

Christian Higher Education in the Context of Japanese Culture

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Crises in Christian higher education are nothing new. In the West, since the Enlightenment of the 18th century, Christian higher education has faced a series of challenges — challenges from rationalism, the modern sciences, evolutionary theory, nationalism, fascism, socialism, liberalism, materialism, secularism, religious pluralism etc. The end of the 20th century is no exception. But while the current scene is not unexceptional, it is extraordinary in the sense that Christian higher education is rapidly losing its grasp of the world and its reality.

In a recent article entitled “The Secularization of the Christian University,” Professor FURUTA Yasuo of International Christian University, a leading advocate for the renewal of Christian higher education in Japan and the author of *The Theology of University* (1993, in Japanese), points to the world-wide and ecumenical concern for the crises it is facing today. Two recent documents he cites are of considerable interest in illuminating the contemporary situation. The one is the 1992 book, *The Secularization of the Academy*, which traces the role Christianity has played in the American higher education and concludes that Christianity, a leading force a century ago, now is “tolerated as a peripheral enterprise and often is simply excluded.” The other is a Catholic document, *Apostolic Constitution on Catholic Universities* issued by Pope John Paul II in 1990, which urges all Catholic universities to face the crises and to uphold their Catholic identity.¹

This article is a small attempt to illustrate the present state of Christian higher education in Japan. By doing so, however, the author wishes to share the reality of Christian

optimism which Christianity has fostered for 20 centuries against the waves of challenges it has encountered and which it is about to survive even in the 21st century.

1. What are the Issues ?

The basic issues which Christian higher education in Japan is facing, I believe, are four. Although some of them are historical and others contemporary, all of them seem to have considerable impact upon the present state. They are:

- (i) Reason-to-be
- (ii) Identity
- (iii) Integrity
- (iv) New Challenges

The first is an old issue of the reason for the existence of Christian higher education, namely, “Mission and Education.” In a country like Japan where modern Christian education was introduced by the Western churches and their missionaries in the second half of the 19th century, the primary purpose of “mission” was inevitable. The term “mission schools” has become part of a Japanese vocabulary designating the schools of Christian background ranging from primary schools to universities. In the case of Japan, however, the introduction of Christianity coincided with the formative stage of modern nationhood, the “education” aspect of which became increasingly emphasized even to the extent that it came into conflict with the “mission” aspect. In the pre-WW II period, Christian education was thoroughly integrated into the nationalistic educational system and even Christian teachings and worship were not allowed in both the curricular and the extra-curricular programs in Christian schools. Only after Japan’s defeat in 1945 did the situation drastically change and Christian schools gain a free hand in Christian teaching, worship and evangelism. However, the issue of integrating both “Mission and Education,” especially in Christian universities, is still with us today.

The second issue is more or less a post-WW II issue. Along with Japan's economic recovery and the rising demands for higher education, many of the old mission schools have grown to be prestigious, multi-departmental universities with high records of admissions and job placements. With the blessings of the Ministry of Education, they have been increasingly integrated into the industry-education conglomerate which has helped to boost Japan to become an economic giant. In the late 1960's, however, student unrest and demonstrations shook many campuses across the nation. Many Christian universities were also involved and the major issue there was their identity as Christian schools. Although the student demonstrations gradually subsided, the issue saw no satisfactory solution and its impact has been felt ever since.

The third issue concerns the nature and quality of Christian higher education. For a long time we heard about the "secularization" of Christian universities. But in recent years we are hearing "impasse" and "fossilization." What is at stake is their integrity, what makes their education distinctively Christian. The issues of the so-called "Christian code" for teachers and administrators, mandatory chapel attendance, the curricular requirements for the Christian courses etc. have been discussed. Although these are issues vital to the nature of their Christian education, these are not all what the "integrity" issue is about. The real issue must be deeper and more comprehensive. In this respect, there seem to be some positive and hopeful developments of seeking their integrity.

The last issue is contemporary and, to a great extent, is related to so-called post-modernism. This may turn out to be the most devastating new challenge which Christianity and its higher education have ever encountered in this century. In modern Japan, Christianity with its Western background has been identified with modernity. Oftentimes, the Christian movements have been characterized as "Western, modern and reformist." Christian higher education not only has shared the same characterization but also has positively contributed to the growth of capitalism in Japan. Beginning in the 1970s', there emerged the world-wide phenomenon which indicated the impasse reached by such modern ideologies and systems as socialism, capitalism, democracy, states, sciences, universities etc. Postmodernism challenged the universal values claimed

by these ideologies and systems. In the same manner Christian universities are witnessing their Christian values radically challenged. In this monistic, individualistic and pluralistic age of postmodernism, the issue is whether Christian universities can really survive.

2. Reason-to-be: Mission and Education

(a) Discrepancy

First of all, we notice a curious discrepancy in statistics. According to the latest Christian Yearbook, the Christian population amounts to 0.85%, that is 85 Christians out of 10,000 Japanese. In the post WW II period the Christian population has remained at about 1%. It seems as if Christianity is under the spell of a 1% barrier. Or, if we use a more appropriate Biblical concept, Japanese Christianity has always been a “diaspora.”

Despite the fact that the Japanese Church claims only 1% or less as the Christian population, the following figures are to be seriously taken into consideration.

- (i) According to the Ministry of Education, Christian influence extends to 7–10% of the total population. It is assumed that this figure takes into account those who are in Christian schools as well as their graduates.
- (ii) According to a recent Christian Yearbook, Christian schools of Protestant origins total over 35 universities, over 50 junior colleges and nearly 100 high schools. Catholic schools are not counted in these figures.
- (iii) There are over 300,000 students who are enrolled in Christian schools, ranging from kindergarten through university. This figure is almost equal to one third of the professed Christian population of Japan.

From the above, can we simply assume that Christianity in Japan has been unsuccessful in evangelism and church formation but successful in education? The real picture is not so simplistic, but points to the fact that the Japanese church in general has failed to support the church’s “teaching” ministry and has left the responsibility of Christian education on the shoulders of the foreign missions and those who are involved

in Christian schools. Traditionally in the Christian West, for example, the church, the Christian home and the schools have shared the responsibility for religious education. As both the young Japanese church and its Christian homes failed to shoulder their proper shares, the Christian schools were forced to bear a disproportionately large responsibility.²

(b) *Mission Schools*

It may be reasonably safe to portray an early Protestant missionary, or a Christian who had ventured to come to distant Japan, as a Christian of the Puritan-Pietistic background and as a believer in both evangelism and higher education. Even while Christianity was still banned, some of these early missionaries were engaged in such educational activities as teaching English, translating, etc. until they were allowed to evangelize. After the ban was officially lifted in 1873, their mission schools flourished. According to one analysis, 70% of the Christian schools for girls and 60% of those for boys started as mission schools in the period between 1870–1889.³

Since the term means a school for mission, mission schools used education as a means for evangelism. Their use, however, was basically not utilitarian but was motivated by their high sense of vocation for education. It is well known in the history of Japanese education that mission schools greatly contributed to Japan's modernization especially in their early years. Naive though it may have been, they took both "Mission and Education" seriously and believed that the Japanese as well as Japanese society could be changed by both of them. A noted scholar on the history of mission schools, KUDO Eiichi, remarked: "A great contribution which Christianity, especially Protestantism, made in the early years of the Meiji era was to liberate the Japanese youth from their traditional mold and teach them the equality and dignity of human beings."⁴

(c) *Christian Schools (Kirisutokyo Shugi Gakko)*

During the first two decades of the Meiji era, the government had an open policy toward the West. The Education Act (1879) and School Act (1886) helped Japan to turn from its feudalistic past to becoming a modern state. This was a pro-Western education

policy period. Mission school education helped to enhance the modern, individualistic and liberal ideal of the West.

Then a reactionary, nationalistic period followed. Nationalism, the revival of Japanese religions especially Confucianism and Shintoism, political unrest and economic difficulties, which generated an anti-Western sentiment among the people, helped to turn the tide. Symbolic events were the promulgation of the Constitution in 1889 and the Imperial Rescript on Education in 1890. Their impact was strongly felt on education and signaled that education could no longer be considered just for human freedom and equality but decisively for the national consensus and for the standards to unify the thought of the populace. Mission schools needed to reorient their education. A more decisive blow to them was Directive No. 12 of the Education Ministry (1899), which read in part that “in the schools regulated by the education laws of the State neither religious education nor religious cults were to be exercised even as extracurricular activities.” The Directive was particularly aimed at mission schools. Some of the mission schools opposed the Directive to the extent of forsaking their government accreditations but many others followed it.⁵ In general, however, a new trend of accommodation set in.

As a result of this accommodation process many mission schools evolved to be Kirisutokyo *Shugi* Gakko, Christian schools, more literally however, is the English equivalent, *Christian-ism* schools. Some factors in this process were:

- i) Largely due to external pressure, their leadership was handed over to the Japanese.
- ii) “Mission and Education” were separated. Their goal was no longer evangelism but for the sake of education per se, that is for the nation.
- iii) Their curriculum was secularized and absorbed within the political, economical, and cultural life of the nation.
- iv) Their Christian standards, Christian code, and theological position, etc. were compromised.

After Japan's defeat, the infamous Directive No. 12 was completely abolished and religious freedom was restored to Christian schools. However, it is rather amazing to see that these Christian schools' basic stand on "Mission and Education" was not drastically changed. With their new freedom, furthermore, many of them flourished and became universities of high reputation and soon were imbedded in the national program of the postwar resurgence of the Japanese economy.

3. Identity : Founding Spirit and Christian-ism

(a) Reaction

At the height of the postwar recovery, in the late 1960's and the early 1970's, many universities in Japan experienced severe campus unrest. The student movement was ideologically and politically motivated and was directed against Japanese society, its status-quo. Many Christian universities, including Meiji Gakuin, Kwansai Gakuin, Kanto Gakuin, Tohoku Gakuin and International Christian University, were involved. There in particular, the heart of the issue seemed to be the very identity of Christian universities and inevitably the issue touched on the question of "Mission and Education."

In 1969 a book symbolically entitled as *Kiristokyo Shugi Daigaku no Shi to Saisei* (Death and Rebirth of Christian Universities) appeared. The author was TAKAO Toshikazu, one of the radical critics of Christian universities and himself then Associate Divinity Professor of Kanto Gakuin University, which later abolished its divinity school in 1973. He criticised the pretense of a "Christian" university as hypocritical because it was just serving the industry-education conglomerate, while the school's Founding Spirit, Christian code, chapel, chaplaincy, and the compulsory courses on Christianity were both antiquated and illusory to the reality of the school. His reformatory proposal amounted to a thorough separation of "Mission and Education." He said that "since the Christian faith establishes freedom and enhances it, what is called a Christian university must, paradoxically speaking, cease to be "Christian-ism" in order to be truly "Christian." ⁶

(b) Responses

What were the responses to this challenge? In a debate over “the Ideal and Reality of Christian Universities”, for example, TAKASAKI Takeshi, then President of Tokyo Union Theological Seminary (Tokyo Shingaku Daigaku) and a noted specialist on Christian education, took issue with TAKAO and others. He admitted the reality (*de facto*) which they charged as being unworthy of their Christian names but insisted on the right (*de jure*) to operate Christian universities as private schools on Christian principles. Further, he pointed out a great role which private universities had played on behalf of public education in Japan and that their self-determination needed to be guarded.⁷ In another debate, FURUYA Yasuo argued that, first of all, they should not be “Christian-ism” universities where Christianity itself disappeared and only the Christian atmosphere remained but they should be “Christian” universities where Christianity was deeply involved in their actual life. In Christian universities, and because they were “Christian”, he insisted, the search for truth and freedom of research could be guaranteed.⁸

In the debates, TAKAO further claimed that Christian universities should be devoid of religion and that Christian principles should be reduced to such general principles as humanity, freedom, equality and philanthropy.⁹ What amounts to be a Christian university for him was its concern for the universal and non-sectarian truth. His ideal was thoroughly modern, secular and humanistic.

Long after the campus unrest and the challenges subsided, some recent responses have appeared. In 1984 ONO Tadanobu of Meiji Gakuin remarked that TAKAO’s and others’ challenge “hardly shook the major premise for the existence of Christian universities.” Furthermore, MATSUKAWA Shigeo of Tokyo Women’s University, one of the panelists in the debates mentioned above, concluded that “the two directions went on roughly in parallel and the theoretical solution has never been seen until today.”¹⁰

(c) Identity Crisis

Oftentimes a Christian university's identity is stated in its Founding Spirit, a document which expresses its *modus operandi*. The focal point of the identity crisis, therefore, is centered around it. In many universities the Christian principles are expressed in moralistic and humanistic terms. Naturally such a kind has a wider appeal to the non-Christian teachers and students in Christian universities. In this connection, ONO remarked that Protestant Christianity planted over a century ago in Japan was ethically oriented and Christian schools too were accepted by the government and the populace on this basis. An earlier example of this type of Christianity was NIIJIMA Jo, the founder of Doshisha University. In his *Doshisha Daigakko Setsuritsu Shui* (Founding Statement of Doshisha University, 1883), he stated "Christian-ism" as the basis of ethical education and "Christian ethics" as consisting in "trusting the Emperor, loving truth, and exercising concerns for one's neighbors."¹¹

One of the distinguished literary critics of post-war Japan, KATO Shuichi, wrote in 1975 *Nihon Bungakushi Josetsu* (Introduction to the Literary History of Japan). Kato pointed out that Japanese culture is exclusive and closed to other cultures, and when it has to receive them, it forces them to be "Japanized." The direction of Japanization, he said, is the same especially when the foreign cultures are such highly sophisticated and comprehensive systems as Confucianism, Buddhism, Christianity and Marxism. The direction can be summarized as follows:

- i) To cut off the system's abstract and conceptual aspects.
- ii) To disassemble the comprehensive system and to reduce it to practical and particular points.
- iii) To exclude the transcendental principles.
- iv) To reinterpret the "that-worldly" system in terms of "this-worldly" practicality.
- v) To soften the system's exclusivism.

If we apply KATO's thesis to Christianity in Japan, we can say that Japan accepts Christianity not as the system of doctrines, theology and worldview but as a useful

religion of ethics and education. Thus, Japanized Christianity is more or less the principle of conduct or a tolerant religion of love rather than an exclusivistic religion. We may say that this is a kind of Christianity inbedded in Christian higher education. If so, this may well explain the discrepancy mentioned above in 2 (a) and may further complicate the identity issue of Christian universities.

4. Integrity: Truth and Ethics

FURUYA Yasuo, ICU Professor, pays special attention to Allan Bloom's book, *The Closing of the American Mind* (1982), which is said to raise two basic questions facing modern universities, namely, the questions of truth and ethics. He cites the following quotation from the book (p. 25):

There is one thing a Professor can be absolutely certain of: almost every student entering the university believes or says he believes, that truth is relative.¹²

Could this be the case for Christian universities in Japan? Can they convincingly give answers to questions from their Christian perspective? What is at stake seems to be their very integrity.

(a) Impasse and Fossilization

In the past decade or so, the overall picture surrounding Japanese universities has been rather gloomy. They are said to be facing the "winter season." Signs are ominous: the current 18 year old population of over 2 million will be down to 1.5 at the beginning of the next century; oversized universities are facing financial difficulties; two dozen junior colleges already have been closed in recent years; thorough curriculum revisions are in place and the tenure system for teachers is being reconsidered; job placements, especially for women students, are getting tighter, and so on.

In addition to these concerns, Christian universities are facing such particular issues as internal challenges against their Founding Spirit, the so-called Christian code,

chapel services, Christian courses etc. In the last few years, for example, the faculties of Miyagi Gakuin Women's University and Meiji Gakuin University voted to strike out the Christian code for their presidents, thus opening the way to non-Christian presidents. Oftentimes, Christian universities are said to be slow in responding to the growing awareness of the society and to the issues of the day. In a 1984 article on the relation of education and religion in Christian schools in Japan, William Mensendiek pointed the existence of the gender issue. In particular he cited the cases of two universities founded by the German Reformed Church of the United States in 1886 and provided the following statistics: at Miyagi Gakuin, only 7 out of 31 professors are women and all department heads are male; at Tohoku Gakuin only 4 (including 2 foreigners) out of 80 professors are women and so likewise 2 out of 55 assistant professors.¹³

If society's attitude toward Christian universities is becoming cool, and if its general trend is conservative like the so-called New Japanism which tries to identify Japan with the old non-Western values, and if the internal secularization of and indifference toward their Christian values are dominant within them, how can their Christian integrity survive?

(b) New Trends

In spite of all signs which seemingly indicate pessimism, however, there have been some encouraging trends. A general direction of these trends seems to point to a serious search for both the integration of "Mission and Education" and the integrity of Christian universities.

i) Missio Dei as service for humanity

Although sharing the "death of Christian universities" sentiment, some have tried to find a supposedly higher calling of Missio Dei as a new missiological goal for Christian universities. "As the calling of Christian schools is over," SAITO Masahiko said, "from now on they have to search for a new calling of serving humanity, being sent out by the church and serving in the educational situation."¹⁴ More recently ONO Tadanobu urged Christian universities to apply this goal to their campus life and said that, instead of the early missionaries' slogan of "Proclaim, heal and teach" they should hold a new

slogan of “Proclaim, have fellowship and serve,” having the spirit of deep concern for the non-Christian members and respecting their freedom and equality.¹⁵ The key to Missio Dei seems to be, on the one hand, the direct connection of the gospel with the world as Missio Dei and, on the other hand, the subordinate role of the church and Christian universities in service for humanity.

ii) Church positivism

This is a widely observed trend which has tried to rectify Christian schools’ past faults and redefine them in terms of the church’s ministry. Being influenced partly by Barthian theology, this trend has advocated a positive approach to both the Christian church and its “Mission and Education.” An early advocate, TAKASAKI Takeshi, wrote that “a Christian school is a school established and managed by the Christian church (denomination, individual church, church member) exercising general education on the basis of the Christian faith.”¹⁶ Another advocate, KUMAGAI Kazutsuna, Professor and Chaplain of Kwansei Gakuin University, wrote in 1976 that religious education in Christian schools should not be simply for old style evangelism but should reflect the church’s mission and “mission in the classroom.”¹⁷

iii) Theological reorientation

Today, this trend is perhaps the most active and productive of all. It aims to revitalize Christian schools by means of theological reexamination of their “Mission and Education.” (Since its advocates try to make Christian schools more distinctively Christian, they seem to prefer “Christian schools” to the older term of “Christian-ism schools”). Among the earlier advocates for the reorientation were such notable figures as KITAMORI Kazo and KUMANO Yoshitaka. Among more recent advocates the most vocal figure is OHKI Hideo. It is interesting to note that Tokyo Union Theological Seminary (TUTS) which also earlier experienced campus unrest, is behind this trend. A 1987 publication, *Kyoiku no Shingaku* (Theology of Education), represents perhaps the best of this trend. The contributors to this volume include OHKI Hideo, SATO Toshio, KONDO Katsuhiko (TUTS), KURAMATSU Isao (Tohoku Gakuin) and FURUYA Yasuo (ICU). In its lead article, also entitled “Kyoiku no Shingaku,” OHKI proposes to

establish theology of education in place of Christian education. As the title itself strongly suggest the influence of Paul Tillich's "Theology of Culture," the author considers education as a vital portion of a culture and suggests that the theology of education in Christian schools should bear a wider impact on education and culture at large. In closing he suggests that a Christian school must be the "heart" rather than the "appendix" of public education.¹⁸

iv) Daigaku no Shingaku (Theology of the University)

The most recent and thought provoking publication on our topic is FURUYA Yasuo's 1993 book. He addresses the issue not only to Christian universities but also to a wider circle of higher education in Japan. Citing Robert Bellah's thesis that today's university is the "church" in secularized society, the author says that Christian theology which is responsible for the Christian church should also be responsible for the secular church, i.e. the university.¹⁹ This is the idea behind the title of the book. The author draws a great deal of the case study material from some American universities of Christian background and applies them to the Japanese situation. Citing Alan Bloom's controversial book, *The Closing of the American Mind* (1987) and its thesis that "Higher education has failed democracy and impoverished the souls of today's students," the author contends that the issues concerning truth and ethics are two major issues confronting today's universities. He seems to be encouraged by some American universities' attempts to counter the relativism in truth issue and the lack of ethical standards.²⁰ Reflecting on the recent American attempts, the author optimistically views Japan's Christian universities as confronting a great opportunity to have influence. As a token of his optimism, he cites the result of a 1991 poll conducted by Recruit Company concerning the satisfaction degree of some well known universities in Japan and notes that five out of the ten top ranking universities are Christian — ICU, Sophia, Doshisha, Tsuda and Rikkyo.²¹

v) An Evangelical attempt

In 1990 Tokyo Christian University (TCU) was founded in Chiba Prefecture. It was an Evangelical attempt to integrate afresh "Mission and Education". In reality

TCU is a theological college which received a university status. It was started in a climate of declining interest in the ideal of the Christian university and especially that of the theological faculty. Also TCU is the first theological faculty which has, beside a theology major, a new major in International Christian Studies. Accordingly, its curriculum aims to integrate general education, theological and international studies for the higher goal of world evangelism.²²

(c) War Responsibility

The issues concerning Yasukuni Shrine, the imperial system and war responsibility have been widely discussed in Christian churches as well as in Christian universities. These have been regarded as the issues deeply touching Japan's past responsibility as well as Christian conscience and integrity. On the occasion of the 50th anniversary of Japan's defeat in 1945, many churches issued statements acknowledging Japan's war crimes against Asian peoples and confessed their responsibility in having participated in the war efforts.

One statement in particular caught the mass media's attention and received positive comments for its honesty and integrity. The statement was issued, in June 1995, by NAKAYAMA Hiromasa, Chancellor of Meiji Gakuin and Professor of Meiji Gakuin University, and was entitled "Meiji Gakuin's War Responsibility and Post-war Responsibility: A Confession." It takes the form of a personal confession yet is signed in the official capacity of Chancellor. It begins with the following words:

O Lord, at the 50th anniversary of Japan's defeat, I do confess before you the sin which Meiji Gakuin committed by participating in the war; at the same time, I do apologize for it before the peoples of Korea, China and other countries. Also I do apologize for failing to make this fact known in public in the post-war period.²³

The statement goes on to acknowledge the role private schools played during the war and the particular role of Meiji Gakuin by citing three persons by name, its war-time executives, and by referring to their deeds. One of them, TOMITA Mitsuru, Meiji

Gakuin's board chairperson as well as the top executive of the unified Protestant Church of Japan, for example, was said to "have himself worshipped at Ise Shrine and forced Korean Christians to worship at Pyongyang Shrine, causing many Christians to be driven to martyrdom." It also states that "until now Meiji Gakuin has neither publicly confessed the sin before the Lord nor apologized for it to the peoples involved."²⁴

The statement itself is significant, at least, in the following three accounts:

- i) It is a personal, Christian confession yet clearly represents one institution and its conscience. No statement of this kind usually comes out of the consensus-oriented Japanese organizations.
- ii) The fact that it comes out of an educational institution as the result of the institution's long soul-searching efforts. The responsibility of Meiji Gakuin and its war-time leaders are sought after as an educational institution and its educators.
- iii) It clearly manifests Christian worldview. It is a confession before the God of justice and mercy and of forgiveness and reconciliation. This Christian perspective enables it to seek God's forgiveness for the institution and its leaders, including the confessor himself, and to ask for both forgiveness and reconciliation from Asian peoples.

5. New Challenges: Postmodernism

(a) Postmodernism

The term "postmodernism" became popular in 1970s' in the academic circles of linguistics, literature and philosophy. At the beginning it was known as "deconstructionism" which identified modernity with "constructionism" and tried to go beyond it. Postmodernism challenged modernism's very contention, namely, all societies, cultures, sciences, ideologies and languages share the universally unchangeable, logical and rational structures. In rejecting such universality, postmodernism fostered a variety of

interpretations and validity of various life-styles. In general, modernity and postmodernism can be contrasted in this way: nature vs. supernatural, universal vs. individual, rationality vs. personality, accommodation vs. freedom, ethical vs. existential, etc.

While the world witnessed the collapse of Berlin Wall and the dissolution of the Soviet Union, a world-wide impasse in socialism, capitalism, democracy, sciences etc. has been observed. Since modern higher education in the major parts of the world has been identified with modernity, the real issue is whether what Allan Bloom called “the questions of truth and ethics” can still be maintained altogether in universities? Postmodernism’s challenges have still been going on and their impact upon modern higher education has been increasingly felt yet not well ascertained.

When we turn to Christian higher education, although the situation is not different from that of secular universities, we consider one particular aspect of postmodernism noteworthy. This is the aspect of growing interests in religions. Since the Enlightenment in the West, the modern spirit has been attacking the old religion, i.e. Christianity which had supported the old regime. When modernity came to impasse, however, religious forces began to accuse modernity for its long negligence of religions. There followed the world-wide cry for the resurgence of religions. A French political scientist, Gilles Kepel, in his *La Revanche de Dieu* (1991) observed the revival movements in the traditional religions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam and interpreted them not simply as “resurgence” but more radically as “God’s revenge” against modernity.²⁵

The question is whether this trend of religious interests is welcomed in Christian universities or not. The answer seems not to be so simple but the following points need to be considered. First of all, religious interests and activities witnessed on university campuses are not the traditional types but new religions which are often syncretistic, polytheistic and spiritualistic. They certainly reflect the age of religious pluralism. Secondly, in connection with Christianity, as Harvey G. Cox’s *Religion in the Secular City* (1984) pointed out, Christian movements of postmodernism are often associated with Charismatic-Pentecostal, New Age, Fundamentalist, Liberation Theology and

Feminist movements and they are not necessarily accommodating themselves to the reality and the ideal of Christian universities. Thirdly, moreover, these movements can challenge Christian principles expressed in the Founding Spirit which usually assumes the universal validity of Christianity.

(b) Christian Responses

How are Japanese Christian universities responding to the new challenges? There must have been various responses and accommodations, in given situations, made by Christian universities. As far as I can ascertain, however, there has been no major and comprehensive treatment specifically made from clear Christian perspective to the challenges. The following points are to be mentioned as some theories and practical suggestions which seem to be helpful for Christian universities to cope with the challenges.

i) The above mentioned author of *Daigaku no Shingaku* (The Theology of the University), FURUYA Yasuo, considers the formulation of a university ideal, more specifically, the theology of a Christian university vitally important in order to meet the contemporary challenges. Reviewing historically the ideas of university proposed by John H. Newman, Ernst Troeltsch, Paul Tillich and others, he insists on the importance of Christian higher education in the age of relativism and religious pluralism. Newman's idea of university having theology as a condition of general knowledge, Troeltsch's idea of a university as the synthesizer of culture and Tillich's idea of Christianity as the basis of theonomous culture are cited. Particularly, however, he regards H. Richard Niebuhr's idea of three forms of faith significant for "the theology of the university." The three forms are henotheism, polytheism and radical monotheism. The first form, ranging from primitive tribal religions to modern fascism, is not able to give meanings to all sciences and to provide freedom of academic research. The second acknowledges the validity of all religions and sciences but fails to give meanings to the system of knowledge and falls into relativism. Only the third form, radical monotheism of Christianity, can be the ideal for a Christian university. It can make the university neither exclusivistic nor intolerant toward other religions and non-Christian ideas. Furthermore, because it affirms the absolute God of radical monotheism, it can consider

all sciences and other religions relative in the sight of God and his teaching, treat them equally and give each its own distinctive meaning. In this respect a Christian university can be both comprehensive and tolerant. This seems to be a key to FURUYA's "theology of the university" and his answer to postmodernistic challenges.²⁶

ii) Christian universities need to meet the challenges on the practical level, in dealing with the needs of students on campus. For this purpose they need to discern postmodernism's motifs which are appealing to the students.

For example, postmodernism is deeply concerned with the idea of life. It can be said as a yearning for life or a kind of vitalism which respects all forms of life. A leading postmodern theorist and Professor of Chuo University, NAKAZAWA Shinichi, describes this motif as "a desire to live our own life as it is, not for the sake of meaning or dreams which are not life itself, but for the sake of life as a reality."²⁷

Another motif, related to vitalism is holism. This is an attitude which refuses to look at man dichotomically (rational/irrational, spirit/flesh, mind/body, etc.), but accepts him as a whole person and acknowledges his emotion, intuition, uncultivated abilities, religiosity and dignity. This is, in a sense, a radical reaction to modernity's concept of man as a part of structure.

The third motif, related to both vitalism and holism, is communalism. This is distinctively postmodernistic feature — to make small communities separated radically from the modern and secular world and to find the meaning of "life and death" in them. While modernity tried to seek "life" in the secular world and to forget "death" as an isolated event, postmodernism tries to face the reality of death and through it to find the meaning of life.

Can Christian universities today truly answer those questions of "truth and ethics" as well as of "life and death"?

iii) Just over a hundred years ago in England, William Booth's famous book, *In Darkest England and the Way Out* (1890), appeared. It depicted England, then the richest and most advanced country in the world, in darkness and boldly challenged her low spiritual and moral state, secularism and injustice. Just a century later, at the end of the 20th century, I believe today's Christian universities everywhere have to face Booth's challenge.

Notes

1. FURUYA Yasuo, "The Secularization of the Christian University," *Humanities: Christianity and Culture* (Institute for the Study of Christianity and Culture, International Christian University; June, 1994), pp. 16, 22ff.
2. MURAMATSU Katsumi, "Shukyo to Kyoiku (Religion and Education)", *Kwansei Gakuin University Shingaku Kenkyu*, vol. 7 (1958), p. 382f.
3. NISHIYA Kosuke, "Nihon no Shingaku ni okeru Kyoiku no Rongi (Discussions over Education in the Japanese Theology)", *Kyoiku no Shingaku* (Jordan, 1987), p. 100.
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〔日本語要約〕

日本の文化脈絡におけるキリスト教高等教育

丸山忠孝

キリスト教高等教育は世界的規模で危機に直面しており、次第に世界における地歩を失いつつあると言われる。この小論は日本におけるキリスト教高等教育の現状を分析し、その将来性を考えるものである。

論文は五つの小区分から成り、第一区分では日本のキリスト教高等教育が歴史的に直面した四つの基本的論点を明らかにする。それらの論点は、(1)存在理由、(2)アイデンティティー、(3)誠実さ、(4)新しい挑戦である。

第一論点・存在理由は伝統的な「宣教と教育」の論点である。歴史的にはキリスト教学校は「宣教」を主目的としたミッション・スクールとして始められるが、台頭著しい近代国家日本の国家主義的な教育制度に組み込まれるに至り、キリスト教主義学校へと転身した。第二次大戦以前においては、キリスト教特有の教理を教えることも禁止されていた。

第二論点は第二次大戦後に宗教の自由が回復された後も「宣教と教育」の緊張関係が高度成長を期したキリスト教学校にも存続し、そこで新たにアイデンティティーが問われたことに関する。1960年代および1970年代の学園紛争は、しばしば「建学の精神」に明記されたミッション・スクールとしての性格と世俗化された学園という現状との間の矛盾を突き、そのアイデンティティーに激しく挑戦した。

第三論点は、学園紛争の消え去った1980年代、1990年代において世界の高等教育機関が共通して直面した課題、「真理性と倫理性」に関するものである。日本のキリスト教高等教育はこれらの課題をキリスト教的観点から取り組み、その誠実さを示すことが求められている。

最終の第四論点はポストモダンの今日においてキリスト教高等教育が直面する特別な論点である。とりわけ、ポストモダン時代の相対主義、宗教多元主義、生命至上主義(生氣論)、全体論、共同体意識からの挑戦について言及する。

[Abstract in English]

Christian Higher Education in the Context of Japanese Culture

T. Maruyama

Christian higher education worldwide is facing a crisis and, as a result, it seems to be rapidly losing its grasp of the world and its reality. This article attempts to examine the present state of Christian higher education in Japan and to explore some future directions.

The article consists of five sections. In the first section, the author points out the issues, i. e., four basic issues which Christian higher education has been facing. The four issues are: (1) reason-to-be, (2) identity, (3) integrity, and (4) new challenges. These issues are treated in the sections 2–5.

The first issue, “Reason-to-be”, is the old historical issue of “Mission and Education”. Historically speaking, many Christian schools started as “Mission Schools” and then, while being incorporated into the nationalistic educational system of the emerging modern state, they became “Christian-ism Schools”. Before WWII, even distinctive Christian teachings were banned in them.

The second is a post-WWII issue. After religious freedom was restored to the thriving Christian schools, the original tension between “Mission” and “Education” continued. Campus unrest of the 1960’s and the 1970’s exposed the crises of identity by pointing out a discrepancy between the “Mission” character often codified in their “Founding spirit” and their reality as secularized Christian schools.

The Third issue focuses on the Christian schools’ integrity. After the campus unrest, in the 1980’s and the 1990’s, they have had to tackle with two serious questions facing modern universities, namely, the question of truth and ethics, from their Christian perspective. A few examples of attempts to search for integrity have been introduced.

The fourth and the last is a contemporary issue of the postmodern age when Christian universities seem to face special challenges. The author notes the effects of postmodern relativism, religious pluralism, vitalism, holism and communalism on Christian higher education in Japan.