

Winther and Kagawa¹

A Commentated Translation of Denmaaku no inshou
[Danish Impressions] by Kagawa Toyohiko

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“Jeg har spillet fodbold med Kagawa (I have played soccer with [Rev.] Kagawa),” a 14-year old boy from Hjerm wrote in his diary back in 1925. The boy was preparing for his confirmation under the guidance of Rev. J.M.T. Winther².

Hjerm is a smaller Danish village located between the cities of Struer to the north and Holstebro to south. In the first half of the 20th century its primary industry was limestone mining. The limestone was carried to the world by railway and consequently the village had a station. It also had two churches, whose pastor was Jens Mikael Thøgersen Winther.

How come one of Japan's most well known Christian leaders and one of its foremost social reformers, Rev. Kagawa Toyohiko, was playing soccer in the garden of a Danish village parsonage in 1925? This little mystery deserves an explanation that follows here.

Like any other tale this one is spun from several strings that stretch back in time. So as not to tire the reader with too many details, we shall just look at three of them and not stretch the time frame back further than the 1850s. The core of the story will be told by Rev. Kagawa himself through a commentated translation of his short essay Denmaaku no inshou or "Danish Impressions". But first, a brief look at Danish history and the relation between J.M.T. Winther and Kagawa T., seems appropriate.

¹ This is the second article resulting from my ongoing research on Danish mission in Japan. The first was published in 2011.

² Information thanks to pastor Laurids Breum Jakobsen, private correspondence.

Jens Mikael Thøgersen Winther, 1874-1970, was born on the Danish west coast, the oldest son to a couple of deeply devoted Christian revivalists and small-scale peasants. Except for a few furloughs and the interruption of the Pacific War, he was a Lutheran missionary to Japan from 1898 to 1970. From 1899 he worked with his Danish wife, Andrea Hansen, joining the few Lutheran missionaries from the United Synod of the South (US) in Japan at that time.³ Their first field was Saga on Kyushu. This was the beginning of Japan Evangelical Lutheran Church.

Winther met people of other faiths and Christians of different denominations. But as far as can be told from his recordings in his diary and letters, he did not seek such contacts with a purpose of deeper understanding of those beliefs and interpretations.

Consequently, he was in for a new experience when the Danish pastor Carl Axel Skovgaard-Petersen visited Japan on a world tour before assuming a new position as head of The Danish Bible School in Copenhagen, inaugurated in 1912.⁴ Winther, an avid reader, was familiar with Skovgaard-Petersen's publications and had met him in person during a furlough in Denmark in 1907. Winther served as his companion and interpreter for three weeks in late May and early June.⁵ Skovgaard-Petersen's book *Fra Nutidens Japan Personlige Indtryk* (From Modern Japan, Personal Impressions) makes it clear, they met leaders of important non-Christian institutions and of various church denominations such as Ebina, Kozaki, Uemura and Uchimura Kanzo.⁶

3 The South of the Synod began its Japan work in 1892 (Peery 1900, p. 20), having prepared for it from 1887 (Huddle 1958, p. 66). On Winther's first 23 years in Japan, see Hermansen 2014

4 C. A. Skovgaard-Petersen (1866-1955), parish pastor till 1911, then head of Dansk Bibelskole 1912-29, and provost of Roskilde Cathedral Parish 1929-36. Chair of numerous Christian organizations in the 1930s including a bible translation commission, the Danish Bible Society 1936-49, Kolonien Filadelfia (A Deacons' school and a hospital for epileptic and other nervous illnesses) 1922-35, and Missionskurstedet Nyborg Strand 1916-41. A well-known author of Christian literature (cf. *Kraks Blaa Bog* 1949, p. 1265).

5 "Jeg var borte fra Hjemmet 3 uger sidst i Maj og først i Juni" (W. to his parents, 12 Juli 1911, p. V (2681): "I was away from home for three weeks at the end of May and the beginning of June."

6 See Skovgaard-Petersen 1911. The book is online at archive.org, University of Toronto – Robarts Library.

Exactly when they went is not clear, but they visited Kobe. Winther described this visit a letter of 19 June 1911 to his sister Helene.⁷

Like our mother has told you, I have been on a tour with Pastor Skovgård Pedersen.⁸ We saw much and heard much; I think, I learned more in these 3 weeks than otherwise in the last 3 years. One of the most impressive things I saw was a young man, who one and a half years ago laid facing death by tuberculosis.⁹ One of my good friends sat with him during a night, when he believed he would die before dawn.¹⁰

He did not and now works in one of the most horrible areas of the World. Houses there are rented per night; they are six by six feet, sometimes six by nine feet wide. He has moved down to them and lives amongst society's most wretched and poor creatures in such a way that 30 to 40 have become Christians and everybody respects him, though initially they attempted to assassinate him, because they took him for a police spy. He is a student of theology and has a monthly stipend of 11 yen of which he himself survives on 3 and spends 8 on the miserable in spite of his weak lungs; he is not kept alive by fresh air and good food, as both are lacking, but he is kept alive by the joy of the Lord that shines from his hollowed cheeks and bright eyes. We met many famous people, but I do not think I have met a stranger man than this student, not on this tour

7 This and subsequently quoted letters and diary of Winther are currently in the archives of Kobe Lutheran Seminary, an institution he helped build up from its initiation in 1957. I owe the staff many thanks for help with my research.

8 The reader will note a variant on the spelling of the pastor's name – Skovgård Petersen instead of Skovgaard-Petersen. Official Danish spelling before 1953 prescribed "aa" where W. used "å." W.'s spelling is not consistent regarding this particular letter, but he mostly used the å-spelling for Skovgaard-Petersen's name in his letters including those addressed to the pastor himself.

9 Schildgen 1988 identifies two near-death experiences of Kagawa. One in 1907 (p. 35) and the other in September 1908 (p. 42). Thus even the latter happened two and a half year before W. met K. K. was 33 years when they met.

10 W.'s friend could have been Dr. Myers, the protector of K.

at least.¹¹ (Winther 19 June 1911, Letter to Helene, pp.2658-2659)

Kagawa is not mentioned by name but that it is he can be inferred from this description congruent with Schildgen's 1988-biography on Kagawa, see Chapter 3 in particular, and is confirmed by Skovgaard-Petersen's chapter about the visit, entitled "Kagawa" (Skovgaard-Petersen 1911, pp. 164-167). Over the following years, Kagawa's activities made him still prominent in Japan, wherefore Winther certainly must have heard of him time and again. Yet, Kagawa's name does not appear in Winther's writings until 1925.

Between November 1924 and July 1925, Kagawa Toyohiko was on a world tour. Of the eight months he spent five days and four nights in Denmark, arriving on May 13 and leaving on the 18th. He came to get a first hand impression of the Danish schools for adult farm workers and the cooperate movement. He had asked Winther to organize the tour. Winther did that and went along as guide and interpreter. After the visit, he also wrote a short book Kagawa, De Forkuedes Ven (Kagawa, Friend of the Subdued) that was published by the Danish Church Society for Inner Mission (hereafter IM). This book

11 "Jeg har som Mor har skrevet været på en Rundrejse med Pastor Skovgård Pedersen. Vi så meget og hørte meget; jeg lærte mere i den 3 Ugerstid end ellers i 3 Aar, tror jeg næsten. Men noget af det største jeg saa var en ung Mand i Kobe, der lå for Døden af Tæring for 11/2 Aar siden, en af mine gode venner sad ved ham en hel Nat, da han troede, at han vilde dø inden Morgen.

Det gjorde han ikke, nu arbejder han nede i et af de frygteligste Kvarterer, Verden ejer. Husene der lejes hver Aften, der er på 6 Fod i Firkant, under Tiden 6 Fod bred og 9 Fod lang. Han er flyttet ned til dem, bor selv i sådan Hytte, men han har arbejdet iblandt disse Samfundets elendigste, fattigste Skabninger på en sådan Måde at en 30-40 er bleven kristne og alle respekterer ham, skønt de først prøvede at snigmyrde ham, da de troede, han var en Politispion. Han er theologisk Student og får som sådan 11 Yen om Måned, men han lever selv på 3, og bruger de 8 til de elendige og det til Trods for hans svage Lunger; det han lever paa er ikke frisk Luft og god Føde, for begge Ting mangler, men han lever på Glæden i Herren og den lyser ud af hans hule Kinder og strålende Øjne. Vi mødte mange berømte Personer, men en mærkeligere Mand end denne unge Student har jeg vist ikke mødt endnu, ikke på denne Tur i alt Fald."

Skovgaard-Petersen impressions are recorded in his book, pp. 164-167. The book was written with W.'s assistance (cf W.'s letters to Skovgård Pedersen sic of 10 July 1911, 4 September 1911 with comments on the manuscript, and 16 October 1911).

combines a biographic introduction to Kagawa with a review of his visit to Denmark, press reports on that occasion and a 30-page compilation of the speeches Kagawa delivered at eight places in Denmark.

Later, Winther was privately very critical of Kagawa, cf. entries in his diary,¹² but in 1925 his criticism was restricted to Kagawa's theological shallowness,¹³ whereas his 1911-admiration for Kagawa's selfless Christianity was intact and possibly enhanced by the chance to promote Japan in Denmark. On a speculative note, if Kagawa's enthusiasm for Vilhelm Beck (1829-1901), so explicitly stated in *Danish Impressions*, shone through during the time he spent with Winther, the latter may have felt his mission – to promote IM's dogma in Japan – to have been a success.

Regarding the last point, one cannot but wonder how much Winther told Kagawa about the conflict between N.F.S. Grundtvig (1783-1872) and Beck. Winther was firmly rooted in Beck's tradition that prescribed a stern pietistic life as a consequence of the awareness of one's unworthiness of God's forgiveness. This position combines Martin Luther's teaching of salvation through faith only with what has been labeled the Tertullian Christianity rooted in one of the Fathers of the Church, Quintus Septimius Florens Tertullianus' (160?-225?) Latinized interpretation of the Bible that understands the fall of human being to be a crime that will be punished on the final judgment. Opposed to this position, the Irenaean Christianity is based on Irenaeus (130-202) another of the Fathers of the Church's theology, which is Greek, poetical and understanding the fall of human being as a wound that will ultimately be healed.¹⁴ Grundtvig is said to have had an epiphany by

12 Pastor Laurids Breum Jakobsen, "J.M.T.Winthers missionsindsats i Japan set i forhold til den lutherske og konfessionelle problematik fra 1898 til 1970", has researched Winther's diary and kindly shared the information that W. had made notes and comments on K. on ten occasions between 1927 and 1960: 1928 p. 192, 1929 p. 551. 1929 p. 620, 1936 p. 819, 1951 p. 303, 1955 p. 389, 1958 p. 312, 1960 p. 640, 1960 p. 645, 1960 p. 687. Private correspondence.

13 Winther 1925: "Theolog kan man ikke kalde ham. Hans Dogmatik kunde hurtigt nedskrives." (pp. 49 ff) > One cannot label him a theologian. His dogma could soon be recorded.

14 Væрге emphasizes that Irenaeus claimed to have listened to Polycarp, Bishop in Syria and a disciple of the Apostle John (2012, p. 39). Tertullianus, on the other hand, was trained in

his encounter with Irenaeus and his theology, feeling at home in his poetic approach.¹⁵ While Beck initially concurred with Grundtvig, after 1861 he apparently turned around and became a firm defender of the Tertullian position, possibly in order to secure his power in IM (Værgé 2012, pp. 144-150). The dichotomy of the “dark” IM people and the “light” Grundtvigians has been stated more than once in Danish literature, e.g., Kai Munk’s *Ordet*, and people who feel themselves victims of the restrictive IM are still not uncommon in today’s Denmark. Winther, in line with the IM position of Vilhelm Beck, found the Grundtvigians too lighthearted and their faith shallow.

Kagawa, on the other hand, expressed equal enthusiasm for both Grundtvig and Beck in his *Danish Impressions*.

Below follows my translation. I have followed the original’s text divisions and strived to be faithful to Kagawa’s poetic touch. Should anyone read his text in order to get a picture of Denmark of 1925, I hope my comments will help the reader better understand some of the realities behind his idyllic descriptions.

Roman jurisprudence and worked successfully in that field in Carthage (Roman North Africa), before he became a Christian (Værgé 2012, pp. 40-41).

15 This is but a very brief summary of the argument made in Værgé 2012. On Grundtvig’s epiphany, see Værgé, pp. 124 ff.

Danish Impressions¹⁶

To Copenhagen

There is nothing exceptione between Berlin and Warnemünde. The journey continues across ordinary flat plains. In Warnemünde, the first-class and second-class carriages simply are driven onto the steamboat which then traverse for two hours. The waters of the Baltic Sea are lightly yellowish and not beautiful. However, the May sun shone over the north sea from a rare blue sky, the sea was calm so it felt like a journey on [China's Blue] Yangtze River. On entering Denmark, one sees beautiful reed thatched houses among the hilly fields. They are distinctively different from German farmhouses in being surrounded by whitened walls on all four sides. On the way to Copenhagen, one sees bungalows with German-styled red roofs, but they do not seem to fit in with the land. I arrived in Copenhagen at five in the afternoon and was greeted by Mr. Winther, who was missionary in Japan for many years, and his friends and they accompanied me to my loggings in front of the station. That evening, I was to give a lecture in the big auditorium of the state church,¹⁷ and it was quite full. The presence of so many audiences surprised me. I have forgotten his name, but a relative of the king, an earl, was among them.¹⁸ (In Denmark, there are only two families of earls. They are the second most prestigious ones after the king). After my lecture, I was invited to the home of an important merchant, who also has a filial in Yokohama. He is particularly fond of Japan,

16 Translated from Kagawa Toyohiko, "Denmaaku no inshou" in *Unsui henrou*, pp. 124-132

17 Kagawa (hereafter K:) writes *kokuritsu kyokai* 国立教会 = state church or national church. Winther 1925 (p. 59) identifies the locality for the lecture as "Bethesdas," a house and meeting hall owned by IM Copenhagen society, slightly north of Copenhagen city center. While IM certainly understood itself to be an integral part of the Danish Folk Church, its properties were private. The legal status of the Danish Folk Church was and still is confusing.

18 Earl = K: *hakushaku* 伯爵. He likely met a member of the Earl Moltke family, Joachim Moltke (1857-1943), who was much involved in Christian organizations in Denmark and a friend of W. (cf. W.'s letters 190.).

and almost all the rooms in the house were decorated according to his taste for Japan.



——— Places visited by Kagawa Toyohiko 13-18 May 1925

Haslev, the Center of Danish Rural Culture

The following day (May 14), I left Copenhagen on a train after 7 a.m., to go to Haslev Higher Peasants' School.¹⁹ Mr. Petersen, head of Faarevejle Peasants' School,

19 K: *koutou noumin gakkou* 高等農民学校. IM founded a People's High School in Haslev in 1891. (cf. Holt 1961, pp. 651-652). Kagawa visited four schools categorized as Friskole or Folkehøjskole in Danish and in English usually are referred to as People's High Schools. Such schools were initiated to provide a general liberal and examfree education for young adult farmworkers, but were not restricted to them. Kagawa's emphasis on "peasant" and subsequent elimination of "high" in his translation is therefore somewhat at odds with the original idea.

met us at the station in his car.²⁰

Speeding down the four-ken [about 7 meters] wide country road as fast as possible, I arrived at Haslev. The Danish State Church's Inner Mission runs a Peasants' school there, and the village is of such quality that the Danish government recommends Haslev to those who wish to see the Danish rural culture. Its population is a mere 2000 people, but it is the center of The Inner Mission's education movement. Besides the Higher Peasants' School there is an Agricultural School, a Teachers' school, a Crafts' School and a Bible School.²¹

All the buildings are very solid and so spacious that had they been in Japan one would imagine them to house several thousands of people.

The Higher Peasants' School principal, Mr. Davidsen, kindly received me and immediately treated me to a cup of coffee and some sweets. Neither in the US nor in Europe, except for Denmark, have I experienced that guests are first treated to coffee and sweets. People here are really most kind, and I immediately felt I had arrived in the land of Hans Christian Andersen, the great fairytale teller.

I was particularly impressed with the female students' graceful nejen. When they shake hands, the women always take a short step back with the right leg, turn it slightly

20 K: *ferauere no noumin gakkou kouchou pitaruson* フェラウエレの農民学校校長ピタルソン. Faarevejle High School was founded by IM in 1907, and according to available sources between 1912 and 1934 it was lead by Carl Marius Julin (1882-1963) (Lammefjordsbyen 2013 <http://www.lammefjordsbyen.dk/adelters-alle/faarevejle-hoejskole>, viewed 11 November 2013; see also Holt 1961, p. 652). Winther 1925 does not identify the host at Faarevejle Højskole. In 2014, the school's name is Oddsherreds Efterskole.

21 According to local archives, the following institutions were opened in Haslev: *The first mission house (1871), *Haslev Højskole ([Folk] High School, 1891), *The Mission House Bethesda (1894), Teknisk Skole (Technical School, 1897), Haslev Håndværkerskole (Artisans' School, 1900), Haslev Landbrugsskole (Agricultural School, 1904), Haslev Seminarium (Teachers' School, 1905), Haslev Handelsskole (Merchants' School, 1908), Haslev Kontrolskole (Dairy products controller school, 1914), Haslev Gymnasium (Haslev High School, 1919), *Haslev Udvidede Højskole ("Expanded" [People's] High School, 1922). * = Institution belonging to IM. In 1922, the official population figure for Haslev was 5000 people. (Cf. Faxø, 2013).

and partially bent their knees to express the outmost reverence.

You often see it in motion pictures, and I have heard this reverential greeting was a custom in the US sixty or seventy years ago, but I did not know it was still preserved in Denmark.

The Peasants' High School had started its season for women on May 1st. Consequently, there were a hundred and fifty young women from all over Denmark gathered in Haslev. Compared to the daughters of Germany their features are beautiful, and nine of ten are beauties. I did not see a single face like those of the mal-nurtured peasant girls in Japan. All of them had apple chins and shone like stars. Their clothes were all hand sewn, and it is my impression the girls had crafted them well with strips and colors to their tastes.

First, I participated in Principal Davidsen's Bible class. The 150 students listened in outmost silence. They sang the hymns really well.

Then we had lunch, and I was fortunate to eat with the 150 young people. The dining hall was right under the lecture hall, and at one end hung three big national flags of Denmark, Sweden and Norway. I asked the headmaster why they were displayed, and he answered, the peoples are of one race and speak one tongue, wherefore the flags are displayed as a sign of affection. I liked his words. With such actions and this kind of education, Sweden, Norway and Denmark will probably be united some day. Then we sang a hymn of grace before the meal. A very pleasant verse it was. It could be because we were in the North, but the food was of the Danish, seriously fatty kind. And sweet.

The principal joked,

“Our cream and bacon are the only things of a world class quality we can serve you, so as long as you are in Denmark, please eat to your heart's content.”

Indeed, cream production alone accounts for an annual export worth more than thirty million yen. And the bacon is of a superior quality that has made Danish Bacon a world brand.

Some of the young women were on duty for the meal, and they served everything

without looking bothered. We ate in groups and friends seated themselves table-wise. After the meal, a teacher gave me a tour of the dormitory, the stables, the handicraft classrooms and the area for physical education.

All students live in the dormitory, wherefore it looks most intimate. The rooms are about 12-mat wide [roughly 20 meters square] with three or four simple beds. The rooms' interiors are simple, but decorated according to the girls' tastes and therefore have a most pleasant atmosphere.

I was surprised by the cleanliness of the stables. They were several times healthier than the two-mat row houses inhabited by the people in Kobe's Fukuai Shinkawa, where I lived for many years. I envy the Danish pigs when I think of how they live in a better environment than the Japanese people. I suppose that explains why they make the world's best bacon (smoked pork).

The handicraft-classrooms were comparatively not as exquisite, but I was told that the young men, who use them for five months between November and March, with a mere 27 classes of handicraft drills nevertheless learn the techniques for making common furniture.

Right then began the girls' gymnastics, but I was asked not to look, because they do it stark naked.²²

Before I heard this, I did not know that Danish peasant girls were taught world-class gymnastics. I believed that as peasant children they were not given physical education.

22 The Japanese gloss is 真裸 *mappadaka*. According to an expert on the history of women's physical exercises in Denmark, Professor Emeritus Ellen Tranbæk, Copenhagen University Department of Nutrition, Exercise and Sports, there has not been a practice of naked gymnastics in Denmark (personal correspondence of 26 August 2013). Her colleague and expert on the history of physical education in Denmark, Professor Hans Bonde, has confirmed this observation (personal correspondence, 31 August 2013). In Germany, naked physical exercises was part of the Nacktkultur or Freikörperkultur since the 1870s (cf. Toepfer 1997, pp. 30 ff), and in Denmark naked swimming was not uncommon among young boys, partially documented by J.F. Willumsen's painting "Badende Børn på Skagen Strand" [Bathing Children at Skagen Beach] of 1909.

But that is not how it is. In Denmark, they say they do gymnastics in order to develop the psyche so they do gymnastics in earnest. Grannies and mothers and daughters all get together, get naked and do gymnastics.²³

Coming to Denmark, it feels like I have come to the land of eternally rejuvenating. Just everything I hear and see is novel to me. Unlike the big countries, Denmark does not engage herself endlessly in wars, wherefore she can devote all her energy to the improvement of her citizens' lives.

As we toured the school, I asked, how poor peasant youths could afford the school fees. This is what the teacher explained to me.

A winter season's five-month course costs the equivalent of about 570 Japanese yen. However, government support covers half of it. The Danish government has completely abolished its navy and reduced its army to 3000 men and spends the money on the citizens' education.²⁴ Consequently, every small private school receives governmental support as long as it has students.

Hearing this really made me jealous. The age has come to Denmark where military expenses has been repealed and the funds allocated for education.

The young teacher showed me his home. It lies near the exercise place, a shabby one-story house but he is satisfied living there with a beautiful wife and their baby. Though the outside is shabby, the inside is verily fine. I don't believe even Japanese in America have furniture of such quality. Seeing this convinced me that a Danish schoolteacher can lead a comparatively affluent life.

As a special feature of the Peasants Schools all teachers live in the same school

23 K: *rooba mo okamisan mo, musume mo, mina issho ni natte, mappadaka ni natte taisou wo suru to iu koto de atta* 老婆もおかみさんも、娘も、みな一緒になって、真裸になって体操をするとうことであった。(p. 126).

24 W. has a comment on the fact that DK had scaled down its military expenses to a lesser degree than zero – see Winther 1925, p. 52

Claiming to be in tune with Denmark's commitment to the League of Nations, a 1922-Defense Law had reduced the navy and army. The navy was not completely abolished but reduced to one-third of its previous size (Wismann 2006, p. 6).

buildings as the students. Precisely like the Japanese *private elementary schools in the Edo period*. That condition enables the character building education. Like headmaster Davidsen in Haslev, everybody with their whole family live together with the students. I want similar schools in Japan.

I then saw a Danish-styled church with more than four hundred years of history.²⁵ Remains of the Catholic age's customs are clearly visible. However, there are no pictures but there is a cross on the altar. Leaving the church, I went to the Artisans' School.

The Artisans' School has the largest building among all the schools in Haslev, a four-storied impressive thing. Students and teachers live there and work diligently under the motto "Work is Prayer".²⁶ This school also opens five months in the winter for men and four months in the summer for women. The summer course has a mere one hundred female students, so few that one almost does not know where they are in the big school building.

On the flight of stairs in front of the main entrance sat three or four female students working their lace tools the best they could. Because it was the main entrance, I could not help feel the school's atmosphere is freedom all the more. Coming up to the third floor we saw a lesson of cutting western clothes. Ascending to the fourth floor, twenty handlooms were lined up and a class of weaving began.

This surprised me, so I asked the female teacher who guided us:

"Has Denmark taught the handloom for a long time?"

The teacher answered:

"No, we did not teach it until last year. The spinning companies were too strong.

25 The church mentioned by K. is Haslev Kirke, whose the earliest remains date back to the 12th century and were preceded by a wooden structure in the 11th century. The core of the building K. saw dates from the early 15th century with an enlargement made in 1914-16 due to the many schools for adult education K. describes (Haslev 2013).

26 K. renders the motto of St. Benedict *ore et labore* (pray and work) in Japanese as *roudou sunawachi* (or *soku*) *kitou* 『労働即祈祷』, where the connector indicates identity or immediate sequence, as for instance in the 16th Century Buddhist Suzuku Shosan's expression 農業即仏行 Farming is Buddha practice.

However we realized that some special Danish weavings cannot be woven on spinning machines, so they are woven by peasant women as a side job, whereby they can make a decent income, and we began the teaching.”

Next to the weaves I saw what had been woven, and, indeed, these sophisticated fabrics could only have been made by very advanced heads.

It reminded me of my childhood; in my countryside home in Awa we had an Awa weave and I had to help working the shuttle and assist with the reeling. In the past, as I helped my stepmother with the fabrics of the handloom, I also wove an inch or two. Therefore, it made me most happy to witness the return of the handloom as a source of an extra income in the Danish rural culture.

We also have many places in Japan, where weaving flourishes as the main occupation. Mikawa and Totomi, where wooden weaves are plentiful, produce half of Japan's cotton fabrics, I have heard. Silk weaving flourish in the Amino area of Tango and Echigo's Goizumi area. But I don't think there are anywhere in Japan, where the handloom has had a renaissance as a side income for peasants like in Denmark.

The Danish Artisan's School for men is completely different from those in Japan in that it focuses on the real craft and is dissociated from the machine techniques of the painter, furniture carpenter, carpenter, and black smith. The students are in apprenticeship during the summer, then come to school for four consecutive winters to continue their education.

In precisely the same fashion, the Agricultural School teaches real science. The Peasants' High School differs from it in being focused on teaching rural culture, while the former emphasizes the technical aspects.

The Bible School, too, is an interesting organization. It is open also to those with no intent to make it a career but for personal development wants to study the Bible with experts in the winter or the summer season. The school accepts they come and study as they please.

When I saw the Bible School, I thought, “It would be good, if we had similar free

Christian educational places in Japan.”²⁷

The Teachers’ School was rather worn compared to the other schools, but I learned that a hundred and some tens of students board the beautiful garden and beautiful building. Here they are filled with the Danish spirit and go to spread it in other regions of the country. A new Danish national flag was hoisted in front of the building, which somehow made it look like a teachers’ school.

All of Haslev is situated right in the heart of a plain,²⁸ so it has no view worth mentioning, but I was really pleased that such a middle of an endless plain had been chosen for building this big cultural center.

A natural-wood speaker’s platform had been raised in a chestnut wood behind the town, and at two in the afternoon, about fifteen hundred audiences including students and people from neighboring villages had gathered there. A local paper estimated the audiences to have been 700-800, see picture. Given the solitude of the countryside, I (could hardly believe it but) appreciated that so many people had gathered. It testified to the Danes’ degree of cultivation, and I could tell how starved was their hunger for knowledge by the look in their eyes. The audiences sat down in the grass, and from the speaker’s platform I spoke to them first in English then in Japanese. Of course, Mr. Winther, who lived in Japan as a missionary for a decade plus some years, translated the Japanese.²⁹

Kagawa in Haslev, 14 May 1925



27 K: *Nihon nimo konna jiyuuna shuukyō kyōiku no kikan ga areba ii naa* 日本にもこんな自由な宗教教育の機関があれば善いなア (p.128). Jiyuu = free, personal volition – “free” is a keyword in this text; shuukyō = in 2014 it means religion in general, but K. seems to mean “Christian” specifically.

28 K: *Heigen no manmannaka* 平原の真真中

29 W. had been a missionary 1898-1921.

I spoke for about an hour, and right after that I should go fifty kilometers north towards Fårevejle Peasants' School.³⁰

The principal Petersen would drive us in his own car.

As I exited Haslev Peasants' School gates, the female students lined up on both sides of the road and sang my farewell in Danish, hymn number hundred and two in the Japanese Hymnbook.³¹

Hymn 102

Japanese text	(Translated by Hermansen)
iesu kimi ha / ito uruwashi	Oh graceful Lord Jesus
ame tsuchi no shu naru/	Ruler of heaven and earth
kami no miko / hito no ko wo/	Child of God, human kid
nani nika ha tatohen	With what may I compare you?

This was really beyond my expectations and touched me very much.

³⁰ Today the distance is about 70 kilometers.

³¹ The melody is The Crusaders' Hymn. The Japanese text is translated from a German hymn, the first verse of which is: Schönster Herr Jesu / Schöpfer aller Dinge / Gottes und Marien Sohn / Dich will ich lieben! / Dich will ich ehren/ Meiner Seelen Freud und Wonn (Most beautiful Lord Jesus/ Creator of all things/ The son of God and Maria/ You I will love/ You I will honor/ My Soul's Joy and Bliss). The Danish text sung by the women is different, written by B. S. Ingemann: Dejlig er jorden! Prægtig er Guds Himmel! Skøn er sjælens pilgrimsgang! Gennem de favre / riger på jorden/ gå vi til Paradis med sang. (Lovely is the Earth/ Impressive is God's heaven/ Beautiful is the pilgrim march of the souls/ Through the fair/ Kingdoms on Earth/ We walk to Paradise singingly.)

Kagawa's song

Transliteration ³²	Translation
Utae yo, utsukushiki koe age	Sing, lift up you beautiful voices
Musume yo, folkshuure no musume yo	Oh daughters, daughters of the
Kiyoki koe wo age	Volksschule
Denmaaku no nohara ni	Lift up you pure voices ----
Atarashiki hikari wo ukuru tame ni ----	On the plain of Denmark
Taiyou ha kagayaki	To receive a new light ---
Mori ha shinsou ni koru ---	The sun shines
Kokoni Bekku no seishin wo kunde	The wood is dressed-up anew (lit.
Hakuou no tenchi no shinkou no hatake	refurbished) ---
wo	Draw of the spirit-well of Beck ³³ here
Takayasan to suru	To cultivate
Otome yo utae	The Nordic faith fields of heaven and
Sumeru gogatsu no sora no gotoku	earth
	Fair maidens sing
	Like the clear sky of May

(1925/5/14)

The plains on the way to Fårevejle are like those on the way to Ishikarikawa on Hokkaidō. They differ from the Ishikarikawa plains in not having any forest and in that all the peasant houses are poor-looking and many are thatched with thin wheat straw, like the ones on Manchuria's plains.

I immediately associated them with the beautiful grass-thatched Japanese peasant houses, and thought Denmark was the poorer in this aspect.

I gave a lecture at Fårevejle Peasants' school that evening, and again the

32 K: 歌へよ 美しき声を上げて／娘よ 人民学校の娘よ／清き声をあげて—／デンマークの野原に／新しき光を受くる為に—／太陽は輝き／森は新装にこる—／ここにベックの精神を汲んで／北歐の天地の信仰の畑を／耕さんとする乙女よ 歌へ／澄める五月の空の如く p. 128.

33 K. refers to the charismatic leader of the IM, Vilhelm Beck. See his explanation in his letter to a friend below.

female students sent me off with a hymn (one written by the Huguenots during their persecution), and by car we were rushed more than eighty kilometers to the station. That day, Mr. Petersen drove his car over one hundred and fifty kilometers for my sake. I gave him heartfelt thanks for his kindness.

We crossed a narrow strait on a steamship, rode a train, and crossed another narrow strait³⁴ so I hardly slept that night before we arrived at Lagermünde High School by the German boarder.³⁵ This was not specifically for Peasants' children, but a privately managed school of an unusual and interesting shape. Having finished my lecture there, we rushed by car eighty kilometers over the plains of Slesvig to Askov Peasants' School. That night, we stayed in the home of Askov's principal Dr. Appel.³⁶

From Askov

A Letter to a Friend in Japan

Dear Mr. S

It has been quite a while since I wrote you last. When I left Japan, a visit to Denmark was high on my wish list, and now I am in Denmark. The day before yesterday, I saw Haslev and Fårevejle and yesterday I stayed over at Askov Peasants' School, managed in person by the former Minister of Education, Dr. Appel. When I am back in Japan, I really would like to emulate the Danes, but that seems impossible. First

34 The first of the straits is undoubtedly Storebælt [Greater Belt] that separates Sjælland (Sealand Island) from Fyn [Funen Island]. Thus the train took Kagawa across Funen. Then they were ferried over Lillebælt [Smaller Belt] between Fyn and Jylland [Jutland].

35 K: *doitsukyou no ragaarumundeno koutougakkouni tuita* ドイツ境のラガールムンデの高等学校に着いた。(p.129). It has not been possible to find a locality near the Danish German boarder named Ragaarumunde or Lagermünde. In W.'s records of the tour they arrived at Løgumgård Skole (Winther 1925, p. 60). It was a Højskole founded by IM in 1920 and closed again in 1929 (cf. Historisk Atlas 2013 - keyword "Institutionen Løgumgaard").

36 Jakob Christian Lindberg Appel, 1866-1931, principal of Askov Højskole 1906-1928. Minister of Education 1910-13, 1920-1924. Askov Højskole was the second of its kind founded in 1865.

of all, the peoples' commitments are different. In Denmark, the small-scale peasants all have their own land thanks to a system whereby they can take out an interest-free loan from a self-producers' fund with a capital of one hundred and fifty million yen. This is very different from Japan's attempt to set its 3.7 million small-scale peasants free by stingily dishing out a meager seven million yen annually. In Denmark, there is a higher degree of security of existence in the village than in the town. Consequently, those who can stand the slightly more dull life in the countryside, happily choose to live there. Even the poorest small-scale peasant in Denmark owns a farm of some 30 acres.³⁷

However, dear S. the matter³⁸ is not only economy. The matter of the Danish villages is at a more fundamental / deeper level. They have achieved so much thanks to Christianity. In general, the citizens say in Copenhagen that it has been defeated by the materialistic view of history, and the same trend is evident in the villages. I was surprised to learn how Christian the Danish Peasants' schools are. Even the mission schools in Japan cannot be more Christian than they. Christianity lives in Denmark. The matter of her villages shows not in statistics and figures, it is hidden in a secret.³⁹ You always praise the patriot Grundtvig and he IS important, but since my arrival, I learned there is yet another giant benefactor of Denmark. His name is Vilhelm Beck.⁴⁰ He is a Christian little known outside Denmark, but in this country his great work is like that of

37 30acres=12ha. 1899-1940 is labeled "The Period of Parceling Out" in Danish Agricultural History, because laws were implemented to dissolve what remained of the absolute monarchy's aristocratic land ownership. The first law on "Statshusmand" – State Smallholders" of 1899 initiated the period. In 1913, Denmark had 2000 entailed estates of 150 hectares, 70000 farms of 30 hectares and 100000 smallholders of 7 hectares on average. New laws of 1919 and financial initiatives in 1920 increased the speed of parceling out to create more smallholders, more than 9000, with more land each, 8 hectares on average. Thus Kagawa's summary is right in the outline but exaggerated in the details (cf. Hansen 2008).

38 "matter" = the Japanese *mondai* 問題, often translated as "problem" but here the idea seems to be "uniqueness" or "focus" or "what is particular."

39 K: *denmaaku no nouson mondai ha toukei ya suuji de arawasenai tokoroni, hikketsu ga yokotaotteimasu* デンマークの農村問題は統計や数字で表せない所に、秘訣が横倒って居ます。

40 K: *uiriamu bekku* ウイリアム・ベック William Beck, but his name was Vilhelm (p.130).

General Booth in England.⁴¹ Haslev, the center of Danish Peasants' Culture, was born by Beck's influence, and besides Haslev the Inner Mission, founded by Beck, operates nine Peasants' schools. All of them perform pretty well.

About seventy years ago, Danish Christianity had come to a standstill. Almost simultaneously with Grundtvig, Beck started the largest revival movement in Denmark. Today, his disciples spend more than five million yen annually on social projects in little Denmark. For the Peasants they have set up Peasants' schools, for the workers they have set up Artisans' schools, for the seamen they have seamen's homes in twenty four places throughout the country and in the cities and towns – no matter how small a rural town – there is a mission hotel. It is a complete Christian net battling for the people's purity.

It is impossible to overlook the influence of Vilhelm Beck on Danish life. It flourishes in the village churches. I am really envious.

Without Christianity, it will be impossible to create a country like Denmark. The history of the Japanese production cooperation is not new anymore. But, why is it impossible to establish a complete industrial cooperation in Japan? In Denmark, they have made the perfect cooperation. In towns like Haslev, there would be at least a hundred small retailers if it was in Japan, but here there is only one. It is the Consumers' Cooperation.

Mutual neighbor cooperation has become a religion in Denmark. This has not been drilled in the Japanese villages. I find this point very important.

There is no doubt that Grundtvig's influence is rather important. Thirty some People's High Schools have been built in eternal memory of his name.

Of course, not everybody labeled a Grundtvigian is Christian. However, Christianity has become the norm of the Danes. Their Christian lifestyle is really refreshing. It is far more Christian than the lifestyle of the Protestants in Japan.

There are two Grundtvigian groups. One values Grundtvig's Christian spirit

41 William Booth, 1829-1912, the founder of the Salvation Army and its leader 1878-1912.

above all, while the other values his patriotic spirit highest. Thinking of Grundtvig in Japanese terms, he was like a combine of Arai Hakuseki and Ninomiya Sontoku.⁴² Later, the aspects of this great person were disconnected, and the two groups fight among themselves to be the principle one.⁴³ Anyway, Grundtvig's influence is tremendous.

My dear S., if we want to improve the villages, I think we'll after all have to do it the Grundtvigian way. I mean, it has to come from the soil. Japan cannot do it the Russian or the German way, but in the Danish fashion we must start with a spiritual improvement of the villages. As one does not feel economy preservation is a pressing issue in the villages, nor does one feel a need for protecting their spiritual social structures. It is undeniable that some tens of percent of the many young people moving away from rural Japan do so, not only due to an economic pressure but also due to dissatisfaction with family life, mostly morally dissatisfaction. A society may be poor but if it has love, it really is happy, whereas a loveless society is unhappy even if it has money. This must given serious attention when considering the issues of marriage etc. in rural areas.

Denmark also has twenty-three Socialist Peasants' Schools based on materialism. I have been told they are not very prosperous. Today, under His Majesty, a socialist cabinet wields the political power. In spite of their influence their Peasants' Schools do not prosper, wherefore we can fairly well imagine what the Danish Peasants think.

I repeat. Concerning Denmark's rural situation our attention should not focus on numbers or statistics. It should focus on the fundamental spiritualism. No matter how much, if Japan imitates the surface only, I doubt she will succeed. Our focus should be on the social structure of love.⁴⁴ That is, on agreement. On love. On ideal. On cooperation.

42 Arai Hakuseki 新井白石 (1657-1725), Edo period polyhistor, samurai and Confucian scholar. Ninomiya Sontoku 二宮尊徳 (1787-1856), Japanese agricultural leader, philosopher, moralist and economist.

43 K: *honzanarasoi wo shiteiru* 本山争いをして居る, literally a fight to become the main seat of a (Buddhist) denomination or group. Before 1946, the *honzan* was the ultimate authority dictating the rules for its organization and punishing disobedience.

44 K: *ai no shakai soshiki* 愛の社会組織.

I am heartily happy that I came to Denmark. Visiting Denmark, I have genuinely understood the meaning of Christianity in the life of a people. While Europe's big nations plunder their colonies to their hearts content and have sacrificed twenty five million souls in their mutual war without thinking much of it, Denmark has transgressed warfare and put its efforts into the social structure of love.

Thus I have thought --- if you want to see Europe, do not visit the big nations. The smaller ones are much better ruled. I am truly pleased to have seen Belgium, Holland and Denmark. I feel touring these countries have shown me the real Europe. England, France or Germany is not the real Europe. They are hell.⁴⁵

Coming to Denmark I have felt our ideal for rural reconstruction is more problematic. I cannot imagine we can solve this issue with physical strength or weapons like the Russian communists. I also don't think it would suffice even if we hired Grundtvig, Douglass (who planted trees in Denmark's deserts and turned sand dunes into green fields)⁴⁶, Kumazawa Banzan and Ninomiya Sontoku all together.

When I come back to Japan, I intent to calm down a bit. Here I mean calm down spiritually. I have no intention of making withered wood bloom. I want to be a seed sower all my life. Initially, Grundtvig's school had only four students. I want to start with four students.

The fieldworker knows this. Who sows in the spring must wait for the autumn. I will arm me with patience. When one is involved in a social movement the endless wait can be nerve wrecking, but one must brace oneself.

I love the Japanese people and want to cleanse it by following the path of Beck and Grundtvig. Please cleanse yourself in same way. Here, ten thousand miles from Japan, I pray for you.

45 K: *Igirisu ya furansu ya doitsu ha, yooroppa deha arimasen. Are ha jigoku desu.* イギリスやフランスやドイツは、ヨーロッパではありません。あれは地獄です。(p. 131)

46 K: *dogurasu* ドグラス [Douglass] must be a reference to Enricho Mylius Dalgas (1828-1894), made famous in Japan by Uchimura Kanzō's essay "Denmaruku koku monogatari" [A Story of Denmark], published in 1911.

The Female Students Weave

At Askov High School the female students weave. They live under the same roof as the former minister of education and really enjoy their time.

I wish one of Japan's former ministers of education would have Mr. Appel's courage. The night I visited Askov, I met Mr. Hirabayashi Hirono, head of the Youths' Section under Tokyo's Bureau of Social Education.⁴⁷ He is studying there, and he repeatedly told me, "It is the Christianity. It is the Christianity. The Danish spirit is the Christianity." In the morning on the 16th, I went with Mt. Winther to his field of mission, Hjern:⁴⁸ a little, isolated village a five-hour steam train ride North of Askov.

I spent two nights at his quite parsonage and observed the Sabbath, 17 May there.⁴⁹ That day, the village assistant stationmaster couple celebrated its silver wedding anniversary wherefore all the villagers had set the flag to honor them.

In the afternoon on the Sabbath, I was asked to give a talk on Christianity for 1500 people gathered in the birch wood of a small park in the neighboring town a mile away.⁵⁰ Most sat on a hill listening to me.

47 Hirabayashi Hirono 平林広人 1886-1986, educator, librarian, studied at a Danish People's High School (Folkehøjskole) from 1924 for three years. After his return to Japan, he taught North European Studies at Tōkai University. Translator of H.C. Andersen's tales and author of several studies on Danes related to Japan. Cf. Azumino 2009

48 K: *Hadyaan* ハヂヤアン Exactly what K. heard and chose to transliterate this way is not clear. Winther was pastor in Hjern (ヒェアム in the local dialect or イェアム in standard Danish), located between the two towns of Struer ストルア to the North and Holstebro ホルステブロ to the South.

49 K: *Go gatsu juushichi nichi no ansokubi wo mamotta*. 五月一七日の安息日を守った. Here is a discrepancy with the calendar. 17 May 1925 was a Sunday, but Sabbath is traditionally the last day of the week, i.e., Saturday.

50 Winther 1925: "Lørdag talte han ved et Friluftsmøde i Holstebro, hvor der mindst var 1500 Mennesker til Stede. Søndag vilde han være i Ro paa Landet, men var med ved Gudstjenester" (p.60) > Saturday, he gave a talk at an open air gathering in Holstebro, with more than 1500 people present. Sunday, he wanted to rest in the countryside, but participated in two worship services." One Danish mile = 10 kilometers, but did K. calculate in Danish measures?

Back from the neighboring town, in the parsonage alone in the middle of fields?) I sat down on the stairs of the back garden. Listening to the Danish skylarks I suddenly felt very lonely. (In my book *Eien no nyūbō* [The eternal breast] I refer to the Danish sparrows.)

The sun sets behind the small village church with the unusual roman roof. Here, at the 55th Northern latitude the sun never reaches the horizon no matter how long you wait. After half an hour it has only come half way down. The skylark keeps singing. The sky glows red. The sun still does not set. I see the bay far away and silently pray for Japan. Being a Northern country the cold chill of the evening shrouds my body. I button my overcoat and listen intensely to the skylarks that keep singing their beautiful evening song.



Andrea and Jens M.T. Winther. Hjerm parsonage, 1924
Photo by Maya Winther

Conclusion

Judged by Kagawa's enthusiastic discussion of Vilhelm Beck, one may assume Winther felt his mission accomplished. As noted above, the roles of Beck and the Inner Mission movement were not uncontested by contemporary Danes, and it remains a topic of discussion among sociologists to what extent Christian ethics indeed were the foundation of Danish economic success in the 20th century. Opponents to their significance argue the importance of the social democratic movement, which Kagawa refers to but immediately dismisses as impotent. Had he been taken to the labor movement's People's High School, his evaluation might have been different, though this remains a speculation.

Kagawa followed up on his idea of a farmer's high school when he had returned to Japan.⁵¹ Called Nihon noumin fukuin gakkou (Japanese peasants' gospel school) the first was located in Kawaragi Village near Nishinomiya city a bit west of Osaka. It opened in February 1927 and ran for one month (Kaneda 2008). Excellent teachers were invited to give lectures that cultivated the agriculturists. Until 1942, the school was continued in this way, both in Kawaragi and in other places.

Nevertheless, Winther did not find Kagawa to be a Christian of the genuine Inner Mission kind. He would criticize the quality of his faith in later years. Kagawa on his side, as far as I have probed did not return to Winther either, but his impressions of Denmark remained positive. He visited the country again in 1950, and again spoke to a large crowd.

Appendix 1

Kagawa's speech, as briefly summarized in *Kristeligt Dagblad* (Christian Daily):

"He told us not only about the poverty in Japan, but especially about the misery

51 For introducing me to this fact, I would like to thank Mr. Nishi at the Kagawa Memorial Center in Kobe.

of heathenness; how, despite its many good, even splendid ideas it is unable to help or restrain anybody, and unable to give a soul peace and joy.

“He told us about Marx and his theories as well as about their importance materially speaking, but emphatically maintained that they could never solve the workers’ issues or enrich the work condition, that is possible for the love of Jesus alone.

“He made a very strong demand to the European Christians, not at least to Denmark’s Christians, a demand, worded differently, but briefly expressible in one word: reality, not only know Christ, but live him, not merely recognize Christianity, but act it.

“His was a voice of warning against merely make do with the glory and the name [Skinnet og Navnet], against getting loaded with the many so-called “goods” of the world, but to live in modesty and work for the sake of others, as otherwise we are doomed to fall, nay to destruction.

“He forcefully spoke about self-sacrifice and about the responsibility that rests on anyone who has received anything from the good hand of God. This was said by a man who himself felt that responsibility, who obeyed its demands and who has sacrificed – sacrificed more than most of us are aware. In addition he has proved that even extreme self-submission in one can lead a life of happiness, and that not matter how poor ones external conditions are, one may have an inexpressible satisfaction and joy, as long as the Lord lives in ones heart.” (Winther 1925, pp. 62-63)

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