Encounters in the Glocal Mirror

The Role of the Performing Arts in Japan’s Christian Century and its Reflection in Early Modern Europe, 1549–1783

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“If we had organs, musical instruments and singers, all of Miyako and Sakai would be converted without any doubt within a year” – so said the Italian missionary Gnecchi-Soldo Organtino (1530–1609) in 1577 after seven years of proselytisation in Japan. The power attributed here to music as an intercultural communicative device is linked to the three weapons of the Catholic Reformation: rhetoric, cultural accommodation, and missionary formation. For the Society of Jesus, an itinerant order of men (known as Jesuits), the forging of these weapons was invoked by the command of Christ to spread the gospel to the ends of the earth (Matthew, 28:19). Indeed, apostolic mobility was woven into the very fabric of the Jesuits’ work by their founder, Ignatius of Loyola (1491–1556), from the order’s institution in 1540. The Jesuits’ foundation of a truly global outlook and practice thus created remote contact zones where the friction of first encounters with indigenous populations propelled the development of unique approaches to apostolic work. No more clearly is this use of *accommodatio* over a *tabula rasa* approach to proselytisation demonstrated, than in the Jesuit mission to Japan during its so-called ‘Christian Century’ (1549–1650). Musical and theatrical practices by Jesuit missionaries in Japan are thus interpreted in this dissertation as part and parcel of the Society’s “cultural mission”. In engaging with recent debates over the ‘global turn’ in historical scholarship, the multifaceted nature of these cultural encounters reveal shared pathways for discussion about states of global interconnectedness in the early modern period. This dissertation overviews the treatment of globalisation in Jesuit historiography to date and offers a new theoretical synthesis, with a focus on the nexus between Jesuit ‘universalism’ and various forms of local ‘particularism’ in the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries. As ‘cross-cultural brokers’, Jesuit missionaries are identified as ‘glocal’ intermediaries, facilitating the localisation
of Jesuit religious and sociocultural traditions. The metaphor of a ‘Glocal Mirror’ is employed as a way of capturing the bi-directional nature of intercultural exchange, in addition to the ways in which ‘culture’ (in defining the inter-cultural) functions on two important levels: as recognition of boundaries (be they religious, ethnic, or linguistic) to be overcome; and/or the acknowledgment of shared understandings. The first half of the dissertation (‘The Object’) looks to the performative practices of conversion employed by Jesuit missionaries in Japan. In analysing how music and theatre were practiced and experienced in these local contexts, examples of performative syncretism are explored. The second half of the dissertation (‘The Reflection’) demonstrates how globalisation in this period entailed both a real and imagined defiance of geography. In this way, the ‘Glocal Mirror’ not only relayed a re-imagined image of Japan across Catholic Europe, but it also served as a medium through which continental Jesuits could see an exemplary reflection of their own faith in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Three case studies of different compositional genre (melodrama, oratorio, and tragedy) in Europe are analysed for evidence of how and why Japan’s Christian Century was interpreted and re-interpreted over space and time. The ‘object’ and its ‘reflection’ are two halves of a whole that have yet to be considered in the same space. Indeed, this dissertation argues that these examples of European ‘Japanese plays’ were part of a broader process of intercultural exchange, central to an understanding of the global and local history of the Japanese Church.
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There is no accepted standard of hyphenation and word division for romanised Japanese. This dissertation has therefore made use of these practices wherever it is felt it helps the reader. All Japanese terms are italicised, except for a few widely recognised words, as indicated by their inclusion in standard English-language dictionaries (such as samurai, shogun, daimyo, Noh, etc.), as well as some proper nouns (such as the names of Japanese sects of Buddhism: Tendai, Zen, Jōdo Shinshū, etc.). Italics are also used to distinguish between the name of Japanese deities and the same words used as literary terms (e.g. Dainichi as deity and Dainichī as the term used by the Jesuits). In English text, macrons are hereafter omitted from vowels in well-known proper nouns, predominantly those of geographical names: Tokyo (Tōkyō), Kyoto (Kyōto), Kyushu (Kyūshū) etc. In Japanese, there is no real distinction between singular and plural nouns. Therefore, words such as daimyo, biwa-hōshi and Kirishitan which appear in this dissertation are distinguished by context: e.g. ‘this daimyo’ as contrasted with ‘these daimyo’. The word Kirishitan (a Japanese transliteration of Cristaõ in Portuguese, ‘Christian’) is used in this dissertation as both an adjective and a singular/plural noun, designating the identity and/or practice of Christianity as it was understood and expressed by its Japanese adherents in the early modern period. Names of Japanese historical figures are presented as per the standard Japanese convention of surname first, followed by their given name. An exception is made, however, in the case of individuals with Christian baptismal names: e.g. ‘Hosokawa Tama’ before baptism and ‘Gratia Hosokawa’ after baptism. Names of Japanese scholars are standardised for citation purposes as given name first, followed by surname.
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INTRODUCTION

A Global Prelude

“It is according to our vocation to travel to any part of the world where there is hope of God’s greater service and the help of souls.”

Nostrae vocationis est diversa loca peragrare et vitam agere in quavis mundi plaga ubi maius Dei obsequium et animarum auxilium speratur.

The Global Order of the Society of Jesus

Visitors to the Church of Sant’Ignazio in Rome crane their necks and gaze to the heavens, setting their eyes upon a sensuously rich fresco that spreads across the nave ceiling (see Figure 1). Painted by the Jesuit lay brother Andrea Pozzo (1642–1709) in the 1690s, this vibrant representation of the Apotheosis of Saint Ignatius celebrates the missionary achievements of the Society of Jesus, an apostolic order of the Roman Catholic Church instituted in 1540. In his own words, Pozzo describes his visual spectacle as “the figure of Jesus, who sends forth a ray of light to the heart of Ignatius [of Loyola], which is then transmitted by him to the most distant hearts of the four parts of the world”: Africa, America, Asia, and Europe (see Figure 2). Both in these words

and in the iconography of his painting, Pozzo draws upon two cornerstones of the Jesuits’ early modern mission: the “care of souls” (\textit{iuvare animas}) and an apostolic concern with global influence.\textsuperscript{3} For Ignatius of Loyola (1491–1556), founder of the Society of Jesus, these two objectives were paramount and inextricably linked. Just as Ignatius shines Christ’s light upon the world in Pozzo’s painting, so too did the emblematic globe feature prominently in Jesuit literature as a way of demonstrating that “one world [was] not enough” (\textit{unus non sufficit orbis}) for the Society of Jesus (see Figures 3 and 4). Thus in seeking out ‘new’ worlds to conquer (spiritually or otherwise), the Jesuits’ role in developing early modern networks of trade, communication, scientific research, education, and the arts, are all ways in which we can observe their involvement in both global and local dynamics.\textsuperscript{4} Global mobility, as such, was “culturally encoded” into the very foundation of the Jesuit order.\textsuperscript{5} Indeed, a perceivable global turn in Jesuit studies and in historiography more broadly has come to impress a truly global image upon the history of the Society of Jesus.\textsuperscript{6} Consequently, the very interplay between these dynamics of the global and local has fostered a divide in the ways in which academics conceptualise and talk about intercultural exchange throughout the Jesuit missions in the early modern period. Diogo Ramada Curto has outlined what he sees as two distinct sets of historical terminology which need to be

\textsuperscript{1} European Art in the Americas,” in The Jesuits: Cultures, Sciences, and the Arts, 1540–1773, ed. John W. O’Malley et al., vol. 1 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 274–304.
thought through carefully: “[o]n the one hand, the rich history of Jesuit missions around the world; [and] on the other the different and sometimes contradictory conceptions of mediation and brokerage as they have been used in history and anthropology”. While not explicitly referred to, the contentious term Curto avoids using here is ‘globalisation’. Beyond painting the missionaries of the Society of Jesus as “cross-cultural messengers”, Curto is wary of merging these two distinct approaches to historical research. He insists on this distinction for fear of “travelling too fast towards an untroubled characterisation of the Jesuits as simple mediators between different worlds, as effortless agents in a complex network of communication”. This concern is certainly not unjustified. Christopher Bayly, a leading figure in global history, for instance, has emphasised that speaking of “interconnections” and “networks” tends to override colonial dialogues of dominance. However, in the case of the Jesuits, painting an image of an enterprise of religious imperialism over wholly passive subjects is certainly debatable. In the case of Japan and China, for instance, where missionaries were not accompanied by a colonial force, an ‘accommodative’ approach to the Gospel was defined by the regional forces that controlled their movements. That is to say a discussion of global interconnections and networks cannot take place without consideration of local contexts and processes. Indeed, greater focus on the nexus

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8 Ibid.
between these two interrelated dynamics is the missing link in what will be described as the ‘Brockey v. Clossey debate’.

**Historical Globalisation**

The global turn in historiography has certainly not been without its opponents. Divergent definitions have been forged to fit different assessments of globalisation’s causes and consequences across disciplines. Accordingly, the criteria by which the phenomenon is defined influences questions about its origins, the form it has taken, and the manner in which it has spread. The vigorous theoretical debates over what constitutes globalisation and how far back its origins can be traced indicate that no singular discipline is able to grasp the phenomenon as a whole. Most accounts acknowledge its multidimensional character and emphasise how global flows involve the transformation of “economic, political, social and cultural relationships across countries, regions and continents by spreading them more broadly, making them more intense and increasing their velocity”.\(^\text{11}\) It is within this theoretical discourse that a strong divide has emerged over the question of *when* globalisation started. Through the lens of religion, some historians have argued that the “transethnic, transpolity diffusion of religions” and the formation of what we now call “the world religions” initiated a first wave of globalisation, a so-called “axial age” (between the fourth and eighth centuries) of human civilisation.\(^\text{12}\) Others identify early modern Christianisation as the most “comprehensive international effort at globalization” by the Catholic monarchy

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\(^{11}\) Ibid. See also David Held et al., *Global Transformations: Politics, Economics and Culture* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), 2.

and the Portuguese Estado da Índia.\textsuperscript{13} However, opposition to this construction of early modern globalisation is generally based on political and economic considerations. This is most clearly demonstrated in the debate between O'Rourke and Williamson on the one hand, and Flynn and Giráldez on the other.\textsuperscript{14} Despite acknowledging the boom of overseas trade developing after Columbus in 1492, O'Rourke and Williamson refuse to concede its importance to the early stages of globalisation.\textsuperscript{15} What is lacking here is an understanding of how the expansion of Western maritime interest at the turn of the fifteenth century coincided with the development of ecumenes in which “congeries of money, commerce, conquest, and migration began to create durable cross-societal bonds.”\textsuperscript{16} In this dissertation the importance of nineteenth-century price convergence is accepted, but viewed simply as a stage in the growth of globalisation as an ongoing phenomenon. It is evident that many of these differences of interpretation arise as a result of disciplinary emphases. Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that both economic and cultural tenets of globalisation do not operate in isolation.

Liam M. Brockey, in his recent history of the Jesuits in Asia through the life of André Palmeiro (1569–1635), presents arguments against the historiographical use of globalisation theory. Chiefly provoked by the work of Luke Clossey, Brockey asserts

\textsuperscript{13} Ines G. Županov, \textit{Missionary Tropics: The Catholic Frontier in India (16\textsuperscript{th}–17\textsuperscript{th} Centuries)} (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2005), 21–22.

\textsuperscript{14} As a means of measuring the age of globalisation, this approach employs econometrics and simulations to identify pro-convergence forces, which include commodity price convergence, factor accumulation, and factor-savings biases. The findings of such an approach conclude that open-economy characteristics and international market integration are central sources of convergence. In identifying this economic phenomenon of factor price convergence occurring in the late nineteenth century, this period is considered as ‘the beginning’ of globalisation. Kevin O’Rourke and Jeffrey Williamson, \textit{Globalization and History: The Evolution of a Nineteenth-Century Atlantic Economy} (Massachusetts: MIT Press, 2001), 5–28. Flynn and Giráldez, however, argue that globalisation began when all heavily-populated land masses began interacting (both directly with each other and indirectly through other people) in a sustained manner with deep consequences for the involved regions. In opposition to O’Rourke and Williamson, Flynn and Giráldez argue that globalisation emerged during the sixteenth century. While not denying the important of economic history, they contend that these aspects only become salient when located in a global/historical context that draws upon all disciplines. See Dennis O. Flynn and Arturo Giráldez, “Born Again: Globalization’s Sixteenth Century Origins (Asian/Global versus European Dynamics),” \textit{Pacific Economic Review} 13 (2008): 359–87.


that the proper use of the idea of the ‘global’ in early modernity ‘lies with the extremely limited set of individuals ... whose lives and travels actually achieved something of the ‘global’’. Brockey’s monograph is largely directed to demonstrating how he sees global history in practice, and he is fiercely critical of historians who gloss the geographical distances travelled by men of the Society of Jesus as “global”. His caution is not unwarranted. However, the assertion that globalisation “enables scholars of premodernity to claim more than their share, to maintain superficial or misleading similarities between the past and present”, risks running a line of theoretical reductivity. Forming parallels between ‘now and then’ through the lens of globalisation is by no means the goal of most historians who endorse this approach. Rather, the very periodisation of globalisation views ‘globality’ as a critical consideration for the contemporary era (1945 to present), without negating its developing forms in earlier periods. Nevertheless, Brockey highlights a real need for clarity. This dissertation is broadly in agreement with Clossey’s approach for, as will be seen later, there is undoubtedly a need for justification of the need to invoke globalisation in historical research. What does this analytical lens offer us over other approaches? Can we historicise globalisation and can we globalise history? These are the core questions that need to be addressed.

Clossey’s work on the early Jesuit missions as a global network marks a definite turn in the historical adoption of the rhetoric of globalisation. As Clossey himself notes, his approach to globalisation relates more to “[t]aking up a global perspective” in order to “see the existence of a global religion” through the lens of “salvific religion and

21 Clossey, Salvation and Globalization in the Early Jesuit Missions.
soteriology”. This perspective, while developing a valuable vocabulary for early modern scholars, does little to interrogate the theoretical underpinnings of globalisation. This is a fate that has befallen many investigations. References to Jesuit missionaries as participants in some form of ‘early’ globalisation are frequent and often fleeting. Yet this common lack of theoretical engagement presumes an understanding of what ‘globalisation’ is, blurring disciplinary distinctions, and serving only to further confusion over an already muddy field of study. Andreas Exenberger emphasises that the prevalent misuse of ‘globalisation’ has formed an ambiguous umbrella under which “free trade, liberalization or even progress” is discussed. In most studies in which the term appears (quite often prominently in the author’s title), a serious consideration of how various phenomena were influenced by processes, or were indeed a process in themselves, of globalisation is certainly lacking. Ultimately, most studies tend to address the author’s historical interest within the context of a perceived ‘globalised world’ in the early modern era. In fact, the term ‘globalisation’ in such studies would be better replaced with ‘globality’. The latter refers to a condition, rather than a process, characterised by interconnectedness of people and the global consciousness of our world in its entirety. Roland Robertson, one of the founding figures in globalisation studies, acknowledges that the condition of globality should not be temporally restrained, citing examples of how the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries can be observed as having “global significance”. Working alongside David Inglis, whose

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research explores historical sociology and globalisation, Robertson has extended our understanding of the early modern European Renaissance to consider it a Eurasian phenomenon marked by “cultural interplay and connection between the Christian ‘west’ and the Ottoman [and arguably ‘Far’] ‘east’”. More specifically, they emphasise that the Renaissance not only ushered in a reawakening of classical learning, but also a return to the “Hellenistic and Roman sensibility that the world was becoming ever ‘smaller’ because all of its various parts were becoming more and more regularly connected with each other”. Norihisa Yamashita, in his review of Timothy Brook’s study of world trade in the seventeenth century, also endorses an approach centred on early modern *globality*. He identifies the previously discussed pitfalls of historians who adopt the rhetoric of globalisation without explicitly identifying how and why its processes explain the historical conditions of their study. In an effort to address the history of globalisation and the globalisation of history, scholars, in recent years, have begun to engage in multi-disciplinary research groups, fostering syntheses that provide a clearer image of our world in its history of interconnection.

Cátia Antunes and Karwan Fatah-Black’s edited collection on *Explorations in History and Globalization* marks a new wave of methodological development in the historicisation of globalisation. In contrast to studies of historical conditions of *globality*, Antunes and Fatah-Black seek to establish a “conceptual and theoretical bridge between the theory and practice of global history by using local sources…”

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27 Inglis and Robertson argue that “global connectivity was present first in Hellenistic Greece from the third century BCE onwards, and then in both Republican and Imperial Rome.” Inglis and Robertson, “Discovering the World,” 101. See also David Inglis and Roland Robertson, “The Ecumenical Analytic: ‘Globalization,” Reflexivity and the Revolution in Greek Historiography,” *European Journal of Social Theory* 8 (2005): 99–122.


This “composite of local and regional specificities” in a globally interconnected and interacting context is what they identify as globalisation. Moreover, Antunes and Fatah-Black assert a universalist approach to the phenomenon through the conceptualisation of it as the “interconnectedness of all aspects of social life”. However, what can be defined as a new Austrian school of thought on this approach offers some clear distinctions that are essential to this dissertation’s theoretical underpinnings. At the very heart of these innovations is Philip Strobl and Manfred Kohler’s edited volume on globalisation. Strobl and Kohler draw not only on the work of historians, but also from the fields of philosophy, architecture, economics, sociology, political science, journalism, anthropology, and law. The result is the realisation of a phenomenon that is simultaneously a process, by which people and ideas are increasingly connected both physically and imaginatively, and a condition, of being conscious of one’s interconnectedness with the world at large. Christoph Mertl, in his essay on “globalizations, globalities and global histories”, identifies three basic understandings of globalisation: “the phenomenon of increasing worldwide interactivities; the phenomena of increasing worldwide interconnections and interdependencies; and the phenomenon of increasing worldwide economic, political, and social integration”. He then outlines seven categories of historical globalisation, presenting the varied disciplinary relevance for each one: “global spreads”; “partial globalizations”; “cognitive globalization”; “mundialization and regionalization”; “localization”; “global cooperation”. For research concerned with global history and historical anthropology, Mertl advocates “localization” as a key approach. In so doing, he identifies spaces of cultural friction and animosity to “external influences” (i.e. European expansion) not as acts of “anti-
globalization”, but rather as an inextricable part of the process. This ‘localised’ approach is central to the consideration of intercultural exchange in early modern Japan in this dissertation. Political scientist Georg Wiessala, whose broad consideration of ‘European Studies’ in Asia (from the third century BCE to current times), also sees myriad interpretations of ‘globalisation’ as fruitfully accounting for “the changing dynamics of an East-West cooperation around the transmission of ideas and knowledge”. He asserts that an “orientalized constructivist” approach can:

contribute significantly to how intellectual, ‘people-to-people’ exchange between Europe and Asia can be configured. I remain convinced that those explanatory frameworks which leave behind materialist, structuralist and utilitarian modes of reference, to focus instead on the roles of culture, ideas and identities in shaping actors and constituting institutional agency, are best suited to shed light on a discipline such as European Studies in Asia.

A consideration of the global cannot occur without a comprehensive understanding of the local. This relationship between micro-histories and their bigger picture appears as a necessary middle ground between the poles stationed by Brockey and Clossey.

**Glocalisation as Globalisation**

The Jesuits’ particular “way of proceeding” (*noster modus procedendi*), characterised by a “flexible accommodation to local circumstances”, can be identified as a schema of glocal processes. As has been argued elsewhere, encounters with indigenous populations throughout the four corners of the globe tested the adaptability of the

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33 Ibid., 29.
35 Ibid., 11.
Jesuits’ spiritual, intellectual, and institutional practices, redefining what they understood as their own way of proceeding. In this way, the ‘universality’ of the Church was conditioned by local particularities, a dynamic which fostered instances of social, cultural, and religious hybridities. The push and pull of this process is fruitfully embodied in the concept of ‘glocalisation’. Put simply, it involves “the diffusion of ideas and practices from one ‘place’ to another” or the “simultaneity – the co-presence – of both universalizing and particularizing tendencies”. Religion has increasingly developed as a key player in global and glocal literature since the publication of Roland Robertson’s early works on the concept. Victor Roudometof’s interpretation of glocalisation theory offers what this dissertation sees as a viable pathway for early modern cultural-historical research. In this he endorses an approach to “globalisation [which] is not simply dissolving local life worlds in their traditional local structures and settings, but is interacting with them in a sort of localisation, or glocalisation”. Peter Tze Ming Ng, in his analysis of Christianity in China, similarly identifies the propagation of Christianity as a “promoter of a globalization process”, and emphasises

“the indigenization of Christian faith as a local response to globalization”.42 This movement towards a global-local dynamic is in many ways resonant with Robertson’s initial approach to the phenomenon:

[T]he global is not in and of itself counterpoised to the local. Rather, what is often referred to as the local is essentially included within the global. In this respect, globalization, defined in its most general sense as the compression of the world as a whole, involves the linking of localities. But it also involves the ‘invention’ of locality, in the same general sense of the idea of the invention of tradition, as well as its ‘imagination’.43

This dissertation employs the approach of globalisation as glocalisation, corroborating Peter Beyer’s insightful claim that the former involves multiple instances of the latter.44 In this way, globalisation is “realized in concrete forms that are local”.45 The acceleration of these glocal processes in the sixteenth century, however, can be seen as taking place in the wake of global mercantilism and its associated industries, enabling new pathways for intercultural exchange.46 It is in this sense that a glocal approach to the Jesuit missions allows us to look beyond a master narrative unaffected by local tensions. In conceptualising the foreign Jesuit missions and their proselytic methods as a form of glocalisation, we are better positioned to challenge the narrative of

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42 Peter Tze Ming Ng, Chinese Christianity: An Interplay between Global and Local Perspectives (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 99.
44 “[T]he global cannot be global except as plural versions of the local. Hence globalization is always also glocalization...the global expressed in the local and the local as the particularization of the global.” Peter Beyer, “Globalization and Glocalization,” in The Sage Handbook of the Sociology of Religion, ed. James A. Beckford and N.J. Demerath III (London: Sage, 2007), 98.
45 Roudometof, “Theorizing Glocalization,” 48. This is similar to the ways in which Pieterse views hybridisation as giving rise to a “global mélange”. Jan Nederveen Pieterse, Globalization and Culture: Global Melangé (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield, 2003), 65.
Catholicisation as homogenisation. More than a ‘global approach’, a glocal focus enables us to engage with apostolic localisation, recognising the agency exerted by the individuals who missionaries sought to convert. According to Brockey’s critique of the ‘global’, “this adjective … [establishes] a level of superficiality where all detail disappears and all actors are reduced to caricature”. This dissertation, however, argues that a shift to the glocal, rather, facilitates a fertile exploration of detail, as it reveals and explores the nexus between the global and local. Thus for Roudometof, the heuristic value of glocalisation, in analysing “historical entanglements between universalism and particularism”, lies in its ability to “explore the tension between the universal claims of a world religion and the particular realization of this claim into concrete eras, cultural milieus and institutional contexts”. Roudometof establishes three ways in which globalisation manifests in historical records: “the worldwide spread of various religions”; processes of territorial disruption and its effect on a religion; and processes of indigenisation or glocalisation. These three processes demonstrate the varied ways in which religion can adapt to different populations, engaging intimately with the social, cultural and even local religious norms of the community. Indeed this merging of Jesuit universalism with forms of local particularisms in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries would lead to a watershed moment in the Society’s approach to missionary work.

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47 Hopkins has similarly called for an approach to globalisation which moves away from seeing “the rise of the West” as “the fall of the rest”. Hopkins, “Introduction: Globalization – An Agenda for Historians,” in Globalization in World History, 2.
49 Brockey, The Visitor, 429.
50 It is important to acknowledge that the flexible concept of the global means that its invocation can in some instances refer to the world as a whole, and in others refer to Europe as a continent. Roland Robertson, “Europeanization as Glocalization,” in European Glocalization in Global Context, 8.
51 Roudometof, Globalization and Orthodox Christianity, 172.
52 Ibid., 8–9.
Looking into the Glocal Mirror

Joan Blaeu and Martino Martini’s Novus atlas sinensis ("New Chinese Atlas") of 1655 was the starting point for this dissertation. In its frontispiece a vibrant sun is emblazoned with the “IHS” monogram (Jesus Hominum Salvator – “Jesus, saviour of men”) (See Figure 5). Its bright rays, symbolic of Christ’s divine light, strike a mirror held by an allegory of the Church. In her hands this mirror is embellished with the words speculum sine macula (“mirror without blemish”) whose reflection ignites a torch wielded by a cherub. Invoking Isaiah 18 – “go, ye swift messengers, to a nation scattered and peeled…”53 – the Church, through its ‘mirror image’ of God’s will, calls its members to order, signalled by the flaming torch which guides them through the door held open upon new and fertile lands. Accordingly the frontispiece incorporates the emblem of a globe and map of China, demonstrating that unus non sufficit orbis. Thus the metaphorical door to this world is opened by a figure who proclaims that “I open the [door to] closed places” (clausa recludo).54

This dissertation takes inspiration from Martini’s mirror, finding the metaphorical function of objects and their reflection a productive way of understanding the dynamic relationship between the global and local – glocalisation. This metaphor of a ‘Glocal Mirror’, inspired by the Jesuit emblem tradition, captures the bi-directional nature of intercultural exchange, in addition to the ways in which ‘culture’ (in defining the inter-cultural) functions on two important levels: as a recognition of boundaries (be they religious, ethnic, or linguistic) to be overcome; and/or the acknowledgment of shared understandings.55 Evonne Levy’s discussion of the symbolic representation of Ignatius of Loyola as a radiant figure is particularly salient to this Glocal Mirror

53 “Ite angeli veloces ad gentem convulsam et dilaceratam isaiae xviii”.
54 See Clossey, Salvation and Globalization, 80.
metaphor. She notes how the Jesuits’ founder is featured throughout Claude-François Ménestrier’s *La Philosophie des Images* (1682) as an emblem of fire.\(^{56}\) This zealous blaze was often linked to mirror emblems as a way of illustrating Ignatius as a divine Sun whose bright rays kindled Christian fire throughout the four corners of the globe. Ménestrier cites two such emblems through which “a concave mirror that gathers light and turns it to fire” and an “ardent mirror” are used to present this blazing image of Ignatius.\(^{57}\) Carolo Bovio (1614–1705), among others, also used the mirror as an emblem of Ignatius’s purity.\(^{58}\) Perhaps this emblematic use of mirrors is most famously employed by Athanasius Kircher in his *Ars Magna Lucis et Umbrae* (“The Great Art of Light and Shadow”) of 1671. In its frontispiece, Kircher illustrates mirrors as directing divine rays toward the earth, opening sacred celestial space.\(^{59}\) Ignatius is similarly reflected in a mirror and projected into one of Kircher’s depictions of a camera obscura.\(^{60}\) Interestingly, the notion of the mirror as a social or moral reflection is something the Jesuits in China found they shared with Confucius’s *Analects*: “we can contemplate, like in a mirror, what suits us the most, and what does not suit us, and by examining it, we can stir it up with profit”.\(^{61}\) Thus the reflection, and the way in which it is understood, shifts vis-à-vis the individuals who stand before it. In this sense, the

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\(^{56}\) Some of these include emblematic representations of Ignatius as “a mountain spurring flames generated by his zeal; the incendiary fire powering the cannonball sending Xavier and other missionaries into the world; the fire impressing its image on wood just as love of God impressed on his heart is impressed on those around him, and so on”. Evonne Levy, *Propaganda and the Jesuit Baroque* (Berkley: University of California Press, 2004), 157–60. See Claude-François Ménestrier, *La Philosophie des Images: Composée d’un ample Recueil de Devises, & du Jugement de tous les Ouvrages qui ont été faits sur cette Matiere*, 2 vols. (Paris: Robert J.B. de la Caille, 1682).


Jesuits’ effort to make intelligible certain social, cultural, and theological ideas in particular non-European contexts is one in which the ‘object’ could only be grasped through a localised reflection. Simultaneously, the image of the local was reflected in the global. For Brockey, the “[g]lobal” raises a smoke screen that masks the limited capacity for action enjoyed by early moderns, regardless of the miles they traversed or the fact that they belonged to a centrally administered organization”. However, this dissertation argues that these very ‘smoke and mirrors’ are in fact an essential part of what Mertl refers to as “cognitive globalization”, an awareness of the world as an interconnected globe. For those early moderns incapable of physical action in exploring the Far East, globalisation was more about the imaginary defiance of geography than any physical traversal of the world’s seas. One is necessarily reminded of Edward Said’s own conceptualisation of “imaginative geographies”, through which reflexive practices of self-identification take place: “For there is no doubt that imaginative geography and history help the mind to intensify its own sense of itself by dramatizing the distance and difference between what is close to it and what is far away”. Couched within Said’s discourse on Orientalism, this cognitive process reflects similar ideas presented by the Jesuit mirror metaphor drawn from the aforementioned Confucian Analects.

For early moderns, ‘globalisation’, in all its cognitive splendour, was literally illustrated in the frontispieces of books, the ceilings of churches, in the arias of secular and sacred music, and upon theatrical stages across Europe. Louis Richeôme (1544–

62 Brockey, The Visitor, 428.
1625), in this regard, describes the worldly paintings of the recreation room at the Novitiate of S. Andrea al Quirinale as allowing one to travel to the Orient “without leaving the harbour of this room”. It is through such material demonstrations of a global consciousness that the Glocal Mirror functioned both as practice and condition. In returning to the Church of Sant’Ignazio in Rome, we can thus approach Pozzo’s fresco with new meaning. Notwithstanding the politics of power in its imagery, the representations of Europe, Africa, Asia, and America can all be seen as a material allegory for the transregional networks that came to define this early modern era of globalisation.

**A Local Fugue**

**The Jesuits and Japan’s Christian Century (1549–1650)**

After their early work in Italy, the Jesuits were sent by Pope Paul III (r. 1534–49), on instruction by King John III of Portugal (r. 1521–57), to carry the word of God to the Portuguese colonies of India (Estado da Índia). It was here that the seeds of the Jesuits’ aspirations for a Christian Japan were sown, with their first fruit soon bearing witness to a new century of interreligious exchange and eventual conflict. Remarkably, the arrival of the earliest missionaries, Francis Xavier (1506–52) and Simão Rodrigues (1510–79), to Goa in 1542 coincided with Europe’s first real contact with the Japanese. The image of Japan up until this point had been one of speculation, pieced together from “pre-encounter knowledge” of the mysterious land. Misconceptions about the island

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territory to the East were in large part derived from Marco Polo’s inventive thirteenth-century account of a golden empire. This established Europe’s first literary encounter, albeit inaccurate and evidently fabricated, with what is now known as the Land of the Rising Sun. 68 150 years after Columbus’s erroneous ‘rediscovery’ of what he believed to be the very same Cipangu in 1492, the first Europeans reached Japan by chance when Portuguese sailors, caught in a typhoon, drifted off the south coast of Kyushu, forcing them to anchor at the island of Tanegashima. 69 The so-called ‘Christian Century of Japan’ that would follow this encounter of 1543 70 has been well-defined in scholarly circles as a period of intercultural exchange between the East and West, built on a substratum of commerce and religious dissemination. Francis Xavier, revered as the “Apostle of the Indies and Japan,” was a founding member of the Society of Jesus and a central figure in their formulation of early missionary practice, forged through experiences with diverse and divergent cultures. He was introduced to Anjirō (or Yajirō), a Japanese man brought to Malacca by Jorge Álvares (d. 1552), in December of 1547. 71 This meeting and Anjirō’s subsequent Catholic instruction laid the foundations

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68 See Marco Polo, The Most Noble and Famous Travels of Marco Polo... Edited from the Elizabethan Translation of John Frampton, ed. Norman M. Penzer (London: Argonaut Press, 1929). There are numerous inconsistencies between Polo’s descriptions of countries and events which have led to a generally scepticism of the travel writing’s validity. Wood contends that it is likely the Venetian merchant picked up second-hand accounts about China, Japan, and the Mongol Empire from Persian merchants who he met on the shores of the Black Sea, thousands of kilometres from the ‘Orient.’ See Frances Wood, Did Marco Polo go to China? (London: Secker & Warburg, 1995).

69 The English word for ‘Japan’ derives from Cipangu, the name which Polo designated the “Golden Land” of which he had heard during his travels in Cathay (China). This name most likely derives from Riben Guo, the Chinese pronunciation of the characters for “Kingdom of Japan.” See Martin Collcutt, “Circa 1492 in Japan: Columbus and the Legend of Golden Cipangu,” in Circa 1492: Art in the Age of Exploration, ed. Jay A. Levenson (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991), 306.

70 In accordance with most European accounts, this encounter occurred in 1542. However, Japanese records, which are comparatively more reliable in this instance, identify this occurring on 23 September, 1543. For the 1607 Japanese account of this arrival, see Yoshitomo Okatomo, Jūroku seiki Nichiō kōtsūshi no kenkyū (Tokyo: Kōbunsō, 1936), 187–89.

71 Álvares, a Portuguese ship captain, is commonly confused with the Jorge Álvares (d. 1521) acknowledged as the first European explorer to teach China by sea in 1513. See, for instance, Massimo Leone, Saints and Signs: A Semiotic Reading of Conversion in Early Modern Catholicism (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2010), 357; Eric P. Cunningham, “A Glorious Failure: The Missions of Francis Xavier and Its Consequences on the China Enterprise,” in A Voluntary Exile: Chinese Christianity and Cultural Confluence since 1552, ed. Anthony E. Clark (Bethlehem: Lehigh University Press, 2014), 27. An English translation of Álvares’s firsthand account of Japan is provided by Willis, although his discussion of Orientalism in relation to this account is somewhat problematic. See Clive Willis, “Captain Jorge
for Xavier’s mission to Japan and foreshadowed the intercultural difficulties that were to come.  

Educated at the Collegio de São Paulo in Goa, Anjirō was baptised by Bishop João de Albuquerque (d. 1553) as history’s first Japanese ‘Christian’. He demonstrated a sufficient grasp of the Portuguese language and a respectable understanding of the key tenets of Christianity. It is for these reasons that Anjirō was elected as the mission’s first interpreter and translator of Christian doctrine. However, while an intellectually able man, Anjirō was not of a social class that permitted him literacy in the classical language of Japanese religious texts (Chinese). Xavier himself acknowledged Anjirō’s inability to comprehend the subtleties of Buddhist philosophical thought, claiming “I shall write to you from there [Japan] about the contents of their writings, since I could not learn this from Paul [Anjirō], a common man, who has never studied Japanese literature, which, just as we have books written in Latin, employs an almost alien tongue.” Thus his responsibility for translating a catechism into Japanese, as Higashibaba has convincingly argued, was to ask Anjirō to use unobtainable “skills and knowledge of an intellectual cleric or scholar, a Japanese counterpart to [Xavier]”.

The subsequent difficulties encountered in coherently explaining Christian doctrine to the Japanese in the mission’s early years, thus highlighted two essential missionary

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73 Xavier notes the presence of three Japanese men who travelled to Goa from Malacca in 1548. In addition to Anjirō, two men by the baptismal names of João and Antonio were educated and converted by the Jesuits at the Collegio. See Xavier to Ignatius of Loyola in Rome, from Cochin (January 12, 1549), translated in M. Joseph Costelloe, *The Letters and Instructions of Francis Xavier* (St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1992), 219. Little is known about these two companions. They accompanied Xavier from Kagoshima to Hirado, as well as Yamaguchi and Bungo. Lidin suggests that they may have served as interpreters in these regions. See Olof G. Lidin, *Tanegashima: The Arrival of Europe in Japan* (Copenhagen: NIAS Press, 2002), 182. See also Georg Schurhammer, *Die kirchliche Sprachprobleme in der japanischen Jesuitenmission des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts* (Tokyo: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Natur- und Völkerkunde Ostasiens, 1928), 24–25.

74 Xavier to Ignatius of Loyola in Rome, from Cochin (January 14, 1549), in Costelloe, *Letters and Instructions of Francis Xavier*, 229.

paths to be paved and negotiated: on the one hand, clarifying confusion over their theology due to the Jesuits’ use of Buddhist terminology to explain Christian concepts, while on the other hand, pursuing alternative methods of communication and conversion in the process of overcoming sociocultural obstacles. The latter is a field in which Jesuit missionaries explored the communicative capacities of the performing arts—through ritual, music, and drama—as part and parcel of their “cultural mission”. Notwithstanding the fact that the Jesuits’ initial success in Japan was integrally tied to matters of trade, scholars have begun to reappraise the importance of the arts more broadly in defining the social, cultural, and political landscapes of early modern Eurasia. It is within this context that Jesuit missionaries acted as “cross-cultural brokers” – global-local intermediaries – who worked as “inspired demiurges of the cultural world[,] produc[ing] cultural hybrids” throughout the four corners of the globe.

The Performing Arts as Cultural Mission

_Regimini militantis ecclesiae_ (“To the Government of the Church Militant” or _The Formula_), the foundational document of the Society of Jesus approved by Pope Paul III in 1540, called for men of their Order to “strive especially for the progress of souls in Christian life and doctrine and for the propagation of faith”. In the context of this call to evangelistic arms, John W. O’Malley identifies five key “missions” of the Jesuit

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79 Translated in O’Malley, *Saints or Devils Incarnate?*, 51.
charism in the formative years of the Society (1540–56): the pastoral-spiritual, ecclesiastical, social, cultural, and civic missions. As he has noted, the cultural and civic aspects of their apostolic work were not institutionally defined either in The Formula or in Ignatius’s Constitutions of the Society of Jesus, printed in 1558. To this extent, the evident expansion of the Society’s activities to an emphasis on formal schooling as a ministry, and a consequently deep commitment to the studia humanitatis, indicates a critically important role of the Society in local and global contexts that were not detailed in their official documents. Indeed, it was this very involvement in humanities-based education that distinguished the cultural identity of the Jesuits from mendicant orders. Celenza and DelDonna, in their volume on Jesuits and music, adopt O’Malley’s concept of the “cultural mission” and, through this, explore the varied ways in which music and drama functioned within the Society’s educational and evangelistic vocations. In light of these aspects of their apostolic work, the Jesuits can be seen variously as “preachers, teachers, scholars, and missionaries” whose global outlook connected them to the four quadrants of the globe, spreading the word of God through use of the performing arts. This essential part of their “way of proceeding” connected the Society’s missionaries from Goa to Ethiopia, Malacca to Japan, the Philippines to Ossossané, and across the European continent, such that Jerónimo Nadal (1507–80) believed that “the world [was their] house” – their vocation was to travel and it was the

80 O’Malley, Five Missions of the Jesuit Charism.
81 A commitment to the studia humanitatis was systematically incorporated by the Jesuits while Dominicans and Franciscans, although being expected to have some proficiency, did not define them as part of their fundamental system. O’Malley, Five Missions of the Jesuit Charism, 24. For a contemporary discussion of the importance of humanistic study in Jesuit formation, see Juan Alfonso de Polanco’s (1517–1576) letter to Diego Laínez (1512–1565) in which he establishes five foundations for humanistic study, drawing especially on the value Ignatius placed on the studia humanitatis. An English translation is available in Cristiano Casalini and Claude Pavur, eds., Jesuit Pedagogy, 1540–1616: A Reader (Boston: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 2016), 41–48.
journey itself in which they found ‘home’.\textsuperscript{84} While some scholars of early modern Asia have followed a similar approach as Celenza and DelDonna to Jesuit musical practice as an evangelistic vocation,\textsuperscript{85} a similarly comprehensive approach to the Japanese mission has yet to be undertaken.\textsuperscript{86}

In looking to the role of music as cultural mission – as a tool of intercultural communication and conversion – analysis must be conducted within a broader sociocultural context. Edward E. Lowinsky’s consideration of musical and physical space in the Renaissance is an essential point of departure, for “musical endeavour[s], like all human activity, should be understood not in an abstract vacuum but as a part of the cultural matrix within which it is embedded”\textsuperscript{87}. It is through this very matrix that music was, and continues to be, used as a way to “express and help create, contest, or dissolve the identity of social groups”.\textsuperscript{88} This interplay between the dynamics of the global and local, and their manifestation in outward ‘performativity’, reflects processes of intercultural exchange and the ways in which these encounters mutually shaped and reshaped notions of cultural and religious identities, both individual and collective. Such

\textsuperscript{84} T. Frank Kennedy, \textit{Music and the Jesuit Mission in the New World} (St. Louis: Seminar on Jesuit Spirituality, 2007), 2. See also O’Malley, \textit{To Travel to Any Part of the World}.
\textsuperscript{85} See primarily Irving, \textit{Colonial Counterpoint}.
a ‘sociomusical’ approach will necessarily invoke methodologies associated with historical ethnomusicology, and will open a space for exploring the varied contexts of music as social and cultural practice.  

Lessons from Historical Ethnomusicology

The Jesuits’ own contribution to the proliferation of ethnographic work in the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries has long been acknowledged as a key forerunner to the development of what we now call ‘Area Studies’. Similarly, early missionaries of the order who studied the history of non-Western music have been regarded in the light of modern ethnomusicology. Jesuit Jean-Joseph-Marie Amiot’s (1718–93) Mémoire sur la musique des Chinois, tant anciens que modernes, published in 1779, for instance, was one of the earliest and most comprehensive studies of a non-Western musical tradition by a Westerner until the late nineteenth century. Modern scholarship has, in the last two decades, begun to tackle the complicated task of “re-envisioning” past musical cultures such as that of the intercultural period of Amiot’s sixty years in China.

92 Although not as widely disseminated as Amiot, Charles Fonton’s Essai sur la musique orientale comparée à la musique européenne, published in 1751, was the first European comparative analysis of Turkish music.
process of re-envisioning is wholly dependent upon surviving “materials, including both
music and the ritual complexes of which it may be a part” and how these can be defined
as “primary cultural documents within which crucial evidence is encoded”. 94 This
dissertation has drawn on the useful work of the Historical Ethnomusicology Special
Interest Group (of the Society for Ethnomusicology), whose members have worked
towards reclaiming the role that “historical studies have long quietly occupied in
ethnomusicology”. 95 Thus McCollum and Herbert identify the rapid decline of the
comparative method in ethnomusicology during the 1950s, leading scholars to the
principle of cultural relativism through which music was examined by the same
standards of cultural anthropology. 96 As a result, historical investigation was left to
musicologists whose focus, until the late twentieth century, had remained almost
exclusively within the confines of Europe and the canon of Western art music. The
question remained, and in many ways continues to remain, of how the histories of
‘other’ musics can be undertaken. McCollum and Herbert correctly assert that
ethnomusicologists require an “awareness of histories, historical consciousness, and
processes that are significant to musical cultures”. 97 However, the primary obstacle to a
truly ethnomusicological investigation of early modern Japan, in the instance of this
dissertation, is that we cannot directly observe performance practices by means of
standard ethnographic participant-observation. 98 Thus Waterman, in his development of

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96 Ibid., 5.
97 Ibíd. For a classic ethnomusicological work that involves this key set of skills, see Alan P. Merriam, Ethnomusicology of the Flathead Indians (Chicago: Aldine, 1967).
98 Jeffrey, Re-Envisioning Past Musical Cultures, 120.
“sociomusical practice”, encourages exploration of the human creators of musical traditions within their historical contexts. In light of the absence of a material history of the music associated with Japan’s Christian Century (such as musical instruments and scores), Waterman’s reflections on “music in context” reveal that “the irreducible object of ethnomusicological interest is not the music itself, a somewhat animistic notion, but the historically situated human subjects who perceive, learn, interpret, evaluate, produce, and respond to music”. The theoretical and methodological paths which these “human subjects” walk are varied, and scholarship is now seemingly at a point where ethnomusicology is distinguishing “directions in the field and … inform[ing] our present discourse by forging new ideas and fresh concepts”. Within the field of missiology more broadly, this dissertation sees the previously discussed development of glocalisation theory as a fruitful direction for interrogating the nexus between universalising and particularising tendencies in the Jesuits’ foreign missions of the early modern period. Championed primarily by David Irving, this global-local line of inquiry, drawing on different disciplinary methods, allows us to address the objectives of historical ethnomusicology and cultural history more broadly. Looking to the future shape of the field, McCollum and Herbert see these objectives as follows:

Robust historical scholarship seeks not only to uncover what actually happened in the past, but also to interpret the meanings of past events and experiences of individuals from a bygone milieu, the latter being objectives that reciprocate the aspirations of ethnography. […] The act of creating history is necessarily descriptive and it is through methodology that we are able to “sound” the past,
whether through the oral tradition or the written word. The challenge is to create a history that is as compelling, comprehensive, and balanced as possible, while utilizing sources that may have inherently subjective tendencies.¹⁰³

This challenge is not only limited to considerations of music, but is also one to be taken up by historians interested in periods of intercultural contact. Accordingly this dissertation adds ‘culture’ (as per Herskovits’s definition¹⁰⁴), as a distinct category, to Antunes and Fatah-Black’s list of “ecology, migration, labor, trade, religion and social movements as aspects of globalization”.¹⁰⁵ In so doing, considerations of the cultural find reciprocal resonances with all these aspects of globalisation in the early modern era. Throughout this dissertation we will follow individuals and collectives and their performance, both dramatic and musical, of globality – microcosms bound by space and time in which the global and local were interconnected and interacting, singing and dancing.

**Performance as Conversion and Performance of Conversion**

The first half of the dissertation (‘The Object’) looks to the performative practices of conversion employed by Jesuit missionaries in Japan during the early years of 1549–70. In analysing how music and theatre were practiced and experienced in these local contexts, examples of performative syncretism are explored. The second half of the dissertation (‘The Reflection’) demonstrates how globalisation in this period entailed both a “real and imagined defiance of geography”.¹⁰⁶ In this way, the Glocal Mirror not

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¹⁰⁴ Culture as defined as the “creative and speculative aspects” of individuals’ existence, or the humanistic (as opposed to institutional) manifestations of culture. Melville J. Herskovits, *Man and His Works* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1948).

¹⁰⁵ Antunes and Fatah-Black, “Introduction,” xvi.

only relayed a re-imagined image of Japan across Catholic Europe, but also served as a medium in which continental Jesuits could see an exemplary ‘reflection’ of their own faith in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.\textsuperscript{107} Thus we can see the manner in which performance was both a method of conversion and a means of re-enacting it for the purpose of spiritual affirmation. Case studies from three European compositional genres (melodrama, oratorio, and tragedy) are presented to reveal how and why Japan’s Christian Century was interpreted and re-interpreted over space and time. These ‘objects’ and their ‘reflections’ are two halves of the same whole that have yet to be considered in the same space. Indeed, we will see that these examples of European ‘Japanese plays’ were part of a broader process of intercultural exchange that are essential to understanding the global and local histories of the Japanese Church.

Chapter One explores the transformation in Jesuit attitudes towards the role of music from humble beginnings to its adoption as a didactic and proselytic tool. In particular, it looks to the development of a missionary ethos of *accommodatio*\textsuperscript{108} which shaped Jesuits’ approaches toward the conversion of indigenous populations via the performing arts. This provides context for the second half of the chapter which discusses Xavier and his companions’ initial encounters with the Japanese from 1549 and the struggles of overcoming linguistic barriers. Chapter Two presents the use of music as one of the primary non-verbal modes by which Jesuits were able to bridge the

\textsuperscript{107} Makoto Harris Takao, “Francis Xavier at the Court of Ōtomo Yoshishige: Representations of Religious Disputation between Jesuits and Buddhists in *La conversione alla santa fede del re di Bungo giapponese* (1703),” *Journal of Jesuit Studies* 3 (2016), 474.

divide of (mis)translation, and to engage meaningfully with the Japanese people. This chapter focuses on the role of children in the Japanese Church, looking to their musical training in the 1560s and identifying key methods by which the Jesuits employed music as a means to their proselytic ends. Chapter Three explores how these musical developments found their ultimate expression in the development of Kirishitan dramaturgy. It looks to Japanese performance genres and theorises the likely paths by which they came to be adopted in Kirishitan practice. In the grassroots development of these devotional practices, we see local communities actively forging new forms of religious drama that are best understood as ‘Japanese’ traditions, or more accurately what will be called Kirishitan traditions from here onwards. 109 Chapter Four contextualises the second half of the dissertation (‘The Reflection’), providing an overview of how Japan’s relationship with Christianity had deteriorated towards the end of the sixteenth century, addressing the political circumstances that ultimately led to the persecution of the Jesuits and their Japanese followers. It then underscores how tales of Japanese martyrdom came to experience unprecedented popularity in Europe and how they were adapted for the early modern stage. Chapters Five, Six and Seven present three case studies that explore the development of a discernible ‘Japanese genre’ in varied forms of musical drama in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Europe. These case studies address the ways in which Japanese conversion and martyr narratives were employed with varying degrees of historical ‘accuracy’ and the broader significance behind this mythologising of the Japanese Church. The dynamic relationship between the global and the local – the early modern mission as glocalisation – thus facilitates a “focus on salient details” that allows us to develop a “grammar for [cultural] comparisons” and to overcome, rather than fall victim to, the claim, as per Brockey, that

109 Kirishitan, transliterated from the Portuguese cristão, was the Japanese word for “Roman Catholic” and is used today as a historiographic term for these Christians in Japan during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (either an adjective or a noun).
a focus on the global leads to a kind of superficiality where are all details vanish and history’s actors are “reduced to caricature”.\textsuperscript{110}

\textsuperscript{110} Trivellato, “Introduction,” 13; Brockey, \textit{The Visitor}, 429.
FIGURE 1. Andrea Pozzo’s *Apoteosis de San Ignacio* at the Church of Sant’Ignazio in Rome (1685–94).

*WIKIPEDIA COMMONS.*
FIGURE 2. The Allegory of Asia in Pozzo’s *Apoteosis de San Ignacio*.

WIKIPEDIA COMMONS.
**Figure 3.** *Societatis Missiones Indicae* (“The Missions of the Society of Jesus to the Indies”), from *Imago primi saeculi Societatis Iesu* (Antwerp: Plantin Press, 1640), 326.

*Google Books, Open License.*
Figure 4. Allegory of the spiritual conquest of Asia by the Jesuits. Francisco de Sousa, *Oriente Conquistado a Jesu Christo pelos Padres da Campanhia de Jesus da Provincia de Goa* (1710).

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Part One

The Object
CHAPTER ONE

Developing a Jesuit Tradition of Music

Jesuita non cantat

The mid-sixteenth to seventeenth centuries bore witness to religious conflict and restructuring most commonly referred to as the ‘Counter’ or Catholic Reformation.1 This reinvigoration of doctrine and practice seemingly paralleled the Bible-centred movements of the preceding Protestant Reformation in the early 1500s.2 Instigated by the Catholic Church and culminating in the Council of Trent (1545–63), ecclesiastical and theological dignitaries sought to affirm dogma and provoke dialogue regarding disciplinary reform.3 Inasmuch as the Society of Jesus had come to be seen as the embodiment of this Catholic Reformation, so too did its order’s members see their mission as stemming the tide of ‘heresy’ and winning back the lands and souls lost to


3 Comerford and Pabel identify these goals of Trent and the Catholic Reformation at large as the “increasing [of] devotion, clarifying the content of faith, and reforming religious practice”. Kathleen M. Comerford and Hilmar M. Pable, “Preface,” in Early Modern Catholicism: Essays in Honour of John W. O’Malley, S.J., ed. Kathleen M. Comerford and Hilmar M. Pable (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), xii.
their Protestant adversaries. Within the context of this dissertation, the Catholic Reformation was significant for its role in the control of culture, especially in matters of the performing arts. Arthur G. Dickens has called this period a time of “order-seeking”, whereby officials and new religious orders sought to define and redefine culture, and to set limits on the expression of its diversity. The first Jesuits’ relationship with music, in this regard, was marked by restrictions on its performance through constitutional censure and a departure from the tradition of liturgical music. This resistance, however, was not necessarily an absolute opposition to music itself. Indeed, scholars, especially in the field of musicology, have demonstrated that the idea of the Jesuits as being particularly insensitive or averse to music had often led to misunderstandings about their association with the creative arts. Jesuita non cantat (“The Jesuit does not sing”) created a seemingly axiomatic, though inaccurate, impression of the order’s relationship with music throughout the sixteenth century. This particular misapprehension endured as late as the twentieth century, with Spanish essayist Miguel de Unamuno (1854–1936), for instance, deriding the Jesuits’ presumed disregard for music, song, and poetry through the lens of a childhood fable: “A singing grasshopper could never be

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comfortably harbored in that anthill of regular clergymen”. The origins of this strained relationship with music, however, even precede the previously discussed *Regimini militantis ecclesiae* of 1540. After meeting in the Roman spring of 1539, Ignatius and his companions penned the *Formula vivendi*, their “Plan of Life”, in five chapters, which was to be submitted to the Holy See. It was in this *Formula* that members of the order were discouraged from reciting the canonical Hours (such as the Matins, Lauds, or Vespers) in common, let alone chanting in choir. The presence of musical instruments in Jesuit residences was also prohibited. The motivation for this seemingly strange provision was found in the need for members to be “free for their ministries at every hour of the day and night,” as subsequently ratified in the *Constitutions* of 1558. Thus Chapter Three of this foundational document proclaimed that “because the occupations which are undertaken for the aid of souls are of great importance […] and because our residence in one place or another is so highly uncertain, our members will not regularly hold choir for canonical hours or sing Masses and offices”. However, this prohibition was not enforced without resistance. Pope Paul IV (r. 1555–59) had insisted on the continuation of sung Vespers during Holy Week, while Cardinal Girolamo Ghinucci (1480–1541) rejected Ignatius’s prohibition of instruments and the recitation of the Hours in choir following his review of their *Formula vivendi*. Yet to label Ignatius as vehemently ‘anti-music’ is a generalisation without considered grounds. Pedro de Ribadeneira (1527–1611), Ignatius’s first biographer and close confidant in later years,

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7 Translated in Artola, “Preface,” xi.
claimed that under different circumstances Ignatius would have made singing an obligatory practice for members of the Society of Jesus.\textsuperscript{13} Ignatius himself expressed this very sentiment, evidently having struggled between his love of music and the will of God as he had interpreted it:

If I were to follow my taste and inclination, I would put choir and singing in the Society; but I do not do it because God our Lord has given me to understand that it is not his will – nor does he wish to be served by us in choir, but in other matters of his service.\textsuperscript{14}

Luís Gonçalves da Câmara (1519–75), who transcribed Ignatius’s autobiography, also testified that following his conversion, Ignatius had delighted in hearing the sung canonical Hours, and at times “seemed to him that he was totally enraptured”.\textsuperscript{15} Although this early restriction on musical activity had numerous opponents, Ignatius’s initial conservatism lingered in the Society even after his death in 1556. By the Second General Congregation of the Jesuits in 1565, however, these restraints had eased and the singing of vespers on Sundays and feast days had become a normalised practice.\textsuperscript{16} Thus, Jerónimo Nadal (1507–80) stipulated the following musical regulations for the Jesuit College in Vienna during 1566:

Let the type of music used be as follows: in the Mass, only the Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus, Agnus and the response to the *Ite Missa Est* be sung in polyphony. During Vespers, let the psalms be sung in *falsobordone*, as it is called – or in a similar way. The Magnificat, however, may be sung in polyphony. Let all else be sung in Gregorian chant. Let care be taken that the

\textsuperscript{13} Artola, “Prologue,” in *The Jesuits and the Arts*: xi–xv, here xii.
\textsuperscript{14} Translated in Culley and McNaspy, “Music and the Early Jesuits,” 218.
\textsuperscript{16} O’Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 160.
singers are obedient as much to the Superior as to the prefect of the choir, and let discipline be exercised in this matter…Naturally, Ours must not use the organ in choir, not trumpets, nor flutes.\(^{17}\)

Nadal’s musical formula would become the standard in a post-Tridentine Europe, where musical instruments in church contexts were initially rejected “as interlopers from the secular world”.\(^{18}\) In 1563, Nadal, accompanied by Juan Alfonso de Polanco (1517–76), had joined the Papal contingent of Jesuits attending the initial proceedings of the Council of Trent in 1546.\(^{19}\) In the account above, Nadal embodies the decree that resulted from the Tridentine deliberations: *Decretum de observandis et evitandis in celebiratione missae* (“The Decree on What to Do and What to Avoid in the Celebration of Mass”):

> They shall also banish from the churches all such music which, whether by the organ or in the singing, contains things that are lascivious or impure; likewise all worldly conduct, vain and profane conversations, wandering around, noise and clamor, so that the house of God may be seen to be and may be truly called a house of prayer.\(^ {20}\)

Yet the transportation of Jesuit ideas into new cultural contexts would present unforeseen challenges. This friction of first contact with indigenous populations necessitated a practical approach to the problems of cross-cultural communication,

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\(^{17}\) Translated in T. Frank Kennedy, “Jesuits and Music: The European Tradition, 1547–1622” (PhD diss., University of California, 1982), 77. It is also interesting to note that as early as 1562, Nadal had observed and encouraged the use of music for religious instruction: “If it could be done for greater edification, let the boys teach Christian doctrine composed in rhythm, by singing it”. Kennedy, “Jesuits and Music,” 39.


\(^{20}\) The Council of Trent, Session 22, “Decree concerning the Things to be Observed and Avoided in the Celebration of Mass” (1562), in *The Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent*, trans. Henry J. Schroeder (St. Louis: Herder, 1941), 152.
leading to the development of key methods in proselytisation. It is in this way that a discernible Jesuit musical tradition would come to flourish throughout the foreign missionary fields, etched out not through the development of centralised legislation, but through practices of trial and error. In the words of O’Malley, “practice almost immediately began to modify theory”. It would appear that this pastoral pragmatism was built into the very outlook of Ignatius. His extensive correspondence with members of the order reflected a common qualification when proposing new ideas by the phrase “unless you think some other course would be more effective”. Similarly, the principles of the Constitutions were subject to a consideration of practices deemed appropriate “to the places, persons, and circumstances”. Indeed, Artola conjectures that Ignatian spirituality was wholly congruent with both respect for, and practice of, the creative arts, seeing them as forming a “sphere of sensibility that [led] toward spiritual contemplation”. It was thus in music, and the performing arts more broadly, that Jesuit missionaries experimented with the boundaries of their cultural mission, drawing upon the principle of accommodatio, itself an expression of localisation found in the very spirit of Ignatius and enshrined in his Spiritual Exercises.

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22 Ibid.
23 Ibid.
The Jesuits Sing

The first stirrings of a Jesuit musical tradition originated from the order’s members in Spain. Having adopted the practice, as advocated by Saint John of Ávila (1499–1569), of setting the catechism (most often in the vernacular) to popular music, the convention known as contrapunctum came to be used within Europe and throughout the foreign missions during the middle decades of the sixteenth century. As early as 1544 in the Valencian city of Gandía, reports tell us of young boys singing “sweet melodies” of the vernacularised catechism through city streets which were so popular that “day and night ... nothing else was sung by both adults and children.” This power of music – as an instrument of evangelisation – was soon acknowledged for its ability to forestall heretical interpretation by virtue of its supposed unambiguous representation of Christian ideas. Moreover, technological development and expansion of the music printing and publishing industries greatly increased early modern Europeans’ access to music as never before. These books, as material objects, also became items of trade across the opening merchant networks, bringing old music to new ears and vice versa. These developments coincided with the Council of Trent and were one of the leading factors which came to emphasise the importance of songs as tools in pastoral and proselytic practice. Francis Xavier, for instance, had used songs in 1546 to educate ‘converts’ in the Indonesian island of Ternate. They had been instructed in singing of the Credo, Pater noster, Ave Maria, Confiteor, and the Commandments, though the language in which these were sung is unknown. João de Azpilcueta “Navarro” (d. 1557), the Jesuits’ first missionary to Brazil, is reported by his companion Manoel da

Nóbrega (1517–70) in 1550 to also have “made the Indian [the indigenous Tupí] boys sing at night some prayers which he had taught them in their language, giving them that tune in place of certain diabolical and lascivious songs which they had used before”. Letters from this same year indicate Navarro’s awareness of this vernacular turn and its usefulness for imprinting European cultural and religious knowledge upon the minds and memories of the indigenous people. Indeed, Nóbrega notes that converts were taught prayers both in Portuguese and the native Tupí language “in the style of Indian songs” – that is through local melodic expression. Within a short ten-year period, the successful use of song in the missionary work of the Jesuits in South America, India, and Africa, spoke to the effectiveness with which music could be used as a means of conversion. Thus Polanco in 1558 advocated the use of music to the extent that it could further the spiritual development of so-called ‘heathens’ in “remote places”, while nevertheless acknowledging this as being at odds with accepted practice in Europe.

It was not long until the vernacular turn, developed in the distant mission fields, took root in Europe, though its progress among continental Jesuits was somewhat behind the pastoral experimentation of their foreign brothers. As noted by Kate van Orden, vernacularisation on the European front was largely triggered by the encroachment of the Calvinist Huguenot Psalter published in 1562. Jesuits in France had hoped that local translations of hymns would act as their desired “contrepoison” to this spread of perceived Calvinist heresy. Much like their brothers to the East, this

31 Ibid.
34 Ibid., 138.
vernacularised tradition was intended to provide Catholics with a musical repertoire that could be sung “at home, in shops, and while traveling.”

The French delegation at the Council of Trent went so far as to propose the singing of vernacular canticles during Mass. However, this practice was not endorsed until the dawn of the seventeenth century. It was finally in 1573, with the publication of Diego de Ledesma’s (1519–75) *Modo per insegnar la Dottrina Christiana* (“Method for Teaching Christian Doctrine”), a catechetical manual, that a thorough analysis of the relationship between Christian doctrine and its embodiment in musical practice had taken place. The fifth chapter, especially, is imbued with a distinctly Tridentine attitude towards musical profanity, setting the limits of music within religious institutions, yet emphasising its importance in the learning of the catechism:

> [T]he reason why one sings, mainly in places where it is unusual to sing like that … is because the children learn more easily, and also those who cannot speak well, and those who cannot read, the illiterates, the common people, and women; because memory gets reinforced with singing, and learning becomes easier, and thus instead of ugly songs they are accustomed to singing, let them sing holy and good things; and also because we have the example of the primitive Church where hymns were sung in the morning and the evening in praise of God. For this and other reasons, nowadays the Church sings sacred things.

Of particular importance in this extract is the calculated construction of continuity between the Catholic Church of the sixteenth century and the practices of Christians

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35 Kennedy, “Jesuits and Music,” 82.
from antiquity. Indeed, a preoccupation with historical research into the early Christian Church was one of the hallmarks of Tridentine apologetics.\(^3^8\) As will be explored in the second half of this dissertation, this notion of historical continuity influenced the manner in which Europeans represented the Japanese Church in their historiographies, martyrologies, and in the performing arts. Ledesma’s recognition of singing as a mnemonic device for spiritual development was also recognised by his contemporaries. Michel Coyssard (1547–1623), in his *Traicté du profit que toute personne tire de chanter en la Doctrine Christienne* (1608), declared that “I know not how – [but] that which is insinuated by a pleasant delectation … is captured more strongly in the memory”.\(^3^9\) This use of singing had come to be understood in the early modern period as an effective method of ‘cognitive conditioning’ – that is, as a mode through which undesirable behaviour could be modified in favour of more devout models.\(^4^0\) Achieved through the use of “tuneful melodies, familiar language, and the charm of rhyme”, *contrafactum* was a primary means by which Jesuits were able to effect this kind of ‘cognitive conditioning’.\(^4^1\) Although this was a practice adopted by missionaries in sixteenth-century Japan, the musical forms that arose out of the mission appear to have developed beyond mere vernacularisation into devotional practices best understood as ‘Japanese’.

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\(^4^1\) Translated in van Orden, *Materialities*, 137.
Misunderstood Missionaries

The evangelising strategies employed by the Jesuits in the first decades of contact engaged in a progressive understanding of the Japanese political climate, social mores, and cultural practices. This engagement took a unique form, with the mission constructing an identity distinct from other contemporary proselytising efforts in South America and Africa. By virtue of the fact that Francis Xavier famously regarded the Japanese as “the best [people] that have as yet been discovered”, the missionary practice adopted can be understood as a form of cultural *accommodatio* or enculturation to people of perceived worth. Yet, a policy of adaptation was not necessarily new in the sixteenth century, for it had been a key characteristic of Christian expansion since the time of St. Paul’s sermon before the Areopagus. Such an approach, however, largely fell into disuse after the reign of Pope Gregory I (r. 590–604), tending towards what Wolfgang Reinhard has termed “ecclesiastical colonialism”, which he contends was inherent in the global Catholicisation of the early modern period. While the related missions in India and Japan could be seen as a revival of this earlier enculturative conversion practice, the degree of apostolic experimentation that occurred throughout the sixteenth century argues for a fresh consideration of Jesuit *accommodatio* centred in

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42 “First of all, the people with whom we have thus far conversed are the best that have as yet been discovered; and it seems to me that no other pagan race will be found that will surpass the Japanese. They have, as a race, very fine manners; and they are on the whole good and not malicious. They have a marvellous sense of honor and esteem it more than anything else.” Xavier to his Companions living in Goa, from Kagoshima (November 5, 1549). Costelloe, *The Letters and Instructions of Francis Xavier*, 297.


glocal practice. As compellingly demonstrated by Irving, the “examination of [these] multilateral cultural encounters through music is one of the most valuable ways we can begin to understand the transnational dialogues and reciprocal exchanges that took place during the early days of globalization.” Thus a glocal approach to performative practices by missionaries also allows us to unravel the conventional, yet problematic, narrative of Eurocentrism. Referred to as Nanbanjin or “barbarians of the South”, the Jesuits were not received by the Japanese as ‘gods’ of the Sun, in the way that the Aztecs had characterised the Spanish conquistador Alonso de Alvarado (c.1485–1541). If we recognise early modern Japanese ‘converts’ as active participants from the very outset, they are transformed, in the formation of Kirishitan practice and identity, from passive recipients into both conscious and unconscious reformers of a new kind of Catholicism. Moreover, the Japanese adoption of Catholic aesthetics in various sacred and secular forms of daily life also inverted the play of power between the global and local. This constant state of fluctuation between the embodiment of ‘centre’ and ‘periphery’ is symptomatic of glocal interconnectedness and allows us to develop a vocabulary necessary for understanding early modern Kirishitan practice. In employing these terms, we are able to properly address the development of Catholicism beyond Europe in the ways in which its local practitioners interpreted its beliefs via

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48 It is interesting to note that in identifying Europeans as “barbarians of the South”, the Japanese placed themselves as the centre, and Europe as the geographical periphery. Nanban literally means “Southern Barbarian.” This term was adopted from China during the time of the Europeans’ first arrival in Japan. The idea of the “Southern Barbarian” originates from the Confucian conceptualization of the Chinese Kingdom as the central figure around which four sides were populated by so-called ‘barbarians.’ The Portuguese and Spanish who had reached China were therefore believed to have sailed from unknown lands in the south. Grant K. Goodman, Japan and the Dutch, 1600–1853 (London: Routledge, 2000), 5.
49 As has been outlined by Higashibaba, scholarly use of the terms ‘converts’ or ‘conversion’ in the Japanese context is problematic, as it implies an ideal type of theologically-defined Christian fidelity. That is to say that these terms can mislead us into understanding Japanese followers’ religious identities and practices as being congruent with the Jesuits’ European communities. Higashibaba, Christianity in Early Modern Japan, xv. Using the Japanese term Kirishitan (both as an adjective and noun) thus allows us to engage more meaningfully in understanding these new practices as something grounded in glocal exchange.
their local modes of expression. This dissertation thus gives due consideration to what Simon Ditchfield identifies as a scholarly obligation to reconsider our understanding of the geography of Catholicism.\footnote{Simon Ditchfield, “Decentering the Catholic Reformation: Papacy and Peoples in the Early Modern World,” Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte 101 (2010), 191. See also Ryan Dunch, “Beyond Cultural Imperialism: Cultural Theory, Christian Missions, and Global Modernity,” History and Theory 41 (2001): 301–25; Ditchfield, “Catholic Reformation and Renewal,” 152–85.} That is to say, a preoccupation with Eurocentric dualities detracts from a more nuanced understanding of the ‘local’ in its own terms, for sites of intercultural contact are simultaneously global and local. In adopting different geographical points of view, we are thus able to see Jesuit missionaries at once as ‘global’ movers as well as minor players on the periphery of Japanese social, cultural, and political power. This dissertation thus disputes the notion of “ecclesiastic colonialism” in the Japanese context and confronts the lingering scholarly myth of a fundamental inequity in cultural power.\footnote{For a discussion of the ethical issues associated with scholarly endorsements of ‘acculturation,’ ‘assimilation’ etc., see Thomas Leims, Die Entstehung des Kabuki: Transkulturation Europa-Japan im 16. Und 17. Jahrhundert (Leiden: Brill, 1990), 6–7.} However, it should be noted, as per Joan-Pau Rubiés, that scholarship on Jesuit cultural dialogue can run the risk of aligning these harbingers of the Catholic Reformation with modern ideals of cultural relativism.\footnote{Joan-Pau Rubiés, “The Concept of Cultural Dialogue and the Jesuit Method of Accommodation: Between Idolatry and Civilization,” Archivium Historicum Societatis Iesu 74 (2005): 237–80. See also Jonathan Chaves, “Inculturation versus Evangelization: Are Contemporary Values Causing us to Misinterpret the 16th–18th Century Jesuit Missionaries?”, Sino-Western Cultural Relations Journal 22 (2000): 56–60.} Rubiés argues that the policy of {	extit{accommodatio}} was often used opportunistically, as a “temporary measure rather than as a long-term acceptance of cultural diversity”.\footnote{Rubiés, “The Concept of Cultural Dialogue and the Jesuit Method of Accommodation,” 239.} This should not distract us, however, from the adoption of Christian ideas and aesthetics by the Japanese for their own secular and sacred consumption. As colonial imposition as such did not occur, individuals – prior to the persecution of Christians in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries – could move in social, cultural, and religious spaces in which the choice to participate in Christianity – however idiosyncratic their
interpretations may have been – was theirs to make. Mary Laven, in her consideration of the Jesuits’ activities in China, clearly identifies this dynamic between the global and local where the creative play of power was in the hands of the ostensible ‘converts’:

For whereas the Jesuits, who believed those in ignorance of the true faith to be destined to damnation, were committed to conversion, the Chinese, who considered their spiritual lives to be enriched by the addition of new devotional strands, took a syncretic approach to religion.

These instances of syncretism can be seen as the result of simultaneous acts of cultural imitation, dialogue, and opposition. The role of music in facilitating such acts “tap[ped] into global [and local] expression[s] by reference to topics of broad interest, especially common emotional or sentimental feelings”. Not only was music a mnemonic instrument of the catechism, but it was also in this way an effective and affective means of engaging with the Japanese.

Lost in Translation or the Problem with God

Xavier arrived in Japan with minimal knowledge of the Japanese language. It was soon clear to him and his fellow missionaries that in order to effect a successful transplantation of their namban cultural and religious ideas, the linguistic divide had to be bridged. The Jesuits’ efforts in the transmission of cultural and religious knowledge has been elsewhere defined as a kind of missionary ethos instigated by the early work of

55 There were, however, instances where Japanese regional rulers (or “daimyo”) imposed Christianity upon their subjects, often in efforts to secure trade contracts with the Portuguese. Michael S. Laver, The Sakoku Edicts and the Politics of Tokugawa Hegemony (New York: Cambria Press, 2011), 5–8; Charles R. Boxer, The Christian Century in Japan, 1549–1650 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1951), 138.
Xavier in South and South-East Asia. Yet it was in Xavier’s encounter with the Japanese that the seeds of a true *accommodatio* approach to apostolic work were sown. Indeed, Henri Bernard-Maître refers to Xavier’s “deux manières de mission”, with the former *tabula rasa* method ending as the Japanese mission began. Central to this approach was an emphasis on local language acquisition. Xavier wrote with much frustration in his famous letter of November 5, 1549, how the missionaries were “forced … to dispose [themselves] to be like them [the Japanese], both in learning the language and in imitating the simplicity of small and innocent children”. The metaphorical use of sound is a leitmotif in the letter that speaks to the realisation of how these cultural encounters had to be navigated. The unhappy situation is stressed by Xavier in almost despondent tones, through the related metaphors of sound and voice, as he likens the Jesuits to “so many statues among [the Japanese], since they speak and talk much about us, while we, not understanding their language, are mute”. To this extent, the initial movements and practices of the missionaries were heavily reliant upon interpretative intermediaries, both linguistic (through Japanese translators) and material (through the visual and performing arts).

The motivation for a ‘Japanese Catechism’ was born in Xavier’s first meeting with Anjirō, whom we have already encountered in this dissertation’s introduction. As he was believed to be able to “write Japanese very well” (in contrast to his illiteracy in Chinese), Xavier expressed a desire to assist Anjirō in the translation of “an explanation

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of the articles of the faith, and an extensive account of the coming of Christ”. This plan was realised at the turn of 1550, with Xavier foreshadowing the project in the aforementioned letter sent from Kagoshima in 1549:

I believe that we shall be busy this winter in composing a rather long explanation of the articles of faith in the language of Japan so that it may be printed, since all the leading people know how to read and write, in order that our holy faith may be spread through many regions, since we cannot go to all of them. Paul [Anjirō], our dearest brother, will faithfully translate all that is necessary for the salvation of their souls in his own language.

Written in prose, the Japanese Catechism was comprised of an extensive overview of the history of the Old Testament after the fall of humankind. Painstakingly transliterated by Xavier into Latin characters (an early form of rōmaji), Anjirō’s translations were a flawed product born of apostolic urgency and completed with great toil. As early as 1551, the Jesuits were already encountering problems as a result of their linguistic shortcomings. Worse still, by 1555 Balthasar Gago (1515–83) had

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64 Xavier to his Companions in Goa (Kagoshima, November 5, 1549), in Costelloe, *Letters and Instructions of Francis Xavier*, 312.
identified more than fifty problematic words used in the Japanese Catechism. Many key offenders were Buddhist terms adopted to express Christian concepts. Some of these included: *jōdo* – the Buddhist Pure Land – used as a translation for Christian “paradise”; *jigoku* – the lowest of the six realms of existence or *rokudō* in Buddhist teachings – as Christian “hell”; *ten’nin* – heavenly spirits in Buddhism that are often depicted in flight – as Christian “angels”; and *tamashii* – a ‘soul’ with no distinction between being “vegetative, sensile, or rational” as the immortal Christian “soul.”

However, no term is more symbolic of being so lost in translation than the Jesuits’ misappropriation of *Dainichi* (大日), literally “The Great Sun” (or “The Great Illumination”), as “God”.

This problem with God, so to speak, was primarily the result of Anjirō’s rather superficial understanding of the various sects of Japanese Buddhism. Yet, we must also acknowledge a two-way process of mistranslation. As noted by Higashibaba, the translation of God as *Dainichi* was derived from Anjirō’s previous summary of Japanese religion, conducted in Portuguese with the Jesuits during his time in Goa. Needless to say, his already shallow grasp of Buddhist theologies was compounded as he expressed his (mis)understandings in a language with which he would have lacked the necessary subtleties of expression. When asked who or what the Japanese revered as their central figure of divinity, Anjirō offered the name of *Dainichi*, as recorded by Nicolo Lancillotto (d. 1558) in 1548:

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All [Japanese] adore one single God whom they call in their language *Denychy* [*Dainichi*]; and he [Anjiro] says that they sometimes paint this *Denychy* with only one body and three heads. [...] But this man said that he did not know the meaning of those three heads; but he knew that all were one ... as with [our] God and Trinity.\(^{72}\)

*Dainichi* (literally: “Great Light”) was the Japanese name given to the Mahāvairocana, the Primordial Buddha (*ādibuddha*) in the Chinese schools of Tiantai and Hua-Yen Buddhism, later appearing in the Japanese schools of Shingon, Kegon and esoteric lineages of Tendai.\(^{73}\) Dainichi or Dainichi Nyorai (大日如来) is the central figure of veneration in Shingon Buddhism, as well as a syncretistic character of the Shinto sun goddess, Amaterasu (天照, literally: “shining in heaven”).\(^{74}\) Prior to his arrival in India, Anjirō had been a member of the Shingon sect, and had described their veneration of Dainichi as akin to the Christian conceptualisation of an omnipotent Creator. Thus Xavier, having arrived in Kagoshima, announced (most likely through Anjirō) to the Japanese that he and his companions had come to preach the *buppō* (the teachings of Buddhism or “Buddhist dharma”) of Dainichi.\(^{75}\) Knowing that the Jesuits had sailed from India, the very cradle of Buddhism, it is understandable that the Japanese believed these men in black robes to be preaching yet another sect from these same origins. Indeed, the daimyo Ōuchi Yoshitaka (1507–51) of Yamaguchi famously offered the Jesuits a deed to a former Buddhist temple in 1551, referring to them as “monks [bōzu] who have come from the western region [India] to spread the law of Buddha (buppō o

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\(^{72}\) Translated in Schurhammer, *Francis Xavier*, vol. 3, 484. Garcia de Sá (1486–1549), the then governor of India, entitled Lancillotto’s report as *Information on the Island of Japan given by Mestre Francisco, who obtained Reports on it from very Trustworthy Persons, especially from a Japanese who became a Christian in this City, a Man of great Talent and Ability.*


shōryū no tame”). The Jesuits, not only seen as namban, were for this confusion also understood to be Tenjikujin (“men from Tenjiku” or “Indians”). Armed with an arsenal of ‘loaded’ Japanese terminology, Xavier is thus reported to have shouted “Dainichi wo ogami are!” (“Pray to Dainichi!”) through the streets of Kagoshima. Ironically, Xavier, a central figure of the European Catholic Reformation was initially seen by many Japanese as a mouthpiece for Buddhist reformation. The Jesuits’ preaching of the fires of hell (jigoku) and the eternal embrace of the Pure Land (jōdo) were all too familiar to the Japanese. Novel, however, were their stories of a “Dainichi [who] had created the world in six days, had impregnated a virgin, and had a human son who was brutally executed but subsequently rose from the dead and ascended to the Pure Land”. Although Xavier would later grow suspicious of Anjirō’s translations, it was ironically this adoption of Dainichi (and its Buddhist connotations) that allowed him to reach a wide population in the first three years of the Japanese mission.

In the year 1551, a series of famed theological debates with Shingon and Zen Buddhist monks in Yamaguchi revealed to Xavier that the name Dainichi was not the “Sun of Righteousness” (as he had deduced from its literal translation), but a Buddhist

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76 Translated in Higashibaba, Christianity in Early Modern Japan, 11. See also Hirokazu Shimizu, “Kirishitan kankei hōsei shiryō shū,” Kirishitan kenkyū 17 (1977), 251–438. App translates the key clause of the deed as follows: “The bonzes who have here from the Western regions may, for the purpose of promulgating the Buddhist law, establish their monastic community at the Buddhist temple of the Great Way.” Urs App, The Cult of Emptiness: The Western Discovery of Buddhist Thought and the Invention of Oriental Philosophy (Rorschach: University Media, 2012), 16.

77 Tenjiku, the Japanese term for India, the land in which the law of Buddha was forged. Cosme de Torrès (1510–1570) wrote to Xavier in 1551 stating that the Japanese “nos disserão chensisicus” (call us “Tenjiku”). Cosme de Torrès to Francis Xavier in Bungo, from Yamaguchi (October 20, 1552), Cartas que os padres e irmãos da Companhia de Jesus que andão nos Reynos de Iapão escreverão aos da mesma Companhia da India e Europa des do Anno de 1549 até o de 1580, vol. 1, ed. Manoel de Lyra (Evora, 1598), f. 18v. See also Ronald P. Toby, “The ‘Indianness’ of Iberia and Changing Japanese Iconographies of the Other,” in Implicit Understandings: Observing, Reporting, and Reflecting on the Encounters between Europeans and Other Peoples in the Early Modern Era, ed. Stuart B. Schwartz (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 327.

78 Schurhammer, Francis Xavier, vol. 4, 225.


term used among esoteric practitioners. Consequently, the Jesuits promptly cut all ties with the misleading ambiguity of Dainichi, transplanting it with the word Daiusu, a Japanese transliteration of the Latin term for God, Deus. This need to communicate in Japanese about Christian ideas and concepts where there were no existing idioms, underscores the intellectual debates in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries known as the “Terms Question”. The Jesuits certainly had no illusions about the complexities of this conundrum. Indeed, “great labyrinths” (grandes laberintos) had revealed themselves in the aftermath of their theological discussions with the Buddhist monks of Yamaguchi. Likewise in China, debate over whether it was acceptable for Jesuits to use the Chinese terms Shangi-di (‘God on High’) and T’ian (‘God’ or ‘Heaven’) resulted in suggestions of transliteration or the invention of new terms in Chinese. However, where words failed, Jesuits were forced to experiment with more material methods of communication. It was their potential for use and development as sensuous and affective media that missionaries looked to the visual and performing arts. The evocative power of their Ignatian engagement with the senses stressed “affectivity and emotionalism in order to appeal to the imagination of the faithful and to bring about conversion”. The performing arts thus acted as a kind of ‘glocal mirror,’ reflecting a localised catechism in sight and sound.

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82 For an overview of these debates, see Schurhammer, Francis Xavier, vol. 4, 225–29.
83 This transliteration as Daiusu was certainly not without its own set of shortcomings. Due to its phonetic similarity to dai usō (“Great Lie”), many Japanese are reported to have openly mocked the Jesuits. See Schurhammer, Francis Xavier, vol. 4, 156, 223–26, 229, and 239.
85 Wiessala, European Studies in Asia, 65.
Balthasar Gago and the New Japanese Catechism

A turning point in the Japanese understanding of the Jesuits’ true identity occurred with the arrival of Balthasar Gago and his new approach to the “Terms Question”. In a letter to his confrères in India, Gago wrote in 1555 of the initial failures of the Jesuits and their ‘problem with God’:

The Japanese sects have various technical terms that 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 connotation 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. Now we explain the meaning of those [Buddhist] words along with the errors they contain and then we explain also the meaning of our own correct words. In this way the people come to understand the difference between the two kinds of expressions, understand the doctrine better and recognize also that it is impossible to use their words to express the truths of God. I mention this in order that those who work among the pagans may weigh their words well when they try to give expression to religious truth.  

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87 Balthasar Gago to his Companions in Goa, from Hirado (September 23, 1555). Translated in Cieslik, “Balthasar Gago and Japanese Christian Terminology,” 87. João Rodrigues (c.1561–1633) would later reiterate this approach in his Japanese Grammar at the turn of the seventeenth century: “Seeing that the Japanese tongue wants words to express numerous new things required by the holy Gospel, it is necessary either to invent such, which is difficult in Japanese, or to take them from our language, corrupting them as may best suit the Japanese pronunciation, so as to be, as it were, indigenous. And as the Portuguese
This approach to translation was central to the composition of a new Japanese catechism, ordered and initially drafted by the Provincial Melchior Nuñez Barreto (1520–71) during his time in Hirado. Following his own transfer to Hirado in 1555, Gago undertook the completion of this catechism with the assistance of the first recognised Japanese lay brother (or dōjuku) by the name of Lourenço. Completed sometime in 1557 or 1558, this work became popularly known as the Nijyū-go-ka-jō, as it was divided into twenty-five doctrinal chapters in a dialogic style. It served as the standard text for all catechetical instruction for the following two decades, undergoing constant revision in line with the Jesuits’ developing understanding of the Japanese language. In light of this, it would appear that the Nijyū-go-ka-jō, with its pivotal position in the 1560s, formed the bedrock of religious understanding among Kirishitan communities through its introduction of Christian terminology into the Japanese vernacular. On the one hand, this clarity lost the Jesuits a large number of followers who had mistaken their mission for a school of Buddhism, while on the other it brought Europeans and Japanese into a closer understanding of one another.

Within the context of early modern colonialism, Irving employs the musical metaphor of an “enharmonic exchange” occurring between Europeans and non-

language has much resemblance to that of Japan, both in many of the syllables and in pronunciation, they can usually be taken from it, although some have been taken from the Latin also. These words are solely such as relate to God, to the saints, to the virtues, and other things which they [the Japanese] have not got.” João Rodrigues, Arte da lingoa de Iapam (Nagasaki, 1604), 179. Translated in Ernest Mason Satow, The Jesuit Mission Press in Japan, 1591–1610 (privately printed, 1888), 11.


89 Dōjuku (同宿) literally means “living together.” It was a Buddhist term used to designate a novice who lived with the monks and served his superiors at the temple. This term was adopted by the Jesuits (dogicus or dogicos) to identify those Japanese undertaking lay instruction. Scholarship on the Japanese Mission is full of conflicting definitions of this term as ‘lay catechists.’ For clarification, see Brockey, The Visitor, 364–65. Abé has also likened the dōjuku to the European sacristans. See Abé, The Jesuit Mission to New France: A New Interpretation in the Light of the Earlier Jesuit Experience in Japan, 141.

90 Ebisawa, Yōgaku denraishi, 64.

91 Nijyū-go-ka-jō translates literally as “Twenty-five Articles.”

92 Ibid.

93 To this effect, Melchior Nuñez Barreto claimed that “some of the neophytes left the Church saying that they had been deceived since they thought that in accepting Christianity they were adopting a religion that was in harmony with the teachings of Shaka and Amida…Others, however, remained faithful to their new-found faith.” Translated in Cieslik, “Balthasar Gago and the Japanese Christian Terminology,” 87. See also, Schurhammer, Das kirchliche Sprachproblem in der japanischen Jesuitenmission.
Europeans during sustained periods of contact, whereby different communities “gradually tempered their cultural systems to incorporate an understanding [of] the Other”. In this way, the Jesuits’ religio-cultural mission adopted and adapted the language, ideas, and practices of others to suit their proselytic objectives. Indeed, this flexible approach to “their way of proceeding” resonates with Ignatius’s famous expression: “Enter through the door of the other so as to make them leave through our door”. By opening one door and exiting through another, both the Jesuits and the Japanese engaged in a “reciprocal process of cross-cultural familiarisation”. Through this negotiation of social, cultural, and religious identities, the consequent exchange between the proverbial ‘East and West’ gave birth to what this dissertation argues was a truly syncretic genre of liturgical performance, which will be referred to as misuteriyogeiki (mystery play) – syncretic both in the way it was acted and the means by which music was applied, localised and newly created. In this light, Irving identifies a subversive power in such practices of syncretism against cultural imperialism. Similarly, it is argued in this dissertation that an account of Kirishitan musical practices devoid of glocal considerations runs the risk of reducing this period of intercultural exchange to a static image of European imposition and ‘oriental’ reception. However, the missionary ethos of accommodatio, and its facilitation of “cross-cultural familiarisation” through the performing arts, implies a degree of cultural openness on both sides. The liturgical traditions that developed in Japan during the 1550s and 1560s, more than merely bridging a cultural divide, demand recognition as practices that can be truly described as Kirishitan. It was in the proselytic capacity of these performative traditions that Xavier brought the success of a growing tradition of liturgical music from Goa to Japan in the mid-sixteenth century.

94 Irving, Colonial Counterpoint, 73.
95 See Muller, “The Jesuit Strategy of Accommodation,” 469.
96 Irving, Colonial Counterpoint, 73.
97 Ibid., 74.
CHAPTER TWO

Singing for Salvation

As it developed from the practice of *missa lecta* (read Mass), we can assume that singing in Japanese churches, as in Goa, was initially performed in Latin. The very first recorded example of liturgical singing occurred in 1552 at the Daidōji Church of Yamaguchi. Pedro de Alcaceva (d. 1579) recounts how the arrival of Balthasar Gago at Yamaguchi in October brought much joy to the *Kirishitan* there. With Juan Fernández (1526–67) and Duarte da Silva (1536–64), Christmas Day was celebrated by these missionaries and the *Kirishitan* community with a *missa cantada* (sung Mass). Although Alcaveva’s account describes the Japanese as not being blessed with “good voices” (*boas vozes*), their singing brought great comfort to those in attendance. By 1555, daily mass and the regular use of liturgical singing became a common practice across Hirado and Funai, in addition to the singing of monophonic *cantigas* from 1556. These latter secular melodies were sources of *contrafactum*, in which missionaries set simple catechetical and biblical texts in Japanese. It is also important to note that the development of these sung practices preceded the arrival of the first European books in Japan during 1556. These included “a book of plainchant” (*hum livro de canto chão*) and “another book of polyphony” (*outro de canto d’orgão*) which are no longer extant.

1 The decrepit Buddhist temple, *Daidōji*, was repurposed by Xavier as the Jesuits’ first church in Japan upon permission of Ōuchi Yoshitaka in 1551.
2 Pedro de Alcaceva to his brothers of the Society of Jesus in Portugal, from Goa (undated, 1554), *Cartas*, vol. 1, f. 24r.
4 Vernacularised *cantigas* were likewise used as tools of religious instruction by the Jesuits proselytising in sixteenth-century Brazil. See Castagna, “The Use of Music by the Jesuits in the Conversion of the Indigenous Peoples of Brazil,” 641.
and whose contents are unknown. A considered analysis of liturgical singing in Japan’s Christian Century is something that is still lacking, due primarily to a scarcity of sources and the general way in which these musical activities have fallen into a “grey area” between different disciplines. Indeed, Daniele V. Filippi notes that Jesuit catechetical methods that “involved dialogues, recitation and singing” were developed within a “fruitful interaction between experiences on European soil and experiences in the extra-European missions”. He further emphasises that in looking to this “non-conventional repertory” we are able to identify practices that were “one of the most characteristic sonic experiences available in the everyday life of Catholics, and … [as such] helped shape personal as well as collective beliefs and identities”. In exploring the development of local music traditions, we gain a greater sense of the Jesuits’ grassroots approach to their apostolic work in the Japanese mission, and how it was grounded in interactions with the common people. This is to be contrasted with the missionaries’ simultaneous ‘top down’ method of seeking the conversion of regional rulers and the nobility. This dissertation demurs from Filippi only in his conceptualisation of “extra-European” regions, for this is to relegate the development of Kirishitan traditions to a status of peripheral significance. In this chapter, performance practices are explored that demand a fresh, indeed localised, consideration of their validity as new cultural forms in the sixteenth century. As the Jesuits’ first decade came to an end, the 1560s would usher

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8 Ibid., 42.
in a period of salvific progress for the Society of Jesus. Higashibaba defines this decade as a turning point in the mission’s first thirty years (1549–80) when, for lack of linguistic fluency, emphasis was placed upon non-verbal practices that focused on the visual, such as the use of religious artwork, relics, and ritual. However, it is argued in this chapter that the development of Kirishitan identity through these visual media was in fact part and parcel of a broader project based in aural and oral training.

There is a tendency in scholarship on Japan’s Christian Century to focus primarily on the early acts of Xavier and the reformism of Alessandro Valignano (1539–1606), the Jesuit Visitor to the East Indies, post-1579. Notwithstanding the importance of these two key figures in the grand narrative of the Japanese church, the thirty-year gap between them saw a number of other missionaries experiment with the limits of accommodatio in their apostolic work. The fostering of distinctly Kirishitan liturgical practices, primarily between 1560 and 1570, is presented in this chapter as constituting the most intensive period of intercultural exchange during the Christian Century, and allows us truly to see glocality in action. Among the hundreds of thousands of Kirishitan who guided and embodied these traditions, arguably the most important demographic was that of children.

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10 Higashibaba, Christianity in Early Modern Japan, 12.
11 Ibid., xvii.
14 The oft-cited number of converts by the turn of the seventeenth century is 300,000. See, for instance, Boxer, The Christian Century in Japan, 320–21; Haruko Nawata Ward, Women Religious Leaders in Japan’s Christian Century, 1549–1650 (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2009), 6; Christal Whelan, The Beginning of Heaven and Earth: The Sacred Book of Japan’s Hidden Christians (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1996), 11. Some scholars cite significantly higher numbers (e.g. 760,000), but these are in
The Role of Children’s Music in the Japanese Church

A bell, a well-known instrument made of metal, with which principally the faithful are congregated to participate in the mass, or to hear the canonical hours, and the divine office; and for that reason they put them high into the towers, so that they can be heard by all.15

This definition of a church bell by Sebastián de Covarrubias y Orozco (1539–1613), a noted musical aficionado and chaplain to King Philip III of Spain (r. 1598–1621),16 alludes to its power as a sonic symbol of the word of God. One is reminded of Psalm 98:4 in which the faithful are instructed to “make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth; break forth into joyous song and sing praises!” The tolling of bells thus represents a kind of “joyful noise” which penetrates the public sphere, redefining space through its construction of a Christian soundscape. The first record of a Jesuit church bell in Japan was noted by Cosme de Torrès (1510–70) in the province of Bungo during 1561 (see Figure 6).

At the sound of the bell announcing prayer time all the Christians kneel down and pray loudly, even the small children. They sing the responsories in every mass and after mass the Pater noster, Ave Maria, Salve Regina, and the Commandments. Every Wednesday there is [a] procession with singing of the Ave Crux; in the evening, after the angelus bell, they are accustomed to sing for all likelihood inflated figures that do not account for apostates. For a discussion of these figures, see George Elison, Deus Destroyed: The Image of Christianity in Early Modern Japan (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1973), 397.


a full hour. Even the heathens sing the doctrine in the streets. There are small children who, although they cannot yet talk properly, already sing the doctrine and happily singing, toddle down the streets.\footnote{Translated in Harich-Schneider, \textit{A History of Japanese Music}, 450.}

The reverberations of this bell can be seen as a kind of metaphor for the blooming of the Japanese Church in the 1560s from the seeds planted by Xavier only twelve years earlier. Central to this account by Torrès is the presence of children. Throughout the corpus of Jesuit correspondence in the sixteenth century, the singing of children seems to define the very contours of Japan’s Christian Century, from the feast days of the liturgical calendar to the classrooms of Jesuit elementary schools and colleges. Indeed, children’s music-making was at the very heart of these soundscapes throughout the \textit{Kirishitan} communities of Japan. The use of music aided the Jesuits in their apostolic work “to attract and entertain people, to reshape habits, and even to redefine perceptions of time and space”.\footnote{Daniele V. Filippi, “‘Their sound hath gone forth into all the earth’: Music and Sound in the Ministries of Early Modern Jesuits,” \textit{Journal of Jesuit Studies} 3 (2016), 357.} Filippi has outlined how such musical modes of “reshaping habits” worked on people’s “corporeity, memory, and emotion” through the creation of “experiences which were genuinely collective and at the same time intimately individual”.\footnote{Ibid., 363.} In what follows, the presence of children in Jesuit records throughout the 1560s will be traced, looking to how their training and performance of liturgical music fulfilled key proselytic objectives. There is a tendency in existing scholarship to present such cases of music-making as detached episodes, when in fact there are connections between people and places that warrant closer inspection.\footnote{Kambe’s pioneering study of the viola da gamba in early modern Japan is an essential work in this field of study. Her focus is concerned with the instruments themselves and their presence in a chronology of episodes between 1561 and 1613. The missing link here, however, is a consideration of the people – the children – who played these instruments and how they relate to a broader shift in the Jesuits’ approach to music-making. Kambe, “Viols in Japan,” 31–67. Similarly, Amano’s exploration of the Jesuits’ exposure to Japanese performing traditions, despite being a very useful resource, is structured primarily as an inventory of detached episodes in Jesuit records. Sachi Amano, “Did Fróis Encounter Christian Noh?”, \textit{DEDiCA: Revista de Educação e Humanidades} 5 (2014): 123–38.} In so doing, we are able to
see a broader narrative of the developing cultural practices and identities of *Kirishitan* communities, grounded in the Jesuits’ approach to the education of Japanese children. This chapter will thus explore four key methods by which Torrès and his companions employed music, especially liturgical singing in Latin, as a means to their proselytic ends:

1. The teaching of liturgical songs as a substitute for text-based catechetical instruction;
2. The introduction of instrumental music tuition;
3. The establishment of repertories to be sung in public and private contexts;
4. The use of public processions as multi-sensorial spectacles to attract converts.

**Cosme de Torrès and the Boys of Bungo**

The ancient province of Bungo (present-day Oita Prefecture) is a recurrent geographical reference in the annals of the Japanese Church. Its association with the Portuguese even preceded the arrival of the Jesuits, with merchant ships sailing into the port of Funai (the provincial capital) as early as 1544 or 1545. The trader Diogo Vaz de Aragão (n.d.) is reported by the Japanese to have resided here for almost five years, from around 1546 until 1551, undoubtedly intriguing the young daimyo Ōtomo Yoshishige (1530–87) with his practice of a foreign faith. From his first contact with Xavier in 1551 until his deposition in 1578, Yoshishige shaped the province of Bungo

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21 The Japanese mission was divided into three jurisdictions: ‘Shimo’, Bungo and Miyako, each with their own houses and residences. In Jesuit terms, Shimo (written as Ximo) referred to the Jesuit residences in the provinces of Hizen, Chikuizen, Higo, and Satsuma (Kyushu region).
23 Daimyo were feudal lords who exerted their rule through hereditary land holdings, subordinate only to the Shogun between the tenth to mid-nineteenth century.
as an epicentre of the Jesuit mission. It was here that a standard was set for the musical education of children, expanding beyond vocal practice and into instrumental tuition.

To begin to consider the *Kirishitan* children of the province of Bungo we must first look to the man who saw their education as important to the mission’s success. Cosme de Torrès was one of the pioneering missionaries who sailed to Japan in 1549 and succeeded Xavier as mission superior in 1551. The series of events that came to define his movements across Kyushu to the Christian stronghold of Bungo highlight the fragmented state of Japanese politics in the mid-sixteenth century.25 The failure of the Ashikaga ‘Shogunate’ (government of the Shogun) to maintain centralised control in the fifteenth century, had led to the expansion of local power among the daimyō and the rise of a hereditary military caste known as samurai. Referred to as the *Sengoku jidai* or “Age of Warring States” (1467–1568), this period of civil conflict had ravaged Japan for almost a century, with some twenty-six distinct provinces, each governed by its own daimyō, struggling for power.26 It was under these conditions that the Jesuits’ cultural mission in Japan was informed by, and simultaneously an influence on, Japanese political and economic landscapes.

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26 The Genpei War of 1180–85 saw the two primary samurai clans, the Taira and the Minamoto, fight for control over the imperial court. The Minamoto clan’s victory led to the establishment of the Kamakura Shogunate in 1192 under which power was devolved from the emperor to the shōgun (military commander). The Minamoto reign was short-lived, being overthrown by the Ashikaga clan in the fourteenth century. A policy of decentralisation was subsequently introduced, outsourcing administration of each province to military governors or *shōgu*. The collapse of the *shōgu* system, however, began in 1467 due to a combination of economic decline, famine, and contestation over succession to the Shogunate. The consequent outbreak of the Ōnin War of 1467–77 would lead to unresolved conflict that later developed in the *Sengoku jidai*. See William E. Deal, *Handbook to Life in Medieval and Early Modern Japan* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 4–12; Stephen Turnbull, *War in Japan, 1467–1615* (Oxford: Osprey, 2002); John Whitney Hall, Nagahara Keiji and Kōzō Yamamura, eds., *Japan before Tokugawa: Political Consolidation and Economic Growth, 1500–1650* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981); Marius B. Jansen, ed., *Warrior Rule in Japan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).
Following a failure to obtain an audience with Emperor Go-Nara (1497–1557) in January of 1551, Xavier left the capital of Kyoto to return to Yamaguchi where he had left Torrès and Juan Fernández at the end of 1550. As we saw in Chapter One, it was here that the Jesuits, endorsed by Ōuchi Yoshitaka, experienced both initial success and spectacular failure. In September of 1551, Xavier left for Bungo, having been invited by the daimyo Ōtomo Yoshishige to his court in Funai. The cordial relationship established in this encounter would continue for over two decades, as will be explored in Chapter Five of this dissertation. This was the last time Xavier would see Torrès, who was now embroiled in the Buddhist intellectual debates of Yamaguchi that led to the Jesuits’ terminology crisis (i.e. the problem with the term Dainichi). However, the political sanctions Torrès had enjoyed in Yamaguchi were soon interrupted when a military coup, instigated by Sue Takafusa (1521–55), led to Yoshitaka’s death only days after Xavier’s departure for Bungo. Coincidently, this revolt had been conducted in collaboration with the very man Xavier had gone to see, Yoshishige, whose younger brother, Ōtomo Haruhide (d. 1557), was installed as the new daimyo of Yamaguchi in 1553. Although Haruhide, like his brother, was an ally of the Jesuits, his reign was cut short by Mōri Motonari (1497–1571) in 1557. Mōri’s vehemently anti-Christian agenda reclaimed all properties deeded to the Jesuits by Yoshinaga, eventually leading to the collapse of the city as a vibrant Christian centre. While this constant state of political flux presented practical difficulties for missionaries looking for a foothold, their perhaps

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27 Not knowing that the emperor held little political power, Xavier had intended on converting the “king of Japan” as they understood him to be, so that he would decree to the country’s people to turn to God. See Elisonas, “Christianity and the Daimyo,” 311–12.


29 See Elisonas, “Christianity and the Daimyo,” 315. Cunningham needs to be corrected here in his assertion that, firstly, the appointment of Haruhide by the rebels was “surprising”; and secondly, that a policy of Christian protection continued in Yamaguchi. See Cunningham, “A Glorious Failure,” 32. Indeed, Xavier himself writes that “[t]his duke of Bungo [Ōtomo Yoshishige] promised me and the Portuguese that he would see to it that his brother, the duke of Yamaguchi, showed great hospitality to Father Cosme de Torres and Juan Fernández, and that he would assist them; and his brother promised us that he would do the same when he reached Yamaguchi”. Xavier to his Companions in Europe, from Cochin (January 29, 1552), in Costelloe, The Letters and Instructions of Francis Xavier, 339.
unwanted association with Portuguese merchants opened doors to provinces and opportunities that would have otherwise been closed. Moreover, some scholars, such as Joseph M. Kitagawa, have conjectured that in a climate where existing Japanese religious institutions were failing to provide necessary works of charity and spiritual succour, the arrival of the Jesuits and their new message of salvation might have been appealing: “Living as they did at a time when the political order and social fabric were disintegrating, people were in need of a sense of social identity and solidarity; many were also looking for the certainty of a salvation experience”. Torrès was in many ways the key protagonist in this “salvation experience” through his development of Xavier’s approach to accommodatio. Affectionately referred to in Jesuit correspondence as “the good old padre” (bom velho padre), Torrès was evidently much-loved by the Kirishitan of Yamaguchi, who are reported to have eagerly embarked on a fifty-hour journey to Bungo where Torrès had fled at the height of Mōri’s campaign in 1556. It was here, in the flourishing mission of Funai, that Balthasar Gago truly made his mark through much-needed works of charity. It is perhaps because of this fame with which Gago has risen in Jesuit historiography thus far, that the figures of Torrès, Juan Fernández, and Aires Sánchez (c.1528–90), among others, have been overlooked for their grassroots role in the education of Japanese children. It is here that we begin our story.

34 The study of grassroots movements in Japan and the experience of lay Kirishitan is still an area requiring further research. Ikuo Higashibaba, et al., “Nihon ni okuru Kirisuto-kyo no jyuu to rikai:
On October 8, 1561, writing to António de Quadros (d. 1572), the then provincial of India, Torrès describes how he had never seen people “so obedient to reason” after conversion to Christianity, “nor [so] inclined to devotion and penitence”.35 Here he makes specific reference to the Kirishitan of Hirado who, in seeking a life of poverty in the cause of Christ, had abandoned their farms and moved to Bungo. More specifically, these Kirishitan had fled their former home following an exodus of the Jesuits from Hirado in 1561. The daimyo Matsuura Takanobu (1529–99), who had initially welcomed Xavier in 1550, acted upon his growing anti-Christian sentiment in expelling Gaspar Vilela (1525–72) for his burning and destruction of Buddhist images in 1558.36 Vilela’s initial uncompromising approach to evangelisation shows that the practice of *accommodatio* was not practised uniformly among the Jesuits in the first phase of the Japanese mission. Indeed, the arrival of Francisco Cabral (c.1533–1609) as Torrès’s successor in 1570 marked a new period of direct opposition to Kirishitan syncretism in favour of liturgical orthodoxy. This return to an anti-local attitude was not overturned until the arrival of Valignano and his systemisation of the Japanese mission, grounded in the spirit of *accommodatio* from 1580 onwards.37

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35 “Muitas terras tenho vistas de fieis & infieis, & nunca vi gente tão obediéte à rezão depois que a conhecem, nem tão inclinada a devaçam, & penitencia: porque nell, & em receber o Santissimo Sacramento, mais parecem religiosos, que Christãos de tão pouco convertidos.” Cosme de Torrès to António de Quadros, Provincial of India, from Bungo (October 8, 1561), *Cartas*, vol. 1, ff. 76r–76v.


37 This conflict of missionary principles between Cabral and Valignano has been extensively analysed elsewhere. See especially Schütte, *Valignano’s Missions Principles for Japan*, vol. 1/1, 187–247. It is important to summarise, however, that in contrast to his predecessors, Cabral outspokenly condemned the Japanese people as “negroes” of “low class”, discouraging missionaries from the precedent established by Xavier and de Torrès of learning the Japanese language and adapting social customs in favour of their communities. Valignano, having dismissed him as mission superior in 1581, expressed that Cabral would...
Cabral’s decade as a hiatus in the mission timeline between the efforts of Xavier and Torrès on the one hand, and Valignano on the other. This is not to overstate a sense of continuity in a localised approach to apostolic work among the Jesuits, nor is it to present an overly simplified image of the Japanese Church as one that uniformly endorsed *Kirishitan* practices. It is, however, an important distinction that defines the 1560s, under the direction of Torrès until his death in 1570, as a decade of *accommodatio* endorsed at the highest level. It was during these years in Bungo (between 1556 and 1562) and the cities of Shimo (until his death in 1570),\(^{38}\) that Torrès formed lasting links between mission houses and their training of children across southern Japan.

In his letter to de Quadros, Torrès recounts a conversation he had with one of the *Kirishitan* who had fled from Hirado to Bungo. He recounts how his little girl had gone to buy some wine (*saké*):

> [I]t came to pass that a beggar was playing the Ave Maria, and listening to [it] … [she] dropped the wine vessel, and after kneeling to pray, did not get up until [she had] recited five times the *Pater Noster* and *Ave Maria*.\(^ {39}\)

Here, the use of the verb *tangerão* ("playing") seems to indicate the plucking of a stringed instrument. The description of a beggar as the performer is most likely a reference to the blind ‘troubadours’ of sixteenth-century Japan known as the *biwa-hōshi* or ‘lute priests’. These enigmatic figures played the *biwa*, a pear-shaped fretted lute strummed with a plectrum, to accompany songs about histories, wars, legends, and

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\(^{39}\) “Hum Christão me contou, que mandando os dias passados hũa sua moça pequena Christã a buscar hum pouco de vinho, onde o vendião, aconteceo que estandoo mendindo [mendigo] tangerão às Ave Marias, & que em ouvindoas logo á hora largou o vaso de vinho, & se pós de giolhos a rezar, & não se levantou até não rezar cinco vezes o padre nosso & Ave Maria.” *Cartas*, vol. 1, f. 76v.
mythologies. The majority of these biwa-hōshi relied upon kadozuke, the practice of door-to-door performance, which despite its ritual associations was regarded as a form of begging.\(^{40}\) As will be discussed in Chapter Three, the handful of biwa-hōshi who ‘converted’ to Christianity played a key role in the Jesuits’ localised approach to grassroots conversion. The act of obedience and devotion by this little girl is described as moving the “gentiles” who were “so amazed and edified” by the display that they proclaimed there to be no other God than that of the Christians, for “even the children teach good conduct.”\(^{41}\) Here, the streets of Bungo sound more like the city of Valencia whose children sang songs of the catechism day and night. Indeed, by 1561 we can already see the singing of prayers (mainly the Credo, Pater Noster, Salve Regina and Ave Maria\(^{42}\)) as the foundations of instruction for Japanese children. Moreover, Torrès’s account of the call (of the beggar) and response (of the little girl) in a typical marketplace demonstrates how individual actors engaged in the construction of soundscapes that defined and redefined the parameters of Kirishitan space. The characterisation of this girl as an exemplum of virtue could seemingly be cut from the same cloth as Ledesma’s Modo per insegnar (1573), as discussed in Chapter One, which exhorted children to lead by example, especially in the public singing of liturgical song. The clear “subtext of behavioural socialization”\(^{43}\) is evident in this account, where the Japanese spectators, who in hearing the call of God, are reshaped through a trinity of corporeal, memorial, and emotional experience.\(^{44}\) A similar approach to instruction was endorsed in the establishment of a Jesuit elementary school


\(^{41}\) “Ficáraõ es Gentios taõ espantados & edificados, que dezião que não avia outro Deos como o dos Christaõs, pois ainda os meninos ensinavão bõs costumes.” Cartas, vol. 1, f. 76v.

\(^{42}\) See Juan Fernández to his brothers of the Society of Jesus, from Bungo (October 8, 1561), ibid., f. 77r.


\(^{44}\) Filippi, “‘Their sound hath gone forth into all the earth’,” 363.
at Funai in 1561, a forerunner to the Jesuit collegios designed by Valignano in the
1580s. Directed by Torrès after his arrival in 1557, Japanese pupils were instructed
by the likes of a young Duarte da Silva (1536–64) and Guilherme Pereira (c.1540–
1603), as well as Aires Sánchez and Japanese dōjuku who had been trained in
Yamaguchi and Funai. As Abé has indicated, the establishment of this school was
perceived by Japanese students and their parents as another kind of Buddhist
education. Thus in order to attract the boys who were currently instructed at Buddhist
temples, Torrès and his companions were compelled not only to teach Christian
doctrine, but also to follow a curriculum in reading and writing similar to that which
their charges were accustomed. An early understanding of this is evident from 1559,
with Gago emphasising that his companions were occupied with study of the Japanese
language, even describing how they spoke among themselves at the Jesuit house in
Japanese so as to improve their fluency. Along with Gago, who already had a strong
grasp of the language, Juan Fernández noted how a Japanese dōjuku by the name of
Damian (Damião), held “the office of teaching the letters of Japan to the children of
the Christians, for before, they had been instructed at the monasteries of their Bonzes where
... young men are taught many more [immoral] customs and vices”. The Japanese
students would have been struck by the novelty of the arrival of the first European
instruments in the form of the viol (or ‘viola da gamba’), a family of fretted string

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45 Dorotheus Scholling, *Das Schulwesen der Jesuiten in Japan, 1551–1614* (Munich: Regensbergschen
Buchhandlung, 1931); Kenjiro Miyamoto, *Klang im Osten, Klang im Westen: der Komponist Toru
Takemitsu und die Rezeption europäischer Musik in Japan* (Saarbrücken: Pfau-Verlag, 1996), 16. See
46 We do know, however, that Torrès and his companions were already engaged in the education of
Japanese children in Bungo from 1557. See Balthasar Gago to his brothers in India, from Bungo
(November 1, 1559), *Cartas*, vol. 1, ff. 63r–67r.
Experience in Japan*, 170.
48 Balthasar Gago to his brothers in India, from Bungo (November 1, 1559), *Cartas*, vol. 1, f. 63v.
49 “També ensina as letras de de Iapã[o] aos filhos dos Christãos, porque antes as aprendião nos mosteiros
dos seus Bonzos, onde depois de aprenderem fica vão filhos do demonio, polos muitos maos costumes &
vicios que os Bôzos enfînia aos moços que té em seus mosteiros...” Juan Fernández to his brothers of the
Society of Jesus, from Bungo (October 8, 1561), ibid., f. 77v. This description of the monks’ “vices” is
common in Jesuit correspondence and is likely a reference to the Buddhist practice of pederasty. See Gary
Leupp, *Male Colors: The Construction of Homosexuality in Tokugawa Japan* (Berkley: University of
instruments held between the legs (da gamba) and played with a bow (see Figure 7). It was not until this point in the Japanese mission that the teaching of musical instruments was mentioned in Jesuit correspondence. It is thus from 1561 that we can see the beginnings of instrumental tuition at the Jesuit elementary school of Funai. How and why viols came to arrive in Japan is shrouded in as much mystery as the man who taught them to the Kirishitan children.

The early life of Aires Sánchez is largely unknown. Ruiz-de-Medina conjectures, however, that on account of his good grammar and mature writing style, he must have been well-educated prior to his training in music and medicine. Having landed in Japan during the year of 1561, he was likely to have been on board any number of the Portuguese merchant ships which had arrived in the port of Funai. It might well be possible that these merchants were also the very same individuals who brought viols to the Jesuit mission house. Given that mention of these instruments does not appear until Sánchez himself writes of his arrival at Torrès’s elementary school in 1562, this is certainly plausible. “I dedicate my time to curing the sick and teaching fifteen Japanese and Chinese boys that I have in my house to read, write, sing and play the violas darco [viols]” states Sánchez on October 11, 1562, soon after being admitted as a novice of the Society of Jesus by Torrès in the very same month. Torrès undoubtedly saw great utility in the ambition and expertise of the young Sánchez who

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50 Kambe’s exhaustive analysis of the viola da gamba’s use in Japan identifies the myriad terms missionaries used to refer to this instrument: viola, violas, violas darco, violas de arco, to name a few. See Kambe, “Viols in Japan,” 31–67. The presence of flutes (frauta) and shawms (charamela) appear in accounts as early as 1551, but these would seem to be merchant musicians who were not directly associated with the Jesuit mission. See Waterhouse, “The Earliest Japanese Contacts with Western Music,” 38.

51 The earliest mention of a musical instrument in connection with the Jesuits is a European keyboard (cravo) given to Ōuchi Yoshitaka by Xavier in 1551. This was a part of a set of gifts intended on winning over the daimyō of Yamaguchi. We do not see any further mention of this instrument. See Takahashi, “A Portuguese Clavichord in Sixteenth-Century Japan?” 116–23.


53 “Ao presente me exercito em curar os doentes, & ensinar a ler & escrever, & cantar & tanger violas darco a quinze míninos Iapões, & Chinas, que aqui em casa estão, pera que sendo Deos servido, se fação os divinos officios có toda a so lenidade.” Aires Sánchez to his brothers in Portugal, from Bungo (October 11, 1562), Cartas, vol. 1, f. 101r.
would later travel to Macao to be ordained as a priest in 1579. The speed with which Sánchez established Japan’s first choir and ‘ensemble’ of European music is certainly striking and paints a picture of an enthusiastic teacher with undoubted musical prowess.

Indeed, as Kambe notes, none of the Jesuits up until this point had any notable talent with music beyond what was required for liturgical instruction.\textsuperscript{54} Despite placing great importance on singing in the education of children, Torrès would have been unlikely to have himself requested viols for use in his school. The Kirishitan students here were noted for their musical talents and, already within the year, Luís de Almeida reported the fruits of Sánchez’s labour. The daimyo Ōtomo Yoshishige, accompanied by his then four-year-old son and “nobles of his Kingdom” were invited to dine with the Jesuits at their mission house in 1562. Almeida recounts how

\[a\]fter sitting at the table, they were served delicacies in their style and in ours. We ate while music of violas darco was played. It was so nice that it could have been suitably played even in front of a [European] Christian prince. The boys who played were Christians, and dressed all in white. They were extremely pleased to hear it.\textsuperscript{55}

Almeida’s account speaks to the many ways in which music – both the instruments and their playing – was used as a kind of diplomatic currency by the Jesuits in Japan’s Christian Century.\textsuperscript{56} This dinner, beyond being a meeting of gastronomical cultures (a kind of culinary accommodatio\textsuperscript{57}), was a demonstration of the Jesuits’ success achieved

\textsuperscript{54} Kambe, “Viols in Japan,” 38.
\textsuperscript{55} Translated (with some alterations) in Kambe, “Viols in Japan,” 39–40. See Luís de Almeida to his brothers of the Society of Jesus, from Bungo (October 25, 1562), Cartas, vol. 1, f. 110r.
\textsuperscript{57} The Jesuits were not particularly known for their fondness of Japanese cuisine. See, for instance, Frois’s sixty points of comparison between ‘European’ and Japanese food. Luis Frois, The First European Description of Japan, 1585 (A Critical English-language Edition of Striking Contrasts in the
under the endorsement of their guest of honour. In this we can see an identification of children as the very embodiment of the Jesuits’ approach to their cultural mission. For Almeida, this investment in Japanese children for the mission’s future was no uncertain matter, for as he proclaimed to his companions in Europe during the same year, “my dear brethren, with these little boys Our Lord is going to bring fire all over Japan, that it may flare up in the fire of his love”.\textsuperscript{58} We must, of course, be careful not to freeze these children in time; in a matter of years they would become adult representatives of the Japanese Church. Nevertheless, these “little boys”, for the present, came to form the first ‘touring ensemble’ of so-called namban music, esteemed for their musicality as much as their devotion. Almeida demonstrates an acute awareness of how their musical instruction was critical to the Jesuits’ grassroots progress. To this extent, he notes how Japanese children who were sent to Bungo were specifically chosen for their musical aptitude so as to supplement the small numbers in Sánchez’s choir.\textsuperscript{59}

Little is known about how singing was taught in this period of the Japanese mission, nor what the repertory consisted of beyond the singing of Latin prayers. However, an account from 1557 may shed some light on this. In a letter written from Hirado, Gaspar Vilela reflects upon his time in Bungo and offers us a description of how Holy Week was celebrated in Funai earlier that year.\textsuperscript{60} While he outlines the singing of the Benedictus and Miserere for Holy Wednesday, he contrasts these

\textsuperscript{58} Luís de Almeida to his brother of the Society of Jesus, from Yokosuera (October 25, 1562), translated in Ruiz-de-Medina, “The Role of Children,” 63.  
\textsuperscript{59} López-Gay, \textit{La liturgia en la misión del Japón del siglo XVI}, 172.  
\textsuperscript{60} Leims conjectures that this account refers to Hirado, but this is not the case. In this letter, Vilela reflects upon his own missionary activities and the initiatives of his superior, Torrès. Vilela worked under his instruction during his time in Funai between 1556 and 1557, before traveling to Hirado where he was expelled in 1558. See Leims, \textit{Die Entstehung des Kabuki}, 271. For Vilela’s movements throughout Kyushu, see Madalena Ribeiro, “Gaspar Vilela: Between Kyushu and the Kinai,” \textit{Bulletin of Portuguese-Japanese Studies} 15 (2007), 14.
practices with the singing of four people in polyphony for Easter Sunday.⁶¹ Boys, dressed in surplices and adorned with wreaths and roses of different colours, performed these polyphonic songs which, he remarks, he had never heard before. This implies Vilela had witnessed Japanese boys singing in a new way (i.e. polyphonically) that departed from their previous training in plainchant. As such, we might consider the possibility that this singing for Easter Sunday was performed from the previously discussed book of polyphony that arrived in Japan in the previous year.⁶² Without their own printing press throughout the first four decades, Jesuits of the Japanese mission were heavily reliant upon any texts made available to them via the merchant trade routes. It is thus highly likely that this book of polyphony, and the book of plainchant that accompanied it, were used by the likes of Torrès and later Sánchez who was placed in charge of vocal instruction from 1561.

This early stage of the *Kirishitan* musical repertory is based in what Irving has described elsewhere as “the long-distance reproduction of [European] sacred musical performances”.⁶³ As will be discussed later, this process of performance “reproduction” is to be contrasted with the introduction of vernacular singing and its influence on *Kirishitan* dramatic traditions. By 1563, Torrès had left Bungo for the domain of Ōmura (in western Kyushu) where he worked with the *Kirishitan* community who had been without a priest for five years. In a letter written in November of this year, Luís Fróis, reflecting upon Torrès’s celebration of the Assumption, describes how “Brother Aires Sánchez, who had come from Bungo three or four days earlier, with [his] boys and their violas darco, served in the vespers and the mass. […] The vespers were sung by boys,

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⁶¹ “Logo se seguia hum irmão revestido, com hum incésario, com hũa capella na cabeça, & hiamos logo quatro cantando em canto dorgaõ (que he cousa q̃ nunca ouvirão) muitos Psalmos, e Alleluya, com sobrepelizes, & grinaldas na cabeça, & rosas de diversas cores.” Gaspar Vilela to his fathers and brothers of the Society of Jesus in India, from Hirado (October 29, 1557), *Cartas*, vol. 1, ff. 56v–57v.
⁶² For description of this book’s arrival, see López-Gay, *La Liturgia en la Misión del Japón*, 159.
and the padre [Torrès] recited a prayer.” As Kambe has noted, Fróis described this occasion again in his *Historia de Japam* in which the young boys are said to have been taught by Sánchez, and that they “knew well [the] offices [of] the Mass, and played the instruments skilfully”. Within the space of one year, then, the students of the Jesuits’ elementary school in Funai had gained a significant reputation for their abilities. We can see by this account the manner in which music served not only to build local *Kirishitan* communities from the ground up, but also how this music travelled, weaving together the social and religious fabric of towns, creating a sense of collectivity through the *Kirishitan* soundscapes that bound them. Fróis, who had arrived in this very year of 1563, travelled from Macao to Yokosuera in the company of Giovanni Battista di Monte (1528–78), the first Italian Jesuit to set foot on Japanese soil.

By the following year, Monte had stationed himself in Funai and in a letter to Polanco, the Jesuits’ secretary in Rome, offers us a fresh perspective on the progress of the *Kirishitan* children of Bungo and the centrality of music in their instruction and practice. He describes the morning of Easter Sunday in 1564 with an image of crowding outside the door of the Jesuits’ church. Monte then evokes in great detail the procession spectacle, illustrating its colours, textures, and sounds:

Sixteen boys dressed in white garments with crucifixes upon their chests, lit candles in their hands, and garlands upon their heads, [sang] hymns in praise of the Lord. Almost all of these boys are offered to this house by their parents in

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64 “...& avia tres ou quatro dias, que era chegado de Bûngo o irmão Aires Sanchez cõ os mininos com suas violas darco que a inda sirvirão nas vesporas, & à missa. [...] As vesporas foraõ cantadas polos mininos, e a oração disse o padres”. Luís Fróis to his brothers of the Society of Jesus in Europe, from Ōmura (November 14, 1563), *Cartas*, vol. 1, f. 135v.

service of the Lord.] [S]ome learn and study to spread the Law of the Lord […] of whom are already competent singers and players of the viola d’arco.\footnote{Giovanni Battista de Monte to Juan Alfonso de Polanco in Rome, from Bungo (October 9, 1564), Cartas, vol. 1, ff. 153v–54r.}

Monte reflects upon the mass that followed, describing it as being “officiated with good voices and viols”.\footnote{Ibid.} This is certainly in stark contrast to the ‘bad’ voices described by Alcaveva in 1552, as discussed earlier in this chapter. These boys and their viols importantly represent Japan’s first encounter with European ‘chamber’ music. Indeed, the advent of Japanese bowed instruments did not occur until the kokyū appeared as part of the sankyoku (“three kinds of instruments”) ensembles of the eighteenth century (see Figure 8).\footnote{The kokyū is the only bowed instrument to have developed in the history of Japanese music. Similar in shape to the shamisen, the kokyū is played on the lap (much like a treble viol) and incorporates the use of a detached bow, as opposed to the Chinese erhu which has an undetachable bow. Kambe’s groundbreaking work on viols in early modern Japan has led her to the hypothesis that the kokyū, as Japan’s only bowed instrument, was influenced by the presence of Western bowed instruments circulated by missionaries and merchants throughout Japan’s Christian Century. See Yukimi Kambe, “Kokyū-to rabeca: sofuto-to shitenō Kirishitan kigensetsu,” Nihon Dentō Kenkyū 7 (2010): 37–59; Yukimi Kambe, “The Origin of the Kokyū,” Journal of the Viola da Gamba Society of America 47 (2012): 5–41. For the origins of this idea, see Fumihiko Otsuki’s unpublished manuscript entitled “Shamisenshi,” (c.1885), Waseda University Library, Bunko A0152 08 1-3.} While we do not have any detailed accounts of the Japanese reception of Sánchez’s music students, it is useful to consider how the common Japanese had initially perceived these missionaries from a foreign land. As discussed in Chapter One, the myth that the Jesuits were in fact men from the land of Tenjiku (India) is one factor that may have influenced how their music was interpreted. In the same way that Higashibaba conjectures that the early Japanese interest in Catholic imagery was fuelled by this myth of the Tenjikujin, so too, perhaps, can the presence of Western music – as the Japanese perception of ‘exotic’ (European) tonality – be seen as furthering the misconception of the Jesuits as ethereal figures from the cradle of Buddhism.\footnote{Higashibaba, Christianity in Early Modern Japan, 43–44.} Such
might have been the case throughout the 1550s. By the 1560s, however, it is difficult to imagine that this attitude continued, for the province of Bungo had come to be so intimately interconnected with the Society of Jesus and, with it, an understanding of their true geographical and religious origins. Nevertheless, the playing of viols presented the Japanese, *Kirishitan* or otherwise, with new musical textures that clearly delineated the soundscapes of these communities.

By 1565 there appears to be a systematised approach to the integration of music, both vocal and instrumental, in liturgical practice. In this way, Monte describes a kind of weekly schedule for the students of the elementary school in Funai:

> After the Mass, boys recite the doctrine repeatedly. The brothers are occupied in teaching the Christians, in learning the language [Japanese], and in copying many books in the same language. We spend the whole day on these and other spiritual exercises. After *Ave Maria*, we conduct [the] litany. On Fridays, not only [the brothers] … but also the Christians practice asceticism. On Saturdays, [we sing] *Salve Regina* with the *violas de arco*. On Sundays and feast days, we conduct the Mass with *violas*, and sing some motets with great solemnity.\(^70\)

This use of viols in consort to accompany the choir was likely conceived as a substitute for pipe organs which, along with other keyboard instruments, had yet to make an appearance in Japan. This was, for example, a practice in early modern Europe, with the late sixteenth-century advent of the consort anthem in England and its interchangeable use of organ and viols, while musicologists have also often looked to Henrich Schütz’s (1585–1682) preference for the use of viols as a substitute for organ continuo.\(^71\) The distinction here, however, lies in the viol’s use in *Kirishitan* liturgical settings. Musical

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\(^70\) Giovanni Battista de Monte to his brothers of the Society of Jesus in Portugal, from Bungo (undated, 1565), translated in Kambe, “Viols in Japan,” 43.

instruments, apart from the organ, did not normally take part in the conduct of Mass, and an effort to curb the instrumental embellishment of church services was the central consideration of musical practice that came to a head towards the end of the Council of Trent.\(^\text{72}\) Thus the viol itself stands as a symbol of cultural adaptation and a key technology of education, proselytisation, and non-verbal communication of cultural and religious ideas in early modern Japan. While mention of the use of viols in Japan disappears between the years 1567 and 1579, Kambe conjectures that the playing of viols would have likely continued.\(^\text{73}\) Without the presence of Sánchez, who left Bungo in 1566, there might not have been any further development in the viol players of Funaii, and thus no cause to mention them in correspondence. However, what Sánchez established in this school was a watershed moment for the Jesuits’ cultural mission in Japan. Torrèes, who was by now in very ill health, appears to place an even stronger emphasis on the use of liturgical singing in his final years, between 1563 and 1570.

Despite his frailty, Torrèes was surprisingly mobile in his time after Bungo, travelling throughout the Shimo region. Reflecting upon Christmas of 1565, Almeida writes of Torrèes’s work in the city of Shiki:

> At this time I noticed a great diligence and care with which Father Cosme de Torrès instructs the Christians of this place, and so too the boys and girls of whom he has care of. It is much to the praise of our Lord to see a choir of boys, and another of girls, sing the Vespers, intoned in plainchant with such devotion that one is amazed to hear them. It would seem they know twice as many psalms as I, and so well pronounced, and intoned, that whosoever were to listen would not judge them for anything but religious young men, and good grammarians.\(^\text{74}\)

\(^\text{73}\) Kambe, “Viols in Japan,” 44.
\(^\text{74}\) “Neste tempo o que notei foi húia grande diligencia, e cuidado do Padre Cosme de Torres em doutrinar os Christãos deste lugar, e assi os meninos, e meninas: dos quaes elle tem cuida do. He muito pera louvar
The movements of Torrès from city to city within the Shimo region are seemingly plotted by the sound of children’s voices. To this extent, he stands as a figure that connected disparate Kirishitan communities through the teaching and performing of liturgical singing and the structuring of collective soundscapes. As Almeida had noted, Torrès, in his ill health, was “not happy with only teaching the doctrine to the boys and girls, now he also instructs them in singing vespers, psalms and hymns”. It is in this way that singing came to form an integral part of children’s education and, in some instances, acted as a substitute for text-based doctrinal instruction. This emphasis on singing is an evident acknowledgement of its effectiveness as a mnemonic device. Children, in the act of singing, externalised Christian teachings and subsequently became critical actors in the Jesuits’ apostolic work. In singing, the melodic and rhythmic properties of music impressed the Christian doctrine upon the hearts and minds of Japanese children. As van Orden has argued,

songs taught children to speak together in time and constrained their diction to the norms of the class, and by singing, students incorporated texts, enticed by musical pleasures and the physicality of music, which initiated an irresistible form of education beginning in the muscles and the breath.

An unnamed Portuguese man, presumably a merchant, travelled to the city of Shiki in 1568. He recounts how he was very well received by the Kirishitan there, and was astounded by the children who sang the “Benedictus Dominus Deus Israel, and Te Deum laudamus, and many other things of the Church, that the boys and girls of Japan nosso a Senhor ver hum coro de meninos, e outro de meninas cantarem hũas versporas entoadas em canto chão com tanta devação que he pasmo ouvilos. Paraceme que sabe duas vezes mais salmos que eu, e taõbem pronunciados, e entoados, que quem os ouve não nos julgara senão por moços religiosos, e bons gramaticos, e entendidos arrezoadamente no canto”. Luís de Almeida to his brothers of the Society of Jesus, from Shiki (October 20, 1566). Cartas, vol. 1, f. 213v.

75 Cited in López-Gay, La liturgia en la misión del Japón del siglo XVI, 174.
76 van Orden, Materialities, 141.
know by heart”. Similarly in the city of Gotō, Alessandro Vallareggio (1529–80) describes how Torrès had, in the following year, instructed “two choirs of boys and girls, who sang the Benedictus Dominus Deus Israel with a sweet harmony. At that time, there was already so much joy within my soul, which I say unto you, my beloved brethren … that it seemed to me more [like] a dream than a reality”. This mention of both boys (mininos) and girls (mininas) is important to note. As the Jesuits did not engage in the formal education of Japanese girls as they had with boys, the use of liturgical singing played a central role as a broader form of public education. In this way, singing appears as one of the most direct ways in which Japanese girls were able to actively participate in Kirishitan identity-building. In the same letter penned by the unnamed Portuguese man, a procession for the funeral of a Kirishitan woman is recounted. Torrès is described as leading some one-hundred boys and girls through the streets of Shiki who assisted him “with many psalms”. In line with the importance the Japanese placed on ancestral worship, the Jesuits, in navigating the array of funerary rites entrenched in daily Japanese life, used these occasions to their advantage. As has been discussed by Vu Thanh, Christian funerals were a site of public curiosity, and were

77 “Benedictus Dominus Deus Israel, & Te Deû laudamus, e outras muitas cousas da igreja, õ os meninos, e meninas do Japaõ sa bé de cor.” Letter of a Portuguese man “whose name is not known to the Fathers and Brothers of the Society of Jesus,” from Kuchinotsu (August 15, 1569), Cartas, vol. 1, f. 282r.
78 “...de dous choros de mininos, & mininas: os quaes com hũa doçe harmonia vinhaõ cantando o Benedictus Dominus Deus Israel. Neste tempo era ja tanta a alegria de minha alma, que vos afirmo irmãos meus charissimos, que da alegria estava como atonito, e mais me parecia aquillo sonho que realidade de cousas que na verdade passavaõ.” Alessandro Vallareggio from Gotô (September 4, 1568). Cartas, vol. 1, f. 254v.
79 For an analysis of female participation in the Japanese mission, see Ward, Women Religious Leaders in Japan’s Christian Century, especially 221–22, 331.
80 “…socedeo falecer hũa molher a qual o padre Cosme de Torres foi sepultar, & a estas obras taes os que podem não as perdem, hia com ella muita gente, & irião até cem meninos, & meninas em procissão, os meninos da hũa banda ajudando o padre com muitos psalmos, que de cor sabê”. Letter of a Portuguese man, from Kuchinotsu (August 15, 1569), Cartas, vol. 1, f. 282r.
thus employed by the Jesuits to increase the visibility of the Kirishitan faith.\textsuperscript{82} Central to distinguishing Christian funerary practices from Buddhist traditions was an emphasis on spectacle and solemnity. Both of these emphases were achieved especially in the sonic character of such displays in which the singing of both boys and girls was critical. Torrès’s life came to an end in the months following this procession, and with it, a decade of apostolic work centred in the Jesuits’ investment in the education of Japanese children. As we have seen, the figure of Torrès lies at the very heart of this narrative, and through his and his companions’ efforts, added new musical lines to the growing soundscapes that came to define Kirishitan identity. Indeed, the importance of his elementary school is reflected in the establishment of the Diocese of Funai by Pope Sixtus V (r. 1585–90) in 1588.\textsuperscript{83} In reality, the bishop resided in Nagasaki, for the province of Bungo had since fallen to Yoshishige’s enemies in 1578, ironically the very same year as his baptism. While this chapter has considered the role that children’s music-making played in this first period of the Japanese mission, perhaps of even greater significance to this dissertation’s consideration of the ‘glocal’ is the development of vernacular vocal styles and their role in creating a distinctly Kirishitan dramaturgy.


\textsuperscript{83} See William Corr, \textit{Adams the Pilot: The Life and Times of Captain William Adams, 1564 – 1620} (New York: Routledge, 1995), 44.
**FIGURE 6.** An example of a *Kirishitan* church bell (1570), Nantoysō Collection, Japan.

**WIKIMEDIA COMMONS, OPEN LICENSE.**
FIGURE 7. An example of a seventeenth-century viola da gamba (Ventura di Francesco Linarolo, Venice, 1585).

REPRODUCED COURTESY OF THE ORPHEON FOUNDATION MUSEUM OF HISTORICAL MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS, CASTELLO DI DUINO, ITALY.
FIGURE 8. Woman Stolling Player of Kokyu (Suzuki Harunobu, c.1763–67)

BROOKLYN MUSEUM, NEW YORK (WIKICOMMONS)
“In their own way”

Throughout the Jesuit corpus of correspondence, references to the presence of liturgical singing “in their own way” (á sua maneira) or in accordance “with their traditions” (á sua costume) are recurrent. As distinct from the ways in which missionaries describe the vernacular approach to contrafactum – that is, the setting of indigenous translations to existing European melodies – we are confronted with performative practices that appear to move beyond vernacularisation toward a set of socio-religious traditions that are best understood as truly ‘Japanese’. The practice of what can be described as ‘local versification’ was a turning point in the Jesuits’ cultural mission. In this chapter, this term is employed not only to signify the practice of rendering biblical narratives into vernacular verse, but also the setting of these spoken verses to local vocal styles. This Kirishitan approach to liturgical singing can therefore be understood as a kind of contrafactum whereby Japanese translations were set to Japanese melodies. By transforming the singing of Kirishitan communities from pieces rendered in Latin (and seemingly unintelligible to most of the Japanese), to ones in vernacular verse, Kirishitan practitioners were able to take creative control of how they expressed their own understanding of the Christian faith. Indeed, the Japanese predisposition for incorporating foreign elements into their core beliefs and practices laid the foundations
for distinctly Kirishitan musical and dramatic traditions.\(^1\) This dissertation identifies the use of terms ‘localised’ and ‘localisation’ as theoretically distinct from that of ‘inculturation’ and ‘indigenisation’. ‘Inculturation’, in the context of Christianity, is excluded, for it is too firmly aligned with the ways in which post-Vatican II leaders and theologians have signified the “process of engagement between the Christian Gospel and a particular culture”.\(^2\) Moreover, the process of indigenisation is also outside the bounds of what is addressed in this dissertation. To speak of an ‘indigenous movement’ or the ‘indigenisation’ of Christianity, is to identify, as per Byron D. Klaus and Loren O. Triplett, a “philosophy that affirms that from the beginning, an institution should grow from within the culture in terms of both structure and values”.\(^3\) To accurately describe the true indigenisation of Christianity in Japan, we must look to the forms of faith and devotion practice developed by the Kirishitan in the mid-sixteenth to mid-nineteenth centuries. Such is a kind of Christianity that lies beyond the scope of this study. Thus this chapter is more concerned with what Peter Berger has defined as “the deliberate effort to synthesize foreign and native cultural traits” – i.e. localisation.\(^4\) As opposed to ‘inculturation’ which implies an imbalance of cultural power, ‘localisation’ captures more accurately the bi-directional nature of intercultural exchange, facilitating discussion of the ways in which both Japanese and Jesuits tempered their sociocultural and religious practices to one another. In so doing, this dissertation’s focus is aligned with the relationship between global and local elements, as endorsed in the metaphor of the Glocal Mirror. While references to ‘indigenous’ performance styles will be made,

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this is not to be mistaken for the already confusing practice of using ‘localisation’ and ‘indigenisation’ interchangeably. 5

As the Jesuits developed greater fluency in the Japanese language, so too did the quality of their doctrinal translations. The first recorded instance of Japanese verse within a performative context occurs in 1554. In celebration of Christmas at the Daidoji Church of Yamaguchi, Duarte da Silva and Belchior de Figueiredo (1528–97) are recounted as reciting passages from a Japanese book that contained the Six Ages of Adam until the events of the Revelation. These passages are described as being contextualised by a “sung preface” (prefacio cantado) which was very consoling to the Kirishitan there. 6 Da Silva was most likely responsible for these translations as he was noted by Almeida as being actively engaged in the compilation of language vocabularies. 7 However, he would have undoubtedly been assisted by a Japanese dōjuku. The most likely candidate in Yamaguchi would have been the famed biwa-hōshi (琵琶法師) or ‘blind troubadour’ known by the name of Lourenço Ryōsai (c.1525–92). Baptised by Xavier in 1551, he was received into the Society as a lay brother by Torrès in 1563. 8 As the missionaries’ own language instructor, Lourenço was intimately engaged in the Jesuits’ literary endeavours and was noted for his assistance in the translation of various catechetical texts. 9 Described as an intelligent, well-spoken man of great ingenuity, Lourenço fulfilled a vital role that Xavier had prematurely entrusted

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6 Duarte da Silva to his brothers of the Society of Jesus in India, from Bungo (September 20, 1555), Cartas, vol. 1, f. 43v.

7 See Luís Almeida to his brothers of the Society of Jesus in India, from Bungo (October 14, 1564), Cartas, vol. 1, f. 154v.


9 After arriving in Bungo, Gago recounts how Lourenço had translated a book, brought to him by Belchior de Figueiredo, into Japanese. See Balthasar Gago to his brothers of the Society of Jesus in India, from Bungo (November 1, 1559), Cartas, vol. 1, f. 65r.
to Anjirō only ten years prior.\footnote{10} Identifiable as the first Japanese catechist, we begin to see Lourenço’s role in the training of \textit{Kirishitan} children.\footnote{11} Indeed, the Japanese contribution to the apostolic work of the Jesuit mission is too often overshadowed by the works of European \textit{padres}. In reading between the lines, we are able to see more clearly the active role that \textit{Kirishitan dōjuku}, such as Lourenço, played within the Japanese mission. Ultimately, it was the \textit{biwa-hōshi} who fostered a new kind of \textit{Kirishitan} devotion, grounded in existing Japanese styles of vocalisation.

By 1561, Juan Fernández reports that the now well-seasoned Guilherme Pereira, apart from offering lessons in the Japanese language, was responsible for teaching the Christian doctrine to the children of the Funai elementary school. Fernández paints a picture of the young boys, “even those who barely know how to speak”, as learning “the whole doctrine in their language” within eight months.\footnote{12} By the beginning of the 1560s, Fernández, under the tutelage of Lourenço, had become one of the most linguistically-proficient missionaries, leading him to write a book of Portuguese-Japanese grammar.\footnote{13}

As Joseph F. Moran has noted, this book was used by missionaries for instruction in the Japanese language until the arrival of a printing press at Nagasaki in 1591.\footnote{14} Given that Gago had also returned to Funai by 1559, we might also consider the possibility that his Japanese catechism, the \textit{Nijyū-go-ka-jō}, was a source for vernacular instruction. With its inbuilt ‘call and response’ format, it would also appear a likely text source for sung

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{10} “Vay por interprete o irmão Lourenço, Iapão de grande lingoa & engenho, & muito esperto, tanto que nam lhe ganha ningué em entender as cousas de Deos, & as do Iapaõ.” Ibid.\
\textsuperscript{11} Lourenço is reported as conducting a catechism class in Bungo in 1559, though he was already teaching in a similar capacity soon after his baptism in Yamaguchi. Ibid., 65v.\
\textsuperscript{12} “O irmão Guilherme afora as lições q̃ tem continuas da lingoa de Iapaõ, ensina a doutrina Christã aos míninos: os quaes sam de grandíssimas habilidades, porque não ha nenhum entre elles, ainda os que escassamente sabé falar, que em oito meses não soubesse toda a doutrina em sua lingoa, & em latim, & os mais delles o Miserere mei Deus.” Juan Fernández to his brothers of the Society of Jesus, from Bungo (October 8, 1561), \textit{Cartas}, vol. 1, f. 77r.\
recitations, especially in the case of antiphonal singing. Indeed, Gago himself notes in 1559 that the Christian doctrine was recited in Japanese during the conducting of a morning sermon. Insomuch as Latin liturgical singing offered the Jesuits one of the most far-reaching and affective methods of doctrinal instruction, the vernacular turn in this practice gave unprecedented access to Kirishitan practitioners outside the Jesuits’ formal schooling system. In his same letter of 1561, Fernández demonstrates the extent of translation and the efficiency with which these were memorised by the Japanese:

They know the principal tenets of the Christian Doctrine: Pater Noster, Ave Maria, Credo, [and] Salve Regina in Latin, and the Commandments of the Law of God and of the Church, the mortal sins and virtues against them, and the works of mercy, in their language.

In order to understand how this kind of vernacular instruction led to the proliferation of localised vocal styles, we must look to the contexts in which this syncretic practice flourished. It was in dramatic representations, based in the tradition of medieval mystery plays, that Japanese townspeople used their own genres of music and dance as new ways to express their identity as being Kirishitan at both individual and collective levels.

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15 See, for instance, the 1560 celebration of Christmas in Bungo. *Cartas*, vol. 1, f. 79r.
16 Balthasar Gago to his brothers of the Society of Jesus in India, from Bungo (November 1, 1559), *Cartas*, vol. 1, f. 65v.
17 “...e não dizem mais que as cousas principaes da doutrina Christã, s. Pater noster, Ave Maria, Credo, Salve Regina em Latim, & os Mandamentos da ley de Deos, & da Igreja, os peccados mortaes, & virtudes contra elles, & as obras de Misericordia em sua lingoa.” *Cartas*, vol. 1, f. 77r.
Defining Kirishitan Drama

The development of a unique dramaturgy that synthesised both European and Japanese performance aesthetics is a largely neglected topic in the history of Japanese theatre.\(^{18}\) Insomuch as Buddhism ‘became Japanese’ following its arrival from Korea in the sixth century, so too does this dissertation argue that the global-local dynamics, afforded by intercultural exchange in the performing arts, facilitated the ‘Japanisation’ of Christianity. This is most clearly exemplified in the genre of what will be called misuteriyo-geki,\(^{19}\) a form of Kirishitan drama that developed in line with the vernacularisation of liturgical singing in the 1560s. This decade, as has been explored in Chapter Two, set a standard in the apostolic practice of *accommodatio*, grounded in the Jesuits’ approach to their cultural mission. It was within this experimental environment that we see both Japanese and Jesuits attuned to each other’s ritual traditions and performance aesthetics.\(^{20}\) One of the first, and most communicative encounters with Japanese performance styles, followed the arrival of the blind itinerant troubadour, Lourenço.

Appearing at the steps of the Daidoji Church of Yamaguchi in the spring of 1551, Lourenço and his *biwa* (see Figure 9) offered the Jesuit mission a new way of preaching that exploited the familiarity of Japanese musical narrative traditions. *Biwa-hōshi* (‘lute priests’) recited war stories for the deceased and the bereaved during funerary rites for fallen soldiers, while others engaged in popular Buddhist evangelism.

\(^{18}\) Thomas Leims is seemingly the only scholar to have comprehensively looked at this intersection. See Thomas F. Leims, “Japan and Christian Mystery Plays: Christian Kōwakamai Reconsidered,” in *Contemporary European Writings on Japan: Scholarly Views from Eastern and Western Europe*, ed. Ian Nish (Kent: Paul Norbury Publications, 1988), 206–209; Leims, *Die Entstehung des Kabuki*.

\(^{19}\) *Misuteriyo* is the Japanese transliteration of the Portuguese *misterio* (mystery), while *geki* (劇) means ‘drama’.

\(^{20}\) This is not to state that the Jesuits respected the traditions of Japanese music, namely *gagaku* (imperial court music). Valignano’s assertion that “listening to their music was a great torture for us” was a common sentiment shared by the missionaries throughout the sixteenth century. See Ury Eppstein, “From Torture to Fascination: Changing Western Attitudes to Japanese Music,” *Japan Forum* 19 (2007): 191–216.
at temples and in the streets.\textsuperscript{21} The apogee of this story-telling tradition is the \textit{Heike monogatari} (平家物語 or “The Tale of the Heike”), an epic ballad that describes the political struggle between the Taira and Minamoto clans for control of Japan at the end of the twelfth century. As Alison Tokita has noted, the sung recitation of this epic to the accompaniment of the \textit{biwa} served “to pacify the dead or to lead to salvation”, in addition to functioning as a form of entertainment.\textsuperscript{22} With its central Buddhist themes of impermanence (mūjo) and karmic order, we can begin to see a number of useful parallels for the Jesuits’ cause. Indeed, this epic was eventually adapted for Christian use by the \textit{dōjuku} (and later impassioned apostate), Fabian Fucan (c.1565–c.1621), who published the book between 1592 and 1593.\textsuperscript{23} It is also interesting to note that this religious repurposing of the \textit{Heiki monogatari} was not without precedent. Just as the \textit{biwa-hōshi} were developing their narrative performance styles in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, so too were Shinto priests in Kyoto beginning to incorporate episodes, known as \textit{ku},\textsuperscript{24} from the \textit{Heiki monogatari} into their sung hymns, through which the powers of Buddhism were presented as an antidote to history’s misfortunes.\textsuperscript{25}

The itinerant model of vernacular, grassroots engagement by the \textit{biwa-hōshi} offered a framework through which the word of God could be disseminated in a localised way. In their use of these musically skilled itinerants as mouthpieces for the Christian faith, the Jesuits appropriated Buddhist soundscapes for Kirishitan purposes. In conflating the sonic worlds of Buddhism and Christianity, Lourenço and his pupils were able to present their newly-adopted foreign faith to the Japanese in a familiar and accessible

\textsuperscript{21} Alison Tokita, \textit{Japanese Singers of Tales: Ten Centuries of Performed Narrative} (Farnham: Ashgate, 2015), 60.
\textsuperscript{22} ibid., 53.
\textsuperscript{23} In its preface, Fabian describes the Romanised Japanese version of the epic as a resource for the European missionaries’ training in the Japanese language. See Boxer, \textit{The Christian Century in Japan}, 192–93.
\textsuperscript{24} The \textit{Heiki monogatari} is composed of two hundred episodes which are themselves divided into phrases, each with its own manner of singing.
way. These blind troubadours offer us a link to the development of distinctly Japanese styles of *Kirishitan* devotion and their expression in music and drama.

As noted by Rosemary Woolf, the early medieval Church had inherent structures and liturgical conditions from which the development of drama was seemingly inevitable. In this she observes “a building, an audience, and men speaking or singing words to be listened to and performing action to be watched”, as “the outward phenomena of a theatrical performance”.\(^{26}\) It is within this framework that more defined dramaturgies were expanded in musical ways. In the case of choirs, for instance, the singing of psalms and other liturgical pieces antiphonally, as was practised in the Japanese mission, \(^{27}\) rendered verses as questions and answers which “might momentarily seem to be engaged in dialogue” between biblical figures, or more broadly between devotees and God.\(^{28}\) This core notion of ‘dialogue’ lies at the very heart of religious drama, from its medieval roots through to its more spectacular iterations of the eighteenth century, and in Japan moved beyond communication between Christians and ‘gentiles’, to a dialogue between European and Japanese performance styles. The role of the Church in the tenth-century ‘rebirth’ of drama and the manner in which it developed throughout the late medieval and early renaissance periods is elsewhere well-documented.\(^{29}\) However, it is useful for us to briefly consider the genre of mystery plays

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\(^{27}\) See, for instance, accounts from 1557 and 1560. *Cartas*, vol. 1, f. 56v; f. 79r.
\(^{28}\) Ibid.
\(^{29}\) The origins of medieval religious drama are conventionally attributed to the works of the Benedictine abbess of Gandersheim in Eastphalian Saxony, Hrotswitha, whose plays were modelled on Terence (Publius Terentius). As Pedro Juan Duque has noted, the subsequent proliferation of religious drama developed more or less concurrently and in a similar fashion throughout the Western Church. Pedro Juan Duque, *Spanish and English Religious Drama* (Kassel: Edition Reichenberger, 1993), 7–8. See also, for instance, James A. Parente, Jr., *Religious Drama and the Humanist Tradition: Christian Theater in Germany and in the Netherlands, 1500–1680* (Leiden: Brill, 1987); Lynette R. Muir, *The Biblical Drama of Medieval Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995); Diehl Houston, *Staging Reform, Reforming the Stage: Protestantism and Popular Theater in Early Modern England* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997); Rainer Warning, *The Ambivalences of Medieval Religious Drama* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001); Kevin J. Wetmore, Jr., ed., *Catholic Theatre and Drama: Critical Essays* (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland, 2010); Paul Shore, “Counter-Reformation Drama,” in *The Ashgate Research Companion to the Counter-Reformation*, ed. Alexandra Bamji, Geert H. Janssen and
and how they came to be adapted in *Kirishitan* practice. Derived from Latin liturgical
drama as early as the tenth century, mystery plays were developed most significantly in
the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries throughout England, France, and Italy. These
plays performed representations of biblical narratives as *tableaux vivants*, accompanied
by antiphonal recitation or singing in the vernacular. This dramatic structure in many
ways mirrored existing Japanese performance traditions, opening a door to the re-
imagination of Christianity in innovative, localised ways. As we will see, the majority
of religious drama in Japan throughout the 1560s dealt primarily with the suffering of
Christ. Such representations of the paschal mystery appear as part of a broader biblical
repertory performed by the *Kirishitan*, including representations of Adam and Eve and
the origin of sin, the Judgement of Solomon, and the End of Days, among others. What
Jesuit correspondences tend to leave us with are descriptions of notable *Kirishitan*
drama and their use by the Japanese for key times of the liturgical calendar, namely
Holy Week and Christmastide. As we have seen in Chapters One and Two, the Jesuits
had established the practice of translating extracts from the Gospel, and from the Bible
in general, from the very beginning of the Japanese mission. Japanese *dōjuku*, such as
Lourenço, continued this practice through what this dissertation has called ‘local
versification’, in which these translated extracts were set as verses to be sung in local
performance styles. In reflecting on Christmas in the city of Sakai during 1566, Luís
Froís describes the active participation of *Kirishitan*, by this point, in the creative
direction of devotional acts:


The *consoado*\(^{32}\) was not like those normally had in other lands, but the night [was] accompanied by many stories of the Scriptures that the noblemen, in their taste and devotion, rendered into verses to be sung.\(^{33}\)

To speak of “their taste” and “their devotion” is to clearly delineate between a standard of (European) Jesuit devotional acts and a set of distinctly Japanese, indeed *Kirishitan*, traditions formed by Japanese for the Japanese. The recurrence of these accounts of performance rendered “in their own way” or in accordance “with their traditions” thus begs the question of how they were enacted. In this chapter, the existence of three types of *Kirishitan* drama that fall more broadly under the genre of *misuteriyō-geki* is theorised:

1. The enactment of biblical narratives through vernacular singing derived from the *biwa-hōshi* tradition;
2. The enactment of the paschal mystery, performed in Latin, and contextualised through the practice of *etoki* (picture deciphering);
3. The use of dance based on *kyōgen*\(^{34}\) as contextualising interludes for *misuteriyō-geki*.

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\(^{32}\) A Portuguese Christmas supper, to be eaten after midnight mass on December 24.

\(^{33}\) “A consoada não foi como se costuma a fazer em outras terras, mas a noite acompanhada de muitas historias da escritura, ḣ os fidalgos por seu gosto, & devação fazem em versos pera os cantarem.” Luís Frois to his brothers of the Society of Jesus, from Sakai (June 30, 1566), *Cartas*, vol. 1, 207r.

\(^{34}\) “Inspired” or “mad speech”, *kyōgen* is a performance genre that is both related to, and distinct from, Noh. Regarding its role within Noh plays (which, when combined with *kyōgen* is referred to as *nōgaku*), *kyōgen* are comical interludes between scenes. *Kyōgen* also developed as an independent form of theatre in its own right with a core repertory that is still performed to this day.
The first descriptive account of the misuteriyogeki form appears in a letter written by Juan Fernández in 1561. He recounts how, in the days leading up to Christmas of 1560, Cosme de Torrés had given charge of directing a religious drama to two or three Kirishitan of the Funai congregation:35

First, they enacted the fall of Adam, and the hope of redemption, and for this purpose they placed a tree [adorned] with golden apples in the middle of the Church, beneath which Lucifer had deceived Eve, and all this [was presented] with their motets [sung] in Japanese. [...] And after the fall they were cast out from Paradise by the Angel, which was the cause of much lamentation and weeping, because the material was so moving, and the figures so devout and graceful that there was no one in the audience who was not moved. [...] After this they enacted the two women who went to seek justice from Solomon. This enactment was good and caused much confusion amongst the gentile women who kill their children, [for it “shows them the strength of natural love a mother has for her child”]. [...] And they said all this in song, and the Christians would reply to them from the other side [of the church], helping them to sing these songs.36

In this account we can see a form of Kirishitan drama with performative conventions, rooted in the practice of local versification, already well-known to the congregation. The use of Japanese motets (motetes) and songs (cantigas), in this instance, should not be interpreted as musical forms from the canon of Western sacred music, but rather

35 Juan Fernández to his brothers of the Society of Jesus, from Bungo (October 8, 1561), Cartas, vol. 1, ff. 78v–79r.
styles of vocalisation derived from Japanese traditions. An emphasis on antiphony between the actors and the congregation is evident; the ‘call and response’ engaged individuals to participate in the sonic structuring of collective Kirishitan identity. This misuteriyo-geki, intended for celebration of the birth of Christ, was nevertheless grounded in the moral teaching of sin, to which teaching the Japanese were reported to have been very receptive. Fernández’s particular mention of the Judgement of Solomon further speaks to the Jesuits’ concern with the Japanese ‘sin’ of infanticide. In addition to the condoned practices of suicide and pederasty, infanticide was one of only a few sins for which the missionaries condemned the Japanese. Fernández’s mention of this play’s antiphonal form is of particular importance. Given that the musical structures he speaks of are Japanese in compositional form and language, this example of antiphony could not be derived from the Christian tradition of singing psalms in plainchant. Therefore we must look elsewhere to understand the distinctively Kirishitan use of ‘call and response’. We find a likely candidate in the musical style of Lourenço and his fellow Kirishitan biwa-hōshi in their public and private proselytising performances. Their translation of biblical stories into vernacular minstrel ballads was particularly noted for its use of audience participation. The dialogue between the preacher and his people, and the setting of texts to recognisable melodies, thus offers us a possible explanation for the 1561 description of antiphonal participation and the congregation’s familiarity with these ‘songs’. An attempt to re-imagine the soundscapes of Kirishitan devotion is a difficult task, for the Jesuits lacked a vocabulary to provide accurate details of the Japanese musical elements in the misuteriyo-geki of

37 Ebisawa glosses over these ‘motets’ as popular Japanese songs. See Ebisawa, Yōgaku denraishi, 68.
38 Jesuits frequently commented, often with some concern, on their overly-zealous practice of corporeal mortification. A Kirishitan concern with damnation appears as a recurrent struggle for their practitioners. See Fujitani, “Penance in the Jesuit Mission to Japan,” 306–24.
40 Ebisawa also acknowledges the importance of conversational styles in both Latin and Japanese as a key method of religious instruction among the Kirishitan. See Ebisawa, Yōgaku denraishi, 67.
the 1560s. Thus in discussing likely vocal styles, we must observe the techniques employed by Lourenço and his contemporaries.

There was an abundance of different, yet related, song styles that were being practised during Japan’s Christian Century. Yōkyoku (謡曲 – Noh theatrical recitation), heikyoku (平曲 – epic ballads), saimon (祭文 – hymns used in Buddhist, Shinto, and Confucian rites), and songs from the ballad-drama genre of kōwakamai (幸若舞), were all based in the tradition of Buddhist sutra chanting called shōmyō (唱名). 41 The latter, derived from the Sanskrit sabdavidya (“study of language”), is a kind of scriptural intoning vocalised syllabically or melismatically, 42 and set to standard melodic phrases. Shōmyō consists of a set of formulaic patterns which are derived from two different scale systems, the ryo and the ritsu, each of which employs five basic notes (pentatonic scale structure) and two auxiliary notes. 43 James Araki conjectures that shōmyō, due to the pervasive reach of Buddhism throughout the Asuka period (538–710), formed the roots of much of Japan’s popular music at that time. 44 The vernacularisation of shōmyō as early as the ninth century also demonstrates a Japanese propensity for cultural assimilation 45 and provides a parallel for the Kirishitan phenomenon of local versification in the sixteenth century. The art of the heikyoku (“Heike melody”), of which Lourenço was a master, enjoyed popularity between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries before being subsumed by the advent of the satsuma-biwa at the turn of the

42 Melismatic singing involves extending a single syllable over multiple notes or pitches as contrasted with syllabic singing which matches one syllable per note or pitch.
seventeenth century. The name *heikyoku* is derived from the music to which the previously-discussed *Heiki monogatari* was sung. In fact, it is believed that Nakayama Yukinaga (c.1159–1221), to whom the text of the ballad is attributed, had based his melody on a *shōmyō* composed by the Buddhist priest Genshin (924–1017). Thus the blind *biwa-hōshi*, encountered by the Jesuits, were performing music influenced not only by the mysticism of their pre-*Heike* predecessors, but also by the traditions of Buddhist *shōmyō* and the music of the imperial court (*gagaku*). Their use of this synthesised musical tradition for *Kirishitan* purposes can be seen as yet another strand in an already complex fabric.

Lourenço’s performance of what this dissertation calls *‘Kirishitan-kyoku’* (*Kirishitan* melodies) likely employed stylistic techniques that we see in *heikyoku*: the striking of the *biwa* to set a vocal pitch, followed by the singing of a phrase; and then the setting of a new pitch or the playing of a *biwa* interlude that reflects the mood of the text. Within the various melodic formulae (*kyokusetsu*) of the *heikyoku* repertory, we can identify four distinct structures of vocalisation: “declaration (*ginshō*), recitation

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46 Named after the province in which it was created, *Satsuma* *biwa* was developed in the late sixteenth century as a new model of narrative singing. Initially its repertoire was divided into pieces for the edification of young men, women, and the elderly. These soon were transformed military narratives for samurai audiences as well as the general public. William P. Malm, “Music Culture of Momoyama Japan,” in *Warlord, Artists and Commoners: Japan in the Sixteenth Century*, ed. George Elison and Bardwell L. Smith (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1981), 170; William P. Malm, *Traditional Japanese Music and Musical Instruments*, vol. 1, 2nd ed. (New York: Kodansha, 2000), 153–55.


48 *Biwa-hōshi* were initially blind mendicants (*mōsō*) who primarily specialised in incantations and exorcisms that are to be distinguished from the practice of *shōmyō*. The early history of these figures is unclear and it is uncertain how these shamanistic figures become artist-performers of vocal narratives. See Ruch, “The Other Side of Culture in Medieval Japan,” 535–36. These *mōsō* figures would later become the itinerant troubadours known to the Jesuits in the sixteenth century. See Palm, *Traditional Japanese Music and Musical Instruments*, 151.

49 Matisoff argues that the union of vocal *shōmyō* and instrumental *biwa* through the figure of Fujiwara Moronaga (1137–91) can be seen as foreshadowing the development of the *heikyoku* style. Susan Matisoff, *The Legend of Semimaru, Blind Musician of Japan*, 2nd ed. (Boston: Cheng and Tsui Company, 2006), 37.

50 This term is coined to distinguish the *biwa-hōshi* and their use of local versification as something distinctly Japanese.

51 *Biwa* and vocal elements in *heikyoku* are always separated. Apart from occasional strokes on open strings to punctuate single verses, the *biwa* mainly functions to articulate the divisions of the narrative episode, and through preludes and interludes reinforce the mood of the text. Hugh De Ferranti, “Composition and Improvisation in Satsuma Biwa,” in *Musica Asiatica*, ed. Allan Marett, vol. 6 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 110; Malm, *Traditional Japanese Music and Musical Instruments*, 159.
(rōshō), arioso[s], and eishō aria[s]). The aria form employs melismatic vocal lines within a free rhythmic structure, while recitation passages are generally syllabic with use of a regular pulse. The syllabic form of composition, in which each syllable is set to a single note, demonstrates the emphasis on textual clarity. The use of syllabic recitation would have likely functioned in Kirishitan-kyoku as a memorable, but also importantly as an entertaining, way of interpreting plot lines and the dramatic action of biblical narratives, much like the use of recitative in European sacred oratorios or secular opera. The eishō, with their melismatic flourishes and wide vocal range, can be seen as a potential means of presenting impassioned accounts from the Gospel or an opportunity to emphasise Christian moral lessons. Indeed the two-and-a-half octave vocal range of the heikyoku repertory was in stark contrast to the melodic conservatism of the Jesuits’ plainchant. It is perhaps for this reason that Luís Froís believed that while “[European] boys sing an octave higher than men; in Japan they all screech out the same note, the one on which the treble clef rests”. What Froís appears to be emphasising here is the absence of a distinction between treble, tenor, alto and bass voice types (the natural high voices of boys and the matured voices of men) among the Japanese, and that the men sing at the same register as boys. Exactly what kind of singing Froís is referring to in this statement, however, is uncertain. What has been presented so far, in brief, are the musical textures and styles of the biwa-hōshi, and in the next part of this chapter, we shall explore how these can facilitate an understanding of the Japanese contributions to the soundscapes of Kirishitan communities.

53 Ibid., 82.
54 For a discussion of biwa vocal ranges, see Komoda, “The Musical Narrative of the Tale of the Heike,” 82.
55 Froís, The First European Description of Japan, 238. The editors of this English critical edition explain this statement on Japanese vocal styles as an indication of monophonic singing, that is, that the Japanese lacked a form of vocal polyphony with harmonised independent parts. While this observation is certainly true, Froís seems to be remarking on pitch, rather than harmony.
Insomuch as Fernández’s reference to Japanese ‘motets’ at Christmas indicate a kind of purely Japanese vocal style, Belchior de Figueiredo’s description of the Feast of the Resurrection during 1566 also seem to support this claim:

Our companion Paulo [Yōhō], had rendered into the Japanese language, in a certain kind of verse that the Japanese habitually sing, the entire story of the burial of Christ, and that of the Angel’s answer to the Marias who went to visit him.56

Figueiredo’s indication of a standard verse form would seem to confirm a vocal style that was part of the everyday lives of the Kirishitan Japanese. Lourenço used songs derived from his Kirishitan-kyoku to instruct and edify his pupils, both in Yamaguchi and Funai, who memorised these narratives of the Gospel and the Bible in general.57 Moreover, we are aware of a young blind boy, known by the baptismal name of Tobias, who learnt how to play the biwa from Lourenço and continued his practice of preaching through the genre of Kirishitan-kyoku.58 The scholarly work of the late Juan Ruiz-de-Medina, in this regard, has been indispensable. His tracing of Jesuit correspondence for mention of these biwa-hōshi presents a number of detached episodes, which in their connection, assist us even further in understanding the nature of Kirishitan-kyoku in the 1560s. Later accounts of these itinerant figures reveal how they fitted into the Jesuit mission and their perceived utility as local agents of conversion. In 1586, Froís recounts:

In some of our churches we also make use of them [biwa-hōshi] after they become Christians, but for a different purpose, namely, to teach the Christian

56 Belchior de Figueiredo, from Shimabara (September 13, 1566), translated in Ruiz-de-Medina, “The Role of the Blind Biwa Hōshi Troubadours,” 121.
58 Ibid.
doctrine from village to village, to preach to some heathens and recount the lives of saints and matters of God to the Christians.\textsuperscript{59}

Similarly, in 1594, Francesco Pasio (1554–1612) comments on how the skills of the \textit{biwa-hōshi} were transformed into both literal and figurative instruments of the word of God:

Instead of teaching the other frivolities and stories that such blind [troubadours] habitually teach and sing, now, after being converted, they become masters of the Christian doctrine and go about teaching it from village to village.\textsuperscript{60}

These accounts paint a picture of Lourenço and his contemporaries as mobile mouthpieces for the Jesuit mission, bringing Christian vocabulary and ideas to the ‘gentiles’ via music, and corroborating the faith of the \textit{Kirishitan} from “village to village”. Figueiredo’s description of a standard verse form is thus likely a reference to the \textit{Kirishitan-kyoku} performed by the itinerant \textit{biwa-hōshi} as early as Lourenço’s arrival at the Daidoji Church in 1551. By the early 1560s we can already see an established \textit{Kirishitan} repertory of locally-versified ‘songs’. In a letter written in 1564, Giovanni Battista de Monte offers pivotal information as to how the Jesuits directed the use of \textit{Kirishitan-kyoku} for the presentation of religious drama. Here he describes the celebration of Christmas by the Funai congregation in 1563:

The feast of the birth of our Lord is celebrated with great solemnity, by which they [the Japanese] enact many mysteries of the Old and New Testament, such as the Story of Adam to Noah, which are translated into verses in the Japanese

\textsuperscript{59} Ibid., 124.
language, that almost all the [Japanese] Christians know by heart, and sing them while walking, and at their own celebrations.61

This description of performing localised verse by the Kirishitan illustrates its dual function, both public and private: on the one hand there is an emphasis on community, as the individual confirms their Kirishitan identity within the group by singing at festivals; on the other hand, Monte’s account suggests that these verses were also sung as a kind of ‘inner dialogue’ that accompanied individuals in their daily activities. Indeed, the use of localised verse in singing Kirishitan-kyoku was the key to instructing both children and adults alike. In the very process of learning and “singing to the Lord,” Monte identifies a process of cognitive substitution whereby the Japanese would “leave” (that is, forget) “their gentile songs”: 62 This ‘overwriting’ came to exemplify the Jesuit approach to instructing children in the art of liturgical singing in the latter half of the sixteenth century. Diego de Ledesma’s Modo per insegnar, as we have already seen, exhorted children to be an example of virtue: when singing in the streets or at home, they were to sing songs of the catechism and not immoral tunes.63 Similar sentiments were expressed by missionaries in Brazil towards the turn of the seventeenth century where songs of devotion were rendered into the vernacular to “change profane music [in]to holy music … composed … in honour of God and the saints, which were sung in churches, streets, and with which people are edified and know the fear and love of God”. 64 While the policy of vernacularisation for the native Tupí of Brazil appeared to

61 “A festa do nascimento do Senhor se celebra com grande solenidade, por que se representam muitos mistérios do testamento velho, & novo, como he a historia de Adam até Noe, a qual esta traduzida em versos em lingoa de Iapaõ os quais versos quasi todos os Christaõs sabem de cor, & os cantaõ quando caminhãm, & estão em suas festas.” Giovanni Battista de Monte to Juan Alfonso de Polanco in Rome, from Bungo (October 9, 1564), Cartas, vol. 1, f. 154r.
62 “Foi este hum dos melhores modos que se podera achar para com esta gente, e para deixarem seus cantares gentilicos, e cantaremos do Senhor. E desta maneira ficão sabendo grande parte da escritura de cor, o que náopoucos os ajuda para terem mais fé.” Ibid.
be commonplace from 1550, the use of indigenous performance styles quickly faded from Jesuit institutions in Brazil within a three-year period. The Japanese mission is thus unique in its (comparatively longer) fostering of localised performance styles from the mid-1550s and their flourishing throughout the 1560s. In his account Monte explains the Jesuits’ understanding of this vernacular turn as the prime “way [in which] they come to learn much of the Scriptures by heart, which [in turn] greatly helps them to have more faith”. His rationale echoes the sentiments of both Ledesma and Michel Coyssard, as has been previously discussed in Chapter One. The repertory of Kirishitan-kyoku allowed Japanese practitioners to engage in “sonic sign[s] of belonging” through the localisation of text and performance styles. The ability of the Japanese to pick and choose aspects of Christianity as they understood it, and to interpret and express devotion in “their own way” is the very reason why Higashibaba identifies the scholarly use of the terms “converts” or “conversion” as problematic in relation to the Japanese. He argues that this implies an ideal type of theologically-defined Christian fidelity which was for the most part never achieved. For many Japanese, baptism offered them an alternative or supplementary form of salvific insurance. As devout as many church-goers may have seemed, the Jesuits also reported that Kirishitan practitioners continued to engage in Japanese popular religious acts. As Higashibaba claims, “new and old symbols (religious elements) coexisted within the same religious system”. In 1564 Froís reports encountering a man in Limori, a Kirishitan of noble status, who was reciting the prayer of the Pure Land Buddhism, Namu Amidabutsu, in front of a Christian church. When questioned by the padre, he responded:

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65 Castagna notes how Pedro Fernandes Sardinha (1496–1556), the first bishop of Brazil, condemned the practice of indigenous music in singing of the catechism soon after his arrival in October of 1551. Thus it seems that from 1553 onwards, only European liturgical music was permitted to be used within their churches. See Castagna, “The Jesuits, Music, and Conversion in Brazil,” 644–45. See also Kennedy, Music and the Jesuit Mission in the New World, 15.
66 “...e desta maniera ficaõ sabendo grande parte da escritura de cor, o que naõ pouco os ajuda, pera terem mais fé.” Cartas, vol. 1, f. 154r.
68 Higashibaba, Christianity in Early Modern Japan, xv.
69 Ibid., 36.
I have been a very sinful person, and I prayed with Christian beads, asking our Lord to have mercy for my soul. In a sermon, however, I learned that the Lord is very strict in his judgment. Since my sin is so great, I may not deserve the glory of Deus. I am, therefore, praying to Amida Buddha too so that I will be able to go to paradise (gokuraku), the Pure Land of Amida, in case I cannot go to [Christian] heaven.70

The popular practice of the Kirishitan faith, most evidently in the 1560s, was a syncretistic union of local (Japanese) and foreign (European) ideas and rituals. As we have seen so far, the manifestation of this union in musical and dramatic acts of devotion demonstrates a clear ‘Japanisation’ of Christianity, so that to speak of these practices as simply ‘Christian’ runs the risk of masking their hybrid character. The porous structure of Kirishitan identity thus allowed for such syncretism, as is charmingly demonstrated in an account from 1564. Froís describes the events of Easter Sunday in Hirado during the previous year, in which Juan Fernández sings “Dic nobis Maria, quid vidisti in via?” This question, posed to Mary Magdalene as she returns from the sepulchre, is a reference to the medieval sequence, Victimae paschali laudes (Praises to the Paschal Victim) in which she witness Christ’s resurrection.71 Froís describes a kind of intercultural antiphony, where this question is answered by an elderly Kirishitan man, singing and playing a bowl with a stick.72 While no reference is made to the language or manner in which the elderly man sang, this playing of a bowl is a telling...

70 Ibid., 38. See also Luís Froís, Historia de Japam, ed. José Wicki (Lisbon: Biblioteca Nacional de Lisboa, 1976), vol. 1, 259.
71 The gospels all refer to the woman in this sequence as Mary Magdalene, who, depending on the gospel, was accompanied by two other Marys. However, in the Victimae paschali laudes, much like the widespread Quem quaeritis dialogues, the name of Mary is left ambiguous. Rothenberg identifies this ambiguity as intentional, for it emphasises a resonance between Mary Magdalene and the Virgin Mary. David J. Rothenberg, The Flower of Paradise: Marian Devotion and Secular Song in Medieval and Renaissance Music (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 187–88. See also Elizabeth Monroe, “Mary Magdalene as a Model of Devotion, Penitence, and Authority in the Gospels of Henry the Lion and Matilda,” in Mary Magdalene in Medieval Culture: Conflicted Roles, ed. Peter Loewen and Robin Waugh (New York: Routledge, 2014), 100.
72 “...Dic nobis Maria quid vidisti in via? & da outta parte lhe respondia hû velho Christaõ com hûa bacia, & hum pao com q̃ hia tangendo, por não aver na terra outros instrumentos musicos.” Luís Froís to the brothers of the Society of Jesus in India, from Hirado (October 3, 1564), Cartas, vol. 1, f. 147v.
sign. “Bowl beating”, or *hachi-tataki* (鉢叩), was used by itinerants to accompany the recitation of Buddhist sutras in exchange for alms.\(^73\) Often aligned with the Tendai sect of Buddhism, this use of *hachi-tataki* might imply a recitation style akin to sutra-chanting or perhaps more broadly draws from the *Kirishitan-kyoku* circulated by the *biwa-hōshi*. The examples presented so far speak to a unique form of religious dramaturgy, *misuteriyogeki*, through which we can identify processes of mutual religious and performative accommodation. These bodies in dramatic movement became sites for the transformation of the paschal mystery and biblical narratives into something distinctly *Kirishitan*. In fostering the application of the Japanese performing arts to these sacred contexts we can identify a local form of *contrafactum* – that is, the setting of their own vernacular verses to existing Japanese melodies. In reassessing the performing arts from the early decades of the Japanese mission, we can begin to see the great extent to which Japanese performers were actively engaged in the shaping and reshaping of how they saw themselves as *Kirishitan*.

**Performing the Paschal Mystery in 1561**

The Jesuits’ zeal for contemplation on the Passion of Christ was grounded in Ignatius’s Spiritual Exercises. During the third and fourth (final) week of this retreat, exercitants are engaged in the paschal mystery, meditating upon the death and resurrection of Christ through an array of sensorial imagery, emphasising hearing, sight, touch, smell, and taste.\(^74\) Indeed, a desire for *compassio*, that is, “suffering with” Christ, was introduced

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to the Japanese mission through the dramatisation of the paschal mystery for Kirishitan congregations. Along with the affective pageantry of their sermons, the Jesuits used misuteriyo-geki to engage the Japanese in a similarly sensorial contemplation of the Passion cycle. The singing of the Victimae paschali laudes is noted a number of times in Jesuit correspondence, but an account from 1561 is unique in its portrayal of a broader performance context. In the same letter in which we encounter the first record of a misuteriyo-geki, Juan Fernández describes the conduct of Holy Week in Funai. On the day of Easter he recounts that “two hours before dawn, the door was opened, where many Christians were already waiting to take a seat, so that in opening these doors, the church was soon filled”. What follows appears to be a summary of the Octave of Easter, from Palm Sunday through to Easter Sunday, as Fernández makes no distinction between the events conducted on any given day. References to the placement of two statues of lustrous angels (dous Anjos muy lustrosos) at either end of the sepulchre indicate the Eucharistic Deposition ceremony of Good Friday. In combination with the public presentation of the Blessed Sacrament, this ceremony at Funai bears a number of similarities with the Deposition customs observed most notably in sixteenth-century Bavaria. In both regions, Jesuits placed emphasis on the public display of the Blessed Sacrament, rather than concealing it within the sepulchre. It is highly likely that these sepulchres in Japanese churches, especially where Buddhist temples were repurposed, were temporary fixtures. The importance of this lies in the visual impact of the object, often constructed as a wooden coffin, whose sudden revelation would have been easily

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75 See Cartas, vol. 1, f. 225r.
77 “O dia de Pascoa, duas horas antes q̃ amanhecesse, se abrio a porta, onde estavão ja muitos Christãos, aguardando pera tomar lugar, de maneira que em abrindo as portas, de hum logo se encheo a Igreja.” Cartas, vol. 1, f. 80r.
read by the Japanese as a symbol of death. Likewise the Jesuits’ practice of the public presentation of the Blessed Sacrament emphasises the importance of visual elements for following the Passion narrative in Kirishitan contexts. Fernández also notes how the sepulchre was adorned with “fresh trees” (arvores fescas). From this we might infer that the congregation of Funai participated in the procession of Palm Sunday. As Maria Cračiun has noted, this procession was elsewhere favoured by the Jesuits, especially in the sixteenth-century Transylvanian mission, for its “festive and playful dimension” through which fostering of “solidarity of the group through communal activity” was encouraged. While we are not offered a description of such a procession by Fernández, we can nevertheless understand that the theatrical dimension of Palm Sunday will have appealed to the sensory imagination of the participants.

We now turn our attention to the conclusion of the Paschal Triduum, which is described by Fernández in surprising detail. The standard image of Japanese boys in white vestments, bearing candles, and garlanded with roses and flowers, is evoked. They are described as walking in procession on either side of a rich canopy, singing three stages of song: the Dic nobis Maria (Victimae paschali laudes), an Alleluia, and finally the Laudate dominum. In considering the Kirishitan sensory experience of the liturgy, we are able to come to a greater understanding of how the Victimae paschali laudes was dramatised. There is a clear emphasis on visual media to reveal the meaning


81 Cartas, vol. 1, f. 80r. These fresh trees appear to be a reference to the blessing of palm fronds. There are four species of palms that are native to the Ryukyu Islands off the southwestern tip of Japan, but it is more likely that the Jesuits would have used some other variety of local tree branches. See Andrew Henderson, Palms of Southern Asia (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), 15.

of the paschal mystery, confirming what Higashibaba has identified as a reliance on non-verbal practices – that is, symbols and rituals – to communicate the Christian doctrine in the early years of the Japanese mission. \(^{83}\) Two young boys, playing the roles of Saint Peter (S. Pedro) and Saint John (S. João), are described as singing the question (“Dic nobis Maria, quid vidisti in via?”) to Mary Magdalene (presumably played by a young girl), who responds with her account of Jesus’s tomb and his empty shroud, most likely in Latin. \(^{84}\) What follows is a localised interpretation of the paschal mystery through word and image. Kirishitan boys are seen presenting their own “mysteries” (mysterio) to the audience, describing their depictions in Japanese. \(^{85}\) In this context, the word “mystery”, as Jennifer Waldron has noted, can be identified as having multiple meanings, often referring to allegorical images. \(^{86}\) Indeed, Ebisawa has elsewhere interpreted the presentation of “mysteries” by Kirishitan boys as that of paintings or drawings, perhaps ones illustrated by the children. \(^{87}\) This would appear to parallel the development of symbolic imagery, especially that of emblems, used by the Jesuits in their instruction of rhetoric throughout their European colleges. \(^{88}\) Similarly, the Kirishitan use of symbolic visual aids accompanied spoken Japanese verse on the punishments and ignominy of Jesus. The boys recounted the Passion narrative starting from the Cross and ending in the thirty pieces of silver. \(^{89}\) These Japanese narrative verses expressed the broader context of the Victimae paschali laudes, facilitating contemplation upon the Passion and Resurrection of Christ. This form of vernacular

\(^{83}\) Higashibaba, *Christianity in Early Modern Japan*, xvii.

\(^{84}\) Here Fernández is referring to Mary’s singing of the following text: “Sepulcrum Christi viventis, et gloriam vidi resurgentis: Angelicos testes, sudarium, et vestes”.

\(^{85}\) *Cartas*, vol. 1, f. 80v.


\(^{87}\) Ebisawa, *Yōgaku denraiishi*, 70.


\(^{89}\) *Cartas*, vol. 1, f. 80v.
commentary, reinforced through pictoral aids, therefore served a vital function for members of the Kirishitan community, most of whom had next to no understanding of the Latin language. Moreover, in aligning the Victimae paschali laudes with easily-identifiable images of the paschal mystery, Kirishitan were instructed in the meaning of this particular Latin sequence. The extent to which Kirishitan came to understand this meaning may be evidenced by the previously-discussed performance of the Victimae paschali laudes of 1563, in which Fernández himself sings the very question (“Dic nobis Maria…”) to the congregation, only to be answered by an elderly Kirishitan man in a localised fashion (hachi-tataki, “bowl beating”). By 1566, Belchior de Figueiredo describes the performance of Mary at the sepulchre in “a certain kind of verse which the Japanese often sing”, and that the boys and girls of Kirishitan families regularly present this scene at home for their own recreation and edification. Figueiredo’s description of this performance, now three years later, indicates a progression in how the Victimae paschali laudes came to be localised by the Japanese, here rendered in sung vernacular verse that implies the vocal style of the previously-discussed Kirishitan-kyoku. Between 1551 and 1556, these dramatic realisations of the paschal mystery demonstrate an increasing use of Japanese performance elements. While this chapter has discussed the manner in which musical practice drew on Japanese performance styles, Fernández’s account of 1561 has presented us with an interesting example in which localised visual media, through a meeting of Japanese and Jesuit practices, functioned simultaneously as performative exercise and religious instruction. The success with which the Jesuits used devotional imagery in Japan is something that has been elsewhere noted, yet the

90 “Pera este dia tinha Paulo feito na lingoa de Iapão em certo modo de verso, q̃ costumão câtâr os Iapoẽs, toda a historia do sepulcro de Christo, & da reposta do Anjo as Marias…” Belchior de Figueiredo to his brothers of the Society of Jesus in India, no location written (September 13, 1566), Cartas, vol. 1, f. 225r.
proficiency with which the Kirishitan were able to develop visual literacy in Christian symbols is something less known. Indeed, investigating this kind of literacy is central to our understanding of how the misuteriyo-geki genre experienced such popularity throughout the 1560s.

Prior to the Council of Trent’s decrees on art (1563) and its emphasis on the instructive use of images, the Jesuits in Japan were pioneering visual methods to communicate with their Kirishitan communities. Upon his arrival in 1549, Xavier had brought with him paintings and prints, many being of depictions of Christ and of the Virgin Mary. Our first account of Christian religious artwork appears soon after his arrival, where Xavier describes in a letter the gifting of an oil painting to the daimyo Shimazu Takahisa (1514–71) of Satsuma who “was marvellously pleased when he saw it; he knelt down before the image of Christ our Lord and of our Lady, and adored it with great respect and reverence”. While Xavier uses this example to demonstrate the effectiveness of devotional images, it is more likely that Takahisa mistook the painting for a representation of Kannon, the bodhisattva of mercy, who was often depicted in flowing robes and has been noted for her resemblance to the Virgin Mary. However, as the mission progressed and communication difficulties with the Japanese became

93 Xavier to companions living in Goa, from Kagoshima (November 5, 1549), in Costelloe, Letters and Instructions of Francis Xavier, 306. See also Curvelo, “Copy to Convert,” 114–15.
ever more strained, we can observe the growing reliance on visual culture through the extensive number of paintings imported by the Jesuits. In 1584 alone, Froís had claimed that 50,000 Christian paintings would be necessary to continue their successful work.95 Taking the Victimae paschali laudes as our analytical focus, it is proposed that existing forms of didactic imagery in everyday Japanese life provided a model for Kirishitan devotion.

The combination of verse and images was a form of religious instruction already very familiar to the Japanese, a fact of which perhaps the Jesuits were unaware. Etoki (解), the religious practice of ‘picture deciphering’, was used as early as the tenth century to explain a wide variety of Buddhists texts: including “canonical scriptures (sutras), moralizing folktales, biographies of the Buddha, eminent monks, and historical figures, legends of the foundation of temples (engi), and historical narratives” (see Figure 10).96 Even a cursory glance at the practice reveals striking parallels with the ways in which the Kirishitan boys of Funai used images and vernacular verse to interpret the paschal mystery. By the thirteenth century, the use of etoki had developed into an itinerant tradition, with Buddhist missionaries performing in public spaces from village to village.97 As Jolyon Thomas has noted, the practice of etoki facilitated a “juxtaposition of image and narrative” through which a “shared visual-verbal religious vocabulary” was developed among the laity as a means of disseminating religious ideas.98 In the case of Easter in 1561, we can see a similar visual ‘vocabulary’ in action, serving a dual purpose in contextualising Japanese verse and linking narrative content to

95 Yoriko Kobayashi-Sato, “An Assimilation between Two Different Cultures: Japan and the West during the Edo Period,” in Artistic and Cultural Exchanges between Europe and Asia, 1400–1900, ed. Michael North (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), 164.
the dramatic representation of Mary Magdalene at the sepulchre, performed in Latin. These paschal images were more than mere stage props, however, and through their ritual use, appear to have been transformed into icons of Kirishitan worship. The Japanese have been noted elsewhere for their keen interest in Christian art and their use of these images, particularly of the Virgin Mary, as devotional objects. In looking to this broader context, we gain a sense that the practice of etoki may have had close connections to Kirishitan practice. If we take this as our premise, the question to be asked is how etoki came to be employed by the Jesuits. Once more our answer may lie with the biwa-hōshi. While some scholars have debated whether etoki priests and nuns played the biwa to accompany their religious narratives, we are aware of extant paintings in which the instrument is featured in the depiction of these itinerant preachers.

Moreover, Ikumi Kaminishi has brought attention to a likely conflict between the biwa-hōshi and the etoki preachers over the right to perform the Heike monogatari. As both were itinerant performers, these different schools of storytelling were intimately connected with one another through their sharing of, and competing for, audiences and performance spaces. We can therefore assume that the Kirishitan biwa-hōshi, despite their blindness, would have been very aware of the etoki practice and its undeniable effectiveness in religious instruction among the laity. An alternative hypothesis is that the Jesuits themselves had observed the practice of etoki and accordingly introduced the use of contextual images to accompany their already established practice of ‘local versification’. Indeed we are aware that Gaspar Vilela,


among other missionaries, attended public sermons given by Buddhist priests from whom they learned how to adopt and adapt localised didactic techniques for Kirishitan use. In spite of the absence of further source material to confirm this connection between etoki and Kirishitan practice, it is clear that the existing predisposition to devotional images of the Japanese made them receptive to the translation of their visual literacy into Kirishitan devotion. In this chapter so far, we can see how even Latin-based dramas of the paschal mystery were localised through vernacular framing and visual cues. Even the most holy days of the liturgical calendar were thus co-opted for the purposes of accommodatio. We will now explore Jesuit correspondence in which Kirishitan practices of devotion went beyond vernacular verse, to the embracing of local dance styles in contemplation of Christ’s Passion and in celebration of his resurrection.

Dancing for the Lord

“Let them praise his name with dancing; let them sing praises unto him with the timbrel and lyre!” (Psalm 149:3)

From the early middle ages to the dawn of the European Renaissance, the use of dance was a cause for concern for many church councils. With regard to the Protestant Reformation and its repercussions in Catholic renewal, the image painted by current historiography on the status of dance is far from uniform. As for the Society of Jesus,

103 Initiated by the edict of the Third Council of Toledo (589), decrees were continually issued condemning the use of sacred dance styles, including the Council of Rome (826), Synod of Meeresheim (1009), Council of Paris (1212), Council of Cologne (1310) and the Council of Soissons (1456). See Brooks, The Dances of the Processions of Seville in Spain’s Golden Age, 2.
most research has focused on the teaching of dance at Jesuit colleges as a form of non-verbal rhetoric, and the innovative use of ballet in their famed stage productions. Yet the scholarly representation of the Jesuits as apologists for dance is only part of a broader global picture. Missionary encounters with an array of indigenous dance styles throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries highlight an approach to dance that was determined from locale to locale and through the apostolic vision of their respective mission superiors. While references to dancing in the Japanese mission have been elsewhere noted in broader histories of the Society of Jesus, its significance is too easily glossed over as a tool of conversion. Just as Japanese styles of music underwent a transformation and came to be signifiers of Kirishitan identity and tools for localising the Jesuits’ message, so too did dancing become a form of Kirishitan devotion. The distinction that must be made here is that missionaries did not introduce European styles of sacred dance as part of their cultural mission; rather, they were faced with defining acceptable standards of dance and how local forms could be incorporated, if at all, into liturgical practice.

In contrast to the case of Kirishitan music in the 1560s, we find a recognisably Japanese vocabulary about forms of dance in Jesuit correspondence towards the end of this decade. That is to say, the Jesuits appear to have had a clearer understanding of Japanese dance and their related theatrical contexts than they did of music. One might be tempted to attribute this to the relatively accessible aesthetics of Japanese dance over that of their music, so foreign-sounding to Western ears. The first descriptive Jesuit

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106 See, for instance, O’Malley, *Saints or Devils Incarnate?*, 234
account of dancing is found in a letter written by Almeida in 1565.  

A group of Kirishitan from Shimabara are described as having improvised dances inspired by “prose in praise of the Virgin, which they all knew by heart”. This form of sacred dance would have no doubt seemed a natural means of religious expression to the Japanese, for this was a practice that had been fostered by both Shinto and Buddhist traditions for centuries. The nembutsu-odori (dancing nembutsu), associated with the Pure Land school of Buddhism, had developed since the twelfth century, becoming one of the most common sacred dance forms during Japan’s Christian Century. Performed for the pursuit of salvation and the invocation of dead spirits, among other uses, this practice of sacred dance was a part of everyday Japanese life. As such, we can see how Almeida’s description of the Japanese expressing Marian devotion through dance would have seemed a logical accompaniment to their Kirishitan prose. In this we can see how Kirishitan communities actively engaged in the grassroots interpretation and performance of Kirishitan identity. However, Cosme de Torrés, despite his sensitivity to local particularities, was far from pleased. These Kirishitan had walked to the church to perform this dance for the padre, only for him to be appalled by the display. One of the Kirishitan noblemen was so ashamed at provoking the “disgrace of God” that he is said to have chastised himself with such fervour that he was left “bathed in blood”. A concern over the use of indigenous dance was expressed elsewhere. The Sacred Congregation de Propaganda Fide issued complaints from Rome to the mission.

108 Leims has made reference to a “dance of the Cross” in Ikitsuki in 1563. See Leims, Die Entstehung des Kabuki, 274. Luis de Almeida to Luís Frois in Miyako, from Fukuda (October 25, 1565), Cartas, vol. 1, f. 171v.

109 “Acabado isto determinaraõ os Christãos como passasse a festa dos gentios irem visitar os gentios com hũa dança, em ţ dizem muitas prosas em louvor da virgem, ţ elles todos sabem de cor”. Luis de Almeida to Luís Frois in Miyako, from Fukuda (October 25, 1565), Cartas, vol. 1, f. 171v.


111 “Quando os Christãos vierãã, & a missa era dita, foi tanto seu sentimento, por terem ţ stavão em desgraça de Deos … [e] hum fidalgo principal, ţ foi també na dança sabédo como os Christãos fizerão a diciplina, veose pera a igreja com hũas diciplinas de rosetas, dizendo, que elle fora só o que pecara, & tinha toda a culpa, e diciplinouse tam fortemente, que todo ficou banhado em sangue”. Cartas, vol. 1, f. 171v.
in Ethiopia, for instance, in which they defined the use of indigenous dance in Christian rituals as an “abuse against the ecclesiastical rite and [that] reverence … was [to] be maintained in the sacred temple”.\textsuperscript{112} Torrès’s outburst, as recounted by Almeida on October 25, 1565, is a curious contrast, however, to the “well-formed dances of young men” performed only two months later in the city of Shiki for Christmas.\textsuperscript{113} In the company of Torrès and Belchior de Figueiredo, these dances accompanied (presumably vernacular) verses in praise of the Lord and the Virgin Mary. Moreover, they are described as being performed alongside a number of representações, a reference to the dramatic depiction of biblical narratives (i.e. misuteriyo-geki). In this way, we gain a sense of how local dance styles came to be incorporated into Kirishitan dramaturgy. The performance of these danças functioned as explanatory interludes between scenes of the misuteriyo-geki so as to contextualise their dramatic content and religious themes. As we will see, this dramaturgical format drew directly from the traditional theatre of Noh (nō).

Between 1566 and 1568 there are no references to the use of sacred dances. However, this is likely explained by the fact that they had become such an integrated part of the misuteriyo-geki that they were simply not mentioned. Indeed, the only other example from 1565 describes a misuteriyo-geki based on the nativity and the shepherds who went to adore the Redeemer. Presented at Hirado for the celebration of Christmas, dancing is described here as being accompanied by sung verse.\textsuperscript{114} Thus these two Christmas misuteriyo-geki from 1565 appear to have established a standard of Kirishitan dramaturgy in which local dance styles had, for one reason or another, come to be accepted by Torrès and his companions. Mention of dance does not feature in the

\textsuperscript{112} Cohen, \textit{The Missionary Strategies of the Jesuits in Ethiopia}, 161.  
\textsuperscript{113} “…toda a noite até se começaré as missas ouve sempre muitas representações, e danças de moços bem tratados, a letra das quais era toda em louvor de Iesu, e da Virgem”. Luis de Almeida to his brothers of the Society of Jesus, from Shiki (October 20, 1566), \textit{Cartas}, vol. 1, f. 214r.  
\textsuperscript{114} López-Gay, \textit{La liturgia en la Misión del Japón}, 180.
Jesuits’ correspondence again until 1569. In a letter written by Fróis to Belchior de Figueiredo, we are presented with a single Japanese word that constitutes a direct link between the misuteriyo-geki and Noh.

The feast of the Most Holy Resurrection was also celebrated according to the decency of this place […] with their customary dances, which they call Quiogen, music, delicacies, and other things necessary for such festivities.115

Performed by the Kirishitan of Miyako (present-day Kyoto), these “customary dances”, described by Fróis as Quiogen, were clearly a tradition that had persisted between 1565 and 1569. In this account, Quiogen is a Portuguese transliteration of the Japanese word kyōgen. As has been insightfully noted by David Griffiths, kyōgen “which parallels the Satyr play in the Greek festival, and the Intermezzi of the 15th and 16th century Italian theatre, acts as a form of comic relief and release for the audience, and is positioned in the programme between Noh plays”.116 While kyōgen refers to the dramaturgical form as a whole, we can identify three key elements: dialogue (serifu), singing (ko-uta), and dance (mai).117 In its Kirishitan interpretation, this structure thus became: vernacular dialogue (verse), singing (Kirishitan-kyoku), and sacred dance. For Froís, it is clear that the dancing style of kyōgen was its defining feature. This is of some significance as it implies he was already aware of Noh plays as early as 1569.118 We can therefore confirm that Kirishitan misuteriyo-geki and kyōgen were not only intimately connected, but also shared a common origin in the traditions of the Kirishitan of Miyako.

115 Luís Froís to Belchior de Figueiredo, from Miyako (June 1, 1659), Cartas, vol. 1, f. 260r.
116 David Griffiths, The Training of Noh Actors and the Dove (Amsterdam: Harwood Academic, 1998), 16. We must also make a distinction between hon-kyōgen, which are discreet plays performed between Noh plays, and ai-kyōgen which refer to interludes within a Noh play itself and thus contributes to the greater narrative.
118 In her consideration of Froís’s possible encounter with Noh theatre, Amano does not mention this account, only providing the missionary’s reference to Noh in 1592–93. See Amano, “Did Fróis Encounter Christian Noh?”, 128.
but that kyōgen (and its relationship with Noh) was adopted as a framework for Kirishitan drama.\textsuperscript{119} It is interesting to note that even scholars and dramatists who were unaware of this dramaturgical encounter have emphasised shared elements between medieval mystery plays and Japanese Noh.\textsuperscript{120} We find one other account from 1569 in which dance is mentioned. In a letter written by an unknown Portuguese man (possibly a merchant), the festivities for Easter Sunday in the city of Shiki are described. However, in illustrating how the holy day was celebrated in “their manner” (sua maneira), he uses the term falsas bailos (false dances) to define the genre.\textsuperscript{121} This condemnation offers us a useful point of comparison in which we can identify the Jesuits’ relative spirit of accommodatio in learning to accept and incorporate local styles of devotional practice.\textsuperscript{122} Sacred dance had become such a defining feature of Kirishitan identity that even after the exiling of Japanese adherents in the period of persecution, this tradition continued. In 1620, Japanese exiles in Manila are reported by Francisco de Lira (n.d.) to have celebrated the feast of the Immaculate Conception with “a dance [which] was given by more than sixty Japanese, who danced and sang to the

\begin{footnotes}
\item[119] Ortolani has briefly referenced the Jesuits’ familiarity with Noh and kyōgen, but describes only “indigenous techniques” as being incorporated into their “educational shows”. Ortolani, The Japanese Theatre, 155. López-Gay also refers to the Jesuit use of kyōgen as a “liturgical substitution”, rather than something fostered by the Japanese themselves as part and parcel of their syncretic identities as Kirishitan. López-Gay, La liturgia en la Misión del Japón, 40. The relationship between the musical drama form of kōwakamai and the Jesuits’ mystery plays is something that has been contested throughout the twentieth century. The work of Thomas Leims is the definitive authority on this topic, asserting that the Japanese Kirishitan known as Paulo Yōho had edited plays texts of kōwakamai printed by the Jesuit mission press towards the end of the sixteenth century and had also authored Japanese mystery plays as early as 1566. Given Leims’s extensive research on this dramaturgical intersection, it is not addressed in this dissertation. Rather, a focus on kyōgen adds an important dimension to how, through its framing function, it localised the content of these misuteriyo-geki. See Leims, “Japan and Christian Mystery Plays,” 206–10.
\item[121] Letter of a Portuguese man “whose name is not known to the Fathers and Brothers of the Society of Jesus”, from Kuchinotsu (August 15, 1569), Cartas, vol. 1, f. 282v. The letter also describes how many Kirishitan men, women, and boys had travelled from Shiki to Kuchinotsu after Easter in order to visit Father Vilela. Upon arrival they engaged in great festivities composed of seus autos (their dramatic representations, i.e. misuteriyo-geki) in the church, with the celebrations lasting two days.
\item[122] In Portuguese, danças and bailos both refer to dance (likewise in Spanish danzas and bailes). In early seventeenth-century Spain, bailes often implied lewd and indecent movements, whereas danzas were seen as virtuous. The description of Japanese kyōgen as falsos bailos might therefore imply the observer twice condemning the performance. See Maurice Esses, Dance and Instrumental Diferencias in Spain during the 17th and 18th Centuries, vol. 1 (New York: Pendragon Press, 1992), 346.
\end{footnotes}
accompaniment of various instruments, according to their custom”. In this we see the mobility of their syncretic traditions serving to consolidate a sense of communal identity in the Kirishitan diaspora of the seventeenth century. In looking to the dramatic representations of tales from the gospel and the Bible in general, this chapter has observed how Japanese adherents were able to actively participate in the creating and restructuring of Kirishitan dramatic forms. Additionally, the consideration of these more broadly as misuteriyo-geki allows us to see a common link throughout the 1560s in which local styles of vocalisation, instrumental music, visual images, and dance were all employed and developed as a way of accessing ideas, stories, and lessons from Western Christianity. Far from exemplifying Reinhard’s “ecclesiastical colonialism”, the 1560s were a decade in which the Kirishitan themselves fostered syncretic practices of devotion. In this way, the question of what it meant to be Kirishitan at a grassroots level was ultimately defined by their local communities and their own approach to faith and its expression in performance. However, it is important to note that Kirishitan identity was fluid and adapted to shifts in social, political, and economic conditions of sixteenth-century Japan. In the early decades of the Japanese Church, the most prominent catalyst for change in Kirishitan identity and practice was the influence of Tridentine reform. Enacted through an increasing level of intervention in the administration of foreign missions by the General Congregation of the Society of Jesus, boundaries of the accommodatio approach were redefined, in turn challenging aspects of Kirishitan devotion.

The Demise of the *Misuteriyo-geki*

Between 1570 and 1580 we find seven references to Japanese dance, while six examples are found between 1585 and 1611. Their absence from Jesuit correspondence between the years 1580 and 1585, however, is not due to any complacency about *Kirishitan* dance, but rather an outcome of apostolic reform concerning *accommodatio* and its influence on the Jesuits’ cultural mission. Indeed, as Jeffrey Muller has noted, the practice of *accommodatio* among the Jesuits was “developed as a strategic practice and not as a theory”, fostering different proselytic applications from region to region and person to person.\(^{125}\) This lack of missionary unity across the globe was problematic. In this light, the beginning of the 1580s marks a period in which Tridentine attitudes towards devotional acts had begun to influence the Japanese mission. Although music was not a central topic of concern for the Council, four issues regarding its performance for the Roman Rite were considered: “musical settings that truncated liturgical texts, compositions that made the sacred words unintelligible, inappropriate secular vocal music during worship, and lengthy secular pieces played during liturgy”.\(^{126}\) In summarising the twenty-five sessions of deliberation, there is an implicit denunciation of music that aligned itself with these four issues, although the surviving minutes of council discussions suggest that these outcomes on music were incidental.\(^{127}\) There exists only one explicit decree on the reform of liturgical music: “Let them keep away from the churches compositions in which there is an intermingling of the lascivious or impure, whether by instruments or voice”.\(^{128}\) This was the ecclesiastical climate that set the tone for reconsideration of the performing arts as tools of conversion. However, it


\(^{128}\) *Concilium Tridentinum*, 963.
was not the Tridentine *Catechismus romanus*, which arrived in Japan in 1568, that was a catalyst for reform, but rather more direct calls for intervention in the Jesuits’ foreign mission principles. Reiterating the Tridentine definition of ‘appropriate’ music, the Third General Congregation of the Society of Jesus (1573) proclaimed a return to a simple, unaffected kind of devotion. The principles resulting from this were to restrict the performance of choral polyphony in Jesuit churches, and that if singing was called for, it was only the business of the order’s members and not their congregations. Similarly, religious processions were not to be conducted without express dispensation. Thus between 1573 and 1575, devotional reform did not only take place in Japan, but most prominently in the regions of Goa and Bassein of India, and Cochin of China. Nevertheless, the Indian mission consultation, held in the island region of Chorão (near Goa), voted against the decree of the General Congregation, and re-introduced solemnity in their divine services and the use of processions. In this we see a flow-down effect of liturgical and cultural policy reform, wherein the Society’s attempts to globalise their edicts were ultimately negotiated by local particularities of the foreign mission fields. Alessandro Valignano had been present during these discussions, and it was his reservations about the increasing sense of secular influence in the missions to the East Indies that eventually led to the demise of misuteriyo-geki in Japan.

The General Congregation’s edict of 1573 regarding the reform of liturgical music was similarly considered in Nagasaki following Valignano’s arrival in 1579. His

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129 The Roman Catechism, written under the supervision of Carlo Borromeo (1538–84) in 1566, was introduced to Japan in 1568. It was an abridged form of the original Italian text and translated into Japanese for the use of preachers and coadjutors. The complete Latin text was printed later at Amuksa in 1596. See Proust, *Europe Through the Prism of Japan*, 14.
Obediências of 1580 demonstrate a clear alignment with these principles in paring back frivolity in performing the liturgy:

In opposition to the general custom of the Company, we have no reason to admit a musical practice here [Japan] as we permit in India. Henceforth we prohibit the learning of polyphony and the playing of the viola, arpa, rabeca, or other musical instruments, except for keyboards. Instead, only Gregorian chant, the organ, and other keyboard instruments are permitted to serve the church. We prohibit the use of polyphony here, as is seen in other churches of the Company. Instead, use simply plainchant in accordance with our style.\(^\text{133}\)

However, as has been explored both here and in Chapter Two, music had been a central mode of communication for the Jesuits since Xavier’s arrival, and by 1580 had become the foundation upon which Kirishitan identity was constructed and practised. To that extent, many of the missionaries were outspokenly opposed to Valignano’s prohibition, bemoaning the loss of music as a blow to the mission’s potential for widespread conversion. One of the greatest advocates for musical modes of proselytism in the 1570s was the Italian missionary Gnocchi-Soldo Organtino (1530–1609), who had called for architects, painters, musicians, and musical instruments for use in Japan.\(^\text{134}\) Valignano was soon swayed, reinstating music, both vocal and instrumental, for use in “ceremonies of the church, and solemn feasts that [were] to be conducted”.\(^\text{135}\) As regards the role of drama, regulations for the Japanese mission (Ordinationes pro Iaponia) were issued from Rome in 1580, in which the performance of comedies and tragedies inside Jesuit churches was proscribed – exceptions could be made for Latin performances approved by the mission superior – while sacred dialogues and

\(^{134}\) Ebisawa, “The Meeting of Cultures,” 137.
\(^{135}\) Valignano’s Regimento for the seminaries in Japan (June, 1580), reproduced in Josef Franz Schütte, Valignanos Missiongrundsätz für Japan, vol. 1/II (Rome: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 1958), 481.
performances in the vernacular were retained for liturgical use. However, the composition of misuteriyo-geki as a distinctly Kirishitan genre, already waning in the 1570s, and now no longer permitted for performance in churches, was to lose its associations with Japanese forms of theatre and become supplanted by stage plays akin to those of the Jesuits’ European colleges. In his Obediências, Valignano expresses a clear distaste for the misuteriyo-geki and the practice of liturgical singing that has been defined as Kirishitan-kyoku in this dissertation. He calls for Jesuit fathers to examine the customary “representations” (representaciones) of the Kirishitan to ensure that they do not contain any “Buddhist songs [cantigas de pagodes], nor anything less decent and honest” such as the use of kyōgen. This instigation of dramaturgical reform was reiterated in 1612 by Valignano and Francesco Pasio, who cautioned missionaries to look out for indecent use of “qyógués [kyōgen], or doconobós [dokonobō]” in devotional practice. It is interesting to consider that this might suggest Valignano had some difficulties in implementing his reform of the misuteriyo-geki, and that there was a continued practice of local performance styles. Dokonobō is a reference to the use of puppets, as is evident from the Jesuit publication, Vocabulario da Lingoa de Iapam (1603), attributed to João Rodrigues. Furthermore, Leims has aligned Rodrigues’s description of these dokonobō as beggars, with the puppeteering tradition of ebisu mawashi, whose itinerant performers were associated with the Ebisu Shrine at Nishinomiya. However, Jesuit correspondences from 1580 onward indicate a phasing out of the kind of misuteriyo-geki that was practised in the 1560s, with a shift toward the performance of staged dramas in the Jesuit colleges opened in the cities of Funai.
Arima, and Nagasaki throughout the 1580s. Valignano’s suppression of Kirishitan drama provides an important insight into his character, for scholarship on his mission principles in Japan has often painted him, perhaps too easily, as a staunch advocate of *accommodatio*.

While his systemisation of a localised apostolic approach is undeniable, these early actions of his first Japanese ‘visit’ (1579–82) speak to the perceived limits of this *accommodatio*, defining where localisation of devotional practice verged too far into perceived indigenous paganism.

This chapter has presented the years between Xavier’s departure from Japan in 1551, and 1570, as a period of first encounters: between religions, cultures, politics, music, and drama. In an effort to break their clay moulds as “mute statues”, Jesuits in this early phase of the Japanese mission looked to the performing arts as a way of giving voice to their apostolic cause. In these accounts from the 1560s we have seen a syncretistic development of Japanese Christianity – the Kirishitan tradition – that offers snapshots of glocalisation in action. These examples of devotional performance “in their own way” (*à sua maneira*) speak to the active roles that the Japanese assumed in the grassroots development of their Kirishitan faith and practice. Not only did the incorporation of local performance styles offer unprecedented access to the otherwise inaccessible world of Christian Latinity, but these also served as familiar frameworks through which narratives from the gospel and Bible in general could be disseminated in a manner culturally comprehensible to the Japanese. Indeed, the persistence of some of these traditions in a clandestine form between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries of Kirishitan persecution is testament to the continuation of glocal dynamics over space and time. The devotional hybridities fostered by these “hidden Christians” (*kakure*

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142 Xavier to his Companions in Goa (Kagoshima, November 5, 1549), in Costelloe, *Letters and Instructions of Francis Xavier*, 306.
Kirishitan) over the following two centuries demonstrate the enduring encounter of religious universalism with local particularities that are still practised to this day.  

**Figure 9.** A blind *biwa-hōshi* from the *Shichijūichi-ban shokukan utawase emaki* scroll (1501)

Tokyo National Museum, Wikimedia Commons.
FIGURE 10. Moving between scenes of a hand scroll: *etoki* performance at Dojo-ji, Wakayama Prefecture

PART TWO

THE REFLECTION
CHAPTER FOUR

Reflections of the Japanese Church in Early Modern Europe

I can’t but admire here, the wonderful Efficacy of Divine Grace, the invincible Constancy of the [Japanese] Martyrs on one Side, and the strange Tepidity of our European Christianity on t’other; who had rather burn eternally with the Damn’d in Hell, than suffer the least Spark of Fire for him that laid down his Life for their Sakes. What will they think at the Day of Judgment, to see Persons of Quality burnt by a slow Fire for Defence of the Holy Faith, to see Men, Women, and Children, Roasted, Broil’d, and Consum’d in Flames for the Love of God? Have not we the same Saviour too? Do not we fear the same Hell? And have we not Grace to purchase the one, and fly the other? The Japonians will be our Judges afterwards, and their Example will infallibly confound our Tepidity and Coldness.¹

This reverential characterisation of the Kirishitan by French Jesuit Jean Crasset (1618–92) exemplifies the manner in which the Japanese Church was reflected in early modern Europe. Aside from the novelty of tales from the exotic East, the materialisation of a re-imagined ‘Japan’ for European consumption demonstrates the construction of a bridge – through literature, historiography, martyrology, and the arts – that elided their

geographical distance and facilitated a reflexive kind of glocalisation. This potential for finding oneself in the global narrative of Christianity – that is, in the act of forming relations with the converts and martyrs of past and present – lay at the very heart of the Jesuits’ approach to constructing the history of the Japanese Church as a mirror of Christian antiquity. Indeed, the very house (in Jerónimo Nadal’s sense of “the world [as] our house”) of the Society of Jesus was built upon a bedrock of adversity, its foundational pillars formed through the blood of the ancient martyrs. In expanding upon Nadal’s metaphor, the various rooms within this house represent regions ‘discovered’ and yet to be ‘discovered’ by the Society’s missionaries who sought to open their doors to closed places (clausa recludo). The door to Japan had, for five decades, been unlocked by Xavier and his companions. However, as the political climate in Japan was nearing a state of unification, three key political figures were beginning to draw that door closed once more, crushing thousands of Kirishitan in its frame. A consideration of the complex set of political changeovers that occurred in Japan between 1568 and 1600 is essential to understanding the interconnected nature of religion, commerce, and politics towards the end of the sixteenth century. Indeed, the people and places explored in the second half of this dissertation are inextricably caught in the ebb and flow of how Japanese political figures viewed the Jesuits’ influence as a foreign threat. To talk about the fall of Christianity in Japan is thus to talk about the country’s narrative of national selfhood.

The desire for national unification and a return to relative stability was a vision shared by the very daimyo who shed each other’s blood throughout the Sengoku period (1467–1568). Oda Nobunaga (1534–82), in this vein, was the first to truly set in motion the events that led towards its realisation. Despite having pacified most of central Japan and gained control of the shogun (Ashikaga Yoshiaki, 1537–97), however, both

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2 On “reflexive glocalization,” see Robertson, “Europeanization as Glocalization,” 25.
Nobunaga’s campaign of expansion and his own life were cut short by a rebellion led by one of his generals, Akechi Mitsuhide (1528–82), in 1582. Mitsuhide’s subsequent imposition as shogun lasted a mere thirteen days before Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1537–98), Nobunaga’s chief lieutenant, regained control (see Figure 11). The Akechi clan were executed for this act of treason, with the exception of the already married daughter of Mitsuhide, Hosokawa Tama (1563–1600), whose association with the Jesuits is explored in Chapter Six of this dissertation.

Hideyoshi’s rise to power and his establishment of a military hegemony by the 1590s transformed his relationship with the Jesuits from one of amenability to hostility and persecution. Having initially enjoyed his open endorsement of their apostolic work, the Jesuits were soon shocked to receive an edict of expulsion on July 24, 1587. In his decree, Hideyoshi asserted that “Japan [was] the Land of the Gods [kami]”, a dictum that would be reiterated in subsequent anti-Christian movements in the early seventeenth century. It was here that Hideyoshi drew a line in the sand between commerce and religion, asserting that “the purpose of the Black Ships [Portuguese merchants] is trade, and that is a different matter”. Indeed the eventual demise of Christianity in Japan had less to do with religion than it did with politics and trade. Perhaps the most injurious argument in the edict was Hideyoshi’s comparison of the Jesuits to the leaders of the Buddhist True Pure Land Sect (Jōdō Shinshū) whose influence had caused great struggles for political influence throughout the sixteenth century. What is most ironic about this claim is that it represents the Society of Jesus, the very personification of the Catholic Reformation, as comparable to the actors of a

3 Hope for the Jesuits cause was initially bolstered when, on June 20, 1586, Hideyoshi issued a decree which guaranteed the Jesuits’ freedom to reside and preach unimpeded “in all the lands of Japan”. However, this stability would not last. See Elisonas, “Christianity and the Daimyo,” 348–49.

4 Elisonas, “Christianity and the Daimyo,” 360. For a full translation of the edict, see Elson, Deus Destroyed, 115–16.

5 Translated in Elison, Deus Destroyed, 116.

6 See Mary Elizabeth Berry, Hideyoshi (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1982), 63–64; McMullin, Buddhism and the State in Sixteenth-Century Japan.
religious movement who were at the very heart of a so-called Buddhist ‘Reformation’. Although the edict was not initially enforced, it left the Jesuits in a precarious position, only to be exacerbated by the arrival of the Franciscans in 1593. The shipwrecking of the Manila Galleon San Felipe off the coast of Kyushu three years later created cause for concern, both for Hideyoshi and the Jesuits, leading to a drastic turn in Japan’s international relations, with a movement away from the Iberian Peninsula. It was reported to Hideyoshi that the heavily armed ship carried not only a bounty of goods, but also many friars. R. Po-Chia Hsia has emphasised how the ship’s captain took much pride in showing a map that outlined the extent of Spain’s expanding global conquest, and the role of the Franciscans in expanding the empire of their Catholic king. Growing suspicious of an imperialist subtext, Hideyoshi seized the ship’s cargo, and arrested all missionaries in the vicinity of the capital. Twenty-four Christians were gathered and sent to Nagasaki – comprising six European Franciscans, ten Japanese Franciscan lay brothers, three Japanese Jesuit brothers, and five Japanese laity – who were joined by two other Japanese Christians in 1597. The subsequent crucifixion of these twenty-six martyrs came to symbolise Japan’s Christian Century throughout early modern Europe, and would continue to have significant influence into the nineteenth century, eventually leading to their canonisation by Pope Pius IX (r. 1846–78) in 1862.

The death of Hideyoshi in 1598 left a power vacuum. His council of five elders (or gotairō) were left with the task of governing as a regency until Toyotomi Hideyori

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7 The Kamakura period (1185–1333) gave birth to various figures and schools of Buddhism which disassociated with the aristocracy and catered to the common people. This ‘Reformation’ was initiated by Hōnen (1133–1212), founder of the Pure Land sect (Jōdo-shū), who was followed by Shinran (1151–1215) of Rinzai Zen, Dōgen (1200–53) of Sōtō Zen, and Nichiren (1222–82) of the Nichiren school of Buddhism. As discussed by Ford, these figures sought to reform the “corrupt aristocratic schools”, a line of reasoning that would sound all too familiar to the Jesuits. James L. Ford, Jōkei and Buddhist Devotion in Early Medieval Japan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 5.

8 The arrival of the Franciscans in 1593 signalled the end of the Jesuits’ proselytic monopoly, with other mendicant orders (the Augustinians and Dominicans) arriving from 1602.


10 Ibid. For the account of their martyrdom along with twenty-three other Christians in Nagasaki on February 5, 1597, see Luís Fróis, De rebus iaponicis historica relatio, eaque triplex (Mainz: Johannes Albini, 1599), 1–81.
(1593–1615) came of age. However, the unresolvable rivalries between the regents led to the collapse of this structure, with Tokugawa Ieyasu (1543–1616) arising as the dominant figure (see Figure 12). The subsequent conflict between Tokugawa Ieyasu (1543–1616) and his allies (referred to as the ‘Western Camp’) against the Toyotomi loyalists (‘Eastern Camp’) would eventually lead to the watershed Battle of Sekigahara in 1600. Although Ieyasu’s rise to power after his victory in this war is glossed over in some histories as stemming the tide of Christian persecution until 1614, this is certainly not the full picture. As noted by Marie Conte-Helm, “isolated incidents of persecution and martyrdom of Christians” followed the issue of further anti-Christian orders between 1611 and 1614. While Ieyasu’s enforcement of these policies has been described as “relatively mild”, the immediate lead-up to Sekigahara, and the subsequent fledgling years of unification under the new Tokugawa Shogunate, facilitated a number of earlier episodes of Christian persecution between 1603 and 1609 which are generally overlooked. Caught in the crossfire of this pre-Sekigahara struggle for power was the aforementioned noblewoman, Hosokawa Tama. Ishida Mitsunari (1559–1600), one of Hideyoshi’s former governmental prefects and leader of the ‘Eastern camp’, had exploited Ieyasu’s departure for Edo (Tokyo) in July of 1600, taking wives and families of Tokugawa loyalists hostage in Osaka. Hosokawa Tama, a devout Kirishitan, was one of these captives. However, she evaded any tarnishing of her honour, committing suicide to the great sadness of the Jesuit priests and her Kirishitan community who had revered her virtue. The figure of Gratia, the name by which she was baptised, was interpreted and re-interpreted as an exemplum of Christian piety

11 The regency consisted of Tokugawa Ieyasu, Mōri Terumoto (1553–1625), Ukita Hideie (1573–1655), Maeda Toshiie (1538–99) and Uesugi Kagetatsu (1555–1623).
14 Ibid., 39. See also Higashibaba, Christianity in Early Modern Japan, 136–37.
throughout Europe in the seventeenth century, both from the pulpit and upon the 
theatrical stage. The variations in her representation for European dissemination are the 
basis for Chapter Six of this dissertation.

João Paolo Oliveira e Costa’s analysis of Ieyasu’s relationship with the varied 
Christian daimyō of Japan provides the most balanced account of the fortunes of the 
Jesuits’ mission in the immediate aftermath of the Battle of Sekigahara. As he has 
noted, Ieyasu’s victory had two significant consequences for the Japanese Church. First, 
a “decisive structural alteration” between 1600 and 1601 which brought Japan under the 
centralised control of a singular power whose blueprint for a united nation had no place 
for Christianity. Secondly, the more immediate outcome was that the southern half of 
the province of Higo, once a Christian stronghold of thousands, was handed over to 
Katō Kiyomasa (1561–1611), who ushered in a period of violent persecution against the 
Kirishitan. The city of Yatsushiro within this province of Higo is the scene of the final 
chapter of this dissertation, which explores the martyrdom of the noblewoman Agnes 
Takeda (c.1548–1603). Until the turn of the seventeenth century, writings about these 
people and places of Christian Japan occupied more space in published collections of 
Jesuit letters than any other Asiatic country. Despite the eventual suppression of 
Christianity and the closure of Japan’s borders by 1639, the Jesuit Province of Japan 
continued to be administered from Macao as late as the eighteenth century. It is perhaps 
through the re-imagination of Japan’s Christian Century in European performing 
traditions that hope for reconquering the Land of the Rising Sun was preserved in the 
seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

The Japanese Genre in European Musical Dramas, 1698–1783

For composers, librettists, and playwrights of the Society of Jesus, creative inspiration was found in the annals of the Japanese Church, replete with heroic tales of conversion and martyrdom amidst adversity, and endurance against ruthless and systematic persecutions. Indeed, these themes of conversion and martyrdom were the twin pillars which supported the Japanese Church as a mirror in which continental Catholics could see an exemplary reflection of their own faith. This appropriation of the Kirishitan figure as a means of simulating spiritual self-reflection speaks to the very heart of the Catholic Reformation. As we will see in the second half of this dissertation, the elevation of the Japanese Church to that of a transcendental narrative of Christian adversity rendered these converts and martyrs from the Far East into reflections of their brothers and sisters from Christian antiquity. A Tridentine concern with aligning the Church with its ancient roots facilitated this conflation of time and space.18 In drawing Japan close to the hearts and minds of early modern Europeans, their imaginations – inspired by the printed and spoken word, visual art, and music – defied geographical distance through cognitive globalisation, or what Joseph McDermott and Peter Burke identify as “intellectual connectivity”.19 Thus the second half of this dissertation, ‘The Reflection’, stresses the bi-directional nature of the ‘Glocal Mirror’ metaphor, looking to the ways in which “the diffusion of ideas and practices”20 from Japan’s Christian Century were adopted at the local European level. It presents three case studies from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries: an oratorio, a melodrama, and a tragedy. All three examples illustrate how the use of key Kirishitan figures were subsumed into the ‘universal’ Christian narrative of conversion and martyrdom, and consequently how

18 See Ditchfield, “What was Sacred History?”, 72–100.
20 Robertson, “Prologue,” 3.
these representations allowed for the recognition of boundaries and shared understandings between continental Jesuits and the Japanese Church. The early baroque stage, both secular and sacred, was a site of the mythologising of cultural encounters in which real and fabricated Japanese characters became central protagonists in a developing sense of geographical and spiritual intimacy between Catholic Europe and Japan. Jürgen Maehder’s approach to mythologising in performance stresses an “interactive process through which historical events and protagonists are translated into cultural discourse, often subordinating the actual facts of an event to the value system of the dominant society”. 21 The second half of this dissertation draws upon this interactive definition, looking to how the ‘historical accuracy’ of Japanese narratives, spun by European playwrights and librettists, varied during the course of the early modern period. While the imagined exoticism of foreign lands had long inspired performative genres throughout the late Renaissance and early baroque, the development of a distinctly ‘Japanese genre’ was rooted in more recent history, through physical proximity realised or accessed via the proliferation of literature on South and South East Asia during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. As Allison B. Kavey has suggested, “people [in the early modern period] invented new worlds, created explanations for those they inhabited, and justified their relationships with other civilizations, nature, and God through their cosmological imaginations”. 22 The burgeoning genre of Japanese plays throughout this period was thus an act of “world building”, to borrow Kavey’s term, through which the contours of a European ‘Japan’ were imagined and reimagined for the stages of Jesuit colleges and beyond. The varying degrees of historical accuracy in the European performative re-imagination of Japan’s Christian Century can be linked in some ways to the differing ‘depths’ of a globally interconnected consciousness. This

22 Allison B. Kavey, “Introduction: ‘Think you there was, or ever could be’ a world such as this I dreamed,” in World-Building and the Early Modern Imaginations, ed. Allison B. Kavey (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 1.
act of “world building” was subject to multiple ongoing revisions, with their narrative variations entirely relative, of course, to who was doing the constructing.

‘Japonism’, derived from the French ‘Japonisme’, is most commonly associated with the influence of Japan on the artistic movement of Impressionism. Following the end of Japan’s Sakoku (‘closed country’) era in the mid-nineteenth century, interest in the aesthetics of Japanese design developed rapidly into a craze for acquiring Japanese art, especially ukiyo-e, Japanese woodblock prints, of which Monet was a keen collector. However, a very different kind of ‘religious craze’ for all things Japanese was taking place in Europe from the end of the sixteenth century. The mirror in which the image of a Christian Japan was reflected – in England, Italy, Germany, Austria, and Switzerland, among others – was arguably the first source of Japonism. As has been comprehensively demonstrated by Tokuo Furuse, the Japanese motif became popular in the visual arts, theatre and music in these earlier centuries. A discrete genre of what we may call ‘Japanese plays’, appearing throughout Europe, can be linked to the beatification of three Japanese Jesuits – Paul Miki (c.1564–97), John de Gotō (1578–97), and James Kisai (1533–97) – by Pope Urban VIII (r. 1623–44) in 1627. These three martyrs were among the twenty-six Nagasaki Christians crucified by Hideyoshi in 1597. Dramatic and musical works alike drew inspiration from such prominent Japanese figures who dominated Jesuit histories and martyrologies, often contributing to the then established view of Japan’s Christian Century as a mirror of the early Roman Church. To this effect, Valignano had claimed that “the Lord [had] poured his Grace on this Country [Japan] so different from ours and with such different laws and customs as He


did in the Early Church in order to plant here his holy faith”. The second half of this dissertation thus explores multiple encounters in the case studies of the following chapters: encounters between Christian past and present, between Europe and Japan, Buddhism and Christianity, and between earthly life and the divine experience of martyrdom. Chapters Five, Six and Seven explore the following musical dramas respectively: Pietro Paolo Laurenti and “Verbenio”, La conversione alla Santa Fede del Re di Bungo Giapponese (“The Conversion of the Japanese King of Bungo to the Holy Faith”, 1703); Johann Baptist Adolph and Johann Bernhard Staudt, Mulier Fortis, [...] sive Gratia regni Tango regina (“Strong Woman, [...] alternatively Gratia, Queen of the Kingdom of Tango”, 1698); and Alfonso Varano, Agnese Martire del Giappone (“Agnes, Martyr of Japan”, 1783).

The Jesuit Theatrical Tradition

The Jesuits’ development of dramaturgical tradition, much like their relationship with music, was not one codified in regulation, but one developed in practice. The Society of Jesus, from its earliest years, had begun to foster the performance of dramas in their schools. With the exception of a few early productions at the Mamertine College at Messina, the tradition of the Jesuit school drama first began to develop in Rome. From their beginnings in the mid-1560s, Jesuit plays at the German and Roman Colleges were

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26 While Varano’s drama is a spoken tragedy, it appeared to have incorporated musical choruses.
performed in an effort to compete with secular entertainment. Indeed, “what the Counter-Reformers could not suppress, they influenced”. 29 The Jesuits were at the forefront of theatrical reform at the turn by the seventeenth century, paving the way for the stage as site of instruction in rhetoric and devotion. The Jesuit theatre – in its multimedia exploitation of the senses – became “a living catechism of the Christian doctrine”. 30 The order’s schools and colleges served as meeting places for the Catholic public, and it was through music and theatre that the Jesuits effectively and affectively engaged in cultural interaction with them. The history of Jesuit theatre is a topic that has been extensively explored elsewhere, 31 but it is important to note where the following chapters’ case studies fall in the spectrum of compositional media employed by the Society of Jesus throughout the early modern period.

The first Jesuit dramas were born at a time when the Quattrocento sacra rappresentazione was transforming into the tragedia sacra, in which neoclassical conventions were applied to religious subjects. 32 From its humble beginnings, the Jesuit stage was shaped by a concern with the “struggle between light and darkness, between truth and illusion, between faith and heresy, culminating in the victory of faith and light, the good and true”. 33 These dichotomies, so central to the missionary cause, found

32 Clubb, Giambattista Della Porta, 73.
relatable expression in tales of Japanese conversion and martyrdom as will be explored in the second half of this dissertation. *Mulier fortis* of Chapter Six is defined here as a ‘melodrama’. As Victor R. Yantelli has shown, the Jesuits left behind the conservatism of the *sacra rappresentazione* to develop a form of theatre that would rival the works performed in the opera houses of the early baroque. Indeed, previous scholarly references to *Mulier fortis* as an ‘opera’ are certainly misleading. While there are a confusing variety of terms used in relation to early Jesuit productions, there is a general need for a clear distinction between opera proper, written and performed both in Italy and Austria in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and what shall be henceforth referred to in this dissertation as Jesuit melodramas. These melodramas, such as *Mulier fortis*, involved the recitation of dramatic text accompanied by musical commentary either in the form of divisional choruses and/or sung prologues and epilogues. These are again to be contrasted with those Jesuit theatrical productions which were entirely sung, and which, for scholarly convenience, have often been referred to as *drama musicum*. The notion that Jesuit dramatic works present a kind of ‘transitional’ repertoire that evolved into opera ignores the poetics of these genres, as codified in Jesuit writings, and the breadth of the order’s artistic practice, indicating that melodramas and *drama musicum* were original and independent genres. Indeed, Jesuit theatre and opera developed parallel to, and in competition with, each other in which the

38 See Jeż, “Między Rappresentatione a Melodrama Sacrum,” 75–94.
spectacle of the latter greatly influenced the former.\textsuperscript{39} The Jesuit contribution to the development of Italian oratorio is more straightforward. From the mid-sixteenth century onwards, Jesuit composers were engaged in this form, “blending lyric and drama, narrative and song, religious subject and allegory”.\textsuperscript{40} Chapter Five’s exploration of La conversione alla Santa Fede del Re di Bungo Giaponese discusses its place within the context of the genre’s development at the turn of the eighteenth century and how its Japanese focus is a distinguishing factor in the history of church music to date. Finally, we turn to the late eighteenth-century martyr tragedy, Agnese Martire del Giappone. Published in 1783, it demonstrates the reflective endurance of the Japanese Church in Catholic Europe and the continued inspiration its Kirishitan figures offered for both faith and entertainment. This is particularly important to note in light of the Society of Jesus’s papal suppression in 1773. Agnese Martire del Giappone presents us with a tale of a Jesuit convert, written by the famously devout Alfonso Varano who, although seemingly not a Jesuit himself, had deep ties to members of the now suppressed order. As will be discussed in Chapter Seven, this is a spoken tragedia, although the involvement of sung choruses is very likely. These three case studies in the second half of this dissertation are not presented in chronological order, but rather in logical sequence of theme: we start with conversion and end in martyrdom, highlighting the reflection of the Japanese Church first at the turn of the seventeenth century, and secondly towards the end of the eighteenth century.

\textsuperscript{40} Jean-Frédéric Chevalier, “Neo-Latin Theatre in Italy,” in \textit{Neo-Latin Drama in Early Modern Europe}, 85.
Performing Global Interconnectedness

Globalization, according to Bryan Turner, “transforms the generic ‘religion’ into a world-system of competing and conflicting religions. The process of institutional specialization has transformed local, diverse and fragmented cultural practices into recognizable systems of religion”. In the early modern period reflections in the Glocal Mirror served to present conflicting religious forms (i.e. Japanese sects of Buddhism) against which the virtues of Catholicism were reinforced. That is to say, the Jesuits’ rapid dissemination of information about Japanese Buddhism – whether accurate or not – throughout the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries transformed this ‘pagan idolatry’ into a competing world-system of religion. The Society of Jesus was now not only striving to reclaim people and lands lost to Protestant ‘heresy’ in Europe, but also found themselves in direct competition with ‘newly-discovered’ religions from the four corners of the globe. Inasmuch as the Jesuits’ adversity inspired the re-imagination of their lives for theatre- and church-goers alike, so too did the exotic intrigue of Japanese ‘kings’ and their foreign faith engender fascination. As Pietro Redondi has claimed, “the highly emotional lives of saints [and the] sensual tortures or Jesuit martyrs in Japan” featured prominently as subjects for the performing arts. Jesuit composers, librettists, and playwrights sought to move the hearts and minds of their congregations by drawing upon a sensual arsenal of musical and theatrical devices. Central to their audiences’ suspension of belief was the Jesuits’ ability to perform a sense of global interconnectedness through which individuals were led to a reflexive state of global unity in the cause of Christ, from Japan to China, Mozambique to Goa, New France to the reducciones of South America.

43 These are ideas explored by various scholars from a global perspective in the forthcoming volume edited by Yasmin Haskell and Raphaële Garrod. Changing Hearts: Performing Jesuit Emotions Between Europe, Asia and the Americas (Leiden: Brill).

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**FIGURE 12.** Engraving of Tokugawa Ieyasu in Lorenzo Crasso, *Elogii di capitani illustri* (Venice: Combi e Là Noù, 1693), f. 47.

*FROM AUTHOR’S OWN COLLECTION*
CHAPTER FIVE

Francis Xavier at the Court of Bungo:

La conversione alla Santa Fede del Re di Bungo Giaponese (1703)

Now that we have a definite knowledge about the contents of their [religious] laws, we are searching for reasons to prove them to be false. Every day we have therefore asked them questions about their laws and arguments; but neither the bonzes\(^1\) nor the nuns, the soothsayers nor any others who are opposed [to] the law of God, have been able to answer them. When the Christians saw that the bonzes could not answer our questions, they were delighted. Every day they came to believe more firmly in God, and the pagans who attended the disputations lost confidence in the erroneous sects in which they had believed.\(^2\)

In this letter to his companions in Europe, Francis Xavier reflects upon the birth of the Japanese mission and the theological debates that have been discussed in Chapter One. Following his arrival on August 15, 1549, Xavier travelled throughout the Kyushu region, visiting the cities of Hirado, Hakata, Funai, and Yamaguchi, and moving as far east as Sakai and Kyoto over a period of twenty-seven months. Of the daimyo by whom Xavier was received during this time, one of the most influential, both during and after his lifetime, was the ‘King’ of the province of Bungo. Recurrently referred to in (mainly

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\(^1\) Derived from the Portuguese word *bonzo* (Buddhist monk), a transliteration from the Japanese *bōzu* (坊主).

\(^2\) Francis Xavier to his companions in Europe, from Cochin (January 29, 1552), in *Letters and Instructions of Francis Xavier*, 333.
French) Jesuit histories as “Civan”, the daimyo Ōtomo Yoshishige held the seat of power in the city of Funai. With the exception of Takayama Ukon (1552–1615), Yoshishige was arguably the most revered of the Kirishitan daimyo both during and after his lifetime. The European fame of this Japanese sovereign, “who embraced so heartily the law of God and showed such love to the priests and [the] Portuguese”, reflects a man in a state of theological flux between the states of ‘Catholicness’ and ‘Buddhinst’. Indeed, his support of the Jesuits and his eventual baptism in 1578 has polarised the ways in which history remembers him. For the historical Society of Jesus, Ōtomo Yoshishige was lauded as a man of virtue, and his legacy as a Christian King grew throughout the eighteenth century in theatres and churches across Europe. His patronage of the Jesuit mission during its early years afforded missionaries the opportunity to preach and engage with existing religious institutions. Thus, the roots of the Japanese Church were founded on a basis of theological disputation, with the first Jesuits collecting information on a miscellany of Buddhist practices in order to structure arguments against them. This apologetic spirit and a fascination with the exoticism of the Japanese mission would later converge at a juncture in the development of the Italian oratorio.

Despite the Christian-centric view of Yoshishige as a bastion of Catholic fortitude, his efforts to construct a model Christian state have also been looked back upon with scorn. Yuki Hideo notes that a tourist pamphlet at the Zuihō-in (瑞峯院), a Rinzai sub-temple of Daitoku-ji (大徳寺), founded by Yoshishige in 1546, contains a description of him as a ruthless warlord who exploited his faith: “…at the age of forty-eight [sic], this devoted Zen follower became a fanatic Christian. […] Ōtomo killed many Buddhist monks and nuns, destroyed many Buddhist temples, seminaries, [and] monasteries…” Yuki Hideo, “Christianity and Japanese Culture,” Japanese Religions 26 (2000): 28–35.

Immoos discusses the “Bungo cycle” of Swiss baroque plays (including references to some musical works) that focus on the figure of Ōtomo Yoshishige. See Thomas Imoos, “Japanese Themes in Swiss Baroque Drama,” in Studies in Japanese Culture, ed. Joseph Roggendorf (Tokyo: Sophia University, 1963), 79–98.

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3 See, for instance, Pierre-François-Xavier de Charlevoix, Histoire et description générale du Japon, vol. 1 (Paris: J.M. Gandouin, 1736), 211–29. It is, however, interesting to note that the use of the name “Civan” in La conversione alla Santa Fede predates its use in any of the Jesuit Church histories.


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corroboration of Catholic faith. In 1703, *La conversione alla Santa Fede del Re di Bungo Giaponese* ("The Conversion of the Japanese King of Bungo to the Holy Faith"), an oratorio composed by Pietro Paolo Laurenti (1675–1751) with a libretto by "Verbenio", was performed in the Chiesa di Santa Maria dell’Angelo of Faenza (see Figure 13). While the musical score has been lost, the libretto is preserved today at the Museo Internazionale e Biblioteca della Musica in Bologna (see Figure 14). Although the existence of this text has been acknowledged since the late nineteenth century, it has received no academic attention to date. This chapter will explore the unexplored narrative of this libretto while contextualising it within its historical, musical, literary, and religious settings. In so doing, it will analyse the performative representation of Buddhism and explore the apologetic voice of the Jesuit librettist through his development of characters and blurring of fact with fiction in the oratorio. What we are ultimately faced with is not an instance of genuine interreligious dialogue (a true *kaikō*), but rather one of disputation, where the Jesuit impulse was to identify and magnify comparative theological differences.

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7 The title page of the libretto specifies that the oratorio was “to be sung in the Church of the Fathers of the aforesaid Company [the Society of Jesus] in Faenza" [Da cantarsi nella Chiesa de Padri di detta Compagnia in Faenza]. The Chiesa di Santa Maria dell’Angelo was the first Jesuit church to be built in Faenza, with work beginning in 1621 under the direction of Girolamo Rainaldi (1570–1655), later substituted by Ercole Fichi (1595–1665) in 1646.


The Composition of La conversione alla Santa Fede del Re di Bungo Giapponese

The reverence in which the converts and martyrs of Japan’s Christian Century were held in Catholic Europe found its supreme manifestation in the performing arts throughout the baroque period. Indeed, La conversione alla Santa Fede can be identified as belonging to a distinct genre of ‘Japanese plays’ (musical or otherwise), and appears to be the first and only example of an oratorio based on an entirely Japanese theme. As early as 1622, however, we find the musical representation of ‘Japan’ among a number of oriental allegories in Giovanni Girolamo Kapsperger’s Apotheosis sive consecratio SS. Ignatii et Francisci Xaverii (“The Apotheosis or Consecration of Saints Ignatius Loyola and Francis Xavier”). By the turn of the eighteenth century, this ‘Japanese genre’ of Jesuit plays and melodramas had become entrenched in the canon of college productions. Johann Bernhard Staudt and Johann Baptist Adolph’s Mulier fortis of 1698, as will be explored in Chapter Six, appears to be one of the few examples with an extant musical score. The conversion of Ōtomo Yoshishige also appears during the mid-eighteenth century in, among others, the allegorical drama musicum, Pallas und Flora (“Pallas and Flora”), performed at the Jesuit College of Luzern in 1741. The rage for

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11 I have been unable to find any other reference to an entirely ‘Japanese’ oratorio. Samuel Coleridge-Taylor’s secular cantata A Tale of Old Japan (1911), however, used the poem “Two Painters” by Alfred Noyes as its libretto, while Dudley Buck’s cantata The Light of Asia (1886) was based on the epic poem of Edwin Arnold and explored the “life and teaching of Gautama, prince of India and founder of Buddhism”.

12 Written in celebration of the canonisation of Ignatius and Xavier in 1622, this musical production explores “the missionary conquering by the two new saints and features personifications of countries – including India, China, Japan, and Palestine – in which Xavier was most active”. Coelho identifies the piece as drawing upon traditions of Jesuit theatre and being inspired by the operatic form, yet emphasises its unique musical structure as distinct from early Italian operas. See Victor A. Coelho, “Kapsberger’s Apotheosis…of Francis Xavier (1622) and the Conquering of India,” in The Work of Opera: Genre, Nationhood, and Sexual Difference, ed. Richard DellaMora and Daniel Fischlin (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 30; T. Frank Kennedy, liner notes to The Jesuit Operas. Operas by Johannes Kapsberger (“Apotheosis sive consecratio SS. Ignatii et Francisci Xaverii”) and Domenico Zipoli/Martin Schmid/et al., (San Ignacio), 2-CD set, Dorian Recordings: 3243, 2003.


14 Die Danck-Sagende Pallas und Heyl-Eyfferende Flora (Luzern: Jost Frantz Jacob Wyssing, 1741). In this drama musicum, Flora, the Roman goddess of flowers, is an allegory for the Japanese Church, who
Japanese exoticism also made its way into purely secular entertainment. Joseph Bodin de Boismortier’s *ballet comique, Don Quichotte chez la Duchesse* (“Don Quixote at the House of the Duchess,” premiered in 1743), for instance, takes inspiration from Cervantes’ work, but, through the hand of librettist Charles-Simon Favart, is embellished with fanciful Japanese divertissements. To that extent, the Japanese theme of *La conversione alla Santa Fede* was not unique for its time. However, in contrast to the previous examples of Jesuit musical works, this oratorio, which features Japanese characters in sung (as opposed to speaking) roles, was something innovative, reflecting also the genre’s development in early eighteenth-century Italy.

Following the Apennine earthquakes of 1703, Pope Clement XI (r. 1700–21) issued a decree that prohibited popular carnival festivities, including opera, for a period of five years, as an expression of gratitude to God for protecting Rome. To fill this cultural void, oratorios were turned to as a source of entertainment which could simultaneously satisfy spiritual needs.\(^{15}\) Having developed closely to opera, both in the treatment of libretto and musical aesthetic, oratorios were effective and affective substitutes for the banned operas up until 1709.\(^{16}\) As has been demonstrated by van der Linden, the ambiguous identity of the Italian oratorio, somewhere between the secular and sacred, was a defining characteristic of the musical form.\(^{17}\) Indeed, this ambiguity allowed for the oratorio to occupy various performance contexts, gaining particular

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\(^{15}\) The term ‘oratorio’ has taken on a variety of different definitions since the seventeenth century. It can, however, be generally defined as an extended composition based on a libretto having a religious theme and performed by a chorus, orchestra, and vocal soloists, in concert and church contexts.

\(^{16}\) Smither, *A History of the Oratorio*, vol. 1, 258–80. One might even say that it was through these oratorios that opera survived in Rome during those years. Handel’s *La resurrezione* (HWV 47), for instance, performed on Easter Sunday of 1708 at the Palazzo Ruspoli, was produced with rich tapestries, palms, and canvas backdrops, among other ornaments. This ‘closet’ opera caused great scandal with Clement XI not for its extravagance, but because of Handel’s use of female singers, in defiance of another decree of 1704 which forbade the participation of women in public performances. See, for instance, Francesco Valesio’s account (April 9, 1708) of Clement XI’s response to the oratorio in Donald Burrows et al., *George Frideric Handel: Collected Documents*, vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2013), 127.

\(^{17}\) Huub van der Linden, “The Unexplored Giant: Use Histories of Italian Oratorio around 1700” (PhD diss., European University Institute, 2012).
popularity during Clement’s prohibition era of the early eighteenth century. It was while this edict was in force that La conversione alla Santa Fede was written by Laurenti and “Verbenio”. Pietro Paolo Laurenti was noted during his lifetime as a skilled string player, singer, and composer. Having studied under Giacomo Antonio Perti (1661–1756), Laurenti was recognised for his compositions both secular and sacred. As for his operatic output, by 1709 Laurenti had written only one opera since his first in 1701 (Attilio Regolo in Affrica, “[Marcus] Atilius Regulus in Africa”). With nine oratorios composed between 1703 and 1710, however, it is clear that during the imposition of Clement XI’s edict Laurenti had found a dramatic outlet in the oratorio. While composers such as Handel, Caldara, and Alessandro Scarlatti composed oratorios during the prohibition period, their plots were ‘less operatic’, based upon allegorical discourses or colourful sacred and biblical narratives rather than tales from the early Roman Empire or the lives of kings from centuries past. Laurenti and Verbenio’s oratorio, by virtue of its historical and cultural exoticism, thus holds a unique place in this genre’s history. Without the musical score of La conversione alla Santa Fede to analyse, what we are left with is the sophisticated poetics of the libretto by “Verbenio, pastor d’Arcadia”. 

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19 Laurenti was admitted to the Accademia Filarmonica as a cellist in 1698 and as a composer in 1701. As a singer he was cast in a number of operas including Tomaso Albinoni’s Il Giustino of 1711 and Antonio Lotti’s Teuzzone between 1711 and 1712. See also, Michael Talbot and Enrico Careri, “Pietro Paolo Laurenti,” in The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, ed. Stanley Sadie (London: Macmillan, 2001), 381–82.
20 Cecilia Bartoli has recorded a number of arias from these oratorios: see Cecilia Bartoli, Opera Proibita, Decca: CD4757029, 2005.
21 See, for instance, Handel’s early operas: Rodrigo (HWV 5), performed in Florence in 1707; Florindo (HWV 3), performed at the Theater am Gänsemarkt in 1708; Agrippina (HWV 6), composed for the 1709–10 Venetian Carnevale season.
Giovanni Tedeschi (1648–1727), not to be confused with the eighteenth-century castrato of the same name (also known as “Amadori”\(^\text{23}\)), was a professor of belles-lettres in Carpi for many years, and was regarded as an influential writer in his time.\(^\text{24}\) “Verbenio” was the Arcadian pseudonym under which Tedeschi published a number of his works. Unlike Laurenti, who was a Franciscan,\(^\text{25}\) Tedeschi was a member of the Society of Jesus.\(^\text{26}\) Laurenti and Tedeschi’s choice of Ōtomo Yoshishige as a subject was not only appropriate for their intended audience (the Jesuits’ congregation in Faenza), but, by virtue of the exotic setting, was also promising in terms of entertainment. The oratorio’s *argomento* summarises the plot:

Saint Francis Xavier having been invited by Civan, King of Bungo, presented himself at court in noble dress with the cortege of Edward Gama, Captain of the Portuguese ships, followed by many knights of the country, and was welcomed by the King with signs of esteem and veneration[.] The saint did not reject this display of courtly pomp because it honoured the Gospel. Having then held a dispute with a very learned Bonze before the King, the latter was moved by the Holy Christian Faith; But because he was tied to the pleasures of the world, he remained in the ancient superstition [Buddhism]. It was then foretold by Xavier, with prophetic spirit, that after a long time the King would become a Christian. In fact, twenty-seven years later, the King was baptised by Father Francis Cabral, Vice-Provincial of the Society of Jesus, and he chose at the Sacred Font

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the name of Francis, in the venerable memory of Saint Francis Xavier, Apostle of Japan.\textsuperscript{27}

Despite the oratorio’s name and the argomento’s focus on Yoshishige’s baptism, the dramatic action does not actually portray his formal conversion, but rather his meeting with Xavier and a fictitious religious debate between the saint and a Buddhist bonze. The narrative woven by Tedeschi in La conversione alla Santa Fede is the result of a series of historical appropriations. Thus in order to understand the apologetic tone of the libretto and to distinguish the various voices that contribute to it, Tedeschi’s sources of inspiration must be identified.

\textbf{The Genesis of Tedeschi’s Libretto}

As was the convention with these ‘Japanese plays’, Tedeschi’s Japanese muse was found in the histories of the Society of Jesus. His argomento cites “Bartoli, Asia, parte p[rima]” as the source for the dramatic action. Referring to the volume on Asia in Daniello Bartoli’s monumental Dell’istoria della Compagnia di Giesu (1650–73),\textsuperscript{28} La conversione alla Santa Fede was thus drawn from Bartoli’s account of Francis Xavier at the court of Ōtomo Yoshishige.\textsuperscript{29} Complications arise, however, when considering Bartoli’s own sources. While the historical accuracy of his prose has long been

\textsuperscript{27} “S. Francesco Saverio, invitatodo Civan Re di Bungo, si portò a Corte in abito nobile con signorile corteggio di Odoardo Gama, Capitano delle Navi Portoghesi, seguito da molti Cavaglieri di quella Nazione, e fu accolto dal Re con segni di stima, e venerazione, né ricusò il Santo tal pompa per onor del Vangelo. Tenutasi quindi una Disputa da lui con un Bonzo dottissimo avanti il Re, questi rimase affezionato alla Santa Fede Christiana; Ma perch’egli era allacciato in piaceri di Mondo, restò nell’antica Superstizione. Fu poi con spirito profetico predetto dal Saverio, che doppò molto tempo sarebbe reso Cristiano. In fatti 27 anni doppò fu detto Re battezzato dal Padre Francesco Cabral Vice Provinciale della Compagnia di Gesù, e volle al Sagro Fonte il Nome di Francesco, per memoria venerabile di S. Francesco Saverio Apostolo del Giappone.” Verbenio [Giovanni Tedeschi], La conversione alla Santa Fede del Re di Bungo Giaponese (Bologna: Peri, 1703), 2.

\textsuperscript{28} See Simon Ditchfield’s current research project “Discovering How to Describe the World: Daniello Bartoli and the Writing of Global History”. See also Ditchfield, “Catholic Reformation and Renewal,” 178.

\textsuperscript{29} Daniello Bartoli, Dell’istoria della Compagnia di Giesu: L’Asia (Rome: Varese, 1667), 163–69.
debated, the origin of this particular story has a clear literary lineage with its own set of obstacles. It is evident that Bartoli, and thus Tedeschi, based their interpretation of events on the travel writings of the Portuguese merchant Fernão Mendes Pinto (1509–83). His Peregrinação, posthumously published in 1614, became one of the most popular books of the seventeenth century, and is claimed to have rivalled even Cervantes’ Don Quijote. More of an “autobiographical romance”, Mendes Pinto’s exotic travelogue is heavily dramatised and, through its own rhetorical constructs, blurs fact with fiction. Yet, as noted by Rubiés, his sections on Japan have proven to be relatively reliable, particularly in light of his induction into the Society’s novitiate in Malacca during April of 1554. We do know that Mendes Pinto and his fellow Portuguese merchants assisted Xavier in Bungo in 1551, and that Xavier did indeed meet with Ōtomo Yoshishige in September of the same year. However, the religious disputation that Mendes Pinto and Bartoli describe as occurring between Xavier and a Buddhist bonze named “Faisciondono” appears to be strategic invention. It is this very disputation that forms the basis of La conversione alla Santa Fede and consequently raises questions as to the extent to which Tedeschi’s own narrative voice resonates in the oratorio.

31 Steven Gonzagowski, “The Subversion of Empire as Farce in Fernão Mendes Pinto’s Peregrinação,” in At Whom are we Laughing?: Humor in Romance Language Literatures, ed. Zenia Sacks Da Silva and Gregory M. Pell (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Press, 2013), 32.
33 Rubiés, “Real and Imaginary Dialogues,” 452. However, the influence of Mendes Pinto on subsequent biographers of Xavier must be noted. Henry J. Coleridge’s nineteenth-century account of Xavier’s life, for instance, notes discrepancies between Mendes Pinto’s details and other sources, yet still regards the Peregrinação as an historical work. Consequently, research that relies heavily on Coleridge without consideration of these issues is problematic. See, for instance, John D. Young, Confucianism and Christianity: The First Encounter (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1983), 12–22.
34 “I left Father Cosme de Torres and Juan Fernández in Yamaguchi with those who had become Christians and went to Bungo. The duke [Ōtomo Yoshishige] received me with great kindness, and I was much consoled by the Portuguese who had come there”. Francis Xavier to his companions in Europe, from Cochin (January 29, 1552), in Letters and Instructions of Francis Xavier, 338.
Parte prima: Christianity as Light, Buddhism as Darkness

… but in the end, dear hopes, be consoled
to see at the river-mouth of Bungo the
harbour of Faith and the triumph of the Cross.
In the Sea, which is always unstable,
there is no fleeting fortune
for he who hoped for Heaven.
The tempests are calm,
The waves are not troubling
for he whom the Faith guided.36

The oratorio opens with Xavier and the Portuguese Captain-Major Duarte da Gama (n.d.)37 approaching the “Harbour of Faith” (i.e. Funai). In the above da capo aria, sung by the character of da Gama, the recurrent metaphor of a ship upon stormy seas is used to convey the “triumph of the Cross” over the turbulence of heathenism. Da Gama characterises Xavier as the captain of this emblematic ship, guiding infidels away from crashing waves through the divine light of God.

Just as among the billowing clouds
the rainbow smiles,
and joins the earth and Heavens in peace:
So did the great Xavier come here

36 Odoardo Gama (Duarte da Gama): “Ma consolate al fin, care speranze / Di vedere di Bungo in su la foce / Porto alla Fede, e trionfar la Croce. / Nel mar, ch’è sempre instabile, / Non v’è fortuna labile / Per chi nel Ciel sperò. / Son calme le tempeste, / Non son l’onde moleste, / Per chi la Fè guidò.” Verbenio, La conversione alla Santa Fede, 3. For the Italian quotations from the libretto, spelling and punctuation have been modernised.
37 In 1551, Duarte da Gama travelled to Bungo from Lampacao (an historical island of the Pearl River Delta) on the Kwangtung coast, where he visited the ports of Hide and Funai. He is noted for returning to China in November of that year, taking with him several Japanese including an envoy of Ōtomo Yoshishige. See Boxer, Fidalgos in the Far East, 1550–1770, 29–30,
out of the inconstant breakers
to quell the storms of impiety.\textsuperscript{38}

Xavier and da Gama then sing a duet expressing their desire for the unworthy Buddhist idols to cede to the reign of the true faith.\textsuperscript{39} Meanwhile at the Court of Funai, the King of Bungo (Ōtomo Yoshishige) and his “Minister of the sacred Altars” (\textit{Ministro de’ sagri Altari}) await the arrival of Xavier. Fasciondono, described in Tedeschi’s list of interlocutors as a “Japanese Bonze”, is characterised as an individual of the vilest order who, in the libretto, uses crude language and displays such arrogance as to inspire disgust in the audience/congregation. His distrust of Xavier manifests itself in an anti-Christian tirade through which we are made aware of the King’s readiness to accept Christ. This secondary religious disputation between the King and Fasciondono is embodied in a \textit{da capo} aria revolving around the metaphorical dichotomy between light and darkness, in which Japan is likened to a cave of eternal night untouched by the bright rays of Christianity.

\textbf{Console yourself, my heart,}
since the Sun has finally reached
these caves of blackest night.
\textbf{Take comfort, my soul,}
as [the Sun] wants to make a new day
here, by his visit.\textsuperscript{40}

\textsuperscript{38} Odoardo Gama (Duarte da Gama): “[…] Come là tra le nubi ondeggianti / Ride l’arco balen, / E tra la terra, e ’l Ciel la pace fa: / Così fuor di marosi inconstanti / Qua venne il gran Savier / Le procelle a sedar dell’Empietà.” Verbenio, \textit{La conversione alla Santa Fede}, 4–5.
\textsuperscript{39} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{40} Re di Bungo (Ōtomo Yoshishige): “Core consolati, / Che a queste grotte / Di oscura notte / È giunto il Sol. / Alma confortati, / Che nuovo giorno / Col suo soggiorno / Aver qui vuol.” Verbenio, \textit{La conversione alla Santa Fede}, 5.
After being asked by the King about his thoughts on the arrival of the missionaries, Fasciondono, through a *da capo* aria, rejects this light, depicting it as nothing but an illusion of foreign strangers.

How many stars in their thousands appear
in the sky above the poles!
How many suns bestow
the splendour of their golden light upon one’s eyes!
But the luminous deceits
of the coloured cloud
are unveiled by the wind, and the false
golden light disappears once more.  

This perceived impermanence of the foreign light causes Fasciondono to doubt the fame of Xavier in Japan, instead fuelling his desire to dissuade the King. Indeed, his description of Xavier as a barefoot beggar is based on historical facts. Xavier’s initial display of apostolic poverty worked against him during his first visit to Yamaguchi (November, 1550), where the daimyo Ōuchi Yoshitaka had taken great offence at his shabby appearance. Those who opposed the missionaries perpetuated this image of a threadbare foreigner, much like Fasciondono in *La conversione alla Santa Fede*. Fasciondono, after the aria described above, launches into a recitative in which he portrays Xavier as a wizard, a liar, and a lunatic, who “enchants with his words, …

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41 Bonze (Fasciondono): “Quante in Ciel appaion stelle / Sopra i poli a mille a mille! / Quanti soli alle pupille / Pompa fan di luci d’or! / Ma gl’inganni luminosi / D’una nube colorita / Scuopre il vento, e la mentita / Luce d’or sparisce ancor.” Verbenio, *La conversione alla Santa Fede*, 6.
43 Jurgis Elisonas, “Christianity and the Daimyo,” 313. Xavier returned to Yamaguchi in April of 1551, this time attired in his best clothes and offering sumptuous gifts to Yoshitaka, who was so impressed by the European display that the Jesuits were given permission to evangelise in the region. See, Kerstin-Katja Sindemann, “Japanese Buddhism in the 16th century: Letters of the Jesuit Missionaries,” *Bulletin of Portuguese–Japanese Studies* 2 (2001), 116.
fascinates with his eyes, and ... flatters the people”.44 Thus the Bonze expresses his “fear [of] deceit from afar ... [and] deceptions close by,” and accuses the King of being advised by “too credulous a heart”.45 The parte prima of the oratorio concludes with Xavier and da Gama preparing to enter the court of the King.

Tedeschi’s libretto is undeniably imbued with a sense of his own apologetic spirit. As Bartoli’s Dell’istoria della Compagnia di Giesu does not contain this particular disputation between Fasciondono and the King, we are able to distinguish here the results of Tedeschi’s literary invention. By identifying Tedeschi’s own voice in the libretto, we understand more clearly his intention – that is, to deepen and dramatise the theological rifts alluded to in Bartoli. Introducing an underlying dispute between Fasciondono and the King, Tedeschi moves his audience to abhor the Bonze. The faithful of Faenza (the oratorio’s intended spectators) were presented with an image of a virtuous Japanese king to the Bonze’s doubts with a growing sense of Christian faith, and by warning the heathen against the degeneration of excessive prudence into crime.46 The characterisation of Fasciondono as a mouthpiece of ‘Buddhist’ vainglory is further developed in the oratorio. As such, the libretto demonstrates a naïve simplification and conflation of varying sects of Buddhist belief and practice in sixteenth-century Japan. Furthermore, as we will see in the parte seconda, the transformation of Xavier from a passive to an active agent in the main disputation (between Xavier and Fasciondono), demonstrates the apologetic voice of Tedeschi as Xavier.

44 Bonze (Fasciondono): “[...] Incanta con sue voci, / Affascina co’ i lumi, / Per il volgo ha lusinghe.” Verbenio, La conversione alla Santa Fede, 6.
45 Verbenio, La conversione alla Santa Fede, 6, 7.
46 Ibid., 7.
Parte seconda: Representations of Buddhism and Theological Disputation

The second half of the oratorio opens with a recitative by da Gama who sings of a fanfare of trumpets and “proud timbales” as they approach the royal palace of the King.47 The opening of the parte seconda with a corresponding musical display is likely. The only marginal instruction about Laurenti’s instrumentation in the libretto is a reference to the use of “trumpets, and many instruments” (con Trombe, e molti strumenti) to accompany a short chorus of Portuguese soldiers in the parte prima.48 While lacking specificity, this does however indicate the importance and scale of the performance, suggesting a musical display of some grandeur.49 It is against this backdrop of pomp and circumstance that Fasciondono protests the arrival of Xavier and the European faith, claiming it to be but “futile considerations, unnecessary thoughts! The true wisdom is to honor Siacca [Shaka] and Amida, our Gods”.50 Here, he is referring to Shaka (Shakyamuni), the historical Buddha upon whose teachings Buddhism was founded, and Amida (Amitâbha), a cosmic Buddha described in the scriptures of Mahâyâna Buddhism, who is also the principal Buddha in the various schools of Pure Land Buddhism (especially Jōdo-shū and Jōdo Shinshū). A discussion of the Buddhist pantheon does not in fact take place in Bartoli’s account of Fasciondono’s tirade. Thus the representation of Buddhism, and the theological disputation that occurs between the Bonze and Xavier, in La conversione alla Santa Fede, is a construction of Tedeschi’s own apologetic agenda.

48 Ibid., 4.
49 La conversione alla Santa Fede is listed in Claudio Sartori’s catalogue as one of only two oratorios performed in Faenza during 1703. While no performance date is listed, the absence of oratorios between 1703 and 1719 indicates that these were no doubt significant events for the religious institutions of Faenza. Claudio Sartori, I libretti italiani a stampa dalle origini al 1800: catalogo analitico con 16 indici, vol. 6/1 (Cuneo: Bertola e Locatelli, 1993), 41.
50 “Vani riguardi, inutili pensieri! / Son bene i sensi veri, / Sciacca e Amida onorar, li nostri Numi.” Verbenio, La conversione alla Santa Fede, 10.
Upon arising before the King, Xavier sings an aria, proclaiming to him in the presence of Fasciondono that:

[the] King of the Kings is God.

All of Nature revolves around him,

as a centre of love,

From him all of nature emanates

and to him it returns.  

The King becomes inflamed with the desire to convert and laments the wayward condition of the Japanese nation in an aria:

And until now did we remain

in the darkest night? And does that Sun

Want to disappear from Japan now?  

The unintended irony in this is that, unbeknownst to Tedeschi, Amida refers to “the buddha of infinite light” (Amitābha Buddha). The importance of the Nembutsu (primarily in Jōdo-shū, the Pure Land School), or the pursuit of salvation through the recitation of the name of Amida, was noted by Xavier and later Jesuit missionaries. In effect, this chanting of Namu, Amida Butsu (“Hail, Amida Buddha!” or “Save us, o merciful Buddha”), invokes the awakening of infinite light, a concept that resonates with Tedeschi’s own metaphorical use of the sun to describe the illuminating power of his Christian God. The Jesuit interpretation of the Nembutsu appears to be replicated in

51 “[…] e Re de’ Regi è il Dio. / Tutta a lui come a centro d’amore / La Natura d’intorno si gira, / Da lui parte, ed a lui ritornò.” Ibid., 11.

52 “E Noi fin’or restammo / In buia notte? E vuole / Al Giappone fin or sparir quel Sole?” Ibid., 12.

53 “[I]f they invoke the founders of these sects [Shaka and Amida], they will free them from all their pains, even though they do no penance; and that this will happen if, with great faith and without any shadow of doubt, they invoke those in whom they place all their hopes and confidence”: Francis Xavier to his companions in Europe, from Cochin (January 29, 1552), in Letters and Instructions of Francis Xavier, 328–29.
Tedeschi’s use of a Chorus of Bonzes. They refute Xavier’s expression of Christian faith, invoking the salvation of Shaka and Amida:

Long live Sciacca, long live Amida,
Our Gods, and only Gods:
Here on earth and in the heavens
Let all that is good be ascribed to them.\(^{54}\)

The inclusion of Shaka in Tedeschi’s performative interpretation of the \textit{Nembutsu} corresponds to descriptions of the practice given by Xavier, as well as by other Jesuits such as Alessandro Valignano: “[n]o matter what sins one has committed, [bonzes] ... chant the name of Amida or Shaka, and so long as one truly believes in the virtue of this act, those sins will be cleansed”.\(^{55}\) The conceptualisation of Shaka and Amida as Japanese ‘gods’ is problematic and indicates a clear attempt to interpret non-Christian worship through the lens of Christian practice. Xavier’s initial encounter with Buddhism was coloured by a belief in the existence of an omnipotent, omnipresent singular deity of Japan that corresponded to his Christian God.\(^{56}\) Following his time in Bungo, Xavier penned a famous letter from Cochin in 1552 in which he identified Shaka and Amida as the primary figures of Buddhist worship.\(^{57}\) It should be noted, however, that Xavier’s recognition of Shaka and Amida shifted from “\textit{men} of ancient times” (as actual historical figures) in 1549 to “\textit{inventions} of the demons” (as false symbols of idolatry) in 1552.\(^{58}\) This distinction between cosmic deity and mortal man is also addressed in \textit{La conversione alla Santa Fede} during the great theological dispute. As noted by Abé, the primary misunderstanding in this Jesuit pursuit of identifying

\(^{56}\) Abé, \textit{The Jesuit Mission to New France}, 52.
\(^{57}\) \textit{Letters and Instructions of Francis Xavier}, 328.
\(^{58}\) Ibid., 298; 337. Emphasis added.
Japanese ‘gods’ was the idea that Buddhist deities were central to their doctrine in the same way that God was at the very core of Christianity. By approaching the Japanese through the lens of Christianity, they “failed to understand that there was a mystical law at the core of Buddhism and that Shaka or Amida was the individual who was believed to have fulfilled this law and enlightened himself as a Buddha”.

**Tedeschi’s Conflation of Buddhism**

Ōtomo Yoshishige, during the twenty-seven years between his meeting with Xavier and his formal baptism, was an ardent practitioner of Zen Buddhism. This was known to the Jesuits, with Cabral writing to Everard Mercurian (1514–80) in 1587 that:

> In all of Japan, the ‘king of Bungo’ is regarded as one of the most intelligent men. It is a known fact too, that among laymen he is best acquainted with, and has the best grasp of, the sects, especially that of the Zen, which is the most important of them all. He has the rank of a choro in that sect, corresponding roughly with that of a doctor.

Following the relocation of Yoshishige’s court from Funai to Usuki in 1562, a temple was constructed and a renowned Zen master was summoned to take up residency. It is no surprise that he is known more commonly today by the Buddhist name of Sōrin (宗麟), which he adopted upon his nominal retirement. The significance of this lies in the fact that Tedeschi’s representation of Buddhism in *La conversione alla Santa Fede*, unbeknownst to him, is primarily derived from the schools of Pure Land Buddhism. The vocal, indeed performative, invocation of Amida in the oratorio would suggest more

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60 Ibid.
specifically the sect of Jōdo-shū, which places greater importance on recitation of the Nembutsu than the contemporary reformed sect of Jōdo Shinshū (True Pure Land Buddhism). The characterisation of Fasciondono and the Chorus of Bonzes as simply “Japanese monks” thus conflates the doctrinal divisions of Buddhism present in sixteenth-century Japan, and presents an oversimplified picture of theological unity. Tedeschi’s emphasis on the central worship of Amida, for instance, would not have been found in Yoshishige’s own beliefs and practices. In contrast, the letters of Xavier and the chapters of Bartoli on Japanese religion both reflect the existence of different sects. Indeed, even Bartoli, in spite of his factual errors, describes seven to twelve different “institutions” of Buddhism that are so disparate that they appear as divided bodies rather than “members united in the same religion”. Zen, as a contemplative sect which emphasised simplicity and self-discipline, can be clearly distinguished from Tedeschi’s representation of Buddhism. Rejecting more traditional modes of worship, Zen adepts oriented to Shaka, the historical Buddha, as an exemplar of spiritual awareness through individual meditation. Similarly, Zen paintings from this period display a select number of deities who were utilised more as inspirational models than as idols to be worshipped. For Yoshishige, a follower of the Rinzai school of Zen, Shaka was viewed as a mortal man who was “committed to solitary and strenuous self-sacrifice in his quest for enlightenment, rather than as an abstract symbol of

63 Jōdo-shū, Jōdo Shinshū, and Ikkō-shū, all taught an eschatological pursuit of salvation in the Saihō jōdo (the Pure Land or the Paradise in the West). The primary doctrinal distinction between Pure Land and True (Shin) Pure Land Buddhism lies in the latter’s conception of faith (shinjin). Shin Buddhism advocates the abandonment of personal power (jiriki), and the acceptance of tariki, the notion of faith as a gift from another power (i.e., Amida’s gift to mankind). Compared to Jōdo-shū, salvation in Shin Buddhism is found in a ‘moment of faith’, and not at the moment of death. See Esben Andreasen, Popular Buddhism in Japan: Shin Buddhist Religion and Culture (New York: Routledge, 1998), 9–12.

64 In letters of 1549 and 1552, Xavier distinguishes these sects by the colour of the robes worn by their monks. In the letter of 1552, Xavier identifies “nine kinds of doctrine” that most likely refer to the nine principal sects of Tendai, Shingon, Yūzū Nembutsu, Jōdo Shinshū, Rinzai Zen, Sōtō Zen, Ikkō-shū, Hokke-kei Bukkyō (Nichiren), and Ji-shū. See Letters and Instructions of Francis Xavier, 328.

65 Bartoli, Dell’istoria della Compagnia di Giesu, 132.

66 Zuiho-in (瑞峯院), one of twenty-two sub-temples within northern Kyoto’s Daitoku-ji (大徳寺) Temple was founded by Yoshishige in 1546. Daitoku-ji is one of fourteen autonomous branches of the Rinzai school of Japanese Zen.
Buddhahood”. However, we must recognise that Tedeschi’s inaccuracies, aside from those we can impute to poetic licence, may be traced back to Bartoli. While Bartoli acknowledges a distinction between Cami (kami or Japanese deities) and Fotoches (hotoke or Buddhas), he does not sufficiently explain these concepts, as are elsewhere defined in other Jesuit documents. Nevertheless, to take significant creative liberties with their historical adaptations was a common practice of playwrights and librettists writing ‘Japanese plays’ throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In this way, the exotic narrative of La conversione alla Santa Fede provided a captivating basis from which Tedeschi himself could engage in theological debate with the imagined (Buddhist) ‘Other’ through the mouth of Francis Xavier.

Religious Disputation between Fasciondono and Xavier

In response to the Nembutsu chorus, Xavier, in the parte seconda, questions the legitimacy of these Japanese ‘gods’. By asserting that Shaka and Amida are “subject to all the Laws of Nature” and the time between moments of life and death, he contrasts the immortality of the Christian God with the mortality of heathen idols. By virtue of that mortality, he then questions how they can offer eternity (the concept of the immortal soul and a Christian afterlife) to Fasciondono and his bonzes. This

68 Bartoli states the existence of various religions in Japan: Sinto (Shintoism), Budso (Buddhism), and Atheism (divided into those who worship the sun and moon, kami, and those who revere animals or the devil). In a letter to Claudio Acquaviva (1543–1615) from Nagasaki on August 27, 1585, Frños explains this distinction between kami and hotoke, specifying that Shaka and Amida are Buddhas, while the kami include various deities of the sun, the harvest, war, etc. See Abé, *The Jesuit Mission to New France*, 53.
69 Immoos, "Japanese Themes in Swiss Baroque Drama,” 90.
71 The Christian concept of the immortal soul was a problematic one for the Jesuits in their theological debates. Zen adherents, for instance, denied the existence of the personal soul, a theme that would continue to define the sect in Jesuit writings. See Georg Schurhammer, *Die Disputation des P. Cosme de Torres*, 50. Indeed Cosme de Torres warned Xavier that “Zen priests ask questions which even Thomas and Scotus could not answer to their satisfaction”. Torres to Xavier, from Yamaguchi (October 20, 1551), translated in Elison, *Deus Destroyed*, 40.
interconnectedness of a personal soul, salvation, and the afterlife, was established from the very outset as a crucial topic for religious disputations between Jesuit missionaries and the Buddhists monks they encountered. Just as Xavier here questions the validity of the *Saihō jōdo* (the Pure Land) in the oratorio, so too did Valignano, in his *Catechismus christianae fidei* (1586), reject the Pure Land conception of the afterlife upon grounds of its overly-corporeal nature. The rest of Xavier’s recitative speaks to the omnipotence, righteousness, and mercy of the one true Christian God, claiming that those who do not yield to his light are mere savages. Fasciondono responds through arguments of reason, attacking these notions of Godly omnipotence and righteousness. Formal Buddhist refutations of Christianity began to be published by the turn of the seventeenth century, which similarly sought to deconstruct the identity of Daiusu (sometimes written as Deusu). Suzuki Shōsan (1579–1655) and Asai Ryōi’s (d. 1691) *Kirishitan hakyakuron den* (“Christians Demolished: Tract and Glosses”), for instance, defines Daiusu as the Christian creator of all things and the Lord of Heaven and Earth. Their counterarguments against the foreign faith reflect a myriad of perceived inconsistencies, such as the delay in Christianity’s discovery of the New World and the actions of this supposedly all-knowing God permitting the growth of other religions which had been practised by sentient beings for thousands of years. Indeed, they assert that “this Deusu is a stupid Buddha [god]. Could anything be so bereft of reason?”

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72 Alessandro Valignano, *Catechismus christianae fidei, in quo veritas nostrae religionis ostenditur et sectae Japonenses confutatur* [Catechism of the Christian Faith, in which the verity of our Christian religion is demonstrated and the Japanese sects refuted] (Lisbon: Antonius Riberius, 1586).

73 For Valignano, the soul of the deceased was comprised of only three powers: memory, intellect, and will. As the Christian afterlife was a purely spiritual realm, the (Buddhist) Pure Land, a place occupied by golden bodies with human characteristics, was simply implausible. See James Baskind, “Emptiness and Nothingness in Habian’s Critique of Buddhism,” in *The Myōtei Dialogues: A Japanese Christian Critique of Native Traditions*, ed. James Baskind and Richard Bowring (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 18.

74 Translated in William Theodore de Bary et al., eds., *Sources of Japanese Tradition, 1600–2000*, vol. 2 (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 181–84. This was a common tone adopted in the anti-Christian literature circulating in the seventeenth century. This is perhaps most famously embodied in Fabian Fucan’s (Fukansai Habian, 1565–1621) *Ha Daiusu* (“Deus Destroyed” or “Refutation of Deus”, 1620), in which the ex-Christian apologist turned Buddhist monk seeks to demythologise Christianity and highlight the destructive nature of that religion. An English translation is presented in Elison, *Deus Destroyed*, 259–91.
Fasciandono similarly refutes Christianity through the notion of evil in the following recitative:

But how did He condemn mortals,

His dearest creation,

to so many deaths?

Where are Love and Righteousness in him?  

This perceived incompatibility of an all-loving God with the existence of evil was a recurring and problematic point of contention for the Jesuits during theological debates with Buddhist monks. Similarly the concept of Hell and eternal damnation was incomprehensible through the lens of Buddhist compassion and mercy for even the most debased of people. 

Xavier, both the historical and dramatic (in *La conversione alla Santa Fede*) character, references original sin, emphasising that evil forms through one’s own faults. In a corresponding aria, Xavier sings of the immortality of the soul, and the necessity of penance in light of Christ’s love demonstrated through his death upon the Cross. 

Thus the King proclaims he is guided by the light of God and the oratorio draws close to its end.

**Parte finale: Foretelling the Conversion of Ōtomo Yoshishige**

As expressed in the oratorio’s *argomento*, Yoshishige flirted with Christianity for twenty-seven years before his formal baptism. The circumstances of this decision are complex, and his delay reflects predicaments of a simultaneously sociocultural,
political, economic, and religious nature. However, Tedeschi accounts for this delay by asserting that the “fruit of [the King’s] faith is not yet ripe” (Il frutto di tua fè non è maturo anch’). So as to fulfil Xavier’s foretelling, da Gama sings an aria extrapolating upon Tedeschi’s theme of spiritual immaturity:

The King, faithful in Heart,
is not faithful in mind!
And does he not see the light, and feel the ardour?
Ah yes, how the heart hardens
while pursuing the softness of worldly pleasures,
and the mind darkens amidst the heavenly rays.

Following Xavier’s vision of the King bathing at the baptismal font, the oratorio concludes with a da capo chorus of Portuguese soldiers, Xavier, da Gama, and finally a tutti declaration to the country of Japan.

Chorus of Portuguese: Yes, faith will win
the Heart of such a great King,
which is now made of stone.

Xavier/da Gama: Arrow of Holy Love,
Blood of the Redeemer
They know how to conquer
souls that rebel against God.

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79 As sung by Xavier. Verbenio, La conversione alla Santa Fede, 13–14.
80 “Il Re nel Cor fedele, / Non fedel nella mente! / Ei la luce non vede, e l’ardor sente? / Ah si che troppo molle / Ne’ vizi il Cor s’indura, / E tra lumi del Ciel la mente oscura.” Verbenio, La conversione alla Santa Fede, 15.
81 Coro de Lucitani [Chorus of Portuguese]: “Vincera si la fè / Il Cuor di si gran Re, / Ch’or è di pietra.” Ibid., 16.
The meeting of a curious Ōtomo Yoshishige with Francis Xavier in 1551 represents one of the most eventful moments of intercultural contact in the sixteenth century. Despite the brevity of Xavier’s time in Bungo and his death soon thereafter, the legacy of Yoshishige resounded throughout early modern Europe. Not only was he one of the most ardent activists for Xavier’s beatification, but he also contributed to the Japanese Embassy sent to Europe in 1582. Laureti and Tedeschi’s _La conversione alla Santa Fede_ in many ways can be seen as bringing to life the intrigue of this encounter through music. However, the various layers of theological and performative rhetoric, demonstrated in this chapter, are central to interpreting the function of the oratorio. The multiple levels of Eurocentric bias (from Xavier to Mendes Pinto to Bartoli to Tedeschi) prevent any genuine rapprochement with Buddhist ideologies, and the final result in the libretto is a fanciful appropriation of fictionalised history. Nevertheless, the performative representation of Buddhism and its friction with Christianity, for all its shortcomings, facilitates the exploration, for modern readers, a number of key themes that dominated the Jesuit-Buddhist disputations of the mid-sixteenth century. Moreover, Tedeschi’s characterisation of Xavier as an active participant in theological disputation (as opposed to the passive role in Bartoli) enabled his own didactic agenda of reinforcing the faith of the Jesuit congregation in Faenza. As

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82 “Strale del Santo Amor, / Sangue del Redentor, / L’Alme rubelli a Dio / Sanno espugnar.” Ibid., 16.
83 “E Porto in mezzo al Mar / Là Fede impetra.” Ibid. This description of a port in the middle of the sea is most likely a reference to the nation of Japan as a set of islands.
in the majority of these baroque ‘Japanese plays’, the exoticism of their narrative functioned both as entertainment and spiritual reflection. Furthermore, *La conversione alla Santa Fede* offers us a remarkable example of an oratorio composed during the period of the ‘ban’ on opera by Clement XI. It is to be hoped that the libretto will one day be reunited with its lost musical score.

**Figure 13.** Faenza, Church of Santa Maria dell’Angelo

*Photo with permission of Pro Loco Faenza: www.prolocofaenza.it*
Figure 14. Libretto of La conversione alla Santa Fede del Re di Bungo Giaponese (Bologna: Nella Stamperia deli Peri, 1703), title page. Reproduced with permission of the Museo Internazionale e Biblioteca della Musica, Bologna.
CHAPTER SIX

A Japanese Martyr’s Model for the Imitation of Christ:

Mulier fortis, [...] sive Gratia regni Tango regina (1698)

Mulier fortis (“Strong Woman,” 1698), a ludus caesareus or “imperial play” written by Johann Baptist Adolph (1657–1708) with music composed by Johann Bernhard Staudt (1654–1712) of the Jesuits’ Viennese College, represents the life and death of a Japanese noblewoman, Gratia Tama Hosokawa (1563–1600), glorifying her alleged Christian martyrdom (see Figure 15). Modelled as a virtuous Christian who observed the principles of Imitatio Christi, Gratia’s character dies at the hands of her tyrannous husband, Jacundonus (Hosokawa Tadaoki, 1563–1646), who demands that she apostatis. This three-act drama valorises her religious constancy through allegorical commentaries in the musical prologue and epilogue, as well as in the divisional choruses and interludes comprised of intermezzi, dance, recitative, ariosos, and arias. As will be discussed in this chapter, Staudt’s music also served as a medium of rhetorical affect (affectus musicus). In addition to emblematic art, dance, stage design, and declamation, music contributed to a multi-sensorial representation of Gratia’s life,

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1 Since the completion of this chapter, a full English translation of Mulier fortis has been completed by Ann Louise Cole. For translation and a comparative literary analysis of the text, see Cole, “Becoming All Things to All Men: The Role of Jesuit Missions in Early Modern Globalization,” 221–49.

2 The term ‘chorus’ (as it relates to chorus primus and chorus secundus) in the Mulier fortis manuscript is only indicative of its dramatic function and not its musical structure. Both choruses in the melodrama do not feature any choral singing, but rather recitative, ariosos, and arias. Polyphonic singing is only found in the ‘chorus’ of townspeople in Act One, Scene Three (see Appendix 1) and toward the end of the epilogue.
to inspire religious constancy in the performance’s audience. However, Gratia’s real historical voice is muted by layers of politics, performance practice, and a curious historical anomaly. Her ascendancy to martyrdom in *Mulier fortis* contrasts with other records of her life – both Japanese and Jesuit alike – and could very well be a calculated invention of the Dutch church historian, Cornelius Hazart (1617–90). Adolph and Staudt followed by transforming the pious Japanese noblewoman into a model of faith and womanhood which the ladies of the Hapsburg Empire were implicitly invited to imitate. In its presentation of a model of *imitatio Christi* and its allusions to figures from Christian antiquity, *Mulier fortis* demonstrates a systematic approach to spiritual instruction while forging the figure of the Japanese martyr as a flattering reflection of its royal audience.

This chapter analyses the means by which Gratia is performatively represented on the stage in *Mulier fortis* and the contextual factors that informed Adolph and Staudt’s rendering. In so doing, it explores Kirishitan literature from the turn of the seventeenth century as a means of understanding the Japanese environment of fervent martyrdom that inspired Jesuit dramaturgy. The moralising function of this dramatisation in *Mulier fortis* is also addressed. The Jesuit capacity for ‘changing hearts’ through performance will be explored through the lens of Ignatius Loyola’s *Spiritual Exercises* as an emotional “style”, that is, as Benno Gammerl defines it, an “ensemble of emotional patterns and practices, i.e. styles or repertoires”. This chapter identifies how the stage, as expressed by the Jesuit playwright Franciscus Lang (1654–

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3 The baptismal name of ‘Gratia’ is used in reference to her life events after Christian conversion, while her birth name of ‘Tama’ refers to the period prior to this.
4 In Hazart’s *Church History of the Whole World*, Gratia’s death is recounted as an act of martyrdom. Following her refusal to apostatise, she finally expires after enduring her husband’s abuse. Cornelius Hazart, *Kerckelycke historie van de gheheele werelt*, vol. 1 (Antwerp: Cnobaert, 1667), 49–51.
1725), was able “to move the affections” (*ad affectuum movendum*) and “to inspire emulation of virtue” (*ad virtutis aemulationem*) to confirm Catholic faith. While Gratia cannot, and should not, be mistaken as a venerated martyr, her staged life fulfils three key functions: she embodies the principal tenets of a pious Christian preparing for martyrdom as informed by early seventeenth-century *Kirishitan* literature; she exemplifies *Imitatio Christi*; and she remains an enduring reminder of the Society’s presence in early modern Japan. Finally, this chapter argues that the dramatic, and evidently fictitious, representation of Gratia on the Jesuit stage as a Christian symbol, epitomises the sort of spiritual and moral guidance provided through theatrical performance in Jesuit colleges of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

**Gratia and the Culture of Martyrdom in *Kirishitan* Literature**

Maria and I are prepared for any persecution whencesoever it comes…and we would rejoice if on this score we could suffer something for the love of God.

[...] All the Christians who I have with me are strong, and I work in exhorting them to martyrdom…

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7 There are cultural references to her canonisation as a saint in 1862, but there is no historical documentation to qualify this. Gratia is occasionally referred to as a martyr in various media: e.g. the “Weinachts-teller” (Christmas plate) by Kiyomi Akagi (Noritake) in 1976 refers to “Die Geschichte der Märtyrerin Gracia Hosokawa” (The story of the martyr Gracia Hosokawa).

In this letter to the Spanish missionary Gregorio de Céspedes (1551–1611), Gratia exemplifies the *Kirishitan* attitude towards religious persecution at the turn of the seventeenth century. The crown of Japanese martyrdom was seen in this literature as a gift from God: its bestowal was accompanied by feelings of joy. Jesuit missionaries made note of lay confraternities established throughout Japan, based on Portuguese *misericórdias*. These confraternities enforced a rule of life whose adherents convened to prepare themselves for death in the cause of Christ. One might consider Gratia’s group of Christian female servants in the Adolph-Staudt play as a kind of ‘sorority of martyrdom’. Kiyohara Ito Maria (n. d.), her lady-in-waiting, was one of Japan’s first examples of female catechists, having baptised Gratia who was forbidden from leaving the castle grounds. Gratia’s sorority represents the highpoint of the *Kirishitan* culture of martyrdom whose seeds were sown from the very beginning of the Japanese mission.

In a letter dated September 29, 1551, Cosme de Torrès already noted that most Christians in the region of Yamaguchi were “willing to undergo adversity for the love of God”, suggesting that stories about saintly martyrs of the early Roman Church had been in circulation from the beginning of the Jesuit mission to Japan. As has been discussed in Chapter Three, by 1552, converts had engaged in the custom of meditation on the Passion of Christ which formed the basis of much of the religious drama conducted throughout the 1560s across Japan. With regard to *Kirishitan* literature on representations of martyrdom, the earliest texts are a Japanese translation of the *Flos sanctorum de las vidas de los santos* in 1564 and a collection of stories recounting the

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lives of the Saints by 1568. In considering this Japanese rumination upon the concept of Christian martyrdom and sainthood, we are reminded of Tertullian’s dictum: “Sanguis martyrum semen Christianorum” (“the blood of the martyrs is the seed of Christians”). This seemingly formed the basis of the Japanese Church from its very inception, anticipating the friction and future persecution that accompanied the Jesuits’ fields of conversion. These early *Kirishitan* texts represent the very beginnings of a Japanese culture of martyrdom in the mid-sixteenth century, developing further in *Kirishitan* literature, sermons and teachings, and eventually in lived practice during the dawn of Christian persecution at the turn of the seventeenth century.

The Japanese noblewoman, Hosokawa Tama (Gratia), was born when this culture of martyrdom blossomed, and was eventually made aware of it in the years leading to her baptism. Following the execution of her mother and brother for her father’s assassination of the warlord Oda Nobunaga, she was banished to the remote mountain village of Mitono by her husband Hosokawa Tadaoki. In 1584, Tama was granted a pardon by Nobunaga’s successor, Toyotomi Hideyoshi, for her father’s crimes. Hideyoshi consequently instructed Tadaoki to return to his wife and arrange for her to move to the Hosokawa mansion in Osaka. It is here that Tama made first contact with the Jesuit missionaries, and sought a life of Christian fortitude while confined by her husband within the walls of her residence.

The Jesuit accounts of Tama, baptised as Gratia, and her formative years of conversion emphasise her intellectual acumen and grasp of European languages. In a letter from 1587, Luís Fróis notes a touching encounter between the elderly convert

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Catarina of Tanba and the yet-to-be-baptised Gratia. Catarina had brought a book written by “Gerson” which captured Gratia’s interest. Due to a conventional early modern misattribute to Jean Gerson (1363–1429) of the *Contemptus mundi* or *The Imitation of Christ*, we can infer that this book was a copy of the very same, known by its Japanese transliteration as *Kontemutsusu Munji*. Fróis comments that upon her request, a number of spiritual texts in Japanese, Portuguese and Latin were sent to her, most notably a copy of the *Kontemutsusu Munji*.

She savored it so much, that she never left it far from her. If questions came to her mind about some words in our language or if she did not know some maxims, she would write them all down clearly and send Maria to the church to bring her back the solutions ... On Sundays and holy days, she gathered her Christian women to her and she herself read some chapters of *Contemptus mundi*, or she exercised some items of catechism having translated them.

In this respect, the *Kontemutsusu Munji* holds the key to understanding Gratia’s faith as one of acceptance and eventual spiritual satisfaction in enduring an increasingly abusive marriage and the political circumstances of her death. Such adversity symbolises the cross she bore in her daily life through the imitation of Christ. Indeed, this is how Gratia was characterised by the Jesuits in their annual letters and eventually reinvented for the

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18 The Jesuit missionaries in Japan, as did their counterparts in Europe, erroneously attributed *The Imitation of Christ* to Gerson, and not Thomas à Kempis as it is conventionally known today.
19 The first official Japanese Jesuit print of the *Contemptus Mundi* was not published until 1596, though it is clear that manuscript forms had been in circulation from as early as 1588. See Pierre Humbertclaude, “La littérature chrétienne au Japon il y a trois cent ans,” *Bulletin de la Maison Franco-Japonaise* 8 (1936), 197. See also Farge, *The Japanese Translations of the Jesuit Mission Press*.
21 It should be noted, however, that Gratia was initially unhappy (even after her conversion) with her abusive marriage and desired to leave. Yet it was for political reasons that the missionaries encouraged her to endure. The very public nature of a high profile divorce would have worsened the already severe restrictions enforced upon them. See Ward, *Women Religious Leaders*, 250–55. See also Yasmin Yaskell and Makoto Harris Takao, “Battered Wife or ‘Strong Woman’? The Real Life and Death of Gracia Hosokawa,” *The Conversation*. Last modified February 26, 2015, http://theconversation.com/battered-wife-or-strong-woman-the-real-life-and-death-of-gracia-hosokawa-37793.
stage. Her continual expression of readiness for death is a clear reflection of the lessons found in the *Kontemutsusu Munji* to “witness the truth, to endure sufferings of the Passion and to achieve glory; [for] it is the cross that was the way to heaven ...”\(^2\) In this context, Gratia would have been encouraged by the Italian missionary Gnecci-Soldo Organtino (1530–1609) to conceive such endurance as a union with Christ, a means by which one could come closer to understanding the truth of the Passion. The *Kontemutsusu Munji* exhorted its reader to experience such closeness in the chapter entitled “Tattoki Kurusu no Gokô no Michi no Koto” (“The Royal Way of the Precious Cross”), a commentary on Matthew 16:24.\(^3\) “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself; take up his cross and follow me”. Here, Christ tells his disciples that in giving up their mortal lives, eternal spiritual life would be gained; in losing all, they would receive everything, and in the endurance of suffering, achieve glorious beatitude.

Haruko Nawata Ward has argued that Gratia understood her role in the Church not solely as one of Christian wifely sacrifice, but as a future martyr. For Ward, this exemplifies an “ordering [of] daily life in clear conscience following Christ”.\(^4\) Indeed, Gratia agreed to being beheaded by her husband’s servant in 1600, in order to preserve her honour from enemies closing in on the Hosokawa residence. A *jisei no ku* (death poem), penned by Gratia at this very moment, resonates with the teachings of the *Kontemutsusu Munji*: “A flower is most beautiful when it knows the time to fall. People are like flowers, I will die without hesitation.”\(^5\)

While no extant copy of Gratia’s *Kontemutsusu Munji* manuscript has survived, two editions from 1596 and 1610, which testify to stylistically different approaches to

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\(^4\) Ibid., 291.

\(^5\) “Chirinubeki tokishiritekoso yononakano hanamo hanare, hitomo hitonare”. Here, Gratia’s use of the verb *chirinubeki* holds a double meaning, wherein it initially refers to the falling of flowers, while its secondary meaning (“to die nobly”), indicates her readiness for death. A strictly literal translation of this poem, devoid of Gratia’s Christian context, fails to convey her inner thoughts.
translation, emphasise martyrs, confessors and virgins as *exempla* for Christian imitation: “Various apostles, martyrs, confessors and virgins...these virtuous people have been defined as models for all [kinds of] Christians.” Mulier fortis highlights the significance of this text. In Act Two, Scene Five (see Appendix 1), Gratia’s tyrannous husband, Jacundonus, is incensed upon discovering a copy of the *Contemptus mundi*. The book’s physical presence in the play symbolises Gratia’s identity as a devout Christian, but also embodies a perceived rebellion against her husband in the name of her faith. In outrage, Jacundonus asks his henchman, Colinus, whether the text has “infected” his children. The royal children proceed to confirm their faith, making visible the crucifixes gifted to them by their mother as a reward for their learning of the Christian Doctrine. The *Kontemutsusu Munji* exemplifies a body of Kirishitan literature published prior to the Nagasaki martyrdoms of 1597, which glorified the early Christian martyrs, while texts published after this juncture generally fall into practical guides on the path to, and endurance of, martyrdom. Thus, the *Sanctos no Gosagueono Uchi Nuqigaki* (“Extracts from the Lives of the Saints”, 1591), a translation of Luis de Granada’s *Introducción del simbolo de la fe* adapted to the cultural climate of Japan, dedicated a hundred and seventy-one pages out of six hundred to “Martyrio no Cotourari” (“Considerations of Martyrdom”), while the *Fides no Dōxi* (“Guide to [the] Faith”, 1592), another adaptation of Granada, similarly established a model of martyrdom.

The exemplary martyrs of the *Sanctos* call for the contemplation of spiritual life distinct from bodily considerations. They do so by seeking to move their reader by

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example. Thus one can read in the chapter headings of sixteen and nineteen of the second volume:

“Among the evidences of the Church, martyrdom is the testimony of truth by blood and the noblest expression of Fides [faith]...”

“Martyrdom is the way of loyally serving Deus in the combat against Satan, the afflictions, sufferings, endurance along this way lead men to the rank of heavenly life”.

“The stories of the woman martyrs, Saint Olalha, Saint Martina, Saint Anastasia.”

These exempla and their related sententiae on martyrdom are particularly significant to the Jesuit account of Gratia’s life when considered alongside the Fides no Dōxi discussed by Ward in 2013. Ward interprets female martyrs (often virgins) as the ultimate guide to Japanese Christian faith as evidenced in chapters twenty-one and twenty-three of the second volume of the Fides no Dōxi. References to unyielding hearts are recurrent (“qengo naru von cocoro” ~ “firm heart”; “cząuoqi von cocoro,” ~ “strong heart”) throughout these chapters whose truth is “testified by blood and the source of inspiration”.

Another Kirishitan text from this period, Maruchirio no Kagami (“Mirror of Martyrdom,” c. early seventeenth century), is similarly devoted to the lives of female martyrs, depicting them as models to be emulated by Japanese Christians. Young women in the Fides no Dōxi are characterised by means of stark contrast between their soft female beauty and ‘inherent’ physical frailty on the one

33 The lives of the holy virgins St Anastasia, St Catherine, St Marina are presented in this work. See Masaharu Anesaki, Kirishitan shūmon no hakugai to senpuku (Tokyo: Dōbunkan, 1925), 140–71.
hand, and the strength with which they endure suffering in the name of their faith on the other.

These women, despite their physiques so beautifully dressed that the moon and flowers might envy them, and [so small that they may be] easily blown off by a rough wind, are not afraid of humiliation, ill reputation, or beating of torture. Forgetting the affectionate relationship with their father and mother, disregarding others’ tears, even when finally [the torturers] grind their bones and tear their bodies into halves by pulling them by two wheels, they surely maintain Fides [faith].

Indeed, these examples of female virgins, alongside the previously discussed “Martyrio no Coutouari”, provide idealised archetypes in Kirishitan literature whose function was to prompt veneration and encourage contemplation. At the turn of the seventeenth century, the persecution of Japanese Christians had reached its zenith. As a result, Kirishitan literature reflected a growing enthusiasm for martyrdom within the Jesuit mission: the glorification of past martyrs gave way to more ‘practical’ guides on how one should prepare for martyrdom both spiritually and physically. Kirishitan guides of this period such as Maruchirio no Susume (“Exhortations to Martyrdom,” c.1615) and Maruchirio no Kokoroe (“Instructions on Martyrdom,” c.1622), sought to justify the necessity of the practice and why it existed at all, while simultaneously offering a checklist of sorts against which Japanese Christians could assess their readiness for martyrdom. According to the authors of the Maruchirio no Susume, “the Church is not itself weakened by persecution, but is instead reinforced”. This maxim became commonplace in European accounts of the Japanese Church throughout the 1600s. The underlying lesson of these Kirishitan texts throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth

34 Ward, “Translation of Fides.”
35 Cited in Gono, “Kirishitan,” 52.
centuries was that martyrdom was the baptism of blood and a path to Christian perfection. While these theological tropes were not unique to the Japanese mission, the Kirishitan culture that produced such Japanese martyrs – as the ones beatified by Pope Urban VIII – represents something quite distinctive. Alessandro Valignano, in his *Sumario de las cosas de Japón* (1583), claimed that “the Lord poured his Grace on this Country so different from ours and with such different laws and customs as He did in the Early Church in order to plant here his holy faith”. The conceptualisation of the Japanese Mission as a parallel of the early Roman Church was widely acknowledged and employed by the Jesuits for *propaganda fide* (propagation of faith). In so doing, Japanese Christians were viewed as models of religious constancy, and whose virtue was, by some, seen as superior to their European brothers and sisters. This conceptualisation likely explains the popularity of Japanese martyrs, over those of the other Jesuit missions from around the world, as a source of creative inspiration for reasons beyond the intrigue of exoticism.

Japanese martyrdoms captured the European imagination: numerous accounts, engravings, paintings, and musical and dramatic works were composed on this topic throughout the early modern period. As previously emphasised, the transformation of a Japanese culture of martyrdom into a performative point of departure for European drama was arguably precipitated by the beatification of the Nagasaki martyrs by Pope Urban VIII in 1627. Thus, in 1666, a twelve-year old Johann Bernhard Staudt took part in the performance at the Jesuit College in Vienna of *Honoris et pietatis connubium, sive Justus Ucondonus*, a historical tale about the exile of the famous Japanese convert Dom Justo Takayama, a close friend of Gratia’s husband. This play was attended by

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the Archduke of Austria, Leopold I (1658–1705) and his first wife, Margaret Theresa of Spain (1651–73). Thirty-two years later, Leopold I and his third wife, Eleonor Magdalene of Neuburg (1655–1720), would attend the performance of Mulier fortis on July 31, 1698, in celebration of Eleonor’s name day and of the Feast of St. Ignatius. Staudt’s childhood experience of this 1666 performance no doubt influenced his composition of Mulier fortis in collaboration with Adolph for the Viennese College. The Japanese theme would have also been familiar to Leopold I. Yet, the dissonance between the life of Gratia Tama Hosokawa in Jesuit reports from her lifetime and her performative representation in Mulier fortis presents us with an intriguing anomaly.

**Faking Martyrdom in Cornelius Hazart’s Kirchen-Geschichte (1678)**

In the argumentum (plot summary) of the perioche (performance program), Adolph cites, as the source of his play’s plot, the Annales ecclesiastici of the seventeenth-century Dutch Jesuit controversialist, orator, and historian, Cornelius Hazart (1617–90). This refers to the first book of Hazart’s voluminous Kerckelycke Historie van de gheheele wereldt which assembles narratives of the Catholic missions from around the world, drawn from Jesuit annual letters, manuscripts, histories, and early ethnographies. In writing Mulier fortis, Adolph referred to its German translation completed by Mathias Soutermans in 1678. As far as the circumstances of Gratia’s death in 1600 are concerned, the most comprehensive Jesuit account features in a letter most likely narrated by Gnecci-Soldo Organtino, edited and published by Portuguese...
Jesuit historian Fernão Guerreiro (1550–1617) soon after in 1603. Recognizing the futility of retaliating against the Hosokawas’ enemies, Tadaoki’s trusted servant, Ogasawara Shōsai, carried out his master’s orders. After she had attended the residential oratory and spent time in prayer and in contemplating the prospect of her death:

…Dona Gra[t]ia knelt down, and repeating many times the holy names of Jesus and Maria…[bore]her neck, when her head was cut off at one blow. […] Then they [the servants] all ripped up their bellies, at the same time setting fire to the [gun] powder [strewn throughout the house], on which they and the mansion…were reduced to ashes…at which news the Father and all the rest of us were exceedingly sorrowful, since the Christendom of those parts had lost such a lady, such a mirror, such and so rare an example of virtue, as she always was ever since her conversion.

In this account, Gratia did not die a martyr to the Christian faith, but by Japanese customs of war and virtue. Japanese chronicles also recount a similar set of events. Compiled sometime between 1759 and 1783, the Menkō Shūroku features an account given by Shimome Oboegaki who claimed to be Gratia’s aunt and a servant of the Hosokawa residence. In these chronicles, a number of different versions of Gratia’s death are given. These supposed eyewitness accounts conclude with Gratia committing suicide, while one exception depicts her killing her children before taking her own life. The Menkō Shūroku was written during the Tokugawa Era in which Neo-Confucianism permeated social structure and had come to form the basis of Japanese political philosophy. As a result, the Japanese accounts of Gratia’s life and death were

43 Ward, Women Religious Leaders, 261.
44 Ibid.
completely cleansed of Christian content. The Japanese representations of her demise in
the eighteenth century consequently emphasise her misfortune as a result of political
association and render her in death as an enduring symbol of ryōsai kenbo (“good wife,
wise mother”) and not the pious Christian the Jesuits had so widely admired.\footnote{Ibid., 287.}
However, given the proximity of Guerreiro’s publication of Organtino’s letter to the
date of Gratia’s death, some Japanese historians, such as Matsuda Kiichi, believe the
Jesuit accounts to be more reliable than the Japanese chronicles.\footnote{Kiichi Matsuda, “Hosokawa Garasha: nanbanjin no hōkokusho kara,” in Ai to shinkō ni ikita Hosokawa Garasha ten (Tokyo: Mainichi Shinbunsha, 1982), 105.}

Organtino’s account was read throughout Europe and incorporated in a number
of Japanese Church histories. One of the most prominent of these is François Solier’s
\textit{Histoire ecclesiastique des isles et royaumes du Japon},\footnote{François Solier, \textit{Histoire ecclesiastique des isles et royaumes du Japon}, vol. 2 (Paris: Cramoisy, 1627), 175–78.} one of forty-one sources that
Hazart cites in the preface to his \textit{Kerckelycke Historie}. Solier’s account of the
“deplorable mort de Madame Grace Royne de Tango” follows Organtino’s letter
exactly. Yet Hazart’s account is far less faithful to either Organtino or Solier. In the
original first edition of the Dutch volume, Hazart tells us that “[t]his Christian heroine
spent thirteen whole years in such a tyrannical reformatory, and her beautiful patience
blossomed as a fragrant rose under the piercing thorns of all kinds of persecution”\footnote{“Dreizehn ganzer Jahr brachte diese Christliche Heldin zu in solcher Tyrannischen Zucht-Schuel und ihr schöne Gedult blüte als ein wohlrchiechende Rosen unter den stechenden Dornen allerhand Verfolgungen.” Hazart, \textit{Kirchen-Geschichte}, 73.}.
She finally succumbs in 1600, exhausted by her husband’s abuse, leaving Tadaoki
overcome with remorse and anguish. Gratia is thus explicitly made a martyr in Hazart’s
account where she is not in Organtino’s. So why did Hazart ‘falsify’ Gratia’s cause of
death as martyrdom? Either he read Solier’s account, but decided, for the sake of
literary and religious closure, to complete the trajectory of her life set on the path of
Christian excellence, or he simply cited Solier without reading the account of Gratia. If
we assume the latter, Hazart must have read more widely than the forty-one references he listed, as Solier was the only one to provide a description of Gratia’s life. We do know that, in some sections, Hazart also relied upon oral news “that we [the Jesuit fathers in the Antwerp professed house] expect any hour from China”. While the story of Gratia’s death by 1667 was arguably old news, this story provided prime material for preaching. Her success as a Christian exemplum reached as far as the Bavarian city of Dillingen. In 1665, Jesuit poet, preacher and historian, Johannes Bisselius (1601–82), presented a sermon of nine examples of Christian constancy. Subsequently published in 1666 and 1680, Gratia features prominently over thirty-seven pages throughout which Bisselius focuses on the contrast between Japanese paganism and the virtues of Catholicism. Thus, the “Queen” leaves “lust and all sorts of vices” to become a model of Christian virtue. While Bisselius references the Jesuits’ annual letters (predominantly those of Fröis), he renders Gratia as a Christian martyr. Despite describing her conversion and the nature of her marriage accurately, Bisselius remains pointedly silent about the political motives underpinning her death in 1600. Without the corroborating evidence of other extant sources of this nature, it is unclear whether the altered story of Gratia’s death had become a common reinterpretation throughout the seventeenth century. Nevertheless, the proximity in date of Bisselius’ work to the publication of the Kerckelycke Historie raises the possibility that Hazart may well have found inspiration for his fictional Gratia in this sermon or in other sources he did not explicitly reference. Despite the historical inaccuracies that inspired Adolph, Gratia’s reinvention in Mulier fortis presents us with an archetype of the Christian hero whose performance expresses the metaphysical notion of Catholic virtue.


50 Johannes Bisselius, Digitus Dei, humana corda tangens: Herz beruerenden Finger Gottes, in unterschiedlichen Fasten Exempeln vorgestellt (Dillingen: Akademische Truckerey, 1666), 118–55.
‘Changing Hearts’ and the Sensuous Performance of Japanese Martyrdom

The moralising function of Jesuit theatre was entirely dependent upon the assumption that ‘changing hearts’ was possible through the emotive effectiveness of performance for *propaganda fide*. In order to understand the rationale for the Jesuit theatre as a “large-scale pulpit”, the relationships between actors/singers and their characters, and these characters and their audiences, must be seen in the light of the *Spiritual Exercises* of Ignatius of Loyola. Ignatius’s set of meditations, prayers, and mental exercises was heavily reliant on visualisation, a process by which the imagination of the exercitant was engaged with apposite representations to support, prompt, and sustain spiritual practice. By developing their image-forming faculty, exercitants engaged not only their sense of sight, but also hearing, touch, taste, and smell in order to effect a spiritual transformation predicated on their emotional response to these visualisations. The use of material objects, devotional art, and the performing arts more broadly, can be seen as extensions of this meditational sensuousness, and all had their role to play in the Jesuits’ emotional pedagogy. In this way, Tomasz Jeż defines Jesuit school drama as the “artistic equivalent” of the Spiritual Exercises through its use of *applicatio sensuum*, the “meditative use of experiences acquired with the imagination’s senses”. In combination with the Ignatian *compositio loci* (“composition of place”) – a visual scene composed from one’s imagination or memory – these methods facilitated the recreation of the lives of Christian heroes and representation of spiritual themes. Thus the standard of sensuous performance, grounded in the *Spiritual Exercises*, was for “individuals [to] use their senses and imagination fully, [such that] they [could] imagine themselves

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51 Immoos, “Japanese Themes in Swiss Baroque Drama,” 79.
inside a different place or person and, through this process…learn and change”.

To this extent, every place and character, once it was mentally conceived, was first structured in a figurative form, and then indelibly ‘imprinted’ upon the consciousness. Ultimately, emotive aesthetic in Jesuit drama was related to a pedagogical and spiritual emphasis on the imaginative capacity in particular, and on training of the senses in general.

Within the context of *Mulier fortis*, the Jesuit stage acted as a reflexive mirror through which European Catholic identity was constructed through the embodiment of the exotic ‘Other’. The college boys not only performed the trials and tribulations and the good deeds (or acts of evil) and virtues (or vices) of their assigned character, but in the very act of doing so, ideally underwent moral changes themselves through the performance of borrowed piety or the suffering of condemnation. Indeed, many contemporary Jesuit writings on drama stress this development of moral soundness through imitation. Portuguese Jesuit Luís da Cruz (1543–1604), for instance, reflected on this very significance:

Why is it that the Society [of Jesus] makes use of the drama? What have we to do with the theatre? […] There is but one purpose we have at heart and will always have, namely, to be of service to the state by instilling virtue. We shall continue to labor at it, even in the face of difficulties, as long as it will help to expel wickedness, increase piety, inflame love of virtue and afford becoming amusement.56

56 Translated in Allan Farrell, *The Jesuit Code of Liberal Education* (Milwaukee: Bruce, 1938), 123.
While an analysis of the didactic role of the theatre prescribed by Jesuit regulations need not be replicated here,\(^{57}\) it is important to emphasise the inextricable link between rhetorical performance and a need to move the audience’s emotions. In this manner, French Jesuit Charles Porée (1675–1741) asserted that “[m]an consists of body and soul. We will be instructed and moved and are not sufficiently instructed unless we are moved.”\(^{58}\) In a similar vein, Bernardino Stefonio in the preface to his tragedy, *Crispus* (1597) addressed the need for ‘changing hearts’:

The entire theatrical display constructed to move the affections of the spectators, made everything more impressive by means of the images, which make an impact on the soul through the ears and eyes. What human heart is so shielded with armor that it cannot be transported by the orchestra, the staging, the dramatic action, and the harmony of sounds?\(^{59}\)

In this preface, Stefonio exemplifies the capacity of the Jesuit stage as a multimedia spectacle that engaged the human senses, moving the audience to a spiritual transformation: a true *theatrum affectuum humanorum* (“theatre of human affections”).\(^{60}\) Moreover, it speaks to the emotional ‘style’ of the Jesuits, keyed to visualisation and enacted in public space through sensuous theatrical displays. Thus the aim of ‘changing hearts’ through sensuous theatre provides a useful analytical lens for exploring the moralising function of *Mulier fortis*.

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\(^{58}\) Poirée cited in Levy and Kay, “The Use of the Drama in the Jesuit Schools,” 64.

\(^{59}\) Cited in Fagiolo, “The Scene of Glory,” 231.

The history of religious persecution in Japan was arguably one of the most fruitful sources of plots for the Jesuit stage, and manifested in stories and characters that endured throughout the seventeenth and eighteen centuries.\(^{61}\) *Mulier fortis* epitomises this repertoire, performed before the Austrian royal family. Intended for a royal event, with the glorification of the virtuous Japanese ‘Queen’ as a mirror for Eleonor Magdalene,\(^{62}\) this *melodrama* can be categorised as a *ludi caesarei*, a definable form of baroque theatre composed and performed by the Jesuits for the Hapsburg court.\(^{63}\) *Mulier fortis* is one of thirty-four surviving manuscripts written by the ‘Pater Comicus’ Johann Baptist Adolph. Gérard Laudin identifies Adolph as one of the most influential Viennese playwrights of his time, innovating new approaches to the *ludi caesarei* through its use of music (often written by Staudt) in ways unexpected of school productions.\(^{64}\) Divided into three acts, *Mulier fortis* incorporates a sung prologue and epilogue, as well as two divisional choruses between the acts (see Appendix 1). These transitional portions of the drama involve allegories of virtues and vices: Constancy (Constantia), Restlessness (Inquies), Repentance (Poenitudo), Adversity (Adversitas), Wrath (Furor), Cruelty (Cruelitas), and Reward (Praemium).\(^{65}\) These sections which frame the dramatic action can be seen as drawing on the Italian genre of the

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\(^{65}\) The *perioche* lists the musical performers as follows: Constancy – D. Laurentius Pfeiffer, tenor in the Professed House (*domo prof.*); Wrath – D. Leonardus Georgius Lercher, bass in the Professed House; Cruelty - D. Mathias Oetlin, theologian (*theol.*) of the Seminary of Saint Ignatius and Saint Pancras (*Semin. SS: Ignat. & Pancratii*); Restlessness, Adversity and Reward – Ignatius Antonius Synetius, A pupil of the upper grammar class (*syntaxista*) at the Seminary of Saint Ignatius and Saint Pancras; Repentance – Adamus Wanderer, A pupil of the upper grammar class at the Seminary of Saint Ignatius and Pancras. Including these singers, forty-nine actors were involved in the production.
Indeed, the form’s seemingly antiquated style was preserved by the Jesuits in their school dramas, finding utility in their combination of allegory, spectacle, and heightened tone. These intermedi, in Mulier fortis, form an allegorical play-within-a-play, constructing moral paragons that comment on the plight and victory of Gratia’s soul. In this way, the prologue of the drama, in which “Wrath and Cruelty fight in vain against the column of Constancy”, acts as an allegory of the argumentum in the perioche. This proverbial fight between vice and virtue, parallels the progression of Gratia’s body as it undergoes a physical and symbolic conversion from earthly-bound mortality to the boundless embrace of heaven. The torture inflicted upon Gratia by her husband Jacundonus ‘inscribes’ her body as a witness to Christ. As such, the body functions both simultaneously as spectacle and symbol. The finality of her death also presents an inverse play of power. In spite of her inherent frailty as a woman, accentuated in Adolph’s text, she transcends her gender through the act of martyrdom, a process by which her soul is infused with spiritual power, while leading her husband to see the error of his pagan ways. In reviewing this performative representation of Gratia in Mulier fortis, there are unavoidable resonances between allusions to martyrdom in

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66 Beginning in fifteenth-century Italy, these short entertainments employed vocal and instrumental music between acts of larger theatrical works. In contrast with operatic writing, the intermedi comprised self-contained dances and songs, but not continuous music. Donald C. Sanders, *Music at the Gonzaga Court in Mantua* (Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books, 2012), 174–75.


69 “Gratia, queen of the realm of Tango and spouse of the King Jacundonus, converts to the Christian belief in the absence of her husband and teaches her children also in that respect. When Jacundonus returns from war she is presented as a Christian, and is badly received; through various turns and even under pain of death she is ordered to return to idol-worship, but in vain; until eventually, having stood above threats and beatings in her heart, exhausted by her sufferings, in August 1590, she sends her steadfast soul to heaven, a reward for her fortitude. After her death, Jacundonus, tormented by pangs of guilt, damns his own cruelty and is transformed from a tyrant into a wonderful herald for his wife.” Pass and Niiyama-Kalicki, *Drama des Weiner Jesuitenkollegium*, xxvi. Direct quotations from the Mulier fortis manuscript have been translated by Yasmin Haskell.

the play and models of piety substantiated in the Kirishitan literature previously discussed.

Gratia, both in Mulier fortis as well as in Jesuit and Japanese reports, was noted for her considerable beauty, with which she charmed many. This is emphasised in Act Three, Scene One (see Appendix 1), in which her husband, who initially threatens her with red-hot irons and molten lead, is pacified against his will by her beauty. He exclaims that her softness weakens his hand, and he cowers at the sight of her bright cheeks, pink lips and eyes like gemstones. Jacundonus exits the stage exasperated by his attachment to her fragile beauty and exhorts himself to end such love. Similarly, erotic undertones may be detected in the account of her martyrdom by Jacundonus’ henchman, Colinus:

…the heavy rain of blows pressed down, and pain stole through all her joints, the thick storm inundates her snowy limbs with blood. Ashamed, she blushed at her naked breast, and often in chaste modesty cast down her eyes, often she raises them to heaven, sighs, suppresses her cries, rains with tears. 71

For Tertullian, the Church was seeded by the blood of the martyrs: Sanguis martyrum semen Christianorum. In basing his dictum in ancient medicine, which understood semen as a clarified form of blood, he not only conflates the two bodily fluids, but also relates martyrdom to sexuality. 72 Thus, according to David Biale, “to die for God is an erotic act whose result is the birth of new Christians”. 73 The erotic imagery evoked by the account of Gratia’s torture is reminiscent of her sisters in the early Roman Church. A common thread to be found among the female martyrs commemorated in the Canon of the Mass is emphasis on the defilement of the naked female form: from the

71 Pass and Niiyama-Kalicki, Drama des Weiner Jesuitenkollegium, xxxviii.
73 Biale, Blood and Relief, 74.
humiliation of the virginal Saint Agnes, stripped naked and paraded to a brothel, to the
severing of Saint Agatha’s breasts. This dichotomy between the fragility of female
beauty and strength in physical tolerance of torture strongly resonates with the model of
female martyrdom established in the *Fides no Dóxi*. Adolph and Staudt also forge
typological links between Gratia and the “heroines from antiquity” celebrated in the
Epilogue of *Mulier fortis*. The soprano role of Reward ruminates upon *The Book of
Proverbs* 31:10: “Who can find a virtuous woman? From afar, from the furthest realms,
I come, her Reward.”  

Reward, in the presence of Constancy continues to sing:

I have roamed the lands,

I have wandered the seashores,

I saw [the] Amazons,

I saw Tomyris,

Camilla [Aeneid], Coelia [Concordia]

Cornelia [mother] of the Gracchi,

Heroines from antiquity.

And does our age not bear

Similar minds? Or times recently past?

Whose deeds,

Whose acts,

Accomplished and enduring with great praise,

May furnish plots for a play?  

74 “Mulierem fortem quis inveniet? Procul et de ultimis finibus pretium eius.” Johann Baptist Adolph and
Johann Bernhard Staudt, *Mulier fortis: cuius pretium de ultimis finibus sive Gratia regni Tango regina*
(Vienna, 1698), 314 (Manuscript Cod. Vind. 9812, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek Wien).

75 “Tractus terrae peragravi./Littus maris pererravi/Vidi Amazones./Vidi Thomyrides./Camillas,
Coelias./Grachas Cornelius./Heroinas prisci saeculi. An non similium est ferax mentium/Vel aetas nostra?
Vel vincina tempora? Quaram gesta./Quaram facta./Sic cum laude stent peracta./Ut thema sint
The role of Constancy in hearing Reward’s search for a “Strong Woman,” affirms Gratia’s identity as a Christian heroine, emphasising her nobility, virtue, and strength in suffering torture for the crown of martyrdom:

A Strong woman, you ask?
Come, come, I will show you such a woman,
A Christian Amazon,
A magnanimous prince,
An image of true virtue,
The prodigy of the last century.

[...] She endured threats and torture,
Lashings and lances,
Madness and fury,
She triumphed over tyranny and pain,
All with a blessed omen,
For Christ’s holy name.76

Here the dramatic characters (i.e. Gratia) and the singing allegories finally converge through in a direct reference to the virtuous ‘Queen’. Constancy’s ode to Gratia’s soul is reminiscent of Hazart’s description of the fragrant rose enduring the cruelty of its persecutor. It is here, in the final moments of the melodrama as a whole, that the Glocal Mirror is truly turned upon the audience. In placing Gratia in the company of “strong women” from Christian antiquity, matters of time, space, and cultural distance are compressed, presenting Gratia Hosokawa as a reflection of the past as a martyr, the

76 “Mulierem fortem requisist Veni, veni, ostendam mulierem./Christianam Amazonem./Magnanimam principem./Virtutis verae imaginem./Lapsi saeculi prodigium. [...] Vicit minas et catastas./Vicit flagra, vicit hastas./Vicit insanum, vicit furorum./Vicit tyrannum, vicit dolorem./Felicia cuncta omne./Sacro pro Christi nomine.” Adolph and Staudt, Mulier fortes, 315–16.
present as Eleonor Magdalene, and the future as the virtuous young women of the Hapsburg Empire. The Jesuit construction of Gratia also conformed to the early modern ideal of a wife who, “[e]xcelling in Christian virtues, …studied devotional literature, engaged in charity, cared for her subordinates, guided her husband gently to the faith, and with virile courage sacrificed herself for him.”77 Just as Mulier fortis reflects the model of female martyrdom espoused in the Fides no Dôxi, so too does its imagery of “firm” and “strong” hearts permeate the Second Chorus in which “the faithful heart withstands the furnace of Adversity, and Wrath resentfully concedes defeat to Constancy”.78

Inasmuch as Antoine Wierix’s famous engravings emblematically represent the heart as a stage for the exploits of the infant Jesus,79 Adolph and Staudt in this allegorical chorus bring to life the static cardiomorphic emblem through music and staged spectacle. Adolph’s marginal instructions inform us that the stage is set as a furnace, in which the heart of Constancy is thrown into the flames by Adversity who sings of the forge as a test to see whether the heart is worthy of heaven. The heart ascends from the flames, shining and stronger than before, symbolising Gratia’s unification with God and the moral lesson that one’s faith grows stronger through adversity. That is to say “[t]he Society [of Jesus] is made complete by adversity”.80 This motto, whose sentiment is similarly expressed in the Maruchirio no Susume, is found in the Dutch translation of the famous emblem book, Imago primi saeculi, whose fourth chapter is devoted to the Society’s martyrs and to the imitation of Christ. Musically, the

78 Pass and Niiyama-Kalicki, Drama des Weiner Jesuitenkollegium, xxxvi.
79 Antoine Wierix, Cor Iesu Amanti Sacrum (Antwerp: Michael Snijders, c. 1585).
80 “De Societeyt wordt volmaeckt door teghenspoet.” Joannes Bollandis et al., Af-Beeldinghe van D’eerste Eeuwe der Societeyt Iesu, trans. Laurent Uwens (Antwerp, 1640), 398r. This motto accompanies the famous emblem of the Jesuit printing press. Beneath it is the phrase, fingitque premendo (“shaped by pressing”), a direct reference to Virgil’s Aeneid (Book 6: 77–80), in which Apollo overpowers the Sibyl’s body and soul. Less visible in the emblem are hanging pictures of the crucifixion and of a Pietà, drawing parallels of personal adversity with the Passion.
second chorus of *Mulier fortis* features interjecting “clarino” (trumpet) passages between the sung lines of Constancy. These in themselves act as musical symbols of war and victory. At the beginning of the chorus they signify the heart’s descent into the flames as a battle of faith, while their reprise towards the end calls forth the glory of God in Constancy’s, and indeed Gratia’s, victory. This example of an allegorical chorus demonstrates what one might define as a living emblem, wherein the conventional properties of static word and image are transformed through the animation of music, acting, and staging. In the First Chorus, the tenor role of Constancy sings of rocky cliffs ascending triumphantly above the turbulent waters, while “the lone moon frees itself from the clouds,” and palm fronds strengthen even after being weighed down by the yoke. These images are highly reminiscent of Jesuit emblems most famously rendered in the *Imago primi saeculi*. They are rhetorically emphasised by musical repetition in *Mulier fortis*. In analysing the score of the allegorical sections, the repeated musical phrases fall on text describing emblematic images and professions of Christian fortitude. Such repetitive emphasis may be seen in the tutti chorus of the Epilogue, in which all four singers repeat the word *coronat* (“crown”), in the final chord, thus putting the accent on the triumph of the Christian faith. In the original manuscript, this final word is penned in significantly larger writing (see Figure 16). The rhetorical *repetitio* extends to repetition of certain musical passages or thoughts as well as the *da capo* of arias. Hence the seemingly simplistic Latin and rhyming structure of the sung allegories and the repetitive nature of the music emphasise clarity, amplification, and emotional effect, serving a clear didactic function. Throughout the early modern period,

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83 Joannes Bollandus et al., *Imago primi saeculi Societatis Iesu* (Antwerp: Plantiniana Balthasar Moretti, 1640), 50; 324; 327; 565; 580; 717; 726.

84 See for instance, Johann Adolph Scheibe, *Der critische Musicus*, vol. 2 (Hamburg: Wiering, 1740), 688.
the spectacle of the Jesuit stage – in its exploitation of word, music, and image – drew upon the human senses to inscribe moralising messages in their audiences by any sensuous means. Thus for those in attendance of Mulier fortis, its performance of “music as oration” became, what Andrew Weaver has defined as, “a true oration, an affective delivery of a text heightened by a wealth of musical devices adding new intensity to the rhetorical impact of the words”.85

Adolph, in the scene preceding the Second Chorus, features an exhortation to martyrdom voiced through the mouths of three young Japanese children and a father who are persecuted by pagan soldiers. Act Two, Scene Six (see Appendix 1) opens with a reflection upon the extent of martyrdom that swept the country by the turn of the seventeenth century: “In what storms of blood from Christ’s flock is Japan swimming? Everywhere I put my foot I step on blood, and I tread in the footsteps of the martyrs.”86 The pathos of this statement also carries an implicit exhortation to the boy actors (and their audience by extension) to follow in these bloodied footsteps on a virtuous path to salvation. Throughout the scene, the raging soldiers tell the three boys that death awaits them if they refuse to apostatise. In their responses, the virtuous youths offer rationales that are reminiscent of the aforementioned Maruchirio no Susume. The boys speak of their determination to die: “I will consider this the highest reward, to be able to die for Christ before my father”; “Here you see my breast prepared for the wound. I am a Christian. I live and die for Christ.”87 The character of the “third young boy” who quarrels with the third soldier, views his persecution as wholly profitable whether he is killed or not: “You live, and send me to heaven a martyr -- or learn to be better in future

85 Andrew Weaver, Sacred Music as Public Image for Holy Roman Emperor Ferdinand III: Representing the Counter-Reformation Monarch at the End of the Thirty Years’ War (Lanham: Ashgate, 2013), 118.
with me as teacher!” The boy stresses that should the soldier die a pagan, his soul would be destined to “roast … in the eternal fire, and how much glory is there in that for God?” Although the soldier can be seen as a potential convert, his role as a persecutor also holds the key to the boy’s desired transformation through martyrdom. This sentiment is directly expressed in the *Maruchirio no Susume*:

> If wicked rulers did not exist in various countries, where would myriads of martyrs have been produced? Above all, thanks to the malicious and atrocious acts of the Jews, the way of our salvations has been accomplished through the Passion of Jesus, our Savior.

Indeed, *Kirishitan* literature on martyrdom discouraged retaliation against Japanese persecutors and enjoined prayer for their salvation. This is clearly outlined in the *Maruchirio no Kokoroe*:

> Never cherish an evil thought towards the officer passing the sentence of death or the executioner, but pray to Deus that they be led to the way of truth, since it is their deeds that take you on the way to Paraiso [Paradise].

It is evident from these examples that Adolph and Staudt’s performative representations of Japanese martyrdom do unknowingly transmit the key tenets of *Kirishitan* literature prevalent towards the end of Japan’s Christian Century. While such an ideology was ultimately universal to the Jesuit missions, it informed the Japanese culture of martyrdom which developed in its own unique ways during the persecution era. In reviewing Act Two, Scene Six, we gain insight into how the Jesuits used performance as a rehearsal space for the actors’ and the audience’s moral future. These young boys,

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88 “Coesus aeterno fores Assandus igne, Gloria et quanta hinc deo? Ast ego peremptus pro dei immensi fide, Psallam beatus coelicos inter choros. Tu vive, et hinc me martyrem coelo insere, Vel me magistro imposterum melius sape.” Ibid., xxxvi.

89 Translated in Anesaki, “Writings on Martyrdom,” 42.

90 Ibid., 65.
in embodying their Japanese brothers, were placed in a performative context in which they were presented with a moral dilemma. On the point of persecution, these actors, in taking to heart their characters’ lines, gained vicarious life experience through performance. This particular scene stands alone, outside of the narrative and of its allegorical commentary, yet fulfilled a vital didactic function. Alongside the figure of the woman of valour (mulier fortis), the child martyr in Jesuit church histories of Japan was developed as a model of affective piety. Crasset’s Histoire de L’Église du Japon, for instance, offers poignant tales of young children who fearlessly face death and even encourage violence from their persecutors. The audience’s ‘witnessing’ of young boys proclaiming their readiness for death in the cause of Christ on stage was designed to move the affections powerfully. Emotional resonances can thus be found between Jesuit accounts of Kirishitan mothers and fathers watching the persecution and martyrdom of their own children, and the act of Viennese parents witnessing their child performing this role for the Jesuit stage. The corroboration of faith in Act Two, Scene Six was thus reliant upon the emulation of virtue (ad virtutis aemulationem) brought about by the ‘movements’ of one’s affections. While there are no extant records of audience reception for the performance of Mulier fortis, there are examples of the Jesuits’ productions in Vienna prompting direct spiritual responses. In a production of the tragedy Euripus (1555), Jesuit reports claim that the audience was “so stirred by the pitiful plaints of the damned souls of Euripus, as to not make a few of them resolve on a better manner to live. This they openly proclaimed and their tears and groans left no doubt about this”. Similarly, in the preface to Jacob Bidermann’s posthumous Ludi theatrales sacri (1666), it is reported that a 1609 performance of Bidermann’s Cenodoxus in Munich caused thirteen members of the court to immediately retreat to perform the Spiritual Exercises. Moreover, the student who played the very role of

92 Litterae quadrimestres, III, 710–11, translated in McCabe, An Introduction to the Jesuit Theater, 38.
Cenodoxus is recorded as having entered the Society of Jesus, inspired by the moral lessons at the heart of the performance. The educational power of dialogue, the didactic function of repetition and memorisation, and the theatre as a space to practise ethical choices, are all factors that one might consider part of the Jesuits’ rationale for employing performance as a school of morals.

The propagation of faith lay at the centre of Jesuit practice. This winning of souls was central both to the Society’s apostolic work and to the performative representations of these efforts across the globe. In this, playwrights and composers of the Society of Jesus were masters in employing their histories of foreign missions to corroborate Catholic faith in Europe throughout the early modern period. Indeed, spiritual persuasion by manipulating the audience’s emotions – to move the soul – was the primary purpose of theatrical and musical composition and performance throughout the baroque period. Mulier fortis provides us with a fascinating case of a carefully – if not fancifully – constructed exemplum of martyrdom, and instantiates not only theatrical and musical structures and styles of the time and region, but gives us insight into the Jesuit stage’s moral capacity through multi-media and multi-sensorial engagement. The role of Hazart in mythologising the figure of Gratia Tama Hosokawa as a Christian martyr poses new questions about the genesis of her European narrative. Gratia embodies the pious Christian preparing for martyrdom as informed by contemporary Kirishitan literature, exemplifies a prime model of Imitatio Christi, and remains an enduring cultural demonstration of the Society’s presence in early modern Japan. Thus, if we view the Jesuit theatre as a reflexive mirror of European Catholicism, its

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appropriation of ‘Oriental’ aesthetics and themes turn out to be self-referential. Although the Japanese Gratia is obscured by layers of Christian/European rhetoric, these layers are in turn imbued with the blood of the Japanese martyrs, forming an invaluable imprint from the Jesuits’ historical missions. Beyond its function as exotic ornamentation, the Japanese theme of *Mulier fortis* spoke to the Society’s view of a global Church, formed through an imagined sense of interconnectedness in the universal experience of adversity, for it is “[w]ith these rewards [that] heaven bestows virtue” and “with these praises, [that] the earth crowns the virtuous”.  

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FIGURE 15. Titlepage of *Mulier fortis* (1698).

REPRODUCED WITH PERMISSION OF THE ÖSTERREICHISCHE NATIONALBIBLIOTHEK, COD. 9812 FOL. 270.
**Figure 16.** Final chorus (Epilogue) of *Mulier fortis* (1698).

*Reproduced with permission of the ÖSTERREICHISCHE NATIONALBIBLIOTHEK, Cod. 9812 fol. 323v.*
It is too difficult to discern between the contrasting lights that both assault the soul, which is deceptive, and which is true” (Gecivo to Agnese: Act One, Scene Three).  

Within the Christian discourse of conversion, the duality of turning to, and turning away from God has been central to the conception of faith and the construction of religious identities. In the New Testament, the Greek terms *metanoia* (to rethink or repent) and *epistrephein* (to turn back) are used to demonstrate a fundamental change of perception. This understanding of finding God, through the intervention of divine power, has been manifested throughout the history of Christianity in one of two ways: through the inner transformation of the individual, or the conversion of a collective. On December 9, 1603, Agnese Takeda (d. 1603), a respected *Kirishitan* noblewoman of the

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1 “Difficil troppo e L’accertarsi ne’ contrarj lumi, che a vicenda fra loro assalgion l’alma, qual sia l’ingannatore, e quale il vero”. Alfonso Varano, *Agnese Martire del Giappone* (Parma: Stamperia Reale, 1783), 11 (from here onwards referred to as *Agnese*).


3 Katharine Gerbner, “Theorizing Conversion: Christianity, Colonization, and Consciousness in the Early Modern Atlantic World,” *History Compass* 13 (2015), 135. It is important to make note of the current ‘renaissance’ in conversion studies and that the sheer breadth of covering the new ground established by these scholars simply falls outside the scope of this dissertation. See especially the work of the Early Modern Conversions institute based at McGill University.
city of Yatsushiro,\(^4\) was fixed to a cross and martyred for her refusal to apostatise. In June 1783, in the northern Italian city of Ferrara, a *tragedia* written by Alfonso Varano (1705–88) was published on the life, virtues, and glory of this Japanese example of Christian fortitude. As such, this dramatic work forged a link between Christian past and present through the martyred body of the converted Agnese, offering a performative site of historical re-imagination, intercultural exchange, and religious didacticism. The play, divided into five acts, has seemingly received no significant scholarly analysis since its publication, yet warrants exploration inasmuch as it represents an important anomaly when considered in context of the history of European Japanese plays.\(^5\)

Finding his plot in Canturani’s eighteenth-century Italian translation of Jean Crasset’s _Histoire de l’Eglise du Japon_,\(^6\) Varano weaves a striking tale imbued with wide reading about the Japanese mission. In light of Varano’s historical re-imagining, we contend in this chapter that Varano’s own steadfast Catholicism motivated the play’s modelling of a conversion experience. In this we see the use of effective and affective imagery, overwhelming the senses, and engaging the emotions with lessons in morality to spur spiritual fervour amongst the faithful. In exploring the various manifestations of ‘conversion’ in the *tragedia*, this chapter adopts Turner’s definition of religion as a “system of symbols and values which, through their emotional impact, not only bind people together into a sacred community, but induce a normative and altruistic commitment to collective ends”.\(^7\) It looks not only through the analytical lenses of *metanoia* and *epistrephein*, but also those of the dramatic and literary conventions Varano drew upon, in order to characterise a distinction between individual and

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\(^4\) A city of the ancient province of Higo (肥後国).


collective experiences of religious conversion and the emotions associated with these phenomena.

The Lost Legacy of Alfonso Varano’s Dramaturgy

“I find history dwelling with great complacency on Alfonso Varano, a nobleman of Camerino, who died, loaded with honors and with years, in 1788.”

Such was the respect accorded to our dramatist by Joseph Cooper Walker (1761–1810) in his monumental historical memoir on Italian tragedy. Indeed, to speak so highly of Varano’s works was commonplace in Italy, Germany, and England throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Alfonso Varano was born in Ferrara on December 13, 1705, to an aristocratic mother Countess Ippolita Camilla dei Brasavola (1673–1706) and father Marquis Giulio da Varano of Camerino (n.d.). While his older twin brothers, Giuseppe and Francesco, pursued a religious life as Benedictines in the Cassinese Congregation, Alfonso was educated at the Collegio di San Carlo in Modena. It was here that Varano learnt the art of literary composition under the instruction of Girolamo Tagliazucchi (1674–1751). As the Professor of Greek and Italian Literature, Tagliazucchi was renowned for pairing “an austere Catholic devotion with a taste for the stylistic simplicity of the Augustan age”. His emphasis on reading and imitation of the works of Dante, Boccaccio, Petrarch, and Castiglione, as well as

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9 Reviews of the *Memoir* also make note of the prominence of Varano in Walker’s opinion: “Mr W. makes honourable mention of Alfonso Varano, a nobleman of Camerino, whose Giovanni di Giscala and Agnese are well known to Italian students, and justly admired.” Review in *The British Critic: And Quarterly Theological Review* (London: F. and C. Rivington, 1799), 354.
10 Antonio Lombardi, *Storia della Letteratura Italiana nel Secolo XVIII*, vol. 3 (Modena: Tipografia Camerale, 1829), 247
12 Massimo Mazzotti, *The World of Maria Gaetana Agnesi, Mathematician of God* (Maryland: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007), 28. Mazzotti also notes that Tagliazucchi’s “stylistic simplicity” was an intended slight against the baroque aesthetics adopted by the Jesuits in their colleges.
translating the classics of Homer, Virgil, Horatius, and Cicero, are evident in the poetic style of Varano. At the age of twenty he had already gained praise from Ferrarese Cardinal Corneliio Bentivoglio (1668–1732), being accepted into the Accademia della Crusca in 1726.\textsuperscript{13} He was later admitted to the Accademia dell’Arcadia, writing under the pseudonym of Odimo Olimpico until 1780.\textsuperscript{14}

Today, Varano’s dramaturgical legacy has largely been overshadowed by his literary achievements, limited primarily to his poetic Visioni sacre e morali, published sometime between 1749 and 1766. Written in imitation of Dante’s Divine Comedy, Varano was lauded throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries for being the first Italian poet to “treat religious themes, at length and with an approach to the epic form, free from all admixture of the mythologic”.\textsuperscript{15} Indeed, his eminence amongst his contemporaries is reflected in a meeting with Anne-Marie du Boccage (1710–1802) who famously travelled to Italy in 1757 for the sole purpose of meeting Varano.\textsuperscript{16} His writings, both in poetry and in tragedy, were seen as efforts in reforming the literary tastes of his century, upholding “the restitution to the great Florentine [Dante] of his rightful place”.\textsuperscript{17} The importance Varano’s tragedies held before their decline in the twentieth century can be found in their perceived educational utility. At least in the nineteenth century, we are aware that his tragedies (including Agnese Martire del Giappone) were included as part of the educational curriculum on Greek, Latin, and

\textsuperscript{13} Tozzi, “I Varano. I Tempi, i Luoghi, la Storia,” 6.
\textsuperscript{14} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{15} Charles Isidore Hermans, Catholic Italy: Its Institutions and Sanctuaries, vol. 2 (Florence: M. Cellini and C., 1862), 89.
\textsuperscript{16} Boccage was mostly known for her Le Paradis Terrestre (1748), modelled on Milton’s epic poem. She also had some success with her tragedy Les Amazones (1749).
\textsuperscript{17} Frederick John Snell, Primer of Italian Literature (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1893), 121. See also, James Philip Lacaita, Selections from the Best Italian Writers: For the Use of Students of the Italian Language (London: Longman, Brown, Green, and Longmans, 1855), 255. Thomas’s extensive nineteenth-century dictionary also defines Varano as a leading figure in “the reformation of Italian poetry, to which he restored ... that manly accent and elevation which Dante had given it”. J. Thomas, Universal Pronouncing Dictionary of Bibliography and Mythology (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott and Co., 1870), 1179.
Italian theatre for schools in Trieste. Likewise, his tragedies featured prominently in German histories of Italian theatre, while Joseph Cooper Walker considered them essential reading for any English student of Italian theatre.

Beyond their scholarly value, Varano’s tragedies were favoured for their ability to inspire Christian faith. Franco Fido has noted that, in this regard, his writing was “far less theatrical than those of the Jesuits, but was marked by a more austere religious sensibility”. Following Varano’s death in 1788, the former Jesuit abbot Emidio Pannelli (1741–c.1826) published an elegy in which he sought to “paint the heavenly image of [Varano’s] piety” and to “narrate his intense love for the faith”. For Pannelli, the clearest demonstration of Varano’s Christian zeal was the very act of publishing devotional works from which the young children of Camerino could deepen their faith in God. His celebrated piety, evinced in both word and deed, pervades his dramaturgy and seems to have inspired, in his audiences and readers, a conversional experience centred on his own conception of the Catholic world. Although it is unclear as to whether Varano had been a Jesuit, he had ties to many members of the order in the years leading up to and after their Suppression in 1773. Praised for his writing and piety by the likes of Jesuit poet Giuseppe Luigi Pellegrini (1718–99) and Jesuit tragedian Giovanni Granelli (1703–69), it is unsurprising that Pannelli celebrated Varano’s life.

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18 Programm des K.K. Gymnasiums in Triest: veröffentlicht am Schlusse des Schuljahres (Trieste, 1863), 69. The Imperial Free City of Trieste was established as the capital of the Austrian Littoral in the fourteenth century under Leopold III of Habsburg (r. 1365–79). It would remain under Austrian possession until 1918. See Maura Elise Hametz, Making Trieste Italian, 1918–1954 (New York: Boydell Press, 2005), 1–10.


20 Emidio Pannelli, Elogio di Alfonso Varano (Camerino, 1790), xxiii; xxiv. Pannelli was Professor of Eloquence at the University of Camerino. See Augustin de Backer and Aloys de Backer, Bibliothèque des Écrivains de la Compagnie de Jésus (Liège: L. Grandmont-Donders, 1861), 420.

21 Pannelli, Elogio, xxiv; xxix.

22 Varano is reported to have lived a life of celibacy, devoting his time to religion and writing. See Giovanni Battista Coriani, I secoli della letteratura italiana dopo il suo risorgimento, vol. 2/I (Milan: Federico Motta, 1861), 286–87.

23 See Pellegrini’s letter to Varano which praises his Visioni sacre e morali (May 20, 1769), in Opere Poetiche di Sua Eccellenza il Signore Don Alfonso Varano, vol. 1 (Venice: Palese, 1805), xlvi. Granelli
so sincerely. What is surprising, however, is that he would publish this elegy under the
to the Society of Jesus so publicly during the years of their suppression. Hanns
Gross has referred to Varano as a “Jesuit tragedian” in a passing reference, but no
material is offered to substantiate this claim. However, Varano’s association with the
Jesuit literati and the college of Reggio Emilia, as will be discussed later, would seem to
imply some kind of working relationship with the Society of Jesus prior to their
suppression. For Varano, tales of Christian conversion and constancy in early modern
Japan not only satisfied the criteria for an engaging story on the tragic stage, but also
fulfilled his religious agenda of confirming the constancy of eighteenth-century Italians
and extending the reach of Catholicism. Such is Varano’s claim in his dedication to
Pope Pius VI (r. 1775–99). What we are thus presented with is an example of the
endurance of the Japanese Church, as described in Jesuit histories, as a mirror for
spiritual reflection even during the order’s suppression between 1773 and 1814.

The Takeda Family and the State of Christian Persecution in Yatsushiro

As has been discussed in Chapter Four, Hideyoshi’s imposition of an expulsion edict
against the Jesuits in 1587 led to a very uncertain environment. In the period between
this edict and the rise of Ieyasu towards the turn of the seventeenth century, the most
powerful protector of the Kirishitan of Kyushu, and perhaps all of Japan, was Konishi
Yukinaga (1555–1600), a converted daimyo baptised as Agostino. In 1592,
Alessandro Valignano noted that “these islands … of which Augustín Tsukamidono
describes Varano as a “true Catholic” (vero Cattolico) in a letter sent in the year of his death (July 31,
1769), ibid., xlvi–l. See also Paolo Emiliani-Gludici, Storia delle belle lettere in Italia (Florence: Società
editrice fiorentina, 1844), 1039–42.

Pannelli’s activity in these years is certainly a topic that would benefit from further research.

Gross refers in passing to Varano as Jesuit tragedian, but he appears to be the only one to have made
this claim. Unfortunately no references are provided to support this claim. Hanns Gross, Rome in the Age
of the Enlightenment: The Post-Tridentine Syndrome and the Ancien Regime (Cambridge: Cambridge
University Press, 1990), 291.

Varano, Agnese, no page numbers for dedication.

[Konishi] holds half … have been a place of refuge for the Society [of Jesus], and very advantageous for the [Jesuit] brothers”.

The region Valignano refers to is the ancient Province of Higo, where Agnese Takeda resided in the city of Yatsushiro. Under the authority of Konishi, it is reported that some 30,000 baptisms were conferred in 1599.

However, in the Battle of Sekigahara the following year, Konishi was captured and executed, leaving Katō Kiyomasa to invade Higo. His overthrowing of the city’s castle signalled an end to the Christian sanctuary Konishi had nurtured, and ushered in a period of systematic persecution against the converts of Yatsushiro.

The earliest accounts of Agnese Takeda and the acts against the Kirishitan of Yatsushiro were published in the reports sent by Luis de Cerqueira (1552–1614), Bishop of Japan, to Pope Clement VIII (r. 1592–1605). Among a number of French church histories of Japan written between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Jean Crasset’s Histoire de l’Eglise du Japon was particularly inspired by these reports of conversion and conviction, holding up the Takeda family as an exemplum of true Christian faith to be imitated. Translated into English, German, and Italian, Crasset’s history enjoyed continuing influence into the late-eighteenth century, when Alfonso Varano, upon reading Canturani’s translation, was moved by the virtues of this Japanese martyr: “Among those Heroines of Christianity, Agnese occupies a distinct place, a lady of high affair, Giatossira [Yatsushiro] her homeland, where under the rule of the tyrant Daifusama [Tokugawa Ieyasu] she performed the course of her mortal life with glorious

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29 Ibid.
31 Ludovico Cerqueira, Relazione della Gloriosa Morte Fatta da sei Christiani Giaponesi, per la Fede dei Christo (Parma: Erasmo Viotti, 1607).
martyrdom”.

Inasmuch as Gratia Hosokawa in *Mulier fortis* is aligned with her sisters from Christian antiquity, so too does Varano follow in this tradition of characterising Agnese as a Christian heroine. The full extent of the events prior to her execution, however, is not fully realised in the *tragedia*. It is therefore worthwhile briefly summarising this, for the broader context of Crasset’s narrative undoubtedly influenced Varano’s approach to his own composition.

One of these [enemies] appeared in the year 1602, ravaging the Vineyard of our Lord, like a wild boar, that thirsts after nothing but blood. His name was Canzugedono, a sworn enemy of Don Agostino, and immediate successor to him in his Kingdom of Fingo, where there were upwards of a hundred thousand Christians.

Referred to by Crasset as “The King of Fingo [Higo]”, Canzugedono appears in Varano’s *tragedia* only in references made by other characters, but is defined as the king under whom Agnese suffered martyrdom. It is thus clear that this character is Kiyomasa. Less clear, however, is his character of Camidiro (see Figure 17). Varano discloses in his preface to the reader that “Cacuzaimone” is “too harsh in the Italian language”, and is thus rendered as “Camidiro”. The former, an Italian transliteration of *Kakuzaimon*, refers to Governor Miyake Kakuzaemon (n.d.) of Yatsushiro who ordered the renunciation of Christianity by all nobles. At this point, the order of events that transpire in *Agnese* is a slight deviation from what is described in Crasset. The martyrdom of Agnese’s husband, Simon Gohyoe Takeda (d. 1604) – along with another

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38 Ibid.
nobleman of Yatsushiro, John Minami Gorōzaemon (d. 1603) – precedes the action of Varano’s tragedy.\footnote{For the account of Gorozemon’s martyrdom, see Crasset, La Storia della Chiesa del Giappone, 204–207.} Gecivo, a non-Christian, was an intimate friend of Simon, and as Crasset recounts, endeavoured to persuade him to apostatise and escape the executioner’s blade.\footnote{Spelled ‘Gifiojo’ in Crasset. See Crasset, La Storia della Chiesa del Giappone, 209.} However, remaining steadfast, Simon implores Gecivo to deliver his fate in the presence of Agnese, his mother Jane, and the Takedas’ servants. With a heavy heart, Gecivo beheads Simon, leaving Agnes desirous to follow in her husband’s footsteps:

At last my desires are accomplished. I have now a Spouse, a Martyr in Heaven.

O happy Simon! O glorious Martyr! Now that thou reigns with God in Heaven, be mindful of thy poor afflicted Wife, and to call her to thyself, that together we may praise and glorify his divine Majesty for all Eternity.\footnote{Crasset, La Storia della Chiesa del Giappone, 214. Translation adapted from the English edition. Crasset, The History of the Church of Japan, 117.} The figure of Simon is ever-present in the tragedia, and remains both a physical and spiritual reminder of the transience of earthly life and the infinite splendour of martyrdom. This is the background to Varano’s plot.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure 17. Dramatis personae in Agnese Martire del Giappone</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>AGNÉSE</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>CAMIDIRO</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>NEITA</strong></td>
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<td><strong>SANGORO</strong></td>
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<td><strong>ANNA</strong></td>
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<td><strong>UN CAPITANO DI SOLDATI</strong></td>
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<td><strong>CORO DI DONNE CRISTIANE</strong></td>
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40 For the account of Gorozemon’s martyrdom, see Crasset, La Storia della Chiesa del Giappone, 204–207.
41 Spelled ‘Gifiojo’ in Crasset. See Crasset, La Storia della Chiesa del Giappone, 209.
43 The historic city of Mogami was part of the Dewa Province.
The opening scene of Act One (see Appendix 2) establishes a state of persecutory hysteria in the region of Yatsushiro, situating the call for Agnese’s execution within the greater context of the martyrdom of her mother-in-law, Magdalena (wife of John Minami Gorōzaemon), and the Minamis’ adoptive son, Luis.\footnote{Luis was the son of Magda- lena’s eldest brother. See Ruiz-de-Media, El Martirologio del Japón, 299.}

I heard voices truncated by wailing and confused laments, and praises for the firmness of the Martyrs and the boy … hanging high from the fatal gallows, [whose] chests torn open by spears, had died in a gushing river of blood.\footnote{“Udii voci tronche da gemiti, e querele confuse, e lodi alla fermezza offerte delle martiri Donne, e del fanciullo ... alto legate al patibol ferale, e aperte il petto dall’aste, e in fiume d’ampio sangue estinte!” Anna to Agnese (Scene One, Act One). Varano, Agnese, 2–3.}

Varano’s writing style resonates with the sensuous tone of Crasset, constructing accounts of martyrdom which historically and figuratively saturate the play-text with the blood of Japanese converts. Agnese is replete with such evocative descriptions of the corporeality of martyrdom, demonstrating Varano’s acute awareness of a link between the senses, affective response, and the role of these stimuli in the process of metanoia. These sensory-emotional factors are, at first glance, hallmarks of Jesuit college productions, recognisable as early as the sixteenth century.\footnote{Jesuit theatre can be seen as engaging with religio caralis, a form of piousness navigated by the human senses and emotions. See Luigi Mezzadri and Paola Vismara, La Chiesa tra Rinascimento e illuminismo (Rome: Città Nuova, 2006),176. Eleonora Rai is also currently engaged in a research project on “Emotions and Visual Techniques in the Conduct of Jesuit Missions in Early Modern Italy: Paolo Segneri Senior’s religio caralis and Theatrical Method (17th century)” with the Australian Research Council Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions.} From what we know about Varano’s childhood and education, he does not appear to have had any direct connections with the Society of Jesus. However, his affective dramaturgy speaks more about the relationship between the Jesuit and the non-Jesuit theatres. Gaetano Morono, in his nineteenth-century dictionary entry on Varano, remarks how his tragedies were “praised for their strength and robustness of style”, and especially for their “warmth of affect”.\footnote{Gaetano Morono, Dizionario di erudizione storico-ecclesiastica (Venice: Tipografia Emiliana, 1855), 191.} More importantly, Morono emphasises how it was innovation in the Italian

\begin{center}
\textbf{Appendix 2}
\end{center}
form of tragedy that influenced Jesuit stage productions in the mid-eighteenth century. Given Varano’s relationship with the Jesuit Granelli, we can conjecture there to have been a meeting of tragedian minds and an exchange of dramaturgical ideas and techniques. In returning to the opening scene of Agnese, Varano’s emphasis on physicality acts as form of ‘conversion’: a Christian’s transformation from one state to another; from the bounds of mortality to the boundless embrace of Heaven. In this scene, Agnese expresses her envy of those martyred women and the child, bemoaning the continuation of her earthly life. By contrast, Anna, Agnese’s lady-in-waiting, in being described as visibly shaken from witnessing the executions, draws on Senecan traditions of tragedy, fearing for the life of her mistress. In an effort to embolden her spirits and guide her to the Faith, Agnese asserts the idiomatic moral lesson of ‘strength through adversity’ while outlining the history of persecution against the Kirishitan of Japan:

Indeed it is known to you, since through a wicked edict the usurper of the Japanese empire, the evil Taico [Toyotomi Hideyoshi], condemned to a bitter death the faithful worshipers of Christ, how many prisons, and sleep deprivation, and crosses, and swords, and boiling waters, and red-hot irons tempted in vain to challenge the Faith. And neither his successor Daifusama [Tokugawa Ieyasu], also a tyrant who committed himself to extinguishing the Faith, obtain other shameful fruit from his cruelty besides Our constancy among the evils, and his disappointed rage.49

48 Ibid.
49 “Noto è a te pur, dacchè con empio editto l’usurpator del Giapponese Impero, il perfido Taico, a morte acerba condannò i fidi adorator di Cristo, quante prigioni, e sveglie, e croci, e spade, e bollenti acque, ed infocati ferri tentarono in van la combattuta Fede. Nè poi Daifusama il successore di lui, tirano egual, che a spegner questa si volse, altro ebbe vergognoso frutto della sua crudeltà, che la constanza Nostra fra i mali, e il suo furor deluso”. Ibid., 5–6.
Thus Anna, inspired by Agnese’s fervour, proclaims “whoever saw a stronger woman than you?” Following this establishment of the protagonist as a *mulier fortis*, the second scene opens as a soliloquy through which Agnese contemplates the thought of her martyred husband and her own impending sacrifice. The following scene, which introduces the character of Gecivo, plays a central role in illustrating Varano’s underlying imagery of religious conversion, and offers us insight into the playwright’s own conceptualisation of a conversion narrative.

**Establishing Models of Religious Conversion in Agnese Martire del Giappone**

The English word “conversion” is derived from the Latin *convertere*, meaning “to turn”. For Pierre Hadot, this etymology implies a reversal or a “change of direction” in its broadest sense. Within the context of Christianity, the motions of rethinking (*metanoia*), turning back to (*epistrephein*), and turning away or defecting from God (*apostasia*), are ways of speaking about the dynamics of faith, and are three identifiable strands of religious conversion and aversion in *Agnese*. According to Hadot, a discussion of conversion demands sociological analysis, for the phenomenon represents an “uprooting from a particular social milieu and adhesion to a new community”. Semiotician Massimo Leone establishes an invaluable framework for analysing this connection between conversion and a complication of sociocultural identity. Through analysis of biblical and early modern texts, Leone identifies three stages that are characteristic of conversion: “the destabilization of self”, “the crisis of self”, and “the re-stabilization of the self”. All three stages of this conversion narrative are represented

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50 “Chi vide mai di te donna piú forte?” Ibid., 8.
52 Ibid., 980.
in *Agnese*. David Kling, in discussing the Acts of the Apostles, conceives of a similar tripartite formula, in which conversion comprises the “acts of forsaking, embracing, and incorporating”.\(^{54}\) This process is also defined as allowing for instantaneous as well as gradual conversion, either as a solitary experience or as “a visibly emotional event in a communal setting”.\(^{55}\) The scriptural portrayal of the former – a sudden and overwhelming intervention of the divine, resulting in the reorientation of the soul and reversal of previous beliefs – became the “Pauline paradigm of conversion”.\(^{56}\) While this golden standard is represented in *Agnese*, the sociological considerations of Hadot, Leone and Kling allow us to explore further dimensions of Varano’s conversion narratives: is the transformation instantaneous or a process? Is the change psychological, social, intellectual, moral, or a combination of these factors?\(^{57}\) Does socialisation play a role in instances of individual conversion? What is the direction of the conversion motion (*epistrephein* vs. *apostasia*)? All these considerations provide insight into the construction of Varano’s characters and the manner in which their varying degrees of Christian faith (or infidelity) facilitate dramatic development in the *tragedia*.

### The Conversion Narrative of Agnese and Gecivo’s Crisis of Religious Identity

In the third scene of Act One (see Appendix 2), Gecivo arrives at the Takeda residence, bringing what Agnese hopes to be news of her “longed-for death”. What follows is an exchange between the two characters in which the account of Agnese’s conversion and her plea for Gecivo to convert are framed within the Christian iconography of godly

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\(^{54}\) David W. Kling, “Conversion to Christianity,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Religious Conversion*, 598.

\(^{55}\) Ibid., 598.


\(^{57}\) Kling, “Conversion to Christianity,” 599.
light. The metaphor of Christ as the illuminator of faith features centrally in Varano’s
representations of conversion. Thus Agnese “bless[es] the God who withdrew [her]
from the ancient darkness, and washed [her] sins with the sacred water [baptismal font],
so that He descended in [her] to follow him, the divine force and light”.\(^{58}\) This
dichotomy between dark and light (or turning away from and turning to God) is also
adopted by Gecivo, who is so wracked by guilt over the execution of Agnese’s husband,
that he appears to be at a point of crisis.

I feel continual war between remorse and horror. As soon as I hang at my side
my sword, that cut off the head of your husband, this same fatal iron torments
me, and weighs upon me with unbearable heaviness, and calls me villain and
cruel. Given that I shed his blood, it now cries out against me in revenge.\(^ {59}\)

Varano’s Gecivo is based on the nobleman “Joxivava Gifiojo” in Canturani’s translation
of Crasset.\(^ {60}\) While the characterisation of Gecivo is largely derived from this account,
the role of guilt in his eventual conversion is a new emotional angle taken by Varano,
elaborating on the brief report of Agnese’s martyrdom in *La Storia della Chiesa del
Giappone*. In the *tragedia*, Agnese transforms Gecivo’s guilt, framing it within the
category of the glory of martyrdom:

Not against you cries that dear [Simon’s] blood, but in you wakes such a frantic
storm that, if you wish, an endless calm will be born from this. Give in to that
blood that thanks you for having been shed.\(^ {61}\)


\(^{59}\) Ibid., 15.


\(^{61}\) “No, contro e te non grida quel caro sangue, ma nel sen ti sveglia si affannosa procella, onde per questa, se tu vuoi, nasca interminabil calma. Cedi a quell sangue, che d’averlo sparso grazie ti rende”. Varano, *Agnese*, 15.
Indeed, Gecivo’s state of internal emotional conflict -- he is unable to “discern between the two contrasting lights that both assault the soul”\(^6^2\) -- represents what Leone identifies as “the crisis of self”.\(^6^3\) His witnessing of Simon’s religious constancy until death (which precedes the action in \textit{Agnese}) may be defined as the initial stage of “destabilisation”. Gecivo’s guilt, which manifests itself here in a questioning of his religious beliefs, constitutes what Hadot (and the field of conversion studies generally) describes as the characteristic of crisis necessary for the conversion process. Varano effectively presents us with the phenomenon of conversion in action; that is, the “ineffable moment \textit{between} disbelieving and being converted”.\(^6^4\) Agnese takes advantage of this destabilisation, calling upon Gecivo to ruminate upon the salvation of his soul:

\begin{quote}
Do not believe the light, nor any false ray, that offers itself to your blind desires, leading them to graze on their own pleasures, rather than on righteous reason.
This is the light that God infused in our souls. Turn your thoughts to it in meditation.\(^6^5\)
\end{quote}

In the following scene, Camidiro, the governor of Yatsushiro and close friend of Simon, pleads with Agnese to rethink her faith and to save herself from execution. In grieving for the godlessness of Camidiro’s soul, Agnese employs a similar line of Christian metaphor while simultaneously invoking the strength of her martyred husband:

\begin{quote}
“Non creder lume, no, qualunque falso raggio, che s’offre alle tue cieche voglie, per trarle ove il piacer di sè le pasce, non la retta ragion. Questa è la luce, che Dio nell’alme infuse. A lei rivolgi meditando i pensier”. Varano, \textit{Agnese}, 11.
\end{quote}

\(^6^2\) Ibid., 11.
\(^6^3\) Leone, \textit{Religious Conversion and Identity}.
\(^6^4\) Leone, \textit{Religious Conversion and Identity}, 70. Emphasis added.
\(^6^5\) “Non creder lume, no, qualunque falso raggio, che s’offre alle tue cieche voglie, per trarle ove il piacer di sè le pasce, non la retta ragion. Questa è la luce, che Dio nell’alme infuse. A lei rivolgi meditando i pensier”. Varano, \textit{Agnese}, 11.
If for the blood of my husband, which you shed, it is licit for my vows to implore pardon, I offer them to God on your behalf, so that the darkness of your soul may be illuminated with the victorious light.\textsuperscript{66}

In beseeching Gecivo and Camidiro to turn to her Christian God, Agnese simultaneously recounts her own experience of conversion through the invocation of godly light. This act constructs her own conversion narrative that serves the function of consolidating her new identity as a Christian woman during the persecution era in the city of Yatsushiro.\textsuperscript{67} This process of affirming identity through the ‘replay’ of conversion forms links between the individual and the new religious community they have joined. Not only does Agnese – through her role as the converted and the convertor – associate herself with the Christians of Yatsushiro, but she also extends her shared experience of godly light with the reader or audience of the \textit{tragedia}. This (re-) performed \textit{metanoia} is central to Varano’s didactic intention and ability to model conversional experiences for his audience.

\textbf{The Role of Familial Contingencies in (de-)Conversion}

Act Two (see Appendix 2) of the \textit{tragedia} introduces the fictitious character of Neita, Agnese’s sister. In the preface to the play-text, Varano pre-emptively defends the liberties he has taken with the historical facts. He asserts that the few deviations from Crasset’s account serve as necessary agents of a Tragic Poet, adding to the power of the dramatic action.\textsuperscript{68} Indeed, he claims that the love of the fictitious Neita for Agnese is too natural and innocent to detract from the seriousness of the \textit{tragedia}’s message.\textsuperscript{69} On the contrary, this creative import of sisterly affection functions as a didactic instrument

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{66} “Se pel sangue del mio … Sposo, che tu spargesti, lice ai voti miei grazia implorar, a Dio per te gli porgo, che la tua tenebrata alma rischiari con lume vincitor”. Ibid., 18.

\textsuperscript{67} Leone notes the importance of conversion narratives in the consolidation of new religious identities. Leone, \textit{Religious Conversion and Identity}, xii.

\textsuperscript{68} Varano, \textit{Agnese}, iv.

\textsuperscript{69} Ibid., ii.}
with which Agnese plays the sweet virtues of Christianity and the dissonant vices of the ‘old gods’. Accompanied by the invented character of Sangoro, a priest and brother of Conzudedono (Katō Kiyomasa), Neita travels from Mogami through treacherous terrain, seeking the apostasy of her sister. In the third scene of Act Two, the initial meeting between the two sisters revolves around the themes of sisterly love, family blood ties, honour, and guilt. Neita reflects upon their childhood, speaking of the patience and love she bore her sister. In so doing, she pleads with Agnese to return this love. Neita is instead rebuked by Agnese for her efforts, and she reaffirms her desire for martyrdom: “now you invite me to refuse that immortal joy, and honour, that I hope for you? Ah, so it is not true, that you love me, or that your love is devoid of sense: I am only merciful towards you, and you are cruel with me”. Sangoro, a Buddhist monk, plays upon similar themes of family and honour in his attempt to dissuade Agnese in the fifth scene of Act Three. In the process, he highlights another stage of social conversion: the transition from wife to widow. This transformation is perceived as a way of saving the honour of her bloodline and re-establishing her status as a virtuous noblewoman among the social circles of Yatsushiro: “If Agnese bends to repentance, she returns not only innocent, but so respectable that a king would not refuse her as a wife”. We are informed earlier in the third scene of Act Three, that the “King of Bitso”, upon hearing the news of her husband’s execution, desires the hand of Agnese in marriage. Here, Varano has arbitrarily chosen the Japanese province of Bitchū as a means of geographically validating the somewhat nebulous reference to Agnese’s suitor (see Figure 18). Sangoro encourages Agnese to accept this proposal, claiming that her

70 “Or tu m’inviti a rifiutar per me quell’immortale gaudio, ed onor, che per te spero? Ah dunque non è ver, che tu m’ami, o l’amor tuo è sconsigliato: e unicamente io sono teco pietosa, e tu con me crudele”. Ibid., 34–35.
71 “Se Agnese stessa piegasi al pentimento, ella ritorna innocente non sol, ma degna ancora, che per consorte un Re non la ricusi”. Ibid., 65.
72 “Bitso” is Varano’s interpretation of the Dutch Bitsiu or Bitçou (spelling in Figure 3.) transliteration. In his preface to Agnese, Varano indicates that his geographical names are derived from Dutch maps. Ibid., ix.
refusal, “seeming virtuous to you, is pride to others”.

He invokes Amida, god of her previous faith, and attempts to stir sisterly guilt, portraying her pursuit of martyrdom with reckless abandon as the cause of much grief to those around her: “Listen, or ignore the honours reserved for you; a sister who loves you and cries, you unjustly afflict her; and you choose to die rather than live happily with the rare gift that Amida presents to you?”

Although unsuccessful in their efforts to ‘de-convert’ Agnese, Neita and Sangoro exemplify what Fenggang Yang and Andrew Abel have called “social contingencies”. The act of conversion is dependent upon such factors as the individual’s interaction and connection with members of the new religion, as well as the weakening of pre-existing social bonds. Neita’s and Sangoro’s approach to the deconversion of Agnese is centred upon what we might call ‘familial contingencies’. Thus contrasting sets of familial emotions are played upon in order to deconstruct and reform Agnese’s identity as a Buddhist noblewoman: shame and honour; feelings of guilt and innocence; displays of cruelty and mercy; hatred and love. This relative ascendance of the subject’s affective bonds with one religious group over another ultimately determines the deconstruction and reconstruction of their identity, again underlining the importance of sociocultural factors in the conversion process.

The intended irony in Varano’s writing, however, is that these very familial contingencies are what lead Neita to her eventual, physically evident, point of crisis and consequent conversion to Christianity.

73 “Il tuo rifiuto a te parla virtude, e ad altri orgoglio”. Ibid., 71.
74 “odj, o non curi gli onori a te serbati; una Sorella, che t’ama, e piange, indegnamente affligi; e morir scegli anzi che viver lieta del raro don, che ti presenta Amida?””. Ibid.
76 Ibid., 142.
Gerosuno the Apostate

In Crasset’s account of Simon Takeda’s execution, the martyr’s close friend, “Figida Jorosuchi”, is noted as attending the beheading, seeking forgiveness for his apostasy from Christianity.\(^\text{78}\) It is clear that Varano’s inspiration for the character of Gerosuno is derived from this account. However, in Crasset, the apostate is given “hallowed grains” by the martyr as a reliquary on the condition that he “renounce[s] the worship of false Idols, and, reconciles [himself] to the holy Church”.\(^\text{79}\) This promise of re-conversion is described as a “great Conquest” before the moment of his beheading. In Agnese, however, Varano transforms the fate of the apostate to create dramatic friction as well as to fulfil a didactic function.

In the fourth scene of Act One, the character of Gerosuno is used by Camidiro as a model for apostasy. He encourages Agnese to think upon her conversion to Christianity as delusion, claiming that Gerosuno’s “repentance” (apostasy) bestowed him with “novel honours” (novella onori) through which he could achieve happiness.\(^\text{80}\) This is presented by Camidiro as an enviable state, while Agnese retorts that little can be gained by relying on the example of but one wicked man. In the third scene of Act Three, Gerosuno arrives at the Takeda residence where Agnese bemoans his betrayal of the truth faith: “Ah, woe is you! Your [baptismal] name was John, an example, and honour of the Christian Law, to which you swore faith to at the holy fount where your soul became pure. Now you are changed into an infidel”.\(^\text{81}\) In the following scene, Gerosuno, in a soliloquy, begins to question his apostasy and is overcome with the fear of God and punishment for his sins. This state of spiritual dissension is manifested in an emotional outpouring and would seem to constitute a point of religious destabilisation.

\(^\text{78}\) Crasset, La Storia della Chiesa del Giappone, 212–15.
\(^\text{79}\) Ibid., 213.
\(^\text{80}\) Varano, Agnese, 19.
\(^\text{81}\) “Ah, infelice! Il tuo nome era Giovanni, esempio, e onor della Cristiana Legge, cui tu fede giurasti allor che al santo lavacro l’alma tua pura si rese. Ora tu sei cangiato in infedele”. Ibid., 56.
However, in the context of Varano’s reinterpretation of the role of the apostate, this experience functions more as an omen of the fate to come, rather than an indication of ‘turning back’ (*epistrephein*): “What terrible voice arises from the darkness of the soul … and inspires in me shame, and grief, and horror? Was that voice born from God, whom I abandoned? Or from the tumult of my affections, that were stirred in me by Agnese’s art or by her valour?” Yet in spite of this insight, Gerosuno remains loyal to Conzugedono. In the sixth scene of Act Four, he threatens to throw Simon’s lifeless corpse from the balcony of the Takeda residence, “a worthy tomb for him … between the stench and filth of the unclean street, and the greedy bellies of the hungry dogs”. Indeed, Gerosuno conceives of this as a test for the benevolence of the Christian God: “You will find it [Simon’s corpse] in small pieces, and spilled over the ground by me. If he is the true God, he will know how to avenge himself; if he should not be thus, I will have avenged the honour of Amida”. In the opening scene of Act Five, Gecivo informs Neita of Gerosuno’s defilement of Simon’s corpse. He describes how he, with cowardly fear, escaped the turbulent mob and fled the gates. However, the omen of God’s vengeance comes to fruition, whereupon “his head [is] fixed on the end of a lance as an example or object of pity to all cowardly hearts” as a sort of messenger speech.

It is evident that this warning, through its very graphic imagery, extends to the audience of the *tragedia*, and functions as a moral lesson on the repercussions of abandoning God. The character of Gerosuno exemplifies an unresolved binary between conversion and deconversion, for whatever is rejected can also be reaffirmed. To this extent, a “crisis of faith may lead to deconversion [while] a crisis of doubt may lead to

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82 “Qual dal cupo dell’anima risorge terribil voce, che grida, e mi spira vergogna, e affanno, e orror? Nasce ella forse questa voce dal Dio, che abbandonai? O dal tumulto degli affetti miei, che in me irrii l’arte, o il valor d’Agnese?” Ibid., 61.
83 “A lui più degna tomba apprestar non puossi che fra il lezzo, e il sudiciume dell’immonda strada, degli affamati cani il ventre ingordo”. Ibid., 92.
84 “Lo troverai ridotto in pezzi, e a terra rovesciato da me. S’egli è Dio vero vendicarsi saprà; s’ei non è tale, io vendicato avrò l’onor d’Amida”. Ibid., 96.
85 “Ora il suo mozzo capo a un asta infisso stassi ai codardi cori esempio, e pena”. Ibid., 99–100.
reconversion”. Gerosuno’s omen, while not fulfilling the expectation of reconversion, nevertheless presents us with an affective account of a “crisis of doubt”, through which the character questions his own apostasy.

The Martyred Body as a Site and Sight of Conversion

Within the varied ways in which Varano explores the motions of turning to and turning away from God, the conversion of a collective is reserved for the climax of the tragedia: Agnese’s martyrdom. In this way, an understanding of the socioreligious context of martyrdom in early modern Japan offers insight into the model of virtue which Varano saw in Agnese. The character of Michele, Agnese’s page, who in the tragedia endures various tests of his Christian faith, is derived from Crasset. In La Storia della Chiesa del Giappone, he, along with Giovanni (Jean) and Gioacchimo (Joachim), are described as three “Gifachi”, that is, Officers of the Confraternity of Misericordia. As has been explored in Chapter Six, these Kirishitan confraternities were formed upon a collective dedication to prepare themselves for a ‘good death’ in the cause of Christ. Crasset outlines five key features of these communities, whose function was not only to serve as a training ground for martyrdom, but also as arbiters of conversion. In this way, assurances of sincerity and displays of penance to that effect were considered necessary

86 Kling, “Conversion to Christianity,” 599.
88 Crasset, La Storia della Chiesa del Giappone, 202.
in order to prove one’s turning to God.\textsuperscript{90} Given Michele’s relationship with the Takeda family, it would not be unlikely that Agnese’s model of life, as \textit{imitatio Christi}, was informed by the Gifachis’ confraternity. The independent practices of these communities can be seen as linked to the proliferation of \textit{Kirishitan} literature, published by the Jesuits in Japanese, following the Nagasaki martyrdoms of 1597. Practical guides on how Japanese converts should prepare for violent death assured the faithful that “the Church is not itself weekend by persecution, but is instead reinforced”.\textsuperscript{91} These are the words of the \textit{Maruchirio no Susume} (“Exhortations to Martyrdom, c. 1615), yet, as we have seen in Chapter Six, it is a message that harks back to the earliest centuries of Christianity, and Tertullian’s dictum “Sanguis martyrum semen Christianorum” (the blood of the martyrs is the seed of Christians). One could demonstrate the sincerity of one’s conversion to a new faith no more clearly than by taking up a cross and giving one’s life for it. Both the historical and dramatic Agnese are motivated to pursue this ultimate expression of \textit{imitatio Christi}.

In Varano’s \textit{tragedia}, Agnese is advised by Sangoro to feign apostasy in order to escape execution. She remains undeterred, leading Sangoro to marvel at the strength of her constancy in the face of death, outlined in a soliloquy in the third scene of Act Four: “Never have I seen equal to this, such enduring strength in the female heart, that no threats, or flattery, or prayers, or dishonourable examples of atrocious death and voluntary sacrifices, wet by human blood, can deter”.\textsuperscript{92} In Act Five, the \textit{tragedia} gains momentum as Agnese prepares herself for the cross. The transformation from prosecuted to executed features in this final act as the climax of Varano’s narrative, as well as the broader trajectory of \textit{imitatio Christi} and the pursuit of a ‘good death’. In

\textsuperscript{90} Crasset, \textit{La Storia della Chiesa del Giappone}, 367–69.
\textsuperscript{91} Gonoi, “Kirishitan: Les Chemins qui Mènent au Martyre Pour une Histoire des Martyrs Chrétiens de Japon,” 52.
\textsuperscript{92} “Eguale a questa non mai vidi alta si durevol forza in petto femminil, che non minacce, o lusinghe, o preghiere, o inonorati di morte atroci esempi, e volontarj sagrifizj d’uman sangue bagnati ponno espugnar”. Varano, \textit{Agnese}, 87.
this way the body of the martyr becomes a *site* of conversion, a catalyst for religious transformation in others. The imminence of mortal death and indeed the very act of execution brings the remaining characters to a point of crisis.

**The Conversion of Neita**

After the atrocious judgment, I, assailed, [and] indeed torn by incessant, and ever more severe blows of fury, pity, shame, and of love, I tried to escape; but I cannot.\(^{93}\)

A chaos of conflicting emotions is how Neita describes her reaction to her sister’s death sentence in Act Five. Coincidently, Neita and Sangoro, through their efforts to dissuade Agnese from Christianity, sought to evoke these very same emotions. While it is clear from the preface’s dedication to Pope Pius VI that Varano’s inspiration was found in Agnese Takeda’s religious constancy, one is tempted to claim that the *tragedia*, in fact, tells us more about the nature of finding of God through the final act’s preoccupation with Neita’s conversion. To this extent, Varano offers us a comprehensive model of conversion that anticipates both Leone and Kling’s different transformational stages. Furthermore, by drawing continuously on the metaphor of light, Varano aligns Neita with the tradition of Pauline conversion.

In the second scene of Act Five, Agnese appears before Anna, Neita, Gecivo, and a Chorus of Christian Women, dressed in magnificent clothing for her martyrdom. Neita is overwhelmed by this display and flies into a desperate state, pleading with her sister to reconsider:

\(^{93}\)“Dopo l’atroce sentenza, io combattuta, anzi sbranata da incessabili, e ognor più crudi colpi di furor, di pietà, d’onta, e d’amore, fuggir tentai; ma non posso”. Ibid., 97–98.
Look at me: the tears flow in torrents, and my sobs kidnap my voice. On the ground I bend my knees, and I embrace your feet, and I pray. If you do not want two victims in one moment – I pierced by grief, and you from the iron – forgive your life, your lineage you have outraged, and a bloodless sister. Little is that which I beg.\textsuperscript{94}

Undeterred, Agnese rebukes her sister’s attempts, and aspires to her “blessed end”. In their final embrace, Neita’s religious identity is thrown into doubt: “My heart fails me … (faints) Oh God! What is this poisoned kiss!”\textsuperscript{95} This physically evident moment of crisis can be defined as Leone’s “destabilization of the self”, which quickly leads to Kling’s act of forsaking. Neita’s progression to a crisis and “re-stabilization of the self” (embracing and incorporating) is then triggered by Agnese’s expiration upon the cross.\textsuperscript{96} While the audience is not shown these last moments of her life, we are informed through Gecivo’s recount as well as the notice affixed atop the crucifix (See Figure 19):

Consugedono, King of Higo, commands the deserved death of the impious Agnese, tenacious in Christ, and guilty follower, who on the cross must – through blows of the lance to pierce the chest – give up her wicked soul; enemy of the Gods.\textsuperscript{97}

By the end of the fifth scene of Act Five, Neita rejects Amida and thus her ‘pagan’ ways, consequently accepting Christ as her saviour:

My plaints to you, evil god, barbarous Amida. Did not your altars smoke with incense thanks to my deeds? Did not I offer you adequate victims? You on this

\textsuperscript{94}“Guardami: sgorgano le lagrime a torrenti, e i miei singulti mi rapiscon le voci. A terra io chino le ginocchia, e t’abbraccio i piedi, e prego. Se tu non vuoi due vittime in un punto, me dal duolo trafitta, e tel dal ferro, perdona alla tua vita, alla tua stirpe da te oltraggiata, e a una Sorella esangue. Poco è quel ch’io ti chieggio”. Ibid., 104.

\textsuperscript{95}“Il cor mi manca... (sviene) Oh Dei! Che bacio avvelenato è questo!” Ibid., 106.

\textsuperscript{96}Leone, \textit{Religious Conversion and Identity}.

\textsuperscript{97}“Consugedono Re di Fingo intima la meritata morte all’empia Agnese ostitata di Cristo, e rea seguace, che su la Croce dèe trafitta il petto a colpi d’aste esalar l’alma infame nemica degli Dei”. Ibid., 107.
satiated your hunger with palpitating viscera, and with blood dripping out of the
torn bellies of three valiant Children. Now how do you bring help that you
promise to those who honour you? Go; may only the greedy wolves worship
you, whose likeness you bear in your face, and ferocity in your heart. *I deny you,
I hate you, and detest you.*

Her later description of a sudden light and an “inimitable voice” outlines a shared
experience that establishes the *tragedia*’s representation of collective conversion.
Neita’s assertion that her soul has “changed into another” (*cangiata in altra*) and that
she desires “to wash away every ancient sin” (*terger a tette ogni sua colpa antica*),
demonstrates her “restabilization” of religious identity as a Christian. *99* This very act of
“embracing” and “incorporating” the intervention of Divine Light exemplifies
conversion at its most Pauline. *100* Even more so, as the *tragedia* comes to a close in the
sixth scene, Neita takes up the remains of Simon and Agnese as “trophies of the
Christian Law in new lands to infuse grace and light”. *101* In this action, both the Takeda
martyrs are transformed into relics. Their bodies thus become sources of veneration and
sites of conversion.

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98 “Le mie querele a te, perfido Nume, barbaro Amida. Non fumaron forse per opra mia gli altari tuoi
d’incensi? Non t’offrj degne vittime? Tu in questo giorno la fame tua pur saziasti con palpitanti viscere, e
col sangue grondante fuor del lacerato ventre di tre prodi Fanciulli. Or come rechi l’aita, che prometti a
chi t’onora? Va; che t’adorin sol gli’ingordi lupi, di cui tu porti le sembianze in volto, e la ferocia in core.
100 Kling, “Conversion to Christianity,” 599.
101 “ch’io meco porto come trofei della Cristiana Legge in nove terre a infonder grazia, e luce”. Ibid., 121.
Conversion as a Shared Experience of Emotion

Researchers who draw upon self-categorisation and social identity theory assert that emotion can be experienced at both an individual and collective level. In returning to Turner’s definition of religion as a “system of symbols and values”, we can see these very symbols and values as having emotional impact in binding individuals into a sacred community, as well as facilitating individual contemplation (metanoia). For Barbara Rosenwein, “emotions are above all instruments of sociability”, and thus religion, in the Durkheimian sense as collective social thought, is inherently linked to emotionality. In the final act of Agnese, religious conversion can be seen in the culmination of a new community of God achieved through shared emotional experience.

Varano’s use of Agnese’s martyred body as a site and catalyst of conversion is effective because of her central role in a set of emotional relationships through which these collective processes are initiated in potential converts. In each of these connections (Agnese and Anna; Agnese and Gecivo; Agnese and Michele; Agnese and Neita), Agnese guides her interlocutor to question (or to deepen, in the case of the already converted Michele) their faith. It is not until her mortal body expires that these characters share in a common experience of the divine and so turn themselves to God. Anna, who opens the tragedia, distraught and fearful following the martyrdom of Agnese’s relatives, is transformed in scene four of Act Five. Upon her mistress’s execution, she “would weep; but at that moment when the tears are about to gush, she finds them blocked by a victorious joy”. It is thus by contrasting her physically evident expressions of emotional response to Christian martyrdom that we can identify

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a point of crisis, of ‘turning’ and ‘forsaking’. Varano’s use of musical choruses in this scene also signifies the collectivity of conversion, employing a group of “Christian Women” who sing praises of the martyred Agnese:

Receive her soul
Liberated from her bloodless breast
Among the inflamed squadrons
Of eternal love.
Receive her soul
And sprinkled with your blood
In offering it to the Father
Speak to his mercy. 106

In the previously discussed Historical Memoir on Italian Tragedy of Joseph Cooper Walker, the importance of sung choruses in Varano’s tragic works is emphasised. He makes brief mention of Agnese, stating that “the choral songs … in the Agnese are … addresse[d] to the deity in [sic] behalf of the expiring martyr. In the first, strength to endure the agonies of the cross, is entreated: in the latter, a petition for the passing soul is offered”. 107 Despite the impressive amount of detail contained in Varano’s preliminary notes to Agnese, he makes no mention of performance guidelines, nor specifies these choruses as necessarily sung. However, in his tragedia of 1754, Giovanni di Giscala, Varano states that “all choruses can be adapted to any sort of harmony, these being composed of canzonettas and arias … accompanied by musical

106 “Ricevi tu quell’anima/ Sciolta dal seno esangue/ Tra le infiammate squadre/ D’eterna carità./ Ricevi tu quell’anima:/ E aspersa del tuo Sangue/ In offerirla al Padre/ Parla alla sua pietà”. Ibid., 113.
instruments”. Walker provides details for this production’s reception, stating that it was performed at the Jesuit college of Reggio Emilia, where students “expressed much delight at the recollection of the music with which the chorus that concludes each act, was accompanied”. It appears unlikely that Agnese ever made it to the stage, but these questions of performance context give us insight into the vision Varano had for this tragedia and casts light upon his style of dramaturgy and the state of theatre in late eighteenth-century Italy. It would seem reasonable to conclude that the use of choruses in Agnese were similarly flexible in their structure, allowing stage directors to use local canzonettas or well-known arias to engage with their audience on a familiar sonic level.

Further in Act Five, Scene Five of Agnese, the affective experience of Godly light and its ability to induce both metanoia and epistrephein, is explored through Neita’s bewilderment:

But what do I see? The joined roof separates from the walls, Heaven appears? Oh how they splendour from above the golden clouds, the globes and the whirlpools of light! In the midst of such brightness what a countless crowd that seems to exult in great joy? And whence comes the inimitable voice spread throughout the serene air, proclaiming: Angels of peace, go to meet my beloved, tinted with blood that she shed for me. Verily, he is a God who speaks. I see indeed at his side a Cross fertile with rays that illuminate all the ethereal paths.

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109 Walker, Historical Memoir on Italian Tragedy, 261. Walker states that he had discussed this performance with a student of the college who was in the audience.
Neita’s description of this “countless crowd” rejoicing in the heavenly sky of divine light, in addition to the sung chorus of Christian women, implies a display of collective conversion beyond the tragedia’s main characters. As such, their experience of wonder and joy can be seen as collective emotion felt by Neita, Anna, Gecivo, and Michele, in joining in the community of God. In this, the people of Yatsushiro are united in Agnese’s martyrdom and the light of their Redeemer. As this light disappears, so does the ‘darkness’ of the characters’ previous beliefs, for as Anna claims: “The just God reserves for those who please him the most choicest of graces, that the grand reward is revealed”.

For Gecivo, who is characterised as spiritually confused, this event brings him to the end of a prolonged state of religious confliction. This model of conversion is, for Gecivo, directly linked to his emotional relationship with Agnese, encouraged by the collective’s vision of the divine: “The divine light assailed me, I, who was tormented and torn between contrasting thoughts for a long time, and imprinted in me the words and actions of Agnese; in the end her death won me over”. Gecivo’s amazement at the “ray of light that … cut through the air to illuminate the sacred body” is not a flight of Varano’s imagination. The description is based on Crasset’s account where Gecivo is described as being inspired by the constancy of Simon and Agnese Takeda.

As the tragedia comes to a close, Sangoro, the Buddhist monk, flees the city, telling Gecivo to inform Neita that his state of confusion forbids him from being in her presence. As he sets off to Kumamoto to inform the King of Agnese’s death, we are left to question whether this represents a point of religious “destabilization” for the monk. The tragedia ends with Neita in conversation with her deceased sister, seeking forgiveness for her efforts to dissuade Agnese from the true faith, and emphasizing the ultimate victory of God. Her acknowledgment in this final moment of religious

111 “Il giusto Dio riserva a chi più aggrada a lui grazia si eletta, che il gran premio gli sveli”. Ibid., 115.
112 “Me lungamente combattuto, e incerto fra contrarj pensier lume divino assalse, e impresso in me le voci, a l’opre d’Agnese; a la sua morte alfin mi vinse”. Ibid., 117.
113 “E ancora riverbera i splendori in ogni lato del vasto foro”. Ibid., 120.
114 Crasset, La Storia della Chiesa del Giappone, 223–25.
ignorance, through a direct rejection of one set of values for another, draws upon conventional notions of sight and movement (i.e. illumination, wonder, etc.), exemplifying a most archetypical understanding of religious conversion. Michele and Anna, now without a master or mistress, vow to follow in Neita’s footsteps to the greater glory of God.

And you pardon, victorious soul, if I used the malignant arts, and vain arguments of my blindness to divert you from that path which led you to God: Recall evermore, that he chose you to guide my mistaken steps; and that among the many seductive blandishments, and bitter hardships, you triumphed over me and over the gods.115

Varano’s representation of conversion and conviction, through the lens of seventeenth-century Japan, presented a mirror of devotion through which readers and audiences were able to reflect upon their own lives. As has been previously mentioned, it seems unlikely that Agnese was ever performed, but it is useful for us to consider Varano’s previous audiences. It is clear that his stage works had achieved fame outside of religious institutions, but it was their performance for the edification of students that appears to have been his objective.116 The staging of his Giovanni di Giscala at the Jesuit college of Reggio Emilia, and Varano’s own association with Jesuit poets and playwrights, might imply Agnese was a tragedia written for the spiritual education of young students. In his re-imagination of persecution in Yatsushiro, Valignano conflates distances of time, space, and culture, forging a link between Christian past and present through the martyred body of Agnese. However, it must also be noted that although martyrdom was a central part of the Church’s history, it was also a matter of the present

115 “E tu pardona, anima vincitrice, se adoprai l’arti maligne, e gli argomenti vani della mia cecitade a desviarti da quell sentier, che ti condusse a Dio: rammenta ognor, ch’egli te scelse guida agli erranti miei passi; e che frat ante seduttrici lusinghe, e acerbi affanni tu di me trionfasti, e degli Dei”. Varano, Agnese, 122.
116 Pannelli, Elogio, xxiv; xxix.
day for eighteenth-century Catholics. We should keep in mind that only nine years after
the publication of *Agnese*, twenty-three Jesuits were executed at the height of the French
Revolution.\(^{117}\) Indeed, Varano was writing against a backdrop of mounting religious
tension between the Jansenist reforming movement and the ‘official’ Church in the
1780s. More radical reformers of the Italian Enlightenment were seeking to remedy
such abuses as pluralism and the Church’s economic privileges, while pushing to
“restrict papal jurisdiction over the Church in individual states”.\(^{118}\) While not all
advocates of a Catholic Enlightenment in Italy were this radical, it is clear that Varano’s
tragedies, especially given his Jesuit connections, would not have been happily received
by all orientations of late eighteenth-century Italian Catholics.

Varano’s inclusion of a prefatory guide to Japanese culture and religion
demonstrates his anthropological curiosity and a sincere effort to accurately reimagine
an early seventeenth-century Yatsushiro for the late eighteenth-century Italian stage. His
transparency about factual manipulation is a deviation, or perhaps development, from
the case studies explored in the second half of this dissertation which take considerable
liberty with the church histories they adapted. Varano’s tone illustrates stories of
martyrs in Christian blood, and employs sanguineous imagery to illicit an emotional
response. He recognised the role of sensuous stimuli in the rhetorical act of *movere*, and
sought to bring his audience to a contemplation and confirmation of their own faith. His
ability to model a conversational experience, through *Agnese*, lies at the very heart of
Varano’s identity as a playwright and ardent Catholic.

It would appear that Varano’s veneration of Agnese’s martyrdom, though
sincere, is but a pretext for the exploration of conversion in its many manifestations. As

\(^{117}\) See George M. Anderson, *With Christ in Prison: Jesuits in Jail from St. Ignatius to the Present* (New

\(^{118}\) John Pollard, *Catholicism in Modern Italy: Religion, Society and Politics since 1861* (New York:
Routledge, 2008), 7. See also S.J. Barnett, *The Enlightenment and Religion: The Myths of Modernity*
has been discussed, *Agnese* assesses three possible movements of the religious self: motions of rethinking, turning back to, and turning away from God. By playing out on the Ferrarese stage (or in the imagination of the reader) the outcomes of all three of these movements, eighteenth-century Italians gleaned spiritual profit from Varano’s characters from Japan’s Christian past, and learned to better themselves as Catholics. Despite the richness of the *tragedia*’s vision of Christian fortitude, a distinction must be made between the ‘real’ conversion experience of Agnese and her private circle, and the performative rendering in Varano’s play. To this extent, what *Agnese* offers is not a narrative from the perspective of the Japanese per se, but an insight into Varano’s Catholic worldview. Varano consequently offered the people of Ferrara a framework through which they could conceptualise and experience conversion in all its ‘directions’, and in turn look inwards at an individual and collective level. In standing before the Glocal Mirror, Varano witnessed a reflection of the Japanese Church that had transcended space and time. He found people, places, and experiences from a distant land that spoke to his Catholic sensibilities, and developed ways to interpret these at a localised level. Varano’s *Agnese* is but one of many ‘Japanese plays’ that were performed throughout Europe in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It is perhaps in this way that the proselytic achievements of the Society of Jesus persisted in the performing arts and the minds of their consumers even after the Society’s Suppression.

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Figure 18. ‘Bits’ Provence, in Nicolas Sanson d’Abbeville, Kaart van Japan (François Halma, c. 1705).

Wikipedia Commons.

REPRODUCED WITH PERMISSION FROM LAURES KIRISHITAN RARE BOOK DATABASE OF SOPHIA UNIVERSITY, TOKYO.
"There [in Europe] is the centre and here [in Japan] the circumference, there is the particular and individual and here the universal, there the indivisible and here the infinite."¹ These words of Frois, written in a letter from 1560, speak to ways in which Japan and Europe could be at once global and local, centre and periphery. This dynamic lay at the very heart of the Jesuits’ efforts in early modern Japan and fostered the development of an apostolic ethos of *accommodatio*. The first half of this dissertation (‘The Object’) has explored how ‘accommodation’ was variously interpreted in their approach to language, liturgy, and the performing arts, and the relative successes and failures the Jesuits experienced in negotiating its boundaries. The condition of being lost in translation – linguistically, culturally, or religiously – was a hallmark of the encounters between the Japanese and the Jesuits throughout the latter half of the sixteenth century. It has been shown how the performing arts set the very contours of these encounters, from the sounding of church bells, to the creation of a unique localised repertory of *Kirishitan* music and drama. In looking to these traditions as “sociomusical practice”, this dissertation has reinstated the human creators, actors, and consumers of these traditions within their broader sociocultural and religious contexts.² In so doing, it has endeavoured to present a clearer image of how *Kirishitan* practitioners invented and reinvented acts of localised devotion, while simultaneously employing these to consolidate *Kirishitan* identity. Far from a mere transplantation of the Jesuits’ cultural mission (as it had developed in Europe), what has been uncovered is

a period, albeit brief, in which Japanese musical and theatrical forms came to be intimately connected with a Japanese grassroots approach to Kirishitan faith. As noted by Byron Earhart, “Japanese religion [in a broad sense] is the distinct tradition formed from the interaction of indigenous and foreign organized religious and folk elements in the context of Japanese culture”.\(^3\) Within the context of Japan’s encounter with Christianity, then, to talk about the products of these interactions as merely ‘hymns’, ‘songs’, ‘mystery plays’, or ‘representations’, is to mask their syncretic nature; it was this very syncretism which offered the Japanese direct modes of accessing and participating in the liturgy. Therefore this dissertation has focused on developing a vocabulary that speaks more effectively about the relationship between Kirishitan communities and their performative traditions. The discussed episodes of Japan’s Christian Century demonstrate how, as Simon Frith has written, “music constructs our sense of identity through the direct experiences it offers of the body, time and sociability”.\(^4\) Inasmuch as a mirror allows us to recognise ourselves in its reflection, so too did Kirishitan soundscapes enable communities to define their identity, positioning themselves within the sonic makeup of these soundscapes’ reverberations. The use of the Glocal Mirror metaphor has furthermore enabled a fruitful examination of boundaries as well as shared understandings between local and foreign elements of religion, ethnicity, and culture. Even within the chosen focus of the mission’s early decades (1549–70), this dissertation has identified a plethora of syncretic practices that warrant further investigation. Indeed, these colourful episodes from Jesuit correspondence provide us with snapshots of glocality in action – that is, the simultaneity of universalising and particularising tendencies – that invite further study of Japanese contributions to the cultural mission of the Jesuits.


The dissemination of these Jesuit correspondences contributed to what Ditchfield has called a “tsunami of print”, in which church histories, martyrologies, and fictional literature brought the Kirishitan of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to the forefront of European interest.  

The second half of this dissertation (‘The Reflection’) has explored the ways in which the Japanese Church was reimagined in European musical dramas of the early modern period. Its three case studies speak to the globalised image of Japan’s ‘converts’ and martyrs and how they were adopted with varying degrees of factual accuracy to fulfil different standards of edification. In exploring the sources utilised by these playwrights and librettists, we have also seen how these musical dramas present a labyrinth of intertextual references. In unpacking these connections we are able to come to an understanding of the early modern “tsunami of print” as an increasing network of knowledge about the world and her diverse inhabitants as a global entity. These dramatic productions of imagined interconnectedness defied geography, and through the ‘universal’ reach of the Church, united its members throughout the four corners of the globe. Further investigation into the transformation of these plays (many of which have yet to be analysed) throughout different periods and geographical locales would not only be of great significance for scholars, but also to modern performers of music and theatre in offering an understanding of how these theatrical works engaged with their audiences’ understanding of early modern Japan. To that extent, the second half of this dissertation is also a valuable resource for ensembles interested in reviving the performance practices of this long-forgotten genre.

This dissertation has surveyed a wide variety of primary source materials (many for the first time), and has reassessed seminal scholarly work on Japan’s Christian Century. This careful piecing together of early historical sources, literary and dramatic

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5 Ditchfield, “Catholic Reformation and Renewal,” 185.
texts, musicological literature, and interdisciplinary theoretical perspectives, has presented a new approach to understanding the role of the performing arts in the Japanese mission and its subsequent re-imagination in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Europe. In its structure of ‘The Object’ and ‘The Reflection’, this dissertation has further emphasised a need to consider these two halves as a whole in order to truly interrogate the nexus between the global and local histories of the Japanese Church. As we look to the future shape of the field, especially in light of a recent surge in research on the Japanese mission, scholars should be urged to look further into the Japanese grassroots participation in Kirishitan communities, particularly in the early decades of the mission. The field would also benefit greatly from research into the performance traditions of the Kirishitan diaspora during the Christian persecution era of the seventeenth century, and to investigate any continuities with what has been presented in this dissertation.

We now end where we began, with the fresco of Andrea Pozzo in the Sant’Ignazio in Rome (see Figures 1 and 2). As one of the Jesuits’ most famous pieces of propaganda, this spectacle offers a literal image of the Society’s understanding of its own narrative and place in the global order of time and space. While Pozzo’s masterpiece has often been cited as a demonstration of the Society’s missionary zeal, it is perhaps more important as a representational configuration of the geography of Catholicism. This dissertation has argued for a glocal approach to the Japanese mission in which we can begin to discuss the ‘Japanisation’ of Christianity in locally-specific ways: in the formation of Kirishitan faith, devotional practice, and artistic innovation. The Glocal Mirror mediates the geographical configuration of Pozzo’s painting to release the four continents from their peripheral positions. In this way, they are drawn into the centre where we can truly see them as agents of their own interpretation of
Christianity, allowing us to focus on the local details and overcoming the ‘extra-European’ stereotype of these syncretic traditions as mere “caricatures”.6

6 Brockey, The Visitor, 429.
## Appendix 1: Scene Summaries, *Mulier Fortis* (1698)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scene</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prologue</strong></td>
<td>[Musical] An allegorical prologue in which Wrath and Cruelty fight in vain against the column of Constancy. They are seized by Restlessness and Repentance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Act 1: Scene 1</strong></td>
<td>Gratia, the Queen of Tango, is glad to be a Christian and decides to instruct her Children in that way.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Act 1: Scene 2</strong></td>
<td>The Queen tests her children, who are already familiar with the principles of the Christian faith, and rewards them with gifts of jewelled crucifixes and swords.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Act 1: Scene 3</strong></td>
<td>King Jacundonus appears in public for the first time since his return from war and the people applaud him. When he sees the Christian images lining the streets, however, he is enraged. [Musical] <em>A sung chorus of townspeople in honour of the King.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Act 1: Scene 4</strong></td>
<td>The noble youths of Tango dance among the spoils of war. They march out armed with varied weapons. [Musical] <em>Ballet accompanied by music:</em> “March,” military exercise with a banner and the sounding of trumpets. “Galliard,” the dance of the Tango youth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Act 1: Scene 5</strong></td>
<td>The Queen is distressed upon hearing of the King’s fury, and she prepares herself to endure all hardships for the Christian faith.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chorus One</strong></td>
<td>[Musical] An allegorical chorus in which Constancy demonstrates symbolically how the human soul overcomes adversity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Act 2: Scene 1</strong></td>
<td>Jacundonus is informed by his chief Bonze, Orcamus, that the Queen is devoted to the Christian faith and therefore subjects the realm to misfortune. The King’s anger is roused by her, and he orders an investigation of the Christians.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Act 2: Scene 2</strong></td>
<td>The Queen stands before Jacundonus. In vain she is ordered to renounce Christ, and is led away at the King’s command to be flogged.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Act 2: Scene 3</strong></td>
<td>The servant responsible for the Queen’s custody now fears for himself, as his carelessness had allowed her to secretly escape from the castle and attend Christian teachings. He places the blame upon the soldier who is currently guarding the citadel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Act 2: Scene 4</strong></td>
<td>The European swordmaster, captured in battle by Jacundonus in the war for</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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1 Scene summaries are adapted from those found in the *Perioche* (Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, 4° Bav 2194, I, 45).
2 All scenes are acted without music unless otherwise indicated in the scene summary.
Emperor Taikosama [Toyotomi Hideyoshi] against the King of Ximo, is ordered to demonstrate an example of his art.

**ACT 2: SCENE 5**
The King’s opposition to the Queen is strengthened after being shown the little book *The Imitation of Christ* by Thomas à Kempis. He sees the crucifixes worn upon the chests of his daughters, gifted to them by their mother as a reward for their learning of the Christian doctrine; he tries to discourage them. However, upon finding them firm in their Christian faith, he tries to kill them, and they are led away from their father’s sudden rage.

**ACT 2: SCENE 6**
The steadfastness of children during the persecution of faithful Christians.

**CHORUS TWO**
[Musical] An allegorical chorus in which the faithful heart withstands the furnace of Adversity, and Wrath resentfully concedes defeat to Constancy.

**ACT 3: SCENE 1**
The Queen, unshaken in her Christian faith, offers her neck to the raging sword of Jacundonus, but he is moved by her beauty to a gentler disposition.

**ACT 3: SCENE 2**
Upon seeing the blood-stained instruments of their mother’s torture, the children become frightened. They are falsely informed that their mother has apostatised following heavy flogging; however, they are not fooled by this deception and reunite with her.

**ACT 3: SCENE 3**
Once again the royal children receive encouragement in the Christian faith from their mother. The tyrant appears, holding a dagger to the Queen’s breast and seeking her death. However, Jacundonus is held back once he sees the readiness of the Queen to die. Nevertheless, she is sent away to be tortured.

**ACT 3: SCENE 4**
The careless guard is exposed by the Queen’s page to the ridicule of the Bonzes.

*Guards and bonzes dance.*

**ACT 3: SCENE 5**
The royal children pray to God for their ailing mother, the Queen, but not without accepting an omen of their mother’s death.

**ACT 3: SCENE 6**
At first, Jacundonus rejoices in the death of the Queen, but is soon overcome with various emotions. Finally overwhelmed with repentance and remorse, he is transformed from a tyrant to a wonderful herald to his wife.

**EPILOGUE**
[Musical] To Reward, who searches for a strong, steadfast woman, Constancy shows the soul of the Queen in glory, to which Reward builds a monument in honour of her strength on Earth.

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3 Written as “Ximo” in the play text as well as the *perioche*, this transliteration refers to the island of Kyushu. The war between Hideyoshi and the “King of Ximo”, therefore refers to the Kyushu Campaign of 1586–87 in which Hideyoshi defeated the Shimazu and Aizuki clans. The “King”, however, could refer to any number of regional rulers from these clans.
## APPENDIX 2: SCENE SUMMARIES, AGNESE MARTIRE DEL GIAPPONE (1783)

| ACT 1: SCENE 1 | In this scene between Agnese and Anna (her lady-in-waiting), a state of persecutory hysteria in the city of Yatsushiro is established, situating the call for Agnese’s death within the greater context of the martyrdom of her mother-in-law (Joan), Magdalene, the young Luis, and her late husband, Simon. The scene concludes with Anna’s establishment of Agnese as a Christian heroine. |
| ACT 1: SCENE 2 | A soliloquy by Agnese in which she contemplates the image of her martyred husband in heaven and of the imminence of her own sacrifice for Christ. |
| ACT 1: SCENE 3 | This scene between Agnese and a kinsman of her husband, Gecivo, revolves around the concept of conversion: Agnese’s conversion from ‘heathenism’ to Christianity, and the current state of Gecivo’s stubbornness in resisting the true faith. We are informed that Gecivo was the individual who carried out the beheading of Simon upon the order of the King. |
| ACT 1: SCENE 4 | This scene between Agnese and Camidiro (Miyake Kakuzanemon), governor of Yatsushiro and close friend of Simon, is one of contested conversion. Camidiro begs Agnese to reconsider her faith while Agnese grieves the darkness of Camidiro’s godless soul. Camidiro introduces the characters of Neita (Agnese’s sister) and Sangoro (a Buddhist monk and brother of the King). We are informed that Neita is in mourning upon hearing of her sister’s fate, and after pleading with the King to delay Agnese’s execution, is on her way to Yatsushiro to convince her to apostatise. |
| ACT 1: SCENE 5 | A soliloquy by Agnese revolving around the themes of religious constancy and the determination for a ‘good death’. |
| ACT 2: SCENE 1 | Neita arrives at the Takeda residence in an effort to break Agnese’s Christian conviction. She is met by a servant, Michele (Michael), who informs Neita that Agnese is comforted and encouraged towards martyrdom by the presence of her husband’s corpse. Michele affirms his own Christian faith while establishing that the other servants, at this point, do not follow the will of God. |
| ACT 2: SCENE 2 | Neita expresses her sorrow to Sangoro. The extent of military presence in the city is illustrated and Neita describes various omens of mourning. |
| ACT 2: SCENE 3 | This scene revolves around the themes of sisterly love, blood ties, honour, and guilt. Neita reflects on their childhood and the love she bore Agnese. She pleads for her to return this affection. Undeterred, Agnese derides Neita for the cruelty her efforts for apostasy represent. Agnese reaffirms her desire for martyrdom. |
| ACT 2: SCENE 4 | A soliloquy by Neita in which she realises the inevitability of her sister’s death. She judges herself for making the journey to Yatsushiro. |
| ACT 2: SCENE 5 | Gecivo paints a picture of Agnese as a virtuous woman whose charity has inspired the love of the people of Yatsushiro. This is seen as a threat by Daifusama (Tokugawa Ieyasu) who hopes the decree of her death will bring her to apostatise. Gerosuno is revealed to not only be an apostate himself, but also an informant to the Emperor Daifusama. |
| ACT 2: SCENE 6 | Sangoro encourages Neita to maintain courage and hope. He foreshadows the Buddhist monks’ deception of Michele. |
| ACT 3: SCENE 1 | Anna is in distress. Agnese praises Michele’s constancy, and the seed of Anna’s conversion is sown. |
| ACT 3: SCENE 2 | Michele returns to the Takeda residence drenched in blood. He recounts how his Christian companions were slaughtered at a Buddhist temple, and of the sufferings he endured for his faith. He is exalted by Agnese as a “new Hero of Christ”. |
| ACT 3: SCENE 3 | Gerosuno arrives at the Takeda residence for the first time since his apostasy. He is struck by feelings of sorrow upon seeing the decapitated corpse of his old friend, Simon. Gerosuno then presents the marriage proposal of the King of Bitso (Bitchū) to Agnese as a way of healing her corrupted reputation. Agnese remains firm in her devotion to her deceased husband and to God. |
| ACT 3: SCENE 4 | A soliloquy by Gerosuno. He begins to question his apostasy and fears God will condemn him for abandoning the Christian faith. |
| ACT 3: SCENE 5 | Sangoro questions the motive behind Gerosuno’s meeting with Agnese. Neita gives insight into the King’s desire to wed her sister. |
| ACT 3: SCENE 6 | Sangoro and Neita attempt a final effort to bring Agnese to apostasy. Agnese criticises the shortcomings of the Buddhist monks and their lack of social empathy. Agnese remains firm in her faith. |
| ACT 4: SCENE 1 | Neita describes a scene wherein Agnese addresses a crowd protesting her death. With prayer she serenely calms the townspeople. Sangoro questions whether Neita doubts the omnipotence of Amida. |
| ACT 4: SCENE 2 | Sangoro attempts to convince Agnese to feign apostasy in order to save her life. Agnese speaks of the joy she is experiencing in the knowledge that her martyrdom is near. |
| ACT 4: SCENE 3 | Soliloquy by Sangoro who acknowledges the strength of Agnese’s religious conviction. |
| ACT 4: SCENE 4 | In this scene, Sangoro accuses Gerosuno of returning to his Christian faith and... |
questions him as to his motives for speaking with Agnese. Gerosuno defends himself and tells Sangoro that he shall provide evidence to demonstrate the strength of his devotion to the King and Amida.

**ACT 4: SCENE 5**  
Sangoro orders the soldier to bring Agnese and her Christian women to him.

**ACT 4: SCENE 6**  
Gerosuno threatens to throw Simon’s lifeless corpse from the balcony to the hungry dogs below should Agnese refuse to add her name to the list of condemned Christians. Agnese reminds Gerosuno of the kindness Simon had showed him in his tender years.

**ACT 4: SCENE 7**  
Anna is bewildered that Gerosuno, who had been “a defender of the Holy Law”, should so quickly become their persecutor. Agnese implores Anna to follow the Christian faith.

**ACT 4: SCENE 8**  
Gerosuno sets a test for the benevolence of the Christian God: should he desecrate the corpse of Simon, surely their God would take revenge. If this should not occur, Gerosuno swears to honour Amida. Gerosuno is captured by an angry mob for his defilement of the martyr’s body and is decapitated.

**ACT 5: SCENE 1**  
Neita describes her conflicting states of emotion upon confirmation of her sister’s fate. Gecivo informs her that the crucifix (the “dismal apparatus”) has been set for Agnese.

**ACT 5: SCENE 2**  
Agnese appears dressed in rich attire for her martyrdom. Neita, in a desperate state, prays for her sister’s apostasy, eventually becoming overcome by emotion and faints. Agnese affirms her constancy and kisses her sister farewell.

**ACT 5: SCENE 3**  
The captain of the soldiers reads the official notice of Agnese’s execution. Anna affixes the notice above Agnese’s head.

**ACT 5: SCENE 4**  
Anna, to a chorus of women, reflects upon the constancy of her mistress. In the beginning of the tragedia, Anna is torn by feelings of sorrow upon hearing news of Agnese’s execution. In this scene, however, she has converted to seeing Agnese in death as a “victor of joy”.

**ACT 5: SCENE 5**  
Michele describes Agnese’s final moments. As she expires, Neita rebukes Amida and by the end of the scene has accepted Christ as her saviour.

**ACT 5: SCENE 6**  
Neita takes possession of Agnese and Simon’s bodies as Christian reliquaries. Gecivo finally succumbs to the light of God, and inspired by the piety of his mistress, converts to Christianity.
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