

Alexandra Curvelo /  
Angelo Cattaneo (eds.)

Interactions Between Rivals:  
The Christian Mission  
and Buddhist Sects in Japan  
(c.1549-c.1647)

passagem

Estudos em Ciências Culturais  
Studies in Cultural Sciences  
Kulturwissenschaftliche Studien

Ed. Marflia dos Santos Lopes & Peter Hanenberg



PETER LANG

This volume presents comprehensive research on how southern European Catholics and the Japanese confronted each other, interacted and mutually experienced religious otherness in early modern times.

In their highly variable and asymmetric relations, during which the political-military elites of Japan at times not only favoured, but also opposed and strictly controlled the European presence, missionaries – particularly the Jesuits – tried to negotiate this power balance with their interlocutors.

This collection of essays analyses religious and cultural interactions between the Christian missions and the Buddhist sects through processes of cooperation, acceptance, confrontation and rejection, dialogue and imposition, which led to the creation of new relational spaces and identities.

**Alexandra Curvelo** holds a PhD in History of Art on *Nanban* Art and its circulation between Asia and America (c.1550-c.1700), and is a Professor at NOVA FCSH, Lisbon. She is also a researcher and board member of the Art History Institute (IHA) and an affiliated researcher of CHAM – Centre for the Humanities (NOVA FCSH). Her research focuses on the visual and material culture of early modern Japan during the Iberian presence and on processes of cultural transfers between Asia and the Americas in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

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Interactions Between Rivals:  
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PASSAGEM  
ESTUDOS EM CIÊNCIAS CULTURAIS  
STUDIES IN CULTURAL SCIENCES  
KULTURWISSENSCHAFTLICHE STUDIEN

Herausgegeben von  
Peter Hanenberg und Marília dos Santos Lopes

BAND 17

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Alexandra Curvelo / Angelo Cattaneo (eds.)

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## **Bibliographic Information published by the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek**

The Deutsche Nationalbibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliografie; detailed bibliographic data is available online at <http://dnb.d-nb.de>.

## **Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data**

A CIP catalog record for this book has been applied for at the Library of Congress.



This book results from the Research Project *Interactions Between Rivals. The Christian Mission and Buddhist Sects in Japan (c.1549-c.1647)*. Both the research and the publication were funded by Fundação para a Ciência e Tecnologia (FCT) (Ref. PTDC/HIS-HIS/118404/2010).

This publication was sustained also by the PIMo COST Action (CA18140) supported by COST (European Cooperation in Science and Technology).  
ISSN 1861-583X

ISBN 978-3-631-66716-3 (Print)  
E-ISBN 978-3-653-06266-3 (E-PDF)  
E-ISBN 978-3-631-70254-3 (EPUB)  
DOI 10.3726/b18727



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Peter Lang – Berlin · Bern · Bruxelles · New York · Oxford · Warszawa · Wien  
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[www.peterlang.com](http://www.peterlang.com)

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# Abbreviations

- abb.** – abbreviation
- act.** – active
- aka** – also known as
- ARMSTA** – Archivo del Real Monasterio de Santo Tomás, Ávila
- ARSI** – Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu, Rome.
- ASR** – *Genshiryō de tsuzuru Amakusa Shimabara no ran*. [Tsuruta Kurazō (Ed.) – *Genshiryō de tsuzuru Amakusa Shimabara no ran* 原史料で綴る天草島原の乱. Hondo 本渡 (Amakusa): Hondo Municipality, 1994.]
- Auth.** – author(s)
- b.** – born
- BA** – Biblioteca da Ajuda, Lisbon
- BCE** – Before Common Era
- BNP** – Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal
- BRAH** – Biblioteca de la Real Academia de la Historia, Madrid
- c.** – *circa*
- Cartas** – *Cartas que os Padres e Irmãos da Companhia de Jesus escreveram dos Reynos de Japão & China aos da mesma Companhia da India & Europa desde anno de 1549 até o de 1580*. 2 Vols. Em Evora por Manoel de Lyra, Anno de MDXCVIII [1598].
- Catechismus** – *Catechismus christianae fidei*, 1586. VALIGNANO, Alexandre – *Catecismo da Fé Cristã, no qual se mostra a verdade da nossa santa religião e se refutam as seitas japonesas*. António Guimarães Pinto (Tradução do Latim); António Guimarães Pinto e José Miguel Pinto dos Santos (Introdução); José Miguel Pinto dos Santos (Anotações). Lisboa: Centro Científico e Cultural de Macau; Fundação Jorge Álvares, 2017.
- CE** – Common Era
- Cf.** – confer/conferatur
- chap.** – chapter
- chaps.** – chapters
- Collab.** – Collaboration
- D.** – diameter

- DI** – *Documenta Indica*. Joseph Wicki, S.J.; John Gomes (collaboration Vols. XIV-XVI) (Ed.). 18 Vols. Rome: Jesuit Historical Institute, 1948–1988.
- DK** – *Dochiriina Kirishitan*, Katsusa, edition of 1591, as reproduced in Ebisawa Arimichi; Cieslik, Hubert; Doi Tadao; Otsuka Mitsunobu (Eds.) – *Kirishitan sho Hai-ya sho* キリシタン書・排耶書, *Nihon shisō taikai* 日本思想大系, vol. 25. Tōkyō: Iwanami Shoten Kanko 岩波書店刊行, 1970, pp.13–82.
- Documentos** – *Documentos del Japón*. 2 Vols. (vol. 1: 1547–1557; vol. 2: 1558–1562). Juan Ruiz de Medina (Ed.). Roma: Instituto Histórico de la Compañía de Jesús, 1990–1995.
- Ed.** – Edited / Edited by
- f.** – folio / folios (*folia*)
- ff.** – following
- H.** – height
- JA** – Jesuitas na Ásia (Biblioteca da Ajuda, Lisbon)
- Jap. Sin.** – Japonica-Sinica (Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu, Rome)
- Jp.** – Japanese
- KK** – “Kirisuto-ki” 契利斯督. *Nanbanji kōhaiki hoka ni hen* 南蛮興廢記他二篇. *Kirishitan Bunko* 吉利支丹文庫, vol. 2. Hiyane Antei 比屋根安定 (Ed.). Tōkyō: Keiseisha Shoten, 1926, pp.45–143.
- L.** – length
- lit.** – literally
- n.** – note
- N.a.** – no author
- n.d.** – no date
- No. / no.** – number(s)
- N.p.** – no place
- n.p.** – no publisher
- NSK** – *Kinsei shoki Nihon kankei nanban shiryō no kenkyū*. [MATSUDA Kiichi 松田毅一 – *Kinsei shoki Nihon kankei nanban shiryō no kenkyū* 近世初期日本関係南蛮史料の研究. Tōkyō: Kazama Shobō 風間書房, 1967]
- O.F.M.** – Ordo Fratrum Minorum
- OKS** – *Ōmura kenbun-shū*. [Fujino Tamotsu; Shimizu Hirokazu (Ed.) – *Ōmura kenbun-shū* Tōkyō: Takashina shoten, 1994.]

- O.P.** – Ordo Fratrum Praedicatorum
- O.S.A.** – Ordo Sancti Augustini
- p. / pp.** – page(s)
- Principio** – *Historia del principio y progreso de la Compañía de Jesús en las Indias orientales* (1583). VALIGNANO, Alessandro  
– *Historia del principio y progreso de la Compañía de Jesús en las Indias orientales* (1542–1564). Josef Wicki, S.J. (Ed.). Rome: Jesuit Historical Institute, 1944. [Col. Bibliotheca Instituti Historici SJ, vol. II]
- r.** – reign
- S.J.** – Societas Iesu
- Skt.** – Sanskrit
- Sumario** – *Sumario de las cosas de Japón* (1583). VALIGNANO, Alessandro – *Sumario de las cosas de Japón* (1583). *Adiciones del Sumario* (1592). José Luis Alvarez-Taladriz (Ed.). Tōkyō: Sophia University, 1954.
- T.** – Tome
- Transl.** – Translation
- VOC** – Dutch East India Company (Dutch: Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie)
- Vol.** – Volume
- Vols.** – Volumes
- WIC** – Dutch West India Company (Dutch: Geocrooieerde Westindische Compagnie)



## Acknowledgements

This book results from a Research Project funded by FCT – Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia, I.P. (the Portuguese National Funding Agency for Science, Research and Technology) under the title *Interactions Between Rivals. The Christian Mission and Buddhist Sects in Japan (c.1549–c.1647)* (reference: FCT – PTDC/HIS-HIS/118404/2010).

The outputs of this project, of which this publication is the chief attainment, is the result of work by an interdisciplinary team of researchers and the collaboration of three institutions: CHAM – Centre for the Humanities (School of Social Sciences and Humanities, Universidade NOVA de Lisboa – NOVA FCSH), as promoting Research Unit, the École Française d'Extrême-Orient (EFEO, Paris) and the Italian School of East Asian Studies (ISEAS, Kyōto).

The collaboration among these institutions, active in Portugal, France and Japan with their different structures, but converging interests to promote culture and international collaboration through research and publishing, enabled favourable constellations of collaborative energies which have allowed us to reconsider and to explore the intense historical and cultural interactions that shaped the crucial decades between the mid-sixteenth century and the first half of the seventeenth century, at the interface of the encounter among Catholic missionaries, Iberian and Dutch merchants, Japanese military and political elites, Buddhist monks, neo-Confucian scholars, as well as the numerous Japanese commoners with whom the missionaries interacted. In particular, we are deeply grateful to Silvio Vita – at that time, director of ISEAS – and his assistant, Yamamoto Makimi for facilitating our research missions in Japan, meetings with numerous Japanese scholars, and making it possible to gain entry to several temples, archives and museums, otherwise more difficult to access. We are also grateful to the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS, University of London), and particularly to Lucia Dolce, for hosting one of the project's workshops and meetings in March 2014.

Thanks to the FCT funding, it was possible to put together a team of scholars coming from different parts of the world – Portugal, Japan, Spain, Italy, the UK, France and Mexico – creating the opportunity to meet, exchange archival data that each of us had been assembling and studying for years, discuss information and points of view, and learn immensely from each other. Furthermore, it enabled us to work in archives, libraries, museums and private collections, including examining materials held in Japanese Buddhist temples and European catholic churches.

The project ran from March 2012 to September 2015 with Alexandra Curvelo as Principal Investigator (PI) and Angelo Cattaneo as Co-PI. The research team included Rie Arimura, Lucia Dolce, Nicolas Fiévé, Daniele Frison, Frédéric Girard, Makoto Hayashi, Ana Fernandes Pinto, Martin Nogueira Ramos, José Miguel Pinto dos Santos and Silvio Vita. As Research Fellows (Grant Holders), we have relied on the work and expertise of Helena Barros Rodrigues, Carla Tronu and Linda Zampol

D'Ortia, the latter two researchers writing essays for this book. All the research team contributed to this volume in one way or the other, and other colleagues have joined us, as is the case of Susumu Akune, Kathryn Bosi Monteath, Yoshie Kojima and Max Moerman, who have accompanied this long process almost from the beginning. We are deeply grateful to all of them and the Project Consultants: João Paulo Oliveira e Costa (NOVA FCSH) and François Lachaud (EFEO), two of the Project's mentors, and Jean-Noël Robert (EFEO).

For the gestation of the project and this book, we benefited from an international network of scholars and friends from Portugal, Italy, the United States, Spain, Japan, and other countries who, with liberality, joined their intellectual energies and specialized knowledge to help and sustain the whole team.

In the last phase of preparation of this volume, the synergy with the Cost Action 18140 *People in Motion: Entangled Histories of Displacement across the Mediterranean (1492-1923)*, or PIMo, and in particular with Giovanni Tarantino (Action Chair, University of Florence) and his scientific board, made it possible to publish the essays in this volume in open-access.

The PIMo project focuses on the forms of displacement and dispossession across the Mediterranean from the fifteenth century to the present and the significance of dislocation for individuals and communities, centering on the ideas, objects, and writing that accompanied them.<sup>1</sup>

The project *Interactions Between Rivals project. The Christian Mission and Buddhist Sects in Japan (c.1549 – c.1647)*, addressed these very issues, however having Europe and Japan as two observation points. Within the framework of different and at the same contiguous spatialities, this common interest and sensitivity for the study of the entangled forms of displacement and dispossession has allowed a mutual enrichment and exchange of methods and experiences with the PIMo seminar series 'Visual Grammars of Globalization' proving in particular a fertile ground for reflective learning. Our heartfelt thanks go to the scientific community of PIMo and, in particular to Giovanni Tarantino, for having accepted and supported this volume.

Paula Monteiro, the project manager at the School of Social Sciences and Humanities, Universidade NOVA de Lisboa (NOVA FCSH), was always willing to help and work with us. Stephen Berkwitz, Orion Klautau, Rômulo Ehalt, Patrick Schwemmer and Radu Leca followed our work enthusiastically and gave us their valuable advice. To Nandini Chaturvedula, who translated and revised many of the texts; to Kathryn Bosi Monteath and Hannah Sigur who also contributed to the linguistic revision, to Alexandra Koussoulakou (Aristotle University of Thessaloniki), the author of the maps; and to Katsura Washizu, who gave precious help in obtaining

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1 PIMo, funded by Horizon 2020 Framework Programme of the European Union. PIMo Grant Holder: Università degli Studi di Firenze, Dipartimento di Storia, Archeologia, Geografia, Arte e Spettacolo (SAGAS) < <http://www.peopleinmotion-costaction.org/>.

the rights and reproduction permissions for some of the photographs, goes our warmest gratitude.

Finally, we would like to thank Marília dos Santos Lopes and Peter Hanenberg who agreed to include the book in the series *Passagem* of Peter Lang Publishing Group, as well as the personell of Peter Lang Publishing Group: in particular Ute Winkelkötter, for her most professional attitude, encouragement, patience and collaboration in the preparation and printing of this book.

Lisbon, Florence, September 2021,  
Alexandra Curvelo and Angelo Cattaneo





Angelo CATTANEO and Alexandra CURVELO

## Introduction

### The Project

This book stems from the research project *Interactions Between Rivals: The Christian Mission and Buddhist Sects in Japan (c.1549–c.1647)* hosted by CHAM – Centre for the Humanities, School of Social Sciences and Humanities, Universidade NOVA de Lisboa (NOVA FCSH), and funded by the FCT – Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia, I.P. (the Portuguese National Funding Agency for Science, Research and Technology) (reference: FCT – PTDC/HIS-HIS/118404/2010), which ran from March 2012 to September 2015 with Alexandra Curvelo as PI and Angelo Cattaneo as Co-PI.<sup>1</sup> The research team included as fundamental researchers Arimura Rie, Lucia Dolce, Nicolas Fiévé, Daniele Frison, Frédéric Girard, Hayashi Makoto, Ana Fernandes Pinto, Martin Nogueira Ramos, José Miguel Pinto dos Santos and Silvio Vita, and as Research Fellows (Grant Holders) Helena Barros Rodrigues, Carla Tronu and Linda Zampol D’Ortia.

The project and the book are not about the Christian mission in Japan during the early modern period. If the factual context in which the Christian mission in Japan evolved during almost a century framed our work and also appears in this book through the inclusion of a Contextual Chronology prepared by Daniele Frison, our main focal point was located not in Europe, but Japan, and aimed at a bifocal perspective. From the initial stages of conceptualizing the proposal – a work in which François Lachaud (École française d’Extrême-Orient) played a key role – it was clear that we aimed at promoting comprehensive research on the way that Catholic Southern Europeans and Japanese confronted each other, interacted and mutually experienced religious Otherness through the study of a composite cultural heritage, created in Japan by either side. This was the central structural axis of the project, as it is of the texts that can be read in the present volume. Each author directly associated with the project or following it from an early stage conducted his or her research in line with this chief principle.

The comprehensive portrait of these interactions has been studied during the duration of the project and beyond it through four main lines of enquiry that are in some way reflected in the way this book is organized:

1. References to Buddhist sects, system of beliefs, and practices in missionary writings.

This line of enquiry consisted in the study of references to Buddhist sects, systems of beliefs, and practices in missionary writings, aimed at analysing the records

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1 [http://www.cham.fcsh.unl.pt/pr\\_descricao.aspx?ProId=3](http://www.cham.fcsh.unl.pt/pr_descricao.aspx?ProId=3)

written by the missionaries working in Japan between the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries to assess the awareness of Japanese Buddhism by the Europeans of that time. The achievement of this task led to a better knowledge of Japanese religious practices in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Furthermore, it enabled the research team to understand with more accuracy how Japanese Buddhist practices have been perceived and disclosed in Europe

## 2. Buddhist influences in Christian literature published in Japan.

This research aimed at identifying Buddhist elements that can be found in Japanese-written Christian literature printed in the second half of the sixteenth century and the first half of the seventeenth century. These elements can be terms and expressions originating from the Buddhist literature as well as examples, images, figures of speech, etc., that relate to Buddhist concepts. Once this identification was done, we tried to analyse to what extent these elements could interfere with the intended message of these publications by comparing them with those of similar nature published in Europe during the same period. It was also our aim to determine if there was any evolution in time as far as the quantity and quality of these elements are concerned.

## 3. Interactions between Buddhist and missionary visual culture and ceremonial practices.

This investigation developed a methodological approach that was not only object-centred but also object-driven. Having as the main data of analysis the written documents and visual/material culture, this research examines the visual arts, religious architecture and performing arts as interacting fields between missionary and Buddhist and Shinto practices. Particular attention is given to architectural and musical data, to the Painting Seminary opened by the Jesuits, and to the action of Giovanni Niccolò (c.1558–1626), who was called to the Japanese Mission to teach “Western-style” painting to any Japanese who might have an interest in learning and mastering oil painting, engraving, the technique of *chiaroscuro* and linear perspective.

## 4. Interactions between Buddhist and Jesuit scientific cultures.

Jesuit sources shed light on that way around 1600, within the Japanese Mission, Jesuits such as Pedro Gómez (1533/35–1600), Carlo Spinola (1564–1622), and Pedro Morejón (c.1562–1639) were engaged with the Japanese military and political elites to challenge in public dispute Buddhist monks on scientific topics, mostly related to the explanation of astronomical and cartographical phenomena. In the course of disputes, maps of the world, celestial and terrestrial globes, clocks, armillary spheres and other astronomical instruments were used. Based on field research conducted in Japanese museums, temples and libraries, an impressive corpus of manuscript world maps depicted on folding screens has come to light. These maps reinterpret with new elements regarding Europe, as well as Matteo Ricci’s Chinese cosmography and cartography; and at least in one case, also Chinese and Sino-Korean world cartography. In the light of these discoveries, the island of Kyūshū

appears as a unique place in the world where the most important cosmographic languages available around 1600 were used simultaneously. It is important to stress that some of these maps were held in Buddhist temples. In the framework of this line of enquiry, these different *corpora* of documents (Jesuit written accounts, scientific books written in both Latin and Japanese, maps and cosmographies) are the object of an interconnected analysis, to show how different visions of the world competed and interacted with each other, serving theological, political and scientific purposes in early modern Japan.

When referring to the Christian mission in early modern Japan, many of the essays focus on the work of the Jesuits. The reasons for this can be briefly summarized by the fact that the missionaries of the Society of Jesus were the first to arrive in the archipelago and to establish a Mission in 1549, having had the exclusivity of the missionary work until 1593, the year the Franciscans were permitted to settle in, followed by the Dominicans in 1601, and the Augustinians in 1602. Also, and partially associated with this precedence in Japan, the Jesuits' administrative procedures, missionary strategy and evangelization method gave rise to a written, material, musical and visual culture that has no parallel with any other religious presence in the territory. However, we are well aware that this ascendancy of the Jesuits should not underestimate the accomplishments of the other religious orders that came to work in Japan, and some of the texts, as well as the Data Collection Project, attest to this consciousness.

## The Book

From the arrival of the Portuguese to Tanegashima in 1542/43, to the last embassy sent to Japan by the king of Portugal in 1647, for a period of *circa* 100 years, in the context of the pressing events that brought about the military and political unification of the Japanese kingdom led by Oda Nobunaga (1534–1582), Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1536–1598) and Tokugawa Ieyasu (1543–1616), Japan appears, in the eyes of cultural historians, as an extremely interesting laboratory of cross-cultural, social, political, linguistic, religious and philosophical interactions. During this relatively short period of time, even considered ephemeral by some historians,<sup>2</sup> small communities of European and Chinese merchants and Catholic missionaries mutually experienced very heterogeneous forms of cultural interactions with Japanese political, mercantile, military and religious communities. It included joint activities, such as the organization of networks of maritime trade; the foundation and construction of two interdependent new cities, Nagasaki and Macao; the foundation and organization of western religious institutions, such as the itinerant Jesuit Colleges and Seminaries (including the Painting Seminary); the introduction in Japan of new technologies such as firearms and western-style ships, printing using

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2 Elison, *Deus Destroyed. The Image of Christianity in Early Modern Japan*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988 (first ed. 1973), p.248.

movable type in books using both the Romanized and logographic Japanese scripts, hybrid-western style forms of mapping and artistic production; the teaching of European music in Jesuit Seminaries; and finally, the mutual codification, teaching and learning of four previously disconnected languages (Portuguese, Latin, Japanese and Chinese). These economic, cultural and technological interactions – which implied constructive forms of cooperation – developed almost concurrently with violent social and political processes of control that included rejection, persecution, banishment, and even martyrdom, of both European and Japanese Christians, as well as the expulsion of Portuguese and Spanish merchants in 1639.

Cooperation, acceptance, confrontation and rejection, dialogue and imposition, understanding and misunderstanding were in a constant fluid dialogue. These ambivalences are often forgotten, or at least undervalued, in the conspicuous historiography on Japan, at the time of the arrival and settlement of the first Europeans in early modernity. Most research tends to highlight one of the aspects of those interactions often in an exclusive perspective – acceptance, cooperation or rejection and violence – underestimating both the interdependence and the fluidity of these phenomena, strongly conditioned by power relations and dynamics out of control of part of the (very few) Europeans active in Japan.

In the context of early modern Japan, the European agents, whether Iberian, Dutch or British merchants and Catholic missionaries, were in radical asymmetry, in terms of number, resources, concrete possibilities to act and plan, with respect to their Japanese interlocutors. Asymmetric power relations with the Japanese military-political and Buddhist elites were the main factors influencing the development of both European merchants' and missionaries' strategies and practices. By referring to current theoretical debates, in contexts in which the balance of power clearly favoured the Japanese, the (confrontational) interactions, whether economic, religious, cultural or political, were characterized by the controlled contact pattern (for and by the Japanese) and the minority culture pattern (for and by the Europeans). In this type of cultural encounter – as has been convincingly argued recently by Luís Afonso, based on Urs Bitterli's former analysis<sup>3</sup> – the

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3 Afonso, "Patterns of Artistic Hybridization in the Early Protoglobalization Period". *Journal of World History*, vol. 27, no. 2 (2016), pp.215–253 (p.218): "In this balance of power, between symmetric or asymmetric relations, there are three possible settings: (1) the two parties have equivalent positions; (2) one party has a dominant position; and (3), consequently, the other party has a minor position. From here emerge the three main patterns of artistic hybridity studied in this article: the *partnership pattern*; the *controlled contact pattern*; and the *minority culture pattern*. There are variations in each of these patterns, depending on the degree of cultural differences between partners, the (a)symmetry of forces involved in their (confrontational) interactions, the moment and location where these interactions take place, the degree of acceptance (or rejection) that these parties have of each other's cultures, and the idiosyncrasies of the individuals and groups on each side who participate more actively in the interaction process." See also Bitterli, *Cultures in*

local agents were always in a position to determine the conditions and nature of relations with the visitors, “who had to accept the terms offered.” Only in rare cases could the Europeans negotiate these terms, and very often, as in the case of Toyotomi Hideyoshi’s 1587 first decrees of the expulsion of the Jesuits and limiting the propagation of the foreign creed, the non-execution of orders or resolutions taken by the Japanese authorities depended almost exclusively on the implicit decision of the same authorities to not put them into practice, and very little, if not at all, from specific actions and decisions by the Europeans involved.<sup>4</sup>

Under these circumstances, scrutiny and analysis of available sources reveals that the ability to adapt and deal with these very uncertain dynamics, linked to a radical asymmetry of power, was a fundamental condition of survival. Those who failed to adapt or to achieve at least an attitude of adaptation, including the learning of the Japanese language, habits and social behaviours, had little chance of keeping their position or even surviving, in the complex and potentially hostile context of Japan. The well-known cases of the Jesuit Francisco Cabral (1533–1609) during his time as Superior of the Japanese mission (1570–1579), before the arrival in Japan of Alessandro Valignano, and the following appointment of Gaspar Coelho (c. 1529–1590) as the first Vice-Provincial of the mission of Japan clearly illustrate these difficulties and the misunderstandings that could ensue.<sup>5</sup>

Cabral’s harsh rejection of the Japanese culture, language and habits and Coelho’s decision to build and equip an armed ship that he showed proudly to Hideyoshi Toyotomi, together with the imprudent offer of military support in the incipient campaign of Korea, are revealing. Cabral left Japan and ended up in Goa, eventually becoming rector of the College of São Paulo and later even Visitor to India. Coelho’s hasty behaviour, instead, made Toyotomi Hideyoshi indelibly suspicious of the missionaries, to the point that in July 1587 he presented Coelho with the decree that ordered the *Bateren* out of Japan.

The highly variable and asymmetric relations with the political-military elites of Japan at times favoured, but also opposed and in any case, tried to strictly control international trade through the tally system. European merchants – from the mid-sixteenth century, Portuguese traders, then from the end of the sixteenth century, also Spanish (from the Philippines), British and mostly Dutch – overcame the disadvantages of the asymmetry by placing themselves as strategic intermediaries, at first with the *daimyō* (feudal lords) of Kyūshū, and then with the Tokugawa Shogunate in the “maritime space between” in early modern South-East Asia. Japan

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*Conflict: Encounters between European and Non-European Cultures, 1492–1800*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1993, pp.137–140.

- 4 Boscaro, “Toyotomi Hideyoshi and the 1587 edicts against Christianity”, *Oriens Extremus*, vol. 20, no. 2 (December 1973), pp.219–241.
- 5 On Cabral see D’Ortia, *The Cape of the Devil. Salvation in the Japanese Jesuit Mission Under Francisco Cabral (1570–1579)*. A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, University of Otago, December 2016.

could no longer be kept apart from the phenomenon of the world scale process of “politicization of Oceanic Space”.<sup>6</sup>

Missionaries, instead, tried to cope with and negotiate the radical asymmetry of power balance with their Japanese interlocutors by adopting and exploring (controversial) strategies of adaptation and accommodation that, over the course of circa 70 years, guaranteed the implementation of relevant mutual learning processes. Far from being an *a priori* philosophical position, an ethical or moral choice of (alleged and anachronistic) respect for cultural differences or otherness, or – on the contrary – a hidden, subtle and premeditated strategy to penetrate and conquer the (otherwise lost) souls of the (Japanese) pagans, the so-called Jesuit *acomodatio* or “adaptation” to local contexts of interactions in a place like Japan in early modernity, was above all a reaction to and a consequence of the radical asymmetry of power, aimed at securing safer living conditions in the potentially hostile local contexts of the mission.

Well before it was theorized and described in the well-known texts by Valignano, composed following his first stay in Japan between 1579 and 1582 – the *Advertimentos e Avisos acerca dos costumes e catangues de Jappão* (1581)<sup>7</sup>; the *Sumario de las cosas de Japón* (1583)<sup>8</sup> and the *Historia del principio y progreso de la Compañía de Jesús en las Indias orientales* (1583)<sup>9</sup> – the reading and analysis of the letters and reports composed already in the first 20 years of the presence of the Jesuits in Japan reveal that the enculturation and acculturation of Christianity to and for the Japanese audiences, later systematized by Valignano, largely depended on the practices that some of the Jesuits had tried to implement since the very first years of the arrival of the missionaries of the Society of Jesus in Japan. Power imbalance did not only prevent the development of relevant cultural interactions, but on the contrary stimulated some of the Jesuits toward creative strategies and practices of communication and cultural translation, which later became the broader framework of early modern Catholic global mission.

The essays in this volume share the fact that they take into consideration these processes of transcultural interactions, which involved, directly or indirectly, Catholic missionaries, their Japanese assistants, the population they addressed, the military and political elites, Buddhists monks, and neo-Confucian scholars.

Part I reunites four essays under the broad topic of ‘Interactions between Christian and Buddhist Written Cultures and Practices’ and opens with a text by

6 Mancke, “Early Modern Expansion and the Politicization of Oceanic Space”, *Geographical Review*, vol. 89, no. 2, Oceans Connect (Apr. 1999), pp.225–236.

7 Valignano, *Il Cerimoniale per i missionari del Giappone*. «*Advertimentos e Avisos acerca dos Costumes e Catangues de Jappão*». Josef Franz Schütte, S.J. (Ed.). Roma: Edizioni di «Storia e Letterature», 1946.

8 Valignano, *Sumario de las cosas de Japon (1583)*. *Adiciones del Sumario del Japon (1592)*. José Luis Alvarez-Taladriz (Ed.). Tōkyō: Sophia University, 1954.

9 Valignano, *Historia del principio y progreso de la Compañía de Jesús en las Indias orientales (1542–64)*. Josef Wicki (Ed.). Rome: Jesuit Historical Institute, 1944.

Linda Zampol D’Ortia, Lucia Dolce and Ana Fernandes Pinto – “Saints, Sects, and (Holy) Sites: The Jesuit Mapping of Japanese Buddhism (Sixteenth Century)” – that investigates the approach through which the Jesuit missionaries based in Japan shaped and handled the information collected on Buddhism during the first decades of the Christian mission, between the 1540s and 1580s.

The authors of these writings are all well-known – with particular references to Captain Jorge Álvares (?–1552) and the missionaries Francis Xavier (1506–1552), Juan Fernández (1526–1567), Cosme de Torres (c.1510–1570), Melchior Nunes Barreto (c.1520–1571), Baltazar Gago (c.1515/20–1583), Francisco Cabral (1533–1609), Luís Fróis (1532–1597) and Alessandro Valignano (1539–1606) – and so are the sources (both manuscript and printed). The latter constitute the basis of the Data Collection associated with the Project (see pp. 43–45) and its utilization is plainly demonstrated by this text.

This extensive documentation is analysed aiming at outlining a comprehensive genealogy of the missionary discourse on Japanese Buddhism during these fundamental years of the Mission when a narrative about this topic began to be constructed. The process was neither simple nor linear, as the gathering of information, writing and reporting about this ‘religious Other’ reveals. Moreover, the documents are analysed considering the hermeneutical framework utilized, the immediate motivations of these European agents and their purposes. The meticulous examination of these writings led the authors to perceive changes and adaptations in the discourse over the years, resulting from the understanding of the related interactions between missionaries and Buddhist monks.<sup>10</sup> From the first, far from a uniform presentation of Buddhism in Japan, an official position was adopted in the 1580s: a sensitive period for the Mission due to the political turmoil in the country. By this time Jesuit knowledge collected in the field, not only in Kyūshū but also in Kyōto, allowed them to be more aware of a broader physical landscape of sacred sites, of devotional aspects of Buddhism, as well as of Buddhist lineages in competition amongst themselves and the tensions thus created, which was also used for propaganda purposes, raising the missionaries’ interest in the Buddhist institutional configuration. The image that surfaces of Buddhism in Japan by the end of the sixteenth century as a complex and powerful religion, albeit imprecise and necessarily compromised by the Jesuit standpoint, was a major intellectual achievement with an impact on the ways that other religions were perceived in Asia. Furthermore, Buddhist doctrine came to assume a significance it had not held in previous discussions of other Asian religions.

Adding to the religious and cultural barriers, and inextricably related to them, Hubert Cieslik referred to the linguistic obstacle, particularly the need to translate Christian concepts and terms into Japanese, as “one of the most vexing missionary

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10 App, *The Cult of Emptiness. The Western Discovery of Buddhist Thought and the Invention of Oriental Philosophy*. Rorschach; Kyoto: UniversityMedia, 2012.

problems” that the Mission had to face in Japan.<sup>11</sup> José Miguel Pinto dos Santos’ essay – “Mincing Words: Terminological Sublation in the Japanese Christian Doctrines” – focuses on this fascinating topic through careful analysis of one of the paramount texts published by the Jesuit mission press in the territory: the *Dochiriina Kirishitan* (1591), based on the *Doctrina Christã* by Marcos Jorge, S.J. (1524–1571), first printed in 1566. Resulting from a complex and arduous process of apprenticeship of both Japanese language, culture and religion, this translation reveals a composite strategy that included employing vocabulary – borrowed mainly from Portuguese and Latin – which was used to express Christian concepts and doctrines (‘loan words’), as well as Japanese words (*ningen* 人間, for Man or human beings, *taisetsu* 大切 for love, *shi* 死 for death, *tengu* 天狗, for the devil), including several Buddhist words (as *sūtra*, *kyō* 經 and *goshō* 後生, the rebirth after death, but also employed to designate simply the future world).

The ‘loan words’ were introduced by the Jesuits whenever they considered that previously adopted Japanese vocabulary was either misleading or unable to express a Christian doctrinal concept. Taking as examples some of these words – *Zezu Kirishito* (Jesus Christ), *Deusu* (God), *esuperansa* (hope), *kirishitan* (Christian), *karidade* (charity), *dochiriina* (Doctrine), *Chirindaade* (Trinity) – Pinto dos Santos asks if the final result would be effective from the point of view of a Japanese audience. In other words, “Could a hypothetical seventeenth-century Japanese reader, without any previous contact with a foreign missionary or a Japanese Christian, and without recourse to any of the other books published by the Jesuits in Japan, be able to make an educated guess at their meanings, just by reading the *Dochiriina Kirishitan*?” Through the textual analysis, the author argues that there is evidence of both the effort and ability from the Jesuits and their Japanese assistants to translate into Japanese the Christian doctrine, even if it implied borrowing words from other languages, a process that sheds a deeper understanding of the Mission’s intellectual work.

A similar perceptiveness results from the study of one of the texts published by the Jesuit Mission Press in 1600: the *Japanese Poems on the Nine Stages [of a Decaying Female Body]* (*Kusōka*, 九相歌), a collection of eighteen Japanese poems describing the process of decay of a female corpse, strongly connected to Buddhist doctrines and practices on the contemplation of impurity. The Jesuit version of the *Kusōka* is part of a miscellaneous compendium of Japanese texts appearing under the title *Royei Zafit*. By introducing the volume in which the poem collection was published, and its function within the Jesuit mission, the Buddhist tradition from which the poems originated, and finally providing a translation and analysis of the Jesuit edition of the poems, Carla Tronu thoroughly examines this intriguing publication in her essay “*Memento mori* and Impermanence (*Mujō*, 無常): The 1600 Jesuit Mission Press Edition of Japanese Poems on the *Nine Stages of a Decaying*

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11 Cieslik, “Balthasar Gago and Japanese Christian Terminology”. *The Missionary Bulletin*, vol. VII (May-June 1954), p.82.



*Female Body* (*Kusōka*, 九相歌). Tronu argues that there is evidence of its use by advanced students of the Japanese language on how to read poetry, epistolary style, and prose, as well as to broaden the conversation topics of future Jesuits with Japanese learned elites. Moreover, the *Kusōka* is also a good example of the Jesuit policy towards Buddhist terminology and testifies to the Western missionaries' grasping of the importance of the Buddhist concepts underlying the poems, namely the impurity and impermanence of the (female) body and sensual attachment or lust, thus giving new insight into Jesuit understandings of Buddhism.

In a text titled "In Search for a Buddhist Ecumenical Reformation in Contact with Christianity", Frédéric Girard explores an extremely complex and, at the same time, little investigated chapter of the reverberation of the doctrinal, theological and philosophical aspects of Christianity on Buddhist thought and doctrines since the late sixteenth century. As noted by Girard in the introduction of his essay, the vast majority of Christian doctrinal texts destined for the Japanese audience have been destroyed in the course of anti-Christian persecutions or have been lost following the abrupt expulsion of the missionaries. After the expulsion and the bloody revolt in Shimabara, Christianity, in all its doctrinal, literary, iconographic or material aspects, was banned, and even the slightest reference was prohibited. Despite this documentary deficit, Girard tackles with philological virtuosity the cross-cultural analysis of some fundamental texts elaborated in the framework of the Christian mission, which escaped from the destructions perpetrated by the Tokugawa persecutions and a vast selection of central works for the renewal of Japanese Buddhism, during the first half of the seventeenth century. Girard analyses the central notions and concepts of 'reason', 'vacuity', 'eternal soul', 'paradise', 'liberation and liberty', though a cross-cultural reading of works such as the *Compendium catholicae veritatis*<sup>12</sup> originally authored in Latin by Pedro Gómez, S.J., and in part translated into Japanese by Pedro Morejón, S. J., the *Vocabulario da lingoa de Iapam*<sup>13</sup> printed by the Jesuit Press in Nagasaki in 1603–1604 and the treatises of relevant Buddhist masters, including Suzuki Shōsan 鈴木正三 (1579–1655), Sessō Sōsai 雪窗宗崔 (1589–1649), or monks such as Takuan 澤庵 (1573–1646), looking for indirect influences. Of particular importance is the analysis of 'paradise', "an integrating part of the Buddhist creed since it appeared in the

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12 *Compendium catholicae veritatis*. 3 Vols. Kirishitan Bunko Library, Sophia University (Ed.). Tōkyō: Ōzorasha 大空社 Co. Ltd., 1997. (Facsimile edition of the original Latin and Japanese manuscripts of the *Compendium Catholicae Veritatis in gratiam Iaponicorum Fratrum Societatis Iesu*)

13 *Vocabulario da lingoa de Iapam (1603)*. Tadao Doi (Ed.). Tōkyō: Iwanami Shoten, 1960. [Online: <https://archive.org/details/nippoijshovocabv06doit/page/n9/mode/2up>] Vocabulario da lingoa de Iapam com a declaração em portugues, feito por alguns padres, e irmãos da Companhia de IESV. Nangasaqui: Collegio de Iapam da Companhia de IESVS, 1603. [facsimile edition: Tsukimoto Masayuki (Ed.) – Nippo jisho: kirishitanban: karā einban. Vocablario da lingoa de Iapam: Nagasaqui 1603–4. Tōkyō: Bensei shuppan, 2013.

Mahāyānic currents”, and of the Christian Faith. Girard’s analysis enables one to follow the tension between the promise of rebirth in Paradise for the men of goodwill, as preached by the Christian missionaries, and the Amidic Pure Land Buddhist doctrine. The faith in Amida and his Pure Land was widespread in sixteenth and seventeenth-century Japan, at the time of the missionaries’ presence. Through detailed textual and doctrinal analysis of seventeenth-century Buddhist masters, and by developing and deepening the reflection initiated by the pioneering work of Ōkuwa Hitoshi,<sup>14</sup> Girard puts forward the hypothesis, innovative from a historiographical point of view, that the criticism of Christianity by Buddhist monks was one of the cultural vectors that led them to a reformation of the Buddhist community from the inside, in the first half of the seventeenth century.

On the ‘Interactions between Buddhist and Missionary Material, Musical and Visual Culture’, which constitutes Part II, three essays analyse the architectural, musical, and visual and performative *milieu* in which the Christian mission evolved in connection with the Japanese religious and ceremonial backgrounds. These are fundamental aspects of the Mission’s endeavour in its evangelization strategy and interaction with a broader audience, yet still overlooked by most of the historiographical discourse on the subject. Emphasis is generally put on the examination of the remaining textual evidence, seldom placing it in dialogue with testimonies of the visual, material and intangible culture. One of the first to fully accomplish such an exercise was Jesús López Gay, S.J. in his seminal work *La Liturgia en la Misión del Japón del Siglo XVI*, published in 1970.<sup>15</sup> In that same year another reference book was published: Okamoto Yoshitomo and Takamizawa Tadao’s *Nanban Byōbu*, which can be considered the first attempt to systematize and study the known corpus of Japanese folding screens depicting the black ship and the *Nanban-jin*, missionaries included, confronting the visual domain with prevailing objects and written accounts.<sup>16</sup>

Departing from a field of study that has known considerable growth and maturation in the last decades, above all from a theoretical and methodological perspective, an achievement for which the intersection of different disciplines (History, Art History, Museum Studies, Anthropology, Sociology, Conservation and Restoration, among others) has been proved crucial, all three essays aim at examining the interactions between the Western missionaries and their religious counterparts taking as the central object of study other than the written testimonies.

Stemming from a long and rich investigation on the subject, Arimura Rie’s essay “The Adaptation of Vernacular Sacred Spaces in the Catholic Architecture

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14 Ōkuwa, *Nihon kinseino shisō to bukkō* 日本近世の思想と仏教 (Thought and Buddhism in Modern Japan). Kyōto: Hōzōkan 法藏館, 1989.

15 López Gay, *La Liturgia en la Misión del Japón del Siglo XVI*. Roma: Libreria dell’Università Gregoriana, 1970.

16 Okamoto; Takamizawa, *Nanban Byōbu* 南蛮屏風. 2 Vols. Tōkyō: Kashima Kenkyūjo Shuppankai, 1970.

of Early Modern Japan” results from a comparative approach to the missionary contexts of both Portuguese and Spanish dominions conducive to a better understanding of the characteristics of the Japanese reality. If the phenomenon of architectural adaptation was not a unique feature of the evangelization of Japan, its circumstances can be considered distinctive from any other context. Contrary to what happened in the Spanish dominions in the American continent, where there was the presence of a centralized colonial government, Japan was never colonized. In terms of the missionary work in the country, the fact that it depended entirely on local circumstances, and that it was severely affected by the political and social instability Japan lived in, most of the Catholic churches could only be built after personal permission by the *daimyō* of each feudal domain was granted, and much of the missionary work depended on the help of different agents, mostly local lords and European merchants as well. What was ‘provisional’ for other missions became ‘permanent’ in Japan, as Arimura perceptively points out. However, this ‘permanence’ is of course, in itself an illusion, not only because of the political turmoil followed by the persecution of Christianity but also due to local traditions of construction. Arimura’s object of study, the reusing of Buddhist structures by missionaries, is in its essence ephemeral, albeit the remains left.

The examination of the Jesuits’ actions towards the adoption of Buddhist spaces to Christian usage – whether disused buildings or properties belonging to popular Buddhist schools, a process that evolved over time – is accompanied by the analysis of the procedures taken by the mendicant friars and mendicant architecture, particularly Franciscans and Dominicans, who followed the same trend. By adopting once more a comparative approach, the author demonstrates that the Jesuits were not alone in adapting practices at this level. Furthermore, Arimura claims that there was even continuity in the process, although with diverse criteria and sensibilities.

As in the case of traditional Japanese architecture also, music belongs to both the domain of the material and intangible culture. Music played a central role in Catholic liturgy, so much so that there are references to masses sung in Japan from a relatively early time, at least from the 1560s.<sup>17</sup> Furthermore, it made part of the *curricula* of the Jesuit Missions, and missionaries often refer to the use of music and singing in their writings, mostly on festive occasions such as Christmas, the Holy Week and Easter, propitiatory moments to the development of musical practice and singing, both within churches and in processions that roamed the streets of Japanese towns where the missionary presence was more intense. Additionally, the Painting Seminary funded in the 1590s was a place intended not only to teach Western-style painting and engraving but also for the manufacture of European musical instruments.

One particular moment for the blooming of this domain was the Tenshō mission to Europe (1582–1590), which consisted of sending in a journey to Europe

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17 López-Gay, op. cit., p.158.

and eventually Papal Rome, four young Japanese converted to Christianity and related to three Christian lords. This important event for the Jesuit Mission in Japan is the departure point for Kathryn Bosi Monteath's essay "European Music as Taught in Jesuit Seminaries in Japan: The case of four noble youths who visited the Pope in 1585" in which the author examines the teaching of European music in Japanese Seminaries by the Society of Jesus as a tool for conversion, and the consequent surprise and admiration of Europeans that the four boys, during their European tour, could play European musical instruments such as the *viola da gamba*, the lute, and even the magnificent organ of the Cathedral of Évora.

The central idea that Missionaries interacted on different levels with diverse publics, including Buddhist monks and intermediaries, is further analysed by Alexandra Curvelo in her essay "A Culture In-Between: Materiality and Visuality in the Christian mission in Japan in the Early Modern Age". Taking as a point of departure a painting presumably portraying the author of the *Compendium catholicae veritatis* (Compendium of the Catholic Truth), the Jesuit Pedro Gómez with his hands in a position of a *mudra*, which has been identified as the *Seppō-(no)-in* (説法印), or more precisely the *Tenbōrin-(no)-in* (転法輪印), the gesture of the Buddha engaged in teaching and preaching, Curvelo explores some of the ways through which missionaries interacted on different levels with diverse publics, including Buddhist monks and intermediaries. Although the Mission had already adopted a visual and material culture imbued with Buddhist elements, as the reading of coeval missionary writings indicates, the Jesuit Painting Seminary appears as a pivotal institution in this regard. When it emerged during the last decade of the sixteenth century this complement to the humanist education and the study program of the Society of Jesus soon became a tool for outreach to a wider community and placed itself as a space of cultural interaction and mediation among different agents of the inner and outer circles of the Christian mission. The presence of the Jesuit painter Giovanni Niccolò, the founder of this Seminary, and the network of individuals, including Buddhist painters and the "dōgicos" (*dōjuku* 同宿), or auxiliaries of the mission, proved to be essential to the appearance of a religious hybrid culture embedded of 'visual bilingualism'<sup>18</sup> therefore understandable to different audiences, particularly Christian and Buddhist. Aiming at understanding the formation of such an environment, the author confronts textual sources with objects and images attesting to a complex process of adaptation and substitution within the Christian mission and confirming a cross-cultural partnership that dates to the first decades of its activity in Japan. This phenomenon is particularly noticeable in the arrangements of sacred settings and performative activities central for the Christian religious ceremonial, such as the festivities associated with Christmas and Easter. One of the outcomes was the creation of a new visuality and materiality in late sixteenth-century Japan and the appearance of

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18 Hioki, "Visual Bilingualism and Mission Art: A Reconsideration of "Early Western-Style Painting" in Japan". *Japan Review*, no. 23 (2011), pp.23–44.

a ‘culture in-between’<sup>19</sup> created by continuing interactions between distinct cultural and religious domains, attesting to very stimulating, active, and insightful exchanges between two different religious and cultural spheres.

Part III of the volume, entitled “Interactions between Buddhist and Jesuit Scientific Cultures”, focuses on the way divergent cultures of space were encoded in the multiple and heterogeneous discourses and practices developed in Japan in the highly variable and asymmetric relations that involved European merchants, Jesuit missionaries, Buddhist monks, Confucian scholars, and several members of Japanese political, military and mercantile *élites*. In the first part of this section, Angelo Cattaneo’s essay, “Spatial and Linguistic Patterns in Early Modern Global History. Iberian and Dutch Merchants, Jesuit Missionaries, Buddhist Monks and Neo-Confucian Scholars and their Interactions in Japan”, analyses the multiple ways in which space was experienced in early modern Japan from four integrated perspectives. The first two parts of the essay examine the differences and similarities between (European) mercantile implicit understanding and practices of space and places and those of missionary orders. This comparison allows Cattaneo to highlight that while travelling the same sea routes, missionaries radically transformed the ways of experiencing and conceptualizing space and places with respect to merchants and soldiers. The third part of the essay considers specific cases of interaction involving space and spatiality among the Jesuits, the Buddhist *bonzes* and neo-Confucian scholars through the analysis of the disputes that saw them rivalling while debating cosmological and cosmographic topics. This analysis will shift the focus from a unique interpretation of acclaimed Jesuit missionary science to the theological relevance of cosmology and cosmography in missionary contests in which the Christian concepts of God creator and the world as creation were ignored as well as challenged by equally structured and alternative cosmologies.<sup>20</sup> Finally, as a conclusion of the essay, a long forgotten Japanese manuscript cartographic document, currently held at the Prefectural Library of Kōchi in the Shikoku island, that for the first time repositioned Japan from the margin of the Eurasian *oikumene* to the centre of the Iberian transpacific sea routes, is analysed and in part transcribed. The study of the cultural and scientific dynamics that took place in Japan, in the context of the interactions between Jesuit missionaries and Iberian and Dutch merchants with the Japanese learned Buddhist and neo-Confucian religious and academic communities, show that linear Eurocentric models of circulation of knowledge, people, and ideas are ill-adapted to articulate the complexities of the agencies, and also the places of exchange and transformation of culture, forms, and ideas in the long and multifaceted system of maritime and terrestrial routes that linked Europe to several kingdoms and cities in Asia.

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19 Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*. New York: Routledge, 1994.

20 Hiraoka, “The Transmission of Western Cosmology to 16<sup>th</sup> Century Japan”. Luís Saraiva and Catherine Jami (Ed.), *The Jesuits, The Padroado and East Asian Science (1552–1773)*. Singapore: World Scientific Publishing, 2008, pp.81–98.

Complementary to Cattaneo's analysis, Max Moerman's essay, "The Epistemology of Vision: Buddhist versus Jesuit Cosmology in Early Modern Japan", focuses instead on the conspicuous – and so far, little known – Buddhist monks' and Neo-Confucian scholars' cosmological – direct and indirect – responses to Jesuits' proselytism involving the global earth and heavenly spheres as evidence of the Christian divine plan. Moerman's essay traces a broad landscape of the discourses and devices of Buddhist cartography and cosmology that developed throughout the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries grounded in classical Buddhist cosmology and theory of vision "in which – Moerman argues – the limited optics of the human eye are incommensurate with the panopticism of the Buddha". The introduction by the Jesuits of the Aristotelian-Ptolemaic cosmos into Japan, since the mid-sixteenth century and, two centuries later, of Copernican astronomy, in the context of the *Rangaku* (蘭学, literally "Dutch learning"), presented significant challenges to the Japanese Buddhist worldview. Starting from an analysis of Jesuit sources, such as the first part of the *De sphaera* ("sphere" here meaning 'the spherical world', that is the Aristotelian-Ptolemaic universe), the first part of Gomez's *Compendium catholicae veritatis* (1595), Moerman analyses the work of Mori Shōken 森尚謙 (1653–1721), of the Pure land monk Monnō 文雄 (1700–1763), and of the Tendai monk Fumon Entsū 普門円通 (1755–1834), among several others. Fumon Entsū, one of the most distinguished advocates of classical Buddhist astronomy and geography in the late Edo period, stands out. While basing his theories on the classical texts of the Buddhist canon, as described in the *Abhidharmakosa*, Entsū incorporated the techniques of European science to prove the accuracy of traditional Buddhist cosmology over European astronomy well into the late nineteenth century.

Altogether, both Cattaneo's and Moerman's research trajectories allow us to focus on the processes of circulation, transformation, and above all of the negotiation, resistance and even of mutual rejection, between heterogeneous world views. There was no such thing as the "globalisation" of European culture or science before the nineteenth century.

Finally, Part IV of the volume, "The Aftermath", takes into consideration the decades immediately following the expulsion from Japan of the Catholic missionaries. We believe that the history of these decades, often considered extraneous or detached from the events connected to the effective presence of Catholic missionaries in Japan, is instead a fundamental and integral part of that history, one that, in particular and primarily, involves numerous Japanese communities that had to face the trying experiences of the ban of Christianity brought forward by the Tokugawa shogunate. In this final part of the book, the essays of Martin Nogueira Ramos and Kojima Yoshie approach from two different perspectives – however integrated – the history of the Japanese Christian communities, which, following the ban, tried to keep alive their faith and the memory of Christianity, while formally adhering to Buddhism. Finally, Akune Susumu analyses in detail the latest attempt by the Jesuits to return to Japan in 1643, trying to grasp the complex objectives and hopes embedded in this desperate endeavour, and thus

renovating a historiography that has mainly highlighted the search for a martyrdom to redeem the apostasy of Cristovão Ferreira S.J. (c. 1580–1650).

Martin Nogueira Ramos' essay, "Neither Apostates nor Martyrs. Japanese Catholics Facing the Repression (1612–Mid-Seventeenth Century)" focuses on the vast majorities of Japanese Christians who did not choose to apostatize or to become martyrs and decided instead to secretly practicing their religion. Although the Tokugawa shogunate obliged all Christians to recant Christianity and to formally become Buddhists by associating themselves with local temples, numerous communities of commoners tried to remain adherent, or at least not to lose, the Christian creed, in very discreet and prudent ways. By following and further developing Higashibaba Ikuo's<sup>21</sup> and Kawamura Shinzō's<sup>22</sup> studies on Catholic commoners, Ramos renews interest for popular religion by taking into considerations new sources that shed light on this chapter of social religious and cultural history through the example of the peninsula of Shimabara between 1612 and 1638. The region of Shimabara was one of the most significant places for the history of Christianity in Japan: the Shimabara *daimyō* Arima Yoshisada 有馬義貞 (1521–1576) and his son Arima Harunobu 有馬晴信 (1567–1612) were among the first to convert to Catholicism and, as argued by Ramos, at the time of the persecutions against the Christians, the commoners of Shimabara "were the initiators, along with peasants from Amakusa 天草, of a large-scale revolt of Christian inspiration in 1637–1638".

By analysing missionary sources, Japanese political documents and transcripts of interrogation as well as the few testimonies left by lay Catholics, Ramos sheds light on the religious mentality of Japanese Christians in the first half of the seventeenth century, at the time of the most violent attack against Christianity. These documents are accompanied by a fresh reconsideration of the texts written in the aftermath of the Shimabara revolt by Inoue Masashige 井上政重 (1585–1661), the "great inspector" (*ōmetsuke* 大目付) of the Bakufu, who supervised the ban of Christianity in the whole Kingdom. Altogether, these comparative and integrated readings on the one hand elucidate the anti-Christian measures and policies, and on the other, explain the progressive adaptation of the Christians to them. Extensive quotations and translations from original documents detailing the daily Christian practices in contexts where there were few missionaries and, after 1625, almost no missionaries at all, provide the basis on which Ramos manages to draw a very detailed social history of Christianity in Japan, beyond what is generally known through the more normative or even propagandistic Jesuit letters and reports. Of particular importance, in the final part of the essay, is the analysis of

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21 Higashibaba, *Christianity in Early Modern Japan: Kirishitan Belief and Practice*. Leiden, Boston & Koln: Brill, 2001.

22 Kawamura, *Kirishitan shinto soshiki no tanjō to hen'yō* キリシタン信徒組織の誕生と変容. Tōkyō: Kyōbunkan 教文館, 2003; Kawamura, *Sengoku shūkyō shakai shisō-shi: Kirishitan jirei kara no kōsatsu* 戦国宗教社会思想史—キリシタン事例からの考察. Tōkyō: Chisen shokan 知泉書館, 2011.

the documents about the Shimabara rebellion, which reported the voices of the officers who were in charge of fighting against the rebels, and even the echo of the hopes and fears of a few Catholic commoners of Shimabara.

Kojima Yoshie's essay, "Orthodoxy and Acculturation of Christian Art in Japan: The Transformation of the Eucharistic Representation of 'Hidden Christians'", focuses mainly on the descendants of the communities who maintained the Christian faith in secrecy in Ikitsuki, a small island in north-western Kyūshū, contiguous to Hirado island. Known in modern Japanese as 'Kakure Kirishitan かくれキリシタン' – Kakure means 'hidden one' and Kirishitan means 'Christians' – their systems of beliefs are considered to have originated from Catholic religious practices of the sixteenth century. Kojima's research takes into consideration a vast sample of images, traditionally known as 'Gozen-sama' 御前様 and Okake-e 御掛け絵 (the latter are sacred images of the Kakure Kirishitan of Ikitsuki, in the form of hanging scrolls), preserved and venerated by these communities, and discusses their functions and iconology. In ways similar to what happens with the recitation by the Kakure Kirishitan of prayers or ritual phrases which, while maintaining a sonority that recalls Latin, are just repeated as sounds, without any perception of their original meaning,<sup>23</sup> even their sacred images have undergone a similar process of loss of the original Christian meaning, while maintaining some of the very recognizable Christian stylistic features of the images that inspired them. With regard to this, particular emphasis is given to the analysis of the *Madonna with the Child* and the *Annunciation* paintings and their hybridisation with other Buddhist images, such as the *Amida-sanzon Raigō-zu* (Descent of Amida Trinity). In the final part of her essay, Kojima studies the Japanese Christian representations of the Eucharist in connection with texts in Japanese related to the Eucharist published by the Jesuits, such as *Hiidesu no Dōshi* (*Introducción del symbolo de la Fe* by Luis de Granada) in romanized Japanese language (1592), and *Sakramenta Teiyō* (*Manuale ad Sacramenta*) in Latin and romanized Japanese language. Among other *nanban* paintings, her analysis focuses on the *Madonna of Mysteries of the Rosary*, a painting originally conserved by the Harada family of Shimootowa, found in 1930 inside a bamboo tube, currently held in the Kyōto University Museum, and a similar *Madonna of Mysteries of the Rosary* belonged to the Higashi family of Sendaiji, found in 1920 in a hidden 'never-opened' box, currently held at the Ibaraki City Museum of Cultural Properties. Kojima develops an innovative research regarding the reverberations of these complex *nanban* images in a conspicuous series of okake-e depicted and worshipped by the Kakure Kirishitan of Ikitsuki, some of which are reproduced in the volume for the first time.

The last essay of the book, "New Evidence and Perspective of the Pedro Marques Missionary Group: At the Tail End of the Jesuit Enterprise in Japan", authored

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23 Minagawa Tatsuo, *Yōgaku torai kō: Kirishitan ongaku no eikō to zasetsu* 「洋楽渡来考: キリシタン音楽の栄光と挫折」 (*Introduction of Western music in Japan: study on Kirishitan mass*). Tōkyō: Nihonkirishutokyōdan-Shuppankyoku, 2004.



by Akune Susumu, develops a microhistorical analysis of the last attempts by the Jesuits guided by Antonio Rubino (1578–1643), *Visitador* of the Japan Province and the China Vice-Province, and the *Provincial* of the Japan Province, Pedro Marques (c.1576–1657), to reach Japan from the Philippines. Rubino and Marques, who were aware of the martyrdom that would affect them, were generally credited to have made their voyages to Japan to repair the shame of the apostasy of the former Vice-Provincial of Japan Cristóvão Ferreira SJ (c.1580–1650) who had recanted Christianity in 1633 and was given the Japanese name of Sawano Chūan.<sup>24</sup> By first reassessing a vast array of sources already available in the historiography mostly dealing with Rubino’s travel and martyrdom, on the basis of Josef Franz Schütte,<sup>25</sup> Akune develops a new and close reading of the *Relação da viagem do Padre Pedro Marquez Provincial de Japão...* (Report of the voyage of the Father Pedro Marques, Provincial of the Japan Province...), a manuscript document written in Portuguese by a Luso-Japanese Jesuit, Pedro Marques junior (1612–1670), preserved in the Roman Jesuit Archive, which details the origin, preparation, scopes and tragic doom of Marques’ endeavour, including his later reception in the Jesuit communities of Macao, *Cochinchina* (nowadays Vietnam), and the Philippines.<sup>26</sup> In doing so, Akune revises the conventional viewpoint that Marques was simply an epigone of Rubino and instead argues that both Rubino’s and Marques’ expeditions equally benefited from the full support of the Jesuit headquarter in Macao and were part of the Jesuit mission strategy in Southeast Asia, whose horizon included *Cochinchina*, Macao, the Philippines and Japan. “The report – Akune argues – holds significant value as a historical source as it is inclusive of a variety of documents written not only by missionaries but also by seculars” that include “a short maritime journal kept by a Spanish seaman, and a Dutch merchant’s report brought via the rare route, Batavia to Macao”. Through the integration of this and other sources – in particular the letters written by the officers of the Dutch East India Company – Akune follows the converging vicissitudes not only of Antonio Rubino and Pedro Marques, but also of Francesco Cassola (c.1608–1644), Alonso de Arroyo (1592–1644), as well as of the Japanese *Irmão* André Vieira (1601–1678) and of the renowned Giuseppe Chiara (1602–1685), the last Jesuits who survived in Japan under the control of the Japanese authorities for about 40 years after they landed Japan in 1643.

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- 24 Cieslik, “The case of Christovão Ferreira”, *Monumenta Nipponica*, vol. 29, no. 1 (1974), pp.1–54; For the biographies of Rubino and Marques, see O’Neill; Domínguez (Eds.), *Diccionario Histórico de la Compañía de Jesús: Biográfico-Temático*. 4 Vols. Roma: Institutum Historicum Societatis Iesu, 2001, vol. 4, p.3430; vol. 3, p.2512.
- 25 Schütte, *Monumenta historica Japoniae. Textus catalogorum Japoniae. Aliaque de personis domibusque S.J. in Japonia informationes et relationes, 1549–1654*. Romae: Apud Monumenta Historica Societatis Iesu, 1975, pp.1010–1033.
- 26 *Relação da viagem do Padre Pedro Marquez Provincial de Japão, e mais companheiros da sua chegada, e prizaõ naquelle Reyno o anno de 1643*. ARSI, Jap. Sin. 29, f. 322r–328v.

## Final Remarks

In the introduction to their edited volume *The Age of Revolutions in Global Context, c. 1760–1840*, when stressing the importance of connection (connected histories), David Armitage and Sanjay Subrahmanyam refer to at least two possible ways of conceptualizing the connected histories: “A first would suggest that connections did exist and were known to past actors, but have for some reason been forgotten or laid aside. The task of the historian would then be to rediscover these lost traces. A second view would instead posit that historians might act as electricians, connecting circuits by acts of imaginative reconstitution rather than simple restitution.”

The same can be argued about the essays in this volume, where both the rediscovery of lost traces and the imaginative reconstitution of linking circuits were put into practice, attesting to the presence of various kinds of border-crossing networks (cultural, religious, linguistic), and a history that is in every aspect transnational. The four parts and twelve essays offer a polycentric and complementary look at a plurality of interactions that, over the course of about one century, characterized the relations between Catholic missionaries, in particular the Jesuits, and their Japanese interlocutors: in particular Buddhist monks, Neo-Confucian scholars, the military and political elites, but also more numerous commoners, in connection with Portuguese and, by the end of the sixteenth century, Spanish and Dutch merchants. Moreover, the volume develops a transdisciplinary approach: religious history, philology and philosophy, book history, art history, history of music, history of science, history of the European expansion, history of ideas and mentalities are mobilized to explore various forms and contexts of interactions in early modern Japan. It is within the general framework of early modern history that such multifaceted disciplines and methodologies complement each other and guided us in this collective research.

The macro space where these interactions emerged – Japan at the moment when it was placed in the world map of the time – aggregates smaller spaces, such as parts of the island of Kyūshū, and even micro spaces, like the Christian mission itself. Whatever the scale, all of these spaces emerge as connected contact zones that were the stage for processes of various degrees of permeability, often resulting in adaptations, exchanges, and translations. Furthermore, as the essays demonstrate in different levels and on distinct issues, these processes were frequently marked by misunderstandings, incompatibilities, tensions, and disputes, with acceptances and rejections. Hence, the impossibility (and even the vacuity) of trying to label the history of the Christian mission in Japan as a ‘success’ or a ‘failure’. It was neither, or it was both, depending on the criteria adopted. However, in doing so, the central point is misplaced or even lost: that something new and unexperienced emerged from these interactions and interconnected histories in the early modern period.

Both the Christian and Buddhist religious dimensions are undoubtedly a central factor in these interactions; however, although it is essential to highlight

their pervasiveness, the multiplicity of existential and cultural spheres that they involved go far beyond internal religious perspectives. The great variety of documents highlighted and analysed by the authors who have contributed to this project reflects, on the one hand, the multiplicity of areas involved in the interaction, and on the other, the need to develop polycentric disciplinary approaches. None of the documentary *corpora* considered are more effective than the others for grasping the complexities of the negotiations that involved the European and Japanese interlocutors. On the contrary, it is precisely their heterogeneity that sheds light on the complexities and articulated outcomes of their interactions.

Judging by the material richness of the *corpora* taken into consideration, perhaps one aspect can be grasped: the end of the interactions – carried out through a series of edicts which progressively sanctioned the expulsion of the missionaries and their acolytes, together with the obligation to abjure Christianity by Japanese Christians – highlights the predominance of the political sphere in contrast to, or despite, the richness or effectiveness of the interactions. The political dimension and power dynamics and tensions, so fundamental both in the context of the military unification of Japan and for Catholic missionary policies within the framework of the Iberian Empires, were preponderant factors for the deconstruction, interruption and rejections of any interaction, independently from their social efficacy and cogency.



Ana Fernandes PINTO and Linda Zampol D'ORTIA

## The Project Data Collection

In terms of philosophical conceptualization, as well as representations of divinities Buddhism in Japan acquired its own specific forms that distinguished it from its mainland variants, including sects and schools that developed specific beliefs and practices over the centuries. It was with some of these schools that the missionaries working under the Portuguese *Padroado* created acquaintances and exchanges.

Jesuit missionaries living in Japan, more than any other missionary presence in the country, produced a vast corpus of written and visual sources. Through the lens of these men, we can find precious information about the political, religious, social, and cultural aspects of Japanese society. The assemblage of this data was essential for the elaboration of a localized missionary strategy and explains why the Jesuits focused so much on local religious practices.

One of the Project's outputs was the construction of a Data Collection that is available in Open Access (see below). The information contained in the Data Collection is assembled mainly from Jesuit sources. This is due to the fact that the Society of Jesus was the most enduring missionary presence in early-modern Japan, and it is facilitated by the Jesuits' habit of keeping regular correspondence with their brethren, and their superiors in Europe. Due to the limitations imposed by the project timeframe, priority was given to collecting information pertaining to the official (that is, public) discourse on Buddhism articulated by the Society. This was elaborated with the specific aim to inform about Japanese practices and traditions, to be later publicized in print. The Data Collection also includes sources written by missionaries of different religious orders. A limited number of Mendicant sources are included to showcase the type of knowledge that these other missionary orders had available: Marcelo de Ribadeneira's *Historia de las islas del Archipiélago Filipino y Reinos de la Gran China, Tartaria, Cochinchina, Malaca, Siam, Cambodge y Japón* (Barcelona, 1601); and Jacinto Orfanell's *Historia ecclesiastica de los sucessos de la cristiandad de Iapon* (Madrid, 1632).

The main sources of information considered are *Historia de Japam*<sup>1</sup> and the collection of Jesuit letters *Cartas que os padres e irmãos da Companhia de Iesus escreverão dos Reynos de Iapão & China...* (Évora, Manuel de Lyra, 1598).<sup>2</sup> The

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1 Fróis, *Historia de Japam*. 5 Vols. José Wicki, S.J. (Ed.). Lisboa: Biblioteca Nacional, 1976–1984.

2 *Cartas que os Padres e Irmãos da Companhia de Jesus escreveram dos Reynos de Japão & China aos da mesma Companhia da India & Europa desde anno de 1549 até o de 1580*. 2 Vols. Em Évora por Manoel de Lyra, Anno de MDXCVIII [1598].

former was written by the veteran missionary Luís Fróis from 1584 to 1594 on the orders of Jesuit General Claudio Acquaviva. The *Cartas* collection is composed of two volumes, printed in Évora in 1598, summing up 213 letters sent from Japan from 1549 to 1589. These two works, while differing in form and genre, give a chronological perspective of the history of the Mission, providing a portrait of the main actors and their missionary work, and richly contextualizing their interactions with local Buddhist authorities. The data collected from these texts were then integrated with information from *Documentos de Japón*,<sup>3</sup> two volumes which compile all the extant manuscripts regarding Japan from 1549 to 1562. After 1589, information on the official discourse of the latter years of the Mission was collected instead from the printed editions of the so-called annual letters. With the arrival of Visitor Alessandro Valignano in 1579, the epistolary output of the Mission had begun to be regulated through the institution of a single letter for the whole enterprise, that would be written every year and would be acceptable for printing in Europe. This decision was taken with various aims: collecting and organizing the information for the upper echelons of the Society, promoting the education of the public, and – should the occasion arise – future missionaries, and edifying the readers.

The Data Collection comprises a total of 1013 entries and 230,000 transcribed words approximately. However, this tool amounts to more than a mechanical transcription of the sources. Its organization considers the nature of the documentation and aims at handling the information with a research-oriented utilization in mind. The most significant excerpts were chosen from each documental source, each classified and described following the Data Collection fields. Every entry is identified by a number and is associated with information that links to its source:

- (i) Document's date;
- (ii) Document's place of writing;
- (iii) Document's title;
- (iv) Bibliographic reference.

Every record transcribed also accommodates five research-oriented fields:

- (i) Agents;
- (ii) Subject matters;
- (iii) Content;
- (iv) Document's language;
- (v) Location of the episode;
- (vi) Year of the episode.

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3 *Documentos del Japón*. 2 Vols. (vol. 1: 1547–1557; vol. 2: 1558–1562). Juan Ruiz de Medina (Ed.). Roma: Instituto Histórico de la Compañía de Jesús, 1990–1995.

The entry for subject matters identifies its broad themes: Buddhist practices, Buddhist doctrine, visual culture, etc. The content field describes in more detail the elements present in the entry: funerary rituals, orations, paintings, festivals, mount Hiei, etc. For both, a reference guide of the available keywords is associated with the Data Collection. The field regarding agents identifies the missionaries, *daimyō* or Japanese monks involved in the action described.

The uses of this Data Collection are numerous, as it can be a valuable tool, unique of its kind, in the research of early-modern Japanese Buddhist forms, the Jesuit way of proceeding in the Japanese Mission, and their interactions and relations through time. The analysis of the data according to specific subject matters and contents allows the evolution of the first European discourse on Buddhism, the changes in their interactions with monks and Japanese authorities, and an understanding of Japanese Buddhist practices in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

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To cite the Data Collection: Data Collection of the Research Project *Interactions Between Rivals. The Christian Mission and Buddhist Sects in Japan (c.1549–c.1647)*, edited by Ana Fernandes Pinto and Linda Zampol D’Ortia.

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### Contextual Chronology of the Christian Mission in Japan c.1540 – c.1640

Daniele FRISON

1542–1543	Portuguese traders land on the island of Tanegashima, in the South of Japan, introducing the firearms. In the same year, the future shōgun Tokugawa Ieyasu is born.
1544	Portuguese merchants are authorized to call at the southern Japanese ports of Satsuma and Bungo, in Kyūshū, the third largest island of Japan.
1546–1547	In Malacca, the Portuguese merchant Jorge Álvares reports to father Francisco Xavier of the Society of Jesus on what he found out about Japan and its people: namely, Japanese religious devotion and praying practices, the structure and daily practices of the Buddhist sects, Buddhist iconography and architecture.
1547	The last Japanese mission of the official tally trade (i.e., trade carried out through official ships provided with <i>kangō</i> , or tallies, to distinguish them from the ships of smugglers and pirates) leaves for Ming China.
1548	Father Nicolao Lancillotto, Rector of the Jesuit college in Goa, wrote the <i>Informação sobre o Japão</i> , in which he reported extendedly on Buddhist topics, such as Shaka's life and deeds, the origin of Buddhism, the organization of the Buddhist clergy, the different sects (Jōdo Shinshū (Ikkōshū), Tendai and Shingon), practices, rites and iconography.
1549	Francisco Xavier arrives in the Southern Japanese city of Kagoshima, in Kyūshū. Soon after, along with his interpreter and assistant, the Japanese Anjirō (also known as Yajirō), he visits the nearby castle of the Satsuma <i>daimyō</i> , Shimazu Takahisa. In December, Xavier writes a letter to his brethren in Goa reporting on his interaction with the Japanese Buddhists and the similarities between Christian and Buddhist beliefs.
1550	While in Goa, it is decreed that the Sino-Japanese trade should be an annual monopoly conceded by the crown, Portuguese traders and Chinese authorities agree on establishing a biannual fair in Guǎngzhōu (Canton).
1551	Francisco Xavier is the first European to set foot in Miyako, present day Kyōto. In the same year, while the Jesuits settle in Yamaguchi, in the Chūgoku region, with the Spanish Cosme de Torres as father Superior, the first letters written by Xavier in Japan are printed in Portugal. Cosme de Torres writes to the Jesuits in Goa commenting on the history of Buddha, Shaka Nyorai, the sects Hokkeshū (Nichirenshū) and Ikkōshū and the Buddhist concept of reincarnation.



1552	The Bungo <i>daimyō</i> , Ōtomo Yoshishige Sōrin, sends envoys to Goa. On 9 <sup>th</sup> April 1552, Xavier writes to the General of the Order, Ignacio de Loyola, informing him that it was necessary to send literate fathers to Japan with a good knowledge of astronomy, due to the great curiosity the Japanese felt towards scientific matters and meteorological phenomena. On 3 <sup>rd</sup> December, Xavier dies in Shangchuan Island, on the southern coast of Guangdong, China.
1553	Koteda Yasutsune, lord of Ikitsuki and vassal of the lord of Hirado Matsuura Takanobu in the Nagasaki area, is baptized as António.
1554	The Portuguese in Goa send an embassy to Bungo, while the converted Japanese Bernardo is the first Japanese to enter the Society of Jesus in Europe.
1555	The missionaries of the Society of Jesus found a hospital in Funai (nowadays Ōita), where they settled two years before.
1556	The Jesuits are expelled from Yamaguchi and Funai becomes the mission's headquarters. The <i>Sumário dos erros en que os gentios do Japão vivem e de algumas seitas gentílicas en que principalmente confiã</i> is completed. It presents Shintoism and Buddhism based on the information the fathers have been gathering since their arrival in Japan. The Society of Jesus establishes its first printer in Goa.
1557	The <i>fidalgo</i> Leonel de Sousa secures permission from officials at Guǎngzhōu to establish a Portuguese port at Macao. Gaspar Vilela invests money in the silk trade for the first time to sustain the evangelical effort.
1558	Matsuura Takanobu expels the missionaries, believing that the Portuguese would still visit his harbours even without him being a patron of the Christian faith. Kinoshita Tōkichirō, the future Toyotomi Hideyoshi, enters the service of the powerful lord of the Owari province, Oda Nobunaga.
1559	Father Gaspar Vilela founds the first Jesuit mission in Kansai and visits Mount Hiei.
1560	Nobunaga begins his rise to national prominence by defeating Imagawa Yoshimoto in the battle of Okehazama, in Owari province.
1561	The missionaries of the Society of Jesus establish contact with the <i>daimyō</i> of Ōmura, Ōmura Sumitada, who is also willing to harbour trade with the foreigners.
1562	The Superior of the Japan Mission, father Cosme de Torres reaches an agreement with Sumitada, who not only accepts the proposal for opening trade with the Portuguese at Yokoseura (near the modern port of Sasebo), but also donates to the missionaries half of the port town, so that the Christians could reside there without disturbance. Nobunaga concludes alliance with Tokugawa Ieyasu.

1563	<p>Ōmura Sumitada becomes the first Christian <i>daimyō</i> with the name of Dom Bartolomeu.</p> <p>Owing to an uprising incited by Buddhist monks, the port of Yokoseura becomes a heap of ashes.</p>
1565	<p>The relationship between the Portuguese merchants and the <i>daimyō</i> of Hirado are interrupted. The missionaries are also expelled from Miyako.</p>
1567	<p>Cosme de Torres sends brother Luís de Almeida to proselytize in the small territory – currently near the port city of Nagasaki – to a leading vassal of Sumitada, Nagasaki Jinzaemon Sumikage, who receives the sacrament and takes the name of Bernardo.</p>
1568	<p>Nobunaga marches into Miyako and installs Ashikaga Yoshiaki as shōgun.</p>
1569	<p>Father Gaspar Vilela is invited to baptize Bernardo's retainers and receives a piece of land near Nagasaki in which he erects the famous church <i>Todos os Santos</i>. Meanwhile, Bungo becomes the missionaries' strongest centre in Kyūshū.</p> <p>First meeting between the Jesuits and Oda Nobunaga, who grants them the right to settle in the capital city.</p> <p>The city of Sakai submits to Nobunaga.</p>
1570	<p>The Portuguese Francisco Cabral becomes the new Superior of the Japan mission.</p>
1571	<p>Nagasaki becomes the final centre for the silk trade and the stronghold of the Jesuit mission.</p> <p>Preoccupied with the Tendai sect's independence and military power, Nobunaga destroys their headquarters – the Enryakuji - on Mount Hiei in the outskirts of Kyōto.</p>
1572	<p>Nobunaga issues a seventeen-article remonstrance to shōgun Yoshiaki.</p>
1573	<p>Nobunaga first confines the shōgun to Nijō Castle and then drives him from Miyako, in effect putting an end to the Ashikaga shogunate.</p> <p>Alessandro Valignano is nominated <i>Visitatorem Societatis nostræ in universa India Orientali</i> by General Everard Mercurian.</p>
1574	<p>The Portuguese King Sebastião I allocates a fixed sum of 1,000 golden <i>scudi</i> to the Japanese mission.</p>
1575	<p>Nobunaga defeats Takeda Katsuyori at Nagashino, in the province of Mikawa and conquers the province of Echizen from the sect Jōdo Shinshū.</p>

1576	Nobunaga moves to Azuchi, near Biwa lake, where he begins constructing a new castle. He commissioned the decoration from Kanō Eitoku. Arima Yoshisada, <i>daimyō</i> of Arima, is baptized with the name of André.
1578	Ōtomo Sōrin Yoshishige <i>daimyō</i> of Bungo, is baptized with the name of Francisco. On August 4 <sup>th</sup> , King Sebastião I of Portugal dies at the Battle of Alcácer Quibir in Morocco. The Portuguese crown momentarily passes to Cardinal Dom Henrique.
1579	Religious disputation between monks of the Jōdo Shinshū and the Nichiren sect. A judge appointed by Nobunaga declares the Jōdo Shinshū the winner and Nobunaga orders three of Nichiren monks to be executed. In July, Alessandro Valignano arrives in Japan, landing at Kuchinotsu in Arima.
1580	Valignano calls the first mission conference, which takes place in Usuki, near Funai (Ōita), Nagasaki and Kyōto. The Japan mission becomes a vice-province with Gaspar Coelho as the first Vice-Provincial. There are 65 members of the Society of Jesus in Japan: 29 fathers, 31 brothers and six novices. Ōmura Sumitada, threatened by his neighbour Ryūzōji Takanobu, and determined not to lose the advantages afforded by the Portuguese ship that regularly docked in his harbour, donates the ports of Nagasaki and Mogi to the Society of Jesus. Arima Harunobu takes the Christian name Protasio. The first English trading vessels visit Hirado. The Ishiyama Hongan-ji surrenders to Oda Nobunaga while his liege's subject Shibata Katsuei defeats the religious uprising ( <i>Ikkō ikki</i> ) in Kaga, thus ending Oda's war against the Jōdo Shinshū. On January 31 <sup>st</sup> , Dom Henrique dies leaving behind a board of five governors to administer the kingdom until a successor is found. Possible successors include Felipe II of Spain, whose access to the Portuguese throne is also secured thanks to the invasion of Portugal by the Spanish army.
1581	Valignano finishes writing the <i>Advertimentos e Avisos acerca dos Costumes e Catangues de Jappão</i> , commonly known as <i>Il Cerimoniale per i Missionari del Giappone</i> . Nobunaga presents to Valignano a screen painting ( <i>byōbu</i> ) of Azuchi castle depicted by Kanō Eitoku. The same year, Oda campaigns against the Kongōbu-ji, the principal temple of the Shingon sect on Mount Kōya, in the province of Kii (today's Wakayama prefecture).

1582	<p>In February, Valignano leaves Japan together with the four young Japanese ambassadors – Mancio Itō representing the Bungo <i>daimyō</i>, Ōtomo Yoshishige Sōrin, Miguel Chijiwa for the Arima <i>daimyō</i>, Arima Harunobu, and the lord of Ōmura, Sumitada, and two other young men, Martinho Hara and Julião Nakaura – heading for Rome on a mission organized by Valignano together with the Kyūshū <i>kirishitan daimyō</i>. The party reaches Macao one month later and will leave by the end of the year.</p> <p>Honnōji Affair: Akechi Mitsuhide betrays and murders Nobunaga in Kyōto. Soon afterwards, Hideyoshi avenges Nobunaga's death in the battle of Yamazaki and becomes his successor.</p>
1583	<p>Valignano, while in Cochín, finishes writing the <i>Sumario de las cosas de Japon</i>.</p> <p>Hideyoshi defeats Shibata Katsuei at the battle of Shizugatake in Ōmi and begins rebuilding Ōsaka's castle.</p>
1584	<p>The first Franciscans arrive in Japan.</p> <p>The four ambassadors reach Lisbon in August and begin a tour of the main cities of Iberian Peninsula until February 1585, when they sail for Livorno.</p> <p>Hideyoshi adopts throughout his domain the <i>kokudaka</i> system and confronts Tokugawa Ieyasu in the Komaki campaign.</p>
1585	<p>Pope Gregory XIII issues the brief <i>Ex Pastoralis Officio</i> thus conferring on the Society of Jesus the monopoly of the evangelization of China and Japan.</p> <p>In March, after visiting Florence and other important Italian cities, the four Japanese ambassadors reach Rome. Their return journey takes them through the most important cities of central and northern Italy. In August, they sail back to Spain from Genoa.</p> <p>Hideyoshi concludes peace with Ieyasu, conquers Shikoku and is appointed <i>kanpaku</i>, imperial regent.</p>
1586	<p>Hideyoshi becomes <i>daijō daijin</i>, a kind of prime minister, and receives the approval of Go-Yōzei <i>tennō</i> (emperor) to erect a massive statue of the Daibutsu in the capital city. He overcomes the resistance of the Shingon temple in Negoro. Later in the year, he moves his troops to Kyūshū in response to a request for help from Ōtomo Sōrin in the struggle against Shimazu Yoshihisa.</p>
1587	<p>Death of Ōmura Sumitada and Ōtomo Yoshishige.</p> <p>Hideyoshi conquers Kyūshū, takes possession of Nagasaki, and in July issues the first anti-Christian decree, which includes the expulsion of the Jesuit missionaries from Japan, but refrains from enforcing the edict.</p> <p>The four Japanese ambassadors meet Valignano in Goa.</p>

1588	<p>The exiled Ashikaga Yoshiaki resigns the office of shōgun, bringing a legal end to the Ashikaga shogunate.</p> <p>Hideyoshi issues orders for the sword-hunt (<i>katanagari</i>), while Go-Yōzei <i>tennō</i> pays him an official visit in the Jūraku Palace.</p> <p>Valignano is appointed ambassador of the Portuguese viceroy in Goa, Dom Duarte de Meneses.</p> <p>The Society of Jesus establishes a printing press in Macao.</p>
1589	<p>Dedication ceremony for the Kyōto's <i>Daibutsu</i>.</p>
1590	<p>Hideyoshi completes his military hegemony by defeating the Go-Hōjō at Odawara. The final resistance in northern Japan ceases by the following year. Ieyasu resettles in the Kantō area and builds a castle at Edo.</p> <p>The four young Japanese who have visited Europe return to Japan together with Valignano in his role of ambassador. On this occasion, Valignano brings with him a printing press produced in Italy.</p> <p>Second general conference of the Japan vice-province held in the province of Kazusa.</p> <p>The <i>De Missione Legatorum Iaponensium ad Romanam Curiam...</i> is printed in Macao.</p>
1591	<p>Alessandro Valignano is officially received by Hideyoshi in Kyōto together with Portuguese <i>fidalgos</i> and the four noble Japanese who play European musical instruments to please Hideyoshi.</p> <p>The number of Jesuits in Japan reaches an all-time high of 142. The missionaries establish a printing press in Japan and publish the <i>Dochiriina Kirishitan</i> in vernacular Japanese style with a mixture of <i>hiragana</i> and <i>kanji</i>. A revised version would be published first in 1592 in Roman characters and then in 1600 in both Japanese and Romanized version.</p> <p>Hideyoshi issues a three-clause order prohibiting changes of status from samurai to merchant or from farmer to merchant. He also orders a unified cadastral survey on a national scale.</p>
1592	<p>Japanese forces led by Katō Kiyomasa and Konishi Yukinaga cross to Korea heading for China. The army lands at Pusan and rapidly takes control of the fortresses at Pusan and Donglae and occupies Seoul.</p> <p>Valignano, after receiving financial support from the senate of Macao, begins building a college.</p> <p>Valignano's <i>Adiciones al Sumario del Japón</i> is printed in Macao.</p>
1593	<p>Hideyoshi allows the Franciscans from Manila to settle in Japan.</p> <p>Hideyoshi's legitimate son, Hideyori, is born.</p> <p>The Vice-Provincial of Japan, Pedro Gómez finishes the scientific treatise <i>De Sphæra</i>.</p>

1594	<p>Hideyoshi finishes erecting a castle at Fushimi, near Kyōto, also known as Momoyama or Fushimi-Momoyama castle.</p> <p>Completion of the work for the college of Macao, which becomes the missionary centre for the evangelization of both China and Japan.</p>
1595	<p>Hideyoshi's adopted son, Hidetsugu, is disgraced and forced to commit suicide.</p> <p>The first Japanese students reach the college of Macao. Among them are Sebastião Kimura and Luís Niabara who will be (in 1601) the first two Japanese priests.</p> <p>The <i>Dictionarivm Latino Lvsitanicvm, ac Iaponicvm, ex Ambrosii Calepini volumine depromptum</i> including circa 27,000 entries in three languages (Latin, Portuguese and Romanized Japanese) is published by the Jesuit press in Amakusa.</p>
1596	<p>Hideyoshi's field generals (see 1592) arrange a truce with the Chinese that fails to meet Hideyoshi's military objectives.</p> <p>The <i>San Felipe</i>, a Spanish galleon bound for Acapulco and laden with rich cargo, ran aground off the coast of Tosa (Shikoku) on 19<sup>th</sup> October.</p> <p>The first bishop of Japan, D. Pedro Martins, arrives in Nagasaki. Hideyoshi receives him soon afterwards.</p> <p>Keichō-Fushimi earthquake.</p>
1597	<p>Hideyoshi orders the expulsion of the Friars Minor from Japan and the death of twenty-six missionaries and Japanese converts in Nagasaki. Amongst them were five Franciscans: Pedro Baptista, Francisco Blanco, Gonçalo Garcia, Francisco de San Miguel and the Mexican Felipe de Jesus.</p> <p>Hideyoshi moves to Ōsaka Castle and orders the second invasion of Korea. This time the objective is to win acceptance of the conditions for peace that Hideyoshi had laid down during the peace negotiations, so emphasis is placed on obtaining the cession of Korea's three southern provinces and gathering as many hostages as possible.</p> <p>The former shōgun Ashikaga Yoshiaki dies.</p> <p>The Jesuit Luís Cerqueira, the new bishop of Japan, reaches Nagasaki.</p> <p>The Painting Seminary moves to Nagasaki.</p>
1598	<p>Hideyoshi dies, and the Japanese invasion armies are recalled from Korea.</p> <p>Go-Yōzei <i>tennō</i>, in order to reestablish the traditional role of the Imperial Court, bestows the title of <i>taikō</i> (regent in retirement) on an heir of the Fujiwara clan, reasserting the principle that this title is a prerogative of the high nobility.</p> <p>Valignano, while in Nagasaki, finishes writing and sends to Rome the <i>Apologia en la qual se responde a diversas calumnias que se escrivieran contra los PP. da la Compañía de Japon, y de la China</i>.</p>

1599	<p>Kanō Sōshū paints panels of the Thirty-Six Poets for the Hōkoku Jinja, the shrine dedicated to the deified Hideyoshi, in Ōsaka.</p> <p>Ieyasu allows the Christian believers to profess their faith freely in Nagasaki and to attend mass. The number of gathered Christians, however, is so overwhelming that the missionaries ask the Nagasaki governor Terazawa Hiroataka the licence to erect a new, bigger church.</p> <p>A Japanese <i>dōjuku</i> is sent to Manila to help tend the Japanese Christian community in the Philippines. He takes with him a Japanese dictionary, a catechism, a book with the lives of the Saints and other books regarding the history in Japan, all in Japanese but written in <i>rōma-ji</i>. Conversely, from the Philippines news arrives in Japan of the demise of King Philipp II, who had died the previous year.</p>
1600	<p>Ieyasu asserts military hegemony with a victory in the battle of Sekigahara, in the province of Mino.</p> <p>The first Dutch ship – <i>De Liefde</i> – arrives in Bungo, Kyūshū, with only a handful of people aboard. Among them there is the English pilot William Adams, who is later granted an audience by Ieyasu at Ōsaka.</p> <p>There are at least 14 <i>kirishitan daimyō</i> in Japan: Konishi Yukinaga, Ōmura Yoshiaki, Arima Harunobu, Kuroda Yoshitaka, Itō Suketaka, Mōri Takamasa, Kobayakawa Hidekane, Sō Yoshitomo, Oda Hidenobu, Tsutsui Sadatsugu, Hachisuka Iemasa, Tsugaru Nobuhira, Kyōgoku Takamoto and Gamō Hideyuki.</p> <p>Whereas the number of Jesuits drops to 123. On 21<sup>st</sup> February, the Vice-Provincial of Japan Pedro Gómez dies, his role is taken over by Francesco Pasio between September and October. The Fathers begin erecting the new church in Nagasaki also thanks to the alms of the Japanese Christians.</p> <p>In December, Pope Clement VIII issues the brief <i>Onerosa pastoralis officii</i> henceforth permitting the mendicant orders to enter Japan provided they do so via the Portuguese Indies.</p> <p>The East Indian Company (<i>EIC</i>) is chartered and English activity in the Indian Ocean becomes systematic.</p>
1601	<p>There are 107 Jesuits in Japan with almost 250 <i>dōjuku</i>. Luís Niabara and Sebastião Kimura are the first Japanese to become priests.</p> <p>The first Dominicans reach Japan and settle in Satsuma.</p>
1602	<p>Ieyasu begins erecting the Nijō Castle in Kyōto.</p> <p>There are 129 Jesuit missionaries in Japan. The Jesuit press is already working on the <i>Vocabulario</i>, the first Japanese-Portuguese dictionary.</p> <p>In addition, the Augustinians reach Japan in Satsuma, close to Kagoshima.</p> <p>Wreckage of the Spanish ship on the coasts of Tosa, which carried aboard the <i>General da Armada</i> Don Lope de Ulloa y Lemos.</p> <p>The Dutch East India Company (<i>Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie</i> – <i>VOC</i>) is founded in Amsterdam.</p>

1603	<p>Ieyasu is appointed shōgun and thus begins the Tokugawa or Edo period. By this year Izumo no Okuni, apparently a priestess of Izumo Shrine, performs <i>kabuki</i> dances in Kyōto.</p> <p>There are 119 Jesuit missionaries in Japan divided into two colleges – one in Nagasaki and one in Arima – a probationary house close to Nagasaki (<i>Todos os Santos</i>), two Seminaries, a large one in Arima and a smaller one for painters in Nagasaki, 21 residences and almost 200 churches.</p> <p>The <i>Vocabulario da Lingoa de Iapam com a declaração em Portugues, feito por alguns Padres, e Irmaos da Companhia de Iesv...</i> is printed by the Jesuit press in Nagasaki. An addition will be printed in 1604. All together, the <i>Vocabulario</i> includes circa 34.000 entries.</p>
1604	<p>Ieyasu issues principles concerning the foreign trade and the authorized ships, the <i>shuinzen</i>. The Confucian scholar Hayashi Razan is employed by Ieyasu.</p> <p>There are 123 Jesuit missionaries in Japan.</p>
1605	<p>Ieyasu resigns the title of <i>sei-i taishōgun</i> by passing it onto his son Hidetada and thereby asserting the hereditary principle in the shogunal succession. Ieyasu takes the title of retired shōgun (<i>ōgoshi</i>) and names the family castle at Sunpu as his official residence.</p> <p>In order to find other commercial partners beside the Portuguese from Macao, Ieyasu allows Jacob Quackermaeck, one of the survivors of the <i>Liefde</i>, to sail to Patani to invite VOC's vessels to trade in Japan.</p> <p>Hideyoshi's widow, Kita no Mandokoro, orders the erection of the Kōdai-ji in Kyōto.</p> <p>The Jesuit church in Nagasaki is completed, whereas a new one begins to be built in Kyōto. There are 121 Jesuit missionaries in Japan.</p>
1606	<p>In the same year when Ieyasu forbids the nobility to accept the Christian faith, Dom Bartolomeu's son and successor, Ōmura Yoshiaki (Dom Sancho), piqued at what he considered the Jesuits' intrigues against his interests in Nagasaki, expels them from his domain, and abandons the Christian religion for Nichiren Buddhism.</p> <p>In Miyako, both Go-Yōzei <i>tennō</i> and Tokugawa Hidetada receive Jesuit missionaries to enquire about European scientific thought. Elsewhere, Bishop Luís Cerqueira is received by Ieyasu.</p> <p>There are 124 Jesuit missionaries in Japan.</p> <p>Alessandro Valignano dies in Macao on the morning of 20<sup>th</sup> January.</p>
1607	<p>Envoys from Korea arrive in Edo, their first visit to Japan since Hideyoshi's failed invasions.</p>



1608	<p>Pope Paul V in the brief <i>Sedis Apostolicæ Providentia</i> grants permission to members of the mendicant orders to follow any route they choose to reach the Asian missions.</p> <p>An incident in Macao involving a ship belonging to Arima Harunobu and Macao's citizens.</p>
1609	<p>While the VOC receives permission from the shogunate to trade at Nagasaki, Ieyasu addresses a letter to the Duque de Lerma authorizing Spanish vessels coming from New Spain to call at Japanese ports.</p> <p>The small Seminary in Nagasaki is closed.</p> <p>There are 132 Jesuit missionaries in Japan.</p>
1610	<p>Japanese forces attack the <i>Nao do Trato</i> captained by the Portuguese <i>fidalgo</i> André Pessoa.</p> <p>The trade with Macao is interrupted.</p> <p>The shōgun allows Spanish ships from New Spain to call at Japanese ports.</p>
1611	<p>The vice-province of Japan became a province on 9<sup>th</sup> December 1608, when patents were signed in Rome naming Francesco Pasio Visitor and Valentim Carvalho Provincial. However, the patents will not reach Japan until 31<sup>st</sup> July 1611, when the change effectively takes place.</p>
1612	<p>Capital execution of Arima Harunobu (Dom João), owing to the Okamoto Daihachi incident, a court intrigue involving the <i>daimyō</i> and Okamoto Paulo Daihachi, who was bribed by Harunobu to forge documents regarding territories his family had lost in the past.</p> <p>The shogunate issues prohibitions against Christianity.</p> <p>The trade with Macao is reestablished after the incident in 1610.</p>
1613	<p>In January, after some months of calm, the persecution takes off once again in the Takaku area (Arima domains, in Kyūshū). In other regions, although the situation appears to be safe, the missionaries do not feel at ease.</p> <p>The English ship <i>Clove</i> reaches Hirado on 11<sup>th</sup> June 1613. After a friendly reception by the local <i>daimyō</i> Matsuura Shigenobu, Captain John Saris meets Tokugawa Ieyasu at Shizuoka and his son Hidetada at Edo. With the help of William Adams, the English obtain permission to settle at Edo and to open a factory at Hirado.</p> <p>Hasekura Tsunenaga sets off from Sendai for Rome via New Spain as ambassador for the <i>daimyō</i> Date Masamune.</p> <p>In the summer, Ieyasu issues the <i>Chokkyo shie no hatto</i> (Regulations Governing Court Approval of Purple Robes) to establish guidelines for rank advancement among Buddhist priests.</p>

1614	<p>On 14<sup>th</sup> February, the Fathers are expelled from Miyako, while only three days later Bishop Luís Cerqueira dies. Valentim Carvalho is appointed as vicar in his stead.</p> <p>In October, the shogunate expels the missionaries from Nagasaki and forces them to gather in Fukuda and in a small village close to Nagasaki, where they wait for passage either to Macao or to Manila. Now there are 150 missionaries in Japan. On 6<sup>th</sup> November 73 of them sail to Macao on three ships – reaching the Portuguese entrepôt on the 18<sup>th</sup> and the 19<sup>th</sup> of November. From that point on, Macao becomes the main centre for missionary activity in Japan. Later, 23 of them go to Manila, while 54 remain hidden in Japan. Together with the Western preachers, also Takayama Justo Ukon is also exiled to Manila along with his wife, his daughter and five grandchildren. In Manila, the Spanish Governor Juan de Silva grants the Japanese 1,000 pesos per year.</p> <p>Before the expulsion, the First Provincial Conference of Japan is held to appoint two procurators to inform Rome about the political situation in Japan. The Portuguese Gabriel de Matos and the Spanish Pedro Morejón are chosen.</p> <p>The Court ignores an order passed by Ieyasu in 1606, and grants rank to a number of Toyotomi men: an act that probably represents one of the steps leading to the Ōsaka Winter campaign (November-January 1615).</p>
1615	<p>The summer campaign culminates with the fall of Ōsaka Castle and the death of Hideyori. The shogunate issues its “<i>one province, one castle</i>” edict and the <i>Buke Shohatto</i>, which defines the relationship between the <i>Bakufu</i> and the lords that basically remains in force until the end of the shogunate, the so-called <i>Bakumatsu</i>.</p> <p>The missionaries who remain in Japan are divided between different areas of the territory.</p> <p>Father Claudio Acquaviva dies and Muzio Vitelleschi is elected 6<sup>th</sup> General.</p>
1616	<p>Tokugawa Ieyasu dies and all foreign ships, except the Chinese ones, are restricted to Nagasaki and Hirado.</p> <p>Francisco Vieira, appointed Visitor of the Japanese province, arrives in Macao in July to take up his duties. At the same time, Valentim Carvalho is dismissed from his role of Father Provincial and Father Jerónimo Rodrigues takes over his position.</p>
1617	<p>The new shōgun, Hidetada, brings the persecution to a new level. João Baptista Machado is the first Jesuit martyr, who is killed in Ōmura for his faith together with his <i>dōjuku</i> Leão, Pedro Assunção O.F.M., Alonso Navarrete O.P. and Fernando Ayala O.S.A.</p>

1618	<p>Due to the persecution, the Fathers are forced to disguise themselves as Portuguese merchants and to proselytize in secret at night.</p> <p>In December, Carlo Spinola and Ambrósio Fernandes are apprehended by Japanese forces in the house of the Portuguese Domingos Jorge and Isabel Fernandes, who are executed the following year for hosting the missionaries.</p> <p>In summer, the Visitor Francisco Vieira sets off from Macao to Japan. From this year on, the Macao citizens substitute the carrack with six smaller ships (<i>galeotas</i>) both for the Goa-Macao and for the Macao-Nagasaki routes.</p>
1619	<p>The shogunate sentences to death 86 Christians throughout Japan. In the meanwhile, the new Nagasaki <i>bugyō</i>, Hasegawa Gonroku, orders that everyone in the city has to sign a document swearing that they will not help or host members of the Society of Jesus – be that Fathers, Brothers or <i>dōjuku</i> – under threat of being burned alive together with all their family and the people living in the same borough. Moreover, Gonroku publicly displays economic rewards for whoever knows the whereabouts of any Christian.</p> <p>After spending several months in Japan, Francisco Vieira goes back to Macao in November, where he dies only a few days after his arrival.</p>
1620	<p>Date Masamune puts into practice the anti-Christian decrees in his domain. The embassy to Rome lead by Hasekura Tsunenaga comes back to Japan. The Society of Jesus sends five missionaries to Japan via Manila on board of Japanese trading ships.</p> <p>On 16 May 1620, William Adams dies, and by the end of the year, the first ships of the Fleet of Defence, five Dutch and two English vessels, reach Japan.</p>
1621	<p>The shogunate issues edicts against overseas travel, the construction of ships capable of sailing to foreign countries, and the exportation of weapons. Concerning the persecution, the <i>bakufu</i> focuses in particular on the Nagasaki area, while in other regions the missionaries feel slightly more secure.</p>
1622	<p>55 Christians are executed at Nagasaki in the notorious martyrdom of the <i>Genna</i> era, which gives rise to a period of intense persecution.</p> <p>After a blockade, the Dutch attempt to conquer Macao with a force of 600 men.</p>
1623	<p>Hidetada retires as shōgun and is succeeded by Iemitsu. The <i>bakufu</i> forbids the Portuguese to have a fixed base in Nagasaki.</p> <p>Only 28 Jesuits remain in Japan, 23 Fathers and five Japanese Brothers.</p> <p>The English close their factory at Hirado and leave Japan for good.</p>

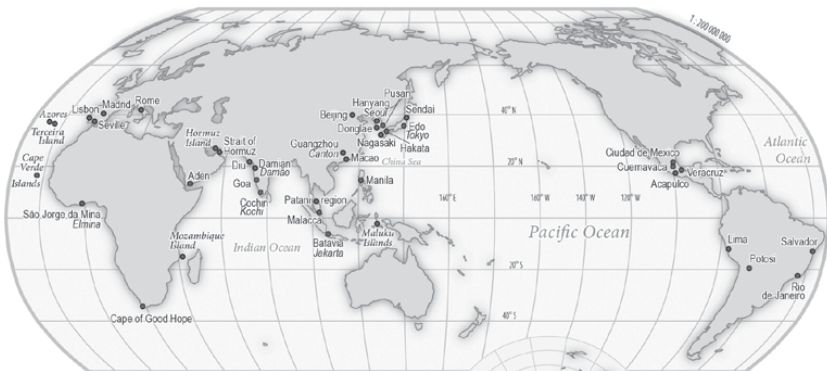
1624	<p>The <i>bakufu</i> expels the Spaniards from Japan and breaks the trading relationship with Manila due to the missionaries found aboard Spanish ships. Consequently, no Japanese trading vessel reaches the Philippines this year.</p> <p>Only 24 Jesuits are left in Japan (20 Fathers and four Brothers), plus other Japanese catechists.</p>
1625	<p>The persecution becomes now also an economic problem for the Portuguese traders in Japan, as they are forced to look for accommodation within places owned by non-Christians, who charge them higher rents.</p> <p>Ships leaving and reaching Japan are now strictly searched to avoid any Christian leaving or arriving unnoticed. Japanese traders or sailors who embraced the Western faith are requested to apostatize before leaving the country.</p>
1629	<p>The practice of <i>fumie</i> or trampling on images with Christian symbols, usually the crucifixion, begins with the persecution of Christians in Nagasaki.</p>
1632	<p>The Portuguese Jesuit Sebastião Vieira is taken to Edo, where he has the unexpected opportunity to read a compendium (probably Gómez's <i>Compendium</i>) of the Catholic faith in the presence of Iemitsu himself. As when the persecution started, also in this occasion reason of state prevails over any religious argumentation and the shogunate decides to continue the extirpation of Christianity.</p> <p>Tokugawa Hidetada dies.</p>
1633	<p>The first <i>sakoku</i> law (literally, closed country – ie Tokugawa's isolationist foreign policy) regulating overseas trade is issued. Furthermore, Japanese officials instigate a credit crisis demanding that the Portuguese pay off outstanding loans.</p> <p>In October, after being tortured, Cristóvão Ferreira apostatizes.</p>
1634	<p>The second <i>sakoku</i> law is issued.</p> <p>The artificial island of Deshima is being built in Nagasaki.</p>
1635	<p>With the third <i>sakoku</i> law, the shogunate restricts foreign ships and foreign trade to Nagasaki and prohibits overseas Japanese from returning home.</p> <p>The <i>bakufu</i> also institutionalizes the <i>sankin kotai</i>, the system of alternate residence. Finally, Japanese authorities confine all Portuguese residents in Nagasaki to Deshima.</p>
1636	<p>The fourth <i>sakoku</i> law is issued and the Portuguese merchants are no longer authorized to leave Deshima.</p> <p>On 2<sup>nd</sup> November, the Society of Jesus, through the words of Visitor Manoel Dias, decrees the expulsion of Cristóvão Ferreira for his apostasy, disregarding the Portuguese being a professed Father of the fourth vow.</p>

1637	The Shimabara Rebellion begins, continuing into the next year.
1638	According to the <i>sakoku</i> policy, since the Portuguese have persisted in bringing in missionaries and have stirred up Christian rebellion at Hara, from now on Portuguese ships coming to Japan are to be burned together with their cargo, and all the people on board are to be executed. Furthermore, the shogunate issues its most severe edicts against Christianity.
1639	With the final <i>sakoku</i> law Portuguese ships are forbidden to dock at Japanese ports and any trade whatsoever between Japan and any Christian land is finally prohibited.
1640	The city of Macao sends an embassy to Edo, with the result of seeing all the envoys executed by the shogunate. An anti-Christian inquisition ( <i>Shūmon aratame yaku</i> ) is established. The first inquisitor is the notorious Inoue Chikugo no Kami Masashige. The Portuguese crown regains independence from Spain.
1641	The Dutch trading posts are transferred from Hirado to Deshima.
1644–1647	Dom João IV, the new king of Portugal after Portuguese independence from Spain, sends an embassy to Japan led by Gonçalo Siqueira de Sousa. Three years later, the embassy reaches the Japanese archipelago, but it is met with orders to leave immediately.



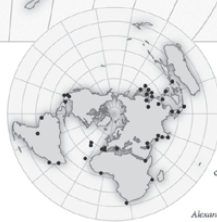
# Maps

Alexandra KOUSSOULAKOU



## Relevant places

for European merchants and missionaries active in Japan  
as well as for the dissemination of information about Japan  
16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> cent.



The global pattern of  
the places' distribution  
all around the World,  
becomes more evident  
with this map projection,  
centered on the North Pole

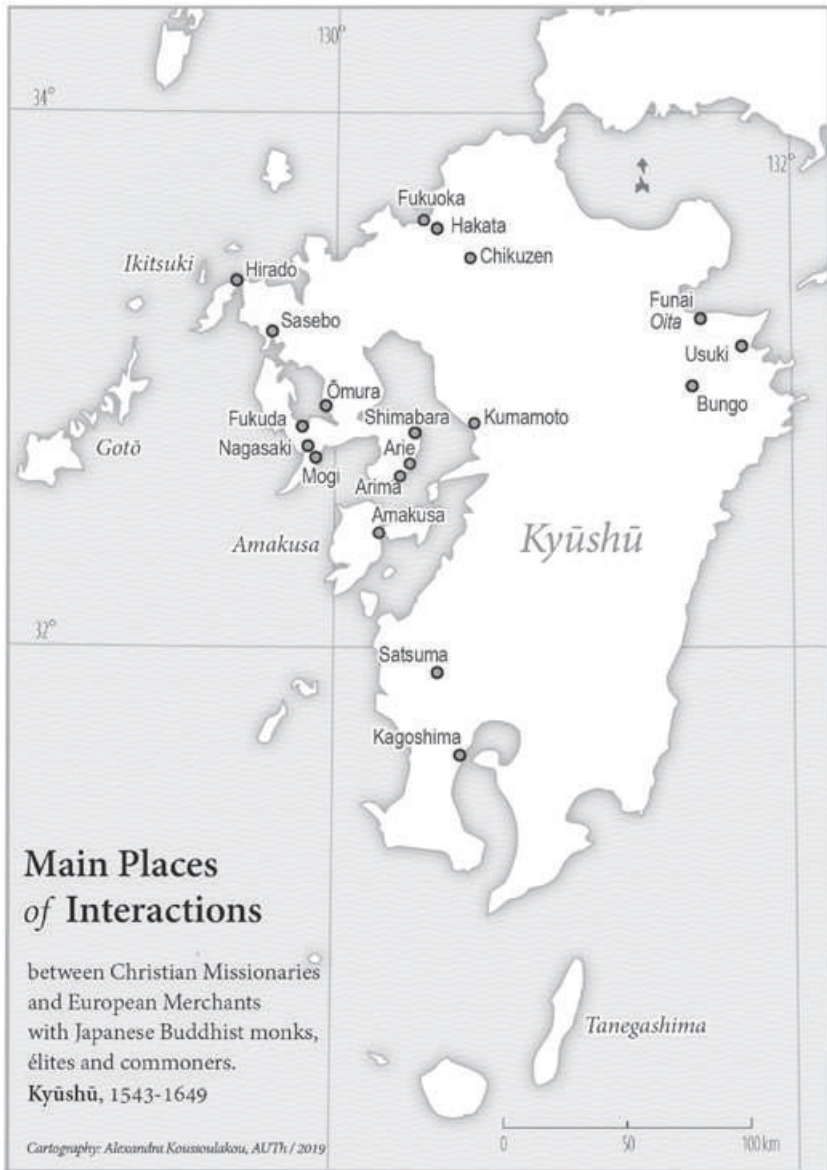
Cartography:  
Alexandra Koussoulakou, AUTH / 2019

Map of the World



Map of Japan





Map of Kyūshū



**Part I Interactions between Christian  
and Buddhist Written Cultures  
and Practices**



Linda Zampol D'ORTIA, Lucia DOLCE, Ana Fernandes PINTO

## **Saints, Sects, and (Holy) Sites: The Jesuit Mapping of Japanese Buddhism (Sixteenth Century)**

### **Introduction**

This essay explores the way in which Jesuit missionaries in Japan created and handled knowledge about Buddhism in the second half of the sixteenth-century. Missionaries collected information on Buddhism for several decades and these efforts resulted in the compilation of an ample corpus of documents consisting of letters and reports. By creating accounts on different aspects of Japanese practice and belief, Jesuits repeatedly tried to understand and organise the diversity of Japanese Buddhism, with the hope of providing an explanation of its nature to their Western audiences.

The present essay reconsiders relatively well-known authors and sources to draw a comprehensive genealogy of missionary discourse on Japanese Buddhism between the 1540s and the 1580s. This analysis has been made possible by a systematic engagement with the whole body of printed sources that the Jesuits produced on Japan, supported by the use of manuscript sources. We have been able to survey this material thanks to the creation of a Data Collection, in which references to Japanese religious matters were transcribed and classified.<sup>1</sup> Drawing on these data, we have tracked variations on the first European discourse on Buddhism and the changing patterns in the interactions between missionaries and Buddhist monks.<sup>2</sup>

This study focuses on the years between the 1540s and the 1580s, as this was the period when a Jesuit narrative on Japanese Buddhism was first produced. The material we have interrogated has revealed that the production of this narrative did not follow a consistent method, but underwent numerous changes depending on how data were collected and the specific aims their collection and processing served on a mission-wide level. Our examination has also brought to the fore that providing a complete and coherent picture of Buddhism was not always essential for the missionaries, who accorded varying importance to different pieces of

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1 This work was carried out as part of the project *Interactions Between Rivals. The Christian Mission and Buddhist Sects in Japan (c.1549–c.1647)*. See “The Project Data Collection”, pp.43-45 of this volume. All the translations included in this essay are by the authors, except where indicated.

2 Other scholars have carried out an in-depth analysis of theological elements in Jesuit writings of this period and the corresponding Buddhist doctrine. A representative work is App, *The Cult of Emptiness. The Western Discovery of Buddhist Thought and the Invention of Oriental Philosophy*. Rorschach; Kyoto: UniversityMedia, 2012.

information available to them. Yet, it can be posited that the Jesuits arranged their data in specific categories and this allowed them to create a working system to frame and make sense of the information they collected.

This essay draws a broad-stroke picture of the major features that the Jesuits used to classify and describe Japanese Buddhism and explores the logic behind that selection. Particular attention is given to the terminology that was employed to identify Buddhist institutions, deities and beliefs. This helps us understand how the Jesuit construction of Buddhism fluctuated between the need to posit it as a different religion than Christianity and the acknowledgement of its similarity to Christianity. We then bring into focus specific Japanese devotional practices repeatedly mentioned in missionary sources. These narratives reveal how Jesuits appreciated Buddhist rituals and the piety that engendered them, exemplifying the difficulty of positing Japanese Buddhism as “the other.”

## Jesuit Writing Practices

A stratified, complex organisation such as the Society of Jesus, in which obedience was seen as fundamental both from a practical and spiritual point of view, needed to maintain secure ties between its various operational levels in order to guarantee the functionality of the whole institution.<sup>3</sup> The organisation of the Society of Jesus was mostly based on continuous, well-kept correspondence.<sup>4</sup> This was true for those Jesuits in Europe who, especially in the early years of the Society, communicated through letters to create a “union of hearts” and to help sustain the image of the Society that had been built by its founders’ official texts, the *Spiritual Exercises* and the *Constitutions*.<sup>5</sup> This was also true of the missions established in other continents, such as Asia or the Americas: the wide geographical spread Jesuits had attained meant that letters were the most common tool for a steady exchange of information, and thus for a successful centralised administration.<sup>6</sup> The need to keep in touch with the European headquarters was a key element in the ongoing

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3 For a detailed description of the workings of the Society, see Alden, *The Making of an Enterprise: The Society of Jesus in Portugal, Its Empire, and Beyond, 1540–1750*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1996, pp.229–253.

4 Pinto, *Uma Imagem do Japão. A Aristocracia Guerreira Nipônica nas Cartas Jesuítas de Évora (1598)*. Macau: Instituto Português do Oriente; Fundação Oriente, 2004, pp.30–31; p.48.

5 O'Malley, *The First Jesuits*. Cambridge; London: Harvard University Press, 1993, pp.62–63.

6 See, for example, Friedrich, “‘Government in India and Japan is different from government in Europe’: Asian Jesuits on Infrastructure, Administrative Space, and the Possibilities for a Global Management of Power”. *Journal of Jesuit Studies* vol. 4 (2017), pp.1–27.

construction of the missionary enterprise itself.<sup>7</sup> Further, missionary correspondence was supposed to edify all readers, regardless of who they were, so that it could contribute to spreading the news of evangelisation and support missionary propaganda. Many letters were printed in various languages and did indeed reach a vast public in Catholic Europe.<sup>8</sup>

According to the rules drafted by Ignatius Loyola's secretary, Juan Alfonso de Polanco (1517–1576), each mission had to write to the General and their brethren in Europe on an annual basis. This was not always possible. Before 1580, in particular, Jesuits operating in the Japanese archipelago kept contact mainly with Goa, the seat of the Provincial of India, on whom they depended.<sup>9</sup> From there, their most important missives were redirected to Lisbon and Rome.<sup>10</sup> However, these letters might be lost along the way, which limited contacts with Europe even more.

During the mission's early years, missives sent from Japan consisted of both personal epistles and general letters. The first type was limited in scope, reporting the experiences and opinions of a single Jesuit. The second type consisted of information gathered from various missionaries scattered across the archipelago, put together by a missionary especially appointed to this task. The aim of these letters was to convey a well-rounded image of the activities of the whole mission. Some letters would be made public and printed. Standard correspondence was also reinforced by occasional reports, generally sent by local superiors to the headquarters of the Province or Rome; these reports usually remained unpublished.<sup>11</sup> In the 1580s, Visitor Alessandro Valignano (1539–1606) regulated the practice of letter-writing for an internal audience and imposed a stricter adherence to the facts and problems of the mission, over the preoccupation with edifying potential Jesuit readers.<sup>12</sup> In 1578 he instituted the 'Annual letter,' a special missive which

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7 Torres Londoño, "Escrevendo cartas. Jesuítas, escrita e missão no século XVI". *Revista Brasileira de História* vol. 22, no. 43 (2002), p.13.

8 Pinto, 'Tragédia mais Gloriosa que Dolorosa.' *O Discurso Missionário sobre a Perseguição aos Cristãos no regime Tokugawa na Imprensa Europeia (1598–1650)*. PhD in History, Faculdade de Ciências Sociais e Humanas da Universidade Nova de Lisboa (NOVA FCSH), 2014.

9 Japan was initially part of the Province of India. It became a Vice-Province of its own only in 1581.

10 Bourdon, *La Compagnie de Jésus et le Japon 1547–1570. La Fondation de la mission japonaise par François Xavier (1547–1551) et les premiers résultats de la prédication chrétienne sous le supériorat de Cosme de Torres (1551–1570)*. Paris; Lisbonne: Centre Culturel Portugais de la Fondation Calouste Gulbenkian; Commission Nationale pour les Commémorations des Découvertes Portugaises, 1993, p.21.

11 *Ibidem*.

12 Correspondence between Visitor Alessandro Valignano and General Claudio Aquaviva often deals with this topic; *Ibidem*, p.22. See, for example, the letter from Macao, 1<sup>st</sup> January 1593, in *Documenta Indica*. vol. 16, Joseph Wicki, S.J.; John Gomes (Ed.). Rome: Jesuit Historical Institute, 1984, pp.56–57 (henceforth: *DI*).

would systematically report the most important events of the year and could be printed and widely disseminated.

Jesuit writings were also influenced by circumstantial factors: not all texts were written in Japan, not all Jesuits had the same level of education, knowledge of the Japanese language, or ability to write elegantly and succinctly. This was particularly true of the first decade of the mission, when manpower was sorely lacking. This also explains why most of the earlier sources rely on only a handful of writers: Cosme de Torres (c. 1510–1570), Luís Fróis (1532–1597), and Baltazar Gago (c.1515/20–1583).

The specific context in which a text was composed always influenced the information it presented. In the case of letters, selecting the information to be provided had to take account of such factors as their recipients; the writer's specific position both geographically and within the Asian enterprise's chain of command; and how much time the missionary had for writing activities. In the case of reports and printed letters, the prospective readers were an additional conditioning element.

A direct consequence of these conditions is that early materials do not offer a monolithic discourse on Buddhism. A single, official position on Buddhism was adopted only much later, in the 1580s, and it is not by chance that it was formulated at a time when missionary policy was being completely overhauled. It is therefore not possible to speak of a single Jesuit understanding of Buddhism through time.

## **Buddhism as a Degenerated Form of Christianity (1546–1551)**

The first flow of information on Japanese Buddhism that reached Europe comes from Jorge Álvares (n.d.–1552), a Portuguese merchant who had visited the country. Between 1546 and 1547 he wrote a report for Francis Xavier (1506–1552) in which he outlined various aspects of Japan and briefly described its religious landscape.

According to this report, Japan had two kinds of “prayer houses” (*casas de oração*), that is, religious buildings. The first of these housed “fathers” (*padres*), who were called *bonzos* (from *bōzu*, Buddhist monk) and whose lifestyle was very similar to that of European religious orders. Álvares stated that their scriptures and rites had come from China, as they seemed similar to what he had seen there. The second type of “house,” by contrast, was comprised of “friars” (*frades*), who carried a bead rosary so that they could be recognised as religious men, prayed for the dead and the sick, and were helped in this by women. Álvares provided an overall positive description of the Japanese religious landscape, noting over and over again how much it resembled Christianity.

A more analytical framework to interpret Japanese Buddhism starts to emerge in a 1548 report written by Jesuit Nicolao Lancillotto (n.d.–1558).<sup>13</sup> This document

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13 On the life and missionary activity of Nicolao Lancillotto (or Niccolò Lancillotti), see Roscioni, *Il desiderio delle Indie*. Turin: Einaudi, 2001, pp.45–64.



summarises the conversations between Francis Xavier and his first Japanese convert, Anjirō.<sup>14</sup> The nature of the questions posed to Anjirō demonstrates that the missionaries expected to find traces of Christianity, albeit in a corrupted form, in Japanese beliefs and rituals.<sup>15</sup> This approach was not specific to Japan, but resulted from three key assumptions within the Catholic worldview. The first was that God had imparted knowledge of natural law to every human being.<sup>16</sup> The second was that all mankind descended from Noah's sons and therefore had inherited some knowledge of the true God; time, however, had distorted this knowledge.<sup>17</sup> The third assumption was that Thomas the Apostle (n.d.–53 CE) had preached across Asia before been martyred in Mylapore, India. Missionaries postulated that if the memory of a past knowledge of Christianity could be brought back, this would provide a stepping-stone for engaging with future converts, and instead of teaching them anew they would only need to correct and restore their beliefs. This conceptual framework was also used to explain why the beliefs and rituals the missionaries encountered in Asia appeared similar to Catholic ones, albeit in a “degenerated” form: the precise nature of God had been forgotten, the Jesuits maintained and only a pale echo remained.

An example of this conceptual structure at work can be found in an account of the origins of Japanese religion, which Lancillotto included in the report sent to the General in Rome:

“The people of China and Japan keep the same [religious] laws [...] We believe that some heretic Christians have preached in China, given the similarities between their customs and ours. Here in Cochín, there is a very old Armenian bishop, who has taught for forty-five years the things of our faith to the Saint Thomas' Christians, in

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- 14 On the little information available about Anjirō, who had been converted in Malacca, see *Documentos del Japón*, vol. 1 (1547–1557). Juan Ruiz-de-Medina, S.J. (Ed.). Roma: Instituto Histórico de la Compañía de Jesús, 1990, pp.31\*–32\*, (henceforth: *Documentos*); and App, “Francis Xavier's Discovery of Japanese Buddhism. A Chapter in the European Discovery of Buddhism (Part 1: Before the Arrival in Japan, 1547–1549)”, *The Eastern Buddhist* vol. 30, no.1 (1997), pp.61–63.
- 15 Elisonas, “An Itinerary to the Terrestrial Paradise. Early European Reports on Japan and a Contemporary Exegesis”. *Itinerario* vol. 20, no. 3 (1996), pp.25–68. Lancillotto wrote two reports from the information he collected and sent them to Rome (*Documentos*, vol. 1, pp.44–69; pp.69–76).
- 16 This was an important point in early exchanges between the missionaries and the Japanese (see, for example, Juan Fernández to Francis Xavier, Yamaguchi, 20<sup>th</sup> October 1551, *Ibidem*, p.255). Cf. Schurhammer, *Francis Xavier: His Life, His Times*. vol. IV, *Japan and China 1549–1552*. Rome: Jesuit Historical Institute, 1982, p.222.
- 17 Gelders; Balagangadhara, “Rethinking Orientalism: Colonialism and the Study of Indian Traditions”. *History of Religions* vol. 51, no. 2 (2011), p.109.

Malabar. This bishop says that the Armenians, at the times of the primitive Church, went to China to preach and there they made many converts.<sup>18</sup>

This story appears to be a further elaboration of the information obtained from Anjirō. According to the latter, Japanese religion was founded by a holy man by the name of “Sciacca” (Śākyamuni), who preached about “one single god, creator of all things.” He was born “more than one thousand and five hundred years ago, in a land beyond China, in the Western direction, which the Chinese call Cengicco.” Unaware that “Cengicco” (Jp. Tenjiku) was the Japanese name for India, Lancillotto suggested that such land “could be near Scythia.”<sup>19</sup> These and other details framed the figure of Sciacca as a distorted memory of the life of Jesus.

The image of a bygone Christianity also appears in the description of the religious practices and beliefs derived from Sciacca’s teachings, which Jesuits understood Sciacca’s disciples had brought from “Cengicco” to Japan through China. Similarities between Japanese and Christian customs were explicitly highlighted by Lancillotto in the third edition of his report, which mentions, for example, the presence of religious orders, evening prayers summoned by bells, the use of the rosary, iconoclasm, the concepts of hell and heaven, and the worship of numerous saints who intercede with God on behalf of the faithful.<sup>20</sup>

Thus, when Francis Xavier arrived in Japan in 1549, he had a preconceived idea of what Japanese beliefs consisted of –one which was informed both by what he had learned from Anjirō and by Christian worldviews. Xavier wrote to his brethren in Goa that he was generally pleased with Japanese laypeople because they did not worship animals but believed in their “men of old,” who had lived “like philosophers.” Most Japanese worshipped the sun and the moon, he admitted, but were governed by reason and if somebody explained their errors reasonably, they recognised them.<sup>21</sup> Moreover, according to Xavier, lay Japanese despised sinful monks, who were believed to practice sodomy. Xavier appears to have been aware of the divisions among Japanese monks, as he mentioned the acrimony between competing groups. However, he distinguished them only by the colour of their robes and made no reference to differences in beliefs or practices. Here, too, he

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18 Nicolao Lancillotto to Ignatius Loyola, Cochin, 26<sup>th</sup> December 1548, in *DI*, 1:443. The Armenian bishop has been identified by José Wicki as Mar Jacob *abuna*, bishop of the Syro-Malabar Church (*DI*, 1:443 n. 50). Cf. Schurhammer, “Three Letters of Mar Jacob, Bishop of Malabar 1503–1550”. *Orientalia*. Rome; Lisbon: Jesuit Historical Institute, 1963, pp.333–349.

19 Nicolao Lancillotto, “Información sobre Japón”, Cochin, 28<sup>th</sup> December 1548, in *Documentos*, vol. 1, pp.51–53; p.60.

20 *Documentos*, vol. 1, pp.45–47.

21 Francis Xavier’s letter to the Jesuits of Goa, Kagoshima, 5<sup>th</sup> November 1549, in *Documentos*, vol. 1, pp.134–170. This was Xavier’s first letter from Japan and is analysed in App, “Francis Xavier’s Discovery of Japanese Buddhism. A Chapter in the European Discovery of Buddhism (Part 1: Before the Arrival in Japan, 1547–1549)”.

drew parallels with Europe, reporting that some monks dressed in brown, like friars, while others wore black robes, like clerics.<sup>22</sup>

### Not So Similar After All (1551)

Although the dearth of surviving letters written from Japan prevents us from attempting a detailed reconstruction of the first years of the Jesuit encounter with Buddhism, it appears that by the summer of 1551 Francis Xavier had become aware of the detrimental consequences of introducing Christianity on the basis of a supposed affinity with Buddhism.<sup>23</sup> The adoption of Buddhist terms to translate key Christian tenets into Japanese could irremediably compromise the theological significance of Christian terminology. Even the name of God, which up to that point had been translated with the name of the Buddha Mahāvairocana (Dainichi), had turned out to be a dangerous mistranslation.<sup>24</sup> This realisation prompted Xavier to entrust fellow Father Cosme de Torres and translator Brother Juan Fernández (1526–1567) with the task of interviewing Buddhist monks to set right the mistakes. The results of these interviews, the so-called “disputes of Yamaguchi,” were presented in two letters addressed to Xavier.

A comparison between these two epistolary texts brings to the surface the process by which the missionaries elaborated the information collected from their Japanese interlocutors.<sup>25</sup> The first letter, signed by Juan Fernández, is a summary of the notes he had taken earlier during the debates and records the trail of questions and answers between the missionaries and the monks.<sup>26</sup> The missionaries employed a maieutic method, asking questions with the primary objective of “making the interlocutors understand” Christian belief.<sup>27</sup> Thus, collecting information on Buddhism seems to have been, at least initially, a secondary target, subordinated to the confutation of Buddhism and the demonstration of the rational superiority of Christianity.

A good example is the discussion on the concept of “saint” as somebody who had pursued a path of salvation. It can be inferred from the answers the missionaries received that Fernández used the word “saint” (*sancto*) to translate *hotoke* (buddhas),

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22 *Documentos*, vol. 1, p.146.

23 Schurhammer, *Francis Xavier*, vol. 4, pp.223–225.

24 The traditional retelling of the events surrounding the use of the name Dainichi can be found in *Ibidem*, pp.225–26. See also Luís de Almeida to the Jesuits of Europe, Yokoseura, 25<sup>th</sup> October 1562, in *Documentos*, vol. 2 (1558–1562). Juan Ruiz-de-Medina, S.J. (Ed.). Roma: Instituto Histórico de la Compañía de Jesús, 1995, p.547.

25 On the more philosophical aspects of the Yamaguchi disputes, see Rubiés, “Real and Imaginary Dialogues in the Jesuit Mission of Sixteenth-century Japan”, *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* vol. 55 (2012), pp.474–482.

26 Juan Fernández to Francis Xavier, Yamaguchi, 20<sup>th</sup> October 1551, in *Documentos*, vol. 1, pp.238–261.

27 *Ibidem*, p.242 (see also p.242, n.13).

not realizing the fundamental difference between the two concepts.<sup>28</sup> The Jesuits had singled out this notion of “saint” as central to Japanese religion and translated the Japanese term for Buddhism, *buppō* (lit. “the law of the Buddha”), as “the law that produced saints.” Thus, their inquiry began with this idea, in an attempt to discover a corresponding theology of salvation. However, the first Buddhists they questioned, a group of monks and laypeople affiliated to the Zen school (“jenxus,” i.e., *zenshū*), dramatically overturned the Jesuit understanding of local religious practices. These Buddhists seem to reject the very existence of a saint and the necessity of following a holy lifestyle, for, they argued, “what comes from nothing necessarily returns to nothing.” This stance paved the way for a long philosophical debate through which the Jesuits understood that there was more to Buddhism than what they had assumed.<sup>29</sup>

The Yamaguchi disputes were dominated by Zen interpretations of Buddhism, and this can be attributed to various factors. Zen monks were the first and most numerous group to visit the missionaries.<sup>30</sup> More importantly, Zen tenets simply appeared as the most alien to Jesuits. Therefore, not only did such tenets attract more questions, they also had to be described in detail to Xavier –who, as head of the entire Asia mission, had the final say on the policies to be implemented in Japan. Other Buddhist schools are mentioned in the records of the debates, but it appears that these initially attracted less interest from the Jesuits. Fernández spoke of two other groups, which he associated to specific Buddhas: the first group consisted of “worshippers of Śākyamuni [Xacha],” while the second comprised the followers of “the law of Amitābha [Amida] and other Buddhas.”<sup>31</sup> While Śākyamuni had already been mentioned in Lancillotto’s letter, this is the first Jesuit source that refers to the Buddha Amitābha.<sup>32</sup>

The other document that recounts the Yamaguchi disputes, a short letter by Cosme de Torres, provides more information on the structure of Japanese

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28 *Documentos*, vol. 1, p.242, n.10. See also App, *The Cult of Emptiness*, p.25.

29 *Ibidem*, p.25. See also *Documentos*, vol. 1, p.242.

30 *Ibidem*.

31 Fernández writes “y así venieron otros de la ley de Amida y otros foquexus.” The word “foquexus” indicates members of Hokkeshū and it is interpreted in this sense by the editor of the letter in *Documentos*, vol. 1, p.257, n.29. However, here it must be just a mistake for “fotoques” (*hotoke*).

32 Śākyamuni is described here in much more detail than Amida. He is identified as the perpetrator of a “Great Lie”, a feature that would repeatedly appear in Jesuit descriptions of this Buddha. Urs App discusses it as a “unique biographical invention”: the Jesuits in fact thought that “at the age of forty-one the Buddha suddenly rejected all of his earlier writings and doctrines and subsequently exclusively taught meditation – a change of opinion that the Jesuits denounced as a lie.” App, *The Cult of Emptiness*, p.32.

Buddhism.<sup>33</sup> Torres does not identify Buddhism as a single entity, but describes it as “many manners of idolatry,” subdivided by their object of worship. Torres calls the latter “idol,” abandoning the use of the term “saint” to refer to the buddhas. Śākyamuni is presented as the most important idol. His devotees are in turn divided into two groups: those who worship him exclusively, called *faquexu* (Hokkeshū, i.e., the modern Nichiren school), and those who also worship other “idols”. In addition, the Buddha Amida is given a prominent place in this document. According to Torres, his worshippers were the most numerous Buddhist group in Japan, and the reason for this was that they were offered an easy path to salvation which even evil people could follow: in order to be saved it was sufficient to call out the name of Amida, “Amidabud” (*Namu Amida Butsu*) with a firm heart before death. Torres divides this group, too, into those who worship solely Amida, called *icoxo* (Jp. Ikkōshū, i.e., the modern Jōdo shinshū), and those who also worship other Buddhas. Torres describes a third group of believers as the worshippers of sun and moon. This group reportedly regards the sun and the moon as gods, but it is also said to worship everything in existence, including the devil. Its members are depicted as ignorant and gullible, because of their many “silly beliefs”. It is not clear to what kind of devotees this category corresponded in the Japanese religious landscape of the time. It is probably a reference to the various *kami* cults that are today included in the rubric of Shinto. Interestingly, this category of believers is presented as a separate group, but within Buddhism – a perspective that will be maintained, by and large, in later documents.

Albeit short, Torres’ letter is the first and hitherto most complex attempt to map out the world of Japanese Buddhism for a general audience. Torres organised Japanese Buddhism according to a principle that had been used by European missionaries and travellers alike in previous centuries: the object of worship. This was the main criterion used for evaluating other religions in other areas of Jesuit presence, such as Goa. The object of worship was also a marker of sectarian identity within Japanese Buddhism and thus to focus on it should have helped the Jesuits understand the configuration of the Buddhist world. Yet the Jesuit reckoned that this classification was not sufficient to address the diversity of Buddhism in Japan. For instance, it could not be applied to the Zen school, which denied worshipping any Buddha. Zen was perceived as too popular a school among the elites to be simply ignored. Thus, Torres created a hybrid classification system, bringing doctrinal tenets to bear upon the taxonomy of this last group of Buddhists. He divided Zen followers in three further types, according to their belief in a so-called “soul”.<sup>34</sup> The first type believed that there is no soul, as they upheld the view that “what comes from nothing returns to it”; the second believed that souls are ever-existing

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33 Cosme de Torres to the Jesuits in Goa, 29<sup>th</sup> September 1551, in *Documentos*, vol. 1, pp.206–218.

34 *Documentos*, vol. 1, pp.214–215. See also App, *The Cult of Emptiness*, p.24.

and return to where they came from after death; the third maintained that souls enter other bodies after death. The most difficult type to convert, according to Torres, was the first, for it consisted of “men of great meditations” who required educated missionaries to confront and convince them.

Buddhist doctrine therefore assumed a place of importance it had not held in previous discussions of other Asian religions. The centrality ascribed to the concept of soul in the description of Zen undoubtedly reflected the significance this topic had in Christian theology, rather than for Zen believers. The attention missionaries gave to presumed internal divisions within the Zen school regarding the interpretation of the soul also attests that they saw Buddhism through the lenses of their own historical experience. In the post-Reformation climate, when divisions within European Christianity had prompted the Catholic Church to posit orthodoxy, uniformity and unity as crucial elements for the survival of religious institutions, rifts within the Buddhist world could be identified as potentially exploitable weaknesses. This depiction of Buddhism thus might have highlighted internal contradictions in the hope of reaching a breakthrough for the conversion of the Japanese country.

Despite the information he received while leaving Japan, Francis Xavier did not come to a definitive conclusion on the best way to describe Buddhism. Possibly perplexed by the unexpected complexity of Buddhism, Xavier repeatedly asked for some educated European missionaries to travel to Japan, with the intention of sending them to study in “Japanese universities.” Xavier hoped that the missionaries could “enroll” at monastic complexes, such as Mount Hiei and Mount Kōya, so that they would then engage authoritatively in disputes with the monks and convince them of the superiority of Christianity.<sup>35</sup> Xavier’s final letter to Europe shows that his main concern were the activities of Japanese monks and nuns.<sup>36</sup> His descriptions introduce a word that would later become the staple term to refer to Japanese Buddhist groups: sect (*seita*). In Europe, until the seventeenth century this term encompassed a broad range of meanings, such as “school of thought” and “way of life,” and did not necessarily have the negative connotations it would have at a later stage.<sup>37</sup> Xavier had arguably made a connection between Buddhist

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35 This plan was not carried out in the end; see D’Ortia, “Il ruolo delle ‘università’ nella strategia missionaria di Francesco Saverio per il Giappone”. *Revista Estudios*, vol. 32 (2016), pp.417–46.

36 Francis Xavier to the Brothers in Europe, Cochin, 29<sup>th</sup> January 1552, in *Documentos*, vol. 1, pp.290–317.

37 Cf. *seita*, in Cardoso, *Dictionarium latino lusitanicum, et lusitanico latinum*. Lisbon: Laurentij de Anveres, 1643, 333r. Cf. Menegon, “European and Chinese Controversies over Rituals: A Seventeenth-Century Genealogy of Chinese Religion”. Boute; Småberg (Ed.), *Devising Order. Socio-religious Models, Rituals, and the Performativity of Practice*. Leiden: Brill, 2013, p.197, n. 7. On the modern use of the word “sect” as applied to Buddhist schools, see McMullin, *Buddhism and the State in Sixteenth-Century Japan*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984, pp.11–12. It is interesting to note that the equivalent term for sect/school in Japanese, “shū”,

schools and the various Protestant denominations, which were more and more frequently called “sects” in Catholic Europe.

## The Refutation of Buddhism and the Language Reform (1551–1561)

An element that emerges from Xavier’s writings after he left Japan is that Buddhism is no longer understood to comprise lost traces of Christianity. In a letter from Cochin, Xavier expresses his perplexity:

“I tried to understand if these Amitābha [Ameda] and Śākyamuni [Xaca] were human philosophers. I asked the [Japanese] Christians to collect faithfully [the facts of] their lives. I found out that, according to what is written in their books, they were not men, because they lived one thousand and two thousand years, and Śākyamuni was born eight thousand times. Thus, they cannot have been men, but pure inventions of the devils. For the love and service of our Lord, I beg all who read these letters to pray to God to give us victory against these devils, Śākyamuni and Amitābha, and all the other [devils].”<sup>38</sup>

In regarding the Buddhas as a creation of the devil Xavier took the Jesuit interpretation beyond a simple equivalence between Buddhism and some kind of degenerated Christianity. His judgement condemned Buddhism, making its denunciation a moral obligation for missionaries. This position had a profound influence on Jesuits’ attitudes in the years to come.

It was based on this new approach that Baltazar Gago, who stayed in Japan from 1552 to 1559, fashioned his own analysis. In a letter written in 1555, Gago argues that the initial confusion between Christianity and Buddhism was due to an erroneous translation of key theological terms. If Xavier had identified the problem with God’s name, Gago expanded it to the whole evangelisation vocabulary: “the devil [in Japan],” he wrote, “has sustenance from ten sects he brought from China.”<sup>39</sup>

In his account, Gago introduced a pivotal Buddhist tenet, the doctrine of skillful means (Jp. *hōben*). Gago does not seem to have grasped its meaning as the Buddha’s pedagogical tool to convey his teachings to a diverse audience. He translated the expression “fonben xet” (*hōben setsu*, i.e. the theory of skillfull means) as “all these [Buddhist practices] are a lie,” probably drawing on the primary meaning of *hōben*

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was used as early as the thirteenth century to indicate Buddhist denominations when making comprehensive presentations of Japanese Buddhism. This is attested in *Hasshū kōyō* (Essentials of the Eight Schools, 1268), a primer of Japanese Buddhist history.

38 Francis Xavier to the Brothers in Europe, Cochin, 29<sup>th</sup> January 1552, in *Documentos*, vol. 1, pp.307–308.

39 Baltasar Gago to the Jesuits of India and Portugal, Hirado, 23<sup>rd</sup> September 1555, *Ibidem*, p.564.

as 'lie'.<sup>40</sup> Using this idea, Gago organised Japanese devotees into two groups: those who were deceived by this lie, and those who were not.<sup>41</sup> He also seems to have taken the expression "fonben xet" as a formula used in ritual, and argued that the Buddhists who are misled by this illusion end their rituals by saying "fonben xet". Yet they do not comprehend the real meaning of the phrase, that is, that every Buddhist teaching is a fabrication. Thus they continue to engage in devotions, believe in hell and heaven, pray by reading books, and enter religious orders, but these actions produce no results. The second group of Buddhist followers, mostly comprised of monks and noblemen, on the contrary appears not to be deceived by Buddhist tales, for they refute the existence of a creator, of the soul, and of the devil. Instead of publicly admitting that the teachings of their gods are false, however, these Buddhists avoid performing any rituals and spend their time meditating.

This approach bears similarities to that of the *Sumario de los Errores* ("Summary of Errors," completed by 1556), suggesting that Gago was involved in the compilation of this fundamental text which would guide the Jesuits' assessment of Buddhism until the beginning of the 1580s.<sup>42</sup> By tracing the origins of Christianity and Buddhism to different sources – the former coming from God, the latter from the devil – the *Sumario* ratified a move from the attempt to use Buddhism to introduce Christianity to its outright rejection. The *Sumario* also attests that Jesuits were now comfortable with considering Buddhism as a distinct body of teachings, rather than a scattered expression of religiosity. The *Sumario* characterises Buddhism as a "gentile sect" and uses the Japanese term *buppō* (spelled as *bupoo*) to speak about it.<sup>43</sup> This religious body is, in turn, subdivided into "eight or nine sects," according to different criteria – a clear borrowing from standard presentations of Buddhism as consisting of eight or ten schools, which circulated in Japan since the thirteenth century.<sup>44</sup> Although the term *buppō* does not appear in the subsequent documents considered for this article, which tend to speak of "kami and hotoke," the Jesuits maintained an awareness of the meaning of this word as the "doctrine of the buddhas."<sup>45</sup> It is the *Sumario* that introduces the term "Fotoqui" or "Fotoque"

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40 For an introduction to the concept of *hōben*, see Pye, *Skilful Means: A Concept in Mahayana Buddhism*. London; New York: Routledge, 2003.

41 A Japanese convert, Paulo Chōzen, helped Gago to formulate this interpretation.

42 "Sumario de los errores" in *Documentos*, vol. 1, pp.652–668.

43 The *Sumario* mentions another "gentile sect", whose followers "worship twenty idols, which they call kami (camins)", and which includes a subsect "which in Japan is called the 'Law of the Devil'; its members are called Iamambuxos (Yamabushi) [...] they follow the sect of the kami most literally." (*Documentos*, vol. 1, p.655; p.659). The *Sumario* is somehow unusual in presenting the followers of the kami as a separate group from the Buddhists.

44 *Ibidem*, p.659. For a Japanese outline of Buddhism as composed of eight schools, see n. 37.

45 The Jesuit dictionary *Vocabulario da lingoa de Japam* (Nagasaki, 1603) includes the term with this sense: the entry "Buppō, Fotoqeno nori" is translated as "Laws, or doctrine of the hotoke."



(Buddha). Albeit translated as “redemptor” (Redeemer), this term was compellingly defined as “the matter of the four elements.”<sup>46</sup>

The *Sumario* argues that “the sect [dedicated to] contemplation is not the only one which says that there is nothing more than to be born and to die: all the other sects, even if they preach and pray to the buddhas [fotoques] to be saved, in their midst [have] sages [who] believe that there is nothing.”<sup>47</sup> The *Sumario* thus concludes that Buddhism revolves primarily around two strands: one is to identify a Buddha as the object of worship and to pray for salvation; the other is to believe that nothingness is the underlying principle of reality. The *Sumario* connects the latter strand with a specific type of devotees: defined as “philosophers,” they represent an elite group found in every sect, whose beliefs are described as the “inner” feature of Buddhism.<sup>48</sup> The remaining believers, who worship various buddhas and perform salvation rituals, comprise the “outer” side of Buddhism. The greater attention that Jesuits paid to the “inner” aspect of Buddhism is symptomatic of the importance they accorded to the conversion of the monastic and political elites, as they had identified the “inner” beliefs with those of the upper classes. Jesuit plans for the evangelisation of Japan strove to implement a top-down approach: to evangelise the elites first and then convert the people of their lands through mass baptism. This approach was justified by arguing that it followed the rigid hierarchy of Japanese society.<sup>49</sup>

The arrival of Vice-Provincial Melchior Nunes Barreto (c.1520–1571) in 1556 initiated a new reform period. Barreto perceived the identification of Christianity with Buddhism as a mutual misunderstanding. If Jesuits had used Buddhist vocabulary to refer to Christian concepts, Japanese monks had aggravated the situation by identifying various elements of Christianity with their Buddhist equivalents, then declaring them to be skilful means used by the Buddhas.<sup>50</sup> To avoid corrupting the evangelisation process further, Barreto replaced the fifty-odd Buddhist terms that missionaries had until then used with Portuguese or Latin words.<sup>51</sup> The reformed terms were presented in a new catechism called *Nijūgo Kajō* (Treaty of the Twenty-five Instructions), now lost.<sup>52</sup> A perusal of Barreto’s letters reveals a

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46 *Documentos*, vol. 1, p.660; 667.

47 *Ibidem*, p.666.

48 *Ibidem*, pp.666–667.

49 See López-Gay, *El Catecumenado en la Mision del Japon del s. XVI*. Roma: Libreria Dell’universita’ Gregoriana, 1966, pp.94–96.

50 Melchior Nunes Barreto to Diego Láinez, Cochin, 13<sup>th</sup> January 1558, in *Documentos*, vol. 2, pp.109–110.

51 Examples include *anima* instead of *tamaxe*, or *deusu* instead of *fotoque* (Bourdon, *La Compagnie*, pp.269–270).

52 *Ibidem*, p.311. Following the transcription of the mission’s interpreter and historian, João Rodrigues (c. 1561–1633) (n.187), we understand Barreto’s work was called *Nijūgo Kajō*, rather than *Nijūgo Kagyō*, as Bourdon has it.

more articulated knowledge of Buddhist tenets. For example, he shows to be aware of the central Buddhist concept of attachment:

“Hell is [according to the Japanese] the worm of conscience that besets and afflicts men who persist in their ignorance, believing that there is something after this life. They truly enter paradise [and are] blessed in this life, once they become firmly persuaded that there is nothing after this life and the pain of their conscience is extinguished. And for as many loathsome crimes they commit, they do not fear any judge after death.”<sup>53</sup>

Barreto is clearly influenced by his education in describing the Buddhist hell as “worm of conscience” – a specific Christian expression, used in Loyola’s *Spiritual Exercises*.<sup>54</sup>

Interestingly, Barreto found a social justification for the two layers of truth, which during his time had become the main feature of Buddhism in Jesuit descriptions.<sup>55</sup> He postulated that “outer” beliefs were used by monks to keep the lower strata of society under the control of the political authorities. An assorted group of monks and noblemen maintained this deceit, refusing to share their “inner” truth with the populace at large.<sup>56</sup>

## Perspectives from the Capital

At the end of 1559 a mission was established in Miyako (Kyōto) by Gaspar Vilela (1526–1572).<sup>57</sup> The Portuguese father was helped by a Japanese brother, Lourenço of Hirado (c.1525–1592), who was to act as Vilela’s interpreter, and by a *dōjuku* (auxiliary) called Damião (c.1536–1586).<sup>58</sup> The establishment of this house created a second major Jesuit centre in Japan. The Miyako mission, however, operated in a slightly different manner from its Kyūshū counterpart.

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53 *Documentos*, vol. 2, p.110.

54 In Ignatius Loyola’s *Spiritual Exercises*, “worm of conscience” refers to one of the bitter things the believer is to taste in the Meditation on Hell (5<sup>th</sup> exercise, 4<sup>th</sup> point).

55 See, for example, the description in Cosme de Torres to Antonio de Quadros, Funai, 8<sup>th</sup> October 1561, in *Documentos*, vol. 2, p.452.

56 Melchior Nunes Barreto to Diego Laínez, Cochin, 13<sup>th</sup> January 1558, in *Ibidem*, vol. 2, p.109. Although Barreto elaborates on the “followers of the sect of meditations” (*Ibidem*, p. 111), there is no substantial implication later in the text that the “inner” teaching is exclusive to the Zen school, as Urs App instead suggests (App, *The Cult of Emptiness*, pp.41–42).

57 Francis Xavier had travelled to Miyako in 1550, but had not remained long in the capital, apparently disappointed by the state of disrepair in which the city had fallen.

58 On Lourenço, see Ebisawa, “Irmão Lourenço, the First Japanese Lay-Brother of the Society of Jesus and his Letter”. *Monumenta Nipponica*, vol. 5, no. 1 (1942), pp.225–233.

Problems affecting the Miyako mission included the lack of economic resources, the isolation in which the missionaries worked, and the chaotic political context in which it operated. These circumstances contributed to the instability of the enterprise, but at the same time facilitated, and in some cases even forced, a wider experimentation with evangelisation methods and a more attentive observation of Japanese culture and religious practices.<sup>59</sup> The strong Japanese presence in the Jesuit house made missionaries more aware of the demands of Japanese culture. The court's proximity also pressured them to follow local customs, such as visiting the authorities on the first days of the New Year (*shōgatsu*).<sup>60</sup> However, missionaries were also more subject to the control of city authorities and sources mention direct interventions by officials in their proselytization efforts.<sup>61</sup> Due to the prestige of being in the capital, the Miyako mission would take on an increasingly important role over time, despite the fact that the headquarters did not always endorse the direction it took. By 1580, even though most Christians lived in the south, the Miyako house had become the most important Jesuit establishment in Japan.<sup>62</sup>

Overall, the information supplied by sources from Miyako reflects different experiences and needs. Writing in June 1560, Lourenço spoke of the difficulties met while establishing the Jesuit mission in the capital, but demonstrated an optimistic attitude in the light of the notable converts the missionaries had won.<sup>63</sup> He reported that, after antagonising the Jesuits, Buddhist monks started claiming that “what [the Jesuits] preached was the foundation of their own teaching;” the Shingon school associated the Christian God and Christian teachings with Dainichi Nyorai, the Zen school with the workings of *hōben*, and the Nichiren school with the teachings of the *Lotus sutra*. Thus Lourenço suggested that the Buddhists

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59 Ribeiro, “Gaspar Vilela. Between Kyūshū and the Kinai”. *Bulletin of Portuguese-Japanese Studies*, vol. 15 (2007), p.22.

60 Fróis, *Historia de Japam*. vol. 2. José Wicki (Ed.). Lisboa: Biblioteca Nacional de Lisboa, 1981, p.13.

61 One such episode occurred in 1585, when the Emperor enquired on the reasons that led an old and respected physician from the capital, whose name appears in the sources as Dosam, to convert to a religion that condemned the *kami* as devils. Dosam is reported to have diplomatically maintained that he had never heard of such teachings, but privately he advised the Christian preachers to avoid explicit denunciations of deities that were considered to be the forefathers of Japanese nobility. Letter from Luis Fróis to the General in *Cartas que os Padres e Irmãos da Companhia de Jesus escreveram dos Reynos de Japão & China aos da mesma Companhia da India & Europa desde anno de 1549 até o de 1580*. Em Evora por Manoel de Lyra, Anno de MDXCVIII [1598], vol. 2, pp.157r–159r (henceforth: *Cartas*).

62 *DI*, vol. 13, p.209. This is also suggested in Valignano's *Sumario de las cosas de Japón (1583)*. *Adiciones del Sumario (1592)*. José Luis Alvarez-Taladriz (Ed.). Tōkyō: Sophia University, 1954, vol. 1, pp.162–169.

63 Lourenço of Hirado to the Jesuits in Funai, Miyako, 2<sup>nd</sup> June 1560, in *Documentos*, vol. 2, pp.263–278.

incorporate Christianity into their doctrinal framework, giving details than previous Jesuits had omitted.<sup>64</sup> Unlike Barreto, Lourenço was not concerned with such strategy. He expressed hope that in so doing Buddhist monks would eventually recognise the Catholic truth.<sup>65</sup> Lourenço's relaxed attitude clearly does not reflect the stance that the Jesuit headquarters in Kyūshū had taken towards Buddhism.

The Jesuit presence in Miyako afforded the missionaries a different perspective on Japanese Buddhism as a whole. To start with, they acknowledged the central role that the great Buddhist complexes of the Kinai region played in the power dynamics of the country, as we shall analyse further. Secondly, the frequent journeys between the capital and Sakai that Vilela and his group undertook for safety reasons allowed them to come into contact with different Buddhist practices than those they had witnessed in Kyūshū. They recorded these practices with interest and tried to understand their background. For instance, Vilela wrote about the death rituals of each Buddhist school and their related beliefs regarding the afterlife.<sup>66</sup> He also understood that Buddhist schools were organised into lineages and described their founders (Kōbō Daishi, Nichiren, Kakuban) as the distinctive elements of each lineage. We shall examine some examples in more detail shortly.

During the 1570s the Japanese mission found itself in a complex situation, as rapid conversion growth did not correspond to an increase in the number of missionaries or funds.<sup>67</sup> The new Superior, Francisco Cabral (1533–1609), spent the first years of his term dealing with internal organisation problems, as he was concerned that the mission had strayed from what he considered to be Jesuit orthopraxis. Cabral's Eurocentric approach had an impact on the perception of Buddhism. He was reluctant to recognise Buddhism as an independent religion and assimilated Japanese beliefs to the thought of Classical philosophers, in particular Aristotle's. Accordingly, he suggested that missionaries only needed to read the commentaries on *De Fisica* to be able to refute the Buddhists.<sup>68</sup> From Goa he requested books by the Fathers of the Church, who had already dismantled ideas

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64 Josephson echoes such claim arguing that Japanese Buddhists dealt with Christianity as they had done with religious difference, that is, by organising it under a totalling framework that he calls 'hierarchical inclusion.' (*The Invention of Religion in Japan*, Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 2012, pp.24–28.)

65 *Documentos*, vol. 2, pp.274–275. According to Ruiz-de-Medina, Lourenço is being ironic in this passage.

66 Gaspar Vilela to António de Quadros and the Jesuits in India, Sakai, 17<sup>th</sup> August 1561, in *Documentos*, vol. 2, pp.356–358; and Gaspar Vilela to António de Quadros and the Jesuits in India, Sakai, September 1562, *Ibidem*, pp.513–14.

67 The number of missionaries in Japan during these years is documented in Costa, *O Cristianismo no Japão e o Bispado de D. Luís Cerqueira*. PhD in History, Faculdade de Ciências Sociais e Humanas da Universidade Nova de Lisboa (NOVA FCSH), 1998. vol. 1, p.646 (Table 13).

68 Valignano, *Sumario de las cosas de Japon (1583)*. *Adiciones del Sumario del Japon (1592)*. vol. I. 140\*.

similar to those of the Buddhists and could therefore be effectively used to the same effect against Buddhism. On other occasions, however, Cabral compared some Buddhist groups to Lutheran Christianity, anticipating the assessment of later interpreters:

“The Ikkō [Jcoxus] are a sect similar to that of Luther in Europe, and they believe that the only thing necessary to be saved is to call the name of Amida [Amuda]. Therefore, nobody can be saved by their good works, nor if they vituperate Amida, whose merits are the only thing that saves them.”<sup>69</sup>

Part of the information conveyed in Cabral’s epistles comes from the interactions with Buddhist monks which were possible in the capital. An important informant of the Jesuits in the years 1570–71 was a former Buddhist monk called Kenzen João, a learned cleric from Hakata who is said to have previously been the “rector of a monastery.”<sup>70</sup> Cabral had taken him to the Miyako mission, where he spent a year reading “Buddhist books” to the missionaries and thus greatly expanding their knowledge of Buddhist doctrines and practice. Cabral writes of him:

“He read us some books of the laws of Japan and helped us writing a book in which not only the mysteries of our Holy Faith are declared, but the laws of Japan are also disproved and their falsities shown; he helped us much in this, because he knew all their secrets.”<sup>71</sup>

It appears that this informant was not the only Buddhist monk at the Miyako house. In 1574, Fathers Luís Fróis and Organtino Gneccchi-Soldo (1532–1609),<sup>72</sup> Vilela’s successors, hired a former monk of the Nichiren school to read them the *Lotus sutra*.<sup>73</sup> Thus Buddhist monks were instrumental in building Jesuits’ appreciation of Buddhist teachings, although Jesuits eventually used it to rebuke Buddhism.

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69 Francisco Cabral to the General, Kuchinotsu, 23<sup>rd</sup> September 1571, Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu (henceforth: ARSI), Jap. Sin. 7-II, 30r. Comparative analyses of True Pure Land Buddhism and Protestant Christianity, including comparisons of the fathers of the school, Shinran or Rennyō, and Luther, have continued in modern scholarship. See, for instance, Blum; Yasutomi (Ed.), *Rennyō and the Roots of Modern Japanese Buddhism*, Oxford University Press, 2006.

70 Alvarez-Taladriz’s transcription of Cabral’s “quijen” (Valignano, *Sumario*, 139\*). Kenzen João had been the spiritual leader of his hometown, Hakata, where he was in charge of baptisms. It often happened that Buddhist monks who converted to Christianity retained religious leadership of their communities, and offered their old temple to be used as a church (see, for example, Joaquin’s case in *Cartas*, vol. 1, p.353v.)

71 Cabral to the General, Miyako, 31<sup>st</sup> May 1574, ARSI, Jap.Sin. 7-II, 209r.

72 On Organtino, see Malena, “I gesuiti italiani missionari in Giappone nel ‘secolo cristiano’”. *Il Giappone* vol. 35 (1995), pp.21–22.

73 Fróis, *Historia de Japam*, vol. 2 (1981), pp.408–409.

Cabral, for instance, arguably used the information collected during the Buddhist reading sessions for his refutation of Buddhist doctrines.

Overall, Jesuit depictions of Buddhism from the years 1570–1579 seem to focus on rituals, institutions, and other tangible elements of Buddhism. This is indicative not only of a shift in the interests of various missionaries, but also of the broadening of Jesuit horizons after the foundation of the Miyako mission. We shall present a few representative cases below.

## Buddhism as the Religion of *Kami* and *Hotoke*

Alessandro Valignano, the Society's Visitor (General Inspector) of the East Indies, arrived in Japan in 1579.<sup>74</sup> Valignano engaged extensively with Buddhism, although he implemented no major changes to the patterns of analysis established before him.<sup>75</sup> He was committed to reorganizing the Asian missions and restructuring their missionary policies, which enabled him to produce a more comprehensive discourse on Buddhism than his predecessors. The breadth and strength of his analysis can be appreciated in four of his substantial works: *Catechismus christianae fidei* (1586; henceforth *Catechismus*); *Advertimentos e Avisos acerca dos costumes e catangues de Jappão*, (1581; better known as *Cerimoniale*); *Sumario de las cosas de Japón* (1583; henceforth *Sumario*); and *Historia del principio y progreso de la Compañía de Jesús en las Indias orientales* (1583, *Principio*).<sup>76</sup> Valignano never minced his words regarding the evil nature of Buddhism and its sinful origins. In *Principio*, for instance, he presented Japanese religion as the “creation of a perverse

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74 For an introduction to the figure of Valignano and his impact on the Jesuit missions in Asia, see Üçerler, “Alessandro Valignano, Man, Missionary, and Writer”. *Renaissance Studies* vol. 17, no. 3 (September 2003), pp.337–366; and *Alessandro Valignano S.I., Uomo del Rinascimento: Ponte tra Oriente e Occidente*. Tamburello; Üçerler; Di Russo (Ed.). Rome: Institutum Historicum Societatis Iesu, 2008. Moran offers a good presentation of his work in Japan in *The Japanese and the Jesuits. Alessandro Valignano in sixteenth-century Japan*. London; New York: Routledge, 1993.

75 See, for example, Alvarez-Taladriz's comments (*Sumario*, 139\*-43\*) on how Valignano reused Cabral's lost catechism in his *Catechismus*.

76 The critical editions and translations used here are: Valignano, *Catecismo da Fé Cristã, no qual se mostra a verdade da nossa santa religião e se refutam as seitas japonesas*. António Guimarães Pinto (Tradução do Latim); António Guimarães Pinto and José Miguel Pinto dos Santos (Introdução); José Miguel Pinto dos Santos (Anotações). Lisboa: Centro Científico e Cultural de Macau; Fundação Jorge Álvares, 2017; *Il cerimoniale per i missionari del Giappone*. Josef Franz Schütte, S.J. (Ed.). Nuova edizione anastatica con saggio introduttivo do Michaela Catto. Roma: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 2011; *Sumario de las cosas de Japón: 1583. Adiciones del Sumario 1592 and Historia del principio y progreso de la Compañía de Jesús en las Indias orientales (1542–64)*. Josef Wicki (Ed.). Rome: Jesuit Historical Institute, 1944.

man,” a set of contradictory doctrines which confused the Buddhists themselves.<sup>77</sup> At the same time, however, he acknowledged the social role that Buddhism played in Japan, as we shall see in later sections.

In *Principio* Valignano reorganised previous interpretations and further elaborated on a number of points. He divided Buddhist followers into those who believed in hell and heaven and those who did not, thus adopting a criterion that dates back to the 1550s *Sumario de los errores*. He argued that the first group believed in many saintly beings called *hotoke*, as well as in a kind of paradise and in six hells, whereas the other group did not uphold such beliefs because they had reached *satori* and therefore had realised the truth and perfection of the Buddha.<sup>78</sup> These enlightened faithful, however, also believed that the other group of followers would be repeatedly reborn in different hells as human beings or animals, until they too returned to an original status that Valignano indicates as “first principle.” Valignano noted that each Buddhist school called this principle by different names, such as Amida, Śākyamuni, or Mahāvairocana, but these basically addressed the same principle.<sup>79</sup> Echoing Gago, Valignano maintained that those followers who aimed at *satori* were the literati of all Buddhist schools and the members of the Zen sect.<sup>80</sup>

With an eye to the European readership of his writings, Valignano returned to the relation between Buddhism and Lutheranism and argued that since the Japanese did not believe in good deeds, they followed “the same doctrine that the devil, father to both, taught to Luther.” In doing so, Valignano applied a rhetorical strategy that depicted the enemy in Asia as the enemy at home – a strategy that would continue to be used by both Protestant and Catholic writers against each other in later descriptions of Asian religions:

“From this [similarity] the wretched heretics of our time [i.e., the Lutherans] could take the opportunity to recognise their blindness; [...] it would be enough for them to know that their own doctrine was given by the devil, through his ministers, to the gentility of Japan, simply changing the name of the person they believe in and wait for. Through this, the devil obtains the same result among the heretics and the gentiles, because both are deeply involved in carnality and error, divided into many sects and, for this reason, living in great confusion about what they believe and in continuous wars.”<sup>81</sup>

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77 See, for example, *Catechismus*, pp.125–28.

78 “Through *satori*, they finally manage to open their understanding, and to know the perfection and truth of their [first] principle, [and this is] the glory and accomplished virtue of the *hotoke*.” (*Principio*, p.159).

79 *Ibidem*.

80 “But the literati, [who are those] who know more in these sects and who follow the interior of their laws, in which they believe, and those who belong to the Zen sect, commonly settle for saying that there is no heaven nor hell in the other world.” (*Principio*, pp.158–159).

81 *Ibidem*, p.161. For later identifications of Japanese Buddhism with Catholicism by writers from Protestant cultures see Dolce, “Icons, scriptures, and their ritual

The most significant innovations of Valignano's depiction of Buddhism are lexical. Firstly, it is noteworthy that both *Sumario* and *Principio* frequently use the word "religion" to speak of the beliefs of the Japanese, in a sense closer to the modern meaning of the term, rather than the more common sixteenth-century meaning of "religious order". Valignano also borrowed words from Christian theology to describe Buddhism: for example, he used the term "doctrine" (*doutrina*), which up to that point had been reserved almost exclusively for Christianity.<sup>82</sup> These lexical changes hint to a more rounded appreciation of Buddhism as a religious entity having the same complexity of Christianity.

Secondly, Valignano introduced Japanese deities to European audiences as "gods" (*dioses*), avoiding the term hitherto commonly used for Asian deities, *pagodes*, of South Asian provenance:

"They have primarily two manners of gods: ones called kami [càmys], and others called *hotoke* [fotoqués] [...] Of the latter they tell such impossible, dirty, and ridicule stories, like always were the stories of the gods of the Gentiles."<sup>83</sup>

The use of the term "gods" had repercussions beyond the lexical innovation. As a Renaissance man, Valignano reflected the period's interest in the deities of chronologically and geographically distant cultures, which were placed in the same category as the gods of the Gentiles for their multitude and unusual features. An example of this understanding is the first manual of "idols," published in 1556 in Venice by Vincenzo Cartari (c.1502–1569). Titled *Le Imagini de i Dei de gli Antichi*, it included Greek and Roman gods as well as more exotic deities worshipped in the East (Egyptian gods) and the North of Europe (the gods of the Celts and the Germans). A subsequent edition published in 1615 would add a rubric for "the gods of the Indies". These comprised deities from both the Americas and the Indian sub-continent, the latter extending to East Asia and mainly featuring Japanese Buddhist deities.<sup>84</sup>

Valignano understood Buddhist deities to encompass *kami*, that is, the gods we today consider part of Shinto, and *hotoke*, literally 'buddhas', but in fact a term embracing discrete figures of the Buddhist pantheon. Valignano was aware of the differences between the two kinds of deities. For instance, he pointed out that *kami* were born locally, while *hotoke* were a later import from Siam through China.<sup>85</sup> More

use: reflections on nineteenth-century European understandings of Japanese Buddhism", *La rencontre du Japon et de l'Europe: Images d'une découverte*, Paris: Publication Orientalistes de France, 2006, pp.57–78.

82 Exceptions were sporadic mentions in letters by Fróis and Barreto.

83 *Principio*, p.154. An extensive and detailed interpretation of the creation of *kami* and *hotoke* is found in the eighth lesson of the *Catechismus*, where Valignano speaks of the legends created by mankind after the Fall. See *Catechismus*, especially pp.125–128.

84 Frank, *Le panthéon du Japon*. Paris: Collège de France; Institut des Hautes Études Japonaises, 2017, pp.14–15.

85 *Principio*, p.155.



discerning than any previous Jesuit interpreter, he articulates the relation between these two types of gods in compelling ways:

This doctrine of Śākyamuni [Xàca] was initially received in China, and then it came to Japan in a time when Japanese people cared little about the things of the afterlife because they did not know any gods except for the kami, to whom they only asked favours for this world. Since [Śākyamuni's doctrine] had been received among the literati of China (whom the Japanese hold in high esteem), and exteriorly it appeared a good and reasonable thing, it was accepted among Japanese people easily. But because [the Japanese] were attached to their kami [camis], and the monks only wanted to win over the Japanese, not only did they not push the Japanese to abandon the kami, but actually, having such a good occasion to obtain what they wanted, they unified the buddhas [fotoquès] and the kami [...].<sup>86</sup>

This is a remarkable explanation of the symbiotic relation *kami* entertained with buddhas, which highlights important features of the combinatory system developed in Japan. Valignano attests that rituals to the *kami* concerned worldly benefits, while Buddhism offered solace for the afterlife. He also points out that different factors had contributed to the success of Buddhism, despite being a foreign religion: its integration with local cults; the needs of the people; the authority of Chinese culture, which Buddhism had brought with it; and the rationality of the Japanese, who were able (like Christians) to discern right from wrong. Valignano depicts the success of Buddhism as a deceit, claiming that Buddhist monks knew that neither heaven nor hell actually existed and propagated these beliefs only to captivate their audiences. It is noteworthy that Valignano describes the “unification” of the two types of deities as a Buddhist undertaking and the ultimate ruse to trick people. This would become a recurring argument in the writings of Christian visitors to Japan up to the nineteenth century.<sup>87</sup>

The notion of inner belief and outer teachings which is intimated in Valignano's description of the interaction between *kami* and buddhas also merits attention, as it would become a key element in the Jesuits' strategic assessment of Buddhism. Valignano discussed it in *Catechismus*, a handbook designed as a teaching tool for Jesuit Seminaries, which although focused on the refutation of Buddhism and the exposition of Christian tenets, it also elaborated on Buddhist teachings. The first *Catechismus* lesson is dedicated to Buddhism's “inner beliefs,” which Valignano

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86 Ibidem, pp.159–160.

87 William Griffis, for instance, would dedicate a chapter of his history of Japanese Buddhism to the combination of *kami* and buddhas, and would maintain that this was a development of Buddhism specific to Japan, which originated with the tricks of a Buddhist monk, Kōbō Daishi. Griffis, *The Religions of Japan from the Dawn of History to the Era of Meiji*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1895, and Dolce, “Duality and the Kami: Reconfiguring Buddhist Notions and Ritual Patterns”. *Cahiers d'Extrême-Asie* vol. 16 (2009), pp.119–150.

identifies in four tenets: (1) There is a first principle for everything; (2) This principle is present in all things; (3) This principle is of the same nature as that of human hearts, which merge into it after death; (4) The state of complete tranquility which characterises this principle can be attained by human beings through meditation, but until this happens they are forced to move constantly from one hell to the other.<sup>88</sup> Valignano considers the “outer teachings” of Buddhism too fanciful to deserve a proper rebuttal.<sup>89</sup> Yet these teachings receive some coverage in the *Catechismus*' fourth lesson. Here it is argued that *kami* and *hotoke* exist; that salvation consists of becoming a Buddha; and that people exist in different states according to their merits until they follow the laws of Śākyamuni and Amitābha and are thus granted salvation.<sup>90</sup> Once again, this explication shows a remarkable degree of understanding of Buddhist doctrines and practices.

Valignano's writings represent a pinnacle in the Jesuit mission's efforts to systematise Buddhism throughout the sixteenth century. While he built on interpretations that missionaries had advanced before his arrival, his openness towards Japanese culture and his skills as both an organiser and a communicator afforded him new insights into the nature of Japanese Buddhism. In particular, his understanding of Buddhism as a religion of its own helped reassess Buddhism as a distinct entity.

## The Institutional Power of Japanese Buddhism

As the Jesuit mission expanded over the Japanese territory and missionaries travelled more frequently outside Kyūshū, they learned about religious institutions and practices that were very different from anything they had seen in the south. The grand temple compounds of Mount Hiei and Mount Kōya impressed them with their size and the power, both spiritual and secular, their elders exuded. In his 1561 correspondence Torres called attention to the role of the *Zasu* (the head priest of Enryaku-ji, the headquarters of the Tendai school on Mount Hiei) whom Torres thought was the head of all Japanese Buddhists.<sup>91</sup> In 1562 Vilela sent to Europe detailed information on the Shingon establishment on Mount Kōya and its founder, Kūkai (774–835), known with the posthumous title of Kōbō Daishi:

[...] These monks, whom I mentioned, being like the knights of Rhodes, [...] live in many monasteries on a mountain range, and they must be more than 20,000 men. Their first principle was a man called Kōbō Daishi [Combondaxi], a *literato*, who,

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88 *Catechismus*, p.34.

89 *Ibidem*, p.75.

90 *Ibidem*, pp.77–78.

91 Cosme de Torres to António de Quadros, Funai, 8<sup>th</sup> October 1561, in *Documentos*, vol. 2, p.448.

according to the many things I heard, had a familiar [demonio familiar].<sup>92</sup> He invented a kind of alphabet that is widely used in Japan, called kana [Cana]. [...]. The law he left behind is called Shingon-shū [Xingojú].<sup>93</sup>

Vilela reported on the system of governance that characterised large monastic institutions in Japan, such as Enryaku-ji or the Shingon head temples, whereby the entire monastic community gathered in assemblies (*engi*) to deliberate on important issues that affected the monastery and voted when unanimity could not be reached. Writing of Negoro-ji, a major centre of Shingon Buddhism, Vilela explained:

They have no superior above themselves, the one who has more power becomes the leader when they gather in assembly. However, they grant some authority to their elders, according to their age. One of them has the same authority as all of them together on things that have to be decided [...], and many times they meet to discuss the same matter, until they reach a consensus.<sup>94</sup>

The self-determination of the monasteries must have made a favourable impression on the missionaries: Fróis would characterise those of the Kii peninsula as “great res publicae,” that is, independent states.<sup>95</sup>

It is significant that detailed information on Japanese religious institutions and practices was often requested from missionaries by their European audiences, and not only by the religious authorities on which the missions depended. European audiences were eager to know more about Japanese places and people. The Jesuits responded to this demand, turning it to their advantage. In fact, knowledge collected on the field also served propaganda purposes, for the greater the interest their narratives aroused in wealthy patrons, the more funds the missionary enterprise could hope to receive and the faster the fame of the Society of Jesus would grow.

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92 In Western demonology a familiar is “a small animal or imp kept as a witch’s attendant, given to her by the devil or inherited from another witch. In general the familiar is understood as a “low-ranking demon.” *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, “Familiar.” <https://www.britannica.com/topic/familiar>

93 Gaspar Vilela to the Fathers and Brothers of the Society of Jesus, Sakai, 1562, in *Cartas*, vol. 1, p.114r. Vilela had already written extensively on this topic in his letter to António de Quadros and the Jesuits in India, Sakai, 17<sup>th</sup> August 1561, *Documentos*, vol. 2, p.356.

94 Gaspar Vilela to the Fathers and Brothers of the Society of Jesus, Sakai, 1562, in *Cartas*, vol. 1, p.114r. On the mediaeval system of temple governance see Seita, *Chūsei jiin hōshi no kenkyū: jiin no tasū kessei to jiin hōshiki* 中世寺院法史の研究: 寺院の多数決制と寺院法式. Tōkyō: Keibundō, 1995; Rambelli, “Buddhist Republican Thought and Institutions in Japan: Preliminary Considerations”. Baskind (Ed.), *Scholars of Buddhism in Japan: Buddhist Studies in the 21st Century*. Kyoto: International Center for Japanese Studies, 2009.

95 Luís Fróis, Nagasaki, 1<sup>st</sup> October 1585, in *Cartas*, vol. 2, p.162r.

The mission in Kyōto also allowed Jesuits to become acutely aware of the tensions between competing Buddhist lineages, which too often degenerated in feuds and armed conflicts that the missionaries might have witnessed, and sometimes resulted in schismatic movements. Vilela's letter, for instance, attests to the split that occurred in the Shingon school in the twelfth century and fostered the activities of warrior-monks (*sōhei*):

Among the followers [of Kōbō Daishi] there were many thefts, robberies, and fights, causing many deaths. One of the followers, called Kakuban [Cacubao], left with some others, and ordained this kind of bonzos that they call Negoro. Among these, some pray continuously, others go to war, and all of them have to make every day five arrows, and always have their weapons ready. They worship their founder Kakuban.<sup>96</sup>

Divisions within a denomination must have been a familiar reality to the Jesuits, who witnessed similar strives in sixteenth-century Europe. Significantly, Vilela draws attention to the manner in which a new lineage was created, noting that Kakuban (1095–1143) had the power to ordain new monks. Kakuban and Kūkai are thus clearly identified as the initiators of two competing Shingon lineages, one with its headquarters on Mount Kōya, the other in the valley at Negoro-ji.

These accounts reveal a marked interest for Buddhist institutional configuration. The missionaries recognised the importance of Buddhist institutions among the Japanese and the close relationship monasteries entertained with the political world, in particular in the capital area. Their later writings even comment on how quickly the capital recovered its role as the country's Buddhist centre, less than a decade after Oda Nobunaga (1534–1582) burned down the establishment on Mount Hiei.<sup>97</sup> Eventually, Jesuits tried to replicate elements of the Buddhist organisation for the benefit of the mission. Valignano, for example, identified the Gozan system, which regulated the temple network of Rinzai Zen, as the Japanese counterpart of the Society of Jesus. Since its head temple, Nanzen-ji, was located in the capital, Valignano understood the Gozan structure to have developed in the refined culture of the court and considered it suitable for city-dwellers, such as the Jesuits themselves. Accordingly, as part of the administrative changes he implemented in the mission, he instructed missionaries to follow the customs and etiquette of the Gozan system so that they could acquire the same authority granted to Buddhist monks.<sup>98</sup>

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96 Gaspar Vilela to the Fathers and Brothers of the Society of Jesus, Sakai, 1562, in *Cartas*, vol. 1, p.114v.

97 Gaspar Coelho to the General, Nagasaki, 15<sup>th</sup> February 1582, in *Cartas*, vol. 2, p.30v.

98 See "How to acquire and maintain authority when dealing with the Japanese" (*Cerimoniale*, pp.123–157). In a revised version, compiled after criticism received from the General, the explanation of specific aspects of the Gozan system disappeared (*Cerimoniale*, pp.282–313).

## Devotion and Piety on Mount Kōya

It was not only the institutional side of Japanese Buddhism that missionaries got to understand better once they moved out of Kyūshū. They became familiar with the physical landscape of sacred sites and absorbed the popular narratives that circulated about the spiritual power of these places. The charisma of individual religious figures and the devotional practices they inspired attracted their attention. The cult of Kūkai is a case in point. His name was well-known among Japanese and Jesuits alike: Kōbō Daishi had been first mentioned in Lancillotto's 1548 report and the missionaries were keen to report on his deeds. This does not mean that the image of Kūkai they conveyed was necessarily positive. Vilela, for instance, presented Kūkai as a learned but diabolic figure:

This monastery [on Mount Kōya] was founded by a man called Kōbō Daishi [Combodaxi]. This name, Daishi, is like the [academic] degree of Master among us. This man was inventor and teacher of great sins among the Japanese. Especially, he was the first who invented sodomy in Japan. He made a pact with the devil and for this reason he performed many fake miracles, and he would prophesy many things.<sup>99</sup>

While the rhetorical depiction of a Buddhist holy man as the evil other is not unexpected in missionary writings, stories of the exceptional powers of Kūkai must have fascinated –and perhaps alarmed –the missionaries. At one point in his *Historia*, Fróis even suggested that it was thanks to “the cult of the devil” promoted by Kūkai on Mount Kōya that the province in which Mount Kōya is located, Kii-no-kuni, was never attacked during the civil wars.<sup>100</sup>

Jesuits appear to have been aware that Mount Kōya was not only the headquarters of the Shingon school but a centre of extraordinary devotion and piety. They describe in detail how the mountain became the last abode of Kūkai:

Already old, [Kōbō Daishi] had a house made underground in this monastery; he put himself there, still alive, and had somebody close it from outside. He said he could not die naturally and wanted to sleep, because after many thousands of years a man called Miroku would come to Japan to reform the world. Only then Kōbō Daishi would come out of his cave; nobody should dare open that place before that time [...] So they closed the doors and he was buried, and his soul is now suffering great torments in hell.<sup>101</sup>

This description of Kūkai's entry into perpetual meditation resonates with the accounts we find in Japanese origin stories and hagiographic narratives, elaborated

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99 Gaspar Vilela to the Fathers of the Convent of Avis, Goa, 6<sup>th</sup> October 1571, in *Cartas*, vol. 1, p.327r.

100 Fróis, *Historia de Japam*, vol. 4 (1984), p.173.

101 Gaspar Vilela to the Fathers of the Convento of Avis, Goa, 6<sup>th</sup> October 1571, in *Cartas*, vol. 1, p.327r.

throughout the medieval period to promote a devotional cult around Kūkai and attract pilgrims to Mount Kōya. For instance, one of the oldest of these tales, the tenth-century *Kongōbuji konryū shugyō engi*, recounts that “[Kūkai]’s entry in meditation simply meant that he had closed his eyes and did not speak... Since he was still living like an ordinary person, no funeral was performed... His disciples closed the structure and people had to get permission to enter it.”<sup>102</sup> The mysterious afterlife of Kūkai was also depicted in handscrolls, such as the fourteenth-century *Illustrated Deeds of the Great Master of Kōya*, widely circulated and later printed<sup>103</sup> (Fig. 1).



**Fig. 1.** Kūkai sitting in meditation in the cave where he had been buried. His hair has grown long and one of disciple visiting the cave gives him a haircut. From a Edo period printed version of the *Illustrated Deeds of the Great Master of Kōya* (*Kōya daishi gyōjō zuga* 高野大師行狀圖畫). © Kokubungaku kenkyū shiryōkan, YAヤ4-330-1~2.

102 Translated in Tanabe, “The Founding of Mt Kōya and Kūkai’s Eternal Meditation”. *Religions of Japan in Practice*. Tanabe (Ed.). Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999, pp.354–359. On the legends about Kūkai, see Takeuchi, *Kōbō Daishi denshō to jijitsu. Eden o yomitoku* 弘法大師伝承と史実: 絵伝を読み解く. Ōsaka: Tokishobō, 2008.

103 Variously known as *Kōya daishi gyōjō ekotoba* or *Kōya daishi gyōjō zue*, it exists in many variants. Several printed versions from the Edo period may be perused on the website of the National Institute of Japanese Literature (<https://kotenseki.nijl.ac.jp/>)

Other references to Kūkai in Jesuit sources describe him as being “alive for many years in a cave, waiting with his hands raised for Miroku [Maitreya, the Buddha of the future] or Śākyamuni;”<sup>104</sup> or waiting to be resurrected after the arrival of the *literato* Miroku<sup>105</sup>; or simply waiting “to come back.”<sup>106</sup> Kūkai’s exact condition after being closed in his “cave” was not so clear to the Jesuits, and it is curious that they were not concerned to determine it. Were they afraid of the similarities between Kūkai’s eternal life and Christian beliefs? Or did they consider such a belief incoherent and confused, as one would expect from teachings imparted by the devil, and thus undeserving further attention? The preoccupation with the possible parallelisms between Kūkai and Christ must have played a role in the missionaries’ decision to describe popular beliefs without delving much into the specificities of their nature. Had the missionaries probed into the subject further, their writings would have lost the edifying function they set out to fulfil.

Jesuit sources, however, go to great lengths to convey the significance of Kūkai’s status in Japanese Buddhism. The perceived presence of Kūkai in his living body had in fact created an extensive graveyard around his resting place (*okunoin*) and a variety of devotional practices were performed there. Jesuit letters depict Mount Kōya as a coveted burial place that people from all sixty-six Japanese provinces aspired to<sup>107</sup>:

When the honourable people of other kingdoms die, after being cremated they all send their teeth to Mount Kōya [Coya]. There they are buried with the [deceased’s] title [carved] in stone. They believe that everyone who sends their teeth to be buried near Kōbō Daishi is immediately beatified and saintly.<sup>108</sup>

[...] after cremation a small amount of ash, the teeth and a few small bones of the deceased are placed in a small wooden box wrapped in paper. This box is offered to another temple, built there [on Mount Koya] on purpose to receive such offers. The monks say that those who send these boxes with bones and alms will be part of the unbeatable and triumphant army of Kōbō Daishi, who will come to restore and save the world.<sup>109</sup>

To understand better how important this practice is in Japan and the great veneration this cult is given, [you should know that] it is more than five hundred years that four

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104 Baltazar Gago to the Jesuits in Portugal, Goa, 10<sup>th</sup> December 1562, in *Documentos*, vol. 2, p.603.

105 Luís Fróis to the Fathers and Brothers of the Society of Jesus in China and India, Miyako, 20<sup>th</sup> February 1565, in *Cartas*, vol. 1, p.174.

106 Luís Fróis, Nagasaki, 1<sup>st</sup> October 1585, in *Cartas*, vol. 2, p.162r.

107 The Jesuits described Japan as being comprised of sixty-six kingdoms. See, for example, *Documentos*, vol. 1, p.24\*.

108 Luís Fróis to the Fathers and Brothers of the College of Goa, Sakai, 5<sup>th</sup> September 1566, in *Cartas*, vol. 1, p.211v.

109 Luís Fróis, Nagasaki, 1<sup>st</sup> October 1585, in *Cartas*, vol. 2, p. 162r.

thousand lamps burn day and night in front of this demon, put there by kings and lords, who pay much rent to keep them there. They tell me that there are three or four lamps that have a hundred and more wicks, and give more light than four burning torches. The oil is always so expensive in Japan, especially around here, that usually a bowl costs one golden *pardão*, even if it is bad oil.<sup>110</sup>

This description of the worshipping hall at the *Okunoin* is precise and quite faithful to historical records, hinting at the possibility that the missionaries actually visited Mount Kōya.<sup>111</sup>

## The Performance of Religion: Festivals for *Kami* and Buddhas

Another devotional aspect of Japanese Buddhism that captured the attention of the missionaries was the way *kami* and buddhas were honoured in community rituals. Living in the capital city allowed the Jesuits to observe some of the most magnificent festivals in the country. These were public events that displayed the strength of Buddhism as a religion, and Jesuits frequently reported on them in their letters and other written documents. Two celebrations were especially important in sixteenth-century Kyōto: *sannōsai*, the festival for the *kami* of Mount Hiei, which took place in Sakamoto in spring; and *gionsai*, the festival of the Gion shrine deities, which took place in town in summer. These two festivals feature in Jesuit narratives, sometimes with extensive descriptions that provide readers with insights into the nature of the deities worshipped and their sacred places.

Let us first consider the Hie deities. Although Jesuits were not granted access to the temples on top of Mount Hiei, they appear to have visited the shrine complex situated at the eastern base of the mountain, in the town of Sakamoto. Luís Fróis gives an account of the Hie shrine (today called Hiyoshi Taisha) in a chapter of his *Historia* devoted to the events that occurred in the year 1569:

The shrine of Sannó [...] was near famous Mount Hiei. It was situated on a mountain called Hachiōji [Fachiuongi], and below it, there was a fresh valley with twenty-two shrines [varelas] of Kami, very prosperous and pleasant to see. Inside these shrines, there were seven big float-like objects, richly decorated and well-made. They were used once a year in a solemn festival, during which all the monks of Mount Hiei descended in procession with them, and then they would sail, bearing arms, in a

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110 Luís Fróis to the Fathers and Brothers of the College of Goa, Sakai, 5<sup>th</sup> September 1566, in *Cartas*, vol. 1, p.211v.

111 For a description of the contemporary appearance of the *okunoin* and its lantern hall, see Nicoloff, *Sacred Kōyasan*. Albany: State University of New York, 2008, pp.224–31.



nearby lagoon, which is 22 leagues long. This was called the matsuri [maçuri] of Sakamoto.<sup>112</sup>

Sannō (lit. 'King of the mountain') is a collective term for the deities protectors of the Tendai school –combinatory entities that were at the same time *kami* and *hotoke*. There were twenty-one of them, with seven being considered the central deities.<sup>113</sup> The seven objects Fróis describes are their temporary abodes (*mikoshi*), carried down during the festival in a procession which, today as when the Jesuits observed it, departs from the shrine complex and reaches the banks of Lake Biwa after crossing the town of Sakamoto (Figs. 2 and 3)



**Fig. 2.** Venerating Sannō: the portable shrines of the main Sannō deities. Details from *Hie Sannō sairei emaki*, seventeenth century, colour and gold on paper. © Collège de France, Institut des Hautes Études Japonaises.

112 Fróis, *Historia de Japam*, vol. 2. (1981), p.247.

113 On the history of the Hie shrine and the Sannō deities, see Kageyama, *Hieizan* 比叡山. Tōkyō: Kadogawa shoten, 1975, and Sagai, *Hiyoshi taisha to Sannō gongen* 日吉大社と山王権現. Kyōto: Jinbun Shoin, 1992, which devotes a chapter to *sannōsai*. In English see Breen; Teeuwen, *A New History of Shinto*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010, pp.66–128.



**Fig. 3.** Sannō kami carried down from the Hie shrine. Details from *Hie Sannō sairei emaki*, seventeenth century, colour and gold on paper. © Collège de France, Institut des Hautes Études Japonaises.

In a letter written from the capital on 4<sup>th</sup> October 1571, Luís Fróis provided his superior with further details on the Hie deities and again described the popularity and opulence of the shrine complex and the lavish festival staged on land and water, for which no expense appeared to have been spared. Interestingly, Fróis must have seen such magnificence of places and performances collapse in front of his own eyes, for the letter was written just a few days after Nobunaga had reduced to ashes shrines and non-religious buildings in Sakamoto as well as the temples on Mount Hiei.<sup>114</sup>

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114 According to *Shinchōkōki*, the key source on the career of Oda Nobunaga, Nobunaga's raid took place on the twelfth day of the ninth month of the second year of the Genki era, that is, 30<sup>th</sup> September 1571. See Ōta, *The Chronicle of Lord Nobunaga*. Elisonas; Lamers (Ed. and Transl.). Leiden: Brill, 2011, pp.164–166. Jesuits reported repeatedly on this dramatic episode in the history of Japan. Fróis, however, misdated the assault on Mt Hiei by a day. (Ibidem, p.40)

There was also on Mount Hiei a shrine built on the top of a mountain, dedicated to a certain idol, which they call Sannó, much worshipped in all of Japan.<sup>115</sup> This was a place of great pilgrimage, where they asked for health, riches, and a long life. On this mountain there are a lot of baboons, unlimited in number, dedicated to Sannó. To throw stones at these baboons, or hurt them in any other way, is an offence to this idol, and also a grave sin. Offences to this idol are punished immediately, and the offender becomes a leper. At the foot of this mountain range there is a flat valley, near the town I mentioned earlier called “upper Sakamoto,” where there were built some ten or twelve temples dedicated to this Sannó. They were the most beautiful, rich, and lustrous (even if small) that were found in Japan [...] [331v] It is an ancient tradition of Hie that every year the monks have a very sumptuous festival for this idol Sannó: they descend from the summit, all up in arms, carrying on their shoulders seven huge chairs which are kept in seven temples of the valley below. These chairs with all their hand-made decorations [...] cost 1500 *taels* each. With these seven chairs on their shoulders, on seven boats, they entered the lagoon of the kingdom of Omi, which is huge, and there they danced with them, and made great solemnities in honour of this idol.<sup>116</sup> (Fig. 4)

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115 *Cartas* wrongly transcribes Sannó as “Canon” throughout, making the passage incomprehensible (see also Schurhammer, *Shintō. The way of the gods in Japan*. Bonn: Kurt Schroeder, 1923, p.67, note 4). The original document, however, has Sannó. See ARSI, Jap. Sin. 7–I, 63v.

116 Luís Fróis to António de Quadros, Miyako, 4<sup>th</sup> October 1571, in *Cartas*, vol. 1, p.331rv. The opulence of the Hie shrines is perfectly illustrated by a pair of six-panel screens, one showing the buildings of the shrine complex with pilgrims coming and going, the other the segment of the festival where the portable shrines are on boats, sailing on Lake Biwa. British Museum, 1949-0709-0-9 and 1949,0709,0.10. See <https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/A>.



**Fig. 4.** Portable shrines of the Sannō deities on boats. Details from a pair of six-panel screens illustrating the Hie shrine and its festival. Kanei period (1624–1644).  
© Trustees of the British Museum, London.

Monkeys were considered to be vehicle of the Hie deities and therefore those that inhabited the space of the deities were regarded as sacred animals. Indeed, *Sannō gongen*, the combinatory aspect of these deities, is often represented as a monkey. As we have seen in the preceding sections, the Jesuits understood *kami* and buddhas to be part of a single religious system. Thus, Fróis is not surprised to see Buddhist monks carrying the *kami* in procession. (In fact, this was done by local parishioners [*ujiko*] from Sakamoto, with lower-ranking monks in decorative armours leading the progress.)

Jesuits also seem to have realised the power relation between the shrines in Sakamoto and the monastic establishment on Mount Hiei. They described Sakamoto as a town “serving Mount Hiei” so that the monks “would not be disturbed by everyday activities” necessary to their sustenance.<sup>117</sup> The shrines indeed supplied the monks with financial support and service people (*jinin*, lit. shrine people), and Jesuits easily drew analogies between the logic of monastic support in Europe and Japan. One may even read a specifically Jesuit polemical tone in their calling attention to the abundance of free time that having an entire town at their service afforded the Tendai monks. The use of time in each religious order, and specifically in the Society of Jesus, was in fact a debated topic in Europe.<sup>118</sup>

Religious festivals also opened a window for missionaries to get a better grasp of the political dynamics between discrete sacred places and the institutions that linked them. In Jesuit sources, the Sannō festival appears connected with the capital’s other major festival, which has its devotional centre at the Gion shrine (today called Yasaka shrine). Vilela provides the first detailed description of these celebrations in a letter written in 1561 to his brethren in India:

Many things I saw, dearest brothers, of the worship of the devil in this land, *in which it seems the devil wanted to emulate the cult that is given and due to God Our Lord*. And I think you will be pleased in the Lord if you hear them, and after seeing such blindness in so many souls, you will recommend them to their Creator, to illuminate them and save them from such darkness. *It looks like the devil wanted to counterfeit the feast of Corpus Christi that the Holy Mother Church celebrates*. Because around the month of August they celebrate a festival, called Gion [Guivon] as it is dedicated to a man of that name, and they celebrate it in this way. First, they distribute among the streets’ officials the contraptions that each of them has to carry. On the day of the festival, in the morning, they go out in their manner of procession, according to which first come fifteen or more floats covered in silks and other riches. These floats have very tall masts. Inside the chariots, many children sing and play small drums and fifes. Each float is carried

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117 Luís Fróis to António de Quadros, Miyako, 4<sup>th</sup> October 1571, in *Cartas*, vol. 1, p.331r.

118 For example, the Jesuits’ decision not to sing the Hours in choir and to dedicate that time to other apostolic activities was heavily contested by Church authorities (O’Malley, *The First Jesuits*, pp.134–135). The Jesuits transposed these tensions to the Japanese context and often denounced the laziness and luxury they perceived in Buddhist monks’ lives.

by thirty or forty men. Each one is followed by the [towns]people and the officials in their uniforms, arms, spears, hatchets, *naginata* made by a hanger as a blade attached to half a spear, well set up. All chariots queue like this with their people and officials. The chariots with children are followed by others covered in silk, carrying armed people and many painted antiquities and other remarkable things. In their proper order they visit the temple of the festival idol. And thus they spend the morning. In the afternoon they go out with a very big sacred palanquin which comes out from the same shrine; it is carried by many people who pretend they cannot carry it, saying that it contains their god. People worship this palanquin with great devotion. Together with this [palanquin] there is another, which is said to be of the mistress of the idol, whom he loved and took with him because she was young. There also is – a rifle shot away – another palanquin which, they say, belongs to the idol's wife. When those carrying [the wife's] palanquin see the idol's palanquin approaching together with that of his mistress, they run from one side to the other, suggesting that [the wife] is mad with rage to see her husband with his mistress. Here the people start to feel bad for her, seeing her so distressed: some cry, some get on their knees and worship her. And so, when the palanquins get close, together they go to the temple of the idol, where the procession ends.<sup>119</sup>

Gion festival, whose origin may be traced back to ninth-century rituals to appease vengeful spirits (*goryōe*), was a summer celebration to exorcise Gozū Tennō, the ox-headed god of epidemics, and venerate it as a protective deity.<sup>120</sup> A composite event, it consisted of different segments that culminated in two parades: the religious ritual proper, which revolved around the Gion shrine and had its climax in the procession of the three large portable shrines of the deities (Gozū and his family); and an extravaganza presided by Kyōto townspeople, who erected and paraded across town gigantic floats (*yamaboko*), richly decorated with lacquered ceilings, metals and tapestries and textiles of diverse provenance<sup>121</sup> (Fig. 5). Vilela accurately documents how these public portions of the festival were enacted in the sixteenth century, conveying the contrast between the slow and ordered progress of the floats in the morning and the exuberant pace of the portable shrines carried around in the evening by a crown of noisy men.

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119 Gaspar Vilela to António de Quadros and the Jesuits in India, Sakai, 17<sup>th</sup> August 1561, in *Documentos*, vol. 2, pp. 349–351. Cf. *Cartas*, vol. 1, pp.91v–92r.

120 See McMullin, “On Placating the Gods and Pacifying the Populace: The Case of the Gion “Goryō” Cult”. *History of Religions*, vol. 27, no. 3, (Feb. 1988), pp.270–293.

121 On the medieval aspects of Gion festival see Wakita, *Chūsei Kyōto to Gion matsuri: ekijin to toshi no seikatsu* 中世京都と祇園祭: 疫神と都市の生活. Tōkyō: Yōshikawa kōbunkan, 2016; Kawashima, *Gion matsuri: shukusai no miyako* 祇園祭: 祝祭の京都. Tōkyō: Yōshikawa kōbunkan, 2010; Kawachi, *Kaiga shiryō ga kataru Gion matsuri: sengokuki Gion sairei no yōsō* 絵画史料が語る祇園祭: 戦国期祇園祭礼の様相. Kyōto: Tankōsha, 2015. Whether the float parade represented a separate, secular dimension of the festival is a point debated by scholars. Jesuit narratives do not make such distinction. In fact, townspeople also erected altars in each neighbourhood and some of the floats hosted a statue or other image of protective deities. This festival is still performed today.



**Fig. 5.** One of the floats paraded in the Gion festival, Taishi yamaboko. Detail of a door, seventeenth century, colour on wood. Attributed to Kanō Atsunobu. © Trustees of the British Museum, London.

This account is significant in many ways. First of all, we should note that Vilela's letter, which we have translated here from the original manuscript, was censored when it was printed. In fact, the passages in italics have been omitted in the Évora edition, which consists of published letters. Secondly, the letter suggests a comparison between Gion festival and an important celebration in the Catholic calendar, that of Corpus Christi. Those references to the Christian pageant are precisely the sentences that have been censored. Unravelling the logic of appreciation of Japanese practices and the ensuing reaction to their similarities with Christian rituals sheds light on the process by which the missionaries understood Japanese religious practices, valued them, and at the same time were anxious about them.<sup>122</sup>

The comparison between Gion festival and the Catholic feast of Corpus Christi could not have been more appropriate to make Jesuit audiences in Europe grasp the scale of this religious celebration and the force of the religion it represented. Corpus Christi (or Corpus Domini) is a Catholic feast that glorifies the sacrament of the Eucharist. Established in the thirteenth century, by the sixteenth century it had become one of the most important events in the Catholic calendar, celebrated across the Catholic world, from Portugal to Italy to Austria, and exported to the colonies.<sup>123</sup> Like Gion festival, it was a urban ritual that showcased the authority of kings and queens and the power of merchants and craftsmen; after the Reformation, it became a triumphal progress, a symbol of Catholic identity. Gion festival had by the fifteenth century become the grand festival of Kyōto's flourishing merchant community, memorable for its solemnity and magnificence. The elaborate shape of the floats progressing through the town, the affiliation of each float with a distinct neighbourhood, the involvement of the entire city, the music, the wealth displayed in the decorations of the floats and of the private altars in each neighbourhood, were all elements that were familiar to the Jesuits from Christian celebrations. The vivid details of Vilela's narration of the Gion festival could indeed apply to contemporary processions of saints in Catholic Europe, where extravagant constructions were carried around by townsmen, with space for musicians to sit and play throughout the progress, and on top an image of the saint being

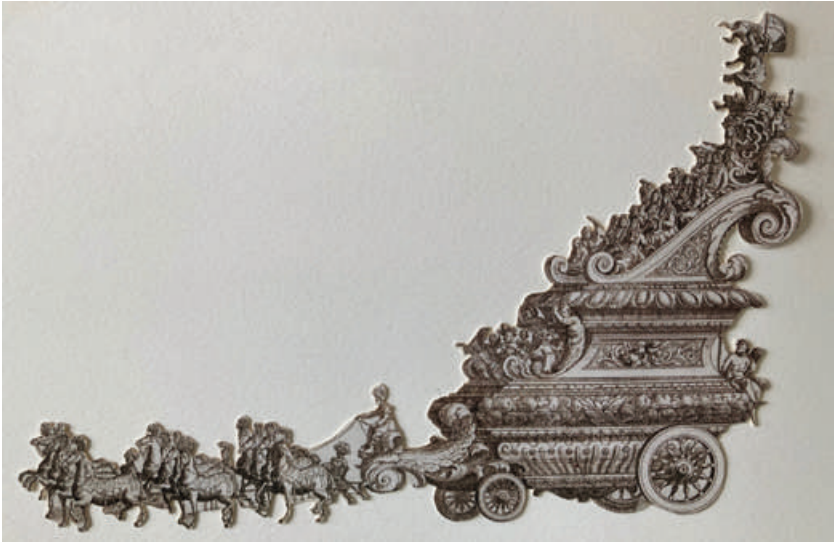
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122 For a discussion of other aspects of Buddhist practice, which the missionaries found resonant with their own and drew upon to carve their own space in society, see Higashibaba, *Christianity in Early Modern Japan: Kirishitan Belief and Practice*. Leiden, Boston & Koln: Brill, 2001.

123 See Rubin, *Corpus Christi: The Eucharist in Late Medieval Culture*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991; Checa Cremades and Fernandez-Gomez, *Festival Culture in the World of the Spanish Habsburg*. London: Routledge, 2016. The Spanish introduced the festival to Latin America. The celebration of the Corpus Domini in Cuzco, Peru, was of particular importance and is still performed today. Dean, *Inka Bodies and the Body of Christ: Corpus Christi in Colonial Cuzco*, Duke University Press, 2003. Sumptuous processions have also continued in Spain, for instance in Valencia.



celebrated<sup>124</sup> (Fig. 6). Vilela rightly described the Gion floats as “carros triunfantes,” the term that would become standard for the spectacular floats celebrating Christianity in baroque Europe.



**Fig. 6.** “Carro triunfante” celebrating Saint Rosalia, the patron saint of Palermo. Detail from an engraved plate illustrating the festival parade, included in Vio, *Li giorni d’oro di Palermo nella trionfale solennità di S. Rosalia vergine palermitana celebrata l’anno 1693*. Palermo: Pietro Coppula Stamp. camerale, 1694.

Missionaries’ writings convey the sense of togetherness that Japanese festivals displayed, supported as they were by the efforts of the rich and the poor and by the city’s ecclesiastic and temporal authorities. It is also clear from Jesuit writings that the capital’s two major festivals were not merely local celebrations but were replicated in various areas of Japan, reinforcing the idea that Buddhism was a national religion with a ritual calendar shared across the country. In his *Historia Fróis*, for instance, writes:

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124 One example is the “carro triunfante” designed by engineer Amato for the 1693 celebration of Saint Rosalia, the patron saint of Palermo. See Vio, Ignazio de, *Li giorni d’oro di Palermo nella trionfale solennità di S. Rosalia vergine palermitana celebrata l’anno 1693*. Palermo: Pietro Coppula Stamp. camerale, 1694. A digital version of the copy in the Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library at Yale University is available on <https://brbl-dl.library.yale.edu/vufind/Record/3440657>.

It is custom in every town, when they do the solemn festivities of the kami and buddhas, for all the population to participate and help with their contraptions, as we do in Portugal for the Corpus Christi and similar ones. At that time, in Shimabara, they were about to do the festival for an idol they call Gion.<sup>125</sup>

Was it problematic to remind readers of the similarity between Buddhist and Christian festivals? The censored passages in Vilela's letter highlight the Jesuits' concern with how to deal best with the obvious similarities they encountered in Japan. Comparisons were made by missionaries in order to help their superiors understand what they observed and the situation in which they found themselves. However, they had to be cautious in their approach to other religious practices, especially when they appeared to be too similar to Catholic practices, for confusion could arise about the orthodoxy of Catholicism. Therefore, we often find a rhetorical stance that posited resemblances in the religious other as the workings of the devil. This argument had a long history in Christian apologetics and was first used to justify similarities between the gods of classic antiquity and other pagan gods and Christian saints – although it is not clear how convincing this official argument was in the eyes of the missionaries themselves. With a similar logic, references to the imitation of Catholic rites were often removed from printed editions of missionary correspondence, for they were considered dangerous suggestions for the readers rather than edifying examples. No extensive comparison has been made between published letters and original manuscripts, and therefore it is difficult to establish how often missionaries drew on such comparisons.

A few words should also be spent on the perception of the festivals' political dynamics. It is compelling that Jesuit sources connected the Sannō festival to the Gion festival. Undoubtedly, this association was common among the Japanese of the time, as attested by the depiction of the two festivals as a set in visual sources, such as paintings and decorative screens.<sup>126</sup> Taken together the two celebrations demonstrated Kyōto's importance as the country's religious centre. The connection between the two festivals also epitomized the political links between the institutions that carried them out, for Gion was a subordinate shrine (*matsusha*) of the Hie shrine and both Hie and Gion shrines were under Tendai jurisdiction. The cost of the two festivals were covered by taxes levied by Enryakuji. Fróis speaks of the relation between the two festivals:

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125 Fróis, *Historia de Japam*, vol. 1 (1979), p.319.

126 See, for instance, the pair of six-panel folding screens attributed to the Tosa school in the holdings of the Suntory Museum. Dated to the Muromachi period (sixteenth century), these screens are regarded the oldest illustration of the floats of the Gion festival. See the museum webpage and McKelway, *Capitalscapes: Folding Screens and Political Imagination in Late Medieval Kyoto*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2006.

When the festival of Sakamoto had ended, immediately here in Miyako there would be another for an idol, or kami, called Gion [Guiòn]; it was the most solemn of the year, and it seemed people from all over Japan were participating. It seems like the devil wanted to counterfeit the feast of the Corpus Christi, because they did all the dances, games, and inventions that could be done in Miyako. So that Your Reverence understands the influence of Mount Hiei over Miyako, if it happened that it was not possible to do the Sannó festival of Sakamoto for one year, that of Miyako could not be done for thirty-three years.<sup>127</sup>

Japanese sources indeed attest that when the *sannō* festival did not take place because of interference from Tendai monastics (usually low-ranking monks using the portable shrines for their protests), the Gion festival was cancelled or at least delayed.<sup>128</sup> By linking the two festivals, thus, the Jesuits highlighted the power that the Tendai establishment on Mount Hiei held over *kami* and buddhas, as well as over the capital city. For a time, this position made the Tendai monks, in the eyes of the missionaries, the ideal Buddhist interlocutors of Christianity. Indeed, even before setting up the mission in the capital, Jesuits had tried to gain access to Mount Hiei, hoping to be allowed to preach to the monks of Enryaku-ji. Unfortunately, the missionaries never managed to establish close contacts with the school they perceived as the most powerful in Japan, and in later years they turned again their attention towards Zen monks.

## Epilogue

The examination of Jesuit writings recounting their encounter with Japanese Buddhism in the sixteenth century has revealed a twisting and complex process of learning about and evaluating the religious Other.

Both the patterns by which Jesuits acquired knowledge of Japanese Buddhism and the hermeneutical framework they used to describe it were shaped by a Eurocentric point of view, by the Christian worldview from which the missionaries

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127 Luís Fróis to António de Quadros, Miyako, 4<sup>th</sup> October 1571, in *Cartas*, vol. 1, p.331v. It is not clear what the 33 year hiatus mentioned by Fróis refers to. Gion festival had been interrupted in 1467, at the beginning of the Ōnin war, and was staged again in 1500, after 33 year, but this had no relation to the Hie shrine. However, in 1533, at the time of the so-called Lotus uprisings of the Tenbun years, the *shōgun* suspended the shrine-related segments of the festival (while the float parade organized by the neighbourhoods took place), giving as a reason the fact that Hie shrine had cancelled its festival. (See Gay, *The Money Lenders of Late Medieval Japan*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2001, pp.186–7 and p.279.) Since this suspension occurred 33 years after the restoration of the festival, it is possible that Jesuits misunderstood the temporal reference.

128 Kawauchi, “Sengokuki Gion-e ni kansuru kisoteki kōsatsu” 戦国期祇園会に関する基礎的考察. *Shirin*, vol. 85, no. 5 (2002) pp.700–723.

proceeded, and by the historical experience of the Society of Jesus at home and in Asia. The complex expectations Jesuits had regarding any gentile belief coloured their first interactions with “the laws of Japan.” The missionaries looked for elements they assumed Buddhism ought to have and emphasised aspects of it which appeared puzzling and which, accordingly, could support their critical agenda, namely, to show the superiority of Christianity. This led the Jesuits to organise the limited information they had into rubrics and categories that chiefly made sense in the context of Christian theology. What emerged was a somehow distorted framing of Buddhism, which rested on the Christian understanding of divine Providence and its work in the world. Whether perceived as a form of Christianity or as a “product of the devil,” Buddhism was never understood on its own terms.

As it happens in many intercultural relations, the interaction between Jesuits and Buddhists was heavily influenced by the knowledge (or lack thereof) of the language the missionaries had acquired. Inadequate understanding meant errors in translations that could have enormous consequences for the purpose of the mission. The more the Jesuits built up their capacity to engage with Buddhist sources and Buddhist practices in Japanese, the more articulated their depictions of Buddhism became.

The process of documenting and elucidating Japanese Buddhism did not proceed efficiently throughout the period we have examined. While Jesuits aimed at systematising the information they collected to make sense of the nature of Buddhism as a competing religion, their work was far from systematic and it appears discontinuous in time, affected as it was by the realities of the missionary field.

The image of Buddhism that emerges at the end of the sixteenth century is that of a national religion as complex and powerful as Christianity. It is a religion founded on the revelation of the books of “Xaca,” which worships “hotoke and kami,” but ultimately relies on a single principle; a religion divided into schools that embrace different interpretations of the sacred books and rituals, but are united in religious piety and the performance of devotional practices. The understanding of Buddhism afforded by the Japanese experience might have not always been fully accurate, but it was a crucial achievement for the Jesuits. The knowledge acquired of Buddhism in Japan, albeit not precise, would in fact be put to use in other missions, influencing Jesuit understandings of religious realities in other parts of the Asian continent.

José Miguel Pinto dos SANTOS

## Mincing Words: Terminological Sublation in the Japanese Christian Doctrines

### A Paradox

There is an interesting paradox in the narratives and interpretations made popular by some historiographic schools, during the past 50 years, concerning the missionary activities of the Society of Jesus in Japan during the second half of the sixteenth century. On the one-hand, the Society is portrayed as being the most effective proselyting organization of the Catholic Church during the Counter-Reformation period.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, the results of its missionary work in Japan, arguably its most successful missionary field during that period, are evaluated as an utter failure. They are said to have failed politically because “[t]he Christians were exterminated by the despotic Tokugawa regime.” They are said to have failed culturally because “[t]he sum of their cultural contribution to Japan was nil.”<sup>2</sup> And they are said to have failed as missionaries, because their religious and doctrinal instruction was incomprehensible to their audience owing to the fatal flaws in the terminology they chose to use in their preaching and catechetical and doctrinal teaching.<sup>3</sup>

There is no denying that one of the major difficulties and problems faced by the Jesuits and their Japanese collaborators was the cultural and linguistic translation as well as the transmission of Christian concepts and terms into Japanese. From this very real and historical challenge, the twentieth-century historiographic claim is made that sixteenth-century Japanese Christian terminology suffered two main problems. One was the widespread use of loan words completely devoid of meaning to their hearers. This was vocabulary borrowed, mainly from Portuguese and Latin, which was used to express Christian concepts and doctrines for which the Jesuits had not found a satisfactory equivalent in the local language. Another was the frequent use of Japanese words that had, for the Japanese, a completely different signification than that intended by the missionaries. Many of these words had long been associated with Buddhist concepts that stuck to them in their new

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1 See, for example, O’Malley, *The First Jesuits*. Cambridge; London: Harvard University Press, 1993, especially chapters 1–3, 6 and 7.

2 These two conclusions were made by Elison in *Deus Destroyed. The Image of Christianity in Early Modern Japan*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988, p.248.

3 The most cogently argued presentation of this thesis seems to be that made by Higashibaba, *Christianity in Early Modern Japan: Kirishitan Belief and Practice*. Leiden; Boston; Koln: Brill, 2001.

Christian usage and which would, at best, distort the meaning of the missionaries' teaching or, in some cases, render it completely meaningless to its Japanese audience.

Let us see one example of this argument taken from a basic doctrinal text, the *Dochiriina Kirishitan* (hereafter DK), published in 1591, after some 40 years of Jesuit missionary experience in Japan. The following is a short excerpt from its sixth chapter, expounding the Creed and the Articles of Faith, as translated from the Japanese by Professor Ikuo Higashibaba:

- D: It is difficult to comprehend that Deus is only one [body] while Deus is in the three *persona*.
- M: It is called the *misterio* of the *Trindade* and is the supreme truth in the article of our *Fides*. Deus is unfathomably wide and large. Since our wisdom is little and limited, we cannot comprehend it. Even if we are unable to comprehend it, we must believe in it because *Jesus Christo*, who is Deus, taught it himself.
- D: Is there a metaphor to help us comprehend it?
- M: There is a metaphor. Although our *anima* is only one, it has *memoria*, *entendimento*, and *vontade*. Likewise, although *Deus* is only one, *Deus* is in three *persona*, *Padre*, *Filio*, and *Spiritsu Santo*.<sup>4</sup>

Professor Higashibaba comments this passage thus:

This is a straightforward translation of Jorge's text. In addition to the excessive use of the original terms, especially unfamiliar *Trindade*, *memoria*, *entendimento*, and *vontade*, the metaphor depending on the original terms does not work by itself for the Japanese audience, and this made the whole instruction on the Trinity incomprehensible. ... [T]he above passage in the *Dochiriina* is surprising in the light that the text was used for the education of Kirishitan catechumens.<sup>5</sup>

The above explanation of the Trinity is thus deemed to have been incomprehensible to late sixteenth-century Japanese for two reasons. First, there are a large number of loan words, or original terms, many of which were unfamiliar to the intended audience. In the above citation of the DK, loan words are in italic, but the excessive use of loan words, which occupy 25 % of the characters used in the original Japanese text, is perhaps made more graphic in Text box 1 by printing them in red.<sup>6</sup> Second, the metaphor of the operations of the soul used to throw light on the concept of the Trinity would not be perceptible to the intended audience. Again,

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4 Ibidem, p.61.

5 Ibidem, pp.61–62.

6 Unless otherwise indicated, all transcriptions of the DK made in this chapter are made from the Katsusa edition of 1591, as reproduced in Ebisawa; Cieslik; Doi; Ōtsuka (Eds.), *Kirishitan sho Hai-ya sho* 『キリシタン書・排耶書』, *Nihon shisō taikai* 日本思想大系, vol. 25, Tōkyō: Iwanami Shoten Kanko 岩波書店刊行, 1970, pp.13–82.

this is ascribed to the abundant use of loan words in this metaphor rather than an inability of the Japanese to draw the metaphorical correspondences between the soul and the deity. As the Trinity is one of the central tenets of Christianity, this is perhaps one of the best and starkest examples of the failure of the Jesuits to present an accurate and comprehensible exposition of their doctrine, but it is not the only one. There are many other examples.

弟 **でうす**三の**べるさうな**にて御座ましながら、御一様なりといへる理は分別し可なり。  
 師 其**ちりんが**みすてりよとて、我等が**い**の題目の内にては極意最上の高き理也。其故は、**でうす**は無  
 量廣大に御座まし、我等が知恵はつづかひなき事なれば、分別は及ばず。たとひ分別に及ばずと云とも、  
**でうす**にて御座ます御主**ぜ**きりしと直に示し玉ふ上は、真に信じ奉らずして叶はざる儀也。  
 弟 此儀をよく分別するため、譬へばなきや。  
 師 譬へ有。我等が**い**に**ま**はだ一様にてありながら、**めもうりあ**・**あんとんじめん**と・**おんたあ**で、三つの**ぼてん**  
**や**有ごとく、**でうす**御一様にて御座ましながら、**はあてれ**・**いんりよ**・**すてりつさん**と、三の**べるさうな**にて御座  
 ます也。

**Text box 1.** Loan words used the Japanese DK (1592) are shown in red

In what follows this claim that the text of the DK was not understandable to a Japanese reader will be examined. To this end an attempt will be made to frame the Jesuit language problem and to present a possible solution to the paradox of scholarly and competent Jesuits being unable not only to present a clear and accurate account of their faith, but also to fail to notice their lack of success to do so. This argument involves several threads. One contends that the vocabulary used by the missionaries to present Christianity was not static but was in a continuous process of adaptation. It was natural that the terminology used by Francis Xavier (1506–1552), in the early days of the Jesuit mission in Japan, was quite inaccurate because of his ignorance of the language and of his dependence on an uneducated, even if bright, young samurai as interpreter and translator. I argue that there is evidence showing that there was a process of continuous revision of the vocabulary used by the missionaries to propose and explain their religion. This continuous process was led by a number of linguistically competent Japanese and Europeans, and it is reasonable to expect that through it the number of terminological inaccuracies should have decreased through time. Another thread of this argument is to recall that sixteenth-century Jesuits made a clear distinction between catechetics and (in)doctrination, one aimed at non-baptized, the other directed to the already converted. The religious and moral issues dealt with and the rhetorical approaches used in these two activities were different. Therefore, an analysis of the literary style and doctrinal contents of a book such as the DK must take into account the cultural context where it was produced, including the abilities and motivations of its intended audience and the purpose of its authors. In another thread to this argument, I claim that the terminology presented in the extant Japanese *doctrines* was

appropriate for its intended audience, Japanese Christians not Japanese pagans. Finally, I make the still stronger argument that even if the DK were not used for its intended audience most of it probably would still be understood by seventeenth-century Japanese readers because, except for a few words, its vocabulary was self-contained.

## The Jesuit Language Problem in Japan

One should not underestimate the language problem faced by the first missionaries to Japan. Christian terminology<sup>7</sup> is both complex and precise, having matured over centuries of theological controversies, hotly argued doctrinal definitions made by multiple ecumenical councils and commented upon by numerous Fathers of the Church and ecclesiastical authors. Its transposition into Japanese was bound to be difficult, although it was necessary if the missionaries were to missionize. It was, in the words of Hubert Cieslik, “one of the most vexing missionary problems” the Jesuits faced in Japan.<sup>8</sup>

The first Jesuits in Japan faced two distinct problems concerning language. One was their insufficient, sometimes deficient, knowledge of Japanese. As foreigners, they had to learn a new language that was completely unrelated in grammar and vocabulary to the languages they knew. Therefore, mastery of Japanese was bound to be laborious and time consuming. To this one may add that learning a new language was more difficult the older the missionaries were when arriving to Japan, as language acquisition becomes harder with age, and most of the first Jesuits to arrive to Japan were generally of mature age. Another problem that the Jesuits faced was the lack of words in the Japanese vocabulary deemed appropriate to express some Christian concepts or that could be employed in necessary definitions and explanations.

Circumstances that appeared favourable to the introduction of Christianity in Japan added a twist to these two problems. The first Jesuits came to rely on Yajirō (*fl.* middle sixteenth century), a bright but uneducated samurai, as their most important source of information on Japanese affairs, religion and language. After meeting Francis Xavier in Malacca, Yajirō was sent to Goa to learn Portuguese and to be catechized. There, over the course of little more than one year, he seems to have mastered both the language and the religious teaching. Not only that, he was

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7 Christian terminology means, in what follows, the Japanese words, both native words and loan words, deemed appropriate by the Jesuit missionaries for use in Christian teaching and liturgy, as observed in the extant texts produced in the Japanese mission or mentioned in other mission documents, such as letters.

8 Cieslik, “Balthasar Gago and Japanese Christian Terminology”. *The Missionary Bulletin*, vol. VII (May-June 1954), p.82.



also able, we are told by Yajirō himself, to memorize the Gospel according to St. Matthew and to begin its translation into Japanese.<sup>9</sup>

There seems to be little doubt that Yajirō not only lacked the ability to accurately communicate the Japanese religious situation to the missionaries but also induced them to adopt a vocabulary that was ill-suited to express Christian theological ideas.<sup>10</sup> This resulted in Francis Xavier preaching *Dainichi* in Kagoshima, Hirado, Miyako and Yamaguchi, for over one year after arriving in Japan. It was only in early 1551 that he became aware that *Dainichi* was the name of a Buddhist deity, with eschatological implications incompatible with those of Christianity, and started using the loan word *Deus* in its substitution.<sup>11</sup> This episode was a foretaste of the difficulties the Jesuits would face in their preaching and reveals that they did indeed make mistakes in their word choice, errors that caused them to grossly misstate their theological views. But it does not show that their religious and doctrinal instruction was always and everywhere incomprehensible to their Japanese audience owing to the terminology they used. Rather, it shows that their Japanese religious vocabulary was not static. Indeed, it indicates that a dynamic process of mistake, awareness and correction was at work in what may be called a terminological *aufheben* or sublation process.

This episode involving Francis Xavier was not an isolated case. Other examples show that the terminological sublation process was at work at least until the end of the seventeenth century. In a letter of Baltasar Gago (c.1515/20–1583) we can see a similar process occurring a few years later:

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- 9 Cf. letter from Yajirō to Ignacio Loyola, November 29, 1548, in *Documentos del Japon* vol. 1 (1547–1557). Juan Ruiz de Medina (Ed.). Roma: Instituto Histórico de la Compañía de Jesús, 1990, p.43 (henceforth: *Documentos*).
- 10 A few letters from India present the list of the information the Jesuits received from Yajirō concerning the Japanese religious scene. These show a clear misunderstanding of the basic tenets of Buddhism either because Yajirō could not explain them appropriately, or because the Jesuits could not understand them right, or both. For example, a letter from Nicolao Lancillotto, December 28, 1548, states: “[Sciaccia] mandò che se tenesse la imagine de Idio dipinta como uno huomo con trei capi, e quando està dipinto com trei capi lo chiamano Cosci, e quando è dipinto com un solocapo lo chiamano Denici. Disse questo huomo, qual me dette la informatione, che lui non sapeva la significacione de quelli tri capi, ma que sapeva bene che Cosci e Denici significa una mesma cosa, asi como intra noi Dio e Trinità”, *Documentos*, vol. 1, pp.53–54. For more on early Jesuit perceptions on Buddhism see: App. *The Cult of Emptiness. The Western Discovery of Buddhist Thought and the Invention of Oriental Philosophy*. Rorschach; Kyoto: UniversityMedia, 2012.
- 11 Shurhamer, *Francis Xavier: His Life, His Times*. vol. IV, *Japan and China 1549–1552*. Rome: Jesuit Historical Institute, 1982, pp.223–226.

The Japanese sects have various technical terms which we also used for a long time to express our theological ideas. As soon as I became aware of the problem, however, I made the necessary changes immediately since using the words of falsehood to express the truth gives a false impression. Whenever I find out, therefore, that a word is harmful I teach the people the correct Portuguese or Latin word. New things, after all, require new words and the words the people here use have a vastly different connotations from the ideas we want to express.

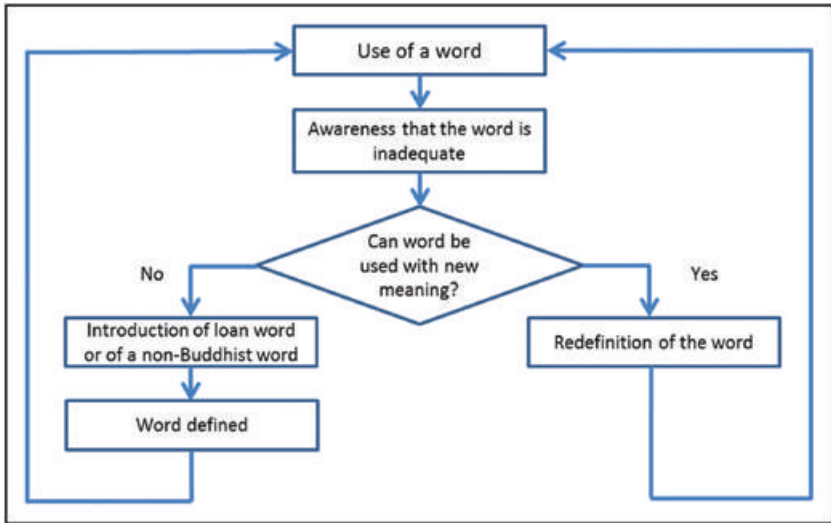
There are only two possible solutions to the problem, either to make all kinds of explanations with regard to each of these words, or to change the words altogether. This would have to be done in the case of about fifty words.<sup>12</sup>

The process at work here is similar, even if in a dramatically more extensive and systematic way, to that described above for the change from *Dainichi* to *Deus* made by Xavier. Gago's account may be schematized in the flow presented in Fig. 1. It starts with the use of a Japanese word, sometimes of Buddhist origin, to express a Christian doctrinal point. Then, some event creates awareness that the word, for some reason, may not be adequate to express that doctrine. This event might be a debate with Buddhist sectaries or a conversation with a cultured convert. This awareness would lead to the question of whether that Japanese word could be redefined into an intended Christian meaning. Most likely, this solution was adopted only when the original meanings associated with it were not incompatible or very different from the signification that the missionaries wanted to associate to it. Even if that were the case, "all kinds of explanations" would be given when that word was to be used. Then that vocabulary would be used, at least until a new incident drew doubts concerning its appropriateness.

However, if the original meanings associated with a word were out of harmony or even incompatible with Christian doctrine, that term would be discarded and replaced by a more adequate alternative. As has already been noted by Cieslik, the possibility of fashioning new words out of novel combinations of Chinese characters in order to express Christian concepts was used some time later by Jesuit missionaries in China, starting with Mateo Ricci, but does not seem to have

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12 Translation from Cieslik, op. cit., p.86. The original letter, of September 23, 1555, reads: "Têm estes algumas palavras por onde lhes pregávamos a verdade muito tempo, as quais eles usam em suas seitas, nas quais, depois que cá nellas, vi o dano. Logo as mudei, porque querer tratar a verdade com palavras de engano e mentira fazião eles entendimento falso. De maneira que em todas as palavras que vejo que lhe são prejudiciais lhes insino as nosas mesmas, para que além das cousas que são novas, pera estes terem necessidade de palavras novas. São as suas muito diferentes no coração do que nós pretendemos." *Documentos*, vol. 1, p.569.



**Fig. 1.** The sublation process that may be inferred from Gago's letter of September 23, 1555

occurred to the missionaries in Japan.<sup>13</sup> Instead, they chose to introduce European words, mainly from Portuguese and Latin vocabulary, to replace a Japanese term deemed unfit.<sup>14</sup> This was to be accompanied by an explanation of the new terms and, at least for a time, with an explanation of why the Japanese word used up to then was discarded. Gago mentions that under his direction some fifty words were thus changed. However, as this process was applied over the course of 50 years, the total number of loan words used in Japanese Christian terminology would increase to a much larger number. Evidence that this sublation process was still at work during the 1590s can be found by analysing the vocabulary employed in the four extant doctrines published in Japanese at the end of the century.

13 Cieslik, *op. cit.*, p.86.

14 The reason adduced by Gago, in the aforementioned letter, for the preference of Portuguese was one of phonetics: "Since there are many points of similarity between Japanese and Portuguese both in the matter of syllables and pronunciation, such words can generally be adapted from the Portuguese though some have been taken from the Latin also." Cieslik, *op. cit.*, p.87.

## The Doctrines in Japanese

Although historically the primary medium of Christian missionary work has always been the spoken word, texts have also frequently played an important role in the spreading of the faith. No one in the Japanese mission was more conscious of this than Alessandro Valignano (1539–1606), who once gave the following as a justification for the introduction of a mission press:

Since in Japan there is no knowledge of any of our authors or our books [...] it would seem meet and necessary to compose for the Japanese special books in all sciences, in which would be taught simply the gist of the matters at hand and the pure truths, well-founded and with their proofs [...].<sup>15</sup>

From this awareness resulted Valignano's decision to establish the Japanese mission press. The Japanese mission press would publish over one hundred works in a wide range of subjects, including liturgy (for example, *Salvator Mundi Confessionarium*, 1598), doctrine (e.g., four slightly different versions of a Christian Doctrine originally authored by Marcos Jorge, S.J. (1524–1571)), spirituality (e.g., *Contemptus Mundi*, 1610), profane literature (e.g., *Feiqe no Monogatari*, 1592; *Esopo no Fabulas*, 1593) and linguistics (e.g., *Vocabulario de Lingoa de Iapam*, 1603/4; *Arte da Lingoa de Iapam*, 1604).

The Japan mission produced several catechisms and doctrines. Curiously, no catechism seems to have ever been printed in Japan. However, one doctrine composed in Japanese, based on Marco Jorge's *Doutrina Cristã*, had at least four printed editions. These four editions, although printed in a short 10 years' span, use slightly different vocabulary and are thus of great value to confirm that the terminological sublation process described above was at work even at a late stage in the Japanese mission. The four editions are:

1. The Katsusa edition, of 1591, written in Japanese script (*kana-majiri*), presently in the Vatican Library.
2. The Amakusa edition, of 1592, in romaji, preserved at the Tōyō Bunko.
3. A Nagasaki edition, of 1600, in Japanese script (*kana-majiri*), now at the Casanatense library.
4. Another Nagasaki edition, also of 1600, in romaji, in the Suifu Meitoku Kai Museum.

At this point, it seems important to make an important distinction, frequently overlooked in the literature, between catechesis on the one hand and doctrine on

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15 Valignano, *Sumario de las cosas de Japon* (1583), Ch. XII. English translation from Elison, op. cit., p.65.

the other.<sup>16</sup> In the Christian tradition, catechesis is the teaching to non-believers, usually adults who are being prepared to receive baptism, with the objective of presenting to them the core Christian beliefs. Traditionally, this type of teaching would not take the Bible or Christian dogmas as the basis of its arguments, as it recognized that these had not yet been accepted as authoritative by the non-convert. Instead, reasoning would start based on common sense or commonly accepted philosophical principles. Sometimes it would begin with a critique of beliefs held by the members of the audience, when these were found to be incompatible with Christian theological conceptions. Luís Fróis (1532–1597) gives a description in his *Historia de Japam* of what would be the typical scheme in a catechetical instruction in Japan:

First of all we prove that there is a Creator of the Universe, that the Universe had a beginning and is not eternal as some people believe and that the sun and the moon are not gods, and are not even endowed with life. We then prove that the soul lives forever after its separation from the body and show the difference between the rational and the sensible soul, a distinction which is unknown to the people here.

After that we discuss all kinds of objections and difficulties as they are brought forward and answer questions that are asked about various phenomena of nature.

The next step is to discuss those Japanese sects to which each individual belongs in order that they can compare their beliefs with what we have told them and can see the difference. Each of the errors must then be refuted with clear-cut proofs so that the people can understand that these beliefs are false.

Once all these things have been understood, we seek according to the intellectual calibre of each to explain the mystery of the Trinity, the creation of the world [...].<sup>17</sup>

The manuals used in, or serving as basis for, catechesis were called *catechisms*. They dealt with the same topics and had an organization similar to that found in catechesis, as can be seen by comparing the scheme described by Fróis with the surviving outline of the catechism written by Francis Xavier that was used in Japan, and the plan of the *Catechismvs Christianae Fidei*, printed in 1586, authored by Alessandro Valignano.<sup>18</sup>

16 The following discussion draws and expands the distinction already made in Section 2 of my article “Illustrations of *Doutrina*: Artwork in the Early Editions of Marcos Jorge’s *Doutrina Cristã*”. *Bulletin of Portuguese-Japanese Studies*, vol. II-2, 2016, pp.149–167 ([http://www.cham.fcsh.unl.pt/ext/bpjs/files/BPJS%202\\_Santos.pdf](http://www.cham.fcsh.unl.pt/ext/bpjs/files/BPJS%202_Santos.pdf)).

17 Translation from Jennes, *A History of the Catholic Church in Japan: From Its Beginnings to the Early Meiji Era, (1549–1873)*. Tokyo: Oriens Institute for Religious Research, 1973, pp.22–23.

18 Concerning Xavier’s Japanese catechism, see Fujita, *Japan’s Encounter with Christianity. The Catholic Mission in Pre-Modern Japan*. New York: Paulist Press, 1991, especially pp.19–20; Schurhammer, *Francis Xavier: His Life, His Times*, vol. II, *India (1542–1545)* (1977), pp.218–224; and Cieslik, “Zabieru no Kyōri Setsume: Shodai Kirishitan no Senkyō ni Kansuru Ikkōsatsu to sono shiryō” 「ザビエルの教理説明

Doctrine, on the other hand, is the teaching of the basic tenets of the faith to those who have already accepted them, at least implicitly, either children born into Christian families or to Christian adults who for some reason did not receive proper religious instruction. It was common during the sixteenth century for the instruction of doctrine to be built around interpretation of the common forms of prayer such as the *Our Father*, *Hail Mary* and the *Credo*, and explanation of the Ten Commandments and the sacraments, sometimes with recourse to some well-known texts of the Bible. The purpose of this teaching was not to make these formulas and texts accepted but to explain them so that the hearers could gain a deeper understanding of their catholic faith. It could include topics also found in catechesis, such as accounts of creation and salvation, but less time was spent on this than in catechesis. In the second half of the sixteenth century, it became common in Portugal, Spain and in their overseas territories for priests and lay-people to go through the streets gathering Christian children and adults for doctrine classes as Schurhammer relates concerning Francis Xavier:

In the evenings, when it was cooler, [Francis Xavier] went with a little bell through the streets and squares of Goa and stopped at certain places, for example, at a street corner, and cried out in a loud voice: 'Faithful Christians, friends of Jesus Christ, send your sons and daughters and your slaves, both men and women, to learn about the faith, for the love of God!'<sup>19</sup>

The textbooks used in doctrine classes are called, as one might expect, *doctrines*. The degree of elaboration of these written doctrines could vary widely. They could be simple statements of truths and prayers, and lists of commandments, sacraments and works of mercy. In this case, they would presumably serve simply as an outline to the instructor, who would orally explain and expand these contents, and

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一初代キリシタンの宣教に関する一考察とその資料」. *Kirishitan Kenkyu* 『キリシタン研究』, vol. 15, 1974, pp.113–141. Concerning Valignano's catechism Fróis wrote: "Fez o P.e Visitador com alguns japãos entendidos nas seitas, hum diffuso cathecismo bem ordenado, assim para por elle se poder pregar aos novos conversos, como para os irmãos ficarem melhor instruídos e mais alumiados nas coisas da nossa fé quando cathequizessem os gentios." Fróis, *Historia de Japam*. vol. 3, José Wicki (Ed.). Lisboa: Biblioteca Nacional de Lisboa, 1982, p.173. For Valignanos's catechism see the edition by Antonio Guimarães Pinto and José Miguel Pinto dos Santos of Alexandre Valignano, S.J., *Catecismo da Fé Cristã, no Qual se Mostra a Verdade da Nossa Santa Religião e se Refutam as Seitas Japonesas*. Lisboa: Centro Científico e Cultural de Macau; Fundação Jorge Álvares, 2017, and App, *The Cult of Emptiness. The Western Discovery of Buddhist Thought and the Invention of Oriental Philosophy*. See also Ide Katsumi 井出勝美, *Kirishitan Shisō-shi Kenkyū Josetsu: Nihonjin no Kirisuto-kyō Jūyō* 『キリシタン思想史研究序説—日本人のキリスト教受容』, Tōkyō: Perikan-sha, 1995, pp.10–20 for an elaboration of the distinction made by Valignano between "pre-evangelization" and "catechesis".

19 Schurhammer, *Francis Xavier: His Life, His Times*, vol. II, *India (1541–1545)* (1977), p.218.

as aide-memoire to the students.<sup>20</sup> Or they could be more elaborate and include, besides basic statements, detailed explanations, sometimes to great length.<sup>21</sup>

This distinction between *catechism* and *doctrine* was current and obvious during the sixteenth century and it was especially clear in mission countries such as Japan.<sup>22</sup> In the documents written by the missionaries working there during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, *catechism* was reserved for the teaching to non-Christians and *doctrine* was used for the teaching of those already Christian. For example, Luís Fróis wrote in his *História*:

“With him [Yofu Paulo, 養方軒], the catechism used to preach to the gentiles was ameliorated throughout time with the information that he gave us about the sects and antiquities of Japan, because he was very learned in these matters.”<sup>23</sup>

It is clear that “the catechism” was “used to preach to the gentiles” not to the already baptized. It should be noticed also that this catechism was not limited to the simple exposition of Christian tenets, as it made references to “the sects and antiquities of Japan”.

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20 An example of these very summary doctrines made by the Portuguese Jesuits is *Doutrina Christã que se diz em ho colegio da companhia de Iesu nesta cidade de Coymbra*. Em Coimbra: Ioam de Barreyra, 1559. Printed by Ioam de Barreyra in December 1558. It is printed in only 16 folios.

21 An example is the “Short Catechism of the Doctrine” or *Cathecismo pequeno da doutrina e instruçam que os xpaãos han de crer e obrar pera conseguir a benaumenturança eterna*, Lisboa: Valenti Fernãdez alemã e Iohã Boôhomini de Cremona, 1504, written by the bishop of Viseu D. Ortiz Vilhegas (ca.1457–1519), and one of the earliest doctrines to be printed in Portugal. The author states in his preface that he had written a “Long Catechism”, now probably lost. Given the extension of this “Short Catechism of the Doctrine”, one wonders how long the “Long Catechism” must have been.

22 See Humbertclaude, “Myôtei Mondô: Une Apologétique Chrétienne Japonaise de 1605”. *Monumenta Nipponica*, vol. 1, no. 2 (1938), pp.515–548, writes: “Les missionnaires du Japon distinguaient deux sortes de livres pour l’instruction des fidèles: le Catéchisme proprement dit, destiné à détourner des idoles et à amener à la foi les néophytes; et la Doctrine Chrétienne réservé aux seuls baptisés.” (p.521). For this distinction see also the discussion in Asami Masakazu, *Gaisetsu Kirishitan-shi* 『概説キリシタン史』. Tōkyō: Keio Gijuku Daigaku Shuppan-kai, 2016, pp.56–59. For the importance of this distinction also when analysing Matteo Ricci’s works see Criveller, “Speaking of God in China: Matteo Ricci’s Inspirations for Today”. Mariano Delgado and Michael Sievernich (Ed.), *Mission und Prophetie in Zeiten der Interkulturalität: Festschrift zum Hundertjährigen Bestehen des Internationalen Instituts für Missionswissenschaftliche Forschung 1911–2011*. N.p.: EOS Verlag, 2011, pp.294–305.

23 “Com elle pelo discurso do tempo se foi depurando o Cathecismo que se prega aos gentios com a noticia que nos dava das seitas e antiguidades de Japão, por nestas materias ser mui rezoluto.” Fróis, *Historia de Japam*, vol. I (1979), p.172.

An example showing who went to a doctrine class can also be found in Fróis' *História*:

There were then, at Shimabara, among the Christians, some two hundred boys, of which some 70 would come to the [lessons of] doctrine, and all of them well dressed, because they were sons of rich men; almost every day they had an argument about the law of God with the pagans, and were so able in their replies to the questions posed by the pagans that it surprised all those who saw them, because all were at the same time kind and sharp, so that Father Cosme de Torres used to say that those were children in age but old men in wisdom.<sup>24</sup>

It should be noted that it was Christian boys, not pagan children seeking pre-baptismal instruction, who went to the lessons of doctrine. Eventually, at a certain point in the history of the Christian mission in Japan, when the number of Christians became large, the teaching of doctrine certainly gained importance, surpassing that of teaching the catechism, and required the allocation of more resources: people, time and books. Thus, although we know that many catechisms were composed in Japanese, we do not know of any being printed, while at least four printed editions of a doctrine have survived to the present.

From the above it should be clear that any analysis of the contents of a *catechism* or of a *doctrine* should take into account the genre to which it belongs. The purpose of the author of a *catechism* was different from that of the author of a doctrine, because the target audience was different. The recipients of doctrinal instruction had already assented to the faith and most probably had already some knowledge of basic Christian tenets from prayers, participation on liturgical acts and from conversations with family and friends. The targets of catechetical teaching, although probably already inclined to receive baptism, were not yet Christians and in most cases lacked any acquaintance with Christian beliefs and practices. Therefore, the topics presented in *catechisms* and *doctrines*, their structure and their language, were also different.

That said, one should also be aware that this clear distinction made between catechesis and catechisms, on one hand, and doctrine and doctrines, on the other, was not always and everywhere observed in practice. Sometimes *catechisms* were used in the instruction of Christian children, while *doctrines* were used in the teaching of non-believers. This started to happen after the Council of Trent (1545–1563), when *catechisms* and *doctrines* started to slowly converge in their contents to a hybrid type of manual that could be used to teach doctrine to the already Christian

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24 “Havia então em Ximabara, somente entre os christãos, como duzentos meninos, dos quais vinhão 70 à doutrina, e todos mui bem vestidos, por serem filhos de homens ricos; quazi cada dia tinhão disputa sobre a ley de Deos contra os gentios, e andavão tão destros em responder às perguntas que soem fazer os gentios, que admirava a quem os via, por todos a huma mão serem discretos e agudos, dos quaes dizia o P.<sup>e</sup> Cosme de Torres que aquelles erão meninos na idade e velhos no saber.” Fróis, op. cit., vol. I, pp.315–316.



and catechesis to the not yet converted. In the past few centuries, this distinction has become more and more blurred so that the word doctrine, with the meaning given above, has almost disappeared from present Church usage, displaced by the term catechism, which now means teaching both to Christian children and non-Christian adults.<sup>25</sup> But this conflation was mainly a European phenomenon that did not touch the Christian mission in Japan during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

It should also be noted that, in the sixteenth century, Christian doctrine was not taught only in doctrine classes, or only through doctrine manuals. Often, Christian doctrine was used as material to teach children to read and write by primary school instructors. This can be inferred from the existence of another kind of text, called *cartilhas* in Portuguese, which, besides being used to explain Christian doctrine, were also employed to teach reading and writing, and even the basics of arithmetic.<sup>26</sup> One should remember that it was through the teaching of reading and writing to young men that Jesuits and other missionaries frequently taught the basics of the Christian faith not only to the sons of Portuguese settlers overseas but also to the sons of the most important indigenous families in their mission fields.<sup>27</sup>

Finally, we should also be aware that besides catechesis and doctrine there was a third type of missionary activity in Japan: apologetics.<sup>28</sup> Apologetics is the systematic argumentation and discourse directed especially to those who hold strong views against Christianity. As is widely known, the Jesuits in Japan also engaged in apologetics. Some well-known examples are the debates of Yamaguchi, of Juan

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- 25 One early example of this phenomenon is given by the also widely read *doctrine* written by D. Fr. Bartolomeu dos Mártires (1514–1590), *Catechismo ou Doutrina Christã & Praticas spirituaes*, Braga, 1564. This *doctrine*, contemporaneous with that of Marcos Jorge, had eleven editions in Portuguese and two in Spanish by the end of the seventeenth century. Notice that the title bears the ambivalence of the author in how to classify his work: whether *catechism* or *doctrine*. In the end, he chose to include both. However, in the text, the references made are always to *doctrine*, never to *catechism*, which was in accordance with traditional usage and better reflected his purpose, as this “Catechism or Doctrine” had as its primary public the parochial priests and curates of his diocese of Braga and, through them, their Christian flock.
- 26 One early example of this type of manual (still without a section dealing with arithmetic) is: *Cartinha pera esinar leer: cõ as doutrinas da prudencia e regra de viuer em paz*, Lixboa, Germã [Galharde], published in the early sixteenth century.
- 27 For example, in a letter written from Salvador de Baía, Brazil, on August 10, 1549, by the Jesuit Manuel da Nóbrega, to a professor at Coimbra University, Dr. Martin de Azpilcueta Navarro, we can read: “Estes [homens] são cá os nossos pregões. Onde nos achamos, convidando aos rapazes a ler e escrever, e desta maneira lhes ensinamos a doutrina e lhes pregamos [...]”, *Cartas do Brasil e mais Escritos do P. Manuel da Nóbrega (Opera Omnia)*. Com uma introdução e notas históricas e críticas de Serafim Leite. Coimbra: Por Ordem da Universidade, 1955.
- 28 See Santos, “Spreading the Faith: Catechesis, Doctrine, and Debates in Jesuit Missionary Work in Japan (1549-1614)”. *Waseda Rilas Journal*, vol. 8 (October 2020),

Fernández with several Buddhist monks, as well as the debates of Nara between Brother Lourenço and Yūki Yamashiro (*fl.* middle sixteenth century) and Kiyohara Geki (*fl.* middle sixteenth century). This later debate would later evolve into what may be properly classified as catechetical instruction.

As is widely acknowledged, the above-mentioned Japanese doctrines were written based on the *Doctrina Christã* authored by Marcos Jorge, S.J. first printed in 1566. That this manual was a doctrine, not a catechism, should be beyond doubt: besides it was originally written to be used in Portugal, where almost everyone was then a Christian, to teach children of Christian families, the title also makes this claim. It could be argued, however, that the Japanese versions of this book could have a different purpose, and that they could have been used as catechisms directed to non-Christians. Such an affirmation can be laid to rest for several reasons. First, the preface states clearly that the purpose of the DK is “to teach to the *Kirishitan* what is essential for attaining salvation in the afterlife.”<sup>29</sup> The same is expressed implicitly in the body of the text, in the question made in chapter 3 “when a Christian reaches the age [of reason] what is important for him to know?”<sup>30</sup> Second, the structure and contents are those of a doctrine, not of a catechism. Third, and excepting some rare cases, it would not make much sense to use a doctrine as basis for a catechetical class given that the former would not answer to the needs of a Japanese catechumen. Therefore, the four Japanese versions of Marcos Jorge’s *doctrine* should also be treated, analysed and interpreted, as *doctrines*, texts to teach Christian doctrine to Christians.

## The Vocabulary of the Japanese Doctrines

Let us now turn our attention to the vocabulary used in the Japanese doctrines. Besides stating that it is a book to be used by Christians, the Preface to the first edition of the DK also makes another claim: that it uses a simple, ordinary language so

pp.325-331 (<https://www.waseda.jp/flas/rilas/assets/uploads/2020/10/325-331-Jose-Miguel-PINTO-DOS-SANTOS.pdf>).

29 「後世の為に専なることをきりしたんに教へん為に、」, p.14.

30 「年頃なるキリシタンは何事を知る事肝要なるぞや。」, p.25. It should be noted further that, in the first exchange of the dialogue in the first chapter of the DK, the term “catechism” is used with the meaning of “instruction for conversion”:

Master: If the determinations of the *Kirishitan* [religion] are a true teaching, to become a *Kirishitan* [believer] it is important to listen to them. Please let me hear them.

Disciple: To become a *Kirishitan* [believer] one needs to ask in the light of reason by hearing the catechism. p.16

Further, when making a reference to the distinction between the Aristotelian categories of matter and form it recommends: “Those persons who wish to delve in more detail into these matters should read what is written in the catechism.” p.40. This may refer to Valignanos’s catechism where matter and form are discussed in f. 21.

as to be understood by all (万民), even the uneducated (上下). As the DK states: “So that the principles of heaven’s mandate may be understood to the utmost, the language is close to the ears of the people, for the purpose that [those principles] may be easily known by all, high and low.”<sup>31</sup> Two claims are being made here. The first is that the DK attempts to make Christian doctrine understood “to the utmost”. The second is that its language is “close to the ears of the people” so that even the lower classes, that is, the uneducated, could understand it. This assertion is thus in clear contradiction to recent interpretations that the vocabulary used would be incomprehensible to ordinary Japanese both because of its extensive use of meaningless loan words and of its frequent avail to a terminology pregnant with Buddhist concepts. Which claim is more reasonable?

We will proceed in two steps. First, we will sample a number of words and expressions used in the DK that might be problematic, either because of their Buddhist connotations, or because of their meaninglessness derived from their foreignness. Then, in the next section, we will examine an excerpt that has been presented as an example of the clumsiness in the expression of a difficult point of Christian doctrine.

For the purposes of the present discussion the vocabulary used in the DK may be classified into three classes: Japanese non-Buddhist words, Japanese Buddhist words, and loan words. Let us take a brief look at a sample of words in each one of these classes as they are used in the Katsusa edition.

### Japanese Non-Buddhist Words

Japanese non-Buddhist words are, by far, the most numerous words in the DK. They are used to express both non-religious and religious concepts. Some examples of the former are *ningen* 人間, for Man or human beings, *taisetsu* 大切 for love, and *shi* 死 for death. In none of these instances, or in any other case involving non-Buddhist words used for non-religious concepts, there seems to be any question of their appropriateness in usage or clarity in meaning.

However, Japanese non-Buddhist vocabulary was also extensively employed to express important Christian doctrinal notions. These include expressions for devil (*tengu*, 天狗), original sin (*uke tsuzuku hatsu no toga*, 受け続く初の科), personal sin (*midzu kara okoshita toga*, みづから犯した科), and even that most quintessential of Christian concepts, transubstantiation (*goshikitai to onchi nomi nite gozaimasunari*, 御色体と御血のみにて御座ます也). Would their use cause confusion or induce the Japanese Christians into theological error?

*Tengu* is one of the many mysterious creatures found in Japanese folklore, appearing for example in some of the tales in *Konjaku Monogatari*. According to modern Japanese dictionaries, it is a devious imaginary monster living in the

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31 「上下万民にたやすく此旨を知しめんが為に、言葉は俗の耳に近く、儀は天命のそこを極むる者也。」, pp.14–15.

mountains, with a human figure, red face, large nose, wings and supernatural strength. The *Vocabvlario da Lingoa de Iapam* defines it pithily as “Tenno inu,” which translates directly as “dog of heaven,” and then adds the translation into Portuguese: “Diabo.”<sup>32</sup> “Dog of heaven” seems to be a particularly apt term to designate the devil, who according to Christian theology is a fallen heavenly being. This becomes even more evident when the secondary dictionary definition of *tengu* is considered, meaning a proud person. One may aptly remember that the devil is an angel that fell due to pride. The missionaries appropriated the designation popularly used for a heavenly being, looking human but having wings, with supernatural strength, who is proud and devilish to express the Christian concept of fallen angel or devil, which seems an eminently apt choice.

*Toga*, meaning fault or blame, is the central word in the expressions used to express original and personal sin. No single word is used for the concept of original sin. Instead, as also happens in Western languages, the expression *hatsu no toga*, the first (or original) sin, is composed by two words. To this, the DK adds *uke tsuzuku*, meaning “inherited,” to make it clear that the original sin, although not committed by everyone, is transmitted to all human race, expressing the idea that all people share in the original sin through inheritance even more clearly than the shorter expression traditionally used in Western languages. In a similar way, the ambagious expression *midzu kara okoshita toga*, meaning “sin committed by oneself,” has, from a moral point of view, the clear advantage over “sin,” or even “personal sin,” of stressing that a wrong was committed by a self-determining individual. If anything, these Japanese expressions seem to be theologically more complete, precise and clear than the usual Western “original sin” and “personal sin.”<sup>33</sup>

The concept of transubstantiation, arising within Christianity, required the coinage of a new word, in both the Greek and Latin traditions, to be expressed precisely. In Japan, the Jesuits chose instead to express it through a periphrastic expression *goshikitai to onchi nomi nite gozaimasunari*, which translates as “the becoming only the honorable body and honorable blood”. Nevertheless, the effort to transmit the original concept while avoiding ambiguity is clear, even if the price to pay for precision is an unwieldy long expression.

Besides these, other examples of Japanese non-Buddhist vocabulary can be found in the DK that express Christian ideas in an unambiguous and orthodox way, even if in long and roundabout expressions. Non-Buddhist words constituted most of the Japanese Christian vocabulary and seem to have been skillfully used to present precisely core Christian concepts, even the most quintessential of them.

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32 *Vocabulario da lingoa de Iapam com a declaração em portugues, feito por alguns padres, e irmãos da Companhia de IESV*. Nangasaqui: Collegio de Iapam da Companhia de IESVS, 1603, f. 254v.

33 Besides *toga* we also find in the Japanese Christian literature the word *tsumi* for expressing sin. A discussion of the relative merits of these two words will be left to another occasion.

## Japanese Buddhist Words

Several dozen Buddhist words can be found in the DK. That they steadily remained in the Christian vocabulary, even after some 40 years after the sublation process described by Baltasar Gago started being applied, shows that the Jesuits somehow remained persuaded of their appropriateness. Nevertheless, the possibility that they were mistaken should be examined. Let us have a quick look at some examples.

One is the Japanese word for *sūtra*, *kyō* 經.<sup>34</sup> When Francis Xavier first arrived to Japan it was commonly assumed that he was preaching a novel version of the teaching of the Buddha, introducing a new Buddhist sect and he was therefore referred to as a *sō*, or Buddhist monk, coming from India, to preach *buppō*, the Buddhist law or religion, with the help of some new *kyō*, or sutras. When the Jesuits became aware that this unintended identification was being made, they rapidly repudiated the *sō* and *buppō* designations, but continued using *kyō*. Originally, *kyō* designated a book expounding Buddhist teaching. However, having made clear that what they were teaching was not Buddhism, and from the time that everyone else accepted this, the Jesuits do not seem to have been much preoccupied with any misunderstandings that might have arisen from their use of *kyō* for their own sacred and doctrinal books. The *Vocabulario* translates it simply as “livro,” book, certainly reflecting the then current Japanese usage and understanding.<sup>35</sup> It may be safely assumed that the missionaries would not be unduly worried even if the meaning of “book expounding sacred teaching” was still attached to *kyō* by the ordinary Japanese: after all they believed that it was their teaching that was truly sacred.

Another Buddhist word that the Jesuits kept using was *goshō* 後生.<sup>36</sup> *Goshō* is used in Buddhism with the primary meaning of rebirth after death, but was also frequently employed to designate simply the future world. In the Buddhist vision rebirth could take place several times into one of the *rokudō*, six different realms of existence ranging from *jigoku*, or Hell, to *ten*, or Heaven, depending on the workings of *inga-ōhō*, karma. It has in common with Christianity the idea of life after death, but almost every other association this word brings with it is incompatible with Christian eschatology. The Jesuits who composed the *Vocabulario*, and usually were so careful in their classification of the words listed in that work, fail to acknowledge the Buddhist origin of this term and provided only the following definitions in Japanese and Portuguese: “Nochino vmare. *Vida futura*, ou

34 It was used in the preface of the DK: “Many *kyō* [books expounding sacred teaching] have been written concerning these matters.” 「是等の儀につゐてあまたの經を書きをき玉ふ者也。」, p.14.

35 F. 197v.

36 Also used in the preface of the DK: “the way for every person to reach the after-life” 「一切人間に後生を扶かる道」, p.14. For the distinction between Buddhist and no Buddhist words we relied on Kitahara et alia (ed.), *Nihon Kokugo Daijiten* 『日本国語大辞典』, second edition. Tōkyō: Shogakkan, 2001.

*outro mundo*. ¶ *Item, Salvação*.<sup>37</sup> “Rebirth” is given in Japanese, “future life” and “salvation” in Portuguese. What understanding would a Japanese Buddhist have had of this word when reading the DK? He would have most probably read it as indicating the rebirth in one of the *rokudō*, at least until he had made his way to the tenth and eleventh articles of Credo presented in the sixth chapter of the DK.<sup>38</sup> There he would have been introduced to such ideas as the body coming back to life, life everlasting, and to the Christian concepts of Heaven and Hell. He might have then apprehended (or not) a novel concept for *goshō* and become startled or just puzzled by it. However, we must not lose sight of the fact that the DK was not written to be read by Buddhists, but by Christians. Christians studying the DK, especially children, would most often read it with an instructor who would explain any doubts that might arise. Those Christians reading it alone would most probably have been introduced to its meaning in a Christian context, either in catechesis, liturgy or talks with missionaries and friends.

One last example is the Japanese word for *vimukti*, *gedatsu* 解脱. *Gedatsu* means deliverance from the attachments of heart and flesh, and freedom from restraint. The *Vocabvlario* gives these two meanings, even if in reverse order: “*Liurar, ou libertar*. Bup. *O principal sentido de liberdade a cerca das paixões, & vicios*.”<sup>39</sup> From this definition it is apparent that the Jesuits were aware that besides the non-religious meaning of “freedom,” or “granting freedom,” this word also had the Buddhist connotation that freedom was mainly from the attachments of the heart and of the flesh. Still they found the two meanings of the term suitable to what they wanted to express in expressions such as “because on the Cruz [He] delivered us”.<sup>40</sup> Even though the intended meaning for *gedatsu* here seems to be simply “to free,” it seems that even the “Buddhist meaning” of “freeing from worldly attachments” did not unduly adulterate the intended “Christian message”. This is apparent from the dialogue after the first appearance of *gedatsu* in the DK:

Disciple: What is *gedatsu*?

Master: It is to make somebody free.

Disciple: Who may be freed?

Master: Prisoners and bondsmen may be freed.

Disciple: Well then, are we prisoners?

Master: We are very much bondsmen made prisoners.

Disciple: Of whom are we bondsmen?

Master: We are bondsmen to the *tengu* and to our own sins.<sup>41</sup>

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37 F. 122.

38 Pp.46–47.

39 F. 115 v.

40 「くるすの上にて我等を解脱し玉ふ」, p.19.

41 「弟 解脱とは何事ぞや。  
師 自由の身となる事也。

A close inspection of over three dozen Buddhist words in the DK reveals that the Buddhist meanings and connotations they might bring with them to this Christian text are not in disharmony with Christian teachings.

## Loan Words

Loan words were introduced by the Jesuits whenever they found that previously adopted Japanese vocabulary was either misleading or incapable of properly expressing a Christian doctrinal concept. This was probably a continuous and slow process, though there might have been moments when large numbers of words were revised at once, as in the above-mentioned instance when Baltasar Gago altered some fifty terms or, possibly, when a major doctrinal work, such as the DK, was edited.

As already noted, the argument has been made in the last few years that, as loan words were unintelligible to the Japanese, their heavy use in the DK made this doctrinal manual incomprehensible. The validity of this argument rests on the assumption that loan words were not defined, either in oral teaching or in written documents, and as such, a Japanese would not understand them. Let us inspect, then, this assumption by examining some of the nine loan words that appear in the preface of the DK. Would a hypothetical seventeenth-century non-Christian Japanese reader, without any previous contact with a foreign missionary or a Japanese Christian, and without recourse to any of the other books published by the Jesuits in Japan, be able to make an educated guess at their meanings, just by reading the DK?

The first foreign word is a name, and appropriately it is the name of the founder of Christianity: Jesus Christ. As Christianity is a religion centred in Christ, His person and His name are central in Christian doctrine. However, for a Japanese who had never before heard or read *Zezu Kirishito*, these would be meaningless sounds. There are, however, at least four instances in the DK where, through partial definitions, some light is thrown on what this name might signify. From them, a Japanese reader could learn that Jesus Christ is:

(a) Lord

“The Lord Jesus Christ”

「御主ぜす-きりしと」, p. 14

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弟 何たる人が自由に成ぞ。  
 師 囚はれ人、すでに奴の身と成たる者が自由に成る也。  
 弟 さては我等は囚はれ人と成たる身か。  
 師 中々、囚はれたる奴也。  
 弟 何たる者の奴になりたるや。  
 師 天狗と、我等が科の奴なり。」 , pp.19-20.

- (b) True *Deusu* and truly human  
 “Disciple: Why is it Christ Lord?  
 Master: Because He is true *Deusu* and truly human.”  
 「弟 きりすととは、いかなる御主にてましますぞ。  
 師 実のどうす、実の人にて御座るます也。」 , p. 18
- (c) That Christ means to be anointed with oil  
 “Christ means to be anointed by precious oil.”  
 「きりすととは、貴きおおれよを塗られ玉ふと云心也。」 , p. 18
- (d) Son of *Deusu*  
 “*Deusu* and His son our Lord Jesus Christ”  
 「どうすと其御子御主ぜず-きりしと」 , p. 28

Not knowing what *Deusu* meant would have made much of the above characterizations meaningless. Nevertheless, it should be noted that except for *Deusu*, all words are in plain Japanese, and that from (a) and (c) any Japanese reader would know that “Christ, meaning anointed with oil, is Lord.” Fortunately for the Japanese reader without any previous contact with Christian doctrine, an explanation of what kind of being *Deusu* is, as we will see in a moment, is presented somewhat later in the text. Therefore, any attentive reader, even if non-Christian, might have grasped who Jesus Christ was, even if he were not to read the passages concerning His life and death and resurrection that are found latter in the text.

The second term is *hiidesu*, the transliteration of the Latin word for faith. The following clarifications, among others, could be found in the DK about *hiidesu*:

- (a) That it is something that should be believed, and it is a virtue  
 “What should be believed corresponds to the virtue of *hiidesu*.”  
 「信じ奉るべき事とは、ひいのですの善にあたる事也。」 , p. 14
- (b) That is believing correctly  
 “To believe correctly, *hiidesu* [is necessary]”  
 「正しく信ずる為には、ひいのです、」 , p. 26
- (c) What is to be believed, the object of *hiidesu*, is to be found in the *keredo*  
 “Disciple: Please show the way to properly believe.  
 Master: By knowing the *keredo* and the *aruchigo* of *hiidesu* found therein.”  
 「弟 今は又確かに信じ奉る道を示し給へ。  
 師 けれども、それにこもるひいすのあるちごを知る事也。」 , p. 35
- (d) It is a grace bestowed by Deus on the *anima* of a Christian that surpasses human wisdom  
 “Disciple: What is *hiidesu*?  
 “Master: It is the grace of a light above *natsuura* that *Deusu* bestows to the *anima* of the *Kirishitan* so that they may believe firmly what *Deusu* announces through the *santa-ekerejiya*.  
 「弟 ひいのですとは何事ぞ。  
 師 どうす我等に告げ知らせ玉ふほどの事さんた-えけらじやより示し玉ふごとく、堅固に信じ奉るやうに、どうす、きりしたんのあにまに与え下さるるなつうらをこへたる御恩の光り也。」 , p. 36



(e) That it is received at baptism

“*Hiidesu* ... is received through ... *bauchizumo*”

「ばうちずも[...]をもてひいです[...]を受け奉り、」, p. 65

It is to be noted that, with recourse just to the passages without loan words ((a) and (b)), a Japanese reader devoid of any previous knowledge of Christian doctrine would be able to gather that *hiidesu* is a virtue consisting of what should be properly believed, precisely the gist of this term. He would further be able to note that although *hiidesu* consists of believing, not all belief is *hiidesu*. As he would be able to find explanations elsewhere in the DK for what *keredo*, *aruchigo*, *bauchizumo*, *santa-ekerejiya*, *anima* and *natsuura* might be, he would further be able to understand that the virtue of *hiidesu* is received at baptism, its object is found in the Credo and in the articles of *hiidesu*, it is bestowed by God and is a knowledge that surpasses (human) nature (or “human wisdom” 人智 in the wording of the DK editions of 1600).

Let us now jump to *Deusu*. As it would be expected, this word is used many times throughout the DK. A few sentences seem to shed some light on whom and how important *Deusu* might be:

(a) Deus made the Heaven and the Earth from nothing and is only one

“*Deusu* who from nothing made Heaven and Earth to be is only one.”

「なき所より天地をあらせ玉ふ御作者でうすは、御一体のみにて在ます也。」, p. 16

(b) It is necessary to adore and venerate *Deusu* to obtain salvation

“It is not possible to receive salvation in the after-life without adoring and venerating *Deusu*.”<sup>42</sup>

「御一体を拜み、貴び奉らずしては、後生の御扶けにあづかること、さらになし。」, p. 16

From just these two sentences, any non-Christian Japanese reader of the DK would learn that *Deusu* is one, is creator, and that without proper adoration of Him there is no salvation. Would this be enough for him to picture *Deusu* as a deity? And having done that, would he face any exegetical problem when encountering this word in any other context? It may be worth noting that from many other

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42 João Rodrigues (c.1561/62–1633) in the “Tratado de vários modos de contar” in his *Arte da Língua de Iapam*, 1604, presents *tai* 体 as a counter for spiritual beings and substances. Moreover, he gives *goittai* 御一体 as a synonym for *Deus*: “Ittai. *Substancia*, Anjo, Anima, Tengu, & *cousas Spirituaes*. De’ goittai, l, goittaino Deus.” (f. 223). Therefore, *goittai* might be translated as “one”, as is done throughout this text, as “the Honorable One” or even “the Holy One” given the honorific at the beginning of the expression, or as “*Deusu*”, as is done in this particular instance for syntax reasons. In the light of this definition in the *Arte*, Professor Higashibaba’s literal translation, presented above, of *ittai* as “only one [body]” seems to be linguistically inaccurate and historically inappropriate.

encounters with the loan word *Deusu* in the DK our Japanese reader would be able to infer many other qualities of the Christian deity, such as Trinity, infinity, goodness, and foreknowledge, that would allow him to draw a mental image of *Deusu* very close to that held by the missionaries.

One final example is *anima*, from the Latin word soul. No scholastic definition for *anima* is to be found in the DK. Nevertheless, this word is frequently used in the DK, and in such different contexts, that an attentive reader would likely gather, amongst other things, that:

- (a) It is a vital principle, as separation from the body causes death and reunion with the dead body brings resurrection

“At the time of His death, the honorable *anima* departed from the honorable body”

「御入滅の時、貴き御あにま御色体を離れ給ひ、」, p. 44

“When the honorable *anima* brought back to life the honorable dead body found in the honorable tomb ...”

「御あにま御棺に納められ給ひし御死骸によみがへり給えひ、」, p. 44

- (b) It possesses three powers, memory, understanding and will

“Disciple: What are the three *potenshiya* of the *anima*?”

Master: First is the power of *memouria* to recollect what has passed. Second is the power of *entenjimento* to know and distinguish things. Third is the power of *ontaade* to hate or to love.

「弟 あにまの三のぼてんしやとは、何事ぞ。

師 一には、過ぎし事を思ひ出すめもりやの精。二には、物を知り、弁ゆるえんてんぢめんと云精。三には、憎み、愛するに傾ぶくおんたあでと云う精、是也。」, p. 63

Although the many more instances where the word *anima* is used in the DK would throw more light on its meaning, these two instances seem enough to gather the more important elements pertaining to the concept of the soul according to Christian scholasticism: that it is a vital principle, whose separation from the body causes death and whose return brings the body back to life, and it has the three powers of remembrance, discrimination and will.

Four other loan words appear in the preface: *esuperansa*, *kirishitan*, *karidade*, *dochiriina kirishtan*. From the context, and with the explanations given in the text, a non-Christian Japanese reader would most probably understand that they mean something akin to hope, Christian faithful, love and Christian doctrine.

To summarize, of the nine loan words found in preface, eight were either explicitly or implicitly defined in the DK. Only one word, *konpania*, for “Company [of Jesus]” was left completely unexplained. However, the lack of understanding of this word would hardly affect in any material way the understanding of the teaching found in the DK. Many more loan words are used through the DK but close inspection reveals that, except for a handful of hardly central terms, it is likely that the meaning of most of them could be understood from contextual definitions and

usage by any Japanese without previous contact with Christian doctrine or catechesis. However, the DK was not published with such a reader in mind. It was rather to provide support to the further instruction of Japanese Christians. These people had certainly had some contact with Christian doctrine, either through missionaries and catechists or from spouses, parents or children in their homes, and these Christians had no need of explicit definitions of the many loan words found in the DK to make sense of its text.

## An Incomprehensible Passage?

Let us return to the excerpt about the Trinity, presented at the beginning of this chapter as an example of a passage that would not be understood by a Japanese who had no previous contact with Christian doctrine.

Text box 2 reproduces the Japanese text in Text box 1, but now the loan words for which we already found an explanation in the DK, as seen in the previous section, are also in black just as the other Japanese words, because now we may assume that they could have been understood by any Japanese reader.

弟 とうす三のべるさうなにて御座まじながら、御一体なりといへる理も分別しがせし。  
 師 其はちりんが遊でのみすてりよとて、我等がいひですの題目の内にては極意最上の高き理也。其由は、とうすは無量廣大に御座まし、我等が知恵おつつかにかぎりある事なれば、分別には及ばず。たとひ分別に及ばずと云とも、とうすにて御座ます御座まじきりしと直に示し玉ふ上は、真に信し奉らずして叶はざる儀也。  
 弟 此儀をよく分別するため、譬へばなきや。  
 師 譬へ有。我等が信にまはたニ一体にてありながら、めもうりあ・あんでんじめんと・おんたあで、三つのぼてんしや有ととく、とうす御一体にて御座まじながら、ばあてれ・ひいりよ・すひつさんと、三のべるさうなにて御座ます也。

**Text box 2.** Loan words still without explanation in red

There are still quite a few loan words in this passage, enough to render it incomprehensible to a non-Christian Japanese reader if no explanation for their meaning were provided in the text.

Let us start by noting that explanations for *memouria*, *entenjimento* and *ontaade* were also to be found in the text of the DK, as we have already seen. In the passage containing the definition of these three loan words, seen above, the relation between the three *potenshiya* and the three *sei* 精 (or powers) of memory, discernment and will should also have been sufficiently evident for anyone to perceive that the *potenshiya* of the Christian terminology means “power” in ordinary language.

However, there is no definition, direct or indirect, of what *perusauna*, the transliteration of the Latin word for “person,” might mean. The closest hint comes in

the implicit definition for *chirindaade*, the transliteration to Portuguese word for Trinity, in this same passage, which itself relies on the concept of *perusona*:

- (a) “D: *Deusu* while being three *perusauna* is only one [...].  
 M: “That is the *misuteriyo* of *Chirindaade* [...]”  
 「弟 どうす三のべるさうなにて御座ましながら、御一体なり [...],  
 師 其はちりんだあでのみすてりよと」, p. 38

The concept of *misuteriyo*, on the other hand, is clearly defined as:

- (a) [That which is a] *misuteriyo* cannot be expressed with words.  
 「みすてりよならば、言葉に述べられぬ事也。」, p. 67

Thus, we have that, while *chirindaade* is something that cannot be expressed in words, somehow it means that God is three *perusauna* but only one entity or substance.<sup>43</sup> This is basically the same as the affirmation that gave rise to the question whose answer we are examining. Its translation to English is:

Besides the one true *Deusu* there is no other [*Deusu*]. All *Kirishitan* should believe and confess that this is *Paatere*, *Hiiriyo*, *Supiritsu-Santo*. Although three *perusauna*, it is only one *Deusu*.<sup>44</sup>

However, somewhat earlier in the chapter where this discussion is presented, there is an enunciation of the Articles of Faith that throws some light on what the relation between *Patere* and *Hiiriyo* might be. There we can find that:

The first is to believe in *Deusu-Patere* the creator of Heaven and Earth. The second is to believe in his only son our Lord *Jesu-Kirishito*.<sup>45</sup>

Therefore, a sharp Japanese pagan would probably be able to conclude that Jesus Christ is *hiiriyo* and son of God the *Patere*, the creator of Heaven and Earth. If the *hiiriyo* is his son, then God the *Patere* should be His father. If it is accepted that this conclusion would not be out of reach for the average Japanese, then in Text box 3 these words can be shown in black. Besides these words in black, which

43 It might be worth calling attention once again to the fact that the Japanese *tai* 体 acts as a counter in the word *ittai* 一体, and no word needs to be added to “one” when translating *ittai* into English. If a word were to be added then it should be either “entity” or “substance”, rather than “body”, even if the primary meaning of *karada* 体 is “body”. Note the distinction made in the *Vocabulario*: “*Carada. Corpo morto. Algũas vezes se toma por corpo viuo.* B” f. 40, and “*Tai. Sustancia.*” f. 237.

44 「真のどうすは御一体の外、御座まさず。是即ばあてれ・ひいりよ・すびりつさんとにて御座ます事を各々きりしたん弁へ、信じ奉らで叶はざる事也。」, p.38.

45 「第一には、天地の御作なされたる万事叶玉ふどうす-ばあてれをしんじたてまつる事。第二其御独子、我等御主ぜず-きりしとをしんじ奉る事。」, p.37.

presumably would be comprehensible to a Japanese pagan because he would be able to arrive at their intended meaning by an attentive reading of the text, two words (*perusauna*, twice, and *Chirindaade*, once) for which he could make an educated guess are shown in purple; and the only word (*supiritsu-santo*) for which he would probably not be able to attach a meaning besides that it was one of the *perusauna* of the *chirindaade*, that is, the God of the *Kirishitan*, is shown in red. This passage would then be translated, based on the understanding of a non-Christian, thus:

- D: It is difficult to understand that God is only one while being three *perusauna*[, something akin to person].
- M: That is the mystery of the *Chirindaade* and it is the most sublime and supreme truth of all the articles of our Faith. God is unfathomable and immense and since our wisdom is little and limited, we cannot understand it. Even if we are unable to understand it, truly we ought to believe in it because the Lord Jesus Christ, who is God, taught it himself.
- D: Is there a metaphor to help us understand this matter?
- M: There is a metaphor. As our soul is only one but has the three powers of memory, discernment, and will, so God although only one is three *perusauna*, Father, Son, and *Supiritsu Santo*.

Given that most doctrines and catechisms in the seventeenth century, written in Europe or elsewhere, by either Catholics or Protestants, when presenting the Holy-Ghost did not go beyond the statement that He is one person of the Godhead and that, therefore, is God, it seems reasonable to conclude that a non-Christian Japanese reading the DK would not be at much disadvantage to a European Christian or, for that matter, to a Japanese Christian, when it came to what he could learn about the *Supiritsu Santo* in a doctrine.

弟 　　でうす三のべるさうなにて御座ましなから、御一体なりといへる理お別しかりし。

師 　　其はちりんがあでのみすてりよとて、我等が心いすの題目の内にては極意最上の高き理也。其故は、でうすは無量廣大に御座まし、我等が知恵おつづかにかぎりある事なれば、分別こはあはず。たとひ分別こあはずと云とも、でうすにて御座ます御主ぜずきりしと直こ示玉ふ上は、真ご信じ奉らずして叶はざる儀也。

弟 　　此儀をよく分別するため、譬へおなきや。

師 　　譬へ有。我等が心こまはたごだ一休にてありなから、めもうりあゝゑんてんじめんとゝおんたあで、三つのまてんしや有ごとく、でうす御一体にて御座ましなから、ばあてれゝひんりよゝ **すりつさんと**、三のべるさうなにて御座ます也。

**Text box 3.** Loan words without any explanation in the text in red and in purple for those for which an educated guess was possible

Be that as it may, it bears remembering that a Japanese Christian reading the DK would be spared all the pains associated with the above interpretative exercise.

For him *patere* would mean father from the start, *hiiriyo* would mean son, and the trinity would be a mystery that could not be expressed in words.

Were the Jesuits satisfied with this explanation of the Trinity in Japanese? Probably not, because they changed the text slightly in the editions of the DK published some 8 years later. Text box 4 shows the same passage of the DK presented in the previous text boxes, but now taken from the 1600 romaji edition.<sup>46</sup> The three major changes are shown in blue.

弟 デウス三つのべるさうなにて御座ましながら、ご一体なりといへる理は分別し難し。  
 師 それはたつきチリンダアデのミステリヨとて我らがヒイデスの題目の中にては、極意最上の高き理なり。その故  
 は、デウスは無量広大に御座まし、われらが知恵おつづかひかぎりある事なれば、分別は及ばず。たとひ分別  
 に及ばずといはとも、デウスにて御座します御庄ゼズキリシト直にしめし給ふ上は真に信じ奉らずして叶はざる  
 儀なり。  
 弟 この儀をよく分別するためにその譬へはなしや?  
 師 譬あり。我らがアニマはご一体にてありながら、三つの精根あり。一つはメモリアとて覚えたる事を思ひ出  
 だす精。二つはエンテンジメントとて善悪を弁へ分別する精。三つはオンタアデとてよきと思ふ事を望み、悪  
 しきと思ふ事を嫌ひ、ものを愛する精。かくの如くアニマは一体なりと雖も、三つの精根ある如くデウス御一体に  
 て御座ましながら、パテレ、ヒイリヨ、スピリツサント三のべるさうなにて御座ますなり。

**Text box 4.** Major changes between the 1592 and the 1600 editions

The first change is that the word *chirindaade* is preceded by the Japanese word *tattoki*, meaning “worthy of reverence,” probably to provide a hint of its divine nature. The second is to change the Japanese word *sei* 精, power, for *seikon* 精根, meaning “natural power”.<sup>47</sup> Lastly, the third change is to include in the metaphor the meaning of the three loan words for the powers of the soul. The second answer would then be read by a non-Christian Japanese thus:

M: There is a metaphor. Our soul is only one while having three natural powers. One is memory, the power to remember what has passed. The second is discernment, the power to distinguish between good and evil. And the third is will, the power to love, wishing what is considered good and avoiding what is considered evil. Just as the soul being one has three powers, so God although only one is three *perusauna*, Father, Son, and *Supiritsu Santo*.

46 Transcribed from Ebisawa; Ide; Kishino (Ed.). *Kirishitan Kyōrishiho* 『キリシタン教理書』. Tōkyō: Kyobunkan, 1993, p.40.

47 Cf. *Vocabulario*, f. 293v.

The great advantage of the 1600 version over the previous one is to make immediately available to its non-Christian reader an explanation, and a memory refresher to its Christian reader, for what the words *memoriya*, *entenjimento* and *ontaade* mean.

This passage is arguably one of the most complex of the entire DK. If an exercise similar to that performed above were to be made for any other passage of this doctrine, it would result in the conclusion that the vocabulary employed in the DK, even the loan words, would be understandable even for a Japanese without any previous contact with Christianity. However, it is improbable that such a person would have had access to a doctrine. A curious Japanese pagan would normally be directed by a missionary or lay Christian to a catechism or to a catechetical class, not to a doctrine.

How did the Jesuits themselves evaluate the evolution of their Christian terminology in Japan? They seemed to be quite satisfied, if we are to believe the appraisal made by Padre Camillo Constanzo (1572–1622):

Everybody was so well satisfied that even the pagans used these words to express Christian ideas and the Christians were happy to know the terminology we ourselves use.<sup>48</sup>

Were the Jesuits incompetent transmitters of Christian doctrine in the Japanese language of the seventeenth century? The evidence from the Christian terminology in the DK does not seem to support such a claim. Did they fail in their missionary efforts? To answer this question we need to look for other historical evidence beyond the text of the Japanese doctrine.

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48 Cited in Cieslik, *op. cit.*, pp.87–88.





Carla TRONU

***Memento Mori and Impermanence***  
**(*Mujō*, 無常): The 1600 Jesuit Mission Press**  
**Edition of Japanese Poems on the *Nine Stages***  
***of a Decaying Female Body* (*Kusōka*, 九相歌)**

## Introduction

The interest of Jesuit missionaries in learning about Japanese culture in general and Buddhism in particular must be understood within the framework of their evangelisation method. The so-called cultural accommodation method can be traced back to the beginning of the Japanese mission in the late sixteenth century – especially to one of its founders, Francis Xavier (1506–1552), and its reformer Alessandro Valignano (1539–1606) – and stands out as a very innovative and respectful approach if we take into account that most missionary orders disregarded or even denied the value of the native cultures they encountered around the globe in the so-called age of discoveries and its aftermath. We must take into account, however, that Jesuit efforts to learn the Japanese language and culture were meant not only to better integrate themselves into Japanese society and interact with Japanese people, but first and foremost to make their evangelisation methods – which included refuting Buddhism, preaching in Japanese about Christianity, and translating Christian doctrinal and devotional literature into Japanese – more effective and persuasive.

Jesuits considered all Japanese religious traditions idolatrous, but since they believed Buddhism had a stronger influence in political matters and catered for the population's salvation and concerns about the afterlife, it was seen as the main rival and the refutation of Buddhist doctrines was therefore incorporated into the missionaries' preaching strategy. In missionary letters and reports, Buddhist monks were often seen as enemies both in the political and social sphere and in religious matters. The debates between Jesuits and Buddhist monks, the extant works refuting Buddhist doctrines, and the problems encountered in using Buddhist terminology to translate Christian concepts reflect a strong antagonism indeed. It was in this context that in 1600 the Japanese Jesuit Press published the *Japanese Poems on the Nine Stages [of a Decaying Female Body]* (*Kusōka*, 九相歌), a collection of 18 Japanese poems (*waka*, 和歌)<sup>1</sup> describing the process of decay

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1 *Waka*, also named *yamato-uta* (大和歌), initially referred to several forms of Japanese poetry, mainly 'short poems' (*tanka*, 短歌) and 'long poems' (*chōka*, 長歌), but also 'Buddha's footprint poems' (*bussokusekika*, 仏足石歌), 'memorized poems' (*sedōka*, 旋頭歌) and 'poem fragments' (*katauta*, 片歌). Nevertheless, by the end of the Heian

of a female corpse, strongly connected to Buddhist doctrines and practices on the contemplation of impurity.<sup>2</sup> Why did they publish poems strongly connected to Buddhist doctrines and practices? Were Jesuits aware of Buddhist meditative practices and doctrinal teachings, as well as of the long literary and pictorial tradition in which the poems had originated? What are the characteristics of the Jesuit Press version, and what do they convey about the Jesuits' stand on Buddhism? By exploring these questions, this essay provides a new insight into Jesuit understanding of Buddhism, considering the possibility of finding similarities in their respective conceptions of death and bodily impurity. I will first introduce the volume in which the poem collection was published and its function within the Jesuit mission. Secondly, I will briefly introduce the Buddhist tradition from which the poems originated, and finally I will provide a translation and analysis of the Jesuit edition of the poems.

### The *Rōyei Zafit*

The Jesuit Press version of the *Kusōka* is part of a miscellaneous compendium of Japanese texts published by the Jesuit Press in Japan of which only one copy, kept at the Royal Library of the Monastery of El Escorial in Madrid, Spain, has been identified so far.<sup>3</sup> The volume is printed in Sino-Japanese script, using both Chinese characters (*kanji*, 漢字) and the Japanese syllabic alphabet (*kana*, 仮名) in cursive style, except for the cover in which both Latin and Japanese scripts are used. The title 'ROYEI ZAFIT' is given at the top in horizontal Latin script from left to right, with the bottom indicating the place and year of publication according to the Gregorian calendar: 'IN COLLEGIO JAPONICO SOCIETATIS JESU Cum facultate Ordinarii & Superiorum ANNO 1600'. At the centre of the cover page, in vertical Sino-Japanese script, from top to bottom, a different title can be read *Wakanrōeishu Kannojō* (和漢朗詠集 卷之上) and the publication year is given according to the Japanese calendar, 'Keichō gonen' (慶長五年).<sup>4</sup> While the Japanese heading gives the full title of the first text of the compilation, the romanized title abbreviates it to 'Rōyei' (朗詠) and combines it with 'Zafit' (雜筆), the abbreviation of another text's title in the volume, the *Zahitsushō* (雜筆抄).<sup>5</sup>

The volume consists of twenty-eight sheets of Japanese paper (26 × 19.5 cm) and is bound in Japanese style, which means that two pages are printed on each

period (794–1185), most forms had been extinct and *waka* came to refer almost exclusively to *tanka*, following a 5-7-5-7-7 metre, as is the case in the *Kusōka*.

2 *Royei Zafit*. N.p.: Collegio Japonico Societatis Jesus, 1600.

3 Unfortunately, the Library holds no records on when and how this copy joined the collection of King Philip II.

4 *Royei Zafit*, f. 1.

5 It is very common to give titles to *collectanea* in Japan by combining the abbreviated titles of some of the texts contained in the compilation.

sheet, which is then not cut but folded and bound on the right side, so that the geometric patterns, section headings and page numbers printed in the middle column of the sheet are visible in the folding edge or outer margin, making it easier to navigate the contents of the book. Writing runs vertically and from right to left, and there are abbreviated headings printed in the folding line, which serve as markers for each part. When comparing this book with other books printed by the Jesuit Press, the paper is very thin, and most of the pages have been broken in the folding edge, which can be taken both as a sign of the low quality of the paper and of intensive usage. This, rather than a book produced for commercial use, points at a cheap and simple handbook or textbook for the internal use of the Jesuit college students.<sup>6</sup> The volume does not provide a table of contents, but five sections can be distinguished. All sections start in a new page and are marked by a heading title at the beginning and a colophon at the end, except for the last section.<sup>7</sup> Original pagination in the outer margin ‘column’ starts anew for each section as follows:

- (1) *Wakanrōishū kannojō* (和漢朗詠集 卷之上) Anthology of Japanese and Chinese Poems for recitation. Part 1, pp.1–17 (f.1v-17v).
- (2) *Uta* (歌) Japanese Poems pp.1–2, (f.18r-19v), including a collection of 18 *waka* with a prologue in prose under the subheading ‘Japanese Poems on the Nine Stages with Prologue’ (*Kusōka narabini jo*, 九相歌並序), and 37 *waka* under the subheading ‘Impermanence’ (*Mujō*, 無常).
- (3) *Zahitsushō* (雑筆抄) Collection of phrases to be used in written letters, pp.1–4 (f.20r-24v).
- (4) *Jitsugyōkyō* (実業教) Collection of sayings used for educating children p.1 (f.25r-25v).
- (5) Untitled compilation of three sample letters by Japanese historical lords and seven short statements in prose on the benefits of learning, attributed to Chinese emperors and nobles, pp.1–3 (f.26r-28v).

No information is given on the compiler, the editor, or the publication place. Amakusa is given as the publication place in the catalogue of El Escorial Library, but that is unlikely as in 1600 the Jesuit Press was located at the Jesuit College in Nagasaki. As for the editor, it was precisely in 1600 that Jesuits entrusted the printing press in Japanese script to a Japanese printer, Gōto Tomé Sōin (後藤 登明 宗印 n.d.–1627), whose seal appears indeed in the cover of the Japanese script version of the Christian Doctrine (*Dochiriina Kirishitan*, どちらいな きりしたん) published in 1600.<sup>8</sup>

6 Doi, “Wakanrōishū kannojō”. *Kirishitan bunkenkō*. Tōkyō: Sanseidō, 1969, p.3.

7 *Royei Zafit*, f. 26–28v.

8 Doi, “Wakanrōishū kannojō”, p.51. Gotō Sōin, also named Shōzaemon Sadayuki, belonged to a family of merchants established in Nagasaki. *Doctrina Christiana rudimenta, cum aliis piis Orationibus*. Nagasaku (Nagasaki) ex Officina Gotō Thome Sōin typographi Societatis Iesu, 1600.

Although the poem collections in the *Royei Zafit* might have appealed to the general public, the fact that they were bound together with lists of phrases for writing letters and samples or real letters by Japanese lords makes it clear that the main purpose was educational, as will be further argued below. College students being a small group of consumers, it is unlikely that a professional printer would consider it a profit-making title. In fact, since it was a book for internal use within the Society of Jesus, it is more likely that Jesuits would assume its production and hand over the press after publishing the *Royei Zafit*. The compiler must have been one or several Jesuits, most likely a learned Japanese brother.

Although the book has no prologue explaining the purpose of the compilation and how it was meant to be used, other Jesuit sources shed some light into the matter. According to the 1596 annual report:

At the [Amakusa] college (*collegio*) the usual rule of the Society is followed, according to which Japanese brothers under training who have already studied Humanities and the compendium of essential matters regarding the Catholic faith are then taught about Buddhism (*buppo*), which is a book [*sic*] about the sects and mistakes of Japan, so that in disputes [with Buddhists] they know how to convince them. And they are also taught how to read Japanese books and letters in their characters, which is a very necessary [skill] to communicate with people outside [the Society of Jesus].<sup>9</sup>

The *Royei Zafit* does not really provide basic knowledge on Japanese Buddhist sects and how to refute Buddhist doctrines, which can be found in other Jesuit titles.<sup>10</sup> Rather, it seems to be a selection of some of these ‘books and letters’ to teach

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[https://digital-archives.sophia.ac.jp/laures-kirishitan-bunko/view/kirishitan\\_bunko/JL-1600-KB25-24-20a](https://digital-archives.sophia.ac.jp/laures-kirishitan-bunko/view/kirishitan_bunko/JL-1600-KB25-24-20a) (18 November 2021)

- 9 *Carta Anua de 1596* [Luís Fróis]. Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu, Col. Japonica-Sinica 46, f. 284. Translation from Portuguese by the author.
- 10 Extensive refutations of Buddhism can be found in Valignano’s *Catechismus* (1586) and Fukan Fabian’s *Myōtei Mondō* (1605). The *Catechismus* was the first book printed for the Japanese mission. It is written in Latin and dedicates six chapters to refuting Buddhism and seven to expounding the basic doctrines of Christianity to non-Christian Japanese. See Valignano, *Catechismus christianae fidei in quo veritas nostrae religionis ostenditur et japonenses sectae confuntatur*, Olyssipone, Antonius Riberius, 1586. The *Myotei Mondo* was written in Japanese in the form of a dialogue between a learned Christian woman and a Buddhist nun, and is extant only in manuscript form. For the full Japanese text and the most recent research in Japanese, see Sueki, *Myōtei Mondō wo yomu. Habian no bukkyo hihan*. Kyōto: Hozonkan, 2014. A French translation of the fragments on Buddhism is available in Humbertclaude “Myōtei Mondō: Une apologétique chrétienne japonaise de 1605 by Fucan Fabian”. *Monumenta Nipponica*, 1/2 (1938), pp.526–534. For a complete English translation, see Baskind and Bowring (Eds.), *The Myōtei Dialogues: A Japanese Christian Critique of Native Traditions*, Leiden: Brill, 2016. For recent research in English, see Baskind, “The Matter of the Zen School’: Fukansai Habian’s ‘Myōtei mondō’ and His Christian Polemic on Buddhism”. *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies*, vol. 39, no. 2 (2012),

advanced students of Japanese how to read poetry, epistolary style, and prose. The 1603 annual report provides further details on the purpose of teaching students about ‘Japanese books’ and ‘letters’:

Apart from three courses on Latin and one on Latin and Japanese calligraphy, this year there is another class for those who have already finished the Latin courses, in which two Japanese brothers among the most intelligent explain some Japanese books so that they learn to speak and preach, as well as to write in a good and elegant style, particularly letters, which according to the Japanese include most of their courtesies [phrases] and compliments, so that this is one of the classes the Japanese are most inclined to take.<sup>11</sup>

While recitation practice and knowledge of Japanese poems would improve preaching skills in general, the ability to read and write letters was necessary because of the importance of letter exchange in Japan at the time, and therefore played a crucial role in the interactions between Jesuits and the Japanese. Taking into account that letter writing in Japanese requires a specific, rather formal language style, also difficult for native Japanese, who usually learned it in Buddhist temples, it is understandable that this was the most popular class among Japanese Jesuit members.

The Society of Jesus entrusted the teaching of advanced Japanese language to the Japanese Jesuit brothers. For example, Jesuit Catalogues register the names of André Nokan and Simeão from Bungo as Japanese brothers in charge of teaching Japanese literature in the Arima *seminario*.<sup>12</sup> It is likely that learned Japanese brothers were required to take active part in the compilation of appropriate teaching materials such as the *Royei Zafit*, although most probably under the supervision of the European Jesuit leaders, like Father João Rodrigues (c.1561/62–1633), who had acquired a deep knowledge of Japanese literature and language and developed a method for learning Japanese in which the *Royei Zafit* seems to fit perfectly.

The abridged version of the Japanese language grammar *Arte Breve da Lingoa Iapoa* (Macao, 1620) includes a section titled ‘On the method to learn and teach this language’, in which Rodrigues stresses the importance of learning Japanese poems, among other Japanese cultural aspects, in order to converse with learned Japanese.<sup>13</sup>

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pp.307–331, and Schrimpf, “The Pro- and Anti-Christian Writings of Fukan Fabian (1565–1621)”. *Japanese Religions*, vol. 33/1&2 (2008), pp.35–54.

11 *Carta Anua de 1603* [Matheus de Couros]. Biblioteca da Ajuda, Lisboa, Col. Jesuítas na Asia 49-IV-59, f. 130v. Translation from Portuguese by the author.

12 Brother Simeão, like Fukan Fabian, eventually left the Society of Jesus and after the prohibition collaborated with the persecution of Christianity. Cieslik, “Seminario no kyōshitachi”. *Kirishitan Kenkyū*, vol. 11 (1966), pp.31, 57–58.

13 Rodrigues, *Arte Breve da Lingoa Iapona*. Macao: Collegio Societatis Iesu, 1620, pp.2v–6r.

In order to have a broad vocabulary in all Japanese matters, it is necessary to teach words concerning all matters going on in the kingdom, providing sentence examples from all of them, like tea ceremony (*cha*, 茶) and the other Japanese arts (*suki*, 数寄), weapons, fencing, hunting, riding, politeness and courtesy, theatre and dances, celebrations, rites and ceremonies from the sects, the seven liberal arts called *shichigei* (七藝) and *hatsunō* (八能); from Japanese poetry called *uta* (歌) and *renga* (連歌), and Chinese poetry called *shi* (詩) and *rengu* (連句); from the stories and deeds of heroic men and various other subjects that make a learned man, so that when they entertain polite people or are in a setting where such matters are talked about, they can understand what is being said and intervene as necessary, even in their preaching, without using improprieties.<sup>14</sup>

Ultimately, according to Rodrigues, the purpose of learning Japanese poetry is to broaden one's vocabulary and knowledge of Japanese culture in order to improve one's conversational skills for engaging with local learned elites. These views were probably based on his own interactions with Japanese elites, since Rodrigues, as the procurator of the Jesuit mission, was the mediator between Portuguese and Japanese merchants and the official interpreter at the court of Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1537–1598) and Tokugawa Ieyasu (1543–1616). The fact that a compilation like the *Royei Zafit* included three poem collections including both Japanese and Chinese poems suggests that his method was at least partly implemented in Japan. However, it is not clear why of all the available *waka* anthologies did they chose the *Kusōka* and the *Mujōka*.

Rodrigues considered that western books translated into Japanese and Buddhist Sutras had to be avoided as teaching materials, and proposed instead a list of 'proper' Japanese books which students should be taught gradually according to difficulty starting with the easiest styles, such as *mai* (舞)<sup>15</sup> and *sōshi* (草子),<sup>16</sup> followed by the biographies of sages, then the *Heike monogatari* (平家物語)<sup>17</sup> and finally the *Taiheiki* (太平記), which is given as the epitome of elegance in Japanese

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14 Rodrigues, *Ibidem*, pp.3v–4. Translation from Portuguese by the author. The original text does not include Chinese characters, these had been added by the author for the benefit of specialists.

15 *Mai* literally means 'dance' and in Japanese literature refers to Noh and *kyōgen* theatre plays. *Mai no hon* ('book of dances') are books that collect *kowakamai* (幸若舞), Japanese songs to be danced which became very popular during the Muromachi period (1336–1574). For a study on the Jesuits and this literary genre, see Schwemmer, *Samurai, Jesuits, Puppets, and Bards: The End(s) of the Kōwaka Ballad*. Princeton University Dissertation, 2015.

16 *Sōshi* are tales, often recorded in manuscript scrolls or printed books with illustrations.

17 Literally 'The Tale of the Taira Family', this is an example of historical epic literature, narrating the rise and fall of the Taira Family at the end of the Heian period (794–1185). The Jesuits published an abridged version in romanized Japanese in the form of a dialogue in colloquial style. *Nifon no cotoba to historia uo narai xiran to fofsvrv fito no tameni xeva ni yavaragvetarv Feige no monogatari*, Amakusa, Iesvs no companhia no Collegio, 1592. According to the Laures Database there is only one

prose. He finally recommended poetical anthologies and epistolary collections as ‘other books to be learned at the final stage’.

Apart from the abovementioned books, it is good to read something about Japanese selected poetry, like *uta* (waka), *shirengu* (Chinese poems by Japanese authors), *Ise Monogatari* (伊勢物語, The Tales of Ise),<sup>18</sup> *Genji Monogatari* (源氏物語, The Tale of Genji),<sup>19</sup> and a selection of letters in epistolary style, which the teacher can teach them alternately when he feels they are ready, so that they can be aware of these matters and write letters, which must be done in a particular style.<sup>20</sup>

Thus, the texts compiled in the *Royei Zafit*, poems and letters, fit Rodrigues’ indications for teaching materials on the most difficult styles of the Japanese language. These were meant to be taught to advanced students only, which suggests a rather reduced audience for the *Royei Zafit*.

Also, the explicit purpose of publishing and teaching the *Wakanrōeishū* poems on the seasons, the *Kusōka* and *Mujōka*, seems to be merely ‘instrumental’ – namely, to broaden the potential conversation topics of future Jesuits with Japanese learned elites. While the *Wakanrōeishū* was indeed a very popular collection, memorized by many and often recited at parties, and therefore an obvious choice for that purpose, it is rather surprising that Jesuits preferred the *Kusōka* and the *Mujōka* poems, which had not yet become popular at the time and had a deep connection with Buddhism, over more popular anthologies such as the *Man’yōshū* (万葉集, *Ten Thousand Leaves’ Collection*)<sup>21</sup> or the *Kokin Wakashū* (古今和歌集,

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extant copy at the British Library. [https://digital-archives.sophia.ac.jp/laures-kirishitan-tan-bunko/view/kirishitan\\_bunko/JL-1592-KB13a-13-9](https://digital-archives.sophia.ac.jp/laures-kirishitan-tan-bunko/view/kirishitan_bunko/JL-1592-KB13a-13-9) (28 June 2019).

- 18 *The Tales of Ise* is a compilation of Japanese poetry and prose written in the Heian Period (794–1185). It contains 125 sections combining poems and prose, with a total of 209 poems. There is not a narrative cohesion or continuity, but poems explore topics such as nature, the court society, and love along three stages of a man’s life (youth, adulthood and deathbed). For the most recent English translation see MacMillan (Transl.), *The Tales of Ise*. London: Penguin, 2016.
- 19 *The Tale of Genji* is the first novel in Japanese literature. Authored by a court lady, Murasaki Shikibu, it narrates the court life of Prince Genji, especially concentrating on his love adventures. The work combines prose and Japanese poetry. Its poems have been considered, together with the poems of the above-mentioned *Tales of Ise* and the *Kokin Wakashū*, the epitome of Japanese poetry. There are many translations available. For a complete translation into English see Tyler (Transl.) *Murasaki Shikibu. The Tale of Genji*. New York: Viking, 2002.
- 20 Rodrigues, *Ibidem*, pp.4v–5. Translation from Portuguese by the author. The original text does not include Chinese characters, these had been added by the author for the benefit of the specialist reader.
- 21 The *Man’yōshū* is the oldest collection of Japanese poetry containing more than 4,500 poems, in various forms, including a variety of Japanese poetic forms, of which 4,207 are *tanka* (短歌, short poems following the form 5-7-5-7-, the number indicating syllabic units), four *kanshi* (漢詩, Chinese poems), and 22 Chinese prose passages. There

*Collection of old and new Japanese poems*).<sup>22</sup> Especially so when taking into account that Rodrigues emphasized that Buddhist sources had to be avoided. Although there is no agreement between scholars on whether the *waka* on impermanence (*mujōka*) can be considered Buddhist poetry, because they are not classified as ‘Buddhist *waka*’ (*shakyōka*, 釈教歌) in imperially-sanctioned poetry collections,<sup>23</sup> the connection with core concepts of Buddhist doctrines such as ‘impermanence’ and the ‘contemplation of impurity’ in both the *Mujōka* and the *Kusōka* is undeniable. Nevertheless, the topic of bodily impurity, and more specifically of the female body, as well as the transience of life and the inevitability of death, must have resonated deeply with Jesuit spirituality, as will be argued below. Since a translation and analysis of all the poems is beyond the scope of this paper, I focus on the *Kusōka*.

## The *Kusōka* in the Buddhist Tradition

The origin of the *Kusōka* is connected to Buddhist doctrines on the contemplation of impurity and the pictorial and literary traditions that developed from those, as well as to the Chinese literati’s elegy-writing tradition.<sup>24</sup> The motif of the nine

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are several translations of selected poems available in English. For a complete poetic translation using Western verse elements (such as tetrameters with end-rhymes) see Honda (Transl.), *The Manyōshū: A New and Complete Translation*. Tōkyō: The Hokuseido Press, 1967. For a more academically oriented, annotated an more literal translation preserving the sounds and semantics of the original poems see Vovin (Transl.), *Man’yōshū. A New English Translation Containing the Original Text, Kana Transliteration, Romanization, Glossing and Commentary*. 20 Vols. Leiden: Global Oriental, 2009–2019 (and forthcoming). This translation will be published in 20 volumes, mimicking the 20 books of the original work, and as of 2019, 7 volumes have already been published (Book 15, 2009; Book 5, 2011; Book 14, 2015; Book 17, 2017; Book 18, 2016; Book 1, 2017; Book 19, 2019).

- 22 The *Kokin Wakashū* is the first collection of Japanese poetry only, compiled by imperial order in 905. It comprises 1,111 poems, many of them anonymous, divided into 20 books arranged by topic (six books of seasonal poems, five books of love poems, and single books on topics such as travel, mourning, and congratulations). For a complete translation into English, see McCullough (Transl.) *Kokin Wakashū: The First Imperial Anthology of Japanese Poetry*. Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 1985.
- 23 Yamada, *Shakyōka no tenkai*. Tōkyō: Sakamoto Ryōichi, 2012.
- 24 Kawaguchi, “Keichō 5 nen Nihon Yasokai ban Wakanrōeishū fusai kusōka narabini mujōka nitsuite”. *Kanazawa Daigaku Kokugo Kokubun*, 1, 1966, pp.6–7. For the most thorough study on the topic, see Lachaud, *La jeune fille et la mort*. Paris: Collège de France, 2006. He surveys the connections between religious doctrine and practice from the early Indian Buddhist tradition, with special attention to Chinese and Japanese translations of Buddhist doctrinal texts, as well as to Japanese pictorial and literary traditions. Lachaud provides a full French translation and analysis of the two most popular *Kusōshi* collections, the one attributed to Kūkai and the one attributed to Su Dong Po (Su Tung-po).



or ten stages or aspects of decay after death, as well as the contemplation of the impurity of a female corpse, are already present in early Buddhist scriptures.<sup>25</sup> Frescos found in the Dunghuang caves depicting monks contemplating corpses in cemeteries testify to the existence of such meditation practices. These frescos are considered to be the origin of the pictorial tradition of decomposing corpses within Buddhism, which in Japan crystallised in the *Drawings of the Nine Stages* (*Kusōzu*, 九相図) and in the illustrated versions of the *Chinese Poems on the Nine Stages* (*Kusōshi*, 九相詩).<sup>26</sup> The earliest reference to an image depicting nine views of decay dates back to 1223 and can be found in the historical records of Daigo-ji Temple in Kyōto, and while there are several extant examples of *Kusōzu* hanging scrolls and illustrated scroll paintings, most of them belong to temples and retain their religious function.<sup>27</sup>

Within the Buddhist Theravada tradition, the nine stages of corpse decay can be found in the *Sattipatthana-sutta* (*The Discourse on the Establishing of Mindfulness*), one of the most studied discourses of the Pali Canon as the basis for meditation practice. The *Visuddhimagga* (*Path to Purification*), an encyclopaedic exposition of the teachings of the Mahavihara School of Theravada Buddhism, written by Buddhagosa in the fifth century, enumerates ten post-mortem stages and prescribes a set of visualizations to counter several aspects of carnal lust.<sup>28</sup> Far from being a forensic or biologically accurate study of the human body's decay process, this is an allegorical strategy for male monks to gain awareness of impermanence and counter lust.<sup>29</sup> In the *Visuddhimagga*, the concept of 'contemplation of impurity' (*asubha-bhavana*) can be understood both as the visualization of one's own body and the visualization of corpses in cemeteries.<sup>30</sup> However, Chinese commentaries on and translations of Buddhist doctrinal works seem to have emphasised the latter over the former, and this was the case in Japan as well, since the Japanese learned about Buddhism mainly through Chinese works.<sup>31</sup>

*The Great Cessation and Contemplation* (摩訶止觀; Ch. *Mo-ho Chih-kuan*, Jap. *Maka Shikan*) is one of the most important Chinese Buddhist treaties, and became the main doctrinal book in the training of aspiring priests at the Tendai school

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25 Sanford, "The Nine Faces of Death: Su Tung-po's Kusō-shi". *Eastern Buddhist*, vol. 21, no. 2 (1988), pp.57–58; Lachaud, op. cit., pp.29–84.

26 Lachaud, *Ibidem*, pp.299–338.

27 Chin, "The Gender of Buddhist Truth. The Female Corpse in a Group of Japanese Paintings". *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies*, vol. 25, no. 3/4 (Fall, 1998), p.279. An example of a hanging scroll depicting the nine stages of decay in the human realm, titled *Rokudōei Jindō Fujōsōzu*, as well as a hand scroll titled *Kusōzumaki* have been recently reproduced in colour in Yamamoto; Nishiyama, *Kusōzu Shiryōshūsei. Shitai no bijutsu to bungaku*. Tōkyō: Iwata Shoin, 2009, pp.8–14 and pp.15–20.

28 Sanford, op. cit., pp.57–58; Lachaud, op. cit., pp.45–46.

29 Sanford, op. cit., pp.57–58.

30 Lachaud, op. cit., pp.85–86.

31 *Ibidem*, p.86.

Enryaku-ji monastery, the most authoritative Buddhist monastery in Japan from medieval times.<sup>32</sup> Instructions for meditation practices on the ‘nine considerations’ (*kusō*, 九想) can be found as part of the contemplation of impurity, which is the first of the five kinds of mental practices aimed at countering passions by focusing on the appropriate thought, called the ‘five attentions of thought’ (*gojō shinkan*, 五停心觀). The section on the ‘nine considerations’ not only expounds the method, purpose and importance of the practice, but also provides grotesque and detailed descriptions of the decomposition of corpses:

[...] Suppose you are sitting in meditation and suddenly you see a corpse laying on the ground. Until a few moments ago you were speaking with this person, but now suddenly he is gone, with his chi-breath extinguished and his body cold, his spirit departed and his color changed. The law of transiency moves and does not choose between the powerful and the humble, the rich and the poor, the old and the young, the beautiful and the ugly; there is no place to hide from this fate. Even a compassionate parent or filial child cannot take another person’s place in this matter. The corpse lies stinking on the ground; the wind blows and it is exposed in the sun, and its original form is changed forever. Whether one sees one corpse or many corpses, this is a contemplation of great impurity. [...] These corpses have faces that are pitch black; the bodies lie stretched out straight, the hands and feet open like a flower, bloated and broken like a bag filled with the wind, and extremely defiled and evil odor and liquid pouring forth from the nine orifices. The practitioner thinks to himself, “My body is also like this; I am not yet free nor have escaped it. In contemplating those that I love, I see that the same is true for them.” When these aspects of meditation appear, one has attained a part of a concentrated mind, which is somewhat peaceful and pleasing. In the twinkling of an eye one sees this corpse 1. “bloat,” blown by the wind and scorched by the sun, the skin and flesh destroyed, the body split open, the form and color changing beyond comprehension; this is called the mark of 2. “decay.” Again, seeing where it has split open, blood spurting forth, scattering and smearing, making a motley mess here and there, pouring out into the ground, making a vigorous stench; this is the mark of 3. “blood smears.” Again, rotting pus pours out like sweat, like a candle on fire; this is the mark of 4. “rotting pus.” Again, one sees the remaining skin and flesh dried by the wind and scorched by the sun, smelling rotten and falling apart, half blue and half bruised, breaking apart into pieces; this is the mark of 5. “turning blue.” Again, one sees the corpse chewed on and eaten by foxes, wolves, and birds, as they fight over the scattered pieces, tearing and dragging and pulling them around; this is the mark of 6. “chewing.” Again, one sees that the head and hands are scattered in different places, and the five organs divided up so that they are unrecognizable; this is the mark of 7. “scattering.” Again, one sees two types of bones, one still with clinging remnants of blood and fat, and others pure white. Or one sees a complete skeleton,

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32 Groner, *Saichō: The Establishment of the Japanese Tendai School*. Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2000, p.35.

or scattered around in clusters. This is the mark 8. of “considering bones.” In this way the various marks of corpses turn and change with time, and the concentrating mind should follow these changes, grow deeper in quiescence, discover a quiet subtlety and a peaceful joy that cannot be explained. [...] Those who have not yet seen these marks of a decaying corpse still have strong attachments to passions. But if they see these things, their desirous thoughts will come to an end, and they will not endure being attached to them.<sup>33</sup>

The text continues with a series of analogies with highly scatological and provocative images and wording, strengthening the idea that seeing the impure side of an object will eradicate any desire towards it. The section on the meditation on the nine considerations ends by stating that contemplating the impurity of a decaying corpse is more powerful than any of the previously taught meditations, and that by doing this practice one does not only become weary of fleshly desires but is also able to arouse the state of being undefiled by the outflows of passion and to perfect the Mahāyāna. It is thus clear that in the *Maka Shikan* the contemplation of the impurity of a decaying corpse is considered one of the most effective ways to counter desire and impurity.

It is not clear how the meditations on the nine considerations were actually taught; probably, the master read the text aloud to the monks in training, commented on it, and eventually encouraged them to meditate on images of corpses produced for that purpose, rather than on real corpses. Several anecdote compilations (*setsuwa-shū*, 説話集) contain references to Japanese monks actually practicing the meditation on the nine considerations.<sup>34</sup> For instance, it is said that Musō Sōseki 夢窓 疎石 (1275–1351) meditated on the nine considerations as early as at the age of 13 and that he painted his own *Kusōzu* to meditate on.<sup>35</sup> A study on the development of the paintings on the nine considerations is beyond the scope of this study,<sup>36</sup> but I want to emphasize that both the doctrinal scriptures and the paintings emphasize the grotesque aspects and the disgusting details of the corpse and its decaying process, probably with the pedagogical intention of making an impression on the audience to stimulate both their imagination and their disgust for the female body and bodily impurity in general.

While the contemplation of impurity by means of a female corpse rarely appears in Chinese Buddhist narratives, the topic recurs in Japanese Buddhist anecdotic narrative (*setsuwa*, 説話) from the Heian period onwards.<sup>37</sup> Lachaud distinguishes between stories describing the contemplation of impurity and conversion stories

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33 Swanson, *Clear Serenity, Quiet Insight: T'ien-t'ai Chih-i's Mo-ho chih-kuan*, 3 Vols. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2017, vol. 2, pp.1449–1454.

34 Lachaud, op. cit., p.180.

35 Ibidem, p.182.

36 A study on the development of the paintings on the nine considerations can be found in Lachaud, Ibidem, chap. 6, pp.299–338.

37 Ibidem, p.180.

(*hosshindan*, 発心談) in which a casual encounter with a corpse or the death of the beloved one leads to conversion to Buddhism.<sup>38</sup> The 1605 printed version of the *Kusōshi* is the oldest known printed version in Japan and the one that fixed the form and number of *waka* in the collection. When Japanese scholars found out about the 1600 Jesuit Press version of the *Kusōka in the Royei Zafit* in the twentieth century, no Japanese manuscript versions of the *Kusōka* were known.<sup>39</sup> However, in the past decades Japanese scholars have identified several manuscript versions of both the *Kusōka* (*waka* only) and the *Kusōshi* (Chinese poems and *waka*). Imanishi has brought to light a manuscript book from the late Muromachi or very early Edo period which he describes as an Illustrated *Nara*-style version of the *Chinese Poems on the Nine Stages* (*Nara eihon Kusōshi*, 奈良絵本九相詩) because for each of the nine stages it includes a Chinese poem, two *waka*, and an illustration in ‘*Nara style*’.<sup>40</sup> Kishimoto has brought attention to a non-illustrated manuscript version of the *Kusōka* in the *Tale of India* (*Tenjiku Monogatari* 天竺物語) which includes the *waka* only collection as a final appendix to the main story.<sup>41</sup> Yamamoto and Nishiyama have published the text of six manuscript versions of the *Kusōshi*, three of which are dated before 1600 and therefore preceding the Jesuit Press version. The oldest manuscript version containing both Chinese and Japanese poems identified so far is the *Kuhaku* manuscript (1501), and the oldest known copy including illustrations, Chinese and Japanese poems is the *Kusōshi emaki* (1527, kept at Dainenbutsu-ji temple in Kyōto).<sup>42</sup> The comparison of the *waka* of four of these manuscripts with the Jesuit Press version by Watanabe Yasuaki reveals that textual variation existed before the collection was fixed in printing in 1605 and that while the Japanese narrative tradition (*setsuwa*) contains grotesque elements, the Japanese poems are far less striking.<sup>43</sup> Imanishi considers that the reason why the *waka* do not make the reader feel the cruelty of the images is the use of ‘*Yamato words*’ (original Japanese terms as opposed to

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38 Ibidem, pp.181–226.

39 Doi, “Introduction”. Kyōto Daigaku Bungakubu Kokugogaku Kokubungaku Kenkyushitsu (Ed.), *Wakanrōeishū Keichō 5 nen Yasokaiban*. Kyōto: Kyōto Daigaku Kokubungakukai, 1964, p.29.

40 Imanishi, “Hanpon Kusōshi zenya”. *Shomotsugaku, Special contribution*, 2014, p.2. *Nara style* books are elegantly illustrated small format manuscript books (as opposed to scrolls) produced by Buddhist monks affiliated to *Nara* temples, using plain colours like green, azure, cinnabar, silver and gold, and whitewash for simple colouring.

41 Kishimoto, “Rōei Zahitsu Kusōka nitsuite”, Oral communication at Kirishitan Gogaku Kenkyukai, Kyōto, Kyōto Prefectural University, September 9, 2014. Motoi, “*Tenjiku Monogatari*, Hōzōbikunosōshi kaisetsu”. Kyōto Daigaku Bungakubu Kokugogaku Kokubungaku Kenkyūshitsu (Ed.). *Kyōto Daigakuzō Muromachi Monogatari*, vol. 3. Kyōto: Rinsen Shoten, 2002, pp.443–466.

42 Yamamoto; Nishiyama, op. cit., pp.187–192.

43 Watanabe Yasuaki, “Kusōshi no *waka* wo megutte”. *Setsuwa kenkyu* Vol. 42 (2007), pp.119–124.

words of Chinese origin) which are less explicit and more evocative.<sup>44</sup> Indeed, the *Kusōka* in the *Royei Zafit* use indirect imagery through words that within the *waka* literary tradition are associated with specific feelings or concepts, as shall be seen in the translation below.

## The Jesuit Press Version of the *Kusōka*

The Jesuit Press version of the *Kusōka* includes a Japanese translation of the prologue that usually precedes the Chinese poems and 18 Japanese poems (*waka*), without the illustrations or the Chinese poems. However, it is clear that Jesuits came across the Chinese Poems of the *Kusōshi*, because its first stanza is included as an example of Chinese poetry in João Rodrigues' *Arte da Lingoa de Iapam*.<sup>45</sup> Therefore the omission of the Chinese poems must have been a conscious decision. Jesuits also omit the sub-headings with the names of the nine stages of decay that are usually found in the *Kusōshi*, and each *waka* is written in a single line, without breaking them into five lines according to verses (句, *ku*), or into two lines (the upper and lower *ku* as is often the case in *waka* compilations). Therefore, the printed Jesuit Press version differs from most of the extant *Kusōka* collections in terms of format. The inclusion of the prologue in prose, rather than verse, seems to indicate that its content was prioritized over form and that it was not included as an example of Chinese poetry, but in order to contextualize the *waka* and make their function as moral guidelines explicit. This strengthens the idea that the *Kusōka* were not only selected by Jesuits to broaden conversational topics, but also because of its edifying content. The translation provided below, exempt of any literary ambition, is just one of several possible interpretations, a proposal for a contextualised reading.

### Japanese Poems on the Nine Stages [of Decay] with Preface<sup>46</sup>

九相歌并序

紅粉翠黛はただ白波 [sic.] 可れをいろとる  
男女の姪樂は互に臭骸をいたく

44 Imanishi, op. cit., p.21.

45 Rodrigues, *Arte da Lingoa de Iapam*, 1604, p.180r.

46 Translation by the author, with help from Akane Nakamoto. In order to check for alterations, the author consulted several versions of the original prologue in Chinese in Yamamoto and Nishiyama, op. cit., p.187, and the English translation in Sanford, op. cit., pp.63–64 as well as the French translation in Lachaud, op. cit., p.254. The Jesuit Press version of the prologue is a Japanese rendering (*kundoku*, 訓読) of classical Chinese (*kanbun*, 漢文) and is written in prose, but both its form and content are very poetic, since units of meaning correspond to two sets of eight or ten Chinese characters.

身ひえ魂さつて是を荒原にすつ  
 雨にそそき日にさらされて須臾に爛壊す  
 やけは則灰となるいつくんそ昔質をみん  
 埋めは則土となる誰か舊好をおもはん  
 是か為に名をおしむ其名は谷の響よりもすままし  
 是かために利をもとむ其利は春の夢よりもむなし  
 我にしたかふをもて恩愛とすをのれにそむけは忽讎敵となす  
 順逆の二門妄縁ならずといふ事なし  
 皆是無我の我を執て無常の常をはかる  
 四種顛倒眼前の迷乱也  
 世人猶はつへしいはんや聖賢の人にをひてをや

The red for the lips, the white for the face, and the green for the eyebrows  
 are just colouring the colourless skin.<sup>47</sup>  
 The pleasures of the flesh between men and women  
 are just stinking corpses embracing each other.  
 The soul will depart and the bodies will grow cold  
 and be abandoned in the wilderness.  
 Soaked by the rain and burned by the sun,  
 in an instant they will rot away and decompose.  
 When cremated, they become ashes,  
 so who could recognise the bygone silhouette?  
 When buried, they become dust,  
 so who remembers the old friendship?  
 For such a body, we cherish fame,  
 but that fame is hollower than the echo of the valley.  
 For such a body, we seek profit,  
 but that profit is vainer than a spring dream.<sup>48</sup>  
 We love those who follow us,  
 and consider enemies those who oppose us.  
 Love and enmity are but two doors  
 into delusive attachment.  
 All this takes self for non-self,  
 and permanence for impermanence.  
 It is a state of confusion  
 on the verge of the four mistakes.<sup>49</sup>

47 The Jesuit Press version reads 'wave' (波) instead of 'skin' (皮); given the resemblance of the two Chinese characters, it is probably not an intentional change but a typographical mistake, as noted by Doi, "Introduction", p.27.

48 In the imaginary of *waka*, in spring, sleep is shallow and dreams are very short.

49 The Four Mistakes in Buddhism refer to mistaking impermanence, self, suffering and impurity for permanence, selflessness, bliss, and purity.

If common people must be ashamed of these mistakes and avoid them,  
how much more ashamed should the *wise and sagely ones* be!<sup>50</sup>

### Japanese Poems<sup>51</sup> 歌

1. けふ見すは くやしからまし 花さかり さきものこらす ちりもしめす  
If I do not see them today,  
I shall not regret it.  
Flowers at their fullest  
will blossom to disappear,  
will scatter to beget nothing.<sup>52</sup>
2. さかりなる 花のすかたも ちりはてゝ あはれに見ゆる 春のゆふくれ  
The forms of the flowers  
in full bloom  
are now completely scattered.  
How moving,  
this evening of spring!
3. 花ちりて 春もくれゆく 木のもとに いのちつきぬる いりあひのかね  
Flowers wither,  
spring fades away,  
at the base of a tree  
life is fully extinguished  
at the sound of the evening bell.

50 The term ‘wise and sagely ones’ is a translation of ‘*seiken no hito*’ (聖賢の人) and is italicized to indicate a variation introduced by the Jesuits to replace ‘*Shakushi*’ (釈氏) in Su Dong Po’s original prologue, meaning ‘the disciples of Shakyamuni’.

51 Translation by the author, with help from Michelle Kuhn.

52 The first *waka* in the Jesuit Press version of the collection does not belong to the first stage, but to a stage prior to death – the ‘best years’ stage, which is not included in Japanese printed versions from the early Edo period onwards, but can be found in the Chinese literary tradition and in Japanese manuscript versions of the *Poems on the Nine Stages*. For example, the manuscript version of the *Nara eihon* opens with a picture depicting a young woman in her prime, under a blossoming cherry tree, although no poems are given for that first image. Imanishi, op. cit., p.22. There is a similar *waka* with wording variations in the *Tenjiku Monogatari*’s *Kusōka* collection, although it is the second one in that case. Manuscript kept at the University of Kyōto, f. 29r–30v. Reproduced in “*Tenjiku Monogatari*”. Kyōto Daigaku Bungakubu Kokugogaku Kokubungaku Kenkyūshitsu (Ed.), *Kyōto Daigakuzō Muromachi Monogatari*, vol. 3. Kyōto: Rinsen Shoten, 2002, pp.243–246. When comparing the Jesuit Press version with the other extant manuscript versions, it becomes clear that the association of specific pairs of *waka* to each of the nine considerations had not yet been fixed at the time. Although the original could be translated using either the second or third person, as if the *waka* was an exhortation to the reader or written from the point of view of an observer, I translate the poem in the first person,

4. 浅からず しるはともにと ちきりつる 人もよそなる よもきふの本  
 Though our bond  
 is far from shallow,  
 when I die<sup>53</sup>  
 even the one you cling to  
 will depart far away,  
 to a remote place covered by mugwort weeds.<sup>54</sup>
5. 落やすき 秋のもみちの 霜かれて みしにもあらぬ 人のいろかな  
 Short-lived  
 autumn red leaves  
 withered by winter frost.  
 Is this not a colour of the human body  
 never seen before?
6. みな人の わかものかほに 思ひにし このみのはての なれるすかたよ  
 A transforming shape!  
 That is the end of this body  
 which we all  
 considered  
 our face.
7. 日にそへて かはる姿の まゆすみも きえてあとなき 露の身そうき  
 As with every passing day  
 the shape of black ink brows changes,  
 so the body like dew  
 evaporates without a trace.  
 Harrowing!!

assuming the *waka* takes the point of view of the living woman, as some *waka* will later on take the point of view of the corpse.

- 53 The term 'shiruha' (しるは) in the original text has been considered a typographical mistake for 'shinaba' (死なば). Although it could be translated using the third person, as if the *waka* was written from the point of view of an observer, here the first person has been used, assuming this *waka* takes the point of view of the female corpse, as suggested by Watanabe, "*Kusōzu no waka*". Yūko Shimauchi; Yasuaki Watanabe (Ed.), *Waka Bungaku no Sekai*. Tōkyō: Hōsō Daigaku Kyōiku Shinkōkai, 2015, p.124.
- 54 The term 'moto' (本) in the original has been translated as 'yado' (宿). Mugwort is a plant that grows in uncared-for fields, like weed, and is therefore often associated with feelings of desolation in Japanese literature – for example, in Chapter 15 of the *Tale of Genji*, titled precisely 'Mugwort' (*Yomogiu*, 蓬生), translated as 'Waste of weeds' by Tyler, where the prince visits a lover he had forgotten, only to find her villa abandoned and covered by mugwort weeds. See Tyler (Transl.), op. cit.



8. 何として かりなる色を かさりけん かかるへしとは かねてしらすや  
 Why did I embellish  
 in so many ways  
 this transient body?  
 Didn't I know already  
 it would become like this?
9. うらみても かひなきものは 鳥邊山 まくすか原に 風さはくなり  
 No matter how much I resent it  
 nothing can be done  
 about the clamouring of the wind  
 in Toribe Hill's  
 Makusugahara fields.<sup>55</sup>
10. とりへのに あらそふ犬の こゑきけは 身のうきかねて をき所なし  
 When I hear the snarling  
 of the dogs fighting  
 in Toribe fields,  
 there is no place to lie  
 for the long-suffering body.
11. これをみて 身はうきものと 思ひしれ 何のなさけか 今はあるへき  
 Looking at this,  
 be aware that  
 the body is transient.  
 What kind of feeling  
 could you have for it now?
12. はかなしや あさゆふなてし くろかみも よもきか本の 塵となりけり  
 How ephemeral!  
 Even the black hair  
 she stroked every morning and evening  
 has become dust  
 amongst the mugwort weeds.
13. 思ひきや 鳥邊野山に すてられて 犬のあらそふ 身なるへしとは  
 Did you ever imagine  
 the body  
 would be abandoned  
 in Toribe fields  
 and fought over by dogs?

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55 Makusugahara is a place in Kyōto, near Toribe Hill, located where nowadays Maruyama Park stands. Before the Edo period, it was a field ground where corpses were disposed of, a sort of cemetery.

14. かはにこそ おとこそんなの 色はあれ ほねにはかはる 人かたもなし  
 It is only in the skin  
 of men and women  
 that the flush of passion exists.  
 Once turned into bones  
 there is no human form.
15. かさりつる 色香は野へに ちりはてゝ 残るかはねの なれるすかたよ  
 The glamour and charm  
 she embellished herself with  
 are completely scattered in the fields.  
 The remaining corpse  
 is just a changing form.
16. つゆの身の きえにしあとを みよかほに よもきか本に のこるすかたよ  
 Look at the traces  
 of the dew-like body  
 completely vanished!  
 All that remains  
 of her face  
 is amongst the mugwort weeds.
17. 立のぼる 煙かすゑは きえはてゝ つかにはのこる 露の身そうき  
 The smoke traces  
 disappeared in the air completely,  
 and the dew-like body  
 rests in the tomb.  
 Harrowing!
18. 書つけし そのなも今は きえはてゝ 誰ともしらぬ ふるそとはかな  
 That engraved  
 name has now  
 completely faded,  
 and no one knows  
 to whom this old tombstone belonged.

These translations are just one possible interpretation of the poems, and literacy has been prioritised over literary quality, in order to reflect the structure and wording of the original *waka*, when possible at all, given that Classical Japanese and English are languages which differ greatly in grammatical structure. Translating poetry is always very challenging, and translating *waka* is even more difficult due to the many omissions that often allow for multiple interpretations and the many cultural and literary references implicit in certain words. The purpose of

this essay is not to offer a thorough literary study of these *waka*.<sup>56</sup> Rather, it will focus on its content in order to argue that Jesuits must have chosen these poems for its moral and misogynous content by pointing to similarities with coeval Christian spiritual works, by contextualizing the *Kusōka* within the Jesuit policy towards the use of Buddhist terminology, and by suggesting that the *Kusōka* might have been one of the sources for the Japanese poetic images used in Japanese translations of Christian literature published by the Jesuit Press.

According to Rodrigues' Abbreviated Grammar, Jesuit preachers should learn Japanese poetry in order to broaden their conversational topics. However, as said above, the fact that Jesuits published the *Kusōka*'s prologue suggests that they wanted their students to be aware of the purpose of the poems. The prologue points at a particular interpretation of the poems, one that stresses their spiritual or moral message – namely, that the human body is perishable and that physical attachment between men and women is not only ephemeral and shallow but also impure and delusional. Therefore, it advocates detachment toward the body and the self. The vocabulary and the reasoning are rather Buddhist, since duality – and more specifically love and enmity – are seen as a cause of further suffering, but the last sentence of the prologue appeals to the wise and virtuous. While in the Japanese versions the prologue circumscribes the audience of the poems to the 'disciples of Shakya' (*Shakushi*, 釈民), the Jesuit Press version replaces that clearly Buddhist and specific concept meaning those who follow Buddha's doctrinal teachings, with the Confucian concept of 'wise and sagely ones' (*seiken no hito*, 聖賢の人). This is a rather broad term referring to both the ancient sage kings (former virtuous rulers) and those wise men who recorded and interpreted their acts in the classics (including Confucius among many other authors). With this replacement Jesuits detach the poems from its doctrinal dimension and stress its moralistic and educational potential. This is reinforced by the fact that another Confucian term 'ancient saints and sages' (*koseiken*, 古聖賢), was the term used in compilations of humanistic sayings published by the Jesuits in China to refer to ancient Greek and Latin authors.<sup>57</sup> Jesuits did not go as far as to Christianize the message by using 'followers of *Deus*', 'Christians' (*kirishitan* キリシタン), 'saints', (*santos* サントス), or any other expressions used in Jesuit Japanese publications to refer to believers or virtue models. Instead, they chose a more 'neutral' option, appealing to the ideal of wisdom and virtue, widely spread in East Asia through Confucianism and Taoism, yet also valued in Christianity and European Humanism. In sum, the prologue adjustments

56 For a literary comparative analysis of several versions of the *Kusōka*, including the Jesuit Press version, see Watanabe, "Kusōshi no waka wo megutte", pp. 119–124.

57 Standaert (Ed.), *Handbook of Christianity in China*. Volume One: 635–1800. Leiden: Brill, 2001, pp.604–605. Japanese students in Jesuit mission schools were also exposed to Classic humanistic authors and a Latin anthology of sayings was used to teach them Latin. See Manuel Barreto, *Flosculi ex veteris ac Novi Testamenti, S. Doctorum et insignium philosophorum floribus selecti per Emmanuelem Barretum Lusitanum, presbyterum Societatis Iesu*. Nangasaquij. In Collegio Iaponico eiusdem Societatis, 1610.

suggest that Jesuits found in these poems a message that was more than just ‘acceptable’ from a Catholic moral perspective. In fact, it ‘resonated’ with Christian values like the disgust for the impurity of the body, the awareness of one’s own death, chastity and celibacy, one of the three main vows of Catholic monks (including Jesuits).

Awareness of one’s own death and of the transience of life, coupled with contempt for the body, which are key concepts underlying the *Kusōka*, were also important values in modern Catholic devotion. For example, we can find some of these ideas in the *Spiritual Exercises* (1548), a set of contemplation practices composed by the founder of the Society of Jesus, Ignatius of Loyola (1491–1556).<sup>58</sup> The first edition was published in Latin in 1548, and soon the *Exercises* became crucial to Jesuit identity, as well as very popular among other Catholic religious orders and the laity. Among the exercises for the first week – out of a total of four weeks –, meditation on the contempt for one’s own body is recommended in the first ‘exercise’, and in the sixth ‘addition’ the importance of being aware of one’s own death and the final judgement is also stressed.<sup>59</sup> Although there are no specific exercises to prevent lust, meditation on one’s own sins is also a crucial part of the first exercise and lust is one of the seven capital sins in the Catholic doctrine.<sup>60</sup> Thus, a difference with regard to Buddhist doctrines on the nine considerations is that Loyola emphasizes awareness and repentance of sins, rather than prevention. Nevertheless, awareness of one’s own death as a way to prevent sin is present in the works of a very popular Spanish Catholic author, the Dominican priest Fray Luis de Granada (1505–1588), who elaborated extensively on death and stressed the ‘ugliness’ of the dead body, the burial and the tomb.<sup>61</sup>

Regarding prevention of lust, it must be noted that specific indications for Catholic priests on how to maintain chastity are provided in the book *Practice of Christian and Religious Perfection* by the Jesuit Alfonso Rodriguez (1533–1617), first published in 1606, in Spanish.<sup>62</sup> A series of rules are given to keep chastity, but rather than active confrontation of a decaying female body, these are mainly avoidance prohibitions. Rodriguez recommends not looking at anything that might cause the flesh to rebel against the spirit, repudiating exciting words or books, rejecting any impure thoughts, not touching or being touched by anybody in the face or hands, not touching oneself, not entertaining affection for or accepting presents from whom one feels any particular inclination, and avoiding

58 Loyola, *Exercitia Spiritualia*. Rome: Antonio Bladio, 1548; first exercise of the first week. See English translation in Mottola, *The Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius*. New York: Doubleday, 1989, p.54.

59 Mottola, *Ibidem*, p. 61.

60 *Ibidem*, pp. 54–56.

61 Fray Luis de Granada, *Libro de la Oración y Meditación* (1566) and *Guia de Pecadores* (1567) in Trancho, *Obra Selecta de Fray Luis de Granada*. Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, 1970, pp.1046–1064. *Guia de Pecadores* was translated into Japanese. *Guia do Pecadoru*. ぎやどべかどる N.p.: Collegio Japonico Societatis Jesus, 1599.

62 Rodriguez, *The Practice of Christian and Religious Perfection*. Dublin: N. p., 1861.

their company.<sup>63</sup> In this regard, the Jesuits must have surely seen in the *Kusōka* an explicit and direct warning against the desire for the female body and the sensual attachment between men and women, offering a way to counter lust that was different but complemented or even filled a gap in Christian literature.

Whether Jesuits ever came across an illustrated version of the *Kusōka* is unknown, since no references to such paintings have been found so far. It is possible that they learned about them from some of the Japanese brothers who had been trained as Buddhist monks before joining the Society, but perhaps they were shown some illustrated scrolls at some of the Buddhist temples they visited. Meditation practices on images were not a new concept for Jesuits. An important Jesuit contribution to Catholic spiritual literature is an illustrated version of Loyola's *Spiritual Exercises*, published in 1595 by Jerónimo Nadal (1507–1580) with a collection of images for meditating on the Passion.<sup>64</sup> The book had already reached China in 1605, and became one of the most reprinted Jesuit books in China.<sup>65</sup> Unlike the *Kusōzu*, it was not meant only for the training of monks, but also for the laity. Jesuit missionaries published a Chinese version of it, as well as pictorial books for meditation on the rosary (1619) or the life of Christ (1637, 1640). Not only were the explanatory texts translated into Chinese, but even some of the original images were modified according to Chinese pictographic conventions.<sup>66</sup> Although there is no evidence that Jesuits used this book in Japan, the popularity of Nadal's prints in China testify to the importance of religious practices and books in the Jesuits' evangelisation strategy for China and Japan, and allows for a comparative study on the concept and practices of meditation.<sup>67</sup>

The *Kusōka* is also a good example of the Jesuit policy towards Buddhist terminology. In the prologue, the replacement of the Buddha's name is an example of the censorship of Buddhist terms, but there are other less obviously Buddhist concepts in the prologue that are left uncensored, such as the 'four great errors' which refers to mistaking impermanence for permanence, pleasure for suffering, selflessness for self, and impurity for purity. In spite of the omission of Buddha's name in the prologue, and of the sub-headings with the name of each of the nine stages, which

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63 Ibidem, pp.362–363.

64 Nadal, *Adnotationes et meditationes in evangelia quae in sacrosanto missae sacrificio tot anno leguntur*. Antwerp: Martinus Nutius, 1595. See a photographic reproduction in Homann (Ed.), *Annotations and Meditations on the Gospels: The Passion Narratives*. Philadelphia, PA: Saint Joseph's University Press, 2007; Homann (Ed.), *Annotations and Meditations on the Gospels: The Resurrection Narratives*. Philadelphia, PA: Saint Joseph's University Press, 2005, and Homann; Melion, *Annotations and Meditations on the Gospels: The Infancy Narratives*. Philadelphia, PA: Saint Joseph's University Press, 2003.

65 Ito, "Furansu kokuritsu toshokan shozō no Iezusukaishi niyoru seiyōkagaku kanyakusho ni tsuite". *Tagen Bunka*, 13, 2013, pp.128–129 and 136–138. Idem, "Furansu kokuritsu toshokan shozō no senkyōshi niyoru seishokanwa chosho ni tsuite". *Tagen Bunka*, vol. 11 (2011), pp.200–201.

66 Standaert (Ed.), op. cit., pp.26–27.

67 Ibidem, pp.29–35.

are customary in the *Kusōshi*, it seems that the policy towards Buddhist terminology is not the radical ‘zero approach’.

When looking at the other works compiled in the *Royei Zafit*, different ‘policies’ regarding Buddhist references can be observed. In the first part (*Wakanrōishū*), some *waka* related to Buddhist rituals of atonement and purification and the whole section on ‘impermanence’ are omitted, but at least three poems with Buddhist references are included.<sup>68</sup> On the other hand, in the second part (*Uta*), following the *Kusōka*, there is a *waka* collection (*Mujōka*) themed around the Buddhist concept of impermanence (*mujō*). Thus, Jesuits seem to have selected poems related to mundane or this worldly matters in the first part, and poems related to death and impermanence in the second.<sup>69</sup> However, while in the third part (*Zahitsushō*) Buddhist expressions have not been censored at all, in the fifth part (letters by Japanese historical figures), the references to Buddhist and Shinto deities have been eliminated and replaced by Japanese words that Jesuits used to refer to the Christian God.<sup>70</sup> This speaks of a ‘selective censorship’ or heterogeneous policy towards Buddhist terminology, which seems to apply as well to the use of Buddhist terms to translate Christian concepts in Jesuit publications. Scholars who have studied the Jesuits’ use of Buddhist terms in Japanese translations of Christian doctrinal works and devotional literature conclude that there was not one single unified criterion and that different manuscripts and books show slightly different approaches to using Buddhist words.<sup>71</sup> Kaiser suggests that different translation traditions or different translators can be identified, and concludes that one-to-one translation equivalents for Christian terminology into Japanese had not been achieved among Jesuits by the time Christianity was banned in 1614.<sup>72</sup> We must keep in mind that the works

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68 San Emeterio, “Presencia y papel de un clásico de la poesía, el *Wakanrōishū*, entre las misiones jesuitas del Japón del s. XVII. Conversión y poesía”. *Revista Iberoamericana de Estudios de Asia Oriental*, vol. 3 (2010), pp.108–109.

69 The combination of the *Kusōka* and the *Mujōka* was not unusual in Japan. For example, there is an extant commented version of the *Chinese Poems on the Nine Considerations* printed in Kyōto in 1694, which includes the Japanese *waka* and long commentaries in classical Chinese, followed by a second volume with explanations on the *Contemplation of Impermanence and Impurity* based on Buddhist scriptures and anecdotic stories (*setsuwa*). Photographic reproduction in Yamamoto; Nishiyama (Eds.), op. cit., pp.104–138. Both sections include several Japanese poems by various authors at the end, and it is likely that similar texts circulated either in printed or manuscript form from earlier times.

70 Doi, “Introduction”, p.5.

71 Shirai, “Kirishitan gogaku zenpan”. Toyoshima Masayuki (Ed.), *Kirishitan to Shuppan*. Tōkyō: Yagi Shoten, 2013, pp.202–203; Hazama, “A. Valignano ni yoru bukkyō riyō no kito – *Nihon-shi* (1601) wo tegakari ni”. *Ajia, Kirisutokyō, Tagensei*, 13, pp.35–52.

72 Kaiser, “Translations of Christian Terminology into Japanese 16<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> Centuries: Problems and Solutions”. John Breen; Mark Williams (Eds.), *Japan and Christianity, Impacts and Responses*. London: Macmillan Press, 1996, p.15.

of the Jesuit Press in Japan involved many different kinds of texts, by different individuals with a common vision, but with particular backgrounds and methods, and therefore variation and differences in criteria and style can be observed.

Finally, I want to bring attention to a few expressions in the Jesuit Japanese translations of Christian devotional literature that corroborate similarities between Buddhist and Jesuit views on death and impermanence. The Jesuits grasped the importance of the concept of impermanence in Japanese culture and religiosity, and used it to appeal to the affective and emotional aspect of Japanese potential converts. This Buddhist concept became crucial to explain Christian concepts in their translations of devotional literature, and eventually evocative expressions referring to ‘impermanence’ replaced explicit references to ‘death’, which was a taboo concept in Japanese culture, in order to make the Christian message more appealing to the Japanese. In fact, some of the metaphors or poetic expressions used in Jesuit Japanese translations of Christian literature might have been taken from the *Kusōka* and the *Mujōka*.

When looking at Japanese translations of devotional works like *Contemptus Mundi*<sup>73</sup> and *Guia do Pecador*, for example, one of the main characteristics according to Farge is that the translators added several Japanese poetic expressions. In *Contemptus Mundi*, direct references to death are softened and expressed through poetic metaphors using concepts related to Japanese Buddhist views on the transience of the world like ‘transient world’ (*ukiyo*, 浮世) and impermanence (*mujō*).<sup>74</sup> Jesuits did not identify these concepts as Buddhist terms in the Jesuit Japanese-Portuguese Dictionary, but seem to have understood its meaning. *Ukiyo* is defined as ‘this miserable world of suffering’ and *mujō* is given three definitions: first as ‘misery or brevity of the matters of the world’, second as ‘dying’, and third as ‘characteristic of worldly matters that end or change easily.’<sup>75</sup> Some of the most praised Jesuit translators in the Japanese mission, like Hara Martinho,<sup>76</sup> had actually been educated in the Jesuit *seminario*, where the *Royei Zafit* was used as a textbook, so that the *Kusōka* and the *Mujōka*, might well have been one of the sources of inspiration for the poetic expressions used in Jesuit Christian literature in Japanese.

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73 There are two different Japanese translations of this book, a Romanized one and a different one in Sino-Japanese alphabet. *Contemptus Mundi jenbu*. [Amakusa] Nippon Iesusno Companhia no Collegio, 1596; *Contemptus Mundi*. Miaci [Kyōto] ex Officina Farada Antonii, 1610. 『こんてむつすむん地』都、原田アントニオ、慶長十五年。

74 Farge, *The Japanese Translations of the Jesuit Mission Press, 1590–1614: De Imitatione Christi and Guia de Pecadores*. Lewiston (US), Queenstone (Canada), Lampeter (UK): The Edwin Mellen Press, 2002, pp.58–61.

75 *Vocabulario da lingoa de Iapam*. Nagasaki: Collegio Societatis Iesu, 1604, pp.170r, 380r.

76 Pacheco, “Diogo de Mesquita, S. J. and the Jesuit Mission Press”. *Monumenta Nipponica*, vol. 26/3–4 (1971), pp.440–441.

## Conclusions

The *Royei Zafit* includes a version of the *Kusōka*, and João Rodrigues quotes the first stanza of the *Kusōshi* in *Arte da Lingoa de Iapam* (1604),<sup>77</sup> which suggests that the Jesuits were in contact with one of the versions comprising both *Chinese and Japanese Poems on the Nine Stages* which circulated in manuscript form in Japan, perhaps with illustrations. Since the oldest extant printed Japanese edition of the *Kusōshi* (Chinese and Japanese poems) is dated 1605, the Jesuit Press version stands out as the earliest printed version of the *Kusōka* (Japanese poems only). Another characteristic of this version is that it is the only printed version comprising the Japanese poems alone, with neither the Chinese poems nor the pictures.

Although it is not clear if Jesuits were aware of Buddhist practices and doctrines on the contemplation of the nine aspects of bodily decay, it seems that they grasped the importance of the Buddhist concepts underlying the poems: the impurity and impermanence of the (female) body and of sensual attachment or lust. I have argued that the Jesuits published a full version of the *Kusōka* in one of the textbooks for the advanced students of their schools, not only to broaden their conversation topics, as openly stated by João Rodrigues, but also because the poems resonated with key concepts within Jesuit spirituality – namely, the contempt for the body, the transience of life and the importance of remembering the inevitability of one's own death (*memento mori*) – present in the Catholic devotional literature of the time as well as in the Jesuits' main contemplative practices, the *Spiritual Exercises*. Moreover, I have suggested in my analysis that there might have been another, less explicit instrumental dimension, which is the training of young men for religious life. In the Buddhist context, the ultimate goal of meditation practices on the nine considerations was to help monks in training overcome desire and lust, and reflect on death and the impermanence of life in order to strengthen one's commitment to religious life. Although this purpose was highly aestheticized in the Japanese poems, it was still the main purpose, as stated in the preface. Overcoming lust and keeping celibacy being a crucial part of the training of Catholic monks, the *Kusōka* must have been considered most suitable to train young Japanese boys aspiring to become Jesuits or priests.

Regarding the Jesuit stance on the censorship of Buddhist terms, we must acknowledge that while the name of the Buddha was omitted in the preface to the *Kusōka*, several Buddhist concepts were retained, according to a 'selective censorship'. We tend to talk about Jesuits as a homogeneous body, yet translations were made by various individuals with heterogeneous approaches. Jesuits lacked a unified policy towards Buddhist terms, as is evident in the absence of consistent criteria on the use of Buddhist terms among the texts compiled in the *Royei Zafit*, as well as among Jesuit manuscript and printed books. However, some Buddhist concepts, like impermanence (*mujō*), were perceived as crucial for understanding

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77 Rodrigues, *Arte da Lingoa de Iapam*, p.180r.



Japanese spirituality, and extensively used in Japanese translations of Christian devotional works, like *Contemptus Mundi* and *Guia do Pecador*, to convey Christian teachings on death and the afterlife in a more appealing way for the Japanese.

Although Buddhist and Catholic understandings of the afterlife differed substantially and were one of the main points of doctrinal debate and refutation, there was a shared emphasis on the awareness of death and the transience of life underlying the *Kusōka* poems and Japanese translations of Christian literature, which speaks of a certain resemblance or affinity between Catholic and Buddhist approaches to life, death, and the impurity of the body. This brings to the surface a new dimension of the relationship between Christianity and Buddhism in early modern Japan, often explained merely in terms of difference and mutual hostility. While the Jesuit appraisal of Japanese poems with a Buddhist background does not contradict or deny this historical antagonism, it does add an interesting nuance to the traditional understanding of Jesuit attitudes towards Japanese Buddhism, showing that it was more complex than a mere rivalry or doctrinal confrontation. Jesuits achieved a deep understanding of certain Buddhist concepts related to impermanence and not only included them in educational materials, but even appropriated them in devotional publications.



Frédéric GIRARD

# In Search for a Buddhist Ecumenical Reformation in Contact with Christianity

## Introduction

The reactions of Buddhist currents towards Christianity present particularly insurmountable obstacles because there are almost no live documents nor materials open to describe them. The prohibition of the foreign religion resulted in the destruction of almost all Christian materials, and native Japanese thinkers or religious believers were reluctant to recognize the validity and influence of Christianity in their own systems of thought. In this regard, the case of the Cosmological section, which is the first chapter of the *Compendium catholicae veritatis* by Pedro Gómez (1533/35–1600), diffused as a non-Christian book and a Confucian treatise, is well-known. To be more precise, a *Treatise of Philosophy and Theology*, based on the teachings of Aristotle (384–322 BCE) and Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274), was translated into Japanese at the end of the sixteenth century, in its definitive shape in 1595. The title of the work was *Compendium of Theology* or *Compendium on the Catholic Truth* or in abbreviation *Compendium*.

This *Compendium* was conceived as a catechism, as the Japanese title chosen afterwards shows *Kōgi yōkō* 講義要綱 [*The Essential of the doctrine or of the catechism*]. In reality, it was actually an integral and total survey of the knowledge derived from the Council of Trent (1545–1563) and stemmed from the university teachings and seminary training inside the Iberian Peninsula. In Latin, the work was known under the title of its three parts, *Compendium on the Celestial Spheres*, *Compendium on De Anima and on Treatises on Nature* [*Parva Naturalia*] of Aristotle, and the *Compendium on Theology* or *on the Catholic Truth*. In fact, one of these three titles was used to name the totality of the work, so that the title of *Compendium* was considered sufficient to connote the whole treatise. The first part, named *De Sphaera*, or *Compendium physicae naturalis* deals with ideas of cosmology, astronomy, physics and meteorology, belonging to Aristotle and Ptolemy (c.100–c.170), which was represented by the *Book on the Sphere* (*Tractatus de Sphaera Mundi*) by John of Holywood or Johannes de Sacrobosco (c.1196–c.1256 [1244?]), and commented upon by the mathematician Christopher Clavius (1538–1612) (1579: *In Sphaeram Joannis de Sacro Bosco Commentarius*), with some adaptations to the Gregorian calendar. This part tries to highlight the laws of nature explaining the phenomena, especially those that are strange and cannot be explained, like eclipses. This part aims to demonstrate that what is attributed to the influence of supernatural or miraculous strengths can be explained rationally. The Japanese translation of this part is actually lacking, but it has circulated in Japan under several forms, the most current is the *Compendium on the two cosmic*

*principles*, *Nigi ryakusetsu* 二儀略説, published under the name of the literate Confucian Kobayashi Kentei 小林謙貞 (1601–1684) (1682). Some other treatises are also derived from it, like the *Examination of the Heaven and of the Earth* (*Kenkon bensetsu* 乾坤弁説, about 1656), a translation of Kristofer Clavius's *In sphaeram Joannis de Sacrobosco commentarius*, brought by the Italian Jesuit Giuseppe Chiara alias Okamoto Sanuemon 岡本三右衛門 (1602–1685), and the *Compendium on Astronomy* (*Tenmon biyō* 天文備要, 1644) by Sawano Chūan 澤野忠庵 (the apostate Cristóvão Ferreira, c.1580–1650), revised by Mukai Genshō 向井元升 (1609–1677, who criticised the lack of the concepts of Principle (*li*), energy (*ki*), and of Yin and Yang.. An arranged version of this treatise, including Chinese knowledge, was popularized by the Confucian thinker Nishikawa Joken 西川如見 (1648–1724), the *Compendium of the two cosmic principles*, *Ryōgi shūsetsu* 兩儀集説.

Nonetheless, we are not completely unable to approach this question and not without any hope to grasp it with some success, though we have to be cautious with the degree of certainty on having grasped real results on the matter. To proof too much is to proof nothing but a congruence of facts gives some reliability to a reasonable hypothesis. Is it not the case when in India Buddhism was refuting the thesis of the eternity of soul (*ātman*) against Brahmanism and theistic Saṃkhya or in Ancient and Medieval Japan against local thought and creed?

When Christianity became important and prevalent in some places in South Japan, Buddhist preachers attempted to assert evidence of the eternity of a spiritual principle, *reimei* 靈明, *reisei* 靈性, a hypostasised soul, that modern Buddhist thinker Suzuki Daisetsu 鈴木大拙 (1870–1966) recognized as the *Japanese Spirit*, *Nihonteki reisei* 日本的靈性 (1944), which he sought in medieval and pre-modern preachers at the same time including Rinzaï monks as Bankei Yōtaku 盤珪永琢 (1622–1693), Gudō Tōshoku 愚堂東寔 (1577–1661), Shidō Bunan 至道無難 (1603–1676), and others. In some cases, it seems that an indirect influence can be detected in Suzuki Shōsan 鈴木正三 (1579–1655) by Sessō Sōsai 雪窗宗崔 (1589–1649). Some monks such as Takuan Sōhō 澤庵宗彭 (1573–1645), very close to the shogunate, may also be mentioned as stressing the eternity of the soul by mixing Zen with the Amida Paradise creed. There is no textual evidence that Takuan had contact with Christianity, but his discourses on the causality in the world seem to be an echo of the Christian doctrine of the Creation that he wants to refute systematically. This seemingly unorthodox doctrine was the reverse of the Buddhist doctrine, which was not outright, denied from the very beginning because it was not useful to do so.

Previous studies on this subject cannot be easily found but we have to mention the pioneering work of Ōkuwa Hitoshi who has done a very useful edition of Sessō Sōsai works and family documents of the Tokugawa, like the *Chronicle inaugurating the Augurous Destiny of Matsudaira*, *Matsudairashi keiunki* 松平氏啓運記, the *Last teachings* of Tokugawa Ieyasu (1543–1616), *Tōshōgū goyūikun* 東照宮御遺訓, or the *Chronicle inaugurating the Augurous Destiny of the cult of Matsudaira*,

*Matsudaira sūshū kaiunroku* 松平崇宗開運録 (1651?),<sup>1</sup> giving a lot of information concerning the Buddhist ideology elaborated during the so-called “Christian Century”. Ōkuwa himself has not conducted research on Christian influence but his editions can be used with this objective.<sup>2</sup>

## Misunderstood Concepts

I shall list some interpretations of Jesuits about Japanese Buddhist religion, stressing some aspects where there were misunderstandings. In the perception of Buddhism by the Jesuits, Buddhist concepts have been analysed with an amazing acuity, apparently from the information collected, but in some cases, we can notice misunderstandings about them.

## Reason

It is asserted by Jesuits, as in the Yamaguchi controversy of 1552, that what distinguishes man from animal is the use of reason and therefore the moral sense. At the time of the Jesuit missionaries, the word *ratio* meant not only reason but also intellect: it has an objective and a subjective side, a fact which is reflected in the Japanese translations. They also used the term in the meaning of reasoning, essence and definition of a thing, cause (formal, final); for them, the reason is not a faculty separated from the intellect but the latter, which is perfect, apprehends directly the intelligible truth though the former, which is imperfect, reaches the intelligible truth through a cognitive process going from one object to another. As men are imperfect, they have reason and are reasonable beings but do not have the perfect intelligence

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1 Hirano; Ōkuwa, *Kinsei bukk'yō chikokuron no shiryō to kenkyū – Matsudaira kaiunroku / Tōshōgū goyūkun / 近世仏教治國論の史料と研究 松平開運録 / 東照宮御遺訓 (Materials and researches on the country governance by Buddhism in modern times / Chronicle inaugurating the Augurous Destiny of Matsudaira / Last teachings of Tokugawa Ieyasu)*. Ōsaka: Seibundō Shuppan 清文堂出版, 2007. It is a compilation of papers published earlier by prof. Ōkuwa. I used the earlier version of these materials: Ōkuwa, *Kinsei ni okeru bukk'yō chikokuronno shiryōteki kenkyū*, 『近世における仏教治國論の史料的研究』 (*Historical researches on the State ruling doctrine by Buddhism in modern times*). *Kenkyū kadai bangō 10610340*, Heisei jūinen jūichinen kagaku kenkyūhi hojokin 研究課題番号10610340、平成十年十一年度科学研究費補助金, Kibankenkyū C-1 基盤研究C-1, *Kenkyū seika hōkokusho* 研究成果報告書, Report on Researches Results, Ōtani daigaku bungakubu 大谷大学文学部, University Ōtani, Faculty of Letters, June 2000, pp.28–29.

2 Ōkuwa, *Nihon kinseino shisō to bukk'yō* 日本近世の思想と仏教 (*Thought and Buddhism in Modern Japan*). Kyōto: Hōzōkan 法藏館, 1989.

for instance of angels.<sup>3</sup> Later, in the two Chapters concerning *Philosophy and Theology* of the *Compendium* (1592–1595), reason is stressed as the natural means by which man can attain the Truth independently of the Revelation. In the vocabulary of the Jesuits, for instance in the *Vocabulario da lingua de Iapam* (1603–1604) coordinated by a Committee of Japanese and European compilers, in which João Rodrigues, S.J. (c.1561/62–1633) seems to have played an appreciable role,<sup>4</sup> there is not an appropriate native term for “reason” as a human intellectual faculty in the fields of knowledge and action, but only as a principle of explanation in the natural world. That is the case of words such as: *dōri* 道理, reason, reasoning,<sup>5</sup> *ri* 理, reason or

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- 3 Abbé Drioux (Transl. and notes), *Lexique des termes et des formules scolastiques les plus embarrassantes qui se trouvent dans la Somme théologique de Saint Thomas et en général dans les auteurs du Moyen Âge, Somme théologique de saint Thomas d'Aquin, Docteur évangélique, Lexique thomiste et table du Tome VIII*, p.751, *La Somme Théologique de Saint Thomas d'Aquin Docteur Angelique*. 8 Vols. N.p.: Éditions Saint-Rémi, 2001. Gilson, *Index scolastico-cartésien*. Paris: Librairie philosophique J. Vrin, p.259. According to the principles of the Valladolid Controversy (1550), such a reasonable being could not be treated as a slave. Cf. Bartolomé de Las Casas, *La controverse entre Las Casas et Sepúlveda. Précédé de Impérialisme, empire et destruction*. Introduit, traduit et annoté par Nestor Capdevila. Paris: Vrin, 2007, pp.13 et n.3, 240 et n.88 (Bulle de Paul III du 9 June 1537).
- 4 *Vocabulario da lingua de Iapam com a declaração em portugues, feito por alguns padres, e irmãos da Companhia de IESV*. Nangasaqui: Collegio de Iapam da Companhia de IESVS, 1603. This *Vocabulario* has no definite author – Christian followers in particular Japanese, do not give their names as authors, possibly because their work is dedicated to God. Against Léon Pagès who stressed that Rodrigues the interpreter played an important role as a compiler (1869) and Georg Schurhammer who considered that he collaborated with the *Vocabulario* (1935), Doi Tadao, after a long demonstration, thought that the compiler was another person than Rodrigues the interpreter. Doi, *Kirishitan gogaku no kenkyū* 吉利支丹語学の研究 (*Studies on the linguistics of Christians*). Ōsaka: Seibunsha 靖文社, 1943–1944, pp.59–60, 104–106. However, it has been argued that Rodrigues the Interpreter was an important contributor and an occasional compiler, after the disappearance of Francisco Rodrigues (in Japan 1588–1603). Among Japanese contributors, the translator Paulo Yōhō (1510–1595), and among the compilers, the names of João Yamaguchi and Cosme Takai (1568?–1613?) are proposed. Cooper, *Rodrigues the Interpreter. An Early Jesuit in Japan and China*. New York; Tokyo: Weatherhill, 1974, pp.220–224, 228, and “The Nippo Jisho (review of the *Vocabulario da Lingoa de Iapam com a declaracao em Portugues, Feito por Alguns Padres, e Irmaos da Companhia de Jesus*)”. *Monumenta Nipponica*, vol. 31, no. 4 (Winter 1976), pp.417–430. *Nihon kirisutokyō rekishi daijiten* 日本キリスト教歴史大事典 (*Encyclopedia of Japanese Christianity*). Tōkyō: Kyōbunkan, 1988, p.1030. Minako Debergh does not give any definite compiler and considers that it is a collective work, “Les débuts des contacts linguistiques entre l'Occident et le Japon. Premiers dictionnaires et grammaires des missionnaires chrétiens au Japon au XVIIe et au XVIIIe siècles”. *Langages*, 16<sup>e</sup> année, n°68, 1982, pp. 35–37.
- 5 Pagès, *Dictionnaire Japonais-Français, traduit du Dictionnaire Japonais-Portugais composé par les Missionnaires de la Compagnie de Jésus et imprimé en 1603, à*

reasoning,<sup>6</sup> or *kotowari* 理, reasoning, reason,<sup>7</sup> *giri* 義理, a good reason or a valuable reasoning, sometimes the ‘bonne cause’; reason or meaning; perfection, excellency, merit.<sup>8</sup> The meaning of this word, denoting the reason why one has to do what he does, that is “duty and justice,” evolved greatly during the Christian Century: “What is now regarded as one’s duty was once done spontaneously out of sheer enthusiasm by samurai in the days of civil wars. It is because we now live in a peaceful world that we have come to regard it as our duty.” Love and gratitude, inherent in the spontaneous intentionality and inner will (*iji* 意地), have been overridden and replaced by an extrinsic sense of duty: “It is no wonder that there should arise a sharp conflict between duty and love, and the corresponding sense of honour and pride finds its satisfaction in overcoming the feeling of love and compassion in its struggle with the latter.”<sup>9</sup> It seems that it was too early for the *Vocabulario* to record the new acceptations of this term. Other equivalents refer to the reason in things as their cause and motivation of the state of being: *shisai* 子細, *yue* 故, *innen* 因縁, cause.<sup>10</sup> In all cases, this ‘reason’ in the one engraved in the things that human intellect abstracts from experience. The nearest term, *risei* 理性,<sup>11</sup> is not translated as “reason” – it has been chosen in this acceptation in modern times – but as “spiritual acuity, wisdom, or delicacy”. Another concept close to reason, the verb *wakimaeru* 弁える, ‘understand or discern’, in its substantive shape, *wakimae*,<sup>12</sup> in Japanese does not have the plain meaning of reason nor of moral discrimination of good and evil, but it has been used in this way by the translators of the *Compendium* (1595) to explain the function of the “reason” translated by the Buddhist concept *chie* 智慧: “A preacher is permitted by God to preach the Gospels (*praedicando evangelium*) to one who has sufficient reason (*ratio*) to distinguish the true and the false, the good and the evil”, *dangisha nimo zehi tokushitsu wo wakimayuru hodo no chie aru hito niwa dangi wo toku koto deusu yori goshamen aru nari* 談義者にも是非得失を弁ユル程ノ智慧アル人ニハ談義ヲ説ク事、デウ

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*Nangasaki et revu sur la traduction espagnole du même ouvrage et imprimé en 1630 à Manille.* Paris: Chez Firmin Didot Frères, Fils et Cie, Imprimeurs de l’Institut et de la Marine, rue Jacob, 56, au Japon à la Procure des Missions étrangères, 1868, p.268; Collado, *Dictionarium sive Thesauri Linguae Iaponicae Compendium, Raseinichi jiten* 羅西日辭典. Text by Doi Tadao 土井忠生; new edition by Ōtsuka Kōshin 大塚光信. Kyōto: Rinsen shoten 臨川書店, 1966, p.111.

6 Pagès, op. cit., p. 663; Collado, op. cit., p.111.

7 Pagès, op. cit., p. 217; Collado, op. cit., p.111.

8 Pagès, op. cit., p.394: bonne raison, ou bon raisonnement; raison ou sens; perfection excellence.

9 Tsuda Sōkichi, *An Inquiry into the the Japanese Mind as Mirrored in Literature – The Flowering Period of Common People Literature.* Translated by Fukumatsu Matsuda, compiled by Japanese National Commission for Unesco. Tokyo: Japan Society for the Promotion of Science, 1970. (Reedited 1988), pp.125–126.

10 Collado, op. cit., p.111.

11 Pagès, op. cit., p.663.

12 Pagès, op. cit., p.847.

スヨリ御赦免アル也,<sup>13</sup> On the other hand, the substantive *funbetsu* 分別, a Buddhist term, would correspond to intellect as using reason as the *Vocabulario* of 1603 attests: “to understand, and to discern ‘the good and the evil’”,<sup>14</sup> but in fact, it does not give the meaning of reason, and in any case it is the regular equivalent for the scholastic ‘intellect, intelligence’, in an Aristotelian-Thomist sense, at the exception of the rather quasi-Buddhist equivalent *gosei* 悟性 in the *Dochiriina Kirishitan*.<sup>15</sup> This choice of *funbetsu* for “intellect” is not the best one: in Buddhist philosophy, it indeed is a translation of the Sanskrit *vijñāna*, a discriminative and discursive intelligence that is always subordinate to the plain and intuitive supreme intelligence, Prajñā, the only one faculty that grasps the Truth.<sup>16</sup> In this acceptation, it corresponds to the reason as inferior to intellect, but in common Japanese, it hardly is equivalent to reason. Prajñā is transliterated *Hannya* 般若 or translated from Sanskrit to Chinese *chie* 智慧, according to the emphasis done on the purely unconditioned meaning or both unconditioned and conditioned meaning of this word.<sup>17</sup> In the glossaries of the Jesuits, we do not find as a data entry the transliteration *Hannya* but only the word *chie*, which is translated in Portuguese as knowledge or science (*chiesha* 智慧者, the one who knows). This translation is very weak and does not take into account the two levels of reality distinguished by Buddhists: the conditioned or relative one, the object of the Vijñāna (discriminative knowledge), and the unconditioned or absolute one, grasped by the intuitive and true intelligence, Prajñā. It seems that because missionaries ignored this subtle distinction and eventual combination of two levels of reality grasped by *hannya*, *chie* and *funbetsu*, as levels of intelligence and reason, they misunderstood the real use of these Buddhist terms. *Chie* would have been a better-generalized translation than *funbetsu* for the scholastic ‘intelligence’. In fact, no other word than *chie* or *hannya*, considered as a cardinal virtue in Buddhist philosophy, corresponds to intellect as direct knowledge, though the reason is indirect knowledge. It is obvious that they strived during decades in the words renderings and that the choice of *funbetsu* is not due to hazard for it denotes the act of reasoning as a qualification of the intellect. In addition to its partial non-adequation, it keeps the colour of an imported word, contrarily to *chie* and *hannya*, which are completely Japanized.<sup>18</sup> Did missionaries voluntarily avoid using it because they did not recognize the use of the faculty of reason in Japanese Buddhism, or did they only ignore the real meaning of these terms in their common use? As Francis Xavier and his followers, among them Alessandro Valignano considered that Japanese men were at the highest point reasonable, it is the second hypothesis that seems valuable.

13 *Compendium of Philosophy*, II, p.155; latin, III, p.189recto.

14 Pagès, op. cit., p.368.

15 Ibidem, p.368.

16 Hirakawa, “De la différence entre pénétration intuitive et connaissance dichotomique”. Girard (Transl.). *Cipango, Cahiers d'études japonaises*, no.10-hiver 2003, pp.169–227.

17 Pagès, op. cit., p.774.

18 It is noteworthy in this sense that the above-mentioned Suzuki Daisetsu fought during his lifetime against the *funbetsu* as the workhorse of the Buddhist intuition of truth and reality.



## Vacuity

Japanese Buddhist terms have their meaning in peculiar and concrete situations and scarcely in a general and universal way. Such is the case of the Buddhist term ‘vacuity’. There is no vacuity in itself but always ‘a vacuity of something: “the void is the void of what is perceived by the senses or mental consciousness, and it is what is perceptible that is void” (*shiki sokuze kū kū sokuze shiki* 色即是空、空即是色), says the famous *Sūtra of the quintessence of Perfection of Prajñā, Hannya shingyō* 般若心經, that almost every Japanese knows by heart. That is what is perceived (things, mind states) that is void, but if one understands that things are void, the Buddhist has to say that it is not so for things perceived are not completely void: in this case, he has to say that this void is void. To preserve the existence and way of being of conditioned things in their fluxing reality, the Buddhist must say that these perceived things are “nor ... and nor...”: they are not (really) existing and not (really) not existing. Such a subtle and difficult way of understanding of being can only be grasped by the intuitive Prajñā and not by Vijñāna. In brief, the vacuity is not “something” but a qualification of the empirical flux of phenomena to avoid the human intellectual projections on it as substantial realities.<sup>19</sup>

The Void does not lead to the Nothingness but to the plain being a perpetual flux where the Bodhisattva applies his compassionate activity qualified by six virtues, the *rocufaramit* (*rokuharamitsu* 六波羅蜜). Jesuits define them as “Six qualities or gifts of the soul, belonging to what is said in the Buddhist teaching”.<sup>20</sup> But these virtues are cardinal virtues and not merely mundane qualities and their supra-mundane character is due to the fact that they are under the mastery of Perfection or Prajñā, the keystone of all Buddhist philosophy, which allows one person to “pass on the Other Side of the Saṃsāra River” (*pāramitā*). The unsatisfying definitions also extend to the definition of the Bodhisattva who is said to have a dignity inferior to the Buddha or Hotoke, for he has not realized Nirvāna and is an agent of salvation, *bosatsu* 菩薩: *tasuke, tasukuru*. In the same way, *bodai* (*bodhi*) 菩提 is interpreted as a retreat from the mundane world, on one hand, or as a posthumous salvation, on the other hand. *Bodai* 菩提: “to retire of all its heart all the mundane affections, so as to save oneself. Desire of salvation”. *Bodaishin* 菩提心: “contempt of the world; to banish all mundane things from one’s heart that are an obstacle to devotion and salvation. Devotion and desire of salvation. *Bodaishin wo okosu*, to contempt or leave the world as to save oneself, or to make

19 On this prevalent interpretation of *vacuité*, see Girard about a Chinese treatise which had a great influence on Zen *milieux*, *Méthode d'examen mental sur la sphère de la Loi selon l'Ornementation fleurie, Huayan fajie guanmen* 華嚴法界觀門, 觀門, – avec le *Commentaire* de Guigeng Zongmi 圭峯宗密 (780–841). N.p.: Editions You-Feng, 2019, pp.101–108.

20 Donation, Observance of Morality, Patience, Energy, Mental Concentration and Intelligence. Pagès, op. cit., p.672.

acts of devotion”.<sup>21</sup> All these definitions concern the individual and self-centred processes of salvation, not the universal vision of an altruistic activity concerning all mankind. The ignorance of the Mahāyānic doctrine of equivalence of Saṃsāra and Nirvāṇa and, therefore, the superiority of Bodhisattva over Buddha, was decisive in the misunderstanding of Japanese Buddhism.

This is also why Jesuits have not exactly understood Vacuity thought as an always relative or dialectical one. On the other hand, they had some knowledge of the unconditional character of Prajñā. That is the reason why they have defined it interestingly as a ‘materia prima’ a ‘minimal being’ (*e de minimo ser*) (minimal essence, “minime essence,” translates Léon Pagès), conceived as an imperfect being. This interpretation is like the *materia prima* of Aristotle, conceived as a pure potentiality, a state of pure indetermination of every being, which is waiting for its actualization; its actualization is its perfection and its indetermination is imperfection.<sup>22</sup> Jesuits have understood this Vacuity as the Absolute or Unconditioned, which is right. However, it is impossible for Buddhist philosophy to have this vacuity defined in a positive manner as the origin of all things. The glossaries record: for instance, *kūjaku* 空寂 is interpreted as “being or principle prior to all creatures” (*Hum ser ou principio antes de toda creatura*)<sup>23</sup>; *kūkū jakujaku* 空々寂々 is also defined as “being or principle prior to all sensory creatures” (*Hum ser ou principio antes das creaturas sensiveis*) and is considered as an interpretation of the Buddhist concept of *hon.u* 本有 (fo v) “original being”.<sup>24</sup> Such positive definitions would have been refuted by rigorous Buddhist thinkers. Could the reason for these misinterpretations have been that the missionaries have not met such strict Buddhist interpreters or merely a lack of mutual understanding on both sides?

## Influences

Below are some of the possible influences of Christianity on Buddhism.

### An Eternal Soul for the Buddhist?

On the arguments brought up on that which is eternal – expressed in the Japanese language as “what does not disappear” (*fumetsu* 不滅) – it is said that therefore it

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21 Pagès, op. cit., pp.59–60.

22 “Cette pure possibilité d’être une substance est ce que l’on nomme matière première”, Gilson, *Le thomisme. Introduction à la philosophie de saint Thomas d’Aquin*. Paris: Librairie philosophique J. Vrin, 1965, p. 228. “*Materia prima*. La matière première, d’après les péripatéticiens, est une substance imparfaite qui est indifférente à toutes les manières d’être et qui ne constitue une chose plutôt qu’une autre qu’en raison des formes substantielles qui se joignent à elle. Unie avec la forme elle produit l’être composé (*compositum*)”, p.741. Abbé Drioux, op. cit., p.741.

23 Pagès, op. cit., p.230.

24 Ibidem, p.226.

does not arise in temporality (*pushō* 不生). To express the fact that a principle is eternal, Buddhist thinkers say that it is perennial, *jōjū* 常住, but since this affirmative assertion may be identified as the same as a Brahmanical thesis and therefore to be heretical, they preferred to qualify it as not-arisen nor destroyed, (*pushō fumetsu* 不生不滅). For Zen followers, the true “Self,” *jiko* 自己, not to be identified to the conditionate ego, *ga* 我 (*ātman*), is considered as ungraspable and escaping to a temporal dimension and therefore it is not born nor destroyed. The Christian soul does not have this unconditioned quality to be unattainable in a temporal dimension because it is born once in time, even though it is said that it does not disappear. From a Buddhist (and a Confucian) viewpoint, the Christian position on the soul is contradictory. In summary, for the Christian translators, that which is eternal, like “Deus” and the Soul, does not arise nor disappear (*pushō fumetsu* 不生不滅). In one sense, to not disappear is a synecdochic expression for “to not arise or disappear.” This expression is also known by Confucianism and Buddhism from Ancient times, but it can be said that it has been actualized and concretized again in touch with Christian followers.

However, from the Buddhist viewpoint, what has not arisen in time is the very definition of the Unconditional that is the Absolute. In this perspective, we have the list of Nirvāṇa, Tathāta (Tality), Akāśa (Space), Prajñā, which are indestructible realities that man has to inquire on and grasp as the ultimate reality. In this list, it is impossible to add “Deus,” a mere deity identified with Ívara or Maheśvara and submitted to Samsāra as Brahmā, Viśnu, the Trayatrmśas and others, nor the human Soul, for it has born and has a beginning in time. Strictly speaking, the Christian doctrine does not identify Creation with a beginning point in time, as Thomas Aquinas observed, but as for the common believer, they were considered similar. The Japanese catechism taught it in this way.<sup>25</sup>

## Dōgen Argument

Concerning this argument, a famous text of Dōgen 道元 (1200–1253) criticizes the idea of an eternal mind or soul, asserted by heretics and foolish interpreters

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25 After the reintroduction of Aristotelism in Medieval times, Albert the Great (c.1193–1280) and Thomas Aquinas stressed the idea that the question of the beginning of things has to be distinguished from the question of the Creation. Time and eternity cannot be put on the same level and there is time only if beings exist. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologica*, I, question 46, A-1; *Compendium Theologiae*, 98; *De aeternitate mundi contra murmurantes*, 1–4, 8. Leibniz (1646–1716) stressed the same idea in his *De rerum origine radicali – De la production originelle des choses prises à leur racine* (1697). N.p.: Librairie philosophique J. Vrin, 1978 (Opuscules philosophiques choisis, Bibliothèque des textes philosophiques), pp.83–86, as I have mentioned in Girard, “Un essai d’interprétation des choses selon Yamauchi Tokuryū: l’appel fait à la philosophie bouddhique”. *Ebisu*, 49, Maison Franco-Japonaise, printemps-été 2013, p.99.

of Buddhism, the Senika followers, named for instance *fumetsu* 不滅, non-extinction that is eternity in Christian language, or *jōjū reisei* 常住靈性, perennial spiritual nature. In his sermon “It is in this very mind that is the state of Buddha”, *Sokushin zebutsu* 即心是佛 (1239–1245), Dōgen gives an extensive description of their theory:

Those who are qualified as heretics are the heterodoxies of India known as Senika. Belonging to them, the Great Enlightenment (*daidō* 大道) is in this very body and they say that it is easy to know it. Such is their opinion. They declare that this Enlightenment distinguishes suffering and happiness, which knows spontaneously the cold and the warm, pain and itch. It is never obstructed by things nor does it depend on objects. Things are going and coming, objects appear and disappear, but this spiritual intelligence subsists without the slightest alteration. This spiritual intelligence extends universally in largescale, without any distinction between the soul of profanes and saints. In it, there are for the time being illusory entities [rootless as] a flower in the sky, in as much does not appear a sapiential thought in adequation with it, things disappear and objects abolish themselves so that only, perennial, subsists, the fundamental nature of this spiritual knowledge in all its clarity. Even if the body is dissolved, the spiritual intelligence, unharmed, would emerge. It is like the householder who takes to one’s heels to escape the fire in his house. It is a pure luminous spirit and is qualified as nature of Enlightened one or the Wise. It is named Buddha (*Hotoke*) or Enlightenment (*Satori*). Everyone has it, himself and others, and it penetrates in the Illusory as in the Enlightenment. Whatever things and objects may be, this spiritual intelligence does not accompany objects and is not identical to things: it is perennial during the successive kalpas. If the objects existing now depend on its existence, we can qualify it as the true reality. As they are born in dependence of the fundamental nature, they are real things. Nevertheless, they are not perennial in the same way as the spiritual intelligence, and inasmuch as they exist and disappear, they do not depend on the clear or the obscure, and as it knows on a spiritual level, it is qualified as spiritual intelligence. It is also called the Authentic Self, the root of Enlightenment, the fundamental nature, the fundamental being in itself. To realize this fundamental nature is to return, is it said, to the perennity, so that it is called the Great Being which Returns to the Authenticity. Since one no longer transmigrates in the cycle of birth and death, and no longer penetrates in the ocean of the nature of things which do not arise nor disappear. All that is not this Intelligence is not an authentic reality and if this nature does not manifest itself, the triple empirical world and the six destinies of transmigration arise and arise again. Such are the views of the heretics called Senika.<sup>26</sup>

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26 Translation Frédéric Girard: *Les Dialogues de Dōgen en Chine*. Édités et traduits par Frédéric Girard. Genève: Rayon Histoire de la Librairie Droz, 2016, pp.339–344.

## Shōsan

Suzuki Shōsan was a Sōtōshū follower and therefore he would have had to read the works of Dōgen but this does not seem to be the case or, maybe, he stressed an activism when Dōgen was a quietist, so as to adapt his teaching to a wartime epoch. In all cases, it is wondering that his teachings are exactly the opposite of what the founder of his sect says. For instance, it is exactly as though Suzuki Shōsan had not read the first line of this sermon of the Treasure of the eye of the True Law, *Shōbōgenzō*, for though Dōgen says that one has to forget his own self, Shōsan asserts the importance of the Self: “The more important thing is to know in clarity one’s own Self and to have it as the basis for the practice and realization” (*akiraka ni jiko wo shiru koto daiichino yōjin ni shite, kore wo gyōshō no kihon to nasu* 明らかに自己を知る事第一の用心にして是を行證の基本と為す. But what Shōsan says is in one sense evidence for a Zen monk, but what is not pertinent for a Buddhist is that Shōsan also stresses the existence of a principle before the universe, identified with the empirical Self (*ga* 我). He alludes to the *Logia of Dahui*, Dahui being the doctrinal enemy of Dōgen: “What is the body (*mi* 身) that I enjoy as if it was my thing? It is the provisory union of the elements of earth, water, fire and wind, which make a shape; but nowhere can it be grasped as my thing! When we are attached to these four elements, they induce myself in error. We have to examine it with the greatest attention without being deluded by them. There is a Self (*ga*), but again it is not mine, separated from the four elements, it belongs to them, accompanying the four elements, it uses them as instruments. There is a being preceding the Universe, which is without form and is originally in quietude. He is the owner of all phenomena and is not degenerating belonging to the time of the four seasons”.<sup>27</sup> In other parts of his sermons, Shōsan speaks of this Self as a spiritual principle, *reimei* 靈明, which is indestructible.<sup>28</sup> It seems that

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27 Stick to guide blindmen, Moanjō 盲案杖, Suzuki, *Suzuki Shōsan zenshū* 鈴木正三全集, (*Complete works of Suzuki Shōsan*). 2 Vols. Compiled by Kamiya Mitsuo 神谷満雄 and Terasawa Kōsei 寺沢光世. Toyota: Suzuki Shōsan kenkyūkai 鈴木正三研究会, 2006–2007, vol.1, p.22; p.51.

28 Suzuki Shōsan 鈴木正三 (1579–1655), Kyūtaiyu 九大夫 his current name, Shōsan his layman name that he did not abandon during his life, even after becoming a monk. He was born at Mikawa, district of Kamo 加茂群, at Sokuteimura village 則定村 (actual Ashisuke 足助). He is the elder son of Suzuki Tadabei Shigetsumi 鈴木忠兵衛重次, affiliated to the Matsudaira. He illustrated himself with warrior exploits during the battles of Sekigahara and Ōsaka, like his younger brother Shigenari, and receives an income of 200 kokus in 1615 at Kamo. He is linked with Zen monks so that he himself becomes a monk in 1620 in Sōtō Zen obedience. Sōtō are so disparate that they do not hide ways of practice and thought even without any definite affiliation. He was proud to be ignorant in Buddhism. For him, it was important to preach towards the population with an easy language that could be understood by everyone. He wrote a major work in Japanese, *Banmintokuyō* 万民徳用, *The Use of virtues for the population*. He condemns the hermetic way of life and advocates the exercise

Shōsan was obliged in his struggle against Christian followers to stress the eternity of a spiritual principle to offer salvation to Japanese people and a Paradise better than the Christian ones.

Shōsan is a monk without lineage and master, contrary to the formalist tradition of Japanese Zen so that his thought is untied to any sectarian obedience. He was a former warrior (*bushi* 武士) of Mikawa, the fief of Tokugawa Ieyasu, and a leading captain of Ieyasu during the Sekigahara battle in 1600, remunerated for his service by an important income in rice's *koku*, and became a monk of the Sōtō sect. Nevertheless, his Zen tenets were quite opposed to the Dōgen's ones and mixed with esoteric elements, which constitute his famous Ninnōzen 仁王禪, Zen of the two Kings or of the Benevolent Kings.<sup>29</sup> It consisted in observing, remembering and grasping the self firmly (Dōgen called instead to forget one's self), in acting without sitting in idleness (Dōgen stressed instead only the sitting). For Shōsan, the Zen sect was the only one to be able to restore true Buddhism for it was involved in a spirit of salvation related to the Law (*uen no iware* 有縁の謂), always acting with a mind of equality (*byōdō no kokoro* 平等の心) that cannot be found in the doctrinal sects only related with speculative knowledge (*gakushū* 學習) and not with the culture of practices (*shūgyō* 修行).<sup>30</sup>

of its own profession as a Buddhist practice so that to deal with its own profession in an activity of Buddha and Bodhisattva. "All actions, whatever they may be, are practices of Buddha. Men can realize the state of Buddha in what they are doing". The very essence of Buddhist Law is in the morality of professions. His ethics were impregnated with a capitalist ideology. He wrote a *Stick to guide blinds*, *Mōanjō* 盲案杖, in 1 volume, when he was a samurai in service in Ōsaka castle. *Two moniales*, *Nininbikuni* 二人比丘尼, in two volumes. *Records on causality*, *Ingamonogatari* 因果物語, in three volumes, record marvellous anecdotes for the edification and conversion of populations. *The Saddletree of the donkey*, *Roankyō* 驢鞍橋 is a record in three volumes of acts, events and words of Shōsan compiled by his disciple Echū 惠中. *Old letters*, *Hogoshū* 反故集, in two volumes is a partial record of letters and writings of Shōsan. *Clearing the path at the foot of a mountain*, *Fumotonokusawake* 麓草分, in 1 volume. He goes to several provinces and inaugurates the temple On.shin.in 恩眞院 at Ishidaira 石平 in his native province. He was active in converting Christian followers to Buddhism on the site of the Shimabara Revolt, in Kyūshū, and to block the pernicious Christian influence, which was considered responsible for the rebellion by Bakufu. In 1655, he dies in the residence of his brother Shigeyuki 重之, at Kanda, in Edo. See his biography, in Suzuki, *Suzuki Shōsan zenshū* 鈴木正三全集, 2006--2007, vol. 1, pp.327-339.

29 On this practice and its meaning in the life of Shōsan, see Girard (Transl. and presentation), *Aimables ermites de notre temps. Récits composés par Sairo, alias Kyōsen, et préfacés par Ihara Saikaku*. Paris: École Française d'Extrême-Orient, 2017, pp. 84-86.

30 *Records of the acts of the man of the Way Sekihei*, Idem, vol. 1, p.253.

## The Reformation Movement

The common doctrinal basis of the reformation movement was found with great persuasiveness and pertinence in the *Dacheng qixinlun* 大乘起信論, the *Treatise on the Act of Faith in Great Vehicle*, in the middle of the sixth century, in particular in its theory of the Womb of Tathāgata (*nyoraizō* 如來藏) – the Possibility or Virtuality for each being to become a Tathāgata, an achieved Buddha – and of the Original Enlightenment (*hongaku* 本覺).<sup>31</sup> These spiritual principles were identified at the time with the immaculate and absolute consciousness (the ninth consciousness) by the famous translator Pāramātha, but this doctrine was rather heterodox and not recognized by later thinkers such as Xuanzang 玄奘 (602–664), though it became prevalent in sects like the Huayan (Kegon), Tiantai (Tendai), and some others like the esoterism Zhenyan (Shingon).

The coreligionist of Suzuki Shōsan, Sessō, presents a completely different case than Sōsan. Shōsan was a warrior converted to Buddhism, though Sessō was from the very beginning a follower of Buddhism who changed his sectarian allegiance; furthermore, he could observe directly the so-called degeneration of Pure Land Buddhism, due to the influence of Christianity. He is a former follower of the Pure Land sect (Jōdoshū), which in these times was more or less confused with Christianity, and then converted to Rinzai. He worked his entire life in Kyūshū. After his predication in Amakusa, he gained adepts of other sects influenced by his thought, like the two monks of Jōdoshinshū Saigin 西吟 (1605–1663) and Gekkan 月感 (1600–1674). He organized his thought system rather syncretically by integrating the Nenbutsu practice in his Rinzai Zen and was a follower of the unity of the three religions – Taoism/Shinto, Confucianism and Buddhism – against the exclusivist and sectarian Nichirenism and Shinshū tendencies. In his major work, the *Treatise on the unity of Dhyāna and Doctrines, Zenkyō tōron* 禪教統論, he advocates the confluence of Zen and Doctrinal sects to create an integral view and perspective on all the Buddhist currents. Far from a decrepitude of Buddhism, as was said by the famous historian Tsuji Zennosuke, the Tokugawa Ages saw a discrepancy of Shintō, a poor Confucianism, and had to establish a strong Buddhism, protected by the State but weak in its doctrinal foundations. Sessō frequently used the *Sūtra of Perfect Enlightenment* to assert that all beings have equally realized the Buddha state from the very beginning (*shujō honrai jōbutsu* 衆生本來成佛), with a prevalence accorded to Zen on Doctrines: in this way Sessō could solve the important problem of the evil existing in humanity by returning to the original nature of mankind.<sup>32</sup> It is worth noting that it was the *Treatise on the Act of Faith in the Great Vehicle* that for him could offer the doctrinal foundation of the Ecumenical

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31 On this work, see my study and translation: Girard, “Discours bouddhiques face au christianisme”. *Repenser l’ordre, repenser l’héritage, Paysage intellectuel du Japon (XVIIe-XIXe siècles)*. Annick Horiuchi-Baba; Mieko Macé (Collab.). Paris; Genève: Droz-EPHE-IVe Section, 2001–2002, pp.167–208.

32 Ōkuwa, op. cit., pp.362–363.

movement of Reformation in Japan. If all men have an original nature, the Flower Ornament (Kegon) scriptures teach in an abrupt or sudden way and it is impossible for all beings to understand it immediately.<sup>33</sup> This reality is too difficult to understand immediately and the *Treatise on the Act of Faith in the Great Vehicle* is more appropriate to have this nature assimilated gradually for the profane. Indeed, the concept of Shinnyo specific in this Treatise, has two sides, a profane one and an absolute one, and is related to the other concept of Mind-Only, *yuishin* 唯心, of the Flower Ornament, which also has two sides (profane beings and Buddhahood unified by the sole and unique mind).<sup>34</sup> Commenting upon this assertion that all beings have equally realized the Buddha state from the very beginning (*shujō honrai jōbutsu* 衆生本來來成仏), Sessō says that there is a being, clear and spiritual, which is the basis of all things, the ancestor of the universe, who has not yet been born, nor has been destroyed, who has no name nor figure, who at the extremity of the decibel can be named the “True state of things,” the Tality (*shinnyo* 真如). By the emergence of its nature, it is discerned as the fundamental source of the universe, the world and beings, with one unique shape and activity.<sup>35</sup> This Shinnyo, that Jesuits translated as Principle, is the *raison d’être* of all things, man and the natural world. This Shinnyo is very close to the Way of Heaven, Tentō, which at the time had all the characteristics of the Christian God, as a ruling and creating god. It can be considered a transformation, in Buddhist terminology, of this Way of Heaven, as an ultimate principle of creation and transformation, unifying in itself the Absolute reality belonging to all the currents of thought, Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism and Tentō ideology.<sup>36</sup> In all his thought, Sessō professes also a spiritual principle, eternal and indestructible, like his friend and colleague Shōsan, which was subsumed by the concepts of Shinnyo.

### **The No-Birth Zen as a Counterpoint of the Non-disappearance (Eternity) of Soul**

Another preacher of the Rinzai sect, Bankei, is said to have experienced the Enlightenment without any master. In fact, he was first influenced by the Confucian

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33 The Flower Ornament Sūtra is said to preach directly the content of the Enlightenment of the Buddha to sentient beings without adapting to their more or less accurate faculties so that the beings stayed astonished by it unable to understand it, as if they were «deaf and dumb». The immediacy of Enlightenment is a common characteristic of this sūtra and of Chan (Zen) currents, which locates the truth beyond language, common sense and the ordinary understanding of men so that it was necessary for the preachers of Buddhism against Christianity to have a more intelligible and notional, language to have successful results in their work.

34 Ōkuwa, op. cit., p.405.

35 Ibidem, pp.367–369.

36 Girard, “Discours bouddhiques face au christianisme”, pp.177–180. Ōkuwa, op. cit., p.368.



philosophy of the *Right Middle* (*Zhongyong*, *Chūyō* 中庸) concerning an innate nature (*tenmeiose* 天命の性) identified as the Clear Virtue (*meitoku* 明德), and then by Chinese Buddhism but without lineage. He lived a long time in Nagasaki and is considered the founder of the No-Birth Zen, *Fushōzen* 不生禪 – No-Born is an abbreviation of No-Born and No-Disparition (*fushō fumetsu* 不生不滅) but as Bankei could not say “No-Disparition”, which is synonymous to the Christian Eternity of Soul, he was obliged to say only No-Born, which has the same meaning as Eternity but is not a heretic. He advocates an innate spirit – no-born is synonymous with innate nature in most cases for him –, *reimei* 靈明, *reisei* 靈性, which is the true self of man. Bankei cannot be said to have been acquainted with Christianity but he was accused of heresy of Christianity by his contemporaries: maybe it was only a kind of joke or sally, but this term may also have an origin in the particularity of his doctrines to assert an unchanging spiritual principle which was rather strange for a Buddhist thinker, though it was sustained in the Chan tradition.<sup>37</sup> In fact, his Spirit is very close to the Immortal Soul of Christianity in its descriptions and modalities, inasmuch as no-born is synonymous with no-destroyed. Bankei also uses frequently the concept of *jiyū* 自由 or *jizai* 自在 in the sense of liberty for whoever has realized the No-Born state of mind, like Christians, and advocates a kind of meditation of Amida’s Commemoration, *Nenbutsu zanmai* 念仏三昧 aiming at salvation in the next life, exactly like Suzuki Shōsan.<sup>38</sup> He is in complete opposition and struggles against the idea that women cannot attain Buddhahood in this very life.<sup>39</sup>

## Paradise

The yearning and request of a Paradise is an integrating part of the Buddhist creed since it appeared in the Mahāyānic currents. The predication of missionaries including the promise of rebirth in Paradise for the men of good will, it was necessary for the Buddhist monks to bring in contrast in full light the Amidic Pure Land faith to seduce the Japanese followers of Christianity, in preference to other doctrines or faith elements. In this regard, three unprecedented phenomena deserve attention.

- A. The doctrine of Pure Land strengthened its own positions in parallel to Zen during the Christian Century. From the middle of Middle Ages, and especially from the Muromachi Period (1338–1573), Zen and Nenbutsu were practiced in parallel: for instance, the Zen by men and Nenbutsu by women, as in the case of the Kinkakuji and Ginkakuji by the Ashikaga in Kyōto. During the Tokugawa period, the Pure Land doctrine became the official doctrine of the ruling family and aimed to clearly and firmly distinguish itself from the Pure Land

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37 Akao, *Bankei* 盤珪: *Bankei zenji zenshū*, 盤珪禪師全集 (*Complete works of the Dhyāna master Bankei*). Tōkyō: Daizō Shuppan 大蔵出版, 1976 (new edition, 1987), p.18.

38 *Ibidem*, pp.28–29.

39 *Ibidem*, pp.48, 74–75, 128, 285.

doctrine of Shinran and Rennyo, the Shinshū. This fact appears when Sessō identified the Christian believers as Pure Land followers, in 1647 as recorded in his *Kōfukuji hikki* 興福寺筆記, the *Records of Kōfukuji*: the prefect of Nagasaki rebuked him for his confusion of Christianity with all the followers of Pure Land, Jōdo and Jōdoshin; he ordered him to have training course and guidance in the Edo Castle on this doctrinal question, in the Tokugawa's Library. When he returned to Nagasaki the next year, he distinguished Jōdo and Jōdoshin by identifying Christianity with the latter for his laxity in morality and doctrines (*Taiji jashūron* 對治邪執論, *Treatise on the refutation of fallacious doctrine* of 1648).

- B. In the *Spiritual Exercises* of Ignatius Loyola (1491–1556), a passage alludes to the conquest of non-believers by the army's military action, maybe it is only a metaphoric expression, for Ignacio was originally a warrior. We find in a series of *Precepts of the Tokugawa family*, 徳川氏家訓、徳川家遺訓, edited by professor Ōkuwa Hitoshi, the strange idea that Ieyasu was himself an epiphany of the Tathāgata Amida and received his power and the legitimation of his reign as a Shōgoun by the transmission of the sacred sword by the same Tathāgata Amida: "Ieyasu appeared as the great deity of the East-illuminating Palace, Tōshōgū, who has epiphany from the inner realization uniting the inceptive Awakening of the newly born and the fundamental Awakening of the authentic sapience. One must realize that this epiphany deity is the Tathāgata Amida". (*Chronicle inaugurating the destiny of the Matsudaira, Matsudairashi keiunki* 松平氏啓運記); and:

I tentatively preached that only the sword quickly determined salvation in the Pure Land. Thus, there is a large population in the empire but we can extract from it the four states of warrior nobility, peasants, artisans and traders. All that this population of the four categories does is the practice of Awakening. In any case, [this category of warriors] saves the three other categories, and if another category saves the three others, all help each other. Among them, the warriors represent the supreme category among the four. Concerning the warriors, the practices of bodhisattva consist first in making use of the culture to regulate the world and to make use of the weapons when it is in disorder. The culture that regulates the world is not at all only reading books and learning to write. It consists of taking as models the conduct of the famous sovereigns and sages of antiquity and putting them into practice. This will naturally put the empire in order. Since there are bad people who hurt many men, killing a man saves many others. This is the practice of bodhisattva.

(*Chronicle inaugurating the destiny of the Matsudaira cult, Matsudaira sūshū kaiunroku* 松平崇宗開運録).

And also:

There is this vow [of Amida] that whoever recites his name will receive protection from all good deities. How much more, if you take the empire with this aim, is it certain that the whole population will necessarily take refuge in the invocation of the

Buddha [Nenbutsu]. How could not all devas and good deities protect the rulers? The Tathāgata Amida in his high benevolence [katajike naku] vowed to go to welcome the beings when they were born [in the Pure Land], but in the wars that take place day and night, he misses the men (*hitohima nari*). While Amida's own vow is ineffective, if you now seize the empire, you must convert it to the Invocation of the Buddha that unifies and regulates everything (*ittō no nenbutsu*). Since there is the vow that all devas and good divinities will protect [the land] by the invocation of the Buddha, you have to observe it. If you rely heavily on the 'Buddha Amida Veneration', which enemy will not you defeat? There is no reason for an enemy not to fall under Amida's honed sword. This is what is called using warlike force in times of disorder (*Chronicle inaugurating the destiny of the Matsudaira*).<sup>40</sup>

This sacred sword is an allusion to one of the Three Regalia of the imperial family yielded to the shogunate succeeding families but this paradoxical association of a military element with the Buddha of compassion can be explained as a necessity of the new times.

- C. It has been noticed by historian Tsuda Sōkichi and others, that the doctrine of the Celestial Way, Tentō 天道, had a renewal of success from the sixteenth to the seventeenth centuries. It was conceived at the time as a kind of Providence and a principle of retribution of rewards and punishments for good and bad actions, superior even to the decisions of the rulers. The translation of "Deus" by terms including Heaven, *ten* 天, as *tenshu* 天主 and *tendō* 天道, were used for some time but were ultimately discontinued in Japan, but not in China. The reason for this was the close similitude of the two concepts, but this betrays also a kind of influence of the idea of a divine Providence on a cosmic and moral principle superior to the human realm. By which other way the sudden and great success of this concept can be explained exactly during the Christian Century and after, in the predication of the Mind or the Intimate Sense School (Shingaku 心學) of Ishida Baigan, where the Tentō is Amida, Vairocana, Amaterasu and the supreme reality of Confucianism?

## The Liberation and the Liberty

The quest for human salvation is identified with the purchase and mastery of liberty and control of oneself, *jiyū jizai* 自由自在. This term is used in Japan to translate the notion of liberation and liberty, first translated *gedatsu* 解脱, in the Buddhist sense of Vimokṣa, the liberation from Saṃsāra. But gradually it was used to translate the notion of the Omnipotence and Omniscience of God. In Buddhist texts, *jizai* 自在 is used as a common noun to express the supreme self-mastery of a Buddha acquired when he has attained the supreme Bodhi. It is also used as

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40 Belonging to an oracle of the National Master Zonnō 存應國師 (1544–1622) of Jōdoshū, of Zōjōji 増上寺 temple. Hirano; Ōkuwa, op. cit.

a proper name to refer to the deity Ísvara or Maheśvara. In their refutations of Christianity, Buddhist monks did not hesitate to point out that the Christian *Deus* could not have omniscience nor omnipotence worthy of a supreme God inasmuch as it was submitted to torture by Christ and denied by the evil actions of Satan. Like Ísvara, he is not eternal nor a universally ruling king, and he is only a deity enslaved by the Samsāra; God is finally a pallid imitation of Ísvara. The concept of Christian liberation and liberty could not be properly understood in this Buddhist context. In this regard, two points have to be stressed:

- A. It has been shown that during the Christian Century the concept of liberty, *jiyū* 自由, gradually, integrated connotations coming from Roman Law, which was taught in the Jesuit pedagogical course in the Seminaries and Colleges.<sup>41</sup> It had in this new context no longer the Buddhist sense of self-mastery, and it began to have the meaning of the freedom of a man as a public citizen during the Edo period, so that from a Buddhist meaning it deviated towards a common meaning.
- B. In the thought of Suzuki Shōsan, though he is a Buddhist follower, the term *jiyū* no longer has the meaning of self-control nor self-mastery in the Buddhist meditation – he hated the quiet meditation of Dōgen in virulent terms. It defines the state and condition of liberation attained by the one who accomplishes his professional occupations and family duties in accordance to the social order and with the sense of his obligations, so that his secular activities are as such acts of Buddha and Bodhisattva, *butsugyō bosatsugyō* 佛行菩薩行. In a famous article on the critical spirit of Buddhist thinkers Suzuki Shōsan and Tominaga Chūki 富永仲基 (1715–1746), Nakamura Hajime pointed out the fact that the ethical position of these two thinkers was akin to the Weberian conception of the capitalist development of modern societies due to the Protestant ethic. We have to be cautious with the Nakamura interpretation of Shōsan, for Shōsan was a rather conformist monk towards the establishment of the Tokugawa shogunate, even though he was certainly a great original thinker, a critic of the tradition, and innovative in several fields of his activities and writings. His romance *Two Nuns* (*Ninin no bikuni* 二人比丘尼) is considered one of the first attempts to describe the confession of women, prior to the writer Saikaku huge production on this matter. Though Nakamura noticed the abundant use of the term *jiyū* in his sermons, he felt to associate this change of meaning of this concept with a Christian influence in reverse due to the anti-Christian activities of Shōsan.

## Repentance

The development of oral and verbal expression is a particularity of the *Spiritual Exercises* of Ignatius Loyola. Through them, the practitioner is invited not to comment indefinitely on the sacred words of Christ and apostles, but to speak directly

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41 See Girard, “Discours bouddhiques face au christianisme”, pp.180–189.

to them, as if they were equal to them and at the same level of intimacy. Jules Michelet (1798–1874) defined the *Spiritual Exercises* as representative of a Noble and Warrior becoming a Bourgeois and trying to express his individuality that he discovers himself by his self-reflection: conscious of his inalienable and irreducible individuality, the practitioner is facing himself and others.<sup>42</sup> Is this attitude, new in the history of ideas, not in some way akin to the Zen training of dialogues between master and disciple, and in the confession practice which was abandoned and became disused in Medieval Times?

- A. A new expansion is given to the practice of Zen *kōan*, which had become completely venal during the Middle Ages, till the reform of *kōan* by Hakuin 白隠慧鶴 (1686–1769), related to the unity of all the teachings.<sup>43</sup>
- B. A renewal of the rituals of confession and repentance can be observed in the Buddhist communities, though they were non-existent until pre-modern times.
- C. A literature of repentance and confession, *zange bungaku* 懺悔文學, based on the dialogues and oral self-expression, develops in a great scale in the eighth century, initiated by Shōsan, continued by Asai Ryōi 浅井了意 (1612–1691) and accomplished in the successful works of the great writer Ihara Saikaku 井原西鶴 (1642–1693). In these works, the hero and heroine are liberating himself of his own passions by expressing the history of their formation to persons he is speaking with an intimate and oral relation is created through vivid dialogues, similar to the Jesuit maieutics.

## New Thematics: The Creation Belonging to Takuan

The predication and the activities of Buddhist monks is changing in their thematics.

We can give the example of the Zen monk Takuan, belonging to Myōshinji's rather heterodox tradition, though he became intimate with the third *shōgun* Tokugawa Iemitsu (r.1623–1651), who asks new questions: what is the origin of things, who created them, for what reason are they as they are, what is the relation between the individual, sole existing, and the species, which does not actually exist but is necessary to explain the existence of beings?<sup>44</sup>

The question of the species is known in Buddhism, in the Abhidharmic treatises, as an important one, but it was not treated in the Sino-Japanese currents as such. We wonder if there is not a Christian influence on this problem as is explained in detail in the *Compendium of Philosophy* of 1595.

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42 Michelet, *Précis de l'histoire de France jusqu'à la révolution française*. Paris: L. Hachette, 1833; Idem, *Des Jésuites*. Paris: Hachette & Paulin, 1843.

43 Ōkuwa, op. cit., pp.387–392.

44 I have treated of his case in an article, “Âme et esprit dans le Compendium philosophique de Pedro Gómez (1595) et ses échos éventuels chez les moines zen de la région de Nagasaki”. Pierre Bonneels; Baudoin Decharneux (Dir.), *Philosophie de la religion et spiritualité japonaise*. Paris: Classiques Garnier, 2019, pp.31–62.

The act of creation in the Christian conception is not so well understood by Japanese adepts: creation is beyond time conceived as perennial and is not identical with a beginning in temporality. This point has been imperfectly taught by Jesuits or maybe has not been taught at all. This doctrine is nonetheless sensed or hinted at. The term *zōka* 造化, which translates this notion, is used in Japanese, by thinkers like Matsuo Bashō 松尾芭蕉 (1644–1694), in the meaning of natural process, transformation action in nature, and is synonymous with the Taoist notion of *shizen* 自然, which also has the meaning of creation but in the specific sense of a spontaneous generation, a generation without any cause. Natural process and spontaneous generation were the two poles between how the notion of creation was understood in the Christian Century, so that its understanding deviated in the way of a grasp of Nature as it appears to human eyes.

Takuan engages a long discourse about the question of what we call the “Creation”. For him, there is no transcendental principle explaining things and their nature, as the origin of their existence and characteristics. This principle, named the Heaven or the Way of Heaven, is not creative but a manifesting or a growing principle of beings eventually explaining their nature but not their existence. Takuan explains the things and beings, which are reproducing themselves by seeds or germs, under the guidance of Heaven or the Way of Heaven who watches over their growth and harmonious development.<sup>45</sup>

For Takuan, beings and things have in themselves their own principle of existence and reproduction. He explains clearly that a genus cannot be produced by something different from its genus, a man cannot be borne by something else than mankind, as the Heaven, the Way of Heaven, not Earth and Heaven. At the time, Heaven and Way of Heaven are terms derived from the Christian vocabulary for God. They were no longer in use at the Takuan time for they were prohibited and avoided in Christian translations, but their semantic import in Japanese thought is obvious.<sup>46</sup>

A plum tree fathers a plum tree and a chestnut tree fathers a chestnut tree, and never something else. These things and beings father themselves in their genus and this way of being that Takuan names a “Principle”. On the other hand, Heaven or the Way of Heaven allow the development and growth of beings in a general harmony extending to all beings, by the principle of nutrition and growth, principle specific to each genus. This principle is said to “make” and “produce” (*koshiraheru, tsukuru*), not to “create”. He says:

“It is obvious that all things are developing themselves by evolving and maturing” (*kaiku ryūkō shite banbutsu seisei suru koto wa mokuzen nari*).

It is by flourishing that flowers manifest their vitality and by falling down that leaves return to their roots. All things are done so as to begin again in spring. Such are

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45 Ibidem, pp.47–59.

46 See Girard, “Discours bouddhiques face au christianisme”, pp.169, 177–180.

men also. Birds, land animals, insects, and creepy-crawlers all are growing. In such conditions, all beings in the Universe can be said to have been done by Heaven. Nevertheless, it is impossible for Heaven to father a chestnut tree, a kaki tree, which would have not to be planted, to all fruits, like plums or peaches, if their seeds would not to have been sowed. Nothing that has not been sown can be born. In these conditions, if only chestnut fathers chestnut and kaki fathers kaki, it will not be Heaven who fathers them. Heaven only proceeds to the growing of things.

This kind of explanation and speculation about things in nature is not ignored by Buddhist thought. For instance, in the philosophical theoretical treatises of Abhidharma, there are long developments about what is called *sabhāgatā*, the participation of beings in their species or genus, *sattvasāmyam*, common points between beings of the same genus, translated as *dōbun* 同分, *shudōbun* 衆同分, community, participation, *dōruishō* 同類性, living beings of the same nature.<sup>47</sup> However, these concepts are infrequently used in discussions. During the so-called “Christian Century,” it had become necessary for Buddhist preachers to explain the existence of things in their specificity against the Creation theory of missionaries. Though there is no explicit proof of an influence of Christianity in Takuan’s thought, it is obvious that as he lived in Kyōto monasteries Daitokuji and Myōshinji, he had some acquaintance with it: it is difficult to explain in another way why Takuan has developed so extensively in works devoted to Confucian theories about the nature of things, his conception of the world of Nature. Though it cannot be proven, the hypothesis I propose is that, under the fear of the Christian faith expansion, Takuan, like others, made an effort to rationally explain the order of the universe with Confucian theories in the frame of the Buddhist faith.

Heaven and Earth may have their revolution, if one does not show anything, nothing will arise. Without a seed planted in the land, nothing will grow with only Heaven and Earth. Heaven does not create anything. Therefore, if from the times without beginning a plant or a tree becomes for the first time a chestnut, it is because there is a principle belonging which it will become a chestnut and, till the end of time, if one sows a chestnut seed, it will never become kaki, and if one sows a plum seed it will not become a peach.

Here Takuan uses the Buddhist concept of karmic induction, of karma inducted by causality (*ingō* 引業), and of karmic completion by which the causality of an individual entity is implied in a larger field of causality (*mangō* 滿業), a kind of pre-established harmony.

Everything, by induction of its karma, is such that a plum is a plum and a peach is a peach. Such is every being animate or inanimate. Inasmuch as every being constituted itself by the induction of its own karma, we speak of karmic induction. All

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47 See Girard, *Vocabulaire du bouddhisme japonais*. 2 Vols.: Tome I: A-K; Tome II: L-Z. Genève: Droz, 2008. s.v. *dōbun*. Also: *tōbun* 等分, *jibun* 自分, *ubun* 有分.

beings, organized in parallelism, constitute a completion. The karmic induction is said of every being in its singularity, though karmic completion is said of all beings considered together as a globality.<sup>48</sup>

This course of things is explained in Confucianism by the principle of Nature (*shizen*) belonging, at the time, to Buddhism and Christians.<sup>49</sup> Here, does Takuan refer to discussions with Christians? Though we cannot answer this question, due to a lack of documents, the problematics and the way Takuan answers the questions suggest a polemical context of discussion with Christians. When he says that Heaven does not create things and beings but only sustains and grows them is a refutation that Heaven would proceed to a kind of continuous creation, as Malebranche would have said. Every being is responsible for its own production and Heaven plays the role of a helping element. Did Takuan, in this polemical context, replace God with Heaven?

In Confucianism, all things are the transformation of unique energy (*ikki*). It says that Heaven has created and manifested them and that such is the Nature (*shizen/jinen*). If one says that surely Heaven has created and manifested them, does a plum tree or a peach tree that has not been sowed arise now under our eyes? [...] Does Nature mean that, by planting a plum tree, a peach tree will arise? Obviously, a plum tree or a peach tree becomes a plum tree or a peach tree by karmic induction. Heaven only proceeds to their growing. Plum tree and peach tree have created themselves; it is not Heaven who created them. If there exists another principle, I would like to know it! Dear disciples, teach me it!<sup>50</sup>

## Hayashi Razan and Matsunaga Teitoku

For a Confucianist like Hayashi Razan 林羅山 (1583–1657), there exists one unique nature, *sei* 性, sustained by Confucianism and robbed by Buddhism under the term of Buddha nature.<sup>51</sup> The constitution of a new current of Buddhism, which in fact can be reduced to Confucianism, is the characteristic of heresy. His adversary of the Nichiren sect, Matsunaga Teitoku 松永貞徳 (1571–1654), denies these allegations of robbery and heresy but Razan, who refuted Christianity represented by Fukun Fabian 不干ハピアン (1565–1621) in 1606, may have put in one sole set Nichiren, Jōdoshin, Zen and Christianity as variations of the same thing. For him,

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48 All these quotations of Takuan are from this same work: *Takuan Oshō zenshū* 澤庵和尚全集 (*Complete works of Master Takuan*). vol. 5, *Tōkai yawa* 東海夜話. [Takuan Oshō Zenshū Kankōkai 澤庵和尚全集刊行会] Tōkyō, n.p., 1928–1930, pp.7–9.

49 *Ibidem*, p.13.

50 *Idem*, pp.69–10.

51 For Neo-Confucianist thinkers, the Buddhists were said to have taken the concept of nature from Confucianists to forge the notion of Buddha-nature in Buddhism. It is a very usual way to reduce a quia a rival, in Eastern religions.



the explanation of things by causality is fallacious: there is a nature at the very beginning and all which occurs is a transformation of it. This nature, identified as Principle, *ri* 理, has been elevated to the status of an invisible and imperceptible Principle, equivalent to the “Great Tope without Top” (*mukyoku no taikyoku* 無極之大極) so as to argue with the invisible and imperceptible God of Christians. Nature, identified with the Principle of things - invisible and escaping perception - was thus elevated to the status of the Supreme Faith without Faith (*wuji zhi taiji*, *jap. mukyoku no taikyoku*) with the aim of putting it in parallel with the invisible God of the Christians, while avoiding the overall perception of the Christians.<sup>52</sup>

## Why a Reformation Movement in the Seventeenth Century?

The criticism of Christianity by monks led them to a reformation of the Buddhist community from the inside. In former times, it occurred that external criticism from the imperial court, the shogunate authorities or rival currents, religious or profane, led to a reformation of the order: such was the case when disciplinary rules were not followed so that monks were compelled to restore them in their order, for instance at the beginning of Kamakura period with Yōjōbō Yōsai 葉上房栄西 (1141–1215), Jōkei 貞慶 (1155–1213), Myōe 明恵 (1173–1232) or Gyōnen 凝然 (1240–1321) and Eison 叡尊 (1201–1290). As the criticism came from secular authorities and also from religious authorities, the reformation bore the two aspects of a reformation on the State level of the so-called *New Sōniryō* (*Rules for monks and nuns*) issued from the shogunate in 1332 (*Goseibai shikimoku* 御成敗式目) and the monastic communities themselves, a threefold system of plain rules (*gusokukai* 具足戒) delivered by Tōdaiji and Kanzeonji, of spiritual bodhisattvic rules oriented not only on interdiction and selfish rules but also and above all on altruist conduct, and then on rules specific to each sect: ointment or unction (*kanjō*) for esoteric Buddhism, invisible rules (*musōkai*) for Zen, purely formal recognition in the case of Pure Land doctrines, who admitted the lay status of monks. The State and Monastic levels referred to were in any case in a specific relationship: the Buddhist Law was subordinated to the Prince Law, so that the reformation operated on the two levels.

However, from the Middle Ages, some Buddhist communities, Sōtō of Dōgen, Hokkeshū of Nichiren, Shinshū or Ikkōshū of Shinran and Rennyo, settled the Buddhist Law as superior to the Prince Law so that the latter had to be submitted to the former. Though it was not the totality of these three currents that required the

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52 Girard, “Dialogues on Confucianism and Buddhism, Jubutsu mondō, Les Dialogues sur le confucianisme et le bouddhisme (Jubutsu mondō): ou la critique du bouddhisme par Hayashi Razan face à Teitoku”. *Japon Pluriel 5, Actes du cinquième colloque de la Société française des études japonaises*. Paris: Éditions Philippe Picquier, 2004, pp.83–93.

Prince to obey and submit himself to the Buddha's Law, their number was sufficient to cause disorders in the Empire. For those, who were put outside the clerical ordination system, a reformation from outside was unacceptable or compelled by force. One way to escape the secular power was for the followers of Jōdoshinshū to have a quite strange use of the Two Truths theory: the profane truth has to lead to the authentic truth by using skill means (*hōben*); to have a child understand the doctrine of the One Vehicle or the Vacuity, to lie to him is allowed as a way to pass from the common or conditioned order to the unconditioned one. But adepts of Shinshū used the profane truth as a mean to follow the Prince law in appearance and the authentic truth as the true creed: it was preconized to make a salutation to Amaterasu or the Buddha Vairocana of his own master but in fact to think in one's own mind of the Buddha Amida. This habit was introduced in one passage concerning the definition of the Soul in the *Compendium of Philosophy*: "What is the Soul? The man, led astray by the disorders of his misery (*zaigō*, sins), is profoundly falling prey to error. Consequently, he is not able to discern even the tangible body, which belongs to the profane truth. Moreover, he cannot discern the authentic truth of the Soul [which cannot be perceived]!"<sup>53</sup> It has been developed in a long passage concerning the idolatry of the *Compendium Catholicae Veritatis*, in the Japanese version of the text (1595): the servant, when he is catholic, has to follow his master in shrines and temples, to prostrate himself in appearance before the idols of Shinto and Buddhism but to revere in fact, in his inner mind, the Christ, Maria and God.

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53 The Latin states: "The nature of man is so pitiful that he cannot know his most inner interiority if not in the obscurity. In consequence, the soul, for it is for us what is the most interior thing, is difficult to know. Nevertheless, I shall state on it in saying what it is through clear truths, which will not be an obstacle to shed in light its potentials and its operations. Aristotle defines the soul in these terms: the soul is the first act of natural things possessing the life".

The Japanese translate with more details not included in the Latin version: "The man, disturbed by the disorders of his misery (litt. his sinfull or fautive acts, *zaigō* 罪業 a Buddhist term) is profoundly immersed in error. Consequently, he is no longer able to discern the sensible things belonging to the profane truth. How could he have discernment concerning the authentic truth to which the soul belongs! However, we shall state now in this treatise about the account of Aristotle about the soul, by recording every point of his interpretations. In particular, we shall discuss the nature of the soul and, then, of its functions and operations. Aristotle defines what is the soul, in the second chapter of his treatise, in the following way: *Anima est actus primus substantialis corporis physici seu naturalis organici potentia vitam habentis* [The soul is the first act of the substance of physical corpses, which has the potentiality of the life]. This means that the soul is an organ, for it provides the operations of the life in itself, and that it is the foundation of all the natural body which possesses its own instruments".

*Compendium catholicae veritatis*. Kirishitan Bunko Library, Sophia University (Ed.). Tōkyō: Ōzorasha 大空社 Co. Ltd., 1997, Tome 1, p.42; tome 2, p.365.

This custom was at the origin of a kind of religious practice, which prevailed to have Shinshū and Christianity becoming very similar faiths in their external manifestations, on one side, and to make an assimilation between Amida and God as an absolute and unique object of their creed, on the other side. This assimilation was put forward in the middle of the seventeenth century and Sessō mingled the two credos in his mind and his predication. The two could hardly be distinguished by the authorities and the common people. From this viewpoint also, a reformation of the Buddhist clergy urged the authorities, from outside, and for the monks themselves, from inside.

When we read the account of Luís Fróis (1532–1597) on Buddhism, 42 items concerning monks, 30 items relating to temples, images and cult, it is clear that a reformation of the Buddhist order was required.

## The Monks and Their Customs

1. Monks enter in religion to escape work and to live in idleness among leisures.
2. The monks are vicious from the interior and commit horrible sins.
3. Monks receive in due donations from their parishes' worshippers (*danas*) and are in search of thousands of ways to become rich.
4. Monks have their own property and accumulate goods so as to increase them.
5. Monks do not respect their donors and pardon their sins so as to not lose their rent.
6. As far as possible, monks wear silk togas with ostentation and arrogance.
7. In Japan, monks give a lot of money, even if they have to die, to ascend in the clerical hierarchy.
8. The warriors-monks of Negorosan have military service as their profession and are fit to fight.
9. Monks would not have to eat meat nor fish but most of them do so, if they do not fear to be seen or are hindered to do so.
10. In Japan, monks are used by their masters (*tono*) as messengers or spies (*buriaqos*) in time of war.
11. Monks marry or become warriors when they borrow from their state.
12. Among monks, the superior has as a successor a disciple educated from a very young age (succeeding him not necessarily by virtue).

The Tokugawa shogunate ordered a series of measures concerning shrines and temples, first by sects (1601–1616) and gradually for the totality of clergy (1665), conceived and issued by Ishin Sūden 以心崇伝 (1569–1633), the same Zen monk who wrote the edicts of interdiction of Christianity in 1613–1614: the two facts were in an important part linked for the almighty Zen counsellor of the Tokugawa family. These rules aimed to have no more trouble nor disorder in the monastic communities, in particular by their “wild ordinations,” that is the ordination of monks who did not have the qualification to manage a monastery in due form. The system of ordination specific to each sect was an important cause of this state

of things and the worst thing that governmental authorities feared at all times. The Shogunate measures tried to stop and control the monastic communities by appointing monks to pacific and cultural activities, a compilation of treatises and historical genealogies proving the orthodoxy of their own sect, of encyclopaedias defining the accurate meaning of Buddhist key-terminology and central concepts. Apart from the stimulation in the intellectual life that these measures gave to the Buddhist currents, and also though it is connected with these official measures, it is worth noticing that an inner reformation movement was brought to light during the seventeenth century by monks mostly belonging to Zen sects. Inner reformation is here synonymous with a spontaneous movement which aroused from itself and, it is notable, directly or indirectly in the contact of Christianity. Two of these leaders were preachers, appointed by the shogunate, working at Amakusa to struggle against Christian followers and to convert them again to Buddhism: Suzuki Shōsan and Sessō Sōsai. The other names associated with this movement were the master in Vinaya Genshun 玄俊 of Kōyasan, that is of Shingon esoterism but related to Hōryūji temple of Nara in the Vinaya tradition, and Isshin Monshu 一系文守 (1608–1646) of Yōgenji 永源寺 at Ōmi, a disciple of Takuan who advocated a Disciplinary Zen. Then, the Zen monks of the non-orthodox tradition (Rinke 林下) of Myōshinji 妙心寺, unamenable to the shogunate, Taigu Sōchiku 大愚宗築 (1584–1669), who inherited the tradition of the founder of Myōshinji 妙心寺, Kanzan Egen 關山慧玄 (1277–1361), Ungo Kiyō 雲居希膺 (1582–1659) – who practised a Nenbutsu Zen and converted the Lord Date Masamune 伊達政宗 (1567–1636) in the North, in Zuiganji 瑞巖寺 of Matsushima – and Myōseki 明關 or Shidō Bunan profane ethics. These Zen monks criticized the way of only making consultations to one master in an intimate and excessively confidential way (*mitsusanzen* 密參禪) and joined a “coalition of practitioners of a universal consultation” (*ketsumei henzan* 結盟遍參) in 1606. They travelled across the country to consult masters in provinces: this new way of practice restored the spirit of early Chan Buddhism practices but may have been suggested also by the activities of missionaries in Japan. It had also as a common aim the attainment of Satori (Enlightenment) which was forgotten by the former currents of Zen in compromising with secular authorities. To these names, we can add the Sōtō monk Ryūkei Sōsen 龍溪宗潛 (1602–1670) of Myōshinji, Ban'an Eishu 萬安英種 (1591–1654) of Kōshōji 興聖寺 in Uji, Kenshun Ryōei 賢俊良永 of the Shingon-Vinaya sect of the Saimyōji 西明寺 in Makinoo 槇槇尾, Joshū 恕周 of Sennyūji 仙遊寺 Shingon-Vinaya sect: this Shingon-Vinaya current has as a particularity the fact that its Vinayic behaviour is oriented towards the social activities and the salvation of the population by concrete deeds, like the construction of roads, bridges, cutting wood, clearing of paddy fields and lands, which were appreciated in these times of scarcity.<sup>54</sup> A special case was Fukan Fabian, who was first a Zen monk before becoming a Jesuit and return to his Zen faith.

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54 Ōkuwa, op. cit., p.316.

## Conclusion

Based on concrete and practical experience, the new movements and currents of Buddhism born more or less in touch with the Christian faith are characterized by several facts in contrast to former practices:

- The importance of the Enlightenment against the formalism of *Kōan* and Consultations developed during the Middle Ages;
- In their practices, they associated all that could be useful for the development of the personality, as Nenbutsu and Esoteric invocation or meditation and social activities;
- A priority is given to real practice and therefore a tendency to be free of any sectarian affiliation.

For these renewal movements of Buddhism, influences from Ōbaku Zen with Ingen Ryūki 隱元隆琦 (1592–1673) arrived in 1654, the syncretic Integrism of Zenshinkyō 全眞教, the New Confucian currents imported from China by Shu Shunsui 朱舜水 (1600–1682) arrived in 1659, are pointed out, for textual and material data are obvious. Christianity must not be forgotten because it had a subterranean and boomerang influence, with limits that are difficult to define.



## **Part II Interactions between Buddhist and Missionary Material, Musical and Visual Culture**





Rie ARIMURA

# The Adaptation of Vernacular Sacred Spaces in the Catholic Architecture of Early Modern Japan

## Introduction

The Catholic architecture in the century of evangelization before the ban on Christianity and the expulsion of the Portuguese and Spaniards in early modern Japan (i.e., 1549–1639) was the product of diverse adaptation strategies by the missionaries. Thus, lands to plant churches were selected according to varied criteria and, likewise, existing buildings, such as native temples, grounds within walled enclosures of feudal castles, and houses of lords or native converts were reused. This paper focuses on the adaptation of native sacred spaces. Firstly, I will approach the missionary context in Japan, comparing it to that of the Portuguese and Spanish dominated territories in order to elucidate and contrast the features of the Japanese case. Then, I will show different measures applied by both Jesuits and mendicant friars in adapting Buddhist spaces. It bears mentioning that the analysis of mendicant architecture will be limited to the Franciscan and Dominican orders, since to date, the data on the Augustinians in Japan is too scant to reconstruct the architecture carried out by this order.

## The Context of Catholic Architecture in Japan

The Catholic architecture in early modern Japan was characterized by its great adaptability and ephemeral nature. The Japanese specificity of missionary architecture can be explained by the lack of control by the missionaries over native authorities, and the hardships to carry out missionary work. Indeed, in Japan the missionaries faced much greater obstacles than in the territories conquered by the Iberians. There evangelical work was directly associated to the colonial policy of ‘congregation’ of native villages. The policy of congregation consisted in establishing a centralized administrative system and implementing state social-economic development plans, including urban planning and infrastructure. Thus, in colonial America, churches were built at strategic locations. In Japan, on the contrary, the missionaries rarely enjoyed the privilege to freely choose lands to erect churches. There, apostolic activities depended on permissions granted by native civil authorities. Thus, most of the Catholic churches in Japan were built with personal permission granted by the *daimyō* of each feudal domain, without a central government’s agreement.<sup>1</sup> So the feudal lords’ support and donations from

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1 In this regard, it is worth mentioning that a centralized regime had not yet been consolidated before Hideyoshi conquered Kyūshū region in 1587. Therefore, most

native Christians and from Portuguese traders were key factors for the establishment of churches.

Since the missionary work in Japan depended entirely on local circumstances, it was also deeply affected by the political and social instability of the country. Thus, the destruction and burning of church buildings, furniture and liturgical objects, as well as the relocation or closure of churches and seminaries were frequent phenomena. These setbacks were not only due to anti-Christian policies implemented by Japanese feudal lords and governors at different stages, but also to political instability at the local level. In fact, the constant civil wars affecting the Japanese Archipelago caused continuous interruptions in the missionary work and the destruction of a large number of churches and outbuildings. Such circumstances limited missionary work, but, at the same time, it pushed missionaries to adapt to the local environment and to find innovative solutions for their own liturgical spaces.

A few factors define the features of Catholic buildings in Japan: their integration into the social and cultural context; the reuse of construction materials; a new symbolic significance of native sacred precincts; the availability of human and material resources; and the continuity of local architectural traditions.

It must be emphasized that the phenomenon of architectural adaptation was not a unique feature of the evangelization of Japan. Integration into the local circumstances, such as the use of existing buildings and modification of only their interior decoration, as well as construction works using perishable materials had been widely experienced in the missions of different geographical contexts. Thus, at the beginning of the evangelization of the New World, the friars provisionally conditioned the caciques' palaces as liturgical places and residences. Moreover, for the erection of permanent church buildings and monasteries they often took advantage of the platforms and construction materials belonging to pre-Hispanic temples. These spatial or material reuses had symbolic significance representing the triumph of the Roman Catholic Church over paganism.<sup>2</sup> At the same time, primitive church buildings and 'visiting' chapels were often built with vernacular materials such as wood, straw and adobe to reduce costs. Besides, this solution did not require collaboration with craftsmen trained in Western building techniques.

churches at the early stage of the mission were planted only with the permission of the *daimyō* of each locality. But this situation never changed because Hideyoshi began the anti-Christian policy once the state's reunification was consummated. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, the persecution of Christians was temporarily calmed and the number of churches remarkably grew. However, there were the only two churches had the official permission of Tokugawa Ieyasu: the Franciscan church in Edo and the Jesuit church in Kyōto. *Cfr.* Delgado García, *Fukusha Jacinto Orfanell, O.P. Shokan hōkoku* 福者ハシント・オルファネール O.P. 書簡・報告. Tadashi Sakuma 佐久間正 (Transl.). Tōkyō: Kirishitan bunka kenkyūkai, 1983, p.101.

2 Kubler, *Arquitectura mexicana del siglo XVI*. Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1992, p.166.

In the Japanese mission, the above-mentioned solutions, which were 'provisional' for other missions, became constant practices throughout the century-long evangelization period. In Japan, provisional or ephemeral solutions were easy alternatives to local problems, such as lack of financial and human resources, as well as the constant persecution of Christians. The reuse of existing buildings without enforcing structural changes upon them was not limited to the first stages of the evangelization, but it was carried out under different circumstances, at different times and from different religious orders, thereby acquiring a lasting feature.

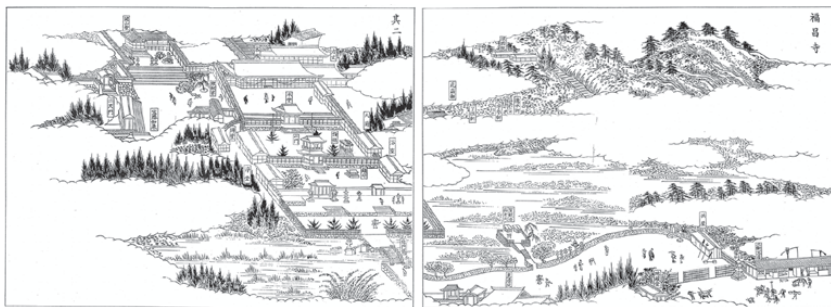
### Reuse of Buddhist Temples

The strategy of reutilisation and adaptation of native sacred places – which has been practiced throughout the history of Christianity – was implemented not only by the Jesuits missionaries, but also by mendicant friars from the beginning of each of these missions in Japan. Buddhist temples and monasteries were ideal places to preach the Gospel and establish mission centres due to their large dimensions and symbolic meaning. The acquisition of Buddhist properties mainly depended on concession, donation, or purchase. There were also cases in which building materials from Buddhist temples were the subject of negotiation. Thus, as a consequence of successful negotiations, Buddhist buildings were dismantled, transported and transformed into churches.

It is worth noting that the majority of Buddhist temples reused by the missionaries did not belong to the elitist Zen sect, and were instead disused buildings or properties belonging to popular Buddhist schools, such as Hokkeshū, and Jōdo Shinshū. Exceptionally, Francis Xavier (1506–1552) used a Zen temple ground for preaching, when he began apostolic work in Satsuma feudal domain (present-day Kagoshima Prefecture) in 1549. Shimazu Takahisa (1514–1571) welcomed and hosted him at his family temple Fukushōji 福昌寺 of Sōto Zen school. This was one of the greatest Buddhist monasteries of southern Kyūshū, and consisted of several ramps and terraces (Fig. 1). The Apostle of the East utilized the large penultimate walled enclosure, and preached from the porch which gave access to the main hall that stood at the end of the precincts, taking advantage of its high visibility.<sup>3</sup> But this temporary use of Zen temple precinct was uncommon, probably due to the hospitality of the lord of Satsuma and the friendship with Ninshitsu, "chief priest" of Fukushōji.

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3 BRAH (Biblioteca de la Real Academia de la Historia, Madrid), Jesuitas, leg. 9/7238, f. 31v.



**Fig. 1.** Fukushōji before the destruction caused by anti-Buddhist movement at the beginning of the Meiji era, from *Sankoku meisho zue* (1843). *Sankoku meisho zue* 三國名勝図會. Torao Haraguchi 原口虎雄 (Ed.). Kumamoto: Seichosha, 1982, vol. I, pp.284–287.

The question of why Zen temples were not turned into churches deserves discussion. Firstly, the Zen sect was one of the strongest Buddhist schools in Japan at that time, as their main followers were members of the intellectual elite, the most influential feudal lords and their subjects. Moreover, from the time of Francis Xavier, the Jesuits had close contact with Zen monks, with whom they cultivated friendships and conducted dialogues and philosophical debates. So, while the Jesuits refuted Buddhist philosophy, they also admired the architecture and the intellectual and cultural heritage that is specific to the Zen sect. Therefore, they showed a great tolerance and understanding of Buddhist traditions.<sup>4</sup> Far from attempting to destroy them, they tried to take advantage of them, such as with the tea ceremony called *chanoyu* that was used to approach and Christianize native lords.<sup>5</sup>

The abandonment or cession of Buddhist properties, this was a common phenomena due to the political and social instability of the Sengoku period (c. 1467–1573). Powerful Buddhist institutions were also oppressed, as shown in the burning of Enryakuji, the main temple of the Tendai sect on Mount Hiei in 1571, carried out by Oda Nobunaga (1534–1582) to limit their power, as part of his strategy to unify and create a centralized regime in Japan. Similarly, Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1537–1598) eliminated a community of Shingon monks known as Negoroshū 根

4 Cooper, “The Early Jesuits in Japan and Buddhism”. Peter Milward (Ed.), *Portuguese Voyages to Asia and Japan in the Renaissance Period*. Tōkyō: Sophia University, The Renaissance Institute, 1994, p.55. (Renaissance Monographs, 20).

5 Hioki, “Tea Ceremony as Dialogical Space: The Jesuits and the Way of Tea in Early Modern Japan”. *Comparative Theology. Engaging Particularities Conference papers*. Massachusetts: Boston College, 2008, (no pages).

来衆。<sup>6</sup> It was in order to escape religious oppression that the Buddhist monks sold their properties to the missionaries. The Jesuit Luís Fróis (1532–1597) noted this in 1577: “The reason why these monks sell their temples and monasteries where they live is because the King Nobunaga is gradually destroying and taking away their property. [...] The monks sell what they have in order to get funds to live.”<sup>7</sup>

The relationship between Catholic missions and popular Buddhist schools had different dimensions. Firstly, the two faiths shared their belief in one faith for salvation: the mercy of God for Christians and the compassion of Amida, or Amitābha, for believers of Jōdo Shinshū. Secondly, the organizational structure and preaching methods of the latter Buddhist school, particularly the Honganji branch known as Ikkōshū, were adapted in order to create a Catholic network in Japan. Indeed, the Japanese *confrarias* or confraternities were similar to the Buddhist lay groups or congregations known as *kō* 講. Thirdly, the missionaries also took advantage of the propaganda method begun by the Buddhist monk Ren’nyo (1415–85) by writing doctrines and teachings for members of the lower social strata in an epistolary style that used the *kana* syllabary.<sup>8</sup>

### *Attitudes of the Jesuits towards Native Sacred Spaces*

The Jesuit criteria for the utilization of native religious spaces in Japanese missions were diverse. The Jesuit theory of adaptation showed a marked contrast between two personalities, Francisco Cabral (1533–1609), Superior of the Jesuit mission in Japan from 1570 to 1581, and Alessandro Valignano (1539–1606), Visitor of the East Indies. The latter visited Japan on three different occasions – 1579–1582, 1590–1592, and 1598–1603 – and set forth a theory of the mission based on humanist philosophy. In practice, however, different attitudes towards the adaptation to local society and culture coexisted during the ‘rule’ of the two figures.

Thus, dating to the time of Cabral, the missionary record shows that different measures were applied. According to a letter of 1575, new converts to Christianity went to a very old ‘*varela*’,<sup>9</sup> or ‘temple of idols,’ and they destroyed the temple

6 Biblioteca da Ajuda, Jesuitas na Ásia, Codex 49-IV-53, Alessandro Valignano, “Del principio y progreso de la Religion Christiana en Japon y de la especial Providencia de que n[uest]ro Señor vsa con aquella nueva Iglesia”, 1601, Chapter 7, f.286.

7 ARSI (Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu, Rome), Jap. Sin. 8-III, f.142, a letter from Luís Fróis, Usuki, 9.9.1577. This translation is mine.

8 Kawamura, “An Evaluation of Valignano’s Decision-making from the Viewpoint of Japanese Society”. *Integration and Division between Universalism and Localism in Jesuit Mission Reports and Histories: Sophia University International Colloquium 2005 Report*. Tōkyō: The Sophia University Research Group for Jesuit Mission Reports and Histories, 2006, pp.106–107.

9 The old Portuguese word “*varela*” or “*varella*”, which means “temple of idols”, often appears in documentary sources. See also Dalgado, *Glossário Luso-Asiático* [Coimbra: Imprensa da Universidade, 1919]. 2 Vols. Hamburg: Buske, 1982, vol. 2: M-Z.

and pagodas, turning them into firewood, as if they had been Christians for many years.<sup>10</sup> Nevertheless, at the same time, there were also more peaceful measures. On the one hand, it was common practice to negotiate prices of Buddhist properties or to obtain the monks' consent for dismantling native temples and reusing their materials to construct Catholic buildings, such as the case of the church of Tamba,<sup>11</sup> erected in 1573 by using building materials from a Buddhist temple of Kyōto, which though small, was one of the best and richest buildings of that city.<sup>12</sup> On the other hand, there were also instances in which non-Christian temples were reused without any architectural modification. Thus, a *varela* donated in 1576 by Arima Yoshisada (1521–1576/77) was reused as a church without any changes, taking advantage of the expanse of the buildings.<sup>13</sup> Meanwhile, the lack of tolerance, such as the burning of Buddhist images continued even in the time of Valignano. In Arima, for instance, at the beginning of 1584 several idols were brought to the church and were publicly burned in a bonfire, together with an ornament of a Buddhist monk, who was among them.<sup>14</sup>

Such violent measures were often undertaken with the agreement and support of the local Christian lords. Thus, the missionaries “took down temples and pagodas and erected, in their place, churches and crosses”, as happened in 1575 in Nagasaki.<sup>15</sup> Similarly, the most important Buddhist temple of Hizen Ōmura was dismantled to leave free space for a Catholic church at the behest of Ōmura Sumitada (1533–1587). The same ruler also commanded all non-Christians to attend the site and hear the word of God.<sup>16</sup> With the passage of time, however, the Christian *daimyō* themselves realized that destructive actions of native religious buildings and idols went against the apostolic zeal, besides leading to conflicts with local Buddhist authorities.<sup>17</sup> The missionaries, for their part, handled this matter differently depending on the situation. Catholic figures realized that violent and destructive actions of Buddhist statues among non-Christian populations could cause hatred towards Christianity, so they recommended the eradication of local religious beliefs through dialogue with wisdom and tolerance. Yet, among those who had been baptized and thus instructed not to hold on to ‘superstitions,’ the missionaries were more severe and did approve more severe measures such as the destruction of ‘idols’.<sup>18</sup>

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- 10 BRAH, Cortes, 9/2663, f. 99v, a letter from Miguel Vaz, Nagasaki, 3.8.1575.
  - 11 The old province of Tamba comprises the central part of modern Kyōto Prefecture and the north-eastern part of Hyogo Prefecture.
  - 12 BRAH, Cortes, 9/2663, f. 90v, a letter from Luís Fróis, Kyōto, 17.6.1573.
  - 13 BRAH, Cortes, 9/2663, f. 122v, a letter from Alonso González, Arima, 24.9.1576.
  - 14 BRAH, Cortes, 9/2663, f. 407v–408, a letter from Damian Marin, Arima, 27.12.1584.
  - 15 BRAH, Cortes, 9/2663, f. 98, a letter from Miguel Vaz, Nagasaki, 3.8.1575.
  - 16 BRAH, Cortes, 9/2663, f. 98v.
  - 17 Matsuda, *Namban shiryō no hakken. Yomigaeru Nobunaga jidai* 南蛮史料の発見 よみがえる信長時代. Tōkyō: Chūō Kōronsha, 1991, p.145.
  - 18 Acosta, *De procuranda indorum salute* [Salmanticae, 1588]. 2 Vols. Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1987, vol. II, pp. 259–275.

Sources also report cases wherein new Christian buildings were erected “with much dispatch” in the place of Buddhist monasteries that had been erased.<sup>19</sup> Additionally, it was also customary to recycle materials from Buddhist temples. These practices derived from ancient Japanese architectural tradition. The wooden structure of most Japanese buildings was composed simply of columns, beams and a sloping roof, a system that facilitates the extension of the space or the restoration of damaged parts, as well as more far-reaching measures such as dismantling and reconstruction. Thus, the Jesuit João Rodrigues ‘Tçuzu’ (c.1561/2–1633), who lived in Japan from 1577 to 1610, stated that “They [The Japanese] seem to build neither with stones nor bricks because of the many earthquakes, or because it is more difficult, while wooden buildings can be transported elsewhere. This is a daily occurrence.”<sup>20</sup>

Valignano, during his first stay in Japan, set forth building rules in the Chapter 7 of his *Advertimentos e avisos acerca dos costumes e catangues de Jappão* (1581): “Do modo que se ha de ter en fabricar nosas cassas e igrejas em Jappão” (The way of proceeding in building our houses and churches in Japan).<sup>21</sup> The architectural adaptation policies were not Valignano’s own, and the visitor simply codified practices existing prior to his arrival.<sup>22</sup> Valignano defended local architectural traditions and customs as well as the employment of native builders, and he pointed out the importance of seeking the advice of master builders.<sup>23</sup>

Yet, the Jesuits were concerned in distinguishing their churches from the Buddhist temples, as they repeatedly wrote in their letters and reports. As Fróis pointed out, the height of the building was the feature that distinguished Jesuit buildings from the Japanese ones, which tended to be single-storied ones.<sup>24</sup> Moreover, building ‘in our way’ (*no nosso modo*) with Christian liturgical ornaments on

19 BRAH, Cortes, 9/2663, f. 99v, a letter from Miguel Vaz, Nagasaki, 3.8.1575.

20 Rodrigues, *História da igreja do Japão (1620–1633)*. 2 Vols. Transcription of the Codex 49-IV-53 (f. 1–181) of the Biblioteca do Palácio da Ajuda, Lisboa. João do Amaral Abranches Pinto (Ed.). Lisboa: Notícias de Macau, 1954, vol. I, pp.197–198. This translation is mine.

21 Valignano, *Il Cerimoniale per i missionari del Giappone*. «Advertimentos e Avisos acerca dos Costumes e Catangues de Jappão». Josef Franz Schütte, S.J. (Ed.). Roma: Edizioni di «Storia e Letterature», 1946, pp.270–281 and Valignano, *Nihon Iezusukai reihō shishin* 日本イエズス会礼法指針 (*Advertimentos e avisos acerca dos costumes e catangues de Jappão*). Toshihiko Yazawa 矢沢利彦; Suna Tsutsui 筒井砂 (Transl.). Tōkyō: Kirishitan bunka kenkyūkai, 1970, pp.109–114.

22 Yamaguchi, *Nihon ni okeru sei-yō kenchiku no dōnyū katei no kenkyū* 日本における西洋建築導入過程の研究. Doctoral dissertation in Engineering, University of Tōkyō, 1970, pp. 54–55.

23 Valignano, *Il cerimoniale per i missionari del Giappone*, p.271, Articles 146 and 147.

24 Miyamoto, *Kinsei Nihon kenchiku ni hisomu sei-yō shuhō no nazo: “Kirishitan kenchiku” ron josetsu* 近世日本建築にひそむ西洋手法の謎「キリシタン」建築論序説. Tōkyō: Shōkokusha, 1996, p.100.

display was essential to catching the eye of the stranger.<sup>25</sup> The *Annuae del Iapon* of 1607 reported that the church of Hakata was "...strong and well built with a floor plan that was very new to Japan and very different from their temples and varellas..."<sup>26</sup> The phrase 'a floor plan that was very new to Japan' (*traça tan nova em Japão*) suggests the use of a European architectural plan. The design of Buddhist monasteries thus became the reference point that helped the Jesuits to determine their own architectural forms in Japan. The introduction of Western architectural elements was crucial in establishing a contrast with local religious architecture, and asserting a distinctive Catholic identity.

Concerning the concepts 'no nosso modo' or 'traça tan nova,' Valignano indicated: "...churches will be constructed in such a manner as observed in our European custom, having a longer nave, and not the same width as the Japanese do in erecting their temples."<sup>27</sup> Valignano proposed the use of such a longitudinal plan to contrast with Buddhist temple floors. Moreover, the Catholic houses were to have appropriate spaces to receive Japanese visitors according to their social status. Yet, in practice, the enforcement of these rules was limited. Indeed, only the major churches were built with a longitudinal floor plan, such as was the case with the church of Arima, which was built in 1581 reusing wood from several Buddhist temples, and had a basilical floor plan, composed of three naves (or one nave and two aisles).<sup>28</sup> Meanwhile, native Christians continued to reuse their own houses as places of worship.

### *The Mendicant Missions and Their Adaptation Criteria*

The mendicant orders belatedly undertook missionary work in Japan. Initially, papal bulls claimed the monopoly of the Society of Jesus on these lands and thus imposed a number of obstacles and limitations on the participation of the mendicant orders in evangelical works in that country. The first official arrivals of the friars in Japan did not have an apostolic, but a diplomatic purpose. Thus, in 1592, Manila Governor Don Luis Gómez Pérez Dasmariñas (from May or June 1, 1590 to October 25, 1593) sent the Dominican Juan Cobo (c.1546–1592) as ambassador, and the following year he sent the Franciscan Pedro Bautista Blásquez (1542–1597) under the same duties. The aim was to meet with Toyotomi Hideyoshi. Since then, the Franciscans managed to settle in Japanese territory through negotiations conducted by Pedro Bautista with that minister, while the Augustinians and Dominicans did not join in evangelical work until 1602.

25 ARSI, Jap. Sin. 55, f. 298, "Annuae Iapon de Outubro do anno de 1605 ate o mesmo do anno de 1606", João Rodrigues Giram, Nagasaki, 15.2.1607.

26 ARSI, Jap. Sin. 55, f. 334v.

27 Valignano, *Il cerimoniale per i missionari del Giappone*, p.279. This translation is mine.

28 ARSI, Jap. Sin. 45-II, f. 34v, "Annua del Japon", Gaspar Coello, Nagasaki, 15.2.1582; BRAH, Cortes, 9/2663, f. 257v; Valignano, *Sumario de las cosas de Japón (1583) Adiciones del sumario de Japón (1592)*. José Luis Alvarez-Taladriz (Ed.). Tōkyō: Sophia University, 1954, V. I, p.84 n.



The historiography of the Catholic Mission of Japan tends to contrast the Jesuit missionary policies with the mendicant ones, stressing differences and rivalries between them. But it is also true that the mendicant missions in Japan began to support the Jesuits. The chronicler Francisco Colin (1592–1660), for instance, reported that Gaspar Coelho (1531–1590), Vice-Provincial Father of the Company of Jesus in Japan, wrote to the governor and the bishop of Manila two letters in 1584 and 1585 requesting that the Franciscans were to assist them in apostolic tasks.<sup>29</sup> There are also documents issued in Manila in 1587 indicating the need to send brothers to Japan in order to make up for the lack of missionaries in that country.<sup>30</sup> Therefore, it was not by chance that the Franciscans began their work establishing their convents in Kyōto, Nagasaki and Ōsaka, where the number of Christian population had increased owing to the previous work of the Jesuits. This fact is even comparable to the apostolic work undertaken by the Franciscans and Dominicans in the thirteenth century in Europe: “The ideal of going to the missions could be rarely done, so that they made no effort to penetrate lands of heathens, but they set about transforming the infrastructure of existing Christian communities.”<sup>31</sup>

Similarly, according to the mission theory of the Dominicans, they aimed to establish their religious houses “...in those realms where there were no other congregations in order to be more profitable for the Gentiles and to avoid overlapping of works.”<sup>32</sup> But this does not mean that the Dominicans always were engaged in an entirely new territory. In fact, they often took advantage of the work previously performed by the Jesuits and Franciscans. For example, for establishing a church in Fukahori, Hizen, the Dominicans repaired a ‘church of another religion,’ namely a building used by another Catholic order.<sup>33</sup>

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- 29 Colín, *Labor evangélica, ministerios apostólicos de los obreros de la Compañía de Iesvs, fundación, y progresos de su provincia en las islas Filipinas* [Madrid: Ioseph Fernandez de Buendia, 1663]. P. Pablo Pastells, S.J. (Ed.). Barcelona: Imprenta y Litografía de Henrich y Compañía, 190, p.357; Pérez, “Origen de las misiones franciscanas en el Extremo Oriente: II. Primera expedición de los franciscanos de Filipinas a la China, India Oriental y Japón”. *Archivo Ibero-Americano*, T. I, 1914, p.331.
- 30 “Información que recibió el obispo del estado que tienen las cosas del Japón”, Manila, 4.7.1587, published in Alvarez-Taladriz, “Notas para la historia de la entrada en Japón de los franciscanos”. *España en Extremo Oriente: Filipinas, China, Japón. Presencia franciscana, 1578–1978*. Víctor Sánchez; Cayetano Sánchez Fuertes (Ed.). Madrid: Cisneros, 1979, p.16; “Petición de los japones al obispo del envío de Religiosos de San Francisco y Santo Domingo a Japón”, Manila, 26.9.1587, published in Alvarez-Taladriz, *Ibidem*, p.20.
- 31 Braunfels, *Arquitectura monacal en Occidente*. Barcelona: Barral, 1975, p.193. This translation is mine.
- 32 Muñoz, *Los dominicos españoles en Japón (siglo XVII)*, offprint from *Missionalia Hispánica*, no. 64–65. Madrid: Raycar, 1965, p.25.
- 33 Orfanell, *Historia eclesiastica de los sucesos de la cristiandad de Iapon, desde el año de 1602, qve entro en el la Orden de Predicadores, hasta el de 1620*. Madrid: viuda de Alonso Martin, 1633, f. 3v.

In short, since the mendicant orders were established, the friars made effective use of advances in missionary work carried out in former times. So common evangelical strategies and methods went beyond geographical and institutional differences. As the historian García Ros puts it, the Franciscan friars “accommodated to what they found in each region, conforming to the physical conditions of the area, financial resources, the will of benefactors, the personal style of master builders, materials and construction techniques of the place, in short, to the local customs.”<sup>34</sup> In the case of Japan, in addition to similarities between the ways in which religious orders accommodated themselves to the local circumstances, there were connections and continuity between the previous work of the Jesuits and that of the friars. Furthermore, because of a peculiar Japanese social context characterized by constant civil wars and persecutions against the Christians, the missionaries practiced the mutual support and solidarity between the different orders. Particularly, in the context of severe persecution of Christianity, modest local buildings, e.g. ‘small shacks, or cells covered with branches, and mountain herbs’ which were completed rapidly, became increasingly important to the different orders as places of worship and abodes of the missionaries and followers.<sup>35</sup>

### Order of Friars Minor

As mentioned above, while the first Franciscan churches and convents were established in Kyōto (1594), Nagasaki (1594), and Ōsaka (1596),<sup>36</sup> the Franciscans contributed later to undertaking missionary work in the north-eastern region of Japan (present-day Kanto and Tohoku). Their incursion into new lands responded to the change of the political regime in Japan in 1603 with the establishment of the Tokugawa shogunate in the new capital of Edo. Thus, Gerónimo de Jesús (n.d.–1601) founded the church of Our Lady of the Rosary in that city with the permission of Tokugawa Ieyasu (1543–1616).<sup>37</sup> Similarly, Luis de Sotelo (1574–1624) established a church in Uraga, a strategically located port at the entrance to the Tōkyō Bay.<sup>38</sup> These churches were destroyed after the edict banning Christianity in 1612 and 1613.<sup>39</sup>

34 García Ros, *Los franciscanos y la arquitectura: de san Francisco a la exclaustación*. Valencia: Asís, 2000, p.105.

35 Orfanell, op. cit., f. 51v, 92.

36 Schilling, “Le missioni dei francescani spagnuoli nel Giappone: primo periodo (1593–1597)”. *Il pensiero missionario*, vol. IX, 1937, pp.294–296; Uyttenbroeck, *The Franciscans in the Land of the Rising Sun: Fifty Years After Their Return*. Tōkyō: St. Joseph Friary, 1957, pp.3–4; Uyttenbroeck, *Duo generosi apostolatus saecula in Japonia (1549–1650; 1844–1945)*. Tōkyō: Seminarium St. Antonii, 1945, p.75.

37 Delgado García, *Fukusha José de San Jacinto Salvanés, O.P. Shokan hōkoku* 福者ホセ・デ・サン・ハシント・サルバネス O.P. 書簡・報告, Tadashi Sakuma 佐久間正 (Transl.). Tōkyō: Kirishitan bunka kenkyūkai, 1976, p.56.

38 BRAH, Cortes, 9/2666, f. 88, 92; Diego de San Francisco 1971, pp.24–25.

39 Delgado García, *Fukusha José de San Jacinto Salvanés, O.P. Shokan hōkoku*, p.56.

The Franciscan friars adapted their architecture to local conditions much as the Jesuits had done before them, and they frequently reused existing buildings from small houses to large properties. The friars mainly used two different architectural styles depending on the functions. According to Juan de Santa María (1551–1622), the Franciscan convent of Ōsaka was built ‘in our way,’<sup>40</sup> while hospitals and schools in Kyōto made ‘by way of Japan.’<sup>41</sup> This suggests that non-religious buildings properly followed the local tradition.

There are very few historical records referring to the reuse of Buddhist temple precincts done by the Franciscans. But one of the most striking examples was the first Franciscan establishment in Japan, namely the convent complex of Saint Mary of the Angels in Kyōto. The complex was established by Pedro Bautista, who had entered into negotiations with Hideyoshi in 1593 to obtain a residence permit for the Franciscans. Hideyoshi not only granted permission to found the convent, but also for the friars to live in their own way and exercise apostolic ministry.<sup>42</sup> He ordered the governor “Guêni foin” (Gen’ihōin 玄以法印 or Maeda Gen’i 前田玄以, 1539–1602) to allow the friars to choose a site and amount of land necessary for them in a large field of wheat, in the city. However, the governor, observing that the land they wanted was very large, and also knowing that the friars aimed to build their church, did not want to give them the estate requested, although the friars insisted that their aim was to build a hospital to cure the poor, and a small house right next to it to lodge them. The governor eventually complied on condition that they lease the site, not purchase it. Furthermore, he insisted, the friars should not spread the faith nor assemble Christian brethren in their house. A few days later, however, the friars began to erect on that site a convent and a church, both in the manner of those of Spain.<sup>43</sup>

According to Fróis, this place belonged to the ‘Foricaua mionaji yaxiqi,’<sup>44</sup> i.e., Myōmanji 妙満寺, head temple of the Lotus sect, which had to be moved to Teramachi Nijō by order of Hideyoshi. This temple precinct stood on the bank of

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40 Juan de Santa María, *Chronica de la provincia de San Joseph de los descalços de la orden de los menores de nuestro seraphico padre san Francisco*. 2 Vols. Madrid: Imprenta Real, 1618, vol. II, p.182.

41 Ribadeneira, *Historia de las islas del archipiélago filipino y reinos de la gran China, Tartaria, Cochinchina, Malaca, Siam, Cambodge y Japón* [Barcelona, 1601]. P. Juan R. de Legísima (Ed.). Madrid: La editorial católica, 1947, p. 355; Juan de Santa María, op. cit., 1618, vol. II, p.51.

42 A report written by Pedro Bautista, 1.1.1596, quoted by Pérez, “Cartas y relaciones del Japón II Relaciones e informes sobre el proceder de los franciscanos antes de la persecución de 1596”. *Extract of Archivo Ibero-Americano* XXV, XXVI, XXVIII, XXXII–XXXIII. Imprenta de G. López del Horno, 1920, p.37.

43 BRAH, Cortes, 9/2666, f. 11v.

44 Luís Fróis, *Historia de Japam*, cited by José Luis Alvarez-Taladriz in Ascensión; Ribadeneira, *Documentos franciscanos de la cristiandad de Japón (1593–1597). Relaciones e informes*. José Luis Alvarez-Taladriz (Ed.). Ōsaka: [Eikodo], 1973, p.176, note 37.

the river Horikawa. Although it was situated in the city, there were no neighbours.<sup>45</sup> The estate was ‘very wide and with large capacity,’ since it occupied an area of some 16,000 square meters.<sup>46</sup>

A letter sent by Pedro Bautista to the governor of Manila Don Luis Pérez Dasmariñas (1539–1593) on 13 October 1594, i.e., a few days after performing the first Mass in the Franciscan church of Kyōto, provides the following information.<sup>47</sup> The building materials were wood, ‘cane’ (strong, slender stems of bamboo) and clay. This indicates that the mendicants adapted to local materials and architectural traditions for their buildings. Bautista also refers to a Christian ‘*hidalgo*’ (man of the lower nobility), term indicating here *samurai*, called Cosme as the builder and main benefactor. In order to complete the building works, Pedro Bautista had to apply for funding from Pérez Dasmariñas.<sup>48</sup>

Pedro Bautista described in that letter a ‘poor’ convent with its church, while in the same site, another more spacious and lavish church was completed by February 1595. This extension work aroused suspicion among the Jesuits. The Jesuit Pedro Gómez (1533/35–1600) sent a letter to Claudio Acquaviva (1543–1615), the Superior General of the Society of Jesus, to inform him of discord between Jesuits and Discalced Franciscans: “...The friars of Miaco built a large church with a choir and three altars; [...] These [sumptuous] works would make him [Hideyoshi] think that all Christianity despised his authority. Therefore, he might [be angry and] destroy the Christianity that we strive to sustain.”<sup>49</sup>

The Franciscan chronicler Ribadeneira described it in detail:

The church was built in a public place, and the building was so high that it stood out very much. It was greatly praised by the Japanese who saw it and admired its shape of floor plan, which they had never seen there. [Because of this] all kinds of people came to see it, even before the friars moved into [and settled themselves] in their [new] church. The convent had high and low cloisters, offices and cells, and the church had three altars, and a choir, in the manner of the convents of the Discalced Friars in Castile.<sup>50</sup>

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45 Ribadeneira, op. cit., p.342.

46 Ascensión; Ribadeneira, op. cit., p.97, note 238.

47 The first Mass was held on 4 October 1594. See Ascensión; Ribadeneira, op. cit., p.176, note 39.

48 BNM (Biblioteca Nacional, Madrid), Ms. fols. 98r-102v, “Letter to Don Luis Pérez Dasmariñas, which gives account of the result of the embassy that arrived in Japan in 1594, as well as requests an offering to complete the convent and church of Kyōto” (fray Pedro Bautista, Kyōto, 13.10.1594), quoted by Pérez, “Cartas y relaciones del Japón”. *Archivo Ibero-Americano*, T. VI (1916), p.216.

49 ARSL, Jap. Sin. 12-II, f. 242, a letter from Pedro Gómez to Claudio Acquaviva, Nagasaki, 3.2.1595. This translation is mine.

50 Ribadeneira, op. cit., p.342. This translation is mine.

First, the church of Kyōto was remarkable for its height. It is worth adding that the height was an essential feature of Franciscan as well as Jesuit architecture in Japan. The missionaries intentionally sought architectural verticality in order to distinguish their buildings from the Buddhist temples and draw the public's attention.<sup>51</sup>

Second, how was that floor plan, 'which they had never seen there'? Franciscan chroniclers Ribadeneira and Martínez stated that there was a rood screen inside the church, which separated the 'crucero,' i.e., transept from the nave of the temple in accordance with the 'Discalced style.'<sup>52</sup> This building must have been composed of a Latin cross plan, although this shape was not common for contemporaneous mendicant architecture, and the vast majority of sixteenth-century mendicant churches were characterized by a single nave floor plan.

The presbytery of the Franciscan convent church of Kyōto was raised by six steps and bounded by a rood screen. The church had three altars. An oil painting altarpiece and a tabernacle were placed on a high altar topped by a cross, while the altarpiece on the Epistle side displayed an image of Saint Francis. A choir loft was located over the narthex, at the end of the nave.<sup>53</sup> This arrangement of the choir had been common in Franciscan churches for some centuries. Single-nave and low-rise churches began to be built in the Iberian Peninsula from the late fourteenth century; after that date, a choir loft was added over the segmental arch of the narthex.<sup>54</sup> This architectural pattern of the mendicant churches spread worldwide from the sixteenth century.

The Franciscan convent complex comprised two hospitals called Saint Joseph and Saint Anne respectively. These buildings were located on either side of the church and 'seemed like two bell towers' according to Juan Pobre writing in 1596. The convent was composed of upper and lower cloisters "...and one walks around them, since they were made in the manner of Castile..."<sup>55</sup> This suggests the existence of corridors in the cloisters, to be expected as this convent followed Spanish convent architecture. On the ground floor, there were a refectory, a chapter room and three rooms used for catechism, while the upstairs space had cells and a library. The description given by Ribadeneira in 1601 contrasts with that of Pedro Bautista, who in 1594, referred to 'a poor convent of wood, cane and clay.' The convent complex evidently underwent a complete transformation within 6 or 7 years.

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51 Miyamoto, op. cit., p.100.

52 Ribadeneira, op. cit., p.347; Martínez, *Compendio histórico de la apostólica provincia de San Gregorio de Philipinas de religiosos menores descalzos de N. P. San Francisco, en que se declaran sus heroicas empresas, para la dilatación de nuestra santa fé por varios reynos, y provincias del Assia: con las vidas, martyrios, y hechos en comun, y en particular de sus venerables hijos, correspondientes a la sucesión de los trienios, misiones, desde su fundación, hasta los años del Señor de mil setecientos y ocho*. Madrid: viuda de Manuel Fernández y del Supremo Consejo de la Inquisición, 1756, pp.29–30.

53 Ascensión; Ribadeneira, op. cit., pp.176–177, note 39.

54 García Ros, op. cit., p. 142.

55 Ribadeneira, op. cit., p.98, note 245.

Ribadeneira testified to the improvement of buildings, and pointing out the outstanding need for ‘a well decorated room’:

...sometimes Japanese Christians suggested that the convent should be equipped with at least a well decorated room to receive the honoured pagans who came to visit and hear Mass and sermons. Encouraged to achieve major benefit of missionary objectives, [the friars] ordered the building of a reception room. This room was conformed with [Franciscan rule of] Holy Poverty and complied with the demands, but did not exceed the [policy of] austerity by which they were bound...<sup>56</sup>

Clearly, the Franciscans were heeding the suggestions of the faithful that they adapt to the circumstances in which they found themselves. It is also worth noting that the presence of a reception room coincided with the Jesuit building code, as shown in Valignano’s *Advertimento*.<sup>57</sup>

Before the Tokugawa shogunate enacted the Edicts banning Christianity in 1613, the Discalced Franciscan buildings in Japan did not strictly follow the traditional architectural rules of poverty and narrowness. The major establishments, e.g. the convent of Kyōto and the church of Saint Francis of Nagasaki were regarded as ‘very sumptuous.’ The architectural model for large-scale construction projects was Spanish Discalced Franciscan buildings. In fact, the convent complex of Kyōto was described by Ribadeneira ‘...like the convents of the Discalced Friars in Castile,’<sup>58</sup> while Juan de Santa María wrote that all was ‘...in accordance with the floor plan and measurements of the convents of the Discalced Friars of St. Joseph in Spain.’<sup>59</sup>

### Order of Preachers

Even though the first Dominican Juan Cobo arrived in Japan in 1592, it took a decade for the Dominicans to undertake evangelical work in the country. The beginning of the Dominican mission dates to 1601, when Francisco Morales (1567–1622), Provincial Father of the Order of Preachers in Manila, met some Japanese from Satsuma and sent through them a letter to the *daimyō* Shimazu Yoshihiro (1535–1619) asking for permission to enlighten the natives in his fiefdom. After obtaining an affirmative response, a group of five missionaries, headed by Father Morales,<sup>60</sup> left Manila in June 1602 and landed in the island of Koshiki, Satsuma

56 Ibidem, p.347. This translation is mine.

57 Valignano, *Nihon Iezusukai reihō shishin*, p.111.

58 Ribadeneira, op. cit., p.342.

59 Juan de Santa María, op. cit, vol. II, p.41.

60 ARMSTA (Archivo del Real Monasterio de Santo Tomás, Ávila, old documentary collection of the Archives of Holy Rosary Province in Manila), Ms. Sección Japón, t. II, doc. 10, f. 85v, “El principio q tuvo la orden de nro P<sup>e</sup> S<sup>o</sup> Dom<sup>o</sup> para venir a Japon. Por el P<sup>e</sup> Morales”. I am grateful to Father Renzo de Luca, former director of the 26 Martyrs Museum of Nagasaki for this reference.

in accordance with the *daimyō*'s instruction on the third day of the following month.<sup>61</sup> The Dominicans initially engaged mission work on the island of Koshiki, in the peripheral and isolated village of Satsuma. Yet, with the passage of time, they would manage to extend their mission territory. Later, important Dominican missionary centres will be the fiefdoms of Kyūshū: Satsuma (1602–1609), Hizen (1606–1613),<sup>62</sup> and Nagasaki (1610–1614). Moreover, they will succeed in establishing the church of Our Lady of the Rosary in Kyōto<sup>63</sup> and that of Saint Dominic in Ōsaka in 1610, although these churches persisted only for a few years, until April 1612, because of the anti-Christian policy.<sup>64</sup>

Various records witness the contacts between the Dominicans and the Buddhist priests or institutions. The utilization of native religious spaces and furniture was also carried out from the outset. Thus, as soon as the friars arrived in Koshiki, Satsuma, they were hosted at the home of a Buddhist monk, because his house was the best in the area, and then the friars put a beautiful image of Our Lady on the altar of 'abominable idols,' i.e., Buddhist images.<sup>65</sup> According to Juan de la Badía (c.1580–1627) and Francisco Morales, the said image –which was possibly the Virgin of the Rosary, whose devotion was widely promoted by the Dominicans– was a painting in a large square format, and allegedly caused admiration among the Japanese because of her beauty.<sup>66</sup>

Nevertheless, the Dominicans could not start apostolic work immediately after arriving in Koshiki in July 1602, but had to wait until late November of the same year, after the lord of Satsuma granted permission to establish their church on the island. The first church was located in Nagahama, Koshiki. Ground conditions of this site were not favourable because it was in a 'difficult terrain between rocks (so that there was barely room for some vegetable).'<sup>67</sup> According to Badía, the lord of

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61 ARMSTA, Ms. Sección Japón, t. II, doc. 10, f. 85–86v; Boxer and Cummins, "The Dominican Mission in Japan (1602–1622) and Lope de Vega". *Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum*, vol. XXXIII (1963), p.7.

62 Orfanell, op. cit., f. 4; Delgado García, *Fukusha Alonso de Mena O.P. Shokan hōkoku* 福者アロンソ・デ・メーナ O.P. 書簡・報告, Tadashi Sakuma 佐久間正 (Transl.). Tōkyō: Kirishitan bunka kenkyūkai, p. 26; Delgado García, *Fukusha Jacinto Orfanell, O.P. Shokan hōkoku* 福者ハシント・オルファネール O.P. 書簡・報告, Tadashi Sakuma 佐久間正 (Transl.). Tōkyō: Kirishitan bunka kenkyūkai, 1983, p.104; Delgado García, "Beato Alonso de Mena, O.P. Misionero y mártir del Japón (s. XVII)". *Archivo Dominicano*, T. IX, 1988, p.220.

63 Delgado García, *Fukusha Jacinto Orfanell, O.P. Shokan hōkoku*, p.102.

64 Muñoz, op. cit., p.28.

65 ARMSTA, Ms. Sección Japón, t. II, doc. 10, f. 85v.

66 Delgado García, *Fr. Juan de la Badía, O.P., misionero del Japón y Bto. Domingo Castellet, O.P., misionero mártir del Japón*. Madrid: Instituto Pontificio de Teología / Misionología, 1986 (Cuadernos de misionología, 2), p.16; ARMSTA, Ms. Sección Japón, t. II, doc. 10, f. 86v.

67 Orfanell, op. cit., f. 1v.

Satsuma promised to provide them with the materials and human resources necessary for construction work. But, a record of the former Provincial Archive of the Holy Rosary in Manila reported that the church in question "...was built by purchasing timber from a Buddhist temple, and all cost only eight pesos, which were paid not by the *tono* [i.e., feudal lord] but by the captain."<sup>68</sup> This source suggests that the reuse of materials from native temples was due to practical reasons, namely its ease of acquisition and low costs.

Badía describes this primitive church in Nagahama as follows:

They slept on the ground because the house had no floor, but only a few sticks and canes, and mat that served as a mattress. [...] In that year, it was very cold and snowed intensively. Since the house was made of reeds and straws, the snow got inside with the wind for many nights. When they woke up in the morning, the snow was all over their clothes. To shake it off, they were going to pray. They did not go very far because everything was at close reach, the oratory and bedroom...<sup>69</sup>

This report shows that the building was 'a poor shack' as Orfanell stated.<sup>70</sup> Furthermore, strips of wood from a Buddhist temple, which cost eight pesos, must have been used for the structure, while the walls were covered with reeds and the roof was thatched.

Unlike the first church in Nagahama, in the construction work that the lord of Satsuma sponsored a few years later in the same island of Koshiki, the church and house were separate buildings. This donation aimed at encouraging the friars to bring ships to the fiefdom of Satsuma, and the church was blessed on August 15, 1605. However, two weeks after it was destroyed by a typhoon. As a result, Mena requested the *daimyō* to move to the mainland. Thus, in 1606 the Dominicans settled in Kyodomari, a small port at the delta of the River Sendai. They first built a house and then a church, which was consecrated on July 2, 1606.<sup>71</sup> It is interesting to note its location, about which Orfanell stated below:

This site was very good on a little hill outside the village at the entrance of the port, with very peaceful view. However, the friars had very despicable neighbourhood, because the church was between two temples of pagan bonzes. One was in front of the door, very close, and the other was right next to the church, so that they were hindered at the time of prayer.<sup>72</sup>

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68 Delgado García, *Fr. Juan de la Badía, O.P., misionero del Japón y Bto. Domingo Castellet, O.P., misionero mártir del Japón*, p.17n.

69 Delgado García, *Ibidem*, pp.17–18. This translation is mine.

70 Orfanell, *op. cit.*, f. 1.

71 Delgado García, "Beato Alonso de Mena, O.P. Misionero y mártir del Japón (s. XVII)", pp.214–215; Delgado García, *Fukusha Alonso de Mena O.P. Shokan hōkoku*, p. 26.

72 Orfanell, *op. cit.*, f. 1v-2. The original reference is the following: "Era este sitio muy bueno en vn montezito fuera del lugar a la entrada del Puerto, con muy apazible vista: pero tenía muy ruin vecindad, porque estava la Iglesia de los Padres entre dos



The Dominican church adjoined two Buddhist temples of different sects, ‘Tendayxú’ (Tendai-shū) and ‘Ienxús’ (Zen-shū).<sup>73</sup> The Tendai and Zen sects also used to be sit on a hill, since the former practiced esoteric rituals and exercises, while the latter was engaged in meditation to reach the stage of spiritual awakening. In short, there was a certain similarity between the criteria for Buddhist and Christian monastic establishments. Since the Dominican church was very close to Buddhist temples, the friars competed against the bonzes instead of interacting with native priests. This shows a primary difference between the Jesuit and mendicant attitudes towards the native priests or institutions.

The church of Kyodomari endured only 3 years, and in April or May of 1609 the Dominicans were forced to leave the site due to the anti-Christian policy in Satsuma.<sup>74</sup> There were three main reasons for the expulsion: the increase of converts within their district; the suggestion of Buddhist monks who were not in favour of the presence of the missionaries; and the Dominicans’ failed attempt to bring ships from Manila.<sup>75</sup> As a result, the human and material resources of the church of Kyodomari were sent to other Dominican missions. Thus, from the three friars living in Kyodomari at that time, Jacinto Orfanell (1578–1622) was sent to Hizen to assist Father Juan de los Ángeles, while José San Jacinto went to Kyōto, where he established a church within a short span of time. Meanwhile, Father Morales remained in Kyodomari to dispatch some pending work. He also sent images and ornaments to the house of Murayama Tōan 村山等安 (1566–1619), *daikan* 代官 (local governor) of Nagasaki, and ordered that the friars’ house and church, which were made of wood, be dismantled without leaving a stick. Construction materials were transported by boat to Nagasaki, and reused to build the Church of Saint Dominic in that city.<sup>76</sup>

The Dominican church of Nagasaki was located on a piece of land belonging to Tōan, in the current zone of Katsuyama-machi. According to documentary source, Father Morales “...ordered to frame the church which I conveyed from Satsuma...” after his arrival in Nagasaki; “...A house was built in a short time. Although small, the house was wealthy and had offices, dormitories and cloister, where processions were carried out as is usual in the convents.”<sup>77</sup> The phrase ‘to frame the church’ (*armar la yglesia*) suggests that the Dominicans tried to rebuild the church just like

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de Bonços Gentiles; vna delante de la puerta alli muy cerca; y la otra al lado casi pegada, tanto que se estoruavan los vnos a los otros al tiempo del rezar.”

73 Ibidem, f. 2v.

74 Delgado García, *Fukusha José de San Jacinto Salvanés, O.P. Shokan hōkoku*, p. 45; Boxer and Cummins, op. cit., p.10.

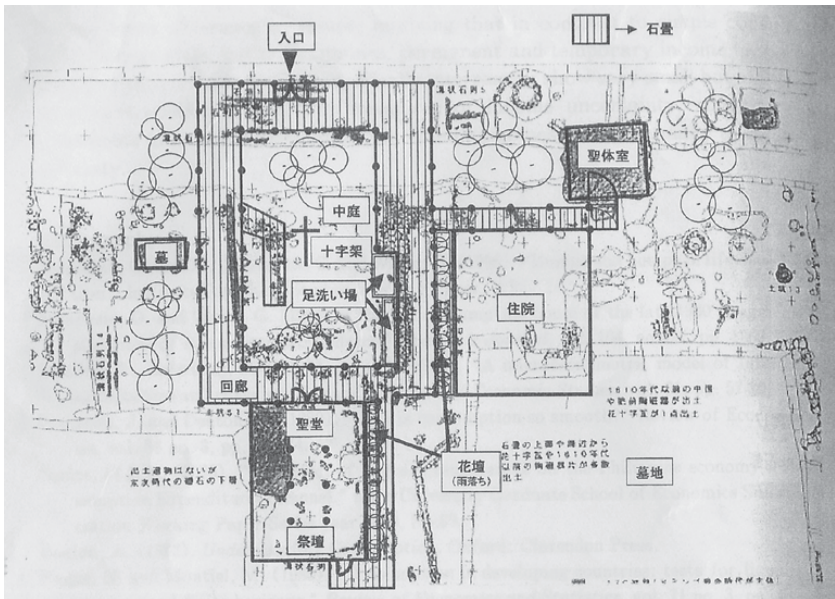
75 ARMSTA, Ms. Sección Japón, t. II, doc. 10, f. 89; ARMSTA, Ms. vol. 301, f. 110–32, reference quoted by Delgado García, *Fukusha Jacinto Orfanell, O.P. Shokan hōkoku*, p. 101.

76 ARMSTA, Ms. Sección Japón, t. II, doc. 10, f. 89; Delgado García 1972, p. 228; Delgado García 1985, pp. 22–24.

77 ARMSTA, Ms. Sección Japón, t. II, doc. 10, f. 89v.

they had in Kyodomari, although the building could be modified to some extent, either in the design or measure in the reconstruction process.

According to archaeological data from the excavation work conducted in 2000–2001 in the former site of the Dominican church of Nagasaki, the cloister of this church was not surrounded by four corridors around an enclosed courtyard, in the way of mendicant convents in Europe and colonial Latin America. Instead, it just had stone pavements that connected the entrance to the property oriented towards the northwest with the church and outbuildings, as shown in the ground plan of the church drawn by Kenji Miyamoto (Fig. 2). Both the church and friars' house must have had a single nave, and the former was characterized by a longitudinal plan.



**Fig. 2.** Reconstruction of the church of Saint Dominic of Nagasaki (Miyamoto 2004). Miyamoto, “The Restoration of Santo Domingo Church in Nagasaki: the Study of Western Techniques Hidden in Early Modern Japanese Architecture, Part 15– 長崎サント・ドミンゴ教会の復元について—近世日本建築の意匠における西洋手法の研究その15—”. *Intercultural Studies 国際文化研究*. No. 8, 2004, p.66.

Moreover, artefacts unearthed in the same site include a number of roof tiles with floral cross. Their chemical components coincide with those of the tiles excavated from nearby areas of the same city (e.g. Manzai-machi, Kozen-machi).<sup>78</sup> This shows that the tiles of the church of Saint Dominic were not transported from Kyodomari but were manufactured in Nagasaki. It is also worth mentioning that other fragments of tiles with floral crosses, unearthed in Bunchi-machi and Kozen-machi of the same city were located below the stratum corresponding to the Great Fire of 1601.<sup>79</sup> This archaeological data suggests that before the arrival of the Dominicans in Japan, the local custom of showing heraldic symbols on the roof was adapted by the Jesuits. Indeed, the Seminary directed by the Jesuit painter Giovanni Niccolò (or Nicolao) (c.1558–1626), contributed to the dissemination of a floral cross design, since he integrated this motif into an illustration of the *Doctrina Christiana*, printed in Amakusa in 1592. Fróis reported in 1597 that by then, the rich merchants of Nagasaki emulated the lords and samurai, although in a less ostentatious way, and began to put the sign of the cross on their roofs.<sup>80</sup> Thus, the use of tiles with floral crosses had spread before the beginning of the Dominican mission in Japan. The finding of numerous tiles with Fleur-de-lys crosses in the former site of Sanit Dominic of Nagasaki indicates a continuity of the work previously implemented by the Jesuits.

## Conclusions

Catholic missionary architecture in Japan has been traditionally interpreted by highlighting only the adaptation policies and practices of the Company of Jesus. Historical sources, however, show that both the Jesuits and the mendicant friars took advantage of local materials, skills and architectural traditions. Moreover, there were also connections and continuity between the previous work of the Jesuits and that of the friars.

Regarding the reuse of native sacred sites, the Jesuits as well as the Franciscan and Dominican friars utilized Buddhist temples from the beginning of their respective apostolic missions. Most native temples procured by the missionaries were disused buildings or properties belonging to popular Buddhist schools. The utilization of native temples was not only due to its symbolic meaning, but also in order to minimize costs.

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78 *Katsuyama-machi iseki: Nagasaki-shi Sakura-machi shōgakkō shinsetsu ni tomonau maizō bunkazai hakkutsu chōsa hōkokusho* 勝山町遺跡—長崎市桜町小学校新設に伴う埋蔵文化財発掘調査報告書—. Nagasaki: Nagasaki-shi Kyōiku linkai, 2003, pp.87–88.

79 Pacheco, “Giovanni Cola, S.J. (Nicolao), El hombre que hizo florecer las piedras”. *Temas de estética y arte*. No. XVII (2003), pp. 112, 116.

80 Pacheco, *Ibidem*, pp.110–12.

Adaptation criteria were diversified even within the same order. In the case of the Society of Jesus, different attitudes towards native sacred spaces coexisted from the time of Francisco Cabral. Violent measures such as the destruction of temples, pagodas and images were often undertaken with the tacit agreement and support of Christian lords. But at the same time, more peaceful measures were carried out, such as dismantling native temples and reusing their materials to build Catholic spaces of worship. Ultimately, Valignano would contribute to codifying adaptation practices already in place before his arrival in Japan.

Yet, the knowledge about Buddhism and their sects and traditions as well as the degree of interaction between the Jesuits and Buddhist monks were different than those shown by the mendicant orders. For the Jesuits, the architectural features of Buddhist temples became the starting point in determining Jesuit architectural forms in Japan, while for the friars, Buddhist institutions or priests were nothing but rivals.

Both the Jesuits and the friars used two different architectural styles depending on the functions. So, the churches were built 'in our way,' while non-liturgical buildings were made 'in the Japanese way.' Both Jesuit and mendicant churches were characterized by their height and longitudinal plan, in Contrast with Buddhist temples. However, for the Jesuits, *nosso modo* ('our way') was contrasted to local religious architecture, while the Franciscan concept *a nuestro modo* ('in our own way') referred to the architectural style of Spanish Discalced Franciscans.

Kathryn BOSI MONTEATH

## European Music as Taught in Jesuit Seminaries in Japan: The case of four noble youths who visited the Pope in 1585

### Introduction

“...We have every good hope of converting this reign of Miaco, and we desire that Your Paternity help us with certain important matters... we know from experience that with the ceremonies ... of the divine cult as carried out in our church, millions will be converted. And if we use organs and other musical instruments with singers ... without doubt all this Miaco and Sacai will be converted within a year, and these are the two principal cities of Japan...”<sup>1</sup>

On 10 August 1584, four Japanese youths of noble birth disembarked from the good ship *Santiago* in Cascais, the port of Lisbon, after a voyage from Japan which had lasted some two and a half years. Converted to Christianity, along with their families, by Jesuit missionaries in Japan, they had been sent as an embassy to Europe to bring the Pope in Rome the homage of three Christian *daimyō* of Japan, but also to witness, in person, the power and splendour of the Christian church in Europe, in order to be able to take back first-hand accounts to their countrymen in Japan. The *Visitatore* Father Alessandro Valignano (1539–1606), who conceived this remarkable diplomatic manoeuvre, deliberately chose boys of a tender age, precisely because their youth would enable them to better stand the hardships of a long, tedious and dangerous journey, while at the same time they would be particularly susceptible to the beauties and wonders of Europe, and would be long-living testimonies to these marvels once they had returned to their own country. Valignano hoped that the *ambasceria* would also raise financial support for the Jesuit missions in Japan, which were over-worked, under-staffed and under-financed. This aim was in fact realised: both ecclesiastical and temporal authorities would shower the boys with valuable gifts, and the Pope, along with many others, provide generous financial support for the missions.<sup>2</sup>

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- 1 Padre Organtino to the General in Rome, from Miyako, 27 September 1577 (see note 16).
  - 2 On Valignano and the embassy, see in particular Volpi, *Il Visitatore. Alessandro Valignano: Un grande maestro italiano in Asia*. Milano: Spirali, 2011. See also *Alessandro Valignano S.I., Uomo del Rinascimento: Ponte tra Oriente e Occidente*. Adolfo Tamburello; M. Antoni J. Üçerler, S.J.; Marisa Di Russo (Ed.). Rome: Institutum Historicum Societatis Iesu, 2008. For his mission principles, see Schütte, *Valignano's*

The *Tenshō Shōnen Shisetsu*, as the enterprise was known then (and still today), was by any standards an early and extraordinary example of that phenomenon of cultural ‘crossing of borders’ which justly fascinates our modern minds.<sup>3</sup> Four youthful students of the Seminary of Arima related to persons of high rank set forth in March of 1582 to see the wonders of Christianity in Europe, and returned safely to their families after more than eight years of travel.<sup>4</sup> Fortunately, a detailed account of their European tour was published by Guido Gualtieri in Rome in 1586: the *Relationi della venuta degli ambasciatori giaponesi a Roma fino alla partita*

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*Mission Principles for Japan*. vol. I: *From His Appointment as Visitor until His First Departure from Japan (1573–1582)*; Part II: *The Solution (1580–1582)*. St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1985. For a useful concise account of Valignano, see Fujita, *Japan’s Encounter with Christianity. The Catholic Mission in Pre-modern Japan*. New York: Paulist Press, 1991, and Ross, *A Vision Betrayed: The Jesuits in Japan and China, 1542–1742*. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1994. See also Cooper, *The Japanese Mission to Europe, 1582–1590: The Journey of Four Samurai Boys through Portugal, Spain and Italy*. Folkestone: Brill, 2005.

- 3 This remarkable event seems to have been soon forgotten within European history, but in more recent times the *ambasceria* has received a great deal of attention from scholars, both European and Japanese: see in particular: Lach, “A Japanese Mission in Europe, 1584–86”, *Asia in the making of Europe*. Volume 1: *The century of discovery*; Book 2. Chicago; London: The University of Chicago Press, 1965, pp.688–706; Harich-Schneider, “Renaissance Europe through Japanese eyes: Record of a strange triumphal journey”. *Early Music*, 1, issue 1, 1 January 1973, pp.19–26; Brown, “Courtiers and Christians: The first Japanese emissaries to Europe”. *Renaissance Quarterly*, vol. 47, no. 4 (Winter 1994), pp.872–906. Michael Cooper’s *The Japanese Mission to Europe, 1582–1590: The Journey of Four Samurai Boys through Portugal, Spain and Italy*, the most extensive study of this event, is based on Fróis’s *Tratado*: see note 7.
- 4 The two principal envoys were Mancio Itō, related to the *daimyō* of Bungo, and Michele (Miguel) Chijiwa, related to the *daimyō* of Ōmura and Arima. They were accompanied by Julião Nakaura and Martinho Hara who were of lower rank, but always also treated as envoys. Two young Japanese servants accompanied them, as well as a tutor for their Japanese studies, the Japanese father Jorge Loyola, and the Portuguese father Diogo de Mesquita as their translator and mentor. Valignano was to have accompanied them to Europe, but while in Goa, he received news that he had been appointed General to India. Ever the efficient administrator, he thus compiled a set of instructions for the Mission, and appointed the Portuguese Father Nuno Rodrigues, the Rector of the Jesuit College in Goa, to lead it in his place. See Pinto; Bernard, “Les instructions du Père Valignano pour l’ambassade japonaise en Europe (Goa, 23 décembre 1583)”. *Monumenta Nipponica*, vol. 6, no. 1/2 (1943), pp.391–403. Note that Valignano’s request that the embassy be received with affection but few honours, and that solemn public receptions not be organised in their honour, was almost everywhere disregarded; the European courts and spiritual centres would compete amongst themselves in offering hospitality and festivities. Venice would out-do all of them, with a polychoral Mass followed by an immensely long and sumptuous procession in their honour; see note 49.

*di Lisbona. Con le accoglienze fatte loro da tutti i Principi Christiani per dove sono passati.*<sup>5</sup> Another account was published in Macao in 1590, in the form of a dialogue between the four Japanese youths and two interlocutors: the *De missione Legatorum Japonensium*. This work, thought to be based on the detailed accounts of their experiences which the youths had been requested to keep, was compiled by Valignano himself, although published under the name of Duarte (Eduardo) de Sande (1547–1599), who had translated the work into Latin.<sup>6</sup> A third significant source of information is a *Tratado* compiled by the Jesuit Father Luís Fróis (1532–1597), again based on the notes of the voyagers, which has been edited from two manuscript sources.<sup>7</sup> Moreover, many local archives contain a great deal of

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- 5 A fourth account by Luís de Guzmán clearly derives from Gualtieri, so we do not take it into account in this article. See Guzmán, *Historia de las misiones que han hecho los religiosos de la Compañia de Iesus para predicar el sancto Euangelio en los reynos de Iapon / compuesta por el padre Luis de Guzman...* En Alcalá: por la Biuda de Iuan Gracian, 1601, vol. 2: Segunda parte, Libro nono, pp.125–297.
- 6 Known to have been prepared by Valignano in Spanish and then translated into Latin by Duarte de Sande. Valignano's Spanish version has been lost. On this subject, see Moran, "The Real Author of the *De missione legatorum Iaponensium ad Romanam Curiam... Dialogus*. A Reconsideration". *Bulletin of Portuguese-Japanese Studies*, vol. 2 (June 2001), pp.7–21. Father Mesquita, the Portuguese father who accompanied the embassy to Europe, also kept copious notes on the voyage, and it is thought that his notes made a fundamental contribution to this publication. Valignano intended that the work be used as a textbook for both teaching the Latin language and for informing the Japanese of the wonders of Europe (and for this reason he naturally wished it to be translated into Japanese, but this did not eventuate). Thus, the scope of his dialogues goes well beyond the notes of the travellers, by including lengthy geographic, architectural and sociological descriptions of individual countries and cities. A splendid English translation by J. F. Moran of the *De missione* has been edited and annotated, with an extensive introduction, by Derek Massarella in Massarella (Ed.); Moran, (Transl.), *Japanese Travellers in Sixteenth-Century Europe: A Dialogue Concerning the Mission of the Japanese Ambassadors to the Roman Curia (1590)*. Farnham, Surrey, UK: Ashgate, 2012. In his introduction (p.22), Massarella notes that, amongst others, Valignano draws on the works of Damião de Góis for Lisbon, Palladio for Rome, and Sansovino for Venice. He says that Valignano also incorporated into the *De missione* the notes of a certain Alessandro Leni, who had been requested by the Jesuit authorities in Rome to accompany the boys. Following them as far as India, on his arrival in that country Leni was able to give Valignano first hand information about the tour. All citations from the *De missione* in this article refer to Massarella (Ed.); Moran, (Transl.), *Japanese Travellers in Sixteenth-Century Europe: A Dialogue Concerning the Mission of the Japanese Ambassadors to the Roman Curia (1590)*, unless otherwise specified.
- 7 Pinto; Okamoto; Bernard (Ed.), *La Première Ambassade du Japon en Europe 1582–1592*. Première Partie: *Le Traité du Père Frois (texte portugais)*. Tôkyô: Sophia University, 1942. When referring generically to the source, as opposed to the modern edition, we cite Fróis, *Tratado*.

documentary information about their visits to individual courts and cities, so that all in all, those interested in this event can learn a great deal about the places they visited, the personages they met, what they saw, how they were received, and what, in particular, pleased and impressed them.

Our three major accounts (Gualtieri, *De missione* and Fróis), together with a vast number of brief *resoconti* published in Italy and elsewhere,<sup>8</sup> contain a huge amount of information about the triumphal progress of the four youths from Portugal to Spain and Italy, then back to Portugal, whence they departed for Japan. Gualtieri's *Relationi*, in particular, is a valuable and perhaps insufficiently known source for contemporary information about costume, religion, ritual, courtly reception, travel, music, the perception of the exotic, and (most exceptionally) the Japanese way of life. But some of the documentation regarding musical events within the sources raises questions for the attentive reader. We are told by Fróis, for example, that in the city of Évora, on their way to Spain, two of the delegates – Mâncio Itō (c.1570–1612) and Miguel Chijiwa (1569–1633) – played the splendid organ of the cathedral to a large audience, to the wonder and satisfaction of the Archbishop and all those present.<sup>9</sup> Moreover, when the boys were staying in Vila Viçosa, the Duke of Bragança, D. Teodósio II (1568–1630), knowing that they were musicians, sent a harpsichord and *viola* to their rooms, and everyone admired and were astonished by their performance on these instruments.<sup>10</sup> A report on their arrival in Italy published in Venice in 1585 informs us that “they know how to play the *cembalo*, the *chitarra* and the *lira*, and they keep these instruments in their rooms”.<sup>11</sup> And two of the three sources cited

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8 See Boscaro, *Sixteenth Century European Printed Works on the First Japanese Mission to Europe: A Descriptive Bibliography*. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1973.

9 Pinto; Okamoto; Bernard (Ed.), op. cit., p.43: “... His Excellency ... took them to the choir of the cathedral, where they found some of the finest organs they had seen until that moment: besides being very large, by playing a single keyboard three keyboards played automatically, corresponding to three tonalities of the organ, which produced a harmonious sound. Since it was a day of jubilation, there were a great many people in the church. Don Mâncio and Don Michele played [the organs] very well indeed, which gave great satisfaction to his Excellency, as well as to the greater part of those who listened”. See Appendix 2 for the original text.

10 Ibidem, p.53: “e sabendo o Duque, q[ue] os Senhores Japões tangião, mandou vir alli cravo, e violas a sua camara; m.to se admirarão todos de os ver tanger, e descantar cõ viola, e cravo”.

11 “Sanno sonare di cimbalo, di chitara, di lira, e tengono questi istromenti in casa”: *Relatione del viaggio et arrivo in Evropa et Roma de' principi giapponesi: venuti à dare obediienza à Sua Santità l'anno MDLXXXV all'Eccell. Sig. Girolamo Mercviale*. In Venetia: Appresso Paolo Meietto, MDLXXXV [1585], p.14. The instruments are almost certainly the harpsichord or spinet, lute, and viola da gamba. The guitar was principally used in this period for the performance of dance music, or to accompany secular solo song, so it seems a most unlikely instrument for the boys to have learnt in a Seminary. And we can read elsewhere that they played the lute.



above<sup>12</sup> relate in detail their fascination, in Italy, with an ingenious keyboard instrument which, through the use of several registers, allowed them to hear the sound of a great variety of instruments, simply by adjusting *operculae* controlling the passage of air. What are the implications of these remarks? Were the youths really able to play a magnificent European organ? Could they indeed play a variety of instruments? Did they take such an informed interest in an innovative European keyboard instrument, that they would leave for posterity a highly detailed description? Might these have been simply textual strategies designed to impress the reader, or was there instead some concrete foundation for such statements?

There was indeed a basis for such statements. Annual letters from Jesuit missionaries in Japan to their superiors in Rome have left us a great deal of information about the teaching of European music to Japanese youths within Jesuit Seminaries in Japan in the second half of the sixteenth century. While some of this material has been published in recent studies, it has been reported in a somewhat chaotic manner, and very often without a precise citation of the source or a complete transcription of the original material.<sup>13</sup> This article offers a select anthology of the sources regarding European music as brought to Japan by Jesuit missionaries in the sixteenth century, and as taught to Japanese youths in the Jesuit Seminaries. But we will also cite evidence of the performance by our youthful ambassadors

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- 12 Massarella (Ed.); Moran, (Transl.), op. cit., p.270; Pinto; Okamoto; Bernard (Ed.), op. cit., pp.137–138.
- 13 Harich-Schneider, in *A History of Japanese Music*. London: Oxford University Press, 1973, offers a contribution to the subject in the chapter “The first introduction of European music (1549–1638)”, pp.445–486, but while presenting much relevant information, the citation of Harich-Schneider’s sources leaves a great deal to be desired. Some fundamental errors regarding the Italian tour, such as the fact that the youths travelled through Murcia between Florence and Siena, and that the Duke of Ferrara was an eminent composer (*recte* the Duke of Mantua), suggest that this source of information should be used with great caution. Her article published contemporaneously – “Renaissance Europe through Japanese eyes: Record of a strange triumphal journey”, pp.19–25 – is excerpted from this chapter, and contains the same defects. A more recent article by Sestili, “La prima introduzione della musica europea in Giappone tra Cinque e Seicento”. A. Boscaro; M. Bossi (Ed.), *Firenze, il Giappone e l’Asia orientale. Atti del Convegno internazionale di studi (Firenze, 25–27 marzo 1999)*. Firenze: L. S. Olschki, 2001, pp.56–65 is a basic introduction to the subject, but again the writer does not provide references for the sources of his material. The most informative source, for those who can read Portuguese, is Waterhouse, “Música dos bárbaros do Sul no Japão”. Salwa el-Shawan Castelo-Branco (Ed.), *Portugal e o mundo: o encontro de culturas na música / Portugal and the world: the encounter of cultures in music*. Lisboa: Publicações Dom Quixote, 1997, pp.323–349. This article is often cited in bibliographies with the English title “Southern barbarian music in Japan”. I have not been able to locate the English version. For those who can read Japanese, see Ebisawa, *Yōgaku denraishi: Kirishitan jidai kara Bakumatsu made*. Tōkyō: Nihon Kirisutokyōdan Shuppankyoku, 1983.

on European instruments while on their European tour, and a reportage of their performance on European musical instruments on returning to their own country.

## European Music as a Tool for Conversion in Sixteenth-Century Japan

The following documentation deriving from letters from the Jesuit missionaries in Japan to their authorities in Rome will bring many a surprise to the uninitiated reader. The basis of the education offered to Japanese youths in the Jesuit Seminaries was, naturally, a study of the Christian doctrine, Latin, and for strategic reasons, Japanese language and literature (these latter taught, obviously, by Japanese fathers); but often, for the more talented students, these subjects were also flanked by the study of European music, painting and engraving. Our selected anthology of sources offers citations regarding the education offered by the Jesuit Seminaries in the sixteenth century, with particular reference to music, which Jesuit missionaries quite clearly considered a useful tool for conversion. We will cite material regarding the presence of European musical instruments in Japan, and the teaching – or performance – of European music found in letters by Jesuit missionaries to their superiors in Europe (from both printed and manuscript sources), which we hope may provide a useful point of departure for further studies. We offer transcriptions rather than the summaries or brief references to be found in many extant studies, and will also provide the precise sources for these documents, which unfortunately are often lacking in otherwise excellent and comprehensive studies of the Christian century in Japan.<sup>14</sup>

We begin with the most fascinating and revealing document regarding the use of European music as an instrument for conversion of the Gentiles<sup>15</sup> by the Jesuits in sixteenth-century Japan: a letter sent from Padre Organtino Gneccchi-Soldo (1532–1609) from Japan, to Padre Everardo Mercuriano (1514–1580), *Preposito Generale della Compagnia di Giesù* in Rome, on 29 September 1577:

"We have every good hope of converting this reign of Miaco, and we desire that Your Paternity help us with certain important matters, because these parts of Japan are like Rome in Europe, where science, discretion and cleanliness are more to be found than in other places; nor should Your Paternity think that they are barbarians, because

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14 Very often we do not know whether the information comes from Gualtieri, *Relazioni della venuta de gli ambasciatori giaponesi à Roma, sino alla partita di Lisbona. Con vna descrizione del lor paese, e costumi, e con le accoglienze fatte loro da tutti i prencipi christiani per doue sono passati. Raccolte da Guido Gualtieri*. In Venetia. In Venetia apresso i Gioliti MDLXXXVI [1586]; Sande, *De missione legatorum Iaponensium ad Romanam curiam, rebusq; in Europa, ac toto itinere animaduersis dialogus... / ab Eduardo de Sande Sacerdote Societatis Iesu*. In Macaensi portu: in domo Societatis Iesu, 1590; Fróis's *Tratado*, or letters from Jesuits in Japan to their higher authority in Rome, whether in manuscript or in print.

15 As the unconverted Japanese are called by the Jesuits in their letters to Rome.

apart from the faith, it is we who are for the most part inferior to them, and since beginning to understand their language I would judge there to be no other people so universally considerate and well disposed to our faith. It seems to me that no church could fail to receive advantage. Besides this, we know from our experience of them that with the ceremonies ... of the divine cult as carried out in our church, millions of them will be converted. And if we use organs and other musical instruments with singers ... without doubt all this Miaco and Sacai will be converted within a year, and these are the two principal cities of Japan (...).<sup>16</sup>

A description of the following event, which took place some 5 years later, as described in a letter of 13 February 1582, from Gaspar Coelho (1531–1590), *Viceprincipale* in Nagasaki to the *Padre Generale* in Rome, is similarly remarkably revealing of Jesuit strategies:

“Some days after Padre Organtino had returned from accompanying the Padre Visitatore, a person from Nobunanga came unexpectedly to our house ... climbing up to the highest part, he requested that everyone else remain below; then he began to converse in a most familiar and affectionate manner with the Fathers and the Brothers. He went to see the clock; he also saw a harpsichord and a *viola*.<sup>17</sup> that we had in the house, and he requested that both be played, taking great pleasure from their sound, and praising both the youth who played the harpsichord, who was the son of the King of Fiu[n]ga, and the youth who played the *viola*. He went to see the bell, and other things that we keep in the house, which are necessary for alluring the Pagans, who being very curious come to see them, and we use them as a bait to make these people our own, and to have them come to hear our sermons, as we are every day able to ascertain. Amongst the things we have brought to Japan that they most enjoy, is the sound of the organs, harpsichords and *viola*. We have two pairs of organs: one in Anzuchyama, and the other in Bungo, and harpsichords in various places, which the youths learn to play; and in the Masses and other festivities we substitute these for our lack of singers and the other garnishments which are part of our festivities in

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16 Padre Organtino to the General in Rome, from Miyako, 27 September 1577, auto-graph letter, Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu (hence ARSI), Jap. Sin.8-I, f. 178–9. Summarised in Schütte, op. cit., pp.106, 116–117. I thank warmly Prof. Mauro Brunello for having kindly made available a copy of the original.

17 Almost certainly a member of the *viola da gamba* family (*vihuela de arco* in Spanish), but there is no way of knowing which. Portuguese letters in the *Cartas que os Padres e Irmãos da Companhia de Jesus escreveram dos Reynos de Japão & China aos da mesma Companhia da Índia & Europa desde anno de 1549 até o de 1580*. 2 Vols. Em Evora por Manoel de Lyra, Anno de MDXCVIII [1598] (henceforth: *Cartas*) mention the *viola d'arco* on a number of occasions (1562: pp110; 1563: p.135v; 1564: p.154; 1565: p.198; 1566: p.226; 1573: p.338v). An article kindly brought to my notice by Cristiano Contadin just as this article was going to print offers a fundamental study of this subject: see Yukimi Kambe, “Viols in Japan in the Sixteenth and early Seventeenth Centuries”. *Journal of the Viola da Gamba Society of America*, vol. 37 (2000), pp.31–67.

Europe, [being] necessary to convert these people, and to have them understand, to some degree, the glory and magnificence of our Divine Cult.”<sup>18</sup>

The role of the Seminaries for the teaching of all disciplines, including that of music, was fundamental for conversion, as is made evident in the same letter, which reveals that in the Seminary of Arima there are twenty-six noble youths, and it gives the writer great joy to see “the progress they are making, in spirit and behaviour, as well as in learning ... and very often they supercede many youths of Europe in their memory and intellect ... and diligence, so that we believe they will learn Latin just as quickly, or even in less time than our youths are wont to take. They also learn polyphony,<sup>19</sup> and have a good musical chapel, and can sing with facility a solemn Mass.”<sup>20</sup>

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- 18 *Lettera annale portata di novo dal Giappone da i signori ambasciatori delle cose iui successe l'anno MDLXXXII*. In Venetia appresso i Giolitti MDLXXXV [1585], p.82. In *Lettere del Giappone et della Cina de gl'anni MDLXXXIX & MDXC* [1589 & 1590]. *Scritte al R.P. General della Compagnia di Giesu*. In Venetia MDXCII Appresso Gio. Battista Ciotti Senese al segno della Minerua [1592], p.24 we read, regarding the death of a certain Don Stefano, brother of Don Paolo, that: “His funeral rites were sung with great pomp and solemnity, as was appropriate for a person of his rank, and as we must do in these places, since these Japanese are much moved by such charitable rites and ceremonies”. The same concern for the effects of ceremony is evident here.
- 19 *Canto figurato* in the original text, undoubtedly signifying polyphony, as opposed to *canto fermo*, or chant. Harich-Schneider, *A History of Japanese Music*, p.460, is adamant that European vocal polyphony was not performed in Japan, and that the countless references in Jesuit letters (in Portuguese) to *canto d'orgão* could not have meant vocal polyphony, as it did at that time in Europe; she considers that this term would signify monodic chant with organ accompaniment in unison. But it is clear from a reading of all the sources that vocal polyphony was taught (as we see here), and performed. With regard to the term *canto de organo*, or (in Portuguese) *canto d'orgão*, Spiess, in “Inconstancy of meaning in certain medieval and Renaissance musical terms”. *Cantors at the Crossroads: essays in church music in honour of Walter E. Buszin*. St. Louis: Concordia Pub. House, 1967, pp.25–32, confirms its use to signify polyphony. But we might also consider Morelli, ““Cantare sull'organo”: an unrecognised practice”. *Recercare*, 10 (1998), pp.183–203, which testifies to performance of polyphonic music by a solo voice accompanied by organ within liturgical practice, which may well be its significance in this context. For *canto d'orgão* within Jesuit sources, see Miyama, *Furoisu Nihonshi ni okeru canto d'orgão* (音楽の宇宙: 皆川達夫先生古希記念論文集). Tōkyō: 音楽之友社, 1998. (Music Nozomo Co., Ltd.). This article is said to discuss the practice in Japan of the vocal polyphony known in Portugal as *canto d'orgão* (*cantio organalis*) as documented in Fróis's monumental *Historia de Japam* (note that rather than a history of Japan, this latter is actually a history of Jesuit activities in Japan, c.1549–1593). Note also, that with the return to Japan of the four boys, we have confirmation that instrumental music was thence performed not only on solo instruments, but also in consort.
- 20 *Lettera annale portata di novo dal Giappone da i signori ambasciatori delle cose iui successe l'anno MDLXXXII*, p.17.

In the *Avvisi* of 1582, 1583 and 1584, we can read, moreover, that:

“One of the matters regarding Japan which can give us the greatest consolation and happiness today, and no less hope of an abundant future, as I have said to the Padre Visitatore, is to observe these youths whom the Padre Visitatore has brought to live in the Seminary in Arima. They have Padre Melchior [*recte* Belchior] di Mora as their Rector. They are almost all of noble birth; they live modestly, as befits *religiosi*; they are well behaved, much given to purity; and are no trouble to those who teach them: to the contrary, they are prompt to obey, observing carefully the way of life assigned to them by the Padre Visitatore. Their hours of the day are organised in such a way that they do not lose time: they study literature and vocal and instrumental music.<sup>21</sup> They are docile and intelligent. The establishment of these seminars has certainly been the work of Heaven, since there was no other feasible way to carry forth the work of the Evangelio”.<sup>22</sup>

It was in this Seminary that the boys of the embassy were educated, as Coelho tells us:

“The results of this Seminary, apart from that I have already told you, you will understand ... since the four youths, whom the Padre Visitatore is taking with him ... along with our Brother who is accompanying them, are the fruit of this Seminary, so you can well see that the solution for Japan consists in these Seminaries...”.<sup>23</sup>

A letter sent to Rome some 4 years later (c.1588–89) notes, with reference to the Seminary at Yamaguchi (*Amagunci* in the source), that:

“These young Japanese are very well disposed, and of great intelligence, and they do very well with Latin, and similarly in all the sciences, since they are naturally conscientious. They are divided into three classes, and besides the lessons that they have in Latin, and in *canto*, they spend some hours each day studying their Japanese language and laws; even if it is some impediment to the progress they could make with Latin, it is no less important that they acquire a good knowledge of the literature and laws

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- 21 Fujita, *op. cit.*, pp.79–80 tells us that the schedule for the Seminary in Arima was as follows: 4.30 (summer) / 5.30 (winter), awakening, prayer and Mass; 6.00–9.00, Latin lesson; 9.00–11.00, meal and recreation; 11.00–14.00, Japanese lesson; 14.00–15.00, music lesson; 15.00–16.30, Latin lesson; 17.00–19.00, supper and recreation; 19.00–20.00, Latin and Japanese lessons; 20.00: litany and bedtime.
- 22 *Avvisi del Giappone degli anni 1582, 1583 et 1584 con alcuni altri della Cina dell' a 1583 et 84. Cavati dalle lettere della Compagnia di Giesu: ricevute il mese di dicembre 1585.* Roma: 1586, p.32. This letter appears in a Portuguese version in the *Carta annua do Iapao do anno 1582 ... escrita po lo padre Luis Froes em Cochinoçù, aos 31 de outubro de 1581* published in *Cartas*, pp.50–51. Note that *canto figurato* is written in Portuguese here as *canto d'orgão*, reinforcing our argument in note 17.
- 23 *Lettera annale portata di novo dal Giapon da i signori ambasciatori delle cose iui successe l'anno MDLXXXII*, p. 17.

of Japan, so as to come to terms with the nation and convert it to Christ (which is what we intend), so we must allow them some hours for this study. Notwithstanding, a large part of them can already write with facility in Latin, and some even teach the lower classes ... They are modest, well disposed, given to purity, and so composed that they truly seem members of the clergy, and their ways and sentiments are by no means puerile.... Don Protasio, along with all the other noblemen of Arima, has a great opinion of these seminaries, and holds them dear".<sup>24</sup>

A detailed report of music-making in the Seminary of Fachirao, near Arima, comes from the annual letter from Father Pedro Gómez (1533/35–1600) of 1594:

"The seminarists [of Fachirao] have had this great advantage over the other seminaries. In these times of persecution the other houses cannot hold public liturgical ceremonies with the necessary dignity, whereas in this Seminary, because of its remote situation located amidst woods, with a great number of people therein studying music and learning to play a diversity of instruments, they have always been able to perform the liturgy with all due solemnity. Besides that which they perform during Holy Week, and on other Feast days, more or less every Sunday we have at least one sung Mass, sometimes in *canto fermo*, sometimes in *canto d'organi*, sometimes with *viola d'arco*, sometimes the harp or the lute, the *viola semplice*<sup>25</sup> and the harpsichord, which instruments many of them play very well. Besides this they sing Vespers and Compline in the evening, and do everything in order to adorn the feast days, which cannot be done in the other houses. And this they do also to entertain the youths, and keep them in practice, capable, and knowledgeable about the liturgy."<sup>26</sup>

A report from Luís Fróis of 1596, describing the Seminary of Arie (or Arye) in Takaku, informs us that it is "...divided into four classes with a school for writing. In one of these they instruct matters concerning Japan to those who have already finished their studies of Latin, which is of great importance for both those who will preach, and those who will converse with the pagans: that is to say, the literature and sciences of Japan. The other three classes teach Latin. Other clerics are engaged in painting images both *à olio et à fresco*, with remarkable perfection and delicacy, as will have been seen by those images that in past years have been sent

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24 *Lettere del Giappone et della Cina de gl'anni MDLXXXIX & MDXC* [1589 & 1590], pp. 30–32.

25 *Viola da braccio?*

26 *Lettera annua del Giappone dal Marzo del MDXCIII sino al Marzo del XCIV al molto R. in Christo P.N. il P. Claudio Acquaviva Preposito Generale della Compagnia di Giesu. Tradotta dal P. Gio. Battista Peruschi romano, delle medesima Compagnia...* In Roma apresso Luigi Zannetti MDXCVII [1597]. This passage is given in English in Harich-Schneider, *A History of Japanese Music*, p.472, as being translated from a Portuguese original, but without specifying its source. Harich-Schneider translates *canto d'organo* (*canto d'orgão* in the Portuguese original) as chant accompanied by organ at the unison, whereas it undoubtedly refers to polyphony: see note 19.

to Vostro Padre, which is to say that they study engraving on copper, reproducing exceedingly well a number of images which have come from Europe.<sup>27</sup> There are a great many in the Seminary who play a number of instruments with such grace and ease that they cause great wonder to those who hear them. Their daily routine is well organised, both for the study of *canto fermo* and for that of the organ; they celebrate the rites with great devotion, and pay great attention to the details of the divine cult...<sup>28</sup>

A later report comes from Francesco Pasio (1554–1612) writing from Japan to Rome in 1601 on the Seminary of Nagasaki, with its more than a hundred pupils, says that “the said Seminary is of great use to this Christianity, because it is from here that come the musicians who serve in the Divine Offices which are celebrated in Nangasachi...”<sup>29</sup>

With regard to the Seminary of Arima, he tells us that:

“In the house of Arima we have had fifteen of our people this year, and eleven in the five Residences which belong to it.... Because of the war, fourteen *Doghici*<sup>30</sup> have come to Arima; they occupy themselves with painting. They have a house set apart for them within the Seminary, and are taken care of by two of our people. One of these came from Rome some years ago, and he is now a priest, and he has produced such able pupils of painting that these churches of Japan are adorned with fine paintings ... and they can truly be considered to be on a par with European painters. With these, and other images printed in great quantities [now] belonging to many of the Christians, devotion and piety has been greatly increased. And through the industry of the same Father, a number of organs have been made, along with musical instruments for the

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27 Some of these images were brought back by the four ambassadors, as Pedro Gómez tells us in the *Lettera annua del Giappone dal Marzo del MDXCIII sino al Marzo del XCIV al molto R. in Christo P.N. il P. Claudio Acquaviva Preposito Generale della Compagnia di Giesu* [1597].

28 *Lettera annua del Giappone dell'anno MDXCVI. Scritta dal P. Luigi Frois, al R.P. Claudio Acquaviva generale della Compagnia di Giesu. Tradotta in italiano dal P. Francesco Mercati romano della stessa compagnia.* In Roma, appresso Luigi Zannetti 1599, pp.78–79.

29 *Lettera annua di Giappone Scritta nel 1601 e mandata dal P. Francesco Pasio V. Prouinciali. Al M.R.P. Claudio Acquaviva Generale della Compagnia di Giesu.* Venetia, MDCIII, Apresso Gio. Battista Ciotti Senese, All Aurora [1604], pp.44–45.

30 Deriving from the term *dōjuku* (from the ideogram 同宿, meaning “the same dwelling”, for which information I thank warmly Naomi Kato), which according to Fujita, op. cit., p.74, was used by Buddhists to designate a novice who lived in the monks’ quarters to serve them. He notes that the Christians adapted the term to indicate a lay acolyte who taught catechism and preached; he was not officially a member of the clergy, but was regarded as such because of his work for the missions, his celibacy and his appearance (tonsure and long black cassock). The *doghici* lived with the fathers and brothers, who strictly supervised their religious progress. Ross, op. cit, p.49, notes that they were almost apprentice clergy, but not clergy by canon law.

principal churches, and many mechanical clocks for the use of our [people], which give great pleasure to the Japanese".<sup>31</sup>

There remains thus, through these annual letters, an ample documentation of the teaching and performance of European music in Jesuit Seminaries in Japan from 1577 until at least 1601. It was clearly a widespread practice, and moreover considered a vital element for the conversion of the Japanese, through the effects of the beauty and majesty (and undoubtedly, also the novelty) of the formal rites of the Christian church.<sup>32</sup>

### Valignano's Embassy visits Europe, 1584-1586

But let us return to our four ambassadors who are on their way to Europe. The boys reached Macao on 9 March 1582, the first stage of their journey. Here they were delayed by unfavourable winds for ten months. Michele, in one of the dialogues of the *De missione*, tells us, however, that "what with the various proper things to do, reading, writing, playing musical instruments, and so on, our time was not wasted".<sup>33</sup> Similarly, the boys were delayed for another eight months in Cochin while waiting once again for favourable winds, and here, Gualtieri accounts, they put their time to good use in studying Latin, and [European] instrumental and vocal music "as a pleasant way of passing the time, but also [*nota bene!*] because European music is greatly esteemed in Japan".<sup>34</sup> The boys finally reached their European destination on 10 August 1584.

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31 *Lettera annua di Giappone Scritta nel 1601 e mandata dal P. Francesco Pasio V. Prouinciali. Al M.R.P. Claudio Acquaviva Generale della Compagnia di Giesù* [1604], pp.44–45.

32 For the use of music by the Jesuits as a tool for conversion in other countries, see Castagna, "The use of music by the Jesuits in the conversion of the indigenous peoples of Brazil". John W. O'Malley, S.J.; Gauvin Alexander Bailey; Steven J. H.; T. Frank Kennedy, S.J. (Ed.), *The Jesuits. Cultures, Sciences, and the Arts. 1540–1773*. Toronto; Buffalo; London: University of Toronto Press, 1999, pp.641–658.; Summers, "The Jesuits in Manila, 1581–1621: the role of music in rite, ritual and spectacle". John W. O'Malley, S.J.; Gauvin Alexander Bailey; Steven J. H.; T. Frank Kennedy, S.J. (Ed.), *The Jesuits. Cultures, Sciences, and the Arts. 1540–1773*. Toronto; Buffalo; London: University of Toronto Press, 1999, pp.659–679. For the Jesuits and music see also Filippi, "Their sound hath gone forth into all the earth": Music and Sound in the Ministries of Early Modern Jesuits: Introduction". *Journal of Jesuit Studies*, vol. 3, issue 3 (2016), pp.357–364.

33 Massarella (Ed.); Moran, (Transl.), op. cit., p.57.

34 Gualtieri, *Relazioni della venvta de gli ambasciatori giapponesi à Roma, sino alla partita di Lisbona*, p.43: "li trattennero dunque in Cochin ben' otto mesi continui, seguitando quei Signori in questo tempo d'imparar latino, et anco à sonar, et cantare, il che serviva parte per lor'honesta ricreazione, parte perche nel Giappone la nostra musica è molto stimada...".



We have not sufficient space to give here a detailed account of the embassy's experiences of European music during their travels in Europe, but there are constant references to "buonissima musica" welcoming them throughout Portugal, Spain and Italy, and it is clear from all accounts of their reception in the various towns and cities of Europe that music always played an important part in the celebrations. Their arrival was generally heralded by the sounds of trumpets, drums, church bells and artillery fire, and on many an occasion, a solemn *Te Deum* in the local cathedral.<sup>35</sup> Visits to abbeys and cathedrals called for "suono d'organo" and "soavissima musica". The printed accounts never name the composers heard (with a single exception: Gualtieri mentions music by the Duke of Mantua that they heard in his city, quite clearly for diplomatic reasons).<sup>36</sup> A detailed examination of their musical reception during their European tour merits the attention of another article, but there is one outstanding report, which confirms the boys' keen interest in European music, which we must examine here. In Florence<sup>37</sup> – or in Cardinal Gambarà's villa at Bagnaia<sup>38</sup> (reports differ)<sup>39</sup> – they were shown an ingenious musical instrument called a *clavicymbalum*, made by a Venetian (who also played it) which could reproduce the sound of a variety of instruments. It was clearly an *claviorgano* (a combination of a harpsichord and organ),<sup>40</sup> since it is documented that *opercula* for taking in the air were so disposed that with a slight shift of the same, the sounds and voices of different instruments could be heard: the cithera, the lyre, the organ, the pipes ... trumpets ... the harp, ... the lute, the

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- 35 Their reception in Rome was, for obvious reasons, particularly splendid. See Gualtieri, *Relazioni della venuta de gli ambasciatori giapponesi à Roma, sino alla partita di Lisbona*, pp.77–98; Massarella (Ed.); Moran, (Transl.), op. cit., pp.273–323; Pinto; Okamoto; Bernard (Ed.), op. cit., p.150 ff.
- 36 Gualtieri, *Relazioni della venuta de gli ambasciatori giapponesi à Roma, sino alla partita di Lisbona*. p.132. Harich-Schneider, *A History of Japanese Music*, p.464, opines in her study that the boys will have heard – and perhaps even had contact with – all the major composers during their European tour, citing those of the city of Florence in particular. There is absolutely no foundation for this statement. Note that the "Spanish canzoni with organ accompaniment, newly composed in their praise", that she cites as performed in the Chiesa Maggiore in Florence, were instead performed in Belmonte in Spain (Gualtieri, *Relatione*, p.68).
- 37 Pinto; Okamoto; Bernard (Ed.), op. cit., pp.137–8l. Fróis' account in the *Tratado* is the more detailed of the two.
- 38 Massarella (Ed.); Moran, (Transl.), op. cit., p.270.
- 39 The date that Fróis gives for this event, 10 March 1584 [recte 1585], puts them firmly within their stay in Florence. The presence of *claviorgani* has been documented in Renaissance Florence on a number of occasions: see Montanari, "Florentine Claviorgans (1492–1900)". *The Galpin Society Journal*, 58 (2005), pp.236–259.
- 40 I am deeply grateful to Maria Virginia Rolfo for having identified this instrument as a *claviorgano*, and for having provided me with a bibliography on this instrument: in particular, the admirable thesis of Eleanor Smith, *The History and Use of the Claviorgan*. Ph.D. thesis, The University of Edinburgh, 2013.

mandolin, the psalterium... and any other instrument. ... whether you wish to hear many sounds at once, or these or those sounds separately, you can obtain [that] ... with a minimum of effort".<sup>41</sup> There was, moreover, a central *vasca*, a "lake,"<sup>42</sup> with receptacles attached to its sides, which, if one called up the 'bellicose sound' by action of the air, opened up, and *triremes* came out to do battle, trumpets sounded, catapults were released, and sailors and soldiers carrying arms entered into battle, moving their limbs and heads. If we are sceptical about the existence of such an instrument, which in Fróis is described as being the product of either diabolic or angelic art,<sup>43</sup> we should remember that a very similar instrument is described by Adriano Banchieri (1568–1634) in his *Conclusioni nel suono dell'organo* of 1609, said to be the work of a certain Domenico da Feltre:

"who went from one Italian city to another with an organ with wooden pipes, in which gracefully played an *arpicordo*, which allowed us to hear every wind, plucked and bowed instrument. And inside there was a container full of water in which one could see replicas of the two castles in the Venetian lagoons, with innumerable boats and gondolas, and with a variety of music of lutes, *cithare*, *arpicordi*, viols, *violone*, & other [instruments], amongst which one could hear, played by the wind instruments, the Singing Lady, the Siren,<sup>44</sup> and other such gallantries. Then followed the ceremony of the Bucintoro, when one could hear and see the shawms playing, and when they finished one could again listen to a consort of trombones and cornetts with a *ripieno* of different instruments playing together, that enraptured the listeners with these happy effects; and that which marvelled the experts, was to hear a ten foot organ, with E, D, and C, and *pedali trasparenti*".<sup>45</sup>

Harich-Schneider, in *A History of Japanese Music*, is entirely dismissive of the interest of the youths in this instrument of Bagnaia (or Florence), which she calls "a toy": she considers that having previously heard the music of great European

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- 41 Massarella (Ed.); Moran, (Transl.), op. cit., p.270. According to the account in Fróis, *Tratado*, that is, Pinto; Okamoto; Bernard (Ed.), op. cit., it also had bird stops: see Appendix 2.
- 42 Pinto; Okamoto; Bernard (Ed.), op. cit., pp.137–138. Since it mentions a "lake" (lago) this receptacle must have contained water, as with the instrument by Domenico da Feltre described by Banchieri. We are told by Fróis that two small bellows were positioned under the lake. See Appendix 2 for a summary in English translated with the assistance of Maria Virginia Rolfo.
- 43 The writer notes that everything is activated by stops on the sides and the front of the harpsichord.
- 44 No doubt popular Venetian airs of the time.
- 45 Adriano Banchieri, *Conclusioni nel suono dell'organo*. Bologna: Giovanni Rossi, 1609, pp. 14–15, transcribed in Smith, op. cit., p.204. *Trasparenti* in this particular context must mean thin, of little substance. Our *claviorgano* of Florence or Bagnaia must surely have been the work of the same strange genius known to us through Banchieri as Domenico da Feltre.

composers, their wonder is excessive, and even puerile.<sup>46</sup> But why would a combinative instrument, which could offer so many sounds, not be rightly fascinating to both their minds and their fingers? And who would not be enchanted by such a strange object which could provide battle music to accompany *combattimenti sull'acqua*?

After their joyous reception in Rome, and the prolonged festivities for their reception in that city, the long trip north which the boys undertook from Rome was enlivened by elaborate celebrations offered by the numerous cities that they passed through: bells, organs and trumpets heralded their arrival, banquets accompanied by music were given in their honour, a motet was specifically written for their arrival in Perugia,<sup>47</sup> a splendid polychoral Mass performed in Venice,<sup>48</sup> followed by an elaborate procession in which music played a large part, delayed in their honour from 25 June, the feast of the Apparition of Saint Mark.<sup>49</sup> Chamber concerts were performed in their honour in Vicenza, Verona and Mantua,<sup>50</sup> and solemn Masses heard everywhere.<sup>51</sup> The boys at last set sail for Spain from the port

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46 Harich-Schneider, *A History of Japanese Music*, p.470.

47 Most appropriately, on the text “Ecce gentem quam nesciebas vocabis; et gentes, quae te non cognoverunt ad te current, propter Dominum Deum tuum, et Sanctum Israel, quia glorificavit te” (“Behold thou shalt call a nation which thou knewest not: and the nations that knew not thee shall run to thee, because of the Lord thy God, and for the Holy One of Israel, for he hath glorified thee”): Isaiah, Chapter 55. See Gualtieri, *Relazioni della venuta de gli ambasciatori giapponesi à Roma, sino alla partita di Lisbona*, p.103. Sadly, no trace of this motet is known to remain today.

48 Reference must be made to Masataka Yoshioka, who read an interesting paper entitled “Cultural dialogue and political power of singing: the Mass of Andrea Gabrieli at the 1585 visit of the Japanese delegation”, at the Annual Meeting of the American Society of Musicology in 2011.

49 See the *Relatione degli honori et accoglienze fatte dall'Illustrissima, et Serenissima Signoria di Venetia alli Signori Ambasciatori Giapponesi*. Cremona: Apresso Christoforo Draconi, 1585, for a detailed account of this extraordinary event: perhaps the most solemn and imposing procession that Venice staged in the sixteenth century.

50 In the Teatro Olimpico, Vicenza; the Palazzo Bevilacqua, Verona; and the Ducal Palace, Mantua.

51 For their reception in Ferrara, see Ianello, “«L'Indiani gionsero qui sabato». Riflessi ferraresi della prima missione giapponese alla Santa Sede (1585)”. *Annali online dell'Università di Ferrara – Sezione Lettere*, vol. 7 (2012), pp.339–356. For Venice, see Boscaro, “La visita a Venezia della prima ambascieria giapponesi in Europa”. *Il Giappone: Rivista trimestrale a cura del Centro di studi di cultura giapponese, Istituto Italiano per l'Africa e l'Oriente* (IsIAO), 5 (1965), pp.19–32. For Mantua, see Bosi, “Tenshō Shōnen Shisetsu: the reception of a Japanese delegation at the court of Mantua in 1585”. Simona Brunetti (Ed.), *Maestranze, artisti e apparatori per la scena dei Gonzaga (1480–1630). Atti del convegno internazionale di studi (Mantova, 26–28 febbraio 2015)*. Bari: Edizioni di Pagina, 2016, pp. 230–243.

of Genoa on 9 August 1585, to the valedictory sound of trumpets and artillery fire, “in the name of God, taking with them the affection and universal applause of the whole of Italy and leaving behind perpetual memory of their virtue and nobility of spirit”, as Gualtieri so gracefully tells us.<sup>52</sup>

We do not relinquish our subject here, for we have evidence of the musical engagement of the *ambasceria* during their return journey through Spain to Portugal. The boys were received in Alcalá (de Henares) by Ascanio Colonna (1560–1608), who presented them with a sumptuous harpsichord decorated with mother of pearl which he had imported from Rome: an object of great value,<sup>53</sup> which must surely indicate that the youths’ ability to play the harpsichord was already well-known to him. Moreover, Fróis relates in his *Tratado* that when the boys were staying in Vila Viçosa shortly afterwards, the Duke of Bragança, knowing that the boys were musicians, sent harpsichords and viols to their rooms, and everyone admired a performance on these instruments.<sup>54</sup> And we are told by Diogo de Mesquita (c.1551–1614) that the boys put their long journey home to good use by practising on the harp, lute, clavier and rebec.<sup>55</sup> Moreover, while delayed in Macao for almost a year by unfavourable winds, and a sudden fall from favour of the Jesuits in Japan, they are said to have continued their studies and practiced assiduously on their musical instruments. Padre Mesquita reported to Rome that Martinho Hara (c.1568–1629), in particular, was outstandingly gifted in the liberal arts and in music.<sup>56</sup> The *ambasceria* even gave a concert in a church in Macao on the evening of the Circumcision (January 6) to a receptive public.

The four boys miraculously returned to Nagasaki on 21 July 1590, to the incredulous joy of their families, after all of 8 years and 5 months of travel.<sup>57</sup> They had

52 Gualtieri, *Relazioni della venuta de gli ambasciatori giapponesi à Roma, sino alla partita di Lisbona*, p.150.

53 “Un ricco clavicembalo ornata di madre perle che aveva fatto venire fin da Roma, cosa di gran prezzo”. Gualtieri, *Relazioni della venuta de gli ambasciatori giapponesi à Roma, sino alla partita di Lisbona*, p.153. The *De missione* notes that it was made of cedar wood. See Massarella (Ed.); Moran, (Transl.), op. cit., p.384.

54 Pinto; Okamoto; Bernard (Ed.), op. cit., p.53: “e sabendo o Duque, q[ue] os Senhores Japões tangião, mandou vir alli cravo, e violas a sua camara; mto se admirarão todos de os ver tanger, e descantar cõ viola, e cravo”.

55 See note 60 for rebec.

56 Massarella (Ed.); Moran, (Transl.), op. cit., p.440, note 1. For Mesquita’s letters, see ARSI, Jap. Sin. 11-I, f. 9–11v; 46; II, f. 173–174, 192 (I am again indebted to Prof. Brunello for having kindly supplied copies). Waterhouse (1997, p.336), notes that Mesquita encouraged the boys in the study of their musical instruments; he also cites the letter of Lourenço Mexia of January 1589, which reports that the boys studied harp, *clavicembalo*, lute and rebeca [= *viola d’arco?*], and that Martinho was making excellent progress with Latin.

57 Michele (Miguel), ambassador for Don Protasio of Arima, and Don Bartolomeo of Omura, writes of their reception in a letter to the Bishop of Évora, published in *Raggvaglio d’alcune missioni dell’Indie Orientali, et Occidentali. Cavato de alcuni auuisi scritti gli anni 1590 et 1591. Da i P.P. Pietro Martinez prouinciale dell’India*

survived illnesses, the dangers of shipwreck, the risk of attack by pirates, and the fatigue of an infinitely long and stressful journey over land and sea. They brought back with them experiences and acquired abilities which must have seemed nothing short of extraordinary to those at home. It is not surprising that, once returned to Japan, their ability to play European instruments in consort (which we can deduce from the surviving sources) would cause sincere wonder and admiration. In a Jesuit letter sent back to Rome shortly after their arrival home, we can read that:

“The Japanese take great pleasure in seeing and hearing such a variety of musical instruments that these *Signori* have brought back from Europe, and they remain enchanted by their melody, and amazed by the harmony and consonance of so many instruments tuned together. And they confess that our music is much more sweet and pleasing than they had previously supposed”.<sup>58</sup>

Alessandro Valignano had rejoined the boys in Goa and accompanied them back to Japan: with some caution, since the country was now practically unified under the ruler Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1537–1598), who was known to be unfavourable towards the Christian religion. Wishing to present the four youths to the ruler, Valignano requested a meeting in his role of ambassador of the Governor General of the Portuguese Indies (rather than that of a Jesuit missionary), and was granted an audience, in the company of Padre João Rodrigues (c.1561/62–1633) as interpreter.<sup>59</sup> They were all received with great ceremony and kindness, and we read that after a banquet,

“The tables were removed, and returning to the place where the Padre had remained, they called the four Japanese youths so as to hear the music which they had learnt in Europe, and a *gravi cembalo*, a *harpeleuto* [an error for a harp and a lute] and a *ribeca*<sup>60</sup> being immediately brought forth, they began to play with such grace that

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*Oriente, Giouanni d’Atienza prouinciale del Peru, Pietro Diaz prouinciale del Messico. Al rever. P. Generale della Compagnia di Giesu, et raccolto dal padre Gasparo Spitilli della medesima Compagnia...* In Roma Appresso Luigi Zannetti, 1592, p.16, that “we have been received by all Christianity, and in particular by our mothers and relatives, with indescribable happiness and joy. And even the Gentiles gave us a great welcome; they were all astonished by our safe return home”.

58 *Copia di dve lettere annve scritte dal Giappone del 1589 & 1590. L’vna dal P. viceprouinciale al P. Alessandro Valignano, l’altra dal P. Luigi Frois al P. Generale della Compagnia di Giesu. Et dalla spagnvola nella italiana lingua tradotte dal P. Gasparo Spitilli della Compagnia medesima.* In Roma apresso Luigi Zannetti, 1593.; Fróis in Pinto; Okamoto; Bernard (Ed.), op. cit., p.56. Fróis’s letter describes in detail the reception of the four boys to Japan on their return from Europe.

59 Ross, op. cit., pp.70–71.

60 I believe that the instruments concerned were the harpsichord (or spinet), the harp, lute and viola da gamba. There are countless mentions of *viola d’arco* (almost certainly the viola da gamba) in reports of the musical education in the Jesuit seminaries and music performed within the Christian liturgies in Japan, but none of a

Quabacondono [Hideyoshi], having heard the sweetness of this music, made them repeat it three times. Then, taking up the instruments into his own hands, he asked questions about each of them. And he said, in conclusion, that he was most proud that they were Japanese”.<sup>61</sup>

Valignano had foreseen the possibility of impressing the ruler with a performance of European music, and had thus brought along their musical instruments, together with many valuable gifts for Hideyoshi. Such was their success that the ruler even invited Mâncio Itō to enter his service, which he was able to decline only with considerable embarrassment and difficulty.

On their return, the boys entered the Jesuit novitiate in July 1591. They seem to have immediately assumed the role of music teachers – and exceedingly efficient ones at that – for we can read later in the same publication, where the author, speaking of one of the Seminaries, writes:

“I hereby send word to Your Paternity... of the great expectations and hopes the pupils of the Seminary bring us ... With the arrival of these four Japanese lords, who are now our Brothers, they have immediately understood and learnt how to play, with great ease, a number of instruments, and soon they were playing in consort a music as fine and consonant as do those who have studied in Europe. And moreover, since our music seems to them dissonant in comparison to their own, as in fact theirs seems to us, nonetheless, they apply themselves to playing harpsichords and similar instruments with great gusto, and they warmly appreciate the use of organs in the rites of our church.”<sup>62</sup>

Our travellers would take their religious vows 2 years later. But active persecution of Christians began from around 1587,<sup>63</sup> while a second phase would follow

rebec or ribeca. Although usually referring to a bowed stringed instrument held in the arms (the antecedent of the violin), the term rebec or ribeca could also, in this period, refer to a version very similar to a viola da gamba: it was held between the legs and had a low register, hence it might easily be confused with a *viola d'arco* or *viola da gamba*. The term *harpeleuto* is clearly an error for a harp and lute, which are both cited in other accounts, such as that of Frois, *Historia de Japam*, Chapter 39. Fróis also mentions *violas de arco* and *realijo* (this last some kind of portable organ, or even a hurdy-gurdy?). I thank Alexandra Curvelo for bringing to my notice this precious information.

61 *Lettera del Giappone de gli anni 1591 et 1592 scritta al R.P. generale della Compagnia di Giesu. Et dalla spagnuola nella italiana lingua tradotta dal P. Ubaldino Bartolini della Compagnia medesima*. In Roma, apresso Luigi Zannetti MDXCV [1595], p.46.

62 *Idem*, p.148.

63 See *Raccolta di molti Avvisi del Giappone Dell'Ano M.D.LXXXII fin all' LXXXVIII Dove si tratta del progetto della Fede Christiana, delle varie riuolutione, e mutatione de' Stati di quel paese, d'una gran persecutione contro i fideli, & altre cose notabili. Con alcun altri auvisi della China dell'Anno LXXXIII & LXXXIV. Cauati dalle lettere della Compagnia di Giesu*. In Roma, Apresso Francesco Zanetti, 1590. Con Licenza de' Superiore. Et ristampata in Palermo MDXC [1590].

from 1614. Mâncio Itô died young, Martinho Hara (c.1568–1629) went into exile in Macao, where he lived out his life as a priest, Miguel Chijiwa seems to have abandoned his Christian faith, and Julião Nakaura (c.1569–1633), who remained steadfast, was martyred in 1633. I am told that the memory of the extraordinary European adventure of these intrepid and noble minded youths, known as the *Tenshō Shōnen Shisetsu*, is still very much alive in Japan today.

This article, which took its point of departure from my initial research on the voyage from Japan to Rome of four youthful converts to Christianity in 1585, has brought forth information which one hopes will be useful and interesting for musicologists: namely, that European music was used by Jesuit missionaries in Japan as a tool for conversion, and that precisely for this reason, European music was taught in Jesuit Seminaries in Japan in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Moreover, our four young converts, who received sufficient musical training to be able to play imposing European organs, and perform chamber music before appreciative listeners, have left us a detailed description of a most unusual instrument – a highly complicated and sophisticated *claviorgano* – which is precious for our knowledge of late sixteenth-century keyboard instruments. It is to be hoped that more evidence of European music in late sixteenth and early seventeenth-century Japan will emerge with time.

## Appendix 1

1577

**Padre Organtino, from Japan, to Padre Evorardo Magliano, Preposito Generale della Compagni di Giesu in Rome, 29 September 1577. Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu (ARSI), *Ital. J.8 I*, 178–9.**

“... Abbiamo grande speranza di convertire tutti questi regni dello Miaco et desiderariamo ch[e] V[ostra] P[aternità]ci aiutasse co[n] alcuni molto boni sugetti perch[é] questi parti nello Giappone sono come Roma in Europa dove la scienza la discretione e la pulicia vive più ch[e] in altri luoghi, ne pensi V[ostra] P[aternità] ch[e] siano barbari perch[è] fuori della fede siamo noi in grande maniera i[n]feriori a loro et dipoi che come[n]cete a inte[n]dere la loro lingua giudichei non avere gente tale ch[e] universalme[n]te fosse ta[n]ta discreta et soggiogata alla fede nostra mi pare ch[e] no[n] avera tal chiesa ch[e] gli possa levar ventaggio; oltra di questo per la evidente esperientia ch[e] teniamo di loro ci pare ch[e] co[n] ceremonie nello culto divino come si usa nella chiesa si c[on]vertiriano a miglioni et tenendo quivi organi et altri i[n]stromenti musici co[n] cantori et molta gente senza nissuna dubitatione tutto questo Miaco et Sacai in uno solo an[n]o si co[n]vertiria ch[e] sono le due principali città di tutto il Giappone...”.

1582

**Lettera annale portata di novo dal Giappone da i signori ambasciatori delle cose iui successe l'anno MDLXXXII. In Venetia appresso i Giolitti MDLXXXV [1585].**

“... Quanto al Seminario non potrei esplicare à V[ostra] P[aternità] il gran contento che habbiamo in vedere il profitto così nello spirito, e costumi, come anco nelle lettere... et comunamente nella memoria, et ingegno superano molti giovani di Europa; poiche per essergli la nostra lingua pellegrina, in pochi mesi l'apprendano à leggere, et scrivere, similmente la lingua Latina quantunque lor sia molto difficile; nondimeno tanto è la felicità di loro intelletto et memoria, et tanto anco la loro diligenza, che crediamo habbino da riuscir buoni Latini nel medesimo tempo, ò in meno di quello, che i nostri sogliono; Imparano anco canto figurato, et hanno una buona capella et con facilità cantano una Messa solenne. Il frutto di questo Seminario oltre à quello che è detto, potrà intendere V[ostra] P[aternità] dalle Primitie, che di esso gli offeriamo, poiche così i quattro giovani, che il P[adre] V[isitatore] mena seco, come di sopra è detto, come anche il Fratello nostro, che con essi viene, sono frutti di questo Seminario; onde ben si scorge, che il remedio del Giappone consiste in questi Seminarij, in ciascuno de quali se si potessero sostenere fino à cento giovani, s'havrebbe in breve tempo copia di sogetti et per la Compagnia, et per Preti secolari ...”. (p. 17)

“... Dopo alcuni giorni essendo già ritornato il Padre Organtino da accompagnare il Padre Visitatore, venne un di Nobunanga all'improvviso a casa nostra ... salendo più alta parte della casa, comandò che restassero tutti gli altri a basso, e si pose poi a ragionare con gran familiarità, et amore co[n] i Padri et fratelli. Andò a veder l'horiuolo, vidi anche un Gravicembalo, et una Viola, che havevamo in casa, e comandò che si sonassero ambedue, sentendo sommo piacere di quel suono, et lodando insieme il giovanetto che il Gravicembalo sonava, il quale era figliuolo del Re di Fiu[n]ga, et anco quel che sonava la Viola. Andò veder la campana, et altre cose, che similmente havevamo in casa, le quali sono necessari per allettare i Gentili, i quali per essere molto curiosi, vengono a vederle, servendocene, come di esca per farli nostri famigliari, et udir le prediche, come ogni giorno sperimentiamo” (pp.31--32).

“... Tra le cose, che sino ad ora venute a Giappone, delle quali essi più gustano, è il sonar de gli Organi, e Gravicembali, et delle Viole; e però habbiamo due paia d'Organi, uno in Anzuchyama, e l'altro in Bungo, e Gravicembali in diversi luoghi, quali imparano i giovanetti di sonare; e nelle messe, et altre feste si supplisce con quelli al mancamento che habbiamo de' cantori, et altri apparati, che nelle nostre feste s'usano in Europa, il che faria qua molto necesario per muovere questa gentilità, e darle in qualche parte ad intendere la gloria, e magnificenza del culto divino...” (p. 83).<sup>64</sup>

1582/1584

*Avvisi del Giappone degli anni 1582, 1583 et 1584 con alcuni altri della Cina dell' a 1583 et 84. Cavati dalle lettere della Compagnia di Giesu: ricevute il mese di dicembre 1585. Roma: 1586.*

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64 Harich-Schneider erroneously attributes this citation to Lourenço Mexia.



“Una della cose che nel Giappone hoggi ì possono dare molta consolatione, et allegrezza, et non meno speranza di copioso frutto per l’avvenire, dico à V[ostra] Paternità ch’è il vedere quei Giovanetti che il P. Visitatore congregò nel Seminario di Arima. Hanno per rettore il P[adre] Melchior [*recte* Belchior] di Mora. Sono quasi tutti nobili: vivono come religiosi modesti, raccolti, amici della purità, non sono gravosi à chi governa, anzi pronti nell’ ubidire: guardano al piè della lettera il modo di vivere che fù loro assegnato dal P. Visitatore, hanno le loro hore distribuite in modo, che non perdono il tempo: imparano buone lettere, et music di voci, et di stromenti... Sono di natura docili et vivi d’ingegno. Et certo che la institutione di questi Seminari è stata cosa del Cielo, poi che non vi era humanamente altro mezzo per condurre innanzi la impresa dell’Evangelio” (p. 15).

**1589/1590**

*Lettere del Giappone et della Cina de gl’anni MDLXXXIX & MDXC [1589 & 1590]. Scritte al R.P. General della Compagnia di Giesu. In Venetia MDXCII Apresso Gio. Battista Ciotti Senese al segno della Minerua [1592].*

[On the death of Don Stefano, brother of Don Protasio] “... Fugli cantato l’ufficio funerale con molta pompa, et solennità, come conveniva alla persona sua, et come si deve fare in questi luoghi, sentendosi per simili charitativi officii, et ceremonie molto mossi questi Giaponesi: per ciò vi si trovarano presenti tutti quei N[ostri] Padri...” (p.24).

[on the seminario at Amagunci] “... questi giovani Giaponesi sono di molto buona indole, et di grande ingegno, et riescono molto bene nella lingua nostra Latina; et la medesima riuscita sono per fare tutte per scienze, havendo principalmente per la pietà il naturale molto accomodato. Sono tutti ripartiti in tre classe, et oltre alle lezioni che hanno di lingua Latina, et di canto, danno insieme ciascun giorno alcune hore di studio al rivedere, et leggere il loro idioma, et dogma Giaponese il che se ben è di non piccolo impedimento al progresso maggiore, che potrebbero fare nella lingua Latino; nondimeno perchè il sapere bene le lettere, et le leggi di Giappone, è cosa altrettanto necessario, per confarsi con la nazione, et guadagnarla à Christo (che è quel che si pretende) non si piò lasciare di concedere loro alcune hore per questi studij: pure, nonostante tal’ occupatione, buona parte di essi compore già molto speditamente Latino, et alcuni anche servono per Maestri nelle classe inferiori...” “... Sono modesti, raccolti, amici della purità, et si composti nell’interiore, et esteriore loro, che veramente paiono Religiosi, et hanno maniere, et sentimenti non punto puerili...Ha Don Protasio con tutti gli altri nobili di Arima molto grande opinione di questi seminarij, et porta loro molto amore...”.

**1589/1590**

*Copia di dve lettere annve scritte dal Giappone del 1589 & 1590. L’vna dal P. viceprovinciale al P. Alessandro Valignano, l’altra dal P. Luigi Frois al P. Generale della Compagnia di Giesu. Et dalla spagnvola nella italiana lingua tradotte dal P. Gasparo Spitilli della Compagnia medesima. In Roma apresso Luigi Zannetti, 1593.*

“Gran piacere poi sentono i Giaponesi, et gran gusto hanno di vedere, et di sentire sonare tanta diversità di strumenti musici, che da Europa hanno portato questi Signori, et restano rapiti dalla melodia di essi, et stupiscono dell’armonia, et consonanza di tanti strumenti insieme accordati. Et confessano che la nostra musica è più dolce, et più soave di quelli che essi prima dicevano.” (Fróis, 1590, p. 56)

**1591/1592**

**Lettera del Giappone de gli anni 1591 et 1592 scritta al R.P. generale della Compagnia di Giesv. Et dalla spagnuola nella italiana lingua tradotta dal P. Ubaldino Bartolini della Compagnia medesima. In Roma, apresso Luigi Zannetti MDXCV [1595].**

“... forno levate le tavole, e tornando al luogo dove stava il Padre, fece chiamare i quattro Signori Giaponesi per sentir la loro musica, che in Europa havevano imparato, e venuto in un tratto un grave cembalo, harpeleuto, e ribica, incominciarono à sonare con tale gratia, che con grande attentione era ascoltata la dolcezza della musica da Quabacondono [Hideyoshi], si che trè volte la fece ricominciare. Dopo prese gli strumenti in mano ad un’ per uno, domandando alcune cose intorno ad essi. Finalmente disse loro, che sentiva gran piacere, che essi fossero Giaponesi...”. (p. 46)

“... Vengo à dar relatione à V. paternità della grande aspettatione, e speranza che danno i se gli alunni del Seminario... ne con minor debolezza imparano à sonare con la venuta di quei quattro Signori Giaponesi che hora sono fratelli nostri, subito appresero, et impararno con tanta facilità diversi istromenti, che in breve sonavano tra loro con musica tanta buona, e consonante, come suonavano i medesimi che impararno in Europa. Con tutto questo si come à loro la nostra musica, per essere abituati alla propria, par dissonante, così à noi tale in pare la loro, non dimeno à gli arpicordi, et simili istromenti si applicano con più gusto, e gli par molto buono l’uso degli organi negli officii della Chiesa”. (p. 148).

**1592**

**Raggvaglio d’alcune missioni dell’Indie Orientali, et Occidentali. Cavato de alcuni auvisi scritti gli anni 1590 et 1591. Da i P.P. Pietro Martinez prouinciale dell’India Orientale, Giouanni d’Atienza prouinciale del Peru, Pietro Diaz prouinciale del Messico. Al rever. P. Generale della Compagnia di Giesu, et raccolto dal padre Gasparo Spitilli della medesima Compagnia.... In Roma Appresso Luigi Zannetti, 1592.**

[on the arrival in Nangasachi, 21 July 1590)] “col P[adre] Visitatore della Compagnia di Giesu et altri sedici fra Padri et Fratelli d’istessa, quali tutti siamo stati ricevuti da tutte la Christianità, et in particolare dalle nostre madre et parenti, con tanta allegrezza et contento, quanto non si può scrivere; di maniera che fin da Gentili ci son state fatte grandissime accoglienze, restando tutti attoniti del nostro salvo arrivo”. (p. 16)

1593/1594

**Lettera annua del Giappone dal Marzo del MDXCIII sino al Marzo del XCIV al molto R. in Christo P.N. il P. Clavdio Acqvaviva Preposito Generale della Compagnia di Giesu. Tradotta dal P. Gio. Battista Peruschi Romano, delle medesima Compagnia... In Roma apresso Luigi Zannetti MDXCVII [1597]**

“Hebbero anchora quelli del Seminario [di Fachiravo] questo vantaggio, più che tutte l’altre case; che dove nelle altre nel tempo di persecutione non si ponno fare publichi officij, con la solennità, che si richiede; nel Seminario [di Fachiravo] quale sta in luogo remoto tra le selve, et con haver la commodità, che tiene con la congregatione di tanta gente, che s’essercitavano nella musica, et in sonare diversi instrumenti, han fatto sempre li suoi uffitij con tutta la solennità, che potevano fare: perche oltra quel, che fanno la settimana santa, et nelli giorni più solenni, tutte le Domeniche communemente vi è Messa cantata, hora in canto fermo, hora in canto d’organi, hora di viole d’arco, hora d’arpa, ò liuto, viola semplice, et gravecimbalo, i quali molti di loro fanno molto ben sonare. Et oltra di questo cantano hora il Vespro, hora la Compieta la sera; il che tutto fanno così per solennizzare le feste, come conviene in questo tempo (gia che non si può fare in altri parti) come anchora per dare intertenimento alli fanciulli, et tenerli bene esercitati, abituati, et destri in questi uffitij ecclesiastici”. (pp.68–69)

1596

**Lettera annua del Giappone dell’anno MDXCVI. Scritta dal P. Luigi Frois, al R.P. Clavdio Acqvaviva generale della Compagnia di Giesù. Tradotta in italiano dal P. Francesco Mercati romano della stessa compagnia. In Roma, apresso Luigi Zannetti 1599.**

“Del Seminario di Arie: ... Il Seminario è scompartito in quattro Classi, et una Schuola da scrivere, in una di quelle si leggono le cose del Giappone à quei, che già hanno finiti i loro studij delle cose latine, il che è di grand’importanza si per quei, che hanno à predicare, come per conversare con i gentili, che fanno le lettere, e scienze del Giappone. L’altri tre classi sono di latino. L’altri chierici s’occupano in dipingere imagini à olio, et à fresco con tanta esattione e delicatezza, quanto haranno visto dall’imagini, che gli anni passati si mandarono à V. P. ovvero si esercitano in intagliare in rame, dove imitano molto bene varij esemplarij, che vengono da Europa. Vi sono molto nel Seminario, i quali suonano diversi sorti d’istromenti, sì speditamente, e con tanta gratia e facilità, che danno gran meraviglia a chi li vede. Hanno ordinariamente ogni giorno le loro hore determinate, si per il canto fermo, come per l’organo; celebrano i lor uffici con molta devotione, et hanno grande attentione nelle cose del culto divino; e cio con non minor lor consolatione, che de’ nostri, e de forastieri, che si ritrovano presenti, e per l’asiduità, che hanno in tutti i sopradetti exercitij, si scorge in esse un frutto notabile...”. (pp.78–79)

1601

**Lettera annua di Giappone Scritta nel 1601 e mandata dal P. Francesco Pasio V. Prouinciali. Al M.R.P. Claudio Acquaviva Generale della Compagnia di**

**Giesù. Venetia, MDCIII, Apresso Gio. Battista Ciotti Senese, All Aurora [1604].**

[speaking of the Seminary of Nangasachi, with more than a hundred pupils] “... E il sudetto Seminario di grande utilità a questo Christianesimo; percioche di qui vengono i musici che servono ne gli officii divini, che ci celebrano in Nangasachi, et altrove: di qui escono quei, che catechizzano i gentili, e che aiutano alla conversione de medesimi ...”. (p. 36)

“Delle case, e delle Residenze di Arima: Nella casa d’Arima quindici di nostri sono stati quest’anno, et in cinque Residenze appartenente a quella, undeci... Per cagion della guerra se passarano ad Arima 14 Dogichi, ch’attendono alla pittura, et in forma di seminario vivono in una casa appartata, de quali hanno cura due di nostri. Uno di questi venuto da Roma alcuni anno sono, et hora è sacerdote, ha fatti cosi buoni scolari nella pittura, che le Chiese di Giappone restano adornati co’i ricchi quadri, che essi hanno fatti, e veramente possono star à paragone co’ gli Europei, con questi e con altri imagini stampati in grande quantità, e ripartite a varij Christiani, s’è accresciuta grandemente in questo regno la devotione e pietà. Con l’industria del medesimo Padre si sono fatti diversi organi, et istrumenti musicali per le principali chiese, e molti horologgi à ruote per uso di nostri, che gran gusto recano a Giaponesi ...”. (pp. 44–45)

## Appendix 2

**Froís, *Tratado*, f. 11v (J. A. Abranches Pinto; Yoshitomo Okamoto; Henri Bernard, S.J. (Ed.) – *La Première Ambassade du Japon en Europe 1582–1592. Première Partie: Le Traité du Père Frois (texte portugais)*. Tôkyô: Sophia University, 1942, p.43)**

“... os levou Sua Senhoria para dentro de sua Caza ao Coro da Sé, a onde estavão hũs dos fermozos orgãos, q[ue] athe alli tinhão visto; por q[ue] alem de serem mui grandes, tocando em hũa tecla moviãose tres ordens de teclas, que são tres maneiras de orgãos, e fazẽ hũa sonora armonia, e posto q[ue] na Igreja estava muita gente por ser dai de jubileo, nelles tangerão Dom Mancio, e Dom Miguel muy arrezoadamente, de que o Arcebispo ficou mui satisfeito, e os mais que ouvirão...”.

**Duarte de Sande, *De missione legatorum Iaponensium ad Romanam curiam, rebusq; in Europa, ac toto itinere animaduersis dialogus...* / ab Eduardo de Sande Sacerdote Societatis Iesu. In Macaensi portu: in domo Societatis Iesu, 1590, pp.230–231.**

“Adijmus etiam quendam locum nomine Bagnaiam a cardinali Gambarensi ad voluptatem, deliciasq; extractum ... Mitto huius loci hortos, fontes, aliaq; amoenitatis testimonia, quae ex superius dictis facile conijci possunt, solumq; de instrumento quodam musico agam, quod clavicymbalum vocant, et merito animos nostros summa admiratione defixos habuit. Est illud quidem longum sex palmos, latum

vero quatuor, unius palmi altitudine, cuius ad aërem excipiendum opercula ita sunt disposita, ut facili eorum motu, ijsdem tabellis pulsatis, plurium instrumentorum inter se differentium, soni, vocesq; reddantur: ita ut varie excepto aëre, plusquam centum tonorum genera suavissime emittantur. Quod si rursus velis singula tantum instrumenta audire, facile excepties auribus suavem sonum, nunc citharae, nunc lyrae, interdum organi, nonnunquam fistularum, modo tubarum, deniq; sambucae, testudinis, barbiti, psalterij, & cuiuscumque alteri musici instrumenti. Illus est ergo huius, de quo loquimur, artificium, ut sive multos simul sonos, sive, hos, atq; illos sigillatim velis audire, minimo labore id perficias; quod quidem inventum, & excogitatum est a quodam Veneto artifice summi ingenij viro. Accedit ad hoc opus arca quaedam instar stagni confecta, quae hinc, atq; inde octo habet receptacula, & quoties ex eo instrumento sonus ille emittitur, qui bellicus dicitur, toties apertis aëre receptaculis, triremes affabre confectae ad certamen descendunt, pulsantur tubae, propelluntur & inhihentur remi, tormenta solvuntur, denique quaedam species pugnae, & certaminis oculis obijcitur, quae omnia vi flatus varie temperati, sicut supra de aqua diximus, efficiuntur”.

“... We arrived at a place called Bagnaia, built by Cardinal Gambara for his pleasure and entertainment ... I will not speak of the gardens, the fountains and other sources of pleasure, but ... of a certain musical instrument that is called a *clavicymbalum*, and which filled our minds with intense admiration. It is six palms long, four palms large, and one palm high, and its *opercula* for taking in the air are arranged in such a way that, with an easy movement of pressing their keys, one can produce the sounds of voices and a great many instruments. Thus, by taking the air in a number of ways, one can emit with great harmoniousness more than a hundred kinds of sounds. And if one wishes to hear only single instruments, you can easily hear the sweet sound of now the *cythera*, now the *lira*, at times the organ, other times the bagpipe, and finally the trumpets, the harp, the *sambuca*, the lute, the cetra, psaltery and any other musical instrument. Thus, the beauty of this instrument of which we speak is that if you wish to hear many sounds together, or hear them separately, this can be done with the minimum effort. This was invented and constructed by a certain Venetian, a man of genius. Joined to this object is a receptacle made of tin, which has eight tanks on each side, and when the “bellicose” sound, as it is called, is emitted from this instrument, the air containers are opened, boats most ably constructed come out to do battle, trumpets sound, men row, catapults are unleashed, and at last a most wonderful scene of battle took place before our eyes, and all these things are brought about by the force of the air under a variety of pressures...”.

**Fróis, *Tratado*, f. 55v-56 (J. A. Abranches Pinto; Yoshitomo Okamoto; Henri Bernard, S.J. (Ed.) – *La Première Ambassade du Japon en Europe 1582–1592. Première Partie: Le Traité du Père Frois (texte portugais)*. Tôkyô: Sophia University, 1942, p.137)**

*De um cravo maravilhozo que virao estes Senhores*

“Aos 10. do mez di Março de 84 [rete 1585], à boca da noite antes de cear forã, o ver hum cravo admiravel de hũa só ordem de teclas, e tangeo nelle em quanto alli estiverão hum homen Veneziano, e tangeria perto de trinta maneiras di muzicas diferentes hũas das outras, e todas muy suaves; dizem ser aquelle homem o mais destro, e exercitado naquella arte de quantos agora se sabe em Europa.

O clavicordio he de seis, ou sete palmos em comprido, e quatro em largo, e hum em alto; e tangese nelle em aquella só ordem de teclas, q[ue] tem mais de 120. instrumentos differentissimos huns dos outros, assim cortezãos como rusticos, e pastoris, e todos os mai q[ue] se podem imaginar; e muitos, q[ue] o virão tanger, dizem, e contão, q[ue] tem diante de sy hum lago, e em cima delle oito cazas de cada parte, e q[ue] em cada caza está hua galé, e outra sorte de embarcações dentro, e as galés de marin[h]e[i]os por ordem, e soldados com armas, e de baixo deste lago estão dous foles pequenos conforme ao cravo, q[ue] levantão de continuo em quanto tanger todas as diversid[ad]es de instrumentos.

O lago está no ár posto em hũs paos, q[ue] p baixo estão alevantados.

Ha naquelle cravo infinitos resitros cõ q[ue] se rege, e governa toda a sorte de muzica, tange premeiro cravo, e depos craviorgão, e cravo con frutas, e orgaos cõ sua contraaixa, e sacabuxa, e com quatro instrumentos diferentes em quatro vozes distintas, o tiple em voz de orgão, e cravo tenor frautado a sacabuxa contrabaxa frautada, trombão, e baixa sacabuxa, e orgãos frautados, e meios frautados, charamelas, e trombetas ajuntados cõ outros instrumentos, as sacabuxas mui formados, frutas, e cornetas sobre canto d’orgão, descanto de cravo, e viola, cithara, rabequihna, pifaro, e tambor ajuntados coõ outros instrumentos, tambem sobre sy, canto ao modo, e voz de mulheres, tange mais ao modo quando a galihna chama os filhos, e quando o galo as chama, ou quando canta, e tangendo huns instrumentos juntos, faz responder hum passaro q[ue] se chama cucu cõ muito compasso, tangendo faz sua batalha, e ordenaremse quatro, ou cinco galés, q[ue] naquelle lago estão, faz jugar a artilharia, abalroar as galés hũas com as outras, e pelear todos os Soldados, movendo as mãos, e os pés, corpo, e cabeça, come se fosse hum homen vivo, q[ue] tem poder, ed liberd[ad]e para se mover, tendo as espados nas mãos, ou outra couza; faz tanger pifaros, trombetas, e tambores como se costumão tanger nas batalhas, e os forçados remar as galés, e as fazem hir a diante por seo compasso, e ordem, e as vezes remarem todas juntas.

Os circunstantes, q[ue] isto virão, nao e podião persuadir, senão ser aquillo algũa arte diabolica, ou angelica. Mas sem falta, q[ue] tudo se faz, e rege por registros, que tem nas ilhargas, e dianteiras do cravo...”. (pp.137–138 [f. 55v])

*Of a wonderful harpsichord that these Gentlemen saw*

“On the 10th of the month of March of [15]84 [sic]<sup>65</sup> in the early evening before dinner, they went to see an admirable harpsichord of only one order of keys [i.e., with a single keyboard] and while they were there a Venetian man played it, and played close to thirty kinds of music all different from each other, and all very

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65 *Recte* 1585.

harmonious. He is said to be the most dexterous and able man in this art to be currently known in Europe.

The harpsichord [lit. *clavicordio*] is six or seven palms long, and four wide, and one high, and [although] it has that single keyboard, it has more than 120<sup>66</sup> instruments all very different from each other, courtly as well as rustic, and pastoral, and all the more that can be imagined; and many people who saw it played, say that in front of it there is a lake, and on top of it eight boxes on each side, and that in each box, there is a galley, and other kinds of vessels inside, and the galleys are full of sailors and soldiers with arms, and under this lake, there are two small bellows in accordance with the harpsichord, that they continuously pull up when all diverse instruments are played.

The lake is positioned on some sticks, that are lifted from below.

The harpsichord has infinite number of stops and produces all sorts of music: it plays firstly the harpsichord, and then the *claviorgano*, the harpsichord with flutes, and organs with its counter-bass, and sackbut, and with four different instruments in four different voices, the treble with the organ, and harpsichord tenor fluted, and fluted mediums, shawms, and trumpets together with other instruments, [well made?] sackbuts, flutes, and trumpets on the melody of the organ, harpsichord descant, and viola, cithara, a small rebec, a fife and drum, together with other instruments, and also alone ...womens' voices, the way a hen calls its chickens, and when the rooster calls them, or when he sings, and when playing instruments together a bird that is called a cuckoo answers with a great deal of rhythm. Playing battle [music], four or five galleys that are on that lake take position; it activates the artillery, the galleys run into one another, and all the soldiers fight, moving their hands, feet, body, and heads as if living men who have the power and freedom of movement, with swords in their hands ... it plays the fifes, trumpets, and drums as it is customary to play in the battles, and the men row the galleys, following their rhythm and order, and sometimes they row together [in formation]. Those who saw this could not believe it to be anything but the product of a diabolic or an angelic art! ... Everything is activated by stops on the sides and the front of the harpsichord<sup>67</sup>.

1609

**Adriano Banchieri, *Conclusioni nel suono dell'organo*. Bologna: Giovanni Rossi, 1609.**

"... Domenico da Feltre, che pochi anni sono scorreva per le Città d'Italia con un' Organo di canne in legno, nel quale suonando con leggiadria un Arpicordo, faceva sentire ogni stromento da fiato, Pletro, & Arco, & dentro un vacuo pieno d'acque fingendo gli dui castelli posti nelle lagune di Venetia, faceva comparire infinite

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66 Possibly an error for 20

67 I am deeply grateful to Virginia Maria Rolfo for her assistance with this difficult passage. The fourth paragraph is problematic, especially the passage regarding the bird stops.

Barche, & Gondole con variati concerti di Lauti, Cithare, Arpicordi, Viole, Violone, & altri, trà questi sentivasi alle fiata Donna cantatrice, la Sirena, & altre galanterie, apresso seguitava la cerimonia del Buccentoro, sopra il quale sentivansi, & vedeansi gli Pifferi al cessare de' quali di nuovo udivasi un concerto di Tromboni, & Cornetti, con un ripieno di diversi istromenti accordati insieme, che rapivano gl'audienti per l'allegrezza, & quello, che rendeva estrema meraviglia, à gl'intendenti, sentivasi un'Organo di diece [sic] piedi, con il Mi, Re Ut, & Pedali trasparenti". (pp. 14-15)



Alexandra CURVELO

# A Culture In-Between: Materiality and Visuality in the Christian Mission in Japan in the Early Modern Age

## Introduction

This text will analyse the incorporation of elements of Japanese Buddhism into the “materiality”/“material culture” and “visuality”/“visual culture” of the Christian mission in Japan between c.1549 and c.1614.

The term “material culture” recognizes objects as essential components of interpretation, and with respect to the Christian mission in Japan, a particular kind of source with both tangible and intangible aspects. It also indicates that these material goods and images were not merely objects of contemplation and/or use, but also acted as mediators between the Mission and the Japanese community. Therefore, they are sources and evidence of complex, multifaceted social relationships and interactions.<sup>1</sup> Each object and image possesses a physical dimension that, much more than simply visual, binds inextricably with contexts of production, consumption, and reception. Furthermore, when considering cultures outside the frame of Western Europe, such as that of the Japanese, we must question modes of seeing, as well as the idea that the experience of seeing involves one sense only. Moreover, a number of scholars have already called the attention to the fact that the mere possibility of considering how “other cultures” besides the European, no matter how they are defined, privilege the visual, is an important question to examine when considering whether and how the “visual” is a legitimate analytic category for writing history.<sup>2</sup>

Recent studies on the quality or condition of being visual or visible, particularly the seminal work of Mieke Bal,<sup>3</sup> emphasize the indivisibility of the domains of visual and material culture from sense-based activities, namely looking/seeing, listening and reading. Indeed, they are mutually permeable, so that the acts of

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- 1 Yonan, “Toward a Fusion of Art History and Material Culture Studies”. *West 86<sup>th</sup>: A Journal of Decorative Arts, Design History, and Material Culture*. vol. 18, no. 2 (Fall-Winter, 2011), pp.232–248, and Karen Harvey’s introduction to *History and material Culture. A student’s Guide to approaching alternative sources*. London: Routledge, 2009.
  - 2 Farago, “Seeing Across Time: Understanding visuality”. Dana Leibsohn, Jeanette Favrot Peterson (Ed.), *Seeing Across Cultures in the Early Modern World*. London; New York: Routledge, 2012, p.243.
  - 3 Bal, “Visual essentialism and the object of visual culture”. *Journal of Visual Culture*, vol. 2, no. 1 (2003), pp.5–32.

listening and reading may inhere a visual dimension. Hence, considering *the object* of visual culture does not exclude literature, sound, and music. In light of the thematic focus of this text, there seems to be evidence worth exploring in this regard.

For studying the connexions between the Christian mission in Japan and the Buddhist sects, it is also important to consider the “impureness” of the act of seeing and its consequences, because it is “inherently framed, framing, interpreting, affect-laden, cognitive and intellectual”: not only looking/seeing but also other sense-based activities, namely listening and reading, also participate in this “impurity”.<sup>4</sup> Consequently, and because the visual experience is inevitably coloured by the constructs of the viewer’s culture, “It requires careful analysis of images, material objects, and broader cultural contexts of use to see processes of inscription, accommodation, resistance, reframing, and so on at work in the “event” of cultural interaction”, as Claire Farago claims.<sup>5</sup>

Certain primary sources are essential to the study of the visual and material culture of the Christian mission in early modern Japan. First of all, the coeval written texts – above all the letters, books, and dictionaries – of the European missionaries, mainly the Jesuits, whose relationship with Japan, exclusive for more than 40 years, made them the first to interact with the Buddhist sects. Secondly, the surviving material evidence, including paintings. These realms – the domain of the image and that of the text – have distinct codes and specific semantics that must be kept in mind.

Through the analysis of these different but interconnected sources, I will argue that the visual and material culture that came to be associated with the Christian mission in Japan testifies not merely to the circulation of people and things from one cultural and religious context to another, but above all to a complex process of reinterpretation and re-signification, in which objects and images gained a new meaning. Also, it will be possible to explore how this cultural transfer and exchange involved different individuals, who impacted the dissemination of knowledge and objects from one cultural zone to another, acting as translators and contributing to the creation of what can be classified as a heterogeneous cultural space.<sup>6</sup>

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4 Bal, op. cit., p.9.

5 Farago, op. cit., p.244.

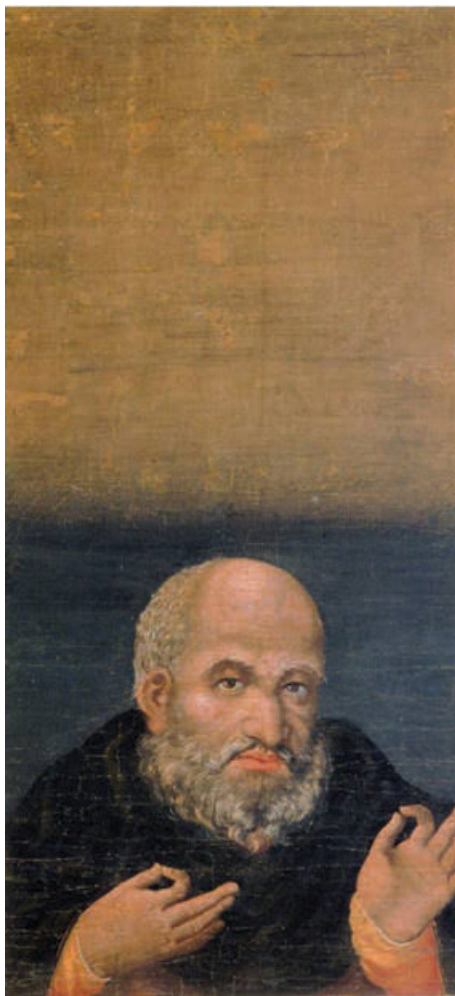
6 Herren; Ruesch; Sibille (Ed.), *Transcultural History. Theories, Methods, Sources*. Berlin; Heidelberg: Springer-Verlag, 2012; Feuchter, “Cultural Transfers in dispute: An Introduction”. Jörg Feuchter, Friedhelm Hoffmann, Bee Yun (Ed.), *Cultural Transfers in Dispute: Representations in Asia, Europe and the Arab World since the Middle Ages*. Frankfurt / New York: Campus Verlag, 2011, pp.14–37.

## “Fathers and Brothers Are the Bonzes of the Christian Religion”

The Kobe City Museum (*Kobe Shiritsu Hakubutsukan*), whose collection of *Nanban art* is among the most important in the world,<sup>7</sup> holds a painting that although acknowledged by scholars as a Western-style painting of early modern Japan,<sup>8</sup> is still little known and not sufficiently discussed outside this field of study (Fig. 1).

This painting was found in Japan in the spring of 1975 and was reproduced for the first time the following year by Grace Vlam in her PhD dissertation, *Western-style Secular painting in Momoyama Japan*.<sup>9</sup> Presumably dating from the beginning

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- 7 The name of this museum reflects a complicated institutional history. From 1951 to 1965 it was known as the Kobe Municipal Art Museum (Ichiritsu Kobe bijutsukan), between 1965 and 1982 it included the word “Namban”, becoming the Kobe Municipal Namban Art Museum, and continued to function as a public art museum under this name until it was incorporated into the Kobe City Museum in 1982. In 1931, Hajime Ikenaga bought the collection of Tokutarō Nagami, an art collector and historian of Nagasaki, who in 1928 had published a book titled *Namban-bijutsushū*. The transfer of Ikenaga’s namban collection from his eponymous Ikenaga Art Museum (1940–1944) to the Kobe Municipal Art Museum led to the city museum’s name change to reflect the character of the collections. Kotani, *Studies in Jesuit Art in Japan*. Volume I, Dissertation presented to the Faculty of Princeton University in candidacy for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, Department of Art and Archaeology, June 2010, pp.39–40.
- 8 I draw special attention to the following works: Gutiérrez, “A Survey on Namban Art”. *Revista de Cultura*, no.17 (II Série). Lisboa: Instituto Cultural de Macau, Outubro/Dezembro 1993, pp.101–132; Hioki, “Visual Bilingualism and Mission Art: A Reconsideration of “Early Western-Style Painting” in Japan”. *Japan Review*, no. 23 (2011), pp.23–44; McCall “Early Jesuit Art in the Far East”. *Artibus Asiae*. vol. X/2; X/3; X/4; XI, 1/2. Ascona: Artibus Asiae Publishers, 1947–1948, pp.121–137; 216–233; 283–301; 45–69; Okamoto, *The Namban Art of Japan*. New York; Tōkyō: Weatherhill; Heibonsha, 1972; *Pictorial Record of Kobe City Museum of Namban Art*. 5 Vols. Kobe: Kobe City Museum, 1968–1972; Sakamoto; Ide; Ochi; Hidaka, *Namban bijutsu sō-mokuroku, yōfū-ga hen* 南蛮美術総目録 洋風画篇 (An Essay of Catalogue Raisonné of Namban art: Japanese early European-style painting). Kokuritsu Rekishi Minzoku Hakubutsu-kan kenkyū hōkoku 国立歴史民俗博物館研究報告 (Bulletin of the National Museum of Japanese History), vol. 75. Sakura, Chiba: National Museum of Japanese History, 1997. Sakamoto; Sugase; Naruse, *Namban bijutsu to yōfuga* (Namban Art and Western-Style painting). Genshoku Nihon no bijutsu (full-colour reproductions of Japanese art), vol. 25. Tōkyō: Shōgaku-kan, 1970; Vlam, *Western-style Secular Painting in Momoyama Japan*. PhD dissertation in History of Art. University of Michigan, 1976.
- 9 Vlam, op. cit., p.170 and following. Vlam refers to the fact that the painting belonged to Takamizawa Tadao (1899–1985), the author, together with Okamoto Yoshitomo



**Fig. 1.** Portrait of a Master (Vice-Provincial Pedro Gómez?). Japan, early seventeenth century (?). Colour on paper, H. 78.7 × W. 36.8 cm © Kobe City Museum

of the seventeenth century, it presents the format of a hanging scroll measuring 78.7 cm in height × 36.8 cm in length and portrays a male figure wearing a dark cloak and looking directly at the observer.<sup>10</sup> Standing out against a plain background of dark grey, his form occupies the entire lower half of the composition. We only see the bust, and our attention immediately goes to his face and hands, both illuminated by the use of brighter pigments in contrast to the deep tones of the foreground. The technical quality, particularly noticeable in the modulation of his hands and head, is remarkable.

Because of his simple cloak and distinctly positioned hands he has been identified as a religious figure, although in different terms, such as ‘Portrait of a Teacher’,<sup>11</sup> “A Hermit”,<sup>12</sup> “Portrait of Saint Paul”<sup>13</sup> or “A Master”.<sup>14</sup> His singular facial features support the argument that this is a portrait and not a mere depiction, and suggest that the subject is of European origin and a certain age, as his hair and beard are grey. The image becomes even more intriguing because this aged man holds his hands in a position of a *mudra* that has been identified as the *Seppō-(no)-in* (説法印), or more precisely the *Tenbōrin-(no)-in* (転法輪印). Both these *mudras* are associated with the preaching and exposition of the Buddhist Law and the teaching of the faithful. The circle formed by the thumb and index fingers is a complete form without beginning or end (the sign of the Dharma Wheel) and conveys the idea that the Buddhist Law is eternal and perfect. Adapted to the aims of the Mission in Japan, this sign can be translated as the equivalent to the eternal authority and perfection of the Christian dogma.<sup>15</sup>

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of the book *Namban Byōbu* (Namban Screens), published in Tōkyō in 1970, among other works. He was also the person who in the 1930s acquired from a small castle belonging to the *daimyō* of Sakai, Ōsaka, a pair of *namban* folding screens attributed to Kanō Domi now in the collection of the Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga (National Art Museum), Lisbon (Inv.1638 and 1639 Mov.). About the purchase of the *Namban* screens see Sousa, “The namban collection at the Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga. The contribution of Maria Helena Mendes Pinto”. *Bulletin of Portuguese-Japanese Studies*, vol. 12 (2006), pp.57–77.

- 10 For technical information about this painting see Kobe City Museum’s website: <https://www.kobecitymuseum.jp/collection/detail?heritage=367505>
- 11 Vlam, *Western-style Secular Painting in Momoyama Japan*, p.170.
- 12 *The Namban Art of Japan. Paintings and screens*. Ōsaka: The National Museum of Art, 1986, Cat.69.
- 13 *Namban Arts Selection. Kobe City Museum*. Kobe: Kobe City Museum, 1998, Cat.19. This identification is based on some physical features similar to the one we can observe in another painting depicting St. Peter that will be referred to in this text.
- 14 Sakamoto; Ide; Ochi; Hidaka, op. cit., Cat.39, pp.230–233.
- 15 See Vlam, op. cit., p.170 and ff; Sakamoto; Ide; Ochi; Hidaka, op. cit., Cat.39, pp.230–233. I call attention to the fact that the *mudra* known in Japanese as *seppō-in* is formed by joining the thumb and the forefinger of the right hand and is recognized by diverse names such as *vitarka-mudra* (*mudra* of argumentation), *karana-mudra* (*mudra* of (religious) action) and *vyakhyana-mudra* (*mudra* of exposition). In this portrait, however, both hands (and not only the right one) have the thumbs and the index fingers forming a circle at chest level, which can be associated with the *mudra*

This key element gives a clue to the possible identities of both the subject and the painter. As the gesture suggests a teaching role, the possibilities put forward by Vlam are that it portrays the Vice-Provincial Pedro Gómez (1533/35–1600), whose writings and teachings of European science, culture, and courses in Theology strongly influenced the Japanese Christian mission, and that the use of the *mudra* betrays the unidentified artist's Buddhist background. Portraying a Jesuit Vice-Provincial in such a way is by any means extraordinary, even in the ground-breaking experimental context of the Mission. Not even the famous posthumous portrait of Matteo Ricci (1552–1610) depicted in the manner of the Chinese *literati* is as audacious.

In my view, the hypothesis that this depicts not merely a European missionary, but probably Pedro Gómez, is highly plausible given his achievements within the context of the Christian mission in Japan after his death, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, when this portrait was probably painted. Briefly summarizing what is known about Gómez, he was born in Antequera in the province of Málaga, Spain, in 1533/1535.<sup>16</sup> He studied at the University of Alcalá de Henares and joined the Society on the 21<sup>st</sup> of December 1553. His career began at the Jesuit College of Arts in Coimbra (the well-known Colégio das Artes), where he taught liberal arts from 1555 to 1563. During this period, in 1557, Bernardo of Kagoshima, the first documented Japanese to have visited Europe died in Coimbra,<sup>17</sup> and although there is no evidence that the two ever met, it is plausible that they did. Gómez attained the degree of *Maestro*, was ordained in the summer of 1559, and from 1564, taught theology at the college for over 3 years. According to coeval records, he was highly esteemed as a theology teacher, as a priest, and as a preacher. His wish to be sent

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known in Japanese as *tenbōrin-in* (転法輪印) (the *Dharmachakra mudra*), literally meaning the turning of the Dharma Wheel, that is, Buddha preaching of the Dharma, or the Buddhist law. Sometimes the *tenbōrin-in* is referred to as *seppō-in*, but they are not synonyms. Cf. “seppou-in 説法印” and “tenbourin-in 転法輪印”, JAANUS. Japanese Architecture and Art Net Users System: <http://www.aisf.or.jp/~jaanus/deta/t/tenbourinin.htm> (May 2020).

- 16 For the biography of Pedro Gómez, see Hiraoka and Watanabe, “A Jesuit Cosmological Textbook in ‘Christian Century’ Japan: De sphaera of Pedro Gomez (Part II)”, *SCIAMVS* vol. 16 (2015), pp.125–223, a text that corresponds to a new critical Latin edition and the first English translation of Pedro Gómez’ *De sphaera*, Part 2, and Santos, *A Study in cross-cultural transmission of natural philosophy: The Kenkon Bensetsu*. PhD in History, Faculdade de Ciências Sociais e Humanas da Universidade Nova de Lisboa (NOVA FCSH), June 2012, p.91, based in Schütte, *Monumenta Historica Japoniae I. Textus catalogorum Iaponiae aliaeque de personis domibusque S. I. In Iaponia. Informationes et relations, 1549–1654*. Monumenta Missionum Societatis Iesu, vol. XXXIV, Missiones Orientales. Roma: Institutum Historicum Societatis Iesu, 1975.
- 17 For an outline of Coimbra’s Colégio das Artes and its connections with the Christian mission in Japan, see Curvelo, “Coimbra e a missão do Japão no século XVI numa perspectiva histórico-artística”. Carlota Simões; Margarida Miranda; Pedro Casaleiro (Ed.). *Visto de Coimbra, O Colégio de Jesus entre Portugal e o Mundo*. Coimbra: Universidade de Coimbra, 2020, pp.175–192.

on a mission to Asia dates from 1563, the year of his first application, but in 1570, before he was granted a license to go, he moved from Coimbra to Terceira Island in the Azores archipelago to establish a new college. There he taught *Casos* (moral theology) until 1579,<sup>18</sup> the year he returned to Lisbon to travel to the Indies.

Gómez eventually reached Macao in 1581, where he assisted the Italian Jesuit Michele Ruggieri (1543–1607) in compiling a Chinese catechism. In the summer of 1583, he finally arrived in Japan. This was precisely the moment that Giovanni Niccolò (c.1558–1626), who would found the Painting Seminary in Japan,<sup>19</sup> arrived in Nagasaki. In other words, Gómez and Niccolò, to whom I shall return later, arrived in Japan in the same year and were together for some time, as is attested by a letter sent by Gómez to the Jesuit *Visitador* (Visitor, or Inspector) of the East Indian missions, Alessandro Valignano (1539–1606), written from Usuki on the 2<sup>nd</sup> November 1583.<sup>20</sup>

Usuki was located in the province of Bungo, for which Valignano appointed Gómez Superior immediately after his arrival. In Bungo, Gómez worked at the Jesuit College of Funai, nowadays Ōita, where under his supervision the first official course of philosophy or liberal arts began in October of the same year.<sup>21</sup> In the spring of 1585, the philosophy course finished, he introduced a program of theological study, which was interrupted by political tumult. The College relocated, setting in 1591 on the island of Amakusa (Kumamoto prefecture). By this time, and amidst a very challenging political context, Gómez became the Vice-Provincial of the Jesuit mission in Japan in 1590, a position he held despite poor health until his death in Nagasaki in 1600.

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- 18 According to Hiraoka and Watanabe, following the work of Robert Aleksander Maryks, it is possible that Gómez's delayed consignment to Japan had to do with his Jewish origin. Hiraoka and Watanabe, *op. cit.*, p.126.
- 19 For a study of the life of Giovanni Niccolò, see Curvelo, *Nuvens Douradas e Paisagens Habitadas. A Arte Namban e a sua circulação entre a Ásia e a América: Japão, China e Nova-Espanha (c.1550 – c.1700)*. PhD in Art History, Faculdade de Ciências Sociais e Humanas da Universidade Nova de Lisboa (NOVA FCSH), November 2007 and Curvelo; Cattaneo, "Le arti visuali e l'evangelizzazione del Giappone. L'apporto del seminario di pittura dei gesuiti". Tanaka Kuniko (Ed.), *Geografia e cosmografia dell'altro fra Asia ed Europa. Geography and Cosmology Interfaces in Asia and Europe* (Proceedings of the III Dies Academicus of the Accademia Ambrosiana, Milan, 22–23 October 2010). Roma: Bulzoni, 2011, pp.31–60.
- 20 ARSI, Jap. Sin 9-II, Letter from Pedro Gomez to Alessandro Valignano, Usuki, 2nd November 1583, fls.177–178v. See Curvelo, *Nuvens Douradas e Paisagens Habitadas. A Arte Namban e a sua circulação entre a Ásia e a América: Japão, China e Nova-Espanha (c.1550 – c.1700)*, p.296.
- 21 For a study of the role of Jesuit Seminaries and Colleges in Japan, see Girard, "Collèges jésuites dans le Japon des XVIe et XVIIe siècles". *Centre et Périphérie, Approches nouvelles des orientalistes*. Actes du Colloque organisé par l'Institut du Proche-Orient Ancien et du Collège de France, la Société Asiatique et le CNRS (UMR 7192), Paris – Collège de France, Cahiers de l'Institut du Proche-Orient du Collège de France, I, Librairie d'Amérique et d'Orient. Paris: Jean Maisonneuve, 2009, pp.371–394

In 1593, on Valignano's request in response to the progressive replacement of the European clerics in the territory, Gómez completed his *Compendium catholicae veritatis* (Compendium of the Catholic Truth),<sup>22</sup> written in Latin and presented as a Catechism aimed at the formation of local clergy. This textbook gave instruction on the philosophy course and theology course in the mission in Japan. The manuscript has three parts or treatises: (1) *De sphaera*, on cosmology; (2) *De anima* (On the Soul), whose main objective is to show the human soul as rational, having free will, and able to reach God, and (3) *De Fide*, written following the decisions of the Council of Trent (1545–1563) regarding the teaching of doctrine. Only a single example of Gómez's original survives, discovered in 1937 in the Vatican Library. But more than 50 years later, in 1995, a translation into Japanese of two of the treatises – *De anima*<sup>23</sup> and the *Compendium catholicae veritatis* (Kōgi Yōkō / 講義要綱) – the joint work of a team coordinated by Pedro Ramón (1550–1611) and Japanese translators during the years 1593–1595, was discovered at Magdalen College in Oxford.<sup>24</sup>

The impact of Gómez's *Compendium* is impossible to determine. At the Japanese Mission it was read to students of Amakusa College beginning in September 1593 and for the following 20 years, until the expulsion of the missionaries in 1614. Furthermore, the Japanese translation was probably printed.<sup>25</sup> Thus, we can assume that it may have been used by hundreds of Japanese: above all, but not exclusively, catechumens, belonging to a certain elite.<sup>26</sup> Sources indicate that the *Compendium*, the first substantial work that directly introduced Western science, philosophy and theology into Japan,<sup>27</sup> was compiled as a textbook for the European and Japanese students, and was used at Jesuit colleges there as well as in Macao.<sup>28</sup>

This last point is of particular relevance as it may explain why – despite its position outside mainstream Japanese scholarly tradition – it reappeared in Japan almost one century later under the title *Nigi Ryakusetsu*, authored by Kobayashi

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22 Full Latin title: *Compedium Catholicae Veritatis, in gratiam Iapponicorum fratrum Societatis Iesu, confectum per Rdum. Patrem Petrum Gomezium Vice-Provincialm Societatis Iesu in provincia Iapponica* (Compedium of the catholic doctrine intended for the Japanese brothers of the Society of Jesus concocted by the father Pedro Gómez, Vice-Provincial of the Society of Jesus in the Province of Japan).

23 That was translated into Chinese in 1629 by Francesco Sambiasi (1582–1649). Girard, "Adaptation et accueil de la mission jésuite au Japon: La traduction japonaise récemment découverte du Compendium de Philosophie (*De Anima*) et de Théologie (1595)". *Mondes et Cultures*, t. LXXI, vol. 1. Paris: Académie des Sciences d'Outre-mer, 2013, p.187.

24 *Ibidem*, pp.177–201.

25 Santos, *A Study in cross-cultural transmission of natural philosophy: The Kenkon Bensetsu*, pp.107–108 and 179–180.

26 *Ibidem*, p.188.

27 Hiraoka and Watanabe, *op. cit.*, p.126.

28 *Ibidem*, p.126.



Kentei (1601-1684), an astronomer and surveyor resident in Nagasaki.<sup>29</sup> In other words, although the *Compendium* was written in Latin and its use confined to the church and its colleges (even the Japanese translation was used mostly by the students and professors of the Jesuit colleges),<sup>30</sup> it came to be known outside the mission's intellectual space and period of activity. Gómez's *Compendium*, therefore, attests to the role of Jesuit colleges as institutions of higher education, playing a significant cultural role not only as places for the preaching of the Gospels but also for scientific interactions.

Within the mission itself, the reputation and significance of Gómez and his work are undeniable. Moreover, as Vice-Provincial from 1590 until 1600, he occupied the highest position within the mission's hierarchy.<sup>31</sup> Therefore, and accepting that this painting portrays Gómez, to present him gesturing the *seppō-in / tenbōrin-in*, the *mudra* of the exposition of the Law, reveals him to the Japanese – both Christian and Buddhist – as a teacher and an authority of the Christian dogma.

In my view, this presumed portrait of Gómez may also be acknowledged as a visual parallel to what Valignano wrote in his *Advertimentos e Avisos acerca dos costumes e catangues de Jappão* (Advice and notes on the costumes and habits of Japan, better known as the *Cerimoniale*). In this text of 1581, of paramount importance, written during Valignano's first visit to the Japanese Mission, he affirms that "Los Padres y hermanos son los bonzos de la religión cristiana" (Fathers and brothers are the bonzes [Buddhist monks] of the Christian religion).<sup>32</sup> This powerful declaration must be contextualized, because for Valignano, there was no possible confusion between Buddhism and Christianity.

It appears in a chapter titled "Regarding the approach you will adopt to acquire and retain authority dealing with the Japanese" which concerns the necessity to convey hierarchy and dignity within the Christian mission and the way it should be perceived by others (others being strangers to the Society). In the introduction to this chapter, Valignano claims:

Because one of the main things needed in Japan for the Fathers to do what they want with Conversion and Christianity, is to know how to deal with the Japanese in such a way that on one hand they have authority and on the other hand they use familiarity,

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29 Santos, op. cit., p.704, pp.723–724 and p.207.

30 Ibidem, p.704.

31 The hierarchy of the Japanese mission was designed by Alessandro Valignano to include six grades into which the Jesuits and their helpers were assigned according to their rank and office in the Society: the Vice-Provincial at the top; then the district superiors, the priests, the brothers, the novices and the *dōjuku*. See Santos, op. cit., p.85.

32 Valignano, *Il Cerimoniale per i missionari del Giappone*. «Advertimentos e Avisos acerca dos Costumes e Catangues de Jappão». Josef Franz Schütte, S.J. (Ed.). Roma: Edizioni di «Storia e Letterature», 1946, "Do modo que se ha de ter para adquirir e conservar autoridade tratando com os jappoens", p.124.

accompanying these two things in a manner that the one does not conceal the other, but the two are joined so that both has his place (...).<sup>33</sup>

The focal point for Valignano is therefore how Catholic priests and brothers would gain respect, consideration, and admiration in the eyes of Japan's sophisticated, complex, and hierarchic society. The debate around the different means to reach this esteem and reverence also explains why the Christian mission in Japan came to adapt the hierarchy of the Zen Buddhist community.<sup>34</sup>

Why Zen? Because, as Valignano puts it, "the sect of the Genxus [Zenshū]" was perceived by the Jesuits as the leading Buddhist sect in Japan and the one that reached a wider and socially diverse audience "(...) que entre todas hé tida em Japão por principal e que tem mais commonicação com toda a sorte de gemte de Japão".<sup>35</sup>

For the Mission, the question of communication with a varied and broad audience, and not only the elite, was of vital importance. Its efforts in mastering the Japanese language attest to this priority. Likewise, the creation of a Painting Seminary in Japan served this purpose. When it emerged during the last decade of the sixteenth century this proficient, skilled complement to the humanist education and the study program of the Society of Jesus soon became an additional effective tool for outreach to a wider community. Its manifold activities included the construction of visual devices, printed works, and musical instruments. At the same time, through this role it placed itself as a space of cultural interaction and mediation among the different agents it involved and aimed to reach.

## Religious Interactions within the Jesuit Painting Seminary

During his years writing the *Compendium*, Gómez participated in the training and pedagogical improvements of both the Jesuit's Seminaries and Colleges in Japan, which anticipated the methods and subject matter definitively established

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33 Ibidem, p.120. Free translation from the original text: "E porque huma das principais cousas que são necessarias em Jappão pera fazer o que os Padres pretendem acerca da converção e da Christandade hé saber tratar com os Jappoens de tal maneira que por huma parte teinhão authoridade e por outra usem de muita familiaridade, acompanhando estas duas cousas de tal maneira que a huma não impida a outra, mas se ayuntem ambas em modo que cada huma tenha seu proprio lugar (...)"

34 It was in Funai that the first attempt was made to match the hierarchy of the missionaries to the degrees of bonzes, obtaining in this way a stratification that matched, in purely formal terms, the different degrees. Thus, the superior was equalled to *chōrō*, the priests to *shūsa*, and the brothers to *zōsu* and auxiliaries to *dōjuku*. See Schütte in Valignano, op. cit., p.44.

35 Valignano, op. cit., p.124.

by the *Ratio studiorum* in 1599–1600. Before this date, the Mission followed Valignano's rules concerning the course of study for its program, a document that remains lost today. However, an organizational scheme regarding the daily use of time in the Seminaries for the year 1592 has survived, giving us some valuable information.<sup>36</sup>

It reveals that the general educational program of a Seminary comprised the learning of language (Latin), subjects of general culture (including Latin and Japanese literature, as well as conversation, rhetoric, choral chant, and music, among other disciplines), and practical exercises, which included oil painting, watercolour, copper engraving, xylography, and the making of musical instruments, clocks, and astronomical tools. The names of Giovanni Niccolò, Mancio Ōtao<sup>37</sup> and Mancio João (also known as Tadeu)<sup>38</sup> appear associated with the Seminary in Shiki, north of Amakusa,<sup>39</sup>

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36 Girard, "Collèges jésuites dans le Japon des XVIe et XVIIe siècles".

37 Regarding Mancio Ōtao (also spelled Utao), who was born in Ōmura in 1569, the documentation attests to his having entered the Arima Seminary in 1581, thus even before the arrival of Niccolò to Japan. He joined the Company in January 1589, and in 1592 he studied painting in Shiki. In the years 1603, 1606, and 1607 he is listed in Nagasaki, where he lived until 1613. Like many others, he too left for Macao after the missionaries were definitively expelled from Japan, and his name is still mentioned there in 1620. Curvelo, *Nuens Douradas e Paisagens Habitadas. A Arte Namban e a sua circulação entre a Ásia e a América: Japão, China e Nova-Espanha (c.1550–c.1700)*, pp.301–302.

38 Originally from Usuki, in Bungo, where he was born in 1568, Mancio João/Tadeu joined the Society in January 1590 and studied at the Painting Seminary in Shiki in 1592. Between 1603 and 1606, he was in Nagasaki, which was followed by 2 years in Kyōto, where he was between 1606 and 1607, and again, in 1613. In November 1614, he left for Manila, returning to Japan in 1618, where he stayed for a short time before leaving for Macau, where he died in November 1627. *Ibidem*, pp. 314–315. It is to Mancio João that Grace Vlam attributes the well-known portrait of Saint Francis Xavier in the Kobe City Museum of Art. See Vlam, "The Portrait of S. Francis Xavier in Kobe". *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* vol. 42, no. 1 (1979), pp.48–60.

39 Shiki was then part of the Amakusa archipelago, which was divided, in the second half of the sixteenth century, into five small fiefdoms. In Shimo-shima, the largest of the islands were the landlords of Shiki and Amakusa. Amakusa was precisely the place where, for more than a decade, between the middle of 1588 and the end of 1600, thanks to the protection and support of Konishi Yukinaga and the various *kokujin* that lorded the islands in his name, the Jesuits carried out their activities without much disturbance. Except for the year 1589, when it was briefly installed in Kawacinōra, it was here that the novitiate functioned from May 1591 until the autumn of 1597. The college was settled in this fortress between 1591 and 1597, as well as the printing premises from 1592 to 1598. From 1598 to 1600, Amakusa was the location chosen by Bishop D. Luís Cerqueira to live. See Ribeiro, *A Nobreza Cristã de Kyūshū. Redes de Parentesco e Acção Jesuítica*. Master dissertation in History of the Portuguese Maritime Expansion (XV–XVIII centuries). Lisboa: FCSH-UNL, 2006.

where in the year 1593 eight students studied oil painting, eight watercolour and five engraving.<sup>40</sup>

The use of images played a central role in the Jesuit presence in Japan, emerging as one of the main topics in the letters exchanged by the missionaries from the Mission's first years. Created in the 1590s, the Painting Seminary's main master was Giovanni Niccolò, an Italian painter born in Nola, near Naples.<sup>41</sup> Niccolò arrived in Japan in the summer of 1583, the same year as Gómez, whom he later met in Amakusa. The island became pivotal territory for the mission and the place of important achievements both of painting production and also the printing press, brought from Europe in 1590 by the Tenshō Embassy,<sup>42</sup> is attested in different mission writings. Among these the *História de Japam* written between 1584 and 1594 by Luís Fróis (1532–1597) remarks:

With no less fruit, some progress has been made in painting and engravings. Some of the boys are engaged in oil painting. We cannot help greatly admiring them because some copy so dextrously the finest paintings brought back from Rome by the four Japanese nobles. They do this with such skill as regards colour, exactness, shading, and precision, that many of the Fathers and Brothers cannot distinguish which are their paintings and which are the paintings done in Rome, and some insist that those done by the Japanese are those brought from Rome. Without knowing that they had been made in Japan, some Portuguese saw these paintings and were greatly astonished, declaring afterwards that they looked like the paintings brought from Rome. So in this way, with God's help, Japan will have from now on people who can fill many churches with fine pictures and also satisfy many Christian lords.<sup>43</sup>

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40 Girard, "Collèges jésuites dans le Japon des XVIe et XVIIe siècles", particularly pp.376–378.

41 For the Painting Seminary in Japan, see Vlam, *Western-style Secular Painting in Momoyama Japan*; Bailey, *Art on the Jesuit Missions in Asia and Latin America, 1542–1773*. Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 1999; Curvelo, *Nuvens Douradas e Paisagens Habitadas. A Arte Namban e a sua circulação entre a Ásia e a América: Japão, China e Nova-Espanha (c.1550–c.1700)*, and Curvelo, "Exchanging Artistic Practices and Textual Narratives: The Jesuit Painting Seminary in Japan (Late 16th–Early 17th Centuries)". *Visual and Textual Representations in Exchanges Between Europe and East Asia 16th–18th Centuries. Conference on History of Mathematical Sciences: Portugal and East Asia V*. Luís Saraiva and Catherine Jami (Ed.). Singapore: World Scientific Publishing Co., 2018, pp.203–220. Of Niccolò's work, none is known to exist, although some paintings have been attributed to him on feeble grounds.

42 It was precisely in Amakusa that Christian texts (*kirishitanban*) and images began to be printed in 1590.

43 Original text: "Não menos proveito vão fazendo alguns delles assim em pintar, como em abrir laminas para estampa: porque huns se exercitão em pintar imagens de oleos, os quaes nos fazem grademente admirar, porque alguns delles tirão pelo natural algumas imagens das mais perfeitas que trouxerão de Roma os quatro fidalgos japões, com tanta perfeição assim das cores, nitidez e sombras, como das simelhanças, que depois entre os mesmos Padres e Irmãos muitos não sabião dittinguir quaes erão as

This excerpt testifies not only to the activity of the Painting Seminary but also to the importance of copying as a process of apprenticeship and as an evangelising strategy.<sup>44</sup> Another important element concerns the origin of the Japanese students enrolled in the School. The Painting Seminary was opened to anyone wanting to learn how to use the printing machine and how to paint according to the main technical principles of the European painting: the use of *chiaroscuro* and, above all, linear perspective. This attracted the attention not only of individuals already converted to Christianity or intending to do so, but also of others who kept their original religious beliefs, including the “dógicos” (*dōjuku*). The *dōjuku* (auxiliaries) not only learned the Western-style painting and engraving, but also seem to have played an important role in the dissemination of new pictorial techniques in Japan.

The presence of “dógicos” reveals the singular situation of the Japanese mission, in that it led to the adapting of a practice of Buddhist monasteries in creating a group of secular auxiliaries for catechesis. As laity, they resembled the *kanbō*, mission auxiliaries who lived in isolation, tasked with the care of the Christian community and the maintenance of churches mostly in rural areas. But unlike the *dōjuku* whom the Jesuits, like their Buddhist counterparts, recruited mainly from the noble and warrior classes – the two highest of the time – the *kanbō* did not engage in evangelization work. The appearance of both groups was thus a consequence of the Jesuit effort to adapt the pre-existing Japanese religious model. As remarked by Ikuo Higashibaba, Japanese ‘irmãos’ (brothers), *dōjuku*, and *kanbō* were the native missionary resources and performed the crucial role of mediating between the European missionaries and the Japanese. Their role was essential by 1580 and its scope was especially important for translating and preaching.<sup>45</sup> In the Painting Seminary, their position seems to have been significant<sup>46</sup> and for some of them, we can trace a short biography, as is the case of Leonardo Kimura

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que elles fizerão, e quaes as que vieram de Roma. As quaes sendo vistas por alguns portugueses, sem saberem que se fizerão em Japão, se admiravão, dizendo que, com ajuda de Deos, terá Japão daqui por diante quem possa encher tanto numero de igreias de boas imagens e contentar tambem muitos senhores christãos.” In Fróis, *Historia de Japam*, vol.5. José Wicki (Ed.). Lisboa: Biblioteca Nacional de Lisboa, 1984, Capítulo 61: “Do que este anno [de 1593] soccedeo assim em Arima, como no seminario de Fachiravó”, pp.479–480. I have used the English translation by Cooper, op. cit., p.36.

- 44 Curvelo, “Copy to Convert. Jesuit’s Missionary Artistic Practice in Japan”, pp.111–127.  
 45 Higashibaba, *Christianity in Early Modern Japan: Kirishitan Belief and Practice*. Leiden, Boston & Köln: Brill, 2001, pp.19–27.  
 46 As an example, the Jesuit Annual letter dated from the 3<sup>rd</sup> of December 1596 makes a particular reference to the *dōjuku* working at the Painting Seminary. Cf. ARSI, Jap. Sin. 52, Carta Ânua do Japão de 3 de Dezembro de 1596, f.193 («Del Seminario de Arie»). This document is referred to by Schütte in *Monumenta Historica Japoniae I. Textus catalogorum Iaponiae aliaque de personis domibusque S. I. In Iaponia. Informationes et relations, 1549–1654*, p.517, note 5.

(c.1574–1619). Born in Nagasaki he became a *dōjuku* in 1587, but not until 1602 did he enter the Novitiate of Todos os Santos where in the next year, he is listed as “pintor y abridor” (painter and copper engraver).<sup>47</sup>



**Fig. 2.** *Yōjin sogakuzu byōbu* (folding screens). Japan, early seventeenth century. Ink and colours on paper. H. 93 × W. 302 cm (each) © MOA MUSEUM of Art , Shizuoka

In the framework of the Jesuit Painting Seminary, the circulation of individuals from different cultural and religious contexts, and of a rich, diversified visual and material culture, contributed to the creation of a very particular visual *corpus*. Its imagery originated in varied Christian iconographical models (mainly Italian,

47 Leonardo Kimura decided to stay in Japan after 1614, having accompanied Father Ishida Kyutaku António to Hiroshima. Due to its relationship with the escape of the Christian samurai Akashi Naiki, he was arrested in 1616 and burned alive in Nagasaki on the 18<sup>th</sup> of November 1619. Vlam, *Western-style Secular Painting in Momoyama Japan*, Appendix C, p.276; “Kimura, Leonardo”. O’Neill; Domínguez (Eds.), *Diccionario Histórico de la Compañía de Jesús: Biográfico-Temático*. 4 Vols. Roma: Institutum Historicum Societatis Iesu, 2001, vol. 3, p.2193. Cf. Schurhammer, “Die Jesuitenmissionare des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts und ihr Einfluss auf die japanische Malerei”, pp.120–121 and Schütte, “KIMURA, Leonardus S.J.”. *Monumenta Historica Japoniae I. Textus catalogorum Iaponiae aliaeqe de personis domibusque S. I. In Iaponia. Informationes et relations, 1549–1654*.

Flemish, and Spanish), while it made use of different techniques (oil and tempera on wood, paper, or copper, as well as engravings),<sup>48</sup> and employed diverse pictorial supports (including the painting of folding screens, screens, hanging scrolls (*kakemono*), retables and oratories). Some authors emphasise that the Christian (*kirishitan*) images that emerged in early modern Japan, particularly the paintings, reveal “(...) that the [Japanese] artists had learned to unite their technique with Christian spirituality”, thus producing “(...) a new type of religious painting in Japan”.<sup>49</sup> The alleged portrait of Pedro Gómez attests precisely to the advent of a new type of religious hybrid images that confirm a cross-cultural partnership, thus giving rise to what has been termed “visual bilingualism”.<sup>50</sup>

Hioki Naoko conceived this term in the analysis of a set of Japanese folding screens depicting figures of European aristocrats in a European-like pastoral landscape an example of a *Yōjin sōgakuzu* (paintings of Europeans Playing Music) in the MOA MUSEUM of Art in Shizuoka (Fig. 2). By adopting a double point of view – European/Christian and Japanese/Buddhist – such a work incorporates perspectives of both Christian and Buddhist iconographies and by doing so, offers different narratives depending on the audience, whether of ordinary Japanese and/or Catholic missionaries and Christian converts. While the latter would see Christian figures in a pastoral background (a shepherd, a Catholic priest, a hermit, a winepress motif symbolizing the sacrifice of Jesus), conveying a didactic message about the pilgrimage to the heavenly city and the spiritual education of the young, the others would see as an outdoor merrymaking scene resonating a Buddhist paradise, and the depiction of a joyous mingling of the “sacred” and the “profane”. Taking this interpretation a step further, I suggest that the images of hermits set in an idyllic landscape or isolated in a plain set appear illuminated in the light of what Kendall Brown called the ‘values of aesthetic reclusion’.<sup>51</sup> That is to say

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- 48 One striking example is the painting of Our Lady of the Snow – known by locals as *Yuki no Santa Maria* – a painting that was found in the small town of Sotome, Nagasaki, in the 1970s and today on display at the Twenty-Six Martyrs Museum, in Nagasaki. This is a hanging scroll format painting whose material and laboratory analysis attests to be most likely a part of a larger painting which is painted on a piece of Japanese paper possibly using emulsion paints such as tempera with different pigments mixed to create colour variations, and a final layer of varnish of natural resin, producing a final work compatible with the European techniques of the Painting Seminary. Asano; Takeda; Takabayashi, “Our Lady of the Snow in Twenty-Six Martyrs Museum, Nagasaki: Scientific Examinations and an Analysis of Painting Technique”. *Junshin Journal of Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research*, no. 1 (March 2012), pp.1–30.
- 49 Garcia Gutiérrez, “A Survey on Namban Art”. *The Southern Barbarians. The First Europeans in Japan*. Michael Cooper, S.J. (Ed.). Tōkyō; Palo Alto: Kodansha International Ltd.; Sophia University, 1971, p.152.
- 50 Hioki, “Visual Bilingualism and Mission Art: A Reconsideration of “Early Western-Style Painting” in Japan”, pp.23–44.
- 51 Kendall, *The Politics of Reclusion. Painting and Power in Momoyama Japan*. Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1997, with a particular focus on pp.175–179.

that they also express a cultural phenomenon associated with the power elite that developed in the Momoyama and early Edo periods, that featured paintings of Chinese-hermit themes such as the Seven Sages of the Bamboo Grove and the Four Graybeards of Mt. Shang, or even the lives of hermit-scholars, namely Shōkadō Shōjo (1584–1639) and Ishikawa Jōzan (1583–1672).

MOA MUSEUM of Art's pair of folding-screens is by no means unique in utilizing a classic Japanese format in which to present depictions of Europeans in an idyllic landscape, nor of European musicians playing Western instruments or hermits reading books. An important repertoire, extant specimens can be seen in private and public collections, namely in the Fukuoka City Museum, the Eisei Bunko Foundation (Tōkyō), the Kobe City Museum, the Yamato Bunkakan (Nara) and the Nanban Bunkakan (Ōsaka).<sup>52</sup> Particularly relevant to the study of the Kobe City Museum's portrait are the paintings of religious men, mainly hermits, of which one of the most impressive, due to the application of Western-style techniques, is attributed to Nobukata (active in the first half of the seventeenth century)<sup>53</sup> (Fig. 3).



**Fig. 3.** A Hermit reading a book Attributed to Nobukata. Japan, late sixteenth-early seventeenth century. Colour on paper. H, 35.0 × 55.7 cm. Private collection

52 Sakamoto; Ide; Ochi; Hidaka, op. cit. See also Garcia Gutiérrez, “A Survey on Namban Art”, particularly pp.163–175; *Namban Arts Selection. Kobe City Museum and The Namban Art of Japan. Paintings and screens*. Ōsaka: The National Museum of Art, 1986.

53 This painting is in a private collection but has been displayed in exhibitions such as *A Record of Encounter with the Namban Culture*. Special Exhibition. Kobe City Museum, 1992, Cat. 30, p.32, and 105. See Sakamoto; Ide; Ochi; Hidaka, op. cit., Cat.37, pp.226–227.





**Fig. 4.** Portrait of Nikkyō Shōnin. Seal of Nobukata. Japan, early seventeenth century (1608?). Colour on paper. H. 117 × W. 60 cm © Shōren-ji, Yamazaki, Hyōgo Prefecture. Reproduction from: *Tōkyō Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan* 東京国立博物館編, ed. Dai Nichiren ten: Rikkyō kaishū 750 - nen kinen 大日蓮展: 立教開宗750年記念 (Tōkyō: Sankei Shinbunsha, 2003).]

However, when it comes to making a parallel between the presumed portrait of Gómez and other paintings, another image calls for attention: the Portrait of Nikkyō Shōnin at Shōren-ji, complete with the Nichiren invocation *Namu Myōhō Rengekyō* (“I devote myself to the Lotus Sutra of the Wonderful Law”). It also bears the seal and signature of Nobukata<sup>54</sup> (Fig. 4). Nikkyō (1552–1608) was a priest of the Nichiren sect and founder of the Shōren-ji temple, where he is buried.<sup>55</sup> This hanging scroll is probably a posthumous portrait.<sup>56</sup> When compared to the alleged portrait of Gómez, it is particularly striking to observe the same realist approach, similar pose, and delicate treatment of the light and shadow modulation.

Nobukata’s extant works reveal an artist of considerable talent. Yet, the only information we have about him comes from his seal, which appears on various paintings, including the above-mentioned portrait of Nikkyō. Some consider this painting unique in that although executed in Western-style, it depicts a Buddhist figure and therefore does not follow the common practice within the Painting Seminary of replicating an imported European example.<sup>57</sup> Likewise, another of Nobukata’s pictorial compositions, a stylised painting of Daruma, or Bodhidharma,<sup>58</sup> the Indian monk who introduced Zen into China, testifies to Western-style technical principals but utilized in an image not produced under Jesuit patronage.

Nobukata’s signature and seal on several paintings, some painted in oil, allow by extension for attributions of others based on comparative stylistic and technical grounds. But no documentary evidence of his life remains, so that any theory about him is mere speculation. His name does not appear in the Jesuit Catalogue, yet this should not be considered a factor of suspicion about whether he passed through the institution, as these listings were far from exhaustive. We cannot determine definitively whether or not – or when – he studied in the Jesuit Painting Seminary, but nowhere else could he have obtained this specific training and such accomplished results. Based on her analysis of his signed works, including “Priest with

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54 Vlam, *Western-style Secular Painting in Momoyama Japan*, pp.171–173. About Nobukata, Cf. Vlam, *Ibidem*, p.19, and pp.181–183; McCall, “Early Jesuit Art in the Far East”. *Artibus Asiae*. vol. X/3. Ascona: Artibus Asiae Publishers, 1947, pp.216–225.

55 Shōren-ji, Yamazaki, Hyōgo Prefecture. For a reproduction of the painting, see *Tōkyō Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan*, Ed. Dai Nichiren ten: Rikkyō kaishū 750-nen kinen. Tōkyō: Sankei Shinbunsha, 2003, p.78. I am grateful to Orion Klautau for having provided me with this image.

56 However, this portrait is dated from the late sixteenth century in Sakamoto; Ide; Ochi; Hidaka, *op. cit.*, Cat.40, pp.234–235.

57 Cooper, “Western-Style Paintings in Japan”. John Breen; Mark Williams (Ed.), *Japan and Christianity. Impacts and Responses*. London; New York: Macmillan Press Ltd.; St. Martin’s Press, Inc., 1996, p.39.

58 In Yōchiku-in, Saitama. There are several portraits of Zen masters that feature distinct Western-style and which are attributed to Nobukata because of the seal on the painting. See Hioki, *op. cit.*, p.33.

two children” (based on the painting of Shōtoku Taishi and His Sons)<sup>59</sup> Vlam was the first to attribute to him the Kobe portrait presumably depicting Gómez.<sup>60</sup> She assumes that before enrolling in the Jesuit Painting Seminary as a convert to Christianity, Nobukata was a Buddhist priest-painter, which thus explains the source of elements from Buddhism in his works. Yet in my view, the possibility exists of Nobukata being enrolled without converting to Christianity at any point. Analysis of his production argues that he was a Buddhist painter who incorporated Buddhist elements in a work that assimilated his apprenticeship of Western painting techniques. Moreover, his work reveals stylistic parallels suggesting possible prior training in one of the workshops of the Kanō School of painting, before entering the Jesuit Painting Seminary, perhaps in Arima.<sup>61</sup>

The Portrait of Nikkyō Shōnin at Shōren-ji suggests that around or after 1608, Nobukata must have been at Yamazaki, which indicates a relationship with the Nichiren sect. That a Western-style trained artist had been asked to portray the founder of a Nichiren temple must be emphasised. In the words of Okamoto Yoshitomo, “If we take it that this Nobukata was one of those who worked collectively on the making of genre screens for the Jesuits, we may be sure that he was the first of their art students, and that as a result of his technical superiority over his fellows received frequent commissions both from within and outside the Society, to which works he affixed his seal. For surely the pictures which survive bearing his seal can only be a fraction of the many works he must have completed.”<sup>62</sup>

The likelihood of Nobukata having had commissions from inside and outside the Society, on one hand, and maintaining a connection with both the Christian mission and the Nichiren sect, on the other hand, illuminates interesting interactions between these two religious realms through the activity of specific agents. That this Buddhist sect, at least in and around Kyōto, adopted the Maltese cross as a crest (*mon*) for their temples, supports the theory of lineage between these two communities. One striking example comes from Nose Yoritsugi (1563–1625) a Christian *daimyō* from the Settsu area between Ōsaka and Kyōto who adopted the same crest and kept it after his conversion to the Nichiren sect.<sup>63</sup>

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59 In the collection of Kobe City Museum. See *Namban Arts Selection. Kobe City Museum*, pp.66–67; Sakamoto; Ide; Ochi; Hidaka, op. cit., Cat.36, pp.224–225.

60 Vlam, *Western-style Secular Painting in Momoyama Japan*, pp.181–183 and Appendix C, pp. 273–274. Cooper, op. cit., p.39.

61 McCall, op. cit., p.225.

62 Okamoto, *The Namban Art of Japan*. New York; Tōkyō: Weatherhill; Heibonsha, 1972, pp.144–145.

63 Vlam, *Western-style Secular Painting in Momoyama Japan*, pp.182–183, and Appendix C, pp.273–274. Interestingly, a *tsuba* (handle guard), knife, and a hairpin with the decoration of a Maltese cross dating from the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century and coming from the collection of Ichio Kuga, in Ōsaka, are supposed to have belonged to Nose Yoritsugi. See *Namban Art. A Loan Exhibition from Japanese Collections*. N.p.: International Exhibitions Foundations, 1973, Fig. 64.

Although the case of Nobukata is the most striking, further evidence exists of Japanese painters who, after having learned Western-style painting within the Christian mission, earned their living by painting Christian images or by applying the foreign techniques they had mastered to Buddhist repertoires. A remarkable case is that of Yamada Emosaku (d. Nagasaki, in 1655?) who aside from links to the Painting Seminary, is renowned in the history of the Shimabara uprising. From the island of Kyūshū, and a vassal of the Arima clan, before entering the service of Matsukura Shigemasa (157–1630) in Shimabara, Emosaku was among the Japanese Christians defending Castle against the Tokugawa troops. When the rebel army fell before the Tokugawa forces, Emosaku's life was spared because of his contribution as an informer. This allowed him to continue painting Buddhist subjects such as portraits of Zen masters using the Western painting techniques he had learned.<sup>64</sup>

The techniques introduced into Japan by the Christian mission resulted in a new type of image for Japanese, who found its optical illusionism particularly alluring when applied to portraits. The missionaries perceived this wonderment and perhaps one of the most expressive testimonies comes from the later period of the Mission, a letter of 1607 by João Rodrigues Girão (1558–1629) referring to the impression created by the decoration of the new church built in Kyōto:

(...) the painting and gilding of the main chapel's lining in the style of Europe and above all the setting of the altars with very good oil altarpieces, a kind of painting new for the Japanese who had never seen it, and of which they are greatly amazed; so much so that many or almost everyone thought that the images of the altarpieces were freestanding sculptures because of their perfection for not having in Japan such a way of painting with shadows.<sup>65</sup>

The remaining production associated with the Painting Seminary along with the information we have or can infer from the available data linked to specific

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64 About Emosaku, see Hioki, op. cit., pp.32–33; *Western-style Secular Painting in Momoyama Japan*, pp.116; 280–282; McCall, op. cit., vol. X/3, pp.225–233; Mody, *A Collection of Nagasaki Colour Prints and Paintings Showing the Influence of Chinese and European Art on that of Japan*. vol.1. London; Kobe: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co. Ltd.; J.L.Thompson & Co., Ltd., 1939; Sullivan, *The Meeting of Eastern and Western Art*. Berkeley; Los Angeles; London: University of California Press, 1997, pp.14–15.

65 Free translation from the original text: “(...) pintando se e dourando se o forro da capela mor ao modo de Europa e sobretudo armando se os altares com muito bons retabulos de oleos, pintura para japoens muito nova e nunca vista, e de que grandemente pasmam; tanto que muitos, ou quasi todos julgavam as imagens dos retabulos por estatuas de vulto pela perfeição delas por não haver em japam tal modo de pintar com sombras”. Annual letter from Japan written by João Rodrigues Girão on the 15<sup>th</sup> of February 1607, Biblioteca da Ajuda, 49-IV-59, f. 434v-435. *Apud* Costa, op. cit., footnote 345.

names, such as those of Leonardo Kimura, Nobukata or Emosaku, indicates interesting networks of transmission and exchange through translators and other intermediaries between two cultural and religious spheres. Yet the Christian mission had access to other centres of visual production. Primary documents reveal two groups of artists working for the Jesuits in Japan: those at the Painting Seminary, whose diverse background has already been discussed, and those at an affiliated local workshop (namely from the Kanō school), with no direct relationship with the Jesuit Painting Seminary.<sup>66</sup> We may classify these groups as the “inner” and “outer” circles of Jesuit and the Christian mission art production.<sup>67</sup> What emerges is thus a composite environment for the production of images, with a constellation of institutions and/or persons involved. A pivotal place of learning and communication, the Painting Seminary played an essential role in the construction of the mission’s visual and material cultural context and as a mediator with a wider audience. This was possible not only by the aggregation of an eclectic body of people but also through the numerous activities they were involved in, as the Mission and the Painting Seminary in particular embraced other practices besides painting and engraving, as music, theatre, and other performative activities, which were fundamental for the Christian religious ceremonial.

## Defying (Whose) Conventions?

A pair of *Nanban* folding screens depicting the arrival of a Black ship and Southern Barbarians to a Japanese shore, now kept in the Museum of the Imperial Collections (Sannomaru Shozokan, Tōkyō), presents a curious detail. On the right screen, we can observe a group of these foreigners walking toward a religious compound where Western missionaries gather around an outdoor altar (Fig. 5). The altar, whose curtains are pulled back to reveal the interior, has in its centre an image of Christ portrayed with dark skin, long, dark curly hair, a moustache and long beard.<sup>68</sup> Although we can infer by the position of this figure that it was meant as a *Salvator mundi* or Christ as the saviour of the world, the gesture of the right-hand does not convey exactly the established iconography, nor the positioning of the left hand resting over an indistinct support and sustaining a cross. However,

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66 I call attention to Mia Mochizuki’s analysis of the World Map screens (Bankoku ezu byōbu 万国絵図屏風) in the Museum of the Imperial Collections, which illuminates this subject. Mochizuki, “A Global Eye: The Perception of Place in a Pair of Tokugawa World Map Screens”. *Japan review: Journal of the International Research Center for Japanese Studies*, vol. 29 (2017), pp.69–119.

67 Bailey, op. cit., p.14 and Hioki, op. cit., p.32.

68 There are several *Nanban* folding screens depicting the Black ship and the *nanban-jin* with details of altars with a Christian painting and similar liturgical utensils, namely in the *Nanban Bunkakan*, Ōsaka; the Tshodai-ji, Nara; the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; the Freer Gallery of Art, Washington D.C., and the Matsuoka Museum of Art, Tōkyō.



**Fig. 5.** Detail of a pair of six-leaf folding screens (each) with the Black Ship (*kurofune*) and the Southern Barbarians (*nanban-jin*). Japan, Kanō School, early seventeenth century. Colour (tempera) and gold leaf on paper; wood (frame). H. 156 × W. 344.5 cm (each) © The Museum of the Imperial Collections (Sannomaru Shozokan), Tōkyō

its identity as a Christian image leaves no doubt, as it asserts itself by the general ambience and the symbol of the cross, even though this iconography evokes similar icons of Buddhist and Daoist deities.<sup>69</sup>

If some pictorial compositions produced in the Painting Seminary gave rise to double reading, it would have not been the case here because the main symbol associated with this foreign religion in Japan is present, even if in a peculiar way. Nonetheless, sometimes the fact that the Catholic symbol was not known or recognisable as such by the non-Christians allowed a Buddhist reading of an image. That

69 Shin, “The Jesuits and the Portrait of God in Late Ming China”. *The Harvard Theological Review*, vol. 107, no. 2 (April 2014), pp.194–221.

was the case of the oil on canvas depicting Saint Peter, now in the collection of the Nanban Bunkakan (Ōsaka). Preserved for many years in the temple of Kakuō, in Funabashi (Chiba Prefecture), and venerated as a portrait of a Buddhist Saint, it escaped the destruction of Christian images that accompanied the persecution of Christians<sup>70</sup> (Fig. 6). In other words, this image's ability to speak a double language, or to incorporate 'visual bilingualism',<sup>71</sup> insured its survival in the turmoil that followed the expulsion of the missionaries in 1614 and the Portuguese in 1639.



**Fig. 6.** Saint Peter. Japan, late sixteenth-early seventeenth-century. Oil on canvas. H. 119 × W. 69.0 cm © Nanban Bunkakan, Ōsaka

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70 Garcia Gutiérrez, "A Survey on Namban Art", p.157; Sakamoto; Ide; Ochi; Hidaka, op. cit., Cat.74, pp.324–325.

71 Hioki, op. cit.

Returning to the folding screen of the Museum of the Imperial Collections, we can observe that other than the presence of Christ, probably attesting to production at the Painting Seminary, the colourful Japanese architectural setting includes an altar with an array of liturgical ritual instruments and objects. The utensils depicted and the altar itself closely resemble those used in Buddhist<sup>72</sup> and Shinto temples, where paintings and other elements such as textiles, incense and, ceramics play a significant part in the sacred setting as expressions of the concept and practice of *shōgon*, “which denotes adornment that proclaims and celebrates the divine”.<sup>73</sup> Western missionaries knew this term, which refers to a decorative setting to imbue rituals with a sense of solemnity and ‘gravitas’. It appears in the Portuguese-Japanese dictionary *Vocabulario da Lingoa de Iapam*, published in Nagasaki in 1603.<sup>74</sup> With no equivalent in Western languages for the Japanese term involved, its translation as “resplendence” or “decoration” denies its religious aura. Yet these pictorial compositions, and the writings of the time, make clear that the missionaries understood it well.

The painting is sufficiently detailed for us to identify a Chinese ceramic incense burner and, on an adjacent table, what has been identified as a monstrance, or a receptacle for the display of the consecrated Host, with a *tomoemon* (or more precisely a *migi mitsudomoe*) decoration and a cross on the top.<sup>75</sup> Curiously, another folding screen with the same subject now in Tenri Central Library, portrays a similar object on the deck of a Black Ship but with the central body of the piece left unadorned.<sup>76</sup> The *tomoemon* pattern, possibly related to water and the idea of a whirlpool, typically decorates the semi-cylindrical eave-end tiles of Buddhist temples and frequently Shinto shrines, which may indicate that it expressed the spirit of the gods.<sup>77</sup> Roof tiles excavated at some Christian archaeological sites in

72 More precisely the *mitsu-gusoku* (三具足) or the Japanese Buddhism traditional arrangement of three articles, usually consisting of a censer, a candlestick, and a vase for flower offerings often displayed in front of a painting of the Buddha. Curiously, this term appears in the *Vocabulario*: “Mitsugusoku – Tres cousas que se poem diante dos idolos. s. perfumador, castiçal, & hu vaso pera por rosas, ou flores.”, p.724 (free translation: “Mitsugusoku – Three things that stand before idols. s. perfumer, candlestick, and a vase to hold roses, or flowers”).

73 Watsky, *Chikubushima: Deploying the Sacred Arts in Momoyama Japan*. Seattle; London: University of Washington Press, 2004, p.36.

74 In the *Vocabulario* it appears as “xōgon”: “Cazari cazaru. *Lustro, ou ornato*. ¶ Xogon suru. *ornar*”. *Vocabulario da lingoa de Iapam* (1603). Tadao Doi (Ed.). Tōkyō: Iwanami Shoten, 1960. [online, DOI: <https://archive.org/details/nippoishovocabv06doit/page/n9/mode/2up>]

75 Okamoto; Takamizawa, *Nanban Byōbu*, vol. 1, Cat.2, pp.121–122. See also Sakamoto; Narusawa; Izumi, et al., *Nanban byōbu shūsei (A Catalogue Raisonné of the Nanban Screens)*. Tōkyō: Chūōkōron Bijutsu Shuppan, 2008, Cat.7, pp. 330–331 and Okada (Ed.), *Kirishitan no seiki*. Zusetusu Nihon no Rekishi 10. Tōkyō: Shūeisha, 1975, particularly pp.113–120.

76 Sakamoto; Narusawa; Izumi, et al., op. cit., Cat.50.

77 “Tomoemon”, JAANUS. Japanese Architecture and Art Net Users System: <http://www.aisf.or.jp/~jaanus/deta/t/tomoemon.htm> (October 2020).



Japan attest to its appearance in a Christian context. One such case can be found in Nagasaki, where the Museum of the Church of São Domingos (Santo Domingo Church) displays examples of round eaves tiles with the pattern of *tomoemon* along with tiles decorated with different variations of floral crosses (Fig. 7).



**Fig. 7.** Round eaves tiles with the pattern of *tomoemon* (left) and of a floral cross (right). Japan, early seventeenth century. © Museum of Santo Domingo Church, Nagasaki

From the beginning of the Christian mission in Japan, the Western missionaries noted the Japanese fondness for religious images and objects. Recognition of this natural predisposition became a convincing argument for the necessity of replacing images of local idols with a Christian repertoire, especially pictures of Saints, to which converts became much devoted. The Museum of the Church of São Domingos, and many other private and public collections in Japan, exhibit such devotional objects. Particularly important are those of the Nanban Bunkakan (Ōsaka), the 26 Martyrs Museum (Nagasaki), the Amakusa Christian Museum, the Amakusa Rosary Museum, and the Hirado City Ikitsuki Folk Museum (Shima-no-yakata). Along with painted and printed images of Christ, those of the Virgin and the Saints, religious medals, plaquettes (*mediai*), rosaries,<sup>78</sup> and crosses played a

78 Like the Jesuits, the Franciscans also testify to the importance of rosaries for the Japanese. See *Documentos Franciscanos de la Cristiandad de Japon (1593–1597)*. San

significant role in the popular devotion of the believers. Some of these, like the pictorial compositions, came to be produced in Japan as well as Europe.<sup>79</sup>

This overall awareness, to which the foundation of the Painting Seminary is closely connected, also links with the principle of ‘accommodation’. Of the activities to which this applied, the practice of liturgy proved particularly receptive and found considerable success under the work of a number of missionaries.<sup>80</sup> One of the first to understand the need to observe and learn from the ritual and ceremony of Buddhist sects in order to convey some familiarity to Japanese converts to Christianity was Baltasar Gago (c.1515/20–1583).<sup>81</sup> This practice of attending Buddhist ceremonies to observe specific behaviours and apprehend the overall ambience was further explored by Gaspar Vilela (1526–1572),<sup>82</sup> one of the main figures responsible for the development of the cultural accommodation method. In 1565, when living in Kyōto, the oratory of a bonze at a lecture attended by Vilela left him stunned. A companion later wrote that the mission greatly benefited from the practice of listening to the Buddhist lectures: “(...) [Father Vilela] took great

*Martin de la Ascensión Y Fray Marcelo de Ribadeneira. Relaciones e Informaciones.* José Luis Alvarez-Taladriz (Ed.), Ōsaka: S.e., 1973, p.193.

- 79 Reference is due to the material and laboratory study of a *plaque* of Madonna of Loreto at the Nakatani collection, Ibaraki city, Ōsaka prefecture, whose Japanese origin, and not necessarily, a European one is put forward by scientific research. Asano; Takeda, “A Study on a Plaque of Madonna of Loreto”. *Junshin Journal of Human Studies*, no.18 (January 2012), pp.113–136.
- 80 The most important study on this subject is still the outstanding book by López Gay, *La Liturgia en la Misión del Japón del Siglo XVI*. Roma: Libreria dell’Università Gregoriana, 1970.
- 81 Baltasar Gago was born in Lisbon where he was admitted to the Company in 1546. He left for India in 1548, where he stayed for 3 years until sailing to China and then Japan, where he arrived in the summer of 1552. Gago founded the Bungo mission together with Brother João Fernandes (1552–1556), and then moved on to Hirado (1556–1557), and from there to Hakata (1558–1559); in this city, he was imprisoned during a revolt against Ōtomo Yoshishige. After three months of captivity, he was released and he left for India. He arrived in Goa in April 1562 and remained there until his death on the 1<sup>st</sup> of September 1583. Costa, *O Cristianismo no Japão e o Bispado de D. Luís Cerqueira*. PhD in History, Faculdade de Ciências Sociais e Humanas da Universidade Nova de Lisboa (NOVA FCSH), 1998, Apêndice ‘Jesuítas no Japão’.
- 82 Vilela was born in Aviz, Portugal, was educated by Benedictine monks and came to join the Company in India in 1553. He arrived in Japan with Melchior Nunes Barreto, in 1556 and lived in Bungo (1556–1558), Hirado (1558–1559), and Miyako (1559–1566), where he was the founder of the first mission in the centre of Japan. After returning to Kyūshū, he organized a mission to Korea, but the trip did not take place. In 1569, he was in Nagasaki, involved in the building of the first church. He left for India at the end of 1570 and died there in 1572. Costa, *Ibidem*.

advantage of this visit because he could take some teaching about how to proceed with the Christians in preaching, according to their [Japanese] taste and language (...).<sup>83</sup>

The advantage referred to in this letter comprised not only the learning of the Japanese language but also the study of the sermons of the bonzes, with the aim of subsequent adaptation to Catholic ritual. Later, Valignano echoed these same ideas in the *Cerimoniale*, when discussing how to obtain and maintain authority (respect) when interacting with the Japanese:

In order to maintain this authority it matters greatly that all the church's ceremonies should be done with much reverence and outward appearance, without any pressure or haste, but slowly, just as the bonzes do and that is why they must learn well the Church formalities, giving good order to them so there is no confusion.<sup>84</sup>

Once more, Valignano underlines that there could not be any misunderstandings in the process. The overall objective was to make Christian ceremony more familiar to the Japanese converts through the adaptation of some recognisable elements that would not change the Christian message and meaning. A principle of utmost importance for Valignano and the Mission, the Visitor discusses it both in the *Cerimoniale* (1581), and in the *Sumario de las Cosas de Japón* (1583).<sup>85</sup> Moreover, it is essential to remember that during this period there existed no such a thing as liturgical uniformity, which only came as direct consequence of the Council of Trent. Not until 1605 did the new Nagasaki press finally publish the *Manuale ad Sacramenta Ecclesiae ministranda* that López Gay refers to as a “liturgical event,” in the sense that from that moment on it would be the definitive ritual of the Mission in Japan.<sup>86</sup>

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83 *Cartas que os Padres e Irmãos da Companhia de Jesus escreveram dos Reynos de Japão & China aos da mesma Companhia da India & Europa desde anno de 1549 até o de 1580*. Em Evora por Manoel de Lyra, Anno de MDXCVIII [1598] (henceforth: *Cartas*), vol. 1, letter from Luís Fróis written in Kyōto (Myaco) for the brothers in India, 27<sup>th</sup> April 1565, f.184r. Free translation from the original text: “(...) não aproveitou tão pouco esta ida, que dali se não tomassem algumas lições pera melhor proceder com os Christãos em as pregações, conforme a seu gosto, & lingoa”.

84 Valignano, op. cit., p.154. Free translation from the original text: “Importa muito pera se conservar esta autoridade fazeren-se todos os officios da igreja com muita reverencia e aparato exterior, sem strepito nem pressa, mas pausadamente, assi como fazem os bonzos, e por isso hé necessario que aprendão bem as cerimoniaes da Igreja, dando nos officios boa ordem, pera que não aja nenhuma confusão”.

85 Valignano, *Sumario de las cosas de Japon (1583). Adiciones del Sumario del Japon (1592)*. vol. I. José Luis Alvarez-Taladriz (Ed.). Tōkyō: Sophia University, 1954, particularly p.245 ff., when answering the question number 18 “If it is good to keep in all the customs and ceremonies that the bonzes use” (free translation from the original text: “Si es bien guardar en todo las costumbres y ceremonias que los bonzos usan”).

86 López Gay, op. cit., p.15.



**Fig. 8.** Detail of a pair of six-leaf folding screens (each) with the Black Ship and the *nanban-jin*, showing a Christian chapel with an altar similar in form and decoration to the remaining exemplar inside Kōdai-ji’s memorial mortuary building (*tamaya*) built in Kyōto in the early seventeenth century. Japan, Kanō School, early seventeenth century. Colour (tempera) and gold leaf on paper; wood (frame). © Nanban Bunkakan, Ōsaka

In the use of Japanese architectural forms, including Buddhist temples<sup>87</sup> (Fig. 8), for Christian churches and residences as part of the principle of adaptation,<sup>88</sup> I shall focus on the process referred to by López Gay as the “substitution principle,”<sup>89</sup> part of what he classifies as a dynamic, “positive adaptation”. It can be perceived through a series of manifestations, including the social dynamics of the Painting Seminary framework and the work it produced. It can also be found, as López Gay pointed out, in the way that missionaries adapted the Christian celebrations. They did this not only by creating an official calendar of the Japanese church, but also by

87 Higashino, “Jesuit Architecture in Japan: How to Convert a Buddhist Temple into a Church”. *Anais de História de Além-Mar*, vol. XVII (2016), pp.245–270.

88 See in this book the text by Rie Arimura.

89 López Gay, op. cit., pp.21–26, and 34–40.

adjusting it to the religious calendar of Japan, which had a multitude of festivals. These the people could not do without, as they were linked to long tradition, and integrated the social life of the kingdom. Of particular relevance were the O-Bon, or Buddhist festival of the dead, the Shinto festival of Gion-matsuri,<sup>90</sup> and especially Shōgatsu or New Year's Day.

The dynamic principle of adaptation allowed new converts to continue to participate in traditional Japanese practices, but exchanged their original meanings for ones rooted in Christian belief. Among the most interesting, the celebration of 'Our Lady of Protection', known in Japanese as 'On-inamori no Santa Maria', replaced that of Shōgatsu.<sup>91</sup> However, as López Gay asserts, the theory of liturgical substitution was not limited to the great solemnities. It penetrated a multitude of details, to which the Christian architecture and interiors depicted in the folding screens attest. This principle transformed many traditional values in Japanese culture into festive elements of Christian celebrations, above all those that could find an appropriate place in the liturgy, such as music and certain performances. According to authors such as López Gay and Léon Bourdon, perhaps the most interesting realization was the creation of *mai* and *kyōgen* – representations and dances – that replaced their ancient solemnities with Christian liturgical ones.

The Jesuits in Japan had already printed a collection of *mai* (sacred dances) by the early seventeenth century. Texts compiled by father Manuel Barreto (c.1563–1620),<sup>92</sup> which included translations of Scripture on Sunday, lives of Saints and several prayers, refer to these sacred scenes that were presented in churches. Even though the information we have about the performances made during important liturgical festivities, in particular those of the Holy Week, Easter, and Christmas, makes reference to the European archetypes from which they derived, the use of the term *mai* suggests that the recitation was accompanied by gestures and hieratic poses similar to those of traditional Japanese dances, particularly in Nō and Kyōgen.<sup>93</sup> These had become popular at the end of the fifteenth century thanks to the work of Buddhist bonzes, and can be described as poetic narratives sung during

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90 To which Luís Fróis makes an interesting reference in a letter he wrote in Kyōto on the 4<sup>th</sup> of October 1571. *Cartas*, vol. 1, f.331v: "(...) the most solemn festivity of the year, the one that seems to call people from all over Japan and where it seems that the devil wanted to dispute the Corpus Christi celebration (...)" (Free translation from the original text: "(...) a mais solene de todo o anno pera ver, a que parece concorrem ordinariamente de todo o Iapão em que perece que o demonio quis contrafazer a festa de corpus Christi (...)").

91 López Gay, op. cit., p.36.

92 About Manuel Barreto, who was proficient in Japanese and one of the closer companions of Bishop D. Luís Cerqueira, see Costa, op. cit.

93 Bourdon, *Rites et jeux sacrés de la mission japonaise des Jésuites vers 1560–1565*. Separata de Miscelânea de Filologia, Literatura e História Cultural. À memória de Francisco Adolfo Coelho (1847–1919). Lisboa: Centro de Estudos Filológicos, 1950, p.321 e ss.

a mime dance. Having as main themes the exploits of national heroes, they contain elements of Japan's popular, military and religious life.<sup>94</sup> Likewise, the literature of the missionaries includes constant references to the presence of music in religious environments: in Shinto festivals and Buddhist temples such as in Midara, where the occupation of the bonzes was 'to sing', or that of Katsura, that celebrated a dance ritual performed by Zen nuns.<sup>95</sup>

In this context, a passage of a letter written by father Luís de Almeida (1525–1583) from Funai (Ōita) on the 1<sup>st</sup> of October 1561 is thus revealing. Little more than 10 years had passed since the establishment of the Mission when Almeida refers to the celebration of Christmas in the following way:

The Christmas feast is celebrated here with much joy. It is attended by the Japanese Christians with their plays that last for many days. They represent many stories of the Holy Scripture with precept. About these stories they make up songs and motets their way, singing continuously.<sup>96</sup>

Undoubtedly, these vernacular festive elements helped the Mission to come closer to a Japanese audience, and over the years this incorporation came to be more and more elaborate. Two descriptions referring to the Holy Week, one from 1584 and the other dated 1585, offer particularly detailed and evocative accounts of this complex interaction and therefore, although long, deserve our attention. The first locates this religious celebration in Usuki:

(...) The *Ofício das Trevas* [*matutina tenebrarum*] was performed in the best possible way. On Maundy Thursday, the tomb of Christ was shown and we can say that it was the most luxurious of all that have been made in Japan until now. The Japanese were so amazed that they could not keep their eyes off it. It was so huge that it occupied the whole chapel. Its structure was square; it was in a high position and had a good volume. It was constructed of diamonds made of white paper that we call *suybara* and marbled stones made the same way, with a chess pattern, and dusted with gold from China. It rested on six marbled and gleaming columns (...). Above the altar was a dome made of marbled stones dusted with gold and the altar and the round gallery that circled it, where the body of Christ was buried were exquisitely adorned. Moreover, the side chapel was dressed up with very rich folding screens ('Beonbus'). The

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94 López Gay, op. cit., p.180.

95 Ibidem, p.165.

96 Free translation from the original text: "A festa do Natal se celebra quá tão bem com muita alegria; onde os japões christãos vêm todos com seus autos que de muitos dias se provêm; onde representão muitas histórias da Sagrada Scriptura e de muita doutrina. Sobre as quoaís histórias se compõem cantos e trovas à sua maneira, que contínuo cantão." Letter from Luís de Almeida to António Quadros. Funai, 1st of October 1561, *Documentos del Japón*, vol. 2 (1558–1562). Juan Ruiz-de-Medina, S.J. (Ed.). Roma: Instituto Histórico de la Compañía de Jesús, 1995, Doc. N.º 44, p.378.

King<sup>97</sup> was so happy that he wouldn't leave the sacristy, talking to the Fathers in a very familiar way.<sup>98</sup>

One year after, in 1585, the description of the Holy Week celebration in Arima is seemingly striking:

The rest of the day was spent in continuing the structures which were begun for the Passover procession, which took place around the great four-sided square. At the corners of it, bulwarks with canopies of branches were constructed, and around it, a street of well-ordered branches and in the middle there were some trees with gunpowder devices. The church, fortress, and all the people were heavily adorned with canopies of branches, and flagged. The inhabitants had sticks as tall as masts at their doors with narrow banners, and painted ropes, and they were so many that they looked like a great navy by the sea. The Christians made many creations of paper lamps of varied figures and colours, and of these, a great number were on the streets of the procession. Inside the church, there were many other candlesticks. The procession went before dawn, and near the baldachin, there were four boys from the Seminary dressed as Angels with candlesticks and candles in their hands. The others of the Seminary and the brothers were dressed with surplices and the fathers with a cap. There were so many people that we could not break through it and when looking at the fortress, trees and bulwarks we only saw people dressed as at a party. To enter the square we passed the bridge over the river that was very bright with much brushwood. On the way out there was an ingenious and ornate carriage, and on the top of it, (because

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97 Ōtomo Yoshishige, also known as Ōtomo Sōrin and by his Christian name D. Francisco, *daimyō* of Bungo.

98 Free translation from the original text: "(...) os ofícios das trevas se fizeram com a melhor ordem que foy possível chegada quinta feira de endoenças apareceu o sepulchro ao encerrar do Senhor o quall se podia afirmar que foy o mays luxtroso e pera ver que ate gora Em Japão se fez de que os Japões ficarão admirados sem saberem delle tirar os olhos o quall Era tão grande que ocupava toda a capela & a maquina do Sepulchro Era quadrada & estava alto & em boa proporsão Era feito de diamans muito brancos de papel que se chama suybara & de pedras Jaspeadas do mesmo ordenado tudo a modo denxadres & semeado de ouro/da china fundado tudo Isto sobre Seys columnas douradas muito lustrozas – tudo o embate da Vista era feito de pedras Razas brancas Jaspeadas & semeadas douro, as grades/danbas as bandas de Jaspes Roliços Sobre o Altar estava feita huma abobada da mesma obra & o altar & charola aonde o Senhor Se emserrou [sic] Estava muy bem ornado per se meter nelle tudo o Resto de casa – a Isto ajuntava estar a capela ao Redor ornada de muy Ricos Beonbus el Rey andava tão alegre que não cabia de prazer & assi nunca Sahia da sacrestia falando & conversando com os padres & Irmãos muy familiarmente." Annual letter written by Luís Fróis from Nagasaki on the 3<sup>rd</sup> September 1584 and addressed to Alessandro Valignano. ARSI, Jap. Sin. 9-II, f.280v. This document is published in *Cartas*, vol. 2, f. 103 ff. and is referred to by Okamoto in *Letters of the Society of Jesus*. Tōkyō: Kirishitan Bunkwa Kenkyū Kwai (Institute of Early Japanese Christian Culture), 1949.

it was like a tower) there were five Angels, the greatest of whom was the brother of the lord of this land, and represented the Angel of Custody. The others were the sons of the noblest people here. Underneath there were other figures, which represented the devil and as we arrived in a good place they acted their sayings. Then came the dances in the manner of Japan, one from the noble people, and others from those of the villages. The bulwarks fired a great number of harquebusiers, when the carriage passed through them, the trees of fire played their role in time, and everything was ordered so that the regular was the song of the church, and in certain places the other things.<sup>99</sup>

Though these Jesuit accounts were written to impress the high hierarchy of the Society – the first excerpt comes from the Annual Letter sent to Rome and the second one from a letter directed to Valignano – there is no reason to believe that, despite some likely enhancement of the events overall, this kind of performances did not take place in the broader terms in which they are described. The same applies to the Japanese folding screens depicting the missionaries, their churches and residences. They did not represent a reality such as it existed but as it was perceived. It is

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99 Free translation from the original text: “(...) O resto do dia se gastou em continuar as armações que estuão começadas pera a procissão da Pascoa, aqual se fez ao redor de hũa grande praça quadrada (...).”

Aos cantos della se fizerão baluartes mui enramados, & ao redor hũa rua de ramos bem ordenados & no meo se puserão algũas aruores com inuênções de poluora. A igreja, fortaleza, & todo o pouo estauão mui enramados, & embandeirados: os moradores aluantarão paos mui altos como mastos ás suas portas con bandeiras estreitas, & cordas pintadas, & eraõ tantis que parecia hũa grande armada por mar: fizeraõ os Christãos muitas inuênções de alenternas de papel, de diuersas figuras, & cores, & destas auia grande numero: polas ruas da procissão, & dentro na igreja afora outras muitas candeas sahio a procissão antes de amanhecer, & junto do palio hião quatro mininos do seminario vestidos em figura de Anjos com castiçais, & velas nas mãos, & os outros do seminario, & os irmãos leuauão sobrepelizes, & os padres capas. A gente era tanta que não se podia romper por ella, & olhando pera a fortaleza, aruores, & baluartes não se via senão gente vestida de festa, pera entrar na praça passamos a ponte do rio que estaua muito fresca com muitas portas de ramos, & ao sair della veo ao encontro hum carro artificioso, & bem ornado, & no alto delle (porque era como torre) vinhão cinco molos em figura de Anjos, o maior delles era irmão do senhor desta terra, & representava o Anjo Custodio, os outros eraõ filhos da gente mais nobre que aqui há: embaixo vinhão outras figuras, que representauão o demonio, & como chegamos a bom posto representarão seus ditos. Depois vieraõ as inuênções de danças a modo de Iapão, hũa da gente nobre, & outras do pouo, & das aldeas. Os baluartes despararão muita arcabuzaria, quando passarão por elles, & as aruores de fogo fizerão seu officio a seu tempo, & tudo foi ordenado de modo, que o commum era o canto da igreja, & a certos postos as outras cousas.”

*Cartas*, vol. 2, “Annual das partes do Ximo, do anno de 1585 pera o Reuerendo padre geral da Companhia, escrita pelo padre Luis Froes de Nangaçãqui, ao 1 de Outubro de 1585”, f. 131v–132.



precisely the juxtaposition of sources from different cultural backgrounds, European (not only missionary, nor exclusively Jesuit), and Japanese, both written and visual/material, that provide the fundamentals to better understand this particular and complex historical context. The overall scenario that emerges from these accounts, and in particular the two excerpts above, is that Japan was a territory where Western missionaries, above all the Jesuits, implemented the Council of Trent's propagandistic stand that utilized art as a means of increasing and stimulating the people's faith in the church and its doctrine. To this end, the painting, music and theatrical performances that featured in the Jesuits' study programme and evangelization method, served the central purpose of appeal to the emotions of the faithful. Dramatic and illusory effects to inspire piety, devotion, and convey a sense of the splendour of the divine provided an essential counter to the reality that Japan already had a liturgy of its own that made use of singing, incense and light.<sup>100</sup> Thus in Usuki, Japanese folding screens and local materials (Japanese paper, gold from China) provided illusionistic substitutes for the diamonds, jasper stones and other costly and luxuriant materials that graced Europe's opulent places of worship. In Arima ephemeral architectures were employed, as well as gunpowder devices, painted ropes and banners, paper lanterns of diverse figures and colours, candlesticks and candles.

Light, sound and movement bonded everyone who participated in these religious Christian celebrations and practices, including the common people and the elite of society, transforming them into community events. Particularly striking is the reference, in the Arima festivities, to the use of an "ingenious and ornate carriage" (in Portuguese, 'hum carro artificioso, & bem ornado') with Angels (all played by the sons of the local nobility) and devils. It is impossible not to make a parallel between such a machine and the traditional Japanese wooden floats of the Gion festival, which the missionaries witnessed.<sup>101</sup> A festivity by this time singularly devoted to honouring the gods, it used wooden floats that incorporated Buddhist effigies into the designs. This observance featured mainly two types of floats: the *hoko*, giant constructions on wheels pulled by celebrants, and *yama*, portable shrines carried on the shoulders. *Yama* carried life-sized figurines of historical Japanese and over-sized puppets of animals and insects, all arranged into historical and legendary scenes centred on a *shingi* (a sacred tree, often a pine) as well as the occasional miniature Buddhist carving or shrine. The *hoko*, which seems to more closely resemble Fróis' description, was a three-story structure towering at eighty feet and weighing up to twelve tons, not including the massive wooden wheels at the bottom. It needed no fewer than thirty to forty men with long straw ropes to pull and push these enormous carts. Both included a stage on which troupes of sixty or more musicians using a variety of percussion

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100 Frank, *Dieux et Bouddhas au Japon*. Paris: Éditions Odile Jacob, 2000, p.36.

101 As soon as 1561 Gaspar Vilela describes the *Gion Matsuri* in a letter sent to the Jesuits in India. Cf. *Cartas*, vol. 1, f. 89v-94r.

instruments and flutes played *Gion-bayashi*, religious music specific to the festival.<sup>102</sup> In addition, most important Buddhist festivals featured processions as key elements, participants bearing hand lanterns, tree branches, scented incense, etc. as main decorative elements.

For Funai and Arima, as for so many other places of the Mission during these years, we have plenty of references to the use of theatrical performances, dances and music.<sup>103</sup> Moreover, we know that these incorporated both Western and Japanese elements, as the above-mentioned passages explicitly refer to “these stories, that they make up songs and motets their way, singing continuously” and “(...) the dances in the manner of Japan, one from the noble people, and others from those of the villages.” However, inseparable from these celebrations and the religious “representations” that staged biblical themes with musical accompaniment, was the liturgical-musical tradition of the Church, where sacred music occupied as prominent a place in the writings of the early Jesuits, as it did in the Catholic rituals.<sup>104</sup> It comes as no surprise that the Society of Jesus devoted special attention to the teaching of music. To the Catholic Church, the ear, a sacred organ, was interpreted allegorically as a woman playing music, and music itself the mirror of the world’s harmony. To make music was a means to participate in this harmony.<sup>105</sup> The belief in music as a potent, persuasive tool of communication to arouse emotion in its listeners was further enhanced by the use of performance and visual strategies of communication. Hence, the pictorial representations associated with the Jesuit Painting Seminary in Japan, where some painters also participated in the construction of musical instruments.<sup>106</sup> Accordingly, in a complex process of cultural and religious interaction, the idea that everything could be designed to communicate optically and rhetorically was explored and conventions were defied.

## Final Remarks

Broadly, an encompassing understanding of “visuality”/“visual culture” and “materiality”/“material culture” as cultural, cross-cultural and cross-geographical

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102 Miller, *A Parade of Pictures: An Examination of the Illustrated Evolution of Gion Matsuri Throughout Japanese History*. Submitted to the graduate degree program in the Kress Foundation Department of Art History and the Graduate Faculty of the University of Kansas in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts, November 2016, particularly pp.6–7 and 140–142.

103 Another significant description of the Holy Week celebrations is narrated by Fróis in *Historia de Japam*, vol. 3 (1982), Cap. 38, pp.321–323.

104 López Gay, op. cit., pp.156 ff. See in this book the text by Kathryn Bosi Monteath.

105 Sebastián, *Contrarreforma y barroco. Lecturas iconográficas e iconológicas*. Madrid: Alianza Editorial, S.A., 1985, p.33.

106 Luis Shotsuka (1577–1637) who enrolled in 1588 at the Seminary in Arima and joined the Society in 1607 is listed in Nagasaki in 1613 as painter, organist and choirmaster. Vlam, op. cit., Appendix C, pp.273–274

concepts highlights the importance of the senses, of mental images, and of discursive knowledge.<sup>107</sup> These constructs, when used as tools, illuminate how cultural (and social) values are projected and can also help us (re)consider questions of inclusion and exclusion of identity and otherness. When applied to a context such as that of this essay, they also invite us to understand through specific practices and performances the perception of cultural difference, how sensory knowledge was valued, and what effects such valorisation did produce.

Through the analysis of a process that may be referred to as “Cultural transfer,” as coined by Michele Espagne, that is, a process of relocation and of migration from one cultural situation to another, where any image and object falls into a new context and takes on a new meaning, it is possible to scrutinize practices of accommodation. An image such as the presumed portrait of Pedro Gómez reminds us that visibility is not only a practice, but also a strategy.<sup>108</sup> The same applies to the majority of the material that was analysed in this essay and which is but a minor fraction – albeit significant and representative – of the existing data.

Above all, the relentless reinterpretation, rethinking and re-signification of objects, images and ideas such as occurred in the interaction of the Christian mission with Buddhist sects and Shinto practices in Japan, led to the creation of a culture “in-between”<sup>109</sup> – a space within and among individuals and cultures, which does not maintain a single position but forms identities in an on-going process, and reveals hybrid forms of life, culture, and art.

All these achievements, stemming from very stimulating, active, and profound interactions between two different religious and cultural spheres, were dominated by the turn of political events. Politics overlapped everything else and, it was above all the context of an emerging unified Japan and the advent of the Tokugawa shogunate that determined the impossibility of anything “in-between”. From the perspective of centralized power or from a government that aimed at being so, the internal existence of a singular, original, and fluid process of intercultural and interreligious relations was hard to grasp and even more difficult, if not impossible, to control. It was, therefore, perceived as a menace and potentially disruptive for the new emerging order. “In-between”, this interstitial, relational and identity construct space, was precisely what needed to be avoided in the name of stability. Nonetheless, in the case of Christianity in Japan, or Japanese Christianity, one can even argue that this ongoing process lasted for centuries, even if hidden, or precisely because it had to be concealed, and disguised.

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107 Farago, op. cit., pp.246 ff.

108 Bal, op. cit., p.11.

109 Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*. New York: Routledge, 1994, p.xiii and ff; p.5.



## **Part III Interactions between Buddhist and Jesuit Scientific Cultures**



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# **Spatial and Linguistic Patterns in Early Modern Global History. Iberian and Dutch Merchants, Jesuit Missionaries, Buddhist Monks and Neo-Confucian Scholars and Their Interactions in Japan**

## **Introduction**

Recent scholarship across a wide array of disciplines has rediscovered space, places and territoriality as fundamental analytical categories in the humanities and in historical research.<sup>1</sup> Space and places, at any scale, are no longer conceived as neutral *continua* or mere contexts of human action and have now been recognized under two main, only apparently conflicting perspectives: on the one hand, as value-laden human constructs, modelled by the historical agents, based on their systems of beliefs and political-economic-symbolic interests; on the other hand, as crucial, although easily underestimated, elements that condition, favour, or limit the choices or define the action criteria of the agents. According to the first perspective, the awareness and experience of space and places is conditioned by historical and cultural processes; according to the second perspective, cultural and historical processes are influenced by their spatial contexts. Although from different viewpoints, both perspectives give shape to an intellectual movement, often referred to as “the spatial turn,” in which space, places and forms of spatiality are acknowledged as crucial modes of perceiving and analysing cultural historical processes.<sup>2</sup>

Both these approaches result very effective to analyse and understand the dynamics related to the early modern European presence in Asia, in the context of the Portuguese and the Iberian expansion, and in particular of Catholic missions, in connection with the responses by local civilizations and as well as agents, such as Buddhist monks, neo-Confucian scholars, members of local political, military and mercantile *élites*.

Why did space and forms of spatiality matter in these articulated narratives? More precisely, under which perspectives did they matter? To answer these

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- 1 Jacob, *Qu'est-ce qu'un lieu de savoir?* Marseille: OpenEdition Press, 2014; Torre, “A ‘Spatial Turn’ in History? Landscapes, Visions, Resources”. *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales* vol. 63, issue 5 (2008), pp.1127–1144.
  - 2 Withers, “Place and the “Spatial Turn” in Geography and in History”. *Journal of the History of Ideas* vol. 70, no. 4 (2009), pp.637–658.

questions, this essay analyses how space is encoded in the multiple and heterogeneous discourses and practices developed in Japan in the highly variable and asymmetric relations that involved European (mainly Portuguese, Spanish, and Dutch) merchants, Jesuit missionaries, Buddhist monks, Confucian scholars, and several members of Japanese political, military and mercantile *élites*.

We will consider four contiguous yet specific case studies converging on early modern Japan. The first two parts of the essay examine the differences and similarities between (European) mercantile implicit understanding and practices of space and places and those of missionary orders. This comparison will allow us to highlight the emphasis and efforts that missionaries placed to decipher and interact with the human, political, economic, linguistic and cultural geography of the territories of the missions. While travelling the same sea routes and relying in large part on the commercial and military infrastructures of the *Estado da Índia*, at least to get to their missionary destinations, missionaries radically transformed the ways of experiencing and conceptualizing space and places with respect to merchants and soldiers. In summary, while the port cities that formed the dense network of the *Estado da Índia* were the final point of arrival for merchants and soldiers, for the missionaries, on the contrary, these ports were the points of departure, from which departing towards the inland territories of the kingdoms they were assigned to. Furthermore, unlike the vast majority of merchants and soldiers, missionaries started a new cultural mapping of several languages ignored in Europe before early modern missions. Their efforts gave origin to the first global system of connected languages. By focusing on Japan, this analysis will also emphasize the fundamental role of the Japanese interlocutors of the Jesuits as essential cultural and linguistic translators of the complex cultural, religious and political otherness that the Jesuits faced while establishing their missions in Japan.

In the third part of the essay, we will consider specific cases of interaction involving space and spatiality among the Jesuits, the Buddhist *bonzes* and neo-Confucian scholars through the analysis of the disputes that saw them rivalling while debating cosmological and cosmographic topics. We will analyse the centrality of Christian Aristotelian-Ptolemaic cosmology and cosmography within the framework of Jesuit missionary practices, in particular with respect to the preaching of the Christian doctrine of Creation. This analysis will shift the focus from a sole interpretation of claimed Jesuit missionary science to the theological relevance of cosmology and cosmography in missionary contests in which the Christian concepts of God Creator and the world as creation were ignored as well as challenged by equally structured, rigorous and alternative cosmologies. As we will see, Christian, Buddhist and Confucian cosmographic visions, both written and visual, were mobilized by all contenders to support their own vision of the world and, at the same time, to mutually discredit their rivals, in veritable theatrical “cosmographic clashes” involving Jesuits such as Pedro Gómez (1533/35–1600), Fukan Habian (1565–1621), Carlo Spinola (1564–1622), Buddhist *bonzes* (left unnamed), and neo-Confucian scholars such as Hayashi Razan 林羅山, also known as Hayashi Dōshun (1583–1657).



Finally, as a conclusion of the essay, we will present a long forgotten Japanese manuscript cartographic document, currently held at the Prefectural Library of Kōchi in the Shikoku island, that for the first time repositioned Japan from the margin of the Eurasian *oikumene* to the centre of the Iberian transpacific sea routes, in the aftermath of the shipwreck on the coasts of Urado (Shikoku island) of the Spanish galleon *San Felipe* in 1596. This document epitomizes the vectors that broke into Japan at the end of the sixteenth century and is in stark contrast to the subsequent autocratic closure of the Japanese kingdom, enacted by the Tokugawa shogunate starting in 1633 under the rule of the third shōgun Tokugawa Iemitsu (1604–1651).<sup>3</sup>

Altogether, these four interconnected research trajectories converging on early modern Japan, highlight the fact that from circa 1542 to circa 1647, over the course of about 100 years, in the context of the pressing and violent events that brought to the military and political unification of the Japanese kingdom by Oda Nobunaga (1534–1582), Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1536–1598) and Tokugawa Ieyasu (1543–1616), at the time of the unstable presence of the *nanbanjin*, Japan became an interesting laboratory of cross-cultural, social, economic, political, linguistic and philosophical interactions. During this relatively short period of time –which ended abruptly and for this reason was even considered ephemeral by some historians<sup>4</sup> – small communities of Portuguese, Chinese and Dutch merchants and of Catholic missionaries, in particular the Jesuits, mutually experienced very heterogeneous forms of cross-cultural interactions with Japanese political, mercantile, military and religious communities.

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3 Between 1633 and 1639 until about 1860, the so-called *kaikin* (海禁 “maritime restriction”), which later became known as *sakoku* (鎖国 “chained country”), was decreed by the Tokugawa *bakufu*. This was a legal and administrative regime in which Japanese people were not allowed to leave the country, foreign trade depended on government authorization, and the Japanese kingdom was essentially closed to foreigners, with the exceptions strictly controlled by the government of the Ainu people of Hokkaidō, the Chinese, the Koreans, the Dutch merchants and the inhabitants of the Ryūkyū Islands. See Toby, “Reopening the Question of *Sakoku*: Diplomacy in the Legitimation of the Tokugawa Bakufu”. *Journal of Japanese Studies* vol. 3, no. 2 (Summer 1977), pp.323–363; Yonemoto, *Mapping Early Modern Japan. Space, Place and Culture in the Tokugawa Period (1603–1868)*. Berkeley; Los Angeles; London: University of California Press, 2003, pp.5–6.

4 Elison, *Deus Destroyed. The Image of Christianity in Early Modern Japan*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988, p.248; for a critical historiographical review of the periodization of the Kirishitan phenomena in Japan, see Higashibaba, *Christianity in Early Modern Japan: Kirishitan Belief and Practice*. Leiden, Boston & Köln: Brill, 2001, pp.xiii–xxxi.

## Merchants' Space and Places: Pitfalls of Anachronism

Although merchants' and missionaries' spaces and places were connected and in part overlapped, the way that merchants and missionaries conceived and experienced their space and places of action was remarkably different from that of missionaries. The case of Japan is no exception and provides a very interesting case study to analyse and disclose the strategies through which different communities of European agents related themselves to new places and peoples in early modernity.

At first, we will analyse the way in which Japan became part of transoceanic trading networks, at the time of the arrival of Portuguese merchants, and later of Spanish and Dutch traders. By contrasting Eurocentric and even nationalistic interpretations, we will show how the action of these European merchants was possible on the basis of a previous, independent, structural, economic transformation that affected Japan just a few years before the arrival of the Portuguese: the discovery of conspicuous silver mines that transformed Japan from a silver-importing country to one of the main silver-exporting countries in the world, in particular with respect to Ming China.

The details of the arrivals in Japan of the first groups of Portuguese merchants are relatively well-known. In summary, from around 1542–43 and more regularly from 1550s onward, Portuguese captains and merchants, often operating with Malaysian, Chinese and Indian crews, on-board western ships or Asian junks, entered and acted as intermediaries in the silver and silk trade between Japanese ports in the Kyūshū and the Pearl River Delta, where, starting officially in 1557, the port city of Macao was built, under license from the Chinese authorities of Canton (Guāngzhōu, in the Guangdong Province).

As evidenced by Portuguese archival sources and travel accounts, from about 1550 to 1639 the Portuguese *nau do trato* made an annual (irregular) journey from Macao to Hirado, and from around the 1570s to Nagasaki and other ports in the Hizen province, mainly transporting Chinese silk and firearms in exchange for Japanese silver. This Portuguese-run trade also included a plethora of subsidiary merchandise, partly from Europe or purchased in Africa, Persia, India and Maritime South-East Asia (the so-called 'Insulindia'), such as Indian textiles, spices, Persian carpets and horses, tigers, elephants and other rare animals.<sup>5</sup> In this regard, *nanban* folding screens (*nanban byōbu*), depicted by Japanese painters from around 1590 onward, provide extraordinary visual testimonies to Portuguese-run trade involving Japan. The nearly 90 extant *nanban byōbu* magnificently depict

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5 See the classic work: Boxer, *The Great Ship from Amacon. Annals of Macao and the Old Japan Trade 1555–1640*. Lisboa: Centro de Estudos Históricos Ultramarinos, 1959. Leitão, *Do Trato Português no Japão: Presenças que se cruzam (1543–1639)*. Master dissertation in History of the Portuguese Maritime Expansion, Lisboa, Faculdade de Letras da Universidade Clássica de Lisboa, 1994.

the departure from imaginary foreign port cities and the landing in Japan of the Portuguese ‘Black Ship’ (黒船 *kuro fune*), with its multi-ethnic crew, composed of Portuguese merchants, captains, and their attendants, including black slaves, and the Jesuits, together with the rich, exotic plethora of goods just described.<sup>6</sup>

After 1569, when the Jesuits obtained residence permits in Nagasaki from the *daimyō* Ōmura Sumitada (1532–1587), who had allowed the Jesuits to preach in his domain since 1562 and eventually converted to Christianity in June 1563, the well protected bay of Nagasaki, better connected with the rest of Japan than Yokosekura and Hirado, became the most important hub for Portuguese – until their definitive expulsion in 1639 – and, from 1641 onward, Dutch traders.

Within the framework of early modern Portuguese (and Dutch), overseas mercantile and military activities, territorial occupation was limited to a few port cities and fortresses, strategic for the logistic organization and protection of trade. This resulted in a reduced knowledge of the internal territories, mostly limited to the local specificities of the products to buy or to sell, based on the evaluation of the best possible “terms of trade” – the local exchange rates between different goods.<sup>7</sup> Settlements were limited to strategic coastal and island localities, mostly fortified sea or river ports, already inserted or to be inserted in long-distance and, more importantly, intra-Asian exchange networks, in the specific case of the Indian Ocean and the China Sea. This way of conceiving maritime space, rooted in medieval Mediterranean maritime trade strategies, rested on Afonso de Albuquerque’s (1453–1515) strategic vision and military transformation of the Indian Ocean into a *mare clausum* (closed sea) militarily controlled by the Portuguese armed fleets strategically located near the Mozambique channel, Aden, the Strait of Hormuz and the Strait of Malacca.<sup>8</sup>

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6 For their reproduction and brief description: Sakamoto; Narusawa; Izumi, et al., *Nanban byōbu shūsei (A Catalogue Raisonné of the Nanban Screens)*. Tōkyō: Chūōkōron Bijutsu Shuppan, 2008. (In Japanese; summary and list of screens also in English). For a recent historical reconsideration of nanban *byōbu*: Curvelo, *Nanban Folding Screens Masterpieces. Japan-Portugal XVIIIth Century*. Paris: Éditions Chandeigne, 2015.

7 These strategies for maritime trade were originally conceived and implemented by merchant companies in the Italian peninsula and Catalonia (in particular in the so-called “Maritime Republics”) active in the Mediterranean Sea basin during the Middle Ages. Medieval marine charts of the Mediterranean Sea basin, including the Black Sea, together with the *portolani* (sea rutters) and the *pratiche di mercatura* (“practice of commerce” or “merchant’s handbook”) are the clearest visual and textual witnesses of this maritime geo-economic mentality. See Evans (Ed.), *Francesco Balducci Pegolotti, La Pratica della Mercatura*. New York: Medieval Academy Books, 1936. Digital edition and transcription: [https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.medievalacademy.org/resource/resmgr/maa\\_books\\_online/evans\\_0024.htm](https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.medievalacademy.org/resource/resmgr/maa_books_online/evans_0024.htm). See also Nanni, *Ragionare tra mercanti. Per una rilettura della personalità di Francesco di Marco Datini (1335ca–1410)*. Pisa: Pacini, 2010, pp.87–133.

8 Subrahmanyam, *The Portuguese Empire in Asia, 1500–1700: A Political and Economic History*. Chichester, West Sussex, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012, pp.11–31 (“Early

The maps in Fernão Vaz Dourado's atlases perfectly display this strategic mercantile understanding of the world by providing synoptic pictorial representations of the port cities and military outposts strategic for the global trade. By joining together an average of ten maps that compose the eastern hemisphere of his marine atlases<sup>9</sup> – from the Portuguese and African coast to the Pacific Ocean to the East – Vaz Dourado's world unfolds like a long coastline, with two major clusters of archipelagos around Madagascar and Insulindia, that is Maritime South-East Asia, including the so-called Spice Islands. All together, they provide a clear example of the European merchants' political epistemology of vision: the gaze and the mind follow the coastal profiles and spread over the seas. Focusing our gaze on Maritime South-East Asia and having as a reference Vaz Dourado's manuscript atlas, its thirteenth and fourteenth maps are particularly important for understanding Japan's place in the Portuguese political-economic network connected to the *Estado da Índia*. The former reads: "Nesta folha esta lamcado do cabo de Comorim ate Iapam e ate Maluco com toda a terra ao norte" ("This sheet portrays (the area) from Cape Camorim<sup>10</sup> to Japan and the Moluccas with all the land to the North"), while the latter recites: "Nesta folha esta lamcado de Pegu ate a costa que descubrio o Magalhais com toda a costa da Iava" (This sheet portrays <the area from> Pegu to the coast discovered by <Fernão de> Magalhães<sup>11</sup> with the entire coast of Java).<sup>12</sup>

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Modern Asia. Geopolitics and Economic Change"). For a later jurisdictional debate on the nature of the seas, see Vieira, "*Mare Liberum vs Mare Clausum*: Grotius, Freitas, and Selden's Debate on Dominion over the Seas". *Journal of the History of Ideas* vol. 64 (2003), pp.361–377.

- 9 In the six extant manuscript atlases designed by Vaz Dourado, both their number and geographic coverage change slightly. See Garcia, "Comparison of Fernão Vaz Dourado's 1571 Atlas with his atlases dating from 1570, 1575 and c.1576." João Carlos Garcia (Ed.), *Atlas universal, 1571*. Barcelona: Moleiro, pp.62–74.
- 10 The southernmost promontory of the Indian sub-continent, in present day Tamil Nadu.
- 11 Ferdinand Magellan (c.1480–1521).
- 12 Both maps reveal strong similarities with the cartographic models of other Portuguese cartographers, notably João de Lisboa (Lisbon, Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo, Coleção Cartográfica n°166: *Livro de Marinharia*, c. 1560), Lázaro Luís (Lisbon, Academia das Ciências de Lisboa, MS-14-11563: [Nautical Atlas of the World]), Sebastião Lopes (Chicago, Newberry Library, Ayer Ms. map 26: [Nautical Atlas of the World], c. 1565) and Spanish cartographers, notably Bartolomé Olives (Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Urb.lat.283: [Nautical Atlas of the World], c. 1562). For a detailed description, reproduction and analysis of Fernão Vaz Dourado's, maps, see Garcia, op. cit., pp.126–133.



**Fig. 1.** Fernão vaz Dourado, ‘This sheet portrays [the area] from Cape Comorim to Japan and the Moluccas with all the land to the North’, in *Idem*, [Maritime Atlas], ink and colours on vellum, 54.2 × 41.1 cm (bifolium), Goa (?), c. 1570. San Marino (CA), Huntington Library, HM 41, twelfth map. © Huntington Library

Taken together, the series of Vaz Dourado’s nine maps covering the north and south Atlantic, Brazil, Africa, Asia including the Philippines and Japan clearly shape the Portuguese empire’s, and later the VOC’s and WIC’s space of action as a network of interconnected fortresses and exchange nodes, distributed on a world scale according to a logic of mutual protection.<sup>13</sup> It is essential to emphasise that the analysis of the overall cartographic semiosis of these maps reveals a space epistemology based on the combination of the linear model of the sea routes and the insular model of fortified ports, precisely conceived and represented as islands, having the function of strategic exchange and protection nodes that structure and shape maritime spaces.<sup>14</sup>

13 For a digital synoptic reconstruction of the Vaz Dourado’s world, see Garcia, *Ibidem*, pp.94–97.

14 On the Dutch overseas mercantile space see: Zandvliet, ‘Mapping the Dutch World Overseas in the Seventeenth Century. David Woodward (Ed.), *The History of Cartography*. vol. 3 (Part 2). *Cartography in the European Renaissance*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007, pp.1433–1462. Available online in open-access at:

The mercantile “maritime space between,” sailed by Portuguese ships in South-East Asia, was structured on four major sea ports: Malacca, Macao (serving Canton, now Guǎngzhōu), Hirado, and Nagasaki. By looking carefully at Vaz Dourado’s maps, it becomes clear that well before the so-called Iberian Union (1580–1640), also the Philippines, in particular the port-city of Manila, and the Eastern Pacific basin, became active nodes of the Portuguese-Iberian maritime network in South-East Asia.

From the Portuguese perspective, far from being perceived and thought of as an isolated kingdom, (Southern) Japan – in particular the western and southern coasts of the Kyūshū island – were perceived as the eastern border of an articulated and complex commercial network. It is fundamental to highlight that the outer border of Maritime South-East Asia, on the basis of knowledge of, and taking advantage of pre-existing routes that bound China to Japan, the Portuguese aspired to enter the profitable routes of often “illegal” Japanese and Malay navigations – illegal, in the sense of ‘not authorized navigations’, with the goal of avoiding taxation and government control imposed by the Chinese and Japanese tally systems. Since the mid-sixteenth century, the cartographic efforts of “mise en carte” of the ports of Kyūshū by the Portuguese merchants and cartographers, later followed and amplified by Dutch merchants and cartographers, was mainly directed towards inserting Japan into the articulated commercial networks of South-East Asia, and not the fully anachronistic “mapping of Japan”.<sup>15</sup>

Therefore, if the arrival of Portuguese merchants in Japan appears as a further eastern projection of the Lusitanian navigations in Maritime South-East Asia, it is nevertheless fundamental to overcome simplistic traditional historical Eurocentric interpretations, which overlook the fact that the sea route that bound Macao with Japan for nearly 100 years found its main *raison d’être* in the coeval transformation of Japanese economic dynamics, which were independent from the European agencies.

Quite remarkably, Portuguese merchants landed in Kyūshū just 20 years after the Japanese kingdom became, from a silver-importing country, a relevant silver-exporter to China and Korea. This crucial economic transformation was a

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[https://www.press.uchicago.edu/books/HOC/HOC\\_V3\\_Pt2/HOC\\_VOLUME3\\_Part\\_2\\_chapter46.pdf](https://www.press.uchicago.edu/books/HOC/HOC_V3_Pt2/HOC_VOLUME3_Part_2_chapter46.pdf). Cattaneo, “Cosimo III and the Global World of the Mid-17th Cent. Through the Carte di Castello collection”. Cattaneo; Corbellini, *The Global Eye. Dutch, Spanish and Portuguese maps in the collections of the Grand Duke Cosimo III de’ Medici*. Florence, Lisbon: 2019, pp.19–33. For a complete digital, cartographic and documentary reconstruction of the overlapping places and spaces of the Portuguese, Dutch and Spanish expansions, consult *The Atlas of Mutual Heritage* – Den Haag: *Nationaal Archief* (Dutch National Archives): <http://www.atlasofmutualheritage.nl/en/>.

15 In this regard, most of the publications that aspire to trace the history of the cartographic representations of Japan – this also happens with many other kingdoms or geographic realities – do not generally capture and do not allow to grasp, instead, this network dimension.

consequence of the discoveries and full exploitation, since 1526, of the silver mines of Iwami Ginzan, near the city of Ōda, in Shimane Prefecture, on the western side of the island of Honshū, and since 1542, of Ikuno, near the city of Asago, in the prefecture of Hyōgo, in Eastern Honshū. The mines contributed substantially to the economic development of Japan and south-east Asia in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, prompting the mass production of silver and gold that was shipped to Korea and China.<sup>16</sup> On the one hand, these events are extremely relevant for understanding Portuguese (and later also Dutch) merchants' specific agencies in Japan; on the other, they enable one to place Japan in the early modern global scenario, on the structural basis of the global flows of precious metals toward Ming China.<sup>17</sup>

At the beginning of the seventeenth century, at the apogee of the trade managed by the Portuguese by means of the *nau do trato* between Macao and Nagasaki, the total production of Japanese silver reached 38 tons, corresponding to a third of the entire world extraction. This impressive figure explains the commercial importance of Japan with respect to intra-Asian mid-sixteenth-century Portuguese trade routes, as well as the attempts at diplomatic reconciliation after their definitive expulsion in 1639. It also highlights and frames the relevant place of Japan in the first global circulation of precious metals, from 1550s onward. In brief, it was within this economic conjuncture that, starting from around 1560s–1570s, Japan and China came to be seen in both hemispheres divided by the Tordesillas and Zaragoza Line, the Iberian *raya*, as crucial commercial objectives. This became a key issue for the Iberian empires especially at the time of the union of the crowns, when Japan and China – viewed by the Europeans as the two most populated, wealthy, solid, organized, and powerful world kingdoms<sup>18</sup> – became the most desired Asian targets also by missionary orders: in particular, the Jesuits.<sup>19</sup>

This global framework, whose focus was Ming China, is essential not only to better understand the complexity and non-linearity of the economic and political

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- 16 Flynn; Lee, “East Asian Trade before/after 1590s. Occupation of Korea: Modeling Imports and Exports in Global Context”. *Asian Review of World Histories* vol. 1, no. 1 (2013), pp.117–149. The “Iwami Ginzan Silver Mine and its Cultural Landscape” became a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2007: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1246/>.
- 17 Brown, “The Importation of Gold into Japan by the Portuguese during the Sixteenth Century”. *Pacific Historical Review* vol. 16, no. 2 (1947), pp.125–133; Flynn; Giraldez, “Silk for Silver: Manila-Macao Trade in the 17th Century”. *Philippine Studies* vol. 44, no. 1 (1996), pp.52–68; Tremml-Werner, *Spain, China and Japan in Manila, 1571–1644: Local Comparisons and Global Connections*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2015.
- 18 Ollé, *La invención de China: percepciones y estrategias filipinas respecto a China durante el siglo XVI*. Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz Verlag, 2000.
- 19 The bibliography is very extensive. See Standaert (Ed.), *Handbook of Christianity in China*, Volume One: 635–1800. Leiden: Brill, 2001; Mullins (Ed.), *Handbook of Christianity in Japan*. Leiden: Brill, 2003.

scenarios in which European merchants and, indirectly, Catholic missionary orders were involved, but also to highlight the anachronism and the limits of both Eurocentric and, even worse, nationalistic approaches, to the study of interactions between European agents (merchants and also missionaries, though for different reasons) and the Japanese economic, military and political elites in the early modern age. With regard to this, nationalistic approaches such as “Portugal-Japan,” rather than “Spain-Japan,” “Holland-Japan” or even and quite imaginatively “Italy-Japan” taken as analytical models, express instances that would emerge only much later, in the framework of nineteenth-century diplomacy, following the Meiji Revolution, and obscure the complexity and non-linearity of the economic and political scenarios in which European mercantile and missionary communities were active. Their actions were directed to the broader and more fluid contexts of Maritime South-East Asia; Japan was relevant to them as part of these networks, not in the anachronistic, allegedly linear connection with Lisbon, Seville, Madrid, Rome or Amsterdam.

## Missionary Space and Missionaries’ Places

Compared to the needs of the communities of European merchants and soldiers, missionaries urgently needed to understand the places and the space in which they were active, well beyond the port-cities to which they were carried by Chinese or Malayan junks – as in the case of Francisco Xavier, S.J. (1506–1552) and his companions in 1549 – or by Portuguese ships, the *nau do trato*, that – although irregularly – had linked Macao with Hirado and Nagasaki, since the mid-sixteenth century, once a year.

Although fully, or at least largely dependent on the Portuguese ships, the mercantile connections and the reticular logistical infrastructure of the *Estado da Índia* and the financial support of the Portuguese Crown through the *Padroado* (Royal Patronage), missionaries had different needs, visions and perception of both the places and the overall space of the mission with respect to European merchants and soldiers. Undoubtedly, since the beginning of the mission of Japan, there was a structural contiguity between merchants and missionaries. Xavier’s famous first visit to Japan in 1549 was inspired also by Captain Jorge Álvares’ *Informação do Japão* (Report about Japan) that Xavier received around 1546–47, when the Portuguese captain returned to Malacca after visiting Japan.<sup>20</sup> Although Álvares’ report is surprisingly detailed and includes descriptions of religious aspects and

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20 *Documentos del Japón*, vol. 1 (1547–1557). Juan Ruiz-de-Medina, S.J. (Ed.). Roma: Instituto Histórico de la Compañía de Jesús, 1990, pp.4–24 (henceforth *Documentos*). A digital edition is available on-line for free at the The Jesuit Historical Institute (Institutum Historicum Societatis Iesu – IHSI): <http://www.sjweb.info/arsi/en/publications/ihsi/monumenta/>. English translation: Willis, “Captain Jorge Álvares and Father Luís Fróis S.J.: Two Early Portuguese Descriptions of Japan and the Japanese”. *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, Third Series, vol. 22, no. 2 (2012), pp.391–438 (pp.393–400).



rituals of Japan as well as some glimpses of the daily life of the Japanese people, even distinguishing between female and male habits, his knowledge is admittedly limited to a few port cities.<sup>21</sup> If on the one hand, we observe a consistent overlap between the space and places of the Portuguese mercantile and military presence and those of the religious orders' missionary practices (at first the Jesuits, later on, as of the 1590s, followed by the Franciscans, the Dominicans, the Augustinians, the Carmelites, just to mention only the main orders active in Asia), however the way in which these places and the overall space were conceived and experienced by missionaries was almost antithetical with respect to merchants and soldiers. Port cities, like those within or connected to the *Estado da Índia* – to be understood as a space that included both territories under the jurisdiction of the Portuguese crown as well as a system of trade routes run by the Portuguese merchants and officers that comprised a multiplicity of local Asian maritime networks<sup>22</sup> – were perceived by missionaries not only as landing points and places of residence, but rather as points of departure, from where missionary activities could be organized and projected to the broader inland territories of the kingdoms in which they were operating. In order to support and organise their religious proselytism, missionaries had to figure out and understand the human, political, economic, linguistic and cultural geography of the places in which they carried out the mission, in a much more pressing and thorough way with respect to merchants and soldiers.

In my analysis, I would like to emphasize the missionary practices that led small communities of Jesuits in cooperation with, if not guided by, their Japanese interlocutors, to develop the first European attempts at drawing a (Catholic) cultural and political geography of Japan based on the learning, teaching and translation of two European languages (Portuguese and Latin) and two Asian languages (Japanese and Chinese), connecting three different systems of writing – the *kanji*, the *kana* and the Latin alphabet – previously disconnected and reciprocally unknown to the communities involved in the encounter, for the first time in history. These linguistic practices not only were developed as closely interconnected and interdependent actions, but together with preaching, teaching and conversion, were fundamental priorities of Jesuit missionary activities. They not only were

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21 Consider this passage from Álvares's *Relação*: "2. Regarding ports on the mainland, I found out nothing, though I refer merely to ports. The Japanese say that there are many noble townships on the mainland within a radius of half a league to one and a half leagues around Miyako [Kyōto]. Certain Portuguese have visited the straits near Miyako, and they confirm that this is true. [...] 44. I have seen one of their idols. They are very ugly and very badly proportioned. These priests are known as *cho*. Finally, in all this territory as far as Miyako (which we have reached) there is only one language".

22 On the *Estado da Índia* (State of India) see Boxer, *The Portuguese Seaborne Empire 1415–1825*. London: Hutchinson and Co. Ltd., 1969 pp.39–40; Thomaz, *De Ceuta a Timor*. Lisboa: Difel, 1994, pp.207–240. For a critical reassessment, see: Bethencourt; Curto, *Portuguese Oceanic Expansion 1400–1800*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007 (in particular 'Part II. Politics and Institutions').

crucial events for the development of the Jesuit mission in Japan, but resulted in the first European aggregation of consistent linguistic, cultural, geographic and political knowledge about Japan, in the tumultuous years that brought to the political unification of the kingdom under Oda Nobunaga, Toyotomi Hideyoshi and Tokugawa Ieyasu, who finally established the *bakufu* of Edo. These linguistic interactions also reveal a different approach to otherness, bearing relevant cultural consequences that affected the very way the people of the world began to be considered, at the interface of early modern long-distance trade and religious proselytism in the frameworks of the Iberian Empires.

As early as 1549, when Cosme de Torres (1510–1570) and Francisco Xavier, accompanied by the Brother Juan Fernández (c.1526–1567) landed at Kagoshima, followed in 1553 by a second group of Jesuits that included Baltazar Gago (c.1520–1583), Xavier and Fernández went from Southern Kyūshū to Hirado, in the North of Kyūshū, thence to Yamaguchi, in the Chūgoku region, and on to Kyōto, crossing nearly half of the kingdom.<sup>23</sup> Since the very beginning of the mission of Japan, missionaries' travels are in striking contrast with merchants' confinement in a few port cities in the Kyūshū. In 1551, on the way back to southern Japan, at Yamaguchi, Xavier and Torres, helped by Fernández as interpreter, were involved in famous harsh disputations with the local communities of Buddhist monks, the *bonzes* (from the Japanese *bōzu* “master of the cell” or *bōshi* “master of the law”), at the abode of the *daimyō* of Bungo, Ōtomo Yoshishige (1530–1587), on such questions as the nature of God, the creation, the nature and immortality of the soul.<sup>24</sup> Xavier, through the (mis)translation of Anjirō – a Japanese uneducated renegade he met in Malacca in 1547, who went with him to Goa, eventually becoming in 1548 the first Japanese to learn the first rudiments of the Portuguese language and to be baptized with the Christian name of Paulo da Santa Fé (Paul of the Holy Faith) – is credited to have translated the first (lost) Japanese versions of a *Doutrina Cristã* (Christian Doctrine) and the *Declaração de Fé* (Creed), that is a catechism and an explanation of the Christian (Catholic) Creed, respectively, conceived by Xavier.<sup>25</sup> In the

23 Schurhammer, *Francis Xavier: His Life, His Times*. vol. IV, *Japan and China 1549–1552*. Rome: Jesuit Historical Institute, 1982.

24 Rubiés, “Real and Imaginary Dialogues in the Jesuit Mission of Sixteenth-Century Japan”. *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, vol. 55 (2012), pp.447–494.

25 While in Goa, Anjirō learned Portuguese and, according to his letter to Loyola of 29 November 1548, prepared a first draft of a (lost) translation into Japanese of St. Matthew's gospel, “to fix it in his memory”: “Praza a elle por sua misericordia que lhe naao seja ingrato a tanto beneficio, e engenho, e memoria, e vontade, que me da, segundo dizem os padres desse colegio de minha habilidade, e impressão que fazem em mj as cousas do senhor, e em tam breve tempo saber tambem ler, e escrever, e ter capacidade para receber doutrina tam alta e tela na memoria, que he o Evangelho de S. Matheus, o qual escrevi em minha letra de Iapão, e em pontos para melhor me ficar, a qual letra ou caracteres verão vossas Reverencias [...] de Goa do Collegio de S. Paulo, a 29 de Novembro de 1548, Servo Paulo da santa fee. Gitpon (sic)”, in *Carta de Paulo Iapão, (que antes de se converter a nossa santa fee se chamava Angêro) para o*

first letters that Xavier sent to his confreres, he observed that “Japanese write in a very different manner from other nations, beginning at the top of the page and writing straight downwards to the bottom. I asked Paul the Japanese why they did not write as we do? Why, rather, said he, do not you write as we do? The head of a man is at the top and his feet at the bottom, and so it is proper that when men write it should be straight down from top to bottom.” When he left Japan, he wrote, “Japan is a very large empire entirely composed of islands. One language is spoken throughout, not very difficult to learn.”<sup>26</sup>

In 1555, just a few years after the departure of Xavier from the Kyūshū toward Goa, to prepare a new mission to China, where he eventually died,<sup>27</sup> Gago had already noted the serious and profound misunderstandings concerning the Christian creed that had arisen from the first attempts of translating into Japanese the main Christian foundational concepts, dogmas, and the very history and eschatology of Christianity. Gago realized that there were specific Japanese words used by Xavier and his companions that were Buddhist (*Shingon*) terms.<sup>28</sup>

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*padre mestre Inacio de Loyola fundador da companhia de IESU em Roma e mays Padres e Irmãos da mesma companhia, escrita em Goa a, 29 de Novembro de 1548. Esse Paulo era homem casado, in Cartas que os Padres e Irmãos da Companhia de Iesus q[ue] andão nos Reinos de Iapão escreuerão aos da mesma Companhia da Índia e Europa des do anno 1549 até o de [15]66. Impressas por mandado do... Senhor Dõ Ião Soarez, Bispo de Coimbra. Conde de Arganil. &c... Em Coimbra: em casa de Antonio de Marijs, 1570, f. v-x.*

- 26 Francisco Xavier, S.J., “To my Holy Father in Jesus Christ, Ignatius, at Rome”, Cochín, January 29<sup>th</sup>, 1552. Translated into English in Coleridge (Ed.), *The Life and Letters of St. Francis Xavier*. 2 Vols. London: Burns & Oates, 1872, vol. 2, Letter LXXXVI, p.331 (for the whole letter, pp.331–350).
- 27 Xavier died in 1552 in the island of Shangchuan, some fifty miles west of Macao, in the bay of Canton.
- 28 According to Gago, there were at least 55 Christian concepts and words that should have not been translated using Japanese adopted terms, as previously done by Xavier. Among the Japanese words that should have not been used to translate Christian terminology there were Buddhist terms such as *Dainichi* (the celestial Buddha Mahāvairocana, or Dainichi Nyorai, in Japanese), *jōdo* (Pure Land), *jingoku* (Hell), *ten'nin* (heavenly persons, that is the angels in Xavier's intention), *tamashi* (soul). Their use had created great misunderstandings, leading the Japanese to believe that Christianity was just another Buddhist sect reaching Japan from *Tenjiku* (天竺; 天竺), the Indian sub-continent, the real and somehow mythological place of origin of Buddhism. See Higashibaba, op. cit., 2001, pp.1–11 (p.9) and App, *The Cult of Emptiness. The Western Discovery of Buddhist Thought and the Invention of Oriental Philosophy*. Rorschach; Kyoto: UniversityMedia, 2012, pp.11–22 (pp.13–14). See also Schurhammer, *Das Kirchliche Sprachproblem in der Japanischen Jesuitenmission des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts: ein Stück Ritenfrage in Japan*. Tokyo: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Natur- und Völkerkunde Ostasiens, 1928 and Cieslik: “Balthazar Gago and the Japanese Christian terminology”. *Missionary Bulletin*, vol. VII (May-June 1954) – URL: <<https://web.archive.org/web/20070101170902/http://pweb.sophia.ac.jp/~britto/xavier/cieslik/ciejmj02.pdf>>.

Higashibaba, Paramore, App, among other scholars, and in this volume, the essays of D’Ortia, Dolce and Pinto, and Pinto dos Santos, have already investigated the theological and doctrinal Christian and Buddhist aspects of these interactions. While their works highlight the intrinsic complex cultural dynamics that have characterized and conditioned the attempts of cultural translation between heterogeneous religious systems, in my analysis I would like instead to emphasize the practices that led small communities of Jesuits and Japanese acolytes to the first attempts at learning and mutually translating languages, formerly disconnected and mutually unknown, while at the same time reconfiguring each other’s positions in a world had mutually become much wider over the course of nearly half a century.

### Missionaries and a New Form of Mapping: Languages

At this regard, one of Baltazar Gago’s letter sent from Hirado to his confrères in Malacca, Goa and Europe on 23 September 1555, eventually published in Coimbra in 1570 and in Évora in 1598, is particularly significant.<sup>29</sup> The general narrative of Gago’s letter is grounded on the conventional topos of the condemnation of the devil and evil supernatural spirits, the primary causes of Japanese idolatrous beliefs and practices.<sup>30</sup> By using this pervasive register of demonology, Gago

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29 Lisbon, Biblioteca da Ajuda, ms. 49-IV-49, ff. 248–252: “Copia de hu<m>a carta que escreveu o P. Balthazar Gago, de Fyrando, reyno de Japão, p<a> os irmãos da India e Portugal, de 1555”. The long letter is published in *Documentos*, vol. 1 (1547–1557), Doc. 114, pp.552–572. Ancient, although incomplete, editions include the “Carta do Padre Baltasar Gago de Iapão pera os Irmãos da Companhia de Iesu, da India e Portugal, a 23. de Setembro, de 1555”, in *Cartas que os Padres e Irmãos da Companhia de Iesus q[ue] andão nos Reynos de Iapão escreuerão aos da mesma Companhia da India e Europa des do anno 1549 ate o de 66... Impressas por mandado do... Senhor Dõ Ioão Soarez, Bispo de Coimbra. Conde de Arganil. &c...* Em Coimbra: em casa de Antonio de Marijs, 1570, ff. 108v-118. Another partial edition is available in *Cartas que os Padres e Irmãos da Companhia de Iesus escreveram dos Reynos de Japão & China aos da mesma Companhia da India & Europa desde anno de 1549 até o de 1580*. Em Evora por Manoel de Lyra, Anno de MDXCVIII [1598], vol. 1, f. 38v-41v. Both editions are available in open access digital format at the Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal: <<https://purl.pt/15113/3/>>; <<http://purl.pt/15229>>.

30 “O demonio esta arreygado nesta terra e se sustenta em dez seytas que trouxe da China: de huma parte pregão huns que hay lugar de pena, e de descanso: fazem o officio de finados, rezão livros em coro entoados, e fazem mil cousas vãs, e dão de comer aos mortos, e de beber, enterrânos com suas cerimonia. Tem mosteiros com suas celas, tem sinos, andão vestidos de pardo.e preto, como religiosos, e outras infinitas cousas: outros ministros do demonio sam dados a contemplação, pera se quietarem no engano que tem, que he dizere(m)que não hay nada.f.nem Criador, nem alma nem demonio, nem cousa alguma depois da vida...”, *Cartas* (Coimbra, 1570), f. 114v.

perceived and described Japan as a kingdom immersed in the darkness induced by the absence of the true faith.<sup>31</sup> In this obscure context, the (very few) Jesuits tried to bring the light of Christian faith and truth. After indulging on this conventional trope for a few pages, Gago provided one of the first European extant graphic descriptions of the Japanese systems of writing and accompanied his description with six examples: *alma* (soul): たま志ゐ (tamashii): 魂; *besta* (animal): ちく志やう (chikushau – “chikushou”): 畜生; *sol* (sun): ひ (hi): 日; *lua* (moon): つき (tsuki): 月; *ceos* (heaven): てむ (temu – “ten”): 天; *homem* (man): ひと hito: 人.

By providing six words in Portuguese translated into Japanese through the *kanji* (漢字, the logographic Chinese characters used by Japanese learned writers), Gago aimed at showing the “imperfection” of the Japanese language: once combined with other *kanji*, the same *kanji* could refer to different terms, concepts or things. Gago gives the example of *alma* (soul), whose *kanji* could also mean “devil,” according to him.<sup>32</sup> In the following, adjacent page of the letter, Gago displayed instead the same six Portuguese words written in *hiragana* (one of the two Japanese phonetic syllabaries, made of 46 basic symbols, with cursive shapes). It is important to highlight that words written in *kanji* and *hiragana* printed in Gago’s letter are graphically consistent: the printers of the workshop of António de Mariz in Coimbra (fl. 1556–1599) managed to carefully reproduce the two writing systems without any distortion.<sup>33</sup>

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- 31 Behringer, “Demonology, 1500–1660”. Ronnie Po-chia Hsia (Ed.), *Cambridge History of Christianity*, Volume 6, *Reform and Expansion 1500–1660*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007, pp.406–424. (p.407). “After the Reformation, demonology seemed to have become a universally accepted branch of theology. Because it involved collecting and discussing ancient, medieval, and contemporary stories of extraordinary events, demonology also turned into a science of the exotic and the unusual to explain those phenomena in society and nature that could not easily be understood by the paradigms of Aristotelian physics, Galenic medicine, Thomistic theology, or common sense”.
- 32 “Estas letras de Iapão primeiras, tem duas sinificações, e algumas dellas mais, como esta primeyra de riba, que quer dizer Alma, também quer dizer Demonio”, *Cartas*. f. 117r.
- 33 On António de Mariz, “printer of the univeristy of Coimbra” (*impressor da universidade*), see Almeida, “A mobilidade do impressor quinhentista português António de Mariz”, 2007 – <http://www.cepese.pt/portal/pt/publicacoes/obras/artistas-e-artifices-e-sua-mobilidade-no-mundo-de-expressao-portuguesa/a-mobilidade-do-impressor-quinhentista-portugues-antonio-de-mariz>.



**Figs. 2 and 3.** Letter written by Baltazar Gago S.J. in Hirado in 1555 displaying the two systems of Japanese writing, the *kanji* and the *hiragana*, together with the Latin alphabet. *Cartas que os Padres e Irmãos da Companhia de Iesus q[ue] andão nos Reynos de Iapão... do anno 1549 até o de 66...* Coimbra: em casa de Antonio de Marijs, 1570, ff. 108v–118. © Angelo Cattaneo; Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal

On the basis of the experience acquired by Xavier, Fernández and Torres, in connection with their Japanese interpreters as well as Japanese-Christian interlocutors, first of all Gago highlights the concrete possibility of learning, writing, speaking and translating the Japanese language into a European language. The two sets of the same six words written in *kanji* and *hiragana* proved that in Japan words and concepts could be expressed using two different writing systems that could be related to and expressed through the Latin alphabet. Although Gago did not name these systems, he

wrote that the first system – the *kanji* – was used by literates and the political-cultural élites, while the second – that of the *kana* – was instead more spread among the commoners.<sup>34</sup> According to Gago, the latter offered the advantage of “avoiding multiple meanings” and the possible confusion that could arise. He also added that these two combined characteristics convinced the Jesuits to choose to write and publish their books through the *kana*, or phonetic syllabary. Once the movable types printing press and the first sets of *hiragana* types, casted and bought in Lisbon in 1585, but arriving in Japan only in 1590, these first Jesuit works were either copied in manuscript form or as woodcut prints.<sup>35</sup> Gago was in fact explaining a more complex procedure: following the footsteps of Xavier’s first linguistic engagements and experiments to preach in Japanese by reading the phonetic transcription in the Latin alphabet of Anjirō’s Japanese (quite problematic) translations of his sermons, the Jesuits transcribed the phonetics of Japanese words and sentences by using both the Latin alphabet and the *hiragana* syllabary. Gago’s letter adds an important piece of information to understand the cultural dynamics at the beginnings of the cultural interaction between the Jesuits and their Japanese interlocutors: these double phonetic transcriptions were essential to begin the communication process between the missionaries and their local intermediaries. For some Jesuits – perhaps those more gifted with linguistic talent, or simply the more motivated to undertake language training – this primary linguistic intermediation resulted eventually in a progressive learning of the Japanese language, which gradually made them less dependent on their Japanese assistants. At the same time, their Japanese interlocutors were also involved in a similar learning process of the Portuguese language and, in some cases, even of Latin. Over the course of nearly 40 years, these concomitant processes of learning three languages in the context of Jesuit missionary schools in Japan and later in the Franciscan and Dominican schools in the Philippines, resulted in the printing, in Latin letters, of three monumental dictionaries, indisputable landmarks in the history of world linguistics: the *Dictionarium Latinum Lusitanicum, ac Iaponicum* (Amakusa, 1595), the *Vocabulario da lingoa de Iapam com a declaração em portugues* (Nagasaki, 1603/04), and the *Dictionarium sive thesauri linguae japonicae compendium* (Rome, 1632).<sup>36</sup>

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34 “São estas letras que se prezão os principaes de saber, estroutras abaixo sam letra que mays comumente se sabem, e não tem, nem soão mays que a primeyra sinificação, e nestas escrevemos os livros”, *Cartas* (Coimbra, 1570), f. 117r.

35 By following Valignano’s written instructions, Diego de Mesquita, S.J., who guided the four Japanese boys to Europe, had acquired in Lisbon the full equipment to organize and run a printing press with both Latin and *hiragana* movable types. See Uçerler, *Gutenberg Comes to Japan: The Jesuits & the First IT Revolution of the Sixteenth Century*. Edited and Revised Transcript, San Francisco, The Ricci Institute Public Lecture Series, September 2005, [www.ricci.usfca.edu/events/Ucerler.pdf](http://www.ricci.usfca.edu/events/Ucerler.pdf) (consulted 16 August 2020).

36 *Dictionarium Latino Lusitanicum, ac Iaponicum, ex Ambrosii Calepini volumine depromptum*. Amakusa, Collegio Iaponico Societatis Iesu, 1595 (facsimile

On the one hand, Gago implicitly asserted and confirmed the translatability of the Japanese language into a European idiom as well as the possibility of the mutual cultural translatability of both Buddhist and Christian systems of beliefs; on the other, he also highlighted the difficulties and pitfalls of both these linguistic and cultural translations. These two contradictory issues will remain inextricable throughout the circa 70 years of activity of the mission of Japan, even at the time of the publication of the *Dictionarium* in 1595 and of the *Vocabulario* in 1604. At this regard, Gago wrote:

These Japanese have some words with which we have been preaching the truth for a long time, which they use in their sects that they change because they want to treat the truth with words of deception and lies, giving them a misleading meaning. In this way, to all the words that we teach them as ours to indicate new things for them – since we need new words – and that they recognize as prejudicial to them, they give a different meaning in respect to what we mean. Thus, for example, for Cross, in their language they say Iumogi (*jumonji* 十文字), which is their letter in the form of a cross which means ‘ten’, and therefore to the careless people it seems that the Cross and their letter is the same thing. Therefore, at every turn, every word must be explained, or we must change the word, and there are more than fifty of these words that can do damage, but by specifying the meaning of their words and that of ours, we see the difference that exists, and we see that their words are unsuitable for explaining the things of God, and this can lead to a better understanding. I say this so that those who are among the pagans listen well to the explanations and weigh well the words.<sup>37</sup>

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edition: Tōkyō, Benseisha, 1979). *Vocabulario Da Lingoa De Iapam, con adeclaração em Portugues, feito por Algvnos Padres, E Irmaos da Companhia de Iesv*, Nangasaqui, anno M.D.C.III (facsimile edition: Tsukimoto Masayuki (ed.), *Nippo jisho: kirishitanban: karā einban. Vocablvario da lingoa de Iapam: Nagasaqui 1603–4*. Tōkyō: Bensei Shuppan, 2013). *Dictionarivm sive Thesavri Lingvae Iaponicae Compendivm. Compositum, & Sacrae de Propaganda Fide Congregationi dicatum à Fratre Didaco Collado Ord. Praedicatorum, Romae anno 1632* (Latin and Spanish). Digital edition: <http://dl.ndl.go.jp/info:ndljp/pid/2513086>. See Kishimoto, “The Adaptation of the European Polyglot Dictionary of Calepino in Japan: *Dictionarium Latino Lusitanicum, ac Iaponicum* (1595)”. Zwartjes; Altman, (Ed.), *Missionary Linguistics II / Linguística misionera II*, Amsterdam-Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2005, pp.205–223; Tollini, “Translation During the Christian Century in Japan. Christian Keywords in Japanese”. Nicoletta Pesaro (Ed.), *Between Texts, Beyond Words Intertextuality and Translation*. Venice: Ca’ Foscari, 2020, pp.13–25.

- 37 *Carta do padre Baltasar Gago, para os irmãos da Índia, e Portugal, a 23. de Setembro de 1555*, ff. 116 r-v: “[f. 116r] Tem estes Iapones algumas palavras por onde lhes pregavamos a verdade muyto tempo, as quaes elles usam nas suas seytaa, nas quaes depois que cay, logo as mudey: porque querer tratar a verdade com palavras de engano, e mentira, faziamo elles entendimento falso. De maneyra que em todas as palavras, que vejo, que lhe sam prejudiciaes, lhes ensino as nossas mesmas, porque alem das cousas, que sam novas, pera terem necessidade de palavras novas sam suas muyto defferentes no coração do que nos pretendemos, assi como acabado de lhe



In the context of the analysis of the history of the Jesuit mission in Japan and of the history of the translation of the Christian system of beliefs and of the coeval attempts of describing and analysing Buddhism,<sup>38</sup> Gago's analysis on the translatability and untranslatability of the Christian and Buddhist systems of beliefs, followed in 1556 by the *Sumário dos erros en que os gentios do Japão vivem e de algumas seitas gentílicas en que principalmente confiã* (Summary of the errors in which the Gentiles of Japan live and of some Gentile sects that they mainly trust)<sup>39</sup> reveals the crucial importance of the interlocution with Japanese converted Christians or assistants, in most cases left anonymous, with the exception of Xavier's assistant, Anjirō. Despite scant archival information provided by Jesuit letters on these crucial figures, a careful reading of primary sources reveal that their role was paramount to the cultural development of the missions and, in particular, for the mutual cultural mapping of both Japanese and European culture.

## Missionaries and Cosmography: Displaying the Space of Creation

In the third part of the essay I will focus on the long-distance journey of cosmographic ideas and representations, in particular with reference to the Christian Aristotelian-Ptolemaic *mundus*, that is the sub-lunar and heavenly world created by God, showing the process of transformative exchanges that the Aristotelian-Ptolemaic-Christian cosmologic vision went through from Medieval

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declarar, que quer dizer Cruz [f. 116v] chamamolhe eles em sua lingoa *Iumogi*, que he letra sua em feyção de cruz, que quer dizer dez, e assi parecêles aos simples, que a Cruz, e a sua letra, he o mesmo. Demaneyra que, ou he, que a cada passo, e sobre cada palavra se lhe avia de mudar a tal palavra, e desta maneyra mays de cincoenta palavras que poderão fazer dano: mas agora declarando lhes o fim daquelas palavras suas, e a peçonha que tem, e o coração das nossas vem a defferença que há, eque as suas palavras sam falsas pera tratar as cousas de Deos, e desta maneyra fazem muyto mais claro entendimento. Digo isto para que os que estão entre gentios olhem como declaração as cousas de Deos, e pesem bem as palavras. The English given here has been translated by Tollini, op. cit., p.16. A partial translation is also provided in Kaiser, "Translations of Christian Terminology into Japanese, 16<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> Centuries: Problems and Solutions". Breen; Williams (Ed.), *Japan and Christianity. Impacts and Responses*. London: Macmillan Press LTD, pp. 8-28 (p. 9). Gago's letter is partially translated into German in Schurhammer, *Das Kirchliche Sprachproblem in der Japanischen Jesuitenmission des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts: ein Stück Ritenfrage in Japan*, p.61.

- 38 On these topics, see D'Ortia, Dolce and Pinto essay as well as Girard's and Pinto dos Santos' essays in this volume and their bibliography.
- 39 *Sumario de los errores. Japón (1449)* in *Documentos*, vol. 2 (1558-1562) (1995), Doc. 124, pp.652-667 (transcription of the Portuguese version of the manuscript text held in the Biblioteca Nazionale di Roma, Fondo gesuitico 1482 n. 33 134, pp. 655-667).

and Renaissance debates and exegesis, to their reuse and reception in the context of the Christian missions in Japan and China.

Against interpretations that depict the cosmographic – written and visual – discourses that originated and developed in the context of the Jesuit Missions in Asia as something specific and original to early-modern culture, in particular the evangelization strategy of the Jesuits in Asia, we will briefly present the use of Aristotle's and pseudo-Aristotle's cosmographic ideas in medieval preaching and medieval theory of mission, highlighting the medieval roots of the use of cosmography, geography and cartography in the service of Christianity, either in ritual as well as in missionary contexts. In the light of these introductory remarks, I will then proceed to briefly analyse the specific re-configuration of the use of the Aristotelian-Ptolemaic ideas of the cosmos in Jesuit writings as "Catholic truth," *Catholica veritas*, to paraphrase Pedro Gómez's work, conceived and written around 1590 for the Jesuit missionary schools in Japan and China.

Together with the dogmas of the existence of the immortal soul, the incarnation of Jesus Christ, the history of salvation and resurrection, and the final judgement, the belief in the Creation *ex nihilo* and the incommensurability between the Creator and the creatures were among the dogmatic pillars of Christianity. Since Antiquity, on the basis of the Book of Genesis, Roman Christian scholars such as Tertullian (c.155 or 160–220),<sup>40</sup> Origen of Alexandria (c.185–c.254)<sup>41</sup> and Lactantius (c.250–c.325)<sup>42</sup> considered the Creation *ex nihilo* as the central discourse of Christianity. Since the twelfth century, after the translation of the *corpus aristotelicum* from Arabic into Latin – in particular, the *De caelo* (On the Heavens), the *Metereologica* (Meteorology) and the *Physica* (Physics) – the Jews' and

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40 "The object of our worship is the one God, who, by the Word of his command, by the reason of his plan, and by the strength of his power, has brought forth from nothing for the glory of his majesty this whole construction of elements, bodies, and spirits; whence also the Greeks have bestowed upon the world the name Cosmos", Tertullian (Quintus Septimius Florens Tertullianus), *Apology* 17:1 (197 CE).

41 "The specific points which are clearly handed down through the apostolic preaching are these: First, that there is one God who created and arranged all things and who, when nothing existed, called all things into existence", Origen of Alexandria, *The Fundamental Doctrines* 1:Preface:4 (c. 220–230 CE).

42 "Let no one inquire of what materials God made those so great and wonderful works, for he made all things out of nothing. Without wood, a carpenter will build nothing, because the wood itself he is not able to make. Not to be able is a quality of weak humanity. But God himself makes his own material, because he is able. To be able is a quality of God, and, were he not able, neither would he be God. Man makes things out of what already exists, because he is... of limited and moderate power. God makes things from what does not exist, because he is strong; because of his strength, his power is immeasurable, having neither end nor limitation, like the life itself of the maker", Lactantius (Lucius Caecilius Firmianus Lactantius), *The Divine Institutions* 2:8:8, (c. 304–310 CE).

Christians' belief in the divine creation of the entire cosmos *ex nihilo* was incorporated into and explained through the scholastic-Aristotelian Christian cosmology of the homocentric spheres of the four elements, the seven planets and the fixed stars, also through the intermediation of works such as the *Tractatus de sphaera* (On the Sphere of the World) of the Augustinian Johannes de Sacrobosco (c.1195–c.1256) and its numerous medieval and early modern commentaries. Very relevant in the context of this analysis are the editions edited by Alessandro Piccolomini (*La sfera del mondo*, The Spere of the world, first edition, Rome 1540) and by the Jesuit mathematician and cosmographer Christophorus Clavius (*In Sphaeram Ioannis de Sacro Bosco Commentarius* Commentary on the Sphere of Sacrobosco, first edition, Rome, 1570).<sup>43</sup> These two works were widely used for the scientific education of the Jesuits, in particular in the Roman College and the mission of China: Matteo Ricci quoted them in both visual and textual forms in the edition of his planisphere printed in Beijing in 1602, a map that had a wide circulation also in the context of the Jesuit mission in Japan.<sup>44</sup> There is no doubt that the main objectives of the missionaries were the evangelization and the spiritual salvation of the non-Christian communities they encountered, and not their scientific acculturation. Nevertheless, due to profound cosmological, cultural and philosophical differences that opposed to an immediate, direct transmission of the Christian system of beliefs, natural philosophy started to achieve an increasing importance in the interlocution between the missionaries and the learned communities of Buddhist monks and Confucian (or neo-Confucian) scholars. With regard to this, the Christian dogma and belief in God as creator *ex nihilo* of the universe, from which all other dogmas and articles of faith were deduced, was in deep contrast with Buddhist and Confucian cosmological visions. It was certainly not a new challenge in the context of the history of Christianity. Since Antiquity, Jewish and Christian theologians and philosophers were engaged in defending the dogma of the

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43 *Christophori Clavii Bambergensis In Sphaeram Ioannis de Sacro Bosco Commentarius*. Rome: apud Victorium Helianum, 1570. *La sfera del mondo di m. Alessandro Piccolomini di nuovo da lui ripolita, accresciuta, & fino a sei libri, di quattro che erano, ampliata, & quasi per ogni parte rinnouata & riformata*. Venice: Giovanni Varisco e compagni, 1566. For the medieval reception of the *De Sphaera*, see the classic studies: Thorndike, *The Sphere of Sacrobosco and its commentators*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1949; Grant, *Science and Religion, 400 B.C. to A.D. 1550. From Aristotle to Copernicus*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005, pp.165–224 (Chapter 6. The Medieval Universities and the Impact of Aristotle's Natural Philosophy; Chapter 7. The Interrelations between Natural Philosophy and Theology in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries).

44 Baldini, "Matteo Ricci nel Collegio Romano (1572–1577): cronologia, maestri, studi". *Archivum Historicum Societatis Iesu*, vol. 82, no. 1 (2013), pp.115–164; Cattaneo, "Shores of Matteo Ricci. Circularity of visual and textual sources and the Interrelation of the missionary experiences in Europe, Japan and China. Preliminary considerations". *The Bulletin of Portuguese-Japanese Studies* vol. 2 (2016), pp.7–22.

creation *ex nihilo* from pagan philosophers that questioned the mythic accounts of the Bible and the eternity of the Creator who transcended both time, space and its creatures, while creating continually.<sup>45</sup>

Cosmography was mobilized by the missionaries to sustain and structure their response to their interlocutors' critiques, by drawing on the Christian medieval speculative tradition of Aristotelian natural philosophy. Since at least the twelfth century, cosmography became a relevant part of Christian natural philosophy, endlessly debated in the universities and monastic schools. It was mainly the Dominican Albertus Magnus (Albert the Great, c.1200–1280) and Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274) and the Franciscan Roger Bacon (1214–1294) that in the thirteenth century harmonized the theology of Creation with the Aristotelian natural philosophy.<sup>46</sup> In the first part of the *Summa theologiae*, Thomas Aquinas distinctly defined the connections among theology, natural philosophy and cosmography. "The very order of things created by God – Saint Thomas writes – shows the unity of the world. For this, world is called one by the unity of order, whereby some things are ordered to others. But whatever things come from God, have relation of order to each other, and to God Himself, as shown above."<sup>47</sup> In this passage, Saint Thomas debated the substantial unity of the *mundus*, that is, of the entire universe created by God, distinguishing and analysing its individual parts, in the sublunary world and in the celestial one, distinct from each other and yet linked by unbreakable bonds. It is significant that this quote was painted in the hands of Saint Thomas at the base of an enormous fresco representing the Christian Aristotelian-Ptolemaic cosmos, depicted by Piero di Puccio (*pictor et musaicu [sic]*, that is painter and mosaicist, active in Orvieto and Pisa in the second half of the fourteenth century) on the north wall in the monumental Cemetery of Pisa as part of a monumental frescoed cycle about the Creation and stories from *Genesis*.<sup>48</sup>

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45 Keenan, "Refuting Some Buddhist Arguments about Creation and Adopting Buddhist Philosophy about Salvation History". Schmidt-Leukel (Ed.), *Buddhism, Christianity and the question of Creation: Karmic or Divine?*. Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2006, pp.69–80 (pp.73–74).

46 Grant, "How Theology, Imagination, and the Spirit of Inquiry Shaped Natural Philosophy in the Late Middle Ages". *History of Science* vol. 49, no. 1 (2011), pp.89–108.

47 *The Summa Theologica of St. Thomas Aquinas. Literally translated by the Fathers of the English Dominican Province. Second and Revised Edition*. London: Burns, Oates & Washbourne Ltd., 1920, p.I, q. 47, a. 3. The original quotation in Latin runs: "Ipse ordo in rebus sic a Deo creatis existens, unitatem mundi manifestat. Mundus enim iste unus dicitur unitate ordinis, secundum quod quaedam ad alia ordinantur." See S. *Thomae Aquinatis Summa theologiae*, cura et studio sac. Petri Caramello cum textu ex recensione leonina, pars prima et prima secundae, Turin: Marietti, 1952, p.334.

48 Caleca, "Costruzione e decorazione dalle origini al secolo XV". Baracchini; Castelnuovo (Ed.), *Il Camposanto di Pisa*. Turin: Einaudi, 1996, pp.13–48.



**Fig. 4.** Piero di Puccio (second half of the fourteenth century), *Theological Aristotelian cosmography with Saint Augustin and Saint Thomas Aquinas*. One of seven frescoes depicting the stories of the Genesis. Pisa, Monumental Cemetery, North wall, late fourteenth century, 715 × 810 cm. © Wikipedia commons

According to a tradition that persisted until the beginning of the modern age and was revitalized in missionary contexts, in particular in Asia and by the Jesuits, the composite field of knowledge of cosmography included and integrated elements of Christian cosmology and chronology (the Heavens and the Earth situated within the Creation story), astronomy and Ptolemaic astrology (the Earth placed in relation to the heavenly world of planets and stars), Aristotelian natural philosophy (the Earth placed in relation to other elements of the sublunar world, water, air and fire), and universal geography and chorography (the description of the world.)<sup>49</sup> At the time of the Jesuit missions in Asia, Abraham Ortelius (1527–1598) and Gerard Mercator (1512–1594) regarded cosmography as the second ranking

49 Brincken, “Mappa mundi und Chronographie”. *Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters* vol. 24 (1968), pp.118–186; Smet, “Les géographes de la Renaissance et la cosmographie”. *Album Antoine de Smet*, Brussels: Centre national d’Histoire des Sciences, 1974 (Publ. du Centre national d’Histoire des Sciences, IV), pp.149–160; Gautier Dalché, “Pour une histoire du regard géographique. Conception et usage de la carte au XV<sup>e</sup> siècle”. *Micrologus* Vol. 4 (1996), pp.77–103; Cattaneo, “European Medieval and Renaissance Cosmography: A Story of Multiple Voices”. *Asian Review of World Histories – The Official Journal of The Asian Association of World Historians*, vol. 4, issue 1 (January 2016), pp.35–81 [online, DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.12773/arwh.2016.4.1.035>]

field of knowledge, surpassed in importance only by theology. Mercator chose to become a cosmographer because he could not afford the doctoral training required to become a theologian, and cosmography was regarded by him as the closest field of study for those who could not undertake theological studies. If today, Mercator is mostly and quite anachronistically renowned as the mathematical scientist who conceived and designed in 1569 the so-called Mercator Projection “for the use of sailors,”<sup>50</sup> together with several other maps, atlases and globes, Mercator wrote extensively if not primarily on the creation, history and description of the universe, accompanying his cosmological and cosmographical work on the Earth with maps. Even his cosmographic and cartographic masterpiece, definitely his major scientific legacy, the *Atlas siue Cosmographicae meditationes de fabrica mundi et fabricati figura* (Atlas or cosmographic meditations on the creation of the world and its “constructed [visual] representation”) published posthumously by his son Romualdus in 1595, is revealing with regard to this.<sup>51</sup> The very concept of “cosmographic meditations” about the “created world” unequivocally places cosmography and cartography within a semantic area very close to religious contemplation: according to Mercator (and Ortelius), the world should be studied and represented precisely because it was created by God.<sup>52</sup> Mercator published extensively also on chronology, and his major intellectual enterprise in the last decades of his life was the publication of a synoptic edition as well as history of the Gospels, focusing on and spatializing their explicit and implicit geography.<sup>53</sup> His intellectual trajectory combined and mutually linked theology, chronology, geography and cartography. It is instrumental for understanding and deciphering the “cosmographic mind” of some of the missionaries active in the missions in Asia, who became more involved with cosmography and cartography, such as Matteo Ricci, Alessandro Valignano

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50 Gaspar; Leitão, “How Mercator Constructed His Projection in 1569”. *Imago Mundi* vol. 66, no. 1 (2013), pp.1–24.

51 See at this regard Gerard Mercator’s emblematic, posthumous work *Atlas siue Cosmographicae meditationes de fabrica mundi et fabricati figura* (Atlas or cosmographic meditations on the world and its “constructed representation”). Dusseldorf: Albertus Busius, 1595. On the concept of “cosmographic meditations” see Besse; Couzinet; Lestringant (Ed.), *Les méditations cosmographiques à la Renaissance*, special issue of *Cahiers V.-L. Saulnier* 26 (2008).

52 The Latin lemma *fabrica* in Mercator’s title refers to the creation; nevertheless, it also conveys and implies a meaning of “creation” as an ongoing process.

53 Mercator, *Chronologia, Hoc est temporum demonstratio exactissima, ab initio mundi, vsque ad annum Domini 1568. Ex eclipsibus et obseruationibus astronomicis omnium temporum, sacris quoque Biblijs, ... summa fide concinnata* (A chronology, a very accurate demonstration of recorded time from the beginning of the world until AD 1568. Elaborated from astronomical observations of eclipses for all times according to the Holy Bible). Koln: apud haereditas Arnoldi Birckmanni, 1569; Mercator, *Evangelicae historiae quadripartita monas sive harmonia quatuor Evangelistarum* (Gospel story of fourfold unit or the harmony of the four Evangelists). Duisburg: N.p., 1592.

(1539–1606), Niccolò Longobardo (1565–1655), Manuel Dias (1559 – 1639), and Carlo Spinola, among others.

In the context of the Catholic missions in Japan and China, within competitive interactions developed locally with both Buddhist monks and Confucian *literati*, the Aristotelian-Ptolemaic-Christian cosmography – I quote from Hui-Hung Chen – “paved the way for the comprehension of the Creator’s significance. It was an embodiment of the Renaissance tradition of cartography as the graphical representation of the universe, which included the idea of understanding nature through mathematical science as well as of understanding Heaven by visualization and sensibility.”<sup>54</sup> The conception and theological discernment of the Christian *Deus* as Creator was grounded on the Aristotelian-Ptolemaic cosmology and explained through the Christian natural philosophy of the spherical Heavens, made of the seven planets, surrounded by the outer circle of the fixed stars, and the sublunary world, with the four corruptible elements, placed toward the centre, provided the epistemological basis on which the missionaries could present themselves and ground their disputes with the learned communities of Buddhist priests and scholars.

The presentation and explanation by Matteo Ricci, Pedro Gómez, Fucan Habian and Carlo Spinola of the round Earth within the spherical heavens, composed of several celestial spheres – the core of the very notion and understanding of the universe, created by God – stand both at the centre of their criticism either of Confucianism, Buddhism, Daoism, or Shinto, while at the same time being one the pillars of their negotiation of the Christian message with these systems of beliefs.<sup>55</sup> According to the missionaries, Buddhism, Daoism, or Shinto, and even Confucianism, were likely to be incapable of explaining the foundations and origins of the universe. Their weak understanding of the notion of the spherical Earth placed at the centre of the spherical universe was among the reasons that brought missionaries to regard these pagan beliefs as being intellectually poorer and, as a consequence, totally incapable to lead human beings to salvation. Within a circular way of arguing, by ignoring that the universe had been created by God, lacking a clear understanding

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54 Chen, “The Human Body as a Universe: Understanding Heaven by Visualization and Sensibility in Jesuit Cartography in China”. *The Catholic Historical Review* vol. 93, no. 3 (2007), pp.517–52 (in particular pp.537–541). See also Mangani, “Misurare, calcolare, pregare. Il mappamondo ricciano come strumento meditativo”. Mangani, *Cartografia morale, Geografia, persuasione, identità*. Modena: Cosimo Panini, 2006, pp.123–134.

55 Paramore, “Early Japanese Christian Thought Reexamined. Confucian Ethics, Catholic Authority, and the Issue of Faith in the Scholastic Theories of Habian, Gomez, and Ricci”. *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* vol. 35, no. 2 (2008), pp.231–262; Paramore, *Ideology and Christianity in Japan*. London: Routledge, 2009 (in particular ch. 1, “Japanese Christian thought: doctrinal diversity or civilizational clash?” and ch. 2, “Japanese Confucianism and Japanese Christianity: parallels and interactions”, pp.10–50).

of the origins and shape of the universe, and by adding that they were also weaker, if not entirely wrong, in explaining and detailing from a mathematical perspective the way the heavens functioned (something made clear by the inconsistencies of the Chinese and Japanese Lunar calendar), for Catholic missionaries Buddhism, Daoism, or Shinto were manifestly idolatries that originated from the devil to confuse and divert men from salvation, even if Ricci acknowledged that Confucianism was instead a form of natural religion that, though incomplete and distorted, could provide the ground for a solid foundation of a new Christianity in China, in a manner similar to that of Stoicism with respect to early Christianity.<sup>56</sup>

These assumptions and their political-religious epistemology spread and even turned into a literary trope in Jesuit letters and reports, as in this eloquent “Annual letter from Japan” of 1605. Carefully studied by Daniele Frison, it reports a cosmographic theatrical dispute that took place among the Jesuits (Carlo Spinola, very much probably the hidden main character) and some bonzes in the presence of the *shōgun* Tokugawa Hidetada (1579–1632). A few passages follow, translated into English from the original source in Portuguese:

With the arrival to Miaco [Miyako 京 or 都, Kyōto] of the son of the Kubō [Tokugawa Hidetada, son of the Kubō 公方 Ieyasu] from Quantó [Kantō 関東] to take the rank of Xogun [...] there were numerous visits to our homes [the missions], especially in that of Miaco moved out of curiosity, as already mentioned, to see new things and some instruments we have in the house to show the movements of the planets and other European instruments ever seen in Japan; and with this occasion many of them listened to us and were baptized. [...] The Japanese listen to us with great interest and curiosity about astrology [astronomy] and mathematics and they take us into great consideration; and this causes great discredit and loss of earnings to their *bonzes* [Buddhist monks], because the things that we teach about the movement of the Sun, the Moon and the planets, the representation of the elements, and other teaching dealing with meteorology, thus being in complete accordance with reason and experience, just make them fall into the truth of these and make them realize how absurd are the opinions and stories of their *bonzes*.<sup>57</sup>

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56 See Ricci’s “On friendship” (*Dell’amicizia*), composed by Ricci in Nanchang, in November 1595, originally authored in Italian and later translated and printed in Chinese. Modern edition (Chinese and Italian): Ricci, *Dell’amicizia*. Filippo Mignini (Ed). Macerata: Quodlibet, 2005. This work aims at showing the moral compatibility and similarity between Greco-Roman and Christian Humanism with the Confucianism. At this regard, it is worth recalling Ricci’s definition of Confucius as “another Seneca”. “On friendship” was written in the very moment in which Ricci decided to assume the posture, habits and status of a Confucian *literatus*, literally taking off the clothes and abandoning forever the posture of Buddhist bonze that for almost 15 years, with Michele Ruggieri had kept, since their entrance in China in 1579 and 1582, respectively.

57 *Annua de Iapam do anno de 1605*, Rome, ARSI, Jap. Sin. 55, ff. 274v-275v. See Frison, “Il contributo scientifico del gesuita Carlo Spinola nel Giappone del primo Tokugawa”. *Il Giappone* 49 (2009), pp.15–16, and note 73 for the transcription.



The reference to Tokugawa Hidetada invites one to reconsider the complete veracity of the episode, in favour of a probable emphatic literary exaggeration through which the Jesuits active in Japan aimed at communicating the prestige of their interlocutors to their *confrères* in Macao, Goa and Europe and therefore, implicitly, claiming the success of their mission. Regardless of the complete veracity of what is narrated in this passage of the *Annua de Iapam* of 1606, it is nevertheless possible to detect the same circular argument that intertwines Buddhist inconsistencies in cosmology and astronomy with Buddhism's eschatological and moral falsehood, a trope also developed by Ricci to challenge and dispute with both his Chinese Buddhist and Confucian interlocutors.

An early seventeenth-century *nanban* folding screen, currently held in the Nanban Bunkakan Museum in Ōsaka, provides a visual representation of the “new things and some instruments [...] to show the movements of the planets” that the Jesuits had in their residences. In the upper left side, the screen displays a Jesuit residence placed in the outskirts of an unidentified, imaginary Japanese port city, inhabited by Portuguese and Japanese merchants and their multi-ethnic crews and slaves, Japanese women, Jesuit missionaries and novices, and also, on the right margin, a Franciscan friar, interacting with – supposedly, confessing – a Japanese man.<sup>58</sup>



**Fig. 5.** Moments of serene daily life in a Jesuit residence in Japan, emphasizing communication and dialogue among missionaries and their Japanese interlocutors. Detail from one of a pair of *nanban* folding screens, ink colours and gold on Japanese paper, early seventeenth century. © Angelo Cattaneo; Nanban Bunkakan, Ōsaka

58 Hino, “Nanban byōbu ni arawareru nanbanjin ni tsuite” 南蛮屏風にあらわれる南蛮人について (“The representation of nanbanjin in nanban byōbu”). 文学 *Bungaku* 52 (1984), pp.176–84. Fujikawa, “Studies on the Jesuit Japan Mission”, Brill online Reference Work: [http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/jesuit-historiography-online/studies-on-the-jesuit-japan-mission-COM\\_196472](http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/jesuit-historiography-online/studies-on-the-jesuit-japan-mission-COM_196472). I am particularly grateful to Fujikawa Mayu (I Tatti, Florence) for her advice and generous help.

The Jesuit residence comprises a *nanban-ji*, a wooden Christian church, built in the architectural style of a Buddhist temple, with a cross on the top of the *kawara* 瓦 roof. Beside the church, there is another building whose entrance is protected by a gate. On its left side, facing the street outside of the wooden building, a huge image is hung, or depicted on, a wooden panel.

Decorated at the top with three indigo lotus flowers, the wall panel displays a huge geometric representation consisting of eight concentric circles that fully occupy the left gate wall. By keeping to the proportion of the objects represented in the *byōbu*, the size of the circles would indicate a huge, nearly square depiction, at least about one and a half meters in size. The drawing with the eight concentric circles, traced with the compass, most likely represents an astronomical diagram of the Aristotelian-Ptolemaic cosmos. The representation could be an enlargement of the astronomical diagrams printed, for example in the comments to *De Sphaera*. Hanging at the entrance to the mission, facing the street, it was visible and on display for all those who approached the Jesuit mission, or simply walked along the adjacent street. If this interpretation was correct, the Aristotelian-Ptolemaic cosmology of the elementary and celestial concentric spheres, generated by the creative will of God, was one of the emblems of the Christian mission, together with the cross, visible on the top of the roof of the *nanban-ji*. The representation of the cosmological diagram could potentially also be a metonymy for an entire western planisphere, like those displaying the astronomical diagrams generally placed in the corners, as exemplified by Matteo Ricci's planispheres in Chinese.



**Fig. 6.** A huge image with eight concentric circles, possibly a representation of the Christian Aristotelian cosmos, hanging on the outer wall of a Jesuit residence in Japan. Detail from one of a pair of nanban folding screens, ink colours and gold on Japanese paper. Ōsaka, Nanban Bunkakan, early seventeenth century. © Angelo Cattaneo; Nanban Bunkakan, Ōsaka

In the front room (*zashiki* 座敷<sup>59</sup>) of the *nanban-ji*, a middle-aged Jesuit and a Japanese young man are seated one in front of the other, each of them holding a small size (seemingly western) book in their hands, in the act of reading or reciting a passage together. Another Japanese young man, wearing the black robe of the Jesuits – probably a Japanese brother or maybe a *dōjuku* 同宿, an assistant of the mission<sup>60</sup> – is bringing a cup of tea. Placed beside the *nanban-ji* there is a second building, the Jesuit residence as such. From inside a wooden grate window, a western Jesuit is talking with a Japanese middle-aged man, who is seated outside on the floor, wearing a *kamishimo* 袴 (vest and trousers) with a *kosode* 小袖 (a robe underneath them). Just beside, other four Japanese people, including a Japanese woman, are kneeling in the act of praying, and two of them, including the woman, are holding rosaries.

As a whole, the pictorial representation captures a moment of serene daily life in the sociality of the missions in Japan, emphasizing the aspects of communication, dialogue, the “being together” among the Jesuits, their young Japanese acolytes as well as Japanese male and female adults, within the permeable and welcoming space of the Jesuit residence. Beside the cosmological diagram, the accent is also placed on books: cognitive objects that the Jesuits shared, read and recited together with their Japanese brothers or assistants of the mission, the *dōjuku*.

The Christian-European cosmology of the Aristotelian spherical universe whipped up great debates not only in the period of the Jesuit presence, but also after their expulsion in 1614, as exemplified in a work such as the *Kenkon Bensetsu* 乾坤弁説 (Commentary on the Heavens and Earth), a treatise on Aristotelian cosmology and cosmography, written in Romanised Japanese in 1643 by a former Portuguese Jesuit, Cristóvão Ferreira (c.1580–1650), who, after being tortured, apostatized and took the Japanese name of Sawano Chūan.<sup>61</sup> Translated on the orders of Inoue Masashige (1585–1661), Inspector General against the “Pagans” – that is, the Christians – the treatise was also rewritten using *kanji* and commented on by Mukai Genshō (1609–1677), a distinguished Confucian scholar of Nagasaki, who discussed the Aristotelian theory in the light of Confucianism.<sup>62</sup>

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59 Valignano explains and uses this terms several times in his *Ceremoniale*. Cf. Valignano, *Il Cerimoniale per i missionari del Giappone. «Advertimentos e Avisos acerca dos Costumes e Catangues de Jappão»*. Josef Franz Schütte, S.J. (Ed.). Roma: Edizioni di «Storia e Letterature», 1946. (Reedition edited by Michela Catto, 2011).

60 *Dōjuku* 同宿 was the term that the Buddhists used for their novices. Jesuit missionaries used it to refer to “a lay acolyte who dedicated himself to evangelization by teaching the catechism and preaching.” López-Gay, “Las organizaciones de laicos en el apostolado de la primitiva misión del Japón”. *Archivum Historicum Societatis Iesu* vol. 36 (1967), pp.3–31;

61 Cieslik, “The Case of Christovão Ferreira”. *Monumenta Nipponica* vol. 29, no. 1 (1974), pp.1–54.

62 Hiraoka “The Transmission of Western Cosmology to 16th Century Japan”. Saraiva; Jami (Ed.), *The Jesuits, The Padroado and East Asian Science (1552–1773)*.

Significantly, there is also a brief dialogue, probably apocryphal, attributed to the renowned neo-Confucian master and academician Hayashi Razan and (probably surreptitiously) dated 22 July 1606, which sees Hayashi himself and Fukan Fabian as main protagonists and discussants on cosmological and cosmographical topics. The purpose of the short dialogue written from the point of view of neo-Confucianism was to demonstrate the inconsistency of the Christian cosmology of the spherical world, reinforced by the globes and armillary spheres brought to Japan by the Jesuit fathers and also displayed by them to the Japanese political and military authorities to ridicule local academicians and religious authorities.

The dialogue, included in Hayashi's complete work, translated into German in 1939 by Hans Müller and into English by George Elison in 1971, has recently been postdated to around 1640 and declared probably apocryphal by Kiri Paramore. In 1606, Hayashi Dōshun would have been only 23 years old and it is very unlikely that he was already recognized as a great Confucian master, as is evident from the dialogue. The date of 1606 also appears significant, coinciding with the episode of the cosmographic dispute between the *bonzes* and the Jesuit fathers, in the presence of Tokugawa Hidetada, mentioned in the *Annua* of 1606. The dialogue attributed to – or just featuring – Hayashi fits into the same conceptual paradigm, developed by the Jesuits, of recourse to the (presumed) scientific inconsistency of one's interlocutors, to show their moral unreliability.

This in synthesis is the content of the dialogue. On July 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1606, Hayashi Dōshun is invited to enter a Jesuit residence, where he meets the Japanese Fukan Habian – as already mentioned, a Buddhist who had converted to Christianity – and his Jesuit *confrères*. In the context of a warm welcome, after sitting down, Hayashi sees a globe on display in the room. Then, in a provocative way, he asks Fukan Habian to briefly illustrate the features of this device that displays the spherical earth. When the Japanese Jesuit responds by saying that the very notion of the spherical earth implies that unlike north and south, east and west are relative concepts and not physical realities, as evidenced by the navigations that have conducted the *nanban-jin* in Japan, Dōshun rejects this statement and the cosmology underlying the spherical world. In order to ridicule Fukan Fabian, he contrasts it with the neo-Confucian cosmology of Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130–1200), in which a substantially flat, non-spherical earth is encapsulated into a celestial hemispherical heaven. Dōshun claims that in Confucian cosmology, all cardinal points are univocally connected to well defined spatial and physical stable realities, and this quality makes Confucianism more reliable and rational than Christianity.

Hayashi Dōshun's critique goes on to address the heart of the question underlying the cosmographic dispute: the belief that the world was created by God, creator of all

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Singapore: World Scientific Publishing, 2008, pp.81–98. For the first translation and analysis into a European language of the *Kenkon Bensetsu*, see Santos, *A Study in Cross-Cultural Transmission of Natural Philosophy: the Kenkon Bensetsu*. Ph.D. Dissertation. Lisbon, New University of Lisbon, Faculty of Human and Social Sciences, 2012, pp. 197–308. [Open Access: <https://run.unl.pt/handle/10362/7468>].

things, visible and invisible. He does so, by referring explicitly to Matteo Ricci, in a quote that is worth reporting:

*Dōshun says:* The Jesuit Matteo Ricci argues, Heaven, earth, spirits and gods and the human soul would have a beginning but not an end. I don't believe this. If there is a beginning, there is also an end. It is believed that both, beginning and end, are missing. But it is not correct that there is a beginning, but no end. Confirmation is therefore necessary.

Fukan could not answer.

*Dōshun:* God created the universe etc etc, but who created God?

*Fukan:* God has no beginning and no end and the earth is created. Instead, on the contrary, that God is without beginning and end cannot be ignored. This is very clear.

Then, the discussion proceeds in the form of a very close debate on the fundamental cosmological principles of neo-Confucianism, the *ri* ("principle" or "pattern") and *ki* ("generative force"), as the generating primordial forces of the world. By expanding on Zhu Xi's neo-Confucian philosophy, according to Dōshun these forces precede and generate God too.<sup>63</sup> Then the dialogue rapidly moves towards conclusion. In this context, it is essential to report and highlight some passages of the two conclusions attributed to Hayashi:

Conclusion. The Jesuits argue that even under the earth there is heaven. If you dug through the earth and reach the bottom, you would surely see the sky, as if you were looking out of a well. For this reason, the falling stone stops in the centre of the earth and there is no top and bottom. This would be a confirmation [for the Jesuits] that the earth would be the centre of the heaven. However, I believe that all things between heaven and earth that I see have an above and a below. [...]

Conclusion. The Jesuits argue: the sky is round, and the earth is also round. I believe that everything is movement, everything is calm, everything is angled and everything is round, especially the universe. And the reason is as above. If things were as according to their words, there would be neither angled nor round, neither movement nor calm.

For the historians of culture and science, it is undoubtedly fascinating to imagine Hayashi Dōshun, the future tutor and advisor to the first four shōguns of the Tokugawa *bakufu*, engaged in a debate with Fukan Fabian in a Jesuit residence. But even in the case the dialogue was just a literary composition, authored later or even much later than the alleged date of the events – Paramore suggests the years around 1640 – the dialogue does not lose its cultural relevance. On the basis of the founding principles of neo-Confucian philosophy, the dialogue carries out a radical critique of Christian cosmology, starting precisely from a sarcastic reading of the cosmology

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63 See Tucker, "Japanese Confucian Philosophy", in particular the paragraph "3.2 Metaphysics". *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Edward N. Zalta (ed.), (Spring 2018 Edition), URL <<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2018/entries/japanese-confucian/>>

and cosmography transmitted by the Jesuits and reusing against them the same rhetoric trope of the “scientific inconsistency” of the rivals (the Jesuits) that we find in several missionary reports: for example those of Ricci, Spinola or in the cited *Annua* of 1606. If Paramore’s hypothesis were correct, it is very interesting to observe how even in 1640, almost 30 years after the expulsion of the Jesuits, Christian cosmology was still the object of critical reflection, at least in the neo-Confucian learned communities. In the immediate aftermath of the Shimabara rebellion, the Christian cosmos, created by God, its sphericity and geometry, probably kept challenging Buddhist and Confucian cosmologies even decades after the abrupt expulsion of the missionaries and the violent disruption of Kirishitan Christianity in Japan.



**Fig. 7.** The Kanshin-ji ‘World Map’ folding screens, displaying China, Korea, the American continent, two cosmographic diagrams of the Aristotelian cosmos and two *nanban* ships. Two panel folding screens, ink and colours on paper, 354 × 139 cm, c. 1640. Kanshin-ji, Kawachinagano (Ōsaka Prefecture). © Angelo Cattaneo; Kanshin-ji, Ōsaka Prefecture

In this regard, it is worth presenting, though briefly, a ‘World Map’ folding screen, designed around 1640, held at the Kanshin-ji, a Buddhist temple on the hills around Kawachinagano, in Ōsaka Prefecture, some fifty kilometres south of Ōsaka, which was recently brought to scholarly attention by Sakamoto Mitsuru.<sup>64</sup> This unique and extraordinary *byōbu* displays on the first screen the Asian continent whose cartographic shape and geographic contents derive from the Korean transformation of Yang Ziqui’s 楊子器 *Integrated Map of the Historic Boundaries of Nations and Capitals*, also known as *Map of the Great Ming Nation* 大明国地理图, with an enormous Korea, and without the representation of Central Asia, Europe, and Africa.

64 Sakamoto; Narusawa; Izumi, et al., op. cit., Pl. 91.



**Fig. 8.** The map of China, derived from the *Map of the Great Ming Nation* (late fourteenth century) and of Korea, displaying a Sino-centric world vision. Details from the Kanshin-ji 'World Map' folding screens, c. 1640. © Kanshin-ji, Ōsaka Prefecture

This Confucian, Sino-centric cartographic vision, originally designed in Ming China in the late fourteenth century, once brought to Korea was given its current title, and a huge map of the Korean peninsula was added. Sometimes in the late sixteenth century – probably in the context of the Tokugwa *bakufu* renovated diplomatic exchange with the Kingdom of Korea, or a few decades after Hideyoshi's failed attempts to conquer Korea between 1592 and 1598 – one or more copies of the map were brought to Japan. In the second screen, panel three displays the map of Korea and, beside it, panel four shows the New World – whose source could be traced back to one of the cartographic folding screens based on Matteo Ricci's and Li Zhizao's planisphere in Chinese (*Kunyu Wanguo Quantu* 坤輿萬國全圖, *Map of the Myriad Countries of the World*, first published in Beijing in 1602). In panels five and six two huge western ships of the type that are often represented in *nanban byōbu*, an astronomical diagram of the Aristotelian sub-lunar world and a second astronomical diagram that shows the Ptolemaic-Aristotelian sub-lunar world surrounded by the seven planetary spheres and the sphere of the

fixed stars, are represented. In the first diagram, at the centre of the sub-lunar world, there is a representation of the terraqueous globe, surrounded by four ships, positioned at the four cardinal points. At the centre of the globe, a sketchy Eurasian *oikumene* can be made out. The two large western ships, drawn with a miniaturist taste, derive from the representation of the Portuguese ships, or *kurofune*, that is the “black ship” depicted by Japanese painters in the *nanban* folding screens since around 1600. In particular, they represent the narratives of the *nanban* ship harboured in a Japanese port city, with worn sails, and the *nanban* ship departing from an imagery port in a “foreign land” with unfurled sails. Altogether, the cosmographic diagrams and the *nanban* ships aim at conveying the very idea of the (Aristotelian-Ptolemaic) spherical earth with the spherical universe with direct implications on the possibility of circumnavigating the earth, by navigating the oceans.



**Fig. 9.** Map of the American continent, possibly derived, indirectly, from Ricci’s and Li’s *Map of the Myriad Countries of the World* (1602). Diagrams of the Aristotelian cosmos and two *nanban* ships that convey the concept of the circumnavigable earth. Details from the Kanshin-ji ‘World Map’ folding screens, c. 1640. © Kanshin-ji, Ōsaka Prefecture



## Repositioning Japan

In conclusion to this essay, I would like to present the preliminary analysis of an extraordinary handwritten map, currently kept at the Prefectural Library of Kōchi, in the island of Shikoku in Japan, drawn by some Japanese officers starting from the information provided by Spanish officers and merchants who shipwrecked near Urado, on the southern shores of the island of Shikoku. These, in summary, are the events that brought about the design of the map. In July 1596 a Spanish galleon, the *San Felipe*, under the command of Captain Matias Landecho, which sailed from Manila to Acapulco, was hit by three typhoons which caused it to be shipwrecked in the maritime space between the Philippines and Japan. While adrift and without sails, the *kuroshio* – the co-called ‘black current’ that crosses the Pacific Ocean flowing eastward toward the American continent – pushed the galleon to aground on the Japanese coasts, in the territory of the *daimyō* Chōsokabe Motochika (1539–1599), in the province of Tosa (the current Kōchi Prefecture, where the map is still preserved). Chōsokabe Motochika informed the central military command in Kyōto, and Hideyoshi Toyotomi sent an officer, Masuda Nagamori 増田 長盛 (1545–1615), to seize the cargo and interrogate the *Nanban-jin*. The Spanish officers replied to their questions by drawing or showing a map, thanks to which the Japanese became aware of the routes that linked the Philippines with China and the *Nueva España* and, implicitly, of the global extension and projection of the Iberian empires at the time of the union of the two Iberian crowns (1580–1640). At the same time, they also learned about the Spanish and Portuguese imperial ambitions and the connection between these (unified) empires and Catholic missionary proselytism.<sup>65</sup>

Contextualized through the studies of Takekoshi Yosaburō, Juan Pobre de Zamora and José Eugenio Borao Mateo,<sup>66</sup> as well as through the report sent to Hideyoshi Toyotomi by the Japanese officer Masuda Nagamori, the report authored by the Spanish captain Matias de Landecho and the work *Sucesos de las Islas Filipinas* by Antonio de Morga (1559–1636), printed in Mexico City in 1609,<sup>67</sup>

65 Vu Thanh, “The Role of the Franciscans in the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations between the Philippines and Japan: Trans-Pacific Geopolitics? (16th–17th Centuries)”. *Itinerario* vol. 40 (2016), pp.239–256 [online, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0165115316000346>]

66 For a detailed reconstruction of the *San Felipe*’s shipwreck and its political consequences in Japan, see: Takekoshi, *Economic Aspects of the Civilization of Japan*. London: G. Allen, 1930 (digital reprint, London: Routledge, 2003, vol. II, chap. 32, without pagination); Zamora, *Historia de la pérdida y descubrimiento del Galeón “San Felipe”*. Ávila, Diputación Prov. de Ávila: Institución Gran Duque de Alba, 1997; Mateo, “The Arrival of the Spanish Galleons in Manila from the Pacific Ocean and Their Departure along the Kuroshio Stream (16th and 17th centuries)”. *Journal of Geographical Research* vol. 47 (2007), pp.17–38 (pp.8–9) – <http://homepage.ntu.edu.tw/~borao/2Profesores/Kuroshio.pdf>.

67 “Carta de Matias de Landecho sobre Japón”, 4 July 1598. Archivo General de Indias, Filipinas, 35,N.18 and Antonio de Morga, *Sucesos de las Islas Filipinas*. En Mexico: En



**Fig. 10.** The sea routes connecting China, Siam, the Philippines, Japan, the Americas and the Iberian Peninsula in the so-called “Kōchi map”. Seventeenth-century copy of a 1596 original map. Black and red ink on Japanese paper, toponyms in Japanese. Transcription: Sagiya Ikuko. Editing: Angelo Cattaneo. © Angelo Cattaneo; Kōchi, Prefectural Library

the analysis and transcription developed by the author together with Sagiya Ikuko of the University of Florence,<sup>68</sup> highlights that the Kōchi map is a document of exceptional importance for understanding the repositioning of Japan – carried out by the Japanese themselves – within the framework of the Iberian transcontinental routes. In fact, the map allows one to grasp the location in Japan of the sea routes that for the first time linked the Philippines, the Chinese and Indochinese

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casa de Geronymo Balli. Año 1609. Por Cornelio Adriano Cesar, pp.33–36. A digital open access copy is available at the John Carter Brown Library (Providence, Rhode Island): <https://archive.org/details/sucesosdelaisla00morg/page/n6/mode/2up>. See also: Cummins, “Antonio de Morga and his Sucesos de las Islas Filipinas”. *Journal of Southeast Asian History* vol. 10, issue 3 (September 1969), pp. 560–581 [online, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0217781100005081>]

68 The map is analysed, reproduced and in part transcribed in Cattaneo, “Magellano per tutti? La circumnavigazione del globo e la sua ricezione a Venezia e in Giappone in una prospettiva comparata (XVI–XVII secolo) (“Magellan for all? The circumnavigation of the globe and its reception in Venice and Japan in a comparative perspective, 16<sup>th</sup>–17<sup>th</sup> centuries”). Vittoria Fiorelli (Ed.), *Tracce di impero. Cortés tra Napoli e Nuovo Occidente*. Napoli: Editoriale Scientifica, 2020, pp.41–76 (pp.67–76). The author is currently preparing a full edition and English translation of the document.

coasts with the American continent and, indirectly, with the Iberian coasts, having Japan as an observation point, placed at the centre of the representation.

To study the map, in collaboration with Sagiya Ikuko of the University of Florence, we numbered all the 59 textual units, written partly in Chinese logographic characters (*kanji*) and in the *katakana* syllabic writing system, widely used (still today) to transliterate phonetically foreign words, for which there were no equivalent in the *kanji*.<sup>69</sup> After identifying and numbering each of the 59 textual units, we proceeded to their original textual transcription, to the romanization (*romaji*, the phonetic transcription of Japanese words using the Latin alphabet) and, whenever possible, identification. Oriented towards the south – therefore, the south lays in the upper part, the west on the right side, the north in the lower part and the east on the left side of the document<sup>70</sup> – the map displays a legend, written in *kanji* with red ink, which clarifies its genesis. Below we offer a translation of the legend, *de verbo ad verbum*, with some minor clarifications in square brackets:

[59]. A Namban ship in the fifth year of the Bunroku era [1596] ninth month and twenty-eighth day [c. October 19, 1596] arrived in the bay of Urado. Taiko Hideyoshi [the Taiko 太閤, i.e., the “retired regent” Hideyoshi Toyotomi<sup>71</sup>] sent a cargo inspector named Masuda Nagamori, then the *namban* people [the Spaniards] brought this map when they went to Kyōto and therefore one copy was made, and here another copy has been made.

The map is therefore the result of the collaboration between the Spaniards and the Japanese officers who not only translated the contents of the map from a linguistic point of view, but also made a cultural translation, recentering the whole representation on Japan. It is this work of cultural translation that makes this document particularly interesting. Furthermore, the reference to the existence of three copies seems to indicate a precise desire for dissemination of the information contained therein.

At the centre of the map there is the Japanese archipelago (Nihon), represented disproportionately if compared to the other places displayed in the map. The

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69 Starting roughly from the second half of the sixteenth century, both the *hiragana* and *katakana* syllabic scripts were used to transcribe the toponyms of new places or kingdoms – made known to the Japanese by the *Namban-jin* – that were not included into the cultural space mediated by the Chinese or Japanese language. See Pigeot, “Entre contraintes et libertés: l’écriture au Japon”. *Actes du Forum International d’Inscriptions, de Calligraphies et d’Écritures dans le monde à travers les âges*, 24–27 avril 2003, Alexandrie, éd. Bibliotheca Alexandrina, 2007, pp.111–124.

70 南 Minami, South; 56. 西 Nishi, West; 18. 北 Kita, North; 03. 東 Higashi, East.

71 After the assassination of Oda Nobunaga by Takechi Mitsuhide, Toyotomi Hideyoshi achieved a prodigious military career: in 1592 the general declared himself *Kanpaku* (関白), formally the Imperial Regent. Subsequently, he proclaimed himself *Taiko* 太閤, that is “Retired Regent” to allow his adopted son, Toyotomi Hidetsugu, to succeed him as *Kanpaku*, with the goal of establishing the Toyotomi dynasty in the military government of the unified Japan. Just a few years later, in 1595 Hideyoshi Toyotomi repudiated Hidetsugu and forced him to commit suicide, after exterminating his entire family and acolytes.

Kyūshū, Shikoku and Ezo, Hokkaido, the Ryūkyū Islands (Okinawa), together with other smaller islands are highlighted<sup>72</sup>; to the north and to the south of Japan, Korea and the Philippines are represented<sup>73</sup>; to the west, the coastal profile of China (referred to as “the Great Ming”) with Macao, Vietnam and India is drawn in a very schematic way.<sup>74</sup>



**Fig. 11.** The sea routes connecting Japan with South-East Asia and the American continent in the so-called “Kōchi map”. Seventeenth-century manuscript copy of a 1596 original map. Black and red ink on Japanese paper, toponyms in Japanese. Transcription: Sagiyama Ikuko. Editing: Angelo Cattaneo. © Angelo Cattaneo; Kōchi, Prefectural Library

72 28. 日本 Nihon, Japan; 38. 九州 Kyūshū; 17. 糸所 (蝦夷) Eso, Ezo (Hokkaido); 37. 四国 Shikoku; 33. りう(き)う Riu(ki)u, Ryūkyū Islands (Okinawa); 21. サト Sato (Sado Island); 40. つしま (対馬) Tsushima; 41. をき Oki (Oki Islands). Transcription by Sagiyama Ikuko.

73 32. るそん Ruson, Luzon (Philippines); 44. 高麗 Kōrai (Korea). Transcription by Sagiyama Ikuko.

74 56. 西 Nishi, West; 54. 大明国 Dai Minkoku, Great China; 53. 澳門, Àomén, Macao, 52. かうち (交趾) Kauchi, Vietnam; 47. てんちく (天竺) Tenchiku, India. Transcription by Sagiyama Ikuko.

On the left side, with respect to Japan – therefore to the East – in a very schematic way and completely out of proportion with respect to Japan, we find the American continent, identified as “Maya Mexico” and, to the extreme west, in the left margin, the coastlines of the Iberian Peninsula and North Africa, with Portugal and the indication of “Myaco,” the Japanese designation for the “capital,” identifiable with Madrid, are sketched.<sup>75</sup>

The central element of the entire representation is a network of sea routes, traced in red ink with a very evident line, which from the Philippines radiate west towards Macao, north towards Japan, passing through the Ryūkyū Islands; to the east, they head towards the American continent and then towards Portugal and the Iberian Peninsula. It is essential to highlight that the routes between the Philippines and the centre of the American continent distinguish two routes, most likely to be identified with the two distinct routes that went from Acapulco to Manila and the opposite one, which involved a route located north, skirting the coasts of Japan to meet the *kuroshio*.

In schematic form, the Kōchi map summarizes and integrates two different perspectives: on the one hand, the Spanish view of the world, from the Iberian peninsula to the Chinese coasts, crossing the American continent; on the other hand, the repositioning of Japan at the centre of these huge marine spaces, through a Japanese reinterpretation, mediated by the Spaniards, of the Iberian transoceanic routes, rooted in the pioneering navigations of Fernão de Magalhães (1480–1521), Juan Sebastián Elcano (1486/87–1526), Miguel López de Legazpi (c.1510–1572) and Andrés de Urdaneta (1498–1568), just to recall the main protagonists. The Iberian and Dutch “irruptions,” and the visual and cosmographic contents they brought to Japan, had implicitly paved the way for the affirmation of a repositioning of Japan, based on a spatial, almost cartographic ordering of the other and elsewhere, when the Tokugawa shoguns, starting with Tokugawa Iemitsu, in 1641 decreed the autarchic closure of the Japanese kingdom.

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75 03. 東 Higashi, East; 15. のひすはん まや Nohisuhan Maya, Mexico Maya; 02. ふるとかるの国 Furutokaru no kuni, Kingdom of Portugal; 04. ミヤコ Miyako, Capital (Madrid). Transcription by Sagiya Ikuko.



**Fig. 12.** The sea routes connecting the American continent with the Iberian peninsula in the so-called “Kōchi map”. Seventeenth-century manuscript copy of a 1596 original map. Black and red ink on Japanese paper, toponyms in Japanese. Transcription: Sagiyama Ikuko. Editing: Angelo Cattaneo. © Angelo Cattaneo; Kōchi, Prefectural Library.

## Conclusions

The documents we have analysed corroborate one of the salient points that emerged from Serge Gruzinski’s recent analysis on the early modern European roots of world history, according to which, starting from the beginning of the sixteenth century, most of the urban civilizations on the earth were confronted with the image of the world developed by the educated elites of Western Christianity.<sup>76</sup> The analysis of the Japanese case, during the 100 years of the contrasted presence of the *nanbanjin*, shows that this process, although pervasive, was certainly not linear and homogeneous, and on the contrary, it had very intricate, unpredictable and

<sup>76</sup> Gruzinski, *La macchina del tempo. Quando l’Europa ha iniziato a scrivere la storia del mondo*. Milan: Raffaello Cortina Editore, 2018 (French edition, Fayard, 2017), pp.9–11, pp.277–282.

contradictory consequences. The “(European) conquest of the world transformed into image” – to quote Gruzinski – provoked the firm resistance by the political, military and cultural élites of Japan to the political, religious and historical colonization of time, space and memory, attempted by the Europeans. The mutual repositioning of Japan in the world-image created and imposed by the Europeans and, as we have seen, transformed by the Japanese, contributed to the autarchic closure of Japan. There was no such thing as the “globalisation” of European culture or science in the sixteenth and seventeenth-centuries. The study of the cultural and scientific dynamics that took place in Japan, in the context of the interactions between missionaries and Iberian merchants and Dutch and English merchants with the Japanese learned Buddhist and neo-Confucian religious and academic communities, allow us instead to focus on the processes of circulation, transformation, and above all of the negotiation, resistance and even of rejection, between heterogeneous world views. Linear Eurocentric models of circulation of knowledge, people, and ideas – such as West-East relationships and the exchange of knowledge – are ill-adapted to articulate the complexities of the agencies, and also the places of exchange and transformation of material culture, forms, and ideas in the long and multifaceted system of maritime and terrestrial routes that linked Europe to several kingdoms and cities in Asia. The analysis of the local contexts of interaction in Japan enable us to reveal the pitfalls of the old, ‘glorious’ idea of Europe’s ‘discovery of the world’ as well as traditional definitions of the role of European cultural brokerage as an agent of teleological innovation *tout-court*.

This resistance, however, did not prevent Europeans, Catholics and Protestants, from conceiving and writing stories about Japan that can be connected to a universal history of the world, conceived and written first by Christian Europe. It was the Jesuits that initiated this massive cultural operation which embraced, for the first time, Japanese history, culture and language, and which is testified by numerous individual letters, later by the *Litterae annuae*, by the monumental stories of the mission of Japan and of the Japanese kingdom,<sup>77</sup> from lexicographic works (a trilingual dictionary, Latin-Portuguese-Japanese, printed in Amakusa in 1595 and based on one of the several editions of the Latin dictionary of Ambrogio Calepio (called ‘Calepino’, c.1435–1509/10), with over 27,000 headwords,<sup>78</sup> and a Portuguese-Japanese dictionary printed in Nagasaki in 1603, of over 34,000

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77 See the *História de Japam* (c.1570–90); ed. Lisboa (1976–1984) and the *Tratado [das] algumas contradições e diferenças de costumes entre a gente de Europa e esta província de Japão* (c. 1580–90; ed. Lisboa 1993 and 2019) authored by Luís Fróis; see also the *Advertimentos e avisos acerca dos costumes e catangues de Japão* (ed. Roma 1946 and 2011) and *El sumario de las cosas de Japón* (ed. Tokyo 1954) authored by Alessandro Valignano as well as the *História da Igreja do Japão* (c. 1600–1630; ed. Macao 1954–56) by João Rodrigues. It should be noted that Fróis’ *História* and the *Tratado* did not circulate because of Valignano’s severe censorship.

78 *Dictionarium Latino Lusitanicum, ac Iaponicum, ex Ambrosii Calepini volumine depromptum*. Amakusa: Collegio Iaponico Societatis Iesu, 1595.

headwords<sup>79</sup>), from the first grammars (the *Arte da Lingoa de Japam*, printed in three books in Nagasaki between 1605 and 1608, and the *Arte breve*, or ‘short grammar’, printed in Macao in 1620) by João Rodrigues, S.J. (c. 1562–1633), to the same *De missione legatorum* (Macao 1590), with the visit to Europe of the Japanese legates and the numerous reports that followed, especially in Italy and France, taken up and summarized, together with the letters of the Jesuits, by copious publications, including the *Universal Relations* of Giovanni Botero (1591–1618).<sup>80</sup>

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79 *Vocabvlario da Lingoa de Iapam com Adeclaração em Portugues ... feito por algvns Padres e Irmãos da Companhia de Iesu*. Nangasaqui [Nagasaki], Companhia de Iesu, 1603 (add. 1608).

80 See the recent edition Botero, *Le relazioni universali*. 3 Vols. Blythe Alice Raviola (Ed.). Turin: Aragno, 2015 and 2017.



D. Max MOERMAN

## The Epistemology of Vision: Buddhist *versus* Jesuit Cosmology in Early Modern Japan

The Portuguese traders and Jesuit missionaries who first arrived on Japan's shores in the 1540s brought much that was unfamiliar and strange: new geographies of Europe, Africa, and the Americas; new technologies of optics, astrolabes, and globes; and new universes of Aristotelian physics, Ptolemaic astronomy, and Christian theology. The encounter between European Jesuits and Japanese Buddhists entailed the confrontation between religious views of the world and of ways of seeing. It was not only a conflict over cosmology but over visual culture, by which I mean the theory and practice of vision and of the relationship between vision and knowledge. The conflict began when European Christians first landed on Japan's shores but lasted centuries beyond the period of the Portuguese presence. This contest was waged through visual discourse and was, in the end, a dispute over vision. This was not simply a struggle between Buddhists and Christians, or East and West, or pre-modern and modern, or religion and science. Such dichotomies are more than false. They obscure what was common to all participants: the practices of image-making and the claims to represent the invisible.

Geographic and astronomical knowledge not only provided the conditions of possibility for European travel to Japan, it was integral to the Jesuit strategy of conversion. Francis Xavier (1506–1552), who led the Jesuit mission in Japan from 1549 until 1551, wrote that missionaries,

(...) should know something of the globe, because the Japanese very much like to know about the movement of the heavens, the eclipse of the sun, the waxing and waning of the moon, as well as the origin of rain, snow, hail, thunder, lightning, comets and other natural phenomena. The explanation of these things is very useful in winning over the people.<sup>1</sup>

In another letter of the same year Xavier further noted that,

(...) the Japanese are the most susceptible to reason, more so than any other infidel people I have seen. They are so curious and persistent with their questions, so desirous

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1 Letter from Goa to Rome, April 9, 1552. Schurhammer; Wicki (Ed.), *Epistolae S. Francisici Xaverii aliaque eiusscripta, Tomus II (1549–1552)*. Rome: Monumenta Historica Societatis Iesu, 1996, p.373.

to learn, that they would never cease to ask and speak with us about those things we said in response to their questions. They did not know that the earth was round, neither did they know the path of the sun through the sky. They would ask about these things and others such as comets, thundercracks, rain, snow, and other similar things, until they would state that they were quite content and satisfied. They regarded us as learned men, which helped us greatly in convincing them to believe our word.<sup>2</sup>

The *História de Japam*, the late seventeenth century record of Jesuit activities by Luís Fróis (1532–1597), includes numerous scenes in which the Jesuits gain respect and converts because of their knowledge of the cosmos, such as in a meeting in 1561 at Vilela's Kyōto residence with a group of Nichiren monks:

At that time the most eminent astronomer in Japan, the courtier [Kamo no] Akimasa, was present. Akimasa asked the *padres* about solar and lunar eclipses and about the movement of the heavenly bodies. He held the *padres'* knowledge in high esteem and thereafter everyone in the capital did so as well. Akimasa received baptism as did his wife, children, and servants and he took the name Manuel Akimasa.<sup>3</sup>

Fróis describes another meeting the following year between Luís de Almeida (1525–1583) and a number of eminent Buddhists:

The abbot of Nanrinji listened to our teachings and then summoned two learned monks. One was named Kawanabe, abbot of Ōsenji and the other was from Kōkokuji in Kagoshima. The abbot of Ōsenji was a very learned Japanese mathematician. He asked numerous questions about solar and lunar eclipses, about low and high tides, and about the relationship between air and space. We replied to his questions in writing and also provided him with several diagrams for verification. He believed us at once and was completely satisfied with our explanations. Based on the teachings of Śākyamuni, the Japanese believe that heaven rises above a mountain known as Sumeru, shaped like an hourglass. He explained that the sun was like a child's top with a string wrapped around it and that it makes one revolution a day around the summit of the central mountain. The world gets warmer in the summer when the sun draws nearer and colder in the winter when it is more distant. He asked me what I thought of this explanation and I replied that the sun does not drift away from the heavens and that our astronomical scholarship was based on reason. The monks were then completely satisfied.<sup>4</sup>

The Portuguese Jesuit João Rodrigues (c.1561/62–1633), who spent the years 1577–1610 in Japan, explained this Mount Sumeru centred cosmology to his European readers as follows:

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- 2 Letter from Cochin, January 29, 1552. Schurhammer; Wicki, op. cit., p.265. See also Goodman, *Japan and the Dutch 1600–1853*. London: Curzon, 2000, p.89.
  - 3 Fróis, *Historia de Japam*, vol. 1. José Wicki (Ed.). Lisboa: Biblioteca Nacional de Lisboa, 1981, p.193.
  - 4 *Ibidem*, vol. 1, p.219.

In the three worlds, Śākyaṃuni placed a mountain like a very high pyramid called Mount Sumeru. It has four sides at its base, one facing the south, another toward the north, another toward the east, and finally another to the west. ... Śākyaṃuni holds that this mountain is separated from us by a great distance towards the north. He says that its foundations lie on three spheres supporting it. The first and lowest one rests on the sphere of the wind, and on this the sphere of water, which surrounds all this mountain. The height of this mountain above the water is 46,080 leagues, and it has the same below the water, making a total of 92,160 leagues. Above this mountain there are thirty-three Heavens divided into three orders, and the sun, moon, and stars revolve around it. The mountain itself is thinnest in the middle and widest at the top and bottom, rather like an hourglass. From this arises the distance between day and night, which are longer or shorter depending on whether the place where they move is thinner or thicker.<sup>5</sup>

As Rodrigues makes clear, Japan already had a highly detailed cosmology based on Indian sources and represented in such canonical works as Vasubandhu's fifth-century *Abhidharmakośa* (J. *Abidatsuma kusharon*). According to Buddhist scripture, the entire universe is cylindrical and flat and is supported by lower strata of wind, water, and gold. The heavenly bodies revolve around the central Mount Sumeru, (*Shumisen* 須弥山) square and hourglass-shaped, which is itself surrounded by eight concentric mountain ranges, seven of gold and the eighth made of iron. Seas separate the mountain ranges and in the largest outermost sea lie four great continents: the half-moon-shaped continent of Pūrvavideha in the east, the circular continent of Godānīya in the west, the square continent Uttarakuru in the north, and the world on which we reside, the trapezoid-shaped continent of Jambudvīpa, (*Nansenshū* 南瞻部州) in the south.

In the face of this Buddhist view of the universe, the curriculum of the Jesuit academies in Japan prioritized the Christian cosmology of sixteenth-century Europe. The *Compendium Catholicae Veritatis*, compiled by the Spanish Jesuit Pedro Gómez (1533/35–1600) in 1593 and translated into Japanese in 1595 under the supervision of Pedro Ramón (1550–1611), served as the principal textbook of Jesuit education in Japan until their schools were forced to close in 1621.<sup>6</sup> The *Compendium* was composed of three sections: the first, *De Sphaera*, covered Aristotelian and Ptolemaic theories of astronomy, cosmology, and meteorology; the second, *De Anima*, was based on Aquinas's commentary on Aristotle's philosophy of the soul; and the third, *De Sacra Scriptura*, presented the salient points of post-Tridentine Roman Catholic theology. *De Sphaera*, as its title suggests, introduced the theory of a spherical earth. The

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5 Michael Cooper (Transl.), *João Rodrigues's Account of Sixteenth-Century Japan*. London: The Hakluyt Society, 2001, pp.358–359.

6 For a facsimile edition of the original Latin and Japanese manuscripts of the *Compendium Catholicae Veritatis in gratiam Iapponicorum Fratrum Societatis Iesu*, see *Compendium catholicae veritatis*. 3 Vols. Kirishitan Bunko Library, Sophia University (Ed.). Tōkyō: Ōzorasha 大空社 Co. Ltd., 1997.

explicit goal of the text, as stated in its very first lines, was to explain the power and authority of the Christian God through the workings of heaven and earth. Gómez begins his preface by paraphrasing Romans 1:20, “As the Apostle says, these visible things, namely, the machine of the world and the perpetual and immutable order of the heavens, clearly demonstrates the invisible attributes of God.”<sup>7</sup> Gómez goes on to explain, in words and diagrams, “the nature of the heavenly bodies (*de natura caelestium corporum*); the motion, number, and order of the heavens (*de motu et numero, et ordine caelorum*); solar and lunar eclipses and the magnitude of the stars and sky (*de solis, et lunae eclipsibus, deque astrorum et caelorum magnitudinibus*).”<sup>8</sup> *De Sphaera* was largely based on a work of the same title composed by the thirteenth-century English monk Joannes Sacrobosco (John Holywood) that was translated into Portuguese in 1537 and on Christopher Clavius’s commentary on Sacrobosco’s text published in Rome in 1570.<sup>9</sup>

Gómez’s discussion of “the motion, number, and order of the heavens” articulates a crucial connection between medieval Christian cosmology and the theological promise of paradise. Valignano, the *Visitador* responsible for all of the Jesuit missions in Asia, composed in Latin a *Catechism of Christian Faith* expressly for the Japanese Church during his first visit to Japan between 1579 and 1582. Valignano’s *Catechism*, published in Lisbon in 1586 and later translated into Japanese, states:

We call the seat of God “paradise”, for He shares the immortal glorious wealth of His own with the blessed souls in this place. Therefore this place encloses its own delight and inexplicable beauty. It is sometimes called paradise and at other times the empyrean heaven.<sup>10</sup>

Gómez, in his *Compendium*, identifies the astronomical location of paradise with even greater precision. After introducing the ten heavens of medieval scholasticism,

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- 7 “Quia, ut Apostolus ait, visibilia haec, mundi scilicet machine, caelorumque pertetus et immutabilis ordo, invisibilia Dei attributa maxime demonstrant”. See Hiraoka and Watanabe, “A Jesuit Cosmological Textbook in ‘Christian Century’ Japan: *De Sphaera* of Pedro Gomez (Part II)”. *SCIAMVS* vol. 16 (2015), pp.99–175 (p. 108).
  - 8 *Compendium Catholicae Veritatis*, pp.74–79. On the *Compendium*, see Üçerler, “Jesuit Humanist Education in Sixteenth-Century Japan: The Latin and Japanese MSS of Pedro Gómez’s Compendia on Astronomy, Philosophy, and Theology (1593–95)”. vol. 3. Kirishitan Bunko Library (Ed.), *Compendium Catholicae Veritatis*. Tōkyō: Ozorasha, 1997, pp.11–60.
  - 9 Cieslik, “The Case of Christovão Ferreira”. *Monumenta Nipponica* vol. 29, no. 1 (1974), p.43.
  - 10 Valignano, *Catechismus Christianae Fidei, in quo veritas nostrae religionis ostenditur & sectae Iaponenses confutantur, editus à Patre Alexandro Valignano societatis Iesu. Olyssipone: excudebat Antonius Riberius, 1586, Lib. 2, 20. Cited in Hiraoka, *Nambankei uchuron no gententeki kenkyū* 南蛮系宇宙論の原典の研究 (*Studies in the textual sources of European cosmology in Japan*). Fukuoka: Hana shoin, 2013, p.49.*

he explains, to “these ten heavens that astronomers recognize, theologians add an eleventh heaven, which is called the empyrean because of its fiery splendor.”<sup>11</sup>

Christian cosmology not only identified the location of paradise and the seat of God, it also provided polemical material for a critique of Buddhism. The Christian convert Fukansai Habian (1565–1621) makes this point in his *Myōtei Dialogues* (*Myōtei mondo*) of 1605:

What we call “paradise in Heaven” in Christian teaching has nothing to do with the Triple Realm of Śākyamuni’s sutras. It lies in the eleventh layer of clear blue Heavens that we see above us, where the moon, sun, and stars are fixed. Śākyamuni, quite unaware that the heavenly bodies are in this sky, claimed that the moon, sun, and stars move around the center of Mount Sumeru, carried by the wind. It goes without saying that all of this is absolutely ludicrous. Do not identify any such silly ideas with Christian teachings.<sup>12</sup>

The proscription of Christianity nevertheless significantly limited the importation of European books that discussed astronomical matters. Matteo Ricci (1552–1610), his fellow Jesuits, and their Chinese students edited a compendia of theological and scientific texts which included two works on astronomical theory, five works on instrumental techniques, and a translation of the first six books of Euclid’s *Elements*.<sup>13</sup> But even if Ricci’s astronomical compendium was proscribed, his world maps were widely known and contained within them visual explanations of Ptolemaic astronomy. The preface to Ricci’s world map of 1602, much like Gómez’s preface to *De Sphaera*, directly addresses the centrality of astronomical knowledge to the larger Jesuit mission:

I have heard that the universe is a great book, and that only the intelligent scholar can read it and then achieve the ultimate doctrine. By comprehending heaven and earth, one would be able to testify to the ultimate kindness, greatness, and oneness of the supreme power of the Lord who rules over heaven and earth.<sup>14</sup>

As testimony to “the supreme power of the Lord who rules over heaven and earth”, Ricci included a number of astronomical illustrations in the four corners of his map of 1602. In the upper right corner is a detailed diagram of a nine-sphere universe. A spherical earth surrounded by two oval rings of cold and warm air and a flaming circular ring of fire lies at the centre of the diagram. Around it are nine heavens

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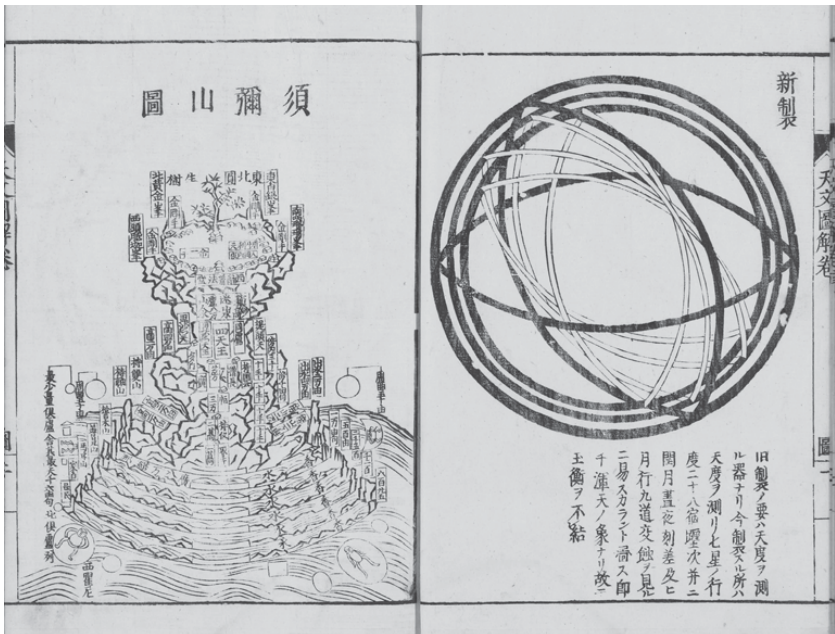
11 Cited in Hiraoka, *Ibidem*, p.210.

12 Baskind and Bowring (Eds.), *The Myōtei Dialogues: A Japanese Christian Critique of Native Traditions*. Leiden: Brill, 2016, p.182.

13 Nakayama, *A History of Japanese Astronomy: Chinese Background and Western Impact*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard East Asian Monographs, 1969, p. 84.

14 Translation from Chen, “The Human Body as a Universe: Understanding Heaven by Visualization and Sensibility in Jesuit Cartography in China”. *The Catholic Historical Review* vol. 93, no. 3 (2007), p.542.

of orbiting celestial bodies, each noted with the length and direction of their rotation: the Moon, Mercury, Venus, the Sun, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, and the twenty-eight constellations. In the lower right corner is a depiction of a celestial globe. A diagram of the northern hemisphere and smaller depiction of the solar and lunar eclipses are located in the upper left corner. And the lower left corner contains a diagram of the southern hemisphere. Many of the world maps painted on Japanese screens of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, like the European print sources on which they are based, are surrounded with similar illustrations of the larger universe to which they belong. In the four corners of these maps, framing the central cartographic display, are often insets of the earth's hemispheres and polar regions or diagrams of eclipses and celestial orbits. Western astronomical texts may have been prohibited but the cosmological models they advanced circulated, even if only as decorative details, within Japanese visual culture.



**Fig. 1.** Iguchi Tsunenori, *Astronomy Illustrated and Explained*, 1688. Monochrome woodblock book illustration. © National Institute of Japanese Literature. National Institutes for the Humanities.

In 1689 Iguchi Tsunenori (井口常範) published a popular five-volume *Astronomy Illustrated and Explained* (*Tenmon zusetu* 天文図解). On facing pages he contrasted a traditional image of Mount Sumeru with Matteo Ricci's diagram of a nine-sphere universe, noting their radii and periods of revolution, and asserted the supremacy of Western astronomy over Buddhist cosmology.<sup>15</sup> Iguchi ridiculed the Buddhist explanation of eclipses as the struggles between heavenly deities. His more fundamental critique, however, was directed at the Buddhist epistemology of vision.

The Buddhists say that they can see the form of Mount Sumeru with the power of the heavenly eye. Astronomers, however, have only the power of the ordinary human eye and therefore must rely on theory. Yet the astronomers' explanations of the solar and lunar eclipses are correct and those of the Buddhists are not. To say that the eclipses are the result of battles between Indra and the *asuras* is nonsense. How can the results of such heavenly battles be so invariable?<sup>16</sup>

The “power of the heavenly eye (J. *tengentsu* 天眼通; Skt. *divya-cakṣur-abhijñā*)”, is a Buddhist term of art. It refers to the power of infinite vision; a form of sight unobstructed by any obstacle; an ability to see far and near, past and future, inside and outside. It is one of the six supernormal powers (J. *jinzu* 神通; Skt. *abhijñā*) attained by those who have reached an advance level of Buddhist meditation and one of the five modes of vision, or “five eyes”, within the traditional Mahayana classification of discriminative knowledge.<sup>17</sup>

Thus by the end of the seventeenth century, the Buddhist epistemology of vision was already part of the astronomical debate. Buddhists were asserting that the power of the heavenly eye confirmed a universe invisible to the human eye. Buddhists advanced their claims by reformulating an ancient Indian cosmology into contemporary astronomical treatises that used explanatory diagrams to present the empirical reality of a Buddhist universe. Their arguments, and those of their opponents, were overwhelmingly graphic. Disputations about the shape of the world and the structure of the universe were made with illustrations and images. That which could not be seen had to be shown.

15 Ricci's diagram was reproduced from his *Profound Demonstration of the Two Spheres* (*Liangyi xuanlan tu* 兩儀玄覽圖) of 1603.

16 Iguchi, *Tenmon zusetu* 天文図解 (*Astronomy Illustrated and Explained*). 5 Vols. Ōsaka: Kashiwaharaya Yozaemon; Itamiya Mohē 柏原屋與左衛門; 伊丹屋茂兵衛, 1689, vol. 4, 59b.

17 The five eyes are: the physical eye (肉眼), which sees the material aspects of things; the heavenly eye (天眼), which sees the causes and effects of all things; the wisdom eye; the dharma eye (法眼), which sees the impermanence of all things; and the Buddha eye (仏眼), which includes all of the previous levels. Charles Muller, *Digital Dictionary of Buddhism* (<http://www.buddhism-dict.net>). See also Wayman, “The Buddhist Theory of Vision”. George R. Elder (Ed.), *Buddhist Insight: Essays by Alex Wayman*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidas, 1984, pp.153–161.

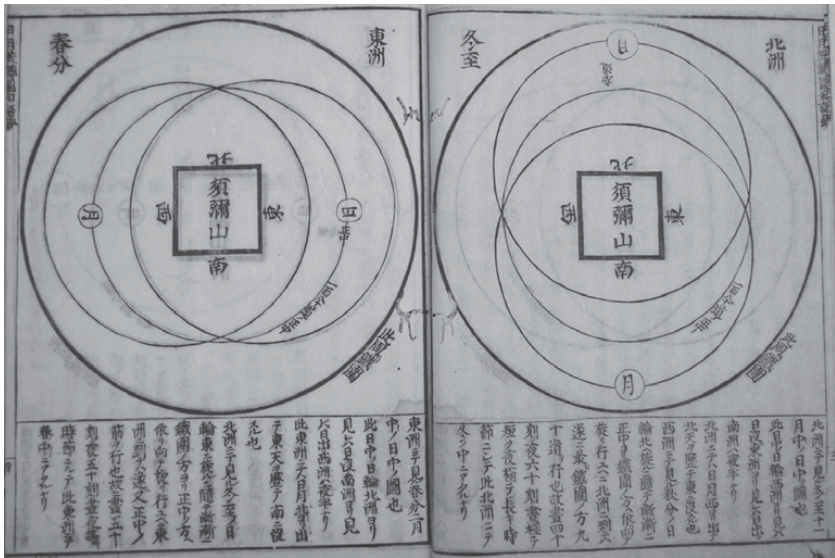


Fig. 2. Imai Shirō, *Illustrated Explanation in Japanese of the Solar and Lunar Orbits*, 1699. Monochrome woodblock book illustration. © Yokohama City University Library.

The Buddhist response to astronomical critique began in earnest at the beginning of the eighteenth century and the monastic scholars who produced them returned on again and again to Vasubhandu’s *Abhidharmakośa* as the *locus classicus* of Buddhist cosmology and geography. In 1699 Imai Shirō 今井氏老 published an *Illustrated Explanation in Japanese of the Solar and Lunar Orbits* (*Nichigetsu sentenzu wagoshō* 日月旋転図和語鈔), which presented the Buddhist theory of solar and lunar movement with diagrams. In 1700 the monk Yūhan 宥範 published a nearly identical treatise entitled *Illustrations of Solar and Lunar Movement as Explained in the Dhātu Chapter of the Abhidharmakośa* (*Kusha sekenbon nichigetsu kōdō zu shō* 俱舍世間品日月行動図解). Other Buddhists sought to reconcile the cosmology of the Mount Sumeru universe with the possibility of a global earth. In 1708 the Shingon-Ritsu monk Sōkaku (1639–1720; a.k.a. Shōjiki 正直) constructed a Buddhist terrestrial globe of papier-mache with a cylindrical piece of clear rock crystal, representing Mount Sumeru, at its apex. Two other metal rings of different diameters encircle the globe horizontally and can be adjusted to indicate the sun’s orbit between the summer and winter solstice.

One year earlier, Mori Shōken 森尚謙 (1653–1721) published a similar representation of a global earth with a nearly identical image of Sumeru at its apex



in his ten-volume *Defense of Buddhism* (*Gohō shichiron*). Shōken consulted Buddhist, Confucian, Daoist, and Shinto texts before concluding that, like the sun and the moon, the earth too must be spherical. Shōken wrote his *Defense* in response to Kamazawa Banzan's *Shūgiwashō* 集義和書 of 1672, which claimed that, "the explanations of ancient saints and sages are no longer believed and people say that Buddhist cosmology and calendrical calculations are incorrect."<sup>18</sup> Shōken warned that "Western geography and astronomy are great disasters that must be defeated to ensure the future of Buddhism."<sup>19</sup>

1707, the year in which Shōken's composed his *Defense*, was also the year in which the Kegon monk Hōtan 鳳潭 (1659–1738) published a fourteen-fascicle commentary on the *Abhidharmakośa* (*Kanchū kōen kusharon jūso* 冠註講苑俱舍論頌), which included detailed diagrams explaining the orbits of the sun and moon around Mount Sumeru. Three years later Hōtan produced the first woodblock printed single-sheet Japanese Buddhist world map. The map, entitled *Handy Map of the Myriad Countries of Jambudvīpa* (*Nansenbushū bankoku shōka no zu* 南胆部州万国掌菓之図) measures 121 × 144 cm and was published in Kyōto in 1710 by Bundaiken Uhei 文臺軒宇平 and later by Nagata Chōbe 永田調兵衛. The title of the map, the literal translation of which is "Map of the Myriad Countries of Jambudvīpa [Seen] like a Fruit in the Hand", uses a religious vocabulary to denote not only a Buddhist vision of the world but also the very quality of Buddhist vision itself. The phrase, "fruit in the hand", (*shōka* 掌菓) is a Buddhist expression for that which is easy to see and comprehend, signals Hōtan's deployment of the traditional Buddhist equation of vision and knowledge. A preface printed in the lower corners of the sheet states "the wisdom eye 慧眼 of the sage 聖 is far more powerful than the human eye and sees the boundless ten-thousand-fold world just like a fruit held in one's hand."<sup>20</sup> The preface continues as follows:

There are innumerable realms, as countless as the leaves of mustard grass, beneath the four heavens. Our realm of Jambudvīpa, which has the shape of a human face, is like a single grain within a great storehouse of millet. The ordinary person can see no more of the world than someone inside a cave peering through a tiny hole. Human vision is as limited as that of the horned owl who can catch a flea at night but cannot see a hill at mid-day. The vision of an ordinary person is as far from the vision of the wisdom eye as that of a blind person is from the sighted. He can say nothing of the worlds as numerous as atoms. He is like a frog in a well discussing the vast oceans.

18 In Gōtō; Tomoeda, (Ed.), *Kumazawa Banzan* 熊澤蕃山. *Nihon shisō taikai*, vol. 30. Tōkyō: Iwanami shoten, 1971, p.365. Banzan follows this statement with a detailed critique Buddhist cosmology (pp.365–366).

19 Mori, *Gohō shichiron* 護法資治論. 10 Vols. Kyōto: Sawada Kichizaemon, 1766, vol. 2, 16b.

20 Hōtan is here paraphrasing the *Guan wu liang shou fo jing yi shu* 觀無量壽佛經義疏, which states that the "heavenly eye sees the thousand-fold world like a fruit in the hand." Takakusu; Watanabe (Eds.), *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* 大正新修大藏經. Tōkyō: Taishō Issaikyō Kankōkai, 1924–1935, vol. 37, p.290.

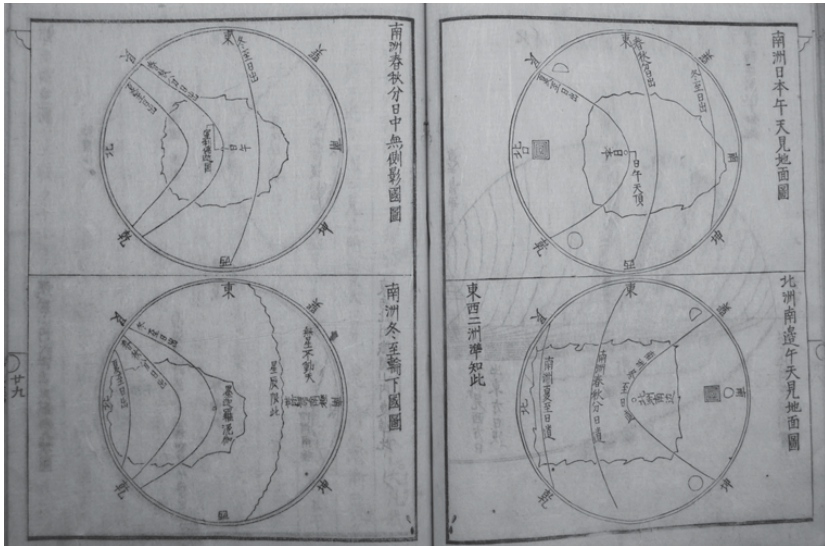


**Fig. 3.** Hōtan, *Handy Map of the Myriad Countries of Jambudvīpa*, 1710. Woodblock print with hand colouring, H. 121 × L. 144 cm. © David Rumsey Map Collection, Stanford University Libraries.

Hōtan’s polemic is thus as much about epistemology as it is about representation. His argument, that the view of the world from the perspective of Buddhist wisdom is qualitatively different from that of human vision, relies on the classical Buddhist understanding of vision as a root metaphor for knowledge.<sup>21</sup> Hōtan’s “wisdom eye” refers to the power of vision to discern the true nature of all things (Skt. *prajñā-cakṣus*). It is, like the heavenly eye (*tengen* 天眼), one of the five modes of vision within the Buddhist classification of discriminative knowledge. In deploying this Buddhist vocabulary of vision in a cartographic context, Hōtan is addressing both a mode of perception and the world perceived. This distinction between the lower human vision of the physical eye and the superior Buddhist vision of the heavenly or wisdom eye is a strategy that was to be employed by numerous Buddhist critics

21 On this metaphor, see McMahan, *Empty Vision: Metaphor and Visionary Imagery in Mahayana Buddhism*. London: Routledge Curzon, 2002.

of Western cartography and astronomy in the nineteenth century. To this Buddhist technical vocabulary Hōtan adds allusions to pre-Buddhist Chinese thought, citing allegories from the Daoist classic, the *Zhuangzi*, to illustrate the limitations of conventional perception.<sup>22</sup> It is thus clear from both his title and preface that Hōtan is promoting a particular Buddhist view of the world, as well as a particular Buddhist view of knowledge.



**Fig. 4.** Monnō, *Discourse on the Theory of the Nine Mountains and the Eight Seas*, 1754. Monochrome woodblock book illustration. © Yokohama City University Library.

In 1754 the Pure Land monk Monnō 文雄 (1700–1763) published another defense of Buddhist cosmology entitled *Discourse on the Theory of the Nine Mountains and the Eight Seas* (*Kusen hakkai kaitōron* 九山八海解嘲論). Monnō underscored the importance of visual argument in announcing his intention to “use pictorial explanations to attack the falsehood” of Western astronomy.<sup>23</sup> With

22 The horned owl who can catch a flea at night but cannot see a hill at mid-day and the frog in the well who knows nothing of the vast oceans are both drawn from the Autumn Floods chapter of the *Zhuangzi*. See Watson (Transl.), *Zhuangzi: Basic Writings*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2003, pp.103, 108–109.

23 Monnō, *Hi Tenkei wakumon* 非天經或問. N.p., 1754, 1b.

copious diagrams and illustrations, he explained the movement of the sun and moon, the mechanism of lunar and solar eclipses, and the process of seasonal change. Citing such classical texts of Buddhist cosmology as the *Sutra of the Great Conflagration* (*Dairōtankyō* 大樓炭經), the *Sutra on the Arising of Worlds* (起世經 *Kisekyō*), the *Lokasthānābhīdharmasāstra* (*Ryūse abidonron* 立世阿毘曇論), and the *Abhidharmakośa*, Monnō argued, “the world is flat and round and contained within vast seas like water in a basin.” Monnō also criticized the astronomical theories of the Confucian advocate of heliocentrism, Yamagata Bantō 山片播桃 (1748–1821) and, in a work entitled *Against “Emerging from Meditation”* (*Hi shutsujō kōgo* 非出定後語), denounced Tominaga Nakamoto’s 富永仲基 (1715–1746) critique of Buddhist cosmology. Tominaga had written that, “the theory of Mount Sumeru is an ancient Brahmanical teaching. It is not fundamental to the Buddha’s teachings. Such matters are what is known as ‘skillful means.’”<sup>24</sup>

In 1790, more than 30 years after its publication, the eminent Nativist scholar Motoori Norinaga (本居宣長 1730–1810) denounced Monnō’s work in his *Refutation of the Monk Monnō’s “Discourse on the Theory of the Nine Mountains and the Eight Seas”* (*Shamon Monnō Kusen hakkai kaitōron no ben* 沙門文雄九山八海解嘲論の辯). Motoori criticized Monnō’s argument as vague and inconsistent and asserted that, “as the theory of the Mount Sumeru universe is fundamentally false, Monnō’s critique of the theory of the spherical earth is groundless.”<sup>25</sup>

The proliferation of astronomical treatises in the eighteenth century by Buddhist, Confucian, and Nativist scholars was occasioned by a new influx of European texts translated into Japanese. In 1720 Tokugawa Yoshimune (1684–1751) relaxed the ban of foreign books that had limited the importation and circulation of European knowledge during the previous century. Yoshimune was himself interested in Western astronomical instruments and encouraged the translation of Dutch texts on the natural sciences. Astronomical works composed by Jesuit scholars in China such as Jacob Rho (1593–1638), Johann Adam Schall von Bell (1591–1666), Ferdinand Verbiest (1623–1688), and others could now be imported.<sup>26</sup> By the 1770s Dutch editions of European works were reproduced in Japanese by official government translators in Nagasaki. The year 1772 saw the first mention of Copernican heliocentrism in Motoki Ryōei’s *Dutch Illustration of the Globe* (*Oranda chikyū zusetu* 阿蘭陀地球図説), a translation of a Dutch edition of Louis Reynard’s *Atlas de la navigation et du commerce qui se fait dans toutes les parties du monde*. Between 1772 and 1773 Motoki Ryōei (1735–1794) translated a 1770 Dutch edition of George Adams’ 1766 *Treatise Describing and Explaining the Construction*

24 Yoshikawa (Ed.), *Chūkai shutsujō kōgo* 註解出定後語 (*Emerging from Meditation, Annotated*). Tōkyō: Ōzorasha, 1996, p.52.

25 *Shamon Monnō Kusen hakkai kaitōron no ben*, in *Motoori Norinaga zenshū* 本居宣長全集 (*Collected Works of Motoori Norinaga*) Tōkyō: Chikuma Shobō 筑摩書房, 1968–1977, vol. 14, p.171.

26 Nakayama, op. cit., pp.165–167.

and *Use of New Celestial and Terrestrial Globes*. Ryōei's translation of Willem Janszoon Blaeu's *Use of Celestial and Terrestrial Globes* (*Tweevoudigh Onderwijs van de hemelshe en aardsche Globen*) appeared the following year as *Tenchi nikyū yōhō* 天地二球用法.<sup>27</sup> Ryōei's translations, however, remain in manuscript, and under strict government control during his lifetime. Although Ryōei's translations were extremely influential to a small group of scholars, it fell to others, such as Shiba Kōkan (1747–1818), to publish and popularize these new astronomical models.

Kōkan's 1796 volume on European, or more literally "Dutch Astronomy" (*Oranda tensetsu* 阿蘭陀天説) was the first work to introduce heliocentrism to a popular Japanese readership. It was followed by the publication in the same year of a set of ten etchings entitled *Complete Illustrations of the Heavens* (*Tenkyū zenzu* 天球全図) including images and explanations of an orrery, the sun, the moon, the elliptical earth, heliocentric and geocentric universes, the earth in space, and the ebb and flow of the tides. In 1808 he published an *Illustrated Explanation of Copernican Astronomy* (*Kopperu tenmon zukai*) and a booklet entitled *Illustrated Explanation of the Celestial Globe* (*Chitengi ryakuzukai*) which included a diagram with moving parts.<sup>28</sup> Kōkan's interest lay not only in the content of European imagery but also in its mode of representation and what he saw as its mimetic power. "The technique employed in this art", Kōkan wrote in his 1799 *Discussion of Western Painting* (*Seiyōgadan*), "produces a true representation of reality, greatly different from the style used in Japan. The written word in black and white cannot possibly recreate an accurate image of the true form. For this reason the pictures drawn in Western countries are regarded even more highly than writing."<sup>29</sup> In his astronomical texts, Kōkan put his understanding of this epistemology of images into practice, explaining, "I have made a visual representation of the heliocentric universe and drawn illustrations of the heavenly bodies in the solar system in order to convince people skeptical of heliocentrism."<sup>30</sup> Kōkan shared a similar faith in the visual that characterized the astronomical thinking of his age. Buddhist, Christian, Confucian, and European theories of the universe – however different their models may have been – were all promoted through visual discourse predicated on the authority of the image.

The monk Giryō Doshin 義了道人 responded in 1806 with a critique of Copernican astronomy entitled a *Brief Japanese Discourse on Śakyamuni's Astronomical Teachings* (*Shakyō tenmon wadan shō* 釈教天文和談鈔) in which he charged that "the Copernican explanation of earthquakes is derived from the Catholic faith and should therefore be treated with suspicion."<sup>31</sup> In the same year, the monk Mitsuan

27 Ibidem, pp.174–175.

28 French, *Shiba Kōkan: Artist, Innovator, and Pioneer in the Westernization of Japan*. New York and Tōkyō: Weatherhill, 1975, p.136–140.

29 Ibidem, p.171.

30 Cited in Nakai, *Shiba Kōkan* 司馬江漢. Tōkyō: Atoriesha, 1942, p.167.

31 Cited in Unno, *Nihonjin no daichzō: seiyō chikyū no joyō o megutte*, Tōkyō: Taishukan, 2006, p.203.

Shakusōen 密庵積僧慈 echoed Hōtan's distinction, articulated a century earlier, between the Buddhist and human vision. He wrote, "the explanations of Buddhist texts rely on the heavenly eye. Astronomers can not see by such means and have only the laws of computation."<sup>32</sup> This classical Buddhist epistemology of vision which maintained a distinction between the heavenly eye of Buddhist knowledge and the physical eye of human observation would continue to inform Buddhist cosmological discourse throughout the nineteenth century.

The figure at the centre of Buddhist cosmological discourse in nineteenth-century Japan, and the individual responsible for the most comprehensive response to the Copernican revolution was the Tendai monk Fumon Entsū 普門円通 (1755–1834), leader of the intellectual movement of Buddhist astronomy know as *Bonreki* 梵曆 or *Butsureki* 仏歴. Born into the Yamada clan of Inaba domain, Entsū took the tonsure at age seven at a Nichiren temple. He later joined the Tendai school, resided at Shōgo-in 聖護院 subtemple of Sekizenkyō-in 積善教院 in Kyōto, and lived out his final years at Esho-in 恵照院 at the Pure Land temple complex of Zōjōji in Edo.<sup>33</sup> Entsū composed more than forty works including, in 1810, the five-volume *Astronomy of Buddhist Countries* (*Bukkoku rekishōhen* 仏国歴象編). In this and later publications, Entsū promoted a unique defense of Buddhist cosmology based on an exhaustive reading of scriptural sources, detailed mathematical calculation, and scientific reasoning. As innovative and extensive as his Buddhist astronomy was, however, Entsū's work relied on the same epistemology of vision and enlightened sight that informed the cartography of Hōtan a century earlier. The preface of Entsū *Astronomy of Buddhist Countries* begins,

The unsurpassed enlightenment attained by the Buddha, the World Honored One, clearly sees (洞視 *dōshi*, Skt. *divya-cakṣus*) the innumerable worlds. Calendrical science and the structure of phenomena were one of the five fields of learning in ancient India and are an essential part of the Great Way. The laws of karma explain the universe, even the creation and destruction of Mount Sumeru and the Triple World, and the movement of the sun, the moon, and the stars. These forms of Indian knowledge are far superior to the reasoning of contemporary scholars, which, compared to the wisdom of the Buddhas and bodhisattvas, is as insubstantial as the leaves of bamboo scattered by a whirlwind. The practitioners of Indian knowledge apprehend true reality (*shinjitsu*) and perceive everything in the world with the power of the heavenly eye (*tengentsu*).<sup>34</sup>

32 Ibidem, p.205.

33 Yamada, "Ryūkoku daigaku Ōmiya toshokan shozō shukushōgi – e yaku oyobi mokei – ni tsuite 龍谷大学大宮図書館所蔵縮象儀 — 図・説および模型 — について" ("On the Shukushōgi in the Collection of the Ōmiya Library of Ryūkoku University"). *Nihon kenkyū* (Japan Studies) 16 (September 30, 1997), pp.59–71; 59.

34 Entsū, *Bukkoku rekishōhen* 仏国歴象編 (*Astronomy of Buddhist Countries*), 5 Vols. Ōsaka: Yamato Yashirobei, 1815, vol. 1, Preface, 1a-b.

Entsū discusses calendrical calculation, astronomical phenomena, the shape of the earth and concludes his magnum opus with an argument about what he terms, “optical knowledge” (*genchi* 眼智).<sup>35</sup> In his final chapter Entsū introduces what he calls “the law of optical knowledge” (*genchi no hō* 眼智之法) or, more freely translated, “the epistemology of vision.” After presenting the theories of vision and knowledge from various scriptural sources, Entsū explains that Buddhist astronomy represents the universe from the perspective of “the heavenly eye and the five modes of vision” whereas Western astronomy sees it only from the limited perspective of the physical eye.<sup>36</sup> These two kinds of vision, Entsū explains, produce two kinds of knowledge: the physical eye that perceives the world as represented in Western astronomy and the heavenly eye, what Hōtan had described as “the vision of the wisdom eye”, that apprehends “the worlds as numerous as atoms.”

Entsū saw European astronomy as a threat not only to Japanese Buddhism but to the moral, religious, and political culture of Japan.

Such wicked teachings are not the ancient teachings of our country. Such teachings treat the gods with contempt and destroy the conscience of the people of the realm. Their evil influence is profound and grave. They make a mockery of our Buddhist teachings about heaven and earth even as they plagiarize them. They cause the ignorant to treat Buddhism as a trifling thing and to think nothing of disrespecting the Imperial Court. Out of indignation for the great harm of these worldly teachings that insult and ridicule the gods and Buddhas, I have systematically arranged documentary evidence and compiled these five volumes, entitled *Astronomy of Buddhist Countries*. I have done this to uphold the path of righteousness, strike down heresy, and support the lofty rule of the sacred *kami* of the state who eternally nourish all subjects of the realm. It is my sincere hope that the Buddhist Law and the Imperial Law, like the sun and moon and heaven and earth, shall forever illuminate the world.<sup>37</sup>

Entsū’s work was not without its critics. In 1817 Inō Tadataka 伊能忠敬 (1745–1818), who studied astronomy under Takahashi Yoshitoki 高橋至時 (1764–1804), the official astronomer to the Tokugawa shogunate, and who produced the first map of Japan using modern Western surveying techniques, repudiated Entsū’s claims in a five volume critique entitled, *Rejecting the Delusions of the Astronomy of Buddhist Countries* (*Bukkoku rekishohen sekimo* 仏国曆象編斥妄). Inō’s denunciation was echoed the following year by astronomer Kojima Tozan 小島涛山 (1761–1831) in his *Disposing of the Delusions of the Astronomy of Buddhist Countries* (*Bukkoku rekisho benmo* 仏国曆象弁妄).<sup>38</sup> Entsū’s Buddhist astronomy

35 Ibidem, vol. 1, 3a.

36 Ibidem, vol. 5, 52a.

37 Ibidem, vol. 1, Preface, 2b–3b.

38 On Entsū’s critics, see Yoshida, “Meiji no shumisensetsu ronsō” 明治の須弥山説論争 (“The debate over the theory of the Mount Sumeru universe in the Meiji period”). *Tōyō bunka* 東洋文化, no. 75 (February 1995), pp.79–102.

nevertheless gained a following among his fellow monks and among lay astronomers as well. His advocates included Koide Chōjūrō 小出長十郎 (1797–1865), a scholar in the astronomy office of the Imperial household and Fujii Saishō (1838–1907), an astronomer in the service of the Tokugawa government. Entsū was invited to lecture on the subject at the Shingon headquarter on Mount Kōya, the Tendai headquarters on Mount Hiei, and he lived out his life at the Pure Land headquarters of Zōjōji, the family temple of the Tokugawa shōgun, where many of his works were first published. Entsū's students continued to develop and teach Buddhist astronomy throughout the nineteenth century. His disciples Kōgen, Ankei, and Jōmei taught his theories at the Seminary of Nishi Honganji and his disciples Reiyū and Daitō did the same at the Seminary of Higashi Honganji, the two main temples and educational institutions of the True Pure Land school.

Recognizing the advantage that quantitative reasoning and diagrammatic demonstration provided the proponents of heliocentrism, Entsū insisted that Buddhists must present their worldview in the same terms.

People believe in the theory of a spherical earth because it is scientifically demonstrated through astronomical calculation. To dispel people's doubts about the Mount Sumeru world, we have to demonstrate it using astronomical calculation as well.<sup>39</sup>

Entsū was in no sense a naïve reactionary. He had studied both Chinese and European astronomical theory under Kawano Tsūrei, an official astronomer to the Imperial court.<sup>40</sup> In *Astronomy of Buddhist Countries* Entsū analyses Chinese, Arabic, and European astronomical theory and offers explanatory illustrations of each tradition's planetary and terrestrial models.<sup>41</sup> He surveys the various schools of Chinese astronomy, including the models of both a flat and a spherical earth, and discusses the work of Matteo Ricci, Adam Shall von Bell, Jacobus Rho, Nicholas Copernicus (1473–1543), and Tycho Brahe (1546–1601). He cites the latest Japanese translations of European sources – such as Shizuki Tadao's 志筑忠雄 (1760–1806)

39 Entsū, *Jikken shumikai setsu* 實驗須彌界説, vol. 1, “Preface”. Kyōto: Nakashima Rizaemon, 1821, 3a.

40 Watanabe, *Kinsei nihon tenmongakushi* 近世日本天文学史 (*The History of Astronomy in Early Modern Japan*). Tōkyō: Kōseisha kōseikaku, 1986, pp.116–119.

41 On Entsū's comparative cosmology and conceptualization of Indian calendrical science, see Kobayashi, “Tenmonrekigaku to shisō, shūkyō: *Bukkoku rekishōhen* to sono jidai” 天文曆学と思想・宗教-- 『仏国曆象編』とその時代 (“Thought, religion, and calendrical science: the *Astronomy of Buddhist Countries* and its time”). *Dōshisha daigaku rikōgaku kenkyūshō kenkyū happyōkai*. Nov 12, 2005, pp.32–37. On Entsū's critique of Chinese and European Cosmology, see Takeda, “Shaku Entsū *Bukkoku rekishōhen* naka nishi uchūsetsu hihan” 釈門通の仏国曆象編中西天文説批判 (“Entsū's critique of western astronomy in his *Astronomy of Buddhist Countries*”). *Dōshisha daigaku rikōgaku kenkyūshō kenkyū happyōkai* (Dec 2, 2006), pp.3–41.



*New Treatise on Calendrical Phenomena* (*Rekishō shinsho* 曆象新書), a translation of John Keill's *Introductiones ad Veram Physicam et veram Astronomiam* – to demonstrate the variety of European theories and uses this very diversity to indicate the absence of any universal truth. With arguments that may seem tendentious by modern standards, Entsū overwhelms the reader with diagrams and calculations in an attempt to disprove the tenets of European astronomy and defend the flat earth described in Buddhist texts.

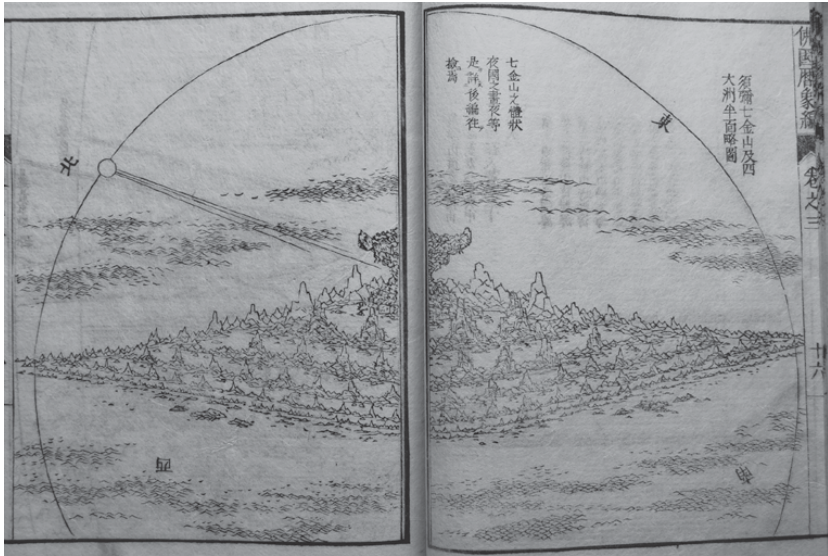
Entsū often draws on such astrological texts of the Esoteric Buddhist tradition as the *Sun-Store Sutra* (*Nichizōkyō* 日藏經), the *Moon-Store Sutra* (*Gatsuzōkyō* 月藏經) and *Sutra on Constellations and Luminaries* (*Shukuyōkyō* 宿曜經) in his discussions of the celestial order, yet his description of the world centred on Mount Sumeru is based primarily on citations from the *Abhidharmakośa*. In his *Astronomy of Buddhist Countries*, Entsū presents two double-page topographic illustrations of Mount Sumeru and its surrounding mountains and seas.<sup>42</sup> Together the illustrations depict the trajectory of the sun's horizontal orbit, calculate its circumference and diameter, and represent the angle from which its rays reach Mount Sumeru and the southern continent of Jambudvīpa. Another two-page illustration depicts the movement of the sun across Jambudvīpa and the angle of its rays as they reach the peaks of the great mountains of the southern continent. The purpose of these detailed drawings and the calculation of solar height and distance, is to account for the northern regions known as the Land of Night. These northern regions, where sunlight shines only half the year, appear on Matteo Ricci's maps and on their popular Japanese reproductions as well as on Sokaku's globe. As they provide evidence for the sphericity of the earth, Entsū goes to great lengths to explain their existence within the flat world of the Buddhist scriptures.<sup>43</sup>

Entsū's *Astronomy of Buddhist Countries* also includes a remarkable *Map of Jambudvīpa* (*Nansembushu no zu*).<sup>44</sup> It is a single-page illustration of the southern world continent covered with mountains and forests and surrounded by sea and clouds. A row of craggy peaks and trees along the upper border of the frame is labeled Jihensen 持辺山 (Skt. Nimimdhara), the outermost of the seven rings of mountains that encircle Mount Sumeru. Below it lies a sea labeled Jihenkaï 持辺海 and the northernmost reaches of Jambudvīpa. At the top of the continent is the Jambud Tree and beneath it horizontal rows of seven forests and seven rivers divide the upper two-thirds of the continent. In the centre of the continent Entsū has located the legendary Mount Kunlun 崑崙山, a mythic mountain of the

42 Entsū, *Bukkoku rekishōhen*, vol. 3, 15b-18a.

43 Entsū explains the winter darkness of the Land of Night as the sunlight being blocked by Mount Kunlun.

44 Entsū, *Bukkoku rekishōhen*, vol. 3, 29b.



**Fig. 5.** Fumon Entsū, illustration of the sun's rays on Mount Sumeru from *Astronomy of Buddhist Countries*, 1810. Monochrome woodblock book illustration. © Masahiko Okada Collection.

Chinese religious tradition that was often conflated with Mount Sumeru. Only the lower third of the map represents the world of human habitation: a triangular landmass cut off from the rest of the world continent. The northeast corner of this lower landmass is labeled Asia 亜細亜, the northwest corner labeled Europe 欧邏巴, and Africa 阿弗利加 is inscribed in the southwest. As Entsū explains, “the three continents of Asia, Europe, and Africa that appear on the maps that Westerners have brought to Japan are what is called Jambudvīpa. [...] The three continents were originally one land. Its north, east, and west sides are nearly the same. Its south side is narrow and comes to a point.”<sup>45</sup>

45 Ibidem, vol. 3, 6b-7a.



Fig. 6. Fumon Entsū, *Map of Jambudvīpa*, from *Astronomy of Buddhist Countries*, 1810. Monochrome woodblock book illustration. © Masahiko Okada Collection.

In 1821 a student of Entsū, the Pure land monk Zontō 存統 (1781–1832), produced a large-format print entitled *An Expanded Image of the World* (*Sekai daisōzu* 世界大相圖) that compiled the encyclopedic detail of Entsū's cosmology in a single explanatory image.<sup>46</sup> (Colour plate 1a) Measuring 129.5 × 56 cm and designed to be mounted as a hanging scroll, it depicts the traditional world-picture of the Mount Sumeru universe with an obsessive attention to quantitative precision. Zontō's print illustrates and annotates the many details of the Mount Sumeru universe: the multiple strata of heavens above the cosmic mountain, the levels and dwellings of the mountain itself, the sun and moon on either side, the surrounding mountains and seas, the four great continents in each of the cardinal directions, the supporting layers of golden earth, water, and air, and the eight great hells beneath. As if in response to recent challenges to this ancient cosmology, an inscription in the upper left corner of the print situates the Buddhist universe within an eternal temporality: the perpetual cycle of cosmic time, known as the the four aeons (Skt. *kalpas*) of formation, existence, decay, and disappearance.

When this world comes to an end it will be overcome by the three great calamities of fire, water, and wind and we will enter the kalpa of disappearance. The kalpa of disappearance lasts twenty-five small kalpas and is followed by the kalpa of formation. All living things within the Mount Sumeru universe, beginning with the palace of Brahma, are produced during the kalpa of formation. During the kalpa of existence, humans will have an infinite lifespan like celestial beings. Gradually all created things, including humans, will have a shorter lifespan, and will experience disparities of wealth, crime, and the fires of war. This will be followed by the kalpa of decay and, once again, the kalpa of disappearance. The succession of the four kalpas will continue perpetually.<sup>47</sup>

Within this eternal temporal frame Zontō offers a spatial representation of the Buddhist universe essentially unchanged from its earliest Japanese depiction. The hourglass-shaped cosmic mountain occupies the centre of a radiating series of mountains ranges and seas, the four great continents lie in the outermost oceans, with our world of Jambudvīpa clearly foregrounded. Although otherwise resembling earlier medieval illustrations, the depiction of Jambudvīpa acknowledges a more recent world. Closely following Entsū's *Map of Jambudvīpa*, Zontō includes the Jambud Tree with triangular leaves at the top of the continent, the seven rows

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46 Zontō, from the Ogawa family of Tagima Province, entered the priesthood at the age of eight, studied at the Pure Land temple of Fukugawaji and in 1809 with Entsū at Zōjōji in Edo. He served as head monk of Entsūji in Edo and retired to Matsuoji in Okazaki. Gotō, “Zontō Shōnin saku Sekidaisōzu sanpukutsui” 存統上人世界大相圖三幅対 (“Zontō's three-scroll Expanded Image of the World”). *Jōdo*, (October 1988), pp.8–18.

47 This and the following passages from Zontō's print are transcribed in Gotō, “Zontō Shōnin *Sekaidaisōzu* sanpukutsui”, 11.

of forests and rivers and Mount Kunlun below, as well as the three lines marking the path of the sun through out the year according to Entsū's theory of solar movement. In an inscription below this image, Zontō compares the canonical cosmology of Buddhist scripture with the astronomy of European sources:

According to the *Kegonkyō*, the form of the universe is infinite, inexhaustible, and indescribable. Nevertheless, the form of the universe has often been described in both Mahayana and Hinayana texts. This illustration of the Mount Sumeru world distinguishes the Three Realms of Desire, Form, and Formlessness and the Twenty Five Stages of Existence. .... Today those who purport to be learned and debate cosmology are unaware of the fact that the entire human realm is but one small part of the Realm of Desire. Those who refer to the world as "myriad lands" (*bankoku*) know nothing of the thousands of worlds of the past and future. Although they may think that they know all that there is to know, their knowledge is no more comprehensive than that of a frog in a well.

Ever since I was a child I have had profound questions about the structure of the universe and its past and future and these questions have only increased as I have grown to adulthood. One day, following the advice of a teacher, I read the Dhātu chapter of the *Abhidharmakośa* and learned of the shape and size of the universe and of the Three Realms. After investigating its details for many years, my doubts have melted away and my joy has never ceased. I have therefore produced this image so that others will not be troubled with similar questions and doubts. There are of course already many illustrations of the Mount Sumeru universe but they are all rather crude and rough. In recent years a book entitled *Astronomy of Buddhist Countries* has been published which, in order to clarify the foundations of calendrical science, has produced a detailed analysis of astronomical matters and, on the basis of domestic and foreign texts, has corrected the errors of Western scholars. Those who study astronomy should read this book and the design and intention of my print is in complete accordance with it. Encompassing the various heavens and mountains where deities reside, the world of humans, and the distant worlds far away, this illustration makes small things large and large things small such that all can be seen, understood, and accepted, in a single glance.

Citing Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakośa* as his scriptural source and Entsū's *Astronomy of Buddhist Countries* as his hermeneutic lens, Zontō offers a popular printed image of the classical Buddhist universe for the modern viewer. Like Entsū and Hōtan before him, Zontō's cosmology combines scriptural pedagogy with contemporary critique. Reaching back to the vocabulary and tropes that Hōtan had deployed over a century earlier, Zontō belittles the blinkered vision of those satisfied with the Riccian paradigm as nothing more than the myopic conceit of Zhuangzi's frog in a well. Zontō's most significant similarity with Hōtan, however, is the promise of a new modality of visual knowledge. Zontō's claim that his "illustration makes small things large and large things small such that all can be seen, understood, and accepted, in a single glance", like Hōtan's claim to "have

integrated all of the mote-like countries of Jambudvīpa and reduced the scale so ... one can take in the entire world in a single glance”, offers the panopticism of Buddhist insight through the visual medium of the commercial print.<sup>48</sup>

A few years later Zontō produced an even more detailed map of Jambudvīpa characterized by an even greater amalgamation of Buddhist cosmology and Western cartography.<sup>49</sup> (Colour plate 1b) Zontō’s print, entitled *Jambudvīpa with an Illustration of the Sun* (*Enbudai tsuketari nichikanzu* 閻浮提附日官圖), matches the size and format of his print of 1821. The upper register is filled with a traditional representation of Jambudvīpa quite similar to the upper sections of both Entsu’s illustration and the detail of Jambudvīpa in Zontō’s earlier print. At the very top of the print is the outermost mountain range and sea surrounding Sumeru and beneath it the Jambud Tree and alternating rows of forests and rivers. In the lower section of Jambudvīpa, where Entsu’s illustration and Zontō’s earlier print had depicted an undifferentiated terrain or a simple array of toponyms, Zontō here supplies a finely detailed European-style map of the eastern hemisphere with the continents of Asia, Africa, Europe and Australia carefully defined and named.<sup>50</sup> What might appear to be the Pacific coastline of North America protruding from the map’s eastern margin is instead labeled Avaracāmara 勝猫牛州, the island east of Jambudvīpa according to the geography of the *Abhidharmakośa* and Australia is labeled Cāmara 猫牛州, the island that Buddhist sources locate to the west of Jambudvīpa.

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48 The passage from Hōtan’s map reads in full, “I have integrated all of the mote-like countries of Jambudvīpa and reduced the scale so that it can be held in one’s hands. ... With this map one can take in the entire world in a single glance; one can visit distant places without ever traveling beyond one’s garden gate.” It is remarkably similar to Kōkan’s description of Dutch cartography: “This map is but two feet square, yet by studying it you can understand even small facts about very tiny countries, illustrated as clearly as stars in the sky. At one glance you see before you on this map the entire enormous surface of the earth.” (French, *Shiba Kōkan*, p.126).

49 The exact date of the print is unclear. Although it is dated on the block “Fifth Year of the Bunka Era (1808)”, the text within the print refers to his print of 1821. 後著ス所ノ閻浮提図ヲ対照シテ. The world map in the lower register of the print is also indebted to a later source.

50 The land forms and place names of Eurasia and Australia conform to 1819 edition of Takahashi Kageyasu’s, *Newly Revised Map of the World* (*Shintei bankoku zenzu* 新訂万国全図).



**Colour Plate 1a.** Zontō, *Expanded Image of the World*, 1821. Woodblock print with hand colouring, H. 195 × L. 64 cm. © Library of Congress. **Colour Plate 1b.** Zontō, *Illustration of Jambudvīpa with the Sun*, ca. 1821–1828. Woodblock print with hand colouring, H. 195 × L. 64 cm. © Yokohama City University Library.

A similar map of Jambudvīpa, produced by the monk Egon 惠嚴 in 1845 illustrates a further articulation of this worldview. Egon's print, entitled *A Detailed Explanatory Illustration of Jambudvīpa* (*Enbushū saiken zusetu* 閻浮洲細見圖

説), is clearly based on Zontō's *Jambudvīpa with an Illustration of the Sun*. Egon shifts Zontō's solar landscape to the upper half of the image and, in the lower half, similarly attempts to unite the classical Buddhist cosmology with contemporary Western cartography. Yet Egon has reshaped the continents of Asia, Europe, and Africa into the familiar inverted triangular form of the Buddhist world continent as if to illustrate Entsū's claim that "the three continents of Asia, Europe, and Africa that appear on the maps that Westerners have brought to Japan are what is called Jambudvīpa."<sup>51</sup> Egon has added the Americas (including the depiction of California as an island) but has labeled them North Cāmara and South Cāmara and Australia, fused with New Zealand and New Guinea as in earlier eighteenth-century Japanese maps, has been labeled Avacāmara. Like Zontō as well, Egon has retained Entsū's astronomical arguments indicated by the three lines marking the sun's path throughout the seasons of the year.

The Buddhist cartography of Zontō and Entsū were but one part of a larger discourse, articulated verbally and visually, of a comprehensive Buddhist cosmology. Entsū and his followers were drawing from ancient scripture to formulate modern cosmological arguments and engage in contemporary intellectual debates. The materials they produced – texts, diagrams, maps, and large-format hand coloured woodblock printed hanging scrolls – were promotional materials used in public lectures and meant for popular consumption. When Entsū and his disciples travelled the country, offering lectures at temples and seminaries throughout Japan, such prints were essential visual aids, pedagogical imagery of a sort that has always been among the visual resources of Buddhist preaching in Japan. As the visual arguments became increasingly complex, the pedagogical imagery did too, and was not limited to the printed page.

In order to demonstrate how the horizontal orbit of the sun and moon around Mount Sumeru can explain seasonal change and solar and lunar eclipses, Entsū designed a three-dimensional model of the Buddhist universe. A painting of the model, mounted as a hanging scroll, entitled *Model of Mount Sumeru Inscribed and Explained* (*Shumisengi mei narabini jo* 須彌山儀銘並序), depicts a squat cylindrical object set on a decorative wooden base. The painting was later reproduced as a woodblock print used by Entsū and his students in public lectures on Buddhist astronomy (Colour plate 2a). The sides of the object are painted in horizontal bands, and annotated with textual inscriptions, indicating the layers of matter that make up the Mount Sumeru universe. On the surface are the eight mountain ranges and seas with the hourglass shaped Mount Sumeru rising from the centre. In the outermost sea, bounded by a circular range of iron mountains, lies the four great continents with smaller landforms scattered around them. Above the surface layer of the model and seas are eight small discs representing the positions of constellations, arranged in pairs aligned with each of the four continents, surrounded by a ring marked with calendrical characters. A system of

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51 Entsū, *Bukkoku rekishōhen*, vol. 3, 6–7.



fixed elevated circular tracks is coloured red, white, and gold and marked with regular increments and two wire rings along which the sun and moon travel as they orbit the cosmic mountain. Positioned vertically against one side of the device is a black wooden pole with a pulley, escapement, and counterweight. This simple clockwork mechanism regulated the measured movement of the sun and moon as they circle Sumeru.



**Colour Plate 2a.** Entsū, *Model of Mount Sumeru Inscribed and Explained*, 1813. Multicolour woodblock print, H. 137 × L. 62 cm. © Yokohama City University Library.  
**Colour Plate 2b.** Entsū, *Model of Relative Phenomena Explained*, 1814. Colour woodblock print, H. 129 × L. 53 cm. © Yokohama City University Library.

To further explain the workings of his model Entsū also published in the same year a two-volume text entitled, *Model of Mount Sumeru Explained in Japanese* (*Shumisen gimei narabini jo waga* 須彌山儀銘並序和解) that provides exhaustive

numerical measurements of every element of the model and clarified their correspondence to the calculations of the scriptures. The details of Entsū's model and the precision of his calculations were crucial to his defense of the accuracy of Buddhist cosmology. "If the Mount Sumeru world is correct", Entsū wrote, "it will be in accordance with calendrical calculations; if the calendrical calculations are correct, they will be in accordance with the solar and lunar eclipses."<sup>52</sup>

The following year, 1814, Entsū produced another explanatory print entitled, *Model of Relative Phenomena Explained* (*Shukushōgi setsu* 縮象儀説) to demonstrate the movement of the sun and moon as they pass over Jambudvīpa (Colour plate 2b). The *Model of Relative Phenomena* represents a ninety-degree section of the Great Salt Sea that lies between the final square range of mountains surrounding Sumeru and the ring of iron mountains that defines the perimeter of the Buddhist universe. At the centre of this surface is a circular metal band, inscribed with astrological notations, supporting three measured semicircular arcs of red, white, and gold and two metal rings along which the sun and moon move as they pass over Jambudvīpa. The southern world continent, however, is not represented as the single trapezoidal form as in the *Model of Mount Sumeru Inscribed and Explained* issued the previous year, or as in the *Map of Jambudvīpa* included in the *Astronomy of Buddhist Countries* published in 1810. It is represented instead as the three continents of Asia, Africa, and Europe, much as they appear on European-style maps, each named and printed in separate colours, compressed to approximate the traditional form of Jambudvīpa. It is a hybrid geography combining the continents of Buddhist and European cartographic traditions illustrating Entsū's claim that "the three continents of Asia, Europe, and Africa that appear on the maps that Westerners have brought to Japan are what is called Jambudvīpa."<sup>53</sup>

Like the print of 1813, it too is accompanied with an extensive inscription which explains that the device "shows a single continent of the Mount Sumeru world as it is perceived by the power of human vision. ... It represents the view of the Mount Sumeru world of nine mountains and eight seas, two wheels and three rings, as perceived by the sense organs, or the mind of an ordinary person. It is a view that Buddhists understand as limited." The inscription invokes the authority of other astronomical models: "It is like the view of the world represented by celestial and terrestrial globes or by an armillary sphere, a physical object perceived through the power of human cognition."<sup>54</sup> Like these other astronomical devices, Entsū's *Model* serves as a mechanism by which to allow the human eye to see beyond its limits. The inscription continues: "the *Model of Relative Phenomena* and the *Model of Mount Sumeru* are paired models of the Buddhist universe, similar to a pair of armillary spheres. They are constructed to correct the deluded view of ordinary people." Entsū contrasts this deluded view with the power and clarity

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52 Entsū, *Bonreki sakushin* (1816), p. 23.

53 *Ibidem*, vol. 3, pp.6–7.

54 The inscription is transcribed in Yamada, *op. cit.*, pp.64–65.

of Buddhist vision, which is “like a person using a telescope imported from the West that allows them to see mountains and seas a great distance away, or to see the constellations as clearly as he might see an anthill, or as clearly as the palm of one’s hand, entirely and in every direction. Even the entire world in the four directions appears as clear as an object in a mirror. This mode of vision cannot be compared to that of ordinary humans.”<sup>55</sup>

Deploying a Buddhist vocabulary of epistemological clarity – “as clearly as the palm of one’s hand ... as clearly as an object in a mirror” – Entsū echoes Hōtan’s claim, made a century earlier, to have “integrated all of the mote-like countries of Jambudvīpa, and reduced the scale, so that it may be held in one’s hands.” Both have produced a visual prosthetic that allow one, in Hōtan’s words, to “take in the entire world in a single glance; to visit distant places without ever traveling beyond one’s garden gate; and to point out the various countries of the world just as easily as pointing out the stars in the night sky.” Entsū, however, has radically expanded the scope of Hōtan’s project from a geographic to a cosmographic scale. As Entsū explains, “The reduction of large to small and of far to near allows the world to be comprehended by human reason and human vision just as terrestrial and celestial globes allow one to comprehend phenomena that cannot otherwise be apprehended. For the majesty of a single Mount Sumeru world lies beyond the capacity of human vision and human understanding.”

If the *Model of Mount Sumeru* is meant to demonstrate the structure and movement of the world as seen from the Buddhist perspective of absolute phenomena, the *Model of Relative Phenomena* is meant to demonstrate the world from the ordinary human perspective. Together the two instruments are intended to explain the discrepancy between these two modes of vision. For like Hōtan and Mitsuan Shakusōen before him, Entsū shared a traditional Buddhist approach to the epistemology of vision. The physical eye of an ordinary human provides a qualitatively different view of reality than the heavenly eye of a Buddha. The final chapter of Entsū *Astronomy of Buddhist Countries*, is entitled “Knowledge Obtained Through Vision” (*Genchi* 眼智). In it Entsū introduces what he calls “law of knowledge obtained through vision” (*genchi no hō* 眼智之法) based on the classical Buddhist notion of the heavenly eye. After presenting the theories of vision and understanding from various scriptural sources, Entsū explains that Buddhist astronomy represents the universe from the perspective of “the heavenly eye and the five modes of vision” whereas Western astronomy sees it only from the limited perspective of the physical eye.<sup>56</sup>

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55 Yamada, op. cit., pp.64–65. [this quotation is a continuation of the above cited passage]

56 Entsū, *Bukkoku rekishōhen*, vol. 5, 52.

The earliest extant example of one of Entsu's astronomical device is dated to 1824 and housed in the collection of the Shizuoka temple of Ryūshinji 龍津寺.<sup>57</sup> Commissioned by Entsu himself or perhaps by a disciple, this articulated instrument is nearly identical to the model depicted in the painting and print of 1813. The instrument is powered by a single counterweight that propels an internal clockwork mechanism calibrated to regulate the movement of solar and lunar orbs along metal rings encircling a detailed model of Mount Sumeru at the rate of one rotation a day. The clockworks also regulate the rotation of eight elevated discs bearing representations of the constellations so that the mechanism demonstrates both the passage of day and night and the change of the seasons.

Such mechanical models of the Buddhist world were refined and reproduced by Entsu's disciple Kanchū 環中 (1790–1859) of the Kyōto Rinzaï Zen temple Tenryūji 天龍寺, who further developed Entsu's theories and his mechanical models of Mount Sumeru. Kanchū's new model of Mount Sumeru is represented in a colour woodblock print published in 1848. In style and format, it resembles Entsu's hanging scroll of 1813, but it represents the changes that Kanchū had by then made to his master's design. The most prominent of these is the replacement of the pole-mounted counterweight and escapement mechanism with fully automated clockworks. Kanchū had the device fabricated by Tanaka Hisashige 田中久重 (1799–1881), the pioneering engineer of automata, clockworks, steam engines, and telegraphy, and founder of what would later be known as the Toshiba Corporation. Tanaka produced at least three different versions from Kanchū's designs: precision instruments made of wood, metal, crystal, lacquer, mother of pearl, and clockworks. Unlike the relatively simple model of 1824, animated by pendulum, counterweight, and escapement, which merely demonstrated the movement of sun and moon during a twenty-four hour period, Tanaka's intricate machines shared the complex technologies of his famous chronometers.<sup>58</sup> They marked the movement of the sun and moon, the date and time, the twenty-four divisions of the solar year, the passage of the four seasons, and the location of the twenty-eight celestial mansions. Tanaka produced Kanchū's clockwork models of Mount Sumeru between the years 1847 and 1850.

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57 Okada, "Kindai Bukkyō to shumisengi" 近代仏教と須弥山儀 ("Early Modern Buddhism and Mount Sumeru devices"). *Nihon Bukkyō gakkai gakujitsu taikai happyō* 70 (09/03/2011), pp.1–12.

58 On the clockworks of Tanaka Hisashige, see Takehiko, "The Mechanization of Time and the Calendar: Tanaka Hisashige and His Myriad Year Clock and Cosmological Models". *UTCP* [University of Tōkyō, Center for Philosophy] *Bulletin* 6, 2006, pp.47–55.



Fig. 7. Kanchū, *Model of Mount Sumeru Incribed*, 1848. Woodblock print with hand colouring, 118 × 54 cm. © Ryūkoku University Library.

The earliest example, in the former Moody Collection, is an astronomical clock measuring thirty-three cm. in diameter and 34 cm. in height that shows the phases of the moon, the rotation of the sun, the movement of the stars, the ebb and flow of the tides, and the twenty-four seasonal periods.<sup>59</sup> A dial above the centre of Mount Sumeru marks the seasonal divisions and long brass hands extend from the dial supporting solar and lunar orbs that indicated the horizontal orbits of the sun and moon. A small metal disc supported by a post represents the constellation of the Big Dipper in the sky above Jambudvīpa. Two black lacquer rings supported above the surface are divided into 360 degrees and marked with the names of the twenty-eight constellations. The layers of air, water, and golden earth that support the surface of mountains, seas, and continents are painted on the sides of the instrument's base in brown, blue, and white lacquer. On one side of the base is a metal clock face with hands and dial and the entire instrument is operated by a large clockwork mechanism housed within the base. A decorative lacquered wooden stand with four curved cloud-form legs supports the entire device.

Tanaka produced a second version of his model, now in the collection of the Seiko Museum, with a more refined clockface set behind glass and an elaborate removable ornamental cover composed of eighteen plates of glass fitted into a lacquered and gilded frame. A third and final version, even more elaborate and twice the size, signed by Tanaka and dated 1850, is in the collection of the Ryūkoku University Library (Colour plate 3a). The Ryūkoku model is similar in proportion, if not in exact dimensions, to the Seiko Museum model and conforms in nearly every detail to an image of the device produced by Kanchū in 1848.

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59 The instrument is no longer extant but is photographed and described in Mody, *A Collection of Japanese Clocks*. London: Kegan Paul, 1932, plate 111, figs. 1–3, pp.40–42.



**Colour Plate 3a.** Kanchū and Tanaka Hisashige, *Model of Mount Sumeru*, 1850. Wood, brass, lacquer, glass, mother-of-pearl, colours, H. 55 × D. 66.5 cm. © Ryūkoku University Library. **Colour Plate 3b.** Kanchū and Tanaka Hisashige, *Model of Relative Phenomena*, 1847–1850. Wood, brass, lacquer, glass, mother-of-pearl, colours, H. 64.5 × D. 64.5 cm. © Ryūkoku University Library.

Kanchū produced a second matching scroll, also in 1848, which represents Kanchū's modifications of Entsu's 1814 *Model of Relative Phenomena Explained* (*Shukushōgisetu*) and is entitled *Model of Relative Phenomena Illustrated* (*Shukushōgizu*). Compared with Entsu's image of a simple tabletop model produced 35 years earlier, Kanchū's image shows a fully mechanized instrument set within the same clockwork base of Tanaka's final *Shumisengi*. The fixed surface of Entsu's map has become, in Tanaka's updated device, a separate swiveling disc across which the passage of the sun and moon are calibrated to the twenty-four seasonal divisions of the year. The geography of Jambudvīpa has changed as well. Although Kanchū retains the three coloured continents of Asia, Africa, and Europe depicted on Entsu's *Model of Relative Phenomena*, they have been fused into a single great continent and moved to the northwest. At the centre of the map, enlarged to the size of Africa, is the Japanese archipelago. To the south is a group of islands and a large continent coloured a pale pink and to the west a long narrow continent, perhaps the Americas, coloured green. Twelve lines, drawn and notated, radiate out to the eastern and western edges of the disc. The lines converge at the exact centre of the world map, the orientation point of astronomical observation: Kyōto. The *Model of Relative Phenomena* that Tanaka produced for Kanchū is also in the Ryūkoku collection (Colour plate 3b). Other than missing the map of the world, it is identical to Kanchū's scroll.

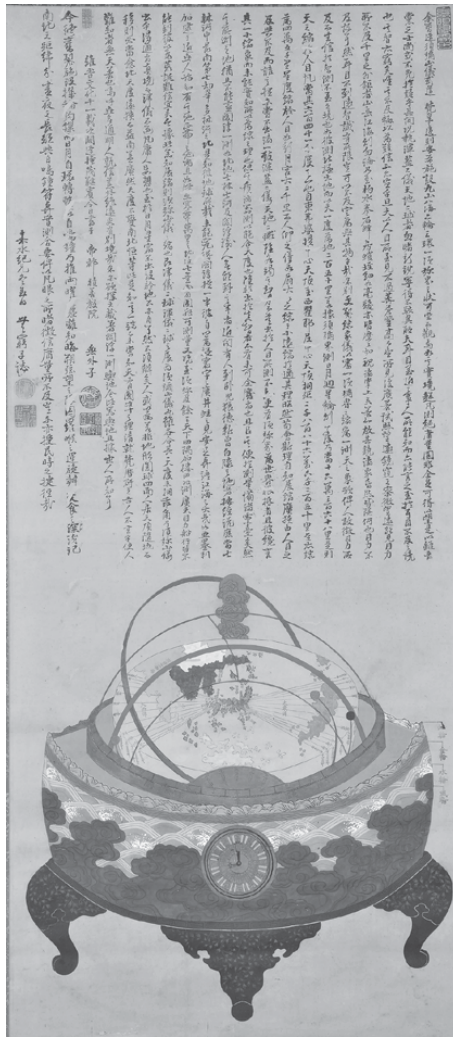
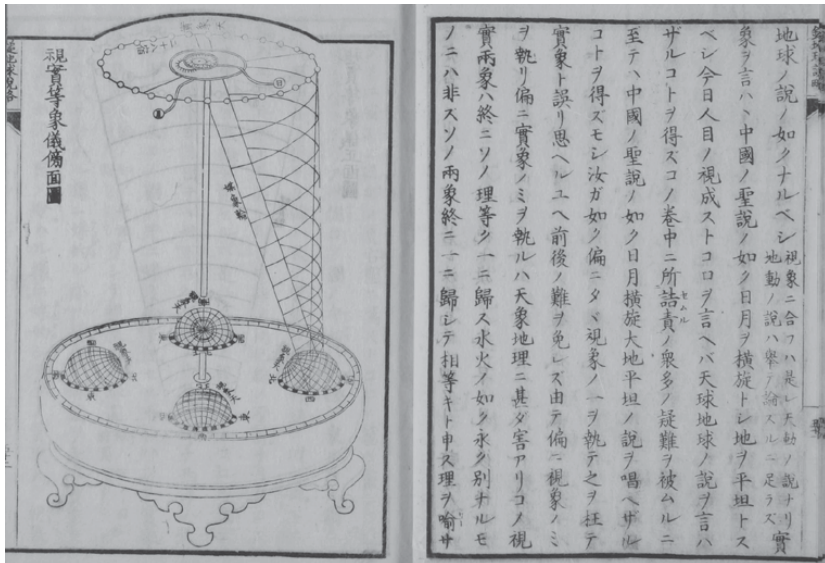


Fig. 8. Kanchū, *Model of Relative Phenomena Illustrated*, 1848. Multicolour woodblock print, H. 118 × L. 54 cm. © Ryūkoku University Library.

In their paired images and instruments, Entsu and his disciple Kanchū sought to produce a visual and material exegesis of Buddhist cosmology. In the process however they faced a fundamental problem of depicting and explaining the discrepancy between the apparent and the true form of the world. A certain aporia (a crisis of representation?) exists between their models of the Mount Sumeru



universe in its relative and absolute forms. It is as if the models, like the modes of visuality they represent, must remain apart: a kind of double vision that can not be brought into focus. An attempt to resolve this problem is suggested in the work of the True Pure Land monk, Sada Kaiseki 佐田介石 (1818–1882) who continued to promote Buddhist astronomy even after it was prohibited in 1876 by the Meiji government. An outspoken critic on economic, political, and social issues, Sada was also the author of fourteen works on Buddhist astronomy. He studied with Entsu's disciple Kanchū for 6 years (1847–1853) and produced his own model of the Mount Sumeru universe in 1855. It was presented for imperial inspection in 1859 but was destroyed in a fire 3 years later. Sada published his designs for a second device in 1862 (Fig. 9) and commissioned Tanaka to fabricate it in 1877. Although fundamentally different in design and simpler than the machines that Tanaka had produced for Kanchū, it was similarly operated by a calendrical clockwork mechanism, included solar and lunar orbs on a canopy structure, and had a rotating ring indicating the position of the twenty-eight celestial mansions. The tall shaft at the centre of Sada's model representing the position of Sumeru differed from the topographic literalism of the earlier models and the four continents are covered with hemispherical structures.

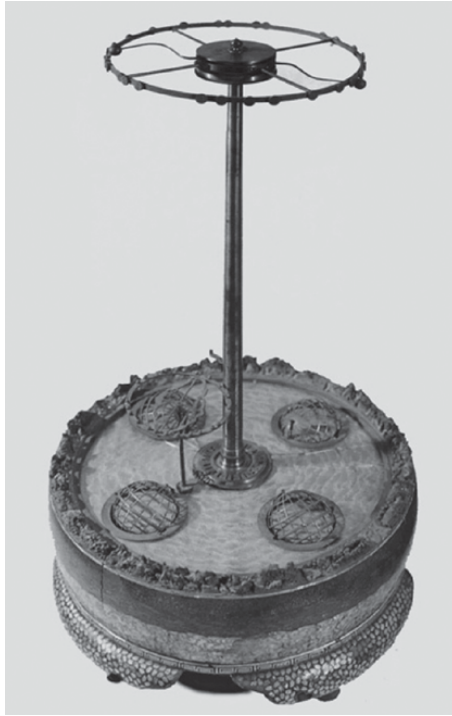


**Fig. 9.** Sada Kaiseki, explanation of a “Device to Represent the Equivalency of the Apparent and the Real,” from *A Hammer [Smashing] the Global Theory of the Earth*, 1862. Monochrome woodblock book illustration. © Waseda University Libraries.

Although Sada's device was created to render visible the workings of the Buddhist universe, the very name of Sada's mechanism underscores the epistemological gap implicit in the Buddhist theory of vision. Entitled a "Device to Represent the Equivalency of the Visual and the Real" (*Shi jitsu tō shō gi* 視実等象儀), it was designed to explain the perceptual difference between the cosmos as it appears to the human eye, what Sada terms "visual phenomena (*shi shō* 視象)", and its actual form, what he terms "true phenomena (*ji shō* 実象)." According to Sada, the movement of the sun and moon and astral bodies appear as they do to the human eye because of the optical distortion produced by the air in the hemisphere that covers Jambudvīpa. Represented by the hemispherical structures over the four flat continents in his model, Sada terms this misperceived realm, "heaven as apparent phenomena" (*shi shō ten* 視象天). Sada argues that even though the solar, lunar, and astral bodies do not appear to the human eye to orbit Mount Sumeru as it is stated in the Buddhist texts, they in fact do. He calls this true movement, invisible to the human eye, "heaven as real phenomena" (*ji shō ten* 実象天). The true location of the sun and moon are indicated by the orbs attached to the large ring and the true location of the North Star is indicated by the small ring. The model is thus designed as a visual exegetical and hermeneutic mechanism to explain the difference between the universe as seen by the human eye and the universe as seen by the heavenly eye. Like Hōtan and Entsū before him, Sada understood the differences between Buddhist and Western views of the world in the terms of classical Buddhist theories of vision. "Mount Sumeru can not be apprehended from the perspective of the physical eye of ordinary humans", explained Sada. "The true phenomena of the Mount Sumeru universe can not be perceived with the physical eye but only with the heavenly eye. This refers not to the eyeball but rather to spiritual perception."<sup>60</sup> According to Sada, "the vision of the heavenly eye is unobstructed by any barriers. Even microscopes and telescopes cannot compare to its power of vision. The Buddha Śākyamuni acquired it only through ascetic practice. It is the ability to see all – from the heavens of Mount Sumeru above to the hells below – as clearly as an object held in the hand."<sup>61</sup> Sada's advocacy of Buddhist over Western vision shares not only the arguments but also the vocabulary of his predecessors. His description of the Buddha's optical command of the entire world, "seen as clearly as an object held in the hand", appears in the preface to Hōtan's Buddhist world map and its title as well. The title of another text by Sada, *Mirror of Mount Sumeru in a Single Glance* (*Shumisen ichimoku kagami* 須弥山一目鏡), also known as *Dispelling Doubts about the Heavenly Eye* (*Tengen hyōshaku* 天眼), distinguishes between the normal perception of ordinary humans and the supernatural perception enjoyed by Buddhas and advance meditators using the same

60 Sada, *Shijitsu tōshōgi shosetsu* 視実等象儀詳説 (*Explanation of the Device to Represent the Equivalency of the Visual and the Real*). 2 Vols. Tōkyō: Sada Kaiseki, 1880, vol. 2, p.3.

61 *Ibidem*, vol. 2, p.11.



**Fig. 10.** Sada Kaiseki, *Device to Represent the Equivalency of the Apparent and the Real*, 1877. Wood, brass, gold, glass, lacquer, mother-of-pearl, colours. © Photo courtesy of the National Museum of Nature and Science, Tōkyō.

classical taxonomy of vision outlined by Entsū in the final chapter of his *Astronomy of Buddhist Countries*.

Sada's discourse on vision was not addressed only to Buddhist scholiasts. It was broadcast to a wider audience in a public lecture delivered in August of 1878. The lecture was attended by a certain Captain John Mathews James (1838–1908) and translated by him as "A Discourse on Infinite Vision" and read before the Asiatic Society of Japan on March 13<sup>th</sup>, 1879.<sup>62</sup> In the lecture Sada stated, "that Mount Sumeru is situated so high above the earth – several hundreds of thousands of miles – that no human being, however clear his organs of sight, can even conceive

62 James, "A Discourse on Infinite Vision." *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan* vol. 7 (1879), pp.267–281.

the manner of its existence.” It can only be seen by the Buddha, whose heavenly eye “perceives things that no human eye or intellect could grasp in their present unenlightened state, even though they should use a telescope a million times more powerful than any yet invented.” By the late nineteenth-century, classical Buddhist theories of vision had joined the modern discourse on optics and the mechanics and technologies of human perception. Sada’s references to microscopes and telescopes were more than rhetorical flourishes. For the previous 200 years, Japanese Buddhist representations of the earth and the universe had to contend with foreign technologies and modes of representation: longitudes and latitudes, Ptolomaic and Mercator projections, terrestrial and celestial globes, orreries and planispheres.

Kamuro Anne 禿安慧 (1819–1901), also known as Shōkotsu Dōjin 勝因道人, was a student of Entsū who wrote that “the greatest threat in the world today and to the laws of the state and the teachings of the Buddha are the astronomical theories of the Western Barbarians.”<sup>63</sup> Yet he also recognized the need to engage such theories and appropriate their scientific discourse. Kamuro’s *New Thesis on the Defense of the Dharma* (*Gohō shinron* 護法新論) is a three-volume treatise that critiques the astronomical theories of the contemporary west and presents the cosmological teachings of Buddhist India. Whereas Kamuro’s critique of Western astronomy and the presentation of Indian cosmology in the second and third volumes have much in common with other nineteenth-century Buddhist astronomical tracts, the contents of the first volume are rather unusual. Instead of the scholastic arguments and scriptural citations of earlier defenses of Buddhist cosmology, Kamuro opens with what looks like a primer on modern physics. He explains, though the use of simplified illustrations, the nature of optical phenomena in order to argue that the distortions produced by the refraction of light reveal the limitations and flaws of human vision. “What the Westerners call the study of natural laws”, he wrote, “are matters of optical perception, of space, objects, size, angles, and straightness. But these are all but small matters of human vision within the vastness of the Mount Sumeru universe.”<sup>64</sup> Kamuro shares Entsū and Sada’s distinction between “apparent phenomena” visible to the human eye, to which Western astronomy attends, and “true phenomena” visible only to the Buddha’s divine vision. Yet Kamuro goes one step further. He uses “what Westerners call the study of natural laws” to prove the very artifice of optical phenomena. Through a series of diagrams, he attempts to show how the “small matters of human vision” are flawed, limited, and ultimately unreal. Turning the empirical facts of ocular perception against themselves, Kamuro mobilizes the visual vocabulary of Western science for the purposes of its own undoing. Twenty illustrations represent the basic principles of the refraction of light and the retinal reception of images. The reader is shown, for example, how

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63 Kamuro, *Gohō shinron* 護法新論 (*New Thesis on the Defense of the Dharma*). 3 Vols. n.p.: Seimeikan 清明館, 1867, vol. 1, p.4.

64 *Ibidem*, vol. 2, p.3.

objects viewed through a lens appear inverted beyond its focal point, how objects viewed through beveled glass will produce a kaleidoscopic effect, how objects viewed under water will appear displaced and magnified, and how changes in atmospheric temperature produce a mirage effect. The optical axioms of Newton, Descartes, and Snell are commandeered by Kamuro to demonstrate the instability of human observation and the weakness of scientific claims that rely on the physical eye. It is a treatise on Buddhist cosmology that begins with a review of optical illusions.

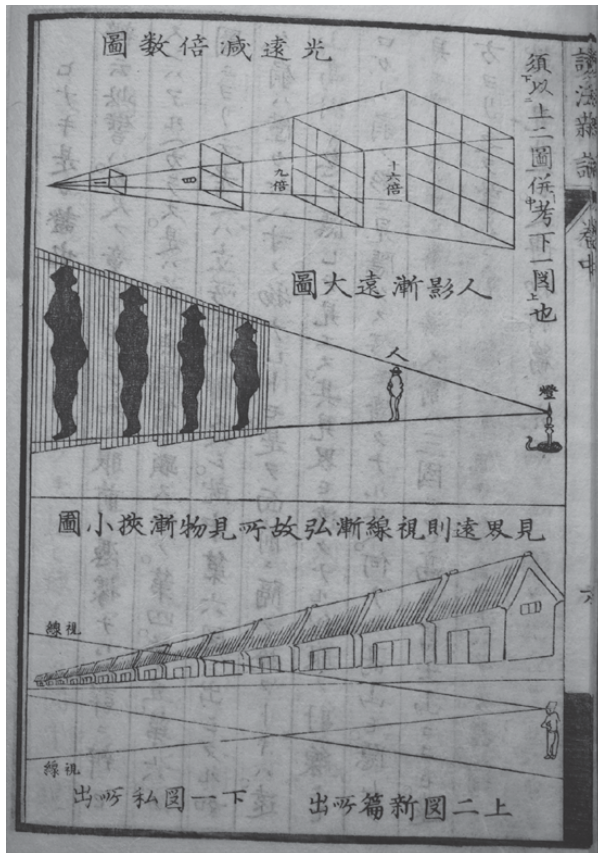


Fig. 11. Kamuro Anne, *New Thesis on the Defense of Buddhism*, 1865. Monochrome woodblock book illustration. © Yokohama City University Library.

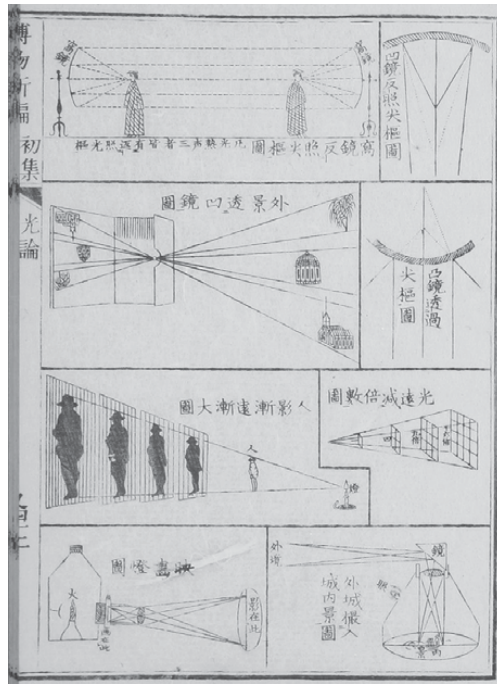


Fig. 12. Benjamin Hobson, *Natural Philosophy*, New Edition, 1864. © Waseda University Libraries.

Kamuro's diagrams of optical phenomena are not of his own design. Rather they are lifted directly from Benjamin Hobson's *Natural Philosophy*, *New Edition* (博物新編, Ch. *Bowu xinbian*, J. *Hakubutsu shinpen*), published in Canton in 1855 and in Japan in 1864. Hobson (1816–1873), a British medical doctor and member of the London Missionary Society, travelled to China in 1840 and during his 20 years in the country founded numerous hospitals and wrote several medical and scientific texts in Chinese.<sup>65</sup> He compiled *Natural Philosophy* for his medical students in Guangzhou and it was widely influential as the earliest Chinese primer on

65 On Hobson's career in China, see Wong and Wu, *History of Chinese Medicine*. Shanghai: National Quarantine Service, 1936, pp.321–366. On his publications, see Wylie, *Memorials of Protestant Missionaries to the Chinese Giving a List of their Publications*. Shanghai [sic]: American Presbyterian Mission Press, 1867, pp.126–127. On the *Bowu xinbian*, in particular, see Wright, *Translating Science: The Transmission of Western Chemistry into Late Imperial China, 1840–1900*. Leiden, Brill: 2000, pp.263–272.

European science.<sup>66</sup> Hobson wrote that he intended to “convey some instruction in the elementary branches of physics ... with special reference to natural theology.”<sup>67</sup> One volume of the work, entitled *Digest of Astronomy*, was described by Hobson as “a treatise on the properties of air, light, heat, and electricity, and the elements of astronomy and natural history, designed as an introduction to these various branches of the natural phenomena.”<sup>68</sup> The copious illustrations, drawn by Hobson’s colleague Dr. Walter Dickson, are included in the Japanese edition and a number of them reappear, virtually unchanged, in Kamuro’s treatise on Buddhist cosmology.<sup>69</sup> The technical and visual vocabulary of scientific explanation, the laws of physics, and the empiricism of the experimental method are here turned against themselves. The science of optics is appropriated to explain the disjunction between what the eye perceives and the true structure of the universe. The foundations of Western astronomy are disproved by its own evidence and show, in a language visible to all, the veracity of the Buddha’s eye.

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66 Wright, op. cit., p.36.

67 Hobson, “Report of the Medical Missionary Society at Hongkong”. *The Chinese Repository* vol. 13, no. 7 (1844), pp.377–382.

68 Quoted in Wong and Wu, op. cit., p.364.

69 Ibidem, p.365.





## **Part IV The Aftermath**



Martin Nogueira RAMOS

## Neither Apostates nor Martyrs. Japanese Catholics Facing the Repression (1612–Mid-Seventeenth Century)

### Foreword: What about the 99 Percent Left?

When Japan ended its policy of isolation, for many Westerners this country was associated with the bloody memory of the persecutions held by the Tokugawa 徳川 regime during the first half of the seventeenth century. This image was kept alive in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries by the many authors in Europe who had written plays or books related to the Japanese Church.<sup>1</sup>

The primary sources of these authors were the published (and fairly censored) reports of the last missionaries present in the archipelago after 1614, the year that marks the beginning of the ban on Christianity. These documents, whose main purpose was to edify Western readers and to praise the work of the missionaries, were centred on those who, having refused to give up their faith, had endured martyrdom.<sup>2</sup> In comparison, very few pages were devoted to those who had “fallen”, the so-called apostates. However, if the number of martyrs is important, a vast majority of the Catholics did not die for their faith. Indeed, the martyrs made up no more than a tiny minority of the estimated 300,000 Japanese who belonged to the Church on the eve of the ban.<sup>3</sup>

The attitude of the latter toward the repression was more complex than choosing between martyrdom and apostasy; a large number of believers kept practicing the

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- 1 Concerning the cultural production around these martyrs in Europe, see Omata Rappo, *Des Indes lointaines aux scènes des collèges: les reflets des martyrs de la mission japonaise en Europe (xvi<sup>e</sup> – xviii<sup>e</sup> siècle)*. Münster: Aschendorff Verlag, 2020.
  - 2 The writings of the Company related to the missions were elaborated following a complex discursive strategy that was well analysed for Brazil (Castelnau-l’Estoile, *Les ouvriers d’une vigne stérile. Les jésuites et la conversion des indiens au Brésil (1580–1620)*. Lisboa; Paris: Fondation Calouste Gulbenkian, 2000) or China (Girard, *Les religieux occidentaux en Chine à l’époque moderne. Essai d’analyse textuelle comparée*. Lisboa; Paris: Centre Culturel Calouste Gulbenkian / Commission nationale pour les commémorations des découvertes portugaises, 2000). On the mission of Japan in the sixteenth century, see Pinto, *Uma imagem do Japão: A aristocracia guerreira nipônica nas cartas jesuíticas de Évora*. Macau: Instituto Português do Oriente; Fundação Oriente, 2004.
  - 3 For some statistical evidence, see Boxer, *The Christian Century in Japan, 1549–1650*. Manchester: Carcanet, 1993, p.448.

religion of the missionaries after their formal apostasy. At the beginning, these “false” apostates might have outnumbered the “true” apostates (and certainly the martyrs). My essay will focus on these Christians who decided to secretly continue the practice of their religion. My aim is to understand how they perceived the religious policy of the shogunate and the formal obligation they had to renounce Christianity and become Buddhists.

Apart from the apologetic works related to the martyrs<sup>4</sup> and the pioneer studies of Okada Akio 岡田章雄,<sup>5</sup> until recently, very few scholars had paid attention to the behaviour and the beliefs of the Japanese Catholics; more generally speaking, the commoners were barely mentioned in the studies on the “Christian Century.” Since the beginning of the millennium, Higashibaba Ikuo 東馬場郁夫<sup>6</sup> and Kawamura Shinzō 川村信三<sup>7</sup> have again shed light upon the Catholic commoners and offered stimulating insights about the acculturation of this faith in Japan. Their studies have rectified the idea, held in the past by many scholars as well as rooted in the Japanese collective imagination, that the Christian community radically differed from the local religious substratum. The renewed interest for popular Christianity can also be observed among specialists of China.<sup>8</sup>

Higashibaba mostly focuses on the second half of the sixteenth century: only one chapter of his book is related to the period of repression. He considers “false” apostasy as the “most reasonable and practical conclusion if people wanted to continue their faith.”<sup>9</sup> Nonetheless, very few of his sources are direct accounts from commoners. As for Kawamura, he focuses on the reasons that could explain the quick success of the Church at the end of the Sengoku period. He points out two principal causes: the capacity of the missionaries to introduce swiftly, in the countryside and the cities, brotherhood organizations adapted to

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4 Kataoka, *Nihon kirishitan junkyōshi* 日本キリシタン殉教史. Tōkyō: Jiji Tsūshinsha 時事通信社, 1979; Laures, *The Catholic Church in Japan: A Short History*. Rutland: Charles E. Tuttle Company, 1954.

5 Okada’s main studies were published in six volumes. See *Okada Akio chosakushū* 岡田章雄著作集. Kyōto: Shibunkaku Shuppan 思文閣出版, 1983–1984.

6 Higashibaba, *Christianity in Early Modern Japan: Kirishitan Belief and Practice*. Leiden, Boston & Köln: Brill, 2001.

7 Kawamura, *Kirishitanshintososhikinotanjōtohenyō* キリシタン信徒組織の誕生と変容. Tōkyō: Kyōbunkan 教文館, 2003; Kawamura, *Sengoku shūkyō shakai shisōshi: Kirishitan jirei kara no kōsatsu* 戦国宗教社会思想史—キリシタン事例からの考察. Tōkyō: Chisen Shokan 知泉書館, 2011.

8 See, for example, Laamann, *Christian Heretics in Late Imperial China: Christian Inculcation and State Control, 1720–1850*. London; New York: Routledge, 2006; Menegon, *Ancestors, Virgins and Friars: Christianity as a Local Religion in Late Imperial China*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009; Harrison, *The Missionary’s Curse and Other Tales from a Chinese Catholic Village*. Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2013.

9 Higashibaba, op. cit., p.155.

Japanese customs and social structures; and the appeal of monotheism among the Japanese during an era of wars, political instability, and natural calamities.

I will sustain my essay with documents that mainly concern the peninsula of Shimabara 島原 between 1612 and 1638. The history of this domain is closely linked to Catholicism. Arima Yoshisada 有馬義貞 (1521–1576) was one of the first feudal lords (*daimyō* 大名) to convert to the new creed. His son, Arima Harunobu 有馬晴信 (1567–1612), known in the Portuguese sources as *Dom Protásio*, actively supported the propagation of Catholicism among his retainers and subjects. The “Western religion” particularly took root in the southern half of the peninsula. However, the 20,000 or so Catholics of Shimabara were also the first to endure harsh repression from 1612 to 1615 when their new lord, Arima Naozumi 有馬直純 (1586–1641), renounced his faith. Furthermore, they were the initiators, along with peasants from Amakusa 天草 of a large-scale revolt of Christian inspiration in 1637–1638.



Map 1: Kyūshū

I will use sources written by missionaries, the authorities and lay Catholics. We have an important number of letters, reports and texts directed to the lay believers (brotherhoods' rules, doctrinal books and exhortations to martyrdom) written by the missionaries after 1614, especially about Shimabara: between 1615 and 1625, the region was (relatively) safe for the clergy; it provided shelter to many Jesuits, Franciscans and Dominicans. As for the officials of the Bakufu 幕府 and the domains, they produced different kinds of sources related to Catholicism like inquiry reports or prescriptive documents. The voices of the lay Catholics are more difficult to retrieve. We mostly have at our disposal indirect accounts: for instance, the transcript of interrogations led by the warriors or documents elaborated under the control of missionaries. A couple of documents from the rebel armies of Shimabara and Amakusa have survived. As we shall see, they give us precious insights about the religious mentality of the Catholics in the first half of the seventeenth century.

## The Antichristian Measures: Between Relentlessness and Permissiveness

Before studying the reactions of the believers against the religious measures of the Tokugawa, it is first necessary to evaluate their efficiency and pervasiveness. Until the 1980s, Japanese scholars studying the repression of Christianity were focusing on martyrs. Most of these scholars were Christians themselves. As primary sources, they used, sometimes uncritically, the annual reports written by the Jesuits. Therefore, their views on the topic were in accordance with those of the Church. The suffering of the martyrs was a demonstration of the faith of Japanese Christendom.<sup>10</sup> There were non-apologetic works before the 1980s, but they focused on the causes of the ban rather than on its concrete application.<sup>11</sup>

Since the 1990s, other scholars, who are usually not linked with the Church, have recused the martyrdom-centred view of repression. Their objective is to understand how repression was carried out on a local or regional scale and to determine its evolution in the long term. These authors have brought to light that the ban on Christianity was not uniformly applied across Japan. They have pointed out regional differences and the political motives beyond the execution of Christians.

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10 As a representative example, see the five volumes edited by Kataoka Yakichi 片岡弥吉 on the regional history of Catholicism in Japan: *Kirishitan fudoki* 切支丹風土記, Tōkyō: Hōbunkan 宝文館, 1960.

11 See, for instance, the last chapters of Boxer, op. cit., and Alison, *Deus Destroyed. The Image of Christianity in Early Modern Japan*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1973.

Recent studies have even defined stages in the religious policy of the domains and the shogunate.<sup>12</sup>

For instance, Ōhashi Yukihiro 大橋泰幸<sup>13</sup> compared religious inspection in forty-four domanical or shogunal territories from Tōhoku 東北 to southern Kyūshū 九州 and established three stages. In the 1620s–1630s, a few territories irregularly inspected the religion of their subjects; Buddhist monks were generally not in charge of this task, which was entrusted to officers. After the revolt of Shimabara-Amakusa in the 1640s–1650s, the situation evolved, and a majority of territories examined the religion of their subjects and used the Buddhist clergy for it. In the 1660s, after the discovery of hidden Christian communities in Ōmura 大村 (1657), Bungo 豊後 (1660) and Owari 尾張 (1661), the system of religious inspection was universally applied in Japan.<sup>14</sup>

Shimabara's case shows us the application of the ban was extremely irregular (Fig. 1); its intensity greatly varied depending on the villages, the social status and the period. As stated above, Arima Naozumi, who had been allowed to succeed his father despite the behaviour of the latter,<sup>15</sup> initiated a large-scale fight against Catholicism, demanding his retainers to deny their faith. However, many refused. As a result, between July 1612 and January 1615, sixty-three Catholics, mostly samurai living in villages of the south of Shimabara Peninsula, were killed or “led” to death by the authorities.<sup>16</sup> The devotees did not hesitate to demonstrate their support to the “criminals” by organizing processions or public prayers. It appears that the agitation in the villages was such that the Bakufu decided to move Naozumi from Shimabara to Hyūga 日向, a province situated on the east coast of Kyūshū. In

12 Ōhashi, *Kirishitan minshūshi no kenkyū* キリシタン民衆史の研究. Tōkyō: Tōkyōdō Shuppan 東京堂出版, 2001, and Murai, *Kirishitan kinsei no chiiki teki tenkai* キリシタン禁制の地域的展開. Tōkyō: Iwata Shoin 岩田書院, 2007 are representative studies of this trend.

13 Ōhashi, *Ibidem*, pp.100–131.

14 For a presentation of these episodes, see Ōhashi, “Seitō itan kirishitan: Kinsei Nihon no chitsujo to kirishitan kinsei 正統・異端・切支丹—近世日本の秩序とキリシタン禁制”. *Waseda Daigaku Kyōiku Gakubu gakujutsu kenkyū chiri-gaku rekishi-gaku shakai kagaku-hen* 早稲田大学教育学部 学術研究 地理学・歴史学・社会科学編, no. 54, 2005, pp.11–26; for Ōmura and Murai, *Kirishitan kinsei no chiiki teki tenkai*, pp.52–58, for Bungo and Owari.

15 Arima Harunobu was involved in a rather obscure corruption affair with Okamoto Daihachi 岡本大八, the retainer of a *rōjū* 老中 (Elder) of the Tokugawa, in order to retrieve lands he had lost in the sixteenth century. In 1612, he was tried and condemned to death by the Bakufu. On the life of this Christian lord, see Gonoi (Ed.), *Kirishitan daimyō: Fukyō, seisaku, shinkō no jissō* キリシタン大名—布教・政策・信仰の実相. Kyōto: Miyaobi Shuppansha 宮帯出版社, 2017, pp.193–211.

16 The figures I give for the martyrs come from the martyrology of Japan elaborated by Juan Ruiz-de-Medina (*El Martirologio del Japón 1558–1873*. Rome: Institutum Historicum Societatis Iesu, 1999).

1616, the domain was entrusted, by Tokugawa Ieyasu 徳川家康 (1543–1616), to Matsukura Shigemasa 松倉重正 (1574–1630), one of his trustworthy vassals.<sup>17</sup>

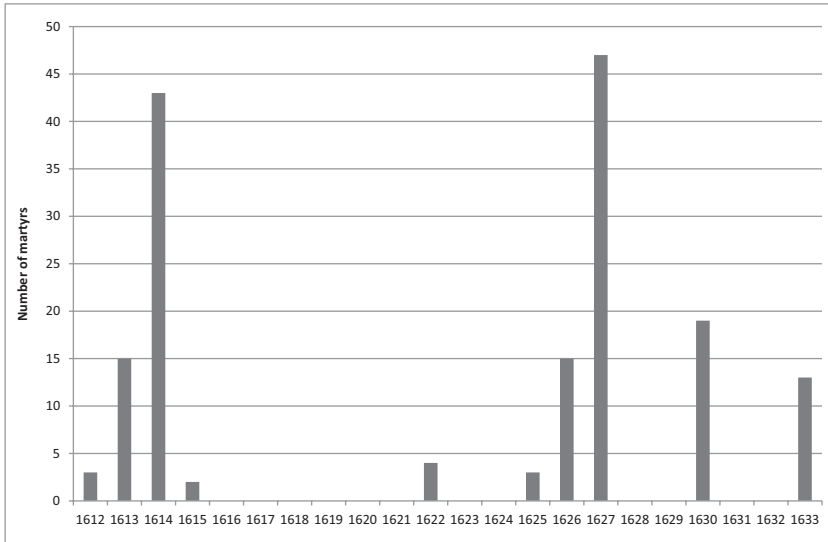


Fig. 1 Martyrs in Shimabara between 1612 and 1633

This statistical table uses the figures given by Ruiz-de-Medina (see note 16). I only took into account the persons who were arrested by the authorities of Shimabara. I excluded some dubious cases Ruiz-de-Medina considers as martyrs, in particular the priests who died from overwork.

Under the new lord, the situation of Christianity within the domain improved. Until December 1625, virtually no Catholic was killed or persecuted. As far as we know, only four people, one Jesuit and three laymen, were executed in November 1622. Even in that case, Shigemasa was apparently, following a letter of the Spanish Jesuit Baltasar de Torres (1563–1626), presented with a *fait accompli*.<sup>18</sup> In their letters and reports written between 1616 and 1625, missionaries predominantly

17 For a convenient overview of Shimabara's anti-Christian policy in the 1610s, see Ebisawa, *Kirishitan no dan'atsu to teikō* キリシタンの弾圧と抵抗. Tōkyō: Yuzankaku Shuppan 雄山閣出版, 1981, pp.179–189.

18 Jap. Sin. 38, f. 251–252v, March 3, 1622.



pointed out the safe situation of the Church in Shimabara in comparison with other regions of Japan. The Portuguese Jesuit Mateus de Couros (1568–1632?) wrote in March 1621 the community was enjoying a “great calm” (*grande quietaçam*). According to him, Shigemasa behaved this way for practical reasons: Catholics lived peacefully and paid taxes (*rendimentos*) without complaining. Repressive measures might have changed their attitude.<sup>19</sup> For this reason, many missionaries were stationed in the domain. In March 1623, there were six Jesuits: the *Provincial*, four fathers and one brother.<sup>20</sup> Moreover, we know that missionaries from the mendicant orders were active in the region. The lord turned a blind eye to the missionaries as long as they acted carefully and in secret.

The explanation of Couros seems to be accurate: Shigemasa needed stable income. Between 1618 and 1625, he was trying to turn the small town of Shimabara into a proper siege for his domain, i.e., a “castle town” (*jōkamachi* 城下町). Under the Arima, the majority of the retainers lived in their own lands. Only a few of them lived with their lord.<sup>21</sup>

Material considerations could explain why many lords were reluctant to brutally apply the ban on Christianity. In the beginning of the early modern period, they faced new expenditures generated by their long stays in Edo<sup>22</sup> and the maintenance of numerous vassals for the “military service” (*gun'yaku* 軍役).<sup>23</sup> Both expenditures were required by the Tokugawa regime. Generally, they had to increase taxes and to clear new lands. However, the commoners were not as docile as we would imagine. In the first half of the seventeenth century, the peasants, who did not hesitate to leave their lands in great numbers in order to find fortune elsewhere, were particularly mobile. They were called *hashiri byakushō* 走百姓, “runaway peasants”, in the sources.<sup>24</sup> As we will see, some Western and Japanese documents lead us to believe Catholics tended to flee from regions where persecution was harsh. Therefore, we can imagine that in Shimabara, a domain where the Christian population was high, such measures would have severely lowered income.

This favourable situation dramatically changed in December 1625. Three Jesuits, including the *Provincial* of the Japanese mission, were arrested with their

19 Jap. Sin. 37, f. 196–197v, March 15, 1621.

20 Jap. Sin. 34, f. 156–157v, March 7, 1623.

21 Nagasaki-kenshi Hensan Iinkai 長崎県史編纂委員会 (Ed.), *Nagasaki-kenshi: Hanseihen* 長崎県史一藩政編. Tōkyō: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan 吉川弘文館, 1973, pp.242–244.

22 On the “alternate attendance” in Edo (*sankin kōtai* 参勤交代), see Vaporis, *Tour of Duty: Samurai, Military Service in Edo, and the Culture of Early Modern Japan*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2009.

23 Héraïl (Ed.), *L'Histoire du Japon des origines à nos jours*. Paris: Hermann, 2009, pp.634–636.

24 For more information about the “runaway peasants”, see Miyazaki, *Nigeru hyakushō o' u daimyō: Edononōminkakutokugassen* 逃げる百姓、追う大名—江戸の農民獲得合戦. Tōkyō: Chūō Kōron Shinsha 中央公論新社, 2002.

catechists (*dōjuku* 同宿), helpers (*komono* 小者) and the families who provided them shelter. According to Baltasar de Torres, his fellow missionaries were not careful enough; since the fact that they were hiding in Shimabara was now known by many people, Shigemasa, who at that time was in Edo, could not pretend to ignore them anymore. He had to act swiftly in order “not to jeopardize his position” (*por não pôr a risco seu estado*).<sup>25</sup>

From that time, the number of martyrs increased considerably. Between December 1625 and 1633, we know from the Jesuit sources that around one hundred people from Shimabara died due to the repression. The situation was so extraordinary that lengthy reports were dedicated to this domain. For example, the famous Portuguese Jesuit Cristóvão Ferreira (c.1580–1650) wrote a document of 148 pages about the situation of Shimabara in 1627.<sup>26</sup> In that year, around fifty people died for their faith. The missionary gave many vivid and precise details about the anti-Christian measures of the fief and how the devotees had reacted to them.

At the beginning of the document, it is said the *daimyō* hardened his policy because of the pressure exerted by the shogunate. After the arrest of missionaries in December 1625, Shimabara still sheltered a large Catholic community (f. 124). For the first time, the village headmen (*shōya* 庄屋) and elders (*otona* 乙名) had to establish lists of Christians (f. 125). According to Ferreira, the village elite and the retainers (*criados*) were the main targets of the Matsukura clan: it was believed their apostasy would show the path to the rest of the population (f. 126). Besides these two groups, only people with a certain social status were examined and sometimes tortured when they hesitated. Women and children were generally, but not always, spared. The officers of the lord organized the persecutions. Seemingly, in 1627, the Buddhist clergy had a minor role (or no role at all) in the anti-Christian policy.

This situation evolved swiftly. In a report about Kyūshū mission in 1629 and 1630 also written by Cristóvão Ferreira, the role of the Buddhist clergy is emphasized.<sup>27</sup> As is known for other ancient Christian domains like Ōmura<sup>28</sup> or the city of Nagasaki 長崎,<sup>29</sup> after 1614, numerous temples and shrines were built to replace the churches. In the meantime, monks of different schools sat themselves in these promising lands. To all appearances, Shimabara knew the same phenomenon: the commoners were forced to give lands and houses to the monks, to entrust them

25 Jap. Sin. 37, f. 274–275v, February 25, 1626.

26 Jap. Sin. 63, f. 123–197v, January 28, 1628.

27 Jap. Sin. 62, f. 1–77v, August 20, 1631. On the region of Shimabara, see f. 40–59.

28 Kudamatsu, *Kirishitan denraichi no jinja to shinkō: Hizen no kuni Ōmura no ba'ai* キリシタン伝来地の神社と信仰—肥前国大村の場合. Ōmura: Tomatsu Jinja Saikō Yonhyaku-nen Jigyō Inkaikai 富松神社再興四百年事業委員会, 2002, pp.208–223.

29 Arano (Ed.), *Edo bakufu to Higashi Ajia* 江戸幕府と東アジア. Tōkyō: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan 吉川弘文館, 2003, pp.75–78.

with funerals and to clear out all Christian objects from their houses. Ferreira wrote that Catholics, especially the householders, had to “idolize” (*idolstrar*) Buddhas (*fotoque*) in front of the monks and the officers. From the low number of martyrs during these two years and what is said by Ferreira, we can infer that abjuration was the priority of the lord. Those who refused to deny their faith would be tortured until they had given up Christianity.

It is a very difficult task to determine with precision how carefully anti-Christian measures were applied. Presumably, during the first decades following the ban, the Christians and the authorities gradually built up a *modus vivendi*. The warriors, in most cases, pretended that the threat of Christianity had faded away, while the practice of the remaining Christians would become increasingly discreet: the latter could believe whatever they wanted as long as they complied formally with the laws.

From 1638 until 1658, in the aftermath of the Shimabara-Amakusa revolt, Inoue Masashige 井上政重 (1585–1661), a “great inspector” (*ōmetsuke* 大目付) of the Bakufu and a trustworthy vassal of the Tokugawa family, was given the responsibility to supervise the fight against Catholicism on a national scale; thus his prerogatives went beyond the boundaries of the territories directly governed by the shogunate.<sup>30</sup> A compilation of texts written by him was elaborated by his successor Hōjō Ujinaga 北条氏長 (1609–1670): the *Kirisuto-ki* 契利斯督記 (Notes on Christianity).<sup>31</sup> Its reading allows us to get a good grasp of the reality of the anti-Christian measures and the progressive adaptation of the Christians to them. One of its items reveals that control of the forbidden religion was irregular in some domains:

**Quote 1**

Among the lords, some carefully control Christianity; others do not. In the domains where religious measures are not carefully planned, it is easy to hide. In these domains, there are certainly Catholics. It is necessary to watch over, with meticulous care, how temple parishes inspect [their parishioners]. [...] There are some domains where, after ordering farmers, merchants and craftsmen to sign Japanese or Southern barbarian oaths and to affiliate to a temple parish, religious inspection is abandoned for one or two years. It is obvious that a lot of Catholics are hiding in places where there is such carelessness.<sup>32</sup>

30 On the life and methods of Inoue Masashige, see Murai, *Bakuhan seiritsu to kirishitan kinsei* 幕藩成立とキリシタン禁制. Tōkyō: Bunken Shuppan 文献出版, 1987, pp.47–65.

31 I follow the edition established by Hiyane Antei 比屋根安定: ‘Kirisuto-ki’. *Nanbanji kōhaiki hoka ni hen* 南蛮興廢記他二篇. Kirishitan Bunko 吉利支丹文庫, vol. 2. Hiyane Antei (Ed.). Tōkyō: Keiseisha Shoten 警醒社書店, 1926, pp.45–143 [abb. KK].

32 KK, pp.75–76. In this article, all translations are mine. The original texts can be found in the appendix.

During his mandate, Inoue Masashige urged the lords of Japan to introduce measures in their domains, which would allow a regular inspection of the religious beliefs of their subjects. According to the above-mentioned theses of Ōhashi Yukihiro, we can say he was quite successful. However, the task of the authorities was considerably hardened by the behaviour of the Christians who tended to increasingly conceal their religion.

This attitude was, to a certain degree, admitted and encouraged by the Jesuits who distributed booklets, which indicated how Catholics should behave during the ban and how to prepare for martyrdom. One of these texts, which bears no title and was probably written around 1620, was confiscated from the hidden Christian community of Urakami 浦上 at the end of the eighteenth century by the magistrate of Nagasaki (*Nagasaki bugyō* 長崎奉行).<sup>33</sup> A passage in the document detailed six acceptable behaviours from the viewpoint of the Catholic Church: (1) Christians did not need to declare their faith if they were not asked to do so; (2) they could flee if they believed they could not stand firm in the faith (Jp. *hītesu* ヒイテス/L. *fides*); (3) they could hide themselves or (4) dissimulate religious objects; (5) to behave like a gentile (Jp. *zenchiyo* 前知与/P. *gentio*) was strictly forbidden but Christians were allowed to act “neutrally”, “as if they did not seem to have any particular religion” (*izure no shūshi tomo miezaru yōni* 何の宗旨とも見へざる様に); (6) lastly, with their masters, they could show restraint about religious matters.

The *Kirisuto-ki* clearly shows Christians did not follow the limits established by the missionaries: “Originally, when they were asked if they were Catholics, they absolutely did not try to conceal [the truth]. Currently, they conceal it as much as possible.”<sup>34</sup> Many interesting examples of concealment are described: Catholics hid pious images (*imase* イマセ from the Portuguese *imagem*) in the hilt of their short swords (*wakizashi* 脇差) or ashes of priests who had died at the stake inside their pillows or incense boxes;<sup>35</sup> they also took advantage of the negligence of the Buddhist clergy in order to “christianize” the coffin of the deceased.<sup>36</sup>

After their formal apostasy, many Christians continued to secretly possess devotional objects. In 1645, a woman in Hasami 波佐見 (Ōmura) was accused of

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33 Anesaki Masaharu 姉崎正治, who transcribed and published the text (*Kirishitan shūmon no hakugai to senpuku* 切支丹宗門の迫害と潜伏. Tōkyō: Dōbunkan 同文館, 1925, pp.162–169), gave it a title: *Maruchiriyō no kokoroe* マルチリヨの心得 (Understanding Martyrdom). For more information about the documents confiscated in Urakami, see Shimizu, “Urakami ichiban kuzure ni okeru Nagasaki bugyōsho no kirishitan-kyō shorui shūshu o megutte: ‘Yaso-kyō sōsho’ to no kankei to Urakami sonmin no jiko ishiki 浦上一番崩れにおける長崎奉行所のキリシタン教書類収取をめぐる「耶穌教叢書」との関係と浦上村民の自己意識”. *Meiji Gakuin Daigaku Kirisuto-kyō Kenkyūjo Kiyō* 明治学院大学キリスト教研究所紀要, no. 46, 2014, pp.131–160.

34 KK, p.69.

35 KK, p.70.

36 KK, p.75.

having Christian objects of piety. For this reason, the officers of the domain interrogated her:

**Quote 2**

Twenty years ago [c. 1625], I went to Nagasaki [from Hasami]. During the ten years I stayed in this city, I joined Zen Buddhism. Afterwards, I came back to Hasami. The religious inspections against Christianity were so harsh I trod upon a Christian object and joined Shingon Buddhism. However my heart was still Christian. I am hiding many Christian objects, statues made of wood and other things. [...] This is true, I showed the statue made of wood to Otaku [another woman in the village]. She is the only person to whom I showed it. I do not know anybody else who has a Christian heart [in the village]. Even if you tortured or killed me I would have nothing else to say.<sup>37</sup>

This behaviour was not the prerogative of the hidden Christians. In the domains of Hitoyoshi 人吉 and Satsuma 薩摩 on the island of Kyūshū, Shin Buddhism (Jōdo Shinshū 浄土真宗) was forbidden from the sixteenth century until the Meiji era; the believers used subterfuge to conceal their faith and religious objects.<sup>38</sup>

Despite the efforts of Inoue Masashige and the generalization of religious inspection across the whole country from the 1660s, hidden Christians were in many domains tolerated by the authorities who turned a blind eye to their secret practices. The *Ōmura kenbunshū* 大村見聞集 (Record of things heard and seen in Ōmura), a compilation of historical documents from the past centuries elaborated in the 1830s by the domain of Ōmura, shows that deep inquiries were generally avoided.<sup>39</sup>

In this fief, after the arrest of more than five hundred hidden Christians in 1657–1658 in Kōri 郡 and around this village,<sup>40</sup> religious inspection was greatly reinforced: villagers were expected, for example, to organize in groups of five families (*goningumi* 五人組), to show before cremation – which also had become mandatory – the corpse of all the deceased to the Buddhist clergy, and to receive religious certificates (*tera'uke tegata* 寺請手形) from their parish temple. They were also asked to clean the shrine of their village (*chinju* 鎮守) and to actively participate in its religious festivities (*matsuri* 祭り).<sup>41</sup>

The influence of the authorities on the beliefs and practices of their subjects should not be overestimated. The warriors only controlled their formal compliance

37 Fujino; Shimizu (Eds.), *Ōmura kenbunshū* 大村見聞集 [abb. OKS]. Tōkyō: Takashina Shoten 高科書店, 1994, p.183.

38 Concerning the ban on Shin Buddhism in Satsuma, see Chilson, *Secrecy's Power: Covert Shin Buddhists in Japan and Contradictions of Concealment*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2014, pp.62–100.

39 Regarding the elaboration and the historical context of the *Ōmura kenbunshū*, see the introduction by Shimizu Hirokazu 清水紘一 and Fujino Tamotsu 藤野保 in the compilation: OKS, pp.i–xviii.

40 The main documents concerning this episode were compiled in the volumes 39, 40 and 41 of the *Ōmura kenbunshū*.

41 OKS, p.648.

with the law. In 1660, a round of inspection was organized in Sotome 外海, a region located north of Nagasaki where large hidden Christian communities went through the Edo period. A report based on this round was written; it shows the religious behaviour of the villagers was considered satisfactory by the retainers of Ōmura clan. The following excerpt concerns Mie 三重, a village where many hidden Christians “reconverted” to Catholicism during the Meiji era<sup>42</sup>:

**Quote 3**

Village of Mie

– It is said that the inhabitants of this village and of the coast really believe [in the gods and Buddhas]. They visit temples and shrines without any laziness. Every month, without exception, they go to the temple and chant the *nenbutsu*. We learnt this from the monk [of the village]. The shrines are extremely clean.

– The harvest of the paddy fields will not be worse than last year; the harvest of the other fields will be better than in the other villages. We heard that during the sixth and seventh months of this year it rained heavily.

This village is situated in the lands of Ōmura Chūzaemon, Asada Samon and Sawai Zenzaemon.<sup>43</sup>

It is true that, at first sight, it was impossible to distinguish hidden Christians from “normal” Buddhist peasants. However, this concealment certainly did not fool anyone in Ōmura. The report of 1660 gives much more detailed and varied information about the harvests than about the religious life of the commoners, which is described with very similar terms in the twenty-one villages. Warriors and monks do not appear to have had interest in carrying out in-depth investigations. For the former, peace assured stable income. Economic reasons might have also partially dictated the behaviour of the monks. Around 1640, 80 percent of the temples could not survive on only their land holdings; they needed the pecuniary support of their parishioners.<sup>44</sup> Also, “purity of faith” was perhaps of no importance for most of the Buddhist clergy. This attitude explains why only a few hidden Christian communities were denounced until the end of the ban in 1873.<sup>45</sup>

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42 For the geographical spread of Catholicism during the 1860s and 1870s, see chapters 2 and 3 of Ramos, *La foi des ancêtres. Chrétiens cachés et catholiques dans la société villageoise japonaise (xvii<sup>e</sup>-xix<sup>e</sup> siècles)*, Paris: CNRS éditions, 2019.

43 OKS, p.682.

44 Hur, *Death and Social Order in Tokugawa Japan: Buddhism, Anti-Christianity, and the Danka System*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2007, p.2.

45 The most detailed study concerning the (few) inquiries conducted by the authorities about hidden Christian communities, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, can be found in Ōhashi, *Kirishitan minshūshi no kenkyū*; the death penalty was never used and sanctions were generally mild.

## Salvation Amidst the Turmoil: The Dread of the Christians toward Their Sins

The authorities, who showed leniency for the beliefs of the now hidden Christians, were generally satisfied with the nominal respect for the law. To put it simply, the domains and the Bakufu, whose aim was not to sound out the heart of their subjects, were rarely thorough in their investigations. For example, it would be misleading to compare the Japanese anti-Christian measures to the Iberian inquisitions.

It was recently argued the missionaries, especially the Jesuits, tolerated nominal apostasy for the lay believers; martyrdom was only expected for the clergy.<sup>46</sup> It is true that those who had weakened were very swiftly forgiven. But, the Japanese and missionary accounts of the seventeenth century indicate that nominal apostasy was not considered an easy choice by the Christians: by treading on an image of Christ, by joining a Buddhist temple or by swearing to relinquish Catholicism, many feared their behaviour was infuriating God and believed it would imperil the destination of their soul in the afterlife.

The fear engendered by apostasy is described in various documents. In the *Kirisuto-ki*, it is written that “when [the officers] ask old women, [and more generally speaking] women, to tread an image of *Deus* (*Deusu no fumie* デウスの踏絵), their faces turn red; they throw out their headdresses, breathe heavily and sweat.” Inoue Masashige added that some of the women revered these images far from prying eyes.<sup>47</sup> Missionaries also described the anxiety of their flock when they had to renounce Christianity publicly. In the aforementioned annual report of the Kyūshū mission for the years 1629 and 1630, Ferreira depicted the reaction of the Christians of Shimabara to the obligation they had to venerate the Buddha in front of monks as follows:

### Quote 4

The poor Christians were in great despair and anxiety because, on one hand, even if it was feigned, they knew the great offense they made to God by venerating the Buddha and, on the other hand, they deeply feared the pain of the torture usually used by the cruel tyrant on those who refused to obey; they felt that they did not have the spirit to endure the suffering and could not succeed in hiding. There was no means or road to escape. Finally, the majority was defeated by fear and weakness. They got together in the house of the Buddhist priest as they were told to. Some of them, a minority, [openly] venerated [the Buddha]. Most people, since they did not venerate, remained silent.<sup>48</sup>

46 Asami, *Kirishitan jidai no gūzō sūhai* キリシタン時代の偶像崇拜. Tōkyō: Tōkyō Daigaku Shuppankai 東京大学出版会, 2009, pp.284–286.

47 KK, p.70.

48 Jap. Sin. 62, f. 1–77v, August 20, 1631 (f. 42v and 43 for the quote).

Confession was the best means to “erase” one’s sins. Nevertheless, meeting a priest was becoming more and more complicated. Missionaries normally did not indicate the precise number of apostates, but it seems the reintegration of those who had nominally rejected Christianity was a crucial and time-consuming activity. Like the so-called *lapsi*, those who had renounced Christianity during the persecutions led by the Roman Empire, the verb “to fall/to lapse” (*caer* in Spanish, *cair* in Portuguese) was frequently used in the letters or reports of the clergy to designate the apostates; the first task of the missionaries was to “pick up” (*alevantar*) these people. The same idea, which is taken from a letter of Baltasar de Torres from October 1620,<sup>49</sup> can be found in many documents written after 1614; it shows missionaries were constantly on the move to recuperate their “lost sheep”:

**Quote 5**

[The Provincial] sends the fathers to accomplish different missions in all the kingdoms [of Japan]. We have accomplished more missions during the suppression than during peace. Since we have no houses or determined places to settle, we are forced to travel all over these regions and to face great dangers. But, [this situation] bears many fruits and is beneficial for the Christians. We hear the confession of many people and there are always new baptisms. Others, who had fallen because of the fury of the suppression, got up again.

Jesuits and friars from the mendicant orders who were, despite the precarious position of the Church in Japan, struggling with each other, gathered and sent to Rome testimonies from their supporters in order to defend their action. In 1617, Couros collected the accounts of seventy-five communities scattered all over the archipelago, from the north of Honshū 本州 to the south of Kyūshū.<sup>50</sup> Each account, which was presented as an oath made on the Gospel (*Ewanseriyo* ゑわんせりよ), bore the signatures of important laymen from the community: village headmen, brotherhood leaders and samurai. The Japanese Catholics used similar words to those of Torres’ letter to describe the work of the fathers. For instance, the representatives of Urakami wrote:

**Quote 6**

We do not mention the facts before [the ban]. After Lord Daifu [Tokugawa Ieyasu] started the repression against the Christian community, a father of the Company stayed for a long time in Urakami. [The Jesuits] hear the confessions of the Christians, give the sacraments, pick up those who had gone against the faith and convert gentiles. They spare no effort when they help the Christians. For their neighbour, they

49 Jap. Sin. 38, f. 240–241v, October 21, 1620.

50 This document was published and described by Matsuda Kiichi 松田毅一: *Kinsei shoki Nihon kankei nanban shiryō no kenkyū* 近世初期日本関係南蛮史料の研究 [abb. NSK]. Tōkyō: Kazama Shobō 風間書房, 1967, pp.1022–1145.



are ready to endure one hundred torments and one thousand dangers, or even give up their life.<sup>51</sup>

In 1622, the Dominican Diego Collado (1589–1641) imitated Couros: he gathered documents from Christian communities in Nagasaki, Ōmura and Shimabara, which aimed to prove the heroic behaviour of the friars during the repression; he also sent Jesuit documents (confraternity regulations or personal letters) which allegedly revealed the monopolistic attitude of the Company in these regions. Their supporters recounted the action of the friars with words similar to those of the inhabitants of Urakami.<sup>52</sup>

Of course, such documents, which were written under the scrutiny of the missionaries, should not be taken at face value. Nonetheless, despite their excessive laudatory tone for the order they support, these texts all point out the lack of fathers and the growing number of apostates who regretted their behaviour and feared dying without confession. In the testimonies gathered by Collado, we can read the following words from the leaders of a Dominican brotherhood in the villages of Chijiwa 千々石 and Ōtsuru 大津留 in the peninsula of Shimabara:

**Quote 7**

Any priest, whatever his branch, is a representative of the only God. He spreads the real teaching of the Holy Church which is unique. This fact is absolutely certain. Thus, whatever the branch of the priests who will be wandering around our villages, we are determined to give them hospitality and to ask them to sustain our souls.<sup>53</sup>

This lack of priests, which was already obvious before the ban, worsened after 1614. In November of that year, about a hundred fathers and brothers left Japan for Macao or Manila. There were around thirty Jesuits in the country between 1615 and 1622, but their number declined steadily until 1632. In 1633, eleven of the seventeen survivors were caught by the authorities, and in the 1640s, the presence of missionaries in the archipelago was completely over.<sup>54</sup>

Before 1614, the sacrament of penance and reconciliation, commonly called confession, had great success among the Japanese Christians.<sup>55</sup> The missionaries, who tried to follow the instructions of the Council of Trent (1545–1563), exhorted their flock to confess once a year. However, they were not enough to satisfy the numerous and scattered Christian population of the archipelago. This is why in

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51 NSK, pp.1085–1086.

52 These documents are comprised in NSK, pp.1146–1221.

53 NSK, p.1171.

54 For a discussion about the number of missionaries after 1614, see Schütte, *Introductio ad historiam Societatis Jesu in Japonia, 1549–1650, ac proemium ad catalogos Japoniae edendos ad edenda Societatis Jesu monumenta historica Japoniae propylaeum*. Rome: Institutum Historicum Societatis Iesu, 1968, pp.348–366.

55 Higashibaba, op. cit., pp.109–117; Kawamura, *Sengoku shūkyō shakai shisōshi: Kirishitan jirei kara no kōsatsu*, pp.268–276.

1603 the Jesuits published a short opus titled *Konchirisan no riyaku* こんちりさんのりやく (The merits of contrition).<sup>56</sup> Contrition is the sincere pain the Christian endures after having offended God; it is also the first of the three steps (contrition, confession, and satisfaction) in the sacrament of confession. The author of the text explains that anyone who sincerely regrets his sins, promising to confess to a priest as soon as possible, receives absolution. It seems the Christians considered it a great help, especially after 1614. Indeed, along with books of prayers and calendars, this is one of the few documents produced by the missionaries that was copied during the two hundred and fifty years of the ban. Many hidden Christian villages, which “reconverted” to Catholicism during the Meiji era, had copies of the text.<sup>57</sup> Some leaders, for whom its content was mostly incomprehensible because of the many Portuguese and Latin words, were able to recite it completely. In 1869, the priests of the Paris Foreign Mission Society published a corrected version and distributed it among their new flock.<sup>58</sup>

With the missionaries fast disappearing, Christians had to find means other than confession to get the absolution of their sins. It is very likely that remorse caused by apostasy prompted them to increase the number of prayers or fasting days, or to practice mortification. Such a phenomenon is widespread among groups who need to secretly practice their religion and to outwardly behave as the followers of a legal cult; this was the case, for instance, of the hidden Jews (*Marranos*) in Spain and Portugal.<sup>59</sup>

We know from Jesuit documents that before 1614, Japanese Christians considered scourging as an efficient way to obtain the forgiveness of God.<sup>60</sup> This kind of behaviour was not peculiar to the Catholic community. In Japan, sins, or better-said, impurities (*tsumi* 罪), are often seen as a burden that needs to be lightened by one’s efforts or those of someone else.<sup>61</sup> In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, many

56 For more on the elaboration and the success of this booklet among the Christians, see Kawamura, *Ibidem*, pp.233–298. The text can be consulted in Ebisawa; Cieslik; Doi; Ôtsuka (Eds.), *Kirishitan sho Hai-ya sho* キリシタン書・排耶書, *Nihon shisô taikai* 日本思想大系, vol. 25. Tôkyô: Iwanami Shoten 岩波書店, 1970, pp.361–380.

57 I discussed elsewhere the importance of these texts for hidden Christians joining the Catholic Church in the second half of the nineteenth century: see chapter 4 of Ramos, *La foi des ancêtres. Chrétiens cachés et catholiques dans la société villageoise japonaise (xvii<sup>e</sup>-xix<sup>e</sup> siècles)*.

58 The reissue of the *Konchirisan no ryaku* 胡無知理佐无之略 can be found in different collections of texts. See, for example, Shinmura (Ed.), *Kaihyô sôsho* 海表叢書, vol. 1. Kyôto: Kôseikaku 更生閣, 1927 (no pagination).

59 Muchnik, *De paroles et de gestes. Constructions marranes en terre d’Inquisition*. Paris: Éditions de l’EHESS, 2014, pp.219–222.

60 Debergh, “Les pratiques de purification et de pénitence au Japon vues par les missionnaires jésuites aux xvi<sup>e</sup> et xvii<sup>e</sup> siècles”. *Journal asiatique*, no. 272, 1984, pp.167–216.

61 This question is discussed in-depth in Gorai, *Nihonjin no jigoku to gokuraku* 日本人の地獄と極楽. Kyôto: Jinbun Shoin 人文書院, 1991.

lay followers (*monto* 門徒) of Shin Buddhism, in contradiction with the teaching of their school, thought the sole reliance on the mercy of the Buddha Amida 阿弥陀 was not enough to guarantee their rebirth in the Pure Land (*Gokuraku* 極楽). As a matter of fact, seclusion from the world (*tonsei* 遁世) or asceticism (*kugyō* 苦行) were widely practiced.<sup>62</sup>

At the beginning of the ban, it appears that lay confraternities, or brotherhoods, developed swiftly in local society, especially in regions where Christianity had taken root.<sup>63</sup> These organizations, whose basis lay on the material and spiritual aid between the members, were seen by Christians as a solution to accumulate merits and *in fine* to obtain salvation, and as a means to control Christian communities by missionaries.

In Shimabara, confraternities were numerous and their role in the organization of local communities was important. Among the eighty-one Christian headmen of the region who officially supported the Jesuits in 1617,<sup>64</sup> fifty-one indicated they were brothers (*kumijū* 組中), leaders of a brotherhood (*kumioya* 組親) or representatives of a group of brotherhoods (*sōdai* 總代). The others gave their official position in the organization of their village or town: village headmen, elders or town officers (*bettō* 別当). But, as written in many Portuguese documents, local elites were generally also members of a confraternity. These eighty-one people represented seven localities: Arima 有家, Futsu 布津, Fukae 深江, the town of Shimabara, Yamadera 山寺, and Mie 三会. The documents gathered by Collado in 1622 prove that there were confraternities organized by the Dominicans in other villages of the peninsula. It is important to note that these villages all played a central role in the Revolt of Shimabara-Amakusa. It was even argued that confraternities facilitated the mobilization of the peasants.<sup>65</sup>

There are few detailed comments on the confraternities in the letters and reports of the missionaries; only their rules allow us to understand rather precisely their function and the religious practices of the members. As for the brotherhoods established by the Jesuits, three regulations – two in Japanese and one in Portuguese – have survived.<sup>66</sup> The texts in Japanese were written in 1621 and concern villages in Shimabara: *Sesuzu no o-kumi no reikarasu* 世須々乃御組のれいから須 (The rules of the Confraternity of Jesus) was written by

62 Kanda, *Ikkō ikki to Shinshū shinkō* 一向一揆と真宗信仰. Tōkyō: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan 吉川弘文館, 1991, pp.113–121.

63 On the brotherhoods in sixteenth and seventeenth century Japan, see Kawamura, *Kirishitan shinto soshiki no tanjō to hen'yō*. In his study, Kawamura especially focused on the province of Bungo.

64 NSK, pp.1076–1085.

65 Nakamura, “Shimabara no ran to sakoku” 島原の乱と鎖国. Asao Naohiro 朝尾直弘 (Ed.), *Iwanami kōza Nihon rekishi 9 – Kinsei 1* 岩波講座日本歴史9 近世1. Tōkyō: Iwanami Shoten 岩波書店, 1975, pp.227–262.

66 I will not discuss the text in Portuguese which was transcribed by Kawamura Shinzō: *Kirishitan shinto soshiki no tanjō to hen'yō*, pp.422–430.

Giovanni Battista Zola (1575–1626) and *Konfurariya no hitobito kokoroeraru beki jōjō no koto* こんふらりやの人々心得らるべき條々の事 (The rules the members of the Confraternity [of Mary] need to keep in mind) by Jacome Antonio Giannone (1577–1633).<sup>67</sup> These texts are known because they are part of the documents sent by Collado to Spain in 1622. Indeed, in the regulations, the Jesuits forbade their flock to have contact with missionaries of the mendicant orders.

Their content shows it was very easy to join a confraternity. The brother needed to know the *Ave Maria*, the *Pater Noster*, the Credo, and the Ten Commandments, and of course not be a compulsive sinner to be admitted by the leader of the organization. The gatherings were frequent: one or two Sundays per month and for the main celebrations of the liturgical calendar. Apparently, the rules were directed to villagers with a certain social status: the members of the two confraternities were asked to gather the people of their household on Sunday in order to pray in front of a Christian image (*miei* 御影).<sup>68</sup>

Individual duties were mentioned: to say one's prayers on getting up and at bedtime, to fast and prepare oneself for confession, etc. However, the regulations emphasized the collective facet of the confraternities; they were presented as an answer to the ban on Christianity and the spiritual losses it provoked. For example, in the regulations of the Confraternity of Jesus, we can read as follows:

#### Quote 8

The ban [on the clergy] is now so strict, you understand you cannot go to the church, attend mass, listen to sermons or meet with the fathers and brothers [of the Company] anymore. It is thus extremely important that, at intervals, Christians get together here and there, and exhort one another to work for their salvation and fortify their faith. Therefore, you need to constantly encourage each other and meet on determined dates. It goes without saying that such behaviour will truly make you earn, for each of you, many merits [from God]. You have to understand that supporting your neighbour is an extraordinarily meritorious deed.<sup>69</sup>

Apostasy was not directly mentioned but there was an allusion to those who went against the will of God:

67 The first rule can be found in NSK, pp.1147–1151, and the second in Schütte, “Futatsu no komonjo ni arawaretaru Nihon shoki kirishitan jidai ni okeru ‘Santa Mariya no onkumi’ no soshiki ni tsuite 二つの古文書に現はれたる日本初期キリシタン時代に於ける『さんたまりやの御組』の組織に就いて”. *Kirishitan kenkyū* キリシタン研究, no. 2, 1944, pp.135–147.

68 The shortage of devotional objects was a recurrent problem of the Japanese mission. Scholars think that only the Christians with an important role in the community were in possession of such images. On this question, see, for example, the third chapter of Bailey, *Art on the Jesuit Missions in Asia and Latin America, 1542–1773*. Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 2001.

69 NSK, p.1148.

**Quote 9**

Recently, the Devil is leading the Christians to the path of evil; he makes them lose their faith, and he tries hard to make them fight the laws of God. This fact is without any doubt. Christians, who are the servants of God, must unite their heart, strengthen their faith and exhort piety. You need to do your best for the laws [of God] to become more and more prosperous. Constantly remind those who are under your direction that behaving in this way confers many merits in front of God.<sup>70</sup>

Their aim was not the spiritual improvement of a devout elite, like the confraternities established by the Jesuits or the mendicant orders in Europe,<sup>71</sup> but to maintain the Catholic community and the possibility to save one's soul under repression. Prayers were depicted as an efficient practice to redeem sins: in the Confraternity of Jesus, every time one of the brothers died, all the members had to recite the rosary once and seek indulgences so that to transfer their merits to the deceased (*ekō* 廻向); during each reunion, they recited five *Ave Maria* and *Pater Noster* for the souls in Purgatory. In addition, the majority of the indulgences granted concerned mutual help. For example, a brother received a partial indulgence each time he said fifteen *Pater Noster* or *Ave Maria* for the redemption of a Christian who had committed a mortal sin, or when he helped a dying person to prepare his soul in his last moments.

Jesuits often complained to Rome that, instead of opening new missions, Dominicans and Franciscans were expanding their brotherhoods in the strongholds of the Company like Shimabara or Nagasaki.<sup>72</sup> This success can be explained by the fact that Christians perceived these organizations as collective insurance for the afterlife. In one of the testimonies gathered by Collado, Christians wrote they were attracted by the indulgences given by the Pope to the Dominican confraternities.<sup>73</sup> Some may even have tried to be members of more than one brotherhood to accumulate more merits. In the rules of the Confraternity of Mary, it is written that a brother should not belong to another *kumi* 組, i.e., a brotherhood controlled by the Dominicans.

## The Revolt of Shimabara-Amakusa: Apocalypse and Messianic Hopes

In a way, we can describe the piety of the Catholics during the first decades of the ban as “compensatory”; they repeatedly needed to have a guarantee that their

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70 NSK, p.1150.

71 See Froeschlé-Chopard, *Dieu pour tous et Dieu pour soi: histoire des confréries et de leurs images à l'époque moderne*. Paris: L'Harmattan, 2007.

72 See, for example, Jap. Sin. 34, f. 156–157v, March 7, 1623, a collective letter signed by eleven Jesuits.

73 NSK, p.1168.

sins, especially the one of apostasy, were forgiven by God. This alternation of apostasy and compensatory acts was nevertheless precarious. Many wished the ban would end with divine intervention. The revolt of Shimabara-Amakusa, on which there are numerous historical documents,<sup>74</sup> allows us to analyse how religious mentalities had evolved at the end of the 1630s. I argue that the remorse of apostasy was an essential feature of the revolt, and even one of its principal triggers: the aim of the insurgents was to find new means to make peace with God and, therefore, to guarantee salvation.

Before starting the examination of the sources, some facts about the revolt have to be shared.<sup>75</sup> In November 1637, peasants who, for the majority, used to be Christians, started to gather around a young charismatic leader Masuda Tokisada 益田時貞 (1621?–1638), better known under the name of Amakusa Shirō 天草四郎. Swiftly, the rebels attacked the domanical armies. At its peak, it is said that 37,000 men and women, led by former samurai (*rōnin* 浪人), village headmen and probably brotherhood leaders, participated in the revolt. They came from villages in the southern part of Shimabara Peninsula and the east islands of Amakusa archipelago. The revolt was a failure. It ended on the 12<sup>th</sup> of April 1638 with the massacre of the insurgents in the castle of Hara 原. The causes of the revolt are still discussed today by Japanese historians. If, in the past, socioeconomic elements were privileged,<sup>76</sup> since the 1980s, many have pointed out the religious motivations of the movement.<sup>77</sup>

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74 A local historian, Tsuruta Kurazō 鶴田倉造, published, in 1994, the most comprehensive collection of documents related to the revolt: Tsuruta (Ed.), *Genshiryō de tsuzuru Amakusa Shimabara no ran* 原史料で綴る天草島原の乱 [abb. ASR]. Hondo 本渡 [Amakusa]: Hondo Municipality, 1994. The 1592 documents of this collection are classified in chronological order. In-text, I give the number of the document quoted.

75 The sequence of the events is well known. See, for instance, Ōhashi, *Kenshō Shimabara-Amakusa ikki* 検証島原天草一揆. Tōkyō: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan 吉川弘文館, 2008, pp.12–17.

76 See, for example, Sukeno, *Shimabara no ran* 島原の乱. Tōkyō: Azuma Shuppan 東出版, 1967.

77 Irimoto, *Shimabara no ran* 島原の乱. Tōkyō: Kyōikusha 教育社, 1980; Kanda, *Shimabara no ran: Kirishitan no shinkō to busō hōki* 島原の乱ーキリシタンの信仰と武装蜂起. Tōkyō: Chūō Kōron Shinsha 中央公論新社, 2005; and Ōhashi, *Kenshō Shimabara-Amakusa ikki*, are representative studies of this trend.



**Map 2:** Main villages and towns involved in the revolt of Shimabara-Amakusa.

The first known document produced by the “rebels” is a call to the revolt. It was written on the 29<sup>th</sup> of November 1637 and bore the name of Kazusa Juwan (João) かづさじゅわん. Kazusa 加津佐 is a village situated on the west coast of the peninsula:

**Quote 10**

We declare as follows: a celestial being came down from heaven. God will judge the gentiles with fire. Anyone who chooses Christianity has to join us rapidly. Village headmen and elders must do the same. You need to spread this message in the islands. The monks of the gentiles will also be forgiven if they become Christians. Lord Amakusa

Shirō is a celestial being. He is summoning us. Those who in Japan will not become Christians, God will throw them by their left foot in hell. You need to be conscious of this. 10<sup>th</sup> month, 13<sup>th</sup> day, Kazusa Juwan.<sup>78</sup>

We find in the words of Juwan three central elements: (1) the revolt was a means for Christians to obtain God's forgiveness and salvation; (2) Buddhism was the enemy. It could not lead to paradise: on the contrary, all the "gentiles", whose behaviour infuriated God, would suffer his judgement and fall into hell; (3) a messiah, who acted as an intermediary between God and men, had come down from heaven. I will develop my argumentation around these three facets.

In the first month of the revolt, many testimonies lead us to think the insurgents believed God was sending them messages through miracles or natural phenomena. Two weeks after the call of Juwan, a relative of Amakusa Shirō, Watanabe Kosaemon 渡辺小左衛門 (1610–1638), also the district headman (*ōjōya* 大庄屋) of Ōyano 大矢野, an island located in the east of Amakusa archipelago, was arrested by samurai of the Kumamoto domain. We have the text of his first deposition:

**Quote 11**

– [Here is what I can say] about the Christian uprising which broke out recently in Shimabara. In Hinoe, a locality of Shimabara Peninsula, there was an old image of a divinity whose edges were torn up. We secretly wished to restore it but that was impossible. However, around twenty days before the events, the image was like new. Nobody knew how such a thing had happened. We were astounded. People from the surroundings heard about this fact and many came to venerate [the image]. At the moment of this extraordinary event, the one who is called "Gaspar the Blessed" preached and said marvellous things. The deputy learnt of this and arrested Gaspar. This is the reason why everything started.

– Around the 27<sup>th</sup> or 28<sup>th</sup> of the 10<sup>th</sup> month, the Christians of Amakusa started their uprising. They had heard about the Christian miracles, which had happened in Shimabara and thought they should venerate the image [*or God?*] [...].<sup>79</sup>

For an inhabitant of Ōyano (who might possibly be the same person, Watanabe Kosaemon), these signs sent by God were interpreted as an order to come back to the open practice of Christianity. When this man was arrested trying to sneak in the domain of Kumamoto, he spoke as follows:

**Quote 12**

I am a village headman of Ōyano Island in the archipelago of Amakusa. We are unmistakably of the religion of God. We came to spread the fire in the province of Higo. Recently, the Christian religion is flourishing in Arima. Since the ban on this religion, because we feared what people thought, it was impossible for us to make sacred images of our main divinities. However, in the space of one night, a splendid image

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78 ASR-1.

79 ASR-95.



was elaborated. It is the work of God. The news of this marvellous fact spread and all of those who had lapsed corrected their religion as it used to be [i.e., came back to Christianity].<sup>80</sup>

The words used by this Christian are interesting: the verb *korobu* 転ぶ, which means “to fall/to lapse”, clearly refers to apostasy; *naosu* 直す signifies “to correct a mistake” or “to return to a good/correct situation” and certainly means the inhabitants of Ōyano, who regretted their behaviour, had decided to stop the concealment of their beliefs. In other words, the signs sent by God were believed to have the redemptive virtue of confession. By answering his appeal, the contrite Christians thought they would be forgiven for their sins.

After less than two months of battles in the countryside of Shimabara and Amakusa, the leaders of the revolt decided to entrench their troops in the castle of Hara and started to exchange messages with their enemies; the Bakufu wanted to understand what the deep motivations of this army of peasants were. The first message of the insurgents was transmitted on the 26<sup>th</sup> of February:

**Quote 13**

Do you think we entrenched ourselves in this castle in order to take control of the domain or to stir up a revolt against our lords? [Our aims] are completely different. As you have known for a long time, Christianity strictly forbids [its followers] to join another religion. But the Shogun reiterated many times the ban on [our religion]. This confused us. Those who thought it was impossible to consider the afterlife with disdain did not change their religion; this is why they had to endure harsh examinations. [The authorities] used inhuman means by covering them with shame and driving them into a state of utter destitution. Then, they were killed for the Lord of Heaven. The others [i.e., us], even those who continued to be faithful [to God], complied with the law on several occasions; while holding tears of blood, they changed their religion. They behaved this way because they were attached to the flesh or because they feared punishment. Recently, thanks to the miraculous action of God, [the faith] of the inhabitants [of the region] has revived [*another possibility*: everything went up in flames]. We do not wish to seize the domain. We do not act out of lust. If we behave like before and if there is no change in the ban, it will be difficult for us to endure the examinations and, by mental or physical weakness, we will [again] neglect the Almighty God. Behaving this way would mean we assign too much importance to our ephemeral life in this world. We would have been pathetic if we had not collaborated with the great work [of God]. This is why we are acting like this now. What we are doing is not wicked. [...] <sup>81</sup>

This document sums up the feelings of the common Christian – i.e., the majority who had repeatedly apostatized and regretted it – during the two first decades of the ban. The remorse of apostasy is strongly emphasized: indeed, about half of the text is dedicated to it. The martyrs are portrayed as heroes who were able to remain

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80 ASR-338.

81 ASR-1053.

firm in the turmoil. Nevertheless, as the text above shows, the others, those who still had faith, were convinced God had not abandoned them. They clearly stated their aim was to obtain the withdrawal of the ban, which was considered a great obstacle for salvation.

An internal rule of the rebels, allegedly written by Amakusa Shirō, gives us other details about their beliefs and practices; it was found and copied by the troops of the Kumamoto domain. The document was distributed three weeks before the end of the siege, on the 16<sup>th</sup> of March, when the defeat seemed ineluctable. Military duties were compared to religious obligations (prayer, fasting or mortification) and as the only means for the repentant Christians to save their souls. Half of the eight articles of the document concern that question:

**Quote 14**

1– You who have joined this castle, by committing many sins, you had disobeyed [God?]. Therefore, your salvation in the afterlife was uncertain. But, thanks to a particular blessing, you have been called to serve in this castle. Do you understand the greatness of this benefit? It is not necessary to say it but accomplish your duty keeping this in mind.

2– Do not limit yourself to prayers, fasting and mortification of the flesh. Here and there, you must help repair the castle and defend it against the heretics. Prepare the weapons. All of this is part of your duties.

3– Your stay in this world is temporary. You, the people of this castle, know that your time [in this world] is about to end. Day and night, constantly repent for your past, do your daily duties and focus on prayers.

[...]

5– The sin of idleness might spread [among you]. We are experiencing a crucial event, especially now because it is Lent. Keep your post rigorously and serve day and night. Some of the occupants of the castle shut themselves away in their hut and lounge carelessly. This is intolerable. Remind all the people [of the castle].

[...] <sup>82</sup>

Faced with the imminence of defeat and death, men and women of the castle were urged to consider their last days in this world as a period of penance. Since this is a prescriptive document, it is hard to determine if it reflects a widespread attitude among the insurgents. The existence of this kind of document and the threats directed to those who did not cooperate (articles 4, 6 and 7 of the rule) indicate there were some tensions in the camp. However, the fierce defence of the rebel troops until the very last moment of the siege shows this rule certainly mirrored the beliefs of a significant number of the occupants of the castle.<sup>83</sup>

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82 ASR-1236.

83 The archeological excavations organized in Hara Castle testify to the Christians' fierce resistance until the very last day: see the various articles included in Hattori; Senda;

The justification of violence by a divine will is, in Japan, not as common as in Europe during the same period.<sup>84</sup> However, it is not a completely absent feature in Japan history. One century before, the armies of the Ikkō leagues (*Ikkō ikki* 一向一揆), whose official purpose was generally to protect Shin Buddhism against its enemies, were also told by the clergy that their participation to combat was an act of loyalty toward the Buddha Amida and the founder of the school, Shinran 親鸞 (1173–1262). Those who died fighting were guaranteed they would be reborn in the Pure Land.<sup>85</sup>

In the villages controlled by the Christians, Buddhas and native gods were considered obstacles toward salvation; they were clearly designated as the enemies. As is often the case in a context of persecution, religious groups, which are forced to practice in secret, tend to strengthen their identity and perceive the religion of the oppressor with increased hostility.

The insurgents took back the space, which they had lost because of the ban, by christianizing it, and reasserted their belonging to the Catholic Church by their clothes or the ostentatious use of specific religious objects. This attitude was enhanced by the fact that in Shimabara and the Amakusa Islands, where the missionaries had been allowed in the past to spread the Catholic creed in-depth, numerous inhabitants were Christians by birth and were certainly convinced that gods and Buddhas were the creation of the Devil. Following the words of a Portuguese Jesuit, João Rodrigues Girão (1559–1629), they had been nourished with “the milk of the Company’s doctrine” (*o leite da doutrina da Companhia*) (f. 161).<sup>86</sup>

As was shown for the domain of Ōmura, at the end of the sixteenth century, Christians, influenced by the exclusive message of the clergy, tended to abandon the use of the amulets distributed by the itinerant priests of the Ise 伊勢 Shrine and to rely on the objects of piety furnished by the Church.<sup>87</sup>

Dutch and Japanese sources point out the destructive behaviour of the Christians. Nicolaes Couckebacker, the director (*opperhoofd*) of the Dutch East India Company in Japan, who was in Hirado at the end of 1637, wrote in his diary,

Miyatake (Eds.), *Hara-jō to Shimabara no ran: Arima no shiro-gaikō-inori* 原城と島原の乱-有馬の城・外交・祈り. Tōkyō: Shinjinbutsu Ōraisha 新人物往来社, 2008.

84 Concerning “God’s warriors” in sixteenth and seventeenth century Europe, see, for example, Crouzet, *Les guerriers de Dieu: la violence au temps des troubles de religion (vers 1525– vers 1610)*, 2 vols. Seyssel: Champ Vallon, 1990.

85 For more information about the Ikkō leagues, see Kanda, *Ikkō ikki to Shinshū shinkō*, or Tsang, *War and Faith: Ikkō Ikki in Late Muromachi Japan*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007.

86 Jap. Sin. 61, f. 132–165v, March 28, 1627.

87 Kudamatsu, *Ōmura-shi: Koto-no-umi no jitsugetsu* 大村史-琴湖の日月. Tōkyō: Kokusho Kankōkai 国書刊行会, 1994, pp.85–88.

on the 26<sup>th</sup> of December, the peasants had burnt “Japanese churches” (*Japansche kercken*), i.e., temples and shrines, and built new places of worship where they had erected statues of Jesus and Mary. On the 8<sup>th</sup> of January, he reported the rebels, like penitents, all wore white clothes and bore crosses on their forehead.<sup>88</sup> At the end of the revolt, Sekido Mokuemon 関戸 奎右衛門, an inhabitant of Ōyano Island, who had remained loyal to the lord of Amakusa, declared to the authorities the Christians had burnt the “gods” (*kamigami* 神々) of his village.<sup>89</sup>

The “born-again” Christians did not limit themselves to a symbolic war. Many Japanese documents show the insurgents tried to convert Buddhists by force. Those who refused to submit to the religion of *Deus* had to flee or to face death. Three weeks after the beginning of the event, seventy-three inhabitants of Iwaya 岩家, a village located on Ōyano Island, fled to Misumi 三角, a territory controlled by the domain of Kumamoto. They declared to the officers that Christians had threatened to kill them if they refused to convert. However, as followers of Shin Buddhism, they had preferred to escape. The same had happened to the Buddhist clergy of the island.<sup>90</sup> By physically and symbolically attacking followers of the native gods and Buddhas, it seems the insurgents were trying to reconcile with God, whose judgement they feared, and avenge themselves from those who endangered their salvation.

The last important religious facet of the revolt is the figure of Amakusa Shirō. Numerous documents from his “flock”, non-Christian commoners or Tokugawa armies, mention him. However, we do not have many documents about the “real” Shirō. One exception is the account of his mother; she was captured in Kumamoto domain at the beginning of the revolt. According to her, Shirō came from Ōyano Island; his real name was Tokisada and he was the son of Masuda Jinbei 益田 甚兵衛 (?–1638), an ancient retainer of the Christian lord Konishi Yukinaga 小西 行長 (c.1555–1600). He learnt to read and write, and studied in Nagasaki. Apparently, nothing distinguished him from the other youngsters from the upper sectors of the peasantry.<sup>91</sup>

His followers portrayed him in a completely different manner; for them, he was thought to be some kind of messiah or prophet. He proclaimed the conversion of Japan to Christianity in the near future, performed miracles and taught his knowledge

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88 The diaries of the directors of the Dutch East India Company were partially edited by the Historiographical Institute of the University of Tōkyō (Tōkyō Daigaku Shiryō Hensan-jo 東京大学史料編纂所). The entries related to the revolt of Shimabara-Amakusa can be found in Tōkyō Daigaku Shiryō Hensan-jo 東京大学史料編纂所 (Ed.), *Oranda shōkan-chō nikki: Genbun* オランダ商館長日記一原文, vol. 3. Tōkyō: Tōkyō Daigaku 東京大学, 1977, pp.84–142.

89 ASR-1590.

90 ASR-60.

91 Ōhashi, *Kenshō Shimabara-Amakusa ikki*, pp.114–115.

to those who wanted to listen. The most detailed account was made by Yamada Emosaku 山田右衛門作, a painter from Kuchinotsu 口之津 and one of the generals of the rebel army until his betrayal, who was captured on the 12<sup>th</sup> of April 1638 by the shogunal army. His life was spared. According to him, five inhabitants of Ōyano were spreading a prophecy before the revolt, which would have been first told by a priest in 1614, when he was expelled from Japan. The prophecy can be summarized as follows: twenty-six years after the ban, people in the region would witness marvellous phenomena and the appearance of a virtuous man (*zennin* 善人) endowed with extraordinary skills.<sup>92</sup> Some argued the revolt leaders had used Shirō to “accomplish” the prophecy and therefore to provoke the uprising of the peasants.<sup>93</sup> This is possible; however, their readily acceptance of the prophecy and Shirō indicates that they met some of their religious needs and expectations.

Shirō was perceived as a religious leader who could fulfil the principal duties of a Catholic priest. The miracles he allegedly accomplished convinced the peasants he had the required skills. An inhabitant of Shimabara town, Mokuzaemon 柰左衛門, who fought against the Christians, reported some deeds attributed to the young man. For instance, it was said he was able to walk above water or that he had, in front of witnesses, received a religious text (*kyōmon* 経文) from a bird!<sup>94</sup> According to Yamada Emosaku, some Christians thought he was immortal because he could not be reached by the weapons of the enemies.<sup>95</sup> A man who had deserted Hara Castle recounted, during his interrogation with the Tokugawa armies, that Shirō was considered by the insurgents to be superior to the abbot of the Honganji 本願寺, the head temple of Shin Buddhism.<sup>96</sup> Multiple examples could be given.

Shirō’s coming was not only predicted by a missionary; he was even seen as a kind of priest. The few descriptions we have of Shirō’s appearance indicate he was dressed as a foreigner: a non-Christian itinerant merchant, who was doing business in Amakusa, had met him and described him as wearing a white ruff and baggy trousers tight around the ankles.<sup>97</sup> Another witness, who had escaped from Hara Castle, even reported he had red hair. He also added that, during the siege, Shirō virtually never left his headquarters.<sup>98</sup> The aim was perhaps to convince the insurgents they were led by a foreign priest.

His resemblance to the foreign priests was not only physical: he was also able to cure the souls of the living and the dead. A retainer of the Matsukura clan, Sano

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92 ASR-1526.

93 Sukeno, *Shimabara no ran*, pp.158–159.

94 ASR-3.

95 ASR-1526.

96 ASR-1001.

97 ASR-519.

98 ASR-902.

Yashichizaemon 佐野弥七左衛門, wrote in a memoir that peasants had been to Ōyano in order to meet Shirō. There, they had received his instructions and had been raised up to the rank of priest (*bateren* 伴天連). Later, endowed with this new legitimacy, they had come back to their village and had preached.<sup>99</sup> Yamada Emosaku depicted Shirō as a priest who was able to confess to his flock, ashamed of having apostatized, and to re-establish the Christian cult:

**Quote 15**

[The village leaders] discussed and decided to make Shirō their religious chief. After long talks, people from different villages sent messengers to Shirō in order to declare to him that they regretted their apostasy in the preceding years and also to raise him to the rank of general of the Christians whose task was to re-establish the religion.<sup>100</sup>

Dōke Shichirōemon 道家七郎右衛門, a samurai of Kumamoto domain, who was in Shimabara at the beginning of the revolt, reported things he had heard from the insurgents about Shirō:

**Quote 16**

The one the insurgents call lord Shirō is a young man of seventeen or eighteen years. They pretend he came down from heaven. They say the deceased cannot reach any further enlightenment because the Christian ceremonies for them are not held recently and that, in heaven (*tenjiku*), their master is extremely angry (*gekirin*). They tell the people to rejoice for the coming [of Shirō]. The apparition of fire above the sea and of crosses encouraged the people from the coasts to venerate him [*or God?*].<sup>101</sup>

The vocabulary used makes this excerpt rather obscure and hard to understand. It is nevertheless plausible the peasants thought their young leader had the capacity to save the souls of the deceased. This might be an indirect reference to the mass for the dead offered, in the past, by the Catholic clergy. The meaning of *tenjiku* 天竺 and *gekirin* 逆鱗 is unclear. *Tenjiku*, which originally means “India”, could relate, in the collective imagination of the seventeenth century, to a very distant country, almost fictitious, or even to heaven. *Gekirin* designates the anger of a superior who, in that case, could be God or the missionaries.

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The two main arguments developed in this essay – the tacit toleration of the officers, who focused their attention on external behaviours, regarding Christians’ beliefs and the great religious anxiety felt by the latter because of the ban – are seemingly quite contradictory. The few testimonies left by seventeenth-century Christians show us that this contradiction was only apparent.

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99 ASR-2.

100 ASR-1526.

101 ASR-46.

There is no doubt many officers, especially in ancient strongholds of the missionaries, demonstrated an unwillingness to strictly implement Tokugawa anti-Christian measures and generally restrained themselves to a formal control of appearances; progressively, this control became annual and extended to the whole population.

This situation was not considered as the lesser evil by the followers of the missionaries. The growing impossibility for the majority of them to avoid multiple apostasies and to receive sacraments from a priest, in particular the sacrament of confession, provoked a deep feeling of apprehension. Their reluctance to become outwardly Buddhist indicates that the Christians had integrated the exclusive religious stance of the Catholic Church and the main benefit promised to those who were able to remain loyal to God: salvation in the afterlife.

Secrecy, which could be viewed, at first sight, as the most rational choice for those who wished to continue practicing Christianity without putting their lives at risk, was thus extremely painful. It encouraged the Christians to compensate for their sins by increasing individual and collective rituals. However, as the accounts of the insurgents of Shimabara and Amakusa reveal, all these compensatory acts were considered insufficient: only God's intervention could permit the abolition of anti-Christian measures, allow the believers to properly practice their cult and, therefore, guarantee their salvation.

## Appendix

### Quote 1

一、国主吉利支丹宗門の仕置善悪有之、宗門の考へ悪しき仕置の国には、隠れ候こと紛れ易きにより、其国には必ず吉利支丹宗門あり、切切旦那寺の改め念入る可きなり。[...] 農人町人職人等に日本の誓詞、南蛮の誓詞を致させ、寺請をとり、其後は一年も二年も改めの沙汰無之さし置かるる国あり。左様にて油断有之候へは、必ず吉利支丹かくれ有之こと多く候由

### Quote 2

一我等廿ヶ年以前ニ長崎へ参、十ヶ年余居申候内ニ禅宗ニ罷成候而、波佐見村之様ニ罷歸りきりしたん御改稠敷御座候付、きりしたん道具をふミ申、真言宗ニ罷成候得共きりしたん心残り候而、今ニきりしたん道具・木像・其外色々隠し申候[...]右之もくさうおたくニ見せ申候事実正也、別ニ見せ候者無御座候、殊ニきりしたん之心御座候者一人も不存候、此上は責殺被成候共、可申上儀無御座候

### Quote 3

三重村

一村中浦懸共弥信心ニ御座候由、宮寺参も無懈怠仕、毎月念仏号所之寺ニ而無油断仕候由、坊主咄ニ承候、宮々之掃除も別而きれいニ御座候

一当年之田作、去年ニはおとり不申候、畑ものも余村方はよく御座候、此所ニは今月六日・七日頃夕立雨降申候由承申候  
右は大村忠左衛門・浅田左門・沢井善左衛門内也

#### Quote 4

Viamse os pobres xpãos em summa afflicção e aperto, por que por huma parte conheciam a gravissima offensa que cometião contra Ds adorando o Fotoqe ainda que fingidamente por outra temião grandemente a crueldade dos tormentos com que este cruel Tyranno custuma atormentar os que se lhe não rendem. E não sentião em si animo pera os sofrer ; esconderse não podia ser de effeito ; fugir não avia meyo nem caminho pera isso. Em fim venceo pola maior parte o temor e fraqueza ; ajuntaramse na caza do Bonzo como lhes era mandado adorarão alguns e forão os menos ; os mais posto que não adorarão, calaramse [...].

#### Quote 5

[O Provincial] manda os P<sup>tes</sup> a diversas missões por todos estes reynos, e mais missões se tem feito nesta perseguicção que no tempo da paz porque como não temos casas, nem lugares determinados em que estar, a necessidade nos obriga a discurrir por todas partes com m<sup>to</sup> perigo mas com m<sup>to</sup> fruto e apeitamento destes xpãos, confessase infinita gente, sempre ha baptismos de novo, e se levantão outros que com a furia da perseguicção tinham caydo.

#### Quote 6

一 此以前乃事ハ不申及別而内府様日本乃き里し端たあてに對しへるせきさんを発し給ひて後こんはにやの伴てれ一人浦上在郷に久敷御滞留なされ諸き里し端のこんひさんを聞貴きさからめんとを授けたまひひてすを背きたる者を立揚たまいせんぢよをき里し端になしたまひ惣而貴理志端に御合力なしたまふ事に少もおこた里たまはず節々此許を御見舞なされほ路しも乃為に百苦千難は不申及御命をも惜ミたまハさる者也

#### Quote 7

何れの御門派のはてれ衆も、御一体のてうすの御名代として、二ツとなきさんたゑけれしやのまことの御法を御ひろめ被成候事、聊うたかひなき儀と致納得候間、いつれの御門派にても、此所御徘徊之御出家衆をハ、随分御馳走申上、あにまの御合力を頼ミ可申覚悟ニ候

#### Quote 8

一当時逼塞稠敷に付き、恵けれ志屋へ参詣し、ミいさを拜ミ、談儀をきゝ、伴天連入満に参会是なき見きりなれハ、折と各きりしたん衆中こゝかしこに相集り、後生のつとめをはげまし、ひるで須信心をそたてらるへき事尤肝要なり、然ハ無油断やうにすゝめ、相衆会に定りたる時分にハおこたりな



く可相集、是まことに面とのくどくハ不及沙汰、ほろしものあにまに力をそゆる道なれば、はなはだふかきくりきなりと心得らるへき事、

#### Quote 9

一てんぐハ此節に当て、きり志端衆を悪道に引入れ、ひるですをうしなわせ、Ds の御掟をせめたいらげんと力をつくす事、うたかひなければ、Ds の御ひくわん成きり志端ハ、何れも心をあわせ、ひるてすをかため、信心をもよをし、ますく御掟御繁昌あるやうに、面との力及ぶほどなげかるへし、是Ds の御前におゐていかにもふかきくりきなりといふ事を、能といひきかせらるへし、

#### Quote 10

態申遣候、天人天下り被成、ぜんちよの分ハてうす様より、ひのぜいちよ被成候間、何の者成共、貴利支丹ニ成候ハ、爰元へ早々御越可有候、村々の庄屋をとな、はやく御越可有候、嶋中へ此状御廻可被成候、ぜんちよの坊主成共、貴利支丹ニ成申者御ゆるし可被成候、天草四郎様と申ハ、天人にて御座候、我等儀被召出候者にて候、きりしたんに成申さぬものハ、日本国中の者共、てうす様より、左の御足にていんへるのへ、御ふみこみ被成候間、其心得可有候  
十月十三日 かつさじゅわん

#### Quote 11

一、今度島原の切支丹起り申候事ハ、島原の内ひのへと申在所ニ、古キすその破申たる御影御座候由、内々表具など仕度存候得共、不罷成候処、此廿日中以前二人も不存ニ俄ニ新ひやうぐ出来申ニ付驚申候、是をあたちの者聞付大勢参拜ミ申候、加様なる不思議有之内ニべやとがすはると申ものだんぎなどと不思議を申候を彼所の御代官御聞被成御しぱり被成候、此意趣よりおこり申候事、

一、十月廿七八日の頃、天草の切支丹起申候儀ハ右島原領ニきりしたんの不思議ども御座候を承及、拜ミ可申と申 [...]

#### Quote 12

我等天草大矢野之庄屋ニ而御座候、不紛大うす宗にて候、肥後へ火を付ニ参候と為申由候、今度有馬へきりしたん宗誇之儀者、彼宗御法度之時分より、本尊之表具を仕儀、世上ニ恐て不罷成候処、一夜之間ニいかにも結構ニ表具出来候、是者でいうすの御作にて候、難有之由申渡、それより前ころびたる者共も、皆々もとのやうニ宗を直したる由候

#### Quote 13

今度、下々とゞ及籠城候事、若国家をも望ミ、国主をも背申様ニ可被思召候歟、聊非其儀候、きりしたんの宗旨ハ従前々如御存知、別宗ニ罷成候事不成教にて御座候、雖然、従天下様数ケ度御法度被仰付、度々致迷惑候、就中、後生之大事難遁存ル者ハ、依不易宗旨、色々御亂明稠敷、剩非人間之作法、或現恥辱、或極窘迫、終ニ為後來対天帝被責殺候畢、其外志御座候者も、惜

色身、恐呵責候故、乍押紅涙、数度随御意改宗門候、然処ニ今度、不思議之天慮難計、惣様如此燃立候、少として国家之望無之、私欲之儀無御座候、如前々罷居候ハハ、右之御法度ニ不相替、種々様々之御糺明難凌ても、又匡弱之色身にて候へハ、誤て背無量之天主、惜今生纒之露命、今度之大事空敷可罷成処、悲歎身ニ余候故、如此之仕合候、聊以非邪路候 [...]

#### Quote 14

一、今度此城内ニ御籠候各、誠此中如形、罪果数をつくし背奉り候事ニ候へハ、後生のたすかり不定の身ニ罷成候処ニ、各別之御慈悲を以、此城内の御人数に被召抱候事、如何程の御恩と思食候哉、乍不及申無油断心のおよび、御奉公無申迄候事、

一、おらしよ・ぜじゆん・じしひりいな等の善行のミに限申間敷候、城内そこその普請・扨又ゑれじよふせく手立、成程武具の嗜可被入御念事も皆御奉公に可成事、

一、現世には一旦の事と申候中に、此城内之人数は弥見しかき様ニ存候間、昼夜おこたりなく、前々よりの御後悔尤、日日の御礼、おらしよ等の御祈念専ニ可存候事、

[...]

一、不用油断の科ニも可罷成候間、大事之時分と言、殊今程くわれすまの内と申、我々の持口に駢相詰、夜白御奉公可被申候、人により小屋くに引入、すこしのすきにくつろきのみ見え申候、是無勿体儀ニ存候間、下々迄銘々に右の通可被仰聞候事、

[...]

#### Quote 15

[...] 其後相談仕候ハ、四郎守立、宗門之司ニ可用之由、皆々談合きわめ、天草四郎所へ村々より一人宛使をたて申候ハ、先年宗門ころひ、後悔ニ存候間、今度四郎をきりしたんの大将ニ仕り、宗門取立可申由、四郎方へ申遣候事、

#### Quote 16

一、四郎殿と申て十七八ノ人天より御ふり候が、此中切支丹のとふらひヲ不仕候ニ付、死人共うかひ不申候、てんちくよりも殊外御けきりんにて候、やかて迎を被下候間忝存候へと申ふれ申候、其内ニ海ニ火か見え候がくるす有之候ニ付、浦々のもの拝候由申候事、

Yoshie KOJIMA

# Orthodoxy and Acculturation of Christian Art in Japan: The Transformation of the Eucharistic Representation of ‘Hidden’ Christians\*

## Introduction

The period between 1549, when Francis Xavier (1506–1552) arrived in Japan, and the 1640s, when *shōgun* Tokugawa Hidetada (1579–1632) banned Christianity thoroughly with complete expulsion and execution of priests, is called the ‘Christian century’ in Japan. During this period, a vast number of conversions took place<sup>1</sup> and numerous Christian sacred images were imported from Europe or reproduced in Japan, playing an indispensable part in the faith of the early converts. This period coincided with the ‘Catholic Reformation’ or ‘Counter-Reformation’<sup>2</sup> in which not only doctrines and institutional issues but also canons for sacred images were elaborated. After the Council of Trent (1545–1563), Catholic art in Europe was reflected in the Christian religious art of Japan. Subsequently, in the following period of thorough oppression of Christianity, such ‘orthodox’ Christian Art was transformed drastically by the Hidden Christians. In this article, I would like to analyse the reception of Western Catholic art during the Christian Century and its transformation in the following period, focusing on the Eucharistic representation that was crucial for the Catholic Church at the time of the Counter-Reformation.

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\* In this essay, figures 3, 6, 9, 10 and 11 have been blurred in the digital version for reasons of privacy. They are visible exclusively in the hard copy edition of the book.

- 1 The exact number of Christians in Japan at the time of the ‘Christian century’ is unknown. Scholars estimate that by 1610, the number could have been between 400,000 and 600,000. That would be roughly 3 % of the Japanese population of that period. Takase, *Kirishitan jidai no bunka to shosou* 「キリシタン時代の文化と諸相」 (*Aspects of Kirishitan period*). Tōkyō: Yagi-Shobō, 2001, pp.452–489; Gonoi, *Nihon Kirishitan-shi no Kenkyū* 「日本キリシタン史の研究 (*Study on the Christian History in Japan*). Tōkyō: 2002, pp.96–117.
- 2 As for the notions of the terms ‘Counter-Reformation’ and ‘Catholic Reformation’ see Prodi, “Riforma cattolica e Controriforma”, *Nuove Questioni di Storia Moderna*. vol. I, Milano: Marzorati, 1970, pp.358–418; Bireley, *The Refashioning of Catholicism, 1450–1700: A Reassessment of the Counter Reformation*. Washington D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1999.

## Japanese Converts and Their Sacred Images

The Jesuits in Japan found that sacred images were indeed indispensable in their missionary work.<sup>3</sup> At that time, in Japan almost every household possessed Shinto-Buddhist altars with proper sacred images that, once a household converted, had to be abandoned and replaced with Christian images. To respond to the high demand for Western Christian paintings, in 1575 there was even a proposal to send to Japan Giuseppe Valeriano, an Italian Jesuit who was one of the most competent artists in Italy at the time.<sup>4</sup>

Under these circumstances, Giovanni Cola, an Italian Jesuit painter from Nola in the kingdom of Naples, arrived in Japan, where he directed a kind of Painting Seminary or *Seminario dos pintores*, as it was called in Jesuit epistles and annual reports from Japan.<sup>5</sup> When he arrived in 1583, Cola was the first Western artist in Japan. The school was very active after 1590, even though the civil war in Japan forced it to relocate multiple times around Nagasaki. In 1614, Cola and some of his disciples were forced to flee to Macao, where Cola died 12 years later. Notwithstanding the brevity of the school's active period, it was a great success. Cola trained an estimated 40 Japanese artists and apprentices, and they produced

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- 3 For fundamental studies on the history of the first mission in Japan, in Western languages, see, Schütte, *Valignanos Missionsgrundsätze für Japan*. 2 vols, Roma: Storia e letteratura, 1955–58; Boxer, *The Christian Century in Japan 1549–1650*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press 1951. It is necessary to add that the Spanish-born and naturalized Japanese Jesuit 結城了悟 (Yuuki, Diego), originally called Diego Pacheco López de Morla, published numerous important studies in Japanese.
  - 4 Pirri, *Giuseppe Valeriano S. I. Architetto e pittore 1542–1596*. Roma: Istitutum Historicum Societatis Iesu, 1970, p.235.
  - 5 On Giovanni Cola and his 'art school', see D'Elia (Ed.), *Storia dell'introduzione del Cristianesimo scritta da Matteo Ricci*. Roma: La Libreria dello Stato, vol. 1, 1942, pp.230–232; Vlam, *Western-Style secular painting in Momoyama Japan*. Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Michigan 1976; Curvelo, *Nuvens douradas e paisagens habitadas: a arte Namban e a sua circulação entre a Ásia e América: Japão, China e Nova-Espanha (c. 1550–c. 1700)*. PhD diss., Universidade Nova de Lisboa, 2007, pp. 290–321; Curvelo, "Copy to Convert. Jesuit's Missionary Artistic Practice in Japan". Rupert Cox (Ed.), *The Culture of Copying in Japan. Critical and Historical Perspectives*. London; New York: Routledge, 2008, pp.111–127; Curvelo; Cattaneo, "Le arti visuali e l'evangelizzazione del Giappone. L'apporto del seminario di pittura dei gesuiti". Tanaka Kuniko (Ed.), *Geografia e cosmografia dell'altro fra Asia ed Europa. Geography and Cosmology Interfaces in Asia and Europe* (Proceedings of the III Dies Academicus of the Accademia Ambrosiana, Milan, 22–23 October 2010). Roma: Bulzoni, 2011, pp.31–60; Curvelo, "«Vencer no pincel a Zeuxis e a Apelles» na Ásia. A produção e consumo de pintura nas missões do Japão e da China no século XVII". *Viagens, produtos e consumos artísticos. O espaço ultramarino Português, 1450–1900*, Isabel Soares de Albergaria; Duarte Nuno Chaves (Coord.). CHAM EBOOKS // DEBATES #3, 2018, pp.24–41.

Christian artworks on an enormous scale. The Japanese disciples of Cola did not create original works of art but instead copied Western pictures, especially Flemish prints and oil paintings. Sometimes those Japanese painters composed patchworks of several Western images, an occurrence that can be paralleled in New Spain, for instance, in Mexico and Peru.<sup>6</sup>

Due to the fierce persecution of Christians in Japan, which lasted for about two and a half centuries, most Christian sacred paintings have been largely destroyed. Nonetheless, from the remaining pictures, it is possible to recognize the characteristics of Counter-Reformation art. Taking notable examples, one can cite the *Salvator Mundi* in oil on a copper panel, which is the only dated and signed work, from 1597, and signed in Western Letters as “Sacam. Jacobus” (Fig. 1).<sup>7</sup> As Mitsuru Sakamoto indicated, Flemish engravings after Maarten de Vos were the most likely model. It is possible to confirm how the disciples of Cola faithfully imitated Western art, even though there was certainly some level of awkwardness. Here one observes simplicity and clarity both in composition and iconography, which, as Federico Zeri discussed in his book *Pittura e contrariforma*, are prevalent characteristics of Counter-reformation art that restrained the use of emotion and complicated expression.<sup>8</sup> A disciple or disciples of Cola also executed copies of the *Salus Populi Romani*, a renowned Italo-Byzantine icon located in the Cappella Paolina of Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome.<sup>9</sup> As has been widely discussed, this *acheiropoieton*, an image miraculously made without human hands, was considered extremely important during the period of the Counter-Reformation.

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- 6 Cf. the site <http://colonialart.org> of PESSCA (Project on the Engraved Sources of Spanish Colonial Art), housed at the University of California-Davis and the Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú.
- 7 This painting was discovered in 1920 in the old house of the Nakatani family, Kakure Kirishitan of Ibaraki, located in the mountains between Kyōto and Ōsaka. Kakure-Kirishitan of Ibaraki will be discussed in this present study. Sakamoto; Ide; Ochi; Hidaka, *Namban bijutsu sō-mokuroku, yōfū-ga hen* 南蛮美術総目録 洋風画篇 (An Essay of Catalogue Raisonné of Namban art: Japanese early European-style painting). Kokuritsu Rekishi Minzoku Hakubutsu-kan kenkyū hōkoku 国立歴史民俗博物館研究報告 (Bulletin of the National Museum of Japanese History), vol. 75. Sakura, Chiba: National Museum of Japanese History, 1997, pp.72–75.
- 8 Zeri, *Pittura e contrariforma: l'arte senza tempo* di Scipione da Gaeta. Torino: Eianudi, 1957.
- 9 For the Japanese *Salus populi romani*, see Kojima, “Reproduction of the Image of Madonna *Salus Populi Romani* in Japan”. Shigetoshi Osano (Ed.), *Between East and West: Reproductions in Art (Proceedings of the CIHA Colloquium in Naruto, Japan, 15th – 18th January 2013)*. Cracow: IRSA, 2014, pp.373–387.



**Fig. 1.** *Salvator Mundi*, signed Sacam Iacobus, dated 1597. © University of Tōkyō Library.

In distinction from the ‘Christian Century’, the methods through which the Christian faith rooted itself in Japan by the 1640s and was inherited and modified by hidden Christians remain contentious. In particular, Christianity remained in Ikitsuki Island, where several ‘hidden’ Christian communities still practice their particular brand of faith to this day. The hidden Christians of Ikitsuki produced various devotional images.<sup>10</sup> In Japanese, this group is referred to as ‘Kakure Kirishitan

10 Key studies on Kakure Kirishitan are Tagita, *Shōwa jidai no senpuku Kirishitan* [昭和時代の潜伏キリシタン] (*Hidden Kirishitan in the Showa period*). Tōkyō: Nihon Gakujutsu Shinkōkai, 1978; Turnbull, *The Kakure Kirishitan of Japan: A Study of Their Development, Beliefs and Rituals to the Present Day*, Richmond: Japan Library, 1998; Kataoka, *Fumi-e, Kakure Kirishitan* [踏絵・かくれキリシタン] (*Fumi-e tablet, Kakure Kirishitan*). Tōkyō: Tomo-Shobō, 2014 (1<sup>st</sup> ed. 1979); Mitazaki, *Kakure*

かくれキリシタン’: Kakure means the hidden one, and Kirishitan is a traditional denomination for Christians in Japan.<sup>11</sup> These people are the descendants of the communities who maintained the Christian faith in secrecy during the period of persecution, which lasted up to 1873 and who then chose not to reconcile with the Catholic missionaries that returned to Japan in the middle of the nineteenth century. They have continued separate and distinctive series of religious practices that reflect the conditions forced upon their ancestors, and still today, their practices vary from complete openness to nearly complete secrecy. In light of modern normative forms of Christianity, their religious practices give the appearance of complete indigenization in a form of syncretism between Shinto, Buddhism, and Christianity. Kakure Kirishitan practitioners conceive that they have inherited religious practices without any interruption from ancestors who defended their faith at the risk of their lives under utterly cruel persecution.

It is presumed that by the end of the 1980s the number of Kakure Kirishitan practitioners should have been roughly two thousand, and currently those numbers are estimated to be significantly reduced. Kakure Kirishitan communities are mostly distributed in the modern Nagasaki Prefecture of Kyūshū Island, where converts were concentrated during the Christian century. Kakure Kirishitan communities can be divided into two groups depending on their religious practices. The first, the Kakure Kirishitan communities, mainly in Ikitsuki, a very tiny island, venerate mostly holy objects including images traditionally known as ‘Gozen-sama 御前様’. A few of them also live on the north-western edge of Hirado Island, a small area contiguous to Hirado. The second, the Kakure Kirishitan communities in the Sotome area, a region of deeply indented coastlines and a steep range of hills, who are characterized by their commitment to the church calendar, which is conceived to be sacred.

Both phenomena derived from the absence of priests who could have administered sacraments, notably the Mass, except baptism, which the Church allowed to be administered also by a layperson. The Kakure Kirishitan needed alternatives to receiving the sacraments after the middle of the seventeenth century. Seen in that light, one can recognize a correct comprehension by Kakure Kirishitan that only

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*Kirishitan no jitsuzo: Nihon-jin no kirisuto-kyo rikai to jitsuzō* [カクレキリシタンの実像 日本人のキリスト教理解と受容] (*Life of the Hidden Christian: grasp and reception of Christianity in Japan*). Tōkyō: Yoshikawa-Kōbundō, 2014; Nakazono Shigeo 中園成生 – *Kakure Kirishitan no Kigen* [かくれキリシタンの起源: 信仰と信者の実相] (*Kakure Kirishitan and their faith*). Fukuoka: Gen-Shobō, 2018.

- 11 In Japanese grammar, *Kakure Kirishitan* is both singular and plural. Most recently, *Senpuku Kirishitan* (潜伏キリシタン), which means “absconded Christians” has been used by some people – especially Christian scholars – to indicate absconded or subterranean Christians of the persecution period. *Senpuku Kirishitan* distinguishes such individuals from *Kakure Kirishitan*, a term that has designated both hidden Christians of the persecution period and those Christians’ descendants who still practice the faith inherited from their ancestors.

priests celebrate the holy sacraments. The Catechism in Japanese has also been inherited, but it was passed from generation to generation only orally for fear of being revealed, and thus the original meaning of the prayers was largely modified or lost. Even Latin prayers, such as the *Oratio* (*Orasho* according to the Japanese way of reading) of *Catechismus romanus*, have been handed down orally without the understanding of meaning, simply as holy sounds or a spell.<sup>12</sup> Even today, in most cases it is barely possible to identify the original words of the ‘holy sounds’ of Kakure Kirishitan, rather like a mantra in esoteric Buddhism. For instance, the prayers for Baptism, the only sacrament celebrated by Kakure Kirishitan without priests, has mutated from the original Latin “Ego te baptizo in nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti, Amen” into “Wegotebauchizo in-nomine paatilisuwetsuhilii wetsusupilitusanchi aamen.”<sup>13</sup> This demonstrates how seriously they have endeavoured to preserve the original *vox* (sound) but not the *verbum* (meaning).

On the other hand, under the ban of Christianity, Kakure Kirishitan tried to disguise their faith as if it was a traditional native religion from the seventeenth century. Hence, until recently, it was thought that Kakure Kirishitan’s faith had gradually become a fusion of Christianity, Shinto, and Buddhism.<sup>14</sup> In Japan, the latter two were indeed fused under the name of Shinbutsu-Shūgō since the seventh century.<sup>15</sup> However, Shigeo Nakazono recently demonstrated that in most cases of the Kakure Kirishitan of Ikitsuki, the form of Christian practice is largely preserved, and while Christianity and Japanese indigenous religions coexist, they do so in formal terms, but not in terms of faith and doctrine.<sup>16</sup>

It is also a consideration that, on the island of Ikitsuki, all inhabitants, including Buddhist and Shinto priests, were converts by the end of the sixteenth century under the rule of the lord Yasumasa Koteda, who was baptized in 1558 after his son Yasutsune who was baptized in 1553 as one of the first Christians in Japan. Interestingly, on the island of Ikitsuki, each zone or region originally corresponded to a different Kakure Kirishitan community, called ‘Kakiuchi垣内’ or ‘Tsumoto津

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12 Minagawa identified the original text of almost all the Latin prayers of Kakure Kirishitan. Interestingly, he elucidated that one of the prayers in Latin inherited by the Kakure Kirishitan is *O gloriosa Domina* made in Madrid and sung only in Madrid in the seventeenth century: Minagawa, *Yōgaku torai kō: Kirishitan ongaku no eikō to zassetsu* 「洋楽渡来考: キリシタン音楽の栄光と挫折」 (*Introduction of Western music in Japan: study on Kirishitan mass*). Tōkyō: Nihonkirishutokyōdan-Shuppanyoku, 2004.

13 For its transcription in Japanese Hiragana characters, see Kataoka, *Fumi-e, Kakure Kirishitan*, p. 248.

14 For this thesis, see in particular Mitazaki, *Kakure Kirishitan no jitsuzo*.

15 In Japan, since the seventh century, Buddhism was amalgamated with Shinto under the name of *Shinbutsu-Shūgō* (syncretism of Kami and Buddhas). In English, see Rambelli; Teeuwen (Ed.), *Buddhas and Kami in Japan: Honji Suijaku as a Combinatory Paradigm*. London-New York: Routledge Curzon, 2003.

16 Nakazono, *Kakure Kirishitan no Kigen*.



元.’ Thereby, one can recognize how the entire society of Ikitsuki was organized by Kakure faith.

Kakure Kirishitan was once considered completely indigenized because of the view that they believe “superstitions” that would have had nothing to do with Christianity. However, as Stephen Turnbull indicated, most “superstitious beliefs” of Kakure Kirishitan of Ikitsuki originally derived from proper Catholic religious practice of the sixteenth century, which of itself can be argued to have contained ‘magical’ elements according to contemporary definitions.<sup>17</sup>

It is significant that the continuity of Christian tradition in Kakure Kirishitan practice is largely formal, as with the sounds of prayers in Latin as mentioned before, and is combined with a substantial loss of meaning. This presumably happened also to the ‘御掛け絵Okake-e,’ sacred images of Kakure Kirishitan of Ikitsuki. That is to say, the essential formal elements like composition, personage, gesture, and frequently even the colours, were preserved. Each Kakure Kirishitan community in Ikitsuki, ‘Kakiuchi’ or ‘Tsumoto,’ has its own ‘Gozensama,’ which are objects supposed to embody a deity. The most important Gozensama are Okake-e, rustic and naïve holy images, depicted on paper by simple and untrained local people. As Okake-e means a hanging painting, they are in the form of hanging scrolls, a traditional Japanese painting format, but in a very poor and simplified state. Kakure Kirishitan repeatedly reproduced these Christian sacred images when others seemed worn or damaged. Intriguingly, the act of reproduction is called ‘Osentakuお洗濯’ which means ‘laundry,’ and damaged out-of-use Okake-e are called ‘Inkyo隠居,’ meaning ‘retired’ or ‘retreated.’

Although not all Kakure Kirishitan reveal their Okake-e to outsiders and the dates of their execution are still ambiguous, it can be assumed that the works of the ‘Art Seminary’ of Giovanni Cola came first, and with the procedure of Osentaku/Laundry, images gradually adopted indigenous traits, like Kimono and Japanese traditional coiffure, that was much more familiar and natural for Kakure Kirishitan practitioners. However, it seems that until recently, essential elements often did not vanish, even though their visual images seem more easily indigenized and sometimes fused with local deities than the auditory perceptions.

For instance, in the case of most depictions of *Madonna with the Child*, the red and blue of the *Virgin’s* vesture are kept (Figs. 2, 3, 4, and 5); it should be noted that, like in other East Asian countries, in Japan green is equated with blue, and for both colours, the same linguistic term ‘ao 青’ is employed.<sup>18</sup> Moreover, it is unusual that the stylized moon and cloud of the *Madonna of Immaculate Conception* are depicted at Madonna’s feet in almost all Okake-e, as if they were normative attributions of the Madonna. The crescent moon and cloud are represented

17 Turnbull, *The Kakure Kirishitan of Japan*, pp.82–84, 138–155.

18 Cf. Komatsu, *Nihongo no rekishi: ao-shingō wa naze “ao” nanoka* 「日本語の歴史：青信号はなぜアオなのか」 (*Notable occurrences in the history of the Japanese language: why the green signal is “ao”*). Tōkyō: Kasama-Shoin, 2001.

not only in the plain *Madonna and Child* that could be classified as the *Madonna of Immaculate Conception*, even if the cloth of the Madonna is not in white and blue, but also in the *Madonna of Rosary* and the *Virgen de la Antigua* of Sevilla (Fig. 3). The latter can be recognized because of the presence of three angels above the head of the Madonna that, instead of holding a crown, hover around a cross, similar to the cross of Kadohana-kurusu mon, a Japanese family crest originally used by Christian samurai. In section “Eucharistic Representation in the ‘Christian Century’” of the present study, the case of *Virgen de la Antigua* of Sevilla will be discussed further.



**Fig. 2.** *Madonna with Child*, nineteenth century (?). © Biwa-no-kubi Tsumoto, Ichibe, Ikitsuki.



**Fig. 3.** *Virgen de la Antigua*, end of the nineteenth century (?). © Yamada, Shōwa Tsumoto.

Regarding Okake-e's *Annunciation*, Japanese traditional vestures and coiffures are more conspicuous, and the wings of the angel seem like a short cape or mantilla made of feathers (Fig. 4). Interestingly, "cape" in Japanese is phonetically called "kappa", since cape (*capa* in Portugal) and its name were adopted from European missionaries in the sixteenth century and its two Kanji 合羽 mean together 'conjugated wings,' just as depicted on the shoulders of the angel. God the Father is represented above the cloud as in the original iconography of *Annunciation*, but its composition is reminiscent of Buddhist *Amida-sanzon Raigo-zu* (Descent of Amida Trinity) (Fig. 18, 19). On the other hand, the Virgin Mary of *Annunciation* holds the Child to her chest under a Kimono, but this can also be derived from the iconography of the *Madonna with the Child*, as in the case with the moon under feet of the *Virgin Mary*.



**Fig. 4.** *Annunciation*, first half of the twentieth-century (?). © Kuroda family, Tachiura.

From these examples alone, it is clear that, although they seem improper and intentional, the modifications and transformations of the original Christian representations seem more likely to have been unconsciously and gradually indigenized: in some cases syncretized with Buddhist or Shinto images with which Kakure Kirishitan were familiar, and in other cases with elements of other Christian iconographies, such as the moon and the Child. Obliterating the original, Christian meaning through repeated reproduction spontaneously generated Kakure Kirishitan's sacred images. The fact that Okake-e were reproduced without interruption beginning in the seventeenth century is decisively important. Hence, the question becomes that of how the orthodoxy of Okake-e – being of image and form and not meaning – can be recognized. In answering this, it is significant to analyse the representation of the Eucharist, a primordial piece of the Catholic doctrine, especially as it regards the transubstantiation.

## Eucharistic Representation in the ‘Christian Century’

In the decree of the thirteenth session of the Council of Trent, stipulated on October 11th of 1551, it was confirmed that under the forms of both bread and wine the sacrament contained “truly, really, and substantially the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ together with his soul and divinity, and therefore the whole Christ.”<sup>19</sup> In the post-Tridentine world, new devotions developed around the Eucharist, specifically for the Jesuits, such as frequent communion, the Forty Hours, and new and vigorous sacramental fraternities.<sup>20</sup> At the centre of these beliefs and attitudes, there was the doctrine of transubstantiation, which Protestants criticized as an *Aristotelian* pseudo-philosophy. The Eucharist was the organizing principle of the Counter-Reformation and of the struggle against Protestant heresies and pagans in the Americas and Asia, where Catholic missionaries were promoting missionary works. The Eucharist supposedly shielded Catholics against evil and was conceived as being comparable to a relic that took on miraculous power. By virtue of its physical nature, the Eucharist was vigorously represented in the architecture and art of that period, as Cardinal Carlo Borromeo argued in *Instructiones fabricate et suppellectilis ecclesiasticae* of 1577 that the reservation of the Eucharist was to be kept at the high altar, safely, publicly, and singularly, not to mention the numerous masterpieces of the period that were related to the Eucharist.<sup>21</sup>

It is noteworthy that Jesuits in Japan reflected this new Catholic approach long before the publication of texts in Japanese related to the Eucharist, such as *Hiidesu no Dōshi* (*Introducción del symbolo de la Fe* by Luis de Granada) in romanized Japanese language (1592), and *Sakaramenta Teiyō* (*Manuale ad Sacramenta*) in Latin and romanized Japanese language (1605). In 1552, only 1 year after the decree of the thirteenth session of the Council of Trent, Francis Xavier wrote about the “very great benefit of the sacrament of communion”, complaining that it was impossible to administrate the sacrament of the Eucharist in certain places due to distance.<sup>22</sup>

19 Waterworth (Ed. and Transl.), *The Canons and Decrees of the Sacred and Oecumenical Council of Trent*. London: Dolman, 1848, pp.75–91.

20 On the Eucharist of the Counter-Reformation period, see McGinness, “Roma Sancta and Saint: Eucharist, Chastity and the Logic of Catholic Reform”. *Historical Reflections* XV-1 (1988), pp.99–116; Wandel (Ed.), *A Companion to the Eucharist in the Reformation*. Leiden: Brill, 2014.

21 Cf. Baviera; Bentini (Ed.), *Mistero e Immagine. L’Eucaristia nell’arte dal XVI al XVIII secolo*. Milano: Electa, 1997, [Exhibition catalogue – Bologna, Chiesa Abbaziale di San Salvatore, 20 September – 23 November 1997]; Frank; Malgouyres (Dir.), “L’eucharistie”. *La Fabrique des saintes images. Rome-Paris 1589–1660*. Paris: Louvre Éditions, 2015, pp.238–267. [Exhibition catalogue – Paris, musée du Louvre, 2 april – 29 June 2015].

22 Letter from Francisco Xavier to Simão Rodrigues, S.J. in Portugal, Goa (ARSI= Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu, Hihst. Soc. Ia, n. CC.): «[...] e por carecerem deste tam grandissimo beneficio do sacramento da comunhão, hão de sinter sito muito». *Nihon Kankei kaigai Shiryo* 「日本関係海外史料」 (*Historical documents*

Three years later another Jesuit, Baltazar Gago (c.1515/20–1583), reported from Hirado, a small island adjoined to Ikitsuki, after an exposition of the doctrine of the “Sacrament of the Eucharist that they [the Japanese people] venerate very much”, they entreated the holy Sacrament that “they believe[ed] excessively necessary to make themselves strong.”<sup>23</sup> Thus, already in the 1550s, Japanese converts conceived the miraculous power of the physical existence of the Eucharist. Regarding the Holy Week of Easter of 1557, the Jesuit Gaspar Vilela left interesting descriptions about the converts of Hirado:

On Holy Thursday, the Portuguese and the Christians who had been prepared received the Holy Sacrament. It was for them the first time, both who received and who did not receive assisting there were with a lot of tears.

[... on Holy Friday] I took up the holiest sacrament with great devotion and tears of all, which I would certainly say that we may express: *Haec mutatio dexterae Excelsi* [Psalm 77–11].<sup>24</sup>

Likewise, Jesuit Luís de Almeida reported on the Holy Thursday of 1557 in Bungo:

On Thursday we, together with thirty Japanese men and women received Holy Sacrament. Many of them had strongly asked it for two or three years. Many had such wished in spirit, but Jesuits thought that it was not appropriate for those who have more faith. Receiving the Lord many of them tore and sobbed that well manifested the great fire that they felt in their souls the love of God. [...] I say to Your Reverence that after I was born, I nor any of those who were at [Jesuit] home, Fathers and

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*in foreign languages relating to Japan*). Tōkyō: Tōkyō Daigaku Shiryō Hensanjo hensan 東京大学史料編纂所編纂, 1990- Original texts, Selection III, *Jesuit Letters concerning Japan*, vol. I, 1990, p.256; *Nihon Kankei kaigai Shiryo*, vol. II, 1994, pp.151–152. Theses series of *Nihon Kankei kaigai Shiryo*, translated texts were referred for the English translation in this present study. Those that follow are the same.

- 23 Letter from Balthasar Gago, S.J. to the Jesuits in India and Portugal, Hirado in *Cartas que os Padres e Irmãos da Companhia de Jesus escreveram dos Reynos de Japão & China aos da mesma Companhia da India & Europa desdo anno de 1549 até o de 1580*. 2 Vols. Em Evora por Manoel de Lyra, Anno de MDXCVIII [1598], f. 38v–41v: «Sacramento da Eucharistia, que ells têm em muita veneração», «Para que tomassem o santo Sacramento, que crião que Ihes era muito necessario, para se fazerem fortes». *Nihon Kankei kaigai Shiryo*, vol. II, 1994, p.240.
- 24 Letter from Fr. Gaspar Vilela, S.J. to the Jesuits in Portugal, Hirado (ARSI, Jap. Sin. 4. 335r–341v): «A quinta-feira tomarão I sanctissimo sacramento os portugueses e os christãos que para iso erão, sendo aquella a 1a vez que se Ihes comunicou, com muitas lágrimas, assi os que o recebrão como as que o não tomarão tinham [sic]», «Desençarrou-se o sanctissimo sacramento com muita devação e lágrimas de todos, que por certo afirmo que bem podemos dizer: *Haec mutatio dexterae Ecclesie*». *Nihon Kankei kaigai Shiryo*, vol. III, 2014, p.45.

Brothers, we have never seen so much devotion in the moment of receiving the Lord, even among clerics.<sup>25</sup>

The passionate and profoundly devout attitudes of Japanese Christians towards the Eucharist can be attributed to the Jesuits' mission work that mirrored the directive of the Council of Trent, which emphasized the doctrine of transubstantiation. In the context of Catholicism, the Eucharist itself should have been viewed as a defence against pagans in Japan.

For this fervent devotion to the Eucharist, the absolute shortage of clergy who could administer the Mass should have been a significant factor. Indeed it has been contemplated that at the end of the sixteenth century there were less than 100 missionary priests, while the number of Japanese converts was approximated between 150,000 and 250,000.<sup>26</sup> Jesuit epistles and annual reports from Japan stated repeatedly that Japanese converts in many cities and villages had to wait for months, sometimes even more than a year, to receive the Eucharist. On the other hand, there were many communications between Jesuits in Japan about stories of miraculous recovery from illness after receiving the Eucharist. For instance, in 1559, Juan Fernandez reported that in Hakata (today's Fukuoka) a nobleman who had been mute uttered words soon after taking Eucharist,<sup>27</sup> an occurrence that was thereafter considered miraculous.

The devotion of Japanese Christians towards the material existence of the Eucharist seems to have been connected with the sacred images that were primary instruments for Jesuit missions. The most representative painting with such a perspective is the *Mysteries of the Rosary*, of which two very similar or nearly identical versions exist (Fig. 5). Both copy paintings were concealed for many years by Kakure-Kirishitan families in Sendaiji Shimootowa, small villages in the steep

25 Letter from Luís de Almeida, S.J. to Fr. Melchior Nunez Barreto, S.J., Bungo (*Documentos del Japón*, vol. 1 (1547–1557). Juan Ruiz-de-Medina, S.J. (Ed.). Roma: Instituto Histórico de la Compañía de Jesús, 1990, p.128, pp.717–726): «Quinta-feira tomarão obra de 30 japoís, homens e molheres, o sancto Sacramento conosco, tudo por sua hordem e estes muitos que [avião ou 3 amos que o pedião com muita eficácia. E se forão polos desejos de muitos na alma o] desejarão[sic] tomarm nas ao padre não lhe pareceo [bem senão aqueles que elle sentio com maior fé.]

Ao tomar do Senhor ouve entre ells tantas lágrimas e soluços que bem manifestavão o grande fogo que suas almas sentião do amor de Deos. [...] Eu digo a Vossa Reverencia que depois que nasi, eu nem nenhum dos que estávamos em casa, padres e irmãos condessado por ells, que nunca vimos tanta devação ne mem religiosos tomando o Senhor». *Nihon Kankei kaigai Shiryo: Historical documents in foreign languages relating to Japan*, vol. III, 2014, p.73; p.101.

26 Arai et al., *Sōsetsu Kirisuto-kyōshi* 「総説キリスト教史」 (*History of Christianity in Japan*). 3 Vols. Tōkyō: Nihon Kirisuto-kyōdan Shuppankyoku, 2007, vol. I, pp.34–41.

27 Letter form Juan Fernandez, S.J. to Fr. Melchior Nunez Barreto, S.J., Bungo, BA = Biblioteca da Ajuda (Lisboa), Jesuitas na Ásiam 49-IV-50, Cartas da Índia II, f. 520r-521r. *Nihon Kankei kaigai Shiryo*, vol. III, 2014, p.187.



Fig. 5. *Madonna of the Mysteries of the Rosary*, painting originally conserved by Harada family of Shimootowa, found in 1930 inside a bamboo tube tied to the ridgepole. © Kyōto University Museum.



mountains that are now part of Ibaraki city, situated between Kyōto, the Capital of Japan of that period, and Ōsaka. Sendaiji Shimootowa was under essentially Christian rule under the Takayama family starting in 1573.<sup>28</sup> The Kakure-Kirishitan of this area conserved their religious practices until the middle of the twentieth century, especially the Latin words of the *Oratio*, which sound like a magic incantation, but they seem not to have produced any Christian sacred images during the period of Persecution. The partly damaged painting of the Higashi family is somewhat finer than that of the Harada family, which is more stylized; presumably, these were the work of two different disciples of Giovanni Cola. Like other paintings of Cola's Japanese students, it is possible to recognize that they were modelled after European and particularly Flemish prints.

As José María Medianero Hernández indicated, the source of the *Virgin Mary* was the celebrated Gothic *Virgen de la Antigua* (Our Lady of Antigua) conserved at the Seville Cathedral. The resemblance is recognizable especially in the Virgin's gesture of pinching a flower between her thumb and index finger. The *Virgen de la Antigua* was traditionally associated with the miraculous legends of Saint King Ferdinand III of Castile (c. 1200–1252) and was hugely venerated, especially after the circumnavigation of Juan Sebastián Elcano, whose successful return to Spain in 1522 was reportedly thanks to the protection of this *Virgen de la Antigua*.<sup>29</sup> It is one of the emblematic cases of veneration in the Counter-Reformation period of the thaumaturgic medieval sacred image, treasured especially in the cathedrals of the "New World" of Panama, Mexico, and Lima.<sup>30</sup> This miraculous *Virgen* of Sevilla played a significant role in the Spanish Conquest and colonization of the New Kingdom of Granada. Interestingly, in Western images of the *Virgen de la Antiqua*, including those of New Spain, the *Madonna* holds a white rose, while in Japanese versions of the *Mysteries of the Rosary*, the flower is white camellia japonica, which

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28 On Kakure Kirishitan of Sendaiji Shimootowa, see Fujinami, *Sendaiji Shimootowa no Kirishitan iseki* 「茨木市文化財資料集 9 千堤寺・下音羽のキリシタン遺跡」 (Kirishitan remains of Sendaiji Shimootowa). Ibaraki: Ibaraki-shi Kyōiku-iinkai, 1969; *Sendaiji Shimootowa no Kirishitan iseki* 「千堤寺・下音羽のキリシタン遺跡」 (*The Kirishitan remains of Sendaiji Shimootowa*). Ibaraki City Board of Education (Ed.). Ibaraki City: Ibaraki City Board of Education, 2000.

29 Medianero Hernández, "Copias de la Virgen de la Antigua en Japón". *Laboratorio de Arte: Revista del Departamento de Historia del Arte* (9), 1996, pp.323–332. On the *Virgen de la Antigua*, see above all Pereda, *Las imágenes de la Discordia: política y poética de la imagen sagrada en la España del cuatrocientos*. Madrid: Marcial Pons Historia, 2007, in particular pp.145–220.

30 Another emblematic case is the *Salus Populi Romani* of the Church of Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome. Wolf, *Salus Populi Romani, Die Geschichte römischer Kultbilder im Mittelalter*, Weinheim: VCH, Acta Humaniora, 1990; Ostrow, *Art and Spirituality in Counter-Reformation Rome. The Sistine and Pauline Chapels in S. Maria Maggiore*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996; Bacci, *Il pennello dell'Evangelista: storia delle immagini sacre attribuite a san Luca*. Pisa; Edizioni ETS, 1998.

is very popular in the Nagasaki area and known for its use in the production of camellia oil. It is also intriguing that camellia japonica has been regarded as a protective amulet and a symbol of longevity in Japan since ancient times, and from circa sixteenth century, this flower has been prized as a symbol of silence in the context of Zen and the tea ceremony.<sup>31</sup>

It is notable that, customarily, the Jesuits left from the port of Sevilla for missions in the Indies. And this is not unrelated to the fact that a Japanese disciple or disciples of Giovanni Cola executed a copy of the *Virgen de la Antiqua* in copper print using the printing press brought by Alessandro Valignano in 1590. Probably this print of the *Virgen de la Antiqua* was the model for the Japanese Madonna in *Mysteries of the Rosary*. For the other parts of these paintings, Flemish prints were likely the models: *Ignatius of Loyola*, *Francis Xavier*, and *Fifteenth Scenes of the Life of Virgin Mary and Christ* are all associated with the Prayer of the Rosary.<sup>32</sup> In the Harada family's painting, Saint Mathias and Saint Lucy stand behind two Jesuit saints and have not yet been identified; these saints could be patron saints of the original proprietors, conceivably a couple of high statuses.

These paintings may be compared to a patchwork of various images in prints, as can be seen in Spanish Colonial Art and also in England where, in effect, Renaissance art was imported in most cases through images in prints.<sup>33</sup> In analogy with the cases in South Central America and England, it would appear that in the *Virgin Mary of Mysteries the Rosary* various European images in prints were combined not randomly but with precise schemes that might have been elaborated by European Jesuits in Japan.<sup>34</sup> The crucial part of this painting is the representation of the Eucharist in the centre, in which Host is shining above the chalice aligned in central vertical axis with the scene of the Passion of Christ and Virgin Mary and the Christ Child from above, and from below, the Christogram IHS, an emblem of the Society of Jesus, and the word "IESVS." The last word at the bottom of the painting is a part of the inscription "Societatis Iesus", which is grammatically incorrect since

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31 Yotsuyanagi, *Tsubaki to nihon-jin* 「椿と日本人」 (*Camellia and Japanese people*). Kanazawa: Notoinsatsu, 2000. The idea diffused throughout Japan today that the Camellia flower is inauspicious since its blossom falls as a whole as if by decapitation, dates back to only the Edo period.

32 Regarding the Life of Virgin Mary and Christ, one can find some similar coetaneous print versions in the series of *The New Hollstein Dutch & Flemish Etchings, Engravings and Woodcuts* (Roosendaal: Koninklijke Van Poll). In particular, see Ann Diels, *The Collaert Dynasty*, part III, 2005. Disciples of Giovanni Cola could have used these sorts of prints as a model.

33 Wells-Cole, *Art and Decoration in Elizabethan and Jacobean England: The Influence of Continental Prints, 1558–1625*. London; New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997.

34 On the role and impact of Flemish prints on the migration of Catholic devotional images, see various studies by Walter S. Melion, such as *The meditative art: studies in the Northern devotional print, 1550–1625*. Philadelphia: Saint Joseph's University Press 2009.

“Jesus” must be declined in genitive “Iesu.” However, one can presume that this “error” was intentional *lapsus* to accentuate the Christological implication and glory of the Eucharist. In fact, above the Host and chalice in the centre of this painting, the Portuguese words that praise the Eucharist are inscribed: *Louvado seja O Santissimo sacramento* (praise the holiest sacrament). These words were and still are used for the exposition of the host of Mass.

The Museum of Sacred Art of the St. Paul ruins at Macao houses a very interesting oil painting on wood depicting *Saint Michael Holding a Monstrance* (Fig. 6).<sup>35</sup> It was executed by a Japanese disciple or disciples who fled to Macao with Giovanni Cola in 1614. As has been argued quite extensively, the iconography of Saint Michael is strongly connected to the stance of the Catholic Church during the Counter-Reformation period as a representation of the battle against Protestant heretics in Europe and pagans in Asian countries and the so-called New World.<sup>36</sup> The monstrance or ostensory, which is not a current attribute of Saint Michael, is notable: it stands (like the physical presence of the host) as Catholicism’s shield against evil.<sup>37</sup> Analogous iconography can be found in the Museo de la Basílica de Guadalupe in Mexico City where an eighteenth-century painting representing *Saint Michael Holding Eucharist* is preserved.<sup>38</sup> In the *Saint Michael* of Macao, the host treasured in the oval crystal

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- 35 Cf. Guillen-Nuñez (Ed.), *Macao’s Church of Saint Paul: A Glimmer of the Baroque in China*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2009; Kojima, “Nihon no Iezusu-kai gaha to Higashi-ajia: Makao no «Seitai-kenji-dai wo motsu Daitenshi Mikaeru» to Manila no «Rozario no seibo»” 「日本のイエズス会画派と東アジア：マカオの《聖体顕示台を持つ大天使ミカエル》とマニラの《ロザリオの聖母》」 (“Jesuit “seminário dos pintores” in Japan and East Asia: St. Michael the Archangel Holding a Monstrance in Macao and the Madonna of the Rosary in Manila”), *Bulletin of the Graduate Division of Literature of Waseda University*, vol. LXVI (2020), pp.531–542.
- 36 Mujica Pinilla, *Ángeles apócrifos en la América Virreinal*. Lima: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1996. Rafael Moreira identifies this as the Archangel Uriel seeing the flaming sword, but it seems appropriate to identify as the Archangel Michael. The flaming sword is associated with the Archangels such as Uriel, Camael, Jophiel, and, in particular, Michael in the scene of the Last Judgement, since in Genesis the “fiery revolving sword” was put at the gate of Paradise (Genesis 3:24). In the case of Macao, one can recognize as Saint Michael because of a big chain connected to a quadrangular seal of the abyss. According to the Revelation of John, Chapter 20, the angel with a key and a great chain put the devil or Satan in bonds in the abyss for a thousand years. Cf. Moreira, “A Facade-Retable in Macao”. *Reprint of El Museo de Pontevedra*, T. LIII. Pontevedra, 1999, pp.159–168; Kojima, “Nihon no Iezusu-kai gaha to Higashi-ajia: Makao no «Seitai-kenji-dai wo motsu Daitenshi Mikaeru» to Manila no «Rozario no seibo»”, p.535.
- 37 On the Eucharistic monstrance, see now, Tixier, Frédéric, *La monstrance eucharistique: genèse, typologie et fonctions d’un objet d’orfèvrerie (XIIIe – XVIe siècle)*. Rennes: Presses Univ. de Rennes 2014.
- 38 Rishel (Ed.). *The Arts in Latin America: 1492–1820*, Boston: Yale University Press, 2006, pp.335–348.

container depicts the *Crucifixion*, which quite literally corresponds to the decree of the thirteenth session of the Council of Trent on the comprehension of the Mass as being “the sacrifice of the crucified Christ for our salvation.”<sup>39</sup> Furthermore, in the *Saint Michael* of Macau, the chain that is hanging from the monstrance is not attached to the Dragon, but falls on a square-shaped object. According to the Revelation of John, Chapter 20, the angel with a key and a great chain put the devil or Satan in bonds in the abyss for a thousand years.



**Fig. 6.** *Saint Michael Holding the Monstrance*, oil painting on wood, seventeenth century.  
© Tomo.Yun ([www.yunphoto.net/en/](http://www.yunphoto.net/en/)).

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39 Waterworth (Ed. and Transl.), op. cit., p.85.



**Fig. 7.** *Eucharist Adoration by Two Angels* (Battle banner used for Shimabara Rebellion). © Amakusa Christian Museum, Kumamoto.

The image of *the Eucharist Adoration by Two Angels* is on white silk wrought with a delicate design called *rinzu* and denotes the definite and conclusive end of the Christian century in Japan (Fig. 7). This was the battle banner used for the Shimabara Rebellion (1637–1638), which occurred in the western area of Kyūshū Island, and in which about 30,000 local Christians made a massive revolt against the religious persecution of regional lords. Tokugawa shogunate sent nearly 130,000 troops, led by 16-year-old Shiro Amakusa, to crush this tenacious rebellion, which was subsequently annihilated. This banner was taken by Daizen Nabeshima, samurai of the Tokugawa military, who was the first to enter the surrendered Hara Castle at the end of the battle with the besieged Christian rebels. The medieval origin iconography of the *Eucharist adoration by two angels* was particularly important and popular during the Counter-Reformation,<sup>40</sup> and a vast number of

40 Cf. Mujica Pinilla, “España eucarística y sus reinos: el Santísimo Sacramento como culto y tópico iconográfico de la monarquía”. 4 Vols. Juana Gutiérrez Haces (Coord.); introducción Jonathan Brown (Introduction), *Pintura de los reinos: identidades compartidas; territorios del mundo hispánico, siglos XVI – XVIII*. México, D.F.: Grupo Financiero Banamex, 2009, vol. 4, pp. 1099–1503. [Exhibition catalogue – Palacio Real de Madrid, Museo Nacional del Prado, 26 October 2010–31 January 2011]. Shinzo Kawamura supposes that this banner was originally used by Japanese confraternity,

medals with this representation were manufactured in Europe. The Portuguese inscription “Louvado seja O Santissimo sacramento” on the banner is the same as that on the medals, and also on the *Mysteries of the Rosary*. The accomplished designs and brush strokes reveal that, in the 1630s, even after the flight of Cola and a segment of his Japanese disciples to Macao in 1614, a skilful disciple or disciples were still active in the Nagasaki area. Remarkably, it was used as a battle banner for Christians who would have resorted to the miraculous power of the Eucharist in the hopeless fight, meaning that the dogma of transubstantiation could have still been comprehended at the time.

## Eucharistic Representation of Kakure Kirishitan

The most emblematic Okake-e of the Kakure Kirishitan of Ikitsuki Island in terms of Eucharistic representation is the *Madonna and Child, with Ignatius of Loyola and Francis Xavier*. Okake-e of this subject have been worshipped in three small villages or groups called the Thumoto-Kakiuchi that include Yamada (山田), Tateura (館浦), and Monofure (元触) (Fig. 13–17). It is uncertain whether all the Okake-e have a single original model made during the so-called Christian Century, or if each Thumoto-Kakiuchi had its original images. The currently lost original or originals, venerated in Ikitsuki, should have been almost identical to the two copies of *Mysteries of the Rosary* of Kakure Kirishitan in Sendaiji-Shimootowa near Kyōto. It would appear that, under the importance of its iconography, Giovanni Cola’s disciples depicted this image multiple times.

In the Okake-e version, *Saint Mathias*, and *Saint Lucy*, and the surrounding *Fifteenth Scenes of the Life of Virgin Mary and Child* are omitted. This omission is reasonable considering these characters’ minor importance compared to the *Madonna and Child* and the two Jesuit Saints *Ignatius of Loyola* and *Francis Xavier*. However, it is quite notable that the image of the Eucharist is simply absent in the Okake-e versions. Okake-e were typically executed by local people who were not artistically trained and repeatedly reproduced Christian sacred images. For the time being, precise dates of the reproductions of surviving Okake-e are unknown. The Okake-e were executed after the utter ban of Christianity and the expulsion of missionaries during the middle of the seventeenth century, and also after the decree of freedom of religion introduced in 1873 until recently. Accordingly, it is unclear when the image of the Eucharist vanished. Be that as it may, one could argue that Okake-e became objectively non-Christian religious images when the image of the Eucharist, which is crucial for Catholicism, vanished.

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comparing it with similar image of the crest of the Confraternità del SS. Sacramento of Santa Maria Sopra Minerva in Rome. Kawamura, *Kirishitan shinto sosiki no tanjō to henyō* 「キリシタン信徒組織の誕生と変容: ‘コンフラリア’ から ‘こんふらりあ’ へ」 (*Birth and transformation of Japanese Christian organization*). Tōkyō: Kyōbunkan, 2003.

As if in synchronization with this change, outfits, hairstyles, and gestures were also indigenized or familiarized, leaving out the images' original religious implications. Notably, regarding the gestures, each Tsumoto-Kakikuchi exhibits its autonomous development. In the case of Yamada, clasped hands in the prayer of Loyola become raised in the air as if in praise of the Madonna, whereas Xavier's fists seizing his cloak turn into a hand extended before him as if to express surprise (Figs. 8 and 9). In Tateura versions, Xavier points his index fingers toward each other, and sometimes they touch (Fig. 10). In the case of Motofure, Loyola and Xavier bend their bodies, as if dancing, to look up at the Madonna (Fig. 11). It is also interesting that in Yamada's same *Okake-e*, the Child holds a pinwheel instead of a rose or camellia. As regards Jesuit habits, they were replaced with costumes of *Kannushi* (Shinto priests) or *Kuge* (court nobles). Further representations of radiating light and cloud were added in such a way that the overall icon appears to be a Buddhist *Amida-sanzon Raigo-zu* (Descent of Amida Trinity), typical iconography for the *Jodo* (Pure Land) sect (Fig. 12).<sup>41</sup> This observation is not unconnected with the fact that Houzen-ji, the most important Buddhist temple in Ikitsuki, is of the *Jodo* sect, and priests of this temple were converted to Christianity in the sixteenth century. After their recovery to Buddhism during the ban on Christianity, *Jodo* priests of this temple entombed more than one thousand Christians executed in 1654.<sup>42</sup> On the other hand, it is not possible to see the intentional influence of Buddhist iconography in these *Okake-e*, since there is no Buddhist connotation in the figures of the *Madonna and Child* and the two Jesuit saints. Furthermore, during the period of persecution, *Okake-e* were rolled up and scrupulously concealed, and only in the case of Christian liturgical practice were hung in storage. If these *Okake-e* were revealed by an inquisitor, their proprietors were certainly apprehended because of the small image of the cross on the head of the Virgin Mary. It seems more likely that Kakure Kirishitan had adopted more and more local motifs for their *Okake-e*, forgetting the Christian significance of the original motifs in the course of about two and half centuries of isolation.

41 On the iconography of *Amida-sanzon Raigo-zu*, see Ide, "Amida-sanzon Raigō-zu" 「阿弥陀三尊来迎図」 ("Descent of Amida Trinity"). *Kokka* 国華 1807, 1985, pp.36-43; Yajima, "Amida-sanzon Raigō-zu" 「阿弥陀三尊来迎図」 (Descent of Amida Trinity). *Kokka* 国華 1153, 1991, pp.23-30.

42 Nakazono, "Shouhou no dan'atsu to sen'nin zuka" 「正保の弾圧と千人塚」 (Persecution of Shouhou and a thousand grave mound). *Ikitsuki shōgai gakushū kōza* 生月学習講座80 (<http://www.hira-shin.jp/record/index.cgi?page=42&field=67>)



Fig. 8. *Madonna of the Mysteries of the Rosary*. © Yamada, Ikitsuki.





**Fig. 9.** *Madonna of the Mysteries of the Rosary.* © Yamada, Ikitsuki.



**Fig. 10.** *Madonna of the Mysteries of the Rosary.* © Tateura, Ikitsuki.



**Fig. 11.** *Madonna of the Mysteries of the Rosary.* © Motofure, Ikitsuki.



**Fig. 12.** *Amida Raigō zu: Welcoming Approach of Amida*, end of twelfth-beginning of thirteenth century. © Reihō-kan, Kōya-san.

At that point, the Kakure Kirishitan faith was no longer Christianity for outsiders, and sacred images took on some hybrid characters. However, for Kakure Kirishitan, who have continued their formally ‘Christian’ practices without correct understanding these meanings, Okake-e are subjectively legitimate images. As Turnbull wrote, Kakure Kirishitan “have therefore not abandoned Christianity in any conscious sense.” They strove to continue “‘right-doing’ rather than ‘right-believing,’” and adhered rather to the formalities and forms inherited from their ancestors, who supported their faith at the cost of their own lives.<sup>43</sup> The formalities and forms are, paradoxically, substantially those of these ancestors, and in such a way that their religious attitude seems to have become synchronized with traditional ancestor worship.<sup>44</sup>

43 Turnbull, *The Kakure Kirishitan of Japan*, pp.224–225. See also Nakazono, *Kakure Kirishitan no Kigen*.

44 Regarding ancestor worship in Japan, strongly rooted since the ancient period as in other East Asian countries, see above all, Yanagida, *Senzo no hanashi* 「先祖の話」. Tōkyō: Chikuma-shobō, 1956 (English translation: *About our ancestors*, Transl. Fanny Hagin Mayer and Ishiwara Yasuyo, Tōkyō: Japan Society for the Promotion of Science, 1970). In addition to this still fundamental study, see also Akada (Ed.) – *Sorei shinkou* 「祖霊信仰 (*Ancestor worship*). Tōkyō: Yūhikaku-shuppan, 1991.

Susumu AKUNE

# New Evidence and Perspective of the Pedro Marques Missionary Group: At the Tail End of the Jesuit Enterprise in Japan\*

## Introduction

(...) when [Father João Monteiro] was returning to Hangzhou, he received a letter about a certain shipwrecked people who had departed Manila aboard a vessel in which the Provincial of Japan, Father Pedro Marques along with other Fathers headed for Japan. Those people had launched the missionaries in the Islands of Hirado and proceeded to Manila when they met with adverse winds and drifted off the coast of Hangzhou. The pilot and two mariners drowned and thirty-two survived. (...) These survivors brought welcome news regarding the illustrious martyrdom of Father Antonio Rubino, Visitor to Japan and China, and his companions.<sup>1</sup>

(Antônio de Gouveia (1592–1677), 1643 *Annual Letter of the Southern Vice-Province of China*)

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\* This paper is an enlarged and edited version of Akune, “Manira kara Tsugaru e: “Kirishitanjidai” makki ni okeru Nihon senkyō saikai no kokoromi マニラから津軽へ: 「キリシタン時代」末期における日本宣教再開の試み” (From Manila to Tsugaru: An attempt to reopen the Japanese mission at the end of the “Christian Century”). Guo Nanyan 郭南燕 (Ed.) *Kirishitan ga hiraita nihongo bungaku: Tagengo tabunka koryu no engen* キリシタンが拓いた日本語文学: 多言語多文化交流の淵源 (Japanese literature by foreign missionaries: The origin of multi-lingual and multi-cultural communication). Tōkyō: Akashi Shoten, 2017, pp.134–154. Moreover, this work (partly) was supported by the Sasakawa Scientific Research Grant (28–135) from the Japan Science Society; Japan Society for the Promotion of Science KAKENHI (JP 17H02392).

1 “(...) quando voltava para Hâm Cheu teve carta de huns naufragantes, que partindo de Manilla em huma embarcação em que hia o Padre Pedro Marques, Provincial de Jappão, com outros Padres para Jappão, lançando-os nas Ilhas de Firando, voltavão para Manilla, e com ventos contrarios derão na costa de Hâm Cheu. Afogou-se o piloto e dous marinheiros; escaparão 32 pessoas (...) Estes derão as novas alegres do insigne martyrio do Padre Antonio Rubino, Visitador de Jappão e China, e mais companheiros.” Original Portuguese text translated by the author of this paper. Gouveia (Auth.); Araújo (Ed.), *Cartas Ânua da China (1636, 1643 a 1649)*. Macau: Instituto Português do Oriente, 1998, p.148. See also Nakasuna, “Iezusukaishi Furanchesuko Sanbiashi no tabi イエズス会士フランチェスコ・サンピアシの旅” (The voyages of the Jesuit Francesco Sambiasi). *Ajia shigaku ronshū* アジア史学論集, 3 (2010), p.53, n. 87.

At the tail end of the “Christian Century,” voyages from Manila to Japan were undertaken by Jesuit missionaries, namely the preeminent Italian Antonio Rubino (1578–1643, *Visitador* of the Japan Province and China Vice-Province) and the Portuguese Pedro Marques (c. 1576–1657, *Provincial* of the Japan Province). Their ventures are generally considered to be final attempts to reopen the Japanese Mission that ended in contrasting consequences.

Since the 1869 publication of *Histoire de la Religion Chrétienne au Japon* by Léon Pagès,<sup>2</sup> it has been generally assumed that Rubino and Marques made their voyages to Japan for no other reason than fulfilling the hope of reclaiming the faith of ex-Vice-Provincial Cristóvão Ferreira (c. 1580–1650, alias of Sawano Chūan) from his apostasy in 1633.<sup>3</sup> While new evidence regarding Rubino’s decision to sail to Japan in 1642 was unearthed in a recent study by Shimizu Yūko,<sup>4</sup> especially the clarification that Rubino’s attempts had multifarious aspects rather than just Ferreira’s apostasy and hopes for martyrdom, however, much is still unclear about Rubino and Marques’s larger ambitions about resumption of the Jesuit Japanese Mission. In relation to the Marques missionary group of 1643, previous studies clarified some basic facts, taken from Dutch and Japanese sources, about the arrest that led up to their apostasy<sup>5</sup> as well as the details on the information provided by

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- 2 Pagès, *Histoire de la Religion Chrétienne au Japon depuis 1598 jusqu’à 1651: Comprenant les Faits Relatifs aux Deux Cent Cinq Martyrs Béatifiés le 7 juillet 1867*. 2 vols. Paris: C. Douniol, 1869.
  - 3 Elison, *Deus Destroyed. The Image of Christianity in Early Modern Japan*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1973; Cieslik, “The Case of Christovão Ferreira”, *Monumenta Nipponica*, 29 (1) (1974), pp.1–54; Ross, *A Vision Betrayed: The Jesuits in Japan and China, 1542–1742*. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1994; Hesselink *Orandajin hobaku kara saguru kinseishi* オランダ人捕縛から探る近世史 (Early modern Japan through the examination of the arrest of the Dutch in Yamada). Yamada: Yamada-chō Kyōiku Inkai, 1998. Brockey, *The Visitor: André Palmeiro and the Jesuits in Asia*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2014; Üçerler, “The Christian Missions in Japan in the Early Modern Period”, Ronnie Pochia Hsia (Ed.), *A Companion to the Early Modern Catholic Global Missions*. Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2018, pp.303–343. For the biographies of Rubino and Marques, see O’Neill; Domínguez (Eds.), *Diccionario Histórico de la Compañía de Jesús: Biográfico-Temático*. 4 Vols. Roma: Institutum Historicum Societatis Iesu, 2001, vol. 4, p.3430; vol. 3, p.2512.
  - 4 Shimizu, *Kinsei Nihon to Ruson: Sakoku keiseishi saikō* 近世日本とルソン: 「鎖国」形成史再考 (Japan and Luzon in the early modern era: Reconsidering the history of the “Sakoku” policy). Tōkyō: Tōkyōdō Shuppan, 2012.
  - 5 Hesselink, op. cit.; Shimizu, op. cit.; Shimizu, “Shūmon aratame yaku no seiritsu to hensen 宗門改役の成立と変遷” (Shūmon aratame yaku: The establishment and transition of official duties). Hirokazu Shimizu (Ed.) *Edo Bakufu to Nagasaki seiji* 江戸幕府と長崎政事 (Edo Bakufu and the political issues of Nagasaki). Tōkyō: Iwata shoin, 2019, pp.235–260.

Giuseppe Chiara (1602–1685) to the Japanese authorities.<sup>6</sup> Jesuit scholars such as Josef Franz Schütte<sup>7</sup> and Juan Ruiz de Medina<sup>8</sup> have dealt with some information, but the details of the voyage from Manila to Japan in June 1643 remains unknown and unexamined. Also, the issue of Rubino and Marques’s venture needs to be further explored in the context of the Jesuits’ three decade long struggle to continue the Japanese Mission after the expulsion edict of 1614 was enforced.

This essay first introduces the background of Rubino and Marques’s venture to Japan and then sequentially gives a microscopic view of the voyage itself, the final destination, and the mission plan of the Pedro Marques missionary group through the analysis of the Portuguese manuscript *Relação da viagem do Padre Pedro Marquez Provincial de Japaõ...* (“Report of the voyage of the Father Pedro Marques, Provincial of the Japan Province...”) <sup>9</sup> preserved in the Roman Jesuit Archive. In most previous studies, the Marques missionary group has generally been termed “the second Rubino group.”<sup>10</sup> This categorisation renders the Marques missionary group as a mere substitute or subordinate of Rubino. This is a mere simplification of the inquiry and also implies that Marques and his companions travelled to Japan without any concrete plan or any significant prospects. The *Relação da viagem* has ample content to shed light in this direction. The present study attempts to revisit and revise this conventional viewpoint. Furthermore, the final section of this paper shows how the curtain fell on the “Christian Century” in Japan by revealing the process through which information about the doom of the Marques missionary group was garnered and transmitted to the Jesuit College of Macao.

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- 6 Shimizu, *Kinsei Nihon to Ruson*; Kimura, “Nihon no kirisutokyō kinsei niyuru fushinsen tensō yōsei to Chōsen no taishin-tainichi kankei: Iezusukai senkyōshi Nihon sennyū jiken to sono yoha 日本のキリスト教禁制による不審船転送要請と朝鮮の対清・対日関係: イエズス会宣教師日本潜入事件とその余波” (Requests for transfer of ships under suspicion of violating Japan’s prohibition of Christianity and Joseon’s relations with Qing China and Japan: The Jesuit infiltration plots of 1642 and 43 and their aftermath). *Shigaku zasshi* 史学雑誌 124 (1), 2015, pp.1–39.
- 7 Schütte, *Introductio ad historiam Societatis Jesu in Japonia, 1549– 1650, ac prooemium ad catalogos Japoniae edendos ad edenda Societatis Jesu monumenta historica Japoniae propylaeum. Opus composuit plurimisque tabellis instruxit et adnotationibus auxit Iosephus Franciscus Schütte*. Romae: Institutum Historicum Societatis Iesu, 1968.
- 8 Ruiz de Medina, *El Martirologio del Japón 1558– 1873*. Roma: Institutum Historicum Societatis Iesu, 1999.
- 9 *Relação da viagem do Padre Pedro Marquez Provincial de Japaõ, e mais companheiros de sua chegada, e prizaõ naquella Reyno o anno de 1643*. ARSI, Jap. Sin. 29, f. 322r–328v. Abbreviation used for the title of this manuscript has been changed to complete text and the same style is maintained throughout the paper including footnotes.
- 10 See note 3 of this paper.

## Tri-decade Long Jesuit Struggle Post the “Great Expulsion Edict”

### From Neighbouring Areas to Mainland Japan

The Japan Province of the Society of Jesus headquartered in Macao toiled to continue the Japanese Mission defying an anti-Christian policy enforced by the Tokugawa government. These efforts encompass Rubino and Marques’s expeditions to Japan in 1642 and 1643, which are regarded as the final stages in the history of the Province’s thirty-year long struggle.

The year was 1614, when the Tokugawa government issued the decisive as well as disastrous edict proclaiming the expulsion of missionaries and began the nationwide persecution of Christians. Among the 115 Jesuits working in Japan at the time, 65 were expelled to Macao, and 23 were expelled to Manila.<sup>11</sup> Under the prevailing circumstances, until around the 1620s a few members of the Japan Province proactively planned to launch alternative mission fields in the peripheral region of the Japanese archipelago, such as Ezo, Ryūkyū, Korea, and Formosa, with the strategic motive of utilising these as places of refuge for persecuted missionaries and Christians within mainland Japan.<sup>12</sup>

Between 1618 and 1622, the Italian Jesuit Girolamo de Angelis (1568–1623) first explored the Ezo region with an aim to test its potential as a new mission field, and another, the Portuguese Diogo Carvalho (c. 1578–1624), who had returned to Japan from Cochinchina in 1616, visited Christians in Matsumae of the same region.<sup>13</sup> Subsequently, although for just a few occasions, the Ryūkyū region provided a transit-point to Japan for the Mendicant missionaries and one Jesuit especially from the 1620s to 1630s.<sup>14</sup> Eventually in September 1640, about a year after his arrival in Macao from Goa as the *Visitador*, Rubino was considering a plan to dispatch missionaries to Korea by regarding that country as a favourable location for easy entry into Japan.<sup>15</sup> In spite of these attempts and plans, owing to the financial difficulties of the Japan Province coupled with strict enforcement of anti-Christian

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11 Takase, *Kirishitanjidai no bunka to shosō* キリシタン時代の文化と諸相 (Culture and its various aspects during the Japanese Christian Century). Tōkyō: Yagi Shoten, 2001, p.39.

12 Gonoï, “Iezusukai senkyōshi to Ryūkyū イエズス会宣教師と琉球” (Jesuit missionaries and Ryūkyū). *Kirisutokyō shigaku* キリスト教史学, 53 (1999), pp.48, 54–55.

13 Cieslik (Ed.); Okamoto (Transl.), *Hoppō tankenki: Genna nenkan ni okeru gaikokujin no Ezo hōkokusho* 北方探検記: 元和年間に於ける外国人の蝦夷報告書 (Jesuits’ documents relating to the exploration of northern Japan and Ezo during the Genna period). Tōkyō: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1962.

14 Gonoï, “Iezusukai senkyōshi to Ryūkyū”, pp.58–61.

15 ARSI, Jap. Sin. 38, f. 218r; Takase (Ed.; Transl.), *Iezusukai to Nihon* イエズス会と日本 (The Society of Jesus and Japan). vol. 1. Tōkyō: Iwanami Shoten, 1981, p.586.



laws in Japan, none of the above areas materialised into gaining a new missionary foothold. The Ezo region was nevertheless reconsidered and once again emerged as the suitable location to resume the Japanese Mission chosen by the Marques missionary group.

## From Southeast Asia to Japan

Consequent to the expulsion edict of 1614, the Japan Province initiated the development of newer playgrounds in Southeast Asia, anticipating that this maneuver would also provide an avenue for enabling missionary penetration in Japan as they endeavoured to channelise trade links in the South China Sea.<sup>16</sup> Some Jesuits remained in Japan serving Christian communities, continuing missionary work until the 1640s, others took to the seas for the purpose of supporting comrades. A total of 38 Jesuits also succeeded in quietly gaining entry into Japan on secretive voyages from the following four regions in the southern part of Asia: 13 from Macao (1615–1621); 21 from Manila (1615–1643); 2 from Cochinchina (1616); 2 from Malacca (1616 and 1621).<sup>17</sup> Alternatively, Cambodia, where the Japan Province had opened a mission in 1616, started gaining importance as a location favourable for the Jesuits' preparation for the Japanese Mission. In reality, two European Jesuits who later sailed to Japan with Rubino were dispatched in 1638 from Macao to Cambodia to master the Japanese language under the Japanese Jesuit Romão Nishi (c. 1569–1639/1640) who had made the Cambodian kingdom his residence.<sup>18</sup> In this

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- 16 In 1615, the Jesuit Mission opened in Cochinchina (present-day south-central Vietnam) under the Nguyễn clan. Subsequently, from 1616 to 1646, new missions were initiated in the following six regions, in chronological order: Cambodia in 1616; Siam in 1626; Tonkin (present-day northern Vietnam) under the Lê-Trịnh government in 1627; Hainan Island in 1633; Laos in 1642; and Makassar in 1646. For further details of these new mission fields of the Japan Province, see Cardim (Auth.); Cordeiro (Ed.), *Batalhas da Companhia de Jesus na sua gloriosa Província do Japão*. Lisboa: Imprensa Nacional, 1894; Gonoï, *Tokugawa shoki kirishitanshi kenkyū* 徳川初期キリシタン史研究 (A study on the history of Christianity in the early Tokugawa period). Tōkyō: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1992, Part III, chap. 2; Alden, *The Making of an Enterprise: The Society of Jesus in Portugal, Its Empire, and Beyond, 1540–1750*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1996, chap. 6; Brockey, op. cit., chap. 9; Akune, “Porutogarujin Iezusukaishi Antonio Karudin no shūshi katsudō: “Eikō no Nihon kanku ni okeru Iezusukai no tatakai” no seiritsu, kōsei, naiyō wo megutte ポルトガル人イエズス会士アントニオ・カルデインの修史活動: 『栄光の日本管区におけるイエズス会の闘い』の成立・構成・内容をめぐって” (Historiographer António Francisco Cardim’s *Batalhas da Companhia de Iesv na sua gloriosa Província de Iappam*: Compilation, structure, and content). *Rekishi bunka shakairon kōza kiyō* 歴史文化社会論講座紀要 12 (2015), pp.75–105; Sena, “In Search of Another Japan: Jesuit Motivations towards Continental Southeast Asia in the Early 17th Century”. *Revista de Cultura: International Edition*, vol. 52 (2016), pp.31–46.
- 17 Shimizu, *Kinsei nihon to Ruson*, pp.101–102.
- 18 ARSI, Jap. Sin. 29, f. 188v; Gonoï “Iezusukai senkyōshi to Ryūkyū”, p.60.

way, Southeast Asia acquired dual significance as *porta para Japão* or the gate to Japan<sup>19</sup> as well as a training ground for the Japan enterprise.

The Tokugawa government enforced prohibition on the Japanese from travelling overseas as well as returning home and they were subjected to a strictly monitored immigration control policy as a consequence of the strong influence of Catholic missionaries and their successive infiltration from Southeast Asia to Japan. Concurrent to maintaining this *Sakoku* policy, the surveillance of missionaries and Christians kept the *Bakufu* agents busy throughout Japan. The question of how to penetrate into Japan, create favourable conditions and maintain Christendom was a daunting task for the missionaries. Even after the expulsion of missionaries in 1614, a total of 27 Jesuits carried on activities secretly. Finally, in 1638, there were only four Jesuits, one European and three Japanese missionaries engaged in underground missionary activities in Japan.<sup>20</sup>

### Organisation of the Two Missionary Groups by Antonio Rubino

Mostly garnered from the findings of Shimizu, this section focuses on how Rubino strengthened his determination to sail to Japan and organise the missionary groups.<sup>21</sup> On succeeding Manuel Dias the senior (1559/1560–1639) as *Visitador* in October 1639, Rubino's initial reluctance drove him to articulate his fundamental stance to renounce the Japanese Mission. He highlighted that travels to Japan would prove futile since missionaries were bound to face immediate arrest owing to the intensification of nationwide surveillance and practically gaining negligible support from local Japanese.<sup>22</sup> Actually, since the travel of the Italian Jesuit Marcello Francesco Mastrilli (1603–1637) to Japan via Manila and Ryūkyū, who had fared martyrdom in Nagasaki in 1637, not a single missionary had left the shores of Macao heading for Japan. Nevertheless, from 1640, Rubino started to reconsider his reluctance in resuming the Japanese Mission. This is visible from Rubino's letter to the Superior General Muzio Vitelleschi (1563–1645) dated September 16, where Rubino disclosed his plan for dispatching three or four missionaries to Korea expecting an easy transit into Japan.<sup>23</sup> This is an addition to Shimizu's findings. Alternatively, Rubino also contemplated, according to Shimizu, sending comrades to potentially more productive mission fields such as Tonkin, Cochinchina and China.<sup>24</sup>

19 Regarding the usage of this term, see Cardim (Auth.); Cordeiro (Ed.), op. cit., p.253; Akune, "Porutogarujin Iezusukaishi Antonio Karudin no shūshi katsudō", p.91; Sena, op. cit., p. 42.

20 Gonoī, *Tokugawa shoki kirishitanshi kenkyū*, pp.161–170, 190–191.

21 Shimizu, *Kinsei nihon to Ruson*, chap. 8.

22 Ibidem, pp.273–274.

23 ARSI, Jap. Sin. 38, f. 218r; Takase (Ed.; Transl.), *Iezusukai to Nihon*, p.586.

24 Shimizu, *Kinsei Nihon to Ruson*, p.274.

On September 20, information about the decapitation of four Portuguese envoys with their crew of fifty-seven at Nagasaki on August 3, was transmitted to Macao.<sup>25</sup> These envoys were dispatched by the Senate of Macao to negotiate the resumption of the Macao-Nagasaki trade with the Japanese authorities. It was this “martyrdom” of seculars which finally convinced Rubino that travelling to Japan was imperative.<sup>26</sup> In 1641, Rubino rushed to lay the groundwork for the Japanese venture despite discouraging words from his subordinate Gaspar do Amaral (1594–1646), who actually stressed the impending necessity for opening the Korean Mission as an initial step for reopening the Japanese one.<sup>27</sup> Through negotiations with Sebastián Hurtado de Corcuera, Governor of the Spanish Philippines between June 1635 and August 1644, Rubino acquired a vessel with crew for the expedition to Japan and recruited eager applicants ready to be engaged in the Japanese Mission. According to his letter dated July 1, 1642, Rubino determined to sail to Japan mainly for the following motives.<sup>28</sup> Firstly, Rubino hoped to set an example to fellow comrades by personally leading this venture. Another motive was to atone for the dishonour of the Catholic Church and the Society of Jesus, tarnished by the apostasy of Cristóvão Ferreira. Lastly, in the context of competition, to boast the Jesuit presence in the Japanese Mission to the rival Friars.<sup>29</sup>

25 Ibidem, p.275.

26 Ibidem, pp.275–281.

27 According to Amaral’s letter addressed to the Superior General dated April 29, 1642, the former had previously begged Rubino to refrain from making a journey to Japan via Manila. Amaral emphasised on Korea because of its proximity to Japan and missionaries had never crossed to Japan from the country. His plans for reopening the Japanese Mission via Korea consisted of the following three stages: establish *caza* and *residencia* in Korea; dispatch wise Christians to Japan to examine the prevalent situation; and dispatch several missionaries disguised as Chinese or Koreans to Japan. Amaral was convinced that favourable results would be achieved by following this plan, rather than that of Rubino. See ARSI, Jap. Sin. 161–II, f. 265v; Gonoï (Ed.; Transl.), *Petoro Kibe Kasui shiryōshū* ベトロ岐部カスイ資料集 (Compilation of documents relating to Petro Kasui Kibe). Ōita: Ōita-ken Kyōiku Inkaï, 1995, European Materials, no. 49; Penalva, *Mulheres em Macau: Donas Honradas, Mulheres Livres e Escravas, Séculos XVI e XVII*. Lisboa: Centro de História de Além-Mar, 2011, p.108, n. 601. Also, see for Rubino’s determination to travel to Japan in spite of strong opposition from Amaral and others in Macao, pp.105–109. Moreover, Giuseppe Chiara, who was arrested in Chikuzen Ōshima following his entry into Japan, owned up during interrogation that China-based missionaries tried to persuade him into proceeding to Japan via port “Ryānhō” near Korea. Similarly, the Chinese Christians arrested in Nagasaki in 1644 provided vital information in another instance revealing the Jesuits’ plot for penetration into Japan via Korea. See Kimura, “Nihon no kirisutokuyō kinsei niyoru fushinsen tensō yōsei to Chōsen no taishin-tainichi kankei”, pp.11–13, 17–18.

28 Shimizu, *Kinsei Nihon to Ruson*, pp.282–285.

29 In this letter, Rubino revealed information about the arrival of a Friar Archbishop at Goa and the Friars’ preparation for travelling to Japan, and further expressed his

Rubino's decision to reopen the Japanese Mission was at a time when circumstances were becoming bad to worse. It is worth reiterating that the Jesuit missionary system and networks in Japan had already faced extermination by the time Rubino organised two missionary groups. Local support had almost completely been destroyed to the effect that in 1638, the Jesuit Japanese Mission was barely sustained by only one European and three Japanese missionaries. What is even worse, information concerning their subsequent arrest, martyrdom, and apostasy was successively transmitted and consumed in Macao.<sup>30</sup> With this above handicap, Rubino was left with no choice but to go all out to change the circumstances or to abandon any future hopes for Japan. Presumably, this stimulated his ambition and motivated Rubino's decision to dispatch a total of nine Jesuit missionaries from Manila to Japan on two occasions for the reconstruction of the missionary scaffolding.

Rubino, under this threatening situation, devised a special plan in reply to his fear and expectation that some fruitful result be availed, by organising two missionary groups aimed at two different destinations. This was not only precautionary but also laden with contingency, assuring that in case one failed at least the other had some chances of survival.<sup>31</sup> The first group, which departed Manila on July 9, 1642, consisted of five missionaries, namely the Polish Alberto Mezchinski (1598–1643), the Spanish Diego de Morales (1604–1643), and the Luso-Japanese Francisco Marques (1611–1643), the two Italian Jesuits, Antonio Rubino himself and Antonio Capece (1606–1643); supported by four subordinates, the Korean Thomé, the Cochinchinese recruit, the Portuguese Pascoal Correa de Sousa and João de Chaves from the Canary Islands.<sup>32</sup> Upon landing on the Shimo Koshikijima Island which was within the territory of the Satsuma domain, Rubino and his members were captured and transported to Nagasaki for interrogation, following which between March 20–25, 1643, all members except one Cochinchinese, were martyred.<sup>33</sup> Although Rubino's intentions were noble, the venture resulted in complete failure from the start, besides the "glorious" martyrdom of its members.

concern about the loss of prestige for the Society of Jesus in Japan if the Friars had travelled to Japan one step ahead of the Jesuits. The Jesuits had taken the lead in the Japanese Mission in times of persecution for more than two decades; however, from 1639 onward, the Franciscans outnumbered the Jesuits. Shimizu, *Kinsei Nihon to Ruson*, pp.283–284. See also Gonoï, *Tokugawa shoki kirishitanshi kenkyū*, pp.190–191.

30 Shimizu, *Kinsei Nihon to Ruson*, pp.272–273.

31 *Ibidem*, p.286.

32 Tōkyō Daigaku Shiryō Hensan-jo (Ed.), *Nihon kankei kaigai shiryō: Oranda shōkanchō nikki, genbunhen* 日本関係海外史料オランダ商館長日記原文編 (Historical documents in foreign languages relating to Japan: Diaries kept by the heads of the Dutch factory in Japan [original texts]). vol. 6. Tōkyō: Tōkyō Daigaku Shiryō Hensan-jo, 1986, pp.106–108, n. 257–262.

33 *Ibidem*, vol. 7, 1989, p.32.

Subsequent to the first Rubino group, the second missionary group sailed to Japan from Manila in June 1643 under the leadership of an experienced Portuguese Jesuit, Pedro Marques, who had worked at Kuchinotsu of Shimabara Peninsula in the capacity of *Superior* from 1609 and had later succeeded in opening up new mission fields in Cambodia, Tonkin and Hainan.<sup>34</sup> Armed with the knowledge of Japanese language skills, in 1627, Pedro Marques was dispatched to Tonkin to care for the Japanese community there.<sup>35</sup> Actually, in his letter dated April 8, 1639 from Macao addressed to the headquarters in Rome, Marques stated that he had requested a transfer to Manila where he could avail an opportunity to proceed to Japan, emphasising his present engagement in Macao where he was fostering over 200 expelled Japanese.<sup>36</sup> From this experience with Japanese, it is clear that Marques was inclined to missionary activities in Japan and was in a more suitable position to establish the Japan Mission than his predecessor Rubino.

Pedro Marques's team comprised of four Jesuits, including two Italians Giuseppe Chiara (1602–1685) and Francesco Cassola (c. 1608–1644), the Spanish Alonso de Arroyo (1592–1644), the Japanese *Irmão* André Vieira (c. 1601–1678) who “went to Europe and was received by the Society [of the Jesus] and returned to this region with the glorious Martyr Father Sebastião Vieira”<sup>37</sup>; and five subordinates who included two Japanese, Júlio and Jacinto from Ōsaka and Kyōto respectively, a servant from Cochinchina, a Chinese from Guangdong, and the Chinese Lourenço Pinto from Nagasaki (Pinto's father, Miguel Pinto, was a Chinese interpreter and the mother a Luso-Japanese).<sup>38</sup> It is worth noting that Marques, in contrast to the Rubino group, was supported and accompanied by three native Japanese, including one Japanese *Irmão* side by side with other European missionaries. As shown in the latter part of this paper, these three native Japanese were assigned a special role for the preparation of new missionary activities.

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34 O'Neill; Domínguez (Eds.), op. cit., vol. 3, p.2512; Cardim (Auth.); Cordeiro (Ed.), op. cit., chap. 9, 32, 36.

35 Cardim (Auth.); Cordeiro (Ed.), op. cit., p.73.

36 ARSI, Jap. Sin. 35. f. 251r, 252v. According to research conducted by Gonoï, while Marques was stationed in Cambodia and Cochinchina he was already planning to re-enter Japan. Further, his letter of October 17, 1625 from Macao reveals that his plea to the Visitor Jerónimo Rodrigues, to sneak into Japan via Ryūkyū and Manila was rejected. See Gonoï, “Iezusukai senkyōshi to Ryūkyū”, p.58. See also ARSI, Jap. Sin. 35, f. 249r–249v.

37 “andò in Europa et ivi ricevuto nella Compagnia tornò in queste parti col glorioso Martire Padre Sebastiano Vieira”. ARSI, Jap. Sin. 29, f. 360v. Moreover, it is known that in 1628, André Vieira had joined the Society of Jesus in Portugal. See also ARSI, Jap. Sin. 29, f. 364r; BNP, Reservado, 4467//1V, no. 4.

38 Tōkyō Daigaku Shiryō Hensan-jo (Ed.), op. cit., vol. 7, 1989, pp.48–50, n. 169–178; Hesselink, op. cit., pp.90–91; Hesselink, *Prisoners from Nambu: Reality and Make-Believe in Seventeenth Century Japanese Diplomacy*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2002, pp.51–52.

Apart from the number of recruited missionaries, Rubino and Marques's expeditions were grand in terms of expenditure too. This is visible in a 1646 document by the Portuguese Jesuit António Francisco Cardim (c. 1596–1659), *Procurador* of the Japan Province dispatched from Macao to Rome, submitting the *Informatio* about the financial conditions and other matters relating to the Japan Province addressed to the Superior General Vincenzo Carafa (1585–1649).<sup>39</sup> According to this internal document, an extraordinary expenditure of 4,000 scudos in gold was allocated for each of the two voyages, which was double the value spent on both the Tonkin Mission and the other new mission fields of the Japan Province at that time.<sup>40</sup> Despite the favourable situation where Christendom in Tonkin was developing steadily, Rubino and Marques took up the challenge and strived to pave the path for reopening the missionary activity in the diminishing old pasture of the Japan Province.

### Structure of the *Relação da viagem do Padre Pedro Marquez*

The author of the Portuguese manuscript *Relação da viagem* is a Luso-Japanese Jesuit, Pedro Marques the junior (1612–1670), who in his later life went on to engage in the Cochinchina Mission of the Japan Province.<sup>41</sup> It is important to note that Padre Pedro Marques the junior, the central figure of this section, should not be confused with Pedro Marques the senior. Known for authoring the *Relação da viagem*, Pedro Marques incidentally was the younger brother of Francisco who had accompanied Rubino in the Mission and was martyred in Nagasaki in March of 1643. At

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39 Schütte, *Monumenta historica Japoniae. Textus catalogorum Japoniae. Aliaeque de personis domibusque S.J. in Japonia informationes et relationes, 1549–1654*. Romae: Apud Monumenta Historica Societatis Iesu, 1975, pp.1010–1033; Kisaki, “Junkyōroku to tomoni Yōroppa ni kikoku shita shūdōshi: Iezusukai kankudaihyō purokuradōru no katsudō「殉教録」とともにヨーロッパに帰国した修道士: イエズス会管区代表プロクラドルの活動” (Returned missionaries and “the records related to the martyrs”: Activities of Jesuit provincial procurators). *Rekishigaku kenkyū* 歴史学研究, 941 (2016), pp.26–29.

40 Schütte, *Monumenta historica Japoniae*, pp.1028–1029; Kisaki, “Jyunkyōroku to tomoni Yōroppa ni kikoku shita shūdōshi”, p. 28. In a similar context, Luso-Japanese Isabel Reigota's financial aid extended to Rubino and missionary activities in Asia. Teixeira, “The Church of St. Paul in Macau”. *Studia*, 41–42 (1979), pp.92–93; Penalva, “Women in Macao 1633–1644”, Luís Filipe Barreto (Ed.), *Macao during the Ming dynasty*. Lisboa: Centro Científico e Cultural de Macau, 2009, pp.199–202; Penalva, *Mulheres em Macau*, pp.105–107.

41 Pedro Marques the junior was born in Nagasaki in 1612 to a Portuguese Vicente Marques and Sabina Ogi, a descendant of the Ōtomo clan of Bungo. O'Neill; Domínguez (Eds.), op. cit., vol. 3, p. 2513; Penalva, “Women in Macao 1633–1644”, p. 203, n. 89; Penalva, *Mulheres em Macau*, p.108, n. 603.

the headquarters of the Japan Province in Macao on October 7, 1644, Marques the junior compiled this report as a subsequent report to the *Relação breve do glorioso martirio, que o Padre Antonio Rubino da Companhia de IESV, Vizitador da Provincia de Japão, e China, padeceo en Nangasaqui...* (“Short report of the glorious martyrdom that Father Antonio Rubino of the Society of Jesus, Visitor of the Province of Japan and China, suffered in Nagasaki...”).<sup>42</sup> Unlike the report of the martyrdom of Rubino, there are no sections in the part on the voyage of the Marques missionary group. The report holds significant value as a historical source as it is inclusive of a variety of documents written not only by missionaries but also by seculars. These include letters penned by a Jesuit missionary, a short maritime journal kept by a Spanish seaman, and a Dutch merchant’s report brought via the rare route, Batavia to Macao. The following tabular representation with reference to the analysis by Schütte classifying the structure adds light on the nature of the report.<sup>43</sup>

**Tab. 1.** Structure of the *Relação da viagem do Padre Pedro Marquez*.

No.	folio.	Description by the author and/or Letters quoted by the author.
1	f. 322r.	Preface by the author.
2	f. 322r–324r.	Letter written by Francesco Cassola addressed to the Vice-Provincial of the Japan Province, i.e., Gaspar do Amaral, from <i>Maribales terra</i> , <sup>44</sup> dated April 10, 1643.
3	f. 324r–326r.	Description based on the maritime journal kept by Francisco de Aguirre.
4	f. 326r–327r.	Letter written by Cassola handed to Aguirre.
5	f. 327r.	Supplementary description by the author.
6	f. 327r–328r.	Letter written by a Dutch brought to the Jesuit College of Macao via <i>Jacatará</i> , i.e., Batavia.
7	f. 328r–328v.	Annotation of the above letter and closing remarks by the author.

(Source: ARSI, *Jap. Sin.* 29)

42 *Relação breve do glorioso martirio, que o Padre Antonio Rubino da Companhia de IESV, Vizitador da Provincia de Japão, e China, padeceo en Nangasaqui Cidade do Reyno de Japão com mais coatro Padres da mesma Companhia, e coatro pessoas seculares em Março de 1642* [sic, 1643]. ARSI, *Jap. Sin.* 29, f. 296r–321v.

43 Schütte, *Introductio ad historiam Societatis Jesu in Japonia, 1549–1650*, pp.269–270, 372.

44 Presumably, this place, according to a personal suggestion received from Professor Nakasuna Akinori, is identified as Mariveles, located on the western side of Manila Bay, which is the southern end of the Bataan Peninsula.

Schütte, in his research, summarises the background to how documents No. 2, 3, 4, and 6 of the Table, were included in this report using the study of the second despatch of this report in the bundle of ARSI, Jap. Sin. 29 (f. 288r–294r).<sup>45</sup> On careful examination of the third dispatch, as well as referring to the text-to-text transcription included in the bundle of ARSI, Jap. Sin. 39-b (f. 53r–58r), the author notes that, besides Schütte’s study, the third despatch too is a valuable source that reconfirms the progression of the compilation of the above reports.<sup>46</sup>

Francisco de Aguirre, the creator of the short maritime journal (Table, No. 3), was a secular Spanish who accompanied the Marques missionary group from Manila to the Hirado region via Tsushima. According to the supplementary description by Pedro Marques the junior (Table, No. 5), Aguirre’s ship was wrecked and drifted ashore on Ningbo in Zhejiang Province of Ming China, encountering a heavy storm on its return voyage from Japan to Manila. Aguirre, one of the thirty-two survivors of this shipwreck, was rescued and received by the Portuguese Jesuit João Monteiro (1602–1648) working in the Zhejiang Province. The *1643 Annual Letter of the Southern Vice-Province of China* compiled by António de Gouveia also includes a passage reporting this shipwreck and the Marques missionary group sent out from the ship around the Hirado region.<sup>47</sup> Aguirre handed Monteiro his personal voyage diary as well as another letter entrusted by Francesco Cassola (Table, No. 4). The headquarters of the Japan Province grasped the details of the voyage of Marques and his company through these very documents delivered from the Zhejiang Province to Macao by Monteiro himself.

The letter, which was probably later translated from Dutch to Portuguese (Table, No. 6), is originally written by *certa pessoa digna de credito* (a certain trustworthy person).<sup>48</sup> At the end of the letter, Marques the junior writes, “*Athe aqui a carta do Olandes, e a noticia que tivemos destes Padres*”<sup>49</sup> clarifying that the quotation is from a Dutch source. To be more specific, this refers to the subsequent piece of valuable information regarding Marques’s arrest in Japan. Prior to this, in April 1644, in the Makassar vicinity,<sup>50</sup> the Portuguese Jesuit Francisco Rangel (1615–1660) had obtained information about the martyrdom of the Rubino group in Nagasaki and the arrival of a second group on Japanese shores, and sent it to the Jesuit General in Rome.<sup>51</sup>

45 Schütte, *Introductio ad historiam Societatis Jesu in Japonia, 1549–1650*, p. 372.

46 ARSI, Jap. Sin. 29, f. 322r–328v.

47 Gouveia (Auth.); Araújo (Ed.), *Cartas Ánuas da China (1636, 1643 a 1649)*, p.148; See also Nakasuna, “Iezusukaishi Furanchesuko Sanbiashi no tabi”, p.53, n. 87.

48 ARSI, Jap. Sin. 29, f. 327r.

49 ARSI, Jap. Sin. 29, f. 328r.

50 In 1643, en route to Macao from Goa, an English ship carrying Rangel and two other Jesuits was intercepted by the Dutch ships and the missionaries were taken as captives. ARSI, Jap. Sin. 123, f. 132v–133r. It is assumed that information on Japanese affairs sent by Rangel from Makassar was obtained after his arrest.

51 ARSI, Jap. Sin. 29, f. 364r–364v. See also Schütte, *Introductio ad historiam Societatis Jesu in Japonia, 1549–1650*, p.270; Akune, “Aratana Nihon jōhōgen to shite no



It was from the *carta do Olandes* via Batavia that the arrival of the Marques missionary group, their capture followed by transportation to Nagasaki became clearer to the Japan Province. Most parts of the content of this letter resemble the *Dagh-register* of the Dutch Factory in Nagasaki dated July 1 and July 4, 1643 kept by Pieter Anthoniszoon Overtwater (c. 1610–1682).<sup>52</sup> Presumably, the material that was delivered to the Jesuit College of Macao was based on the Dutch diary, or perhaps its draft version, or a relevant record. In the VOC's original diary, there is a passage stating that the missionary group departed with a total of sixty crewmen, and came to Japan with funds of 307-tael silver and 10-tael gold comprising of donations received from locals prior to their departure.<sup>53</sup> The author of this paper notes that while the Dutch original diary detailed the above information, its corresponding translated version into Portuguese, the *carta do Olandes*, omits these details.<sup>54</sup> This naturally raises further questions as to why the information was excluded, whether there was a specific motive behind omitting this information in the process of translating the text into Portuguese, or it did not exist at all in the Dutch letter from Batavia. In the annotation (Table, No. 7) included in the last part of the *Relação da viagem*, the author of this document rectifies the errors of the above letter and supports it with additional explanation related to the Marques group, foreseeing that this group would embrace the same destiny as Rubino.

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Orandajin: “Namban bōeki” danzetsu ikō ni okeru Iezusukai Nihon kanku no jōhō shūshū 新たな日本情報源としてのオランダ人: 「南蛮貿易」断絶以降におけるイエズス会日本管区の情報収集” (Dutch merchants as a “new information source on Japan”: Information gathering of the Japan Province of the Society of Jesus in the post-Portuguese Namban-trade era). *Yōgaku: Yōgaku shigakkai kenkyū nenpō* 洋学: 洋学史学会研究年報, 25 (2018), pp.26–27, n. 67. It is known that information from Batavia was included in the *Relação da viagem* in October 1644. However, it is unclear when this information was actually procured. Another important point to be noted whichever the case maybe, Rangel definitely was one step ahead in sending the information from Makassar directly to the Jesuit headquarters in Rome and also to the Lisbon branch in April 1644. Besides, information sent to Lisbon was published in 1645 after obtaining the necessary license and screening. See BNP, Reservado, 4467//1V, no. 4. As far as the contents of two letters are concerned, there is a visible gap in the selection and depth of information. Due to the limitation of this paper, the above findings open up a new debate and will be left out for further research to be published at a later date.

52 Tōkyō Daigaku Shiryō Hensan-jo (Ed.), op. cit., vol. 7, 1989, pp.48–50. Further, the VOC's original diary in Dutch dated August 21 and 22, 1642 reporting the arrest of the Rubino group had been obtained by the Austrian Jesuit Andre Xavier Koffler (1612–52) at Batavia on November 20, 1642. It was later translated into Portuguese by Bertholomeu de Sequeira. ARSI, Jap. Sin. 29, f. 257r–257v; Tōkyō Daigaku Shiryō Hensan-jo, op. cit., vol. 6, 1986, p.108, n. 263. See also Akune, “Aratana Nihon jōhōgen to shite no Orandajin”, pp.7–8, 24, n. 37.

53 Tōkyō Daigaku Shiryō Hensan-jo (Ed.), op. cit., vol. 7, 1989, p.49.

54 For other details such as differences seen on comparing the Dutch and the Portuguese versions, see Akune, “Aratana Nihon jōhōgen to shite no Orandajin”, pp.11–12.

## Voyage of Pedro Marques and His Companions

### Final Destination of the Marques Missionary Group

Schütte and Ruiz de Medina have simply pointed out that the Marques missionary group reached and disembarked at Hirado on June 22 via Tsushima before being captured at Chikuzen Ōshima.<sup>55</sup> Other varied elements of the voyage such as the final destination or ancillary facts still remain unclear. This section aims to reveal major details related to the voyage on the basis of the *Relação da viagem*, which also suggests that they undertook the venture to Japan with a clear vision.

Two months before his departure for Japan, Francesco Cassola sent a letter (Table, No. 2) to Gaspar do Amaral from Manila dated April 10, 1643, containing information received by him a while ago, from certain Chinese about the imprisonment of the Rubino group at Nagasaki following their arrest at Satsuma.<sup>56</sup> Next, Cassola went on to express “Nos com outro alvo, e prevençõis intentamos a jornada”, suggesting that his group were in possession of a new precautionary plan different from that of the previous Rubino group. Further, the letter carried an introduction of the members of the Mission headed by Marques such as four European Fathers, one Japanese Brother, André Vieira, and particularly focused on the participation of three subordinates, namely, two Japanese aged around 55, and one Chinese, Lourenço Pinto.<sup>57</sup> In Cassola’s opinion, one of the Japanese, Júlio Xirojemon (Shirōemon) from Ōsaka, was a quintessential exile, even before his adoption of the Christian faith he was ready to sacrifice himself and deep within he was already resolving to become a Christian. He had left behind his wife and son and proceeded for a challenging venture.<sup>58</sup> Cassola highlighted prospective potential in another Japanese, Jacinto hailing from Miyako<sup>59</sup> whose passion was noticeable through his actions, which corresponded with his words and desires, a quality befitting for the conversion of Japanese. Jacinto desired to enlighten people of high profile and nobility; since he possessed a sound knowledge of the *lingua alta* (language of the higher class) and had associations with the nobles.<sup>60</sup> As for

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55 Schütte, *Introductio ad historiam Societatis Jesu in Japonia, 1549–1650*, pp.269–270; Ruiz de Medina, op. cit., pp.256–257.

56 ARSI, Jap. Sin. 29, f. 322r–322v.

57 ARSI, Jap. Sin. 29, f. 322v–323r.

58 ARSI, Jap. Sin. 29, f. 322v–323r.

59 The text simply mentions another Japanese from Miyako. This individual must be “Matabe Jacinto dono”, which appears in a different passage of the *Relação da viagem*. ARSI, Jap. Sin. 29, f. 326v.

60 See also Penalva, “Women in Macao 1633–1644”, p.203, n. 89; Penalva, *Mulheres em Macau*, pp.108–109, n. 603. In the former English publication, Penalva in n. 89 mentions, “He speaks the high language and is acquainted with nobility” and maintains that “He” refers to the Luso-Japanese Jesuit Francisco Marques. The same is mentioned in Penalva’s Portuguese version in n. 603. The author of this paper (a) is in agreement with Penalva that, “He” above does not refer to Júlio Xirojemon,

the final subordinate, according to the text, one Lourenço Pinto, 28 years of age, from Nagasaki, son of a *jurubaça* (interpreter) named Miguel Pinto.<sup>61</sup> Lourenço had taught the language (presumably Japanese but not restricted to it) to Cassola's team and this being the reason why he was ultimately chosen as the *terceiro companheiro* (third companion). Moreover, as a novice, he had lived with them for over three years and had expressed his desire to join the Society of Jesus.<sup>62</sup>

Further, Cassola has revealed vital information through a description of the final destination of the missionary group:

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however, is in disagreement that "He" refers to Francisco Marques, since Marques had already left for Japan with Rubino and subsequently martyred at Nagasaki. This is clarified in section "Tri-decade Long Jesuit Struggle Post the "Great Expulsion Edict" of this paper. Furthermore, "He" here, the author would like to reiterate, refers to none other than Jacinto from Miyako. See n. 59 of this paper. Penalva's view is mostly based on examination of the bundle ARSI, Jap. Sin. 39-2 [*sic*, 39-b] comprising of two reports which probably was presumed to be one continuous document Jap. Sin. 39-2, f. 32r-58r as mentioned by Penalva. The author has (b) examined two bundles Jap. Sin. 39-b as well as Jap. Sin. 29. Moreover (c) would like to categorically put it on record that bundle Jap. Sin. 39-b comprises of, among others, two sets of documents, dealing with different individual contents, yet collated together in folios bearing continuous numbering; f. 32r-52v relates to Rubino group's martyrdom; f. 53r-58r describes the voyage of the Pedro Marques missionary group. This collation is misleading and could probably be the reason attributable to Penalva's confusion. The author (d) on careful examination of bundle Jap. Sin. 29 (f. 296r-321v; 322r-328v) notes, also has similar continuous numbering and in fact identical in content to bundle Jap. Sin. 39-b (f. 32r-52v; 53r-58r), believes that (e) probably is the original document prepared by Pedro Marques the junior, bearing his signature in the end thus lending the view that 39-b is a copy of the original bundle Jap. Sin. 29. See also section "Structure of the *Relação da viagem do Padre Pedro Marquez*" of this paper.

- 61 As additional information, the author of this paper notes that there is reference of one Miguel Pinto, who was involved with negotiations with Chinese, along with the famous Jesuit João Rodrigues Tçuzu (c. 1561-1633). This was in about 1625, when the clash between the local authority of Guangdong and the Senate of Portuguese Macao surfaced over the issue of building the city wall. The author would like to mention that at this point there is no definite evidence that this is one and the same person as father of Lourenço Pinto. See Penalva; Lourenço (Eds.), *Fontes para a História de Macau no Século XVII*. Lisboa: Centro Científico e Cultural de Macau, 2009, pp.223-224, 246-247.
- 62 See also Penalva, "Women in Macao 1633-1644", p.204, n. 93; Penalva, *Mulheres em Macau*, p.108, n. 607; Tōkyō Daigaku Shiryō Hensan-jo (Ed.), op. cit., vol. 7, 1989, p.48, n. 173.

With this company, we embark, heading for Tsugaru which is located almost at the very tip of Japan, remote from persecution, sparsely populated in comparison with other domains, and also the place of exiled Christian nobles.<sup>63</sup>

Immediately following the text quoted above, according to Cassola, heading for Tsugaru meant avoiding entry directly into the land of the *matadeiro* (slaughterhouse), which by no means was the intention of the missionary group.<sup>64</sup> A mission for fortunate Christians living in the Tsugaru area, he said, should prove fruitful and revealed another destination choice for the missionary group:

Over and above, in case we do not achieve the desired result, we can cross over to Ezo, the ancient country, and carry out some service to our Lord. We can also undertake a mission to Japan with the people of Ezo, accompanying them as merchants.<sup>65</sup>

From the above one can infer, Cassola and his group decided to camouflage with the help of the locals and continue with their underground activities in order to carry forward the Japan Mission. It is obvious that the Marques missionary group had fixed destinations in mind when they decided to sail from Manila to Japan. In addition, an important point to note is that Marques and his team prioritised the success of the missionary effort in the far north end of Japan over the martyrdom.

Eventually after their arrival in the northwest Kyushū region of the Japanese seas, as is clarified in the following section of this paper, the group was obliged to reroute to alternative destinations and decided to disembark around the Hirado region in order to move independently in a small boat, since the sailors from Manila were apprehensive about their safe passage through the strict inspection by local authorities of Tsushima. At the juncture of separating with the crewmen, Cassola handed a letter to the Spanish Francisco de Aguirre (Table, No. 4), wherein he stated that, “Neither the weather nor the fear of those aboard, nor the ship itself permitted us to execute the plans of departing Manila for the Island of Tsugaru.”<sup>66</sup> This record also reveals that the Marques team was navigating as per the original venture.

The series of events and the historical background that possibly led to devising such colossal plans can be summed up as follows. While persecution of Christians

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63 “Com esta Companhia nos embarcamos pera Tçungaru ultimo quazi remate de Japão, remoto da perseguição, pouco povoado em comparação dos mais Reynos, e lugar dos christãos fidalgos desterrados.” ARSI, Jap. Sin. 29, f. 323r.

64 ARSI, Jap. Sin. 29, f. 323r.

65 “alem de que se não tivermos o sucesso que dezeíamos, podemos passar ao Reyno de Yezu reino antigo, e fazendo nelle algum serviço a Nosso Senhor podemos com os de Yezu intentar missões a Japão acompanhando nos com elles como mercadores.” ARSI, Jap. Sin. 29, f. 323r.

66 “nem o tempo nem o medo dos do navio, nem o mesmo navio nos não deixarão executar os desenhos com que saimos de Manilla pera a Ilha de Tsungaro.” ARSI, Jap. Sin. 29, f. 326r.

was enforced in various major cities, the northern part of Japan still functioned as propagation fields for Jesuits who chose to continue their secret missionary activities by the end of 1630s. After the enforcement of nationwide prohibition laws by the Japanese authorities, according to the *1614 Annual Letter of the Japan Province*, the crackdown in Kyōto resulted in even more enforcement of stringent orders to immediately capture all Christians who tried to maintain their faith and be deported to the ultimate eastern confine of Japan, i.e., Tsugaru. Finally, a total of 71 Christians, 47 from Kyōto and 24 from Ōsaka that included well-known feudal military aristocrats were exiled.<sup>67</sup> In the same year, high-profile Christians from Kanazawa too were expelled to Tsugaru.<sup>68</sup> Diogo Carvalho, who six years later had set out with the sole purpose of their salvation, referred to them as the “exiled saints of Tsugaru, our joy, crowning glory, and the honour of Christianity in Japan as well as of the Society.”<sup>69</sup>

In the case of the Ezo region, repressive policies against Christianity were exercised slightly later and less severely than those on mainland Japan, which helped Diogo Carvalho to visit Christians and propagate the faith to mine workers in 1620.<sup>70</sup> Furthermore, in a report by Carvalho, written in the same year, there is also mention of an oceanic route, Nagasaki-Sado-Matsumae.<sup>71</sup> Motivated by three prime intentions such as spreading the faith among Ezo people, spiritual salvation of Japanese in Ezo followed by interests in geographical exploration, Girolamo de Angelis, two years before and after 1620, also chose to visit the land as part of his itinerant missionary tour to the north-eastern region of Japan.<sup>72</sup> Angelis contributed not only to the Jesuit effort in the Ezo region, but also to the world of cartography, especially in the early years of European interest in the geographical inquiry of far north Japan.

The Ezo area, as mentioned at the beginning of the paper, originally featured among one of the selections to create a new missionary base for the Jesuit Japan Province at the time when the Tokugawa government had deported Catholic missionaries. Perhaps, Cassola’s hopes for reopening the Japanese Mission around the northern edge of Japan rested on the basis of this above historical background. However, even after more than fifteen years post the Angelis-Carvalho’s endeavours, the Christian communities in the northern region of Japan suffered and persecution never ceased to diminish after the anti-Christian policies of the

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67 Hamaguchi (Transl.), “1614 nen Iezusukai nenpō 1614年イエズス会年報” (Jesuit annual letter of 1614). *Jyunshin joshi tanki daigaku kiyō* 純真女子短期大学紀要, 3 (1957), pp.22–23. See also Gonoï, *Tokugawa shoki kirishitanshi kenkyū*, p.126.

68 Hamaguchi (Transl.), “1614 nen Iezusukai nenpō”, p.39.

69 “santos desterrados de Tçugaru, alegria e coroa nossa, honra da christandade de Japão, e honra também da Comphania”. Cieslik (Ed.); Okamoto (Transl.), *Hoppō tankenki*, Part III, p.20.

70 Ibidem, Part I, pp.33–37; Part II, pp.61–83.

71 Ibidem, Part II, p.72.

72 Ibidem, Part I, pp.7–11, 24–33, 37–40; Part II, pp.49–58, 88–100.

Tokugawa regime. To be specific, 73 Tsugaru Christians were executed in 1638 followed by another 106 facing martyrdom in Matsumae in 1639.<sup>73</sup> Under these changing circumstances in Japan especially at the time of the fading Namban-trade nexus, it is yet unclear whether such kind of detrimental events and news involving persecution actually reached Macao or Manila and if it did, then how and to what extent was it consumed. Presumably, Cassola still cherished spiritual value and expectations from the northern region even though Christian communities there had actually almost disappeared. Moreover, information concerning the arrest of the Rubino missionary group was delivered to Manila via Chinese merchants prior to the departure of the Marques missionary group to Japan.<sup>74</sup> Knowing this unfortunate end result of the first group, Marques and his fellows may have thought of an alternative, realistic and realisable plan.

In a letter to Gaspar do Amaral, Cassola revealed that he undoubtedly was aware of possible hardships, yet the preparations required for the venture were not less adequate. Specifically, the Governor of Manila made available (a) Spaniards, royal pilots, sailors and reserves in the form of men and materials; (b) while maintaining tight secrecy under the name of the King, the Governor himself took on a supervisory role in buying and repairing of the ship; and (c) gave special instructions to the pilot as he did with “St. Marcelo,” i.e., Marcello Francesco Mastrilli and the Visitor Antonio Rubino.<sup>75</sup>

### Tracing the Voyage from Manila to Japan

The voyage from Manila to Japan in June 1643 under the full-fledged support of the Governor of Manila such as men and materials was the last project in the so-called “Christian Century” carried out under the leadership of Pedro Marques.

The diary kept by Francisco de Aguirre (Table, No. 3) reveals the process of the final voyage.<sup>76</sup> On June 8, the Marques missionary group departed Manila for Japan. Smooth sailing enabled the vessel to reach the Japanese waters. On June 17, the Marques group sighted land, recognised it as Nagasaki port, and saluted the martyrs who shed their blood. At this juncture, Cassola disguised himself as a Japanese by shaving his head and adopted the alias of *Sayto Sacoyemon* (Saitō Sakuemon). Until this time, the group felt blessed by the Lord, Virgin Mary, St. Xavier and Marcello with favourable conditions. However, as the Marques group directed their vessel for Hirado, conditions worsened and they encountered a storm at night. On June 18, from the break of the dawn until noon, there were no

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73 Ruiz de Medina, op. cit., pp.741, 744; Urakawa, *Tōhoku kirishitanshi* 東北キリシタン史 (History of Christianity in the Tōhoku Region of Japan). Tōkyō: Nihon Gakujutsu Shinkōkai, 1957, pp. 407–408.

74 ARSI, Jap. Sin. 29, f. 322r–322v.

75 ARSI, Jap. Sin. 29, f. 323r–323v. See also Penalva, “Women in Macao 1633–1644”, pp.201–202; Penalva, *Mulheres em Macau*, p.107.

76 ARSI, Jap. Sin. 29, f. 324r–326r.

signs of land. When they sighted land again, from the natural environment, they were certain that they had discovered Japan. The ship sought refuge by entering an inlet and noticed some people waving a white cloth at them; however, the Marques group was reluctant to trust them. The ship proceeded and anchored in a wider and deeper bay. The storm showed no signs of improvement. The crew serving the ship (not to be mistaken as missionaries) was fatigued and decided to call at port late in the evening. Three of the missionaries disguised themselves as Spanish. Pedro Marques disguised himself as a secular Spanish with the title of *Piloto Major* while Alonso de Arroyo adopted the title, *Contramestre* and Giuseppe Chiara the title, *Senhor Alferes* respectively following suit. Francesco Cassola had already disguised himself as a Japanese.

Between June 19 and 20, the crew was dispatched on a small boat to investigate the exact arrival location. They made contact with a female inhabitant of the land twice and learnt that the arrival location was *Tcuxima* (Tsushima). The woman mentioned that the *Tono* of Tsushima had recently arrived from *Meaco* (Miyako), and was at a distance of two walking days. At the time of separation, she served the crew wheat porridge in return for some sweets.

The Marques missionary group decided to stop at the port to obtain water supply. Meanwhile, two Japanese boats approached Marques's ship. Seven persons were on board one of the boats, and the leader was in possession of two Japanese swords. Japanese officials of Tsushima started an inspection of Marques's vessel. When questioned by an official, Marques replied, "We departed Cambodia, navigated the China Sea, and drifted ashore into an unknown area as a result of the storm." After disclosing that the location was the *Ilha de Tcuxima* (Island of Tsushima), the Japanese official advised Marques to enter deep into an inlet with his vessel. Marques rejected this advice, replying to the Japanese official that, "The storm cleared out. We do not want to lose our course." The Japanese official said to Marques that, "We have orders to escort you into our port and we will protect you there." Two Japanese boats prepared to tow the ship into the port and attempted to force Marques in their boat. The Japanese officials intended to transport Marques and the other members to the *caza do Tono* (residence of the local lord). Marques refused to comply with their orders, and one of them expressed repugnance. Moreover, Marques was further questioned by another Japanese official, "Are there any Christians onboard? Is the native land of the crew a Christian nation?" Marques replied in positive, "apart from some Chinese *gentios* serving on our ship." While Japanese officials tried to tow Marques's ship, the crewmen hastily prepared for departure, by lifting the anchor, raising the sail, and openly arming themselves with weapons. This startled Japanese officials who unexpectedly returned to land. In this process, many boats sought to chase the missionary group to give them a warning.

The Missionary group was lucky in escaping the critical situation the previous night, and left Tsushima waters on June 21, a day that coincided with the auspicious Day of Luigi Gonzaga. At a mass conducted by Cassola aboard the ship, the crew confessed their sins and received communion. That afternoon, a Chinese

crewmember whose long-cherished hope to be baptised was finally fulfilled and he was christened, Luís Marcello. Eventually, on June 22, the missionary group reached a location in front of Hirado, presuming that it was situated at the latitude of 33 degrees. The Marques group hoped to proceed to a place that was over 10 *legoas* from Hirado. However, the crew's fear of being detected by the Japanese authorities ruled out this plan from being put into action, and they began to disembark.

In previous studies, owing to inadequate descriptions, both in the Japanese as well as Dutch sources, the circumstances of the voyage of the Marques missionary group before their arrest on June 27, 1643 (on the 12th day of the 5th month, the 20th year of *Kan'ei*) at Chikuzen Ōshima was unclear. However, from the short maritime journal kept by Francisco de Aguirre, the following new historical facts can be obtained. Marques and his fellows intended to continue their voyage, concealing their identities as Catholic missionaries. From June 18 to 20, the missionary group stayed around Tsushima, which served as the nexus of the *Bakufu* for its diplomatic relations with Korea. Even after inspection, the missionary group shortly continued the voyage without following the advice and warnings given by the officials of Tsushima. Probably, rather than achieving "glorious" martyrdom, Marques's top priority was commencing a new mission in a region distant from Nagasaki.

Finally, on parting ways, the plan of action of the missionary group after disembarkation is visible through a letter by Francesco Cassola handed to Francisco de Aguirre (Table, No. 4). According to the first part of the record, Cassola stated that the missionary group's intention was to land farthest from Nagasaki, since the weather and the anxiety of the crew of the parent vessel disrupted the execution of the original plan of reaching the *Ilha de Tsungaro* (Island of Tsugaru).<sup>77</sup>

The sudden backup plan devised to proceed with their underground activities was crystallised under the group's direct encounter with unexpected mishaps such as those mentioned above. Cassola's letter also mentioned the preparative activities of the missionary group after reaching an alternative destination as follows.<sup>78</sup> First, on touching land, the missionary group should disembark from the ship at nightfall. Second, while the European Jesuits hide in the mountains, one secular Japanese and one Japanese *Irmão* should engage in procuring a boat. Third, on boarding the boat, the missionary group should head for an uninhabited island along the *contracosta de Meaco* (opposite coast of Miyako).<sup>79</sup> Fourth, two Japanese

77 ARSI, Jap. Sin. 29, f. 326r. See also n. 66 of this paper.

78 ARSI, Jap. Sin. 29, f. 326r.

79 It should be noted that "the opposite coast of Miyako" could refer to either the Sea of Japan or the Seto Inland Sea. However, no further detailed information of this specification has been clarified by Cassola. By the way, as an earlier example of missionary travel following the route via the Sea of Japan is known to have been undertaken in 1626 and attributed to the Franciscan priest Diego de San Francisco's long-distance



members of the group, originally hailing from the Miyako region having influential relatives, should be dispatched to find Christians ready to provide shelter to the missionaries. These Japanese recruits were familiar with Christians. Judging from these instructions, it is safe to infer that the three Japanese men were selected as assisting members in the Marques missionary group with the larger aim of being used as a cover for Europeans due to their self-explanatory Japanese origins, easily identifiable physical appearance and last but not the least, their affinity with the nobles. Addition of such members to the team, it can be said, was considered to prove advantageous in laying down the plan of action for smooth preparation of reopening the Japanese Mission.

Undoubtedly, there also existed a looming threat of capture if the above plan did not materialise. The latter part of Cassola's letter focuses on two aspects: make efforts in unifying the ideas of team members and follow the proposed plan of action of the Japanese members as well as European missionaries in the event of discovery.<sup>80</sup> In this context, it was decided they disclose that they were fellow members who were advised by St. Marcello<sup>81</sup> to propagate their faith in Japan. By the same token, after departing Europe, they had landed upon the *Ilha de Baràs* (Island of Baràs) where they first met their prospective Japanese recruits, among others. Still further, Cassola said that non-followers as well as Christians coexisted on this island in the Manila region that belonged to Francisco Saplat, the *Mestre do Campo*.

What's more, upon discovery of reality during the negotiations with local Japanese for procuring the boat, Japanese assistants of the team should expose their identity as followers of Christianity and reconsider their discovery as an opportunity for propagation. As for Europeans on being questioned when discovered, they too should not give up and spread the message of the faith instead.<sup>82</sup> According to the manuscript, the members had also assumed aliases by adopting Japanese names such as; *Kimpo* (Kimpō, Pedro Marques who had a shorn head like a Buddhist monk), *Chobe* (Chōbei, Alonso de Arroyo), *Zuiubioi* (Jūbei, Giuseppe Chiara), *Jerube* (Jirōbei, André Vieira), *Matabe Jacinto dono* (a Japanese from Miyako), *Xirobe Julio dono* (Shirōbei, a Japanese from Ōsaka), *Ginqichy* (Ginkichi, Lourenço Pinto), *Yosacu Donato* (Yosaku, a man from Cochinchina), *Quipachy*

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navigation from Nanatsugama in Hizen to Sakata in Mogami. Urakawa, *Tōhoku kirishitanshi*, pp.460–462.

80 ARSI, Jap. Sin. 29, f. 326v.

81 In this context, it is presumably Marcello Francesco Mastrilli. Jesuit missionaries such as Cassola and Chiara who travelled to the Far East accompanying Mastrilli from Europe are featured in the elaborated list compiled here. See Wicki, "Liste der Jesuiten-Indienfahrer 1541–1758". *Aufsätze zur Portugiesischen Kulturgeschichte*, 7 (1967), p.295.

82 ARSI, Jap. Sin. 29, f. 326v.

(Kihachi, Pinto, a Chinese from Macao), and *Sacuyemon* (Sakuemon, Francesco Cassola).<sup>83</sup>

As pointed out in the previous section of this text, Cassola's final letter entrusted to Aguirre was relayed to the Jesuit João Monteiro working in the Zhejiang Province of Ming China and reached the Jesuit College of Macao.

### **News from Batavia: Arrest of the Marques Missionary Group at the Chikuzen Ōshima Island**

Post the collapse of the Portuguese Namban-trade era, the Dutch, or the Japanese living in Southeast Asia became the main source of information for the Jesuits regarding Japanese affairs and this included the scenario about the tail end of the oceanic journey of the Marques missionary group. The details revolving around the arrest of the Marques group will be omitted here for the purpose of brevity.<sup>84</sup> According to a letter transmitted to Macao via Batavia (Table, No. 6), "our factory in Hirado" (*nossa Feitoria de Firando*)<sup>85</sup> obtained information on July 1, 1643 concerning the arrest of the Marques group.<sup>86</sup> A diary entry of that day reports that 10 Christians including 5 Jesuits arrived at *Vxima* (Chikuzen Ōshima) in northern Kyūsyū. The following entry dated July 4 reports that the Marques missionary group was transferred to Nagasaki in chains, along with details about the voyage of the missionary group, and name, age, and native place of the members.<sup>87</sup> This information obtained from a Dutch explains that the missionary group finally reached Chikuzen Ōshima after visiting a couple of islands by a small boat following their first sighting Japanese land. The missionaries offered a local islander a few silver bars in order to retrieve veritable information. The interaction with him revealed that the arrival location was *Facata* (Hakata). The missionaries rowed from Chikuzen Ōshima heading towards Shimonoseki when they were intercepted and arrested by the guardians of Chikuzen Ōshima.<sup>88</sup> According to information received by the Dutch, it is said that the group hoped to travel to Miyako or Edo. Furthermore, among these diary entries, there is not even a hint of the Jesuits' plan of opening a mission in the Tsugaru region or the Ezo area nor any mention about the Jesuits' contact with Japanese at Tsushima.

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83 ARSI, Jap. Sin. 29, f. 326v; See also Tōkyō Daigaku Shiryō Hensan-jo (Ed.), op. cit., vol. 7, 1989, p.49, n. 175–178.

84 Hesselink has given a detailed picture of this using Japanese sources. Hesselink, op. cit., pp.87–88; Hesselink, *Prisoners from Nambu*, pp.49–50.

85 This is a pure misinterpretation. The Dutch East India Company's Factory in Japan had already been transferred to Nagasaki from Hirado in 1641.

86 ARSI, Jap. Sin. 29, f. 327r.

87 ARSI, Jap. Sin. 29, f. 327r-327v.

88 ARSI, Jap. Sin. 29, f. 327v–328r.

## Information Gathering of the Jesuit Japan Province: End Result of the Marques Missionary Group

### Across the Ocean: Martyrdom or Apostasy?

Antonio Rubino's martyrdom in 1643 at Nagasaki gave birth to a new leadership. Previously holding office of the Visitor and Superior of Maluku from 1620 to 1624, Rector of Malacca until 1635, followed by Provincial of Cochin from 1637 to 1641, Manuel de Azevedo (1581–1650) was appointed as the new Visitor of the Japan Province.<sup>89</sup> The latest news on Japanese affairs reached Manuel de Azevedo in Goa. On December 25, 1644, shortly before his departure to Macao, Azevedo had sent information of the martyrdom of Rubino and the arrest of Marques to António Francisco Cardim, who was then engaged in the historiographical work in Rome and Lisbon. The information stressed that the Marques group, after reaching Japan, was transported to Nagasaki and investigated. This information, however, claimed that they never faced any torture.<sup>90</sup> Contrarily, according to a 1643 Dutch diary dated July 27, one of the captives was subjected to water torture after being transported to Nagasaki.<sup>91</sup>

At this time, five years had passed since the unavailability of the Jesuits' conventional communication channels as well as the collapse of the trade links between Macao and Nagasaki since 1639. Under these circumstances, the Jesuits craved new informants such as the Dutch and the Chinese who traversed Asian waters as well as the overseas Japanese.<sup>92</sup>

Even by the end of 1645, it was still unclear to the Jesuits in Macao whether Pedro Marques and the other missionaries were forced to abandon their Catholic faith under torture or died as martyrs. There is a specific chapter dedicated to the issue of the Marques missionary group in the *1644 Annual Letter of the Japan Province* compiled in November 1645.<sup>93</sup> It introduces several types of speculations

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89 Jacobs (Ed.), *The Jesuit Makasar Documents (1615–1682)*. Rome: Jesuit Historical Institute, 1988, pp.14\*–15\*.

90 ARSI, Jap. Sin. 29, f. 360v.

91 Tōkyō Daigaku Shiryō Hensan-jo (Ed.), op. cit., vol. 7, 1989, p.52; Hesselink, op. cit., p.91; Hesselink, *Prisoners from Nambu*, pp.52–53.

92 Success of the Dutch East India Company's conclusion of a commercial relationship with Tonkin in 1637 facilitated the newly incorporated trading base into the shipping route between Hirado (Nagasaki since 1641) and Batavia. Further it can be also said that this laid the foundation for the interactions between the Jesuits and the Dutch. From among these Dutch sources, in 1642, Girolamo Maiorica (c. 1590–1656) obtained latest information related to the martyrdom of Giovanni Battista Porro (1576–1638/1639) and Mancio Konishi (1600–c. 1644). BA, JA, 49-V-3, f. 163r. See also Akune, "Aratana Nihon jōhōgen to shite no Orandajin", pp.4–5.

93 For a deeper investigation on issues relating to this, see Akune, "Aratana Nihon jōhōgen to shite no Orandajin", pp.12–13. The practice of compiling the annual letters was resumed in about twenty years at the behest of Gaspar do Amaral, Rector

about the Marques missionary group. For instance, first, according to the Dutch arriving in Tonkin in 1645, the captive missionaries in Edo finally succumbed to the *seitas de Japão*, or Japanese religious sects.<sup>94</sup> Second, the French Jesuit Alexandre de Rhodes (c. 1591–1660), during his activities in Cochinchina, obtained information on the Marques missionary group through a Japanese residing there. According to this information, Marques and Arroyo were executed; Cassola and Chiara died in prison, and the details about the Japanese Jesuit André Vieira were partially unknown.<sup>95</sup>

### Tail End of the “Christian Century”

The Portuguese Jesuit João Cabral (1599–1669), who visited Tonkin in 1647 in place of the Visitor Manuel de Azevedo, received the latest news about Marques and his fellows.<sup>96</sup> After eliciting information on the current situation in Japan from the Dutch, Chinese from Nagasaki, and the Japanese Paulo Rodriguez (also known by his Japanese name of Wada Rizaemon) (?–1667),<sup>97</sup> Cabral reported the following to

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of the Jesuit College of Macao and Vice-Provincial of the Japan Province. See ARSI, Jap. Sin. 64, f. 217r. The structure of the annual letters written in the mid-seventeenth century directly reflects the Jesuit multi-directional activities in this period. The headquarters of the Japan Province in Macao compiled a carefully formatted report by tailoring select content that useful information from the separate letters delivered to Macao from each mission field in Southeast Asia.

- 94 ARSI, Jap. Sin. 64, f. 226r–226a. The original source of the information about the apostasy of missionaries received at Tonkin via Dutch may have been based on the written and spoken testimony of the Dutch merchant Wilhem Bijlvelt, who was taken to Edo from Yamada for interrogation as a result of the so-called Breskens affair in June 1643. In Edo, Bijlvelt actually met the members of the Marques missionary group transferred from Nagasaki. Bijlvelt, fluent in Spanish, kept a minute record of the apostasy of the missionaries as well as their replies in the interrogation conducted by Japanese authorities. See Hesselink, op. cit., chap. 3, 4; Hesselink, *Prisoners from Nambu*, chap. 3, 4.
- 95 ARSI, Jap. Sin. 64, f. 227r–227v.
- 96 For a more detailed account, see Akune, “Aratana Nihon jōhōgen to shite no Orandajin”, pp.13–17.
- 97 In Tonkin, Wada served as *feitor* of the Dutch and kept up correspondences with his homeland acquaintances through them. ARSI, Jap. Sin. 80, f. 67r. See also Ribeiro, “The Japanese Diaspora in the Seventeenth century: According to Jesuit sources”. *Bulletin of Portuguese Japanese Studies*, 3 (2001), p.69. For Wada’s trading activities throughout Southeast Asia, see Iwao, *Zoku Nan’yō Nihonmachi no kenkyū: Nan’yō tōsho chiiki bunsan Nihonjin imin no seikatsu to katsudō* 続・南洋日本町の研究: 南洋島嶼地域分散日本人移民の生活と活動 (The Japanese immigrants in Island Southeast Asia under the Dutch in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries). Tōkyō: Iwanami Shoten, 1987, pp.99, 272 and Nagazumi “17 seiki chūki no Nihon Tonkin bōeki ni tsuite 17 世紀中期の日本トンキン貿易について” (“The Tonkinese-Japanese trade in the mid-seventeenth century”). *Jōsai daigaku daigakuin*

the Portuguese assistant of the Superior General.<sup>98</sup> Out of the five Jesuits, three died in prison following torture using a bamboo saw. Cabral, in this context, mentioned that the Dutch had witnessed the missionaries facing torture, and the *Jurubaça arrenegado* (renegade interpreter) confirmed their apostasy.<sup>99</sup> Two survivors were transferred to the *caza de hum Chicodono, que avia sido Christão* meaning the residence of a certain *Chicodono*, a former Christian who is none other than Inoue Chikugo-no-kami Masashige (1585–1661).<sup>100</sup> Since both survivors were reluctant to abandon their faith, as a punitive measure they were subsequently confined to the *caza das molheres publicas* (house of harlots). Also, the Italian Jesuit Giovanni Filippo de Marini (1608–1682), who had landed in Tonkin almost concurrently with Cabral, received more detailed information through the Dutch.<sup>101</sup> According to this Dutch source, Alonso de Arroyo, Giuseppe Chiara, and André Vieira died after being tortured. Pedro Marques and Francesco Cassola were still alive and

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*kenkyū nenpō* 城西大学大学院研究年報, 8 (1992), pp.36–41. In the *Annual Letter of the Tonkin Mission of 1654*, Wada appears as Paulo de Vada and was estimated as the great benefactor of the Christendom. BA, JA 49-IV-61, f. 265v. Between 1653 and 1655, he was informed of the death and “martyrdom” of Cristóvão Ferreira through Chinese merchants who came from Nagasaki. See ARSI, Jap. Sin. 64, f. 304v-308r; Schütte, “Ist Christovao Ferreira als martyr gestorben?: nach dem bericht eines japanischen „Mandarinen“ in Tongking”, Gustav Voss; Hubert Cieslik (Ed.), *Kirishito-ki und Sayō-yoroku: Japanische dokumente zur missionsgeschichte des 17. Jahrhunderts*. Tōkyō, Sophia University, 1940, pp.202–208; Ribeiro, “The Japanese Diaspora in the Seventeenth century”, p.70; Kasaki; Akune, “Nihon eno shisen to kibō: “Kirishitan no seiki” shūengo no lezusukai nenji hōkoku to G. F. marini no “fukyōki” wo yomitoku 日本への視線と希望: 「キリシタンの世紀」終焉後のイエズス会年次報告とG・F・マリーニの『布教記』を読み解く” (“Speranza” and the focused attention towards Japan post “Christian Century”: Analysing Jesuit annual reports (1650–60) and G. F. de Marini’s *Delle Missioni* (1663)). *Kirishitan bunka kenkyūkai kaihō* キリシタン文化研究会会報, 151 (2018), pp.14–15.

- 98 ARSI, Jap. Sin. 80, f. 67r-67v. See also Voss; Cieslik (Ed.), *Kirishito-ki und Sayō-yoroku*, pp.24–26.
- 99 While Cardim did not fail to quote Cabral’s letter in his 1650 compilation *Batalhas da Companhia de Jesus na sua gloriosa Província do Japão*, however, he chose to omit these details perhaps to rescue the Jesuit Japan Province from perceptions such as discredit, disgrace and devaluation. Cardim (Auth.); Cordeiro (Ed.), op. cit., pp.62–63.
- 100 The famous “inquisitor” responsible for containing the Christian population and for foreign relations in general. He usually appears as his title *Sickingodonne* (Chikugo dono) in the VOC diaries. Some VOC sources indicate that Inoue was Christian until the age of around forty. Murakami (Transl.), *Nagasaki Oranda shōkan nikki* 長崎オランダ商館日記. vol. 3. Tōkyō: Iwanami Shoten, 1958, p.279. Much of my understanding of VOC sources has been supplemented by Matsuura Kōsuke. For the latest research regarding Inoue Masashige, see Shimizu, “Shūmon aratame yaku no seiritsu to henshen”, pp.235–250.
- 101 ARSI, Jap. Sin. 80, f. 67v–68r. See also Voss; Cieslik (Ed.), *Kirishito-ki und Sayō-yoroku*, p.25.

confined to the residence of Inoue Masashige, where two Japanese women served Marques and Cassola. The intention of the Tokugawa shogunate was to lure Marques and Cassola to marry the Japanese women. This led to belief that the two had renounced their faith.<sup>102</sup>

This well-known apostasy case can also be confirmed in the diaries of the Dutch East India Company, however, the details mentioned therein differ from those in Marini's letter. In January 1645, the head official of the Dutch factory recorded the matrimonial alliance of two survivors including Marques as well as the death of Arroyo and Cassola in his diary.<sup>103</sup> Conversely, Marini reported the death of Arroyo, Vieira, and Chiara.<sup>104</sup> As is widely known, after renouncing the Catholic faith under torture, Chiara married and was given the Japanese name, Okamoto San'emon and survived until 1685. Vieira too adopted the alias of *Nampo* after his apostasy and survived until 1678. As for Marques, he too survived the adversities and spent his final years in captivity at the *Kirishitan Yashiki*.<sup>105</sup>

Nevertheless, returning to the discussion on apostasy and the Marques missionary group, focusing on the triple route information gathering of Manuel de Azevedo gives us a more vivid understanding. In Azevedo's letter dated November 20, 1647 addressed to the Superior General, we find that he had not only obtained information via Cochinchina, but also from a Dutch source on the Marques missionary group imprisoned in Edo at the time.<sup>106</sup> This Dutch source clearly reported the apostasy of Marques and Chiara. The third was the direct route from Nagasaki

102 Cardim's omission concerning the apostasy of the two survivors is also visible in his quotation of Marini's letter. See Cardim (Auth.); Cordeiro (Ed.), op. cit., p.65.

103 Tōkyō Daigaku Shiryō Hensan-jo (Ed.), op. cit., vol. 9, 1999, p.15.

104 For further reference on the circumstances of Chiara's so-called death news, see Schütte, *Introductio ad historiam Societatis Jesu in Japonia, 1549-1650*, pp.373-374. Information regarding Chiara obtained by the Jesuits in Tonkin can be linked to a subsequent painting in oil, depicting the glorification of Chiara's "martyrdom" which today exists in his hometown of Sicily. This pictorial representation bearing textual information in Latin appended within the canvas provides significant evidential value and tenacity to understanding the reactionary expression of the "hopeful" circumstantial information of Chiara's fate obtained from the Far East. I am grateful to Father Gaetano Compri, the Director of Cimatti Museum of Chōfu City in Tōkyō for his kindness and generosity in sharing with me his personal copy of the said portrait and facilitating an engaging discussion on Chiara and his comrades, which deepened my understanding of this incident.

105 Tōkyō Daigaku Shiryō Hensan-jo (Ed.), op. cit., vol. 7, 1989, pp.48-49, n. 169, 172, 174; Ruiz de Medina, op. cit., pp.760, 781-783, 844-845. For Japanese sources regarding the apostasy case of the Marques group, see Shimizu, *Kinsei Nihon to Ruson*, pp.289-290; Hayashi (Ed.), *Tsūkō ichiran* 通航一覽 (Compilation of documents relating to the Tokugawa Bakufu's maritime relations). vol. 5. Tōkyō: Kokusho Kankōkai, 1913, pp.96-99.

106 ARSI, Jap. Sin. 161-II, f. 337r; Schütte, *Introductio ad historiam Societatis Jesu in Japonia, 1549-1650*, pp.275, 373.

to Macao. Azevedo's letter unfolds the situation in Macao after the two Portuguese galleons (carrying the royal embassy, Gonçalo de Siqueira de Souza as its captain) had called at the port of Macao on their return voyage to Lisbon from Nagasaki. These galleons were responsible in breaking the news of unsuccessful negotiation, which resulted in failure of the restoration of Japanese-Portuguese relations. In the context of the history of Christianity in Japan, it can be said that the galleons were instruments that delivered the dejection and decline of the reopening of the Jesuit Japanese Mission under the persistent absolute anti-Christian policy of the *Bakufu*.

Information about the apostasy of the above two missionaries dispersed, not just around the city of Macao, but also inside the galleons at this time because the renegade interpreters in Nagasaki<sup>107</sup> had acknowledged the accuracy of reports when they visited the Portuguese embassy, which had set up office in a vessel anchored in the Nagasaki Bay. Azevedo was careful and took time to reevaluate various information sources, especially because they came from the Dutch, gentiles and renegade Christians, and he openly shared his suspicions with those interested. Regardless of those suspicions, he was obliged to communicate the news of the apostasy of Marques and Chiara to the headquarters in Rome, based on the official decree that was issued by the *Emperador de Jappão* and given to the Portuguese embassy.<sup>108</sup> The second article of the decree does not mention particular individuals, however, Azevedo identified the person/s to be Marques and Chiara. In his letter, Azevedo further asserts that the decree received from the Tokugawa shogunate will reach the Viceroy, and be read by the *Conselho do Estado* of India and Portugal, where this incident would lend discredit to the Society and

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107 It is certain that these were António Carvalho, Belchior de Azevedo, and Mathias Rodrigues. See BA, JA 49-V-13, f. 577v. As for Carvalho, he is identified as Nishi Kichibyōe. They acted as liaison agent between the Japanese authorities and the Portuguese royal embassy in 1647. The research below provides a fresh perspective on the Portuguese-Japanese interpreters employing sources in Japanese, Portuguese and Dutch languages. Matsuura, ““Nanban tsūji” shiron 「南蛮通詞」試論” (“An exploratory study on Portuguese-Japanese interpreters”). *Tōfū seisei: Kyūshū kokuritsu hakubutsukan kiyō* 東風西声 九州国立博物館紀要, 12 (2016), pp.33–47. See also Boxer, *The Embassy of Captain Gonçalo de Siqueira de Souza to Japan in 1644–7*. Macau: Oficinas Graficas da Tipografia Mercantil, 1938, pp.129, 141; Boxer, “Macao as a Religious and Commercial Entrepôt in the 16th and 17th Centuries”. *Acta Asiatica*, 26 (1974), p.73.

108 ARSI, Jap. Sin. 161-II, f. 337r; Schütte, *Introductio ad historiam Societatis Jesu in Japonia, 1549–1650*, pp.276, 373. It is described as “korobi sōrō Namban bateren ころひ候南蠻伴天連” in the second article of the decree. See Hayashi (Ed.), op. cit., vol. 5, p.83. This Japanese term was translated into Portuguese as “o Padre Europeo, que aqui retroçedeo” meaning “the European Padre who abandoned the Christian Law here”. See ARSI, Jap. Sin. 80, f. 68v–69r; Boxer, *The Embassy of Captain Gonçalo de Siqueira de Souza to Japan in 1644–7*, p.52.

shall no doubt lead to massive disturbance in Europe.<sup>109</sup> Moreover, in this context, Azevedo recalls the episode of Cristóvão Ferreira who too had abandoned his faith during his days as the Provincial. The above contextual reference indicates that Azevedo, who was in the crucial position of heading the Far East Mission, had to finally accept the scandalous incident of the new Provincial Pedro Marques.

The headquarters of the Jesuit Japan Province never again dispatched missionaries to Japan after the unsuccessful voyages to Japan carried out by Antonio Rubino and Pedro Marques in 1642 and 1643. Despite what preceded, the Japan Province continued to have great interest in Japanese affairs. Harnessing several channels, the Jesuits striving in the new mission fields in Southeast Asia did not refrain from obtaining information regarding the Tokugawa shogunate's foreign policy as well as the situation of diminishing Christendom in Japan and worked towards the continuance of reporting information to their regional headquarters at Macao and then onwards to Rome.<sup>110</sup>

## Final Remarks

Employing the analysis of the Portuguese manuscript *Relação da viagem* that describes the voyage led by Pedro Marques, this essay has presented the following new evidence regarding the Jesuits' final struggles for reopening the Japanese enterprise in the last days of the "Christian Century." Marques and his fellows departed Manila on June 8, 1643, motivated to commence a new mission around the northern fringe of Japan from Tsugaru to Ezo, the region where after the expulsion edict of 1614, the Jesuits had conducted underground activities. The three Japanese recruits for the Marques missionary group were assigned specific roles directed at preparing for new missionary pursuits. En route to the intended final destination, the ship navigated seas around Tsushima disguising their status as well as departure point and, underwent inspection by the Tsushima authority between June 18 and 20 prior to their capture at the Chikuzen Ōshima Island on June 27. The occurrences in the final phase of the Marques missionary group using European sources were detailed through this paper. These new findings require to be further cross-examined with Japanese sources preserved by the Tsushima domain to obtain a cohesive whole picture. At the same time, the fresh perspective lent by this paper needs to be discussed under the framework of studies related to coastal defence security systems that the Japanese authority enforced in the 1640s.

Established theories on the mission reiterate that Rubino and Marques made voyages to Japan with the hope of reclaiming the Catholic faith of the apostate

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109 ARSI, Jap. Sin. 161-II, f. 337r; Schütte, *Introductio ad historiam Societatis Jesu in Japonia, 1549–1650*, pp.275, 373.

110 For further details, see Ruiz de Medina, op. cit., pp.258–270; Ribeiro, "The Japanese Diaspora in the Seventeenth century", pp.69–70; Kisaki and Akune, "Nihon eno shisen to kibō", pp.10–31.



missionary Cristóvão Ferreira. However, the *Relação da viagem* nowhere mentions the case of Ferreira's apostasy. Judging from this perspective, at least for the Marques missionary group, reopening the Japanese Mission might have been prioritised over resolving the Ferreira issue. Besides, Marques and his fellows have been referred to as "the second Rubino group" and this categorisation, to some extent, has given the impression that they eventually travelled to Japan with no significant vision, as if simply a successive, substitute for Rubino. Presumably, this categorisation is based on negation and failure, therefore diminishing the attention it deserves. The new historical findings presented in this study should provide for a fruitful revision of such underestimation and initiate a new inquiry.

From 1645 to 1647, rumors about the apostasy or death of the Marques missionary group was received primarily at Tonkin through Dutch ships that came from Nagasaki. It was only in November of 1647 that the Jesuit headquarters of the Japan Province in Macao concluded and officially admitted the apostasy of Pedro Marques and Giuseppe Chiara on the basis of an official decree issued and handed to the Portuguese royal embassy by the Tokugawa government. In this way, prospects for reopening the mission in Japan quickly evaporated, drawing the curtain on its "Christian Century." Concurrently, Tonkin's fortunes had blossomed and poised to receive the enhanced status of *novo Japão desta Provincia*, or the "new Japan of this Province" praised by João Cabral as the most-favourable mission field in the Orient.<sup>111</sup>

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111 As per the report of Cabral's 1647 inspection tour, more than 130,000 Christians flourished and 205 churches stood strong in the Tonkin region. For a detailed picture, see ARSI, Jap. Sin. 80, f. 50r-59v.



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