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聖典翻訳と精神文化の移行
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I hope to be brief and shall address my remarks mostly to Professor Peel's paper, since Alfred's Bloom's remarks mainly commented on Bishop Yamaoka's exposé. Still, I want first of all to thank both speakers for their meaningful papers.

My comments will be remarks from one missionary to another. For that appears to be our precise relationship: co-missionaries, people in the selfsame situation, only in reverse. In practically everything my Buddhist conferees said I can recognize myself and the problems I encounter in my work, so that in their words they have held up a mirror for me, and the image thrown back at me was a little bit out of focus only in a very few places.

And this is not surprising, since—as Prof. Thurman just reminded us—both Buddhism and Christianity are missionary religions that have known in their histories phenomenal expansions whereby many national and cultural borders were crossed. This brings me to my first remark: There must be something wrong somewhere when A. Peel says that "Actually Buddhism is not an apostolical Weltanschauung, comparable to the missionary activities of Roman Catholics, Baptists, etc.;" and also when bishop Yamaoka must speak of Hongwanji as simply "following its adherents."

It may be true, however, that both religions have come right now to the supreme test of their universality and their capability of crossing all borders. Will Buddhism be able to become a living part of the religious geography of the West, and will Christianity be able to strike roots in the East?

The unaccustomed height of the present barrier may be partly due to historical circumstances. The wig of Islam driven in between them has kept Buddhism and Christianity out of one another's hair for many centuries, and kept Christianity camped in the West and Buddhism in the East. Let us add to this that in that interval Western culture has known a very particular development that made it into a kind of "freak" in human history. The result is that both religions became so identified with their part of the world and laden with the particularities of these
respective cultures, that it has become hard for them to shed that skin and to grow a new one.

Bishop Yamaoka and Reverend Peel, together with Professor Alfred Bloom—just like me and my Christian fellow missionaries—are fighting these same odds. So, I want to congratulate them for their efforts and perseverance that speak out of every page of their papers.

After uttering these sincerely meant words, I must immediately reflect that, twenty years ago, I—as a Catholic and a priest to boot—could never have said such a thing. One does not congratulate the devil and his cohorts, does one?!

This devilish remark has, of course, been inspired by the Monshū-sama’s allusion to good father Valignano’s letter, but I must pray you not to conclude immediately: “You, Christians, surely had bizarre and outrageous ideas about us.” We certainly had, but do not forget that also in Japan, ever since the Kirishitan time—think only of the rather moderate Ha-kirishitan of Suzuki Shōsan—and into the Meiji era the Christians were depicted as the “destroyers of all that is good and holy,” or, to say it with a term that may have been more common in China, as “Western devils.”

We sure have changed in our judgments about one another, and for me personally it is very instructive to reflect on my own “gut reactions” toward the present spread, minimal as it still may be, of Buddhism in the West.

Twenty years ago, I certainly would have seen that Buddhist expansion as an inroad of the enemy into Christian territory:
—“Those Buddhists are trying to take away people from what I believe to be the (only) way of salvation.”—Now I have come to believe that God must have many ways in his work of salvation, and that He seems to have done an especially admirable job with Buddhism.
—I must confess that my initial reaction toward the first news of Buddhist successes in America and Europe was antagonistic: They invade my group, weaken my team which I want to see victorious.—But I have come to see that reaction, rather than with faith, had to do with communal self-centeredness and group egoism, and was thus not very Christian.
—O.K., but even then one bone is still sticking—although rather loosely, I think—in my throat. It is the rather unsettling idea: “Could it possibly be that Christianity is not totally universal and sufficient to save every woman and man and to help humanity as a whole?” That is an harder nut to crack, especially theologically speaking; but you may remark that this worry of mine is, at last, no longer turned against anybody else.
It would certainly be very instructive for me if one of Shinshū friends would care to answer the question: “Do you have similar difficulties and misgivings?”

On the other hand, it seems to be the case that the more favorable view of the other religions in Christianity is accompanied, nowadays, by an (at least provisional) loss in motivation for missionary work: Why try to make other people Christians if they can be saved without it? That provokes in me another question which I would like to ask: Do you believe that people will not be saved if you do not make them Buddhists? I do not think that you really hold such an idea, but in that case what would you say is your sustaining motivation in your missionary work? Would you say: My own personal experience of being saved by Amida?

Directing my remarks now more directly to Reverend Peel’s paper, I would first like to say that this paper, while being erudite enough, struck me as one solid block of common-sense, of a degree as I have not encountered in many a year. At least to me everything Rev. Peel says sounds evident once he has said it— but that does not make it any the less amazing or instructive.

Secondly, I would like to make one or two remarks on the differences I find between his situation and mine. The first is, of course, that he is a missionary in his own country and I in a country that was initially foreign to me and where I will be seen forever as a gaijin (foreigner). This leads me to the following observations.

Differently from the American West Coast and Hawaii, Shinshū in Europe, Rev. Peel told us, has no base of Japanese-ness, no Japanese missionaries sent to it, and (as far as I know, for Rev. Peel did not touch on this) little financial support from Japan. Now, at first sight, this looks to me as the purest missionary situation imaginable, of which there are maybe not too many examples in the history of religious propagation. Bishop Yamaoka has pointed out to us that the presence of Japanese immigrants was rather a drawback than an asset in the spreading of Shinran’s gospel to the “white population” (with, for example, the very interesting remark about the prevalent idea that Jōdo Shinshū can only be understood in the Japanese language). But here I would like to focus my attention on a narrower area that is more directly applicable also to the Christian situation in Japan: Do you think it advisable for the Honpa Hongwanji to send Japanese missionaries to Europe, or at least to invest more money in the European venture? I assure you that I mean this as an honest question in view of my own missionary situation and without the least intention of embarrassing anyone but myself, because for me it becomes the question: Did I do good in going to Japan, or would it have been better (for Christianity) if I had stayed in Belgium, my native
country?

The dynamic character showing in Rev. Peel’s paper would make me suspect that the answer to my question really is: If you want Shinshū to be culturally translated and to take real roots in Europe, it is better to let Rev. Peel and his confreres go it alone. For, I find in him a missionary attitude much more convinced of the necessity of, and much more ready to practice, a deep adaptation to the local culture than the attitude I find in the Christian churches in Japan.

When we then further ask: Why this difference? I can think of two reasons:

1. The fact that European and American missionaries brought Christianity to Japan with all its cultural (Western) forms and paraphernalia.

2. The difference between the mentalities of Europeans and Japanese people. Many things could be mentioned here, but two elements might be of major importance: More than Europeans, Japanese appear to want what they would consider to be “the authentic thing” (at least to begin with): the foreign thing as it is lived in its native place. Thus, although Christian monastic life exists already in Japan, Japanese who want to know about it prefer to go to Europe or America to witness it “in its purity”. And secondly, while Westerners are inclined to demand some logical unity in their lives, let us say some kind of unity between their religious life and their professional and cultural life, a Japanese seems much more able to “compartmentalize” his life into different spheres, among which no “unity” is required, and to switch from one sphere to the other according to time and circumstance. He can be nature poet and not particularly offended by the asphalt jungle he has to live in; and he can be very traditionally Japanese in his cultural and everyday life and still not feel embarassed by the Western forms of his religion. A European soon feels a contradiction there and naturally tries to do something about it.

Reverend Peel has pointed out a related difference, that might be formulated as follows. If Christianity is “accepted” in Japan it is as part of Western culture, very much like Buddhism was originally accepted as part of “Chinese” culture. In Europe, however, Japanese Buddhism may have its attraction for many people, but Japanese culture as a whole is not particularly desired by the Europeans. Will the day come that Europeans will come to look up to Japanese culture as a whole and to value Buddhism as part as that whole? It is not excluded but not directly to be foreseen.

However this may be, we are both blessed with the same paradoxical situation: On the one hand, there is the necessity of having our mes-
sage find roots in a different culture. But, on the other, there is the psychological need of converts to a “new” religion (“new” in this culture) to set themselves off against the dominant religion they came from, in order to find and secure their identity. This psychological need is strongest, of course, in the very beginning when the number of co-religionists is still small and the break with the old still threatens an identity crisis. And this identity supposes a number of things, not the least of which is a sufficient number of distinct symbols and “in”-words.

Thus, without really wanting to interfere in the shinjin-faith dispute —since I know very well that an outsider who wants to play the referee in a family spat is usually jumped on by both sides—I would like to suggest the following: In the long run, “shinjin” will have to be translated into a Western word, if Shinshū really wants to become part of the Western scene. And I cannot but think that “faith” will have to be the eventual choice. However, for the time being, the European situation sketched for us by Rev. Peel may require that one sticks for a time to the use of the Japanese word “shinjin.”

Finally, I want to point out a few intriguing similarities between Rev. Peel’s missionary situation in Europe and our situation as Christian missionaries in Japan:

On page 4 of his paper, Rev. Peel writes: “In fact, we come to the rather paradoxical situation, that Jōdo-Shinshū, by its founder intended for ‘ignorant people,’ is nowadays in Europe a kind of elitarian Buddhism!” How well this echoes the Christian paradox: Jesus’ language being, if anything still simpler and freer of any erudition for the benefit of the ignorant crowds, and still Japanese Christianity appearing as a religion for a well-educated elite.

Also the experience that, for the recruitment of new members, direct personal contact is more fruitful than all the books distributed (cf. p.14) has always been made by Christian missionaries in Japan, too. But this does not, of course do away with the necessity of a sufficient amount of literature for the education of the new converts and especially for the penetration into the culture in general.
Lastly, I think that to solve today’s serious problems, we have to seriously reflect and overcome human’s self-centeredness, attachment and greed. It is a pity that Japanese Buddhism has not yet fully contributed to solving these problems. I wonder how Christianity attempts to answer the issues that I have attempted to raise.

**Takeda:** Next, moving right along, I would like to ask for Professor Van Bragt for his response to Professor Shigaraki’s paper.

**Van Bragt:** In the short space of two weeks this is the second time that I have been asked to comment on one of Professor Shigaraki’s presentations, and I worry that he is becoming rather tired of me. With this apology in mind, though, I must frankly offer my opinions.

In short, although his paper is full of interesting contents, I do not think that Professor Shigaraki has approached the issues and problems encountered in the dialogue between Jodo Shinshu and Christianity in a very direct fashion. I think that maybe he wanted to question my colleagues from Harvard University and I more closely. On the other hand, he did raise two issues which we are very deeply interested in. The first regards the meaning which underlies the history of the dialogue between Jodo Shinshu and Christianity. The second issue concerns where, within the academic field of Shinshu, the ideological basis for continuing the dialogue with Christianity is. This is an extremely important issue. Since my time is limited, I would like to focus my comments upon this point; which is, from the standpoint of Shinran Shonin’s doctrine, how are we to view the principle of communicating with other religions.

Within Christian circles, about twenty years ago, an issue which came to be known as “universal religious theology” was enthusiastically debated. I think that our current discussion has many points similar to that question. With this in mind, it pleases me greatly to see this issue being raised within Jodo Shinshu circles. This is an extremely subtle question which must draw on all of the wisdom present in the world’s religious history if we are to come up with an answer. It is the kind of issue that will come to nothing if we do not all join hands and wrestle with it. Turning to the issue of discussions with other religious sects, it is often said that, compared to Buddhism, Christianity has actively encouraged such endeavours. In addition to this, we see that in avidly pursuing these, Christianity has from some time ago thought about the ideological conditions of these discussions. The meaning that this history has for us is that, in the modern period, Christianity has experienced a deeper conversion through this experience. We may say that
Christianity shows more willingness to cast off its former prejudice towards other religions, and also more willingness to discard our own self-righteousness. If we allow this, then what is the cause of this conversion? If we place the concept of God's providence to the side for a moment, I think that there are two main points which should be considered when attempting to answer this question. The first is a concept which Professor Kaufman mentioned. Within Christian circles we have become increasingly conscious of the concept of historical consciousness. Secondly, we have become more aware of the crises which our religion is confronting. Because of this it seems that we have become more willing to learn from other religions and more willing to allow them to help us.

In opposition to this, when we look at Japanese Buddhism; although the Monshu is willing to admit to his own awareness of a crisis, I wonder how common this feeling is. The general belief seems to be that the “anti-modern” Christian view is experiencing a downfall, but that this has no relationship to the more “logical” belief system of Buddhism. In addition to this, there is, I think, a feeling that “we have already learned all we can from Christianity during the Meiji Period.”

I feel that Professor Shigaraki has provided a clear elucidation of a fundamental problem found in the interfaith dialogue when he observed that, on the one hand, when one adopts the perspective of historical consciousness, one's own position cannot be held to be absolute; while, at the same time, one must regard the person with whom one is talking as one's equal and a partner in the discussion. On the other hand, the religious world is such that, one's religion is “one's subjectively chosen path that will lead one beyond this world.” The contents of one's religious experience is such that it is “entirely singular, and non-dual,” and that “it must certainly be a thing possessing extreme virtue.” In other words, from one's position within one's religion it is very hard to consider another person's religion as being equal to one's own. For we theologians we may often think that this problem is one which cannot be overcome through the use of reason; but if we accept that this is a problem which cannot be solved through reason, where is it that we can go to find a solution. Will this always present itself as a kind of Zen koan to us? Whether this solution will come to light, as we continue to engage in discussion, no one is in a position to be able to predict.

Next, I would like to consider some of the concrete problems which Professor Shigaraki has raised. When we look for a doctrinal or rational basis for establishing a discussion between the “heathen” teaching of Christianity and Jodo Shinshu, we find that Shinran concluded that there were true religions, false religions and in between
these, provisional religions. Of course, in his time, Shinran had experience only with teachings within the Buddhist stream, and the category of provisional religions only includes other religious sects within this stream, yet Professor Shigaraki suggests that this category may be seen to include the Christian teachings.

When we consider this point for a moment, Professor Shigaraki's assertion seems to echo points made by Professors Nagatomi and Kaufman, in that it suggests that, as Shinshu moves into a period of internationalization, it must begin to see itself, not as a religion that exists only in Japan, but as one which exists within the scope of the entire world's religious history. I think that Professor Shigaraki's assertion seems to respond very well to this motion. If asked whether Christian theologians possess a suitable concept which corresponds to his assertion, I would suggest that we look back twenty-five years to the Second Vatican Council. At this time, during a presentation regarding other religious faiths, a concept similar to Professor Shigaraki's definition of a provisional religion arose; "While these, by themselves, do not possess any substance, existing as provisional teachings, they may bring one to the true teaching, and are skillful means for assisting this maturation."

In this way, we can say that the Catholic's Second Vatican Council ascribed positive merits to other religions. These religions, in that they are part of God's intention, are expressing complete truth. In other words, they are a preparation, a way of educating that leads one to the gospel of Jesus Christ. I feel that this point is quite similar to Professor Shigaraki's assertion. I personally believe that it is only through viewing other religions in this fashion that openhearted dialogue can become a possibility. But, if we look at the Christian theological discipline's tendency over the past twenty years, we see that the discipline has gone beyond this view. I think that there are two main reasons for this. One is the limitation of seeing other religions as leading towards one's own teaching. Not only does this fail to recognize other religions in their own right, it simply views them as things from which we can gain thoughts which can revitalize our own religion. The second reason may be considered similar to the first, but the adoption of this position reflects a traditional bias; that is, in its fundamental meaning, it shows that we have not yet conquered the tendency to esteem our own religion regardless of the circumstances. In short, it sets one's own religion's truth as the sole standard from which to judge other religions.

Lastly, if I can borrow Professor Shigaraki's words; "We all stand on the basis of our own faith." While doing this though, we must, at the same time, pray for a future time, when we can lose our egos and come to acknowledge others from all angles. I think that we must
together go even further than regarding each other as provisional religions. The steep path towards reaching this peak requiring religious and theological co-operation is still left to be found. With this in mind, I think that we must encourage each other to put forth such co-operation.

**Takeda:** I would like to ask Professor Mikogami for his response to Professor Carman.

**Mikogami:** Professor Carman's presentation is based on his viewpoint as a Christian theologian.

I think that when a person living within a certain religious tradition studies another religion, or engages in a comparative discussion between other religions and his or her own, he or she comes to a deeper understanding of the value systems that his or her own religion has to offer. By thinking about them, these value systems come to work effectively and motivate him or her in the modern society. It then offers to people suffering in the modern society a key to enabling them to overcome their worries.

People living in this modern society are often forced, when they encounter individual problems in their lives, or complicated social issues, to make decisions before they have reached a full understanding of them. In previous times, people were assisted by their religions' deep insights and value systems to cope with problems and to make decisions, but the modern age is different. In our modern society, there are many things which cause difficulties for religious insights and value systems to reach people's minds. One reason is that members of religions are not allowing their religions' insights and value systems to effectively motivate them, or work in their lives. In this context, Professor Carman's presentation is very meaningful for Shinshu followers.

There are two or three issues though, that have drawn my concern. On page ten of the English text, there is a passage which reads:

If Amida is eternal, the Bodhisattva Dharmakara could not become the Buddha Amida. Rather Amida's nature of boundless compassion is expressed in the compassionate vow of the Bodhisattva to postpone his own enlightenment. Shinran has reversed the position of those previous Mahayana thinkers who held that the Bodhisattva's meritorious activity led to the attainment of Buddhahood, a thought that moved from cause to effect. Instead, Shinran thinks of the Buddha as absolute truth manifesting itself as compassionate form in the realm of cause and effect. The eternal Buddha is fully present in the compassionate Bodhisattva