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**PIONEERS OF JAPANESE BIBLE TRANSLATION:
The Application of the Dynamic Equivalent Method
in Japan**

A thesis presented in partial
fulfilment of the requirements for
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ABSTRACT

The objective of this study is to investigate the appropriateness of the term *kami* (神) as the translation of the term 'God' from the point-of-view of Dynamic Equivalent (DE) translation in Japan. The study argues that the translated term *kami* (神) in the Japanese Bible was adopted at first without sufficient investigation of its appropriateness but because of its penetrating character, it became the exclusive term to represent the monotheistic God. Discussion of the effect of the philosophy of Dynamic Equivalent translation in the history of Bible translation in Japan and the history of the changes of the Japanese notion of God is used to justify the validity of the above argument.

As a procedure, two translation methods (DE and FE) seen in conventional Bible translations have been compared, supported by case studies where these methods are used. Next, to understand the mind of the Japanese who were the recipients of the new concept of God, the history of Japanese Shinto is discussed. Finally, the lives of two Japanese assistants of Japanese Bible translation, Anjirō and Otokichi, are studied.

The study concludes that the adoption of *kami* (神) was appropriate from the point-of-view of DE translation, and the Japanese assistants also applied the DE translation method unconsciously. A reassessment of their selection of the terms for God is possible if they are seen as examples of the DE translation method.

DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis has not previously been submitted for any degree and that acknowledgements have been made to the contributions of others where appropriate.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In what way can Japanese people understand the Bible more easily? This has been an on-going question for me. The key word to answer the question is the term *kami*, a Japanese translation of the term 'God'. The term *kami*, like god, encodes a huge amount of linguistic, historical, cultural and theological information. In this thesis, an approach to the term 'God' from the viewpoint of the translation history of the Japanese Bible has been chosen. The research involved the histories of China, England, the USA and medieval Rome as well as Japan. It also required a lot of actual translation work. I would often feel that challenging the project was like scratching a tall concrete block with a finger nail. Without the sincere support of the staff of School of Language Studies in Massey University, I would have never completed this study. I am grateful to Dr. Penny Shino who mentored me with great patience for these four years, Professor Kiyoharu Ono (now retired) who kindly provided me the opportunity to study at Massey University, and also Dr. Fumio Kakubayashi who supervised me in 2003 and 2004, guiding me in historical matters, lending me his precious resources and introducing me to Dr. Kurozumi of Tokyo University. Regretfully Dr. Kakubayashi ended his earthly life on Christmas Eve, 2005, after a long illness, but his works will continue to help the successive scholars in the field. I also wish to express my gratitude to Mrs. Toshiko Kakubayashi who kindly allowed me to use Dr. Kakubayashi's collection and resources after his death.

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AUTHOR'S NOTES

1. Translations of quotations from Japanese-language sources are my own, unless stated otherwise.

Due to the difficulty in locating some resources, some references had to be retranslated into English from Japanese translation of English originals.

Any inaccuracy thus arising is regretted.

2. Personal names are given in the order of first and middle names, then surname, or surname preceded by the initials of first and middle names.
3. Non-English terms are typed in *italic* letters.
4. All Japanese terms are transliterated into Hepburn system romanizationⁱ. They are followed by synonymous *kanji* in parentheses when appropriate.
5. Principal notations of god are:
 - a. god represents a mighty, awesome and superhuman existence used as a general term, differing from *Elohim* in Hebrew, *Theos* in Greek, *Deus* in Latin and God in English, the object of Christian faith.
 - b. God for the god of Christianity.
 - c. *kami* (カミ) represents the general traditional Japanese concepts of gods.
 - d. *kami* (神) is a Japanese translation of the term God of Christianity.
 - e. *shen* (神) is a Chinese translation of the term God of Christianity.

ⁱ Chinese terms are Romanized according to the Wade-Giles system.

ABBREVIATIONS

1-, 2-, 3-	John	First, Second and Third Letters of John
ABCFM		American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions
ABF		American Baptist Foreign Missionary Society
ABS		The American Bible Society
Acts		The Book of Acts
Amaterasu		Amaterasu-ō-mikami
BFBS		British and Foreign Bible Society
BFM		The Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the USA
CEV		The Contemporary English Version
CMS		Church Missionary Society
DE		Dynamic Equivalence
FE		Formal Equivalence
Gegū		The Outer Shrine of Ise Shrine
John		The Gospel of John
KJV		King James Version
LMS		London Missionary Society
Luke		The Gospel of Luke
Mark		The Gospel of Mark
Matthew		The Gospel of Matthew
MEFB		Board of Foreign Mission of the Methodist Episcopal Church
Naigū		The Inner Shrine of Ise Shrine
NBSS		National Bible Society of Scotland

PEC Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Protestant
Episcopal Church in the USA

Permanent Committee

The Permanent Committee on the Translation, Revision,
Publication and Preservation of the Text of the Holy
Scriptures

PN Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the
USA

RCA Reformed Church in America

RL Recipient language

Romans The Letter for Romans

SJ Society of Jesus

SL Source language

SPG Society for Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts

Tokyo Committee The Tokyo Bible Translation Committee

Toyoke Toyoukeno-ō-mikami

Yokohama Committee The Bible Translation Committee in Yokohama

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1. Purpose of Thesis

It is often said, “The adoption of the term *kami* (神) for the Christian God was a wrong choice, which made the penetration of Christianity in Japan slow.”¹ Whenever hearing the comment, I have questions. What’s wrong about the term *kami* (神)? What effects arose from adopting the term *kami* (神)? If it is a wrong choice, what is a good alternative?

As an evangelist, I have been studying the Bible with Japanese people for years and have sensed that it is hardly deniable that the term *kami* (神) consists of various concepts which have been adopted from other religions or philosophies during many centuries of usage. However, I also have realised that the translated term has an influential power to penetrate in the recipient culture and gradually change the concept of god in the culture.

¹ S. Kashima, 1997. *Kami to goddo wa dō chigauka*. Shinchōsha, Tokyo, pp. 9-11; A. Ebisawa, 1964. *Nihon no Seisho: Seisho Wayaku no Rekishi*. Nihon Kirisuto Kyōdan Shuppanbu, Tokyo, p.186; S. Ōno, 2002. *Nihonjin no kami*. Shinchōsha, Tokyo, pp.122-123; N. Suzuki, 2001. *Nihon Kirisutokyōshi Monogatari*, Kyōbunkan, Tokyo, p.121.

The term representing god is one of the most important terms in every culture because the notion represented by the term explains various phenomena of the culture and gives a fundamental effect to the activities in the culture. For example, if a culture believes in the absolute authority of the creator, people living in such a culture would possess natural order under this authority. If the notion generates a clear sense of afterlife, the funeral activities in the culture would consist of hope as well as grief.

The term is also one of the first terms to be translated when accepting new thoughts from a source culture into the recipient culture.

Given the above background, this thesis is intended to elucidate the process by which the term *kami* (神) was preferred, and investigate whether the adoption of term *kami* (神) in Japanese Bible translation was appropriate or inappropriate in the period prior to 1888. Central players in this process will also be discussed. (F. Xavier and Anjirō, K.F.A. Gützlaff and Otokichi, J.C. Hepburn and S.R. Brown.) Reference will also be made to the effects of this term on Japanese thought in the following one hundred years.

2. Scope of Thesis

This thesis covers Japanese Bible translations and aspects of terminology in the period before 1888 when the whole Old and New Testament translation was completed. In order to investigate the appropriateness of the term *kami* (神), the present acceptability of the term will be discussed.

The thesis also refers to the mission and Bible translation in China as far as they relate to the Japanese Bible translation.

Study of other terms like ‘baptism’, ‘word’, ‘Holy Spirit’, etc. would also contribute to detailed research in Bible translation, but reasons of space and time require me to defer their study to a separate project.

3. Review of the Literature

The key documents consulted for the purpose of this thesis are Ōno (2001)², Ebisawa (1964)³ and Suzuki (2006)⁴. Frois (1659)⁵ provides information on the footsteps of Jesuit missionaries. And for an overview of the Japanese Bibles, I refer to Kadowaki and Ōshiba (1983)⁶.

Conventionally, the literature has focused on the pros and cons of the adoption of the term *kami* (神) as the translation of the Christian ‘God’.

H. Ritter gives a negative evaluation of the adoption of the term *kami* (神). The fact that Ritter wrote in 1898, 35 years after C.M. Williams had first adopted the term *kami* (神) and 4 years after the Tokyo Bible Committee had

² S. Ōno, 2002. *Nihonjin no kami*, Shinchōsha, Tokyo.

³ A. Ebisawa, 1964. *Nihon no Seisho – Seisho Wayaku no Rekishi*, Nihon Kirisuto Kyōdan Shuppanbu, Tokyo.

⁴ N. Suzuki, 2006. *Seisho no Nihongo*, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo.

⁵ L. Frois, 1659. *Historia de Iapan*, translated to Japanese by K. Matsuda, and T. Kawasaki, , 1956. *Furoisu Nihonshi* Vol.6, Chūōkōronsha, Tokyo.

⁶ K. Kadowaki & K. Ōshiba, 1983, *Kadowaki Bunko – Nihongo Seisho Hon'yakushi*, Shinkyō Shuppansha, Tokyo.

completed the translations of Old Testament, proves that the confusion about the term still remained after the term had been used widely.

S. Kashima⁷ is also negative about the adoption of the term, saying that calling the Absolute God of the Bible *kami* (神) is actually a hindrance preventing Japanese people from internalizing legitimate Christianity. So he used the term *tsukurinushi* (創主) instead, which means ‘creator’.

On the other hand, J.C. Hepburn, one of the translators who adopted the term *kami* (神), defined *kami* in his dictionary, *Waei Gorin Shūsei* edited preceding his Bible translation, as follows:

Kami カミ 神 (shin) n. The deities of Shinto religion, of whom there are said to be *yaoyorozu*, - eight millions i.e. innumerable. This word is now used by Christians as the only Japanese equivalent for Deus and God.⁸

Hepburn knew that the term was used by Shinto, indicating innumerable gods. But he ventured to state that this term *kami* is the “only Japanese equivalent” for Deus and the God of Christianity.

Critical of Hepburn’s translation, A. Yanabu⁹ points out that the Japanese Bible translation was initiated by American missionaries. The missionaries adopted *kami* (神) only because China and Japan use the same character 神 as the object of worship. He claims the translators did not consider any deeper meaning nor understand it fully enough. But I would regard Yanabu’s

⁷ S. Kashima, 1997. *Kami to goddo wa dō chigauka*, Shinchōsha, Tokyo, p.11.

⁸ J.C. Hepburn, 1886, reprinted 1980. *Waei Gorin Shūsei*, Kōdansha, Tokyo, p.257.

⁹ A. Yanabu, 2001. “*Goddo*” wa *Kami ka Jōtei ka*, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, p.121.

criticism as too superficial, because he did not take into consideration the fact that other Bible translators including non-Americans continued to adopt the term *kami* in later translations, which will be discussed in the following part of the thesis.

S. Ōno¹⁰, standing at a relatively neutral position, states that the sense of the old Japanese gods seems to have been gradually lost and forgotten and the notion of the Absolute God is being understood and is spreading. At the same time, he questions whether the concept of God which originated in a desert climate can take root in Japanese life or culture which is located where nature is moderate or gentle. The reason why Japan's Christian population hardly exceeds one percent is attributable to the problem that the fundamental concept and characteristics of the Christian God cannot match the basic consciousness of life of the Japanese. It is interesting that Ōno refers to the penetration of the notion of the Absolute God though he is not optimistic at all about the total spreading of the notion in Japanese culture. Ōno's statement seems to have inherited S. Tsuda's view. Tsuda¹¹, though setting a limit as "among many intellectuals", points out that whenever (the intellectuals) hear the word *kami* (カミ), they immediately associate the sound with the One God, remembering the translation which uses the character 神. This statement indicates the extent to which penetration of the term *kami* (神) had occurred at Tsuda's time, which was the 1950s or 1960s.

It is interesting that the Catholic scholars support the penetration of the term

¹⁰ Ōno, op. cit., pp.190-191.

¹¹ S. Tsuda, 1965. *Nihongo Zakkan, Tsuda Sōkichi Zenshū*, vol.21, p.69-70 quoted in A. Yanabu, 2001. *God wa Kami ka Jōtei ka*, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, p.122.

kami (神). H. Cieslik¹² (1914 -) refers to the Catholic missionaries' hesitation about the usage of old *Kirishitan* term De'usu and the adoption of the term *tenshu* (天主) in imitation of the translation in the Chinese Bible in the early Meiji era. The Japanese Bishops' Council in 1959 changed the term to *kami* (神) because the term *kami* was used in the ancient Japanese language, *yamato kotoba*, and the term became a philosophical term in the Meiji era. Cieslik states that the term *kami* (神) has been groomed to become the Christian term in the past hundred years; therefore, at present, it is the most appropriate term to express the Absolute Existence in Christianity even though there still remain some Shinto associations.

N. Suzuki¹³ states that as the Christian terms *kami* (神) and *ai* (愛) were widely used, then the terms started to change the [original Japanese] concepts of *kami* (神) and *ai* (愛).

The viewpoint of this thesis is that the term *kami* (神) was first adopted with only a limited understanding of the Japanese gods, but the monotheistic notion of *kami* (神) has been progressively penetrating into Japanese thought as observed by Tsuda, Ōno, Cieslik and N. Suzuki.

On the basis of observing the studies above, I believe that scholars have investigated the works and thoughts of the translators well, but have been apt to overlook the view of the recipient people. This may be due to insufficient resource materials relating to the recipient in comparison with the amount of

¹² H. Cieslik, 1996. *Kirishitan no Kokoro*, Seibo-no-Kishi Sha, pp.147, 152.

¹³ N. Suzuki, 2001. *Nihon Kirisutokyōshi Monogatari*, Kyōbunkan, Tokyo, p.121

resources on the translator's side. But, in order that translation be assessed from the recipient's side as well as the translator's side, it is important to investigate how Japanese people received the adoption of the term *kami* (神).

For this reason, based on the above scholarship, I will investigate (1) how the dynamic-equivalence (DE) method has been applied to Japanese Bible translations, (2) how the Japanese concept of god has developed in Japanese thought and (3) how certain Japanese translation assistants contributed to the adoption of the term *kami* (神). Investigating the DE method will clarify to what degree the translators took the recipient language and culture into consideration. Knowing the Japanese concept of god at the time of Meiji era will clarify whether or not the recipient people were ready to accept the new Biblical concept of God. And the studies of the Japanese assistants will throw light on how hard the recipient people worked in order to adopt the new foreign concepts into their understanding and language.

4. Overview of Thesis

Firstly, this thesis [Chapter II, Section 2] compares the two major translation methods, the Formal Equivalence (FE) method and the Dynamic Equivalence (DE) method, and investigates how the two methods were applied to the translation of the Japanese Bible, especially to the translation of the term *kami* (神).¹⁴

¹⁴ As known well, the DE method is the translation theory systematized by E. Nida. But whether it had been recognized or not, the method itself had in fact been used before him.

In some cases of Bible translation, translators tend to adopt FE methods so as to avoid the influence of heretical teachings or syncretism with other religions or philosophies. In other cases, they often adopt DE method so as to encourage the penetration of the Bible teachings to the recipient culture. But it goes without saying that none of the translations leans totally to one extreme and totally avoids the other. All of the translations adopt both methods to a lesser or greater extent.

These two methods indicate well the priorities of the translator; that is, the usage of the FE method indicates that the translator considers that *each word or phrase* must be translated faithfully from the original text (word-to-word translation). On the other hand, the usage of the DE method indicates that the translator considers that the translation must be faithful to the *meaning* of the original text (phrase-to-phrase, sentence-to-sentence, or meaning-to-meaning translation).

Therefore, I assume that if any trace of DE method can be observed in the translation of the term God, this will reveal the translator's attitude toward the recipient culture and their response to the problem of what is the most appropriate term for the term God in the Bible, which would allow the people in the recipient culture to accept the new concept of God more easily.

According to the information I can obtain at this moment, it is likely that the translated term *kami* (神) was first used by Bible translators in the beginning of the 1860s. The term *kami* (カミ), however, had been observed even in the *Kojiki* period (712). Because of this phonetic coincidence, the translated term

kami (神) inherited the concepts associated with the term *kami* (カミ) which is a supernatural existence to be awed and appeased.

Moreover, the kanji character 神 had been adopted to write the word *kami* (カミ), at latest before the beginning of the 8th century when *Kojiki* and *Nihonshoki* were written. The Japanese Bible translators in the beginning of Meiji era adopted this same character 神 as the translation of God. Because of this notational coincidence, the term *kami* (神) caused the confusion notationally as well as phonetically. And due to this confusion, Japanese people faced the risk of syncretism between the absolute and monotheistic concept of God and the relative and polytheistic *kami* (カミ).

In the next section of the thesis [Chapter III], the thesis investigates in what circumstances this term *kami* (神) had been adopted into the Japanese Bible. In this context, the Term Question in China is addressed. Prior to the Japanese translation, many missionaries in China had tried various Chinese terms as the translation of God, using the FE method and DE method. After many trials, British missionaries considered that the term *shang di* (上帝) was better and American missionaries thought the term *shen* (神) was proper. But neither could come to an agreement over a mutually acceptable term. So two different Chinese Bibles with respective terms for God were translated and published. This is what the Term Question in China refers to.

On the other hand, in Japan in the beginning of the Meiji era, the majority of the missionaries involved in Japanese Bible translation were Americans. So, as will be understood, the translators adopted the character 神 for God. There

were no specific objections from the Japanese assistants, either. The adoption of the term *kami* (神) was relatively easily accepted. It is my theory that the DE method appears not to have been consciously applied because the translators' Japanese ability as well as the translation assistants' English ability had not reached a sufficient level of proficiency at that time.

Following discussion of this issue, the thesis turns its view next Chapters IV and V to the religions being practiced by the Japanese people at the end of Tokugawa period and the beginning of Meiji era, when the Japanese Bible was translated. In the Japanese people's lives at the time, the following four kinds of religion were practiced.

The first was folk religion in which indigenous gods were worshipped. The second was the worship of the gods which had been syncretised with Buddhist idols being supported by the theory called *honji-suijaku-setsu* (本地垂迹説). The third kind of religious activities were called Okage Mairi which was popular among the populace after the mid-Tokugawa period. It was a large public movement involving hundreds of thousands of people who left their home to visit famous shrines like Ise Shrine. The New Religion sects arose in close relationship with this movement, too. The fourth religion, or 'school of thought' bordering on a religion, was Kokugaku or National Learning which influenced some assistants of Japanese Bible translators. The Kokugaku scholars asserted that the purest belief was the belief which had existed before the influence of Buddhism and Confucianism from China. So they studied ancient writings like *Kojiki*, *Nihonshoki* and *Man'yōshū*. Their belief later became the foundation of the National Shinto which worshipped

emperors as descendants of god.

This thesis does not refer to the details of all the religions which have already been the subject of many other studies¹⁵, but will pay special attention to Ise Shrine and Kokugaku which represents the restoration of Shinto in the Tokugawa period. Atsutane Hirata's theory is also studied because it widely quoted from the writings of the missionaries in China.

By investigating these conventional religious views, it will become clear how the people must have been confused by the term *kami* (神) when they first read the translated Bible. I assume that because of the mixture of these concepts of gods, Japanese concepts of god were always relative, and thus, people could not recognize the monotheistic Absolute God. Though people might read the Bible which described about the Absolute God, they first would misinterpret it as a polytheistic existence. This is why the adoption of the term *kami* (神) was criticized as improper.

In that case, were there no other proper alternatives for the term *kami* (神)?

In this thesis [Chapter III, Sections 4 to 6], four alternative terms which had been propounded before *kami* (神) are discussed, in the context also of the translators' or their Japanese assistants' considerations of Japanese culture in their period. Their attempts to achieve the DE method should be obvious in their translations. Conventionally, these Japanese assistants' abilities have

¹⁵ W. Bunce K., (ed.), 1955, *Religions in Japan – Buddhism, Shinto, Christianity*, pp.129-147; N. Miyata, 2003, *Ikigami Shinko – Hito o Kami ni Matsuru Shūzoku*, Hanawa Shobō, Tokyo, pp. 111-171

tended to be underestimated and their work has been given a low evaluation. By discovering some trace of their efforts of DE method, their reputation may be recovered.

The four alternative terms to be discussed in this thesis are *dainichi* (大日), *tianzhu* (天主), *shang di* (上帝), and *gokuraku* (極樂).

The term *dainichi* was the word suggested by Xavier's assistant, Anjirō. But according to Frois (1659), because of its syncretising character, Xavier came to support the FE method, which diminished Anjirō's reputation badly. So the term *dainichi* has conventionally been thought as a mistranslation.¹⁶ But this thesis argues that the translation was the yield of Anjirō's DE translation effort.

The term *tianzhu* is considered having been used by Japanese Christians for the first time in the 16th century. Valignano, a Jesuit visiting missionary, had introduced the term to other Jesuit missionaries in China and it had been widely used in China. Then, in the 19th century, after the long debate of the Term Question, missionaries in China agreed to adopt the term *tianzhu* as their common translation of God. In the Meiji era, the Catholic churches used the term for a while. But Protestant Bible translators avoided using the term *tianzhu* so as to separate them from *Kirisitan* who were specifically Christians who had suffered from harsh repression throughout the Tokugawa period.

¹⁶ A. Ebisawa and S. Ōuchi, 1970. *Nihon Kirisutokyōshi*. Nihon Kirisutokyōdan Shuppanbu, Tokyo, p.34.

Shang di, as described above, was first suggested by British missionaries as the translation of God and evaluated both positively and negatively. Today, the term is still used commonly in Chinese Bible as well as the term *shen* (神).

Gokuraku (極樂) was the term which Otokichi and his shipwrecked fellows suggested to Gützlaff, the translator of the existing first Japanese Bible. This thesis reinvestigates the term from the point view of the DE method. To the best of my knowledge, this perspective has not been attempted in research so far.

In short, this section of the thesis argues that the translators applied DE method to a lesser or greater extent and took the recipient culture into consideration. This was reflected in their product. The Japanese translation assistants were not as ignorant as we have been led to believe. They fully used their religious knowledge and tried to apply it to this new concept of God.

However, as previously described, in the translation work at the beginning of the Meiji era, the Bible translators and their assistants seem not to have applied DE method in their translations, especially in adopting the term *kami* (神), possibly because their Japanese or English language ability was still inadequate. But the fact still remains that the term *kami* (神) nonetheless has continuously been used by their successors who had achieved sufficient ability both in language learning and cultural understanding. What does this situation suggest?

To solve the problem, the thesis investigates the nature of the penetration

which the term *kami* (神) has achieved. It points out how *kami* (神)'s monotheistic character may have subtly changed the Japanese people's concept of god even though they still tend to be in polytheistic circumstances. It seems that the term *kami* (神) may possibly have started to generate a monotheistic image of god in Japanese minds when they hear it.¹⁷

The term *kami* (神) has been used for a much longer period than the other terms like *dainichi*, *tianzhu*, *shang di*, and *gokuraku*. This fact indicates the term has some unique strength which others do not. And this will explain why the term *kami* (神) has been finally adopted as the translation of God. The thesis makes some attempt to clarify this process.

The conclusion reached by this thesis is that the term *kami* (神) involved the risk of syncretism with the conventional homophonic or homographic term when it was first adopted. However, the penetration of the new Christian meaning of the term *kami* (神) into the culture of Japan may have had the effect of changing the original Japanese concept of god. And in that sense, the adoption of the term may be concluded as the appropriate choice.

¹⁷ S. Ono, 2002. *Nihon no Kami*, p.190; H. Cieslik, 1999. *Kirisitan no Kokoro*, p.152; N. Suzuki, 2001. *Nihon Kirisutokyōshi Monogatari*, Kyōbunkan, Tokyo, p.121.

CHAPTER II

METHODS OF TRANSLATION

1. Introductory Comments

In consideration of intercultural translation, the characteristics of two translation methods, Formal Equivalence (FE) method and Dynamic Equivalence (DE) method, are argued. Then, various terms in actual Japanese Bible translations are compared to see how respective translation methods were reflected in them. To further investigate this intercultural translation, Suzuki's (1977) proposal and Kashima's (1997) model are referred to and developed to my Penetration and Syncretism models.

2. Formal Equivalence (FE) and Dynamic Equivalence (DE)

a. Definitions

Traditionally, Bible translators have considered the Formal Equivalence (FE) method as the most important translation method. FE method emphasized the accuracy of the translated term in the recipient language (RL) with reference to the original term in the source language (SL). However, in the latter half of the 20th century when the Christian Scriptures began to spread over the world and millions of people gained access to the Scriptures, there arose the need of a translation which “would foster effective communication of the Good

News across all kinds of cultural and linguistics barriers.”¹⁸ According to the need, Nida (1969) introduced the Dynamic Equivalence (DE) translation method in his theses,¹⁹ which is also called phrase-to-phrase, sentence-to-sentence, or meaning-to-meaning translation.

The DE method compares the culture of SL to the culture of RL, and tries to find the expression in RL which expresses the original notion of SL most suitably. What is required here is the “approach which enables the translator to capture the meaning and spirit of the original language text without being bound to its linguistic structure.”²⁰

Felix Just (2002) in his paper “English Translation of the Bible”²¹ compared FE and DE methods (though FE is called Formal Correspondence) and another method named Paraphrases; then, describes the philosophies and styles of the respective methods as follows:

- 1) *“Formal Correspondence Translations”* try to stick to the original wording and word-order of the Hebrew and Greek texts as closely as possible. Thus they may seem more accurate or “literal,” but often require detailed explanations in footnotes to avoid being misinterpreted by modern readers. They are good for in-depth academic study of the Bible, but may be less suited for public proclamation, since they can be difficult to understand when heard or read aloud.

¹⁸*Brief Biography of Eugene Nida*, Eugene A. Nida Institute for Biblical Scholarship, [Online]. Available: <http://www.nidainstitute.org/> [June 28, 2006].

¹⁹ E.A.Nida, 1969. *Science of Translation* in A.S. Dil, 1975 (ed.) *Language Structure and Translation – Essays by Eugene A. Nida*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, California, p.95.

²⁰Eugene A. Nida Institute for Biblical Scholarship, loc.cit.

²¹ Just, 2002. *English Translations of the Bible*, [Online]. Available: http://catholic-resources.org/Bible/English_Translations.htm [June 28, 2006].

- 2) *"Dynamic Equivalence Translations"* try to put the sense of the original text into the best modern English, remaining close to the ideas expressed but not always following the exact wording or word-order of the Hebrew or Greek originals. Thus they may seem less "literal" than the formal correspondence translations, but can be just as "faithful" to the original text, and are therefore generally better suited for public proclamation or liturgical use.

- 3) *"Biblical Paraphrases"* are not (and do not even claim to be) accurate translations, although they are usually still called "Bibles." These popular books (esp. those intended for children or teenagers, or the "Living Bible" of 1971) not only condense and/or omit much of the material, but also freely change the wording of the original texts to make the stories easier to understand and/or more "relevant" for their intended readers.

b. Arguments in Methods of Bible Translation

Advantage of Formal Equivalence

In Bible translation history, Formal Equivalence (FE) was the dominant method until the first half of the 20th century. It was the method for translators to maintain the word-to-word accuracy of the Bible contents, being faithful in form to the original text (SL), necessary because the Bible texts closely relate to the doctrine which Christians and Judaists believe. Some of the doctrinal terms like grace, saints, righteousness, justice, etc. have unique connotations in Christianity. If we translate them into other expressions of similar but not the same meanings, it will twist the real meaning of the original terms and in extreme cases, it may lead readers to heretical interpretations.

Extreme Interpretation of the Contemporary English Version of the Bible

To support the importance of the formally translated terms, Cloud introduces some examples, comparing the King James Version (hereafter called KJV) as a representative of FE translation with The Contemporary English Version (hereafter called CEV) as a representative of DE translation as follows.²²

Revelation 22:21

KJV: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

CEV: I pray that the Lord Jesus will be kind to all of you.

Ephesians 2:8

KJV: For by grace are ye saved through faith

CEV: You were saved by faith in God's kindness.

Philippians 1:1

KJV: with the Bishops and deacons

CEV: to all of your church officials and officers.

Philippians 1:1

KJV: the saints in Christ

CEV: all of God's people who belong to Christ Jesus.

Romans 3:10

KJV: none righteous

CEV: none acceptable to God.

Romans 3:24

KJV: being justified freely

CEV: he freely accepts us.

According to Cloud;

the terms chosen to replace the original Bible words do not transfer

²² Cloud, D.W. (1999), *Its Influence and Error*, (Dynamic Equivalence Avoids Traditional Ecclesiastical Terms.) [Online]. Available: <http://www.wayoflife.org/fbns/dyn-equiv-influence-error.html> [May 1, 2003]

the exact meaning of the original words. “Saints” means more than those who belong to God. “Grace” means more than kindness or favour or privilege. “Justification” means more than acceptance. ...They are the terms by which God chose to communicate the truth. They are heavenly terms, and have been known as church terms because they were given to the church and are kept considered precious by God’s people.

Privileging Accuracy over Plainness

Cloud presupposes that Bible language was not equal to the language appropriate for moderately or barely literate people, and a version of the Bible cannot be created in such a low level of language without making unacceptable changes in God’s Word.²³ This is an argument hinging on what purpose the Bible has been written for.

Though I agree with rejecting such extreme translations as the above examples of CEV, I do not agree with Cloud’s argument that the Bible was not written for readers who are moderately or barely literate. The main purpose of the Bible was to communicate the divine message of God to ordinary people including non-educated ones so that its content can be understood even without the help of scholars, priests or commentaries. The use of Aramaic, a colloquial language at the time of Jesus, in the New Testament is evidence of this. In a society like Japan where the Christian population is less than one percent of the whole, access to Christian scholars, priests, or commentaries is not so easy, and thus an easy-to-read Bible has been valued for a long time.

²³ Cloud, D.W. (1999), *Dynamic Equivalency: Death Knell of Pure Scripture*, (Some Other Names by which Dynamic Equivalency Is Known.) [Online]. Not available any more: <http://www.wayoflife.org/fbns/dynamic1.html> [May 1, 2003]

Criticism of Distortion

Cloud also argues, “Though dynamic equivalency proponents claim to honor the meaning of the Bible text, in practice they do not! In practice they change, twist, and pervert scripture. ... The Bible is a serious book. It is one thing to modify the words of a man’s book; it is another thing to modify God’s book.”²⁴

Then, he introduces some examples of the modification from “Translating the Word of God” by J. Beekman and J. Callow of Wycliffe Bible Translators:

Matt. 8:20 — “foxes” was translated “coyotes” in the Mazahua language of Mexico.

Mark 4:21 — “on a candlestick” was translated “on a grain bin” in the Korku language of India.

Lk. 12:24 — “storehouse” was translated “basket” in the Villa Alta Zapotec language of Mexico.²⁵

These translations were made to alter the meaning of objects or concepts which the recipient people had never seen or experienced in such a way that they would seem more familiar. The translator may borrow terms familiar with the recipients with careful investigation of their appropriateness.

But Cloud argues against the idea, saying that;

We believe this type of thing is wrong. When one departs from the principle of a formal or literal translation, the mind of the translator and the culture and understanding of the people become the authority rather than the actual words of Scripture. ... Dynamic equivalency allows translators the strange liberty to change, delete from, and add

²⁴ Cloud, *ibid.*, (Dynamic Equivalency Adapts the Wording of the Translation to the Culture of the Receptor People)

²⁵ Cloud, *ibid.*

to the Word of God.²⁶

I agree with Cloud partially. Christians have been trying not to depart from the original meaning of Bible texts because their history was, in one aspect, the history of fighting against misinterpretations by the sects. Christians have been seeking what was exactly described in the Bible and what was not and to avoid the slightest misinterpretation. They believe that the Bible was written by writers inspired by God (2nd Tim. 3:16) and any contents must not be added to or taken away from it (Rev.22:18-19).

Contradictions in the FE Argument

However, there is contradiction in Cloud's interpretation. The terms in KJV are of an English translation, though these terms have stood the test of time to become the orthodox text to represent Christian doctrine. In the original texts written in Hebrew, Greek or Aramaic, there must have been contents which people in KJV's time could not see or experience. KJV translation must have adopted DE method as well in some part. As DE proponents suggested, KJV's English was also only a method of communication. Related to this argument is the argument as to whether or not a translation can be a canon in the same way as the original texts were. But this argument is beyond the scope of the present thesis.

Dictionary and Commentary

Cloud states that:

²⁶ Cloud, *ibid.*

It is not the job of the Bible translator to become the evangelist and preacher in the process of his work as a translator. Of course, the translator can add explanatory footnotes if he so desires and by this means give definitions of the words used in the translation. He can also make dictionaries and commentaries and other teaching tools to be used in conjunction with the Bible translation.²⁷

Looking at the initial Protestant Japanese Bible translation work, this was the very method that J.C. Hepburn (1815-1911), the leading translator of Protestant Japanese Bible translation followed. He compiled a dictionary named *Waeigorinshūsei* (1867) before participating fully in his work of Bible translation. Resulting from that, he succeeded in producing an accurate and sonorous style of Bible translation, which was highly appreciated in modern Japanese literary history.

Thus, FE method has been recognized as an important method to maintain the accuracy of the contents. However, as is discussed in the following portion of the thesis, we must remember that the Bible translators have always been confronted with 'new people' who would read their translation. So, the translators had to decide which of the two different methods, FE and DE, provides a better translation which was understandable to those 'new people' through history.

Reality in Bible Translation

Given the above discussion, are there any fundamental principles in Bible translation?

Regarding this question, Felix Just provides a hint below:

²⁷ Cloud, *ibid.*

no translation (of the Bible) is "perfect" (none of them can be completely "literal" or 100% identical to the original texts) and *there is no "best" translation* (all of them have some advantages and some drawbacks). *In general*, however, the most recent translations (1980s or 1990s) are better than the older ones (esp. the KJV or the Douay-Rheims, both about 400 years old), not only since the English language has changed significantly over the centuries, but more importantly because of the ancient biblical manuscripts that have been discovered in the last 50 to 150 years which are much older (and thus closer to the originals) than the manuscripts that were available to the translators of previous centuries.²⁸

Just made the following list to develop his idea:

- No original manuscript of any biblical book has survived.
- The extant manuscripts contain numerous textual variations.
- Important old manuscripts were found in the last 200 years.
- The meanings of some biblical texts are unknown or uncertain.
- Ancient languages are very different from modern languages.
- Every 'translation' is already inevitably an 'interpretation'.
- All living languages continually change and develop over time.
- Cultural developments require new sensitivities in language.

In the argument of FE-DE translation methods, his thought may be applied as follows:

There is a limit to the accuracy of the translation because of the non-existence of original manuscripts and the variations of later manuscripts. Any FE efforts cannot avoid such limitations. Also because of the continuous change of the living language, new translations are always required so that the new generations of readers can understand the contents of the Bible. Therefore

²⁸ Just, op. cit..

the DE method is needed and translation must be continually revised according to the change of the language and the culture.

3. FE & DE Reflected in the Japanese Version of the Bible

When considering cross-cultural or cross-lingual communication, the terms which are unique in the source language (SL) need to be investigated. In around 1845, when the argument of the “term question” regarding Chinese Bible translation was going on in China, a list was made. The list had the following thirty terms which were claimed to require close attention in Bible translation:

angel, apostle, baptism, church, conscience, convention, covenant, devil, divine, election, evangelist, God, hell, holiness, heart, mercy, messenger, Messiah, mind, mystery, offering, prayer, priest, prophet, preacher, repentance, Sabbath, sacrifice, saint, soul²⁹ .

In this section, a comparison is made of the translation of the above terms in J.C.Hepburn and S.R.Brown’s Japanese Bible translations (1872, 1876 and 1877) and in recent Japanese Bible translations, *Kōgoyaku* (1955), *Shinkaiyaku* (1963) and *Shinkyōdō-yaku* (1999). Then, we will investigate to see how the DE translation methods were applied to them.

Table 1 indicates how differently terms were translated between the respective Bible translations.

²⁹ *Chinese Repository*, Vol. XV, February, 1846, No.2, pp.108-110 in N. Suzuki, 1977. p. 293.

Table 1 Bible Terms Requiring Attention³⁰

	<i>Hepburn&Brown's Translations</i> ³¹ (1872,76,77)	<i>Kōgoyaku</i> (1955)	<i>Shinkaiyaku</i> (1963)	<i>Shinkyōdō-yaku</i> (1987)
Angel	<i>Tsukai</i> (つかい)、 <i>Tsukai</i> (使い)、 <i>Ten no Tsukai</i> (天使)、 <i>Tsukai</i> (天使)、	<i>Mitsukai</i> (御使い)	<i>Mitsukai</i> (御使い)	<i>Tenshi</i> (天使)
Apostle	<i>Shito</i> (使徒)	<i>Shito</i> (使徒)	<i>Shito</i> (使徒)	<i>Shito</i> (使徒)
Baptism	<i>Senrei</i> (洗禮;1872) <i>Baputesuma</i> (バプテスマ;1876, 77)	<i>Baputesuma</i> (バプテスマ)	<i>Baputesuma</i> (バプテスマ)	<i>Senrei</i> [<i>Baputesuma</i>] (洗禮[バプテスマ])
Church	<i>Kyōkai</i> (教會)	<i>Kyōkai</i> (教会)	<i>Kyōkai</i> (教会)	<i>Kyōkai</i> (教会)
Conscience		<i>Ryōshin</i> (良心)	<i>Ryōshin</i> (良心)	<i>Ryōshin</i> (良心)
Convention	<i>Aratameru</i> (v.) ³² (悔改る)	<i>Kaishū</i> (改宗)	<i>Kaishū</i> (改宗)	<i>Kaishū</i> (改宗)
covenant	<i>Shinyaku</i> (新約)	<i>Keiyaku</i> (契約)	<i>Keiyaku</i> (契約)	<i>Keiyaku</i> (契約)
Devil	<i>Akuma</i> (あくま)	<i>Akuma</i> (悪魔)	<i>Akuma</i> (悪魔)	<i>Akuma</i> (悪魔)
Divine		<i>Shinseina</i> (神聖な)	<i>Kami to shite</i> <i>no</i> (神として の)	<i>Gojibun no motu</i> (<i>kami no</i> <i>chikara</i>)

³⁰ *Chinese Repository*, op. cit.. The list was chosen in the Term Question.

³¹ From *Shinyaku Seisho Yohanneden* (circa 1872), *Shinyaku Seisho Rukaden-Zen* (circa 1876), *Shinyaku Seisho Mataiden-Zen* (circa 1877), and *Shinyaku Seisho Shitogyōden-Zen* (circa 1877), the originals of which are the translations by Hepburn and Brown and are owned by Dr. H. Hasebe of Tohoku University, Japan.

To make this table, Vine's Expository Dictionary (Vine, W.E., *Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, Riverside Book and Bible House, Iowa Falls, Iowa.) was first used to identify the Bible verses where the above terms appeared. Then the same verses in four different translations were compared. Because of the limitation of the resources, not all the verses could be investigated in Hepburn and Brown's translations. A further study will be expected in due course.

³² translated as verb.

				(ご自分の持つ[神の力])
Election		<i>Erabi</i> (選び)	<i>Erabi</i> (選び)	<i>Erabareta</i> (v.) (選ばれた)
Evangelist		<i>Dendōsha</i> (伝道者)	<i>Dendōsha</i> (伝道者)	<i>Fukuin</i> <i>Senkyōsha</i> (福音宣教者)
God	<i>Kami</i> (神)	<i>Kami</i> (神)	<i>Kami</i> (神)	<i>Kami</i> (神)
Hell	<i>Jigoku</i> (地獄[ちごく])	<i>Jigoku</i> (地獄)	<i>Gehena</i> (ゲヘナ)	<i>Jigoku</i> (地獄)
Holiness	<i>Sei</i> (聖)	<i>Kiyosa</i> (きよさ) <i>Sei</i> (聖)	<i>Kiyoku</i> (きよく) <i>Seinaru</i> (聖なる)	<i>Kiyoku</i> (清く) <i>Seinaru</i> (聖なる)
Heart	<i>Kokoro</i> (志ころ[こころ])	<i>Kokoro</i> (心)	<i>Kokoro</i> (心)	<i>Kokoro</i> (心)
Mercy	<i>Awaremi</i> (矜恤 [あわれみ])	<i>Awaremi</i> (あわれみ)	<i>Awaremi</i> (あわれみ)	<i>Awaremi</i> (憐み)
Messenger	<i>Tukai</i> (使者 [つかひ])	<i>Shisha</i> (使者) <i>Tukai</i> (使)	<i>Shisha</i> (使者)	<i>Tukai</i> (使い)
Messiah	<i>Messhiya</i> (メシヤ)	<i>Meshiya</i> (メシヤ)	<i>Meshiya</i> (メシヤ)	<i>Meshiya</i> (メシヤ)
Mind	<i>Kokoro</i> (こゝろ)	<i>Kokoro</i> (心)	<i>Kokoro</i> (心) <i>Omoi</i> (思い) [<i>Shu-no-</i>] <i>mikokoro</i> ([主の]み心)	<i>Kokoro</i> (心) <i>Omoi</i> (思い)
Mystery		<i>Okugi</i> (奥義)	<i>Okugi</i> (奥義)	" <i>Himerareta Keikaku</i> " (秘められた計画) <i>Shinpi</i> (神秘)
Offering	<i>Fudokoshi</i> (施濟[ふどこし])	<i>Sasageru</i> (v.) (ささげる)	<i>Sonaemono</i> (供え物) <i>Sasagemono</i> (ささげ物)	<i>Hodokoshi</i> (施し) <i>Sonaemono</i> (供え物) <i>Sasageru</i> (v.) (献げる [ささげる])

Prayer	<i>Inori</i> (いのり)	<i>Inori</i> (祈)	<i>Inori</i> (祈り)	<i>Inori</i> (祈り)
Priest	<i>Saishi</i> (祭司)	<i>Saishi</i> (祭司)	<i>Saishi</i> (祭司)	<i>Saishi</i> (祭司)
Prophet	<i>Yogenja</i> (預言者, よげんじゃ)	<i>Yogensha</i> (預言者)	<i>Yogensha</i> (預言者)	<i>Yogensurumono</i> (預言する者) <i>Yogensha</i> (預言者)
Preacher		<i>Sekkyōsha</i> (説教者) <i>Sendensha</i> (宣伝者)	<i>Sekkyōsha</i> (説教者) <i>Sendensha</i> (宣伝者) <i>Nobetsutaeta</i> (v.) (宣べ伝えた)	<i>Sekkyōsha</i> (説教者) <i>Toite-ita</i> (v.) (説いていた)
Repentance	<i>Kuiaratame</i> (悔改 [くいあらため])	<i>Kuiaratame</i> (悔改め [くいあらため])	<i>Kuiaratame</i> (悔改め [くいあらため])	<i>Kuiaratame</i> (悔改め [くいあらため])
Sabbath	<i>Ansokunichi</i> (安息日[あんそくにち])	<i>Ansokunichi</i> (安息日[あんそくにち])	<i>Ansokunichi</i> (安息日[あんそくにち])	<i>Ansokubi</i> (安息日[あんそくび])
Sacrifice	<i>Matsuri</i> (祭祀 [まつり])	<i>Sonaemono</i> (供え物)	<i>Sonaemono</i> (供え物) <i>Ikenie</i> (いけにえ)	<i>Ikenie</i> (いけにえ)
Saint		<i>Seito</i> (聖徒)	<i>Seito</i> (聖徒)	<i>Seinarumono</i> (聖なる者)
Soul	<i>Tamashii</i> (靈魂 [たましい]) <i>Inochi</i> (いのち) <i>Seishin</i> (精神)	<i>Tamashii</i> (魂 [たましい])	<i>Tamashii</i> (たましい) <i>Inochi</i> (いのち) <i>Omoi</i> (思い)	<i>Tamashii</i> (魂) <i>Inochi</i> (命) <i>Seishin</i> (精神)

Among the translations in the table, *Shinkaiyaku Seisho* (1963, 1990) was translated mainly in FE method. *Shinkyōdōyaku Seisho* (1987, 1988, 1999) inherited *Shinyakuseisho Kyōdōyaku's* (1978) DE method though the degree of the adoption of the method was moderated according to the change of translation policy in 1983.³³ This is revealed by the difference of the

³³ Oyama (1989; 24) describes that the translation principle of *Shinyakuseisho Kyōdōyaku*

translated terms in RL, representing the difference of the philosophies in these translation methods. For example, the original term ‘divine’, which originated from *theios* (Θεῖος) in Greek, does not include the notion of “his own” as translated in *Shinkyōdōyaku* as *gojibun no motsu [kami no chikara]* (“[the power of God] He Himself has”). In the same way, the original term ‘evangelist’ from *euangelistes* (εὐαγγελιστής) does not include the notion of “of the gospel” as does the Japanese translation *fukuin-senkyō-sha* (“the missionary of the gospel”) in English. These terms are not transferring their original forms but transferring the notions or meaning of the original texts to RL and in that sense it can be said that *Shinkyōdōyaku* translation still uses DE method.

On the other hand, a typical representation of the FE translation philosophy is the term *gehena* (“hell”). Though previous and following translations used the term *jigoku*, the *Shinkaiyaku* suddenly adopted the original Greek term *gehena*. It is likely the translators wished to avoid the confusion of the notions of hell with the one in Buddhist teaching. This is the same principle that Jesuits adopted when they translated the term God to De’usu in Japan in the 16th century. But the term *gehena* does not transfer the notion of the original meaning at all unless a detailed explanation is given in the Japanese language.

was E. Nida’s “Dynamic Equivalence”, but after publishing the New Testament translation, Japanese Bible Society changed the principle to conventional “faithful to the original” [in 1983], . . . and published the Old-New Testament with the title of *Shinkyōdōyaku* in 1987. Oyama later published his private Bible translation, *Gendaiyaku*, which applies the Dynamic Equivalence method more directly. Suzuki (2006;169) described the detailed transition of *Shinyakuseisho Kyōdōyaku* to *Shinkyōdōyaku Seisho*.

	<i>Hepburn&Brown's Translations</i>	<i>Kōgoyaku</i>	<i>Shinkaiyaku</i>	<i>Shinkyōdō-yaku</i>
Mystery		<i>Okugi</i> (奥義)	<i>Okugi</i> (奥義)	<i>Himerareta Keikaku</i> (秘められた計画) <i>Shinpi</i> (神秘)

Another example, “mystery,” had once a stable word-to-word FE translation, *Okugi* (奥義, means “hidden teaching”), in *Kōgoyaku* and *Shinkaiyaku*. *Shinkyōdōyaku*'s translation, however, adopted *himerareta keikaku* (秘められた計画, means “hidden plan”) or *shinpi* (神秘) which puts more emphasis on the mystical notion. The change is probably derived from the contextual emphases of this translation, where the terms are selected according the contexts; adopting *himerareta keikaku* where the notion of ‘plan’ is emphasized or *shinpi* where the mystical notion is emphasized. This is a characteristic of DE translation.

The list also indicates that some terms like “mind”, “offering”, “preacher” and “soul” are still awaiting a definitive Japanese translation or are intentionally left flexible so as to allow the translators to use different terms in different cases. For example, the term “soul” has been translated by three Japanese terms except in the case of *Kōgoyaku* as seen in the table below. Adopting different RL terms for one SL term is a characteristic of the DE method.

	<i>Hepburn&Brown's Translations</i>	<i>Kōgoyaku</i>	<i>Shinkaiyaku</i>	<i>Shinkyōdō-yaku</i>
Soul	<i>Tamashii</i> (靈魂 [たましい]) <i>Inochi</i> (いのち)	<i>Tamashii</i> (魂 [たましい])	<i>Tamashii</i> (たましい) <i>Inochi</i> (いのち)	<i>Tamashii</i> (魂) <i>Inochi</i> (命) Seishin (精神)

	<i>Seishin</i> (精神)		<i>Omoi</i> (思い)	
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It is interesting that a similar flexibility of adoption is observed in *Shinkaiyaku Seisho* for these terms. The term “mind” is translated to *omoi*, *kokoro* and (*shu no*) *mikokoro*; and “soul” is translated to *tamashii*, *inochi* and *omoi*. This suggests that even translations which mainly use the FE method sometimes have to use the DE method.

Shinkyōdōyaku Seisho was the first translation which was made in cooperation by Catholic and Protestant translators. Reflecting their effort to combine different translations into a common one, some modifications were made to the terms that had been used in Protestant translations.

For example, *baputesuma* (“baptism”) was changed into *senrei* [*baputesuma*] (“baptism”). The term has been a long-argued term; because the Baptist believers have argued that the true baptism was total immersion, not sprinkling with water, and asserted that *shinrei* (literally, “rite of immersion”) instead of *senrei* (“rite of washing”)³⁴ should be used.

	<i>Hepburn&Brown's Translations</i>	<i>Kōgoyaku</i>	<i>Shinkaiyaku</i>	<i>Shinkyōdō-yaku</i>
Baptism	<i>Senrei</i> (洗禮;1872) <i>Baputesuma</i> (バプテスマ;1876, 77)	<i>Baputesuma</i> (バプテスマ)	<i>Baputesuma</i> (バプテスマ)	<i>Senrei</i> [<i>Baputesuma</i>] (洗礼[バプテスマ])

In the above Table 1, Hepburn and Brown in New Testament Translation

³⁴ Ebisawa, op. cit., pp.256-257.

Committee (hereafter called Yokohama Committee from the location the regular meeting was held), as their compromise adopted the *baputesuma* (derived from original Greek reading *baptisma* or *βάπτισμα*) in their translations of Matthew, Luke and Acts (1876,77).³⁵ Since then, the term *baputesuma* has been used in official Protestant translations. Then in the *Shinkyōdōyaku Seisho*, the translation reuses kanji 洗礼 (normally read as *senrei*) with a *furigana* reading “*baputesuma*”. I presume it is because the Catholic Church has been using the term *senrei* according to their practice, which is ‘sprinkling’, as seen in Raguets translation.³⁶ I consider that the unstableness of the translations is derived from the non-existence of the equivalent notions in RL or difference of the notions between SL and RL. The DE method gives a solution for the unstableness.

4. Suzuki’s Methods on Translation of ‘God’

The following section refers to Suzuki’s (1977) four methods for the translation of the term ‘God’, which, later, will be related to the DE and FE translation methods. Suzuki’s methods add to the preceding DE-FE arguments the view of the difference of the concepts between the source language (SL) and the recipient language (RL) in Japanese Bible translation methods.

³⁵ In Hepburn and Brown’s personal translation of the Gospel of John of circa 1872, the term was translated to *senrei*.

³⁶ A Belgian bishop, E.M.E. Raguets (1854-1929) attempted the complete translation of the New Testament, based on the Vulgata Latin Bible referring also to the Greek Bible, helped by Giichi Satō, an evangelist, during the bishop’s ministry at Yamashita-chō Church in Kagoshima Prefecture. The translation was completed in approximately 1905 and published in 1910 with the title of *Wagashu Iezusu-Kirisuto no Shinyaku Seisho*. A. Ito, 16/08/2005. *Katorikos*, No.8 (Seisho Wayaku no Rekishi). [Online]. Available: http://www.nanzan-u.ac.jp/TOSHOKAN/publication/katholikos/kato8/kato_8.htm [October 1st, 2005].

a. Reasons for difficulties in translation

There are several reasons why a translator finds difficulties in transferring a concept in the source language (SL) to a new recipient language (RL):

- 1) Sometimes the notion is an unknown new concept for the translator.
- 2) Though the translator himself can understand the meaning of the notion, it is still unknown for the recipients who use RL, like in the case of *jiyū* (自由, freedom) in the beginning of Meiji era.
- 3) There have been other connotations belonging to the translated term in RL and there is a strong possibility that the recipients of the new meaning will be confused by receiving the translated term, like the term *ai* (愛, love) which had represented physical intercourse before Christianity was introduced. Suzuki (1977; 297-298) states that 2) and 3) above were reasons for the Term Question, which will be further studied in a later chapter.
- 4) The translated term had become trite and required another fresh term.

This section focuses the argument on the translation methods for the term 'God'. Although the term God is one of the most difficult terms to translate, it is, as described before, probably the most important term.

b. Four Translation Methods for 'God'

Suzuki (1977; 300) suggests the following four methods which were respectively adopted in China to translate the Christian term 'God'. Though these are cases which appeared in Chinese Bible translation, Suzuki suggests that they may be the typical ways to translate the term 'God' to another language in a different culture:

- 1) To present the SL term 'God' in its original language or transliterate it to a term having similar phonetic sound. Examples are Deus or De'usu. The same method is applied to the term *baputesuma* ('baptism').
- 2) To translate the SL term 'God' either to an existing RL term which represents the notion of god in the recipient's culture, or to a term similar to it. Examples are *shang di* (上帝, literally "emperor above") and *shen* (神, "god") in Chinese translation.
- 3) To use a term which is close to the existing RL term which represents the notion of god, but combine the term with other term(s) to create a new one. An example is *tianzhu* (天主, "heavenly master").
- 4) To add *zhen* (真, "true") to a term similar to the existing RL term which represents the notion of god. An example is *zhenshen* (真神, "true god").

Then, Suzuki argues that:

Among the methods, Method 1 requires a large effort to explain the meaning, but once accepted, problems will rarely occur.

In Method 2, the notion of god in the recipient's language will strongly affect the original notion and may syncretise the original notion. However, Method 2 may be of some help to understand the original notion of SL at first.

Method 3 is a compromise between Methods 1 and 2. Though ambiguity still remains, Method 3 generates relatively few problems.

Method 4 implies the existing god in the recipient language is a 'false god' or an 'evil god', thus tends to cause a conflict.

Method 1 can hardly be called ‘translation’ in a narrow sense, but if the term is investigated in the recipient culture and if the term is still thought as the best term by the translator, it may be called ‘translation’ in a broad sense. According to the DE theory, Method 2 may be FE translation but including some DE thought, too. And Method 3 may be called one of the DE methods.³⁷

Concluding the discussion, Suzuki states the term *tianzhu* (天主) in the Method 3 is the most appropriate term though being the second best choice. However, the fact is that, in actual Japanese Bible translation, Method 2 was chosen and the translated Japanese term was *shin* (神) which later was read *kami*.

What occurred in the recipient culture by adopting the term *kami* (神)? In the next section, starting from Kashima’s (1997;32) model, we will investigate how the phenomena called ‘syncretism’ and ‘penetration’ occurred.

5. Syncretism / Penetration Models in Translation of ‘God’

a. Kashima’s Model

To investigate the issue more precisely, the following diagrams are used. In Fig. 1-1, the SL has a concept ‘A.’ In other words, *Elohim*, *Theos*, *Deus* or *God* is a concept with monotheistic characteristics. The RL has another notion ‘B.’ In other words, *kami* (カミ) is a concept with polytheistic characteristics.

³⁷ I assume that the difficulty of finding a suitable Japanese term which is equivalent to *Elohim*, *Theos*, *Deus* or *God* in the Bible using DE translation method lies in the presupposition of DE method that there must be an RL notion equivalent to the SL notion. This presumption needs to be investigated in the future.

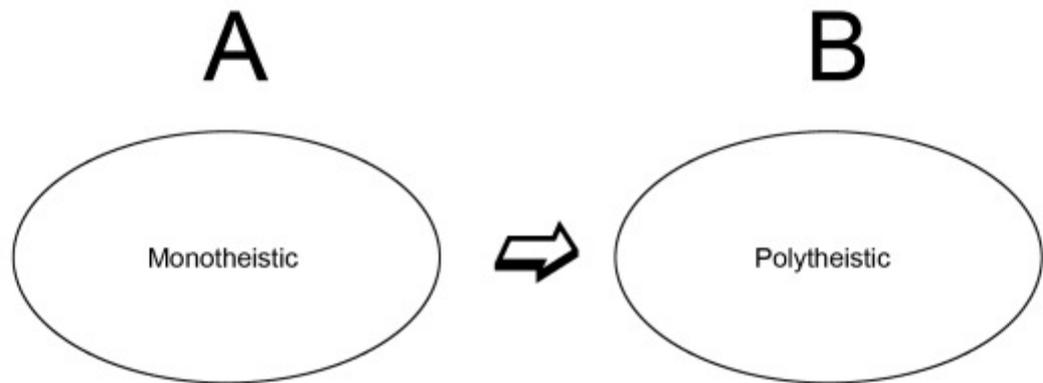


Fig.2-1 Kashima's Model 1

According to the DE presumption, 'A' should have had the same or equivalent characteristics to those of 'B'. However, the reality is that the characteristics of God and *kami* (カミ) cannot be totally equivalent, as Kashima (1997;32) showed as in Fig 1-2.

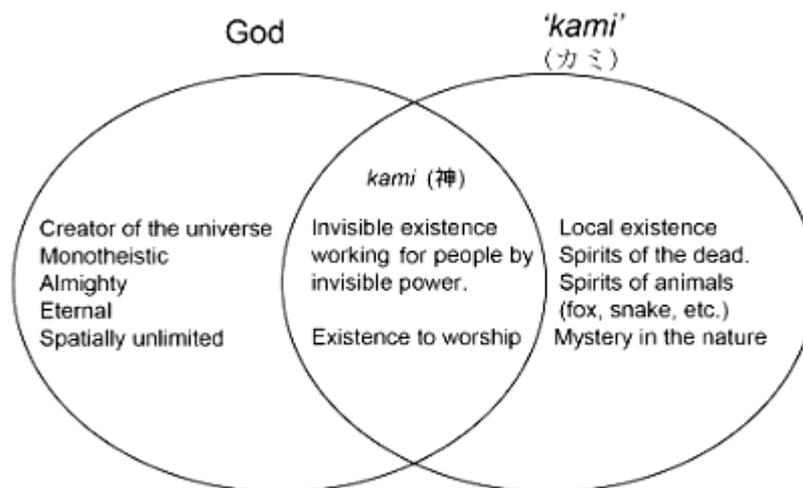


Fig.2-2 Kashima's Model 2

Kashima states that both terms God and *kami* (カミ) have common attributes. That is, these terms represent invisible existences that relate to people through invisible powers, and therefore are to be worshipped. According to these common attributes, the translators choose the term *kami* (神) for the

translation of 'God'. The term *kami* (神), however, did not express to the recipients connotations like Creator, Only One Existence, Almightyness, eternity, and spiritual unlimitedness. Therefore, there was a risk that the term *kami* (神) may be interpreted by the recipients to be equal to the term *kami* (カミ) which includes concepts like local existence, spirits of the dead or animals, and mystery in nature. These are the problems DE method holds.

Was the adoption of the term *kami* (神) therefore a wrong decision? It is not such an easy question to answer.

b. Penetration Model

A translated term can effect a change to the concept of the recipient language (RL). When a source language (SL) is translated to RL, in some cases the notion belonging to SL will start to penetrate into RL, resulting in eroding RL's properties as seen in Fig 1-3.

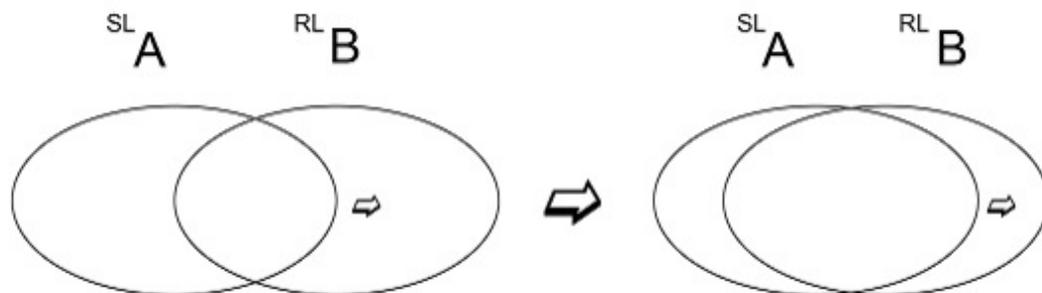


Fig.2-3 Penetration 1

Although this view requires further research before it can be validated, Doi (2003; 30-33) argues that by adopting the term *kami* (神) as a translation of God, connotations of the term God seem to have affected the traditional notion of *kami* (カミ); more specifically, God's monotheistic aspect seems to

have been penetrating and taking over *kami's* polytheistic aspect.³⁸ The notion of SL paralyzes the notion of RL as seen in Fig 1-4.

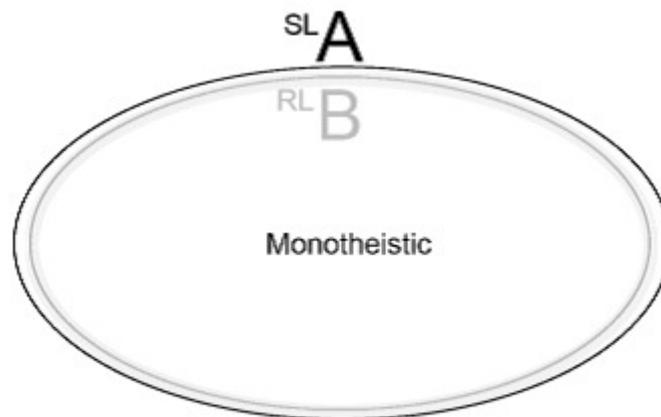


Fig.2-4 Penetration 2

In 1854, Japan opened the nation from national seclusion and started contact with Western culture. Many new Western ideas were imported. To define the concepts, translations were made and new words were created.

Nae in her study of translation in Meiji Restoration states:

The Meiji Restoration created the intellectual background against which by means of translations Japan became acquainted with new concepts such as society, individual, freedom, rights, God, nature, beauty, etc. When I say “new” I intended to say that, although the Japanese people were familiar with these notions, their way of seeing them was different from the Western image.³⁹

She continues:

³⁸ S. Ono, 2002. *Nihon no Kami*, p.190; H. Cieslik, 1999. *Kirisitan no Kokoro*, p.152; T. Yamaori ed., 1995. *Nihon no Kami 2 – Kami no Henyō*, p.164-168; N. Suzuki, 2001. *Nihon Kirisutokyōshi Monogatari*, Kyōbunkan, Tokyo, p.121.

³⁹ N. Nae, 1999. Concept Translation in Meiji Japan. *Translation Journal*, volume 3, No.3. [Online]. Available: <http://accurapid.com/journal/09xcult.htm> [May17, 2005]

(‘tree’ and *ki*) are often regarded as equivalent, due to their shared features. However, the case of such abstract nouns as “liberty” *jiyuu* [sic], “common sense” *joushiki* [sic], or “god” *kami* is much more complicated, because their referents cannot be perceived with one’s senses, and do not evoke any image in themselves.

Then, she concludes that:

The translators were confronted with the absence of not only translation equivalents for these concepts, but what is more, they discovered that the Japanese language actually lacks the reality behind these words.

The translators tried to translate new Western concepts but could not find proper terms in Japanese. So they created new Japanese terms but it was not easy for the common readers to accept them because they could not find realities behind these words. But once the term or word became familiar to the people, the term began to change people’s thoughts and created new notions in the recipient culture. The term *kami* (神) seems to have had this effect.

c. Syncretism Model

The intercultural translation may also cause syncretism as characterized in Fig 1-5. In the figure, ^{SL}A or the notion of monotheistic God has been taken over by ^{RL}B, that is, the notion of polytheistic *kami* (カミ).

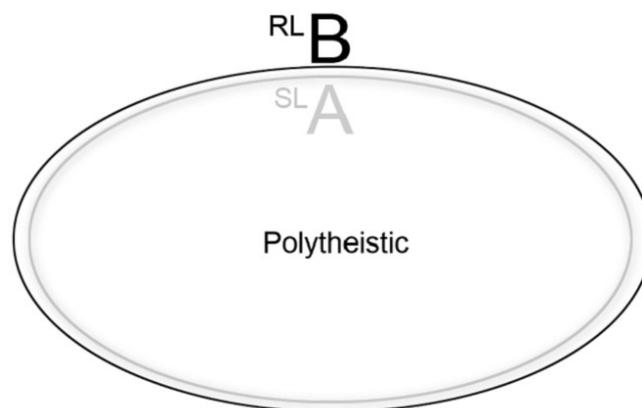


Fig.2-5 Syncretism

The possibility of syncretism of God with Japanese *kami* (カミ) was always a concern to Japanese Christians. Strict clarification was sought between what the Bible describes and what it does not, which inclined translators to prefer the Formal Equivalence (FE) method.

6. Chapter Conclusion

In this chapter, we have observed the phenomena generated alongside intercultural translation, referring to “FE and DE methods” and “Penetration and Syncretism models”. The FE method is considered effective for the accuracy of the translation, and DE method is considered effective for plain and accessible translation for non-educated readers.

In Japanese Bible translation, *Shinkaiyaku Seisho* adopted FE method and *Shinkyōdōyaku Seisho* inherited *Shinyakuseisho Kyōdōyaku's* DE method. If the identical notion of SL does not exist in RL, the translated term becomes unstable, and thus, various terms occur. Regarding the term ‘God’, Suzuki (1977; 301) states that the best possible translation is *tianzhu* (天主), but in

actual translation, the term *kami* (神) was adopted. By this adoption, the notion of God penetrated into Japanese culture but with ambiguous boundaries due to the traditional connotations of the term *kami* (カミ) and the risk of syncretism between God and *kami* (カミ). However, during 130 years of usage of the term *kami* (神), the monotheistic notion of the term does seem to have made considerable advances. Further research is necessary to prove this theory.

The debate on Bible translation methods therefore consists of these issues of syncretism and penetration. If the translator goes beyond the border of the original notion of God, hoping for penetration into the recipient society, he may face the risk of syncretism. Thus Christianity may be compromised. And if the translator stays totally within the original notion of God, he may be able to maintain the 'purity' of the notion of God, but it cannot be accepted by the recipients as their own term and God will remain understood as a Western god. Thus, the penetration of Christianity will be very limited and it will remain in the position of a Western religion, even though it may contain universal truth that can be applied in most cultures.

CHAPTER III

JAPANESE BIBLE TRANSLATIONS BEFORE 1888

1. Introductory Comments

The first missionary Xavier and his followers translated many catechism texts and probably the New Testament in Japan. During the mission trip, Xavier discovered their translation 'Dainichi' (大日, "great sun") for God was a wrong choice and since then, the Jesuits in Japan were inclined to adopt loanwords whose pronunciations were closer to the original Latin or Portuguese Christian terms. Their decision was the adoption of FE methods caused by fear of syncretism with Buddhism.

In the 19th century, Japanese Bible translation works by Protestant missionaries flourished in spite of the Japanese governors' effort to stop the penetrating power of Christianity. Starting with personal translations, the work shifted to the hands of the translation committees.

As a case study, Gützlaff's translation of the first Protestant Japanese Bible is investigated, proving that he is worthy to be called the first translator of the Japanese Bible. Next, J.C. Hepburn and S.R. Brown's ministry is studied to find out how they introduced Christianity to Japanese people in the Meiji era. Then, the background of the adoption of the term *kami* (神) is investigated with reference to the thoughts of missionaries both in China and Japan.

2. Jesuits' Japanese Translation in the 16th and 17th Centuries

a. Xavier and Anjirō's Translations



Fig. 3-1 F. Xavier³⁵

It has been said that Christianity was officially introduced to Japan for the first time by Francisco Xavier, SJ (1506-52) in 1549.³⁶ Ebisawa (1964;19) says that no record has been discovered to support the claim that Xavier brought a Bible to Japan. But as seen below, there had been a Japanese translation of the Gospel of Matthew in Goa, India before Xavier arrived in Japan.

Xavier first met three Japanese men, one called Anjirō or Yajirō,³⁷ and two of his servants, in Malacca in December 1547. Anjirō's inquisitiveness and the culture he reflected perhaps caused Xavier to sense a greater potential for his mission in Japan than in other countries.³⁸ So, Xavier decided to go to these

³⁵ Furanshisuko Zabieru.jpg [Picture of Francisco Xavier], [Online]. Available: atky.cocolog-nifty.com [2007, June 14].

³⁶ There are some arguments that Prince Shōtoku (574-622), Kawakatsu Hata who was an immigrant from China or Korea in the 6th to 7th century or Kūkai (774-835), the founder of the Shingon Buddhist sect, had received or brought Christian influence before Xavier introduced Christianity.

³⁷ Kishino states that Xavier and Lancillotti described his name as Angero, F.M. Pinto wrote it as Anjiroo, but J. Rodriguez called him Yajiro. H. Kishino, 2001. *Zabieru no Dōhansha Anjirō: Sengokujidai no Kokusaijin*, pp.11-14.

³⁸ Kishino, *ibid.*, p.74

newly discovered islands and felt the need to prepare for a mission trip with the help of these men.

He sent Anjirō and two of his servants to Goa to be educated in Christian doctrine by Padre Nicolò Lancillotti (?-1558) and Padre Cosme de Torres (1510-1570) at the College of St. Paul. Anjirō and the servants even specially received 20 days of Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius.³⁹

In Goa, Anjirō translated the Gospel of Matthew and the small Catechism edited by Xavier into Japanese. Ebisawa (1964; 22) quotes Anjirō's letter (29/11/1548) addressed to Ignatius Loyola, where Anjirō wrote:

I pray not to lose the abundance of grace, talent, memory and will with which I was made to write and memorize the Gospel of St. Matthew in Japanese.

After arriving in Japan, Xavier translated his Commentary on Catechism into Japanese with Anjirō in Kagoshima. He also wrote the Instructions for evangelists who took care of groups of believers in Kagoshima, Ichiki, etc. Frois (1659; Japanese translation; 44) states that Xavier, his co-worker, Friar Juan Fernandes (1525-68) and Anjirō made a partial translation of the Old and New Testaments from 1549 to 1550. Cieslik (1999;122-123) describes that Fernandez also translated the Record of Passion of Christ. Unfortunately these translations are no longer extant due to the fire in Takujima, Hizen in 1563.

³⁹ A prayer and meditation training course, following the example of Ignatius of Loyola (1491-1556), founder of the Jesuit Order, to remember the work of Jesus.

Furthermore, Ebisawa (1964; 49-50) quotes a British captain, John Saris' record that Jesuits printed the Japanese New Testament in Kyoto, the capital of Japan of that time.⁴⁰ Ebisawa also quotes the letter of João Loureyro (26/06/1791) which suggests the existence of a printed Japanese New Testament. The letter consists of an index of Jesuits' literature including the statement:

Japanese New Testament. By 1613, printed in Miako [sic], by Jesuits. Small size folio plate. Printing.⁴¹

These efforts suggest that Xavier and his followers well understood the need for Christian literature and the Bible in Japan.

b. Xavier's Correction

Xavier arrived in Kagoshima on 15th August, 1549,⁴² then shifted to Hirado, Yamaguchi and Kyoto, then returned to Yamaguchi. Possibly Anjiro stayed in Satsuma to take care of other believers.⁴³ On Xavier's first visit to Yamaguchi, Xavier wondered why the Buddhist priests welcomed his group so warmly. As his Japanese progressed, he experienced more encounters with highly educated people, Xavier realized that the Buddhist priests had welcomed him because of the Japanese term for God that he was using. He was told by Anjirō that the translation of the term God was *Dainichi* (大日) and he had been encouraging people, saying "*Dainichi ni ogami are,*" which means "Worship *Dainichi*." According to Frois (op.cit., 62), the term *Dainichi* was

⁴⁰ J. Saris, *The First Voyage of English to Japan* in Ebisawa, op. cit., p.49.

⁴¹ J. Loureyro, June 26, 1791. in Ebisawa, *ibid.*, p.50.

⁴² Kishino, op. cit., p.154.

⁴³ Xavier's letter (29/01/1552) in Kishino, *ibid.*, p.186-187

originally a translation of the term *material prima* or “primary material” used by European philosophers, but Buddhist priests interpreted it as the Ultimate

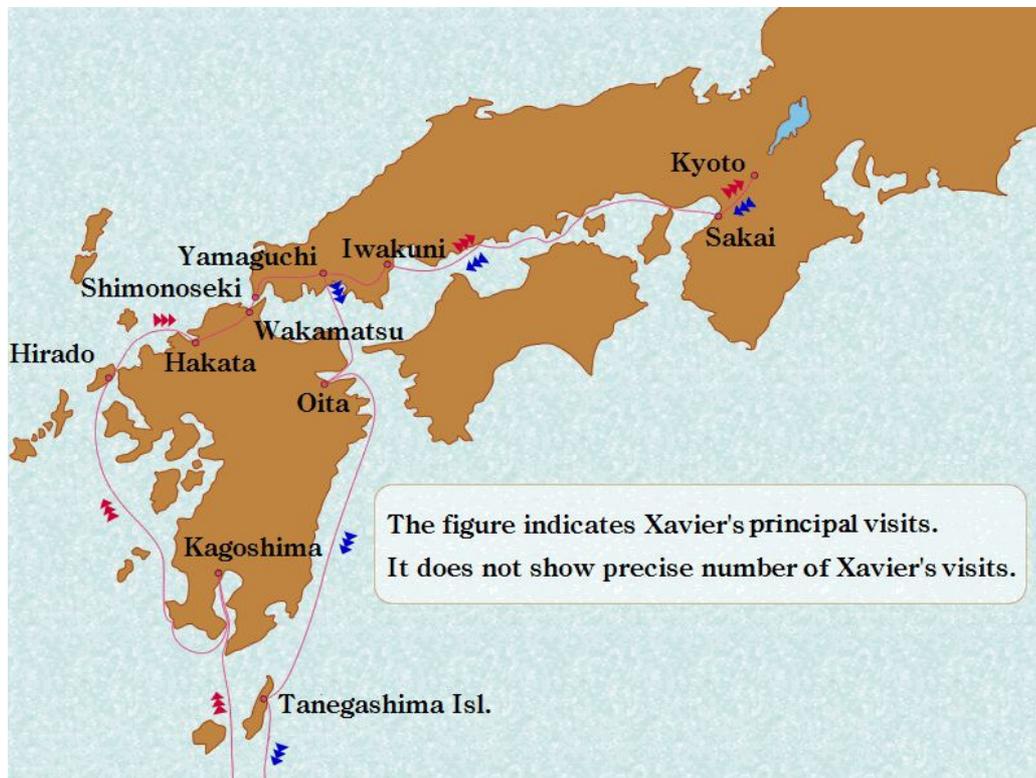


Fig. 3-2 Xavier’s Mission Trip to Japan⁴⁴

Unlimited God, thus falling into many errors and antilogy. Cieslik (1999;126) states that Anjirō was most likely to have been a believer of Shingon esoteric Buddhism which believed in Dainichi Nyorai (Buddha). Yamazaki (1988) defines Dainichi Nyorai as the “fundamental Buddha”⁴⁵, “the source of many different Buddha-manifestations”⁴⁶ and “the personification of the Buddha in the aspect of perfect universal self-enlightenment.”⁴⁷ He further describes Dainichi Nyorai as follows:

⁴⁴ Adapted from Catholic Bishops' Conference of Japan, 1997, *Sei Furanshisuko Zabieru ga ayunda michi (Tokōzu)* [Online]. Available: http://www.cbcj.catholic.jp/jpn/feature/xavier500/img/zabiel_map1.gif [04/09/2006].

⁴⁵ T. Yamazaki translated by D. Kid, 1988. *Shingon – Japanese Esoteric Buddhism*, Shambhala, Boston & London, p.8.

⁴⁶ Yamazaki, *ibid.*, p.12.

⁴⁷ Yamazaki, *ibid.*, p.42.

Dainichi Nyorai was placed at the center of esoteric mandala (enlightened place) systems. ... Inseparable from all that exist, this central Mikkyo [esoteric Buddhism] deity came to represent the originally unborn life-energy of the universe. The originally unborn (honpushō, 本不生) is that which was never created and which exists in all things. Dainichi Nyorai, as a personification of Dharma Body [the eternal law of the cosmos], was further seen to unite the wisdoms and qualities represented separately in the many deities of esoteric Buddhism.⁴⁸

During his second visit to Yamaguchi, Xavier investigated Buddhist priests' knowledge on Christian doctrines like the Trinity, God's personalities, the second personality's humanity and deity and his crucifixion. Listening to the Buddhist priests' answers, he discovered the mistake of the translated term Dainichi. Xavier was surprised and upset at the fact and told Fernandez to go out to the street telling people "*Dainichi na ogamiso*," which means "Never worship Dainichi". He ordered Fernandez to preach that Dainichi must not be regarded as God, that the Shingon sect was a false and untrustworthy teaching like every other Japanese religious sect, and was an invention of Satan.⁴⁹

Xavier was afraid he would make another mistake by choosing another misleading Japanese term for the translation. So he dared to adopt the Latin term Deus for the translation, pronounced as De'usu. The term De'usu was, of course, hard to understand for Japanese people then, but at least, it clearly distinguished Christianity from Buddhism. It is an example of the adoption of FE method and the translation method No.1 in Suzuki's proposal (1977;

⁴⁸ Yamazaki, *ibid.*, p.62-63.

⁴⁹ Frois, *op. cit.*, pp. 62-63.

300), which is, “to present the term ‘God’ in its original language or transliterate to the term having similar phonetic sound.”

c. Term Selection

Xavier’s change of approach made a large impact on the missionaries following him. The missionaries recognized that if they kept using the Buddhist terms, they would not match Christian terms or would cause many misunderstandings. Surrounded by strong Buddhist influence, the Jesuits decided to opt for accuracy of the texts and the FE method at least for the translation of ‘God’.

Cieslik (1999;129) provides the following comments:

Xavier seems to have used terms *hotoke* as well as *Dainichi* for the translation of ‘God’. The term *tamashii* was used for the human spirit but since the term did not indicate the principal difference of lives between animal and plant, the continuous usage of the term *tamashii* might have led the Japanese Christian into the belief in transmigration of the soul which Buddhism taught. It is said that he used Buddhist notions of *gokuraku* and *jigoku* respectively for ‘paradise’ and ‘hell’, and *ten’nin* (a celestial being) for the translation of ‘angel’. ‘Fathers’ were called *sō* (Buddhist priest), and ‘preaching’ was called *buppō*. (teaching of Buddha) . So their teachings sounded like a new Buddhist sect from Tenjiku (India).

Frois (1659, Japanese translation; 54) describes an episode when Xavier was introduced to Yoshitaka Ōuchi, the governor of Yamaguchi:

The priest (Xavier) asked for a noble man in a high position to introduce him to the governor. The noble man introduced the priest as “the person who came from Tenjiku, that is, the birthplace of

Buddha which was Siam.”⁵⁰ Then the governor said he wanted to see the priest.

Further, when another governor, Yoshinaga Ōuchi donated a piece of land at Daidōji temple in Yamaguchi to the missionaries in 1552, the conveyance said that the permission to build the temple was given to “the sō (僧) who came to Japan from Seiiki (西域, the west of China) to help Buddhism flourish.”⁵¹

Regarding the translation problem, Baltasar Gago (1515-1583), a successor of Xavier, proposed two options: to keep using Buddhist terms and interpret them according to Christianity. In this case, they have to explain the words one by one. (This is equivalent to Suzuki’s Method 2 described in the previous chapter.)

The other option was to adopt the original foreign terms as loanwords. But there are more than fifty of these words. (This is equivalent to Suzuki’s Method 1.)

Gago chose the second option and the succeeding missionaries added extra terms to them, resulting in the Christian writings of those times being filled with loanwords.⁵²

Friar João Rodriguez (1561-1634)⁵³ developed the study further, saying:

Japanese lacks some terms to express the new concepts which

⁵⁰ Obviously Siam is not India. This was probably a misunderstanding of the “noble man.”

⁵¹ Cieslik, *op. cit.*, pp. 129-130.

⁵² Cieslik, *ibid.*, pp. 130-132.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, pp.132-133.

were brought with the holy gospel. We need either to create new terms [which is the third option and equivalent to Suzuki's Method 3], but the method is difficult in Japanese; or to adopt terms from our language and modify them according to their Japanese pronunciation to make them into Japanese proper nouns, [which is Suzuki's Method 1]. Since Portuguese syllable and pronunciation will connect with Japanese well, many of the terms will be taken from Portuguese rather than Latin.

Cieslik (*ibid.*, 133-134) quotes the letter (25/12/1618) of Friar Camilo Constanso:

(Japanese) Christians have rather promptly adjusted themselves to these new terms. The large number of loanwords did not cause much difficulty for the ministry work. They attract people, so even heathen are using these terms when they talk about us. Christians especially look forward to knowing these terms in our language.

The often observed Japanese characteristic to be attracted with new thoughts is also evident here.

Another possible option for Japanese translation was to use kanji to make a new term as described in Suzuki's Method 3. However, for the missionaries of that period, this option was totally out of the question because they did not have enough knowledge of Japanese culture and had not learnt kanji yet. The usage of kanji for Bible translation had to wait for nearly 40 years until Michele de Ruggieri (1542-1607) and Matteo Ricci (1552-1610) started the China ministry.

The term selection by the Catholics, or, more precisely, Jesuits, returned to

the strict Formal Equivalence (FE) method in order to avoid syncretism. Considering the historical circumstances of these missionaries, their choice was probably inevitable in their situation at their time. The missionaries' linguistic ability was still too limited to interpret the meaning of the doctrinal terms and discover the contextually proper terms in Japanese one by one to make uneducated people understand, or to utilize kanji to symbolize the complex doctrine.

In the mission field, there was syncretisation of Shinto with Buddhism and Buddhist priests had a strong influence in culture and society. So the term *kami* (カミ) would not have a particularly distinctive effect as the translation of the term 'God' and there existed a strong danger for Christianity to fall into syncretism as Shinto had done. Therefore, the choice of Portuguese terms as loanwords was a good decision to achieve the mission's objective, even though the decision may have been made from the fear of their repeating misselection of the terms. And fortunately, the recipient people were used to imported new thoughts and terms, and tended to highly estimate them with strong curiosity.

On the other hand, the decision may have been made from a characteristic of the Catholic mission where the doctrinal teaching was in principle given by the clergy, and the audience would not be encouraged to obtain knowledge directly and individually from the Bible itself. They may have thought that it was better to provide loanwords and complement them with teaching the Catechism by clergy rather than fall into syncretism.

Regardless of these presumptions, the terms were welcomed by people and the believers withstood long severe persecutions through the Tokugawa Period as Kakure Kirisitan (hidden Christians) after all the missionaries had been deported or martyred. So as the result, their strategy worked out.

3. Japanese Bible Translation in the 19th Century

a. Bible Translation as Urgent Need

Ōuchi in Ebisawa and Ōuchi (1970;224) says that it was obvious that in the beginning of the Japanese ministry, Protestant missionaries believed the Japanese translation of the Bible was an indispensable, important and urgent task. The missionaries believed that the Christian faith depended upon the message of the Bible and knowing the contents of the Bible in the mother tongue was the best and fastest way to accept it.

S.R. Brown, in his letter to Philip Peltz (31/12/1860) ⁵⁴ quoted his Japanese teachers' words that if the Bible was translated to Japanese, it would be read by the people of irrespective of social rank.

Brown also wrote in his letter to J. M. Ferris (31/12/1866) ⁵⁵ that they felt it was their most important task to provide Japanese people with the Bible written in their own Japanese language. During these six years (1860 -1866), Japanese Bible translation and publication were considered as the unchanging goal of the ministry by Brown and his fellow missionaries.

⁵⁴ M. Takaya, 1965. *S.R. Braun Shokansyū*, Nihon Kirisuto Kyōdan Shuppanbu, Tokyo, p.56.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p.219

b. Overview of Translators

After long persecution, at the end of Tokugawa period Christian missions began to prepare to enter Japan and Bible translation work accelerated.

Table 2 Japanese Bible Translators in the 19th Century⁵⁶

Name	Date of Birth/Death	Affiliation	Abbreviation
Karl F.A. Gützlaff	1803-1851	London Missionary Society	LMS
S.W. Williams	1812-1884	American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions	ABCFM
B.J. Bettelheim	1811-1870	British Loochoo Naval Mission	
Jonathan Goble	1827-1896	American Baptist Foreign Missionary Society	ABF
J.C. Hepburn	1815-1911	Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the USA	PN
S.R. Brown	1810-1880	Reformed Church in America	RCA
Nathan Brown	1807-1886	American Baptist Foreign Missionary Society	ABF
D.C. Greene	1843-1913	American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions	ABCFM
R.S. Maclay	1824-1907	Board of Foreign Mission of the Methodist Episcopal Church	MEFB
J.P. Piper	1840-1932	Church Missionary Society	CMS
W.B. Light	1843-1912	Society for Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign	SPG

⁵⁶ Most of the information in this table is collected from A. Ebisawa, 1964. *Nihon no Seisho: Seisho Wayaku no Rekishi*, pp. 9 - 10.

		Parts	
P.K. Fyson	1846-1928	Church Missionary Society	CMS
G.F. Verbeck	1830-1898	Reformed Church in America	RCA

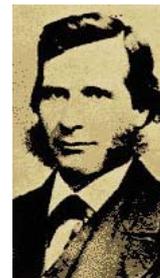
Karl F.A. Gützlaff⁵⁷Otokichi⁵⁸B.J. Bettelheim⁵⁹J. Goble⁶⁰J.C. Hepburn⁶¹S.R. Brown⁶²H. Nagata⁶³N. Brown⁶⁴M. Okuno⁶⁵G. Takahashi⁶⁶K. Matsuyama⁶⁷

Fig. 3-3 Early Japanese Bible Translators

⁵⁷ Karl_F_A_G%C3%BCtzlaff.jpg [Karl Friedrich August Gützlaff]. [Online]. Available: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Karl_G%C3%BCtzlaff [2007, June 14].

⁵⁸ Otokichi.jpg [Otokichi]. [Online]. Available: <http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Image:Otokichi.jpg> [2007, July 13].

⁵⁹ bettelheim3.jpg [Bernard J. Bettelheim]. [Online]. Available: www.hawaii.edu/.../e_image/bettelheim3.jpg [2007, June 14].

⁶⁰ know18_01.jpg [Göburu(1827~1898)]. [Online]. Available: www.bible.or.jp/know/know18.html [2007, June 14].

⁶¹ 084hebon.jpg [Hepburn, James Curtis]. [Online]. Available: http://www.lib.city.minato.tokyo.jp/yukari/person_img/084hebon.jpg [2007, June 14].

⁶² brown1.JPG [Brown, S.R.]. [Online]. Available: <http://www.meijigakuin.ac.jp/~siryokan/founders.htm> [2007, June 14].

⁶³ photo145.jpg [“Hokkaidō Ezogo Chimeikai” no chosha Nagata Hōsei sensei]. [Online]. Available: <http://www.city.hakodate.hokkaido.jp/soumu/hensan/hyakuchin/145.htm> [2007, June 14].

⁶⁴ nathan_brown.jpg [*Mission The Life of Nathan Brown, Early American Missionary*]. [Online]. Available: <http://www.geocities.com/rainforest/vines/6826/nb.html> [2007, June 14].

⁶⁵ A. Ebisawa, op. cit..

⁶⁶ Idem.

⁶⁷ Idem.

Karl F.A. Gützlaff

The first Protestant missionary who translated the Japanese Bible was Karl F.A. Gützlaff (1803-1851) who translated the Gospel of John, First, Second and Third Letters of John (hereafter respectively called John and 1-, 2-, 3-John) published in Singapore in 1837. The trio of Japanese fisherman, Otokichi, Iwakichi and Kyūkichi, helped him.

S.W. Williams

The next translator was S.W. Williams (1812-1884) who translated the Gospels of Matthew (hereafter called Matthew) and John⁶⁸ around the same time as Gützlaff's translation, and Genesis in 1841, all in Macao. A copy of Williams' translation of Matthew was lent to S.R. Brown to bring to Japan, but unfortunately burnt at a fire at Brown's house in 1867. The original copy of the translation was also burnt at a fire at the print shop in Macao. Only a handwritten copy made by a castaway Japanese, Shōzō Harada, in 1850 was left.

B.J. Bettelheim

Next, B.J. Bettelheim (1811-1870) translated Luke and John, Acts and Letter to Romans (hereafter called Romans) into the Ryukyuan language and printed them in Hong Kong in 1855. The existence of his translation of Mark is confirmed by Hepburn's letters (14/02/1861 and 11/02/1864).⁶⁹ Since the translations were very different from standard Japanese, Bettelheim made

⁶⁸ M. Wada, 2002. *Nihongoyaku Seisho no Rekishi-Sobyō*, [Online]. Available: http://mikio.wada.catholic.ne.jp/JAP_BIBL.html [2007 October 10].

⁶⁹ M. Takaya, 1959. *Hebon Shokanshū*, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, pp. 71 and 145.

Chinese-Japanese parallel translations of the four gospels among which at least Luke was published in 1858 in Hong Kong. The originals of other two gospels; Matthew and Mark were discovered at the British and Foreign Bible Society (BFBS), London by Hiroshi Niimi in 1976.⁷⁰ The parallel translation of John was still missing as of 1983. Bettlehaim retranslated Luke, John and Acts in America, and these were published in Vienna, after his death, in 1873 (Luke and John) and 1874 (Acts).

J. Goble

Jonathan Goble (1827-1896) was the first Protestant missionary who translated the Bible inside Japan. He translated the four gospels and Acts. He worked in a hostile environment due to the Meiji government's banning policy against Christianity. Goble's sentence style comprised contemporary language. It was written in hiragana and had almost no influence from Chinese style. It used the same style of kana calligraphy as Ise Shrine's calendar, as did Baptist missionary Nathan Brown's translation.⁷¹

J.C. Hepburn and S.R. Brown

J.C. Hepburn (1815-1911) and S.R. Brown (1810-1880) cooperated to translate the books in the New and Old Testaments based on Bridgman and Culbertson's translation of the Chinese Bible. In spite of the loss of the first translated originals of Mark and Matthew at the fire at Brown's house, they continued the work of translation and published Mark and John in 1872 and

⁷⁰ K. Kadowaki & H. Ōshiba, 1983. *Kadowaki bunko: Nihongo seisho honyakushi*, Shinkyō Shuppan, Tokyo, p.78.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 89, 137 and 144.

Matthew in 1873.

H. Nagata

Hōsei Nagata (永田方正, 1844-1912) was the first Japanese to make an abridged translation of the New and Old Testaments, printed as *Seiyō Kyōsō Ichi Mei Aikei Hen* (西洋教草一名愛敬篇) in 1873.

N. Brown

Nathan Brown (1807-1886) was the first person who translated the whole New Testament in Japan. He was a member of the Bible Translation Committee in Yokohama (hereafter called Yokohama Committee), but he insisted on adopting the term *shizume* (浸礼) for the translation of 'baptism' which could not win the agreement of other committee members, so he decided to resign from the committee and completed the whole New Testament translation with the assistance of Tetsuya Kawakatsu (川勝鉄弥, 1850-1915) and printed it in 1879.

Not long before that, in 1874, a year after the lifting of the ban on Christianity, the Yokohama Committee was established to make a cooperative translation of the New Testament. The members were J.C. Hepburn, S.R. Brown, D.C. Greene, N. Brown (resigned later), R.S. Maclay, J.P. Piper, and W.B. Light. The Japanese assistants were Masatsuna Okuno (奥野昌綱, 1823-1910), Goro Takahashi (高橋五郎, 1856-1935) and Kokichi Matsuyama (松山高吉, 1847-1935). The translation started in 1874. Translated books were gradually published and the translation was completed in 1879. All New Testament

books were published by 1880 and as one combined book named *Shinyaku Zensho* (新約全書, Fig.3-4) in 1885. The American Bible Society (ABS), British and Foreign Bible Society (BFBS), and National Bible Society of Scotland (NBSS) cooperatively published it.



Fig. 3-4

*Shinyaku Zensho*⁷²

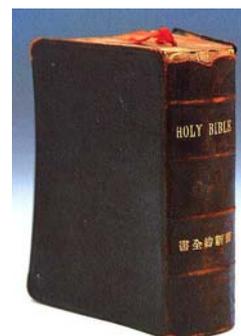


Fig. 3-5

*Kyū Shinyaku Zensho*⁷³

Regarding the Old Testament translation, the Tokyo Bible Translation Committee (hereafter called Tokyo Committee) was established in 1876. Their work did not make sufficient progress. Therefore, in 1878, a new committee named “The Permanent Committee on the Translation, Revision, Publication and Preservation of the Text of the Holy Scriptures” (hereafter called Permanent Committee) was established with twelve members respectively representing their own missions. But this trial did not work out, either. So missionaries re-structured the Permanent Committee and Hepburn, P.K. Fyson and G.F. Verbeck actively worked to make the progress of translation

⁷² soc03_02.jpg[Honyaku iin shachūyaku “*Shinyaku Zensho*”]. [Online]. Available: <http://www.bible.or.jp/soc/soc03.html>[2007, June 14].

⁷³ bungo.jpg[Meijiyaku (motoyaku) *Kyū Shinyaku Zensho* (bungoyaku)]. [Online]. Available: <http://www.koluthse.jp/king/image/bungo.jpg> [2007, June 14].

faster. In 1884, Kōkichi Matsuyama, Masahisa Uemura (植村正久, 1858-1925) and Kajinosuke Ibuka (井深梶之助, 1854-1941) were elected to join the Permanent Committee.⁷⁴ BFBS and NBSS gave them financial support. ABS, however, decided to postpone financial support until the argument on the ownership of the New Testament published by the Yokohama Committee was resolved.⁷⁵

Though the above Japanese Permanent Committee members had to break up because of financial reasons and the busyness of ministry in 1886, they kept cooperating with foreign committee members. The Old Testament translation was finally completed in 1887, and published as the whole Old Testament (旧約全書, *Kyūyaku Zensho*) in 1888. An edition of the New and Old Testaments combined (旧新約全書, *Kyū Shinyaku Zensho*, Figure 3-5) published the following year, in 1889.

Hepburn had been involved in the translation of these two Testaments for more than twenty years. When he held the New and Old Testament in his hands at the celebration of the completion of Old Testament translation on 3rd

⁷⁴ W. Saba, 1966. *Uemura Masahisa to sono Jidai*, vol.4, Kyōbunkan, Tokyo, p. 190.

⁷⁵ The dispute was as follows. The Permanent Committee claimed proprietorship over the existing New Testament translated by the Yokohama Committee, saying that they inherited the right of publishing and revising the New Testament from the Yokohama Committee. However, ABS claimed the proprietorship of the New Testament as a reward for their expenditure of ABS money for the translation. ABS was also afraid of losing the control of accuracy of the translation by giving the freedom of revision to the Permanent Committee. That was why ABS postponed support to the Permanent Committee at first. It is interesting that copyright was introduced as compensation for expenses in this kind of work. M.T. Hills, 1965. Text & Translation, 1861-1900, essay, *ABS Historical Essay #16*, IV-G-1, ABS, pp. 62-120.

February 1888, how joyful his heart was!⁷⁶

c. Gützlaff and Otokichi's Translation

Karl Friedrich Augustus Gützlaff (1803-51) inherited Robert Morrison's (1782-1834) vision and became the pathfinder of Japanese Bible translation. Having been sent by Netherlandsche Zendeling Genootschap, he went to Batavia (Djakarta). There, Gützlaff seems to have met J. Marshman (1768-1837) and R. Morrison who later translated the Chinese Bibles. He learned Chinese and Malay from W.H. Medhurst (1796-1857) who was studying Japanese there and made a dictionary, *An English and Japanese, and Japanese and English Vocabulary*. Medhurst equipped Gützlaff for Japanese Bible translation.⁷⁷

In Macao, he learned Japanese from three wrecked Japanese fishermen, Iwakichi, Kyūkichi and Otokichi who originated from Owari Ono'ura. In December 1836, Gützlaff completed his translation work, and in May 1837, simultaneously with the revision of Morrison's Bible, he published the Gospel of John and 1-, 2-, 3-John into Japanese.

In the Opium War, Gützlaff served as an interpreter and helped to conclude the Treaty of Nanjing in Hong Kong in 1842. In 1849-1850, he traveled over

⁷⁶ In Hepburn's celebration message, he expressed his appreciation of financial support from ABS as well as BFBS and NBSS:

"The committee could not forget, on this occasion, to thankfully acknowledge the cordial sympathy extended to them by the British and Foreign Bible Society, and the National Bible Society of Scotland, as well as the Christian generosity with which they bore the necessary expenses incurred in the work of translating the Old Testament, just as the American Bible Society had previously so generously helped the Yokohama Committee in their work of translating the New Testament." Saba, op. cit., pp. 126-127.

⁷⁷ Ebisawa, op. cit., p. 93.

Europe to preach the needs of the Oriental mission, and through him, G. Verbeck was challenged to dedicate himself to the mission to Japan.⁷⁸

Gützlaff was a most active missionary for both China and Japan and the bridge between missionaries for China and those for Japan. Gützlaff's translation was the first Protestant Japanese Bible translation published though it was not the full New Testament translation. The beginning of his translation of the Gospel of John is shown below with the English translation (New International Version) as follows:

Hajimari ni kashikoi-mono gozaru, kono kashikoi-mono gokuraku
In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God,

tomo-ni gozaru, kono kashikoi-mono wa gokuraku.
and the Word was God,

Hajimari ni kono kashikoi-mono gokuraku tomo-ni gozaru.
He was with God in the beginning

He translated key terms as: Kashikoimono for Logos or the Word, Gokuraku for God, Kami for the Spirit, *korivo-toraseru* for baptizing.

It has been said that Gützlaff's Japanese Bible translation was poor in quality and its printing was stopped in 1838 according to the ABS's judgment that the quality of the translation did not satisfy the standard ABS required.⁷⁹ Gützlaff was involved in Siamese translation in 1824 and the revision team of R.

⁷⁸ Verbeck arrived in Japan with S.R. Brown in 1859 and went to Nagasaki to serve the Japanese for the rest of his life.

⁷⁹ Japan Bible Society, *Seisho Honyaku no Rekishi*, [Online]. Available: http://www.bible.or.jp/info/inf07_05.html [2007 October 10]

Morrison's Bible which completed their work in 1837. He had inherited the Chinese interpreter's job from R. Morrison for the British East India Company Factory in Macao in 1835.⁸⁰ Assessments of Gützlaff and Otokichi's work will be made in detail in Chapter VI..

⁸⁰ N. Suzuki, 2006. *op. cit.*, p.56.

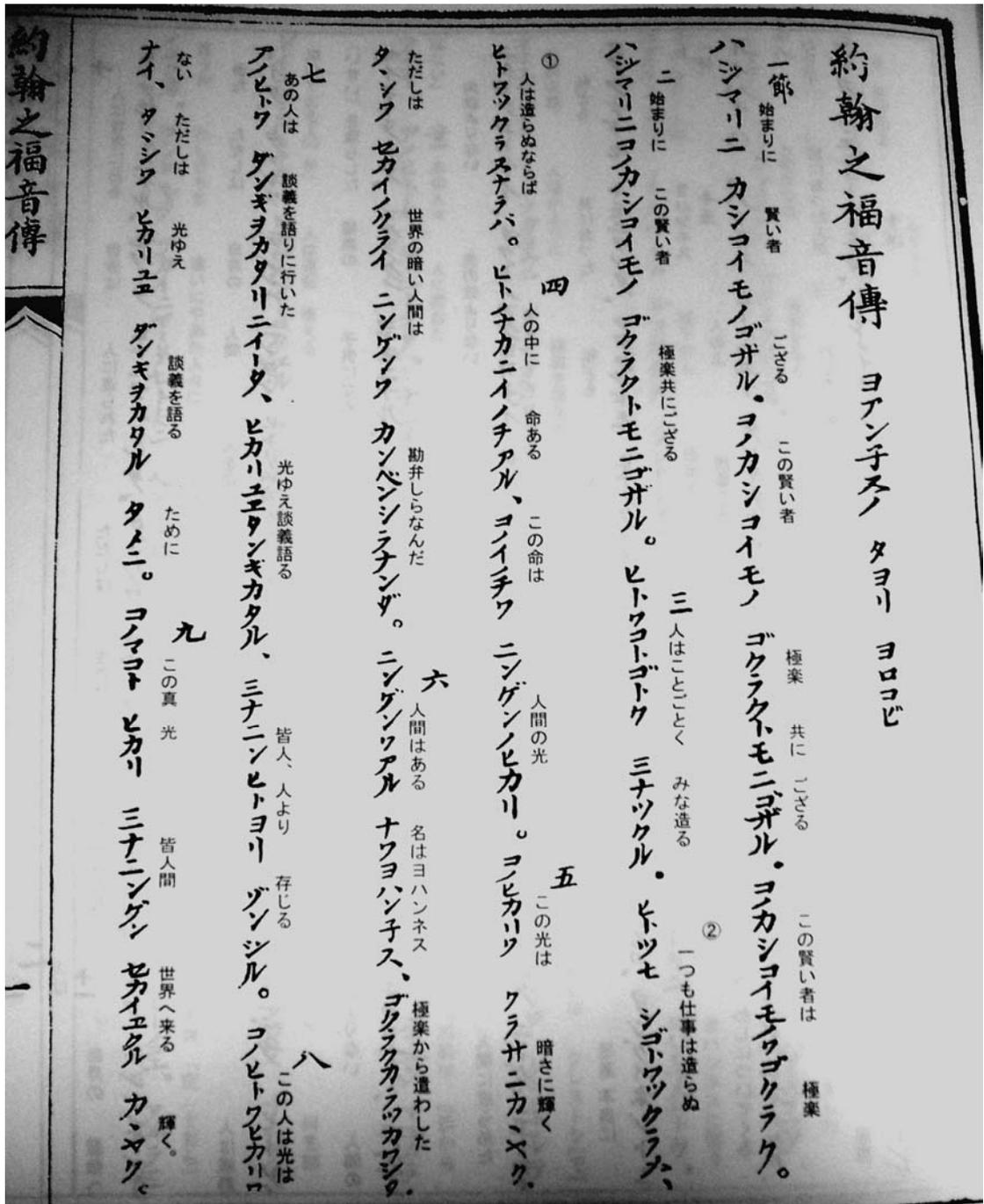


Fig. 3-6 John Chapter 1. Translated by Gützlaff⁸¹

⁸¹ Japan Bible Society (ed.), 2006. Gyutsurafuyaku Yohane ni yoru Fukuinsho, Japan Bible Society, Tokyo, p. 3.

d. Hepburn and S.R. Brown's Translations

In 1841 Hepburn arrived in Singapore, and met for the first time S.R. Brown who was the principal of Morrison Memorial School of Macao. In 1841 in Singapore, Hepburn obtained Gützlaff's translation of the Gospel of John. In 1842, Hepburn left Singapore, dropped in to Macao⁸² and arrived in Amoi where he opened and operated a hospital with Dr. Cummings, a medical missionary, until 1845.



Fig.3-7 Jōbutsuji⁸³



Fig.3-8 Hepburn's House in Yokohama⁸⁴

In 1859, both Hepburn and S.R. Brown arrived in Kanagawa at a similar time and stayed at the same Buddhist temple, Jōbutsuji. In 1861, Hepburn opened a clinic for medical ministry, which operated until 1876. He charge of the Japanese nothing. Hepburn (December,1862) and S.R. Brown (January,1863) then shifted to the foreign concession in Yokohama.

Brown started his Bible translation in 1862 and completed four gospels and Genesis next year. He also published *Colloquial Japanese* (Japanese-English

⁸² H. Suzuki (2002;24) guesses that Hepburn may have obtained *Vocabulario da Lingoa de Iapam* or *Nippo Jisho* (日葡辞書; 1603) while he was in Macao.

⁸³ pic_joubutsuji1.jpg[Buraun tachi no sunda Kanagawa Jōbutsuji]. [Online]. Available: <http://rokugou.cside.com/sub339hantihankai.htm> [2007, June 14].

⁸⁴ image177.JPG[Yokohama kyoryūchi no toyabashi to hebontei]. [Online]. Available: <http://www.meijigakuin.ac.jp/~siryokan/hepburnjyuku.htm> [2007, June 14].

conversation textbook) in 1863.

Mrs. C.M. Hepburn opened Eigakujuku, an English study school, too. In 1864, Hepburn, S.R. Brown and D. Thompson (1835-1914, PN) opened the Yokohama Academy to teach English and other subjects.

Until 1867, Hepburn was involved in medical ministry and preparation for *Wa-Ei Gorin Shūsei* (和英語林集成) or Japanese-English and English-Japanese Dictionary⁸⁵ which was printed in Shanghai. The profit from the sales of the dictionary was appropriated for providing his free medical services.



Fig. 3-9 *Wa-Ei Gorin Shūsei*⁸⁶

An evangelistic tract, *Shinri Ekichi* (真理易知) which means “Easily Known Truth” was also printed at the same time. Hepburn considered the dictionary as the greatest ministry and indispensable preliminary work for Bible translation. In his letter (04/09/1866), Hepburn wrote:

“[Editing the dictionary] would be the greatest ministry work that I

⁸⁵ H. Suzuki (2002; 36) states that *Wa-Ei Gorin Shūsei* was intended to be used for Bible translation. This is apparent from the selection of terms and idioms which were frequently used in the Bible and special imperative forms.

⁸⁶ wei.jpg [A Japanese and English dictionary. Hepburn, James Curtis. Yokohama : 1867], [Online]. Available: <http://www.kufs.ac.jp/toshokan/50/wei.jpg> [2007, June 14].

could achieve. It is absolutely necessary literary work and without this, Bible translation cannot be achieved. It provides scholars most of the language in a comprehensive way and study tools for scholars.”⁸⁷

Precise definition of terms was thought indispensable in this time when FE method was dominant, as described in the previous chapter.

S.R. Brown once returned to the States in 1867 because his house burnt down and he lost his precious resources and translation works except Matthew and Mark. He came back to Japan in 1869 to teach in Niigata and came back to Yokohama the next year.

Hepburn started the translation of Matthew in 1867 which he completed in nine months. Five years later, in 1872, Hepburn, S.R. Brown and Masatsuna Okuno cooperatively published Mark and John. In 1873, Hepburn published the translation of John in romanized Japanese accompanied with English parallel texts in USA with the help of ABS. And after Hepburn returned from U.S.A. to Japan in November, 1873, Hepburn's Matthew was published in Yokohama. These are Hepburn and Brown's private Bible translation works.

Since the Yokohama Committee started on 25th March, 1873, Hepburn and Brown were involved in interdenominational cooperation in translation. In 1876, Hepburn closed his clinic to concentrate on his translation work. As described above, in 1878, Hepburn and S.R. Brown became members of the Permanent Committee for the Old Testament translation and Hepburn

⁸⁷ Takaya, 1959. op. cit., p. 175.

became the chairman of it.

The publication of all the New Testament books was completed in 1880, and S.R. Brown ended his earthly life on 20th June of the same year.

In 1887, the Old Testament translation was completed. In 1892, Shiro Church building with which Hepburn had been involved was completed. The same year, he published *Seisho Jiten* (聖書辭典) or a Bible dictionary which was compiled in cooperation with Shūō Yamamoto (山本秀煌). In this way, the series of Hepburn's Bible translation project, a dictionary, the Bible, then a commentary, were completed. Hepburn ended 96 years of earthly life on 21st September 1911.

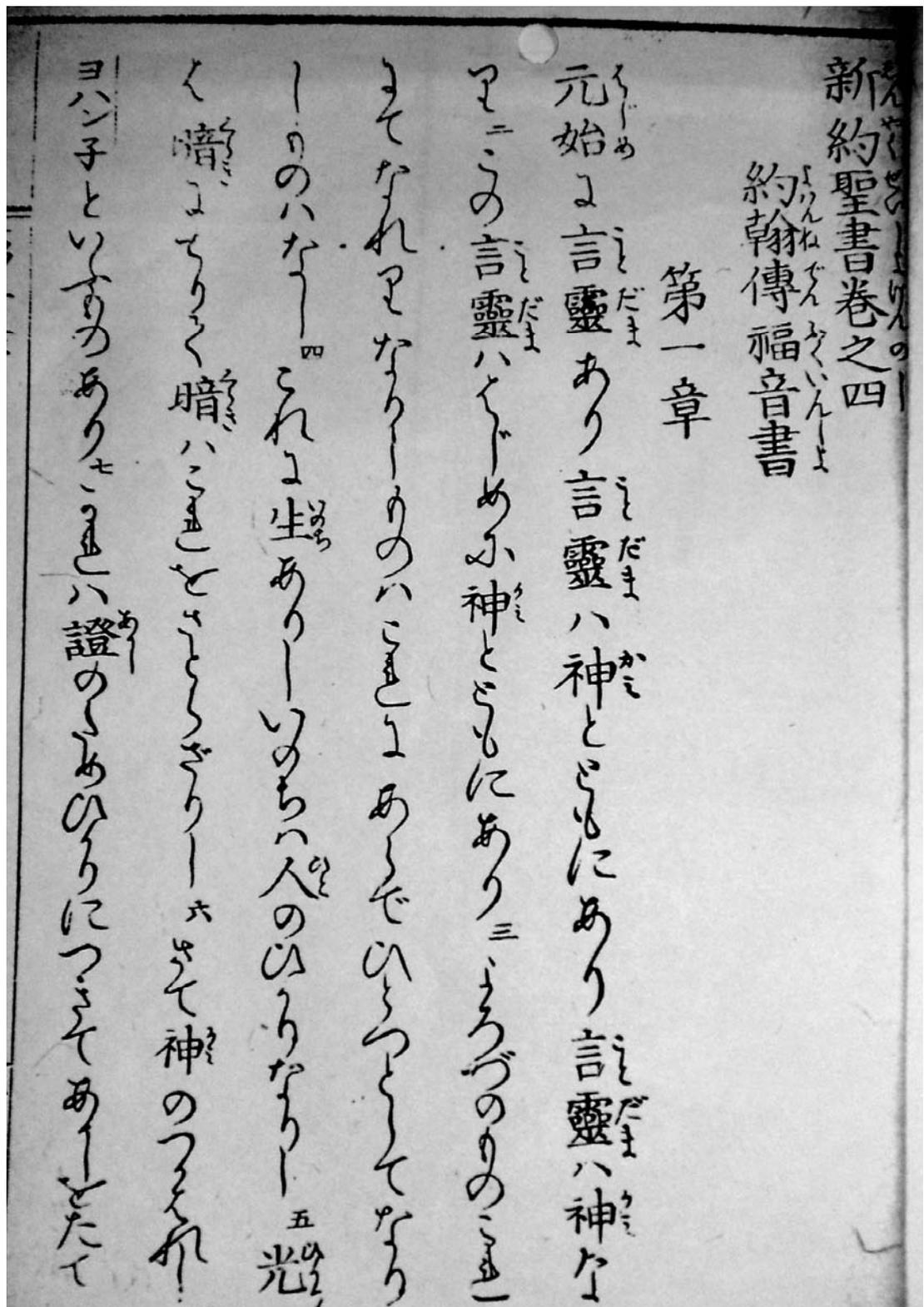


Fig. 3-10 John Chapter 1. Translated by Hepburn and Brown⁸⁸

⁸⁸ J.C. Hepburn & S.R. Brown, 1872 ca. *Shinyaku seisho Yohanneden Fukuinsho*, n.p., in the collection of Dr. Hasebe, Tōhoku Univ.

4. Adoption of the Term *Kami* (神)

a. Adoption of the term *kami* (神)

J.C.Hepburn adopted the term 神 (*shen* later read *kami*) for the translation of God in English, Theos in Greek or Deus in Latin. Hepburn (1886;257) presents the meaning of *kami* in his *Wa-Ei Gorin Shūsei* (和英語林集成) or Japanese-English English-Japanese dictionary, 3rd edition as:

Kami カミ, 神 (*shen*) n. The deities of the Shinto religion, of whom there are said to be *yaoyorozu*, - eight millions, i.e. innumerable. This word is now used by Christians as the only Japanese equivalent for Deus, and God.

S.R. Brown agreed with Hepburn's choice of the term *kami* (神). In his letter to Dr. Holdich of the American Bible Society (hereafter called ABS) (10/07/1866), Brown reported:

There is no probability that such a controversy as that in China, respecting the term for God will arise among us here. The Japanese have settled the question already, by the use of Shin (Cn.) [sic] or Kami as interchangeable terms. All we have to do is to Christianise their own words.⁸⁹

When S.R. Brown referred to "such a controversy as that in China," in the above letter, what did he mean? The next paragraph explains about the controversy and its significance to Japanese translation.

b. The Term Question in China

⁸⁹ Hills, op. cit., p.21

On 31st August 1843, missionaries representing LMS, ABCFM, PN and ABF, gathered in Hong Kong to decide the revision work of R. Morrison's (1782-1834) Chinese translation of the Bible (神天聖書) which had been published in Malacca, Malaysia in 1823. They delegated the work of New Testament translation to the missionaries located in five open-port cities.⁹⁰ Then on 26th June 1847, after nearly completing the first drafts of translation, the representatives including W.H. Medhurst (chairman), W.J. Boone, W.M. Lowrie, J. Stronach, E.C. Bridgman, etc. gathered from their respective areas to Shanghai to revise the drafts. The meeting was continuously held until the completion of the New Testament translation.

⁹⁰ Guangzhou, Amoy, Ningbo, Shanghai and Fuzhou

Table 3 Chinese Bible Translators in the 19th Century

Name	Date of Birth/Death	Affiliation	Abbreviation
R.Morrison	1782-1834	London Missionary Society	LMS
W. Milne	1785-1822	London Missionary Society	LMS
W.H. Medhurst	1796-1857	London Missionary Society	LMS
J. Stronach		London Missionary Society	LMS
W.J. Boone	1811-64	Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the USA	PEC
W.M. Lowrie	1819-47	American Presbyterian Mission	
E.C. Bridgman	1801-1861	American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions	ABCFM
M.S. Culbertson	1819-1862	Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the USA	PN

During the revision work, Lowrie died and Milne took his place. Boone tended to be absent due to his physical weakness, thus only the other four representatives were actually involved in the revising task. Among the four, only Bridgman was an American and other three were British missionaries. During the work, they argued on the translation of Greek terms Theos (God) and Pneuma (the Spirit). Regarding the conventional translations like *shen* (神) for God and *fēng* (風), *shen* (神), or *ling* (靈) for the Spirit in Medhurst's translation, various arguments were made but the representatives could not come to an agreement and had to leave the terms blank for some time. This argument was called the "Term Question".

But British missionaries decided to use *sháng té/ shang di* (上帝) for Theos or God and *shen* (神) for Pneuma or the Spirit. However, Boone, a Bishop of the

American Episcopal Mission stood against it and adopted *shen* (神) for God and *ling* (靈) for the Spirit, and Bridgman agreed with it.

In spite of Boone's disagreement, the majority of representatives made the decision to adopt the British translations on 24th June, 1850. Then they printed and first published the four Gospels, and in 1852, the whole New Testament (named 新約全書) in Shanghai. They also determined this translation to be the standard Protestant translation in China and that no other translation would be allowed except for the terms for "to baptize." Since then this translation has been called the Delegates Version.⁹¹

The American missionaries left the representative committee and started their own revision immediately. Bridgman and his peer Culbertson directed the work, starting the New Testament revision in 1851. They completed it in 1859 and published it in Shanghai in 1861. They completed the revision of the Old Testament in 1863 and published it in Shanghai in 1864.

The British missionaries represented by W.H.Medhurst translated the word God as *shang di* (上帝). They argued that the term *shen* (神) was not appropriate for the following reasons :

- (1) In Chinese, the term *shen* had never represented the Supreme Being 'God.'
- (2) The term *shen* represented invisible beings which are interpreted as 'spirits' in China.

⁹¹ N. Muraoka in Saba, 1966. op. cit., pp.7-8.

- (3) Though *shen* represents 'spirit,' it is not always an object of worship.
- (4) *Shen* represented all spirits in heaven and earth, good and bad, high and low, or dignified and undignified. Therefore, it was not suitable to use the letter *shen* to represent the One God.
- (5) Since the character 神 also represented the human spirit, it was not suitable to use the term to represent 'God' the object of human worship. It would be strange to translate "my God" as "my *shen*."
- (6) If the term were used to translate "worshipping the God of ancestors", it would be misunderstood as "worshipping ancestors' spirits."
- (7) The term *shen* is the best term to represent 'spirit' in Chinese. The use of this term for 'God' would make the best translation for 'spirit' unavailable.
- (8) The term has been used by the Roman Catholics for the translation of 'spirit' and this influence has spread widely.⁹²

For the above reasons, they avoided using the term *shen* (神) but chose the term *shang di* (上帝) to represent the Supreme Being 'God.'

Medhurst supported his argument in his Chinese-English Dictionary as follows:

God, the Supreme Being, 上帝 Shang Di, 天帝 T'hëen Té; the Most High God, 皇皇上帝 Hwáng Hwáng Shang Di; according to the Romanists, 天主 T'hëen Choè; according to the Mohammedans, 主 Choè, 真主 Chin Choè; some Protestant writers⁹³ have used 神 Shen, 神天 Shen T'hëen, 神主 Shen Choè, ...⁹⁴

⁹² *The Chinese Repository*, Vol. 19. No.2, Feb. 1850 in N. Suzuki, 2006. op. cit., pp. 35-36.

⁹³ Indicating R.Morrison and other American missionaries.

⁹⁴ W.H. Medhurst, 1847-48. *Chinese and English Dictionary* (英華字典), Vol.2 in Yanabu, op. cit., p.115.

On the other hand, American missionaries represented by Boone and Lowrie translated the term 'God' as Shen (神). In 1850, the American Bible Society supported their missionaries in their report as follows:

- (1) *Shang di* meant 'the ruler of high' or 'the supreme ruler', therefore, was the title of a political position.
- (2) *Shang di* represented not only the unique supreme ruler but also the five emperors of the five heavens; east, west, south, north, and centre, which was against the concept of the Deus being the only one God.
- (3) In many cases, Chinese emperors were called *shang di*.⁹⁵

American missionaries argued that *shang di* was not suitable. And though admitting that *shen* remained problematic, since the term *shen* was generally and widely used as the subject of worship in China, they decided to adopt the term *shen* as their translation for God and Deus.

The American missionaries referred to R. Morrison's *Dictionary of the Chinese Language* as their resource, where God and Deus were defined:

God or the Deus of the Chinese was originally, and is still most generally 神 Shin [sic]; in the plural, Dii, 神鬼 Shin Kwei, and 神祇 Shin Ke. A sort of Supreme God, is in the ancient books expressed by 上帝 Shang Di...⁹⁶

⁹⁵ Ono, 2002, op. cit., p. 120.

⁹⁶ R. Morrison, 1815-23. *A Dictionary of the Chinese Language* (英華字典) in Yanabu, op. cit., p.114.

5. The Influence of the Chinese Translation on the Japanese Bible

Returning to the matter of the Japanese Bible translation how did this 'Term Question' in China influence the Japanese translation? In this regard, two questions arise. First, what was the original text for Japanese translation? Second, did the translators recognise differences between the traditional Japanese concept of gods and the Biblical concept of God?

Regarding the first question, Ebisawa (1964; 91) argues that Bridgman and Culbertson's *Old and New Testament Compendia* (旧新約全書) influenced later Japanese Bible translation. To examine the validity of Ebisawa's arguments, we refer to Hepburn's letters.

On 17th April 1861, Hepburn sent a letter to Lowrie, saying that, when he translated the Gospel of Mark, he was much helped by the Bible translation that missionaries in China had translated into Chinese.⁹⁷ This letter suggests it is likely that the Gospel of Mark which Hepburn translated first was based on the Chinese Gospel of Mark (馬可伝).

In another letter of Hepburn's to Lowrie (04-10-1862),⁹⁸ he wrote that his Japanese tutor took time to be involved in the work of translation of the Bible from Chinese to Japanese. The Japanese tutor had translated Mark, John, Genesis, and part of Exodus.

By these quotes, it becomes clear that Hepburn, in his early translations,

⁹⁷ Takaya, 1959. op. cit., p.80. and Ebisawa, op.cit., p.121.

⁹⁸ Ibid., p109.

largely relied on the Chinese Bible for his Japanese Bible translation in his early days in Japan. He and Brown could read Chinese, but were not so proficient in Japanese yet, and their assistants, like many educated Japanese of the time, could read Chinese as well as their mother tongue. The question now arises: what kind of Chinese Bible did they refer to?

With regard to the New Testament, Ebisawa (1964; 185), referring to Ibuka's comment,⁹⁹ states that the members of the Yokohama Committee [the majority of them were American missionaries] referred to the King James version and used the Greek original (generally known as the *textus receptus*) by D. Erasmus [1466-1536] as a source book, but the Japanese assistants are considered to have followed Bridgman-Culbertson's Chinese Bible translation (published in 1863-64).

Regarding the Old Testament, Yanabu (2001,155-156) compares respective translations of Genesis Chapter 1, verses 1-8, in the Authorized Version (1611), Morrison-Milne's translation (神天聖書), Bridgman-Culbertson's translation (旧新約全書), and Tokyo Bible Committee's translation (旧約全書), in which Hepburn also was involved, as follows:

The Authorized Version (1611) [subscripted and underlined by Doi]

1. a In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.
2. And the earth was without form, and void: and darkness was bupon the

⁹⁹ Kajinosuke Ibuka's comment in Nihon Kirisuto Kyōkai Ryakushi, *Fukuin Shinpō*, Vol.1088, May 1916

face of the deep: and cthe Spirit of God dmoved upon the face of the waters.

3. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.

4. And God esaw the light, that it was fgood: and God divided the light from the darkness.

5. And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were gthe first day.

6. And God said, Let there be ha firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from waters.

7. And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was so.

8. And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were ithe second day.

Morrison- Milne's translation (神天聖書)

¹神 a当始創造天地也。²時地無模且虛。又暗在 b深之面上。而 c神之風 d搖動于水面也。³神曰。由得光而即有光者也。⁴且神 e視光者為 f好也。神乃分別光暗也。⁵光者神名之為日。暗者其名之為夜。且夕且為 g首且子也。⁶神曰在水之中由得 h天空致分別水于水。⁷且神成天空。而分別水在天空者之上于水在天空之下而即有之。⁸其空神名之為天。且夕且為 i次日也。

Bridgman-Culbertson's translation (旧新約全書)

¹a元始時。神創造天地。²地乃虛曠。b淵面晦冥。c神之靈 d覆育於水面。³神曰。宜有光。即有光焉⁴神 e觀光為 f善。神遂分光暗。⁵神名光者曰昼。暗者曰夜。有夕有朝是乃 g元旦。⁶神曰。水中宜有 h穹蒼。以分上下之水。⁷神遂作穹蒼。使穹蒼以上之水。与穹蒼以下之水。然中断。於是有如此。⁸神名穹蒼曰

天。有夕有朝是乃 i 二日。

Tokyo Bible Committee's translation

¹ a 元始 (はじめ) に神天地を創造 (つくり) たまへり。² 地は定形 (かたち) なく曠空 (むなし) くして黒暗 (やみ) b 淵 (わだ) の面 (おもて) にあり。
 神の靈水の面 (おもて) d 覆 (おほひ) たりき³ 神光あれと言 (いひ) たまひ
 ければ光ありき⁴ 神光を f 善 (よし) と e 觀 (み) たまへり神光と暗 (やみ)
 を分かちたまへり⁵ 神光を昼と名 (なづ) け暗 (やみ) を夜と名 (なづ) けた
 まへり夕あり朝ありき是 (これ) g 首 (はじめ) の日なり。

⁶ 神言たまひけるは水の中に h 穹蒼 (おほぞら) ありて水と水を分つべし⁷ 神
 穹蒼 (おほぞら) を作りて穹蒼 (おほぞら) の下の水と穹蒼 (おほぞら) の
 上の水とを判 (わか) ちたまへり即ち斯 (かく) なりぬ⁸ 神穹蒼 (おほぞら)
 を天と名 (なづ) けたまへり夕あり朝ありき是 (これ) i 二日なり

The subscripts 'a' to 'e' respectively correspond to the identical terms in the other translations.

Yanabu (2001;121) discovers similarity in the words, word-to-word relations, and syntax of the Bridgman-Culbertson translation and the Tokyo Bible Committee's translation. The only exception is the term for 'the first day'. But if '元日' had been used, the term would have been misunderstood as 'New Year's Day'. Therefore, the translators must have chosen the term '首日' from Morrison- Milne's translation. This indicates that they partially referred to Morrison-Milne's translation, too. Accordingly, Yanabu argues that the most important original text for the Japanese Bible was probably Bridgman-Culbertson's Chinese translation, and it was definitely not

Morrison-Milne's translation. Therefore, we assume that the translators of the Japanese Bible also adopted the term *shen* (神) from the Bridgman-Culbertson's translation, but later it was read as *kami* by Japanese readers.

6. Difference between *Shen*, *Kami* and God

a. Differences Between *Shen* and *Kami*

As quoted in the above section, regarding the adoption of the term *kami* (神), S.R.Brown seemed not to have met the same sort of opposition in Japan as his fellow missionaries had faced in China. He wrote:

There is no probability that such a controversy as that in China, respecting the term for God will arise among us here. The Japanese have settled the question already, by the use of Shen (Cn.) [sic] or Kami as interchangeable terms. (10/07/1866) ¹⁰⁰

A great advantage to translation work in Japanese was the fact that the term for the Deity seemed to have been settled for the missionaries by the Japanese themselves. (circa n.d./12/1866) ¹⁰¹

The Japanese had accepted '*shin*' for 'God' and its equivalent *kami* as the generic term for 'god'. (05/06/1873) ¹⁰²

Yanabu (2001;121) however states that the problem was that the term *shin* (神), later read as *kami*, was not considered as a problem, as in fact Chinese *shen* (神) is not same as Japanese *kami* (神). However, he does not explain the difference between *shen* and *kami*.

¹⁰⁰ Hills, op. cit., p.21.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., p.22.

¹⁰² Ibid., p.26.

To acknowledge the differences between Chinese *shen* and Japanese *kami*, Suzuki (2006; 200-201) quotes Watsuji's statement¹⁰³ that [after having absorbed the Chinese notion of god,] Japanese *kami* (カミ) gained a superhuman meaning, but still remained more concrete than *shen* (神).

Let us look at Medhurst's argument in the Term Question again. He said:

- (1) In Chinese language, the term *shen* had never represented the Supreme Being 'God'.
- (2) The term *shen* represented invisible beings which are interpreted as 'spirits' in China.
- (3) Though *shen* represents 'spirit', it is not always the object of worship.
- (4) *Shen* represented all spirits in heaven and earth, benign and destructive [according to the treatment they receive], high and low, or dignified and undignified. Therefore, it was not suitable to use the letter *shen* to represent the One God.
- (5) Since the character 神 also represented the human spirit, it was not suitable to use the term to represent 'God' the object of human worship. It would be strange to translate "my God" as "my *shen*".
- (6) If the term were used to translate "worshipping the God of ancestors", it would be misunderstood as "worshipping ancestors' spirits".
- (7) The term *shen* is the best term to represent 'spirit' in Chinese. The use of this term for 'God' would make the best translation for 'spirit' unavailable.
- (8) The term has been used by Roman Catholics for the translation of 'spirit'

¹⁰³ T. Watsuji, 1962. *Nihon Kodai Bunka* in *Watsuji Tetsurō Zenshū*, Vol.3, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo

and this influence has spread widely.¹⁰⁴

When comparing these characteristics of Chinese *shen* (神) with the Japanese traditional view of *kami* (カミ), there appear the following similarities and differences:¹⁰⁵

- (1) In Japanese language, the term *kami* had never represented the Supreme Being 'God.'¹⁰⁶
- (2) The term *kami* represented invisible beings which are interpreted as 'spirits' in China.
- (3) *Kami* represents 'spirit' and is often the object of worship.¹⁰⁷
- (4) In ancient times, *kami* represented all spirits in heaven and earth, benign or destructive [according to the treatment they receive], high and low, dignified and undignified. However, later, destructive spirits came to be called *akki* or *akuryō*.¹⁰⁸
- (5) In Japanese, the character 神 also represented the human spirit. But in this case, the character 神 was always used in a compound with another kanji.
- (6) In Japanese, *sosen no kami* represents "ancestors' god" and *sosen no rei* represents "ancestors' spirits". Both are clearly distinguished.
- (9) The term *rei* (霊) is the best term to represent 'spirit' in Japanese.

¹⁰⁴ *The Chinese Repository*, Vol. 19. No.2, Feb. 1850 in N. Suzuki, 2006. op. cit., pp. 35-36.

¹⁰⁵ The numbers correspond with the numbers for Chinese *shen* above.

¹⁰⁶ There is an argument that *Amenominakanushi-no-kami* described in *Kojiki* was the Supreme Being.

¹⁰⁷ As Ono (2002;22-23) describes, in ancient Japan, *kami* were regarded as fierce deities to be worshipped to prevent their awful power to harm people.

¹⁰⁸ N. Suzuki, 2006. *Seisho no Nihongo*, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, p.36.

Thus, the differences between Chinese *shen* and Japanese *kami* become clear. According to Medhurst, the term *shen* is mostly used to represent Japanese *rei* (霊) rather than *kami* (カミ). *Shen* seldom becomes the object of worship, but *kami* (カミ) is mostly the object of worship.

b. Difference between God and *Kami*

Ōno (2001; 15-21) states that there was an animistic belief at the base of the Japanese concept of *kami*. The summary of Ōno's description about Japanese *kami* is : *Kami* (カミ) is a super-human, powerful and frightening existence like thunder, a fierce animal such as tiger, leopard, or wolf, or a monstrous being, or a mountain. Other than the above, the characteristics of *kami* are: (1) not sole existence but many; (2) not having concrete figure or form, (3) drifting, wandering, (4) sometimes visiting and *kamigakarisuru* (possessing) a person; (5) occupying and ruling places, objects or situations; and (6) being personified.

On the other hand, Thiessen (1961; 196 - 220) presents the definition and characteristics of 'God', which corresponds with the belief of Hepburn, Brown and other missionaries, as follows:

God's essence is spirituality consisting of immateriality or incorporeality, invisibility, life and personality as well as aseity, limitlessness, and eternity. God's attributes are omnipresence, omniscience, omnipotence, immutability, holiness, righteousness/justice, goodness, and truth. God is unique and has absolute deity.

From comparison of the two concepts of *kami* and God, the difference of the

two appears as follows:

- (1) *Kami* is not unique, but God is unique.
- (2) *Kami* drifts and wanders, but God exists everywhere simultaneously (omnipresent), therefore never needs to drift or wander.
- (3) *Kami* occupies and rules places, objects and situations but within the limit of its territory. God, however, reigns the whole universe.
- (4) *Kami* fills man with fear of its supernatural power, but God is a loving existence even though he judges sins based on His holiness and justice.
- (5) *Kami* is personified, that is, a human may be worshipped as *kami*. But God is never personified.
- (6) Humans worship (or *matsuru*) *kami* by offering foods and liquor (or *sake*). But humans worship God by turning their hearts to God and returning to God by repenting sin and having faith.

Therefore, it is clear that *kami* (カミ) is different from God. And according to the above arguments, it is said that Hepburn, Brown and other missionaries adopted the term *kami* (神) as a translation of God without sufficient investigation of the conventional Japanese term *kami* (カミ).

c. Revision of Translation and Term *Kami* (神)

The inadequacy of the first translation had been recognised at an early time. Kadowaki (1983; 205) remarks that the progress of Japanese language study and Bible theology fostered the atmosphere of revising the translation. He describes:

In May, 1878, representatives of missions and American and British Bible Companies made the [new] Bible translation plan including the

revision of the almost completed New Testament translation [made by the Yokohama Committee]. And after the completion of the Old Testament translation, arose the atmosphere [of revision] among Japanese. ... At around Japan-Russia War (1904), Kanzō Uchimura, Masahisa Uemura, Hiromichi Ozaki etc. had personally made respective revision plans.

Referring to Kadowaki and Ōshiba (1983), I researched what kind of Japanese terms respective translators adopted at that point as the translation of the term 'God'. Table 4 shows the result of the research. The Japanese terms representing 'God' are collected from various Japanese Bibles that have been translated in the past 150 years. The list tells us that various translations of the term 'God' were made till 1885. However, since then, most translators have continued to use the term 神 (*kami*) in their Japanese Bibles. One of the exceptions was 天主 (made to read as *kami*) translated by Catholic translators, by which they tried to indicate the different or more specific meaning of 'God' in the translated term *kami*. But such unusual practice was the subject of rebuke, for example Uemura stated that [translated] Japanese terms should not have the same reading and different kanji to indicate the difference of meaning.¹⁰⁹

The list indicates that, even after having pointed out the shortcomings of the adoption of the term *kami* (神), the majority of Bible translators considered adopting the term *kami* (神) as preferable.

¹⁰⁹ M. Uemura, in Saba, op. cit., p.232.

Table 4 Translations of the Term God¹¹⁰

Translator (Publisher)	Year of First Edition	Translation of 'God'	Verses Referred to
K.F.A. Gützlaff	1837	ゴクラク(<i>gokuraku</i>)	John1:1-2
S.W. Williams	1850	テンノツカサ(<i>ten no tsukasa</i>), 聖神	John1:1-2 、 Matthew 5:12
B.J. Bettelheim ¹¹¹	1855	神	John1:1-2, 3:16
H.Hamada (or Joseph Heko)	1866	神	Genesis (abridged translation)
J.Goble	1871	神 (<i>kami</i>), かみ (<i>kami</i>)	Matthew 5:8,9
J.C.Hepburn & S.R.Brown	1872	神 (<i>kami</i>)	Mark1:1, John1:1-2
H.Nagata	1873	神 (<i>kami</i>), 神 (<i>shin</i>), 天ノ神 (<i>ten no kami</i>), 天父 (<i>tenfu</i>)	
S.Tajima	1875	真神 (<i>shinshin</i>)	Matthew 1:8
S.Tajima	1875	上帝 (<i>jōtei</i>)	Matthew 2:16, 4:1
Bible Translation Committee (Yokohama)	1877	神 (<i>kami</i>)	John 4:2
Bible Translation Committee (Yokohama)	1876/1877	神 (<i>kami</i>)	Romans1:4
Tokyo Bible Translation Committee (tentative translation by J.Piper)	1877	神	Genesis1:1-3
N.Brown	1879/1883	かミ (1879, <i>kami</i>), カミ (1883, <i>kami</i>)	Matthew 5:8, Mark1:1
N.Brown (revised by W.J.White)	1884	真神 (<i>kami</i>), 神 (<i>kami</i>) *hereafter all read <i>kami</i> .	Matthew 5:8
Tokyo Bible Translation Committee	1884	神	Genesis1:1-3
G.Takahashi	1897	神	John1:1-2

¹¹⁰ Most of the information in this table is collected from K. Kadowaki & H. Ōshiba, op. cit.

¹¹¹ Ebisawa, op.cit., p. 111.

H.Hirata	1898	御神 (<i>mikami/onkami</i>), 神	2 nd Thessalonians 1:1-3
H.G.Brand, S.Shudo, M.Norimatsu	1899	神, 神さま(<i>kamisama</i>)	Romans1:1
J.Nicolai (Russian Orthodox Church Japan)	1901	神	
E.Raguet (Catholic)	1910	神	Romans1:18
O.Shibuya (Catholic)	1941	天主 (<i>kami</i>)	Genesis1:1-3
Y.Wakiya	1941	エロヒーム (<i>erohiimu</i>)	Genesis1:1-3
A.Ogiwara (Catholic)	1947	天主 (<i>kami</i>)	Genesis1:1-3
K.Matsumiya	1950	神	Mark1:1
H.Terada	1951	神	Genesis1:1-3
S.Watase & T.Muto (Kirisuto Shinbunsha)	1952	神	John 3:16
F.Barbaro (Catholic)	1953	神	Genesis1:1-3
S.Ogawa	1953	神	Romans12:1-2
Nihon Seisho Kyōkai (Japan Bible Society)	1955	神	All Bible
Shoyaku Seisho Kankōkai (Japanese Amplified Bible Publishing Committee)	1962	神	All New Testament
T.Tsukamoto	1963	神	All New Testament
Shinkaiyaku Seisho Kankōkai (New Japanese Revised Bible Publishing Committee)	1963-74	神	All Bible
A.Matsuda	1967	エホバ(<i>ehoba</i>)	Proverbs
R.Oyama	1983	神	All Bible
Nihon Seisho Kyōkai (Japan Bible Society)	1987/88/97	神	All Bible

7. Chapter Conclusion

Under the dominant influence of Buddhism and its syncretisation with Shinto, the Jesuits decided not to use the term Dainichi but to use De'usu which was a loanword from Latin. It is a typical FE method. They considered the loanwords from Latin or Portuguese were preferable as they would avoid syncretism. The Japanese welcomed the loanwords because Portuguese was easy for them to pronounce and the Japanese tended to find unfamiliar things appealing. The loanwords were adopted by Japanese people and the believers withstood long severe persecutions through the Tokugawa Period. So as the result, the Jesuits' strategy worked out.

In the 19th century, at the end of the Tokugawa period, Christian missions began to prepare to enter Japan and Bible translation work accelerated. Hepburn and other missionaries in Japan consulted a Chinese translation *Old and New Testament Compendia* (*Kyūshinyakuzensho*, 旧新約全書) which American missionaries had translated after the Term Question argument in China. Thus the term *shen* (神) used in the Chinese translation was possibly adopted in the Japanese translation, but the character 神 was read as *kami*. Hepburn and Brown did not recognize the problems arising from the adoption. But actually, the terms *shen* and *kami* have differences between them, as do the terms God and *kami*.

Until 1885, attempts were made to seek a more appropriate Japanese term for 'God,' but since then, the majority of the Japanese Bible translators have kept adopting the term *kami* (神). In this sense, the adoption of the term may

have been appropriate.

CHAPTER IV

JAPANESE RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS BEFORE BIBLE TRANSLATION

1. Introductory Comments

In the previous chapter, we studied how the translators thought and worked to translate the Japanese Bible. Turning our attention to the recipient side, in this chapter and the following chapters, we investigate how the Japanese people received Christianity and the Japanese Bible.

In Hepburn's letter (16/03/1881), he stated that Japanese Christians would face a "special battle." I assume this "special battle" which Hepburn predicted is the battle against traditional religious thought accumulated from the primitive age to the Tokugawa period. Studying Japanese traditional religious thought will guide us to the knowledge of how the Japanese, as recipients of the Bible, faced the concepts in the Bible and what the "special battle" means.

In this chapter, concepts of Japanese gods are studied chronologically. First, different hypotheses about the origin of Japanese *kami* are introduced. Secondly, we investigate how abstract substances came to be recognized as *kami*. Here, some hypotheses on *kami* are rejected according to our knowledge of ancient kana transcription. Thirdly, we study how the import of

Buddhism affected the conventional rite-oriented Japanese belief and how this formed syncretised Shinto. At the end of the chapter, the creation stories in *Kojiki* and the Bible are compared to each other. The two books differ with each other in the matters of creation, revelation, concept of sin, redemption, judgment, and eschatological views. But in this chapter, the subjects discussed are limited to 'concept of god(s)' and 'creation.'

2. Hepburn's Disappointment

J.C. Hepburn, one of the early Protestant missionaries in Japan as we have seen, wrote a number of reports to the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the USA (BFM) on his life and ministry in Japan. In his early reports, he comments rather optimistically on Japanese openness to the Gospel, saying (17/05/1861), "I cannot not think of any other nation who are more suitable [than the Japanese] for accepting the gospel."¹¹² Hepburn imagined that the major hindrance to the Japanese for accepting the Gospel was the fear of the persecution conducted by the shogunate and the bulletin boards of prohibition of Kirishitan put up all over the nation for the past two hundred years. He reported to the BFM (18/11/1865) that based on his observation, if the bulletin against Kirisitan was abolished, there was no doubt the general public would willingly listen to the "words of life."¹¹³ Then he appealed for the need for a Japanese Bible translation (05/08/1872): "God was conducting a great work over this nation. If there were a Japanese Bible, we would see an amazing miracle."¹¹⁴

¹¹² Takaya, 1959, op. cit. p. 83.

¹¹³ Ibid., p. 168.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., p. 245.

The bulletin of prohibition of Kirishitan was discontinued on 19th February 1873. The translation of the Japanese New Testament (*Shin'yaku Zensho*) was completed in 1880, then the whole Japanese Bible (*Kyū Shin'yaku Zensho*) in 1887. However, Hepburn's optimistic dream did not come true. In his latter days, he wrote (16/03/1881), "The work of Christianity is progressing but under much difficulty ... Christianity will have to face special battles here."¹¹⁵ And toward the end of his mission (08/05/1887), he confessed that he did not consider that he had thoroughly studied the Japanese people or reached understanding of the fundamental spirit of the nation or its underlying characteristics.¹¹⁶

Hepburn's activities in Japan were geographically limited to a small area by the Japanese government so that he could meet only a limited number of people and thus could have limited sources of information. Therefore, a sympathetic interpretation would be that his circumstances did not allow him to understand the Japanese adequately.

3. Concepts of God

a. Definition and Origin of the Term *Kami*

Various attempts have been made to define the term *kami*. For example, Kashima (1997;12) defines Japanese *kami* as the mysterious atmosphere or '*kī*' (active energy) which resided in natural objects. Kakubayashi (2003;2)

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 302

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 333

calls *kami* a supernatural existence.

Ōno proposes that the primitive *kami* have the following traits:

- 1) *Kami* exist in many things,
- 2) *Kami*'s figure or shape is invisible and
- 3) *Kami* can exist apart from the things it possesses.

He says that these characteristics of *kami* imply that an animistic belief existed as the foundation of the Japanese belief in gods. He explains the concept of 'animism' by quoting the view of early British anthropologist E.B.Tylor (1832-1917) who postulated a belief in the existence of pneumas or spirits in animals, plants, natural objects and natural phenomena, which dwell in the objects and make them alive, yet can leave the substances and freely move around. The pneumas or spirits are superhuman existences which are invisible to humans. They have emotions like joy, anger, sorrow and pleasure.¹¹⁷

Yamabuse (1995, May) says that Japanese gods are invisible gods, which makes them different from the ancient visible Greco-Roman gods. He does not agree that Japanese gods are considered as only a little superior to the animistic pneumas and are classified in a wide range of "polytheistic" gods. The summary of Yamabuse's description of the characteristics of Japanese gods (*kami*) is as follows: Japanese gods can and do freely move around a wide area, but dwells in a certain place. They do not attract attention to their

¹¹⁷ S.Ono, 2002. *Nihonjin no Kami*, Shinchōsha, Tokyo, p.19.

existence but hide themselves where they settle down. But they send out signs of their existence with a divine or spiritual atmosphere which man has to perceive. The gods can divide themselves infinitely and shift their alter egos to be enshrined in different places. They possess objects like old trees, stones and certain localities, and even to humans.¹¹⁸

Regarding the origin of the term *kami* (カミ), there has been no established theory yet. Kakubayashi (2003;2), however, suggests as his personal opinion that the term *kami* is derived from a term ‘*hami*’ which represents a snake and the snake deity was the most essential part in Japanese primitive beliefs. Kakubayashi (2003, 51) considers that the term *kami* was etymologically originated from *hami*, but later, the h-sound of *hami* changed to a k-sound. Kashima (1997;32) says that in many cases when the snake is worshipped, it is a white snake. The white snake has an atmosphere of having something beyond the other living things in this world. Kakubayashi (2003; 26, 27) says that the unusual appearance of a snake generated fear among ancient people, but because of the fear, people thought that the snake possessed spiritual power; and people thought that, with the help of the snake power, they could conquer nature and obtain comfort and health in their lives. As the result of the perception of the power, people interpreted the fierce appearance of the snake rather abstractly and the snake became an object which humans depended on.

¹¹⁸ T.Yamabuse, (ed.) (1995, May 17). *Nihon no Kami I, Kami no Shigen*, Heibonsha, Tokyo, pp.18-53.

Kakubayashi's hypothesis is interesting in the sense that explains how the animistic character of Japanese gods, *kami* (カミ) arose. But it does not fully explain why other supernatural existences like the sun, the moon, tigers, deer, wolves, boars, etc. were called *kami*.

b. Addition of Abstract Gods to the Concept

The concept of gods was extended to more abstract concepts as human ability to think of abstract concepts progressed. When the term *kami* became widely used, the concept of *kami* was extended from a specific and concrete reptile to more general and abstract concepts. Among them, there were sacred entities like 'I,' 'hi,' 'sa,' and 'chi.'

'I' represents a sacred being. The belief in 'I' was to believe in an invisible mysterious existence.¹¹⁹ It is interesting that verbs related to religious rituals like *i-noru*, *i-mu*, *i-wafu* and *i-tsuku* and nouns related to religious belief like *i-no-chi* were derived from the term 'I'.

The term 'hi' represents 'spirit'. So 'hi-to' (human) represents the place where the spirit dwells. Kakubayashi (ibid.; 38) states that the term 'hi' was seen in the names of religious or secular Japanese leaders¹²⁰ in *Gishi-Wajinden* (魏志倭人伝) written in between 280 to 290 A.D. in China, which proves that the term 'hi' had an important position in the religions of western Japan during

¹¹⁹ From 'i' are derived the terms *i-ki* (breath), *i-buki* (breathing or sacred blow), *i-noru* (to pray or tell a sacred thing), *i-no-chi* (life or sacred spiritual power), a noun *imi* and a verb *imu* (thing or act to hide, keep distance and separate; originated from 'avoid touching or speaking about' because it is sacred), *iwafu* (to celebrate or do a sacred thing), *i-tsuku* (a sacred thing possesses something), *i-na-zuma* (lightening or the appearance of edge of the sacred thing) or *i-na-bikari* (lightening or the light of the sacred).

¹²⁰ Kakubayashi quotes *hiko*, *hime*, *hinamori* and *himiko* as examples.

these periods.¹²¹

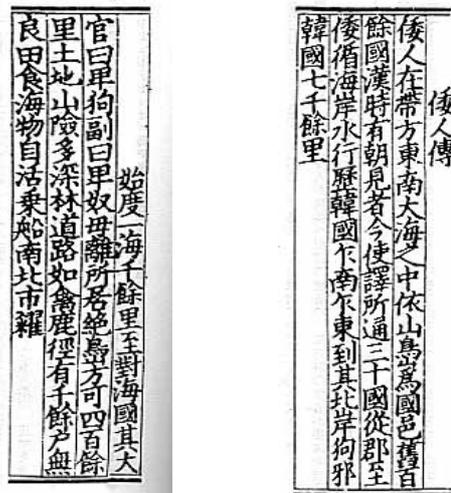


Fig.4-1 Opening Part of *Gishi-Wajinden*¹²²

The term 'sa' represents sacredness.¹²³ According to Kakubayashi (ibid.; 43), *sagiri* (sacred fog) was used in relation to the generation of the ancestral gods of imperial family.

The term 'chi' represents godly spirit,¹²⁴ and the term 'mi' represents a god, like *yama-tsu-mi* (god of mountain) and *umi-tsu-mi* (god of ocean).

Kakubayashi (ibid. 52) suggests that these terms appeared because people in

¹²¹ Kakubayashi (2003;38) also states that in *Kojiki* and *Nihonshoki*, the term 'hi' is also seen in a god's name like Takamusu-hi and in *hi-rume* (woman of spirit) which is a part of the real name of Amaterasu-ō-kami. 'Hi' also produced *hi-ko* as a part of a god's name meaning a man of spiritual power and *hi-me* similarly used as a part of goddess' name, like Ōtoma-hi-ko and Ōtoma-hi-me.

¹²² W1.jpg and W2.jpg [Gishi-Wajinden] [Online]. Available: <http://www.g-hopper.ne.jp/bunn/img/w1.jpg> [2007, July 19].

¹²³ 'Sa' produced the terms *sa-chi* (a game or sacred spirit gained by the hunting), *sa-naki* (*dōtaku*, a bell-shaped bronze vessel or a thing making a sacred sound), *sa-na-da* (a sacred paddy field), and *saru-me* (a shaman or a sacred woman).

¹²⁴ 'Chi' gave rise to the terms *woro-chi* (a giant serpent; literally, a godly spirit dwelling on a ridge), *ikazu-chi* (thunder; literally, spirit of a dignified thing), *kagutsu-chi* (a name of god of fire, meaning a godly spirit of waving fire), *mitsu-chi* (spirit of snake god).

the primitive age felt the need to explain natural phenomena, human behaviours and the whole life of humans in a convincing way. In particular, people who were involved in religious activities must explain why a baby was born, why a man became sick or died, why a good or bad harvest occurred or why the spoils of hunting were many or few. They tried to attribute it to the 'spirits.' This led to the generation of the respective names and concepts of different 'spirits.' And the term '*kami*' began to be used as the general term for these spirits. The term *kami* had therefore evolved from referring concretely to a reptile, a snake, to become a generic term for abstract spirits.

The term *kami* did not represent any singular substance or god like Elohim, Theos, Deus or God according to Christian belief. In other words, the term *kami* in this time already indicated the polytheistic character of Japanese gods.

c. *Jōdai Tokushu Kanazukai*

As discussed above, Kakubayashi presented a theory on '*hami*' as an origin of the term *kami*.

Ōno (2001; 11) presents the conventional hypotheses about the term *kami*:

- 1) *Kami* is derived from '*kagami*' (鏡, mirror)
- 2) *Kami* is an abbreviation of '*kashikomi*' (畏, humbleness with profound respect)
- 3) '*Mi*' of *kami* is a corruption of '*hi*' (日, sun), therefore *kami* represents 'sun'.

4) *Kami* represents ‘*kami*’ (上, authorities)¹²⁵

However, hypothesis 4) does not appear to be valid. Let us investigate why not. Norinaga Moto’ori (1730-1801) recounted his discovery that ‘*ki*,’ ‘*hi*,’ ‘*mi*,’ of *manyō gana*¹²⁶ in *Kojiki* (712A.D.) has smaller subdivisions. The term *kami* (カミ) was written by using the kanji ‘微’ (*mi*) but not using ‘美’ (*mi*). However, another term *kami* (上) uses the kanji ‘美’ (*mi*) but not ‘微’ (*mi*). Moto’ori, however, did not recognize that the ‘美’ (*mi*) and ‘微’ (*mi*) respectively have different pronunciations and were never mixed up with each other.¹²⁷

Later this discovery was expanded on by Tatsumaro Ishizuka, a disciple of Moto’ori, then was further corrected by Shinkichi Hashimoto (1882-1945).¹²⁸

Hashimoto researched *jōdai tokushu kanazukai* or early-history kana used in *Kojiki*, *Nihonshoki* (720A.D.) and *Man’yōshū* (783 or 806A.D.) and discovered that there were two different pronunciations for twelve sounds; *ki*, *hi*, *mi*, *ke*,

¹²⁵ Suzuki (1977; 307) states that hypothesis 1) was suggested by Nobuyoshi Watarai (1615-1690, a Shintoist, a *negi* of the Outer Shrine of Ise), Ansai Yamazaki (1618-1682, a Confucian, the founder of *Suika Shintō*), Keichū (1640-1701, the founder of National Learning). Hypothesis 4) was suggested by Kanetomo Yoshida (1435-1511, the founder of Yoshida Shintō), Mabuchi Kamo (1697-1769), Hakuseki Arai (1657-1725), and Ekiken Kaibara (1630-1714).

¹²⁶ *Man’yōgana* is a script which uses Chinese characters as *kana* [to represent Japanese sounds] separately from their meaning. There are different types of usage like *jion* [loaning Chinese reading, e.g., 阿良 read “*ara*”], *jikun* [loaning Japanese reading, e.g., 千 read “*chi*”, or 大 read “*oo*”], or *gikun* [representing a notion of a phrase, e.g., 少熱 read “*nuru*”, meaning lukewarm, or 八十一 read “*kuku*”.] *Man’yōgana* appeared to represent proper nouns on the swords and mirrors around the sixth century and to represent Japanese terms in the Nara period, especially many in the *Man’yōshū*. Other names for this script are *magana* or *otokogana*. (I. Shinmura (ed.), 2001. *Kōjien Vol.5*, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo; Zenkoku Rekishi Kyōiku Kenkyū Kyōgikai (ed.), 1993. *Nihonshi Yōgoshū*, Yamakawa Shuppansha, Tokyo.

¹²⁷ S. Hashimoto, 1980. *Kodai Kokugo no Onsei ni Tuite: Hoka Ni Hen*, from lecture in 1937, edited in 1942, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, p.111.

¹²⁸ Hashimoto’s corrections of Ishizuka were as follows: 1) Number of sounds which have two pronunciations is twelve, not thirteen; 2) Number of sonants which have two pronunciations is seven, not five; 3) *Kojiki* has two different kinds of *hi* sound, not three; 4) The sound with two pronunciations found only in *Kojiki* was ‘*mo*’ only, not ‘*mo*’ and ‘*chi*.’

he, me, ko, so, to, no, yo, ro and their sonants in these three books. The difference was also observed in the ‘*mo*’ sound, but this sound appeared only in *Kojiki*.¹²⁹ Hashimoto confirmed that these differences came from the difference of the vowel pronunciation of the Nara period when these books were written. He divided these two pronunciations into two groups; Group A whose vowels were closer to today’s Japanese vowels pronounced with the front tongue (for *i* and *e*) or back tongue (for *a*, *o* and *u*) and Group B whose vowels were pronounced with the middle tongue (described as *ī*, *ē* and *ō*).¹³⁰ In this way, Hashimoto discovered that there were eight vowels in the Nara era, for example in the ‘*ka*’ line, there are *ka, ki, kī, ku, ke, kē, ko, kō*.

Regarding the ‘*mi*’ sound in the above three books, 12 Kanji (美,弥,民,彌,瀰,寐,湄,弭,未,微,味,尾)¹³¹ represent it, but among them, the first eight belong to Group A and the last four texts belong to Group B. Then more specifically looking at the term *kami*, the Kanji 未,微,味,尾 of Group B are used for the term *kami* (god) transcribed as 伽未, 柯微, 可尾, 可味. However, for the term 上 (authorities), the Kanji in Group A were used and the Kanji in Group B were never used. So we can conclude that the hypothesis claiming that the term *kami* (カミ; god) originated in the term *kami* (上; authorities) is doubtful and that the word *kami* (上) which means authorities or existence on high cannot mean *Kami* (神) or god.¹³²

Looking at his previous hypothesis that *hami* may be the origin of *kami*,

¹²⁹ Hashimoto, *ibid.*, pp. 60-61, 70-72 and S. Ōno, (ed.), 1975. *Nihonkodaigo to Chōsenigo*, Mainichi Shinbunsha, Tokyo, p. 18.

¹³⁰ Ōno, 1975. *ibid.*, p. 23.

¹³¹ Hashimoto, *loc. cit.*, p. 119.

¹³² Hashimoto, *ibid.*, p. 111.

Kakubayashi (2003;21) says that *hami* appears in *Wamyōshō*.¹³³ “*mamushi*, Japanese name *hami* (波美).” The *Wamyōshō* shows the reading of words in *man’yōgana*, *hami*’s ‘mi’ belongs to Group A mentioned above. Therefore, according to Hashimoto’s theory, *hami* is not the origin of the term *kami*, either.

d. Transition to Syncretised Shinto

When the agricultural society was established in the Yayoi period, in folk religion, people worshipped *yama-no-kami* (god of a mountain) and *ta-no-kami* (god of a rice field), the god of the mountain coming down to the village at the beginning of the rice planting.¹³⁴ In honor of these *kami* (カミ), ancient Japanese people conducted *matsuri* which were to invite *kami* (カミ) and pray by offering foods and *sake* (rice wine) to them. The person who served *kami* (カミ) cleansed their *kegare* (sins) which were considered external dirt by *misogi* (washing oneself with clean water)¹³⁵ and *harae* (excluding the objectionable things) by the magical power of substances like fingernails, sputum or mucus belonging to the body of the one who conducted the rite.¹³⁶

After Buddhism was introduced in 538 or 552 A.D. and grew in the Nara era, one characteristic of *kami* (カミ), which was to reign over an area and thus

¹³³ Formal name is *Wamyōruijushō* which is considered to have been written by Shitagō Minamoto in 935 A.D. It is the second oldest existing Japanese dictionary. *Manyōgana* was used to write Japanese names.

¹³⁴ F. Kakubayashi, 2003. *Amaterasu no Genfūkei: Genshi Nihon no Jujutsu to shinkō*, Hanawashobō, Tokyo, pp. 100-102.

¹³⁵ Kakubayashi (2003; 219) argues that there were two kinds of *misogi*; a *misogi* by water and a *misogi* by removing a part of the body like hairs, nails or fingers. The rite represents the removal of an impure part from one’s body.

¹³⁶ Kakubayashi, *ibid.*, p.223.

inspire fear, became diluted; and contrarily, the other characteristic, which is to give help to men and thus be relied on, became emphasized. As a result *kami* (カミ) and *hotoke* or Buddha began to be syncretised and the *hotoke*'s role of saving and helping others gradually penetrated and was included in the concept of *kami* (カミ).¹³⁷

Later, a theory called *honji suijaku* (本地垂迹) was introduced. According to this theory, the Indian Buddha or Bosatsu (*honji*) appeared in a temporary manifestation (*suijaku*). For example, Dainichi Nyorai in India was the *honji* of Ise Jingū whose *suijaku* was Amaterasu-ō-mikami (hereafter called Amaterasu), as seen in *Tōdaiji Yōroku* (東大寺要録;1106),¹³⁸ providing a clear example of syncretism and penetration of an imported concept.

As described in the previous chapter, Anjirō's selection of the term *dainichi* seems to have been based on this *honji suijaku* theory.

As seen in Fig.4-2, Shinto had kept syncretising with imported religions and transformed itself by generating different sects accordingly. In the 19th century, there existed confucianised Shinto,¹³⁹ restored Shinto (Kokugaku) and New Religions.¹⁴⁰ Among the public, the large religious folk movements called Okage Mairi arose periodically. These will be described in detail in the next chapter.

¹³⁷ Ōno, 2002.op. cit., pp. 62-63.

¹³⁸ Ōno, 2002. ibid. pp. 63-65; Sekine, B. (1985). *Nihon Seishinshi to Kirisutokyō*, Sōgensha, Osaka, pp.12-13.

¹³⁹ Yoshikawa Shinto, Watarai Shinto and Suika Shinto, etc.

¹⁴⁰ Kurozumikyō, Tenrikyō, Konkōkyō, etc.

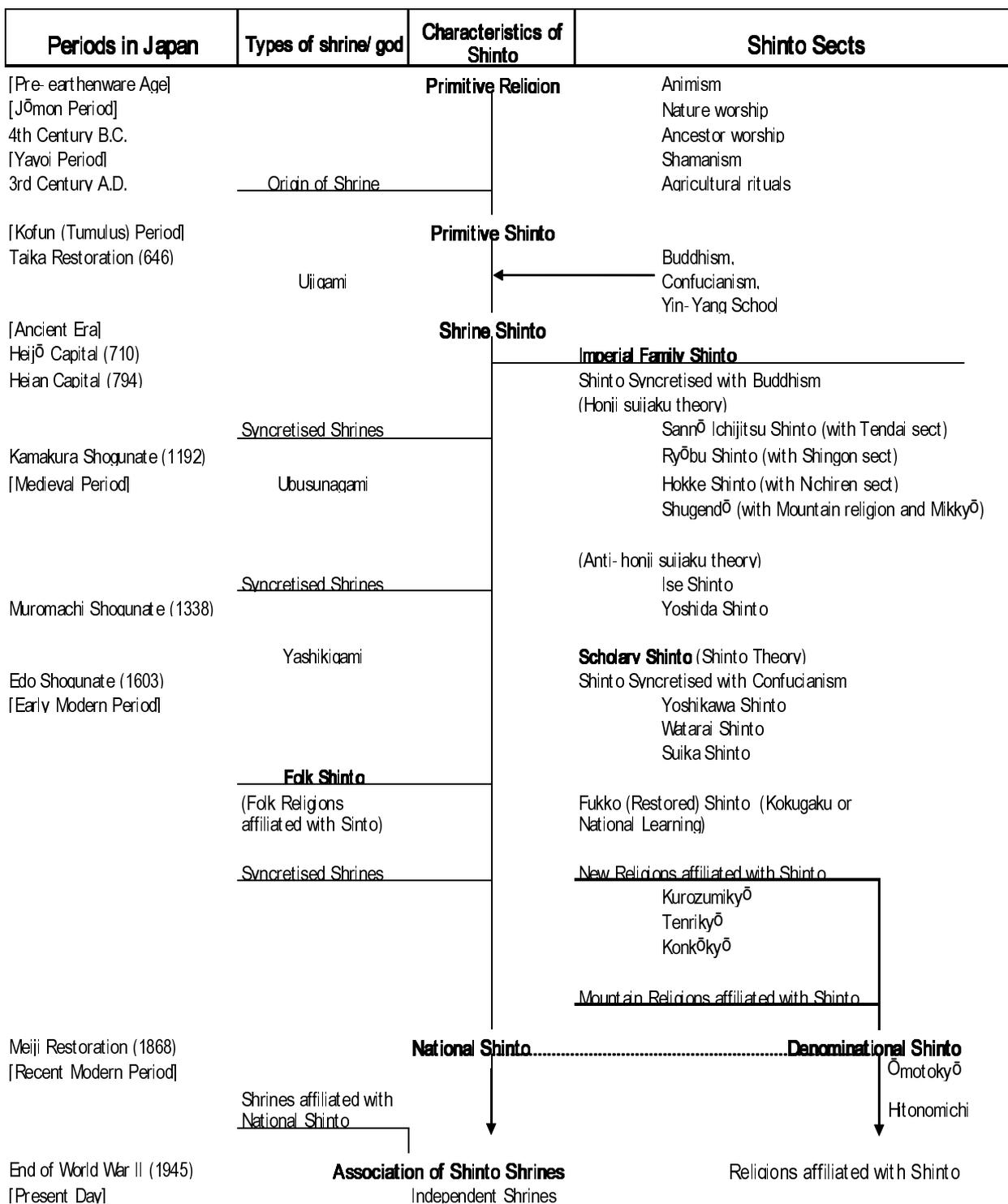


Fig. 4-2 Transformation of Shinto¹⁴¹

¹⁴¹ Translated and adapted from S. Murakami, 1982. *Kokka Shintō*, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, p. 17.

4. *Kojiki* and the Bible

a. Origin of *Kojiki*

Stories of the creation or generation of the world are common to the ancient cultures. In this section, comparisons are made between the description of creation in Genesis Chapter 1 in the Old Testament and the creation myths in *Kojiki* because it is considered that the former is the basis of Hepburn's belief and the latter gave a significant influence to the thought of Kokugaku scholars and the Meiji government who intended to establish emperor-centered National Shinto during the period when the initial Japanese Bible translations began.¹⁴²

We have used D. Philippi's English translation of *Kojiki* (1968) and M. Sonoda's interpretations of *Kojiki* (1977). The version of Genesis used is the New International Version.

Conventionally, there are arguments about whether *Kojiki* was motivated by a political purpose or was a history edited from pre-existing oral traditions.

Sonoda (ibid., 76-77) views the creation myths in *Kojiki* as follows:

The story of the mythological age is not the history of the age of the gods. It was an oral tradition but not a history ... The period when the story was edited probably corresponds with the period when the regime changed from ritual regalities to the Ritsuryō System or legal system in the Suiko period (593-623 A.D.) in the Asuka era, through the Reformation of Taika (646) and the War of Jinshin (672), to the

¹⁴² S. Ono, op. cit., p.108; S. Murakami, op. cit., pp. 66-67.

B. Sekine (1985; pp. 169-170) describes about the Shinto influence on the Japanese assistants of the Bible translation.

Genmei period in the Nara era (707-715). It is hardly deniable that a strong political intention accordingly intervened in the editing ... However, it should not be overlooked that the editors' intentional methods were also based on the 'mythological thought' of the time ... Since even the way of thinking of the editors, being the court nobility, was nurtured in myth, in a way which characterized the ancient people, their 'intention' in editing could be 'mystical' as well. The editors adopted the mystical elements like the ancestral oral traditions of the imperial family or other baronial families, folk songs, and narratives as the source of *Kojiki*. They were what had been 'born' but not 'made'.

Sonoda here argues that, despite what some historians say, the editors of *Kojiki* did not make up the creation story, but according to their own mythological thought edited the creation myths that had been passed down from their ancestors. According to Sonoda, *Kojiki* is not a fiction but a collection.

b. Two Types of Revelation in Christianity

Corresponding to the argument over whether *Kojiki's* contents are fiction or myth, Christian theology deals with the issue of revelation, which is how God revealed or introduced his character, will and works to humans or creatures.

In Christianity, there are two types of revelation; general revelation and special revelation. General revelation refers to the dispensation of God equally to believers and nonbelievers. In the Psalms of David in the Old Testament, the author sings:

The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge. (Psalm 19:1, 2)

The phrases following the above give humans an idea that everywhere in the world man can see the sky like a tent which God installed for the sun which provides heat to everyone. Thus everyone in the world receives information about God. This is general revelation.

On the other hand, special revelation refers to the revelation of God's character, will or works, especially information about salvation, for believers or future believers through divine or God-giving mediators like Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit or the Bible. For example, in the Second Letter to Timothy, Paul wrote:

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. (2 Tim 3:16,17)

The term 'God-breathed' implies that the Holy Spirit inspired the writers of the Bible and let them use their own ability to understand and express their understanding in their own languages and cultures, but still the intention of God is presented. In this sense, the Bible can be seen as a divine book of revelation.¹⁴³

c. Revelation in *Kojiki*

If we turn back to *Kojiki*, Sonoda (ibid.76) argues that the story of the mythological age is not about historical facts, but consists of aspects to be

¹⁴³ Regarding the general/special revelations, refer to L. Berkhof trans. by H. Inoue, 1974. *L. Berukofu – Kirisutokyō Kyōri no Yōyaku*, Shikoku Chūkai Kyōiku Iinkai, Marugame, Japan, pp.6-11 and H.C. Thiessen, trans. by F. Shimada, 1971. *Soshiki Shingaku*, Seisho Tosho Kankōkai, Sendai, Japan, pp.58-76

called “the living reality”¹⁴⁴ of the ancient religion, and at least, it must consist of the world of supreme meaning that the ancient people who practised oral traditions had drawn from their real experiences of life. Sonoda (ibid. 118) also says that the ancient people daily and closely observed natural phenomena and by those observations, they gained inspirations for their mythological expression. *Kojiki* was therefore the book that collected the ancient people’s daily inspirational observations and edited them into a mythological form in order to support the political needs of that time.¹⁴⁵

In this sense, *Kojiki* is not divine scripture or the story God gave in the way that the Bible is. The *Kojiki*’s texts were sourced from general revelation.

The thoughts of the Japanese had been influenced by this *Kojiki*-pattern of mythology, which was later inherited by the scholars of Kokugaku or National Learning represented by Moto’ori and Hirata. In the time when the first Protestant Japanese Bibles were translated, Kokugaku was one of the foundational backbones of the thought of the leaders of the Meiji Restoration. Unfortunately, the Bible translators were poorly equipped to recognise this thought structure of the Japanese.¹⁴⁶ Hepburn confesses in his letter (08/05/1887):

The standard judgment rules which are normally applicable to other nations can be hardly applied to Japanese. Japanese are a special

¹⁴⁴ B. Malinowski, 1926. “Myth in primitive psychology,” in M Sonoda, 1977. *Zankyō no Kanata: Shinwa no Shūkyōgaku Shiron* in Fujita, T., (ed.), 1977. *Kōza Shūkyōgaku* Vol.4 *Himeraretaimi*, University of Tokyo Press, p. 76.

¹⁴⁵ Sonoda, op. cit., p.118

¹⁴⁶ A. Yanabu, 2001. “*Goddo*” *wa Kami ka Jōtei ka*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, p.121.

kind of people. They are unique religiously, morally, in social sentiment and custom, and in their disposition and their national character. Japanese people will be an interesting subject of research for the folklorists. But I do not think that I have studied them thoroughly or I have reached the fundamental principle of their national character or its underlying trend.¹⁴⁷

d. Creation Story in *Kojiki*

In this section, in order to see the different characteristics of *Kojiki* and the Bible more specifically, the text of *Kojiki* and that of the Bible regarding the creation of the world will be compared.

Chapter 1, Book One of *Kojiki*, 'The Five Separate Heavenly Deities Come into Existence' starts as follows:

¹At the time of the beginning of heaven and earth, there came into existence in TAKAMA-NÖ-PARA a deity named AMĒ-NÖ-MI-NAKA-NUSI-NÖ-KAMĪ (hereafter called Minakanushi); next, TAKA-MI-MUSUBI-NÖ-KAMĪ; next, KAMĪ-MUSUBI-NÖ-KAMĪ. These three deities all came into existence as single deities, and their forms were not visible.

²Next, when the land was young, resembling floating oil and drift-like a jelly fish, there sprouted forth something like reed-shoots. From these came into existence the deity UMASHI-ASI-KABĪ-PIKO-DI-NÖ-KAMĪ; next, AMĒ-NÖ-TÖKÖ-TATI-NÖ-KAMĪ. These two deities also came into existence as single deities, and their forms were not visible.

³The five deities in the above section are the Separate Heavenly Deities.¹⁴⁸

The investigation of above phrase derives following four characteristics of the

¹⁴⁷ M. Takaya, 1959. *Hebon Shokanshū*, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, p.333.

¹⁴⁸ D.L. Philippi, 1968. *Kojiki*, Translated with an Introduction and Notes, Princeton University Press & University of Tokyo Press, Tokyo, p. 47.

first three deities (note that the title '*kami*' has already appeared here):

- Beginning of existence: the time when they came into existence is “at the time of the beginning of heaven and earth,” not the time of chaos.
- Eternity: the three deities “came into existence”, which means that their existence is not eternal but they had a starting time for their existence.
- Number of gods: The three deities all came into existence as “single deities,” which means each of them was not comprised of a male/female couple. Note that there is not one god, but three.
- Invisible quality: their forms were not visible.

Sonoda (ibid.,100) argues that it is appropriate to consider these three deities as ‘supreme beings’ because they clearly possess characteristics which seem to have been generated by a speculative conceptualization [by humans], and they give us an impression of ‘transparency’ in comparison to the gods who follow them who usually appear as one of a god/goddess couple, called ‘creator gods’.¹⁴⁹ In his perspective, there first came into existence the ‘supreme gods’ and then the ‘creator gods’ appeared.

Sonoda (ibid., 101), however, made another argument noting that AMĒ-NÖ-MI-NAKA-NUSI-NÖ-KAMĪ appears here only once, but the other two appear in the succeeding texts, too, suggesting some special significance: TAKA-MI-MUSUBI-NÖ-KAMĪ (hereafter called TAKA-MI-MUSUBI) appears five times with the same name and four times

¹⁴⁹ Note that ‘creator’ represents one who was involved in a part of the creation work, which is different from the characteristic of God in the Bible who created every existence other than himself from nothing.

with the name of TAKA-KĪ-NÖ-KAMĪ; and KAMĪ-MUSUBI-NÖ-KAMĪ (hereafter called KAMĪ-MUSUBI) appears five times with the same name. TAKA-MI-MUSUBI always appears in close relation with the ‘heavenly deity’ lineage to which belongs Amaterasu and later the Japanese imperial family. On the other hand, KAMĪ-MUSUBI appears in relation with the ‘earth deity’ lineage where Susa-no-wo-no-mikoto belongs. KAMĪ-MUSUBI is also the member of the heavenly deities that ordered Izanagi and Izanami to perform the creation activities.

These two ‘presidential’ gods (TAKA-MI-MUSUBI and KAMĪ-MUSUBI) normally hide themselves but on some important occasions of the creation process, they use their hidden position and power to lead the creator gods. Sonoda (ibid., 101) says that ‘*musu*’ represents to bear and ‘*bi*’ or its transformed form ‘*hi*’ means spiritual power.¹⁵⁰ Therefore, *musuhi* originally represents mystical power for botanical germination.¹⁵¹ In these names, he observes the first step of conceptualization. In this way, the Japanese concept of god originated from the observation of visible phenomena and then was conceptualized as described in the myth of *Kojiki*. Thus, these two names of gods (TAKA-MI-MUSUBI and KAMĪ-MUSUBI) appeared as a result of human observation of nature surrounding them but not as the result of their speculation for political benefit. According to this statement of Sonoda’s, it can be proved again that the origin of *Kojiki* was in general revelation.

¹⁵⁰ Regarding the abstract notion of *kami* as *hi* or spiritual power, also refer to Section 3.b of this chapter.

¹⁵¹ Regarding the “mystical power for botanical generation”, Kakubayashi (2003; 162-163) introduces the unique Japanese thought that the life is generated by steaming or *musu*.

Sonoda's argument then proceeds to why there were two gods; TAKA-MI-MUSUBI and KAMI-MUSUBI. The significance of this argument is that even in the time of supreme gods, the concept of polytheism had already appeared. Sonoda (*ibid.*, 101) further develops his arguments, for example that the beginning of Chapter 1:1 of *Kojiki*, "at the time of the beginning of heaven and earth", implies the existence of the concept of an original world that consists of two divided substances; *ame*, or heaven and *tsuchi*, or earth. It was commonly regarded as an influence of the yin-yang world view imported from China. In such a way, the primitive world view seen in *Kojiki* is supposed to indicate separation of heaven and earth, which is from an undivided state to a divided state, and at this point there already existed the concept of *ame* and *tsuchi*, which later evolved into the two worlds of Takama-no-hara and Naka-tu-kuni. The two 'presidential' gods, TAKA-MI-MUSUBI and KAMI-MUSUBI, appeared as backgrounding gods of these two worlds.

e. The Creation Story in the Bible

The corresponding texts of the creation story in the Bible are Genesis 1:1-2 and 6-9 of the Old Testament, which state:

¹In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. ²Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the water. ... ⁶And God said, "Let there be an expanse between the waters to separate water from water." ⁷So God made the expanse and separated the water under the expanse from the water above it. And it was so. ⁸God called the expanse "sky." And there was evening, and there was morning – the second day. ⁹And God said, "Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear." And it was

so.¹⁵²

Let us apply the same investigation made about *Kojiki* 1:1 to the Genesis text:

- Beginning of existence: the time when heaven and earth came into existence was the time God created them. They had not existed until this time.
- Eternity: this God had existed before the time of creation, which represents His eternity.
- Number of gods: there was only one God who self-existed, created and sustained the universe.
- Invisible quality: God's form was not visible.

The clearest difference in Genesis Ch.1 is the monotheistic view of God. The creator God has no beginning for his existence which represents his eternity. On the other hand, the three deities of *Kojiki* "came into existence," thus there was a starting point for their existence. God executed his creation work all by himself with his words. He did not need other gods' help. That is a representation of the monotheistic god's character. The three deities in *Kojiki* delegated the creation activities to the next generation of gods. The creation works in *Kojiki* were executed by the cooperation of many gods. Though it is a brief comparison, it clarifies the differences between the creation in the Bible and the creation in *Kojiki*.

Kojiki's creation concept was inherited by the various sects of Shinto in later centuries and by Kokugaku or National Learning in the Tokugawa period, then

¹⁵² New International Version

by the educational policy of the Meiji government. The creation concept became a cornerstone of Japanese thought. The thing which gave Hepburn a hope for success in his mission was the similarity in the creation concept between the Bible and *Kojiki*. And the matter which caused him difficulty and disappointment in his mission was the difference in creation concepts between the two.

5. Chapter Conclusion

Kakubayashi presented a hypothesis that *hami* (snake) was the origin of the term *kami*. But this chapter discovered that this hypothesis contradicts to the *jōdai tokushu kanazukai*.

Japanese Shinto has its origin in the worship of the substances found in nature as *kami* and shifted to the worship of invisible abstract matters or the substances in which these abstract matters dwelled. Then Shinto developed the rituals for worship. In this sense, Shinto was a rite-centred religion and did not establish enough systematic theology for itself until the latter portion of the modern age.

Japanese Shinto syncretised with Buddhism, Confucianism and Yin-Yang theory and generated more gods. The belief was basically polytheistic.

Kojiki and *Nihonshoki* were edited the myths of Japanese gods and became the foundation of Shinto. After comparing the *Kojiki* and the Bible in the area of the concept of god(s) and the creation story, the thesis discovered similarities in the existence of the creation story and the concept of invisible

god(s) and differences in the eternity of god(s) and the number of gods.

CHAPTER V

REVIVAL OF SHINTO IN TOKUGAWA AND MEIJI ERAS

1. Introductory Comments

In this chapter, the revival of Shinto along with the decreased influence of Buddhism due to the weakened shogunate system is studied. Regarding the Shinto revival in the Tokugawa period, two streams can be observed, Kokugaku and Okage Mairi. Through our study of the scholarly revival of Shinto through Kokugaku and the public mass Shinto movement of Okage Mairi, it will become clear how the minds of the future recipients of the Japanese Bible were prepared for this experience. The growth of New Religion is also studied in relation with Okage Mairi. New Religion contributed by introducing to the public of the time the idea of holistic salvation and the monotheistic concept of god.

2. Kokugaku (National Learning)

a. Birth and Development of Kokugaku

The concept of *kami* (カミ) and the ritual activities of Shinto were not based on personal life experience nor had a systematic logical ideology. People worshiped *kami* (カミ) only to have their production and peaceful existence on their land protected by observing rites like *matsuri* or worship and making

offerings to the *kami* (カミ). So when the Shinto scholars tried to theorize the belief in *kami* (カミ), they had to borrow the theoretical framework from Buddhism or Confucianism. In the Tokugawa period, Ansai Yamazaki (山崎闇齋; 1618-82) established Suika Shinto which was based on a Confucian school, Shushigaku (朱子学). This was an attempt to separate *kami* (カミ) from Buddha but it only substituted a Buddhist framework with Confucian one. Thus Shinto was still syncretised.¹⁵³

Kokugaku or Japanese National Learning was born from this background. Therefore, Kokugaku is classified as a Scholarly Shinto which later generated Restored Shinto.¹⁵⁴

The characteristics of Kokugaku scholars' thoughts are as follows:

- 1) Prehistoric Japan which had not yet been influenced by Confucianism and Buddhism was the state of real Japan.
- 2) Old Japanese works like *Kojiki*, *Nihonshoki*, and *Man'yōshū* represented the state of real Japan, so Kokugaku scholars carefully searched the contents of these books.
- 3) Concept of *kami* (カミ) was to be restored.
- 4) Buddha was clarified as an imported concept.

The first leading scholar of Kokugaku was Keichū (契沖; 1640-1701) who established the method of study. He used the inductive method to collect all the possible examples and determine the meaning of terms. The second was

¹⁵³ T. Tahara, 1990, *Hirata Atsutane*, Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, Tokyo, p.121.

¹⁵⁴ Murakami, op. cit., p. 16.

Azumamaro Kadano (荷田春満; 1669-1736) who made an effort to establish an institute of Kogaku or Kokugaku. The third was Mabuchi Kamo (賀茂真淵; 1697-1769) who determined the object of study would be *Kojiki* and searched *Man'yōshū* as a preparation to *Kojiki* study. The fourth and the fifth were Norinaga Moto'ori (本居宣長; 1730-1801) and Atsutane Hirata (平田篤胤; 1776-1843), who will be discussed further in the following sections.¹⁵⁵

Keichū¹⁵⁶Azumamaro Kadano¹⁵⁷Mabuchi Kamo¹⁵⁸Norinaga Moto'ori¹⁵⁹Atsutane Hirata¹⁶⁰

Fig. 4-3 Kokugaku Scholars

b. Norinaga Moto'ori

¹⁵⁵ Tahara, op.cit., p.16 ; K. Sasaki, 2000, *Amenominakanushi no Kami in Late Tokugawa Period*, Institute for Japanese Culture and Classics, Kokugakuin University. [Online]. Available: <http://www2.kokugakuin.ac.jp/ijcc/wp/cjpr/kami/sasaki.html#para0001> [2005, May 06]

¹⁵⁶ art.npos.biz/img/ch03-1_180.jpg [Portrait of Keichū]. [Online]. Available: art.npos.biz/img/ch03-1_180.jpg [2007, August 6]

¹⁵⁷ 202.209.73.88/.../02gazo/02e1-th/195-v180.jpg [Portrait of Azumamaro Kadano]. [Online]. Available: http://202.209.73.88/users/jit/06jinbutu/02_kokusi_tai4.html [2007, August 6]

¹⁵⁸ www.geocities.jp/bane2161/PICT38941.jpg [Statue of Mabuchi Kamo]. Available: <http://www.geocities.jp/bane2161/kamonomabuti.htm> [2007, August 6]

¹⁵⁹ www.city.matsusaka.mie.jp/.../hito/image/02.jpg [Portrait of Norinaga Moto'ori]. Available: www.city.matsusaka.mie.jp/.../hito/02.html [2007, August 6]

¹⁶⁰ www.nippon-bunmei.jp/hirata1.jpg [Portrait of Atsutane Hirata]. Available: <http://www.nippon-bunmei.jp/tsurezure-27.htm> [2007, August 6]

Norinaga Moto'ori established the broad study of Kokugaku. Moto'ori often argued on '*michi*'. Confucians emphasized '*michi*' or "way taught by saints," saying that Japanese people did not know the ways of loyalty and filial piety, love and justice, propriety, wisdom, and reliance until the Confucians had taught them. Moto'ori disagreed saying that:

There had been words even before the letters existed and there had been lives even before the words existed. The letters were imported from China. But even before the import, Japan had lives according to the '*michi*' even though they did not have letters. In China, because the way had been corrupt, saints taught people the way. However, in ancient Japan, there were no corruptions and the way was naturally fulfilled. Thus, there was no need to teach the way.¹⁶¹

Moto'ori also emphasized the *kaminagara-no-michi* or "the way as the gods had determined." The attitude for observing the *kaminagara-no-michi* was to avoid reasoning. He argued that Buddhism was superstitious and Confucianism was disputatious. But the *kaminagara-no-michi* was neither of them. It was not empty theories, but belief and acceptance of the facts handed down from the old books as they were. For example, *Kojiki* said that the generation of all things was the work of Musubi-no-Kami, but it did not describe how Musubi-no-Kami had been generated. Moto'ori stated that if a matter was not explained, the matter must be only believed and accepted. Relating to *kaminagara-no-michi* which avoided reasoning, Moto'ori emphasized prayer to ask *kami* (カミ) for happiness and blamelessness.¹⁶²

¹⁶¹ In T. Yanaibara, 1964. *Nihonseisin e no Hansei* in K. Takeda, (ed.), 1964. *Gendai Nihon Sisō Taikai* Vol.6 *Kirisutokyō*, Chikuma Shobō, Tokyo, p. 330

¹⁶² Yanaibara, *ibid.*, p.330-331; S. Matsumoto, 1970, *Moto'ori Norinaga: 1730 – 1801*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, pp.101-102; N. Haga & S. Matsumoto, 1982, *Kokugaku Undō no Shisō, Nihon Shisō Taikai Vol.51*, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo,

The *kaminagara-no-michi* also emphasizes cleanness. *Norito* or Shinto prayers at Ōharae or the purification service reinforced Moto'ori's thought, where all guilt, uncleanness, or disasters are cleansed by sea water.¹⁶³ In Japanese, there is a phrase, "*Mizu ni nagasu*" whose literal translation is "wash away in water" but the actual meaning is to forgive all the suffering caused by the other party. Yanaibara (1964; 333) interprets this concept as the representation of the strength and weakness of the Japanese sense of guilt. He claims that Japanese dislike impurity and like cleanness, which is a strength, but shed guilt easily and without thinking deeply, which is a weakness of the Japanese.

Regarding his view of the nation, Moto'ori argues that Japan is the country of origin of the world. Japan is precious because Amaterasu who illumines the entire world selected Japan as the nation where the rest of the world originated. And the emperors are thought to be the descendants in the lineage of Amaterasu and were appointed as the supreme governors of the nation where the world originated. It is not because of Japan's individual value or the emperor's personal superiority but because of selection by *kami* (カミ). Moto'ori considers the divine selection is important, and the reason for the selection should not be argued by human reasoning.¹⁶⁴

Moto'ori obtained these thoughts by his inductive studies of *Kojiki*. His

pp.591-592.

¹⁶³ Yanaibara, *ibid.*, pp. 332-333.

¹⁶⁴ Yanaibara, *ibid.*, p.333; I. Jōfuku, 1988, *Moto'ori Norinaga*, Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, Tokyo, p.138.

intention was to re-establish the Japanese identity apart from the dominant influence of Confucianism and Buddhism in his time by discovering ancient Japanese thought through the interpretation of *Kojiki*. He believed that the contents of *Kojiki* were totally true. These thoughts were very different from the syncretised Shinto and Confucianism at that time.¹⁶⁵

Yanaibara (ibid., 337) criticizes Moto'ori's thought in the following way:

It lacks a concept of an absolute, supreme, and therefore solitary god. This is because Moto'ori does not make a substantial distinction between god and human. He does not have a concept of god as a person. ... Moto'ori sees the gods in a natural state as seen in the society of *kamiyo* or the age of the gods. So his concept of god could not exceed a reflection of humans.

Moto'ori's thought was derived from the desire to rediscover the ways which the gods were free from the influences of the thoughts imported from India and China. He tried to discover the way by studying an ancient literary work, *Kojiki*. He thought that the goddess Amaterasu selected Japan and appointed her lineal descendants, emperors, as the supreme governors. In this way, Moto'ori's thought is nationalistic,¹⁶⁶ and thus, became a psychological support for the Meiji Restoration.

c. Atsutane Hirata

Hirata's Motivation

¹⁶⁵ Jōfuku, ibid., p.103.

¹⁶⁶ Yanaibara, ibid., p.335; Jofuku, ibid., p.132.

The weakness of Moto'ori's *Kojiki* study is due to his belief that *Kojiki* is the only absolute reference for ancient Japanese thought. However, *Kojiki* does not include the concepts of the wretchedness of human life, and situations and judgments after death. Thus, in Moto'ori's theory, there is no explanation of them. Atsutane Hirata went beyond Moto'ori's limitations by learning from other resources than *Kojiki*. Hirata called himself the successor of Moto'ori. He stepped into the issues of original sin, the resulting wretchedness, the destination of the dead, judgment, and understanding of a universal system with a 'presidential' god, Ame-no-Minakanushi-no Kami (hereafter called Minakanushi), etc. His motivation was the desire to put himself in a superior position to Confucianism and Buddhism by describing the areas which these conventional teachings could not explain. For this purpose, Hirata utilized the knowledge of natural science provided by Western learning and Dutch studies.¹⁶⁷

One might imagine that information from overseas was blocked under the national seclusion policy of Japan. But the reality was different. Even under the strict control of the Tokugawa shogunate, information about Western geography, the calendar and astronomy, and so on flowed in through the interchange with China and Holland mainly in Nagasaki. Even knowledge of Christianity which was strictly banned sneaked in with the natural science information.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁷ A. Ebisawa, 1968. *Nanban Gakutō no Kenkyū: Kindai Nihon Bunka no Keifu*, Sōbunsha, Tokyo, p. 407, 423.

¹⁶⁸ Ebisawa, 1968. *ibid.*, p.352; A. Ebisawa and S. Ōuchi, 1970. *Nihon Kirisutokyōshi*. Nihon Kirisutokyōdan Shuppanbu, Tokyo, p.117.

Hirata's Encounter with Christianity

Hirata wrote *Honkyōgaihen* (本教外篇, 1806) as a personal reference. The contents of the book, however, were copies, summaries or replacements from the Chinese *Tianzhujiào* (天主教, or Catholic) books, more specifically, the writings of Jesuit missionaries like Matteo Ricci (1552-1610) or Giuglio Aleni (1582-1649).¹⁶⁹ Aleni's *Sanshanlunxue* (三山論学紀, 1625) and Hirata's *Honkyōgaihen* are compared below to prove how similar these two writings are. Aleni wrote the book in order to confute Confucianism and Buddhism theologically and scientifically, which would so attract Hirata that he adopted the ideas of *Sanshanlunxue* into *Honkyōgaihen*. In the compared phrases, Hirata has replaced 天主也者 (means "Lord in Heaven") with 産靈大神 (*Musubi-no-ōkami*, "great generator god"), which is the term used in *Kojiki*.

Ebisawa (1968;410-422) analyses the problem in detail. This section, however, summarizes his argument by quoting two of his comparisons. The superscript numbers indicate parts copied by Hirata. The underlined parts are replacements or modifications made by Hirata to conform with the contents of *Kojiki*.

- *Sanshanlunxue*:

天主也者、¹天地万有之真主也。²生天、³生地、⁴生人、⁵生神、⁶生物、⁷而主宰之、⁸安養之、為我等⁹一大父母。¹⁰心身性命、非天主安界。天下国家、非天主¹¹安立。¹²吾人所極当欽崇者也。

- *Honkyōgaihen*:

産靈大神は、¹天地万有の真主なり。²天を生じ。³地を生じ。⁴人を生じ。⁵神を生じ。⁶物を生じて⁷其を主宰し。⁸其を安養し。我人の本生の⁹大父母にて。¹⁰心身性命すべて此の大神の賦与物なり。天地間の万の事物。この大神の神徳によりて¹¹安立す。¹²我人の極めて欽崇

¹⁶⁹ A. Ebisawa, 1968. *ibid.*, p. 412.

(し奉らでは之有まじ) き大神なり。¹⁷⁰

- English translation of *Honkyōgaihen*:

The great generating gods¹ are true gods of all in heaven and earth. They² generate heaven,³ earth,⁴ men,⁵ gods and⁶ things, then,⁷ preside over them.⁸ They grow them in peace.⁹ They are great father and mother of our true life.¹⁰ All of the body and life are the gift of these great gods. All things between heaven and earth¹¹ securely exist by the divine virtue of these gods.¹² They are the great gods whom we cannot help humbly respecting.

The next quotes are from the Gospel of Matthew. In Hirata's *Honkyōgaihen*, the underlined part was replaced to "mystique of Shinto":

- *Sanshanlunxue*:

¹³ 為義而 ¹⁴ 被窘難者。 ¹⁵ 乃真福。 ¹⁶ 為其己得。 天国不虛死也。 ¹⁷ 此於穆奧妙。 ¹⁸ 豈可以人意測度。 (Matthew 5:10)

- *Honkyōgaihen*:

¹³ 義の為にして。 ¹⁴ 窘難を被るものは。 ¹⁵ すなはち真福 (にて) ¹⁶ その己に天国を得て処死せざると為るなり。 ¹⁷ これ (我も) 神道の奥妙。 ¹⁸ 豈人意を以って測度すべけんや。

- English translation of *Honkyōgaihen*:

¹⁴ Those who are persecuted ¹³ because of righteousness ¹⁵ are truly blessed. ¹⁶ For they will gain the kingdom of heaven and never die. ¹⁷ This is a mystique of Shinto. ¹⁸ Immeasurable by human thought.

It appears that Hirata tried to rationally explain the creation myth in *Kojiki* with borrowing Western natural science and Christian theories about creation and God and eschatology. He placed Minakanushi as the static creator and

¹⁷⁰ Ebisawa, 1968. *ibid.*, p. 413.

Izanagi and Izanami as the dynamic trustees of the creation, and thus tried to confirm the position of emperor as the trustee of the reign on earth and Minakanushi's patrimonial successor.

Hirata's Influence on the Meiji Restoration

Hirata extended Moto'ori's works in literary and historical study to politics. Though he could not directly meet the emperor, he tried many times to present his books to the emperor and six of them were accepted. This could explain Hirata's claim that his theory was accepted by the emperor. It is interesting that J.C. Hepburn in 1861¹⁷¹ and the Evangelical Alliance in 1897¹⁷² respectively made similar attempts to present the emperor with a specially decorated Bible.

In his later life, Hirata became influential in society, but aroused criticisms also. Confucians who were governing the ideologies of the period regarded Hirata's theory as farfetched and irrational. Because of his writings like two books on the measuring system, *Kōkoku Doseikō* (皇国制度考, 1834) and *Sekiken Doseikō* (赤国制度考, 1835) and a book on the calendar system, *Tenchō Mukyūreki* (天朝無窮曆, 1837-1838), the shogunate authorities prohibited Hirata's book writing and ordered him to be banished and exiled from Edo to his hometown, Kubota in Akita in 1841, where he died two years later. The government was irritated by Hirata's intervention in its authority to control the

¹⁷¹ Takaya (1959; 73) wrote that Hepburn was entrusted with a Bible by the American Bible Society to offer to the emperor. Hepburn says that Townsend Harris, the ambassador of the time, thought it too early to attempt to give it to the emperor.

¹⁷² Saba, 1966. op. cit., p. 338. Shūkō Yamamoto, a Bible Offering Committee member, showed the cover sample of the Bible to offer to the Meiji emperor at the ninth general meeting of the Evangelical Alliance in 1897.

measuring system and calendar system.¹⁷³

These incidents indicate not only how Hirata's studies extended to the political area but also how much the period in which Hirata worked was influenced by his theories. In the 1830s, due to economic growth, contradictions of the feudal system appeared. The ship Morrison¹⁷⁴ tried to approach to Japan under seclusion in 1837, which led to anti-seclusion writings by Kazan Watanabe and Chōei Takano, and resulted in the punishment of both of them in 1839 (called Bانشa no Goku). In the same 1837, Heihachirō Oshio revolted for rescuing poor farmers in February and Yorozu Ikuta, a disciple of Hirata, also revolted in June.¹⁷⁵ The signs of breakdown of the shogunate system became visible. The banishing of Hirata took place under these circumstances.

In spite of the penalties, however, due to his disciples, there is evidence that his theory penetrated thinking at the end of the Tokugawa period and the beginning of the Meiji era. Yoshika Mutobe (1796-1863), one of Hirata's disciples and a priest attached to Muko Shrine in Kyoto, lectured Emperor Kōmei. Harumichi Yano (1823-87), another disciple of Hirata became the head of the Jingikan¹⁷⁶ at the time of the Meiji Restoration.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷³ Tahara, op.cit., pp. 240-242, 266-271, 274-276

¹⁷⁴ Refer to Chapter VI.2 (Otokichi)

¹⁷⁵ N. Haga, *Bakumatsu Henkakuki ni okeru Kokugakusha no Undō no Shisō – Toku ni Yonaoshi Jōkyō to kanrensasete* in N. Haga & S. Matsumoto, 1982, *Kokugaku Undō no Shisō, Nihon Shisō Taikō Vol.51*, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, p.668.

¹⁷⁶ Early Meiji government office which conducted the National Shinto rituals. Established on 21st April, 1868 and renamed to Jingishō in August, 1871.

¹⁷⁷ R. Devine, 1981. *Hirata Atsutane and Christian Sources* in *Monumenta Nipponica*, vol.36-1, pp.41.

Hirata also contributed to uniting two Shinto sects which had been conflicting with each other since medieval times. His synthesis of Shinto ended the conflict between the Yoshida family of Yui-itsu Shinto (唯一神道) and the Shirakawa family of Ryōbu Shinto (両部神道), and the solution was accepted at the imperial court in Kyoto.¹⁷⁸ Earl in Devine (1981; 40) observed that:

This doctrine, laid down by Hirata Atsutane, forty-five years later became the official state religion of Japan, when the Jingi-kan was made the highest ranking branch of the Meiji government, and the separation of Shinto and Buddhism was rigidly enforced.

Kokugaku therefore first started as a study in opposition to Confucianism and Buddhism, and developed to become the ideological background for the anti-shogunate movement and opposition to Western thoughts. It then developed into the theory of the Emperor's divinity based on *kōkoku shikan* (皇国史観) or the Imperial View of History, which later took statutory form as the Dai Nihon Teikoku Kenpō (issued 11/02/1889; enforced 29/11/1890).¹⁷⁹

After the Meiji Restoration, the theocratic system based on Restored Shinto seemed to be useful for the young Meiji government to unite the nation. Kokugaku scholars, at first, exercised a large influence in the Jingi-Jimuka office.¹⁸⁰ But the anti-Buddhist and anti-Christian attitude of the Shintoists including Kokugaku scholars gradually hindered to the government who was attempting to strengthen the nation and to revise the unequal treaties the

¹⁷⁸ Devine, *ibid.*, p.40.

¹⁷⁹ S. Murakami, 1982. *Kokka Shintō*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, pp. 65-67, 79-80; A. Ebisawa, 1968. *Nanban Gakutō no Kenkyū: Kindai Nihon Bunka no Keifu*. Sōbunsha, Tokyo, pp.426-431.

¹⁸⁰ A former name of Jingikan. Established on 17th January, 1868. Murakami, *op.cit.*, p.84-85.

Tokugawa shogunate had concluded.¹⁸¹ The government eventually shifted their policy to lead the nation toward the emperor worship to the newly established Monbushō (Ministry of Education) and the nation-wide education system rather than by the Jingishō's¹⁸² religious activities.¹⁸³ In this change, the influence of Kokugaku scholars also faded out.

Hirata's View of Death and Judgment

Hirata divided all existence and events into two dimensions; the immediate one and the transcendental one. The immediate one is termed *arahanigoto* (顯明事) and is ruled by Sumemina-mikoto (皇美麻命) or the Emperor of Japan. The transcendental world is called *kamigoto* (幽冥事) which is basically eschatological in content. According to Hirata, the *kamigoto* is ruled by Ōkuninushi-no-kami (大國主神).¹⁸⁴ Regarding the immediate and transcendental dimensions, Devine (1981; 48) provides the translation of two chapters of Hirata's *Honkyō Gaihen*, saying that these passages depend heavily on the second and third chapters of Ricci's *Chi jen shin p'ien* (畸人十篇, 1608). What happens after death is explained in the *Honkyō Gaihen* by Hirata as follows:

We proceed from life in this world to the unending world of the spirit ... this brief life is the basis for either reward or punishment in the afterlife... At the time of death, the body and soul depart ... the soul immediately appears before the creator, only to be summoned before the throne of the god who judges the dead. All the deeds performed during this life are sifted and examined at this particular

¹⁸¹ Murakami, *ibid.*, p.98

¹⁸² A later name of Jingikan. Established in August, 1871 and replaced to Kyōbushō in March, 1872.

¹⁸³ Murakami, *ibid.*, pp.106 – 107.

¹⁸⁴ T. Tahara, 1990. *Hirata Atutane*, Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, Tokyo, pp. 186-187.

judgment. Every crime and sin committed in this world is first related to the judgment of the dead. (These revelations include) resistance to the way of the gods as well as opposition to and disregard of the gods. A man who has followed teachings other than those of Shinto and has wickedly led people astray ... Fifteen million gods, fifteen million souls, all creation, including your very heart, will be the witness of your offenses ... only sin and unending suffering and despair remain because those evil sins, no matter how hard you writhe and cry, cannot be purged from the body ... After this judgment, the god who judges the dead will gather all the good people to himself and take them to his country where they will be allotted fitting rewards. But as for the wicked, in accordance with the judgment received they will be sent to the land where they will receive everlasting suffering, a suffering that has no end, a suffering from which they cannot escape.¹⁸⁵

d. Section Conclusion

Kokugaku was born out of the disappointment with syncretised Shinto. The motivations of Kokugaku scholars were to discover a Japanese identity apart from Confucianism and Buddhism. The Kokugaku scholars considered that prehistoric Japan was the real idealistic state of Japan and searching *Kojiki* or *Nihonshoki* was the way to know the real Japan. They thought Buddhism and Confucianism were imported thoughts from India and China and thus did not teach about the state that Japan was supposed to be.

Moto'ori first introduced the inductive method in *Kojiki* study. Hirata developed Moto'ori's study and extended Kokugaku to systematized theory. However, because of the limit of conventional Shinto knowledge as a folk religion, Hirata had to borrow information about Western science and theories from

¹⁸⁵ Devine, op. cit. pp. 52-53.

Tianzhujiào (天主教 or Catholic) missionaries' doctrines. Therefore, Kokugaku doctrines of creation, sin, human death and judgment were influenced by the Christian doctrines. However, those Christian doctrines were altered so as to conform with the contents of *Kojiki* and to support the authority of the emperor.

Though Hirata's study upset the Tokugawa shogunate, its supportiveness of the imperial regime encouraged the Meiji Restoration and grew into the Imperial View of History and the Imperial Constitution. Thus, Kokugaku became the foundation of Japanese nationalism and confronted Christianity as a Western religion, but at the same time, its theories included the influence of Christianity. It also aided the penetration of the term *kami* (神) in its monotheistic sense.

Hirata's emphasis of Ame-no-Minakanushi as the supreme god¹⁸⁶ led the Jingikan of the Meiji Restoration government revering the emperor as their supreme god in the lineage of Amaterasu¹⁸⁷ and induced New Religions to advocate respective supreme deities.¹⁸⁸ In this way, the concept of a monotheistic God of Christianity was embraced by Kokugaku theory, and further influenced the thoughts of the Meiji government as well as the public of this time through the supreme deity of the New Religions. Both the nationalism and the Christian theology that Kokugaku introduced to Japan exerted a large influence on Japanese thought in and after the Meiji Era.

¹⁸⁶ Murakami, op.cit., p.66.

¹⁸⁷ Murakami, ibid., pp. 84-86; T. Yamabuse, (ed.), 1995, June 19. *Nihon no Kami 2, Kami no Henyō*, Heibonsha, Tokyo, p.164.

¹⁸⁸ Murakami, ibid., p.69-70.

3. The Ise Shrines

a. Transformation of Ise Belief

The inner shrine (called Naigū) of Ise Shrine was first dedicated to Amaterasu as the ancestral god of the imperial family.¹⁸⁹ And the outer shrine (called Gegū) was dedicated to Toyoukeno-ō-mikami (hereafter called Toyouke) at first as an attendant god of Amaterasu.

Along with the increase in imperial political power, the position of Amaterasu was raised so that she became the supreme goddess of the sun and her role as farming goddess was transferred to Toyouke.¹⁹⁰

In the Kamakura period (1183 or 1185 - 1333) and Nanbokuchō period¹⁹¹ (1336 to 1392), the Gegū priesthood¹⁹² established Ise Shinto. Their emphases were: first, Toyouke, the goddess of Gegū, was looked upon in the same way as Ame-no-Minakanushi (a creator god) and was superior to Amaterasu; second, Shinto is superior to Buddhism and Confucianism; and third, the emperors' divine position was historically and religiously proved. Thus, they religiously proclaimed the position of Japan as a nation which was founded and protected by the gods. The theory was intended to be an

¹⁸⁹ According to Miyamoto (1995;19), Ise Shrine was enshrined around 4th to 5th century.

¹⁹⁰ Miyamoto, T. (1995). *Tabi no Minzoku to Rekishi 5, Ise Sangū*. Yasaka Shobō, Tokyo, P.29.

¹⁹¹ The period when Japanese imperial family was divided between the Northern Emperors (Jimyōin-tō) and the Southern Emperors (Daikakuji-tō)

¹⁹² Primary leaders were Yukiwaka Watarai (1236 - 1306), Tsuneyoshi Watarai (1263 - 1339) and Ieyuki Watarai (1256 – 1351 or 1362).

anti-*honji suijaku* theory.¹⁹³

The influence of Ise Shinto on society rapidly declined and its territories were lost with the decrease of the emperors' power. Thus they fell into financial difficulty. So the priests, especially the ones in lower positions called '*oshi*' began to go out nationwide to increase believers. They delivered the talismans and calendars which they published to satisfy people's desire for worldly benefits. The objects of their propagandism were farmers, merchants and craftsmen. According to their activities, miniatures of the Ise shrine (Shinmyōsha) were built in many places. Naigū and Gegū priests competed against each other in these activities. They organized believers' groups in village communities named 'kō' (講).¹⁹⁴

At the end of the Tokugawa shogunate, the status of Buddhism fell, and Shinto's status rose. When the prohibition of public worship at Naigū was removed in 1811, anyone, even if they were not an emperor, an empress or a prince, became able to visit Naigū to worship. Immediately after this, periodical nationwide mass movements occurred to make tours to Ise, which were called Okage Mairi.

These movements were deliberately overlooked by the shogunate as release mechanisms providing people with relief from the sense of stagnation in the feudalistic society.

¹⁹³ Murakami, op.cit., pp.50-52; Miyamoto, op.cit., pp.56-57, 68-69

¹⁹⁴ Miyamoto, ibid., pp.64, 79-82, 118-125; Murakami, ibid., p.55.

But the administration's patience ran out when the movements gave way to another mass movement called *Ējanaika* in the summer of 1867. Triggered by the alleged falling of talismans of Amaterasu or Ise Shrine from the sky, people took part in riotous activities, calling for Amaterasu's virtue to change society immediately. The riots sang vulgar and irresponsible songs ending with the phrase '*Ējanaika*', broke into landlords' or rich merchants' houses with their sandals on and were served with *sake* and foods. The movement threw the existing authorities into disorder all over the nation.¹⁹⁵

Immediately after the riots, the new Meiji government withdrew Ise Shrine's authority to be the object of the public religion and instead promoted it to the highest position in the National Shinto. On 21st April 1871, the Jingikan (the Office of Deities¹⁹⁶) was established and both the Naigū and Gegū of Ise Shrine were put under the jurisdiction of the Jingikan. In 1871, the *oshi's* rights to produce and distribute talismans and calendars were taken away by the government.¹⁹⁷

b. Changes of the Attributes of Amaterasu

The goddess enshrined at Ise Shrine, Amaterasu, was originally the goddess of agriculture so when the imperial family started to conduct the ritual for a

¹⁹⁵ Miyamoto, *ibid.*, pp.191-196; Murakami, *ibid.*, pp.83-84

¹⁹⁶ Britanica Online, [Japan the Ritsuryo System]. [Online]. Available: www.britannica.com/eb/topic-303985/Jingikan [2007, October 10]

¹⁹⁷ Murakami, *op.cit.*, p.94. In 1882, the Ise Shrine office was restored the right to publish the government calendar. In 1946, it was decided that Tokyo Astronomical Observatory was to publish the government calendar and Ise Shrine office was to publish their own calendars called *daireki* or *shōreki*.

N. Inoue, 2005, Offerings and Talismans: Jingūreki, *Encyclopedia of Shinto*, Establishment of National Learning Institute for the Dissemination of Research on Shinto and Japanese Culture, Kokugakuin University. [Online]. Available: <http://eos.kokugakuin.ac.jp/modules/xwords/entry.php?entryID=329> [2007, October 10]

good harvest, the myth stating that emperors were the lineal descendants of Amaterasu was generated and Amaterasu became the family deity of the emperors. Then, along with the increase of the emperors' political and military power, one of the Amaterasu's roles as the goddess of sun was emphasized. Under the *honji suijaku* theory, Amaterasu was said to be the provisional representation of Dainichi (Vairocana Buddha) or Kuze Kannon (a merciful saviour goddess). Then in the anti-*honji suijaku* theory, she was relegated to a position lower than Toyouke. When Ise Shrine attracted a popular following, Amaterasu became the object of belief for worldly benefit. In the late Tokugawa period, Kurozumikyō, a New Religion sect (discussed later in this chapter), worshipped Amaterasu as a monotheistic supreme god. After the Meiji Restoration, Amaterasu was ranked as one of the highest gods and allocated the same position as the three creator gods.¹⁹⁸

c. Ise's Relation with Christianity

As a measure of government's syncretising policy

At the time when missionaries were involved in Bible translation at the beginning of the Meiji era, the Meiji government thought that prohibition of Christianity would have to be removed soon or later due to the Western nations' diplomatic pressure. But the government was also looking for a counter value against Christianity and selected National Shinto based on Restored Shinto founded on Kokugaku ideology¹⁹⁹ which supported the

¹⁹⁸ Murakami, *ibid.*, p.84, 115-117.

¹⁹⁹ Restored Shinto's idealistic attempt to unite ritual and politics ended in failure. Recognising that Restored Shinto's theocratic enthusiasm caused the radical destruction of Buddhist temples and images, the Meiji government reduced the influence of Kokugaku and Restored Shinto by limiting the Jingikan's competence to ritual only and increasing the Daijōkan's competence on the political side. Then in 1875 they ranked National Shinto above denominational Shinto, Buddhism and Christianity.

emperor-centered national structure. To establish this national structure, Ise Shrine had to be restored to the highest position among many shrines, because it had been the imperial family shrine and was dedicated to Amaterasu who was declared by the emperors as the 'ancestor' of their family. In other words, Ise Shrine had to be changed from being the object of the popular religion and restored as the object of National Shinto. This is why the Ise-kō (Ise believers' group) and Okage Mairi were abolished at same time as the Jingikan was re-established.²⁰⁰ The Meiji government tried to syncretise Christianity by introducing National Shinto as an umbrella over all existing religions in Japan and the Jingikan contributed to this purpose.²⁰¹

Influence of Ise Goyomi

Ise Shrine had two faces represented by the Naigū and the Gegū, which enabled the shrine to be an imperial shrine and a public shrine simultaneously. And this characteristic also enabled the Ise Shrine to survive the vicissitudes of imperial power through Japanese history. In and around the Meiji Restoration, the people were still familiar with the popular character of the Ise Shrine even though the government was working to bring it to the top of the National Shinto. N. Brown insisted on using the same *kana* for the Japanese Bible as the Ise Goyomi (calendar) did, so as to make the Bible easy to read. Since his idea was not accepted by other missionaries, he made the original *kana* type by himself and published the *kana* New Testament in parts from 1875.²⁰² Uemura in Saba (1966; 142,144) says that N. Brown had sold

²⁰⁰ The name of Jingikan is first seen in a section of 694 A.D. in *Nihonshoki*, suggesting that the office was first established by the end of the 7th century.

²⁰¹ Murakami, *op.cit.*, pp.88, 90-91, 93-94, 119, 125

²⁰² A. Ebisawa, 1964. *Nihon no Seisho: Seisho Wayaku no Rekishi*. Nihon Kirisuto Kyōdan Shuppanbu, Tokyo, pp.216 and 257.

sixteen thousand Bibles in parts by the year 1882 and fifteen thousand of them were *kana* Bibles.

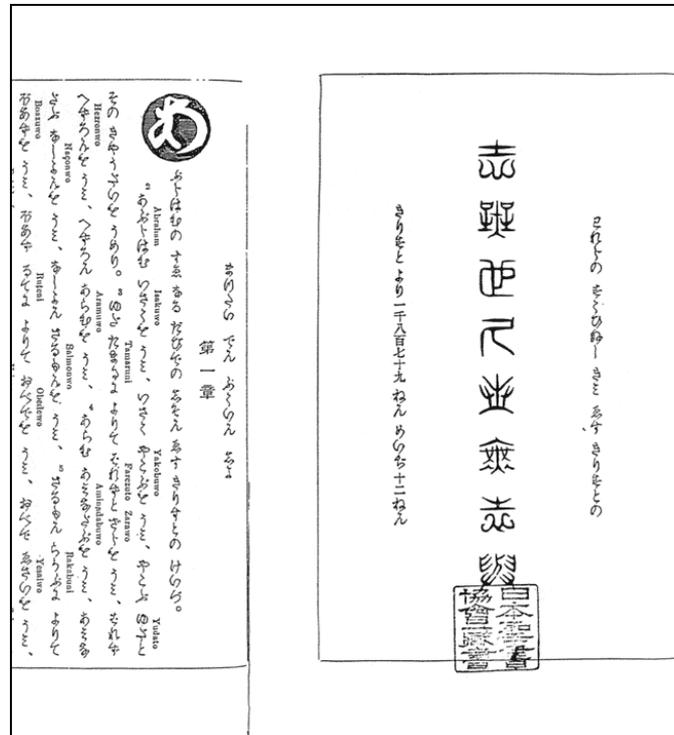


Fig. 4-4 Nathan Brown's New Testament Translation²⁰³

d. New Religions

Taking advantage of Ise-kō and Okage Mairi, new Shinto cults grew at the end of the Tokugawa period and the beginning of the Meiji era. The founders, as allegedly living gods, were united with or related to their own new supreme gods and transmitted the god's will to the public. These gods were respectively stated as gods having a spiritual authority that transcended the traditional gods; and, in this sense, their character was monotheistic.²⁰⁴ The

²⁰³ gazou151.gif [Nēsan Buraun-yaku Shinyaku Seisho]. [Online]. Available: <http://taijiro.tama.net/Kuni2Sato/photo/gazou151.gif> [2007, October 10]

²⁰⁴ Murakami, op. cit., p. 69.

Considering that Hirata's *Honkyōgaihen* was written in 1806, their monotheistic concept of

gods promised holistic rescue to the public who lived at the bottom of the collapsing feudalistic class system. Each founder played a shamanistic role, uniting with their god and telling the god's will to the people, thus giving new teachings satisfying the people's needs, which traditional Shinto could not provide. These new Shinto cults are called New Religions.

As examples of the kind of supreme gods worshipped in their sects, Kurozumikyō (founded in 1814) worshipped Amaterasu but as the creator of the universe and a generator and a nurturer of all creation. Tenrikyō (founded in 1838) worshipped Tenrin'ō who was one of the ten Buddhist kings but later the name was changed to Tenriō Myōjin and then re-changed to the monotheistic god Oyagami. Konkōkyō (founded in 1859) worshipped Tenchikon-no-kami, one of the vengeance gods of Yin-Yang principle, but also an ancestor god of the earth, a loving god and a god of the family.²⁰⁵

Kurozumikyō used Ise-kō organizations to worship Amaterasu and expanded its emphasis to landlords, influential townsmen, farmers, merchants and craftsmen. Tenrikyō utilized the direct influence of Okage Mairi by organizing periodical group worship tours to their headquarters.²⁰⁶

Among the public in 19th century, there therefore existed mass movements of Shinto like Okage Mairi and large Shinto cult organizations established by New Religion groups. Both represented the increased influence of Shinto

god may have been influenced by Hirata's Shinto theory. However, this hypothesis requires further study.

²⁰⁵ Murakami, *ibid.*, pp. 70 – 73.

²⁰⁶ Murakami, *ibid.* pp. 70 -71. This tour is called Ojibagaeri, for which the larger branch churches provide accommodation facilities around the headquarters in Tenri city.

replacing the diminishing power of Buddhism.

4. Chapter Conclusion

This chapter has investigated how the characteristics of Japanese *kami* (カミ) which were studied in the previous chapter changed in the Tokugawa period, and how the change related to the influence of Christianity and New Religion sects.

With the help of Kokugaku, Shinto began a move to eliminate the influence of Buddhism and Confucianism and return to a belief in the concept of gods that existed in the *Kojiki* and *Nihonshoki* period. But Shinto was originally rite-centered and borrowed its doctrines from Buddhism, Confucianism and Yin-Yang theory. Therefore, it was unrealistic for Shinto to establish an original doctrine without the help of these foreign religions.

For the solution of this dilemma, Atsutane Hirata referred to the writings of the Jesuit missionaries in China so as to establish doctrines like creation, sin, human death and judgment. After this reference to Christianity, the idea of a supreme god became more recognized by Shintoists. The idea of a supreme god would influence the monotheistic characteristic of the New Religions which arose around and after Hirata's period.

Public mass belief represented by Okage Mairi movement and the rise of New Religion sects was the other characteristic of Shinto in the Tokugawa period. By these movements and sects, a new kind of belief in a monotheistic, supreme god who promised carnal happiness or holistic salvation arose.

These movements and sects arose at the end of the Tokugawa period and beginning of the Meiji era and were symptomatic of the weakened Tokugawa shogunate under threat by the arrival of Western warships, and the loss of public interest in secularized Buddhism.

This chapter has also confirmed the restoration of the emperor's religious authority. The restoration consolidated its theoretical foundation with Kokugaku and reinforced its religious foundation by emphasizing the superior authority of Amaterasu and Ise Shrine.

However, Kokugaku's anti-Buddhist and anti-Christian characteristics became a hindrance to the government and their influence eventually faded and was replaced by Monbushō and the nation-wide education system.

The translators of the Japanese Bible chose the Shinto term *kami* for the term God. Naturally, Japanese recipients of the Bible faced confusion of the concepts of *kami* and God.

However, it is my argument that the monotheistic supreme-god belief which arose in the end of Tokugawa period through developments in Shinto encouraged the penetration of the concept of a monotheistic Christian God into the Japanese term *kami* (神).

CHAPTER VI

JAPANESE TRANSLATION ASSISTANTS

1. Anjirō (circa 1511-1551)

a. Conventional Assessment of Anjirō

Up to now, Anjirō's ability and works have been assessed rather negatively. It is mainly because historians thought that Anjirō's suggestion to Xavier on the choice of the term *Dainichi*, which is conventionally believed to have come from his lack of education, was 'totally' wrong.

Ebisawa (1970, 34) suggests that Yajirō (another name for Anjirō) made a big mistake calling God *Dainichi* because of his lack of education, quoting Valignano's low assessment of Anjirō:

Since Paulo [Yajirō or Anjirō] was an uneducated man, even though he [Xavier] transplanted our *Dotirina* [doctrine] in Japan, [because of Paulo] it was very poor and brought ridicule.²⁰⁷

Cieslik (1999; 125-126) also gives Anjirō a low evaluation:

Though we have to admit that Anjirō was active in spirit and had an education, winning the trust of Xavier from the beginning, the warrior from Satsuma never received theological training nor had a special linguistic talent.

²⁰⁷ A. Valignano, *Historia del Principio y Progreso de la Compañía de Jasús en las Indias Orientales* (1542-1564). f.85.

b. Reassessment of Anjirō

The above assessment of Anjirō can be considered premature for the following three reasons:

- 1) Anjirō received theological training under Lancillotti and Torres at the College of St. Paul as well as the 20 days of Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius, which means he had received enough training to understand at least basic Christian doctrine.
- 2) Anjirō produced or helped with the translations of the Gospel of Matthew, the small Catechism edited by Xavier and the Commentary on Catechism. Given these achievements, his linguistic ability cannot easily be assessed as “low”.
- 3) Anjirō must have known the term *kami* (カミ) because the term had been used in Japanese culture since the time of *Kojiki* (712) and *Nihonshoki* (720) or before. Therefore, it can be said that Anjirō intentionally avoided the term *kami*.

Anjirō probably was intelligent enough to be familiar with Christian doctrine as well as the connotations of Japanese religious terms. To verify this assumption, I investigated the details of the texts in Frois (1659) as below.

Anjirō's letter (29/11/1548) addressed to Ignatius Loyola, the founder of the Society of Jesus and other bishops and monks, explains Anjirō's life well. Since the letter is very long, a summary is given here:

I killed one heathen and escaped to a monastery in Japan, became

friends with a Portuguese trader, was introduced to a Portuguese captain, traveled to Malacca, China, came close to Japan but met a typhoon, returned to China, and Malacca. I met Padre Xavier there and was welcomed and told to enter the College of St. Paul. I was accepted into the College in March 1548 to receive the teaching on the faith, and baptized on the day of Pentecost in May and given the Christian name Paulo de Santa Fé. I by Deus, the creator of the universe, and Jesus Christ who was crucified to save us, hope to be the one to exalt their glory and spread my faith. I received unlimited grace and affirm that this belief is true with perfect consolation.²⁰⁸

Anjirō recorded the summary of the Gospel of Mark in Japanese for the aid to his memory. He showed his desire to help Xavier, having faith strong enough to dedicate his life hundreds of times in response to Xavier's love.²⁰⁹

Soon after this, Cosme de Torres, who had been a teacher at the College of St. Paul and decided to follow Xavier to Japan with Anjirō, later acknowledged Anjirō's clear discernment and deep knowledge on God in his letter (25/01/1549) to Jesuit monks:

Paulo de Santa Fé (Anjirō) has the ability of clear discernment, deep knowledge about Deus, outstanding memory and talents. I was to give him the Spiritual Exercises. And I have already explained the Gospel of Matthew twice to him. The second time, I explained thoroughly from Chapter 1 to the end. He has been a Christian for 6 months ...²¹⁰

Frois came to Goa in 1548 and met Anjirō directly. He acknowledged Anjirō's good conversational skill in Portuguese and efforts to record in Japanese what he heard about faith. He says:

²⁰⁸ Anjirō's confession of faith here indicates his doctrinal knowledge well.

²⁰⁹ K. Matsuda and T. Kawasaki, *op. cit.*, pp. 18-22.

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 25-26.

Paulo de Santa Fé (Anjirō) is very able, already speaks Portuguese so fluently that those who hear him speak understand all that he says. He showed his understanding on all he learned and made efforts to write them down in Japanese.During his six-month stay in the College, he concentrated on lessons of reading and writing in Portuguese, with the result that no one in the College has achieved such progress as he has made. In addition, he was a good model and good influence on the other people.²¹¹

Xavier confirmed in his letter (22/06/1549) to Simon Rodriguez and members of the Society of Jesus in Europe that Anjirō and two of his servants' baptism was based on their adequate understanding of faith in Jesus Christ. According to the letter, Anjirō knew that the sun is nothing but a phenomenon and a measure to illuminate the day so as to glorify God. In his understanding, the term Dainichi did not represent the sun as an object to worship.

They (the three Japanese) realized that they had received many great blessings from the Creator and the Redeemer, Deus, and expressed their gratitude to Him. They made really good progress in their training period and in other opportunities ... They can read and write Portuguese and pray with the prayer book ... During the Spiritual Exercises, they believed deeply and felt so comforted that they shed tears ... I heard one of them, Paulo de Santa Fé [Anjirō] say with a deep sigh, "Miserable Japanese heathen, you are worshipping phenomena as gods, which Deus created for humans." When I questioned him why he said so, he replied, "I was talking about people in my home country who are worshipping the sun and the moon. For the ones who know Jesus Christ, the sun and the moon only shine day and night, letting us know the Deus with their light and letting us glorify the Deus and the Son, Jesus Christ on the earth. They are thus called the servants of the Lord Deus for the sake of human beings."²¹²

²¹¹ Ibid., pp. 27-28.

²¹² Ibid., pp. 29-30.

Anjirō was a well educated man in both theology and language. He knew the sun was only a phenomenon even though the Shingon Buddhist sect called it the ultimate and unlimited God.

c. Reasons for Selecting Dainichi

Anjirō must have known the connotations of the term Dainichi. Why then did he suggest the term Dainichi to Xavier? There are three possibilities to answer this problem:

- 1) Anjirō confused the notion of God with the notion of Dainichi as the Shingon priests did. But considering Anjirō's doctrinal knowledge, this possibility is very small.
- 2) Anjirō thought that Dainichi would be the most acceptable term to Japanese people in his period. Though he knew the term *kami* as a candidate for the translation, the term *kami* had become ambiguous in his time because the Shinto term *kami* had been syncretised with the Buddhist term Dainichi by the theory of *honji-suijaku* (本地垂迹). So he avoided using the term.

According to *honji-suijaku* theory, people tried to integrate the notion of *kami* (カミ) into the framework of *mikkyō* (密教, esoteric Buddhism like the belief of the Shingon sect or Tendai sect). According to the world view of *mikkyō*, all things were the embodiments of Dainichi-Nyorai (大日如来). On the Shinto side, Ryōbu Shinto (両部神道) adopted the framework of the Shingon sect and San'nō Shinto (山王神道) adopted the framework of the

Tendai sect. In Ryōbu Shinto, both Toyo'uke-no-Ōkami (豊受大神) and Amaterasu-Ōmikami (天照大神) of the Ise Shrine are called Dainichi.

Anjirō knew the term *kami* but he chose Dainichi probably in order to make ordinary people understand the notion God better. His method used here may be called a DE method to contextualize Christianity to Japanese culture. The choice of Dainichi was thus never the fruit of his “uneducated thought.”

This is the theory supported by this thesis.²¹³

- 3) Another possibility is that Anjirō chose the term Dainichi in the beginning before he received theological training in the College of St. Paul, but gradually discovered the difference in notions between God and Dainichi. Anjirō, however, did not correct Xavier on their mistranslation in fear of the authority of Xavier in the Society of Jesus, which might stop providing Anjirō the support to return to Japan. This deference and fear of a resulting risk may have prevented him from speaking frankly. Though further research is needed to support this idea, the following information about the end of Anjirō's life will give us some hint. Frois (*ibid.*, 72) states:

He advised his wife, children, and relatives to become Christians and in fact, they became Christians. But a few years later, though it is not clear whether he renounced his faith or stopped being a Christian, he has chosen a different way.Perhaps because of poverty or having been tempted with good plunder or treasures which people in the same province brought from the other side of the

²¹³ H. Kishino (2001; 213) attributes the adoption of Dainichi to the convenience of communication with Japanese people. But the hypothesis does not investigate the contribution of Anjirō, as a recipient of new Biblical concepts.

sea, Paul seems to have gone to China on a pirate ship. It is said that he may have been killed there.²¹⁴

It is a mysterious comment. The eager evangelist Anjirō changed his mind within a few months after his family's conversion. Why did Anjirō renounce his faith so immediately after his return?

d. Reasons for Renouncement

Frois attributed it to temptation. I, however, assume that it was because the Jesuit missionaries did not have enough linguistic ability to understand the syncretised state of Shinto at that time and thus did not recognize Anjirō's passion for contextualizing the concept of God. Further, Xavier left Anjirō in Kagoshima and took Juan Fernández (1525-1568) on the mission trip to Hirado, Yamaguchi and Kyoto. Anjirō must have disappointed, felt isolated and lost faith because of his previous superior's bad treatment of him.

The second possible reason is the difference of translation methods. The conventional evaluation of the assistant, Anjirō is too low. He actually was well-educated in theology and language. He may have adopted the term Dainichi by unconsciously practicing DE method, and in that sense, tried to acculturate the term God. But the Jesuits did not understand Anjirō's intention. The Jesuits' attempt was an application of FE method. Anjirō's attempt was an application of DE method. And Anjirō's renouncement may be the result of the

²¹⁴ Umekita, M. (1993; 11) quotes a Hiyoshi-Ikehata archive which states, "In 1560, there was a conflict on trade between a Namban ship and a Chinese ship in between Yamakawa port and Nejime port. And Ikehata Yajirō Shigehisa who was mediating between them according to the request of Nejime family was shot and killed by a bullet." Umekita argues this Yajiro must be Anjirō.

<http://homepage3.nifty.com/UTOPIA/Archive/Utopia4/Namban2.html>

conflict of the two methods.

The third possible reason is Anjiro's fear of the upcoming persecutions by the government.²¹⁵ But this theory requires further research in the future.

2. Otokichi (1819 - 1867)

a. Otokichi's Journey

Otokichi was one of the fourteen crew of the ship Hōjunmaru which left Toba, Japan for Edo on 11th November 1832. He was shipwrecked and drifted ashore at Flattery Cape, Oregon Territory, North America after 13 months adrift in December 1833. Only three crew survived whose names were Iwakichi, Kyūkichi and Otokichi. They became slaves of Makau American Indians but were rescued by the Hudson Bay Company and sent by the British sailing ship Eagle to England. From London, the trio was sent to Macao by the ship General Palmer. They arrived in Macao in December 1835 and were put in the care of Gützlaff, an interpreter and German missionary who was an assistant of the British Consul, Charles Elliott. For nearly a year, Otokichi taught Japanese to Gützlaff and learned English from Gützlaff's wife. During their stay in Macao, the trio wrote an unusual 'letter' to George B. Robinson, the Governor-General of India, confirming their desire to return to Japan, where they wrote:

Japan. Departed from Tobaura port, Shima district on 11th day of tenth month 1832. Owari district's cargo vessel, Hōjunmaru. Captain Jūemon with 14 crew. Do not be surprised at the foreign ship. We are

²¹⁵ In July 1550, when a Portuguese ship came to anchor at Hirado, Takahisa Shimazu, the governor of Satsuma, began prohibiting Christian belief.

able to go to Japan.
Iwakichi, Kyūkichi, Otokichi.²¹⁶

Haruna (1980; 54) interprets this letter in this way: the first three sentences indicated their professional affiliation. The fourth sentence, “Do not be surprised at the foreign ship,” was an appeal to Japanese people not to be surprised if the trio returned to Japan on a foreign ship. This was an expression of their fear of the strict investigation by the authorities to be expected under the national seclusion policy. The returned castaways were likely to be strictly investigated to see whether they had been involved in Christianity or not. The fifth sentence, “We are able to go to Japan,” was the expression of their expectation.

On 4th July 1837, the trio and the four other castaways boarded the ship *Morrison* with two missionaries, S.W. Williams and a medical doctor named Parker, and left for Japan. They made a stop at Napacan (present Naha, Okinawa) and here Gützlaff joined them from another ship *Raleigh* heading to Peal (present Ogasawara) Island. The *Morrison* arrived in Edo Bay by the end of July 1837, but the shogunate drove the ship out with cannons. This was called the *Morrison Incident*. They shifted to Kagoshima where they were driven out again by cannon fire. The castaways were deeply discouraged and had to return to Macao with bitter hearts toward their home country, Japan. According to the deck logbook of C.W. King (1809-1845) who was on board the *Morrison*, the trio appeared on deck with heads shaven to show their

²¹⁶ The original text is as follows:

日本、天保三辰年十月十一日志州鳥羽浦湊出、尾州尾張國會賤宝順丸重右衛門船拾四人乗、岩吉久吉乙吉徒ノ人ノ御船ニをどろくな日本廻はいける、イワキチ、久吉、音吉

T. Okuhira's study of British Public Record Office documents (1934) in A. Haruna, 1980. *Nippon Otokichi Hyōryūki*, Shobunsha, Tokyo, pp. 54-56.

intention to abandon their home country (13/08/1837).²¹⁷

According to Tei A. Gorton, after returning to Macao, Otokichi became a sailor on the ship Morrison and went to New York City in 1838.²¹⁸ Haruna (1980; 80-81) refers to a note on the inside of the front cover of the Bible which was translated by Gützlaff and was presented by the American Bible Society to Dōshisha University in Kyoto. The note says that when [the owner of the Bible] asked the meaning of a verse in the Bible to a native who assisted with this translation, he confessed that he did not understand what he had written. Haruna assumes that this “native” must be Otokichi.

At the end of 1838, Otokichi was reunited with S.W. Williams at Mission Press in Macao and here he was baptized.²¹⁹

In 1849, he seems to have worked as an interpreter on the British warship Mariner which visited Uraga and Shimoda, pretending to be a Chinese named Atō Rin.²²⁰ When the warship Mariner went close to Uraga, at the mouth of Edo bay in 1849, they faced an enormous number of Japanese coast guards. Otokichi aboard the Mariner trembled for fear, saying, “If we go ashore, we will all be murdered and I myself will be tortured and killed inch by inch” [because he assisted the British navy].²²¹ We can see the trauma here which

²¹⁷ Haruna, *ibid.*, p. 133.

²¹⁸ Gorton, T. A., n.d., *True Life Adventures of Otokichi (1817-1867)*. [Online] Available: <http://www.jmottoson.com/Otokichi-Story.htm> [2007, September 26]

²¹⁹ Gorton, T. A., n.d., *True Life Adventures of Otokichi (1817-1867)*. [Online] Available: <http://www.jmottoson.com/Otokichi-Story.htm> [2007, September 26]

²²⁰ Haruna, *op. cit.*, p. 188.

²²¹ Haruna, *ibid.* p. 189.

Otokichi suffered from the Morrison incident.

In the beginning of April 1853, another castaway group from the shipwrecked Eirikimaru had an opportunity to meet Otokichi in Shanghai. Otokichi was very sympathetic and warmly welcomed them with the air of a well-settled successful man.²²² He said to them that as he was not able to be dutiful to his parents he would help the castaways return to Japan to comfort his parents' souls.²²³

Otokichi worked again as an interpreter for the British Far East Armada which arrived in Nagasaki on 7th September 1854, and contributed to the Anglo-Japanese Friendship Treaty which was concluded on 14th October of that year. This time, he was observed as a confident and rather snobbish person by Japanese officials who investigated the fleet.²²⁴ In recognition of this contribution, Otokichi was granted British citizenship and rewarded well financially in 1864.

In Shanghai, Otokichi worked for the British merchant firm, Dent & Co. until 1859 at the earliest. He shifted to Singapore in early February 1862 and about ten days later, on 18th February 1862, he visited the members of the Japanese delegation which was on its way to Europe in 1862. He met the members of another Japanese delegation in Singapore on 4th March 1864. Haruna (1980; 248) suggests that one reason for Otokichi's shift to Singapore was because he wanted to cut off his relationship with England.

²²² Ibid., pp. 202-203.

²²³ Ibid., p. 232.

²²⁴ Ibid., pp. 223-224.

On 18th January 1867, Otokichi died in Singapore.²²⁵ In 1879, Otokichi's son, John William Ottson,²²⁶ applied for Japanese citizenship in Kanagawa Prefecture, as instructed in his father Otokichi's will. Otokichi's loss of Japanese identity was vindicated in this way.

b. Assessment of Otokichi and Gützlaff

Assessment of Otokichi

Otokichi had been traveling round the world since December 1833, so his communication skills would have become fairly good. He would have been able to converse with others in English. However until the trio learned English at Gützlaff's wife's school, Otokichi's linguistic level was still at beginners' level, thus far from capable of assisting Gützlaff's Bible translation work. His theological understanding was also very limited. He only learned Christian doctrine while he was assisting Gützlaff's work. However, it can be said that the less he understood Christian doctrine, the more Otokichi must have had to mobilize his indigenous religious knowledge to assist Gützlaff's Bible translation.

²²⁵ Chūnichi Newspaper, 29th June 2004, *Funanori "Otokichi" Maisō no Haka Hakken*. [Online]. This webpage is no longer available.

http://www2.osk.3web.ne.jp/~aranishi/oto_haka.jpg [2005, October 5].

²²⁶ Otokichi was called Oto-san by the other castaways. This name sounded like the common Swedish name "Ottoson." Thus, his baptismal name became "John Matthew Ottoson." Tei A. Gordon says that his first name "John" was given from his work with Gützlaff to translate the Gospel of John. <http://www.jmottoson.com/Otokichi-Story.htm> John William Ottoson was granted Japanese citizenship, changed his name to Otsukichi Yamamoto and worked for a shipbuilding plant and a trading company in Kobe. Yomiuri Newspaper, 12/06/2003, [Online]. This webpage is no longer available. <http://www2.osk.3web.ne.jp/~aranishi/oto0306.jpg> [2005, October 5].

According to Gützlaff's daily schedule which was written in November 1836, Gützlaff worked on the Japanese Bible translation with two or three Japanese assistants from 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. From 12:00 to 1:00 p.m. a precise examination of the translation was done. On Sundays, he had a worship service with Japanese people. If the above schedule was followed almost everyday, they would have been under a very intensive work load. In this situation, Otokichi's linguistic skill must have advanced to a higher level very quickly.

Haruna (1980; 80) says that such involvement of the Japanese in a missionary's life is unique because other castaways were reluctant to help with or to be involved in such Christian activities. Strict seclusion was in force in Japan at this time. Returned castaways would most certainly be subjected to heavy investigation about the influence of Christianity. So they would be afraid to be asked by Japanese authorities how deeply they were involved in Christianity.

Naturally, we can imagine that Otokichi's involvement in Gützlaff's Bible translation work was also fairly passive at first. Probably he assisted Gützlaff in gratitude for the care Gützlaff provided to the trio. But even though it was passive, his assistance was sincere. The long hours' commitment to the work and the input of various religious terms like Gokuraku (God), *kori-wo-toraseru* (to baptize), *kami* (spirit), *amatsu-kami* (angel) well indicated Otokichi's sincere attitude to the work. Although he began passively, once he had decided to help, doing his best was Otokichi's attitude, which could also be observed in Otokichi's later life when he helped other castaways return to

Japan.

On the other hand, though Otokichi assisted Gützlaff well, he seems to have kept his distance from Gützlaff after Otokichi's return to Macao. He was more involved in establishing himself financially, interpreting for the British Navy and assisting other castaways to return to Japan. It may be because Otokichi became weary of Gützlaff's hasty character and tendency to take any measures to achieve his goal.²²⁷

Assessment of Gützlaff

Gützlaff was a translation expert. He had translated the Siamese Bible and later he was involved in the revision of R. Morrison's Chinese Bible. Gützlaff exercised very careful techniques to achieve precision in translation. In his letter of January, 1837, probably to E.C. Bridgeman, he says:

As I promised before, I tried to translate [the Japanese Bible] faithfully and precisely. I believe this work is my duty. Placing the original text in front of me, I translate it sentence by sentence, and ask them [Otokichi and other two] whether or not they can understand it. They transform it to more understandable Japanese expressions, paying attention not to change the meaning, to make the Japanese better. One of them writes it. Then we all review it on a later day. After repeating the process twice, we copy it on paper.²²⁸

Gützlaff's daily schedule quoted above also indicates that he also carefully

²²⁷ Haruna, op. cit., pp. 74-75.

²²⁸ K. Sato, 2000. *Gützlaff's Letter* (Brief History Concerning "The Bible"). No.7 [Online]. Available: <http://tajiro.tama.net/Kuni2Sato/matuwaru/matuwaru.cgi?page=7> [2007, October 10].

reviewed the translation.

c. Gützlaff's choice of Gokuraku for God

Gützlaff adopted the term *gokuraku* (極樂) for the term God in his Japanese Bible translation.²²⁹ The Buddhist term *gokuraku* had first appeared in the Chinese translation of the Amida Sutra which was translated by Kumarajiva in the beginning of the 5th century.²³⁰ The Amida Sutra introduced Amitābha as the prime Buddha in Gokuraku (Paradise) where everything was satisfied, painless, and comfortable and inhabitants lived eternally. The Amitābha belief seems to have originated in northwest India around the first century.²³¹

From medieval time, it was the Buddhist belief with the most popular penetration in Japan, as Pure Land or True Pure Land Buddhism.

The problem with Gützlaff's translation is that Gokuraku is a place which is a non-personal existence, while God is a personal existence. It is difficult to find a point in common.

However, in the Japanese language, there are many cases that a word for a place actually represents a person. For example, *kita-no-kata* (北の方, literally “northward”) means “wife of a noble” because the wife usually resided in the

²²⁹ It should be noted that Gützlaff knew the Chinese term *shen* (神) and *shang di* (上帝), which we discuss later, but he evidently rejected these options.

²³⁰ H. Nakamura, M. Fukunaga, Y. Tamura & I. Konno, 1989, *Iwanami Bukkyō Jiten*, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo;

Shinshū Seikyō Zensho Hensanjo, Bussetsu Amidakyō. [Online]. Available: <http://www.yamadera.info/sanskrit/chinese.pdf> [2008, March 28]. The Chinese translation of the Amida Sutra on this statement is “從是西方。過十萬億佛土。有世界。名曰極樂。其土有佛。號阿彌陀。今現在說法。”

²³¹ T. Takamaro, 1982. *Bukkyō Bunka Kenkyūjo Kiyō* (Amidabutsu-ron). March 1982, Vol.20., p.111. [Online]. Available: <http://www.terakoya.com/ronbun/shigaragi/disp.cgi?470> [2007, September 29].

northern part of the palace. The term *onando* (お納戸) literally means a storage room but it represented an accountant of the Tokugawa shogunate.

In addition, there are cases that the term *gokuraku* also represents divine existence. The term ‘*gokuraku no mukae*,’ (極楽の迎え) which literally means welcoming of *gokuraku*, actually represents the coming of Amitabuha.²³² A similar case is ‘*gokuraku no shoten*,’ (極楽の諸天) which literally means various heavens in *gokuraku*, but actually represents various inhabitants in heaven. Thus there are cases that a non-personal notion like a place coincides with a personal notion like a person or a divine existence.

Therefore I assume that the term *gokuraku* which Otokichi suggested to Gützlaff was based on the notion of Amitabuha as a divine existence dwelling in *gokuraku*. Gützlaff probably examined all other possible candidates and concluded that Gokuraku, corresponding to the Buddhist concept of Amitabuha, was the most appropriate term for God. This adoption was made with a strong desire to communicate this new concept of God to people living in Buddhist culture. In this sense, it is a fruit of DE translation method.

d. Other Candidate Terms

There were other possible terms that Gützlaff could have chosen as candidates for the translation of the term God. This section investigates those possibilities.

Kami (神)

²³² Shōgakukan, 1974. *Nihon Kokugo Daijiten*, Vol.8

Many scholars have investigated Gützlaff and Otokichi's intention behind not adopting this term for "God." Gützlaff knew the existence of the term *kami*, probably through Otokichi. But he used the term *kami* or *amatsukami* for 'spirit' or 'angel' and *arigatai-kamisama* for "Holy Spirit". Suzuki considers that these usages are appropriate to the original meaning of Japanese *kami* at that time. Hamashima²³³ states that Gützlaff possibly wanted to adopt a term for the Christian God that was different from the term for heretical gods.

Gützlaff also knew the existence of the Chinese term *shen* (神). However, the Chinese term *shen* (神), though using the same kanji as *kami* (神), consisted of the notion of a spirit and was still accompanied by ambiguity. R. Morrison used the term *shen* (神) as a term for God but he also used the term as a translation of 'spirit'.²³⁴ Morrison wandered between the two meanings.

During the period of the translation work, the concept of *shen* (神) could have been explained by Gützlaff to Otokichi, and Otokichi as a Japanese in the 19th century definitely knew the term *kami* (神). And it is quite possible that Otokichi, who lived in the 19th century, knew that the term *kami* (神) had become syncretised with Buddhism. It appears that either Gützlaff or Otokichi or both intentionally avoided using the term *kami* (神) as the translation of God.

Ten (天)

²³³ B. Hamashima, in Japan Bible Society (ed.), 2006. *Gyutsurafuyaku Yohane ni yoru Fukuinsho*, Japan Bible Society, Tokyo, Commentary, p.1.

²³⁴ W.H. Medhurst's critique to R. Morrison during the Term Question in Yanabu, 2001, op. cit., pp. 26, 227-228.

R. Morrison tried many terms for the term God:

神 (god), 真神 (true god), 神主 (god lord), 神天 (god heaven), 天 (heaven), 神天上帝 (god heaven high king), 天帝 (heavenly king), 天皇 (heavenly emperor), 天帝主神 (heavenly king prime god), 神天上帝 (god heaven high king), 神天大帝 (god heaven great king), 天皇神主 (heavenly emperor god lord), 天皇上帝 (heavenly emperor high king), 上帝 (high king), 天上上帝 (celestial high king), 真神上帝 (true god high king), 天皇神父 (heavenly emperor god the father), 上帝神帝 (high king god king).²³⁵

By trying these terms, Morrison seems to have experimented in discovering the most appropriate term for God, but he seems to have intentionally avoided the term *tianzhu* (天主) or Deus. He may have tried to distinguish his translation from the Catholic translation.

Among the various options, we notice the term *tian* (天). This *tian* (天) has both a personal notion and a non-personal notion. The personal notion is explained in *Kōjien* as follows:

President of all things in the universe, Creator, Emperor, God, or power of nature; celestial dwellers, gods (Sanskrit: *deva*); ones to esteem and respect; ones to respect and serve.

On the other hand, the non-personal notion is explained as:

An imaginary world in the sky where gods, celestial beings, or angels live and which is pure. It is believed that mortal soul will ascend to it after death. Heaven, Paradise [which is *gokuraku*].

Since Gützlaff had a sufficient knowledge of theology, it would be possible to

²³⁵ *The Chinese Repository*, Vol. 17. No. 7, July 1848 in Suzuki, 2006. p. 34.

consider that he explained the personal notion of God to the trio. And the trio interpreted Gützlaff's explanation as the Divine Existence inhabiting Tian (天) or Ten (天) in Japanese. But in Buddhist terms, Ten was still lower than Gokuraku. Ten was still a destination for souls in transmigration. On the other hand, Gokuraku is the highest heaven where one is emancipated from transmigration. Thus the term *gokuraku*, similar to but higher meaning than *ten* may have been adopted.

Jōtei (上帝)

Gützlaff referred to R. Morrison's English-Chinese dictionary, *A Dictionary of Chinese Language*, and Medhurst's dictionary, *An English and Japanese, and Japanese and English Vocabulary*, too. He definitely knew *shang di* (上帝), another term for God, which was adopted for the Chinese Bible translation by British missionaries in the Term Question. But he dared not to adopt *shang di* or *jōtei* (上帝) in Japanese. I assume it was because the term *shang di* (上帝) was not found in the Japanese language. Even if some educated people could understand the term from Chinese writings, the Japanese language did not possess this term. Similarly the term 天主 (Deus) would require an interpreter to translate it to Japanese, which could not be expected in Japan during the era of seclusion.

Though Gützlaff and the trio's Japanese translation was assessed as low quality work by the ABS, it is possible to reassess their work as the outcome of a deep contextualizing search for the terms. At least, one copy of the translation which was obtained by Hepburn in Singapore contributed as a reference for the succeeding translations of the Japanese Bible.

Their Bible translation should be assessed as a well-investigated DE translation.

3. Comparison between Anjirō and Otokichi

Having studied the two Japanese assistants' lives, we can observe differences and similarities between them. The differences are:

1. Anjirō escaped from Japan on his own initiative, but Otokichi left the country unintentionally.
2. Anjirō went to meet Xavier intentionally but Otokichi happened to be brought to Gützlaff. There was a choice for Anjirō to avoid his encounter, but not for Otokichi.
3. Anjirō received linguistic and theological training at the seminary but Otokichi did not receive any such intensive training. Xavier depended on natives or skilled peer missionaries to fulfill his linguistic needs but Gützlaff was a translation expert. So, in Otokichi's case, the initiative for the translation work was with Gützlaff, not Otokichi.
4. Anjirō's translation work began for his own study purposes. But Otokichi's involvement in the Bible translation was passive.
5. Anjirō's term *dainichi* was based on the Shingon Buddhist sect and Otokichi's term *gokuraku* was based on the Pure Land sect or True Pure Land sect of Amida Buddhism. Both sects were very popular in their respective time.
6. Anjirō's return to Japan was as an assistant and interpreter of Xavier.

Otokichi's attempt to return to Japan was largely the result of the decision of the Governor-General of India.

7. Anjirō's return was welcomed by the governor of Satsuma and his relatives but Otokichi's return was rejected by gunfire, which remained a drastic trauma for the rest of Otokichi's life.
8. Anjirō was baptized in Goa in 1548 just before Xavier's mission team left for Japan. The baptism was celebrated in the whole Estado da Índia (the colonies which Portugal held in India.)²³⁶ Otokichi was baptised more quietly by S.W. Williams in Macao in 1838 over one year after the Morrison incident.
9. Anjirō was left in Kagoshima after Xavier's team headed for Kyoto, then he renounced Christianity, became a pirate and was killed in China. On the contrary, Otokichi developed his life outside Japan and kept supporting other castaways to return to Japan, but he himself never desired to do so. He died peacefully in Singapore.
10. In the period when Anjirō assisted Xavier, Japan was still welcoming overseas, especially European, influence. Therefore, we see a kind of initiative and freedom in Anjirō's activity. However, once the whole nation's attitude had turned negative, Anjirō lost his foundation and had to renounce his belief.

Furthermore, Otokichi's time was approximately three hundred years later than Anjirō's time. Japan was in the midst of the seclusion policy and rejected all foreign influences except those from China and Holland coming in through Nagasaki port. The atmosphere toward Christianity

²³⁶ Kishino (2001; 117)

was extremely negative. Therefore Otokichi's assistance to the missionaries was very passive and timid. The styles of their assistance were different but reflected their own culture and the history of their time. The terms were the products of their own time. In this sense, their translations were DE translation.

As we have seen, there were many differences, but they had similarities, too. Both Anjirō and Otokichi were in the care of Christian missionaries, so they had some obligation to assist them in their work. When they confronted the term God, they must have fully used their knowledge and experiences to translate this key word. They did not adopt the term *kami*, because, as we studied before, the term had animistic and polytheistic connotations and had been syncretised with Buddhism. So they applied DE method in their translations to find another alternative.

From the point-of-view of 'word to word' (FE) translation, Anjirō's *Dainichi* or Otokichi's *Gokuraku* were assessed as a very inferior translation. Only from the view point of DE translation, can the value of their translation be acknowledged.

4. Elimination of *Dainichi* or *Gokuraku*

In this section, two questions are considered: the first question is why *Dainichi* or *Gokuraku* stopped being used and the second is why the term *kami* (神) which was thought inferior to these two terms remained as the translation of

God.

One answer to the first question is that both *dainichi* and *gokuraku* were loanwords from Buddhism. The terms were the fruit of DE translation techniques where the translators borrowed the foundation from the religion (in both cases, Buddhism) which was most systematized and most popular at the time the translation was made. The translators tried to graft the new Christian concept of God onto such a foundation.

Nonetheless, borrowing from a Buddhist foundation was a 'double-edged sword'. The foundation contributed to introducing the new concept, but on the other hand, it risked syncretising the new concept with Buddhism. It was this danger that Xavier was most afraid of. And it would have been this danger that made the followers of Xavier or Gützlaff avoid the succeeding usage of these terms. They were afraid of the syncretising character of these originally Buddhist terms.

It is also important to consider the historical background. It was the end of the Tokugawa period and the beginning of the Meiji era when Gützlaff's translation was published, following the publication of Hepburn and others' translation. In this period, people's interest was moving away from Buddhism which supported the shogunate system and becoming more secular. In the Meiji era, when the national system was being reorganized based on Shinto, adopting a term which originated from a Buddhist term was apt to give a negative image to the readers of the Bible. From this view, the term *kami* (神) had the historical advantage of appealing to the people who lived in this

period. So in this sense, the term *kami* (神) was also the fruit of the DE translation techniques which took history and culture into consideration.

If we look at the decline of *dainichi* and *gokuraku* and the increasing popularity of *kami*, we could conclude that terms generated from contemporary history and culture may tend to decline in popularity as history and culture changed. If this is true, the term *kami* (神) which is presently considered to be the most appropriate term to represent God might possibly be replaced by another term at some point in time.

CHAPTER VII

Conclusion

The thesis has intended to elucidate by what process the Japanese term *kami* (神) for the English term God was preferred, and whether or not the adoption of the term *kami* was appropriate for its time, namely the late Tokugawa and early Meiji period. As proof of its appropriateness, the thesis points out how the term *kami* is still used today as the translation for God, and how it has come to acquire a monotheistic meaning.

The thesis has clarified that there were two kinds of Bible translation methods; the Formal Equivalence (FE) translation method and the Dynamic Equivalence (DE) translation method. The history of Bible translation has showed that the translators repeatedly argued about these methods.

The study of the effects of translation uncovered various principles. For example, when a term in the source language (SL) is translated into the recipient language (RL), there often appear two effects which are 'syncretism' and 'penetration.' It was also found that there is a tendency for a translator who is concerned about the disadvantage of 'syncretism' to adopt the FE translation method; if he hopes for 'penetration,' he will adopt the DE translation method. But whichever method is selected, the translator needs to be careful to set a boundary for his method to ensure that the term is not too difficult for the recipient to understand it, nor too easily syncretised.

Looking at the situation of the first introduction of the term *kami* (神), the study discovered that the initial translators of the Japanese Bible in the 19th century who adopted the term *kami* (神) did not make a detailed investigation of the term or the concepts which the recipient people had associated with the term *kami* (カミ) in their previous history. Most translators adopted the term *kami* (神) because it was written with the same character as Chinese *shen* (神), and the majority of the translators were American missionaries in contact with the fellow missionaries in China who had adopted the term *shen* (神) for God in the Term Question argument. The translators' Japanese skills and understanding of Japanese culture had not been sufficient to practise the DE method.

The study confirmed the above relationship between American translators in China and Japan by comparing Bridgman-Culbertson's Chinese translation and the Tokyo Bible Committee's Japanese translation. It also proved the translators' insufficient understanding of the Japanese concept of *kami* (カミ) by clarifying the difference between *kami* (カミ) and God or *shen* (神).

Yet, an investigation of the translated terms for God adopted in past Japanese Bible translations uncovered that after the end of Tokugawa period, the term *kami* (神) has been mostly selected for the term God and now, 170 years after the first adoption, the term *kami* (神) seems to be regarded as the exclusive term for the term God. In this sense, the adoption of the term *kami* (神) was first inappropriate but gradually became appropriate because of its penetrative character.

The study researched the changes in Shinto theory so as to recognize the state of people's religious thought at the time when Japanese Bible translations were made. In Japan, Shinto originated from an animistic belief and then became syncretised with the imported religions from China like Buddhism, Confucianism and Yin-Yang theory until the end of Tokugawa period. Opposing the state dominated by the imported religions, Kokugaku scholars propounded a movement to restore the original concept of *kami* (カミ) as it had existed in Japanese primitive belief.

Along with the recognition of modern Western science and the increase in intake of knowledge by the Japanese people in the Tokugawa period, even the concept of the Christian God directly influenced the Kokugaku theory. Atsutane Hirata borrowed the concepts of a Supreme God, Creation and judgment after death to systematically organize Japanese Shinto theory. New Religion sects which arose in this time applied Hirata's theory and propounded the concept of the Supreme God.

Study was also made of Ise Shrine which in the late Tokugawa period became the object of the mass movement known as Okage Mairi and later Ējanaika. The Ise Shrine was also the source of the Emperor's authority and accordingly the Meiji government designated Ise Shrine as the highest shrine in National Shinto to function as a counter value against Christianity.

Thus the period when the Bible translation work was in progress was the time when Japanese Buddhism weakened and Shinto was restored, and Shinto

had accepted Christian influence in the concept of *kami* (カミ). This was the reason why the translated *kami* (神) which was adopted with insufficient investigation was accepted without facing any particular opposition from the recipient people. Restored Shinto took the Christian concept of God into their theory and the people became used to the concept of a monotheistic supreme deity by the influence of restored Shinto and New Religions. The concept of *kami* (カミ) had already been influenced by the concept of God.

In Chapter VI, two Japanese translation assistants were studied. It goes without saying that when missionaries who did not know the language of the recipient people and yet tried to translate the Bible into the recipient language (RL), the assistance of native speakers was indispensable, but the thoughts of the native assistants have not been investigated until recently. Nevertheless, if a translator applies the DE method taking into account the knowledge of history and culture of the recipient, he needs to recognize the thought and roles of the assistants because they are the mediators between SL and RL.

In this thesis, Anjirō and Otokichi were studied as examples of native assistants. The result of the study elucidated that they struggled to mediate between the source culture and the recipient culture and then adopted DE method to assist the missionaries' translation work. The terms they adopted were the Buddhist terms *dainichi* or *gokuraku*. In the periods they lived, the religion most integral to their daily lives was Buddhism and it was from such a Buddhist background that the respective terms were selected. However, as times changed, these terms became inappropriate and were replaced by *kami* (神).

The study has shown that the DE method was appropriate for the translation of works such as the Bible which were intended to be read by many people, even the uneducated public. However, insofar as DE translation must take into account local history and culture, a translated term cannot avoid being exposed to the changes of the time and conditions. At this point, they have to change themselves or disappear. In this sense, such terms are literally dynamic and variable.

The term *kami* was one such term. Through the study of the history of the term *kami*, we discovered the variability of the term *kami*. The term added meanings or changed its meaning according to the concepts of gods imported from different cultures. Thus the monotheistic character of the term God has penetrated the translated term (神), thus changing Japanese people's perception of *kami* from polytheistic to monotheistic. And now the term *kami* (神) is almost completely established as the exclusive translation of the term God. Based on this characteristic of the term *kami*, the thesis concludes that the adoption of the term *kami* (神) made by translators in 19th century was appropriate. And the term as a Christian term has penetrated into Japanese thought. However, insofar as the term *kami* (神) is the product of the DE method, it may need to be replaced by another term depending on how future history or culture change.

Since the pioneers of Japanese Bible translation completed their work, at least three major revisions of the translation have been made. And Japan has experienced a drastic change in National Shinto after World War II. The

rationale behind these more recent revisions and the effects of these changes must be the focus of future research.

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