Transition in Taishō

From Uemura Masahisa to Takakura Tokutarō

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READERS OF THIS STUDY who have a general knowledge of Japanese history will have a sense of the incomparable Meiji Era (1868–1912) and the fateful Shōwa Era (1926–89). They will know of the monumental changes that took place in Japan at breathtaking speed during the Meiji years, as well as the rise of militarism and subsequent plunge into war during the 1930s and early 1940s. Similarly, those familiar with the history of Christianity in Japan will be aware of the new churches which emerged, some of the activities of missionaries and Japanese leaders, and the multifaceted socio-political challenges that confronted the Christian Church at critical points during Meiji and early Shōwa.

Some readers may not be quite as familiar, however, with the intervening Taishō Era (1912–26), including what those years meant for Christianity. Many will have heard of the so-called "Taishō Democracy"; some will have studied several specifics of the denominational consolidation that took place during Taishō. But due to the wealth of material concerning the crucial Meiji and early Shōwa years, and to the extent that people are even aware of what happened in those two eras, Taishō is generally seen as a transition, or even a kind of waiting period for World War II.

This study has no particular axe to grind in terms of emphasizing Taishō Japan at the expense of the obviously critical Meiji and Shōwa years. Nor does it want to argue that contrary to conventional wisdom, Taishō Christianity was of peculiar importance in comparison to what transpired beforehand and afterwards. What this essay does propose to do is gather together into a coherent format some scattered pieces of information—both English and Japanese written materials—that pertain to two noteworthy Protestant leaders, Uemura Masahisa (1858–1925) and Takakura Tokutarō (1885–1934). Their personal, working interaction spanned the Taishō Era, and their relationship is important for study both in its own right and because of the far-reaching influences these men had on the Protestant Church in Japan. Moreover, comparing Uemura and Takakura reveals interesting facets of Christianity in Japan, as well as of each man's respective period of Japanese history.

To that end, this essay will first give a summary of Uemura's and Takakura's lives and of their relationship. Such summary material will for the most part be a compilation of information available in representative English-language surveys of Christianity in Japan. This will be followed by a more in-depth examination of Uemura and Takakura as found in many of the relevant Japanese materials. Finally this study will suggest a way of comparing these two Christian leaders which is not found in any of the related literature, along with some of the wider implications of that comparison.[1]

SUMMARY INTRODUCTION TO UEMURA AND TAKAKURA

As noted above, this first section is largely a compilation of what is scattered here and there in various writings, including materials in English. While it may be mostly review for some readers, introducing Uemura and Takakura here both individually and in relation to each other, will help in proceeding through the remainder of the study.

Uemura Masahisa

Like most other Protestant, Meiji Christian leaders, Uemura Masahisa was of samurai stock. Moreover, as was the case with many other contemporary Christians, Uemura's family had been loyal to the Tokugawa Shogunate, and thus they had been dispossessed of their status and many belongings at the time of the 1868 Meiji Restoration. Uemura's family therefore had to move to Yokohama, and as a teen he himself had to stoop to raising pigs for income. His mother enrolled him in a nearby English school, however, which opened the door for meeting some American missionaries: the Dutch Reformed Samuel R. Brown and James H. Ballagh, as well as the Presbyterian James C. Hepburn. In 1873 Uemura was baptized into the first Protestant church (initially called a *kōkai*, or public meeting) in Japan, which had been established a year earlier in Yokohama.

After further theological study and training, Uemura became the founding pastor of the Banchō Kyōkai (the eventual Fujimichō Kyōkai[Church]). It would be remiss to fail to note Uemura's significant apologetic work published in 1884, *Shinri ippan* (Outline of Truth[2]) as well as his many other writings. In 1887, while pastoring, Uemura also started teaching at Meiji Gakuin, which had been established the previous year. Soon after, Uemura became a leading figure in the 1890 reconstitution of the Nihon Kirisuto Itchi Kyōkai (Japan Christian United Church, formed in 1877) as the Nihon Kirisuto Kyōkai (Japan Christian Church, hereafter NKK).

From the fall of 1901 through the following spring, Uemura and the Congregationalist Ebina Danjō carried out, via their respective journals, a well-known "theological debate," popularly termed the Ebina-Uemura *Shingakujō no ronso*. Uemura's "evangelical" position emerged as the "orthodox" victor, by virtue of a vote of the Evangelical Alliance to which both Ebina and Uemura belonged. Ironically, however, the following year Uemura left Meiji Gakuin because of criticism by conservative American missionaries (Southern Presbyterian) over an alleged "liberal" textbook he was using. Uemura subsequently (1904) began his own seminary, the Tokyo Shingakusha. Along with his weekly journal (the *Fukuin shinpō*) and the NKK—within which he towered as the single most influential figure—this seminary was dearest to Uemura's heart among the ministries to which he gave himself until his unexpected death in January 1925.

Takakura Tokutarō

It was just a few years after Uemura established the seminary that Takakura began studies there as a bright, newly-converted theological student. Takakura had come to Tokyo in the fall of 1906, when he began legal studies at the Imperial University. He soon started attending services at Uemura's Fujimichō Church, and he was baptized that Christmas. Finding his legal studies unfulfilling, he entered Uemura's seminary after one year, thus changing his career path from politician to theologian and churchman.

Takakura may have met Uemura before going to Tokyo as a college student, possibly in Kanazawa during his high school years. Uemura traveled there to speak at a church meeting, and while Takakura was not yet interested in church, he may have attended.

Regardless of whether or not he actually met Uemura in Kanazawa, Takakura had received a copy of one of Uemura's books and thus was not totally unfamiliar with him when he entered the university in Tokyo.

To go back further to Takakura's boyhood days, he was born in the Central Highlands of Kyoto Prefecture. He was not of samurai lineage, but instead from a line of merchants. His family had done well, establishing the right connections to put him on an elitist educational track taking him through the Fourth (National) High School in Kanazawa and into the prestigious Imperial University legal studies department.

One important aspect of Takakura's schooling which had a direct bearing on his eventual theological studies was his study of German. This was not only due to his particular goal of legal studies: Takakura went through his formal education following the 1890 Imperial Rescript on Education. While the Rescript emphasized conservative Confucian values, it also encouraged an imperial devotion that saw the unified national education system swing towards more of a German emphasis as opposed to the Anglo-French elements that had been employed during the previous two decades. Takakura was thus able to do what Uemura and other theological predecessors could not, that is, read in the original German such monumental figures as Schleiermacher and Ritschl.

After graduating from seminary in 1910, Takakura served as an assistant pastor under Uemura at the Fujimichō Church. Takakura then served pastorates in Kyoto and Sapporo before returning to Tokyo in 1918 to teach at the seminary. From the fall of 1921 until January of 1924, Takakura enjoyed a concentrated time of study in Britain: a year in Edinburgh, a year in Oxford, then a term in Cambridge. Besides learning from such teachers as H.R. Mackintosh and W.P. Paterson in Edinburgh and John Oman in Cambridge, Takakura spent a great deal of time reading such varied thinkers as Ernst Troeltsch, Baron Friedrich von Hügel, and P.T. Forsyth. He returned to Japan as a well-informed, biblically-oriented theologian, and his lasting contribution over the next ten years until his death in 1934[3] consisted largely in the theological emphases he conveyed to students and parishioners alike. In addition to several other books and articles, Takakura's most influential written work was his 1927 *Fukuinteki kirisutokyō* (Evangelical Christianity). Besides carrying forward the banner of Uemura's evangelical tradition (in opposition to so-called liberalism, particularly of the German variety), this work showed Takakura's further development of that evangelical theological stream within Japanese Christianity.

Relationship in General

To steer this introductory discussion back to his relationship with Uemura, Takakura was indebted to his mentor ever since the beginning of his Christian life. He was led to faith through Uemura's preaching, then naturally was baptized into the Fujimichō Church (and NKK) by Pastor Uemura. The president and single most influential teacher in the seminary then arranged for Takakura's initial pastoral positions, first in Uemura's own congregation and then in Kyoto and Sapporo. Furthermore, with the particular help of an influential woman in his church, Uemura arranged Takakura's marriage to Sera Senko at Uemura's Fujimichō Church on May 2, 1912, with Uemura officiating. One can further assume that it was Uemura's wide connections that paved the way for Takakura to study in Edinburgh, Oxford and Cambridge for over two years.

Upon returning to Japan in 1924 Takakura had the option (in addition to two other job offers) to serve as a pastor alongside his mentor at the Fujimichō Church, as well as to teach at the seminary. Takakura consented to the seminary position; but, instead of serving with Uemura, Takakura opted to

begin a new NKK congregation in his own residence. When Uemura unexpectedly died in early 1925, Takakura's reputation as the rightful theological successor was confirmed by his being named the new seminary president. As far as the church was concerned, however, Takakura's role of successor was not as clear. After a brief interim by another pastor, the issue as to who would serve as the post-Uemura Fujimichō Church leader came to a head in 1927. Takakura had agreed to serve if chosen, but he was narrowly outvoted and the position went to someone considered to have a somewhat milder personality. A sizable block of the congregation felt their minority voice had not been fairly heard, and they thus left to join Takakura, whom they believed to be truly following in the footsteps of their beloved Pastor Uemura. The addition of almost 100 new members forced Takakura's small congregation to seek new facilities, resulting in the 1930 formation of the (NKK) Shinanomachi Church.

Generally speaking, then, Takakura is viewed as following in the theological and ecclesiastical tradition of the single greatest first-generation Protestant Church leader, his own mentor Uemura Masahisa. Moreover, during the five- to six-year period after Uemura's death, Takakura's influence within that same tradition was at its peak and was the single greatest influence, particularly theologically. Not only did Takakura's German ability enable him to develop further Uemura's theology, it also helped him in creating an environment receptive to the rapid influx of dialectical theology—Barthianism in particular—into Japan during the 1930s.

In short, it is only natural that first and foremost Uemura, then his disciple Takakura, have been seen as guiding the stream of Japanese Protestantism which flowed from the early Meiji "Yokohama Band" to the pre-Kyōdan Presbyterian-Reformed NKK.

FURTHER EXAMINATION AND COMPARISON

Once again, most of the above introductory summary can be found, in bits and pieces, in representative English-language surveys of Japanese Protestantism. There is a far greater volume of Japanese material, however, much of which deals specifically with the relationship and various comparisons between Uemura and Takakura. Several areas are worthy of consideration here, the first of which is related to Uemura's seminary.

Tokyo Shingakusha

Uemura and Takakura interacted and cooperated very closely through this influential school. Takakura of course was a student there, studying closely under Uemura until graduation in 1910. Takakura taught at the Tokyo Shingakusha from 1918–21, and again after returning from Britain in early 1924. He then assumed the post of president after Uemura's death in 1925, succeeding the only president the seminary had ever had during its first twenty-year history.

At the same time, Uemura's beloved Tokyo Shingakusha became a bone of contention with Takakura. Along with some other NKK colleagues, Takakura began to view the school as essentially Uemura's own private *juku* (cram school) and thus limited in its potential influence. When he returned to Tokyo from Sapporo in 1918, Takakura began discussing with Uemura the option of bringing the seminary under the official oversight of the NKK. Takakura also began to push the related idea of merging with the theological department at Meiji Gakuin, from which Uemura had withdrawn years earlier.

The two men butted heads over the issue on more than one occasion. There were extremely frank discussions before Takakura left the country in 1921. Then one particularly heated argument occurred in the sum-

mer of 1922. Uemura was making the last of his three trips to America and Europe; Takakura had completed his year in Edinburgh. The two rendezvoused in London before touring Germany together at the invitation of their common friend, Ishihara Ken, who was studying in Heidelberg. Seeing each other for the first time in a year, Uemura and Takakura at one point started arguing about the future of the seminary. The discussion distressed Takakura enough for him to share with Ishihara his own agitation and frustration over the incident (Satō 1983, 122–25).

Such conflict is not surprising. Both Uemura and Takakura were strong leaders, so it is only to be expected that even within a relationship that surely bore marks of a typically Confucian *chūkō*, or loyalty of inferior to superior, neither would acquiesce easily on important matters where they held different opinions. There was the added pressure of Uemura's desire for a successor—whom he believed should be Takakura—and Takakura's gradual awareness that he was called by God to facilitate a transition for the seminary. In the end, neither man changed his view. The seminary remained independent until after Uemura's death, when it was officially merged with Meiji Gakuin's theological department in 1930 as the newly constituted, NKK-governed Nihon Shingakkō (Japan Seminary).

One can further understand the existence of such a flash point of controversy when coupling the two men's strong characters with what must have been Takakura's overall feeling of wanting to "get out from underneath Uemura's thumb," so to speak. Having had much of his adult life supervised by the recognized leader of not only the NKK but arguably the entire Protestant Church in Japan, the strong-willed Takakura surely felt a certain measure of frustration, albeit tempered with gratitude and admiration. The depth of his conflicting attitudes towards Uemura was such that Takakura publicly acknowledged in writing shortly after his teacher's death, "My obstinate heart was not humble before [Uemura] Sensei" (Takakura, 1964, Vol.2, 31). Clearly the struggles over the seminary were only part of an overall, fascinating relationship between two leaders of succeeding generations of Japanese Protestantism.

Men of Different Eras

Mention of the generational difference between Uemura and Takakura leads to a comparison of them against the backdrop of their respective eras. Particularly in light of the rapidity and extent of change during Meiji Japan, the twenty-seven-year age span separating the two men suggests significant differences on a number of fronts. Their common cause in the Christian faith plus their common involvements in the NKK, seminary, *Fukuin shinpō* (Takakura occasionally contributed articles), and other organs must not be forgotten, of course. Nevertheless, as seen in the areas of education, sense of responsibility for the nation, and political prowess, there was indeed a noticeable "generation gap" between Uemura and his younger comrade Takakura.

The matter of education has already been mentioned in terms of fluency in a foreign language. Speaking more generally, Uemura's generation of samurai youth often were taught in official feudal domain schools. There the emphasis was on Confucian, Bushido-type values. With the establishment of the new, Meiji Ministry of Education in 1871, there was an initial administrative commitment to the highly centralized French model, soon followed by a shift to a more locally controlled American style. From the start there was extensive use of American and English materials in the government schools. As a teenager Uemura himself attended a small, private missionary-operated English school in Yokohama. So that aspect of his school-

ing resembled what was increasingly happening with others of his generation nationwide. Insofar, then, as Uemura's generation encountered the new education system, they were taught within a framework that in terms of Western influence was predominately Anglo-Saxon.

Takakura, however, started elementary school in 1892. This was just after the predictable conservative reaction to the massive influx of all things Western during the first two decades of Meiji. The promulgation in 1889 of the Meiji Constitution thus signalled the shifting trend towards national consolidation. Since Germany was perceived to be the most congenial Western counterpart to Imperial Japan, there was an accompanying general drift towards things German, including German pedagogical ideas. Thus by the time Takakura attended school during the two decades surrounding the turn of the century, he studied the German language and was generally nourished within a Japanized German style of education.

Uemura's and Takakura's contrasting formal educations very much correspond to the matter of their respective senses of responsibility for the Japanese nation. To see how this is so, we can note first Uemura's background and upbringing. Born into a samurai-rank family and nurtured as a youngster on Confucian, Bushido values, Uemura carried a burden of responsibility for the nation's welfare. Moreover, as happened to other families who had been loyal to the pre-Meiji Tokugawa Shogunate, his family's status had been ripped away, perhaps leaving Uemura with conservative longings for a resurrection of the better days of yesteryear. To be sure, Uemura's baptism at age fifteen brought a fundamental change in his life goals: "I no longer cared to become a high official, and in a short time I felt a deep desire to be a Christian minister" (Saba 1966, Vol.1, 673). Even so, as will be further described below, Uemura never lost his desire to rebuild a new Japan, albeit on Christian foundations.

As for Takakura, as noted earlier, he was not of samurai background but from a long line of merchants. From his childhood, Takakura had come to share his father's dream for him to become a famous government official, and thus he followed an elitist educational track all the way to the Tokyo Imperial University. His conversion to Christianity changed all of that, however, beginning with his decision to pursue theological studies. Furthermore, unlike Uemura, throughout his adult life Takakura did not exhibit an ambition to create a new Japan, beyond the somewhat idealistic (or even pietistic) notion of vast numbers of people, changed by the power of the gospel, transforming the nation from the inside out. Takakura's own description of his struggle with his proud ego leads to the conclusion that his childhood career dreams were built on grandiose hopes for fame instead of on an ingrained sense of responsibility.

There was a great disparity between the Anglo-Saxon flavor of Uemura's teenage schooling and the German, aimed-to-cultivate-imperial-loyalty orientation of Takakura's entire formal education (until seminary). Built on a foundation of conservative Bushido values, an Anglo-Saxon stress on individual freedom would have equipped Uemura to dare to challenge the existing political authorities when necessary—they were, after all, from clans long opposed to the Tokugawa regime which had been supported by his own family tradition. Takakura's egotistical aspirations for personal glory, on the other hand, were no match for the all-encompassing imperial system into which he was inculcated throughout his school years. Powerless to resist and challenge, as Uemura did at times (e.g., in publicly supporting Uchimura Kanzō following his infamous 1891 lese majesty incident), Takakura thus fled for safety into the strictly religious realm of the Church.

Their generational difference surely contributed as well to Uemura's and Takakura's contrasting political governing abilities, although this third factor could be attributed more than the previous two to simple differences in character and personality. Whatever the case, Uemura's early Meiji samurai background had to be important in enabling him to become the leading Protestant Church statesman of his day. He led in the formation of the NKK, the Evangelical Alliance (and its organizational equivalents), the widely-read *Fukuin shinpō*, and the Tokyo Shingakusha, and exerted a continuing and powerful influence on them all. He helped establish in 1880 the *Rikugo zasshi* (Cosmos Magazine), which by all accounts became a significant and comprehensive interdenominational Christian effort that earned the respect of the wider intellectual community.[4] Furthermore, in order to help realize his goal of transforming the nation, Uemura was able to use his wide connections in such a way as to hold an annual worship service, beginning in 1909, at his own Fujimichō Church especially for the national Diet members.

Takakura, by contrast, was not as skilled at governing and organizational politicking. Becoming both Uemura's successor at the seminary and the founding pastor of the important Shinanomachi Church was due to Takakura's theological posture, not to his organizational prowess or maneuverings. In his later years Takakura became the leader of a reform-minded theological research and fellowship group that called itself the *Fukuin doshikai* (Gospel Association of Kindred Spirits). They started a new magazine, *Fukuin to gendai* (The Gospel and Modern Times), which ran for two and one-half years, with thirty-one monthly issues, from March 1931 through October 1933. Although the group began with high hopes and a strong vision, various problems soon emerged, and Takakura suffered great personal pain. While a powerful teacher and preacher, Takakura was not a gifted organizational leader.

Part of the explanation for this lies in the fact that Takakura's generation of young intellectuals was preoccupied with inward concerns about the nature of the human "self." Theirs was the generation of *hanmon*, or introspective "agony." This was in contrast to the previous generation of Meiji leaders, whose concern was with pressing external matters. As Takakura himself put it:

> To the people of the Meiji Restoration, matters such as the self did not at all become a problem. Human nature was just forgetting oneself and facing outward only, discussing the empire, exerting strength towards how to mobilize the masses. All of the people of that time were taken up with external activities and did not have the leisure to examine the inmost heart; but, although pushed into a corner the self did not stay in the shadows. Thus their [the people of that time] lives were still ruled by traditional legends and customs, and there was not a waking up from themselves and a critical doubting of these authorities (Takakura 1964, Vol.1, 85).

In other words, Uemura and the other former samurai had to build a new nation. Takakura and other intellectuals were left to interpret how the vast changes of Meiji impacted the meaning of human life within a new, modern Japan.

This generational contrast goes a long way towards explaining Takakura's self-proclaimed and continuing problem with *jiga* (or the self), to be further examined below. It is also related to another fruitful area of comparison between Uemura and Takakura, namely that of social ethics.

Social Ethics

Takakura has been criticized almost uniformly for failing to develop any sort of adequate approach to social ethics. Charles

Germany, whose influential book on Protestant theologies in Japan has an explicit subtheme of evaluating those various theologies' social ethics, represents the criticisms of Takakura concerning this point: "Quite obviously...he failed to recognize adequately, or did not consider relevant, the complexity of any human society and, particularly, Japanese society.... He was unrealistic..." (Germany 1965, xii, 118). Along with other analysts, Satō Toshio, the recognized authority on Takakura, has noted how he had an overarching concern for the so-called *bunka no mondai* ("problem of culture," or perhaps in Takakura's case better translated as "civilization"). Nevertheless, Satō also recognizes Takakura's failure to have "much of a concrete idea concerning the problem of Christianity and culture" (Takakura 1964, Vol.1[Explanatory Comments], 399).

As noted earlier, Takakura had what could be termed an idealistic or pietistic longing for a new Japan. His ongoing concern was more for internal meaning than for external society. Takakura's own testimony is that his twin decisions to convert to Christianity and to enter seminary were related to solving the problem of the "self," i.e., its nature, how to set it free, and how to see it become fully realized. (This topic of the "self" is too overriding for Takakura to confine it to one section of comparison with Uemura, as we shall see through its continued reappearance in our discussion.) Insofar as he thought of doing so, Takakura's idea of changing Japan thus meant finding for himself and for others internal, qualitative solutions more than strictly social, quantitatively observable answers.

In contrast, Uemura has been thought to have had a much healthier and balanced approach to social concerns. Compared to the rest of early Japanese Protestantism, particularly those groups with an organized emphasis on addressing the wider society, Uemura and others from the "Yokohama Band" are usually considered to be somewhere between the extremely socially-interested "Kumamoto Band" and the individualistic "Sapporo Band." Some critics have speculated that Uemura's church-centeredness inhibited what could have been a more constructive posture towards social problems (Sumiya 1961, 135–39; Drummond 1971, 212). On the whole, however, Uemura's approach has at least been more highly evaluated than Takakura's.

In acknowledging the important place of the Church in the NKK tradition, one study calls for a return to Uemura's healthy, Puritan-like ecclesiology (Ōki 1963). The analysis argues that Uemura's proper ethical posture was in large part lost in Takakura's overemphasis on grace: "The road from Uemura to Takakura is a road of change from a religion of ethics to a religion of grace," as well as a change "from a theology of evangelism to theological evangelism." This is the primary explanation for the feeling that, "Upon reading Takakura's *Complete Works* directly after reading Uemura's *Complete Works*, we are impressed that there is a certain disparity there." As the study also states, Takakura's "Evangelical Calvinism" in the end "gives a change of religious character" to Genevan, Scottish and New England Puritan religiosity in a manner that Uemura's own version of Calvinism did not.

Moreover, the study notes such contrasting starting points as Uemura's "problem of extroverted practice and determination" versus Takakura's "problem-consciousness of the self." The understandings of the human-divine personal relationship as "covenantal" versus "union-like" are highlighted. Particulars of such an analysis would need closer scrutiny, especially Takakura's understanding of the divine-human relationship as "union-like," in light of his frequent criticisms of mysticism. Nevertheless, focusing too exclusively on these differences distracts us from the essence of Uemura's and Takakura's similarity as Christian leaders: their common evangelical faith. It is thus to

this fourth area of examination and comparison that we must now turn.

Evangelical Theology

"What, then, are his [Takakura's] evangelical faith and Christianity all about?" In answer to his own question, Satō Toshio once again offers the recognized view: "He had received them from his teacher, Uemura Masahisa" (Furuya 1997, 49). Uemura had learned his evangelicalism from Brown, Ballagh, Hepburn and other evangelical American missionaries. Uemura was also a part of the first Protestant church in Japan, which had sprung out of the New Year's prayer meeting of the World Evangelical Alliance, that was founded in Yokohama. Just as Uemura grew in his evangelical understanding of the Christian faith through studying Scottish theologians such as Denney and Forsyth, Takakura also learned from such writers, particularly during his sojourn in Britain in the early 1920s. Takakura followed in Uemura's footsteps in defending the Bible against the attacks of "liberal Christianity." Indeed, the very title of Takakura's best-known work, *Evangelical Christianity*, shows his indebtedness to the Meiji champion of evangelicalism, Uemura Masahisa.

Furthermore, all analyses acknowledge some type of shift in theology from Uemura to Takakura. As discussed above, some have seen that change as negative, whether in relation to ethics or some other aspect of their respective theologies. Most, however, have seen a more positive deepening and refining of Uemura's theology by his successor. So for example, in regard to the atonement, there is a common view that Takakura's thought crystallizes and makes a "creative contribution" (Germany 1965, 106); it is thought that Takakura improves upon Uemura's theological emphasis on Christ's person at the expense of Christ's work. Some feel that Takakura's strong preaching enabled him to deepen Uemura's evangelicalism; some point to Takakura's culture and German education gained through his studies at the Tokyo Imperial University.

In terms of what Takakura learned from Uemura, there are certain phrases and attitudes which Takakura picked up from his mentor. Takakura's late son Tōru notes his father's frequent diary entry, *"susume, susume"* ("keep going, keep going"). Recalling his father's own mention of a particular sermon by Uemura which stressed a persevering spirit in following Christ, Takakura Tōru sees Uemura's influence in his father's continual, internal striving (Takakura Tōru 1985, 24). Similarly, Takakura occasionally used the term *kokorozashi* ("aspiration"), a hallmark of Uemura's understanding of faith. Furthermore, Takakura himself admiringly remarks Uemura's *kakushin* ("conviction" or "certainty") and *reiteki chokkan* ("spiritual insight" or "intuition"). Takakura also notes, "Otto's so-called Numinous element probably was in my teacher's personality," an evaluation he similarly applies to Jesus' holiness (Takakura 1964, Vol.3, 349, 355).

In explaining how Takakura came to react negatively to Uemura, it is instructive to note the background of Takakura's sense of prophetic calling which he had upon returning to Japan from Britain. After his conversion, Takakura initially had a euphoric devotion to Uemura's sermons. Soon, however, he began to find his mentor's messages unsatisfactory and dry. A few years later, Takakura began to wonder about the spiritual well-being of the NKK and the Church in Japan as a whole, specifically noting the lack of a "spirit of prayer" and "intimacy with Christ" among his elders (Takakura 1936, Vol.6, 508). In the midst of his running disagreement with Uemura over the future of the seminary, Takakura set sail for the West in 1921 with a sense of personal calling to gain more philosophical training. His purpose was to be able to "systematically" and "philosophically express"

the Christian faith like "true" theologians such as Paul, Augustine, and Calvin. In defense of this decision, Takakura notes, "If true theology does not spring up, Christianity cannot deeply take root in our country" (Takakura 1964, 38). One is thus left to wonder to what extent Takakura felt that Christianity had taken root at all in Japan during the previous generation.

Continuing in that mindset, Takakura managed to steer his own course upon returning to Japan from Britain in 1924, particularly in relation to Uemura's Fujimichō Church. This reflected Takakura's concern, which he had expressed before leaving Japan, that the Church was focusing more on quantity than on quality. In light of that move, taken in the wake of all of his other running concerns, one analyst concludes that Takakura was seeking to bring about a reform movement within the NKK. By this interpretation, Takakura had seen a hardening of the NKK under Uemura into a secularized, middle-class organization, and hence he was trying to "uproot and throw away all of the embellishments" in the Church with which his conscience could not co-exist (Miyamoto 1964).

Such an interpretation is quite plausible. It helps to explain Takakura's emphasis on prophetic Christianity, including his concern to address evangelicalism's clerical, priestly character. The almost total absence of citations from Japanese theological works in Takakura's writings (and Uemura's writings stand as clear examples of possible references) might similarly indicate Takakura's feeling that they were not "true" theology.

Of course, none of this would necessarily lead to the conclusion that Takakura disdained, or saw as non-Christian, either the NKK or Uemura: Takakura's public statements and continuing membership in the NKK in fact indicate otherwise. What an understanding of Takakura's sense of prophetic calling does is heighten our awareness of the fact that his and Uemura's respective visions and means of reaching them were undoubtedly different. The contrasting political contexts within which they were educated, and perhaps more importantly different family backgrounds vis-à-vis having a sense of socio-political responsibility (i.e., Uemura's samurai background versus Takakura's merchant heritage), go a long way towards explaining the two men's respective visions for the Christianization of Japan. Even with a common commitment to evangelical theology, differences of context and background make for significant contrasts between theologians and churchmen.

Nevertheless, this author believes that there is a further explanation for Uemura's and Takakura's contrasting emphases and characteristics beyond the factor of their respective, individual personalities. Beginning with the above-mentioned differences in background, this study would like to offer a way of comparing Uemura and Takakura that has not yet received any treatment in the relevant literature.

AN ADDITIONAL MANNER OF COMPARISON

To begin with an indirect approach, we can first consider Natsume Sōseki and Mori Ōgai, perhaps the two greatest literary figures of Meiji and Taishō Japan. While appreciating the greatness of both Natsume and Mori, it is important to note their differences, and to explore the underlying reasons for those differences. First of all, they varied in the ways they understood and used Western thought: Mori's focus was on transplanting Western scientific thinking into Japanese political and scientific soil, whereas Natsume used insights from Western ethical teachings to further his own sense of an internalized, individualistic morality. Also, Mori spent a lifetime in government administrative posts; Natsume never had such a position (Natsume even

resigned from teaching at the Imperial University and focused on writing). The latter difference may be explained by historical circumstances, and even the former could hinge on the encounters with the West that each man "happened to have." There could be a more substantial explanation, however, based on different strands of thought within their common historical context.

Mori Ōgai was educated as a child in orthodox Chu-tzu (Chu Hsi) Neo-Confucianism. This cultivates a dualistic mindset "which separates facts from their 'Reasons' or 'Principles.'" Natsume Sōseki, on the other hand, was a student of Zen Buddhism, which has a close affinity with the Yang-ming (Wang Yang Ming) school (as opposed to the Chu-tzu). Accordingly, Natsume reflected the Yang-ming monistic inclination and emphasis on "life" and its activity.

Furthermore, Chu-tzu and Yang-ming learning methods are different: "The former enquires into the reasons for individual things in the world and seeks to acquire in the long run complete wisdom or awakening, and the latter asks for an all-comprising 'Mind' directly." It could be said that the former lends itself to scientific inquiry, and the latter towards a more immediate, passionate search for awakening. Since there are clear parallels to Mori's and Natsume's respective ways of thinking, might not their respective religio-philosophical backgrounds help to explain the two authors' different emphases?[6]

That is the question this study would like to raise in relation to Uemura and Takakura. On the one hand, much work has been done on the samurai, Confucian backgrounds of various Meiji Christian leaders, including that of Uemura. Furthermore, analyses of Takakura have considered well his historical context and the internal agonizing of his generation of young intellectuals. However, the question of Takakura's religio-philosophical background, as well as how that affects a comparison with Uemura, has not yet been raised. What this study would like to argue is that there is no other factor more basic for carrying out a comparative analysis of any two religious thinkers in general, and of Uemura Masahisa and Takakura Tokutarō in particular.

Takakura's Heritage

In contrast to Uemura's Confucian, Bushido background, Takakura's was Jōdō Shinshū (True Pure Land Buddhism). The Takakura family is described by Takakura's biographer as having had its religious affiliation with True Pure Land Buddhism "for generations"; moreover, Takakura's (great-) grandparents were *nesshin* ("earnest") affiliates of the powerful Hongwanji (Ōshiō 1955, 6,10).

It is noteworthy that Takakura had a continuing, close relationship with his grandmother, accentuated by the combined factors that he was the oldest son and that his father was away from home nearly three years while Takakura was a very young boy. Particularly in relation to someone like Takakura, then, one must heed the statement, "To know the persons and ideas that dominated a man's childhood is to know, to some extent at least, the man himself" (Barmann 1972, 1). Also, just as one analyst sees the lasting impact of Sigmund Freud's Roman Catholic nanny in causing him to have a lifelong, inner battle with Christianity, so any serious study should look for a similar impact of the religious heritage Takakura encountered as a young child (Vitz 1988, 2ff., 212ff.).

To cite the obvious evidence first, both in *Evangelical Christianity* and throughout his other writings, Takakura makes periodic criticisms of traditional Japanese religion, most often singling out Buddhism and Jōdō Shinshū in particular. While most of these comments are negative—and for the most

part quite brief remarks made almost in passing—their regular appearance shows the consistent attention Takakura gave to the subject, both in addressing his audiences and (more importantly for our purposes) in clarifying his own thinking.

Besides his frequent mention of Buddhism and Jōdō Shinshū in his writings, Takakura often read writings by other Buddhist authors. Moreover, he had occasional, special opportunities for interaction with famous Buddhist scholars. For instance, Takakura was able at the Imperial University to study Buddhism under the eminent scholar Anesaki Masaharu. On ship en route to Britain, Takakura also had some stimulating conversations with Sasaki Gesshō, a well-known lecturer on the history of Buddhist doctrine and of Pure Land Buddhism. This time spent with Sasaki prompted Takakura to write a critical essay on Jōdō Shinshū. All of this evidence suggests, then, that throughout his lifetime Takakura experienced a regular give-and-take with Buddhist, and especially Jōdō Shinshū, thought and life.[7]

An inordinate amount of space has been given here to set forth some of the evidence for the relevance of Takakura's religio-philosophical heritage because heretofore it has not been duly recognized. One related encounter Takakura had—which has been noted but has not been given enough importance—was with Japan's greatest modern philosopher, Nishida Kitarō. Just before Nishida went to Kyoto University and published his monumental 1911 *Zen no kenkyū* (A Study of Good or An Inquiry into the Good; cf. Nishida 1988 and 1990), Takakura was one of his close students in the high school in Kanazawa. To have interacted that closely with so powerful an intellect as Nishida would have left an impression on anyone, especially a twenty-year-old grappling with the great issues of life. One evidence of the impact is Takakura's subsequent reading of some of Nishida's works.

The relation with Takakura's religio-philosophical heritage comes from noting the Zen Buddhist roots of Nishida's philosophy. Zen is part of the larger category of Mahayana Buddhism, also shared by Jōdō Shinshū. (It is also worth noting that while he consciously rejected it, Nishida had been born into a Jōdō Shinshū home himself.) It was the Zen, Mahayana flavor of Nishida's philosophy that struck such a deep chord in the hearts of countless Japanese intellectuals upon the publication of *Zen no kenkyū* in 1911. Given Takakura's background, one can assume that Nishida reinforced—awakened—a similar, deeply ingrained Mahayana mindset in Takakura. Furthermore, Nishida was a powerful example of a Mahayana thinker who was digesting and reshaping Western philosophico-scientific thought. That was a challenge Takakura himself had to face, both in his formal education and in his post-conversion, lifelong study of (Western) theology.

Space does not permit anything close to a thorough examination of the distinguishable threads of Takakura's background, nor of his encounter with Nishida, which became woven into the overall fabric of Takakura's thought as it developed and then crystallized in the form of his "Evangelical Christianity."[8] Nevertheless, in order to enable a meaningful comparison with Uemura, we will briefly consider some aspects of Nishida's early thought (i.e., that which Takakura encountered) and some similar traits in Takakura. The discussion will necessarily become more technical, in order to be as clear as possible on some of the distinguishing characteristics of thought to be compared.

The controlling idea in *Zen no kenkyū* is *junsui keiken*, or pure experience. This is not a rank subjectivism, but a primary immediacy that is prior to the "common-sense" notion of an existing subject that experiences an object. In Nishida's second major work, *Jikaku ni okeru chokkan to hansei*

(Intuition and Reflection in the Consciousness of the Self, 1917), "pure experience" has developed into *jikaku*, variously translated as "self-consciousness," "self-awareness" or "self-awakening." This is a subjectivity that is "immediate and direct consciousness [which] is...essentially self-transcendent and self-extricated consciousness...." For Nishida especially, *"Jikaku* signifies a fundamental, ontological awareness which is beyond the self-and-other-duality, and hence also beyond self-consciousness in the psychological sense" (Abe, 1988, 356 [n.7], 357 [n.12]). That is, *jikaku* is neither subjective nor objective, but a subjectivity that (allegedly, at least) transcends simple, face-value notions in a way having basic epistemological and ontological implications.

Takakura's Christian Thought

In looking at Takakura, we must not make the mistake of assuming a straight-line influence from Nishida to Takakura: Takakura was his own man, he absorbed ideas from others and used them in his own way. Nor must we assume that a linguistic correspondence means similarity of thought content. Even so, besides being appropriate to such a limited study as this one, it is instructive to examine some of the ways in which Takakura himself uses the term *jikaku* in describing even basic matters of faith and theology. Not only does a similarity to Nishida in particular become evident, but even in the midst of almost exclusively Christian theological language, the permeating scent of Takakura's own Mahayana background can be sensed as well.

First, we can consider some of Takakura's statements concerning Jesus Christ. In seeking to comprehend more deeply Jesus' "Self-awareness" (*jikaku*) of being the Son of God—something that enabled Him to have such great authority relative to His disciples to the point of becoming the object of their faith—we can say that "God's enterprise of atonement is based on this Self-awareness of Jesus." Indeed, "God's great administration of human redemption in history was something going upstream until Jesus' matchless Self-awareness of being the Son." We cannot say *when* Jesus became aware of His unique Sonship, however. Takakura's suggestion is that rather than asking that question we could say that His was a "supertemporal, metaphysical Self-awareness" (Takakura 1964, Vol.2, 335).

Next, there is the matter of an individual becoming "self-aware" of his or her own sin. Job, for example, became "self-aware" (*jikaku*) both of his own "weakness, foolishness, and deep sin" and of the "dignity of his life which must not be snatched away" (Takakura 1964, Vol.3, 39). Also, we become "aware [*jikaku*] of the self's imperfection" in terms of faith and ethics "at the time we directly face, with an awakened conscience, Jesus' person in the gospels" (Takakura 1937, Vol.8, 179). In recounting his own struggle with the "self," Takakura asks rhetorically, "Isn't it at the point of becoming keenly aware that one is foul and selfish that the possibility of self-abolition is understood? I want more and more strongly and keenly to be aware [*jikaku*] that I am egotistical, for it is from here that the new heavens and new earth open up" (Takakura 1964, Vol.1, 20–21).

In describing a person coming to faith, Takakura speaks of becoming "aware" (*jikaku*) of the "spiritual self while being deeply engrossed in the self," so that one "hears the prophet Elijah's so-called 'still, small voice,'"or senses the "true life" of God as the Psalmist's "'deep calling to deep.'" Moreover, Takakura follows the Apostle Paul's words on the Holy Spirit in Romans 8:15 and preaches, "Potentially anyone is God's child, but there also must be a falling of the Holy Spirit to reach an awareness [*jikaku*] of being God's child, and to realize an appropriate life" (Takakura 1936, Vol.1, 81, 135).

To round out this current account of Takakura's relevant statements, there is the "awareness" of forgiveness in Christ's Cross. This involves having the "conviction" of the "absolute trust" and love God has placed upon us: "When I am aware [*jikaku suru toki*] of this grand confidence, sincerity, and grace of God towards us, my sins are forgiven and I am saved" (Takakura 1964, Vol.4, 69). Similarly, daily bearing one's Cross as a Christian involves the same type of "self-awareness":

> There is the thought [in Paul's boasting in the Cross alone] that we are judged in the awareness [*jikaku*] of oneself being a Christian.... Bearing the Cross is first fighting daily the self. That which overcomes the self's passions, flesh, and character is the Cross.... We must perceive [*kakugo*] the matter of bearing the Cross.[9]

Moreover, in terms of theological articulation, underlying the various recognitions given by Church councils to Christological "orthodoxy" has been the "faith of the Incarnation." The Church has been "aware" (*jikaku)* of God's miraculous and gracious gift in Christ, which was His superhistorical, redemptive revelation entering into human history (Takakura 1964, Vol.2, 346–47).

To summarize this all too cursory overview, for Takakura there is an epistemological-ontological merging of the "Self- (self-) awareness" (*jikaku*) of Jesus, of individuals, and of the Church. It is the experience of the Cross—not a "subjective" experience of an "objective" event, but a subjectivity that is a "self-transcendent and self-extricated consciousness" (cf. Abe quotation above)—that gives conviction and certainty concerning Jesus' divinity, one's own forgiveness, and the Church's beliefs.

In relation to Nishida and Mahayana Buddhism, Takakura's biblical, Christian distinctives are clearly different. In addition to other explicit statements about Buddhism (as described earlier), the following shows Takakura's critical stance towards his inherited religious tradition:

> The object of worship must be not only a postulate, but an axiom. I think Amida-Butsu who is the personal god believed by some faithful Japanese Buddhists is the most gracious beautiful idea of worship except the God of Jesus Christ. But Amida-Butsu is only the projection of human subjective religious need and consequently has no real historical basis (Takakura 1936, Vol.5, 24).[10]

Here one sees the importance for Takakura the Christian thinker of the category of history, for example, in distinguishing the Christian faith from Jōdō Shinshū. Even so, we can understand this type of statement as containing a *conscious* distinction made by Takakura. Hence it is not inconsistent to see from our overview of his use of *jikaku* a strong similarity between Takakura's more implicit, *unconscious* thought patterns and those of his family's religious heritage. Thus even if they are starkly different in terms of explicit content, Takakura's thinking as a Christian theologian and his thinking as one born into the Mahayana tradition exhibit a good deal of overlap in subtler methodological ways.

Comparison with Uemura

As noted earlier, and in agreement with other analyses, Takakura's and Uemura's biblical, evangelical emphases flow in the same expressly Christian stream. However, also as noted above, what one analyst sensed to be a "certain disparity," or even "a change of religious character," between Uemura and Takakura points to other tributaries. In other words, whatever differences exist are not only in the area of explicit content, but perhaps more in implicit thought patterns. And as a reminder, in looking for these subtle discrepancies, the particular, respective flows we are comparing at this

point in our discussion are those of religio-philosophical heritages.

We have already noted the importance for Uemura of the notion of *kokorozashi*, or aspiration. Indeed it is so pervasive in his thought that one well-known analysis has termed Uemura's theology a "fighting theology" (Kumano 1968, 216–39). That is, one "aspires" as a child of God to cultivate within oneself Jesus' noble character and goodness. While this ongoing process requires one's own effort, God's grace is of basic importance in coming to realize both one's separation from God, as well as one's insufficiency to live a godly life. Furthermore, the Christian's "aspiration" is not only increasingly to live like Jesus, but also to fulfill one's *tenshoku* ("vocation") of bearing fruit as part of God's own "aspiration" and *jigyō* ("enterprise") to evangelize Japanese society and establish the Christian Church (Unuma 1988, 50–55).

Related to this is the supernatural, personalized idea of *ten* ("heaven"), which Uemura held along with many other countrymen during the pre- and early-Meiji years (Unuma 1993). Since he already thus had an ingrained reverence for a personal, supreme ruler, the message concerning the one, true God of the Bible found fertile soil in Uemura's and others' hearts. No wonder that Uemura could testify in retrospect about hearing of Christian monotheism from James Ballagh, "This greatly impressed and astonished me. I immediately grasped and accepted the idea" (Saba 1966, Vol.1, 672–73). It was henceforth in total allegiance to their newly found Lord that Uemura and others of Bushido background served God in Jesus Christ—each in his own distinctive way, but all for the salvation of Japan.

In sum, the thrust of Uemura's theology is an outward-looking, evangelistically oriented "aspiring" service in line with his heavenly Lord's own "enterprise." Takakura also emphasized evangelism, but the well-spring of that emphasis was from Jesus' and our "awareness" of the atonement (as quoted earlier, "God's enterprise of atonement is based on this Self-awareness of Jesus" of being the Son of God). Uemura's "aspiration" was to join in the heavenly Lord's work of saving society and building the Church; Takakura emphasized one's *jikaku* of forgiveness in the Cross, leading to grateful commitment to the task of evangelism. The former's built-in Confucian sense of loyalty to an external ruler can be seen in contrast to the latter's built-in Mahayana sense of an inward self- (or Self-) awareness.[11] Adding in this way the crucial factor of each man's religious-philosophical heritage thus helps explain the "certain disparity" or "change of religious character" senses in the analysis mentioned earlier.

This external versus internal discrepancy resulting from a Bushido-Confucian versus Mahayana background also helps to explain Uemura's and Takakura's contrasting emphases (or lack thereof) on social ethics. Interestingly, the analysis cited earlier—which calls for a return to Uemura's healthier, Puritan ethics, and which also points to a basic difference in the religious character between Uemura's and Takakura's theologies—blames the lack of a proper ethical outlook within the post-Uemura NKK tradition on the ingrained socio-ethical passivity of the Japanese religious environment, due particularly to the longstanding presence of a "Jōdō Shinshū-type religion of grace." The analysis points to Takakura as contributing to the downward spiral, but it fails to make the specific connection between him and his own Jōdō Shinshū heritage within that process. Such an oversight, the present study wants to claim, leaves out a critical element for understanding what was happening in the overall transition from Uemura to Takakura. Thus while the contrast between their Bushido and Mahayana backgrounds certainly is not the sole explanation for Uemura's and

Takakura's respective external and internal social emphases, it nevertheless is an indispensable, underlying factor.

Similarly, one can point to contrasting heritages in explaining Takakura's greater emphasis on the atonement, or Christ's work. On the one hand, the limitations of our study must not leave the impression that Uemura had *no* emphasis on forgiveness in the Cross; such an impression would be unfair and grossly inaccurate. But he did focus more on Christ's person. A case in point is his defense of the divinity of Christ in his debate with Ebina. The relative point here, however, is that one cannot fully understand this posture of Uemura, as well as Takakura's greater focus on Christ's work on the Cross, without taking into account the former's heritage of Confucian loyalty to one's (heavenly) lord, as well as the latter's sense, at least, of the mercy of Amida. Again, backgrounds do not explain everything, but they do fill out an otherwise inexplicable difference between two evangelical theologians.

The goal of the current study is to add the element of religious heritage, especially in the case of Takakura, to the discussion of how he and Uemura came to their respective understandings of the Christian faith. Without taking their religio-philosophical backgrounds into account, one cannot fully appreciate the often subtle dynamics of the discrepancies of nuance and emphasis between Uemura and his disciple. Heretofore, those who have recognized the role of *Uemura's* inherited worldview have sensed enough difference between him and Takakura to note that their respective frameworks of understanding were "worlds supported by fundamentally different aims" (Unuma 1988, 216). What is needed to more adequately explain why that was the case is an appreciation of the role that *Takakura's* inherited religious mindset played in his own Christian understanding, and thus in his peculiar differences with his closest theological mentor.

EPILOGUE

Recognizing the importance of both Uemura's and Takakura's religio-philosophical backgrounds relates directly to how one understands the overall development of Protestant theology in Japan. Heretofore, the common view has been that Meiji Protestantism produced little theological reflection due to its strong ethical emphasis. With Takakura, however, there was the appearance in late Taishō and early Shōwa of the first systematic theology—although it was rather uncreative, serving merely as a linguistic translation of Scottish evangelical and German crisis theologies. Then there was genuine theological production with Kumano Yoshitaka and other NKK thinkers who drank deeply from the well of Karl Barth. Finally, with Kitamori Kazō's *kami no itami no shingaku* ("theology of the pain of God") and, in the 1960s, an escape from the so-called "German theological captivity," Japanese Protestants started producing authentic, distinctively Japanese theology that was beyond the nationalistic, prewar variety.

The first particular implication of this study concerns viewing Meiji and Taishō theology in a way different from the commonly held understanding. On the surface at least, seeing a prevalent ethical flavor in Meiji theology, followed by an "uncontextualized" copy of Western theology with Takakura in Taishō, is accurate. However, in recognizing *theologically* the actual interaction that was taking place during those years between God Himself and the Meiji-Taishō Christian leaders, we must necessarily see as an important part of that interaction Uemura's, Takakura's and others' *theological* attempts to articulate the Christian gospel in the only terms they had at their disposal, namely those of their

inherited religio-philosophical traditions. Uemura and Takakura did not (in the main at least) preach, teach and write in English, Latin or German on behalf of Europeans or North Americans. Both for themselves and for their followers, Uemura, Takakura and other leaders of their eras thought, spoke and wrote in their inherited Japanese language, necessarily using inherited religious notions. Thus, those multifaceted, diverse notions were necessarily and to varying degrees part of the Christians' *theological* understandings and articulations. Otherwise, Uemura, Takakura and others would have been *tabula rasa*, and their newly found Christianity would have furnished them with a totally different language and vocabulary than they had learned within their own cultural settings.

In other words, even though it may not match up as nicely as some might like with what they consider "real theology," what Uemura, Takakura and others articulated were in fact their own "words about God," i.e., "theology." Moreover, all theologies have to one degree or another incorporated inherited religious words and ideas.

This leads to a second and even wider implication, namely the necessary and vital roles which particular languages, cultures and religio-philosophical heritages play in any Christian theology. Only since World War II, and the correlative unraveling of the so-called Christian West religio-cultural unity, have Protestant and Catholic theologians alike (the latter especially after Vatican II) begun to realize the anomaly of an allegedly monocultural, Latin-European "Christendom." For centuries, the underlying notion of territorial religion, whereby there are "Christian nations" and "non-Christian" or "pagan nations," meant a theological inability to acknowledge any legitimacy to religio-philosophical understanding outside the pale of Christian domains, exceptions such as Ricci and Valignano notwithstanding. Hence the only linguistic-cultural setting for genuine theology was Europe (and in time North America). This powerful notion itself, however, developed within a particular historical progression of Constantinian Rome, the Christianization of Northwest Europe, and encirclement by Islam. Thus instead of cultivating the multilinguistic and multicultural nature of Christian understanding (exemplified in the translation of the Bible itself into multiple languages), Medieval and then Modern Europe constructed its allegedly universally valid theology—forgetting that it was doing so on its own limited, inherited notions of politico-religious unity within defined geographical boundaries.

The inability, therefore, to see that Uemura and Takakura did in fact produce real theology, and did so in interaction with their particular religio-philosophical heritages, is due to a limited, historically conditioned notion of theology that is in fact a relic of a decaying European Christendom. That notion is also what helped to empower German, and especially Barthian, theology to sweep into Japan and captivate much of Protestant thought from the 1930s through the 1960s (if not until the present). Recognizing the necessary involvement of inherited thought in Uemura, Takakura and indeed in all of Christian theology confronts the idea of an imagined universal theology such as that of Islam, in upholding the solitary unity of the Arabic language. Similarly trying to maintain a universal Latin (or related English or German), Christian theology ignores the gospel's inherent character of being translated into multiple settings, and of being actively received by the members of those linguistic-cultural contexts.

Related to these first two implications is a final one we will mention here, namely the resiliency of pre-Christian thought within Christian theology, along with how to evaluate that fact. Undoubtedly, and indeed by definition, there is change in religious understanding upon conversion to Chris-

tianity. There is not *total* change, however, nor is there an obliteration of how Christian converts (and their succeeding generations) formerly conceived of religious ideas. The working out of Christian life and identity—part and parcel of the ongoing theological task—includes some measure of integration of the past, new life in the present and future hope. Insofar as doing Christian theology assumes the normativity of divine revelation, it thus becomes necessary to relate that standard to persisting pre-Christian (or non-Christian) religious thought. The theological category of general revelation can help to serve that purpose, as can constructive interreligious dialogue. One must be careful, however, not to go to either of two extremes: first, that of assuming a pristine beauty of all human religiosity in a way that denies the reality of sin and error; and second, that of seeking to subsume non-Christian thought under an allegedly unchanging Christian standard that simply carries on the tradition of a conquering Christendom. However one proceeds in this complicated but vital task, the importance and legitimacy of pre- or non-Christian religious understanding as a subject for Christian theological reflection must be acknowledged either in a continuing way in some quarters, or for the first time in others.

Within its ongoing, worldwide spread (and at times regressions), the Christian faith was brought to and received within Meiji and Taishō Japan. Particular individuals, both eventual church leaders and more rank-and-file members, embraced that faith. Here in this study, we have compared two such individuals who ended up being leaders within the same NKK tradition, Uemura Masahisa and Takakura Tokutarō. By drawing together the many existing analyses of these two important figures, we have seen their similarities and differences in relation to something as specific as a particular seminary, as well as in relation to their respective eras, to social ethics and to evangelical theology. By considering both Uemura's and Takakura's inherited religio-philosophical traditions, we have sought to fill some of the gaps in understanding their complicated relationship. Moreover, wider implications for gaining further insight into Japanese theology, and indeed all of Christian theology, have been suggested as well. The author's hope is that the reader of this study will thus have been spurred on to develop a fuller understanding of Uemura and Takakura in their own right, as well as of ongoing theological developments within the ever-changing, worldwide Christian faith.

NOTES

[1] Noting all of the relevant sources at each place where they support what is written here would be far too cumbersome for this particular study. Along with quotations, only select, particular points that are supported by either relatively obscure materials or materials written specifically for the point at hand will be noted. Furthermore, listing all of the references underlying this study would give a far too extensive list. Therefore only representative English and Japanese materials are listed below; however, studies particularly devoted to comparisons between Uemura and Takakura have been included. More detailed information can be obtained from the author.

[2] Aside from terms commonly used in the literature (e.g., *kyōkai* and "church"), and except where otherwise noted, translations in this study are the author's.

[3] Some readers will know that Takakura committed suicide; as might be expected, questions over Takakura's death remain to this day.

Despite these lingering questions, increased public awareness of depression as a medical condition, along with continued examination of Takakura's own case, have led to the conclusion that Takakura died due to that particular illness. This is the view of this writer. Takakura did not die because of a lapse of faith, but because he was sick. Increased recording of dreams in Takakura's diary, along with expressions of guilt, were aspects of the sickness. If anything, Takakura's journal entries reveal a faith that endured to the end, as he exhorted himself to give thanks, pray and worship. Even so, the genuineness, or lack thereof, of faith really is not a relevant

factor. As is the case with many other sufferers of depression, it was illness that was the direct cause of Takakura's death.

The most recent, persuasive treatment of Takakura's death is Satō Toshio's. Professor Satō argues for understanding the cause of the suicide as depression, i.e., the view just outlined (Satō 1983, 221–34). A reviewer of Satō's book devoted most of his attention to the chapter on Takakura's death, and he proclaimed himself convinced by Satō's argument (Kikuchi 1984, 46).

[4] The founding group had just formed a Tokyo counterpart to the YMCA, hence the *Rikugo zasshi* was essentially that group's periodical. It should be noted as well that within a decade Kumiai (Congregational) leaders were the prime contributors to the magazine, followed by its becoming a Unitarian periodical.

In light of the timing of its establishment, the magazine's title is intriguing. "Cosmos" is the standard English translation for "rikugo." However, one could conjecture that the title was purposefully selected to be an alternative to the influential *Meiroku zasshi* (the *riku* of rikugo is the same character as *roku*, i.e., meaning the English "six"), which had run for nearly two years between 1874–76. The latter was formed by the *Meirokusha* ("Society of Meiji Six"), a group of leading specialists in things Western, whose noteworthy members included Fukuzawa Yūkichi and Mori Arinori. The group was quite progressive, and it advised the Restoration government in its innovations and programs of Westernization.

As one of the *Rikugo zasshi*'s editors, Uemura debated, among others, Fukuzawa—just mentioned as a pivotal member of the Meirokusha. In light of Fukuzawa's status of a well-known public figure, it can be argued that Uemura's and the other founders' intent for the *Rikugo zasshi* to be a comprehensive Christian counterpart to the progressive *Meiroku zasshi* is more than a far-fetched speculation (Ion 1990, 36–37; Saba 1966, Vol.2, 353–56; Braisted 1976, Introduction; Soltau 1982, 82).

[5] Representative of a minority, but by no means solitary, negative and critical position concerning Takakura's theology is Kumano Yoshitaka's essay, "Unsettled Ecclesiology in Takakura Tokutarō" (*Takakura Tokutarō ni okeru miteikei kyōkairon*, ch.7 in Kumano 1968, 375–426. The translation "unsettled" comes from Matsuoka 1978, 65; other possibilities would include "undecided" or "pending").

[6] Iki 1979, 102–3. In offering this explanation, Iki suggests that the Japanese preference for Natsume over Mori is due to the former's monistic inclination, which matches a similar, deep Japanese mindset.

[7] One early indication of what might be called Takakura's internal "interreligious dialogue" is some comments he makes in a letter while in his first pastorate in Kyoto. After visiting the Pure Land Buddhist temple near his Yoshida Church, Takakura remarks how he had felt attracted while inside the temple and while looking at the image of Buddha, and that "without thinking I mumbled the Nenbutsu" (Takakura 1937, Vol.10, *Shokan*, 28).

[8] Please note that in describing the relationship between Takakura's thinking and both his background and Nishida, I have intentionally avoided such terms as "effect" and "influence." These strike me as too philosophically rooted in certain Western notions of cause-and-effect to do justice to the dynamic, personal nature of developing, human thought, particularly when analyzing thought that is taking place within a non-Western context such as Takakura's.

[9] The reason for capitalizing all instances of the word "Cross," as opposed to only capitalizing those clearly referring to the Crucifixion of Jesus Christ, will become clearer below when we note a similar ambiguity with the word "self" (Takakaura 1936 Vol.2, 374,377). The characters for "awareness" (*jikaku*) and "perceive" (*kakugo*) overlap, so to speak: the *kaku* in each term is the same character. Interestingly—although by itself this fact cannot offer any sort of conclusive evidence—the *go* of "perceive" is the common character for Buddhist enlightenment, i.e., *satori*.

[10] Takakura made these comments towards the conclusion of his only extant English essay, written during his time in Edinburgh (and reproduced as written here).

[11] While beyond the scope of this essay, exploring Takakura's "problem of the self" in these terms of "self-/Self- awareness" would hold much potential for discerning the interaction of indigenous and biblical notions within Takakura's thinking.

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