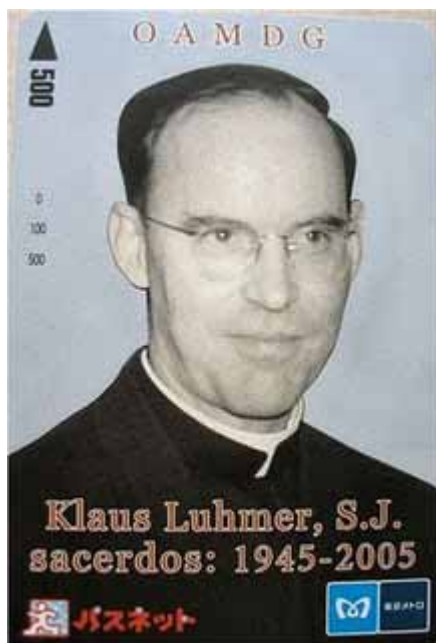


BLOG BRITTONIA

<<http://brittonia.blogspot.com/2011/03/klaus-luhmer-former-chancellor-of.html>>
<http://pweb.cc.sophia.ac.jp/britto/xavier/britto/>

Klaus Luhmer, former Chancellor of Sophia University

Tuesday, March 1, 2011



I hate to make this into a blog of obituaries, but unfortunately so many illustrious professors and builders of Sophia University are disappearing that I am forced to write something about at least some of them. Just a couple of minutes ago, I heard that Fr. Klaus Luhmer, one of the most well-known faces of Sophia University, passed away at the age of 94, at 12:20 PM today (March 1, 2011).

My association with Klaus goes back to many years, but it started getting closer and warmer since the time he started using computers and email, in mid-1990s. He was one of the most athletic, energetic, and enthusiastic men around, and so his curiosity knew no bounds. He boldly embraced the Internet, and despite numerous 'electronic accidents', he continued to use it and do creative work with it. I believe he started engaging himself seriously in Montessori-style education around that time, and he started translating, writing, and editing numerous books and articles on

Montessori--of course, with several Japanese collaborators, one of his closest associates being Professor Masako Ejima. He also became the President of Nihon Montessori Association (日本モンテッソーリ協会会長) and was eager to give some exposure to the Association on the Internet. That was what brought us together. Following his suggestions and recommendations, I opened a Montessori web site for him at Sophia (with web-data created by another Montessori colleague), since the Association had some links with Sophia University then. Sophia, unfortunately, cut off its ties to the Association after some years, and so the Webpages had to be removed. Luhmer too gave up the Association's Presidency in favor of some other person.

Around the same time, I also created a Web site for Fr. Luhmer, aptly named **LUHMERLAND** (see <http://pweb.cc.sophia.ac.jp/luhmer/>), listing major events in his life and the series of Montessori books he authored, edited, or translated. Even after he moved to Loyola House, he continued supplying some information for the Web page, including his meeting with Agnes Chan, a Sophia University alumna and a teen idol of the 1970s. Fr. Luhmer really enjoyed life and loved to be in the company of people, and so he was constantly on the move meeting persons, giving talks, and visiting the sick. It was hard to keep up with all his activities, and so I have to confess that I was a bit negligent in reporting many of his activities.



Here is a list of some major events in his life:

**1916, September, 28 : Luhmer was born in Koln, Germany. Had his early education at Beethoven Gymnasium near Bonn.

**1935, April 26 : Entered the Society of Jesus.

**1937, February 18: Arrived in Japan, via Siberia, with other illustrious Jesuits such as L. Laures & Erlinghagen, after 13 days of travel! Studied Japanese in Tokyo and Hiroshima for about 18 months, and then studied philosophy at Hiroshima noviciate for about three years.

**1943: Studied at Tokyo Azabu Theologate, while experiencing many aerial attacks and bombs.

**1945 July 1: Ordination to priesthood, and on August 6, witnesses the incredible atomic bomb over Hiroshima, from a distance of 4 kilometers. Enters the bombed zone within the city several times to help the wounded, rescue Fr. Enomiya Lasalle, and save some Church relics and sacred vessels. Thus becomes acquainted first hand with the atom bomb, and also gets affected with some skin infection.

**1947: After acquiring teaching skills at Kobe Rokko Gakuin, proceeds to Detroit University, USA, for studying Educational Administration.

**1953: Enters Sophia University as a Professor in the Department of Education, Faculty of Literature. He teaches Western Educational History and Comparative Education.

**1957-1965: Holds the position of Sophia University Chancellor. Among his achievements as Chancellor were the buying of the Kioizaka Building, establishment of the Science Faculty, and the recruitment of illustrious Japanese to hold important positions.



**1965: Is in charge of Public Relations, and gives publicity to Sophia overseas. Also sees to the publication of student newspaper and dissemination of information about Sophia.

**1969: For about three years--especially during the Student Unrest period--serves as the Vice-President of General Affairs under President Moriya.

**1985, November: Receives an Award from the Japanese Government for his services (勲三等旭日中授賞)

**1987: Even as he is ready to retire at the age of 70, he is appointed the Chancellor of Sophia University once more! Also made a Professor Emeritus.

**1992 March: Retires from the job of Chancellor, and takes up wholeheartedly and intensely the study of Montessori Education. Visits various countries like India and Italy to get to know Montessori first hand, and attends many conferences on Montessori. Becomes President of *Nihon Montessori Association*. Publishes several books (see <http://pweb.cc.sophia.ac.jp/luhmer/album.htm>), including *The origins of Liberal Education: From Plato to Montessori*, *The Way of Montessori Education*, and *Schule und Ildungsreform In Japan I & II*.

**Fr. Luhmer was not only an academic, but also a sportsman, doing ice-skating even in his mid 80's, and a man of many talents. He loved playing the flute and organ, often playing with

friends in an ensemble. Even at the age of 90, he was learning Korean, Spanish, Italian, and French listening to the NHK radio!



Fr. Luhmer was perhaps born to govern as he spent most of his life occupying positions of power and administration. Still, he had a simplicity and gentleness that made him amiable and approachable. He was friendly with all and never put on airs. Like most great men and women of history, he had a way with fellow human beings, and dealt with them respectfully, fairly, and generously. He seemed adept in using languages--especially Japanese--and wielded Japanese ably to raise funds, extract cooperation, and encourage colleagues. He used to speak of the verbal and non-verbal cues that the wealthy gave him whenever he went fundraising, and had a list of signs that guided him when to continue the conversation and when to cut it short.

Funeral Arrangements:

WAKE: March 3, 2011 (Th), 19:30, at St. Ignatius Church, Yotsuya, Tokyo

FUNERAL: March 4, 2011 (F), 13:30, at St. Ignatius Church, Yotsuya, Tokyo



Fr. Cusumano's Japanese Eulogy on Fr. Luhmer begins on the next page...
ルーマー先生のお葬式の時クスmano神父様がした賛辞の言葉は次のページで始まります。

EULOGY FOR FR.LUHMER

Homily given by Fr. Jerry Cusumano, S.J. at the Funeral Mass

St. Ignatius Church

4 March 2011

Luhmer 神父様の旅は第一次大戦中のドイツに始まって第二次大戦の日本を経て、94年間に渡る人生経験が豊かな生涯に終わりました。イエズス会の修道者の身分でナチ時代のドイツと帝国主義の日本で生活をなさって、世の中の厳しい時代で鍛えられました。特に広島原爆が彼に深い印象を残して、90歳の時にそれについて講演するように頼まれたら、2時間ほど話して細かいことが明瞭で昨日だったかのように、その日のことをのべました。こう言った人生体験は彼の性格に大きな影響を及ぼしたと思われます。一方彼はとても現実的な方で、少し皮肉っぽい側面もありました。他方、彼は粘り強い方で必要なことなら、あるいは正しいと思っただことなら、成し遂げるまで頑張った方です。彼が使っていた手帳の中に聖書の次の言葉が書いてありました。

「だから、蛇のように賢く、鳩のように素直になりなさい。」ご自分の生活の理念になったのではないのでしょうか。



上智大学の教育学科で西洋教育史を教えました。私もその授業を受けたことがありますが、彼の講義から印象に残っているのは、彼の記憶力です。ほとんど Note を見ないで数数の人名、日付、地名などを述べました。しかし、先生として教え始めるとほぼ同時に、退官なさるまで管理職に携わることになりました。理事長の仕事を二回ほど務め、学生運動の大変な時期に副学長の役職に就き、その後、広報活動の責任者として外国でも国内でも上智大学の著しい成長の時期に、多いに貢献しました。長い間、上智大学の顔はLuhmer 神父様の顔でした。私は上智大学のカウンセリング・センター長になったばかりのころ、いつかLuhmer 理事長に大学についてのいろいろな心配事を相談した時に、彼は「自分に与えられている使命を忠実に果たしなさい。そうすると大学は大丈夫ですよ。」と励ましてくださいました。晩年になって大学を退官なさってから Montessori 教育で大活躍なさいました。日本 Montessori 協会の会長を務め外国の研修旅行と執筆活動によってその教育理念を日本に広めました。

これだけの活動をなさっているので、趣味のない人間ではないかと思われるでしょうが、実はアイススケート、フルートとオルガンの練習・演奏、外国語の勉強など、随分年をとってからも続けられました。また修道生活がいくら忙しくなっても模範的に送りました。ある時に私は彼が住んでいたクルトゥルハイムの隣の休館の部屋をカトリック学生の会のために使いたいと願いました。皆さんもよくご存じのことだと思いますが、高齢者は住みなれている環境に強く執着します。彼はきっとこの頼みに対して抵抗するだろうと思いましたが、そうではなくて

素直に「了解しました。直ぐ移動します。」と返事して面倒くさいことでありながら早めに移動してくれました。



ドイツのマイスナー枢機卿に勧められて一昨年自叙伝の出版をしました。その出版のお祝いに Luhmer 神父様は次のことを言われました：「まだほど遠い見通しですが、神さまの御摂理を信じて、すべて良い方向へ運んで下さることを信じております。」この言葉はもしかしたら彼の霊性がわかるために一番いい鍵になるかもしれません。長い人生の間に人間の残酷な出来事、戦争と原爆、また、素晴らしい出来事、子供の発達と学生の成長を見て、どちらも最終的に神様の御摂理だと悟ったことではないでしょうか。もしかしたら私たちに彼からもらった財産、彼の指導のもとに買った土地、出来た建物、学部、学科、また彼が残した教育業績よりも彼が身を以て示して下さった、この御摂理に対する信頼の態度の方が貴重な宝物ではないでしょうか。これを感謝しながら彼に冥福と安らぎが

豊かに与えられますようにお祈りしたいと思います。

