noting a tension between the Meiji spirit of free investigation and the Protestantism of the missionaries. Words by Hiyane Antei that the missionaries of the early period were not "necessarily rich in theological grasp and were almost totally lacking in understanding of traditional Japanese religions", Hiyane 1949: 347, accounts for this tension. Such missionary weakness in theology, would in due course lead to radical doubts about the truth of Christianity.

Yokoi and Kanamori were refuted, among others, by Uchimura from the Sapporo Band and Uemura from the Yokohama Band, which at the time already had developed into a well organized, national Reformed Church. Uemura was foremost in the criticism, pointing out that the views of Yokoi and Kanamori were contrary to classical Christianity. He also questioned the way in which they tried to make Christianity relevant to Japan by "Japanizing" theology. However, Uemura as well as Uchimura did not deny the Japaneseness of Meiji Protestantism. They developed an understanding of Christian thought and the Japanese heritage and accepted a continuity between the two. Certain Japanese ideas paved the way for Christianity. Christianity was indeed seen as a fulfillment of Japanese thought. In their view, however, Christianity was not Japanized. Instead, Japanese ideas were Christianized.<sup>237</sup>

The sharpest confrontation on theological issues in Japan, however, took place in the years 1901 - 1902, between Uemura Masahisa and the person who gradually emerged as the leader of *Shin-shingaku*, "New Theology", Ebina Danjo, from the Kumamoto Band.

It was conducted with a deep theological serenity. Ebina claimed that doctrinal formulations were unessential to express Christian faith, what mattered was religious consciousness: "We, being the children of our age, cannot help but interpret our religious consciousness through contemporary thoughts. Nevertheless, our consciousness must be that of Christ. Christ's spirit, Christ's consciousness, this has enabled me to have the privilege of belonging to the Heavenly Kingdom and undertaking a study of the doctrine of the Trinity as I attempted to interpret my religious consciousness"<sup>238</sup>

Against this subjective interpretation of Christianity, Uemura presents Protestant orthodoxy, as it is expressed in historical documents. "We believe that he is God made man. We believe in Christ's omnipotence and immanence. We worship him and pray to him. Mr. Ebina looks up to Christ only as a teacher. We do that, but believe him also to be the Saviour..."<sup>239</sup>

From his Confucian background, Ebina had accepted the Lordship of Christ. Later he had come to emphasize the Father image in Christianity as an expression of ultimate grace. He saw Jesus as the person who demonstrates and communicates the consciousness of the gracious Father. Uemura on the other hand affirmed classical views on the atonement. The discussion between these two persons was conducted with an intensity which so far had not been seen in Japanese Christian circles. As the understanding of Christ was at stake, the debate was called the *Kirisutoron Ronso*, (Christological Controversy). It defined two types of theological emphases, a Confucian inspired interpretation of Protestantism with a deliberate openness to Japanese traditions and progressive ideology on the one hand; and a classical orthodoxy of an ecclesiastical character on the other.

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Roots of the crisis in the 1890ies thus extend right into the early Protestant mission to Japan, Ouchi 1957: 63ff.

The Bible was focused in the crisis. The translation of the Bible to Japanese was an achievement of great significance for Protestant beginnings, Kumazawa 1976: 180. But, the naïv biblicism which left young Japanese believers unsatisfied was, however, attacked by Kozaki already 1889. At a later stage, Biblical authority was radically questioned by Kanamori; cf *Kindai Nihon no Seishoshiso* (Views on the Bible in Modern Japan) Ouchi 1960: 23 - 50. In Ebisawa/Ouchi 1970: 312f, Ouchi maintains that a main attraction of "New Theology" was its intention of liberating theology from biblicism.

<sup>237</sup> Cf Uchimura 1886/1972 and Uemura 1898b.

<sup>238</sup> Ebina 1902. Quoted from Ishida 1971: 76.

<sup>239</sup> Uemura 1902, quoted by Kumazawa 1976: 183.

The Uemura - Ebina debate has been fully assessed in Japanese scholarship. It reflects differences in Meiji Protestantism, ecclesiastical as well as social. <sup>240</sup>

The ecclesiastical trend was indeed a significant element in the Christological controversy. An ecclesiastical aspect had triggered the debate, as it was related to conditions for participating in the Evangelical Alliance. It thus demanded a deeper theological understanding of church unity and co-operation than had earlier been achieved. The debate ended with Ebina being temporarily barred from participation in the nationwide co-operation of the Evangelical Alliance. <sup>241</sup>

A structural aspect of the ecclesiastical debate was, however, also coming to the surface. The supra denominational attitudes of the first Protestants, the *kokai* idea, lived on in the churches, within the denominational structures. <sup>242</sup> But a special development of early Protestant ideas was represented by Uchimura Kanzo. Whereas most Japanese theologians gradually changed their views towards ecclesiastical directions, Uchimura did

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<sup>240</sup> Although Ishihara Ken, found the controversy neither advanced nor exciting, Ishihara 1967: 155f, 190; he sees it as a serious debate, Ishihara 1967: 189. The seriousness is also observed by Michalson 1962: 69, Ebisawa/Ouchi 1970: 354f and Ishida 1971: 214 - 18. Ishida even sees this debate as the birth of Japanese theological seriousness. A theological potential was made explicit for the first time, and he found it the first debate among independent thinkers who tried to indigenizing their theology. Thus he concludes his evaluation of the controversy by maintaining its being a watershed in Japanese Protestant History, Ishida 1971: 214 - 18.

Based upon a concern for indigenization Ishida also detects common perspectives in the theologies of Ebina and Uemura. He sees the struggle of both thinkers each in his own way, with the question of autonomous selfhood, an important issue arising from the concern for indigenization of Christian ideas. Although Ebina applies a method of adjustment and Uemura of confrontation, between Christianity and Japanese culture, he finds that both thinkers share a desire to integrate their theologies in a Japanese spiritual context, Ishida 1971: 177ff, 184ff.

Takeda Kiyoko, for whom indigenization is a dominating principle, of her study of Kinoshita Naoe, Takeda 1975: 539, takes a similar approach to the controversy. The perspective is formulated thus: "The problem of an encounter between Japanese people and Christianity, in other words, between the Japanese, traditional value system and spiritual structure and Christianity," in *Selto to Itan no "aida"* ("Between" Orthodoxy and Heterodoxy) Takeda 1976: 73. She sees the need for a continued indigenizing of the orthodoxy which was expressed in the controversy, in a process where state absolutism is negated but where Japanese spiritual heritage also can be affirmed. Takeda 1976: 75f.

Ouchi pursues a consistent ecclesiastical perspective when interpreting Japanese Christian History, and sees correspondingly the Christological controversy in a church-perspective. He maintains the ecumenical character of the debate: its transcending the borders of one denomination, and leading up to the understanding that churches are founded on the Gospel. In fact, the Gospel (Christ's salvation of sinful man) became, according to the views of Ouchi, recognized as the very foundation of the Church by the 12th congress of *Nihon Fukuin Domeikai* (Japan Evangelical Alliance) in 1902. This concluded the controversy. Ebisawa/Ouchi 1970: 354f.

<sup>241</sup> Cf supra 2.2.3.3.1.

<sup>242</sup> Ouchi maintains the polarity between *bunpaka* (centripetality) and *shuchuka* (centrifugality) in early Protestant church history. Though he admits that *kokai*shugi (ecumenism) was dissolved in 1873 when denominational churches were formed, he claims that it has been influential in subsequent Japanese church history, Ebisawa/Ouchi 1970: 191. He maintains that the idea of a *kokai* was transmitted through various agents of *shuchuka* in the Protestant history, Ebisawa/Ouchi 1970: 197ff.

not. He distanced himself from the whole concept of an organized church. In 1901 he fully launched the idea of a Christian "**mukyokai**" in 1901.<sup>243</sup>

The Uchimura episode and the Uemura - Ebina debate also reflected tensions concerning the social responsibility of Meiji Protestantism. The predominant issue which involved Uchimura concerned the relationship between Christianity and the Emperor-system. This was a major challenge in the 1890s and would become anew an issue in the 1930s.

There was also in the context of Christian social thinking, a tendency towards socialist ideas as a working class slowly developed out of the industrialization taking place in Japan from the 1890s onwards. In 1897 groups for the promotion of socialism in Japan were founded, among the members were Christians, such as Takano Hotaro, Katayama Sen, Shimada Saburo and Abe Kozo. Other Christians later also joined the movement. The ideas of this socialism were to a large extent formed by Christianity, but only to a limited extent was this a church related movement.<sup>244</sup>

The theological situation in Japan towards the end of our period was not in the first place dependent upon foreign influences or new thought. The theological situation was basically created by inner developments of the Japanese Church in its interaction with forces in Japanese society. However, in addition to the influence of traditional theology, modernist thought from Europe and America was also an influence.<sup>245</sup> From Germany came books on Schleiermacherian and Ritschlian theology. Particularly the so called "Tübingen school" was well known, not only through its dominating theologian Pfleiderer. It was introduced in a moderate form by missionaries from Der Allgemeine Evangelisch-Protestantische Missionsverein.

This school influenced the New Theology in Japan and is one of the challenging influences behind the theology of Yokoi, Kanamori and Ebina. This modern thinking also gave an impetus to a social concern in the Japanese Christian church. But as to social involvement, even stronger influence came from the USA towards the end of the 1880s. Early Christian Socialism in Japan was to a large extent inspired by Unitarian thought. Therefore it has had a fairly weak connection with the predominantly ecclesiastical traditions within Meiji Protestantism.<sup>246</sup>

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<sup>243</sup> Ouchi considers **mukyokai** (non-church) as based in church-critical ideas of Uchimura and expressed in his publication **Mukyokai** from 1901. Ouchi non the less maintains that Uchimura basically supports the idea of a Christian church, Ebisawa/-Ouchi 1970: 130, 374f. Cf similar evaluations by Ishihara 1976: 107ff.

<sup>244</sup> There has been a general postwar agreement that the Protestant church which developed in Japan lacked social commitment, cf Kudo 1959: 240 - 46, Kumazawa 1976: 184. Sumiya applies such criticism to the Uchimura and the Uemura traditions, Sumiya 1961/82: 137ff. The dualist character of Uchimura's ecclesiology is identified by Dohi 1980b: 188.

<sup>245</sup> Dohi finds three distinct types of Christianity represented by missionaries: evangelicals, exponents of New Theology (including Unitarians) and fundamentalists. Dohi 1980b: 17ff.

<sup>246</sup> Supra 2.2.3.1, note 227.

Postwar theology has paid much attention to the connection between Christianity and socialism. Let me briefly mention a few cases.

Takenaka presents early Christian socialism in Japan, Takenaka 1957/67: 36ff. Ouchi Saburo, follows suit in a broad, idea-oriented presentation of Christian socialism. He emphasizes the contribution of the Unitarians and identifies Christian socialism as a stream distinct from church Christianity and non-church Christianity, Ebisawa/Ouchi 1970: 390 - 410.

Cf also the study on the Christian socialist personality Kinoshita Naoe, Takeda 1975

### **Conclusion.**

In this exposition of the formation of Meiji Protestantism I have attempted, on the basis of Japanese scholarship since 1945, to draw a picture of a Church becoming established in a society in transition.

As a part of a society in the process of modernization, Protestantism evolved at times with an open reception in some groups and periods, at other times facing a national resurgence and resistance.

After a generation, Meiji Protestantism presented itself in basically a threefold pattern of an ecclesiastical, a social and an individualist movement. This pattern is expressed in organizational structures as well as in modes of theological reflection.

In the following chapters, I will look into how this process is interpreted by Japanese and Western pre-war scholars and Christians. I will first turn to interpretations from within this period of foundation itself. That is to say, I will look into how the actors in the process and their contemporaries interpreted what they were involved in.

## CHAPTER 3: REFLECTIONS ON MEIJI PROTESTANTISM DURING THE FOUNDATION OF THE PERIOD, 1872 - 1905.

### Introduction.

This chapter illustrates how committed Japanese Christians on the one hand and involved Western missionaries and informed missiologists on the other interpreted the breakthrough of Protestantism in Japan. The interpretations date from the later decades of the 19th century, which means that a new dimension is added to the interpretation of the Meiji Protestant foundation.

As already noted, the comparative historiographical analysis is pursued at two levels. The first is more formal and concerns the type of material which emerged during the period, and the stage it represents in the process of composing a written Japanese Church History. The other is deliberately concerned with the content and inquires into how the story has been told; i.e. what elements in the process have been given particular attention, and also what kind of general perspectives on the Japanese and Western side have informed the account.

In this chapter I cover developments as a whole during the foundation period of Japanese Protestantism. There are significant changes of orientation and emphasis in the material from the Japanese writers during this period of intensified patriotism in Japan from around 1890. I will therefore distinguish between two phases in the content analysis; the first covers developments from 1872 - 1889, and the other from 1890 to 1905.

### 3.1 TYPES OF LITERATURE.

#### 3.1.1 Definitions and Criteria.

As already noted, I employ a functional definition of genre in this analysis. Strictly speaking, genre means literary form, and genre analysis identifies what literary forms different texts or parts of texts belong to. However, in a wider sense, genre can also be used as a means of classifying texts with reference to the degree of interpretation of the given data which they represent.<sup>247</sup>

It is the latter, more functional sense in which I have used genre in this study. I will, thus, distinguish between different types of material with reference to how respective texts reflect certain degrees of analytical distance to the subject-matter. Linking this type of genre analysis to the content analysis, I will also pay attention to the intention of the writer in his or her interplay with the expectations of the readers. This is particularly relevant for missionary material.

I distinguish between three types of genre in my analysis: **Direct Accounts**, **Essay Material** and **Interpretative Accounts**.

**Direct Accounts** are direct descriptions of the subject matter with little deliberate attempts at evaluation, explanation or judgement. They are like "photographs" of reality. In this study, however, I limit myself to reports of ecclesiastical events. Minutes, diaries, notes or proceedings and various reports will fall into this genre.

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<sup>247</sup> For a general presentation of the literary concept of genre, particularly applied to religious material, see Stefansson 1979.

In theology, genres (cf German *Gattungen*) particularly are applied to Biblical studies. In order to understand the concept of genre, it is related to a wider concept of *Sitz im Leben* an expression which describes the total situation in which the text functions or is intended to function by the author, cf C. Kuhl 1958.

Classifying historical literature according to interpretative distance to the events, as it is done in this thesis, actually reflects different cases of *Sitz im Leben* which particularly applies to the process of research.

**Essay Material** is my second category. It operates at greater distance from the recorded events. The concept is fairly wide, and this genre includes articles, speeches and personal reflections - all of which convey general opinions or personal evaluation. Essay Material can therefore be said to be critical or syncretical. In my classification there is not necessarily any specific reference to more artistic qualities.<sup>248</sup> Essay Material might deal with ecclesiastical events, explore ideas, or assess the development and contribution of individual actors in the process.

**Interpretative Accounts** is the third type of genre. It is qualified by a high degree of analytical distance and contains presentations which are consistent, reflective and synthetic. Like Essay Material, Interpretative Accounts are comprehensive in coverage and can deal with ecclesiastical events, ideas or persons. Essay Material as well as Interpretative Accounts can convey autobiographical insights.

### 3.1.2 Comparative Inventory.

#### 3.1.2.1 Japanese Material.

##### 3.1.2.1.1 Direct Accounts.

Japanese Protestants immediately documented what happened during church meetings and how the first church bodies performed. The number of early reports concerning church matters is large. I have included some short Japanese documents termed "reports".<sup>249</sup>

A notable structural characteristic, however, is that these reports are unedited. They are close to the events, but do not contain any evaluations, nor are they included in any larger composition or interpretation.

Containing close observation of historical events, they are sources of later history writing, rather than actually representing history writing in themselves. They are a starting point for historical reflection still in the making.<sup>250</sup> They are not "fruits" of historical reflection, but "seeds" of history writing to come. The existence of such documents show a potentiality in history writing. As first-hand sources of early ecclesiastical they are a firm base for later reflection and interpretation.

As sources for our investigation, they are, however, of limited value. Providing information about processes and events of early Protestant history, they convey factual aspects of early germs of Protestantism in Japan. But as they fail to offer any substantial interpretation of what was happening, they are not valuable sources for an investigation which tries to detect characteristic features of early Japanese ecclesiastical history.

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<sup>248</sup> It is said about the German Essay in an article about the literary genre of essay: "The essay, an independent literary genre, is a rather short, rounded off and somewhat loosely composed piece of reflected prose. In an esthetically demanding form, it circles around one single, unmeasurable object; mostly critical, syncretical, associating, creating coherence." Rohner 1982: 229.

Excepting the esthetical dimension, the above description of essays is valid also as regards Essay Material in my analysis.

<sup>249</sup> Cf the following reports: **Chukai Giroku** (District Committee Minutes) 1877 - 1878, **Daishinbokkai** (National Fellowship of Believers) 1880, **Kokai Nishi** (Church Diary) 1872 and 1873, **Kokai Regulations** 1872a and 1872b.

<sup>250</sup> The existence of an incipient historical reflection, is early documented in Japanese Protestantism. At the 15 years' anniversary for the foundation of Kaigan Church, Japan Gazette thus mentions that a special committee for publication of the history of the Church is at work, **Japan Gazette** 1886: 199.

### 3.1.2.1.2 Essay Material.

When the ban on Christianity was terminated in 1873, Christian literature was legally permitted in Japan. From the beginning of the 1880s, Japanese Protestant magazines appear.<sup>251</sup> When we approach the 1890s, Japanese Protestant leaders such as Uchimura Kanzo, Uemura Masahisa, Ebina Danjo, Kozaki Hiromichi, Yamaji Aizan had already become prolific writers. Japanese ad hoc writings, mostly articles, are included in our comparison, as evidence of this flourishing development.<sup>252</sup>

Our Essay material enter into the process of history writing at two levels, and might correspondingly be classified as two types. One type provides direct information and interpretation on historical processes, events, ideas and persons. This applies to the material provided by Uemura, Uchimura and others.<sup>253</sup> The other type, however, give chiefly indirect insights into the conceptions of Protestant history. For instance Uchimura Kanzo wrote on the "Japanese spirit",<sup>254</sup> and Uemura wrote on the "Bushido of Christianity".<sup>255</sup> Protestant history is in neither case the direct subject. But their implied convictions about how the reality of Christianity fits into a certain Japanese spiritual environment nevertheless inform their views on Protestant history.<sup>256</sup> In either case the objective is generally apologetic. Historical facts, processes, biographical observations play a secondary role in the structure of the material, in which authors express their subjective opinions.<sup>257</sup>

In both cases our material is more than just sources for a later interpretation. In other words it is more valuable to our investigation than the "reports". There is a fair

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<sup>251</sup> The first Christian regular publication was the bi-monthly *Shichichi Zappo* (Miscellaneous News) published by Congregational circles in Kobe from 1875. In 1880 Tokyo YMCA started publishing the influential monthly *Rikugo Zasshi* (Universal Magazine). Uemura Masahisa initiated in 1890 the magazines *Fukuin Shinpo* (Gospel News) and *Nihon Hyoron* (Japan Critique). The first of them lived on as the organ of the Japanese Presbyterian Church whereas the second was shortlived. These two publications have provided a considerable amount of material for this study. Uchimura Kanzo, Ebina Danjo and other Protestant leaders also started magazines, where they expressed personal opinions on religious and social issues. In this investigation, of the material written by Uchimura, much is supplied by the daily newspaper *Yorozu Choho* (Universal News). Here Uchimura was the editor of an English column from 1897.

<sup>252</sup> These articles together with other material underlying this chapter are listed in a special appendix, 7.3. Not all of the material listed in the appendix is explicitly referred to in the chapter. The appendix shows which material has been available. Although the list shows selected material, cf 1.2.2. Providing reliable libraries and bibliographies, it also indicates the frequency of relevant material from this period.

<sup>253</sup> Examples from other authors than Uemura and Uchimura, are Sawayama 1883, Nijima in Hardy 1891, Yamaji 1891, Takahashi 1893 and Yuya 1896, which all offer direct information on historical issues or aspects. A biographical essay written to commemorate Dr. Verbeck exemplifies direct information on persons, Uemura 1898a.

<sup>254</sup> Cf the article "Moral traits of the Yamato-damashii", Uchimura 1886/1972.

<sup>255</sup> Uemura 1898b.

<sup>256</sup> Non Christian documents also interpret aspects of Protestant history. Two attacks on Protestantism are included also to illustrate this perspective, cf *A New Essay* 1868 and *Tales* 1868.

<sup>257</sup> See articles by Uemura 1891a+b+c, 1892, 1893a+b, 1895, 1896, 1897, 1898b+c, 1903, 1905b See also Uchimura 1886, 1897a+b, c+d, 1898, 1899a+b.

amount of historical understanding and historical interpretation to be found in the essays.

### 3.1.2.1.3 Interpretative Accounts.

There are few Japanese books on Japanese Protestant history from the early Period. This should not come as a surprise, as the young Japanese Church published their own first books towards the end of the 1880s. The appendix lists Interpretative Accounts by Japanese writers.

There is a preference in this period for Essay Material among Japanese Christians, when they reflect on church developments in the then rapidly changing Japan.<sup>258</sup> Although opting for an essayist form, some of these Japanese writers nevertheless devoted themselves to explaining their point of view in the form of Interpretative Accounts. Uchimura, Kanamori and Yokoi are particularly worthy of mention. Their accounts contain reflections on the basis of personal experience of religious change. In this sense their books are authentic as sources on religious and ecclesiastical developments. However, they are of immediate interest also from a historiographical point of view. This is because they deliberately reflect on the dynamics of religious and social change in Japan, and on what role Christianity played in this process. It does not mean that their main objective is to write history as the concern is basically existential. Nevertheless, their accounts also contain reflections on the role of Christianity in the historical transformation of Japan. Although the Interpretative Accounts do not yet present mature historical interpretations of how Protestantism established itself in Japan, these reflections have influenced later generations of Japanese Christians. Largely because of this very reason, they represent an important stage of "history writing in the making".

With reference to the critical "distance" and the relevance of the existential interpretation of the role of Christians in the Japanese modernization process, I feel confident when classifying the nine books which are listed in the appendix as Interpretative Accounts. They contribute to Japanese Church History in the making. Here also autobiographical material belongs. It provides the first Japanese attempts to write the history of the foundation period of Protestantism in Japan.<sup>259</sup>

### 3.1.2.2 Western Material.

#### 3.1.2.2.1 Direct Accounts.

Western material is in fact more extensive than that of the Japanese for this period. It

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<sup>258</sup> Cf as examples Uemura 1884, Kozaki 1886, Kanamori 1891, Yokoi 1891, 1894 and Nitobe 1905.

<sup>259</sup> Uchimura 1895, is an autobiographical work, largely filled with comments and evaluations of concrete historical issues. The book is based on original notes from private diaries. Reminiscences of various kinds are included as well. The book is astonishingly critical, particularly as to missionary views or Western understanding of Christianity.

Kanamori 1891, Yokoi 1891 and 1894, also provide opinions on the theological situation in Japan. These two pastors who are caught in a struggle for identity between Japanese traditionalism and various theological positions, address the Japanese Church on these crucial issues. Historical reflections are part of their approach. Personal memories and knowledge about the contemporary religious scene, provide the main factual background and sources for their presentation.

includes various reports, records and proceedings from the early Protestant venture in Japan.<sup>260</sup>

Our list of material clearly shows that the number of available Western Direct Accounts is considerably high. The Western documents in our selection is of varying length.

The Western material provided in our Direct Accounts does not primarily reflect the personal views of the writers. Rather, it supplies facts within a structure provided by the missionary boards or organizations. The reports thus interpret the history of Meiji Protestantism on the basis of the requirements of missionary organizations.

In some of the Western material different records are worked together and edited.<sup>261</sup> Such material is not only based upon observations by individuals, but manufactured in a process of conscious historical interpretation. There is an interplay between historical reflection and the concerns of missionaries and their boards. Such material therefore represent a higher degree of conscious history writing than the Japanese Direct Accounts do.

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<sup>260</sup> Cf the appendix, 7.3. The chief source of information about early Mission History in Japan is the two volumes of **Proceedings of The General Conference of Protestant Missionaries in Japan**. The first of these conferences was held in Osaka April 1883, the second and last was held in Tokyo October 1900. These two **Proceedings** contain material on various themes related to Protestant mission in Japan. There are also statistics, figures on membership, information about personnel, economy and related issues. Other parts rather belong to the category of Essay Material, supra 3.1.2.1.2. Verbeck's pioneer report on Japanese Mission History, **History of Protestant Missions in Japan**, covering the years 1859 - 1883 is included in both volumes. In the last volume, published 1901, the period extending from 1883 to 1900 is covered by various missionaries representing their churches or boards. Vögelein 1901 provides a German missiological evaluation of the conference.

Other reports of a more limited scope include Murdoch 1882, **A Historical Sketch 1883**, **American Board 1892** and Pettée 1895. Each of these reports cover the activities of one Protestant body in a historical perspective. The Standing Committee of Co-operative Christian Missions 1903, a yearbook, intends to cover all Protestant activities, but here the historical perspective is limited to the range of a yearbook.

Books of a general character which include religious and historical interpretations are e.g. Chamberlain 1905, Griffis 1886, 1901a and 1904, and Sjösteen 1904.

<sup>261</sup> Cf the procedure of Verbeck when editing the **History of Protestant Missions** "he first prepared a carefully printed circular, dated Nov. 20 1882, in which he made requests and presented a scheme of topics; historical, educational, medical and literary. He spent some months in digesting the matter received, finishing the work which, besides a general history and an abundant collection of historical sketches gave the statistics also of the three forms of the faith, Greek, Roman and Reformed. Part of the historical matter was read at the Osaka Conference of Missionaries, a famous gathering held in the year 1883. The work as printed contains one hundred and eighty-three pages, including statistics". Griffis 1901b: 309f.

### 3.1.2.2.2 Essay Material.

For this period, Western magazines are numerous.<sup>262</sup> In addition to articles, there are three pamphlets in the selection. One essay is taken from a report.<sup>263</sup>

The Western Essay material is frequently structured along the lines of a commented report. This applies particularly to material provided by missiologists living in the West.<sup>264</sup> But missionary contributions, impressed by apologetic concerns, are also included.<sup>265</sup>

Essay material might be directly or indirectly relevant for history writing. The Western material selected from mission magazines provides direct information and an interpretation of historical processes, events, ideas and persons. Material from other sources, however, chiefly give indirect insights into the conceptions of Protestant history. Implied convictions about how Christianity fits into a certain Japanese spiritual environment inform their views on Protestant history. This is particularly true about apologetic material written by missionaries.<sup>266</sup> The general tendency of Western material is to offer direct accounts,<sup>267</sup> and this gives material from the West a specific structure. This feature can be identified as a predilection for a historical pattern of how input leads to a result. This "result oriented" character of direct accounts, found in all Western genres, also means that we have to be aware of the collective aspect of history writing, even in essays. The individual authorship in Western material is largely subject to a "collective authorship", or editorship, of missionary organizations which were striving for results.

### 3.1.2.2.3 Interpretative Accounts.

For this period there were several Western books on Japanese Protestant history. Two of the Western books which fall into the category of Interpretative Accounts and are included in the selection have direct bearing on the foundation of Meiji Protestantism as a whole.<sup>268</sup>

A special mention should, however, be made of biographies. The number of Interpretative Accounts which presents biographical material or reminiscences is a comparatively

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<sup>262</sup> Several missionary magazines have existed from the time when mission in Japan was begun. *Missionary Herald*, published by the American Board presented already in its issue for March 1828 a note acknowledging the receipt of \$ 27.87 "for mission to Japan". Supra 2.2.1. note 131

The German magazine *Allgemeine Missionszeitschrift (AMZ)*, of which I have made extensive use, was published by Gustav Warneck in Berlin from 1874.

<sup>263</sup> Cf the appendix, 7.3. The three pamphlets are DeForest 1880, 1889 and Gordon 1892. The essay Greene 1901 originates in the report, *Proceedings* 1901.

<sup>264</sup> See in particular *Missions Rundschau* (Mission Review), from *AMZ*. Annual *Rundschau* from 1882, 1885 - 1891, 1893, 1896, 1899, 1904 are included.

<sup>265</sup> Cf pamphlets De Forest 1880, 1893 and Gordon 1892.

<sup>266</sup> As examples, cf Gordon 1892, De Forest 1880, 1893. See also Greene 1901.

<sup>267</sup> See as illustrations Greene 1901, where this American Board missionary provides a historical perspective on Christianity in Japan, and the *Rundschau* from *AMZ*, written by leading missiologists.

<sup>268</sup> These two are Ritter 1890 and Cary 1900. Together with the other Western books they appear in the appendix, infra 7.3.

high.<sup>269</sup> It signifies that biographies should be given a priority when analyzing Western interpretations of Meiji Protestantism.

Western literature tends to be structured as direct accounts.<sup>270</sup> This structure is noted in all genres and applies even to Interpretative Accounts.

Western Interpretative Accounts demonstrate a sophisticated type of history writing. There is a wide selection of sources, a systematized presentation, and an attempt at covering the whole of Japanese Protestant history.<sup>271</sup> Though part of our material is history writing in only an indirect way, several books directly treat historical subjects. All these features reflect that our material has reached a level of some maturity in the process of history writing.

### 3.1.2.3 Comparison.

Already this genre analysis leads to a discovery of marked differences between Japanese and Western writing on the beginning of Japanese Protestantism.

(1) Although it has not been chief aim to compare frequency of material, a greater frequency of Western materials which appears between 1872 and 1905 is clearly indicated. It applies to all genres, though it is less apparent as regards essays. The comparatively large number of biographies, in the Japanese as well as in the Western material, is striking. It reflects a predominant interest in a personalized perspective of history writing.

(2) There is a marked, though not exclusive difference between the structures of the two groups of material. The Western material is in general "report-oriented", reflecting the decisive influence of the missionary boards on Western writers. Japanese material is in comparison "essay-oriented", reflecting the interplay between a young congregation and dominating personalities. This applies to all genres.

(3) In the genres of Direct Accounts and Interpretative Accounts, the level of history-writing is markedly advanced in the Western literature. This difference is not so apparent in the essays, where the whole structure of the genre provides for a subjective, pragmatic approach, rather than a systematic and inclusive one.

The difference in the level of actual historical analysis is also evident when we make note of what can be called direct and indirect material. By direct material I mean texts which convey historical information in the form of reports in a more or less systematized shape. This predominates in the Western material, although its focus is largely on missionary initiatives and their effects in Japan. By indirect material I mean literature which does not claim to be a historical interpretation in the strict sense, but rather conveys various attempts to get to grips with the dynamics and inner meaning of the historical situation in which the writer is involved. The Japanese material which I have identified and classified, belongs to this category.

At this early stage in the process of writing history, the Western representatives are ahead of the believers of the young church. But the detailed reporting, the frequency of direct sources in essays and books, demonstrate that Japanese interpretations had already reached a level where it is possible to talk about historical interpretation and where comparisons with Western interpretations of the rise of Meiji Protestantism are relevant. I will in the following section continue and extend the formal analysis by considering the content of our Japanese and Western material.

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<sup>269</sup> Hardy, 1891, Davis 1894 and Griffis 1895, 1901b and 1902 are biographies in a strict sense. The three books: Dalton 1895, Gordon 1895 and Bassøe 1896 are primarily reminiscences.

<sup>270</sup> Warneck 1884 and Ritter 1890 remind of direct accounts. So do Gordon 1895, Awdry 1904 and the reminiscences: Bassøe 1896. In particular the last book does not limit itself solely to ecclesiastical issues.

<sup>271</sup> This especially applies to Ritter 1890, but also to Cary 1900.

### 3.2 EMPHASES AND PERSPECTIVES IN JAPANESE AND WESTERN ACCOUNTS.

#### Introduction.

In the preceeding genre analysis I have already identified certain topics and interpretative perspectives which qualify the Japanese and Western material. I will now look more closely at what this material contains about the early beginnings of Protestantism in Japan. As already noted, emphases and perspectives are influenced by significant changes on the Japanese scene. Therefore this analysis is divided into two parts. First I compare Japanese and Western accounts from 1872 to 1889.

#### 3.2.1 Prior to Emerging Patriotism.

##### 3.2.1.1 Early Japanese Confessions.

Having noted the preference for Essay Material and deliberate existensial dimensions in the interpretative accounts, it should come as no surprise that these writers are more concerned with Christianity as a new religious movement with new sets of values and new views on social developments rather than as an ecclesiastical institution.<sup>272</sup> They are more idea-oriented than church-oriented in their approach to the role of Christianity in Japan.

In the 1880s, two ideas dominated. Both express an apologetic interest in the broad sense of the term. The first of these ideas is the view of Christianity as a new and Western religion. Christianity is portrayed as coming from outside, and having roots in a religious tradition from the "Western Orient". It was introduced into Japan in the 19th century in connection with the waves of Western civilisation flooding the country. To the Japanese Christianity was new.

In spite of the Oriental origins of Christianity, its Western image was dominant when it was introduced from the 1850s onwards. On the Japanese side, the receivers of the new faith in no way accepted Christianity as a mechanical matter. The process of adoption involved sincere judgements and assessments. Christianity was assessed over against other Western ideologies and thought,<sup>273</sup> and compared with indigenous

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<sup>272</sup> Ecclesiastical emphases are, however, not completely lacking. A 15 Years jubilee of the first Protestant church in Yokohama was held in 1886, giving opportunity for reflections on the early history of that church, cf Japan Gazette, 1886.

<sup>273</sup> This point is strongly brought out in the virgin Japanese Protestant publication *Shinri Ippan* (One Line of Truth) Uemura 1884. This book, mainly about Christianity versus other Western thought, clearly admits the foreign character of Christianity. It also illustrates that a process of selection takes place when a Japanese encounters Western ideas. The following is an outline of the contents of this book.

The publication gives a systematic account of the theological thoughts of Uemura at the time. It is apologetic and provides an overall explanation of religion, discussing how to approach religious truth through academical studies. The existence of God, prayer, God - man relationship, spiritual and infinite character of man, Jesus Christ and the relationship between religion and science are central themes. The book is practical, selective and demonstrates an attitude of compromise.

The contemporary spirit of enlightenment is the background of a rationalistic tendency, in a sense a "natural theology" of the book. The author argues f.i. like Pascal that rational doubt is a true introduction to religion. The contemporary spirit is also seen in Uemura's approach of free criticism. Uemura does not accept any external authority, Walter, Kant and others are only referred to as illustrations. Traditionalism, superstition are criticized alongside atheism, agnosticism and materialism.

The interpretation of Christ is a mere repetition of the image of Jesus from the Gospels. There is neither a deep analysis of Christianity generally, nor of special religious aspects, such as faith, sin, or experience of salvation.

Morality is, however, stressed. Faith is not mystical, it rather contains a moralistic

Japanese ideas. Even at this early stage, there were efforts at adopting Christianity to the Japanese spirit.<sup>274</sup> It illustrates that "newness" and the related concept of "Westernness" have to be viewed together with "continuity" and the "Japaneseness" of Protestantism.

The other "idea" in this early apologetic literature reinforced the relationship between Christianity and certain needs of contemporary Japanese society. We call this idea the "relevance" of Christianity to Japan. It is a positive idea, implying that Christianity has a positive relevance and value to the basic needs of the country and its people. Early Protestant believers saw Christianity as answering a need for a new political and ethical basis of society. This led to assessments and evaluations of Christianity. Protestants subsequently became involved in debates and confrontations with Japanese leaders of different opinions.<sup>275</sup>

The two apologetic points of concern, mentioned above, are widely found in Protestantism of the 1880s in Japan. The representative Christian Magazine *Rikugo Zasshi*, founded as a YMCA project in 1880, provides us with good evidence of such a characteristic already in their first issue, where an article on the purpose of the magazine occurs. The magazine affirms the relevance of Christianity to Japan, whilst at the same time recognizing its foreign origin and newness to the Japanese people.<sup>276</sup>

In these two points of concern there is already an implicit view of Protestant history. This view might be called a preunderstanding of Japanese Protestant history. In the concern with Christianity as a new, and to a dominating degree, a Western religion, the implicit view is that it has little or no Japanese history. The idea of Protestant history in Japan is that it is still foreign and largely Western. According to the other point of view, namely the relevance of Christianity to contemporary Japanese society, there is an implicit understanding of an incipient Protestant history in Japan which is relevant to basic, contemporary developments of society. The apologetic literature thus, by implication, understands Japanese Protestant history as largely foreign. But contemporary developments were also seen in a positive interplay with central societal needs.

### 3.2.1.2 Japanese Developments and Western Missionary Expansionism.

#### 3.2.1.2.1 A Reminder of the Conceptual Background.

flavour.

The idea of creation is used for apologetic purposes. Because of creation, mankind possesses a religious feeling and is seeking for God. Cf Uemura 1884/1977 and Ishihara 1938/76.

<sup>274</sup> Uchimura Kanzo already in 1886 points out the continuity between *Yamato-damashii* (Japanese spirit) and Christianity. Uchimura 1886.

<sup>275</sup> Kozaki Hiromichi published in 1886 *Seikyo Shinron*, (A New Theory of State and Religion). This book defended many of the standpoints of the People's Rights Movement, supra 2.1.3.2.2. Kozaki was critical to a new Japanese state based on the traditional, Confucian ideas. Inspired by social implications of the Gospel, Kozaki argued for a democratic and egalitarian structure of society. Cf Saba 1938/76d: 192, Drummond 1971: 202 and the articles Kumano 1966a, 1966b, 1967.

<sup>276</sup> The aim of the magazine may be summarized in four points: (a) To study religion, explain and defend its "raison". (b) Religion and morality is considered by the magazine as not keeping pace with the swift progress in knowledge. *Rikugo Zasshi*, however, claims that religion is a necessity for all human beings, and that true religion therefore has to be fostered and promoted. (c) Religion is a necessary basis for the *Jiyu Minken Undo* (People's Rights Movement). (d) To clear away misunderstandings about Christianity and to relate the Christian truth to life in society, *Rikugo Zasshi* 1880, cf Sugii 1984a: 27 - 33.

The writing of History was a high priority for the Western missionary movement. There were theological as well as contemporary social reasons for this. One theological basis was the concept of salvation history, into which all the peoples should be drawn. The Biblical background is to be found in a wide variety of passages, in the Old as well as in the New Testament. One person who brought out relevant biblical passages and built them into a grand system of historical philosophy was Jonathan Edwards (1703 - 1758). His influence upon Western, in particular on American, missionary thinking was considerable.

To Edwards history was a conflict between God and Satan. Mission had an important role to play: it was to fight on the divine side in the struggle with evil, a struggle through which the Kingdom of God will be brought nearer. The motivation of mission was also strengthened through a chronology of world history. Edwards believed that in a certain period of world history, the Jewish people would be converted. After the period of Jewish conversion, the pagan peoples would turn to God. Two successive returns of Christ - between which the millenium of peace will reign, mark the final stage of human history.<sup>277</sup>

Edwards explored themes in Christian apocalypticism, which in different forms proved convincing for the Evangelical missions. During the 19th century, however, the idea of progress and human development became commonplace and they inspired optimistic views of the advance of Western culture and the idea of the expansion of Christianity. A history of salvation, which emphasized continuous development and encouraged missionary expansion could be supported by other references than only those of New Testament Pre-Millennialism. One such non-Theological factor was Western colonialism. Colonialism being a Western, expansionist movement, implied that the Western way of life was superior. Therefore Western dominance was felt as nothing but natural and inevitable. Particularly during the so-called "Heyday of Colonialism" (1858 to 1914), which also included a period of great missionary achievements<sup>278</sup>, a model for expansionist thinking prevailed.

Informed by the idea of the history of salvation in a colonial setting, a fertile ground emerged for the study of mission history. The continuity with foregone ages provided perspectives on Christian developments in new lands. The idea of Christian expansion was reinforced by Biblical references as well as by the daily news of the colonial advance. This was also the conceptual framework for Western interpreters of missionary developments in Japan.

### 3.2.1.2.2 Accounts of Missionary Expansion in Japan.

Against this background it should come as no surprise that by 1890 there already existed sophisticated historical writing on Protestantism in Japan, containing high standards of systematization and reflection. In the Western literature it is at this stage possible to distinguish between history-writing, where the subject of concern is ecclesiastical developments, and history-writing concerned with the evolution of ideas. The latter type of literature corresponds more closely to what also existed among Japanese writings at that time, i.e. the apologetic literature analyzed above.

Looking at material which have an ecclesiastical focus, two books in particular are interesting.<sup>279</sup> Both remind one of reports, and one is in fact part of a missionary report.<sup>280</sup> The idea of a historical continuity leading up to Japanese Protestantism is expressed through the emphasis on mission-structures, e.g. missionary organisations and ecclesiastical denominations. The central role in the historical treatment of the mis-

<sup>277</sup> Axelson 1976: 45 - 56, Wolf 1958: 309. Cf the biography Murray 1987.

<sup>278</sup> Neill 1964: 322 ff.

<sup>279</sup> Ritter 1890 and Verbeck 1883.

<sup>280</sup> Verbeck 1883 is part of the report from the General Conference, *Proceedings* 1883.

nary also illustrates that continuity was basically conceived in terms of mission structures. Both books write mission history, implying that "mission" is the dominant continuum behind Japanese Protestantism.<sup>281</sup> It is not only talk of a continuity with elements from Western Christianity, but with Western society on many levels. After all, Protestant mission was a part of a wider social and political expansion.

Though the West never colonized nor dominated Japan politically, Western political pressure prevailed. From this political history there were intimate relationships with the various undertakings of Christian Mission.<sup>282</sup>

It would not be correct, however, to overlook a couple of elements which modify this general statement, about the dominating idea of continuity between Western society and Japanese Protestantism, in Western interpretations of Protestant history in Japan. Missionaries in the field and the missiologists residing at academic or ecclesiastical institutions in the West, primarily emphasized religious continuity and regarded social or political continuity with the West as unessential. Ritter subsequently talks about *Umsichgreifens des Christentums* (the spread of Christianity) when characterizing a period of early Protestant history in Japan.<sup>283</sup> Thus a continuity that transcends Western social or even religious milieus is contemplated. Rather than social mechanisms, the "continuity" of Protestantism extends to a history of salvation which unfolds itself according to divine providence. Secondly, missionaries as well as missiologists were aware of independent Japanese initiatives in the Protestant history of Japan. Such initiatives are not emphasized in the historical interpretations of the years up to 1890. Verbeck, who presented his *History of Protestant Missions for the General Missionary Conference* in 1883, included such initiatives as part of a section on "Miscellanea" all together covering 4 pages.<sup>284</sup> The Japanese initiatives are not overlooked, but admittedly given minor notice in the representative work on Mission history by the Western missionary. The missiologist Karl Heinrich Ritter,<sup>285</sup> presenting his book in 1890 on Protestant history in Japan, has a slightly broader view of Japanese initiatives, than what was normally demonstrated in missionary reports. But generally local initiatives were also regarded by him as peripheral.<sup>286</sup>

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<sup>281</sup> The different Western missionary societies belong to different churches which in turn may be classified in confessions or denominations. Whereas Ritter 1890: 30ff, 85ff, emphasize confessional or denominational activities in Japan, Verbeck's chronicle of Mission History, in the *Proceedings* 1883, stresses missionary activities. He thus views missionaries as one group up to 1872. Between 1872 - 1883 he follows a year by year periodization, thus somewhat breaking up the denominational perspectives.

<sup>282</sup> Note for instance the following: "When it became known that the Empire of Japan, having concluded treaties with several of the Western Powers, was to be reopened to foreign intercourse, the outside world generally, and friends of Christian missions particularly, took a deep interest in the event, ... for now ... this country ... was to be again made accessible to commerce and Christianity", Verbeck 1883a: 23.

<sup>283</sup> Ritter 1890: 48 - 118.

<sup>284</sup> This section covers Bible translations, publication of books and tracts, Evangelical Alliance Week of Prayer, *Shinbokkai* (Christian Fellowship), lecture meetings by Japanese, four Japanese religious journals, liberal state policies, and cooperation from foreign ministers in Japan, Verbeck 1883b: 869 - 73.

<sup>285</sup> Rev. Ritter (1840-1895) served as a pastor at a social institution in Potsdam. He was interested in the mission to Japan, and a supporter of *allgemeine*. cf. *infra* 3.2.2.2.2.

<sup>286</sup> Ritter talks of "*Gemeinsame Züge des Japanischen Missionslebens*" (Common features of mission in Japan) Ritter 1890: 45 - 48, including topics such as ecclesiastical independence, Japanese missionary societies a. o. Later in his book Ritter returns to

The other basic idea underlying the Western interpretation of mission history concerns expansion and it presupposed the idea of continuity. These two ideas are naturally combined with each other. But there are elements added to the idea of continuity, when references are made to expansion. The writers were considering a movement not only extending to another country, but gaining, growing and developing in various dimensions.<sup>287</sup> In line with this conception, Ritter and Verbeck, presented statistics and results, thus expressing "expansion" with a numerical emphasis. Together with this rudely numerical understanding of expansion, there is, however, an understanding which presupposes qualitative aspects. There is no clear division between quality and quantity. Both aspects are contained in the understanding of expansion.<sup>288</sup>

Having made these observations on the ecclesio-centricness of Western interpretations of Japanese developments, I now turn to material which saw the development of Christianity in Japan more in terms of the history of ideas. The idea of continuity took on other nuances and became related directly to Salvation history. We now turn from the ecclesiastical type of writings to literature mainly concerned with ideas.

To missiologists the mission history is seen to be part of a world history, even the basis of world history, which aims at the conversion of the masses. The procedure of sending missionaries, establishing churches and Christianizing the masses are steps in a divine plan.<sup>289</sup> On the other hand mission might be related in straightforward terms to the appearance of the kingdom of God.<sup>290</sup> The historical continuity might in a clearcut way be conceived as a theological continuity in terms of divine action. Such ideas also relate to the history of salvation. Compared to ecclesiastical writings, there is in other words an increased emphasis on the concept of the history of salvation when "continuity" is seen in the historical perspective of ideas.

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independent congregations and work for ecclesiastical unity, Ritter 1890: 98 - 102.

<sup>287</sup> Verbeck 1883 and Ritter 1890 display an expansionist imagery in their periodization. After Verbeck has characterized the period 1859 - 1872 as a period of "preparation and promise", he terms the years from 1872 - 1883 "a season of progressive realization and performance." Verbeck 1883b: 741. Words such as "preparation" and "performance" reveal an expansionist way of thinking. Cf Ritters term *Umsichgreifens des Christentums* (Christianity catches on), Ritter 1890: 48ff.

<sup>288</sup> Both writers focus the early fruit of Protestant mission in Japan, namely the founding of the first congregation in Yokohama 1872, Verbeck 1883a: 50 - 55, Ritter 1890: 19.

Verbeck, however, lists the results of mission by 1872 in 11 points, ranging from a more positive public opinion, output of Christian publications in Chinese, missionary progress in Japanese studies to more ecclesiastical results: production of tracts, Bible-translation, clinical work, education, and church construction for foreigners. But, in fact such results are only preliminary. The final result and ultimate goal of missions is, conversion and founding of churches.

Ritter stronger leans towards a qualitative dimension of the results. He holds that Christianity has to become Japanese: united, related to Japanese needs and led by Japanese, Ritter 1890: 119 - 23. Ritter is critical to revivals, which he sees unjapanese "emotionalism", and American "Methodism".

The nuance between Verbeck and Ritter may reflect their different professions, where the missionary tends to emphasize numerical results, and the missiologist ideas and theology. But, different theologies of mission in the German academic environment and in the American Presbyterian organization can also be identified.

<sup>289</sup> Warneck 1884: 11 - 18.

<sup>290</sup> Kolmodin 1887: 63.

The idea of expansion is equally strong, and naturally closely combined with continuity. Warneck uses the Biblical image of "leaven" to illustrate the function of mission, the idea being the expansion of the church as an inner, divine process.<sup>291</sup> But expansion might also be conceived in terms of an ongoing struggle, where good and evil fight until the Kingdom of God is established as the consummation of all good forces.<sup>292</sup>

Both concepts, continuity as well as expansion, have in this type of literature, their focus in the concept of a history of salvation.

Turning from the Western missiologists to missionaries in the field, there is no reason to suppose a different approach. The missionary movement to which both groups were related was the same, and the missionaries gained their learning from the Western theological institutions where these missiologists taught. But in the actual situations, somewhat different accents occurred in their presentation of idea-oriented scriptures. The missionaries did not stress to the same extent the idea of a history of salvation. The idea of Japanese Protestantism in continuity with Western Christianity is a matter of course. What they stressed in literature written for missionary purposes is however the prerogatives of Christian faith, overagainst traditional, Japanese faith. Christianity is recommended as a substitute for Buddhism<sup>293</sup> and popular Japanese faith and worship.<sup>294</sup>

The substitution idea which came out of this emphasis is an aspect of expansion, here seen from the inside of missionary activity. Therefore the missiologists' explicit view of the link between expansion and history of salvation is lacking. In an encounter with Japanese seekers, the appeal to a history of salvation was of minor importance. But the renewal of Japanese civilisation became an alternative point of departure in missionary argumentation. This means that the concept of expansion in missionary usage, conflicted with the concept of continuity. The promotion of expansion will in other words qualify the notion of continuity. Expansion will not replace continuity. After all, when missionaries substituted the idea of expansion for the idea of continuity, this was not an absolute or total substitution. Not only would the motif of continuity be taken care of in other contexts, but the missionaries in themselves, personalized a continuity with Western Christendom. An alternative to the history of salvation or to the Western background of Japanese Protestantism was therefore not given. But a stronger emphasis on Japanese beginnings was promoted.

### 3.2.1.3 Comparison between Japanese and Western Material from 1872 - 89.

Already the formal analysis illustrated significant parallels and differences between the Japanese and Western interpretations of what actually took place during the foundation period of Meiji Protestantism. This content analysis sharpens our understanding of these differences and parallels.

<sup>291</sup> Warneck 1884: 84.

<sup>292</sup> Kolmodin 1887: 63.

<sup>293</sup> The pamphlet Gordon 1892 is based upon a speech entitled *Bukkyo Tanomu ni Tarazu* (The unsufficiency of Buddhism), held a few years earlier. The paper attacks Japanese Buddhism for various deficiencies, such as inconsistency and lack of genuine Buddhist identity. Buddhism is considered to be an insufficient foundation of the new Japanese nation.

<sup>294</sup> An example is the pamphlet *Kareki o Ogamu no Gai* (The Harmful consequences of Worshipping Dry Wood). It is a commentary to the 2nd commandment, applied to the Japanese religious environment. De Forest maintains that the worship of "dry wood" is unhealthy to individuals as well as to society. He argues on such grounds that worship of the true God should replace the primitive worship.

I have illustrated how the ideas of Christianity as both a new and a relevant religion are predominant in the existential interpretations of the role of Christianity in Japan which were advanced by young and committed Japanese Protestants. On the Western side the predominant concepts were the continuity of Christian developments in Japan with Christianity in the West and with the expansionist view of Christianity, which was backed by distinct theological views of World History and Salvation History.

Although these emphases, perspectives and their expressions differ considerably, there are some interesting links between the predominant Japanese and Western points of view. This is clearly evident when we compare the Japanese concern for Christianity as a new religion and the Western view of continuity. Being an extension of the religion of the West, i.e. the point about continuity, Christianity in a new religion in Japan. Its new concepts and new basic values challenged traditional Japanese ways of life and religious traditions in the same way as other Western ideas and institutions operated during a period of profound modernization.

Against this background it seems possible to also suggest a link between the Western concern for expansion and the Japanese search for relevance. With the open minded attitude to Western ideas and institutions which Japanese Protestants shared with other Japanese modernizers during the early phases of the Meiji period, it was not a serious problem to recognize the value of the spread of Western influences, including the expansion of Christianity in the Japan of the 1880s.

However, one significant difference of opinion between Western and Japanese interpreters should be noted. Although Japanese Christians were able and willing to recognize the relevance of the expansion of Western ideas and institutions, this did not limit their view of relevance. In the Japanese context, their concern was primarily apologetic. They wanted to prove that Christianity was relevant, with reference to a basic search for a new, more open and humane society, which they shared with other Meiji reformers. Relevance thus was defined from the point of view of the Japanese modernizer and implied accordingly to critical inter-actions with traditional Japanese religions.

This comparative analysis particularly concerns material which assesses Japanese developments in terms of the history of ideas. At this level the material allows for a more substantial comparison. As regards more ecclesiocentric material, the Japanese contribution is still too premature to compare it with the substantial accounts of Verbeck and Ritter. Also there are changes of emphases during the subsequent phase from 1890 onwards.

### 3.2.2 Protestant Identity and the Challenge of Japanese Patriotism.

#### Introduction.

I have already illustrated how the emerging Protestant Movement in Japan was faced with new challenges from 1890 onwards. A dramatic evidence of the new situation was the Uchimura conflict over the expression of reverence for the Emperor, which was expected of Japanese civil servants.

The different theological options reflected the possible roles and directions ahead for the newly organized Protestant communities. There was the continued adaption of a traditional Calvinist Orthodoxy in a new context, which was pursued most consistently by Uemura Masahisa. There was a more flexible, and even liberal approach of Ebina Danjo, who during the 1890s was ready to test, with reference to his former Confucian alignments, the relevance of the New Theology, as represented by the Allgemeine Evangelisch Protestantische Missionsverein and American Unitarianism. The encounter with these radical theological movements challenged Yokoi Tokio and Kanamori Tsurin so profoundly that they had to leave the church.<sup>295</sup>

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<sup>295</sup> Supra 2.2.3.3.2.

Uchimura Kanzo opposed such radical, theological movements.<sup>296</sup> Personal experience and a Biblicalistic general view led him to encourage the formation of the Non-Church Movement.<sup>297</sup> This theological turmoil demanded a reconsideration of previous apologetic concerns in the **newness and relevance** of Christianity in Japan.

New features in the general climate of Japan as well as in the new emphases within the emerging Japanese Protestantism raised questions about the expansionist interpretations of Christian developments in Japan, among Western analysts. There was a new interest in recognizing and relating to Japanese Christian initiatives and local actors involved in the continuous evolution of Christianity in Japan.

### 3.2.2.1 Japanese Revisions.

The vitality and variety in Protestant reflections on the beginnings of Christianity in Japan were, thus, encouraged from 1890 onwards by the new challenges to Japanese Protestantism. This affected the understanding of Christianity as a new religion in Japan, as well as reflections on its relevance. In the first place we can trace the evolution of a more concentrated reflection on the Church - or the Christian community - instead of a previous general affirmation of Christianity as a "new religion". This feature evident in the writings from this second phase by "orthodox" writers such as Uemura as well as by Christian radicals such as Yokoi Tokio.<sup>298</sup>

#### 3.2.2.1.1 A new Focus on the Church.

As far as Uemura is concerned it was not simply the apologetic situation in the 1890s that compelled him to undertake new interpretation in the history of the Christian Church in Japan. In 1892 he assessed the achievement of his own Yokohama Church<sup>299</sup> since its inception 20 years earlier. In 1897 there was the official celebration of the 25th anniversary of this church.<sup>300</sup> However, for Uemura both events provided welcome opportunities to affirm the independence of the new Japanese Church.<sup>301</sup> In fact he suggested a parallel between the Pentecost and the foundation of the Yokohama Church "when the time was fulfilled".<sup>302</sup>

Uemura applied a concept of the church which recognized the importance of structures and institutional expressions.<sup>303</sup> That is why he expounded on the themes of

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<sup>296</sup> Uchimura 1897b+c+d and 1899a+b.

<sup>297</sup> Supra 2.2.3.1.

<sup>298</sup> Supra 2.2.3.3.2.

<sup>299</sup> Uemura 1892.

<sup>300</sup> Uemura 1897.

<sup>301</sup> On independence, cf Uemura 1905a.

<sup>302</sup> Uemura 1897.

<sup>303</sup> Uemura developed a traditional, reformed concept of the church. In an article in *Fukuin Shinpo* (Gospel News) Jan. 1897, Uemura presents the development of doctrine in the Japanese Presbyterian/Reformed tradition from 1872 up to the ecclesiastical consolidation in *Nihon Kirisuto Kyokai* in the 1890s.

The article also speaks in favour of unity, focusing the period of united Protestantism in Japan between 1872 - 1875. He also suggests an ecumenical church history, Uemura 1897: 233.

Ecclesiastical independence is dear to Uemura. He traces this thought to the first missionaries and also recalls the first, independent Japanese evangelistic efforts in 1875,

newness and continuity with early Christianity, but disregarded the other theme: relevance.

It is in other words not a Western but a Biblical history which was unfolding itself in Japan, as his parallelism with Biblical events show.<sup>304</sup>

We might relate these reasons for writing Protestant history to the ones revealed in the contributions by Yokoi Tokio, particularly in certain chapters from his famous theological book: *Wagakuni ni okeru Kirisutokyo no Mondai* (The Problem of Christianity in Our Country).<sup>305</sup> The historical sections of this book are not occasioned by any jubilee or chronological curiosity. Yokoi experienced contemporary Christianity as being in crisis. In order to look for reasons, he reflected on what so far had happened in Japanese Christian history.<sup>306</sup>

A section from this book presented the American background of Protestantism, with the diplomatic negotiations by Commodore Perry and Consule Townsend Harris. The early missionaries were also introduced, with a respectful description of their personal characteristics and methods of mission.<sup>307</sup> Yokoi also periodized his historical interpretation. "Preparation" preceded a period of "beginning", and another of "success". The "beginning", from 1872 - 1881, covered the first church and its characteristics. It is seen as an important feature that the first church was *mushuhashugi* (nonsectarian).

But,<sup>308</sup> Yokoi also considered the numerical expansion of the church and the expansion of Protestant activities generally. The eight years from 1882 - 1889 are termed as a period of success, in spite of attacks from outside. Inner church developments such as revivals, the establishment of *Daishinbokkai* (All Japan Christian Fellowship) are described. Yokoi also related his sketch to political developments, to the westernization process and he added positive statements concerning Christianity as expressed by leading persons in society. This was a period of growth for Christianity: 6000 - 7000 persons per year joins the faith.<sup>309</sup>

The years following, 1890 - 1894, are termed "Stagnation in Protestant Evangelization", and Yokoi analyzed the reasons for this stagnation. Yokoi's explanation is balanced. Conservative reaction to Europeization, unhappy effects of revivals, unhappy effects of the attempt at church merger (Congregationalists and Presbyterians) are seen as causes. Yokoi is sophisticated when analyzing the role of the New Theology as a reason for the setback.

Though he himself was an adherent of the New Theology, he admitted its contribution to the setback. But Yokoi underlined that Japan in general was positively disposed

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Uemura 1897: 238.

To Uemura the church was dynamic and expanding. The occasion of the article is the baptism of 10 - 11 individuals before 1872. He also speaks of later evangelization and the early Japanese efforts evangelize Korea, Uemura 1897: 238f.

Although Uemura thus was a committed evangelist, his orthodox concern and the work for traditional church structures remain decisive for his understanding of the Christian church.

<sup>304</sup> Uemura 1897.

<sup>305</sup> Yokoi 1894.

<sup>306</sup> In the historical sections, Yokoi stressed the "performance" of Christianity rather than the ideas. For Yokoi, the time from 1859 - 1872 was a period of preparation, the years from 1872 - 1881 constituted the beginning, and the years from 1882 - 1889 was a time of "success". From 1889 onwards, Yokoi talks of stagnation, Yokoi 1894: 96.

<sup>307</sup> Yokoi 1894: 95 - 101.

<sup>308</sup> Yokoi 1894: 100f.

<sup>309</sup> Yokoi 1894: 110 - 14.

to the New Theology and dissatisfied with the old. Yokoi argued that the New Theology had a good effect upon some believers and that it would have certain general good effects, for instance greater tolerance.<sup>310</sup>

The book by Yokoi presents a new, progressive theology as a solution of the crisis. The deeper motivations of his history writing is therefore to solve this crisis, inside which the Protestant church in Japan was conceived as being trapped.

In particular he is concerned with the concept of **relevance**. Although Yokoi has not any clearly defined concept of the church, he has an understanding of the church as a dynamic entity, functioning in society. The church is in its very being effective, growing and developing.<sup>311</sup>

When the church became alienated from the dynamic centres of society, however, Yokoi too became alienated from society and ultimately also from the Church. This might cast some light upon his defection, which was a severe shock to many.<sup>312</sup>

### 3.2.2.1.2 From Relevance to Japaneseness.

Yokoi Tokio and Kanamori Tsurin raised searching questions concerning the **relevance** of the emerging Protestant church in Japan and they found it wanting. However, this was not the only way of handling the compelling theme from the previous period. Others reinforced the **relevance** of Christianity, not merely as a Western modernizing agency, but also as a significant Japanese factor for change. In fact, the "Japaneseness" of Christianity was reaffirmed during the patriotic 1890s and after.

It is interesting to note that Uemura was active also in this regard. Taking issue with Yokoi and Kanamori, he did not shy away from the question of an indigenous continuity between relevant Japanese parallels and Christianity as a "new religion". Uemura partly dwelt on the interaction between Christianity and the **bushido** (samurai ethics).

Uemura, thus, illustrated the Japaneseness of Christianity by exploring how **bushido** was fulfilled in Christianity. He highlighted how imperatives such as to be alert and firm in faith, valiant and strong,<sup>313</sup> have broad support in the spiritual traditions of Shinto and Confucianism, upon which **bushido** is founded. But the quality lacking in **bushido** was above all love; "The samurai has a cool and stern attitude to his own home, it cannot be denied that the warmth of love is lacking".<sup>314</sup> The complete fulfilment of **bushido** was to be found in Christianity: "Christianity is the religion of love. It is the religion of the son of God becoming flesh, living among men and dying on the cross. In other words it is the religion of the shepherd seeking the lost sheep, loving his enemies and atoning sin. It is not a stern and cool matter. To experience its harmonious spirit is like feeling a mild wind blowing. There are warm tears, and blood under the skin. When this kind of spirit is added, **bushido** for the first time reach fulfilment. Displaying goodness and beauty and adding the glory of the earth, it will become the glory of heaven"<sup>315</sup>

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<sup>310</sup> Yokoi 1894: 115 - 31.

<sup>311</sup> The book *Wagakuni no Kirisutokyo Mondai* (The Problem of Christianity in Our Country), provides illustrations, Yokoi 1894: 95 - 131.

<sup>312</sup> The defection of Kanamori, which preceeded Yokoi's was perhaps the "severest blow the Protestant churches had yet received", Cary 1909/76b: 237. When Yokoi published his *Wagakuni no Kirisutokyo Mondai*, the shocking effect was not that large. His views, however, seemed to many to be even more destructive of Christian faith, Cary 1909/76b: 253.

<sup>313</sup> 1. Cor. 16: 13.

<sup>314</sup> Uemura 1898b, quoted by Saba 1937/76a: 610.

<sup>315</sup> Uemura 1898b, quoted by Saba 1937/76a: 611.

Though critical of excessive demands for Emperor veneration, Uchimura Kanzo, too, was keen to illustrate the Japaneseness of Christianity, by illustrating how Christianity related to *yamato damashii*. Already in the 1880s, he had anticipated this dimension of the Christian relevance for Japan. Addressing himself to a Western audience, he wanted to "show the Western reader how far the *yamato damashii* is essentially Christian in spirit, and what advantages a Christian missionary may derive from it, in leading my countrymen to the purest and holiest of Saviours, whose sacred flowering, once for all, on the stem of humanity, has shed an 'odorous sweetness' through the world." <sup>316</sup>

Uchimura points to two central features in the Japanese ethos, one being the "sacred relation of child to parent", <sup>317</sup> and the other being "loyalty to higher authorities". <sup>318</sup> Put into this spirit of chivalry, a third element of influence "is Buddhism...a religion incalculating kindness to 'the meanest of things that feels' could not fail to increase tenderness in all human relations and to permeate the hearts of people with a deeper feeling of brotherhood". <sup>319</sup> Uchimura closes his article by relating the touching story of a local Japanese hero who suffered martyrdom for the sake of other people. In this story Uchimura discovers "a faint shadow" of the matchless love and sorrow which lead the "Holy One of Israel" to Calvary. <sup>320</sup>

### 3.2.2.1.3 Autobiographical Evidences.

As noted already in the previous genre analysis, there was some biographical and autobiographical material emerging on both the Japanese and Western sides from 1890 onwards. Interest in this type of interpretative account was sparked off by Arthur Sherburne Hardy's *Life and Letters of Joseph Hardy Neesima* from 1891, which was firmly based on Niijima's own diaries, correspondence and other writings, and thus, is a significant source of information on early Protestant developments in Japan. As we will note presently, Hardy's Niijima biography represented a new emphasis in Western interpretations of the foundation period of Protestantism in Japan. <sup>321</sup>

For our present purposes Uchimura's confession *How I became a Christian*, which was written for an American audience and subsequently adjusted for Japanese readers, is even more significant. <sup>322</sup> This book is a reflection on his personal development as a Christian, from his early years at the Agricultural College in Sapporo, until his return to

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<sup>316</sup> Uchimura 1886/1973: 14.

<sup>317</sup> Uchimura 1886/1973: 15.

<sup>318</sup> Uchimura 1886/1973: 21.

<sup>319</sup> Uchimura 1886/1973: 28.

<sup>320</sup> Uchimura 1886/1973: 34.

<sup>321</sup> To Niijima, cf supra 2.2.2.1. The early biography of another early Congregational pastor in Japan, Sawayama Paul Naruse 1893, and Uchimura's biographical sketches of Japanese personalities, Uchimura 1894/1972, demonstrate an early biographical interest among Japanese Protestants.

<sup>322</sup> Uchimura says in the foreword to the American edition: "The publication of this little volume in America is wholly due to the help and encouragement of my reverend 'elder brother', Hon. David C. Bell of Minneapolis", Uchimura 1895/1971: 11. The occasion is further clarified in the publication for the Japanese market. Uchimura was in USA often asked to "tell us how you were converted". The audience would hear how he "threw ... idols into the fire and clung to the Gospel", Uchimura 1895/1971: 9.

Japan after residing in the USA during the years 1883 - 1888.<sup>323</sup> It contains evaluations and viewpoints related to contemporary problems. Uchimura is particularly concerned with mission issues and the relationship between religion and nationality.

How I became a Christian primarily brings forth Uchimura's genesis as an adherent of the faith from the West.<sup>324</sup> Seen in the perspective of the new religion in continuity with Western society and religion, Uchimura interprets conversion from a personal and existential point of view. In particular the element of monotheism in Christianity is a central point and in fact a condition for his embracing of the new faith.<sup>325</sup> We may note that this is a purely religious condition, not related to the Western character of Christianity or to Western religiosity. Personal conversion and adherence to a new religion often leads to an extreme feeling of religious liberation.<sup>326</sup>

The other concern of Uchimura's auto-biography is his critical observations of American Christendom.<sup>327</sup> It reflects the same historical consciousness. Uchimura reveals how Christianity and American society is a unity for him.<sup>328</sup> But the encounter with American society was a shocking experience for him.<sup>329</sup> Though not separating religious

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<sup>323</sup> Uchimura wanted to tell the story of his conversion in his own way. "my conversion was a slow, gradual process". Uchimura 1895/1971: 9. He wants to make his national identity clear: "Never have I entertained any wish whatever of becoming an American or Englishman, but I reckoned my heathen relationship a special privilege of my own, and thanked God once and again for having brought me out into this world as a 'heathen' and not as a Christian." Uchimura 1895/1971: 186.

Uchimura's confession was published six years prior to the formation of the Non-Church Movement.

<sup>324</sup> Uchimura 1895/1971: 17 - 103.

<sup>325</sup> Dec. 1st 1877 he writes in the diary: "Entered the gate of the 'Jesus Religion'", a sentence which he comments like the following: "or rather forced to enter; i.e. forced to sign the covenant 'The Believers in Jesus'". He does, however, not at all regret this: "Monotheism made me a new man". Uchimura 1895/1971: 29 - 30.

To Sapporo Band, see supra 2.2.2.1.

<sup>326</sup> After conversion, Uchimura experienced a release from previous religiously motivated abstinences: "I resumed my beans and eggs". Even intellectually the release was strongly felt; "I thought I comprehended the whole of Christianity, so inspiring was the idea of one God". Uchimura 1895/1971: 29.

<sup>327</sup> Uchimura 1895/1971: 104 - 212.

<sup>328</sup> "failing to find the desired satisfaction in my own land, I ... thought of extending my search to a land differently constituted from my own - even to Christendom, where Christianity having had undisputed power and influence for hundreds of years ... (here) must, I imagined, be found Peace and Joy in a measure inconceivable to us of heathen extraction", Uchimura 1895/1971: 101.

<sup>329</sup> "First, let me frankly confess that I was not entirely taken up by Christendom ... I remained a stranger throughout", Uchimura 1895/1971: 186. And he goes on to describe the social realities: "Scenes in those backstreets of some of the largest cities of Christendom, which no decent man dare even to look into, can be described with no milder words than the vilest in my language, shameless gamblings, open-day piracies," Uchimura 1895/1971: 194.

history from its social framework, <sup>330</sup> Uchimura tended to develop a critical understanding of religious identity independent of national or social history. <sup>331</sup>

As to the themes of relevance and expansion, Uchimura in his early auto-biography does not elaborate on their relevance to Japanese needs. His objective is personal and he writes mainly for an American audience. It also reflects his strong individualistic emphasis in his interpretation of Christianity. As an observer of Western Christendom for five years, however, he cannot avoid reflecting on the Western concern for expansion. Uchimura not only applies new perspectives on the expansive process, <sup>332</sup> but he deliberately used the receivers perspective as a critical instance over against Western missions. <sup>333</sup> But again, the genuine dimension of mission as an aspect of Christian religious activity is wholeheartedly supported by Uchimura. <sup>334</sup> In terms of historical interpretation, it means that the religious history with which he identifies is conceived as a history of expansion, although it was a purely religious history with a critical distance to Western cultural expansionism.

### 3.2.2.2. Western Interpretations.

New Patriotic sentiments in Japan led to a stalemate in the growth of Japanese Protestantism and to new emphases in the way in which leading Meiji Protestants defined the relevance of the Church in Japan. Increasingly Uchimura Kanzo took a critical view of traditional institutional expressions of Protestant Churchmanship and informed his Mukyokai accordingly.

These developments necessarily affected the accounts of Western analysts. Missionary reports did not any longer speak enthusiastically of Christian advance. Though the theoretical preconditions of Western observers continued to be the same as before, the interpretations of Japanese developments gain another tone and to some extent another focus. The concern for expansion was reduced and reflections on continuity became particularly addressed to denominational developments.

#### 3.2.2.2.1 Denominational Differentiations.

As already noted, one distinct feature of protestant Church life since 1890 was the consolidation of denominational groupings. The former bands were organized as local churches according to the predominant missionary traditions which interacted with the bands. This development was reflected in missionary reports. It also influenced essayist attempts to identify and interpret current developments. In fact, Uemura's church-cente-

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<sup>330</sup> "where outside Christendom can you find one John Howard to ornament its history of humanity?" Uchimura 1895/1971: 193. "I attribute the progressiveness of Christendom to its Christianity", Uchimura 1895/1971: 201.

<sup>331</sup> Cf the expression "The greatest darkness with the greatest light", Uchimura 1895/1971: 193.

<sup>332</sup> "Suppose you stop your foreign missions and concentrate your whole energy upon home missions. What will you have? Many more striking conversions, many more homes freed from the curses of whisky, many more children decently clothed, no doubt. But withal what? Many more heresy huntings, many more denominational back bitings" Uchimura 1895/1971: 202f.

<sup>333</sup> "The Moody-Sankey method that goes so successfully with Americans and Englishmen should succeed equally with Japanese and Chinese. But Japanese and Chinese are not Americans as you know. They had not their childhood motered with 'The Lord is my shepherd'". Uchimura 1895/1971: 205.

<sup>334</sup> The *raison d'être* of mission is ... "the *raison d'être* of Christianity itself". Uchimura 1895/1971: 201.

redness on the Japanese side shows many parallel features to the new denominational focus of the Western material. It was the relevance of a Christ-centered Presbyterianism in interaction with traditional samurai ethics, with which he was primarily concerned. Uchimura Kanzo, on the other hand, took a more critical stance vis-à-vis the imposition of Western denominationalism.

Among Western writers from the period, denominational differentiation was interpreted in terms of continuity. However, there was a new and more specific emphasis here. It was primarily the denominational structures and their local expressions in Japan, which now were seen as the visible sign of the continuity of Western and Japanese Christianity. Material from the American Board as well as J. M. Pettie's assessment of Japanese Congregationalism illustrates the denominational consideration.<sup>335</sup>

Within Japanese Episcopalianism the fragmentation of Japanese Christianity was regretted, but at the same time there was a move towards Anglican self-sufficiency. Rev. Awdry affirmed that "the Anglican form of Churchmanship has been the one that appeals most to the nation, and the *Nippon Seikokai*, or Catholic Church of Japan, is in full communion with the American and English Churches and very much like them".<sup>336</sup>

Although the denominational developments were easily interpreted in terms of continuity and communion with Western churches, there was at the same time an incipient awareness of the role of the Japanese Christians as actors in the process, and not just the Western missionaries. The *Brief Survey* from the American Board as early as 1892, gives full recognition to the responsibility of the Congregational Church in Japan for a future advance in the nation. It also contains a summary of the history of this church by Rev. Miyagawa, who was keen to emphasize the independence of Japanese Congregationalism.<sup>337</sup>

There is thus a new focus on Japanese Church life in the Western recordings from the 1890 onwards. This, however, did not mean a retreat from an active interest and concern on the part of Western mission agencies and missionary historians. Indeed, there

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<sup>335</sup> J. M. Pettie produces in 1895 a statement on Congregational work in Japan. *Brief Survey* 1892, published by the American Board is likewise a denominational presentation.

The trend is underlined by the ecclesiastically representative *History of Protestant Mission in Japan*, which is continued where Verbeck finished 1883 and extended to 1900. Cf *Proceedings* 1901. Whereas Verbeck arranged his materials in the edition of 1883 according to missionary societies in the historical order of their arrival in Japan, the continuation 1883 - 1900 is arranged according to denominational families (Episcopal, Baptist, Presbyterian, Congregational, Methodist and various other groups), *Various missionaries* 1901. Cf also Verbeck's article on early mission in Japan, Verbeck 1892.

<sup>336</sup> Awdry 1904: 43.

<sup>337</sup> The Congregational report *American Board* 1892 is divided into a section of "co-operative work" and a section of "independent work" according to Japanese demands, p. ii. The report emphasizes Japanese initiatives stronger than what so far had been done. There is material on Japanese ethics, and sections on the apologetics of Yokoi, Kozaki and Shimada, who are Japanese pastors of the Congregational Church. Japanese perspectives on church developments are stressed, in response to Japanese desires. There is also a presentation of Rev. Miyagawa's paper on Congregationalist church history in Japan. The paper considers development towards ecclesiastical 'independence'.

A section, on *Nihon Kirisuto Kyokai* (United Presbyterian/Reformed Church) from *Proceedings* 1901, presents a similar picture. Church history is periodized thus:

- (1) In 1879 organized evangelization and self support were attempted.
- (2) Before 1886 Mission was in control, but a Japanese council existed.
- (3) In 1886 administrative and financial co-operation started.
- (4) In 1894 were financial independence and synodal control established, *Proceedings* 1901: 887ff.

was deliberate interest in critically assessing the theological representativity of Japanese Protestantism.

#### 3.2.2.2.2 Theological assessments.

There seems to be two main issues in the continued Western assessment of theological developments within the emerging Japanese churches. One concerned their confessional base. The other issue was theological independence and the search for Japaneseness.

With the main preoccupation with continuity, Western observers of Japanese developments felt uneasy with the confessional articulations in the constitutions of the new churches.

These problems seem to have been particularly acute within the Congregational Church. This was especially so when compared with the confessional basis of the Presbyterian Church, which contained the Apostles Creed and an independent Biblical formulation of the Christological basis, as well as the objectives of the Church.<sup>338</sup>

The statement of the Congregational Church was more brief and formulated in general Christological terms. The American Board as such did not object to its formulation.<sup>339</sup> Otis Cary, whom we will meet as the Western historian of Meiji Protestantism par excellence from the following period, however, was more critical,<sup>340</sup> although he did not deny the validity of a search for relevance in Japanese Christian Theology.

In German related churches, these Japanese developments raised two problems. The first concerned the possible effects on the Allgemeine Evangelisch Protestantische Missionsverein. The other was what was perceived as an expression of self sufficiency in Japanese Protestantism.

Assessments of the effects of the Allgemeine reflect, of course, the observers' own preferences. It is quite interesting that the great Gustav Warneck followed Japanese developments with the most active interest. He was very sympathetic to developments within Japanese Presbyterianism and recognized the adoption of the Apostles Creed by the Presbyterians as one of the *erfreuliche Ergebnisse* (joyful events) of the period, thereby indicating his own theological critique of Allgemeine.

Gustav Warneck was well known for his critique of American missionary activism, and did not find the plea for the *Evangelization of the World in this Generation* fully Biblical. He saw Japanese developments during the 1890s as evidence of this.

Instead of the optimistic drive towards numerical growth, the primary concern of the maturing Japanese Church, should be the *Passionsweg*. In this regard, however, Warneck regretted features of Japanese self sufficiency. He was not as open for the need of Japaneseness in Protestant theology as Congregationalist missionaries in Japan.

#### 3.2.2.2.3 Biographical Evidences.

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<sup>338</sup> Supra 2.2.3.3.1.1.

<sup>339</sup> The American Board editor sees "the promise of Christ to give his spirit to guide his children into the truth ... being fulfilled in the creeds recently adopted by the two largest bodies of Christians.", He also quotes a missionary colleague, M.L. Gordon: "They are clear and outspoken on the essentials of evangelical religion ... and are significantly silent on everything that pertains to the divisive condition of Western Christianity." The author is happy to see that they apply the Bible without copying any readymade system, and he asks: "Why should we not say 'Gods speed' to them in this step?" American Board 1892: 42f.

<sup>340</sup> Cary talks of a Japanese reaction and states that part of the problem was that "Christian ministers and prominent laymen ... declared that Christianity must take on a Japanese form, and in other ways asserted what they called 'independence'". Cary 1900: 88.

Essay material and Interpretative Accounts from the period focused on ecclesiastical problems, as they presented themselves in the Japanese context. However, increasingly there was an additional type of material which falls within our category of Interpretative Accounts, and which reflect a person-centered view of historical developments. I am referring to the increasing number of biographies of missionary pioneers and also of Joseph Hardy Nijjima.

In the missionary biographies we can detect the survival of the expansionist theme during this second phase of the foundation period of Japanese Protestantism. The most productive Western representative of this type of literature during the period is William Eliot Griffis. He portrayed in 1901 the real pioneer Guido Verbeck, and followed suit with biographies of Samuel Brown, James C. Hepburn and also Consul Townsend Harris, the first American consul to Japan, who is portrayed as a stout Protestant.

However, missionary biographies did not simply reflect Western expansionism. There was an interest in Japanese developments and Japanese Christians. In fact, prior to Griffis' biography of Verbeck, J.D. Davis had published a biographical sketch of Joseph H Nijjima, which was followed in 1891 by Hardy's *Life and Letters of Joseph Hardy Neesima*. Davis deliberately adopted a perspective of continuity when he portrayed Nijjima as a Japanese co-worker in the missionary cause. Hardy allowed Nijjima's Japaneseness to inform his interpretation of the pioneer of Doshisha and in selecting his letters.

### 3.2.2.3 Comparison between Japanese and Western Interpretations.

During the second phase of Meiji Protestantism, we note an increasing differentiation between Japanese emphases. The main themes in the Western historical interpretation: **continuity** and **expansion** are maintained, but differentiated and modified. **Continuity** is interpreted in the first place with reference to the formation of local churches along denominational lines. The validity of the institutional expressions of these denominational structures is duely assessed. **Expansion** is maintained as an ideal, although contemporary developments in Japan are characterized by reduced church growth and a Japanese search for ecclesiastical independence. Gustav Warneck deliberately modifies an interpretation of Church developments in Japan, which as a major criterion operates with numerical growth. Although Warneck himself is hesitant in this regard, the **expansion** theme gradually is extended in such a way that it allows recognition of the role and contribution of Japanese Christians as actors in the process, and colleagues to Western missionaries.

Developments on the Japanese side are more far-reaching. There is an increasing interest in interpreting Christianity in terms of a valid, Japanese Church. Uemura is the most advanced representative for this new trend. Uchimura's developments on the other hand implies an increasing critique of traditional, ecclesiastical institutions, although his criticism leads to consequences very different from those drawn by Yokoi and Kanamori in their own ecclesiastical criticism. For Uchimura as well, however, there is a change of emphasis from Protestantism as a new religion to the category of a church.

This new churchcenteredness, which runs parallel to developments among Western analysts, does not, however, reduce an active interest in exploring and affirming the Japaneseness of the Church. It expresses itself as a concern for ecclesiastical independence, a concern questioned by Western missionary experts.

There are also theological dimensions involved in the exploration of Japaneseness. Both Uemura and Uchimura are keen to illustrate how the Christianity they represented in a creative way relates to the Japanese heritage, particularly as expressed in samurai ethics.

Japanese interpretations of the formation of Meiji Christianity, thus, became increasingly Japanese during the formative years of Japanese Protestantism. In this regard it expresses its own self-identity vis-à-vis Western observers at a time when the latter groups are also beginning to recognize the inner dynamics of Meiji Protestantism in their interpretations.

### Introduction.

With the defeat of the Russian fleet in 1905, Japan emerged as a self-conscious military and political power, challenging Western supremacy. In Asian countries it became a symbol and an inspiration. In the world at large it had to be taken seriously in international diplomacy as well as in ecumenical relationships.

Turning to the domestic scene, the impression is that of a stable country, enjoying the fruits of a successful modernization in a spirit of ideological, nationalist unity. Different ideological options represented by socialist factions, as well as competitions between various national institutions in the wake of the passing away of the old *genro* (statesmen), however, signify a political as well as an ideological uncertainty. The Meiji period was followed by the *Taisho* (Great Justice), spanning the years 1912 - 1926.

It was not till the latter part of the 1920s, under the surface of the so-called *Taisho* Democracy, that the real alternatives started to appear. When the international depression hit Japan, these developments accelerated and the military took over.

In Japanese history, the period from 1905 to 1929 is, thus, very much a history of transition. This also meant for the Protestants a critical assessment of the Meiji heritage from various starting points. It should be noted that the Japanese "fathers" of Meiji Protestantism, such as Uemura, Uchimura, Kozaki and Ebina, continue to take a very active part in Japanese Church life during the period of transition. However, their roles were somewhat different. Whilst Uemura and Uchimura pursued their theological and ecclesiastical positions from the 1890s and early 20th century, Kozaki and Ebina continued to independently reflect on the dynamics in the founding period of Japanese Protestantism, and, they tried to relate these to the emerging issues in Japanese society during the period of transition. Meiji Protestantism was thus a live and challenging reality to a new generation of church leaders and theologians after 1906.

Within the International Missionary Movement, the period was a time of incipient polarization. The missionary conference in Edinburgh in 1910 took place in an atmosphere of missionary optimism and pronounced missionary ecumenism. In America, however, there was an increasing cleavage between apocalyptically enthusiastic conservative evangelicals and socially committed mainstream missions, which were convinced about the value of other religious cultures and they acknowledged the need for Christianity to interact positively with these religious traditions. The Great War of 1914 - 19 and the subsequent depression challenged the simplistic plea of *Evangelization of the World in this Generation*. A new trend of theological thinking, dialectical theology, appeared on the European continent.

The sentiments of the period of transition in Japanese history during 1906 - 29 and the emerging contradictions within the Western Missionary Movement, provided a new milieu for reflective thought about Meiji Protestantism in Japanese and Western circles. The objective of this chapter is to assess and compare these new developments in reflective thought about the founding and emergence of Meiji Protestantism. The line of procedure is similar to the previous chapter. Pursuing the analysis on two levels, I first investigate the emerging types of literature, then I go on to the content analysis. In order to better appreciate the new features of the discussions, let me first introduce the new milieu for these reflections upon the previous Protestant development in Japan.

## 4.1 THE HISTORICAL MILIEU.

### 4.1.1 Japanese Pluralism in a Period of Transition.

Nationalism continued to be a dominating trend during the years following the military triumph of 1905. It was reinforced by other military gains. During the years 1906 - 1929

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<sup>341</sup> "Unfortunately, the early decades of the twentieth century are the least studied and least understood period in modern Japanese History". Fairbank 1965: 489.

Japan extended its position on the Asian mainland, in China, Korea and Manchuria. This expansionism, which was inspired by nationalism, also reinforced the nationalist trend in Japan.

On the political level the concept of a *kokutai* (national polity) <sup>342</sup> played a major role in the nationalist ideologies. The centrality of the Imperial House was a characteristic feature. Traditional features such as filial piety and elements from the Shinto and Confucian faiths played an important part in national, political concepts. <sup>343</sup>

Partly parallel to, but also in contrast to these expansionist and nationalist streams, the democratic movements developed during these years. The professor of administrative law at Tokyo University 1900 - 1932, Minobe Tatsukichi, illustrates this. Accepting the *kokutai* concept, he wrote that "our unique national polity is our peoples's greatest glory". <sup>344</sup> But, believing that the emperor was clearly lower than the state and subordinate to state laws, he was a convinced democrat as well.

This democratic nationalism can be found in the writings of his disciple, the Christian political thinker, Yoshino Sakuzo, who became a professor at Tokyo University in 1913. Yoshino, who was influenced by Ebina Danjo and who had been associated with the Christian socialists, showed a strong commitment to parliamentary government. <sup>345</sup>

In addition to these different trends in democratic and national thought, various types of socialism became known in Japanese society. These thoughts varied from a right-wing kind of socialism inspired by Christianity to a leftwing socialism which, particularly from 1907 became radicalized under the leadership of Kotoku Shusui. Attempts from persons within the radical socialist groups to assassinate the emperor provoked a governmental reaction which put an end to organized socialism in 1911. <sup>346</sup> After World War I the movement again appeared, but mostly in intellectual circles.

#### 4.1.2 Christian Participation in National Developments.

As we have illustrated above, there were some initial contacts between Protestantism and early Japanese socialism. When the main-stream of Japanese socialism parted company with Protestant supporters, however, the reasons were partly of an immediate character, such as different attitudes to the Russo-Japanese war of 1904/5. These divisions were also rooted in the difference between a Christian humanistic pragmatism and genuine socialist theories. <sup>347</sup> Christian social commitment was in general of a more pragmatic type. Even Kagawa Toyohiko, who emerged as a Christian evangelist and at the same time a socialist leader, initiating the "Kingdom of God" movement which combined evangelical and social elements, was working more with pragmatic social projects than with socialist theories. The same is the case with another famous Christian social leader from the turn of the century: Yamamuro Gunpei, the founder of the Japanese Salvation Army.

A woman, Hani Motoko (1873 - 1957) who in her Tokyo schooldays had been influenced by Uemura, was engaged in women's movements and initiated a liberal, educational project. In 1921 she founded the *Jiyu Gakuen* (Liberal Centre of Education). In this school she fostered a spirit of equality. She also edited a magazine, *Fujin no Tomo*

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<sup>342</sup> Fairbank 1965: 531

<sup>343</sup> Fairbank 1965: 529 - 38.

<sup>344</sup> Fairbank 1965: 533.

<sup>345</sup> Fairbank 1965: 547 - 9.

<sup>346</sup> Kotoku Shusui and 11 other members were executed after the trial which followed the assassination attempt.

<sup>347</sup> Ono 1986b: 114.

(Woman's Friend) and organized supporters for the school.<sup>348</sup> The majority of Protestants accepted the nationalist politics of the state, including its imperialist expansion on the Asian mainland. Of the rare exceptions against this expansion there were Uchimura Kanzo, who strongly rejected war as a "cardinal sin", and Kashiwagi Gien, a Congregationalist pastor, serving in the famous Annaka church, in the hometown of Niiijima. Kashiwagi demanded that international conflicts be solved through international law, pointing to the absurdity in creating peace through an armaments race.<sup>349</sup>

In general social concern was kept alive in the Kumamoto tradition through personalities such as Ebina Danjo. It is a generally admitted fact that Uchimura as well as Uemura, during the Meiji and Taisho years, gradually moved their main interests to spiritual and ecclesiastical commitments.

#### 4.1.3 Theological Emphases.

Emerging out of the theological differentiation which came about during the 1890s, three streams of thought can be identified in the period of transition in Japan's modern history. They more or less correspond to the three bands and their respective theological attitudes.

The ecclesiastical and reformed emphasis of Uemura, stressing Biblical faith and ecclesiastical traditions, evolved as the dominating tradition in Japanese Protestantism after the turn of the century. Following Uemura, Takakura Tokutaro, a theologian from the Presbyterian Reformed Church established a theological system in line with that of Uemura. He stressed atonement by Christ and salvation by faith. His theology was of a controversial character, and as he said things about Christian revelation similar to statements by Karl Barth, he is called a "pre-Barthian"<sup>350</sup>

Contrasting with this ecclesiastically-oriented orthodox mainstream, there was a social and more liberally oriented stream of theological thought. Ebina Danjo is one of the most influential leaders of this school of thought. Otsuka Setsuji, another theologian with a Doshisha background and Harada Tasuke, likewise from Doshisha, belonged to this tradition. Kozaki Hiromichi and Kagawa Toyohiko can as well be referred to this school of thought. In the wider sense, the socially-orientated streams of Unitarianism and the groups more closely related to the German *Allgemeine*, also convened with the liberal concerns of Ebina.

Thirdly, there is the expanding *Mukyokai* (Non-Church Movement), conforming to the theological leadership of Uchimura Kanzo. In addition to the development of committed pacifist thinking and a strong interest in the second coming of Christ, this group developed a deliberate Japanese, Bible-oriented spirituality. In spite of its Christological and soteriological orientation which followed classical evangelical Protestantism, the movement continued to refute the doctrine of the Church.<sup>351</sup>

As to the "theology of Japan", there is a common feature of a nationally-oriented theology in all groups, though with some significant variations. Uemura as well as Uchimura and Ebina develop a positive Christian relationship to aspects of the traditional Japanese spiritual heritage. Compared to the period prior to 1905, however, the theological tendencies included a closer relationship to Japanese religion. Uemura emphasized

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<sup>348</sup> Takamizawa 1969: 181 - 197.

<sup>349</sup> Ono 1986b: 219.

<sup>350</sup> Germany 1965: 88, 110, 121f. Ono 1986a: 285 - 292.

<sup>351</sup> Ono 1986a: 207 - 11; Sekine 1967/79: 100 - 138.

the positive relationship between Christianity and the Pure Land School of Buddhism,<sup>352</sup> whereas Uchimura related more to the Japanese spirit or heritage, in an inclusive sense.<sup>353</sup> Ebina, however, was mostly concerned with the relationship to Shinto, reflecting upon the preparatory character of Shintoism which he interpreted as embodying a monotheist trend.<sup>354</sup> There was a marked scepticism towards the emperor system in the Non-Church Movement, a scepticism which was not so pronounced in the two other theological mainstreams.

#### 4.1.4 Ecumenical Encounters.

Though international encounters have played a significant role in Japanese Protestant history from its beginning, a new stage was reached in the period 1906 - 1929. This was encouraged through Japanese participation in the World Missionary Conferences of 1910 in Edinburgh and of 1928 in Jerusalem. In the Edinburgh Meeting, representatives from several churches in Japan actively participated in the discussions about World Mission.<sup>355</sup> The meetings provided new experiences of being part of a movement transcending national borders. The visit of John Mott to Japan, before and after the international missionary conference in Edinburgh 1910, sparked further inter-church co-operation on Japanese soil. A Japanese continuation committee was formed after Edinburgh, in 1913, and a co-operative campaign for evangelism was run during 1914 - 16 on the initiative of Mott. In 1923, a new stage of Church co-operation was reached with the establishment of a National Council of Churches, the NCC. But it is also of interest that the international ecumenical environment provided a new dimension of communication which led to new efforts in the historical interpretation of Japanese Protestant history and national heritage.<sup>356</sup> Ecumenical encounters in the wide sense, including participation in meetings, foreign visits to Japan and journeys by Japanese abroad, as well as writing in foreign publications<sup>357</sup> on Japanese developments, have to be seen as important elements in the process of fostering a Japanese Protestant Ecclesiastical history.

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<sup>352</sup> Uemura 1911.

<sup>353</sup> Cf "Representative Men of Japan", Uchimura 1894/1972, originally in English, included a variety of features from the Japanese heritage, including political figures such as Saigo Takamori and the medieval religious leader Nichiren. Cf also articles collected under the headline *Nihon to Kirisutokyo* (Japan and Christianity) Uchimura 1963: 180 - 225.

<sup>354</sup> Iwai 1973: 197ff.

<sup>355</sup> Harada Tasuku, Principal of Doshisha University, gave a paper on "The Contribution of Non Christian Races to the Body of Christ", in Edinburgh 1910, Harada 1910b.

Other Japanese also participated in discussions during the conference, e.g. President Ibuki of Meiji Gakuin University, representing Presbyterianism and Bishop Honda from the Methodist Church.

It is noteworthy that Japan was well represented and participated actively, when compared to other non-Western countries. Two Japanese representatives (Honda and Harada) participated in the discussions on "The Church in the Mission Field". Of other non-Westerners, only Mr. Cheng Yi from China and Yun Chi Ho from Korea participated in the debate. For reference to Harada's speech, Harada 1910a.

<sup>356</sup> Honda 1910: 380, at the Edinburgh conference 1910. Cf Harada's contribution on the understanding of Christianity in Japan, Harada 1910a and his paper on "The Contribution of Non Christian Races to the Body of Christ", Harada 1910b.

<sup>357</sup> Cf Stauffer 1927 and Harada 1912.

#### 4.1.5 Missionary Optimism Maintained.

In spite of the complicated international scene, comprising wars of national independence in Asia and Africa, various revolutions, notably in Russia, and the national selfimposed isolation of the USA in the 20s, followed by a depression towards the end of our period, the general mood among Christians was optimistic, in the Western world.

As to Japanese missions, the self-criticism around the turn of the century changed to a period of reinforced evangelistic zeal. Big evangelical campaigns were planned and put into effect all over the country. These trends were collected and further reinforced by the ecumenical fellowship, in particular by the Missionary Conference in Edinburgh of 1910.<sup>358</sup>

Though there was an emphasis at the Jerusalem meeting in 1928 on religious co-operation and a common religious front against secularism, the task and calling of the missionary as such, as well as the optimistic prospects of missionary ventures in Africa and Asia were never seriously challenged.

#### 4.1.6 Christianity and Local Cultures.

Another feature in the Christian environment during the years following 1905 was the growing interest in local cultures.

The background for such tendencies can be sought in the long-range effects of the Japanese military victory over a Western power, although they were probably in a reaction against Western colonialism. The years of the Western encounter and exploitation of Asian and African countries had led to a greater knowledge of the colonized cultures. From such knowledge spread an interest in exotic religions, arts and forms of civilisation. In Asia this led to a growing interest in Indian and Buddhist thought, to the establishment of Buddhist and Hindu communities in the West, as well as to a greater self-confidence in their cultures among Asians and Africans. There was also the effect on missionary theology of the increasingly recognized Science of Religion.

In Christian milieus this trend led to a stronger interest in local forms of worldwide Christianity, indigenization and an interest in listening to the voices of non-Western peoples. For the interpretation of Christian developments in Japan, this influence can be noted on the Japanese side as a tendency to focus on nationalism and to reinterpret the Christian message in the light of Japanese traditions, such as we have found in Ebina's contribution. On the Western side there was an increasing recognition of local Japanese initiatives in the history of the expansion of Christianity in Japan. Jerusalem 1928 can be seen as a consummation of these tendencies.

### 4.2 TYPES OF LITERATURE.

#### 4.2.1 Definitions and Criteria.

I have already spelled out how I classify relevant material, distinguishing between different genres with reference to their analytical distance to the subject matter. The three main genres are **Direct Accounts**, **Essay Material**, and **Interpretative Accounts**.

Applying this classification to the material, Japanese and Western, from this period, the category of **Direct Accounts** necessarily loses its significance. Of course, Japanese and Western interpreters continued to observe and write minutes and reporting, all of which is included in what is called **Direct Accounts**. But this genre is mainly preoccupied with immediate contemporary events. There will only be indirect and peripheral references to earlier periods of Protestant History. We are therefore left with the two other genres in the analysis of this period. **Essay Material** and **Interpretative Accounts** are, however, very significant for the period of transition after 1905.

#### 4.2.2 Japanese Material.

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<sup>358</sup> Cf Stauffer 1927.

#### 4.2.2.1 Essay Material.

**Essay Material** increased considerably during this period, in particular because new series of theological journals were launched in Japan. **Rikugo Zasshi** (Universal Magazine), however, which we found basic in our previous period, gradually loses its significance in the 1890s, due to the increasing influence of Unitarianism. From 1906 to 1921 the magazine was chiefly concerned with social and cultural questions, without close contacts with organized churches.<sup>359</sup>

Instead, the magazine **Fukuin Shinpo** (Evangelical News), founded by Uemura in 1890, developed into a representative bulletin from the Presbyterian United Church of Christ in Japan, and provides us with some material also from this period. Compared to other magazines which he edited, the two shortlived periodicals **Nihon Hyoron** (Japan Critique)<sup>360</sup> and **Shukyo oyobi Bungei** (Religion and Literature),<sup>361</sup> **Fukuin Shinpo** is a journal about internal church information as well as for the nourishment of faith. **Shukyo oyobi Bungei** offers a wider perspective. From both of these journals I have selected articles which focused on aspects of Japanese Protestant History. In **Shukyo oyobi Bungei** Uemura has an significant article, interpreting the religious personalities of Honen and Shinran and at the same time giving a valuable perspective on the character of Japanese Protestant History. As will be noted in due course, other churchmen such as Ebina Danjo launched theological journals of their own.<sup>362</sup>

I have included talks and lectures by Japanese, and a few articles in the English language. This is a reflection of the influence of ecumenical encounters upon the Japanese study of the local heritage and history, as noted in the introduction. Kanamori Tsurin, who had left the church together with Yokoi in the 1890s, later joined it again in the 1910s and appeared as a socially committed evangelist, presented his life story in what is called his **Three Hour Sermon**.<sup>363</sup> This evangelical address does not, however, lecture on history directly. But Kanamori consciously draws on early experiences of the Meiji Protestant history. The lectures by Harada Tasuku, given at Hartford Theological Seminary 1910 and printed in **The Faith of Japan**, moves more directly into the problematic of character and history of Japanese Protestantism. The same is the case with an article of his in the **IRM** which appears in his book.<sup>364</sup> The historical interpretation here evolves from a concern for evangelical problems and the relationship between Christianity and the Japanese religion and mentality. A speech by Dr. Nitobe Inazo given at the annual meeting of the "Federation of Christian Missions" in 1929,<sup>365</sup> concludes this series of major addresses in English.

A collection of essays in English, called **Japan speaks for herself**<sup>366</sup> contains articles by Ebina Danjo, the Baptist educationist Kawaguchi Ukichi, the previously mentioned democratic nationalist Yoshino Sakuzo, professor at Tokyo University, and others. The legacy of the Meiji heritage is a recurring theme in the book as a whole.

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<sup>359</sup> Doshisha A 1984b: 327.

<sup>360</sup> Published during the years 1890 - 94.

<sup>361</sup> Published in 1911.

<sup>362</sup> *Infra* 4.3.1.4.

<sup>363</sup> Kanamori 1920.

<sup>364</sup> **The Present Position and Problems of Christianity in Japan**, Harada 1912.

<sup>365</sup> Nitobe 1981.

<sup>366</sup> Stauffer 1927.

Though Uchimura Kanzo does not focus directly on the history of Meiji Protestantism in his writings from this period, materials from his **Complete Works** are used in order to illustrate how he relates to the Meiji heritage, to Japanese spirituality and to Western religion and culture.

A sub-section of the essay material focuses upon personalities. In the material gathered by Saba Wataru, to whom I will return more fully in the period after 1930,<sup>367</sup> are various biographical fragments from the period 1906 - 29. Occasions appear when the old Protestant "fathers" pass away or when significant anniversaries were celebrated. Honda Yoichi gave a speech on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of Rev. Ballagh's arrival;<sup>368</sup> other fragments on Ballagh are also found.<sup>369</sup> Brown is likewise portrayed by Ibuka in connection with the anniversary of Nihon Kirisuto Kyokai 1922.<sup>370</sup>

One of the early Japanese Protestants portrayed is the stern nationalist Kuritsu Takaaki, who died in 1880. He was a person with a strong dislike of missionaries, but he was firmly committed nevertheless to the spread of Christianity.<sup>371</sup>

This essay material, thus, reveals biographical perspectives and illustrates that the spiritual relationships between Christianity and Japan are central to the Japanese Protestant mind. These perspectives seem to be the main objective of a reflection upon history which now developed in the numerous publications, particularly on the Japanese side. Considering the character and definition of the essays, which gave much room for personal views and experiences, it must be stated that historical reflection had now attained a clear framework and a balanced perspective, and even drew international relationships into the discussion. The essays reflect a deliberate concern with Protestant identity, making them highly relevant to this investigation. This impression is affirmed when I now move on to the **Interpretative Accounts** from this period.

#### 4.2.2.2 Interpretative Accounts: Towards a Japanese Church History.

Two of the items represent Protestant Church History in Japan in a strict sense as a new feature in the Japanese material. I am referring to **Gendai Nihon Kyokaishiron** (Treatise of Modern Japanese Church History) by Yamaji Aizan<sup>372</sup> and Yamamoto Hide-teru: **Nihon Kirisuto Kyokaishi**.<sup>373</sup>

Whereas Uemura and Yokoi had reviewed the history of Japanese Protestantism for the sake of assessing its relevance to contemporary Japanese developments, Yamaji and Yamamoto have a historical interest in the formation of Meiji Protestantism. In a more qualified sense they share the honour of being the first Japanese Church Historians.

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<sup>367</sup> Infra 5.2.2.

<sup>368</sup> Honda 1911.

<sup>369</sup> **Fukuin Shinpo** 1911.

<sup>370</sup> Ibuka 1922.

<sup>371</sup> Wada 1907.

<sup>372</sup> Yamaji 1906.

Yamaji Aizan (1865 - 1917) borne in Edo, was of samurai background. He was baptized 1886 in Japan Methodist Church, Shizuoka. After having completed his studies, the life was divided between writing, lecturing and pastoral work.

In the 1890s he approached liberal, theological thought. Although his fascination with German liberal ideas culminated around 1906, he still maintained his open and liberal spirit. Particularly he was influenced by Ebina Danjo, and focused religious and mystical aspects of Christianity, cf Yamaji 1906: 95f, Imanaka 1973: 106. **Jinmeijiten** 1986: 1697.

<sup>373</sup> Yamamoto 1929.

Yamaji Aizan, originally from the Presbyterian Yokohama Church, was a pastor and a writer. He had, however, under the influence of the modern theological trend, been particularly influenced by Ebina, and thus aligned himself with the social and liberal stream of Japanese Protestant thought.

In his *Gendai Nihon Kyokaishiron*, Yamaji deliberately traced how Japanese Protestantism was related to other forces for change during the Meiji Restoration. He records with enthusiasm the expansive period up to 1890. He also analysed the factors which during the patriotic phase challenged the Church to reconsider its attitude and function in Japan. He adopts a broad, historical perspective on Meiji Protestantism.

Yamaji had himself been involved in this process and was definitely committed to modernist views. He tried, however, to check his own recollections and interpretations by drawing on a wide set of material, not least essay material, from periodicals edited by his colleagues and opponents. He quoted from *Rikugo Zasshi*,<sup>374</sup> *Kokumin no Tomo*,<sup>375</sup> and *Jogaku Zasshi*.<sup>376</sup> He also made use of the well-known pre-Restoration document of anti-Christian propaganda, i.e. *Bemmo*.<sup>377</sup> The other Church History which is of interest here, *Nihon Kirisuto Kyokaishi*, appeared at the end of this period. The author Yamamoto comes like Uemura from the Yokohama tradition.<sup>378</sup> Following their emphases, he was concerned with the structures and institutions of the Church. He did not, however, overlook theological developments. He analysed the influence of the American Unitarians and the German *Allgemeine* upon Japanese theology.<sup>379</sup> He was also aware of how the theological crisis of the 1890s affected the Church, and what came out of it.<sup>380</sup>

As sources, Yamamoto used statistics, documents from Church-conferences and even newspaper articles. The newspaper articles were used to illustrate debates, for example the debate following the Uchimura incident of 1891. Thus there is a marked difference from earlier Japanese history writing, which was mostly based on personal reminiscences and notes. Yamamoto was, however, satisfied with the mere documentation of events and developments. He did not, and here he differed from Yamaji, look for explanations in a wider historical perspective or by introducing relationships between historical events and social forces or structures. Yamamoto merely recorded how processes develop and what views exist.<sup>381</sup>

The death of early Protestant believers provided opportunities for biographical sketches. Apart from the material mentioned in the earlier period, i.e. the outstanding autobiography of Uchimura Kanzo and the Western biography by Hardy on Niiijima Jo, there appeared after 1906 biographical studies of pioneer missionaries and Japanese Church leaders. Thus, there is a biography by Yamamoto Hideteru on the missionary James C Hepburn. Yamamoto undertook his task in order to make a contribution to the

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<sup>374</sup> Yamaji 1906: 90.

<sup>375</sup> Yamaji 1906: 81f.

<sup>376</sup> Yamaji 1906: 81f.

<sup>377</sup> Yamaji 1906: 30 - 40.

<sup>378</sup> Yamamoto Hideteru (1857 - 1943) was of samurai descent. From West Japan he came to Yokohama for studies. He became influenced by the missionaries Ballagh and Brown. In 1874 he was baptized by Ballagh, and enrolled at Tokyo Theological Seminary in 1877. He combined academical and pastoral work. From 1907 he lectured in Church History at Meiji Gakuin; while also serving as pastor. He became president of *Nihon Kirisuto Kyokai*. *Jinmeijiten* 1986: 1699.

<sup>379</sup> Yamamoto 1929: 208 - 16.

<sup>380</sup> Yamamoto 1929: 214 - 16.

<sup>381</sup> Cf the documentation of early Japanese ecumenism, Yamamoto 1929: 23 - 66.

research on Protestant beginnings in Japan.<sup>382</sup> He drew heavily on the book *Shin Nippon no Onjin* (The Benefactor of New Japan), which he published in commemoration of Hepburn's death in 1911.<sup>383</sup>

#### 4.2.3 Western Material.

##### 4.3.2.1 Essay material.

Essay Material on the Western side contains a variety of presentations on the foundation of Meiji Protestantism.

Missionary Reviews continue to supply valuable interpretations. The German *Allgemeine Missionszeitschrift*, which was so concerned with contemporary interpretation of events in Japan during the editorship of Gustav Warneck, lost its concern for the foundation period of Meiji Protestantism in the years following 1905. Other missionary journals, however, provide various perspectives of interpretation: *Missionary Review of the World*, an established American periodical, devoted much of its 1909 volume to the 50th anniversary of the Protestant presence in Japan.<sup>384</sup> The *Anglican Church Missionary Review*, too, devoted much of its 1909 volume to this half-centenary of the first Protestant arrivals in Japan.<sup>385</sup>

More representative of missionary assessment of the early Meiji Protestantism is the *Japan Christian Quarterly*.<sup>386</sup> Though primarily concerned with contemporary developments, it also presents historical perspectives. The same can be said about another missionary publication, *Japan Christian Yearbook*, or *The Christian Movement*, as it was called in early issues.<sup>387</sup>

In these periodicals and yearbooks we find surveys together with biographical essays as well as more evaluating, missiological approaches to the problem.

Essays providing surveys of historical developments during early Japanese Protestantism can also be found in documents from ecumenical conferences. At such meetings, surveys of a historical character have a natural *Sitz im Leben*.<sup>388</sup>

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<sup>382</sup> Yamamoto 1926: 2f.

<sup>383</sup> The new biography is a revised version of the 1911 publication. He draws on a biographical study by Griffis and consults material on Bible translation work. The biography also introduces the early convert from Yokohama, Okuno Masatsuna, cf. Yamamoto 1926.

<sup>384</sup> Of special interest is the broad survey of Japanese Church history by J.D. Davis, whereas Brain and Bowen dwells on such themes as *The Opening of Japan* and *The Christian Opener of Japan*.

<sup>385</sup> Basil Woods gives a survey which runs parallel to that of J.D. Davis. Rev. Imbrie interprets Japanese Church History in more spiritual and devotional terms.

<sup>386</sup> The journal was founded 1926 as the mouthpiece of the Federation of Christian Missions, with Rev. W.H.M. Walton as editor.

<sup>387</sup> Two early items are particularly useful for our purposes. The first is Otis Cary's summary survey of the progress of Christianity in Japan in the 1909 edition. The other is Rev. Greene's analysis of independence movements within Japanese Protestantism. It is an early attempt to get to grips with Japanese Christian nationalism in general and the critique of institutional Christianity which was voiced by Uchimura Kanzo in particular.

<sup>388</sup> See documents from World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh 1910. Report of Commission I, *Carrying the Gospel to all the Non-Christian World*. Edinburgh and London. In the *Survey of the Non-Christian World*, Japan occupies the pages 50 - 70. Correspondingly in the volume on *Education in relation to The Christianization of National Life*,

As to more evaluative contributions on the historical development of Japanese Protestantism, I point to two essays in particular. One is an introduction by the American missionary leader M. Stauffer to the volume *Japan Speaks by Herself*,<sup>389</sup> which I have already mentioned.<sup>390</sup> The other is the introduction to the *Three Hour Sermon* of Kanamori Tsurin,<sup>391</sup> which was written by the distinguished American Presbyterian Robert Speer. Introducing new Japanese ventures in the field of Christian thought to Western readers, these presentations represent a new accent in Western interpretations of Japanese Protestant historical development.

Though historical interpretations by mission organizations of Japanese Protestantism were still dominated by the desire to record achievements, there is also evidence in Western literature of other foci. The turn to a missiological perspective was one such new focus, which was combined with a greater understanding of indigenous, Japanese historical interpretations and Japanese initiatives generally.

#### 4.2.3.2. Interpretative Accounts: From Mission History to Missiology.

During the period of Japanese Protestantism, Western interpreters were equipped with a conceptual framework and historical methods which prepared them to interpret Japanese developments in terms of the extension of and continuity with Western Christianity. Japanese Protestants were at that time more occupied with existential issues. During the second period, however, an indigenous, Japanese Church History emerged. Here the interaction of Christianity with Japanese realities is the main focus.

Occasioned by Church jubilees, however, Western interest in Japanese Christian development was still alive. The mission historian of the period, Otis Cary, published his comprehensive *History of Christianity in Japan* for the golden jubilee of the Protestant arrival of 1909 in Japan. This was the first survey of Japanese Church History which included references to Roman Catholic and Russian Orthodox developments, parallel to Protestant ventures. The book abounds in events and episodes, persons are portrayed and quoted; the flow of events is told in a vivid, narrating way, coloured by personal judgements and evaluations based on a long period of missionary experience. One easily identifies with the book.<sup>392</sup>

The predominant perspectives are missionary achievements, growth and setbacks, in general the mission process as it was seen and experienced by the missionaries - with their own personal successes invested in the success and growth of the movement. Cary rightly says that "the narrative centres about the work of the missionaries and it does

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Report of Commission III. The section on Japan, pp 122 - 165 gives some historical perspectives.

<sup>389</sup> Stauffer 1927: xiii - xviii.

<sup>390</sup> Supra 4.2.2.1.

<sup>391</sup> Supra 4.2.2.1.

<sup>392</sup> The section called *The Opening of the Gates*, illustrates this. It contains accounts from the Perry expedition, where details about the American observation of the Lord's Day in Japanese presence, as well as various reactions to this custom are recorded.

Quotations from diary entries by the chaplain Mr. Jones, following the Perry expedition, contribute to a vivid and interesting story for persons interested in religious matters.

Similarly there are quotations from the China missionary Dr.S. Wells Williams, who participated in the Perry negotiations, from Perry himself as well as from Townsend Harris, the first American consul in Japan.

Also experiences of the first Western visitors on this, for them, virgin land are related, particularly as they relate to the religious situation. See chaplain Wood's experiences and Dr. McGowan's observations; Cary 1909/76: 28 - 44.

not describe with any degree of completeness what has been done by the Japanese Christians" <sup>393</sup> The book presents missionary thinking on the first 50 years. <sup>394</sup> It is also committed to the urgency of the missionary task. <sup>395</sup>

A parallel historical interest is reflected in the number of biographies which emerged during the period. Verbeck, Brown and Hepburn received recognition by Japanese and Western writers. <sup>396</sup> Though some of these persons tend to become distant to the writer, the biographies are still to a large extent reminiscences. <sup>397</sup> One biography commands special interest. It is the biography of Rev. Jerome D. Davis D.D., Lieutenant Colonel of Volunteers and for thirty-nine years a missionary of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions in Japan, <sup>398</sup> written by his son J. Merle Davis. The biography, like Cary's book, is intended to induce the spirit of missionary service. <sup>399</sup> The biography is entitled **Davis Soldier Missionary**.

Another new feature of western interpretative accounts of Japanese Protestant developments should be noticed. So far, the historical, in particular the mission historical, perspective had dominated the interpretations. During this period, however, an interpretative, missiological perspective gained dominance. Scholars from a European background tried to assess the dynamics and the relevance of Protestant developments in Japan.

A problematic which was attached to German scholarship, and seen in the approach of *Der Allgemeine Evangelisch Protestantische Missionsverein*, was presented by the Danish professor Bergmann in 1906. <sup>400</sup> The same background applied to J. Witte, a

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<sup>393</sup> Cary 1909/76b: 5.

<sup>394</sup> "Most of the materials for this book have been drawn from the magazines and reports published by missionary societies, from Japanese papers, the Japan Evangelist, the historical sketches contained in the reports of the General Missionary Conferences, Ritter's History of Protestant Missions in Japan, and for events in the present century, from the annual issues of The Christian Movement in Japan, published under the auspices of the Standing Committee of Co-operating Missions. Like nearly all writers upon Japanese subjects, I have made great use of The Japan Mail, an English newspaper published in Yokohama. Its translations from Japanese papers have been of special value." Cary 1909/76b: 6f.

<sup>395</sup> "My hope and prayer is", says Cary, "that this volume will help to increase the interest of the Christian world in the evangelization of Japan, and not of Japan only, but of other lands, for in them too, the fields are already white unto harvest." Cary 1909/76b: 7f.

<sup>396</sup> Cf appendix, *infra* 7.4.

<sup>397</sup> Wyckoff 1909 serves as an example.

<sup>398</sup> From title page of Davis 1916.

<sup>399</sup> The biography is based on personal diaries, correspondence, and materials from his military career provided by the military authorities and documents from his work in Japan for the American Board, Doshisha and the Congregational Church.

It is not a critical biography, but a story largely formulated with Davis' own words: "letting him tell his own story of the controversies and troublesome problems in which he not infrequently played a leading part." Davis 1916: Foreword p 2.

The book is thus an apology for J.D. Davis. But, among the purposes are also to "impel them (other people) to similar ideals of service", Davis 1916: Foreword p 2.

<sup>400</sup> Bergmann's book is a missiologically oriented survey, based on Ritter's book, German books and articles on Japan, for example the book by Münzinger, a missionary from *Allgemeine*, called *Die Japaner* and on articles in *AMZ*.

German leader of *Allgemeine*, who presented a deliberate apology for the missionary approach of this organization.<sup>401</sup> In 1918, Gustaf Lindeberg, who is the first Swede to defend a Doctoral dissertation specially geared to a missiological subject, addressed himself to the problems of Japanese Protestantism. He surveyed the developments of Japanese Protestantism, and assessed the ways ahead for the Christian cause in Japan.<sup>402</sup> Lindeberg, who was particularly interested in the contribution of Japanese Christians to international ecumenics, gave a surprisingly positive evaluation of the missionary approach of the *Allgemeine*.<sup>403</sup> In addition we have a French study on *Le Protestantisme au Japon* by the independent and international Church historian, who has specialization in psychological interpretations in the historical processes, Raul Allier.<sup>404</sup> This study was independent of the German problematic. Allier raises searching questions concerning the character of Japanese Protestantism, particularly as it appeared in the life of Christian individuals. A dominating concern was: Is there a Japanese type of Christianity?

We finally note an Anglo-American contribution, assessing the contemporary "religious issues" in Japan. The apologetic aspect was dominating in this presentation from 1928 by Murau and the editor of the *Japan Christian Quarterly*, Rev. Walton.<sup>405</sup>

#### 4.2.4 Comparative Analysis.

Compared with the previous period, a common feature of the Japanese and the Western material from this "time of transition", is the disappearance of the genre termed *Direct Accounts*. As the material of this period is more deliberately concerned with processes in the past, it will also, in both sections, Japanese and Western, reflect a larger historical consciousness. This is particularly evident for the Japanese material which now included the first conscious writings of Japanese Church History.

There is still in the Western material, whether *Essay Material* or *Interpretative Accounts*, a strong interest in mission history. This applies to representative works such as Cary's monumental *History of Christianity in Japan*, or to biographical accounts such as *Davis Soldier Missionary*. On the other hand, the traditions of writing mission history was challenged in two ways. One challenge was the renewed and strengthened interest in Japanese initiatives, as reflected in certain essays and also in *Interpretative Accounts*, such as those by Allier and Lindeberg. Another challenge was the increasing interest in missiological questions.

This development contrasts somewhat with the trends found in the Japanese material. Though there is an interest in missiological questions in the Japanese material, this does not contain a reduced interest in historical studies. On the contrary, a growing interest in the history of Meiji Protestantism can be detected, in Yamamoto's case this can be seen by a preference for ecclesiastical developments, and in Yamaji's and Ebina's with an explicit interest in the social dynamics of Christianity.

The lack of a deliberate historical concern with Meiji Protestantism in Non-Church

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<sup>401</sup> Witte sees the underlying problem of Japanese Christianity as *Das Ringen Zweier Weltkulturen* (The Wrestling of two World Cultures), as his book is entitled.

<sup>402</sup> Lindeberg is rather sceptical to aspects of Japanese independence movements, cf Lindeberg 1918: 106 - 8, 227 - 41. He strongly supports Western mission to Japan, cf p 237.

<sup>403</sup> Lindeberg 1918: 112 - 118.

<sup>404</sup> Allier 1908.

<sup>405</sup> This book, *Japan and Christ*, airs a feeling of strong resistance to Christianity in Japan: "It is a very open question whether the results are commensurate to the efforts expended", Murau 1928: 95. The book is concerned with the *raison d'être* of Christianity in Japan.

circles is a surprising feature, and this relates to its non-ecclesiastical character. It also reflected Uchimura's increasing interest in spiritual and eschatological matters.

Though ecumenical encounters must be considered as a cause in the general picture of history-writing within the Japanese church, it applies particularly to the situations when Japanese encountered ecumenical milieus, e.g. the World Missionary Conference 1910, and the new relationships created by such gatherings. These encounters strengthened a national historical consciousness, as documents from these encounters reveal.<sup>406</sup> On the other hand, through these interpretations Japanese Church history is related to Christian developments in the World at large. These ecumenical interpretations continue the perspectives which were earlier noted in the autobiography by Uchimura Kanzo, and which was related to the Western (American) public.

Biographies on Protestant "fathers", in particular Western missionaries, were continually published during this period. In Western literature we find biographies reinforcing the mission cause, whereas Japanese biographies can be evaluated for their ecumenical concern, in connection with the Japanese search for a Protestant historical identity.

We have thus found differing accents between a growing, but varied Japanese concern with Meiji Protestantism on the one hand, and Western approaches to the period on the other.

The following subsections illustrate in more concrete terms how Japanese analysts, in relation to parallel Western efforts, related to and interpreted the preceding period of Meiji Protestantism.

### 4.3 JAPANESE AND WESTERN INTERPRETATIONS.

#### Introduction.

I will now turn to a more substantial presentation of Japanese and Western interpretations as given in the material which has been systematized in the genre-analysis. As noted in the historical section of this chapter, the tradition from the Meiji Era comprised various elements. Among these are a not yet brought out *anomia* between democratic structures and an "open" Meiji spirit on one hand, and on the other, the limitations to this very openness by Confucianism and the restoration of the emperor system. Whereas the liberties which were rooted in the People's Rights Movement were granted a certain constitutional basis,<sup>407</sup> the antithesis was based also in the constitution and was further strengthened in authoritarian legal documents, such as the Rescript of Education promulgated in the name of the Emperor in 1890.

In particular it is evident that the Japanese Protestant interpretation of the Meiji Era was influenced by these contrasting national patterns, as will be illustrated in the following sections.

#### 4.3.1 Japanese Variations.

##### 4.3.1.1 A more varied Japanese Interpretation.

To Uchimura Kanzo the restrictive or critical aspects of the Meiji heritage, which he had developed in his conflicts with the Emperor system in 1891, had a paralyzing effect. Gradually he withdrew from political concerns to Biblical and spiritual commitments.<sup>408</sup> As a consequence, a disinterest in the Meiji legacy and Meiji history was bound to follow. Parallel to this development Uchimura also detached himself from involvement in

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<sup>406</sup> Cf Harada 1910b and Honda 1910.

<sup>407</sup> Supra 2.1.3.2.2.

<sup>408</sup> Supra 2.2.3.1.

ecclesiastical developments in a more institutional sense. He sought a deliberate seclusion from the whole dimension of Meiji history and Meiji Protestantism. His general orientation thus led to a basically a-historical understanding of Christianity and the Japanese heritage.<sup>409</sup>

Another interpretation of the preceeding period was found in the tradition of Japanese Presbyterianism, spearheaded by Uemura Masahisa. This tradition also comes out with a negative attitude to the Meiji legacy in the general political field. Uemura refused to align Protestantism even with the open aspects of the Meiji tradition.

He did not accept any particular Christian politics, nor did he admit that the relationship between Christianity and national reform was mediated through the Church. An emphasis on spiritual regeneration and living Christianity within the ecclesiastical context was regarded as the true Christian legacy. The relationship to national and state structures, thus, became a secondary or indirect concern to him,<sup>410</sup> although he did not completely rule out such relationships. In contrast to the attitudes taken by the Non-Church Movement, Uemura, did not altogether disclaim the legacy of the Church which was planted in Meiji Japan. As already noted, on the basis of spiritual regeneration and a genuine Christian life, he saw prospects for a political transformation. We may therefore express the view of Uemura which prevails in the tradition which he nourished, as one of appreciation of the Meiji Protestant heritage, interpreted in a definite, ecclesiastical perspective. Within this tradition, a wide range of Meiji elements were made relevant to the Protestantism of the period of transition. This is illustrated in the field of human rights, not only in writings by Uemura, but also through his actions.<sup>411</sup>

Notable here is Uemura's courageous sponsoring of the burial service for a person in his congregation, who was executed together with Kotoku Shusui for alleged partici-

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<sup>409</sup> Certain elements from his Meiji experience are maintained, however, in Uchimura's world of thought. Here they play a significant part. The personal element, which was present in his early writings, continued through this period. Uchimura thus writes on his teacher from the Sapporo Band, Dr. Clark, seeing him as an inspirator and a Father in the faith. Cf the address *Kirisuto wa ikanishite hajimete Sapporo ni tsutaerareshi ya*. (How did Christianity come to Sapporo?) Uchimura 1913/62: 176 - 188.

Interestingly enough, this personal character of his Christian understanding is also illustrated when he commenced his article on Christian evangelism and Japanese culture by narrating his own conversion story, cf Uchimura 1920/63: 291 - 301.

The element of independence is likewise important to him. Thus he celebrates in 1928 his 50th anniversary of independence, signifying that since conversion has aligned himself with a stream of Christianity which is independent from missionaries and churches, cf Uchimura 1928/62: 224.

The a-historical tendency of Uchimura is, however, a basic frame of understanding. It appears when he states that the aim of Christianity is neither to create churches nor to reform society or the state. Evangelism is not even for the sake of converting people, but it is a testimony, i.e. a response to God's salvation through word and action, Uchimura 1911/62: 23.

The individual and theocentric understanding of Christian existence here illustrated, together with the major eschatological concerns of Uchimura, lead us to term his understanding of Protestant existence a-historical. Cf the interpretation of Uchimura's Non-Church Movement given by Caldarola when he relates the Movement to the likewise a-historical Zen Buddhism, Caldarola 1979: 96.

<sup>410</sup> Ono 1986a: 214f.

<sup>411</sup> Uemura supported for example equality between men and women based on thoughts originating from John Stuart Mill, Ozawa 1957: 34 - 36. His own marriage with Yamauchi Setsuya was correspondingly based upon love and mutual affection, contrasting with Confucian thinking which emphasized duty and obedience in marriage, Ozawa 1957: 36f.

pation in a plot to assassinate the Emperor.<sup>412</sup> It was likewise a sign of Meiji elements in his historical understanding of Christianity, when he interpreted certain Japanese religions traditions, in particular those rooted in the Pure Land Buddhism of Honen and Shinran, as a *preparatio Evangelica*.<sup>413</sup>

The strong individual interest of the Yokohama tradition, offering esteem to personalities such as Hepburn, Brown and Ballagh,<sup>414</sup> and , the strong concern for the independence of the Church,<sup>415</sup> point to a varied historical concern with Meiji culture and society within a specific ecclesiastical context. As noticed in the previous chapter, particularly when the relationship between Christianity and Bushido was considered, there is ample room for various aspects of a Japanese, patriotic spirit in Uemura's interpretation of Christianity. Even when Uemura focused on missionary personalities, there is a strong Japanese sentiment permeating his evaluations of the understanding of Japan and the loyalty to Japan found by these missionaries.<sup>416</sup>

However, all these illustrations simultaneously convey the centrality of the Christian Church in Uemura's understanding of the past. In this tradition of thought the Meiji legacy is only found to be of concern when mediated through ecclesiastical structures and the Christian spirit.

This conviction of Uemura was in fact enforced by the pre-Barthian Takakura Tokutaro, who distinguished revelation and the realm of the Church from the realm of human religious experience and commitment.<sup>417</sup>

The remaining version of Protestant interpretations of the Meiji heritage is expressed within the Kumamoto/Doshisha tradition, which reflected a more definite alignment to the sociopolitical heritage of Meiji. Within this tradition there does not seem to be any serious experience of the *anomia* of the Meiji legacy, in other words of a contradiction between the emperor system on the one hand and democratic traditions on the other. For this brand of Protestantism both tendencies comprise a united, positive whole.<sup>418</sup> I will study what this means in terms of the interpretation of Meiji Protestantism in the Church History of Yamaji Aizan, and in the contributions of Ebina and his outstanding disciple in the field of political thought in this period, Yoshino Sakuzo. But first I return to the interpretation of Meiji Protestantism which was developed by

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<sup>412</sup> Supra 4.1.1.

<sup>413</sup> Supra 4.1.3.

<sup>414</sup> Supra 4.2.2.

<sup>415</sup> Cf Ibuka 1910b: 294 - 305.

<sup>416</sup> Cf Uemura 1909 on Brown, cf also material on J.C. Hepburn and Mrs Hepburn , Uemura 1905b and 1906.

<sup>417</sup> The following quotation illustrates the central and exclusive role of the Gospel in Takakura's understanding of Christian existence: "The Christian Church is built on Christ, as the flock of believers who exist for the purpose of following and practising His will. Christ as the head and the centre of the Church lives in the midst of it, extending the power of His atonement through the Gospel to its members." Takakura Zenshu Vol 9 p 734 quoted by Ono 1986a: 288.

<sup>418</sup> The principal of Doshisha, Harada Tasuku, makes a clear and pronounced statement on the Christian contribution from Japan to the ecumenical body of Christ as comprising respect of ancestors as well as veneration of the Emperor, Harada 1910b: 283 - 288. In his book *The Faith of Japan* 1914 he states: " Christians should study deeply the national spirit of Japan, and strive to do nothing wantonly to offend it, and especially cast no unsympathetic reflection upon the relation of the people to the Imperial House." Harada 1914: 183.

Yamamoto Teruhide, and who was brought up in the Yokohama band together with Uemura.<sup>419</sup>

#### 4.3.1.2 The Ecclesiastical Interpretation of Meiji Protestantism: Yamamoto Hideteru.

The book *Nihon Kirisuto Kyokaishi* by Yamamoto, which appeared at the end of our period, in 1929, is as already noted, a deliberate effort to write Japanese Church History. Though it mainly traces the history of the Presbyterian/Reformed *Nihon Kirisuto Kyokai* (Church of Christ in Japan), it also includes a wider perspective on Japanese Church History. Its ecclesiastical emphasis, congruent with the thought of the Uemura tradition, is evident in the structure of the book, where the periodization is based on development of the church organization,<sup>420</sup> and where special sections on pastors and other ecclesiastical workers,<sup>421</sup> clearly demonstrate an intimate concern for the church body.

Within this ecclesiastical general view, there are, however, certain characteristic features. It is first of all noteworthy that Yamamoto so clearly supported the ecumenical idea. The period of united Protestant efforts, the *kokai* era, is seen as the period of Protestant foundation. It is thus regarded as a significant period for the whole development of the Church in Japan.<sup>422</sup>

Yamamoto calls the foundation of a supra-denominational church at that time "a brilliant achievement".<sup>423</sup> In other contexts he also disclosed his ecumenical spirit. This is the case in a special chapter which he devoted to the 50th anniversary of the first Protestant church in Japan.<sup>424</sup>

Related to this issue is an interest in the factors which resulted in the failure of the attempt to merge Congregationalists and Presbyterians towards the end of the 1880s. Yamamoto provided some analysis of the reasons for the failure. Relating certain factors from the contemporary situation and the process of negotiations, Yamamoto saw the pressure from mission boards as a strong factor contributing to the negative outcome of the attempt.<sup>425</sup>

The *kokai* idea conceived in contrast to basic interests of denominational organizations in the West, pointed to another factor which Yamamoto illustrated in compliance with the Yokohama tradition; that was the concern for the independence of the local church. In the framework of Yamamoto's thought, however, this is particularly aired in those sections where he treated the relationships between Church and Missions.<sup>426</sup>

In compliance with the development of the Presbyterian trend of Meiji Protestantism, Yamamoto also gave attention to theological thought. Though some interest is shown in recording the tenets and the development of the Uchimura episode of 1891 and

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<sup>419</sup> On Yamamoto, cf supra 4.2.2.2, note 378.

<sup>420</sup> After the church foundation in 1872, came the *kokai* period. The church was then, an undivided, Protestant church. After the *kokai* period of 5 years the church was organized 1877 - 1890 as *Nihon Ichi Kyokai* (United Church in Japan). The reorganization in 1891 initiated a new period for the church, now renamed *Nihon Kirisuto Kyokai* (Church of Christ in Japan). This period extended to 1900. The following decade is seen as a period of expansion for *Nihon Kirisuto Kyokai*, Yamamoto 1929.

<sup>421</sup> Yamamoto 1929: 217ff, 311ff.

<sup>422</sup> Yamamoto 1929: 23 - 66.

<sup>423</sup> Yamamoto 1929: 38.

<sup>424</sup> Yamamoto 1929: 509 - 532.

<sup>425</sup> Yamamoto 1929: 119 - 121.

<sup>426</sup> Yamamoto 1929: 1ff, 162ff, 252 - 77.

the following debate, there is a stronger concern for the inner-church theological discussions, provoked by the confrontations between traditional Protestant thought and the so-called "New Theology". Here Yamamoto illustrates the influence upon Japanese theological thought from trends such as Unitarianism and the attitude represented by the *Allgemeine* as well as the impact of nationalism. The effects and consequences for the Church are assessed.<sup>427</sup>

Yamamoto shows a certain detachment from the situation of the 1890s and the first years of the 20th century. He does not just conform with the theological tradition of the Uemura tradition. Instead he stated that the influence of the New Theology was positive. It raised the theological consciousness of the Japanese Church.<sup>428</sup>

Though Yamamoto shared the theological presuppositions of Uemura, regarding him as one of the notable leaders in the confrontations with New Theology,<sup>429</sup> and characterizing him as an outstanding personality,<sup>430</sup> there was no disciple relationship between them. Yamamoto instead sees Uemura as one of his friends in the collective leadership of the Yokohama tradition.<sup>431</sup>

Though the main line of the Uemura tradition was maintained in his Ecclesiastical History, there are certain variations and new accents in his interpretation from 1929. It is particularly interesting to note that Yamamoto was deliberately more historical in his understanding of Christianity than Takakura. In this regard he made note of Yamaji's contribution.<sup>432</sup>

#### 4.3.1.3 The Social Interpretation of Meiji Protestantism: Yamaji Aizan.

The first Japanese interpretation of Meiji Protestantism which is a straightforward Church History was by Yamaji Aizan: *Gendai Nihon Kyokaishiron* (Treatise of Modern Japanese Church History), from 1906.<sup>433</sup> As already noted, the author originally came from the Yokohama tradition, but he aligned himself strongly with the modernist understanding of Christianity which evolved in the 1890s.

The background of Yamaji's reflections on modern Japanese Church History reminds one of the corresponding background of Yokoi when he produces his fragments of a Protestant history in 1894, *Wagakuni ni okeru Kirisutokyo no Mondai* (The Problem of Christianity in Our Country).<sup>434</sup> Like Yokoi, Yamaji also sensed a deep crisis in the relationship between Christianity and the people. Compared with the situation about a decade earlier, when Yokoi wrote this book and subsequently left the church, the crisis seems to have passed by the time Yamaji started his writing. He did not, however,

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<sup>427</sup> Yamamoto 1929: 195 - 216.

<sup>428</sup> Yamamoto 1929: 214 - 16.

<sup>429</sup> Yamamoto 1929: 215.

<sup>430</sup> Cf his introductory words to Saba 1937/76a, where Uemura is called *ijin* (out-standing person), Yamamoto 1937.

<sup>431</sup> Yamamoto 1929: 6 lists both of them as *sempai* (pioneers) among the church members, p 75 presents both of them as parallel graduates from the theological seminary. In the book there is no particular emphasis on the ecclesiastical or theological leadership of Uemura.

<sup>432</sup> Yamamoto even makes a postive mention of Yamaji's struggle against the New Theology, Yamamoto 1929: 215.

<sup>433</sup> Supra 4.2.2.2.

<sup>434</sup> Supra 3.2.2.1.1.

believe in the approach suggested by Uemura and Uchimura. These persons were just "defending their private castles".<sup>435</sup>

Yamaji was convinced that Christianity is an asset to Japan in social fields such as education,<sup>436</sup> and in various aspects of spiritual and material modernization.<sup>437</sup> However, he felt that Japanese Protestantism should apply the New Theology in a different way, as compared to Yokoi and the young Kanamori. This kind of new theology proved to be victorious nationally as well as internationally. In the Japanese churches he saw the trends at work e.g. in the Methodist journal *Gokyo* (Apologia), where the historical criticism of the Biblical traditions is an adopted principle, and in the liberal spirit of independence, which has freed the churches from missionary dominance. Particularly he sees the features of a new, progressive theology in the thoughts of Ebina Danjo.<sup>438</sup>

The double aspects of the Meiji heritage - its national reassertion as well as its open Western-oriented features - are harmoniously joined together in the thought of Yamaji. He saw Christianity in a Japanese perspective when he considered the "Awakening of the Japanese People". The section of the book, so entitled, shows that his understanding of Christianity was tied to indigenous developments in the country.<sup>439</sup> The Japanese perspective on Christian beginnings is also evident in his special concern for the conversion history of the Methodist bishop, Honda Yoichi, who also started in the Yokohama Band. Honda Yoichi illustrated the process of conversion through his natural development from Confucian and Wang Yang Ming thought to Christianity as an indigenous, Japanese identity.<sup>440</sup>

Yamaji is, however, not bound to a onesided, traditionalist school of thought. Looking at the trends of history, Yamaji saw that the "awakening" of the Japanese people has led to a progress in the life of the people,<sup>441</sup> and to economical growth.<sup>442</sup> He saw that this was connected to a trend of developing socialism and internationalism. And it is in this open minded, forward-oriented historical perspective that he also found the fascination of the Christian contribution to the Japanese people.

#### 4.3.1.4 Ebina Danjo and the Legacy of Meiji Christianity.

As already noted, Yamaji had a high regard for Ebina's theological contribution. To Ebina Danjo there was no basic *anomia* in the understanding of the Meiji heritage. He developed his views of Meiji Protestantism in a harmonious continuity with the double context of an openminded Western oriented and a nationally restricted dimension of the Restoration ideologies. In the following I will attempt to illustrate the dynamics of the comprehensive thought of Ebina, as he addressed himself to the interpretation of the characteristics and developments of Japanese Protestantism.

Ebina, expressed his ideas as a pastor - in our period mainly in the Congregational Church of Hongo, Tokyo - and as a writer in his own theological journal *Shinjin* (New

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<sup>435</sup> Yamaji 1906: 8 - 19.

<sup>436</sup> Yamaji 1906: 30 - 49.

<sup>437</sup> Yamaji 1906: 8 - 20.

<sup>438</sup> Yamaji 1906: 114 - 21.

<sup>439</sup> Yamaji 1906: 8 - 16.

<sup>440</sup> Yamaji 1906: 22 - 24.

<sup>441</sup> Yamaji 1906: 111.

<sup>442</sup> Yamaji 1906: 112.

Person). He had moved from a Confucian background into Christian faith while a student at the Kumamoto School of Western learning.<sup>443</sup> From his early Christian commitment, which focused on the Lordship of Christ to whom he had offered his allegiance, he later came to focus on the Father image of God, as this was revealed through the words, acts and personality of Christ.<sup>444</sup> Having expressed this view in the famous Christological controversy with Uemura in 1901 - 02, Ebina maintained his conviction in subsequent years, though he applies his theological understanding to new issues. In particular his theology of religion and his social thought are notable achievements. In both fields he inspired people to further carry out his intentions.

Ebina maintained that the capability of human beings could, due to an innate possession of a divine spark, develop through conscience and an understanding of God into a Christlike divine character. He saw many points of contact between his Christian faith and the Japanese religious world. In particular, in the environment of his days, Ebina was concerned with Shinto traditions which in a special way through the so called "Revival Shinto", based on the thoughts of the Shinto revivalists Motoōri and Hirata, were basic to the Meiji Restoration.<sup>445</sup>

"Revival Shinto", as interpreted by these Shinto thinkers, idealized original Shinto, which was interpreted in monotheistic terms. According to views maintained in the "Revival Shinto", one of the gods from the early Shinto Pantheon, *Amenominakanushi* (The Lord in the Middle of Heaven), was ascribed an especially central function as the one around which other divinities converged. Ebina related to one version of this Shinto modernism. He identified *Amenominakanushi* with the Christian God, thus expressing a continuity between Christian revelation and Shinto traditions.<sup>446</sup> As will be illustrated later on, this view of Ebina was carried on in the so called "Japanese Theology" after the 1930s.

However, Ebina's theological thoughts were also applied to the political field. Though Ebina himself neither considered himself a politician nor took an active part in political life, he was deeply involved in political thought. Based upon the high view of human beings as embodying a divine spark and being children of the divine Father, he developed an understanding of human beings as equal and disregarded social and economic status. Committed to such a personalist view, he evolved as a strong spokesman for democracy, in particular during the Taisho period. To Ebina, democracy was a necessary consequence of Christianity, and democracy without a Christian foundation was considered by him an impossibility.<sup>447</sup>

In the latter respect Ebina differed from Uemura and Uchimura, who took a more negative attitude to social systems as valid expressions of Christianity. However, as earlier mentioned, a disciple of his, Yoshino Sakuzo, developed a pronounced system of

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<sup>443</sup> Supra 2.2.2.1.

<sup>444</sup> Supra 2.2.3.3.2.

<sup>445</sup> Supra 2.1.1.2.

<sup>446</sup> The identification between the Christian God and a monotheistic interpretation of Japanese Shinto is brought out by Iwai 1973: 197ff. For a further discussion of the relationship between Shinto and Christianity in Ebina's thought, cf pp 210 - 220.

<sup>447</sup> Yoshinare Akiko explains a line of development in Ebina's thought from an individual emphasis to a national concern. The latter takes priority around 1905. Historical particularity of Christianity also gets weaker, whilst the universal aspects gain in importance. Ebina's concept of God was spiritual: God is the spirit of the living universe; Yoshinare 1982: 6f.

On these presuppositions, however, Ebina firmly maintained a Christian foundation as necessary for the development of democracy, Ono 1986b: 235f.

Christian social thought on the basis of Ebina's theology.<sup>448</sup> These two trends in Ebina's thought, a traditionalist, and a democratic, which reflected the twofold aspect of the Meiji legacy, were held together in a harmonious unity. Ebina maintained the same basic position as Yamaji, who combined nationalism and progressive thought. Ebina wrote in an article which is addressed to a Western public, that it "is unfair to think that the cultural heritage is limited only to yamato-damashii or to Bushido". He also said that "modern Japan is to be found neither in the part which is being Europeanized or Americanized, nor in that which stems from her national past".<sup>449</sup> Then he brought out a future oriented viewpoint: "The Japanese are a people who have always looked to the present and the future for real values, material or spiritual"<sup>450</sup>

#### 4.3.1.5 Conclusion.

With the comments on Ebina, I close this section on Japanese interpretations of Meiji Protestantism from the transition period. The Christian relationship to the legacy of the Meiji Era is conceived here in optimistic terms of social concern. This perspective was applied in a more specific way to historical developments by Yamaji. His view of Japanese Church History contrasts to the ecclesiastical interpretations of the Uemura tradition, in particular as developed by the pre-Barthian Takakura, but also by the Church Historian Yamamoto. It also deviates from the more a-historical view of Protestant relationships which Uchimura represents. Both of these two last mentioned types of interpretations have at this time a more reserved attitude to Christian relationships with the social heritage of the Meiji Era.

I now move on to the Western interpretations from this period, which show a different pattern of concern and interpretation of Meiji Protestantism.

#### 4.3.2 Western Interpretations.

##### 4.3.2.1 Classical Mission History reinforced.

Western interpretations are even less concerned with the relationship between the Japanese Protestant community and Meiji Protestantism than the predominant Japanese traditions. The connections to mission circles and the supporting milieus in the West provided the dominant background for their writings. Though a polarization of the missionary movement was noted in the introduction, the basic spirit in the missionary milieus is still inspired by missionary optimism. "Opportunity and urgency" were the words used in order to characterize the carrying of the Gospel to the Non-Christian World in the Edinburgh Missionary Conference of 1910.<sup>451</sup>

The great achievement in mission history on the western side from this period is Otis Cary's *A History of Christianity in Japan*, which was published in 1909.<sup>452</sup> Tuning in well with the optimistic trend of missionary thinking, and subordinated under the

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<sup>448</sup> Dohi Akeo: *Taisho Demokurashiiki ni okeru Kirisutosha no Seijiron* (Christian Political Thought in the Period of Taisho Democracy) from the magazine *Kirisutokyo Shakaimondai Kenkyu*, no.13: 20, quoted by Ono 1986: 236.

<sup>449</sup> Ebina in Stauffer (ed) 1927: 13.

<sup>450</sup> Ebina 1927: 13f.

<sup>451</sup> World Missionary Conference Edinburgh 1910a: 5ff.

<sup>452</sup> Supra 4.2.3.1.

pronounced aim of creating support for the missionary cause,<sup>453</sup> the book ties in well with the main thrust of mission history from the previous decades.

The ideas of **continuity** and **expansion**, identified in the last chapter, are retained and accentuated. Cary, thus, writes about missions, their arrival in Japan, their conferences, illustrated through correspondence and documents. The continuity he is concerned with, is however, processes, events, acts and organizations, rather than the achievements of individuals. These processes are also seen as Western processes of mission developing on Japanese soil. The scene where these processes take place provide conflicting encounters. There are **"Japanese arguments against Christianity"**<sup>454</sup> and in general a dominating idea of warfare or siege. Against this background, the dynamics of expansion become even more visible. The historical movement is expressed in chapter headings, from **"Waiting before Closed Gates"** to **"Opening of the Gates"**, leading to **"Establishment of Missions in Japan"**, **"Ploughing and Seedsowing"**, **"Rapid ..."** and later **"Retarded Growth"**; these headings illustrate how expansion is a basic approach to the structuring of events.<sup>455</sup>

Japanese initiatives and independent educational developments are not observed as something in its own right. These initiatives in their various forms are nothing but aspects of the greater Christian Movement. The consciousness of a particular Japanese development is not there. In the encounter with opposition, in the conflicts with the non-Christian ideas, Christianity is expanding and extending; the entity of the "young church", however, is not particularly emphasized.<sup>456</sup>

For this all-embracing Christianity, which transcends nations and cultures, national movements enter as something strange and distracting. Cary neither appreciates **"New Theology"** nor the nationalist movements in the church. The **"New Theology"**, appearing as a result of these various movements, is **"chilling to faith"**.<sup>457</sup> He is, however, aware of his Western perspective, feeling its insufficiency, and welcomes Japanese perspectives to complete the view of what is happening in early Japanese Protestantism.<sup>458</sup>

Much of the Western material follows the emphasis by Cary in reaffirming the basic ideas of the Western, missionary movement. This is not least the case with a number of articles appearing in various Western missionary journals in connection with the half-centenary of the Protestant arrival in Japan.<sup>459</sup> The American Board, arriving a decade after the pioneers, similarly printed in 1919 a review of past years, entitled **Fragments of Fifty Years**, where a missionary perspective on the Protestant History in Japan is eloquently presented. Though the presentation showed a positive and open appreciation of the Japanese concern for ecclesiastical independence, the following quotation illustrates some of the problems for contemporary mission workers:

**"It was indeed hard to bear with patience some of the things that were said ... Sometimes ... the wounds were deep and caused great personal suffering ... sleepless nights and broken health were among the experiences that came to more than one member of the mission".**<sup>460</sup>

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<sup>453</sup> Supra 4.2.3.1, note 395.

<sup>454</sup> Cary 1909/76b: 89ff.

<sup>455</sup> Cary 1909/76b: 9 (periodization).

<sup>456</sup> Cary 1909/76b: 9.

<sup>457</sup> Cary 1909/76b: 216.

<sup>458</sup> Cary 1909/76b: 5f.

<sup>459</sup> Imbrie 1909, Brain 1909, Bowen 1909 and Davis 1909.

<sup>460</sup> American Board 1919: 40.

Western biographical literature tended to enforce traditional views on Mission history. This applied to some of the articles already referred to in connection with the jubilee of 1909.<sup>461</sup> It also applied to an interpretation of Nijima Jo in the German periodical *Allgemeine Missions Zeitschrift*, where the American connections of Nijima are underlined,<sup>462</sup> and also to books, particularly to the biography of Jerome D. Davis.<sup>463</sup>

#### 4.3.2.2 Increasing Concern for Indigenous Initiatives.

The 1890s left their vestiges also on Western thinking about Japanese Protestant history. The perspective on indigenous developments and Japanese initiatives is in an incipient form, to a larger or lesser degree part of the interpretations from the 1890s. That tendency is reinforced during this period.

Japanese initiatives were co-ordinated with Western initiatives in a more theological view of the development of the church or in the general perspectives on the World church.<sup>464</sup> Or they may be more directly singled out as specific Japanese achievements, thus, to a greater extent giving room for Japanese initiatives distinct from the Western ones. I point to two articles in the *Japan Christian Quarterly* which illustrate this issue.<sup>465</sup> In one of these articles,<sup>466</sup> called "The Present Accomplishment - What the Missionaries have done", the point is made that the main accomplishments were performed by indigenous workers. Somewhat different from Cary, other Congregationalist missionaries are more positively open to and appreciative of Japanese initiatives, and even of movements for ecclesiastical independence. D.C. Greene should be counted among those missionaries.<sup>467</sup>

Interestingly enough, some of the most notable Western efforts which were confronted with genuine Japanese Protestantism come from non-missionaries. It is thus significant that the Danish Church leader, Skovgaard-Petersen in 1919 published a number of portraits of Japanese Protestant leaders, in which he allowed them to speak for themselves. Among the portrayed personalities were Ebina, Kozaki and Uemura.<sup>468</sup> In a more qualified sense, presentations of Japanese personalities by the American Church leaders Stauffer and Robert Speer need to be mentioned.

In his presentation of Japanese Christians, Stauffer wrote in the introduction to *Japan Speaks for Herself*: "The present generation in North America is no longer willing

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<sup>461</sup> Articles on Verbeck in Bowen 1909: 497ff; a Dane Rafn 1916; and Wyckoff 1909: 1 - 18. Brown is portrayed in Bowen 1909. In the collection of personal portraits published in Wyckoff 1909, he is portrayed by Winn 1909: 34ff. Hepburn is similarly portrayed by Thompson in Wyckoff 1909: 34ff.

<sup>462</sup> Schlunk 1908.

<sup>463</sup> The biography of Rev. Jerome D. Davis, Davis 1916, commands special interest due to the perspective it offers into the formative events of early Japanese Protestantism, *supra* 4.2.3.1. The material selected as well as the purpose of the publication, however, enforce the tenets of traditional mission history.

<sup>464</sup> Examples are provided by the representative Church history by Cary 1909; and also by other contributions such as the talk by Imbrie given at the Protestant Jubilee in Tokyo 1909, Imbrie 1909: 757. Cf also Imbrie 1914; a study on Church unity in Japan.

<sup>465</sup> S.H. Wainright 1926, and D.S. Spencer 1926.

<sup>466</sup> Spencer 1926.

<sup>467</sup> Greene 1906b.

<sup>468</sup> Skovgaard-Petersen 1919. Cf also Wyckoff 1909 and a Swedish Account by Wikander 1910.

to depend entirely on the foreign missionary for its understanding of Christian movements in the so called mission fields ... the young people of our North American Churches and Colleges find themselves sympathetic toward the national and racial aspirations of other peoples." <sup>469</sup>

Though the article deals directly with the interpretations of Meiji Protestantism, it demonstrates that a new perspective and a fresh recognition of indigenous viewpoints are on their way.

This attitude is further developed by Robert Speer in his foreword to the English translation of Kanamori Tsurin's famous *Three Hour Sermon*). <sup>470</sup> The sermon itself is of interest as it reveals how the speaker relates to the period when his conversion took place. In this section of our investigation, however, the relevant point is that there was a genuine Western concern for Japanese aspects of the Protestant beginnings in Japan, as expressed in Speer's introduction.

As I have already identified, there was a trend in Western reflections on Japanese Protestantism which led from purely historical interpretations to missiological reflections. Western appreciation and understanding of indigenous, Japanese, Protestant initiatives seemed to have increased with the growth of this trend. I will go on and consider the evaluations of Japanese initiatives in this type of Western works.

#### 4.3.2.3 A Wider Missiological Approach to Meiji Protestantism.

The theological pluralism in the west which began to question the dominating missionary optimism, missionary experiences in Japan during the period of patriotic self-assertion, and reflections on the Japanese modernization process, are all evident in this wider missiological approach.

The painful missionary experience during the period of Japanese self-assertion in the 1890ies leads to new reflections on Christianity as a World Religion. Confessional or denominational aspects were emphasized.

However, these strong experiences from the 1890s together with frustrated expectations about the successful evangelization of Japan by the close of the 19th century, also led to self critical reflections within missionary circles. The book *Christ and Japan* by Murau and Walton, <sup>471</sup> which reflected on the *raison d'être* of Christian mission in Japan and expressed apologetic general views, certainly reflected a revision of the missionary optimism of the day. Although the conclusion was that mission should be maintained, the fact was considered in a self-critical mood. Similarly, critical concerns can be detected in articles where the missionary community listed the achievements through the years of Protestant work in Japan. <sup>472</sup>

In this connection I will also mention the Interpretative Account by the French historian Raul Allier, published in 1908, where he raised the question of whether there really is a Japanese Protestant Christianity. To Allier, the answer to this question tended to lean towards the negative. <sup>473</sup>

Within other contributions from the European, continental trend of thought, two Interpretative Accounts convey somewhat other accents. The contribution of Witte, the Missionsinspector of *Allgemeine*, whose aim included an apology for the policies of this mission, focused on wide cultural perspectives in his assessment of Japanese Protestantism. He is, however, not specifically occupied with questions concerning Japanese initiatives and the indigenization of Christianity in Japan. There is, though, a general interest

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<sup>469</sup> Stauffer 1927: Preface p. xiii.

<sup>470</sup> Supra 4.2.2.

<sup>471</sup> Murau/Walton 1928, supra 4.2.3 note 311.

<sup>472</sup> Spencer 1926 and Wainright 1926.

<sup>473</sup> Allier 1908: 211ff.

in Japanese culture, and a concern that Christianity should come into a real encounter with this culture. Christianity was also seen as a necessity for the fulfilment of Asiatic cultures. <sup>474</sup>

Witte relates to the modernization policy of Meiji, which he thought superficial.<sup>475</sup> Generally the basic relationship between the Christian culture of the West and the indigenous cultures of the East is one of conflict, as the book alludes to through its title: *Das Ringen Zweier Weltkulturen*. The personality oriented culture which has developed in accordance with Christian influences upon Western culture is, according to Witte, supposed to replace the pantheistic, impersonal culture from the East. <sup>476</sup>

The Swedish missiologist Lindeberg, in certain issues has a standpoint similar to that of Witte. Writing his thesis on the background of a continental debate on mission in Japan, he sided with *Allgemeine* in the discussion on missionary methods. <sup>477</sup>

However, Lindeberg is clearly committed to a traditional missionary ideology. He does not show any particular interest in the Japanese movements to rid themselves of missionary dominance. He is instead critical of the emergence of certain national trends in theology, particularly in the critical form it has taken by Yokoi. Lindeberg maintains that missionary leadership should have lasted longer than what was the case in the Congregational churches. <sup>478</sup> He is also interested in the continuation of mission from Western societies, and thus in a continuing mission history. <sup>479</sup>

But to another extent than Witte, Lindeberg is interested in what he called the sound development of the local churches in Japan. Here he envisaged the development of an independent, Japanese Christianity. <sup>480</sup> His position is in fact closer to that of Uemura. He also recognized the contribution of the methodist leader, Bishop Honda Yoichi. <sup>481</sup>

An interpretation of Japanese Protestant history largely relating to *Volkscharakter*, psychological and social characteristics of the Japanese People, also strengthened his understanding of a genuine Japanese development of Protestantism.

These tendencies in the thought of Lindeberg, markedly point out the missiological thought prevailing at the World Missionary Conference in Jerusalem 1928, which reflected the concern for local initiatives and local churches, although maintaining a traditional structure of missionary thinking.

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<sup>474</sup> Witte 1914: 47ff.

<sup>475</sup> Im grossen aber achtete man ... selbst gar nicht so sehr auf das Eindringen dieser geistigen Mächte Europas ... Man begährte mehr westländische Zivilisation als westländische Kultur ... Witte 1914: 49.

<sup>476</sup> Diese Persönlichkeitskultur, die aus dem Gottgeschenk die Grundidee des Christentums erwachsen ist, ist der Weg des höchsten Vollendung des Menschenlebens und der Welt. Witte 1914: 47.

<sup>477</sup> Lindeberg 1918: 112 - 118.

<sup>478</sup> Lindeberg 1918: 106 - 108.

<sup>479</sup> Lindeberg 1918: 237 - 240.

<sup>480</sup> "In future, a number of independent national churches should appear in Japan, to some degree influenced by the Western denominations which stand behind their formation. These national churches will on the whole be of a particular Japanese type and in various ways provide what people must demand from a church, in order that it may express the essence of Christianity". (Translated from the Swedish text), Lindeberg 1918: 220.

<sup>481</sup> Lindeberg 1918: 110ff.

#### 4.3.3 Concluding Comparison between Japanese and Western Interpretations.

Already through the genre-analysis, certain differences between the structures of Japanese and Western material from this period appeared. I found that there was a continued Western concern for mission history, a concern which increasingly emphasized Japanese initiatives. These findings are supported by the content analysis. The themes of continuity and expansion, which were the overarching perspectives from the period of Protestant Beginnings in Japan, thus, evolved new emphases. In particular local initiatives are given greater attention.

The investigation has also demonstrated a growing Japanese interest in historical interpretations of Meiji Protestantism. Concrete interpretations which emerge out of the Japanese milieu display decisive variations. These range from a notable a-historical interpretation in Non-Church circles via a predominantly ecclesiastical concern represented by the Uemura tradition, to the Ebina tradition with its social concern. The Ebina tradition related positively to Meiji Protestantism, but tended to overlook a possible *anomia* of the Meiji Restoration.

There is no substantial Western parallel to this Japanese variety of interpretation, as Western concern with contemporary relationships to the legacy of Meiji Protestantism during this period is peripheral. The variation in Western interpretations of the period are determined by the Western environment, with its social, theological and ecclesiastical components.

Differences of environment as well as variations in interpretative attitudes to Meiji Protestantism among Western and Japanese analysts thus increase during this period of transition. A primary reason for this on the Japanese side is a growing independence and maturity of Japanese scholars and church leaders in matters related to historical identity. From 1929 they face new challenges. This leads to continued reflections on Meiji Protestantism in a radically new framework.

## CHAPTER 5: REFLECTIONS ON MEIJI PROTESTANTISM FROM THE "DARK YEARS" 1930 - 1945.

### Introduction.

The economic and political conflicts which started in 1929 led to profound changes in the Government of Japan, which from 1926 had entered the so called Showa Era. Showa means "Bright Peace". The modernizing dynamics in the legacy of the Meiji Reformers were seriously challenged and were immediately subordinated to the role of the Emperor. The power of the centralized institutions were reinforced and the supreme status of the Emperor was highlighted. Through this structure, the military forces gradually attained full control of political life in Japan.

Having achieved military victory over Russia in 1905 and having been the major factor behind Japan's subsequent expansive policies in Eastern Asia, the military forces were held in high repute in Nationalistic Japan. By linking their claims for power to the reinforcement of the role of the Emperor, they were able to claim to be the true stewards of the heritage from the Meiji Restoration.

From 1936 developments rapidly led to Japan's war with China in 1939 and the air raid on Pearl Harbour on December 7th 1941. Japan had increasingly become involved in Manchuria, and from 1931 events led to the Japanese annexation of the country. As a result of these developments, the relationship with China rapidly deteriorated.

The achievements of the armed forces helped to undergird the popular support of the military regime and its continued expansionist policies during the Second World War, which ultimately led to the devastating nuclear bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and subsequent surrender to the Allied forces on August 14th 1945.

Opposition against the military government from 1930 onwards was given limited opportunities for any significant political dissent. It was not until 1945 that a real critique of the militarist development could be voiced. This critique became at times exceedingly sharp, implying a serious questioning of the very legacy of the Meiji Restoration.

Being seriously concerned with Japaneseness and self-reliance, Protestant churches were caught in a crisis of conscience. As patriotic religious movements they shared the sense of a Japanese mission in the ongoing international, historical turmoil. They subscribed to a social ethic which demanded loyalty to the Emperor. However, they also aligned themselves with the democratic and modernizing forces from the time of the Meiji Restoration, and they did not identify fully and wholeheartedly with all aspects of the military interpretation of the Meiji legacy. As Uchimura had done, his Non-church Movement deliberately expressed a critique of the military system and its implications. Conservative evangelical Holiness Churches, too, disassociated themselves from attempts within the Mainstream Protestant traditions, to conform to national unifying measures which were in accordance with the religious policy of the Government.

The question of what exactly was the legacy of the Meiji reforms, and who were the true heirs of this Reform, was a significant issue from the 1930s until the end of the war in Japan. It involved Japanese theologians and historians in a profound search for the relevance of their faith in a new and tense national situation.

It is characteristic that the Japanese material on Meiji Protestantism abounds during this period, whereas the Western material is rather scarce. My preoccupation in this chapter is the Japanese and the Western material from the militarist take over in 1930 until the end of World War II. I follow the same structure of analysis as in the two previous chapters, beginning - as in the last chapter - with a brief sketch of the historical milieu out of which the relevant material emerges.

### 5.1 HISTORICAL MILIEU: 1930 - 1945.

#### 5.1.1 Reasons for the Military Take Over.

As stated above, 1930 signifies the beginning of a militarist period in the country. The period lasted until the crushing defeat of Japan in 1945.

How did this military period develop? One of the presuppositions is found in Japanese governmental mechanisms. Organs of Japanese social and national organization were symbolically subordinated to the emperor. There was, however, no clear division of powers between parliament, government, the financial organizations, and the military forces. The latter were directly subordinated to the Emperor, which meant that they had a capacity for independent action. Only as long as the state was governed by the Meiji oligarchs, the interplay between the forces functioned in a united way. By the time the Meiji *genro* (political pioneers) had passed away and around 1930 the peaceful post Meiji democracy and liberalism became challenged. A severe power struggle became evident, and this reflected the unsettled question of where the apex of Japanese national power lay.

The dynamics of the historical process from 1920 leading up to the military period, was further generated through the crisis in the international economy around 1930, and through particularities in Japanese financial developments. The depression in 1929 created a major problem for Japanese economy, with the value of Japanese exports dropping sharply. From 1929 to 1931 it dropped by 50%. In international trade-oriented Japanese production this influenced workers' income, as well as the more nationally oriented rice-based economy of the countryside.

Then the rice-economy as well was shaken. An over-production of rice in 1930 pushed rice prices well below production costs. As the rice-crop of 1931 was a drastic failure, the financial situation of all levels of the society was alarming. Urban workers income fell from 1926 to 1931 by one third. Farmers were even worse off. Rural cash income fell during the same period by two thirds.<sup>482</sup>

The severity of the crisis was reflected in a strong growth in new religious movements, such as Tenrikyo, Omotokyo and Reiyukai. The political blame for the disastrous events was turned towards the political parties. When the parties came to grips with the problems towards the end of the thirties, it was already too late. The military forces by 1936 had already by 1936 established their position as the unchallenged and unchecked power of the country.<sup>483</sup>

The road to the military take over was determined by developments abroad as well as in Japan. Japanese expansion from the 1890s when Taiwan was annexed and the further gains in the victorious war with Russia 1904 - 05 had gradually strengthened the power of the military forces. In Manchuria Japanese military involvement was particularly strong, though the country officially was governed by China until 1930.

In 1931, a clandestine act of sabotage against the Manchurian railway line, gave the Japanese military leaders a pretext for military action. The incident led to the declaration of an "independent" Manchuria in 1932, in other words a Japanese annexation of the Chinese province. This and other independent acts by the Japanese military leaders were finally, after reluctance and resistance, accepted by parliament.

Parallel with this uncontrolled foreign expansion, there was political turmoil within the country. Though the political parties were working hard to solve the financial problems, the economic situation of the 1930s had created unrest. A radical rightist faction, dominated by army and navy officers, and other "patriotic" societies created fear and uncertainty; several democratic leaders were assassinated. In 1932 the Prime Minister was assassinated and the headquarters of the political party Seiyukai, Tokyo Police Headquarters, the Bank of Japan and other official residences were raided. On February 26th 1936, a rebellion by rightist officers broke out. It was finally subdued by the established leadership. This incident contributed to a firm establishment of military leadership and led to a further suppression of leftist and liberal groups.<sup>484</sup>

Though elections in the years 1930, 1932 and 1936 increasingly gave a majority to anti-government parties - in 1936 with 354 seats over against about 40 - this was not

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<sup>482</sup> Reischauer 1978: 245.

<sup>483</sup> Reischauer 1978: 245 - 7.

<sup>484</sup> Among the suppressed institutions were the liberal, educational schools of Hani Motoko, *supra* 4.1.2, note 254.

sufficient to counter the increasing role of the army in government and the policies of foreign, military expansion.

### 5.1.2 The Road to War and Military Defeat.

The long history of the Japanese military presence in Manchuria had created the feeling of a Japanese moral obligation to protect its imperial rights there. On the other hand, growing Chinese nationalism had fostered the view in China that Japan's advances on the Asian continent were but plain aggression. Tensions increased and a mutual military buildup resulted in a full scale war with China in 1939.

The United States also felt its position threatened by Japanese advances in Asia and they tried to curb and hinder Japanese expansion. When Japan made a sudden and devastating attack on the US fleet in Pearl Harbour on Dec 7th 1941, war was a reality.<sup>485</sup>

The development of the war cannot occupy us here. It is sufficient to recall that Japanese advances continued until the middle of 1942. Japan then controlled an imperium consisting of great areas of the east Asian mainland from Korea and Manchuria to Indo China, as well as the Philippines, Indonesia and Taiwan. For the subsequent two years, Japan tried to consolidate its empire. With increasing US air-power, however, it became impossible for Japan to protect the connections to its colonies. The bombing of Japanese industries worsened. On the terrible day of May 10th 1945 not less than 100.000 civilians were killed. The unconditional surrender to allied forces took place on August 14th 1945. Peace was obtained, but not on Japanese conditions.<sup>486</sup>

### 5.1.3 The Western Milieu 1930 - 1945.

Let us after this brief look on the developments in Japan take a view of the situation in the Western countries.

In Germany, developments paralleled those in Japan. From the mid-30s processes accelerated towards a fascist state, which in 1940 became involved in a fully-fledged world war. The other Great Powers of the West tried to avoid a military confrontation with the Hitler regime, while mounting criticism of Nazi-ideology gradually became dominant in Western countries. In the churches there were thus strong criticisms of totalitarian systems towards the end of the 1930s. The Life and Work conference in Oxford 1937 and the World Missionary Conference in Tambaram taking place the following year, are evidences of this.<sup>487</sup>

Western theological milieus were in the 1930ies increasingly influenced by Karl Barth. Barth's thinking led to trends of "neo-orthodoxy" and "realistic theology" where the dialectical tensions between divine revelation and the human world were stressed. This led to increased emphasis on ecclesiastical identity over-against fascist tendencies of the ecclesiastical level. It also led to a shift of interest from historical pursuits within the theological realm to ecclesiology and normative missiology. Confronting Non-Christian religions these accents led to, as voiced above by Hendrik Kraemer, an attitude of accurate and detailed analysis of the religious situation, combined with an uncompromising "position of the Christian Church as a witnessing body in the modern world".<sup>488</sup>

If we take a step further and look at how this spiritual situation influenced missionary relationships with Japan, there are several important references to make. First

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<sup>485</sup> Reischauer 1978: 247 - 53.

<sup>486</sup> Reischauer 1978: 255 - 67.

<sup>487</sup> Cf Bloch-Hoell 1976: 39 and Christensen/Göransson 1976: 534f where short descriptions of the conference in Oxford 1937 are given. As to the Tambaram conference Kraemer 1938 provides evidence for the confrontation with totalitarian systems.

<sup>488</sup> Kraemer 1938: p. v

of all, in her imperialistic advances on the Asian mainland, Japan had little sympathy in the West, with the exceptions of certain German milieus. Most sympathies were with China. Secondly there was scepticism towards the autocratic developments of the Japanese Government. It led to a lack of concern for Japanese developments or to a negative attitude to them. In church circles the discussions at the Third World Missio-nary Conference in Tambaram 1938 are evidence of this. The theology voiced by Kraemer especially turned sharply against the religious policies of the Japanese state.<sup>489</sup>

#### 5.1.4 Japanese Churches and Theology in the National Turmoil.

Within the Protestant minority in Japan there were in certain ways a return to the situation of the mid-Meiji era. The early parts of the 1930s were, like mid- and early Meiji, a period where evangelism and social concern joined hands. This is significantly present in the "Kingdom of God Movement", which was led by the evangelical preacher and social activist Kagawa Toyohiko. After having worked closely with socialist move-ments and the co-operative movement in the 1920s, he turned more to church activities towards 1930. The Kingdom of God Movement was based upon a social creed adopted by the NCC in 1928. This social creed carried on the social concerns from the years prior to 1890 in Japanese Protestantism, a concern which was reinforced by the mounting social problems from about 1930. At the same time the movement was a soul-winning campaign.

Another feature, expressed by the movement, and also a reminder of early and mid-Meiji Protestantism, was the tendency to ecclesiastical unity and co-operation among social organizations. Various types of co-operation had taken place, since the NCC had been organized in 1922. In 1930 there was a merger between the Congregationalist Church and the **The Church of Christ in Japan**. Joint services between various ecclesias-tical bodies became commonplace during these years.<sup>490</sup>

A third feature which is reminiscent of Meiji Protestantism was not only a parallel feature to socio-evangelical and ecumenical trends, but had to do with their very roots. This was the national spirit. Gradually the motivations of ecumenism became strongly related to the promotion of the national cause. In 1937 the NCC established an office to co-ordinate the work for the imperial military forces. When the war deteriorated in the 1940s, joint services and prayers for victory became commonplace. Churches also joined in campaigns to counter the spread of Communism.<sup>491</sup>

When the war effort of the state demanded a unified nation, state relationships with and concerns for the church increased. A **Shukyo Dantai Ho** (Religious Bodies Law)<sup>492</sup> had been repeatedly proposed in 1897, 1927 and 1935. It had, however, been met with protests from united Christian groups and had not passed the legislative assemblies. In 1939, however, a Religious Bodies Law passed the Diet. One aspect of this law was a long cherished wish of the Government to define Shinto legally as non-religious, subse-quently opening Shinto rites for participation on a compulsory, nationwide basis, without infringing the clauses of religious freedom as expressed in the constitution. This opened avenues for a state-propaganda based on a national mythology and traditional rituals. The idea of a non-religious understanding of Shinto, which had its roots in early Meiji, was now a legal reality with which the churches had to cope.<sup>493</sup>

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<sup>489</sup> "the religious nationalism of present Japan pursues its totalitarian ideal with much greater relentlessness than was the case with the Roman Empire". Kraemer 1938: 395.

<sup>490</sup> The development of Japanese ecumenism in the years up to 1930 is treated by Ouchi 1970: 466 - 481.

<sup>491</sup> Cf Dohi: 55 - 59, Ono 1986b: 168 - 177.

<sup>492</sup> Ono 1986b: 83ff.

<sup>493</sup> Cf Ouchi 1970: 567f.

Another aspect of the law was ecumenically crucial, as it demanded that religious groups be organized in larger units, comprising of a minimum of 5000 members, in order to obtain recognition by the Department of Education. Failing to obtain this recognition, churches were liable to suffer persecution from the local police.<sup>494</sup>

As to why the churches at this time yielded to pressure, accepting a Religious Bodies Law with these religious and organizational implications, it is noted that at this time there was a stagnation in evangelization and other church work. For the people, the images of Christianity as the "evil religion" were coming to the surface again, and the democratic background which was still alive up to 1929 had been replaced with a fear of leftist movements.<sup>495</sup>

There is also an inner church development, particularly related to church unity. There had been a development towards Church unity during the latter decades, and the ideal of a united church had survived in the Protestant consciousness.<sup>496</sup> There is, however, little reason to doubt the strong element of outward pressure as the chief reason for the formation of the unified, Protestant Church *Nihon Kirisuto Kyodan* (United Church of Christ) which was accepted and adopted by most Protestant bodies in 1941.<sup>497</sup>

About 20% of Japanese Protestants remained outside the United Church of Christ of 1941.<sup>498</sup> Chief among these were the majority of the Episcopal churches, the Holiness churches and the Seventh Day Adventists. The Non-Church Movement was unorganized and for this movement the law was irrelevant, apart from the inconveniences, mounting to persecution, which individual Christians might suffer from the local police.<sup>499</sup>

Pressures on the churches did not culminate with this law. During the Pacific war, all churches were enforced to perform a "Peoples Rite" common to all gatherings, in which a bow towards the Imperial Palace, the singing of the National Anthem, and reading from Imperial rescripts were included. There was even theological pressure leading to a revision of hymns where too forthright references to God as judge or creator were eliminated. The pressure took various forms in different spheres, and questionnaires to pastors about the relationship between Shinto mythology and Christian beliefs circulated. Christians were also requested to participate in the upkeep of local Shinto shrines etc. Towards the end of the war, the representative of the *Nihon Kirisuto Kyodan* was requested to rewrite the doctrine of the resurrection of Christ and to make a provision that the Emperor should not be seen as subordinated to God. These two demands were flatly refused by the representative of The United Church. The question remained unsolved when Japan capitulated in 1945.

The Mainstream Churches co-operated with the Government in the thirties and forties in various ways. Japanese pastors and Church leaders were sent to visit churches

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<sup>494</sup> Ouchi 1970: 567ff.

<sup>495</sup> Ono 1986b: 89 - 91.

<sup>496</sup> Although Miyakoda Tsunetaro admits that the Protestant unification through *Nihon Kirisuto Kyodan* neither is complete nor ideal, he maintains that "with the birth of *Nihon Kirisuto Kyodan*, Japanese Protestantism has attained the goal it cherished from its very start." Miyakoda 1967: 4f.

<sup>497</sup> See Dohi: 56f, Ouchi 1970: 561 - 578, Ono 1986b: 65 - 134.

<sup>498</sup> Ono 1986b: 138.

<sup>499</sup> One famous disciple of Uchimura Kanzo, professor at Tokyo Imperial University, Yanaihara Tadao (1893 - 1961) exemplifies the persecution. He was forced to quit his teaching position 1937, due to his sharp criticism of Japanese militarism. Cf Ouchi 1970: 596 - 600.

On the persecution of Christian groups outside *Nihon Kirisuto Kyodan*, cf Dohi: 56-59, more particularly about the situation of the Holiness groups, cf Yamazaki 1983 and 1984, Ono 1986b: 189ff.

in occupied areas, financed and supported by the Government. The Government also co-operated in Japanese missionary endeavours in Taiwan, Korea, China and other occupied areas. In Manchuria the co-operation was particularly close.

During these years of turmoil, the theological situation was characterized partly by nationalist ideas influencing the traditional three streams of thought since the Meiji Era and partly by a growing frustration to the totalitarian demands of the state.

An important factor in the theological thought of the thirties and forties was the passing away of the Protestant Fathers. Uemura passed away in 1925, the pioneer of the Non-Church Movement, Uchimura Kanzo, pronounced his famous last words of "**Banzai to Japan! Banzai to the Gospel!**" in 1930, whereas the two great Congregationalist leaders of Ebina Danjo and Kozaki Hiromichi died in 1937 and 1938 respectively. With the possible exception of *Nihon Kirisuto Kyokai*, where Takakura Tokutaro developed a Protestant Reformed theology of a Barthian type in the footsteps of Uemura, there was no firm leadership to point the path forward after the elder generation had left. With a radically changed situation, the guidance of the old ideals and founders were not immediately apparent in the shadows of the dark age.

In the Reformed Yokohama tradition, the influence of Karl Barth was increasing. Together with Takakura, theologians at the same seminary, such as Kumano Yoshitaka, Kuwada Hidenobu and Murata Shiro followed suit. The Barthian theology of these years did not, however, as in the West, serve as a basis for protest movements of social activism. It rather led to a concern for the fundamentals of the Christian revelation, and thus to a reinforcement of the ecclesiastical tradition. This also applied to the assessment of Meiji Protestantism. Within certain limits there was an attempt to let this tradition emphasize ecclesiastical independence and a theological criticism of the Emperor system and compulsory shrine attendance. Pastor Omomura Rinzo should be mentioned in this connection, and we will return to his case when we directly attend to interpretations of the Meiji heritage.

Within the social and more liberal stream of theological thought, new currents were developing. This stream cannot to the same extent be identified with the Kumamoto Band and the Doshisha theologians. It might be natural to mention Kagawa Toyohiko, the dominating Christian personality in Japan between the wars, in connection with this stream. His theological education, however, was from Meiji Gakuin, a Presbyterian University in Tokyo, and Kobe Theological Seminary, a theological school run by the Southern Presbyterian Mission. Due to his influences there, Kagawa remained within an evangelical Protestant dogmatic framework, emphasizing evangelism and the atonement by Christ. But to Kagawa this basis led to an exceedingly social application. The concept of *shokusai-ai* (atonement-love) evolved in his thought as the central concept in his Christian faith and as the basis for social action.

In the YMCA movement there was as well a strong inclination to views by the general secretary of YMCA from this period, Saito Soichi. A more peripheral, but much debated event in Japanese theology during the early 1930s was the SCM movement. This movement which only existed for one year after its emergence from the YMCA in 1931, was led by Kan Enkichi of the Episcopal church. He understood God in immanent terms as Life Power, and considered salvation in immanent, social terms. His thoughts are reminiscent of ideas held by Yokoi in the 1890s and also of the American Social Gospel movement. Kan himself, however, was gradually absorbed by the theology of Karl Barth, and the SCM movement ceased to exist.

We do not hear much about the theology of Kozaki Hiromichi at this stage. At this time Kozaki was more of a mediator who tried to reconcile ideas on a classical, doctrinal basis, but, with a marked social and national concern. The theology of Ebina, however, was more creative and had a sharper profile, which was seen in the development of the so called *Nihonteki shingaku* (Japanese Theology). After the Second World War, "Japanese Theology" is a loaded term, as it is seen to have served as a theological undergirding of the nationalist and imperialist aims of fascist Japan. One type of theology identified Christianity in varying degree with Japanese Shinto. Ebina himself comes close to this

characterisation in some of his views.<sup>500</sup> Another Congregationalist Torai Tsunekichi, who in 1934 published *Nihon Shingaku no Teisho* (Advocating a Japanese Theology) might however, serve as a better example from our period.<sup>501</sup>

There was a more moderate branch of the national thinking which tried to follow a traditional Protestant approach in theological matters, underlining the Christian roots *sui generis*, but on the other hand deeply identifying with a Japanese spirit claiming that no tension exists between the two: Christianity and Japanese spirit. The historian Hiyane Antei is a typical representative of this thinking. As he has produced some creative thoughts on Meiji Protestantism, he will be examined in more detail later.<sup>502</sup>

There is a general agreement among Japanese scholars that these two categories should be termed "Japanese Theology" or "Japanese Christianity".<sup>503</sup> Some also include a third type of thinking which operates with a greater distance between the Japanese spirit and Christianity, a group to which Uoki Tadakazu, a historian from the Theological Department of Doshisha University belongs.<sup>504</sup> As Uoki also has expressed his thoughts in close relation to an assessment of Meiji Protestantism, I will present his views in more detail later.

After the death of Uchimura, the Non-Church Movement was unorganized, and the theology of this group only lived on as inspiration for individuals and more informal groups; in particular various fundamentalist groups which stressed the second coming of Christ.<sup>505</sup> This theology continued thus to live, in the private sphere as an anonymous movement, during the dark years.

Underlying the theological streams, there was the influence of the common denominator through the relationship to the state policies on the one hand and subsequently to the new quest for the Meiji Protestant legacy on the other. The question concerned the Japanese Churches in their Christian and national identity in a period of mounting patriotic and militarist suppression. This is the framework for the continued Japanese reflection upon Meiji Protestantism.

## 5.2 TYPES OF LITERATURE.

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<sup>500</sup> Ebina tried to relate Christianity to the spiritual traditions of the country, such as Confucianism, Buddhism and Shinto. He paid in particular attention to the attitude of monotheism and also the reverence for the divine as evidenced in certain Shinto traditions. He discovered monotheism in the central deity of Amenominakanushi, as this godhead was conceived in the thoughts of Hirata Atsutane. He also interpreted the worship of Amaterasu Omikami, the chief godhead of the Imperial House, as monotheistic. Cf Ebina 1960: 134ff. See also supra 2.1.1.2 on spiritual traditions in Japan.

<sup>501</sup> Germany 65 distinguishes between a moderate and an ultra nationalist trend within the nationally inclined theology. Professor Otani, who holds ultra nationalist views, gave an address to Congregationalist pastors and laymen in 1940, entitled "Some characteristics of the foundation of Japan". In this address he said that "there is no contradiction between the three creative gods of Japanese mythology and the doctrine of Trinity in Christianity." Otani JCQ Vol 15 no 2 1940: 170; quoted by Germany 1965: 163.

<sup>502</sup> Infra 5.2.1.2.3 and 5.3.1.2.1.

<sup>503</sup> Kasahara Yoshimitsu in *Kirisutokyo Shakaimondai Kenkyu* (Study of Christianity and Social Problems) no 22; considers these two categories to be "Japanese Christianity". Sato Toshio in *Fukuin to Sekai* February 1962, also includes, with Ono Shizuo, a third branch within the concept of a Japanese Christianity, by Kasahara named *shohatsuron* (development theory). Quoted from Ono 1986b: 21.

<sup>504</sup> Germany 1965: 164 - 167 counts Hiyane Antei and Uoki Tadakazu as "moderate" nationalists.

<sup>505</sup> Supra 2.2.3.1.

In moving to the genre analysis of material on Meiji Protestantism from the Japanese and Western sides during the "dark years", one feature is immediately apparent. Whereas the Japanese material is varied and involved, the western material is almost non-existent. This, of course, has to do with the existentialist challenges that Japanese Christians had to face during the period of military rule in Japan.

I will use the same classification as in the previous chapter, and will for obvious reasons give particular attention to material which emerge on the Japanese side.

### 5.2.1 Japanese Material.

One introductory observation should be made when tackling the Japanese material. Whilst Japanese writers energetically took part in the tense domestic discussions and presented their claims as to who were the true heirs of Meiji Protestantism, they were also invited in increasing numbers to contribute to Western periodicals for Western readers. The number of Japanese contributions to the *International Review of Missions* and *Japanese Christian Quarterly*, is remarkable. I will include this material in the analysis.

#### 5.2.1.1 Essay Material.

Articles in established missionary periodicals make up a substantial part of the essay material by Japanese authors. They deal with contemporary issues, particularly the interaction of Christianity with Japanese traditional religions, but they see these often in the light of a tradition from Meiji Protestantism. Some of these contributions reflect a sincere Japanese nationalism.<sup>506</sup>

#### 5.2.1.2 Interpretative Accounts.

During the period of transition from 1906 to 1929, there were an increasing number of Japanese Interpretative Accounts. In the period from 1930 onwards, the number is even more impressive. Within the genre-analysis I will look at three sub-categories of such Interpretative Accounts. The first category is applied to a collection of various materials from early Protestant history of Japan, more or less closely related to a dominating interest in Uemura Masahisa.<sup>507</sup> As this work consists of literature with varying degrees of interpretative distance, I will consider it first, although the collection itself was published in 1937/8. The second category contains two traditional church histories, whereas the third presents theological reflections upon the Meiji legacy.

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<sup>506</sup> In the field of history of religion, cf Ueki 1939, in a political frame of reference cf Hiyane 1940, Saito 1941, Tagawa 1939.

<sup>507</sup> This is the work called *Uemura Masahisa to sono Jidai*, compiled by Saba Wataru (1881 - 1958). He was from the early childhood in Kanagawa Prefecture influenced by Christianity. While studying law at the prestigious Tokyo University, he was baptized by Uemura Masahisa. Later he transferred to Tokyo Theological Seminary. Married to Uemura eldest daughter and occupying a lifelong pastorate in Omori church, he was a central personality in *Nihon Kirisuto Kyokai*. In 1951 he left the united Protestant church *Nihon Kirisuto Kyodan* and founded the postwar *Nihon Kirisuto Kyokai*, a more professed Calvinist church, cf *Jinmeijiten* 1986: 628.

#### 5.2.1.2.1 Uemura Masahisa and His Times.

Uemura dominates the biographical material from this period.<sup>508</sup> The focus upon Uemura is evident by a growing literature on him in the contemporary Japanese Church.<sup>509</sup> The dominating document which transcends the limits of mere biography and points to his central position in Japanese Protestantism is the work by Saba Wataru, referred to above.<sup>510</sup>

In its general scope, this book is a source book, compiled, rather than written by its editor. Consisting of five volumes, the book is indeed a "magnificent source book with assorted information for future students"<sup>511</sup> The problematic covered a wide range of items. As a standard source, frequently used by modern authors,<sup>512</sup> it is of particular value in our investigation. I will proceed to give an outline of its content.<sup>513</sup>

Vol I deals with the historical background of Japanese Protestantism, from Nestorian contacts, through to the Roman Catholic period from 1549 onwards. Various influences preparing for a new Christian entrance in Japan are introduced - among those influences mentioned is also the thought of the Shintoist Hirata Atsutane.<sup>514</sup> The arrival of the early missionaries, is told prefaced by the story of the Massachusetts Prayer Meeting when the idea of an American mission work to Japan was borne.<sup>515</sup> These sections lead up to the account of the three bands in Yokohama, Sapporo and Kumamoto, and also to materials on Christianity and Bushido. The last pages are devoted to a portrait of Uemura: his background, personal features, marriage and family.

Vol II follows a similar structure. Various ecclesiastical events, aspects of church life and relationships between church and society are presented. Features of and reasons for church growth during these early years are assessed. This volume closes with a section on Uemura Masahisa, particularly his achievements as a churchman.

Vol III gives material on local churches in Japan; but also on evangelization in South East Asia. Various church projects, such as Sunday School work and Literature, for example the magazine *Fukui Shinpo* are presented. The volume also presents organizational developments such as attempts at church mergers up to the 1890s.

In Vol IV, much of the material relates to the development of a Bible in Japanese, to hymnals and to pastoral questions. Some attention is given to Uemura's travels overseas.

Vol V is oriented towards theological and apologetical debates. Various discussions in which Uemura played a central role are presented. Of them, the Uemura - Ebina debate on the nature of Christ, the debate on religion and education following the Uchimura incident as well as several contemporary debates in Meiji and Taisho Eras, where Uemura was involved are related. A large section of this volume is devoted to *Fujin ni kanshite* (women's issues). It shows the emphasis laid on these issues in the

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<sup>508</sup> There are biographical references also to Uchimura and Ebina. Kozaki Hiromichi contributed his autobiography during this period, Kozaki 1933, and is treated in some significant biographical articles.

<sup>509</sup> Urabe 1925, Mitsumatsu 1935, Aoyoshi 1935 and Uemura *Zenshu* (Complete Works) edited by Aoyoshi in 1933. Cf the article on Uemura literature, Wainright 1936.

<sup>510</sup> Cf also supra 2.2.2.1 note 147.

<sup>511</sup> Hoekje 1938: 204.

<sup>512</sup> A second edition appeared 1971. Cf Scheiner 1970: 248f.

<sup>513</sup> For critiques of Saba's work, see Hoekje 1938: 200ff, Scheiner 1970: 248f.

<sup>514</sup> Supra 2.1.1.2.

<sup>515</sup> Supra 2.2.1 note 131.

Uemura tradition.<sup>516</sup> The book closes with material on Uemura's last years, including various post mortem greetings and addresses on Uemura.

The five volumes are based upon contemporary magazines and publications. Periodicals like *Fukuin Shinpo* and *Jogaku Zasshi*, where Uemura frequently contributed, occur repeatedly. *Rikugo Zasshi*, *Kokumin no Tomo*, and *Nihon Hyoron* also frequently appear.

#### 5.2.1.2.2 Two traditional Church Histories.

From this impressive collection of materials on Meiji Protestantism, to which I will return in the content analysis, I now turn to two Church Histories. The first is *Kyohabetsu Nippon Kirisutokyoshi* (Denominational History of Christianity in Japan) by Sakurai Tada, who came from the Yokohama tradition.

Sakurai was distinct in his Church Historical perspective. He adopted a comprehensive perspective on the development of Japanese Protestantism in its denominational plurality. He saw the development of denominationalism as the outcome of converging tendencies of the band tradition from Meiji Protestantism on the one hand, and the effect of missionary denominationalism on the other. He drew the lines on the new situation in the 1930s. The book by Kozaki Hiromichi, *Nihon Kirisutokyoshi* (History of Christianity in Japan) is a posthumous publication from 1938. In line with the early presentation of Yamaji in 1906, and corresponding to the social and national concern of Kumamoto Band, he adopted a somewhat broader perspective than Sakurai.

Kozaki Hiromichi from the Kumamoto Band, thus, followed in the footsteps of Yamaji. His study traced the history of Japanese Christianity from its Catholic period up to the contemporary situation. Though Kozaki was telling the story of Christianity in Japan, he was not satisfied with merely recording ecclesiastical events or developments. He showed, as his background in Kumamoto Band might have induced him to, particular interest in thoughts about Christianity by outsiders, as for instance Buddhists,<sup>517</sup> the "people",<sup>518</sup> or by the Government.<sup>519</sup> He also entered into the total situation of the Church, when he looked into the reasons for the spread of the Gospel in the Meiji Era.<sup>520</sup> He also related events in Japan to developments and influences from Britain and USA.<sup>521</sup>

The book has a personal character, not only because Kozaki had experienced the development of Japanese Protestantism from the inside. He also shared his opinions on evangelism,<sup>522</sup> unity of Protestantism,<sup>523</sup> and on the so called "New Theology".<sup>524</sup>

#### 5.2.1.2.3 Theological Reflections on the Meiji Legacy.

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<sup>516</sup> It includes for instance questions such as monogami, anti prostitution movement, female education and Christian home. The movement for constitutional equality in the church is documented. In 1921 a such a constitution was adopted. Cf Saba 1938: 597 - 764.

<sup>517</sup> Kozaki 1938: 302 - 10.

<sup>518</sup> Kozaki 1938: 30 - 35, 556 - 64.

<sup>519</sup> Kozaki 1938: 286 - 94.

<sup>520</sup> Kozaki 1938: 8f.

<sup>521</sup> Kozaki 1938: 310ff.

<sup>522</sup> Kozaki 1938: 562 - 4.

<sup>523</sup> Kozaki 1938: 574 - 95.

<sup>524</sup> Kozaki 1938: 606 - 8.

There are also forthright studies which reflected on the legacy and current responsibilities of Japanese Protestantism in a more theoretical and prophetic perspective. The following works are particularly noted: *Kirisuto to Nippon* (Christ and Japan) by Kagawa Toyohiko, *Kirisutokyo no Nihonteki Tenkai* (The Japanese Development of Christianity) by Hiyane Ante from 1938 and Uoki Tadakazu's two studies, *Nihon Kirisutokyo no Seikaku* (The Character of Christianity in Japan) from 1941, and *Nippon Kirisutokyo no Seishinteki Dento* (The Spiritual Tradition of Christianity in Japan) from 1943.

The books by Ebina and Kagawa, though published during our period, are more interested in the earlier nationalism of the Taisho Period, and are not so closely related to the militarist developments of the 1930s. They are inspired by a liberal humanism, in Ebina's case, treated within a framework of the history of ideas; in Kagawa's case informed by an apologetical motif.<sup>525</sup> Kagawa tried to relate to the liberal Confucianism of the Wang Yang-min school.<sup>526</sup>

The apologetic concern seems to be basic to the books of Hiyane and Uoki. To Hiyane, whom I believe should be classified within the moderate trend of "Japanese Theology", it was a dominating question how Christianity should be developed in militarist Japan.<sup>527</sup> It is, however, worth noting that he chose to demonstrate this through a utilization of a historical treatment of Meiji Protestantism in its interaction with imperialist concerns, not by means of dogmatics or missiology. Similarly, Uoki entered into a creative and original interpretation of Christianity in Japan, and not exclusively Meiji Christianity. Uoki should be seen as more moderate in his nationalist argument than Hiyane. He operated with a greater distance between Japanese and Christian thought and he was concerned with defining the characteristics of Japanese Christianity in an ecumenical perspective.

Another methodological observation is relevant at this point. Some of the Christian attitudes to the state, including utterances about patriotism, or participation in shrine ceremonies sound like deliberate adaptations due to a necessity of conformism.<sup>528</sup> But, nonetheless, the originality of the pursuit and the traces of genuine evangelist concerns by Hiyane and Uoki reveal a genuine interpretation of Japanese Protestantism, although within a deliberate, national spirit. In the following content analysis I will try to illustrate how these Interpretative Accounts contributed to a new interpretation of Meiji Protestantism in a Japan at war.

### 5.2.1.3 Summary.

I have moved on from the period of participating reflection by early Japanese Protestants on the formation of Meiji Protestantism as well as from the period of transition, when Christian Meiji Pioneers such as Uemura, Ebina and the independent Uchimura still exerted a profound influence on a new generation of Japanese Christians. From 1930, these Christians were in the complicated period of an increasing military take-over in Japan, when Meiji Protestant *genro* passed away and left the reflection on the character and significance of the process to others. There was indeed an active interest in Meiji Protestantism when Japanese churchmen, young and old, tried to define their independent

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<sup>525</sup> Kagawa 1934: 96ff.

<sup>526</sup> Kagawa 1938: 90ff. On Wang Yang-min school *supra* 2.1.1.2.

<sup>527</sup> Hiyane 1938: 3.

<sup>528</sup> Cf an article in JCQ where Hiyane defends that Christians should respect the national shrines of Japan, Hiyane 1940: 42ff and an article likewise in JCQ by the Christian statesman Tagawa Daikichiro, where he relates the church to the development of the modern Japanese state, Tagawa 1939: 173ff. Both these articles support the adaption. A more reluctant attitude to the adaption is found by Omomuro Rinzo, *infra* 5.3.1.1, see in particular note 540.

position vis á vis the military government during the "dark years" in this history of modern Japan.

### 5.2.2 Western Material.

Compared with the flourishing and involved Japanese material on Meiji Protestantism from 1929 onwards, it is striking that the Western concern for Japanese developments is influenced by other perspectives than those which proved to be crucial for Japanese Christians. Although the Western material on early Protestant developments is limited, some observations should nevertheless be registered.

As regards **Essay Material** in missionary periodicals, I have already noted that the contribution of Japanese writers is considerable. Although their Western colleagues do not have the same concerns themselves, the tradition which we noted in the previous period of letting the Japanese speak for themselves, is continued and extended.<sup>529</sup> A new Western analyst appeared, however, and he wrote especially in the **Japan Christian Quarterly**. It was the American Presbyterian missionary, Rev. S. H. Wainright.<sup>530</sup>

Within the category **Interpretative Accounts** three points are worthy of note. Whilst the Japanese interest in biography reached its peak with Saba's comprehensive study of Uemura Masahisa to *Sono Jidai*, there was no similar development on the Western side. Biographies of missionaries came regularly from the series of early biographies edited by Griffis around the turn of the century. In this period I just note one biography; on the evolutionist John Gulick who worked in the Congregational Church. The fact that the Protestant Fathers from the formative period were now passing away during this period, did not encourage a continuation of Hardy's biographical venture from the early 1890s. The autobiography by Kozaki Hiromichi, however, appeared in English, reflecting that Japanese voices were now speaking for themselves to the Western public.

Whereas Western interest in the history of Japanese Protestantism flourished from about 1890 to 1909 and then turned into a breakthrough of missiological studies on Christian developments in Japan, even this interest dwindled after 1930. From 1930 there is no special study by any Western writer on the history of Christianity in Japan. However, Japanese developments are duly recorded in Kenneth Scott Latourette's all-inclusive **History of the Expansion of Christianity**. As the title suggests, in this work there was a link with a previous interest in the motif of expansion in Christian developments, and Latourette drew on classical missionary accounts of Japanese developments. However, he did not see Christian history in Japan simply as a matter of missionary expansion. He does recognize Japanese initiative in the formation of Meiji Protestantism. But like Otis Cary, rather than a particular Japanese perspective, he maintained an international view of the developments.<sup>531</sup>

Though there is no specific missiological monograph on Japanese problems during the period, the book of Hendrik Kraemer **The Christian Message in the Non-Christian World** should be noted. This comprehensive study, which was written on the request of the International Missionary Council in view of the forthcoming third World Missionary Conference to be held in Tambaram, South India in 1938, devoted a substantial section on developments in Japan. Kraemer gave a condensed summary of the developments during the different phases of the Meiji period and traced their implications for the formation of Meiji Protestantism. Analyzing the ongoing developments in Japan, he noticed anti-liberal and anti-democratic features which he saw as fateful for the Christian Church. He

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<sup>529</sup> Supra 4.2.3.1.

<sup>530</sup> Rev. S. H. Wainright is introduced as "a missionary of 40 years' experience, who commands to a rare degree the respect and confidence of Churches and Missions in Japan. He is General Manager of the Christian Literature Society", JCQ 1926 No 1 Jan issue.

<sup>531</sup> Supra 4.2.3.2.

was also concerned with Christian relationships to Buddhism, where he detected renewal movements.<sup>532</sup>

### 5.2.3 Comparative Analysis.

The differences between Japanese and Western material on Meiji Protestantism have been considerable during all the three periods which I have surveyed. Both in quantity and in qualitative aspects, the differences do not seem to have been greater than during this dramatic period from 1930 to 1945.

Preconditions for the Japanese involvement in Meiji Protestantism proved to be different from what have led to Western concern with early Protestant developments in Japan. During the 15 years following 1930, the decline of Western interest is the most striking feature. However, Hendrik Kraemer's account in his report comes close to the concern of Japanese analysts, although his view of the political and religious developments and their implications for the Church was more critical than what the Japanese material conveyed on similar issues.

The differences in Japanese and Western emphases and perspectives becomes even more compelling when we move on to an analysis of the content of Japanese and Western material from this period.

## 5.3 JAPANESE AND WESTERN INTERPRETATIONS.

### 5.3.1 Japanese Emphases in Militarist Japan.

In the analysis of Japanese interpretations of the formation of Meiji Protestantism so far, I have illustrated on the one hand a focus on the establishment and continued development of Protestant churches and on the other a broader concern for the relevance of Christianity in interaction with Japanese realities. The predominant role of certain leading personalities representing different emphases within Japanese Protestantism, also suggests a feature of person-centered history. In the new period from 1930 onwards, these features had to be further qualified.

#### 5.3.1.1 The Church and the Military Government.

From the very beginning there was a national feature in the interpretation of the development of the Church in Japan. In addition to a general consideration of how Christianity could prove to be relevant by relating to and further developing values in samurai culture and religious traditions, there was also the question of how the Church should express its loyalty to the Emperor and the national cause on its own conditions. In this issue, Uchimura opted for a radical alternative, whereas the Uemura tradition tried to find a more proper balance.<sup>533</sup> The Kumamoto school of thought was most inclined to accept and identify with national aims.<sup>534</sup> This legacy proved challenging in a situation of new legislation bearing on how religious communities should contribute to the development of the Japanese Imperium.

During the period of military dominance there were different views within Japanese Protestantism. Most mainstream denominations opted for a qualified loyalty to the Government, as the proper way of being true to the legacy of Meiji Protestantism. This attitude was given theological motivation by a new generation of Protestant Church leaders, who took up the heritage of the early Protestant Fathers.

Within the Presbyterian - Reformed tradition, there was already from the time of Uemura, a thoroughgoing interpretation of the ecclesiastical legacy of Meiji Protestan-

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<sup>532</sup> Kraemer 1938: 389 - 402.

<sup>533</sup> Supra 5.1.4.

<sup>534</sup> Supra 5.1.4, cf supra 2.2.2.1.

tism. The standpoint involved a high degree of independence over against the state, and it had been a consistent policy to resist government interference in matters of faith. In recurring negotiations with national authorities from 1897 up to 1935 concerning the Religious Bodies Law, these principles had been strictly adhered to and defended.

With the more unstable leadership after Uemura's death in 1925 and the mounting militarist pressure after 1930, the Japanese churches became involved in the preparation of a Religious Bodies Law, which finally was adopted in 1939.<sup>535</sup> The standpoints taken by the Presbyterian *Nihon Kirisuto Kyokai* (The Church of Christ in Japan) are reflected in the presentation by Rev. Goshi Zoji at the meeting in the International Missionary Council, Tambaram 1938, which highlighted the war issue as well as the problem of compulsory participation in shrine rites.

In his presentation, the Rev. Goshi Zoji from *Nihon Kirisuto Kyokai* dwelt on developments within the Church which he represented, but also with the relationship to the state. Admitting the general view among Japanese Church members, that war is a "poor means of settling international questions" he expressed loyalty to the national policies, which were "creating peace and stabilizing Far Eastern countries under Japanese leadership".<sup>536</sup> After a revision due to church criticism, the new Religious Bodies Law was found acceptable from a Christian point of view.

Rev. Goshi openly faced the so called problem of "worship" in his report. He defended Christian worship at state shrines on the grounds that this was not a religious act, but a national rite implying homage to the ancestors and signifying national loyalty. This co-operation with the state provided the Church with a recognition as one of the national religions, equal with Shinto and Buddhism. Such a legal status was considered to be of significance for the future evangelization of Japan. Though Rev. Goshi also expressed that "The traditional attitude of our church has been that we desire the least amount of protection from the Government and the least amount of control of religion by the Government", thereby indicating indirectly his dissatisfaction with the present legal situation, he nevertheless hoped that through this development "Christianity will be firmly established and widely spread throughout the land"<sup>537</sup>

The standpoint of accepting the war, cannot be said to break radically with the tradition of the young Japanese Church. Uemura himself had accepted the Japanese war with China, and had no objections to the annexation of Taiwan. He had stated that the war with China was a confrontation of civilization and non-civilization; the rule over Taiwan was motivated in a "Parent right".<sup>538</sup>

From this standpoint of a normative legacy from the Meiji era, Protestants had no serious objections to the new developments of military aggression taking place in the Showa Era.

The shrine issue was more complicated. Uemura had defended Uchimura's right to refuse Emperor-worship at the occasion of *lese majeste* in 1891, and had strongly defended individual religious liberty. He had opposed the establishment of a Religious Bodies Law, which demanded compulsory patriotic ceremonies at national shrines. In general the *Nihon Kirisuto Kyokai* had a restrictive view on ceremonies of non-Christian religions.<sup>539</sup> The deviation from previous policies in 1939 can hardly be seen as a genuine new interpretation of Meiji Protestantism, but rather as a compromise motivated by considerations of what would best allow the survival of the church in an extraordinary and suppressed situation. The case of Omomura Rinzo illustrates this further.

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<sup>535</sup> Ono 1986b: 83 - 99, cf supra 5.1.4.

<sup>536</sup> Goshi 1939: 153.

<sup>537</sup> Goshi 1939: 154.

<sup>538</sup> Ono 1986b: 143.

<sup>539</sup> "the gods of Buddhism are all purely subjective creations of the mind." Ibuka and Imbrie in World Missionary Conference 1910d: 99.

Omomura had already written in 1925 a pamphlet which he called *Jinja ni taisuru Gigi* (Questioning the Shrine). Here he refuted the main tenets of official Shinto thought, including the idea of shrines as non-religious institutions. In his capacity as a pastor, however, he was gradually forced to modify his expressions when he tried to instruct his congregation, including young men who were sent to the front, how they in this extreme situation could live in the Shinto-patriotic environment and still keep their Christian faith.<sup>540</sup>

Though there are dangers connected with such generalizations, there was nevertheless a more positive acceptance of Shinto policies and nationalist ideas in the Ebina/-Kozaki traditions within the Congregational Church.<sup>541</sup> The positive attitude taken by these leaders to the state, presupposing a basically democratic understanding of the Emperor system, were based on interpretations from the Meiji and Taisho eras. Applying these views to the new political developments in the 1930s, the new Protestant leaders were not aware of the potential *anomia* of the Meiji heritage, but combined democratic ideals with the Emperor system.<sup>542</sup>

One advanced illustration can be quoted from the *Japan Christian Quarterly*, where the Christian member of the Japanese Parliament, Tagawa Daikichiro, reflected on the legacy from the Meiji period and its implications in military Japan.

Tagawa stresses the "uneventful" relationship between state and religion due to the constitutional guaranties of religious freedom in 1889. His concern was to defend the state and its particular Japanese character, to which he gave much honour. He is "convinced as to the happiness of the Japanese people".<sup>543</sup> The formation of Japanese Protestantism entered indirectly as a process included in the national, legal system up to which a whole complex of ideas and religious presuppositions had led.

The general secretary of the YMCA, Saito Soichi, provided another example when he wrote against the background of the Religious Bodies Law from 1939.<sup>544</sup> He threw light upon the process of law-making which had led to religious freedom as well as to the Protestant union which was achieved in Japan. His article contained the same basic views as those propagated by Tagawa. He takes one step further, however, in describing early Japanese Protestantism as part of the modern state system, called *Shintaisei* (New Structure).<sup>545</sup>

As far as the relationship to the shrine-problem is concerned, there was no questioning of such worship. The basic idea of Ebina of a connection between original Shinto and Christianity, and the strong appeal for ancestor veneration by Harada,<sup>546</sup> indicate that respect for the ancestors in ritual forms was regarded as an established asset in the national heritage comprised by Meiji Protestantism. This is particularly the case in the more nationally and liberally oriented tradition from the Kumamoto Band.

In the following section I will illustrate these Protestant ideas as they relate more directly to the reinforced nationalism. The question to explore is whether these ideas facilitated an uncritical acceptance of ultra-national fascism, and totalitarian developments.

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<sup>540</sup> Ono 1986b: 156 - 163.

<sup>541</sup> Cf the defence of ancestor veneration at the Edinburgh conference, Harada 1910b.

<sup>542</sup> *Supra* Chapter 5, Introduction.

<sup>543</sup> Tagawa 1939.

<sup>544</sup> Saito 1941.

<sup>545</sup> Saito views Protestantism in relation to the "New Structure Movement", Saito 1941: 10.

<sup>546</sup> Harada 1910b.

### 5.3.1.2 The Church and the National Ideas.

#### 5.3.1.2.1 Aspects of Church Support of Nationalism.

The relationship between the church and the state also involved the Church in a wider relationship to the national spirit and national ideas. Corresponding to the view of the Christian Church within the "New Structure", there is also an emphasis on Christianity in the "light of national self consciousness".<sup>547</sup>

The historian Hiyane underlined that the Japanese are "people of a great country". He also used other expressions revealing the nationalist mood of the times such as "...Japan is the pivot of the world", thus pointing to a strong spirit of Japanese self-consciousness. According to Hiyane, this national legacy was not contrary to Christian identity and responsibility. On the contrary, this national spirit which could be traced back to the developments in the Meiji era would also induce vigour into Japanese Christianity, as "we Japanese may be able to propagate and preach the Gospel to the world more vigorously than others, in the same way that we did within Buddhism and Confucianism."<sup>548</sup> In this he lined up with the views of Tagawa.<sup>549</sup>

It is as a whole evident that evangelism, a tenet very dear to Japanese Protestantism, became even much so after the reinforcement of the idea from ecumenical centres after the Edinburgh and Jerusalem meetings of the International Missionary Council, and this strengthened the adaption to nationalist ideas.

The Christocentric preaching and evangelism of Kagawa Toyohiko, thus, led to reflections in *Christ and Japan*, where he was keen to affirm the Japanese aspects of Christianity.

This was also the case with Ebina Danjo, who during the period of transition had explored the possibilities of a Christian Shinto Theology. He developed in the 1930s what can be called an inclusive Japanese Folk Church Theology.<sup>550</sup> His primary concern was to relate Christianity to the whole people and he was also strongly interested in education.<sup>551</sup> The incapability of Ebina to discern the inconsistencies of the Meiji political heritage, believing in its capacity of developing into a Christian democracy, can be better understood if his deep commitment to evangelization is taken into consideration. He did not subscribe to the excesses of Japanese militarism, however.

Though it can be argued that an evangelistic commitment, through the concept of adaptation as well as an advanced view of the capacity of the preached Gospel to change a political development, tended to overlook the political contradictions, and made Christianity liable to nationalist ideologies, it cannot be argued that evangelism and evangelist strategies were submitted to nationalist aims. I will argue that, particularly when looking at the historical thought of representative Protestants from the 1930s and 1940s, there was an inherent protest voiced against the militarist claims of a totalitarian Japaneseness. In this perspective I will consider contributions from Ebina, Hiyane, and Ueki first, and then turn to the more Church-history oriented writing from this period.

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<sup>547</sup> Hiyane 1940: 42.

<sup>548</sup> Hiyane 1940: 49.

<sup>549</sup> Thomas 1940: 251ff.

<sup>550</sup> Ebina 1933.

<sup>551</sup> Ebina 1933: 1 - 107.

### 5.3.1.2.2 Protestant Historical Reflection - an antinationalist Voice.

#### 5.3.1.2.2.1 Anti - Nationalism through Historical Interpretation.

In Ebina's historical view, which lacked a critical understanding of the "dark valley", there were clear indications of a historical self understanding, which definitely transcend nationalist perspectives of the Japanese state. In his three-period oriented history, there is a universal perspective of Christian brother- and sister-hood, which surpassed a limited national framework. His *Kokumin no Kirisutokyo* (Christianity of the People), has a marked historical dimension, and he operated with the conception of a distinct Christian history in Japan.

Ebina considered Japanese Christian history in three periods. The first one was the Catholic period from 1549 onwards. The second was called the history of a Christianity based on the Bible, whereas the third period, which follows a Bible oriented Christianity, was based upon divine understanding.<sup>552</sup>

The Japanization of Christianity, as seen by Ebina, is not a narrow, nationally limited adaptation of Christianity. It identified with a global, universal development of the divine spirit. He represented an internationalism in continuity with national developments and trends, which he developed during the period of transition.<sup>553</sup>

In order to evaluate Hiyane's interpretation in this perspective of "anti-nationalism", I will look more closely at his historical interpretation. Although Hiyane had some rather unguarded nationalist statements,<sup>554</sup> there are reasons to believe that they should not be overemphasized when the basic and underlying viewpoints of Hiyane are described.

Hiyane approached Protestantism as a religion coming from outside through the modernization process. He was aware of Christian doctrinal and religious identity. From this conviction he proceeded to ask how Christianity "should be developed, transmitted to this very special and synthesizing country of ours?"<sup>555</sup>

Hiyane did not approve of "Japanese Christianity".<sup>556</sup> There was a transformation of Japanese spirit in theology, not in identity. Christian development on the Japanese basis is further seen in two perspectives; one personal and one religious. Honda Yoichi, the famous Methodist leader originally from the Yokohama Band, was seen as a representative convert in his development from Confucian standpoints to Christian faith.<sup>557</sup> The formation of Meiji Protestantism, thus, is seen in a marked personalist perspective.

Hiyane was also interested in the Christian view of Confucianism and Buddhism, and the relationship between Christianity and the Japanese concept of the Divine. He also noted with particular interest Christian interaction with monotheistic trends of Shinto.<sup>558</sup>

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<sup>552</sup> Ebina 1933: 109 - 116. See in particular the following section, p 15: "the third stage of Christianity finds its base in the very spiritual depths of self, developing this spirit by means of the universe and the history of mankind. Therefore, the third-stage Christianity does not make out a delicate machine through nature, but being the spirit of the living God, it does not tend to conflict with Science."

<sup>553</sup> Ebina 1933: 112 - 114.

<sup>554</sup> Supra 5.1.4.

<sup>555</sup> Hiyane 1938: 3.

<sup>556</sup> Hiyane 1938: 163 - 193.

<sup>557</sup> Hiyane 1938: 138 - 162.

<sup>558</sup> Hiyane 1938: 37 - 122.

The relationship between the Japanese spirit and Christianity seen in terms of a transformation, was further qualified as "logos-oriented". The "alter of an unknown God"<sup>559</sup> was seen as basis for a common, worldwide history of religions, <sup>560</sup> which, however, is not contrary to the idea of an exclusive revelation in Christ. <sup>561</sup>

Uoki shared the basic views of Ebina and Hiyane. He also worked with the historical dimension of Christianity on Japanese soil, comprehending Christianity in the context of spiritual history, meaning that Christianity is related to the religious history of the people. <sup>562</sup>

Uoki was in particular interested in the concept of the Christian breakthrough in Japan, and it is one of his contributions as a Christian historian to develop a special category for this breakthrough. Rather than conversion, the Japanese acceptance of Christianity is "transformation and development", contained in the special Japanese term *shokuhatsu*. Through this concept, Uoki felt convinced that Christianity is within the realm of Japan's own religious history. <sup>563</sup>

But not only the breakthrough, even the whole unfolding of Japanese Christian history reveals, according to Uoki, a special Japanese category of Christianity. He included the four hundred years of Roman Catholic history in this view, because this history was founded on the religious consciousness of the Japanese people itself, and reflects a deepening of the religious understanding of the people. <sup>564</sup>

The idea of a religious fulfillment in Christianity, an idea which we have encountered by many Protestant leaders in Japan, including Uemura, Uchimura, Kozaki and in general the Ebina tradition, is used as a basic structure of the interpretation of Christianity in Japan. Through a fulfillment of Buddhism, Confucianism and Shintoism in various ways and in various epochs, Christianity emerges as a world religion, mediated by Japanese religiosity.

Going in more detail into this mediation by Japanese religiosity, Uoki sees Christianity as the continuation of the spiritualism of Confucianism. <sup>565</sup> This applied to Protestantism as well as to Catholicism. Whereas certain elements of Confucianism are negated, Uoki here agreed with Kozaki, <sup>566</sup> aspects such as morality and the concept of God reveal more directly a strong continuity between these two religions. <sup>567</sup>

Similarly he saw a positive relationship where parts of the Shinto heritage are elevated into a Christian faith. Shinto is basically in this context seen as the popular sentiment of Japan. He drew his final conclusions from positive evaluations of Shinto spirit, found by Ebina as well as by Uemura and from the testimonies of Shintoists who had converted to Christianity. <sup>568</sup>

His analysis of the relationship between Christianity in Japan and the mediation

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<sup>559</sup> Acta 17, 25.

<sup>560</sup> Hiyane 1938: 230 - 231.

<sup>561</sup> Hiyane 1938: 231 - 33.

<sup>562</sup> Uoki 1941: 6 - 7.

<sup>563</sup> Uoki 1941: 223 - 229.

<sup>564</sup> Uoki 1941: 25ff.

<sup>565</sup> Uoki 1941: 144.

<sup>566</sup> Uoki 1941: 152.

<sup>567</sup> Uoki 1941: 157.

<sup>568</sup> Uoki 1941: 167 - 188.

through Buddhism followed a similar structure. Uoki particularly dwelt on Zen Buddhism and Pure Land Buddhism, mediating Christianity in Japan.<sup>569</sup>

Taking into consideration the historical thought of Ebina, Hiyane and Uoki, there are certainly ideas and elements of spiritual adaptation which in the given circumstances support and forward an uncritical acceptance of the Emperor system and its closely associated aspect of militarist expansion. Even the idea of evangelism under these circumstances mediated an adaptation to nationalist ideas which it is difficult to endorse in retrospect. There have, however, particularly in the immediate postwar research, been overlooked important, critical elements of prewar historical thought, which also were implied in the material.<sup>570</sup>

Such elements are found in the utilization of structures in Japanese Protestant history from the early Meiji Period. Through such structures, divine acts, transcending narrow national perspectives are brought to bear on greater or lesser parts of the whole national reality of Japan. The contributions of Ebina, Kagawa, Hiyane and Uoki, thus, imply an important understanding of Meiji Protestantism, namely, the idea of Christianity as a fulfillment of Japanese ideas, not vice versa. This idea, which is also found in Uemura and Uchimura, in Uemura's case particularly related to Bushido and Pure Land Buddhism,<sup>571</sup> was not primarily an aspect of syncretism or an adaptation to extreme nationalism. It was rather a transformation of Japanese cultural heritage in line with classical Christian thought.

As I have illustrated in this chapter as a whole, there are both political and theological considerations behind the predominant recognition of a qualified Protestant loyalty to the Japanese Government in its whole spiritual context; although there is not necessarily an altogether uncritical view of the military government and the way it handled the Imperial legacy from the Meiji Period. Within this context, there was a continued concern in the proper ecclesiastical presence in Japan under its new leadership.

#### 5.3.1.2.2.2 The Church and Christian Identity.

There was indeed a church-centered element in the legacy of the *genro* of Meiji Protestantism. This is particularly true for the tradition formed by Uemura Masahisa; whilst Uchimura Kanzo opened up a new way of expressing the ecclesiastical presence in Japan.

Saba Wataru's comprehensive *Uemura Masahisa to Sono Jidai* illustrated the strength of the legacy from Uemura. In the collection, several sections related the Church to social or national problems. A whole section is called "baptized Bushido", a phrase describing the views of Uemura Masahisa. The material, produced prior to 1930, reflected relationships to social and cultural issues.<sup>572</sup>

We also find nationally coloured articles in a section called "Beautiful features of Japanese Christianity", featuring *Bushido*, where a talk by Uemura and a survey of a book by the Sapporo Band member Nitobe Inazo are included.<sup>573</sup> The national concern in writing Christian history is also seen in the opening sections of the collection. Here Christian history is traced back to the early Christian envoys to Japan. As already noted,

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<sup>569</sup> Uoki 1941: 159 - 222.

Cp similar views in an article about Christian encounter with Japanese religions; Uoki 1939: 107 - 129. Cf also an interpretative account on the character of Christianity, Uoki 1943.

<sup>570</sup> Charles Germany accuses Hiyane and Uoki for syncretist historical interpretations, Germany 1965: 163ff. Fundamental, critical concerns of the two historians are then, in my opinion, overlooked.

<sup>571</sup> Supra 3.2.2.1.1 and 4.2.2.1.

<sup>572</sup> Saba 1938d: 943ff.

<sup>573</sup> Saba 1937/76: 573ff.

an encounter with early Nestorian Christianity is believed to have taken place in connection with the visit of a Chinese envoy in 736. Various pre-Protestant contacts between Christianity and Japan are presented,<sup>574</sup> including the Xavier mission and Christian ideas in the Shinto thought of Hirata Atsutane.

Though there is a national concern and national ideas and consciousness, demonstrated through structures and materials in the collection, the perspective is admittedly ecclesiastical. From the very beginning the ideas of a Christian history is introduced. In the section called "baptized Bushido", the perspective may be partly the similar national emphasis of the previous section, where Christianity is seen as fulfilling a Japanese, spiritual tradition. It is, however, more proper to regard the section as an illustration of society (culture or religion) serving the purposes of the Church. To this could be added that Uemura Masahisa, who was a church leader, has a central position in the whole book. Much of the material is exclusively about Church problems and events, of significance for the organizational development of the Church.<sup>575</sup>

Other Protestant *genro* from the Meiji Era were not given such great attention as Uemura, although we also have registered biographical material about Ebina and Kozaki,<sup>576</sup> in the latter case, even his own autobiography.<sup>577</sup> Kozaki Hiromichi was, as we know from his earlier presentations, very interested in society and in Christian contributions to society.<sup>578</sup> In his autobiography,<sup>579</sup> the perspective is nevertheless ecclesiastical. His own process of conversion and the subsequent position of leadership in the emerging Meiji Protestantism, have central functions in the book.<sup>580</sup>

We might conclude by saying that the biographical material shows a general interest in ecclesiastical issues. The persons are portrayed because of their positions and functions in the church, and convey points of ecclesiastical identification. They are seen as church representatives, and as such actors in Japanese Church History.

Looking at Japanese Church Histories from this period, an interest in Church developments with reference to such factors which have led to new political and social order from the late 1920s can be noted. Sakurai Tada in his *Kyohabetsu Kirisutokyo Shi* (Denominational History of Christianity in Japan) was keen to trace international ecclesiastical factors which had led to a differentiated denominational appearance of Japanese Protestantism. With his background in the Kumamoto Band, however, he related ecclesiastical developments to the evolution of *kokutai* (national structure).

The perspectives of Kozaki's *Nihon Kirisutokyo Shi* (History of Christianity in Japan) are wider. Principles of evangelization, training of personalities, evangelism and education, direct evangelism, unity process are highlighted issues.<sup>581</sup> Kozaki's interest in theology was pronounced. He was critical of the so called "New Theology", which he related to Harnack and also paralleled with neo-gnosticism.<sup>582</sup>

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<sup>574</sup> Saba 1937/76: 1 - 171.

<sup>575</sup> *Supra* 162ff.

<sup>576</sup> Yuasa 1942.

<sup>577</sup> Kozaki 1933: 574 - 595.

<sup>578</sup> Kozaki 1886.

<sup>579</sup> Kozaki 1933: 574 - 595.

<sup>580</sup> On his conversion, see Kozaki 1933: 31ff. On his leadership role, cf Chapter III pp 54ff about the beginning of his Christian Ministry, Chapter IV pp 87ff about his presidency of Doshisha University.

<sup>581</sup> Kozaki 1938: 574 - 95.

<sup>582</sup> Kozaki 1938: 352 - 376, 606 - 608.

The periodization of Kozaki followed the classical lines of a division from 1859 to 1873, leading up to 1883. The period 1883 - 1891 was seen as a time of rapid growth, whereas the following decade illustrated a period of "temptation".<sup>583</sup> The development of the Church is in other words periodized according to a standard criterion of growth and expansion. It might seem as if Kozaki shared the traditional understanding of a church existing for its own sake.

However, a deeper glance into the problematic of Kozaki reveals that he was immensely interested in the world outside the Church. He explored the reasons for the ecclesiastical stagnation of the 1890s. He moves on to consider popular thought,<sup>584</sup> national democratic elections,<sup>585</sup> and attitudes to Christianity among intellectuals.<sup>586</sup> The interest extends to Governmental attitudes as well as the attitudes of Buddhists towards Christianity.<sup>587</sup>

Although it can be argued that Kozaki is regrettably unaware of the *anomia* of Meiji Protestantism, and overlooked implications of the Emperor system in a militarist age, it is evident that he also wanted to relate a church-centered Christianity to contemporary society. Kozaki's Church History considered the relationship between Church and World, and highlighted various sides of the intricate dialogue between Church and environment.

Although the church served as a place of safe withdrawal from the realities of society, gradually even losing its organizational independence during the "dark years", it nevertheless, by its very existence, testified to a reality transcending Japanese nationalistic claims.

This is underlined and strengthened by the ecclesiastical history writing, where the priority of Church over society is clearly expressed.

Together with the historical interpretations of Christianity in a more general Japanese perspective, as I have reviewed them, the literature on Japanese Protestant Church History proper, expresses by implication a clear criticism of the militarist interpretation of the Meiji legacy.

#### 5.3.1.3 Conclusion.

In this chapter I have been particularly interested in how the legacy of the Meiji Period was interpreted and applied in Japanese reflections during a period of general revision of the Meiji tradition. This means that I do not claim to explore the whole theological development during the "dark years".

There is indeed a great reverence for the legacy of the pioneers of Meiji Protestantism, particularly for Uemura. In the Church historical material proper, there is also an interest in giving an independent interpretation of how Church and Society have reached the present stage of development. In this regard, a background is painted against which loyalties in the new situation could be specified and priorities could be faced. There was a concern for a qualified ecclesiastical existence in this material. At the same time there was a sense of subservience to national authorities, though Japanese Church Historians did not fully subscribe to the claims of militarist and nationalist authorities during the **Dark Years**.

#### 5.3.2 Western Concern for Japanese Protestant History Declining.

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<sup>583</sup> Kozaki 1938: List of Content.

<sup>584</sup> Kozaki 1938: 30 - 35.

<sup>585</sup> Kozaki 1938: 43 - 45.

<sup>586</sup> Kozaki 1938: 77f.

<sup>587</sup> Kozaki 1938: 133 - 40.

I have already noted that Western material on Meiji Protestantism was scarce during the Dark Years. Nonetheless, what is available reflects significant aspects of Western interpretations of Meiji Protestantism as a whole.

Whereas I have already illustrated the background of the substantial decline in the Western concern for Meiji Protestantism generally and the change of emphasis in Western missiology from historical to more normative aspects, the problem now is to analyze the interpretations which after all exist also from the dark years.

The years 1930 - 1945 in the Western literature on Japanese developments is in several ways a period of transition. This can be illustrated by a closer look at the two main works of these years, Latourette's *A History of the Expansion of Christianity*, and Hendrik Kraemer's *The Christian Message in a Non-Christian World*. Both of these books devote sections to Japanese developments.

Latourette's book pursued predominant themes in Western interpretations of Japanese developments. He applied the concepts of continuity with the West as well as the idea of the expansion of Christianity in his description of the Protestant realities of Japan.

However, Latourette also dwelt on characteristics of the Japanese development. He noted Japanese initiatives, particularly the evolution of the Non-Church movement led by Uchimura Kanzo. He also applied a certain sociological perspective, particularly when he points out the early samurai-character of the first Japanese Protestantism.<sup>588</sup> The sociological analysis together with references to socio-political factors, such as the treaty controversy, are utilized in order to explain the pattern of growth and the particular forms of expansion in Japan. As a whole, Latourette had an understanding of Christian developments in interaction with society; he not only maintained that Christianity influenced Japanese life, he was also interested in exploring how the specific Japanese environment and how Japanese social conditions had influenced Christianity.<sup>589</sup>

This implies that Latourette is aware of the various Japanese initiatives within this Protestant history in Japan, though he does not particularly stress the initiatives or the process of indigenization.

In this regard he is representative for the main trend of contemporary missionary thinking in Japan in the 1930s and early 1940s. In missionary articles there is a strong interest in Japan.<sup>590</sup> Though it has to be qualified by adding that missionaries no longer wrote all by themselves, many of the Japanese developments are left for Japanese to describe in the missionary magazines or in other articles in English.<sup>591</sup>

In the perspectives of expansion and continuity, Latourette is, however, closely followed by the existing materials in Western periodicals. There is a particular interest in expansion motifs. It can for example be seen in an article where Ebina Danjo is interviewed by the JCQ, and where the classical missionary question of growth, hindrances and methods of presentation of the Gospel are raised.<sup>592</sup>

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<sup>588</sup> Latourette 1944: 408f.

<sup>589</sup> Latourette 1944: 406 - 9.

<sup>590</sup> Cf Soper 1932, Tagawa 1939, Hiyane 1940, Thomas 1940, Saito 1941.

<sup>591</sup> Cf Ochimi 1939, Morito 1936, Yasui 1941.

<sup>592</sup> Downs 1930: 7ff, Ebina 1931: 81ff.

Expansion perspectives are applied to Uemura <sup>593</sup> and Uchimura <sup>594</sup> as well as to manifold aspects of the Christian endeavour in Japan. <sup>595</sup>

In all these aspects Mission History is alive, although there are no major monographies. The output is closely related to missionary circles and their Japanese contacts. <sup>596</sup>

In the work by Hendrik Kraemer, written at the request of the International Missionary Council to serve as material for the World Missionary Conference in 1938, there is a clear understanding of the fact that Christianity in a Japanese historical context is an aspect of the advent of Western civilization. Kraemer was particularly aware of the Japanese horizon within which the developments took place, considering the Christian developments in Japan in their close relationship to indigenous political and religious forces.

His characterisation of Japanese Christianity as "virile", possessing an evangelical spirit, and in general having a conservative and Biblical attitude can easily be endorsed. His identification of the strong denominationalism in Japan can, however, be disputed. Two characteristics of Kraemer's interpretation are particularly significant as they point forward to a new age of missionary thinking. One is his appeal to "concentrate upon Christianity, not as a set of religious tenets, but as the prophetic religion of revelation in Christ and upon living a corporate life of Christian fellowship" in order to meet the storm of religious nationalism. <sup>597</sup> This points to a radical, Barthian understanding of revelation as a pure, religious event *sui generis* upon which Christianity should build, and to a possibility of critical distance to state politics and totalitarian claims.

Another characteristic feature is his way of tackling the question of religion and state, in particular the issue of Christian participation in Shinto rites. Whereas the Presbyterian Rev. Goshi Zoji defends in direct terms the participation in such rites, partly referring to the motif of evangelization, <sup>598</sup> Kraemer sharply refutes such praxis. He holds that the greatest adversary of the Japanese Christian minority is exactly this "torrent of religious nationalism that dominates the country". <sup>599</sup> Compared to the problems of Emperor worship in the first centuries of the Roman Empire, Kraemer finds the Japanese situation even worse, due to a harder pursuit of the totalitarian ideal in Japan, as well as due to the intricacies arising when patriotic ceremonies at the shrines are declared non religious. <sup>600</sup>

The ideas voiced by Kraemer, imply a clear identification of what we have called the *anomia* of the Meiji Restoration. Perspectives are anticipated which after the democratization following the Japanese defeat in 1945, become the ground and base of a whole reappraisal, in Japanese and Western circles. Not only were developments in the 1930s and 1940s reconsidered, but also Meiji Protestantism from its very beginning. Whereas Kraemer stayed with the religious aspirations of the state and the element of Shinto worship conflicting with the central Christian identity, the critique after the war,

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<sup>593</sup> Wainright 1936: 147.

<sup>594</sup> Kakiyama 1937: 28.

<sup>595</sup> Cf Reischauer 1930: 75 - 86 and Yasui 1941 on Christian expansion in education; Morito 1936: 257 - 268 on Christian influence upon socialists; and Wainright 1932: 110ff on Christian literature.

<sup>596</sup> As to articles on Mission history in proper sense, see Reischauer 1930: 75-86; Bousanquet and J.K. Sansbury 1937: 221 - 30.

<sup>597</sup> Kraemer 1938: 400.

<sup>598</sup> *Supra* 5.3.1.1.

<sup>599</sup> Kraemer 1938: 395.

<sup>600</sup> Kraemer 1938: 395f.

however, is also extended to imply Christian attitudes to social issues and to the ideology of imperialism and militarism as a whole.<sup>601</sup>

### 5.3.3 Comparison of the Interpretations.

In this last stage of the comparative analysis which covers the years 1930 - 45, considerable differences of quality as well as quantity between the Western and the Japanese interpretative milieus are identified. The development of fascist ideologies in Japan, parallel to similar developments in Germany, and the outburst of large-scale wars in Europe, as well as in the Pacific region, signify very different national and existential conditions in Japan and in the different interpretative milieus in the West.

The fact that Western writing of mission history in Japan passes its 60th anniversary during the "dark years", counted from Verbecks report in 1883, also points to a new stage in Western Church involvement and Western history writing. For Japanese Protestantism this period signifies a coming of age, which implies a stronger concern for its own historical identity.

These two processes, the wide political and the special ecclesiastical, interact, and create various conditions for historical interpretations of the Protestant beginnings in Japan. In the West it means a marked decline of interest in Meiji Protestantism. Mission history along classical lines of continuity and expansion, following the trend of greater emphasis upon Japanese initiatives continue, however. The Western History of Mission in Japan culminates in Kenneth Scott Latourette's summary of past missionary developments. Ecclesiastical developments signify that the missionary period is terminated. More informed by the political process is the interpretation of Kraemer which raises searching questions for Japanese Protestantism from an ecumenical and Barthian standpoint. In the next decade the challenge of Kraemer was decisive for a generation of postwar interpretations of Meiji Protestantism.

Japanese writers are characterized by a heavy involvement in interpreting their own Protestant past. This is constituted by an inner development according to which a new maturity of church development is reached, but also by the stage of crisis and concern for historical identity which follows the passing away of the founders and symbols of original Japanese Protestantism, such as Uemura, Uchimura, Ebina and Kozaki. Aggravated by this crisis of change in leadership, nationalist developments enforce the search for a Protestant identity, in particular in relation to nationalist and militarist claims of being the true heirs of the Meiji legacy.

Whereas the two processes of history, the wider political and the narrow ecclesiastical, interact to weaken Western interest in Japanese developments, they have the opposite effect in Japan. The concern for expressing a Protestant identity is increased by the interaction of these two processes. This leads to a fertile ground for Japanese expositions of Meiji Protestantism, where sublime works of historical interpretations are produced.

Within the traditionally more social and national Kumamoto stream of thought there is continually a strong interest in relating Christianity to national ideas, as seen in the historical thinking of Uoki and others, who follow the lines of Ebina.

The Uchimura tradition, lacking organizational structure, lives on in the private religious sphere. It is mainly an impetus within fundamentalist Christian groups to resist totalitarian claims in Japanese society.

Due to an increasing nationalist pressure, however, there is a converging tendency

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<sup>601</sup> Kumazawa is critical to what he calls a "social retrogression", cf Kumazawa 1976: 184, 187. Dohi admits that Christianity during the years of its history in Meiji Japan came to support the Emperor system, Dohi 1980: 111. Tsukada Osamu has devoted a special study to this subject called *Tennoseika no Kirisutokyo* (Christianity under the Emperor system) with particular reference to the Episcopal Church in Japan. He illustrates the Christian suppression, under this system, and highlights how *Nihonteki Kirisutokyo* (Japanese Christianity) prepared a Christian acceptance of *Tennosei*, Tsukada 1981: 33.

in all streams to adapt to nationalist claims by the fascist state of 1930 - 1945, particularly after the promulgation of a Religious Bodies Law in 1939.

My investigation has shown, that in spite of increasing Church involvement in Japanese imperialist aims, there is a continuing testimony through church life and Christian interpretation of Meiji Protestantism to the effect of resisting the totalitarian claims of militarist Japan as representing the true Meiji legacy.

## CH. 6 CONCLUSION.

### 6.1 MEIJI PROTESTANTISM REVISITED.

This study has dealt with Meiji Protestantism in history and its historiography. The break through of Christianity in certain sectors of Japanese society during the period of national and social transformation after the Meiji Restoration has provided a compelling as well as a controversial legacy, which has been critically assessed in both Japanese and Western Church History. This has particularly been the case since the Second World War. Significant features have been highlighted in the Introduction <sup>602</sup> as regards Japanese writers. Western writers have also ventured into the area of Meiji Protestantism. <sup>603</sup>

Meiji Protestantism has left a legacy which has proved to be a challenge on various levels, existential as well as intellectual, through the different periods of modern Japanese church history. In the post-war critical assessment of Meiji Protestantism, a new understanding of Japanese Protestantism has been attained. In connection with the new criticism there has emerged a qualified scholarship of Japanese Ecclesiastical History, primarily in Japan, secondarily in Western milieus.

In the second chapter I have dwelt on my own understanding of the formation of Meiji Protestantism. The presentation is based on contemporary studies in Japanese history, where I have been especially informed by Inoue Kiyoshi, Kitajima Masamoto, Okada Akio and Western scholars such as W.G. Beasley, Edwin O. Reischauer, George Sansom and Richard Storry. As to the inner dynamics of Meiji Protestantism I have deliberately made note of the significant contributions by contemporary Japanese scholars such as Dohi Akio, Kudo Eiichi, Ono Shizuo, Sumiya Mikio, Takeda Cho Kiyoko, Takenaka Masao and others.

However, I have moved a step further. I have tried to see the contemporary scholarly concern with Meiji Protestantism in its historical context and against the background of previous attempts to account for the breakthrough of Protestantism in Japan. Thus I assess the relevance of the legacy from the Meiji era, especially ecclesiastically, in subsequent periods in Japanese history. I have in other words devoted myself to its historiography and have tried to identify the characteristics of pre-war Japanese interpretations of Meiji Protestantism by a comparison with parallel Western accounts.

My venture has proved rewarding. In concluding I will try to relate my findings to issues raised by the critical approach to the formation of Meiji Protestantism, which informs contemporary Japanese and Western interpretations of the process. As in the introduction, I will relate my account deliberately to the concerns of distinguished Japanese colleagues in the study of Meiji Protestantism.

### 6.2 RELEVANT FINDINGS.

My study of Japanese and Western interpretations of Meiji Protestantism from 1872 till the end of Second World War has demonstrated a development of distinct Japanese interpretative traditions. These traditions follow the main variations within Meiji Protestantism as expressed through the three bands. The influence of the original leaders of the bands can be spurned in the historical interpretations right down to the end of World War II.

The ecclesiastical interpretations of Uemura Masahisa is, thus, pursued by Yamamoto Hideteru and Sakurai Tada as well as in the concerns expressed by theologians such as Takakura Tokutaro or pastors such as Omomuro Rinzo.

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<sup>602</sup> Supra 1.1.2.

<sup>603</sup> Supra 1.1.3.

In more biographical material such as the extensive collection of material from the early Protestant history, Uemura Masahisa to *sono Jidai* (U. M. and his Times), the early ecclesiastical interests of the Yokohama Band is a dominating perspective.

It might, however, be stated that the nationally and socially more flexible and liberal tradition from the Kumamoto Band, with its extensions and developments, reflected a more analytical and assessing interest in church history. This can be noticed already from the early writings of Yamaji Aizan, developed through the works of Ebina Danjo and Kozaki Hiromichi and later in contributions by theologically reflected historians such as Uoki Tadakazu. This tradition has, however, been more vulnerable as it leans towards an uncritical interpretation of national and the political aspects of the Meiji legacy.

The sharp criticism of the Emperor system voiced by Uchimura Kanzo, who initiated the Non-church Movement, has, however, been linked with a strong ahistorical approach to Christianity. This has not led to an interest in the tenets of Meiji Protestantism during the period covered in this study.

These Japanese developments move in a clear contrast to the Western interpretations of Meiji Protestantism. The generally missionary based Western interpretations which were developed according to the classical model of a history of expansion of missionary initiatives reached a peak in Otis Cary's *History of Christianity in Japan* from 1909, although the real climax is K.S. Latourette's chapter on Japanese developments in his *The Expansion of Christianity*.

However, on the Western side the historical concern soon is qualified or even replaced by a more decidedly missiological, evaluative approach. An early venture is Raoul Allier's *Le Protestantisme au Japon* and the peak of this development is Hendrik Kraemer's assessment of Japanese developments in *The Christian Message in a Non-Christian World*. In his critical discussion of contemporary Christian interaction with the Shinto shrine-veneration and the policy of religion of the militarist government, Kraemer anticipated the critical questions which are basic to post-war studies in Meiji Protestantism.

### 6.3 CONTEMPORARY JAPANESE CHURCH HISTORY IN CONTEXT.

When pre- and post-war Japanese interpretations of Meiji Protestantism are contrasted, great differences become apparent. The greatest and most decisive difference might be the fact that whereas the pre-war interpretation of Meiji Protestantism is increasingly predisposed to a militarist and nationalist understanding of the Meiji Period since 1930, there is in the postwar years a critical detachment to these national emphases. Such a change of interpretative orientation, girded by a greater variation and more qualified academic approach to history indicate that the birth of a qualified Japanese Church History belongs to a post-war age.

This understanding is supported by the fact that new church policies appear and the attainment of university positions by a new generation of scholars. Hiyané Antei, Uoki Tadakazu and the great postwar church historian Ishihara Ken, made their appearance in the academical world before the war. But the great majority of post-war church historians represent a new generation. They have shown great flexibility and understanding of the new ecclesiastical situation, critically facing the new challenges of history, without being burdened by the compromising experiences of writing history during the "dark years".

An interesting aspect of post-war scholarship should be mentioned. Whereas the Non-church Movement was ahistorically inclined, and due to its anti-imperial leanings operated outside the stream of dominant thought in church history prior to 1945, this situation is turned upside down after 1945. An increasingly broad stream of primarily biographical history writing has assessed the dynamics of the *mukyokai* movement and more particularly characteristics of the personality and thinking of its leader, Uchimura Kanzo. This testifies clearly to a reassessment of Meiji Protestantism in the critical, new Japanese scholarship.

Against this background of reorientation in post-war historiography, one might ask about the value of analyzing pre-war church history interpretations. The answer to that question will first of all be that a study of church historical interpretation of Meiji

Protestantism adds a dimension to pre-war theological developments. It demonstrates that to each of the particular streams of theological interpretation there is also a particular understanding of the commanding historical legacy. It is clear from my investigation that the three major theological streams differ markedly, for example in their interpretation of national motifs.

The study secondly reveals that church history seemed not to have been able to reveal the *anomia* of the Meiji legacy, but accepted the inconsistencies as presuppositions of the age. It could, however, be argued, as I have done in the last chapter, that church history worked with a reality which transcended the limits of Japanese history, and which challenged the claims of the Emperor system and the nationalism of the 1930s, even up to the time of the Pacific war. I am inclined to stress this observations as one of the specific findings of the study.

There is thirdly a point of contact between the pre-war and post-war study of history in a common concern for Meiji Protestantism. Pre-war church history was seriously occupied with understanding the Meiji Protestant legacy, in particular after the crisis in leadership was enlarged by developments of ultra nationalist trends in the 30s. But, post-war church history is also interested in this objective. After all, the roots of Japanese Protestantism are found in the Meiji period!

Against this background I suggest that there is a need for modern Japanese church historians to also relate positively to its prewar predecessors. If it is right that the three main theological and spiritual traditions, defined as a (Yokohama based) "church", a (Sapporo based) "non-church" and a (Kumamoto based) "social" approach to Christian realities and Christian scholarship, continue in the post-war situation, and I believe that it to a large extent is so, this will imply that there are continuing influences from the Meiji legacy as well as from prewar research. They can decisively inform the modern historical approach in an age of new intellectual challenges.

In post-war Ecclesiastical History in Japan, the reasons why a fascist state developed in Japan with its devastating internal and external consequences, have been explored. Mainstream Japanese Protestantism is criticized for an uncritical identification with the nationalist military government, and this attitude has further led to a critical reappraisal of the very legacy of the Meiji era. In this way, the critique of developments since 1930 inform the perspective on Meiji Protestantism in its entire historical setting.

However, a closer look at the alternative approaches and emphases in the new Japanese critique of Meiji Protestantism reveals the existence of links between post-war and pre-war attitudes to the legacy of Meiji Protestantism. The three distinct interpretative traditions, which reflect the heritage of the three dominant bands which made up early Meiji Protestantism, can thus also be detected in contemporary Church Historical discussions in Japan.

To acknowledge the existence of this structure might condition a more positive approach to the Meiji roots of Japanese Protestantism. A renewed interest in the Uchimura tradition, not immediately linked to the ahistorical spirituality of the *mukyokai* during its early generations is already noted. I am inclined to suggest that the Uemura tradition and the legacy of the Kumamoto Band also be positively acknowledged and continually explored in the new interpretative milieu. Rightly critical attitudes to political compromises in the past should not overshadow Japanese Protestant roots and their continued relevance in Japan and in the world at large.

## CHAPTER 7: APPENDIX OF SOURCE-MATERIAL

The following is a chapterwise inventory of sources for the historiographical part of the study. The material is arranged according to literary categories. The categories are arranged after their degree of rumination, starting with the comparatively "unreflected" Direct Accounts, ending up with the Interpretative Accounts, where the subject is treated more fully.

For the sake of convenience the three subsections are named 7.3, 7.4 and 7.5, in accordance with the corresponding chapters.

### 7.3 SOURCE-MATERIAL CHAPTER 3.

#### 7.3.1 Japanese Sources.

##### 7.3.1.1 Direct Accounts

- |                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| <b>Chukai giroku.</b>  | (District Records)   |
| 1877 - 1878            | The First District Records of <b>Nihon Kirisuto Kyokai.</b>                              |
| <b>Daishinbokkai.</b>  | (Fellowship of Believers)  |
| 1880                   | The Fellowship of Believers Opened in Osaka.   |
| <b>Kokai Nishi.</b>    | (First Church Diary)   |
| 1872                   | <b>Kokai</b> Diary. Entry February 2nd 1872.   |
| 1873                   | Excerpts from <b>Kokai Nishi</b> 1873.   |
| <b>Kokai Rules.</b>    |  |
| 1872a                  | The First Rules of <b>Nihon Kirisuto Kokai.</b>  |
| 1872b                  | Regulations of <b>Nihon Kirisuto Kokai</b> , Saba 1937/76.                               |
|                        |  |
| 7.3.1.2                | Essay Material (Articles, letters, personal diaries, speeches).                          |
|                        |  |
| <b>A New Essay.</b>    |  |
| 1868                   | A New Essay on the Protection of the Country by the Rev. Folly-Pitier.                   |
| <b>Nijima, Joseph.</b> |  |
| 1891                   | Letters and Diary 1865 - 1890 from <b>Hardy</b> 1891.                                    |
| <b>Rikugo Zasshi.</b>  |  |
| 1880                   | Editorial Principles of <b>Rikugo</b> Magazine.  |
| <b>Sawayama Paul.</b>  |  |
| 1883                   | Selfsupport of the Japanese Church. Speech.  |
| <b>Takahashi Goro.</b> |  |
| 1893                   | Biased Theories from a Philosopher. <b>Kokumin no Tomo.</b>                              |
| <b>Tales.</b>          |  |
| 1868                   | Tales of Nagasaki. The Story of the Evil Doctrine.                                       |
| <b>Uchimura Kanzo</b>  |  |
| 1886                   | Moral Traits of the " <b>Yamato-damashii</b> ".  |
| 1897a                  | Observations on Christian Missions. From Y.C. April 7, 8, 9, 10, 15, 16.                 |
| 1897b                  | The Doshisha .Y.C. Sept 14.  |
| 1897c                  | Again on Doshisha. Y.C. Sept 16.   |
| 1897d                  | Dr. Niishima's beloved D disciple. Y.C. Sept.16.   |
| 1898                   | <b>Higo</b> Men and Japanese Christianity. Y.C. March 13.                                |
| 1899a                  | The Worldliness of the Japanese Christians. Y.C. Feb 20.                                 |
| 1899b                  | Some Eminent Japanese who gave up Christianity. Y.C. March 20, 27, Apr 3, 17, May 8, 15. |

- Uemura Masahisa.**  
1891a+b The Present and Future Christianity in Japan by Kanamori Tsurin. A Book Review in *Nihon Hyoron*, June and July issues 1891.
- 1891c The Present Situation of Religious Thought *Nihon Hyoron* October.
- 1892 The First Church in the Japanese Empire) *Fukuin Shinpo* no 53 - 54.
- 1893a Mr.Inoue Tetsuro and Mr.Takahashi Goro. *Nihon Hyoron* no 50. April 8th 1893 .
- 1893b One or two facts about Japanese Church History *Fukuin Shinpo* September.
- 1895 Independent Office of Evangelism. *Fukuin Shinpo* July.
- 1896 The Christian World in Meiji 28. *Fukuin Shinpo* January .
- 1897 On the book "History of the Christian Church in Japan" *Fukuin Shinpo* Jan.
- 1898a Dr. Verbeck passes away .*Fukuin Shinpo* March Saba 1937/76.
- 1898b The *Bushido* of Christianity). A speech in *Kudan Methodist Church. Fukuin Shinpo*. March
- 1898c The Shallow Waters of the Religious World *Fukuin Shinpo* no 159
- 1903 Overseas Missionaries in Japan Methodist Church *Fukuin Shinpo*. February.
- 1905a Church Independence *Fukuin Shinpo*. October.
- 1905b Dr. Hepburn *Fukuin Shinpo*. April.
- Yamaji Aizan.**  
1891 A Concern for Kanamori Tsurin. *Jogaku Zasshi*. May No 266.
- Yuya Saichiro.**  
1896 Dr. Verbeck and The Soul of Japan. *Fukuin Shinpo* February.
- 
- 7.3.1.3 Interpretative Accounts
- 
- Kanamori Tsurin.**  
1891 Present and Future Christianity in Japan.
- Kozaki Hiromichi**  
1886 A New Theory on Politics and Religion.
- Naruse Jinso.**  
1893 A Modern Paul in Japan.
- Nitobe Inazo**  
1905 *Bushido the Soul of Japan. An Exposition of Japanese Thought.*
- Uchimura Kanzo.**  
1895 How I became a Christian.
- 1894 Representative Men of Japan.
- Uemura Masahisa**  
1884 One Line of Truth.
- 
- Yokoi Tokio.**  
1891 A New View on Christianity.
- 1894 The Problem of Christianity in Our Country.

7.3.2	Western Sources.
7.3.2.1	Direct Accounts
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