

John F. HOWES

Christian Prophecy in Japan

Uchimura Kanzō

Uchimura Kanzō (1861–1930) was an extremely accomplished Meiji Christian convert who emphasized a Christianity he considered in tune with traditional Japanese religiosity and free of Western influence. When a child, he observed his family's distress as Meiji rulers dismantled the Tokugawa political system. Then he assumed responsibility for their support when he turned sixteen. Though thus burdened by family responsibility, he finished a Japanese undergraduate degree in fisheries science, studied further in the United States, and then returned home to encourage Bible study among the Japanese. He became a respected essayist. The result: a complete works of more than twenty thousand pages and many loyal followers who helped form the new democratic Japanese society after 1945. Samples of his writings cover such themes as these: Old Testament-style prophecy; Japan's role to emphasize Christianity's Asian roots; the Christian believer's utter dependence on God; Christian morality; and churchless Christianity as Japan's contribution to world Christianity.

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John F. HOWES is Professor Emeritus of Japanese History in the Department of Asian Studies at the University of British Columbia.

THE AUTHOR AND evangelist Uchimura Kanzō 内村艦三 (1861–1930) is one of Japan’s most outstanding essayists and Christians. This article first outlines the events of his life and then provides an introduction to his thought through a consideration of representative selections from Uchimura’s own writings.

The changes brought about by the Restoration have been frequently used to divide discussions of Japanese history into “modern” or “premodern,” so decisive are they considered. Little snippets in Kanzō’s recollections indicate he knew how the changes affected his family. Kanzō was born a samurai in 1861. He remembers the troops of the Tokugawa shogunate as they passed his home northbound en route to ultimate defeat. He also remembers that his father shortly thereafter was appointed governor of one of the new provinces. The father turned down the appointment to continue with his daimyo. His income declined as the new government phased out the institutions of the old one. Kanzō, the eldest son but only sixteen, became legal head of the household. From then on he had to provide for his parents.

Fortunately, Kanzō excelled at languages. His parents encouraged him to study English. Kanzō, along with another lad who would become Kanzō’s life-long friend, Nitobe Inazō 新渡戸稲造 (1862–1933),¹ was studying English when both were recruited in 1877 to study in the rude new northern settlement of Sapporo. Government leaders needed administrators for Hokkaido. Students in training for this task received everything they needed plus a good stipend. This enabled Kanzō defray his family’s costs in Tokyo.

Students received all their education, with the exception of mathematics and classical Chinese, in English. They became very able in it. Once they graduated, they corresponded in English. They thus became part of a very small group of Japanese whose members dealt with foreigners effectively. Kanzō finished as valedictorian of the second class and entered the bureaucracy as a fisheries researcher. His early publications in the field reflected great promise. He could have contributed greatly to the development of Japanese biology had not his experience led him in other directions.

As a student, he had been converted to Christianity under the influence of the American instructors. They shared the conviction of many contemporary Americans that faith in Christianity formed an important part of the curriculum. The school principal, at once a devout Christian, inspired scientist, and

1. Editors’ Note: On Nitobe Inazō, see article by George M. Oshiro in this special issue, 101–28.

a charismatic teacher, encouraged them to accept Christianity and invited a Protestant missionary to Sapporo to baptize them. Kanzō and his friend Inazō joined the group.

Christianity had been prohibited and ruthlessly suppressed in Japan for more than two hundred and fifty years. If as Japanese in Japan they had confessed their acceptance of Christ as their savior as little as ten years earlier, Kanzō and his friends would have faced the death penalty. But now they were on the cusp of the changes instituted by the Meiji (1868–1912) government. Christianity was no longer illegal, and the Japanese administrators at the school encouraged them to emulate their Christian teachers. The teachers hoped that the students would convert as part of their training. Dedicated to their nation's goals and their own future in a world dominated by Christian values, the students could consider it in the interest of both their country and themselves to become Christian. With other new student Christians, they built a church that they called *dokuritsu* 独立 (independent).

Although in his stirring valedictory address Kanzō had urged his friends to dedicate themselves to serving Hokkaido, they did not. They returned to urban centers in the south where their abilities were better appreciated and they could utilize their very unusual skills. Inazō continued his studies, and Kanzō immersed himself in the life of the nascent Christian community. Its rapid growth encouraged him to seek his future in Christian leadership, even as he sought in vain just the right career choice. His letters on the issue to his Sapporo friends reflect a soul in torment. As he wrote them, he found himself infatuated with a young Christian lady and rashly married her. His parents had objected without success to their plans. The marriage quickly ended. Kanzō believed his wife had cheated on him and returned her pregnant to her family. His refusal to accept her back cost him the fellowship of many of his Christian friends, and he fled in 1884 to America. Inazō had preceded him. Both wanted further study in the nation that seemed the model for Japan's future.

Search for a Calling

Kanzō landed among angels. Friends in Tokyo introduced him to members of the wealthy Quaker community in Philadelphia. They directed Kanzō to one of the pioneer American psychiatric social workers who gave Kanzō a job tending the children in a mental institution. As the therapy with its long hours of contemplation began to work and Uchimura shared with his benefactors his misgivings about his future, they offered to pay for medical school, but he chose training in theology. For this he went to Amherst College and a second undergraduate degree. Kindly and well-informed Amherst faculty members, some of the best in the United States, introduced him to the worldview of the liberals within the Congregational Church. Kanzō went on to theological seminary.

He quit midway through the first year, apparently because his fellow students' casual attitude toward the professional pastorate offended his sense of propriety. He thought their talk of salaries and parsonages cheapened the value of the message they would transmit to members of future congregations. Kanzō returned home over the Isthmus of Panama.

There he determined to serve his fellow Japanese through his Christian faith. Not entirely taken by what he had seen in the churches of America, he wanted to develop a Christianity that would make sense to Japanese. At the same time, new Christian schools sought teachers. Local secular community leaders, convinced that Western education was the wave of the future, sought people with credentials like those of Kanzō. Already critical of professional religionists, he decided to transmit his Christian values through instruction in history. A new provincial school sought a principal. Kanzō accepted the post, but with misgivings when the backers of the school accepted the services of American missionaries as English instructors who would provide their services free. Ōta Yūzō discusses in detail what happened (ŌTA 2005, 249–57). The passage of time taught all the parties what they might have predicted. Kanzō took responsibility for curriculum, as did the missionaries. They disagreed. When the sponsors of the school sided with the missionaries, Kanzō resigned and returned to Tokyo.

There he found employment in a government school designed to prepare students for the new University of Tokyo. Shortly after he assumed his position, he became the unwitting focus of a renewed concern about the dangers that Christianity posed to Japanese society. To instill into students a sense of basic ethics, moralists in the new centralized national education system had devised a statement, the Imperial Rescript on Education (*kyōiku chokugo* 教育勅語), quite similar in its intent to what would in a few years become the American Pledge of Allegiance. Japanese bureaucrats devised a statement that contained the ethical injunctions they considered the basis of Japanese society. They thought repetition of it would prepare students to withstand the attractions of Christianity that seemed so unJapanese. The contents of the new document were well publicized in advance. To increase its impact on teachers and students, beautiful hand written copies on heavy paper with gold threads worked through the paper were distributed to the top schools in the country. The Emperor Meiji signed them with his personal name, Mutsuhito.

Schools acknowledged the receipt of the document in differing ways. Some accorded it almost religious reverence. At others, teachers invited students to observe the beautiful calligraphy. Kanzō's school received a copy. He worried about how he should react to it. He resigned from his Sapporo church lest something happen to him that would involve its members through guilt by association. Events confirmed his fears. His school scheduled an assembly to receive their copy of the document. As part of it, teachers and students were asked to bow before it as they formerly had bowed at Buddhist temples or Shinto shrines.

Undecided, Kanzō bobbed his head but did not bow from the waist as others did. His act infuriated conservatives throughout the country. They took it to represent the treachery of Christian influence. A careful historian over half a century later found over two thousand books and articles occasioned by Kanzō's indecision (OZAWA 1961). It lives in postwar Japan as one of the very few occasions when Japanese individuals took a public stand based upon the demands of their consciences in opposition to nationalist policies.

Kanzō thus forfeited any chance of a career in education. In his first teaching at a private school with missionary colleagues, his attempt to bring Christianity into the classroom through Japanese history had failed. The missionaries disagreed with him; after the ensuing confrontation few missionaries would want to work with him, nor he did he want to work with them. Now, after his half-hearted bow, he could not work in a public school.

At the same time, through his simple act of uncertainty, Kanzō had publicly declared his difficulty when he tried to live up to the demands of both his faith and his community. He was no longer the slowly maturing Kanzō but through his act had become the convinced prophet, out to introduce his faith to his fellow Japanese and judge their acts by this faith. His problem: how could he do it?

How Best to Spread the Word

Domestic tragedy followed Uchimura's hesitation before the Imperial signature. Pneumonia almost took his life and did take the life of his second wife. Without spouse, income, and work, he wandered about, taking temporary positions as an English teacher at a number of schools in western Japan. He married a third time and decided to become a professional writer. A sympathetic bookstore proprietor in Kyoto advanced him a monthly stipend against future royalties. There, with just enough income for food and lodging, he used his own experience and his American books to form his own thoughts.

And he succeeded. In the period 1893–1896, he wrote seven books and five major articles. Two of the books and one of the articles were in English and intended to familiarize English speakers with Japanese history and attitudes. The Japanese-language works dealt with the Christian life, world history, and contemporary Japanese politics. In each case, potential readers could find nothing similar in bookstores. Later memoirs by famous novelists emphasize how greatly Uchimura's ideas influenced their own.

The best-known example is Uchimura's experience during the Sino-Japanese War. Japan defeated China in 1894–1895 over control of Korea and Taiwan. At the time, various European colonial powers circled the periphery of China like vultures waiting for the death of their prey. When the Japanese navy started the war, the European powers assumed that the Japanese wanted to annex parts of China to itself. The Japanese government refuted this idea by assurances that

it desired only to help the Chinese reform themselves so that they could resist foreign incursion. Uchimura employed his formidable English to defend these ideas before foreigners in Japan. Japan's demands at the peace conference after the war gave the lie to the government's earlier assurances. A huge cash settlement, increased influence in Korea, and outright cessation of Taiwan gave them the basis for their own empire. Uchimura wrote a blistering criticism of his own government that ended with a coda on the real insignificance of Japan despite its pretensions. More on that later.

This article attracted the attention of the publisher of Japan's largest newspaper, the *Yorozu chōhō* 萬朝報, a title that challenges the translator but means a daily morning paper that covers many topics. He then invited Uchimura to Tokyo as chief editor. Uchimura assumed his new position in 1897. There he supervised other talented editors and himself concentrated on international relations. The newspaper provided informed commentary about both domestic and foreign issues. Its editors advocated pacifism in 1903 as government officials planned to attack Russia to expand Japanese influence over China by thwarting Russia's plans. The publisher's decision to back these Japanese officials caught his editors by surprise. Led by Uchimura, they resigned en masse. This, in addition to Uchimura's refusal to bow, is the second great example in Japan before 1945 of an individual who followed the demands of his conscience in opposition to national policy.

This time Uchimura was prepared. During the six years with the *Yorozu*, he had started three magazines and found in them the *métier* that would shape the rest of his career. The first, the *Tōkyō dokuritsu zasshi* 東京独立雜誌 [Tokyo Independent], was a journal of opinion modeled on the various American publications that used the term "independent" to vaunt their editor's freedom from external pressure. It ceased publication when Uchimura's fellow sponsors disagreed among themselves. The second, *Mukyōkai* 無教会, helped Christians develop their faith. [The term "mukyōkai" is covered later.]

The third title, a monthly called *Seisho no kenkyū* 聖書之研究 (that Uchimura translated as *The Bible Study*), prospered from the beginning. He continued it through 357 issues, never missing a deadline. Each issue contained about eighty pages. Uchimura wrote the text for approximately half of it. Through it he fulfilled his ambition, conceived as he had studied at Amherst, to make the Bible at home in Japan. Its contents, reprinted frequently in book form, make him the most prolific Japanese writer on Christianity. We introduce below some examples of his copy.

If *Seisho no kenkyū* presented Uchimura with a substantial audience and sufficient income, students that came to his home provided the feedback an author requires. Uchimura's close friend Nitobe Inazō had become the principal of the school where Uchimura had refused to bow before the Imperial signature. Nitobe took an avuncular interest in the students and particularly in those

inclined toward religious ideas. These he introduced to Uchimura who lived near the school. Uchimura interviewed potential students about their ideas and aims. Those he admitted gathered at his home for Sunday lectures on the Bible. Many remained with Uchimura. They led in the development of new Japanese democratic institutions after World War II. Their advocacy of Uchimura's ideas made his writings some of the most popular in Japan in the 1950s. Uchimura helped these protégés mature in their faith, and they in turn popularized his ideas when Japanese readers became more open to them. With his ideas readily available through his own writings and those of his students, Uchimura had found the pattern for the rest of his career, one that has been likened to a "Sunday school teacher." Few Sunday school teachers accomplish as much.

Japanese Christianity

The quiet life of writing, editing, and weekly lectures for a small group of students ended abruptly in 1918. As the stalemate of World War I continued, Uchimura announced his conviction that history was about to end with the return of Christ. His lectures attracted audiences of one thousand five hundred that filled the largest auditoriums in the country. In 1919 he recognized that even if one accepts the doctrine of the Second Coming of Christ, one cannot organize one's daily life around the expectation that Christ will arrive at any given moment. He returned to weekly lectures on the Bible, the same familiar formula with the exception that these lectures were given in a large hall across the street from the Imperial Palace. It held about eight hundred, each of whom paid a lecture fee. The high point of his Bible lectures consisted of sustained commentaries on the book of Job, twenty-one weekly lectures; Paul's letter to the Romans, sixty lectures; and the life of Christ, given in two series that together formed seventy-four lectures.

Gradually those who attended the lectures began to call their group "Mukyōkai," the word Uchimura had used to name the smallest of the three magazines he had started while he worked at the *Yorozu chōhō*. The term consists of the word for church, *kyōkai* 教会 with the prefix *mu* 無 that means simply "lack of." Uchimura first used the word to mean "without a church" to describe his isolation from his fellow Christians after his divorce. Then as the number of those who attended his non-denominational Bible study meetings grew, they began to refer to themselves with the term. In English translation, this results in a lower-case "m" at the beginning of the adjective as Uchimura originally coined it. In contrast, with an upper-case "M," the same word referred to the those who came to hear his Bible lectures. Exactly what the term meant would becloud the end of Uchimura's career and occupies the last chapter of my book, *Japan's Modern Prophet* (HOWES 2004, 363–79). Rather than deal with the debate here, let us simply note a few of its characteristics.

In the first place, it did not mean “anti-church,” as so many other Christians assumed. That they assumed it did should not surprise anyone, for in other comments Uchimura emphasized his disagreement on related subjects. He disliked churches, at least as they developed in Japan.

He also differentiated between Christianity and the various interpretations of it that distinguished Protestant denominations. Those well informed about the variations in belief that separated their denomination from members of other denominations knew that the differences rested on varying interpretations of scriptures. Uchimura rated these differences as less important than the influence of social conditions within which the differences developed. As a result, one could talk of “German Christianity” or “America Christianity.” If one could differentiate this way in terms of nations, why not also a “Japanese Christianity” free of the secular history that led to denominations in Western countries? And why could not that “Japanese Christianity” rest directly on the individual’s relation to God with the Bible as intermediary? If it did, Japanese Christianity would escape the tortured theological debate that so vexed Japanese otherwise attracted to Jesus’ life and acts. While they admired Jesus, they cared little for the differences between denominations to which evangelists, mostly foreigners, exposed them. Why, they might wonder, should they be asked to become a Cumberland Presbyterian rather than a Methodist when the whole idea of a God beyond all societies and generations so challenged their native beliefs? Attendants at Uchimura’s Bible lectures accepted such logic.

Part of what made denominational differences so hard to comprehend resulted from the very success of some Christian institutions established by other Japanese Christian leaders and missionaries. Early Protestant missionaries had learned Japanese well. The missionary who baptized Uchimura, for instance, could understand one of Uchimura’s early books enough to comment on it knowledgeably. Its text included numerous rare Chinese characters and rhetorical flourishes. No one could accuse that missionary of not knowing Japanese. In contrast, as other pioneer Japanese Christians established schools and integrated missionaries into their faculties, these missionary teachers developed with time into high-level English instructors. The students’ parents and the students themselves wanted this direct contact with living English. The unintended consequence of these factors was that missionaries who had lived in Japan and served its Christian community for decades could not handle Japanese as well as an ordinary educated Japanese individual. New missionaries came into positions where all business was handled in English. Uchimura, as we shall see, did not understand this. He took the inability of missionaries to handle Japanese as an indication that they neither loved nor respected the Japanese people and founded an English-language magazine to reach them in English. He called it *The Japan Christian Intelligencer*. It appeared between 1926 and 1928.

Uchimura’s criticism of the missionaries’ Japanese language reflected an

unspoken concern that foreigners considered Japanese converts inferior. As a result of this anxiety, Uchimura tended to interpret comments by missionaries about his work as condescending. One recognizes Uchimura's apprehension in his first English-language publications. It continued to his death.

Although the aged and grumpy Uchimura's fulminations against foreigners strike a reader as one of his least appealing aspects, one can understand his point. A young British missionary meets Uchimura on the street in a summer resort. The missionary tries to convert Uchimura to his denomination. Uchimura sees the young man as very rude. Why should he, then in his twenties, talk in such a way to Uchimura, in his sixties, and a famous Christian leader? But more importantly, where was the young man's respect for one both accomplished in his own society and able to deal with the young man as if they were speaking in London? What did it mean to be a brother in Christ? Uchimura pondered the question during his whole career.

As one learns the details behind Uchimura's misgivings, one sees how Uchimura had touched upon a profound question in Christian theology. If at baptism an individual becomes a Christian, when does that new Christian move into a position where one can act within the mainstream of the development of the Christian faith? In what follows we will see Uchimura aware of his place in the history of Christian prophecy and writing as if he were a prophet, all while still in his thirties. I confess that as I matured in my own understanding of Uchimura, I puzzled over his identification with the Old Testament prophetic tradition. He, so removed by time and place from the prophets of ancient Judea, related to their denunciation of the conditions around them that defied God's commandments for His chosen people.

So, one can ask on Uchimura's behalf, at what time does the convert have enough experience in the faith to assume he can speak like the prophets of old? Uchimura did not ask. And we can simply recognize that in fact he acted within the prophetic tradition and inspired his protégés to emulate him at a time in world history that cried out for prophetic criticism.

Uchimura died in bed in the early spring of 1930, separated a few feet from the smaller lecture hall to which he had retreated after the earthquake of 1923. No one could predict that the Japanese military would eighteen months later propel their nation into the Pacific theater of the largest war in history. One wonders how Uchimura would have reacted. One cannot know. But we do know that his protégés who carefully followed his instruction on the Bible provided some of the most outspoken opposition to the events that accompanied Japan's expansion into China.

At this point, let me introduce some snatches from Uchimura's voluminous writings that bear on what I have said. They include references to his identification as a prophet; his vision of Christianity as an Asian religion that through Japan's Christian community returns to Asia; his profound and continued need

for independence from all persons and institutions; and his use of scripture to comment on Japanese ethics.

Prophecy

A long article, “Jisei no kansatsu” 時勢の観察 (Observations on the times), appeared in 1896, shortly after the Treaty of Shimonoseki ended the Sino-Japanese War. In English translation, it would run to twelve thousand words, and Uchimura wrote to a friend that he completed it in about a week.

In these “Observations,” intended for his fellow Japanese, Uchimura ridiculed the duplicity of the government’s official pronouncements so at variance with its acts. When its leaders started the war, they contended that Japan in victory would require from China nothing except that it revise its outdated policies and modernize as Japan had. In contrast to these benign pronouncements, in the peace conference Japanese representatives had demanded and obtained large reparations and concessions.

Uchimura had enthusiastically defended Japan’s actions at the outset of the war in an English-language article written to affect the attitudes of Westerners in Japan. As he observed the results of the peace negotiations, he felt that his government had duped him into support of their expansionism. This resulted in the long “Observations.” It ends with a coda on the smallness of Japan, in contrast to the boasts of those who advertised its importance. Japan is, he writes, full of

constrained thinking, lack of ambition, low ideals, mean goals. Individuals hampered by these mean goals further constrain their horizons by provincial standards. They talk of *Japanese ethics*. . . . Is there such a thing as English mathematics? . . . *Just because truth is universal, call it “truth!”* To embellish truth with the adjective “Japanese” demonstrates at once both narrowness and smallness.

(ZA 16, 317–18; ZB, 3, 257).

And then, after a lengthy diatribe

I end as I started: of what can Japan be proud? We have nothing that the rest of the world lacks, but the rest of the world has many things we lack. Japan has not given the world a great religion as has Judah or India. Japan has no great literature like that of Greece; Japan has not compiled a great law code like Rome’s; Japan has not produced great explorers like Spain; Japan does not fight for other people’s rights as does Holland; Japan does not have high mountains like Peru; Japan does not have great plains like Russia. Of what can we be proud? the geisha of Higashiyama? or the perfect beauties of the Eastern Sea?

(ZA 16, 319–20; ZB, 3, 259)

Here, with his “geisha of Higashiyama” and “the perfect beauties of the Eastern Sea,” Uchimura invoked stereotypes about Japan popular among globetrotting Westerners. His words attracted such immediate attention among Japanese

readers that by the day after publication the price of the periodical in which they had appeared had gone up four hundred percent. Shortly thereafter, Uchimura was called to Tokyo as chief editor of the largest newspaper in Japan.

God's Gift to the World from Asia

Beginning with his student days in Amherst, Kanzō had been intrigued by world histories that described the origins of civilization in the Middle East and its gradual westward migration. A German author had observed civilization come to Germany where it settled in. A later British author escorted it from Germany to Great Britain where it settled in. And then a Swiss immigrant brought it to Boston, where he described it settling in. One of Uchimura's early books took civilization the next logical step: across the Pacific to Japan. From here, he predicted, Japan would spread it throughout the rest of the world and back whence it had started.

The logical conclusions of his line of thought appeared in a poem "Hatsuyume" 初夢 written on New Year's Day, 1907.

A NEW YEAR'S DREAM

Divine grace fell in a shower on the crown of Mt. Fuji.
 Gathering, it flowed down and watered the foothills;
 Swelling, it became a torrent, dividing eastward and westward.
 To the West it crossed the sea
 to cleanse Mount Chungai,
 To moisten the Kunlun,
 to wash the foothills of Tienshan and the Himalayas
 To find rest at last in the wilderness of Judea.
 To the East it leapt the Pacific—
 Quenching the flame of the worship of gold
 at the foot of the Rockies,
 Purifying the sanctuaries of God
 on the banks of the Mississippi and the Hudson,
 Flowing on to join the waters of the Atlantic.
 Then the Alpine peaks rang with triumphal song
 in chorus with the stars of the morning;
 The desert waste of the Sahara rejoiced
 And blossomed as the saffron.
 For the whole earth was full of the glory of God
 As the waters cover the sea;
 And the kingdoms of this world had been transformed,
 And were become the Kingdom of Christ.

I awoke from my sleep with a shout:
 Amen!
 Be it so!
 Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. (RHODES 1975, 260)

Independence

A third recurrent theme in Uchimura's writing is the importance of independence from all earthly institutions, with dependence on God alone. In a sense, he advocates personal freedom from human constraints much like Japan's national aspiration for freedom from colonial domination. In his own English,

INDEPENDENCE

More than gold,
 More than honour,
 More than knowledge,
 More than life,
 O thou Independence!

O ye kings,
 O ye princes,
 O ye bishops,
 O ye doctors,
 Ye are tyrants!

Alone with Truth,
 Alone with Conscience,
 Alone with God,
 Alone with Christ,
 I am free.

(*Seisho no kenkyū* 153 [April 1913]: 1; ZA 15, 368; ZB 19, 434)

Uchimura had favored the word “independent” and its Japanese equivalent *dokuritsu* 独立 since his student days. He and his fellow converts in Sapporo named the church they founded the “Sapporo Dokuritsu Kirisuto Kyōkai” 札幌独立基督教会 (Sapporo Independent Christian Church). Later as an editor in Tokyo, his periodical, the *Tōkyō dokuristu zasshi* proclaimed aims similar to those of several American periodicals that set forth their staff members' personal convictions in contrast to those of financial backers. His refusal to bow before the Imperial signature and his resignation from the *Yorozu chōhō* reflected his need to avoid dependence on institutions. And in a final act of independence he would cut himself off from the opinions of his major protégé in a posthumous note.

Moralist

Uchimura's interpretation of the Christianity of individuals as the attempt to live by the imperatives of their faith led him into the field of practical morality. Let us see how this worked out with reference to one of his most famous works, the commentary on the book of Romans. It is lecture number sixteen out of sixty and is called "Rippō no nōryoku" 律法の能力 (The power of the law) (SK 252 [July 1921], 304–13; ZA 6, 275–85; ZB 26, 154–64). Uchimura delivered it the summer of 1921. Some observers consider Paul's letter to the Romans the fifth Gospel. More than any of the other epistles, it comments on the significance of Christ's life. Let us look at what Uchimura says about one of Paul's most important statements: Romans 3, 19–20. It includes the phrase, "Now we know that whatever the law says, it speaks to those who are under the law..." (NOB, 212 NT).

Uchimura begins,

"Law" [*rippō* 律法] means "morals" [*dōtoku* 道德]. *What Paul says here about "law" refers in a broad sense to the imperatives of morals.* Since Paul was brought up under the law of Moses and since the gospel of Christ was born out of Judea to replace the law of Moses, Paul discussed the law of Moses alone, but his thesis applies to all moral laws.... Heathen countries of course have moral laws.... To generalize, *no one can be justified before God by moral actions and can therefore in the true sense be saved.* That is because man cannot be morally perfect....

We Japanese are a people brought up encased in a cavern of morals.... The most pervasive element of a society is its moral atmosphere. (This is not to say that our race is morally superior. It is said in the same sense that one says that the peoples of Europe and America who have such a pervasive religious atmosphere are not necessarily religiously superior.) Thus the yardstick of judgment regarding all things is in the main moral laws. Loyalty, filial piety, benevolence and justice [the four Confucian virtues, *chū* 忠, *kō* 孝, *jin* 仁, *gi* 義] are the keynotes of home and school education. This is proof that these morals—even though not always followed—are the best part of our society. But what about the proposition that "morals demonstrate man's sin but do not save him?" It is unnecessary to point out that this is a revolutionary proposition.... Morals are holy and right. But we discover when we try to implement them the impossibility of our task and acutely feel our own lack of rectitude judged by their standards. Though the Ten Commandments are in fact perfect moral laws, they cannot save mankind; on the contrary, judged by them individuals come to know that moral actions cannot justify them....

We should consider Japan's experience in education over the past decades. Everyone now recognizes the failure of...morals education that rests upon loyalty and patriotism. As a result it appears that education is at a standstill, grop-

ing about for new ideas. No people have received as completely worked out an ethical indoctrination as the contemporary Japanese.... What has resulted? Is not the nation about to drown in the slops of corruption, unrighteousness and violence? What about the competition between juvenile delinquents and adolescent delinquents or the preponderance of mature delinquents and aged delinquents? In the contemporary world, the earth is swept clear of virtue and morality conceals itself. Our society in fact stands on the brink of moral bankruptcy.

Ah! Are these the results of all that moral cultivation? Yes! these are the results of all that moral cultivation. Morals do not have the power to do what they propose. Cultivation based on morals alone cannot make men avoid evil. *Moral education makes people aware of their own sin and at the same time enables them to recognize other people's sin.* The present situation wherein we recognize quite well our own evil as well as devote ourselves to ferret out the evil of others amply demonstrates the nature of moral cultivation and its results. Moral cultivation does not make people any more moral but simply makes them more intense in their moral criticism of themselves and others. Just as Paul said, the Law produces a consciousness of sin.

(SK 252, 309–13; ZA 6, 280–84; ZB 26, 159–63)

To learn how to deal with these concerns, Uchimura concludes, one must study the Bible. A lecture that starts out with the statement that Romans Eight is the climax of Romans becomes a fervent plea for further Bible study. And it seems comfortably Japanese.

Missionaries

Patriotic Japanese were conditioned by history and official prejudice to look upon foreigners with suspicion. In the end of the nineteenth century, their word “foreigners” meant in fact Caucasians from Western Europe and North America. Individuals like Uchimura had many foreign personal friends and knew individuals whom they respected and with whom they shared their innermost thoughts. Most of his fellow Christian leaders also had close foreign friends among the missionaries. What set Uchimura apart from them was his determined independence. The others among his early colleagues matured to found churches linked, in each case, to the denominations whose missionaries had baptized them. Like any deeply committed individuals who work together, their mentors who represented churches back home and they occasionally disagreed. When the Japanese pastors complained among themselves about missionaries as a group, they could console themselves with the realization that the missionaries would eventually go home. They could then develop their new faith as they felt appropriate without mentors.

From as early as his leadership in the Sapporo Independent Church, Uchimura himself lacked any denominational affiliation, but he had correspondents in the United States who had strong such affiliations. His letters to them set forth clearly his intellectual and spiritual development in ways that dedicated American evangelicals understood. Uchimura convinced them of his Christian integrity and his patriotic love of Japan. With friends of this sort and without institutional connections with any denomination in either the United States or Japan, he felt beholden to no one. At the same time, like any individual and in particular any Japanese of his generation, he craved the respect of foreigners, and in particular siblings in the faith. All the missionaries belonged to this group.

In the mid 1920s, part of the result of the rise of internationalism among the Taishō 大正 democrats led to writings by scholars in the Buddhist tradition who could present the claims of Japanese Buddhism to the English-speaking world. Authorities like Anesaki Masaharu 姉崎正治 (1873–1949) and Suzuki Daisetsu (Daisetz) 鈴木大拙 (1870–1966) could set forth their views through an English-language journal, *Young East*, that had started publication in 1925. Uchimura believed that the Japanese government “patronized *Young East*” and “sent it all over the world *free* to disseminate Buddhism.” He “could not bear to see that done without attempting to show the outside world that Buddhism is not the only religion of” Japan and that its Christianity is “just as powerful” (fn. letter to David C. Bell [20 August 1926], ZA 20, 1214–15; ZB 39, 268). His response the following year was the *Japan Christian Intelligencer*.

In this simple act he introduced a new responsibility into his workload. He had for thirteen years included in issues of *The Biblical Study* one-paragraph English-language aphorisms that contained meditations on Christianity. Now he edited along with *The Biblical Study* an entire magazine in English. The *Japan Christian Intelligencer* addressed readers in the widespread English-speaking world, but most of those who saw his work were missionaries to Japan. They became interested in this famous Japanese about whom they knew so little. As Uchimura increasingly aimed his words at members of this audience, he found himself expressing his innermost feelings. Predominant among them was his psychological and spiritual need to be addressed as an equal and without condescension. He attacked any perceived lack of respect with his formidable English.

For instance, in 1916 he criticized how little Japanese language missionaries learned. This is the complete aphorism as it appeared in *Seisho no Kenkyū*. The centering of the title marks it, and others of the same sort later, as one of Uchimura’s monthly pithy statements in English.

MISSIONARIES AND LANGUAGE

We know of English and American missionaries who stayed in Japan twenty, or thirty, or forty years, who yet are not able to speak respectable Japanese, and

who in their intercourse with us use their King's or Yankee English with freedom and shamelessness as if English were the official language of this country. As to the reading capacity of missionaries, it is next to nothing. One among a hundred may be able to read vernacular newspapers, and we know of no one who can read ordinary Japanese literature in the original. No wonder that they cannot understand us, and that after spending half their lifetime in this country, they still remain utter strangers to us. The fact that missionaries despise our language is a sure evidence that they have no true love for our souls.

(SK 192, 201 [July, 1916]; ZA 15, 398; ZB 22, 381)

By the time he started the *Japan Christian Intelligencer* ten years later, the missionaries had good reason to feel he disliked them. Yet, in the *Intelligencer* he published an article called "To Young Missionaries." Here he says, again in his own English,

Teach them in Christianity, not in Christian civilization.... I think it is a very mistaken idea that influences can make a Christian.... The worst of atheists came from Christian homes, and the best of Christians rose out of the filthiest surroundings.... [P]reach the gospel. Preach it of course with intelligence. Find out the best equivalences in the native language for the gospel terms and expressions. Then do not fail to find in the native literature and religion, cases of very close approach to the gospel truth. Christianity is a human experience, and something like it is found in thoughts and beliefs of all peoples; else it will never be accepted. As far as Japan is concerned, there are many things in Bushido and Buddhism which come very close to Christianity; and by judicious use of these, preaching of Christianity in this country is made very much easier. There is no need of presenting Christianity as a strange religion to my countrymen. As far as my own experience goes, I have had very little occasion of coming into sharp conflict with the representatives of the old religions. I try to find the common ground on which we stand, and then try to present my beliefs in their own words. I am not afraid of persecution; but offences I try to avoid, as much as I can.... Yes preach the word in season and out of season. Try...to evangelize [Japan]; i.e. to flood it with God's word, and that will be the best and most effectual way of Christianizing it, —after all!

(JCI 1/2 [April 1926] 50–52; ZA 15, 575–76; ZB 452–55)

Here we see two sides of the coin of Uchimura's alleged anti-foreignism. He rebuked missionaries who had spent their entire careers in Japan but could not act effectively in the Japanese language. He demanded respect for himself and his countrymen from those who came to spread salvation and remained without demonstrating the affection that he felt study of the language would reflect. In contrast, as young new missionaries arrived, Uchimura extended them fatherly advice to help them use Japanese.

Mukyōkai

If he seems to have worked through his problems associated with cooperation with foreigners in Japan, Uchimura had to face another more intractable problem. This was his increasing age and his spiritual legacy. The problem came to a head the final two years of his life as his putative successor tried to define *mukyōkai* and Uchimura disagreed with the younger man's formulations. In a posthumous statement, Uchimura disavowed this protégé's attempts at a definition. The problem remained as in the 1950s Uchimura's ideas became known in the West and Uchimura's followers tried to explain his meaning to visiting foreigners. The exact nature of *mukyōkai* remains unclear.

Given the continuing interest in it and the lack of clear definition, let us look at random statements within Uchimura's works that give us a sense of his interpretation of Christianity. To analyze them in terms of Christian theology awaits further work by specialists. Except where otherwise indicated, all are in Uchimura's own English.

FAITH AND THINKING

Faith is not thinking; what a man thinks is not his faith. Faith is rather being; what a man is is his faith. Thinking is only a part of being; rather a superficial part.... The modern man thinks he can know God's truth by thinking... [but] Faith is the soul in passive activity. It is the soul letting itself to be acted upon by the mighty power of God. Passive though faith is, it is intensely active because of the power that works in it. This is the paradox of faith.... The Christian... is a newly created soul which engenders special activity called faith. Faith is thus a Christian activity of far higher order than thinking. It is the whole soul in beneficent action....

(JCI 2/2 [Apr. 1927], 25–26; ZA 15, 635–36; ZB 30, 318–19)

Or, on the Apostle's Creed:

it is not mine because it is the Apostle's, but because it expresses my own belief ... the best possible expression of my faith, ... a concise statement of my inner experience.

(“Witnessing, not Teaching,” JCI 2/4 [June 1927], 72; ZA 15, 645; ZB 30, 357).

Or Christ:

I find in me some thing which no friendship,... can take away. That something I feel as a spiritual malady, ineradicable by human means. I was taught to call it SIN, and I might as well call it by that name as any other.... I found the practical solution of *my* problem, in the atoning death of the son of God.... Thus, Christ is my God-saviour. No man could have performed in me this radical change of my being which I experienced when I looked at Christ crucified by faith. To me it was a miracle... which I call my conversion.”

(“What I Think of Christ,” JCI 1/12 [Feb. 1927], 497–99; ZA 15, 626–27; ZB 30, 212–14)

Or liturgy:

To me,... [ceremonies] are not only not helps for worship, but positive hinderances.... I worship God inwardly in spirit and serve him outwardly in ordinary human conduct. This formless Christianity is called mukyokai-shugi-no-Kirisutokyo, Christianity of no-church principle.... It is *not* a negative faith but positive.

(“Spirits and Forms,” JCI 1/11 [Feb. 1927], 458–60; ZA 15, 621–23; ZB 30, 193–95)

Or:

BELIEF

Belief is not an intellectual act. It is not a result of careful investigations. Belief is an apprehension of truth with our whole being. Belief is therefore instantaneous. Psychologically, it is an act akin to a man's falling in love with a woman. He sees and believes. God speaketh, and a man believes in His words. God calleth, and a man responds by saying: “Here I am; send me.” We cannot with all our arguments make a man a believer. All we can do is to confirm the beliefs of a believer. It is not necessary to be convinced by arguments in order to believe. We can believe against belief as we hope against hope. Belief is *sweet* reasoning; it is a man's falling in love with God and His truth.

(SK, 215, 251 [June 1918]; ZA 15, 420–22, ZB 24, 189)

Or literal interpretation of the scriptures:

There are people who are entirely humourless. To them every word has but one meaning. They call spade, spade, and attach no other meaning to it. When we tell them that spade sometimes means honest labour, or independence, or peace as plowshare does in a famous prophesy of Isaiah, they laugh us to scorn, call us mystics and dreamers, and even dangerous men.... Poetry to them is no fact. Indeed, they have no poetry. All is prose to them; literature to them means statute books, book-keepings and statistics, and nothing more. Verses and rhymes, beautiful dreamings, and speaking by contrasts and covert words are foolishness to them.... They *are* prosaic,... so it is very easy to deceive them. We wear the robes of orthodoxy, and we [sic “they”] take us for good orthodox. We join the Methodist Church, and they take us for good Methodists. We become Episcopalians and we are trusted by bishops and deacons.... And so forth. But truth is, Truth refuses to show itself so plainly.... Truth *is* poetical. Indeed, Poetry is Truth in the highest form, and so is meaningless to the prosaic and humourless

(JCI 2, 11 [Jan. 1928]; ZA 15, 663–64; ZB 31, 94–95)

These short passages illustrate the almost random nature with which Uchimura wrote about the convictions that would have to define *mukyōkai* to those who followed him. The short comment on *mukyōkai* with its de-emphasis of liturgy and emphasis on the inward light as expressed in action explains the core of his belief in fewer words than any other passage.

These seemingly almost random statements make entertaining reading, but they did not make for the logical consistency that Uchimura's successor would require as he anticipated Uchimura's death. The differences between the man who seemed Uchimura's successor and Uchimura himself led to a rancorous exchange of opinions. Uchimura, lying in bed, wrote his final disavowal of what had come to be called the "Mukyōkai" group a few days before he died.

Conclusion

Uchimura was a prophet, accepting his country as a modern state that should live up to the highest standards of government and chastising its leaders when they failed. He was also a patriotic Christian, viewing his nation destined to greatness in the Christianization of the world. He calmly pointed out to foreigners their inadequacies in dealing with Japanese people; at the time, something most Japanese neither would nor could do. He also taught, providing study materials on all books of the Bible but the minor prophets of the Old Testament, and linking biblical preoccupations with those of the members in his weekly audience. And finally, he was an excellent stylist and major contributor to the development of the contemporary Japanese-language essay. He deserves attention along with other great Christians.

REFERENCES (ANNOTATED)

ABBREVIATIONS

- JCI *Japan Christian Intelligencer*, 2 vols. (1926–28). Tokyo: Kudanshita, Kōsando.
- NKR *Nihon kirisutokyō rekishi daijiten* 日本基督教歴史大事典. Nihon Kirisutokyō Rekishi Daijiten Iinkai 日本基督教歴史大事典委員会, ed. Tokyo: Kyōbunkan, 1988.
- NOB *The New Oxford annotated Bible with the Apocrypha /Deuterocanonical Books*, ed., Metzger, Bruce M., and Roland E. Murphy. New York: Oxford University Press, 1991.

Pagination is divided between references to the Old and New Testaments. A page number plus the initials "NT" refers to pagination of the New Testament section.

SBJ *Sōgō Bukkyō daijiten* 総合仏教大辞典. *Sōgō Bukkyō daijiten iinkai* 総合仏教大辞典委員会, ed. 2 vols. Kyoto: Hōzōkan, 1987.

SK *Seisho no kenkyū* 聖書之研究, nos. 1–357 (1900–30). Tokyo: Seisho no Kenkyū Fukkokuban Kankōkai.

The entire file has been republished by the *Seisho no Kenkyū Fukkokuban Kankōkai* 聖書之研究復刻版刊行会.

TDZ *Tōkyō dokuritsu zasshi*, 東京独立雑誌, 7 vols. Tokyo: Dokuritsu Zasshisha, 1899–1902.

ZA *Uchimura Kanzō zenshū* 内村鑑三全集, 20 vols. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1932–1933.

Multi-volumed collectanea of Uchimura's works have been published on at least six occasions. Iwanami Shoten, founded by a student of Uchimura, published three of them, one shortly after Uchimura's death and the last one almost four decades after World War II. See "zB" below. While many libraries have one of these two, few have both. The additional references to original publication should ease the search for those who use another collectanea.

zB *Uchimura Kanzō zenshū* 内村鑑三全集, 40 vols., ed. Suzuki Toshirō 鈴木俊郎, Shigami Hidehiro 氷上英廣, Hidemura Kinji 秀村欣二, Nakazawa Kōki 中沢洽樹, Tamura Kōzō 田村光三, Matsuzawa Hiroaki 松沢弘陽, Dōke Kōichirō 道家弘一郎, Shibuya Hiroshi, 渋谷 浩 Kamei Shunsuke 亀井俊介, and Suzuki Norihisa 鈴木範久. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1981–1984.

Suzuki Toshirō served as chief editor until his death in 1982, after which Suzuki Norihisa (no relation) succeeded him. zB includes the material that has come to light since the publication of ZA, plus an excellent index and chronology.

STUDY AIDS

Seisho no Kenkyū Fukkokuban Kankōkai 聖書之研究復刻版刊行会 ed.,

1973 *Seisho no Kenkyū sōmokuroku* 聖書之研究総目録. Tokyo.

Compiled under the direction of the specialist on Uchimura studies, Nakazawa Kōki 中沢洽樹.

Hokkaidō Daigaku Fuzoku Toshokan 北海道大学付属図書館 ed.,

1955 *Uchimura bunko mokuroku* 内村文庫目録. Sapporo: Hokkaidō Daigaku Fuzoku Toshokan.

Uchimura's library at the time of his death. Contains works in English, German, Japanese, and Chinese.

Kokusai Kirisutokyō Daigaku Toshokan 国際基督教大学図書館 ed.

1964 *Uchimura Kanzō kinen bunko mokuroku* 内村鑑三記念文庫目録. Tokyo, International Christian University. (Second edition, 1971)

The two largest repositories of material on Uchimura are Hokkaido University and International Christian University.

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 1988 *Nihon Kirisutokyō Rekishi Daijiten* 日本キリスト教歴史大事典. Tokyo: Kyōbunkan.
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- 1962 *Uchimura Kanzō* 内村鑑三. *Hito to shisō shirīzu* 人と思想シリーズ. Tokyo: Nihon Kirisutokyōdan Shuppanbu.

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- 1956 *Japanese Religion in the Meiji Era*. Tokyo: Ōbunsha.

KUROSAKI Kokichi 黒崎幸吉

- 1954 *One Body in Christ*. Kobe: Eternal Life Press.

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- 1953 *Uchimura Kanzō den* 内村鑑三伝, Tokyo: San'ichi Shoten.
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1999 *Nakazawa Kōki senshū* 中沢洽樹選集, vol. 3: *Uchimura Kanzō kenkyū, Mukyōkai ron* 内村鑑三研究—無教会論. Tokyo: Kirisutokyō Toshō Shuppansha.

Nakazawa was a major Uchimura scholar and leader of the group that republished *Seisho no kenkyū*, the journal *Uchimura Kanzō kenkyū*, *Mukyōkaishi*, and numerous other studies and study aids on Uchimura.

OBARA Shin 小原信

1976 *Uchimura Kanzō* 内村鑑三. Tokyo: Chūō Kōronsha.

OZAWA Saburō 小澤三郎

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Ozawa through his *Purotestanto shi kenkyūkai* プロテスタント史研究会 and its members did much to develop the field of Protestant Christian history in Japan. This is his work that most directly deals with Uchimura.

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1975 “A New Year’s Dream,” translation of Uchimura’s “Hatsu yume,” 初夢 as quoted in Nakazawa Ikuko 中沢生子, *Seisho to Amerika runesansu no sakkatachi* 聖書とアメリカ・ルネサンスの作家たち. Tokyo: Asahi Shuppansha, 260; for the original of “Hatsu Yume,” see SK 83 (Jan. 1907), 3; ZA 12, 338; ZB 14, 410–11.

SHINAGAWA Tsutomu 品川力

1960 *Uchimura Kanzō kenkyū bunken mokuroku* 内村鑑三研究文献目録. Tokyo: Kokuritsu Kokkai Toshokan, Chōsa Rippō Kyōsakyoku. 1970 ed., Tokyo: Meiji Bunken. (Enlarged ed., Tokyo: Aratake Shuppan, 1977)

Shinagawa, proprietor of the Perikan Shobō ペキラン書房 down the lane from Akamon Mae at University of Tokyo, served as bibliographer and infallible source of further research directions for generations of specialists on Japanese Christian history, and in particular those interested in Uchimura.

SUZUKI Norihisa 鈴木範久

- 1975 *Uchimura Kanzō to sono jidai: Shiga Naoya to no hikaku* 内村鑑三とその時代—志賀直哉との比較. Tokyo: Nihon Kirisutokyōdan Shuppankyoku.
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- [1] *Seinen no tabi* 生年の旅 (1861–1888)
- [2–3] *Ichikō fukei jiken* 一高不敬事件 (1888–1891)
- [4] *Kōsei e nokosu mono* 後世へ残すもの (1892–1896)
- [5] *Jiyaanarisuto jidai* ジヤアナリスト時代 (1897–1900)
- [6] *Tenshoku ni ikiru* 天職に生きる (1900–1902)
- [7] *Heiwa no michi* 平和の道 (1903–1907)
- [8] *Ki o ueyo* 木を植えよ (1908–1912)
- [9] *Gensei to raisei* 現世と来世 (1913–1917)
- [10] *Sairin undo* 再臨運動 (1918–1919)
- [11] *Umeku uchū* うめく宇宙 (1920–1924)
- [12] *Banbutsu no fukkō* 万物の復興 (1925–1930)

Suzuki is the preeminent scholar on Uchimura. His contributions to the ZB are noted in the Study Aids above. The twelve volumes of *nichiroku* detailed above portray the immediate world in which Uchimura lived. Suzuki has also published many translations into Japanese of Uchimura's English-language works along with studies on his life. He has also written a comparative study of translations of the Bible into Japanese.

SUZUKI Toshirō 鈴木俊郎

- 1949 *Tsuisōshū: Uchimura Kanzō* 追想集—内村鑑三. Tokyo: Awaji Shobō.
In large part a reprint of *Tsuisōshū: Uchimura Kanzō sensei* 追想集—内村鑑三先生. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1934.
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Shortly after Uchimura's death, Suzuki Toshirō, a major *deshi*, produced ZA and until his own death in 1982 ZB. Works noted above evaluate Uchimura's importance by others among the immediate *deshi*.

TSUKAMOTO Toraji 塚本虎二

- 1961 *Uchimura Kanzō sensei to watakushi* 内村鑑三先生と私. Tokyo: Itō Setsu Shobō.
- 1962 *Watakushi no mukyōkai shugi* 私の無教会主義. Tokyo: Itō Setsu Shobō.
Tsukamoto was a leading *deshi* of Uchimura at one time considered Uchimura's successor.

UCHIMURA Miyoko 内村美代子

- 1985 *Bannen no chichi Uchimura Kanzō* 晩年の父内村鑑三. Tokyo: Kyōbunkan.
Miyoko is Uchimura's daughter-in-law and Yūshi's wife.

UCHIMURA Yūshi 内村祐之

- 1931 *Uchimura tsuisō bunshū* 内村追想文集. Tokyo: Shūeisha.
1973 *Kanzō, yakyū, seishin igaku* 鑑三・野球・精神医学. Tokyo: Nihon Keizai Shimbunsha.

Yūshi is Kanzō's son. As a student he gained national fame through his pitching for the Tokyo University baseball team, and he later helped found the specialty of psychiatry in Japan. The first book is a collection of reminiscences by Kanzō's *deshi* that Yūshi edited. The second is an autobiography.

YAMAMOTO Taijirō 山本泰次郎

- 1949 *Uchimura Kanzō: Beru ni okutta jijodenteki shokan* 内村鑑三—ベルにおくった自叙伝的書翰. Tokyo: Shinkyō Shuppansha.
1966 *Uchimura Kanzō: shinkō/shōgai/yūjo* 内村鑑三—信仰・生涯・友情. Tokyo: Tōkai Daigaku Shuppankai.
1972 *Uchimura Kanzō: Miyabe hakushi ate no shokan ni yoru* 内村鑑三—宮部博士あての書簡による. Tokyo: Tōkai Shobō.
1981 *Uchimura Kanzō to hitori no deshi* 内村鑑三とひとりの弟子. Tokyo: Kyōbunkan.

Yamamoto is one of the most important *deshi* of Uchimura. He edited the third mammoth *zenshū* published by Kyōbunkan and wrote his many studies to help readers develop their own faith.