

## Voices of Dissent

Uchimura Kanzō and Yosano Akiko\*

Doron B. Cohen

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### Abstract

The Russo-Japanese War of 1904-05 was the first major step on Japan's road to becoming an imperialistic power in East Asia and the Pacific. Only a few decades after emerging from its seclusion, Japan defeated a European empire, gaining great confidence in its abilities. Only a few of its leading intellectuals objected to Japan's militaristic and imperialistic ambitions, some of them adopting a strictly pacifistic position. Among them was the Christian leader Uchimura Kanzō, who although proud of his samurai heritage, gradually adopted strict pacifistic views and expressed them courageously. From another angle, the poet Yosano Akiko wrote a famous poem condemning the war, but her position was personal rather than ideological, and would change during the years leading to the Second World War. Following the devastation in that war, Japan has adopted a pacifist constitution, but lately strong voices inside the country are calling for its change.

**Keywords:** Uchimura Kanzō, Yosano Akiko, Russo-Japanese War, pacifism, poetry

### I.

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Today Japan is a peaceful nation, having adopted a constitution forbidding it from solving conflicts by way of waging war, but, of course, until the end of the Second World War, matters were different. The pacifistic idea enjoyed no more than marginal support in the years prior to the war, although its initial seeds were planted in Japan already in the late nineteenth century.<sup>1)</sup> Its first public expressions were sounded on the eve of the Russo-Japanese War, and even during it, when individual Japanese spoke clearly and courageously against their country's militaristic policies. Here we will focus mainly on two of these voices: that of the Christian leader Uchimura Kanzō, who founded his opposition on a firm basis of principles, and that of the poet Yosano Akiko, who gave a very personal expression to her feelings.

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## II.

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Uchimura Kanzō was one of the leading intellectual figures of the Meiji Period, and his writings still retain much interest. Before we look at his pacifistic views in the context of the Russo-Japanese War, we will briefly review his social and personal background.

During the Meiji era Japan was reopened to the outside world after a long period of seclusion, and in a very short time was deluged with technological and ideological innovations of every imaginable kind. Some of the most innovative ideas arrived through the Christian channel.<sup>2)</sup> Many of the Japanese who advanced socialistic and pacifistic ideas, as well as ideas of freedom, human rights, equality for women and so on, were Christian believers, or those who at least absorbed Christian education early in their personal development. Some of them would eventually reject their faith, convert to other faiths or to nationalism, and even deny the very fact of having once embraced that faith. Generally speaking, it was a period of rapid changes; many Japanese experienced enthusiasm and disillusionment within a period of a few years, as in a fast-forward film. But there were also many who adhered to their faiths and upheld them courageously, often paying a heavy personal toll.

Christianity was introduced to Japan for the first time in the 16th century, when Catholic merchants and missionaries arrived at its shores and opened a period known as “the Christian Century” during which Christianity gained a surprising success in Japan, but not a long-lasting one.<sup>3)</sup> Early in the 17th century Japan opted for seclusion, and the Christian faith was forbidden under the threat of death. Once the country was reopened after the middle of the 19th century, Christianity returned once again to Japan, and rooted itself firmly in its soil.<sup>4)</sup>

The first to adopt Christianity were young samurai, mainly those from families that were on the losing side of the Meiji Restoration. When the samurai of Satsuma and Chōshū took power, and pushed aside the members of families loyal to the Shōgun, the younger sons of these families tried to gain a position in life through education, which quite often was a Christian one. In the early years, before the organized mission was established in Japan, and to some extent even later, it was mostly an informal Christian education. Many of the technical experts recruited by the Japanese government, and especially the Americans among them, regarded it as their duty not only to teach their formal subjects but also to educate their young students in the Christian faith. These teachers instilled in their students the belief that modern western education and culture are inseparable from Christianity. They preached personal faith based on the Bible and Puritan morals, not necessarily on contact with the established churches. Thus, they made it easier for many young enthusiasts to adopt the foreign religion as a moral system, and to find in the Christian faith a substitute for the values of the samurai world, which was speedily falling apart as the new Meiji government system took hold.<sup>5)</sup>

In the first years of Meiji, loyalty to the emperor had not yet become a sacred value and the new morality—according to which every man lived for himself, rather than for his master—seemed evil and wrong after centuries of samurai education. The new faith in the one, omnipotent God, and the mission that came with it to reform society in the Christian spirit, had filled the spiritual vacuum for many former samurai. The arrival of professional missionaries, who represented innumerable Christian churches, sects, and organizations, and who soon started quarreling in front of their astonished and naive young converts, often spoiled the initial success.

Uchimura Kanzō was the product of the first, enthusiastic, period of Christianity's absorption in Japan.<sup>6)</sup> He was seven years old when Emperor Meiji took power, the elder son of a modest samurai family. In his memoirs he wrote about his grandfather, who was a soldier through and through, and regretted the fact that he could not put his military training to use due to the long period of peace. His father also received military training but was a scholar by nature. Uchimura was proud of his samurai ancestry, and even when he was sixty years old he put down "Japanese samurai" as his nationality in a personal data form he filled out for the American college where he had studied many years before.

Uchimura showed remarkable talents from an early age, and at sixteen received a government scholarship to study at the new Agricultural College in Sapporo, on the remote and yet undeveloped northern island of Hokkaido. This institution was established only one year before Uchimura had arrived there with the assistance of an American expert, William Smith Clark, who earlier established such a college in Amherst, Massachusetts. Clark stayed in Sapporo for only eight months, but left a long-lasting impression on his students; he even entered into Japanese folklore thanks to the slogan attributed to him: "Boys, be ambitious!" What sounded so natural to western ears was a major innovation for those raised in the Confucian tradition. Clark convinced his students to sign a "Covenant of Believers in Jesus" drafted by himself, and these students put considerable pressure on Uchimura and his classmates to sign it as well. Uchimura, who was a very serious boy and regarded with awe his ancestors' faith in Buddha and the Shinto gods, tried to oppose them, but eventually succumbed to the pressure.

Uchimura describes in his moving autobiography the serious spiritual crises he experienced as a young convert and the long process that led him eventually to his firm Christian faith.<sup>7)</sup> He and his classmates would join the intellectual elite of the Meiji period and keep close friendly ties all their lives, even after going their separate ways. These young boys experienced a unique religious-social experience as a small, isolated, and independent community of believers, which they compared with the "Ecclesia," the original community of Christian believers. Uchimura never gave up the principle of independence, and later in life developed the principle most often associated with him: *Mukyōkai*, or "Churchless Christianity," which referred to a faith based on small and independent communities,

guided by the Bible and the personal religious experience of the believer, with no formal institutional establishment.

Uchimura graduated with distinction and entered government service. But following a series of personal crises, including a crisis of faith, he left—or actually fled—to the United States, where he stayed for three and a half years. During most of this period he studied at Amherst College and underwent a substantial spiritual development that determined his firm belief in the exclusiveness of the Christian salvation. He adhered to strict Puritan principles, which he likened to the Bushidō principles of the samurai tradition. Just like his classmate Nitobe Inazō, who wrote a famous book on the subject,<sup>8)</sup> Uchimura emphasized the principles of chivalry and honesty in Bushidō, rather than its militaristic aspects.

On his return to Japan Uchimura worked for several years as a teacher in different institutions, including the *Dai Ichi Koto Chūgakko*, the most prestigious school of the time, which prepared students for Tokyo University. But his career as a teacher in such institutions was severed following an incident that became one of the most notorious scandals of the Meiji period. When the “Imperial Rescript on Education” was published in 1891, the students and teachers at the school were told to bow in front of the imperial seal affixed to it. Uchimura, faithful to his Christian principles, inclined his head slightly, and his adversaries blew up the incident into an affair of lese majesty, and used it to attack the alleged “double loyalty” of the Japanese Christians.<sup>9)</sup> Following this traumatic event Uchimura retired from teaching, and dedicated his time to the writing of books and articles, worked for a while as a journalist, and for the last thirty years of his life published his independent monthly magazine *Seisho no kenkyū* (“Biblical Studies”), serving as a spiritual guide to a devoted public of thousands of *Mukyōkai* believers.

If indeed there have been cases of “double loyalty” among the Japanese Christians, Uchimura was not one of them. In an unsophisticated view he may even be considered a Japanese nationalist. He believed that Japan had the unique role and ability to bridge between east and west and unite these cultures through Christianity and Bushidō. In a famous piece written in English he described his love for the “Two J’s”—Jesus and Japan; for him there was no contradiction between these two loves.<sup>10)</sup> Uchimura believed in patriotism and argued that the real man loves his country passionately, but observed that a distinction must be made between real and false patriotism. Japan would not be able to fulfill its mission unless it rid itself of its chauvinistic and militaristic tendencies. He prophesied that if it did not do so, Japan would suffer great punishments at the hand of the Lord. Uchimura used to read the Bible as if it was speaking of his own time, and he therefore believed that Russia was to Japan what Babylonia was for Judea, and that the Tzar was a latter-day Nebuchadnezzar. This meant that Japan was indeed under great danger from Russia, but it also meant that if Japan did not follow God’s will, it would suffer the same fate as Judea.

During the decade between the Sino-Japanese War and the Russo-Japanese War, Uchimura often wrote on political and social issues. That decade saw an ever-widening gap between the government, which advanced “national interests” even at the expense of civil rights, and the opposition, led by liberal intellectuals who put civil rights first. As the opposition grew more radical, the government became more restrictive. Uchimura was not actively involved in politics, but all through that decade his articles dealt with the current issues, sounding a clear and firm oppositional voice. He was heard in public mainly between 1897 and 1903, the years he was writing for the influential paper *Yorozu Chōhō*. He supported disarmament, liberal education, popular suffrage, and so on. He vehemently attacked the Meiji government, which he always referred to as the “Satsuma-Chōshū Government,” and entered into long debates with other publicists. There were some who considered him a socialist, but he always viewed events through the prism of Christian ethics, which guided his position in any matter, large or small. These principles led him also to his pacifistic position, which evolved gradually over the same ten-year period. This process indicates the long inner struggle between his natural patriotism and his Christian faith, for which his interpretation was strict and often literal. For a person with his samurai upbringing, and with his deep concern for his country, it must have been extremely difficult to preach pure pacifism.

In August 1894, during the Sino-Japanese War, Uchimura published an article entitled “Justification of the Korean War,” in which he still claimed that there *are* righteous wars.<sup>11)</sup> As examples he gave the biblical war of Gideon against the Midianites, the war of the Greeks against the Persians and that of the Swedish King Gustavus Adolphus against the Catholic oppression. He explained that Japan’s causes in waging war were pure: to convince China to cooperate with the international community, and to free Korea of the oppressive Chinese rule. But he was soon to experience a painful disillusionment, when it turned out that Japan was going to exploit Korea for its own gain. He wrote to an American friend: “A ‘righteous war’ has changed into a *piratic* war somewhat, and a prophet who wrote its ‘justification’ is now in shame.”<sup>12)</sup> In 1896 he wrote a series of articles in which he attacked the government for its hypocrisy, and for the fact that rather than helping Korea it increased the armament of Japan in preparation for the next war.<sup>13)</sup>

As the tension between Russia and Japan was building, Uchimura’s position against a possible war grew firmer. In an article written in 1898 he was still wishing to avenge Japan’s insult, and threatening to “pay the debt” to Russia. But by 1903 he was preaching peace at all cost. In this position he had support on the pages of the *Yorozu Chōhō*, the most influential paper of the time. Uchimura based his pacifism on Christian principles; two other members of the editorial board, Kōtoku Shūsui and Sakai Toshihiko, based theirs on proto-socialistic principles, and expressed opposition to the use of force for gaining political ends. Kōtoku published, on May 1, 1903, an article under the title “Opposition to Opening Hostilities” and on June 19 an article entitled “The Madness of War.” On June 30 Uchimura published “On

the Abolition of War,” an article in which he stated: “war is nothing but a large-scale crime.”<sup>14)</sup> When the publisher of the *Yorozu*, Kuroiwa Ruiko, decided on the eve of the war to support the government, the three resigned from the paper.

Before and after his resignation, Uchimura expounded in detailed articles his opinion against the war. Now he argued that there couldn't be a righteous war, not even for the sake of freedom. He used the Christian principle of turning the other cheek, and applied it to the state. In his last *Yorozu* article he wrote that Japan should stop all military preparations on grounds of Christian morality, an act that would shame Russia into accepting the same attitude and thus prevent war. Needless to say, no one was going to adopt such a policy, and when the war began Uchimura himself could not avoid being excited that Japan was indeed “paying the debt.” In February 1904 he wrote to a friend, who was also a pacifist: “... my old patriotism took mastery over me today as I read of the magnificent victory over the Russian navy, and I gave three loud *Teikoku banzai!* [long live the Empire!] to be heard throughout all my neighborhood. An inconsistent man, am I!”<sup>14)</sup>

A certain degree of inconsistency can also be seen in the fact that Uchimura did not support conscientious objectors. When one of his disciples considered dodging the draft in protest, Uchimura discouraged him, especially due to the possible ramifications for the man's family. He did not give a clear answer to the basic dilemma of the pacifist, who knows that by participating in the war he might cause the death of others. It seems that Uchimura adopted the traditional samurai view, that the man going into battle assumes his own death. He believed that the death of pacifists in the war would be considered a sacrifice that will advance the idea of peace.

Still, all the inconsistencies notwithstanding, Uchimura was adamant in his objection to the war. During the war with Russia he published a series of articles in the English paper *The Kobe Chronicle*, in which he supported Japan's cause but emphasized its responsibility to the world and condemned the idea of war on natural and historical grounds. And shortly after the war ended he wrote: “The war is fought for the sake of war; there has never been the war really for the sake of peace. The Sino-Japanese War, fought in the name of peace in the Orient, caused the greater Russo-Japanese War. This war is also supposed to have been fought for the sake of peace in the Orient. I think it will cause another, much greater war, for the sake of peace in the Orient again.”<sup>15)</sup> A clear and sound observation, no doubt.

In his efforts to find arguments against war, Uchimura turned also to the Jews. He wrote widely about their success in surviving as a talented nation, in spite of the fact that they had no state or army. Uchimura ascribed their survival to their pacifism and to their belief in the Bible and their constant waiting for the Messiah.<sup>16)</sup> Later, Uchimura himself would start waiting for the return of the Messiah. During the First World War he was disillusioned in his belief in human progress and goodwill, and now relied on eschatological hope, waiting for the Parousia to save the world from total destruction.

I mentioned earlier the personal data form which Uchimura filled out in 1920 for the Alumni Council of Amherst College, in which he defined himself as a “Japanese samurai.” This document is kept in the Amherst College Archives and consists of four pages, one of which is dedicated to the war record of the alumnus. Uchimura wrote on this page: “Have no war record whatever. Indeed, I hate war, and wrote and spoke against it when Japan entered into war with Russia and also with Germany.... Shame to fight, man against man. No good ever came out of war.”

Uchimura died in March 1930, about one year before the Japanese invasion of Manchuria, which was to lead to the greatest war of all—just as he had anticipated. Three months after him one of his leading disciples died, the talented poet Fujii Takeshi, who adopted an even more extreme pacifistic position than his master. Shortly before his death, Fujii published a prophetic poem entitled “Be Ruined,” in which he foresaw the destruction of Japan and even wished for a destruction like that suffered by Sodom, because Japan was just as corrupt. He prophesied that Japan would be swallowed by the “Crocodile from the East”—meaning the United States—which would serve as the “rod of anger” in the hand of the Lord.<sup>17)</sup> One of these men’s disciples described Fujii as the Jeremiah of Japan because he mainly prophesied destruction, and Uchimura as the Isaiah of Japan because his prophecies also included hope.

As was mentioned earlier, many Japanese were attracted to Christianity and then to ideas such as socialism and pacifism, but at a certain stage in their lives underwent a change of heart, or to use the Japanese expression, *tenkō*: “conversion.” For example, Uchimura’s friend Tokutomi Soho went along a path similar to Uchimura’s, and became the editor of the liberal magazine *Kokumin no tomo* (“The People’s Friend”), in which Uchimura had published some of his important articles. But Tokutomi changed from being a speaker for the opposition to a firm supporter of the government; he became a militaristic chauvinist, and even denied that he was ever baptized. He lived long, and after the Second World War was forbidden from taking part in public life.<sup>18)</sup>

Naturally, in the period prior to and during the Second World War it was safer to toe the government’s line rather than to rise against it. Uchimura himself was not persecuted by the government, perhaps because he withdrew from the national arena already in 1904 and focused his attention on his religious work. But others, like Uchimura’s former colleagues at the *Yorozu*, suffered greatly. Famous among them was Kōtoku Shūsui who was thrown into prison for publishing a translation of the *Communist Manifesto* in the weekly *Heimin Shimbun*, which he started with his partner, Sakai Toshihiko. In subsequent years he gradually turned to anarchism. Although there was no evidence that he had been planning a concrete action, he and his friends were arrested in 1910 and indicted for a plot to assassinate Emperor Meiji. Twelve of them, including Kōtoku and his lover Kanno Suga, were executed in January 1911.

It should also be mentioned that Uchimura and his friends were not the first Japanese to hold pacifistic beliefs, although they were the first to express such views publicly and had done so in the context of the Russo-Japanese War. Still, they had a predecessor in the tragic figure of Kitamura Tōkoku, who at twenty-six years of age committed suicide in 1894, on the eve of the Sino-Japanese War. Kitamura lived a very intense intellectual and emotional life since his adolescence and was an important poet and critic; he too was influenced by Christianity, especially by the Quakers whom he had met in Tokyo. He believed in peace at all cost and objected to patriotism and nationalism. In 1889 he established the first pacifistic organization in Japan, *Nihon heiwa kai*. While he was not heard in public he had some admirers, including the writer Kinoshita Naoe who, naturally, was a Christian, a pacifist, and a one-time socialist. In retrospect, Kitamura and some of his supporters are considered the pioneers of Japanese pacifism, but they were almost forgotten by the time of the Russo-Japanese War.

### III.

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All the figures mentioned so far were intellectuals, who expressed positions based on firm ideological grounds: either Christian, socialist, or both. But there was another voice expressing objection to the Russo-Japanese War, which was heard clearly but which came from an entirely different direction. It was the voice of Yosano Akiko, the leading lyrical poet of the time, who published a surprising poem denouncing the war. This poem has been cited countless times as an example of a pacifistic poem par excellence, in spite of the fact that it is not so by any means. The poem did not evolve out of some ideological position, but rather from a private, even egoistic one. Still, the background from which the poem evolved and its subtext give it wider implications.

Akiko was born in Sakai, near Osaka, to a family that owned a famous confectionery business. She was influenced by the modern poet Yosano Tekkan whom she eventually married, and gained widespread fame following the publication of her tanka collection *Midare gami (Tangled Hair)* in 1901. Her poems dealt with love, sex, and women's liberation in a bold and innovative way, although they were written in the classical style.

In October 1904, Akiko published in *Myōjō*, a magazine edited by her husband and herself, a long poem in which she begs her younger brother, who was with the Japanese army besieging Port Arthur, not to give his life in the war.

In the first stanza, Akiko expresses the emotional aspect of her brother being the youngest son, and therefore specially loved by their parents. But she also brings up another matter: his parents did not teach him to fight; he did not grow up in a military tradition, so what has he got to do with the war? This view is emphasized in the second stanza. The family belongs to the merchant class, and this is the tradition they should preserve. It seems that this view is an indication of the fact that the idea of a national state, in which all citizens are united



in mutual responsibility, was not yet self-evident at the time. In her poem, Akiko represents the old social order of the Tokugawa period, in which society was divided into rigid classes. The samurai are supposed to fight, but merchants have no active part in battle. She also gives expression to her local loyalty: the family hails from Sakai, and there it belongs. In the feudal period a person's loyalty was owed to his local community and its leaders rather than to the yet unformed idea of the nation, and Akiko seems to still be thinking along these old lines.

In the third stanza Akiko refers to the emperor, who became a major factor after the Restoration. The fact that she even dares to speak about him indicates that the belief in his divinity was not yet deeply rooted. No one would have dared to speak like that in Japan in the thirties, and if they had the censorship would have curbed them immediately. In fact, Akiko speaks of the emperor very respectfully but indicates that he does not fight personally in the war, and hints that perhaps he does not even realize what it entails. Even worse than that, if he did indeed realize the meaning of war, it was wrong of him to let his subjects die like animals for an unworthy cause.

Akiko returns to the emotional aspect in the fourth stanza, and speaks about the suffering of the recently widowed mother who then also has her son taken away from her. She also protests the fact that the politicians promised peace and security in the emperor's name, but their promises were exposed as groundless. The fifth stanza is again emotional in describing the grief of the young bride who would remain defenseless if her husband gave his life in the war.

Akiko's poem does not express pacifistic views, although she does express her protest against mindless killing. Her main protest is personal and private, and national considerations mean nothing to her. Apparently, Akiko expects her brother to desert from the front and return to his natural place behind the counter at the old confectionery store in Sakai. Does she imply that his friends should also desert and thus put an end to war? It is hard to say with any certainty. The mentioning of the emperor and the general atmosphere of the useless loss and pain may imply as much. The personal attitude which speaks to the primeval emotion of loyalty to the parents, the family, and the home, may indicate a refusal to accept the new political reality and the transformation of Japan into a national superpower, rather than an assortment of feudal fiefs in which every person knows his natural place and his loyalty is given to those closest to him.

The poem was published in *Myōjō* on October 1, 1904 and, surprisingly enough, was ignored by the censorship, which three years earlier had banned the magazine for a while for printing a reproduction of a European painting containing female nudity. It is possible that the government had not anticipated that the voice of a single woman would resonate so strongly, and preferred to ignore it.<sup>19)</sup> But Akiko was attacked by writers who opposed her position and accused her of treason and of lese majesty. In response, Akiko published an "open letter" in the November issue of *Myōjō* in which she announced that she did not oppose the war, but only

hoped that it would end soon and with as little suffering as possible. According to her, a poem is a way of expressing feelings, and in the poem in question she simply expressed her concern for her brother. But her letter also implied a rejection of the glorification of killing and death reflected in the government's propaganda. She argues that in the whole body of Japanese classical literature the demand to die for the nation and for the emperor never appears. Simultaneously, she reaffirms her and her family's loyalty to the emperor. Her position is an ambivalent one, to say the least: an emotional and instinctive objection to the war, while denying the allegation that she adopted a principled pacifist position and insisting on the autonomous status of poetry as an art form expressing feelings, not as a political vehicle.

The debate over Akiko's poem occupied the press for several months until it gradually died out. Most of the responses were hostile ones, although several writers rose to her defense. Akiko herself would prove that her anti-war position was a personal rather than an ideological one. Following a tour of China in 1928, and almost until her death in May 1942, she published several nationalistic poems in praise of Japan's war in Asia. Her poem "Citizens of Japan, a Morning Poem," published in June 1932, opens with unequivocal praise of the emperor's divine rule. In one of her last poems she encourages her son, who served as a naval officer, to fight bravely. A radical change has occurred, then, in her views since the time when she was begging her brother not to fight. About thirty years earlier Akiko identified first and foremost with her own private family; now she seemed to have adopted the official line, which considered the Japanese people as comprising one large family led by the benevolent father-emperor. We may conclude, then, that the publishing of her poem to her brother was a manifestation of courage and resolution, but should not be attributed to a pacifistic position as has often been claimed.

#### IV.

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We have seen two positions of objection to war, an ideological one and a personal one. Neither had a great likelihood of real influence on the Japanese public, whether at the time or in later decades. Like Christianity itself, like socialism and communism, the absorption of pacifism in Japan was a long and difficult process, and it enjoyed the support of a loyal but a very small minority. None of the pacifistic thinkers in modern Japan represented the orthodox line, but rather, different kinds of heresy. All were extraordinary figures, but they relied on firm ideological bases in their opposition to Japanese chauvinism. Their intention was to replace the foundations of Japanese society through the adoption of a new perspective on humanity and the world. But theirs was a voice calling in the wilderness, and their actual influence was marginal.

Still, Uchimura's position had gained some loyal supporters. When the majority of the Japanese Christian leadership succumbed to the government's dictate to adopt the

chauvinistic line on the eve of the Second World War, some of Uchimura's leading disciples adhered to their master's way, and suffered for it during the war. After the war they were rehabilitated, and for a short period were even embraced by the establishment. It turned out that Uchimura's—and even Fujii's—prophecies were correct: they warned their countrymen that the militarism would cause their ruin, and that is indeed what happened. Apparently, Uchimura's victory was complete when the pacifistic constitution was adopted, but it was a very limited victory. Uchimura's Christian dream had not materialized, and his puritanical soul would no doubt have been shocked by the materialism and promiscuity of his countrymen. And even regarding the pacifistic idea itself, we still have to wait and see to what extent Japan will preserve it in years to come, when not a few voices sound their objections to it. We cannot exclude the possibility that these voices will become strong and persistent enough until Japan one day returns to the family of "normal" nations that attempt to solve conflicts by means of waging war.

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#### NOTES

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### Appendix

The poem by Yosano Akiko (与謝野晶子, 1878-1942), "Brother, Do Not Give Your Life" (君死にたまふこと勿れ), was published in the magazine *Myōjō* [明星] on October 1, 1904 (translation by Steve Robson, with some changes):

#### **Brother, Do Not Give Your Life**

(Anxious for her younger brother, who is with the army besieging Lu-Shun [Port Arthur])

Oh, my brother, I weep for you.  
Do not give your life.  
Last-born among us,  
You are the most beloved of our parents.  
Did they make you grasp the sword  
And teach you to kill?  
Did they raise you to the age of twenty-four,  
Telling you to kill and die?

Heir to our family name,  
You will be master of this store,  
Old and honored, in Sakai, and therefore,  
Brother, do not give your life.  
For you, what does it matter  
Whether Lu-Shun Fortress fall or not?  
The code of merchant houses  
Says nothing about this.

Brother, do not give your life.  
His Majesty the Emperor  
Goes not himself into the battle.  
Could he, with such deeply noble heart,  
Think it an honor for men  
To spill one other's blood  
And die like beasts?

JISMOR 2

Oh, my brother, in that battle  
Do not give your life.  
Think of mother, who lost father just last autumn.  
How much lonelier is her grief at home  
Since you were drafted.  
Even as we hear about peace in this great Imperial Reign,  
Her hair turns whiter by the day.

And do you ever think of your young bride,  
Who crouches weeping behind the shop curtains  
In her gentle loveliness?  
Or have you forgotten her?  
The two of you were together not ten months before parting.  
What must she feel in her young girl's heart?  
Who else has she to rely on in this world?  
Brother, do not give your life.