REVIEW ARTICLE

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An Art of History, An Art of Comparison

Reconstructing Christianity in Premodern Japan
through Comparative Analysis

Kawamura Shinzo 川村信三. *Sengoku shūkyo shakai=shisōshi: Kirishitan jirei kara no kōsatsu* 戦国宗教社会＝思想史―キリシタン事例からの考察 [Religio-social and intellectual history in the Warring States period: Kirishitan case studies]. Tokyo: Chisen Shokan, 2011.

Kiri Paramore. *Ideology and Christianity in Japan*. London: Routledge, 2009.

Religion's foreign missions have always had encounters with "others"—other religions, cultures, and languages—with the possible consequences of adaptation, fusion, integration, and conflict. Their history is written not only as a theologically inspired account, but also as a history of the concrete events of human activity, and as such is subject to critical analysis. Methodologies of such critical studies vary, but comparison is the one most often applied. Through comparison, scholars create specific, historical meanings of religion within the context of its mission ground.

When the Society of Jesus introduced Catholic Christianity to Japan in 1549, it showed remarkable growth in the country. At its peak in the early seventeenth century there were more than 300,000 baptized Japanese followers who belonged to approximately two hundred churches. Scholars call these years the "Christian century" (1549–1639), in which the Catholic mission first prospered

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with the protection and tolerance of the country's central and regional powers, but then began to experience severe persecution by the Tokugawa Shogunate. The Japanese called Christianity and its adherents Kirishitan, an adaptation of the Portuguese *Christão*. The word is now used to designate the Christian beliefs and practices observed by the Japanese during the early modern period.[1]

This article introduces two recent works on Christianity in early modern Japan and reviews their contribution to the development of the field: *Sengoku shūkyo shakai=shisoshi* by Kawamura Shinzō, and *Ideology and Christianity in Japan* by Kiri Paramore. I will first locate these books within the field of Christianity studies in early modern Japan and then briefly sketch an outline of both works. I will then evaluate both volumes, paying particular attention to what they have chosen for comparative purposes and their approaches to historiography.

The Study of Christianity in Early Modern Japan: An Overview

Two general perspectives have been influential in the study of Christianity in early modern Japan. One has focused on the secular aspects of the Christian mission. Studies from this perspective include the history of the missionaries' economic, cultural, intellectual, and political activities, but the main focus lies in the negotiations and conflicts between mission leaders and Japan's political leaders. Paramore's work belongs to this general category, providing an innovative analysis of the Christian mission's ideological implications in Tokugawa and Meiji Japan.

Another influential perspective centers on individual or collective biographical histories. Mainly Jesuit church historians have promoted this approach by focusing on the "great figures" of the Jesuit mission to Japan, such as Francis Xavier and Alessandro Valignano. Included in this perspective are studies "from above," namely, from the standpoint of European missionaries or Japanese adherents in high social, political, or intellectual status. Kawamura's work belongs to this category, offering an unprecedented examination of the communal, intellectual, and practical aspects of Christianity in the early Tokugawa period.

In addition to these traditional paradigms, we have seen in recent years new approaches such as the following, listed together with representative works: 1. Christian popular belief and practice: ŌHASHI (2001); HIGASHIBABA (2001); MURAI (2002); and KAWAMURA (2003). 2. Intellectual interaction between Christianity and non-Christian religious thought in Japan: IDE (1995); and

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1. For a scholarly meaning of the term, see HIGASHIBABA (2001, xvi). The use of "Kirishitan" in place of "Christian" or "Christianity" is indicative of the scholar's interest in the local contextual meaning of Christianity in early modern Japan.

Asami (2009). 3. Feminism: Ward (2009). Another noteworthy study is the development of (Western) Christian art and architecture: Hioki (2009).

What characterizes these works are their new perspectives that shed light on documents that have remained largely unnoticed in conventional studies, and their interpretation of sources from totally different angles from preceding studies. In the meantime, the recent discovery of an original copy of *Fidesno Qvio* (*Hidesu no kyō*) ひですの経, a Jesuit Mission Press book (*Kirishitan ban*), has attracted the keen attention of scholars. Found in Houghton Library at Harvard University in 2009, the full text was transcribed with detailed notes, both of which have already been published (see Orii 2011; Orii et al. 2011).

For this field to advance further we must promote critical analysis, whether our approaches are conventional or new. To this end, we must explore the meanings of Kirishitan phenomena in a multidimensional context, and comparison is a basic and useful tool for that endeavor. Let me take the example of the study of the Jesuit Mission Press, which constitutes a major part of the conventional study of the Christian century. While investigation concerning the external form of those books has steadily developed, the content of their message has yet to be sufficiently explored. Aside from some dictionaries, the Jesuit Mission Press was for Christian religious education, and most of the Japanese works were either full or abridged translations of Western works—these facts have distracted many scholars, especially non-Christian scholars, from deeply examining the books' messages. Consequently, it was usually Christian church historians that discussed, or have been able to discuss, the content of these books and a variety of other unpublished mission documents in early modern Japan.

However, new horizons of study have gradually opened up in this field with the efforts of scholars who place the *Kirishitan ban* within a new context of examination: their contemporary Japanese religious context, for example. How did the Kirishitan message sound to a Japanese audience when it was located within Japanese religious culture and coexisting with non-Christian religious messages? How was it understood? Was it different enough from other Japanese religious messages as the missionaries intended? Were the translations faithful to the original? Was there any compromise of the message in the process of adaptation to the Japanese situation? If so, what do such changes suggest about the uniqueness of Christianity in Japanese religious culture? These are but a few questions that may guide us to new horizons of study in the field. Kawamura and Paramore likewise take us to new horizons in their studies of the Kirishitan community and thought, and of ideology and Christianity in Japan, respectively.

Outline of the Works

SENGOKU SHŪKYŌ SHAKAI=SHISŌSHI

Kawamura's central concern in this work is to respond to a simple but most vital question: why was the Kirishitan group able to flourish within a few decades in Japan during the Warring States (Sengoku) period? He is particularly interested in the condition of the Japanese who received Christianity—what did Japanese people expect from it? If they found in the Kirishitan elements they could never expect from traditional religions, what were these? How did Japanese find these unprecedented characteristics, and how were they able to accept them? To answer these questions, he attempts to clarify Kirishitan characteristics from the perspective of religio-social and intellectual history. Indispensable to the religiosocial investigation is a grasp of the religious background (religious soil) of the Japanese populace of that age in the context of the Kirishitan mission that is seldom seen if we only pay attention only to the Kirishitan *per se.*

The contextual understanding of the religious mission requires a comparative examination of the new and the old in the eyes of local people. Kawamura's study is no exception. In his study, the most-often invited counterpart for the comparison with the Kirishitan is Jōdo Shinshū's Honganji branch 浄土真宗本願寺派, which flourished in Japan around almost the same time as the Kirishitan. It "undoubtedly rooted itself in the Japanese soil and represented the characteristics of a Japanese type of religious movement" (6). Kawamura explains that the Honganji branch provides a religious context in which people accepted the Kirishitan. By studying this tradition, "we are able to find many clues with which to understand why people accepted the Kirishitan, because it reveals what spiritual solution they were seeking" (6). Therefore, commonalities between the two will disclose reasons why the Kirishitan population increased so quickly during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Both traditions had similar characteristics: they appealed to a large number of people in a short period of time, formed nationwide networks of communities of adherents, and thus expanded at an unprecedented speed in Japan.

Kawamura further makes a stimulating argument: through comparative analysis he tries to depict the characteristics of the society and thought in Sengoku Japan in which the Kirishitan and the Honganji branch flourished. Here lies his final investigation. It is not the Kirishitan or the Honganji traditions themselves (though these are fully discussed), but the society and thought of Japan that he intends to reveal. This explains why the book is titled *Sengoku shūkyō shakai=shisōshi*. Through Kirishitan and Honganji beliefs, practices, and community he illustrates aspects of the society and the thought of Warring State Japan. Kawamura maintains, "The development of these two traditions was deeply rooted in the situation of contemporary Japan; they could develop

because they were very suited to sixteenth-century Japan or to the society of the Warring States period" (7).

With the Kirishitan and the Honganji as specific examples, and with comparison as the main tool for understanding, Kamamura attempts to reveal the Japanese social and intellectual realities during the Warring States period. Let us see in more detail how Kawamura fulfilled this objective.

STRUCTURE

Kawamura's work begins with an examination of the formation and operation of Kirishitan communities and their contribution to Kirishitan development (chapter 1). He discusses the Kirishitan community's characteristics in two contexts: the Europe-based Christian community and the Japan-based religious community. The first explains that the Kirishitan community was modeled on the *Confraternitas*, a community of the Christian faithful in Europe from the thirteenth century through the Reformation. Drawing on the concept of "connected histories," the author discusses the Kirishitan with reference to their European background, using the popular religious community as a connecting medium between Europe and Japan. The second context seeks the meaning of the Kirishitan community in Warring States Japan, which he extrapolates through comparison with the Honganji branch.

Kawamura's thesis on the Kirishitan community has been established through his previous publications. An interesting point he makes concerning the reason for the development of the two traditions is the advantage of monotheistic faiths at the time of climate change in sixteenth century Japan. With climate change causing poor crops and famine, local communities needed to survive by strengthening their spiritual unity and creating a broader community. Religion had a role to play in such circumstances: Kirishitan and Jōdo Shinshū brought strong spiritual unity among the people due to their monotheistic nature (65–68).

Chapter 2 explores how the Christian doctrine of the West was presented in Japan, focusing on *Compendium catholicae veritatis* (1593) by Pedro Gómez (1535–1600), the then Jesuit Mission Superior in Japan. Kawamura pays special attention to the section of *De Anima*, especially to the issue of the immortal soul. Kawamura's question is how Japanese understood the teachings of human beings as presented by the Jesuits, and how they responded to it. He focuses on the addition found only in the text's Japanese translation that stressed the particular character of the *anima rationalis* and the immortality of the human soul.

The immortality of the soul was an important conclusion of *De Anima*. There are three kinds of soul: *anima vegetativa* or the soul of plants, *anima sensitiva* or the soul of animals, and *anima rationalis* or the soul of a human. The human soul does not proceed from the material body but is created as a separate entity

by Deus. Based on the effects of its actions in this world, the human soul is assigned to agony or bliss in the life to come. Freedom of human action is based on the competence of the human *anima*. The Japanese text is concerned with how to prove the human soul's immortality as the *anima* will never die after the body dies and the *anima* departs from it, and expounds the importance of human ethical effort (120–24). According to Kawamura, the emphasis on the eternity of the human soul was important and needed to be fully explained because of its possible confrontation with Japanese fundamental salvific religious thought most clearly represented by the *hongaku* (original enlightenment) thought 本覚思想 of the Tendai school 天台宗 that claimed human and other beings' inherent salvation (143).

Chapter 3 further discusses the Christian teachings of the immortality of the human soul, which provided the ground for the teaching of ethical conduct. Its significance in Japan is fully illustrated through a wide range of comparative analysis with the *hongaku* thought developed by the Tendai school, which, Kawamura argues, formed the basis of characteristic Japanese ways of thinking. He states, "The *Compendium* was a challenge to the anthropology, soteriology, and theology that had been presented from the essential Buddhist point of view. These were, in short, the aspects of *hongaku* that had formed the foundation of Japanese religiosity and been diffused among the people in most natural ways" (161). Kawamura expands his discussion to include its possible responses from the Japanese, as well as its derivative religious and ethical elements. This is a necessary procedure for him to contextualize the Kirishitan message in Japan.

The thought of punishment in the afterlife, which could be deduced from the immortality of the soul, made it necessary to stress the importance of accumulating ethical virtues. According to Kawamura, the Jesuit's edificatory concerns for the thorough practice of moral principles consequently made their theology become very ethical and moralistic (198). Yet, were there no similar teachings of moral conduct in Japan that recommended good human conduct, using the afterlife (or the afterlife existence of the human spirit) as the rational basis for that recommendation? Kawamura says that the issue of *shōbatsu* 賞罰 (reward and punishment) in the afterlife as a consequence of human conduct in this world could be understood based on the thought of *inga ōhō* 因果応報 (the law of cause and effect), but a decisive difference between this and the Kirishitan teachings was on the issue of immortality. Unlike Buddhism, Christianity does not have the concept of the previous life; it only conceives of life in this world and the afterlife (205–209).

Kawamura furthermore discusses God-human relations with respect to human salvation—the relation between divine grace and human ethical effort. He draws our attention to the issue of the subject that initiates human salvation (210). Again, he compares Christian teachings with those of Jōdo Shinshū's Honganji branch by referring especially to the problem of Self Power and Other Power. Also, By refer-

ring to the contrasting relationship between *hongakumon* 本覚門 that suggests the absolute nature of divine grace, and *shikakumon* 始覚門 which suggests the importance of human action based on free will, Kawamura explains that the Jesuit standpoint was to consider the absoluteness of divine grace as well as the power arising from human free will—or, located in the middle of the two positions, the Jesuit standpoint showed strong inclination toward *shikakumon* (216).

Kawamura's work is impressive both in the breadth and depth of discussion, the best example of which is his investigation of the *Konchirisan no riyaku* こんちりさんのりやく, a Kirishtian manual of penance (chapter 4). He emphasizes the role this text played in the transmission of the faith through generations of hidden Kirishitan. This text was published during the Christian century in order to deal with the lack of priests. Kirishitan were instructed that, when a priest was unavailable for confession, they receive forgiveness for their sins through contrition (*konchirisan*). The *Konchirisan no riyaku* includes prayers of contrition and the main points to be observed for contrition. Handwritten copies still exist, showing the importance of penance among hidden Kirishitan surviving persecution. The *Konchirisan*'s transmission in the Sotome 外海 and Gotō 五島 hidden Kirishitan communities was, Kawamura argues, one reason why they returned to the Catholic Church in the nineteenth century (244).

To explain the meaning of the text, Kawamura offers rich background information on the Jesuit Mission Press in Japan. Indeed, in all of his works, his own personal background as a Catholic priest and theologian enables him to provide a detailed Christian theological explanation on the topics discussed. From time to time, however, his normative point of view surpasses a descriptive standard and concludes the meaning of Kirishitan phenomena only within the limits of theology.

He mentions that the teaching of the *Konchirisan* and the role it played in Japan were "exceptional"—exceptional in the light of the "teaching and practice" of the Catholic Church (252–53). If such an exception originated in Japan, he says, it was a deviance from what was officially taught in the church. He then clarifies how the penance conducted under the name of *Konchirisan* was different from that in Europe, providing a long explanation of the sacrament of penance. Such an argument is reasonable from a normative theological point of view, but, at the same time, it is a typical observation made in the conventional church history.

Finally, Kawamura once again discusses the Kirishitan and the Jōdo Shinshū Honganji, this time their common characteristic of *shushin sūhai* 主神崇拝, "faith in one main deity" (chapter 5). Kawamura focuses on the similarities between the two traditions and examines why faith in one main deity developed against the social and intellectual background of Warring States Japan. He characterizes this main-deity type of faith with its several attributes, including a strong

sense of unity of the adherents, intolerance to other religions, and desire for one almighty deity.

IDEOLOGY AND CHRISTIANITY IN JAPAN

Paramore's *Ideology and Christianity in Japan* is about the political implications of anti-Christian discourse developed from early Tokugawa through early Meiji Japan. He notes that in Japanese history two major waves (outbreaks) of "anti-Christian writing, propaganda and discourse" (1) occurred during the formation of early modern and modern Japanese states. His general interest in this work is twofold: one is to examine the two waves by connecting them, and the other is to discuss anti-Christian discourse in political, ideological contexts. While the ideological role that anti-Christian discourse played in modern Japan is well acknowledged, "the history of anti-Christian discourse in early Tokugawa period has always been narrated in a religious paradigm emphasizing a clash between Eastern and Western religious cultures, leaving its political implications often ignored" (2). He spends two thirds of the work exploring the political implications of anti-Christian discourse in the early Tokugawa period, with the rest devoted to an intriguing discussion on anti-Christian discourse in early Meiji and its connection with that in early Tokugawa. Like Kawamura, Paramore also skillfully uses comparisons to make a number of cases.

STRUCTURE

Chapter 1, "Japanese Christian Thought: Doctrinal Diversity or Civilizational Clash?" deals with the intellectual diversity of Christian discourse in the late 1500s and early 1600s. Paramore focuses on Fukansai Habian's *Myōtei Mondō* 妙貞問答 and *Hadaiusu* (*Hadeusu*) 破提宇子, *Dochirina Kirishitan* ドチリナ･キリシタン, Matteo Ricci's *Tianzhu Shiyi* 天主實義, and the *Compendium of Catholic Doctrine* (*Compendium catholicae veritatis*). Among these, his discussion of Habian's works is most directly linked to the central thesis of his book. Habian's *Myōtei mondō* has been considered "highly valuable as a source of Japanese intellectual history" with its value discussed in terms of its role in "challenging traditional Japanese thought" by "introducing Western thought" to Japan. Paramore argues, however, that such discussion "assumes *a priori* a pair of mutually exclusive categories called "Eastern thought" and "Western thought," and that Habian's "ideas and actions came to be understood in terms of an imagined, constructed conflict between images of 'Japaneseness' and 'non-Japaneseness'" (11).

Paramore's denial of the assumption of the East-West polarization leads to the diverse picture of religious discourse in Japan in the late 1500s and early 1600s. For example, trends of Confucian thought popular in Japan at this time had many elements in common with what was identified as Christian thought,

suggesting the important influence of Confucian and other East Asian thought on Japanese Christian texts.

Paramore further investigates this connection between Confucianism and Christianity in Japan by exploring their parallels and interactions (chapter 2). His comparative analysis of the two traditions discloses "similar intellectual diversity, conflict and pluralism" in Neo-Confucian and Christian thought. As regards the implications for political thought of these overlapping conflicts, he maintains it is important to see the intellectual context of early Tokugawa Japan not as a field of conflict between competing traditions, but "as a period of general intellectual change across traditions, linked more to the massive change in political culture at the time" (6).

Allow me once again to focus on Habian's *Myōtei mondō* and *Hadaiusu* as examples of Paramore's argument. Paramore sees Habian's logical continuity underlying both his works, which take the theories of scholastic philosophy concerning the creation and the human *anima* (46) seriously. However, he sees more conflicts than similarities between the two works. In *Hadaiusu*, Habian criticizes Christianity from a Confucian point of view, saying, for example, that the human mind is danger, while the mind of the Way (righteous principle) is beautiful subtlety, and that this view potentially supports arguments critical of the location of truth in individual human subjects. In *Hadaiusu*, the idea that the "people" take their intentions from the "mind/heart of themselves" is seen as the root of disorder, while "a process by which the people identify… with the rationale of an externalized political order or hegemony is presented as ideal" (48). By contrast, in *Myōtei mondō*, "*anima rationalis* had been presented as an inherently human characteristic located in the individual human soul, giving the capacity for correct action through individual spiritual discernment" (48). According to Paramore, the shift seen from *Myōtei* to *Hadaiusu* is not a simple shift from a Christian to an anti-Christian position, but it is "indicative of a more general trend in Japanese society at this time where intellectual writing of different traditions was becoming increasingly integrated into a systematized framework supportive of political control" (49).

Since Kawamura is also keenly concerned with the Christian tenet of the human soul, let me also refer to his view. Kawamura places Habian's *Myōtei* within the long stream of Christian (Kirishitan) exegesis in Japan that began with F. Xavier, while Paramore treats his theory within the intellectual and religious currents at that time. Kawamura considers the teaching of *anima rationalis* an ethical and moral responsibility of the self and opposed to *hongaku* thought. This comparative view was held by Kawamura, not by Habian, to clarify the characteristics of the Kirishitan teachings. Meanwhile, Paramore interprets Habian's argument within the limits of the document *Hadaiusu*, and maintains that with Confucianism entering contemporary Japan, Habian himself presents his anti-

Christian critique based on the external social system and human relationships. Here Paramore contends an "intellectual overlap, confluence, and interplay between the Christian and Confucian traditions" (50–51). He thus claims that Habian posits his anti-Christian discourse from a Confucian point of view, similar to the arguments by Fujiwara Seika and Hayashi Razan.

In light of the intent of *Ideology and Christianity in Japan*, chapters 3 and 4 provide particularly important arguments. Chapter 3 discusses early Tokugawa anti-Christian discourse using Shogunate proclamations, populist literature, and diplomacy as main sources. By examining these documents representing anti-Christian writings from the seventeeth century, Paramore emphasizes the political roots of the suppression of Christianity and of anti-Christian literature and discourse. He discloses that already at the early stages of Tokugawa suppression, most arguments in anti-Christian literature were not doctrinal or religious but on the issues of political order and conservatism. For example, "the main thrust" (57) of the famous proclamation of 1614, *Bateren tsuihō no fumi* 伴天連追放の文 (Order on the deportation of priests) was not so much the religious dichotomy between Japanese religions and Christianity as a justification for the use of force in maintaining order. In that document, "Confucian and Buddhist quotes are used primarily to argue the need for law and order and to legitimate the use of severe force to uphold order" (57), and the ban on Christianity was justified through the claim that Christianity opposed the systems of law.

Paramore further reveals that anti-Christian discourse also appeared in diplomatic correspondence, suggesting that through such state-related political use, it developed in "more complex ideological frameworks" (7). In Razan's diplomatic correspondence, for example, we can see an "exoticized image of the Christian 'others'," which was the image of Christians as "barbarians" in contrast to a civilized image of Sinocentric Confucian culture. Thus, "for his own political ends" Razan placed "Japan metaphorically within the borders of 'Chinese civilization'," and Christianity was presented "as the real cause of the problem to China" (71–72).

Paramore's intriguing discussion on the political implications of anti-Christian discourse continues in chapter 4, "Attacking non-Christian 'Christians'," where we learn that, by mid-seventeenth-century Japan, politics was no longer just the motive behind the anti-Christian discourse but itself became the purpose of the discourse. Anti-Christian discourse came to be used to serve immediate political purposes in political confrontations. By the 1650s, anti-Christian discourse became "a brand or discursive tool for delineating intellectual and political orthodoxy and heterodoxy and for attacking clearly non-Christian political enemies and ideas" (7).

Based on Hayashi Razan's anti-Christian discourse such as *Sōzoku zenkōki* 草賊前後記 (Razan's comments on rebellion plots, especially political intrigues involved in the Keian Affair 慶安事変 of 1651), Paramore maintains that the primary object of criticism in anti-Christian discourse changed from Christianity

or Christians to non-Christian indigenous Japanese thinkers. For Razan, anti-Christian discourse became "a rhetorical device to be deployed against a range of intellectual currents that do not accord with his own ideas and objectives" (102). According to Paramore, he used anti-Christian discourse:

> To construct an idea of "heterodoxy" with which to compare his own Shinto-Confucian synthesis as an "orthodoxy" aligned to and upholding the central state. In the construction of this "heterodoxy" Razan used the word *yaso*, and an image of Christianity that had particular impact in his political discourse space. (102)

Thus, anti-Christian discourse began to play a more multidimensional role in domestic Japanese politics. Paramore calls this change "a mutation of anti-Christian discourse" (101). He convincingly presents his thesis: in Japanese political history "the language and imagery" of "Christianity" transcended the issues about "the Christian religion, or the historical reality of Christianity in Japan." Rather, it "became code for differentiation between categories of intellectual 'orthodoxy' and 'heterodoxy.'" And, significantly, these categories were built up "over the subsequent 300 years, ultimately playing an important role in the formation of the modern national ideology" (102). Paramore's argument is clear and strong.

In the remaining pages, Paramore follows the history of anti-Christian discourse through the rest of the Tokugawa and the early Meiji periods. In chapter 5, "Mid- and late-Tokugawa anti-Christian discourse: Continuity and Change," he discusses the second wave of anti-Christian discourse by referring to the anti-Christian documents by Mito scholars in the mid-nineteenth century, with special attention to those connected to the anti-Christian discourse in the early Tokugawa years—Tokugawa Nariaki's 徳川斉昭 *Sokkyohen* 息距編 (1860) and Kiyū Dōjin's 杞憂道人 *Hekijakankenroku* 闢邪管見録 (1861), both of which were edited collections of early Tokugawa anti-Christian writings. They were not only influential at the time; while showing the relationship between early and late anti-Christian discourses in the Tokugawa period, they have also been the major source for the study of early Tokugawa anti-Christian discourse in modern and contemporary academic writings.

The second wave of anti-Christian discourse peaked in the early Meiji. Finally, chapter 6 focuses on "modern national ideology and conservatism." Here it is argued that the anti-Christian discourse of the late Tokugawa and early Meiji periods rarely used contemporary or universal arguments; it was instead anti-Western, relying on conservative Chinese Confucian arguments and xenophobic Japanese images of Christians carried over from the seventeenth-century anti-Christian policy. The discourse that emerged in the late 1880s, however, uti-

lized contemporary Western philosophy to attack Christianity. This discourse was nationalist, and also pro-rationalist, and often pro-Western.

Comparison and Historiography

COMPARISON

Comparison plays a crucial role in these two works. Kawamura's work depends on a comparative analysis between the Kirishitan and the Honganji branch and/or the Tendai tradition; Paramore's thesis likewise results from his comparative examination of the wide range of anti-Christian discourse, Christianity, and Confucianism. In recent years, the theory of comparison has been under serious reconsideration in religious studies. One of the most striking contentions is made by Jonathan Z. SMITH (1982; 1990; 2000), who argued that comparison is not a discovery but an invention by scholars who link different things in their minds, like magic. Smith stated his view against the background of modern studies of religion in which comparison had been used too often for producing universal patterns. We should not apply his critique to the two works under review because they use comparison most consciously for understanding the meaning of Christianity within the context of early modern Japan and not for creating universal models. Smith's point is, however, inspiring enough for us to pay close attention to how the authors depict similarity and difference in their works and the consequences of their endeavor.

Generally speaking, in comparing the Kirishitan with their Japanese counterparts, Kawamura stresses their similarity to the community (for example, the Kirishitan confraternity and Jōdo shinshū *dōjō*) and their difference to the doctrine (for example, Kirishitan soteriology and *hongaku* thought). This similarity and difference are formed, however, on the plane of the Japanese historical context. In Kawamura's case, there is another plane of reference—Catholic theology. As pointed out above, Kawamura's work is rich with theological descriptions that provide additional contexts of discussion for the issues at stake. A typical example is his examination of the prayer of contrition. He argues it was an exceptional case—by referring to the Catholic canons (the Council of Trent, 1545–1563, for example). Thus he explores the Kirishitan contrition in Tokugawa Japan within the universal Catholic theological context as well.

In this sort of dual-contextual examination, a similarity in one context may change to a difference in another, and vice versa. Kawamura convincingly explains the difference, or "conflict," between the *Compendium* and *hongaku* thought over the subject of human salvation. In this context, he also introduces the similarities between Lutheranism and the Honganji branch. While the *Compendium* and *hongaku* historically coexisted in the same space and time, Lutheranism and the Honganji branch did not do so. Aligning his standpoint with that of the Jesuits in Japan at the time, Kawamura attempts to reproduce an imaginary but contextual

comparison between the Lutheran and the Honganji branch, and he evolves his analysis using a dual structure. Such multidimensional comparison—or "magic" to use Smith's term—of the Kirishitan requires a highly interdisciplinary background, and it can probably be fulfilled to this extent only by Kawamura.

In Paramore's work too, comparison effectively functions to create sound discussions. Many of his innovative arguments for the political implications of anti-Christian discourse rest on his selection of what to compare. For the general structure of the work, he connects the anti-Christian wave in early Tokugawa and that in late Tokugawa and early Meiji, thereby successfully appealing to the necessity to investigate the political implications of the former, and demonstrates that anti-Christian discourse continued to function as a means to help strengthen Japan's political cohesiveness throughout these years. To disclose the ideological aspects of anti-Christian discourse in Tokugawa Japan, he chose Confucianism, not Buddhism or Shinto. Unlike Kawamura, in order to build up his central arguments, he uses comparison mainly for producing similarities by positing "an array of concrete relationships and parallel functions" (161) between those compared.

Whether comparative analysis creates similarity or difference, the act of comparison itself is only a tool. The true master of the analysis is the theory or perspective behind it, which utilizes comparison for a certain end. Since this article is concerned with history, let me refer to such theory/perspective (or assumption) as historiography. Before concluding this article, I would like to turn our attention to the historiographies of the two books.

HISTORIOGRAPHY

Kawamura elucidates the differences between Christianity and other religions in Japan in terms of doctrine. In particular, as far as human soteriology goes, the primacy of difference over similarity is more than obvious. This reflects his historiography. In order to explain it, let me share a view that, unlike Kawamura, contends more similarity than difference between Christianity and non-Christian religions in Japan over the same issue—human soteriology.

In the *Myōtei mondō* Habian posited salvation in the afterlife as the central theme and constructed his presentation of Kirishitan teachings based on it. He presents an exposition of the Kirishitan doctrine in five sections with the following titles:

> 1. The only one Lord of *genze annon, goshō zensho* 現世安穏, 後生善所 (peace in this world, birth in a good realm in the afterlife). 2. The *anima rationalis* that remains alive in the afterlife. 3. The good place in the afterlife is called *Paraiso*, which is in heaven; the bad place is called *Inferno*, which is the underworld. 4. What we should do to be saved in the afterlife. 5. Questions about the Kirishitan teachings. (FUKANSAI 1970)

Habian expounds a Kirishitan "salvation system," shifting his theme from Deus, who enables salvation in the afterlife, to the soul that is saved depending on human conduct in this world, to heaven and hell as possible places of rebirth in the afterlife, and finally to the rules and practices that one should observe to achieve salvation in the afterlife. The particular emphasis on "the afterlife" (*goshō*) as the place of salvation, also found in other Kirishitan books, is either a Japanese insertion or addition in translation to the simple phrase "to be saved" in the original Portuguese texts. The "afterlife" was the most powerful soteriological idea in Japan when the Kirishitan tradition was growing. The best example of the Buddhist emphasis on the afterlife as the realm of salvation is the Pure Land doctrine that taught birth in the Pure Land of Amida Buddha as the goal of human life. With the idea of salvation in the afterlife deeply rooted in the Japanese religious sentiment, the Kirishitan teachings that emphasized the afterlife as the place of human salvation were able to have a strong "religious flavor" in Japan.

What does this similarity—and perhaps more significantly, Christian adoption of Japanese religious terms—suggest? Is it just about the words, while its message remained genuine? For the Japanese readers and audience who listened to the Christian teachings in Japanese (which is perhaps more appropriately called Kirishitan teaching), Christianity and Buddhism might have been much closer to each other even though they were severely conflicted at high intellectual levels.

In his works, Kawamura emphasizes the importance of the study of Kirishitan *minshū* or the Kirishitan populace to discuss Kirishitan history (KAWAMURA 2003). His excellent study of the Kirishitan community—focused on the Christian century—has opened up a new horizon of religio-social study of the Kirishitan history, which, before him, had been done almost exclusively within the limits of hidden Kirishitan or contemporary *Kakure* Kirishitan. Not to the detriment of my admiration for his achievements, however, I would like to point out that his primary historiography remains the same as that of conventional church historians. He still seems to apply premises of the conventional "history from above" constructed on the assumption that all converts were like full-fledged, theologically well-informed "Christians."

Meanwhile, Paramore is more explicit than Kawamura in claiming his historiographical challenge, or the innovative nature of his work. Indeed, his arguments are clear and convincingly supported by thoughtful analysis of a number of important documents. One question, however, has remained unsolved: were there no political implications in "Christian discourse," that is, in documents written by Christians? Why did he focus only on anti-Christian discourse by non-Christians (including one "former" Christian) to discuss the issue of "ideology and Christianity in Japan"?

Needless to say the political implications or "purpose" of anti-Christian documents have been frequently discussed by historians, with the proclamations

of banning Christians by Hideyoshi and the Tokugawa Shogunate among the most typical examples. But certainly nobody has explored this issue as fully as he did in such breadth and depth, and with such close examination of religious documents. So far this topic has been most often discussed in political, rather than religious, contexts by secular historians; his study is therefore striking in the studies of Christianity in early modern Japan.

In conclusion, when we engage in cross-cultural studies, we usually start with the categories with which we are familiar and then see what there is in our subject of study that might correspond to "our" categories. But this may set an unsurpassable limit on our understanding. If we want to see critical examination further developed in this field, we must be bold in attempting fresh interpretations supported by new historiographies. We should attempt to create unprecedented contexts of analysis through new sets of comparison. In such attempts, the Kirishitan (or Christianity in early modern Japan) ought not to remain a mere object of theology or any preconceived categorization, but its data should offer its own *sui generis* perspective on the interpretation of its own tradition. On this point as well, these works by Kawamura and Paramore will remain significant sources.

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The AP Art History course teaches students the nature of art (its uses, meanings, and production) and societal responses to art throughout history. It seeks to immerse students in rich artistic traditions across cultures dating from prehistory to the present while fostering an in-depth understanding and appreciation of the history of art. In this class, you can expect to learn "visual, contextual, and comparative analysis applied to a variety of art forms, understanding of individual works and connections between processes and products throughout history." This comprehensive art history timeline explores the characteristics, leading contributors and important influences of each prominent period of Western art. Whether you're an aspiring collector or simply appreciate the work of history's great artists, studying the major movements of the art history timeline is a worthwhile place to start. Influential genres of art from the Renaissance to the rise of Modernism have undoubtedly made their mark on history. With many artists today like Banksy, Kerry James Marshall, Mickalene Thomas, and Kehinde Wiley consistently infusing art historical references into contemporary works, understanding the historical context and significance of each period and movement is critical for collectors and art enthusiasts al History is not art in the same the way that a novel is art, for instance. History is first and foremost a presentation of facts about the past. It is scholarship of the sort that can involve creativity, but isn't the same thing as ar... I had the great good fortune to study medieval history under an historian who understood all of these things well, and taught his students accordingly. He made it a point to tell us which of the assigned readings were well written, and which were not. He certainly had a profound effect on the way in which I read history. I had the sense that art history was like a relay-race of artists, each passing the baton on from one to another, building up a cause-and-effect chain of history and development. Beyond wanting to know about the -isms , I had other questions too: What was 'Baroque' and did it come before or after the Renaissance? Was the artist a man or a woman, and could the answer have an bearing on the sort of art they might create? Might race or other specifics of the artist's identity play a role? Did the artwork get shown in public, and if so, what were the reactions of the first viewers? These questions are by no means exhaustive, but they do perhaps point to the reality of any creative process: that all artists work within a context, with all the opportunities and constraints that this context might entail.