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Retrospective

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There were thirteen participants in this symposium, the eleven paper presenters plus two commentators: Harumi Befu and Josef Kreiner. Because the symposium was closed to the public, the participants were able to have a broad exchange of views without being concerned with onlookers. As noted in the Preface, a portion of the discussion is to appear in the Japanese edition of the conference report. It is not easy to summarize such discussion, but I would like to take the occasion to present some of the topics that arose. Fortunately, three participants, including myself, have written articles describing the conference [INOUE 1988a, b; NAKAMAKI 1988; YAMAMORI 1989]. Drawing on these sources, I would like to record my reflections on the symposium and my hopes for the future.

1. CIVILIZATION AND RELIGION

What were the results of this symposium that aimed at a comparative civilization study of religion rather than a comparison of religions? Did we succeed in providing a point of view on religion as one aspect of a system of civilization, considered as a relation among human beings, devices, organizations, and institutions, rather than religion as spiritual culture? Was the aim of adopting a perspective for comparing civilizations through the lens of religion fulfilled? What sort of discussion developed regarding a comparison among religions on religion's role and significance in modern civilization?

Umesao suggested that it would be most effective methodologically not to adopt a rigid definition of a unit of civilization, saying that it would be more effective to adopt the model of an ecological system than an organistic model with individual characteristics. In other words, if the unit of civilization is meaningful, it does not matter how one takes it. For example, while there are cases in which it is useful to compare the civilizations of Islam and Christianity, it is also possible to compare Iranian civilization and Arab civilization within the framework of Islam. Further, within the framework of Confucian civilization, it is possible to compare the civilization of the Korean Peninsula with that of Japan or Vietnam.

The relation between the civilizations of East Asia and Confucianism was a topic of deep interest. Van Bremen took up the topic of Wan Yang-ming's thought in Japan and its influence upon the military, the bureaucracy, industrialists, writers, and religionists, and reported that it functioned as a conductor or shock

absorber. It was also pointed out, however, that in Japan Confucianism's influence was restricted to philosophy and did not extend to the ritual of daily life or to national systems. The situation in China and on the Korean Peninsula makes this special character of Japanese Confucianism conspicuous. Satō discussed how Confucianism in China was so strongly related to national systems that the field of soteriological religion was left almost entirely to Taoism. The situation on the Korean Peninsula was much the same. According to Itō, a policy of denigrating Buddhism and upholding Confucianism was in effect since the Yi Dynasty. It was not only that Confucianism supported the civil service examinations, but that its virtues and standards were symbolically enacted in actual Confucian practice of seasonal rites and such rites of the life cycle as marriage and death. Confucianism contributed to the maintenance of social order through the bureaucratic mechanisms of centralized authority, and furthermore it looked down upon work-site labor and gave rise to a climate of opinion favoring the abolition of practical learning, thus inviting the late development of a fundamental revolution in economy, science, and technology. Comparing this situation with Japan, where civil service examinations were not held, and where practical learning had great scope, we were reminded of the fundamental differences between the mode of Confucianism's existence, and even of civilization's manner of being, between Korean and Japanese civilization, though the two are both East Asian and have both received Confucian influence.

Regarding religious systems, while, as I have said, Japan easily produces enterprise-like organizations, in the Korean new religions the link to a charismatic individual is an important aspect supporting the organization. The same applies likewise to enterprises and is not limited to religions; this is a topic for the comparative study of civilizations [INOUE 1986b: 18]. For example, civilization studies may provide a key to the similarities and differences between Japan and Korea regarding Christianity's role and significance. While less than one percent of the Japanese populace are Christians, more than one fourth of Koreans are Christians. Itō suggested that one reason for the difference lies in the resistance to Japan, a charismatic character, and a base in shamanism in the Korean case, but from the perspective of civilization studies, there is a basic difference in the principles of organization in Korea and Japan. The great majority of Korean Christians are Protestant, and charismatic leaders appear one after another to capture believers through their individual appeal, but drifting is severe, and they continually break into small groups. A similar phenomenon may be seen in industry, where patrilineal kinship links are strong, and corporative relations are not easy to form. On the other hand, in Japan, even in Christianity, there is a tendency for religion to be based on the *ie*, and even in the case of new religions, when they become established, the principles of enterprise organization begin to operate strongly. In the background, instead of a principle of patrilineal relations, the principle of the *ie* takes priority. That the *ie* form of enterprise has long functioned as the basic unit of Japanese society is evident in the *danka* (temple parish) system. It may be

that Christianity was unable to set down deep roots in Japanese society because that system was so strong. Christianity has, however, exerted *philosophical* influence in Japan. According to Umesao, this took place in the same mode as Confucianism. Confucianism was not accepted as religion or ritual, but from the early modern period on, it had an incalculable philosophical influence. Japanese civilization, which took in both Confucianism and Christianity only in their philosophical aspects, differed greatly from the grammar of civilization in Korea, where both Confucianism and Christianity were accepted as religions.

It is also possible to develop a comparative religions report as a problem in comparative civilizations. Ashkenazi compared Judaism's and Shintō's ritualists: the rabbi and the Shintō priest, and discussed their relations with their communities, but one can also ask how a community treats its ritualists as a problem of civilization [INOUE 1988b: 16–17]. Yamaori took up the subject of Japan's special religious identity of pluralism based upon ancestor worship, in which a spiritualism asserts the value of non-ego and the idea of a phenomenal utopia. While on the one hand it easily incorporates State Shintō, on the other it parallels religious pluralism. It is possible to develop this perspective to say that a structure of this kind underlies the system of Japanese civilization [INOUE 1988b: 17].

Hardacre took up the problem of gender in the Japanese new religions, especially the idea of *henjō nanshi* and *henjō nyoshi* in Ōmotokyō, and analyzed its relation to millenarian thought. In the discussion that followed, there was a recognition that while the role of gender differs greatly in each era and civilization, modern Japan is in a period of great change. In this sense, the new religions have offered women a channel for participation in society and have thus played a historical role in civilization, but it was also pointed out that there is a need to study women's roles in the family and society, not just religion (this was the theme of the eighth symposium). According to Umesao, devices and systems to ensure women's status have been underdeveloped since the medieval period in every society, but recently conditions have been prepared. For example, if the problem of contraception has been taken up, accepted, and promoted as a matter of social adjustment, not just discussed as a matter of technique or at the level of religious ethics, then differences in different civilizations' system of adjustment certainly can become the object of comparative studies of civilization. In the sphere of Christianity the ethics of contraception and ethics act as a brake, while in Japan a system has developed of handling the problem after the fact, as the phenomenon of *mizuko kuyō* (cult of aborted, miscarried and stillborn babies) illustrates. This is undoubtedly a problem for comparative civilization studies of religion.

The problem of civilization and religion requires a macroscopic perspective. It must take place on the assumption of prior studies of the histories of individual religions and specific societies, but these are not sufficient. The comparative civilization study of religion is "the attempt to see the relative functions and roles of religion from the yardstick of civilization" [YAMAORI 1989: 167], while when religion is approached in the rubrics of culture, it can appear as no more than a

narrow nationalism. In discussion, the problem was raised whether religion's significance and roles do not differ depending on whether it is a question of the dimension of religion and civilization or the dimension of the individual and religion. And conversely, the necessity of paying attention to religion's function according to the relativization of civilization [YAMAORI 1980: 166] was pointed out.

2. RELIGION AND MODERNIZATION

The problem of religion and modernization is not one of a monolithic modernization, but a question of the modernization of various civilizations. Umesao takes this to be a matter of civilization's relativism. Relativism of cultures is a basic principle of cultural anthropology, and this is also an important standpoint of civilization studies and comparative civilizations. From the perspective of the modernization of various civilizations, Umesao asserted in the keynote address that the industrialized pattern of the west is not the only kind of modernization, but that if there is a civilization in which many more people than before become prosperous, then this is also a type of modernization. Responding to this, Surichai presented the Buddhist thought of Phra Rajavaramuni, who describes a unique type of modernization differing from that of the west. His thought criticizes the secularization, industrialization, destruction of the forests, and endless desire of Thailand, and from the standpoint of the drive for achievement particular to each culture, he proclaims a Buddhist theory of development. In discussion Itō frequently referred to the impasse of cultures taking the form of "high calory—high satisfaction" which are now searching for a way to use limited natural resources in a new way: "low calory—high satisfaction."

Some participants, however, regarded Prayaywaramuni's Buddhist thought as one form of fundamentalism and discussed fundamentalism from the perspective of civilization studies. Fundamentalism is a reaction against universalization in the various fields of administration, economics, science, and technology. In his keynote address, Umesao took up the problem of Islamic fundamentalism as a reaction against the universalization of western civilization and as Islam's special movement to protect itself and pointed out how modernization is caught up in the conflict between the two. Inoue used the concept of globalization to describe the worldwide movement seen also in the case of Japan, which experienced the onslaught of the universalization of westernization in the late Edo and early Meiji periods. He reported on various attempts to counteract this globalization, using the example of Shintōists' responses to Christianity in the late Edo and early Meiji periods. Adopting the perspective of relativism among civilizations, we see that fundamentalism is not limited to the use of the Bible in Christianity or the Koran in Islam. There also exists a eclectic form of fundamentalism, as Satō reported regarding China's eclectic blend of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism in a consistent pattern.

From the perspective of comparative civilizations, western modernization is

merely one type, and while Max Weber's theory of the relation of religion and modernization in western civilization is overly famed, when we compared the situation with the relation between modernization and religion in Japanese civilization, many deeply interesting differences of opinion emerged, and these were taken up in discussion.

Davis suggested the concept of passive enablements for a reconsideration of Weber's theory. He likened Weber's theory of development from traditional times to modernity to an uphill hurdle course, and understanding the overcoming of magic and familism through Protestantism's irrational "strong fanaticism," he suggested a substitution of a barricade model for the hurdle model. For example, the force behind English Protestantism's progress towards capitalism from the end of the eighteenth to the beginning of the nineteenth century was not "uncertainty regarding salvation" but was instead social and political discrimination within the state church. Protestantism compromised with economic development and functioned as its passive enablement, and it demolished the barricade of traditional conservatism built in the seventeenth century by the Puritans. In summary, whereas Weber saw in religion a force to obstruct or advance economic rationalism, Davis avoided the cause-and-effect relation between religion and economic development, and called attention to the possibility of negative (or positive) development according to whether religion remains a spectator to development. The role of established Buddhism in the Meiji period in Japan is not dissimilar; it remained a spectator by means of vowing to contribute to and be loyal to the nation—it was not fanatic—and it was cooperative and compromising towards modern development, not obstructing it.

Yamaori disagreed with Weber's theory of modernization and salvation which is centered upon the ethos of those who succeed in life, whereas the Japanese new religions offer salvation to life's failures. His opinion is that in the history of modernization's other side, religion plays this positive role.

While Weber looked for a causal relation between religion and modernization, this symposium examined the fact that in Japan and England only a negative relation between modernization and religion pertained. Umesao described this as "modernization in spite of religion." Especially in the case of Japan, a civilization system emerged that was skilfully able to avoid religion, and thus, instead of contributing positively to society's modern development, religion took the attitude of a spectator and took charge of salvation on the other side of modernization. The perspective was adopted that as a result modernization progressed without much resistance from religion.

This view was linked to problems surrounding Japan and the modernization of the NICS (NIES), criticizing the theory of a linkage between Confucianism and modernization. And again, the fact that Japan has modernized although it cannot be called a Confucian country emerges as a disproof of that theory. Nevertheless, van Bremen's report stressing the philosophical influence of Neo-Confucianism (Wang Yang Ming's thought) was also presented. There is much value in the view

that "If modern society, for better or worse, requires a strong control, then there is a need to include a consideration of the function fulfilled by Confucian ethics, which include a strong control principle in the desire for stability" [INOUE 1989b: 19].

3. GLOBALIZATION AND RELIGION

The concept of "globalization" was first suggested by Inoue. In his view, globalization differs from internationalization, which presupposes nations and ethnic groups; instead it takes the entire world as its basic group and proceeds most swiftly in the fields of science and technology by the formation of various units by market mechanism. Umesao has also employed the concept of "global epoch" [UMESAO 1974]. The common consciousness between Inoue's "globalization" and Umesao's "global epoch" is a recognition of an increasingly conspicuous principle on a global scale, which transcends the relation between two countries, several countries, or several civilizations. From the standpoint of Umesao's relativism regarding civilizations, the modern age can be characterized as the age of various civilizations. This is an age in which civilization's various systems coexist as they preserve their respective traditions. In the modern age various civilizations are in mutual contact, and many groups of devices have developed for their mutual influence, so that none can remain independent. This is globalization, but this does not mean that the world has become one. Religion in such an age takes a variety of forms in various civilizations. My concept of "multinational religion" is one such attempt.

As a synchronic discipline, civilization studies aims to clarify the synchronic structure of civilization. Developing to the future from the modern age, called the global age or globalization, will religion become linked to an age of various religions? Is the age of the great religions drawing to a close? Discussion in the symposium did not sufficiently engage this point, but it remains a question for a diachronic study of religion and the history of civilization.

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