

共同訳聖書について

財団法人 日本聖書協会

東京都中央区銀座 4 - 5 - 1

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財団法人 日本聖書協会 東京都中央区銀座4-5-1

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共同訳聖書翻訳の成るまで

「初めに言^{ことば}があつた」「言^{ことば}は神であつた」「すべてのものは、これによつてできた。できたもののうち、一つとしてこれによらないものはなかった」。「ヨハネによる福音書」はその冒頭で、このように宣言しているのであります。

わたしたちが、なにごとかを計画するとき、すべて、自分たちで推進しているかのように思いがちであります。これは錯覚と言うよりほかにありません。殊に、聖書の翻訳といった大きな問題になりますと、わたしたちの心のなかから、あらゆる種類の錯覚を取り除いて、ひたすら、主なる神の御導きのみ依り頼まなければならないのであります。

さて、目下進行中の共同訳聖書翻訳計画の経過を見ますと、不思議な御導きのあつ

たことを思わずにはおられないのであります。このことを、少し振り返って見たいと思います。

話は一九六七年頃にさかのぼるのですが、その頃は、高度経済成長の波が高まってきた、そのため社会のあちらこちらに、さまざまなヒズミが出ていたのです。トインビーのことばをまつまでもなく、民衆は、心のすきま風を防ぐ霊的なものを求めている時期でありました。そんな時、カトリック教会の有志と聖書協会関係者との間に懇談の会がもたれ、民衆の求めに応じるため、「ショートタームバイブル」といったものの出版の可能性が話し合われたのであります。

カトリック教会側で、このような懇談の推進役に立たれたのは、B・シュナイダー神父とかJ・スパー神父とかいったかたたちでありました。聖書協会としても竹森満佐一先生に相談にのっていただいたりしたこともありました。また、故遠藤敏雄先生に、原案を作成していただくようお願いしたこともありました。このようなことは、暗中模索の時期のエピソードであります。しかし、計画は幾たびか不発に終わりました。

たが、共通の問題について、カトリック教会の有志と聖書協会関係者とが懇談し、相互に知り合うことができたことはまことに幸いなことでありました。神は、このような機会をとおして、次の段階に入る準備をさせてくださったのであると思います。従ってこの時点において話し合われた内容は、非公式なもので、理事会にも余り報告されていらないのであります。

一九六八年の秋頃になりまして、徐々に機が熟してきましたので、問題を公式に取り上げる方向に進めて行ったのであります。

この時期になって一つの変化があらわれてきました。それは、「ショーター・バイブル」の計画が影をひそめて、民衆の求めに応じるような、聖書の翻訳をすることができないものであろうか、ということが、真剣に討議せられるようになったことであります。

この背景には、数次にわたる翻訳に関する研修会が、八王子や台湾において行われ、それが、アジア地域の聖書翻訳事業に、大きな貢献をしたという事実のあることを忘

れてはならないのであります。これらの研修会におけるE・A・ナイダ博士やR・G・ブラッチャー博士のすぐれた指導ぶりは、長く記憶されることと思うのであります。

一九六九年五月十三日から二十一日にわたって開かれた、カトリック教会の全国司教会定例委員会においては、「共同訳聖書可能性検討委員会」に、カトリック教会からの委員の出席を公式に認めることになりました。これと並行して、聖書協会においても理事会において、正式に同様のことが決定されたのであります。

共同訳聖書翻訳の可能性を検討するうえに役立ったのは、聖書協会世界連盟から出ている、「聖書翻訳におけるプロテスタントとカトリックの共同作業のための標準原則」であります。これを踏み台として検討を重ねてきたのであります。

一九六九年七月二十一日第一回の共同訳聖書可能性検討委員会以来、四回の会合を重ねた委員会は、一九七〇年三月二十三日に答申書を提出して、そのなかで、委員会としては、「共同訳は必要かつ可能であるとの結論」に達したこと、そして、「その方法については、United Bible Societies (聖書協会世界連盟) と Secretariat for Pro-

moting Christian Unity (キリスト教一致推進事務局)との間に締結された、Guiding Principles for Interconfessional Cooperation in Translating the Bible (前述の標準原則)に従って実行することがよい」と考えたと記しています。なお、共同訳聖書実行委員会を組織して、五名ずつの委員を選出することも提案されています。

第一回共同訳聖書実行委員会は、一九七〇年八月二十七日にクリスチャンセンターで開かれました。Z・イエール、B・シュナイダー、P・ネメシエギ、相馬信夫(後に平田三郎)、寺西英夫、岸千年、後藤真、前田護郎、東ヶ崎潔、高橋度の諸氏が委員として選任せられ、また、七名からなるプログラム委員が選ばれました。事務は、日本聖書協会翻訳部が担当することとなりました。

実行委員会は、カトリック教会や聖書協合理事会、さらには、聖書訳語委員会や、共同訳聖書編集委員会と緊密な連絡をもちながら、翻訳に必要な費用を準備したり、翻訳者を委嘱するなど諸般の手配に万全を期するよう努力してきましたのであります。

その間、翻訳は新約部門、旧約部門ともに進展して、新約部門においては、二十七

書の全部の原稿が出そろうまでになりました。しかし、出版となるまでには、編集委員会、検討委員会、および国語専門委員会等の関門を通過しなければなりません。殊に、民衆の心の求めに応じるといふ大目標に添うものでなければなりません。こういうわけで、今回は、「ルカスによる福音」をまず、出版することに踏みきったのであります。これまで各種の委員会において貢献された諸先生に感謝するとともに、常に委員とともに現臨なさり、恵みと導きとを賜った主なる神に栄光を帰し奉る次第であります。ルカスによる福音を手につけられる読者の皆様が、この福音によってわたしたちの主イエスス・キリストにまで導かれて行かれることを祈る次第であります。

昭和五十年九月十五日

共同訳聖書実行委員会

共同議長 平田三郎

全 岸 千年

「共同訳聖書」翻訳の方針

数年にわたる祈りが聞かれて、三十九名の翻訳者による共同訳聖書の初穂がささげられるにいたったことは、関係者一同にとって深い喜びであります。

聖書はキリスト教の基本的文書でありますから、その内容は新しい翻訳によって変わるということはありません。しかし、その本文は新しい写本の発見などにより、徐々に原形に近いものとせられ、また、従来難解であった語句も新しい研究によってその原意が的確に把握されるようになってきました。

聖書正典の範囲については、カトリック教会とプロテスタント教会の間には見解の相違があり、今回の共同訳によってもそれがなくなったわけではありません。すなわち、カトリック教会においては、プロテスタント教会でアポクリファと呼ばれている

諸書（ただし第三、第四エズラ書ともいわれる第一、第二エスドラス書、およびマナセの祈りの三書を除く）を第二正典と認めております。プロテスタント教会の正典とカトリック教会の第一正典との間には何の相違ありません。

聖書の共同翻訳ということはわが国だけではなく、すでに諸外国においても着手されてはいますが、今までは余り見られなかったカトリックとプロテスタントの本格的な共同作業であります。翻訳の一般的指針としてはすでに共同作業のための標準原則が公表され、各国の翻訳者たちは大体この原則によって作業をすすめております。（「聖書翻訳におけるプロテスタントとカトリックの共同作業のための標準原則」『聖書翻訳研究』第一号、一九七〇年、四六ページ以下参照。）

共同訳の定本としては、旧約の本文は Kittel の編集した *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* を参照することになっており、新約は聖書協会世界連盟発行の「ギリシア語新約聖書」第二版 *The Greek New Testament, Second Edition, United*

Bible Societies に基づいています。この版の編集委員にはカトリック教会の代表者も加わっておりますので共通の本文といふことができます。ただし、今年中にも出版を予定されている第三版で追加または削除される語句の中で、一九七一年出版の聖書協會世界連盟版「本文に関する註記」によって察知できるものは今回の翻訳にも採用しました。第二正典（アポクリファ）に関しては、ゲッティンゲン版の「七十人訳」（現在改訂版が分冊で発行中） Septuaginta : Vetus Testamentum Graecum, Vandenhoek & Ruprecht in Göttingen. に主として従うことになっていました。

前にのべた「標準原則」に「一般的に言つて、現存する聖書の改訂を試みるよりは、新しい訳を企てることが望ましい」とうたわれているように、今回の共同訳は従来発行されているカトリック関係やプロテスタント関係の聖書をそれぞれ対比したり、組み合わせたりして翻訳されるものではありません。この共同訳では、聖書が教会以外の一般大衆にも親しまれるよう、現代的な表現を多く用い、なるべく直訳を避けて、日本語として妥当な表現を採用しています。しかし、信仰の基準の書としての性質上、

どこまでも原文に忠実であることにつとめ、また俗語・卑語に類するものはできるだけこれを避けました。

今回の共同訳においては人名・地名などの固有名詞が大幅に変えられています。そのため今までの人名・地名に慣れている人びとは一種の違和感をいだくことも考えられます。しかし、これは一方的に、また妥協的に変えたのではなく、一つの基本原則に従ったのであります。その固有名詞表記の基本原則とは、(一)原語の発音になるべく近く表記する。(二)つとめて読みやすく発音しやすく表記する。(三)地名の表記については、必ずしも原語によらず、慣用を尊重する。という三項目であります。今までは、イエズス——イエス、ペトロ——ペテロ、などカトリックとプロテスタント双方に独特の表記がありました。今回は右の原則によって、過去の教會的慣用にとらわれずに、あえて変更しました。また、新約聖書に出る人名であっても、明らかに旧約聖書に登場する人物に言及している場合には、旧約の表記に従いました。たとえば、アベルはヘベルに、イサクはイツハクになるなど、その例であります。また、母音の

長短は區別せず、一、二の例外を除いては短音であらわしました。このような決定が最終の決定であるとはいえませんが、明治以来の懸案の一つが解決の方向に向かったということはできましよう。これによって、旧新約聖書の各巻の書名も従来のもとは変わってくることは当然であります。これまでの書名はほとんど漢文聖書にそのまゝよつたもので、この点についても、今日の時点において最も適當と思われる書名が選定されました。

今回の共同訳では、初めて聖書を読む人びとのために、小見出しを付け、また新約に旧約からの引用がある場合は別の活字を用いてそのことを示し、また詩歌の部分はこれもギリシア語本文に従つて行をさげました。

前にのべましたように、新約聖書の定本は聖書協会世界連盟発行のギリシア語本文であります、その本文中に散見されるかっこ、角型かっこ、ダッシュ等の記号は煩雜でもあり、これは再記しませんでした、二重角型かっこの部分は比較的後世の写本によるものとして、「」の中に入れました。また会話文における三重かぎは避け、

本文に節が欠けている場合は、ダガー（短剣符†）によってそのことを示しました。

なおこの共同訳においては、叙述文の中では敬語を用いることをできるだけひかえましたが、会話文ではもちろん、適当な敬語を用いました。その他、だれの目にも明白な差別的用語は用いないことにしました。

訳文は総ルビ付きとして朗読の便を計り、また、新約聖書全体の翻訳完成の暁には、聖書に特有なキリスト教用語は、これを一括してその説明を巻末に加え、さらに旧約からの引用の引照表、聖書地図、度量衡、貨幣等の一覧表なども巻末に付けることになっております。

共同訳聖書編集委員会共同委員長

高 橋 虔

Yuko Hotta*
Wataru Hoyo
Kosuke Ishikawa
Masahiro Kano
Akinori Kawamura
Yoshimasa Ono
Michiko Ota
Kiyoshi Sakon*
Yasuaki Satono
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Gyoji Nabetani
Kazuo Nakamura*
Toshiaki Nishimura
Shinya Nomoto
Motosuke Ogushi
Shigeyuki Takahashi*
Yoshimoto Takahashi
Mitsuhiko Tokita
Eiji Totoki
Mikio Wada*
Hiroshi Yoshida

and of the whole Old Testament with the Apocrypha/Deuterocanonical Books four years thereafter.

The publication date of the Gospel according to Luke coincides with the celebration of the centenary anniversary of Bible Society work in Japan. It is most interesting to note that the first fascicle of the first corporate work of translation of the New Testament in Japanese, sponsored by the American Bible Society and often referred to as “the Hepburn New Testament” by reason of this scholar’s great part in this work, was precisely the Gospel according to Luke, published in August of 1875. The whole New Testament was completed four years later in 1879 and published in one volume in 1880. The translation of the Old Testament, sponsored by the Bible Societies of Britain and Scotland, was completed in 1887 and published as one work in 1888.

May this new common translation be a fitting crown to the first centenary of Bible translation work in Japan, and inaugurate a new age of unity, of renewal, and of growth of Christ’s Body. “For the rest, brothers, pray for us that the word of the Lord may make progress and be hailed by many others, even as it has been by you” (II Thessalonians 3, 1).

Translators as of September 1975 (in alphabetical order)
(Editorial committee members are indicated by an asterisk)

Teruo Akiyoshi	Sadao Kawashima
Shozo Arai	Kenichi Kida*
Isao Furuya*	Naohiro Kiyoshige
Masaru Haibara*	Takuho Kohira
Shigeo Hashimoto	Sanae Masuda
Toshihiko Hayami	Kikuo Matsunaga
Tsugio Hayashi	Michi Miyoshi
Kozaburo Hioki*	Hirohiko Mizutani

Christians in Japan. Since the special Christian terminology that has developed in the past century in Japan, and which is characteristic, more or less, of all existing Japanese translations of the Bible, is not understandable to the non-Christian, dynamically equivalent expressions are preferred, where this is possible and feasible, to those that are formally correspondent.

Likewise in view of this purpose, dynamic equivalence in the translation of more ordinary expressions as well, giving primacy to the meaning and emphasis of words or phrases in their context, is preferred to a formal correspondence or word concordance type of translation which attempts to translate the same word or phrase in an identical way in each occurrence. To give but one example, the expression "Amen, I say to you," which occurs six times in Luke, is each time rendered in a slightly different way according to the nuance of meaning or emphasis in the context.

The common Bible translation project is being supported by funds raised jointly by the Japan Bible Society and the Japan Catholic Bishops' Conference in proportion to the respective number of translators involved (as of July 1975, respectively 28 and 11). The funds raised by the Japan Bible Society are being solicited entirely within Japan; the funds raised by the Japan Catholic Bishops' Conference are likewise being raised within Japan but have been aided by a grant received from the Congregation for the Evangelization of the Nations of the Vatican and by one received from Missio in Aachen through the recommendation of the World Catholic Federation for the Biblical Apostolate.

It is very good to be able now to welcome with this introduction the publication of the Gospel according to Luke September 15, 1975, as the first fruits of this common Bible translation. Present plans call for the publication of the entire New Testament in 1976

generally transcribed according to their English or the ablative of their Latin forms, are now almost universally transcribed according to the nominative of their Latin or Greek forms respectively.

The most difficult decision of all to make in this regard concerned the transcription to be adopted for the name Jesus Christ. The more generally used Protestant form is *Iesu Kirisuto*, the recognized Catholic form is *Iezusu Kirisuto*, while the Orthodox form is *Iisusu Harisutosu*. The transcription first proposed by the Terminology Committee in strict accordance with the first general principle mentioned above was *Iesusu Kurisutosu*. The form *Iesusu* was adopted as being truly ecumenical and not a compromise from any viewpoint, while actually embodying specific elements of Protestant, Catholic, and Orthodox forms. However, in view of the fact that “Christ” is originally a title rather than a proper name (and as such is often rendered as “Savior” — *sukuinushi* — in the translation of Luke as noted above), and in recognition of the very general usage in Japan in well-known and commonly used names of Christian institutions, on newspaper mastheads and periodical publications, the form *Kirisuto* was finally preferred in accord with the third general principle to that of *Kurisutosu*, thus making the full form adopted *Iesusu Kirisuto*.

These principles of transcription are in accord with the specific aim of this translation, which is to reach out and be acceptable and understandable not only to all the various confessions within the less than 1% total Christian population of Japan, but primarily to appeal to the more than 99% non-Christian population. The purpose of this translation is not, therefore, to replace existing translations in liturgical or church use, but to be primarily kerygmatic in bringing God’s word in an understandable idiom to first readers of the Bible, and to do this as a witness of the cooperative endeavor of all

Testament, or belonging to the Old Testament, the Old Testament form is used. Thus the name for Moses in the New Testament is transcribed according to the Hebrew *Mōshe* rather than *Moisesu*. Similarly where a Greek form indicates a person whose name is properly Latin rather than Greek, such as in the case of Pontius Pilate, the Latin form is transcribed, thus: *Pontius Piratusu*. In inflected languages such as Greek and Latin it is the nominative form that is transcribed, thus making the transcription of the names of the four evangelists *Mataiosu*, *Marukosu*, *Rukasu*, and *Yohannesu*, and those of the two great apostles of the Acts *Petorosu* and *Pauros*.

2) The second general principle adopted is that of preferring transcriptions that are easy to pronounce in Japanese. Thus the vowel *y* in Greek is transcribed simply as *i* rather than *iyu*. Similarly long vowels in Greek are not specially indicated as such, nor are double consonants transcribed as such except for the preceding of two *n*'s, for which there is a congenial transcription in Japanese.

3) The third general principle adopted in the transcription of proper names is that of recognizing and accepting the common Japanese usage for a particular name when this does not correspond to the first norm of transcription given just above. This principle was found to apply to geographical names now in common use, but not to names of persons of past history, the transcriptions of which are readily changed. Examples of geographical names where modern common usage has been followed are Egypt and Greece, for which the common usage forms in Japanese are *Ejiputo* and *Girishia* respectively. These forms have been preferred to the transcriptions from the original languages as they occur in the Bible, which would be *Mitsuraimu* and *Helasu*. On the other hand the changeability of historical personal names is seen from the fact that names like Augustine and Chrysostom, which twenty or thirty years ago were

passages are enclosed in single square brackets in the translation and may be noted in an appendix to the whole New Testament indicating "Other Readings and Renderings".

Upon the completion of the translation of the New Testament, it is planned to publish the whole with a similary appended glossary or word list of explanations of terms and expressions not in common use in Japanese. Examples would be such terms as those used for "leaven" (*pandane*) in Luke 12, 1 and for "Passover" (*sugikoshi*) in Luke 22, 16. Similarly to be noted in such a glossary will be certain equivalent translations. For example, in view of Luke 2, 11, the Greek term *ho Christos* ("the Christ" or "the Messiah") is rendered as "the Savior" (*sukuinushi*) in Luke 2, 26; 4, 41; 9, 20; 20, 41; 22, 67; 23, 2.35.39; 24, 26.46. In Luke 3, 15 both *sukuinushi* and the transcription *Kirisuto* are employed. To render the term as "the Anointed," would be more formally correspondent, but would not be readily understood by a non-Christian Japanese.

A very difficult and thorny problem to which, as was mentioned above, six years of study extending to almost forty meetings were devoted by the joint terminology committee, was that of the transcription of proper names occurring in the Bible. Present Protestant, Catholic, and Orthodox usages are often not in agreement with each other, and even where they are, these forms often do not follow the norms now generally accepted in Japan for the transcription of foreign names. In accordance with these norms the following three basic principles have been adopted for this translation:

- 1) The transcription of proper names is made from the original language, which for the New Testament is Greek, for the Old Testament generally Hebrew. However, where a Greek form in the New Testament indicates a person or place mentioned in the Old

Three different kinds of parentheses marks or brackets are used in the text of *The Greek New Testament*: 1) curved line parentheses, 2) single square brackets, and 3) double square brackets. The first and second of these are not reproduced in the translation. The double square brackets are represented in the translation as single square brackets.

1) Curved line parentheses in the Greek text enclose remarks or sentences that are deemed parenthetical in the author's own expression in his sequence of thoughts, as in Luke 2, 35a and 7, 29–30. Japanese ordinarily does not use parentheses marks in this sense. If need be, dashes may be used instead.

2) Single square brackets in the Greek text enclose words which are regarded as having dubious textual validity. Many times it is impossible to indicate this dubiety in this way in the Japanese translation. For example, the presence or not of the definite article (which Japanese does not have) enclosed in single square brackets in the Greek text of Luke 11, 13 results in two slightly different translations. An example where it would be possible to reproduce the use of square brackets in the Japanese translation would be in the writing of “seventy [-two]” as the number of disciples indicated in Luke 10, 1.17. But again this is not a generally understood usage in Japanese. The words or particles included in such brackets in the Greek text have therefore regularly been translated as part of the text.

Finally, 3) double square brackets in the Greek text enclose passages which are regarded as later additions to the text, but which are of evident antiquity and importance. Such a passage in Luke that was so marked in the second edition but which it seems will not be so marked in the third edition is 22, 19b–20. A passage in the same chapter where these markings are retained is Luke 22, 43–44. Such

The Greek New Testament, edited by an international and inter-confessional group of five scholars, Kurt Aland, Matthew Black, Carlo M. Martini, Bruce M. Metzger, and Allen Wikgren, in cooperation with the Institute for New Testament Research, and published by the United Bible Societies in 1969. However, constant reference is being made to the companion work *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, by Bruce M. Metzger on behalf of and in cooperation with the editorial committee just mentioned, likewise published by the United Bible Societies, in 1971. This commentary is based on the completed but not yet published third edition of *The Greek New Testament*, the text of which will coincide with the forthcoming 26th edition of the Nestle-Aland *Novum Testamentum Graece*.

Where the text of the second and third edition of *The Greek New Testament* differ, the present translation follows the third edition as reflected in its companion volume, rather than the second edition. Thus in Luke 21, 34–35 the forthcoming third edition has been followed which understands the expression *hōs pagis*, “like a trap”, in verse 35 in the Greek, as belonging at the close of the preceding clause in verse 34, rather than at the beginning of the following clause in verse 35 as the second edition reads this passage.

Sometimes entire verses according to the traditionally received verse numbering of the Gospels are omitted in *The Greek New Testament* because they are lacking in the best manuscripts and are deemed to have been added by copyists in later times from other places in scripture. Thus Luke 17, 36 and 23, 17, for example, seem to have been added from Matthew 24, 40 and Matthew 27, 15 or Mark 15, 6 respectively. The resulting lack of a verse number for such a reason in the translation is indicated by a dagger reference mark.

ments to the central office.

7) The pertinent section of the editorial committee (New Testament, Old Testament, Apocrypha/Deuterocanonical sections respectively) then studies the second draft along with the comments received from the other translators and sends its recommendations to the translator.

8) On the basis of these recommendations the translator then makes the third draft.

9) The third draft is then typed and multiplied and sent in the name of the Executive Committee by the editorial committee to the following three groups, asking their comments: a) a review committee composed of nine recognized Protestant and Catholic Old and New Testament scripture scholars; b) a special advisory group of four Japanese language scholars and renowned authors; and c) representatives of the various constituent churches of the project.

10) On the basis of the comments received from these groups, the editorial committee, on consultation with the translator if necessary, then prepares the final draft and presents it to the Executive Committee for acceptance and publication.

This translation is being made directly from the original languages in which the various books of the Bible were written. For the Hebrew Old Testament books, this is of course Hebrew; for the Apocrypha/Deuterocanonical Books, the original languages are Hebrew, Aramaic, or Greek, although sometimes the original language text no longer exists, in which case the most faithful other ancient language translation text is used. Details of the critical editions being used for the translation of these books will be given when the complete Old Testament is published.

The original language of the New Testament is Greek. The critical edition that is being used for this translation is the second edition of

one member more from each side was added for the Hebrew Old Testament. The present members of the editorial committee are indicated in the present list of translators given at the end of this article. Co-ordinating general co-chairmen of this committee are Masashi Takahashi and Bernardin Schneider, assisted by Takuho Kohira.

The second general meeting of over 30 of the translators, besides other personnel, was held January 16–19, 1973, in Hachioji at the Inter-University Seminar House where the previously mentioned seminars there had been held. The purpose of this meeting was to determine the procedure and various principles of translation such as the style of translation, i. e., formal correspondence or communication type, the level of language to be used, the use of honorific forms, and other kindred questions.

The procedure decided upon comprises the following ten basic steps:

- 1) Each translator makes his first draft from the original Hebrew or Greek.

- 2) Copies of this draft are made by the central office (the Translation Department of the Japan Bible Society) and distributed to the other members of the respective translator's small group.

- 3) Comments upon the first draft are prepared by the fellow translators within each group and mutual group discussions on each translator's draft are held.

- 4) Based on these comments and the group discussions, the translator makes the second draft.

- 5) The central office then multiplies this second draft and sends copies to all the other New Testament translators or to all the other Old Testament translators for their comments.

- 6) Each New or Old Testament translator sends in his com-

lived and worked together for four full weeks in that Bible translators' seminar. Then in November 1971 an intensive two-day seminar of prospective translators was held again in Hachioji, where Dr. Robert G. Bratcher, the basic translator of the New Testament of Today's English Version and now chairman of the Old Testament translation committee of this same version, outlined by way of information the problems dealt with and the principles worked out in regard to that translation work now so widely acclaimed.

From June 27 to 29 in 1972 the first general organizational meeting of the Common Translation Project was held in the Press Association House at Kawaguchiko-han at the foot of Mt. Fuji. Among the 32 participants, including for some part of the time the members of the Executive Committee, were 24 of the prospective translators. These translators had been invited from among the younger generation of Japanese scripture scholars, most of whom had made their scripture studies abroad in European or American universities.

At this first general meeting of the translators, agreement was reached as to who would make the basic translation of which books of the Old and New Testaments. For the New Testament five small groups of the translators were formed, such as one for the synoptic Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles, the members of which would work together in making the first revision of their work. At subsequent meetings six such small groups were formed of the Old Testament translators. Likewise at this first general meeting an editorial committee was set up among the translators to comprise at least ten members, divided into three sections: two members from each side for the New Testament, two members from each side for the Hebrew Old Testament, and one member from each side for the Apocrypha/Deuterocanonical Books of the Old Testament. Later

each named five members to constitute this joint Executive Committee. At its first meeting, held August 27, 1970, this committee elected two of its members, Rev. Dr. Chitose Kishi, former head of the Lutheran Church in Japan and now Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Japan Bible Society, and the Most Rev. Aloysius N. Soma, the Catholic Bishop of Nagoya, as co-chairmen of the committee. Bishop Soma was later succeeded by the Most Rev. Peter S. Hirata, Bishop of Fukuoka. The other members of this committee are: the Most Rev. Makoto Goto, the Anglican Bishop of Tokyo, Prof. Masashi Takahashi, of Doshisha University, Prof. Goro Maeda, of Tokyo University, Dr. Kiyoshi Togasaki, Pres. of Fuji Tours International, Ltd., Rev. Francis X. Hideo Teranishi, of the Archdiocese of Tokyo, Rev. Peter Nemeshegyi, S. J., of Sophia University, Rev. Zenon Yelle, S. S., of the Regional Sulpician Seminary of Fukuoka, and Rev. Bernardin Schneider, O. F. M., of the Studium Biblicum Franciscanum of Tokyo.

As very closely involved in this common translation project on the part of the Japan Bible Society, special mention should here be made of the Rev. Shunzo Miyauchi, the General Secretary of the Society from the inception of the project until the end of 1974, when he was succeeded by the Rev. Hiroshi Shinmi, and very particularly of Mr. Niro Suzuki, who as head of the Translation Department of the Japan Bible Society is now devoting his full time and energy to the many organizational and endless administrative details of this project.

The dialogue concerning the problems of actual translation, begun at the seminar in Hachioji in 1966, was continued by a number of those who were to have key roles in the common translation project at a similar Far East Translators' Seminar held in Taichung, Taiwan, in July of 1970. Six Protestant and five Catholic scripture scholars

The first of these two committees, composed of approximately fourteen scripture men from all parts of Japan, had for its purpose the study of lines of agreement on translation terminology acceptable interdenominationally in Japan. This committee, which has since become a part of the common translation project, has in almost monthly meetings over the past six years studied and decided upon each of more than 500 Greek proper names in the New Testament and the more than 2,600 Hebrew names in the Old Testament. It has likewise taken up and studied the terms for animals and plants, jewels, weights and measures, ritual terminology and other special terminology in the Bible. This committee held its 39th meeting July 15, 1975.

The other similarly constituted joint committee had for its purpose the exploring of the possibilities of a joint translation in present day Japan. This committee met four times from July 1969 to May 1970. At its final meeting its members unanimously reported both to the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Japan and to the Board of Directors of the Japan Bible Society that in their opinion it was not only possible but necessary to undertake a common translation of the Bible that would be acceptable to all Christians in Japan.

The report further recommended that a joint executive committee of ten members be set up to inaugurate and implement such a project and to follow as general norms the "Guiding Principles for Interconfessional Cooperation in Translating the Bible" published jointly in London and Rome by the United Bible Societies and the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity of the Vatican, on Pentecost Day 1968.

Pursuant to this recommendation, the Catholic Bishops of Japan and the Japan Bible Society respectively in May and June of 1970

what *The Bible Translator*, published by the United Bible Societies, is on a worldwide basis.

As a result of this petition the first organizational meeting of the Japan Society for the Study of Bible Translating was held in the Japan Bible Society Building in downtown Tokyo, July 22, 1969. Since then regular meetings have been held twice yearly, which are followed by the semi-annual publication of the official organ of the Society, *Seisho Honyaku Kenkyū – The Study of Bible Translating*. Many valuable studies apropos the common translation project have appeared in the eleven issues published so far.

In the meantime (1968–69) the Japan Bible Society had been conducting a survey of opinion among its constituent members and among other cross section reader representatives as a guide in deciding whether to revise the present colloquial Bible Society translation first published in 1954–55, or to consider making an entirely new translation. The decision reached was in favor of the latter alternative, whereupon the Board of Directors of the Japan Bible Society made the further decision to investigate the possibility of making this new translation a common one, to be made by and to be acceptable to, if possible, all Christian denominations in Japan.

Accordingly an invitation to cooperate in such a project was extended to the Catholic Church in Japan as the main body of Christians not represented among the constituent members of the Japan Bible Society. In turn the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Japan at its meeting in May of 1969 accepted this invitation, specifically the invitation to name a suitable number of members to two joint committees to be set up in view of possible work together in Bible translation. A corresponding number of members for each of the two committees was then appointed by the Board of Directors of the Japan Bible Society.

THE JAPANESE COMMON BIBLE TRANSLATION

Bernardin Schneider

Co-chairman of the Editorial Committee

In a very definite sense the first groundwork of what is now the Common Bible Translation Project in Japan was laid at the three-week Far East Bible Translators' Seminar held in August of 1966 in Hachioji, Japan. That seminar, sponsored by the United Bible Societies and hosted by the Japan Bible Society, was one of the first of its kind with general ecumenical participation. Very significantly on the closing day of that seminar one of the Filipino participants who conducted the usual morning worship that day seemingly prophetically took as his theme the *koinōnia*, the fellowship in the Spirit and the fellowship in Christ's sufferings Paul speaks of (II Cor. 13, 13; Phil. 3, 10), and applied it to fellowship in Bible translating.

The idea of joint work together in Japan to produce a common translation thus already envisioned at Hachioji was formally expressed in a follow-up meeting of some twenty of the Japanese participants in that seminar together with several veteran Japanese scripture translators, held April 10, 1967, under the auspices of the Japan Bible Society at the Studium Biblicum Franciscanum in Tokyo. The general consensus reached at that meeting was that a new, common Bible translation in Japan was by all means desirable, but that it should be prepared for by adequate study of the fundamental problems involved, such as those regarding the transcription of proper names, terminology, and style. In view of this the Japan Bible Society was there requested to launch a specialized periodical that would be for translators of the Scriptures in Japan

**THE JAPANESE
COMMON BIBLE TRANSLATION**

